



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

AGENDA ITEM NO.

For the meeting of: January 26, 2016

Date: January 5, 2016

To: Board of Supervisors
Eureka City Council

From: Connie Beck, *CB* Interim Director
Department of Health and Human Services

Subject: Update on the Homeless Strategy and Implementation Plan from Focus Strategies, City of Eureka and the Department of Health and Human Services

RECOMMENDATION(S): That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive and file report from Focus Strategies; and
2. Schedule this for further discussion, if necessary, and possible action at the next regular meeting of the county.

SOURCE OF FUNDING: NA

DISCUSSION: Department of Health and Human Services, City of Eureka and Focus Strategies will briefly summarize the Homeless Strategy and Implementation Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: No immediate funding impacts as a result of receiving this report.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT: City of Eureka and Focus Strategies.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: Board's discretion.

Prepared by Connie Beck, Interim Director

CAO Approval

REVIEW:

Auditor _____ County Counsel _____ Human Resources _____ Other _____

TYPE OF ITEM:

- Consent
- Departmental
- Public Hearing
- Other - Time Set

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No. _____

Meeting of: _____

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
Upon motion of Supervisor _____
Seconded by Supervisor _____

- Ayes
- Nays
- Abstain
- Absent

and carried by those members present, the Board hereby approves the recommended action contained in this Board report.

Dated: _____

By: _____

Kathy Hayes, Clerk of the Board

ATTACHMENTS: Humboldt County and City of Eureka Joint Homeless Strategy and Implementation Plan

Homeless Strategy and Implementation Plan – Phase 1

Commissioned by the City of Eureka and Humboldt County



January 2016

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Executive Summary

Background and Purpose of Report

In 2013-2014, Focus Strategies worked with the City of Eureka to develop a policy paper analyzing homelessness in the community and proposing some recommended strategies to address the problem. In 2014-2015, Focus Strategies conducted a “Phase 1” scope of work to further expand on the recommendations in the original paper and to develop an implementation plan. Phase 1 was commissioned jointly by the City of Eureka and the Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). While this work is focused on the specific homeless population living in Eureka, the recommended approach to the problem requires strong collaboration between the City and County, and alignment of City and County strategies and funding sources to achieve the greatest possible reduction in homelessness.

This *Humboldt County and City of Eureka Joint Homeless Strategy and Implementation Plan* presents the results of the work Focus Strategies conducted in Phase 1 and includes both recommended strategies (summarized in this Executive Summary) as well as an implementation plan. Information gathering and analysis included in-person and phone interviews with City and County staff as well as other key stakeholders; an inventory of existing and potential funding sources to address homelessness in the community; a Housing Market Analysis; and a review of best practices from other communities. We also drew upon information collected during the drafting of the original policy paper.

Readers should note that much of the content of the report is highly technical in nature. To assist those who may not be familiar with homeless policy or program models, a Glossary has been provided in Appendix 5.

Roles and Responsibilities of the City and County

The overarching recommendation of both the original paper and this *Strategy and Implementation Plan* is for the City and County to work collaboratively to provide housing solutions for the people who are homeless in Eureka. Specific roles of these parties are discussed in more detail in the paper, but generally involve the following:

- City of Eureka: The City has limited funding available for housing or services for homeless people, but does oversee critical elements of the community’s response to homelessness, including the Police Department (which is involved in homeless outreach as well as law enforcement), code enforcement, and community development/planning activities;
- Humboldt County DHHS: The majority of funding for both housing and services are administered by the County, with the City having minimal staff or resources for social services. DHHS receives funds to provide services for targeted populations, including for Child Welfare, CalWORKs, Adult Protective Services, and services to people with severe mental illness. DHHS plays a crucial role

in both policy setting and helping to align these funds to maximize their impact on reducing homelessness;

- Humboldt Housing and Homeless Coalition (HHHC): As the governing body for Humboldt County’s homeless Continuum of Care (CoC), the HHHC develops the annual funding application to HUD for targeted homeless assistance funding. The HHHC also plays an important policy setting role. The HHHC is made up of representatives from non-profit housing and service providers, who bring their experience and their unique resources to the table.

The City and County have convened a leadership group including staff from both entities to develop and implement a coordinated joint response to homelessness. In this report we identify the Leadership Group as the main body that will be responsible for implementation of the recommendations. In some cases we refer to the “City and County” more broadly to identify efforts that will need to be coordinated between the two entities.

Overview of Recommendations

Federal policy, evidence and research from the field, and local data all point to **housing** as the solution to homelessness. Both the City and the County have already taken great strides in this direction – implementing a number of initiatives designed to help homeless people secure housing, with positive results thus far. Our report provides additional context and analysis to support this approach, and makes the following specific recommendations:

Recommendations: Key Strategies to Reduce Homelessness in Eureka and Humboldt County		
1.	Adopt a Housing First Approach County-Wide	<p>“Housing First” is an approach to solving homelessness in which each homeless person receives assistance to secure permanent housing as quickly as possible, without preconditions that they participate in supportive services, substance abuse or mental health treatment. Services are provided on a voluntary basis, with a focus on offering what is needed to help each individual sustain stable housing. Some programs in the community already operate using this approach, but there is no consistent county-wide understanding or implementation of Housing First. We recommend that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City, County and HHHC formally adopt a policy statement or resolution endorsing a Housing First approach; • The Leadership Group convene a Housing First summit and provide follow-up training and coaching to provide all stakeholders with an opportunity to learn about Housing First and ensure that housing and service providers are prepared to implement this approach.
2.	Strengthen and Re-Orient MIST to Focus on Housing Solutions	<p>In January 2015 the City and County jointly created the Mobile Intervention and Services Team (MIST) to conduct outreach to unsheltered homeless people in Eureka. This has been a very positive step and has helped pull together and coordinate key cross-sector partners. Over time, the MIST has</p>

Recommendations: Key Strategies to Reduce Homelessness in Eureka and Humboldt County		
		become more focused on helping clients secure housing. We recommend continuing and expanding MIST's ability to directly offer housing assistance to people as part of the outreach process.
3.	Create Direct and Low Barrier Pathways to Housing	<p>The key to making greater progress on reducing homelessness in Eureka and throughout Humboldt County will be to begin re-structuring and re-aligning existing efforts, including funding strategies, to make available a greater array of housing options for people who are unsheltered, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Diversion</u> – problem solving to help identify a low-cost or no-cost housing option (such as moving in with a family member or mediation with a former landlord); • <u>Interim Housing</u> – emergency shelter and interim (short term) housing provides homeless people with a safe place to stay while they are in the process of identifying a housing solution. The MAC in Eureka has recently been repurposed as short term transitional housing for single adults, and is beginning to provide the needed Interim Housing slots, but some modifications are needed to ensure the MAC can more quickly and effectively help residents move to permanent housing. • <u>Rapid Re-Housing</u> – clients receive time limited case management to help locate a rental unit and short-term rental assistance to help pay the rent. Once the rental assistance ends the client assumes responsibility for the rent payments. This model has proven highly effective in helping many individuals and families exit homelessness quickly, and with very low rates of return to homelessness. • <u>Permanent Supportive Housing</u> – clients receive long-term rental subsidies or permanent affordable units, coupled with intensive on-site support services. This is a more intensive and expensive intervention than rapid re-housing, and is most appropriate only for those individuals with severe mental health and/or substance abuse and who have long histories of homelessness. <p>We also recommend that the Leadership Group identify resources to develop a county-wide effort to recruit landlords who will be willing to rent to homeless individuals, as well as housing navigators to help homeless people search for appropriate units.</p>
4.	Use Data Systems to Track Progress	All of the strategies described above also have a data tracking component. Much of the success of the new approach will depend on being able to analyze what is working, what is not, and make adjustments as needed. Since Humboldt County already has Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) in place to collect data on homeless individuals, we would advise using the HMIS system to track the progress of people as they move

Recommendations: Key Strategies to Reduce Homelessness in Eureka and Humboldt County	
	from MIST and MAC into housing, and to see whether they are returning to homelessness. The MIST has recently begun entering clients they work with into HMIS.

A detailed plan to begin implementing these recommendations is provided in the body of the report.

I. Background and Purpose

In 2013, the City of Eureka engaged Focus Strategies to develop a homeless policy paper analyzing the extent of homelessness in the community, the effectiveness of existing homeless programs and services, and recommended strategies to have a greater impact on the problem. The work commenced in November 2013, and in July 2014 we presented the final report to stakeholders in the City of Eureka and Humboldt County, including City leadership, County staff, the Humboldt Housing and Homeless Coalition (HHHC), homeless service providers and homeless individuals.

In December 2014, the City of Eureka approached Focus Strategies to request a proposal for a “Phase 1” scope of work to develop an implementation plan for the recommended strategies and to provide technical assistance to the City to help guide the activities to be undertaken. The scope of the implementation plan project was further expanded to include working with Humboldt County to align the work with the County’s ongoing homeless system re-design efforts, including researching potential funding sources for City and County efforts as well as some analysis of the available inventory of rental units in the community. On June 9, 2015, Megan Kurteff Schatz, Principal, presented the recommendations in the policy paper to the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors along with planned next steps.

This report further expands on the recommendations in the policy paper and provides a detailed implementation plan that lays out a road map for the City of Eureka and Humboldt County to begin reducing homelessness in the community. Once this plan has been finalized and adopted Focus Strategies will provide technical assistance to assist with implementation.

II. Methodology: Information Sources Analyzed

This report is based on work conducted by Focus Strategies in June and July 2015. The recommendations and strategies in this report are based on the following information sources:

1. Key stakeholder interviews – Between June and August 2015 Focus Strategies conducted interviews in person and by telephone with key informants. Some of the interviews were with individuals and others were in groups. A complete list of organizations and individuals who participated is provided in Appendix A.

2. Funding Source Inventory – We collected information from the City of Eureka, Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and other stakeholders on existing funding sources in the community and how they are currently being used, and developed an assessment of which ones could be re-aligned or repurposed to better address homelessness. The Funding Source Inventory is provided in Appendix B.
3. Housing Market Analysis – Using data from the *Humboldt Housing and Homeless Coalition Point in Time Count 2015 Report*, data available from the US Census, and several years of information from the *American Community Survey (ACS)*, Focus Strategies conducted a Housing Market Analysis to quantify the existing rental housing inventory and determine whether there is sufficient capacity in Humboldt County to house the City’s homeless population within the existing market. The Housing Market Analysis is presented in Appendix C.

In developing this report, we also drew upon the work conducted to develop the initial Policy Paper, including interviews with key stakeholders, analysis of existing programs and services for homeless people in Eureka and Humboldt County, and a review of best practices in addressing unsheltered homelessness. The original policy paper can be downloaded at: http://focusstrategies.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Eureka-Homelessness-Policy-Paper-Final_revised-090514.pdf

III. Findings and Recommendations

A. Problem Statement: Homelessness in Humboldt County

The U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD) requires all communities to conduct a bi-annual homeless “point in time” (PIT) count of homeless people. The most recent count, conducted by the Humboldt County Housing and Homeless Coalition (HHHC) in January 2015, found a total of 1,319 homeless people in Humboldt County, of whom 730 were in Eureka (55%).

	County PIT #	Eureka PIT #
Total PIT	1,319	730
Unsheltered	844	469
Sheltered	468	261
Missing Information	7	--

According to the 2015 PIT, Eureka has by far the largest share of the overall homeless population in the County, and this has been the case over the last four counts (2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015). The total number of homeless people compared to total population is also rather high. National data suggests that in a typical community homeless people represent less than 1% of the total population. In Eureka, homeless people represent about 2.7% of the total population. Eureka’s homeless population is also mostly unsheltered and highly visible, with a large number of people living in the City-owned Palco Marsh area, as well as other smaller encampments around the City. Crime, violence and unsanitary

conditions associated with this illegal encampment have been a source of intense concern in the community for many years. Recent law enforcement efforts coordinated by the Eureka Police Department have led to a number of arrests of people living in the illegal encampments, but there continues to be a group estimated at approximately 150-200 people there, including some children.

Little data is available on the characteristics of the unsheltered homeless population in Eureka, but based on our site visit to the encampment as well as discussions with staff from the Mobile Intervention and Services Team (MIST), it appears that there is a very high proportion of people with serious mental illness and/or active substance use, as well as a significant number of individuals with criminal records. This is a population that is very challenging to engage in services and also difficult to house. In our recommendations we have tried to factor in the unusually complex needs of the population, recognizing that a combination of housing and intensive services will be needed for a higher portion of the unsheltered population than is typical.

B. Policy Paper Recommendations and Updates

1. Summary and Clarification of Policy Paper Recommendations

The Focus Strategies Homelessness Policy Paper included an overview of existing efforts to address homelessness in both the City and the County and identified a key set of short and medium-term strategies to begin to reduce the size of the homeless population. As we noted in our report “existing federal policy, evidence from many research studies, and best practices in the field all point to housing as the solution.” As a general matter, our report recommended that the City focus on developing programs and system to help homeless people move into housing as quickly as possible rather than pursuing approaches directed at better managing the existing problems, such as increasing the frequency of police sweeps or creating a legalized camping area or “tent city.” We also advised a general shift to a “Housing First” approach in which homeless people are offered opportunities to become housed without requiring participation in services or imposing other conditions such as sobriety. This approach also requires investing more resources in housing interventions and re-configuring services to focus on housing location and housing stabilization – in other words, providing services to people to help them remain housed, rather than providing services while they are still homeless to help them become “housing ready.”

Because our paper was organized to present recommendations that could be implemented quickly, the specific strategies detailed in the paper focused on activities that would have some immediate impact. We suggested that the City continue to convene its Leadership Group dedicated to working on homelessness, as well as working in strong partnership with the County and the HHC as the County-wide planning body tasked with addressing homelessness to ensure County strategies were proactively addressing the needs of the homeless population in Eureka. We also proposed that the County, City, and HHC work together to develop a strong outreach and engagement program with a “Housing First” philosophy. We recommended that an outreach team begin working in the illegal encampments and prioritizing those homeless people generating the greatest number of police and other emergency calls,

and then identifying a housing option for each person. Since that report was drafted, MIST has begun to identify people based on frequency of law enforcement contacts and Sempervirens psychiatric facility admissions. We identified a need for more interim housing capacity for homeless single adults. Finally, we suggested a few ways that housing could be made available, such as through turnover of existing permanent housing units or use of MHSA Full Service Partnership (FSP) funds, but our report did not provide a detailed plan outlining how the needed housing could be secured.

This implementation plan expands on the initial set of recommendations in our Policy Paper to include much more comprehensive and specific strategies for housing unsheltered homeless people using a variety of approaches. These include making better use of the existing supply of subsidized housing (including permanent supportive housing for homeless people and affordable housing for low income people) and also approaches that make use of the inventory of market rate housing by providing time-limited or long-term rental subsidies. To support these recommendations, we have inventoried existing funding sources and also conducted an analysis of the housing market in Humboldt County to assess the capacity of the existing rental market to absorb additional rental subsidies. Our general conclusion is that there are many opportunities for expanding access to housing for people who are homeless. However, if this is to work, the community must fully embrace the concept of “Housing First,” – helping people to secure housing without preconditions that they must first accept treatment, participate in services, gain income, or otherwise become “housing ready.” While helping everyone who is homeless and desires to move into housing will be a difficult undertaking, it cannot succeed unless there is a system-wide re-orientation of funders, policy-makers, and providers towards the Housing First philosophy. More details are provided below in Section C: Key Strategies to Implement Recommendations.

2. Recent Accomplishments in Eureka and Humboldt County

In the months since the original policy paper was completed, the City and County have worked closely to begin implementing many of the recommendations. Significant accomplishments include:

- **Leadership:** The Leadership team, consisting of representatives from the Eureka City Council, City staff, and County staff, has continued to meet during a regular re-occurring monthly strategic meeting to continue working on addressing homelessness in the community. City and County staff are also continuing to participate in the Humboldt County Housing and Homeless Coalition (HHHC).
- **Outreach:** The Mobile Intervention and Services Team (MIST) began operation in January 2015. This team receives funding through Measure Z and is a joint project of the Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Mental Health staff and the Eureka Police Department (EPD). The goal of the MIST is to help severely mentally ill, chronically homeless people with frequent contact with both EPD and DHHS. This successful collaboration has already resulted in contacting 89 clients of which 19 are active, completing comprehensive assessments and linking 12 people to services, housing five people, performing six welfare checks, and reuniting five with families outside of the county.

- **Transitional Housing for Homeless Single Adults:** The DHHS has completed a process of converting the Multi Assistance Center (MAC) from a transitional housing program serving homeless families to transitional housing for single adults, with a shorter length of stay. This project is being jointly operated by DHHS and the Redwood Community Action Agency (RCAA). The objective of this re-design is to provide a short-term housing option for people who have been engaged by MIST, SOS and the Open Door Clinic and need a place to stay while they develop and implement a plan to move to permanent housing. The new program began on July 1, 2015 with two full time Housing Specialists. Staff are working to develop relationships with landlords who will rent to the clients and are tapping into some existing sources for rental subsidies, such as through the Child Welfare System (funds for family reunification), Adult Probation Services (AB 109), Measure Z, and Adult Protective Services, but efforts thus far have been hampered by a lack of housing options.

A more detailed summary of accomplishments is presented in Appendix 2.

3. New Federal Guidance on Homeless Encampments

In August 2015, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) released a policy paper: *Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments – Advancing the Dialogue*. This document is strongly aligned with the approach recommended in the Focus Strategies Policy Paper and with this implementation plan. Key findings and recommendations from the USICH paper are highlighted here.

We highly recommend downloading and reviewing the entire document:

http://usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Ending_Homelessness_for_People_Living_in_Encampments_Aug2015.pdf.

The USICH adopts the general perspective that homeless encampments represent a genuine problem and health and safety impacts to communities are very serious. The recommended approach to dealing with this problem is to identify housing solutions for people living in encampments. Other options, such as the forced removal of encampments or making them “authorized” through the creation of tent cities, do little to solve the problem:

“Providing lasting solutions and ending the homelessness of people living in encampments requires a thoughtful, coordinated, and collaborative plan and process to ensure that people can be linked to appropriate **housing options**....The forced dispersal of people from encampment settings is not an appropriate solution or strategy, accomplishes nothing toward the goal of linking people to permanent housing opportunities, and can make it more difficult to provide such lasting solutions to people who have been sleeping and living in the encampment....Authorizing encampments as an official part of the system for responding to homelessness creates costs to ensure the safety, security, and well-being of the people living within the encampments, which can prevent funding from being directed to supporting and creating permanent housing and service options for all who are unsheltered.”¹

¹ USICH, *Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments*, August 2015, page 2-3.

The USICH policy document goes on to identify four general strategies that are effective in addressing the problem of homeless encampments:

1. **Preparation and Adequate Time for Planning and Implementation:** Action plans for creating and providing housing solutions for people living in encampments should ensure that there is adequate time for strategizing, collaboration, outreach, engagement, and the identification of meaningful housing options. Adequate time is essential to achieve the primary objective of meeting the needs of each person and assisting them to end their homelessness.
2. **Collaboration across Sectors and Systems:** Action plans should include collaboration between a cross-section of public and private agencies, neighbors, business owners, and governmental entities, based upon where the encampment is located. The action plan should feature strong communication among a broad range of community service providers and managers of the permanent housing resources that are being utilized in order to maximize efficiency, align resources, and address system gaps.
3. **Performance of Intensive and Persistent Outreach and Engagement:** Action plans should involve agencies that have strong outreach experience and demonstrated skills in engaging vulnerable and unsheltered people. Effective outreach is essential for effectively connecting people with coordinated assessment systems, resources, and housing options.
4. **Provision of Low-Barrier Pathways to Permanent Housing:** Action plans should focus on providing people with clear, low-barrier pathways for accessing and attaining permanent housing opportunities and should not focus on relocating people to other encampment settings.

The City of Eureka and Humboldt County DHHS have already taken a number of steps to implement all these strategies, including the formation of the Leadership Group and engagement of Focus Strategies to develop this plan, making a commitment to continue building strong collaboration among community stakeholders to find a solution to the homelessness problem in the community, and the implementation of a dedicated outreach and engagement team (MIST) that is beginning to connect people in the encampments with services and identify housing options. The element that thus far is the least well-developed is the provision of low-barrier pathways to permanent housing. That component is the main focus of this plan and will be central to the technical assistance that Focus Strategies will provide.

C. Recommendations: Key Strategies to Reduce Homelessness in Eureka

Based on the information we have gathered to date, Focus Strategies makes the following recommendations for reducing homelessness in the City of Eureka. Following this section, we have provided a step by step action plan to begin the process of implementing the recommended strategies.

1. Adopt a Housing First Approach County-Wide

Federal policy is moving strongly in the direction of immediate access to housing as the key solution to homelessness. Many communities are also demonstrating “on the ground” how to end homelessness by quickly returning homeless people to a stable living situation and then working with them to address

other issues after they are housed.² To be successful in reducing the number of chronically homeless encampment residents, Eureka and Humboldt County will need to employ a “housing first” approach offering homeless people the chance to move directly into permanent housing which incorporates a “harm reduction” philosophy, in which clients are not required to become clean and sober or agree to receive mental health services as a condition of receiving housing. Many chronically homeless people need an intensive period of engagement before they will consider a move into housing, but experience shows that the vast majority will accept an offer of housing, particularly if it is clear that they will not be mandated to participate in services as a precondition of signing a lease.

One of the key features of a Housing First approach is that services are provided on a voluntary basis. However, this does not mean that people with significant behavioral health conditions are simply placed in housing without adequate support. For those individuals with active substance use and/or serious mental illness, intensive wrap around services are needed to ensure a successful transition. Typically, these services are most needed during the first year or two, after which many people stabilize and need far less support to sustain their housing situation. While some tenants may initially decline to participate in supportive services, engagement and trust building with services staff eventually leads most clients to see the benefit of developing and participating in a self-directed service plan.

For a small number of chronically homeless people, no amount of engagement or outreach will be sufficient to help them move into housing. For these extremely resistant individuals, the most likely outcome is that they will continue to be homeless and/or cycle through emergency systems and services (jail, emergency room, drug treatment).

While currently there appears to be some level of understanding of the Housing First approach within the Eureka and broader Humboldt County community, and some leaders have fluency in terms of ability to talk about Housing First principles and concepts, it is not yet embraced as an organizing philosophy throughout the system. Based on our conversations with City and County staff, providers and other stakeholders, it appears that the community is still very much operating from a belief that homeless people have to become “housing ready” before they can exit homelessness. Many housing programs and providers in Humboldt County and in Eureka continue to impose significant barriers to admission, including requirements relating to sobriety, willingness to participate in services, and other conditions that have the effect of screening out those people who have been homeless the longest and have the greatest need for housing and services.

To be effective moving forward, the community as a whole needs to understand and embrace the Housing First Approach. Some important initial steps include:

- Adoption of a policy statement or other document by both the City and County affirming their commitment to this approach and their expectations from community partners, particularly those agencies receiving City and County funds;

²Numerous studies have documented the effectiveness of this approach for chronically homeless people. See <http://homeless.samhsa.gov/channel/permanent-supportive-housing-510.aspx>

- Convening a “Housing First” summit with invited speakers (both local and from other communities) to introduce the concepts and their application to all interested stakeholders (City and County staff, non-profit providers, funders, other community members);
- Offering a series of training workshops for housing and service providers on Housing First principles and practices; and
- Identifying organizations from outside Humboldt County who can provide some on-site coaching and technical assistance to key providers on how to better align with the Housing First philosophy.

Our intention is not to minimize the efforts and shifts that have already been made toward Housing First. Instead, our goal is to convey that a primary finding of our analysis is that, for Eureka’s homeless population in particular, full and complete adoption of Housing First principles and strategies are essential to successfully reducing the homeless population. The steps listed above are solid strategies for moving to the next level of adoption and practice of Housing First.

2. Strengthen and Re-Orient Outreach (MIST) to Focus on Housing Solutions

The creation of the MIST Team has been a very important step to help the community more effectively reduce homelessness. Creating this team has helped pull together key cross-sector partners (including law enforcement and mental health) to being engaging homeless people and identifying pathways out of homelessness. To be more effective, this team needs to become more housing focused and have the ability to directly offer housing interventions (see Section 3, below on low barrier pathways to housing). Some key recommended next steps for MIST include:

- Expanding the team membership to include an AOD Specialist and Housing Specialist;
- Developing or adopting a standardized assessment tool to collect a common set of data on everyone the team is contacting; this tool should focus on housing barriers (e.g. disability, functional impairment, criminal record, evictions, income) and help provide a more complete picture of what housing interventions will be needed and in what quantities. Generally speaking, people with higher barriers can benefit from permanent supportive housing while those with lower barriers can be assisted using a diversion approach or with rapid re-housing. The MIST has recently begun using the VI-SPDAT as a common assessment tool, though this tends to measure vulnerability more than housing barriers;
- Continue conducting “registry weeks” in which every person who is living in encampments is contacted and data collected so that a better picture of homelessness and housing needs can be compiled;
- Conducting a regularly-scheduled data match with other systems of care (police, hospitals, detox services) to understand which clients are the “frequent fliers”;
- Prioritizing assistance to those with the highest housing barriers and highest use of emergency services, rather than those who appear to be “housing ready;”
- Reframing the purpose of MIST as being to find housing and offering direct connections to housing options. This could include creating an individual housing plan for each person who has

been prioritized, including a housing strategy and the concrete steps necessary to achieving the housing plan;

- Linking the team with the HMIS system so that their work with each homeless household and the results can be tracked and quantified. MIST has recently begun entering clients into HMIS, which will provide invaluable information moving forward that will help the City and County assess results. Having measurable monthly goals and tracking person-specific progress will be crucial to getting more people into housing. Ideally, the team should meet for 15 minutes every morning to de-brief so that all team members have up-to-date information about the progress of each participant and can assist in bringing the individual housing plan to fruition.

3. Create Direct and Low Barrier Pathways to Housing

The key to making greater progress on reducing homelessness in Eureka and throughout Humboldt County will be to begin re-structuring and re-aligning existing efforts, including funding strategies, to make available a greater array of housing options for people who are unsheltered. As noted above, it will be essential to view this undertaking with a Housing First lens, developing a range of housing opportunities that homeless people can access directly, not requiring long stays in transitional settings, and not imposing unnecessary barriers to permanent housing access.

a. Analysis of the Housing Market

While many community leaders and stakeholders are in agreement that the key is to make more housing available, there is also a widespread belief that the existing supply of affordable housing in the community is inadequate. To address these concerns, Focus Strategies was asked to conduct a Housing Market Analysis, the highlights of which are summarized here (the full analysis can be found in Appendix 3).

Using a range of data sources and making some assumptions about realistic vacancy rates, Focus Strategies believes that on an annual basis there are approximately 259 rental units available in Humboldt County that could be used to house people who are homeless. While a small percentage of these are subsidized, permanently affordable units, the majority are market rate rentals (though we have excluded those in the high rent end of the market). While this inventory is not huge we believe it is sufficient to make substantial headway in housing the people who are currently homeless. Developing a greater supply of affordable housing will undoubtedly help solve the problem sooner, but the timeline for housing production tends to be very slow and solutions are needed immediately. To make swift progress on ending homelessness, the City, County, the HHHC, and other local homeless providers will need to focus efforts on strategies that combine rental subsidies (either short, medium or long-term) with supportive services, to help homeless people transition into rental apartments using the inventory that currently exists within Humboldt County. While the supply of units is somewhat tight, it is sufficient to house the vast majority of the estimated 844 unsheltered homeless people in Humboldt County over a period of one to three years. Doing so quickly (one year) would involve having many people share

units, while doing so more slowly would allow for more people to be housed individually. Details on these options are provided in Appendix 3.

b. Housing Interventions Needed

Below we provide some additional detail about different housing interventions that will be needed and some suggested next steps for each one.

i. Diversion/Problem-Solving

Many communities that have made substantial progress in reducing homelessness have implemented shelter diversion for those households who are still housed or who can move directly to other housing. While diversion is a strategy that generally targets households at the point at which they contact the homeless system seeking emergency assistance, it can also be integrated into mobile outreach and made part of the approach to engagement with people who are unsheltered. The goal of diversion is to have a conversation with every homeless person or family to determine if there might be a no-cost or low-cost housing option that could prevent them from entering shelter or moving into a higher-cost housing intervention like rapid re-housing or permanent supportive housing. Examples could include mediation and reunification with family, moving in with a friend, or restoring a lost housing arrangement through problem solving with a former landlord. The key to diversion is to have diversion workers who are adept at active listening, motivational interviewing, problem solving and mediation, and who are knowledgeable about the housing market and housing options.

Currently there is already some diversion work taking place, including the TAP Program and bus tickets provided by the Betty Kwan Chinn Day Center. Creating a more formalized diversion program will likely yield greater results. This could include providing some training for MIST team staff on shelter diversion and increasing the availability of flexible funding (such as for bus tickets, to pay modest costs to move into a shared housing situation etc.). As part of the implementation work, other providers in addition to MIST could also be identified to conduct diversion work. Based on our experience we estimate that there could be a no-cost or low cost solution for 5% to 10% of the people living in illegal encampments.

ii. Interim Housing

Emergency Shelter and Interim Housing provide short-term places for people with nowhere else to live to stay temporarily, meet basic needs such as food, safety and hygiene, and be supported to seek and obtain housing. In many communities, Interim Housing refers to programs that have converted from transitional housing. As transitional housing, these programs typically included intensive support services programming aimed at helping clients address a wide range of issues (e.g. employment, substance use, health, life skills, etc.) and required service compliance for residents to participate. Interim housing should provide a level of support similar to emergency shelters, with a focus on meeting basic daily needs (food, clothing) and assisting residents to find and secure housing as quickly as possible. Other types of services are provided in the community. For example, health services should be

provided by community clinics and other providers that serve the community, so that once the household exits shelter they can continue their relationship to a provider. Lengths of stay in Interim Housing are usually no more than 120 days.

The City and County have recently repurposed the MAC from a family to a single adult transitional housing program. Though still operated as transitional housing, the MAC is already beginning to achieve some of the goals of an Interim Housing program by housing people directly from encampments and focusing on developing a plan to rapidly exit participants into permanent housing. Key steps to make this program more effective include:

- Prioritizing beds for homeless people with the highest housing barriers;
- Review entry requirements to remove barriers for admission and ensure all beds are filled and the facility is operating at full capacity;
- Review program participation requirements with the goal of removing unnecessary service participation requirements. The MAC rules appear to be fairly minimal and focused on safety, but it is worth exploring whether any adjustments are needed. Best practices suggest that to effectively serve high-need, high-barrier chronically homeless people, program rules should be oriented to ensuring that the facility is safe and secure, and participants only asked to leave if they are violating these rules and creating a danger to themselves or other participants. Terminating participants for “failure to accept services” is not aligned with a Housing First approach and will result in people being discharged right back to homelessness. Individuals who are engaging in illegal or dangerous activities should be dealt with by law enforcement.
- Orient services around housing – problem solving, housing search, housing navigation, including having dedicated Housing Specialists on staff;
- Have direct access to rapid re-housing resources, either by funding MAC to provide rapid re-housing or co-locating a rapid re-housing provider on-site.

iii. Rapid Re-Housing

Rapid Re-Housing is a program model that assists individuals and families who are homeless move quickly into permanent housing, usually to housing in the private market. It does so by offering time-limited, targeted services and financial assistance to make the move from homelessness to housing possible. Rapid Re-Housing has demonstrated effectiveness in ending homelessness, shortening the time people spend being homeless, and reducing the rate at which people become homeless again. Rapid Re-Housing also increases turnover in shelters, which allows them to accommodate more people over time without increasing capacity.

Key components of Rapid Re-Housing include:

- Assistance with the housing search and application process if the individual or family wants and needs it. The program staff have housing expertise and strong contacts with landlords, so they are adept at identifying what housing may be available to the household based on their strengths and barriers.

- Flexible financial assistance to pay for move in costs such as deposits and utilities, and short to medium-term support with rent if needed, which can be adjusted over time.
- Limited housing-focused support services such as housing stability planning to help the household identify strategies to increase income or improve budgeting; and
- Links to community-based programs that can provide the majority of other services a household may need once re-housed, such as child care, employment training or health services.

Rapid Re-Housing programs can vary in length of time, and may be limited to a single payment for deposit and first month's rent or as long as 18-24 months of subsidy and support. Some programs begin with the assumption that most households require only a small amount of support, but are able to provide more if needed. Some households will require more support, but it is not always simple to predict in advance how much each person or family will need. Providing just a small amount of assistance at first and then adding more if needed is called Progressive Engagement.

This intervention type is relatively new, launching nation-wide in 2009 through funding from the federal program called Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP). Initially, communities only used the Rapid Re-housing approach for households deemed to have low barriers to housing. However, as the success of this approach has been continually proven, communities are successfully targeting assistance to those with very high housing barriers, including households with disabilities and no or very low incomes. Some pilot programs, such as in Seattle and Phoenix, are even targeting RRH for chronically homeless people.³

Given its relatively low cost (compared to transitional or permanent supportive housing) and proven effectiveness in serving all but highest need households, making rapid re-housing available to all homeless households will be the key to achieving a significant reduction in homelessness in Eureka and Humboldt County. Current resources in the community to fund this approach are limited, so bringing rapid re-housing to scale will require a major effort to re-align and re-program existing funds, as well as seeking out new funding sources (both public and private), for both the rental assistance and the supportive services components. Funding options are detailed in Appendix B and also summarized here, including:

- Private fundraising from individuals and foundations (deposits, rental assistance);
- Measure Z funds (rental assistance, behavioral health services, other services to sustain housing). These funds are fully committed and time limited, but as one of the main local funding sources for public safety, any options for re-allocation should be explored;
- MHSA Full Service Partnerships slots (intensive mental health services to those who meet MHSA criteria to help them sustain housing)
- AB109 (rental assistance and services to sustain housing for those who are exiting the criminal justice system)

³The City of Phoenix and Maricopa County are partnering with the Valley of the Sun United Way to provide rapid re-housing to chronically homeless individuals who have been living in a City owned parking lot for several years. https://www.maricopa.gov/pr_detail.aspx?releaseID=2870;

- Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) – submit a competitive new grant in Dec./Jan. funding round
- CoC – apply for RRH in 2015 if bonus funding is an option. Explore whether there is any option to re-allocate existing grants to create more RRH
- CalWORKs – already funds RRH for eligible families
- PATH – currently a small budget for RRH
- County General Funds – a potential funding source for a range of activities, including shelter and/or rapid re-housing. DHHS currently receives General Fund dollars for winter shelter

iv. Permanent Supportive Housing

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is subsidized rental housing without time limits and with intensive supportive services offered on-site to assist tenants to maintain housing and meet their desired goals. In PSH, services are offered on a voluntary basis. Clients are not required to participate in services as a condition of being housed, but services are offered to them through a process of engagement. PSH is designed to house the individuals with the greatest housing barriers and highest service needs – those who have significant difficulties getting or staying housed. Typically these individuals have spent long periods of time without housing (known as chronically homeless) and have disabilities. To obtain and sustain stable housing, they need both a long-term rental subsidy or permanent subsidized housing unit and also intensive supportive services. PSH is a proven strategy that, when targeted to those with the greatest needs, has been shown to be cost-effective – it is far less expensive than the cost of the emergency services used by most chronically homeless people when they are unsheltered (emergency room, jail, detox, etc.)

Permanent supportive housing can be offered in a single building, as a sub-set of units within a larger affordable project, or in scattered apartments throughout a community. Options for creating PSH include new construction, acquisition and rehab, master leasing whole buildings or scattered site apartments, or tenant-based rental assistance.

PSH is the most expensive of the available interventions and in most communities is also the most scarce and difficult to access. However, many communities have not targeted this intervention well, providing long-term subsidies and intensive services only to those deemed “housing ready,” which means those with lower needs receive assistance and those with higher needs remain homeless. One of the most important strategies for reducing homelessness is to better target available PSH to prioritize those with the highest housing barriers. This requires adopting a Housing First approach and dispensing with the assumption that people must meet a “housing readiness” test to access PSH. Some suggested steps that Eureka and Humboldt County can pursue to better prioritize access to PSH include:

- Collaborating with the Housing Authority on a “moving-on” program, in which people currently living in PSH units who are stable and do not require intensive services are transitioned into the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program (formerly known as Section 8). This can be done by adopting an HCV preference for people graduating from PSH. HUD has been encouraging this approach and has published guidance to Housing Authorities on how to go about it.

- Creating a centralized waiting list for all the HUD-funded PSH units in the community (including all the CoC funded projects) and placing those with the highest housing needs and barriers at the front of the line for available units. This approach has been mandated by HUD through CPD Notice 14-012, issued in 2014. Having the MIST team and Street Outreach Services (SOS) conduct a standardized assessment with each literally homeless person (see recommendation above) and using these assessments to determine who is prioritized for available units will help improve access to PSH for chronically homeless people living in encampments.
- The same approach to prioritization can be used for the new PSH units coming online at Arcata Bay Crossing (which includes 20 MHSA units) and offers an excellent opportunity to house some of the highest need people in the encampments who meet MHSA mental health criteria.

Another important strategy to pursue involves expanding the supply of permanent supportive housing either through creation of new tenant-based vouchers or dedicated deed restricted units. Measure A restricts the amount of publicly funded affordable housing that can be developed in Eureka, which will make it all the more important to pursue opportunities to expand the supply of tenant-based rent subsidies (or explore a ballot measure to modify Measure A).

Several opportunities for expanded affordable and supportive housing were identified during our information gathering:

- A Danco project in the pipeline to create 49 units of PSH for homeless and chronically homeless veterans at 7th and Commercial Street. An application for this project was submitted by Danco in December 2015 to the State of California Housing and Community Development (HCD) for funding by the Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention Program (VHPP). Should this application be awarded, this project would provide a huge opportunity to house many of the homeless veterans in the County.
- The Housing Authority has the ability within its Administrative Plan to use some of its 1,200 Housing Choice Vouchers for project-based assistance (PBA). To date they have not exercised this option, but the groundwork is being laid to move in this direction. Project basing section 8 vouchers with a preference given for homeless households is one of the best tools for stimulating the production of PSH. Currently Danco has a project in the construction phase of development for a 49 unit senior affordable housing development by renovating a vacant downtown motel. This project is an excellent candidate to have some units set aside for homeless people, but it would need an operating source and PBA is an ideal solution. There are also other tax credit deals in the pipeline that could be leveraged to create some PSH units using PBA.
- Acquisition and rehabilitation of existing motels and other rental properties for conversion to affordable housing is another option to consider, particularly those that have not been kept in good condition and are considered nuisances by neighbors. This approach can help build community buy-in as well as yielding an increase in the supply of housing for formerly homeless people. The challenge will be finding sufficient resources for both the acquisition and rehabilitation costs as well as for ongoing property management and supportive services.

- Currently, the Housing Authority does not offer a preference in the HCV program for people who are homeless. Given that the waiting list is currently open, creating such a priority would give homeless people an opportunity to get toward the front of the line to receive vouchers. Any such approach would have to be coupled with a strategy to provide intensive housing search assistance and ongoing supportive services, so that these voucher holders are successful in both securing and sustaining housing. Coupling tenant-based HCVs with MHSA/FSP services funding or Measure Z funds for intensive case management is a strategy that could yield some significant results.

c. Landlord and Community Outreach and Engagement/Housing Search

To effectively make use of existing market rate housing to house homeless people will require that the City, County, and HHC build up system-wide capacity in the area of landlord engagement/recruitment and housing navigation. Expanding the availability of rental assistance funds, either for rapid re-housing or permanent supportive housing, is not useful unless there are units available and landlords willing to rent to formerly homeless people. This can also extend to broader outreach to the community in general to promote acceptance of affordable housing in particular and housing for homeless people more specifically.

This work can be challenging, but there are a range of strategies that have proven effective even in tight rental markets that can be adopted in Humboldt County. These include:

- Landlord marketing campaigns. Access to the private rental market can be improved by implementing a community-wide landlord marketing campaign. These tend to be most successful when approached as if selling a product and advertising the benefits to landlords (guaranteed rent payment, 24/7 access to case managers, risk mitigation pool). Spreading the word can be done in a variety of ways, including brochures, ads, networking, apartment owner associations, etc.
- Landlord incentive funds. Marketing campaigns work best when coupled with a program to create a pool of funds to provide incentives for landlords to rent to homeless people, including funds for paying maximum allowable security deposit, paying rent in quarterly installments, rent guarantees, eviction guarantees, or a risk mitigation pool to cover damages in excess of the security deposit.
- Some communities have created tenant training programs for potential renters and provide a certificate of completion that the household can then show to the landlord. This can be effective, particularly when coupled with an incentive pool that will help cover damages.
- Specially trained Housing Specialists or Housing Navigators are also essential. These staff are not case managers, just housing resource specialists, whose role can also include landlord recruitment. The MAC already has two Housing Specialists, but this function should be available system-wide, and be linked not only to MAC but also MIST and any new or existing rapid re-housing programs. They need to have a depth of knowledge of the community's housing resources, including both subsidized and market rate units, and their role is to help clients get

on waiting lists, meet with landlords who have available units, fill out applications, and complete needed follow-up to help people move into housing.

Another key element is to ensure that any homeless people who are being housed in the private market have the appropriate service team lined up as soon as they move in to housing (or ideally even before they move in), as discussed in the next section.

d. Intensive Services to Support Housing Stability

Given the very high prevalence of mental health and substance abuse issues among the homeless people in Eureka and Humboldt County, it is going to be essential that any efforts to help them move into housing in the community be accompanied by a well thought out plan for ensuring appropriate services are provided (on a voluntary, not mandatory, basis). Local experience has shown that when homeless people have accessed Housing Choice Vouchers and moved into housing without any supportive services, inappropriate behaviors often lead to a swift eviction and damage relationships with landlords. By contrast, the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (VASH) operated as a partnership between the Housing Authority, the VA and a local service provider (North Coast Veterans Resource Center) has had much better success because all the households that move into rental units receive intensive services and the landlords can feel confident that if there is a problem there is a case worker they can call and receive an immediate response. The VASH program in Humboldt County has actually even been able to recruit landlords who have not previously been willing to accept housing subsidies. Opportunities to align services and housing funds are identified in Appendix B and also summarized here:

- MHSAs – FSPs can provide intensive services to people who meet their mental health criteria. Existing FSPs will likely need additional training to better understand how to deliver services to support housing stability, including mediation with landlords.
- AB109 – Can provide intensive services to probationers and parolees to support housing stability;
- Measure Z – Given that the Measure Z funds that have already been allocated to the City and DHHS are very flexible, it would probably make sense to target these resources for services for people who have severe substance use issues and who do not meet MHSAs criteria. However, it should be noted that that is no guarantee that additional Measure Z funds will be allocated to housing or homeless activities in Eureka.

Given the prevalence of substance abuse among the homeless population living in the illegal encampments in Eureka, and probably more broadly in Humboldt County, it will be necessary to significantly expand the availability of substance abuse treatment services, and ensure there are a range of options available. While abstinence based programs and services are one approach, successful AOD systems incorporate a range of other options, including non-abstinence based approaches like Motivational Interviewing (MI), Brief Strengths Based Case Management for Substance Abuse (SBCM),

and the Matrix Model.⁴ Given the relatively limited funding available currently in California for substance abuse treatment services, having a flexible funding source such as Measure Z will be critical to ensure that when people with alcohol and drug abuse conditions move into housing they can receive the needed counseling and support to maintain stability.

4. Use Data Systems to Track Progress

All of the strategies described above also have a data tracking component. Much of the success of the new approach will depend on being able to analyze what is working, what is not, and make adjustments as needed. Since Humboldt County already has HMIS in place to collect data on homeless individuals, we would advise using this system to track the progress of people as they move from MIST and MAC into housing, and to see whether they are returning to homelessness. As an initial step, we suggest conducting a technical assessment of the existing HMIS data system and the quality of the data currently being entered to understand what data can currently be collected and analyzed, what kinds of system reconfiguration is needed and possible, and what types of reports need to be created so that the City and County can reviewing progress and build a continuous quality improvement process into the work.

IV. Implementation Plan

A. Implementation Framework

The strategies detailed above are all key elements that will be needed to begin to make progress on ending homelessness in Eureka and in Humboldt County. To actually implement this new Housing First approach will not be easy nor can it happen overnight. In this section, we have outlined a suggested framework for implementation that is organized around the concept of the *100,000 Homes Campaign*, begins with an achievable goal of housing 30 people in 60 days and then builds over a period of two years to encompass the majority of the homeless people in the community.

The 100,000 Homes Campaign⁵ was an informally organized national movement that set a goal of getting communities throughout the country to take action to end homelessness using a Housing First, data driven, and action-oriented approach. The campaign celebrated its successful conclusion in July 2014. Over a four year period, communities throughout the country participating in the campaign housed over 105,000 chronically homeless people. Key tenets of the approach included embracing a Housing First philosophy, using outreach and data collection to identify and know every chronically homeless person by name and to assess their needs, make homeless services more accessible and more directed towards getting people into housing, and tracking progress in meeting campaign goals, particularly progress in the numbers of people successfully housed. Although the 100,000 homes campaign itself is no longer active, successor efforts are continuing this work. Zero: 2016, organized by

⁴ <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/principles-drug-addiction-treatment-research-based-guide-third-edition/evidence-based-approaches-to-drug-addiction-treatment/behavioral-3>

⁵ www.100khomes.org

Community Solutions, is using a similar approach to ending veteran and chronic homelessness by December 2016. Any community may voluntarily join Zero: 2016.

One local example of a successful 100,000 Homes Campaign is Santa Cruz's Project 180/180.⁶ Like Eureka, Santa Cruz is home to a large population of unsheltered homeless people living in encampments surrounding the major downtown area, many of whom are "transient" through the area. The Santa Cruz community has had an ongoing conversation about how to mitigate the impacts of the homeless population on downtown merchants and shoppers. After joining the 100,000 homes campaign, a collaborative developed to create Project 180/180, a multi-agency initiative aimed at changing the community's approach to solving homelessness. The project surpassed its goal of housing 180 of its most vulnerable, long-term, chronically homeless individuals by July 2014 and have now re-branded the effort to be called Project 180/2020 with a goal of ending chronic homelessness in Santa Cruz County by 2020.

We are recommending that the City of Eureka, Humboldt County, and HHHC undertake a campaign modelled on this approach, which will provide a general framework for the different work streams that will need to align to truly achieve a reduction in homelessness. For the purpose of this implementation plan, we have divided the work into five main areas. Each of these is represented by a different color on the implementation plan chart (see next page):

1. **Leadership, Staffing and Collaboration**

Achieving a measurable reduction in homelessness will require strong leadership from local elected officials (City Council, Board of Supervisors); funders (City and County Departments, private foundations); the HHHC; and other key stakeholders. Having a formally organized leadership group or funder collaborative will be critical. To ensure all the planned work is on track and coordinate the efforts of all the stakeholders, ideally either the City or County will also identify a lead staff person or single point of contact.

2. **Marketing and Fundraising**

Much of the success of the plan will depend on a strong outreach and marketing campaign to raise public awareness and understanding of the new approach to addressing homelessness using a Housing First approach, recruiting landlords to participate, and raising money from private individuals to create a pool of flexible funds for landlord incentives and financial assistance for homeless people (deposits, rent subsidies, etc.).

3. **Alignment of Public Funding Sources**

⁶ <http://www.180santacruz.org/>

Intensive work will be required to re-structure and align existing public funding streams so that homeless individuals can receive both housing assistance and needed supportive services. The major sources that will have to be aligned include the HCV program, MHSA, Measure Z, AB109 and potentially other sources as well. This work will also include providing technical assistance to providers to improve the competitiveness of applications for public funding, such as for ESG and VHHP funds.

4. **Provider Training and Program Re-Design**

Both funders and providers in the community need to be brought up to speed on Housing First, how to work with households who are difficult to house, and how to change program policies and practices to more effectively support these clients to move into housing. Existing programs, including MIST, MAC, and PSH programs need to become more housing oriented and remove barriers to participation while rapid re-housing must be expanded to a scale sufficient to house a large portion of the homeless population.

5. **Data Systems**

To track progress and make adjustments along the way will require configuration of the HMIS system, attention to data quality, and the development of a data analysis and reporting function and structure that will provide the funders and leadership with the information needed to understand the impact of the changes being made.

B. Implementation Work Plan

The plan detailed in this chart provides an overview of key action steps to launch a 30/60 campaign in Eureka/Humboldt County. This timeline assumes the plan is presented to the Eureka City Council and Humboldt County Board of Supervisors in late January 2016 with planning of the campaign beginning on February 1. We have built in a six-month planning period, with campaign launch on August 1, 2016. Building off this initial campaign, including an analysis of data and a learning collaborative, the campaign will expand on February 1, 2017 to a full-scale implementation aimed at ending homelessness in Humboldt County by 2020. The activities are color coded to reflect the different work streams identified in the previous section of this report.

- 1. Leadership, Staffing and Collaboration
- 2. Marketing and Fundraising
- 3. Alignment of Public Funding Sources
- 4. Provider Training and Program Re-Design
- 5. Data Systems

Timeline	Activity	Responsible People/Organizations
January 2016	Focus Strategies Plan presented to City Council and Board of Supervisors	Leadership Group (City Council, Board of Supervisors, City Dept. Heads, County Dept. Heads, other funders)
Feb. – July 2016 Planning for 30/60 Campaign Launch	<p>Convene leadership team/funder group – draft resolution to City Council and Board of Supervisors to adopt 30/60 campaign as official policy, adopt “housing first” principles</p> <p>Resolution for 30/60 campaign (including housing first approach) adopted by City Council and BOS.</p> <p>Identify organizational structure and lead staff for campaign; explore feasibility of dedicated new hire – since initial funds will be private, possibly have a non-profit take the lead on fundraising, City and County staff to coordinate the implementation work.</p> <p>Set measurable objectives for first 90 days (number of people to be diverted, number to be housed with RRH, number to be housed with PSH); breakdown by population type (veterans, MHSA eligible, AOD, families)</p> <p>Develop budget and plan for first 90 days:</p>	<p>Leadership Group</p> <p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p> <p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p> <p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p>

Timeline	Activity	Responsible People/Organizations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible funds for diversion and rapid re-housing (deposits, rental assistance, transportation assistance) • Landlord recruitment, housing navigation costs • Incentive pool for landlords • House people directly from encampments or out of MAC • Identify services that can be leveraged for first 30 clients (FSP slots, AB109 case management, SSVF), supplement with campaign funds for a dedicated case manager • Identify any expected PSH vacancies and negotiate priority access for 30/60 clients <p>Assumption – funds for first 90 days will largely be private dollars for housing; need more time to begin aligning the public funding pieces.</p> <p>Convene fundraising team; develop marketing and private fundraising materials targeted to landlords, private donors; begin raising funds; begin landlord outreach and recruitment, develop community outreach public information campaign</p>	
<p>Feb. – July 2016</p> <p>Planning for 30/60 Campaign Launch (cont.)</p>	<p>Convene funding alignment work group including HA, DHHS, City, to begin planning for longer term funding needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximizing use of HCV (tenant-based and project-based) and pairing with services (MHSA, AB109, Measure Z) • Maximizing use of Arcata Bay Crossing (new PSH project) housing for chronically homeless people • Maximizing use of VA resources (VASH, SSVF) • Prioritizing FSP slots for chronically homeless people who have HCVs or RRH • Using AB109 to address housing needs • Feasibility of using Measure Z (either for rental assistance or services to people in housing or both; how best to leverage Measure Z with other funding streams • Identify source to expand/strengthen MIST (add Housing and AOD specialists) <p>Goal should be to begin re-structuring funding starting July 1, 2016.</p> <p>Select provider for rapid re-housing work – Issue RFP or just select based on interest and capacity. RRH provider should have some experience with: landlord recruitment/outreach; housing search/navigation; housing-focused case management; working with chronically homeless single adults.</p> <p>Identify organization or entity with strong Housing First experience to provide coaching to MIST, MAC staff on Housing First practices</p>	<p>Fundraising Team (Membership TBD)</p> <p>County & City Dept. Heads and/or Deputies (DHHS, Housing Authority, EPD)</p> <p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p> <p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p>

Timeline	Activity	Responsible People/Organizations
	<p>Begin planning for a county-wide provider summit on Housing First; identify possible speakers, trainers; convene working group of providers to help with planning</p> <p>Configure HMIS system so that MIST can enter people into system</p> <p>Agree on methodology for identifying people with highest needs (use of standardized tool and/or administrative data from MIST team, police, DHSS outpatient and inpatient, and hospital-emergency room); conduct intensive survey of encampments using "registry" approach; develop list of 30 to 50 highest need people to be housed.</p>	<p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p> <p>DHHS</p> <p>DHHS; MIST Team Members</p>
	<p>Ongoing meetings of Leadership Group – to plan for campaign launch</p> <p>Ongoing private fundraising</p> <p>Ongoing meetings of the funding alignment work group</p> <p>Continue engagement with homeless people identified by MIST; offer direct connection to housing (diversion/rapid re-housing using funds that have been raised or placement in available PSH or other housing program)</p> <p>Prioritize beds in MAC for people identified by MIST for this campaign</p> <p>Provide rapid re-housing (rental assistance, housing location, stabilization) using privately raised funds, landlords that have been recruited through the campaign, leveraged services from mainstream systems;</p> <p>Host community-wide provider training on housing first</p> <p>Meet individually with providers of TH, RRH, PSH, other housing to identify barriers to serving chronically homeless people; begin negotiating removal of barriers; identify sources of continuing training and TA on Housing First.</p> <p>Track progress of initial set of clients within HMIS – housing outcomes, returns to homelessness</p>	<p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p> <p>Fundraising Team (Membership TBD)</p> <p>County & City Dept. Heads and/or Deputies (DHHS, Housing Authority, EPD)</p> <p>MIST</p> <p>DHHS, MAC</p> <p>Identified RRH provider</p> <p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p> <p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p> <p>DHHS</p>

Timeline	Activity	Responsible People/Organizations
	<p>Convene learning collaborative including staff from MIST, MAC, RRH provider, others with strong involvement in campaign – identify what is working, what is not, problem solve solutions</p> <p>Begin planning to expand from 30/60 to broader campaign to end homelessness in Humboldt County to launch October 2016; build on lessons learned from 30/60 and begin folding in use of public resources; while planning is in progress, continue the 30/60</p>	<p>DHHS</p> <p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p>
Nov. 2016 to January 2017	<p>Identify organizational structure and lead staff for expanded campaign; this may shift to being more public-funder driven as the public funding streams are brought in.</p> <p>Set measurable objectives for first 90 days of the expanded campaign such as housing another 30 people, housing 50 people. Include goals for breakdown by population type (veterans, MHSA eligible, AOD, families) and by intervention type (% diverted, % in RRH, % into PSH)</p>	<p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p> <p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p>
Continue with 30/60	<p>Ongoing private fundraising</p>	<p>Fundraising Team (Membership TBD)</p>
Nov. 2016 to January 2017	<p>New funding allocations/plans go into effect on July 1 to the extent possible (County GF, Measure Z, MHSA, AB109, etc.); including how to pair available housing resources with services to sustain housing; source of funds and plan for intensive AOD services.</p>	<p>County & City Dept. Heads and/or Deputies (DHHS, Housing Authority, EPD)</p>
Plan for expanded campaign	<p>Housing Authority adopts homeless preference for HCV and public housing; finalizes plan for PBA policy with emphasis on using PBA to create dedicated units for homeless people.</p> <p>Continue 30/60 work – engagement by MIST, MAC to provide Interim Housing, rapid exit using available private funding; begin rolling in available publicly funded housing and services to speed rate of exit</p> <p>Complete work with housing providers on lowering entry barriers, speed rate of entry into existing programs for people with higher housing barriers</p>	<p>HA Director and/or deputies</p> <p>MIST, MAC, RRH provider, other providers</p> <p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p>
February to April 2017	<p>Track progress of initial set of clients within HMIS – housing outcomes, returns to homelessness</p> <p>Convene learning collaborative including staff from MIST, MAC, RRH provider, others with strong involvement in campaign – identify what is working, what is not, problem solve solutions</p> <p>Launch expanded campaign to end homelessness in Humboldt County</p>	<p>DHHS</p> <p>DHHS</p> <p>Leadership Group – (identified staff person)</p>

Appendix 1: Stakeholder Interviews

Date	Stakeholder Name and Organization	Interviewer
June 8, 2015	Miles Slattery, Parks Director, City of Eureka Brian Gerving, Public Works Director, City of Eureka Brian Millett, Recreation Activities Coordinator	Jane Micallef, Director of System Development; Megan Kurteff Schatz, Principal
June 9, 2015	Jet DeKruse, Senior Program Manager, Humboldt County, Department of Health & Human Services, Mental Health Division	Jane Micallef, Director of System Development; Megan Kurteff Schatz, Principal
June 19, 2015	Andy Mills, Police Chief, City of Eureka	Jane Micallef, Dir. Of System Development
June 23, 2015	Betty Chinn, Executive Director, Betty Chin Foundation	Jane Micallef, Dir. Of System Development
June 23, 2015	Fox Olson, Executive Director, Arcata House	Jane Micallef, Dir. Of System Development
June 23, 2015	Pamlyn Millsap, Homeless Liaison, City of Eureka Police Department	Jane Micallef, Dir. Of System Development
June 24, 2015	Val Martinez, Executive Director, Redwood Community Action Agency Maura Eastman, Director of Youth Services, RCAA Lorey Keele, Director of Adult and Family Services	Jane Micallef, Dir. Of System Development
July 6, 2015	Sara Cagle, North Coast Veteran's Resource Center	Jane Micallef, Dir. Of System Development
August 19, 2015	Wes Weir, Housing Authority of the City of Eureka/Humboldt County	Kate Bristol, Director of Consulting
September 28 through November 2, 2015	City of Eureka staff developed range of comments regarding the Draft Plan. City commenters consisted of: Greg Sparks, City Manager; Cyndy Day-Wilson, City Attorney; Andy Mills, Chief of Police; Rob Holmlund, Director of Development Services; Melinda Peterson, Housing Projects Manager; Brian Issa, Code Enforcement Officer.	

Appendix 2: Accomplishments

Activity	Date of Implementation	Brief Description
Leadership Monthly Meetings	Oct. 2013	Monthly meetings with the City of Eureka staff/City Council (2)/County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) staff/Board of Supervisors (1) to coordinate agency efforts to end homelessness.
Mobile Intervention and Services Team (MIST)	Jan. 2015	Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) and Eureka Police Department staff have created a team to coordinate serving homeless people with severe mental illness.
Humboldt Housing and Homeless Coalition (HHHC)	2004	The Humboldt Housing and Homeless Coalition meets every other month in a general meeting and has Executive Meetings on the months between. This Coalition is a Continuum of Care comprised of several organizations, service providers, developers, government agencies and leaders, faith-based organizations, and community members dedicated to end homelessness.
Community Homeless Improvement Program (CHIP)	Sept. 2013	Meetings are monthly and the purpose is to identify and solve issues of homeless and street people, panhandling, vagrancy, theft, etc. The meeting attendees represent Eureka Main Street, County Supervisors, City Council Representatives, Eureka Chamber of Commerce, Sheriff's Office, Eureka Police Department Homeless Liaison, City of Eureka, County DHHS Staff, and members of local non-profits: Eureka Rescue Mission, Betty Kwan Chinn Center, St. Vincent de Paul, and Charles Bean (formerly with the Human Rights Commission).
Street Outreach Services (SOS)	1999	MIST and Street Outreach Services (DHHS & Non-Profits) provide regular outreach to Homeless for registry and provision of services. Street Outreach Services (SOS) began with AB2034 funding and has continued mobile outreach to homeless continuously since 1999.
Multiple Assistance Center (MAC)	July 2015	Prioritized beds for homeless with highest housing barriers and to Rapidly Rehouse.
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Data Base System Usage	2004	HHHC Programs began using HMIS database for programs in Humboldt County.

Activity	Date of Implementation	Brief Description
Adoption of a Policy Statement "The White Paper"	Sept. 2014	The City of Eureka engaged Focus Strategies to study the issue of homelessness and recommended strategies to address the problem. According to data at the time of policy adoption, the City was home to approximately 600 homeless people at any given point in time. At 2.2% of the total population, the community has a higher rate of homelessness than the national averages or than in surrounding Humboldt County. The sizeable and highly visible population of homeless people has been a subject of much discussion and debate. This report summarizes what we have learned about homeless people in Eureka, the effectiveness of existing efforts to deal with the issue, and concrete steps the City can take to more strategically reduce the number of homeless people in the community.
Prioritize Assistance Using Vulnerability Tools	July 2015	MIST/MAC/SOS Began using the Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) 2.0 for all persons wanting assistance with housing. January 2016 MIST/SOS will use the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for all homeless encounters with client permission.
Housing Staff for Landlord Recruitment	Nov. 2015	Multiple Assistance Center (MAC) Housing Coordinators hired.
Measure Z Funding	June 2015	On June 23, 2015 the Eureka Police Department was funded \$400,000 for 2 positions to assist with homeless efforts and services.
Arcata Bay Crossing	Sept. 2015	New construction completed in Arcata of 31 units of supportive low income affordable housing, including one market rate manager's unit.
Winter Shelter	Nov. 2015	DHHS begins Winter Shelter for 17 families at a time for up to six weeks: Motel Vouchers coupled with Case Management Services.
Extreme Weather Shelter (EWS)	Nov. 2015	Eureka Main Street, St. Vincent De Paul, Eureka Rescue Mission and Redwood Teen Challenge begin annual EWS on nights of bad weather.
CALWORKS Family Housing Program	Nov. 2015	DHHS received grant of \$500,000 to house and provide services to homeless families eligible for CALWORKS.
Parents & Children Together (PACT) Program	Jan. 2016	Redwood Community Action Agency and DHHS begin 90-180 day residential treatment project (Parents and Children Together (PACT)) for very high need homeless families receiving services from DHHS-CWS, HEALTHY MOMS, AOD, and CALWORKS in some combination.
Alcohol Drug Care Services (ADCS) Detox & Treatment	Nov. 2015	Measure Z funds ADCS to provide detox and 30 Day Residential Program to Homeless Persons referred by EPD, MIST, SOS, and MAC.

Activity	Date of Implementation	Brief Description
Transportation Assistance Program (TAP)	Nov. 2006	TAP is for homeless clients that are able to verify a job or place to accept them and need financial support to get there. DHHS funding provides bus tickets or gas vouchers and cash for food during trip.

Appendix 3: Funding Source Inventory

Source	Amount	Recipient (Who Receives/Manages)	How Currently Used	Potential Uses for Reducing Homelessness
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	\$1,000,000	Grant from State of California to City of Eureka	Homebuyer down-payment assistance; owner occupied rehabilitation for households 80% AMI or below	None with existing grants; City or County could apply to State for CDBG services funding for services for homeless people (applications up to \$500,000)
HOME Program (State HOME; City HOME Program Income)	\$4,500,000 (\$3.7 m State HOME award; \$800,000 City HOME Program Income)	Grant from State of California to City of Eureka	Funds committed to Danco for development of 50 units of affordable senior housing (60% AMI and below)	Some of this project could be dedicated units for homeless people if a source of funding is identified. Possible opportunity for project-based Section 8, bonus CoC PSH funds.
Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention (VHHP)	TBD	Competitive application process to State HCD; currently no VHHP awards in Humboldt County	Danco (in partnership with Veteran's Housing Dev. Corp in Santa Rosa) applied for VHHP funding for veterans homeless housing in Eureka in December 2015.	If funded, will provide 49 units for homeless and chronically homeless veterans.
Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)	None awarded in 2014-2015 In 2013-2014 - \$200,000	Awarded by State of CA directly to project sponsors (can be non-profit or government entity)	Arcata House and Catholic Charities received ESG funds for rapid re-housing in 2013-2014, but there were no ESG funds awarded in Humboldt County in the most recent round.	The State of California is restructuring the ESG program to emphasize Rapid Re-Housing. Important to submit a strong proposal from Humboldt County in future funding rounds.
Continuum of Care (CoC)	\$733,348 in 2014	Awarded by HUD directly to providers; application	Most of the existing funding supports ongoing costs of permanent supportive housing.	Upcoming funding round in 2015 could present opportunity to apply for bonus funds for RRH and/or PSH

Source	Amount	Recipient (Who Receives/Manages)	How Currently Used	Potential Uses for Reducing Homelessness
Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)	Total grant amount unknown.	coordinated by HHHC Funds for Humboldt County are part of grant from VA to Sacramento Veterans Resource which serves northern regions of the State. Funds for Humboldt are administered by North Coast Veterans Resource Center	Eligible veterans can receive up to \$1,000 for homelessness prevention or rapid re-housing	This program does not appear to be deeply targeting neediest veterans. Possible opportunity to apply for additional funds specifically for Humboldt County.
CalWORKS	\$256,618	Federal/State funding, administered locally by DHHS	Funds are provided to assist eligible families with children to access temporary shelter while looking for permanent housing, housing deposits, utilities and rent through Family Stabilization and Linkages.	Since funds can be used for rental assistance (up to 4 months), housing search, deposits, case management, this is an ideal source for RRH for any homeless families who are CalWORKS eligible.
Child Welfare Funding	\$77,346	Federal/State funding streams (including Title IV-B and IV-E), administered locally by DHHS	Families in Transition (partnership with RCAA) provides flexible funding to support family reunification or prevent out of home placement, including assistance with rent/deposits.	Another good source for housing unsheltered families if they have child welfare involvement.
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	\$250,000	RCAA	CSBG funds RCAA grant writers, fiscal services, front desk staff and a portion of Executive Director salary.	This is a very flexible funding source that can be used for rapid re-housing for any household meeting the income requirements. (Poverty level). However,

Source	Amount	Recipient (Who Receives/Manages)	How Currently Used	Potential Uses for Reducing Homelessness
Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)	\$4.6 million in FY 2015-2016 estimated	DHHS	MHSA funds are budgeted for MIST (outreach), full-service partnerships (FSPs) providing wrap around services for most under-served individuals, including homeless people. Approx. \$45K annual available for rental assistance, or about \$900 per person on average. MHSA Housing funds are invested in Arcata Bay Crossing (31 units/15 MHSA units) which recently opened.	shifting from existing uses could create other gaps in the system. Critical to target FSP openings to chronically homeless people with highest service needs, and work to pair this with ongoing housing subsidy (e.g. HCV, CoC PSH). Units coming on-line at Arcata Bay Crossing should be prioritized for chronically homeless people.
Projects for Assistance in Transition to Homelessness	\$46,000 in FY 2015-2016	DHHS	Street Outreach Services (SOS) and one-time rent payments to avoid eviction, security deposits	Already being used for outreach and housing
AB 109 – State Public Safety Realignment Funds	\$4.9 million projected in FY 15-16	State funding, managed locally by BOS; allocated to Probation, Sherriff, DHHS, Public Defender	DHHS projected to receive \$1.5 million for mental health and social services for parolees/probationers	Funding could be targeted for wrap around services for homeless probationer/parolees to support housing stability; also can be used for rental assistance/deposits.
Measure Z	Varies; \$8.9 million allocated in most recent funding round	Half cent sales tax approved in 2014 for five years, to fund public safety	EPD receives a total of \$400,000 for MIST. Of this, \$170,000 is for rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing and detox services.	Additional funds can be requested. Since this source is highly flexible, it would be ideal for additional IRRH rental assistance, but also for needed supportive services for households to maintain housing stability once housed (e.g. intensive case management, substance abuse treatment).

Source	Amount	Recipient (Who Receives/Manages)	How Currently Used	Potential Uses for Reducing Homelessness
County General Fund	Unknown	County BOS, allocations to County Departments	No County General funds are currently allocated for homeless purposes	General funds dollars tend to be very flexible so represent a good source for homeless activities; however they also tend to be in very high demand for other county purposes.
Housing Choice Vouchers	\$5.7 million	County Housing Authority	They have authority for 1,200 vouchers but generally have about 925 leased up. When they reach 950 people have trouble finding units – market is saturated.	HCV program is underutilized and represents an excellent opportunity to expand long-term rental subsidies for highest need households, e.g. by creating a preference for homeless people in the tenant-based program so they can easily access vouchers; use PBA to create dedicated units.
Public Housing	200 units	City Housing Authority	Most of the units are for families; HA planning to apply to HUD for demo-dispo of 110 units, create new replacement units for families/single adults	Can create preference for homeless households in existing and/or new units
VASH	79 vouchers	Housing Authority in collaboration with VA and North Coast Veterans Resource Center	All currently leased. Program currently targets those who are “housing ready.” Not operating on a Housing First model	These resources could be better prioritized for chronically homeless veterans with highest needs.
Dept. of Justice	\$75,000	Federal Bureau of Justice	EPD recently applied for \$700,000 SMART policing grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, in partnership with Betty Chinn and DHHS.	Can help with the engagement and outreach component of the plan.
Private donations; Foundation grants	Unknown	Major foundation funders in the community include Headwater Fund,	Betty Chinn is prolific fundraiser. Uses private funders for first and last month’s rent, deposits, bus tickets home.	There appears to be great potential in raising more private funding for helping to tackle homelessness. Chief Mills has been approached by some private

Source	Amount	Recipient (Who Receives/Manages)	How Currently Used	Potential Uses for Reducing Homelessness
		<p>Humboldt Area Foundation</p> <p>Non-profits are main recipients of individual donations and foundation grants</p>		<p>funders who would contribute to a well thought out strategy.</p>
<p>City of Eureka Housing Successor</p>	<p>\$250,000 proposed for Mid-year FY 15-16 budget</p>	<p>City of Eureka</p>	<p>None – this is a proposed/projected funding source to be budgeted in the Mid-Year FY 2015-2016 City Budget. Funds are deposited from former Eureka Redevelopment Agency repaid loans and assets, with no annual renewable funding source.</p>	<p>For homeless prevention and rapid rehousing services for homeless individuals and families who are homeless or would be homeless but for assistance, or cash match, housing for the homeless, and other affordable housing projects</p>

Appendix 4

Housing Market Analysis for Humboldt County and City of Eureka

Using data from the *Humboldt Housing and Homeless Coalition Point in Time Count 2015 Report*, data available from the US Census, and several years of information from the *American Community Survey (ACS)*, Focus Strategies conducted this Housing Market Analysis for the City and the County to quantify the existing rental housing inventory and determine whether there is sufficient capacity to house the City's homeless population within the existing market.

Our general conclusion is that though the housing market in Humboldt County is tight, there is sufficient inventory to house a large share of the existing homeless population. Doing so in one year would require that many of the current households share units. With a longer timeline of three years, more households could be housed without doubling up.

A. Estimating Vacancy Rate in the Local Market

Recent data suggests that the vacancy rate in the rental market is declining across the United States. In 2014, the national vacancy rate dipped to 7.6%, its lowest point in nearly 20 years.⁷ As the table below indicates, vacancy rates are also significantly impacted by geography. Specifically, rates are lower in the West than in the U.S. as a whole, and even lower in California than in the West. This regional distinction is consistent over the timeframe from 2010 through 2015.

Year	Vacancy Rates by Geography ⁸				
	US	West	CA	Humboldt County	City of Eureka
2015	6.8	4.9	3.7	Not available	
2014	7.5	5.8	5.2	Not available	
2013	8.2	5.9	4.8	5.2	5.8
2012	8.6	6.2	5.3	5.3	5.7
2011	9.2	6.8	5.9	5.5	5.6
2010	10.6	8.0	7.3	4.8	4.0

The table also includes data available for Humboldt County and the City of Eureka. The estimates for the County and the City are very similar to California and less similar to the Western Region or to the US as a whole. Given the historical similarity to the State, it is reasonable to assume for the purposes of this analysis the current vacancy rate in 2015 for both the County and City is 3.7%.

B. Estimating an Achievable Vacancy Rate Target

Using current stock to house unsheltered homeless people assumes that the vacancy rate will also be reduced as more housing units are filled. However, there is no documentation about what actually

⁷ <http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/jchs.harvard.edu/files/jchs-sonhr-2015-ch1.pdf>

⁸ <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

happens to the vacancy rate when homeless people are housed. Starting with an estimated 3.7% vacancy rate, though, does not leave much room for movement.

We investigated other tight rental markets and found, for example, vacancy rates such as 2.3% in San Diego, 2.6% in Boston and 3.7% in San Francisco. Using Census data⁹ we also investigated the rental vacancy rates for the 75 largest Metropolitan areas in the US in both 2014 and 2015. The average vacancy rate decreased from 7.5% to 7.0% over those 2 years. Although the ranked order of the cities comprising the 75 shifted over the 2 years, the average vacancy rate for the tightest 10 markets was consistent at 2.6% (in 2015, the 10 ranged from 1.4–3.5; in 2014 they ranged from 1.5-3.2).

In absence of new housing units coming on line, a target of a 2.6% vacancy rate is an aggressive but achievable goal. Using this assumption, the number of units available for housing the unsheltered homeless population is the difference between the available stock at a 3.7% vacancy rate and the available stock at a 2.6% vacancy rate.

C. Current Available Stock and Projected Units Available for Unsheltered Homeless People

The table below presents information from the American Community Survey (ACS) regarding rental units in Humboldt County and the City of Eureka (which is a subset of the County). Data in the tables were generated from the 2009-2013 five-year ACS. ACS estimates were based on their 2013 survey and the 2010 Census of Population & Housing. Using the previous vacancy rate assumptions, it appears that there are 259 rental units available to house unsheltered homeless people annually. Of the 259 units, 11 are studio apartments, 67 are 1 bedroom, 105 are 2 bedrooms, and 76 are at least 3 bedrooms.

Humboldt County	Units	Units Available Using Vacancy Rate (3.7%)	Units Available Using Target Vacancy Rate (2.6%)	Units Available for Unsheltered Homeless People
Total:	23,519	870	611	259
Studio	970	36	25	11
1 bedroom	6,060	224	158	67
2 bedrooms	9,561	354	249	105
3 or more bedrooms	6,928	256	180	76
Eureka (subset of Humboldt County)		Units Available Using Vacancy Rate (3.7%)	Units Available Using Target Vacancy Rate (2.6%)	Units Available for Unsheltered Homeless People
Total:	5,984	221	156	66
Studio	376	14	10	4
1 bedroom	2,057	76	53	23
2 bedrooms	2,404	89	63	26
3 or more bedrooms	1,147	42	30	13

⁹ <http://www.census.gov/housing/hvs/index.html>

D. Number of Unsheltered Homeless People

The *Humboldt Housing and Homeless Coalition Point in Time Count 2015 Report* counted 1,319 homeless individuals throughout Humboldt County on the night of January 27, 2015. Of those counted, 730 were in Eureka, accounting for 56.3% of the total homeless population, including people living in sheltered locations (emergency shelters, transitional housing). The unsheltered count throughout the County was 844, or 64.3% of the total counted. Unsheltered individuals include those sleeping in a car, on the street, outdoors, or in abandoned buildings. HUD deems unsheltered locations as those unsuitable for human habitation. Extrapolating these percentages to Eureka, Eureka’s unsheltered homeless count is approximately 469 individuals.

	County PIT #	Eureka PIT #
Total PIT	1,319	730
Unsheltered	844	469
Sheltered	468	261
Missing Information	7	--

E. Matching the Unsheltered Population to Available Units

Given that there are estimated to be about 259 units available annually for housing an estimate 844 unsheltered homeless people, it will not be possible to house everyone within Humboldt County without implementing creative measures. Additionally, any strategy must take into consideration household size in relation to the inventory of available units by unit size. The next table uses data published by HUD from the 2013 PIT count to estimate the number of households that could be housed. Specifically, we assume the proportion of singles vs. families remains at approximately 80:20¹⁰, and for families, the average family size is three. Using these assumptions, the next table shows that the 844 people to be housed includes 56 family households and 675 individual households.

	Humboldt County PIT		
	Singles (80%)	Families (20%)	
	Persons	Persons	Households
Unsheltered PIT (844)	675	169	56

Below we present two scenarios by which the available units could accommodate 56 family and 675 individual households: (1) Everyone is housed in one year using shared housing/roommate situations; and (2) everyone is housed in three years, minimizing the number of roommate situations.

¹⁰ The *Humboldt Housing and Homeless Coalition Point in Time Count 2015 Report* indicated that 15.4% of respondents reported sleeping at the same location with at least one other companion. There was 90% or more missing data associated with this variable, however, so the data is both questionable and not directly relevant to the specific question of proportion of family households. Using the estimate of 20% from 2013 is preferred.

One Year Scenario

The next table shows that by assuming a 2.6% vacancy rate and doubling up almost 84% of people (14 families and 664 singles) in roommate situations, all unsheltered homeless people could be housed in one year using current available stock. Given the complexity of the mental health and substance use issues in the unsheltered homeless population, shared housing situations may be less than ideal for some individuals and will require some intensive services to help clients build interpersonal and conflict resolution skills. However, an assertive effort to house people in shared living situations will help speed the process of securing a place to live for each homeless person.

HH Type	# HH to House	Unit Type	Units	People Housed	Remaining to House
Family	56	2 Bedroom ¹¹	42	126	718
		3 Bedroom	7	43	675
Single	675	Studio (1 person/unit)	11	11	664
		1 Bedroom (2 people/unit)	67	134	530
		2 Bedroom (4 people/unit)	63	252	278
		3 Bedroom (4 people/unit; 2 units with 5 people)	69	278	0
	Total		259	844	

Three Year Scenario

In contrast to the one-year scenario, the three-year scenario does not assume that any family households would need to be in shared situations. It also does not assume more than one single person per bedroom, although two-bedroom units are shared by two single individuals.¹² This scenario also builds in a 5% increase in the unsheltered homeless population (42 people each year consisting of 3 families and 33 singles) and therefore houses a total of 928 people over the 3 year period.¹³ Even with these assumptions, almost 55% of single households will need to double up in roommate situations in order to house all unsheltered homeless people over three years.

Year One					
HH Type	# HH to House	Unit Type	Units	People Housed	Remaining to House
					844
Family	56	2 Bedroom	56	169	675
Single	675	Studio (1 person/unit)	11	11	664
		1 Bedroom (1 person/unit)	67	67	597
		2 Bedroom (2 people/unit)	49	98	499
	Total		183	345	

¹¹ Given the average family household size of 3, these households would most appropriately be housed in 2 or 3 bedroom units. For the purpose of this analysis, we assumed 25% of families would share 3 bedroom units and 75% would occupy 2 bedroom units.

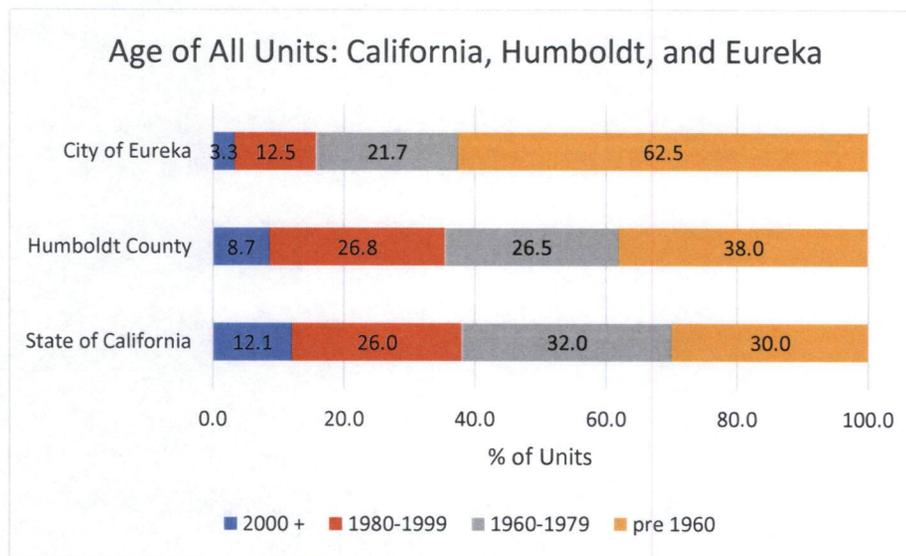
¹² This scenario was able to avoid using any of the 3 bedroom units.

¹³ The 5% rate of increase is based on PIT data, which shows that the unsheltered population decreased by 16% from 2009 to 2015, but increased by 23% from 2013 to 2015. We have factored in the assumption that the efforts currently underway in the City and County to address homelessness will help keep the annual growth of the population to 5% or below.

Year Two					
HH Type	# HH to House	Unit Type	Units	People Housed	Remaining to House
					541
Family	3	2 Bedroom	3	9	532
Single	532	Studio (1 person/unit)	11	11	521
		1 Bedroom (1 person/unit)	67	67	454
		2 Bedroom (2 people/unit)	102	204	250
	Total		183	291	
Year 3					
HH Type	# HH to House	Unit Type	Units	People Housed	Remaining to House
					292
Family	3	2 Bedroom	3	9	283
Single	283	Studio (1 person/unit)	11	11	272
		1 Bedroom (1 person/unit)	67	67	205
		2 Bedroom (2 people/unit)	102	204	1
	Total		183	291	

Housing Stock: Year Built

Compared to the State of California, the percentage of recently constructed units is lower in Humboldt County and substantially lower in the City of Eureka.¹⁴ In fact, more than 60% of the housing stock in Eureka was built prior to 1960.



¹⁴ <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

Cost of Available Units

The ACS provides data for the monthly rents by unit size in 2013 dollars. Focus Strategies used an inflation calculator¹⁵ to adjust the value to 2015 dollars. Further, the average rent value presented in the next table eliminates the top 25% most expensive units of each size to avoid including up-scale properties in the analysis. Given the severity of the homeless problem and the urgency within the community to address it, we have assumed that the majority of units would be candidates for housing homeless people. More expensive units will require higher levels of subsidy or would need to be used as shared housing.

Unit Size	Average 2013 Monthly Rent	Average 2015 Monthly Rent	Units Occupied	Annual Cost Per Unit	Extended Annual Cost
Studio	\$462	\$472	11	\$5,664	\$62,304
1 BR	\$457	\$467	67	\$5,604	\$395,568
2 BR	\$649	\$663	105	\$7,956	\$835,380
3BR	\$853	\$871	76	\$10,452	\$794,352
Total	--	--	--	--	\$2,087,604

Conclusion

As stated at the beginning of this analysis, Humboldt County appears to have adequate stock to house approximately two-thirds of the unsheltered homeless population within one year given existing housing inventory. Housing this proportion of individuals requires that the majority of single individuals share housing, although does not require more than one person per bedroom. It also requires that the community aggressively target a lower vacancy rate; one that is equal to average of the 10 tightest metropolitan rental markets in the US. This target may be ambitious, but it is not clear that it is unreasonable as many markets are functioning at or near this rate.

Other creative strategies will clearly need to be used to house the remaining third of unsheltered homeless people. We would recommend that this include Diversion/problem solving to find no cost and low cost housing solutions, including assisting individuals to move in with housed family or friends, or return to housing in their home community.

Sources

United States Census Bureau/American FactFinder. "DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics." 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office. <<http://factfinder2.census.gov>>.

¹⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "CPI Inflation Calculator." Available at: <http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm>.

United States Census Bureau/American FactFinder. "B25068: Bedroom by Gross Rent." 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office. <<http://factfinder2.census.gov>>.

Appendix 5: Glossary

AB109. Also known as Public Safety Realignment. Legislation enacted by the State of California in 2011 mandating that individuals sentenced to non-serious, non-violent or non-sex offenses will serve their sentences in county jails instead of state prison. This legislation also provides a dedicated funding stream for counties to absorb the costs of realignment. AB 109 funding can be used fairly flexibly, including for services and housing assistance for offenders who have no housing options upon release.

ACS – American Community Survey. A component of the US Census. The ACS includes a broad range of demographic and other data collected from a sample of US households.

AOD Services– Alcohol and Other Drug Services. Also sometimes referred to as Substance Abuse Treatment Services or Substance Use Disorder Services. In Humboldt County, the County Department that provides substance abuse treatment is called Adult Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Treatment Services.

AOD Specialist – Alcohol and Other Drug Specialist. A staff person who provides counseling or treatment to people with AOD issues.

AMI – Area Median Income. On an annual basis, HUD calculates and publishes the Area Median Income for each jurisdiction in the United States. AMI is based on data drawn from the Census Bureau’s American Community Service (ACS). AMI is used by HUD to set income limits for eligibility for certain types of federally assisted housing.

BOS – Board of Supervisors. The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors is the elected body that governs the County.

CalWORKs – California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids. California’s implementation of the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF, formerly known as “Welfare.”). Eligible households with minor children may receive cash aid and other forms of assistance through the CalWORKs program. CalWORKs is administered locally by County Departments; in Humboldt County by DHHS.

CDBG – Community Development Block Grant Program. A federal block grant for community development activities, including development of affordable housing. Awarded to cities and counties on a formula basis. Humboldt County’s CDBG funds are administered by the Housing Division of the Planning and Building Department. The City of Eureka has also accessed CDBG funds available through the State of California.

CSBG – Community Services Block Grant. A federal block grant for activities to assist households living in poverty. Awarded to local jurisdictions on a formula basis. Administered locally by Community Action Agencies (CAAs); in Humboldt County by the Redwood Community Action Agency (RCAA).

CoC – Continuum of Care. A federal grant program for targeted homeless activities, including transitional housing, rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing. Administered locally by a non-profit or governmental lead agency and overseen by CoC governing body or board. In Humboldt County, DHHS is the lead agency and the Humboldt Housing and Homeless Commission (HHHC) is the CoC governing body. A Continuum of Care (CoC) also refers to the overall system of shelter, housing and services available in a community to assist homeless people.

CPD (Notice 14-012) - Community Planning and Development (CPD) is a department of HUD that oversees funding for homeless activities. CPD issued Notice 14-012 in 2014. This notice requires that CoCs must adopt a policy to ensure that chronically homeless people with the most severe disabilities are prioritized for available CoC-funded permanent supportive housing (PSH) units and that access to these units must follow a standardized process for all PSH projects.

DHHS – Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services. The Humboldt County DHHS oversees a broad range of activities and funding sources, including public health, mental health, alcohol and other drug treatment services, child welfare, employment services, veterans services, and other assistance. DHHS is also the lead agency for the Humboldt County CoC.

EPD – Eureka Police Department. The Police Department of the City of Eureka.

ESG – Emergency Solutions Grant. A federal block grant program for targeted homeless activities, including outreach to homeless people, emergency shelter operations and rapid re-housing. Awarded by HUD to cities and counties on a formula basis. Humboldt County does not have a direct ESG funding allocation but non-profit agencies in Humboldt Counties have secured some ESG funds by applying to the State of California, which has its own funding allocation from HUD.

FSP – Full Service Partnership. A category of allowable costs within the Community Services and Support component of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). FSP programs are designed for adults diagnosed with a severe mental illness and would benefit from an intensive service program. The foundation of Full Service Partnerships is doing “whatever it takes” to help individuals on their path to recovery and wellness and typically include a low staff to client ratio, a 24/7 crisis availability and a team approach that is a partnership between mental health staff and client. Many chronically homeless people who have severe mental illness require the level of support offered by an FSP in order to secure and sustain housing.

HA – Housing Authority. Housing Authorities are local entities that administer certain types of federal housing assistance, including the Housing Choice Voucher Program (formerly known as

“Section 8”). In Humboldt County, there is a joint City/County Housing Authority that operates both the HCV program as well as managing several public housing complexes.

Harm Reduction – Harm reduction is an approach to substance use treatment that involves a set of practical techniques that are openly negotiated with clients around what is most likely to be achieved. The focus is on reducing the negative consequences and risky behaviors of substance use; it neither condones nor condemns any behavior. By incorporating strategies on a continuum from safer drug use, to managed substance use, up to abstinence, harm reduction practice helps clients affect positive changes in their lives.

HCD – The State of California Department of Housing and Community Development. Administers funding programs for the development of affordable and supportive housing in California.

HCV – Housing Choice Voucher. Formerly known as the Section 8 Program, the HCV Program is a federal housing assistance program overseen by HUD, providing tenant-based rental assistance to eligible households. The household pays 30% of their income towards rent and the program makes up the difference between the tenant portion and the unit rent. In Humboldt County the HCV program is operated by the Humboldt County Housing Authority.

HHHC – Humboldt Housing and Homeless Coalition. HHHC is the Continuum of Care (CoC) governing body for Humboldt County. Member agencies include service providers, developers, government agencies and leaders, faith-based organizations and community members dedicated to ending homelessness. The HHHC does not have a staff and is not officially incorporated or organized. As the CoC Lead Agency, the Humboldt County DHHS provides some administrative support, but most projects are accomplished by volunteers. HHHC projects include Homeless Connect days, the bi-annual Homeless Point in Time Count (PIT), and development of the community’s 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. HHHC holds a general meeting every other month, open to all interested individuals.

HMIS – Homeless Management Information System. HUD requires that all communities receiving CoC funding must establish a dedicated database system to collect and analyze data on homeless people in the community, what housing and services they access, and the results of the assistance they receive. In Humboldt County the HMIS is managed by DHHS, with oversight from the HHHC.

HPRP – Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program. HUD made \$1.5 billion in HPRP funding available to eligible cities and counties under the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (“the Stimulus”). Funds were used to provide rental assistance and supportive services to homeless households and those at-risk of homelessness. In Humboldt County, HPRP was administered by DHHS. The program ended on September 30, 2012. HPRP funds are no longer available.

Household. A person or group of people who live together in a dwelling unit. In the affordable housing field, a household refers to the group of people who occupy a housing unit. In the

homelessness field, a “homeless household” refers to a single person or group of people who are staying together in the same location and, if housed, would occupy a housing unit. A homeless household can consist of a single homeless adult, two or more homeless adults, or a group including at least one adult and at least one minor child (also known as a “homeless family”).

Housing First. Housing First is an approach to ending homelessness that centers on providing people experiencing homelessness with housing as quickly as possible – and then providing services as needed. Housing First programs:

- Focus on helping individuals and families access and sustain permanent rental housing as quickly as possible without time limits;
- Provide services to promote housing stability and individual well-being on a voluntary and as-needed basis;
- Do not require that clients agree to participate in services or become clean and sober as a condition of occupancy;
- Adopt a “low barriers” approach to screening such that there are minimal entry requirements (e.g. no sobriety requirements, minimum income requirements, service participation requirements, etc.)

HUD – Department of Housing and Urban Development. The federal department responsible for housing and community development policy and funding.

Low Barriers. See “Housing First.”

MAC – Multi Assistance Center. Operated by the RCAA, this program provides transitional housing for homeless single adults, with a focus on helping individuals who are chronically homeless in Eureka to secure permanent housing as quickly as possible.

Measure Z – A half-cent sales tax measure passed by Humboldt County voters in 2014. Measure Z was placed on the ballot to maintain and improve essential Humboldt County services, including public safety. Funds are currently being used for a variety of purposes, including the MIST Program.

MHSA – Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63). Passed by the voters of the State of California in 2004, MHSA imposes a 1% income tax on personal income in excess of \$1 million. Funds are dedicated for county mental health programs for children, transition age youth, adults, older adults and families. The Act addresses a broad continuum of mental health needs, with a particular focus on those who are under-served by the mental health system, including homeless people with mental illness. In California, the MHSA is a key funding source for services and housing for homeless individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. In Humboldt County, MHSA funds are administered by DHHS.

MI – Motivational Interviewing. A counseling approach that works on facilitating and engaging intrinsic motivation within the client in order to change behavior. MI is a goal-oriented, client-centered counseling style for eliciting behavior change by helping clients to explore and resolve ambivalence. MI is an evidence-based practice that has proven to be effective in working

with homeless people with mental health issues who may be difficult to engage in a process of setting goals or following a plan to secure housing.

MIST – Mobile Intervention and Services Team. Created by Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) and Eureka Police Department (EPD), the MIST is a mobile homeless outreach team that conducts outreach, engagement, assessment, and service coordination. The goal of the MIST is to identify unsheltered homeless people with severe mental illness and help them become connected to services and housing.

PATH – Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) is a federal funding source providing assistance to individuals who are homeless and have serious mental illnesses. PATH is administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), within the federal Department of Health and Human Services (H&HS). PATH funds are distributed to States/Territories that, in turn, contract with local public or non-profit organizations to fund a variety of services to homeless individuals. In Humboldt County, PATH funds are administered by DHHS and used to fund outreach activities to homeless people with mental illnesses.

PBA – Project-Based Assistance. Project-based vouchers are a component of a Housing Authority's Housing Choice Voucher program (HCV, also known as Section 8). A Housing Authority can attach up to 20 percent of its tenant-based rental assistance (housing vouchers) to specific housing units if the owner agrees to either rehabilitate or construct the units, or the owner agrees to set-aside a portion of the units in an existing development. Project Based Assistance is powerful tool to help finance affordable housing development.

PIT – Point in Time Count. HUD requires every CoC to conduct a point in time count of homeless people a minimum of once every two years. Locally, the bi-annual PIT is conducted by the HHC and DHHS.

PSH – Permanent Supportive Housing. Subsidized rental housing without time limits and with intensive supportive services offered on-site to assist tenants to maintain housing and meet their desired goals. In PSH, services are offered on a voluntary basis. Clients are not required to participate in services as a condition of being housed, but services are offered to them through a process of engagement. PSH is designed to house those individuals with the greatest housing barriers and highest service needs – typically people who have severe and persistent mental illness or other disabilities and who have long histories of homelessness.

RCAA – Redwood Community Action Agency. A Humboldt County non-profit agency, based in Eureka. RCAA provides a wide range of services to low and moderate income residents of the County. RCAA operates the MAC, which provides transitional housing for homeless single adults.

RRH – Rapid Re-Housing. A program model that assists individuals and families who are homeless move quickly into permanent housing, usually to housing in the private market. It does so by

offering time-limited, targeted services and short-term rental assistance to help participants make the move from homelessness to housing.

SBCM – Strengths Based Case Management for Substance Abuse. A one-on-one social service intervention for adults with substance use disorders that is designed to reduce the barriers and time to treatment entry and improve overall client functioning.

SSVF – Support Services for Veteran Families. A federal funding program operated by the Veteran's Administration (VA), which awards grants to local non-profit agencies to provide short-term rental assistance and case management to veterans who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.

TH – Transitional Housing. A program model that provides clients with a shared or private housing unit for a time limited period, usually between 6 and 24 months, during which the client receives supportive services to help with the transition to permanent housing.

Title IV-B and IV-E. A federal funding source for child welfare services. In Humboldt County, DHHS administers child welfare funding.

USICH – United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. A federal policy body tasked with coordinating the Federal response to homelessness. USICH includes representation from 19 Federal member agencies, including HUD, HHS, and the VA. In 2010, USICH published *Opening Doors, the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. USICH is one of major policy setting entities at the federal level.

VA – Veterans Administration. The federal cabinet agency tasked with addressing veterans affairs.

VASH – Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing. A federal funding program operated by the VA. VASH provides long-term rental assistance vouchers to homeless veterans. The program targets chronically homeless veterans in particular, and operates in a manner similar to the Housing Choice Voucher program (HCV, also known as Section 8). In Humboldt County, VASH is administered by the Humboldt County Housing Authority.

VHHP – Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention Program. A funding program administered by the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). VHHP provides financing for the development of affordable and supportive housing for low income and homeless veterans.