COMMUNITY OF ONE

MAKING HOMELESSNESS RARE, BRIEF & NONRECURRING (2017-2020)

ADOPTED OCTOBER 17, 2017

City of Virginia Beach

BEACH
Bringing an End to All City Homelessness

The Story Behind the Starfish

"...But, young man, do you not realize that there are miles and miles of beach and there are starfish all along every mile? You can't possibly make a difference!"

At this, the young man bent down, picked up yet another starfish, and threw it into the ocean.

As it met the water, he said, "It made a difference for that one."

- Excerpt is adapted from The Star Thrower by Loren Eiseley

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Community of One is the collective work of faith, City, and nonprofit organizations, and represents the vision of the entire community to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring.

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- BEACH Governing Board
- City of Virginia Beach Department of Health
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- Judeo-Christian Outreach Center
- LGBT Life Center
- Performance Monitoring Committee
- PIN Ministry
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 Executive Summary

5 Homelessness in Virginia Beach
Understanding the Scope of the Problem

13 Our Community System
17 How is Our Community System Funded?
18 Community System Partners
20 How do People Access Services through Our Community System?
22 Making Progress & Achieving Success
25 The Challenges that Remain

27 Vision & Process for Developing the Plan
28 Context for the Community of One Plan
31 Process for Developing the Community of One Plan

33 Community of One Action Plan
34 Goal 1: Transform Our Service System to Make Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring
39 Goal 2: Make Family Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring
41 Goal 3: Make Chronic Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring
43 Goal 4: Make Youth Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring
45 Goal 5: Maintain and Increase the Supply of Permanent, Accessible, and Affordable Housing
47 Goal 6: Increase Leadership, Collaboration, and Civic Engagement in Our Community Efforts
49 Goal 7: Develop and Maintain Sustainable Resources to Support Our Ongoing Community Effort

51 Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation

53 Appendices
54 Appendix 1: 2013 Strategic Plan to End Homelessness Action Plan (updated with statuses)
62 Appendix 2: Housing Resource Center Fact Sheet
64 Appendix 3: Glossary of Acronyms & Terms
68 Appendix 4: Online Resources

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community of One represents a shared vision to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring. The plan outlines a path toward a future where everyone in Virginia Beach will be able to live in safe, decent, and affordable housing.

The goals, objectives, and action steps presented in Community of One align with four major themes that will guide our work over the next three years:

Reinvigorating and Inspiring New Partnerships

Since the early 1980s, our community has been committed to ending homelessness in Virginia Beach through a tapestry of faith, City, and nonprofit organizations working together. A testament to the power of regional and community partnerships is our successful effort to functionally end veteran homelessness in 2015.

Through Community of One, we will continue and expand these partnerships that have laid the foundation of our work. A collaboration between the City's Health and Human Services departments will bring additional services to enhance our system. And, we will actively engage businesses and higher education institutions to join our community effort.

Building on our Successes and Enhancing Our System in a Unified Way

Since the 2013 Strategic Plan to End Homelessness was adopted, we have truly created a far more unified system with one access point, one standardized

Community of One Goals

- Goal 1: Transform Our Service System to Make Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring
- Goal 2: Make Family Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring
- Goal 3: Make Chronic Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring
- Goal 4: Make Youth Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring
- Goal 5: Maintain and Increase the Supply of Permanent, Accessible, and Affordable Housing
- Goal 6: Increase Leadership, Collaboration, and Civic Engagement in Our Community Efforts
- Goal 7: Develop and Maintain Sustainable Resources to Support Our Ongoing Community Effort

assessment, and one referral system. The wasted effort by homeless persons and agency staff making multiple calls to various providers, even across the region, has been eliminated through the creation of the Regional Housing Crisis Hotline. The most vulnerable families and individuals are connected to housing and shelter resources more quickly and fairly. Through our coordinated intake and assessment system, everyone is consistently assessed and served based on their condition and need, rather than when they accessed our system. Our robust regional homeless data management system provides far more accurate and useful information on the needs in the community and the services we provide.

We will build on the momentum of the progress we have made and lessons we have learned to help us tackle new challenges as a community, especially in the areas of family, youth, and chronic homelessness.

Challenges & Opportunities of Opening the Housing Resource Center

The Housing Resource Center will be the centerpiece of our community system and enhance how we make homelessness, rare, brief, and nonrecurring. The addition of new shelter, housing, and service opportunities, and the management of partnerships and relationships, all under one roof, will challenge and push our community towards more innovation, collaboration, and accountability. With the opening of the Housing Resource Center, Virginia Beach is poised to become a national leader in the effort to prevent and end homelessness. While our community system is much larger, both geographically and in services than the Housing Resource Center, ensuring the success of this new facility, from the ground up, will necessarily be a major focus.

Engaged & Committed Leadership

The key to Community of One is the ability of people from many diverse organizations working in concert toward a common goal. Our community is fortunate to have many individuals and organizations who have helped set that tone and example, from all portions of our system. We have active faith, nonprofit, and government leadership that sees the value of a community system and the role each other plays. Together we strive to strengthen and improve the institutions and relationships that keep the system connected and in sync. To the extent that our community can continue to do that, we will continue to see progress and success in preventing and ending homelessness.

The enduring partnerships between City, faith, and nonprofit organizations, spanning more than three decades, embodies the spirit of Community of One. It is it not only our strategic plan, it is a renewed commitment between all of us to continue working together toward making homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring for all families and individuals in Virginia Beach. Through Community of One, we hope to inspire others to join in this effort.

HOMELESSNESS IN VIRGINIA BEACH

For many people, the image that comes to mind when they think of homelessness is the person sleeping on a bench or standing in the median holding a cardboard sign. In reality, homelessness takes many forms and affects families and individuals from all walks of life who often go unnoticed by the community around them.

They are the mother and her children who are escaping domestic violence. The teen who just turned 18 and has now aged out of the foster care system. The family whose home and possessions have been lost to a flood. The veteran who bravely served our country, but now suffers from depression and PTSD. The food service worker who sleeps on a friend's couch in between shifts. The senior who must choose between a place to live and medication to manage his disability. Anyone can become homeless.

The reasons why families and individuals experience homelessness are as diverse as the people it touches. Job loss, mental illness, family breakup, eviction, a natural disaster, and the inability to afford housing or health care costs are just a few examples.

The impact of homelessness on a community is far-reaching and long-lasting. The crisis of homelessness perpetuates itself in poor educational, health, employment, and family outcomes for our community's most vulnerable residents. The cost to the community as a whole can be measured by expenditures for police and court intervention, incarceration, emergency medical services, and hospital visits, which are estimated to cost more than $20,000 per person per year. Addressing homelessness and providing everyone the opportunity to live in safe, decent, and affordable housing is not only a quality of life issue, it is also an economic one.

Homeless (Federal HUD Definition): People who are living in a place not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelter, in transitional housing, or are exiting an institution where they temporarily resided.

This includes:

- People who are losing their primary nighttime residence, which may include a motel or hotel or a doubled up situation, within 14 days and lack resources or support networks to remain in housing.
- Families with children or unaccompanied youth who are unstably housed and likely to continue in that state.
- People who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, have no other residence, and lack the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

How Can We End Homelessness?

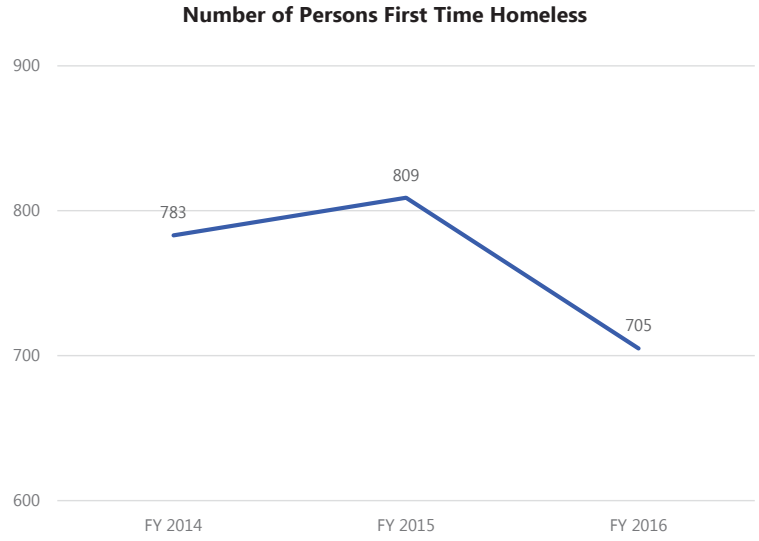
We believe that homelessness is a problem that can be solved by:

- Preventing as many people as possible from becoming homeless
- Shortening the length of time people experience homelessness
- Helping people leave homelessness behind for good

In other words, make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring -- that is our definition of ending homelessness.

Making Homelessness Rare

The following graph illustrates the unduplicated total of individuals that were considered to be first-time homeless in Virginia Beach during the last three fiscal years. A client is considered first-time homeless if the individual did not enter any emergency shelter, transitional housing, or permanent housing program within our Continuum of Care (CoC) during the previous 24 months. The number of people who were first-time homeless in Virginia Beach decreased by 12 percent between FY 2015 and FY 2016. We will strive to make homelessness rare by continuing to lower the number of people who experience homelessness.

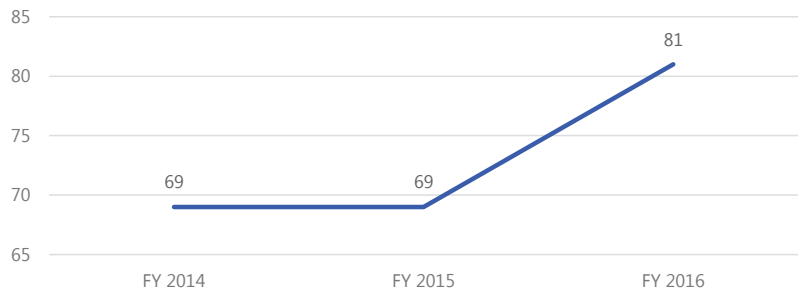


Source: Hampton Roads Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

Making Homelessness Brief

In FY 2016, the median number of days a homeless individual remained in emergency shelter or transitional housing before moving to permanent housing was 81 days, an increase of 12 days from FY 2014 and 2015. One possible explanation for this increase is that because our system focuses on serving the most vulnerable individuals, (e.g. greatest and most extensive needs and longest history of homelessness) connecting them to permanent housing may take longer. We must reverse this trend and connect people to permanent housing faster, thereby shortening the length of time families and individuals experience homelessness.

Median Number of Days Persons Remain in Emergency Shelter or Transitional Housing

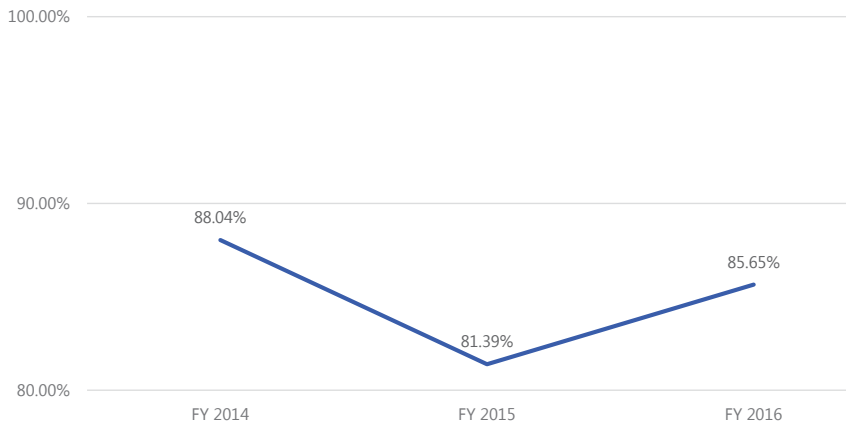


Source: Hampton Roads HMIS

Making Homelessness Nonrecurring

To truly end homelessness, we must break the cycle of homelessness. In FY 2016, nearly 86% of clients who were permanently housed did not return to the Virginia Beach homeless response system. For the past three years, our success rate has averaged 85%. However as a community, we have set the benchmark for our success rate at 90%. We must continue aiming for this goal until all families and individuals are able to leave homelessness behind for good.

Success Rate



Source: Hampton Roads HMIS

Continuum of Care (CoC): A collaborative, community funding and planning process for a range of housing and services addressing the needs of homeless families and individuals. A grant application is submitted annually to the HUD for funding to implement the community plan. The group of community partners involved in this process is often referred to as the "Continuum of Care."

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS): A computerized data collection application that records and stores information on homeless individuals and families who use residential or other homeless services.

During the PIT Count, teams of volunteers and city staff canvass each of the City's four police precincts and survey people who are without shelter. Shelter and transitional housing providers also provide client data for the same day.

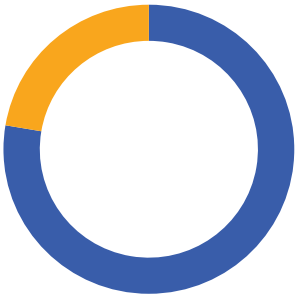
Understanding the Scope of the Problem

People experience housing crises and move in and out of homelessness on an ongoing basis. Those who have sufficient self or family supports are able to solve the problem themselves and do not become homeless. Some may need minimal assistance for a short period of time until they can find a place of their own. And others spend years living on the streets before being connected to the right housing and services that meet their needs. Since the number of people experiencing homelessness is constantly changing, we must rely on various sources of data in order to get the best possible understanding of our community's needs, and act to address them.

When determining the size of the homeless population, many cities will refer to the annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires each city that receives federal funds through the CoC to conduct an unduplicated count of its sheltered and unsheltered homeless population during a 24-hour period in January. During Virginia Beach's most recent PIT Count, conducted on Jan. 26, 2017, 349 people were found to be experiencing homelessness.

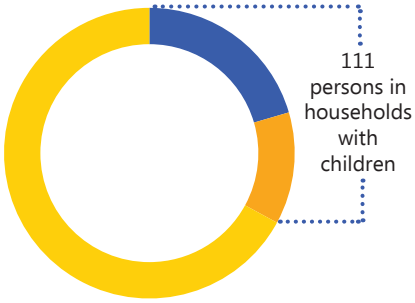
The following figures provide a summary of the findings from the 2017 PIT Count:

Sheltered vs. Unsheltered



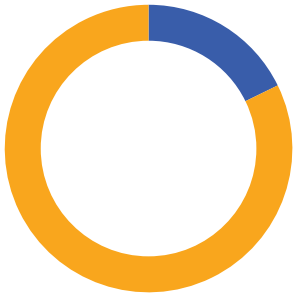
271 Persons Sheltered (78%)
78 Persons Unsheltered (22%)

Singles vs. Families



69 Children under 18 years old (21%)
42 Adults in Households with Children (12%)
226 Single Adults (67%)

Chronic vs. Episodic



62 Chronic (18%)
287 Episodic (82%)

Homeless Youth

12 Minor Children (Age 9-17)
34 Young Adults (Age 18-24)

A total of 62 individuals and members of families were considered chronically homeless -- nearly 18 percent of all homeless persons in Virginia Beach. In addition, more than half (35 individuals) were chronically homeless and unsheltered.

The PIT Count identified 46 homeless youth. While HUD defines the age for homeless youth as individuals 24 years of age and younger, we have broken this population into two age groups: 18-24 and 9-17. Appropriate shelter for youth ages 18-24 is a key gap in our community, a challenge addressed later in this plan.

Other Key Subpopulation Groups

	Sheltered (Persons in emergency shelters, transitional housing and safe havens)	**Unsheltered**	**Total**
Total Number of Veterans (including female veterans)	28	10	38
Female Veterans (subset of all veterans)	5	3	8
Adults with a Serious Mental Illness	69	16	85
Adults with a Substance Use Disorder	33	9	42
Adults with HIV/AIDS	0	0	0
Victims of Domestic Violence	49	11	60
Chronically Homeless Individuals	27	35	62
Chronically Homeless Families (number of families)	0	1	1
Chronically Homeless Families (persons in household)	0	2	2

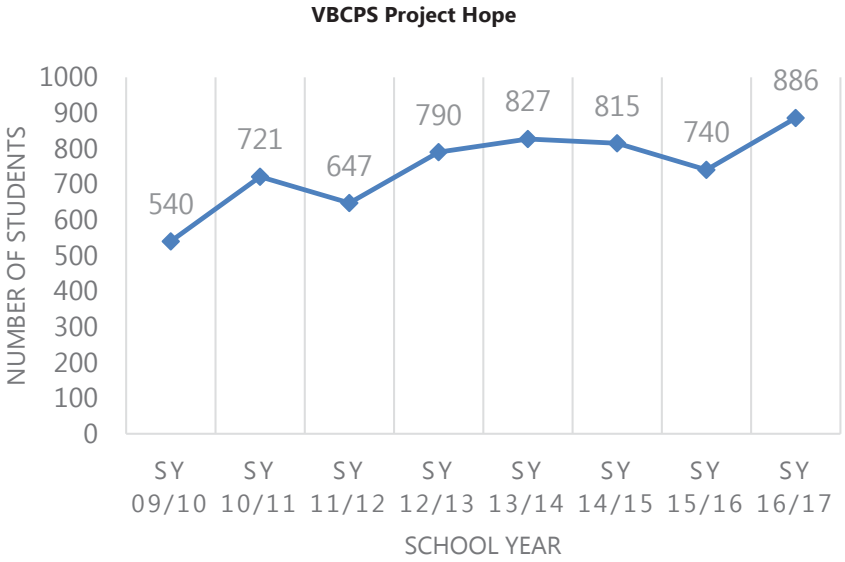
Chronically Homeless: Individuals who have been continually homeless for a year or more; or who have had four or more episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

Homeless Youth: Unaccompanied individuals 24 years of age and younger who are disconnected from a parent, guardian, or spouse.

Homelessness has adverse effects on a child's education. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, children experiencing homelessness are more likely to experience more school mobility, repeat a grade, be expelled or drop out of school, and have lower academic performance.

It is important to acknowledge that since the PIT Count is conducted once a year during a 24-hour period, it can only offer a snapshot of the homelessness issue. While our PIT total aligns with the number of people we know who are homeless, other data show that the issue is much greater if we include the at-risk population.

For example, according to the Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) Project Hope program, almost 900 students were identified as living in households considered homeless or at risk of becoming homeless during the 2016-17 school year. The federal homeless definition for Project Hope is broader and includes all students who did not have a regular, permanent place to stay during the school year. The number of homeless and at-risk students who were identified and assisted by VBCPS Project Hope for the past eight school years is shown in the following graph:



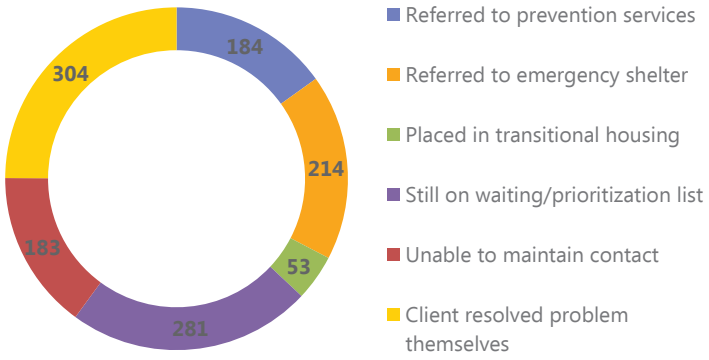
Source: VBCPS Project Hope

To get a more accurate picture of the homelessness issue in Virginia Beach, we can also measure the demand for services by looking at the number of people seeking assistance through our system.

Regional Housing Crisis Hotline: (757) 227-5932; single point of contact to streamline the homeless referral and assessment process for citizens who are homeless or at risk of losing their home.

The majority of people experiencing a housing crisis access our community system by calling the Regional Housing Crisis Hotline. Between July 15, 2016 and June 30, 2017, there were 3,675 unduplicated Virginia Beach callers to the hotline; the system served 1,219 callers. The remaining 2,456 individuals who called the hotline and were not served by the system were not literally homeless or did not have an urgent housing crisis, or the system did not have the capacity to serve them.

How People Were Served
July 15,2016 - June 30, 2017

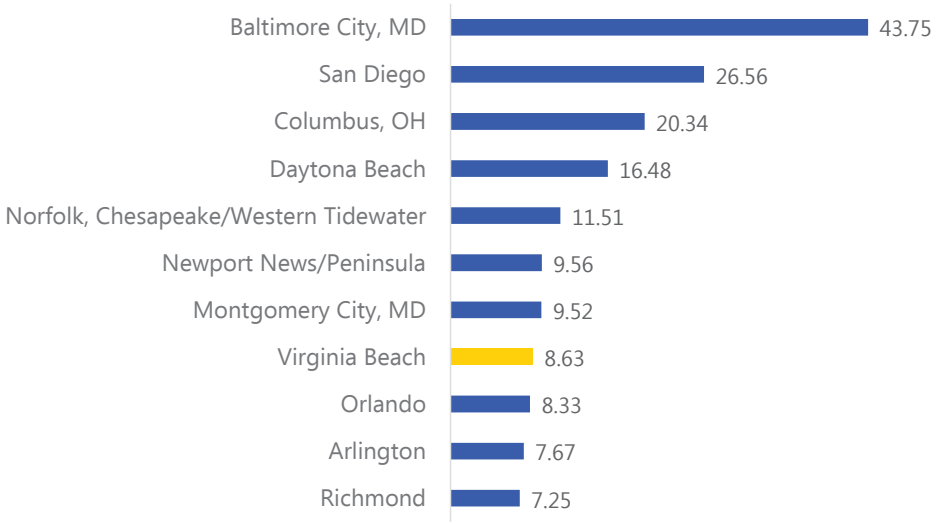


Source: HMIS

How Virginia Beach Compares to Other Cities

Virginia Beach has a low rate of homelessness compared to other coastal cities and cities of our size. Our rate of homelessness is 8.63 persons per 10,000, a decrease from 12 persons per 10,000 reported in 2010.

Number of Homeless per 10,000 Population



Source: Based on 2016 PIT data

Total Homeless Based on 2016 PIT Count

Baltimore City, MD: 2,725

San Diego: 8,669

Columbus, OH: 1,724

Daytona Beach: 1,005

Norfolk, Chesapeake/ Western Tidewater: 723

Newport News/Peninsula: 464

Montgomery City, MD: 981

Virginia Beach: 389

Orlando: 1,670

Arlington: 174

Richmond: 762

Note: Each CoC may be comprised of more geographic areas than the city listed.

Sources: Total homeless from 2016 PIT Count; population from 2014 city-data.com

OUR COMMUNITY SYSTEM

Since 1984, our community has been committed to ending homelessness in Virginia Beach through a tapestry of faith, City, and nonprofit organizations working together. The diverse effort and creativity of each entity has been, and is very much still, a strength of our community approach to solve this problem.

At the time the 2013 strategic plan was adopted, our system of services had just grown, and we were conceptualizing an even more coordinated and formalized effort toward addressing homelessness. In the four short years since, we now have a comprehensive and organized system for delivering homeless services. A unified decision-making and collaborative process is also in place to ensure we are continuously working together toward common goals and objectives.

Given that our system will always be composed of independent organizations, it will, to a certain extent, continue to depend on the good will of all involved to work cooperatively. As cooperation and coordination are also mandated for those who receive federal funds, we expect to continue making significant progress while striving to maintain the balance between coordination and independence.

Role of Faith Organizations

The faith community has perhaps made the most lasting footprint on the path toward ending homelessness in Virginia Beach. Many of the existing organizations and services in Virginia Beach began as initiatives of the faith community who recognized that a separate nonprofit was needed to carry out homeless assistance programs and

In 1986 several churches and a synagogue came together to establish a dinner program at the Oceanfront. The spirit of those faith-based organizations formed the Judeo-Christian Outreach Center (JCOC). Since then, more than 100 faith-based organizations and community partners gather to prepare and serve meals every day of the year for anyone who is homeless or at-risk.

"None of this could occur without the unwavering support of faith-based organizations in our community."

Todd Walker
JCOC Executive Director

The Winter Shelter program provides homeless individuals with a place to sleep each night at various faith organizations throughout Virginia Beach. From October to April, participating faith organizations rotate weekly to provide overnight shelter and meals. Some organizations may also provide additional support and resources, such as toiletries, clothing, and medical care.

obtain grants. The faith community continues to be play a significant role as a key service delivery partner and by filling gaps in our community system.

For example, for many years faith organizations have partnered with the City to provide overnight shelter for single homeless adults during the winter months. The faith community has recently developed a similar model to provide emergency shelter for homeless families in the summer. Other programs and activities include service coordination, furniture ministry, and food programs.

Faith organizations have also implemented the Charity Tracker program, which helps churches coordinate and report on the assistance they provide to people in need. Since 2013, more than $3.4 million in assistance has been recorded.

Role of City Staff

While the City has played various roles in the system, our general approach has been to help lead, plan, and organize the system of services that are primarily delivered by faith and nonprofit organizations. In addition to writing and submitting the federal and state grants the community receives, the City is responsible for monitoring the system to ensure effective operation and continuous improvement.

As our system grows, we envision the City will continue to fulfill these responsibilities and take a more active role as a service provider and mobilizer of networks to address key challenges. The Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation (DHNP) coordinates and supports the organization and operation of our community coalition, known as the BEACH Community Partnership. Other key functions include conducting intake, assessment, and referrals at the Lighthouse Day Support Services Center, and citywide homeless outreach. The City will also manage the housing and services that will be provided at the Housing Resource Center when it opens in the spring of 2018.

Role of Nonprofit Service Providers

Nonprofit service providers are on the frontlines of preventing and ending homelessness in Virginia Beach. The agencies provide housing and supportive services, and work closely with homeless and at-risk households daily in an effort to stabilize them and ultimately help them become more self-sufficient.

Currently there are nearly a dozen organizations who are key partners in establishing policies, procedures, and decision processes for our system. The voluntary cooperation and collaboration of these organizations is critical for the accomplishment of system goals, and allows our community to successfully continue competing for HUD and state funding.

BEACH Community Partnership

If the relationship between City, faith, and nonprofit organizations is a tapestry, then the BEACH Community Partnership is the thread that connects these entities together. BEACH, which stands for Bringing an End to All City Homelessness, is a voluntary association of all individuals and organizations who want to be a part of the community effort to end homelessness, and is the heart of our unified coalition. Since its creation in 2009, the partnership has grown to include representation from more than 30 faith, City, and nonprofit organizations, and various subcommittees that plan and implement projects in key focus areas.

BEACH
Bringing an End to All City Homelessness

BEACH Governing Board

The BEACH Governing Board is a HUD-required entity that makes funding and ranking decisions about federal and state funding -- a total of more than $1.5 million. The board is endorsed by the City Council and provides recommendations to City staff and the Council on homeless policies and plans. Board members are elected by the BEACH Community Partnership, and its membership is comprised of representatives from City, faith, schools, nonprofits, and regional organizations, and the formerly homeless.

Performance Monitoring Committee (PMC)

The Performance Monitoring Committee (PMC) consists of City agencies and nonprofit service providers that receive federal funding and provide homeless programs in Virginia Beach. The committee monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of system programs and services, and makes recommendations to the BEACH Governing Board.

Role of Federal, State, and City Government

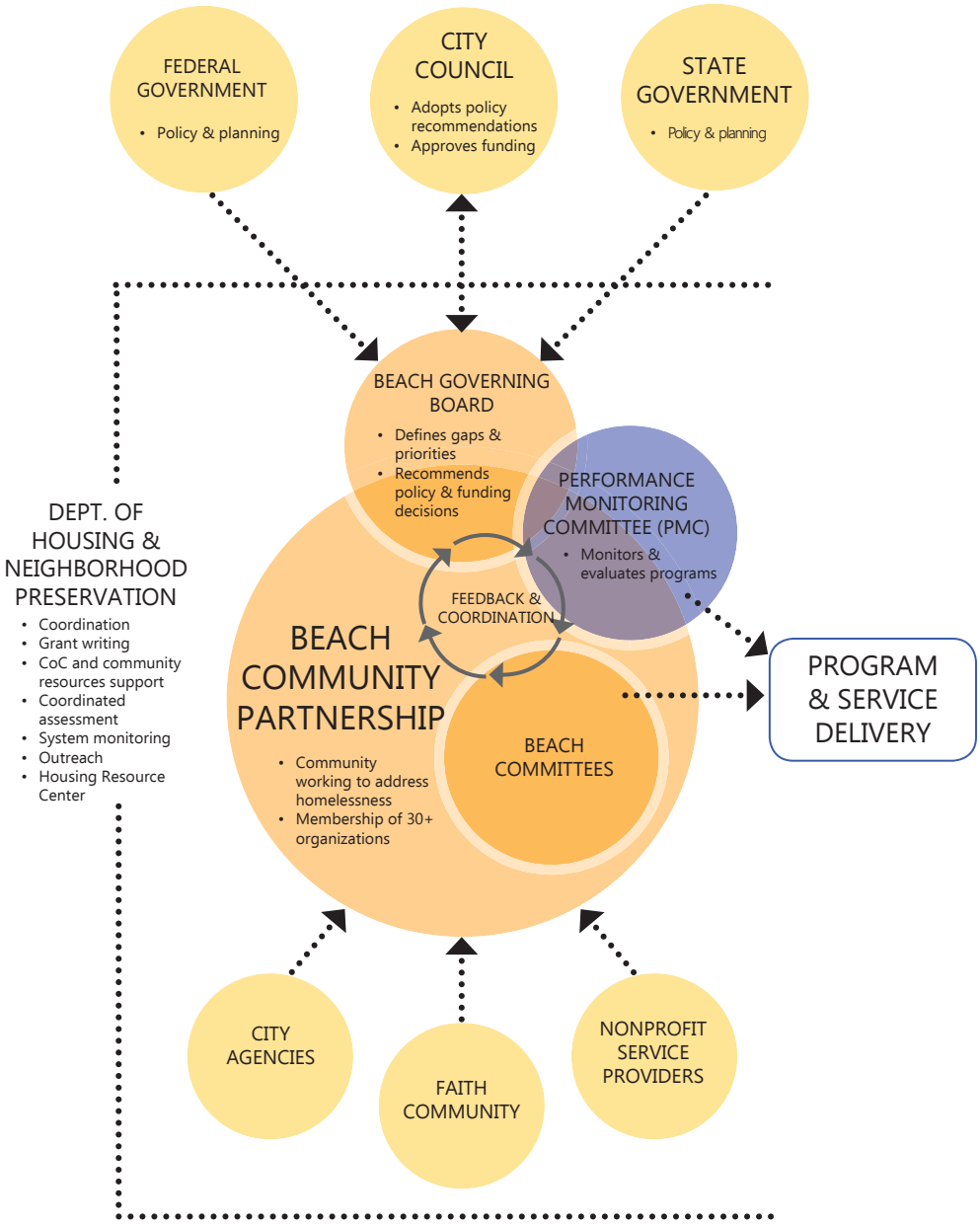
The federal and state government's role is to ensure communities have the right resources to end homelessness among all subpopulations based on each community's needs. As recipients of federal and state funding, our community system complies with federal and state policies, and receives guidance on strategic planning in order to ensure we are using resources appropriately and effectively to achieve this goal. The City Council adopts policy and allocates funding for homeless services based on recommendations from the community through the BEACH Governing Board.

On April 29, 2009, more than 130 representatives from the faith community, City, and nonprofit organizations attended a faith-based forum on homelessness. The forum highlighted the progress that has been made by each entity and focused on creating and enhancing partnerships to address key issues. This meeting would lead to the creation of the BEACH Community Partnership.

BEACH Committees Include:

- Family Homelessness
- Youth Homelessness
- Unsheltered
- Coordinated Assessment
- HMIS
- Performance and Monitoring
- Service Coordination/ Charity Tracker
- Discharge Planning
- Advocacy

Community System Organization



How is Our Community System Funded?

The Hampton Roads Community Foundation funded the first consultant study of our housing crisis response system in 2013, and supports other city and regional projects.

The valuable work of our community system would not be possible without the millions in funding we receive from various sources -- from HUD to the City to private donations -- that support homeless services and programs.

The Federal Government, through HUD, is the largest source of funding for homeless services in Virginia Beach, most of which are provided through the CoC program. The City is the lead agency for the Virginia Beach CoC, helping to obtain and maintain key funding that many of the nonprofit service providers receive directly from HUD. Each year, more than $1.5 million is granted through the CoC to Virginia Beach agencies that provide housing and supportive services to the homeless.

Portions of other federal grants the City receives are allocated for homeless programs and services, administered by the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation, and awarded to nonprofit service providers.

Service providers also receive funding directly from the state, the United Way of South Hampton Roads, and the Hampton Roads Community Foundation.

The City significantly supports the community system by allocating funds for key functions when there is no other provider, such as homeless outreach and services at the Lighthouse Day Support Services Center. As a testament to the City's longstanding commitment to ending homelessness, the City Council unanimously approved $30 million for the construction of the Housing Resource Center, and will fund most of the operating costs of the facility.

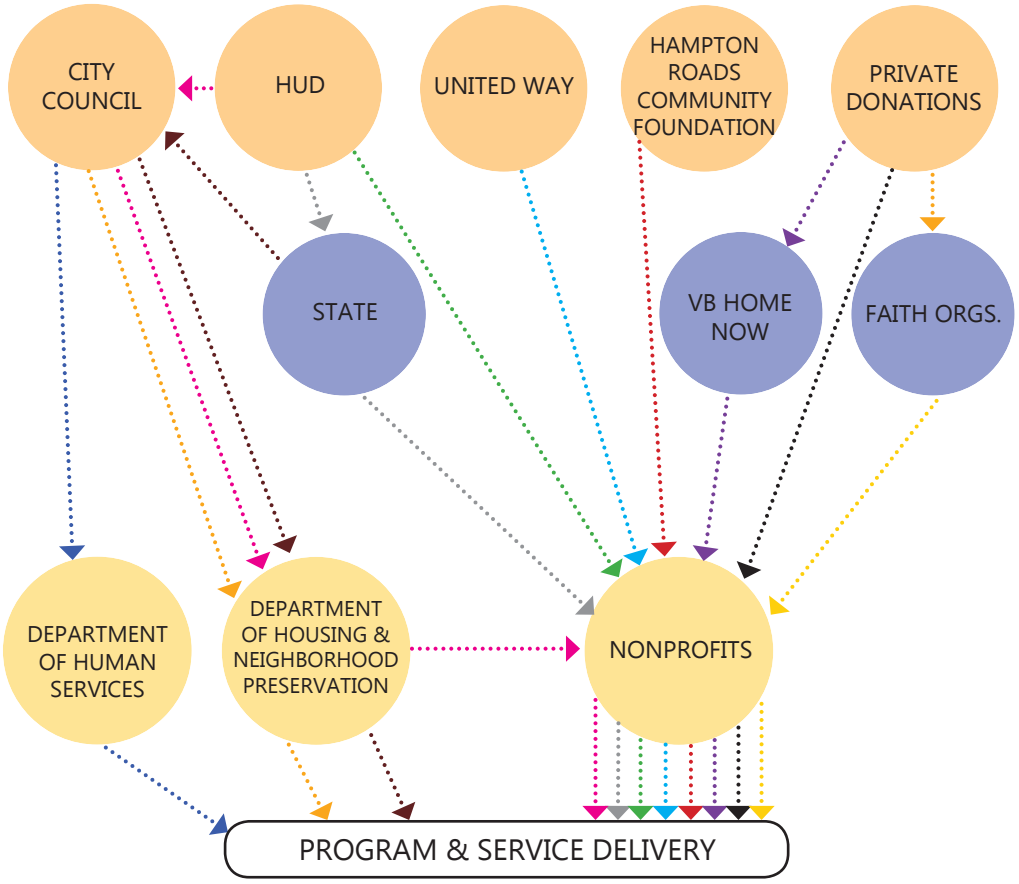
Because much of the funding the community system receives is federal, regulations impact how and when these monies can be used. Private donations are critical to helping us overcome these limitations and address gaps in the community, such as transportation and training for the homeless.

VB Home Now is the newest foundation to support and enhance our community system of services, programs, and facilities to prevent and end homelessness. At the time this plan was written, the nonprofit had raised more than $300,000 to support activities in the Housing Resource Center and the community.

Ray Bjorkman, Chair of VB Home Now

The diagram on the following page shows how funding flows through our system.

Flow of Funding



Community System Partners

The success of our community system depends on the efforts of the many agencies and organizations who have committed to work together in making homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring. While we currently have a robust network of agencies, we recognize the need for more partners to join our system to help us achieve our goals.

Below is a list of our current system partners organized by key function:

We need more organizations to join our system.

Function	Agencies
Intake & Assessment	• DHNP - Coordinated assessment, outreach • ForKids - Regional Housing Crisis Hotline
Prevention	• DHNP - Housing Resource Center (June 2018) • DHS Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) Outreach • LGBT Life Center • The Planning Council • Virginia Beach Community Development Corporation (VBCDC) - veterans
Supportive Services Only	• DHNP - day support, outreach, Housing Resource Center (2018) • DHS PATH Outreach • PIN (People in Need) Ministry - recovery group
Food Programs	• Faith Organizations • PIN Ministry • Judeo-Christian Outreach Center (JCOC) • Potters House
Transitional Housing	• DHNP - families (Housing Resource Center (2018)) • JCOC - veterans • Samaritan House - families (2018)
Rapid Re-Housing	• LGBT Life Center - singles and families (prioritizes LGBT community) • JCOC - singles • Samaritan House - singles and families (domestic violence) • VBCDC – veterans
Permanent Housing	DHNP - Project-based vouchers for regional single room occupancy (SRO) developments: Cloverleaf, Crescent Square, Gosnold, South Bay, Church St. Station (2018); and Cedar Grove (veterans); Housing Resource Center (2018)
Permanent Supportive Housing	• Community Alternatives Management Group (CAMG) - singles and families • JCOC - singles • LGBT Life Center - singles • VBCDC- veterans and singles
Shelter	• DHNP - singles (Housing Resource Center (2018)) • JCOC - singles • Samaritan House - families (domestic violence) • Seton Youth - youth (9-17 years old) • JCOC and faith organizations/Winter Shelter - singles (October - April) • Faith organizations/Virginia Beach Family Emergency Shelter Team (VBFEST) - families (July - August)

How Do People Access Services through Our Community System?

Our community system is designed to help the most vulnerable families and individuals. It is important to keep this context in mind in order to fully understand how people flow through our community system.

Homeless Outreach Team (also known as the Pinkies)

Most people who are experiencing a housing crisis access our community system by calling the Regional Housing Crisis Hotline. A smaller number of people, primarily those who are homeless, are connected by our Homeless Outreach Team (more commonly known as the Pinkies) or by accessing the services at the Lighthouse Day Support Services Center, and eventually at the Housing Resource Center.

The first step in our community system is identifying whether the client is literally homeless (e.g. on the street or living in their car), or at-risk (in imminent danger of losing their housing).

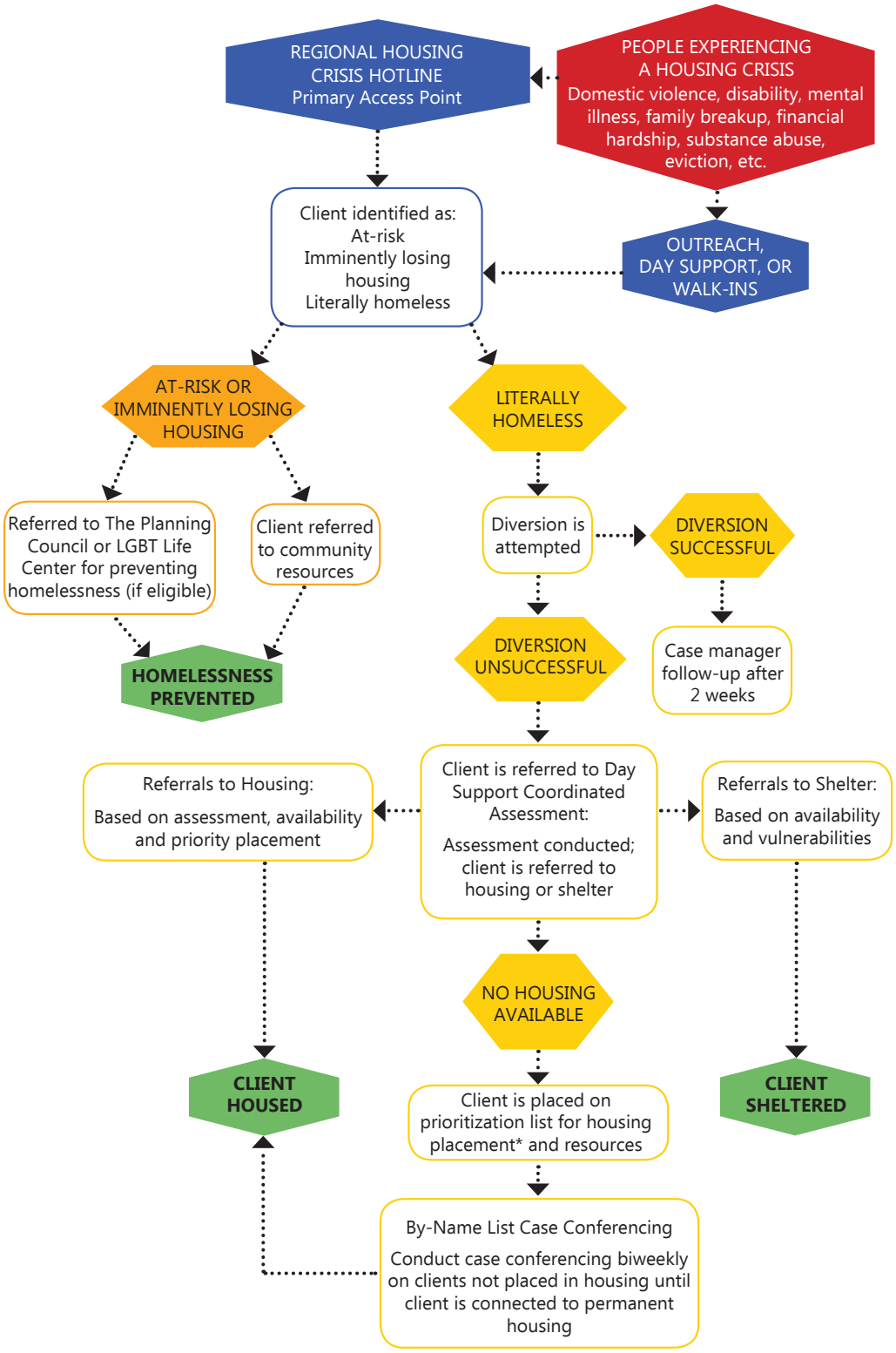
The primary goal for at-risk households is to prevent them from becoming homeless. People who are eligible for prevention services are referred to the appropriate resources for assistance. For example, this may include minimal financial assistance to pay a rental security deposit or rent arrears. Those who are not eligible are referred to other resources within the community.

For families and individuals who are literally homeless, the goal is to permanently house them while making their homelessness as brief as possible. Housing specialists with the City will first attempt to help people seeking shelter find alternative housing options, such as staying with friends or family members. By diverting households away from the system, shelter beds and housing units can remain available for those who need them more.

If diversion is unsuccessful, the client is referred to coordinated assessment. This process involves asking the client a set of questions to determine which programs or services are most appropriate to meet their needs, and prioritizing them for those services. Staff is trained on administering and scoring a standardized set of assessment tools to make these determinations. Based on assessment, vulnerabilities, priority placement, and availability, clients are referred to either housing or shelter.

If housing is unavailable, the client is placed on the prioritization/waiting list for housing and resources. Case managers and service providers will coordinate and communicate regularly regarding each client on the waiting list. As permanent housing units become available, clients are removed from the waiting list in the order of their prioritization ranking.

Service Flow



Acuity: the severity of the issues experienced by clients who are homeless.

*** Housing Placement based on Acuity**

Moderate Acuity

Type of Housing:
Rapid Re-housing

Programs:
- JCOC
- LGBT Life Center
- Samaritan House
- VBCDC

High Acuity/Chronic

Type of Housing:
Permanent Supportive Housing

Programs:
- CAMG
- JCOC
- LGBT Life Center
- VBCDC
- Virginia Supportive Housing (VSH) - SROs

High Acuity

Type of Housing:
Permanent Housing

Programs:
- DHNP - Tenant-based Rental Assistance (TBRA)
- VBCDC - SRO
- VSH - SROs

Making Progress & Achieving Success

For more achievements, see Appendix 1: 2013 Virginia Beach Strategic Plan to End Homelessness Action Plan (updated with statuses)

The goals of the 2013 Strategic Plan to End Homelessness is a reflection of the challenges our community faced at the time. Virginia Beach had yet to fully comply with the new regulations under the federal HEARTH Act, which changed how communities across the U.S. would operate and deliver homeless services. Specific requirements included a coordinated assessment process, performance-based funding, a focus on homeless prevention and permanent housing, and an inclusive governance structure with representation from all service providers, not just those receiving federal funding. The City Council's support to fund the design of the Housing Resource Center revealed fresh opportunities for how, and which, services could be consolidated and delivered at a facility of its kind. The first study of the City's housing crisis response system, which had just been completed, exposed our community's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities to enhance our system.

These challenges influenced the four broad goals of the 2013 strategic plan. In the four years since it was adopted, we have made significant progress in achieving these goals. Our achievements, as they relate to each of the goals from the 2013 plan, are highlighted below:

Goal 1: Increase leadership, collaboration, innovation and civic engagement in our community efforts

- In our pursuit to end homelessness, we no longer operate as individual programs. Through established strategic partnerships and collaboration among community stakeholders, we have designed and implemented an integrated service system approach to ending homelessness.
- The BEACH Governing Board was established in 2014 to meet HUD requirements, and has continued to function as the leadership body for our community effort. It has diverse representation from all community sectors.
- The BEACH Community Partnership continues to have high community interest, with representatives from more than 30 active organizations.
- The Performance Monitoring Committee and its members have enhanced their policies and procedures, increased the level of HUD funding available, and obtained new state funding to support new programs.
- We collaborated with multiple federal, state, and regional organizations to functionally end veteran homelessness in 2015, and have continued these partnerships.
- Virginia Beach joined a regional HMIS and now participates in a single point of entry call system for the entire region.

- We have increased our capacity and utilization of HMIS to provide more accurate data and reports to help identify gaps in our system, and evaluate the performance of not only individual homeless assistance programs, but the overall homeless system as well.

Goal 2: Create a collaborative system of service delivery and access that connects people to services that meet their basic needs and support housing stability

- We have adopted an evidence-based common assessment tool to determine the needs of households experiencing homelessness, developed a data-driven triage and referral process based on the severity of their needs, and created a by-name prioritization list. As a result, homeless households are referred and placed into appropriate housing intervention programs that best match their level of need.

- We have enhanced the capacity of outreach through the creation of the Homeless Outreach Team. This team is dedicated to outreaching and engaging those who are street homeless throughout Virginia Beach, not just at the Oceanfront.

- Through the Regional Housing Crisis Hotline, we have established a primary access point for obtaining homeless assistance, and developed well-defined pathways to assist households in ending their episode of homelessness.

- We have developed an external and objective process of system and program monitoring.

Goal 3: Increase and maintain the supply of and access to permanent, accessible and affordable housing

- Five new affordable housing developments opened:
    1. Heron's Landing (opened in 2013): 60 units of subsidized housing in Chesapeake, including 8 units for previously homeless Virginia Beach residents
    2. Crescent Square Apartments (opened in 2016): 80 units of affordable housing, including 42 subsidized units for the previously homeless, and 38 affordable units
    3. Baker Woods (opened in 2016): 96 units of affordable family housing, including 8 subsidized units for disabled families
    4. Tranquility at the Lakes (opened in 2017): 40 units of affordable housing for seniors, including 20 subsidized units
    5. Summer Haven (opened in 2017): 57 units of affordable family housing, including 6 subsidized units for disabled families

- Through the acquisition of grant funding and the reallocation of existing funding, we have significantly increased our capacity to provide rapid rehousing to serve individuals and families.

Summer Haven Apartments

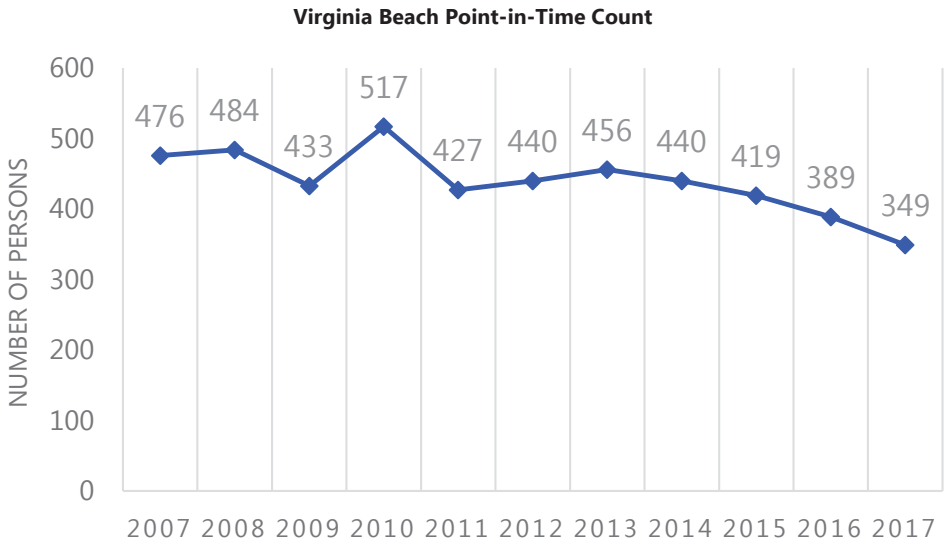
Goal 4: Develop sustainable resources to support our ongoing community effort

- Through major structural changes in our system we have adopted and incorporated all of the federal HEARTH Act requirements, and are therefore positioned to continue receiving federal funding.
- We have increased state funding by 150% (from $100,000 in 2014 to $250,000 in 2015) and maintained this level to date.
- We have increased federal funding by 13% (from more than $1.4 million in 2014 to more than $1.6 million in 2015), and maintained this level to date.
- VB Home Now is a new nonprofit that was established to support and enhance our community system of services, programs, and facilities in order to prevent and end homelessness. The foundation raises funds, accepts gifts and provides other resources in order to fill gaps in our community.

In coordination with the Point-in-Time Count, Project Homeless Connect is held to provide individuals with a variety of services and resources to assist them in moving closer to ending their homelessness. These include referrals to housing resources, veterans' services and Social Security. Participants also receive donated services from local businesses and organizations such as medical screenings, hearing and vision tests, haircuts, and hygiene kits.

Lower PIT Count Numbers

In 2017, we recorded the lowest number of homeless persons (349) since the PIT Count was first required by HUD in 2007. This reflects a 32% decrease from our highest total of 517 in 2010. In the past five years, we have seen a steady decline in the total number of homeless persons identified during the PIT Count.



Ending Veteran Homelessness

In 2014, Mayor William D. Sessoms Jr. signed the Mayor's Challenge committing the City of Virginia Beach to the National Initiative to End Veteran Homelessness by the end of 2015. Through a coordinated city and regional effort, we achieved this goal by functionally ending veteran homelessness. This means that all of the homeless veterans we are aware of, and who want assistance, are either housed or in a program that will lead to housing. Through the initiative, we have made improvements to our system of services so that homeless veterans are not only prioritized for housing programs, but we can also expect to house them within 90 days or less.

By the end of 2015, 157 homeless veterans in Virginia Beach were housed or on their way to being housed. We are continuing these efforts to ensure that every homeless veteran in the city has the opportunity to have a home.

Virginia was the first state in the nation to functionally end veteran homelessness. Nearly 300 homeless veterans in South Hampton Roads were housed thanks to the regional effort.

Mayor William D. Sessoms Jr. announces that Virginia Beach and South Hampton Roads functionally ended veteran homelessness during the Tidewater Veterans Day parade and ceremony in Virginia Beach on Nov. 11, 2015.

The Challenges that Remain

Although our community has achieved many successes, we recognize that we must continue moving forward and build on the momentum of the progress we have made. Until all families and individuals in Virginia Beach have the opportunity to live in safe, decent, and affordable housing, there is still work to be done and challenges to overcome.

Among those challenges, as identified by comprehensive performance system reports using HMIS data, are the following:

- We do not have a comprehensive diversion intervention strategy that prevents homelessness for households seeking shelter. A successful strategy should connect at-risk households to alternative housing arrangements, and provide services and financial assistance to help them regain housing.
- While data shows an increase in youth homelessness, we have not made investments in creating permanent housing programs for youth who are 18-24 years old.
- To increase the capacity of the system, we need additional providers to join our community efforts. We need to develop recruiting strategies to encourage more nonprofits to aggressively apply for federal and state funding to support the efforts of making homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring.
- We do not have an adequate amount of affordable housing for homeless families with minor children who have high barriers to housing and extensive service needs.

Housing First: An approach to homeless assistance that provides immediate access to housing without any prerequisites to services and income, followed by the supportive services that may be needed to foster long-term stability and prevent a return to homelessness.

- We do not have an adequate amount of unshared permanent housing for single adult households with the longest histories of homelessness and the most severe service needs. Currently 85% of all permanent housing beds in Virginia Beach involve shared housing; however, 58% of households in need of those beds have reported they are not interested in shared housing arrangements.
- We need to adopt Housing First as a best practice in addressing homelessness and ensure programs are implementing this philosophy in order to reduce barriers to program entry and increase housing sustainability.
- There have been significant reductions in funding of federal housing and homeless programs that reduce the resources available to achieve our goals.

VISION & PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING THE PLAN

When the previous strategic plan was adopted in 2013, our partnership of City agencies, faith organizations, and nonprofits rallied behind one vision and nine guiding principles to move our community forward to prevent and end homelessness in Virginia Beach. Four years later, we continue to embrace these shared ideals. While the essence of our vision remains intact, we have refocused our definition of ending homelessness to mean rare, brief, and nonrecurring.

One Vision

Realizing our personal and collective responsibility to our fellow man, we mobilize our community to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring. We envision a future where everyone in Virginia Beach will be able to live in safe, decent, and affordable housing.

Guiding Principles

- We believe that we can end homelessness in Virginia Beach for individuals and families. This means that we can drastically prevent as many people as possible from becoming homeless, shorten the length of time people experience homelessness, and help people leave homelessness behind for good.

- Homelessness creates both direct and indirect costs to our community. Ending homelessness will both reduce those costs and create other benefits for the entire community.

Session on decriminalizing homelessness at the 2016 Regional Conference on Ending Homelessness. The South Hampton Roads Regional Task Force to End Homelessness has hosted six conferences to share national best practices and promote strategic planning.

- We will make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring through the active collaboration of all sectors of our community. The BEACH Community Partnership represents our community's coordinated effort to achieve this.
- We must invest our resources in solutions that are shown to be effective and sustainable.
- We will cooperate with our local and regional partners to ensure that we are working effectively and with the lowest possible cost to taxpayers and other funders. Our regional work will focus on what can best be achieved together, while recognizing that some efforts require a local approach.
- We will focus our efforts on prevention of homelessness, diversion to other community and family supports, and rapid rehousing. Our programs will provide the least amount of assistance necessary to ensure housing stability.
- Our community will provide opportunities to help people avoid and end homelessness, and we rely on those who experience it to take maximum advantage of those opportunities.
- Our service system will be person-centered, ensuring that homeless families and individuals play an active role in defining their needs and wants, and are supported to obtain services that best achieve those goals. The person, not the system, is in charge of defining the direction for their lives. This includes ensuring that the needs of special populations are met and that all who need opportunities to avoid or end homelessness are served appropriately.
- We will use defined and measurable outcomes to determine the results of our work and how it can be improved.

Context for the Community of One Plan

The Community of One plan builds upon and expands the previous Strategic Plan to End Homelessness adopted by the City Council in 2013. This updated plan incorporates progress to date, new research, and addresses the following key items:

- The opening of the Housing Resource Center, a one-stop-shop of essential services, shelter, and housing, that is scheduled to open at 104 N. Witchduck Road in the spring of 2018
- Enhancements to the service system that have been implemented to unite the faith community, City agencies, and nonprofit service providers as one coalition for ending homelessness
- Integrating best practices and input from our community partners for our service system

Other Plans

In addition to the items listed above, this plan has been developed and will be executed in the context of overall City goals and housing-related plans. This is a major consideration in order to support the overall success of multiple city goals. These relevant City plans and guidance documents include the annually-developed City Council Priorities and the Comprehensive Plan, especially Section 2.3: Housing and Neighborhood Plan. These documents define key City goals, including housing options that serve people at all income levels and life stages.

Additional plans and programs that provide context for Community of One include:

- HUD Consolidated Plan: Identifies priorities, funding and programs to meet the housing needs of low- and moderate-income persons.
- Housing Crisis Response Strategy: Defines our current system of services for the homeless and provides significant funding for them.
- Regional Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) Plan: Guides the use of federal HOPWA funds.
- Workforce Housing Program: Program designed to enhance affordable housing opportunities so that vital members of the workforce can afford to live and work in Virginia Beach.
- As previously mentioned, since most of the funding for homeless services and affordable housing is federal, federal regulations will influence what activities can be carried out and how.

Workforce Housing Development Riverlake

Regional Relationships

Regional cooperation is an essential element in addressing homelessness for the following reasons:

- We have a regional housing market
- We have organizations that work throughout the region
- People seeking housing are impartial to city boundaries
- Through regional cooperation, we can solve problems by sharing resources and costs, thereby reducing the costs to individual localities and taxpayers

Virginia Beach has been an active participant in the South Hampton Roads Regional Task Force to End Homelessness since it was created in 2005. The task force is a collaboration between the Cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach; Isle of Wight County; The Planning Council; and the United Way of South Hampton Roads. Its mission is to provide a forum for communicating, sharing ideas, and developing and implementing regional strategies to address homelessness

in South Hampton Roads.

The South Hampton Roads Regional Task Force to End Homelessness has been nationally recognized as a successful model for local governments working together to solve problems. As a result of regional cooperation, the task force has achieved major successes in raising awareness, expanding access to existing housing, and leveraging funding to develop new affordable housing.

Through regional cooperation, five efficiency apartment developments have been created in South Hampton Roads since 2006: Gosnold Apartments in Norfolk, Cloverleaf Apartments and Crescent Square Apartments in Virginia Beach, South Bay Apartments in Portsmouth, and Heron's Landing in Chesapeake. These developments provide a total of 282 permanent supportive housing units for homeless single adults, and an additional 38 units of affordable housing for low-income households. Virginia Supportive Housing, a statewide nonprofit, developed all five facilities and received financial support from multiple cities.

By supporting these projects jointly, the cities have created far more housing than they could have individually. The regional nature of the projects has also attracted additional federal, state, and private funding, so that millions of dollars of non-city funding has been leveraged to help build and operate these developments.

The HEARTH Act

In 2009, Congress enacted the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act, which requires significant changes in the way communities plan and deliver services. Communities must operate as a coordinated service delivery system rather than as a collection of individually-funded projects. Specific requirements include a coordinated assessment process, performance-based funding, a focus on homeless prevention and permanent housing, and an inclusive governance structure with representation from all service providers, not just those receiving federal funding. Implementation of HEARTH Act requirements is critical to ensuring the continuation of annual federal funding of more than $1.5 million.

The Housing Resource Center

The Housing Resource Center will be the centerpiece of our community system and will enhance how we make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring. It will be a one-stop-shop of essential services, shelter, and housing where homeless families and individuals can leave homelessness behind. On day one, when the Housing Resource Center opens, 119 people will be off the street.

What will be in the Housing Resource Center?	
Family Interim Housing	10 motel-style rooms (40 beds) with connections that will accommodate small or larger families (operated by nonprofits)
Singles Shelter	49 beds = 42 dormitory-style beds + 7 ADA accessible beds (operated by nonprofits)
Efficiency Apartments	30 one-bedroom apartments (10 allocated for youth) that provide longer term or permanent living arrangements for single adults (operated by nonprofits)
Day Services	Laundry, showers, and related services (operated by nonprofits)
Health Clinic	Comprehensive primary care health services available for both participants at the center and the community. Accessible by separate outside entrance.
City Offices	Human Services
Other	Learning facility and commercial kitchen

With the opening of the Housing Resource Center, Virginia Beach is poised to become a national leader in the effort to prevent and end homelessness. It will combine efficiency apartments, shelter, and housing for families and singles; supportive services; and community resources in one facility, making it the first of its kind in the region.

The City committed $30 million for the construction of the Housing Resource Center and will fund most of the facility's operating costs. The Housing Resource Center is currently under construction at 104 N. Witchduck Road, and is scheduled to open in the spring of 2018.

Services at the Housing Resource Center will include:

- Coordinated assessment
- Housing crisis case management
- Short-term, overnight shelter for families and singles
- Life-skills coaching
- Education programs
- Job-skills training
- Charitable medical services
- Social Services

Rendering of the Housing Resource Center

Process for Developing the Community of One Plan

Community of One was developed after a yearlong process that began in the summer of 2016 and included multiple opportunities for public and stakeholder input. The plan is the collective work of many faith, City, and nonprofit organizations, and represents the vision of the entire community to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring.

On Sept. 26, 2017, the BEACH Governing Board voted to accept and recommend to the City Council the goals, objectives, and action steps outlined in the action plan. On Oct. 17, 2017, the City Council voted to adopt Community of One as the City's strategic plan to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring for 2017-2020.

For more information about the Housing Resource Center, see Appendix 2 or visit www.vbgov.com/housing-resource-center.

COMMUNITY OF ONE ACTION PLAN

The backbone of the Community of One plan are the following seven goals that will guide our objectives and action steps for the next three years:

- Goal 1: Transform Our Service System to Make Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring
- Goal 2: Make Family Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring
- Goal 3: Make Chronic Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring
- Goal 4: Make Youth Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring
- Goal 5: Maintain and Increase the Supply of Permanent, Accessible and Affordable Housing
- Goal 6: Increase Leadership, Collaboration, and Civic Engagement in Our Community Efforts
- Goal 7: Develop and Maintain Sustainable Resources to Support Our Ongoing Community Effort

This strategic plan will enhance our system and continue our progress toward making homelessness, rare, brief, and nonrecurring in Virginia Beach.

However, generally not listed, but forming the basis of continued success, is the need to ensure that we maintain our current funding, organizational structures, relationships,

Tracy Flaherty-Willmott, associate director of OrgCode Consulting, Inc., leads a training for housing agencies, service providers, and the faith community on creating a system of care that aligns with Housing First.

partnerships, and available facilities. This does not mean that we will not enhance or change how we use those resources, but we cannot neglect the current bases of our success in order to move forward.

Goal 1: Transform Our Service System to Make Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring

Overview

For this plan to be successful it is necessary that services for persons who experience homelessness operate as a cohesive, comprehensive system. The system must incorporate all services in the community, whether they are part of the nonprofit, government, or non-governmental sector. The assistance provided must also ensure that the basic needs for shelter and food are met, as well as access to stable housing.

The federal HEARTH Act, which requires significant changes to the way localities deliver homeless services, creates some of the rationale for this goal. Communities must now operate as a service delivery system rather than as a collection of individually funded projects. Funding will be predicated on meeting specific performance measures.

Our current system has made significant strides in creating a streamlined process of accessing services that incorporates prevention and diversion, utilizing an evidence-based assessment tool to determine the service needs of literally homeless households, and providing referrals for housing placements for those assessed to be the most vulnerable. These accomplishments were achieved through service providers and stakeholders coming together and operating as a coordinated system, as opposed to individual projects functioning as silos. While this has been a significant step forward, additional improvements can be made.

To be a truly successful model for coordinated service delivery, our network of agencies and community volunteers will collaborate to provide wraparound services to address specific homeless issues, such as family, chronic, and youth homelessness. Our goal is to integrate ancillary services, such as employment and behavioral and mental health, to facilitate our efforts to end homelessness and help to build resiliency around the sustainment of housing. Our plans for the next three years call for working with providers to create or enhance these networks, and expand or enhance these services.

Objective 1.1: Adapt our current system to ensure that it incorporates all necessary components to prevent and end homelessness and required by the HEARTH Act.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Diversion and prevention i. Improve and enhance efforts for diversion, prevention, and access to mainstream resources and housing-focused case management ii. Collaborate with The Planning Council's diversion and prevention system to ensure effective utilization of available resources	March 2018
b. Continue to support and invest in "Housing First" and Rapid Re-Housing models for homeless families and individuals that provide housing-focused case management and resources necessary for community-based housing placement	2018
c. Support and enhance the Regional Housing Crisis Hotline through a shared governance system	Ongoing
d. Create and adopt standards of care for delivery of housing services, and provide community training opportunities to enhance the provision of Housing First, trauma-informed care	2018
e. Reduce shelter stays by repositioning shelters to provide short-term stays with reduced barriers to access, unified standards and procedures, and a focus on accessing permanent housing	2019 and ongoing

Objective 1.2: Continually enhance the professionalism, effectiveness and accountability of the services system.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. In partnership with regional educational institutions and the Regional Task Force to End Homelessness, create a regional professional development curriculum that addresses key knowledge gaps, including housing-focused case management, outreach for special needs populations, and person-centered planning and support	2019
b. Develop a partnership or contract for an external monitoring/ evaluation process that provides regular, objective, and data-based analysis and evaluation of individual programs and overall system performance	2018

Objective 1.3: Ensure that housing and supportive services projects will receive appropriate and eligible referrals for housing placement.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. The coordinated assessment process will be redesigned to incorporate priority grouping to ensure that those with the greatest service needs are placed in permanent supportive housing beds with intensive services	2018
b. Increase access to homeless services through enhancements to our communitywide system of coordinated assessment and prioritization and ongoing feedback from providers	2017 and Ongoing
c. Households experiencing a housing crisis who cannot be diverted will access emergency beds with as few barriers as possible, and independent of the operating hours of coordinated entry and assessment	2019
d. Ensure coordinated entry and assessment are well-advertised throughout the entire geography of Virginia Beach (print media and signage in public places, e.g. bus stations, food pantries, soup kitchens, etc.)	2018
e. Continue to use evidence-based assessment tools to determine service needs and appropriate connections to permanent solutions	2017 and Ongoing

Objective 1.4: Provide effective case management and aftercare services.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Build strong relationships with community and faith-based organization to provide aftercare services to newly-housed households in project-based housing	2019
b. Ensure permanent supportive housing providers are employing evidence-based models of case management that matches the service needs of the clients	2019
c. Prioritize professional development training of case management skills to ensure the implementation of appropriate and effective supportive services	2018

Objective 1.5 Assist homeless persons accessing housing services in obtaining mainstream income and/or employment opportunities in an effort to increase housing stability	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Develop an income assessment and incorporate at the initial stage of accessing homeless assistance to appropriately connect households to income opportunities, such as employment, training and job readiness, or disability income	July 2018

Objective 1.6: Enhance our system of capturing and reporting data.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Explore options to expand the effective use of Charity Tracker, increase users and link Charity Tracker data to the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), or transition over to the HMIS	2019
b. Provide monthly reports of critical data to the BEACH Governing Board and staff in order to monitor system performance and support key decision-making, and make available to the public	2017 and ongoing
c. Enhance and expand the regional HMIS to improve client data and support service delivery, evaluation, and communication between providers	Ongoing

Objective 1.7: Complete and open the Housing Resource Center to expand and enhance our existing system, and replace the services provided by the Lighthouse Center.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Develop, construct, and operate center	Summer 2018
b. Develop a plan for the relocation of appropriate current services and the creation of new services for the Housing Resource Center, to include physical and virtual access	October 2017
c. Solicit for and obtain appropriately skilled and qualified contractors to provide all appropriate services at the Housing Resource Center	January 2018
d. Seek to establish social enterprises as part of, or in conjunction with, the Housing Resource Center	August 2018

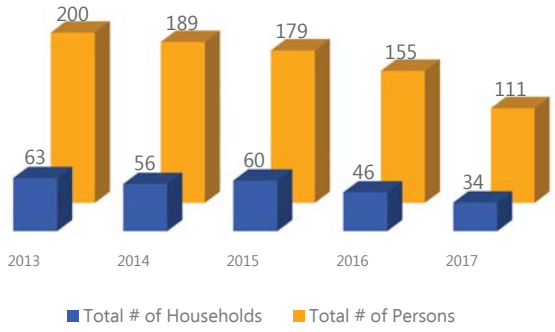
Housing Resource Center under construction at 104 N. Witchduck Road

Objective 1.7: Complete and open the Housing Resource Center to expand and enhance our existing system, and replace the services provided by the Lighthouse Center.	
Action Steps	**Date**
e. Develop and implement an access and security plan that provides a welcoming and safe environment for all at the building	Summer 2018 and ongoing
f. Develop and implement a transportation plan to ensure appropriate access opportunities are provided	Summer 2018 and ongoing
g. Develop and implement a health services plan that helps address critical health needs of the participants and enhances services to the community outside the Housing Resource Center	Summer 2018 and ongoing
h. Reduce impact of homelessness at the Oceanfront by: i. Working with churches and providers to modify the system of assistance in the Oceanfront area in order to reduce the impact on area neighborhoods, and increase coordination and effectiveness of services ii. Closing the Lighthouse Center upon opening the Housing Resource Center iii. Working with Judeo-Christian Outreach Center on potential changes in services and location iv. Focusing outreach and service coordination efforts at the Oceanfront during the spring, summer, and fall of 2018, potentially including a by-name list and schedule	October 2017 - June 2018 and ongoing
i. Engage community partners at the Housing Resource Center in volunteer opportunities that enhance the homeless services system	2018
j. Provide Housing First and cultural competency training to all staff and volunteers	2017 and ongoing

Goal 2: Make Family Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring

Overview

According to our annual PIT Counts, family homelessness has been steadily declining in Virginia Beach for the past five years. In 2017, family homelessness decreased by 44% since 2013. The 2017 PIT Count found 111 persons in families experiencing literal homelessness, compared to 200 persons in families in 2013. While these numbers are promising, there are still many families in Virginia Beach who are living below the federal poverty line and at risk of homelessness. Unemployment, lack of affordable housing, domestic violence, family breakups, and a decrease in government supports are some factors that contribute to family homelessness.



Source: Homeless Data Exchange, VA-503 Point-in-Time

In 2016, the Virginia Beach City Public School system reported that 886 school-age children lacked a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This means these children and their families were living in inadequate and unstable housing situations, such as doubled-up or hotel/motel living arrangements.

The data indicates our system is effectively addressing family homelessness. However, to be truly successful, we will enhance our system with better prevention and diversion strategies that are targeted to at-risk families. Families who are unable to avoid homelessness and have less severe barriers to housing will be connected to Rapid Re-Housing assistance or a rental subsidy in order to help them become stably housed.

Objective 2.1: Reduce the number of families experiencing homelessness for the first time.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Create a diversion program that will incorporate short-term case management, conflict mediation, financial assistance, and connections to mainstream services to prevent families from entering into shelter	2018

"Anna" a 24-year-old mother of three became homeless after losing her job. With financial assistance from relatives, her family was able to stay in hotels while she searched for employment opportunities.

After five months, "Anna's" relatives were unable to sustain her living arrangement. With no place to stay, her family ended up living in their car for a week.

"Anna" called the Regional Housing Crisis Hotline and was connected to the Virginia Beach Family Emergency Shelter Team program. Soon after, she was able to find a job, and her family was housed through a rental subsidy and case management program.

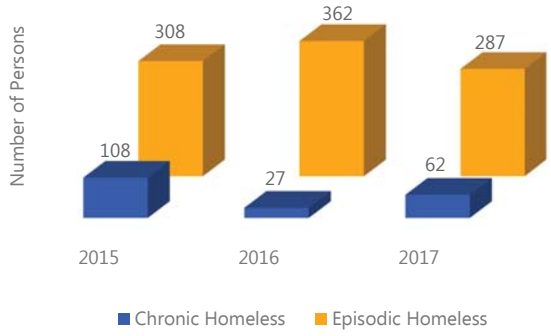
Objective 2.2: Provide appropriate shelter and survival assistance to ensure that homeless families are safe and protected as they transition from homelessness to stable housing.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Ensure through the coordinated assessment policy and practice that the most vulnerable families who cannot avoid shelters are able to quickly access shelter and obtain needed supports that will decrease the negative outcomes associated with experiencing homelessness	2019
b. Sustain our existing stock of family shelter beds to meet the scale of need of families experiencing street homelessness	2017 and ongoing

Objective 2.3: Create affordable housing for families who have demonstrated a need for permanent rental housing subsidies.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Provide a percentage of Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) to be targeted to formerly homeless families in need of a long-term subsidy	2019
b. Reallocate 10 Project-Based Voucher units to families in shelter and/or interim housing	2018

Objective 2.4: Target appropriate homeless assistance resources for families that are categorized as McKinney-Vento families.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Target prevention and diversion strategies to families with children under 18 years old who are doubled-up, self-payers in a hotel, or not yet in a place meant for human habitation	2018
b. Closely coordinate housing assistance and related services with Virginia Beach City Public Schools Project Hope	2017 and Ongoing

Goal 3: Make Chronic Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring

Overview



Source: Homeless Data Exchange, VA-503 Point-in-Time

Historical data has consistently shown that the largest homeless subpopulation in Virginia Beach is single adult men and women. Of the 349 people who were identified as homeless during the 2017 PIT Count, there were 226 single adults, of which nearly 18% (62 persons) were defined as chronically homeless. Families or individuals who have been continually homeless for a year or more; or who have had four or more episodes of homelessness in the past three years are considered chronically homeless, as opposed to those who go in and out of homelessness (episodically homeless).

Since 2013, the city's chronic homeless population has fluctuated between 7% and 26% of the overall homeless population.

Persons experiencing chronic homelessness typically struggle with medical conditions, physical disabilities, mental illness, or substance abuse. Not only is it difficult for these individuals to get back into housing, their conditions are compounded by long periods of homelessness, putting them at risk of premature death.

It is estimated that the cost to the community for police and court intervention, jail stays, and emergency medical services and hospital visits can be more than $20,000 per person per year. Ending chronic homelessness can drastically reduce public costs and help free up resources that can be used toward preventing and ending episodic homelessness.

Objective 3.1: Ensure those experiencing street homelessness are provided opportunities to connect to the housing crisis response system	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Increase outreach staff to ensure outreach efforts cover the entire geography of Virginia Beach, and coordinate across all providers	November 2017
b. Create an outreach plan that includes opportunities for communication and collaboration among a broad range of community service providers, business owners, and neighbors helping to identify the location of encampments	November 2018 and ongoing

Lela experienced four episodes of homelessness for over 10 years. During this time her husband passed away, she struggled with multiple jobs and living situations, and was diagnosed with breast cancer. Lela underwent chemotherapy while living in a tent, and won her bout with cancer.

"Homelessness doesn't discriminate. Anyone's life could change in a heartbeat."

Lela connected with our community system through the Lighthouse Center and Winter Shelter program. With the help of DHNP case managers, she was able to move into her own apartment at Tranquility at the Lakes in June 2017. Lela is already giving back to the community by teaching arts and crafts to the residents there.

The Homeless Persons' Memorial Day Vigil is held on the longest night of each year to commemorate the lives of the men and women who have died homeless. Each rock bears the name of a homeless or formerly homeless individual who has passed away.

Objective 3.1: Ensure those experiencing street homelessness are provided opportunities to connect to the housing crisis response system	
Action Steps	**Date**
c. Develop a multi-system approach of sharing information across outreach teams to include PATH Outreach, and coordinate with other systems (e.g. hospitals, jails, other emergency systems)	November 2018 and ongoing

Objective 3.2: Provide appropriate shelter and survival assistance to ensure that the chronically homeless are safe and protected as they transition from homelessness to stable housing.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Continue to operate the Winter Shelter program in winter 2017-18, and evaluate the need for it during spring and early summer 2018	Fall 2018
b. Ensure emergency shelters are incorporating trauma-informed, harm reduction strategies and housing-focused case management in order to rapidly connect chronic households to appropriate permanent housing solutions	2018

Objective 3.3: Increase the number of permanent housing beds and target them for persons experiencing chronic homelessness.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Establish policies and provider agreements so that 20% of turnover of non-chronic permanent supportive housing beds will be allocated to chronic households	2020
b. Through the Continuum of Care (CoC) application process, compete for bonus funding in order to create more permanent supportive housing beds for chronic households	2017 and Ongoing
c. Continue to prioritize documented chronic households for housing placement and wraparound services to increase the rate of housing and foster stability	2017 and Ongoing

Objective 3.4: Prioritize the improvement of health and well-being of those with the longest history of homelessness by addressing physical and behavioral health issues to increase their quality/quantity of life.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Increase access to health care, including behavioral and substance abuse treatment, free of charge for those without insurance or income	2018
b. Support, enhance, and expand relationships with providers to provide medication at low or no cost to those with little to no income or insurance	2019

Goal 4: Make Youth Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrecurring

Overview

HUD defines "homeless youth" as an unaccompanied individual 24 years of age and younger who is disconnected from a parent, guardian, or spouse. Federal requirements for counting the youth homeless population for PIT began in 2015. According to our 2017 PIT Count, there were 46 homeless youth.

Source: 2017 PIT Count

Homeless youth face unique challenges and dangers on the street. They are especially vulnerable to sexual exploitation, criminal victimization, and traumatic stress. Therefore, youth and young adults need a full range of comprehensive, accessible services to become stably housed to help them successfully develop into adulthood.

Although our system has shelter beds dedicated to youth ages 17 and under, there are no specific beds for youth ages 18-24.

Helping this vulnerable group, including those aging out of foster care or who are LGBT, must be a priority in our system in order to get them off the streets and connected to housing and services.

In 2015, "Michael," a 22-year-old youth, became disconnected from his family due to a history of family violence. After a year of couch hopping with friends and staying on the streets, "Michael" accessed Coordinated Assessment through the Lighthouse Center and secured shelter in the same day.

He was later placed in a transitional housing program and eventually in permanent supportive housing with one of our CoC partners.

In June 2017, "Michael" moved into permanent housing in Virginia Beach and is thriving in his new home.

Throughout "Michael's" journey to end his homelessness, he received intensive case management services, which included two to three weekly visits, assistance in benefits management, and transportation to essential appointments.

Objective 4.1: Provide appropriate shelter and survival assistance to ensure that the unaccompanied homeless youth are safe and protected as they transition from homelessness to stable housing.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Create transitional housing for youth who are not ready to live independently with a focus on developing life skills and staying in school or securing employment	2020
b. Continue to prioritize vulnerable homeless youth as equally as those who are identified as chronic in order to quickly access emergency crisis beds	2017 and Ongoing

Objective 4.2: Reduce number of youth and young adults experiencing youth homelessness.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Continue to support the disconnected youth committee to maintain and expand engagement and support services for youth, and identify best practices for youth housing and services	2017 and Ongoing
b. Ensure at least one outreach team member has the cultural competency to engage the youth population and facilitate system access	2018
c. Work with Human Services and youth service providers to identify and connect youth to services and housing	2018

Objective 4.3: Ensure an adequate supply of housing that is appropriate for disconnected youth.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Create and implement plans to address permanent housing needs and funding for disconnected youth	2018
b. Allocate 10 (1/3) permanent housing apartments located at the Housing Resource Center to unaccompanied youth	2018
c. Research the utilization of host homes for youth aging out of the foster care system	2019

Goal 5: Maintain and Increase the Supply of Permanent, Accessible, and Affordable Housing

Overview

One of the fundamental causes of homelessness is the gap between a household's income and the cost of housing. People are generally extremely poor at the time they become homeless. An adequate supply of housing that is affordable is a permanent, cost-effective solution to homelessness that provides benefits to the entire community.

The relatively high cost of housing in Virginia Beach poses a significant challenge to lower-income families. A recent study that looked at housing affordability challenges in Virginia Beach found that more than one-third of all households in Virginia Beach, approximately 61,420, are cost-burdened. This means these households pay more than 30% of their income for housing, the accepted standard for housing affordability.

Renters and owners have different housing costs, and renters are more likely to grapple with housing affordability challenges. A disproportionately large share of renters have low household incomes, less than 80% of Area Median Income (AMI). Renters are also disproportionately cost burdened (51%).

Households that pay more than 30% of their income for housing may have to make choices between housing and other necessities like medical care, transportation or food. Such households are at risk of homelessness through a single event, such as loss of employment or a medical emergency.

Compelling evidence of the housing affordability crisis was also demonstrated in September 2012, when applications were accepted for Virginia Beach Housing Choice vouchers, a federally-funded rental subsidy. In one week, approximately 5,000 applications for assistance were received from Virginia Beach residents alone.

Objective 5.1: Continue to support the development of affordable housing units to meet identified priority housing needs using all available methods.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Contract for the operation of the 30 available efficiency apartments at the Housing Resource Center as permanent supportive housing	January 2018
b. Complete and open Church St. Station Apartments in Norfolk: will include 10 units of permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless Virginia Beach residents	January 2018
c. Support the development of Price St. Apartments: 260 units of affordable housing, including 20 subsidized units	2019

Objective 5.1: Continue to support the development of affordable housing units to meet identified priority housing needs using all available methods.	
Action Steps	**Date**
d. Continue to utilize Housing Choice Vouchers as appropriate to support the development of new housing	Ongoing
e. Implement a housing strategy plan to obtain and utilize funding and other incentives to support development of affordable housing citywide	2019

Objective 5.2: Expand housing services to facilitate access to rental housing.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Ensure the availability of housing locator services to support Rapid Re-Housing programs	June 2018
b. Support, expand, or create landlord recruitment and retention strategies to increase landlord partnerships	2018

Objective 5.3: Ensure an adequate supply of housing that is appropriate for all populations.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Increase the supply of community-based permanent supportive housing to meet the needs of households with high acuity and the longest history of homelessness	2018
b. Use Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) to provide opportunities for permanent supportive housing residents to transition to community-based housing	January 2019
c. Continue to use HOME and other funds for temporary rental subsidies for very-low-income and/or disabled households	Ongoing

Goal 6: Increase Leadership, Collaboration, and Civic Engagement in Our Community Efforts

BEACH members discuss opportunities for collaboration during a general membership meeting at Beach Fellowship Church. General membership meetings are generally held the second Tuesday of every other month.

Overview

Ending homelessness only occurs where there is a strong, informed community commitment and partnership evidenced by the involvement and support of business and civic leaders; public officials; faith-based volunteers; and housing, human services, and health care providers.

Although significant progress has been made, collaboration across all sectors must be increased to establish and implement action plans that will end homelessness. There must also be additional ongoing opportunities for citizen engagement through educational programs, volunteerism, and public-private partnerships.

Innovation -- in the use of resources, interaction with our partners, and how we work with our homeless citizens -- has been a key factor in the development of model programs, such as the creation of five regional efficiency apartments, and must continue to inform our work.

Greater involvement, better coordination, and more innovation will generate new ways to achieve our goals and more support for achieving them.

Objective 6.1: Maintain and expand partnerships with all those who wish to be a part of the effort to prevent and end homelessness.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Continue to improve the governance and transparency of the BEACH Governing Board by: i. Examining and adopting a policy regarding conflict of interest issues ii. Reviewing term limits and ensuring that regular appointments and elections continue iii. Developing an orientation process for board members	November 2017

Objective 6.1: Maintain and expand partnerships with all those who wish to be a part of the effort to prevent and end homelessness.	
Action Steps	**Date**
b. Support the continued participation of all participants of the BEACH Community Partnership, and ensure its openness to new organizations and people by: i. Seeking to ensure continued participation by smaller organizations through outreach, volunteer engagement, support, and communication strategies ii. Enhancing recognition of all participants for their contributions iii. Providing an organized and open process for utilization of available office and classroom space at the Housing Resource Center iv. Conducting outreach to new potential participants from faith, university, and business communities v. Maintaining and enhancing partnerships and joint activities with faith communities in support of all goals of this plan, including feeding programs, winter shelter, family shelter, identification programs, and health programs. Work with the BEACH Service Coordination committee and the Charity Tracker office to assist in communicating about opportunities for faith involvement, and recognizing that involvement regularly.	Ongoing
c. Create a Community Advisory Committee to provide community input on the development of the Housing Resource Center	October 2017
d. Create partnerships with higher education institutions to provide interns and volunteers to support the system and key services	March 2018
e. Develop an employment and training program in partnership with the Regional Task Force to End Homelessness	March 2018
f. Support and strengthen the network of services and housing available to address youth (ages 18-24) homelessness	October 2018
g. Work closely with Virginia Beach City Public Schools to address needs of school children and their families without regular or appropriate housing	Ongoing
h. Enhance existing and create new partnerships with the corrections, behavioral health, and health and foster care systems to prevent people being discharged to homelessness; include reviews of discharge policies and pre-discharge housing planning.	2019

Objective 6.2: Increase community knowledge about homelessness and our community's efforts, successes, and challenges.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Disseminate a monthly newsletter and other publications about the Housing Resource Center	August 2017 and ongoing
b. Post and make available data and reports for stakeholder and public review and utilization	September 2017 and ongoing
c. BEACH Governing Board should regularly identify and publish key system gaps and community needs as part of an ongoing system of engaging partners and creating understanding in the community	May 2018 and ongoing

Goal 7: Develop and Maintain Sustainable Resources to Support Our Ongoing Community Effort

Overview

Predictable and sustainable funding for programs is required to achieve the goals of our plan. In an era of diminished federal funding and economic uncertainty, it is important to identify new and diversified revenue sources, redirect existing funding to support high performance programs, and create partnerships to leverage new resources.

Objective 7.1: Maintain and increase the availability of funding to address community needs and system gaps.	
Action Steps	**Date**
a. Support the VB Home Now foundation's ongoing fundraising efforts for the Housing Resource Center	2017 and ongoing
b. Develop and implement outcome-based requirements so that funding is directed to the most effective programs	2018

Objective 7.1: Maintain and increase the availability of funding to address community needs and system gaps.	
Action Steps	**Date**
c. Seek new funding from diverse and all appropriate sources in conjunction with partners by: i. Becoming a high performing Continuum of Care (CoC) to qualify for bonus funding ii. Identifying a non-federal, ongoing source of funds for a short-term "Housing First" program that helps potential renters overcome one-time barriers to renting existing market-rate housing units iii. Seeking foundation, social investment, or other new funding sources	2019
d. Seek support to establish a housing trust fund or similar mechanism to provide local support for affordable housing	2019
e. Explore the use of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program to support housing options	October 2018
f. Maintain and continually improve our system of services to qualify for and obtain all available federal and state CoC and Virginia Homeless Solutions Program (VHSP) resources	Ongoing
g. Identify and develop plans to preserve existing affordable housing stock that may need improvement or may be threatened with conversion to market rate	2018
h. Support and participate in policy and resource development initiatives at the regional and state levels to promote resources that will support plan objectives	Ongoing

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING & EVALUATION

Successful implementation of this plan will require the participation of multiple partners who will be engaged in a wide variety of service activities, policy development, and program initiatives. The governance structure will continue to coordinate and oversee plan efforts, review and refine plan contents, evaluate results, and develop the resources needed for the proposed actions.

A monitoring, evaluation, and reporting process will be necessary to measure progress and create support for the ongoing work of the system. Through the enhancement of HMIS, the evaluation process will be informed by the quantity and quality of data collected on system activities. Monthly and quarterly data-driven progress reports will be developed and widely circulated. Data and reporting will also be available on a regional basis allowing better coordination of services as well as improved performance monitoring. A more detailed annual review will be conducted using a reviewer external to the system. This in-depth annual review will incorporate any needed amendments to the plan.

An additional evaluation of performance of housing assistance programs is conducted as part of the annual CoC funding process. Agencies requesting renewal of existing grants will undergo a rigorous performance review to determine if they are meeting performance benchmarks established by the community.

DHNP Homeless Services Division

The Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation has created a new Homeless Services Division. This division will be responsible for assisting in the planning, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of the service system as well the delivery of key services within the system. The leadership staffing component of the division includes the Homeless Services Administrator, Homeless System Manager, CoC/Resource Coordinator, and Community Volunteer and Resource Coordinator.

APPENDICES

The appendices include all of the following:

1. 2013 Strategic Plan to End Homelessness Action Plan (updated with statuses)
2. Housing Resource Center Fact Sheet
3. Glossary of Acronyms & Terms
4. Online Resources

Appendix 1: 2013 Strategic Plan to End Homelessness Action Plan (updated with statuses)

Goal 1: Increase leadership, collaboration, innovation and civic engagement in our community efforts.

Objective 1.1: Strengthen the capacity of key public and private organizations to prevent and end homelessness.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Increase city staff support for the community's efforts to prevent and end homelessness.	Hire Homeless Coordinator. AmeriCorps volunteer starts.	Completed
Continue to support BEACH as the organization where we plan to end homelessness in Virginia Beach.	BEACH is viewed by stakeholders as the place where plans and issues are discussed.	Ongoing
Strengthen the community governance system to enhance coordination, collaboration and insure compliance with the HEARTH Act. Ensure broad community membership including schools, Police, key health care providers and workforce development organizations.	A new governance system meeting HEARTH Act requirements and community needs is created.	Completed and ongoing
Ensure that BEACH has full representation from all key groups, including homeless and/or formerly homeless persons.	BEACH membership reflects this.	Completed and ongoing
Expand use of the Charity Tracker data collection system in the faith-based community.	New faith communities begin and continue using the system.	Ongoing
Ensure the availability of high quality, timely data on homelessness to facilitate targeting interventions, evaluating results, strategic planning and resource allocation.	Monthly reports based on HMIS created and distributed.	Ongoing

Objective 1.2: Increase community knowledge about homelessness and our community's efforts, successes and challenges		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Enhance the BEACH website to serve as the primary online information source about preventing and ending homelessness.	Website complete. Information regularly updated.	Ongoing
Publish and widely disseminate quarterly and annual reports documenting progress toward achieving plan goals. Consider a monthly report of numbers of people housed consolidating info from all agencies.	Reports created, distributed and posted on DHNP and BEACH websites.	Completed and ongoing
Provide ongoing opportunities for people to engage in and learn about our efforts.	Regularly scheduled events and publications about homeless issues.	Ongoing

Objective 1.3: Maintain and expand partnerships with all those who wish to be part of the effort.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Create a Community Advisory Committee to provide community input on development of the Housing Resource Center.	Committee appointed; Regular meetings scheduled.	In process
Create partnerships with higher education institutions to provide interns and volunteers to support the system and key services.	Agreements and programs with local institutions developed.	In process
Develop an employment and training program in partnership with the Regional Task Force to End Homelessness.	Employment program developed.	In process
Continue active participation in the Regional Taskforce to End Homelessness.	Development of regional projects and programs that have win/win results for the city. Projects initiated include: The Healing Place; employment and training; HMIS; and regional conferences. Potential projects include regional central intake.	Ongoing

Goal 2: Create a collaborative system of service delivery and access that connects people to services that meet their basic needs and support housing stability.

Objective 2.1: Adapt our current system to ensure that it incorporates all components required by the federal HEARTH Act using recognized best practices.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Create a comprehensive system plan to address HEARTH requirements, including governance, coordinated intake and assessment, consistent standards for service and a performance assessment system.	Individual component plans adopted throughout early 2014. Full system plan adopted and implemented by August, 2014	Completed and ongoing
Improve and enhance efforts for diversion, prevention, short-term emergency housing, access to mainstream resources and housing-focused case management.	A central system implementing these activities will be in place. 200 individuals or families are diverted and assisted with less than 5% recidivism.	In process
Reposition shelters to provide short-term housing only with reduced barriers to access, unified standards and procedures and a focus on accessing permanent housing.	Emergency shelter usage is consistently less than 250 unique individuals annually and lengths of stay do not exceed 3 months.	In process
Support and invest in "Housing First" and Rapid Re-Housing models for homeless families and individuals that provide housing-focused case management and resources necessary for housing placement.	Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing programs implemented.	Completed and ongoing

Objective 2.1: Adapt our current system to ensure that it incorporates all components required by the federal HEARTH Act using recognized best practices.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Enhance and expand the regional Homeless Management Information System to improve client data and support service delivery, evaluation and communication between providers.	Timely, accurate data and reports are available to service providers.	Ongoing

Objective 2.2: Replace and enhance the services provided by the Lighthouse Center by creating a Housing Resource Center as the focus for our community's effort to end homelessness through coordination of intake, assessment, services and referrals for families and individuals.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Develop the Housing Resource Center.	Housing Resource Center constructed and operational.	In process; scheduled to open spring 2018
Develop services plan for relocation of appropriate current services and creation of new services for the Housing Resource Center, to include physical and virtual access.	Services plan developed. Services plan implemented.	In process
Work with churches and providers to modify the system of assistance in the Oceanfront area to reduce the impact on area neighborhoods and increase coordination and effectiveness of services.	Oceanfront services to the homeless are assessed and modified to maximize collaboration, efficiency and a reduction in homelessness.	In process
Work with the VB Police Department to enhance non-enforcement outreach and engagement efforts to homeless persons in the Oceanfront area.	Non-enforcement outreach staffing is developed and assigned to work in collaboration with DHNP and DHS	Completed and ongoing

Objective 2.3: Mobilize and support the coordination of community providers, volunteers and institutions to create or strengthen networks that address critical components of the services system such as chronic homelessness, homeless families or healthcare.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Identify new and existing key networks as well as current and potential members of each network.	Key networks and members identified.	In process
Develop a plan for each identified network that defines the goals and activities of those networks in detail.	Plans drafted and actions begun. Key networks: Family homelessness with VB public school participation; Oceanfront homelessness issues; Disconnected youth.	In process

Objective 2.4: Ensure that the system reaches and effectively serves all those in need, including special needs populations, using person-centered principles and practices.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Expand and enhance outreach using appropriate staffing and skills to reach chronically homeless persons and families, individuals exiting institutions and nursing homes, veterans, disconnected youth and other special needs populations.	32 individuals annually access housing and support directly from the street. 25 homeless vets annually access VA benefits with 80% accessing supportive housing.	Completed and ongoing
Enhance existing and create new partnerships with the corrections, behavioral health, health and foster care systems to prevent people being discharged to homelessness. Include reviews of discharge policies and pre-discharge housing planning.	Memoranda of Agreement and other protocols developed.	In process
Assist persons experiencing homelessness and those at-risk to access all available behavioral and/or physical health services for which they are eligible.	Behavioral and physical health services available as needed.	Ongoing
Develop a plan to provide medical respite shelter beds.	5 respite shelter beds provided.	No longer pursuing
Develop The Healing Place to serve the chronically homeless with substance abuse issues.	The Healing Place developed.	No longer pursuing

Objective 2.5 Continually enhance the professionalism, effectiveness and accountability of the services system.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Create a regional professional development curriculum that addresses key knowledge gaps, including housing-focused case management, outreach for special needs populations and person-centered planning and support.	Training program launched.	Ongoing
Develop a partnership, or contract, for an external monitoring/ evaluation process that provides regular, objective and data-based analysis and evaluation of individual programs and overall system performance.	Agreement or contract in place.	In process
Ongoing evaluation reports begin.	Report developed, reviewed and circulated.	In process

Objective 2.6: Provide appropriate shelter and survival assistance to ensure that the homeless are safe and protected as they transition from homelessness to stable housing.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Implement Family Emergency Shelter Pilot Program.	Program operational.	Completed and ongoing
Create shelter beds for families and individuals in the Housing Resource Center.	Shelter beds available at Housing Resource Center. Unsheltered homeless decrease by a minimum of 50%.	In process
Expand the current faith-based Winter Shelter Program to a 12 month program on an interim basis, pending construction of the Housing Resource Center.	City Council approves funding to establish 12 month program.	No longer pursuing

Goal 3: Maintain and increase the supply of, and access to, permanent, accessible and affordable housing.

Objective 3.1: Continue to develop affordable housing units through new construction and conversion of existing transitional housing to permanent housing, as determined by community needs.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Ensure completion of Crescent Square Apartments.	80 efficiency apartments for individuals built and occupied.	Completed
Facilitate completion of Baker Woods Apartments.	96 apartments for families built and occupied.	Completed
Assess existing transitional housing and identify units appropriate for conversion to permanent rental housing.	Units converted to permanent housing, as determined by assessment	Completed
Develop affordable housing in conjunction with the Housing Resource Center.	Permanent affordable housing developed.	Moved to housing development strategy
Continue to work with regional and local partners to develop SRO projects and other scattered site housing.	80 additional SRO and other affordable housing units developed; re-assess need to ensure supply is matched to need.	Ongoing
Review the zoning and other housing-related codes to identify barriers to affordable, accessible housing.	Review conducted and code amendments made, as appropriate.	Moved to housing development strategy

Objective 3.2: Avoid losses of existing affordable housing units through ongoing review of rehabilitation needs and financing and program requirements.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Conduct regular reviews of existing affordable housing to identify and address deficiencies or potential loss of units.	No net loss of affordable housing units.	No longer pursuing

Objective 3.3: Increase financial subsidies and other support for access to rental housing.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Explore use of TANF to support rapid re-housing programs.	Review conducted.	In process
Use HOME and other funds for temporary rental subsidies targeted to very-low income households and/or persons with disabilities.	HOME and other funds allocated.	Ongoing
Ensure the availability of housing broker services to support rapid rehousing programs.	Housing broker services established with regional partners.	In process
Identify a non-federal, ongoing source of funds for a short-term "Housing First" program that helps potential renters overcome one-time barriers to renting existing market rate housing units.	Conduct research to identify sources.	In process

Objective 3.4: Continue to create partnerships with non-profit and private sector housing developers for development of affordable housing		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Continue to provide financial support and incentives to promote development of affordable housing.	Additional affordable housing units developed.	Ongoing
Encourage developer interest in affordable housing development and workforce housing program.	Increase in builder interest in affordable housing development.	Ongoing
Promote private development of affordable housing through outreach and education of housing industry professionals	Create and implement educational presentations for housing industry.	Ongoing

Objective 3.5: Ensure an adequate supply of housing that is appropriate for special needs populations		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Provide permanent supportive housing to prevent and end chronic homelessness using Housing Choice vouchers when feasible and available.	Permanent supportive housing units increase by 120 units.	Ongoing
Target permanent supportive housing to frequent users of emergency shelters and public institutions including mental health facilities, hospitals, jails and prisons.	Assessment criteria established that prioritize housing for frequent users of services.	Ongoing

Objective 3.5: Ensure an adequate supply of housing that is appropriate for special needs populations		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Provide opportunities for permanent supportive housing residents to transition to community based housing.	Tenants transition to community based housing.	Ongoing
Increase scattered-site housing options in market rate units with supports provided in the community or in the home.	Relationships with private landlords established.	In process
Create and implement plans to address permanent housing needs and funding for: • disconnected youth • very low-income families • veterans and their families • People discharged from prisons, health care and mental health care facilities.	Plans developed Funding identified 18 unaccompanied homeless youth annually access housing or family reunification, as appropriate.	In process
Promote or incentivize inclusion of Universal Design and visitability features in affordable housing units.	Increase in the number of affordable, accessible units.	No longer pursuing

Goal 4: Develop sustainable resources to support our ongoing community effort.

Objective 4.1: Increase the availability of funding for proven assistance programs and new initiatives that end homelessness.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Identify diverse and flexible funding that can respond to identified needs without regard to program requirements such as a Housing Investment Fund.	Research conducted and sources identified.	In process
Integrate homeless funding with mainstream resources such as TANF and VA benefits.	Eligibility for mainstream resources is determined at assessment.	In process
Develop and implement outcome-based funding requirements so that funding is directed to the most effective programs.	Outcomes established to guide fund allocation.	Completed
Review feasibility of Social Impact Bonds.	Develop a briefing paper for review by BEACH, city agencies and Hampton Roads Community Foundation.	No longer pursuing
Support and participate in policy and resource development initiatives at the state level to promote resources that will support plan objectives.	State resources allocated to homelessness are maintained or increased	Ongoing

Objective 4.2: Identify and obtain new non-monetary resources.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Seek to establish social enterprises as part of or in conjunction with the Housing Resource Center and The Healing Place.	Programs initiated.	In process (without The Healing Place)

Objective 4.3: Coordinate and increase resource development activities for homeless services in the City, Region and State to ensure a net increase in available funding.		
Action Steps	**Benchmark**	**Status**
Support the Virginia Beach fund raising effort for the Housing Resource Center	$1 million raised in support of the Center.	Ongoing
Exchange information about fundraising plans and activities.	Regular information exchange at meetings.	Ongoing
Implement collaborative fundraising activities and grant applications, as appropriate.	Grants developed and submitted.	In process
Seek to establish coordinated funding decision-making among regional funders to promote effective support of key programs and to ensure that grant proposals align with Virginia Beach system goals.	Grant requests are coordinated and aligned with system goals.	In process
Support state-level efforts to stabilize or increase funding for homelessness.	State funding is stable or increased	In process

ABOUT THE HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER

Where our community will come together to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring!

Location:
104 N. Witchduck Road
Virginia Beach, VA

Opening:
Spring 2018

With the opening of the Housing Resource Center, Virginia Beach is poised to become a national leader in the effort to prevent and end homelessness

- It will combine efficiency apartments, shelter and housing for families and singles, supportive services, and community resources in one facility – the first of its kind in the region!

Family Interim Housing	10 motel-style rooms (40 beds with room for cribs) with connections that will accommodate small or larger families (operated by nonprofits)
Singles Shelter	49 beds = 44 dormitory-style beds (20 male, 18 female, 4 LGBT) + 7 ADA accessible beds (operated by nonprofits)
Efficiency Apartments	30 one-bedroom apartments (10 allocated for youth) that provide longer term or permanent living arrangements for single adults (operated by nonprofits)
Day Services	Laundry, showers, and related services (operated by nonprofits)
Health Clinic	Comprehensive primary care health services available for both participants at the center and the community. Accessible by separate outside entrance.
City Offices	Human Services
Other	Learning facility and commercial kitchen

Services Include:

- Coordinated assessment
- Housing crisis case management
- Short-term, overnight shelter for singles and families
- Life-skills coaching
- Education programs
- Job-skills training
- Charitable medical services
- Social services

The Housing Resource Center is a one-stop-shop of essential services, shelter and housing where homeless families and individuals can leave homelessness behind

- Participants at the Housing Resource Center, start on their housing and employment plans on day one!
- We will help families and individuals get into permanent housing, and be successful in that housing as quickly as possible!
- The most vulnerable homeless families and individuals will be connected to shelter and housing at the center or at nonprofit facilities. People who are at risk of losing their home will be connected to services and resources that will prevent them from becoming homeless.

The Housing Resource Center is a testament to the community's longstanding commitment to ending homelessness in Virginia Beach

- For 30+ years, our community effort can best be described as a tapestry of city, faith and nonprofit organizations working together. The center will be a place where our community will come together to do the most good.

The Housing Resource Center is one component of our community system, which will enhance how make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring

- Any organization will have the opportunity to provide services that align with our community goal

For more information:

City of Virginia Beach
Department of Housing & Neighborhood Preservation

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www.vbgov.com/housing-resource-center

Appendix 2: Glossary of Acronyms & Terms

Acuity

The severity of the issues experienced by clients who are homeless.

At Risk of Homelessness

An individual or family experiencing a housing crisis and in imminent danger of losing their housing.

BEACH Community Partnership

Bringing an End to All City Homelessness is a community partnership between citizens, faith, business, nonprofit and City organizations working to address homelessness. A committee of BEACH facilitates the CoC process.

BEACH Governing Board

A HUD-required entity that makes funding and ranking decisions about federal and state funding – a total of more than $1.5 million. The board is endorsed by the City Council and provides recommendations to City staff and the Council on homeless policies and plans. Board members are elected by the BEACH Community Partnership, and its membership is comprised of representatives from City, faith, schools, nonprofits, and regional organizations, and the formerly homeless.

CAMG

Community Alternatives Management Group

Case Management

Case managers work with clients and do some or all of the following: assessment, personal plan development, connection with necessary services, coordination of service providers, monitoring, and personal advocacy.

Charity Tracker

Web-based software that helps faith organizations coordinate and report on the assistance they provide to people in need.

Coordinated Assessment

The system of asking the consumer a set of questions to determine which programs or services are most appropriate to meet their needs and prioritize them for various services. A standardized set of assessment tools are used to make these determinations. Assessment staff is trained on administering and scoring these tools, as well as the order in which they should be administered and the average amount of time each assessment should take.

Continuum of Care (CoC)

A collaborative, community funding and planning process for a range of housing and services addressing the needs of homeless families and individuals. A grant application is submitted annually to the HUD for funding to implement the community plan. The group of community partners involved in this process is often referred to as the "Continuum of Care."

Chronic Homelessness

Refers to a family or individual who has been continually homeless for a year or more; or has had four or more episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

Diversion

A strategy that prevents homelessness for people seeking shelter by helping them identify and access alternative housing arrangements and supports. Diversion programs reduce the number of families and individuals becoming homeless, the demand for shelter beds, and the size of program wait lists.

DH

Virginia Beach Department of Health

DHNP

City of Virginia Beach Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation

DHS

City of Virginia Beach Department of Human Services

Emergency Shelter

Refers to a facility or program for providing temporary shelter for addressing an immediate housing crisis. Sometimes provides additional services and housing assistance.

HEARTH Act

The federal Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act, adopted in 2009, requires significant changes in the way communities plan and deliver services. Communities must now operate as a coordinated service delivery system rather than as a collection of individually funded projects. Specific requirements include a coordinated assessment process, performance-based funding, a focus on homeless prevention and permanent housing and an inclusive governance structure with representation from all service providers, not just those receiving federal funding.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

A computerized data collection application that records and stores information on homeless individuals and families who use residential or other homeless services.

Homeless Prevention

A program that diverts households from homelessness by providing targeted, limited assistance to households who are likely to become homeless if not assisted.

Homeless Youth

Unaccompanied individuals 24 years of age and younger who are disconnected from a parent, guardian, or spouse.

Housing Affordability

The generally accepted definition, established by HUD, that a household pay no more than 30% of its annual income for housing.

Housing First

An approach to homeless assistance that provides immediate access to housing without any prerequisites to services and income, followed by the supportive services that may be needed to foster long-term stability and prevent a return to homelessness.

Housing Resource Center

A one-stop-shop of essential services, shelter, and housing that is scheduled to open at 104 N. Witchduck Road in Virginia Beach in the spring of 2018.

HUD

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Interim Housing

Short-term housing program that provides housing-focused services aimed at quickly rehousing persons who are homeless into appropriate permanent housing.

JCOC

Judeo-Christian Outreach Center

LGBT

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender

Literally Homeless

Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning: (i) has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; (ii) is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter.

PATH Outreach

Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness is a federal, state, and local partnership that provides outreach and assistance to adults with serious mental illness who are experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless.

Performance Monitoring Committee (PMC)

Consists of City agencies and nonprofit service providers that receive federal funding and provide homeless programs in Virginia Beach. The committee monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of system programs and services, and makes recommendations to the BEACH Governing Board.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Permanent housing that is coupled with services intended to support housing stability and independence. PSH is often targeted to those most at-risk of homelessness including individuals and families with substance abuse issues, mental illness, and other disabling conditions.

Point-in-Time (PIT) Count

A one-day (24 hours), statistically reliable, unduplicated count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless families and individuals within a defined geographic area.

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)

A service model designed to immediately return those who are losing or have lost their home back to permanent housing as well as shorten the length of shelter stays.

Regional Housing Crisis Hotline

(757) 227-5932; single point of contact to streamline the homeless referral and assessment process for citizens who are homeless or at risk of losing their housing.

Single Room Occupancy Housing (SRO)

Permanent multi-family housing that consists of efficiency apartments, often developed with supportive services available to the tenants.

Transitional Housing

Refers to time-limited housing with services where people can stay up to 24 months as they prepare to move into permanent housing.

Trauma-Informed Care

An approach to engaging people with histories of trauma that recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role that trauma has played in their lives.

Universal Design

Universal Design is the design of products and environments to be useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

VBCDC

Virginia Beach Community Development Corporation

VBFEST

Virginia Beach Family Emergency Shelter Team coordinates to provide family shelter faith organizations during the summer months

VB Home Now

A nonprofit that supports and enhances the Virginia Beach community system of services, programs, and facilities in order to prevent and end homelessness. The foundation raises funds, accepts gifts and provides other resources in order to fill gaps in our community.

Visitability

Refers to housing designed and constructed so that it can be occupied or visited by individuals with mobility impairments. A home is visitable when it meets three basic requirements:

- One zero step entry
- Doors with 32" of clear passage space
- One bathroom on the main floor with sufficient maneuvering space (a rectangular space no less than 30" by 48" is available adjacent to the tub or shower, the commode, and the sink)

Wraparound Services

Refers to a national best practice model that coordinates all caregiver services, often through a case-management team or shared service plan system, bringing mainstream and nonprofit providers together for case conferencing and problem solving. It is often used in permanent supportive housing and sometimes coincides with "harm reduction."

ONLINE RESOURCES

BEACH

www.beach-cp.org

Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

www.usich.gov/opening_doors/

National Alliance to End Homelessness

www.endhomelessness.org

VB Home Now

www.vbhomenow.org

Virginia Beach Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation

www.vbgov.com/housing

Virginia Housing Alliance

www.vahousingalliance.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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2424 Courthouse Drive, Building 18A
Virginia Beach, VA 23456

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