

Ten-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness in Salt Lake County 2005-2006

**Developed by
The Salt Lake County
Long Range Planning Committee
June 2004-April 2005**

Executive Summary

The Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) was established in 1997 as a working committee under the Salt Lake County Council of Governments chaired by former Salt Lake City Mayor, Palmer DePaulis. LRPC was chartered to investigate the growing problem of homelessness in Salt Lake County. The LRPC recommended solutions to the growing homeless problem beyond expanding existing shelters.

The LRPC stated that the solution to the problem of expanding homeless shelter services and escalating costs related to community services such as hospitals, treatment centers and jails was housing and employment for homeless people.

As part of its annual funding application to HUD, the SLCHCC conducts a gaps analysis to evaluate services and needs. The 2004 analysis identified 435 people that are without shelter and are classified as chronically homeless (those who have multiple episodes of shelter stays over a period of one year or longer). Statistics from Salt Lake City's homeless shelter, The Road Home, indicate that 11 percent of shelter population consumes 52 percent of the resources. Targeting the chronically homeless population for housing would significantly reduce homelessness and the societal costs of homelessness over time.

Early in its deliberations, the LRPC suggested that at least 500 units of permanently supported housing would be necessary to eliminate homelessness in 10 years. In 2000 the State of Utah developed a similar plan in 2004 for Utah emphasizing prevention and permanent supportive housing. These major plans, if implemented properly with adequate resources and strong public and private support, will provide the pathway to success. The current shelter system will remain as an emergency shelter alternative when needed but will not act as a warehouse for homeless people over extended periods of time.

The LRPC has developed and refined its early findings and recommendations in its Ten Year Plan. The plan articulates four main strategies and steps that are considered necessary to end homelessness. These strategies are: 1) Plan for Outcomes, 2) Prevention, 3) Permanent Supportive Housing and Supportive Services, and 4) Manage for Results. These strategies, related steps and recommendations define desired outcomes and target dates to meet the 10 year goal of ending chronic homelessness.

First Year recommendations from the LRPC are:

1. **Implement and Use the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS):** by September 2005 to track costs, service usage rates, housing placements and related data on a person-specific basis.
2. **Ensure Housing Sensitive Decisions in Salt Lake County:** Create a common database of existing housing stock by the end of 2005. If units are lost they must be replaced so that no net loss occurs and Salt Lake County gains housing rather than loses housing.
3. **Increase Public Sector Funding Partnerships in Affordable Housing:** Recent cuts in HUD Section 8 housing vouchers and lack of support for private sector housing initiatives must be reversed. Sustain federal, state, local and private funding to support all services necessary for permanent supportive housing.
4. **Rapidly Re-house People Who Have Become Homeless:** First time shelter users re-housed within 90 days of becoming homeless.
5. **Stop Discharging People into Homelessness: Ensure all persons discharged from jail, prison, hospital, and treatment facilities have a home to go to.** Expand homeless prevention services with 100 new treatment beds, 40 additional case managers and two outreach teams by December 2005.
6. **Improve Homeless Outreach:** Improve outreach to homeless people on the street using the two new outreach teams (Assertive Community Action Teams (ACT)) to reduce the number of homeless persons on the street by 25 percent in five years, by 50 percent in eight years and by 95 percent in 10 years.
7. **Increase Housing for People Escaping Homelessness by 1200 units:** Increase the supply of permanent supportive housing by 600 units by December 2014; expand rental subsidies throughout Salt Lake County by 600 units by 2014.
8. **Increase Supportive Services to Support New Housing Units:** New housing units must have related supportive services to ensure success.
9. **Focus on Outcomes and Adjust Resources Accordingly:** Produce and use quarterly publication of data and outcomes and distribute to all stakeholders to assess and adjust priorities through a strong collaborative inter-organizational process.

The LRPC seeks to make its planning document an active road map that, if followed by local communities, homeless service providers, and private advocates will end chronic homelessness in Salt Lake County in 10 years. The Committee emphasizes, however, that without sufficient funding and long term support and commitment from all sectors of society, there will be little change in the current entrenched system of homeless services.