

Guilford County/High Point/Greensboro Task Force on Ending Homelessness Fact Sheet on Homelessness

- Homelessness affects every community. The latest Homeless Prevention Coalition of Guilford County Point in Time Count showed a total of **1108** homeless persons in Guilford on the night of January 25, 2006.
- Previous studies have led national and local policies to support community-wide Continuums of Care for the homeless that encompass Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Supportive Services, Permanent Housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing. The goal of such a continuum is *to move people toward permanent housing*. Newer research is giving us new tools and policies.
- Studies show that typically,
 - 74-80% are homeless 2 months
 - 10% are homeless 6 months
 - 10-15% are homeless 1 year or more – these are the chronically homeless.
- Studies have shown that usually the 10 to 15 percent of the homeless who are chronic use 50 percent or more of all emergency shelter resources in their communities.¹
- Cost analyses in cities such as New York, San Diego, and others, have shown that supportive housing funding is the least expensive of the resources that might otherwise be accessed.²
- Many communities are now having success in reducing chronic homelessness by developing a **Ten Year Plan** with strategies, benchmarks, and budgets. Successful plans often include:
 - aggressive prevention measures, and
 - increased access to permanent supportive housing.
- “Housing First” is an approach to permanent supportive housing that is successfully getting chronically homeless individuals off the streets by providing housing, then working on mental health and other issues while housing provides stability. *This approach puts people in permanent housing immediately.*
- Pathways in New York utilizes a “Housing First” approach with strong ACT teams; 88% of its clients remain housed after 5 years.
- Other communities with successes in reducing chronic street homelessness through Ten Year Plans are: Denver (from 1000 to 600), Philadelphia (50% reduction), Portland (from 1600 to 660), and San Francisco (40% reduction).

¹ *Strategies for Reducing Chronic Street Homelessness*, Walter R. McDonald & Associates, Inc., and The Urban Institute, January 2004.

² Martha R. Burt, *Assessing Public Costs Before and After Permanent Supportive Housing*, Corporation for Supportive Housing, 2004