

Yamhill County, Oregon

TEN YEAR ENDING HOMELESSNESS PLAN



Report to the Community:
Year Two

September 1, 2009-August 31, 2010

End Homelessness Now Committee

It has been two years 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) 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 original plan identified 10 major action steps and 47 individual tasks.

Current Needs

In 2010 in Yamhill County, the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment is \$839. In order to afford this level of rent and utilities, without paying more than 30% of income on housing, a household must earn \$2797 monthly or \$33,564 annually. Assuming a 40-hour workweek, 52 weeks per year, this level of income translates into an hourly Housing Wage of \$16.14. 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 77 hours per week, 52 weeks per year. Or, a household must include 1.9 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 bleaker. 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 \$726.

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. 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). The January 2010 Point in Time Count showed the impact of our current economic struggles as 283 families adding up to a total of 754 persons (does not include all school aged children) were counted as being homeless on that particular day.

Children show up as a predominate category among the homeless. For the school year 2009-10, the McKinney-Vento count through the Oregon Department of Education found 422 homeless school-aged children identified in Yamhill County. Almost half of these were identified within the Newberg School District.

Another large subpopulation is 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. Others 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 second year of the Yamhill County's 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 second year of the plan, we have made progress on 18 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 second year highlights:

- ☞ **Action Step 1, task 1, 2, 3: Completed full countywide homeless count – January 27, 2010, compiled data from the count and updated the 10-Year Plan with data.**
- ☞ **Action Step 1, task 4: Ending Homelessness Advisory Committee was replaced by the Ending Homelessness Governing Council, which was established by the Yamhill County Commissioners on October 7, 2009 by Board Order 09-620. Governing Council members are now officially appointed by the Yamhill County Commissioners and are tasked with overseeing the progress of Yamhill County's 10 Year Ending Homelessness Plan.**
- ☞ **Action Step 1, task 5: Four subcommittees were created in August 2010 by the Ending Homelessness Governing Council to carry out specific tasks associated with the Ending Homelessness Plan. These subcommittees are: Affordable Housing, Public Relations/Community Volunteerism, Systems Change, and**

Annual Yamhill County Homelessness Count and Connect. Subcommittees will report back to the Ending Homelessness Governing Council quarterly.

- ⌘ **Action Step 2:** On June 7, 2010, Ending Homelessness Governing Council adopted Housing First as the guiding philosophy for all housing programs in the 10-Year Plan.
- ⌘ **Action Step 4, task 1,2:** Increased community information sharing with annual updates to the 2-1-1 info social services hotline to keep local resources current.
- ⌘ **Action Step 4, task 4:** Held Community Connect Event (formerly called Project Homeless Connect) – April 14, 2010, connected more than 250 Yamhill County residents to needed services and assistance
- ⌘ **Action Step 4, task 7:** 27 beds at local homeless shelters provided by Yamhill Gospel Rescue Mission and Love Inc. were 99-100% full on average for this time period. In addition, YCAP was able to serve 37 families through their shelter program with an average length of stay of 189 nights.
- ⌘ **Action Step 4, task 7:** 12 beds were available in Yamhill County for runaway and homeless youth (11-17 years of age).
- ⌘ **Action Step 5, task 1 (partial):** Partnership between Housing Authority of Yamhill County and Yamhill County Health and Human Services created 1 5-bedroom home for women in recovery with young children.
- ⌘ **Action Step 5, task 2 (partial):** Through McMinnville and Newberg Habitat for Humanity and Yamhill Community Development Corporation, created 2 new units of Affordable Workforce Housing with 48 units of Affordable Workforce Housing currently in the pre-development or development phase.
- ⌘ **Action Step 5, task 8:** 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 Willamina.
- ⌘ **Action Step 5, task 8:** YCAP weatherized/repaired 87 homes in 09/10 and another 13 homes in the 1st quarter of 10/11. This could include everything from weatherization, new/repaired furnace/heat pump, new refrigerator, doors/windows, and electrical or floor/frame repairs as needed to install the rest. All this is determined by the amount of energy savings – each is tested and only those repairs that will pay for themselves in energy saving over the length of the life are allowed to be replaced. So yearly cost savings in energy is significant and that money can be used by families for other necessities.
- ⌘ **Action Step 6, task 4:** Advocating at the state and federal levels for increased investment in affordable housing programs.

- ∞ **Action Step 7, task 1:** Since January 2010, Community Compassion Fund (CCF) has been able to help 70 families with deposits or eviction notices to obtain housing.
- ∞ **Action Step 8, task 3:** Through partnerships with the Office of Healthy Kids, an Oregon Health Authority program, local Yamhill County agencies are able to assist families to complete applications for the Healthy Kids program which provides free or low-cost health coverage for all uninsured Oregon kids and teens under 19.
- ∞ **Action Step 10, task 1:** Marketing of existing housing programs and services
- ∞ **Action Step 10, task 2:** Ongoing community education on housing and homeless issues
- ∞ **Additional:** 1) C-WISH (Community Winter Inclement Shelter) group establishes system for activating winter shelters in McMinnville and Newberg. Information regarding shelter openings will be relayed to 2-1-1; 2) Community Compassion Fund (CCF) has provided 5 homeless families with voice message boxes, 50 families with electrical assistance, 60 families with water assistance, 90 individuals with bus passes, 6 individuals with prescription assistance and 10 families with grocery cards; 3) In 2010, St. Barnabas Soup Kitchen has been able to provide an extra meal service and are now serving dinners every weekday night with the exception of Thursday.

In Closing

Our initial progress has been encouraging, but the work is only just beginning. 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.