

I recently joined the Office of Adult Services as the Project Manager for the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness. For those of you whom I have already met, I want to thank you for your support and enthusiasm with regard to the Plan. I look forward to working with all of you to make the plan a living document through which we can see our intermediate successes and achieve our important end-goal. It is my aim to have detailed business plans in place by the end of the year. Please feel free to contact me with any comments or concerns concerning the 10-Year Plan at cheryl.binswanger@phila.gov or 215-686-7158.

I come to Adult Services having had my own consulting firm for the past 15 years. Much of my work was in project management, often of large scale projects in both non-profit and for-profit environments. I have worked with Project H.O.M.E. in the past, and, through Sister Mary, I've learned a great deal about the issues of homelessness in Philadelphia. My background prior to consulting was in information systems management, managing the development of clinical hospital information systems at Shared Medical Systems (now Siemens Medical).

I am encouraged by the strength and depth of the organization supporting the Plan. Since the Mayor's endorsement in October, with Pedro A. Ramos, Esquire and Sister Mary Scullion as chairpersons, we have formed the Action Leadership Team, Advisory Panel, Steering Committee, and several of the work groups related to Plan goals. In addition, the Mayor's Task Force to End Homelessness leads our collaborative efforts to achieve Plan goals. The Plan organization provides the strength in leadership, commitment to quality, and knowledge and ingenuity to carry forward these goals.

The Action Leadership Team will meet for the first time in early June. This group serves as a visible force behind the Plan, providing the support necessary to drive difficult tasks to completion. The Advisory Panel met on March 15th and will continue to meet approximately every 6-8 weeks. This panel provides a cohesive analysis and evaluation of Plan activities and a forum where cross-boundary issues can be addressed and resolved. The Steering Committee meets every other week and is my primary support team, serving as a source of information and a bridge between competing interests. There will be six work groups aligned with the goal areas in the Plan. Each work group will be co-led by a City and a private sector representative. The work groups are responsible for defining and implementing the tasks necessary to support the Plan. Two of the work groups will begin meeting in early May. These work groups, for Housing and for Intake and Shelter, will work with Suzanne Wagner from the Center for Urban Community Services (CUCS) to define the mix of housing, the shelter configuration, and efficiencies in the intake process as part of the 10-Year Plan goals. CUCS is a non-profit organization based in New York City that provides a range of supportive housing services for homeless, formerly homeless, and other low-income individuals. Suzanne Wagner, Director of the CUCS Housing Resource Center, provides training and consultation to non-profit and public agencies to expand their capacity to effectively serve homes and disabled people, and to improve coordination among housing and supportive services systems. Suzanne brings more than 20 years of experience in the field.

I will be using the Philadelphia Government website to communicate with all of you on a regular basis. The link to this site is <http://www.phila.gov/oess/homelessness/>. This site is part of the www.phila.gov site under City Departments, then Temporary Shelter (OESS). Right now, there are links to a long and a short version of the 10-Year Plan available on the site. I will use this site to provide periodic status reports and other pertinent information about the plan and the planning process.

Thank you all for the contributions you have already made to the plan. I appreciate the hard work that has already gone into both the Ten-Year Plan and the Blueprint to End Homelessness processes. Because of your efforts, we now have an excellent set of strategic goals and objectives from which to work. I will take responsibility for defining and managing a more detailed plan from which we can truly see our progress and measure our successes. Once again, I look forward to working with all of you on this challenging and rewarding project!

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