

10-year Homelessness Plan

Pre-Council Briefing

April 22, 2008

Rev. Brooks Harrington, Chair
Mayor's Advisory Commission on Homelessness

Otis Thornton, *Homelessness Coordinator*

National Context

- 2000 – the National Alliance to End Homelessness calls on large cities to create 10-year Plans to end homelessness
- 2002 - President George W. Bush revitalizes the US Interagency Council on Homelessness
- 2003 –President Bush includes a new “top objective” to end chronic homelessness in his budget address to Congress
- Over 300 communities nationwide have adopted plans
(Fort Worth is now the largest city in the United States without a plan.)

Local Context

- Fort Worth's Comprehensive Plan
 - "By the year 2020, Fort Worth will be commonly recognized as the most livable city in Texas. Residents will be able to enjoy Fort Worth's friendly atmosphere and the opportunities that are associated with a growing economy and a diverse community."

PACH

- April 2004: The 47-member Mayor's Planning and Advisory Committee on Homelessness (PACH) was established
- February 2005: Committee issues report containing key recommendations

PACH Recommendations (2/05)

- CFW government must begin to play a stronger role in addressing homelessness by actively taking on new initiatives
- Formation of standing Homelessness Commission (MACH) and hiring full-time staff
- Inclusion of homelessness initiatives in Comprehensive Plan and Legislative Agenda
- Address of multiple issues at once, including funding of housing, services and public safety

Mayor's Advisory Commission on Homelessness (MACH)

- Created by City Ordinance in October, 2005
 - Broad mandate to advise the Mayor and Council and recommend policies, plans and methods for addressing homelessness
 - Charged to develop a 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness, including delivery of services and housing
- 19-member Commission to represent: businesses, neighborhoods, homeless service providers, housing industry, faith community, experts from the fields of criminal justice, mental health and substance abuse, and a formerly homeless person

First Draft of 10-year Plan

- Draws on plans and experiences of other communities
- Tailored to Fort Worth realities
- Result of thousands of hours of work in Workgroup, Community and Commission Meetings
- Reflects insights from homeless people, service providers, business, neighborhoods and outside consultants and experts
- Focus Groups and Public Hearings

A Journey of Understanding

- Critical misperception
- Hope and Opportunity/
Opportunity and Accountability
- *Status quo* – not good enough for our City
 - wastes lives
 - wastes neighborhoods
 - wastes money and resources
- Right thing to do and cost-effective
- Comprehensive Plan
- Key: Permanent Supportive Housing

Vision

- It is our vision that homelessness will be a **rare**, **short-term**, and **non-recurring** experience in Fort Worth, Texas by the year 2018.

Goals

- Homelessness will be **rare**: *every year fewer households will fall out of housing and into homelessness.*
- Homelessness will be **short-term**: *no one will be homeless more than 12 months—ending chronic homelessness in our community.*
- Homelessness will be **non-recurring**: *homelessness will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience.*

Strategies

1. Increase the Supply of Permanent Supportive Housing
2. Expand Opportunities and Services Linked with Accountability
3. Develop and Operate a Central Resource Facility
4. Coordinate and Expand Homelessness Prevention Initiatives
5. Support and Strengthen Existing Public, Private, and Faith-based Efforts
6. Mitigate the Negative Community Impacts of Homelessness
7. Lead, Educate and Advocate for Change

Action Items Grid

Action Item	Target Date	Lead Entity/ Partners	Possible Funding Sources	High	Medium	Low
Establish a credit facility for service providers to bridge funding gaps created by federal appropriation cycles.	2009; ongoing	CFW- Homelessness Team, TCHC	Local Financial Institutions	N/A	N/A	N/A
Honor outstanding achievement in eliminating and preventing homelessness by service organizations, their volunteers and staff on a yearly basis.	3rd Quarter 2008; ongoing	TCHC	Private donations	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$1,000
Hire a county wide homeless system/ service coordinator.	4th Quarter 2008; ongoing	CFW, TCHC	CFW, Foundation, Private Donations	City of Fort Worth hires position; \$70,000	Tarrant County Homeless Coalition hires position; \$42,000	Use existing staff and resources
Maintain a centralized waiting list for assisted units	2008; ongoing	TCHC	Use existing resources	Use existing staff and resources	Use existing staff and resources	Use existing staff and resources

Increase the Supply of Permanent Supportive Housing

Key Innovations

- Create/ identify 1,088 permanent supportive housing units by year 10
- Create/ identify 544 additional permanent supportive housing units by year 6
- Implement locally-funded permanent supportive housing voucher program

Expand Opportunities and Services Linked with Accountability

Key Innovations

- Provide additional bus passes and storage space to be used as incentives for program participation
- Expand access to primary & behavioral health care
- Expand job training and employment opportunities

Develop and Operate a Central Resource Facility

Key Innovations

- A one-stop shop where unsheltered and emergency sheltered homeless can access critical services for stabilization, transition, assistance and reintegration.
- The Central Resource Facility (CRF) would be a publicly-funded, contractor-operated venue for programming and services that facilitate transitions out of homelessness.

Coordinate and Expand Homelessness Prevention Initiatives

Key Innovations

- Comprehensive Discharge Planning policies
- Support the Tarrant County Re-Entry plan
- Develop a database of Congregation- and Faith-based prevention & services programs
- Hire a Jail Transition Coordinator to conduct discharge planning for the homeless

Support and Strengthen Existing Public, Private, and Faith-based Efforts

Key Innovations

- Develop a move-in fund to help clients set up house
- Produce a comprehensive supportive services **gaps analysis** and **funding plan**
- Expand mentoring programs

Support and Strengthen Existing Public, Private, and Faith-based Efforts (continued)

Key Innovations

- Maintain a centralized waiting and real-time inventory list of available vouchers and assisted housing units
- Launch a web-based housing locator service for very low-income renters and landlords
- Fund additional case managers for emergency shelters and drop-in centers

Mitigate the Negative Community Impacts of Homelessness

Key Innovations

- Develop Good Neighbor Agreements
- Expand Community Prosecutor program to include both municipal and district courts
- Establish a Homeless Court
- Add alleys in High Impact Zone to CFW Alley Maintenance Program
- Enforce the "shelter safe zone ordinance"

Lead, Educate and Advocate for Change

Key Innovations

- Public education campaign
- Expand legal aid services
- Independent evaluation of Plan progress
- Funders' council to raise and coordinate funds

Lead, Educate and Advocate for Change

Key Innovations

- Establish a review process to ensure that any new homeless housing is consistent with the goals of the 10-Year Plan
- Incorporate homelessness plan goals and objectives in City of Fort Worth Comprehensive & Consolidated Plans

Next Steps: MACH

- April
 - Incorporate feedback from focus groups
- May
 - Conduct public hearings
 - Incorporate feedback from public hearings
 - Finalize plan
- June
 - Deliver plan to Council for adoption

City of Fort Worth Annual Cost

Current reactive, <i>ad hoc</i> spending (Police, Fire, Library, Code Compliance, etc.)	\$3,045,356.51
Projected cost to support plan implementation*	\$700,000 - \$3M

* Excludes Housing Trust Fund earmark for permanent supportive housing and capital dollars for development of central resource facility.

2008 Citizen Survey

- How Important Do You Think it is For the City of Fort Worth to Address Homelessness In Our Community?
(by percentage of respondents)

Extremely Important	44%
Very Important	26%
Important	20%

2008 Citizen Survey

- How Do You Think the City's Current Level of Investment (Approximately \$2 Million) to Support the Homeless Population Should Change Over the Next Five Years? (by percentage of respondents)

Remain the same ~\$2M	34%
Somewhat greater \$2 – 4M	32%
Much greater \$4M+	14%

Next Steps: City Staff

- Preliminary cost projections have been submitted to budget office
- Homelessness will be considered among budget priorities at upcoming City Council retreat