



2015-YEAR IN REVIEW

The following is a list of agency and community-wide efforts to impact homelessness or those at risk of homelessness that were organized by the coalition and/or reported at Denton County Homeless Coalition meetings.

There are so many positive things happening around the community benefiting the efforts to end homelessness. Any event or item is not included in this review was not intentional. If you would like to see a topic added to this report, please contact Leslie Wisenbaker, DCHC Chair.

- ☐ DCHC Steering Committee was restructured to have more capacity for growth and be more inclusive of sectors.
- ☐ Mayor's Task Force for Housing the Homeless and Report was released to the public.
- ☐ The City of Denton and United Way agree to jointly fund a Homeless Coordinator position. The position was filled in 2016.
- ☐ Monsignor King opens in a new facility provided by the City of Denton
- ☐ 2015 PIT Count was completed in January 2015 providing a snapshot of homelessness in Denton County.
- ☐ 2nd Bridging the Gap Event was held in April 2015
- ☐ 100K Homes Pilot- The placement of 3-5 chronically homeless in housing. Using data collection from a count in November 2014 that survey the chronically homeless to determine who was most at risk of dying on the street a piloting program was developed using the housing first model. Pilot data and results could inform new practices in housing. If proven successful, it could be scaled to house even more.
- ☐ HUD Emergency Solutions Grant funding in 2015 was \$625,000 (2104-15) in Denton County. Funds supported Street Outreach, Homelessness Prevention, Rapid Rehousing and Emergency Shelter services.
- ☐ Veterans Summit in June of 2015 - Summit to look at how to better serve veterans
- ☐ Veteran Standown was held in October of 2015 – The event offered distribution of supplies and provided services to homeless veterans.
- ☐ Denton Housing Authority sets preferences for Section 8 Vouchers that included veterans and homeless.
- ☐ Community Presentations on homelessness
 - o City Council Meeting Homeless Presentation
 - o Rotary
 - o Charitable Clinics Coalition
- ☐ In the Media the Denton Record Chronicle featured many articles and multiple editorials in 2015 related to homelessness.
- ☐ The Wheeler Center opened in July of 2015. The center brings more transitional housing to the City of Denton and addition of more health care options in downtown.

- ☐ Street Outreach Barriers Report was issued. Report highlighted gaps and identified resources needed especially in areas like Lewisville.
- ☐ Diversion Training comes to Denton. Diversion training provided tools for case managers to seek out alternative options for those looking for shelter in an attempt to divert them becoming homeless.
- ☐ A planning grant was awarded by Texas Homeless Network. The grant paid a consultant to generate a report to help identify what kinds of housing Denton needs to prioritize. The report is currently in use by the housing workgroup of the Behavioral Health Leadership Team.
- ☐ Denton CAN/CATT (Coordinated Access) - This program is in the process of testing intake forms and HMIS data as a pilot for a front door or centralized entry point system that would tracking available resources and help the homeless and those at risk of homelessness access services.
- ☐ AbleDisAble group formed. This is a Peer-to-Peer network for the homeless. It meets weekly at Denton Community Health Clinic and provides peer support to participants.

Other Initiatives that have missions and work that have and do impact DCHC efforts.

- United Way's sponsored Denton County Citizen's Council on Mental Health and the Behavioral Health Leadership Team. This initiative is investing in the collective impact model. The team's work is bringing much needed exposure to the issue of comprehensive mental health for every person, which directly impacts those working with the chronically homeless including veterans. For example, one group is currently drafting a pilot project that would divert those exiting jails to mental health and other supportive services to prevent homelessness and jail recidivism.
- The Denton Mayor's Day of Concern for the Hungry on April 21, 2015 generated the largest collection of food yet raising 26,609 pounds and receiving financial contributions that benefited several agencies. The event expanded to reach more cities in Denton County and increased exposure to the issue of hunger.
- The Denton Hunger Coalition coordinated a monthly Mobile Pantry that continues to provide a much needed food distribution point to those in need. This event has the support of many volunteers. It also offers a quarterly community services event.
- Denton Housing Authority received approval by State and City for 320 Unit Affordable Housing Tax Credit Development. This development will increase the number of below market rent housing, and is specifically offering more units for Section 8 voucher. Location will impact some homeless sheltering in the currently undeveloped property. Breaking ground 2017.
- Journey to Dream increased awareness of Kyle's Place, a shelter for unaccompanied youth that is still in development. Organization took the lead on the first ever Youth Count.

LOOKING AHEAD to 2016 and BEYOND

The Denton County Homeless Coalition Members have already generated ideas for DCHC in 2016. In addition, when other opportunities come online in 2016 the DCHC should look to how it can impact those efforts. Here are a few examples:

☐ **Homeless Coordinator**

United Way has hired the Homeless Coordinator who will start Feb. 8, 2016 and will oversee a collective impact strategy for the community in efforts to significantly reduce homeless in Denton County.

☐ **Mayor's Task Force Reports**

The report tools are now available. These resources are for the Denton County Homeless Coalition to adopt and will inform it's planning for this year and beyond. How does DCHC lead and support other community-wide efforts?

☐ **Lewisville/South of the lake resources needed**

A task force was formed. The need for a shelter and how to best support the efforts to increase resources in all other areas of the county is on the list for long-term efforts but the short-term focus is to obtain specific resources including a refrigerator for storing meds, mail service, storage for personal items, transportation, and cell phones. Additional discussions might look at a mobile response team and/or more support for the existing Street Outreach Team.

☐ **Drop In Teen Shelter**

The program was discussed and any strategies will be considered once the data from the homeless youth count is collected and disseminated. Ideas for immediate resources included: lockers; showers; safe spaces to do homework and rest;

☐ **Monsignor King Shelter**

The shelter will soon come online with the goal of being open year-round. Current discussion centers on how to support the new shelter and ensure it is participating in homeless planning efforts while helping identify what gaps will it fill and where it fits in the current system.

☐ **Housing**

Since this idea originally centered on developing a program to build relationships with landlords, members also requested this be an outcome of homeless coordinator position. Related: Giving Hope, Inc. is planning a 'landlord type' event for March 31, 2016.

☐ **Communications**

DCHC could develop position statements on certain topics and should develop a media contact list. Related: Giving Hope, Inc's State of the Homeless Event will highlighting PIT Count results planned for April 28, 2016

☐ **Data Collection**

The PIT Count is DCHC's most well know data tool for understanding the number of homeless and current needs. There are opportunities from local universities to expand data collection efforts to better inform or work. Related: Open Data Data on March 6, 2016 will have a focus on using open data to solve a community problem. Homelessness will be featured.