

**HOMELESS NEEDS**

Table 1A was completed using data from the 2004 Continuum of Care and the most Current Point-In-Time Survey. Local homeless service providers meet on a regular basis through the Allegany County Board on Homelessness. The Continuum of Care and the Point-In-Time Survey are conducted as a collaborative effort between several service providers and local government offices. A Continuum of Care Plan has been completed on an annual basis through the Allegany County Board on Homelessness since 2000. The 2005-2009 Consolidated Plan will precede the 2005 Continuum of Care. Any changes within the Plan from year to year will be reported in the Annual Action Plan and new goals/objectives will be incorporated in the City of Cumberland's Consolidated Plan through and amendment.

**Homeless Facility Needs**

The following Agencies provide direct housing services to the homeless in Cumberland: HRDC, YMCA, Union Rescue Mission, Family Crisis Resource Center, and Allegany County Community Services - Housing Division. Permanent housing assistance not directly designated for "homeless" would also include the City of Cumberland Department of Community Development, Cumberland Public Housing Authority, and Allegany County Housing Authority. Services are all provided without discrimination based on the 2004 Continuum of Care Plan and house on average 84% Caucasian, 15% Afro-American and about 1% other.

The largest population of homeless in Allegany County has been the so-called "hidden homeless." Cumberland's rural mountain location retains generations of families that remain in the area and when faced with housing crisis depend on family and friends to provide shelter. The hidden homeless population continues to be the largest population of homeless in the area, therefore it is important to continue to expand and focus on support services. The need for emergency homeless facilities is on the rise as several local service providers have reported that the number of people requiring emergency shelter has considerably increased over the last couple of years. Service providers are also reporting that the available shelters are constantly full.

The hidden homeless population is difficult to quantify, but the City's Analysis of impediments sites that there is enough anecdotal evidence to justify overcrowding as a problem. Overcrowding results when additional people are added to a household to enable payment of rent or from downscaling the housing unit by increasing the occupancy within each bedroom. Overcrowded households nationwide are highest for extremely low-income and are typically more prevalent in the rental community. The City of Cumberland's renter-occupied housing unit percentage is 42%, which exceeds the national percentage by 9%. In some cases the hidden homeless are found living in housing not intended for habitation because of the lack of essential amenities, or overall blight.

There are five emergency and/or transitional housing shelters for individuals and families in Allegany County, Maryland, all of which are located within the City of Cumberland.

The Union Rescue Mission can shelter twenty-five men at any point in time in the dormitory and six families in Hope House. The Cumberland YMCA's apartments can house ten individuals at any point-in-time and twelve families. HRDC's Transitional Housing Shelter can house 14 women and children at any point-in-time in their facility and Family Crisis Resource Center shelters up to 20 battered and abused women and children at any point-in-time.

Based on The Allegany County Continuum of Care Plan submitted to HUD in July 2004 all five (5) shelters are reporting an increased need and length of stay at the emergency/transitional shelters most importantly the Union Rescue Mission's Hope House and HRDC's Transitional Housing Shelter have reported year round waiting lists. The Continuum of Care's findings are consistent with the Allegany County Department of Social Services and Homeless Services providers' reports of a growing need for emergency and transitional shelter facilities.

It has been difficult collecting data on the exact need for additional emergency and special populations shelter space. The implementation of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) will allow service providers to collect more precise quantitative data on the numbers and types of populations requesting homeless and homeless prevention services.

Special needs populations that are in need of shelter services are those with substance addictions, mental illnesses, or both. In the early 1990's the only shelter that specifically dealt this population closed. No replacement facility has been developed and it continues to be identified as a gap in the Continuum of Care system.

In an effort to fill that gap two of the county's supportive housing providers, HRDC and the YMCA, have developed a partnership with Archway Station to provide timely services for mentally ill residents in their permanent supportive housing projects. The Cumberland YMCA and HRDC provide 31 HUD-funded transitional and permanent beds for individuals and have 5 more slots in development. HRDC is partnering with Archway Station on its permanent supportive housing project.

The City of Cumberland, like many small rural communities, has seen an increase in drug activity and therefore the creation of a population of residents with substance addictions. There are currently no facilities to house individuals with addictions in Allegany County. The City of Cumberland is aware of the need for housing and supportive services for this special population and has spent the last five years working with area human service providers to open a facility that will provide housing and intensive case management services.

**Homeless Units Inventory**  
(Based on the 2004 Continuum of Care Plan)

<b>Emergency -</b>	77 Shelter Beds 40 Beds for Individuals 37 Beds for Families
<b>Transitional -</b>	53 Beds or units 7 Beds/Units for Individuals (general) 46 Beds/Units for Families
<b>Permanent Supportive Housing -</b>	73 Beds 926 PHA/Section 8 Units

Public Housing: The City of Cumberland's Housing Authority has 235 family units and 195 for elderly/disabled units providing subsidized housing for low-income individuals and families in the City of Cumberland. The average individual or family that resides in a Cumberland Housing Authority unit stays for 3.75 years with an average individual or family waiting one year prior to being placed in public housing. Individuals and families with a household member who is disabled are difficult to place because of accessibility issues and may experience a longer wait to be placed in an accessible unit. The Cumberland Housing Authority has contracted with Goodwin and Associates Housing Concepts to conduct a strategic planning and operation assessment which will be assessing accessibility issues and will make recommendations on how the PHA can better meet the needs of their residents.

Section 8: The City of Cumberland currently administers Section 8, Rent Subsidy Vouchers allocated to the City of Cumberland. To date 529 vouchers are distributed to eligible individuals and families with 496 vouchers currently being utilized for housing and the remaining 33 vouchers are in the possession of eligible individuals and families who are attempting to identify housing. There are 281 households on the wait list for Section 8 Rent Subsidy Vouchers with the average wait time being six months. The average wait of six months has been consistent over the last two years.

Permanent Supportive Housing for the Disabled: The Downtown Cumberland YMCA and HRDC's Homeless Services Program operates a total of 20 scattered site units (Permanent Supportive Housing for the Disabled) for families who meet HUD's definition of homeless and disabled.

**Homeless Support Service Needs**

The data collected and the local agencies consulted both demonstrate that one of the most important needs that homeless or at risk homeless persons face is the need for continuing supportive services. Some of

the agencies that currently provide a variety of support services include HRDC, Allegany County Health Department, the Department of Social Services, Western Maryland Health Systems, YMCA, Maryland Job Service and Western Maryland Consortium.

HRDC's Homeless Services Program through the support of the City of Cumberland operates a Housing Placement program to assist individuals and families at-risk of being homeless to identify quality, affordable housing. Individuals and families can access information on local housing providers through two kiosks located at the Allegany County Department of Social Services and the Allegany County Health Department. Housing information is kept up to date by housing providers through the Community Information File.

There are a many homeless persons who receive services that fail to remain housed. There is a need to provide more permanent supportive housing for members of the population most likely to be chronically homeless at intake or likely to become chronically homeless if not provided with help. The Homeless Board has identified a need to relate with those who repeatedly fail to remain in housing and the Board has planned to form a committee of homeless and formerly homeless people in order to formulate better supportive service strategies.

Requirements of quality service to the chronically homeless population include the availability and qualifications of supportive service staff to deliver health and social services. Working with chronically homeless groups presents a variety of challenges to supportive service staff. As clients change from homeless to housed, the staff must be aware that the formerly homeless person will need skills associated with household tasks that are critical to the person's success in housing sustainability.

For mainstream providers to be more receptive to chronically homeless population, much needs to be done to convey what is known about effective treatment. The staff must have the proper training to implement approaches that facilitate prompt eligibility review for persons identified as chronically homeless or at risk of becoming chronically homeless. Failure of service provider's staff to provide the level of service needed may result in the persons slipping back into homelessness.

In addition to enhancement of supportive services there must be open communication and sharing of information. To assure proper implementation throughout service agencies of HMIS is key and there currently is widespread support for the system. The goal is to develop a wide network so that every person who has experienced homelessness at one time, or currently, is documented via one of the participating agencies. The result will be that chronically homeless people are identified more readily, and that by tracking their past

successes and failures, case managers will be able to assist them in implementing plans that will enable them to remain housed.

**Table 1A  
Homeless and Special Needs Populations**

**Continuum of Care: Housing Gap Analysis Chart**

		Current Inventory	Under Development	Unmet Need/ Gap
<b>Individuals</b>				
<b>Example</b>	<b>Emergency Shelter</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Beds</b>	Emergency Shelter	73	40	33
	Transitional Housing	45	7	38
	Permanent Supportive Housing	57	33	24
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Persons in Families With Children</b>				
<b>Beds</b>	Emergency Shelter	64	37	27
	Transitional Housing	76	46	30
	Permanent Supportive Housing	102	40	62
	<b>Total</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>119</b>

**Continuum of Care: Homeless Population and Subpopulations Chart**

<b>Part 1: Homeless Population</b>	<b>Sheltered</b>		<b>Unsheltered</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>Emergency</b>	<b>Transitional</b>		
<b>Example:</b>	<b>75 (A)</b>	<b>125 (A)</b>	<b>105 (N)</b>	<b>305</b>
1. Homeless Individuals	66	24	47	137
2. Homeless Families with Children	11	17	18	46
2a. Persons in Homeless Families with Children	42	35	54	131
<b>Total (lines 1 + 2a)</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>314</b>
<b>Part 2: Homeless Subpopulations</b>	<b>Sheltered</b>		<b>Unsheltered</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Chronically Homeless	16		43	59
2. Seriously Mentally Ill	135			
3. Chronic Substance Abuse	69			
4. Veterans	5			
5. Persons with HIV/AIDS	6			
6. Victims of Domestic Violence	58			
7. Youth	0			

**SPECIAL NEEDS (NON-HOMELESS)**

The City of Cumberland has a variety of housing and human service providers that provide housing and/or supportive services to residents with special needs. Some of these agencies are: The Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, Inc. (HRDC), The Cumberland Housing Authority, The Allegany County Department of Social Services, Resources for Independence, Archway Station, YMCA, Goodwill Industries, Friends Aware, Inc., the Allegany County Health Department and Finan and Brandenburg Centers, Associated Charities, Salvation Army, and Interfaith Housing Alliance.

**Elderly/Frail Elderly**

Cumberland and Allegany County's senior population continues to grow as more and more people choose to retire in the beautiful mountains of rural Western Maryland. As the overall size of this group grows, so do their needs. Many elderly homeowners need housing rehabilitation assistance, as they can not afford to pay a contractor to make needed repairs to their home and can no longer make the repairs themselves. The elderly also need financial relief related to housing and utility costs, as renters and homeowners have fixed incomes from pensions/retirement and Social Security are insufficient. As a rural community, transportation services also are greatly needed by the elderly to reach health care services and grocers. Medical and prescription drug costs continue to rise and continue to be a financial need of this population.

The overall goals and objectives proposed to be undertaken for this group are incorporated throughout the plan and are included in the preceding Homeless and Special Populations section as well as being incorporated in the Housing, Economic Development and Non-Housing Community Development areas.

**Mental, Physical, and Developmentally Disabled**

According to 2000 Census data, 5341, or 24% of Cumberland's total population were diagnosed with disabilities. Forty six percent of the population 65 years of age or older are disabled. Of those 24-64 years of age who report the most disabilities, only 40.1% are employed.

Archway Station, The Finan Center, Friends Aware, Goodwill Industries, and Resources for Independence assist mental, physical, and developmentally disabled individuals in accessing housing and supportive services. Handicap accessible housing is a need as well as job training, transportation services, and opportunities for independent living in order for this special population to fully integrate with the community.

Though no specific numbers about barriers to housing loans or programs could be gained about Cumberland's disabled population, a recent fair housing impediments study outlined two major barriers for disabled in obtaining housing. Firstly, the significant lack of quality affordable housing is viewed as an impediment for fair housing choice for

disabled citizens. This is mostly due to the age of the existing housing stock and the substandard conditions of those properties. From the study, it was also concluded that housing servicing the disabled is covertly opposed within the community. Through anecdotal evidence it was ascertained that though community members do not oppose affordable housing for the disabled, they do not want such housing located in their neighborhood.

**Alcohol/Drug Addictions**

The City of Cumberland, like many small rural communities, has seen an increase in drug activity, which has created a population of residents with alcohol and other drug addictions. There are currently no facilities to house individuals with addictions in Allegany County. The City of Cumberland is aware of the need for housing and supportive services for this special population and has spent the last five years working with area human service providers to open a facility that will provide housing and intensive case management services.

**HIV/AIDS**

The City of Cumberland and Allegany County currently have no facilities dedicated to serve the needs of the community's HIV and AIDS population. Subsidized housing is a need for this special population as most have limited financial resources and exorbitant medical expenses. The City of Cumberland is aware of this special populations need and would be supportive of agencies willing to provide housing and supportive services to HIV and AIDS patients in the community. In the past fiscal year, there were 17 reported cases of HIV and 39 reported cases of AIDS in Cumberland.

**Criminals**

Individuals with criminal backgrounds re-entering mainstream society often have difficulty identifying affordable housing. With both Federal and State correctional facilities in Allegany County, housing, job training, and transportation have been identified as needs for this special population. The City of Cumberland and area housing and human service providers have discussed the needs of individuals with criminal backgrounds in quarterly housing provider meetings.

**Table 1B**  
**Special Needs (non-Homeless) Populations**

<b>SPECIAL NEEDS SUBPOPULATIONS</b>	<b>Priority Need Level</b> High, Medium, Low, No Such Need	<b>Unmet Need</b>	<b>Dollars to Address Unmet Need</b>	<b>Goals</b>
Elderly	M	3,000	\$1,000,000	1,500
Frail Elderly	H	1,000	\$1,500,000	700
Severe Mental Illness	M	332	\$2,000,000	99
Developmentally Disabled	M	471	\$750,000	200
Physically Disabled	M	864	\$1,000,000	150
Persons w/ Alcohol/Other Drug Addictions	H	1635	\$2,000,000	320
Persons w/HIV/AIDS	M	56	\$500,000	28
Criminals	H	500	\$500,000	50
<b>TOTAL</b>			\$9,750,000	

### **Homeless and Special Needs Strategy**

The following table identifies the goals and objectives that together outline the overall strategy that will be utilized over the next 5 years to address priority needs of the homeless and special needs population.

Homeless and Special Populations Goal	Five year goal	Year One 2005	Year Two 2006	Year Three 2007	Year Four 2008	Year Five 2009	Accomplishment	Total
HSP-1 Implement proactive approaches to problems facing the homeless and the risk homeless								
Do not use this line								
Implement HIMS system	X	X	X					
Train homeless service providers on HMIS system	55	10	30	5	5	5		
Encourage HMIS use by non traditional service providers	17	1	1	5	5	5		
Capture a point in time survey of the homeless population	5	1	1	1	1	1		
Placement of kiosks- informing about homeless services available to at-risk persons	3	2	1					
Increase agency/public participation on County Homeless Board	25	5	5	5	5	5		
Provide activities, trainings, and guest speakers to attract additional participants on the Homeless Board	14	2	3	3	3	3		
Support faith-based efforts assisting the homeless	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Conduct training seminar for staff on successful homeless service strategies through Homeless Board	3	1		1		1		
Form committee of current/former homeless individuals to assist providers with service strategies	1	1						
Identify services that can be provided for clients of various agencies through HMIS	X		X	X	X			
Advertise services such as food pantries, health screenings, and holistic case manager	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Coordinate efforts with the CHSC and the State Interagency Council on Homelessness	X	X	X	X				
Provide case management in shelters	750	150	150	150	150	150		

#’s – number to be accomplished  
 X’s – Years for accomplishment

Develop link between HMIS users with Community Access Program users	X		X	X				
Do not use this line								
<b>HSP-2 Assist homeless persons obtain and retain affordable housing</b>								
Do not use this line								
Develop annual Continuum of Care Plan – County Homeless Board	5	1	1	1	1	1		
Weatherize 10 homes per year to reduce homeless risk	50	10	10	10	10	10		
Support leasing project for 5 individuals a year	25	5	5	5	5	5		
Provide emergency utility assistance	250	50	50	50	50	50		
Emergency housing assistance	100	20	20	20	20	20		
Seek alternative funding sources	X	X	X	X				
Do not use this line								
<b>HSP-3 Assist persons at risk of becoming homeless and the chronically homeless</b>								
Do not use this line								
Provide emergency assistance	5000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000		
Provide weatherization assistance	100	20	20	20	20	20		
Provide case management through leasing projects	12	6	6					
Form a mainstream planning committee of representatives of five service agencies	1	1						
Identify level of funding provided for homeless services in Allegany Co.	X	X						
Identify non-traditional funding sources for homeless services	X	X	X	X				
Transition assistance for permanent housing for disabled persons	30	6	6	6	6	6		
Do not use this line								
<b>HSP-4 Increase the supply of supportive housing to serve at-risk and special needs populations</b>								
Do not use this line								

Identify the number and type of emergency shelter space needs through HIMS	X			X				
Identify funding sources for development of emergency shelter	X	X	X					
Develop emergency shelter space	X					X		
Create transitional housing for individuals with substance addictions and/or mental illnesses	X			X				
Provide intensive case management to individuals with substance addictions and/or mental illnesses	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Support leasing project for 5 individuals a year	25	5	5	5	5	5		
Provide case management for self-sufficiency for homeless	12	6	6					
Increase the supply of accessible housing units	25	5	5	5	5	5		
JFK elderly designation	X	X						
Do not use this line								
<b>HSP-5 Assist and Implement programs and services for special needs populations</b>								
Do not use this line								
Support community group drug prevention efforts - CAUSE	5	1	4					
Establish full-time drug prevention community broker	1		1					
Explore new facility placement for the Cumberland Senior Center	1	X	X	X				
Conduct study to measure elderly needs for the Baby-Boomers	1			X	X			
Provide job training to enhance elderly employability	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Enhance senior food service	X			X	X	X		

Homeless & Special Populations - HSP

programs								
Support expansion opportunities for SP needs service providers	5	1	1	1	1	1		
Support SP health referral services	15	3	3	3	3	3		
Do not use this line								
Do not use this line								
Do not use this line								

**June 2005 Consolidated Plan Revisions - Homeless & Special Populations**

There have been no reports indicating that there is an extent of homelessness greater for any specific racial/ethnic group. The Continuum of Care Plan does not require the tracking of racial composition of homeless. HUD funded programs through their Supportive Housing Program (SHP) do not require programs to report on this either. HRDC, who utilizes HUD funding for their homeless services, does track this information through their internal tracking system PRO 2000. In the near future all homeless/housing providers will be able to enter racial data with the HMIS.

HRDC's results for FY2005 (program year 2004) include 190 heads of households were served; 12 Black/African American, 170 White, 2 of Hispanic Origin, and 6 Bi-Racial. This break down is very close to the race break down of the City, so no outstanding concerns are raised at this time.