

# SSVF Priority 1 Community Plan

Date Completed/Revised:

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Month			Day			Year			

<b>Continuum of Care (CoC) Name: Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO)</b>		<b>CoC #:</b> TX-503
<b>CoC Representative:</b> Niki Paul		<b>Title:</b> Operations Manager
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<b>Person Completing this Plan:</b> Greg McCormack		<b>Title:</b> Programs Director
<b>Phone/Email:</b> 512-305-4108 / <a href="mailto:gmccormack@frontsteps.org">gmccormack@frontsteps.org</a>		

**1. Primary Planning and Coordination Group:** Identify the primary group responsible for planning and coordinating efforts to prevent and end homelessness among Veterans in the CoC. Identify the principal members of this group and their affiliation.

<b>Primary Group Name:</b> Austin's Ending Veteran Homelessness Task Group	
Principle Members	Affiliation
Greg McCormack	Front Steps-SSVF Priority 1
Kay Fohn	Caritas-SSVF Priority 2
Niki Paul	ECHO-CoC
Andrew Miller	VA - VASH
Kameron Fowler	ECHO-CoC/Coordinated Assessment
Michael Smith	VA-GPD
Preston Petty	ECHO-Coordinated Assessment
Lori Frasco	Caritas of Austin-SSVF Priority 2
Kim Weinberg	VA-HCHV
Tu Giang	Front Steps-SSVF Priority 1
Bree Williams	ECHO-Community Housing Liaison

**2. Ongoing Review and Coordination:** Briefly describe how often (e.g., monthly) the above group or a related review/coordination group meets to review Veterans who are homeless, track progress toward re-housing, and coordinate efforts. Include a summary of

Beginning on December 15, 2014, the Austin Homeless Veterans Initiative (AHVI) members have met on a weekly basis (Monday AM) to provide updates on system coordination strategies such as Veteran Outreach, Landlord Outreach, HMIS Coordination and implementation of veteran referrals through Coordinated Assessment. Most importantly, the AHVI team reviews and refers real-time veteran cases with housing and other available supportive services and strategize solutions to address unique barriers for an individual household accessing housing.

The AHV Initiative tracks housing placements via Coordinated Assessment (via HMIS-ServicePoint) and provides weekly status updates on referrals. On a monthly basis, the programs serving the veterans provide a housing status update to ensure progress on successful housing placements. Currently, the CoC (ECHO) convenes the meetings and provide administrative support for the group to ensure tracking and progress toward re-housing all veteran households experiencing homelessness. In addition, this core body worked collaboratively to revise our Community Plan to End Veteran Homelessness and has reached out to other successful communities (Houston, New Orleans and LA) to learn best practices and strategies that we can adopt for the Austin/Travis County area. Specifically, we are developing a coordinated outreach effort that may include utilizing active military members and ROTC cadets to assess the unsheltered veteran population and better understand the needs and services that will be needed to re-house the unsheltered veterans. In addition, we are looking to form a local leadership committee with key community leadership stakeholders (e.g. Mayor's Office, City of Austin, Housing Authority of Austin, Non-Profit Provider Executive Directors) to help address the higher level systemic barriers to re-housing veterans (e.g. housing stock and housing affordability; landlord engagement, alternative funding sources for "bridge" funding, etc)

what information is reviewed during these meetings.

**3. SSVF Grantees Serving CoC Geography:** Identify each SSVF funded agency serving Veterans in the CoC geography and each SSVF total grant award amount for FY15, including priority 1 (“surge”), 2 (renewals), and 3 (other new) awards. If one agency has multiple awards, list each separately. Pro-rate a grant award amount if the award covers more than one CoC geography. Include the projected annual number of households each grantee can serve and the total number of households across all grantees.

Grantee Agency Name	Grant Amount	Total Annual Projected Households	Total Annual Projected Households: Rapid Re-Housing	% of Total Households to be Assisted with Rapid Re-Housing
Caritas of Austin (Priority Two)	\$546,844	110	88	88%
Front Steps (Priority One)	\$3,000,000	170	170	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,546,844</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>92%</b>

**4. Annual Demand and Need for Rapid Re-Housing Assistance:** Using the *Veterans Demand Analysis and Progress Tracking Tool* or other demand analysis data agreed to by the primary group above, identify:

- The most recent actual or projected annual unduplicated number of homeless Veterans (on street and/or who access emergency shelter, Safe Havens, or transitional housing, including GPD) in the CoC geography, by household type
- The number of those Veterans who will need rapid re-housing assistance to exit homelessness
- The number of Veterans needing rapid re-housing assistance who are projected to be eligible for SSVF RRH assistance.

	Annual Unduplicated Homeless Veteran Households	Estimated # of Needing RRH (a)	Projected # to be Assisted with SSVF RRH (b)	Projected # to be Assisted with Other RRH (c)	Gap (a-(b+c))
Households without Children	760	380	244	76	60
Households with Children	24	15	14	1	0
<b>Total Homeless Veteran Households</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>60</b>

**5. CoC Goals for Ending Homelessness Among Veterans:** List the CoC’s goals for ending Veteran homelessness by the end of 2015 (fill in additional related goals the CoC has determined, if relevant).

**What are the CoC’s goals for the estimated number of Veterans, including chronically homeless Veterans, who will be homeless as of the night of the January 2016 PIT Count? 50% Decrease (thought decrease for Annual Demand, but on any given night 50% estimated) and applying 15% Chron. Homeless Rate**

	All Homeless Veteran Households (including CH)			Chronically Homeless Veteran Households		
	Sheltered	Unsheltered	TOTAL	Sheltered	Unsheltered	TOTAL
Households without Children	85	24	109	13	4	17
Households with Children	1	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>

Has the CoC established other goals related to preventing and ending homelessness among Veterans by the end of 2015?  Yes  No

If “Yes”, please describe:

The Austin/Travis County CoC (ECHO) has worked to involve our Mayor’s office to join the National Mayor’s Initiative on Ending Homelessness Among Veterans and continuously working to streamline our resources and efforts to engage and house the most vulnerable veterans in our community. As of November 2014, Mayor Lee Leffingwell signed on to the initiative as a statement that our community is dedicated to ending veteran homelessness by the goal of January 2016. As new leadership has been elected to Austin, the CoC is continuing to engage the newly elected officials to ensure their commitment to ending veteran homelessness for Austin/Travis County.

**6. SSVF Integration into CoC Coordinated Assessment System:** Briefly describe how Veterans access SSVF assistance (across all SSVF grantees) via the CoC's coordinated assessment system (e.g., "All Veterans who present to the CoC coordinated assessment center are screened for their current situation, needs, and SSVF eligibility. Then....). If not yet fully developed, describe your plans and implementation timeframe. Specifically address:

- a) How Veterans who present for shelter are screened and diverted to SSVF homelessness prevention assistance when they have somewhere safe and appropriate to stay that night.
- b) How Veterans who become literally homeless are screened and triaged to SSVF rapid re-housing assistance as soon as possible once it is clear the Veteran is unable to resolve their homelessness without assistance.

We are currently in Phase I of our Coordinated Assessment implementation. At this time, any veterans who present for shelter at the ARCH (Front Steps), Caritas of Austin and Salvation Army (pending) will be screened for their utilizing the VI-SPDAT and assessed through the Eligibility Module. Veterans are simultaneously screened for SSVF Rapid Re-Housing, Prevention and Permanent Supportive Housing when they complete the Coordinated Assessment process. If eligible, they will receive the appropriate referrals to Homelessness Prevention, Rapid-Rehousing or Permanent Support Housing conducted real-time and/or at the weekly AHVI meeting. The CoC is currently working with the VAMC to identify programmatic strategy to integrate the VI-SPDAT during VA Homeless Outreach. At this time, the VA is referring to access points for Coordinated Assessment.

**7. Long-Term System Improvements:** Briefly describe how the CoC plans to utilize SSVF Priority 1 and all other SSVF funding over the next three years to foster long-term system improvements and optimization so that homelessness is prevented whenever possible and when it does occur, it is rare and brief. Specifically address areas for improvement related to:

- a) Further integrating SSVF assistance into the CoC's planning, oversight processes and coordinated assessment system.
- b) Ensuring comprehensive coordination with VA systems and other VA funded programs.
- c) Improving or establishing partnerships with community-based services and public/private housing providers.

As an SSVF grantee area since 2011, our CoC has integrated SSVF as part of our critical RRH and Prevention resource stock. Austin/Travis County is in the first phase our Coordinated Assessment implementation and within the few months of implementation we have already seen more streamlined referrals that match the veteran's need with the resources we have available in our CoC. The CoC is working closely with community stakeholders (VAMC, service providers, housing, etc) to implement coordinated assessment and will be monitoring the implementation of the SSVF resources in the community. We are leveraging our goal to end veteran homelessness to garner on-going community support and engagement amongst affordable housing landlords and other housing resources. In addition, the CoC plans to use the successful model of ending veteran homelessness to continue the work on ending other types of homelessness-including chronic, youth and families. Our community will have achieved a "functional zero" when we have enough housing support services and other interventions to help any veterans who are experiencing homelessness become re-housed into stable affordable housing as quickly as possible. We will continue to coordinate our SSVF resources to ensure whenever possible, housing crisis experienced by veterans and their families will be diverted or addressed with short term intervention with the goal of long term housing stability. We do anticipate at that time redefining our RRH vs. Prevention funds to accommodate for the shift in population need.

**8. Other Strengths and Challenges:** Briefly describe any additional strengths and/or challenges relevant to your achieving VA and local goals.

The largest challenge that our CoC experiences is the consistent rise in housing costs. The local housing market is well above the FMR and is also extremely limited. At this point, Austin's housing market is one of the most difficult in the country at a 98% occupancy rate. Building and maintaining relationships with affordable housing landlords is one of our top priorities. One of strengths is our ability to work closely with our CoC stakeholders to develop a centralized affordable housing list for Landlord Outreach/Housing Specialist staff to utilize. This new asset to the community is managed by the CoC and is being utilized by the SSVF program. While sourcing and securing affordable housing for low income veterans is increasingly difficult, as a community we are working extremely hard at addressing this issue through relationship building, civic advocacy and fostering new opportunities for low-income affordable housing and PSH development.