

**WATERBURY TEN YEAR PLAN
TO END HOMELESSNESS**

FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT: 2013



WATERBURY TEN YEAR PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS

FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT: 2013

When our community came together in 2009 to begin implementing the Waterbury Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness (TYP), we pledged to look for innovative ways to help people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness. We vowed to work together as never before to create new housing, prevent homelessness where possible, create new partnerships and collaborations, break down barriers to housing for those most vulnerable, embrace best practices, and coordinate our resources in ways that yield the strongest results for our entire region.

This is our fourth annual report and we remain committed to our mission. Through the efforts of many volunteers, we work together to attack the problems associated with homelessness and make a positive difference. The deteriorating economic environment is challenging and has forced us to be more selective in choosing priorities to work on so that we remain relevant to the issues facing people and the climate in the community.

Accomplishments in 2013:

- Successfully launched a screening of the film *I AM* at the Palace Theater - February 22, 2013, an event that raised public awareness, encouraged participation in committees, and presented a call to action opportunity. This event included a Skype session with director, Tom Shadyac. Over 750 participated
- 95 households awarded \$96,921 in assistance to remain housed through the Flexible Assistance Fund, a prevention strategy for those who are in danger of entering homelessness.
- Added 34 supportive housing vouchers in Waterbury.
- The SOAR program (Social Security Outreach, Access, and Recovery Program) in Waterbury reached out to provide benefit screening in the community.
- Third Annual "Job Connect Event" at Greater Waterbury Interfaith Ministries brought employment services directly to those who are looking to access them. 125 people were served.
- Successfully planned and implemented Project Homeless Connect 2013, offering services to **456 people** on one day at the Waterbury Armory. This innovative approach offered haircuts, clothing, IDs, foot care, food, medical and dental services and fellowship.
- The Homeless Youth Committee conducted a Point in Time Count for Homeless Youth, the only effort of this kind in the state. 45 youth were identified in a two week period.
- The Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness website, www.waterbury10yearplan.net had 1,813 visits and 1,279 were unique visitors.
- 100% data quality score by Continuum of Care (CoC) provider members who use the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data system.

HIGHLIGHTS: YEAR 2013

From Homelessness to Housing:

- The Waterbury Homeless Hospitality Center continues to provide a safe place for individuals who are experiencing homelessness to have access to an array of supports that will assist them in obtaining housing, benefits, and employment. In addition to programs and services, the center provides a place for individuals to shower and wash clothes. As of December 31, 2013 there were over 280 unduplicated clients served
- A total of 9 new units or dedicated subsidies were added to housing inventory in 2013 through Waterbury CoC HUD funding. To date, a total of 225 units of housing with support services have been awarded under Waterbury Continuum of Care-HUD applications for a total funding commitment of over \$7,800,000.

Increasing Efficiencies of the System

- During 2013, the Flexible Assistance Fund provided one-time financial support to help individuals/families address immediate and temporary situations that put their housing in jeopardy. To date, 108 adults and 115 children have been assisted. 87% of households were stable at the 3 month benchmark and 83% were stable at 6 month benchmark. Funds expended to date totaled \$96,921. The average assistance per household is \$1,000.00. The Leever Foundation awarded a grant in the amount of \$25,000 for the Flexible Assistance Fund along with other United Way Supporters.
- Committed key stakeholders representing Connecticut State Legislation, Social Security Administration, NW Regional Workforce Investment Board, Dept. of Social Services, Job Links/Ride works, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, CT Department of Labor, Office of Veterans Workforce Development, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Ability Beyond Disability, Brass City Harvest, and New Opportunities, Inc. continue to create linkages between employment, training, and educational services. A resource inventory was created to identify available services and key stakeholders are holding networking meeting to increase collaborative efforts.

Building Public and Political Will

- TYP website had 1,813 and 1,279 were unique visitors during 2013.
- On average, 45 people attend the CoC/TYP Collaborative meetings to hear progress reports. The homeless or formerly homeless came to share their experiences. The membership represents 160 individuals and over 72 organizations.
- In 2013, the Continuum of Care Committees committed to strategic planning with targeted focus areas. Committees meet monthly and minutes are posted on the Ten Year Plan website.
- Youth were identified as an under-served population and added as a strategic focus area of the TYP.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: HOUSING

The Housing Committee Plan addresses the need to develop solutions on a continuum of need ranging from permanent supportive housing to affordable housing. The Housing Plan has an emphasis on working to meet housing goals in collaboration with and in alignment with policies of city government, public housing authorities, the Waterbury Development Corporation, and Veterans Administration.

The TYP Housing Committee provides a forum for developers and providers to network and identify community level barriers. Two Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) sit on the committee and lend their expertise in this area. Developments in the north and south end of Waterbury are planned. With limited resources, targeting neighborhoods remains critical to the success of the City's stabilization efforts and measurable impact.

Conveners: Diane Toolan, Waterbury Development Corporation

Champion: Rick O'Brien, Webster Bank

Benchmarks for Housing:

- Maintain an inventory of current and potential housing units, landlords and developers.
- Create incentives that encourage rehabilitation of existing housing stock.
- 25% of permanent supportive housing units by Year 3.

Accomplishments:

- Two local Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO's) sit on the Committee, Loyola and Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) and both lend their expertise in this area. Loyola received funds under Community Development in order to create a program for the South End.
- An up-to-date inventory was compiled and distributed to the Full CoC Committee.
- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) units were approved for Francis Xavier Project.

Summary of Housing Projects

Neighborhood Housing Services	<i>New construction of 10 rental units on 885 North Main Street.</i>
Grace Development (Hearth Homes)	<i>New construction of 41 units of Section 202 elderly at 5 Abbott Terrace.</i>
Francis Xavier Plaza	<i>Substantial rehabilitation of former school into 20 units of affordable and permanent supportive housing at 605 Baldwin Street.</i>
Loyola Development Corporation with Carabetta Enterprises	<i>New construction of 38 affordable rental apartments on South Main and East Liberty Streets.</i>

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SERVICES

The Services Committee has identified the importance of having a no wrong door approach to meeting the service needs of the homeless or those at-risk by developing a universal assessment tool to ensure a collaborative and efficient delivery of housing-related services. The TYP/Waterbury Continuum of Care is widely acknowledged as being among the strongest in the state. Its role in coordinating the plan to streamline the assessment and delivery of housing supportive services gives the plan a strong head start and guided leadership.

The Plan identifies the need for respite care for individuals who are homeless who have need for medical and/or behavioral support after leaving inpatient care.

Creation of a Coordinated Access system to share information among service providers and non-traditional providers will allow case conferencing and information sharing to reduce barriers and maximize resources, while increasing the potential for success, especially on behalf of those who are chronically homeless.

Convener: Ellen Brotherton, Western CT Mental Health Network - Waterbury Area

Champion: Dr. Peter Jacoby, St. Mary's Hospital

Benchmarks:

- Research medical/ behavioral respite models. Create a collaboration of mainstream hospital and service providers to explore and lead an effort to create a respite program.
- Increase supportive services to address systems gaps and changing needs of the homeless population.
- Develop a safety net model to close gaps and increase access to services.

Accomplishments:

- The Waterbury Homeless Hospitality Center continues to provide a safe place for individuals who are experiencing homelessness to have access to an array of supports that will assist them in obtaining housing, benefits, and employment. In addition to programs and services, the center provides a place for individuals to shower and wash clothes. As of December 31, 2013 there were over 280 unduplicated clients served
- Surveyed the need of a medical respite program within our community with representatives from local shelters, hospital discharge planners, a local community health center, and clients at a soup kitchen. The findings indicate the need for a medical respite program in our community.
- Representative Larry Butler, Chairman of the Housing Committee is collaborating with the Service Committee on the medical/ behavioral respite models draft to present to the State of CT Housing Commissioner.



STATUS OF HOMELESSNESS IN WATERBURY

On a given night, how many people experience homelessness in Waterbury?

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Sheltered	130	151	131	128
Unsheltered	*	33	*	51
Total Number of Homeless	130	184	131	179

* This data not available for 2010

In a given year, how many people experience homelessness in Waterbury?

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Homeless Individuals	712	637	701	604
Homeless Families	339	283	260	311
Total Number of Homeless	1051	920	961	915

In a given year, how many formerly homeless people reside in Continuum of Care housing in Waterbury?

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Individuals	*	128	130	158
Families	176	184	164	160
Total Number now Housed	176	312	294	318

*This data not available for 2010

What is the occupancy rate of Waterbury Continuum of Care housing?

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Housing for Individuals	*	97%	90%	94%
Housing for Families	83%	98%	99%	98%

* This data not available for 2010

All data obtained from the HUD Waterbury Continuum of Care HUD Homelessness Data Exchange 2013 AHAR.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: PREVENTION

The expansion of 2-1-1 services and training to both traditional and non-traditional providers and a rapid re-housing and prevention program are included as key elements of the Prevention Plan. Rapid re-housing and prevention, have commitments of both federal and state housing resources, and are included as goals that have the potential to produce long-term systems change.

Creation of a flexible prevention fund to provide short-term financial assistance for individuals and families who are in danger of becoming homeless has been a major prevention initiative. The fund provides short term financial assistance that addresses immediate and temporary situations that may jeopardize housing.

Conveners: Milena Sangut, Western CT Mental Health Network
Mary Conklin, CT Legal Services

Champion: Senator Joan Hartley

Benchmarks:

- Serve 25 families by year 3.
- Create a train-the-trainer protocol to expand delivery of information and services.
- A data sharing protocol will be established by year 2.

Accomplishments:

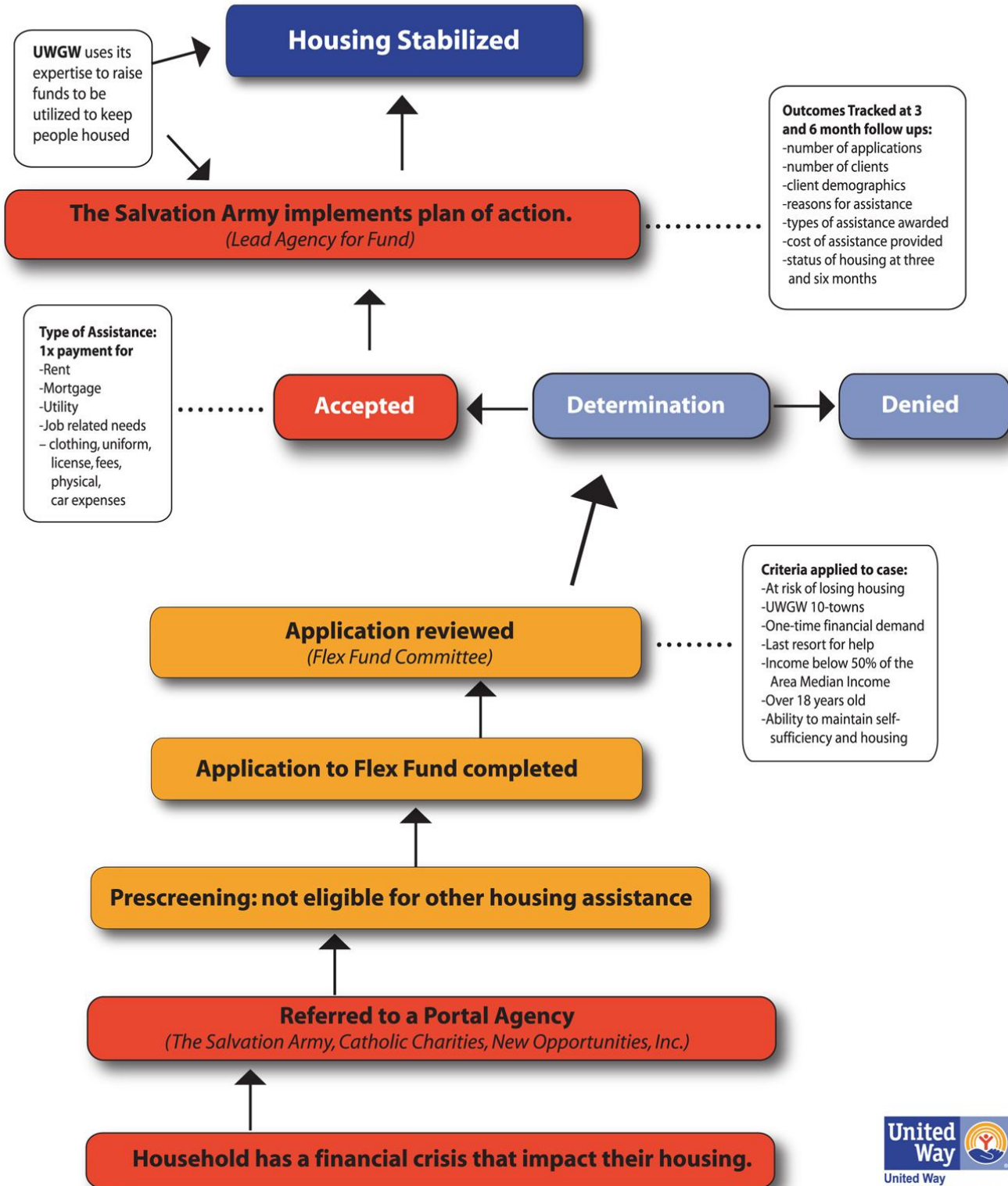
- Fund has assisted 95 households since 11/1/11; 108 adults and 115 children 87% of households were stable at 3 month benchmark and 83% were stable at 6 month benchmark. Funds expended to date are \$96,921.00. The average assistance per household is \$1,000.00.
- Held 211 training for 12 provider agencies, the Flexible Assistance fund portal agency staff and provided training to the Waterbury Police Department.
- Data sharing will be discussed further with the implementation of new HMIS software system Empowered Solutions scheduled for 2/14.

Data collected from the HUD AHAR Report provides information as to where people seeking emergency shelter are coming from and where they have spent the previous night.

For both families and individuals entering emergency shelters, the majority have spent the previous night with families or friends, indicating that many of those in Waterbury encountering homelessness do so after leaving a doubled up situation.

Flexible Assistance Fund

Provide one-time financial support to help low income individuals/families address immediate and temporary situations that may put their housing in jeopardy



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

Reduction of fragmentation and expansion of coordination among employment and training providers are critical to the achievement of employment and income goals. Integration and connection between housing, employment, and educational institutions within the Waterbury region through access to transportation is among the goals. Restoration of and access to entitlements that produce and lead to housing stability is included as an important link to income that can be the critical difference between homelessness and permanent housing. Key among the strategies for implementation in the employment and income plan is developing a job retention model that engages supportive employment strategies.

Under the current fiscal climate, it is crucial for us to look at ways to enhance and strengthen currently funded services through better coordination and increased integration rather than seeking and anticipating additional funding.

Conveners: Theresa Titor, Social Security Administration
Kate Travis, Ability Beyond Disability

Champion: Lynn Ward, Greater Waterbury Chamber of Commerce

Benchmarks:

- Utilize and enhance existing resources by creating opportunities for individuals involved in assisting individuals with employment to network and collaborate.
- Extend bus service to include evening hours by year 3.

Accomplishments:

- Employment Roundtables were held the previous two years, and this has led to the engagement of more local employment service providers being added to the committee. These efforts further reduce fragmentation by broadening the scope of the committee. Additional providers will continue to be recruited.
- Due to the efforts of community partners, a plan and logistics for the expansion of evening public transportation hours were completed in 2010. In FY 2011, funds allocated for evening expansion were rescinded. In the FY 2012 budget, these funds were restored and as of October 24, 2011, most bus routes in Waterbury expanded to include evening hours, running until 12:30 am.

SOAR Partners include:

Social Security Administration
DMHAS Office of Commissioner and Western Connecticut Mental Health
Network
Human Resource Development Agency
Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
Waterbury Health Access Program
Waterbury Hospital Homeless Outreach Team
Saint Vincent DePaul Shelter
Salvation Army Shelter
Greater Waterbury Interfaith Ministries
Ability Beyond Disability
Columbus House
NWRWIB
Waterbury Housing Authority
Veterans' Workforce Development
The Kennedy Center
CT Department of Labor and The United Labor Agency.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Plan is critical to the success of the Waterbury Ten Year Plan. It will allow information, data, research, best practices, and education about housing and related services to become available to a broader and broader segment of the Waterbury community. The Communications Plan will provide a tool to distribute accurate information on costs related to homelessness, effective strategies, local housing related information, and evaluation of the goals, actions, and benchmarks to Waterbury.

Convener: JoAnn Reynolds-Balanda, United Way of Greater Waterbury

Champion: Tom Chute, WATR

Benchmarks:

- Organize data that provides local statistics and cost comparisons related to prevention by year 2
- Deliver presentations using communications toolkit to 10 community organizations by year 2
- Recruit a minimum of 10 new community champions willing to support and speak on behalf of the Plan and its Implementation within 3 years.

Accomplishments:

- Utilized the DVD created at Project Homeless Connect 2012 highlighting the stories of those homeless in our community.
- Designed and executed the TYP Annual Report document reflecting the work of all strategic committees, data, and events. Provided a profile of the TYP and its impact in the community.
- I Am film screening at the Palace Theater in Waterbury successfully provided an opportunity for broader community engagement. Over 750 attended this event. <http://www.iamthedoc.com/toms-profile/>



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: HOMELESS YOUTH

The Homeless Youth Committee is to bring visibility and awareness to youth homelessness, and to identify and develop resources for youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in order for them to attain self-sufficiency.

Convener: Jill Schoenfuss

Champion: Fire Chief David Martin

Benchmarks:

- Complete a Youth Point in Time Count by end of January 2013.
- Advocate and support Waterbury Public Schools to submit application to the CT Department of Education for a Homeless Children and Youth Grant.
- A committee Champion will be identified.

Accomplishments:

- The committee has completed the only Youth Point-In-Time Count in CT based on guidance from the US Interagency Council on Homelessness.
- Waterbury Public School (WPS) hired a Community Connections Coordinator to implement CT Dept. of Education for Education for Homeless Children and Youth Grant, who has participated in the Homeless Youth Committee.
- Chief David Martin of the Waterbury Fire Department agreed to be the Committee Champion.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: HMIS: HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

Chairperson: Diane Albini

In 2011, the CT Coalition to End Homelessness began a process to upgrade the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a statewide data repository that Waterbury providers participate in. Through an 18-month process a new data base system was selected. During the past year the data migration and implementation of the new statewide system began. There was a phased in roll out of the new system that would divide the State into 5 areas of implementation. The Waterbury region is included in Area 2 and is scheduled for roll out of the new ECM System in February of 2014.

The Waterbury Continuum of Care member agencies realize the importance of gathering accurate and meaningful data regarding the homeless population in order to address community needs and identify gaps in services. In order to ensure that data accuracy was maximized, the community received funding to contract with the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness to provide local HMIS administration. This funding over the past 4 years has allowed the CoC member agencies to bring their data to a near 100% data quality. With an increased emphasis on data collection and outcomes the Waterbury CoC member agencies will be part of a statewide effort to refine performance management and outcome reporting. During the upcoming year this effort will be coordinated with the local HMIS administrator to be flexible and meet the needs of our local community.

LOOKING AHEAD

Looking forward to the Ten Year horizon before us, in 2014 the Steering Committee will lead the workgroups through a facilitated process to revisit the original goals and priorities, comparing the actual work to the plan.

PRIORITIES FOR 2014

Housing Committee Priorities for 2014:

- Building strong partnership with housing providers.
- Continue to build a working partnership with the Housing Authority to advocate for subsidies for families, individuals and special populations.
- Focus on strategies to leverage available and potential funding sources to create new housing opportunities.

Services Committee Priorities for 2014:

- Continue to advocate for the establishment of a Medical Respite program in our community.
- Establish Coordinated Access.
- Develop a Resource Pamphlet.

Prevention Committee Priorities for 2014:

- Continue operation of the Flexible Assistance Fund.
- Expand membership on the Prevention Committee.
- Focus on Individual Giving and other Fundraising Efforts.

Employment and Income Priorities for 2014:

- Retain the services of or get assistance with grant writing to secure funding for a dedicated SOAR Case Manager.
- Develop and refine a screening tool to identify potential SOAR applicants.
- Develop and refine the medical assessment process of the SOAR application. Work with Waterbury Health Access Project, LMHA Medical Director, and a local APRN to provide clinical and medical assessments.

Communications Committee Priorities for 2014:

- Launch 2nd Annual Public Awareness Event—"Pursuit of Happiness to continue to encourage participation in committee and other call to action opportunities.
- Develop an automated calendar system for sharing key information about the TYP with stakeholders.
- Reach out to Hispanic media, newspapers and the Observer. Translate media documents into Spanish.

Homeless Youth Committee Priorities for 2014:

- Solidify and expand committee membership.
- Continue to work with the Waterbury Public Schools to assist implementation of the grant funding for homeless youth.
- Identify priority needs for homeless youth.

HMIS Committee Priorities for 2014:

- Support the roll out of ECM software for Waterbury Area
- Support statewide efforts to increase effectiveness of data collection and outcome reporting
- Work with local HMIS administrator to develop uniform performance management tracking

Thank you to the many volunteers and committee leaders whose dedication, expertise, and concern continue to make a difference. Committee membership lists can be found on the website, www.waterbury10yearplan.net

In Memoriam

This Report is dedicated to Kacy Austin, Program Director, CT Renaissance Inc., who was instrumental in Project Homeless Connect 2013 as the sole food provider.

