Greenville Homeless Alliance Update – September 2017

**Vision:** Safe, affordable homes for everyone

**Mission:** To establish and coordinate an accessible system of support services and increase options for individuals who are experiencing homelessness and who are seeking stability and a safe, affordable home.

**Goals:**
- Make homelessness brief – reduce the duration of homelessness for individuals and families experiencing homelessness
- Make homelessness rare – prevent homelessness by increasing housing options for those at risk of homelessness

**Progress and Accomplishments to Date**

**Data collection and tracking:**

Furman University will complete an initial study of existing data and strategies to strengthen data collection and tracking. The study, recommendations and a snapshot for homelessness in Greenville County will be completed on August 15. United Housing Connections has reported that a new data reporting system is being integrated within the existing Housing Management Information System (HMIS) that will result in improved data monitoring for Greenville County. This system is expected to be functional before the end of this calendar year. Until then, Point in Time Counts continue to be the best way to track data specific to Greenville County. The Greenville Homeless Alliance will work to advocate that non-profit and health organizations serving homeless individuals and families adopt HMIS as a data repository.

**Target populations and initiatives:**

**Chronically Homeless - Permanent Supportive Housing** – A committee has been formed to focus on expanding permanent supportive housing in Greenville. The best local example of this strategy is Reedy Place, a facility for formerly homeless individuals who are dually diagnosed with a disability, addiction or mental illness. Early efforts to assess chronic utilization of health and public services (emergency room, incarceration, etc.) indicate significant cost savings gained through providing a permanent single room occupancy apartment and wrap-around services. A detailed analysis of similar projects in Austin, TX and Charlotte, NC found similar cost savings to the community. An Austin report showed an estimate of $49,600 in cost avoidance per person through permanent supportive housing. The GHA coordinated a site visit to Charlotte, NC this past spring to examine the city’s success in addressing homelessness there. About 15 stakeholders from Greenville met with 10-12 leaders from Charlotte. The site visit included a stop at Moore Place, a successful permanent supportive housing complex near downtown.

The committee has engaged the partnership of Clemson University’s business college in recruiting a team of MBA students to conduct an opportunity assessment and a feasibility study this fall to present to stakeholders and gain support from the broader community.

**Homeless Children and Families – 2nd Chance Pilot Program** – a new initiative is underway to address the challenge families with young children who are experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of being homeless. See attached pilot project description.
Advocacy & Community Education – Mediation within the “Homeless Triangle” – In response to concerns expressed by residents regarding campus improvements at the Salvation Army’s Rutherford Road campus, the GHA partnered with the Upstate Mediation Center to facilitate a community discussion and decision-making process that would include how best to accommodate the sometimes conflicting needs of homeless people, homeless service providers and neighborhood residents and businesses as well as the role that civic institutions like municipal government and law enforcement can play in finding and effecting improvements and solutions. See attached letter. Upstate Mediation has concluded the mediation process and a formal report with recommendations will be presented to the GHA and community stakeholders in the next few weeks. The process was well-received by all stakeholders and several recommendations have already been implemented.

On-going Advocacy and Education - One recommendation that came out of the mediation process that will be a primary role of the GHA is to plan education and awareness sessions throughout the community on an on-going basis. The GHA Advocacy and Education Committee has scheduled the following sessions:

- October 9 at 5:30 p.m. for Ginny Stroud, Stan Wilson and Susan McLarty to present to Greenville Legislative Delegation “Greenville Housing Affordability” (open to public)
- October 16 at 11:30 a.m. for Deborah McKetty, Michael Williamson, and Susan McLarty to present to Greenville Women Giving “Greenville’s Gentrification Dilemma: Where Do I Live Now?”
- November 15 at 6:30 p.m. for Deb Richardson-Moore, David Hanna, Lauren Stephens and Susan McLarty to present at Augusta Road Library branch (open to public) Program on Homelessness (title TBD)
- January 19 from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. for Susan McLarty to OLLI “Helping People who are Experiencing Chronic Homelessness Acquire Affordable Housing” (see attached description)

Medical Respite – New Horizon Family Health Services – New Horizon is in the process of developing a formal business plan to establish a medical respite program for homeless individuals who have been discharged from the hospital, but are at risk for medical complications and subsequent high cost hospitalization without proper care. This model will be based on other successful models across the US and will build on existing resources available through federally qualified health centers and other health care partners.

GHA Structure and Leadership:

United Ministries as “Host” Organization - The GHA has adopted United Ministries as its “Host” organization for legal and administrative purposes. The Community Foundation of Greenville has served as its fiscal agent and may continue to serve in this role as deemed appropriate by the steering committee and the host organization.

Articles of Collaboration – The steering committee is finalizing the articles of collaboration that provide a foundation for governance, leadership and decision-making.

Staffing – To date, the GHA has been supported by a planning and organizational development consultant who guided the collaborative in establishing foundational elements (vision, mission, early structure, etc.). With a greater understanding of the role and purpose of the GHA, the steering committee is forming a job description for a homeless coordinator/director.

Funding – The steering committee is finalizing a budget to support the leadership and coordinating role of a staff person as well as advocacy and education. Committee members will be discussing a budget that shows buy-in and ownership, of both in-kind and financial assets, of the partners engaged and will likely pursue additional grant funding to support collective impact.