



JULY 2010

2010 Update on the City's Homeless Assistance and Prevention Strategy

The City of Riverside continues to take a pro-active approach to addressing homelessness in our community in partnership with a wide-range of non-profit organizations, social service agencies, faith-based institutions and the community at-large. Through this collaboration, the City of Riverside's Homeless Assistance and Prevention Strategy has been successful in assisting many individuals and families move toward housing stabilization. The following is a brief update on some of the major developments and initiatives underway:

1. HOMELESS STREET OUTREACH PROGRAM

The City of Riverside Homeless Street Outreach Team continues to provide daily mobile outreach and client service engagement focused on the "hardest-to-reach" and "service-resistant" populations on the streets, in service venues, and other locations where they can be found. The Street Outreach Team works in partnership with city staff, local service providers, law enforcement, health professionals, and the community at-large to help people get off the streets and connected with the services they need to enter stable housing and achieve self-sufficiency. A number of service professionals and community volunteers participate in "ride-alongs" throughout the week to assist the Outreach Team with engaging people in needed services. During the 2009/10 program year, the Outreach Team engaged over 500 homeless individuals and worked with community partners to connect people to a range of assistance including shelter, housing, employment, benefits assistance, behavioral health services, medical services, transportation back to their hometown and other assistance they need. Over the last year, the Team partnered with **Kaiser Physicians** and the **UCR Student Run Health Clinic** to provide street-level health care engagement and the Team has continued to apply a **Housing First model** with over a dozen chronically homeless individuals to assist them with exiting life on the streets and move directly into housing coupled with aggressive case management. The Homeless Street Outreach Team operates from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday and various weekend hours as assigned. To seek assistance with a homeless situation or to volunteer to go on a ride-along with the Outreach Team, residents and others can call 951/826-2200.

2. ONE-STOP MULTI-SERVICE CAMPUS

A pivotal goal within the City's Homeless Action Plan is the creation of a centralized environment to provide short-term emergency shelter coupled with a range of complimentary supportive services necessary to assist homeless individuals and families to address their issues and achieve housing stability. Since the adoption of the Homeless Action Plan, the City has pursued a long-term strategy to assemble properties in a central location in order to provide homeless assistance and prevention services in a "campus-style" setting where a wide-range of service needs can be addressed in a coordinated, multi-service delivery system of care that includes strategic outreach, crisis intervention, interim housing, rapid re-housing and coordinated supportive services and case management. The project is modeled after the national acclaimed PATH Mall in Los Angeles and similar models being developed across the country bringing the retail concept of the "one-stop shopping mall" to the social service arena. Presently, the components of the developing service campus environment include: a **Riverside Access Center** (Phase I in operation), the Path of Life **Riverside Emergency Shelter** (in operation), "**The Place**" **Safe Haven** Supportive Housing and Drop-in Center (in operation), **SmartRiverside Digital Inclusion Program** (in operation) and a **Pet Kennel** for service campus guests (under development). Please see the information piece entitled "**Access: Riverside**" for more details.

3. EMERGENCY SHELTER PROGRAMS

The City continues to partner with **Path of Life Ministries** to operate a Year-round Emergency Shelter facility at Hulen Place. Path of Life presently operates two distinct yet inter-related programs from the emergency shelter facility – *the Year-Round Short-Term Emergency Shelter Program*, and *the Cold Weather Shelter Program*. Path of Life Ministries also operates the County supported Family Shelter at 2530 3rd Street. Over the course of the last year, Path of Life has provided emergency shelter services to over 1,500 unduplicated homeless individuals and members of families with children at the two shelter facilities. Path of Life also engages over 500 volunteers annually through the popular and highly successful **Guest Chef Program** which helps to supplement shelter food costs. In addition to shelter operations, Path of Life also provides 142 beds of transitional housing for families with children at King Hall on the March Air Reserve Base and free medical services to homeless individuals in partnership with **Kaiser Permanente** and **Riverside Community Health Foundation** through the **Health in Motion** mobile medical van.

4. HOUSING FIRST INITIATIVE / TENANT-BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE

During the 2009/10 program year, City staff continued to work with community partners to implement the best practice “Housing First” approach, which emphasizes moving people into housing as quickly as possible and providing the appropriate level of services to support housing stabilization and retention, into all aspects of our local continuum of care. The Housing First approach represents a significant shift away from the traditional homeless service delivery system to one focused on homeless prevention, rapid re-housing and home-based case management to facilitate client stabilization leading to self-sufficiency. This effort currently includes the federal stimulus-funded Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP); the HUD SHP-funded Permanent Supportive Housing Program; the Veteran’s Administration Supportive Housing initiative (VASH) administered by the VA Loma Linda and the Housing Authority of the County of Riverside (HACR); the City’s HOME-funded Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program; and a new Shelter Plus Care “Street-to-Home” Project.

- **HOMELESS PREVENTION AND RAPID RE-HOUSING PROGRAM (HPRP)**

In September of 2009, the City was allocated over \$1.3 million in federal stimulus funding for up to three-years from the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) established under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The intent of the federal funding is to serve persons who are experiencing a housing emergency due to the economic downturn and became homeless or would become homeless *but for* this assistance and can remain stably housed after this temporary assistance ends. Building on the City’s existing Housing First/Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program, the City is partnering with the Housing Authority of the County of Riverside (HACR) to implement HPRP providing temporary financial assistance and housing stabilization services to help prevent low-income individuals and families from becoming homeless and help those who are experiencing homelessness to be quickly re-housed and stabilized. The program includes payment of rental arrears, assistance with move-in costs and/or short-to-medium-term rental subsidies coupled with case management services to facilitate client stabilization leading to self-sufficiency. From October 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010, the City has assisted 486 individuals in 176 households with homeless prevention and rapid re-housing program funding.

- **PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAM**

The City continues to use \$1.4 million in funding awarded through the HUD Continuum of Care Supportive Housing Program (SHP) to support the development and operations of two permanent supportive housing projects providing housing for sixteen (16) individuals/households. One of the projects is providing supportive housing specifically to chronically homeless individuals and the second project provides supportive housing for homeless persons with disabling conditions and their families (where applicable). On-going case management and supportive services are provided to participants to help ensure housing stability and the achievement of self-sufficiency goals. The City is working in partnership with local nonprofit housing developers, Riverside Housing Development Corporation and National CORE, as well as supportive service providers to implement these two projects. City staff will continue to pursue new opportunities to partner with local nonprofit organizations to develop and implement additional permanent supportive housing projects.

- **VETERANS’ ADMINISTRATION SUPPORTIVE HOUSING INITIATIVE (VASH)**

The Obama Administration has set a goal of ending homelessness among veterans over the next five-years. The US Department of Veterans’ Affairs is working in collaboration with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide targeted housing choice vouchers to homeless veterans

throughout the country. Locally, the VA Loma Linda is working in collaboration with the Housing Authority of the County of Riverside and other continuum of care partners to assist homeless veterans with moving off the streets and into permanent supportive housing. During the 2009/10 program year, 97 veterans were issued VASH vouchers in Riverside County, including 33 veterans in the City of Riverside.

- **TENANT-BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TBRA)**

During program year 2009/10, the City allocated \$70,000 in HOME funds to continue the TBRA program, administered by HACR, providing eligible homeless and at-risk households in Riverside with move-in assistance or short-and-medium-term rental subsidies coupled with home-based case management. During the program year, twenty-one (21) households received assistance through the TBRA program. The TBRA program included a "street to home" pilot project assisting a target group of chronically homeless individuals with exiting life on the streets and moving directly into housing coupled with aggressive case management provided by the City's Homeless Street Outreach Team.

- **SHELTER PLUS CARE "STREET TO HOME" PROJECT**

Following up on the TBRA pilot project referenced above, the HACR was awarded new funding through the 2008 HUD Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance process to fund a new Shelter Plus Care "Street-to-Home" Project. The new project will again target approximately 16 chronically homeless individuals identified by the Homeless Street Outreach Team for assistance with exiting life on the streets and moving directly into stable housing using Shelter Plus Care housing vouchers coupled with case management/supportive services.

5. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT / EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES

Development Department staff continues to work with the **County Workforce Development Agency** and other community partners to facilitate new initiatives aimed at providing job skills training and placement opportunities for homeless individuals and displaced workers. We are currently working with a number of community partners on an initiative generated through the **East Riverside Business Neighborhood Watch** organization to provide job training and placement activities linked to the manufacturing industry. We also continue to work with **Riverside Community College's Corporate Connection** program to develop job initiatives linked to the energy efficiency and renewable energy fields. In addition, with **SmartRiverside** housed on the "Hulen Place campus", we intend to pursue new project initiatives creating training and employment opportunities in computer technologies and applications.

6. ANNUAL FUNDING FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

Over \$1,000,000 in federal funding has been allocated by the City Council in fiscal year 2010/2011, including Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership Act (HOME), Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA), and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) programs, to over a dozen public and private service agencies that assist homeless individuals and families and those at-risk of becoming homeless in Riverside. Funding to these agencies support a wide-range of programs and services including homeless prevention, outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, mental health and substance abuse treatment services, domestic violence assistance, rental assistance, basic needs and emergency resources, and referral services. Programs supported with this funding include:

- **Alternatives to Domestic Violence**, providing emergency shelter, transitional housing, and counseling services for women and children victimized by domestic violence;
- **Arlington Temporary Assistance**, providing emergency food, clothing, information and referral services to homeless and low-income individuals and families;
- **Assistance League of Riverside Operation Snack Attack**, providing snack bags to local schools on Fridays for distribution to homeless and economically disadvantaged children for weekend consumption;
- **Catholic Charities**, providing a range of basic needs assistance services including food, rental assistance, utility assistance, along with case management, counseling, information and referral, etc. for low-income households;
- **County of Riverside Cold Weather Shelter program**, providing over 100 beds on a nightly basis for individuals and families during cold weather months;
- **Fair Housing Council of Riverside County**, providing eviction prevention, rental assistance services, tenant/landlord counseling and discrimination services primarily targeted to low-income households and at-risk populations;

- **Foothill AIDS Project**, providing homeless prevention, housing placement case management and supportive service linkage to individuals and families battling with HIV/AIDS;
- **Housing Authority of the County of Riverside**, providing short-term rental assistance and move-in assistance to homeless individuals and families and those at-risk of becoming homeless in the City of Riverside;
- **Lutheran Social Services Genesis House**, providing 32 transitional housing beds and supportive service assistance to women and their children;
- **MFI Recovery**, a private not-for-profit, state licensed/certified residential recovery center for single women and women with children dealing with alcohol and/or drug addiction including a transitional living program for homeless women and their children;
- **Operation SafeHouse**, providing 13 beds of emergency shelter for homeless and runaway youth, and 20 beds of transitional housing for homeless emancipated youth, as well as counseling, transportation and referral services to approximately 45 youths daily;
- **Path of Life Ministries Year-Round Emergency Shelter program**, providing 64 transitional shelter beds for homeless men, women, and children on a year-round basis;
- **Path of Life Ministries Riverside Family Shelter**, providing 50 transitional shelter beds for families with children on a year-round basis;
- **Volunteer Center of Riverside County**, providing free information and referral services linking individuals with vital community services as well as providing a Shared Housing program for low-income seniors in crisis and emergency rental assistance for households at-risk;
- **Whiteside Manor**, a private not-for-profit, state licensed/certified residential recovery center providing emergency, short-term and transitional living programs for homeless adult men and women who are diagnosed with mental illness and a concurrent alcohol and drug addiction problem.

7. RIVERSIDE HOMELESS CARE NETWORK

Over 50 organizations, including nonprofit service providers, municipal service agencies, law enforcement, and faith-based institutions, continue to participate in monthly meetings of the City-sponsored *Riverside Homeless Care Network* (Network). The Network serves as a vehicle to facilitate effective communication, coordination, and collaboration within the continuum of care services to the homeless in the City of Riverside. Network meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Riverside Access Center on the "Hulen Place campus". City staff is working with our Homeless Care Network partners to develop a comprehensive plan to help transform our local homeless service system - shifting the focus from providing temporary emergency assistance to one centered on creating solutions to ending the cycle of homelessness through a "Housing First" approach. The plan will include establishing a coordinated, community-wide, uniform system for assessing and responding to housing needs, determining appropriate service interventions and accessing available and new resources and services to facilitate housing stability.

8. RIVERSIDE PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT IV

On Wednesday, January 27th, 2010, the City worked in partnership with the Homeless Care Network to conduct the 4th Annual Riverside Project Homeless Connect event. The highly successful National Project Homeless Connect initiative is a one-day, one-stop service event conducted in over 200 jurisdictions across the nation. More than 500 homeless individuals were assisted by over 400 volunteers and service providers representing 50+ organizations with getting access to a wide variety of social and personal care services including housing, employment, health care, benefits enrollment, education, veteran's services, pet care and much more, all provided in one location. Over 3,000 service encounters were facilitated during the day. Among the results: 190 people connected with housing opportunities including shelter, transitional housing, HPRP, rental assistance and housing authority vouchers; 271 people assisted with mainstream benefits; 165 people connected with job training and employment services; 277 people received medical and dental services including prescribed medications; 87 people received access to behavioral health services; 58 people were assisted with California IDs; 126 people received assistance with legal services; 129 people received education assistance; 58 people were connected with Veteran's services; 80 people connected with youth services; 25 people connected with domestic violence services; 26 people received 67 services for their pets; 200 people received spiritual counseling; 99 people received cosmetology services; over 500 meals were served; and much more.