

March 2012



**A Review of Federal, State and Local Plans  
Focusing on Homelessness in Oakland County  
and Recommendations**

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**Sponsored by the Oakland County Taskforce  
on Homelessness and Affordable Housing**

This document has been prepared by the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) in partnership with the Oakland County Taskforce on Homelessness and Affordable Housing (OCTHAH) to assist in capacity building efforts and ensure the local plan to end homelessness aligns with federal and state requirements. The plans were reviewed to compare alignment with the recently introduced Federal Plan to End Homelessness, “Opening Doors” and include a review of: The local Oakland County 10 year plan to end homelessness, Michigan’s State plan to end homelessness, Exhibit 1 submitted to HUD, and Federal homeless plan.

In June 2010, the United States Interagency Council announced the first ever Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness, “Opening Doors” ([www.usich.gov](http://www.usich.gov)). The strategic plan identifies objectives and strategies to reduce and end homelessness in our country. This document uses the Federal Plan as the baseline to compare the state and local plans and to identify gaps, areas of alignment and opportunities for partnerships.

## FEDERAL VISION AND GOALS

*No one should experience homelessness — no one should be without a safe, stable place to call home.*

- Finish the job of ending chronic homelessness in 5 years
- Prevent and end homelessness among Veterans in 5 years
- Prevent and end homelessness for families, youth, and children in 10 years
- Set a path to ending all types of homelessness

## COMMON THEMES AMONG PLANS

Several themes are present between the federal, state, and local plans examined. These themes represent initiatives, desired outcomes, and focus areas.

### *Subpopulations*

Several subpopulations are examined across plans including Chronic Homelessness, Veterans, Youth, and Homeless Families. A consideration to ensure that the plans adequately mention each of the plans would assist with continuity. In the local Oakland County plan for example, Veterans are mentioned several times throughout the document, however they are not a specific subpopulation examined; modifying this would put Oakland County’s plan more in line with the federal Opening Door strategy. Also, greater mention of the importance of ending family homelessness as well as specific strategies to do so should be considered.

### *Emphasis on Affordable and Supportive Housing*

Each plan notes the explicit importance of increasing supportive and affordable housing stock. In the Oakland County plan, several desired outcomes revolve around increasing supportive housing; this is also true in the federal, state, and Exhibit one reviewed.

## **GAPS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **1. Promote Collaborative Leadership**

Strengthening this objective in the Oakland County Plan entails adding mechanisms to engage homeless individuals in leadership with the Continuum. While these efforts are informally engaged in at COC activities, specific mention of these efforts in the 10 year plan is needed. Also, creating mechanisms to reward collaborative efforts by service providers or government entities are advised. In the 10 year plan, there is also no explicit mention of engaging congressional committees and how savings across partners can be achieved. Most importantly for this objective, adding Veterans as a targeted subpopulation is recommended, as a signature initiative of the federal plan is ending Veteran homelessness.

At the Federal level, public engagement and involvement is considered extremely important. With that said, increased initiatives and outcomes around engaging citizens and the public in the COC process and general advocacy could be helpful. This could involve adding specific outcomes for the Public Awareness and Advocacy Committee, as outlined in the local Oakland County 10 year plan.

### **2. Strengthen Capacity and Knowledge**

Creating common assessment targets and uniform performance outcome measures will greatly aid in strengthening alignment with this objective. It is recommended that the Outcome Workgroup's results be integrated into the local 10 year plan when completed.

### **3. Provide Affordable Housing**

The 10 year plan is generally very strong in this area.

### **4. Provide Permanent Supportive Housing**

Consider adding specific strategies for freeing up supportive housing units at the community level, i.e., transitioning individuals to other housing, assisting them with obtaining self-sustainability, etc. Also consider adding information about additional potential collaborative funding and opportunities for supportive housing service funding. At this point, the plan

mentions McKinney Vento and MSHDA as potential partners, however does not mention additional foundations or other entities that could be engaged.

## **5. Increase Economic Security**

Consider adding specific COC goal(s) to increase economic security. Within this context, mention specific strategies for assisting Veterans with locating employment opportunities.

## **6. Reduce Financial Vulnerability**

Efforts to achieve financial stability are outlined extensively in the federal plan, *Opening Doors*, and while these are mentioned in each of the Michigan State and Local plans, additional importance in these documents on financial stability, namely employment and income supports, should be considered. A possible course of action would be to integrate the Exhibit One information on financial stability through mainstream resources provision.

## **7. Integrate Health Care and Housing**

Integrating health care into the local plan would be in line with federal integration strategies. The state plan makes no mention of health care. In the local plan, attempting to create more collaboration with local health care providers and mentioning current collaborations with Community Mental Health organizations would strengthen alignment with the federal plan.

## **8. Advance Health and Housing Stability for Youth**

Consider specifying more specific targets with regards to access, outreach, and discharge planning. Decide whether specific outcome measures are desirable to track performance around this objective.

## **9. Advance Health and Housing Stability for Adults**

While the plan does mention promoting targeted outreach strategies, more mention of what these targeted outreach strategies are is recommended. Also, mention of the jail diversion courts that already exist in Oakland County, as noted on the Exhibit One application is recommended. In addition, in the application, the COC is currently engaged in several activities around reducing criminalization with adults including the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Initiative (MPRI) however these efforts are not explicitly mentioned in the 10 year plan; it is suggested that these efforts are operationalized in the plan.

## 10. Transform Crisis Response System

It is known that the COC engages in a great deal of crisis response; it is recommended that these efforts be added to the 10 year plan. This includes mentioning efforts for coordinated responses to access and assess crisis through diversion, prevention, and emergency shelter systems. Also, with the HEARTH Act, a consideration should be made to cross reference crisis response systems in the 10 year plan with the act itself.

### General

Although a great deal of work is being done by the Oakland County COC, some of the overarching work is not reflected in the plan. A revision to reflect this work is highly recommended.

## STRENGTHS OF LOCAL DOCUMENTS

### *Outcome Focused*

Both the Exhibit One and local Oakland County plan illustrate a commitment to outcome-based activities. This is in strong alignment with federal shifts in funding priorities and will continue to serve the Oakland County COC as it seeks additional funding and support to end homelessness.

## POTENTIAL AREAS OF COLLABORATION

### *Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) & Campaign Statewide Implementation Group (CSIG)*

As the Michigan State plan is currently missing several key components of the Federal plan to end homelessness, collaboration with MSHDA/CSIG could be mutually beneficial. This could ultimately result in reduced workloads for both entities, as they work to align closer with the *Opening Doors* plan. This partnership could include several state wide Continua of Care with the coordination of MSHDA/CSIG, to work together to better align plans state wide and not just in Oakland County.

**Attachment 1**

**CSH: Oakland County & Comparative Plans to End Homelessness**

Objectives and Strategies Proposed by Federal Plan	State (MI)*	Oakland County
<b>1. Promote Collaborative Leadership</b>		
a. Educate the Public	X	X
b. Engage state/local/tribal leaders	X	X
c. Update and implement state/local plans	X	X
d. Involve citizens and private sector	X	X*
e. Test, model interagency collaboration	X	X
f. Reward collaborating communities	X	X*
g. Recognize savings across partners	X	
h. Engage Congressional committees / elected officials	X	X*
<i>Signature Initiative: Veterans</i>	X	
<b>2. Strengthen Capacity and Knowledge</b>		
a. Compile research	X	X
b. Coordinate federal technical assistance		N/A
c. More readily available info on best practices	X	X
d. More readily available info on special populations	X	X
e. Needs of rural and tribal communities		N/A
f. Inventory of federal emergency response programs	X	X
g. Increase use of HMIS	X	X*

<b>Objectives and Strategies Proposed by Federal Plan</b>	<b>State (MI)</b>	<b>Oakland County</b>
h. Create a common data standard and uniform performance measures if feasible	X	X*
<b>3. Provide Affordable Housing</b>		
a. Support rental housing subsidies	X	X
b. Expand supply of affordable rental homes	X	X
c. Improve access to assistance	X	X
d. Increase service-enriched housing	X	X
<i>Signature Initiative: Families with Children</i>	X	X
<b>4. Provide Permanent Supportive Housing</b>		
a. Improve access to and use of supportive housing	X	X
b. Protocols and initiatives to free up units	X	
c. Expand supply of supportive housing	X	X
d. Assess options for supportive housing service funding	X	X*
<i>Signature Initiative: Chronic Homelessness</i>	X	X
<b>5. Increase Economic Security</b>		
a. Job development focus on homelessness		X*
b. Improve access to work supports		X*
c. Best practices to help people enter work force		X*

<b>Objectives and Strategies Proposed by Federal Plan</b>	<b>State (MI)</b>	<b>Oakland County</b>
d. Coordinate/Integrate employment programs		X*
e. Increase work for Veterans		
<b>6. Reduce Financial Vulnerability</b>		
a. Best practices in access to income/work supports	X	X
b. Improve access to income supports	X	X
c. Enhance public info and call center for Veterans		
d. Create pathways to financial independence	X	X
e. Prepare Medicaid expansion		
<b>7. Integrate Health Care and Housing</b>		
a. Co-locate housing and healthcare		X*
b. Build upon successful service delivery models		X
c. Evaluate effectiveness of medical home model		X*
d. Establish medical respite programs		
e. Increase availability of behavioral health services		X*
f. Improve access to child and family services		X
<b>8. Advance Health and Housing Stability for Youth</b>		
a. Improve discharge planning		X*
b. Improve access for youth	X	X*
c. Promote target outreach strategies		X*

<b>Objectives and Strategies Proposed by Federal Plan</b>	<b>State (MI)</b>	<b>Oakland County</b>
<b>9. Advance Health and Housing Stability for Adults</b>		
a. Improve discharge planning	X	X*
b. Promote targeted outreach strategies	X	X*
c. Increase number of jail diversion courts		X*
d. Define approaches to reduce criminalization	X	X*
<b>10. Transform Crisis Response System</b>		
a. Promote best practices in crisis response		
b. Use mainstream resources for housing stability	X	X
c. Implement strategies for HEARTH Act		
d. Ensure continuity through HPRP services		
e. Ensure prevention in place-based strategies		X

*This chart was adapted from the USICH Implementation Strategy for Opening Doors*

\*Mentioned in analysis as potential area to strengthen, though included to some degree.

## RESOURCES ON PLANS TO END HOMELESSNESS

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Opening New Doors, Federal Strategic Plan [www.usich.gov](http://www.usich.gov)

United States Department of Veterans Affairs: <http://www1.va.gov/HOMELESS/index.asp>

Michigan's Campaign to End Homelessness: [www.campaigntoendhomelessness.org](http://www.campaigntoendhomelessness.org)

Homeless Action Network of Detroit: [www.handetroit.org](http://www.handetroit.org)

Out-Wayne Homeless Services Coalition: [www.outwaynehomeless.org](http://www.outwaynehomeless.org)

*\*CSH is a partner in the Michigan Campaign to End Homelessness and has collaborated with many communities in Michigan on 10 Year Plans, including HAND and Out-Wayne County Homeless Services Coalition.*