
Fast Facts #05

Innovative Approaches to Ending Homelessness

This report provides examples of innovative approaches to ending homelessness:

- Innovations from the Kitchener Downtown Association
- Innovations from 10-Year Plans to End Homelessness in American Cities
- Innovative Solutions to End Homelessness in American States, and
- Best Practices in the Planning Categories Proposed by the National Association to End Homelessness.

Innovations from the Kitchener Downtown Association

City: Kitchener, Ontario
Population: 190,399 (2001)
Program: Kitchener Downtown Street Outreach Project
See Page: n/a
Links: Not available online.

The Working Centre for the Downtown Street Outreach Worker Coordinating Committee. 2006. *Funding for the Kitchener Downtown Community Collaborative "Downtown Street Outreach Project" from the Safe & Healthy Community Advisory Committee Budget. Report to the Safe & Healthy Community Advisory Committee, October 2, 2006.*

The Kitchener Downtown Business Association operates an outreach program for street people. The project is one component of a plan to address six major issues that were identified as creating a negative public perception and fear of the downtown area. The program employs two full-time outreach workers to make contacts with those in the downtown area, who assist people through general support, referrals, crisis intervention, accessing public services (e.g., health, mental health, substance abuse treatment, social assistance, and so on), accessing safe and affordable housing (including supportive housing), connecting with legal services, and searching for employment. The outreach program has proven successful in assisting those most vulnerable in the downtown area to meet their basic needs and move from the street into permanent housing. Program funding is provided in part by The City of Kitchener's Safe and Healthy Community Advisory Committee and Ontario's Trillium Foundation, as well as through in-kind contributions from local agencies and organizations.

Innovations from 10-Year Plans to End Homelessness in American Cities

City: Portland, Oregon
Population: 556,000 (2005)
Program: Housing Connections – Find Permanent, Affordable Housing Fast
See Page: 25
Links: www.endhomelessness.org/files/624_file_Portland_OR.pdf
<http://www.portlandonline.com/bhcd/index.cfm?c=35250>

Housing Connections offers Portland area medium- and low-income residents a listing service that currently includes 52,000 houses and apartments for sale and for rent, owned or managed by more than 1,300 property managers or owners, including public housing agencies and private landlords. Telephone assistance is provided by staff of 211-info, a nonprofit information and referral agency serving the Portland Metro Area, which works in partnership with The City of Portland Bureau of Housing and Community Development to staff the operations of Housing Connections.

City: Palo Alto, California
Population: 57,223 (2006)
Program: Palo Alto Downtown Streets Team, Santa Clara County
See Pages: 27 and 32
Links: www.collabsc.org/Keys_to_Housing_10_Year_Plan.pdf
www.springboardforward.org/documents/PADFinal.pdf

Create volunteer opportunities, leading to jobs, for unhoused people in Palo Alto. The Palo Alto Downtown Streets Team is a pilot program from the Palo Alto Downtown Business and Professional Association. For the first three to six months of their involvement, members will participate in beautification projects like sweeping sidewalks and planting flowers. While contributing to a better downtown Palo Alto, they will build self-esteem and practice long-term habits necessary for successful re-entry into the workforce. As part of their ongoing involvement, Downtown Streets Team members will also be paired with mentors from Palo Alto businesses and will benefit from professional one-on-one career coaching from Springboard.

City: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Population: 1,463,281 (2005)
Program: Bausman Street Independent Living
See Page: 10
Links: www.phila.gov/oess/homelessness/Final_Plan_Layout_10-06.pdf
www.10000friends.org/designawards/winners/bausman

Increase the stock of high quality permanent affordable and supportive homes, and ensure accessibility to residents and visitors with physical disabilities. Bausman Street Independent Living is a newly constructed supportive housing development designed to complement an existing urban, residential context. It was co-developed by two Pittsburgh-based non-profits, ACTION-Housing, Inc. and Neighborhood Development Ventures, Inc., a supporting organization of South Side Local Development Company. The project was made possible primarily through funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Section-811 Program. Housing referrals and on-site services for residents are provided in cooperation with three Pittsburgh-based agencies: Mercy Behavioral Health, Residential Care Services, and United Cerebral Palsy of Pittsburgh. Project Merits: Diverse residents – This was HUD-Pittsburgh's first Section-811 project to engage multiple service providers to encourage diversity within one development.

City: Denver, Colorado
Population: 575,927 (2006)
Program: Model Website, Costs of Inaction on Homelessness, Research and Awareness, Track Deaths among People who are Homeless
See Pages: 5 and 49
Links: www.denversroadhome.org/the_problem.php
www.denversroadhome.org/document/AccomplishmentsToDateJan2006.pdf
www.denversroadhome.org/document/Tenyearplan.pdf
<http://mdhi.org/download/files/Final%20DHFC%20Cost%20Study.pdf>

The 10 Year plan has a model website to increase awareness, which also profiles the cost of inaction on homelessness. There is also reference to their annual Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative Point In Time Count. Staff have developed a coordinated process with the Coroner's Office and Denver Police Department to identify, track and map deaths among people who are homeless. Date, time location, cause of death and co-morbidity factors will be included in this tracking, as well as basic demographic information. Staff are working with several other cities on pilot projects to identify people who live on the streets and are at high-risk of dying. This information will be shared with the Outreach teams in an effort to prevent deaths.

City: San Jose, California
Population: 953,679 (2006)
Program: Accessing Mainstream Benefits & Employment, Santa Clara County
See Pages: 10-13
Links: www.sanjoseca.gov/purchasing/livwage.asp
[www.collabsc.org/Keys to Housing 10 Year Plan.pdf](http://www.collabsc.org/Keys_to_Housing_10_Year_Plan.pdf)

Living Wage Policy Resolution Number 68900 was adopted in San Jose in June 1999. The city's May 2005 10-year plan builds on the following targets:

- The number of chronically unhoused people earning a living wage will increase by 10% annually in years 1-5, and then by 50% annually between years 6-10.
- Use a Customized Employment model to increase the number of public and private employers who hire unhoused people into jobs that pay, or promote to, a wage sufficient to afford housing. Specifically target efforts to promote the hiring of people who are/have been chronically homeless and those aged 50 and older.

City: San Diego, California
Population: 1,311,162 (2006)
Program: Serial Inebriate Program
See Pages: 7-12
Links: www.endhomelessness.org/files/618_file_SanDiego_CA.pdf
www.sandiego.gov/cpci/press/040914.shtml
www.aemj.org/cqi/content/abstract/13/5_suppl_1/S105-b

The Serial Inebriate Program strategy offers treatment in a joint City/County-funded program in lieu of custody time obtained from a guilty verdict for public intoxication. Once in treatment, clients are provided with wraparound services designed to help their recovery from alcoholism and begin moving them toward re-entering society as a sober community member. Since its inception, the Serial Inebriate Program (SIP) has secured tangible results that have improved the lives of program participants, while reducing the burden taxpayers incur through police, hospital and emergency costs: 32% of clients entering SIP complete the program. Moreover, a study by the San Diego Police Department's Western Division showed that individual arrests were down 12%, total arrests were down 33%, and arrests per person were down 25% for SIP clients. A sample study on the impact the Serial Inebriate Program had on hospital emergency departments and Emergency Medical Services showed that hospital and EMS contacts were reduced 80% to 90%, while hospital costs were reduced 80%.

City: Seattle, Washington
Population: 578,700 (2006)
Program: DESC Housing Includes Case Management and Support Services
See Page: 37
Links: www.uwkc.org/newsevents/researchreports/10YPlanPhotos.pdf
www.desc.org/supportive_housing.html
www.desc.org/documents/Jan_2006_Aff_Housing_Financing_MetLife.pdf

This homeless service provider in Seattle has found that simply placing people in housing is unlikely to be effective as a long-term strategy. In response, the Downtown Emergency Service Center (DESC) has developed a variety of housing options, all of which include case management and/or on-site coordination of support services. With these services, DESC clients are much more likely to successfully maintain long-term tenancy. As part of the DESC funding award, The City is requiring the creation of a Good Neighbor Agreement between DESC and the neighborhood. The Office of Housing will lead this effort to identify what both DESC and the neighborhood can do to ensure success of the proposed development.

City: San Diego, California
Population: 1,311,162 (2006)
Program: Partnership – Affordable Housing
See Page: n/a
Links: www.ich.gov/innovations/index.html#cabuilder

In some parts of San Diego County, there's a new requirement when buying a house: a mandatory charitable contribution by the buyer to assist in meeting the housing needs of homeless people. Lennar Corp., one of the nation's largest builders, now requires homebuyers to make a payment that will be given to local housing organizations chosen by a foundation set up by the builder. Lennar Corp. requires the fee (amounting to 1/20th of 1 percent of the sales price of its new houses) under a program started three years ago in Orange County. Lennar Corp. brought the program to San Diego County two years ago. For a \$500,000 house, the amount collected from a buyer would be \$250, which is added to the purchase price. Making the required contribution even more unusual is that legal documents recorded with the county require future buyers to fund the trust over the lifetime of the homes.

City: New York City, New York
Population: 8,143,197 (2005)
Program: Pathways to Housing
See Page: n/a
Links: <http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/1128>
<http://www.pathwaystohousing.org/html/overview.html>

Pathways to Housing offers scattered site permanent housing to homeless individuals with psychiatric disabilities and addictions. Despite the challenges this population presents, Pathways is unique in that it does not require its residents: to have “graduated” from other transitional programs, have sobriety, or accept supportive services. The vast majority of clients are moved directly from the streets into permanent, private market housing. The program then uses Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams to deliver services to clients in their homes. The ACT teams help clients to meet basic needs, enhance quality of life, increase social skills, and increase employment opportunities. The program currently serves over 400 people. Data from 2000 showed that 88% of the program’s tenants remained housed after five years. Further, Pathways staff contends that its residents have greater satisfaction with their housing, and greater psychological well-being because they were given a choice as to where to live, and what activities to engage in.

Innovative Solutions to End Homelessness in American States

State: California
Program: Proposition 63
Links: <http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/1437>
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Proposition_63_\(2004\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Proposition_63_(2004))
<http://www.healthvote.org/index.php/checkup/C26#5>

Proposition 63 was a proposition in the state of California on the November 2, 2004, ballot. The ballot measure was officially known as the [Mental Health Services Act](#). It passed with 6,191,691 votes in favor (53.8%) and 5,337,216 against (46.2%). It was an initiative statute that levied an additional 1% tax on incomes of \$1,000,000 or greater to fund mental health service programs beginning January 1, 2005. Approximately 25,000 to 30,000 taxpayers were to be directly affected by the tax, generating an estimated \$750 million in revenue during fiscal year 2005/06. At the time of the election, California income tax rates ranged from 1% to 9.3%, depending on a taxpayer’s income level.

State: Massachusetts

Program: Reaching Permanent Housing

Links: <http://www.ich.gov/innovations/index.html#massachusetts>

http://www.ncsha.org/uploads/06AW_MA_Home_Encourage.pdf

Friday, August 13, 2004 marked the last day a homeless family was placed in a state-funded motel used as shelter, and demonstrated the results of several state initiatives and investments that brought in new partners and new expectations to its family shelter system. While just one year before the state was spending in excess of \$20 million for hotel placements for 599 families, the pilot projects and incentives instituted to change outcomes for homeless families demonstrate partnerships and investments applicable beyond Massachusetts.

For decades, there has been a simmering conflict between municipal officials in Massachusetts and the secondary mortgage market. In a number of instances, this conflict and the associated litigation has delayed or even halted the development of new, affordable for-sale housing in Massachusetts. Specifically, Fannie Mae changed its seller and servicer guidelines effective May 1, 2006 to allow deed restrictions on single-family purchase money mortgages to survive foreclosure.

State: Georgia

Program: \$26.8 Million for Homeless Georgia Individuals and Families

Links: <http://www.hud.gov/local/ga/news/pr2005-03-03.cfm>

The focus of much of the State's efforts has been on housing for the chronically homeless. Over the last few years, these efforts have included 600 units of permanent housing with 500 units in production, 456 new units underway for the chronically homeless, and more than \$7 million in resources other than HUD funds leveraged to address the needs of homeless individuals.

State: North Carolina

Program: Produced a *Field Guide* for the Development Community

Links: http://www.ncsha.org/uploads/06AW_NC_Rent_Multifamily.pdf

In the *Field Guide to Multifamily Construction*, the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency condensed pages and pages of regulations, requirements, and building codes into a short, user-friendly, illustrated booklet to assist project designers and construction management staff.

The guide helps to ensure that apartments financed with Agency programs are built right the first time and adhere to mandated standards for design, accessibility, and energy efficiency. After an apartment is framed, it is costly to correct errors such as inadequate turning space in a handicap unit. By helping builders understand up front what is required, the *Field Guide* has reduced the need for costly tear-outs and repairs, made inspections by Agency construction supervisors easier, and encouraged cooperation between Agency staff and development teams.

State: Rhode Island
Program: Encouraging New Production
Links: http://www.ncsha.org/uploads/06AW_RI_Rent_Encourage.pdf

Embracing the concepts of compact development and smart growth, the Housing Finance Agency has undertaken the development of mixed use projects combining commercial and affordable residential. In communities that have not seen any commercial investment in years, these developments combine badly needed new commercial rental and ownership units on the ground floor with new residential above. The impact is immediate as affordable rental units are brought on line on land previously not available for residential development. New commercial opportunities are also created for local merchants and residents of the neighborhoods. The concept is particularly effective within the urban core where disinvestment in arterial commercial development has occurred for decades with the expansion of mall based shopping.

State: Wisconsin
Program: Wisconsin HMIS Implementation Plan
Links: http://www.endhomelessness.org/files/1397_file_10168_NAEH_ANewVision.pdf
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/hmis/implementation/models/wi-hmis.cfm>

The Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR) recognized that the data collected about homeless persons in Wisconsin were woefully inadequate. The methodology used to count homeless persons was based primarily on point-in-time monthly census reports from 36 shelter programs, and the quarterly reports submitted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through its Emergency Shelter Grants program funded agencies. In this methodology, data were collected from about half of the shelter programs. The DHIR acknowledged its need for empirical data about homeless families and individuals, including, to the greatest extent possible, an unduplicated count and tracking of client outcomes to measure program efficacy. The DHIR and local agencies needed quantifiable data in order to better target funds and document the need for additional funds. Wisconsin's efforts to plan and implement a Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) are considered a model by HUD.

Best Practices in the 10 Planning Categories Proposed by the National Association to End Homelessness

Key Reference: National Association to End Homelessness
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/tools/communityplans>

Plan Essential: PLAN

What's Recommended: Your community needs clear strategies focused on ending homelessness.

Who Did It Well: Chicago, Illinois (entire plan + addendum after year 2)
http://www.endhomelessness.org/files/667_file_chicago.pdf
Indianapolis, Indiana (entire plan)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/650>

Plan Essential: DATA

What's Recommended: Good data (e.g., Homelessness Management Information System, Point in Time Count, and other demographics and characteristics) is essential for communities to plan to end homelessness, to evaluate programs, and to properly allocate resources.

Who Did It Well: Hartford, Connecticut (page 24)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/651>
Broward County, Florida (pages 29-34)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/674>

Plan Essential: EMERGENCY PREVENTION

What's Recommended: Prevention programs like rent, mortgage, utility assistance, case management, landlord and lender intervention, and other strategies can prevent eviction and homelessness in the first place.

Who Did It Well: DuPage County, Illinois (component 2)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/658>
Atlanta, GA (pages 22-26)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/678>

Plan Essential: **SYSTEMS PREVENTION**

What's Recommended: Mainstream programs (mental health, substance abuse, TANF [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families], child welfare, etc.) that provide care and services to low-income people and discharge planning from public institutions can prevent homelessness.

Who Did It Well: Denver, Colorado (pages 2-8)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/659>
Quincy, Massachusetts (pages 4-5)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/623>

Plan Essential: **OUTREACH**

What's Recommended: Outreach can play an important role in reducing barriers to ending homelessness by engaging people who are living on the streets and getting them into housing.

Who Did It Well: Dallas, Texas (pages 48-49)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/661>
Colorado (pages 35-39)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/609>

Plan Essential: **SHORTEN HOMELESSNESS**

What's Recommended: The shelter and transitional housing system in your community should be organized to reduce or minimize the length of time people remain homeless, and the number of times they become homeless. This requires an alignment of resources to reduce the duration of each spell of homelessness and prevent recurrence.

Who Did It Well: Broward County, Florida (pages 52-54)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/674>
Columbus/Franklin County, Ohio (matrix of goals)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/664>

Plan Essential: **RAPID RE-HOUSING**

What's Recommended: Housing placement services can address many of the barriers homeless people face like navigating landlord-tenant relationships and dealing with affordable housing shortages.

Who Did It Well: Broward County, Florida (pages 52-54)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/674>
Norman, Oklahoma (pages 21-22)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/634>

Plan Essential: **SERVICES**

What's Recommended: Services can help individuals and families stabilize following a successful housing placement and provide the supports necessary to ensure that they are able to sustain their housing and access other community-based services.

Who Did It Well: Atlanta, Georgia (pages 55-70)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/678>
Minnesota (page 42)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/605>

Plan Essential: **PERMANENT HOUSING**

What's Recommended: Preventing a homeless episode or ensuring a speedy transition into stable, permanent housing can result in significant cost savings, especially for chronically homeless people. You must also address the permanent housing needs of extremely low-income people for whom a simple lack of housing is keeping them homeless.

Who Did It Well: Norfolk, Virginia (page 19)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/635>
Indianapolis, Indiana (entire plan)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/650>
Cape Cod, Massachusetts (pages 31-34)
<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/671>

Plan Essential:

INCOME

What's Recommended: When necessary in order to obtain housing, your community must assist homeless people to secure enough income to afford rent, by rapidly linking them with employment and/or benefits, and help them to maintain that housing through some form of income.

Who Did It Well:

Austin, Texas (pages 37-40)

<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/677>

Alexandria, Virginia (page 20)

<http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/682>