

Angus Chaney, Housing Director  
Vermont Agency of Human Services  
Testimony in the Vermont Child Poverty Council - October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Good Morning. My name is Angus Chaney. I'm the Housing Director for Vermont's Agency of Human Services and chair the Governor's Council on Homelessness. I'll be highlighting key themes from Vermont's Roadmap to End Homelessness report; presenting recent data around homelessness in Vermont; and going into some detail related to income and the relative affordability of housing.

**The Roadmap Study and Report**

The Vermont Legislature included \$40,000 for a homeless study and report in its FY17 Appropriations Bill. Additional funding was provided by the Vermont Community Foundation, the Neighborworks Alliance of Vermont, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, and the Vermont Housing Finance Agency. The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) was selected to develop the Roadmap report, which built on earlier statewide plans including Vermont's Plan to End Homelessness.

CSH's report was the product of six months of work by the consultant and a steering committee of officials from state agencies, regional non-profits, public housing authorities, and advocacy organizations. The report included CSH's assessment of the homelessness system in Vermont, estimates of cost savings if homelessness is reduced and recommendations on how best to implement system changes to meet this important goal in the next five years. The findings from CSH's assessment of Vermont's homelessness system indicated Vermont was headed in the right direction, but would need additional investments. Key themes from the report are:

**Vermont's Strengths**

- Resources for Key Populations
- Partnerships
- Supportive Housing
- New, Innovative Programs

**Vermont's Gaps and Barriers**

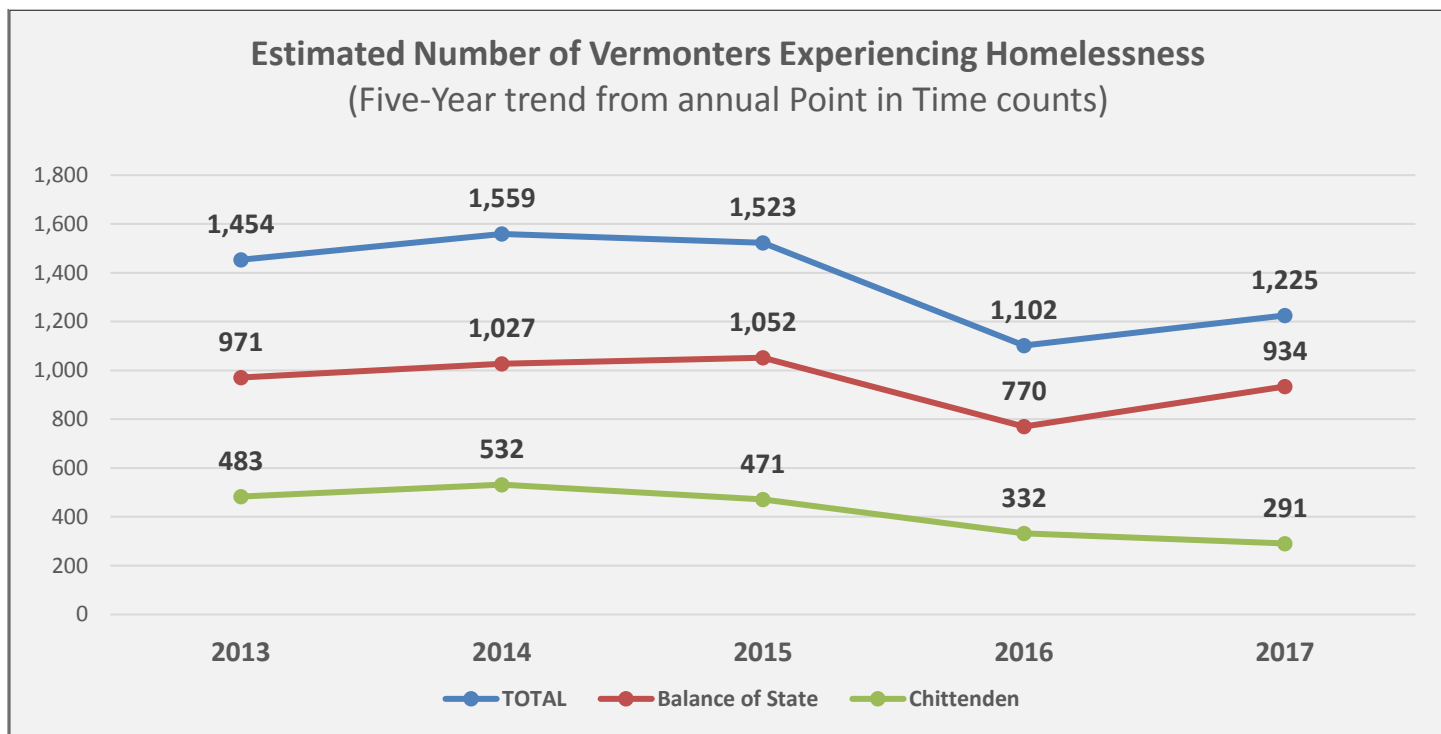
- Lack of Access to Affordable and Supportive Housing
- Insufficient Resources
- Nascent Coordinated Entry
- Reliance on Crisis Systems (Motels)
- Access to Transportation
- Availability of Data

**Recommendations**

- Create 368 units of supportive housing over five years
- Prioritize complete implementation of Vermont's Coordinated Entry System
- Create 1,251 units of affordable housing over five years targeted to households with incomes at or below 30% of the Area Median Income
- Support and expand existing initiatives that move the needle on ending homelessness
- Explore new program models to efficiently use public resources, leverage private investments, and improve outcomes

## Vermont Data - Five-Year Homelessness Trends

Vermont's most recent Point in Time count, conducted January 2017, estimates that 1,225 Vermonters are homeless. This is an 11% increase over 2016 but an overall 16% reduction over the past five years.



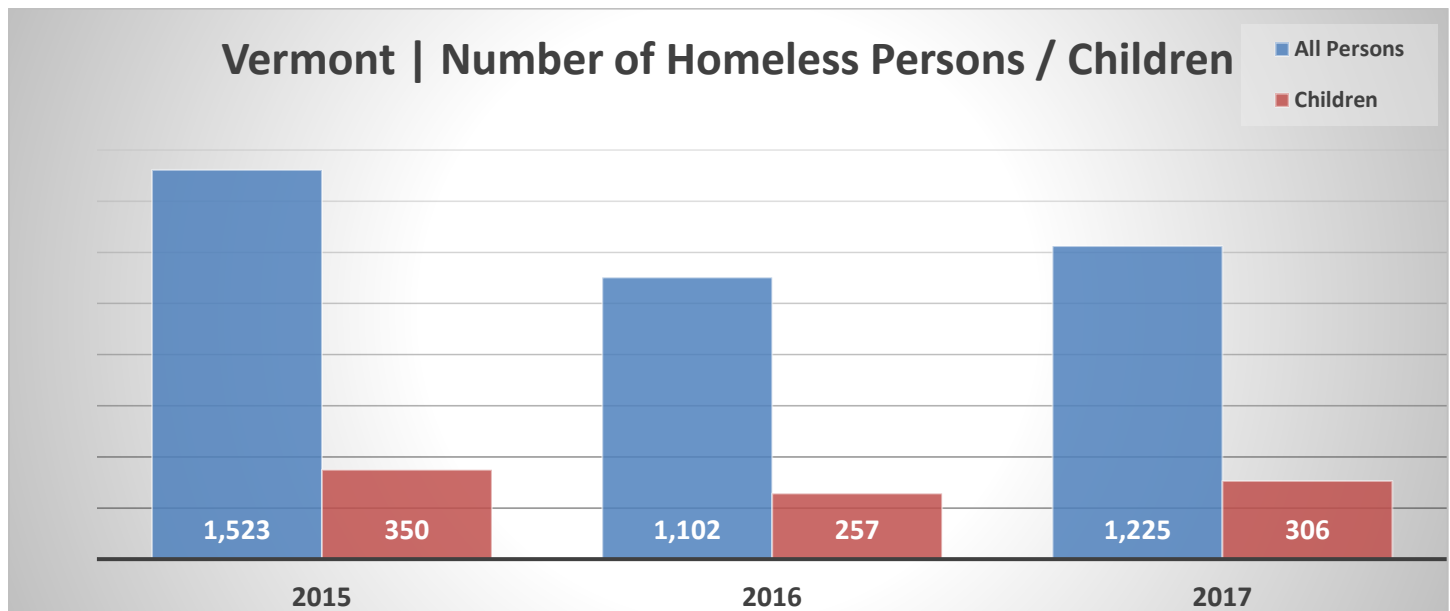
### During the one-night count...

- **533** persons (44%) were in an **emergency shelter**.
- **310** persons (25%) were in a **hotel or motel** paid for by AHS or charitable organization.
- **245** persons (20%) were in a **Transitional Housing** program for the homeless.
- **134** persons (11%) were **unsheltered**, meaning they were sleeping in a vehicle, in the woods or on the streets. (This represents a 14% reduction from 2016 and a 27% overall reduction since 2013.)
- **3** persons were in a **Safe Haven** program for the homeless.

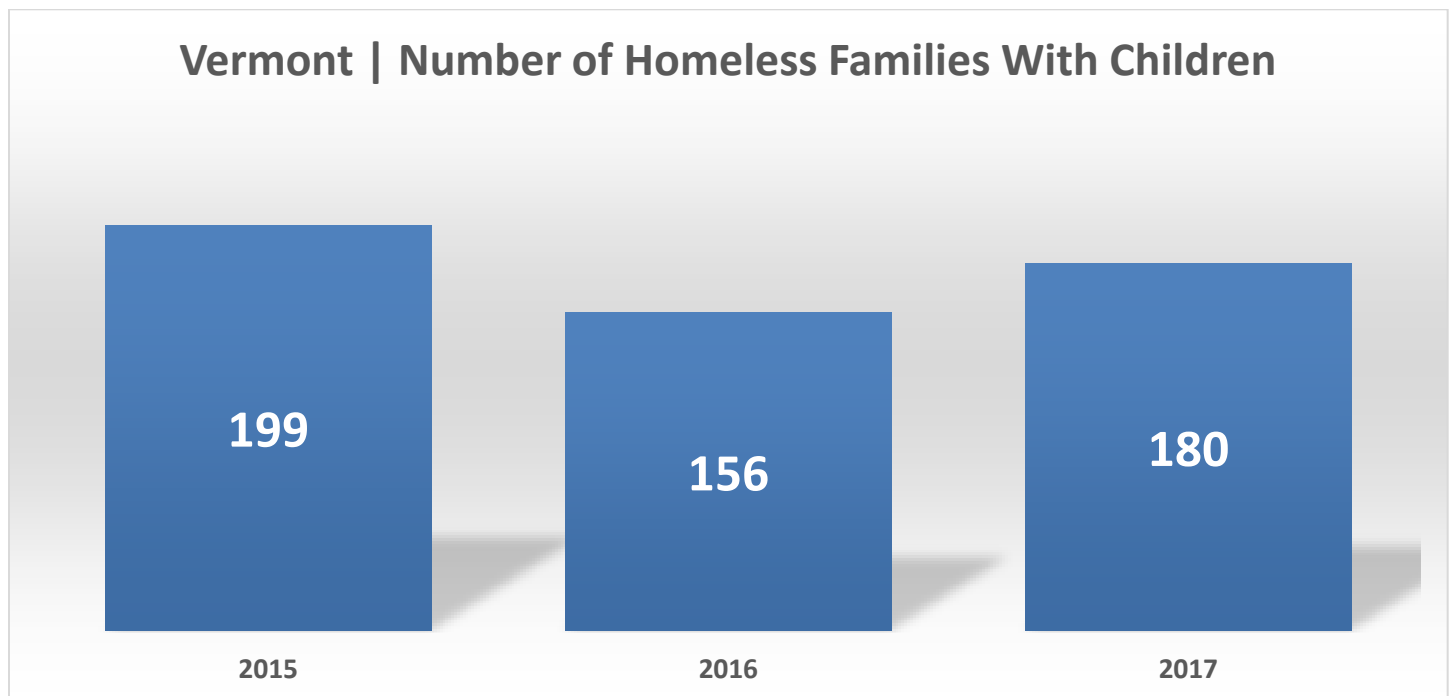
## Vermont Data – Homeless Children

Over the last three years, the number of homeless children in Vermont fluctuated from 350 to 257 to 306. In the past two years, homeless children have begun to represent a slightly higher percentage of the total number of Vermonters who are homeless. Currently, a quarter of Vermont's homeless population is under 18.

Children as percent of total homeless person in Vermont: **22.9% in 2015**    **23.3% in 2016**    **24.9% in 2017**

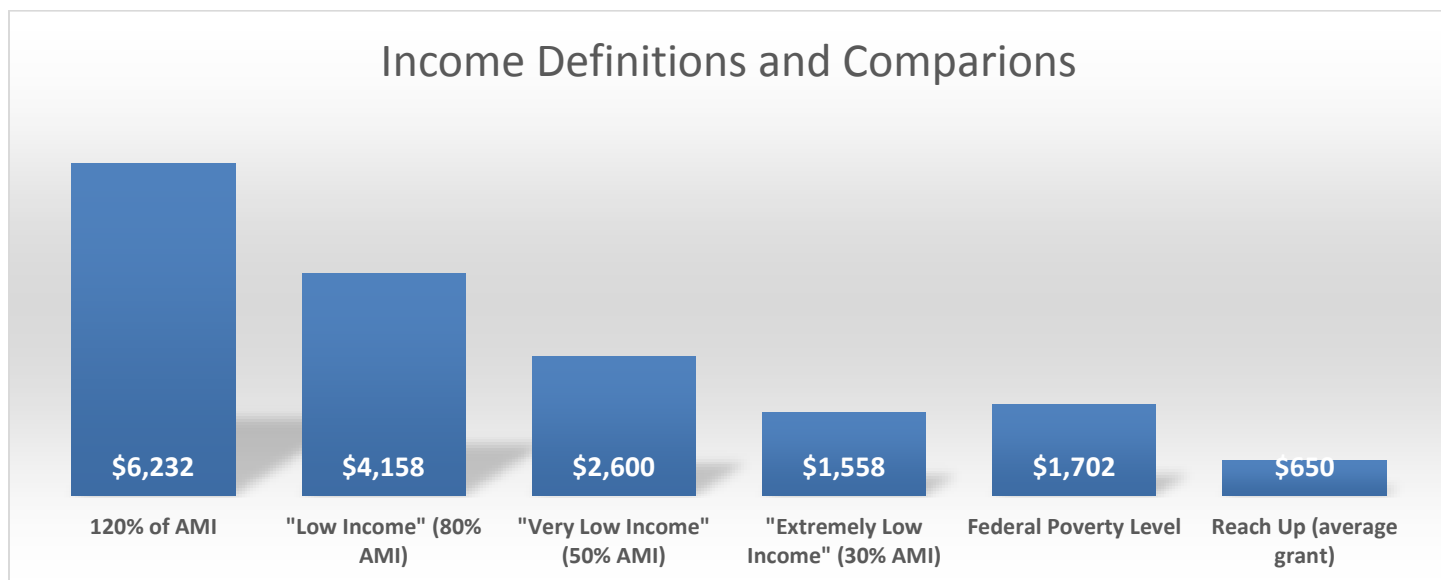


Number of homeless Vermont households with at least one child:



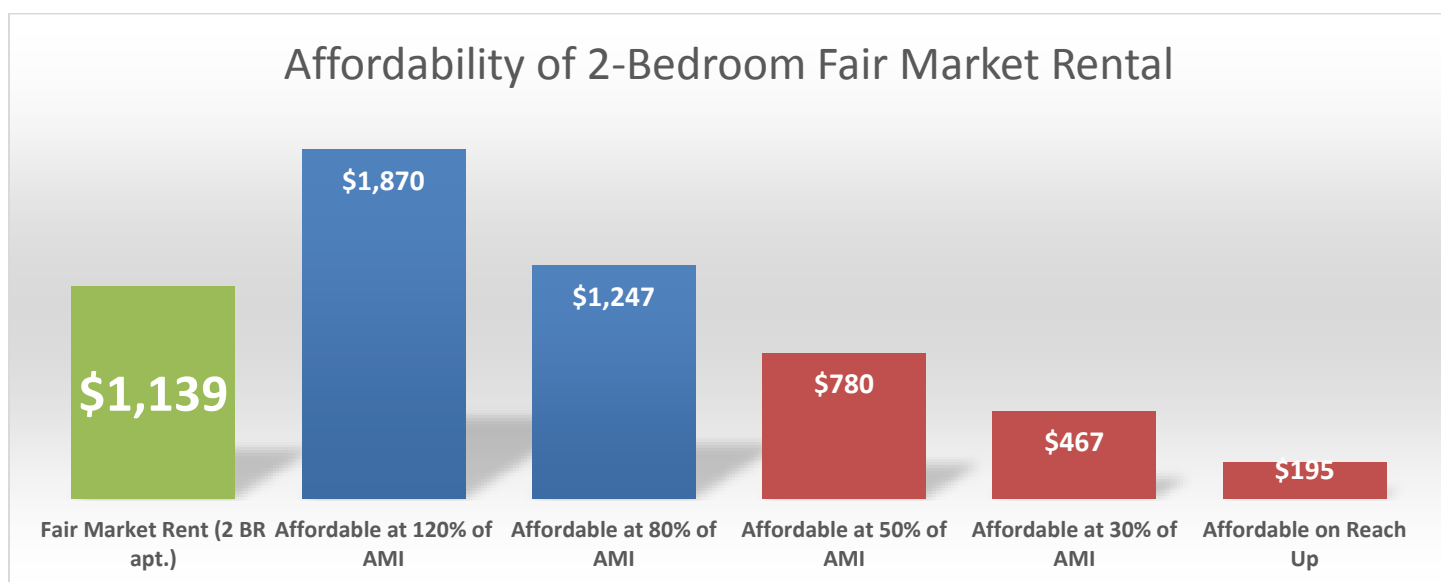
## Income and Affordability

The Roadmap to End Homelessness includes income targeting, specifically, that Vermont needs 1,251 new rental units affordable to people at or below 30% of Area Median Income (AMI). Other Vermont studies have identified gaps in Vermont's rental housing stock particularly at this below 30% AMI level and between the 80-120% AMI level. Vermont's Housing Bond targets at least 25% of units to households below 50% AMI and at least 25% of units between 80 and 120% of AMI. The following chart illustrates average monthly incomes at these levels with a comparison to the Federal Poverty Level and Vermont's TANF program for context.



\*Data calculated using 2017 statewide average for Vermont for a family of three. Data are monthly. AMI = Area Median Income

The following compares rental costs to what a household can afford to pay at these same income levels.



\*Data calculated using 2017 statewide average for Vermont for a family of three. Data are monthly. AMI = Area Median Income. Affordability assumes a household spends no more than 30% of income on housing costs.