

Succeeding Together

Dear friends and colleagues,

Our Fairfax-Falls Church community is one of the most affluent in the country. Our schools are second to none. We are the home for many Fortune 500 businesses. Despite the state of the national economy our unemployment rate is among the lowest in the country. And yet there are people in our community who are homeless and live in their cars or camp in the woods. There are families with no place to sleep at night and children with no place to go after school.

It saddens me to report that during the past fiscal year, our community served 3,076 people who were literally homeless. It is unacceptable to have children, women and men who are homeless in our community. Homelessness impacts all of us and each of us has a role in ending it. For many years, through the good work of many nonprofits, faith-based organizations and government agencies, we have directed our collective efforts to managing the issue of homelessness. However, little was done to find long-term solutions to prevent and end homelessness. That has now changed.

With strong support from the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and key stakeholders from the non-profit, government, faith-based and business communities, the Fairfax-Falls Church community came together to develop an impressive 10-Year Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. The plan recognizes the right of all people to have a safe and affordable

place to live. We have some very steep goals and lots of hard work ahead of us to reach our goal of ending homelessness by the end of year 2018.

This snapshot highlights the progress our community has made during the first year of the implementation of our plan. We have made huge strides in the development of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness. The Office to Prevent and End Homelessness was established within Fairfax County Government and we have constituted a Governing Board made up of business leaders, elected officials, builders, clergy, law enforcement and others. In 2011, a Consumer Advisory Council will be created to ensure that people who are currently homeless and those who were formerly homeless have an active voice in the implementation of our plan. We also will finalize the creation of a new foundation to help fund our efforts.

This past year, we were busy engaging many businesses, including Google and Northrop Grumman, who hosted our first two business engagement events. Target has provided support in helping raise awareness on the issue of ending homelessness and helped bring in much needed household items to assist over 200 of our most vulnerable neighbors. These collective efforts along with others have brought about a reduction in both our total number of people who are homeless as well as the number

of people who are chronically homeless in our community.

Our community has made huge strides in developing new strategies to strengthen relationships with landlords in order to help to move people who are homeless more rapidly into permanent housing.

This past year, through the work of our Partnership we have seen at least 482 people move into permanent housing from emergency shelters, transitional housing programs and permanent supportive housing programs. Many children and adults have been positively impacted. This can only be attributed to the commitment that many of you have made to ending homelessness.

Our approach to preventing and ending homelessness is predicated on us doing so in partnership with a broad coalition of nonprofits, faith-based communities, businesses and government. Working together allows us to do amazing things.

I thank you for your interest and commitment and look forward to our continued working together in the coming year as we strive to end homelessness in our community.

Michael L. O'Reilly

Chairman, Governing Board of the
Fairfax-Falls Church Community Partnership to
Prevent and End Homelessness

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Fairfax-Falls Church 10-Year Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

Community Plan



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A true community plan.

In February 2007, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors endorsed the Blueprint for Success: Strategic Directions for the Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in the Fairfax-Falls Church Community. This strategic road map to prevent and end homelessness was created by the Planning Committee to End Homelessness, in partnership with the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church, local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, faith-based communities and businesses.

In April 2007, the Board of Supervisors appointed a 95-member Implementation Committee to develop the plan to prevent and end homelessness based on the strategies outlined in the Blueprint for Success. The Implementation Committee included representatives from housing development organizations, business and financial institutions, health care and mental health providers, faith-based communities, employment services, nonprofit service providers and public agencies — the broad range of community partners that can prevent and end homelessness. On March 31, 2008, the Board of Supervisors officially adopted the plan.

Housing comes first.

The Fairfax-Falls Church community adopted a new approach to ending homelessness. This approach is called Housing First. What makes this approach different from traditional emergency shelter or transitional models is

that people who are homeless are placed into permanent housing. This approach takes people as they are, in part because housing is a basic right. Put simply, housing comes first, with services.

Once in housing, people receive services according to their needs. Receiving these services is voluntary. They are provided by community-based housing opportunity support teams (HOST). These teams maintain contact with people who are placed into housing, even if they are not receiving services, to make sure that everything is going smoothly for the resident and the neighborhood.

Making it work.

Preserving and increasing the supply of affordable, permanent housing resources is necessary to implement the Housing First approach. This involves working with landlords; dedicating some housing resources, such as assistance with rent, to individuals who are homeless; developing new housing types, such as small efficiency apartments; and increasing the supply of housing targeted to people with special needs. Changes also will need to be made to land use, zoning and tax incentive policies.



We can end homelessness. Go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless to find out how and what you can do to help.