

FAYETTTE COUNTY

Ten-year plan to end homelessness

Introduction

The Fayette County Continuum of Care would like to present this updated Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness in Fayette County, Ohio. The Fayette County Continuum of Care consortium met with the RHISCO (Rural Homeless Initiative of South Central Ohio) in January 2006. At that time the Continuum of Care was asked to join in the process of creating a local and regional plan to end homelessness. A needs assessment was taken of Fayette County in April 2006 to identify what support systems existed in Fayette County and what resources were needed to provide homeless individuals and families or individuals and families at risk of homelessness with necessary services. The Continuum of Care requested members to join the planning committee. The planning committee began to meet in August 2006 to frame the plan.

The Fayette County Continuum of Care would like to thank the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation for providing funding for developing this plan. The Fayette County Continuum of Care would also like to thank The National Alliance to End Homelessness for providing technical assistance to develop the plan. The conference and technical assistance session were integral to the framing of this plan. We would also like to take this time to thank the Executive Planning Committee for their commitment:

Bambi Baughn, Deputy Director, Community Action Commission of Fayette County
Christina Blair, Employment Counselor, Fayette County Homeless Shelter
Gaye Huffman, Homeless Programs Coordinator, Fayette County Homeless Shelter
Mark Lutz, Director, Fayette Recovery
Sue Raypole, Board Member, Goodwill of South Central Ohio
Faye Williamson, Assistant Director, Fayette County Department of Job and Family Services

In 2009, the Fayette County Continuum of Care met to update the plan. Very little needed adjusted at the time. The committee chose to continue current goals and add foreclosure prevention to the list of homeless prevention services. We would like to take this time to thank the planning committee:

Jack DeWeese, Fayette County Commissioners
Faye Williamson, Assistant Director, Fayette County Department of Job and Family Services
Whitney Gentry, Director, United Way
Sue Raypole, Board Member, Goodwill
Yvonne Broughton, Director, Fayette County Head Start
Tina Dahmer, Loan Packager, Self Help Housing
Christina Blair, Case Management Supervisor, Community Action

In 2011, the Fayette County Continuum of Care identified the need for another update due to many of the goal's plans being met or needing to be revamped. The Continuum of Care submitted a Community Needs Survey to partners and members of the community. The survey received 35 responses. The Fayette County Continuum of Care also surveyed several homeless program participants to identify reasons for their homelessness and utilization of services. The following individuals are thanked for their participation during the planning committee meeting:

Faye Williamson, Assistant Director, Job and Family Services
Whitney Gentry, Director, United Way
Eddie Stewart, Executive Director, Fayette Metropolitan Housing Authority
Cheryl Royster, Director of Social Services, Fayette County Memorial Hospital
Vicki Congrove, Director, Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health Clinic

Quella Brown, Shelter Manager, My Sister's House
Anita Helsel, Advocate, My Sister's House
Tina Dahmer, Loan Packager, Self Help Housing
Angel Souther, Southern State Community College
Ashlee Cockerill, Case Worker, Children's Services
Jodi Baker, Coordinator, Fayette County Head Start
Tanya Hart, Licensed Counselor, Fayette Recovery
Kelli Brown, Licensed Counselor, Fayette Recovery
Danielle Shoemaker, Employment Specialist, Goodwill
Christina Blair, HPRP Director, Community Action
Lindsay Minzler, Case Manager, HPRP

The Fayette County Continuum of Care consortium (CoC) has identified the resources we currently have to prevent and address homelessness; determined what gaps in services exist in our county; and is developing and implementing activities to close the gaps and end homelessness in our community. Through the update process, these services and goals were last updated January 2012.

Background

Homelessness

Thirty-six years ago there was not widespread homelessness in America. Tonight approximately 750,000 men, women and children will be homeless, despite a two billion dollar a year infrastructure designed to deal with the problem.

While the seeds of homelessness were planted in the 1960s and 1970s with deinstitutionalization of people living with mental illness and loss of affordable housing stock, widespread homelessness did not emerge until the 1980s. Several factors have affected its growth over the last two decades. Housing has become scarcer for those with little money. Earnings from employment and from benefits have not kept pace with the cost of housing for low income and poor people. Services that every family needs for support and stability have become harder for very poor people to afford or find.

In addition to these systemic causes, social changes have exacerbated the personal problems of many poor Americans, leading them to be more vulnerable to homelessness. These social trends have included new kinds of illegal drugs and more single parent and teen-headed households with low earning power and thinning support networks. These causes of homelessness must be addressed. People who are homeless must be helped. The current system does this reasonably well for many of those who become homeless. But the homeless assistance system can neither prevent people from becoming homeless nor change the overall availability of housing, income and services that will truly end homelessness.

Many people think of homelessness as strictly an urban phenomenon because homeless people are greater in number and are more visible in urban areas, but homelessness, including people who live in housing not meant for habitation, is pervasive in rural areas. The number of people who experience rural homelessness is unknown, but the last national count of homeless people found that 9 percent live in rural areas. In actual raw numbers, this translates into roughly 67,000 people on any given night. (Burt, 1996) Evidence suggests that if the number of people who experience homelessness in rural areas was viewed and counted more accurately, the number would be far greater.

Rural Homelessness

Advocates and researchers often refer to people who experience rural homelessness as the "hidden homeless." Many people who experience housing instability in rural areas go unnoticed and

uncounted because rural homelessness takes shape differently than urban homelessness. Most rural homeless people live in doubled up situations with friends or family or in motels, in cars, campgrounds and other places not intended for habitation. This is largely because most rural areas do not have large emergency shelters systems.

While those doubled up households do not meet HUD's definition of homelessness, people living temporarily with friends and family are essentially homeless and they experience similar problems with housing instability. Many researchers and advocates argue for expanding this view of homelessness to capture the unique situations rural homeless people face. If the view of homelessness included households who double up, the numbers of people who experience homelessness in rural areas would increase exponentially.

The same structural factors that contribute to urban homelessness, such as a lack of affordable housing and inadequate income to pay for housing, cause rural homelessness. Other predictors of homelessness, such as mental illness and drug abuse, while still present among the rural homeless, are not pervasive. However, people who experience rural homelessness do report higher rates of alcohol abuse and domestic violence than their urban counterparts.

Rural Poverty

Rural poverty has some unique characteristics. Areas concentrated with rural poverty can be identified throughout the South, West and the Midwest of the United States. The scarcity of jobs, goods, and services has caused an outward migration of rural populations to places with more opportunities. As a consequence, the rural communities with high rates of poverty are sparsely populated and their poverty populations are severely impoverished.

High rates of poverty and unemployment in rural areas also drive homelessness. Rural homelessness is most dramatic in areas that experience high rates of unemployment because of declining industries, for example farming, timber, mining, or fishing. (Aron and Fitchen, 1996) The lack of available jobs and steady incomes means that poverty rates are higher in rural areas; the poverty rate in non-metropolitan areas is 14 percent, almost 11.6 percent less than in metropolitan areas. It is not surprising that one in five children living in rural areas is below the poverty line. (USDA Economic Research Service, 2004). Transportation also presents a unique issue for low-income families in rural areas.

Homelessness in Fayette County

Service Area, Demographics, & Income

Unless otherwise noted all facts from this section come from the U.S. Census Bureau's State and County Quick Facts.

The Fayette County Continuum of Care has identified its service area as Fayette County, Ohio. This rural county covers 407 square miles with a population of approximately 29,030. In Fayette County the population is predominantly Caucasian with 94.6% of the population reporting white as their race. African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos comprise 2% and 1.8% of the population respectively. All other races and those reporting two races each comprise less than 2.5% of the total population.

In general the population in Fayette County is fairly educated; however it is slightly below the state average. 82.7% of Fayette County residents have graduated from high school. Disparities are more notable in the percentage of the population who has obtained a Bachelor's Degree. Only 13.7% of

the population has a degree versus the state average of 23.6%. However, the type of employment available in the area may be an indicator of why many people who choose to pursue a higher education leave Fayette County to pursue a better job.

Employment

The most common occupations in Fayette County as of 2007 are: sales and office occupations, 25 percent; management, professional, and related occupations, 24 percent; Production, transportation, and material moving occupations, 24 percent; Service occupations, 17 percent; and Construction, extraction, maintenance and repair occupations, 9 percent. Seventy-eight percent of the people employed were private wage and salary workers; 16 percent were Federal, state, or local government workers; and 6 percent were self-employed in own not incorporated business workers.

Unemployment rates since 2006 are as follows:

Year	Rate in August
2006	4.8
2007	4.6
2008	5.6
2009	11.4
2010	10.7
2011	9.1

Housing

43% of all renters in Fayette County cannot afford a two bedroom apartment at the fair market rent of \$641 per month. (2009-2010 PCSAO Factbook, 9th Edition). In fact, 34.7% of renters pay more than 35% of their monthly income on their rent (State of Poverty in Ohio 2011). Fayette County does have a 64.9% home ownership rate.

Fayette County has no public housing. The Metropolitan Housing Authority administers a Section 8 voucher program, and has applied for as many types of voucher-assisted programs as it can. Fayette Metropolitan Housing Authority has 372 vouchers. There are 294 families are on a waiting list. This list was closed January 2005, reopened for 2 months in June 2006, and closed again in August 2006. The list then reopened for 1 month in November 2008 and is currently closed except for Veterans, terminally ill, or disabled persons.

Poverty & Homelessness

Fayette County has programs that provide shelter for the homeless. Community Action’s family shelter has 16 beds. CAC also operates 16 transitional housing units for families, 17 Single Room Occupancy units for single adults, 10 Shelter Plus Care Vouchers, and 8 scattered site Permanent Supportive Housing units. My Sister’s House has 10 beds for domestic violence victims. Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health Center has 12 beds for persons with mental health issues. Fayette Recovery has 15 beds for recovering substance-abusers.

Shelter History:

Year	Adults	Children	Unaccompanied Youth	Average Length of Stay
2006	42	21	1	32.92
2007	60	29	0	33.76
2008	63	42	2	35.75

2009	77	60	0	33.94
2010	62	57	0	34.87
October 2011	53	48	1	33.97

The face of homelessness in Fayette County is much like its demographics. Caucasians comprise the majority of the homeless population with minorities following along with the representation within the entire community. In the past, service providers note that there were mostly single mothers populating the homeless shelters. In recent years that trend has changed with more men entering the family shelter as two parent families. It is unlikely that this represents a change in homelessness, but rather a change in TANF eligibility.

Individuals with disabilities are more likely to experience chronic homelessness. Disabilities in Fayette County reported in the 2010 census are as follows:

Age Group	Percentage reporting a disability
5-20	18.1
21-64	16.5
64 & Above	15.7

Often times another predictor of homelessness is the usage of public support systems. In 2008, recipients of cash assistance increased 4% to a total of 324 households receiving cash assistance. However, relatives caring for children receiving cash assistance increased 16% with 128 households. SNAPs increased by 135% (3,051) and families receiving assistance with child care increased 69% (2009-2010 PCSAO Factbook, 9th Edition)

HMIS

In order to track the characteristics of homelessness, such as: age, sex, race, educational attainment, duration and number of incidences of homelessness the federal government came up with Homeless Management Information System. Fayette County, as one out of nine pilot counties in Ohio, has been using HMIS since January 2004. The use of HMIS has led to better data and the enhancement of service planning and delivery. In 2011, the Fayette County Continuum of Care met with shelters in surrounding counties to discuss additional data points to include in HMIS.

Fayette County Continuum of Care

Mission Statement (adopted February 18, 2004)

“To promote secure, affordable and safe housing for residents of Fayette County who are homeless or who have been identified as being at risk of becoming homeless.”

The Fayette County C o C began meeting informally in the 1990’s. In 2006 the continuum has chosen Fayette County Community Action to act as its fiscal agent. There is broad representation in the Fayette County CoC. The group has identified the necessity of continually engaging and maintaining membership from local elected officials, education, law enforcement, courts, faith-based organizations, and the business community.

Agencies represented are:

Angels Awaiting

Community Action Commission of Fayette County (following programs :)

- Homeless Shelter
- Transitional Housing
- Fayette Inn SRO
- Destination HOME
- Homeless Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing Program
- Self Help Housing
- Salvation Army
- HEAP
- Adult Protective Services and Family Caregiver Program
- Head Start
- Transportation

Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging – Volunteer Guardianship Program

Fayette County Job and Family Services

Fayette County Commissioners

Fayette County Board of DD

Fayette County Memorial Hospital – Social Services Division

Fayette Recovery – Drug & Alcohol recovery services

Goodwill of Central Ohio

Juvenile Court

LIFE Pregnancy Center

Metropolitan Housing Authority

Miami Trace Schools

Ministerial Association

My Sister’s House

Red Cross

Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health

The Well at Sunnyside

VA Homeless Services Coordinator – Chillicothe VA

Veterans Services of Fayette County

Victim/Witness program – County Prosecutor’s Office

Washington City Schools

United Way of Fayette County

Point-in-Time Count

The Fayette County Continuum of Care conducts an annual count of the homeless. The Point in Time Count consists of a service based count, sheltered count, unsheltered count, and a Homeless Project Connect. The following data has been collected:

Year	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total
2006	42	0	42
2007	65	27	92
2008	60	29	89
2009	65	16	81
2010	56	24	80

Needs statement (2006)

While various support systems and collaboration already exist in Fayette County, there are still unmet needs identified by Fayette County CoC.

Fayette County has need for:

- Housing with case management services for the chronically homeless. Target group is chronically homeless families. Case management is needed to keep these families in their housing once they leave the shelter or the streets to end the cycle of homelessness.
- There is no emergency shelter for single males. The family shelter can only accommodate men who are part of families.
- The county's Single Room Occupancy facility has proven to be a very valuable resource, but is full most of the time, with little tenant turnover. There is a need for another one.
- Case management for prevention programs. The agencies are able to obtain funds to provide emergency assistance, but services funds for case managers to provide full assistance to families is limited.
- Volunteers – all the programs serving or benefiting homeless persons could use more volunteers.

Needs statement (2011)

While various support systems and collaboration already exist in Fayette County, there are still unmet needs identified by Fayette County CoC.

Fayette County has need for:

- There is no emergency shelter for single males. The family shelter can only accommodate men who are part of families.
- The county's Single Room Occupancy, Shelter Plus Care, and Permanent Supportive Housing programs have proven to be a very valuable resource, but are full most of the time, with little tenant turnover. There is a need for additional units with case management services.
- Volunteers – all the programs serving or benefiting homeless persons could use more volunteers.

Prevention

The prevention of homelessness is the most cost effective and stabilizing manner to deal with homelessness. Once permanent housing is lost families and/or individuals experiencing homelessness become even more unstable and have even less access to mainstream sources of assistance. Currently, Fayette County has planned and implemented several strategies and resources to prevent homelessness. These include:

- Salvation Army – emergency utility, rent, mortgage assistance – operated through CAC
- Homelessness Prevention (Housing Trust Fund) administered by CAC – emergency rent payments (discontinued in 2008)
- Homeless Prevention Pilot –administered by CAC. Emergency rent and utility payments (morphed into HPRP in 2009)
- Home Energy Assistance Program – administered by CAC. Emergency utility payments
- Home Weatherization & Home Repair programs operated by CAC – health and safety modifications, furnace check-up and repair or replacement.
- Fayette Area Community Emergency Services (FACES), funded by Ministerial Association and administered by CAC – emergency utility and rent payments
- Fayette County Board of DD- Family Support Services
- Fayette County CHIP office – had limited emergency rent funds
- Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health - emergency housing for persons with mental illness
- My Sister's House – emergency services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault
- St. Vincent DePaul – emergency utility and rent payments
- Prevention/Retention/Contingency Program – administered by Department of Job & Family Services – emergency utility and rent payments (discontinued 2008)
- Goodwill- employment specialist through BVR referral

- Food pantries
- OSU Extension Office – assistance with budgeting
- Children’s Services - family reunification program
- Job and Family Services – Dislocated worker rent and utility assistance through the Clinton Foundation
- SSI Ohio Project – assistance with applying for SSI/SSDI for the homeless or at-risk
- Self Help Housing – assistance with credit repair
- Veterans Services – emergency assistance to veterans

While assisting a family prior to its becoming homeless is essential to ending and preventing homelessness, in 2006 there was limited staff dedicated to prevention. Only minimal eligibility and other documentation were done. During the development of the original plan many homeless prevention programs lacked case management staff. Staff administering funds lacked the time or resources to work with applicants to fully understand the problem that led to threat of homelessness and to help develop a long-term plan to alleviate the problems that caused the emergency situation. In order to alleviate this gap in service delivery CoC agencies sought grant money for services, as well as funds for direct assistance. While funding for case management staff was obtained in 2008, the Fayette County CoC still struggles with shrinking funds available to provide prevention services.

During the development of this plan there was no single point of contact in Fayette County. Often times that meant that coordination of funds and services is not being utilized to its fullest extent. As a part of the development of case management for the prevention of homelessness, the CoC hired a dedicated staff member to maintain weekly assessments of resources in Fayette County, maintain a community resource phone line, and provide referrals. This staff person is also responsible for community education and outreach to those experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

During the development of this plan the need to increase coordination of limited funding to better utilize funding on the local and regional level was identified. Rural communities must bind together to share resources as the federal government continues to slash budgets for addressing rural homelessness. The CoC will continue to meet monthly and share information about resources they have to decrease duplication and plan to combine resources to provide maximum services and expand the regional Continuum of Care.

Too often the community does not realize the resources that exist to help those facing homelessness. Homeless individuals in rural counties are more likely to contact friends or family for support or live in a “doubled up” situation. The CoC will designate member(s) to coordinate public awareness information to the local newspaper, radio station and community television station. Informational posters will also be developed and placed in agencies to reach those who are at risk of homelessness who may not have access to radio, television, the paper, or the internet.

Many tenants do not understand their rights and responsibilities and many landlords do not understand due process. In order to provide landlord/tenant education The CoC will continue to contact the local Rural Legal Aid to provide training and disseminate materials. The CoC has a member of the legal aid program attending CoC meetings. The CoC will also continue to contact the Landlord Association to offer education for landlords about the cost of eviction, effective prevention methods, and available resources for tenants who require assistance.

While Fayette County has a public transit program their services are limited to 8-4:30 unless the participant is eligible through the Job Access Reverse Commute Program, which is available from 5-8 Monday through Saturday. The public transit program will look into identifying other funding sources

to transport customers, including developing contracts with local employers and studying the feasibility of a fix route.

Most of the jobs available locally do not pay enough for families to become self-sufficient. The CoC will coordinate more with local WIA programs. 3 members of the CoC are also members for the 5-county Regional Advisory Committee for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) for Fayette County.

Fayette County must continue to have a skilled workforce to attract higher paying employers to the county. To prevent future homelessness the CoC must fill that gap when it exists to ensure that the next generation has been taught the skills they need to succeed in the workplace. The development of a skilled workforce and job creation are the responsibilities of other agencies and organizations in the county. The CoC will invite representatives from those agencies to participate in meetings so that CoC members can be involved and/or provide input regarding economic development in the county.

Prevention Accomplishments

- ✓ (2008) CACFC received one of five pilot grants to provide case management and financial assistance to families facing homelessness.
- ✓ (2008) CACFC created the Single Point of Contact for Homeless Prevention.
- ✓ (2008) CoC held several homeless prevention subcommittee meetings. The committee disbanded when PRC and CHIP funds were cut.
- ✓ (2008) Public Awareness Campaign began to inform public of Homeless Prevention services
- ✓ (2008) Development of Landlord Outreach activities and Landlord/Tenant Rights Education begins
- ✓ (2008) CACFC Transportation receives JARC funding which creates employment related transportation and extended hours.
- ✓ (2009) The CACFC was selected by the state to lead Region 7 in the implementation of the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program for Clinton, Fayette, Highland, Pickaway and Ross Counties.
- ✓ (2011) CoC case management agencies enter into MOU to reduce duplication of home-based case management services and increase HP access

Prevention Families Served vs. Shelter Families Served

Year	Total Served HP	HH Served HP	Total Served Shelter	HH Served Shelter	Unemployment
2006	0	0	64	11	4.8
2007	0	0	89	16	4.6
2008	108	32	107	26	5.6
2009	185	53	137	35	11.4
2010	121	33	119	37	10.7
2011 (oct)	126	54	126	57	9.1

Prevention Goals Update (2009)

- Provide education on foreclosure prevention, foreclosure rights, and Save the Dream.

Prevention Goals Update (2011)

- Implement annual continuous improvement of targeting homeless prevention dollars to match those entering

Permanent Supportive Housing with Case Management Services

Permanent Supportive Housing with case management services has been proven to be an effective method in addressing the cycle of homelessness. Often times, individuals with ongoing mental health, physical, and developmental delays are denied access to services due to their chronic homelessness. Through stabilizing those individuals and families in housing and providing wrap around services, communities can save money in other areas, such as jails, inpatient treatment, emergency room visits, and mental health treatment. The Fayette County Continuum of Care has several permanent supportive housing options in place in the community.

These include:

- Fayette Inn – 17 SRO units for homeless individuals
- Shelter Plus Care – 10 units of scattered site permanent supportive housing units for individuals
- Permanent Supportive Housing – 8 units of scattered site permanent supportive housing for individuals, couples, and one family.

Permanent Supportive Housing units rarely turn over. Given the mobility of the chronically homeless within rural communities the Fayette County Continuum of Care must secure additional permanent supports.

Permanent Supportive Housing Goals Update:

- Partnering with surrounding counties, the Fayette County Continuum of Care will create an additional 40 units of permanent supportive housing.

Coordination of services

Because of the small size of the community and the fact that staff from all the agencies serve on various boards together, service coordination is very informal and simple. Community Action operates most of the emergency assistance programs and homeless programs. CoC members' staff knows which agencies provide services needed by homeless and potentially homeless individuals and who is the contact person in those agencies. The CACFC serves as the single point of entry for homeless prevention funding.

CAC and the DJFS worked with the Community Food Pantry to increase the number of people it was serving and to improve its access to people who need their services. Churches provide services that the community does not realize exist. The creation of the Office of Faith Based Initiatives increases the necessity for community service organizations and faith-based programs to share information and services. The CoC will select a CoC meeting date to be "church day" and invite clergy/members of all identified churches in the county to attend and describe what programs (food pantry, emergency assistance) they provide. The CoC will create a database of all the churches in the county and the resources they provide to families and look to form new, creative partnerships.

In addition to these local efforts, the CoC will continue to collaborate with neighboring counties, such as Highland, Greene, Ross, Pickaway, and Clinton. Coordinating with the RHISCO project partners will also continue. Regional CoC meetings are held 3 times per year.

Coordination Accomplishments

- ✓ (2008) Member from the Ministerial Association and the Well regularly attends CoC meetings
- ✓ (2009) CACFC coordinates with Well to deliver tax services and to conduct the Point in Time Counts; receives award from the Ohio Benefit Bank for the coordination
- ✓ (2010) 3 Regional CoC held
- ✓ (2011) Regional CoC held twice a year, attracting over 40 participants

Coordination Goal Updates

- Increase collaboration with schools homeless liaison staff.

Outreach

The homeless shelter, Victim/Witness, and the domestic violence shelter are frequently the subject of newspaper stories. However, there is limited awareness of coordinated activities and partnerships. This problem is compounded by the limited amount of media resources in the county.

In order to address these issues the CoC will have a booth at the Community Health Fair in April, continue to conduct radio and television interviews, submit success stories to the local paper, participate in the United Way fundraising campaign, and submit a notice of the availability of this plan for review and suggestions. As previously mentioned the CoC will continue to reach out to the community through presentations, and posters at agencies for those at risk of homelessness. The community resource guide produced by Children and Families First will be reformatted to be printed in a booklet and disseminated at public locations and social service agencies.

It is essential to ending homelessness that a volunteer pool is recruited. Efforts to engage the community will begin with the Point-in-time count. A volunteer training course will be developed to train interested community members in how they may help prevent and/or help the homeless. Certificates of completion will be passed out to all volunteers who finish their training. Based upon their skills and interest they may then volunteer to help Fayette County end homelessness.

Outreach Accomplishments

- ✓ Summer and Winter PIT attracts over 40 volunteers

Outreach Goals Update:

- Continuum of Care Coordinator will recruit students from Southern State Community College.

Workforce development

There are several local programs to address workforce development and provide workforce or job search training to individuals in the community. These include:

- Job Search Skills and training is provided by the County Department of Job & Family Services to assess individual needs and provide job training through local companies
- Goodwill has a workforce coordinator
- Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation assigns a counselor comes to Fayette County from Springfield on a regular basis
- Youth Build Program operated by Community Action serves low income youth aged 18 – 24 who do not have a high school diploma or equivalency. YouthBuild teaches GED classes and provides on-site construction training
- Summer Youth Employment Training program provides subsidized work experience for low-income school-age youth
- Mature Works is a USDA-funded work experience for persons age 50 and over
- Fayette County One-Stop located at Southern State provides job search assistance through a Resource Room

- Southern State Community College has a campus in Fayette County. The Housing Director at CAC is a Trustee for the College. The Executive Director of CAC is president of the College's Foundation Board
- YUSA is a large employer in the county that has recently had a large expansion of its operation. YUSA is always looking for innovative ways to find and retain employees.
- Outlet Malls at interstate, WalMart and other large retailers offer entry level employment
- Housing programs have coordinated with economic development office
- CAC and DJFS coordinated on a TANF demonstration grant to provide an employment counselor to the homeless shelter and transitional housing programs.
- Currently, three members of the CoC sit on Fayette County Workforce Board. Recently, the Employment Counselor gave a brief presentation to the Workforce Board about the employment program operated at the local homeless shelter.

There are several programs in the community to assist individuals in obtaining the skills to get a job and then teaching them how to market those skills to potential employers. The CoC will continue to recruit members from the Workforce Board to the CoC. Service providers have found it is difficult to find jobs within the county that provide a living wage. Furthermore, many individuals and families who are at risk of homelessness have no access to transportation to out of county positions. The CoC will look into carpooling, van pooling, and expanded public transportation to help people get to jobs. In addition to this research will be conducted on the possibility of on the job training.

It is difficult to attract and keep employers with higher paying jobs in the county. The CoC will involve the county's economic development director in Continuum. A few months ago, Fayette County was being considered as a site for a new Honda plant. While Fayette County was not chosen for that plant, the economic development director continues to market that site to other manufacturers, as well as recruiting other businesses. The CoC will encourage the E.D. Director to attend committee meetings.

Building support and liaison strategizing

While several agencies already sit on the CoC, liaison strategizing includes working with various other stakeholder groups.

County and city elected officials sit on the Board of Community Action and are made aware of homeless/housing programs and are invited to open houses, ribbon cuttings, etc. However, neither city nor county is involving low-income housing and homeless program operators in CHIS planning meetings. Input, if requested at all, has been at last minute. County and City need to be made aware of their obligations in the preparation of CHIS and CHIP applications.

Law enforcement is a member of the CoC, however attendance has been sporadic.

The CoC needs to work with city and county law enforcement to encourage more involvement. The sheriff's office has put together a SALT (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together) but attendance has been falling off. Provider education has been offered to local law enforcement, but it does not seem feasible to convince law enforcement to provide overtime money to officers. The CoC will continue to search for grant monies to fund provider education to law enforcement. Currently provider education takes place at the CoC meetings.

The CoC needs more involvement with aging programs. One CoC member is the investigator for Adult Protective Services and coordinates the caregiver support program; however we need involvement from mainstream aging programs too.

Other agencies integral to ending homelessness that are not represented include:

- The Landlord Association
- Press
- Judges
- All courts
- Social Groups
- Attorney's
- Local businesses
- Prosecutor
- Medical Providers
- Downtown Revitalization Group
- Local populous
- Chamber of Commerce

The Continuum of Care will appoint various board members to contact aforementioned stakeholders and invite them to become active in the CoC. Provider education will take place at meetings, as different programs talk about their services, barriers their customers face, and give brief presentations about their programs.

Building support and liaison strategizing accomplishments

- ✓ (2009) Children's Services becomes an attending member of CoC
- ✓ (2010) Municipal Court becomes an attending member of CoC
- ✓ (2010) The FMHA utilizes the CoC to plan for the county CHIP Program.

Data collection

In the past there has been little methodology employed in the point-in-time counts. Generally counts were taken by the Homeless Shelter Program Coordinator and included all individuals in shelter, transitional housing, SRO, and other service providers were alerted to report the number of individuals they encountered on that day that were homeless.

The Continuum members attended COHHIO training on Point-In-Time Counts in Rural Areas in Mansfield on November 27, 2006. To enhance the previous data collection methodology, communities similar in population and area will be contacted to see what have been successful strategies employed by their community. A volunteer pool will be developed and volunteers will be trained on the day of the count. Service providers will continue to be alerted, a street count will take place, and those in shelter will continue to be counted. Questionnaires from the RHISCO project will be used for every individual that did not already have the data collected at intake and incentives will be used to encourage participation by homeless individuals. Based upon past point-in-time counts it is unlikely that the street count will produce more than 40 homeless individuals. Therefore the sample size will include 100% of the homeless population.

In an effort to engage the community and raise awareness of homelessness an article will be submitted to the local paper and/or television station publicizing the count and recruiting volunteers.

After the count has taken place and the results tallied the information will be reported to the local paper and/or local television station. At that time the CoC will announce that any agency, business, or other groups that are interested may call to schedule a presentation on homelessness and that the plan is available to the public.

Data collection accomplishments

- ✓ 42 individuals volunteered for the Summer and Winter PIT Counts

Data collection goals update

- Local agencies have been requested to track all individuals who call who report homelessness, including information on disabilities, Veteran status, and whether or not they are chronically homeless. The Continuum of Care Coordinator will collect this information as funding opportunities become available.
- The Continuum of Care, in an effort to create a shelter for homeless men, will collect information regarding the community's current investment in hotel/motel vouchers.
- Improve data collection procedures to implement HEARTH regulations.

Sustainability planning

The Community Action Commission currently receives funding for homeless services from: the Housing Trust Fund, HUD Supportive Housing program, Office of Criminal Justice Services, Marriage license tax, United Way, Eyman Fund, and donations from local churches. It also receives tax credits, Rural Development, HOME, Housing Trust Fund and Enterprise funds for its permanent housing programs.

The Department of Job & Family Services receives WIA funding for workforce development. It also receives TANF funds.

My Sister's House receives funding from the Office of Criminal Justice Services Violence Against Women Grant and Family Violence Prevention Grant, the Attorney General's State Victim Assistance Act Grant, the Fayette County Charitable Foundation, and other local donors.

The Metropolitan Housing Authority administers the Section 8 voucher program and the CHIP program for the county.

The agencies in Fayette County have a history of working together to apply for funding and then implementing those programs once funded. We will work with Continuum members to develop projects for submission in the 2012 HUD Continuum of Care application through the Balance of State application. In addition to this we will continue to develop relationships with nearby continuums for regional planning.

The CoC will also advocate for increased funding to rural areas, research private donors and grant giving organizations, and network with our state and national political leaders to provide funding where it is needed.

Affordable Housing

The Community Action Commission of Fayette County is a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO), certified by the State of Ohio. As a CHDO, it has developed several rental and homeownership housing projects:

Rental Housing - Multi-Family

Glennview Apartments - 56 units - Washington Court House, Fayette County - new construction followed by rehab

Grace Meadows (formerly Woodsvie Square) 40 units - Jeffersonville, Fayette County - new construction followed by rehab

Summer Tree Terrace - 24 units - Jeffersonville, Fayette County - rehab project

Beaumont Place - 12 units - New Holland, Pickaway County - new construction

Washington Court Apartments - 45 units - Washington Court House, Fayette County - rehab (scheduled for completion 12/31/11)

Rental Housing - Single Family

Ivy Glen - 60 units - Washington Court House, Fayette County

Riverbirch Greene - 60 units - Washington Court House, Fayette County

Zachary's Crossing - 40 units - Washington Court House, Fayette County

Linden Greene - 38 units - Jamestown, Greene County

Rental Housing - Special Populations

Fayette Inn - 17 units of efficiency apartments - rehab of former motel - Washington Court House, Fayette County - homeless persons

Frankfort Place - 20 apartments - rehab - Frankfort, Ross County - persons over age 55

Heritage Greene - 50 apartments - new construction - Washington Court House, Fayette County - persons over age 55

Ardmore Crossing - 50 apartments - new construction - Chillicothe, Ross County - persons over age 55

Kearney Court - 12 apartments - new construction - New Holland, Pickaway County - persons over age 62 (scheduled for completion summer 2012)

Homeownership

Village Greene - 74 lot subdivision - new construction - Bloomingburg, Fayette County - completed

Arbor Village - 75 lot subdivision - new construction - Washington Court House, Fayette County - will be completed by end of 2012

Arrowhead - 48 lot subdivision - new construction - Frankfort, Ross County - under development

A subdivision in New Holland, adjacent to the other two projects, is in planning stages

The agency has built/rehabbed many other single family, owner-occupied units using the Self-Help Housing Program, Housing Development Assistance Program, Neighborhood Stabilization Program and private financing.

Implementation strategy

The Executive Planning Committee for the RHISCO Project will be the lead implementing entity with Community Action serving as the implementing and fiscal agent for the Fayette County C o C. The group is comprised of the Deputy Director of Community Action, the Homeless Programs Coordinator, the Assistant Director of Job & Family Services, the Director of Fayette Recovery, a Board Member from Goodwill, and the Continuum of Care Coordinator The plan will be reviewed annually to track progress toward goals and to edit as the committee identifies sections that need to be updated or revised.

Objective 1	Action Steps	Expected Result	Responsibility	Resources	Target Date
Create additional units of PSH	Research the feasibility of each type of permanent supportive housing.	Determine if that type of permanent supportive housing will be available to Fayette Co.	CoC Executive Committee		June 2007
	Identify funding and finance programs.	Determine match requirements and feasibility of different programs.	Community Action	VA HUD 811 202 HDAP Federal Home Loan Bank Department of Development	Ongoing
	Find sites to build or buy.	Estimate costs associated w/ purchasing or building.	CoC Executive Committee		December 2007
	Create 20 units of permanent supportive housing.	Provide shelter plus care to help close the back door to homelessness.	Community Action		2009
Outcome: 10 Shelter Plus Care and 8 PSH units created in 2010					
	Action Steps 2011	Expected Result	Responsibility	Resources	Target Date
	Provide assistance to Region 7 for PIT Count and general data collection to support our application for additional units of PSH	Establish Need	HPRP Director	CoC COHHIO	January 2011
	Collect data from PIT Count	Create baseline for funding	HPRP Director and partners	PIT Data, HMIS	March 2011
	Research possible cash match	Basis for applying for HUD CoC funding	HPRP Director and partners	Clinton Foundation United Way	March 2011
	Apply for funding	Create 40 additional units of PSH	HPRP Partners	HUD COC COHHIO PIT Count	June 2011
	Create Re-Entry Committee and Research Feasibility	Possible additional funding source	CoC members	Second Chance Act	August 2012

Objective 2	Action Steps	Expected Results	Responsible Party	Resources	Target Date
Create an emergency shelter for men	Look for an innovative partnership to create men's shelter	Increase possibility of funding.	Executive Committee	USDA Private Foundations	June 2008
	Look for sites to build/buy	Determine Costs	Partnership Created		December 2008
	Find additional sources of funding	Fund program	Partnership Created		December 2010

During feasibility stage the state indicated it would not fund any new shelters. One church was on board to create men's shelter, but due to incorporation issues did not complete. The Fayette County Continuum of Care will continue to research other options and scale down plans for the men's shelter.

Action Steps	Expected Results	Responsible Party	Resources	Target Date
Locate site/sites	Determine cost	Executive Committee		January 2013
Conduct study on current funding spent on hotel/motel vouchers	Redirect resources	HPRP Director	Local churches	June 2012
Create a volunteer base	Construction and operating	Executive Committee	Outreach	January 2013

Objective 3	Action Step	Expected Result	Responsible Party	Resources	Target Date
Create another SRO	Determine additional funding sources	Fund program	CAC	HUD Private Foundations	December 2010
	Find sites to build or buy	Determine Costs	CAC		January 2009

The state indicated that SRO is no longer an eligible component. The CoC will continue to look for strategies to purchase the SRO through a multi-county HUD CoC application in 2013. This objective will collapse into additional units of PSH.

Objective 4	Action Steps	Expected Results	Responsible Party	Resources	Target Date
Create case management for prevention programs.	Find additional funding sources	Fund salaries Continue to fund direct assistance	CAC/Job & Family Services	Private Foundations	June 2011

	Hire additional staff for case management for prevention	Providing assistance to those receiving prevention funds	CAC/DJFS		June 2012
Outcome: CACFC chosen as the grantee for 5 county Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program. Items continue to be ongoing to continue funding.					

Objective 5	Action Steps	Expected Result	Responsible Party	Resources	Target Date
Recruit volunteer pool.	Raise awareness of point in time count through publicity	Recruit volunteers for point in time count	Outreach Committee	Local paper/radio stations/television channel	January 2007
	Publicize results of the count	Engage community interest in homelessness	Outreach Committee	Local paper/radio/television station	March 2007
	Recruit and begin volunteer training	Recruit additional volunteers	Outreach Committee	Media and current service providers	September 2007
	Hold volunteer graduation	Recognize volunteers for service to community	Outreach Committee		December 2007

Outcome: PIT Count attracts over 40 volunteers. Volunteer recruitment is ongoing.

Action Steps	Expected Result	Responsible Party	Resources	Target Date
Create data subcommittee	Focus on data collection and matching funding to need	HPRP Partners	HMIS	January 2012
Create a list of suggestions for the state	Collect meaningful data	Committee	HMIS	January 2012

Objective 6	Action Steps	Expected Result	Responsible Party	Resources	Target Date
Improve coordination of services and funding for homeless families and families at risk of homelessness	Create SPOC	Increase the coordination of services and improve service delivery	All programs with prevention programs	Private Foundations	January 2011
	Increase coordination of funding	Sharing limited resources	All grantwriters involved in the CoC	Continuum meetings	Ongoing
	Hold point-in-time count	Increase community awareness and meet HUD requirements	CAC, w/ volunteers from CoC	Community, HUD, point-in-time training.	January 2007
	Public awareness of services through posters, booklets, and media	Allowing the community to know where to send people	Outreach Committee (until SPOC is hired)	Private foundations	Posters & booklets– January 2008 Outreach – every 6 months starting in November 2007
	Landlord/tenant Education	Landlords will see benefits of working with low income and tenants will know their rights	Executive Committee will contact Legal Aide/Landlords on CoC	Legal Aide	October 2008
	Transportation for non-TANF and Out of County for employment	All members of the community will have access to transportation and will be able to take higher wage positions	Executive Committee will search for partnerships (Possibly Goodwill)	Out of county transportation systems	October 2007/Ongoing
	Coordinate more w/ WIA	Utilize contact with WIA to increase living wage jobs for both prevention and shortening homelessness	Members on the Workforce Board	Workforce Board/One Stop	Ongoing
As of the 2011 update, most items have been accomplished. The county still needs transportation for out-of-county employment.					

Objective 7	Action Steps	Expected Result	Responsible Party	Resources	Target Date	Outcome
Increase the number of agencies in the community actively involved in the local Continuum of Care	Engage with Metropolitan Housing Authority	Better coordination of services	Appointed member of Executive Committee		Monthly	Attends at least 4 times/yr
	Continue efforts to engage domestic violence shelter	Better able to help those not pursuing action through courts	CoC	Ohio Domestic Violence Network, Ohio Victim/Witness Association, ability to provide transitional housing to victims.	Ongoing	Attends 4 times/yr
	Continue faith-based outreach	Understand fully what is available in the community and create new partnerships	Outreach Committee	Faith-based programs and faith-based database.	Begin October 2005 and ongoing	Ministerial Association & Well participation over 4 times/year
	Collaborate with other counties	Increase funding and utilization of resources	Directors of Agencies	Regional meetings, conferences, etc.	Ongoing	Regional CoC meets twice/year
	Continue outreach to other agencies	Increase support and liaison strategizing	Various members of CoC	Local networking	Ongoing	
	Conduct provider education	Utilize CoC meetings to cross-train	Various members of CoC	Quarterly meetings	Ongoing	

Regionalism

Fayette County agencies do currently have some collaboration across county lines. The homeless shelter in Fayette County works with shelters in Highland and Greene Counties to provide emergency shelter services when the Fayette County shelter is full. Fayette County also accepts referrals from other counties when capacity allows.

The Community Action Commission is developing permanent housing in neighboring counties (Ross, Greene and Pickaway) and has a working relationship with the CAAs and other social services agencies in those counties.

CAC has also worked on some transportation collaborations for transportation in contiguous counties.

Several members represent agencies that serve a multi-county area. These include the homeless veterans services coordinator from the Chillicothe CA, the board member from Goodwill, and the representative from Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health Center.

Conclusion

Fayette County is a small rural county whose few social service agencies have a long history of working collaboratively to solve common problems. The county has a large number of programs to assist those who are facing and those who have become homeless. While these programs are small, they do provide assistance at all levels of the Continuum of Care defined by HUD: Outreach, prevention, emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing and permanent housing. The county's Continuum of Care committee began meeting in 2000 and continues to grow and evolve. Through the efforts of this committee, we will develop a plan to close the gaps in our services so that homelessness in our county is ended through prevention and rapid re-housing.