

BEFORE THE BOARD OF STEVENS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

IN THE MATTER OF HOMELESSNESS

Resolution No. 34-2012

ADOPTING A 10 YEAR HOMELESS HOUSING PLAN

WHEREAS, the Board finds the legislature passed into law the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act (RCW Chapter 43.185C) in 2005 which provides for county responsibilities with respect to homelessness and homeless housing and includes a requirement for adoption of a 10 year homeless housing plan in accordance with state rules, regulations and requirements;

WHEREAS, the Board finds the County approved Resolution No. 133-2005 which adopted a Temporary 10 Year Homeless Housing Plan in December of 2005 and has been working with Rural Resources and the 10-Year Plan Update Planning Group to revise the Temporary Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Board finds the "Stevens County Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness" prepared by the Planning Group, attached hereto and incorporated herein, should be adopted as the ten-year homeless housing plan for Stevens County as required by RCW Chapter 43.185C,

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED AND ORDERED that the "Stevens County Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness" attached hereto and incorporated herein is adopted as the ten-year homeless housing plan for Stevens County as required by RCW Chapter 43.185C.

Passed by the Board of Stevens County Commissioners meeting in regular session at Colville, Washington, by the following vote, then signed by its membership and attested to by its Clerk in authorization of such passage the 26<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2012.

2 YEA; 1 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; and 0 ABSENT

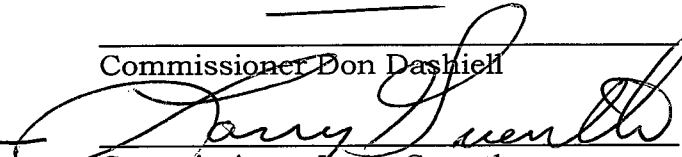
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF STEVENS COUNTY, WASHINGTON

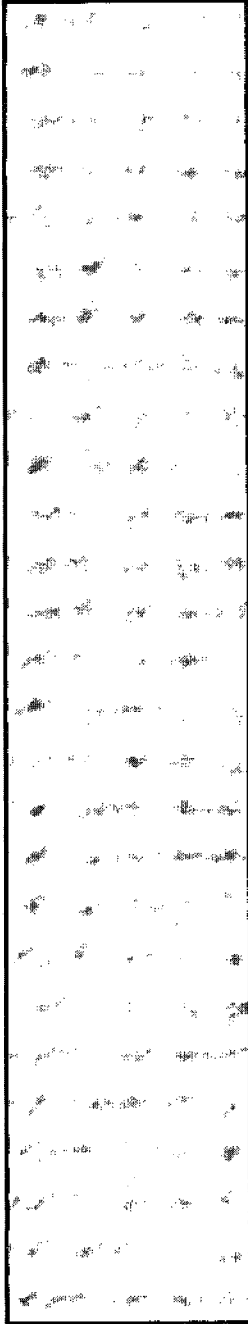
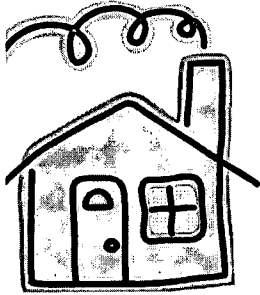
  
Chairman Malcolm Friedman

Attest:

  
Commissioner Don Dashiell

  
Polly Coleman  
Clerk of the Board

  
Commissioner Larry Guenther



# 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness

June 2012



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## Foreword

The Washington State Legislature passed the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act (Chapter 43.185C RCW) in 2005 in response to the “unacceptably high” number of homeless people in the state.

The Legislature deemed that “the support and commitment of all sectors of the statewide community is critical to the chances of success in ending homelessness...” To this end, the act assigned responsibilities to local jurisdictions to prepare homeless housing plans that reduce homelessness by 50% by July 1, 2015 (RCW 43.185C.050). The Department of Commerce Homeless Program prepared its Temporary Guidelines for Local 10-Year Homeless Housing Plans to guide this process.

Stevens County would like to thank those individuals who contributed their time to making this document possible. Their names and representations follow below.

### ***10-Year Plan Update Planning Group Members:***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Service Provider</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Doreen Hogan	Rural Resources Community Action	Housing Services
Gina Day	Rural Resources Community Action	Housing Services
Jenny Jones	Rural Resources Community Action	Homeless Services
Mary Page	Family Support Center	Domestic Violence Services
Nancy Foll	Family Support Center	Domestic Violence Services
Lisa Meddock	Habitat for Humanity	Housing Services
Chris Page	Catholic Charities Volunteer Chore	Community Services
Kelly Zema	DSHS	Community Services
David Neilson	N.E.W. Alliance Counseling	Mental Health Services
Travis Hurst	Department of Corrections	Offender Services
Fran Bessermin	Community Member (prior County Commissioner)	Community Services
Malcolm Friedman	Stevens County Commissioner	Stevens County

## Section 1 – Contact Information

<i>Jurisdiction:</i>	Stevens County
<i>Other Jurisdictions Represented in this Plan:</i>	None
<i>Date of Plan Adoption</i>	June 2012

<b>Jurisdiction Contact Person</b>	
<i>Name:</i>	Jenny Jones
<i>Title:</i>	Housing Assistance Supervisor
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<i>Fax:</i>	509/685-0108

## DATA FROM 2012 POINT in TIME COUNT

Stevens County		<b>21 Total (ES, TH, Unsheltered)</b>		
Part 1: Homeless Population	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Temporarily Living with Family or Friends
	Emergency	Transitional		
Number of Families with Children (Family Households):	0	0	0	9
Number of Households <u>without</u> Children:	2	0	16	42
Number of Households <u>without</u> Adults (nobody over 17 years old):	0	0	0	0
A. Number of Persons in Families with Children:	0	0	0	31
B. Number of Single Individuals and Persons in Households <u>without</u> Children:	3	0	18	49
C. Number of Persons in Households <u>without</u> Adults (nobody over 17 years old):	0	0	0	0
(Add Lines A & B & C) Total Persons:	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>80</b>

## DATA FROM 2012 POINT in TIME COUNT

Stevens County		21		Total (ES, TH, Unsheltered)	
Part 2: Homeless Subpopulations	Sheltered		Unsheltered*	Temporarily Living with Family or Friends*	
	Emergency	Transitional			
a. Chronically Homeless Individuals	0	NA	4	NA	
b. Chronically Homeless Families	0	NA	0	NA	
c. Persons in Chronically Homeless Families	0	NA	0	NA	
d. Mentally Disabled	0	0	3		6
e. Persons with alcohol and/or other drug problems	0	0	2		2
f. Veterans	0	0	2		4
g. Persons with HIV/AIDS	0	0	0		0
h. Victims of Domestic Violence	2	0	1		7
i. Unaccompanied Youth (Under 18)	0	0	0		0
j. Children (Under 18) in Families	0	0	0		17
k. Physically Disabled	2	0	6		16
l. Seasonal Agricultural Workers	0	0	0		0
m. Persons with both substance use and mental health problems	0	0	0		1
n. Senior citizens (aged 65 or older)	1	0	1		8

### Section 3 - Housing Activity Charts

First three tables already completed for most counties as part of the HUD McKinney process

Stevens County 2012													
EMERGENCY SHELTER													
Provider Name	Facility Name	HMIS			Geo Code	Target Pop.		2012 Year-Round Units/Beds				2011 Other Beds	
		Part Code	Number of Year-Round Beds			A	B	Family Units	Family Beds	Individual Beds	Total Year-Round	Seasonal	Over-flow/ Voucher
Current Inventory			Ind	Fam	**								
Rural Resources	Shelter	N		10	539065	HC,SF		4	10				0
Rural Resources	Warming Room				539065	SM,SF,HC						10	
N.E.W. Family Life Services	Maternity Home			10	539065	HC		4	10				
		<b>TOTALS</b>				<b>TOTALS</b>		8	20				0
Anticipated Occupancy													
Under Development		Date											
None													
						<b>TOTALS</b>							

\*\*HC – Households w/children  
 SM – Single Male  
 SF – Single Female







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## Tenant Based Rental Assistance Targeted to Homeless Persons

Provider Name	Geo Code	Target Population	Number of Vouchers
<b>Rural Resources</b>	<b>539065</b>	SM,SF,HC	<b>8</b>

**Housing Choice Vouchers/ Section 8 (Not specifically targeted to homeless in Stevens Co)**

Provider Name	Geo Code	Number of Vouchers	Families with Children	Total Number of Children	Total Number of Individuals
Rural Resoruces	539065	246	94	195	523

## **Section 4 – Homeless Services Needs**

In order to achieve a 50% reduction in homelessness by the year 2015, Stevens County has identified its areas of need. Improvement in these areas is imperative; cooperative efforts need to be made to utilize all available resources in an attempt to overcome these barriers and provide the supportive services necessary to move homeless populations through the continuum toward self sufficiency.

**Educate the Public and Increase Community Awareness.** A community cannot provide adequate support for homelessness without first informing its citizens with reliable and accurate information to portray its homeless situation. The citizens of Stevens County need to be made aware that homelessness does exist within its boundaries. Members of the community will be more willing to participate with volunteer time and dedication of financial resources once the issue is addressed publicly and accepted as a reality.

As a strategy to reduce and eliminate this need, the community should designate leaders to meet regularly with public groups, including businesses, non-profits, faith-based organizations, foundations, and volunteers. All possible efforts should be made to educate the public on the issue and to inspire citizens to commit to preventing and ending homelessness.

**Implement Outreach Programs.** Service providers need to ensure program information is accessible to all homeless populations at all times so they may utilize the resources that are available.

As a strategy to reduce and eliminate this need, program personnel must make themselves available in places where homeless and at-risk populations regularly visit in order to supply valuable information to them and to advise providers on the effectiveness of programs. It is imperative that we furnish leadership personnel that will maintain a regular, consistent presence in areas of the community for the purpose of providing information; in addition, they can provide feedback to service providers regarding barriers and need.

**Preserve Existing Housing Facilities.** Many of the homes, shelters, and apartment complexes in Stevens County are in poor condition. Units in poor condition are expensive to live in because of high utility costs, and many present significant health hazards for people of all ages. Since most low-income families live in older housing stock, they may be exposed to hazards such as asbestos, lead based paint, molds, and other unhealthy substances. Residents of these homes find themselves constantly on the edge of homelessness when their living situations prevent upkeep and improvements on their homes. The poor quality of the local housing stock makes it difficult for households to find residential units acceptable under many housing assistance programs.

***Single Family Rental Units.*** There is a need to improve existing housing to make it more readily available for subsidized rental subsidies. Those units must meet Housing Quality Standards as set forth by HUD, or an equivalent; however, many times landlords are unable or unwilling to make the necessary improvements to be accepted onto the programs, so families have few options.

***Single Family Owner-Occupied Units.*** There is a need to improve existing housing for current and future homeowners. Many of our seniors and disabled community members own their homes, but those dwellings qualify as substandard housing. The ability to make minor repairs and alternations would enable them to either remain in their home or to place it on the market for sale; however, without funding to help assist with those repairs, homeowners must continue to live in substandard housing. An attempt must be made to secure funding sources to provide grants and/or deferred loans to help homeowners with repairs.

***Multi-Family Rental Complexes.*** Many of our county's multi-family apartment complexes are older and in need of rehabilitation and upkeep. Rising costs and lack of funding inhibit landlord abilities to keep up with necessary maintenance of buildings. Funding must be secured to allow for preservation of our existing multi-family complexes. These are historically the most affordable units for families transitioning from shelter situations, the elderly, those with disabilities, and those receiving rental subsidies. Landlords must have access to funding in order to maintain the viability of these important facilities.

**Develop New Housing Opportunities.** There is great need in our community for newly developed adequate shelter and supportive services for populations including veterans, victims of domestic violence, single men and women, families with children, elderly, those who have lost homes to foreclosure, those with disabilities and mental illness, individuals exiting systems of care such as treatment centers/jails, and youth. According to recent statistics, our homeless youth population is rising at an astounding rate. We need family shelters with coordinated supportive services, shelters, and transitional facilities to ensure families move toward self sufficiency and that the cycle of homelessness is broken.

There is a need in our county for residential family shelters and safe houses to provide shelter for our homeless youth. According to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the 2010-2011 school year revealed a count of 279 homeless youth in Stevens County. Counselors and Administrators from three major high schools were recently interviewed. At that point in time, 23 homeless youth were identified in attendance at their facilities. The consensus among all interviewed was concern for the health, welfare and safety of homeless students. Schools recognize the barriers these youth experience, and acknowledge that without facilities, services, and supervision to help guide them, they will turn to unhealthy lifestyles that include drugs, violence, and other illegal and risky behaviors. Along with housing facilities for these youth, long-term funding for supportive services is necessary to establish stability.

In addition to youth, our county needs new housing opportunities for populations that include homeless victims of domestic violence, elderly, and individuals and families; all groups need housing to provide safety and shelter as they work toward stability. Many times building-related regulations and restrictions prevent new multi-family facilities from being constructed, so certain areas are completely without adequate housing. A means to provide for those gaps is needed. Supportive services are vital in all these populations to ensure guidance is provided to enable a positive outcome.

A program to encourage first time homebuyers is important; establishing homeownership will encourage families to stay in the community, work, and raise their children in our school systems.

We will pursue options such as securing and rehabilitating uninhabited properties that may be bank owned with the intent of offering them as homeless housing. We will also enlist local families to provide short term housing for youth and victims of domestic violence; we will pursue all viable housing opportunities that become available at state and local funding levels.

**Implement Systems to Provide Increased Coordination of Services.** Homeless individuals have difficulty understanding the different systems and resources that exist. Efforts need to be made to ensure that access to services does not become a barrier to those services. Efforts of servicers in the county, including community action agencies, businesses, non-profits, faith-based organizations, foundations, and volunteers should be coordinated to provide a county-wide central intake system. Such a system would identify available and appropriate services and guide individuals toward providers who offer programs relative to their needs. Efforts should be made to do so in the most simplistic manner possible to alleviate the confusion surrounding program information and availability. This will require organizing a consolidated system of coordination and that provider members are committed to ongoing communication and cooperative efforts.

**Provide Advocacy and Supportive Services.** Stevens County has a need for increased and comprehensive supportive services. Without ongoing support, homeless populations tend to fall back into previous lifestyles and behaviors. Life skills education is one of the most important tools to instill problem solving capabilities that will ensure families attain self-sufficiency. Without mentoring and advocacy to help teach these life skills, they will remain at-risk. Necessary skills would include money management, landlord/tenant relations, understanding choices and consequences, communication, and understanding the responsibilities of a job. Mastery of those skills is imperative if families are to move away from homelessness. Our goal as a community should be to ensure advocacy and mentoring services are placed at a level of high importance by securing all available funding to maintain and increase those services.

**Increase Employment Opportunities** Our community needs jobs to enable the homeless to work toward providing a means to obtain food, shelter, and health care. Our local economy is suffering; we need to encourage new businesses



and develop recreational activities to encourage economic growth in our area. Economic growth will help provide jobs that will enable households to become and remain in our community as self-sufficient, contributing members.

**Increase Health Care Opportunities** Lack of affordable health care is a major obstacle for those overcoming homelessness since those in poor health cannot earn an income or successfully participate in program requirements. Health care needs that will increase the capacity of households include physical well-being, dental care, mental health counseling, provisions for costs of medication, and chemical dependency treatment. We must seek financial resources and new programs to enable all homeless and those at-risk to receive needed health-related services.

**Increase Transportation Opportunities.** Without transportation options, our homeless populations have fewer choices and limited access to programs, medical services, schools, and resources in the area. Stevens County currently offers limited transportation between main cities; however, families in outlying areas require increased options.

**Maintain a Framework of Awareness that will Prevent Future Homelessness.** It is extremely important to understand the causes of homelessness in order to focus awareness on situations that may play a role. A county-wide central intake system could help identify at-risk households, such as those with income loss, foreclosure notices, and medical needs. If we can focus on proactive involvement, we can provide at-risk households with options and choices that may prevent future homelessness. Our supportive services during a crisis can help guide and lessen the impact of negative circumstances.

## **Conclusion**

Stevens County recognizes that providing for our homeless population is a priority issue. We acknowledge that circumstances, programs, and need will vary as we progress through the continuum of moving those populations toward self sufficiency. Therefore, it is anticipated that there may be a need to alter and revise this plan. In order to accommodate such revisions, an update may be submitted for approval if necessary.