



Winston-Salem Forsyth County

Homeless Initiative Update - 2025

Neighborhood Services
Department Housing and
Community Services Division

What Have We Done?



Project Homeless Connect







City & County Partnership



- \$181,194 in local agency funding for shelter operations and winter shelter.
- County Commissioner representative on the Commission on Ending Homelessness (Commissioner Woodbury).
- County appointments on Commission on Ending Homelessness- 4
- Increased partnership with the Directors of Public Health, Community & Economic Development, and Social Services as well as staff:
 - Manages the Homeless Caucus on behalf of the City and CoC
 - Ongoing assistance with events and needs for the community
 - ✓ Point in Time Count- volunteers, supplies
 - ✓ Project Homeless Connect-volunteers, supplies, flu shots
 - ✓ Winter Shelter- 2025
 - ✓ Day Center or One Stop Shop Conversations
- Attendance in all Continuum of Care meetings and initiatives
 - ✓ Increase referrals and knowledge of available programs within the CoC, City, and County

Winter Shelter 2025

Since January 4th, 2026 75 women and 167 men served.

Dwelling Overflow Shelter and Warming

- Pop Up Overflow Shelter/ Warming Space
- CDBG CV funded

Calvary Moravian Family Overflow Shelter

- Family Shelter
- CDBG CV funded

New Story Overflow Shelter

- 20 beds for men
- CDBG CV funded

Annex 2 Overflow Shelter

- 35 beds for men
- CDBG CV Funded

St. Timothy Overflow Shelter

- 20 beds for women only
- Non-City funded



Revamp Coordinated Entry System:

New Coordinated Entry System Collaboration

- City with Dwellings, City of Winston-Salem, Family Services
- Provides in person services at locations that provide access to mainstream and basic need services- Dream Center/ City with Dwellings
- Provides more than one way to connect to services: in person, phone, email, website

Marketing of the CoC with Events & Newsletters

Increase sponsors and local partnerships.

- Project Homeless Connect
- Monthly Events- Connections Over Coffee

Revision of Prioritization Policy

- Increase connections to resources and case management
- Decrease wait time.
- Increase number of persons served who are long term homeless.
- Light Touch Assistance Program

24/7 Call Center Contract

- Contract with NC 211 to provide call center and resource connection to households who call and are experiencing homelessness.
- Providing 211 access to HMIS system to allow real time data information from call center .

Enhanced Training & Increased Membership & Participation

Education of Best Practices

- o Training agencies on best practices such as:
 - FMR vs. Rent Reasonableness
 - Progressive Engagement
 - Advocating and the Housing First
 - Trauma Informed Care

Increase in Membership

- o Increase partnership agencies
 - Goodwill
 - Local Religious Organizations
 - Novant Health
 - Baldwin Properties
 - Forsyth County Department of Social Services

Increased Participation

- o In person meetings for full Continuum of Care Council
- o Increase participation by creating actions groups for each sector of work:
 - Homeless Caucus
 - Emergency Response
 - Street Outreach
 - Rapid Rehousing
 - Permanent Supportive Housing
 - Commission on Ending Homelessness
 - Data and Performance
 - Membership

Current Needs:

Increase Staff & Agency Capacity

- Wage study (2022) shows 60% of front-line staff earn below the living wage.
(*\$35,006.40 per year*)

Increase and Development of Interim Housing

- Shelter opportunities for families and single women.
- Creation of non-congregate shelter options for those with high barriers.

Supportive Services

- Increase opportunities for mental health/substance abuse services.
- Increase & strengthen wrap around services available for clients.

Affordable Housing Opportunities

- Shelter is short term, so what's next?
 - It costs more to house a household than to provide emergency shelter.
- Increased housing opportunities to utilize housing choice vouches and rapid rehousing funds as well as affordable housing opportunities for households who are making at or below 80%.

Housing Retention

- Unrestricted dollars to prevent households from becoming homeless.
 - Prevention and stabilization of at-risk households avoids families and individuals from experiencing homelessness.

What do we still
Need?



Master Leasing

- An agency (like a nonprofit or housing authority or local government entity) leases an entire building or multiple units from a landlord or property owner.
- The agency becomes the "master tenant" and then subleases the units to individuals or families experiencing homelessness.
- The agency typically provides rent guarantees, property management support, and sometimes on-site services, making it less risky for the landlord.
- People experiencing homelessness benefit by getting immediate access to housing paired with case management and supportive services to help them stabilize.

The key benefit: it opens up housing quickly without waiting for affordable housing to be built, and it reduces landlord concerns about renting to tenants who may have poor credit, rental history gaps, or other barriers



Rehab Existing City Owned Properties or Purchase and Rehab Properties for Sale

- Existing City owned property.
- Rehab existing City owned homes or homes on the City's demolition list which are deemed to be viable.
- These homes will be used for affordable housing purposes and sold to interested nonprofits interested in the development and creation of affordable housing.
- These homes will be required to adhere to the City's Housing Justice Act and be prioritized for households with income below 80%.
- Rehab of this property was around \$75,000



Rehab Existing City Owned Properties or Purchase and Rehab Properties for Sale



Renab of Multi-Family/ Investment Properties

- Currently there are owners who are interested in rehab and will allow units to be used for permanent supportive housing or affordable housing.
- All tenants will have assigned case managers through existing local agencies.
- Prioritization will be given for households experiencing homelessness based on the length of time homeless.
- Owner will maintain ownership and will have to adhere to the City's Housing Justice Act on rent amounts.

Annual Review



Conversion of Commercial Spaces

- Utilizing commercial spaces to increase residential opportunities. Conversion of hotels/motels, warehouses, schools, light industrial locations, retail, and other large spaces to create mixed use housing.
- Increases Housing Supply Quickly- Vacant commercial buildings already exist, so converting them can be faster than building new housing from the ground up.
- Revitalizes Underused Areas- Empty commercial corridors can become vibrant mixed-use communities with people living, working, and spending locally.
- Creates Opportunities for Permanent Supportive Housing- Hotels and motels are especially well-suited for conversion into smaller, studio-style units, which work well for individuals experiencing homelessness or needing supportive services.
- Potential for Mixed-Income Housing- Conversions can blend affordable units with market-rate units, reducing concentration of poverty and creating more inclusive communities similar to locations downtown that have been rehabbed.

Cottage Homes

- A village of cottage homes can often be built in months instead of years (compared to large apartment developments). Permanent housing rather than emergency shelter
- Cottages can be built as stand-alone villages with shared kitchens, bathrooms, and community spaces, or as individual units integrated into existing neighborhoods.
- Cottages use less energy and resources, supporting sustainable and eco-friendly development.



Eden Village Wilmington,
North Carolina
2 year project on an abandoned Mobile Home park. 400 square feet
zoned as
RV.

Additional Services for the Unsheltered

- Services that can meet unsheltered households in the streets.
- Basic need services such as showers, food, and laundry.
- Increase access to mental health and physical health services meeting individuals where they are.



Tampa Hope Project

- Can serve 300-350 individuals at a time.
- Approximate size is about 10 acres.
 - Has tents and pallets for shelter residents.
 - Community Center is used during weather conditions.
- Location is a former warehouse in East Tampa.
- The campus is designed as a controlled, secured environment with sleeping areas, service tents/buildings, dining space, showers, storage, and case management offices.
- The site supports 24/7 staffing, security, and service delivery.
- Basic need services such as showers, food, and laundry.



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