



## **Roadmap to End Homelessness**

Testimony before the  
House Human Services Committee  
Jen Hollar, Director of Policy and Special Projects  
**Vermont Housing & Conservation Board**  
January 31, 2017

### **Project Outline**

- Goal:** Reduce homelessness and stabilize vulnerable populations.
- Purpose:** Build on existing efforts to end homelessness by developing a statewide system for facilitating a range of service-connected affordable housing options (including permanent supportive housing), building local capacity, determining cost and available and needed resources.
- Funding:** \$85,000  
Agency of Human Services (General Fund Appropriation - \$40,000), Sustainable Future Fund of the Vermont Community Foundation (\$25,000), NeighborWorks Alliance of Vermont (\$10,000), Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (\$5,000), Vermont Housing Finance Agency (\$5,000)
- Consultant:** Corporation for Supportive Housing – A national technical assistance provider experienced in supportive housing and guiding cities and states in the creation of successful systems for ending homelessness.
- Timeline:** Steering Committee Established – May  
Scope of Work Created and RFP Issued – June  
Corporation for Supportive Housing Selected – July  
Assessment of Existing Systems and Resources – July to October  
CSH Preliminary Assessment Submitted - August  
Roadmap Development– September to October  
Recommendations and Roadmap Presented to Steering Committee – November  
Training and Technical Assistance – January and February  
CSH Final Report (Assessment, Roadmap, Cost Analysis) Submitted - December  
Agency of Human Services Delivered to Legislature – December 31, 2016
- Steering Committee:** Vermont Agency of Human Services  
Vermont Housing & Conservation Board  
Vermont Housing Finance Agency  
NeighborWorks Alliance of Vermont  
Vermont State Housing Authority  
Chittenden County Continuum of Care  
Balance of State Continuum of Care  
Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development



Upper Valley Haven  
Rutland Housing Authority  
Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition  
Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

Project Elements:

1. Assessment of existing resources and systems for the purpose of identifying the barriers to reducing homelessness. Qualitative and quantitative analysis. CSH engaged in a series of exercises over a three month period which included in-depth interviews with key stakeholders involved in the effort to address homelessness across the state; a group meeting on August 18th in Waterbury with 50 non-profit leaders, government officials, advocates and funders; a second group meeting on September 30th in Burlington involving twelve individuals experiencing homelessness; the distribution, collection and analysis of 338 written surveys which were provided to stakeholders across the state; and discussions with members of the Steering Committee. During this same period more than 50 separate reports, plans and source documents related to homelessness systems, agencies, and activities in Vermont were provided to CSH via the Steering Committee. The assessment section of CSH's report captures themes from both the qualitative and quantitative data reviewed.

2. Comprehensive and actionable roadmap for creating systemic approach to making services, rental subsidies and housing units available for supportive housing to encourage and facilitate local projects that are targeted to ending homelessness. Through the assessment above, CSH determined that Vermont is on the leading edge of the fight to end homelessness – the number of homeless has declined by 30% in the last two year. But challenges remain – a lack of access to affordable housing, transportation, supportive services, continued reliance on motels and not yet complete coordination of data and services. CSH recommends a five-year effort and laid out a roadmap to expand supportive housing, meet targets for new affordable rental housing, complete local coordination systems, retain service and rental assistance programs that are working well while continuing to innovate.

3. Cost Analysis of proposed solutions. CSH conducted financial modeling to estimate costs of implementation of the roadmap. It also reviewed cost avoidance research and data available in Vermont and nationally. The report includes a discussion of the “cost avoidance strategies which have the potential to save state resources and improve outcomes for vulnerable individuals and families with complex needs. “

4. Technical Assistance and Capacity. To build local understanding of and capacity to implement the roadmap, including developing affordable supportive housing and sustaining tenant engagement and success, CSH is providing training in best practices for housing and service provider collaboration and strong partnerships. Trainings in *Housing Stability and Eviction Prevention* and *Best Practices in Supportive Housing*.