

*Yamhill County, Oregon*

**TEN YEAR ENDING HOMELESSNESS PLAN**

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Report to the Community:  
**Year One**

September 2009

End Homelessness Now Committee

It has been almost a year since the launch of the draft of Yamhill County's Ten Year Ending Homelessness Plan, a ten-year housing plan with special focus on chronic homelessness. The plan (available at [http://www.co.yamhill.or.us/homelessness/ten\\_year\\_plan.pdf](http://www.co.yamhill.or.us/homelessness/ten_year_plan.pdf)) is a comprehensive effort to better utilize existing resources and generate new resources to address the county's affordable housing and homelessness crisis.

The decision to develop the plan began in fall 2006 with the Yamhill County Commissioners passing a resolution indicating backing for efforts to move forward with a 10-Year Plan to end homeless. The End Homelessness Now Committee was formed in Fall 2007 with one of the goals being to develop a 10-Year Ending Homelessness Plan to present to the community which was done in September 2008.

Yamhill County's Ten Year Ending Homelessness Plan has an ambitious goal: our plan is not to "manage" homelessness, but to end homelessness. Our plan is to see homelessness disappear and see that every citizen has a decent, safe and affordable place to call home. The 10-year housing plan for Yamhill County focuses especially on chronic homelessness and provides perspectives on what is going on nationally and in Oregon. The plan identified 10 major action steps and 47 individual tasks.

### **Current Needs**

In 2009 in Yamhill County, the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment is \$756. In order to afford this level of rent and utilities, without paying more than 30% of income on housing, a household must earn \$2520 monthly or \$30,235 annually. Assuming a 40-hour workweek, 52 weeks per year, this level of income translates into a Housing Wage of \$14.54. In Oregon, a minimum wage worker earns an hourly wage of \$8.40. In order to afford the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment, a minimum wage earner must work 69 hours per week, 52 weeks per year. Or, a household must include 1.7 minimum wage earners working 40 hours per week year-round in order to make the two-bedroom FMR affordable. For those receiving Monthly Supplement Security Income (SSI) payments, the outlook is even more bleak. Monthly Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments for an individual are \$674 in Yamhill County. If SSI represents an individual's sole source of income, \$202 in monthly rent is affordable, while the FMR for a one-bedroom is \$632.

Homelessness in Yamhill County comes in many forms. Based on the data from the Point In Time Count that was conducted in January 2008, 216 families with a combined total of 364 persons (does not include those not involved with a shelter or social services on that day) were counted as being homeless on that particular night. Of this number,

approximately 5.6 percent are considered chronically homeless and have been without a home for a year or more or have had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past four years. The January 2009 Point In Time Count that included a full countywide count effort resulted in a total of 233 families with a combined total of 404 persons (does not include all school aged children).

Children show up as a predominate category among the homeless. For the school year 2006-07, the McKinney-Vento count through the Oregon Department of Education found 313 homeless children and youth identified in Yamhill County. For the school year 2007-08, this number increased even further to 387.

Another large subpopulation are those who have been incarcerated and have been paroled or are on probation. These hard to serve individuals are often discharged into the local communities without any thought as to where they will sleep that night. Other experience homelessness because they have mental illnesses, alcohol and drug problems, are being emancipated from foster care or are victims of domestic violence.

Others, who live from month to month are very susceptible to becoming homeless. One medical emergency, job loss, eviction notice, or other calamity and they too, are one paycheck away from becoming homeless.

For the Ending Homelessness Advisory Committee, Ending Homelessness means:

- ✓ Community buy-in
- ✓ Rapid re-housing with services and extended follow-up
- ✓ Economic development and jobs
- ✓ Community and private resources

### **Current Progress**

The first year of the Yamhill County's draft 10 Year Ending Homelessness Plan was filled with a great variety of activities requiring strong communication and coordination among our community partners to accomplish desired outcomes. In the first year of the plan, we have made progress on 13 of the 47 individual tasks identified in the plan thanks to the investment of time and energy by a number of organizations and people. These are some of the first year highlights:

- 3 Completed countywide homeless count – January 28, 2009, compiled data from the count and updated the 10-Year Plan with data.
- 3 Met with community members and cities for input into the plan as well as individual city support for the plan.
- 3 Held Project Homeless Connect Event – February 18, 2009
- 3 Secured funding for position to assist with first-year plan activities
- 3 Created 50 new units of Affordable Senior Housing
- 3 Created 15 new units of Affordable Workforce Housing
- 3 Ongoing community education on housing and homeless issues
- 3 Marketing of existing housing programs and services
- 3 Launched 2-1-1 info social services hotline in Yamhill County on Monday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, began piloting of hotline on June 1, 2009.
- 3 The Yamhill County Affordable Housing Corporation (YCAHC) received \$400,000 to administer a Community Development Block Grant rehabilitation grant (to allow low-income homeowners to make repairs on their homes) for the City of Sheridan.
- 3 Advocating at the state and federal levels for increased investment in affordable housing programs.

### **In Closing**

Our initial progress has been encouraging, but the work has only just begun. If you have an interest or expertise, would like more information, or would like to become involved in these solutions, please contact Kathy George at 503-434-7501, Elise Hui at 503-883-4318 or Lee Means at 503-883-4172.