

OPENING DOORS - CONNECTICUT

Development of a framework to prevent and end homelessness in Connecticut

January 2012

What's our starting point?

At any one time, close to **4,500** people in Connecticut are homeless. Over 800 of them are children.

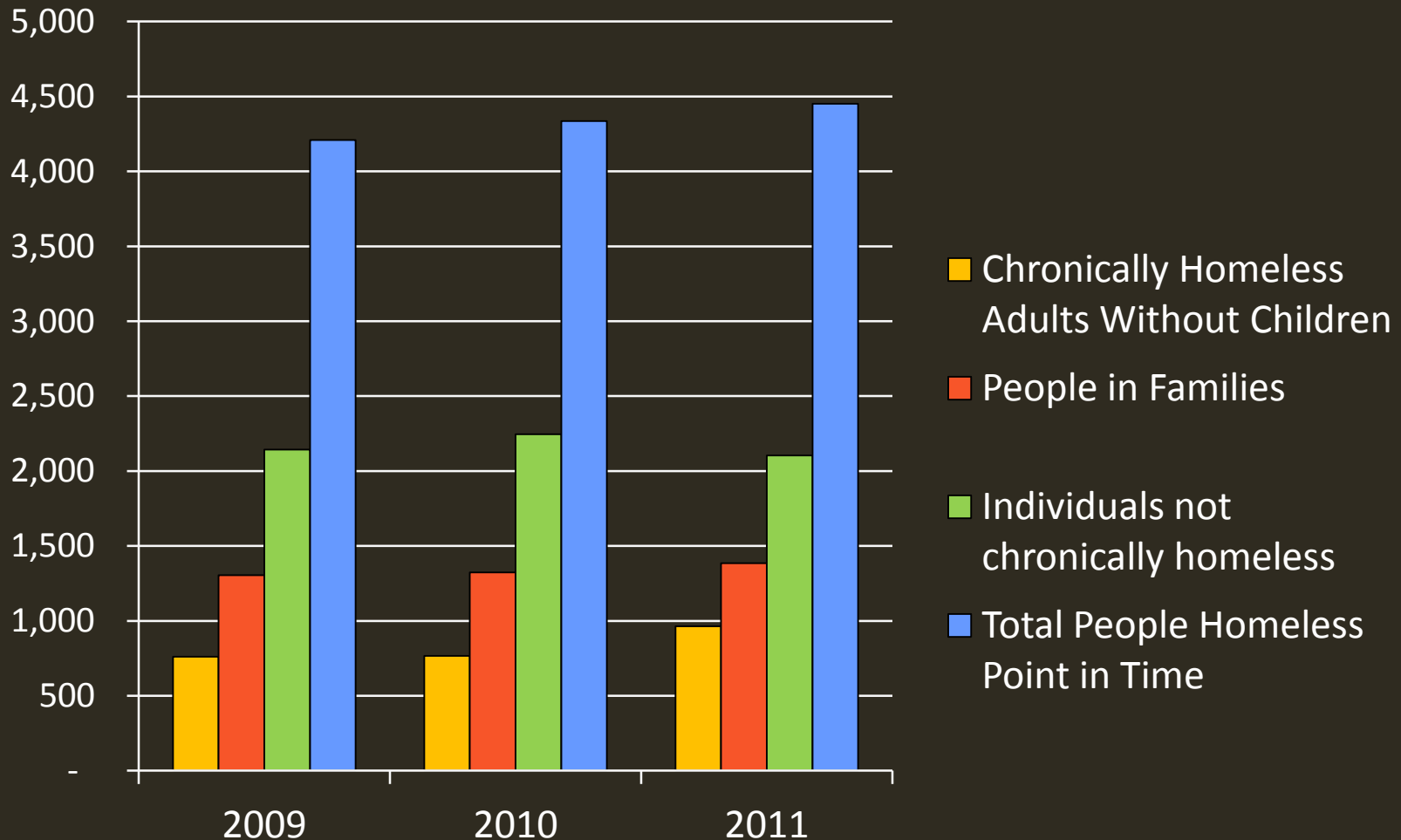
Three times as many people experience homelessness over the course of the year. **13,400** people in Connecticut had at least one episode of homelessness in 2010.

The number of people homeless in Connecticut at any one time has increased by **8** percent over two years.

National Alliance to End Homelessness estimates that in the next three years homelessness in the United States could increase by 5 percent if additional intervention does not occur.

People Experiencing Homelessness in CT

Point in Time 2009, 2010, 2011



Trends

2009-2011

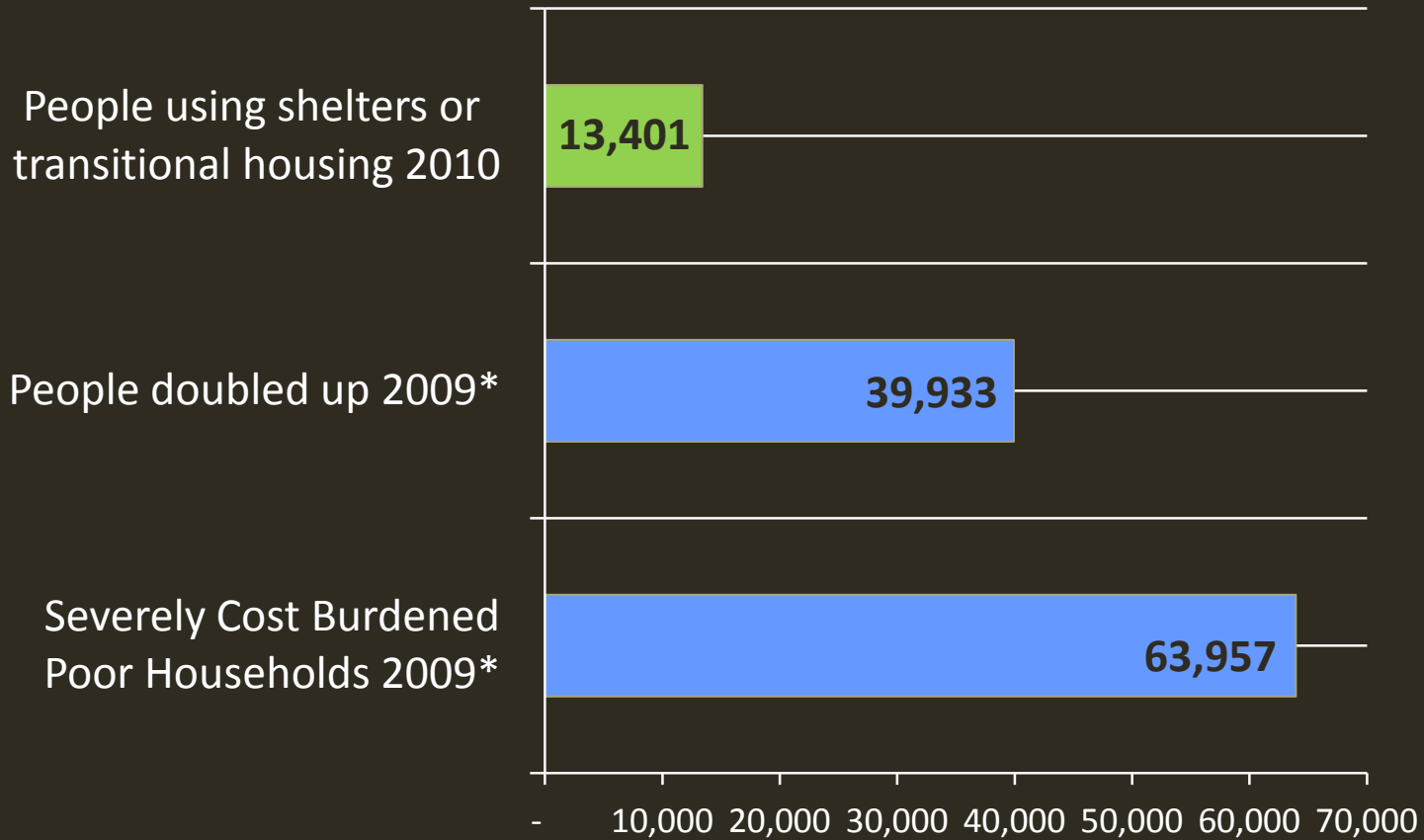


- **Significant increase in chronic homelessness**
 - 26% increase since 2009; 963 adults
 - Represents one in three homeless single adults at a point in time
 - More are living outdoors
 - 92% increase in unsheltered since 2009
 - Represents one third of chronically homeless adults
- **More families are homeless**
 - 12% increase since 2009
 - 482 families at a point in time
 - Over 3,100 over the course of a year
 - 15% increase in families staying in shelters from 2010 to 2011

Three times as many people experience homelessness over the course of the year than at a single point in time

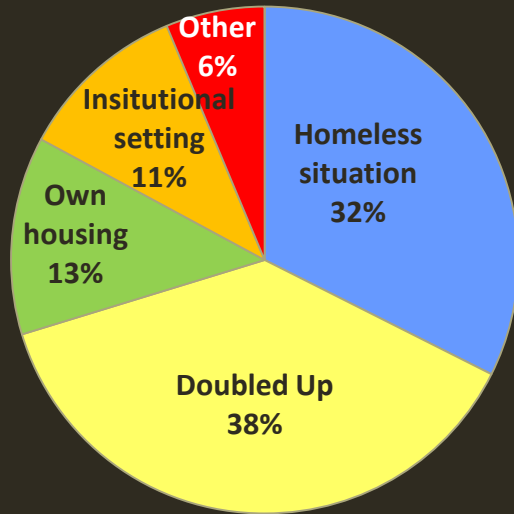


Homelessness is closely related to housing instability



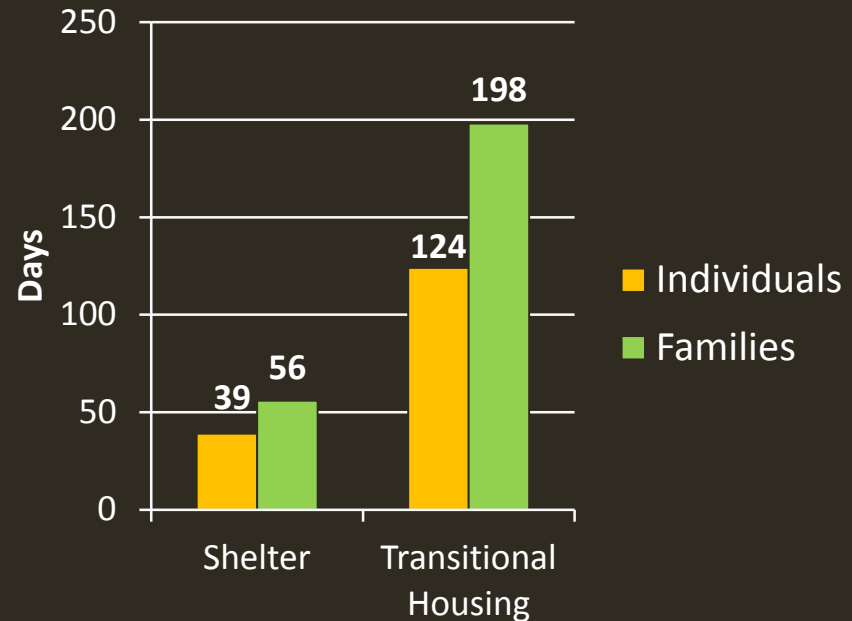
*Source: NAEH and US Census

- Homeless situation
- Doubled Up
- Own housing
- Institutional setting
- Other



Living situation prior to entry into shelter or transitional housing 2010

Average number of bed nights of people in shelter and transitional housing 2011



Returns to Shelter

Shelter and Transitional Housing

Percent of adults in shelter or transitional housing in 2010 who were also in shelter the prior year

Families	10%
Individuals	27%

Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing

Percent receiving services in 2010-2011 who returned to shelter

	PREVENTION	RAPID RE-HOUSING
Families	4%	5%
Individuals	6%	3%

What we're facing



- Increasing homelessness if current trends continue
- Shelters at capacity; more people living outdoors
- More homeless families headed by young mothers with young children
- Returning Veterans, “couch surfing” youth could be new generation of chronically homeless if not prevented
- Expiration of federal stimulus funding for Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP) in 2012

HEARTH Act



New metrics for measuring our impact:

- Reductions in homelessness at a point in time and annually
- Reductions in length of episodes of homelessness
- Reductions in returns to shelter

New flexibility in use of HUD homeless assistance funds

The Framework

**A collective effort with a common goal:
End homelessness in Connecticut**

Purpose of Opening Doors - CT

- **Engage, guide, and support** efforts to prevent and end homelessness in Connecticut among adults, families, youth and Veterans.
- **Foster change** leading to substantial reductions in homelessness

Partners in this effort

1. Advocates & intermediaries
2. Government
3. Local planning bodies
4. People experiencing homelessness
5. Providers of housing and services
6. Philanthropy
7. Private sector, institutions, and faith communities

Inspired by and aligned with the Federal Opening Doors Plan

Vision

No one should experience homelessness - no one should be without a safe, stable place to call home.

Goals

- Finish the job of ending **chronic homelessness** by 2015
- Prevent and end homelessness among **Veterans** by 2015
- Prevent and end homelessness among **families, youth and children** by 2020
- Set a path for ending all types of homelessness

Grounded in a set of core values and guiding principles

Core values

- Homelessness is unacceptable. It is solvable and preventable.
- There are no “homeless people,” rather people who have lost their homes who deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Homelessness is expensive. Invest in solutions

Key principles

- Stable housing is the foundation.
- What happens at the ground level matters.
- Collaboration is fundamental to our success.
- Our strategies and solutions must be driven in a way that puts the person or family facing homelessness at the center.
- Strategies must be implementable, user-friendly, cost effective, and scalable.

Several strategies were used to devise the framework

Listening
Sessions

Online
survey

Kitchen
Cabinet

Individual
engagement

Research

Document
development

Listening Sessions

Online survey

Six sessions:

- Homeless Crisis Response
 - Families, Children & Youth
 - Health
 - Criminal Justice
 - Community Engagement and Workforce
 - Housing
-
- 120 participants in sessions
 - 170 online survey respondents

Kitchen Cabinet

Provided strategic thinking on the process for development of the framework document, its content, and on stakeholder and policymaker engagement process

Includes leaders from several major advocacy and intermediary organizations and Melville Trust

Individual engagement

Engaged several other key individuals and committees within government and the nonprofit community

Research

Document development

- Developed “sector snapshots” of best practices and current use of public dollars in CT
- Analyzed data on homelessness and housing supply, and projected needs for housing assistance
- Digested stakeholder input, reviewed community plans, identified effective practices
- Drafted potential strategies
- Identified various resource options

The framework is centered on five focus areas



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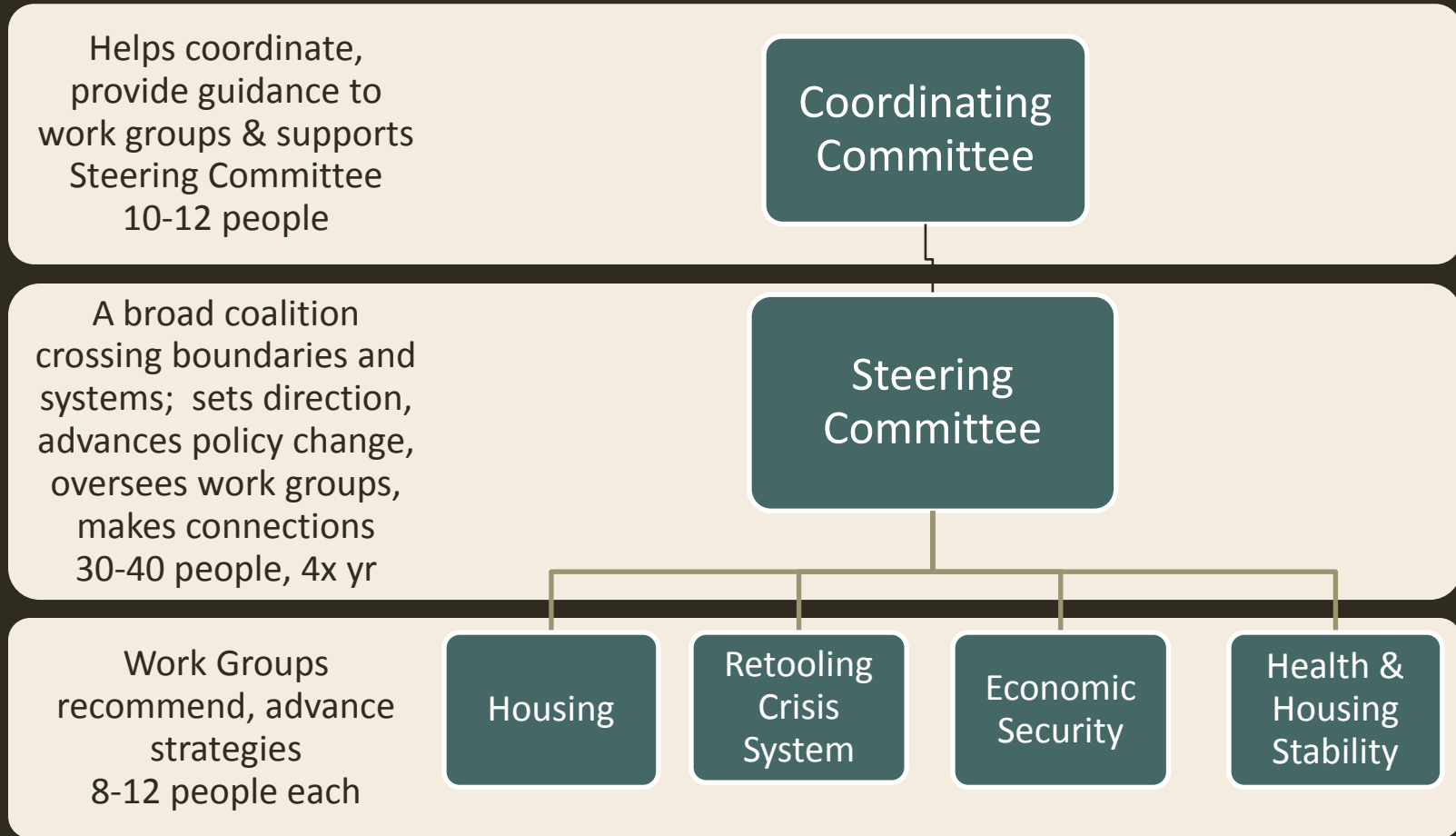


Leadership, Collaboration, & Civic Engagement

Lead, manage, and monitor the change process

- **Reaching Home 2.0** – becomes the leadership structure for planning and oversight of Opening Doors – CT that builds on existing partnerships between the public, private and nonprofit sectors.
- Develop operational plans at the state and local level with specific actions linked to resources and responsible parties.
- Create opportunities to ensure that the voices of people who have experienced homelessness and people working on the front lines of service delivery are heard.
- Develop outcome measures at both the system and program levels.
- As the State looks at its overall use of data and technology, consider the creation of a human services data warehouse to provide a platform for integrating key data across HMIS and human services.

Reaching Home 2.0



Reaching Home Steering Committee includes members from several key sectors

- Supportive and affordable housing developers
- Providers of services to people in housing
- People who have experienced homelessness
- Public housing authorities
- Advocacy organizations and intermediaries
- Philanthropy
- Community planning groups (10 year plans, COGs, etc)
- State and federal agencies, quasi-public agencies
- Business community
- Workforce development
- Health and behavioral health care
- Faith communities
- Universities

Workgroups



Affordable and Supportive Housing

Strengthen our housing delivery system

Create supportive and affordable housing at a scale sufficient to meet the need

- Expand and target rent subsidies.
- Stimulate the development of supportive housing and of mixed income communities that include units affordable to households with extremely low incomes.
- Embed strategies to prevent and end homelessness within cohesive State and municipal housing policies that set clear outcome targets.
- Aggressively leverage and compete for Federal rent subsidies, housing development dollars, and service funding linked to housing.

Retooling the Crisis Response System

Recalibrate our response to housing loss

- Support community or regional-level development of a coordinated system of response centered on prevention, housing assistance, and housing stabilization.
- Target housing assistance to those most likely to enter or remain in shelter or in unsheltered settings.
- Strengthen the capacity of CT's HMIS system to meet expanded data-matching, reporting and research needs.
- Align state and local activities.

Economic Security

Foster housing retention through income growth and employment

- Link workforce system resources (skill development, job development) with the housing assistance system to create effective pathways to employment for vulnerable populations.
- Align public sector programs to ensure effective systems coordination with shared goals.
- Expand income growth for persons with disabilities.

Health and Housing Stability

Reduce medical vulnerability and frequent use of health care systems

- Align state and local strategies to support the goals of improved access to health care and effective use of appropriate types of health services.
- Maximize the use of existing and new health sector resources to address both the housing and service needs of extremely vulnerable populations
- Implement housing-based approaches to align with the health reform goals of prevention, greater access, better quality, and lower cost.
- Expand the use of HMIS to support new targeting approaches and to collect and disseminate quality data about use of healthcare systems.

Health and Housing Stability

Support the housing stability of vulnerable families, children and youth

- Assess the feasibility of deploying a “systems navigator” function that will align and coordinate services at the individual family level across sectors and at different levels of service delivery.
- Incentivize the creation of service-supported affordable housing for families.
- Develop targeted outreach strategies to identify and enumerate youth and young adults without permanent housing and connect them to the housing and supports they need. Develop partnerships with school systems.
- Expand the range of housing options for youth and young adults facing housing loss.

Health and Housing Stability

Break the cycle of homelessness and re-incarceration

- Target and align housing resources and supports to prevent and end homelessness among people leaving incarceration.

The Framework is only a starting point for our next steps

- Recommit ourselves to ending homelessness
- Set our sights on a broader set of goals
- Build on the foundations we've laid
- Form new alliances and new business models
- Encourage innovation
- Remain focused on solutions
- Track our progress
- Hold ourselves accountable
- Celebrate our successes