Metropolitan Homelessness Commission

HOW'S NASHVILLE

·ENDING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS·

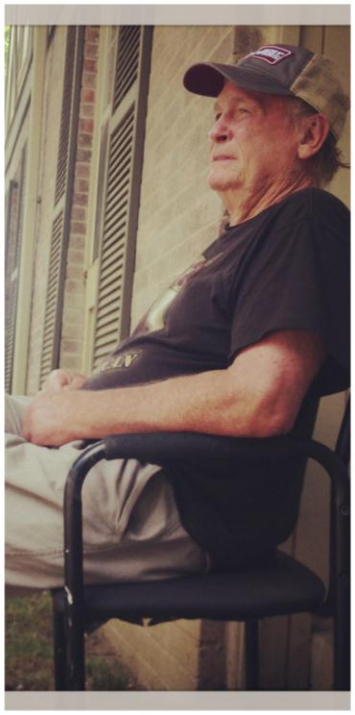
Progress Report – January to June 2013

In January, the Metropolitan Homelessness Commission hired Will Connelly as the new director. Will Connelly immediately aligned Nashville with the national 100,000 Homes Campaign. He outlined the goals for the Commission as follows:

- Build a Nashville campaign team;
- Clarify demand;
- Line up supply;
- Move people into housing; and
- Help people stay housed.

Six months later, the Commission has created a collaborative community effort called *How's Nashville* with the goal to end chronic homelessness in Nashville within the next four years.

The following report highlights the progress made by the Commission in the past six months.



Team Restructured:
The positions of development coordinator and special events coordinator were eliminated. An assistant director position was created. In addition, the outreach and housing coordinator position was filled.
The new team:
Will Connelly, director
Doug Hausken, assistant director
La Toya Carter, outreach and housing coordinator
Judith Tackett, communications coordinator

Boot Camps:
A team of local leaders participated in two boot camps – a Registry Week Boot Camp in San Antonio, Texas, and a Rapid Results Housing Boot Camp in Chicago, Ill. Both boot camps resulted in a collaborative team effort creating momentum and setting goals for Nashville. The boot camps created ongoing network opportunities with peer cities and federal partners including HUD, USICH, and the VA.

Registry Week:
From May28-31, more than 150 volunteers participated to survey people who sleep in the streets of Nashville and create a priority list called Vulnerability Index, which identifies the most medically vulnerable persons and now serves as a housing priority list for the *How's Nashville* campaign.

How's Nashville Campaign Launched on June 4:
How's Nashville is a collaborative community campaign to end chronic homelessness in Nashville. This effort is aligned with the national *100,000 Homes Campaign*. Nashville receives technical assistance and support from the national team.

100 Day Goal:
At a public briefing at the downtown Library on June 4, the *How's Nashville* campaign set a goal to house 200 people in the next 100 days. Partner agencies meet weekly to work toward that goal. In addition, the Homelessness Commission represents Nashville in 30-, 60-, and 100-day calls with federal partners and participates in regular conference calls with peer cities.

Funds Raised:
At the public launch of *How's Nashville* on June 4, the audience pledged a total of $35,000 to cover move-in costs for people being housed. As of June, $35,500 was collected. The money will be used to cover rent and utility deposits, essential furniture, and household goods.

Campaign Structure:
MHC serves as the backbone organization of *How's Nashville,* which is driven by community organizations. Workgroups include:
Steering Committee (meets weekly)
Housing (meets monthly)
Outreach & Support Services (weekly)
Data & Cost Savings (being formed)

Housing Placement Goals Met:
Nashville, as a community, has met the *How's Nashville* campaign goal of housing 2.5% of its vulnerable and chronically homeless population for the three consecutive months.
In addition, the community met its goal to house 43 chronically homeless people in June to meet its 100-day goal.

Collaboration effort:
How's Nashville partners include organizations that already house homeless individuals. They now work together to focus on people who have been homeless for long periods of time and are medically vulnerable according to the Vulnerability Index and VAT.

Vulnerability Index:
While the Homelessness Commission in the past created a Vulnerability Index, under this new effort, community organizations send their outreach specialists to a weekly meeting. In that meeting, participants sign a confidentiality agreement and work together through a list of names to match people with housing.

Project Homeless Connect:
- 943 people served
- >600 volunteers
- 73 service providers
- $47,250 raised

MDHA Partnership:
Immediately after starting his new job, Will Connelly identified opportunities to house people experiencing chronic homelessness. He approached MDHA and starting July 1, 2013, MDHA is prioritizing housing for chronically homeless individuals by setting aside 18 Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8 Vouchers). MDHA and the Homelessness Commission entered an MOU for this one-year demonstration project. Other cities have voiced their interest in this new model applied by Nashville.

VAT Training:
The Commission organized the training of six street outreach specialists in the Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT), which allows for an in-depth, more objective evaluation of people who experience homelessness. The VAT also determines vulnerability and will be used for people applying for the prioritized housing through MDHA.

Private Landlord Partnerships:
Under the leadership of Kirby Davis, several private landlords set aside a few units at discounted rates to house people identified by *How's Nashville* partners as being vulnerable. The private landlord partnership has been crucial to implement a Housing First model.

Case Management Contract:
The Commission created a new case management contract following the Critical Time Intervention model, bidding it out to the community. The contract was awarded to Centerstone. Eckman/Freeman & Associates provides case management services during the transition phase.

Social Media Platform:
MHC updated its Metro website and created Facebook and Twitter (@MHCNashville) pages. Commission staff also maintains the *How's Nashville* media platform, which can be reached at http://howsnashville.org.

How's Nashville Partners:

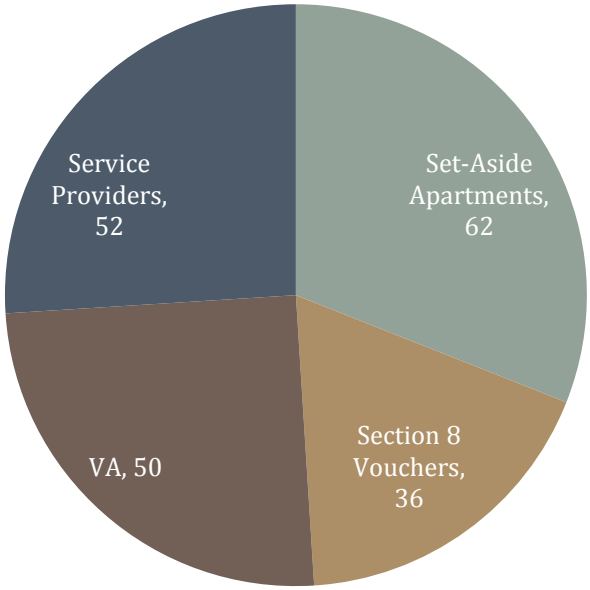
- Metro Social Services
- MDHA
- VA
- Mental Health Cooperative
- Park Center
- Open Table Nashville
- Colby's Army
- Centerstone
- Eckman/Freeman
- Urban Housing Solutions
- UNHS
- Safe Haven Family Shelter
- Tennessee State University
- Nashville Downtown Partnership
- Room in the Inn
- Southern Alliance for People and Animal Welfare
- Operation Stand Down
- Downtown Partnership
- Nashville Cares
- Nashville Rescue Mission
- First Management Services
- Ghertner and Company
- Randy Phillips
- TN Fair Housing Coalition
- Evergreen Real Estate

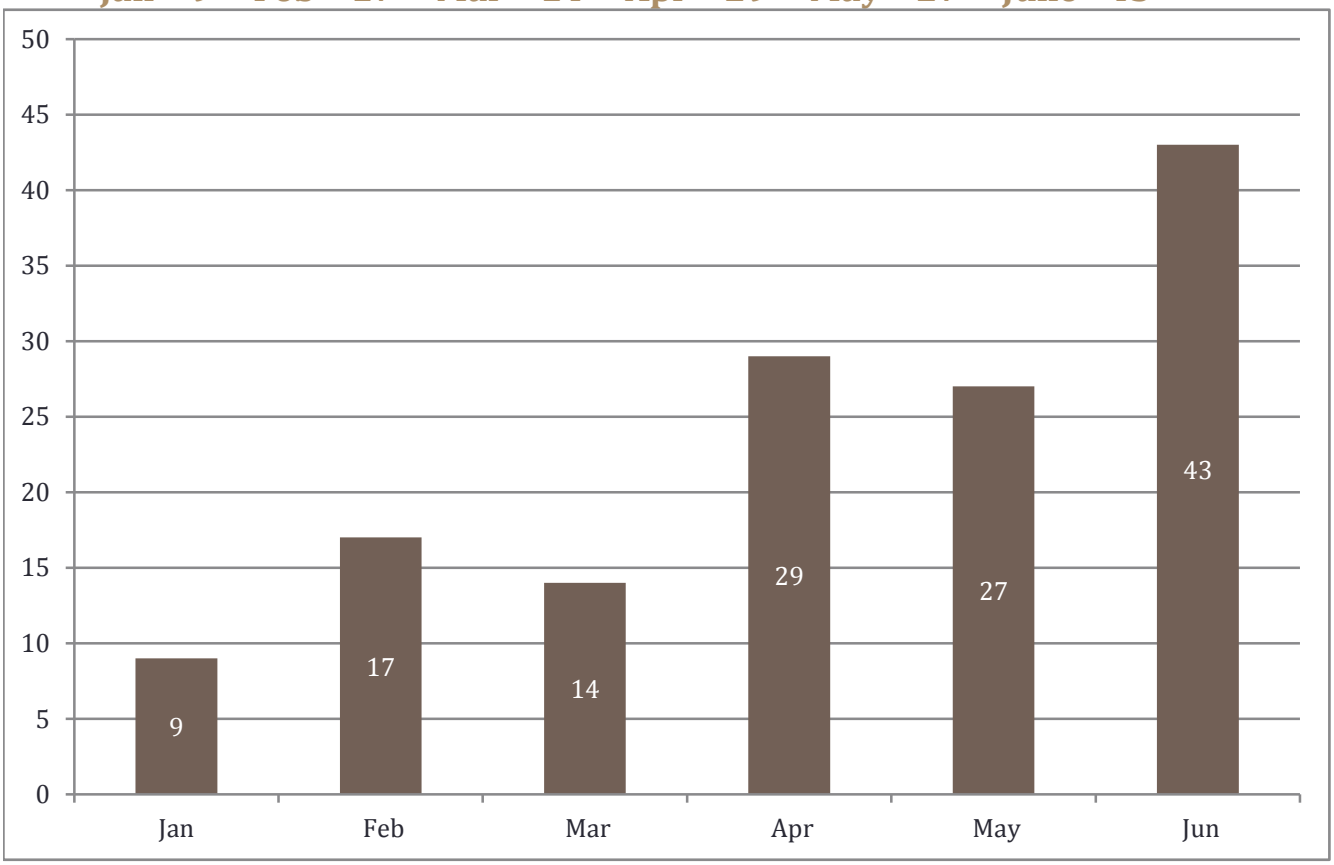
Housing 200 People in 100 Days

It is important to understand that the goal to house 200 people in 100 days is a community goal. While *How's Nashville* is a still a new campaign, we have already generated participation of most of the main provider agencies who serve Nashville's homeless population. The reporting of housing placement numbers does include the combined work of Nashville's community.

The housing placement estimates are based on the following calculation:

- 62 Set-Aside Apartments from private landlords for the *How's Nashville* campaign;
- 36 Section 8 Vouchers set aside from MDHA for the *How's Nashville* campaign;
- 50 VASH vouchers and other housing numbers from the VA; and
- 52 housing placements that service providers in our community have been doing in conjunction with the *How's Nashville* campaign.



Housing Placement Rates:

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