

CHICAGO'S PLAN 2.0

SEMI-ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

AUGUST 2013





365 days. 270 fewer people experiencing homelessness. 170 additional rapid re-housing units and 74 more youth shelter beds. A \$2.5 million increased investment in city resources to support the priorities of Chicago's Plan 2.0: *A Home for Everyone*. Across-the-board federal budget cuts due to sequestration. What a difference a year makes.

On the first anniversary of Plan 2.0, we celebrate the accomplishments and recognize the challenges of the past twelve months. Progress has been made on each of the seven strategic priorities, yet much hard work remains to be done. Realizing our vision of a home for everyone will require the commitment of all of Chicago, and we welcome your participation in Plan 2.0 implementation. Contact the Chicago Alliance at www.thechicagoalliance.org for more information.



PHOTO: CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND SUPPORT SERVICES

HOMELESSNESS IN CHICAGO: 2013 UPDATE

On a bitterly cold night in January, hundreds of volunteers took to the streets of Chicago to conduct the bi-annual Point in Time (PIT) count or one-day census of people who are homeless. Surveys were conducted of people staying in an emergency shelter or short-term housing program, as well as people staying in places not meant for human habitation. The Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) developed the count methodology with researchers from the University of Illinois at Chicago and deployed volunteers from multiple City of Chicago departments and partner nonprofits to conduct the count. The goal of the count is to provide a comprehensive survey of people experiencing homelessness, and to be able to compare results over time. Chicago's Plan 2.0 baseline homeless population data is updated below to reflect the 2013 results.

Figure 1: Baseline Homeless Population Data

(Source: Point in Time Counts, 2005-2013)

	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013
Singles Unsheltered	1,701	1,511	7,94 ¹	1,655	1,194
Singles Sheltered	2,337	2,259 ²	2,548	2,598	2,729
Total Singles	4,038	3,870	3,342	4,253	3,923
Persons in Families Unsheltered	26	65	90	25	22
Persons in Families Sheltered	2,651	1,987	2,808	2,268	2,331
Total Persons in Families	2,677	2,052	2,898	2,293	2,353
Total Persons	6,715	5,922	6,240	6,546	6,276

Chicago is pleased to report an **overall 4% decrease in the number of people experiencing homelessness**, a welcome success that can partially be explained by the Plan 2.0 accomplishments outlined in this report. Demographic characteristics remained steady from 2011 to 2013, with the majority of people experiencing homelessness being male (63%) and African-American (67%). However, other trends point to an increasingly high-barrier population. Veterans experiencing homelessness increased from 500 individuals (8%) to 712 individuals (11%). Reporting of mental illness, substance use, and domestic violence all increased from 2011 to 2013. The number of Chicago Public School students identified as homeless or precariously housed also continued to rise with an 8% increase from 2012 to 2013 as reported by CPS (from 17,225 students to 18,669 students). Increasing the capacity and accuracy of Chicago's data collection methods is a Plan 2.0 implementation priority, so the community will be able to rely on high-quality data in order to inform system planning.

¹ Count did not include persons on the Chicago Transit Authority.

² Count did not include people living in permanent housing with short-term supports.

THE CRISIS RESPONSE SYSTEM

GOAL

Create an effective crisis response system that prevents homelessness whenever possible and rapidly returns people who experience homelessness to stable housing.

- ▶ One of the most pressing Plan 2.0 priorities is to **develop a coordinated access system** for prevention, emergency shelter, and interim housing. As a new federal requirement for all communities, a coordinated access system is defined by a centralized set of system entry points; a universal assessment for all persons requesting assistance; and connections to the appropriate intervention. Once implemented, coordinated access in Chicago will greatly reduce the confusion and complication inherent in navigating the system without support, and will increase the appropriate matching of services to households in need.

Volunteers from across the homeless assistance system (including service providers, consumers, and private and public funders) have been working closely with the Chicago Alliance, DFSS, and a national technical assistance team provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) since the spring to develop Chicago's coordinated access system. To date, the Coordinated Access Steering Committee has researched and reviewed coordinated access models from across the county; mapped out Chicago's current access points and infrastructure; established ten principles of coordinated access; and is beginning work on designing the system framework. Community leaders and stakeholders will have multiple opportunities to weigh in on the proposed coordinated access system as it continues to be developed throughout the remainder of 2013.

- ▶ **Preventing homelessness whenever possible** is a key tenet of Chicago's Plan 2.0: *A Home for Everyone*. Targeted and strategic direct financial assistance can help an individual or family stay in their own housing and avoid the homeless assistance system altogether. This is both a cost-efficient intervention and one that yields significantly better outcomes for at-risk individuals and families. In 2012, Chicago was investing **\$2.2 million annually** in homeless prevention, with the Plan 2.0 goal of doubling that investment by 2019. Already in 2013, our community has grown its investment in homeless prevention resources by 11% (an additional \$247,000 for a total of **\$2.44 million this year**). This growth can be attributed to significant increases in public investments, including a 58% increase in the Illinois Homeless Prevention Funds for Chicago and a 41% increase in the dedicated homeless prevention resources from the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs' Supportive Services for Veteran Families programs in Chicago. Chicago's homeless assistance system will continue working to grow its pool of resources dedicated to preventing homelessness.

ACCESS TO STABLE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

GOAL

Create and maintain stable and affordable housing for households who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

- ▶ In order to achieve the vision of a home for everyone, Plan 2.0 calls for an **expansion of permanent housing options** for Chicagoans experiencing or at risk of homelessness. A range of housing options are needed, including permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, and subsidized, affordable housing. Despite tight public and private budgets, Chicago has been able to increase the number of **rapid re-housing units by 170** (8% of the seven year goal) since introducing Plan 2.0 in 2012.

The chart on the following page illustrates that there is still significant unmet need for permanent housing in the community. To calculate the level of housing need, the Chicago Alliance used the same methodology as in Plan 2.0, analyzing data from the Annual Homeless Assessment Report, Chicago's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and Housing Inventory Chart, and the 2013 Point in Time Count. To review the methodology in detail, please refer to Plan 2.0's Appendix A: Projected Need Calculations (available online at www.thechicagoalliance.org).

From 2012 to 2013, the level of unmet need did go down, though there is still much work to be done. The significant change in the unmet need for permanent supportive housing, especially for single individuals, can be attributed to a confluence of factors: increased housing stock for singles; decrease in the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness in the 2013 PIT count; and less vacancy of existing units. As the community works to increase the capacity and accuracy of our data collection systems, the Plan 2.0 team plans to update and improve the projected need methodology for 2014.



PHOTO: LA CASA NORTE

ACCESS TO STABLE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Figure 2: 2013 Projections of Housing Need
 (Source: Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness, 7/13)

	2012 Need	2013 Need	Percentage Change
Permanent Supportive Housing			
Family Units	859	869	1%
Individual Units	1,113	570	-49%
Total Units	1,972	1,439	-27%
Rapid Re-Housing			
Family Units	512	509	-1%
Individual Units	1,519	1,380	-9%
Total Units	2,031	1,889	-7%
Affordable Housing			
Family Units	1,045	1,064	2%
Individual Units	2,470	2,373	-4%
Total Units	3,515	3,437	-2%

- » Plan 2.0 also recognizes the need to **increase affordable housing options** for extremely low-income households by both harnessing additional government funding and by re-purposing the stock of foreclosed properties. The Sweet Home Chicago Coalition, led in part by the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, has helped shepherd in an exciting new city initiative that will start making progress on these goals this year. Through Chicago's TIF Purchase Rehab Program, passed by the Chicago City Council in May 2011, developers will receive TIF subsidies in certain neighborhoods in order to purchase and rehab foreclosed property and maintain the rentals units as affordable for at least 15 years. The developer can receive a higher subsidy in exchange for targeting very low-income households. The Chicago Department of Housing and Economic Development is committed to working with advocates and City Council to allocate \$1 million to each of five TIF community areas in 2013 (Chicago/Central Park; Central West; Humboldt Park; Kinzie Industrial Corridor; and a fifth TIF district to be determined soon). Plan 2.0 partners will continue to support this innovative city program that is transforming foreclosed property into affordable rental housing for those most in need.

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

GOAL

Create a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate menu of services for youth who experience homelessness in order to prevent homeless youth from becoming the next generation of homeless adults.

- ▶ Plan 2.0 is committed to preventing youth who are experiencing homelessness from becoming the next generation of homeless adults. Therefore, implementation efforts are underway to expand the comprehensive and developmentally appropriate housing and services that are available to youth in every region of the city. Since the release of Plan 2.0, Chicago has **increased the capacity of the youth housing system by 28%** with the addition of 74 new low-threshold, low-demand overnight shelter beds on the west, south, and southwest sides of Chicago, and the transition of seasonal shelters to year-round operation on the north and west sides. This represents 14% of the Plan 2.0 goal to triple the capacity of the youth housing system. The Chicago homeless assistance system will continue to plan and advocate for the expansion of other critical housing models and options for youth.
- ▶ As part of Plan 2.0 implementation and funded by the additional Chicago Department of Family and Support Services resources committed to Plan 2.0, a new citywide network of drop-in centers for youth experiencing homelessness has been created. From January to July of 2013, these centers have already engaged **587 young people** and helped them connect to vital resources. The drop-in centers offer a safe space for youth seeking refuge from the streets or other dangerous situations; help youth meet basic needs by providing food, laundry, showers, and clothing; and provide comprehensive supportive services that help youth move from crisis to stability. The drop-in centers are also working closely with the new and expanded youth shelter system to ensure more young people are accessing a safe and stable bed at night.

EMPLOYMENT

GOAL

Increase meaningful and sustainable employment opportunities for people experiencing or most at risk of homelessness.

- ▶ Living-wage employment is one of the most critical pieces to moving on from homelessness, and a key to self-sufficiency. Unfortunately, recovery in the labor market continues to be sluggish: since the introduction of Plan 2.0, unemployment in Chicago has even risen from 9.0% to 9.4%.³ At the same time, federal resources for workforce development and job training are shrinking. Therefore, it is not surprising that the **percentage of households employed at exit** from the homeless assistance system has dropped from 24% to 12%. Plan 2.0 efforts to increase meaningful and sustainable employment opportunities for people experiencing or most at risk of homelessness are needed now more than ever.
- ▶ This summer, Plan 2.0 is embarking on real change to our employment strategies with the guidance of workforce experts from both within and outside the homeless system. The **Plan 2.0 Employment Task Force** has the commitment of twenty regional leaders, representing a wide range of public and private sector partners, including the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, the Chicago Jobs Council, cutting-edge service providers like the CARA Program and Inspiration Corporation, and successful graduates of employment programs. The Task Force is charged with:
 - ▶ Conducting an assessment of the current workforce landscape;
 - ▶ Making recommendations on effective program models for people experiencing homelessness;
 - ▶ Developing a standard employment readiness assessment;
 - ▶ Setting reasonable targets for improved outcomes; and
 - ▶ Recommending systems-change strategies to achieve progress.

Over the next year, the Plan 2.0 Employment Task Force will make significant progress on their goals, all the while working to bridge the gap between the workforce development and homeless assistance systems. Their policy and program recommendations will be well-grounded in best practice and data, and will influence the system for years to come. The Task Force looks forward to updating the Plan 2.0 stakeholder community as their work progresses.

³ "Monthly, Annual Data for Chicago-Joliet-Naperville, IL." Illinois Department of Employment Security. Retrieved July 24, 2013. <http://www.ides.illinois.gov/page.aspx?item=2509>

ADVOCACY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

GOAL

Engage all of Chicago in a robust plan that creates a path to securing a home for everyone in our community.

- ▶ **Preserving and increasing public resources** committed to ending homelessness is a critical goal that requires ongoing advocacy, especially in an environment of shrinking government budgets. This year, our community experienced important gains at the state level and continues to plan for the impact of recent federal reductions.
 - ▶ Significant advocacy efforts from the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, the Supportive Housing Providers Association, Housing Action Illinois, the Chicago Alliance, and the City of Chicago resulted in flat funding or small increases in four key state homeless programs: Homelessness Prevention, Emergency and Transitional Housing, Supportive Housing, and Homeless Youth. Overall, this **totals a 4% increase in homeless services** in a year when most programs were cut by at least 1%.
 - ▶ Implementation of the Affordable Care Act created opportunities for states to **expand health care coverage and access** for residents that are not currently insured. This summer, Illinois legislators voted to expand Medicaid coverage to all low-income adults in Illinois, reaching approximately 342,000 additional Illinois residents. Illinois will begin enrollment in subsidized health programs on October 1, 2013 with coverage beginning on January 1, 2014. Homeless service providers, advocates, consumers, and the City of Chicago are working to ensure that Chicago's most vulnerable and newly eligible individuals are connected to critical insurance coverage that will lead to comprehensive physical, behavioral, and preventative health care as well as contribute to positive housing outcomes.
 - ▶ In March 2013, the U.S. Congress enacted sequestration measures that applied **across-the-board budget cuts to virtually all federal domestic programs**, including many that support homeless and at-risk households. Chicago is currently preparing for expected reductions in federal funding, including reductions directly awarded to non-profit organizations, as well as reductions in pass-through city and state funding. These indiscriminate funding cuts could potentially have a devastating impact on Chicago's ability to implement Plan 2.0 and achieve our ambitious goals. For this reason, the community continues to advocate for federal funding bills that minimize or eliminate the impact of sequestration on vulnerable households.

ADVOCACY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

- ▶ Plan 2.0 charges the Chicago Planning Council on Homelessness, the system's public-private governing body, with monitoring the Plan's progress and ensuring a comprehensive and effective homeless assistance system. This year, in an effort to align its governance and structure with new federal requirements, the Planning Council embarked on a **planning process to formalize the structure of Chicago's Continuum of Care and enhance its governance strategies**. With the support of HUD-funded technical assistance, the Governance and Structure Steering Committee, comprised of consumers, providers, funders, and advocates, solicited community feedback and prepared recommendations for changes to the Continuum of Care. The Steering Committee's goals are to promote greater inclusion in the Continuum of Care and to broaden the scope of the Continuum of Care to better align with Plan 2.0 goals. In the coming year, the Steering Committee will work with the community to translate these recommendations into a formal Continuum of Care governance charter.

It was just a year ago that Plan 2.0 was endorsed by Mayor Rahm Emanuel, and La Casa Norte will soon realize its dream of opening two new emergency overnight shelters and drop-in centers for youth experiencing homelessness. We commend the city for its leadership role in convening youth providers and encouraging shared ownership of strategies that take young people off the street, place them in safe beds, and provide them with the services they need. Plan 2.0 implementation is having a real impact on neighborhoods city-wide for those who would otherwise have no place to go.

- Sol Flores, Executive Director, La Casa Norte

CROSS-SYSTEMS INTEGRATION

GOAL

Work across public and private systems of care to ensure ending homelessness is a shared priority.

- ▶▶ Chicago was recently invited to join a national initiative, sponsored by federal funding partners, which is focused on **fostering high-level system coordination on the issue of ending chronic and veteran homelessness**. The Rapid Results Boot Camp targeted cities that, with significant increases in housing placement rates, could be on pace to end chronic and veteran homelessness by 2015. A local, cross-systems implementation team included partners from DFSS, the Chicago Housing Authority, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, the Chicago Alliance, the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center, and multiple housing providers. The local team set an ambitious 100-day goal to house 125 households, 90% of which are chronically homeless, and to maintain or increase this monthly rate thereafter. Cross-systems implementation strategies include: targeted trainings on housing eligibility and documentation; landlord recruitment and education; system-wide housing placement reporting capacity; and increased coordination with federal veteran-dedicated resources. As a result of this initiative, the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center has agreed to prioritize chronically homeless veterans who are identified through the Central Referral System (CRS) for its new allocation of HUD-VASH vouchers.
- ▶▶ This spring, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago convened a diverse group of public and private partners to endorse the strategic plan of the local SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) Consortium. The plan is focused on **improving housing stability and health outcomes** for individuals experiencing homelessness in Cook County who are also living with mental illness and/or substance use concerns. The plan focuses on four strategic priorities that contribute to the work of Plan 2.0:
 - ▶▶ Increase the number and type of supportive housing units available for this population.
 - ▶▶ Enroll targeted individuals into coordinated care services.
 - ▶▶ Simplify and expand eligibility for and access to housing, services, and benefits.
 - ▶▶ Increase and strengthen outreach efforts to better link vulnerable individuals to services.

CAPACITY BUILDING

GOAL

Ensure a strong homeless assistance system capable of implementing Plan 2.0 goals and HEARTH Act performance standards.

- ▶ Both Plan 2.0 and the federal HEARTH Act set ambitious system performance goals, promote evidence-based service provision, and increase the emphasis on data-driven decision-making. Therefore, in 2013, a range of **training and technical assistance opportunities** were provided to the agencies, volunteers, and advocates who carry out the important work of Plan 2.0.
- ▶ The Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, with support from the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), convened a series of trainings on performance measurement. CSH facilitated four sessions with approximately **100 leaders** of homeless service agencies, focusing on each provider's role in achieving the system goals set forth by Plan 2.0 and *Opening Doors*, the federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness.
- ▶ The HMIS Team of the Chicago Alliance conducted a variety of new user, specialized, and advanced trainings (both in-person and online) on Chicago's Homeless Management Information System, reaching **864 direct system users** and greatly increasing the capacity and accuracy of our community's data collection system.
- ▶ The Chicago Task Force on Homeless Youth, working with the Illinois Collaboration on Youth, Teen Living Programs, La Casa Norte, and the Broadway Youth Center, sponsored a training series targeted to youth providers this spring. Approximately **150 staff** participated in trainings on the mechanics of drop-in, harm reduction, motivational interviewing, trauma informed care, and positive youth development. In the coming year, the Task Force will expand the focus of its trainings in order to strengthen the capacity of adult-serving homeless programs to provide youth-centered services.