Lewiston Auburn

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# The 10 Year Plan to Eliminate Homelessness in Lewiston and Auburn

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**By the Lewiston/Auburn Alliance for Services to the Homeless**

## Table of Contents

A. Executive Summary ..... 1

B. Introduction ..... 4

C. Overview of the Problem ..... 5

D. General Approach: Ethic of Responsibility ..... 10

E. Goal and Strategies ..... 13

F. Measuring Success ..... 24

# A. Executive Summary

This is the second report in a series produced by the Lewiston-Auburn Alliance for Services to the Homeless (LAASH). The first report identified the needs of the homeless in Lewiston and Auburn (Lewiston Auburn Homelessness Needs Report). It is available at the Community Development offices of both Lewiston and Auburn. This report provides a strategy that addresses those needs. The goal of the strategy is not just to serve the homeless when they are in crisis – it is to help the homeless become independent and self-sustaining, and eliminate homelessness in Lewiston and Auburn by 2019.

Here are the facts. There are about 100 people homeless on any given night in the two cities. They come from a larger group of over 1,300 who are homeless in any given year in the two communities. But these homeless are not visible to the general public. They are hidden in apartments, where they move from one friend's couch to another; or in available shelters; or in cars or campgrounds in the summer. Some of the homeless are immigrants and refugees. Some are victims of domestic violence. Some are single adults -- many of whom have mental illnesses. Some are veterans. Some are very young, barely more than children.

The cost to the homeless and their families is overwhelming. They grow up with the same hopes and dreams as their peers, but at a very early age find themselves on a different track, without a secure home environment, on the streets, prey to older people, tempted by drugs, without access to health care, lacking an achievable path to conventional success. The pattern, once set, is often difficult to break; for some, it lasts a lifetime, exacerbated by a culture of poverty.

The cost to the taxpayers of Lewiston and Auburn is also large. The cities must provide extra police, fire, general assistance, and other services to deal with the consequences of homelessness. Hospitals (and health insurance subscribers) must pay for emergency room visits and health problems caused by lives on the streets. Schools (and their

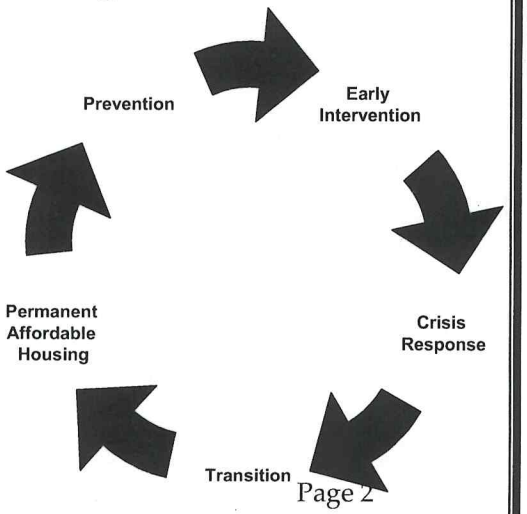
students) pay for the disruptions caused by distraught homeless youth. Businesses (and their workers) pay with lost productivity and unfilled jobs. Everyone pays with quality of life and safety issues. Finally, Lewiston/Auburn's image suffers negative consequences that can discourage potential new residents and businesses from moving to the area.

The homelessness problem in Lewiston and Auburn is not, in the first place, primarily a problem of a lack of housing. Compared to other communities in Maine, there are more rents available at lower costs here. Instead, homelessness is a problem of insufficient income and resources, a lack of life skills, and health problems (primarily mental health and substance abuse). Sometime it is a combination. A fundamental underlying problem is the lack of good-paying jobs in the region, and the lack of attitudinal and work skills among homeless people to qualify for and hold such jobs.

The challenge for a homelessness strategy is both to provide immediate shelter to those facing a night on the street, and at the same time to provide long-term help for people to get back on their feet and become economically independent. This takes a high level of commitment on the part of people who are homeless on the one side, and on the part of the community on the other. This plan is founded upon an ethic of responsibility for everyone involved.

There are five ***strategies*** to achieve the goal. Each strategy addresses homelessness at a different stage of its development:

1. Prevention – addressing the broad conditions that foster homelessness
2. Early intervention – identifying and helping individuals at immediate risk of homelessness
3. Crisis response – ensuring that emergency food, shelter, health care, are available
4. Transition – helping people gain skills to live on their own
5. Permanent affordable housing – achieving reintegration into the community



Each strategy has one or more key ***actions***. Each action has:

- a ***lead agency*** that is responsible for coordinating implementation;
- ***partners*** that will contribute to implementation; and
- ***benchmarks*** that lay out specific steps necessary over time for successful implementation

As with the individual strategies, there is a need for one lead organization to be responsible for the coordination of the plan as a whole. The United Way of Androscoggin County has generously agreed to perform this important role. There are hundreds of partner agencies whose cooperation is essential for the success of the plan. Besides the United Way, three others have particularly important roles. The Public Policy Committee of the Lewiston-Auburn Alliance for Services to the Homeless (LAASH), which has overseen the development of this plan, will provide ongoing support and advice. The two Community Development Departments of the cities of Auburn and Lewiston, which oversee funding for housing and related services, will coordinate their activities related to homelessness with each other and with the United Way. In addition, the United Way will measure progress under the plan in three specific areas: reduced homelessness, reduced risk of homelessness, and meeting plan benchmarks – and provide status reports to the City Councils and public at large.

## B. Introduction

This is the second report in a series produced by the Lewiston-Auburn Alliance for Services to the Homeless (LAASH). The first report identified the needs of the homeless in Lewiston and Auburn. It was produced by Planning Decisions, Inc., and reports on six focus groups conducted with homeless themselves and other local interviews.

This report articulates the strategy arising from the needs study. Its goal is to provide a path towards eliminating homelessness in Lewiston and Auburn by 2019.

This is a particularly appropriate time for Lewiston and Auburn to consider bold action in the area of homelessness. First, the recession is making the problem worse; more people are experiencing evictions and foreclosures. Secondly, more help is now available. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) will provide Maine with $6.5 million for homelessness prevention and re-housing activities, such as:

- financial assistance to individuals, including help with rents, security and utility deposits, and moving costs;
- housing relocation and stabilization, such as case management, outreach, housing search and placement, legal services, mediation, and credit repair; and
- data collection and evaluation (using a HUD-approved homeless management information system).

On the following pages is a strategy that would allow the Cities of Lewiston and Auburn to take advantage of these federal funds in the short run, and also provide guidance for state and local investments in the long run.

## C. Overview of the Problem

In June of 2008 Casey Stanley was stabbed to death in an Auburn park alongside the Androscoggin River. Casey had stepped away from a group of people to call his girl friend on the phone, and was attacked and killed.

Casey was homeless. He was getting his life together. He was going to church. He was planning to get married. He had just taken a job in Harpswell. Then his life was senselessly taken.

Casey Stanley's life and sad death caught the imagination of the community over a period of weeks. What could have been done to prevent the death of this gentle and kind person? Soon the election and the economy and other issues replaced Casey in the news, and homelessness again faded into the background, where it had been before.

Why doesn't this issue receive sustained attention? Because, with the exception of dramatic incidents like Casey Stanley's death, homelessness is not visible in Lewiston and Auburn. There are about 100 people homeless on any given night in the two cities. They come from a larger group of over 1,300 who are homeless in any given year in the two communities.

But these homeless are not on the street begging, as is the case in larger cities. They don't carry around bedrolls and sleep on park benches. Instead, they shift from one couch to another, from the apartment of one acquaintance to another, in exchange for money or services. They are hidden in parks and cars and campgrounds in the summer. They fill the available shelter beds in Lewiston and Auburn, and on many nights people are turned away.

Some of the homeless are immigrants and refugees. Some are victims of domestic violence. Some are single adults, many with mental illnesses. Some are veterans. Some are hardly more than children. Over 200 youth under the age of 18, either dropouts or enrolled at Lewiston High or Edward Little, have no stable home to return to at night.

Here are some of their stories:

- Mary[1] left her husband after years of physical and psychological abuse to go to the Abused Women's Shelter. Mary still keeps a backpack packed and ready by the back door of her apartment, in constant fear that her ex-husband might be able to find her.

- Dave became homeless last year when he lost his job, and has lived in his car or stayed with friends since. Dave has been unable to find another job, and has been disqualified from receiving rental assistance to move into private housing, because of a felony driving conviction years ago.

- Megan is 17. She became homeless at age 14 when her parents kicked her out of their house. Since then she has lived, off and on, at the youth shelter, as well as with various family members and friends. She has no job or job skills. She currently is living with her boyfriend and his family while she works on her GED.

- Fatuma is a refugee with 2 children. She has a section 8 voucher, but has not been able to find a 2 or 3 bedroom apartment. Fatuma's voucher is expiring soon. She is worried that she will not be able to find an apartment. Her English is limited, and she thinks that may be part of the reason that some landlords do not return her phone calls.

- Julie is in her early 20s, and recently left her husband. She and her two children have been rotating between her parents' home and the shelter. She has no job skills, and seems to be just treading water, surviving day to day, but making no progress towards independence.

The cost to the homeless and their families is overwhelming. Many grow up with the same hopes and dreams as the

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[1] *Names have been changed to protect individual's privacy*

rest of their peers, but at a very early age find themselves on a different track, without a secure home environment, on the streets, prey to older people, tempted by drugs, without access to health care, lacking an achievable path to conventional success. The pattern, thus set, is often difficult to break; for some, it lasts a lifetime, exacerbated by a culture of poverty.

There is also a huge cost to the taxpayers of Lewiston and Auburn. The cities provide extra police, fire, general assistance, and other services to deal with the consequences of homelessness. Hospitals (and health insurance subscribers) pay for emergency room visits and health problems caused and exacerbated by a life on the streets. Schools (and their students) pay for the disruptions caused by young people with emotionally insecure lives. Businesses (and their workers) pay with unfilled jobs because of the lack of work skills of available workers, and with quality of life and safety issues. Finally, Lewiston/Auburn's image suffers negative consequences that can discourage potential new residents and businesses from moving to the area.

This plan is designed to break the pattern of homelessness and prevent homelessness for those at risk due to unforeseen circumstances. It offers a path for the homeless themselves to accept responsibility and move forward. At the same time, it provides a path for the community to create the opportunities that the homeless need to succeed.

The following pages provide a statistical summary of the needs of different homeless groups in Lewiston and Auburn. For more detail, consult the first volume of this study.

## Gaps in Services for Homeless Populations in Lewiston Auburn

| | Numbers | At-Risk | Prevention | Crisis | Transition |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Youth** | **204 homeless youth** grades 9-12 identified by schools<br><br>**423 homeless youth** served by New Beginnings and Volunteers of America | **Youth not employed:**<br>900 ages 20-21<br>500 ages 22-24<br><br>**Youth not in school:**<br>200 ages 15-17 | **People are unaware** that these youth exist.<br><br>**HUD definition of homelessness doesn't include couchsurfing**, so many youth don't qualify for subsidized housing for the homeless; high school attendance policies that suspend students after absences assume students have a stable home; subsidized housing regulations don't allow 18 year old children to stay with a parent for more than 2 weeks.<br><br>New Beginnings' **current Outreach Center building is too small**: intended to serve 15 youth/day, it serves 35-45.<br><br>No single program can meet the needs of all homeless you. One subset whose needs are not being met is young mothers.<br><br>Homelessness and accompanying circumstances (unemployment, not in school, estranged from parents and no insurance, lack of transportation) create **barriers to health care access**. | **Funding for homeless youth is fragmented,** making holistic approach difficult. | Depth of services is especially important--homeless youth often lac necessary social and life skills and **need lots of support to be successful.**<br><br>Due to **significant funding changes** requiring a shift toward independent living apartments, New Beginnings TLP may no longe be able to provide supportive group living opportunities for homeless youth ages 16-17. |
| **Families** | 2008 MSHA Point-In-Time Survey found **6 families homeless on January 30, 2008**<br><br>**As of September 2008, 23 families sheltered; 47 families turned away**<br><br>69 homeless children grades K-8 identified by schools | **Families living in poverty** in Lewiston Auburn:<br>1,400 families<br>1,200 families with children<br>200 families over age 65 | **Lack of subsidized housing;** very long wait lists (8 months to 3 years) for vouchers.<br><br>Lack of jobs that pay a **livable wage**.<br><br>Lack of **health care**. | Locating assistance and **navigating services (including for health, mental health, employment and housing) can be difficult.**<br><br>**Limited emergency shelter**: there is only one shelter for families, adults are separated by gender and everyone shares group accommodations. | **Transportation and child care** can be significant hurdles (especiall for single parents) in terms of getting to services and employment.<br><br>**Lack of subsidized housing;** very long wait lists (8 months to 3 years) for vouchers. |
| **Domestic Violence Survivors** | AWAP's domestic violence shelter served **170 women and children last year** | **434 domestic violence crimes** were reported to Lewiston and Auburn police departments in 2006 | **Lack of subsidized housing;** very long wait lists (8 months to 3 years) for vouchers. | Locating assistance and **navigating services (including for health, mental health, employment and housing) can be difficult.** | There are only **7 units of transitional housing** available for women leaving the domestic violence shelter; many women have to secure their own housing.<br><br>**Lack of subsidized housing;** very long wait lists (8 months to 3 years) for vouchers.<br><br>Affordable housing is in **poor condition** and in less than ideal locations.<br><br>AVESTA vouchers, which have a homelessness preference, cannot b used in Lewiston Auburn*; **voucher recipients have to move away from services and employment** opportunities.<br><br>*Special permission to use an AVESTA voucher in Lewiston and Auburn is available if a person can show medical necessity for livin in the cities. |

## Gaps in Services for Homeless Populations in Lewiston Auburn

| | Numbers | At-Risk | Prevention | Crisis | Transition |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **New Americans** | | There are **an estimated 4,000 - 6,000 New Americans** living in Lewiston-Auburn.<br><br>As of Jan. 2007, Lewiston identified 2,641 immigrants who had moved to the city and enrolled in General Assistance<br><br>A 2007 study by the Maine Department of Labor found **unemployment** among Somali immigrants to be at 51% | Not enough **large apartments.**<br><br>Affordable housing is **limited** and often in **poor condition**.<br><br>**Discrimination** is an issue.<br><br>**Employment** is made more difficult by low literacy rates and, especially for large families, the expense of child care.<br><br>**Cultural and language differences** can make accessing services (including for health, mental health, employment and housing) more difficult. | Subsidized housing rules limiting guests make it **difficult to assist friends and family** in need of temporary housing. | **Lack of no-interest mortgage opportunities** limits ownership possibilities. |
| **Single Adults** | **546 homeless single adults** sheltered by Hope Haven and St. Martin De Porres in 2007<br><br>As of Sept. 2008, Hope Haven had sheltered 252 homeless individuals and **turned away** 207 because it was full | 3,900 non-institutionalized individuals with a **mental disability** over age 16<br><br>700 **veterans** living below poverty, 2/3 of whom are disabled<br><br>National rates suggest that as many as 3,000 people in Lewiston Auburn may have significant **substance abuse** issues | **People transitioning** from one system to the next may be lost: individuals released from jail without a plan for reintegration into the community; children aging out of the youth system; individuals leaving mental health institutions without appropriate supports in place.<br><br>**Access to services is now restricted** to those with a diagnosed mental illness<br><br>**Lack of subsidized housing;** very long wait lists (8 months to 3 years) for vouchers. | Emergency shelters have **high barriers**.<br><br>The Jubilee Center and the public library are the only **places for homeless people to go during the day.** | AVESTA vouchers, which have a homelessness preference, cannot be used in Lewiston Auburn*; **voucher recipients have to move away from services and employment** opportunities.<br><br>**Jobs are hard to get,** especially if a person has a felony.<br><br>**Lack of transportation** makes it difficult for many homeless individuals to get to services and employment.<br><br>Substance abuse treatment is available only for men. There are **not enough long-term treatment beds**, so fewer than half of those who complete the halfway house are able to move into the extended stay program.<br><br>There is **a need for more long-term, supportive housing** options.<br><br>*Special permission to use an AVESTA voucher in Lewiston and Auburn is available if a person can show medical necessity for living in the cities. |

## D. General Approach: Ethic of Responsibility

According to the U.S. Census, there were 2,287 residential housing units that were unoccupied in Lewiston and Auburn in 2008. That is 8.4% of the total units in the two cities.

According to the Maine Housing Authority, the cost of the median priced home in the Lewiston-Auburn region was $30,900 less than the state average in 2007 -- $155,000 compared to $185,900. The median 2-bedroom rent was $108 less than the state average -- $734 compared to $842.

The homelessness problem is not, in the first place, primarily a problem of a lack of housing. It is a problem sometimes of insufficient income and resources, sometimes of a lack of life skills, and sometimes of health issues (primarily mental health and substance abuse). Sometime it is a combination. Lewiston and Auburn area residents have a median income $2,700, or 6%, below the state average. Even though the median two-bedroom rent in the area is less expensive than statewide, the affordability problem is just as bad as the rest of the state. Just over half of Lewiston-Auburn renters can't afford the median 2-bedroom rent in the area (54%), about the same as the statewide percentage (58%).

This is not to say that there are not housing issues. Much of the rental housing in Lewiston and Auburn is very old, inaccessible to older people and those with disabilities, energy-inefficient, and poorly maintained. There is a need for rehabilitation of the old housing, and the construction of newer, more efficient apartments. But even with such housing, there remains the problem of helping people make enough money to pay for the rent and maintenance.

A primary underlying problem is the development of good-paying jobs in the region, and the attitudinal and work skills preparation of homeless people to help them qualify for and hold such jobs. Right now, Androscoggin County has a higher proportion of poverty-related problems that contribute to unemployment and, ultimately, homelessness (see chart below).

| Issue | Maine | Androscoggin County |
|---|---|---|
| **Children under poverty, 2005/2006** | 16.90% | **21.50%** |
| **Domestic assaults per 100,000 people, 2006/2007** | 438.9 | **717.7** |
| **Arrests of children 10-17 per 100,000 children, 2006/2007** | 51.1 | **71.8** |
| **High school completion rate, 2006/2007** | 80.80% | **74.20%** |
| **Teen pregnancy, 2006, per 1,000 females 10 to 17** | 6.8 | **10.7** |
| **Infant mortality, 2002-2006, per 1,000 births** | 5.6 | **6** |
| **Unemployment rate, January 2009** | 8.80% | **9.10%** |
| Source: 2009 Maine Kids Count, Anne E. Casey Foundation, http://www.kidscount.org | | |

Poverty, unemployment, domestic violence, youth crime, dropouts, teen pregnancy, poor health, mental health issues and substance abuse all contribute to low incomes and homelessness. So the challenge for a homelessness strategy is both to provide immediate shelter and help to those who are faced with a night on the street, and over the longer term, to provide assistance to help people get on their feet and economically independent.

This takes commitment on the part of people who are homeless, and on the part of the community.

- among the homeless themselves, who need to learn the discipline and skills for success in the private economy;
- among employers and landlords, who need to give a second chance to people who have fallen down once and are trying to improve;
- among community volunteers and churches, who need to provide the mentoring and emotional support for individuals seeking a better life;
- among educators and nonprofit service providers, who need to work together more intensively to break the

cycle of poverty; and

- among municipal governments and private funders, who need to coordinate planning and investment decisions for maximum effect.

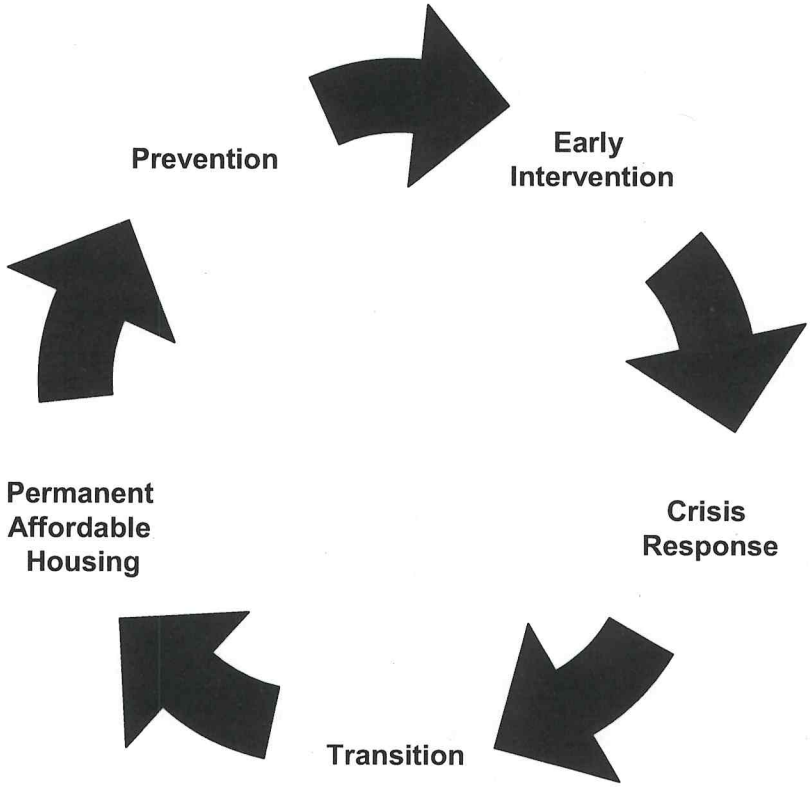
The interconnectedness of the challenges facing the homeless demand strategies that address the root causes. The necessary approach is one of working smart, and working together. It can be effective whether there is a recession or not, whether there are federal funds available or not. Effectiveness comes from mutual responsibility, from everyone doing their part. The ethic of responsibility is the philosophy that underlies this plan.

## E. Goal and Strategies

The ***goal*** of this plan is to eliminate homelessness in Lewiston and Auburn by 2019.

There are five ***strategies*** to achieve the goal. Each strategy addresses homelessness at a different stage of its development:

1. Prevention – addressing the broad conditions that foster homelessness
2. Early intervention – identifying and helping individuals at immediate risk of homelessness
3. Crisis response – ensuring that emergency food, shelter, health care, are available
4. Transition – helping people gain skills to live on their own
5. Permanent affordable housing – achieving reintegration into the community




Each strategy has one or more key ***actions***.

Strategy 1: Prevention

Action 1A. Raise Community Awareness
Action 1B. Ensure Safety Net Services Are Available
Action 1C. Expand Youth Outreach Center

Strategy 2: Early Intervention

Action 2A. Create a Quick Response Team

Action 2B. Create a Housing Liaison

Strategy 3: Crisis Response

Action 3A. Provide safe and accessible Emergency Shelter Beds

Strategy 4: Transition

Action 4A. Help with Living Skills

Action 4B. Develop Job Opportunities

Strategy 5: Permanent Affordable Housing

Action 5A. Increase the Affordable Housing Stock

Each action has:

- a ***lead agency*** that is responsible for coordinating implementation;
- ***partners*** that will contribute to implementation; and
- ***benchmarks*** that lay out specific steps necessary over time for successful implementation

The following tables lay out each strategy and action.

## Strategy 1: Prevention

| Action | Lead | Potential Partners | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1A. Raise Community Awareness**<br>▪ Incorporate plan into Auburn and Lewiston Comprehensive Plans and CD Consolidated Plans<br>▪ Educate business about need for jobs<br>▪ Educate those at risk about aid<br>▪ Educate public about homelessness<br>▪ Educate students to raise aspirations | United Way | ▪ Lewiston and Auburn City Councils<br>▪ Lewiston and Auburn Planning Boards<br>▪ Lewiston and Auburn CD Committees<br>▪ Lewiston and Auburn schools | ▪ Androscoggin Chamber of Commerce<br>▪ Head Start<br>▪ Downtown Education Collaborative<br>▪ Health care centers<br>▪ LAASH<br>▪ Common Ties | ▪ Faith-based community<br>▪ Media: Sun Journal, Twin City Times, radio, Great Falls TV<br>▪ New Beginnings<br>▪ 211<br>▪ VOA |
| | **Benchmarks** | **Years 1-2** | **Years 3-10** | |
| | | ▪ Adopt this plan as part of Auburn and Lewiston Comprehensive Plans, Consolidated Plans<br>▪ Meet with Chamber of Commerce to develop awareness & plan for ongoing education of business community.<br>▪ Support continued prevent student from dropping out | ▪ Implement business education plan.<br>▪ Collaborate with service providers to identify & access individuals at risk.<br>▪ Develop & implement a media campaign to educate general public about the cost of homelessness.<br>▪ Schools and business community work together to create educational programs promoting high student aspirations<br>▪ Organize & sponsor community symposium on homelessness, to focus on successes & develop next steps. | |

## Strategy 1: Prevention

| Action | Lead | Potential Partners | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1B. Ensure Safety Net Services Are Available**<br><br>▪ Coordinate services with regard to food, clothing, health care, access to jobs and housing, case management | ▪ United Way<br>▪ St. Mary's Community Clinical Services | ▪ Trinity Jubilee<br>▪ Churches<br>▪ Lewiston/Auburn general assistance offices<br>▪ DHHS<br>▪ Career Center<br>▪ Hospitals and health centers<br>▪ Community Concepts<br>▪ New Beginnings<br>▪ Common Ties<br>▪ Healthy Androscoggin<br>▪ Preble Street Homeless Clinic | | |
| | **Benchmarks** | **Years 1-2** | **Years 3-6** | **Years 7-10** |
| | | ▪ Identify gaps & barriers, using data from the 2010 United Way /Healthy Androscoggin community needs assessment, CCS strategic plan, Maine Health Access Foundation/Maine Primary Care Association focus groups, and 2010 census<br>▪ Seek resources, including state and federal grants | ▪ Educate business, public & service providers as to needs assessment findings.<br>▪ Develop & implement plan based on needs assessment findings. | ▪ Update community needs assessment. |

## Strategy 1: Prevention

| Action | Lead | Potential Partners | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1C. Expand Youth Outreach Center**<br>▪ Expand existing facility to provides in-depth services to teens | ▪ New Beginnings | ▪ City of Lewiston<br>▪ City of Auburn<br>▪ Maine State Housing Authority<br>▪ Lewiston Schools<br>▪ Auburn Schools | | |
| | **Benchmarks** | **Years 1** | **Year 2** | **Years 3-10** |
| | | ▪ Identify sources of funding for a new facility<br>▪ Apply for funding | ▪ Build/renovate structure for homeless youth outreach in need of multiple services | ▪ Assure adequate services and funding |

## Strategy 2: Early Intervention

| Action | Lead | Potential Partners | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2A. Create a Quick Response Team**<br>▪ Identify people at immediate risk of homelessness<br>▪ Help them access services and resources to prevent their becoming homeless<br>▪ Provide individualized solutions | Lewiston and Auburn General Assistance Offices | ▪ Lewiston/Auburn police, jails and probation officers<br>▪ Lewiston/Auburn schools<br>▪ Hospitals and health centers<br>▪ Social service agencies<br>▪ Churches | ▪ Emergency shelters<br>▪ Food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens<br>▪ Head Start<br>▪ Community Concepts<br>▪ VA Homelessness<br>▪ New Beginnings<br>▪ Trinity Jubilee<br>▪ VOA | ▪ Career Center<br>▪ 211<br>▪ Catholic Charities<br>▪ MaineHousing<br>▪ DHHS<br>▪ Common Ties<br>▪ Tri-County Mental Health Services<br>▪ LAASH |
| | **Benchmarks** | **Years 1-2** | **Years 3-6** | **Years 7-10** |
| | | ▪ Expand agencies participating in the L/A Overflow Plan.<br>▪ Advocate for case management and preventive services.<br>▪ Create monthly brown bag lunch for service providers to coordinate, communicate | ▪ Seek funding and resources to implement a year- round overflow plan.<br>▪ Submit legislative proposals that would fund case management and preventive services. | ▪ Year round overflow plan implemented and funded.<br>▪ Secure funding and resources for case management and preventive services. |

## Strategy 2: Early Intervention

| Action | Lead | Potential Partners | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2B. Create a Housing Liaison**<br>▪ Establish a housing counseling service to ensure successful housing placement<br>▪ Maintain a housing database of currently available apartments in Lewiston-Auburn<br>▪ Provide training about rights and responsibilities of tenants/landlords | Auburn Housing Authority | ▪ Community Concepts Inc.<br>▪ Bank Representatives<br>▪ Landlord Association<br>▪ MaineHousing<br>▪ Pine Tree Legal<br>▪ Maine Equal Justice<br>▪ The Visible Community<br>▪ Common Ties<br>▪ DHHS<br>▪ Tedford Housing<br>▪ HUD Vash Program (veterans)<br>▪ Lewiston Housing Authority<br>▪ Lewiston/Auburn Community Development Departments | | |
| | **Benchmarks** | **Years 1** | **Years 2** | **Years 3-10** |
| | | ▪ Define the position<br>▪ Define funding need<br>▪ Identify funding sources<br>▪ Identify provider | ▪ Service provider seeks resources<br>▪ Service provider develops marketing approach to gather information for database and inform of the availability of housing services<br>▪ Offer services | ▪ Evaluate and refine program |

## Strategy 3: Crisis Response

| Action | Lead | Potential Partners | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3A. Provide safe and accessible Emergency Shelter Beds**<br><br>▪ Assure there are sufficient and safe emergency beds that are available, low barrier, and appropriate | LAASH Public Policy Subcommittee | ▪ Cities of Auburn and Lewiston<br>▪ United Way<br>▪ Healthy Androscoggin<br>▪ Region II Homeless Council<br>▪ Maine Housing<br>▪ Tedford Housing<br>▪ Community Housing of Maine<br>▪ Trinity Jubilee Center<br>▪ Hope Haven<br>▪ New Beginnings<br>▪ St. Martin<br>▪ Abused Women's Shelter<br>▪ Common Ties | | |
| | **Benchmarks** | **Years 1** | **Year 2** | **By or Before Year 10** |
| | | ▪ Perform assessment to identify need for adult and family emergency beds with necessary supports/case management<br>▪ Identify funding sources<br>▪ Develop approach/establish campaign to build support for low-barrier emergency beds<br>▪ Identify mission and organization | ▪ Establish emergency beds with case management services | ▪ Phase out 50% of emergency beds (to permanent supportive housing) |

## Strategy 4: Transition

| Action | Lead | Potential Partners | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **4A. Help with Living Skills**<br><br>▪ Assure services for people to learn living skills prior to re-entering the private housing and job markets | Community Concepts | ▪ Tedford Housing<br>▪ New Beginnings<br>▪ Abused Women's Shelter<br>▪ Women, Work, Community<br>▪ St. Mary's Nutrition Center, including food pantry, Lots to Gardens<br>▪ Senior Community Service Employment Program<br>▪ Catholic Charities | ▪ Coastal Enterprises Inc<br>▪ Advocates for Children<br>▪ DHHS - Aspire -Rehab<br>▪ Lewiston Adult Ed.<br>▪ Veteran' Center<br>▪ Support Solutions<br>▪ The Ace Program<br>▪ Temp Work Agencies<br>▪ Career Center | ▪ St. Martin de Porres<br>▪ Goodwill<br>▪ Common Ties Social Club<br>▪ B St & Lewiston Library Computer labs<br>▪ Women's Wisdom Center<br>▪ Outsource Works |
| | **Benchmarks** | **Years 1-2** | **Years 3-6** | **Years 7-10** |
| | | ▪ Identify agencies with training resources<br>▪ Identify types of training and guidelines for qualifications<br>▪ Maintain a clearing house of training agencies and identify changes in training as they occur.<br>▪ Provide referrals to training in life skills, employment, parenting, etc. | ▪ Identify means and incentives for people to attend life skills training<br>▪ Develop a pool of peer to peer mentors from people who have succeeded with life skills training | ▪ Continue to maintain clearing house of trainers<br>▪ Continue to refer people to appropriate training.<br>▪ Increase peer to peer mentors from newly employed people |

| Action | Lead | Potential Partners | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **4A. Develop Job Opportunities**<br><br>▪ Expand Work Ready program to serve homeless.<br>▪ Increase Alternative Advantage contracts with local businesses, and job placements<br>▪ Introduce businesses receiving city assistance to employment services<br>▪ Provide income opportunities through urban farming, especially for immigrants<br>▪ Integrate job services into transitional housing | Lewiston Career Center | ▪ Lewiston Economic Development<br>▪ Auburn Economic Development<br>▪ LA Growth Council | ▪ Alternative Advantage<br>▪ Community Housing of Maine<br>▪ Coastal Enterprises, Inc.<br>▪ Women, Work, and Community |
| | **Benchmarks** | **Year 1** | **Years 2-10** |
| | | ▪ Create Work Ready curriculum and partners for homeless program<br>▪ Recruit businesses to provide contracts to the Alternative Advantage program<br>▪ Create materials, procedures to orient businesses helped by city assistance to employment programs | ▪ Add one to two Work Ready sessions a year<br>▪ Add 10 to 20 job placements per year for homeless at Alternative Advantage program<br>▪ Institute process of having employment services meet with new businesses coming to the community<br>▪ Create placements for homeless in city garden programs<br>▪ Create transitional housing with job training and support |

## Strategy 5: Permanent Affordable Housing

| Action | Lead | Potential Partners | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **5A. Increase the affordable Housing Stock**<br><br>Create 210 new units of permanent affordable rental housing by:<br><br>▪ Stretching HOME dollars by working with developers to encourage broadening their funding support from other grants<br>▪ Encouraging Lewiston Housing Authority to create a CHDO and undertake development of rental housing<br>▪ Budgeting adequate HOME funds to support rental housing development<br>▪ Advocating on behalf of rental housing developers, particularly with MaineHousing<br>▪ Utilizing CDBG funds for rehabilitation of affordable rental housing | Lewiston and Auburn Community Development Offices | ▪ Community Concepts<br>▪ Avesta<br>▪ MaineHousing<br>▪ Lewiston/Auburn Housing Authorities<br>▪ VA<br>▪ Community Housing of Maine<br>▪ Coastal Enterprises<br>▪ Tedford Housing | | |
| | **Benchmarks** | **Years 1-2** | **Years 3-6** | **Years 7-10** |
| | | • 63 Units | ▪ 57 Units | ▪ 90 Units |

## F. Measuring Success

As with the individual actions, there is a need for one lead agency to serve as a monitor of progress, and as a convener of key actors. The United Way of Androscoggin County has agreed to perform this important role.

There are hundreds of partner agencies identified in this plan that need to work with United Way, but three stand out. The Public Policy Committee of the Lewiston-Auburn Alliance for Services to the Homeless (LAASH), which has overseen the development of this plan, will provide ongoing advice. In addition, the two Community Development Departments of the cities of Auburn and Lewiston, which support housing and related services, will coordinate their funding activities with the plan.

The United Way will measure progress under the plan in three specific areas: reduced homelessness, reduced risk of homelessness, and meeting plan benchmarks. The table below describes the data and data sources for each. United Way will convene partners annually to review progress and will communicate identified successes and challenges. As Year Ten of the plan approaches, United Way will convene a summit of all partners and facilitate a community discussion of next steps.

| Outcome | Data | Source |
|---|---|---|
| **Reduced Homelessness** | Number of people in shelters | MSHA Point in Time survey |
| | Length of shelter stay | |
| **Reduced Risk of Homelessness** | Children under poverty | Maine Kids Count |
| | Domestic assaults per 100,000 | |
| | Arrests of children 10-17 per | |
| | High school completion rate | |
| | Teen pregnancy, per 1,000 | |
| | Infant mortality, per 1,000 births | |
| | Unemployment rate | Maine Department of Labor |
| **Meeting Plan Benchmarks** | | Lead agency reports |