

10-YEAR PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS



JACKSON COUNTY, OREGON
June 2009

Ten Year plans are designed to help prevent and end homelessness - not just manage it.

JACKSON COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE 10-YEAR PLAN

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

STATE OF OREGON, COUNTY OF JACKSON

IN THE MATTER OF ADOPTING THE JACKSON)
COUNTY TEN YEAR PLAN TO END)
HOMELESSNESS)

ORDER NO. 139-09

WHEREAS, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness is encouraging communities throughout the nation to develop ten year plans to end homelessness; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the County to adopt a local Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness to ensure eligibility and effective investment of resources to support the needs of residents who experience homelessness.

Now, therefore,

The Board of County Commissioners of Jackson County ORDERS:

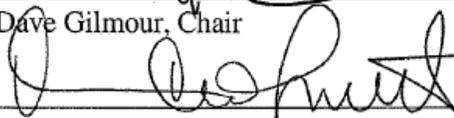
1. Adoption of the Jackson County Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness.

DATED this 3rd day of June, 2009, at Medford, Oregon.

JACKSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Dave Gilmour, Chair



Dennis C.W. Smith, Commissioner



Jack Walker, Commissioner

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**From a father whose family has
experienced Homelessness in
Jackson County**

"I was walking down the sidewalk in the middle of winter with everything we owned in three suitcases- my wife and three daughters following. That's when it hit me that we were homeless and they expected me to do something. Until you experience this there is no way to explain the guilt and fear that consumes you. I could not look them in the eye I was so ashamed. Someone told us about The Salvation Army, so we went there. They asked if I would be willing to work their program and remain clean and sober. I was grateful for the opportunity to get back on track with my life, and without this program there wouldn't be a second chance for me or others. Before coming into this program we, in fourteen years, had never had a savings account. We are doing great, I've gotten a driver's license after never having one in Oregon. My wife and I are both working and have enough money saved for first, last and a deposit to transition into our own home."



Executive Summary

Jackson County, Oregon is joining a nation-wide trend to develop Ten Year Plans to End Homelessness. Jackson County, United Way of Jackson County, and the Jackson County Homeless Task Force have worked closely with community partners to create a plan to reduce the numbers, mitigate the impact, and improve outcomes for people who experience homelessness over the next Ten Years in Jackson County.

The six strategies of Jackson County's Ten Year Plan include:

- 1 Increase the stock of permanent, affordable, and supportive housing for individuals and families who earn $\leq 30\%$ of the Area Median Income (AMI).
- 2 Increase agency coordination and service integration at all levels.
- 3 Provide case management to help people maintain stable rental housing.
- 4 Provide financial assistance and life skills training to help people move into stable housing.
- 5 Develop and increase sustainable emergency and transitional shelter and permanent, supportive housing options for youth and other vulnerable populations as they emerge.
- 6 Develop an ongoing community campaign that highlights emerging issues in the continuum of homelessness.

Each of these six strategies will be implemented through a series of goals and action steps. The Plan identifies the necessity to expand partnerships and relationships with landlords to jointly manage and share the risk of renting to people who have experienced or are at risk of homelessness. The following essential support services must also be addressed to impact homelessness:

- Increase income for the employable and unemployable.
- Increase capacity of substance abuse treatment and mental health services.
- Increase access to health care.
- Increase access to childcare.
- Expand transportation options through the efforts of the Rogue Valley Transportation District.

The Jackson County Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness will serve as a strategic, evolving framework to guide coordinated community efforts that respond to local issues in homelessness as they emerge over the next decade.

Introduction

Jackson County, United Way of Jackson County, and the Jackson County Homeless Task Force have led the community-wide effort to develop the Jackson County Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness. The Ten Year Plan builds upon the existing efforts and plans that are already in place for the Rogue Valley. The Ten Year Plan will be a tool that results in long-term commitments from a broad spectrum of community stakeholders to implement the identified strategies.

This Ten Year Plan initiates a campaign to end homelessness in Jackson County by setting forth a broad range of coordinated strategies that address multiple issues across the continuum of homelessness. Ten Year plans are designed to help prevent and end homelessness - not just manage it. This Plan highlights the recommendations of a county-wide, interdisciplinary planning group who worked over an 18-month period. It is best understood as a framework for strategic directions that the Planning Group has identified. The Plan integrates and enhances existing community planning, efforts and priorities. The result is an even stronger foundation on which to build in the coming months and years to prevent and eliminate homelessness in Jackson County. The plan will continue to evolve over time as a living document that will guide community efforts to respond to emerging issues related to homelessness in Jackson County.

The strategies that are recommended in this document have been formulated by three separate Work Groups:

- Infrastructure,
- Data, and
- Permanent Housing.

These Work Groups were comprised of key individuals from across the county and were charged with creating a set of recommended goals. The Work Groups sought input from various sectors of the community. They also researched other cities' plans and studied best practices.

The next stage of the planning process will focus on integrating the recommendations into a more cohesive whole; engaging more community representatives, identifying lead agencies and critical partners, and identifying funding strategies, outcome measures, and target dates for completion.

Vision and Guiding Principles

Vision: Homelessness in Jackson County, Oregon will end in ten years.

Guiding Principles: The following principles will guide the Plan to end homelessness in the next ten years:

- Individuals and families experiencing homelessness and those who are at-risk of homelessness should have accessible, affordable **housing**, and the supportive services necessary to maintain that housing.
- Individuals and families experiencing homelessness and those who are at-risk of homelessness should receive **coordinated services** from various agencies to help them secure and maintain housing, to meet their individual and family needs, and to maximize their independence and integration within the community.
- Preventative protocols should be in place to ensure that individuals and families are able to maintain their housing. This must include a system that provides coordinated and consistent **case management** and access to services and assistance that contribute to housing stability such as **financial assistance programs** and **life skills classes**.
- The Plan will be modified over time to meet the changing needs of the community.

These guiding principles lead to and are reflected in the Plan's six main strategic priority areas.

Strategies at a Glance

At the core of this Plan are six broad strategies:

1 Increase the stock of permanent, affordable, and supportive housing for individuals and families who earn \leq 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

- Identify current housing providers and potential housing providers.
- Hold a forum to discuss partnership and collaboration needs with respect to housing development.
- Explore partnerships to rehabilitate existing motels into single room occupancy units for people experiencing homelessness who have disabilities.
- Explore technical assistance options and funding for capacity building of nonprofit housing developers.
- Research funding options to develop SROs.
- Develop more housing stock targeted to populations who earn \leq 30% of the AMI.
- Explore possibility of establishing a HOME consortium for increased HUD funding.
- Explore implementation of rapid re-housing/“Housing First” models.

2 Increase agency coordination and service integration at all levels.

- Continue a system-wide examination of agencies providing emergency services with the goal of maximizing effective use of available emergency funding with an increased focus on keeping people in their homes.
 - Continue to promote agency coordination and service integration at all levels.
-

Strategies at a Glance, continued

3 Provide case management to help people maintain stable rental housing.

- Train personal navigators/mentors to help people through Social Security Administration, Department of Human Services and other systems.
 - Enhance discharge planning across disciplines with annual training seminar.
 - Ensure adequate aftercare for people who successfully complete transitional programs.
 - Standardize assessment/ intake form.
-

4 Provide financial assistance and life skills training to help people move into stable housing.

- Increase staffing and funds for deposit, rent, and utility assistance programs.
 - Increase consumer financial management skills by providing classes.
 - Increase consumer access to mainstream financial instruments, such as checking and savings accounts.
 - Increase access to tenant skills classes – promoting referrals by social service agencies and including in outreach efforts.
 - Duplicate/expand the Housing Authority of Jackson County’s Family Self-Sufficiency model.
-

5 Develop and increase sustainable emergency and transitional shelter and permanent, supportive housing options for youth and other vulnerable populations as they emerge.

- Support development of youth emergency shelter.
 - Begin development of permanent supportive housing for women with mental illness.
 - Continue to monitor status of service capacity for homeless veterans.
-

Strategies at a Glance, continued

6 Develop an ongoing community campaign to highlight emerging issues in the continuum of homelessness.

- Convene a workgroup to establish data collection and reporting methodology.
 - Seek partnerships and funding for data collection and publication.
 - Create and publish an annual report card on the progress of ending homelessness in Jackson County.
 - Create an annual public event, Project Homeless Connect, to provide services to the homeless and to raise community awareness of the issue.
 - Create governmental champions of the Plan by approaching all jurisdictions in Jackson County, to encourage ownership and involvement.
 - Publically unveil the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness.
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Context for Homelessness in Jackson County

Who is Homeless in Jackson County?

For most local residents the very obvious answer to the question is “Those panhandlers standing at the freeway exit and on corners.” However, those relatively few individuals in numbers belie the true scope of homelessness in our community. The homeless do live on the Greenway along Bear Creek; they live in cars, in shelters, in transitional programs and doubled or tripled up with other families. The homeless are teens who “couch surf” because they can’t return home for one reason or another. They are families who couldn’t pay the rent due to loss of work, disability or drug abuse. They are people with mental illness or developmental disabilities who just can’t quite make it. And there are even a few who chose the freedom of being homeless. Some are on disability, some work and some have no income. Some hide, some are obvious and some do their best to blend in. Some are homeless for lengthy periods and some are just going through a difficult period of their lives. All of them lack the support of a personal network of family or friends to help get them through tough times. What may be surprising to readers is that at any one given time there are six to nine hundred homeless individuals of all ages in our valley.

It is challenging to count the homeless. Every year the Jackson County Homeless Task Force, a coalition made up of agencies that provide services to the homeless, does its best to get a handle on the number. It conducts a one-night shelter count, street outreach and a week-long survey of the homeless who go to agencies for assistance.

In January 2009, 899 people were accounted for in these two surveys. (*See Appendix for full survey. 2009 data may include some duplicate veteran counts.*)

- 82.3% were single, 16.2% were homeless families.
- 1.3% were children 17 years old or under; 2.5% were seniors 70 years or older.
- 45.4% reported substance abuse, 28.5% physical disability, 37.8% emotional disorder, 7.9% developmental disability.
- There was a range of self-reported reasons cited as the cause of losing their last living arrangement. The top three were: unemployment (32%), couldn’t afford rent (27.6%), and mental/emotional disorder (23.6%). Some respondents reported being homeless by choice (16.9 %).

People who provide services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness believe there are many more people who are not counted in the annual survey: some don’t want to be counted, while others just don’t come in for assistance during the week of the survey. Local school districts have specialists who keep track of hundreds of homeless youth living on their own or with their families. Only a few of these youth are reflected in the 2009 Annual Homeless Count.

What is it Like to Experience Homelessness in Jackson County?

There are a variety of resources available for people who are about to lose or have lost their housing. However, many of these resources are currently limited and at risk of being reduced when demand is increasing due to the state of the economy. For example, there are three emergency shelters in Jackson County all located in Medford; the Men's and Women's Gospel Missions and St. Vincent de Paul's emergency shelter program. The Salvation Army provides transitional housing for individuals and families. Interfaith Care Community of Medford and Rogue Retreat provide transitional housing for men and women separately, including veterans. A special program at DASIL for people with disabilities experiencing homelessness provides rental subsidy for permanent housing. Many agencies and some churches provide meals, food boxes, vouchers for clothing and household goods, and bus tokens for appointments or work.

Experiencing homelessness can increase anyone's vulnerability for a variety of health and safety risks. This can be exacerbated for certain populations, such as women and those with mental illness, developmental or physical disabilities who have an even greater susceptibility to victimization which is further compounded by homelessness. Additionally, it can be even more difficult to ensure access and provision of the available services for people with special needs who are homeless.

Once people transition into their own home they can receive assistance in preparing for employment and obtaining a job from The Job Council and the Oregon Employment Department. Veterans can receive a number of services from the Homeless Outreach Project of the Veterans Administration Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and Clinics (VA SORCC). Alcohol and drug treatment from OnTrack, Inc., the Addictions Recovery Center and mental health services from Jackson County Mental Health are available if needed. Homeless teens and families with children can receive assistance at the Maslow Project, a drop-in center with wraparound support services. Hearts with a Mission is working to open an emergency shelter for teens who are homeless and unaccompanied by their parents.

For people who are on the verge of losing their housing, some assistance is available. For example, ACCESS provides rent and utility assistance. The state Self Sufficiency Office provides assistance to families who are receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (often referred to as "welfare"). People who have difficulty obtaining housing, due to poor tenant history, have the opportunity to complete an 8-week class @ DASIL, called Second Chance Renters Rehabilitation, and receive a certificate to be presented to prospective landlords.

There is the potential for an emerging population of families experiencing home foreclosures who are at risk of experiencing homelessness, perhaps for the first time. Jackson County has seen a significant increase in home foreclosures. In March 2009, 1 in every 97 housing units was in foreclosure, an estimated 1,707 homes (www.RealtyTrac.com, April 2009).

Community Collaboration: The Jackson County Homeless Task Force

The Homeless Task Force is a committee of the Jackson County Community Services Consortium. Active since 1989, the Task Force is comprised of approximately 25 public and private non-profit social service agencies and non-profit housing providers.

The Homeless Task Force meets monthly to provide an opportunity for agencies to check in with each other, to share information and resources, to work together on public events that educate the community about homelessness and to bring as many financial resources to this area as possible. The Homeless Task Force has four active subcommittees: Homeless Veterans Committee, Homeless Youth Networking Council, Accessible Affordable Housing Work Group and Project Homeless Connect. It is at the subcommittee level that gaps are identified and addressed with resources specific to each population. The subcommittees monitor needs and services for their populations and, when necessary, develop and implement collaborative projects to remedy specific gaps in services or to resolve issues.

The Annual Homeless Survey and One Night Shelter Count are coordinated efforts of all Task Force Members. Sub-committees of the Homeless Task Force focus on the needs and gaps in services to particular homeless populations (e.g. youth, veterans). The results of the 2009 Homeless Survey and One Night Shelter Count can be found in the Appendices.

In its role as community educator about homelessness, the Task Force takes frequent action. For example, the Homeless Task Force and its subcommittees:

- Holds annual press conferences to publicize the results of the homeless count
- Produced two community-wide conferences on homelessness; one on accessible affordable housing and one on McKinney funding for homeless youth programs
- Commissioned a photography exhibit to put faces to the local homeless issue, called "Portraits of Disconnection"
- Invited Wyman Winston, the Assistant Director of the Portland Development Commission, to speak to local elected officials and planners about creative options to encourage the development of more affordable housing.

Strategic planning is a critical function performed by the Task Force. For example, working population by population, gaps have been identified and collaborative solutions developed. A "rolling" 5-year strategic plan is updated annually in conjunction with the federally directed Continuum of Care process whereby the community puts in a joint application for the federal Housing and Urban Development funding for a variety of projects. Examples of collaborative projects that have been developed in the last few years are:

- Transitional housing for veterans, provided by Interfaith Care Community of Medford, in cooperation with the Veterans Administration in White City. (Homeless Veterans Committee)

- Home At Last permanent supportive housing for people with disabilities, operated by DASIL and Senior and Disability Services of Rogue Valley Council of Governments. (Accessible Affordable Housing Work Group)
- Second Chance Renters Rehabilitation Classes, coordinated by DASIL, and taught by a number of other agencies with expertise in life skills. (Full Homeless Task Force)

For years, the strategic planning process identified a lack of services and emergency shelter beds for homeless teens as the highest unmet need. Community partnerships of agencies represented on the Homeless Youth Networking Council successfully resulted in the Maslow Project Service Integration Center for Youth in Transition. The Homeless Youth Networking Council also works with the Child Welfare Teen Team to address the needs of teens in the foster care system. School Homeless Resource Advocates are developing a network between districts to enable collaborative problem-solving. Finally, but not least, a new organization, Hearts with a Mission, was created specifically to develop a shelter for homeless teens in Medford.

Homelessness is a complex problem with a multitude of causes. The long-term effects of having nowhere to call home can be exhausting, demoralizing and dehumanizing for individuals and families. This is why it is key for social service and housing agencies to work collaboratively and respectfully with people who are experiencing homelessness to find appropriate solutions. The end goal is permanent housing of one's own.

Ten Year Plans to End Homelessness

Jackson County is joining a nation-wide trend to develop Ten Year Plans to End Homelessness. More than 300 communities across the United States are working on ten year plans that include a variety of strategies ranging from preventing homelessness to creating permanent housing for the chronic homeless. There is increasing national attention on preventing and addressing homelessness in response to the overwhelming need combined with societal costs.

An estimated 744,000 people are homeless in America on any given night and 2.5 to 3.5 *million* people experience homelessness each year¹. It is more expensive to address homelessness in hospitals, jails, shelters and schools than it is to prevent homelessness from occurring in the first place. The societal cost of managing homelessness adds up to billions of dollars each year. Ten-year plans present an opportunity for communities to align resources, policies, and programs in an integrated, effective way.

In the fall of 2006, the Jackson County Board of Commissioners decided to create a Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness after hearing a presentation by Paul Carlson, the Northwest region representative of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), with additional information presented by David Christian, Chair of the Jackson County Homeless Task Force.

USICH is a federal council leading a national research-based initiative to end chronic homelessness. Ashland City Council Member Cate Hartzell invited Paul Carlson to give several presentations in Southern Oregon after seeing a similar USICH presentation at Governor Kulongoski's summit on homelessness in the spring of 2006.

“Homelessness is a national problem with local solutions. No one federal agency, no one level of government and no one sector of the community can reach the goal of ending homelessness alone. Federal agency collaborations and partnerships with state and local governments and the private and faith-based and community sectors are key to achieving the objectives of preventing and ending homelessness.”- *United States Interagency Council on Homelessness*²

“I am inspired by the federal effort because of its common sense approach to the economics of homelessness. Its message that it's cheaper to respond to homeless people than to ignore them appeals to the business community and fiscally conservative taxpayers. It's great to see businesses across the country engaging in this effort,” said Cate Hartzell, who also works directly with the homeless in her position with the Department of Human Services.

Although Ten Year Plans take many shapes depending upon local needs, the most effective plans share four components:

- (1) Planning for outcomes,
- (2) Prevention,
- (3) Intervention, and
- (4) Building infrastructure.

For more descriptive information about these components, visit the websites for the National Alliance to End Homelessness (www.naeh.org) and the Interagency Council on Homelessness (www.ich.gov).

Another essential ingredient for Ten Year Plans that gets results (instead of sitting on a shelf) is the involvement of key stakeholders such as local policy makers, agency heads, business and civic leaders, social service agencies, faith based organizations and churches, the general public, and people who have experienced homelessness. Engaging people in the planning process who can make decisions and commit resources on behalf of those whom they represent increases broad community ownership and drives strategies that will be meaningful and make a difference.

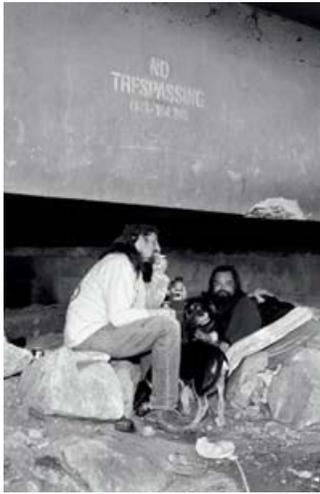
Once the Jackson County Commissioners committed to supporting the process, a small group of people began to meet to discuss how best to implement the planning process. In June of 2007, the County, United Way and the Homeless Task Force hosted a kick-off meeting for the Ten Year Planning Process. Over 100 participants attended, representing jurisdictions, law enforcement, medical providers, human service providers, the Veterans Administration, faith communities, business people, higher education, interested citizens, and homeless people, themselves.

A “fishbowl activity,” where people candidly discussed the reasons they lost their housing, brought home the reality of homelessness in our community and the imminence of the issue to the lives of all residents. The outcome of the meeting was the commitment by a majority of the attendees to participate in the planning process at one of three levels: steering committee, planning group or touchstone group. The latter would serve as a sounding board in response to the efforts of the planning group.

In Jackson County, the executive steering committee for The Plan, called the Planning Group, includes representatives from both public and private sector organizations including leaders from:

- Business,
- Health Care,
- Employment Services,
- Social Services,
- Housing Services,
- City and County Government,
- State Mainstream Benefits Agencies, and
- Citizens.

The Planning Group was responsible for completing a plan that will be effective.



**From a person who
successfully transitioned
out of homelessness
in Jackson County**

“In October of 2002 I went to jail on various charges including possession of controlled substances. Shortly thereafter, my wife and two sons, ages 7 and 8, were homeless. On Dec 2, 2002 they checked into The Salvation Army Hope House. At that time we had nothing left except each other and 30 thousand dollars debt in collection. Both my wife and I at this time decided our lives had to change. We realized that drugs and alcohol had destroyed our lives. So in March of 2003, when I got out of jail my wife was well established. She was working full time, had the boys in a nearby school and was doing quite well. I came in to the shelter and talked to the case manager. Together we came up with an action plan, and it worked around the fact that I had one more court case hanging over my head. My wife was working and I took every part time job I could get. So by May of 2003 we pulled a good portion of our savings. I came into the office and, with the case manager’s help, started contacting creditors. It took all day, but in the end we had eliminated or set up payments on over 40% of our debt.... Now my wife and I have a car, some solid clean time, and new hope. We came into The Hope House broken- 21 years of drug addiction and criminal history behind us. We left August 10, 2004 debt free with a car and a fresh chance at life. Today I am proud to say that we have over 4 ½ years clean and sober. I have a driver’s license after 20 years of not having one. We both have full time jobs and are renting a house. We’ve been working hard on establishing a credit line. And believe for the first time that some day we will buy our own home.”

The Plan

Jackson County’s Ten Year Plan has six main strategies:

-
- 1** Increase the stock of permanent, affordable, and supportive housing for individuals and families who earn $\leq 30\%$ of the Area Median Income (AMI).

 - 2** Increase agency coordination and service integration at all levels.

 - 3** Provide case management to help people maintain stable rental housing.

 - 4** Provide financial assistance and life skills training to help people move into stable housing.

 - 5** Develop and increase sustainable emergency and transitional shelter and permanent, supportive housing options for youth and other vulnerable populations as they emerge.

 - 6** Develop an ongoing community campaign that highlights emerging issues in the continuum of homelessness.
-

These six strategies are further broken down into a series of goals and action steps in order of priority.

Strategy 1

Increase the stock of permanent, affordable, and supportive housing for individuals and families who earn $\leq 30\%$ of the Area Median Income (AMI).

One of the most effective ways to end homelessness is to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of affordable housing available to those with extremely low household incomes, including supportive housing for individuals and families who are faced with complex challenges and thus, need services to remain housed.

In order to implement this strategy, new partnerships must be formed and funding streams must be identified to rehabilitate and/or develop single room occupancy (SRO) dwellings, and new models for providing permanent and supportive housing, such as Housing First must be explored.

This first strategy addresses one of the systemic problems of homelessness—affordable housing—that leads to crisis poverty, of which homelessness is an extreme example. The intermediate outcome of this strategy is an increase in affordable housing stock along the continuum. This includes a variety of solutions to meet the needs of varying populations, such as Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units, special need populations, and transitional housing resources. The following tables illustrate the need for more permanent and affordable housing for individuals and families with extremely low household incomes in Jackson County.

2009 Area Median Income for Family of Four (AMI)		
	Oregon	Jackson County
Annual	\$61,100	\$55,400
Monthly	\$5,091	\$4,616
30% of AMI ¹	\$18,330	\$16,620

The 2009 Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment in Jackson County is \$745. In order to afford this amount of rent and utilities, without paying more than 30% of income on housing, a household must earn \$29,800 annually. The Housing Wage in Jackson County is \$14.33, assuming a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year.

Fair Market Rent		
	Oregon (2008)	Jackson County (2009)
Zero-Bedroom	\$517	\$499
One-Bedroom	\$603	\$593
Two-Bedroom	\$721	\$745
Three-Bedroom	\$1,037	\$1,084

In Jackson County, a minimum wage worker earns an hourly wage of \$8.40. In order to afford the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment, a minimum wage earner must work 68 hours per week, 52 weeks per year.

2008 Renter Household Income		
	Oregon	Jackson County
Estimated Median ²	\$33,000	\$27,876
% Needed to Afford 2 BR FMR	87%	105%
Rent Affordable at Median	\$825	\$697
% Renters Unable to Afford 2 BR FMR	44%	51%

¹ An annual income of 30% of AMI or less is considered the federal standard for Extremely Low Income households.

² Estimated by comparing the percent of renter median household income required to afford the two-bedroom FMR to the percent distribution of renter household income as a percent of the median within the state, as measured using 2006 American Community Survey data.

The following table summarizes the specific action steps that are proposed to implement this strategy.

Strategy 1: Increase the stock of permanent, affordable, and supportive housing for individuals and families who earn \leq 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI).			
Action Steps	Lead	Critical Partners	Benchmarks
1. Identify current and potential housing providers.	Jackson County Homeless Task Force		Number of current housing providers identified. Number of potential housing providers identified.
2. Hold a forum to discuss needs for new partnerships and collaborations around housing development.	Jackson County Homeless Task Force		Forum held. Outcome of forum is reported to critical partners and providers.
3. Identify partnerships to rehabilitate existing motels into single room occupancy (SRO) units for homeless with disabilities.	Jackson County Homeless Task Force		Number of partners identified.
4. Identify technical assistance options/ funding for capacity building of non-profit housing developers.	TBD		Number of technical assistance options/funding identified.
5. Identify funding options to develop SROs.	Jackson County Homeless Task Force		Number of funding options identified.
6. Increase housing stock targeted to people at \leq 30% AMI.	Accessible Affordable Housing Subcommittee		Number of new housing units developed that target people at \leq 30% AMI.
7. Explore possibility of establishing a HOME consortium for increased HUD funding	City of Medford	Governmental jurisdictions of Jackson County, Ashland, Medford & Central Point	Hold meetings with partners to establish consortium.
8. Explore implementation of “rapid re-housing” / “Housing First” models.	TBD		Study best practices. Hold meetings of lead and critical partners to discuss next steps.

Action Step 8 of Strategy 1 refers to two strategies that have been used successfully in other places in the United States: “Rapid Re-housing” and “Housing First.” More research is necessary in order to evaluate whether they are appropriate and implementable in Jackson County.

“Rapid Re-housing” is a program of case management and other services to move families from homelessness into permanent housing, with an emphasis on shortening the period of time they are homeless. This process includes assistance with finding housing and, possibly, working with the landlord to allow them to rent, in spite of a poor tenant history. The program also provides initial financial assistance for rent and utilities. The individual or family may require additional case management assistance once they are housed, to maintain their situation. This program reduces the time an individual or family is in a shelter, and by-passes transitional programs altogether, in an attempt to get life back to “normal” as soon as possible. It assumes the participants have sufficient ongoing income to pay rent where they are placed.

“Housing First” is a program that places individuals into permanent supportive housing, no matter their state of sobriety, rather than using the possibility of permanent housing as a carrot to encourage participation in substance abuse and mental health treatment. The system has been shown to be effective in stabilizing individuals who want to take advantage of treatment, increasing their rates of success. However, there are financial and societal barriers that must be considered when deciding whether and how to implement a Housing First program.

Strategy 2

Increase agency coordination and service integration at all levels.

Increasing the supply of permanent and supportive housing is critical to any effort to end homelessness. While this Plan places its first priority on housing, there is an equally urgent need to ensure that people receive the services they need to secure and sustain housing. For those individuals and families who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness, services are crucial to their financial stability, self-sufficiency, and well-being.

The complexity of homelessness underscores the need for various agencies and sectors within the community to work together to coordinate their services and thus, increase their effectiveness at all levels. The intermediate outcome of this strategy is to strengthen the service system in Jackson County, including an increase in the effective use of available emergency funding with a focus on keeping people in their homes.

The following table summarizes the specific action steps that are proposed to implement this strategy.

Strategy 2: Increase agency coordination and service integration at all levels.

Action Steps	Lead	Critical Partners	Benchmarks
1. Conduct a system-wide examination of agencies providing emergency services.	Jackson County Homeless Task Force	Emergency service providers	Community inventory of existing service capacity and gaps.
2. Standardize assessment/intake forms.	Jackson County Community Services Consortium	Workgroup of community service agencies	Agreement reached on standardized assessment/intake form. Form disseminated to programs for system-wide use.
3. Develop a system of real-time information sharing about available client services and resources	United Way of Jackson County, Community Works	Emergency service providers	Community inventory of opportunities and barriers between existing information and referral strategies.

Strategy 3

Provide case management to help people obtain and maintain stable rental housing.

An essential component for ending homelessness is a system that provides coordinated and consistent case management. The third strategy is a preventative measure aimed at ensuring individuals and families maintain their rental housing. This strategy also emphasizes another preventative measure, discharge planning. Discharge plans should be well coordinated with community agencies for individuals leaving mental health facilities, foster care, jails and prisons, and hospitals who are at risk of homelessness.

The following table summarizes the specific action steps that are proposed to implement this strategy.

Strategy 3: Provide case management to help people obtain and maintain stable rental housing.

Action Steps	Lead	Critical Partners	Benchmarks
1. Train personal navigators/mentors to help people through SSA, DHS, and other systems.	Center for Non-Profit Legal Services (training)	Jackson County Homeless Task Force Rogue Valley Manor Community Services-RSVP	Number of navigators/mentors trained. Number of people served by navigator/ mentor. Number of people who obtain or maintain stable rental housing as a result of mentorship.
2. Improve discharge planning across disciplines.	TBD	Jackson County Community Services Consortium, Professional groups	Develop and hold an annual discharge planning training seminar. Number of discharge planners who attend annual training seminar.
3. Ensure adequate aftercare for people who successfully complete transitional programs.	Transitional housing service providers	Jackson County Homeless Task Force	Number of people who receive adequate aftercare upon completing a transitional program.

Strategy 4

Provide financial assistance and life skills training to help people move into stable housing.

This fourth strategy presents another effort aimed at homeless prevention. Individuals and families must have access to services and assistance that contribute to their housing stability such as assistance with rent or utility bills and access to mainstream financial instruments such as checking and savings accounts.

The following table summarizes the specific action steps that are proposed to implement this strategy.

Strategy 4: Provide financial assistance and life skills training to help people move into stable housing.

Action Steps	Lead	Critical Partners	Benchmarks
1. Increase staffing and funds for deposit, rent, and utility assistance programs.	ACCESS	Jackson County Community Services Consortium	Number of new staff employed. Percent increase in funding for deposit, rent, and utility programs.
2. Increase consumer financial management skills.	Consumer Credit Counseling Service	Jackson County Community Services Consortium	Number of individuals who complete class in financial management skills. Number of individuals who increase their financial management skills.
3. Increase consumer access to mainstream financial instruments, such as checking and savings accounts	Banks	Agencies that provide case management services	Number of individuals who are referred to banks. Number of individuals who open a checking and/or saving account.
4. Increase consumer access to tenant skills classes.	DASIL, St. Vincent de Paul	CNPLS, CCCS, Avista, SO Rental Owners Association	Number of individuals who are referred by social service agencies to tenant skills class. Number of individuals who complete class in tenant skills.
5. Duplicate/expand HAJC Family Self-Sufficiency model.	HAJC	Jackson County Homeless Task Force, Goodwill	Number of families who participate in programs.

Strategy 5

Develop and increase sustainable emergency and transitional shelter and permanent, supportive housing options for youth and other vulnerable populations as they emerge.

The Jackson County Homeless Task Force focuses on individual homeless populations through its system of sub-committees. Over time the sub-committees have developed collaborative projects to address gaps in the overall system of housing and services. Through the past few years the lack of emergency shelter beds for teens has been identified as a serious gap. During the past year one group, Hearts with a Mission has made significant strides in the development of a youth shelter, though it is not yet in

operation. It will require the support and coordination of a variety of service providers and funding sources to bring the shelter fully to fruition.

Another population that has been identified as falling through the cracks is that of homeless women with mental illness. Creating permanent supportive housing for those women is next on the “to do” list of the Homeless Task Force through the Accessible Affordable Housing Work Group.

The following table summarizes the specific action steps that are proposed to implement this strategy.

Strategy 5. Develop and increase sustainable emergency and transitional shelter and permanent, supportive housing options for youth and other vulnerable populations as they emerge.			
Action Steps	Lead	Critical Partners	Benchmarks
1. Support development of youth emergency shelter for both in-school and out of school teens from 10-17 years of age.	Hearts with a Mission	Youth Service Providers, Faith Based Community	Number of emergency shelter beds.
2. Begin development of Permanent Supportive Housing for women with mental illness who are homeless.	DASIL	Accessible Affordable Housing Work Group	Meetings are held Planning begins, Funding sources researched
3. Continue to monitor status of service capacity for homeless veterans.	Veterans Subcommittee of the Homeless Task Force	VASORCC, Salvation Army, Interfaith Care Community	Annual review of local data

Strategy 6

Develop an ongoing community campaign to highlight emerging issues in the continuum of homelessness.

Successful approaches to address systemic causes of homelessness and increase service coordination, which are necessary to prevent and end homelessness, depends in large measure on having good information to track progress, evaluate results, and determine

whether resources are being used most efficiently. Good data is also essential to ensure accountability to the community and to build public support by demonstrating that progress is being made to prevent and end homelessness. To this end, the sixth strategy highlights the need to convene a workgroup, build partnerships, and secure funding to develop a strategic public awareness campaign about homelessness, as well as to track the progress of this Plan over time.

The following table summarizes the specific action steps that are proposed to implement this strategy.

Strategy 6: Develop an ongoing community campaign to highlight emerging issues in the continuum of homelessness.			
Action Steps	Lead	Critical Partners	Benchmarks
1. Convene work group to develop strategic public awareness campaign	Jackson County Homeless Task Force		Workgroup convened. Key issues and messages defined.
2. Convene a workgroup to establish data collection and reporting methodology.	ACCESS, Jackson County Homeless Task Force	Health care, business, and government sectors.	Workgroup convened. Agreement reached on data collection and report methodology.
3. Seek partnerships and funding for data collection and publication	ACCESS, Jackson County Homeless Task Force	United Way, Southern Oregon University (SOU)	Partnerships formalized. Funding secured for data collection and publication. Annual report card published.
4. Create an annual public event, Project Homeless Connect, to provide services to the homeless and to raise community awareness of the issue.	Project Homeless Connect Committee	All service providers, the press	Event takes place on June 5, 2009.
5. Create Governmental Champions of the Plan	Ten Year Planning Group	Homeless Task Force	Present plan at Jackson County Commissioners meeting Develop a common PowerPoint presentation Make presentations to every jurisdiction in Jackson County
4. Publically unveil the Ten Year Plan	Homeless Task Force	Ten Year Planning Group	Hold Press Conference at Project Connect Event, 6/5/09

Community Partnerships

In addition to the six main strategies, this Plan has identified the following Community Partnerships as a critical component toward meeting the housing needs of individuals and families who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness.

- *Build partnerships and relationships with landlords to jointly manage and share the risk of renting to people who have experienced or are at risk of homelessness.* The goal of these partnerships is to initiate a dialogue with landlords about how to best provide rental housing to people who are experiencing or who are at risk of homelessness.
 - A starting point toward achieving this goal is to partner with the Southern Oregon Rental Owners Association to begin the discussion on issues surrounding rental housing and homelessness.
 - Create and maintain a housing stability fund to decrease the risk to landlords.

Essential Support Services

This Plan has also identified five Essential Support Services. These services are interrelated to the experience of homelessness and must be addressed to effectively prevent and end homelessness in ten years.

- ***Increase income for the employable and unemployable. To implement this service it will be necessary to:***
 - Intervene early in the application process to assist SSI applicants and other public benefits claimants through the hearing and appeals process.
 - Increase education among potential recipients of benefits (e.g., Earned Income Tax Credit/Childcare Tax Credit) through a community campaign that targets businesses, churches, service agencies, employers, and schools.
 - Connect adults with disabilities and disadvantaged youth with school and work opportunities that will help them reach their full potential.
 - Support the efforts of the Workforce Development Council to convene a learning group that will examine workforce skills and employment opportunities. Focus one or more Homeless Task Force meetings on employment and invite key players (Vocational Rehabilitation, Employment Department, Rogue Community College, Southern Oregon University, Southern Oregon Goodwill Industries, etc.)

- ***Increase capacity of substance abuse treatment and mental health services.*** To implement this service it will be necessary to:
 - Decrease the time that intervention services are provided when an individual is in need.
 - Convene a task force to assess substance abuse treatment and mental health service gaps in the County.
 - Support the efforts of the Community Crisis Response Project.

- ***Increase access to health care.*** To implement this service it will be necessary to:
 - Advocate for expansion of the Oregon Health Plan (OHP), especially in the area of re-enrollment.
 - Increase the number of Jackson County’s children covered by the Children’s Health Insurance Program through advocacy and outreach efforts.
 - Research options for increasing access to healthcare for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
 - Follow and participate in discussions on the state of Oregon’s health care expansion activities, including promotion of awareness about expanded opportunities/eligibility through federal stimulus funding.

- ***Increase access to childcare.*** To implement this service it will be necessary to:
 - Convene county and state childcare experts and individuals seeking childcare services to examine and discuss efforts at increasing the capacity, quality and affordability of childcare.

- ***Expand transportation options through the efforts of the Rogue Valley Transportation District.*** To implement this service it will be necessary to:
 - Convene a strategy group to develop community solutions to transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, those experiencing homelessness, and low-income. For example, shuttle service between service agencies.

Summary

The strategies included in this plan reflect the expertise of a broad range of dedicated community partners who believe that this plan will be a valuable tool for improving the status of homelessness in Jackson County. The prioritization of these strategies may look different at any point in time, depending upon the current community needs. The strategies will be evaluated on an ongoing basis and modifications will be made as necessary. The Plan will be used as a tool to engage broader community stakeholders in resolving the issues surrounding homelessness. The Jackson County Homeless Task Force will be the interdisciplinary community group that oversees the implementation and necessary revisions in the Plan over time.

A frequently asked question is, “Can we really end homelessness in ten years?” Other communities are seeing dramatic results as a result of their plans. For example, Portland, Oregon has already exceeded some of their Ten Year Plan goals developed four years ago. They exceeded the goal of 565 by placing 1,039 chronically homeless people into housing. They also exceeded a similar goal by placing 717 homeless families into housing, well over the goal of 500.³

Regardless of whether homelessness is completely eradicated, it is possible to prevent more people from experiencing homelessness and to shorten and improve the experience for people who are homeless. Southern Oregon has a strong history of working together with determination to meet the needs of the community. This Jackson County collaboration will also yield results: a future with fewer residents experiencing homelessness.

Appendices

Logic Model

Long Term Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Jackson County Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness Components	Status
End Homelessness in Jackson County by 2019	Increase the number of people who qualify or are able to rent	Provide case management to help people maintain stable rental housing	High Priority Strategy
		Build partnerships and relationships with landlords to jointly manage and share the risk of renting to people who have experienced or are at risk of homelessness	Key Community Partnership
		Increase income for the employable and unemployable	Essential Support Service
		Provide financial assistance/life skills training to help people move into stable housing	Medium Priority Strategy
	Increase affordable housing stock along the continuum, including single room occupancy dwellings	Increase the stock of permanent, affordable and supportive housing for individuals and families who earn $\leq 30\%$ of the Area Median Income	High Priority Strategy
	Increase housing options across the continuum for exceptionally vulnerable populations	Develop and increase emergency and transitional shelter and permanent, supportive housing options for youth	Medium Priority Strategy
	Strengthen service systems	Increase capacity of substance abuse treatment and mental health services	Essential Support Service
		Increase access to health care	Essential Support Service
		Increase access to childcare	Essential Support Service
		Increase agency coordination and service integration at all levels	High Priority Strategy
		Expand transportation options through the efforts of the Rogue Valley Transportation District	Essential Support Service
	Increase community awareness of homelessness	Develop an ongoing community campaign that highlights emerging issues in the continuum of homelessness	Medium Priority Strategy

Ten Things You Can Do

1. Learn about homelessness and educate others.
2. Support the development of affordable housing.
3. Contact your local elected officials and ask them what they are doing to support homeless children and families. Ask for their support of local initiatives and programs. Ask them to establish a Plan to End Homelessness in Your Community.
4. Volunteer at a local shelter – no matter what you do for a living, you can help the homeless with your on-the-job talent and skills.
5. Volunteer at a soup kitchen.
6. Donate groceries, toys and money to local homeless shelters.
7. Donate leftover food and flowers from catered events.
8. Become a landlord to a family that is transitioning out of a homeless shelter.
9. Help a family move or provide "house warming gifts" such as linens, dishes, pots and pans, small appliances, and lamps for children, youth and families who are moving out of the shelter and into their own homes.
10. Ask local television stations to schedule educational programs on homelessness. Your encouragement and praise of such programs can keep them on the air.

Future and Evolving Issues

(To be addressed over time by the Jackson County Homeless Task Force)

1. Discussion of community vision for “ending homelessness” in Jackson County.
2. Articulate strategies for each underserved or over-represented sub-population identified in the annual counts.
3. Identify opportunities to expand and enhance partnerships between the Homeless Youth Networking Council and the Child Welfare Teen Team.
4. Make employment the focus of a Homeless Task Force meeting, inviting representatives from The Job Council, RCC, The Employment Department and other members of the Workforce Development Council.
5. Build the relationship between the Jackson County Homeless Task Force and Law Enforcement Agencies.

Results of 2009 Homeless Survey and One Night Shelter Count

January 2009

899 Total Surveys Completed

- 1) **Have you been continuously homeless for a year or more, or had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years? (703 responses)**
Yes ---- 66% No ---- 34%

- 2) **Please select your Household Type: (837 responses)**
Single Adult (18 or older) ---- 82.3% Couple without children ---- 3.6%
One parent family with children ---- 9.7% Two parent family with children -- 2.9%
Unaccompanied Youth (17 or under) ---- 1.3%
Unaccompanied Pregnant Youth (17 or under) ---- .2%

- 3) **Number of Individuals in Household: (602 responses)**
1 ---- 85.2% 4 ---- 1%
2 ---- 9.6% 5 ---- .4%
3 ---- 3.7% 6 ---- .1%

- 4) **Gender: (831 responses)**
Male ---- 74.5% Female ---- 25.5%

- 5) **Age: (689 responses)**
0-17 ---- 1.3% 45-54 ---- 34.4%
18-23 ---- 6.8% 55-69 ---- 21%
24-44 ---- 34% 70+ ---- 2.5%

- 6) **Race/Ethnicity: (859 responses)**
White ---- 82.5%
Black or African American ---- 8.3%
American Indian or Alaskan Native ---- 4%
Hispanic or Latino ---- 3.4%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander ---- 1.3%
Asian ---- .5%

- 7) **Veteran: (899 responses)** Yes ---- 49.4% No ---- 50.6%

- 8) **Farm Worker: (899 responses)** Yes ---- 2.7% No ---- 97.3%

- 9) **Domestic Violence: (899 responses)** Yes ---- 6% No ---- 94%

- 10) **Corrections Release (in last 90 days): (899 responses)** Yes ---- 5% No ---- 95%

- 11) **Physical Disability: (899 responses)** Yes ---- 28.5% No ---- 71.5%

Appendix

2008 Sample Costs of Homelessness in Jackson County Oregon		
Name of Service Provider	Basis for Calculations	Daily Cost
The Salvation Army Hope House	Covers room, board, case management. SA owns the building, paid staff	\$27.50
Jackson Co. Detox and Sobering Unit	Average, one night's stay	\$59.00
Jackson County Jail	Average, one night's stay	\$75.00
Juvenile Detention/shelter	Average, one night's stay	\$137.00
RVMC, Providence, Ashland Hospitals	Average, one night's hospital stay	\$1,800
RVMC, Providence, Ashland Hospitals	Average, one night's hospital stay plus tests , meds and various extras	\$4,500
La Clinica del Valle	Average cost per homeless person per year excluding medications, transportation or specialty care (1300 homeless patients, \$800,000 per year)	\$615 per year outpatient
Home At Last Permanent Supportive Housing for Homeless People with Disabilities	Average Rent per day paid by program (Client pays 30% of income, some have 0 income), utilities, & case management	\$20.50
Community Works Dunn House Shelter	Total budget divided by 365 days divided by 12 (total of number of adults that can be housed). This cost includes salaries, utilities, client assistance, transportation, a children's program, food, maintenance of property, etc.	\$115.00
Medford Police— Transport to Detox	Cost for police officer to transport one homeless person to detox for services. Does not include overhead or opportunity cost of the officer not being available to work on other crimes. 1 hour of a step four officer=\$45.53 (Approx 233 homeless persons per transported per year=total of \$10,608)	\$45.53/hour
Medford Police— Transport to 2 North.	Cost for police officer to transport one homeless person to detox for services. Does not include overhead or opportunity cost of the officer not being available to work on other crimes. (1.5 hours of step four officer at \$45.53/hour) (Approx 94 homeless persons per transported per year=total of \$6,419)	\$68.30/hour

Resources on Homelessness

2009 Jackson County Community Needs Assessment Survey

www.access-inc.org/page.asp?NavID=165

As compiled by ACCESS, Inc., this community survey reflects the most current needs as reported by 1,404 residents of Jackson County who sought social services.

National Alliance to End Homelessness

www.naeh.org

The National Alliance to End Homelessness is a nonpartisan, mission-driven organization committed to preventing and ending homelessness in the United States.

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

www.ich.gov

The primary activity of the ICH is the development of a comprehensive federal approach to end homelessness. The Council understands that homelessness is affected by factors that cut across federal agencies, including housing costs, job readiness, education, substance abuse and mental health.

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United Way of Jackson
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