# HOMELESS

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## SPECIFIC HOMELESS PREVENTION ELEMENTS

1. *Sources of Funds—Identify the private and public resources that the jurisdiction expects to receive during the next year to address homeless needs and to prevent homelessness. These include the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act programs, other special federal, state and local and private funds targeted to homeless individuals and families with children, especially the chronically homeless, the HUD formula programs, and any publicly-owned land or property. Please describe, briefly, the jurisdiction's plan for the investment and use of funds directed toward homelessness.*

2. *Homelessness—In a narrative, describe how the action plan will address the specific objectives of the Strategic Plan and, ultimately, the priority needs identified. Please also identify potential obstacles to completing these action steps.*

3. *Chronic homelessness—The jurisdiction must describe the specific planned action steps it will take over the next year aimed at eliminating chronic homelessness by 2012. Again, please identify barriers to achieving this.*

4. *Homelessness Prevention—The jurisdiction must describe its planned action steps over the next year to address the individual and families with children at imminent risk of becoming homeless.*

5. *Discharge Coordination Policy—Explain planned activities to implement a cohesive, community-wide Discharge Coordination Policy, and how, in the coming year, the community will move toward such a policy.*

### HOMELESS NEEDS

The City utilizes CDBG and ESG funds for a number of special needs housing centers and shelters in the area. CDBG and ESG funds will be used to provide operating assistance for homeless shelters, assistance to prevent homelessness, and supportive services for homeless persons.

- *Make Substantial Progress Toward Eliminating Chronic Homelessness*

The following table outlines the specific homeless priorities and accomplishment goals that the City of St. Louis plans to achieve through projects supported during the 2012 Program Year.

| ACTIVITY | ACCOMPLISHMENT UNITS | GOAL | SOURCE OF FUNDS |
|---|---|---|---|
| Homeless Facilities (Not operating Costs) | 01-People | 21,000 | ESG, Other HUD, State, Grantee, Local |
| Operating Costs of Homeless/AIDS Patients Programs | 01-People | 14,000 | CDBG, State, Grantee, Local |

## SOURCES OF FUNDS

The following table illustrates the sources of funds anticipated in 2013 to satisfy the homeless priorities shown above:

| SOURCE OF FUNDS | FUNDING TYPE | AMOUNT |
|---|---|---|
| ESG Award | CDBG | $1,700,000 |
| CCOC | Grantee | $10,000,000 |
| Domestic Violence Fund | Grantee | $150,000 |
| Affordable Housing Commission | Grantee | $325,000 |
| Miscellaneous Grants/Donations[1] | Local/Private | $800,000 |
| In-Kind Services | Local/Private | $800,000 |
| | **TOTAL** | **$13,775,000** |

Emergency shelter, shelter for victims of domestic violence, transitional housing, and permanent housing for persons with disabilities and their families are provided through the use of these resources. Along with housing, supportive services in mental health counseling and treatment, substance abuse counseling and treatment, living and employment skills are provided to clients to assist them in gaining self-sufficiency. In each of the past three years, Homeless Services has increased the amount of permanent supportive housing available which, over time, will alleviate the crowding of shelters and provide long-term housing for the chronically homeless.

[1] Each of these grants entails matching funds (or in-kind services) ranging from 25% to 75% depending on the program. Sponsoring agencies who receive grant funds through the City of St. Louis Department of Human Services provide these matching funds. During the application process, each applicant is required to attach a letter guaranteeing that the match requirement will be met. In addition, grant contracts contain language outlining match obligations and proper documentation.

## HOMELESSNESS

The City of St. Louis has prioritized ending chronic homelessness in its Strategic Plan and is working diligently to ultimately achieve this vision much sooner than 2015. The Strategic Plan focuses on: (a) emergency shelters and transitional housing on non-disabled individuals; (b) permanent supportive housing for families; (c) safe havens; (d) regional collaborating with other jurisdictions towards ending long-term homelessness; and (e) partnerships and collaboration.

(a) Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing on Non-Disabled Individuals:
With the implementation of the HEARTH Act, emergency shelters and site-based transitional housing programs will play a limited role. They will be used only for those who cannot immediately be placed in permanent housing. The primary purpose of emergency shelters and site-based transitional housing programs will be to equip persons to move into appropriate forms of permanent housing as soon as possible. Emergency shelters and site-based transitional housing programs will be evaluated in part based on the percentage of persons placed into permanent housing and the length of their stays in permanent housing. While in shelter or transitional housing, participants must be surrounded by competent service delivery utilizing evidence-based or best practices.

St. Louis City is pioneering a creative approach to transitional housing that extends the new national trend towards *"Transition-in-Place"* (TIP) housing. Other communities are also implementing TIP by placing participants in non-site based transitional units and converting the units to permanent housing upon completion of the transitional stage, so that the participants remain in the same units.

The St. Louis City TIP approach, generated during the relocation of homeless residents living along the riverfront encampment residents, adds several key elements to the basic TIP approach:

- A 12-month rental assistance program, with 100% rent paid for first three months and subsidies declining by 10% each successive month.
- Case managers will assess tenants' ability to pay each month during the year.
- Up to 12 months of case management services, with follow-up contacts for an additional six months
- Accommodation of all household/family compositions
- Eligibility regardless of disability status
- Use of multi-bedroom units (apartments and homes) to house several single individuals
- Pre-identification and pre-selection of landlords
- Acceptance of pets
- Utilities included in rent when possible or paid temporarily by third parties

This approach directly addresses five issues that often lead to housing failure. Many single individuals, especially those with addictions, are challenged by loneliness and a loss of community when they move into scattered site units. The house-sharing system will address that. Second, some persons refuse housing because the landlord does not allow pets. They prefer to live on the streets with their animal companions. St. Louis' TIP can accommodate pets. Third, some housing providers do not allow non-traditional

families such as same sex or unmarried couples. The St. Louis TIP will welcome all household configurations. Fourth, the TIP program will reach non-disabled populations who cannot be served under existing regulations governing permanent supportive housing. Finally, the program will accommodate persons with past-due utility bills.

Additionally, the City funded its initial seven TIP units with Gateway 180, Water Tower Transitional Housing Program, with a combination of HUD funds, private funds and local funds. In the future, the VA may also become a resource in order to develop additional TIP housing units. The City expects that its TIP program will actually cost less and be more effective than current approaches. The City is arranging for a professional evaluation to test this theory.

(b) Permanent Supportive Housing for Families:
In 2013, the City will seek additional permanent supportive housing for families. The City of St. Louis currently has nine permanent supportive housing programs for families. In 2010, two transitional housing programs for families were closed. In anticipation of the closures, the City of St. Louis included two transitional housing programs for large families in its 2009 CoC application to HUD; one program was funded and began operating March 2012. The project sponsor is Gateway 180.

(c) Safe Havens:
The City of St. Louis outlined the establishment of four Safe Havens in its 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness. To date, the City has two operating Safe Havens and has received funding for an additional Safe Haven, which is expected to open in 2013. Peter and Paul Community Services is the project sponsor. This will add 25 new PSH units to the St. Louis City CoC. HUD has announced that it will no longer fund new Safe Havens.

(d) Collaborating with other Jurisdictions in the Region towards Ending Long-Term Homelessness:
In an effort to end chronic homelessness in the City of St. Louis, the City must take the lead role for developing a regional approach to homeless issues.

Over the next year, the Homeless Services Division will work with the 16 counties that comprise the St. Louis Metropolitan Area and the Continua in the State of Missouri to develop resources, services and policies to address homelessness.

The City of St. Louis has approximately 2,550 homeless beds of various types. The centralized homeless hotline continues to show substantial numbers of people whose last address was in a jurisdiction other than the City. During the recent closing of the riverfront homeless encampment, an unsheltered location where homeless people lived, as many as 76% of the homeless people sleeping there were not residents of the City of St. Louis.

Jurisdictional partnerships are already building throughout the metropolitan area. Six CoC systems operate in the region: St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles/ Lincoln/Warren Counties (MO), Missouri Balance of State, Madison County (IL), and St. Clair County (IL). These groups now meet to share mutual concerns and problem-

solve. With the advent of HEARTH, the City will explore several opportunities for closer collaboration and partnerships:

- Community Housing Centers could be established (or existing facilities designated as centers) throughout the metro area.
- A uniform intake and assessment format could be selected and implemented throughout the region.
- HMIS could be consistent. All six CoC's currently use the same HMIS system (ROSIE), but not all CoCs have the same version and functionality. With improved technological capacity, a regional HMIS network could allow information and resource sharing, as well as tracking of clients, throughout the metro area. This step alone could make a significant and immediate impact on the efficiency of the regional homeless system.

The lack of resources and services in surrounding counties hampers the efforts within the City. The Homeless Services Division will work to develop a comprehensive policy for the region.

(e) Partnerships and Collaboration:

Stronger partnerships will enhance opportunities to reduce homelessness. Several interdisciplinary collaborations will be generated or strengthened as the City moves into the HEARTH era.

- Public housing authorities may be able to prioritize homeless applicants for conventional or voucher-based housing in return for commitments from CoC members for case management and specialized services such as mental health treatment.
- St. Louis' renowned schools of social work could provide students to fill roles and offer advice from researchers concerning evidence-based practices and program quality.
- Nonprofit human service agencies, community groups and faith-based organizations can provide volunteer opportunities for unemployed participants, helping them gain work-like experience and providing basic job skills.
- School systems and veterans organizations can identify those at imminent risk of homelessness and become active HMIS users.
- For-profit companies such as, the St. Louis Credit Union, can provide critical living skills that will allow participants become educated on budgeting and finance.

These partnerships and collaborations to develop resources and services to address the homelessness epidemic in their area is the key to eradicating recidivism and ending homelessness.

The Homeless Services Division will continue its efforts to bring non-participating providers into the Continuum of Care process such as the New Life Evangelistic Center, the largest emergency shelter in the City. Many of the non-participant providers are unaware of the numerous services aimed at ending chronic homelessness.

The obstacles remain the same for addressing chronic homelessness for the residents of the City of St. Louis. The major obstacles are: Locations of services, affordable housing,

pervasive client risk factors, excessive need for documents, and accountability by other jurisdictions.

The City and County have recently eliminated the residency policies that placed restrictions on sheltering those who are not residents of the respective jurisdictions and are looking at various alternatives to consolidate homeless efforts. However, neighboring jurisdictions have not invested the resources to addressing the increasing number of homeless individuals and families in their area. But the City of St. Louis is committed to establishing the same partnership with the other jurisdictions to assist in establishing better a system to address the homeless issue.

## CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

The City of St. Louis is committed to ending chronic homelessness by 2015 as outlined in the 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness. The City will apply for additional funding for Permanent Supportive Housing in its 2013 CoC Program Application.

Additionally, next year, the City will collaborate with Peter and Paul Community Services, a non-profit agency to bring an additional 25 permanent supportive housing units on-line. This program will add 25 additional units to the current inventory of 274 beds. The City is on target to meet its goal, as outlined in its 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, of establishing 500 beds for chronically homeless persons by 2015. Recent discussions with service providers indicate the need for more flexibility with providing services and non-chronic units in permanent supportive housing to homeless clients.

## HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

With the implementation of the new Emergency Solutions Grant under the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act), the City of St. Louis can continue to add depth to the impact made through the "Hope Is Moving In Initiative" under the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP).

In July 2009, the City received $8,453,865 from HUD via Title XII of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. In October 2009 the City of St. Louis took a giant leap in the battle of ending long term homelessness for families and individuals residing on the streets and in emergency shelters for months and even years by implementing the "Hope Is Moving In Initiative" under the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP).

The funds were intended to target two populations of persons facing housing instability: (1) individuals and families who were currently in housing but were at risk of becoming homeless and need temporary rent or utility assistance to prevent them from becoming homeless or assistance to move to another unit (prevention); and (2) individuals and families who were experiencing homelessness (residing in emergency or transitional shelters or on the street) and need temporary assistance in order to obtain housing and retain it (rapid re-housing).

This format will be used during the new implementation of the Emergency Solutions Grant to establish a four-tier service model in the form a pilot program to end chronic homeless

in 2013. The program will engage and serve an individual based on were their need within the tier. Additionally, ESG funds will be used to assist with homeless prevention services. The City will also collaborate with other organizations toward preventing homelessness.

## DISCHARGE COORDINATION POLICY

The Homeless Services Division will continue to collaborate and develop specific plans and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with local, state and federal agencies focused on a Discharge Coordination Policy among:

- the local office of the U.S. Social Security Administration
- the Missouri Department of Mental Health
- the Missouri Department of Corrections
- the Missouri Department of Social Services and
- the City of St. Louis Division of Corrections

The HEARTH Act will allow for more collaboration in developing a coordinated discharge policy.