

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

A collective effort to address homelessness in Spartanburg County.

OUR VISION

We envision a Spartanburg where homelessness is recognized as a solvable problem and where everyone has a safe, secure place to call home.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We acknowledge that homelessness is complex. There is more to the issue than what we see. The needs of individuals experiencing homelessness are as unique as the individuals themselves.

We believe that housing is a basic human right. All of our community members deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, and all deserve a place to call home.

We know our approach must be inclusive and collaborative. No single agency can address this issue alone. We will address homelessness by convening partners, elevating our impact, and educating the community.

We will focus on an entire continuum of support that includes preventing homelessness, serving those who are currently homeless, and emphasizing housing as the ultimate solution.

We will balance short and long-term solutions. We must meet the immediate needs of our community while also lifting up system-level, sustainable solutions.



This summary document was produced by 1000 Feathers for the November 9, 2023 Coffee and Conversations community gathering.



LONG-TERM FOCUS AREAS

Prevent

1. Reduce environmental and systemic barriers to employment with a strategic emphasis on quality, affordable childcare and transportation that connects people to jobs.
2. Implement a homeless prevention strategy to qualify and assist at-risk households that allows them to stay housed and sets them up for long-term success.

Serve

3. Invest in and coordinate the activities of organizations serving the homeless in our community, specifically those:
 - providing emergency assistance, and/or
 - offering behavioral health, mental health, and substance abuse case management services.
4. Meet the needs of a diverse group of residents by building and operating more emergency shelter, temporary shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing, along with offering supportive residential programs for those transitioning out of chronic homelessness.

House

5. Reduce housing cost burden by developing collaborative strategies to increase the availability of affordable, accessible, and safe housing in our community.

Leadership

6. The effort needs a permanent governance structure and backbone organization to provide leadership and stability.



IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES

The Spartanburg community is in “crisis” around this issue so we can’t just talk about long-term solutions. There needs to be action now.

1. The combination of **case management, data sharing, and coordination** has consistently been identified as important to successful homelessness prevention and service. These efforts in Spartanburg are underfunded and understaffed.
2. The community recognizes that **outreach workers are really important** and already has a number of Community Health Workers (and others) in positions at related organizations. But there is not currently a coordinated, intentional, and visible effort of individuals and organizations working together to assess, refer, and connect people in crisis to resources.
3. In Spartanburg, **there is no day shelter** and limited access to low-barrier emergency shelter(s) and beds, by any definition, leading to increased visibility of the issue. A solution(s) must be staffed by the right people who understand conceptually that low-barrier access means removing as many pre-conditions to entry as possible and responding to the needs of people and conditions of the community.
4. The **structure, governance, and leadership** of this effort must be identified and built out. The effort needs a local organization(s) and staff who wake up every day thinking about this issue.