OFFICE OF
RESILIENCE AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES

COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

LOUISVILLE'S Unsheltered Homeless Initiatives

FY19 Surplus Funding Report and FY20 Recommendations

Update as of May 3, 2019

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LOUISVILLE METRO
Unsheltered Homeless Initiatives
Update as of May 3, 2019

COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

FY19 Overview

- Dec. 2018 - Metro Council recommended and approved the transfer of $546,791 from the city's FY18 year-end budget adjustment to further address the needs of unsheltered homeless individuals in our community.
- Jan. 15, 2019 - Agencies began working on this plan (*Wayside's low-barrier shelter began Dec. 24, 2018)
- June 30, 2019 - Funding for this short-term plan ends

FY19 Agency Recipients, Funding Amounts, Focus Areas and Services Provided

Wayside Christian Mission $100,000 for low-barrier shelter	Started with 100 bed spaces on Dec. 24; 1st night had 90 stay, 2nd night had 94. Week after added bunk beds, bringing the beds to 124; beds have been consistently full with additional folks on mats on the floor. Following 2019 Homeless Street Count, Natalie Harris, Executive Director of the Coalition for the Homeless, stated "It is also noteworthy that 161 people were counted sleeping indoors at the new low barrier shelter, located at Wayside Christian Mission. The count this morning demonstrates a need for both more shelter space and more options for different types of shelter. It is proof that we can get people off the streets when we have the will to do so."
St. John Center for Homeless Men $45,791 for storage	Storage facility had a soft opening March 18 & official opening March 25. 232 total capacity of storage units; 136 utilized to date . While this was the last element of the additional funding plan to come on-line, it has proven to be quite impactful. It has also demonstrated the flexible capacity allowed by the use of shipping containers. An additional shipping container has already been added to provide more secure storage for the bins provided by Louisville Metro.
UP Louisville (Uniting Partners for Women and Children) in partnership with St. John $95,000 for homeless encampment management and outreach	Outreach team fully assembled on Feb. 5, 2019 and is available for both day and evening services. 456 clients served since that time with over 1,600 services provided in coordination with many agencies. Helped arrange shelter for 161 clients requiring coordination with the Coalition and other shelters. Other services included help obtaining a state I.D. cards & other documentation, education around harm reduction, help obtaining medical care, benefits counseling, and delivering vital clothing and supplies.
Volunteers of America $73,000 for rapid re-housing for families	18 families served utilizing supplemental funding including a) rapidly facilitating families exiting from VOA shelter into housing b) moving families from the waiting list into shelter and c) helping families bypass shelter and go directly into housing. Their goal was to serve 10 families, and they have exceeded that by 8 more families to date.
The Healing Place $90,000 for low barrier shelter for men	Since the opening of 24 low-barrier shelter beds on January 14, 2019, they have been operating at a 73% occupancy rate. (Note: 1) Funding from LMG allowed the opening of low-barrier shelter beds focused on men with a history of substance misuse. There is no requirement for these individuals to go into treatment. While this additional capacity made a small contribution, this coupled with the expansion of detox beds, has, for the first time in many years, eliminated the need to turn anyone away from services. Some clients already being served were able to move directly to detox. 2) LMG is only partially funding these additional beds. Healing Place is in the process of determining how to provide for the ongoing support for these beds or for a specific season that these beds would be available. In order to support these beds being available year-round additional funding from other funders and foundations will be necessary.
Family Life Center, Inc. at St. Stephen's $97,500 for family day shelter	Because of structural issues, this facility was unable to providing ongoing, overnight shelter for families. However, they were able to assist during White Flag, providing shelter for families who were unable to stay at other shelters. This program shifted focus to become a Family Day Shelter. Client load is increasing with the warming of weather. More than 20 families have been provided with food, showers, and laundry services. Transportation has also been provided to families to appointments for UP, Golden Arrow, the Nia Center and the Social Security Office.
Other $45,500 for Misc. and unexpected expenses	Storage carts, LG&E and electrical.

Homeless Stats, Reports and Testimonials shared since January 2019

Annual Homeless Street Count Results (*count conducted by Coalition on Jan. 31, 2019*)

- 118 individuals were counted sleeping outside, compared to 153 counted in January 2018. This represents a 23% decrease in the number of people sleeping outdoors – an important sign of progress.
- It is also noteworthy that 161 people were counted sleeping indoors at the new low-barrier shelter, located at Wayside Christian Mission.
- Those sleeping in emergency homeless shelters were also counted on Jan. 31 in order to create a total one-night count of the homeless in Louisville. Those numbers are included in the full annual Homeless Census report (see below).
- Approximately 325 volunteers participated in the count.

2018 Louisville Homeless Census (*released on April 19, 2019 by the Coalition for the Homeless*)

- Advocates and outreach teams provided services to 6,986 unduplicated homeless people between October 1, 2017, and September 30, 2018, which was a 4.3% increase from the 6,695 served in the previous year.
- The number of unsheltered people served throughout 2018 decreased by 18% from 774 to 632. The number of sheltered individuals served increased by 7.3% from 5,921 to 6,354.
- Other statistics noted in this report:
  - Louisville's eviction rate is 4.82%, which is two times that of the national average, with 14 households evicted each day.
  - There were 262 homeless people in 75 families staying in a shelter during the January point-in-time count, including 169 children under age of 18
  - Between 40 and 70 homeless families are on the waiting list for emergency shelter each night, while there were 1,039 unduplicated families who spent time on this waiting list throughout 2018.
  - There are 76 unaccompanied homeless young adults under the age of 25 in Louisville, a 67% decrease since 2017 — when the coalition began an initiative to end young adult homelessness in the city.
  - There are 13,092 families on the Section 8 waiting list in the city.

Homeless Outreach Team Testimonials

- *We hit the ground running and I am so proud of what all is being accomplished, two hours into our day today and we have been able to assess a gentleman in a mental health crisis that was having suicidal ideations and advocate to get him into Phoenix to see a mental health provider immediately, pick up two ladies from The Healing Place and transport them over to Centerstone and have completed two new intakes for St. John Center and we have only just begun. "*
- *"I want to reach out and say how amazed I am by our outreach team and how grateful we are for this partnership and opportunity to serve. It is so wonderful to see the outreach team show up repeatedly bringing in women for services and we are only witnessing a small piece of their work. We are so confident in this team and I am so honored to be a part of this village."*
- *"McKenzie is 20 but he looks 14 years old. Instead of falling through the cracks, we advocated at every turn. He will soon be in a Rapid Re-housing apartment with the Home of the Innocents."*
- *"Detroit was suicidal a week ago. Because of the connections we helped make <u>for</u> him, the steps we took <u>with</u> him, and the services <u>he was able to access</u> (therapy, a nurse, and he'll start a med treatment plan this week), he met with St. John's employment specialist and started his job at the car wash Monday. What a difference a week made! What a difference human connection made."*
- *"In the last week, three women entered recovery programs."*

Lessons Learned

- This entire program plan was established in less than 30 days. The amount of learning through the process of implementation has been invaluable to the success of these initiatives moving forward.
- Wayside made significant progress in understanding and addressing the initial concerns with providing a wide open low-barrier model. They have amended their rules and approaches to begin to address some of the most concerning issues encountered in their startup phase. Their experience will hopefully lead to additional shelter providers relaxing rules of entry to accommodate more individuals being able to come into shelter.
- The storage option for individuals has provided a secure location for personal belongings. This has allowed individuals to access needed medical treatment, and referrals to services for individuals who expressed needs. This provided significant comfort and security for individuals last prized possessions. One participant stated that he was willing to die for his remaining possessions, and while it would not seem that storage was a matter of life and death, for him, it is.
- The outreach teams, (see quotes from previous page), have made significant connections to services each day. This team has actually saved lives and fills a vital component of the continuum to get people into housing.
- Volunteers of America has used the flexibility built into this funding source to address some of the more egregious safety concerns of women and children encountered both in encampments and in the low-barrier shelter venues. This has proven to be a critical resource for the families served. While insufficient to address the full population of homeless families, valuable structural realizations have been made in how to begin to address specific issues related to domestic violence and shelter.
- The Healing Place used these funds to expand their existing program and was able to reallocate resources across their campus to address the additional beds provided to the community. While active substance use was not a requirement of entry, this proved to be an important additional piece to reducing the number unsheltered individuals as reflected in the Homeless Point-In-Time Count.
- The Family Life Center at St. Stephen's provided an important learning experience for this set of initiatives. This was the part of the initiative that was designed to explore the possibility of a more community-based small low-barrier shelters with more targeted populations. The barriers identified, related to life safety code requirements, have highlighted that even though this is a “best practice” it will likely be the most difficult piece to operationalize both from a physical plant perspective and a service perspective.

FY20 Proposed Budget and Future Recommendations

- Mayor Fischer’s FY20 budget proposal includes $1 million to for the continuation of the successful unsheltered homeless initiatives.
- Based on program outcomes and expenditure patterns to date for these efforts, it is recommended continuing the pursuit of multiple low-barrier shelters, ongoing homeless outreach and storage.
- Bolstered by the preliminary findings of the University of Louisville’s report on recommendations in regard to street homelessness, it is vital that we provide additional support for street outreach. This includes utilizing Trauma Informed Training and Approach to better serve individuals with behavioral health issues and drug and alcohol addiction, and increased recognition of human trafficking risks and occurrences.
- It should be a priority to continue support to the low-barrier shelter provided by Wayside.
- There continues to be a need for additional family shelter beds.
- The storage options provided through St John’s Center has had a significant positive impact for the individuals who have accessed their services.
- Preliminary findings of the University of Louisville’s report, “A Preliminary Assessment for Solving Street Homelessness: Applying Best Practices to Louisville’s Continuum of Care”, were reported early March 2019 with the final report release scheduled for June, 11, 2019. This report was funded by a special allocation in the city budget with the purpose to be better informed on the need and best practices so that the community can make the best use of limited resources in addressing the increasingly visible issue of street homelessness.