

# VIRGINIA PENINSULA MAYORS AND CHAIRS

## THE VIRGINIA PENINSULA REGIONAL PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS



**2013 Update**  
**Activities and Accomplishments**

## UPDATE SUMMARY:

Since the adoption of the *Virginia Peninsula Regional Plan to End Homelessness* in 2009, considerable changes at the federal, state, regional and local levels have greatly impacted the organizations and programs working to end homelessness on the Peninsula and the ways that we do business.

At the forefront of change has been the passage and initial implementation of the federal HEARTH Act in 2009. This new law was the first major piece of legislation affecting homelessness efforts since the McKinney-Vento Act of 1987. Using evidence and data gathered by projects and Continuum of Care Councils across the United States, the federal government identified the most effective methods of reducing homelessness, while at the same time maximizing declining financial resources, and recognizing the difficult economic situation the country faced. The HEARTH Act included the following components:

- Consolidation of HUD's competitive grant programs;
- Creation of a Rural Housing Stability Assistance Program;
- Changes to HUD's definition of homelessness and chronic homelessness;
- Simplified matching requirements;
- Increases in prevention resources and focus; and,
- Increases in emphasis on performance.

It is a simple list, which on the surface seemed minor. However, the impact at all levels of government and the community-based agencies has been significant. One major shift over the past five years has been an increasing emphasis on preventing homelessness from occurring in the first place to an individual or family. It has long been recognized that from an economic standpoint, it costs considerably less money to prevent an eviction from taking place than to house a person or family in an emergency shelter. From the homeless person's or family's standpoint, the stress and negative consequences of homelessness and shelter are greatly increased by the eviction as well as from time spent in a shelter environment. This was well known at the time the Regional 10 Year Plan was adopted and included as a major objective. What has changed is the funding level for prevention efforts. Federal and state homeless grant funds now allow for and encourage the use of the funds for prevention activities – paying off past due housing debt, avoiding evictions, and paying for a limited number of months of rental assistance.

Along with an emphasis on prevention, best practices have shown that quickly moving people experiencing homelessness into permanent housing is much more effective and less costly than keeping people for extended periods of time in shelters or transitional housing. From the data collected over many years, transitional housing, although well-intentioned, has been shown to be a generally failed model for addressing homelessness. The evidence-based model, known as “Rapid Re-housing”, aims to have people experiencing homelessness moved into permanent housing within one month – less than 30 days – from the initial homelessness episode. This requires service providers to identify the individual/family, assess their needs, facilitate access to appropriate services, locate and secure appropriate and affordable housing, and initiate income and benefits applications in under 30 days.

The emphasis on Prevention and Rapid Re-housing reduces the reliance on more costly facility-based emergency housing beds and the ever-decreasing funding for costly and less

effective “transitional housing”. In 2012 the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) redesigned their financial support for transitional housing programs in order to end it, while expanding support for both Prevention and Rapid Re-housing efforts.

In order to achieve the daunting new HEARTH requirements, it was recognized that providers across the United States would need to coordinate at higher levels than they had been, more greatly depend upon data-driven outcomes, and obtain additional resources and technical assistance to implement the new regulations and resources.

During the recent and difficult economic period, the Peninsula, through the Mayors and Chairs Commission on Homelessness, applied for and received \$727,000 in federal stimulus funds for a regionally coordinated Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program. The implementation of this project, along with a direct HPRP award of \$624,000 to the City of Newport News, allowed the Peninsula a new forum to acquire and implement the new best practices and incorporate the lessons-learned to improve regional outcomes around rapid re-housing and accelerate shelter exits. This experience led to favorably positioning the Peninsula to receive one of the new regional DHCD Homeless Prevention Program grants for \$250,000.

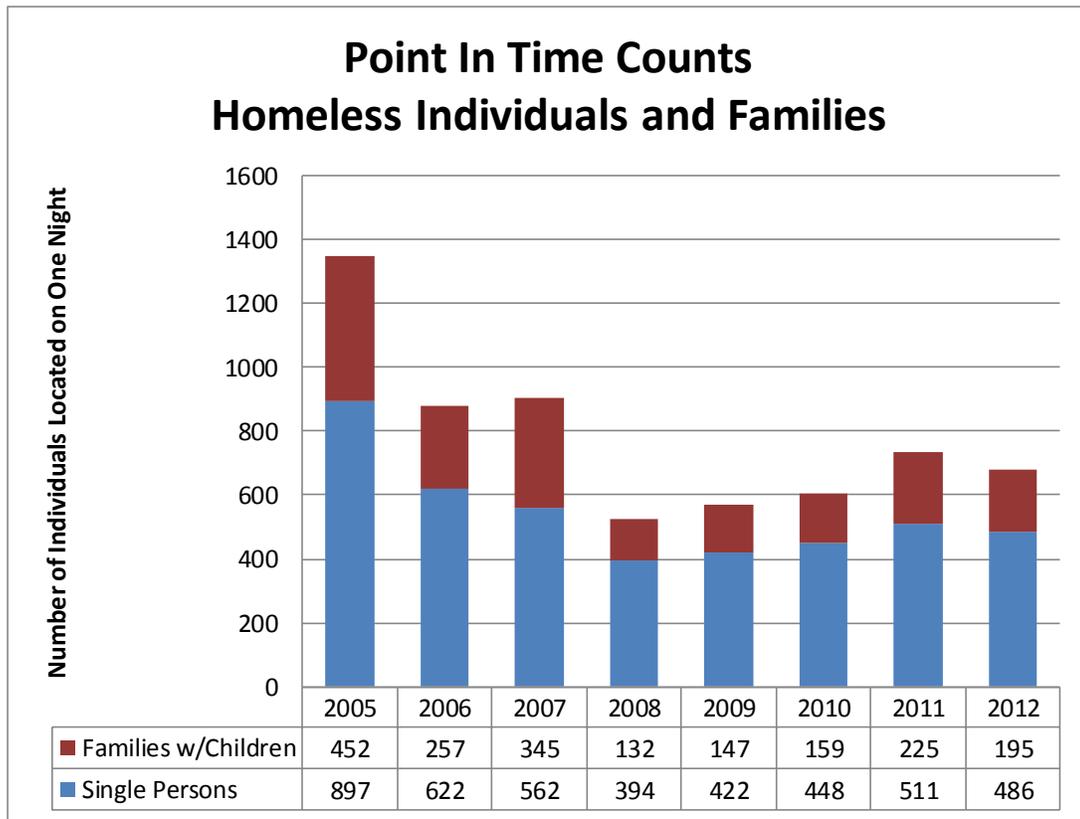
Progress has been made on the Virginia Peninsula in all major Strategic Objectives:

- ✓ Prevention of homelessness has become a more widespread way of doing business, as a means to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness and to increase efficient use of limited financial resources.
- ✓ Additional permanent supported housing units have been added to the regional inventory.
- ✓ Coordination among providers has led to national recognition of the Peninsula’s Services Coordination and Assessment Network (SCAAN) as a best practice.
- ✓ The Continuum of Care and Mayors and Chairs Commission on Homelessness have contracted with the Planning Council to administer and support the two entities for the first time with full-time, dedicated staff and maintenance of the region’s efforts and plan, thus helping ensure continued federal funding.
- ✓ The Task Force on Homelessness has been completely restructured to focus on homelessness and the initiatives under the new HEARTH Act to include a new name: the Greater Virginia Peninsula Homelessness Consortium (GVPHC).
- ✓ Approved Standards of Care have been adopted and implemented by the Greater Virginia Peninsula Homelessness Consortium thereby creating a standard of quality and an expectation of outcome achievement by those entities receiving public funds.
- ✓ Data collection and analysis is achieving more meaningful foundations for decision making and resource allocation through the expansion of participants in the regional Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- ✓ Creation of a new homelessness web site was created for the Greater Virginia Peninsula Homelessness Consortium through the efforts of the Planning Council staff working on behalf of the region through the Commission’s contract.

These and other activities have been achieved by focusing on the 5 Primary Goals in the Regional Plan by the jurisdictions and providers dedicated to ending homelessness on the Virginia Peninsula. Considerable work remains to further reduce and end homelessness on the Virginia Peninsula. However, by focusing efforts on the objectives of the 10 Year Plan, the Peninsula has positioned itself to take advantage of the new regulations and funding streams that will assist the regional partners to continue to achieve positive outcomes.

## Accomplishments and Activities:

Of particular note has been the decreasing numbers of homeless persons identified during the Greater Virginia Peninsula Homelessness Consortium annual, 24-hour Point in Time Counts. Between 2005 and 2012, there was an overall decrease of over 50% in the number of homeless people found and counted on the single-night in January count. During this time period, all categories and subpopulations recorded a decrease in numbers, including those with mental illnesses, chronic homeless, veterans, those affected by HIV/AIDs, and victims of domestic violence. The decreasing trend continued, in spite of an extremely challenging economic environment.



Area providers point to the availability of federal stimulus funds, such as the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program grants, as the reason for their continuing success in reducing the number of people experiencing homelessness on the Peninsula during the recent recession.

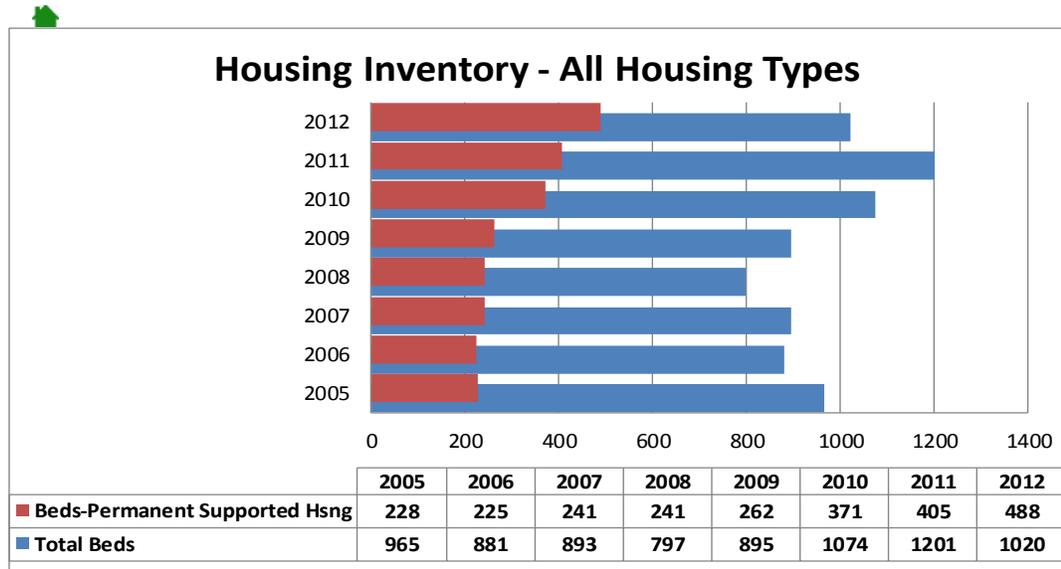
Using the 5 Primary Goals of the Framework, the items following illustrate some of the accomplishments of the past couple of years by various partners – including the Mayors and Chairs Commission on Homelessness, the Greater Virginia Peninsula Homelessness Consortium (GVPHC), and service providers.

## Prevention:

- 🏠 Applied for, awarded, and successfully implemented a \$727,262 regional Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program through federal stimulus funding, in addition to a City of Newport News HPRP grant of \$624,000.
- 🏠 A regional Resource Team was developed to help manage and implement the regional HPRP funds – ensuring accountability, monitoring progress, sharing and assisting with difficult cases, providing for quality management, and data accuracy.
- 🏠 During the two years of HPRP funding, almost 1,600 individuals and households were assisted with prevention or rapid re-housing assistance.
- 🏠 Over 575 persons and/or households were prevented from becoming homeless during this period.
- 🏠 In 2012, the GVPHC used its experience to apply for and implement regional programs, successfully being awarded a state Homeless Prevention Program grant of \$250,000.

## Permanent Housing:

- 🏠 In 2008, HUD provided the region \$1,621,309 of Continuum of Care grants, of which \$1,364,913 was for permanent supported housing for projects. The 2012 allocation was \$1,871,052 with \$1,614,652 for permanent housing for homeless individuals and families.
- 🏠 The GVPHC increased permanent supported housing - 488 permanent supported housing beds for homeless individuals and families up from 262 in the 2009 Continuum of Care Statement – an 86% increase. The following chart illustrates the number of Permanent Supported Housing beds in the region as compared to the overall inventory that includes emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supported housing.
- 🏠 Established the first Housing Broker Team to work with landlords and tenants to prevent evictions and improve access to available housing. This began in Newport News using funds budgeted by the City of Newport News for this purpose.
- 🏠 Participated in the 50 Homes Peninsula as part of the 1,000 Homes for 1,000 Virginians campaign. As part of the national 100,000 Homes Campaign, GVPHC undertook a Vulnerability Registry Week. The 8 teams made up of over 70 community volunteers made contact with 233 homeless individuals, 182 of whom were surveyed. Using the Vulnerability Index, 60 of those surveyed had one or more of the At-Risk Indicators. The Goal is to have 50 of these individuals connected to housing and services by July, 2014. To date the GVPHC has housed 19 of these individuals in 15 households.
- 🏠 GVPHC submitted and was awarded a Homelessness Trust Fund contract through Ft. Monroe Base Closure process. Funding of approximately \$400,000 will become available in 2014.
- 🏠 Veterans on the Virginia Peninsula received additional permanent housing support through an increase in the rental subsidy known as VASH vouchers. In 2008 there were 140 VASH vouchers administered through the Hampton Redevelopment and Housing Authority. In 2012, there were 290 VASH vouchers. These vouchers operate similar to the Housing Choice Vouchers where the veteran pays 30% of their adjusted income for rent and the voucher pays the remaining 70%. In addition, VASH recipients receive case management from the VA.



## Coordinated Services:

- 🏠 Greater Williamsburg HELP was developed in 2009 to coordinate services in the northern part of the region.
- 🏠 SCAAN – Services Coordination and Assessment Network – is comprised of various agencies that provide a triage of assessment, referrals and responsible party actions for families and individuals in shelters in order to more quickly provide services and transition them out of shelters and into permanent housing. SCAAN was recognized by HUD’s federal consultant as a best practice.
- 🏠 A similar structure – Greater Williamsburg SCAAN was developed for Williamsburg, James City County and upper York County in 2011.
- 🏠 Adopted regional Standard of Care for services for all agencies participating in the GVPHC Task Force on Homelessness.
- 🏠 Greater Williamsburg Outreach Ministry created a winter emergency shelter/response.
- 🏠 PORT and A Nights Welcome expanded their winter sheltering weeks, 24 and 28 weeks respectively to better meet the needs of the homeless.
- 🏠 Held SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery) training for agencies in region through the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services.
- 🏠 Expanded the use of “Brown Bag” lunches to regional agencies, volunteers and interested individuals offering a wide variety of training topics, including: Crisis Intervention, Conflict Resolution, Veterans Initiatives, Motivational Interviewing, and Legal Aid. These training sessions help staff and volunteers better understand available resources and services as well as providing a forum for discussing needs and gaps in services.
- 🏠 Created a Community Connections Card for distribution to the homeless providing information on contacts for various community resources and services.
- 🏠 Created the first regional SOAR team in Virginia in 2012.
- 🏠 Hampton’s HELP has secured - and is developing - a Service Center to provide collaborative support services to homeless individuals and families.
- 🏠 Leadership Historic Triangle’s Hands Together was a one-day, one-stop access to a wide variety services and resources for the homeless in Williamsburg, James City County and upper York County, including: haircuts, eye exams, transportation, food, & social services.

## Education and Public Awareness:

- 🏠 GVPHC was reorganized with an overall structure, committees, and mission that focus on preventing and ending homelessness on the Peninsula.
- 🏠 A new website for homeless-specific information was developed through the Planning Council and funded by the Commission on Homelessness.
- 🏠 The Commission initiated a Video Production committee that developed an educational piece on homelessness – information, costs, and solutions. This effort was funded by the City of Newport News using its video production department featuring area agencies.
- 🏠 Created a weekly GVPHC email news source, provided through the Planning Council contracted support staff.
- 🏠 Expanded the use of “Brown Bag” lunches to regional agencies, volunteers and interested individuals offering a wide variety of training topics, including: Crisis Intervention, Conflict Resolution, Veterans Initiatives, Motivational Interviewing, and Legal Aid.
- 🏠 Created a Community Connections Card for distribution to the homeless providing information on contacts for various community resources and services.
- 🏠 Participated in the 50 Homes Peninsula as part of the 1,000 Homes for 1,000 Virginians campaign. Since this was part of the national 100,000 Homes Campaign, GVPHC had access to a nationally- funded array of educational and training materials available to support the regional effort. The Eastern US Field Coordinator, Linda Kaufman, with Community Solutions provided technical assistance and was the Keynote Speaker at the Community Debriefing. The effort brought together area volunteers, college students, interested citizens, elected and appointed officials, and program staffs for a week-long street outreach effort culminating in a Community Debriefing. The debriefing included press coverage and a commitment by Ferguson Enterprises for \$250,000 over 5 years towards the regional homelessness efforts.

## Systems Improvements:

- 🏠 First and foremost, in 2009 the region adopted *The Virginia Peninsula Regional Plan to End Homelessness*. This may seem a minor activity; however, the formal adoption of this plan by the six localities was the key for ensuring that the HUD Continuum of Care funds would continue supporting existing programs and allow for the creation of new permanent supported housing beds. The loss of points received in the annual regional application by not having an adopted 10 Year Plan risked placing the projects supported by the then \$1.5 million under the funding level.
- 🏠 The Commission on Homelessness contracted with The Planning Council to assist in regional integration of HMIS and expansion of the user base. The region now has 47 HMIS user licenses – up from 24 in 2009.
- 🏠 The Commission identified potential new users and paid for initial costs of 10 additional HMIS licenses through The Planning Council contract.
- 🏠 The Continuum of Care Council voted to reorganize with a focus on preventing and ending homelessness. The new structure and new name – The Greater Virginia Peninsula Homelessness Consortium (GVPHC) – is more in line with HEARTH Act requirements. Subcommittees were refocused to address key goals within the federal goals to end homelessness.
- 🏠 Through the GVPHC, all state and federally-funded agencies are on-line and using the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to enter current

information on homeless individuals and families served. The HMIS Administrator prepares reports on data quality, provides training to users and interested parties, prepares data reports for the Mayors and Chairs Commission on Homelessness and the GVPHC.

- 🏠 Incorporated state funded agencies in Program Monitoring Committee to improve and align outcomes with HUD funded programs. This includes DHCD Emergency Solutions Grants, Homeless Prevention Program grants, and Homeless Solutions Grant recipients.
- 🏠 The faith communities in the Upper Peninsula created the Greater Williamsburg Outreach Ministry (GWOM) to help address homelessness in this part of the region. One of its three core tasks is “Systemic Change”.

## Challenges:

The Peninsula is experiencing the loss of public funding support, as is most localities in the U.S. Specifically, FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Program funds have decreased significantly. In 2010, the Peninsula received a combined Hampton and Newport News FEMA allocation of \$173,182. In 2013, the combined allocation was only \$62,705. Due to decreases in the federal budget, FEMA allocations were based upon unemployment rates. The good news was that Hampton and Newport News had lower unemployment rates than the majority of US cities. The bad news was that because of these lower unemployment rates, both cities lost their FEMA allocations and only receives a small amount of balance of state FEMA funds.

Additional challenges that service providers face are the ever-changing state and federal guidelines that have been implemented over the past two years. Some funding programs have been combined while others were eliminated. While the ultimate goal is to reinforce and support community-wide collaboration and transparency, it has created considerably more work for participants in the continuum to not only understand and work within the new framework, but to also create new evaluation tools and standards of care with which to operate programs.

# **ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**2009 – 2013**

## Strategy 1: Prevention – Close the Front Door

**Objective: Reduce the numbers of people experiencing homeless by preventing evictions, obtaining appropriate and affordable housing, developing strength based skills.**

Strategy	Original Action Steps Proposed	Action/Accomplishments
<b>Coordinated Prevention Resources Team (PRT)</b>	❖ Initiate regional <b>Prevention Resources Team (PRT)</b>	✓ Created Resource Team for the regional HPRP funds with 6 entities contracted with through M+C Commission. ✓ Applied for and awarded regional DHCD HPRP grant for \$727,262 for 2 years ✓ Applied for and awarded NN HPRP grant for \$624,000 ✓ Applied for and awarded \$250,000 regional DHCD Homelessness Prevention Program grant
	❖ Identify major prevention/ intervention funding sources and agencies	
	❖ Create sub-regional Prevention Resources Teams that can coordinate sub-regional funds to focus on total solutions for individual and family crises vs. “band-aid” and disconnected approaches	
<b>Keeping Families Together Initiative</b>	❖ Initiate core group to identify major needs and costs related to reunifying families separated by work or housing or homelessness	✓ Williamsburg DSS is successfully using TANF funding to assist in housing temporarily homeless families. ✓ The Mayors and Chairs Commission held an information-sharing meeting with area departments of human services on using existing funding sources for homeless families
	❖ Coordinate efforts with PRT to effectively use funds	
	❖ Identify less traditional funding for possible use for prevention, such as CSA and CDBG funds to fill gaps	
<b>Correctional Discharge Planning – Prevent Homelessness from Jails by Developing Local Discharge Protocols</b>	❖ Establish regional <b>Correctional Discharge Task Force</b> with representatives from local jails in region and housing providers	✓ Aligned GVPHC efforts with newly created state Re-entry Councils. ✓ Have members on Re-entry Councils. ✓ Re-entry Council reps attend GVPHC meetings and report on progress.
	❖ Document current discharge plans/processes	
	❖ Identify and evaluate barriers to housing upon discharge	
	❖ Review best practices for discharge planning/incorporate in protocols	
<b>Policy Changes – Work with Systems Change Group on Effective Prevention Policies</b>	❖ Correctional TF to meet regularly to evaluate data on post-protocol activities and effectiveness	✓ Attended DHCD Input Sessions to advocate for policy/procedural changes to regulations.
	❖ Identify limitations or restrictions in funding sources counter to effective prevention of homelessness. Policies that may need change include the requirements for “pay or quit” notices, limits on use of funds for a household	
<b>Build Skills and Resources of Individuals and Families to Reduce Vulnerability to Homelessness</b>	❖ Develop skill-based curriculum targeting areas of vulnerability: home care, budgeting/money management, employment interview skills, etc.	✓ GVPHC members have attended training sessions on Housing Focused Case Management & Critical Time Intervention to develop stronger housing skills. ✓ Income & employment outcomes are monitored via HMIS & have encouraged agency sponsored skills training.
	❖ Identify appropriate core providers for skill training	
	❖ Tie useful “reward” to successful completion of curriculum, such as free checking for money management course, etc.	

## Strategy 2: Permanent Housing – Open the Back Door

**Objective: Increase affordable housing opportunities for various homeless populations.**

Strategy	Original Action Steps Proposed	Action/Accomplishments
<b>Implement Housing First, Rapid Re-housing Models/Hsng Priorities</b>	❖ Develop/initiate projects using Housing First, Rapid Exit, and Rapid Re-housing models as best practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ HUD supported housing projects have been implemented with Housing First/Rapid Rehousing strategies.</li> <li>✓ Using HMIS-length of time homelessness &amp; in shelters is monitored &amp; reviewed - outcomes data show decreasing lengths of time homeless.</li> </ul>
<b>Increase the Number of New Affordable Housing Units in the Region</b>	❖ Create an <b>Affordable Housing Inventory</b> that is web-based to more quickly house individuals and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The number of permanent support housing beds has increased from 262 in 2009 to 488 in 2012.</li> <li>✓ After reviewing existing housing inventory, GVPHC encouraged the use of the VHDA sponsored Virginia Housing Search data base as having the most current information on existing housing options.</li> <li>✓ GVPHC completes and submits to HUD annual housing inventory charts as part of the CoC requirements.</li> <li>✓ Using HUD CoC funding to focus new projects on increasing permanent supported housing beds.</li> <li>✓ New affordable housing also created by HNNCSB and HDCHR.</li> </ul>
	❖ Establish pro rata targets for housing units based upon homeless populations	
	❖ Identify/reduce local governmental regulatory barriers to develop affordable housing in each jurisdiction	
	❖ Create a streamlined process for developing affordable units that are part of the 10-Year Plan	
	❖ Work with Education/PR committee to promote the development of housing tied to the 10-Year Plan	
<b>Establish Housing Broker Teams</b>	❖ Establish <b>Housing Broker Teams</b> - trained housing counselors to work with & between landlords & tenants to prevent evictions & create new housing opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The City of NN created a Housing Broker Team that works with local landlords as well as individuals and families who need housing.</li> <li>✓ Prevention and Rapid Rehousing funded agencies also working with landlords to create better housing linkages.</li> </ul>
	❖ Develop resource list of collaborative landlords	
<b>Establish Sustainable Housing or Homelessness Funding Sources</b>	❖ Establish a team or committee to evaluate local funding options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ GVPHC after reorganization reinstated the Housing Committee to continually review existing and potential housing.</li> <li>✓ GVPHC Housing Committee has been working on a Housing Barriers Assessment to use with the Centralized Intake system to more quickly target appropriate housing for homeless individuals/families.</li> <li>✓ Ft. Monroe Base Closure proposals submitted &amp; approved.</li> </ul>
	❖ Evaluate current mechanisms for establishing regional funding sources	
	❖ Work with Fort Monroe Base Closure Board to identify potential for Homelessness Trust Fund	
<b>Establish Regional or Sub-regional Housing Support Centers</b>	❖ Identify needs to be met – designate core services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The development of Centers has been replaced by the more regional “No Wrong Door” use of collaborative prevention &amp; rapid rehousing funded participating agencies.</li> <li>✓ Developing Centralized Intake system to also create better access to appropriate services vs. Center-based services.</li> </ul>
	❖ Identify potential sites for Centers	
	❖ Identify potential funding sources	
	❖ Sign MOU with participating agencies	
	❖ Recruit volunteer base for hospitality and services	

### Strategy 3: Appropriate and Coordinated Individualized Services – No Wrong Door

**Objective: Services are in place and coordinated among and between agencies that meet the needs of homeless individuals and families that increase their personal and support systems that reduce the vulnerability of people to episodes of homeless.**

Strategy	Original Action Steps Proposed	Action/Accomplishments
<b>Establish Coordinated Standards of Care for Services</b>	❖ Review samples of standards – other communities/states	✓ GVPHC Standards of Care were researched, developed and adopted, 2010. ✓ Programs funded by HUD used Standards of Care for reviews by peer agencies on south side Hampton Roads. ✓ SOC are used as a guide for agencies interested in applying for funding.
	❖ Develop and adopt standards appropriate for region	
	❖ Develop mechanism/tool for evaluating organizations/projects according to standards	
	❖ Use standards to guide decisions for funding	
	❖ Communicate with funding entities to prioritize funding for organizations that meet or exceed Standards	
<b>Improve Exit Strategies for Individuals/Families in Shelters – Rapid Exit through Coordinated Services</b>	❖ Create SCAT – Shelter Coordination and Assessment Team to improve service coordination & case management to quicken exit from shelters	✓ Reorganized SCAT to Services Coordination and Assessment Network (SCAAN ) to provide triage and assessment of all homeless individuals and families, not only those in shelter. ✓ SCAAN meetings are now held every two weeks in Hampton. ✓ SCAAN upper peninsula was created to better serve homeless and reduce some staff travel time and expense. ✓ SCAAN is the lead in developing a regional Coordinated Intake Form & process to improve response to individual/family homelessness. ✓ A proposal to fund the Coordinated Intake system is being developed. ✓ Exit data is constantly monitored/reported on for Rapid Rehousing exit strategy improvements and outcomes as required by HUD and DHCD. ✓ Rapid Rehousing funding from DHCD, HSG and ESG used to improve exit strategies and targets from emergency shelter programs.
	❖ Identify lead agency for each individual or family in shelter	
	❖ Hold regular SCAT “staffings” with all relevant service agencies to expedite service connections and referrals	
	❖ Monitor HMIS participation outcomes	
	❖ Develop appropriate funding support for services	
<b>Expedite Benefits</b>	❖ Have more agencies trained in SOAR	✓ GVPHC sponsored SOAR training, April 2011. ✓ GVPHC created first regional SOAR Team in Virginia, 2012.
	❖ Improve communication with SS Office on SOAR	
<b>Establish Regional/ Sub-regional Day Service Centers (see Prevention)</b>	❖ Establish Coordinated Comprehensive Day Center not “owned” by any one group	✓ The cities of Hampton and Newport News created a high level team to evaluate the need for and siting of a day service center. ✓ HELP secured site for the HELP Center in Hampton and began renovations, 2012. ✓ HELP expanded dental services through the use of a mobile van. ✓ The Community Free Clinic was created in downtown Newport News. ✓ Hands Together Workshop in Historic Triangle for homeless to access services and resources in the upper Peninsula.
	❖ Place for showers, some food, washers/dryers, meeting space, volunteers, agencies, clothing, etc.	
	❖ Agencies have shared time and space to engage/provide services	

## Strategy 4: Education and Public Awareness – Continuum of Care and Commitment

**Objective: Throughout and between participating jurisdictions there exists a focused commitment to ending homelessness with the information in place to communicate services and resources and reduce the misinformation about homelessness to various stakeholders and participants.**

Strategy	Original Action Steps Proposed	Action/Accomplishments
<b>Develop Plan Administration Responsibility</b>	❖ Identify responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Mayors and Chairs Commission tasked with adoption by localities of 10 Year Plan, adopted November, 2009.</li> <li>✓ Mayors and Chairs Commission funded contract with Planning Council to assist GVPHC administer Continuum and 10 Year Plan.</li> <li>✓ Contract funded by all 6 jurisdictions has been renewed annually.</li> <li>✓ Continuum of Care Council was reorganized to improve administration and focus on homelessness, 10 Year Plan objectives, and HEARTH Act requirements.</li> </ul>
	❖ Identify funding if and as required	
	❖ Hire or contract for services	
<b>Create Website Dedicated to Homelessness and 10-Year Plan</b>	❖ Develop website that provides information on programs, services, statistics, dispels myths, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Website created and continuously updated by Planning Council as part of contract.</li> <li>✓ Links to local, regional, state, and federal resources are on website.</li> <li>✓ Weekly E -Blasts are sent to all participants and connected to website.</li> </ul>
	❖ Provide links to the Regional Homelessness website on local government websites	
<b>Develop Education and Public Relations Information</b>	❖ Develop “branding” of participating agencies and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Periodic Updates are created by Planning Council for local jurisdictions, elected officials, and general public.</li> <li>✓ Cable video program was developed by the City of Newport News on Homelessness.</li> <li>✓ GVPHC joined Chamber of Commerce.</li> <li>✓ Created Community Connections card identifying homeless services and resources.</li> <li>✓ 50 Peninsula obtain media coverage as part of the 1000 Homes Campaign in addition to the use of nationally funded technical assistance, media resources, and toolkit.</li> <li>✓ Expanded the use of “Brown Bag” lunches to regional agencies, volunteers and interested individuals offering a wide variety of training topics, including: Crisis Intervention, Conflict Resolution, Veterans Initiatives, Motivational Interviewing, and Legal Aid.</li> </ul>
	❖ Develop educational material for agencies to help relate their programs and services to the needs of the homeless	
	❖ Create mechanism for linking local, regional, state, federal updates, reports, etc, & communicating with community	
	❖ Use local media resources for disseminating information, such as local access TV channels, websites, etc.	

## Strategy 5: Systems Improvements – A New Way of Doing Business

**Objective: Throughout and between participating jurisdictions there exists a focused, unified, and consistent commitment to ending homelessness and the data available to make well-informed decisions.**

Strategy	Original Action Steps Proposed	Action/Accomplishments
<b>Political Commitment</b>	❖ Adopt 10-Year Plan	✓ 10 Year Plan was adopted November, 2009.
	❖ Designate a Guiding Body – responsible for overseeing the implementation and monitoring of the 10-Year Plan components	✓ The Mayors & Chairs Commission was formally created/funded by the 6 localities. ✓ The “Ten Essentials” were incorporated into plan.
	❖ Incorporate “The Ten Essentials” as a planning framework-see appendices	✓ The GVPCCC reorganized to provide greater focus on homelessness becoming the Greater Virginia Peninsula Homeless Consortium – GVPHC.
	❖ Develop accountability measures and communications linkages	✓ GVPHC committees restructured to focus on 10 Year Plan Objectives – Housing, Coordinated Services, Project Monitoring, & HMIS. A new Leadership Team was structured around accountability and planning vs. developing meeting agendas.
<b>Expand Access to Homeless Management Information System – HMIS</b>	❖ Identify client level data & HUD data requirements	✓ Mayors and Chairs Commission funded additional HMIS licenses in region for smaller agencies – region is up to 50 user licenses from 24 in 2009.
	❖ Identify service level data indicators	✓ State housing agency required participation in HMIS to receive state funds.
	❖ Explore/adopt regional model for data management	✓ HMIS Committee meets regularly around data quality and data management.
	❖ Track participation	✓ HMIS data is regularly provided to Mayors and Chairs.
<b>Monitor Progress of 10-Year Plan</b>	❖ Fund licenses for participating agencies	
	❖ Designate responsible entity to monitor plan	✓ The Mayors & Chairs Commission contracted with/funds the Planning Council to assist the GVPHC in monitoring plan & providing data/reports to M&C and GVPHC.
	❖ Develop tracking/monitoring system and tools	
	❖ Provide for regular reports to localities	✓ 10 Year Plan Updates submitted to HUD annually-requiring outcomes progress.
<b>Identify and Coordinate Services</b>	❖ Review, revise/augment plan components regularly	
	❖ Collect, compile and analyze services to end homelessness	✓ GVPHC restructured Coordinated Services Committee with an emphasis on SCAAN vs focusing on an inventory of services. ✓ Shelter Coordination and Assessment Team became Services Coordination and Assessment Network to collaboratively triage homeless cases, coordinate services and assess the effectiveness of those efforts to reduce homelessness. ✓ Upper Peninsula created SCAAN - Williamsburg, James City and upper York. ✓ Greater Williamsburg Outreach Mission was created in 2012 by the faith communities - a core task is to address systemic factors related to homelessness.
<b>Local Homeless Plans that Support and are Integrated with the Regional Plan</b>	❖ Incorporate “The Ten Essentials” into a local plan	✓ 10 Year Plan included Ten Essentials.
	❖ Integrate the goals and strategies in the Peninsula Plan into local strategic, comprehensive, and housing plans	✓ GVPHC outcomes, resources, plans and action items are incorporated into the Public Housing Authorities’ HUD Action Plans for Hampton and Newport News. ✓ GVPHC working with Peninsula Community Foundation to align plans & resources and collaborate around a 5-year corporate contribution. ✓ Greater Williamsburg Outreach Ministry founded with one of its core tasks “Systemic Change”.