

**U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness  
Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness**

**External Stakeholder Input Report: Region 2 Regional Interagency Council on  
Homelessness (ICH) Stakeholder Input  
February 9, 2010 New York, New York**

**Attending:**

Manny Alvarado, HUD  
Danielle Anderson-Thomas, New Jersey State  
Department of Education  
Barbara Andrews, HHS  
JoAnna Aniello, HUD  
Ralph Benzenberg, USPS  
Bernie Bowles, SSA  
Bonnie Brathwaite, USDA  
Melanie P. Faby, New York State Education Dept.  
Lester Farthing, Census  
Daniel Friedman, DOL  
Adam Glantz, HUD  
Linda Glassman, New York State Office of Temporary  
and Disability Assistance  
Dennis Gonzalez, HHS  
James Goveia, DOT  
Deborah Heinz, New Jersey Department of  
Community Affairs

LaShanda Hodges, VA  
Julie Irwin, VA  
Barry Klitsberg, HHS  
Matthew Lattimer, DOJ  
Everett Lo, SSA  
Alexis Lometz, USDA  
Michael Melendez, HHS  
Maya Ortiz, Census  
Grace Protos, DOL  
Michael Sabo, VA  
Adam Shuster, DOL  
Robert Signoracci, HUD  
Paul Stridick, New Jersey Division of Housing and  
Community Resources  
Joyce Thomas, HHS  
Jennifer Velez, New Jersey Commissioner of  
Department of Human Services

*We thank you for your participation and apologize to anyone inadvertently left off this list.  
We tried our best to read the handwriting of each person who signed in for the meeting.*

**USICH Staff**

Anthony Love and John O'Brien

**Meeting Summary**

Anthony Love welcomed the group and facilitated introductions. He then gave an overview of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness and the framework for the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. The Plan will serve as a roadmap for joint action by the 19 Council agencies to guide the development of programs and budget proposals towards a set of measurable targets to pursue over a five-year period. USICH is centering its Plan on the belief – the moral foundation – “no one should experience homelessness—no one should be without a safe, stable place to call home.” There are five areas of concentration: Preventing and ending homelessness among 1) families with children, 2) youth, 3) Veterans, and 4) adults experiencing chronic homelessness; as well as 5) in the context of state and local communities, mobilize community participation, forge partnerships, and align resources.

The Council affirmed six core values to be reflected in the Plan:

- Homelessness is unacceptable.
- There are no “homeless people,” but rather people who have lost their homes who deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Homelessness is expensive; it is better to invest in solutions.
- Homelessness is solvable; we have learned a lot about what works.
- Homelessness can be prevented.

- There is strength in collaboration and USICH can make a difference.

The Plan's strategies will:

- identify and target to reach and match people with appropriate interventions;
- ensure access by people to needed programs, housing and services;
- retool crisis response to avert and shorten entry into homelessness;
- provide housing and supports;
- build opportunity such as jobs and education;
- enhance capacity in the service system to deliver quality; and
- document results.

The meeting facilitators introduced the World Café process, a conversational process that builds on previous conversations as people move between groups, cross-pollinate ideas, and discover new insights into the questions being discussed. Thank you to volunteers from Art of Hosting for their help to facilitate these conversations.

Small groups of three to five participants each discussed question one and recorded their key answers. After a short report-back session, the small groups were randomly re-mixed and the new groups discussed question two.

The questions for discussion:

1. What should be the key goals and strategies of the plan that will take us toward that vision?
2. How can federal resources and practices be wisely aligned and cost-effectively applied to amplify our state/local work?

Before concluding the meeting, Anthony outlined the next steps in the development of the Plan and attendees were thanked for their participation.

Following the meeting, the responses were categorized into themes. The percentage of comments for each theme is listed for each question followed by the text of every comment, listed alphabetically by theme. USICH has used our best efforts to ensure accuracy in capturing and categorizing comments.

**Question: What should be the key goals and strategies of the plan that will take us toward this vision?**

17%	Communication (external)	Comments highlighting the need for enhanced communication between Federal agencies and communities, concerted strategies to raise public awareness, the need to make information on programs widely available, and for coordinated messaging from agencies.
14%	Coordinated Interagency Strategy	Comments that suggest a need for holistic and coordinated planning across Federal agencies and mainstream systems to better address homelessness.
11%	Investment Target – Housing	Comments suggesting increased funding for housing solutions, including more affordable housing, housing vouchers, PSH, and other specialized housing models.
11%	System Design	Comments relating to the promotion of effective system practices or recommended ways of designing homeless systems or delivering homeless assistance.
6%	Investment Target – Education/ Employment	Comments suggesting a need for increased funding and resources for education and employment strategies for homeless people.
6%	Investment Target – Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing	Comments advocating for increased funding for prevention and rapid re-housing models.
6%	Mainstream System Accountability	Comments on the responsibility of mainstream systems to address homelessness, and those that pertain to assessment and removal of barriers that drive people to homelessness or complicate access to solutions.
3%	Causes – Myriad of Factors	Comments indicating there are numerous causes of homelessness, as opposed to one specific cause.
3%	Coordinated Federal Grants	Comments suggesting the need to pool funding, better coordinate funding applications and grant program regulations, or align grant restrictions across agencies.
3%	Definitions	Comments requesting consistent definitions and common requirements to document homelessness and other related terms.
3%	Flexibility	Comments suggesting a need to maintain or enhance the flexibility and versatility of funding and programming for homeless services.
3%	Investment Target – Regional Coordination/Planning	Comments pertaining to support or increased funding for regional coordination efforts and planning at the regional/local level.
3%	Investment Target – Services	Comments indicating a need for increased funding for treatment services, early intervention, child-focused services, and life skills training for homeless people.
3%	Investment Targets – General	General comments advocating more funding/resources for programs, communities, or subpopulations.
3%	Miscellaneous	A comment that does not fit it any of the thematic codes.
3%	Technical Assistance (TA)	Comments related to the need for training and provision of technical assistance to improve use of federal resources and to disseminate effective strategies and best practices.
3%	Vision of Success/Indicators of Success	Comments regarding statements or goals pertaining to what a successful homeless system would look like.

**Question: What should be the key goals and strategies of the plan that will take us toward this vision?**

Include mechanisms to address the underlying issues leading to homelessness. They include job training/placement, job market orientation, life skills orientation, medical and mental healthcare, education, coordination of community resources and services	Causes - myriad
Better informed public to build community political will	Communication
Better informed public: campaign to educate public and other stakeholders regarding high financial and social cost of homelessness	Communication
Change political will. Re-entry: "Every saint has a past. Every sinner has a future."	Communication
National campaign to raise awareness	Communication
Reduction/elimination of stigma around homelessness: Mass marketing campaign similar to stop smoking to put human face on homelessness	Communication
Use drunk driving as a model: there's a generation to change	Communication
Better coordinated systems: consolidated funding	Coordinated Federal Grants
Align federal/state/county/city regulations ability to speak with one voice	Coordinated Interagency Strategy
Better coordinated system	Coordinated Interagency Strategy
Coordination and collaboration	Coordinated Interagency Strategy
Establish partnership between local, state, federal in maximizing services and alleviating duplication of services	Coordinated Interagency Strategy
Multidisciplinary approaches	Coordinated Interagency Strategy
Standard definition across all agencies	Definitions
90% of resources focused on prevention/diversion. Creative and flexible use of resources by agencies (i.e., DHS to ACS)	Flexibility
Educational stability among housing program	Investment target – ed/emp
Provide economic opportunity through education, employment, financial literacy, independent living skills.	Investment target – ed/emp
Greater access to supportive housing	Investment target – housing
Increase funding for more affordable housing	Investment target – housing
Reduce homelessness with housing and supportive services	Investment target – housing
Sufficient affordable housing stock: increase tax credits and increase interagency collaboration	Investment target – housing
Emphasis on prevention	Investment target – prevention & RR
Prevent homelessness with short-term financial assistance programs	Investment target – prevention & RR
Task force or work group to align all regs/rules	Investment target - regional coord/plng
Reduce homelessness with housing and supportive services	Investment target – services
Increase categorical funding across agencies.	Investment targets – general
Homelessness is out problem - families, veterans. The line separating the haves and the have nots is thin	Mainstream system accountability
Increased responsive quicker interventions	Mainstream system accountability
Stability for children with education	Misc
Database: interoperability between agencies or service providers	System Design
homeless center (analogous to senior citizens centers) with access to multiple services at one location.	System Design
Review data exchange agreements	System Design
Single point of entry for health, housing: transitional/permanent, social services, education	System Design
Technical assistance to provide states/localities with aligned regs/rules re: funding/housing/services	Technical Assistance (TA)
Re-tool our core beliefs: A home for everyone, A job for everyone-an inalienable right	Vision of Success/Indicators of Success

**Question: How can federal resources and practices be wisely-aligned and cost-effectively applied to amplify our state/local work?**

12%	Coordinated Federal Grants	Comments suggesting the need to pool funding, better coordinate funding applications and grant program regulations, or align grant restrictions across agencies.
12%	Coordinated Interagency Strategy	Comments that suggest a need for holistic and coordinated planning across Federal agencies and mainstream systems to better address homelessness.
12%	System Design	Comments relating to the promotion of effective system practices or recommended ways of designing homeless systems or delivering homeless assistance.
9%	Communication (external)	Comments highlighting the need for enhanced communication between Federal agencies and communities, concerted strategies to raise public awareness, the need to make information on programs widely available, and for coordinated messaging from agencies.
9%	Performance-based Funding	Comments promoting greater accountability for local programs and grantees, investment in performance, and the shifting of resources away from poorly performing strategies and programs.
9%	Research	Comments suggesting areas where we need more research to inform strategy development of homeless assistance.
6%	Consumer/stakeholder participation	Comments encouraging input from consumers and other front-line and local stakeholders in the planning and decision-making processes.
6%	Flexibility	Comments suggesting a need to maintain or enhance the flexibility and versatility of funding and programming for homeless services.
6%	Investment Target – Regional Coordination/Planning	Comments pertaining to support or increased funding for regional coordination efforts and planning at the regional/local level.
6%	Investment Targets – General	General comments advocating more funding/resources for programs, communities, or subpopulations.
6%	Technical Assistance (TA)	Comments related to the need for training and provision of technical assistance to improve use of federal resources and to disseminate effective strategies and best practices.
3%	Investment Target – Education/ Employment	Comments suggesting a need for increased funding and resources for education and employment strategies for homeless people.
3%	Investment Target – Services	Comments indicating a need for increased funding for treatment services, early intervention, child-focused services, and life skills training for homeless people.
3%	Potential Revenue	Comments presenting ideas on new revenue sources that could be used to fund proposed interventions.

**Question: How can federal resources and practices be wisely-aligned and cost-effectively applied to amplify our state/local work?**

Educate local homeowner/simplify section 8 to increase participation	Communication
Repository of all available resources in a catalog/online	Communication
Utility in federally-funded public awareness campaign	Communication
Ask state or local entities what is needed (get state or local input)	Consumer/stakeholder participation
Ongoing input with end users included in the feedback loop) from end users (i.e., planning, execution and evaluation)	Consumer/stakeholder participation
Aligning federal regulations across programs	Coordinated Federal Grants
Federal government to encourage utilization of best practice models as part of funding streams	Coordinated Federal Grants
More clearly define federal funding; more clear guidelines	Coordinated Federal Grants
More evenly spread funds	Coordinated Federal Grants
Lack of coordination	Coordinated Interagency Strategy
Removing territorial barriers; more transparency of federal programs—remove silos	Coordinated Interagency Strategy
USICH to take a more authoritative role in coordination of homeless programs across federal government (e.g., create a federal homeless agency)	Coordinated Interagency Strategy
We know what the solution is. Focus on it.	Coordinated Interagency Strategy
Easier access to federal funding (e.g., flexibility)	Flexibility
Increased flexibility of resources for homeless issues across funding streams. Leveraging existing funding	Flexibility
Education—“Race to the Top”—Provide lasting impact	Investment target – ed/emp
Modify HUD continuum of care model to increase statewide cooperation and planning	Investment target - regional coord/plng
Utilize designated homeless coordinators to inventory the available resources to improve coordination	Investment target - regional coord/plng
Provide wrap around services: Measures are just the number placed in housing, but also services needed. Connect the services.	Investment target – services
Bring back the war on poverty.	Investment targets – general
Not enough money. Given the scope of the problem.	Investment targets – general
DOL practices accountability—recipient of homeless benefits (person work force)	Performance-based funding
Hold localities accountable for federal funds through performance measures	Performance-based funding
Rethink agencies, non-profits that are getting funds. Fund those that are successful/Get the jobs done.	Performance-based funding
Housing voucher reform with HUD bank of unused housing voucher	Potential revenue
Better counting of homeless population (relates to funding allocations)	Research
Comprehensive evaluation of existing and previously funded projects before decision are made about future funding allocations	Research
Schools enhance homeless count for more funding	Research
Avoid duplication of services. Focus on lack of services.	System Design
Greater use of technology. Create “one-stop” virtual service centers to apply for multiple agency services at one time. Develop streamlined application for multiple agencies.	System Design
Improve data sharing across programs and services	System Design
Review legalities of information sharing to streamline service delivery; reduce barriers to information sharing across agencies/increase information exchange agreements	System Design
Provide better technical assistance to those who are funded	Technical Assistance (TA)
Repository of all available resources in a catalog/online	Technical Assistance (TA)