

Building Boulder County's Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness

In April of 2007, Boulder County launched a countywide human services strategic plan, adopted by the Boulder County Commissioners, the city councils of Longmont, Boulder, Lafayette, the Consortium of Cities, the board of Foothills United Way, and the trustees of The Community Foundation. The mission of the Boulder County Human Services Strategic Plan (BCHSSP) is to create a dynamic, accessible, coordinated and community-wide human service delivery system. The plan and related planning documents can be found at www.buildinglivablecommunities.org.

The plan includes many goals regarding meeting basic needs of food and shelter, access to health care, increasing economic stability and self-sufficiency. Implementation of the BCHSSP began in 2008 and continues, with countywide representation and involvement in many of its projects.

In July of 2009, the goal: *Provide Boulder County's most vulnerable residents with the support and resources necessary to live in safe, well-maintained, affordable housing* was addressed with the launch of a 10 Year Planning process (and based upon the national 10 Year Planning approach). Development of the plan is occurring with the participation of city and county government officials, agency directors, service providers, members of the faith community, homeless individuals, and other key stakeholders, and is being facilitated by the OMNI Institute. This process is expected to take approximately six months, and will be completed early in 2010.

In moving the process forward, there is recognition that a lot of good work has already been accomplished in this area. In particular, the Longmont Housing Opportunities Team and the Steering Committee for Boulder County's Human Services Strategic Plan have identified goals, objectives and possible strategies designed to impact homelessness across the county. These efforts will serve as the basis for moving the process forward. The plan will also rely on and reflect the work of Denver's Road Home.

The primary conceptual framework guiding this work is utilizing strategies, such as the Housing First model in order to prevent homelessness and/or provide interventions so that individuals and families do not end up homeless (in alignment with HUD's homeless prevention and rapid re-housing model focus).

Some of the initial draft goal areas of the Boulder County Homeless Planning effort include:

- Impact chronic, episodic and temporary homelessness (by providing adequate housing within the Housing First framework; providing supportive services; provide responsive outreach services);
- Provide services to homeless youth;
- Ensure access to shelter and related services;
- Prevent at-risk individuals and families from becoming homeless;
- Improve and implement systems to support efficient and effective plan implementation;
- Increase community aware and support for plan's implementation

The planning process will be structured around two primary groups. A leadership team of approximately 12 individuals will be formed to move the process forward and outline core plan contents. A second larger group of community stakeholders will be formed to reflect on and provide feedback to the leadership team throughout the plan's formation to ensure that the final document is sound and has support from the broader service and stakeholder community.

The process will be lead by Robin Bohannon, Director of Community Services for Boulder County, Karen Rahn, Housing and Human Services Director for the City of Boulder, and Karen Roney, Community Services Director for the City of Longmont. Additional support will be provided by the OMNI Institute and Paul Alexander, Director of the Regis University's Institute on the Common Good.

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