

## A City and County Combine HPRP Efforts to Better Serve their Community

### Positive Stories / Lessons Learned from HPRP: *Community Success Story*

HPRP Grantee:	City of Saint Paul, Minnesota
CoC Name and Number:	MN-501 – Saint Paul/Ramsey County CoC

### Latest CoC Point-in-Time Count:

Total persons in ES:	515	Total persons in TH:	581
Total persons in Safe Haven:	10	Total unsheltered persons:	111
Total persons, sheltered and unsheltered:	1,218		

The City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County used HPRP as an opportunity to work together to provide better homelessness delivery systems for their community. HPRP prompted heightened city and county collaboration, which led to several community-wide advancements in combating homelessness. Ultimately, their coordinated effort resulted in the establishment of a new central contact point for the region: an important first step in developing a centralized intake system.

Prior to implementing its HPRP grant, Saint Paul had limited resources to assist homeless residents, with most homeless services provided through the county. As an entitlement jurisdiction, however, Saint Paul received the bulk of regional HPRP funding, totaling nearly \$3.3 million, while Ramsey County received \$198,000 from the State of Minnesota to serve only the jurisdiction's suburban areas. This change in roles presented both grantees with an opportunity to learn from each other in order to serve one of the most densely populated counties in the country. The city and county began working together to review existing systems, and to develop new approaches that they hoped would be more effective in assisting homeless individuals and families.

The city and county selected their subgrantees using the results of a collaborative community-wide gaps analysis, which identified special populations that could benefit from improved outreach. Populations identified as the most underserved included: homeless youth, residents with limited English proficiency (such as Hmong refugees from Laos and Spanish-speaking residents), and homeless veterans. The city and county then requested proposals from potential subgrantees that either focused on these populations or had the capacity to manage a central contact point. Saint Paul and Ramsey County prioritized the establishment of a central contact point in order to efficiently direct individuals and families to the organization that would help them most effectively. Though some organizations focused on specific populations, all eligible clients were able to receive homelessness prevention or rapid re-housing services.

The city and county worked with subgrantees during the process of establishing HPRP policies and procedures. Through this planning process, they developed the Housing Crisis Response (HCR) system, the region's first central contact point for Saint Paul residents seeking assistance to prevent or resolve an episode of homelessness. HCR is a multi-agency collaborative consisting of city, county, and nonprofit partners that performs eligibility screening and referrals to HCR agencies for residents seeking homelessness prevention, rapid re-housing, or county emergency assistance services. The system's screening process begins with a program participant's first call to HCR, as the system utilizes separate phone numbers for individuals, families, or youth calling in search of services. During the implementation of HPRP, HCR staff screened over 20,000 households for eligibility and need. Eligible program participants were then referred to HPRP subgrantee organizations that could meet their specific needs.

Working collaboratively not only allowed Saint Paul and Ramsey County to create an effective central contact point for their homeless residents and those at-risk of homelessness, but it also allowed them to plan for the future. The city leveraged emergency crisis funds from the Saint Paul Foundation, and the city/county HPRP partnership encouraged both to coordinate the Heading Home Ramsey – Plan to End Homelessness to secure additional governmental and foundation funding support for local needs. The plan resulted in additional beds at the family shelter, additional beds for cold-weather shelters for individuals, and additional shelter beds for homeless youth. Future plans include a rapid re-housing service for veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan that will be at least partially funded through the

Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program. This service will be similar to HPRP, drawing upon lessons the community learned through its implementation.

While looking to the future, Joe Collins from the Saint Paul Planning and Development Department takes a moment to reflect on the HPRP experience: "The city's ESG program will more effectively support the county's Continuum of Care initiatives because the HPRP experience challenged the city and county to become working partners."

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