Region VII Supportive Housing Development Collaborative Meeting (SHDC)
Convened by the Money Follows the Person (MFP) Initiative &
The Burleigh County Housing Authority
Thursday, August 14, 2014
Draft Meeting Summary

Proposed Meeting Goals:
• To gather in a spirit of collegiality and cooperation;
• To receive a report on the purpose of the Supportive Housing Collaborative;
• To receive and discuss a draft report of the Statewide Supportive Housing Development Collaborative goals and action steps;
• To share/identify current housing and collaboration successes and challenges in the region;
• To identify short and long term housing and support service needs;
• To identify additional stakeholders to include in these efforts; and
• To develop a plan for next steps and continued regional collaboration and communication.

Meeting Participants
Jake Reuter, Cheryl Merck, Suzanne Blessum, and Kylie Mundt from the MFP Project; Max Wetz and Jennifer Henderson, NDHFA; Charles Bisnett, Pride, Inc.; Dan Donlin, Dave Draovich and Mark Buschena, Bismarck Police Department; Mike Remboldt, HIT, Inc.; Dwight Barden, Burleigh County Housing Authority; Kelsey Bless, ND Department of Human Services; Kim Osadchuk, Burleigh County Social Services; and Jim Fischer, WCHSC.

Facilitated by
The Consensus Council, Inc.

Welcome, Introductions and Meeting Process
The participants were welcomed and a round of self-introductions was completed. The consensus-based decision-making process and proposed ground rules were presented, explained and accepted for use in the meeting process as follows:

1. It’s your show.
2. Everyone is equal.
3. No relevant topic is excluded.
4. No discussion is ended.
5. Respect opinions.
6. Respect the time.
7. Silence is agreement.
8. Non-attribution.
9. Keep the facilitators accurate.
10. Have fun!

The draft agenda and meeting materials were reviewed and accepted without changes.
The Supportive Housing Development Collaborative (SHDC)
Jake Reuter, Director, and Cheryl Merck, State Housing Coordinator of the Money Follows the Person (MFP) program for the North Dakota Department of Human Services (DHS), reviewed the history and purpose of the MFP program and the intended mission, plans and goals of the SHDC (attached).

Region VII Community/Regional Housing Collaboration
The participants engaged in a discussion process focused on identifying both the successes and challenges regarding housing in the Bismarck/Mandan area.

Successes – What we do well
- HIT, Pride and Enable (local providers of service for individuals with developmental disabilities) are involved in a limited, but successful program that purchases and rents duplex apartments to individuals involved with their services.
- Programs providing services to youth who are in transition have established a limited, but again successful, fund to help offset and pay for apartment deposits.
- There is a good spirit of communication and support between and among community service providers.
- The Bismarck Police Department works with a Landlord/Tenant group that attempts to identify, communicate about and resolve dangerous or problematic situations in apartments on a routine basis.
- Grandma’s House – rental units for sex offenders – has been a successful effort with few police interventions. It is rumored to be up for sale and, if sold, might create a housing gap for “hard to place” people.
- Ruth Meiers Hospitality House does a great service but is faced with a lack of community and neighborhood support.
- A number of organizations provide on-site support and staffing to individuals living in rental situations (a limited, but effective effort).
- The ND Transition from Prison to the Community Initiative, funded with grant dollars through the Department of Justice Second Chance Act (http://www.manyppt.com/10/NORTH-DAKOTA-TRANSITION-FROM-PRISON-TO-COMMUNITY-INITIATIVE.html) assists in planning for and helping offenders make a successful transition back into communities settings. The Access to Recovery (ATR) grant program was identified as an additional option to assist in this process.
- The MFP initiative has allowed for funding to be used for rental deposits and moving expenses for people leaving the ND State Hospital in Jamestown.
- There has been success in other communities (Grand Forks) by using a community land trust model.

Challenges – What we can do better
- Construction costs are increasing dramatically throughout the region.
- There are not enough affordable (and decent) units available.
- Transition Youth (TY) - numbers are increasing and their needs are more complex:
  - Poor or no credit histories;
  - Non-emancipated - cannot legally sign leases;
  - Multiple legal issues related to age and status;
  - Increasing numbers of female TY with children and no available housing;
  - Have chemical dependency problems;
- Lack of practical living skills (money management, cooking, independent living skills);
- Poor/No parenting or coping skills;
- Gender safety issues - female TY at risk.

- Confidentiality issues interfere with agency communication and coordination.
- Couch Surfing - multiple, not authorized residents.
- Units that are available are not affordable to many populations (youth, seniors, people with disabilities, homeless and unemployed).
- Many situations create circumstances that require police involvement and then, criminal records negatively affect rental acceptance - vicious cycle.
  - Police are service of last resort and in most cases have no service or referral/assistance options;
  - Safe environmental focus/need creates a domino effect making it eventually impossible to find housing in the city, area and region;
  - Confidentiality and coordination/communication limits.
- Sex offenders, felons, parolees have limited options and services available to them.
- There are not sufficient services (general support, counseling and addiction) available to meet the needs.
- Plans, services and interventions are not well coordinated in many situations.
- Bad histories (credit and legal) affect available options.
- Specialized needs and affordability affect the ability of seniors to have and maintain housing.
- Increases in services and surveillance result in increased overall costs to providers.
- Confidentiality, HIPPA regulations and mistrust make coordination very difficult.
- "NIMBY" – Not in my backyard attitudes and concerns limit option.
- Contradictory and numerous/excessive regulations (colocations, % levels, etc.) make development and implementation of projects difficult:
  - Costs/crowding/availability;
  - Federal tax credit - increase equity to lower rents;
  - Multiple regulations disqualify those that need assistance the most;
  - 1000+ individuals are currently on the Burleigh County Housing voucher waiting list (with an additional 850 currently being served in housing units);
  - Recipient liability regulations force individuals to make difficult and "bad" choices;
  - Cliff effect - losing all assistance of benefits when a specific income level is attained.
- Wrap-around service staffing is low wage and benefits category that creates a workforce barrier.
- The numbers of individuals with a dual diagnosis are increasing and are presenting more complex needs:
  - Must have services to survive;
  - WCHSC has a 6-week waiting list and limited services and resources - drawn out process to qualify or secure services causes many people to give up/not pursue services;
- Burleigh County Social Services is considering hiring on-site treatment staff to do mental health and chemical dependency assessments.
• There is NO rental assistance program available through the state - little actual funding provided by the state to address the broad spectrum of housing needs.
• The Housing Incentive Fund (HIF) is not permanent and needs increased funding.
• Increasing income gap between the “have and have not” people in the community and state.
• Generational affects - unskilled generation.
• Unmet health concerns and services - uninsured and underinsured.
• Workforce and training issues - adult children unable to afford housing and are moving back in with their parents.
• Increasing affordability gap in light of rising rent - some can afford decent housing but increasing numbers cannot.
• Workforce issues relative to consumers and professionals:
  o Improved skills training, to increase income, to increase living options;
  o Consideration of reciprocal professional licensing and certification.

Organizational outline for the Region VII Supportive Housing Development Collaborative
The participants agreed on the following organizational points:
• The Region VII SHDC will be a group of individuals representing a wide variety of housing issues that will work together to identify and address housing-related concerns.
• The group will be solution and action directed - not just a forum to voice concerns, but a vehicle to get something done.
• The Region VII SHDC will encourage collaboration with all housing concerns groups and initiatives - rather than becoming another housing group, it will work to identify and recruit existing groups to provide overall organization and leverage resources and influence to address housing needs.
• The group will support the sharing and distribution of information including group efforts to educate its members on the purpose and activities of the partner members and other best practices (Memphis Model, Fargo’s HIPPA exceptions, etc.).
• The members will support the "bricks and mortar" needs as well as the support and wrap around services needed by multiple groups and populations (MI, people with disabilities, frail elderly, TY, offenders, families, etc. - a more complete list will be developed).
• The group agreed to further discuss the adoption of the "housing first" philosophy.
• The group will meet on a 4 to 6 week basis and the MFP staff will provide facilitation, documentation and coordination services.

Additional Stakeholders
The following were identified as potential SHDC members:
• Bismarck/Mandan Development Association
• Ruth Meiers Hospitality House
• Mandan/Morton County Agencies (Social Services, Housing Authority, Police, Sheriff)
• Local Homeless Coalition (Katie Lee)
• WCHSC - Relevant service departments - MH, substance abuse, aging services, etc.
• School District liaisons
• TPC and Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation (Tom Earhart)
Future Meeting/Collaboration Plans
The following next steps were identified:

• The Consensus Council will develop and provide a (draft) meeting summary to the MFP staff for distribution to the participants and potential members.
• The invitation list developed by Burleigh County Housing will be correlated with the attendance sheet and the list of additional stakeholders. This list will be used as the member list and further refined as the group develops.
• The MFP staff will utilize the list to develop two surveys/areas of research:
  o Identification of other groups that are working on housing issues (these groups will be contacted and encouraged to bring their issues and resources to the Region VII SHDC); and
  o Collection of each member's "Top Three" housing priorities for Region VII.
• The Region VII SHDC will meet again on Monday, September 22, 2014 - 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Unfinished business will be addressed and the group will work on reaching a consensus on their priorities and establishing work groups to begin developing strategies to address them.

Summary Comments
Participants were asked to provide a short, "bumper sticker" comment on their impressions of the first meeting.

• There is a lot of energy and enthusiasm in the room.
• We covered a great deal of information and we need to figure out what law enforcements role can/will be.
• It was a learning day - we need to move forward.
• We need to ensure that we are not just another meeting, that we have a good, collaborative effort.
• I appreciate the investment of everyone's time and expertise.
• Housing is a community problem and we need to work together to address it.
• We have a great deal of potential. We need to keep moving.
• It was a small group but we had great discussions.
• It is affirming to see the knowledge and commitment - it is great that people get it.
• Communication is the only way to get things done. It was a productive meeting.
• Local, state, regional - we need mutual understanding of the problems and to coordinate where we are going.
• We have identified the needs and now we need to work on how to move forward - addressing housing and support services.

Adjourn
The participants were thanked for their investment with special thanks to Burleigh County Housing for hosting the meeting and assisting in the arrangements, and MFP for their efforts in putting the idea into action. The meeting was adjourned by consensus of the group.

MISSION: The Money Follows the Person Program helps older adults and people with developmental disabilities transition from nursing homes or institutions to community living that meets their needs and wants.
http://www.ndcpd.org/mfp/about.shtml