

# YOUR WAY HOME MONTGOMERY COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 - 2015

Government, Philanthropy & Community Partners Working Together To End Homelessness



464

Residents  
living in  
shelter or on  
the streets

60%

of our  
homeless are  
families

Living in parks  
Living in cars  
Living in garages  
Living in the streets  
Living in tents  
Living in shelters  
Leads to depression  
Leads to physical & mental illness  
Leads to child neglect





# The Old Ways: Silos & Side Doors

# An Evolving Approach To Ending Homelessness



1930s



1980s



1990s



2013

# Your Way Home Montgomery County

is a transformational partnership between government, philanthropy and community organizations to end homelessness and housing instability for hardworking families and vulnerable residents



# Our Purpose and Value

Your Way Home Montgomery County is a transformational partnership between government, philanthropy and nonprofits to solve – finally – the problem of homelessness in our community. By forging new networks, inspiring new ways of working, leveraging existing community assets and planning for dramatic changes in federal policy and funding priorities, Your Way Home Montgomery County is creating:

- **A Rare and Meaningful Opportunity:** To end homelessness and housing instability for hardworking families and vulnerable residents throughout Montgomery County, which will make our community stronger for everyone.
- **An Innovative and Collaborative Approach for Government and Community Organizations:** To achieve better results and drive down costs by using empirically supported strategies like Housing First, Critical Time Intervention and Permanent Supportive Housing to help residents achieve housing stability.
- **A New Role for Philanthropy:** To help lead and contribute to a more coordinated, data-driven, outcomes-oriented response to ending homelessness that leverages and makes better use of philanthropic investments to grow the impact of ideas, programs, technologies and policies that work.

# Our Guiding Principles

- All residents of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania should live in **safe and affordable housing** and have access to **consumer-driven, coordinated** and **exceptional quality services** that promote housing stability, address and eliminate existing homelessness and prevent future homelessness.
- A **public-private partnership** between local government, philanthropy, nonprofit service providers and the community is the best way to end family, youth, veteran and chronic street homelessness in Montgomery County.
- Funders, providers, and consumers **share responsibility** for community and individual outcomes.
- **Scaling the impact of what works** is achieved through continual learning, evaluation, community engagement and prototyping new ideas.
- Investing in **systems change** (rather than individual programs) is a better solution for ending homelessness that inspires:
  1. More effective and creative use of scarce public and private resources with transparency and oversight and,
  2. The use of innovative and transformational strategies to develop a more robust, resilient and efficient housing crisis response system.
- **Housing stability** is the key to leading safe, happy and productive lives for everyone in our community but needs to be combined with economic opportunity, food security, health care access and community connections.



# Our Vision For Change

Your Way Home Montgomery County is a new and more effective system for preventing and ending homelessness. We are focused on enhancing consumer, provider and funder efficiencies—coordinating services, eliminating duplicative efforts, building capacity and resiliency and weaving together our partners in a comprehensive effort. Homelessness and housing instability are best solved when philanthropy, government, health and human service providers, law enforcement, housing developers, landlords, consumer advocates and community partners strive to address this complex social problem as one. Together, we will quickly get people into permanent housing and coordinate the resources they need to stay there. We will measure our success by the number of Montgomery County residents for whom homelessness and its devastating consequences have been prevented or ended quickly and more effectively. Ultimately, our goal is to help families and individuals achieve housing and financial stability as well as food security, better health outcomes, a higher quality of life and lasting independence.

# Our Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Your Way Home Montgomery County makes a positive collective impact on ending and preventing homelessness in Montgomery County through public-private partnership, systems change and service innovation

# Our Strategic Goals

Goal 2: The Homeless Prevention Center provides centralized and effective entry into Montgomery County's housing crisis response system

# Our Strategic Goals

Goal 3: Housing Resource Centers are the primary community destinations for ending and preventing resident homelessness

# Our Strategic Goals

Goal 4: Residents in need of shelter or transitional housing exit to permanent housing more quickly and effectively

# Our Strategic Goals

Goal 5: Residents with the most severe barriers to housing success are able to live successfully and independently in permanent supportive housing or community living

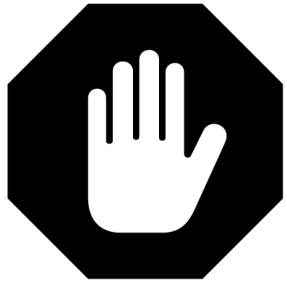
# Our Strategic Goals

Goal 6: All residents have better access to safe and affordable housing

# Our Strategic Goals

Goal 7: Your Way Home Montgomery County grows its impact by actively engaging a large and diverse set of funders, champions, allies and supporters





We will prevent more families and individuals from experiencing homelessness



We will help homeless residents achieve permanent housing stability more quickly & efficiently

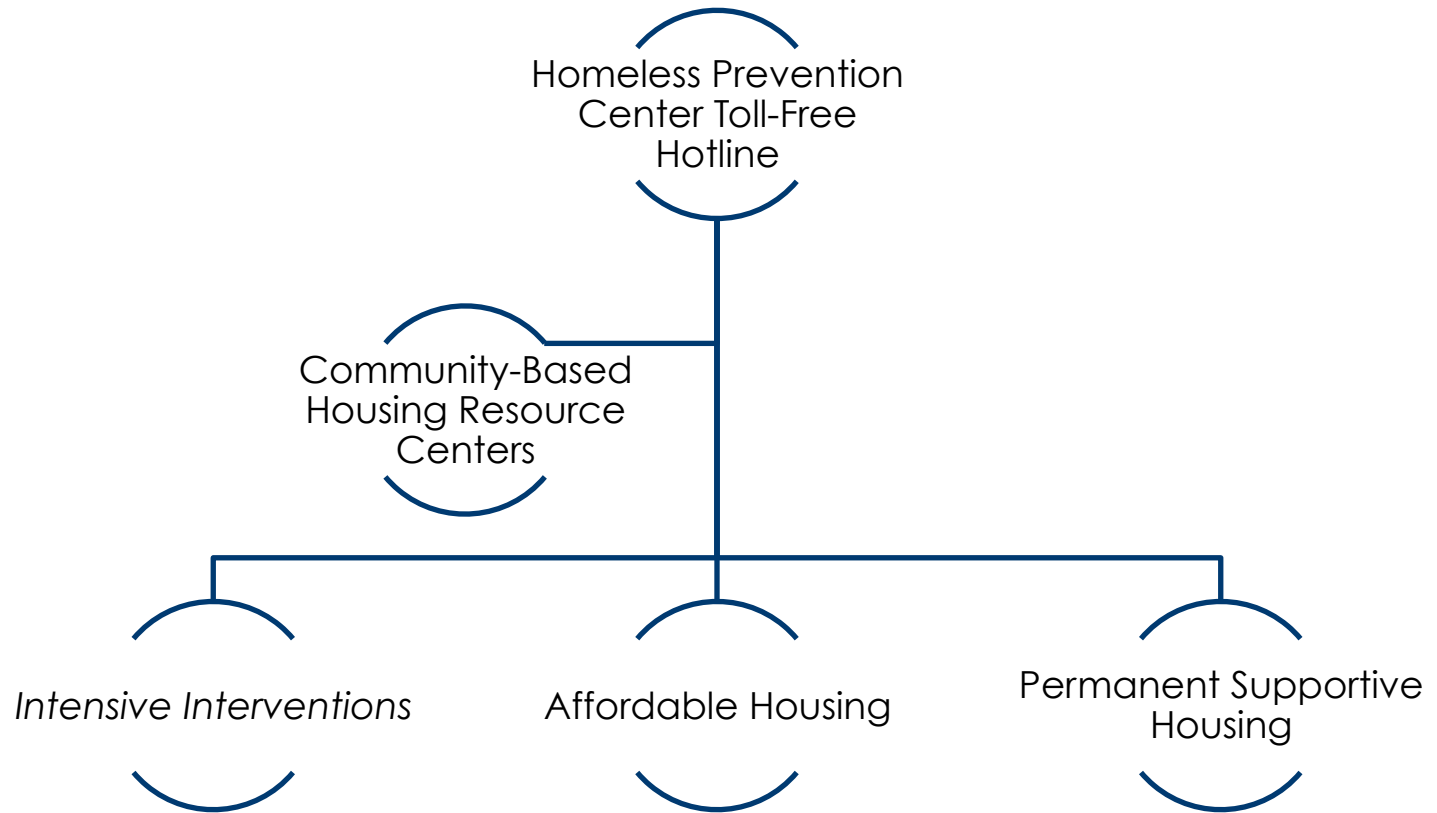


We will use progressive engagement to preserve the most expensive interventions for residents with severe barriers to housing success

# Simple. Efficient. Robust.

In the near future, Montgomery County residents experiencing a housing crisis will simply contact the Homeless Prevention Center toll-free hotline for screening and referral to new community-based Housing Resource Centers (HRC's). HRC's will serve as central locations for coordinated housing crisis response for families and individuals in each major region of Montgomery County, connecting residents with needed resources, support and community connections to secure permanent housing and remain stably housed. HRC's will use a progressive engagement strategy, a nationally recognized best practice in addressing homelessness, to provide customized levels of assistance to families and preserve the most expensive interventions for residents with the most severe barriers to housing success. HRC's will connect our most vulnerable residents, including persons with mental, physical, or developmental disabilities, substance use disorders or diagnosed with AIDS and related diseases, to specialty providers skilled in helping these populations secure and maintain permanent supportive housing.

# Our System Design



# Homeless Prevention Center & Housing Resource Centers

The Homeless Prevention Center toll-free hotline will conduct initial screening and assessment for housing crisis response and refer families and individuals to the nearest Housing Resource Center (HRC) in their community. HRC staff will have two primary functions. First, Housing Stability Coaches are professionals or trained volunteers that help families and individuals identify their goals for housing stability and provide them with appropriate prevention services and resources (to maintain their current housing) or rapid re-housing services and resources to exit from homelessness to permanent housing. Second, Housing Locator Specialists will help families and individuals locate and secure permanent housing in their community by building strong relationships with landlords, real estate agents and permanent supportive housing providers.

# Housing Resource Centers & Progressive Engagement

Housing Resource Centers (HRCs) are envisioned to be the central locations for coordinated housing crisis response for families and individuals who are homeless or at-risk for homelessness in every major region of Montgomery County. HRCs will provide residents with the appropriate resources, support and community connections to find and maintain permanent housing and remain stably housed. HRCs will employ Progressive Engagement, a nationally recognized best practice in addressing homelessness, which provides customized levels of assistance to families and preserves the most expensive interventions for households with the most severe barriers to housing success. HRCs will utilize prevention, diversion, and rapid re-housing or provide referrals to intensive interventions to help as many people avoid entering the homeless system as possible, but connect them with temporary shelter if appropriate.

# Why Change?

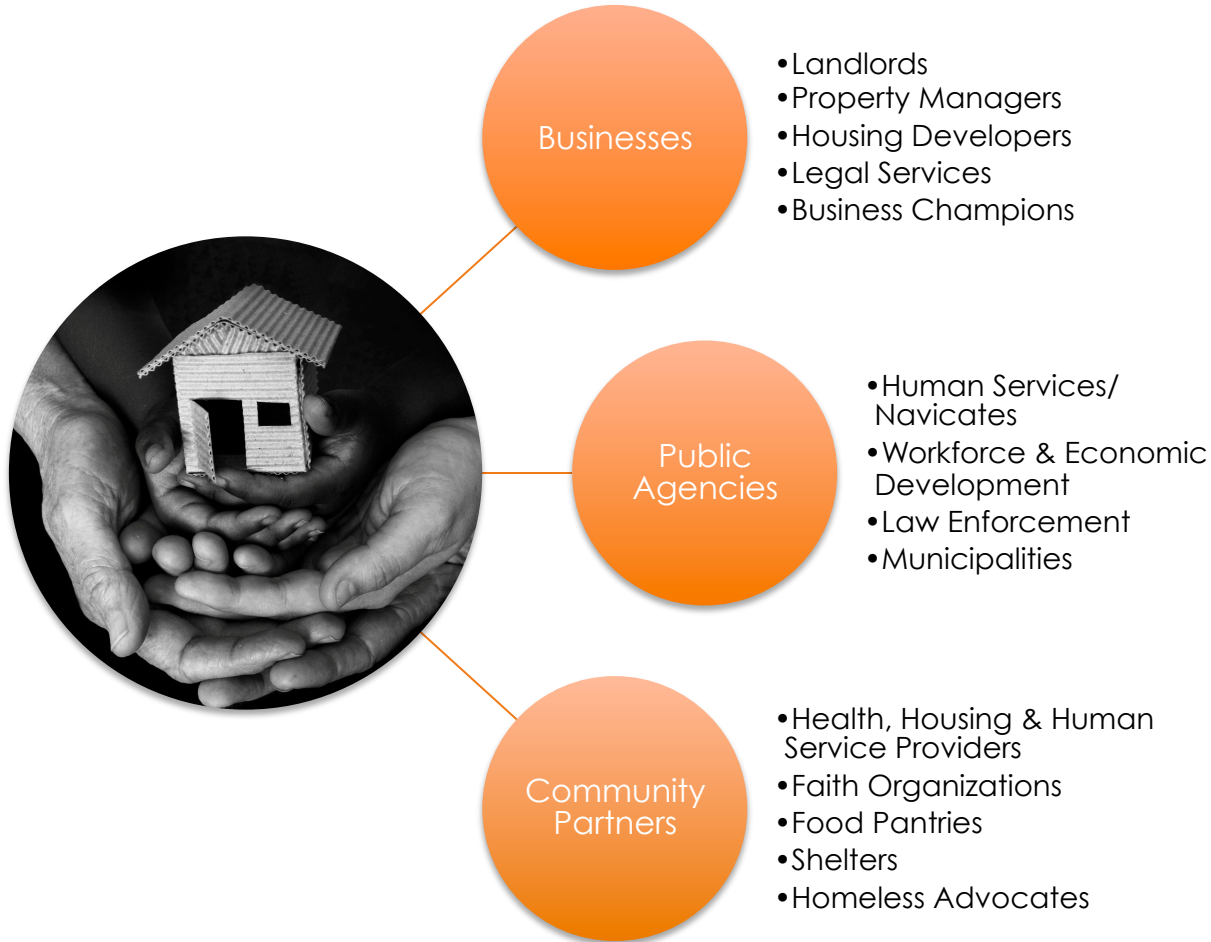
## Value Vs. Traditional Approaches

	Consumers	Funders	Providers
Achieves better results	✓	✓	✓
Drives down costs	✓	✓	✓
Leverages existing strengths & assets	✓	✓	✓
Fosters collaboration	✓	✓	✓
Sparks community connections	✓	✓	✓
Inspires innovation	✓	✓	✓
Breaks down silos	✓	✓	✓
Leads to lasting independence	✓		

# How We Will Grow Our Impact

We will grow our impact by constantly evaluating, improving and scaling what works. Our new infrastructure for success includes a Community Advisory Board, a donor-designated Fund For Your Way Home Montgomery County, a Learning Collaborative to build the capacity of community partners and a coordinated intake, assessment and client management system.

# Our Partners





# An Innovative and Collaborative Approach for Government and Community Organizations

★ Coordinated housing  
crisis response

★ Data-powered  
community solutions

★ Performance-based  
contracting

★ Affordable and  
permanent supportive  
housing development

# A New Role for Philanthropy

★ Growing the impact of ideas, programs, technologies and policies that work

★ Investing in service provider capacity and learning

★ Leading a Community Advisory Board

# GET INVOLVED



# Your Way Home Montgomery County

## Current Partners

COUNTY GOVERNMENT	PHILANTHROPY	COMMUNITY
Board of Commissioners Commerce Department Community Connections – Navicates Program Department of Aging & Adult Services Department of Behavioral Health/ Developmental Disabilities Department of Child Care Services Department of Children and Youth Department of Health Department of Housing & Community Development (Lead agency) Department of Veterans Affairs Montgomery County Housing Authority	Genuardi Family Foundation Montgomery County Foundation, Inc. North Penn Community Health Foundation North Penn United Way United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey	Coordinated Homeless Outreach Center - Resources For Human Development Genesis Housing Corporation Greater North Penn Collaborative for Health and Human Services Habitat For Humanity of Montgomery County Interfaith Hospitality Network Main Line Inter-Faith Housing Alliance of Ambler Keystone Opportunity Center Laurel House Open Hearth Petra Community Housing Public Health Management Corporation Salvation Army Tri-County Community Network Visiting Nurse Association Community Services

Systems Change Consulting and Strategy Design by Capacity For Change, LLC

# A Legacy of Collaboration

The seeds for the Your Way Home Montgomery County Public-Private Partnership were sown in 2007. A group of housing and homeless service providers in the North Penn region of Montgomery County came together to discuss better ways of serving their community by coordinating the intake and referral of residents who were homeless or at-risk for homelessness. In 2008, the North Penn Community Health Foundation and five of these community providers established the **North Penn Housing/Homeless Providers Network**. The Foundation retained Capacity For Change, LLC to produce the North Penn Housing/Homeless Providers Network Situational Analysis Report, which identified strengths and challenges within the region's continuum of care and recommended priorities for system improvement. The Network soon after invited the Montgomery County Department of Housing & Community Development and other private grantmakers and community service providers to the table and became the **Montgomery County Housing/Homeless Providers Network**, the collaborative working group from which all future strategic initiatives sprung forth.

The first major public-private initiative to transform the county's homeless system began in 2010 with the creation of the **Montgomery County Homeless Prevention Center** (HPC), a centralized screening and referral service for families and individuals who are homeless or at risk for homelessness in Montgomery County. By calling a toll-free telephone number, residents are connected to trained specialists who help connect them to the services they need quickly and efficiently. The Homeless Prevention Center also managed the countywide coordinated assessment for HUD's Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP) and is currently managing the initial assessment for the County's Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds. Centralized screening and coordinated assessment have simplified service navigation for residents in need, allowing community service providers to focus their attention and resources on delivering mission-based programs and services.

# A Legacy of Collaboration

The Montgomery County Homeless Prevention Center also helps policymakers, funders, and individual donors to increase their community impact by identifying trends and gaps in the county's housing system through better data and information. The Homeless Prevention Center was jointly designed and funded by the Montgomery County Department of Housing & Community Development, the North Penn Community Health Foundation, the North Penn United Way and The Montgomery County Foundation, Inc., with significant input from community providers, including Inter-Faith Housing Alliance, Keystone Opportunity Center, Laurel House, Resources for Human Development's Coordinated Homeless Outreach Center (RHD-CHOC), and the Salvation Army. Their pro bono contributions of executive and program staff time were invaluable to the process. Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC) serves as the Homeless Prevention Center operations partner.

The public-private collaboration blossomed in 2012 when the North Penn Community Health Foundation allocated a \$125,000 grant and coordinated service delivery in partnership with the Montgomery County Department of Housing & Community Development and Public Health Management Corporation to deliver the successful **North Penn Housing First Pilot Project** that assisted 12 families who were homeless or at imminent risk for homelessness in the North Penn region of Montgomery County to find and maintain permanent housing through short-term rental subsidies and housing stability case management services. Lessons learned from the Housing First pilot project are now being disseminated to other providers in the community. The outcomes achieved through this small pilot were entirely consistent with the outcomes achieved in larger-scale initiatives as reported by NAEH.

# A Legacy of Collaboration

Finally, the **Montgomery County Roadmap for Housing Stability** was unveiled in November 2012 at “The New Normal: A Community Conversation” hosted by the North Penn Community Health Foundation and attended by nearly 200 public, philanthropic and nonprofit leaders. The culmination of three-years of community-driven, data-fueled planning and design facilitated by Capacity For Change, LLC, the Roadmap identified four measurable goals for ending homelessness through innovative housing and homeless systems change agreed upon by local government, philanthropic, nonprofit and community leaders. Simultaneously, Josh Shapiro, Chairman, Montgomery County Board of Commissioners, shared his vision for the transformation of the county's health and human services delivery system. Together, these plans led directly to the launch of **Your Way Home Montgomery County**.

# Contact Us

For more information, please contact the Montgomery County, Pennsylvania Department of Housing & Community Development or visit [www.montcopa.org](http://www.montcopa.org).

If you or someone you know is a Montgomery County resident and homeless or at-risk for homelessness, please call our Homeless Prevention Center hotline at 1-877-646-6306.