****DRAFT SUBJECT TO REVIEW**.**

Draft dated 12/7/2009

One Piece at a Time:
Ending and Preventing Homelessness for Yolo County Residents

2010-2020

This study was funded in part with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds received from the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development.

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
Prevention	7
Housing	17
Supportive Services	27
Implementation	37

Introduction

Homelessness is not acceptable.

- Yolo County Citizen

Yolo County and the Cities of Davis, West Sacramento, Winters, and Woodland supported the creation of this Plan for Ending and Preventing Homelessness, because homelessness is a multi-faceted issue in our community that requires a coordinated, committed effort to address. Through the planning process, the communities learned about the efforts that are underway to end homelessness for Yolo County residents and the needs that are still unmet.

This Plan outlines the key pieces of an integrated and effective system to end and prevent homelessness for Yolo County residents. To achieve those goals, the people of Yolo County, including elected officials, faith leaders, service providers, County and City staff, business people, consumers, and concerned citizens must dedicate their efforts and attention to this goal of reducing homelessness.

The goals of this Plan are:

- ✓ **PREVENTION: Prevent homelessness through early, comprehensive assistance to those at-risk**
- ✓ **HOUSING: Provide a wide range of housing opportunities and services to help people access and maintain extremely affordable permanent housing**
- ✓ **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES: Provide comprehensive, integrated services to help people access and maintain housing and maximize their self-sufficiency**
- ✓ **IMPLEMENTATION: Effectively administer, coordinate and finance implementation of the county's ten-year plan and its efforts to prevent and end homelessness**

This Plan summarizes the need for these goals and the strategies and steps needed to meet them, as well as how Yolo County will achieve them. A key part of the Plan is supporting and maintaining the housing and services that are available in the County. Additional information about the need for these goals, current resources available, and research and models considered by the people who participated in the planning process are available in the Appendices to this Plan.

GOAL: PREVENTION

Prevent Homelessness Through Early, Comprehensive Assistance To Those At-Risk

CHALLENGES: The Need for Homelessness Prevention Services in Yolo County

- People at risk of homelessness cannot always access the services they need, either because the services are unavailable or because the County's system of outreach and referral is not centrally coordinated.
- Rental assistance and credit and eviction history repair services are especially helpful for people at risk of homelessness; however, these services are rarely available. Many affordable housing providers require new tenants to meet stringent requirements, heightening the need for help with past credit problems, past evictions, or criminal histories.
- Public institutions and other service delivery systems discharge people without first identifying stable housing, and those discharged become homeless.
- The need for assistance is ongoing. Against the backdrop of the current economic crisis, there has been an almost 20% increase in homelessness in the County since 2007.

SUPPORT: The Research and Support for Prevention Services

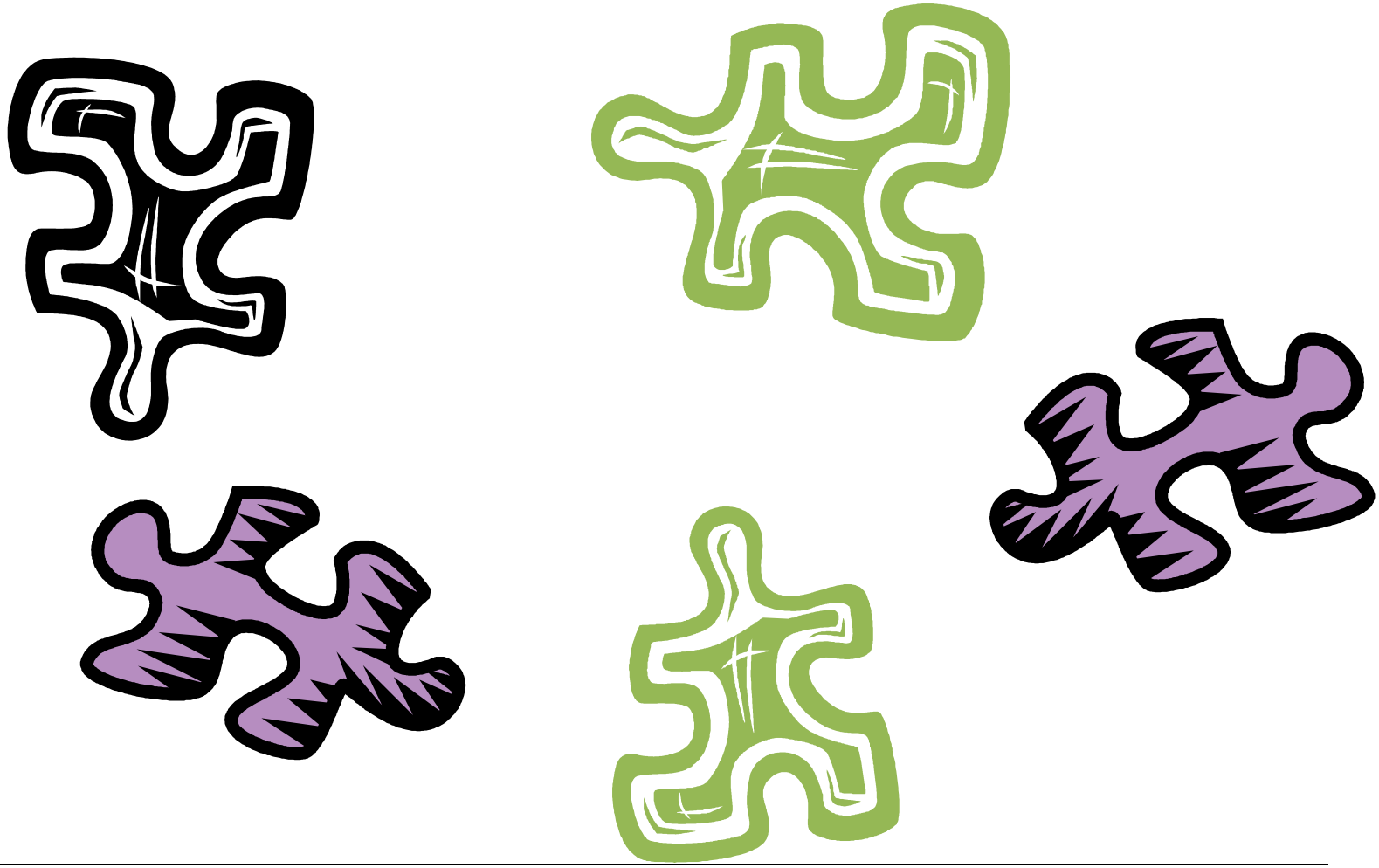
- *Prevention is cost effective*. The cost of preventing an episode of homelessness is one-sixth the average cost of a stay in a shelter.[i]
- *The human cost of homelessness is too high.* In homeless families, the experience of homelessness and the associated stress that results from economic, social, and psychological dislocations can negatively affect health and well-being.[ii] Children in homeless families are more likely than other children to be in bad health[iii], have higher exposure to stress, and experience more disruptions in school and friendships.[iv]
- *Eviction prevention services work.* Mediation with landlords under the auspices of housing court preserved housing for up to 85% of single adults with serious mental illness facing eviction in the Western Massachusetts Tenancy Preservation Project. Compared to the housing outcomes of similar people who were waitlisted but did not receive services, this project cut the percentage becoming homeless by at least one-third.[1]
- *Financial support for prevention is available.* Recent Federal funding programs and legislation have prioritized supporting homelessness prevention activities.

SOLUTIONS:

- ✓ **Adopt Countywide policies that support a healthy community and provide early homelessness prevention support.**
- ✓ **Institute a Countywide, centralized, coordinated system of prevention services that enhances access for people at risk of homelessness.**
- ✓ **Eliminate discharges into homelessness from public institutions, including foster care, hospitals, mental health facilities, substance abuse treatment facilities, and prisons and jails.**

How does Yolo County's homelessness prevention system work now?

When people access services, they often receive referrals to services they need, but not systematically; therefore, a service may be available in the County, but the individual in need and his/her point of entry may not know about it.



What does a coordinated, effective homelessness prevention system look like?

APPROACH & REFER: People in need approach someone for help, which might be any of these access points or one of the available Housing Resource Centers. Access Points will receive information and training about Housing Resource Centers and refer people to them for triage and resource identification.

- **Service Providers**
- **Faith-Based Groups**
- **Police/ Sheriff**
- **Legal Aid**
- **County:** DESS, Health, ADMH
- **Four Cities**
- **Afford-able Housing**
- **Schools**

TRIAGE: Housing Resource Centers will screen People in Need to determine their needs and preliminary eligibility, enter them into a data-tracking system, and refer the households to available resources responsive to their needs.

- **Davis DCM**
- **West Sacramento UCC**
- **Winters RISE**
- **Woodland YWC**
- **Other County Areas YFRC & RISE**

Available Resources

Financial Assistance:
- Rent
- Security Deposits
- Utility Deposits & Payments
- Moving Costs
- Motel Vouchers

Legal Services including:
- Eviction Prevention
- Debt Clinics
- Credit Repair

Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services including:
- Landlord mediation
- Housing database
- Landlord Outreach
- Eviction Repair Clinic

Health Services including:
- Health
- Mental health
- Substance Abuse

Income Services including:
- Employment Assistance
- Employer Outreach
- Training & Education
- SSI/SSDI
- TANF

Who will implement the Prevention portion of this Plan?

The **Prevention Action Team** will be co-led by a member of the Ten-Year Plan Executive Commission and the Homeless & Poverty Action Coalition. **Members** will include representatives from:

- County Health Department
- Yolo County Housing
- County Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Department
- County Department of Employment and Social Services
- Yolo Family Resource Center
- Consumers
- Funders
- Services Providers

Additional partners will help with each of the Solutions. They are noted on the following pages.

PREVENTION SOLUTION: Adopt Countywide policies that support a healthy community and provide early homelessness prevention support.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
ENGAGEMENT: Engage and educate the community at large, broadening the ways the community is called to understand and support the breadth of homeless and at-risk populations; for example, host Project Homeless Connects (see Services Goal), encourage volunteering, and invite the public to homeless summits or meetings.	• Increase in volunteers and private donations at community-based organizations
EMPLOYMENT: Support efforts that help people become employable, productive citizens by increasing vocational training opportunities, job skills programs, employment readiness training, and life skills classes, such as budgeting and financial management.	• Businesses and consumers will indicate an increase of employment readiness of Yolo County residents
SPECIAL NEEDS: Support and meet the needs of special needs populations within the County, including people who are chronically ill, developmentally disabled, seniors, survivors of domestic violence, seniors, or individuals who have HIV/AIDS. Provide a range of mental health and substance abuse services.	• Increased availability of mental health and related services for those who need them
HEALTH CARE: Increase access to adequate health care for low-income County residents, including mental health care, substance abuse treatment, and dental care; in part by participating in Federal and State advocacy efforts.	• Reduction in the number of residents without access to health care
INFORMATION SHARING: Improve information available to County residents about available resources, presenting information in other languages and in culturally competent formats, for both documented and undocumented people, perhaps by creating a 211 resource in Yolo County.	• Majority of people will know where to access services
AFFORDABLE HOUSING: Continue to support policies to develop and maintain affordable and accessible housing for low income and very low-income populations. (Please also see Housing Goal about housing for extremely low income populations.)	• Increase in number of affordable housing units

Additional Partners:

- General Public
- Neighborhood groups
- Businesses and Business Associations
- Schools
- Service groups
- Faith-based organizations
- County Health Department
- County Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Department
- YoloLink
- City Housing Departments

PREVENTION SOLUTION: Institute a Countywide, centralized, coordinated system of prevention services that enhances access for people at risk of homelessness.

How will we achieve this strategy?

HOUSING RESOURCE CENTERS: Collaborating with existing resources, create and expand Housing Resource Centers in each of the four cities of Davis, West Sacramento, Winters, and Woodland to provide one-stop access to and personal assistance with prevention services, housing assistance and streamlined referrals to key services. The Centers' services should be available by drop-in, phone, or email. Center staff should also conduct outreach to the community.

Centers will provide or refer clients to services including:

- Needs assessment
- Various levels of Case Management (depending on need) with follow-up services
- Rental & mortgage assistance, short and medium term
- Utility assistance
- Credit/eviction history repair, including eviction repair certification program
- Landlord mediation
- Tenancy counseling and skills workshops
- Housing search assistance, with updated listings
- Rent guarantee and move-in funds
- Financial counseling and money management workshops
- Benefits assistance, including use of Compass data system to allow clients to apply for many different benefits with one application (See also Services Goal)
- Representative payee services
- Legal services, including eviction prevention linked with the landlord tenant court
- Financial literacy and other life skills counseling and workshops
- Transportation assistance
- On-site provision of or referrals for: employment and vocational training; health care; mental health services; substance abuse treatment; family reconciliation; family services and childcare; life skills workshops; and other services

All families and individuals accepting some type of financial assistance must also accept case management and services outlined in their Individual Housing and Service Plan. The Plan will be written by skilled, informed case managers, who will be trained to serve this population and who will have up-to-the-minute information on available resources. Case managers will provide follow-up services to support ongoing maintenance of housing and to address the crisis that caused homelessness or the threat of homelessness. Services will be provided more intensively the first few months and then will diminish

How will we know we are succeeding?

- Increased cost-efficiencies in homeless services programs
- Reduction of new homeless entries into emergency shelters
- Increase in County-wide coordination
- Agencies and organizations that have contact with at-risk households will know how to identify and refer them to services
- Decrease in repeat users of homeless system and prevention services
- Data collected indicates improved results

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
over time as stability is regained. Station staff from other public and non-profit agencies at the Centers, from time to time, including mainstream benefits programs. Through the Prevention Action Team or Task Forces as well as HMIS (see below), the Centers will share information about service availability and need. Center staff will compare situations and responses to establish a uniform system of care.	
ACCESS: Expanding from existing resources, establish a centralized telephone hotline or web-based resource that people can call for information, assessment and referrals to assistance.	• Centralized resource exists and is well-publicized • Majority of people will know where to access services in an annual survey
DATA COLLECTION: Establish a single data system (Homeless Management Information System or HMIS) to collect all client information, including assessments and Individual Housing and Service Plans, in order to: • Facilitate web-based inter-agency case management and communication • Create accountability and collaboration among Housing Resource Centers and front line providers, through client tracking and shared information • Evaluate and improve the effectiveness of prevention-related services and resources provided • Map high-need neighborhoods and track types of services needed in order to better target services in the future. Appropriate client confidentiality safe guards will be in place.	• All Housing Resource Centers will use HMIS • All programs that serve homeless people will use HMIS • HMIS system will be able to provide answers about service needs and availability
ANY DOOR: Create "any door is the right door" access to services by institutionalizing relations with and conducting homelessness prevention training for all front-line public, non-profit, and faith-based organizations. Front line agencies include: all Homeless and Poverty Action Coalition agencies, police and sheriffs departments, schools, City and County government offices, Yolo County Housing, Landlord Tenant Court, Department of Corrections, hospitals, residential treatment facilities, and faith-based organizations, among others.	• People will receive fruitful referrals as demonstrated by follow up surveys • Tracking will show that referrals are from diverse sources
COORDINATION: Facilitate interagency coordination and communication in service provision by: • Developing a triage and referral tool to be used by all public, non-profit, and faith-based organizations that come into contact with people who are homeless or at-risk. Tool will include questions about housing situation and stability in order to identify individuals at-risk of homelessness • Utilizing a uniform Individual Housing and Service Plan at all agencies in providing services as part of the HMIS • Instituting regular case conferencing and resource coordination sessions at the Housing Resource Centers.	• Tracking will show that referrals are from diverse sources • Reduction in repeat users

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
HOUSING VACANCY DATABASE: Create a Housing Vacancy Database, with up-to-date listings on affordable housing units in the County.	• Affordable units will not be empty for longer than 7 days between tenants
LANDLORDS: Forge relationships with landlords to encourage and support them in accepting homeless people as tenants using the following methods: • Ask landlords to accept housing vouchers • Ask landlords to waive credit review reports and housing application fees for homeless people • Create a common, centralized application for affordable housing, and coordinate credit checks and related costs to reduce all possible costs to homeless or at-risk households • Outreach to landlords to connect to services to support tenants at risk of homelessness • Establish incentives to increase landlord participation.	• Increase in units available for people at risk of homelessness • Streamline access to housing units
RAPID REHOUSING: Identify families and individuals requesting shelter who are appropriate for diversion into a rapid re-housing program, then, refer them to the Housing Resource Centers for linkage with housing, case management and other services. Sustain funding for rapid re-housing programs throughout the Ten-Year Plan.	• Fewer families accessing shelter beds • Reduction in repeat users

Additional Partners:

- Homeless and Poverty Action Coalition agencies
- Landlords and affordable housing providers
- Police and sheriffs departments
- Schools
- City and County government offices
- Landlord Tenant Court
- Department of Corrections
- Hospitals
- Residential treatment facilities
- Faith-based organizations
- Legal Services

Funding: Federal Stimulus Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Funds will support these activities for years 2010 and 2011. Data collection will demonstrate successes of the program to use in fundraising and support and for the Housing Resource Centers for future years.

PREVENTION SOLUTION: Eliminate discharges into homelessness from public institutions, including foster care, hospitals, mental health facilities, substance abuse treatment facilities, and prisons and jails.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
INFORMATION: Analyze data on those served through the County's Housing Resource Centers to identify people who were recently discharged when they sought services. Use data to advocate for resources to provide housing and services for the populations.	• Data demonstrates that few people seeking housing or services came from public institutions
FOSTER YOUTH: Conduct comprehensive discharge planning for youth aging out of the foster care system or who have exited recently without permanent housing. Youth exit plans should have a strong focus on housing, employment, and life skills. Ensure that youth are linked with any benefits for which they are eligible. Improve transitional services for youth in foster care and youth who recently aged out of foster care, including: • Identify housing for transitional aged youth (18-24) with supportive services and connecting youth to appropriate housing • Provide sufficient training and education opportunities and employment preparation for transition age youth • Support resources and training, like ILP, for foster youth starting early on, that prepare them for successful exits, including mentoring programs • Provide additional support, training, and resources for youth with special needs and their families, and • Target resources to youth who have not aged out of the system but have left foster care without resources.	• Recently transitioned persons rarely access homeless housing or services
HEALTH CARE: Engage in comprehensive, housing-focused discharge planning for people exiting hospitals, mental health facilities, and residential substance abuse treatment programs. • Priority should be on increasing communication with mental health facilities and creating a continuum of care for individuals discharged from mental health facilities to community-based providers, including ensuring continuing medication availability. • Create an interim care facility (respite care) for homeless individuals leaving hospitals that still require a higher level of care. • Update information to assist staff at each facility to develop discharge plans. Plans should include identification of short and long term housing opportunities and linkage with needed support services and benefits. Discharge planning staff will coordinate plans with the Housing Resource Centers. • Maintain County System Utilization Review team (See Services Goal). • Engage in eviction prevention at nursing homes.	

CORRECTIONS: Perform comprehensive, housing focused discharge planning for people being released from jails and prisons in order to prevent homelessness and reduce recidivism.

- Advocate for improved relationships between Department of Corrections, the Sheriff's Department, and community providers.
- Develop partnerships to create release plans. Identify partners to conduct assessments to identify those who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness upon entry into the criminal justice system and prepare for exit by assisting people at risk of homelessness to obtain housing, identification, and benefits before their release. Institute a pre-release agreement with Social Security Administration so that benefits can begin for recipients upon release. Knowing that sex offenders require especially careful planning, work to identify and prioritize this population.
- Strengthen and maintain parole symposiums to connect recently released people to housing, services and employers. Educate the community about services available.

Additional Partners:

- Casa
- Families First

Funding: Second Chance Act for jails and prisons.

GOAL: HOUSING

Provide A Wide Range of Housing Opportunities and Services to Help People Access and Maintain Extremely Affordable Permanent Housing

CHALLENGES: There is significant unmet need for affordable housing in Yolo County

- Consistent and adequate funding for affordable housing development, operations, and services must be identified.
- More affordable housing is needed. Currently, there is a 3-5 year wait for Housing Choice vouchers through Yolo County Housing, and because of the waiting list, it is not accepting new names. Forty-seven percent of the households on the Housing Choice voucher wait list (Section 8) in May 2009 were from West Sacramento.
- Homeless housing is not distributed throughout the County: according to the County's 2009 homeless census, 70% of the unsheltered homeless population is in West Sacramento, 18% in Woodland, 12% in Davis, and 1% in rural, unincorporated areas. Currently, the largest homeless shelter and the majority of services are located in Woodland, the County seat.
- Many populations cannot access and maintain housing without supportive services, and housing developers will not build units to house those populations without a stable, sustainable source of services funding.
- The ancillary costs, including permits, fees, and infrastructure, can discourage development of affordable housing.

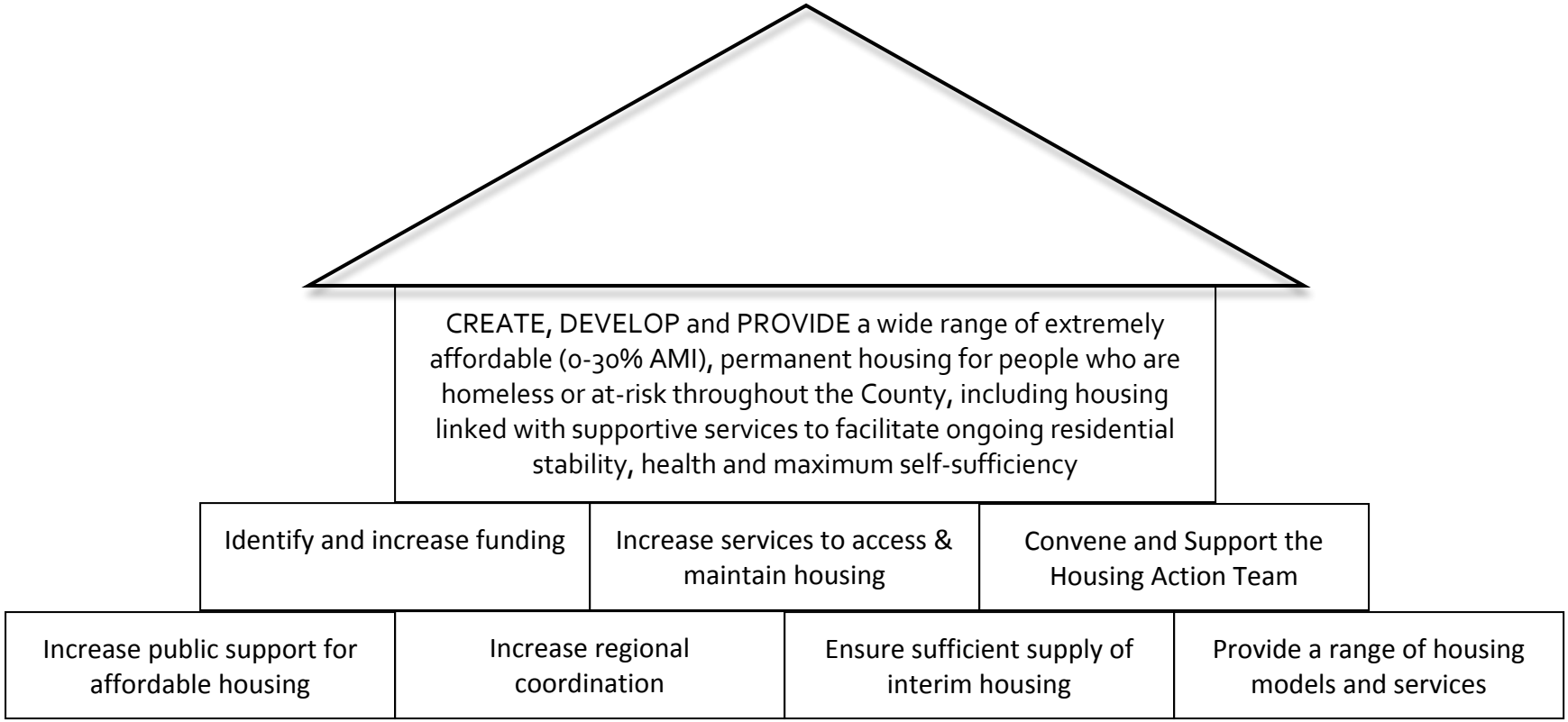
SUPPORT: The Research and Support for the Housing Goal

- *Permanent housing is cost-effective*. In Massachusetts, three pilot programs were implemented to test alternative approaches to family emergency shelter, including flexible assistance and housing subsidies. Two years later, 80% of the families served in these three programs were still housed at a cost significantly below the $47,000 average annual cost of sheltering a family. ***An average of 22 families were housed for the cost of one family emergency shelter unit.***[v] **In Portland, Oregon**, a local homeless services and housing provider reported cost savings of $15,006 per individual after their first year of getting people into permanent supportive housing using a Housing First approach.[vi]
- *Housing subsidies work*. A study in the Boston area found that nearly 90% of families that exited homelessness with a housing subsidy remained stably housed 6-12 months later.[*] Similarly, a study of homeless families in New York City found that those who left homeless shelters with a housing subsidy were 21 times more likely to be stably housed five years later than other formerly homeless families without housing subsidies.[**]
- *Permanent housing with services is effective and cost-effective in rural areas.* A study done in Portland, Maine, found that permanent supportive housing is cost effective: the average **annual cost of savings in the first year of permanent supportive housing was $944 per person**.[vii]

SOLUTIONS:

- ✓ **Build Countywide support and identify financial support for extremely affordable housing (for people with 0-30% of Area Median Income (AMI)) and linked supportive services.**
- ✓ **Create, develop and provide a wide range of extremely affordable (0-30% AMI), permanent housing for people who are homeless or at-risk throughout the County, including housing linked with supportive services to facilitate ongoing residential stability, health, and maximum self-sufficiency.**
- ✓ **Facilitate and streamline access to housing and housing-related supportive services by people who are homeless or at-risk.**
- ✓ **Ensure a sufficient supply of interim housing, including respite care, emergency and transitional housing, to meet the need Countywide.**

What housing is needed and how will we create it?



Who will implement the Housing portion of this Plan?

The **Housing Action Team** will be co-led by a member of the Ten-Year Plan Executive Commission and the Homeless & Poverty Action Coalition. **Members** will include representatives from:

- Housing Developers
- Yolo County Housing
- City Housing Planners
- Consumers
- CDBG Coordinators
- Affordable Housing Providers
- Funders
- Services Providers

Additional partners will help with each of the Solutions. They are noted on the following pages.

HOUSING SOLUTION: Build Countywide support and identify financial support for extremely affordable housing (for people with 0-30% of Area Median Income (AMI)) and linked supportive services.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
HOUSING: Research, analyze and coordinate all possible sources of funding for extremely affordable (0-30% AMI) housing. Consider new and creative means and partnerships for creating housing.	• Increased funding for homeless housing and services flowing to the County
SERVICES: Research and take advantage of all possible sources of funding for housing-related services. Advocate for increased, sustainable sources of services funding to help tenants maintain housing.	
TRUST FUND: Create a Housing and Services Trust Fund to provide ongoing funding for services linked to housing, affordable housing development, housing operations, and Plan implementation. Identify dedicated revenue sources for the Trust Fund.	
REGIONAL: Coordinate efforts to create extremely affordable housing on a regional basis, in partnership with Sacramento and nearby counties. (See also Implementation Goal.)	
COMMUNITY: Build community and financial support for affordable housing and the Housing Resource Centers through educational campaigns. Educate community to reduce Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) responses to extremely affordable housing. Increase local fundraising.	

HOUSING SOLUTION: Create, develop, and provide a wide range of extremely affordable (0-30% AMI), permanent housing for people who are homeless or at-risk throughout the County, including housing linked with supportive services to facilitate ongoing residential stability, health, and maximum self-sufficiency.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
TEAM: Establish a Countywide Housing Action Team to promote and facilitate the development of extremely affordable housing for people with 0-30% of Area Median Income, including dedicated units for people who are homeless or at-risk. The Committee will meet quarterly and its members will include non-profit and for-profit developers, elected officials, the Housing and Community Development Department staff of each City and the County, and other potential funders.	• Productive quarterly meetings • Annual Plan to create homeless housing units • Increase in available units for homeless or at-risk individuals and families
FIND: Identify properties (land, retail or commercial space, motels, apartments, housing units, mobile home parks) in the County that can be developed as extremely affordable housing for a variety of populations, either through new construction, acquisition, rehabilitation, or leasing.	
RANGE: When creating housing, consider a range of housing models and services to respond to the various homeless and at-risk populations. Prioritize housing models and identify need in partnership with the homeless population. • To ensure affordability for homeless people, explore new housing models that are smaller and less costly, including mobile homes, Single Room Occupancy (SROs), and others. • Master-lease housing to provide housing opportunities for clients with severe housing barriers, including those with criminal histories, eviction histories and credit problems. Identify vacant and foreclosed properties that are appropriate for master-leasing. • Work to provide a range of tenant-based housing subsidies, including both long-term subsidies and short-term, shallow subsidies, including using a rapid re-housing model. • Provide a continuum of housing for people with histories of substance abuse, from clean & sober to harm reduction. Harm reduction emphasizes a reduction in substance use, as opposed to abstinence, and focuses on improved health and stability as measurements of success. • Consider creating housing in a Housing First model, a model with an immediate and primary focus on helping individuals and families quickly access permanent housing; then, sustain it by providing voluntary supportive services that flex to meet the tenant's needs. A variety of other communities find this model cost-efficient and effective, especially for chronically homeless people. • Develop "single site" permanent supportive housing with multiple units in one building through new construction or master-leasing of existing properties, with dedicated staffing that provides case management and linkage with a range of support services.	

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
SERVICES: Create integrated services teams that can provide access to services to people in scattered site housing, on a transitional or extended basis, depending on tenant needs.	• Annual survey indicates that clients are receiving all necessary services

HOUSING SOLUTION: Facilitate and streamline access to housing and housing-related supportive services by people who are homeless or at-risk.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
RESOURCE CENTERS: Create Housing Resource Centers located in the cities of Davis, West Sacramento, Woodland, and Winters. Outreach to outlying areas of the County to help people access housing and housing-related services.	• Housing Resource Centers exist in all 4 cities. • Annual survey indicates that more landlords are housing formerly homeless people • Increased access to housing for homeless or at-risk households.
VACANCY DATABASE: Create a Housing Vacancy Database, with up-to-date listings on affordable housing units in the County.	
LANDLORDS: Forge relationships with landlords to encourage and support them in accepting homeless people as tenants.	
ENTRY SERVICES: Provide supportive services that assist with overcoming barriers to housing, including accessing identification, addressing legal issues (including evictions and credit problems), and other barriers.	

HOUSING SOLUTION: Ensure a sufficient supply of interim housing, including respite care, emergency and transitional housing, to meet the need Countywide and support regional coordination.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
INTERIM OPTIONS: For populations that are not able to access permanent housing immediately, maintain or create Countywide short-term housing capacity and develop additional space as necessary, especially in areas of the County that need short-term housing options, such as West Sacramento. • Residents of interim housing will receive case management to help them access housing and the services they need to achieve ongoing health and stability. The goal will be to move people into permanent housing as quickly as possible. • Concrete performance measures will be developed to monitor interim housing programs, including length of time in interim housing, linkage with permanent housing, access to income through benefits or employment, access to education and training, and access to other supports.	• Reduction in number of unsheltered people in bi-annual homeless • People move from Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing to Permanent Housing
TRANSITIONAL HOUSING: Develop or maintain transitional housing for targeted populations, including, among others, youth exiting foster care; victims of domestic violence; and released prisoners.	
FLEXIBILITY: Maintain flexibility in program design so that housing can be rearranged to serve different populations in response to need.	
REGIONAL: Coordinate efforts to create interim housing on a regional basis, in partnership with Sacramento and nearby counties. (See also Implementation Goal.)	

GOAL: SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Provide Comprehensive, Integrated Services to Help People Access and Maintain Housing and Maximize Their Self-Sufficiency

CHALLENGES: The Gaps in Services in Yolo County

System Level Needs

- Current systems are not conducive to ending and preventing the homelessness of Yolo County Residents
- Services are unavailable, inconsistent, or duplicated
- Services are not uniformly available locally

Client Level Service Needs

- Households become unstable due to a lack of housing related services
- Many residents who need mental health and substance abuse treatment services do not know how to access them
- Employment-related services are not widely available
- Homeless or at risk people struggle to access services because of lack of transportation options
- Some Yolo County residents may benefit from financial literacy and other life skills training

SUPPORT: The Research and Support for the Services Goal

- *Services are a cost-effective means to address needs.* A recent cost-effectiveness study in Yolo County demonstrated that only 13% of the cost of serving one family that became stably housed was related to the services and housing that led to stabilization and health, while the remaining 87% was associated with CPS or corrections.
- *Services promote stability and decrease costs*. Inter-agency, integrated services teams can effectively promote residential stability and decrease costs by reducing unnecessary use of emergency rooms and residential mental health programs.[viii]
- *Employment services increase employment*. Studies document that employment services, provided as part of an integrated package of care, are effective in helping people access employment, even among those with histories of homelessness and disability.[ix]
- *Benefit assistance improves benefit access and housing access.* After receiving training by the federal SOAR Project, communities providing SOAR benefits advocacy services to clients tend to dramatically improve homeless access to SSI/SSDI benefits: application approval rates have increased from 10-15% to 70% and the length of time for an application decision decreased from an average of more than 120 days to an average of 93 days.[x]

> Homelessness is not just a lack of housing.
>
> - Bob Ekstrom, Yolo Family Resource Center

SOLUTIONS:

- ✓ **Enhance system level integration of service provision in order to improve efficiency, accountability, access and quality of care.**
- ✓ **Provide consumers with comprehensive, integrated services linked to housing to assist them in maintaining residential stability and overcoming barriers to housing.**
- ✓ **Increase availability and access to mental health and substance abuse services.**
- ✓ **Facilitate access to living wage employment by expanding employment assistance services and job training opportunities.**
- ✓ **Enhance access to benefits programs and mainstream resources.**
- ✓ **Make transportation assistance available to improve access to services and employment opportunities.**

Who will implement the Services portion of this Plan?

The **Services Action Team** will be co-led by a member of the Ten-Year Plan Executive Commission and the Homeless & Poverty Action Coalition. **Members** will include representatives from:

- County Department of Employment and Social Services
- County Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health
- County Health Department
- Services providers
- Social Security Administration
- Faith-based organizations
- Schools
- Consumers
- Community Advisory Boards

Additional partners will help with each of the Solutions. They are noted on the following pages.

SERVICES SOLUTION: Enhance system level integration of service provision in order to improve efficiency, accountability, access and quality of care.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
RESOURCE CENTERS: Connecting with existing resources, create and expand Housing Resource Centers to provide one-stop access to a range of housing and support services. The Housing Resource Centers will undertake outreach to low-income and homeless households and to agencies or people in the community who might encounter them so that people in need can access and locate resources. (See Prevention Goal.)	• The number of people served in and referred by Housing Resource Centers increases • Increase in number of partner agencies
ANY DOOR: Create "any door is the right door" access to services by instituting active referral agreements between all front line public, non-profit, and faith-based organizations so that all agencies can immediately link clients to the full range of care needed to prevent or end their homelessness. (See Prevention Goal.)	• Schedule Project Homeless Connect event(s) in 2011
COORDINATION: Strengthen and broaden interagency communication and coordination in service provision. (See Prevention Goal.)	
PHC: Host Project Homeless Connect(s) in each City, a day-long event hosting a multitude of services for people who are homeless or at risk, to reach people in need of services who have not connected into the system, to increase service coordination, and to increase public support for the Plan's goals.	
QUALITY STANDARDS: Promote and monitor quality of care system-wide by developing system-wide standards of care, outcome measures, and data collection tools. Collect and analyze data through HMIS to evaluate and improve the effectiveness and targeting of services provided.	
STAFF DEVELOPMENT: Organize quarterly system-wide staff development trainings on standards of care, data collection, evidenced-based practices, and cultural competency.	
INTEGRATED DATA: Streamline data systems to increase coordination and improve data availability. Integrate HMIS, benefit access systems, state systems, and County systems, like that of DESS.	
SATELLITES: As appropriate, offer satellite services in appropriate locations throughout the County, including Cities where services are unavailable. These services may include health care, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, employment services, and benefits applications.	

SERVICES SOLUTION: Provide consumers with comprehensive, integrated services linked to housing to assist them in maintaining residential stability and overcoming barriers to housing.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
FUNDING: Identify funding for housing-connected services. Create a Trust Fund(s) to provide ongoing funding for services linked to housing, affordable housing development, housing operations, and Plan implementation. Identify dedicated revenue sources for the Trust Fund.	• Establish a task force by 2013 to investigate permanent source funding and develop action steps
HOUSING SERVICES: Create integrated service teams to provide services linked to housing. The teams will be multi-disciplinary, involving staff from both mainstream and homeless agencies. They will provide intensive case management and either directly provide or actively link clients to a range of services and service models, including health care, mental health care, substance abuse management counseling, money management and life skills counseling, benefits and employment assistance, peer support and any other needed services or support.	
ENTRY SERVICES: Support services that assist with accessing identification, addressing legal issues (including evictions and credit problems), and other barriers to housing.	

SERVICES SOLUTION: Increase availability and access to mental health and substance abuse services.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
PARTNERS: Create a system to coordinate resources in the County that can provide mental health services to people who are homeless, including: hospitals, local medical professionals, local medical societies, community providers, and relevant UC Davis departments. Demonstrate cost savings to providers and partners to encourage participation.	• People in need of mental health services have less than a 10 day wait for services • People in need of substance use services can access them when they are ready for them
DEDICATED PROGRAMS: Support and expand programs that provide mental health services and substance abuse services to homeless people to both improve lives and provide cost-savings to the County. Seek additional funding for these programs. Monitor changes in Federal systems and benefits, and make best use of available resources.	
ADMH: Enhance coordination among providers, including the primary care system and the County's Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Department, to increase service availability and cultural competency for the range of homeless clients. Identify alternative funding to expand mental health and substance use service availability.	
SUR TEAM: Continue to coordinate services and treatment for people who are homeless and mentally ill through ADMH's very successful System Utilization Review Team, which meets regularly to engage in case conferencing to improve care and coordination for people receiving mental health services in the County.	
DETOX: To reduce costs and increase service efficacy, reestablish medical detoxification units to provide basic detoxification services, which are currently provided by hospital emergency rooms.	
TREATMENT: Increase access to a range of substance abuse treatment for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness, including treatment-based housing, especially for individuals released from the correction systems.	

Additional Partners:

- Faith-based organizations
- Hospitals

SERVICES SOLUTION: Facilitate access to living wage employment by expanding employment assistance services and job training opportunities.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
JOB TRAINING: Provide comprehensive employment assistance and job training services at the Housing Resource Centers. Coordinate with the Workforce Investment Board, Job Corps, the Department of Rehabilitation, Vocation Rehabilitation, the One Stop Center and other agencies providing employment-related services. (See Prevention Goal.)	• Increase in number of individuals staying in homeless housing or accessing homeless services who become employed
WORKING SUPPORT: Provide access to employment supports at the Housing Resource Centers, including childcare, transportation, and funds for clothing and work tools. (See Prevention Goal.)	
JOB READINESS: Expand employment readiness classes, short-term employment and volunteer opportunities, and other related programs.	
SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT: Expand vocational training and supported employment opportunities. Coordinate with PRIDE Industries, YES, Northern California Construction Training, and other existing resources.	
EMPLOYERS: Work with local businesses to expand employment and training opportunities. Encourage employers to accept employment-readiness certificates and to contribute to employment-readiness certification.	

SERVICES SOLUTION: Enhance access to benefits programs and mainstream resources.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
COORDINATION: Enhance coordination with mainstream benefits programs (e.g., YCHIP, Food Stamps, veterans benefits) through either stationing eligibility staff at local agencies or by training staff at community-based agencies to do intake interviews or preliminary eligibility assessments, then transfer information to the benefits systems to apply for and receive benefits.	• Increase in number of individuals staying in homeless housing or accessing homeless services who access income and other benefits
SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS: Enhance access to Social Security benefits by implementing the national SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) model to increase application approval rates for homeless people.	
APPLICATIONS: Coordinate system to allow individuals to complete one application for multiple benefits. One model might be the Compass system implemented for children by First 5 Yolo.	
CHILDREN: In partnership with the homeless liaisons, remove barriers to attending school for children in homeless households. Provide additional support, training, and resources for youth with special needs and their families.	

SERVICES SOLUTION: Make transportation assistance available to improve access to services and employment opportunities.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: Work with public transit agencies to maintain and increase access to reduced fares or special passes for people who are low-income.	• Coordinate with agencies annually to improve access
ALTERNATIVES: Provide van services from the Housing Resource Centers to facilitate access by people who do not have cars. Expand Care Car, taxi vouchers, or similar systems.	• Reduction in reports of lack of access in annual survey

GOAL: IMPLEMENTATION

Effectively Administer, Coordinate and Finance Implementation of the County's Ten-Year Plan and its Efforts to Prevent and End Homelessness

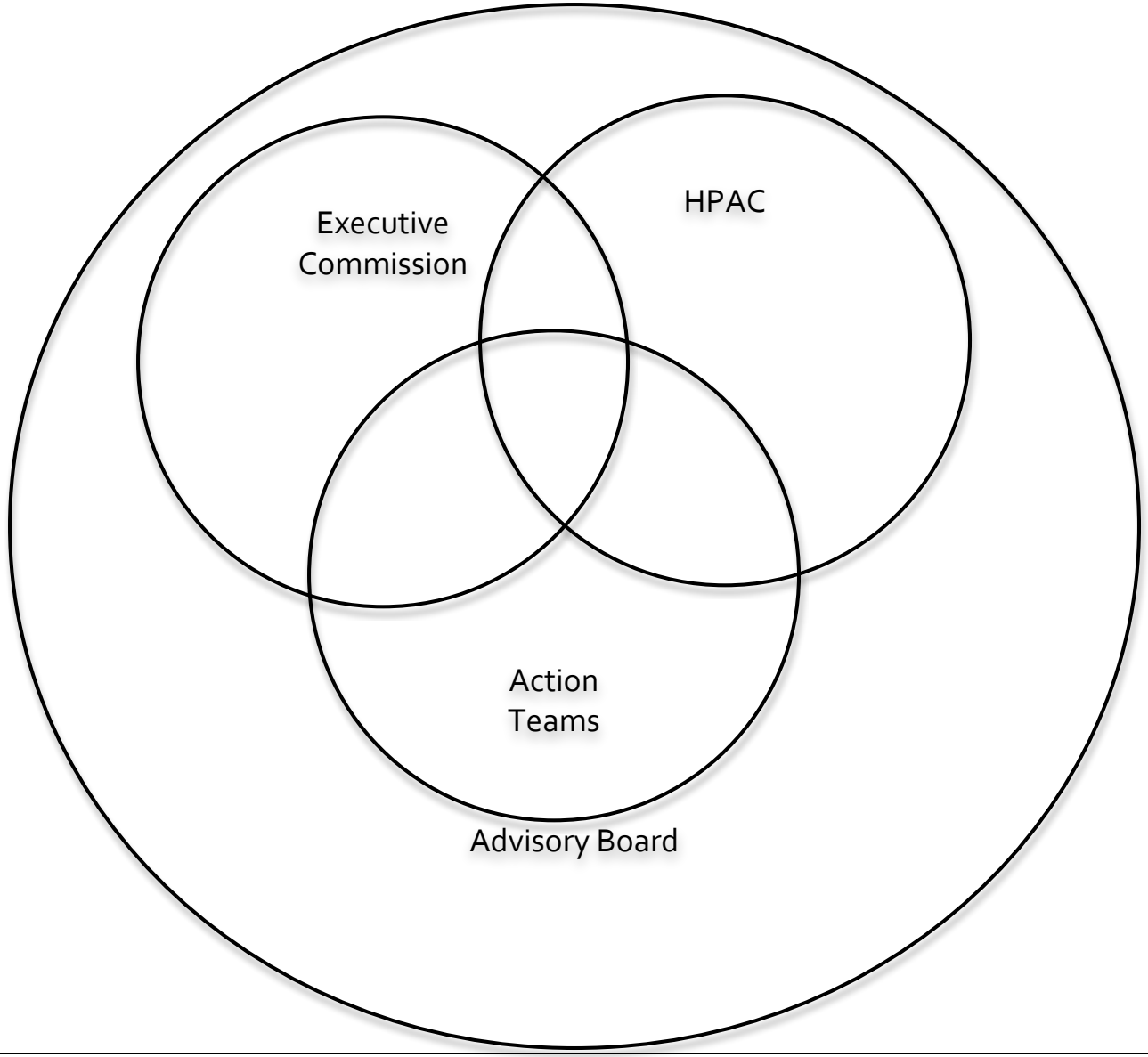
CHALLENGES: To be effective, the Ten-Year Plan's Administration, Coordination, and Financing must include:

- ✓ A Countywide leadership and administrative body
- ✓ Equitable inter-jurisdictional investment
- ✓ System change and integration
- ✓ Better coordination and communication
- ✓ Data collection and analysis

SOLUTIONS:

- ✓ **Establish a Countywide administrative and governing body structure with the legitimacy, representation, power, and resources to effectively and efficiently direct the community's efforts to prevent and end homelessness.**
- ✓ **Allocate resources to support a staff to implement this Plan to end and prevent homelessness.**
- ✓ **Designate preventing and reducing homelessness in Yolo County as a joint priority for all relevant County and City agencies.**
- ✓ **Identify, allocate, coordinate, and secure funding to support Plan implementation and development and operation of homeless housing and services.**
- ✓ **Maximize use of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to collect and analyze data on homelessness and program outcomes and to facilitate inter-agency case management and information sharing and to increase efficiency.**

How will Yolo County and its Cities Implement This Plan?



IMPLEMENTATION GOAL: Establish a Countywide administrative and governing body structure with the legitimacy, representation, power, and resources to effectively and efficiently direct the community's efforts to prevent and end homelessness.

How will we achieve this strategy?

STRUCTURE: Form and maintain an Executive Commission, Advisory Board, Action Teams, and Task Forces (as needed). Fund the Implementation Structure, its staffing and operations.

FORM: Investigate appropriate structures for Plan implementation, including non-profit status.

ADVISORY BOARD: Form a County-wide coalition of plan supporters that will gather annually for a stakeholders meeting about the State of Plan Implementation, promote systems change, build political will, fundraise, and sit on task forces, action teams, and the Executive Commission.

Membership will include representatives from all relevant sectors in the County that support the Plan including:

- Board of Supervisors
- County Departments/ Agencies including (Department of Employment and Social Services, Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health, Department of Health, and Veterans Service Office)
- Yolo County Housing
- Law Enforcement/ Parole
- Hospital/Healthcare
- Mayors or City Council Members from each City
- City Departments (including Housing)
- Federal or State government agencies
- Philanthropists/ Foundations
- Businesses
- Housing Developers
- Civic Organizations
- Legal Services
- Media
- Labor Groups
- Education/ School Districts/ Universities/ First 5
- Transportation
- Community-based Service Providers
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Consumers
- At Large/ Concerned Citizens

How will we achieve this strategy?

EXECUTIVE COMMISSION: Institute an active body to meet at least quarterly to oversee and implement the Plan and lead the effort to prevent and end homelessness. The Commission will set and monitor the annual goals for the Plan and determine when the Plan should be modified to better reflect the needs in Yolo County.

Membership will include representatives from each of:

- Board of Supervisors
- City of Davis
- City of West Sacramento
- City of Woodland
- Unincorporated Areas/ City of Winters
- HPAC
- Faith-Based Community
- Business Community
- Consumers
- Philanthropy Community

Members will sit for staggered three-year terms, to benefit from experience. City and County representatives should be elected officials.

ACTION TEAMS (Prevention, Housing, Services, Outcomes): Create four action teams, one for each Goal in the Plan, to oversee the assigned action area, implement their respective strategy within the Ten-Year Plan, create task forces to take on specific issues, and measure success.

Membership will be drawn from the Advisory Board and other interested citizens. Each Action Team will have co-leadership from HPAC and the Ten-Year Plan Executive Commission, members from each body will report back to both bodies. These teams will continue the work of prior HPAC committees.

TASK FORCES: As needed, call on Advisory Board members and other members of the community to sit on time-limited, issue-specific task forces to undertake program and/or project initiation, operation or oversight, to build political will and public support for specific issues, and to fundraise for specific issues.

IMPLEMENTATION SOLUTION: Assign staff to implement this Plan to end and prevent homelessness.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
PLAN DIRECTOR: One capable, local, dedicated, invested individual should be engaged to drive the Plan and support the work of the implementation bodies, including the Executive Commission and the Action Teams.	• Plan Director in place in 2010
SUPPORT: The Plan Director should receive additional support as needed, which may include additional staff or volunteer support, as well as funding to work towards implementation.	• Increased coordination & support
FUNDING: Funding from each of the cities and county should support Plan staff, at least in part, to demonstrate investment in ending and preventing homelessness.	• Financial commitment from all jurisdictions

IMPLEMENTATION SOLUTION: Designate preventing and reducing homelessness in Yolo County as a joint priority for all relevant County and City agencies and other Partners to the Plan

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
COMMON GOAL: Incorporate the goal of preventing and ending homelessness into the planning, policy and program development, and budgeting of relevant City and County agencies as well as other agencies that support the Plan.	• Increased coordination and support
OUTCOME MEASURES: Implement homeless- and housing-related outcome measures for all relevant departments, contractors, and grantees as part of a performance-based budgeting process. Measures will be appropriate for each agency or department function, but will, at a minimum, include the housing status of clients at intake and exit; homelessness-related services provided, both directly or through referral; and entitlements applied for and received. Measures will be consistent with or complement measures used in HMIS.	
RESPONSIBILITY: All relevant City and County agencies will take responsibility, in partnership with other providers, for identifying people who are homeless or at -risk and linking them with available, appropriate services.	
REGIONAL: Work regionally with Sacramento and other nearby communities to promote and support ending and preventing homelessness. Coordinate data systems, including HMIS, and service provision.	

IMPLEMENTATION SOLUTION: Identify, allocate, coordinate, and secure funding to support Plan implementation and development and operation of homeless housing and services.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
TRUST FUND: Create a Trust Fund(s) to provide ongoing funding for services linked to housing, affordable housing development, housing operations, and Plan implementation. Identify dedicated revenue sources for the Trust Fund(s). Explore the following possibilities among others: in lieu fees and taxes on commercial square footage, private funding sources, mainstream system cost-savings due to reduced use of services by homeless people who have accessed housing, or document recording fees. Trust Fund(s) will be allocated in a manner that encourages collaboration and improves the homeless housing and services system.	• Total amount of funding for homeless housing and services in Yolo County will increase
ANALYZE FUNDING: Taking into account community needs and the restrictions of funding streams, analyze how existing federal, state, and local dollars are being spent to respond to homelessness to ensure that funds are being used as effectively and efficiently as possible, are incorporating best practices, and are in line with the goals and priorities of the Plan. Funding streams to be analyzed include: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funds, county services funding (including the Department of Employment and Social Services and the Health Department), Redevelopment Agency funds, inclusionary zoning fees, Mental Health Services Act, Community Development Block Grant, Community Services Block Grant, Mental Health Block Grant, Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant, community health center funds, Social Services Block Grant, HOME funds, Federal Emergency Shelter Grants, Continuum of Care grants, and other relevant funding.	
PURSUE: Aggressively pursue additional federal, state, local and private funding opportunities to support efforts to address homelessness and quickly secure local funds whenever needed to leverage state and federal resources. Initially, this includes opportunities through the federal Stimulus bill, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).	
PUBLIC: Organize a public education campaign. Explore a public fundraising campaign to collect contributions from business and civic organizations and from private citizens.	
SOCIAL ENTERPRISES: Aggressively explore the development of social enterprise and revenue generating activity within non-profit organizations to support homeless housing and services, by creating businesses staffed or run by homeless and formerly homeless individuals to provide training and create income simultaneously. Examples include restaurants or landscaping businesses.	
COST SAVINGS: Implement mechanisms to document and capture cost-savings data in mainstream systems and programs due to reduced use of services by homeless people after they access housing.	

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
Reinvest cost savings in affordable housing, homeless housing and services, and Plan implementation.	

IMPLEMENTATION SOLUTION: Maximize use of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to collect and analyze data on homelessness and program outcomes and to facilitate inter-agency case management and information sharing and to increase efficiency.

How will we achieve this strategy?	How will we know we are succeeding?
MEASUREMENTS: Establish system-wide performance standards and outcome measures to track progress towards preventing and ending homelessness. Standards and outcome measures should be developed for both homeless programs and mainstream programs serving people who are homeless or at-risk.	• All Housing Resource Centers will use HMIS • All programs that serve homeless people will use HMIS • HMIS system will be able to provide answers about service needs and availability
ANALYZE: Collect and analyze data on a quarterly basis and use it to identify emerging issues and resolve problems.	
EVALUATE: Annually evaluate success in addressing homelessness and progress in Plan implementation. Use analysis to guide planning and program development, facilitate continuous improvement, and inform funding allocation.	
REPORT: Report outcomes at annual Homeless Summit and annual meeting of Advisory Board.	
SHARE INFORMATION: Publish an annual systemwide outcomes report and press release.	
INFORM FUTURE WORK: Develop each year's Annual Work Plan based on data and performance evaluation, incorporating necessary course corrections. Consider whether agencies are effectively adapting the Plan priorities and identify how to support them to make necessary changes, including assisting with: strategic planning, development of new systems, and staff training.	
INFORMATION SHARING: Develop capacity for inter-agency electronic case conferencing and information sharing through the HMIS.	

For additional information about the Ten-Year Plan and its implementation, please contact:
Bridget Kurtt DeJong, 415-788-7961 ext 314 or bridget@homebaseccc.org.

---

[i] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General (1990). *Homeless Prevention Programs*. [OIG: 07-90-00100]. Washington, DC: Author. http://www.oig.hhs.gov/oei/reports/oei-07-90-00100.pdf

[ii] Webb, D. A., Culhane, J. F., Metraux, S. Robbins, J. M. & Culhane, D. (2003). Prevalence of episodic homelessness among adult childbearing women in Philadelphia, PA. *American Journal of Public Health, 93*(11): 1895-1896.

[iii] Weinreb, L., Goldberg, R., Bassuk, E., & Perloff, J. N. (1998). Determinants of health and service use patterns in homeless and low-income housed children. *American Academy of Pediatrics 102*(3): 554-562.

[iv] Masten, A. S., Miliotis, D., Graham-Bermann, S. A., Ramirez, M. & Neeman, J. (1993). Children in homeless families: Risks to mental health and development. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 61*(2): 335-343.

[v] One Family. *Housing First: An Unprecedented Opportunity,* Fall 2006. http://www.onefamilyinc.org/cgi-script/csArticles/uploads/466/PolicyPaperFINAL.pdf

[vi] National Alliance to End Homelessness (2007). Community Snapshot: Portland. Oregon. Washington, DC. http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/1665 [http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/1665]

[vii] Mondello, M., Gass, A., McLaughlin, T., Shore, N. (2007). Cost of Homelessness: Cost Analysis of Permanent Supportive Housing. http://www.mainehousing.org/DATAHousingReports.aspx [http://www.mainehousing.org/DATAHousingReports.aspx]

[viii] Proscio, Tony. (2000). "Supportive Housing and Its Impact on the Public Health Crisis of Homelessness", Corporation for Supportive Housing. pp. 7 and 15-18.

[ix] Cook, J.A., Pickett-Schenk, S.A., Grey, D., Banghart, M., Rosenheck, R., and Randolph, F. Vocational outcomes among formerly homeless individuals with severe mental illness in the ACCESS program. *Psychiatric Services* 52(8):1075-1080, 2001 and Trutko, J.W., Barnow, B.S., Kessler-Beck, S., et al. Employment and Training for America's Homeless: Final Report of the Job Training for the Homeless Demonstration Program. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, 1997.

[x] SOAR Website: http://www.prainc.com/soar/