

Succeeding Together

Dear friends and colleagues,

Last year in our Snapshot 2010, I wrote that it was unacceptable to have men, women and children who are homeless in a community as affluent as ours. Homelessness impacts every person in our community and each of us has a role in ending it. We talked about our 10-Year Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. This Snapshot highlights the progress made in the second year of our plan.

However, before I write about our progress I want to acknowledge a few of the folks who have been instrumental in our success. First, Congressman Gerry Connolly who was the chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors when the 10-Year Plan was discussed, developed and adopted by the board. His leadership helped to galvanize all of the energy and effort in the entire community. Next, our current chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Sharon Bulova. Chairman Bulova has been a tireless advocate for our plan and has been willing to pitch in at every level. Both Chairman Bulova and Supervisor Cathy Hudgins serve as active members of our Governing Board and we greatly appreciate their efforts. I would like to personally thank the members of our

Governing Board whose names can be found on Page 28 of this Snapshot. They have truly made my job an easy one because of their commitment and willingness to participate. Finally, I can't possibly name all of the remarkable people who work with the many nonprofit and religious organizations involved with homelessness. We thank each of you for your efforts!

We have continued in the development of the governance structure called The Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness. The Office to Prevent and End Homelessness is operating at peak efficiency under the guidance of Dean Klein. Our Governing Board, made up of business leaders, elected officials, builders, clergy, law enforcement and others, continues to meet on a monthly basis with several ad hoc committees also meeting to accomplish specific tasks. We are finalizing the creation of a new foundation to help fund our efforts.

The Partnership is working! The number of people who became homeless for the first time in 2011 was 1,376. This was a 16 percent reduction from 2010. The total number of people who experienced homelessness also declined for the categories of families as well

as individuals. Please take a few minutes and review the many success stories contained in this year's Snapshot.

However, we still have much to do to meet our plan's goals. This year we moved our collective efforts to the plan's goal of creating 2,650 new housing units. We supported and will continue to support efforts to amend the county's housing code to permit more individual housing options. We hosted a daylong outreach program for our faith-based communities that shows promise for increasing the housing stock.

Our approach to preventing and ending homelessness is predicated on us doing so in partnership with a broad coalition of nonprofits, faith 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 work 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

“Working together allows us to do amazing things.”

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

Community Plan



In the past four years the Fairfax-Falls Church community has **reduced homelessness by 13.94 percent.**



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 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, 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 Opportunities 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.