



CITY OF DANBURY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT
155 DEER HILL AVENUE, DANBURY, CONNECTICUT 06810

Central Health Office
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DANBURY HOUSING PARTNERSHIP
Mark J. Nolan, Chairman

April 1, 2011

Honorable Mark D. Boughton, Mayor
Honorable Joseph M. Cavo, City Council President
Members of the Danbury City Council
155 Deer Hill Avenue
Danbury, CT 06810

RE: Annual Progress Report on Implementation of the Ten-Year Plan To End Homelessness

Dear Mayor Boughton, President Cavo and Council Members:

We are pleased to submit for your review this fourth annual progress report of the Danbury Housing Partnership. This report is submitted pursuant to Section 10-76(3) of the Code of Ordinances that directs the Partnership to provide annual reports to the Mayor and the Council summarizing the measures taken in the prior year to implement the Plan To End Homelessness. This report covers the period from April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011.

The Danbury Housing Partnership is tasked with coordinating community efforts to address homelessness, implement the Ten-Year Plan and encourage the development of affordable housing in the community to support community and economic development. This task has been made more difficult by the ongoing effects of the national economic downturn of 2008 that continues to cause hardship to our state and local economy as well as our housing market.

Our local experiences mirror findings on the Federal and state levels that show a decrease in long-term, chronic homelessness but an increase in the number of individuals and families facing homelessness for the first time due to financial reasons. Preliminary Point-In-Time count numbers for the Danbury area show a slight yearly increase in the raw number of persons who are homeless with the increase being attributable almost exclusively to individuals and families with children experiencing homelessness for the first time due to economic conditions. This suggests that while considerable progress has been made to address the goals of the Ten-Year Plan, the great recession has created the need for extraordinary efforts beyond those originally envisioned by planners.

Despite the economic headwinds, the community continued to make great progress in creating affordable housing and addressing the issue of homelessness. The Partnership continued to expand the network of community agencies, businesses and organizations involved in the collaborative effort to create affordable housing and implement the Ten-Year Plan. The Partnership implemented an aggressive marketing and outreach effort to create community awareness of the issue of homelessness and the importance of affordable housing to a sound local economy through an active media campaign,

personal appearances by the chair, an email marketing and awareness campaign, enhancement of the Partnership website and Facebook page, creation of video content and networking with local, state and Federal agencies. At a time when local and state governments as well as non-profit agencies are facing great financial pressures, the Partnership increased its efforts to coordinate activities with local, state and federal entities to eliminate duplication of efforts and ensure maximum use of limited financial resources.

The Partnership worked collaboratively with the Greater Danbury Continuum of Care and other community partners to implement key initiatives to address homelessness in the greater Danbury region. Led by Co-Chairs Milena Sangut and Michele Conderino, the Continuum of Care planned another successful Danbury Project Homeless Connect event, produced a successful grant application to receive funding to address homelessness and established workgroups to address employment issues as well as homelessness among young adults and families with children. The Continuum also led the effort to run Danbury Project Homeless Connect 2010, the keystone event to provide services and create awareness of issues affecting persons who are homeless in the greater Danbury region.

The Partnership worked closely with the Continuum to create a marketing campaign to promote the success of Project Homeless Connect and to solicit substantial financial support from the business and banking communities. Five local banks became contributing sponsors of the event and a number of other local businesses made financial contributions or donated supplies and services. The event also solidified ties with Western Connecticut State University, which hosted the event and arranged for volunteer services from students interested in social service careers. The event brought together almost fifty service providers to provide immediate on-site services to more than two hundred persons who were homeless or facing the prospect of becoming homeless.

The annual Danbury Housing Partnership Community Breakfast was again a success both in terms of creating community awareness and raising funds in support of efforts to address homelessness and create affordable housing. The Danbury Housing Partnership Awards presented at the breakfast continue to serve as an effective means of recognizing community efforts to address housing needs and to encourage awareness of the issues of homelessness and affordable housing. Award recipients this year included Patrick Walsh (Business Partnership Award), Catholic Charities Homeless Outreach Team (Supportive Services Award) and the Housing Authority of the City of Danbury (Community Partnership Award). A new video regarding community efforts to address homelessness and affordable housing needs produced by David Deschenes of United Way was debuted at the breakfast and can be viewed at www.danburyhousingpartnership.org.

Encouraging progress was made during the year in the production of affordable housing units in the greater Danbury region. According to the official Affordable Housing Unit totals for 2010 produced by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development a total of 54 new affordable housing units were produced in Danbury. More impressively, the total of affordable housing units in New Milford increased by a region-leading 112 units. Bethel also registered a significant increase of 46 affordable units. The production of affordable units continues to exceed the goals set forth in the Ten-Year Plan To End Homelessness. During the reporting period, Victorian Associates completed a new four-unit supportive housing development in Danbury in collaboration with Interlude. The Housing Authority, in cooperation with the City of Danbury, also completed Phase I of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program consisting of the re-cycling of four vacant foreclosed condominium units into affordable housing for families. Progress was also made on plans to create affordable senior housing units at the site of the former police station on Main Street.



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The Housing Authority of the City of Danbury (HACD) made significant progress in utilization of State and Federal grant funding to make capital improvements to family and senior housing developments. HACD has also begun implementation of the process of Federalization of the Wooster Manor senior housing development, which will result in increased housing subsidies for residents as well as physical improvements to the building and grounds.

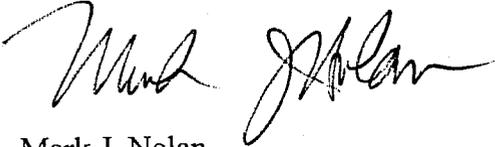
The City's *Housing For Heroes* initiative to provide an array of housing opportunities for veterans also progressed with the continued success of the transitional housing program at the City Shelter run by the Danbury Health and Human Services Department and the opening of the Vet House transitional housing facility at 18 New Street operated by the Non-Profit Development Corporation of Danbury. Danbury's efforts to address homelessness among veterans were recognized by the presentation of the **Gabe Zimmerman Award for Public Service** by the National Community Development Association. The project was the result of a collaborative effort of the City of Danbury, the Non-Profit Development Corporation of Danbury (NPDCD), the Housing Authority of the City of Danbury and Savings Bank of Danbury. Operational partners include MCAA Incorporated, the Dream Homes Community Center and VA Connecticut Healthcare Systems. NPDCD is currently working with the City of Danbury to develop Vet House II, which will consist of three permanent supportive housing units for veterans facing homelessness.

New Opportunities Incorporated working in cooperation with Community Action Committee of Danbury (CACD) and the Dream Homes Community Center continued implementation of the Federal Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program in the greater Danbury area. This innovative approach to addressing the problem of homelessness provided funding that enabled families facing homelessness to maintain their housing as well as provided funds to enable homeless families who lost their homes to find new rental housing. Dream Homes also continued to manage the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for the Danbury region. HMIS not only provides key information to local homeless service providers but also has become an essential tool to support efforts to receive Federal and State funding to address homelessness.

While great progress has been made during the past year to address the housing and homelessness issues in the greater Danbury region, unexpected challenges call for the re-dedication of our efforts. During the upcoming year, the Partnership will continue to expand its efforts to create community awareness of housing issues, increase coordination with state and federal agencies and to engage the private sector to provide financial and logistic support for our efforts to implement the Ten-Year Plan. The heart-rending plight of families with children facing homelessness for the first time as well as the continuing needs of homeless veterans will be uppermost in our minds as we marshal our efforts in the coming year.

Please allow me to direct your attention to the efforts of my vice chair, M. Carolyn Sistrunk as well as Partnership Secretary Susan Zaborowski for their essential contributions to the work of the Partnership. We also thank Scott LeRoy and the Health and Human Services Department for the provision of staff support to the Partnership. Danbury is blessed to have a giving community with volunteers from the public, private and non-profit sectors dedicated to helping persons and families facing the fear and hardships of homelessness. We thank Mayor Boughton and members of the City Council of both political parties for your recognition of the importance of this issue and your continued support of our efforts to address it.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark J. Nolan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being more prominent than the last name "Nolan".

Mark J. Nolan
Chair, Danbury Housing Partnership

Cc: M. Carolyn Sistrunk, Vice Chair
Susan Zaborowski, Secretary
