

**2014 Entry Form**  
(Complete one for each entry.)

Fill out the entry name *exactly* as you want it listed in the program.

**Entry Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**HFA** \_\_\_\_\_

**Submission Contact** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

Qualified Entries must be received by **Tuesday, July 1, 2014**.

For more information about Qualified Entries, [click here to access the 2014 Entry Rules](#).

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page.

HFA \_\_\_\_\_

Entry Name \_\_\_\_\_

Communications	Homeownership	Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Report <input type="checkbox"/> Promotional Materials and Newsletters <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Empowering New Buyers <input type="checkbox"/> Home Improvement and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Multifamily Management <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Combating Homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> Housing for Persons with Special Needs
Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
<input type="checkbox"/> State Advocacy <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Technology	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO



Minnesota is proud of our innovative approach to ending homelessness and the results we've achieved so far. Our statewide effort began more than a decade ago with the bold goal of ending long-term homelessness in Minnesota by creating 4,000 permanent supportive housing opportunities for individuals, youth and families with long histories of homelessness. We completed that goal. We now have evidence that supportive housing is a cost-effective strategy, combining affordable housing with services that help people live more stable, productive lives - and it works.

We completed that goal earlier this year. Instead of doing a victory lap, we recommitted ourselves and reenergized the Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness. This innovative group, made up of 11 State Agency Commissioners and the Governor's Office, created and adopted [Heading Home: Minnesota's Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#). This two-year plan identifies 12 priority areas and the associated strategies and actions that state government will take, in partnership with the broader community, to prevent homelessness and create housing stability for Minnesotans.

### **The People**

The creation and implementation of *Heading Home: Minnesota's Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* demonstrates unprecedented collaboration between the 11 state agencies that make up the Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness. The agencies are: Corrections, Education, Employment and Economic Development, Health, Higher Education, Human Rights, Human Services, Housing, Public Safety, Transportation, and Veterans Affairs. The implementation of the plan is carried out by three teams: the Interagency Council (all 11 Agency Commissioners), the Senior Leadership Team (Deputy and Assistant Commissioners and key staff from the 11 agencies) and the Implementation Team (Program Managers and Program Staff).

In addition to the internal cross-agency work, the State Director and her team have engaged hundreds of stakeholders throughout Minnesota in both the creation and the implementation of the plan. These stakeholders include housing and service providers, business leaders, local government partners, philanthropic leaders, faith communities, and people experiencing homelessness themselves.

### **The Plan**

This action plan was developed using the framework of Results Based Accountability and has both a long-term vision and clear short-term actions. To guide the development of the action plan, the Council identified nine areas of opportunity that hold the greatest potential to create change.

These guiding principles are:

- Prevent homelessness, especially at transition points of youth and adult systems of care
- Reduce barriers and increase access to critical mainstream programs and services
- Improve the coordination and compatibility of existing resources
- Improve targeting of existing resources to ensure they are most effective
- Improve the quality and access to data to drive policy and better service delivery
- Reduce disparities through culturally responsible actions and approaches
- Increase investments in what we know works
- Align with and build on our work with Federal, local and tribal plans to end homelessness
- Increase public education, awareness and engagement

We used these nine guiding principles to develop the 12 Strategies and associated Action Steps of the plan. In addition to looking at homeless-specific resources to prevent and end homelessness, this plan

calls for increased access and effectiveness of larger systems, such as employment, transportation, childcare, and healthcare resources.

We made the implementation timeline short, two years, wanting to capitalize on the engagement, collaboration, and momentum generated while creating the plan. We know this plan is a large undertaking, but we are confident that working collectively we have tremendous potential to decrease and end homelessness across the State while also preventing homelessness.

Plan implementation began in January, 2014, and has two primary outcomes:

- Prevent and end homelessness for families with children and unaccompanied youth by 2020; and
- Finish the job of ending homelessness for Veterans and for people experiencing chronic homelessness by 2015

The initiative differs from previous efforts to address homelessness among Minnesotans, primarily because it establishes clear accountabilities for all 11 Commissioners and their staff. In addition, this effort is coordinating with other large efforts underway within the state, such as implementation of the Olmstead Plan and reducing health disparities.

### **Building the movement**

The momentum created by this plan has spurred other cross sector collaboration and successful outcomes:

- **The passage of \$100 million in new financial resources to preserve and create affordable and supportive housing**, the largest single commitment in Minnesota history. This underscores the bipartisan support for affordable housing and the trust the legislature has in Minnesota Housing.
- **Homes for All: An Alliance to House Minnesotans.** This collaboration between more than 100 organizations engaged in advocacy work to increase stable and affordable housing in Minnesota. **This alliance was integral to the success of the \$100 million housing bill – actually resulting in doubling the \$50 million amount requested by the Governor in his budget.** The Homes for All alliance has five goals:
  1. Strengthen the relationships between housing and homelessness groups.
  2. Coordinate legislative efforts to ensure greater effectiveness.
  3. Engage a broader constituency in common policy work.
  4. Increase the profile of housing in state and local elections.
  5. Create a plan for raising and allocating resources to address homelessness and ensure housing affordability.

This alliance was integral to the success of the \$100 million housing bill.

- **Partnering with the White House and other federal, state, and local partners to finish the job of ending Veteran's homelessness.**
  - Our latest point-in-time (one night) count identified 317 Veterans experiencing homelessness in Minnesota. This is down from nearly 600 a few years ago.
  - Our success has been driven by federal and state investments that have targeted Veterans who have been homeless the longest.

- The Mayors of Minneapolis and St. Paul joined a friendly Midwest competition to be the next metropolitan area to end Veteran's homelessness, since then this "challenge" has grown and the White House recently highlighted the effort which now includes over 77 Mayors and 4 Governors, including Governor Mark Dayton.

### **Keeping up the momentum**

Our two-year action plan includes actions that will make the greatest difference for the greatest number of people. We believe these strategic actions will bend the curves on homelessness down over the next two years and will continue that downward trend in the years to follow. We expect to fully implement this plan, learn what works and what needs improvements, and then create our next set of actions.

The Interagency Council structure is sustainable and has been recognized by state leaders as a model for how we can work on many key goals. This model has also ignited the interest of many private funders and foundation leaders who are investing in the work we are doing together. They are motivated by the interagency collaboration and see their role of providing private sector resources to leverage larger state systems innovation as the "sweet spot" of philanthropy.

While communities across the country are focused on efforts to prevent and end homelessness, few, states have the kind of true interagency collaboration that we have developed in Minnesota. Several staff and Governor's offices across the country have contacted us to talk about the way we have developed the Interagency Council and the action-oriented plan. We believe this model is innovative, replicable and scalable, and can be a path to collaborative change for other communities.





## Tackling the new front in homelessness: families

Article by: Editorial Board  
Star Tribune  
December 30, 2013 - 7:12 AM

In a season that craves good news, here's some: Minnesota is close to ending homelessness among veterans and other adults who have been without permanent shelter for many years — the so-called “chronic homeless.”

Putting a dependable roof over the heads of those vulnerable people was the seemingly audacious goal that Tim Pawlenty, then governor, set in January 2004. He said it would take a decade to meet the goal as he proposed state funding for 4,000 more units of a kind of housing then relatively new — supportive housing. It's the creative combination of affordable apartments with services to help residents manage disorders such as chemical dependency, mental illness and physical disability.

Despite a mean recession and variable political winds in the intervening years, a task force of state, local and philanthropic officials who have been leading the fight to end chronic homelessness [reported this month](#) that they are only slightly behind Pawlenty's timetable. They announced that the number of homeless veterans on any given night in 2013 has fallen below 350 and is on track to reach “functional zero” in 2015 — that is, less than 1 percent of all people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota, or no more than 100, whichever is fewer. (See the accompanying box for an explanation of what is meant by “ending homelessness.”) If that goal is met, Minnesota will be the first state in the nation to achieve it, the leaders said.

The chronically homeless population is larger, about 900. But it fell 17 percent in one year, from 2010 to 2011. Another big decline is expected next year as a result of the Affordable Care Act's extension of Medicaid to more low-income people, thereby improving access to the mental health treatment. A proposal for more state funding of supportive housing will come to the 2014 Legislature to help finish the job.

The rest of the report from the Minnesota homelessness front is not as rosy. A [Wilder Research triennial count](#) in 2012, released several months ago, found that while chronic homelessness is down, the total number of Minnesotans lacking reliable housing on any given night was 10,214, a 6 percent increase since 2009.

Even as outreach and supportive housing strategies are thinning the ranks of the long-term homeless, the economy and unstable family circumstances have been pushing more people out of permanent homes. It's telling that in the latest Wilder count, 46 percent of homeless people are under the age of 21, and the number of two-parent families experiencing homelessness was up 22 percent over 2009's figure. Young people are more at risk of homelessness than any other age cohort, the Wilder study noted.

But for them this season, there's good news, too. The state leaders who have made long strides combating chronic homelessness are turning their attention to families with children and unaccompanied youths. On Dec. 19, they announced a new goal: preventing and ending homelessness for families with children and unaccompanied youths by 2020.

Given the trend lines, that goal seems as big a stretch today as Pawlenty's goal for the chronically homeless did in 2004. But



Rachel Bean, an outreach worker with St. Stephen's Human Services, spoke recently with a homeless woman at the library.

Glen Stubbe, Star Tribune

### A goal's definition

“Ending homelessness means that if a family or individual does become homeless, we will have a crisis response system to assess their needs and quickly provide them the opportunity to access stable housing. It does not mean that no one will experience homelessness ever again.”

Source: “[Heading Home](#): Minnesota's Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness,” December 2013

Gov. Mark Dayton's administration has put top talent on the job — 11 agency heads plus gubernatorial chief of staff Tina Smith, orchestrated with the capable staff leadership of Cathy ten Broeke, the former Heading Home Hennepin director who became the state director to prevent and end homelessness a year ago.

They in turn have enlisted participation by leaders of city and county governments, schools and charities. Both Minneapolis Mayor-elect Betsy Hodges and St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman took part in the new goal's unveiling at Jackson Elementary School in St. Paul. That setting, and the participation of Education Commissioner Brenda Cassellius, underscored that schools will be asked to step up their outreach to homeless youths and families.

Hope lies in the promise that those diverse entities will coordinate their efforts as never before to execute a common strategy. Minnesota has not lacked for do-gooder efforts to combat social ills like homelessness. But too often those well-meaning efforts have failed to employ evidence of what works to hone their strategies, or to consider how their work might blend with others in useful synergy. Making data about results readily available in dashboard format is among the tactics the new homelessness strategy promises.

The new strategy includes a big request — \$100 million — for more supportive and affordable housing in the 2014 Legislature's bonding bill. That amount is as audacious as the goal it serves and may be more than can be achieved in one legislative session. But as state Housing Commissioner Mary Tingerthal noted, state agencies and their partners "can do a better job with existing programs, targeting them differently, redirecting funds to something that might have a higher value." The Dayton administration's recognition of that opportunity is more good news for the homeless — and for taxpayers.

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<http://www.startribune.com/opinion/editorials/237602771.html>

Exhibit 2

# MINNPOST

*This content is made possible by the generous sponsorship support of The Minneapolis Foundation.*

## Homeless for 25 years, finally a room of his own

By Cynthia Boyd | 01/16/14

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MinnPost photo by Bill Kelley

Lorenzo Vasquez: "They hand you the keys to your room; it's like keys to a Rolls Royce."

Living in his car, sleeping on buses, hunkering down with friends, for at least 25 years Lorenzo Vasquez had no place to call his own.

Now at 61, he proudly unlocks the door to his very own place, a single room he's outfitted with his own stuff.

For him, the room at American House on the edge of Mears Park in downtown St. Paul is not only the end to homelessness but also a springboard to a new life and a steady job as a hairdresser.

“They hand you the keys to your room; it’s like keys to a Rolls Royce,” he said.

For state officials, Vasquez is a symbol of success on a continuing path toward housing Minnesota’s homeless.

That’s a goal they see as more attainable since last month when the Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness — a team of representatives from 11 state agencies running the gamut from Corrections to Housing to Human Services, Transportation and Veterans Affairs — with Gov. Mark Dayton’s support announced their coordinated “Heading Home: [Minnesota’s Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.](#)”

Drafted in consultation with community stakeholders, the plan combines homelessness prevention strategies and housing construction.

The effort isn’t “just about ending homelessness but changing the systems that have a role in preventing it,” explained Cathy ten Broeke, the state’s director to Prevent and End Homelessness. The problem is there are barriers to systems working together, she said.

### **‘Disconnect’ between programs**

Too often, ten Broeke said, there’s a “disconnect” between programs that would enable people to make stable lives. For instance, a person lands a job but needs child care to go to work and child-care financial assistance doesn’t kick in until two weeks after the employer expects the new hire to be on the job.

It’s that kind of “disconnect” that state agencies will be looking for and recommending administrative or legislative solutions for, ten Broeke said.

The plan has the goal of preventing and ending homelessness for families with children and for young adults on their own by 2020 and for veterans and people experiencing chronic homelessness by 2015.

Strategies to reach these goals extend beyond stable housing to include “decent paying” jobs and improved personal health.

Council co-chair Mary Tingerthal, who is also the state’s housing commissioner, praises the new plan. She says it builds on a successful, seven-year collaboration between the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency and businesses that last year met the goal of creating 4,000 such housing units. Yet she stresses the need for more funding.

Though her agency had asked the governor for \$100 million in bonding to be used for affordable housing projects, Dayton Wednesday asked legislators for half that amount.

Still, Tingerthal said the request shows Dayton's recognition of the need for affordable housing, accounts for 5 percent of his bonding bill and would "build, preserve and rehabilitate more than 2,000 housing units across the state."

Also Wednesday, [Homes for All](#), a coalition of groups advocating for the homeless, announced it has legislative sponsors for a bill requesting \$100 million.

### **Psychological support**

For Vasquez, who in December earned back a state license to cut and style hair and perform other cosmetology services, a home in American House is more than private space to call his own and communal space to cook, eat and bathe. It is also the source of financial and psychological support.

Vasquez says that at American House, which features 69 sleeping rooms and is owned by [Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative](#), he has found hope. The nonprofit, supported by 50 religious congregations, owns properties across the Twin Cities that provide stable housing for more than 700 men, women and children and has plans for more such housing. Many sites, like American House, provide supportive services as well.

For Vasquez, hope came in the person Suzanne Jerrett, who works at American House, as well as a state jobs counselor who believed in him and mental-health professionals and others.

"I try to work on people's strengths," said Jerrett, downplaying Vasquez' praise of her. She describes her job as providing services to persons who have had a mental-health diagnosis.

"People come down and talk with me about what it is they have going on, and if they don't know the resources or how to get the resources, we discuss it and come up with a plan," said Jerrett, who is employed by [People Incorporated](#), which provides a spectrum of services to promote independence for people with mental illness. Funding for services and housing comes from [Group Residential Housing](#), a state-financed program aimed at reducing and preventing homelessness for low-income adults.

Vasquez said he has had 30 years of therapy to work through a dysfunctional-family history and to deal with depression. He describes a troubled childhood, beginning with his birth to a 16-year-old mother and living in the old "West Side flats" in St. Paul in a house with no electricity or running water and dirt floors.

"I was pretty much passed around as a kid," he said, describing how his mother left him to live with his grandfather and how he was afraid of his father.

### **Loss of self-confidence**

Vasquez says he suffered heartache, anger and loss of self-confidence as well as learning problems in school. His mother came to reclaim him, but brought along an alcoholic stepfather, he said.

Though he had some college, he ran into road blocks. “I never was groomed to be an achiever. I didn’t have job ethics,” he said. Still, years ago he worked in hair salons before losing his cosmetology license.

Three years ago he came to American House where he was hooked up to a wide network of services and professional guidance, including the tuition money to return to cosmetology school and the fees to take the state licensing examination.

“Basically, I’m back in the fashion industry,” he said, suggesting he will look for a job cutting and styling hair or perhaps as a freelance makeup artist. Maybe, he said, he’ll have his own makeup line.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**



**Cynthia Boyd**

Cynthia Boyd, MinnPost's Community Sketchbook reporter, covers poverty, homelessness, mental health, and other topics related to the social and economic challenges facing communities. Community Sketchbook is sponsored by The Minneapolis Foundation. Email Cynthia at [cboyd@minnpost.com](mailto:cboyd@minnpost.com).

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<http://www.minnpost.com/community-sketchbook/2014/01/homeless-25-years-finally-room-his-own>

Exhibit 3

<http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/blog/colleen-oconnor-toberman/new-goals-help-end-homelessness>



## New goals to help end homelessness

By Colleen OConnor Toberman, Minnesota 2020

January 08, 2014

Our frigid winter weather reminds us all (yet again) that thousands of Minnesotans are homeless or without a safe, stable place to live. While shelters and service providers have stepped in to save lives by offering 24-hour warming space and other expanded help, the ultimate fix lies in larger structural changes. State government isn't (and can't be) the only entity engaged in ending homelessness, but its programs and policies play a significant role in the life of every Minnesotans.

To that end, the Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness recently pulled together the commissioners of 11 state agencies, ranging from Education to Transportation, and created a statewide [Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#). The Council identified twelve key actions to take over the next two years, each with deadlines, accountabilities, and measurable goals. The list includes:

1. Increase investments in affordable housing and rental assistance.
2. Create new supportive housing opportunities for the most vulnerable families experiencing homelessness.
3. Evaluate current workforce training, employment and education programs.
4. Identify, assess and improve key mainstream programs by each state agency that could prevent and end homelessness for families and individuals.
5. Maximize the use of health care funding and services to promote improved health outcomes through stable housing.
6. Work with corrections agencies and community providers to facilitate access to stable housing for offenders supervised in the community.
7. End homelessness for veterans on a veteran-by-veteran basis.
8. Improve the transitions of young people from foster care, juvenile corrections, or other systems.
9. Identify homeless and highly mobile students and connect them and their families with services.

10. Prioritize funding for efforts most successful at improving housing stability for communities disproportionately impacted by homelessness.
11. Develop a statewide Coordinated Assessment process and tools.
12. Improve data quality and access.

Most of these actions aren't about reinventing the wheel, but instead about taking a good hard look at how well current programs serve those with housing needs. When resources exist, are they easily accessible? Where are the gaps in service? What initiatives have proven their efficacy and can be expanded?



We might see the fruit of this effort borne out in some promising ways. As one example, many people experiencing or at risk of homelessness suffer from significant physical-, chemical-, and mental-health issues. Medicaid can cover treatment for these needs, but it can be difficult for service providers to get their clients enrolled and to handle the administrative work necessary to recoup the cost of their services. Providing Medicaid support to these service providers may improve the care they can give to their clients.

Another enormous issue is that of youth homelessness. [Wilder Research](#) has found that 58 percent of homeless Minnesota youth have spent time in out-of-home placements such as foster care, treatment, or juvenile detention. Because so many homeless youth have been connected to these institutions, reaching them through these institutions seems logical. The council has set a goal to better identify which of these youth are most at-risk of homelessness and to connect each of them to a comprehensive “transition team” by no later than age 16.

Public assistance programs are also on the Council's radar. Supports such as SNAP, child-care assistance, and health insurance are tremendously important. But accessing and maintaining coverage can be tough for someone lacking stable housing. For instance, a lack of stable mailing address makes it hard for people to receive and return required paperwork. Some programs require in-person visits to county offices, so transportation can pose a real barrier. The Council has committed to assessing these access issues and finding more effective ways to serve those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

The examples above are just a few of those listed in the new plan. They underscore what we already know: that ending homelessness is possible and within our reach. We have a solid foundation of programs and services with successful track records. In the next two years, we should see even more positive progress as the Council's plan moves forward.

## Minnesota 2020