

# **FAYETTTE COUNTY**

## **Ten-year plan to end homelessness**

### **Introduction**

The Fayette County Continuum of Care would like to present this Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness in Fayette County, Ohio. The Fayette County Continuum of Care consortium met with the RHISCO (Rural Homeless Initiative of South Central Ohio) in January 2006. At that time the Continuum of Care was asked to join in the process of creating a local and regional plan to end homelessness. A needs assessment was taken of Fayette County in April 2006 to identify what support systems existed in Fayette County and what resources were needed to provide homeless individuals and families or individuals and families at risk of homelessness with necessary services. The Continuum of Care requested members to join the planning committee. The planning committee began to meet in August 2006 to frame the plan.

The Fayette County Continuum of Care would like to thank the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation for providing funding for developing this plan. The Fayette County Continuum of Care would also like to thank The National Alliance to End Homelessness for providing technical assistance to develop the plan. The conference and technical assistance session were integral to the framing of this plan. We would also like to take this time to thank the Executive Planning Committee for their commitment:

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The Fayette County Continuum of Care consortium (CoC) has identified the resources we currently have to prevent and address homelessness; determined what gaps in services exist in our county; and is developing and implementing activities to close the gaps and end homelessness in our community.

### **Background**

#### ***Homelessness***

Twenty-five years ago there was not widespread homelessness in America. Tonight approximately 750,000 men, women and children will be homeless, despite a two billion dollar a year infrastructure designed to deal with the problem.

While the seeds of homelessness were planted in the 1960s and 1970s with deinstitutionalization of people living with mental illness and loss of affordable housing stock, widespread homelessness did not emerge until the 1980s. Several factors have affected its growth over the last two decades. Housing has become scarcer for those with little money. Earnings from employment and from benefits have not kept pace with the cost of housing for low income and poor people. Services that every family needs for support and stability have become harder for very poor people to afford or find.

In addition to these systemic causes, social changes have exacerbated the personal problems of many poor Americans, leading them to be more vulnerable to homelessness. These social trends have included new kinds of illegal drugs and more single parent and teen-headed households with low earning power and thinning support networks. These causes of homelessness must be addressed. People who are homeless must be helped. The current system does this reasonably well for many of those who become homeless. But the homeless assistance system can neither prevent people from becoming homeless nor change the overall availability of housing, income and services that will truly end homelessness.

Many people think of homelessness as strictly an urban phenomenon because homeless people are greater in number and are more visible in urban areas, but homelessness, including people who live in housing not meant for habitation, is pervasive in rural areas. The number of people who experience rural homelessness is unknown, but the last national count of homeless people found that 9 percent live in rural areas. In actual raw numbers, this translates into roughly 67,000 people on any given night. (Burt, 1996) Evidence suggests that if the number of people who experience homelessness in rural areas was viewed and counted more accurately, the number would be far greater.

### ***Rural Homelessness***

Advocates and researchers often refer to people who experience rural homelessness as the “hidden homeless.” Many people who experience housing instability in rural areas go unnoticed and uncounted because rural homelessness takes shape differently than urban homelessness. Most rural homeless people live in doubled up situations with friends or family or in motels, in cars, campgrounds and other places not intended for habitation. This is largely because most rural areas do not have large emergency shelters systems.

While those doubled up households do not meet HUD’s definition of homelessness, people living temporarily with friends and family are essentially homeless and they experience similar problems with housing instability. Many researchers and advocates argue for expanding this view of homelessness to capture the unique situations rural homeless people face. If the view of homelessness included households who double up, the numbers of people who experience homelessness in rural areas would increase exponentially.

The same structural factors that contribute to urban homelessness, such as a lack of affordable housing and inadequate income to pay for housing, cause rural homelessness. Other predictors of homelessness, such as mental illness and drug abuse, while still present among the rural homeless, are not pervasive. However, people who experience rural homelessness do report higher rates of alcohol abuse and domestic violence than their urban counterparts.

### ***Rural Poverty***

Rural poverty has some unique characteristics. Areas concentrated with rural poverty can be identified throughout the South, West and the Midwest of the United States. The scarcity of jobs, goods, and services has caused an outward migration of rural populations to places with more opportunities. As a consequence, the rural communities with high rates of poverty are sparsely populated and their poverty populations are severely impoverished.

High rates of poverty and unemployment in rural areas also drive homelessness. Rural homelessness is most dramatic in areas that experience high rates of unemployment because of declining industries, for example farming, timber, mining, or fishing. (Aron and Fitchen, 1996) The lack of available jobs and steady incomes means that poverty rates are higher in rural areas; the poverty rate in non-metropolitan areas is 14 percent, almost 11.6 percent less than in metropolitan areas. It is not surprising that one in five children living in rural areas is below the poverty line. (USDA Economic Research Service, 2004)

### ***The RHISCO Project area***

Counting and estimating the number of people who experience homelessness is extremely difficult and costly, and even more so in rural areas. Statewide estimates from the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio report that 179,718 people experience homelessness in Ohio over the course of a year and 27,867 Ohioans are homeless on any given night. At this time, estimates from the seventeen rural counties that comprise the RHISCO Project area, the Rural Homeless Initiative of Southeast and Central Ohio, are becoming available.

Counts of homeless people in Southeastern and Central Ohio are being planned and executed presently. The poverty and unemployment rates in these areas suggest that homelessness is prevalent. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (See Table 1, below), poverty rates in the counties of Southeastern and Central Ohio range from 3.8 percent in Delaware County to as high as 27 percent in Athens County. The poverty rates in Appalachian counties tend to be higher than other counties. About half are higher than the national poverty rate of 14 percent.

Unemployment rates in rural Ohio counties are also high, ranging from 7 percent to 20 percent. In Meigs and Morgan Counties, the unemployment rates reach 20 percent, 15 percentage points higher than the national average of 5 percent. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005) People who live in poverty are at higher risk of homelessness. Although relatively few people of the region are homeless, the problem affects the entire community as a persistent and debilitating social issue.

**Table 1**

County	Type	Population	Pop over 65		Pop at or below 100% poverty		Median income	Household not in the Labor Force
		N	N	%	N	%	\$	
Delaware	Rural	125,399	9,833	7.80%	4,118	3.80%	\$67,258	7%
<b>Fayette</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>28,176</b>	<b>4,048</b>	<b>14.40%</b>	<b>2,810</b>	<b>10.10%</b>	<b>\$36,735</b>	<b>12%</b>
Knox	Rural	56,037	7,496	13.40%	5,159	10.10%	\$38,877	13%
Licking	Rural	148,731	17,872	12.00%	10,602	7.40%	\$44,124	13%
Madison	Rural	40,365	4,498	11.10%	2,790	7.90%	\$44,212	11%
Pickaway	Rural	53,437	5,842	10.90%	4,402	9.60%	\$42,832	15%
Union	Rural	43,010	4,066	9.50%	1,763	4.60%	\$51,743	10%
Athens	Appalachian	63,266	5,860	9.30%	14,728	27.30%	\$27,322	16%
Fairfield	Appalachian	129,161	14,058	10.90%	7,064	5.90%	\$47,962	12%
Hocking	Appalachian	28,481	3,737	13.10%	3,711	13.50%	\$34,261	18%
Jackson	Appalachian	32,854	4,362	13.30%	5,286	16.50%	\$30,661	17%
Meigs	Appalachian	23,111	3,377	14.60%	4,506	19.80%	\$27,287	20%
Morgan	Appalachian	14,749	2,302	15.60%	2,691	18.40%	\$28,868	20%
Perry	Appalachian	34,408	4,110	11.90%	3,970	11.80%	\$34,383	16%
Ross	Appalachian	74,469	9,048	12.20%	8,120	12.00%	\$37,117	15%
Vinton	Appalachian	13,128	1,597	12.20%	2,529	20.00%	\$29,465	17%
Washington	Appalachian	62,561	9,622	15.40%	7002	11.40%	\$34,275	17%

### ***Homelessness in Fayette County***

#### *Service Area, Demographics, & Income*

Unless otherwise noted all facts from this section come from the U.S. Census Bureau's State and County Quick Facts.

The Fayette County Continuum of Care has identified its service area as Fayette County, Ohio. This rural county covers 407 square miles with a population of approximately 28,000. In Fayette County the population is predominantly Caucasian with 96.1% of the population reporting white as their race. African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos comprise 2.4% and 1.4% of the population respectively. All other races and those reporting two races each comprise less than 1% of the total population.

In general the population in Fayette County is fairly educated; however it is slightly below the state average. 78.7% of Fayette County residents have graduated from high school versus the 83% state average. Disparities are more notable in the percentage of the population who has obtained a Bachelor's Degree. Only 10.7% of the population has a degree versus the state average of 21.1%. However, the type of employment available in the area may be an indicator of why many people who choose to pursue a higher education leave Fayette County to pursue a better job.

### *Employment*

For the most part, employment in Fayette County is readily available for blue-collar and service workers. Production, transportation, and material moving occupations comprise 27.6% of the jobs in Fayette County and 24.1% of all industries in Fayette County are manufacturing companies. Furthermore, there is an influx of temporary agencies that work with most of the local factories. Essentially the companies are no longer accountable to giving most of our residents a full time position. Often times they are recycled through the temporary system, allowing the companies to save on insurance costs and other employee benefits.

In spite of this bleak outlook for many of the unskilled positions available in Fayette County, unemployment was as low as 4.6% in September 2006. This number is down from 5.9% in 2005. Fayette County is 62 in the state for unemployment. Delaware County reports the lowest unemployment rate in the state of 3.3% and Monroe county reports 9%. Unemployment figures do not reflect those who have lost or used all state unemployment benefits.

### *Housing*

Despite the low unemployment rate 35% of all renters in Fayette County cannot afford a two bedroom apartment at the fair market rent of \$439.00 per month. (2005-2006 PCSAO Factbook, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition). In fact, 27% of renters pay more than 35% of their monthly income on their rent. On the other side, Fayette County does have a 66.6% home ownership rate.

Fayette County has no public housing. The Metropolitan Housing Authority administers a Section 8 voucher program, and has applied for as many types of voucher-assisted programs as it can. At this point in time all 322 vouchers for the county are in use. 96 families are on a waiting list. This list was closed January 2005, reopened for 2 months in June 2006, and closed again in August 2006.

### *Poverty & Homelessness*

Fayette County has programs that provide shelter for the homeless. Community Action's family shelter has 16 emergency shelter beds. CAC also operates 16 transitional housing units for families and 17 permanent supportive housing units for single adults. My Sister's House has 6 beds for domestic violence victims. Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health Center has 12 beds for persons with mental health issues.

In 2005, Community Action reported 139 individuals received shelter at the Homeless Shelter and 51 received alternative shelter for a total of 190 individuals receiving shelter services. 2,595 shelter nights were used in 2005. Only one family was turned away.

The face of homelessness in Fayette County is much like its demographics. Caucasians comprise the majority of the homeless population with minorities following along with the representation within the entire community. In the past, service providers note that there were mostly single mothers populating the homeless shelters. In recent years that trend has changed with more men entering the family shelter as two parent families. It is unlikely that this represents a change in homelessness, but rather a change in TANF eligibility.

Individuals with disabilities are more likely to experience chronic homelessness. Disabilities in Fayette County reported in the 2000 census are as follows:

Age Group	Percentage reporting a disability
5-20	8
21-64	18
64 & Above	44

Often times another predictor of homelessness is the usage of public support systems. In 2004, recipients of cash assistance decreased 63%. However, relatives caring for children receiving cash assistance increased 49%, food stamps increased by 6%, and families receiving assistance with child care increased 118% (The 2005-2006 PCSAO Factbook, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition).

### *HMIS*

In order to track the characteristics of homelessness, such as: age, sex, race, educational attainment, duration and number of incidences of homelessness the federal government came up with Homeless Management Information System. Fayette County, as one out of nine pilot counties in Ohio, has been using HMIS since January 2004. The use of HMIS has lead to better data and the enhancement of service planning and delivery.

### *Fayette County Continuum of Care*

#### *Mission Statement (adopted February 18, 2004)*

“To promote secure, affordable and safe housing for residents of Fayette County who are homeless or who have been identified as being at risk of becoming homeless.”

The Fayette County C o C began meeting informally in 2000. Recently the continuum has chosen Fayette County Community Action to act as its fiscal agent. There is broad representation in the Fayette County C o C. However, participation may be a bigger issue. The group has identified the necessity of gaining membership from local elected officials, education, law enforcement, courts, faith-based organizations, and the business community. Efforts have already begun to enlist faith based organizations in the continuum.

Agencies represented are:

Community Action Commission of Fayette County (following programs:)

- Homeless Shelter
- Transitional Housing
- Fayette Inn SRO
- Homeless Prevention Program
- Salvation Army
- HEAP
- Adult Protective Services and Family Caregiver Program

Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging – Volunteer Guardianship Program

Fayette County Job and Family Services

Fayette County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities

Fayette County Memorial Hospital – Social Services Division

Fayette Recovery – Drug & Alcohol recovery services

Goodwill of Central Ohio

Juvenile Court

LIFE Pregnancy Center

Metropolitan Housing Authority

My Sister's House

The Agape Church

Red Cross

Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health

VA Homeless Services Coordinator – Chillicothe VA

Veterans Services of Fayette County

Victim/Witness program – County Prosecutor's Office

Washington City Schools

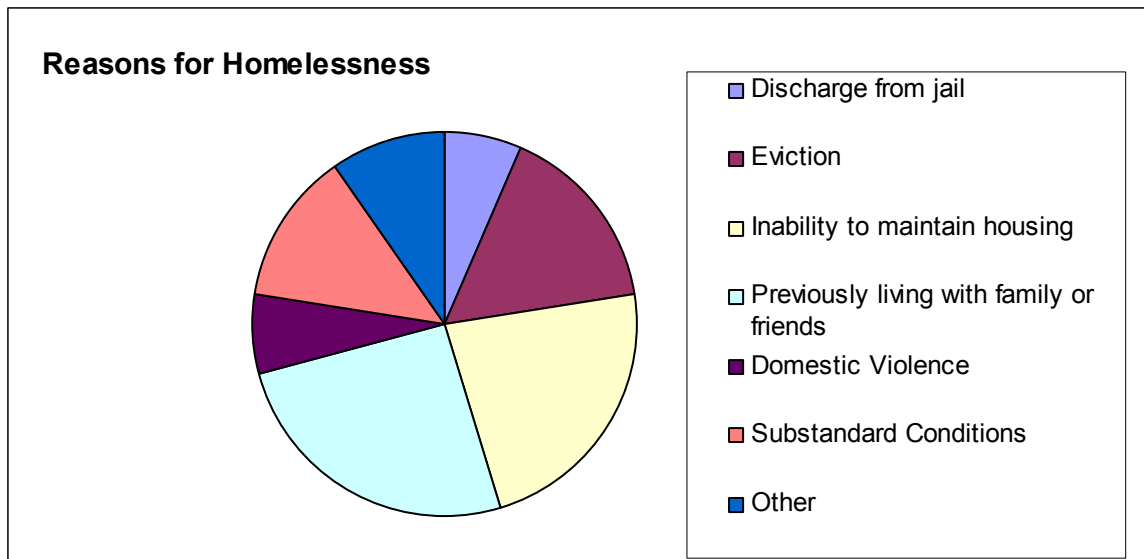
United Way of Fayette County

### *Point-in-Time Count*

The last point in time count took place in February 2006. At that time there were 42 homeless individuals counted. 33 were adults and 9 were children.

Points in time counts were also taken June 2004 and February 2005. The results were 117 and 32, respectively. In February 2005 there were 8 individuals who were homeless (doubled up, campgrounds, etc.) but were not counted as they did not fall within the HUD definition of homeless.

Based upon the February 2005 count the reasons for homelessness were as follows:



### **Needs statement**

While various support systems and collaboration already exist in Fayette County, there are still unmet needs identified by Fayette County C o C.

Fayette County has need for:

- Housing with case management services for the chronically homeless. Target group is chronically homeless families. Case management is needed to keep these families in their housing once they leave the shelter, and not have them homeless again in a few months.
- There is no emergency shelter for single males. The family shelter can only accommodate men who are part of families.
- The county's Single Room Occupancy facility has proven to be a very valuable resource, but is full most of the time, with little tenant turnover. There is a need for another one.
- Case management for prevention programs. The agencies are able to obtain funds to provide emergency assistance, but services funds for case managers to provide full assistance to families is limited.

- Volunteers – all the programs serving or benefiting homeless persons could use more volunteers.

### **Prevention**

The prevention of homelessness in the first place is the most cost effective and stabilized manner for any family. Once permanent housing is lost families and/or individuals experiencing homelessness become even more unstable and have even less access to mainstream sources of assistance. Currently, Fayette County has planned and implemented several strategies and resources to prevent homelessness. These include:

- Salvation Army – emergency utility, rent, mortgage assistance – operated through CAC
- Homelessness Prevention (Housing Trust Fund) administered by CAC – emergency rent payments
- Home Energy Assistance Program – administered by CAC. Emergency utility payments
- Home Weatherization & Home Repair programs operated by CAC – health and safety modifications, furnace check-up and repair or replacement.
- Fayette Area Community Emergency Services (FACES), funded by Ministerial Association and administered by CAC – emergency utility and rent payments
- Fayette County CHIP office – had limited emergency rent funds
- Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health - emergency housing for persons with mental illness
- My Sister's House – emergency services for victims of domestic violence
- St. Vincent DePaul – emergency utility and rent payments
- Prevention/Retention/Contingency Program – administered by Department of Job & Family Services – emergency utility and rent payments
- Goodwill
- Food pantries
- OSU Extension Office – assistance with budgeting
- Children's Services - family reunification program
- Veterans Services – emergency assistance to veterans

While assisting a family prior to its becoming homeless is essential to ending and preventing homelessness, there is limited staff dedicated to prevention. Only minimal eligibility and other documentation are done. Currently, the lack of case management staff means that those administering funds do not have time or resources to work with applicants to fully understand the problem that led to threat of homelessness and to help develop a long-term plan to alleviate the problems that caused the emergency situation. In order to alleviate this gap in service delivery CoC agencies will continue to seek grant money for services, as well as funds for direct assistance. Staff members of CoC agencies will be informed of available training in grantsmanship.

Currently, there is no single point of contact in Fayette County. Often times this means that coordination of funds and services is not being utilized to its fullest extent. As a part of the development of case management for the prevention of homelessness, the CoC will also dedicate staff hired through new funding sources to maintain weekly assessments of resources in Fayette County, maintain a community resource phone line, and provide referrals. This staff person would also be responsible for community education and outreach to those experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

There is also a need to increase coordination of limited funding to better utilize funding on the local and regional level. Rural communities must bind together to share resources as the federal government continues to slash budgets for addressing rural homelessness. The CoC will continue to meet monthly and share information about resources they have to decrease duplication and plan to combine resources to provide maximum services.

Too often the community does not realize the resources that exist to help those facing homelessness. Homeless individuals in rural counties are more likely to contact friends or family for support or live in a “doubled up” situation. The CoC will designate member(s) to coordinate public awareness information to the local newspaper, radio station and community television station. Informational posters will also be developed and placed in agencies to reach those who are at risk of homelessness who may not have access to radio, television, the paper, or the internet (where you may find Children and Family First’s Community Resource Guide).

Many tenants do not understand their rights and responsibilities and many landlords do not understand due process. In order to provide landlord/tenant education The CoC will contact the local Rural Legal Aid to provide training and disseminate materials. The CoC will invite a member of the legal aid program to come to CoC meetings. The CoC will also contact the Landlord Association to offer education for landlords about the cost of eviction, effective prevention methods, and available resources for tenants who require assistance.

While Fayette County has a public transit program their services are limited to 9-5, unless the services are contracted through Job and Family Services to TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) eligible participants. The public transit program will look into the feasibility of coordinating a car-pool program, and into identifying other funding sources to transport non-TANF employees, and to expand employment transportation to other counties.

Most of the jobs available locally do not pay enough for families to become self-sufficient. The CoC will coordinate more with local WIA programs. 3 members of the CoC are also members for the 5-county Regional Advisory Committee for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) for Fayette County.

Fayette County must continue to have a skilled workforce to attract higher paying employers to the county. While there is no current gap in the educational system for high school students, the budget has been cut for Personal and Career Development Courses at the high school. When the current teacher retires the program will no longer be available. To prevent future homelessness the CoC must fill that gap when it exists to ensure that the next generation has been taught the skills they need to succeed in the workplace. The development of a skilled workforce, and job creation are the responsibilities of other agencies and organizations in the county. The CoC will invite representatives from those agencies to participate in meetings so that CoC members can be involved and/or provide input regarding economic development in the county.

### **Coordination of services**

Because of the small size of the community and the fact that staff from all the agencies serve on various boards together, service coordination is very informal and simple. Community Action operates most of the emergency assistance programs and homeless programs. CoC members' staff know which agencies provide services needed by homeless and potentially homeless individuals and who is the contact person in those agencies. There is no formal system with a single point of entry in the county.

The Metropolitan Housing Authority provides important services to homeless and low-income individuals in the county. Attendance at the Continuum of Care meetings has been sporadic. The Continuum feels that the MHA is too important a resource to not have its full participation in CoC activities. The CoC will appoint members to contact the Executive Director of the MHA to attend CoC meetings.

Relations with My Sister's House, a domestic violence shelter, were strained from the beginning. There has been some participation on the on the Continuum of Care now. Coordination of services has improved as the Transitional Housing Program has contacted the domestic violence shelter to provide transitional housing to victims seeking refuge in their shelter.

CAC and the DJFS worked with the Community Food Pantry to increase the number of people it was serving and to improve its access to people who need their services. Churches provide services that the community does not realize exist. The creation of the Office of Faith Based Initiatives increases the necessity for community service organizations and faith-based programs to share information and services. The CoC will select a CoC meeting date to be "church day" and invite clergy/members of all identified churches in the county to attend and describe what programs (food pantry, emergency assistance) they provide. The CoC will create a database of all the churches in the county and the resources they provide to families and look to form new, creative partnerships.

In addition to these local efforts, the CoC will continue to collaborate with neighboring counties, such as Highland, Greene, Ross, Pickaway, and Clinton. Coordinating with the RHISCO project partners will also continue. Previously, the topic had been brought up for regional quarterly meetings. This idea will again be pursued by the CoC.

### **Outreach**

The homeless shelter, Victim/Witness, and the domestic violence shelter are frequently the subject of newspaper stories. However, there is limited awareness of coordinated activities and partnerships. This problem is compounded by the limited amount of media resources in the county.

In order to address these issues the CoC will have a booth at the Community Health Fair in April, continue to conduct radio and television interviews, submit success stories to the local paper, participate in the United Way fundraising campaign, and submit a notice of the availability of this plan for review and suggestions. As previously mentioned the CoC will continue to reach out to the community through presentations, and posters at agencies for those at risk of homelessness. The community resource guide produced by Children and Families First will be reformatted to be printed in a booklet and disseminated at public locations and social service agencies.

It is essential to ending homelessness that a volunteer pool is recruited. Efforts to engage the community will begin with the Point-in-time count. A volunteer training course will be developed to train interested community members in how they may help prevent and/or help the homeless. Certificates of completion will be passed out to all volunteers who finish their training. Based upon their skills and interest they may then volunteer to help Fayette County end homelessness.

### **Workforce development**

There are several local programs to address workforce development and provide workforce or job search training to individuals in the community. These include:

- Job Search Skills and training is provided by the County Department of Job & Family Services to assess individual needs and provide job training through local companies
- Goodwill has a workforce coordinator
- Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation assigns a counselor comes to Fayette County from Springfield on a regular basis
- Youth Build Program operated by Community Action serves low income youth aged 18 – 24 who do not have a high school diploma or equivalency. YouthBuild teaches GED classes and provides on-site construction training
- Summer Youth Employment Training program provides subsidized work experience for low-income school-age youth
- Mature Works is a USDA-funded work experience for persons age 50 and over
- Fayette County One-Stop located at Southern State provides job search assistance through a Resource Room
- Southern State Community College has a campus in Fayette County. The Housing Director at CAC is a Trustee for the College. The Deputy Director of CAC is president of the College's Foundation Board

- YUSA is a large employer in the county that has recently had a large expansion of its operation. YUSA is always looking for innovative ways to find and retain employees.
- Outlet Malls at interstate, WalMart and other large retailers offer entry level employment
- Housing programs have coordinated with economic development office
- CAC and DJFS coordinated on a TANF demonstration grant to provide an employment counselor to the homeless shelter and transitional housing programs.
- Currently, three members of the CoC sit on Fayette County Workforce Board. Recently, the Employment Counselor gave a brief presentation to the Workforce Board about the employment program operated at the local homeless shelter.

There are several programs in the community to assist individuals in obtaining the skills to get a job and then teaching them how to market those skills to potential employers. The CoC will continue to recruit members from the Workforce Board to the CoC. Service providers have found it is difficult to find jobs within the county that provide a living wage. Furthermore, many individuals and families who are at risk of homelessness have no access to transportation to out of county positions. The CoC will look into carpooling, van pooling, and expanded public transportation to help people get to jobs. In addition to this research will be conducted on the possibility of on the job training.

It is difficult to attract and keep employers with higher paying jobs in the county. The CoC will involve the county's economic development director in Continuum. A few months ago, Fayette County was being considered as a site for a new Honda plant. While Fayette County was not chosen for that plant, the economic development director continues to market that site to other manufacturers, as well as recruiting other businesses. The CoC will encourage the E.D. Director to attend committee meetings.

### **Building support and liaison strategizing**

While several agencies already sit on the CoC, liaison strategizing includes working with various other stakeholder groups.

County and city elected officials sit on the Board of Community Action and are made aware of homeless/housing programs and are invited to open houses, ribbon cuttings, etc. However, neither city nor county is involving low-income housing and homeless program operators in CHIS planning meetings. Input, if requested at all, has been at last minute. County and City need to be made aware of their obligations in the preparation of CHIS and CHIP applications.

Law enforcement is a member of the CoC, however attendance has been sporadic. The CoC needs to work with city and county law enforcement to encourage more involvement. The sheriff's office has put together a SALT (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together) but attendance has been falling off. Provider education has been offered to local law enforcement, but it does not seem feasible to convince law enforcement to provide overtime money to officers. The CoC will continue to search for grant monies to fund provider education to law enforcement. Currently provider education takes place at the CoC meetings.

The CoC needs more involvement with aging programs. One CoC member is the investigator for Adult Protective Services and coordinates the caregiver support program; however we need involvement from mainstream aging programs too.

Other agencies integral to ending homelessness that are not represented include:

- The Landlord Association
- Press
- Judges
- All courts
- Children's Services
- Social Groups
- Attorney's
- Local businesses
- Prosecutor
- Medical Providers
- Downtown Revitalization Group
- Local populous
- Chamber of Commerce

The Continuum of Care will appoint various board members to contact aforementioned stakeholders and invite them to become active in the CoC. Provider education will take place at meetings, as different programs talk about their services, barriers their customers face, and give brief presentations about their programs.

### **Data collection**

In the past there has been little methodology employed in the point-in-time counts. Generally counts were taken by the Homeless Shelter Program Coordinator and included all individuals in shelter, transitional housing, SRO, and other service providers were alerted to report the number of individuals they encountered on that day that were homeless.

The Continuum members attended COHHIO training on Point-In-Time Counts in Rural Areas in Mansfield on November 27, 2006. To enhance the previous data collection methodology, communities similar in population and area will be contacted to see what have been successful strategies employed by their community. A volunteer pool will be developed and volunteers will be trained on the day of the count. Service providers will continue to be alerted, a street count will take place, and those in shelter will continue to be counted. Questionnaires from the RHISCO project will be used for every individual that did not already have the data collected at intake and incentives will be used to encourage participation by homeless individuals. Based upon past point-in-time counts it is unlikely that the street count will produce more than 40 homeless individuals. Therefore the sample size will include 100% of the homeless population.

In an effort to engage the community and raise awareness of homelessness an article will be submitted to the local paper and/or television station publicizing the count and recruiting volunteers. After the count has taken place and the results tallied the information will be reported to the local paper and/or local television station. At that time the CoC will announce that any agency, business, or other groups that are interested may call to schedule a presentation on homelessness and that the plan is available to the public.

### **Sustainability planning**

The Community Action Commission currently receives funding for homeless services from: the Housing Trust Fund, HUD Supportive Housing program, Office of Criminal Justice Services, Marriage license tax, United Way, Eyman Fund, and donations from local churches. It also receives tax credits, Rural Development, HOME, Housing Trust Fund and Enterprise funds for its permanent housing programs.

The Department of Job & Family Services receives WIA funding for workforce development. It also receives TANF funds.

My Sister's House receives funding from the Office of Criminal Justice Services Violence Against Women Grant and Family Violence Prevention Grant, the Mary Kay Ash Foundation, the Attorney General's State Victim Assistance Act Grant, the Fayette County Charitable Foundation, and other local donors.

The Metropolitan Housing Authority administers the Section 8 voucher program and the CHIP program for the county.

The agencies in Fayette County have a history of working together to apply for funding and then implementing those programs once funded. We will work with Continuum members to develop projects for submission in the 2007 HUD Continuum of Care application through the Balance of State application. In addition to this we will continue to develop relationships with nearby continuums for regional planning.

The CoC will also advocate for increased funding to rural areas, research private donors and grant giving organizations, and network with our state and national political leaders to provide funding where it is needed.

### *Permanent Housing*

The Community Action Commission of Fayette County is certified by the state as a CHDO (Community Housing Development Organization) and is actively involved in developing permanent housing. Housing developed by the agency includes permanent supportive housing (17 units of Single Room Occupancy housing for the homeless), multi-family housing (56 units in Washington Court House and 2 communities in Jeffersonville, 1 40-unit and 1 24-unit), single family rental housing (160 units in Washington court House) and owner occupied housing (160 units throughout the county). A 56 unit senior project in Washington Court House is currently under construction. In connection with permanent housing with the shelter plus care model a case manager will be assigned to move those with disabilities quickly into permanent housing and provide supportive services to customers.

### *Implementation strategy*

The Executive Planning Committee for the RHISCO Project will be the lead implementing entity with Community Action serving as the implementing and fiscal agent for the Fayette County C o C. The group is comprised of the Deputy Director of Community Action, the Homeless Programs Coordinator, the Assistant Director of Job & Family Services, the Director of Fayette Recovery, a Board Member from Goodwill, and the Employment Counselor at the local Homeless Shelter. The plan will be reviewed quarterly to track progress toward goals and to edit as the committee identifies sections that need to be updated or revised.

<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Expected Result</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Research the feasibility of each type of permanent supportive housing.	Determine if that type of permanent supportive housing will be available to Fayette Co.	CoC Executive Committee		June 2007
Identify funding and finance programs.	Determine match requirements and feasibility of different programs.	Community Action	VA HUD 811 202 HDAP Federal Home Loan Bank Department of Development	Ongoing
Find sites to build or buy.	Estimate costs associated w/ purchasing or building.	CoC Executive Committee		December 2007
Create 20 units of permanent supportive housing.	Provide shelter plus care to help close the back door to homelessness.	Community Action		2009

<b>Objective 2</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Expected Results</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Create an emergency shelter for men	Look for an innovative partnership to create men's shelter	Increase possibility of funding.	Executive Committee	USDA Private Foundations	June 2008
	Look for sites to build/buy	Determine Costs	Partnership Created		December 2008
	Find additional sources of funding	Fund program	Partnership Created		December 2010

<b>Objective 3</b>	<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Expected Result</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Create another SRO	Determine additional funding sources	Fund program	CAC	HUD Private Foundations	December 2010
	Find sites to build or buy	Determine Costs	CAC		January 2009

<b>Objective 4</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Expected Results</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Create case management for prevention programs.	Find additional funding sources	Fund salaries Continue to fund direct assistance	CAC/Job & Family Services	Private Foundations	June 2011
	Hire additional staff for case management for prevention	Providing assistance to those receiving prevention funds	CAC/DJFS		June 2012

<b>Objective 5</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Expected Result</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Recruit volunteer pool.	Raise awareness of point in time count through publicity	Recruit volunteers for point in time count	Outreach Committee	Local paper/radio stations/television channel	January 2007
	Publicize results of the count	Engage community interest in homelessness	Outreach Committee	Local paper/radio/television station	March 2007
	Recruit and begin volunteer training	Recruit additional volunteers	Outreach Committee	Media and current service providers	September 2007
	Hold volunteer graduation	Recognize volunteers for service to community	Outreach Committee		December 2007

<b>Objective 6</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Expected Result</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Improve coordination of services and funding for homeless families and families at risk of homelessness	Create SPOC	Increase the coordination of services and improve service delivery	All programs with prevention programs	Private Foundations	January 2011
	Increase coordination of funding	Sharing limited resources	All grantwriters involved in the CoC	Continuum meetings	Ongoing
	Hold point-in-time count	Increase community awareness and meet HUD requirements	CAC, w/ volunteers from CoC	Community, HUD, point-in-time training.	January 2007
	Public awareness of services through posters, booklets, and media	Allowing the community to know where to send people	Outreach Committee (until SPOC is hired)	Private foundations	Posters & booklets– January 2008 Outreach – every 6 months starting in November 2007
	Landlord/tenant Education	Landlords will see benefits of working with low income and tenants will know their rights	Executive Committee will contact Legal Aide/Landlords on CoC	Legal Aide	October 2008
	Transportation for non-TANF and Out of County for employment	All members of the community will have access to transportation and will be able to take higher wage positions	Executive Committee will search for partnerships (Possibly Goodwill)	Out of county transportation systems	October 2007/Ongoing
	Coordinate more w/ WIA	Utilize contact with WIA to increase living wage jobs for both prevention and shortening homelessness	Members on the Workforce Board	Workforce Board/One Stop	Ongoing
	Begin career education for high school students	Continue to provide career education to prevent future homelessness	Outreach Committee and/or various organizations	Current teacher of Personal Development	Begin w/ retirement of teacher currently in school system

<b>Objective 7</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Expected Result</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Increase the number of agencies in the community actively involved in the local Continuum of Care	Engage with Metropolitan Housing Authority	Better coordination of services	Appointed member of Executive Committee		Monthly
	Continue efforts to engage domestic violence shelter	Better able to help those not pursuing action through courts	CoC	Ohio Domestic Violence Network, Ohio Victim/Witness Association, ability to provide transitional housing to victims.	Ongoing
	Continue faith-based outreach	Understand fully what is available in the community and create new partnerships	Outreach Committee	Faith-based programs and faith-based database.	Begin October 2005 and ongoing
	Collaborate with other counties	Increase funding and utilization of resources	Directors of Agencies	Regional meetings, conferences, etc.	Ongoing
	Continue outreach to other agencies	Increase support and liaison strategizing	Various members of CoC	Local networking	Ongoing
	Conduct provider education	Utilize CoC meetings to cross-train	Various members of CoC	Quarterly meetings	Ongoing

## ***Regionalism***

Fayette County agencies do currently have some collaboration across county lines. The homeless shelter in Fayette County works with shelters in Highland and Greene Counties to provide emergency shelter services when the Fayette County shelter is full. Fayette County also accepts referrals from other counties when capacity allows.

The Community Action Commission is developing permanent housing in neighboring counties (Ross, Greene and Pickaway) and has a working relationship with the CAAs and other social services agencies in those counties.

CAC has also worked on some transportation collaborations for transportation in contiguous counties.

Several members represent agencies that serve a multi-county area. These include the homeless veterans services coordinator from the Chillicothe CA, the board member from Goodwill, and the representative from Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health Center.

## ***Conclusion***

Fayette County is a small rural county whose few social service agencies have a long history of working collaboratively to solve common problems. The county has a large number of programs to assist those who are facing and those who have become homeless. While these programs are small, they do provide assistance at all levels of the Continuum of Care defined by HUD: Outreach, prevention, emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing and permanent housing. The county's Continuum of Care committee began meeting in 2000 and continues to grow and evolve. Through the efforts of this committee, we will develop a plan to close the gaps in our services so that homelessness in our county is ended through prevention and rapid re-housing.