

# 10-Year Strategy ●



## ● to End Homelessness in Butte County

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on behalf of:

**Butte Countywide Homeless Continuum of Care**

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# Table of Contents

I. <a href="#">Executive Summary</a>	3
II. <a href="#">Introduction</a>	5
III. <a href="#">Context</a>	7
IV. <a href="#">Public Outreach Process/Methodology</a>	12
V. <a href="#">10-Year Strategy Goals</a>	16
VI. <a href="#">Community Action</a>	17
VII. <a href="#">Funding</a>	24
VIII. <a href="#">Housing</a>	29
IX. <a href="#">Services</a>	35
X. <a href="#">Jobs</a>	40
XI. <a href="#">Overall Structure</a>	45
XII. <a href="#">Conclusion</a>	49
XIII. <a href="#">Additional Resources</a>	50

# Acknowledgements

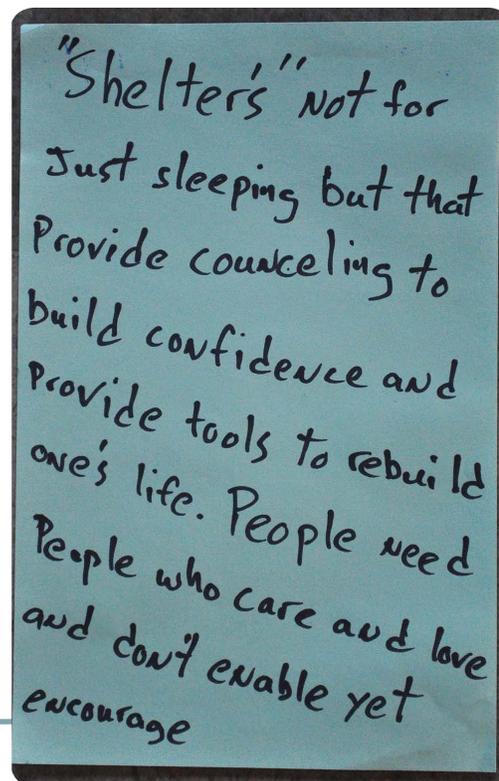
We would like to thank the Sierra Health Foundation, the City of Chico, and the Butte Countywide Homeless Continuum of Care (Butte CoC) for making this 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness (the 10-Year Strategy) possible. In addition, Butte CoC is grateful for the energetic participation of hundreds of community members in developing the 10-Year Strategy. This effort was made possible by community involvement and partnership.

Special thanks also goes to the agencies who provided meeting space for our various public forums and strategy meetings: 1200 Park Avenue Apartments, Arc of Butte County, the Paradise Ridge Family Resource Center, the Hope Center, Housing Authority of the County of Butte, the Jesus Center, Paradise Lutheran Church, and the Torres Shelter.

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*Layout and design by Tempra Board & Associates.*

One of the community forum response cards answering the question "what is missing?" to address homelessness in our county.



# Executive Summary

## Purpose of the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness

The 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness (10-Year Strategy) is sponsored by the Butte Countywide Homeless Continuum of Care (Butte CoC). Butte CoC is a network of local homeless services organizations and interested individuals. The 10-Year Strategy is a recipe book of solutions that the community has prioritized as most needed and appropriate for our localities. It is a starting point for a community dialogue about how we address homelessness. As entities determine what elements they can take on after assessing their capacity, more targeted strategic plans and programs will emerge. This may be the most sensible approach to an issue that is extremely complex.

## Major Themes

A key element of the 10-Year Strategy is community participation. Over a 5-month period, 10 public meetings were held throughout Butte County in which participants explored the causes of homelessness, identified gaps in services, suggested potential solutions, and prioritized solutions most needed and appropriate for our community. Through this process, the following major themes emerged:

- We are a compassionate community.
- Homelessness affects ALL members of the community.
- Let's take ownership of the problem.

## Overview of the 10-Year Strategy Document

This document aims to provide a better understanding of what is required to realize meaningful solutions to homelessness. It is organized into the following sections:

**Context:** Homeless population characteristics, economic and public policy trends, and political environment

**Public Outreach Process:** Communication tools, forums, participation of homeless individuals, Countywide Summit, and Strategy Team meetings

**Goals and Objectives:** As identified by the Public Outreach Process

**Overall Structure:** Describing how goals can be organized for implementation

The Goals and Objectives are the heart of the 10-Year Strategy Document. They are summarized below.

## 10-Year Strategy Goals and Objectives

<b>Community Action</b>
<b>Goal Statement:</b> The citizens of Butte County will take ownership of the homeless problem by creating a Volunteer Support Network, engaging the community in a public awareness campaign, and supporting formation of a homeless court.
<b>Objectives:</b>
1. Create a Volunteer Support Network to encourage positive interactions among volunteers, and to mentor and assist people that are homeless.
2. Engage the community through a public awareness campaign to educate people about the homeless crisis and put a human face on the issue.
3. Form a Homeless Court that will direct homeless offenders to programs that help them rehabilitate their lives, using an approach of restorative justice rather than punitive justice.
<b>Funding</b>
<b>Goal Statement:</b> The communities of Butte County will identify and develop a sizable, sustainable source of funding for all new and existing programs and services to address homelessness in our region through the North Valley Housing Trust, a Nonprofit Resource Center, and a community-wide Marketing and Education program.

<b>Objectives:</b>
1. Support the North Valley Housing Trust (NVHT), an endowment that will provide a locally generated source of revenue targeted to meet local affordable housing and services needs.
2. Develop a Nonprofit Resource Center to supplement local nonprofit homeless service providers' fundraising efforts, and to provide grant seeking and writing, marketing, and technical assistance free of charge.
3. Implement a community-wide, multi-media marketing and education campaign to harness the concern and energy of the community, dispel myths about homelessness, share the stories of homeless residents (including success stories), and show people how they can become active.
<b>Housing</b>
<b>Goal Statement:</b> Butte County housing and service providers will create safe and secure housing options for homeless persons that address gaps in the homeless "continuum of care" and build community.
<b>Objectives:</b>
1. Institute a Homeless Camp that will provide a safe and secure place for chronically homeless individuals to build community and access services.
2. Develop a Wet Shelter that will provide safe and secure overnight shelter for persons that cannot enter emergency shelters due to sobriety rules.
3. Create a Housing-First Program that will proactively outreach to homeless individuals and immediately place them in a home with comprehensive supportive services.
<b>Services</b>
<b>Goal Statement:</b> Community partners will strive to create a network of services, under one roof, that are quick and easy to access, are coordinated between service providers, offer earlier intervention to break the cycle of homelessness, and accommodate pets in services and shelters.
<b>Objectives:</b>
1. Create a One-Stop Opportunity Center, a place where all homeless individuals and families can go to access a variety of services under one roof.
2. Strengthen and develop Homeless Prevention Programs – prevent episodes of homelessness by providing short-term assistance with rent and utility bills, offer mediation between tenants and property owners to prevent eviction, increase housing stabilization, and make referrals to community-based services.
3. Provide Pet Veterinary and Shelter Services – find ways to accommodate pets in shelters and in our network of services; identify low-cost or no cost veterinary services to ensure the pets are healthy and that vaccinations are current.
<b>Jobs</b>
<b>Goal Statement:</b> Community partners will work together to establish a centralized employment resource center, increase employment programs customized to assist the homeless, and develop social enterprise businesses.
<b>Objectives:</b>
1. Develop a centrally located employment resource center to provide quick and easy access to a network of employment and job training services.
2. Provide job training tailored to the specific needs of homeless people, specifically soft skills training, such as communication, interviewing, teamwork, problem solving and critical thinking, and programs that provide participants with a certificate or a degree after completion.
3. Create social enterprise businesses that generate revenue to support shelters and provide jobs for clients – a "double bottom line" business that gives equal importance to income generation and social services.

# Introduction

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## CoC Overview

The 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness is sponsored by the Butte Countywide Homeless Continuum of Care (Butte CoC). Butte CoC is a network of local homeless services organizations and interested individuals. Membership is open and inclusive of all residents, businesses, organizations and government entities within Butte County that are interested in eliminating homelessness. It is a collaborative effort to move people out of homelessness and into a home in a way that builds self-sufficiency. Experience has shown that this is best done by providing services and housing customized to each individual's unique needs. A continuum of housing programs, from emergency shelters to permanent housing, provide the most appropriate living situation for each individual's situation.

## Accomplishments

Established in 2003, the Continuum of Care works to identify the county's homeless populations, facilitate the coordinated provision of services to the homeless, identify gaps in services, and seek additional resources in addressing unmet need. One of Butte CoC's principle roles is to apply for federal funds. Butte CoC has increased its annual allocation of federal funding from \$101,738 in 2003, to \$580,074 in 2013, and increased the number of federally-funded beds for homeless individuals from 95 in 2003 to 176 in 2013.

Butte CoC has also conducted a Point-In-Time Homeless Count in January of 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2013. The Point-In-Time Count is required for federal funding, and is conducted on the same day that other Continuums of Care conduct counts across the country. Volunteers interview homeless people at shelters, service agencies, and public locations throughout the County throughout one full day to provide a snapshot of homeless characteristics, living conditions, and causes.

In 2012, Butte CoC held its first ever Project Homeless Connect. This event brought together services from all over the county under one roof on one day. Transportation and outreach made it convenient for as many homeless people as possible to attend.

More than 50 different organizations and businesses participated, providing services from hair cuts and free clothes to DMV ID Cards and on-site Social Security registration. The event was attended by about 480 people.

## Sierra Health Foundation Grant

In November of 2012, Butte CoC received a \$20,000 Sierra Health Foundation Grant to fund the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness. The CoC then entered into a contract with the consulting firm Housing Tools to produce a written document to lay out the 10-Year Strategy. The contract required a comprehensive outreach process and series of public workshops to engage communities across Butte County.

## Purpose of the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness

The 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness is a recipe book of solutions. It highlights what the community has prioritized as the most critical actions that it should take to make significant progress over the next 10 years. It is not a detailed strategic plan that assigns responsibilities and step-by-step instructions, nor is it a government policy. Rather, it outlines a unifying vision and means to align goals countywide. This document is a starting point for community dialogue about how we can move forward to address the problem of homelessness. As entities determine what elements they can take on after assessing their capacity, more targeted strategic plans and programs will emerge. This may be the most sensible approach to an issue that is extremely expansive and complex.

A key element of the 10-Year Strategy is an effort to broaden community involvement beyond those currently active in the Butte CoC, and bring new partners to the table. These new partners will bring fresh ideas, and new energy, social networks, and resources to bear on the problem. The Butte CoC is an open network where planning, coordination, and implementation of the sort necessary to address homelessness can take place.

## Overview of the 10-Year Strategy Document

This document aims to provide a better understanding of what is required to realize meaningful solutions to homelessness. It begins by providing some context to the issue, including some of the current characteristics of homeless people, economic trends, the impact of government policy and funding, and relevant political issues. The document then describes the public

pervaded the planning process, and is summarized below.

### **We are a compassionate community.**

Participants voiced a strong desire to care for homeless residents rather than relocate them from the area or leave them alone. The community's compassion was evidenced in the creative and proactive ideas put forth, and concern about the well-being of persons experiencing homelessness.

### **Homelessness affects ALL members of the community.**

Participants conveyed that homelessness is a problem that affects all members of society. Concerns that were raised included impacts on business, safety, government finances, and public health. Much of the conversation centered on how

these issues are interconnected.

### **Let's take ownership of the problem.**

In all of the public meetings, there was a general sense that the community's residents must proactively address homelessness. Many expressed a strong need to raise awareness about the extent of the problem, and its impacts on the rest of society. A number of others agreed that nothing significant could be accomplished without greater engagement from Butte County residents.

*"Each person who is on the street has a story. Some of us have had the blessing to hear these stories and connect with these people. Now when I see a homeless person, I think 'I wonder what their story is?' People need to be educated about this. Every person's situation is different. It enriches our community when we have the opportunity to do that."*

-Participant, Oroville Forum

outreach process that was integral to identifying and prioritizing solutions, here categorized as goals and objectives. The top three objectives for each goal are then described, with salient points on the need for the objective, comparable best practices, available resources, and challenges to overcome. This is followed by an outline of major action steps necessary to achieve the objective. If the 10-Year Strategy is a recipe book of solutions, then this section is a description of ingredients that will bring solutions to life. Tying everything together, Chapter X: Overall Structure, organizes the objectives within a framework to show how they reinforce one another.

## Major Themes

The community consistently voiced some major themes in all of the 10-Year Strategy public meetings. These themes characterized a general sentiment that

*"Not too many people know of all the agencies, churches, and programs that are serving the homeless and what is provided. There's very little cooperation, coordination, and communication. There are also a lot of people who simply do not care about the homeless."*

-Participant, Paradise Forum

# Context

## Characteristics of the Homeless Population

The Butte CoC conducts a Point-In-Time Homeless Census every one to two years in Butte County. On one day in January, more than 150 volunteers fan out across the county and conduct interviews with homeless individuals, going to shelters, soup kitchens, libraries, and government offices, as well as the streets, camping sites, parks, and other public places.

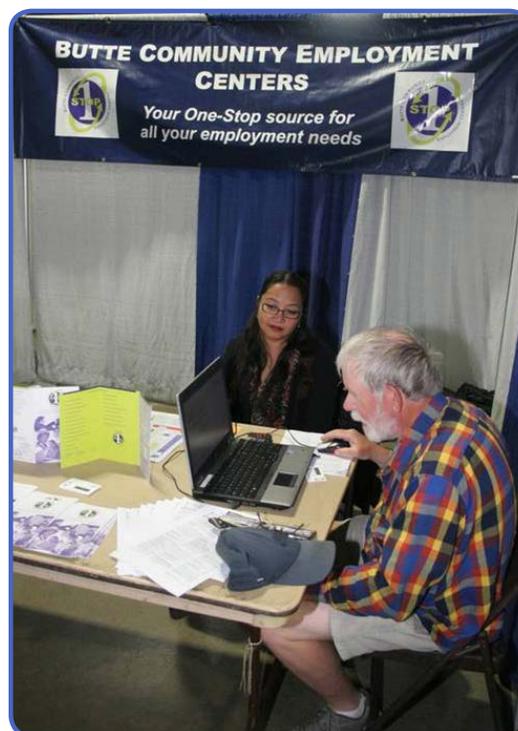
The census provides valuable information about the characteristics of the homeless population. These characteristics include: age; gender; race; family composition; military service; nighttime residence; length of stay in Butte County; length of homelessness; disability status; participation in probation and parole; participation in foster care; reasons for homelessness; barriers to accessing housing; pet ownership; type of income; and education level. The Butte CoC 2013 Point-In-Time Homeless Census & Survey Report is available at [www.butte-housing.com/resources/organizations/butte-county-coc.php](http://www.butte-housing.com/resources/organizations/butte-county-coc.php) or by calling 530.895.4474.

### Below are some key countywide findings from the 2013 Point-In-Time Homeless Census:

- 1,553 homeless individuals were counted in Butte County on the day of the census. This was a 12% decrease from the number of homeless individuals counted on the day of the 2011 census. A possible reason for this decrease may be a result of funding cuts and dwindling resources, which reduced outreach. Another reason for the decrease may be an improvement in the economy and significant reduction in the unemployment rate since 2011.
- 35% of homeless individuals were “chronically homeless,” meaning that they were continuously homeless for longer than one year, or experienced four or more episodes of homelessness in the past three years, and had a disabling condition. This was a significant increase from 18% of homeless individuals surveyed in the 2011 census.
- 17% of homeless respondents reported having children, a 22% increase from the number of

children reported in the 2011 census.

- 37% reported “employment/financial reasons” as the cause of homelessness, a 22% decrease from the 2011 census.
- 55% reported “no job or income” as a barrier to housing, a 27% decrease from 2011 census.
- The most frequently reported living situation was unsheltered (living outdoors) at 31%. About 38% reported either transitional housing for homeless persons, emergency shelter, or substance abuse treatment facility. About 26% reported living with friends or relatives on a temporary basis. This was similar to what was reported in the 2011 census.
- 32% reported having a physical disability. This was a slight decrease to what was reported in the 2011 census (37%).



Employment services were provided at Project Homeless Connect in 2012.

- 23% reported having a mental illness. This was a slight decrease to what was reported in the 2011 census (28%).
- 63% reported having lived in Butte County for five years or longer. This was a slight increase to what was reported in the 2011 census (60%).

**Below are some noteworthy findings that were unique to the geographic locations where homeless individuals were surveyed.**

- The 2013 Point-In-Time Homeless Census counted 804 homeless persons in Chico, which was just over half the total counted for Butte County. This was a decrease of 239 persons (23%) from the 2011 Point-In-Time Homeless Census.
- In Oroville, just over two-thirds of homeless persons reported a physical, developmental, or mental disability. This was higher than any other city and higher than the county as a whole.
- In Paradise, lack of transportation was cited as a barrier to accessing housing for 22% of survey respondents, higher than any other area in the county.
- A higher proportion of homeless persons in Paradise were children than any other area in the county, at 29%.
- In Paradise, 42% of homeless persons reported a physical disability, higher than any other area in the County, and 20% of survey respondents said that physical disability was a barrier to accessing housing.
- Unlike other parts of the county, most of the homeless persons surveyed in Gridley were living with friends or relatives. Also unlike other parts of the county, most homeless persons surveyed cited being forced to relocate from home as the reason for homelessness.

The Point-In-Time Homeless Census has helped answer important questions about homelessness such as, “Who are the homeless in our community?” “Where do they stay?” “Do they have income?” and “What are the causes?” This information is critical to begin understanding what strategies will most effectively end homelessness. The experience of homeless service providers that interact with homeless individuals on a daily basis is another helpful resource. Local surveys and studies, as well as those conducted in other parts of the country, have provided information that can

help correct some common misconceptions about Butte County homelessness in 2014.

**Below are some of the most common misconceptions and salient facts.**

**Myth:** Most homeless people came from outside our area, and are just passing through.

**Fact:** About 63% of homeless persons surveyed in Butte County have lived in Butte County 5 years or longer.

**Myth:** Almost all homeless people are young and single.

**Fact:** About 17% of homeless persons have children, and another 17% of homeless persons are age 55 and over. There are an estimated 264 homeless children in Butte County, by conservative estimates.

**Myth:** All homeless people live on the streets.

**Fact:** About 38% of homeless persons in Butte County live in an emergency shelter, transitional housing, or substance abuse treatment center. About a quarter of homeless persons live with relatives or friends. These arrangements are informal and short-term. Some homeless people live in their cars or campsites outside of town. These living arrangements make them less publicly visible.

**Myth:** Homeless people don’t work.

**Fact:** About 185 homeless individuals in Butte County have regular earned income, and another 135 homeless individuals earn money by recycling. Overall, about one in five homeless persons earns income that is not public assistance or child support.

**Myth:** Homelessness is a lifestyle choice.

**Fact:** The causes of homelessness are myriad and complex, and can include: lack of personal support system, loss of job, lack of affordable housing, inadequate income, debt, divorce, child abuse, domestic violence, family problems, disabilities, substance abuse, criminal record, and natural disaster, among others. Only 11% of homeless individuals surveyed in Butte County cited personal choice as the reason for being homeless.

**Myth:** Nothing is being done to address homelessness in Butte County.

**Fact:** Over the past 5 years, members of the Butte Countywide Homeless Continuum of Care have moved more than 1,500 people out of homelessness into stable housing.

**Myth:** It's too expensive to do anything about the homeless problem.

**Fact:** A 2009 study by the California Economic Roundtable found that the typical public cost for unsheltered individuals is \$34,764 annually in public safety, hospitalization and incarceration, almost five times greater than for their counterparts that were housed in publicly-subsidized supportive housing.

**Myth:** No one knows how to solve the homeless problem.

**Fact:** The success of initiatives that proactively outreach to homeless individuals, immediately house them, and provide supportive services has been well documented. One such program, 100,000 Homes, has moved more than 75,000 homeless persons into stable permanent housing nationwide ([100kHomes.org](http://100kHomes.org)).

## Economic Trends

Economic conditions impact homelessness by driving availability of employment, salaries, and funding for services. This was evidenced by the recent recession, which correlated with a dramatic increase in homelessness in Butte County between 2009 and 2011. The Point-In-Time Homeless Census counted 1,380 homeless persons in 2009 and 1,772 homeless persons in 2011, an increase of 392 persons or 28%. As economic conditions gradually improved, the 2013 Point-In-Time Homeless Census counted 1,553 homeless persons, a decrease of 12% from 2011.

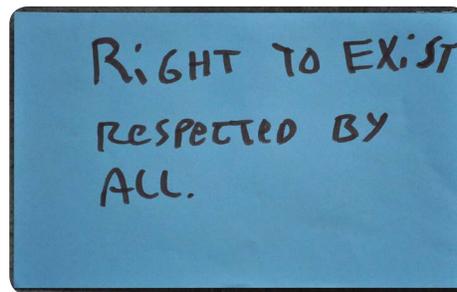
Unemployment grew, nationally, statewide and locally, from 2007 to 2010. Employment in Butte County declined by five percent over this period.

This shot the unemployment rate up to 14 percent in 2010, much higher than the historical average of six to eight percent, and about two percent higher than the state and five percent higher than the national unemployment rate. Since 2010, the Butte County unemployment rate has steadily declined to 9.1% in October of 2013. (California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division)

In terms of income, Butte County per capita incomes increased slowly over a five-year period from \$31,767 in 2007 to \$33,356 in 2011. By comparison, per capita incomes had increased by about the same amount in the previous one year between 2006 and 2007. These per capita incomes are about 30 percent lower than the California State median. Typical of lower income counties, larger portions of income come from retirement/disability benefits, medical benefits and other government payments than for statewide incomes. (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis)

The poverty rate is a measure of the proportion of persons living below the "Federal Poverty Threshold." For 2012, the Federal Poverty Threshold was \$23,283 for a four-person household. The Butte County poverty rate is higher than for the State overall, and unlike the State, has generally increased since 2004. Butte County poverty rates increased from 17% in 2007 to 23% in 2011, before slightly declining to 22% in 2012. The Butte County 2012 poverty rate was five percent higher than the statewide poverty rate. (U.S. Census, 2011 and 2012 American Community Survey)

While unemployment rates rose and incomes stagnated between 2007 and 2010, rents steadily increased. The Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Butte County increased from \$702 in 2007 to \$852 in 2010, and continued to increase in 2012 to \$896. (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) A slowdown in apartment construction between 2007 and 2009, combined with a growing number of renters, many coming out of foreclosure, most likely contributed to a competitive rental market over the last five years despite the economic downturn.



RIGHT TO EXIST  
RESPECTED BY  
ALL.

Community forum participant response to "what is missing?"

## Public Policy Trends

Job losses, stagnant income and rising poverty rates between 2007 and 2011 led to sharp decreases in activities and assets upon which government revenue is dependent—property values, building permits and retail sales. Resulting budget deficits led to funding cuts and significant changes in State fiscal policy as it relates to local governments. Funding cuts to programs that assist low-income people were implemented across all levels of government, including federal, state, county and local.

Overall federal government support for affordable housing has weakened over the last 10 years as it has taken a back seat to other national priorities such as war and tax cuts, followed by efforts to address the recession and budget deficit. Between 2007 and 2010, overall federal support for programs that assist county and local governments fund affordable housing decreased. Then in August of 2011, federal budget sequestration was introduced as part of the Budget Control Act, implementing across-the-board cuts to all federal discretionary programs. This reduced funding for federal housing programs by 8% from the previously reduced 2011 funding levels. These cuts included the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which has been used to fund the Torres Shelter, the Esplanade House and other transitional housing, senior day centers, and low-income child care within Butte County. The cuts have also included Homeless Continuum of Care funds, which fund rental assistance and supportive services for the chronically homeless in Butte County.

One of Governor Brown's signature efforts to eliminate State budget deficits was the elimination of redevelopment agencies. This resulted in the most significant change to the State's affordable housing policy since the early 1980s. Since that time, redevelopment agencies had been required to set aside 20% of their tax increment revenue for the development of affordable housing. As such, it was the principal funding source for almost all affordable housing development within Butte County during that time. Without redevelopment agency funds, localities within Butte County no longer have a stable and predictable funding source for purchasing property and leveraging other funding sources to build affordable housing. In the area of social services, the State has also cut funding for programs that assist populations vulnerable to homelessness, such as

persons with disabilities, foster care graduates and victims of domestic violence.

Beyond the elimination of redevelopment agencies and budget cuts, the State has put in place measures to shift more administrative responsibilities to local governments. These measures have burdened local governments that were already dealing with the fallout of the recession. As a result, local governments have reduced their capacity to administer programs that benefit low-income and homeless residents, and their support for nonprofits that work with these populations on a daily basis.

## Political Environment

As described above, major economic and public policy trends have presented extreme challenges to persons who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless. At the same time, the community is anxious to find solutions to the problem of homelessness. Within the context of these larger trends, this 10-Year Strategy identifies positive developments and local assets that the community can build upon to shape a better future. These opportunities are described below.

**Position to Take Advantage of New Federal and State Policies**— While federal and state support has waned for many traditional funding sources and programs, the Butte CoC can position itself to take advantage of emerging opportunities. One of these potential strategies is the local housing trust fund, further described in this document. It is a vehicle to raise local charitable contributions and investments, and use these to leverage additional federal and state funds. The Butte CoC can capitalize on recently passed State legislation that increases State tax credits and matching grants targeted to housing trust funds and similar entities. In addition, the federal Continuum of Care program appears to have adequately strong political support to endure current budget cuts and possibly expand in the future. The Butte CoC can align its goals now so that it can derive sustainable benefit from this program.

**Expand on Our Foundations of Success**—Despite economic and political challenges, housing and homeless service providers in Butte County have made significant progress over the last 10 years. For example, Butte CoC members have moved more than 1,500 individuals out of homelessness over the past five years. Butte County organizations have developed

effective systems for building self-sufficiency for homeless individuals and effecting sustainable life changes. These systems can be expanded to serve more people in need. As far as affordable housing production, 333 units have been built in Chico alone over the past five years, in addition to the new Catalyst shelter and transitional housing for victims of domestic violence, and an expansion to the Torres Shelter. Most of these units are enriched with supportive services and are located in neighborhoods with transportation, parks, jobs and amenities. These accomplishments demonstrate how housing and service providers are able to achieve impressive

results through open collaboration and effective coordination, notwithstanding limited resources.

**Build on Our Local Human Capital**—Butte County entities that assist homeless persons are strongly supported by the community, through charitable donations and a spirit of volunteerism. This culture of compassion will be an enduring asset if the 10-Year Strategy to Homelessness harnesses it to produce results. This compassion was further demonstrated by the level of community involvement and interest in the public outreach process described in the next chapter.

- *We are a compassionate community.*
- *Homelessness affects ALL members of the community.*
- *Let's take ownership of the problem.*

# Public Outreach Process / Methodology

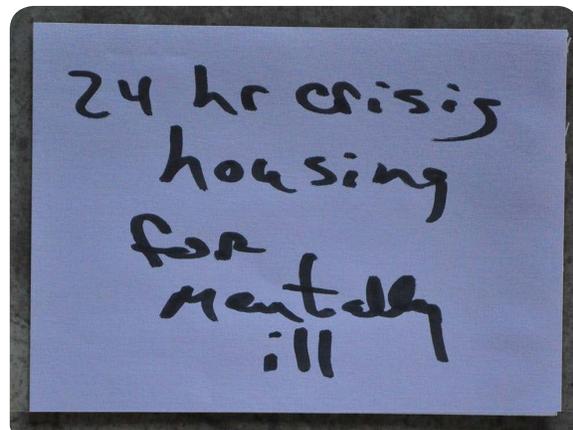
## Overview and Major Themes

In designing the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness in Butte County, the Butte County CoC wanted to ensure that we involved community residents and generated as much input as possible from them. To do this, we implemented a multi-faceted approach that involved everything from grassroots flyer posting and personal phone calls and emails, to regular email blasts, social media, and generation of newspaper articles and announcements.

We spent considerable energy developing a comprehensive list of stakeholders, trying to ensure that the voices of our community, including policy makers, social service organizations, faith based organizations, business owners, law enforcement, interested citizens, homeless residents themselves, and others had the opportunity to hear and be heard.

Based on this careful outreach, attendance at most of the public outreach forums, summit, and strategy team meetings was high. Over a 5-month period, we held 10 public meetings that took the form of community forums, focus groups targeting homeless residents and service providers, a Countywide Summit, and strategy team working groups. The following is a breakdown of each public outreach meeting and attendance:

Not only did this range and breadth of public meetings generate hundreds of ideas about the causes of and solutions to homelessness, but it facilitated connections and networking among residents and sectors that may not have happened otherwise. This resulted in a greater level of understanding of the needs and issues, and the sharing of ideas and solutions that are being implemented, and ideas and solutions that could be implemented in the future.



Community forum participant response to "what is missing?"

Meeting	Date	Location
Chico Forum	7/11/13	1200 Park Ave., Chico (senior affordable housing complex, community room)
Oroville/Gridley Forum	7/18/13	The Hope Center, Oroville
Paradise Forum	7/31/13	Family Resource Center, Paradise
Focus Group	8/8/13	The Hope Center, Oroville
Focus Group	8/9/13	Paradise Lutheran Church, Paradise
Focus Group	8/9/13	The Torres Shelter, Chico
Focus Group	8/12/13	The Jesus Center, Chico
Countywide Summit	8/15/13	The Arc of Butte County's Arc Pavilion, Chico
Strategy Team Meeting 1	10/2/13	Housing Authority of the County of Butte, Chico
Strategy Team Meeting 2	11/6/13	

## Contact List

The master contact list, which included email addresses and some phone numbers, grew from 208 to 268 stakeholders from the first email blast in July to the final blast in November. The purpose of the contact list was to invite the community to attend the public meetings and to reach the greatest number of interested individuals. The Butte CoC strove to include representatives of the following stakeholder categories, including many who agreed to inform their own lists of constituents and email lists:

- CoC Network
- Greater Chico Homeless Task Force
- Service Organizations (nonprofit)
- Government Service Agencies
- Greater Oroville Homeless Coalition
- SHOR Paradise
- Gridley community
- Veterans
- Homeless residents
- Clean and Safe Chico

- Chambers of Commerce
- Board of Supervisors
- Downtown Chico Business Association
- City Staff
- City Councilmembers
- Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Stakeholder List
- CARD
- Hospitals and health care providers
- CSU Chico
- Butte College
- Churches/Interfaith Council
- Law Enforcement
- Latino, African American, and Hmong Cultural Centers
- Local Media (for outreach to the entire community)

## Communication Tools

**Email Blasts:** The online mass mailing tool Mad Mimi was used to design and send blast emails to the master list. Users could unsubscribe at any time, though we only had three unsubscribers out of 268 addresses. We had an average 31% open rate on a total of nine email blasts. The blasts gave us the opportunity to keep the community informed of the status of our work and reminded them about upcoming public meetings.

**Flyers:** Flyers announcing the public forums, focus groups, and Countywide Summit were created and placed throughout Butte County, including at homeless shelters, homeless and social service providers, the Housing Authority and Butte County Behavioral Health, and the Chico Chamber of Commerce.

**Social Media:** A Facebook page for the 10-Year Strategy was created and information about the public meetings was posted there. Though the community was invited to like the page and receive updates, a very limited number actually did so, and this method was not continued.

**Mainstream Media:** Local media, specifically Chico's daily newspaper the Enterprise Record, the weekly Chico News & Review, the Paradise Post, and the Gridley Herald, were on our master email list and were invited to every public meeting. We also sent press releases about the forums and summit to these outlets. The Enterprise Record assigned a staff



Sample Email Blast.

person to the 10-Year Strategy, who attended some of the meetings and published three articles about the process, and included announcements about the meetings.

**Personal Communication** (email, phone, etc.): To ensure participation by as many stakeholders as possible, the Butte CoC made personal phone calls and emails to encourage participation, specifically for the Strategy Team Meetings, described in more detail below.

**Collaboration with Homeless Task Forces:** In advance of the forums, a member of the consulting team attended Paradise and Chico Homeless Task Force meetings to invite its members to participate and share information about the upcoming events. A representative of the Oroville Homeless Task Force is a Butte County CoC Council member and regularly informs the OHTF about upcoming 10-Year Strategy meetings. In addition, Homeless Task Force members are included in the overall e-mail blast list and receive updates on a regular basis.

**Forums:** The goal of the forums was to understand the causes of homelessness and what resources are missing to address these causes from the perspective of Butte County's four largest community centers: Chico, Oroville, Gridley, and Paradise. Three forums took place in Chico, Oroville (with outreach to Gridley), and Paradise. The two-hour meetings consisted of a brief background discussion of the CoC and the 10-Year Strategy, followed by an innovative "Sticky Wall" processes in which the facilitator asked participants to answer in a few words two questions: "What are



the causes of homelessness?" and "What resources are missing to address causes of homelessness?" using 5.5" x 8.5" sheets of colored paper. These sheets were then posted to the Sticky Wall so that the participants could read them. As a large group we organized and categorized the responses, and then grouped them into common themes.

## Major themes that emerged from the outreach process:

### Causes of Homelessness:

- Lack of Public Awareness
- Health Challenges / Disability / Behavioral Health and/or Addiction Issues
- Financial and Economic Challenges / Institutionalized Barriers
- High Cost of Housing
- Hopelessness
- Lack of Positive Support System / Family Challenges / Social Barriers
- Jail Releases
- Personal Choice

### Resources that are Missing:

- Quick, Effective Support
- Affordable, Accessible, and Alternative Shelters and Housing Options
- Community Ownership, Empathy, and Action
- Funding for Services
- Support Services
- Job Training and Economic Opportunities

## Outreach to Homeless Individuals

Although we strove to conduct the forums at locations where homeless individuals obtain services in our communities (in Chico the forum was near the Jesus Center, which is a major food and service provider for the homeless population and in Oroville the forum was at the Hope Center, a multi-service provider that also provides meals) representation at the forums by homeless residents was limited. Therefore, we scheduled four focus groups at shelters and service centers during the meal services. Working with the staff of these centers, facilitators set up a table with the two main questions (What are the causes of homelessness? What resources are missing?) written on large signs. As people came in for meals they were invited to talk to the facilitator and write down their responses to the two questions on the 5.5" x 8.5" cards. These cards were collected and the responses were added to those from the forums.

This was an excellent opportunity to hear from homeless residents about what they believe are the causes of homelessness, as well as resources that are missing. Although many of the responses overlapped with what we heard in the forums, there were some differences. Basic needs, such as a place to take a shower, lack of transportation to obtain services, lack of services and programs for families and children, and lack of options for pets, were just some of the critical needs expressed by homeless residents.

## Countywide Summit

On August 15 we held our Countywide Summit at the Arc of Butte County's Arc Pavilion in Chico. Based on the Forums and Focus Groups, the Butte CoC grouped the missing resources into five major categories: Services, Housing, Jobs, Funding, and Community Action. An overview of these categories, with the most common responses listed, were shared with the Summit participants. We then asked participants to think about what they would like their communities to look like in 10 years. What services and outcomes would they like to see in response to the problem of homelessness in our community? Each participant was asked to choose three of the categories and write down their future vision for each.

This process was at once hopeful, visionary, and creative. The responses included everything from a



Debbie Villasenor, James Coles, and Meagan Meloy posting community members' responses on the "sticky wall."

centralized community resource center that provides a one-stop-shop of services and a universal, reliable funding mechanism for services and housing, to "foster sponsors" of homeless residents and a volunteer network. The responses were all posted on the Sticky Wall and participants were invited to come to the wall to read them. Several were also read aloud. The meeting concluded with every participant filling out a sign up card for participation in the upcoming strategy team meetings.

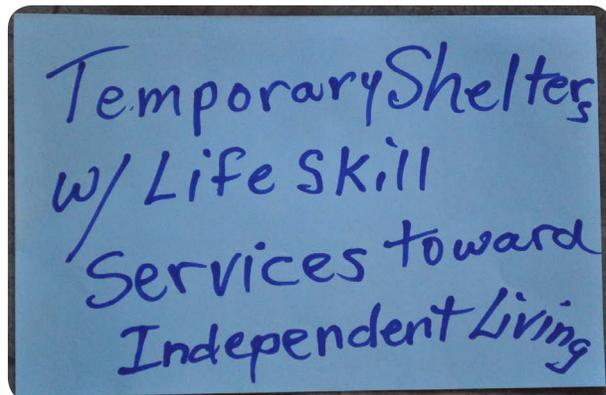
## Strategy Team Meetings

Five teams were created based on the five categories of Services, Housing, Jobs, Funding, and Community Action. Participation in the strategy teams was robust, with teams of between six and 12 participants. The job of the strategy teams was to rank the various proposed solutions to homelessness/outcomes developed at the Summit based on meeting the greatest needs. Following the ranking process the teams chose their top three strategies to further develop. They identified available resources already being implemented locally, best practices and models being implemented elsewhere, challenges to implementation, time frame for implementation, and specific action steps needed for implementation. These strategies form the basis for the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness in Butte County.

# 10-Year Strategy Goals

The public outreach process resulted in identification of goals and objectives in the subject areas of community action, funding, housing, services and jobs. The next chapter includes an overarching goal for each subject area, and three top objectives for each goal. For each objective, sections detail: how it works; the need for it; an applicable best practice; available resources; challenges to implementation; and action steps.

It is important to note that this 10-Year Strategy document does not prescribe who will implement the objectives, nor does it spell out step-by-step instructions. To do so would prematurely restrict the potential collaborations and creative ideas that evolve through relationships and dialogue. Instead, this document is a starting point for more focused discussion and action on homelessness. The goals and objectives are intended to present a recipe book of solutions. The community has identified these as the right ingredients for the job of ending homelessness in Butte County. How and when the recipes are used will be determined by circumstance and context.



# Community Action

## Community Action Goal Statement

The citizens of Butte County will take ownership of the homeless problem by creating a Volunteer Support Network, engaging the community in a public awareness campaign, and supporting formation of a homeless court.

## Top Three Objectives

The Community Action Strategy Team reviewed all the solutions put forth in the Countywide Homeless Summit. The three solutions that were prioritized for the 10-Year Strategy were chosen because they addressed the greatest perceived needs, and because they could build on the momentum of other efforts that have been initiated in recent years.

1. Create a Volunteer Support Network to encourage positive interactions among volunteers, and to mentor and assist people that are homeless.
2. Engage the community through a public awareness campaign to educate people about the homeless crisis and put a human face on the issue.
3. Form a Homeless Court that will direct homeless offenders to programs that help them rehabilitate their lives, using an approach of restorative justice rather than punitive justice

*1. Create a Volunteer Support Network to encourage positive interactions among volunteers, and to mentor and assist people that are homeless.*

## How it Works

The Volunteer Support Network provides opportunities for community members to make a



difference in the lives of people that are homeless. It primarily does this by matching volunteer groups (i.e. church congregations, civic organizations, businesses) with a homeless individual or family. The volunteer group offers its many various talents to assist the homeless individual or family increase self-sufficiency, with the direction and assistance of a professional case manager. These talents may include life skills mentoring, job training, resume building, financial management, medical services, dental work, tutoring, child care or legal assistance. Equally important, the volunteer group provides emotional support and encouragement. The volunteer group may also donate items such as furniture or clothing. In addition to mentoring homeless individuals, the Volunteer Support Network also offers ways for volunteers to share experiences and support one another through coordination meetings, activities, newsletters, and a blog or website. The network will be most effective if it is housed in a physical location, such as the One-Stop Opportunity Center, described in Chapter VIII: Services. The desired outcomes follow.

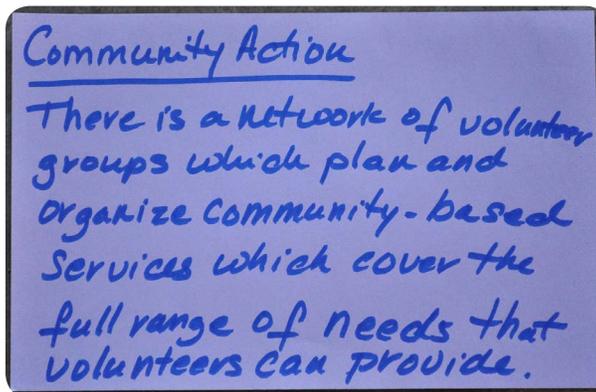
- Make it easy and fun for community members to volunteer.
- Facilitate one-on-one interactions and formation of positive relationships between volunteers and people that are homeless.
- Work with homeless service providers to further their impact.

## Need

The Community Action Strategy Team clearly voiced the greatest support for this objective among the other solutions discussed. All participants agreed that there is a great need and benefit to helping community members become directly involved in solving homelessness. This yields a number of reciprocal benefits to volunteers and people that are homeless. First, it empowers community members by making it easier to volunteer and become part of the solution. Second, it provides needed human capital for organizations that have limited resources. Third, when people interact with homeless individuals in a productive way it deepens their understanding of the issue, and their commitment to addressing the problem.

## Best Practice

**Imagine LA:** Imagine LA is a volunteer mentorship program that was initiated by the faith community. The founder, Rev. Dr. Mark Brewer, had a powerful vision: “There are 8,000 homeless families in Los Angeles, and over 8,000 faith communities - imagine if each of these faith communities partnered with a family and aided them in permanently exiting homelessness and achieving self-sufficiency?” Since the program began in 2007, 29 congregations have participated in Volunteer Teams. These teams are matched with families exiting homelessness, most of whom are single-parent households. As guided by Imagine LA staff, each Volunteer Team and family progresses through a two-year program with three goals for the family: maintain housing, attain self-sufficiency, and ensure that every family member thrives. The Volunteer Team includes a one-to-one mentor for each family member over age six and a Budget Mentor, in addition to other volunteers that help with tutoring, childcare, meal-planning, and many other needs. Since 2007, Imagine LA has assisted 53 families, with 10 families graduating from the program. Hundreds of volunteers have donated their time. More information can be found at [www.imaginelas.org](http://www.imaginelas.org) or by calling 323.944.0210.



Community Action  
There is a network of volunteer groups which plan and organize community-based services which cover the full range of needs that volunteers can provide.

## Resources

Butte County organizations have initiated similar efforts to Imagine LA. Community Outreach Strategy Team members expressed that it will be important to build on these efforts to coordinate a countywide volunteer network for greater impact.

**Jesus Center Street Pastors:** In Chico, the Jesus Center has successfully engaged a large number of volunteers from the community in its many activities. Many community members that have become engaged in the homeless issue first got involved by serving meals there. One of the activities that directly connect volunteers with people that are homeless is the Street Pastors program. Modeled after a successful program in England, the Street Pastors walk the streets of Chico in teams to meet and build relationships with homeless individuals and others in need. There are currently 36 volunteers participating. At least one group of six goes out every Friday and Saturday night. With this experience, the Jesus Center staff can share what they have learned about energizing volunteers around the homeless issue.

**Chico Stewardship Network Downtown Ambassadors:** The Chico Stewardship Network engages citizens in effecting positive change in their community. They do this through a number of different efforts that bring people together around issues of common concern. One of these efforts is improving the

quality of life and safety in downtown Chico. This led to the formation of the Downtown Ambassadors program. Volunteer Ambassadors circulate in the downtown area to promote good will and safety. They do this by providing information to visitors, resources to businesses, eyes and ears for public safety, and referral to services for people experiencing homelessness. This initiative provides opportunities for collaboration and information sharing on public engagement.

**Volunteer Training Institute:** This is a new organization in Chico that is being formed to train volunteers and place them with local nonprofits. This

will prepare volunteers to make a greater impact in the community, and expand nonprofits' capacity. It will also help Chico residents find a way to contribute their talents to the community. They will have better information on what initiatives match their interests and skills, and become more prepared to make an impact. This effort complements key goals of the Volunteer Support Network. With aligned objectives, there may be opportunities for the Volunteer Training Institute to partner with entities that are implementing the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness.

**Greater Oroville Homeless Coalition:** The Greater Oroville Homeless Coalition has provided an entryway for many citizens to serve the community. This was evidenced by the strong participation of Greater Oroville Homeless Coalition members in the 10-Year Strategy community meetings. The coalition primarily consists of volunteers, many of whom meet one-on-one with homeless individuals to assess their needs and provide whatever assistance necessary to improve their situation. The base of operations for this volunteerism is the Hope Center, where homeless

individuals can receive meals and clothing, and meet with volunteer mentors that counsel with them. This is another resource that will strengthen the Volunteer Support Network.

## Challenges

There is a deep reservoir of enthusiasm and good will in Butte County that will be the foundation for the Volunteer Support Network's success. Therefore, it is not anticipated that a lack of volunteers will be a problem. The greatest challenge facing the Volunteer Support Network is finding the means for countywide logistical coordination. This will require time and money to create the infrastructure and develop the relationships necessary for it to function. Fortunately, there is a strong culture of collaboration among nonprofits and volunteers in the area, as exemplified by the work of the Butte CoC, the Greater Oroville Homeless Coalition, the Greater Chico Homeless Task Force, and the efforts described in the Resources section above.

## Action Steps

Major action steps required for Volunteer Support Network implementation follow.

**Step 1—** Identify a coordinator. An entity with a countywide footprint and relationships will need to act as coordinator. The coordinating entity may be the Volunteer Training Institute, or a new entity supported by a group of organizations that have successfully worked with volunteers.

**Step 2—** Form nonprofit partnerships. Identify and enter into working agreements with nonprofits that can refer homeless individuals and families to volunteer groups. The nonprofits should also be able to provide some support and guidance to volunteers. The level of volunteer support will depend on the nonprofit's resources and Volunteer Support Network financial assistance.

**Step 3—** Establish Volunteer Gateways in each major city. These locations will most likely be service centers that are centralized, accessible and familiar to volunteers. Preferably they will be homeless service centers, such as the Opportunity Center proposed in Chapter VIII: Services. This will provide a place for volunteers to register, receive training, meet other volunteers, and engage with homeless persons.

**Step 4—** Develop coordination tools. The program will need to connect volunteer groups with homeless individuals as efficiently as possible. This will involve procedures, screening standards and an orientation program. Volunteer coordinators will be assigned to direct these processes. The program would benefit from an interactive website and mobile application that notifies volunteer groups of mentorship opportunities, and provides other information online.

**Step 5—** Develop an outreach campaign. A comprehensive campaign to find volunteers and donors will be key to the Volunteer Support Network's success. This will include marketing materials, such as brochures, promotional videos and advertising, and venues, such as the Volunteer Gateways, a website and special events. The future growth of the program will depend on steadily increasing volunteer participation, as positive experiences are shared with other community members.

2. *Engage the community through a public awareness campaign to educate people about the homeless crisis and put a human face on the issue.*

## How it Works

The public awareness campaign will elevate the community's consciousness about the need to end homelessness. This can best be achieved by helping people to get to know homeless individuals as people, and not statistics. It will be an effort to put a face on the issue. This will in turn increase empathy, compassion, respect and care toward homeless people, and help the community unify around the issue. The campaign will communicate four central messages:

- Homeless individuals are valued community members, and each has talents to contribute to society.
- Each homeless person is unique, and cannot be fit into broad stereotypes.
- Eliminating homelessness has many community benefits.
- There are solutions to homelessness.

The central messages will be communicated through a variety of vehicles, including: print, television and radio advertising; social media; websites; brochures; and special events. A special event suggested by a Community Action Strategy Team member was a "Black Tie Event" fundraiser, in which formerly homeless person would be invited to sit at each dinner table unannounced. As the evening progresses, attendees would learn the special guests' stories and learn from their experiences. This could be combined with a slide show, video and speakers. Through each of these campaign mediums, consistent messaging and design will magnify the central messages, boosted by a collaborative outreach effort from service organizations, homeless coalitions and civic groups.

## Need

A consistent theme of the 10-Year Strategy community meetings was the need to encourage positive

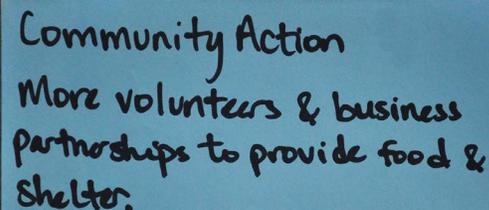
community engagement with the homeless issue. This is an underlying issue that pervades a multitude of issues addressed in this document, from public support for services that assist homeless people, to social isolation and segregation. Participants expressed that there is a great need for general awareness and education on the issue. This includes an understanding of the characteristics of homeless people, barriers to securing stable housing, the connection between homelessness and public policy, effective strategies to end homelessness, and a dispelling of myths. Participants also saw great value in helping the public get to know homeless individuals as people that they can relate to and for whom they can feel compassion.

## Best Practice

**Homeforall:** Homeforall is a public awareness campaign to inspire community members to contribute to solutions that prevent and end homelessness. Homeforall does not espouse a particular solution to the problem of homelessness. Instead, Homeforall engages in open dialogue about homelessness in Marin as the first important step in finding community solutions that work. Homeforall provides opportunities for all members of the community to make a difference in ending homelessness, including: businesses, civic groups, students, seniors and teachers. Individuals are connected with organizations that will help them get involved. Homeforall has a Speakers Bureau that visits interested groups to give presentations about homelessness and what the community can do about it.

Their motto: Participate. Contribute. Motivate. Organize. Visit. Volunteer. Report. Rally. Fundraise. Inspire. Advocate. Share. Educate. Serve. Support. Promote. Employ. Communicate. Help. Inform. Act.

More information can be found at [www.homeforallmarin.org](http://www.homeforallmarin.org).



Community Action  
More volunteers & business  
partnerships to provide food &  
shelter.

## Resources

Other objectives of the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness and existing coordination networks will assist the public awareness campaign. These are described below.

**Volunteer Support Network:** The public awareness campaign and Volunteer Support Network will work synergistically. Each objective will help to achieve the other's desired outcomes. Both initiatives have an outreach campaign that can share resources and strategies. Both initiatives will require coordination with the same service providers. Volunteers will help to raise awareness and share their experiences through the campaign. In turn, the campaign will spread the word about volunteer opportunities.

**North Valley Housing Trust (NVHT):** This initiative is described in more detail in Chapter VI: Funding. NVHT is a local housing trust fund that generates revenues to house the homeless. Its aim is to provide resources to local housing and service providers so they can expand their reach. A key part of the NVHT growth strategy is outreach to solicit community contributions. This effort can be coordinated with the public awareness campaign to offer a way for community members to assist through financial contributions.

**Established Collaborative Networks:** Butte County has strong, cooperative coalitions that work together to achieve common goals. In regard to the homeless issue, these include the Butte CoC, the Greater Oroville Homeless Coalition and the Greater Chico Homeless Task Force. The effectiveness of these networks has been demonstrated with Project Homeless Connect, the Point-In-Time Homeless Census and the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness. In addition, many civic groups have committed time and resources to address homelessness, including the Chico Stewardship Network, the Chico Area Interfaith Council, the Chico Peace and Justice Center, and others. These networks can be drawn upon to coordinate the public awareness campaign, and share success stories of those that have moved out of homelessness.

## Challenges

The primary challenge for the public outreach campaign will be raising the funds necessary to operate it. For this reason, implementation of this objective should be closely coordinated with other outreach efforts such as the Volunteer Support Network and North Valley Housing Trust to economize time and money. The primary funding sources for outreach campaigns are foundations, organizational dues and community donations.

## Action Steps

Below are some major action steps that would be involved in setting up the public awareness campaign.

**Step 1—** Develop messaging. Ask service and housing providers, citizens, and political and business leaders what the central messages of the campaign should be, and how the messages should be conveyed. Reach general consensus after broad input.

**Step 2—** Raise funds. Identify and solicit funding sources to support the campaign.

**Step 3—** Hire a marketing consultant. A marketing consultant will give the campaign proven strategies and a professional and polished look.

**Step 4—** Develop branding. With the help of the marketing consultant and graphic designers, develop branding that includes a logo, typeface, artwork and photography. The branding should be consistent across all communication mediums.

**Step 5—** Lay out a schedule and strategy. A campaign coordinator will need to lay out a schedule and strategy prior to launching the campaign. This will consider the appropriate timing of press releases, website launches, advertisements and special events

3. *Form a Homeless Court that will direct homeless offenders to programs that help them rehabilitate their lives, using an approach of restorative justice rather than punitive justice.*

## How it Works

When a homeless person is charged with a minor crime, a Homeless Court provides options that will help him or her build self-sufficiency and stability. Minor crimes can include traffic tickets, jaywalking, sleeping in public places, illegal use of shopping carts, possession of an open container of alcohol in public, obstructing traffic on the sidewalk, or sleeping on a bus bench. The Homeless Court option is usually not made available for major felonies. Homeless offenders can expunge these charges off their records if they actively participate in rehabilitative services for a minimum period of time. This allows the court system to collaborate with service providers to find long-term solutions, rather than hand out punishments that hamper rehabilitation.

## Need

Some homeless persons often cycle in and out of the criminal justice system in a way that only lessens their ability to progress to a stable living situation. Fines and debts compound and are unable to be repaid. Prison terms dislocate and segregate individuals from society, making it difficult to integrate when they get out. Homeless Courts are a way to put homeless individuals back on a more productive path. Many communities throughout California have implemented such systems. One of these systems is described below.

## Best Practice

The Los Angeles County Homeless Court helps homeless individuals clear tickets and warrants for minor offenses. The individual is informed of this option, and can choose to apply for participation. A case manager is assigned to the applicant to determine eligibility and review options. To be eligible, the offense cannot involve a victim, a weapon, or possession or sale of drugs, and the applicant cannot have any outstanding

felony warrants. Applicants complete a minimum of 90 days of continuous, satisfactory participation in a rehabilitative program. At the end of the participation period, the applicant reports to the court on progress. If the application complies with the program rules, the applicant can have the charges cleared from his or her record. The program is set up so that the participant will continue to work with service providers after charges are cleared. More information can be found at [www.ladpss.org/dpss/grow/homeless\\_court.cfm](http://www.ladpss.org/dpss/grow/homeless_court.cfm). Similar programs have also been implemented in Contra Costa County ([cchealth.org/homeless/court.php](http://cchealth.org/homeless/court.php) or ph: 925.313.7700) and Alameda County ([www.svdnp-alameda.org/how-we-help/community-center/homeless-court.html](http://www.svdnp-alameda.org/how-we-help/community-center/homeless-court.html) or ph: 510.877.9203).

## Resources

Two local efforts have begun to address the criminal justice issue as it applies to homelessness. These are described below.

**Clean and Safe Chico:** Clean and Safe Chico is a collaboration of businesses and nonprofits that have come together to improve safety and livability, primarily in the downtown area. One of this group's initiatives is a diversion program that would provide supportive services to minor offenders in place of citations. The diversion program employs the same philosophy as a homeless court, and connects homeless persons to service providers. A homeless court can work with Clean and Safe Chico, and other similar groups, to set up an alternative criminal justice system for homeless individuals.

**Butte County Forest Program:** The Butte County Courts operated a homeless court program for a short time. This was called the "Forest Program." Unfortunately, because of funding cuts, this program was dropped. However, the concept is not new to the Butte County Courts and forethought has been invested into how such a program can work.

## Challenges

It requires a substantial amount of time and effort to make changes in the criminal justice system. This will require the sustained efforts of people that work within the court system, and expertise from judges and attorneys that can contribute their knowledge. However, proven best practices are in place to borrow from, and similar work has already been done locally.

## Action Steps

Below are key action steps necessary to make the public awareness campaign happen.

**Step 1**— Present the homeless court concept to County leaders. Share best practices and outcomes from other California counties.

**Step 2**— Form a partnership with the Butte County Court System. This partnership will obviously be critical. Strong commitment from the County, from the Board of Supervisors to administrators, will make the homeless court possible.

**Step 3**— Form partnerships between the Butte County Court System and service providers. The program will only be successful with the full involvement of service providers. Determine if courts case managers are necessary, how they will be funded, and how they will coordinate between parties.

**Step 4**— Draft, approve and implement policies and procedures.

# Funding

## Funding Goal Statement

The communities of Butte County will identify and develop a sizable, sustainable source of funding for all new and existing programs and services to address homelessness in our region through the North Valley Housing Trust, a Nonprofit Resource Center, and a community-wide Marketing and Education program.

## Rationale for Top Three Objectives

The funding strategy team was tasked with addressing the funding ideas and themes developed at the countywide Summit and to choose the top three objectives that would have the most impact in our region. The first step was to review the ideas raised and to brainstorm additional ideas, and in some cases to flesh out broad ideas into more specific, practical solutions.

The best way to achieve sustainable funding for any endeavor is to seek and secure multiple income sources. The funding team looked beyond the traditional sources, such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which is the largest source of housing and other homeless services funding available to communities. The most diverse and broadest of income sources is through individuals. The Butte County community has shown over and over again that it is able to come together and raise private funds for critical community programs and services (an example is the North Valley Community Foundation's annual Annie B. fundraising drive, which in 2013 raised more than \$1.3 million from local individuals for nonprofits in Butte County). This is not to say that government and foundation funding is not needed; these sources must also be part of the mix, but they should not be relied upon as the main or only option.

Motivating individuals to give, and setting up systems for them to do so, is the underlying rationale for the top three objectives identified by the funding strategy team: the North Valley Housing Trust, a Nonprofit Resource Center, and a community-wide Marketing

and Education program. Encouraging individuals to give through a local fund that will disperse funding for housing and services is one of the ways that individuals are empowered to give in a way that feels responsible (i.e., "redirecting generosity" from giving cash to people who are panhandling). Many communities have implemented redirecting campaigns with success.

## Objectives

### 1. North Valley Housing Trust

## How It Works

The North Valley Housing Trust (NVHT) is a locally generated source of revenue targeted to meet local affordable housing and services needs. It is an endowment that provides tax benefits to donors and will provide a flexible, renewable source of funding as it grows.

NVHT funds will be used to fill gaps in the continuum of services that move people from homelessness to independent living, with the mission of building self-sufficiency. Funds will be provided by contract to local housing and service providers. Initial funding priorities are listed below:

- Proactive outreach to homeless individuals
- Housing and rental assistance
- Case management and supportive services

## Need

Funding is needed not just for affordable housing, but also for wrap-around services such as education, vocational training, and employment, mental health, child care, transportation, and other services. Currently available funding sources in Butte County are not meeting the need. Federal and state grants, though continuously applied for, are competitive and not dependable.

## Best Practices

The NVHT is modeled after several already successful housing trust funds in other communities, including the San Luis Obispo County Housing Trust Fund and the City of Boise CATCH (Charitable Assistance to Community's Homeless) program. In the last 10 years, the San Luis Obispo program, through support by local governments, banks, businesses, foundations, and individuals, and has provided more than \$7 million in financing to create 218 affordable units. The CATCH program, a collaboration between the City of Boise, the United Way, local churches, and local businesses, begun just two years ago in 2012, has housed more than 100 families with roughly 85% of participants paying their own rent after six months of assistance. The NVHT, initiated in 2012, is studying these programs as it continues to develop.

## Resources

The NVHT is already in development and as of January 2014 it is on target for obtaining its first major investments from local banks through Assembly Bill 32 – the COIN tax credit program, which provides a substantial tax benefit for investors in housing trust

funds. The NVHT will also be applying for matching funds through a special State program made possible by another newly passed bill – AB 532 – enabling it to double its local investments. The goal is to place \$1 million in the endowment in 2014. The NVHT is currently housed under the fiscal sponsorship of the North Valley Community Foundation, though it is seeking its own 501(c)(3) status in 2014. Anyone in the community is encouraged to provide a tax-deductible donation to the NVHT ([www.nvht.org](http://www.nvht.org) or 530.513.3116).

## Challenges

As a new entity, garnering start up funding is always challenging. In addition, a deadline exists for State matching funds, requiring that the NVHT raise a minimum of \$500,000 within the next few months. One of the NVHT's challenges is also in raising awareness about the Fund among the Butte County community in order to obtain investments to grow the endowment. Additionally, the endowment must be substantial enough in size before annual income from dividends is able to effectively address homelessness in Butte County.

## Action Steps

The community must ensure that the NVHT will become a viable source of revenue for housing and services for the homeless population as well as prevention of homelessness. To do this, the fund must receive substantial investment from all sources, great and small. Increasing the fund's visibility through a public outreach and marketing campaign is a must, and needs volunteer support to make this happen.

The NVHT has developed a Business Plan with the following Action Steps aimed at growing the Fund:

**Step 1**— Establish NVCF account and seek contributions. Establish initial account with North Valley Community Foundation (NVCF). Work with NVCF to invite financial contributions from local businesses, civic groups, churches and individuals.

**Step 2**— Offer State tax credits to COIN investors. Use 3CORE's Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) designation to offer state tax credits to COIN investors, such as banks and insurance companies.

**Step 3**— Convene a Startup Board to establish policies, procedures, and budget.

**Step 4**— Raise funds to qualify for matching State grant. Raise \$500,000 as necessary to provide a local match for a \$500,000 grant from the State Local Housing Trust Fund Program, to capitalize the NVHT with \$1 million.

**Step 5**— Apply for a \$100,000 CDFI capacity building grant from the U.S. Department of Treasury.

**Step 6**— Provide loans and grants to community-based organizations for development of affordable housing and supportive services to assist persons who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.

## 2. Nonprofit Resource Center

### How It Works

A Nonprofit Resource Center can be an efficient method for supplementing local nonprofit homeless service providers' fundraising efforts, as well as provide grant seeking and writing, marketing, and technical assistance to these nonprofits free of charge.

### Need

Local homeless service providers' resources are stretched thin. Most do not have development directors or full time fundraisers on staff, and executive directors are tasked with running the organization and raising all of the funding required to keep the doors open, provide services, and somehow grow to meet additional needs.

### Best Practices

Resource centers exist in larger urban communities, such as the Nonprofit Resource Center in Sacramento ([www.nprcenter.org](http://www.nprcenter.org) or 916.285.1840), which provides some services, such as board of directors and executive training, grant writing training, consulting services, and information. CompassPoint ([www.compasspoint.org](http://www.compasspoint.org) or 510.318.3755) is another similar nonprofit training entity, based in Oakland, which provides workshops, conferences, consulting, coaching, and other resources. Though these entities provide models, they are not local and do not provide the range of direct service, at no cost, that are needed in Butte County.

The North Valley Community Foundation (NVCF) provides some excellent services, such as fiscal sponsorship and support as an incubator for new nonprofits, hosting of the North Valley Nonprofit Council, which has quarterly meetings on nonprofit leadership, and the Annie B's Community Drive annual fundraiser. The NVCF is a possible entity to take on the role as a Nonprofit Resource Center.

Yet another model is the provision of services to nonprofits on a pro bono basis. The Taproot Foundation ([www.taprootfoundation.org](http://www.taprootfoundation.org) or 415.359.1423) has been providing these services through the use of professionals in the areas such as marketing and design, fundraising, financial management, legal, and organizational development on a competitive grant basis since 2001. However Taproot is a national organization based in New York, and its reach can be limited, especially in rural areas.

### Resources

Additional funding will be required in order for a Resource Center to be established, regardless of whether an existing entity such as NVCF takes on the services. Community-based donations and grants (particularly for start up) may be sources of revenue

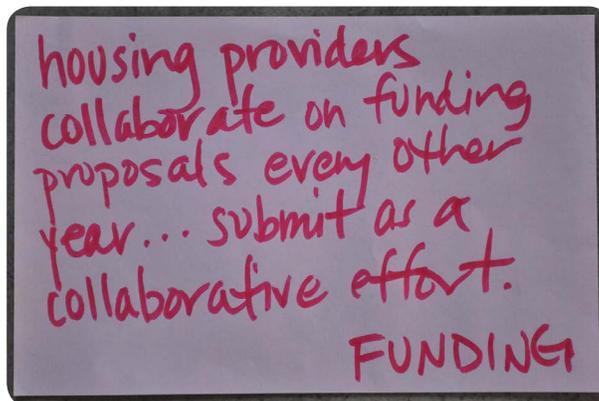
for the Resource Center. Some services may also be provided on a sliding scale fee basis, which could help provide sustainable income.

Additionally, as described above using the Taproot model, some services may be provided pro bono or through volunteer efforts, though this still requires coordination

(through paid staff) and therefore funding. A new entity in Chico is being formed, called the Volunteer Training Institute of Chico (VTIC). It is anticipated that VTIC will increase the number of trained, effective volunteers in this community and be able to match volunteers with nonprofits. These may include volunteers with expertise to provide higher level services to nonprofits such as grant writing and other fund development activities, research, and organizational development assistance and training, among others.

### Challenges

Funding and start up of the resource center are the greatest challenges.



## Action Steps

A committee should be formed to brainstorm funding options, determine specific services (based on the needs of homeless and housing service providers in the region), conduct further research on best practices and models, and determine whether an existing entity can take on this role or if a new organization must be formed. Specific action steps for development of the Resource Center may include:

**Step 1—** Network with service providers. Meet with local service providers and community members already providing some services to determine their interest or level of involvement and assistance.

**Step 2—** Develop a Business Plan, including further research best practices and models, and community needs.

**Step 3—** Identify site location. Explore location within the One-Stop Opportunity Centers, or within an existing service agency.

**Step 4—** Funding strategy. Develop and implement a start-up funding strategy.

**Step 5—** Community Promotion. Promote the Resource Center to the community.

## 3. Marketing/Education Campaign

### How It Works

What we learned from the community forums and countywide summit is that people want to address the issue of homelessness in our county head on. A community-wide, multi-media marketing and education campaign can help to harness the concern and energy of the community, dispelling myths about homelessness, sharing the stories of homeless residents (including success stories), and showing people how they can become active.

### Need

Community wide education and outreach is critical to not only securing funding but for nearly every other proposed solution in this strategy document. Among people in need of services and between service agencies themselves there is a need for better communication and coordination. In order to refer people to the services they need, we must be aware of what is currently being provided, how, and by whom. This enables cross-referral among agencies and reduces costly duplication of services. In addition, community members often do not have

the full picture of homelessness in our County and myths about homelessness and homeless persons are pervasive. A major community-wide education campaign will not only dispel myths, but also engage our community, providing them with inspiration, incentive, and methods for giving their time, money, and empathy.

### Best Practices

Similar to the promotion and effort that goes into the Annie B's fundraising drive each year, ongoing, seasonal, and/or annual promotion of the North Valley Housing Trust Fund, other efforts to address homelessness, and simply sharing the stories of homeless residents in our communities – their difficulties and their successes. Methods may include internet, television, radio, and print media, social media, and community meetings and events. Examples of such community-wide efforts include the Sonoma Upstream Investments program ([www.sonomaupstream.org](http://www.sonomaupstream.org) or 707.565.5800). With the goal of eliminating poverty in Sonoma County, this effort focuses on engaging the entire community in investing in the healthy development of children.

Another example of a community-wide outreach program, this time directly addressing homelessness, is Homeforall ([www.homeforallmarin.org](http://www.homeforallmarin.org)) in Marin County. Described in more detail in the Community Action section of this document, Homeforall is a public awareness campaign to help community members contribute solutions to preventing and ending homelessness in Marin.

## Resources

A community-wide public awareness campaign is also one of the top objectives identified by the Community Action strategy team, and is described further in the Community Action section of this document. The CoC will look to the best practice models described herein to develop a similar campaign in Butte County. The campaign will always include easy methods for community members to contribute financially to services and housing, such as the North Valley Housing Trust (NVHT). The NVHT already has a website and Facebook page, which will be linked to the overall community-wide campaign page.

An internet and social media presence may be accomplished through a volunteer effort without much start up funding. Traditional media placement will require funding, though one of the ways that local media businesses can be involved is to offer discounts on ad space, and by running articles and public service announcements about the effort. The campaign may be able to utilize Tehama Group Communications, a CSU Chico student-managed PR agency that provides low cost and pro bono (through a competitive process) marketing campaigns.

## Challenges

Start up funding remains one of the biggest challenges. As described in the Community Action section, start up of the campaign should be coordinated with other efforts such as the Volunteer Training Institute of Chico and the NVHT, which are both already operating and could potentially share resources and expertise.

## Action Steps

The Action steps for the marketing and education campaign should follow those described in the Community Action section, which are the following: 1. Develop messaging; 2. Raise funds; 3. Hire a marketing consultant; 4. Develop branding; and 5. Lay out a schedule and strategy. Within these action steps, specific activities may include:

- Form a marketing and education committee.
- Develop website and Facebook pages.
- Begin outreach campaign by making community presentations and interviews (for example to service clubs, local radio such as KCHO and KZFR, and business organizations such as the Downtown Business Association).
- Conduct email and/or print mail campaign to solicit community funding.
- Send press releases and PSAs to local media about the campaign and NVHT fund opportunity.
- Create a video to describe the campaign and NVHT.
- Create a blog with success stories.

# Housing

## Housing Goal Statement

Butte County housing and service providers will create safe and secure housing options for homeless persons that address gaps in the homeless “continuum of care” and build community.

## Top Three Objectives

In considering the means for delivering housing and shelter, the Housing Strategy Team put forth the following principles as a guide for each of the top three objectives.

- Safe
- Secure
- Service-Enriched (offering sufficient, effective supportive services)
- Community-Building (for participants, and the larger community)

The top three objectives selected by the Housing Strategy Team adhere to these principles, and address gaps in the homeless “continuum of care”. The continuum of care addresses the individual needs of each homeless person and provides an appropriate level assistance along a continuum of housing and services, ranging from low-barrier access (emergency shelters, transitional housing, housing-first programs) to permanent housing.

The greatest gap in the continuum of care identified in community meetings, and reinforced by the 2013 Butte CoC Point-In-Time Homeless Census, is housing and services targeted to chronically homeless individuals. Chronically homeless individuals are defined here as having been continuously homeless for longer than one year, or having experienced four or more episodes of homelessness in the past three years, with a disabling condition. This segment of the homeless population has increased over the last two years, while the overall number of homeless has decreased, according to the Butte CoC Point-In-Time Homeless Census. The top three Housing objectives seek to assist chronically homeless individuals with three different housing and shelter models. The fit



of each model for any particular homeless individual depends on their individual needs, which should be addressed in an intake assessment. This chapter does not describe homeless prevention, which is an important, cost-effective strategy. Homeless prevention is addressed in Chapter VIII: Services.

The top three objectives follow:

1. Institute a Homeless Camp that will provide a safe and secure place for chronically homeless individuals to build community and access services.
2. Develop a Wet Shelter that will provide safe and secure overnight shelter for persons that cannot enter emergency shelters due to sobriety rules.
3. Create a Housing-First Program that will proactively outreach to homeless individuals and immediately place them in a home with comprehensive supportive services.

*1. Institute a Homeless Camp that will provide a safe and secure place for chronically homeless individuals to build community and access services.*

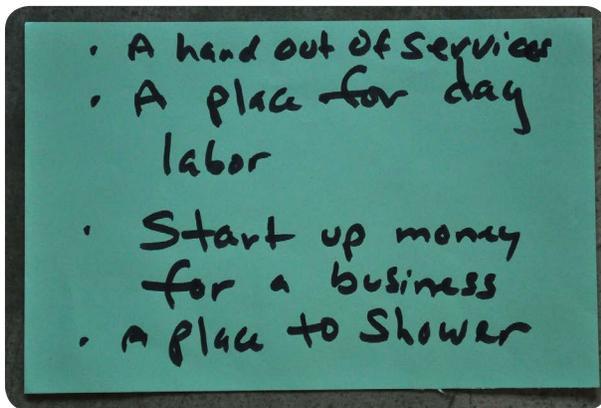
## How it Works

A Homeless Camp will provide a designated campground for homeless persons to live in a safe and secure setting. Campground administration and structure will be crucial to make it successful. A

capable operator will set rules and standards for site maintenance, cleanliness, and mutual resident respect. The level of structure will depend on the operator and the jurisdiction that permits the campground. On-site amenities may include showers, laundry, mailboxes and/or a community building. The Homeless Camp will provide an access point for service providers to build relationships of trust with residents. This will provide a less threatening means of helping homeless individuals build self-sufficiency with the assistance of local nonprofits and government agencies.

## Need

Housing Strategy Team members expressed the need for homeless people to have a “safe place to land” in Butte County. For the chronically homeless, accustomed to an alternative lifestyle, a housing-first model can be threatening. Whether the appropriate first step is housing or a campground is a matter of



individual needs, and is subject to community debate. Both options are described in this 10-Year Strategy so that the community can further research and weigh the benefits and drawbacks of each approach. Some of the Housing Strategy Team members believed that a campground is a safer first step than housing. This objective also seeks to address the segment of the homeless population that is causing the most problems in the community, which include camping in illegal locations such as parks and in front of businesses. The Homeless Camp would not exclude people because they have a substance abuse problem or pets.

## Best Practice

Dignity Village is an encampment of about 60 homeless people in Portland, Oregon. In the days before Christmas of 2000, a group of homeless

people in Portland succeeded in establishing a tent city that evolved into a self-regulating, city-recognized “campground” as defined by Portland city code. Designated by the Portland City Council as a transitional housing campground, Dignity Village falls under specific State of Oregon building codes governing campgrounds. This provides a legal zoning status. Dignity Village is incorporated in Oregon as a 501(c)(3) membership-based non-profit organization, and is governed by bylaws and a board of directors. Membership is by application review. Dignity Village offers a number of services and amenities for its residents, including: showers; communal fridges and cooking facilities; access to education, counseling, medical care, veterinary care and other services; donated food; phone and Internet.

## Resources

Since Butte County is not highly urbanized, it offers open spaces for a potential campground that are close to services and amenities. Securing an appropriate location will depend on community acceptance. A wide variety of service providers in Butte County can adapt to different service locations and approaches. This will help the Homeless Camp integrate supportive services.

## Challenges

The principle challenges for establishment of a Homeless Camp will be securing a site, and management. An appropriate site will require a number of characteristics: it must be large enough to provide adequate camping and program space; it will need to integrate with the existing community fabric; and it should be close enough to services, transportation and amenities so as not to isolate its residents. Communities are not likely to find the campground use acceptable within or near their downtowns or in their residential neighborhoods. This means that the site may most likely be located on the outskirts of a city. In this case, the challenge will be to integrate the campground residents with the rest of the community. In addition to siting, it will be challenging to find an operator capable of managing the campground. Without a thoughtful structure and an active management presence, the experience of other campgrounds has shown that homeless camps can become unsafe magnets for crime. Operation will require adequate funding and staffing.

## Action Steps

The following are action steps that will be necessary to establish the Homeless Camp.

**Step 1—** Complete a feasibility study. Research other homeless camps to determine what works and what doesn't. Establish the primary goal (i.e. simply a safe place to camp, or an entryway to services and re-integration). Lay out an implementation plan.

**Step 2—** Enter a partnership with a camp operator. The Homeless Camp will only function effectively with a capable operator, which will set campground rules, ensure compliance with community standards, provide staffing and maintenance, and coordinate with service providers.

**Step 3—** Secure a site and use permit. The campground site will need to be of adequate size for campsites and programming. Residents should have some minimum of space for privacy. In addition, the site will need to be accessible to service providers and homeless individuals. Finally, the campground will need to be accepted by the community. The site will likely have development and management stipulations attached to its use permits.

**Step 4—** Develop partnerships with service providers. The Homeless Camp will operate under a philosophy of breaking down barriers between homeless individuals and services. This will be followed by bringing services to where homeless individuals reside and feel most comfortable. It will require sustained relationship building in order to engender trust.

2. *Develop a Wet Shelter that will provide safe and secure overnight shelter for persons that cannot enter emergency shelters due to sobriety rules.*

## How it Works

A Wet Shelter is an emergency shelter that accepts anyone for overnight stays, including persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The purpose is to provide a safe, warm place for homeless persons to stay the night. This helps mitigate community violence, health deterioration, and unnecessary use of public services such as policing and emergency room visits. A principle aim of the Wet Shelter is to offer an entry point for services that individuals are likely to otherwise avoid.

## Need

Homeless persons with substance abuse issues are inadequately served by Butte County's programs. As a result, these individuals are forced to live on the streets, worsening their condition and taxing public services. The dangers of this situation become more acute during periods of extreme weather conditions.

## Best Practice

A well-funded example of a wet shelter/supportive housing project is 1811 Eastlake in Seattle, which opened in 2005. It provides supportive housing to 75 formally homeless men and women with chronic alcohol addiction. It is the first of its kind in Washington to address the needs of homeless chronic alcoholics who are the heaviest users of publicly funded crisis services. The project is the subject of multiple rigorous evaluations and has received recognition both nationally and internationally for its effectiveness. In 2009, 1811 Eastlake was cited in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* as proof that a "wet" supportive housing project with low entry barriers saves money and improves lives. The study reported that the program saved taxpayers \$4 million dollars within the first 12 months of operation ("Health Care and Public Service Use and Costs before and after Provision of Housing for Chronically Homeless Persons with Severe Alcohol Problems," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, April 1, 2009). Research on 1811 Eastlake shows that people with alcohol problems reduce drinking in housing that allows alcohol ("Project-Based Housing First for Chronically Homeless Individuals with Alcohol Problems: Within-Subjects Analyses of Two-Year Alcohol Trajectories," *American Journal of Public*

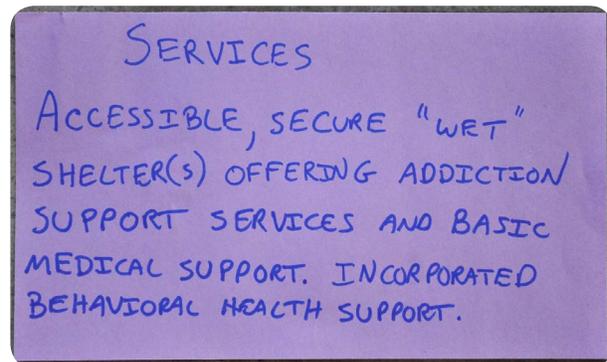
Health, August 4, 2011). The 1811 Eastlake website is at [www.desc.org/1811.html](http://www.desc.org/1811.html) or contact the Project Manager at 206.957.0700 for information.

## Resources

Development of a Wet Shelter will require extensive program planning and funding, both of which are described below.

**Alternative Shelter Task Force**— This is a group organized by the Greater Chico Homeless Task Force to explore alternative shelter options in Chico. This task force has already explored potential operators, locations and costs. The Alternative Shelter Task Force is a logical place for Wet Shelter advance planning to start.

**Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)**— These grants are one of the few public funding sources that can be used for wet shelters. The principle CDBG requirement is that it serves low-income populations. The City of Chico and Town of Paradise receive an entitlement allocation of CDBG funds directly from the federal government. Other Butte County communities apply to the State for CDBG funds in an annual competition.



## Challenges

The primary challenges to developing the Wet Shelter are funding and siting. There are various wet shelter models, from a "bare-bones" operation that solely provides a safe, warm place to sleep, to a supportive housing program with intensive case management and long-term stays. At a minimum, the Wet Shelter will require on-site staffing to maximize safety for residents and neighbors. An appropriate location for the Wet Shelter may also be difficult to secure. The community must feel adequately comfortable with the program to accept it.

## Action Steps

Development of the Wet Shelter will include the key steps listed below.

**Step 1**— Enter into a partnership with an operator. The operator will need to have extensive experience with the target population, and be respected in the community. The operator will need to receive the community's trust that the Wet Shelter will be well-managed.

**Step 2**— Identify an appropriate building. The Wet Shelter location should be convenient to services and accessible by chronically homeless individuals. Optimal location will be near or adjacent to a service provider, preferably the operator. After identifying the potential building, acquisition and capital costs can be estimated.

**Step 3**— Raise funds. Funds will likely need to be raised from public and private sources. CDBG funds are the primary public source, particularly in Chico and Paradise.

**Step 4**— Engage in a public relations campaign. Throughout the process, and especially just prior to operation, the public needs to be made aware of the community benefits associated with the Wet Shelter and the resources and methods that will be employed to mitigate potential problems. The central message will be that chronically homeless individuals and the community at large will be safer with the Wet Shelter, and that the investment will save taxpayer money in the long run.

3. *Create a Housing-First Program that will proactively outreach to homeless individuals and immediately place them in a home with comprehensive supportive services.*

## How it Works

A Housing-First Program is a system that places chronically homeless individuals in housing as the first step to achieving greater self-sufficiency and stability. It is a “low-barrier” housing entry program, meaning that individuals are placed in housing regardless of substance abuse issues or tenant history. With this approach, living in a home of one’s own is central to the rehabilitation process. The approach views a lack of a home as a barrier to an individual’s progression. Without a home, issues of safety and immediate need take precedence over activities such as job training and financial planning. A home provides security, and simple direct benefits such as an address to put on assistance and job applications, a shower to prepare for interviews, and a place to eat. Many housing-first participants cite an improvement in self-esteem and a sense of place. Studies have shown participant improvements in mental health from living in a safe and stable environment.

## Need

The Housing-First Program directly addresses many of the root causes of homelessness, most importantly, the lack of a home. The Housing-First Program helps to fill a gap in Butte County’s continuum of care for housing chronically homeless individuals. Transitional and permanent housing projects exclude most of this population. On the other hand, emergency shelters do accept this population but cannot provide permanent or long-term housing.

## Best Practice

New Directions is a program led by the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California, working to serve people who are the most frequent users of hospital emergency room services in Santa Clara County. A multi-disciplinary team partners with four hospitals to identify and engage people who have frequent

and avoidable hospital emergency room visits. The New Directions team provides case management, care coordination, and linkages to housing and other services. Services are connected to permanent supportive housing opportunities including Shelter Plus Care vouchers and Housing Choice Vouchers provided through a partnership with the local public housing authority. Among participants, the program reported a 25% decrease in the number of hospital stay days, and 72% of participants received housing assistance. More information can be found at [www.hospitalcouncil.net/overview/new-directions](http://www.hospitalcouncil.net/overview/new-directions) or 408.272.6509.

## Resources

Available resources for the Housing-First Program are described below.

**Butte CoC Programs:** Butte CoC members receive federal funds to operate various housing-first programs. They consist of rental assistance and supportive services for chronically homeless individuals, persons with severe mental illness and homeless families. Unfortunately, the need far exceeds the assistance provided. Participants include the Community Action Agency Esplanade House, the Butte County Department of Behavioral Health, the Housing Authority of the County of Butte, and Caminar. These programs demonstrate local expertise and experience necessary to operate housing-first assistance.

**HUD Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP):** This is a federally-funded program that includes a housing-first approach. It has been successfully implemented across the country. Butte CoC narrowly missed receiving funds for a county-wide program in a national competition. However, models and partnerships have been developed to make such a program work. The Community Action Agency of Butte County received HPRP funds through the State program to successfully provide homeless prevention and rapid re-housing last year.

**HUD VASH Program:** This is a collaboration between the local Veterans Affairs (VA) office and the Housing Authority of the County of Butte to assist homeless veterans. The VA provides case management and supportive services, and the housing authority provides rental subsidies. Federal support for this program has increased over the last few years.

**City of Chico Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA):** The TBRA program provides temporary rental

assistance and case management for very low-income households that are at-risk of becoming homeless. Service providers present clients to a committee of local nonprofits for a decision on participation, which is dependent on the client demonstrating readiness to live without rental assistance in the next one to two years. A self-sufficiency plan is part of the application review, and the client's case manager periodically reports on progress. About 90% of TBRA participants are able to live independently at the end of their assistance period. This program provides successful models for the Housing-First Program.

**North Valley Housing Trust (NVHT):** NVHT is a local housing trust fund that was formed to expand the reach of local housing and homeless service providers. This fund is a key part of the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness due to its capability to provide financial resources to help accomplish objectives. As a local independent nonprofit, NVHT will provide financial resources at the direction of a community-based Board of Directors. The initial focus is providing housing and supportive services for homeless persons.

## Challenges

The Housing-First Program requires a high level of financial support for each participant. This includes outreach by professionals with experience in the mental health field, rental assistance, and extensive wrap-around supportive services that will help participants maintain housing. Proponents must show that the program saves taxpayer dollars when compared to providing public safety and hospitalization services for unsheltered persons. While the benefit of participation can be long-lasting, program implementation necessitates a sustained commitment on the part of landlords and housing providers, service providers, and the community in general. The program must also attract landlords to participate. While programs nationwide have shown that this can be done successfully, it may take some time to bring landlords on board. Programs that use case managers to anticipate housing problems and effectively communicate with landlords find adequate housing for participants.

## Action Steps

The Housing-First Program will involve the following steps:

**Step 1—** Secure funding sources. These sources could potentially include Butte CoC, HOME, Section 8, and NVHT.

**Step 2—** Designate a lead agency. This agency will develop procedures, administer contracts and manage the budget.

**Step 3—** Form housing and service partnerships. Various community organizations can play roles in the Housing-First Program based on their expertise and experience. Roles will include outreach and assessment, case management, housing placement and administration of rental assistance payments.

**Step 4—** Develop landlord and housing provider relationships. These may include the housing authority, affordable housing nonprofits, and private property owners.

# Services

## Services Goal Statement

Community partners will strive to create a network of services, under one roof, that are quick and easy to access, are coordinated between service providers, offer earlier intervention to break the cycle of homelessness, and accommodate pets in services and shelters.

## Rationale for Top Three Objectives

The top three objectives the services strategy team prioritized include a One-Stop Opportunity Center, Homeless Prevention Programs, and Pet Veterinary and Shelter Services. In the yearlong planning workshops held throughout Butte County, a common thread that weaved our communities together was a sense of compassion and urgency to find viable and sustainable solutions to end homelessness. The services strategy team acknowledged overarching goals identified by community members, homeless persons, service providers, and government representatives. They want services to be responsive, inclusive, quickly accessible, and available to all in need. A new system of service delivery requires a coordinated, easy to access network, under one roof, and available to everyone experiencing homelessness. A comprehensive approach to ending homelessness includes breaking the cycle before an occurrence. Earlier intervention may disrupt a future pattern of chronic homelessness. Services that are available to all necessitate finding ways to accommodate persons with pets at shelters and other facilities.

## Objectives

### 1. One-Stop Opportunity Center

## How It Works

A One-Stop Opportunity Center is a place where all homeless individuals and families can go to access a



variety of services under one roof. Ideally, it should be centrally located and near public transportation routes. Integrating multiple agencies under one roof will speed up responses for help. A shared site will improve communication among service agencies, and between service providers and homeless participants.

## Need

A universal message from homeless persons, service providers, community members, and government representatives, was the need for quick and easy access to services. In focus groups, homeless persons shared insights and issues concerning obstacles and barriers to services. They found it difficult and time consuming to travel to service providers, often located all over the county, since most did not own a car or have money for bus passes. The current system is confusing, fractured and difficult to navigate. In 2012, the Butte Countywide Homeless Continuum of Care sponsored Project Homeless Connect, a one-day event held at the Silver Dollar Fairgrounds. Multiple service providers and volunteers gathered under one roof. For one day, four hundred-eighty guests had access to thirty-seven different types of services. This event highlights the impact integrating services can have on reaching more people in need.

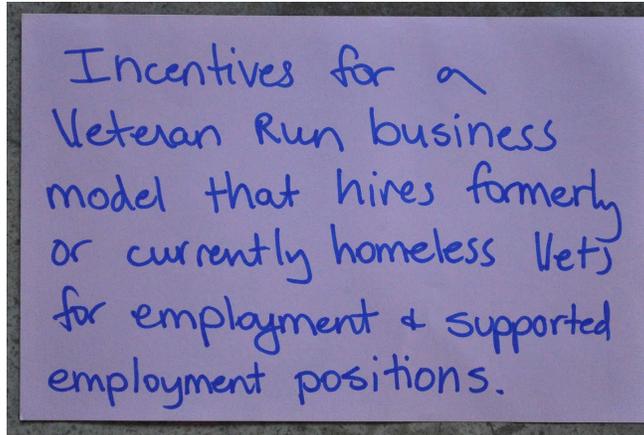
## Best Practice

The Opportunity Center of Midpeninsula is a five story, mixed-use facility that houses multiple services for the homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless, including women and children. The top floors provide 88 affordable apartments for the homeless and the very poor. Two services centers are on the ground floor: one designed to serve the general homeless and at-risk populations; and one designed to serve homeless and at-risk women and women with children. The Center is within walking distance of downtown Palo Alto's transportation hub and Town and County Center. Multiple nonprofit organizations provide the services, with InnVision Shelter Network providing overall management and coordination. The Community Working Group, in partnership with the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara and InnVision Shelter Network the Way Home, developed the Center. Funding for development came from a combination of public programs (Federal, State, and local), Santa Clara's Housing Trust Fund, foundations, local corporations, 20 faith communities sponsoring a capital campaign, and philanthropic individuals and families. (Community Working Group Website, January 12, 2014). The Community Working Group website is [www.communityworkinggroup.org/ochistory.html](http://www.communityworkinggroup.org/ochistory.html) or contact 650.853.8672.

## Resources

Before researching a site for a center, it might be beneficial to explore if any existing service provider can expand and use their facility to host a One-Stop Opportunity Center. A few possibilities are the Jesus Center (Chico), Ridge Family Resource Center (Paradise), and The Hope Center (Oroville). The Jesus Center already houses a Resource Center with on-site phones, computers, job preparation services and partnerships with other job training providers.

Another opportunity to potentially build upon is the consolidated Butte County service center at 2445 Carmichael Drive in Chico, which houses the employment center, social services and veterans services.



If One-Stop Centers are made available in all three communities, more clients will have easier access to services. Generous resources of community-based service providers, that offer an array

of services, are located throughout Butte County. There are also new agencies, such as the Chico Homeless Animal Outreach. CHAO offers assistance with medical care and foster care homes for pets whose owners need shelter services (<http://chicohomelessanimaloutreach.org> or 530.680.0002).

## Challenges

Securing a centralized property, near public transportation, with proper zoning and use permits, will present one of the greatest challenges to implementation. The goal to accommodate pets at service facilities will require careful review of surrounding neighborhoods. It may be easier, save time, and expense to expand an existing program and facility. This approach will require cooperation and collaboration between the existing agency and the new network of partners. Cooperation will also be essential when designing a secure system to share client data. Selecting a lead agency will be necessary to help coordinate the start-up and daily operations. Preparing an operation budget and cash flow forecast will be challenging. The network of service providers may have multiple funding sources; however, their funds may be restricted for specific services. The chief challenge is raising funds to develop and operate the One-Stop Opportunity Center. Much like the Midpeninsula Center, this project may require funding that comes from a variety of sources from public entities to capital campaigns.

## Action Steps

This is a complex undertaking and requires forming a committee made up of multiple partners from public agencies, volunteers, homeless persons, lenders, and community-based programs. The key is to design a comprehensive program and identify a network of service providers to implement the programs. Integrating multiple service providers under one roof will require a detailed memorandum of understanding, preparing an operation budget, and agreeing on a secure system to share client information between agencies.

**Step 1**— Form a committee with a broad stakeholder representation from public agencies, volunteers, homeless persons, lenders, and community-based programs.

**Step 2**— Investigate other examples of One-Stop Centers to learn how they overcame obstacles to develop a project.

**Step 3**— Reach out to service providers to identify if any existing program might be able to expand and use their facility. If not, outreach to private property owners and public partners to help identify a site.

**Step 4**— Design a comprehensive program, which includes working through details of services, funding, and sharing information between agencies.

**Step 5**— Select a lead agency and prepare a memorandum of understanding describing each other's roles, responsibilities, and financial commitments.

**Step 6**— Identify and apply for funding from a variety of sources such as public programs (Federal, State, and local), philanthropic individuals and families, private foundations, and the newly created North Valley Housing Trust.

## 2. Homeless Prevention Programs

### How It Works

The fundamental goal of prevention services is to prevent and break the cycle of long-term homelessness. An important objective is to provide extensive outreach to households who are at high risk of homelessness to encourage them to engage in services earlier. The services should focus on preventing episodes of homelessness by providing short-term assistance with rent and utility bills, offer mediation between tenants and property owners to prevent eviction, increase housing stabilization, and make referrals to community-based services.

### Need

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, “effective homeless prevention programs typically assess immediate housing needs,

explore housing options and resources, provide flexible financial assistance, and, when appropriate, offer voluntary case management services focused on housing stabilization” (Creating a Plan for the Homeless Prevention Fund, March 5, 2009). Community members expressed a desire to provide early intervention services to individuals and families at risk of homelessness.

### Best Practices

St. Vincent de Paul Village in San Diego offers Homeless Prevention Services as part of its comprehensive assistance to homeless persons. The services include housing assessments, interventions to prevent homelessness, and case management, provided by their shelter diversion and rapid-rehousing team. St. Vincent de Paul Village also collaborates with the Veteran's Village of San Diego and Interfaith Community Services to provide Homeless Prevention services to veterans and their families (St. Vincent de Paul Village website, February 12, 2014). More information can be found at [www.svdpv.org](http://www.svdpv.org) or by calling 619.233.8500.

Hope Services of Hawaii (HOPE) provides several approaches to Homeless Prevention Services. Tenant Solutions provide landlords housing HOPE's participants with 24/7 access to a housing specialist and conflict resolution facilitation as needed. All tenants placed in housing complete a comprehensive Renter's Education course that includes an array of topics to assist renters successfully maintain housing. HOPE also administers a Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP), which provides short-term financial assistance with rent and/or utilities, security and utility deposits, and other services to help prevent homelessness. (HOPE Services Hawaii website, February 12, 2014). More information can be found at [www.hopeserviceshawaii.org](http://www.hopeserviceshawaii.org) or by calling 808.935.3050.

## Resources

Resources available for Homeless Prevention Programs are listed below:

**The Community Action Agency of Butte County (CAA)** has successfully operated a Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP),

funded by a State Emergency Solution Grant. The program provides assistance and services to prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless. CAA case managers also help those who are homeless to be quickly re-housed and stabilized. Please visit CAA's website at <http://buttecaa.com> or call 530.712.2600, option 5.

**Help Central of Butte County** recently launched a 2-1-1 telephone assistance program. This is a free phone number and online database that connects people quickly to existing health and human service programs. Telephone services are available 24 hours a day. ([www.helpcentral.org](http://www.helpcentral.org) or 866.916.3566 toll free)

## Challenges

The biggest challenge to implementation will be securing the operating funds to support case managers, rents and utility payments. In addition, it may prove difficult to persuade property owners to participate in tenant mediation meetings that have an objective of delaying or canceling eviction proceedings.

## Action Steps

The following actions steps are necessary to implement a comprehensive homeless prevention program.

**Step 1**— Reach out to existing service agencies and evaluate if they are able to expand an existing program to include homeless prevention services or to develop a new program.

**Step 2**— Investigate the possibilities of community-based agencies adding homeless prevention in their public relation campaigns.

**Step 3**— Outreach and educate property owners about the objectives of a homeless prevention program. Persuade property owners to participate in mediation meetings with tenants to avoid or delay eviction procedures.

**Step 4**— Research public programs and private foundations for operation funds to support countywide homeless prevention programs.

## 3. Pet Veterinary and Shelter Services

### How It Works

We recognize that pets are important to people, and we need to work on ways to accommodate them in shelters and our network of services. However, if we want to accommodate pets in public places, we need

to identify low-cost or no cost veterinary services to ensure the pets are healthy and that vaccinations are current.

### Need

People experiencing homelessness will reject overnight shelter if their pets cannot accompany them into a warm, safe place to spend the night. Pets are family— sometimes the only family— for homeless

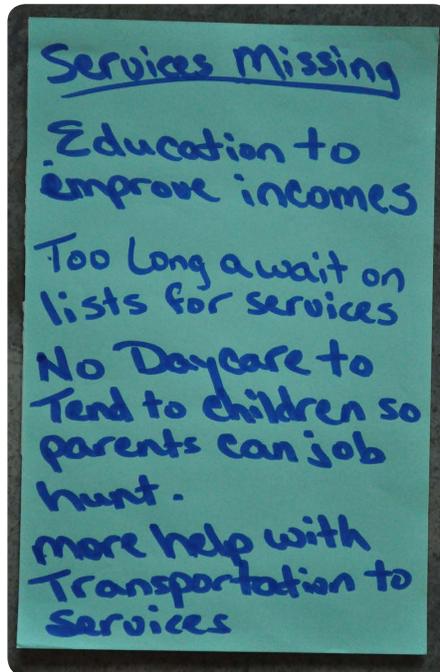
persons. As stated in the Pets of the Homeless Website, "... pets are nonjudgmental, offer comfort, and provide an emotional bond of loyalty. In some cases, they provide the homeless protection and keep them warm. Medical authorities have proven that pets benefit in many ways." The 2013 Butte County Point-In-Time Homeless Census and Survey notes 23% of homeless surveyed reported having a pet.

## Best Practice

Pets of the Homeless, a national organization, recognizes that many people who are experiencing homelessness with pets cannot access accommodations. The organization is familiar with the need for homeless services to fill a gap left by not allowing pets into shelters. Due to homeless individuals' attachment to their animal companions, many avoid services for themselves. Working to fill the gap, Pets of the Homeless offers free crates to homeless shelters looking for ways to allow pets sanctuary with their owners. (Pets of Homeless Website, January 12, 2014) ([www.petsofthehomeless.org/what-we-do](http://www.petsofthehomeless.org/what-we-do) or 775.841.7463)

## Resources

Two community volunteers are forming a new non-profit, Chico Homeless Animal Outreach (<http://chicohomelessanimaloutreach.org> or 530.680.0002).



The organization plans to provide medical care and foster homes for pets whose owners need shelter services. The program will host regular clinics with vaccines, flea and tick medications, spraying and neutering, and other treatment. A foster care service is a major part of the service. A pet will live with a foster caretaker while the owner stays in a shelter, finds a job and secures housing. The owners can get their pets back anytime. There is tremendous potential for local Veterinarians to collaborate with the Chico Homeless Animal Outreach and provide low-cost or no cost care for the pets. Community groups and individuals can donate time, offer to foster a pet, or donate food and other supplies to assist this program.

## Challenges

At this time, all local shelters prohibit pets. Shelter operators need to balance the concerns of all their guests, potential allergies, and constraints of available space. There are also private property owners and public housing complexes that have rules against allowing pets. Some insurance companies restrict policy coverage on certain dog breeds. Community education and outreach is necessary to try to increase the number of property owners that will allow pets. This might be another public campaign to include with the Public Awareness and Marketing/Education Campaigns discussed in Chapter V: Community Action and Chapter VI: Funding.

## Action Steps

The following actions steps are necessary to accomplish this objective.

- Step 1**— Negotiate with property owners and public housing representatives about relaxing rules against pets.
- Step 2**— Reach out to local veterinary service providers as potential partners.
- Step 3**— Support new efforts by Chico Homeless Animal Outreach.
- Step 4**— Identify funding source for operation costs.

# Jobs

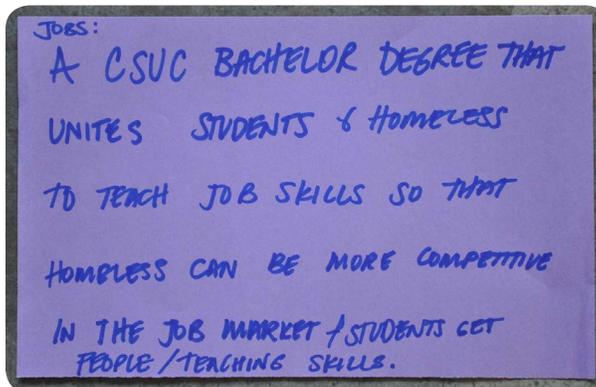
## Jobs Goal Statement

Community partners will work together to establish a centralized employment resource center, increase employment programs customized to assist the homeless, and develop social enterprise businesses.

## Rational for Top Three Objectives

Homelessness goes beyond not having a safe place to sleep at night; it is about not having enough income to afford a place, food or other life necessities. The Jobs Strategy Team recognized that a high percentage of homeless people lack jobs and incomes. Survey answers confirmed this economic disparity in the 2013 Butte CoC Point-In-Time Homeless Census, where 37% of homeless persons reported “employment and financial” reasons as the cause of homelessness. Further, 55% reported “no job or income” as barriers to housing. Responding to these financial gaps, the Jobs Strategy Team focused on programs that expand opportunities for employment, increase incomes, and promote economic growth.

The top three strategies include: 1) developing a centrally located employment resource center; 2) providing job training tailored to the specific needs of homeless people; and 3) creating social enterprise businesses that generate revenue to support shelters and provide jobs for clients. Like all members of our larger community, the homeless community is diverse. Everyone is at different places of employment readiness. The design of programs should reflect this diversity and offer a range of opportunities, from in-house employment within service agencies and soft skill training, to community-based jobs that pay a living wage. Assisting homeless persons to increase incomes will open doors to housing and enhance economic stability.



JOBS:  
A CSUC BACHELOR DEGREE THAT  
UNITES STUDENTS & HOMELESS  
TO TEACH JOB SKILLS SO THAT  
HOMELESS CAN BE MORE COMPETITIVE  
IN THE JOB MARKET / STUDENTS GET  
PEOPLE / TEACHING SKILLS.

## Objectives

1. Develop a Central Employment Resource Center

## How It Works

The purpose of establishing a Central Employment Resource Center is to provide quick and easy access to a network of employment and job training services. To further the goal of easy access, the center’s location should be near public transportation routes. Gathering multiple service agencies under one roof will speed up responses for help. Imagine a location with multiple points of entry and no wrong door. A network of agencies sharing a single site will improve and streamline communication between each other and the client.

## Need

The Center described above contrasts sharply with our current system, which clients report to be confusing, fractured, and spread out countywide. For individuals and families with no car or money for bus passes, the current dispersed system is difficult to navigate.

## Best Practice

Martha’s Village and Kitchen, a partner of Father Joe’s Villages, is located in San Diego, California. This career and education center offers a range of services: a job developer/career counselor for help in obtaining employment, a computer lab for training and research, telephones, fax/copy services, and voice mail accounts. The organization’s mission is “to prepare clients for economic self-sufficiency and life-long learning by providing literacy skills, vocational training and coaching through progressive curricula and technology with business and industry collaboration.” (Martha’s Village & Kitchen Webpage, January 30, 2014: <http://marthasvillage.org/new/career.html>)

## Resources

The Employment Resource Center would be optimally located within the One-Stop Opportunity Centers described in Chapter VIII: Services. A network of services under one roof supports the goal to provide quick and easy access to services. As such, the Resources, Challenges and Action Steps described below mirror information about One-Stop Opportunity Centers found in Chapter VIII.

Before researching a site for a center, it might be beneficial to first explore if any existing service provider can expand and use their facility to host a One-Stop Center. For example, the Jesus Center in Chico, the Hope Center in Oroville, and the Ridge Family Resource Center in Paradise, all three may have the potential for expansion. Another opportunity to potentially build upon is the consolidated Butte County employment center at 2445 Carmichael Drive in Chico, which houses CalWorks and a one-stop job center. If One-Stop Centers are made available in all three communities, more clients will have easier

access to services; spend less time traveling all over the county, and have more time to engage in services and achieve greater levels of self-sufficiency.

## Challenges

It will be important to identify a centralized site, near public transportation, for a One-Stop Center. It may be easier, save time, and expense to expand an existing program and facility. This approach will require cooperation and collaboration between the existing agency and the new network of partners. Cooperation will also be essential when designing a secure system to share client data. Selecting a lead agency will be necessary to help coordinate the start-up and daily operations. Preparing an operating budget and cash flow forecast will be challenging. The network of service providers may have multiple funding sources; however, their funds may be restricted for specific services. The North Valley Housing Trust, a local financial resource, may provide flexible funding to cover costs with initial start-up and on-going operations.

## Action Steps

This is a complex undertaking and requires forming a committee made up of multiple partners from public agencies to community-based programs. The key is to design a comprehensive program and identify a network of service providers to implement programs. Integrating multiple service providers under one roof will require a detailed memorandum of understanding, preparing an operating budget, and working out a secure system to share client information between agencies.

**Step 1—** Form a committee with broad stakeholder representation from the community, public agencies, and community-based programs.

**Step 2—** Design a comprehensive program, which includes working through details of services, funding, and sharing information between agencies.

**Step 3—** Select a lead agency and prepare a memorandum of understanding describing each other's roles, responsibilities, and financial commitments.

**Step 4—** Research and select a site, preferably near public transportation. Evaluate if any existing service site can expand to incorporate a center. If an existing site is not available, an extensive search will be required to identify an appropriate location. In both cases, it is a good idea to review zoning and use permits with planning staff from the local government.

**Step 5—** Identify and apply for funding to support initial start-up and on-going operating costs. A good place to begin is with the North Valley Housing Trust. The NVHT, a local resource, may be able to provide a flexible source of funds.

## 2. Employment Programs Customized to the Homeless

### How It Works

The Jobs Strategy Team focused on helping homeless individuals secure jobs. A couple of key strategies emerged: expand employment programs; and customize job training to homeless individuals' needs. One goal is to provide participants with soft skills training, such as communication, interviewing, teamwork, problem solving and critical thinking. A second training goal is to develop programs that provide participants with a certificate or a degree after completion, such as a Food Handler Certificate or Nursing Assistant Certification. This model provides participants an ability to gain transferable jobs skills, and increases competitiveness when applying for community-based jobs.

### Need

A lack of job opportunities, training programs, internships, and assistance with job searching and readiness was expressed at nearly every community outreach meeting. Economic factors obviously play a role in the availability of local jobs, however, other strategies described in this 10-Year Strategy document, if implemented, may help create jobs. In addition, better training and assistance for homeless residents can help them search for employment and be ready for a variety of positions that are, or become, available.

### Best Practice

Homeward Bound, located in Marin County, opened Fresh Starts Culinary Academy in 2000, at their New Beginnings Center. Students at Fresh Starts Culinary Academy enroll in a three-tier education program designed to prepare participants for jobs in the culinary industry. Courses include: food preparation and safety, recipe sizing, kitchen organization, food service, and hands-on experience in a state-of-the-art training kitchen. Based on industry standards, Fresh Starts Culinary Academy allows students to earn the national Safe Food Handling Certification (ServSafe). This certification is a standard requirement for food preparation and service employees. (Homeward

Bound of Marine County-Fresh Starts Culinary Academy Website, January 12, 2014: <https://hbofm.org/Home.php>).

### Resources

Our county is fortunate to have two colleges—Butte Community College and California State University, Chico. These colleges present opportunities for collaboration. This may include: involving students in job training programs; increasing interaction between job training participants and college business instructors; and incorporating job training for homeless persons into college curricula.

Many non-profits provide job-training programs in Butte County. These programs are customized to targeted groups, from mental and developmental disabilities to substance abuse recovery. Sensible Cyclery, sponsored by Caminar, provides participants vocational skill development by repairing and selling quality used bicycles ([www.caminar.org](http://www.caminar.org) or 530.343.4421). The ARC Store, a work component sponsored by The Arc of Butte County ([www.arcbutte.org](http://www.arcbutte.org) or 530.891.5865), and The Well Ministry of Rescue, provide vocational training in construction, painting, and auto repair (<http://thewellministryofrescue.org> or 530.343.1935). These training programs provide wages to participants, and teach job skills that can transfer to employment.

Employment program development should include an analysis of jobs requiring certificates that are in high demand. This can facilitate partnerships between job training programs and employers. These partnerships could include financial support from benefitting employers and industries.

### Challenges

It will be challenging to recruit and coordinate community partners. Identifying funding sources for start-up costs and operations may also be an impediment to implementation.

## Actions Steps

The recommended action steps are:

**Step 1**— Establish a committee. The group will need to recruit and coordinate partners (public and private) to sponsor and administer employment programs.

**Step 2**— Design programs. This may include hiring a consultant to prepare an analysis of jobs requiring certificates, and availability of jobs in the market place.

**Step 3**— Accreditation. The sponsor agency will need to complete accreditation programs to be able to award certificates to graduates.

**Step 4**— Location. Identify appropriate program locations, and review zoning and allowable land uses with local planning departments.

**Step 5**— Secure funds for start-up and operating costs.

### 3. *Business-Shelter Partnerships for Social Enterprise Programs (providing living wage jobs and financially supporting the shelter)*

the Great Recession, funding levels have dramatically shrunk or evaporated. Service programs operate at maximum capacity, and fiscal constraints threaten to destabilize them. Community-based agencies are searching for new sources of operating funds, such as social enterprise businesses, that will stabilize operations.

## How It Works

As described by Forth Sector in “A Business Planning Guide to Developing a Social Enterprise,” a social enterprise is a business that trades for a social purpose. The social aims of the business are of equal importance to its commercial activities, and this combination is often referred to as the “double bottom line”. Like any business, a social enterprise focuses on generating income through the sale of goods and services. But the added value of a social enterprise comes from the way in which it uses its profits to maximize social, community or environmental benefits. (Forth Sector, funded by the European Union, Royal Bank of Scotland and Communities Scotland).

([www.forthsectordevelopment.org.uk/documents/New\\_BusPlanGuide.pdf](http://www.forthsectordevelopment.org.uk/documents/New_BusPlanGuide.pdf)) A social enterprise is a unique way to provide a social service and generate revenue to support the mission and goals of an agency.

## Need

Traditional funding sources are no longer reliable for nonprofits and shelter providers. In the wake of

## Best Practices

Rwanda Burmera is an award-winning coffee produced by Central City Coffee, located in Portland, Oregon. Through sourcing and roasting exceptional coffees, Central City Coffee provides job-training opportunities for previously homeless people. Sales of Central City Coffee supports Central City Concern’s mission by providing clients with opportunities to learn transferable job skills through the coffee trade. (Central City Coffee Website, January 12, 2014: [www.centralcitycoffee.org](http://www.centralcitycoffee.org) or 503.294.1681). A second example, the Homeward Bound Fresh Starts Culinary Academy, is available in Chapter IX: Jobs, Strategy No. 2, Employment Programs Customized to the Homeless.

## Resources

Caminar, a local non-profit, operates Sensible Cyclery in partnership with Butte County Behavioral Health. Sensible Cyclery is a model social enterprise program that provides vocational training and development that helps employees reach their full potential. The program participants receive training with bicycle

repair and sell reconditioned used bikes to the community. (Caminar website, Feb., 2, 2014: [www.caminar.org](http://www.caminar.org)).

## Challenges

It will be a challenge to develop a business plan and identify funds for start-up costs and operations. The preparation of a business plan will require an

operation budget and cash flow forecast. A social enterprise business, like any new business, takes several years to prosper, so good cash flow is essential. A possible resource for funding is a Community Development Financial Institution “CDFI.” CDFIs operate in every state, serving both rural and urban communities (CDFI Coalition website, Feb., 2, 2014: <http://www.cdfi.org> or 202.653.0300).

## Action Steps

The following action steps are fundamental to developing social enterprise businesses:

**Step 1—** Form a committee with representation from local banks, businesses, community-based organizations, public officials, and interested community members.

**Step 2—** Identify a lead agency. The agency will need key staff with appropriate skills, knowledge and business experience.

**Step 3—** Prepare a business plan. The plan needs to identify the social purpose, business idea, legal structure, milestones, operating budget and cash flow forecast, and marketing

**Step 4—** Analyze market demand for business, who will buy goods. For social purpose, determine who will benefit and/or use service.

**Step 5—** Investigate location and property details. Review zoning and allowable land uses with the local planning department. Evaluate buying, renting or leasing the property.

# Overall Structure

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The preceding chapters have outlined a number of objectives to reduce homelessness in Butte County. They represent a broad array of potential solutions that have been selected through an extensive public outreach process. The outreach process has sought to identify solutions that are relevant and applicable to local conditions. The objectives have been grouped under five major goals, summarized below.

## Community Action

The citizens of Butte County will take ownership of the homeless problem by creating a Volunteer Support Network, engaging the community in a public awareness campaign, and supporting formation of a homeless court.

### Community Action Objectives:

1. Create a Volunteer Support Network.
2. Engage the community through a Public Awareness Campaign.
3. Form a Homeless Court.

## Funding

The communities of Butte County will identify and develop a sizable, sustainable source of funding for all new and existing programs and services to address homelessness in our region through the North Valley Housing Trust Fund, a Nonprofit Resource Center, and a community-wide Marketing and Education program.

### Funding Objectives:

1. Expand the North Valley Housing Trust.
2. Establish a Nonprofit Resource Center.
3. Implement a Marketing/Education Campaign.

## Housing

Butte County housing and service providers will create safe and secure housing options for homeless persons that address gaps in the homeless “continuum of care” and build community.

### Housing Objectives:

1. Institute a Homeless Camp.
2. Develop a Wet Shelter.
3. Implement a Housing-First Program.

## Services

Community partners will create a network of services, under one roof, that are quick and easy to access, are coordinated between service providers, offer earlier intervention to break the cycle of homelessness, and accommodate pets in services and shelters.

### Services Objectives:

1. Create a One-Stop Opportunity Center.
2. Develop Homeless Prevention Programs.
3. Offer Pet Veterinary and Shelter Services.

## Jobs

Community partners will work together to establish a centralized employment resource center, increase employment programs customized to assist the homeless, and develop social enterprise businesses.

### Jobs Objectives:

1. Develop a Central Employment Resource Center.
2. Customize employment programs to homeless persons.
3. Form Business-Shelter Partnerships for Social Enterprise Programs.

## Objective Organization

In order to organize the objectives in a way that makes them achievable, they have been categorized as described below:

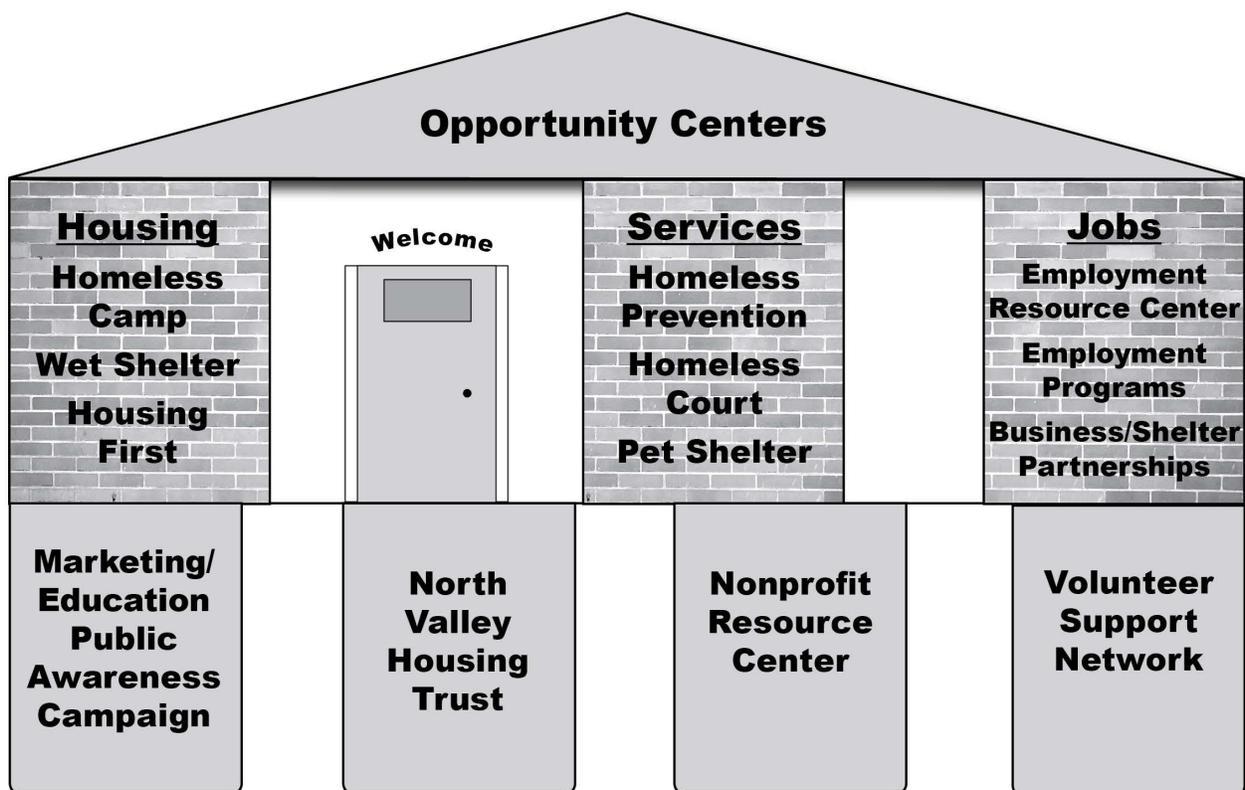
**Foundational Objectives**—The success of these objectives is essential to the achievement of the other 10-Year Strategy objectives.

**Organizational Objective**—This objective provides a physical place to coordinate service delivery, and

connect homeless persons, service providers and volunteers.

**Housing, Services & Jobs Objectives**—These objectives address gaps in the current continuum of services available in Butte County, as identified by the community.

The following chart illustrates how the objectives relate to one another.



## Foundational Objectives

Foundational Objectives generate the resources necessary to achieve the other objectives. These essential resources are: public support, funding, technical support and volunteer engagement. The objectives described below aim to generate these resources. Without these resources, it will not be possible to implement the 10-Year Strategy.

## Public Awareness Campaign

The Public Awareness Campaign, as described in the Community Action chapter, is essential to generate the necessary public support to implement the 10-Year Strategy. It is closely aligned with the Marketing/ Education Campaign described in the Funding chapter. The goals are to dispel myths about homelessness, increase community compassion to do something about the problem, and build public support that motivates funding and collaboration.

Public awareness, marketing and education are integral to all of the other objectives, particularly the North Valley Housing Trust, Volunteer Support Network, and Business-Shelter partnerships for Social Enterprise Programs. The Public Awareness Campaign should closely coordinate with these objectives to present a consistent, recognizable message and branding. In this way, objectives will share resources and increase efficiencies of scale.

### **North Valley Housing Trust**

Funding is obviously essential to implementing any of the 10-Year Strategy objectives. Successful implementation will require raising funds from non-traditional, non-government sources, and combining private and public resources. Objective achievement will also require fund flexibility to meet Butte County's locally-identified needs. The North Valley Housing Trust (NVHT) is a fund-raising vehicle with these characteristics.

NVHT is an established housing trust fund that targets funds for affordable housing in Butte County. Its account is currently managed by the North Valley Community Foundation, which helps to expand its donor base and access other community resources. NVHT raises funds from financial institutions, businesses, civic groups and individuals in the community. Through a partnership with 3CORE, State tax credits are offered to fund investors. NVHT uses local donations and tax credit investments to leverage other federal and state funds that are available specifically to housing trust funds.

It is envisioned that NVHT annual funding priorities will be guided by a community based Board of Directors. These priorities will be guided by community needs and planning documents such as the 10-Year Strategy. NVHT will award grants and loans to local housing and service providers that align with annual funding priorities.

### **Nonprofit Resource Center**

The goal of the Nonprofit Resource Center is to provide technical support to homeless service providers. These service providers are typically stretched thin, which constrains their ability to fundraise. Volunteer professionals will donate time at no-cost or low-cost. The Nonprofit Resource Center will assist with identifying potential grants, grant writing, application

assembly, marketing strategy and marketing implementation. Professionals with experience in the fields of writing, editing, advertising, public relations and fundraising can contribute to this effort.

The Nonprofit Resource Center can potentially support any of the other 10-Year Strategy objectives. It provides a way to extend the effectiveness of the other objectives and service providers with limited resources. It can be closely coordinated with the Volunteer Support Network, described below, as a way to engage community members.

### **Volunteer Support Network**

Volunteer engagement will be key to achieving all of the 10-Year Strategy objectives. This engagement will in turn enhance community awareness of homelessness and fund-raising efforts. While the Public Awareness Campaign prepares the ground for progress, and the North Valley Housing Trust generates resources, the Volunteer Support Network grows the social capital that is critical for success.

The Volunteer Support Network will make it easier for citizens to get involved in eliminating homelessness. This will be done by connecting citizens with homeless individuals and families through a mentorship program. With the support of service providers, volunteers will find ways to contribute their unique talents and skills. This will make services more effective for participating homeless persons. The Volunteer Support Network will also create a network for volunteers to share experiences and assist one another.

The Volunteer Support Network will be most successful if it is housed in a physical location, creating a gathering place where volunteers can connect with homeless individuals, and with other volunteers. This can take place in One-Stop Opportunity Centers, as described below. This is a place to find out about volunteer opportunities, conduct training and orientation, meet with homeless individuals, and share with service providers and other volunteers.

### **Organizational Objective**

The One-Stop Opportunity Center is a central hub for homeless services and volunteer activities. The goal is to create connections, most importantly between homeless persons and community members. The

benefit of a “one-stop” is convenience for those that use it. The environment should be friendly and welcoming, as opposed to institutional and intimidating. Homeless individuals can connect with a number of critical services under one roof. This is important since most services are dispersed throughout the County, making access challenging for people with limited transportation options.

With an eye toward collaboration, resource-sharing and connection, the One-Stop Opportunity Center can convene a number of the 10-Year Strategy objectives. It is an access point for individual assessment and referral to community services. It will house the Volunteer Support Network, Nonprofit Resource Center and Employment Resource Center. It will provide an access point for objectives such as Homeless Prevention, Pet Veterinary and Shelter Services and the Homeless Court. Other local service providers will have a presence there as well so they directly engage homeless individuals. The One-Stop Opportunity Center could also potentially locate the Wet Shelter and/or apartments for the Housing-First Program. Co-locating with housing will likely improve economic feasibility and improve operational efficiency.

The first step in creating One-Stop Opportunity Centers may be one centrally located center within the County. Ultimately, this objective will be most successful if multiple one-stop centers are created in population centers through the County, such as Chico, Paradise, Oroville and Gridley. This will improve access and allow each center to be customized to the unique needs of the surrounding locality.

## Housing, Services and Jobs

The Foundational Objectives and the Organizational Objective described above will support the 10-Year Strategy objectives in the areas of Housing, Services and Jobs. They provide the resources and logistical hub to implement these solutions. The Housing, Services and Jobs objectives fill gaps in the current continuum of available services. These gaps include: shelter and housing for chronically homeless individuals; services that remove barriers to obtaining stable housing; and employment opportunities generated from close collaboration with the business community.

Realistically, not all of the Housing, Services and Jobs objectives will be achieved at one time, or even within the same five-year period. Therefore, it is critical that the Foundational Objectives are the initial focus of countywide efforts to implement the 10-Year Strategy.

# Conclusion

The following themes resonated throughout the 10-Year Strategy community workshops:

- We are a compassionate community.
- Homelessness affects ALL members of the community.
- Let's take ownership of the problem.

The goals and objectives described in this document seek to reinforce these themes. They present a unifying vision for eliminating homelessness in Butte County.

The 10-Year Strategy document is a recipe book of solutions that the community has prioritized as most needed and applicable to our localities. It is a starting point for progress through countywide collaboration. It lays out broad goals and bold ideas. Its intended audience is not a specific group, but Butte County political leaders and residents in general. As such, the 10-Year Strategy is not a detailed strategic plan with assignments and schedules. As entities determine what elements they can take on after assessing their capacity, more targeted plans and programs will emerge.

New collaborations have already evolved out of the 10-Year Strategy dialogue. The North Valley Housing Trust is forming new partnerships and revenue streams. The Chico Housing Action Team (CHAT) is exploring ways to establish a homeless campground. Chico Homeless Animal Outreach (CHAO) and the Task Force on Homeless Pets have begun discussions with shelters about companion animal care. The HelpCentral 211 call center is working with local organizations to coordinate outreach and service

referral. Many other initiatives that began prior to the 10-Year Strategy present resources for further progress, as described in the goals and objectives sections of this document. In addition, the Cities of Chico, Oroville, and Paradise, and Butte County, are drawing upon the 10-Year Strategy as a resource in completing 2014 updates to their respective General Plan Housing Elements.

As the intended audience of the 10-Year Strategy is all Butte County residents, one of its key purposes is to broaden community involvement. We hope to expand the work to eliminate homelessness with attract new partners that will bring fresh ideas, social networks, and resources to bear on the problem of homelessness. Only by expanding involvement and collaboration can we progress beyond what is possible with traditional funding sources and approaches.

Consistent with the theme of expanding community involvement, the Foundational Objectives seek to attract new social and financial capital. Public awareness, volunteerism and community giving create a broad and solid foundation upon which the other objectives can be built. Our success in eliminating homelessness is tightly linked to our ability to make progress in these areas.

It is the intention of the Butte CoC to share the 10-Year Strategy document with the Butte County Board of Supervisors, City and Town Councils, and government staffs, to help build consensus on solutions to homelessness. The Butte CoC will also use the 10-Year Strategy to catalyze discussion and inspire action within the community. Together, we can successfully meet the challenge of homelessness.

- *We are a compassionate community.*
- *Homelessness affects ALL members of the community.*
- *Let's take ownership of the problem.*

# Additional Resources

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The following is an alphabetized list of website links referenced throughout the 10-Year Strategy, along with contact phone numbers when available.

## **1811 Eastlake**

[www.desc.org/1811.html](http://www.desc.org/1811.html)

Project Manager: 206.957.0700

## **Alameda County Homeless Court**

[www.svdp-alameda.org/how-we-help/community-center/homeless-court.html](http://www.svdp-alameda.org/how-we-help/community-center/homeless-court.html)

510.877.9203

## **Arc of Butte County**

[www.arcbutte.org](http://www.arcbutte.org)

530.891.5865

## **Butte CoC 2013 Point-In-Time Homeless Census & Survey Report**

[www.butte-housing.com/resources/organizations/butte-county-coc.php](http://www.butte-housing.com/resources/organizations/butte-county-coc.php)

530.895.4474

## **California State Department of Rehabilitation**

[www.rehab.cahwnet.gov](http://www.rehab.cahwnet.gov)

Chico branch: 530.895.5507

## **Caminar**

[www.caminar.org](http://www.caminar.org)

530.343.4421

## **Central City Concern / Central City Coffee**

[www.centralcitycoffee.org](http://www.centralcitycoffee.org)

503.294.1681

## **Chico Homeless Animal Outreach**

<http://chicohomelessanimaloutreach.org>

530.680.0002

## **Community Action Agency of Butte County (CAA)**

<http://buttecaa.com>

530.712.2600, option 5

## **Community Development Financial Institution**

[www.cdfi.org](http://www.cdfi.org)

202.653.0300

## **Community Working Group (Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara and InnVision Shelter Network the Way Home)**

[www.communityworkinggroup.org/ochistory.html](http://www.communityworkinggroup.org/ochistory.html)

650.853.8672

## **CompassPoint**

[www.compasspoint.org](http://www.compasspoint.org)

510.318.3755

## **Forth Sector**

[www.forthsectordevelopment.org.uk/documents/New\\_BusPlanGuide.pdf](http://www.forthsectordevelopment.org.uk/documents/New_BusPlanGuide.pdf)

## **Help Central of Butte County**

[www.helpcentral.org](http://www.helpcentral.org)

211 or 866.916.3566 (toll free)

## **Homeforall**

[www.homeforallmarin.org](http://www.homeforallmarin.org)

## **Homeward Bound of Marin – Fresh Starts Culinary Academy**

<https://hbofm.org/Home.php>

## **HOPE Services Hawaii**

[www.hopeserviceshawaii.org](http://www.hopeserviceshawaii.org)

808.935.3050

## **Imagine L.A.**

[www.imaginel.a.org](http://www.imaginel.a.org)

323.944.0210

## **Los Angeles County Homeless Court**

[www.ladpss.org/dpss/grow/homeless\\_court.cfm](http://www.ladpss.org/dpss/grow/homeless_court.cfm)

## **Martha's Village**

<http://marthasvillage.org/new/career.html>

## **New Directions Program, Hospital Council of Northern and Central California**

[www.hospitalcouncil.net/overview/new-directions](http://www.hospitalcouncil.net/overview/new-directions)

408.272.6509

## **Nonprofit Resource Center**

[www.nprcenter.org](http://www.nprcenter.org)

916.285.1840

**North Valley Housing Trust**

[www.nvht.org](http://www.nvht.org)

530.513.3116

**Pets of the Homeless**

[www.petsofthehomeless.org/what-we-do](http://www.petsofthehomeless.org/what-we-do)

775.841.7463

**Social Enterprise Alliance**

[www.se-alliance.org/why](http://www.se-alliance.org/why)

**Sonoma Upstream Investments**

[www.sonomaupstream.org](http://www.sonomaupstream.org)

707.565.5800

**St. Vincent de Paul Village**

[www.svdpv.org](http://www.svdpv.org)

619.233.8500

**Taproot Foundation**

[www.taprootfoundation.org](http://www.taprootfoundation.org)

415.359.1423

**The Well Ministry of Rescue**

<http://thewellministryofrescue.org>

530.343.1935