

Update on The Hartford Commission to End Homelessness - February 2008

We have had a lengthy phase of preparation, but our journey is now well under way. Although many of you may have seen the completed Implementation Plan, I am including the link so that anyone that missed it can review it:

http://www.hartford.gov/government/mayor/Hartford_Commission_to_End_Homelessness.pdf

Once the Mayor reviewed and accepted the Plan, and agreed to the creation of an entity to implement the Plan, Journey Home, Inc., a Connecticut non-profit was established. Journey Home is currently negotiating an agreement with the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), and its Foundation, to be its fiscal agent and to provide space. Such an agreement is a strategic fit with the goals of the Plan in terms of addressing this regional issue, and, it obviates the need to establish separate 501(c)(3) status.

We need to build on the momentum generated by the work of you, the Committee members, who worked so hard during the past 18 months. We will use email to update you and to ask for advice and assistance as we move forward. It will be important not only to have your continued involvement, but to have you spread the message to your neighbors, co-workers and friends. We can end homelessness, but it must be a concerted effort by all of us.

Here are a few of the steps we've taken recently:

- Establishment of a the corporate entity, Journey Home, Inc., with a Board of Directors;
- Requested and received a three year commitment of funding from Mayor Perez and the City Council;
- Initiated a search for an Executive Director;
- Engaged a firm to begin to develop a Public Awareness campaign;
- Stimulated and participated in the one day Homeless Connect, held at St. Patrick – St. Anthony Church in December;
- Journey Home was given over 100 rooms of furniture from local hotel. The furniture is only 5 years old and has already begun to find its way to families in need;
- Initiated development of a pilot for a Prevention/Rapid Re-housing program, which is expected to be up and running later this year;
- Engaged Mark Fox, a former banking executive and consultant, to serve as Interim Coordinator to implement key strategies until a permanent Executive Director and staff are on board. Mark has been involved in a wide range of community service activities throughout his working career and is a welcome addition.

I will try to update you again in a month or so and will include some concrete ideas on how each of you may be able to get involved in this important endeavor as we continue moving forward.

Peace,
Bill Farley