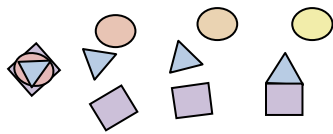


***The Blueprint to End Homelessness in the
Chattanooga Region
– A Progress Report***



Produced by:

The Homeless Blueprint Oversight Committee (HBOC)

August 2009

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Introduction

The following report has been produced by HBOC to provide the Southeast Tennessee community an update on the progress made in implementing the Blueprint.

HBOC members come from social service agencies, law enforcement, education, local government, faith-based organizations, and other perspectives. In a variety of ways, HBOC members (along with other community members) have promoted and supported the Blueprint implementation progress made to date.

Two of the key elements of HBOC's mission involve making sure that the Blueprint is implemented and that progress of implementation is monitored. With HBOC providing this report it is, therefore, of utmost importance to emphasize that the progress reported is the result of many individuals and agencies in the community that may or may not be members of HBOC.

Since coordination and collaboration are key themes throughout the Blueprint, it is encouraging to see the dialogue occurring among many community organizations and individuals. Such is the environment in which real and sustainable improvements can be made.

Some improvements in the community support system have recently been made in the Chattanooga region: The Community Kitchen has opened a wonderful Day Center and the Interfaith Homeless Network will soon be opening a new facility to further its mission to help homeless families. These are just two examples of what can be done when a community pulls together to give to a cause greater than themselves.

Such accomplishments are a cause to pause and celebrate. However, as these and other agencies will likely tell you, a pause is all that is possible considering the number of community members who still have no place to call home. There is much work to be done. This report briefly describes some of that work.

Homeless Blueprint Oversight Committee

Executive Summary

The Blueprint to End Homelessness

The original Blueprint was produced in 2004 as a joint effort by the Chattanooga Regional Homeless Coalition and the City of Chattanooga. In July 2007, Mayor Littlefield initiated a revision of the Blueprint. With participation of over 45 individuals from a cross-section of the community, the Blueprint revision was completed in February 2008.

The Blueprint focuses on five key areas: Housing, Supportive Services, Prevention of Homelessness, Planning/Coordination, and Community Reintegration.

The Homeless Blueprint Oversight Committee (HBOC)

The Blueprint created HBOC to be the “Mechanism for Planning and Coordination.” As such, HBOC’s mission is to “ensure that the Blueprint is implemented (in a timely manner), progress is monitored and efforts are leveraged to maximize funding for ending homelessness in the Chattanooga region.”

The first meeting of HBOC was held on April 29, 2008. After a few meetings to fill some vacant positions, the committee started focusing on the Blueprint at two levels: Implementation and Effectiveness.

Implementation Plan and Progress

In late Summer/early Fall 2008, the committee started development of a “phased” approach to implementing the Blueprint.

Phase 1 tasks: Expected to be started and evaluated within 9 months

Phase 2 tasks: Expected to be started and evaluated within 24 months

Phase 3 tasks: Expected to be started and evaluated within 2 – 5 years

Development of the Phase 1 Implementation Plan was completed and approved in early 2009. The tasks were designed to at least partially implement one or more of the Blueprint recommendations. A summary is provided below:

Key Area <i>(Blueprint Itemized Recommendation references in italics)</i>	# Itemized Recommendations in Blueprint	# Itemized Recommendations with a related Phase 1 task Implemented	# Itemized Recommendations with a related Phase 1 task In-Progress	# Itemized Recommendations with a related Phase 1 task Not Yet Started	# Rec's in phase 2 or 3
Expanding Customer-focused Paths to (and Opportunities for) Permanent Housing <i>(1.1 - 3.2)</i>	9	0	6	1	2
Increase Access to Services and Supports <i>(4.1 - 6.8)</i>	28	4	4	5	15
Prevent Homelessness <i>(7.0 - 9.8)</i>	12	0	4	2	6
Develop a Mechanism for Planning & Coord. <i>(10.1-10.4)</i>	4	2	1	0	1
Community Reintegration <i>(11.1-14.4)</i>	17	2	4	4	7

Executive Summary (cont'd)

Measuring Effectiveness of the Blueprint

HBOC specified performance indicators to determine if the implemented Blueprint recommendations are actually effective in ending and preventing homelessness.

Some of the performance indicators include: # of Emergency shelter turn-aways, # of Affordable housing units added during the year, # of Emergency assistance requests (needs), # of Clients per case manager, # of Prevention-related service requests (needs), # of Proposed programs evaluated for consistency with Blueprint recommendations, and a survey to measure perceptions and aspects of community reintegration.

The complete list of performance indicators is provided in the main section below. Specific baseline values have yet to be finalized.

Other events in the community related to Blueprint or HBOC

- Continuum of Care grant application from Chattanooga Regional Homeless Coalition resulted in over \$2 million in funding for local agencies in F/Y 2008.
- HBOC reviewed three grant applications (to various funding sources) for their consistency with the Blueprint. All three were approved for funding.
- Project Homeless Connect was held on May 14, 2009. The HBOC web site hosted the online sign-up of service providers and volunteers to gather information for coordinating participation in the event.

Vision of a community working together to implement Blueprint recommendations

- Agencies seeking homelessness-related funding would request HBOC review and recommendations to determine programmatic consistency with the Blueprint. Programs considered Blueprint-consistent would receive an HBOC Letter of Support and possibly other advocacy assistance as time and resources permit.
- Funding sources (government, foundations, community organizations, etc.) would require anyone requesting homelessness-related funding to have their program reviewed by HBOC.

Next steps

- More publicly support and promote community efforts to implement Blueprint recommendations.
- Work with local organizations to complete development of baseline data for all performance indicators.
- Broaden efforts to educate the community, agencies and local governments about Blueprint recommendations (and the value of its consideration in funding decisions).
- Continue Phase 1 implementation.

The Blueprint to End Homelessness*

The original Blueprint was produced in 2004 as a joint effort by the Chattanooga Regional Homeless Coalition and the City of Chattanooga. In July 2007, Mayor Littlefield initiated a revision of the Blueprint. With participation of over 45 individuals from a cross-section of the community, the Blueprint revision was completed in February 2008.

Blueprint recommendations are grouped into five categories

A	<i>Expanding Customer-focused Paths to (and Opportunities for) Permanent Housing</i>
1	Expand permanent housing opportunities
2	Increase the availability of transitional shelter units that move people to permanent housing
3	Provide permanent special needs housing and alternatives
B	<i>Increase Access to Services and Supports</i>
4	Reconfigure case management to be assertive, coordinated and focused on placing and maintaining homeless people in permanent housing. Prioritize funding both for 1) case management to homeless people and 2) continuing case management and supportive services to formerly homeless people placed in permanent housing.
5	Improve the effectiveness of outreach and engagement of homeless people living in public spaces.
6	Link homeless and formerly homeless people to mainstream services and resources
C	<i>Prevent Homelessness</i>
7	Establish an organization or give the responsibility to an existing organization for Blueprint implementation which will include promoting prevention of homelessness and providing quick assistance to families and individuals at risk of homelessness...
8	Help at-risk households remain stably housed by providing emergency assistance, maximizing their incomes and improving access to supportive services. The Lead Agent will be responsible for assisting at-risk households with emergency assistance, including brief case management and ultimate entry into the case management system for long-term planning.
9	Prevent people from becoming homeless when they leave institutional care, such as jail, prison, shelter, hospitalization, treatment, foster care, by developing permanent housing plans prior to release and establishing clear responsibility in the community.
D	<i>Develop a Mechanism for Planning and Coordination</i>
10	Establish the Homeless Blueprint Oversight Committee
E	<i>Community Reintegration</i>
11	Develop a central intake point to start the process of linking a homeless/formerly homeless person to the case management and other assistance and follow-up support they need to become more self-sufficient.
12	Make mainstream resources (food stamps, SSI, etc.), health services, case management services and getting personal identification documents more accessible by either convenient location or available transportation.
13	13) Provide assistance in re-establishing a home
14	Connect homeless/formerly homeless people to community services/education that help them obtain, maintain and advance in employment to their fullest potential

More detail on Blueprint recommendations (including the complete document) can be found at www.hboc.org.

* The Blueprint to End Homelessness is also referred to by the U.S. Interagency on Homelessness as the Southeast Tennessee region's Ten Year Plan.

The Homeless Blueprint Oversight Committee (HBOC)

The Blueprint created HBOC to be the “Mechanism for Planning and Coordination.” As such, HBOC’s mission is to “ensure that the Blueprint is implemented (in a timely manner), progress is monitored and efforts are leveraged to maximize funding for ending homelessness in the Chattanooga region.”

The first meeting of HBOC was held on April 29, 2008. After a few meetings to fill some vacant positions, the committee started focusing on the Blueprint at two levels: Implementation and Effectiveness.

Homeless Blueprint Oversight Committee Members

<i>HBOC Member</i>	<i>Agency</i>
• Mike Feely	St. Andrews Center
• Mike Dunne	Hamilton County Government
• Karen Blevins	Chattanooga Regional Homeless Coalition
• Karen Davis	Southeast TN Human Resource Agency (SETHRA)
• Tammy Garland	University of TN - Chattanooga
• Sandra Hollett	Partnership for Families, Children & Adults
• Becky Whelchel	Episcopal Metropolitan Ministry
• Karen Guinn	Chatt.-Hamilton Co. Health Dept.
• Phyllis Casavant	Southeast TN Development. District
• Tommy Kennedy	Chattanooga Police Dept.
• John Hayes	United Way of Greater Chattanooga
• Clare Sawyer	Chattanooga Area Food Bank
• John Dorris	City of Chattanooga

Implementation Plan and Progress

“What set of community tasks will implement (and comply with) Blueprint recommendations?”

In late Summer/early Fall 2008, the committee started development of a “phased” approach to implementing Blueprint recommendations.

Phase 1 tasks: Expected to be started and evaluated within 9 months

Phase 2 tasks: Expected to be started and evaluated within 24 months

Phase 3 tasks: Expected to be started and evaluated within 2 – 5 years

Development of the Phase 1 Implementation Plan was completed and approved in early 2009. Listed below is the Phase 1 Implementation Plan (including progress notes):

<i>Phase 1 Community Tasks for Blueprint Implementation Plan</i>	<i>Blueprint Recommendation Cross-Reference</i>	<i>Status as of 07/13/09</i>	<i>Additional Info on Status as of 07/13/09</i>
Develop pilot projects for central intake access points linking needs and services to follow-up.	4.5, 5.1, 11.1, 11.3, 11.4, 11.5	<i>Implemented</i>	- Homeless Coalition Central Intake pilot project started in July 2009. - United Way Building Stable Lives Initiative with Partnership for Families, Children & Adults
Create HBOC web site.	10, 10.3, 10.4	<i>Implemented</i>	Completed (see www.hboc.org)
Provide quarterly notice of important funding opportunities.	2.2, 4.1, 4.9, 5.5, 5.6, 6.4, 10	<i>Not Started</i>	Developing sources for funding announcement info
Determine status of service provider referral-tracking and follow-up capability, including barriers to improvement	11.1, 11.4	<i>Not Started</i>	Brief report to HBOC during Feb. meeting. Not yet completed. Lessons provided by Central Intake pilot projects will provide valuable input for this task.
Provide quarterly report on homeless shelter gaps and usage.	2.1, 2.2	<i>In-Progress</i>	Info being collected for Continuum of Care
Provide updates on recent funding awarded.	2.2, 4.1, 4.9, 5.5, 5.6, 6.4, 10	<i>In-Progress</i>	
Convene a group of discharging institutions and social service agencies to develop a discharge process that specifies responsibilities at every step.	9.2	<i>Not Started</i>	Background discussions have been held but not yet in context of revised Blueprint implementation
Determine local emergency room homeless client protocols from admission to discharge. Document both frequency and cost.	6.5, 9.2, 9.3, 9.5	<i>In-Progress</i>	Initial data has been collected
Define a process for tracking affordable housing supply.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.1	<i>In-Progress</i>	Initial survey of affordable housing supply has been started

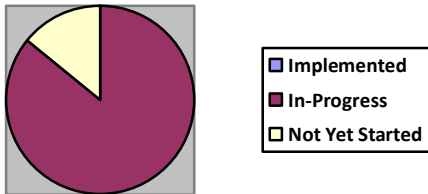
Define a process for tracking affordable housing demand.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.1	<i>In-Progress</i>	Some service providers are currently tracking affordable housing demand/info and other sources are being determined.
Monitor affordable housing supply and demand	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.1	<i>Not Started</i>	To be started at more detailed level once supply/demand-tracking processes have been defined
Establish Day Center for single homeless adults.	5.4	<i>Implemented</i>	Community Kitchen opened Day Center in May 2009
Establish Respite Care facility.	5.6, 9.3	<i>In-Progress</i>	Community Kitchen completed construction of Respite Care facility in May 2009. Currently working on medical staffing details.
Develop Job Mentoring program pilot.	14.1, 14.4	<i>Not Started</i>	Pilot ready for launch but not yet funded.
Review current policy/method for matching applicants to affordable housing.	1.2	<i>Not Started</i>	
Establish Day Center for homeless families.	5.4, 6.3	<i>In-Progress</i>	Interfaith Homeless Network is in final construction stage of its new facility
Develop more current services/eligibility information that can be communicated to agencies.	12.4	<i>In-Progress</i>	Service/eligibility information is being collected and will be available by December 2009.
Develop plan for expanding access to (and enrollment in) Food Stamps and other mainstream resources.	5.9, 6.4, 6.6, 6.7, 8.2, 9.1	<i>Implemented</i>	Many local agencies have implemented web-based and other mainstream resource application processes
Work w/ TN Dept of Veterans Affairs on homeless re-entry and TBI-related supportive service grants.	6.7	<i>In-Progress</i>	Initial discussions held with veterans groups
Develop community-wide calendar for accessing entitlement applications and other community services. Discuss part-time satellite location for staff.	9.1	<i>Not Started</i>	
Establish Southeast TN Human Resources Agency (SETHRA) transit training center.	6.3, 12.2	<i>In-Progress</i>	On-track for December 2009 completion
Establish a Furniture Bank.	12.3, 13.2	<i>In-Progress</i>	Some funding has been provided. United Way to open Furniture Bank in October 2009
Expand supportive service grant projects.	8.1, 8.3	<i>In-Progress</i>	One supportive service grant project is in operation by Episcopal Metropolitan Ministry

Phases 2 and 3 will contain the remaining tasks required to implement Blueprint recommendations. Such detail will be finalized at a later date as more collaborative opportunities resulting from Phase 1 implementation are explored.

Phase 1 Progress (by Category)

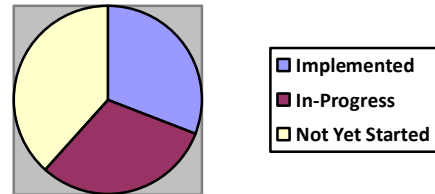
A. Expanding Customer-focused Paths to (and Opportunities for) Permanent Housing

Phase 1 Progress



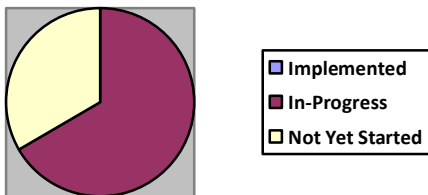
B. Increase Access to Services and Supports

Phase 1 Progress



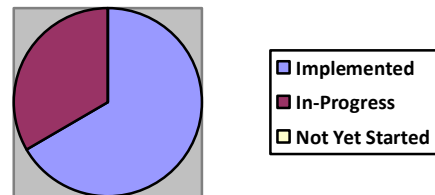
C. Prevent Homelessness

Phase 1 Progress



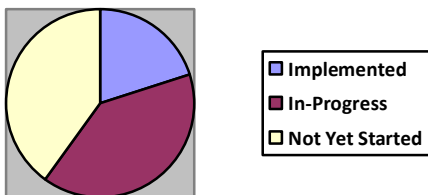
D. Develop a Mechanism for Planning & Coordination

Phase 1 Progress



E. Community Reintegration

Phase 1 Progress



Measuring Effectiveness of the Blueprint

“What performance indicators can be used to determine if the implemented Blueprint recommendations are actually effective in ending and preventing homelessness?”

Blueprint performance indicators* developed by HBOC:

Housing

- # of Emergency shelter beds available
- # of Emergency shelter turn-aways
- # of Transitional shelter beds
- # of Affordable housing units added during the year
- Length of time from starting search/application for housing to getting housing

Services

- # of Clients a case manager has who have gotten into housing in the last 6 months
- # of Clients per case manager
- Establishment of a day center
- # of Emergency assistance needs
- Percentage of emergency assistance needs that are fully met
- Survey of clients regarding case management quality

Prevention

- # of Prevention-related service needs
- Percentage of prevention-related needs that are fully met
- # of Service providers providing SOAR-based services
- # of SSI/SSDI applications filed
- # of Food Stamp applications filed
- Percentage of Food Stamp applications filed that are successful

Systems Coordination & Performance

- # of Proposed programs evaluated for consistency with the Blueprint
- Development of performance indicators
- Minimum of one report on Blueprint implementation progress per year
- Minimum of one data quality audit to assess data collection process and accuracy

Community Reintegration

- Develop a survey to measure perceptions and aspects of community reintegration

* An ongoing task of HBOC is to refine these indicators as necessary to most accurately assess effectiveness of Blueprint recommendations. Such an assessment involves the establishment of baseline data for tracking changes.

Other events in the community related to Blueprint or HBOC

- Continuum of Care grant application from Chattanooga Regional Homeless Coalition resulted in over \$2 million in funding for local agencies in F/Y 2008.
- HBOC reviewed the following three grant applications for consistency with the Blueprint:
 - Chattanooga Regional Homeless Coalition Central Intake Pilot Project
 - A grant application to implement an adaptation of a central intake model to improve access and follow-up for people who are homeless or near-homeless.
 - United Way Furniture Bank
 - A grant application to establish a furniture bank to provide furniture to homeless individuals and families who are moving into housing
 - Homeless Health Care supplemental grant for health care/social services
 - A grant application by Homeless Health Care Center to help homeless clients connect to entitlement resources and to help homeless persons with chronic diseases manage their illness.

Note: An HBOC Letter of Support was provided to each of the three agencies. All three applications have been funded.

- Project Homeless Connect was held on May 14, 2009. The HBOC web site hosted the online sign-up of service providers and volunteers to gather information for coordinating participation in the event.

Comment

Having completed its initial formation stage, HBOC believes now that there is much potential for more active participation as a committee to promote Blueprint implementation. Because of the scope, expertise and commitment of the HBOC members, implementation plans are underway and gaining momentum.

It is critical, however, that HBOC assume a stronger position in determining best practices and oversight of Blueprint implementation. For example:

- Voluntary HBOC review of proposed homeless-related programs to assess their consistency with the Blueprint (Such a review was performed for the grant applications mentioned in the above section). HBOC's letters of support for those applications endorsed consistency with Blueprint recommendations. With all three grant applications being approved and funded, the letters of support likely had a positive impact on the funding decisions.
- HBOC is available to consult with agencies who are developing proposed homelessness-related programs.

Vision of a community working together to implement Blueprint recommendations:

- Agencies seeking homelessness-related funding would seek HBOC review and endorsement. Programs considered Blueprint-consistent would receive an HBOC Letter of Support and possibly other advocacy assistance as time and resources permit.
- Funding sources (government, foundations, community organizations, etc.) require anyone requesting homelessness-related funding to have their program reviewed by HBOC.

The above vision does not suggest an expansion of HBOC's mission; just an emphasis on HBOC achieving its mission by promoting efforts that are consistent with Blueprint recommendations. This vision is in keeping with HBOC's mission to promote, encourage and support implementation of Blueprint recommendations.

Next steps

- More publicly support and promote community efforts to implement Blueprint recommendations.
- Work with local organizations to complete development of baseline data for all performance indicators.
- Broaden efforts to educate the community, agencies and local governments about Blueprint recommendations (and the value of its consideration in funding decisions).
- Continue Phase 1 implementation.

Conclusion

At a minimum, the mission of HBOC requires it to ensure that the recommendations of the Blueprint are implemented and that progress is periodically monitored. Due to the commitment of community organizations and local city and county governments, HBOC has been formed and has begun performing that function.

Many HBOC members are very active participants in implementing Blueprint recommendations via the organizations with which they are associated. As a committee, however, HBOC still has much potential to leverage the ability of its members to help create even greater positive change.

Such potential will not be realized in a vacuum of HBOC activity but will involve many other individuals and organizations in the community. HBOC, like any other organization with mission constraints, is called to support initiatives as needs and opportunities arise.

In conclusion, HBOC will continue to focus on Blueprint implementation and effectiveness issues, providing periodic progress reports, as instructed in its mission. HBOC's future impact will not only depend on the continued commitment of its members but also on the *community's* commitment and, by extension, local government and other organizations.