



Where We Are Now: Heading Home Hennepin 2011

Our vision is that by the year 2016, all people facing homelessness in Minneapolis and Hennepin County will have access to safe, decent and affordable housing and the resources and supports needed to sustain it.

Our mission is to end homelessness in Minneapolis and Hennepin County by 2016.



Minneapolis / Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness
Research, Planning and Development
A-2308 Government Center
300 S. 6th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55487-0238

Contact information



Contact Heading Home Hennepin

headinghomeminnesota.org/hennepin

Cathy ten Broeke

Director, Minneapolis-Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness

612-596-1606

cathy.ten.broeke@co.hennepin.mn.us

Matthew Ayres

Project Manager, Minneapolis-Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness

612-596-6645

matthew.ayres@co.hennepin.mn.us

Lisa Thornquist

612-879-3656

lisa.thornquist@co.hennepin.mn.us, and,

Danita Banks

612-348-9559

danita.banks@co.hennepin.mn.us.

Table of Contents



Introduction	1
Current State of Homelessness in Our Community	2
People at Risk of Homelessness	9
Prevention.....	14
Outreach.....	18
Housing.....	19
Self-Support	30
Service Delivery	32
Next Steps.....	37

A Letter from the Director of the Minneapolis-Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness



As the Director of the Minneapolis-Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness, I am pleased to present this report. While there is no doubt that these have been extremely difficult economic times, this report highlights the truly remarkable and successful work that has occurred in our community over the past four years. In all my years working on this issue, I have never before seen the kind of coordination and collaboration that is now taking place. Over 125 nonprofit partners, faith communities, and businesses are engaged in the work of implementing the plan to end homelessness. Multiple Hennepin

County and City of Minneapolis departments have made this a priority and are coordinating services for greater efficiency and effectiveness.

The Office to End Homelessness is proud to be a partner in this effort; however, the hundreds of community partners and city and county staff who implement this plan every day are truly to be commended and supported. Together, we have connected thousands of people to housing as well as services to help them maintain their housing. We are improving systems. We are moving away from simply funding activities to investing in solutions. We are ending homelessness.

The intent of this report is both to update the community on the current status of our efforts to eliminate homelessness and to illuminate the context in which we are working. In this economy, need has risen dramatically. People who never believed they could become homeless are finding themselves on the edge. Jobs are scarce and many are inadequate to afford housing.

Despite these challenges, we have made great strides. We have increased prevention efforts, keeping more people in their housing and improving the ways people are discharged from foster care, corrections, and the Hennepin County Medical Center. We have moved away from a criminal justice response to people living outside to a social service and housing response, resulting in a reduction in public costs and improving community livability. We have assisted thousands of individuals and families into permanent housing, including those who have been homeless for many years. We have increased access to and efficiency of services through our Project Homeless Connect community events and now the development of two new “one-stop-shop” Opportunity Centers. We have improved the coordination of public and private systems to ensure that we are reducing duplication of efforts and improving outcomes for people. And, finally, we have leveraged more private, state, and federal resources to accomplish our work at the local level.

These are tough times and that is all the more reason to be as smart as we can with the resources we have.

Thank you for your commitment to ending homelessness in Minneapolis and Hennepin County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cathy ten Broeke'.

Cathy ten Broeke

Director of the Minneapolis-Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness

Introduction

Heading Home Hennepin is the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County community's 10-year plan to end homelessness by 2016. The plan was developed over the course of 100 days in 2006 by a commission of representatives from federal, state and local governments, business, nonprofit, faith, and philanthropic communities, and homeless and formerly homeless citizens. In December 2006, the plan was passed unanimously by the Minneapolis City Council and Hennepin County Board of Commissioners.

Championed by hundreds of business, faith, philanthropic, government and advocacy leaders, Heading Home Hennepin is a model for similar initiatives nationwide.

The final recommendation of the plan is to develop a system to track and evaluate its progress.

This report is an outcome of that recommendation. It provides a description of the current state of homelessness in our community, along with the plan's key initiatives that prevent and end homelessness. Where specific program evaluations have been conducted, those evaluations are summarized. It also describes new, recently-implemented initiatives. Finally, this report highlights key areas of concern, as well as priorities moving forward.



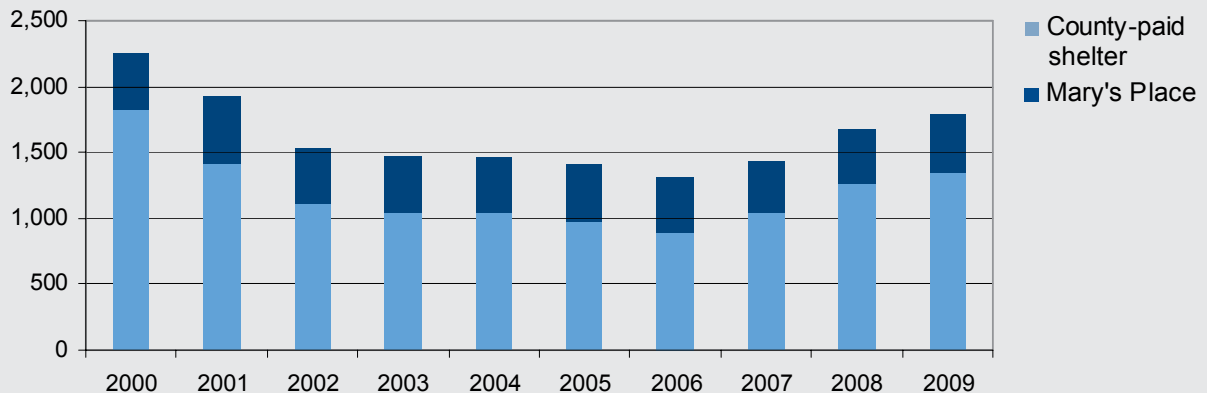
Current State of Homelessness in Our Community

The Wilder Research survey conducted on Oct. 29, 2009 found a total of 4,035 single adults, unaccompanied youth, and families with children experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County. This includes people staying in emergency shelters, battered women's shelters, or sleeping outside. It did not include people who live doubled up or "couch-hop" with friends or relatives, for which there is no adequate measuring tool.

Family Homelessness

In 2009, Hennepin County sheltered 1,343 unduplicated families and Mary's Place, a private agency, sheltered 442 families, for a combined increase of 6.5 percent over the previous year. There is a clear correlation between the economic recession, the foreclosure crisis, and the rise in family homelessness over the past few years.

Number of Families in Emergency Shelter in Hennepin County 2000-2009



Families in Hennepin County Shelter	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
County-funded shelter	1,817	1,411	1,102	1,045	1,042	967	888	1,032	1,251	1,343
Mary's Place	431	514	431	426	420	444	419	408	425	442
Total	2,249	1,925	1,533	1,471	1,462	1,411	1,307	1,440	1,676	1,795
Average length of stay	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
County-funded shelter	51.22	36.5	31.5	26.9	27.0	30.0	31.1	34.7	38.0	38.3
Mary's Place	58	68	71	76	79	73	81	76	69	61
Percent increase from previous year		-14.4%	-20.4%	-4.0%	-0.6%	-3.5%	-7.4%	10.2%	16.4%	6.5%

Hennepin County funds shelters for about half the families seeking emergency shelter in the county. Families stay at People Serving People (PSP), which has 98 rooms, and St. Anne's Place, which has 15 rooms. Mary's Place and Families Moving Forward, both faith-based initiatives, shelter other families.

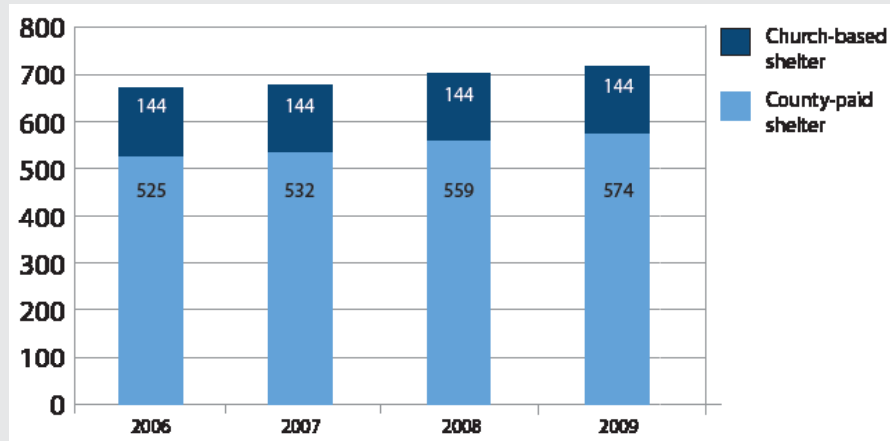
Mary's Place serves 425-450 families each year and 92 families each night. Families Moving Forward shelters 10 families per night, and battered women's shelters can shelter 68 families per night. They are always full.

Current State of Homelessness in Our Community

There are three private church-based shelters and two shelters funded by Hennepin County that serve single adults. The three church-based shelters have a total capacity of 144 men and women total per night. These shelters have been full every night for years. The county-paid shelters have beds for those vouchered

through the county's Eligibility Supports system. All others arrive at the shelter each night and are given a mat on the floor of the "secure waiting" space. There are no criteria for entry to secure waiting.

Single Adults in Hennepin County Shelters 2006 - 2009



Single Adults in Shelter

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009
Nights in county-funded shelter	191.527	194.245	203.914	209.492
Average number per night	525	532	559	574
Church-based shelters	144	144	144	144
Total singles sheltered	669	676	703	718
Percentage change		1.1%	3.9%	2.2%

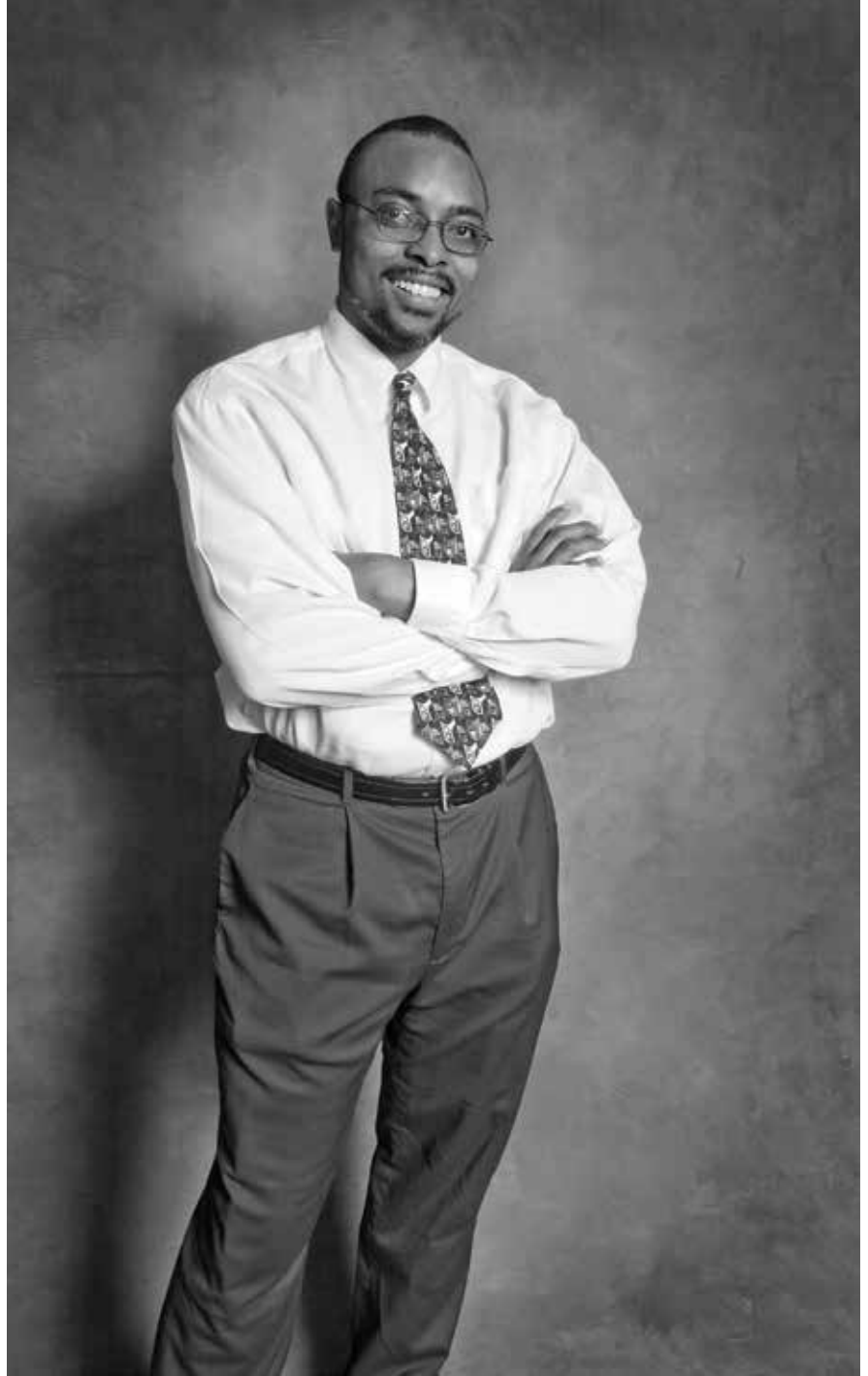
RANDY

My name is Randy. I'm thirty-seven years old. And last night I stayed in my own apartment.

I'm on Social Security because I am fighting a mental illness called bipolar. I get manic sometimes. If I sit down in a certain situation too long I get bored. And whoa! there I go.

But just recently I, you know, I have a handle on my manic episodes. I'm on medication. At first I was on four, now I'm on one.

I stayed in shelters. I made it, try to make it through. I even went to school for radio broadcasting at Brown Institute, which is now called Brown College. And I graduated while I was homeless. You know, homeless and working and going to school seven days a week: a man can lose his mind after a while! But summer came and my final instructor came up and shook my hand and said, "Congratulations, you graduated from Brown College in Radio Broadcasting." When he shook my hand, the feelings I have of being homeless were just put to a side for a moment. Because I had accomplished something.



© Larry LaBonté

Current State of Homelessness in Our Community

Hennepin County Emergency Shelter Numbers at a Glance

Family Shelter		Families	Single Adult Shelter		Men	Women
Mary's Place (Sharing and Caring Hands)		92	Catholic Charities Secure Waiting	126		
People Serving People		99	Catholic Charities Pay for Stay	125		
St. Anne's		15	Our Saviour's Housing	34	6	
Families Moving Forward		8	Salvation Army Safe Bay	130		
Total families in shelter		214	Salvation Army 2nd Floor	144		
			Salvation Army 3rd Floor		58	
			Salvation Army Sally's Place		50	
Youth Shelter		Youth	Simpson Housing Service	44	22	
The Bridge for Youth		17 Youth (ages 10 - 17)*	St. Stephen's Human Services	47		
Avenues for Youth		16 Youth (ages 16 - 20)	Total	650	136	
Hope Street		16 Youth (ages 16 - 20)	* These beds are only available to youth who can be reunited with family			
Total youth in shelter		49				

University of Minnesota Humphrey Institute Study of Shelter Use in Hennepin County

A Humphrey Institute class completed an analysis of single adult shelter usage in Hennepin County for 2006 through 2008. Their key findings included:

- Twenty-seven percent of individuals spent only one night in shelter. Fifty percent of individuals spent six or fewer nights in shelter. Only two percent of shelter clients spent 181 or more nights in shelter.
- Shelter preference (private versus county-funded) is based on personal priorities. Many preferred the private shelters but accessed the county-funded shelters because of convenience and availability.
- Between six and 12 months, the probability of exiting from shelter drops dramatically.
- Those who mostly used public and those who mostly used private shelter did not have a significantly different average number of nights in shelter. However, those who used both private and public shelters (the mixed group) used a disproportionately larger number of nights in shelter.
- Housing First* voucher recipients were just as likely to come from private as from public shelters. The mixed group of shelter users was less likely to get a Housing First voucher.
- Women had longer stays in shelter but they were also more likely to obtain assistance through a Housing First voucher.
- It appears that the definition of long-term homelessness beginning at 12 months is appropriate. This seems to be the timing when people truly become “stuck” in shelter cycles and need intervention to escape. The sharp decline in departure after six months suggests that this may be a good time to assess the shelter guests to determine who will still get out on their own and who may need additional help.
- The average length of shelter stay increased in 2008 when compared to 2007 and 2006, possibly due to the economic recession and, consequently, the lack of ability to find employment.

* For explanation of Housing First, see page 22.

Current State of Homelessness in Our Community

Youth Homelessness

Youth-serving agencies focus on reunifying youth with their families or they work to transition them into independent living when reunification is deemed impossible. On one night, the most recent Wilder Survey identified 427 homeless unaccompanied youth in Hennepin County. Shelter capacity for youth is dramatically less than the need.

Unsheltered

There are many individuals and even some families who are unsheltered on any given night, staying awake throughout the night, sleeping in cars, in encampments, under bridges and overpasses, or in abandoned buildings. Hennepin County does quarterly unsheltered counts, including one during the month of January.

In Hennepin, there was a sharp increase in the number of people identified as unsheltered at the end of January 2010. This is similar to increases that the community saw in homelessness generally. In addition, there have been improvements in shelter counts over the years, with a combination of surveys and social mapping of people known to be unsheltered. Still, the count of unsheltered individuals continues to be an underestimate of the actual number.

Wilder Triennial Survey

Wilder Research has conducted a triennial survey of homelessness throughout the state since 1991. It is the best measure we have of long-term trends in homelessness. The last survey was conducted in October 2009. The table below shows comparable numbers for the past three surveys of people in shelter and transitional housing. An additional 571 people were counted in informal arrangements or unsheltered in 2009, totaling 4,035 people experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County. **Statewide, the greatest percentage increase was in the age 18-21 population, which rose 57 percent between 2006 and 2009.**

Homeless & Highly Mobile Children & Youth

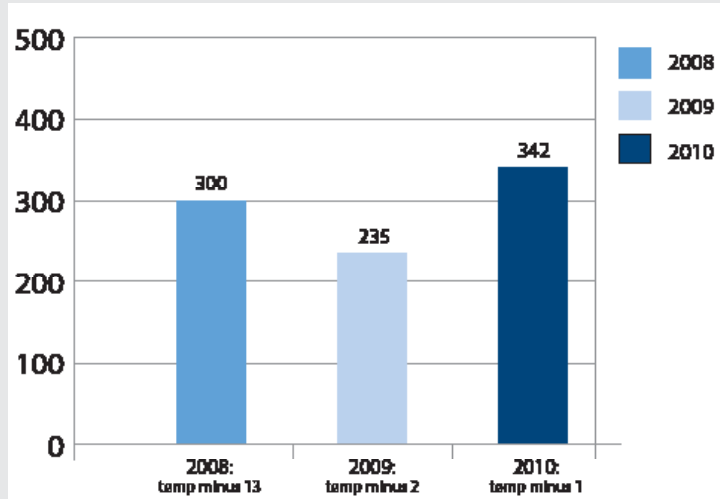
The McKinney-Vento Act requires all public school districts to identify students who are homeless or highly mobile (HHM). These students are entitled to specific educational benefits and accommodations as a result of their housing situation.

In Minnesota, for the most recent school year available (2008-2009), there were 8,406 children identified as HHM. Forty-five percent of these students were identified in Hennepin County, with three-quarters of these identified by Minneapolis Public Schools. The percentage increases in homelessness were much more dramatic in suburban Hennepin and the state as a whole compared to Minneapolis. Minneapolis Public Schools reported an increase of 3 percent between the 2007-2008 and the 2008-2009 school year. Suburban Hennepin reported a 35 percent increase and the state as a whole reported an 11 percent increase. Data from Minneapolis Public Schools document the challenges of HHM youth as they progress through school. At every age there is a large disparity between the achievement of HHM students and the rest of the student body. The disparity exists even when comparing HHM students to other students with free and reduced lunch status, **indicating that housing stability plays a significant role in student achievement.**

From July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010, there were 5,721 children and youth identified as HHM in Minneapolis. This is an increase of 3 percent from the previous year. The 5,721 children and youth include students of Minneapolis Public Schools as well as those age 0-4 and 18-21 not in school but living in Minneapolis, and students staying in Minneapolis shelters but attending schools in St. Paul or suburban districts in the metro area. Of these 5,721 children and youth, 71 percent were African American.

Current State of Homelessness in Our Community

Unsheltered Count in January



The 2010 unsheltered count included 283 adults, 53 youth, and 6 children with their parents.

Youth Homelessness

Agency	Type of Shelter	Beds	General Target	Average length of stay
The Bridge for Youth	Family reunification shelter	14	10 -17 years, who can be reunited with family	3 - 5 days
The Bridge for Youth	Emergency shelter	3	16 -18 years, overnight stay only, for youth not able to be reunited	Overnight, but may repeat stay nightly
Avenues for Homeless Youth	Transitional shelter	15	16 - 20 years, transition into housing opportunities	60 days
Avenues for Homeless Youth	Emergency shelter	1	Male or female, overnight stay only	Overnight
Hope Street Youth Emergency Shelter	Emergency shelter	16	16 - 20 years, some reunited with family and others transitioned to housing opportunities. All families are contacted if possible to locate.	24 days

People in Shelter and Transitional Housing Wilder Tri-Annual Survey

Year	2003	2006	2009	Pct increase 2006 to 2009
Men	1,071	978	1,240	27%
Women	859	766	914	19%
Youth < 18	22	29	23	-21%
Children	1,138	1,104	1,287	17%
Total	3,090	2,877	3,464	20%

Homeless and Highly Mobile Enrolled Students*

Year	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	Pct increase 07/08 - 08/09
Minnesota	5,741	5,462	7,571	8,406	11%
All Hennepin County	3,446	3,342	3,492	3,813	9%
Minneapolis	2,919	2,845	2,820	2,909	3%
Suburban Hennepin County	527	497	672	904	35%

Source: MARSS Report, MN Attendance & Recording

* Only includes children and youth documented in this system. Not inclusive of all children and youth identified as homeless.

Current State of Homelessness in Our Community

Homeless and Highly Mobile Students in Minneapolis Public Schools

Some Comparative Academic Achievements

	Attending school 95% of the time	Proficient in reading - grade 3	Proficient in reading - grade 10	Proficient in math - grade 3	Proficient in math - grade 10
Homeless and Highly Mobile Students	29%	31%	22%	28%	2%
All students district-wide	56%	54%	54%	61%	30%

Source: Minneapolis Public Schools, Elizabeth Hinz and Chi-Keung (Alex) Chan
Data from the 2009-2010 McKinney Vento Attendance and Achievement Report

University of Minnesota Institute of Child Development

Study of Homelessness & Early Childhood Development

Minneapolis has been a site of extensive research on the impact of homelessness on early childhood development. Spearheaded by professors at the University of Minnesota Institute of Child Development, the research focuses on resiliency factors for children experiencing homelessness. One aspect of the research examines the achievement of children in Minneapolis Public Schools, following those children identified as homeless and highly mobile, and compares their outcomes to other students.

Homeless and highly mobile students, on average, have lower attendance rates and score lower on standardized math and

reading tests compared to other children who are eligible for free and reduced cost lunch, as well as students from higher income families.

A second study follows a smaller cohort of children staying in Minneapolis family homeless shelters. The project looks at potential protective factors that may promote school success, focusing specifically on cognitive self-regulation skills known as executive functions. Executive functions include the ability to initiate and stop actions, change behaviors, control impulses, and act in a socially appropriate manner.

Research shows that early stressors in life can impede the brain's development of self-regulation skills, resulting in physiologic and behavioral changes. Poor responses to stress can make children less able to sit still in class, follow instructions, and ultimately achieve success in the school environment.

The research found that early stressors did indeed change children physiologically. However, strong parenting—as measured through ratings on warmth, involvement, and structure provided for the child—helps mitigate early stressors and improves the child's self-regulation skills.

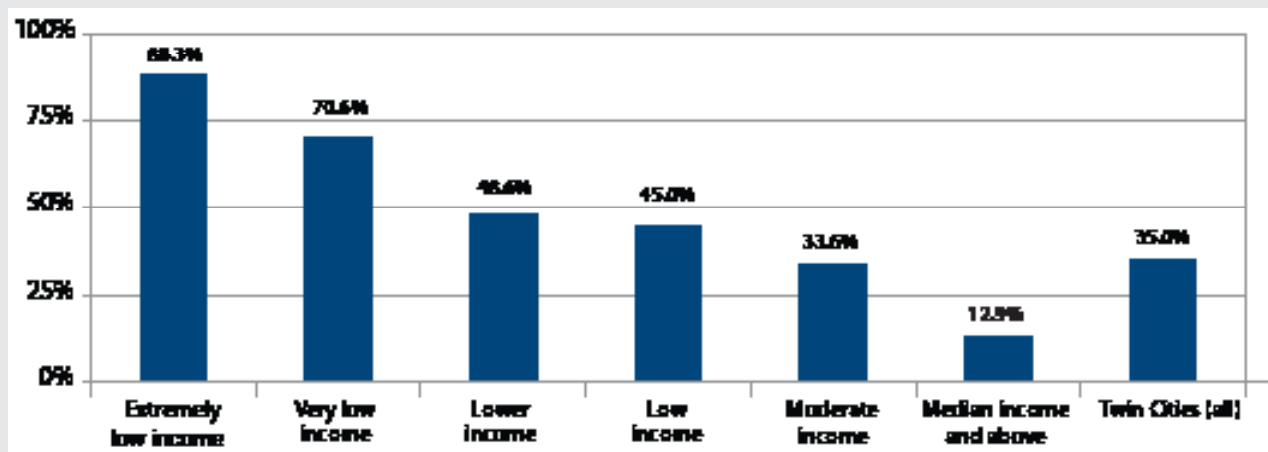
People at Risk of Homelessness

Homelessness is driven by poverty. With the downturn in the economy between 2007 and 2010, the number of people seeking emergency shelter swelled. Metro-wide, extremely low-income households paid an extremely high price for housing. Hennepin County-specific data showed that 87

percent of renters earning less than 30 percent of area median income, or \$23,550, paid more than 30 percent of their income toward housing, making them vulnerable to homelessness. We know that many Hennepin County clients are often paying as much as 80 percent of their income for rent.

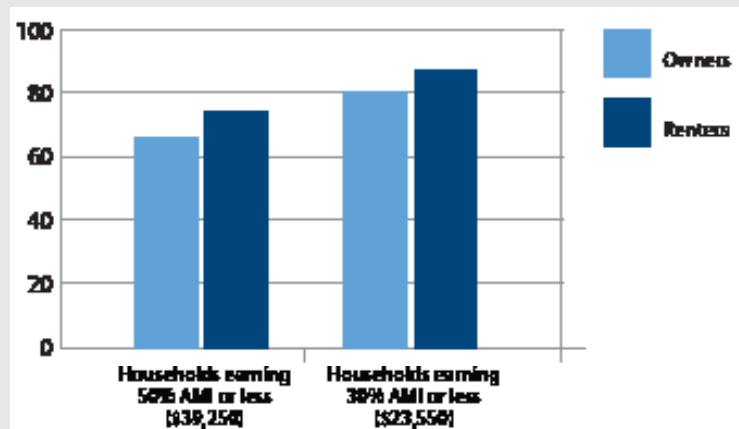
Rent-Burdened Population

Share of Households Paying 30% or More of Income for Housing
by Income Group, Twin Cities Seven-County Region, 2007



Income categories are based on HUD guidelines and indexed by household size. In 2007, the HUD median family income for a family of 4 in the Twin Cities 13-county metro area was \$77,600. For a one person household, these income levels represent the following categories: extremely low income - \$16,500; very low income - \$27,500; lower income - \$33,000; low income - \$41,700; moderate income - \$55,000; median income and above > \$55,000.

Percent of Households Paying 30% or More for Housing

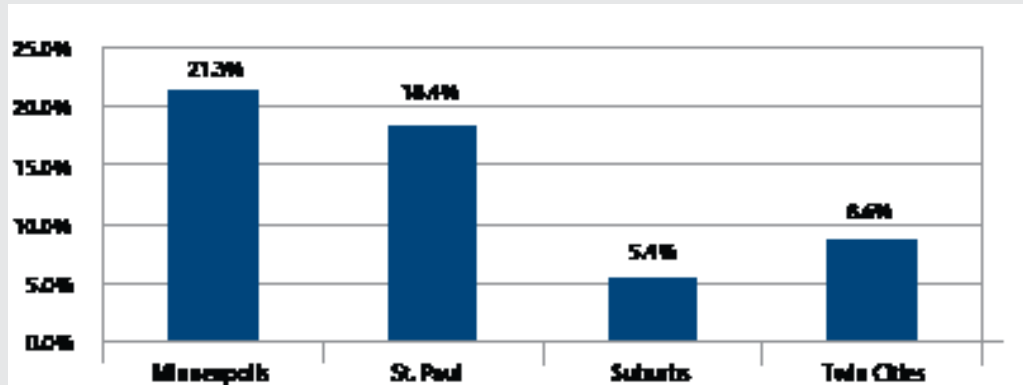


Source: Twin Cities Compass, from US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2007.

People at Risk of Homelessness

Poverty

Individuals Below the Federal Poverty Level*
by Central Cities and Suburbs, Twin Cities Seven-County Region, 2008



*The 2010 Federal poverty line for a family of 1 is defined as \$10,830; for a family of 3 it is \$18,310.

Vacancy Rates and Average Rents

Average Rent in Minneapolis and Metro Area
Fourth Quarter

	Minneapolis	Metro area
2009	\$948	\$909
2008	\$914	\$906
2007	\$876	\$899
2006	\$848	\$871
2005	\$826	\$851
2004	\$822	\$849

Data for multifamily rental housing
Source: GVA Marquette Advisors
City of Minneapolis: Minneapolis Trends Reports

Vacancy Rate in Minneapolis and Metro Area
Fourth Quarter

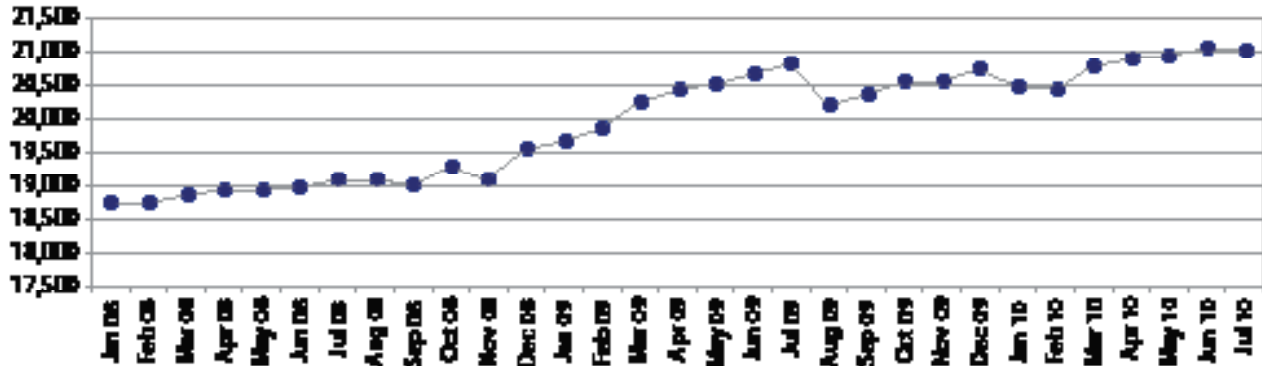
	Minneapolis	Metro area
2009	7.2%	7.3%
2008	4.2%	4.9%
2007	4.3%	4.2%
2006	3.3%	4.7%
2005	4.8%	6.1%
2004	4.8%	7.3%

Data for multifamily rental housing
Source: GVA Marquette Advisors
City of Minneapolis: Minneapolis Trends Reports

Since 2005, rents in Minneapolis and the metro area have climbed an average of 3 - 4 percent per year. The vacancy rate jumped dramatically in 2009, and housing advocates reported in 2010 that rents have stabilized or decreased slightly in response to the high vacancy rate, yet the disconnect between living wage employment opportunities and affordable housing remains a challenge.

People at Risk of Homelessness

Number of Active Cases Receiving Minnesota Family Investment Program, Diversionary Work Program, Work Benefit or General Assistance
June 2008 - July 2010



Source: Eligibility Supports, Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department

Foreclosures in Hennepin County and Minnesota

Total Foreclosures	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	First Half 2010
Hennepin County	1,681	3,042	5,561	7,348	5,655	3,080
Minnesota	6,472	11,907	20,398	26,251	23,017	13,093

Foreclosure rate (1)	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	First Half 2010
Hennepin County	0.46	0.82	1.48	1.93	1.49	0.73
Minnesota	0.38	0.68	1.15	0.46	1.28	0.81

Source: Housing Link, 2010, Foreclosures in Minnesota: A Report Based on County Sheriff's Sale Data (1)
Foreclosure rate - number foreclosed mortgages as a percent of total residential parcels

Work Supports & Cash Assistance in Hennepin County

With no changes to program eligibility, the number of families and single adults eligible for monthly cash assistance in Hennepin County has grown over the past two-and-a-half years. In January 2008, there were fewer than 19,000 open cases.

In July 2010, there were more than 21,000 open cases totaling a 12 percent increase. For this population on public assistance, affording a place to live is particularly challenging. People who receive General Assistance get \$203 per month and a parent on MFIP with two children gets \$532 per month.

Foreclosures

The dramatic increase in mortgage foreclosures since 2005 was unprecedented. There was a small decrease in foreclosures in 2009; however, first quarter 2010 shows an increase of 14 percent over first quarter 2009. Most recent foreclosures are credited to lost income. While most homeowners facing foreclosure do not become homeless, they put pressure on the rental market as they move from homeownership to tenancy. Renters in foreclosing properties are more likely to become homeless if they cannot locate another unit they can afford.

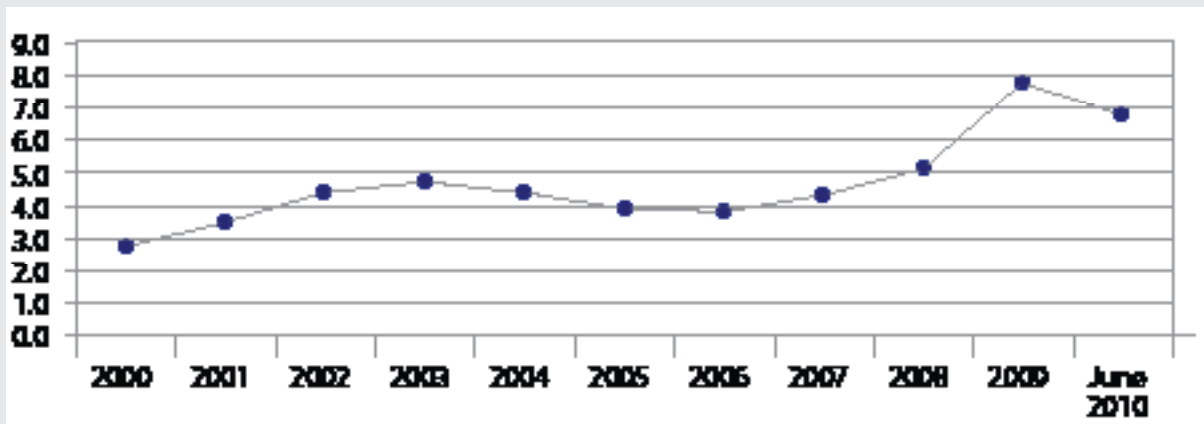
People at Risk of Homelessness

Unemployment Rate

As the unemployment rate rises, more workers' incomes are reduced, placing some in poverty and unable to afford their housing. The limited employment available is highly competitive. An increasing number of recently unemployed men and women are entering the shelter system.

Over the past decade, the unemployment rate in the Twin Cities metropolitan area averaged 4.4 percent. Between 2000 and 2006, the average unemployment rate was 3.9 percent, rising to an average of 5.6 percent since 2007. It peaked in June 2009 at 8.4 percent.

Unemployment Rate for the Twin Cities
Metropolitan Area, 2000 - 2010



Source: Bureaus of Labor Statistics

KYLE

Hi, my name is Kyle. I'm forty-one years old. Last night I stayed at the House of Charity.

It's rather a long story so I'll try to abridge it as much as possible. I got my undergrad at the university. And I went to the MBA program, Master of Business Administration. I began working at the highest paying job I could. And learned very rapidly why some companies hire MBA's and pay them so much money. Because they work them eighty plus hours a week.

Unfortunately at that point I ran into some chemical dependency problems. Some mental health issues came up. Depression runs in the family. And once I lost that job, getting another one became very, very difficult.

So I applied, and applied, and applied for jobs. And one day I had counted up 105 rejection letters. And I was the kind of person that was used to getting the job now, you know, during the interview. A hundred-and-five letters was something I was wholly unprepared to deal with and I had a nervous breakdown and I wound up in a locked psychiatric facility at HCMC.

Slowly I was able to put my life back together, which took time of course. But to this day I still haven't replaced the job. One of the big problems is I have medical assistance now that pays for my antidepressants. And as long as I'm on them I'm fine. The second I get a job of any kind the Medical Assistance quits. The drug they prescribe me is in patent so it's \$190 a month, which I can't afford to pay. And so, really, the moment I get a job all the support falls away.

It was very embarrassing to me to go back to friends who I had grown up with, who were in professional positions and, you know, have to explain my situation to them. It was very embarrassing.



© Larry LaBonté

Prevention

Heading Home Hennepin’s first goal is to prevent homelessness whenever possible.

Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program

The Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) is a statewide program that provides funding to prevent homelessness and help families and individuals move out of shelter. It is both a prevention and a housing tool.

The program funds “Rapid Exit” workers who assist families and individuals in shelter or on the verge of homelessness to secure income and find affordable places to rent.

Prevention is cost-effective. For example, in Hennepin County it costs an average of \$650 in one-time funds to prevent a family from becoming homeless, whereas it costs \$2,700 to shelter a family of three for 30 days.

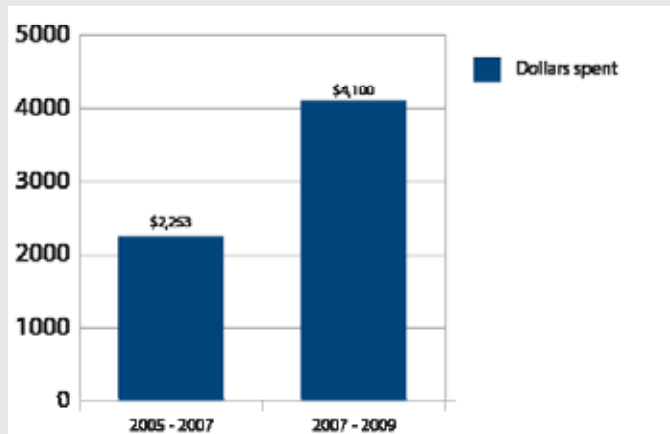
Hennepin County has used FHPAP to help prevent homelessness for thousands of households through one-time assistance or short-term rental assistance. In 2010, Hennepin County provided prevention services for 737 families, 291 single

adults, and 93 youth. From 2007 through 2010, Hennepin County provided prevention services to 5,303 households.

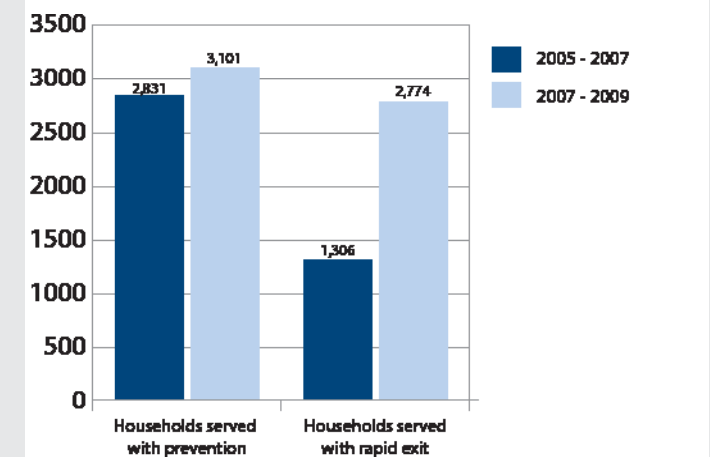
FHPAP services were expanded in July 2008. The expansion included new services for unaccompanied youth and an increase in the level of assistance available for single adults, particularly veterans. The additional FHPAP resources were used to employ a youth Rapid Exit screener at YouthLink and to deliver cash prevention assistance to youth. Freeport West has been providing the youth Rapid Exit services since the expansion. Simpson Housing and Catholic Charities have also been providing additional Rapid Exit services to single adults since the expansion.

Despite the rise in unemployment and foreclosures, and the stagnation of wages and public assistance as noted earlier, use of family shelter did not increase as fast in Hennepin County as it did in other parts of the country. In fact, between 2009 and 2010, there was no increase in families entering Hennepin County shelter. This is remarkable during a time of increasing need and indicates the effectiveness of the FHPAP program and the increased focus on prevention at the federal government level.

FHPAP Dollars in Hennepin County in thousands



Households served with FHPAP funds in Hennepin County



Explanation of Rapid Exit in Hennepin County

Rapid Exit for families experiencing homelessness is designed to move families quickly from shelter into housing. While a few families obtain transitional housing or housing subsidies, the vast majority receive Rapid Exit services and leave shelter to return to private market housing within approximately 30 - 45 days.

Shelter admissions are centrally controlled by Hennepin County's Shelter Team. If a family qualifies for shelter and cannot be diverted to another appropriate option, the Shelter Team vouchers the family into shelter and makes an appointment for the family for a Barrier Assessment.

The Rapid Exit Barrier Assessment occurs within two to seven days of admission to shelter. The Assessment includes a search of criminal history and eviction databases and a face-to-face interview. The intent is to identify tenant screening barriers (reasons a landlord would typically screen out an applicant for housing) and housing retention barriers (barriers that directly impact the ability to achieve and maintain stable housing). Based upon the number and significance of the family's barriers, the Rapid Exit Screener assigns a rating of 1 (fewest barriers) to 5 (most barriers) and refers the family to a Rapid Exit Advocate. Aside from

the Shelter Team, all Hennepin County Rapid Exit services are provided by contracted nonprofit agencies.

The Rapid Exit Advocate helps the family obtain housing as quickly and responsibly as possible. This requires two critical components:

- immediate funding for housing start-up costs (which average \$1,200 - \$1,500),
- and relationships with landlords who will accept families with tenant screening barriers because they trust that the non-profit agency's follow-up services will minimize the risk of renting to a tenant who would otherwise be denied.

Rapid Exit Advocates have relationships with roughly 200 landlords. Advocates match the family to the best available vacancy (based upon the landlord's risk tolerance and the unit location). The Rapid Exit agency, along with Hennepin County's Shelter Team, assures that start-up costs are available as soon as a lease is offered.

The Rapid Exit agencies are funded by Hennepin County at an average cost per household. They have limited dollars for financial assistance but considerable flexibility in how these

funds are used. The Rapid Exit Advocates may decide a household needs an extremely shallow, short-term rental subsidy – such as \$100 - \$200 per month for one to three months – to maintain stability. However, most families do not receive any subsidies after being re-housed and are able to remain stable at the private market housing rate.

The advocates continue to offer tenancy and landlord supports for six months following move-in. This includes monitoring the client's housing stability, such as responding to any lease violations or complaints, damage to the unit, conflict with other tenants or the landlord, etc. It also includes case management for connection to other services and resources that the family identifies as a priority, such as child care, employment, education, physical health care, and mental or chemical health services. The goal is to prevent individuals and families from returning to homelessness.

Prevention

Federal Homeless Prevention & Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP)

An additional influx of funding came through federal stimulus moneys in the form of the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP). HPRP is the Federal Government's version of rapid exit and is funded by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA). It is based, in part, on Minnesota's success

in implementing FHPAP as a homelessness prevention and re-housing tool. \$6.5 million was awarded to Hennepin County and Minneapolis through ARRA, and the two jurisdictions collaborated to issue one Request for Proposal for expenditure of the funds. HPRP, however, was a one-time influx of funding and it is not expected that Congress will extend the program past its three-year initial investment.

Hennepin County Rapid Exit Partner Agencies

Ten contracts were awarded for:

- Catholic Charities Rapid Re-Housing of Single Adults Program: \$406,666 to provide Rapid Re-Housing services for homeless single adults without children, primarily in private or county-funded homeless shelters within the City of Minneapolis.
- The Salvation Army Harbor Lights Center: \$651,708 to provide Rapid Re-Housing services for homeless single adults without children in the City of Minneapolis, with an emphasis on Currie Avenue shelters.
- Catholic Charities Hope Street for Runaway and Homeless Youth: \$305,280 to provide family mediation to prevent homelessness among youth in family crisis who are identified by School Support Teams at 15 City of Minneapolis Public Schools.
- YouthLink Housing Relocation and Stabilization: Nicollet Square: \$300,000 for prevention and Rapid Re-Housing services for youth, case management, and housing stabilization for youth ages 16 to 22 who will reside in the new site-based program Nicollet Square. Housing relocation and stabilization will be provided to youth who exit the program.
- Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery: \$653,290 to provide Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing services for families throughout Hennepin County who have placed a child aged birth to six in the Crisis Nursery due to high risk of child abuse/neglect. Follow-up home visits for parenting supports are provided by the Crisis Nursery.
- The Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services: \$750,770 to provide prevention and Rapid Re-Housing services for refugee households in the City of Minneapolis, who have exhausted federal benefits and are at imminent risk of homelessness or are in homeless shelters.
- Northwest Hennepin Human Services Council: \$595,000 to provide prevention services to residents of west and northwest suburban Hennepin County, including families, single adults and youth.
- Hennepin South Services Collaborative: \$250,000 to provide prevention and Rapid Re-Housing services to residents of south suburban Hennepin County, including families, single adults and youth.
- Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis: \$100,000 to provide legal services to tenants in foreclosing properties to prevent homelessness, with a focus on the City of Minneapolis. Services will be provided to families, single adults or youth throughout Hennepin County. Through a partnership with St. Stephen's Human Services, Legal Aid will refer clients who need to be relocated to prevent homelessness.
- St. Stephen's Human Services: \$1,557,423 to provide prevention and housing relocation services in partnership with Legal Aid for tenants in foreclosing properties, with an emphasis on the City of Minneapolis; and Rapid Re-Housing services for families in county-funded homeless shelters.

Prevention

Youth Mediation

Scholarships were made available to 20 youth workers throughout Hennepin County for mediation training through the Conflict Resolution Center. These certified mediators are embedded in community agencies throughout the county, available to mediate situations with youth where housing is threatened by conflict with family members, landlords, or roommates.

Youth Aging Out of Foster Care

Several existing initiatives to improve the outcomes for youth aging out of foster care and prevent homelessness have joined efforts to form On-Ramp to Independence. In response to federal legislation (known as Fostering Connections for Success and Increasing Adoptions Act) that Congress passed at the end of 2008, as well as new State legislation, Hennepin County extended services for youth aging out of foster care up to age 21 (formerly foster care ended at age 19 or high school graduation, whichever came first). These extended services are called the Transition to Independence Program (TIP). Each youth has an individualized independent living plan. TIP provides flexible funds and services to help youth transitioning from foster care with support for education and/or employment, housing expenses, and other supports youth need to prevent homelessness and transition to adulthood. Since July 2009, approximately 120 youth have voluntarily requested TIP services. Some of these youth actually left foster care at age 18 but requested “re-engagement” due to homelessness or because they wished to continue their education.

Discharge Planner

The Minneapolis Foundation funded the salary of a discharge planner for 2009-2010. Hennepin County extended the position for another year. The Discharge Planner is charged with working with government systems including Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC) and Hennepin County Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCC-R) to ensure that no one is “discharged into homelessness.”

Currently residents of the Adult Correctional Facility (ACF) in Plymouth receive multiple resources to assist with their discharge plan. Examples include identification services, GED classes, employment training, and job search skills offered to inmates while they are serving their sentence. The corrections supervisor and corrections volunteer programs coordinator work directly with incarcerated men and women, developing and implementing the discharge programs. Various nearby prisons, including those in Faribault, Lino Lakes, and Stillwater, also have multiple resources and programs to assist inmates as they prepare for re-entry. The Adult Discharge Planner attends the DOCC-R’s Transition Coalition meetings each month to learn about and collaborate with the many agencies working on re-entry, and also attends the Ramsey County Discharge Planning monthly meetings.

The Discharge Planner works closely with HCMC’s social services department to prevent patients from being discharged into homelessness. Hennepin County now has 20 respite care beds available at Salvation Army’s Harbor Lights shelter which are approved for minor medical needs once a patient is discharged from the hospital. The individuals are able to continue recuperating while the Discharge Planner and case managers work to find appropriate housing resources. Health Care for the Homeless is also a partner and resource provider for patients approved for respite at Salvation Army’s Harbor Lights shelter.

Outreach

The second goal of Heading Home Hennepin is to provide coordinated outreach to people who are experiencing homelessness and are unsheltered.

St. Stephen's Outreach

Since 2008, the City of Minneapolis, the State of Minnesota, and local foundations have supported a team of outreach workers at St. Stephen's Human Services to work in collaboration with the Minneapolis Police Department and the City Attorney's Office to provide targeted outreach to homeless individuals and families in downtown Minneapolis. From October 2007 through July 2010, St. Stephen's Street Outreach has housed over 200 people directly from the street, mostly without subsidies. Outreach staff has access to the downtown security community's RadioLink and can be dispatched to 911 calls when appropriate in order to intervene with a human services response rather than a criminal justice response. Police records indicate a 14 percent reduction in arrests for people with no permanent address between 2008 and 2009.

Veterans Specific Outreach Worker

The Minnesota Assistance Council on Veterans (MAC-V) also has an outreach worker to engage veterans who are experiencing homelessness and connect them to appropriate veterans' services. In addition, this outreach worker partners with other agencies to help increase their ability to serve homeless veterans.

Youth Mental Health Outreach

Hennepin County has expanded its services to homeless youth by adding a Senior Social Worker to do outreach with homeless youth and young adults who have serious mental health issues. The goal is to identify homeless youth and young adults ages 18 to 23 with untreated mental illness and engage them to access traditional mental health services by collaborating with community agencies serving homeless youth. This added outreach worker focuses on connecting 50 youth and young adults with

available community and county services – financial assistance, health care, psychiatric services, chemical health assessment and treatment, mental health case management, and housing.

An integral aspect of this is assisting youth and young adults in navigating complex health plan and county intake processes. The homeless youth outreach worker works evenings and weekends, mostly at homeless youth shelters and drop-in centers such as YouthLink, Avenues for Homeless Youth, Hope Street, and the Salvation Army's adult shelter, as well as supportive housing sites for homeless youth including Archdale, St. Barnabus, and Lindquist Apartments. The outreach worker is stationed part-time at the Youth Opportunity Center to develop relationships with other supportive housing providers who are part of the Group Residential Housing (GRH) system but typically not accessed by young adults experiencing homelessness.

Youth Inreach Worker

Hennepin County restructured an existing contract to fill the gap for youth who access adult shelters. An inreach worker visits single adult shelters, family shelters, and drop-in centers to find youth under age 24, then connects them to developmentally appropriate intensive support and skills training to transition out of homelessness. Between May 2009 and December 2009 more than 100 contacts were made and 40 youth received case management services.

StreetWorks

StreetWorks is a collaborative between 12 youth-serving agencies located in Hennepin County. The collaborative works to provide unduplicated street outreach, emergency case management, and essential resources to homeless youth who are living outside. This approach allows the agencies to cover the largest geographic area possible, as well as provide services to as many youth as possible.

Housing

The third Heading Home Hennepin goal is to create 5,000 new affordable housing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness. Developing new affordable housing or acquiring rental subsidies that can turn market rate apartments into affordable units for people with extremely low income are the two most effective ways to accomplish this goal.

- Between 2007 and 2010, 1,912 new housing opportunities were created under Heading Home Hennepin efforts. All of the rental opportunities were made available in the existing housing market through a mix of Group Residential Housing (GRH) funding from the state of Minnesota, long-term homeless rental subsidies made available through the state's plan to end homelessness, and vouchers from various state and federal programs. New developments were hindered by the weakened economy, but 296 total new units were created during the plan's first 3 years of implementation. A portion of these units are set aside in larger buildings for people with incomes at or below 30% of area median income, while others are buildings where all units are affordable at 30% of Area Median Income. For example, Nicollet Square is a 42-unit building designed to provide homeless youth age 18-24 a place to reside while developing independent living and employment skills. It opened in November 2010.

Tenant-Based Rental Assistance

Rental assistance is provided by state and federal programs, including the state's Housing Trust Fund (to support the State Business Plan to End Long-Term Homelessness), the state's Group Residential Housing

program for people with disabilities, and a variety of smaller voucher programs from the state and federal government. An example of this is the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (VASH), which provides housing vouchers specifically for homeless veterans. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, in partnership with the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority and the Minneapolis Department of Veterans Affairs, issues these vouchers. Thus far Minneapolis has housed 155 homeless veterans with the help of these VASH vouchers.

Housing First

Housing First is a strategy to move people from shelter or the streets directly into their own apartments without first requiring them to address all personal barriers. Once housed, comprehensive services are available to support the client. This is a particularly effective strategy for those long-term homeless adults for whom most other efforts have failed. The county has its own Housing First program and some agencies also contract directly with the state to leverage GRH funds for more residents. As of December 2010, there were 605 households housed through Hennepin County's Housing First Collaborative, including 151 children and 26 youth.

Salvation Army Harbor Light, the largest shelter for single adults in Hennepin County, added two rapid exit workers and four housing case managers in October 2009 to find housing for its clients using the Housing First model. Between October 2009 and July 2010, Salvation Army's Harbor Light staff helped 233 people move out of shelter. Since February 2010, the staff has helped an average of 1 person per day move into housing.

Rental Assistance

Rental assistance is provided by the state and federal programs, including the state's Housing Trust Fund (to support the state business plan to end long-term homelessness), the state's Group Residential Housing program for people with disabilities, and the new Federal Veterans' Affairs Supportive Housing Section 8 vouchers.

Rental Assistance in Hennepin County

Year	2007	2008	2009	Total
Families	176	60	34	270
Single Adults	301	301	149	751
Youth	14	36	0	50
Total	491	397	183	1071

Source: Housing and Homeless Initiatives
Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department

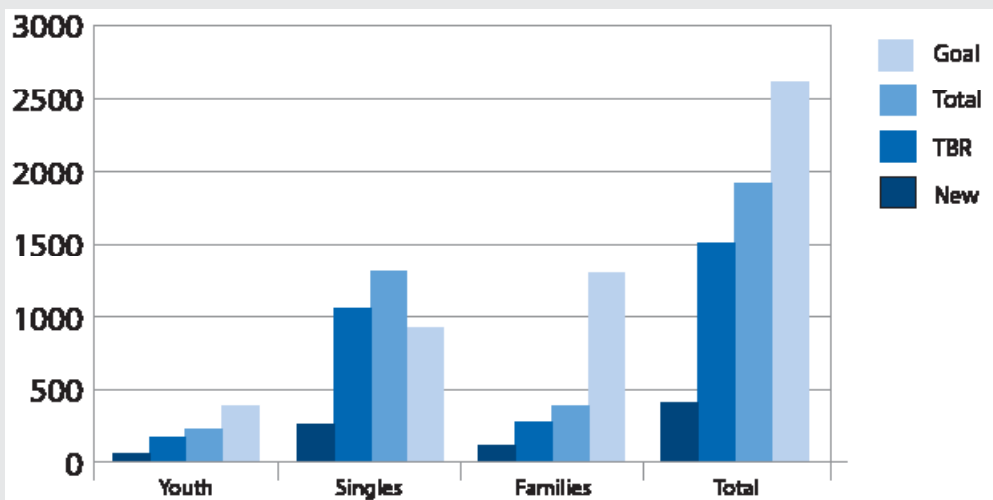
Housing

Below is a graph outlining the number of new housing opportunities created between 2007 and 2010 by target population, including youth, single adults, and families. From 2007 to 2010, 219 new housing

opportunities were created for youth, 1,304 new housing opportunities were created for single adults, and 389 new housing opportunities were created for families.

Total Housing Opportunities Developed

January 2007 - December 2010



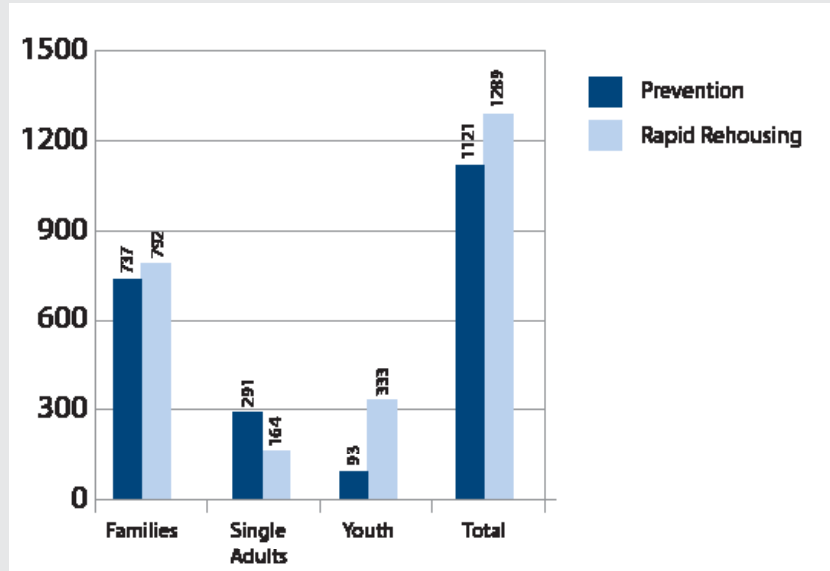
TBR stands for tenant-based rental assistance, such as vouchers or GRH.

Housing

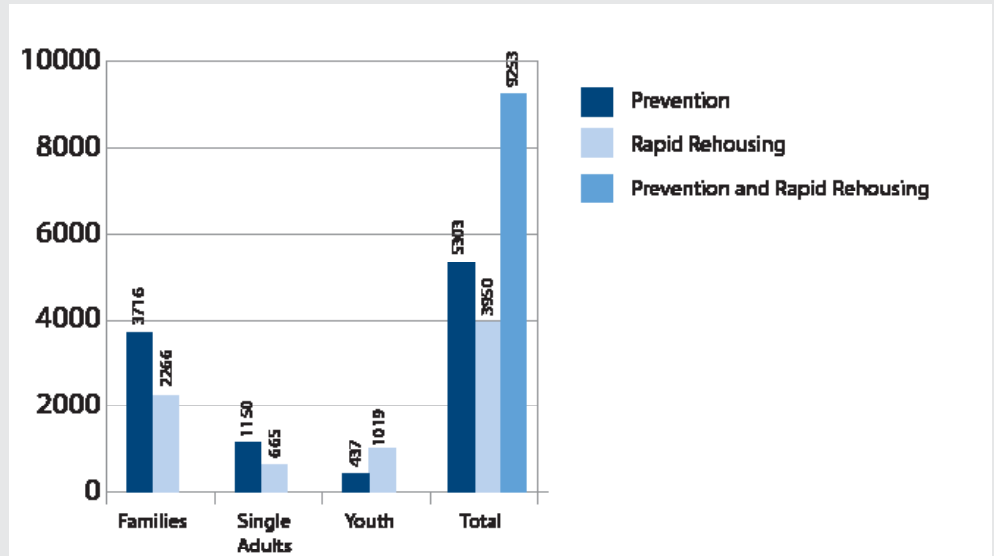
In addition to newly developed housing opportunities, Hennepin County has used the Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program to help end homelessness for thousands of households through rapid re-housing and short term rental assistance. In

2010, Hennepin County provided rapid re-housing services for 792 families, 164 single adults, and 333 youth. From 2007 through 2010, the county provided rapid re-housing services to 3,950 households.

Family Homelessness and Prevention Assistance Program (FHPAP) 2010



FHPAP 2007 - 2010



Explanation of Housing First in Hennepin County

In developing strategies to end long-term homelessness, many communities have experimented with innovative programs such as the permanent supportive housing model, which is characterized by its integration of both stable housing and supportive services for previously homeless individuals. Housing First programs are a subset of this model, and initially arose as an alternative to the linear residential treatment model. The linear residential treatment model, also referred to as the continuum of care model, was popularized in the 1980s and remains widely used today. The linear treatment model moves homeless individuals through a series of qualifying steps before providing permanent housing. In contrast, Housing First programs are predicated on the belief that housing is a basic human right; thus these programs provide individuals immediate access to permanent housing. In addition, participants typically have the ability to choose their housing and the kinds of services

they access. A key difference between the two program models is that the linear treatment model usually requires that participants be sober before being placed in permanent supportive housing, while housing first programs emphasize the importance of placement regardless of sobriety status.

In general, the permanent supportive housing model, including Housing First, targets single adults, families, and youth that, at minimum, meet the state definition of being long-term homeless. Program staff identify potential participant households by examining usage patterns at the County's public and private shelters, as well as information provided by outreach workers. Staff then work with the household to locate permanent housing opportunities, whether single- or scattered-site, that respond to the household's circumstances, needs and wishes. After housing placement, participants are

provided with supportive services such as transportation assistance, independent living skills training, employment assistance, and community resource referral services. Supportive services are client-centered and reflect the needs of the individual participants. The frequency and duration of the supportive services are also tailored to participant needs.

Programs use a variety of funding streams for rental assistance and subsidies for housing, as well as staff to provide services. Most housing assistance comes from rental subsidies, state and federal income supplement programs, and client income. Funding for services often depends on the eligibility of participants for public programs, such as Medical Assistance. Typically, funding for program staff includes a mixture of private and public dollars that may come directly to individuals or through the organizations that serve them.

Housing

University of Minnesota Humphrey Institute Study of Housing First in Hennepin County

An evaluation of the county's Housing First program was conducted by the University of Minnesota Humphrey Institute in the spring of 2009. They examined shelter usage for 444 adults along with a matched comparison group. Their key findings were:

- Housing First participants' shelter use dramatically decreased after housing placement.
- The program increased the number of days and the continuity of health care coverage.
- The Housing First program contributed to a decrease in arrests in the 12 months post-placement when compared to pre-placement levels.
- The Housing First program did not reduce the percentage of long-term or frequent shelter users.
- Placement into housing had a positive effect on participants' feelings of safety and well-being.
- The transition to housing posed challenges related to new daily activities and a changing social environment.
- The location of initial placement for many participants changed.
- Participants noted their respective case managers provided a great deal of support before, during, and after the move into housing.
- Transportation was a significant challenge that affected prospects for jobs, access to health care, and general well-being for participants after placement.



A Housing First Story:

An, a refugee in his mid-40s who suffers from persistent mental illness, had stayed at Catholic Charities' Secure Waiting shelter in downtown Minneapolis for more than seven years after migrating to the United States. During that time, he was unable to work and was not connected with any benefits due to the severity of his mental illness and poor English-language skills. He lost all of his identification, including his immigration papers. After several years of unsuccessful attempts by staff to engage him, an outreach worker with Catholic Charities offered to assist An in accessing General Assistance. With additional help from Hennepin's Office of Multicultural Services at Century Plaza, An was able to begin receiving the benefits for which he was eligible.

Although he had received help from Catholic Charities and made several steps forward in his life, An was still hesitant to enter the Housing First program.

His mental illness and many years spent in shelter combined to cause deep-seated insecurities rooted in his mental illness, as well as the institutionalization that often occurs to people who have spent many years of their life in shelter. However, through the use of photographs that depicted potential housing opportunities, the outreach worker was able to help An feel comfortable enough to make the decision to move from shelter to independent living. After the move, the outreach worker helped connect An with a psychiatrist and he began taking much needed medication for his mental illness. He also visited a doctor for the first time in many years and began treatment for a debilitating physical illness. An then quickly agreed to apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and, with assistance from the outreach worker in navigating the application process, he was approved. A professional payee now handles An's SSI benefits, which are

sufficient to pay full rent without subsidy from Catholic Charities. An was able to replace his immigration documents, obtain a new state ID and Social Security card, and apply for public housing, for which he is currently on the waiting list. His mental health symptoms have improved greatly during his time in the Housing First program. Catholic Charities' Housing First team will continue to work with An for as long as he desires, even after he eventually moves into public housing.

"People who knew him when he was homeless are quite surprised by how much his life has improved, and how fast," An's outreach worker said. "He is really a great guy and it has been wonderful to watch him come out of the fog of homelessness and rejoin the broader community. I am hopeful things will continue to go well for him."

University of Minnesota School of Social Work Research on Refugee Homelessness

Addressing the unique barriers that face homeless refugees is an important action step for Heading Home Hennepin. Over the past several years, roughly 3,000 refugees have settled in Hennepin County each year. They often arrive with a limited support network, limited English language skills, unrecognized credentials and few marketable skills. To inform strategies on working with refugees, the University of Minnesota School of Social Work provided a faculty member and several graduate students to conduct research among refugees, both those with housing and those experiencing homelessness. The key research findings from their work are:

- There are significant ethnic differences in the ways refugee groups respond to housing instability. Culture matters.
- Refugees who first moved in with a relative had less housing stability than those placed in their own apartment upon arrival.

- Those whose first housing was less stable received more forms of public assistance and those services did help stabilize their housing long-term.
- Those whose current housing is less stable tend to have more mental health issues, less social capital or social networks, and use less public assistance.
- Larger families have more housing instability.
- A housing crisis pushes refugees to seek more formal help both within their ethnic group and with non-ethnic social service and government agencies.

The Minnesota Council of Churches received funding from Hennepin County and The McKnight Foundation to work with refugees who were experiencing homelessness or at risk of losing their housing. The two-year program (2007-2008) provided rent subsidies and case management to refugee families to stabilize housing, increase income

and keep families and children engaged with school. The program was re-funded with HPRP funds in fall 2009. Initial findings from the pilot include:

- 70 families were served in the two-year period. Ninety-eight percent remained in housing during the program.
- 83 percent of families increased their income; for those families, the average increase was 63 percent within the first six months. This was due to an increase in employment.
- Those who completed the pilot received a rental subsidy for 6.3 months, on average.
- 97 percent of families surveyed with school-age children showed positive engagement with their children's school.

Housing

Frequent User Service Enhancement (FUSE):

In 2007, Hennepin County conducted a study which found that 266 individuals used approximately 70,000 nights of stay in shelter, jail and detox over five years, costing taxpayers \$4.2 million.

In partnership with Hennepin County, St. Stephen's Human Services, a local nonprofit agency, created the Frequent User Service Enhancement (FUSE) program. FUSE began operation in March 2008 and has housed 60 of the county's top users of shelter, jail, detox and emergency room visits through 2010. Another 15 individuals are enrolled in the program and expected to be housed in 2011. The program targets people who are high users of both the single adult shelter system and the criminal justice system. It follows a housing first model. The program focuses on reducing the involvement of criminal justice and other government systems that provide emergency services to people experiencing homelessness.

As a preliminary examination of FUSE, six participants who had been placed in housing for more than one year were studied to determine their systems use in the year prior to housing as compared to their year post-housing. Use and costs for the Adult Detention Center, Adult Correctional Facility, county-paid shelter, county-paid detox, and HCMC Emergency Department were also examined.

The six participants used \$95,000 in services in the year prior to housing. In the year post-housing, they

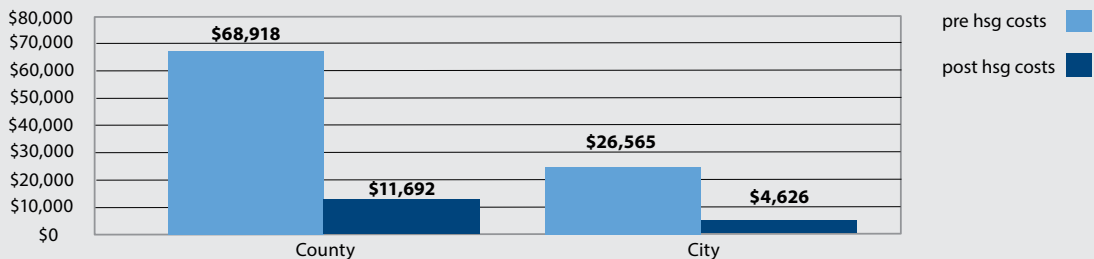
used \$16,000 in services, for a savings of \$13,000 per person.

An evaluation of FUSE was also conducted by the University of Minnesota. Completed in April 2010, the study found that shelter use and criminal justice involvement declined once participants entered the program. There was a 43 percent reduction in shelter nights and a 39 percent reduction in jail nights.

The researchers compared FUSE participants to a similar cohort of potential participants who used shelter and jail. They found that there was a significantly larger decline in shelter nights among FUSE participants versus the comparison group. They found, however, that criminal justice involvement declined for both the comparison and FUSE group and that the FUSE participants didn't decrease their criminal justice involvement more than the comparison group.

This may reflect a general decline in criminal activity in downtown Minneapolis, a change in police practice, or the combination of other Heading Home Hennepin programs targeting shelter users, such as Street Outreach and the COHR/Housing First programs. It may also reflect the success of probation, as the comparison group, like the FUSE group, received probation services after release from jail. There is no way to determine whether any of the people selected for the comparison group were served by other HHH-related programs.

Government Costs for Six FUSE Participants One-Year Pre- and Post-Housing (includes jail, workhouse, detox, HCMC-emergency department, and shelter)



Combined Days of Service Use Pre-Housing

ACF	jail book	jail days	detox	shelter	ED	Total
464	19	185	46	397	28	1139

Combined Days of Service Use Post-Housing

ACF	jail book	jail days	detox	shelter	ED	Total
0	7	24	1	0	23	55

Housing

HUD-VASH

The federal government has made a commitment to end homelessness among veterans in the next five years. As a part of this commitment, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, in partnership with Veterans Affairs and local public housing authorities, have issued 30,000 Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) to veterans who are homeless or at risk of chronic homelessness. Minneapolis Public Housing Authority has received 155 of these vouchers as of fall 2010. These vouchers are attached to a VA case manager who works with veterans to ensure stable housing and help with daily living activities such as shopping, accessing benefits, banking and money management etc., if needed. While implementation was slow at first, collaboration with community housing providers has helped to issue all 155 vouchers to veterans to ensure secure housing for veterans and their families.

Host Homes

Hennepin County supports a Host Home program. This program provides a safe place for gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender youth to live with host families while they prepare for independent living. There are 23 host homes across the metro area, and they have served 25 youth in the last three years. The homes are being expanded in suburban Hennepin and the population is being expanded to include all youth at risk of homelessness.

GRH for Youth

GRH funds have not historically been used for youth even though some youth may be eligible for the program. GRH funds are used for people with disabilities who are unable to work, and there are few youth who fit this category who aren't already involved in other support programs. Finnegan's Irish Amber donated \$25,000 for start-up funds for a case manager to work with homeless youth with disabilities and Freeport West operates the contract to house these youth in scattered site apartments.

Nicollet Square

Nicollet Square, a 42-unit permanent supportive housing center, opened in late 2010. The target populations are youth aging out of foster care and youth who are experiencing long-term homelessness. YouthLink is the service provider and Plymouth Neighborhood Foundation manages the building. The program is working to develop on-site employment and training opportunities for some of its residents.

24/7 Scattered Site Housing for Youth

Youth aging out of foster care can participate in experiential apartment living as a transition to adulthood. Hennepin County subsidizes the rent and provides a life coach, contracted from The Bridge for Runaway Youth or the YMCA. Youth work on independent living skills and can obtain support funded by Adult Rehabilitation and Mental Health Services (ARMHS) medical assistance. This program is also supported by a three-year grant from the Andrus Family Fund, which also funds The Bridge's Transition Training for staff. The program is being expanded by seven to ten slots for young adults exiting mental health treatment centers who would otherwise be discharged to homelessness.

The Currie Avenue Partnership

On any given night between 600 and 700 people experiencing homelessness, many of whom have mental and physical disabilities, and sleep on mats on the floor at Hennepin County's two publicly-funded shelters on Currie Avenue in downtown Minneapolis.

These individuals are some of the most vulnerable members of our community and place an unnecessary burden on taxpayers through repeated use of expensive public institutions. As a result of disabilities which prevent them from working, they qualify for the Group Residential Housing (GRH) program, which provides state-funded housing and support services to people with disabilities who are experiencing homelessness. Yet, due to limited staff working at the downtown shelters, these individuals are unable to access this important resource and thus remain stuck in the cycles of homelessness and shelter use. The Currie Avenue Housing Partnership (CAP) is an innovative response to this challenge.

To date, the downtown business community and the Downtown

Congregations to End Homelessness have raised over \$350,000 in start-up funding to hire 10 Housing Case Managers to connect people with disabilities staying at Currie Avenue shelters with housing and supports. The program officially began in May 2010 and has successfully housed 150 people. Now that these individuals have been housed, the state's GRH program will assume the ongoing costs of the initiative, allowing the case managers to continue housing people with disabilities indefinitely.

To Date:

- Over \$350,000 has been raised and 10 housing case managers were hired. They began working in early May 2010.
- 150 long-term homeless individuals have obtained permanent housing or are in the final stages of obtaining housing, and many new referrals are sent to the program each day.
- The average length of homelessness for program participants is five years.
- The average number of disabilities is roughly two per person.
- All participants had incomes less than 30 percent of area median income and relied on General Assistance at \$203 per month.

Program Expansion to Outreach Model:

- The Office to End Homelessness has met a goal of raising an additional \$150,000 to expand the CAP program to support existing street outreach efforts and provide housing and supports to people with disabilities who are living and sleeping outside.
- This expansion of the CAP model to support outreach efforts will end homelessness for 40 people living on the streets in the first nine months of operation and will improve livability in Minneapolis, particularly the downtown area.

A Currie Avenue Partnership Story: Jacqueline

Jacqueline lived at Sally's Place — Salvation Army's Harbor Light shelter for women — for 10 years. She would return, night after night, in need of a bed and a place to stay. During this period of long-term homelessness, Jacqueline was also diagnosed with breast cancer, and struggled to battle the disease while living without the comfort, safety and refuge of a home of her own. Shortly before completing

chemotherapy, she was finally able to move into a new apartment through the CAP program. Jacqueline had a mastectomy after moving in and then completed radiation treatment. She is now considered to be in full remission by her doctor and her day-to-day life has greatly improved since obtaining permanent housing. Now that her cancer treatments are complete, she has begun to receive ongoing medical care

with a primary physician. Despite facing the diagnosis of a thyroid condition, inflammatory arthritis in her feet and hands, hypertension, and the recent discovery that her IQ is approximately 80 points, Jacqueline reports that her new apartment is the nicest place she has ever lived and this is the happiest that her life has ever been.

Self-Support

The fourth goal of the plan is to build people's capacity to support themselves with increased income including benefit assistance where appropriate or living-wage jobs. People experiencing homelessness are often isolated from mainstream resources that help to obtain the education and employment needed to afford a place to live.

Employment Pilot

The primary strategy for this goal is to provide employment services that work with people experiencing homelessness, noting the unique barriers to a job that come with not having a stable place to live. The employment committee received funding in 2010 for a pilot project, providing job counseling, training, and after-placement support at the Adult Opportunity Center, which opened in November 2010. Funding from the City of Minneapolis and United Way will help leverage federal dollars through the Food Support Employment and Training (FSET) program. The program has an evaluation component built in, with former users of the Branch III center (where the Adult Opportunity Center is located) as a comparison group.

Youth Employment

Hennepin County has a SELF grant to direct employment resources to youth aging out of foster care. The grant funds an employment specialist from HIRED to co-locate and work with a transition specialist to make youth job ready. A private donor through the Minneapolis Foundation provided funds in 2010 for soft-skills training provided by Empower. In 2009, this program worked with 53 young people; 87 percent got a job paying more than \$7 per hour and the average wage was \$8.16 per hour.

Tax Credits

Another strategy for this goal is to help low-income families and individuals receive federal and state benefits for which they qualify. United Way's Claim It! program educates low income families on state and federal tax credits and provides free tax preparation services to low income people. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) averages \$1,700 per family but can go as high as \$4,800 per family. The state's Working Family Credit (WFC) provides approximately \$500 per family. In Hennepin County, the number of EITC claims grew from 55,742 in 2006 to 61,827 in 2008, for an 11 percent increase.

Transportation Costs

Homeless Against Homelessness and the Human Rights Program at St. Stephen's Human Services led an organizing effort that resulted in legislation allowing for 20 homeless serving agencies to purchase bus tokens for clients at 50 percent of their face value.

JESSICA

My name is Jessica. I'm 20 years old. Safe House is six kids and we are all twenty and under. It's better than the street.

I had an apartment for a year and then I had another one, but my fiancé who I lived with, we split rent together and he joined the Marines, so he left and I lost my job and became homeless.

I'm getting married this month and I am moving to Florida. I will be living on a Marine base until he gets stationed and then we will probably end up going to Japan. Wherever the Marines send him, I get to go. Better than the street.

I was thinking about joining the Army Reserves – was actually at my recruiter the other day and took my pre-test that they take. I got a 97 out of 99 so I can do any job I want except for three in the Army. They will pay for my school and I can still live with my boyfriend –who will be my husband in, like, 20 days at the courthouse. Two of our friends are witnesses. No family, just us.

I don't give up, no matter what happens 'cuz it's worthless to sit on your butt and do nothing. Just gotta keep fighting.



© Larry LaBonté

Service Delivery

The fifth goal of the plan is to improve the delivery of services to people experiencing homelessness. This includes increasing the accessibility of services through Opportunity Centers, where a wide variety of services are co-located and available year round. It also includes creating funding for systems navigators for specific populations — such as veterans, refugees, or young mothers — who have unique barriers preventing them from escaping homelessness.

Project Homeless Connect

Hennepin County and Minneapolis have hosted 10 Project Homeless Connect (PHC) events since 2005. Recognized as a national best practice and implemented in over 200 communities nationwide, PHC Minneapolis-Hennepin County transforms the Minneapolis Convention Center into a one-stop service center, addressing the numerous and complex

barriers that prevent homeless individuals from finding lasting employment and securing safe, stable housing. PHC unites 125 separate service agencies, providing a continuum of wraparound services that include mental and chemical health care, employment training and placement, comprehensive medical and dental care, haircuts, ID assistance, and voicemail services. On average, over 400 service providers and 1,000 volunteers help between 1,500 and 2,100 individuals obtain services at each event. Guests are partnered with volunteers to identify and access necessary resources, explore previously unobtained benefits, and eat lunch together. Project Homeless Connect has consistently been proven to be a service delivery model that is crucial in eliminating barriers to housing, employment, education, and the myriad other factors that contribute to long-term homelessness.



The tenth Project Homeless Connect (PHC) event was held on Dec. 13, 2010, at the Minneapolis Convention Center. On that day, over 1,900 people experiencing homelessness or on the verge were served by more than 1,000 volunteers, 160 nonprofit agencies, and 500 service providers.

Below are some of the services that were provided during the event:

- 791 people received housing search assistance
- 346 people received dental care and assessments
- 282 people obtained legal consultation
- 333 obtained reading and prescription glasses
- 105 people created new voicemail accounts
- 90 had chiropractic exams
- 73 had mental health assessments
- 52 were screened for various forms of cancer
- 48 received immunizations

A Project Homeless Connect Story: Mark

When Mark first began attending the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County Project Homeless Connect (PHC) events, he had been homeless for almost 15 years. Like most people experiencing homelessness, he had numerous barriers preventing him from finding and maintaining stable housing. Over the course of his first four visits to Project Homeless Connect events, he obtained a multitude of services, including a chemical dependency (CD) assessment that resulted in the successful completion of a 28-day treatment program, extensive dental work that continued through subsequent visits to a local dental office, and a medical exam that diagnosed hypertension, for which he has now been taking medication for over two years.

As a direct result of services provided at PHC events, Mark has been substance free for more than 18 months, returned to better health, and been placed into CD supervised transitional housing with an eye on a future apartment of his own.

But his story doesn't end there.

On May 11, 2009, when Mark visited the Minneapolis - Hennepin County Project Homeless Connect for the fifth time, he had only one request, albeit an unusual one. Having lived on the streets for a lengthy portion of his life, he admitted he had not seen his three children for more than 20 years and believed they still lived in the Duluth area, where they grew up, and were likely in their late 20's. Their mother, he said, had also been out of contact with them since they were very young,

so other relatives had raised them. With the help of a PHC volunteer at the information desk, Mark was able to locate his oldest daughter via the Google internet search engine. He was overjoyed at the discovery but remained apprehensive about contacting her. Once again his PHC volunteer stepped in to help. During the subsequent telephone call Mark's daughter informed the volunteer that she and her siblings had lost contact with their father decades ago, often wondered as to his whereabouts and well-being, and would be absolutely thrilled to see him again.

While his volunteer called the Greyhound bus company, Mark went to the PHC haircuts area to ensure he looked his best. With the necessary bus information obtained, Mark was advised of several departure times to choose from and given a \$61 check for the fare. Another volunteer familiar with the Duluth area also provided him with the name and address of a local social services professional. Thus, within four hours of arriving at Project Homeless Connect, Mark was on a bus to Duluth to be reunited with his children.

The day after Mark arrived, the social services contact there phoned Mark's PHC volunteer to say that Mark had been to her office and she was able to help provide him with food subsidies and health insurance. She had also begun to search for affordable housing. When last contacted, Mark was staying with his daughter and said the reunion had been wonderful, and he planned on remaining in the Duluth area to live near his rediscovered family.

Service Delivery

Youth Connect:

Patterned after Project Homeless Connect, the youth services community has held three Youth Connect events in Hennepin County. This event brings together youth workers from many agencies to provide services to homeless youth in one location. Hennepin County and Minneapolis are the first communities in the country to host Youth Connect events.

Opportunity Centers:

Heading Home Hennepin calls for the creation of Opportunity Centers for singles, families, and youth. In late 2008, Hennepin County awarded grants to Catholic Charities and YouthLink to develop their sites as Opportunity Centers to serve single adults and youth, respectively. Both agencies have recently opened their centers. These service centers are based on the concept of Project Homeless Connect, co-locating multiple services to facilitate breaking down barriers to housing, employment, and self-sufficiency. Each contains multiple services, including housing, employment, mental and physical health care, community resources such as IDs and birth certificates, creative activities, benefits, and direct connection to Hennepin County agencies. The Opportunity Centers also serve as satellites in the County's regionalization plan.

Single Adult Shelter Network:

The Shelter Efficiency group identified a need to coordinate services among shelters for shelter guests who use multiple shelter sites. The team developed a shared release form that shelter guests can sign in order to have their case coordinated among all the shelters serving single adults. This collaborative is titled the Single Adult Shelter Network (SASN). The group meets bi-weekly and discusses approximately 15-20 cases at each meeting. The group develops a shared plan to help a shelter guest move into appropriate housing or work on eliminating a barrier to housing such as a criminal charge or record, insufficient income, or lack of money to pay a damage deposit. During its first year, the number of SASN clients housed was 12, while there are seven with housing pending, 14 percent still homeless, and 9 percent with client status unknown. SASN

has increased efficiency and reduced redundancy of efforts amongst shelter providers. Youth agencies created their own network, Young Adult Shelter Network (YASN), to accomplish similar coordinated case management.

Young Mothers grant from Phillips Foundation:

In 2009, based on a trend of young mothers staying in shelter, the Jay and Rose Phillips Foundation awarded Heading Home Hennepin a \$75,000 grant to fund an advocate to assist young mothers in obtaining and maintaining housing after leaving shelter. The advocate cooperates with the shelter's Rapid Exit worker so that once the family leaves shelter the advocate can help connect the mother to programs for education, child care, medical services, and other identified needs. The contract was awarded to St. Anne's Place and services began in May 2010.

Cultural Competency Committee:

The Cultural Competency Committee received a grant from the Minneapolis Foundation for their work. The grant funded consultants to develop criteria for measuring the cultural competency of agencies working with people experiencing homelessness and identify appropriate training for agencies. The consultants completed their work in 2010 and a cultural competency inventory tool will be marketed in early 2011.

Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness:

In 2008, 11 churches in the downtown Minneapolis area formed a collaborative — the Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness (DCEH). The DCEH has examined the services they can provide to people experiencing homelessness and are reshaping those services to help end homelessness rather than simply assist in managing it. They hired a full-time coordinator to manage the collaborative and organize the congregations on public policy discussions. The DCEH was instrumental in the Currie Avenue Partnership, funding four of the 10 case managers and helping build relationships with the Downtown Council. The DCEH expanded to include a total of 15 congregations in 2010, with more likely to join in 2011.

Service Delivery

Homelessness 101 Trainings

Homelessness 101 is a service-provider community collaboration established to educate other service providers and members of the general public about ending homelessness. Over two days, participants learn about the causes of homelessness and trainers provide a history of modern homelessness in Minnesota and the United States. Participants learn about the continuum of care, and the variety of housing and service models our community uses to prevent and end homelessness. Demographic information is provided to depict the homeless population. Tips for working with people experiencing homelessness are offered and best practices for successful advocacy are also covered. Each Homelessness 101 workshop culminates with county and provider specific resources, and tours of shelter and housing programs in the Twin Cities metro area. In 2009, 200 people were trained through this program.

Family Services Network

This network of private and public family shelter providers, Rapid Exit workers, and child development and school experts has met since 2007. The group exchanges information on shelter processes. They have developed protocols to provide a more seamless array of services for families in shelter and have helped provide services to the county's overflow shelter at the Drake Hotel. They are researching best practices for services for children experiencing homelessness and have made recommendations for changes in shelter protocols related to access to Rapid Exit and employment services.

Youth Service Coordination

Hennepin County operated services and youth community case managers meet quarterly to discuss systems improvements to services for youth. This group instigated a policy change that allows homeless youth to obtain a psychological assessment at the county's mental health clinic one day per week, reducing the wait time for an assessment from three months to one week.



RITA

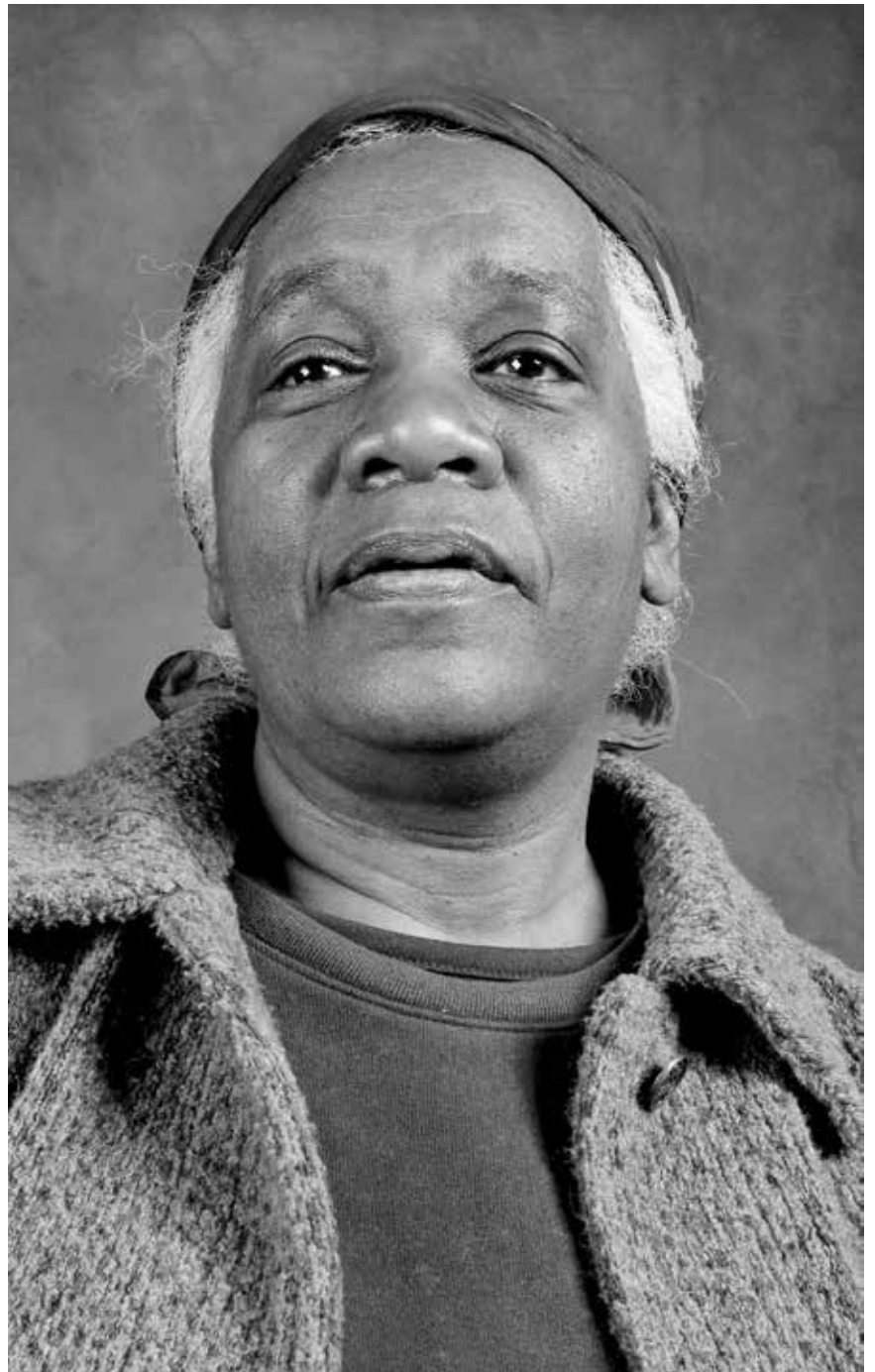
My name is Rita and I'm 61 years old. Last night I stayed with a friend. I'm kind of in need of permanent housing, something that would make me feel secure and that I can afford. I make a limited income; there's always the insecurity about not knowing if I have enough to pay the rent or sustain the rent for any length of time.

I worked as a mail clerk at the hospital for about 23 years. There's a lot of cutbacks and stuff so I was kind of pushed into early retirement. So I only receive partial benefits and I guess I have to wait until I'm 62 to apply for Social Security so it makes it really difficult. Even then I know that I would be on a limited income.

I take care of grandchildren all the time so the kind of housing I would want is the type that would permit me to be in the kind of setting where there's not just seniors only, but housing for people who have grandchildren to take care of. I spend four hours or more every day taking care of them because I have children that are barely making it themselves and in terms of affordability of child care, it's really difficult.

I'd like people to know that we don't choose to be homeless, that the majority of us have jobs or have had a long history of employment. And that we have the same basic needs that they have or desire. And, you know, that even though we have difficulties doesn't mean that we don't have a need to fit in with the rest of the community. We all want that sense of belonging.

© Larry LaBonté



Next Steps

In early 2010, The Office to End Homelessness (OEH) held two meetings to brief the Heading Home Hennepin community on the status of the plan's implementation and prioritize goals moving forward. At Plymouth Congregational Church on Feb. 22, 2010, the OEH reported on the plan's results over its first three years. The community was joined by Nan Roman, executive director of The National Alliance to End Homelessness, who spoke about the recently developed federal plan to end homelessness. At St. Mary's Orthodox Church on March 10, 2010, the OEH held a community working meeting to re-evaluate the 10-year plan and develop new priorities for each of its goals.

- **Prevention:** The highest priorities the community identified included improving services for ex-offenders, improving youth and adult discharge from systems, and targeting and measuring current prevention efforts better. Other areas of discussion on this goal included examining prevention for homeowners and renters who are facing foreclosure, and continuing to expand FHPAP.
- **Outreach:** The community identified the need for a broader outreach effort, including strengthening available mental health resources, developing culturally specific outreach efforts, and increasing the work of volunteers to assist with outreach. Leveraging more funding for street outreach, as well as developing a public education campaign and conducting outreach in suburban Hennepin to reach hidden homelessness, were also identified as priorities.
- **Housing:** New focuses for this goal included creating programs for people transitioning from Group Residential Housing to market rate housing, creating a more comprehensive housing continuum for youth (including shelter, host homes, and permanent supportive housing), creating an outreach and housing mechanism for homeless senior citizens and veterans, improving efforts to match program participant needs with appropriate resources, providing housing and supports for ex-offenders, and expanding Rapid Exit to include domestic violence shelters.
- **Self-Support:** Priorities for this goal include increasing employment opportunities for adults and youth, partnering with the Department of Vocational Rehab, expanding traditional and social enterprise employment models and creating an employment program that collaborates with Group Residential Housing. The community also identified education as an integral priority, along with the development of a life skills mentorship program, in which individuals who have obtained stability would teach basic life skills to others who are experiencing homelessness or newly in housing.
- **Systems Improvement:** The community emphasized the development of increased funding for the entire continuum of services as the highest priority. Creating an inventory map, flexible mental health services, a drop-in center for youth, and bolstering early childhood education were also identified as key areas of focus.



Cathy Ann Bresler
Coordinator to End Homelessness
612-894-1608, Fax: 612-348-7422
cathy.ann.bresler@co.hennepin.us

Minneapolis / Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness
Research Planning and Development
A-2308 Government Center
300 South Sixth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55467-0238