



Plan to End Homelessness Saint Paul-Ramsey County

PART ONE: ENDING LONG-TERM HOMELESSNESS

Presented to: Mayor of Saint Paul, Randy Kelly
Ramsey County Board of Commissioners
Saint Paul City Council

Submitted by: Ramsey County/City of Saint Paul Homeless Advisory Board

September 2005

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary

2. Introduction

- A Call to Action
- Why Is This So Important?
- Mission, Definitions and Scope
- Local Context and Existing Efforts
- Planning Process and Public Input

3. Overview of Long-Term Homelessness

- The National Perspective
- The State Perspective
- The Ramsey County-Saint Paul Perspective

4. Strategies to End Long-Term Homelessness

- Linking the Plan to Broader Systems Change
- Create Supportive Housing
- Prevent Long-Term Homelessness
- Increase and Leverage Public Investment
- Improve Coordination and Delivery of Services and Housing
- Build a Community Response to Homelessness
- Specific Strategies for Implementing Recommendations

5. Implementation and Oversight Responsibilities

6. Financing Plan for Supportive Housing

7. The Rationale for Supportive Housing

- Resident Outcomes
- Efficient Use of Scarce Resources
- Ramsey County Example: Hearth Connection
- Improving and Investing in the Community

8. Supportive Housing Models

- Housing Models: Single-Site, Scattered-Site, Mixed Income/Use
- Service Models: Sobriety-Based, Harm Reduction, Housing First

9. Appendices

- Glossary and Acronyms
- Background Reference Materials
- Financing Plan Assumptions
- Public Comment on Plan
- Authorizing Resolutions

Executive Summary

The mission is clear: end homelessness in Saint Paul and Ramsey County. To fulfill this bold but realistic vision, the Ramsey County/City of Saint Paul Homeless Advisory Board is crafting a two-part plan. This report is Part One and fulfills the request for a plan to end long-term homelessness. Part Two will focus on ending all homelessness and will be presented to the City and County by March 1, 2006.

Homelessness is a tragedy for everyone experiencing it. An affordable and safe home is the foundation for stable and fulfilling lives. Homelessness is also a wasteful and unnecessary drain on our public resources. Research has clearly demonstrated that homelessness, especially long-term homelessness, increases the use of expensive crisis services such as emergency medical care, psychiatric hospitalizations, and incarceration. People experiencing long-term homelessness (lasting one year or longer or having frequently repeated episodes of homelessness) make up a small percentage of everyone who is homeless over the course of a year, but utilize a hugely disproportionate share of our public resources being spent to address homelessness.

Moreover, public expenditures in these crisis systems of care often fail to successfully serve people experiencing long-term homelessness. Fortunately, there are solutions, including supportive housing and prevention and outreach strategies, that provide better outcomes for people experiencing long-term homelessness. Utilizing these and other strategies, we will more effectively and efficiently use public and private resources and end the horrible cycle of homelessness so many people face. Most importantly, ending this cycle will enable people to achieve the broader goal of greater self-reliance and self-determination.

Long-Term Homelessness in Saint Paul and Ramsey County

On a single night in October 2003, more than 700 people were experiencing long-term homelessness in Ramsey County and the City of Saint Paul. These single adults, families, and unaccompanied youth have languished on the streets and cycled in and out of numerous crisis related public systems, including jails, community mental health institutions, detox facilities, etc. According to the Wilder Research Center, it is estimated that one-third of people experiencing long-term homelessness are families, while the remaining two-thirds are single adults (and a small

number of unaccompanied youth). Additionally, Wilder estimates that among the long-term homeless in Ramsey County:

- 52% reported that they had a serious or persistent mental illness
- 30% are employed
- 33% reported a chemical dependency problem
- 24% reported a dual diagnosis of both mental illness and chemical dependency

According to the Wilder Survey, the State projects that by 2010, Ramsey County and Saint Paul will need 920 units of supportive housing for people who have experienced long-term homelessness. This number recognizes the unfortunate reality that in the next few years, there will be an increase in the number of households experiencing long-term homelessness.

Five Strategies to End It

The federal government and the State of Minnesota, in addition to other communities across the country, have identified solutions to ending this vicious cycle of long-term homelessness. The solutions range from preventing long-term homelessness in the first place to creating permanent supportive housing opportunities that provide people with affordable housing linked to the support services they need to maintain their housing. In Ramsey County and Saint Paul, the Homeless Advisory Board has developed five over-arching strategies for ending long-term homelessness in our community, with corresponding benchmarks for measuring our success.



Recommendation #1: Create Supportive Housing

Progress Measure:

920 units of permanent supportive housing for people experiencing long-term homelessness will be developed between 2006-2010, with an approximate annual target of 160 units each of the first two years, and 200 units in each of the last three years.

Recommendation #2: Prevent Long-Term Homelessness

Progress Measure:

We will achieve a zero growth-rate in the number of people meeting the definition of long-term homelessness by 2010, based on Wilder surveys.

Recommendation #3: Increase and Leverage Public Investment

Progress Measures:

- 1) More than \$130 million will be invested from public and private sources to finance the capital costs, rental subsidies, and support services necessary to house people experiencing long-term homelessness.
- 2) The Ramsey County Housing Endowment Fund will be refinanced and designated as a flexible fund to provide gap funding for supportive housing capital, operations or services needs.

Recommendation #4: Improve Coordination and Delivery of Services and Housing

Progress Measures:

- 1) By the end of 2006, persons identified as meeting the definition of long-term homelessness will have a full review of eligibility for publicly funded programs, and applications will be submitted and tracked for all eligible programs.
- 2) By the end of 2007, the County and City will have developed formal protocols with publicly-funded institutions (including jails, community mental health institutions, foster care, etc.) to include housing and service plans designed to prevent people from being discharged into homelessness.

Recommendation #5: Build a Community-Wide Response to Homelessness

Progress Measures:

- 1) By 2008, there will equitable distribution of supportive housing throughout Ramsey County, including at least 150 units of scattered-site and/or single-site supportive housing in suburban Ramsey County, with an equal commitment continuing through 2010.
- 2) By the end of 2007, there will be active participation in the crafting of solutions to homelessness in Ramsey County by broadly representative organizations, including the Saint Paul and suburban police, Chambers of Commerce in Saint Paul and suburban communities, State and County corrections departments, elected officials from at least five suburban municipalities, and local hospitals.

Financing Plan for Supportive Housing

New Construction (207 units)	\$33.7 million
MN State General Obligation Bond	\$15.0 million
Private Tax Credit Equity (MHFA Allocation)	\$10.0 million
Private Tax Credit Equity (City allocation)	\$4.0 million
City of Saint Paul (HOME, CDBG, STAR, etc.)	\$4.7 million
Acquisition and Rehab (345 units)	\$30.8 million
City of Saint Paul (HOME, CDBG, STAR, etc.)	\$3.8 million
Ramsey County HRA (representing Ramsey County suburban communities) (HOME, CDBG, Endowment Fund, etc.)	\$8.5 million
Minnesota Housing Finance Agency	\$7.5 million
Housing Foundations	\$3.0 million
MHFA State Appropriated Programs	\$6.0 million
Private Foundations	\$1.0 million
MN Department of Corrections	\$1.0 million
Dept. of Housing & Urban Development	\$1.0 million
Rental Assistance (920 units) <i>(including 368 units of scattered site housing)</i>	\$36.0 million
Federal Government (Section 8, Shelter Plus Care, etc.)	\$24.0 million
MHFA State Appropriations (ELHIF, HTF, etc.)	\$12.0 million
Supportive Services (920 units) <i>(including 368 units of scatted site housing)</i>	\$30.8 million
DHS Long-Term Homeless Supportive Services Grants	\$6.0 million
DHS/Ramsey County <i>(i.e., County Mental Health, MA, employment services, Endowment Fund, etc.)</i>	\$24.8 million
Total	\$131.3 million

Introduction

A call to action: in the spring of 2005, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners and the Saint Paul City Council each passed unanimous resolutions authorizing the Homeless Advisory Board to draft a comprehensive City/County plan to address homelessness, and report back to the City Council and County Board by March 1, 2006.¹ At the same time, during his State of the City address, Mayor Randy Kelly declared his administration's intent to end long-term homelessness in 10 years, and charged the Homeless Advisory Board to create a plan by September 1, 2005 to achieve the goal.² This report fulfills the request for a credible, specific, and comprehensive plan to end long-term homelessness in Saint Paul and Ramsey County.

Why Is This So Important?

Homelessness is a tragedy for everyone experiencing it. An affordable and safe home is the foundation for stable and fulfilling lives. Homelessness is also a wasteful and unnecessary drain on our public resources. Research has clearly demonstrated that homelessness, especially long-term homelessness, increases the use of expensive crisis services such as emergency medical care, psychiatric hospitalizations, and incarceration.³ People experiencing long-term homelessness (lasting one year or longer or having frequently repeated episodes of homelessness) make up a small percentage of everyone who is homeless over the course of a year, but utilize a hugely disproportionate share of our public resources being spent to address homelessness.

Moreover, public expenditures in these crisis systems of care often fail to successfully serve people experiencing long-term homelessness. Fortunately, there are solutions, including supportive housing and prevention and outreach strategies, that provide better outcomes for people experiencing long-term homelessness. Utilizing these and other strategies, we will more effectively and efficiently use public and private resources and end the horrible cycle of homelessness so many people face.

Mission

The mission is clear: end homelessness in Saint Paul and Ramsey County. To fulfill this bold but realistic vision, the Homelessness Advisory Board is producing a plan in two parts. This document is Part One and fulfills the request for a plan to end long-term homelessness. Part Two

will focus on ending all homelessness and will be presented to the City and County by March 1, 2006.

This document sets forth a detailed plan that focuses our collective efforts to end long-term homelessness on a number of overarching strategies:

- Creating supportive housing
- Preventing homelessness
- Increasing and leveraging public investment
- Improving coordination and delivery of services and housing
- Building a community-wide response to homelessness

It is the intent of the Homeless Advisory Board to continue its work in implementing the plan in four primary ways:

- Advocating for the resources and policy changes needed to implement the plan
- Advising the City and County on strategies for best achieving the goals
- Monitoring progress on the strategies and action steps identified
- Reporting back to the City and County annually on progress made

Definitions and Scope

The Saint Paul/Ramsey plan was developed as a complementary effort to the State's Business Plan to End Long-Term Homelessness.⁴ The focus on people experiencing long-term homelessness is consistent with the State's plan and many of the policies and proposals recommended will complement ongoing efforts at the State level.

Having said that, the Homeless Advisory Board has defined "long-term homelessness" in a manner similar to the State of Minnesota, but with an expanded definition for families experiencing homelessness. Defining various subpopulations among people experiencing long-term homelessness is more art than science. For the purposes of this report, long-term homelessness for single adults and unaccompanied youth is defined as experiencing homelessness at least four times in the last three years, or continuously for more than one year.



With regard to families, in order to be more responsive to the unique needs of children, and recognizing that intergenerational homelessness leads to long-term homelessness, the Homeless

Advisory Board has defined long-term homelessness for families as experiencing two or more episodes of homelessness that have resulted in shelter stays. The Homeless Advisory Board recognizes this definition may need fine-tuning over time.

While these definitions limit the scope and number of people considered long-term homeless, the rationale is sound. It focuses our efforts first on ending homelessness for people with the greatest barriers to housing. People experiencing long-term homelessness often have issues, including mental and chemical health problems and chronic health conditions that hinder their ability to maintain stable housing. In addition, people experiencing long-term homelessness often cycle in and out of a wide array of costly public systems including emergency rooms, detox facilities, community mental health institutions, and jails.

Local Context and Existing Efforts

Ramsey County and the City of Saint Paul have a long track record of serving people experiencing homelessness in the community. The City and County recently completed work on a five-year plan (1999-2004) to build affordable and supportive housing that netted positive results, but significant work remains.⁵ The City and the County have renewed and re-energized their commitment to serve people experiencing long-term homelessness, and address the broader homelessness issue. The City and the County have existing partnerships and strengths that must be utilized in this effort. Among the existing efforts that must be engaged are:

Continuum of Care

The Ramsey County Continuum of Care, a community-wide planning effort to develop priorities for addressing homelessness, is arguably the strongest in the State, and is responsible for attracting more than \$4.5 million in federal HUD McKinney-Vento funding each year. The Continuum of Care is the central coordinating body for assessing the needs of people experiencing homelessness in the County and allocating federal resources to programs and projects based on a community ranking process.

Saint Paul/Ramsey County Funders Council

The Funders Council is a forum for funders of supportive and affordable housing to meet and discuss projects and funding priorities and problem-solve on issues. The Funders Council meets monthly and has proven to be an effective mechanism for resolving a wide range of financing issues in supportive housing.

Existing Affordable Housing Policy

In 1999, the Saint Paul City Council adopted an affordable housing policy which requires that 20% of all new housing production be designated as affordable housing.⁶ During 2002-2005, the City's Housing 5000 Program created over 5,000 housing units, of which over 1,000 will be affordable to low and moderate income households.

Current Investments

Both the City and County have existing programs and infrastructure that provide housing and support services to people experiencing homelessness. Both units of government have invested

significant amounts of local dollars to finance supportive housing, including STAR funds, Emergency Shelter Grant funds, HOME funds, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, and County human service dollars, to finance supportive housing, transitional housing, shelter, and prevention programs. Additionally, the County invests significantly in human services, including mental health and children services, that provide critical care to people experiencing homelessness.

Existing Supportive Housing

The City and County have both invested significant resources to create supportive housing for a wide array of populations throughout the County. Collectively, these projects prove the value of creating supportive housing, and proof that if the City and County partner with the State, federal government, and local developers and services providers – we can create the supportive housing we need to end long-term homelessness.

Existing Transitional Housing

There is a substantial amount of transitional housing in Ramsey County that provides invaluable housing and services to people experiencing homelessness. Transitional housing projects provide a wide-array of case management and other services to transition people from homelessness to other housing options.

State Investment and Engagement

Through its Business Plan to End Long-Term Homelessness, the State of Minnesota is planning to commit substantial resources to develop supportive housing for the long-term homeless population over the next several years.⁷ These resources, which include funds for capital, operating and services costs, will create at least 4,000 additional supportive housing units. The plan will contribute significantly to Saint Paul and Ramsey County's efforts to end homelessness, in part because about 25% of these units are expected to be located in Saint Paul and Ramsey County.

In order to succeed in this endeavor, the City and County must build upon existing partnerships, and work to address new, coordinated ways of funding housing and services.

Planning Process and Public Input

The Homeless Advisory Board was jointly created by the Ramsey County Board and the City of Saint Paul. The Homeless Advisory Board is charged to inform the County and City on homelessness and to advise the City and County on the strategies and resources required to address the issue. The board has more than 20 members, including people experiencing homelessness, employees of City and County government, service providers and community leaders in supportive housing, and concerned citizens.⁸

Targeted outreach to consumers was conducted through interviews conducted by the X Committee (a group of people experiencing homelessness advocating for themselves), public meetings conducted by the Homeless Advisory Board at Dorothy Day Center, Listening House, YWCA, the Family Service Center and SafeZone, and discussions and interviews in a number of

supportive housing communities. Broader public input was generated through a number of venues, including the Saint Paul Public Schools, the Ramsey County Mental Health Community Advisory Committee, the Chamber of Commerce, the Saint Paul Police Department, etc. The Mayor of Saint Paul also conducted a number of Street Beat meetings, including meetings at Listening House and St. Christopher's, to solicit input from people experiencing homelessness.

Overview of Long-Term Homelessness

The National Perspective

It is estimated that in the United States, there are between 2.1 and 3.5 million people experiencing homelessness each year.⁹ On any given night, 850,000 families, individuals and youth are homeless. The number of people experiencing homelessness has increased dramatically over the last ten years, with more and more of them being children. Additionally, the number of people experiencing homelessness who suffer from mental illness, chemical dependency, and/or other disabling conditions has also increased significantly, while employment among the same population has slightly decreased.

This increase in homelessness has not gone unnoticed. Beginning in 2002, the federal government began to focus its effort more on people experiencing “chronic homelessness.” The federal definition of a person experiencing “chronic homelessness” is a disabled and unaccompanied individual who has been homeless continuously for one year or longer or who has had at least four distinct episodes of homelessness in the past three years. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that this population is 10% of the people experiencing homelessness in our country, but utilizes 50% of homeless resources.¹⁰

With this new focus on ending chronic homelessness, the federal government has begun to advance innovative solutions to homelessness, committing to creating 150,000 new units of supportive housing, and promoting legislation to prevent and end homelessness.¹¹ To this end, the United States Congress has directed the Department of Housing and Urban Development to commit at least 30% of its McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants for permanent supportive housing.¹² Finally, across the country 49 states and more than 200 localities have developed plans to end homelessness that are focused on preventing homelessness, aligning public policy and funding streams, and creating supportive housing.¹³



The State Perspective

Not surprisingly, homelessness in Minnesota has grown significantly as well. The Wilder Research Center conducts a statewide survey every three years of people experiencing homelessness, and for the first time, collected information about those experiencing long-term homelessness.¹⁴

FAMILIES AND LONG-TERM HOMELESSNESS

National studies show that children who are homeless fall behind their peers educationally and developmentally; they also suffer from poorer health. Because it is so important to nurture the next generation – and prevent their future homelessness – the Homeless Advisory Board has adopted a broader definition of long-term homeless families: a definition that will allow us to focus more resources on homeless children. The federal government includes only single adults in its definition of chronic (or long-term) homelessness; the State includes families – but only those families that would meet the federal definition. Ramsey County and Saint Paul recognize the need to focus more on children, and provide them with supportive housing. This is proving to be an effective intervention to help these families find stability and help their children develop friends, find adult role models and stay in school.

According to the 2003 data, those experiencing long-term homelessness in the state include:

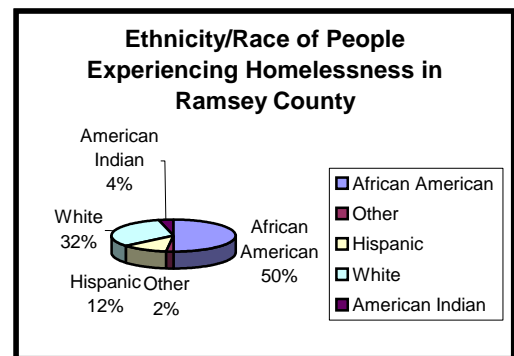
- Approximately 3,300 individuals, youth and families with children over the course of a full year in Minnesota.
- Of these, 2,800 were adults and unaccompanied youth
- 500 were children experiencing homelessness with their parents.

In response to the increasing number of people experiencing homelessness as a long-term condition and the focus on the federal level, the State of Minnesota, in February of 2004, unveiled its Business Plan to End Long-Term Homelessness by 2010. The plan called for the creation of 4,000 units of supportive housing by 2010. Incorporated into the plan is a concrete financing plan, along with several recommendations to increase resources targeted to people experiencing long-term homelessness in the State of Minnesota.

The Ramsey County – Saint Paul Perspective

Homelessness in Saint Paul and Ramsey County is also on the rise. On a single night in 2000, the Wilder Research Center identified 1,067 men, women and children who were homeless. In 2003, this number increased to 1,471, 52% of whom reported being homeless for a year or longer or had experienced at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years. Wilder estimates that on any given night there are 1,600 people who are homeless in Ramsey County.

Significant increases in both adult men and women accounted for this surge in homelessness. In addition, given the large number of people believed to be unsheltered, living in camps, vehicles or other places not fit for human habitation, both the 2000 and 2003 data are likely to be significant undercounts of people who are homeless.

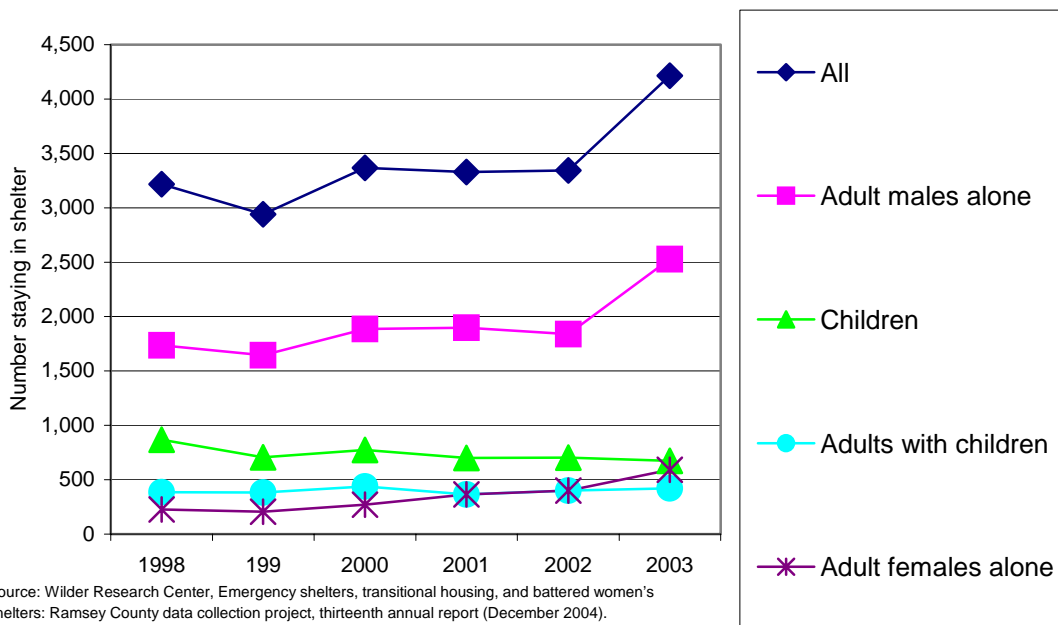


Broad View of Homelessness

Not surprisingly, the number of people being sheltered in Ramsey County is also on the rise. A look at the people sheltered in Ramsey County over the past several years also shows a significant increase. In 2003, Wilder Research Center reported that emergency shelter use trends were toward more frequent and shorter stays.¹⁵ However, more than half of all adult shelter users had more than one stay during 2003, which accounted for 81% of the total stays.

The Ramsey County Continuum of Care also conducted a count of people experiencing homelessness that live outside, in cars, or in places not meant for human habitation.¹⁶ This count was completed by identifying people who stay outside and connecting with them to identify other people who are also outside. They identified 150 people outside on the night of the count. It is believed that this represents an undercount of those who are living outside. It did not represent an actual head count as it is difficult to get volunteers to go to places where people live outdoors in the middle of winter.

Ramsey County homeless shelter use, 1998-2003



It should also be noted (as illustrated in the chart above) that there is a disproportionate number of African Americans, Native Americans and Latino people who are homeless. More specifically, about 50% of the homeless in Ramsey County are African American while African Americans only comprise 12% of Ramsey County residents. The Homeless Advisory Board recognizes and strongly opposes the underlying societal racism and discrimination in housing and employment that contributes to the over-representation of people of color experiencing homelessness.

Long-Term Homelessness

Based on Wilder's count and analysis of the 2003 Statewide Survey of People Without Permanent Shelter, the State determined that 3,300 households in Minnesota are experiencing long-term homelessness.¹⁷ The State plan calls for creating an additional 4,000 units of supportive housing by 2010 to address the current and future need. Of these 4,000 units, 920 will be needed in Ramsey County and Saint Paul. We address the importance of creating supportive housing later in this document. As a general matter, supportive housing is important because people who have been homeless for a long time face a number of challenges. Wilder has found, for example, that among the long-term homeless population across the state and in Ramsey County, they estimate that approximately:

- 30% are employed
- 52% reported that they had a serious or persistent mental illness.
- 33% reported a chemical dependency problem
- 24% reported a dual diagnosis of both mental illness and chemical dependency and
- 48% reported a chronic health condition

It should also be noted that domestic violence is a significant factor leading to homelessness for many women and children.

As the preceding facts and figures clearly demonstrate, the problem of long-term homelessness in Ramsey County and Saint Paul presents a significant challenge to our community and to all levels of government that seek to address it. But it is solvable problem. The numbers in Saint Paul and Ramsey County indicate the need to create 920 units of supportive housing over the next five years (with ongoing investment required to maintain the supportive housing). Collectively we have the resources, knowledge, and experience to make it happen. Having considered the unique needs of homeless youth, homeless families living with children, and single adults; we will work to create supportive housing that is responsive to specific needs of families and youth, and we will identify and change public policies that have adverse impacts on each of these sub-populations.

Strategies to End Long-Term Homelessness

Linking the Plan to Broader Systems Change

In order to meet the goal of ending long-term homelessness, there must be significant investment of energy, resources, and political will from all levels of government, the philanthropic community, and the community at large. These investments in ending long-term homelessness must not come at the expense of existing programs if we are to be successful. Additionally, ending long-term homelessness must be connected to broader efforts addressing the basic issues of people experiencing homelessness. Notably, the common theme in all consumer input received was the need to increase and improve access to jobs, child care, affordable housing, transportation, and health care for people experiencing long-term homelessness. Key issues that must be addressed in our broader effort include:

- **Affordable Housing:** Housing (whether it is connected to services or not) must be affordable to people, generally representing no more than 30% of their income.
- **Health care:** Access to affordable health care with adequate coverage that addresses the complex needs of many people experiencing long-term homelessness, including flexible and comprehensive mental health services.
- **Transportation:** Access to a public transportation system that is located near the housing, employment, and services that people need.
- **Employment:** Availability of (and access to) jobs that provide livable wages in order to significantly and reliably increase incomes.
- **Child care:** Access to affordable childcare for families with children that need a safe place for children while a parent is at work or going to school.

It should also be noted that homelessness in Ramsey County reaches beyond City and County lines, and successful strategies will require regional planning and coordination, specifically with the metro counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Scott, and

YOUTH & LONG-TERM HOMELESSNESS

A conservative estimate is that 1 out of every 5 youth experiencing homelessness will experience long term homelessness (homeless for more than a year or four or more episodes of homelessness in the past three years). According to the Wilder Research Center's study on homeless youth, 21.7% of all homeless youth have experienced long-term homelessness.¹⁸

However, homelessness among youth (aged 12 to 21) is difficult to measure. Many youth who experience abuse, sexual assault, abandonment, and chronic neglect from families often seek refuge with alternative family members or close friends. "Couch hopping" among this young population is pervasive according to information received from Ramsey County homeless youth service providers. Given the transient nature of youth populations, many youth may not be homeless for long period of times. Even short term crisis and homelessness, however, can lead to sexual exploitation, physical assault, and a high incident of mental illness and chemical/alcohol addiction – leading to long term consequences.

Washington. Broader systems improvements and regional cooperation will all be prominently featured in Part II of our plan which is scheduled for release in March 2006.

This plan focuses our community efforts on five essential recommendations designed to end long-term homelessness. For each of the recommendations, there is a specific and measurable benchmark that will track our progress toward accomplishing our goal of ending long-term homelessness. The recommendations and benchmarks are as follows.

Recommendation #1: Create Supportive Housing

Progress Measure:

920 units of permanent supportive housing for people experiencing long-term homelessness will be developed between 2006-2010, with an approximate annual target of 160 units each of the first two years, and 200 units in each of the last three years.

Recommendation #2: Prevent Long-Term Homelessness

Progress Measure:

We will achieve a zero growth-rate in the number of people meeting the definition of long-term homelessness by 2010, based on Wilder surveys.

Recommendation #3: Increase and Leverage Public Investment

Progress Measures:

- 1) More than \$130 million will be invested from public and private sources to finance the capital costs, rental subsidies, and support services necessary to house people experiencing long-term homelessness.
- 2) The Ramsey County Housing Endowment Fund will be refinanced and designated as a flexible fund to provide gap funding for supportive housing capital, operations or services needs.

Recommendation #4: Improve Coordination and Delivery of Services and Housing

Progress Measures:

- 1) By the end of 2006, persons identified as meeting the definition of long-term homelessness will have a full review of eligibility for publicly funded programs, and applications will be submitted and tracked for all eligible programs.
- 2) By the end of 2007, the County and City will have developed formal protocols with publicly-funded institutions (including jails, community mental health institutions, foster care, etc.) to include housing and service plans designed to prevent people from being discharged into homelessness.

Recommendation #5: Build a Community-Wide Response to Homelessness

Progress Measures:

- 1) By 2008, there will be equitable distribution of supportive housing throughout Ramsey County, including at least 150 units of scattered site and/or single site supportive housing in suburban Ramsey County, with an equal commitment continuing through 2010.
- 2) By the end of 2007, there will be active participation in the crafting of solutions to homelessness in Ramsey County by broadly representative organizations, including the Saint Paul and suburban police, Chambers of Commerce in Saint Paul and suburban communities, State and County corrections departments, elected officials from at least five suburban municipalities, and local hospitals.



Specific Strategies for Implementing Recommendations

For each of the five recommendations, this plan has identified a number of strategies designed to move us toward the achievement of each recommendation.

The full engagement of our community in our efforts to end long-term homelessness and changing community economic and social conditions over the next five years will undoubtedly result in the refinement and addition or replacement of strategies. Nevertheless, the strategies listed below have been specifically identified as critical steps in our efforts to end long-term homelessness

1. Create Supportive Housing

Supportive housing provides affordable housing in conjunction with tailored support services to the families, single adults, and unaccompanied youth that need them. The creation of 920 units of supportive housing in Ramsey County over the next five years is the cornerstone of the plan to end long-term homelessness.

Approximately two-thirds of the units will provide supportive housing tailored to the specific needs of single adults, with a small portion specifically dedicated to the needs of homeless youth. The remaining one-third will provide supportive housing to families experiencing long-term homelessness, with

WHAT KIND OF HOUSING
DO YOU WANT?

“A one-bedroom apartment that’s not in the middle of some ghetto. Oftentimes a person can’t get out of bad habits because the only apartment they can afford are in bad neighborhoods.”

-Homeless single adult

a strong focus on the specific needs of families and children. These units will be equitably dispersed throughout Ramsey County, with a significant number of them located in Saint Paul, but a substantial number also located in suburban Ramsey County.¹⁹

Based on data from the Wilder Research Center and a number of state agencies, the estimated cost of creating these units over the next five years is approximately \$26 million a year.²⁰ These resources will be secured from a very wide array of federal, state, local, and philanthropic sources (see financing plan section for details).

In creating these supportive housing units, the City and County should follow the guiding principles:

- Ensure maximum choice for residents
- Locate housing near transit, employment, and support services
- Be affordable, charging no more than 30% of income for rent

Zoning ordinances play a critical role in the ability to site housing for people experiencing long-term homelessness. Saint Paul's ordinances recognize the need for specialized housing opportunities while maintaining the character of the City's diverse neighborhoods. Suburban Ramsey municipalities take the approach of only permitting named housing types and require a special conditional use permit for almost every other type of housing.

Both systems present their own opportunities and barriers in creating a variety of housing from which people experiencing homelessness could benefit. Both systems can be used to foster sensible growth; both can be used to block change. To facilitate the development of housing targeted to the long-term homeless population the Homeless Advisory Board believes the following should be addressed:

In Saint Paul

- Examine whether the density restriction and distance requirement substantially impair the ability of housing providers to site new projects or expand existing ones.
- Examine whether the existing zoning code has had the effect of distributing supportive housing throughout the City.
- Engage the Homeless Advisory Board and the homeless provider community to work with the planning commission to determine which, if any, changes need to be made to the

WHAT ARE YOUR DREAMS
FOR THE FUTURE?

(Responses from homeless persons)

"To get a job and get off the streets."

"To find an affordable place to call home."

"To find a job where I can work until I retire."

"To become self sufficient and never return to shelter."

"To take some courses in school and do better."

zoning code in order to facilitate the siting of permanent supportive housing for the long-term homeless population.

In Ramsey County

- Examine whether existing suburban municipal codes have the effect of distributing supportive housing throughout suburban Ramsey County or creating areas of over concentration.
- Ramsey County should work with the various suburban municipalities to create a supportive climate for the acceptance of supportive housing in locations that have access to employment, transportation, and supportive services.

2. Prevent Long-Term Homelessness

Prevention

- Continue to access funding from the State’s Family Homeless Prevention Assistance Program.
- Utilize Emergency Shelter Grant funds to finance shelters and prevention activities with successful track records.
- Support tenant advocacy focused on preventing homelessness, and continue to target Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for that purpose.
- Extend the County’s shelter stay policy beyond 30 days to give people more time to find suitable housing. For example, run a pilot project extending the stay from 30 to 60 days.
- Increase the stock of affordable housing available to people experiencing long-term homelessness.

Increasing incomes

- Improve and expand outreach efforts by the Ramsey County Workforce Development Centers to better serve the unique needs of people experiencing long-term homelessness.
- City and County staff, along with homeless service providers, should access funding through the Department of Human Services to expand advocacy efforts focused on increasing access to Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Similar efforts should be made to assist people in accessing other benefits including Veterans’ benefits.

WHAT DO YOU NEED
TO SECURE AND
KEEP HOUSING?

“I need a livable wage job and supportive services to help me be successful in housing.”

-Homeless youth

- Expand efforts to link supportive housing options to existing and new supported employment programs.

Discharge planning

A vital component of the prevention strategy is improving the discharge planning practices of public institutions. To that end, we recommend the following:

- Establish a discharge planning advisory group comprised of City and County staff from corrections, foster care, human services, housing, detox facilities, and hospitals to coordinate the discharge of people to the streets.
- Develop and fund a pilot program that places supportive service providers with experience working in corrections directly into jails and prisons to connect and assist people preparing to leave the system.

Outreach

Engaging people who are experiencing long-term homelessness is fundamental to housing and serving people. To improve outreach to people experiencing long-term homelessness, we recommend the following:

- Expand outreach programs. Local homeless outreach providers should apply for at least \$150,000 of funding available through a new State homeless outreach pilot.
- The City and County must raise \$75,000 or more locally to provide matching funds for State funds dedicated to outreach.
- The City and County should work with homeless service providers to identify the most-frequent users of emergency systems and help coordinate resources to move them from shelters to supportive housing.
- Expand the partnership between the Saint Paul Police and homeless service providers and establish agreed upon protocols for coordination and assisting people on the streets.



Preservation

Preservation of decent, safe, affordable housing in Ramsey County and Saint Paul, particularly housing with federal rental assistance payments, is a critical part of both homeless prevention and long-term homeless intervention efforts.

- Ensure that all existing supportive housing has the necessary operating subsidies and service dollars necessary to continue operation.

- Maintain the existing stock of valuable transitional housing, primarily through investments from the Department of Human Services and the HUD McKinney-Vento programs.
- Work with existing landlords involved with the Section 8 program to ensure the long-term affordability of properties, possibly including new ownership.

3. Increase and Leverage Public Investment

To achieve the stated goal, significant additional investment and/or redirecting of existing resources will be required from all levels of government as well as philanthropy and the broader community. Detailed below are specific action steps to be taken by government to meet the goal.

The City of Saint Paul

- Target a significant amount of locally controlled dollars to supportive housing projects serving long-term homeless populations.
- Create a Housing Trust Fund, by investing \$1 million annually in supportive housing.

Saint Paul Public Housing Authority

- The Saint Paul PHA should explore ways to target more Section 8 vouchers to people experiencing long-term homelessness, and continue to assess the viability of project-basing vouchers to supportive housing projects.

Metropolitan Housing and Redevelopment Authority

- The Metro HRA should explore ways to target more Section 8 vouchers to people experiencing long-term homelessness, and continue to assess the viability of project-basing vouchers to supportive housing projects.

Ramsey County

- Improve access to Medicaid waived services for people experiencing long-term homelessness, including Community Alternatives for Disabled Individuals (CADI).
- Expand Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) to provide the necessary supports for clients qualifying as “seriously and persistently mentally ill.”
- Invest in the necessary support services and housing options for youth aging out of (and in) foster care to keep them off the streets.
- Invest \$6 million in the Ramsey County Housing Endowment Fund and provide some priority for use as rent subsidies for long-term homeless projects.

WHAT ONE THING
WOULD YOU
CHANGE ABOUT
SHELTER?

“The 30-day stay policy. It is not enough time to get stabilized before having to go right back on the street.”

-Multiple responses from youth, single adults, and families that have stayed in County shelter

- Focus significant County HOME and CDBG dollars to projects and programs serving the long-term homeless population.
- Ramsey County's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) should prioritize funding for projects that serve the long-term homeless population.
- Prioritize projects that serve long-term homeless populations in applications for federal funding through the Continuum of Care process.

The State of Minnesota

The Governor and State Legislature must fully fund the State of Minnesota Business Plan to End Long-Term Homelessness. The City of Saint Paul and the Ramsey County should actively lobby the Legislature to do the following:

- Maintain 25% targeting of Low Income Housing Tax Credits to supportive housing projects, and continue to award additional points for projects focused on long-term homelessness.
- Increase funding for the Housing Trust Fund by \$4 million in the 2008-2009 biennium, and provide at least level funding thereafter, with priority given for rental subsidies serving the long-term homeless population.
- Continue the investment of \$10 million in the Supportive Housing Services Grants program in the 2008-2009 budget, with ongoing base funding thereafter.
- Allocate at least \$50 million in General Obligation bonds for supportive housing collectively in 2006 and 2008.
- Increase funding for the Bridges program by \$700,000 for the 2008-2009 budget.
- Maintain flexibility of the Group Residential Housing (GRH) program to better serve the long-term homeless population.

The Federal Government

Investment from the federal government is vital to our effort to end long-term homelessness. The federal government plays a key role providing much needed resources to local communities. The City and the County should actively lobby the Minnesota Delegation to support a number of federal initiatives that are central to this effort:

- Full funding of all existing Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers and advocate for new, incremental vouchers targeted for long-term homelessness.
- Support existing legislation establishing a National Housing Trust Fund.
- Increase funding for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants to \$1.45 billion annually.
- Authorize and fund the Services for Ending Long-Term Homelessness Act (SELHA) at \$70 million in FY2006, with annual increases.

- Ensure that as HUD shifts its resources more to housing that there is a parallel shift and focus on behalf of HHS to finance support services. HHS service funding should be coordinated with HUD investments in housing.

4. Improving the Coordination and Delivery of Services and Housing

While financial resources are critical to success, significant improvements in the coordination and delivery of services are necessary to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of supportive housing programs. More specifically, the following policy and systems issues must be addressed:

Coordination of health care services

- The County should identify clients who are experiencing long-term homelessness and identify their eligibility for services, including General Assistance and General Assistance Medical Care, Disability, Minnesota Family Investment Program, Medical Assistance and MinnesotaCare. The County should have a standard procedure for initiating and following up on Social Security disability applications.
- For people who have Medical Assistance, the County should determine optional and waived services for which they might be eligible, including Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services, Assertive Community Treatment, Community Alternatives for Disabled Individuals and Traumatic Brain Injury waived services and case management.

Coordination with correctional systems

- The County Human Services and Community Corrections departments should assemble a supportive housing task force that works with supportive housing providers to understand the services component of supportive housing and look for ways to connect community providers to sustainable sources of service revenue and to explore how best to coordinate criminal justice and human services for residents of supportive housing.

Coordination with foster care and other youth services

- Participate in discharge planning for youth aging out of foster care and actively seek special designated state and federal funding targeting this group, as well as discharge planning for people leaving mental health residential treatment facilities and correctional settings.
- Offer better cooperation between County child protection and community-based programs in assisting homeless youth, including:
 - All youth aged 16 years or older must have an Independent Living Plan developed before they leave foster care.
 - County case managers should assist youth formerly in foster care or the correctional system in developing transition case plans through their 20th year (as allowed under state law). Case workers should use family group conferencing more often to find strength-based, family-focused stability plans for youth transitioning from out-of-home placements.

- County and community-based programs should share information when youth who run from placement cannot be found.
- County program managers and nonprofit agency personnel should engage in continuous dialogue on cases involving minors in need of protective and supportive services.

Coordination among funders of housing and services

- Increase utilization of the Ramsey Funders Council to act as a clearinghouse for discussing the priorities and challenges of various funders of supportive housing.
- Continue to staff and actively participate in the Homeless Advisory Board, the Ramsey County Continuum of Care, the Ramsey County Funders Council and the State Advisory Council for Ending Long-Term Homelessness.
- The County Human Services Department should work with the Minnesota Department of Human Services to examine the allowed parameters of federal optional Medicaid benefits by December 2006 and expand the State plan to maximize applicability of these benefits for serving people experiencing long-term homelessness by December 2007.
- Continue to engage the Human Service Directors from the seven-county metro area in crafting a coordinated regional response to the financing and delivery of supportive housing.

5. Building a Community-Wide Response

To be successful in our endeavor, we must actively engage a wide range of stakeholders in ending long-term homelessness, and work together to address the issue. Promoting the basic respect and dignity that all people in our community deserve must be central in all educational and outreach efforts. Specific steps the Homeless Advisory Board, the City, and County should take together include the following:

Building partnerships with police

- Increase participation in the existing “Police/Provider Forum” that provides a venue for open communication between police and providers.
- Expand cross-training opportunities for the police and social service providers to learn from one-another and foster a greater balance between enforcement and intervention.
- Expand the use of community policing and increase the number of officers to accommodate this effective but labor-intensive practice.

Expand active suburban community involvement

- Ramsey County, in conjunction with the Mayor of Saint Paul and the MN League of Cities should convene a summit of Ramsey County cities to secure commitments to a regional response to long-term homelessness through investment in the State’s Ending Long-Term Homelessness Initiative Fund and the Ramsey County Endowment Fund.

- Participation in the Homeless Advisory Board should be expanded to include greater participation by suburban municipalities.

Engage diverse community groups

- Meet regularly with members of the Chamber of Commerce, and establish a business leadership committee to assist in moving the plan forward.
- Convene regular meetings with Metropolitan Interfaith Council of Affordable Housing (MICAH) and the Saint Paul Council of Churches to increase awareness of long-term homelessness and further engage faith-based organizations in supporting and creating supportive housing.
- Collaborate with a wide-array of advocacy organizations that are focused on issues affecting people experiencing long-term homelessness. Specific efforts should be made to work collectively with mental health, chemical health, housing, and homeless advocates.
- Engage the Minnesota Council of Foundations in an effort to educate local foundations on the issue of long-term homelessness, and encourage them to invest in solutions to end it.

Implementation and Oversight Responsibilities

The Homeless Advisory Board, at the direction of the Saint Paul City Council and Ramsey County Board of Commissioners, will oversee the implementation of the plan to end long-term homelessness. In doing so, the Homeless Advisory Board will be the responsible entity for establishing sub-committees to focus on the implementation of specific strategies and the overarching recommendations. Responsibility for tracking progress may be assigned to existing groups (e.g., the Ramsey County Continuum of Care, the Homeless Advisory Board zoning committee) or may create new strategy specific task groups. Additionally, the Homeless Advisory Board will be responsible for developing and presenting regular reports on the implementation of the plan to end long-term homelessness for the Saint Paul City Council, the Office of the Mayor, and the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners.

Financing Plan for Supportive Housing

The creation of 920 units of supportive housing for families, single adults and unaccompanied youth is the cornerstone of the plan. This number includes approximately two-thirds of the units for single adults, and one-third of the units for families. Based on Wilder research and interviews with youth service providers in Ramsey County, it is estimated that up to sixty units will be for long-term homeless youth. The units will be dispersed equitably throughout the City of Saint Paul and suburban Ramsey County, with a significant number of units in the City of Saint Paul and a substantial number in suburban Ramsey County. Additionally, sixty percent of the units will be new construction or rehabilitation of existing buildings, and the other forty percent will be scattered site units. Outlined in the following chart is an estimate of the sources and uses of financing over the next five years.

Sources & Uses: Supportive Housing Production Financing Plan Estimate 2006-2010

New Construction (207 units)	\$33.7 million
MN State General Obligation Bond	\$15.0 million
Private Tax Credit Equity (MHFA Allocation)	\$10.0 million
Private Tax Credit Equity (City allocation)	\$4.0 million
City of Saint Paul (HOME, CDBG, STAR, etc.)	\$4.7 million
Acquisition and Rehab (345 units)	\$30.8 million
City of Saint Paul (HOME, CDBG, STAR, etc.)	\$3.8 million
Ramsey County HRA (HOME, CDBG, Endowment Fund etc.) (representing Ramsey County suburban communities)	\$8.5 million
Minnesota Housing Finance Agency	\$7.5 million
Housing Foundations	\$3.0 million
MHFA State Appropriated Programs	\$6.0 million
Private Foundations	\$1.0 million
MN Department of Corrections	\$1.0 million
Rental Assistance (920 units)	\$36.0 million
<i>(Including 368 scattered site units)</i>	
Federal Government (Section 8, Shelter Plus Care, etc)	\$24.0 million
MHFA State Appropriations (ELHIF, HTF, etc.)	\$12.0 million
Services (920 Units)	\$30.8 million
DHS Long-Term Homeless Supportive Services Grants	\$6.0 million
DHS/Ramsey County (i.e. County mental health, MA, etc.)	\$24.8 million
Total	\$131.3 million

NOTES:

- 1) The ongoing operating costs after 2010 are not included in this chart, but will be approximately \$18 million per year for rental subsidies and support services, with added adjustments for inflation.
- 2) The financing assumptions for the costs projected in the table can be found in Appendix III.
- 3) The financing plan utilizes the information available to determine the number of family supportive housing units needed and the approximate costs. The increase in units needed based on the expanded definition needs to be calculated in consultation with Wilder.

Annual Incremental Costs

Outlined below are annualized costs of financing the capital, operating, and services for supportive housing. It should be noted that these annual costs include all the costs necessary for developing and operating the units, and that these costs are broadly distributed between the federal government, the State of Minnesota, Ramsey County, the City of Saint Paul, and philanthropic and community organizations.

Year	New Units	Total Units	Percentage	Annual Amount
2006	160	160	17.4%	\$22.85 million
2007	160	320	17.4%	\$22.85 million
2008	200	520	21.7%	\$28.50 million
2009	200	720	21.7%	\$28.50 million
2010	200	920	21.8%	\$28.60 million
	920	920	100.0%	\$131.30 million

The Rationale for Supportive Housing

Across the country and here in Minnesota, supportive housing is proving to be a sound, long-term solution for housing and helping people who have experienced long-term homelessness. Numerous studies clearly demonstrate that supportive housing is, fundamentally:

- An effective intervention that leads to better outcomes for residents
- An efficient investment of scarce public and private money
- An effective tool for improving communities

Supportive housing has been extremely successful in helping people who face the most complex challenges—individuals and families who are not only homeless, but who also have very low incomes and serious, persistent issues that may include substance use, mental illness, and chronic health conditions—to live more stable, productive lives.

Resident Outcomes

Thousands of people who languished on the streets and in shelters for years are now in supportive housing and improving their lives. According to a number of recent studies, people who have moved from the streets into supportive housing have experienced remarkable results, including:²⁰

- Increased housing stability: Once in supportive housing, many studies suggest that upwards of 80% of them remain housed after one year.²¹
- Positive impacts on health: Studies show decreases of more than 50% in tenants' emergency room visits and hospital inpatient days; and decreases in tenants' use of emergency detoxification services by more than 80%.²²
- Positive impacts on employment: Studies indicate increases of 50% in earned income and 40% in the rate of participant employment when employment services are provided in supportive housing.²³
- Positive impacts on treating mental illness: In one study, 83% of people with mental illness provided with supportive housing remained housed a year later, and experienced a decrease in symptoms of schizophrenia and depression.²⁴
- Reducing or ending substance use: A recent study of people leaving chemical dependency treatment programs found that 57% of those living independently remained sober; 56% of those living in a halfway house remained sober; while 90% of those living in supportive housing remained sober.²⁵

Efficient Use of Scarce Resources

In addition to providing better outcomes for people, supportive housing is also proven to be an effective and efficient use of scarce public resources. A growing body of evidence is demonstrating the success and cost effectiveness of supportive housing. Among the findings:

Providing ongoing public services for people with mental illness who are involved in the criminal justice system often costs Ramsey County more than \$100,000 a year per person.

A recent article in the Saint Paul Pioneer Press examining low-level crime offenders with mental illness, and the costs related to serving them, found some startling results.²⁶ According to Ramsey County, the cost of serving a single individual meeting the criteria for mental health court includes a wide array of services, including but not limited to:

<u>Service</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Average of 8 emergency rooms visits	\$19,200
5 months in a regional treatment center	\$69,000
Police involvement	\$6,750
Mental health case management	\$9,500
Adult Detention Center	\$3,500

Providing supportive housing is often no more expensive, and frequently cheaper than many alternatives.

According to the “Cost of Serving Homeless Individuals in Nine Cities” study of homeless single adult completed by the Lewin Group in November of 2004, providing supportive housing is a less expensive alternative than other services accessed by people experiencing long-term homelessness.²⁷ Outlined below is a summary of the cost per day in the Cities of Columbus and Seattle.

<u>Columbus</u>		<u>Seattle</u>	
Supportive housing	\$30.48	Supportive Housing	\$26.00
Jail	\$70.00	Jail	\$87.67
Prison	\$59.34	Prison	\$95.51
Mental hospital	\$451.00	Mental hospital	\$555.00

In addition, a study conducted by the University of Pennsylvania Center for Mental Health Policy and Services tracked 4,679 homeless people with psychiatric disabilities who were placed into 3,615 units of supportive housing in New York City.²⁸ The study compared the costs of serving these individuals while homeless to the costs of providing supportive housing and found that:

- Including the cost of supportive housing, it costs the public only \$1,908 more a year to provide service-enriched housing to a person with mentally illness than it does to allow him or her to remain homeless.

- Participants used an average of \$40,449 in publicly funded services over the course of a year while homeless. Once placed into supportive housing, participants reduced their use of publicly funded services by an average of \$12,145 per year.
- Accounting for the natural turnover that occurs as some of the residents move out of service-enriched housing, these service reduction savings translate into \$16,282 per year for each unit of housing constructed.

Supportive housing leads to significant reductions in the utilization of crisis services, including detox facilities by single adults.

In 1998, Hennepin County issued reports on the Glenwood Residence and Anishinabe Wakiagun supportive housing in Minneapolis that serve formerly homeless men and women with late-stage alcoholism.²⁹ These studies found that:

- Average detox admissions for residents with a prior detox history decreased from 8.0 to 2.4 annually for Glenwood residents, and from 18.0 to 2.5 annually for Anishinabe Wakiagun residents, resulting in an estimated annual savings of between \$2,086 and \$5,012 per tenant.
- The annual cost savings in detox use alone covers 24% of the Glenwood's annual operating costs.
- The annual number of criminal bookings for residents decreased 29% per year, and the average number of days spent in the Adult Detention Center per year dropped by 69%.

Supportive housing for families significantly reduces their reliance on other costly public systems, including chemical dependency services and foster care.

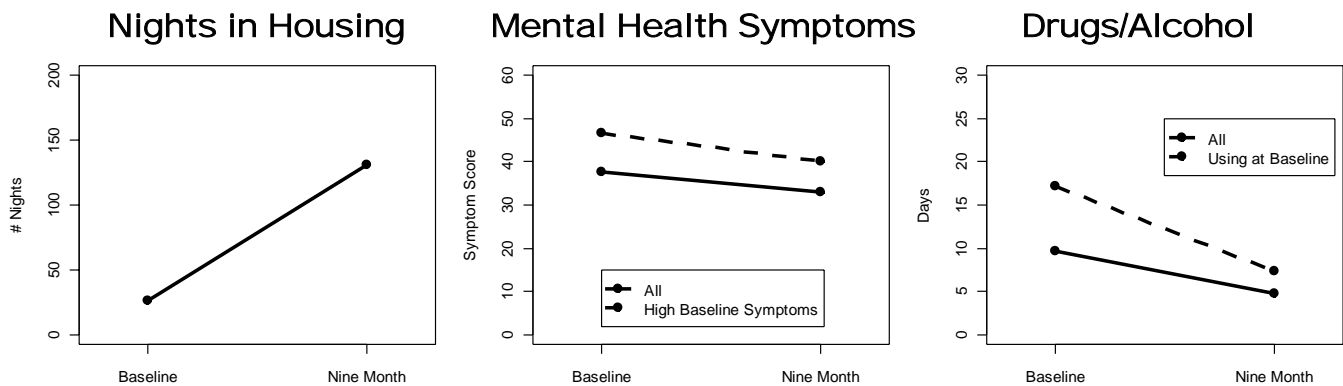
In 2002, Hennepin County began an evaluation of 43 families living in two supportive housing programs to determine whether supportive housing reduces county-funded crisis services in child protection, out-of-home placements and substance abuse treatment.³⁰ The study looked at County crisis service expenses six months before and six months after families moved into supportive housing. This evaluation found that:

- Crisis costs declined by an average of \$6,200.
- Although County spending remained about the same, the amount spent on crisis services decreased from 88% to 22%.
- There was a significant reduction in costs associated with chemical health treatment.
- Children spent fewer days in foster care.

Ramsey County Example: Hearth Connection

Hearth Connection manages a pilot project currently operating in Ramsey and Blue Earth Counties that is focused on ending long-term homelessness. The pilot works with both families and single adults, and in addition to providing housing, it provides a variety of services to assist in keeping the person housed and achieving other goals around health and self-reliance. According to recent data that track participants for nine months:

- Participants increased the number of nights spent in their own housing by a factor of five, from 26 nights to 131 nights.
- Participants experienced a decrease in mental health symptoms, equivalent to the elimination of one symptom.
- On average, participants used a drug or drank to intoxication five fewer days each month. For only the participants with at least one use-day at baseline, the decrease is nearly 10 days.³¹



Improving and Investing in the Community

The most frequent argument made against supportive housing is that the value of adjacent and near-by properties will plummet. The evidence suggests otherwise. A comprehensive evaluation of the Connecticut Supportive Housing Demonstration Program included an assessment of property values of a number of neighborhoods where supportive housing developments were located.³² The study looked at sales data of commercial buildings before and after the developments were built and found that in seven out of eight instances property values actually increased. Several of these areas experienced increases of more than \$12 weighted average per square foot.

The Connecticut evaluation also found that the development of supportive housing can provide additional economic and fiscal benefits to the community. Economic benefits are derived from developing costs and operating expenses of supportive housing projects that were directly

invested into the economy; fiscal benefits result from property taxes and other expenses that are paid directly to the municipality. The study found that the eight developments had an overall economic and fiscal benefit of over \$29 million. Accounting for indirect benefits that result from the economic activity generated by the circulation of additional dollars in the local economy, direct and indirect fiscal and economic benefits added up to nearly \$114 million.

Supportive Housing Models

People experiencing long-term homelessness have a variety of needs and there are many different models of supportive housing to meet those needs. Supportive housing, broadly speaking, is the combination of housing and supportive services designed to help tenants, based on their needs and desires, to maintain their housing and improve their quality of life. In fact, supportive housing has two distinct elements: the housing models themselves; and the service models that are used to provide services to residents.

First and foremost, supportive housing includes a landlord tenant relationship, whether it is between the tenant and a service provider or the provider and landlord/management company. Secondly, there are services offered in conjunction with housing, although accessing services is usually not a requirement of tenancy. There are three primary housing models used for creating the actual supportive housing units: single-site; scattered-site apartments; and mixed income/use.

Single-Site

Single-site housing units are located in one building or one area. Single-site supportive housing can be as small as a duplex with two units, as large as an apartment building with twenty units, or larger. Supportive services are often made accessible on-site to tenants. Examples of single-site supportive housing in Saint Paul include:

- New Foundations/Crestview is a multi family supportive housing community for families with children recovering from chemical dependency.
- Wilder's American House is a Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) Supportive Housing program which provides housing for low-income, single adults.

Clustered or Scattered-Site

Scattered-site supportive housing consists of single-family homes, townhouses, duplexes or apartments throughout the community. Providers of scattered-site supportive housing generally work with landlords to either master lease units, or have the tenants themselves lease the unit. Providers go to the tenants to provide supportive services or the services may be located in close proximity to tenants. Examples of scattered site supportive housing in Saint Paul and Ramsey County include:

- Guild Inc.'s Delancey Street: Works with landlords to help single individuals experiencing long-term homelessness obtain and maintain housing. Units are scattered in apartments across Saint Paul and Ramsey County.
- Wilder ROOF Program: Works with homeless families and assists them in securing housing in the community, and provides supportive services.

Mixed Use and/or Mixed Income Supportive Housing

Mixed income supportive housing incorporates market rate, affordable, and/or supportive housing together, while mixed use housing often includes commercial uses in the same building. Mixed use/mixed income supportive housing works for individuals and families with a range of abilities and needs. It re-establishes patterns of neighboring, minimizes the isolation of low-income people, and reduces the concentration of poverty in housing.

- Seventh Street Landing is home to single youth, at least 18 years old, who are transitioning out of foster care with no place to go or who were previously homeless. In addition to providing single-site units, Seventh Street Landing also has a commercial component to the project on the first floor that, through the commercial tenants, provides the youth with employment opportunities.

Supportive Housing Service Models

There are a variety of service models that are incorporated into supportive housing to meet the different needs of people and populations experiencing long-term homelessness. Services that are often connected to supportive housing include:

- Employment training programs
- Safety planning services for domestic abuse
- Parenting and child development services
- Chemical dependency treatment/support groups
- Mental health supports
- Life skills programs
- Health care supports
- Legal aid services
- Family reunification services
- Education attainment programs

Participation may range from completely voluntary to mandatory. Supportive housing providers look to residents' needs to determine the level of services needed. Some key service models include:

Housing First: Housing First advocates that many families and individuals experiencing homelessness should be relocated into permanent housing as quickly as possible, with the provision of case management and/or other supportive services available to help people rebuild their lives. The model is premised on the belief that many vulnerable and at-risk families and individuals are more responsive to interventions and social services support after they are in their own housing, rather than while living in shelter or on the streets. With permanent housing, these families and individuals can begin to regain the self-confidence and control over their lives they lost when they became homeless. This approach acknowledges that for some individuals, lifelong support may be required to prevent reoccurrence into homelessness.

Harm Reduction: Harm reduction is a set of strategies that encourages clients and service providers to reduce the harm done by drug/alcohol use, negative choices, and harmful behavior. In supporting clients in gaining access to tools to improve their health and lifestyles, harm reduction recognizes their competence to protect and help themselves, their loved ones, and their communities. Ultimately harm reduction is about meeting people where they are at. It is about building trusting relationships as a way to engage people, while always exploring options and slowly offering them an alternative, including sobriety that may help them in some way.

Sobriety-Based: Sobriety-based supportive housing is a service strategy that nurtures sobriety and a strong sense of community. The housing itself offers a sober environment free of alcohol and drugs, and is designed for those who want to remain chemically/alcohol free and live in a drug-free community. Sobriety is generally enforced.

Overall, there is no “one-size fits all” supportive housing model. Given the complexity and variety of challenges people experiencing long-term homelessness face, we must utilize all of the aforementioned service and housing models, and provide options to people so they can choose the approach that best serves them.

Endnotes

- ¹ Ramsey County Board Resolution #2005-198; Passed unanimously May 17, 2005.
- Saint Paul City Council Resolution #05-514; Passed unanimously June 15, 2005. See Appendix 5 for copies of the resolutions.
- ² Saint Paul Mayor Randy Kelly's State of the City Address, April 26, 2005; Dorothy Day Center, Saint Paul
- ³ Culhane, D., et.al., *The New York, New York Agreement Cost Study: The Impact of Supportive Housing on Services Use for Homeless Mental Ill Individuals*, The Corporation for Supportive Housing; May 2001.
- Black, Kendall and Cho, Richard, *New Beginnings: The Need for Supportive Housing for Previously Incarcerated People*, Common Ground Community and Corporation for Supportive Housing, 2004.
- U.S. Departments of Justice, Labor, and Health and Human Services; *The Report of the Re-entry Policy Council; Policy Statement 19: Housing*, Page, 256; 2004
- ⁴ Minnesota Departments of Human Services, Corrections and Housing Finance; *Ending Long-Term Homelessness in Minnesota: Report and Business Plan of the Working Group on Long-Term Homelessness*; March 2004
<http://www.mhfa.state.mn.us/multifamily/LTH.htm>
- ⁵ Elwood, Ron, et.al., *Saint Paul – Ramsey County Five-Year Low Income Housing and Homeless Services Plan*; April 1999. Available by e-mail at: jim.anderson@co.ramsey.mn.us
- Saint Paul / Ramsey County Homeless Advisory Board; *Final Status Report on the Five-Year Plan*; May 2005; Available by e-mail at: jim.anderson@co.ramsey.mn.us.
- ⁶ Saint Paul City Council Housing Affordability Policy; Council File 99-90; Adopted April 21, 1999.
- ⁷ Minnesota State Departments of Human Services, Corrections and Housing Finance; *Ending Long-Term Homelessness in Minnesota: Report and Business Plan of the Working Group on Long-Term Homelessness*; March 2004
- ⁸ For a complete list of the Homeless Advisory Board membership, e-mail to: jim.anderson@co.ramsey.mn.us.
- ⁹ Burt, Martha, *What Will it Take to End Homelessness*, The Urban Institute, October 2001.
- Burt, M. , Aron, L, and Valente, J; *Helping America's Homeless: Emergency Shelter or Affordable Housing?*; The Urban Institute Press, 2001.
- ¹⁰ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Ending Chronic Homelessness: Strategies for Action; Report from the Secretary's Work Group on Ending Chronic Homelessness*; Page 10; March 2003.
- ¹¹ Federal Interagency Council on Homelessness; website: <http://www.ich.gov/>
- ¹² For information on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance programs, go to:
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/index.cfm>
- ¹³ Information on cities, counties and regions who have developed plans to end homelessness go to the Federal Interagency Council on Homelessness website: <http://www.ich.gov/>
- ¹⁴ Wilder Research Center; *Statewide Survey of People Without Permanent Shelter; Ramsey County Regional Data Tables; May 2004*;
<http://www.wilder.org/reportssummary>
- ¹⁵ Wilder Research Center; *Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing and Battered Women's Shelters: Ramsey County Data Collection Project, Thirteenth Annual Report*; December 2004; <http://www.wilder.org/reportssummary>
- ¹⁶ Ramsey County Continuum of Care; *2005 Exhibit 1: Application for funding to HUD for McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Funding*; May 2005; Available by e-mail at: jim.anderson@co.ramsey.mn.us
- ¹⁷ Wilder Research Center; *Statewide Survey of People Without Permanent Shelter; Ramsey County Regional Data Tables; May 2004*;
<http://www.wilder.org/reportssummary>
- ¹⁸ Wilder Research Center; *Homeless in Minnesota: A Closer Look; Youth and Young Adults On Their Own; 2003 Statewide Survey of People Without Permanent Shelter*; February 2005; http://www.wilder.org/fileadmin/user_upload/research/HomelessYouthsum_4-05_01.pdf
- ¹⁹ Saint Paul / Ramsey County Homeless Advisory Board; Zoning and Land Use Sub-Committee; *Committee Recommendations*;
For a copy e-mail to: jim.anderson@co.ramsey.mn.us

-
- ²⁰ Culhane, Dennis, et.al.; May 2001; *The Impact of Supportive Housing on the Utilization of the Public Health, Corrections and Emergency Shelter Systems: The New York / New York Agreement Cost Study: The Impact of Supportive Housing on Services Use for Homeless Mentally Ill Individuals*; www.csh.org
- United States Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA); 2003; *Blueprint for Change: Ending Long-Term Homelessness for Persons with Serious Mental Illnesses and Co-Occurring Substance Abuse Disorders*; DHHS Publication No. SMA-04-3870; Rockville, MD.
- New Freedom Commission on Mental Health; June 2004; *Subcommittee on Housing and Homelessness: Background Paper*; DHHS Pub.No. SMA-04-3884. Rockville, MD; SAMSHA's National Mental Health Information Center (800) 789-2647
- ²¹ Tsemberis, S.; *Housing First Approach*; The Encyclopedia of Homelessness, Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Carling, P.J.; *Housing and Supports for Persons with Mental Illness: Emerging Approaches to Research and Practice*; Hospital and Community Psychiatry; 1993.
- ²² Proscio, Tony; Corporation for Supportive Housing; *Supportive Housing and Its Impact on the Public Health Crisis of Homelessness*; 2000; <http://www.csh.org/html/supportiveimpact-final.pdf>
- Hennepin County; *Anishinabe Wakiagun Residents' Use of Emergency Services in Hennepin County, Minnesota*; March 2001; http://www.mncounties.org/macssa/best_practices_archive/chemical_dependency.htm
- ²³ Long, David, with Doyle, Heather, and Amendolia, Jean; *The Next Step: Jobs Initiative Cost-Effectiveness Analysis, Final Report*; April 1999
- ²⁴ Culhane, Dennis, et.al.; May 2001; *The Impact of Supportive Housing on the Utilization of the Public Health, Corrections and Emergency Shelter Systems: The New York / New York Agreement Cost Study: The Impact of Supportive Housing on Services Use for Homeless Mentally Ill Individuals*; www.csh.org
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ St. Paul Pioneer Press; *Court Seeks Help Not Jail for the Mentally Ill*; June 13, 2005; Source: Ramsey County
- ²⁷ The Lewin Group; *Costs of Serving Homeless Individuals in Nine Cities*; November 2004.
- ²⁸ Culhane, Dennis, et.al.; May 2001; *The Impact of Supportive Housing on the Utilization of the Public Health, Corrections and Emergency Shelter Systems: The New York / New York Agreement Cost Study: The Impact of Supportive Housing on Services Use for Homeless Mentally Ill Individuals*; www.csh.org
- ²⁹ *Anishinabe Wakaigun Residents' Use of Emergency Services in Hennepin County, Minnesota*. Adult Services Chemical Health Division, Hennepin County. March, 2001.
- ³⁰ Summary of Key Research Findings to Date on Cost-Effectiveness of Supportive Housing for Families." Hennepin County Children, Family, and Adult Services Department. April, 2003.
- ³¹ The National Center on Family Homelessness; *The Minnesota Supportive Housing and Managed Care Pilot: Qualitative Evaluation: Year Three*; January 2005
- ³² Sherwood, Kay; University of Pennsylvania Health System, Department of Psychiatry
Center for Mental Health Policy and Services Research; *Connecticut Supportive Housing Demonstration Program Evaluation Report*; January 2001.

Note: All of the appendices listed in the report can be obtained by contacting:

Jim Anderson - Ramsey County
(651) 266-4116
jim.anderson@co.ramsey.mn.us

Joe Collins - City of Saint Paul
(651) 266-6020
joe.collins@ci.stpaul.mn.us