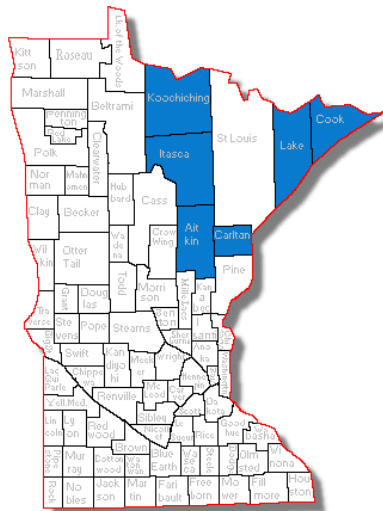


Heading Home: Northeast Minnesota

Northeast Minnesota Plan to End Homelessness



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Heading Home: Northeast Minnesota

Northeast Minnesota Plan to End Homelessness

Background

In March 2004, a workgroup established by the legislature at the request of Governor Tim Pawlenty completed a state plan to end long-term homelessness by 2010. The plan calls for multi-disciplinary (housing, human services, corrections), multi-sector (government, business, nonprofit), and multi-jurisdictional (federal, state and local) strategies to address long-term homelessness.

The goal of the Business Plan is to provide housing and appropriate support services to those experiencing long-term homelessness – single adults, unaccompanied youth and families with children – so they can be successfully housed over the long-term. The strategy is to create 4,000 units of permanent supportive housing – affordable housing with coordinated services that is designed to keep families housed. In addition, emphasis was placed on preventing homelessness.

In 2007, the Bush Foundation awarded funding to the 6 Greater MN Continuum of Care groups to develop regional plans to end homelessness that would focus on the regional implementation of the state’s Business Plan to End Long Term Homelessness.

The Northeast Continuum of Care Committee (NE COC) is the organization responsible for the development of this plan. The Committee is a broad coalition that has been working, since 1997, to apply for and oversee HUD Homeless funding and to coordinate efforts to address homelessness. It includes representatives from homeless service providers, county social service agencies, community action agencies, county Veteran’s Service officers, mental health providers, housing and redevelopment authorities, the Fond du Lac Reservation, the Bois Forte Reservation, the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, family service collaboratives, and organizations that address domestic violence.

The Heading Home Northeast Plan was spearheaded by Plan to End Homelessness Committee of the NE CoC, but most of the planning and prioritizing was done on the county-level by homeless coalitions that meet on a regular basis to quantify the numbers and needs of homeless people, develop housing and programs to meet needs, oversee government homelessness funding, provide public education about homelessness, and engage citizens and the private sector in ending homelessness. The Plan’s goals were approved by the NE Continuum of Care Committee in April 2008.

Why a Plan to End Homelessness?

- A way to better quantify what homelessness “looks like” in rural NE Minnesota;
- A way to engage a broader group of people and organizations in working to end homelessness;
- An action plan for implementing the State of Minnesota’s Business Plan for Ending Long Term Homelessness on a regional and local level;
- A tool for securing additional resources to end homelessness; and
- A way to meet one of HUD’s priorities for awarding HUD Homeless funds.

What do We Mean by Homeless?

The NE CoC adopted the definition used for the Minnesota Homelessness Survey in 2006, which is:

A person living in emergency shelter, transitional housing, a battered women's shelter or safe home, on the street, or in any other place not meant for human habitation.

Regional Overview

Homelessness is a hidden, but growing problem in NE Minnesota's six rural counties.

The best source of facts about the extent and nature of homelessness in NE Minnesota come from the Statewide Homeless Survey, that is coordinated every three years by the Wilder Research Center of the Amherst Wilder Foundation.

On the night of the 2006 Statewide Homeless Survey, coordinated by Wilder Research Center and local volunteers on October 26, there were a total of 264 persons counted as homeless in the non-reservation areas of Aitkin, Cook, Lake, Itasca and Koochiching Counties.

In addition to these 264 people, there were 100 homeless adults interviewed on the Fond du Lac Reservation, and these households included 101 children. Half of the households that took part in the survey at Fond du Lac had their last regular place to live in Carlton County.

Part of the Boise Forte Reservation is also in the Northeast CoC region, but on the night of the Statewide Homeless Survey, none of the 18 persons who were interviewed had their last place to live in Koochiching County.

Regional Overview of 2006 Statewide Homeless Survey

County	Persons Sheltered on 10/26/06			Persons Unsheltered on 10/26/06			Total
	Unaccompanied Youth Under 18	Adults	Children with Parents	Adults who were Interviewed	Spouses & Partners	Children with Parents	
Aitkin	0	3	4	18	7	15	47
Carlton	8	7	12	26	6	12	71
Cook	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
Itasca	0	28	21	42	10	16	117
Koochiching	0	3	2	2	0	3	10
Lake	0	3	2	6	1	4	16
Total	8	44	41	97	24	50	264

Who was Homeless in Northeast Minnesota?

- 54% were male
- 46% were female
- 34% were children
- 23% of men and 13% of women were veterans
- 65% grew up in Greater Minnesota
- 79% grew up in Minnesota
- The average age was 33.8

Ethnicity/Race of Homeless Persons in Northeast Minnesota

Caucasian – 86%

American Indian – 7%

African American – 2%

Multi-racial – 4%

The Reality of Homeless Persons in Northeast Minnesota

Education and Economics

- 28% had completed post-high school education
- 42% had steady employment
- 11% received support from Minnesota Family Investment Program
- 10% worked as day or temporary laborers
- 5% received Social Security Disability Insurance
- The average amount that homeless men would be able to pay each month for their own place to live was \$187. For women it was \$308.

Housing History

- For persons unsheltered, the average number of nights that males had spent outside in the last month was 18.5, for females it was 12.9
- 19% met HUD's definition of chronic homeless.
- 38% were waiting for Section 8 Housing assistance.
- 51% were former correctional facility inmates.

Physical and Mental Health

- 43% were physically mistreated as a child or youth.
- 36% had a chronic health condition
- 48% needed to see a dentist.
- 20% were not taking medicine they were supposed to be taking.
- 79% had a serious or chronic disability (mental illness, substance abuse, other)

Common Causes of Homelessness in Northeast Minnesota

- 36% could not afford rent or house payments.
- 29% broke-up with spouse or partner.
- 25% lost their job or had hours cut.
- 23% were evicted.
- 15% could not get along with housemates.
- 14% had drinking and/or drug problems.
- 14% were abused by someone they lived with.

Overview of Difference in Northeast Minnesota versus Statewide

Homeless people in Northeast Minnesota are more likely to:

- Be younger (average of 34 years versus 38)
- Be white (86% versus 41%)
- Be married (13% versus 7%)
- Have lived in Minnesota over 20 years (67% versus 41%)
- Be prevented from getting housing now by lack of job or income (43% versus 36%)
- To have lived in foster care (28% versus 19%)
- To have income from steady employment (42% versus 21%)
- Of military veterans, to have served in the Iraq War (32% versus 3%)

Homeless people in Northeast Minnesota are less likely to:

- Have grown up in another state (18% versus 47%)
- Be homeless more than three years (11% versus 20%)
- Meet the definition of chronic homelessness (19% versus 32%)
- Have ever lived in emergency shelter (30% versus 65%)

Homelessness on Six Northeast Indian Reservation

A survey was conducted during the Fall of 2006 by a collaborative of many Indian Reservations in partnership with the Wilder Research's statewide study of homelessness. The participating reservations in Northern Minnesota include: Bois Forte, Fond du Lac, Leech Lake, Mille Lacs, Red Lake, and White Earth.

Overview of Homelessness

There were 1,230 identified as homeless and near-homeless on the Reservations. Of those there were:

- 447 children with adults
- 97 youth on their own (ages 13-21)
- 241 parents with children
- 118 husbands, wives or partners
- 336 adults not with children

Forty-four (44%) of those homeless or near-homeless on the Northeast Indian Reservations were children or youth.

Economic and Education Reality

- 34% had no high school diploma
- 52% had a high school diploma
- 14% had at least some higher education
- 27% had steady employment
- 17% received support from the Minnesota Family Investment Program
- 31% of adults were employed at the time of the survey
- 66% of persons with jobs were paid less than \$10 per hour
- 31% of persons with jobs were paid less than \$8 per hour.

Housing History

- 62% had been living "temporarily" with others for over year
- 31% had been without housing of their own for three years or more
- 98% would prefer a place of their own and 83% were looking for housing
- 63% were living in overcrowded housing (more than once person per room)
- 14% were living in substandard housing

Physical and Mental Health

- 31% of adults reported at least one chronic health condition
- 29% considered themselves alcoholic or chemically dependent
- 17% of adults had been told by a medical professional in the last two years they had a significant mental illness.
- 18% of adult respondents had been physically abused as a child
- 14% of adult women were fleeing domestic abuse situations.

Opportunities for Ending Homelessness in NE Minnesota

Over the past twelve years, since the NE Continuum of Care was established, there has been a growing collaboration of organizations that are working together to address homelessness in the six county NE region. Numerous partnerships have been formed to provide services, to develop housing, and to engage additional partners in this important work. In addition the strong local homelessness coalitions that have been formed in Aitkin, Carlton, Itasca, Lake and Koochiching Counties have been essential to identifying needs, coordinating services, educating the public about homelessness, and creating new resources. These partnerships, on the local level and the regional level are the greatest resources for ending homelessness in NE Minnesota. Other opportunities include:

- Very successful programs that can be replicated or expanded. These include Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance, Transitional Housing, Rural Housing Assistance and Stabilization Program, and Free at Last Independent Living Skills Program for Youth.
- Newly developed permanent supportive housing programs that will be models for how permanent supportive housing can work in rural areas or on reservations. These include New Beginnings in Two Harbors, the Fond du Lac Supportive Housing Program on the Fond du Lac Reservation, and the NE Project to End Long Term Homelessness.
- A growing interest in addressing and ending homelessness among citizens and faith communities. Because of excellent public education campaigns by homeless service providers and members of the homeless coalitions, there are a number of small faith-based groups in the region that are currently meeting to learn more about homelessness, to examine program models, and to determine the best way to meet their local homelessness needs.
- Increased capacity among service and housing providers to expand and change programs to better address homelessness.
- Housing stock that is old, but generally less expensive than in larger urban areas.
- Less “turf” conflicts between organizations that address homelessness. Because resources are historically fewer in rural areas of the state, the organizations that serve homeless people are good at working together to eliminate duplication and to stretch resources to get the best outcomes. This approach is better for the people being served, and it is cost efficient for funding agencies.
- A growing level of data on the nature and extent of homelessness in NE Minnesota. Individuals and organizations in the region have greatly increased their outreach for the bi-annual Sheltered and Unsheltered Count and their outreach and volunteer recruitment for the State Homeless Survey, which takes place every three years. As a result, we currently have reliable data on who is homeless in NE Minnesota and what their background and current needs are.
- Available technical assistance and financial support for the development of permanent supportive housing and homelessness planning. The Corporation for Supportive Housing has made a significant investment of time, training, and hands-on technical assistance in the initiation and completion of permanent supportive

housing projects in Two Harbors, Aitkin, Fond du Lac reservation, and Bois Forte reservation. The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency and the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund have been strong supporters of Continuum of Care planning for many years, and the Bush Foundation generously funded the development of this Heading Home Plan. These investments continue to be critical components of our efforts to end homelessness.

Challenges for Ending Homelessness in NE Minnesota

The challenges for ending homelessness over the past 10 years have been:

- The region had only 4 emergency shelter beds and few other programs serving homeless persons. The region also lacked resources or capacity to count homeless persons who were not “in the system”. As a result, the number of homeless people in the region was estimated to be few.
- Because the number of homeless people was estimated to be few, our region was deemed to have low need.
- Because our need was considered low, we often were not awarded funding to expand service or housing for homeless persons. As a result, we had difficulty identifying and serving other “hidden” homeless people.

In recent years, the awareness that there are actually greater numbers of homeless people in the six county area has come about through the addition of the 10-bed GRACE House Shelter in Grand Rapids, through greater outreach efforts like Operation Community Connect in Aitkin and Carlton Counties, through the addition of a regional outreach worker at Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans, and through the concerted efforts of individuals and organizations to count homeless people.

As a Continuum, we are hopeful that all the work that has been done to build a baseline of programs and services, to educate the public and policymakers about rural homelessness, and to prove the greater need will now result in increased funding and volunteer efforts to end homelessness in NE Minnesota.

The challenges that remain include:

- Limited private foundations that fund programs or capital projects in rural Minnesota.
- Limited planning capacity on the local level. Unlike large metropolitan counties that have planning staff in their social service departments, County Human Service agencies in Aitkin, Cook, Lake, Itasca, and Koochiching Counties do not have program planners that work on housing issues, and due to increasing caseloads and diminishing resources, have limited resources to devote to efforts to end homelessness. Likewise, most service providers that participate in the Continuum of Care and local homelessness coalitions are busy running programs that cannot keep up with the demand. They have limited time to devote to regional coordination efforts and efforts on the local level to redesign existing programs, engage volunteers, or to create new initiatives.
- Rental subsidies are very scarce. The Housing Choice/Section 8 voucher program has waiting lists in every county, and new Shelter Plus Care subsidies are difficult to get from HUD because our region is only eligible for 1-2 new vouchers/year.

- Transportation is a challenge for homeless persons because of the vast geography and limited resources other than Arrowhead Transit. For service and housing providers, it is expensive and time-consuming to travel to meetings throughout the region or in the Twin Cities, even though it is necessary to partner and collaborate.
- The rental housing stock is very old and in need of repair.
- Job opportunities for homeless persons are currently scarce due to the economic downturn. Even when jobs are available, they are often in the low-paying service sector, which makes it difficult for low income people to pay for housing.
- The region needs additional development of permanent supportive housing, but has a limited number of organizations that have development expertise, or the ability to do more than one project. Social service organizations like North Shore Horizons and Advocates Against Domestic Abuse have taken on the role of developer in the absence of other options in their communities, but it is not very efficient to train social service organizations to be developers.
- Funding to sustain successful programs is needed, as is funding to provide ongoing supportive services in permanent supportive housing.

Strategies to End Homelessness in NE Minnesota

Goal One: Prevent New Episodes of Homelessness

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Improve discharging Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal Justice System • Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discharge planning protocol are adopted in each county. • Point persons are established in each county for discharge planning. • Incarcerated veterans are more aware of discharge planning resources.
2. Increase housing affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Housing and Redevelopment Authorities • Housing and Urban Development • Low Income Heat and Energy Assistance Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional rental subsidies are available. • People who are eligible for Energy Assistance receive Energy Assistance
3. Improve coverage of the region by the Family Homeless Prevention, Assistance and Stabilization Program (FHPAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minnesota Housing • AEOA • Providers in Lake and Cook Counties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A FHPAP proposal will be submitted and funded for Lake and Cook Counties in 2009. • FHPAP funding will be maintained in Koochiching, Itasca, Carlton, and Aitkin Counties.
4. Improve utilization of mainstream resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Human Service Organizations • Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans • County Veterans Service Officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased numbers of veterans are aware of Minnesota and federal Veteran's benefits. • Increased numbers of veterans receive veteran's benefits. • People who are eligible for Food Assistance receive food assistance. • People who are eligible for Emergency Assistance receive Emergency Assistance. • CoC members regularly review County Biennial Service Agreements to determine Emergency Assistance funding levels and guidelines.
5. Expand the availability of flexible resources for security deposits, first and last month's rent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NE Continuum of Care • Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional resources are available for security deposits, first and last month's rent. • Additional veterans receive resources for security deposits, and first and lasts month's rent.

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
6. Reduce evictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rental Property Owners ● Lakes and Pines Community Action ● University of Minnesota Extension “Rentwise” Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Additional training opportunities are available for rental property owners on landlord rights and responsibilities. ● Additional training opportunities are available for renters on rental rights and responsibilities.
7. Reduce mortgage foreclosures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Private banks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness of resources to prevent mortgage foreclosure is increased. ● The percentage of foreclosed homes decreases.
8. Improve stabilization and independent living skills for youth moving from institutionalization or foster care to independent living.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AEOA LIFE Transitional Housing ● SELF projects ● Lutheran Social Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The percentage of youth who become homeless upon discharge from institutionalization decreases. ● The percentage of youth who become homeless upon discharge from foster care decreased.
9. Increase earned incomes to livable wages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DEED ● State and Federal Agencies ● Private Employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are increased opportunities for full time employment at livable wages. ● There are increased options for job skills training and vocational rehabilitation options. ● There are increased incentives for employers to create jobs. ● Creation of financial aid for felons seeking job skills training.

Goal Two: Provide Coordinated Outreach/Expand Access Points to Housing and Services

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Create and hold “Project Community Connect” events in each county at least once every two years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEOA • KOOTASCA • Lakes and Pines Community Action • Local Service Providers • County Human Service Agencies • North Shore Horizons • Volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake County “Project Community Connect” will be held in 2009. • Itasca County Homeless Resource Fair will be held in 2009. • Carlton County Project Community Connect will be held in 2008 and 2009. • Aitkin County Project Community Connect will be held in 2008 and 2009. • Koochiching Project Community Connect will be held in 2009.
2. Create and hold “Stand Down Events” in each county by 2103	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans • County Veterans Service Officers • Other Veteran’s Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand Down will be held in Koochiching County in 2008.
3. Expand outreach for Social Security disability applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHS • Social Security Outreach Grantees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be SSI outreach specialists in each county and on Fond du Lac reservation.
4. Improve connections between housing and social service staff and jail and corrections staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County jails • Correctional facilities • MN Sex Offender facility, Moose Lake. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin County Jail will implement model program of “inreach” services by July 2008. • There will be one person identified in each county who will be the point person for discharge planning.
5. Develop “model” system of coordinated intake to assist homeless and at-risk homeless population with self-sufficiency and increase awareness and accessibility to housing and supportive services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grace House • KOOTASCA • The Salvation Army, Grand Rapids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grace House will start and operate a day center in Itasca County by January 1, 2008. • Grace House will expand its day center and work cooperatively with other housing organizations to offer day services.
6. Ensure resource directories are available to homeless people in all areas of the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way 211. • County Homeless Coalitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons being discharged from NE facilities will receive resource directories prior to release.

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
7. Increase staff who are focused on outreach to homeless and near homeless persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach worker for veterans at Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans will be maintained.

Goal Three: Shorten Length of Homelessness and Rapidly Re-house in the most permanent arrangement

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Preserve current stock of affordable and supportive housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable Housing Owners Human Development Center KOOTASCA North Shore Horizons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding sources are identified to preserve current affordable and supportive housing. Operating support is secured for the HDC Outreach Center Apartments. Operating support is secured for the KOOTASCA Men's House. Operating Support is secured for New Beginnings Housing in Two Harbors.
2. Increase the stock of affordable housing and increase the availability of supportive services that people need to maintain housing stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nonprofit and For Profit housing developers Corporation for Supportive Housing Fond du Lac Reservation Bois Forte Reservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 300 new units of affordable housing are created over 10 years. Units are created for chronic homeless persons, homeless youth, homeless single adults, homeless families with children, persons who are chemically dependent, and veterans. Appropriate models of housing are created for persons with substance issues.
3. Increase access to Section 8/family choice vouchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing and Redevelopment Authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An evaluation is done of whether it would be helpful to establish Section 8 preferences for homeless people and veterans at each of the region's Housing and Redevelopment Authorities. A veteran's preference is established in at the Cloquet/ Carlton HRA in 2008. A veterans preference is established at the Aitkin HRA in 2008. A veteran's preference is established at the Koochiching HRA in 2008.

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
4. Increase housing subsidies for homeless persons with mental illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and Redevelopment Authorities • HDC • Northland Counseling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridges vouchers for persons with mental illness are available in all areas of the region. • The total number of Bridges vouchers available in the region is increased.
5. Increase housing subsidies for persons who meet Minnesota’s definition of long-term homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearth Connection • Fond du Lac Reservation • County Human Service Organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NE Project to End Long Term Homelessness is expanded to all counties and reservations in the region. • An additional 60 beds are added to the NE Project to End Long Term Homelessness project.
6. Develop a rural “housing first” demonstration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Shelter Providers • County Social Service Providers • The Salvation Army • Nonprofit housing and service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on “Rural Housing First” is offered in the region. • An evaluation is done of the feasibility of moving stable renters to homeownership, and using existing single family stock to house homeless persons. • A pilot Housing First/Rapid Re-housing project for a total of 5 households is implemented in Itasca County in 2009. • An additional Rapid Rehousing Pilot is started in Aitkin County by 2010 that can serve 6 households/month.
7. Develop and maintain good landlord relationships to enhance capacity for utilizing existing private housing market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local landlords • Local Service Provider • Housing and Redevelopment Authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional rental property owners are willing to rent to persons with criminal backgrounds. • Additional rental property owners are willing to rent to persons with poorer rental histories.

Goal Four: Increase Supports for Homeless People

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
<p>1. Increase Emergency Shelter resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grace House • Carlton County Collaborative • Koochiching Housing Issues Advisory Committee <p><u>Government</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State • County • City • Reservations <p><u>CAP Agencies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEOA • KOOTASCA • Lakes and Pines • The Salvation Army 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency shelter units will be available in each county and on reservations. -Ten units of emergency shelter will be developed in Itasca County. -Eight emergency shelter beds will be created in Carlton County. -Ten emergency shelter beds will be created in Koochiching County by 2011. • Hotel/motel vouchers will be available for homeless people not served by emergency shelters. • A new pool of funds for emergency shelter in Lake County will be developed in 2009.
<p>2. Address gaps in services for youth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEOA • Lutheran Social Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be emergency shelter options for youth in each county and on the reservations. • The number of Transitional Housing beds for youth will increase from 2 to 10. • Service gaps in Employment and Transportation for youth will be addressed. • There will be increased numbers of case managers for youth.
<p>3. Increased service resources will be available for emergency shelter, transitional, and permanent supportive housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services • Non-profit service providers • County Veteran Service Officers • Reservations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inventory will be created of existing services including population specific services. • Needed services will be identified, e.g. transportation. • State staff will develop and present a map of existing programs, funding and need by the end of 2008. • Funding will be accessed for new or expanded services such as GRH (Group Residential Housing).

Goal Five: Build Capacity for Self Support

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Increase individual living skills and support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Centers • AEOA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increased percentage of adults leaving homeless programs will have income from employment.
2. Connect at-risk population with education and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Centers • School Districts • Stake Holders • Service Providers • Chamber of Commerce • Employers • Economic/Workforce Development Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increased percentage of adults leaving homeless programs will have income from employment.

Goal Six: Engage the Broader Community in Ending Homelessness

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Educate citizens and groups in the private sector about the nature and extent of homelessness in Northeast Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin Homeless Coalition • Carlton Housing Task Force • Lake County Poverty and Homeless Coalition • Itasca County Housing Issues Advisory Committee • Koochiching County Housing Issues Advisory Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A public education campaign featuring cardboard silhouettes of homeless persons will be implemented in 2009 in Aitkin County. • By the end of 2010, members of the Itasca HIAC will make a video about the face of homelessness in Itasca County. • During 2009, Itasca HIAC members will attend a meeting of the City Council and make a presentation on homelessness. • During 2009, HIAC members will attend a meeting of the County Commissioners and make a presentation on homelessness. • Itasca HIAC and Koochiching HIAC members will plan and publicize “One Night Without a Home” events in Grand Rapids and International Falls.
2. Provide opportunities for community members to assist homeless persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin County Homeless Coalition • Carlton County Collaborative • Lake and Cook County representatives • Koochiching Housing Issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 volunteers and 30 vendors will assist with the 2009 Aitkin County Community Connect. • 35 volunteers and 32 vendors will assist with the 2010 Aitkin Community Connect . • 40 volunteers and 40 vendors will assist with the Carlton

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
	Advisory Committee	County Operation Community Connect in 2009. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 volunteers and 45 vendors will assist with Carlton County Operation Community Connect in 2010.
3. Secure support for the Heading Home Northeast Minnesota Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NE Continuum of Care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008-2009: At least 10 Carlton County organizations will lend their support to the Plan.

Aitkin County Action Plan

Overview of homelessness

Resources

Unmet Needs

Action Plan



7-29-00

Aitkin County

County Overview of Homelessness

On the night of the 2006 Statewide Homelessness Survey, there were 46 homeless persons counted in Aitkin County. Of those persons, 40 were unsheltered and 7 were sheltered. Nineteen (31%) of the homeless were children.

Overview of Persons at Risk in Aitkin County

Those who are at most risk for homelessness in Aitkin County include:

- Persons with impending foreclosure¹
 - Aitkin Sheriff sales in 2005 – 18 (MN County Sheriff's Sales)
 - Aitkin Sheriff sales in 2006 – 35
 - Aitkin Sheriff sales in 2007 – 47 (18 more than projected)
 - Aitkin Sheriff sales projected in 2008 – 67
- Persons living in poverty
 - Percent of persons living at or below the poverty rate in Aitkin County is 12%²
 - Current percent of persons in Carlton, Aitkin, Mille Lacs, Kanabec and Pine Counties living at or below the poverty rate is 11%³
- Persons who are working poor
 - A family of four with two full-time wage earners needs to earn a combined annual salary of \$47,436 to afford the basic cost of living.⁴
 - 34% of jobs in Itasca County and counties nearby pay less than the regional wage required to afford basic needs.⁵
- Persons who can't afford housing⁶
 - It is estimated that 51% of renters in Aitkin County are unable to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at fair market rent (\$625 per month – HUD Fair Market Rents 2008).
 - 239 people are paying over 30% of income in rent. This is 51% of all renters.
 - The wage needed to afford a 2-bedroom apartment is \$11.04/hour (\$4.25 over the estimated mean wage for renters in Aitkin County).
 - In Aitkin County, a median-priced home is \$121,500.
 - Since 2000, home prices have increased by 29.7% and rent has increased by 28.1%.

*Thirty-one percent
(31%) of those homeless
in Aitkin County were
children.*

*Foreclosures almost
quadrupled between
2005 and 2008 from
18 to 67.*

¹ Foreclosures in Minnesota, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund and Housing Link, 2008, <http://www.gmhf.com/programs/foreclosure/reports/april2008/MN-foreclosure-report-042808.pdf>

² US Census, 2000

³ 2006, American Community Survey

⁴ *The Cost of Living in Minnesota Family Wage & Budget Calculator*, JOBS NOW Coalition, 2008

⁵ *The Cost of Living in Minnesota*, JOBS NOW Coalition, 2007

⁶ Minnesota Dept. of Revenue Sales Ratio Study 2006-7; HUD Fair Market Rents 2008; Low Income Housing Coalition, "Out of Reach, 2007-8"

Resources for Homeless Persons in Aitkin County

Sources of Emergency Shelter Vouchers

The Salvation Army	The Salvation Army occasionally uses their resources to shelter a homeless family or individual in a hotel for 1-2 nights
Advocates Against Domestic Abuse (AADA)	AADA occasionally uses state or federal domestic violence resources to shelter a homeless victim of domestic violence in a hotel for 1-2 nights. Others are referred to a shelter in Crow Wing County.
Lakes and Pines Community Action	Lakes and Pines has an Emergency Shelter Grant Program. In the last year, they were able to provide a voucher to shelter 1 Aitkin household in a motel. Motel stays are limited to 7 days.

Existing Transitional Housing

Advocates Against Domestic Abuse	AADA provides 1 unit of transitional housing for a family that is homeless due to domestic violence. Families can stay up to 24 months.
Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV)	MACV leases 6 apartments to provide transitional housing throughout NE MN (Lake, Cook, Carlton, Aitkin, Koochiching, or Itasca Counties) to homeless families that include a veteran.
Lutheran Social Services	Lutheran Social Services offers a transitional housing program for youth in Brainerd. Homeless youth from Aitkin County are eligible to participate if they move to Brainerd.
Lakes and Pines Community Action	Lakes and Pines has grant funding until October 2009 to provide six households in Central Minnesota with a rental subsidy and case management.

Specialized Supportive Services

The Salvation Army	Rural Homeless Assistance and Stabilization Program (RHASP). The Salvation Army administers the RHASP program in Aitkin County. RHASP provides assistance (first month's rent, damage deposit, short-term transportation costs, and other supportive services) to enable homeless families to move into rental housing. RHASP assists approximately 50 households per year throughout the six-county NE region.
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Homeless Prevention

Lakes and Pines Community Action

Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program. Lakes and Pines provides direct prevention and supportive services to households at risk of homelessness in Aitkin county. Twenty-six households were assisted in Aitkin County from July 07 to July 08.

Other Critical Resources

Aitkin Housing and Redevelopment Authority

The Aitkin HRA provides public housing to senior and persons with disabilities. It also provides Section 8 housing vouchers to families and individuals who rent housing from private rental property owners. The HRA provides assistance and referrals to a people who are homeless or are looking for affordable housing.

Access North

Access North assists individuals with disabilities to live independently, pursue meaningful goals, and have equal opportunities and choices. Services include independent living skills, training, information and referral, advocacy, and peer counseling.

Aitkin County Veteran's Service Officer

The Veteran's Service Office assists veterans, including those who are homeless, to secure veterans benefits and other local, state, and federal resources.

Aitkin County Workforce Center

The Aitkin Workforce Center is a one-stop center providing employment and training services.

Unmet Needs in Aitkin County

The Aitkin Housing Coalition is a group that works to educate Aitkin County residents about the existence and needs of homeless people in Aitkin County. The Coalition, which includes representatives from Aitkin HRA, Access North, Aitkin Ministerial Association, Aitkin City Clerk's Office, Aitkin Workforce Center, The Salvation Army, Minnesota Assistance Council for Veteran, Aitkin Advocates Against Domestic Abuse, Aitkin County Health and Human Services, USDA Rural Development, and University of Minnesota Extension. The Coalition has identified the following unmet needs in Aitkin County

- 105 people are on the waiting list for 31 Family Choice Vouchers (Section 8) at the Aitkin Housing Authority. As of December 2007, the waiting list has been closed to new applicants. It may remain closed for 2-3 years.
- 232 women, 10 men and 271 children were assisted by Advocates Against Domestic Abuse (AADA) between July 2007 and June 2008. 147 people (73 adults and 74 children) were homeless or requested assistance with housing, and 39 were sheltered in a hotel for a total of 335 nights.
- There is no emergency shelter in Aitkin County, and very limited ability to use motel vouchers for shelter.
- There are virtually no resources for persons being discharged from the Aitkin County jail. Transportation and temporary housing are the most immediate needs for this population.
- There is just one unit of transitional and no units of permanent supportive housing for homeless persons in Aitkin County.

Prioritized Needs in Aitkin County

The Aitkin County Homelessness Coalition has identified the following priority needs:

- Support for people coming out of jail or corrections;
- Emergency shelter;
- Short –term Transitional Housing or a Rapid Re-housing program to assist homeless households to secure permanent housing, and to assist with short-term rental assistance;
- Permanent supportive housing for homeless families and persons with mental illness
- Affordable rental housing;
- Services and transitional housing for youth;
- Case management, especially for persons with mental illness
- Flexible funds for prevention; and
- Substance Abuse treatment

New Resources Planned for Aitkin County

- The Aitkin Homeless Coalition, Access North, and AADA are in the initial phase of planning for the creation of permanent supportive housing units for families and individuals in Aitkin County. They are being assisted by the Corporation for Supportive Housing.

Aitkin County Action Plan

Goal One: Prevent New Episodes of Homelessness

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Increase housing affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin Housing and Redevelopment Authority • Lakes And Pines Community Action • Low Income Heat and Energy Assistance Program • MN Energy Source • The Salvation Army 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional rental subsidies are available. • Additional funding is available for Energy Assistance and other energy resources. • People who are eligible for Energy Assistance and other energy resource receive assistance with their energy costs.
2. Expand the availability of flexible resources for security deposits and first and last month's rent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans • Lakes and Pines Community Action • The Salvation Army's Rural Homeless Assistance and Stabilization Program (RHASP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional resources are available for security deposits, first and last month's rent. • Additional veterans receive resources for security deposits, and first and lasts month's rent.
3. Expand availability of Foreclosure Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lakes and Pines Community Action's Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional resources are available for foreclosure prevention.
4. Reduce episodes of homelessness for persons coming out of Aitkin County Jail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin County Jail • Aitkin County service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service providers will meet with persons in jail before they are released to provide information on available resources.

Goal Two: Provide Coordinated Outreach and Expand Access Points to Housing and Services

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Create and Hold a "Project Community Connect" event in Aitkin County on an annual basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin County HRA • Aitkin Workforce Center • Aitkin County Human Services • Lakes and Pines Community Action • Local Service Providers • Volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin County Project Community Connect will be held in McGregor 2008 and in Aitkin in 2009. • 150 households/year will participate, learn about, and connect to available resources.
2. Maintain and distribute an Aitkin County resource directory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin Homeless Coalition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An updated resource directory will be available on-line. • Paper copies of a resource directory will be available.

Goal Three: Shorten Length of Homelessness and Rapidly Re-house in the most permanent arrangement

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Develop permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AADA • Corporation for Supportive Housing • Access North 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-6 permanent supportive housing units are created for homeless families and individuals. • 10-12 permanent supportive housing units are developed for persons with mental illness.
2. Develop a short-term transitional or Rapid-Housing program to assist homeless families with temporary housing needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin Homeless Coalition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources to lease housing for up to 6 months/household will be identified. • Resources to provide case management and other services to participating households will be identified.
3. Increase access to Section 8/family choice vouchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin HRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A veteran's preference is established in at the Aitkin HRA in 2008.
4. Increase housing subsidies for homeless persons with mental illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin HRA • Morrison County HRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridges vouchers for persons with mental illness are used in Aitkin County
5. Increase housing subsidies for persons who meet Minnesota's definition of long-term homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearth Connection • Aitkin County Social Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-8 units will be subsidized in Aitkin County as part of the NE Project to End Long Term homelessness project in Aitkin County. • Services will be available for 4-8 households that have experienced long-term homelessness.
6. Maintain and expand transitional housing units for households made homeless due to domestic violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin Advocates Against Domestic Violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence Against Women Act funding will be secured to maintain and expand current transitional housing program.

Goal Four: Increase Supports for Homeless People

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Increase Emergency Shelter resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin Homeless Coalition • Lakes and Pines • The Salvation Army • Sheriff's Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotel/motel vouchers will be available for homeless people not served by emergency shelters.
2. Address gaps in services for youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lakes and Pines Community Action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options for a home-sharing program will be explored.
3. Increase services for homeless persons with mental illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin Homeless Coalition • Region 5 Mental Health Initiative. • Aitkin County Human Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service providers will clarify the intake process for existing services and identify gaps in services. • Funding will be accessed for support services for homeless persons with mental illness.

Goal Five: Engage the Community in Ending Homelessness

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Increase community awareness of homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin Homeless Coalition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A “cut out” public education campaign will be implemented in fall 2009.
2. Provide opportunities for community members to assist homeless persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aitkin Homeless Coalition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 volunteers and 30 vendors will assist with the 2009 Community Connect. • 35 volunteers and 32 vendors will assist with the 2010 Community Connect.
3. Secure support for Aitkin County Action Plan to End Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NE Continuum of Care • Aitkin Homeless Coalition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 10 Aitkin County organizations will lend their support to this plan.

Carlton County Action Plan

Overview of homelessness

Resources

Unmet Needs

Action Plan



7-29-00

Carlton County

County Overview of Homelessness

On the night of the 2006 Statewide Homelessness Survey, there were 71 homeless persons counted in Carlton County. Of those persons, 44 were unsheltered and 27 were sheltered. Thirty-two (45%) of the homeless were children or youth.

While ambitious efforts were made to count homeless individuals and families on this date, the numbers above reflect an undercount of homeless people in Carlton County because they did not include a complete scan of all locations where homeless persons might have been located in the County. Additionally, even though doubling-up with families and friends is common in Carlton County due to the lack of emergency shelter and transitional housing resources, persons who are doubled up do not meet HUD's definition and therefore were not counted as part of the Statewide Survey.

Fond du Lac Reservation Overview

One hundred persons that were homeless or near-homeless were interviewed on the Fond du Lac Reservation at the time of the Statewide Homeless survey. Ten persons who were interviewed had no housing, and the others were living in substandard or overcrowded housing. The average number of people/household was 5.43. The households that were interviewed included 76 children with their parents.

Overview of Persons at Risk in Carlton County

Those who are at most risk for homelessness in Carlton County include:

- Persons with impending foreclosure⁷
 - Carlton Sheriff sales in 2005 – 41 (MN County Sheriff's Sales)
 - Carlton Sheriff sales in 2006 – 46
 - Carlton Sheriff sales in 2007 – 79 (34 more than projected)
 - Carlton Sheriff sales projected in 2008 – 136

- Persons living in poverty⁸
 - Percent of persons living at or below the poverty rate in Carlton County is 12% (US Census, 2000)
 - Current percent of persons in Carlton, Aitkin, Mille Lacs, Kanabec and Pine Counties living at or below the poverty rate is 11% (2006 American Community Survey)

- Persons who are working poor
 - A family of four with two full-time wage earners needs to earn a combined annual salary of \$45,732 to afford the basic cost of living.⁹

Forty-five percent (45%) of those homeless in Carlton County were children.

Foreclosures tripled between 2005 and 2008 from 41 to 136.

⁷ Foreclosures in Minnesota, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund and Housing Link, 2008, <http://www.gmhf.com/programs/foreclosure/reports/april2008/MN-foreclosure-report-042808.pdf>

⁸ Minnesota Kids Count 2007, Children's Defense Fund – Minnesota; www.cdf-mn.org

⁹ *The Cost of Living in Minnesota Family Wage & Budget Calculator*, JOBS NOW Coalition, 2008

- 34% of jobs in Itasca County and counties nearby pay less than the regional wage required to afford basic needs.¹⁰
- Persons who can't afford housing¹¹
 - It is estimated that 48% of renters in Carlton County are unable to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at fair market rent (\$605 per month - HUD Fair Market Rents 2008).
 - 529 people are paying over 30% of income in rent
 - The wage needed to afford a 2-bedroom apartment is \$10.67/hour (\$3.19 over the estimated mean wage for renters in Carlton County)
 - In Carlton County, a median-priced home is \$140,500.
 - Since 2000, home prices have increased by 52.7% and fair market rent has increases by 27.9%.

Overview of Persons at Risk on the Fond du Lac Reservation¹²

Those most at risk for homelessness on the Fond du Lac Reservation include:

- Persons living in poverty
 - Percent of persons living at or below the poverty rate on the Fond du Lac Reservation is 14% (US Census, 2000)
- Persons who can't afford housing
 - The average amount that youth 21 or younger could pay for housing was \$234.62/month.
 - The average amount that adults 22 or older could pay for housing was \$265.15.
 - The average amount that parents with children could pay for housing was \$316.18/month.
- Persons who can't find housing
 - 93% of survey respondents are currently looking for housing.
 - 100% said "if they could find or afford their own housing, not shared with friends or extended family", they would take it.
 - 14% identified their housing as substandard including 17% that had no central heating system.

Most Common Causes of Homelessness in Northeast Minnesota¹³

The top four reasons respondents of all ages left their last housing was:

- Couldn't afford rent or house payments – 36%
- Break-up with spouse or partner – 29%
- Lost job or had hours cut – 25%
- Eviction – 23%

The top four reasons respondents of all ages had difficulty getting or keeping housing was:

- Lack of a job or income – 67%
- No housing they could afford – 63%

¹⁰ The Cost of Living in Minnesota," JOBS NOW Coalition, 2007

¹¹ Minnesota Dept. of Revenue Sales Ratio Study 2006-7; HUD Fair Market Rents 2008; Low Income Housing Coalition, "Out of Reach, 2007-8

¹² 2006 Minnesota Statewide Survey of Persons without Permanent Shelter- Companion Survey on Reservations: Fond du Lac Reservation.

¹³ 2006 Minnesota Statewide Survey of Persons without Permanent Shelter, Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, Wilder Research Center, <http://www.wilder.org/homelessness.0.html>

- Credit problems – 36%
- The cost of application fees - 27%
- No local rental history – 27%

Most Common Causes of Homelessness on Fond du Lac Reservation

The top four reasons respondents of all ages left their last housing were:

- Break-up with spouse or partner – 30%
- Problems getting along with other people they lived with – 29%
- Couldn't afford rent or house payments – 25%
- Eviction, foreclosure, non-renewal of lease – 18%

The top reasons respondents of all ages had difficulty getting or keeping housing was:

- Lack of job or income – 60%
- Credit problems – 39%
- Cost of application fees -24%
- Size of family – 17%

Resources for Homeless People in Carlton County

Existing Emergency Shelter Vouchers

Carlton County Public Health and Human Services

Carlton County Public Health and Human Services has very limited funds to shelter a homeless family or individual in a hotel for 1-2 nights. Resources are only available to shelter 6 households per year.

The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army occasionally uses their resources to shelter a homeless family or individual in a hotel for 1-2 nights

Carlton County Domestic and Sexual Assault Program

Carlton County Domestic and Sexual Assault Program occasionally uses state or federal domestic violence resources to shelter a homeless victim of domestic violence in a hotel for 1-2 nights. Typically families are referred to the Safe Haven Shelter in Duluth.

Fond du Lac Reservation

Fond du Lac Reservation occasionally uses tribal funds to shelter a homeless family or individual in a hotel.

Lakes and Pines Community Action

Lakes and Pines has an Emergency Shelter Grant Program. In the last year, they were able to provide vouchers to shelter 3 homeless Carlton County households in a motel. Motel stays are limited to 7 days.

Existing Transitional Housing

Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) MACV leases 6 apartments to provide transitional housing throughout NE MN (Lake, Cook, Carlton, Aitkin, Koochiching, or Itasca Counties) to homeless families that include a veteran.

Existing Permanent Supportive Housing.

Fond du Lac Reservation, Carlton County Public Health and Human Services, and Hearth Connection The Northeast Project to End Long Term Homelessness leases 21 rental units in Carlton County for households that have experienced long-term homelessness. Fond du Lac Social Services and Carlton County Public Health and Human Services manage the project and provides supportive services to the participants.

Human Development Center Outreach Center Apartments. Human Development Center provides 5 units of permanent supportive housing at the Outreach Center. All units are for single homeless individuals with a mental illness.

Specialized Supportive Services

The Salvation Army Rural Homeless Assistance and Stabilization Program (RHASP). The Salvation Army administers the RHASP program in Carlton County. RHASP provides assistance (first month's rent, damage deposit, short-term transportation costs, other supportive services) to enable homeless families to move into rental housing. RHASP assists approximately 50 households/year throughout the NE region.

Homeless Prevention

Lakes and Pines Community Action Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program. Lakes and Pines provides direct prevention and supportive services to households at risk of homelessness in Carlton County. Forty-one households were assisted in Carlton County from July 07 to July 08.

Other Critical Resources

Carlton/Cloquet Housing and Redevelopment Authority The Carlton/Cloquet HRA provides public housing to senior and persons with disabilities. It also provides Section 8 housing vouchers to families and individuals who rent housing from private rental property owners. The HRA provides assistance and referrals to a people who are homeless or are looking for affordable housing.

Carlton County Veteran’s Service Officer The Veteran’s Service Office assists veterans, including those who are homeless, to secure veterans benefits and other local, state, and federal resources.

Unmet Needs in Carlton County

The Carlton County Housing Taskforce, Carlton Collaborative’s Growing Up Healthy Coalition and the Carlton County Mental Health Advisory Committee have identified the following unmet needs in Carlton County and on the Fond du Lac Reservation:

- 200 people are on the waiting list for Family Choice Vouchers (Section 8) at the Carlton/Cloquet Housing and Redevelopment Authority. The current waiting list is at least six months.
- As of November 2006, there were 200 households on the waiting list for reservation-provided housing.
- 265 adult victims were assisted by the Carlton County Domestic and Sexual Abuse Program between July 2005 and June 2006.
- 250 children were assisted by the Carlton County Domestic and Sexual Abuse Program during this time period. Of these, 55 were under the age of 5.
- 6-8 homeless youth/month from Carlton County contact Lakes and Pines Community Action seeking assistance with housing and other needs.

Priorities for Ending Homelessness in Carlton County

The Carlton County Housing Taskforce has identified the following priorities:

- Emergency shelter options for families;
- Bridges rental subsidies for persons with mental illness who are on the waiting list for Section 8;
- New and creative housing options for persons with mental illness;
- Additional rental subsidies for individuals and families experiencing long-term homelessness;
- Additional homeless prevention resources;
- More affordable rental housing;
- Housing options for homeless youth, including home-sharing options, and
- Resource person/agency to assist people to maintain or find housing.

New Resources Being Planned for Carlton County

- Fond du Lac Supportive Housing. This new housing project being developed by the Fond du Lac reservation will provide 21 units of permanent supportive housing for homeless families and 3 units for homeless individuals. Supportive services will be provided by Fond du Lac Human Services and other providers.
- Emergency Shelter. The Carlton County Collaborative for Families and Children received a grant from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation of Minnesota to develop emergency shelter resources for families. This project is in the planning stage.

Carlton County Action Plan

Goal One: Prevent New Episodes of Homelessness

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
<p>1. Increase housing affordability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlton/Cloquet Housing and Redevelopment Authority. • Fond du Lac Housing office • Low Income Heat and Energy Assistance Program • MN Energy Source • The Salvation Army • Carlton County Public Health and Human Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008: Carlton Housing Taskforce educates service providers about resources for assistance with energy costs. • 2008-2010: People who are eligible for Energy Assistance and other energy resource receive assistance with their energy costs. • 2008-2010: Carlton Housing Task Force members identify and apply for additional rental subsidies.
<p>2. Expand the availability of flexible resources for security deposits and first and last month's rent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans • Lakes and Pines Community Action's Family Homeless Prevention Program. • The Salvation Army's Rural Homeless Assistance and Stabilization Program (RHASP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008-2010: Carlton Housing Taskforce Members identify and apply for resources for security deposits, first and last month's rent. • 2008-2010: Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans assists additional veterans with resources for security deposits, and first and lasts month's rent. • 2008-2010: Salvation Army applies for and receives renewal funding for RHASP.
<p>3. Expand availability of Foreclosure Prevention resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lakes and Pines Community Action's Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: Lakes and Pines applies for renewal funding for Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program. • 2009-2010: Additional resources are available for foreclosure prevention.

Goal Two: Provide Coordinated Outreach and Expand Access Points to Housing and Services

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
<p>1. Create and Hold a “Project Community Connect” event in Carlton County on an annual basis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlton County Collaborative for Families and Children • Fond du Lac Reservation • Carlton County Public Health and Human Services • Lakes and Pines Community Action • Local Service Providers • Faith Community • Volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008: First Carlton County Operation Community Connect (OCC) is held. • 2008: 100 households participate in OCC and learn about available resources. • 2009: 125 households participate in OCC. • 2010: 150 households participate in OCC.
<p>2. Improve 211 service by improving communication between 211 and Carlton County service and housing providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way of Greater Duluth • Carlton County service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008-2009: United Way 211 staff participate in OCC and attend meetings of the Carlton County Housing Taskforce. • 2009-2010: More people in a housing crisis utilize 211. • 2009 -2010: 211 provides better information about available resources in Carlton County.
<p>3. Establish Housing Link database to improve access to vacant rental units</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Link • Carlton County rental property owners • Carlton/Cloquet HRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008: Housing Link database initiated in Carlton County • 2009: Representatives from Housing Link present information to NE Continuum and Carlton Housing Taskforce. • 2009-2010: Additional rental property owners list their properties in Housing Link. • 2009-2010: Households looking for housing utilize Housing Link.

Goal Three: Develop Housing Opportunities/Shorten Length of Homelessness and Rapidly Re-house in the most permanent arrangement

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Preserve current stock of affordable and supportive housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Development Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: Operating support is secured for the HDC Outreach Center Apartments.
2. Develop permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonprofit and For Profit housing developers • Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) • Fond du Lac Reservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010: Fond du Lac Reservation completes 24 permanent supportive housing units for homeless individuals and families. • 2009-2010: Members of the Carlton Housing Task Force Participate in the CSH Supportive Housing Institute. • 2013: 10 permanent supportive housing units are developed for persons with mental illness. • By 2018: 56 permanent supportive housing units are created for homeless families and individuals.
3. Increase access to Section 8/family choice vouchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloquet/Carlton HRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008: A veteran's preference is established in at the Cloquet/Carlton HRA.
4. Increase housing subsidies for homeless persons with mental illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloquet/Carlton HRA • Carlton County Public Health and Human Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: Cloquet/Carlton HRA applies to DHS for Bridges Program. • 2009-2010: 10 Bridges vouchers for persons with mental illness are available in Carlton County.
5. Increase housing subsidies for persons who meet Minnesota's definition of long-term homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearth Connection • Fond du Lac Reservation • Carlton County Public Health and Human Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: Carlton County organizations support increased funding for the NE Project to End Long Term Homelessness. • 2008-2009: The number of units in the NE Project to End Long Term Homelessness project – Fond du Lac Reservation increase from 8 to 16. • 2008-2009: The number of units in the NE Project to End Long Term Homelessness project – Carlton County

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
		increase from 14 to 28.
6. Increase the availability of affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlton County HRA • Carlton/Cloquet HRA • Fond du Lac Housing Authority • Central Minnesota Housing Partnership • Northern Communities Land Trust • Carlton County Economic Development Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008: Steve Nelson from NE HOME Consortium makes a presentation on the availability of HUD HOME funds for Carlton County. • 2008: Central Minnesota Housing Partnership presents information on housing development and rehabilitation resources available through CMHP. • 2008: Carlton County HRA is established. • By 2018: 300 affordable rental and homeownership options will be developed to meet the needs of persons on the waiting lists at Carlton/Cloquet HRA and Fond du Lac Housing Authority.
7. Develop and maintain good relationships with private rental property owners to enhance capacity for utilizing existing private housing market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rental Property Owners • Local Service Providers • Housing and Redevelopment Authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: A forum is held to provide information to rental property owners on resources for rental tenants and landlord rights and responsibilities. • Additional rental property owners are willing to rent to persons with poorer rental histories.
8. Explore housing options for ex-offenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlton Housing Taskforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009-2010: Carlton Task Force learns about resources available to house persons coming out of corrections. • Additional rental property owners are willing to rent to persons with criminal histories

Goal Four: Increase Supports for Homeless People

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Increase Emergency Shelter resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlton County Collaborative • Carlton County Ministerium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008-2009: Carlton County Collaborative educates the community on homelessness in Carlton County and the need for emergency shelter resources. • 2008-2009: Hotel/motel vouchers are available for homeless people not served by emergency shelters. • By: 2011: 10 emergency shelter beds for families are created in Carlton County.
2. Address gaps in services for youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lakes and Pines Community Action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008-2009: Options for a home-sharing program will be explored.
3. Increased service resources will be available for emergency shelter, transitional, and permanent supportive housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Human Services • Non-profit service providers • Carlton County • Fond du Lac Reservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008-2009: Carlton Housing Task Force will support additional funding for emergency shelter, transitional housing, and supportive services for homeless persons. • 2009 and beyond: Funding will be accessed for new or expanded services.

Goal Five: Engage the Community in Ending Homelessness

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Educate the community about the nature and extent of homelessness in Carlton County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlton County Collaborative • Lakes and Pines Community Action • Carlton County Public Health and Human Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008-2009: Presentations on homelessness in Carlton County are made to Ministeriums, County Board of Commissioners, church groups, and other community organizations.
2. Provide opportunities for community members to assist homeless persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlton County Collaborative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: 40 volunteers will assist with the Operation Community Connect. • 2010: 50 volunteers will assist with Operation Community Connect.
3. Secure support for Carlton County Action Plan to End Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NE Continuum of Care Committee • Carlton Housing Task Force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008-2009: At least 10 Carlton County organizations will lend their support to the Plan.

Cook County Action Plan

Overview of homelessness

Needs and Barriers



7-29-00

Cook County

County Overview of Homelessness

On the night of the 2006 Statewide Homelessness Survey, there were 3 homeless persons in Cook County. Of those persons, all three were adults and were unsheltered.

Cook and Lake County Needs and Barriers

A report conducted by the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency in 2007, identified the following statements regarding homelessness in Cook County:

- Veterans Services Officer estimates a highly mobile homeless veteran population of 50-60 people in the summer.
- Salvation Army serves 6 homeless households per year that are transient and 1 single male considered homeless.
- Violence Prevention Center reports 15 nights of temporary housing are used for women fleeing domestic violence.
- Health Services staff report serving about 200 people at risk of homelessness.
- Cook County School superintendent reported 1 family living in woods and others without running water or electricity.

Additional barriers that were identified by Cook and Lake County residents included:

- Lack of transportation to work.
- Untreated or undiagnosed mental illness.
- Families are unaware of services or unwilling to seek them out.
- Lack of temporary housing options.
- Not qualified to participate in assistance programs.

Overview of Persons at Risk in Cook County

Those who are at most risk for homelessness in Cook County include:

- Persons with impending foreclosure¹⁴
 - Cook Sheriff sales in 2005 – 5 (MN County Sheriff's Sales)
 - Cook Sheriff sales in 2006 – 4
 - Cook Sheriff sales in 2007 – 3 (7 less than projected)
 - Cook Sheriff sales projected in 2008 – 2

- Persons living in poverty
 - Percent of persons living at or below the poverty rate in Cook County is 10% (US Census, 2000)
 - Current percent of persons in Lake, Cook, Koochiching, Itasca, and Cass living at or below the poverty rate is 13% (2006 American Community Survey)

- Persons who are working poor
 - A family of four with two full-time wage earners needs to earn a combined annual salary of \$ 44,124 to afford the basic cost of living.¹⁵
 - 34% of jobs in Cook County and counties nearby pay less than the regional wage required to afford basic needs.¹⁶

- Persons who can't afford housing¹⁷
 - It is estimated that 39% of renters in Cook County are unable to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at fair market rent (\$562 per month - HUD Fair Market Rents 2008)
 - 106 people are paying over 30% of income in rent
 - The wage needed to afford a 2-bedroom apartment is \$9.98/hour (\$3.90 over the estimated mean wage for renters in Cook County)
 - In Cook County, a median-priced home is \$213,500. (Minnesota Dept. of Revenue Sales Ratio Study 2006-7)
 - Since 2000, home prices have increased by 64.4% and fair market rent has increased by 28.0%.

¹⁴ Foreclosures in Minnesota, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund and Housing Link, 2008, <http://www.gmhf.com/programs/foreclosure/reports/april2008/MN-foreclosure-report-042808.pdf>

¹⁵ *The Cost of Living in Minnesota Family Wage & Budget Calculator,* JOBS NOW Coalition, 2008

¹⁶ *The Cost of Living in Minnesota,* JOBS NOW Coalition, 2007

¹⁷ Minnesota Dept. of Revenue Sales Ratio Study 2006-7; HUD Fair Market Rents 2008; Low Income Housing Coalition, "Out of Reach, 2007-8

Itasca County Action Plan

Overview of homelessness

Resources

Unmet Needs

Action Plan



7-29-00

Itasca County

County Overview of Homelessness

On the night of the 2006 Statewide Homelessness Survey, there were 117 homeless persons in Itasca County. Of those persons, 68 were unsheltered and 49 were sheltered. Thirty-seven (32%) of the homeless were children. There were also over 100 households counted in a separate survey on the Leech Lake reservation, a portion of which is in Itasca County.

In 2008, 169 households received emergency shelter at GRACE House. Seventy-six percent of the households were from Itasca County. Forty-two people were turned away due to lack of beds at GRACE house.

In July through September 2008, the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program, administered by KOOTASCA, served 142 households facing homelessness in Itasca County. They also assisted 35 households facing homelessness due to mortgage foreclosure.

*Thirty-two percent
(32%) of those homeless
in Itasca County were
children.*

*Foreclosures increased
from 77 in 2005 to 92
in 2008.*

Overview of Persons at Risk in Itasca County

Those who are at most risk for homelessness in Itasca County include:

- Persons with impending foreclosure¹⁸
 - Itasca Sheriff sales in 2005 – 77 (MN County Sheriff's Sales)
 - Itasca Sheriff sales in 2006 – 64
 - Itasca Sheriff sales in 2007 – 73 (22 less than projected)
 - Itasca Sheriff sales projected in 2008 – 92
- Persons living in poverty
 - Percent of persons living at or below the poverty rate in Itasca County is 11% (US Census, 2000)
 - Current percent of persons in Lake, Cook, Koochiching, Itasca, and Cass living at or below the poverty rate is 13% (2006 American Community Survey)
- Persons who are working poor
 - A family of four with two full-time wage earners needs to earn a combined annual salary of \$44,412 to afford the basic cost of living.¹⁹
 - 34% of jobs in Itasca County and counties nearby pay less than the regional wage required to afford basic needs.²⁰

¹⁸ Foreclosures in Minnesota, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund and Housing Link, 2008, <http://www.gmhf.com/programs/foreclosure/reports/april2008/MN-foreclosure-report-042808.pdf>

¹⁹ *The Cost of Living in Minnesota Family Wage & Budget Calculator,* JOBS NOW Coalition, 2008

²⁰ *The Cost of Living in Minnesota,* JOBS NOW Coalition, 2007

- Persons who can't afford housing²¹
 - It is estimated that 46% of renters in Itasca County are unable to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at fair market rent (\$588 per month - HUD Fair Market Rents 2008)
 - 824 people are paying over 30% of income in rent
 - The wage needed to afford a 2-bedroom apartment is \$10.37/hour (\$2.54 over the estimated mean wage for renters in Itasca County)
 - In Itasca County, a median-priced home is \$135,000. (Minnesota Dept. of Revenue Sales Ratio Study 2006-7)
 - Since 2000, home prices have increased by 57.9% and fair market rent has increased by 28.1%.

- Persons waiting to access assistance in Itasca County, as of October 2008:
 - 2-year wait for Section 8;
 - 500 people are on the waiting list for Section 8;
 - 6-9 month wait for Bridges funding, for persons with persistent mental illness at risk of homelessness;
 - 6 people on waiting list for Midway Villa's 14 single room occupancy housing units;
 - 9 people on waiting list for Shelter Plus Care's 7 rental subsidies;
 - First Call for Help made 356 referrals for emergency shelter or transitional housing in Itasca County in 2007.

Resources for Homeless People in Itasca County

Existing Emergency Shelter

Grace House	GRACE House Shelter operates out of Zion Lutheran Church. Ten beds are available per night for homeless families or individuals.
Itasca County Human Services	Itasca County Human Services occasionally uses Emergency Assistance Funds or other resources to shelter a homeless family or individual in a hotel for 1-2 nights.
The Salvation Army	The Salvation Army occasionally uses their resources to shelter a homeless family or individual in a hotel for 1-2 nights.
Advocates for Family Peace	Safe Emergency Housing. Advocates for Family Peace offers shelter, advocacy, transportation, food, and clothing to households.

²¹ Minnesota Dept. of Revenue Sales Ratio Study 2006-7; HUD Fair Market Rents 2008; Low Income Housing Coalition, "Out of Reach, 2007-8

Existing Transitional Housing

KOOTASCA	Itasca Transitional Housing has 3 leased 3-bedroom units for homeless families. Up to 3 families or 18 people can be served at one time.
KOOTASCA	KOOTASCA's Men's House has six short term transitional beds for homeless men. Participants are typically coming out of jail or substance abuse treatment.
Advocates for Family Peace	AFFP offers 4 leased units for households that are homeless due to domestic violence.
Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans	MACV leases 6 apartments to provide transitional housing throughout NE MN (Lake, Cook, Carlton, Aitkin, Koochiching, or Itasca Counties) to homeless families that include a veteran.
Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency	LIFE Transitional Housing provides 3 leased units for youth who are homeless and between the ages of 17 and 21.

Existing Permanent Supportive Housing for Adults who are Homeless

Itasca County Housing and Redevelopment Authority and Northland Counseling Center	Midway Villa. Northland Counseling provides 14 units of Single-Room-Occupancy housing to single homeless adults. Northland Counseling also provides supportive services.
Itasca County Housing and Redevelopment Authority and Northland Counseling Center	Shelter Plus Care. Itasca County HRA provides rental assistance to 7 disabled, homeless households. Supportive services are provided by Northland Counseling.
The Salvation Army and Hearth Connection	The Northeast Project to End Long Term Homelessness leases 5 units in Itasca County for households that have experienced long-term homelessness. The Salvation Army manages the project and provides supportive services to the participants.

Specialized Supportive Services

The Salvation Army

Rural Homeless Assistance and Stabilization Program (RHASP). RHASP provides assistance (first month's rent, damage deposit, short-term transportation costs, other supportive services) to enable homeless families to move into rental housing. RHASP assists approximately 50 households per year throughout the NE region.

Homelessness Prevention and Other Housing Assistance

KOOTASCA

Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP). Provides homeless prevention activities to assist participants to remain in their homes. Services include rent and mortgage assistance, limited case management, budget counseling, information and referral.

Itasca County Veterans Services

Staff at the Veteran's Service Office assist veterans, including those who are homeless to secure benefits and other local, state, and federal resources.

Other Resources for Housing Stability or Permanency

Itasca County HRA

Bridges Program. Itasca HRA offers rental subsidies to persons with a verifiable serious and persistent mental illness who are on the waiting list for Section 8. There are 40 subsidies available.

The Itasca County HRA provides public housing to seniors and persons with disabilities. It also provides Section 8 housing vouchers to families and individuals who rent housing from private rental property owners. The HRA provides assistance and referrals to a people who are homeless or are looking for affordable housing.

Unmet Needs in Itasca County

The Itasca County Housing Issues Advisory Committee identified the following unmet needs in Itasca County:

- Lack of Affordable Rental Housing with Supportive Services
- Not enough Transitional Housing
- Not enough Affordable rental housing
- Tenant/landlord education
- Rental rehabilitation programs to improve rental housing stock
- Crisis funding to address energy-related needs
- Transportation resources
- Better discharge planning for persons leaving jail, corrections, foster care or mental health facilities
- Services/housing for youth.

Priorities for Ending Homelessness in Itasca County

Itasca County's Housing Issues Advisory Committee (HIAC) is made up a broad variety of people and organizations that are committed to educating the community about housing and homelessness issues, improving the delivery of services to persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and overseeing the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program. HIAC's current goals are to:

- Maintain existing emergency shelter resources.
- Maintain existing transitional housing resources.
- Maintain Free at Last independent living services for youth exiting foster care.
- Address mental health access issues for youth
- Plan and implement a housing resource day
- Assist in assuring friendly and easy access to services
- Plan Habitat for Humanity, HIAC fun day
- Create public awareness video on homelessness
- Improve discharge planning (jail, treatment, youth aging out of foster care, etc...)
- Address community employment
- Increase awareness of services for veterans

New Resources Planned to Address Homelessness in Itasca County

- New facility for GRACE House Shelter
- New rental units at the Grand Itasca project to provide Shelter Plus Care subsidized rental units for single persons with a disability who are homeless.
- Rapid Re-Housing Pilot to assist families who are leaving the Grace House Shelter to find and move into rental housing.

Itasca County Action Plan

Goal One: Prevent New Episodes of Homelessness

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
<p>1. Improve discharge planning from jail, mental health facilities, substance abuse treatment and foster care)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) • Northland Counseling Center • Itasca County Jail • Itasca County Judicial System • Hope House • Itasca County • KOOTASCA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of October 2008, MACV will conduct a training on the needs of veterans who are being released from correctional facilities and resources available to this population. • By May 2009, the HIAC Committee will convene a meeting of discharging entities to initiate better coordination between these facilities and organizations that assist homeless persons. • By August 2009, planning will start toward a goal of 10 supportive housing beds for people leaving correctional facilities, mental health facilities, or substance abuse treatment facilities.
<p>2. Provide training to rental property owners on their rights and responsibilities. Inform rental property owners of resources for tenants who are having trouble paying rent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holly Downing, Itasca County Public Health • KOOTASCA • Audrey Moen, Northland Counseling Center • Legal Aid • University of MN Extension Service • Diane Larson, Itasca County HRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KOOTASCA staff will attend the landlord training in Central Minnesota to get ideas for format, topics. • By June 2009, Holly Downing and Audrey Moen will identify a potential date for the landlord training and a potential agenda. • Holly and Audrey will research existing training resources offered by the Minnesota Multi-Housing Association, and possibilities for these trainings to be offered in Itasca County. • The first training will be held by December 2009. • At least ten landlords will attend.
<p>3. Provide training to rental housing tenants on their rights and responsibilities. Inform tenants of resources for maintaining housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holly Downey, Public Health • KOOTASCA • Audrey Moen, Northland Counseling Center • Legal Aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By November 2009, training will be offered.

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
4. Maintain Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program to prevent homelessness for 175 Itasca County households/year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● KOOTASCA ● HIAC Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● By April 2009, KOOTASCA will submit an application for the FHPAP program. ● Special focus for Itasca County FHPAP for 2009-2011 will be homeless youth and homeless single adults transitioning from correctional facilities, mental health facilities or chemical dependency treatment.

Goal Two: Provide Coordinated Outreach/Expand Access Points to Housing and Services

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Educate the community about heating resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dan Hess and Jen McInerney, KOOTASCA ● Salvation Army ● Susan Jordahl-Bubaz, Bovey Coleraine Youth Center ● Northland Counseling ● Teri Blaha, Project Clean Start ● Jill Schubert, Grace House ● Brenda Harthan, Itasca County HRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● By the end of March 2009, KOOTASC will coordinate a flyer “Where Can I Get Help to Get Warm?” that lists the resources and contact persons for heating assistance. ● By the end of March 2009, KOOTASCA staff members will distribute the flyer to HIAC members. ● HIAC members will distribute the flyer to their clients and networks. ● KOOTASCA will coordinate the distribution of the flyer through the elementary schools. ● Jill Schubert will recruit volunteers at Grace House who can help distribute flyers. ● KOOTASCA will distribute a similar flyer in the fall of 2009 for the 2009-2010 season.
2. Assure friendly and easy access to housing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grace House Shelter ● KOOTASCA ● Salvation Army ● AEOA – LIFE Transitional Housing for Youth ● Advocates for Family Peace ● Itasca County Human Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● By May 2009, affordable housing providers in Itasca County will explore the feasibility of co-locating in the new Grace House Shelter or other facility.

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
3. Improve awareness of services for veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MACV • Randall Carlson, Itasca County Veteran's Service Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2011, a Stand Down will be held for veterans in Itasca County.

Goal Three: Shorten Length of Homelessness and Rapidly Re-house in the most permanent arrangement.

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Implement a Rural Rapid Re-housing pilot project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salvation Army • Grace House • Rental Property Owners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By May 2009, the Salvation Army and GRACE House will develop a program concept for a Rapid Rehousing Program for families leaving GRACE House Shelter. • By July 2009: the Salvation Army and GRACE House will secure funding to assist 10 family households per year to rapidly exist GRACE House and be housed in rental housing.
2. Provide subsidized housing to an additional 20 long-term households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patty Beech, NE Continuum of Care Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By February 2009, Patty will provide information to HIAC members about Minnesota Housing's rental assistance resources. • In March 2009, HIAC members will discuss a potential application to MHFA for rental assistance for persons who are long term homeless. • By April 30, 2009, HIAC members will decide whether to apply for ELHIF vouchers. If so, they will identify an organization to apply for ELHIF rent assistance. • By October 31, 2009, and application for ELHIF rental assistance vouchers will be submitted to Minnesota Housing.

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
3. Better coordinate information on vacant rental units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patty Beech, NE Continuum of Care Coordinator • Brenda Harthan, Itasca County HRA • Housing Link 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By February 28, 2009, Brenda Harthan from Itasca County HRA will update the list of subsidized and below market rentals in Itasca County. • By March 31, 2009, Brenda Harthan will distribute the list of subsidized and below market rentals in Itasca County to members of HIAC. • HIAC members will encourage their clients to utilize the Itasca County HRA’s book of vacancies when looking for housing. • HIAC members will encourage rental property owners to share information on vacancies with the Itasca County HRA for inclusion in vacancy book.
4. Explore development of permanent supportive housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporation for Supportive Housing • GRACE House • Blandin Foundation • Greater MN Housing Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By June 2009, GRACE House will explore options for the development of permanent supportive housing in the Hope House annex. • By October 2009, a community training will be offered on Permanent Supportive Housing.
5. Maintain and improve the existing housing stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIAC Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the City of Grand Rapids in a discussion about rental housing standards and options for rental housing maintenance and improvement.
6. Develop 10 units of permanent supportive housing for homeless youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEOA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of 2009, AEOA will explore options to develop permanent supportive housing for youth in Grand Rapids. • By 2012, AEOA will initiate development of up to 10 units of PSH for youth.

Goal Four: Increase Supports for Homeless People

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Develop additional supportive housing for homeless youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEOA – LIFE Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8-10 units of supportive housing for youth will be developed by 2012.
2. Improve youth access to mental health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Itasca County Human Services • AEOA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of 2009, the new director of Children’s Mental Health will attend a HIAC meeting to discuss methods to further identify youth in need of mental health services and ways to connect these youth with needed services.
3. Improve discharge planning for youth aging out of foster care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEOA • North Homes • Itasca County Human Services • GRACE House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By July 31, 2009, the HIAC will invite organizations that provide foster care to youth to a meeting to discuss discharge protocol and practice for youth leaving foster care.

Goal Five: Engage the Community in Ending Homelessness

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Create public awareness video on homelessness in Itasca County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIAC Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By May 2009, the video will be completed. • By October 2009, the video will be shared with the public.
2. Educate Grand Rapids City Council and Itasca County Commissioners about nature and extent of homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIAC Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By December 2009 HIAC members will attend a meeting of the City Council and make a presentation on homelessness, using the Plan to End Homelessness powerpoint and the video. • By December 2009, HIAC members will attend a meeting of the County Commissioners and make a presentation on homelessness.
3. Educate the community about the nature and extent of homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIAC Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Night Without a Home activities will be held each November.
4. Educate the community about mental health issues and needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Mental Health Advisory Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In May 2009, there will public education activities that will focus on mental health awareness.

Koochiching County Action Plan

Overview of homelessness

Resources

Unmet Needs

Action Plan



7-29-00

Koochiching County

County Overview of Homelessness

On the night of the 2006 Statewide Homelessness Survey, there were 10 homeless persons in Koochiching County. Of those persons, 5 were unsheltered and 5 were sheltered. Five (50%) of the homeless were children.

While ambitious efforts were made to count homeless individuals and families on this date, the numbers above reflect an undercount of homeless people in Koochiching County because they did not include a complete scan of all locations where homeless persons might have been located in the County. Additionally, even though doubling-up with families and friends is common in Koochiching County due to the lack of emergency shelter and transitional housing resources, persons who are doubled up do not meet HUD's definition and therefore were not counted as part of the Statewide Survey

A better reflection of the number of homeless persons in Koochiching County comes from a study conducted by the Koochiching Housing Issues Advisory Committee in the fall of 2008. Based on a common reporting tool utilized by housing and social service providers for the month of November 2008, there were 14 households that were homeless and requesting housing and/or services from agencies in Koochiching County.

Overview of Persons at Risk in Koochiching County

Those who are at most risk for homelessness in Koochiching County include:

- Persons with impending foreclosure²²
 - Koochiching Sheriff sales in 2005 – 19 (MN County Sheriff's Sales)
 - Koochiching Sheriff sales in 2006 – 22
 - Koochiching Sheriff sales in 2007 – 17 (12 less than projected)
 - Sheriff sales projected in 2008 – 22
- Persons living in poverty
 - Percent of persons living at or below the poverty rate in Koochiching County is 12% (US Census, 2000)
 - Current percent of persons in Lake, Cook, Koochiching, Itasca, and Cass living at or below the poverty rate is 13% (2006 American Community Survey)
- Persons who are working poor
 - A family of four with two full-time wage earners needs to earn a combined annual salary of \$40,068 to afford the basic cost of living.²³

Fifty percent (50%) of those homeless in Koochiching County were children.

Foreclosures increased from 19 in 2005 to 22 in 2008.

²² Foreclosures in Minnesota, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund and Housing Link, 2008, <http://www.gmhf.com/programs/foreclosure/reports/april2008/MN-foreclosure-report-042808.pdf>

²³ *The Cost of Living in Minnesota Family Wage & Budget Calculator,* JOBS NOW Coalition, 2008

- 34% of jobs in Koochiching County and counties nearby pay less than the regional wage required to afford basic needs.²⁴
- Persons who can't afford housing²⁵
 - It is estimated that 55% of renters in Koochiching County are unable to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at fair market rent (\$558 per month - HUD Fair Market Rents 2008)
 - 347 people are paying over 30% of income in rent
 - The wage needed to afford a 2-bedroom apartment is \$9.98/hour (\$2.60 over the estimated mean wage for renters in Koochiching County).
 - In Koochiching County, a median-priced home is \$67,000. (Minnesota Dept. of Revenue Sales Ratio Study 2006-7)
 - Since 2000, home prices have increased by 21.6% and fair market rent has increased by 28.0%.

Prioritized Needs in Koochiching County

The Koochiching County Homeless Coalition has identified the following priority needs:

- Emergency Shelter
- More transitional housing for different populations
- Bridges Program for persons with mental illness who are on the waiting list for Section 8.
- Better use of RHASP program
- Participation in NE Project to End Long Term Homelessness

Resources for Homeless Persons in Koochiching County

Existing Emergency Shelter

Koochiching County Human Services	Koochiching County Human Services occasionally uses Emergency Assistance Funds or other resources to shelter a homeless family or individual in a hotel for 1-2 nights.
The Salvation Army	The Salvation Army occasionally uses their resources to shelter a homeless family or individual in a hotel for 1-2 nights
KOOTASCA	KOOTASCA has one unit that they use as an emergency shelter for individuals or families.

²⁴ The Cost of Living in Minnesota,” JOBS NOW Coalition, 2007

²⁵ Minnesota Dept. of Revenue Sales Ratio Study 2006-7; HUD Fair Market Rents 2008; Low Income Housing Coalition, “Out of Reach, 2007-8

Existing Transitional Housing

KOOTASCA Koochiching Transitional Housing has 2 units for homeless families. Up to 2 families or 10 people can be served at one time.

Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans MACV leases 6 apartments to provide transitional housing throughout NE MN (Lake, Cook, Carlton, Aitkin, Koochiching, or Itasca Counties) to homeless families that include a veteran.

Existing Permanent Supportive Housing for Adults who are Homeless

Koochiching County Housing and Redevelopment Authority Shelter Plus Care. Koochiching County HRA provides rental assistance to 1 disabled, chronically homeless households. Supportive services are provided by KOOTASCA, Bois Forte and other service providers.

Specialized Supportive Services

The Salvation Army Rural Homeless Assistance and Stabilization Program (RHASP). RHASP provides assistance (first month's rent, damage deposit, short-term transportation costs, other supportive services) to enable homeless families to move into rental housing. RHASP assists approximately 50 households per year throughout the NE region.

Homelessness Prevention and Other Housing Assistance

KOOTASCA Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP). Provides homeless prevention activities to assist participants to remain in their homes. Services include rent and mortgage assistance, limited case management, budget counseling, information and referral.

Koochiching County Veterans Services Staff at the Veteran's Service Office assist veterans, including those who are homeless to secure benefits and other local, state, and federal resources.

Koochiching County Action Plan

Goal One: Prevent New Episodes of Homelessness

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Maintain Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program to prevent homelessness for 100 Koochiching County residents/year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KOOTASCA • HIAC Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By April 2009, KOOTASCA will submit an application for the FHPAP program. • Special focus for Koochiching and Itasca County FHPAP for 2009-2011 will be homeless youth and homeless single adults transitioning from correctional facilities, mental health facilities or chemical dependency treatment.

Goal Two: Provide Coordinated Outreach/Expand Access Points to Housing and Services

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Increase awareness of services for veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koochiching Veterans Service Officer • Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: A second Stand Down will be held for veterans in Koochiching County.
2. Create and hold a “Project Community Connect” event in Koochiching County on an annual basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koochiching Housing Issues Advisory Committee • KOOTASCA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: HIAC Committee will be formed to determine if there is the capacity to hold an OCC event in Koochiching County. • 2010: The first Koochiching County Operation Community Connect is held.
3. Increase awareness of services for homeless youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEOA • KOOTASCA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: AEOA will add staff hours in Koochiching County to expand services to homeless youth, and to do community outreach.

Goal Three: Shorten Length of Homelessness and Rapidly Re-house in the most Permanent Arrangement.

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Increase housing subsidies for homeless persons with mental illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koochiching HRA • HIAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 2010: HIAC Committee and Koochiching HRA learn about the Bridges Program and build capacity to implement the rental subsidy program • 2011: Koochiching HRA joins regional Bridges application. • 2011-2011: 10 Bridges vouchers for persons with mental illness are available.
2. Increase access to Section 8/family choice vouchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koochiching HRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008: A veteran’s preference is established at the Koochiching HRA.
3. Increase housing subsidies for persons who meet Minnesota’s definition of long-term homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearth Connections • Bois Forte Reservation • Koochiching County Human Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: Koochiching organizations support increased funding for the NE Project to End Long Term Homeless. • 2009: The Northeast Project to End Long Term Homeless expands to Koochiching County and assists 4 long-term homeless households. • 2009: The Northeast Project to End Long Term Homelessness – Bois Forte Reservation expands from 1 participating household in Koochiching County to 4 households.

Goal Four: Increase Supports for Homeless People

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Expand emergency shelter resources for homeless adults and youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koochiching HIAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008: SOS Shelter Committee is formed. • 2009: SoS Shelter Committee meets with representatives of other emergency shelter programs. • 2009: SoS Shelter Committee engages the Koochiching County faith community, community organizations, and private citizens to support a shelter in the form of an interfaith hospitality network. • 2011: SoS Shelter opens its doors.
2. Address gaps in services for homeless youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEOA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010: "Free at Last" independent living skills training and support are provided to youth who are aging out of foster care.

Goal Five: Engage the Community in Ending Homelessness

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Educate the community about the nature and extent of homelessness in Koochiching County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koochiching Housing Issues Advisory Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 - 2013: An annual homeless awareness event is held. • 2009 - 2010: Presentations on homelessness will be made to ministeriums, County Board, church groups and other community groups.
2. Provide opportunities for community members to assist homeless persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KOOTASCA • HIAC • AEOA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010: 20 volunteers will assist with the Operation Community Connect. • 2011: 30 volunteers will assist with Operation Community Connect.
3. Secure support for the Koochiching Action Plan to End Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NE Continuum of Care Committee • Koochiching HIAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009-2010: At least 10 Koochiching County organizations will lend their support to the Plan.

Lake County Action Plan

Overview of homelessness

Resources

Unmet Needs

Action Plan



7-29-00

Lake County Action Plan to End Homelessness

County Overview of Homelessness

On the night of the 2006 Statewide Homelessness Survey, there were 16 homeless persons in Lake County. Of those persons, 11 were unsheltered and 5 were sheltered. Six (38%) of the homeless were children.

On January 27, 2009 a count of unsheltered homeless people was conducted in Lake County. Eighteen (18) households were counted as unsheltered and homeless on this night. Ten of these households were homeless youth. Of the total,

- 13 (72%) were staying with family or friends because they had nowhere else to go,
- 3 (17%) spent the night in a vehicle or camper,
- 1 (6%) spent the night in a dwelling without heat, running water, adequate food storage, or toilet facilities, and
- 1 spent the night in an unknown location.

One in four Lake County adults and children served by North Shore Horizons for family violence in 2008 became homeless (126 people), which is a 36% increase over 2007. In 2008, North Shore Horizons assisted 62 homeless women, children, and men who were living in their cars, tents, deer shacks, or squatting in empty houses. NSH was able to house 21 in permanent supportive housing, but had to turn away 65 people who were facing incredible hardship.

Lake and Cook County Needs and Barriers

A report conducted by the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency, in 2007, identified the following statements regarding homelessness in Cook and Lake Counties:

- Veterans Services Officer estimates a highly mobile homeless veteran population of 50-60 people in the summer.
- Salvation Army serves 6 homeless households per year that are transient and 1 single male considered homeless.
- Violence Prevention Center in Cook County reports 15 nights of temporary housing are used for women fleeing domestic violence.
- Health Services staff report serving about 200 people at risk of homelessness.
- Cook County School superintendent reported 1 family living in woods and others without running water or electricity.

Additional barriers that were identified by Cook and Lake County residents included:

- Lack of transportation to work.
- Untreated or undiagnosed mental illness.
- Families are unaware of services or unwilling to seek them out.
- Lack of temporary housing options.
- Some people in need are not qualified to participate in assistance programs.

Thirty-eight percent (38%) of those homeless in Lake County were children in 2006.

Foreclosures quadrupled between 2005 and 2008 from 10 to 40.

Overview of Persons at Risk in Lake County

Those who are at most risk for homelessness in Lake County include:

- Persons with impending foreclosure²⁶
 - Lake Sheriff sales in 2005 – 10 (MN County Sheriff’s Sales)
 - Lake Sheriff sales in 2006 – 16
 - Sheriff sales in 2007 – 32 (16 less than projected)
 - Lake Sheriff sales projected in 2008 – 40
- Persons living in poverty
 - Percent of persons living at or below the poverty rate in Lake County is 7.4% (US Census, 2000)
 - Current percent of persons in Lake, Cook, Koochiching, Itasca, and Cass living at or below the poverty rate is 13% (2006 American Community Survey)
- Persons who are working poor
 - A family of four with two full-time wage earners needs to earn a combined annual salary of \$45,288 to afford the basic cost of living.²⁷
 - 34% of jobs in Lake County and counties nearby pay less than the regional wage required to afford basic needs.²⁸
- Persons who can’t afford housing²⁹
 - It is estimated that 46% of renters in Lake County are unable to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at fair market rent (\$562 per month – HUD Fair Market Rents 2008)
 - 208 people are paying over 30% of income in rent
 - The wage needed to afford a 2-bedroom apartment is \$9.98/hour (\$2.89 over the estimated mean wage for renters in Lake County)
 - In Lake County, a median-priced home is \$ 119,900. (MN Dept. of Revenue Sales Ratio Study 2006-7)
 - Since 2000, home prices have increased by 61.9% and fair market rent has increased by 28.0%.

Resources for Homeless Persons in Lake County

Existing Emergency Shelter

Lake County Human Services

Lake County Human Services occasionally uses Emergency Assistance Funds to shelter a homeless family or individual in a hotel for 1-2 nights.

The Salvation Army

The Salvation occasionally uses their resources to shelter a homeless family

²⁶ Foreclosures in Minnesota, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund and Housing Link, 2008, <http://www.gmhf.com/programs/foreclosure/reports/april2008/MN-foreclosure-report-042808.pdf>

²⁷ *The Cost of Living in Minnesota Family Wage & Budget Calculator*, JOBS NOW Coalition, 2008

²⁸ *The Cost of Living in Minnesota*, JOBS NOW Coalition, 2007

²⁹ Minnesota Dept. of Revenue Sales Ratio Study 2006-7; HUD Fair Market Rents 2008; Low Income Housing Coalition, “Out of Reach, 2007-8

North Shore Horizons or individual in a hotel for 1-2 nights
North Shore Horizons occasionally uses state or federal domestic violence resources to shelter a homeless victim of domestic violence in a hotel for 1-2 nights.

Lake County Ministerium Lake County Relief Fund. Churches in Two Harbors and Lake County pool resources to assist homeless households and households in crisis with immediate needs for food, shelter, transportation.

Existing Transitional Housing

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA) Cook/Lake Transitional Housing. With North Shore Horizons as the supportive service provider, AEOA leases two apartments for single women or women with children who are homeless due to domestic violence. North Shore Horizons provides services to assist participants to increase their income and maintain permanent housing.

Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) MACV leases 6 apartments to provide transitional housing throughout NE MN (Lake, Cook, Carlton, Aitkin, Koochiching, or Itasca Counties) to homeless families that include a veteran.

Existing Permanent Supportive Housing.

North Shore Horizons New Beginnings Housing. North Shore Horizons provides 4 units of permanent supportive housing at New Beginnings. Two are for families who have experienced long-term homelessness. Two are for families who have experienced homelessness.

Existing Supportive Housing for Adults with Disabilities who are Homeless

North Shore Horizons New Beginnings Housing. North Shore Horizons provides two units of Shelter Plus Care housing at New Beginnings for single individuals with disabilities who have experienced chronic homelessness.

Specialized Supportive Services

AEOA and The Salvation Army Rural Homeless Assistance and Stabilization Program (RHASP). AEOA administers the RHASP program in Lake County. RHASP provides assistance (first month's rent, damage deposit, short-term transportation costs, other supportive services) to enable homeless families to move into rental housing. RHASP assists approximately 50 households/year throughout the NE region.

Homeless Prevention and Other Assistance

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency

Emergency Shelter Grant Program. AEOA provides direct prevention and supportive services to households at risk of homelessness in Lake county. Approximately 15 households are assisted each year.

Prioritized Needs in Lake County

Starting in 2008, the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA) organized a broad group of social service providers, private citizens, member of the faith community, school personnel, and government representatives to identify and implement strategies to better coordinate and expand resources for homeless persons in Lake County. In late 2008/early 2009, this group identified the following high priority strategies for ending homelessness in Lake County.

- Affordable rental housing with supportive services;
- Affordable rental housing and rental housing subsidies;
- Additional units of Transitional Housing;
- Expanded Services for youth;
- Additional Emergency shelter resources;
- Support for people coming out of jail/corrections; and
- Additional Mental Health Services.

Lake County Action Plan

Goal One: Prevent New Episodes of Homelessness

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Increase access to Section 8/Family Choice vouchers in Lake County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) • Two Harbors Public Housing • Duluth HRA • North Shore Horizons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: Options will be identified for having vouchers administered in Lake County rather than St. Louis County. • 2012: Family Choice Vouchers will be available in Lake County.
2. Implement a Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEOA • North Shore Horizons • Lake County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: Participants in the Meeting on Poverty will identify options for expanding AEOA's homeless prevention program to serve additional Lake County Homeless Families. • 2010: Lake County providers will secure additional resources to prevent homelessness and to rapidly re-house individuals and families that become homeless. • 2011: Participants in the Meetings on Poverty and Homelessness will identify benchmarks for Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program in Lake or Lake and Cook Counties. • 2011: An application is submitted for the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program. • 2011-2012: An FHPAP program is implemented in Lake County, preventing homelessness for 75 households/year.
3. Increase awareness about the guidelines and application process for the Lake County Relief Fund.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake County Ministerium • The Salvation Army • Lake County Human Service • Social Service Providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: Members of the Ministerium will educate providers about the application process for the Lake County relief fund. • 2009-2010: 10 people will receive assistance through the Relief Fund.

Goal Two: Provide Coordinated Outreach/Expand Access Points to Housing and Services

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Create and Hold a “Project Community Connect” event in Lake County on an annual basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEOA • North Shore Horizons • Lake County Human Services and Public Health • Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans • Two Harbors Homeless School Liaison • Salvation Army • Minnesota Extension • Human Development Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: Lake County Project Community Connect will be held on October 22, 2009. • 2009-2013: Operation Community Connect will be held on an annual basis in Lake County. • 75 households/year will participate, learn about, and connect to available resources. • At least 25 community organizations will participate in Operation Community Connect.

Goal Three: Shorten Length of Homelessness and Rapidly Re-house in the most permanent arrangement.

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Develop a rapid re-housing pilot in Lake County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEOA • North Shore Horizons • Salvation Army • First Baptist • Other churches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By May 2009, the Working Group on Poverty and Homelessness will consider the feasibility of a Rapid Rehousing Program for families who are sheltered in Lake Co. • By July 2009: If a Rapid Rehousing project would be feasible in Lake County, an applicant will be identified and a proposal submitted to rapidly re-house 5-10 families/year.
2. Increase housing subsidies for persons who meet Minnesota’s definition of long-term homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearth Connection • North Shore Horizons and other service providers • Lake County Human Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: Lake County organizations support increased funding for the NE Project to End Long Term Homeless. • 2009 - 2011: The Northeast Project to End Long Term Homeless expands to Lake County and assists 4 long-term homeless households.

Goal Four: Increase Supports for Homeless People

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Increase Emergency Shelter options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Baptist Church 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: First Baptist Church will raise funds to create an emergency hotel/motel voucher pool. • 2009-2010: 40 nights of shelter will be provided through this fund in one year.
2. Increase local agency collaboration to better provide services to homeless people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the Working Group on Poverty and Homelessness • AEOA • North Shore Horizons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009-2010: AEOA will convene quarterly meetings of the Working Group to implement the Heading Home plan goals. • 2009-2010: North Shore Horizons will recruit local members and provide logistical support to the Working Group.
3. Develop an Adult Protection Team to ensure the safety of vulnerable adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake County Human Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: Adult Protection Team is implemented.

Goal Five: Engage the Community in Ending Homelessness

Action Steps:	Partners:	Benchmarks:
1. Educate the community about the nature and extent of homelessness in Lake County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Shore Horizons • AEOA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: A Bridges out of Poverty training will be offered in Lake County in May 2009. • 2009: An article on homelessness and the unsheltered count results will be published in the Two Harbors Paper.
2. Provide opportunities for community members to assist homeless persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KOOTASCA • HIAC • AEOA • Members of the Working Group on Homelessness and Poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 20 volunteers will assist with the Operation Community Connect. • 2010: 25 volunteers will assist with Operation Community Connect. • 2011: 30 volunteers will assist with Operation Community Connect.
3. Secure support for the Lake County Action Plan to End Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NE CoC Committee • Working Group on Poverty and Homelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009-2010: At least 8 Lake County organizations will lend their support to the Plan.

Heading Home NE Minnesota Continuum of Care Committee

Leah Hall, Chairperson	Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency
Steve Saari, Chairperson	Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans
Lisa Hamilton	Advocates Against Domestic Abuse, Aitkin
Gwen Grell	Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency
DeAnna Winge	Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency
Bonnie Hertel	Advocates for Family Peace, Grand Rapids
Janelle Burton	Bois Forte Band of Chippewa
Debi Schaff	Carlton/Cloquet Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Pam Brumfield	Carlton County Public Health and Human Services
JoAnne Erspamer	Carlton County Public Health and Human Services
Donna LeKander	Carlton County Collaborative for Children and Families
Amy Wicklund	Fond du Lac Band
Lisa Pollak	Fond du Lac Band
Jill Schubert	GRACE House Emergency Shelter, Grand Rapids
David O'Leary	Hearth Connection
Jim Youngman	Human Development Center, Cloquet
Diane Larson	Itasca County Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Becky Boelter	KOOTASCA Community Action – Itasca County
Dan Hess	KOOTASCA Community Action – Itasca County ⁷
Sharon Frank	KOOTASCA Community Action – Koochiching County
Jen Stevens	Koochiching County Human Services
Scott McKinney	Lakes and Pines Community Action
Kathy Mills	Lakes and Pines Community Action
Elizabeth Kuoppala	Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless
Steph Coffey	North Shore Horizons, Two Harbors
Andrea Sande	North Shore Horizons, Two Harbors

Audrey Moen	Northland Counseling, Grand Rapids
Barb Klennert	The Salvation Army
JoAnne Johnson Lee	The Salvation Army
Bernadine Martin	The Salvation Army
Melissa Hansen	Wilder Research Center