

GALLIA-JACKSON-MEIGS-VINTON CONTINUUM OF CARE

2011 NEEDS ASSESSMENT



OHIO UNIVERSITY

MAY, 2011

A REPORT

PREPARED BY THE VOINOVICH SCHOOL OF LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS



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Acknowledgements

The Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs at Ohio University would like to thank the members of the Gallia-Jackson-Meigs-Vinton Continuum of Care and the Osteopathic Heritage Foundations for the opportunity to conduct this needs assessment and for their participation throughout the process. Many thanks also to the twenty individuals who graciously agreed to be interviewed as part of the community readiness portion of this effort.

In addition, we thank the staff and students of the Voinovich School who worked on this project. Dr. Lesli Johnson, Robert Gordon, and Kate Leeman led the assessment and are the primary authors of this report. Anita Fredrick, Emily Hawley and Renee Lewis assisted with transcribing and analyzing interviews. Sara Boyd and Vlad Pascal provided the majority of county-specific data for this report.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 5

Introduction 7

Root Cause Analysis 8

Community Readiness Interviews 12

 Community Efforts 13

 Community Knowledge of the Issue and Community Knowledge of Efforts..... 17

 Leadership 21

 Community Climate..... 24

 Resources Related to the Issue 26

 Community Readiness Summary..... 29

Secondary Data 32

 GJMV Point-In-Time Homeless Count 32

 The American Community Survey 37

 Policy Matters Ohio 40

 A Picture of Subsidized Households – 2008 41

 Housing Inventory Analysis for Gallia, Jackson and Meigs 47

Strategic Planning Session 48

Appendix A: Fault Tree Analysis Maps..... 50

Appendix B: Community Readiness Interview Questions..... 54

Appendix C: Community Readiness Model Stages 57

Appendix D: Bumper Sticker Slogans 58

Appendix E: The Strategic Triangle..... 61

Appendix F: Strategic Priority Analysis based on the Strategic Triangle 62

Executive Summary

The purpose of this needs assessment is to provide the Gallia-Jackson-Meigs-Vinton Continuum of Care (COC) with timely data for strategic planning purposes. To that end, this assessment includes information from three sources:

Root Cause Analysis

To draw on the existing knowledge and experience of the COC, members were asked to participate in an interactive discussion of the underlying causes of housing and homelessness issues within the four-county region. Through a series of structured activities, the group identified these root causes and engaged in some preliminary prioritization based on participants' evaluation of their relative importance and capacity to be changed through the work of the COC and/or its members.

The lack of affordable housing received the highest overall ranking. In discussing this issue, participants readily acknowledged its importance but also raised concerns regarding the difficulty of obtaining funding and building the capacity to engage in major building or renovation efforts. Other aspects of the housing and homelessness problem that received high rankings by the group include:

- Lack of education - both postsecondary training that would increase residents' job prospects and community education related to financial literacy and other skills that could help keep people in their homes.
- Lack of local jobs
- Foreclosure / Eviction prevention
- Lack of safe housing
- Transportation issues

Community Readiness Interviews

Using the Tri-Ethnic Center's Community Readiness Model, interviews were conducted with 20 representatives from business, social service, government and the religious community, including five from each county. This model is based on the idea that effective community efforts begin with an understanding of local culture, resources, and level of readiness to work on the issue. It measures six dimensions of community readiness – Community Efforts, Community Knowledge of the Issue, Community Knowledge of Efforts, Leadership, Community Climate and Resources Related to the Issue. Based on the answers provided during the interviews, a readiness stage is assigned to each, ranging between 1 (No Awareness) and 9 (High Level of Community Ownership). An average of the score for each of the six measures determines the overall stage of community readiness.

A wide range of comments were made during the interviews, providing a snapshot of community knowledge, attitudes and opinions regarding housing and homelessness issues within the four-county region. Overall, however, the average Community Readiness Stage Score across the four counties was determined to be a 3.9. This indicates that, on average, this region is in the Vague Awareness stage regarding issues related to housing and homelessness. According to the Community Readiness model, this stage is characterized by situations in which a majority of the community has some awareness that a problem exists, but where there is no immediate motivation to do anything about it. To move the issue forward, the model recommends working to raise awareness of the problem and the community's ability to make a difference by:

- Getting on the agendas and presenting information at local community events and to unrelated community groups.
- Posting flyers, posters and billboards
- Beginning to initiate events (such as potlucks, etc.) and using these opportunities to present information on the issue
- Conducting informal local survey and interviews with community people
- Publishing newspaper editorials and articles with general information and local implications

These recommendations seem particularly appropriate given the repeated comments made throughout the interviews regarding the need for additional public awareness and education regarding housing and homelessness issues with the four-county region.

Individual counties' average Community Readiness scores varied little, ranging from 3.7 – 4.2. Greater variation existed among the six measures of readiness. Community Efforts received the highest average score at 6.1 and Community Knowledge of the Issue received the lowest average score at 3.0.

Secondary Data

Finally, housing statistics were compiled from various sources including the U.S. Census, Policy Matters Ohio, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development as well as data provided by the COC. In addition to providing objective confirmation of the conclusions reached in the first two sections of this report, this data can be incorporated into future COC presentations, flyers and other community awareness efforts.

Introduction

The Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs was asked to conduct this housing and homelessness needs assessment by the members of the Gallia-Jackson-Meigs-Vinton Continuum of Care (COC). The purpose of this research is to provide timely data to inform the group's strategic planning efforts. To that end, this assessment includes information specific to the COC's four-county region and drawn from three sources:

- A **Root Cause Analysis** conducted with members of the COC and designed to identify and prioritize the diverse factors contributing to housing and homelessness issues within this region.
- **Community Readiness Interviews** conducted with five individuals from each county, including representatives from business, social service, government and religious institutions, for a total of 20 interviews.
- **Secondary data** sources such as the U.S. Census, the Ohio Department of Development and the Department of Housing and Urban Development as well as data provided by the COC.

For the purposes of this assessment, the definition of homelessness adopted in the *Gallia-Jackson-Meigs Continuum of Care 10-Year Plan to Address Homelessness, 2007-2017* has been adopted. This states that homelessness includes:

“Those who lack a fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence, including persons whose primary nighttime residence is a:

- *supervised public or private shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations;*
- *a time-limited/nonpermanent transitional housing arrangement for individuals engaged in mental health and/or substance abuse treatment;*
- *a public or private facility not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation ; or*
- *substandard housing including dwellings not fit and/or intended for human habitation.*

Homeless also includes “doubled up” – a residential status that places individuals at imminent risk for becoming homeless – defined as sharing another person’s dwelling on a temporary basis where continued tenancy is contingent upon the hospitality of the primary leaseholder or owner and can be rescinded at any time without notice.”

-adapted from SAMHSA NOFA TI 04-001

Root Cause Analysis

Root cause analysis is “a structured investigation that aims to identify the true causes of a problem and the actions necessary to eliminate them.” Although originally developed to investigate plane crashes and other industrial accidents, this model has been more recently adapted as a strategy for understanding the diverse issues that contribute to social problems with multiple and diverse contributing factors. For this needs assessment, root cause analysis was used to facilitate a discussion among members of the Consortium of Care regarding their shared knowledge and experience with local housing and homelessness issues.

On April 13, 2011, members of the Gallia-Jackson-Meigs-Vinton Continuum of Care met for three hours to participate in analyze the root causes of housing and homelessness problems in the four-county region. After a brief introduction, the group began by reaffirming the definition of homelessness in the *Gallia-Jackson-Meigs Continuum of Care 10-Year Plan to Address Homelessness, 2007-2017*. (To read the definition, please see the introduction to this report.)



Next, participants were divided into three groups. Each group was asked to draw upon their combined knowledge and experience to visually map the probable factors that contributed to a scenario based upon the COC’s definition of homelessness. These included a single man in his mid-forties with nowhere to spend the night; a mother with

two children currently housed temporarily but at high risk of homelessness; and a young adult living in housing unfit for human habitation. After identifying these factors, each group was asked to map their causal relationships on flip charts, using arrows to indicate how each contributed to the others. The three initial maps are provided in Appendix A.



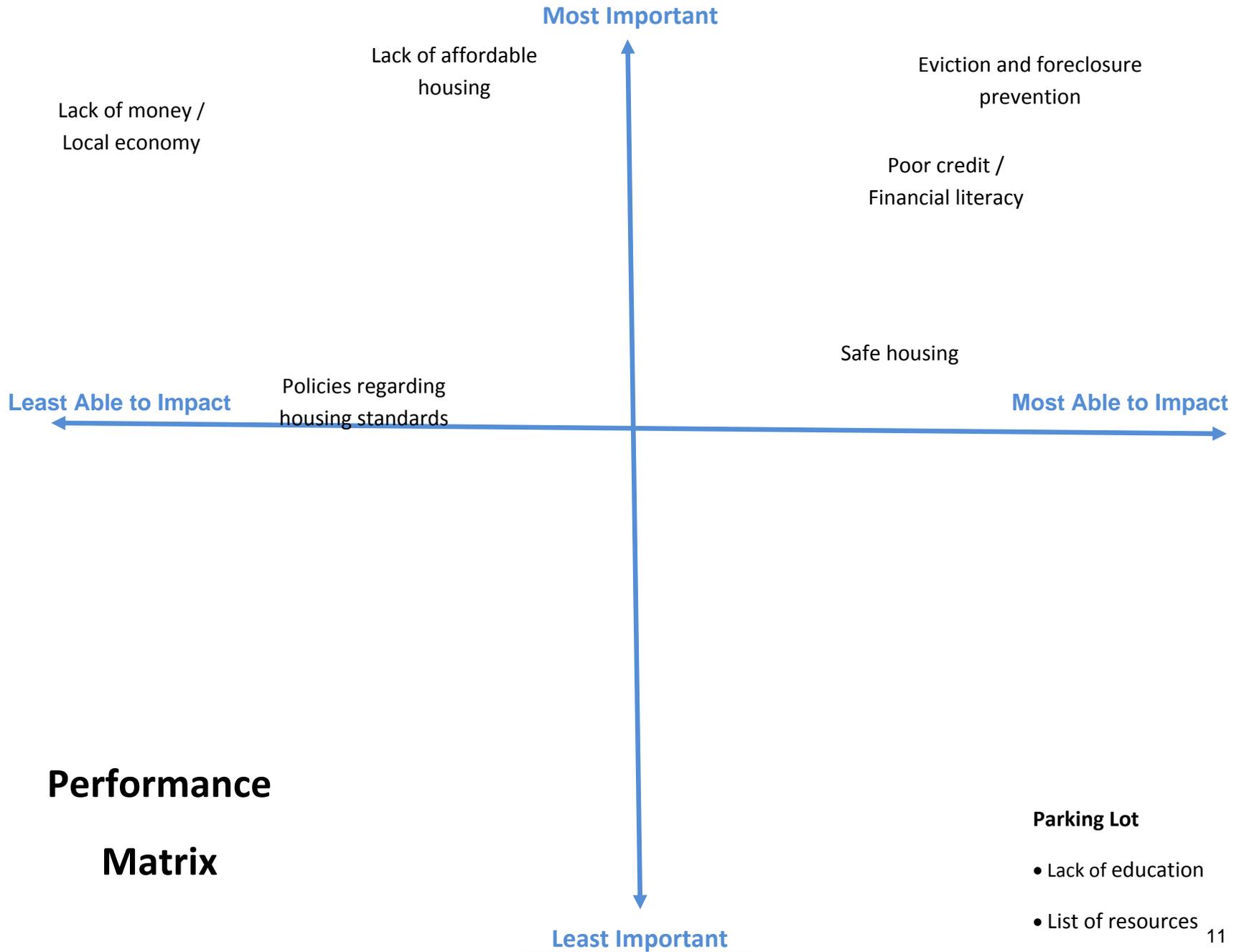
Several causal factors showed up on more than one map. These issues were listed separately, and the group was asked to identify: a) the causes that they believed to be most important to address and b) the causes that they felt most able to address. Following some discussion, it was determined that participants should focus on the causes that their own organization was able to impact, rather than attempting to forecast what the COC as a whole had the capability to address. The results of this voting are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Causes of Homelessness Receiving Two or More Votes

Causes	Total Votes	Importance	Ability to Impact
Lack of affordable housing	12	6	6
Lack of education	8	1	7
Lack of local jobs	8	6	2
Foreclosure / eviction prevention	7	0	7
Lack of safe housing	6	2	4
Transportation problems / No license	6	2	4
Lack of money	5	5	0
Lack of social network / Poor social skills/ Unhealthy relationships	5	3	2
Lack of adequate support programs	4	1	3
Lack of adequate housing standards	3	2	1
Lack of experience with middle class expectations	3	0	3
Trigger event	2	2	0
Poor credit / Financial literacy	2	0	2

To help further define potential priorities for future efforts, participants were asked to consider where key causes would fall on a Performance Matrix. Drawn on the white board at the front of the room, this matrix combined a vertical line for importance (with most important issues placed towards the top) and a horizontal line for ability to impact (with issues that could most easily be changed placed furthest to the right). The resulting diagram is recreated on the next page.

In discussing the placement “lack of affordable housing” on the matrix, it is worth noting that the group mentioned the unique challenges this issue presents because it is both seen as the most critical underlying cause of the problem and one that is extremely difficult to address due to associated funding and capacity requirements. It is also worth noting that “lack of education” was not included in the diagram despite recognition of its importance because conversation among participants revealed a lack of clarity about this issue. Some participants were focused on postsecondary education as a strategy for increasing residents’ employability while others were thinking more about the need for increased community education regarding financial literacy, foreclosure prevention strategies and other topics directly related to housing and homelessness.



Community Readiness Interviews

Since 1995, the Tri-Ethnic Center's Community Readiness Model has been used by over 150 communities as a strategy for assessing community readiness for change related to a wide range of issues, including substance abuse, transportation issues, domestic violence and many others. The model is based on the idea that effective community efforts begin with an understanding of local culture, resources, and level of readiness to work on the issue. This helps to ensure that a project's goals are challenging enough to engage people's interest and to make a real difference, while still being seen as both relevant and achievable.

The Community Readiness Model uses scored interviews with local residents to measure six dimensions of community readiness. These include community efforts, community knowledge of these efforts, leadership, community climate, community knowledge about the issue, and available resources related to the issue. Based on the answers provided during the interview, a readiness stage is assigned to each of the six dimensions, ranging between 1 (No Awareness) and 9 (High Level of Community Ownership). The stage scores for each individual interview are added together and divided by the total number of interviews to obtain an average overall stage score for each dimension. Further, the scores for the six dimensions are averaged to determine the overall readiness stage score of the community. Based on this information, the Community Readiness Model provides recommendations regarding goals and general strategies for future efforts. A copy of the interview questions and a description of the nine community readiness stages are provided in Appendices A and B.

A total of twenty Community Readiness interviews were conducted between January and April, 2011. To ensure that an adequate range of perspectives were included, five interviews were conducted per county including at least one representative from business, government, social service and the religious community in each. The majority of interviewees were selected from a list of sector representatives provided to the Voinovich School by the COC. A few interviews were conducted with alternative individuals holding similar positions (for example, one county commissioner was substituted for another) due to difficulties contacting and / or scheduling a time with the person originally recommended. To protect their anonymity, the names and positions of those interviewed have not been included in this report.

Before discussing the results of the interviews, it is important to note that this tool is primarily a measurement of community members' perceptions regarding existing efforts, resources, knowledge and support regarding housing and homelessness in this region. These perceptions may not match reality in all cases. Those interviewed may not be

aware of all the relevant organizations or may not have a full understanding of a certain program's purpose, scope or limitations. That said, this feedback is still important because it provides a snapshot of community knowledge and opinion regarding this issue. Inaccuracies may offer some of the most useful information, pointing out critical areas in need of additional outreach and education.

Community Efforts

One aspect of community readiness is the level of existing infrastructure for addressing the issue. Therefore, respondents were asked about current programs and policies within each county to deal with homelessness and inadequate housing. Questions focus on what programs exist, how long they have been operating and what their strengths and weaknesses are.

Community Efforts received the highest average community readiness stage score across the four counties. Based on the responses received during the interviews, this element scored 6.1, indicating that the majority of those interviewed could describe local programs addressing the issue of housing and homelessness, many of which have been operating for an extended period of time. Individual county averages varied little, ranging from 5.8 – 6.6.

The programs mentioned most often during interviews were public housing efforts, variously referred to as the Metropolitan Housing Authority, HUD Housing, and low-income housing (mentioned by ten respondents); Community Action (mentioned by nine respondents); and Job and Family Services (mentioned by seven respondents). Other programs or groups mentioned during at least two interviews include the Continuum of Care (four mentions); domestic violence shelters (four mentions); the CHIP program (three mentions); and Woodlands Center (2 mentions). Various other programs were cited by a single respondent, including Habitat for Humanity, Sojourners, MRDD, the Veteran's office, the Jackson County Homelessness Taskforce, the Athens / Meigs ESC Homelessness Liaison, and short term accommodations provided by some churches. In addition, two interviewees mentioned programs operating in counties outside the COC service area, including Love, Inc. in Ross County and Goodworks in Athens County. Only one respondent was unable to name a single local program working to address issues related to inadequate housing and homelessness.

When asked to describe the strengths of these efforts, several respondents mentioned the commitment and collaboration of those involved. Examples of these comments include:

“One strength...is the Continuum of Care.

Just as the name implies, it does provide a continuum so that we can share resources and it's pretty good for referrals and for getting ideas about grants.”

“The strength is the commitment of a few primary people who are very committed and really pursue the opportunities that they need to pursue.”

“A strength countywide ... is a concerted effort among a lot of agencies, both social service and business, that they are aware of some of the services so they can refer people.”

“One strength...is the Continuum of Care. Just as the name implies, it does provide a continuum so that we can share resources and it's pretty good for referrals and for getting ideas about grants.”

“The strength is that [the Jackson County Homelessness Taskforce] is widely represented, not just from private but there are public organizations such as the Health Department and Community Action that have joined with the

churches.”

One person identified local communication efforts as a strength, stating “I think there’s a pretty good support system for people to find out what we do have, even though we don’t have a lot...I think we do a good job of telling people what’s available in the area.” Another individual commented, “The strengths? When there is money, I do think they use it appropriately - but when it’s gone, it’s gone.”

Several respondents struggled to identify the strengths of existing local services related to housing and homelessness. Examples of these comments include:

“[The strength is] that they are offering those programs, like low income housing...I don’t know of any other particular strengths.”

“I don’t think you could really say there is a strength, sad to say.”

“Just the fact that they are there is good...but I don’t see a lot of strengths there.”

When asked to describe the weaknesses of local housing and homelessness efforts, most responses fell into one of three categories. Nearly half (9 out of 20) respondents

mentioned a lack of adequate information and public awareness about the issue. Examples of these responses include:

“I think the weakness is that the community is not made aware... that there are homeless people out there and what the situation is.”

“We have a Metropolitan Housing Authority, but I think it’s not very well known what they do and what services they provide.”

“People need to be aware and if they are not aware...there ain’t nothing gonna get done about it unless people get involved and the way they get involved is they’re gonna have to receive information, whether it’s through the newspaper or fliers.”

“You don’t hear very much about it. As far as publicity, it’s not out there a lot.”

“I think the weakness is that the community is not made aware... that there are homeless people out there and what the situation is.”

An equal number of respondents (9 out of 20) mentioned the inability to respond quickly as a weakness of local housing and homelessness efforts. Examples of these comments include:

“They just seem so overwhelmed right now... There’s just such a big waiting list. We’ve had people come through that are thinking of leaving the area because they’re just not finding a whole lot of help as far as housing.....Metropolitan Housing is where I usually send people but I know they’re telling them it might be a year or so before they can get them into anything.”

“One of the weaknesses we’ve found is that it just takes so long to do the paperwork... a lot of times it’s an emergency and it seems like sometimes it can drag out for days or weeks to actually get it through the process.”

“They just seem so overwhelmed right now... There’s just such a big waiting list.”

“Once you’re on the [HUD] list, you’re waiting and waiting and meanwhile what do you do?”

“We make it so hard to jump through all the hoops and do all the paper work...seems like the response is ‘fill out a form, come back in a couple of days’ and

they don't address the immediate need.”

Eight respondents mentioned lack of adequate resources, including both funding and volunteers, as a weakness of local housing and homelessness efforts. Examples of these comments include:

“Probably the weakness is lack of resources, including lack of people to be involved and, again, I think we're all spread so thin. Like in my case, I have to choose and unfortunately, [homelessness] is something that has had to be on the back burner for me because something else is screaming louder.”

“Money is quite the issue, everybody's funding is being cut. I think they are aware of it and know there's great need, but how do you get funding for that type of venture?”

“We don't really have a committed group of volunteers nor access to good resources to ultimately solve the long-term problems such as mental health, drug addiction, lack of employment that's going to lead a person out of homelessness to leading a pleasant and productive life.”

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A few other weaknesses of local housing and homelessness efforts were mentioned, but each was raised only once. These included public apathy, the stigma associated with accepting public assistance, the perceived prevalence of drug use by those living in public housing, and the overall failure of the family structure and religious values within American society.

When asked about populations that have a harder time accessing housing and homelessness related services, 45 percent (9 out of 20) respondents stated that they were unaware of differential access to housing for any particular age, gender, ethnicity or other group such as veterans or those with a disability. The remaining respondents expressed a variety of opinions on this issue, but no dominant theme emerged. Elderly and disabled people were each mentioned in two interviews as potentially having a more difficult time obtaining housing. However, in both cases, a separate respondent

suggested that these populations qualify for more assistance and therefore may have an easier time accessing and maintaining affordable housing. Other groups mentioned once or twice included young adults, single adults without children, young adults with children and those dealing with domestic violence, substance abuse or family issues.

Community Knowledge of the Issue and Community Knowledge of Efforts

These two measures of community readiness are both concerned with different aspects of local knowledge. For programs to be effective, community members must be aware of both the problem (Community Knowledge of the Issue) and aware of local programs established to address this problem (Community Knowledge of Efforts). Knowledge of the Issue focuses on perceptions of community members' understanding of the problem's scope, causes and impact on individuals and the community. Knowledge of Efforts asks participants about their perceptions of community members' awareness of programs, activities and policies within the county that address this issue.

Community Knowledge of the Issue received the lowest average community readiness stage score across the four counties. Based on the responses received during the interviews, this element scored 3.0, indicating that only a few local people are believed to be informed about this issue and that additional efforts would be needed to provide the majority of community members with appropriate information about the scope, causes and impact of inadequate housing and homelessness in the region. Individual county averages varied little, ranging from 2.6 – 3.2.

Community Knowledge of Efforts was rated more positively, receiving a 4.0, the second highest average community readiness stage score after Community Efforts. This indicates that those interviewed felt that a larger percentage of community members are aware of local efforts to address this issue, but that additional work is still needed to expand and enhance this knowledge. Individual county averages varied somewhat, ranging from 3.4 – 4.8.

With one exception, every person interviewed clearly identified inadequate housing and/or homelessness as a concern in their county. However, several respondents qualified this statement by making a distinction between these two issues. Examples of these clarifications include:

“I don't think we have a housing issue of homelessness. Our housing issue is more related to low-income [residents] keeping what they have and maintaining it.”

“I’m not sure how many homeless there actually are that would be deemed homeless. I know that there are a lot of people out there that are staying with family members or two or three families staying together.”

“Most people don’t see [homeless people] out in the street with tents and boxes so they aren’t aware. As far as the housing goes though...everyone knows we need more, better housing.”

“We don’t see a lot of homelessness in our agency, we see more inadequate housing...I know they go by different definitions and things might fit into that. I’m more concerned about the inadequate housing.”

“I’m not sure how many homeless there actually are that would be deemed homeless. I know that there are a lot of people out there that are staying with family members or two or three families staying together.”

Respondents seemed particularly concerned about the shortage of acceptable, affordable rental options within the region:

“I have a list of owners willing to rent but the rental units are starting to get few and far between or they can’t afford them, they’re out of their reach. “

“We get a lot of calls from folks who are looking for decent housing or affordable housing, and unfortunately, there’s just not a whole lot of that available in the county.”

“I’ve seen some examples of pretty lousy housing that landlords should have been aware of but didn’t fix it maybe because the people living there didn’t know who to contact or just didn’t know any better.”

“I have a concern with rental property, nice rental property for people that’s coming in that want to rent a place. I think that sometimes we might lack in that area.”

“I’m just not sure there’s enough adequate housing in the county. A lot of the houses are just old to start with and think some landlords do a really good job and some don’t do such a good job.”

Several also raised concerns about the conditions in which some local residents were living:

“We get a lot of calls from folks who are looking for decent housing or affordable housing, and unfortunately, there’s just not a whole lot of that available in the county.”

“Several of the people that I have dealings with have extended households where the conditions are crowded or they’re on waiting lists for subsidized living or I’d even go so far as to say that several people with live in, like, campers on family members land.”

“Now, to me, ... if someone is living in a house or a camper trailer – which can be very common in Vinton County - and using an electric heater or, in several cases, a toaster oven, to try to heat their house, I consider that homelessness to some extent.”

“There are people...that are living in conditions that are not adequate for anyone to live in and, in many cases, the sad part is those situations also include kids.”

Despite the nearly universal recognition of a local housing problem among those interviewed, the vast majority of respondents suggest that most county residents have little or no knowledge of this issue. For example, these are some of the comments made during interviews regarding local awareness of housing and homelessness issues:

“I don’t think it is a topic that is well known or discussed”

“I think other than the people that deal directly with these people, most of the population of Gallia County is not aware of it... I like to think they’d be supportive if they were aware...I don’t think there’s a lot of knowledge. I see very little in the newspaper or hear anyone talking about this issue.”

“People aren’t really aware that it’s an issue so therefore their knowledge of it is very little.”

“I don’t think the general public thinks that homelessness is a significant problem”

“I don’t think the general public thinks that homelessness is a significant problem”

The most common explanation offered for community members' limited awareness was the lack of visibility of the problem. Over half the respondents commented on the difference between urban and rural homelessness and the impact this has on community members' awareness. Examples of these comments include:

"The general community isn't aware of it because they don't see people on the street like you would in an urban area. It's a different kind of homeless."

"It is definitely a concern, but you don't see it as much in the forefront as you do in larger cities."

"I think most people in Meigs County don't even consider the fact that there's any homelessness...We think of homelessness as someone who lives under a bridge in a cardboard box. But a lot of people we know move from this friend's house for a week or so to that friend's to somewhere else. And we don't think about them. So I'd say there's a lack of concern in that regard."

"I think people in general do not understand that there is homelessness because people are not laying on our park benches. They think it's a problem in cities."

"The general community isn't aware of it because they don't see people on the street like you would in an urban area. It's a different kind of homeless."

When asked about local sources of information on homelessness, a few respondents mentioned the Point in Time Survey or suggested that some limited data might be available from the Metropolitan Housing Authority, Job and Family Services, the U.S. Census or other government sources. However, most were uncertain what data existed or where it could be obtained. Examples of these responses include:

"There's not a lot of information out there."

"I don't even have an answer for that question. I don't know."

"I would say very little (if any) information has been put out to the public."

"I'm not aware of anywhere in Meigs County where you could get any information."

"I would say very little (if any) information has been put out to the public."

As mentioned previously, respondents were somewhat more optimistic of community members' knowledge of local programs and activities designed to address housing and homelessness issues, although some still felt the overall level of knowledge was low. Examples of the range of responses include:

“I don't think the general public's aware of [homelessness/inadequate housing programs] except when someone needs to access it. ...The service agencies – those people are knowledgeable but the general public? If you just asked ten people off the street, you might get three people who realized there's Community Action or the Homeless Liaison.”

“I would say since I'm not very familiar with what all that encompasses those programs, I'd say they [community members] aren't very aware neither...But sometimes through word of mouth, the ones that deal with it are more familiar than what I am. “

“I think people are fairly aware. I think where we lack is that we have some agencies that are sort of Jackson / Vinton because of population or whatever and I'm not sure if those services are perceived as available to those in Vinton County.”

“Living in Appalachia and seeing these programs operate for many years, most people down here know how to take advantage of them.”

“I think most people are aware of Metropolitan Housing.”

When asked who county residents dealing with housing or homelessness issues would turn to first for help, 70 percent (14 out of 20) of respondents identified Job and Family Services, either alone or in combination with other possible sources of support. Metropolitan Housing Authority, family, and religious organizations were each identified by three respondents as likely first steps for those dealing with housing issues. Other sources of initial help mentioned less frequently included the Veteran's Administration, Community Action, Woodland Centers, United Way, and food pantries.

Leadership

A fourth element of community readiness is the ability to obtain help from those who have power and influence within the region. Therefore, this measure of community readiness asks participants about the extent to which elected officials and other influential community members are supportive of efforts to address the issue of

“I think the directors of agencies and the commissioners and other groups are aware and will do anything within their means. I’m not concerned about the leadership so much.”

homelessness. Questions focus on local leaders’ perceived level of concern, evidence of involvement (such as serving on a committee or task force) and willingness to support additional efforts.

Leadership received the second lowest average community readiness stage score across the four counties. Based on the responses received during the interviews, this element was scored a 3.2, suggesting that homelessness may be recognized as a local concern by most of those in leadership but that there is little immediate motivation to do anything about it and that, even among those who recognize that something should be done, no focused efforts among leadership have been developed. Individual county averages ranged from 2.2 to 4.0.

Respondents expressed a wide range of opinions regarding the level of support for homelessness and housing efforts among local leadership. A total of 6 out of 20 (30 percent) of those interviewed perceived the level of leadership support to be strong, making comments such as:

“I think the directors of agencies and the commissioners and other groups are aware and will do anything within their means. I’m not concerned about the leadership so much.”

“I sat in on several sessions and it’s a concern. I’m not sure they know how to go about it with the limited funds, but it’s a concern.”

“I serve, all the county commissioners serve, on the Community Action [Board] where a lot of the programs are discussed and applied for. There are several programs that we do sit on the Boards.”

“I read newspaper articles about the Commissioners’ meetings, and I don’t see this being addressed much from the leadership in the county.”

An equal number of respondents (6 out of 20 or 30 percent) had the opposite perception, describing the level of leadership support for homelessness efforts as low or nonexistent, making comments such as:

“I read newspaper articles about the Commissioners’ meetings, and I don’t see this being addressed much from the leadership in the county.”

“When we’ve raised [the issue of inadequate housing and homelessness] to these people, there’s no concern and a complete lack of awareness or acceptance that it’s here and it’s happening.”

“We, as commissioners and as a council, haven’t really addressed inadequate housing at all.”

Two of these respondents went a step further, suggesting that some members of local leadership are also property owners and may have a vested interest in maintaining the existing housing situation. A third respondent expressed the opinion that representatives of law enforcement appear to be actively opposed to efforts to help the homeless. Three respondents (15 percent) declined to comment on the level of support from local leadership, saying that they did not know or were unsure.

When asked about support for future efforts related to housing and homelessness issues, most respondents felt that local leaders would be supportive. However, several qualified this answer, stating that leadership support would be dependent upon increased understanding of the problem and/or the availability of funding. The quotations below provide examples of these qualified responses.

“I think it would take an effort on somebody’s part to gather some statistics to make the compelling story that [homelessness and housing] is an issue.”

“I think it would take an effort on somebody’s part to gather some statistics to make the compelling story that [homelessness and housing] is an issue.”

“I think it becomes a matter that people need to be educated, shown that there is a need.”

“If there was funding to do so.”

“They would be supportive of someone else doing it. Not to give a flippant answer, but I know commissioners and everybody has got budget constraints and we can’t service what we should be doing and also time obligations are making demands on everybody, but if somebody wanted to put in a shelter or something of that nature I think they would

get the support they need if the zoning need changed or something like that. If it wasn't particularly controversial."

Community Climate

A fifth element of community readiness involves the communities' willingness to see an issue as worthy of their time and effort. Therefore, this measure of community readiness asks participants about their perceptions of the prevailing attitude of the community towards homelessness.

Community Climate received the third highest average community readiness stage score across the four counties. Based on the responses received during the interviews, this element was scored a 3.9, suggesting that respondents believe that the majority of community members view housing issues as problems that should be addressed in. However, it would be more accurate to say that the interviews revealed a bimodal response pattern. That is, one group of respondents believe the majority of community members lack interest in the issue all together and another group is more optimistic, seeing signs of growing concern and a willingness to provide modest support for additional efforts. Individual county averages ranged from 3.4 to 4.6

Those with a more negative impression of community attitudes suggest that some local residents believe that those struggling with homelessness or inadequate housing have brought the problem on themselves. It is important to note that only one respondent expressed these beliefs as his/her own. All others described these as attitudes held by some in the community, but not themselves. Examples of these statements include:

"Among certain people, there's a mentality 'You just don't try hard enough, you don't care. If you would go out there and get a job, you wouldn't have to live this way.'"

"I think a lot of people around here have the feeling, 'if we've tried to help them and couldn't or if they can't help themselves, then too bad' Kind of that stereotype about welfare, that everyone on welfare is not deserving. I think

"I'm sure there is a percentage of people who think that if someone doesn't seem to make an effort or doesn't work or doesn't put forth any effort to take care of themselves or their family so they get what they deserve. I cannot tell you that's unique to Meigs County. I think that's anywhere."

that's really proliferated around here.... That the people on welfare are lazy and no good.

"I think some people just don't see it as a priority and they maybe blame the people who are the victims or they just don't see it as their problem."

"I'm sure there is a percentage of people who think that if someone doesn't seem to make an effort or doesn't work or doesn't put forth any effort to take care of themselves or their family so they get what they deserve. I cannot tell you that's unique to Meigs County. I think that's anywhere."

"It's somewhat acceptable to see people living in poor conditions because we're rural. To see them living in campers or having eight people live in a two-bedroom house with a leaking roof and poor sanitation is somewhat acceptable."

A few respondents suggested that rural Appalachian communities have a higher level of tolerance for substandard housing overall. For example:

"We live in Appalachia and what some might think is inadequate housing, in Appalachia might be fine because ... people are pretty used to living substandard. I don't really think they compare themselves to other people. ... They live down here by choice and they're used to a lower standard. And maybe that's good or bad, I'm not saying.... I think as long as they've got a place to live and they can watch their television, they're happy"

"It's somewhat acceptable to see people living in poor conditions because we're rural. To see them living in campers or having eight people live in a two-bedroom house with a leaking roof and poor sanitation is somewhat acceptable."

Just over half the respondents (11 out of 20) expressed a more positive view of the local community climate, suggesting that community residents are actively

concerned about the problem of inadequate housing and homelessness (or would be if they knew more about it).

Examples of these comments include:

"I don't think that anything toward the homeless folks is done intentionally. I just think that we're ignorant. The fact of homeless people, how many they are or

programs or anything to do with that are not publicized enough and needs to be maybe an issue that is brought to the forefront and dealt with.”

“If the homelessness becomes very visible I am sure there would be more of an outcry. But it’s not particularly visible so people have a tendency not to look at it. I mean not to search it out.”

“I don’t think [community members] like substandard housing. It affects their housing values. We don’t have slum area so to speak. Substandard housing is scattered throughout the whole county. I don’t know of anyone who tolerates it. They may feel bad for people who can’t bring their units up and have to live in conditions that way.”

“There are so many people in Vinton County that are just a couple of paychecks away from being there themselves. That’s the situation. In general, we’re not a real well educated county but there are good people here who have feelings for others so I would think it would be compatible with other areas. I certainly think there would be more concern here than in an urban area. Here, pretty much everybody knows everybody.”

“In general, we’re not a real well educated county but there are good people here who have feelings for others so I would think it would be compatible with other areas.”

Resources Related to the Issue

Finally, an assessment of community readiness requires considering the people, time, money and space available to be invested in the issue. Therefore, this measure of community readiness asks participants about the local resources they believe to be available to address the issue of homelessness. Questions focus on respondents’ perceptions regarding existing or potential sources of financial or in-kind support.

Resources received the third lowest average community readiness stage score across the four counties. Based on the responses received during the interviews, this element was scored a 3.4, slightly higher than community knowledge of the issue (3.0) and leadership support (3.2). This score suggests that the community is not sure what resources would be necessary to effectively address this issue or where these additional resources could be obtained. It is worth noting that this aspect of community readiness varied the most among the individual counties, with scores ranging from 2.4

(suggesting a belief that very few (if any) resources are available to address the issue) to 5.2 (indicating that some members of the community are engaged in actively seeking additional resources).

When asked about the need to expand housing and homelessness services in their county, all but one of the respondents agreed that this is a local need. However, when asked about the barriers to this expansion, the most commonly received response referenced a lack of adequate funds or resources (60 percent or 12 out of 20 respondents). Lack of awareness was also mentioned as a barrier to expansion by 30 percent of respondents (6 out of 20). No other barrier was mentioned by more than a single individual. Examples of resource-related comments include:

“Accessing adequate funding. It’s a small population base. Many times it’s difficult to justify a need for the kind of funding that it takes. I think there’s an undercurrent of powerful people in the community who would just as soon keep it as it is because they benefit from it.”

“Without a funding source it makes anything pretty hard to kick off. And without anything in place other donations are impossible until people actually see something up and running.”

“If we had more money we could build more homes.”

“Without a funding source it makes anything pretty hard to kick off. And without anything in place other donations are impossible until people actually see something up and running and say oh that’s great. The initial money is just not available right now and hasn’t been for a while.”

“Money. I don’t know that there is enough money to support it. And my understanding is that with the budget cuts that are happening in the state right now, even the Community Actions are going to be cut to the point that they may not be able to provide the services they did at one time... So once again you have less people doing the services and you have less people involved in it.”

When asked about individual and organizational level support in the form of volunteering time, giving money or donating space, respondents expressed a wide range of opinions. Some stated that they had no knowledge of local volunteering and/or donations related housing and homelessness efforts. Examples of these comments include:

“I’m not aware of any [community] involvement [regarding housing and homelessness issues] but I’m not in a position to be aware of it either.”

“Volunteering, I haven’t seen a whole lot of that, but I’m not sure anyone’s approached anybody or asked for volunteers.”

“Aside from individuals trying to hook people up with friends and family, I’m not aware of any community efforts. That’s generally what we do when we come across people [at risk of homelessness].”

“I don’t think there’s going to be a huge amount of [support], to be perfectly honest, from the businesses.

Other respondents described how local individuals, churches or businesses are actively supporting housing and homelessness efforts through volunteering and/or donations. Examples of these comments include:

“I do see a lot of people trying to help, a lot of volunteers in the area, different businesses like ours that try to give people things. The housing is the hard part though. You can give them all this stuff, but they have to have somewhere to go and somewhere to put it.”

“The attitude is okay. As long as they don’t have to do a lot of leg work... they don’t usually contribute time. They usually contribute maybe their space or money.”

“The churches here furnish help periodically, provide donations - financial donations - and labor.”

“Anytime we’re short of funds and we need to contact churches or other organizations, they’ve always been willing to help. I think in general if there were more information out there, I don’t think help or support for any program would be lacking.”

Finally, some suggested that a lack of information and/or the poor state of the economy limits support that might otherwise be available. Examples of these comments include:

“I’d say the community would be very supportive [of efforts to address this issue] but some parts of the community would not be as supportive if it meant it took away from other aspects that maybe affected them more directly...When there’s a shortage of funding and you’re using funding towards a program such as that people may not feel as warmly if it means taking away funding from something else.”

“If they were educated on this, I think [businesses] would donate what they could. You know, this is just tough economic times.”

“A lot of people are suffering, even the businesses. They don’t have a lot themselves to be giving out. The community will do what it can, but I don’t think there’ll be a lot coming from business.”

“If they were educated on this, I think [businesses] would donate what they could. You know, this is just tough economic times.”

“We’re dealing with a situation where the economy is not so good and business is not great for a lot of people. I think you would just have to find the right people who would be committed to doing it.”

“Financially, people seem to be generous when we do ask. I don’t remember a whole lot of occasions where we’ve been turned down. Now, with the way it’s been the last couple of years, churches are not able to do as much, but generally they give what they can.”

Community Readiness Summary

As mentioned previously, each of the six aspects of community readiness are scored on a scale from 1 – 9 based on the responses provided during the 20 interviews conducted with representatives from business, social service, government and religious organizations. Among these six measures, Community Efforts achieved the highest average rating at 6.1, with Community Knowledge of Efforts coming in a distant second at 4.0. The measure receiving the lowest average rating was Community Knowledge of the Issue (3.0), closely followed by Leadership (3.2) and Resources (3.4). When considering the county-specific scores provided in Table 2, please keep in mind that this tool measures community members’ subjective assessments of local efforts, knowledge, attitude and resources.

Table 2: Community Readiness Stage Scores by Category and County

Community Readiness Categories	All Counties	Gallia	Jackson	Meigs	Vinton
Community Efforts	6.1	5.8	6.0	6.0	6.6
Community Knowledge of Efforts	3.9	3.6	3.4	4.0	4.8
Leadership	3.2	4.0	3.2	3.4	2.2
Community Climate	3.9	3.4	3.8	3.8	4.6
Community Knowledge of the Issue	3.0	3.2	2.6	3.1	3.0
Resources Related to the Issue	3.4	5.2	3.0	2.4	3.2
Average Score	3.9	4.2	3.7	3.8	4.1

In addition, these scores for each of the six community readiness measures were averaged to determine an overall Community Readiness Score. For the individual counties, this overall score ranged from 3.7 – 4.2, with an average across the four counties of 3.9. This indicates that, overall, the community is in the Vague Awareness stage regarding issues related to housing and homelessness.

According to the Community Readiness model, the Vague Awareness stage is characterized by situations in which a majority of the community has some awareness that a problem exists, but where there is no immediate motivation to do anything about it. To move the issue forward, the recommended next step is to raise awareness of the problem and the community’s ability to make a difference by:

- Getting on the agendas and presenting information at local community events and to unrelated community groups.
- Posting flyers, posters and billboards
- Beginning to initiate events (such as potlucks, etc) and using these opportunities to present information on the issue
- Conducting informal local survey and interviews with community people
- Publishing newspaper editorials and articles with general information and local implications

These recommendations seem particularly appropriate given the repeated comments made throughout the interviews regarding the need for additional public awareness and education regarding housing and homelessness issues with the four-county region. Specific suggestions offered by respondents include:

“It might be a good idea to join [the Chamber of Commerce] and to go to some of the different activities so that we can talk one-on-one. Sometimes that one-on-one is the best way to get to people, and we can do some advertising through the Chamber newsletters...You’re going to get out to something like 200 businesses on their email. That can be an inexpensive way to get to some of the businesses. Plus I think we need to get some contractors in the room and try to explain to them the need for additional housing in the county and see if somebody from there would step up to the plate.”

“We would like to have some kind of feedback about what other groups are doing, other counties, other shelters, how other people are solving these problems. Because they might have an idea and we realize that the homeless shelter, as it has been existing, is probably going to have a tough time to continue to exist in the government budgetary cycles as they appear now in Washington and in Columbus.”

“Businesses in the four-county region...might be more willing to assist if the targets were more clear and if they has a better ideas what they were helping with...I think a lot of it comes down to how you present it to them.”

“I don’t think that anything toward the homeless folks is done intentionally. I just think that we’re ignorant. The fact of homeless people - how many they are or programs or anything to do about it - is not publicized enough and needs to be maybe an issue that is brought to the forefront and dealt with.”

“Vinton County’s just completed a five-year plan and one of the committee’s that will be meeting addresses public services...Somebody could make a presentation to that Committee to put homelessness on the radar.”

“Maybe...a presentation to the County Commissioners to raise people’s eyebrows about what’s going on so that it’s high on the scale every time people think about, ‘What am I going to do in this organization to help the community?’”

Secondary Data

GJMV Point-In-Time Homeless Count

Communities are required to submit information about the number and characteristics of the local homeless population to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at least every two years. To help prevent counting transient individuals more than once, a specific date is selected for conducting the Point-in-Time measure. In 2011, the Ohio Point-in-Time Count was conducted on Tuesday, January 25. The following information was collected as part of this process.

When asked if they considered themselves homeless, 23 percent of 2011 respondents said yes, compared to 27 percent in 2010, and 40 percent in 2009. It is unclear how this information should be interpreted since both the number of participating agencies and individuals has increased significantly over time (see Table X). Therefore, the declining percentage may reflect a decline in self-perceived homelessness or increased diversity among the group being surveyed.

Table 3: Change in Participation Levels and Self-Identified Homelessness Rate, 2009 - 2011

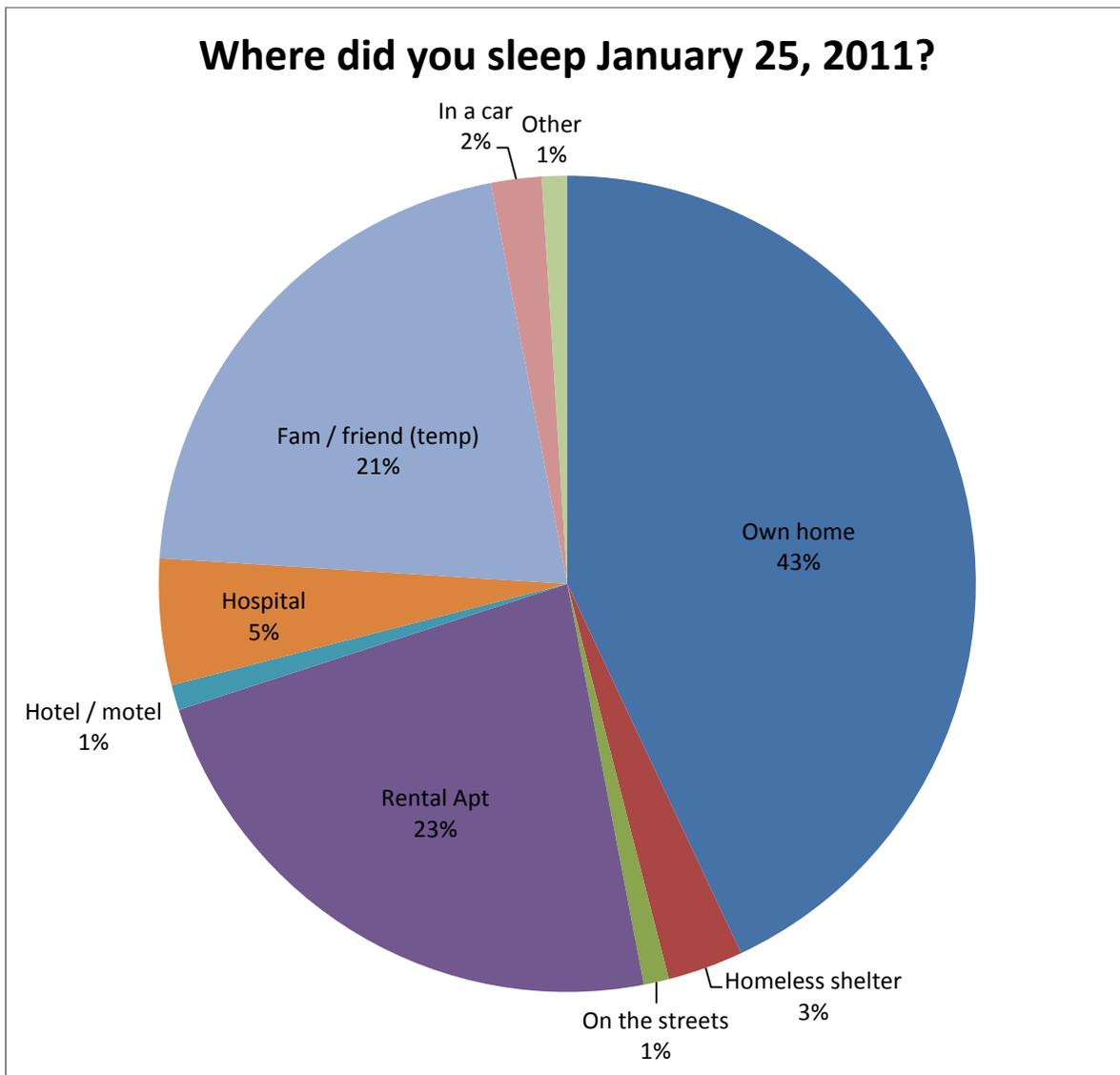
	2009	2010	2011
Number of participating providers	16	22	28
Number of unduplicated responses	134	184	339
Percent answering yes to the question, "Are you currently homeless?"	40%	27%	23%

HUD defines someone as homeless if they live in an emergency shelter, transitional housing for the homeless (including domestic violence shelters) or in a place not meant for human habitation, such as a car, abandoned buildings, campground, on the street, etc. The number of 2011 respondents who fit this definition is 22, up from 3 in 2010, for an increase of over 700 percent. A much larger number of respondents (83) self-identify as homeless. This discrepancy is likely due to individuals who consider themselves homeless because they have a temporary living arrangement with family or friends, a situation currently not covered by the HUD definition of homeless.

HUD describes a person as chronically homeless if the individual has been homeless four or more times within the last 12 months. A total of 12 2011 respondents fit this definition.

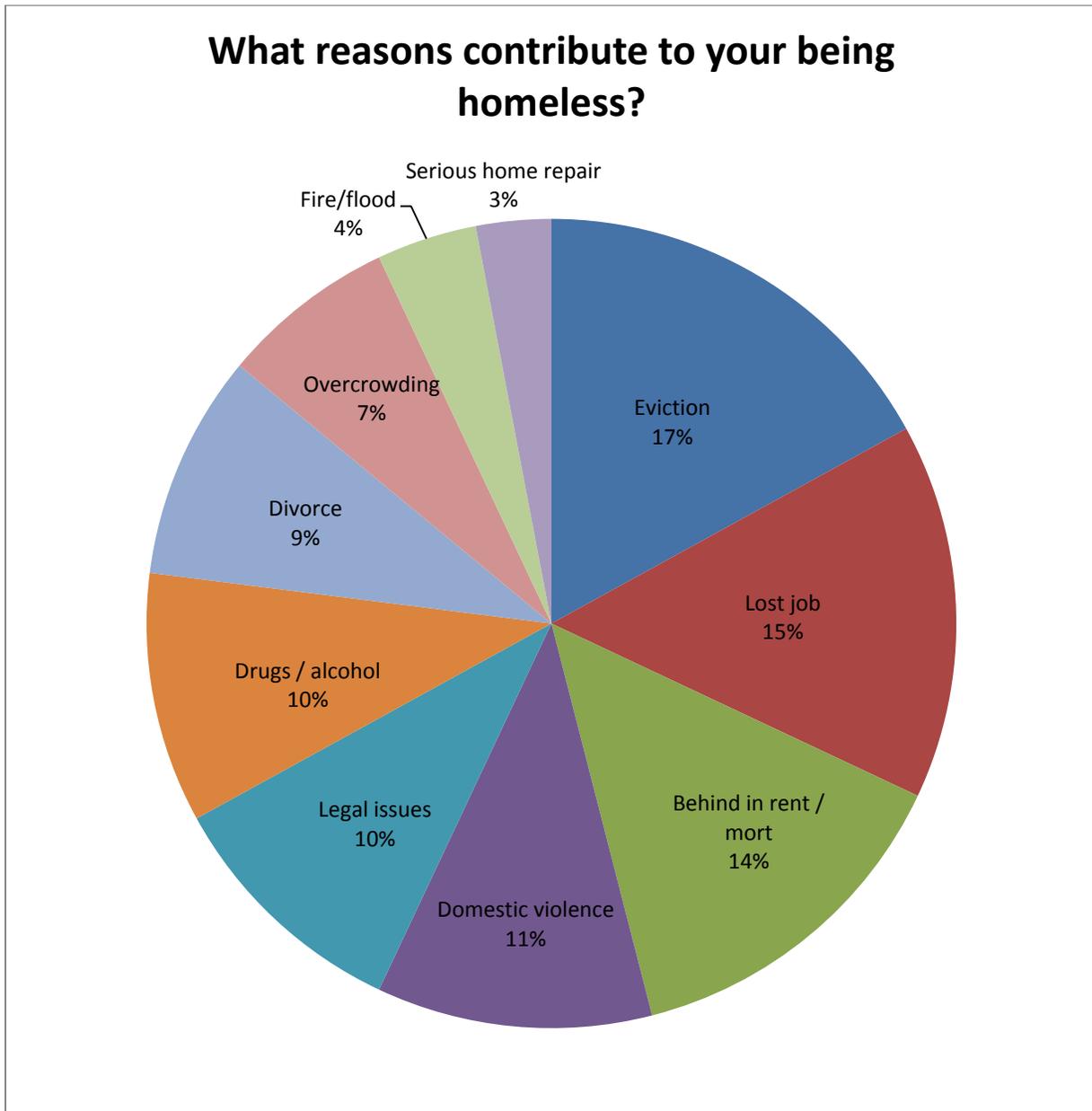
When respondents were asked where they slept on the night of January 25, the most common responses were in their own home (43 percent), in a rental apartment (23 percent), and with family or friends as a temporary arrangement (21 percent). Less frequently provided responses included at the hospital (5 percent), a homeless shelter (3 percent), a hotel/motel (1 percent) and on the streets (1 percent). Other responses provided by fewer than one percent of respondents included in jail and at a campground (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Percent of Respondents Reporting Various Sources of Shelter



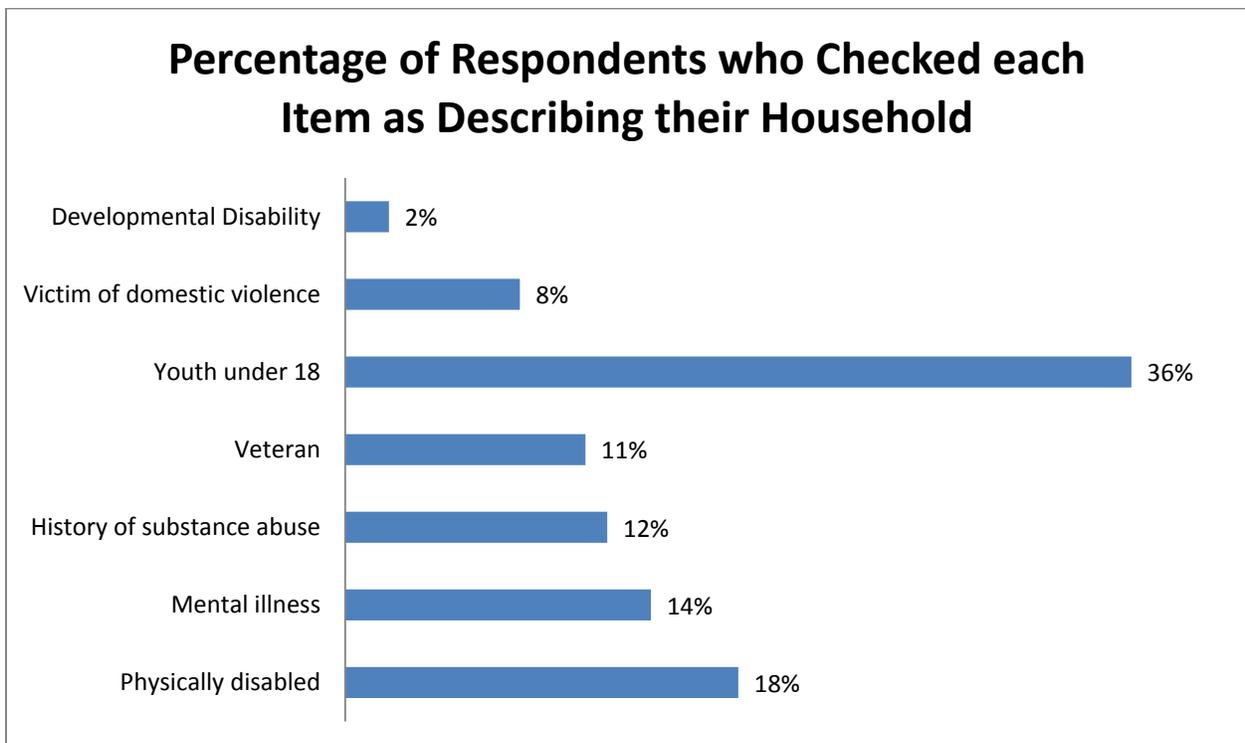
When asked about the factors contributing to their homelessness, the most common responses were eviction (17 percent), lost job (15 percent), behind in the rent or mortgage (14 percent), and domestic violence (11 percent). Slightly less common responses included legal issues (10 percent), drugs / alcohol (10 percent), divorce (9 percent), overcrowding (7 percent), fire/flood (4 percent) and serious home repair needs (3 percent) (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Percentage of Respondents Reporting Various Contributors to Homelessness.



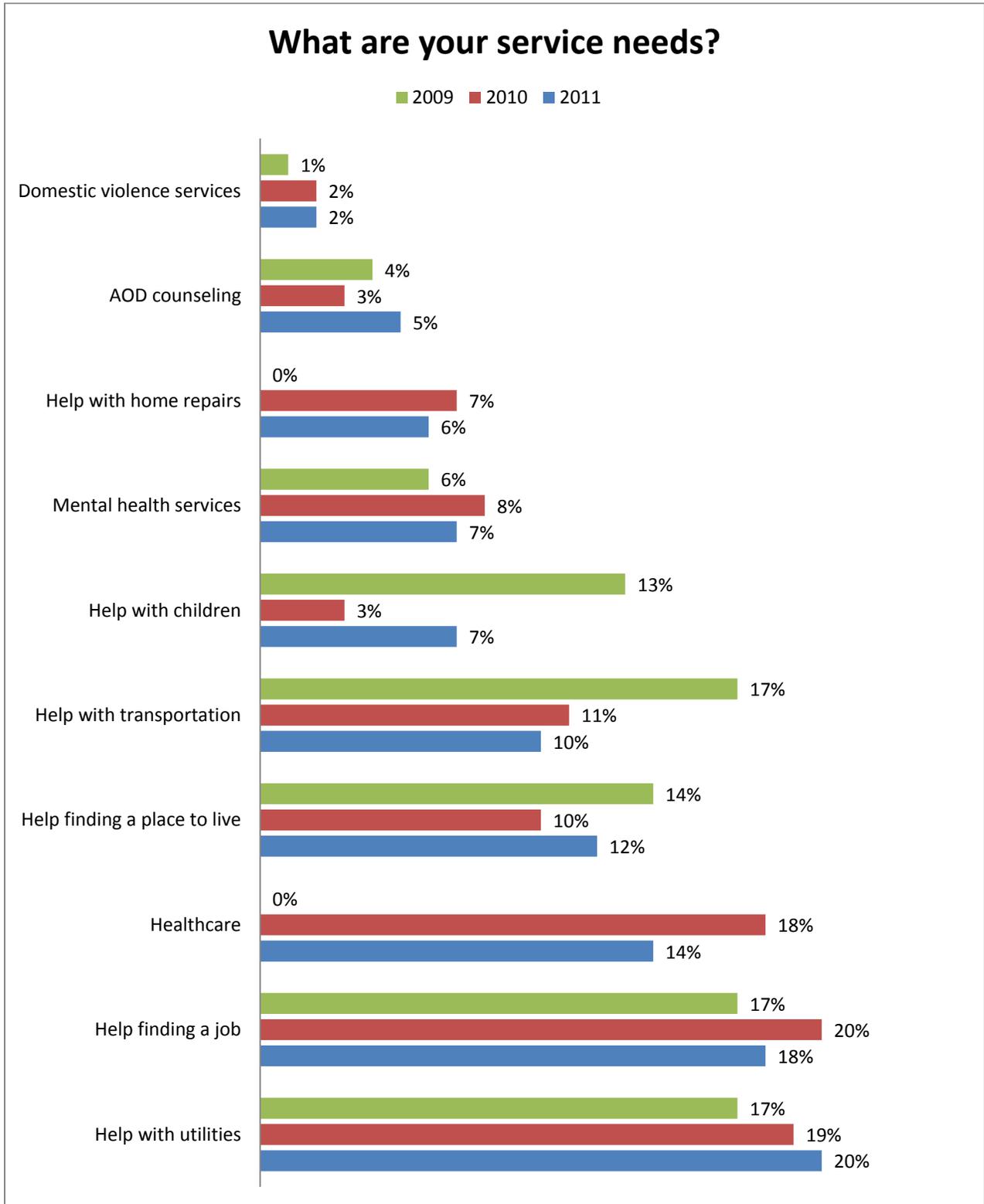
The majority of respondents were white, with approximately 6 percent identifying themselves as African American, Asian, Native American or other. Single adults made up the largest group of homeless people in 2011. Responding households also included two adults with children (30 percent), one adult with children (20 percent), two adults with no children (19 percent) and youth under 18 (1 percent). When asked to select from a list of categories that describe their household, the most common responses were youth under 18 (36 percent), physically disabled (18 percent), mental illness (14 percent) and a history of substance abuse (12 percent). Slightly less common responses included veteran (11 percent), victim of domestic violence (8 percent) and mental retardation / developmental disability (2 percent) (See Figure 3).

Figure 3: Percentage of Respondents Selecting Various Household Descriptors



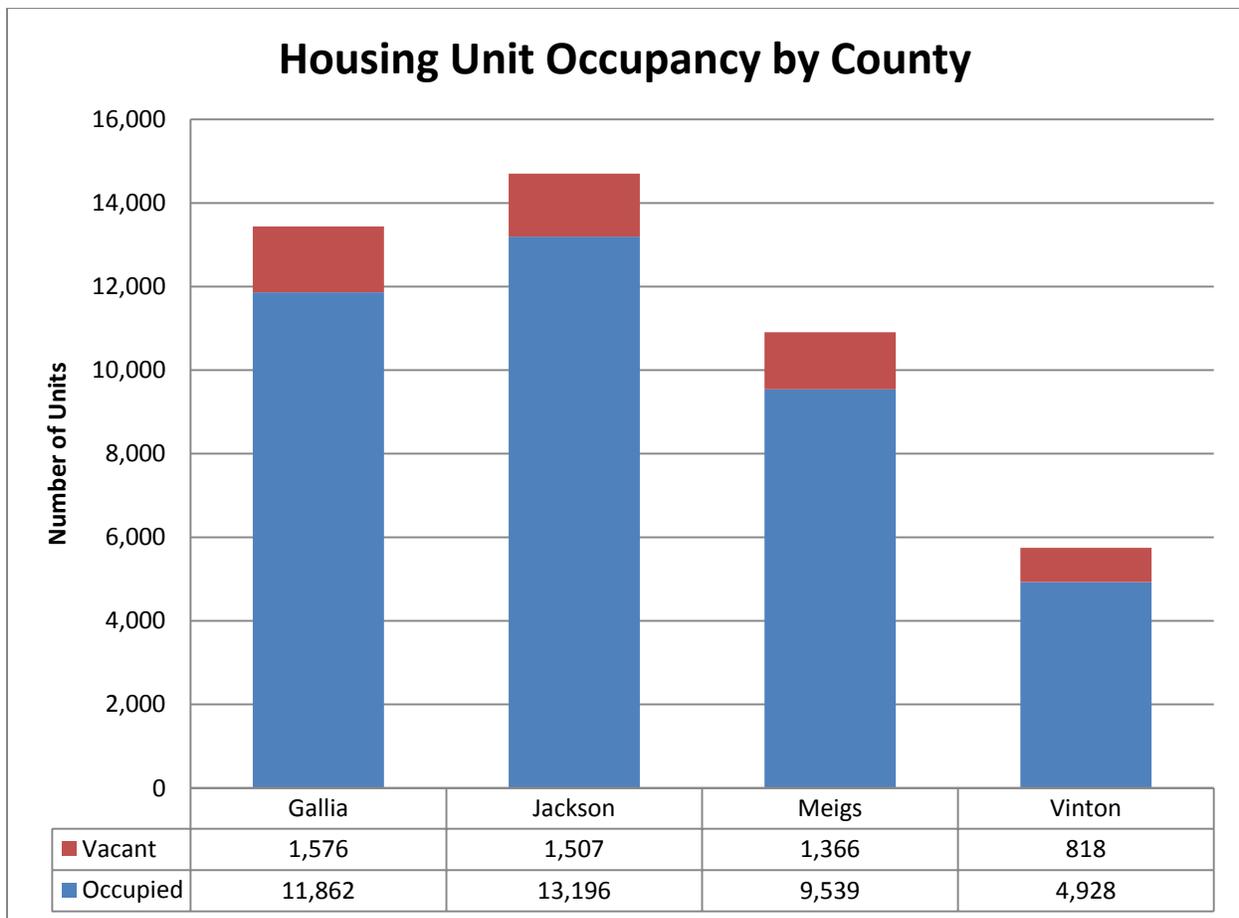
When respondents were asked about their service needs, the most frequent responses included help with utilities (20 percent), help finding a job (18 percent), healthcare (14 percent) help finding a place to live (12 percent) and help with transportation (10 percent). Less frequently requested services included help with children (7 percent), mental health services (7 percent), help with home repairs (6 percent), AOD counseling (5 percent) and domestic violence services (2 percent) (See Figure 4).

Figure 4: Percentage of Respondents Identifying Various Service Needs, 2009 - 2011



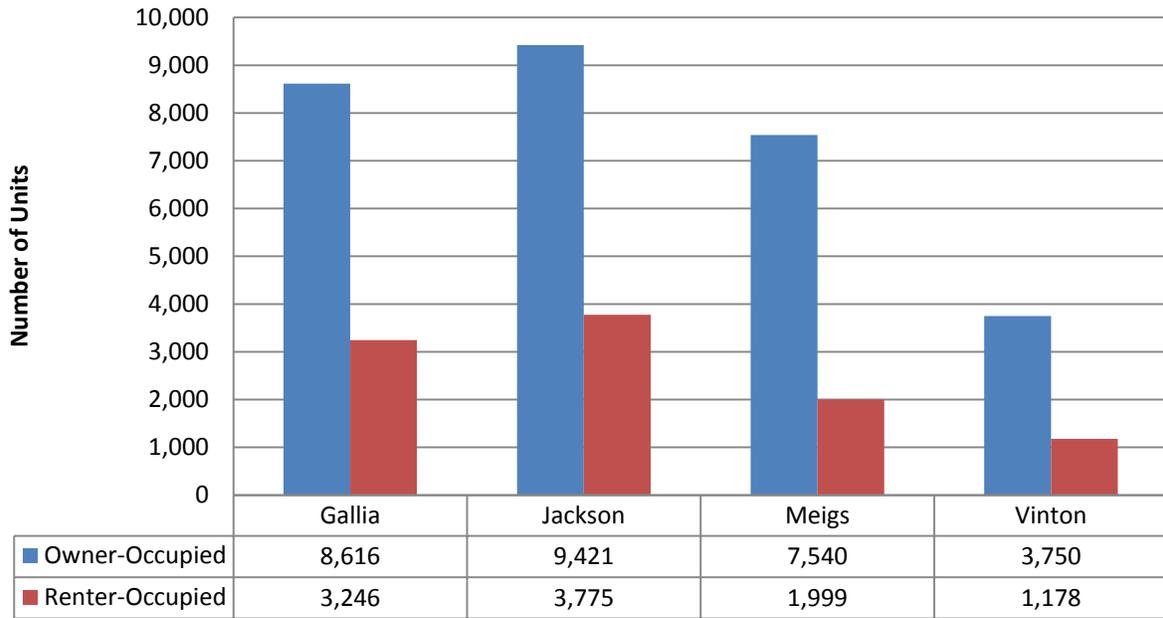
The American Community Survey

Piloted in 1996, the American Community Survey is conducted annually by the U.S. Census Bureau to provide critical economic, social, demographic and housing information on a more frequent basis than was previously possible using only the ten-year survey. To minimize time and expense, this version of the census uses sampling strategies to obtain information from a representative selection of community residents. Currently, this is the most comprehensive and up-to-date source of county-specific housing data for the COC region. Additional American Community Survey data may be accessed at <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>.



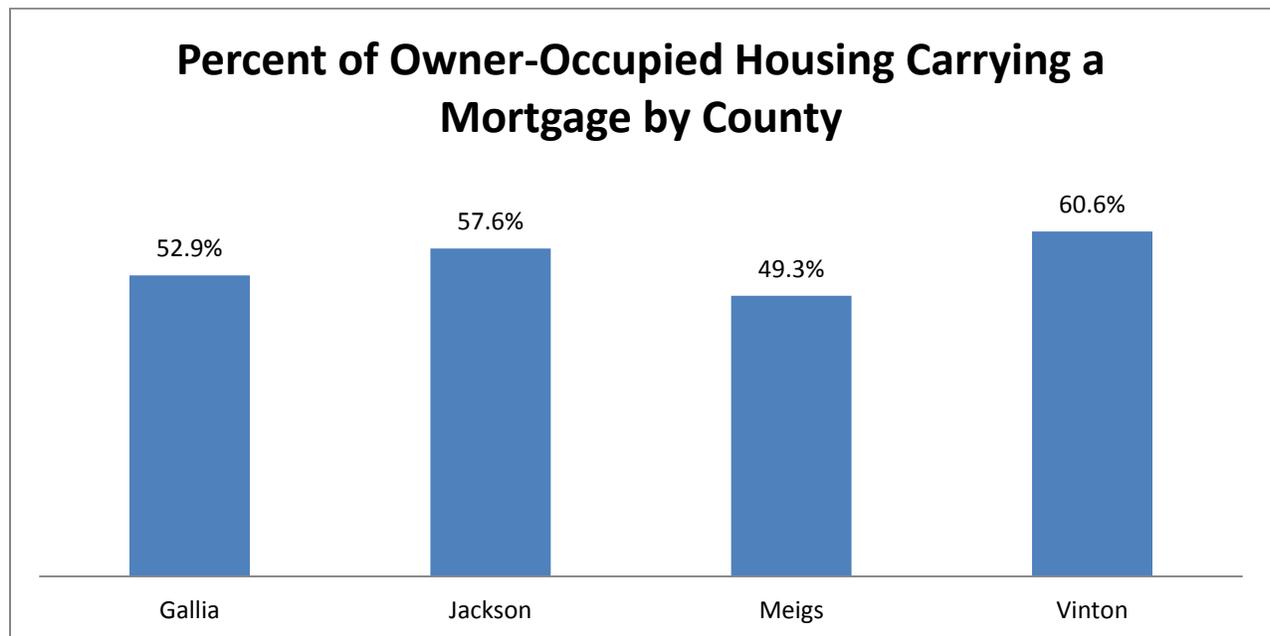
Source: American Community Survey 2005-2009 Housing Data

Owner- and Renter-Occupied Housing by County



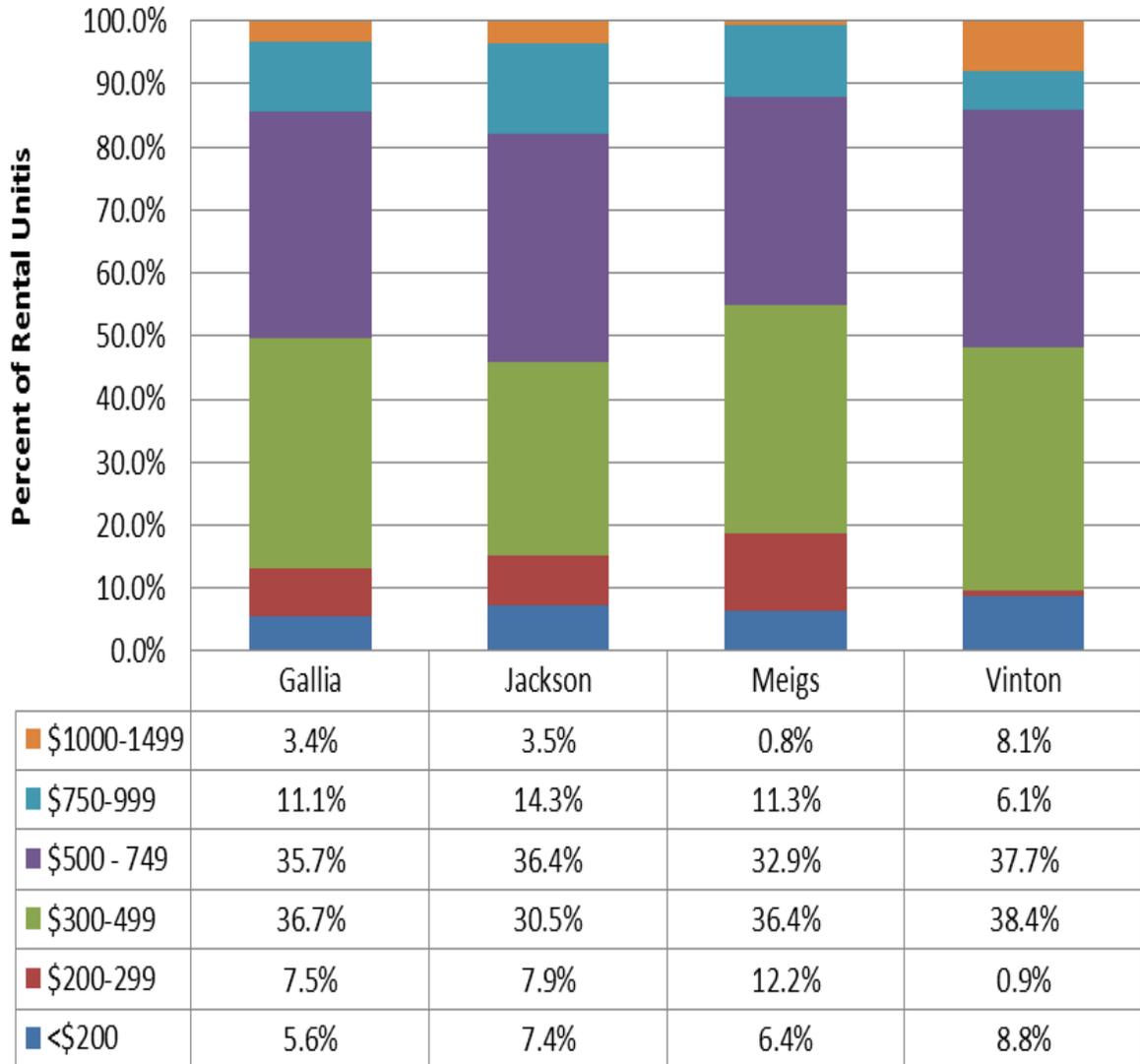
Source: American Community Survey 2005-2009 Housing Data

Percent of Owner-Occupied Housing Carrying a Mortgage by County



Source: American Community Survey 2005-2009 Housing Data

Distribution of Rental Units by Cost



Source: American Community Survey 2005-2009 Housing Data

Policy Matters Ohio

Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan policy research organization founded in 2000 to broaden debate about economic policy in Ohio. In February, they released a report entitled, Home Insecurity: Foreclosure Growth in Ohio, 2011 in which they utilized federal foreclosure filings in U.S. District Courts to come up with county-specific data on the overall number of foreclosures and the change in foreclosure rates between 1995 and 2010.

Foreclosure Growth, 2011

County	1995 Filings	2008 Filings	2009 Filings	2010 Filings	Change 2009 - 2010	Rank in Growth 2009 - 2010	Change 1995 - 2010	Rank in Growth 1995 - 2010
Gallia	42	95	82	113	38.8%	2	169.0%	84
Jackson	63	198	220	207	-5.9%	54	228.6%	83
Meigs	13	75	74	71	-4.1%	46	446.2%	63
Vinton	10	43	65	56	-13.8%	73	460.0%	61
Total	128	411	441	447				

Source: Policy Matters Ohio Home Insecurity: Foreclosure Growth in Ohio 2011

<http://www.policymattersohio.org/pdf/HomeInsecurity2011.pdf>

A Picture of Subsidized Households – 2008

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) publishes statistics on assisted housing units and residents in A Picture of Subsidized Households. Data is broken down in a variety of ways, including by county, public housing agency, and census tract. This information is submitted by public housing agencies and landlords and does not include non-HUD housing subsidy programs, with the exception of the Low Income Tax Credit program. Additional information about this data source is available at <http://www.huduser.org/portal/picture2008/index.html>.

		Subsidized Households, 2008			
		Gallia	Jackson	Meigs	Vinton
All HUD Programs	Households	329	489	208	230
	Average Rent Per Unit	213	225	217	203
Public Housing	Available Units	140	165	N/A	N/A
	Percent Occupied	94	88	N/A	N/A
	Households	130	146	N/A	N/A
	Percent Reported	99	100	N/A	N/A
	Average Rent Per Unit	161	184	N/A	N/A
	Section 8 Certificates and Vouchers	Available Units	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Percent Occupied	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Households	165	191	130	171
	Percent Reported	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Average Rent Per Unit	255	265	221	207
Section 8 New Construction and Substantial Rehabilitation	Available Units	36	138	85	58
	Percent Occupied	98	95	93	97
	Households	34	136	78	59
	Percent Reported	100	100	99	100
	Average Rent Per Unit	209	218	211	190
	Available Units	N/A	17	N/A	N/A
	Percent Occupied	N/A	98	N/A	N/A
	Households	N/A	16	N/A	N/A
	Percent Reported	N/A	100	N/A	N/A
	Average Rent Per Unit	N/A	176	N/A	N/A
Low Income Housing Tax Credit	Available Units	163	570	97	80
	Percent Occupied	100	93	89	100
	Households	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Percent Reported	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Average Rent Per Unit	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Picture of Subsidized Households, 2008 for Gallia, Jackson, Meigs, and Vinton Counties

HUD Definitions:

Available Units: Units under contract for federal subsidy and available for occupancy

Low Income Housing Tax Credit: Privately owned units that are rented to low-income residents and for which the owners receive tax benefits.

Percent Occupied: Occupied units as a percent of those available.

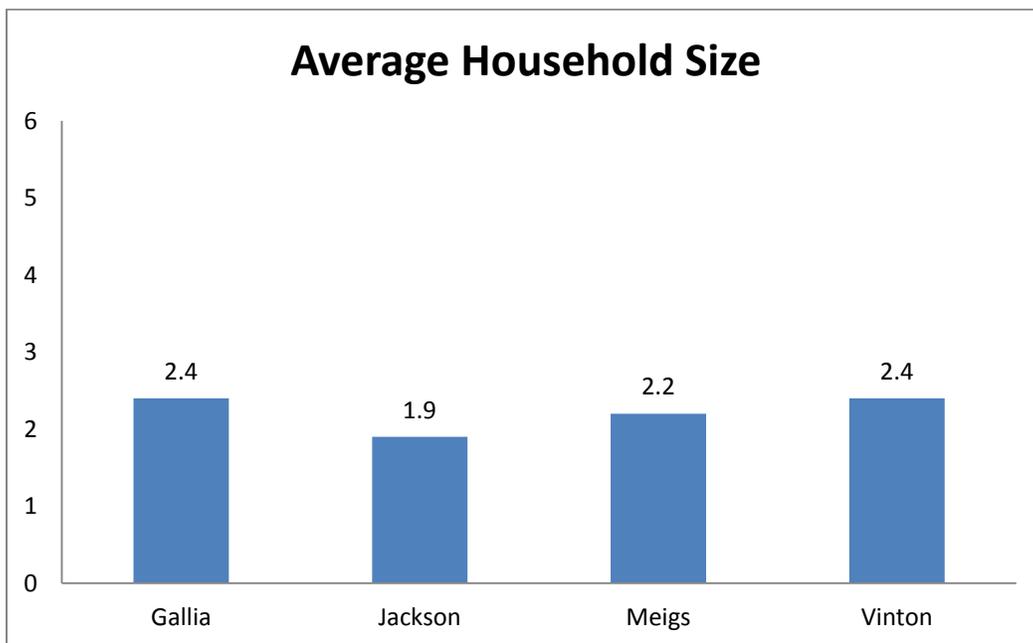
Percent Reported: Households for which reports were received as a percent of occupied units.

Public Housing: Units that are owned and operated by the local housing authority

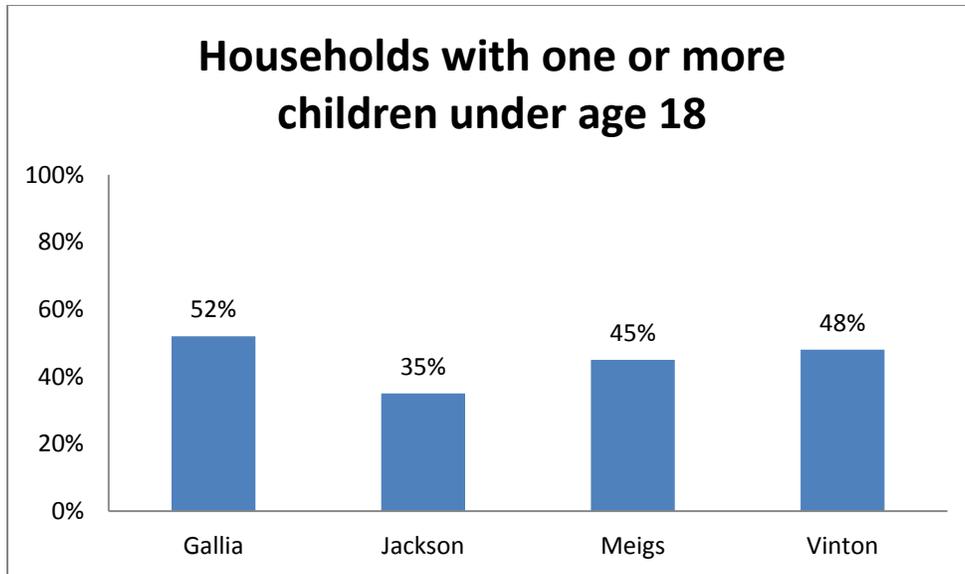
Section 8 Certificates and Vouchers: Privately owned units that are rented to low-income residents at a subsidized rate.

Section 8 New Construction and Substantial Rehabilitation: Privately owned units built or renovated for the purpose of housing low-income residents with funding from HUD.

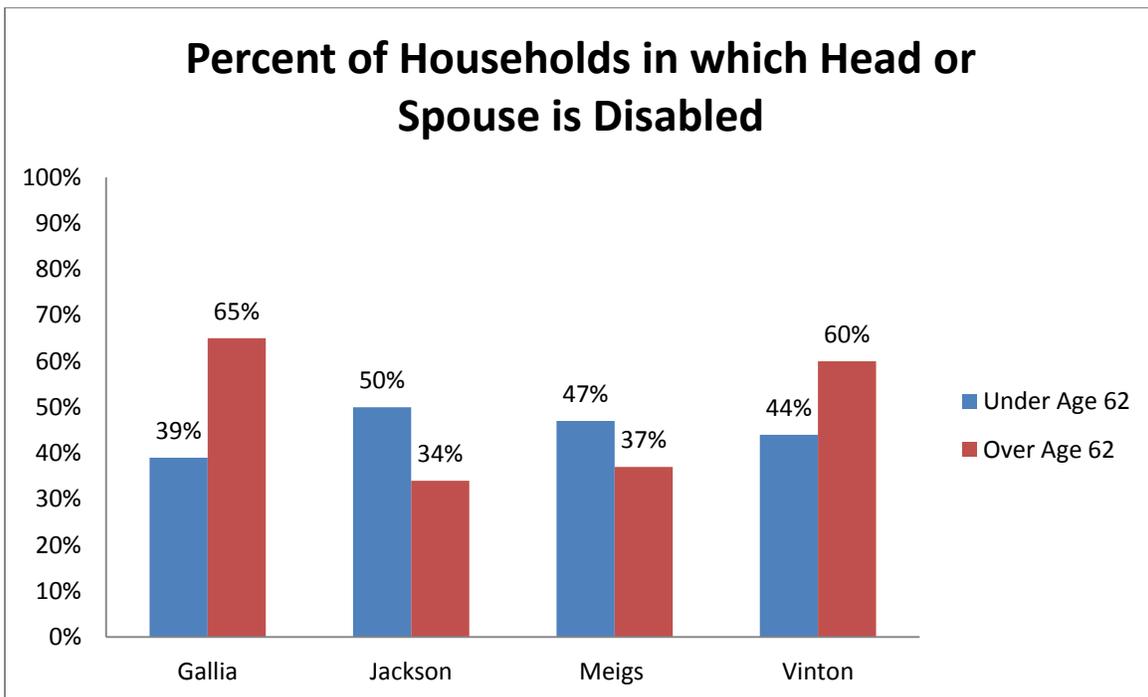
Selected Characteristics of HUD Program Participants by County



Source: Picture of Subsidized Households, 2008

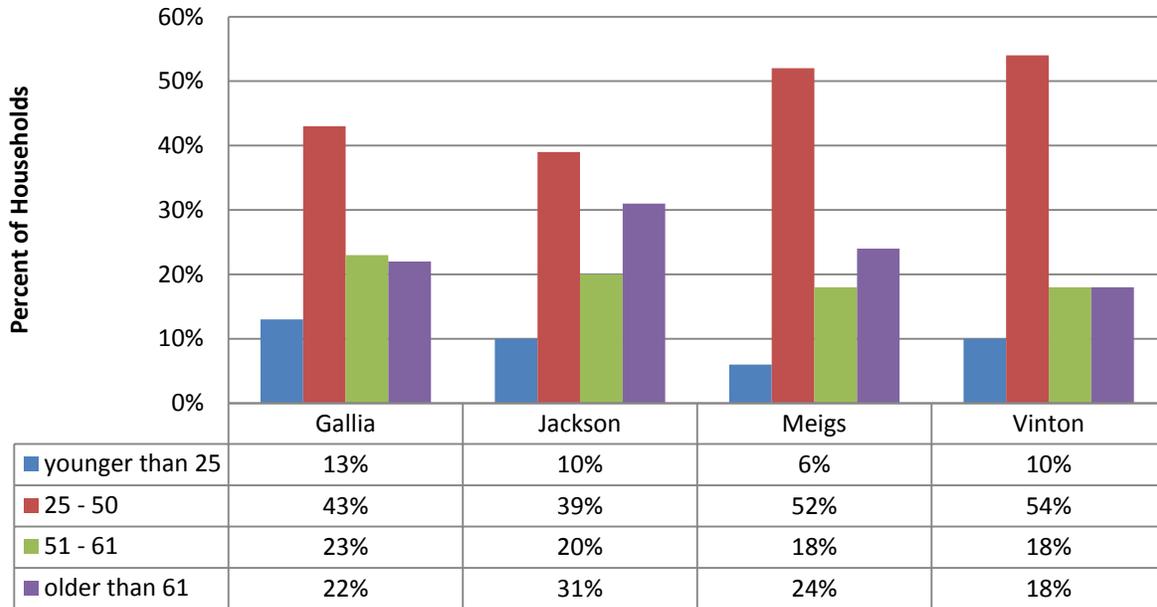


Source: Picture of Subsidized Households, 2008



Source: Picture of Subsidized Households, 2008

Age of Head of Household or Spouse (whichever is older)



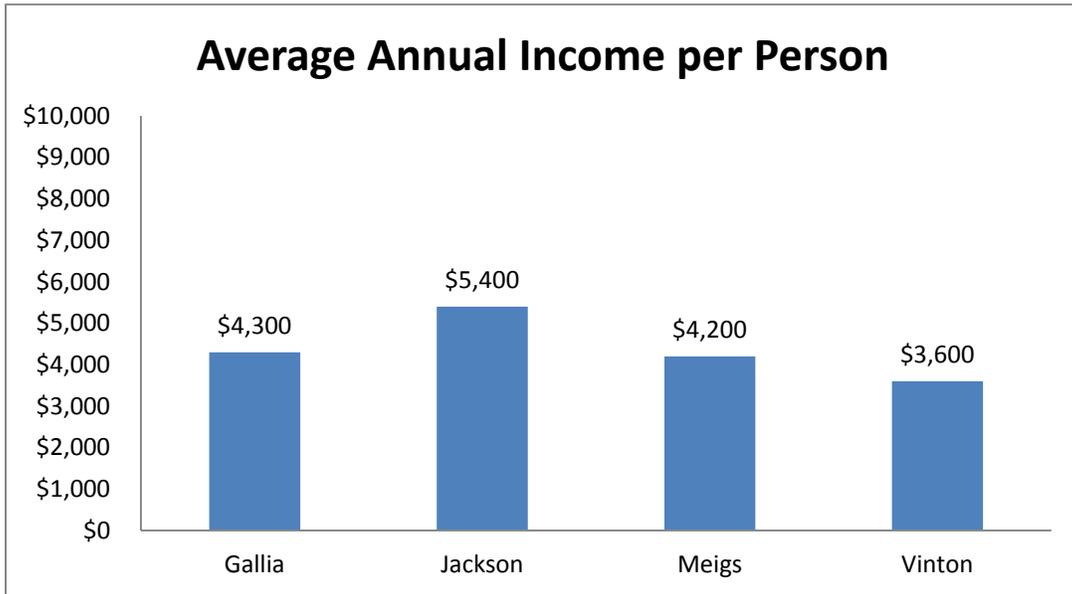
Source: Picture of Subsidized Households, 2008

Average Household Monthly Income and Rent Contribution

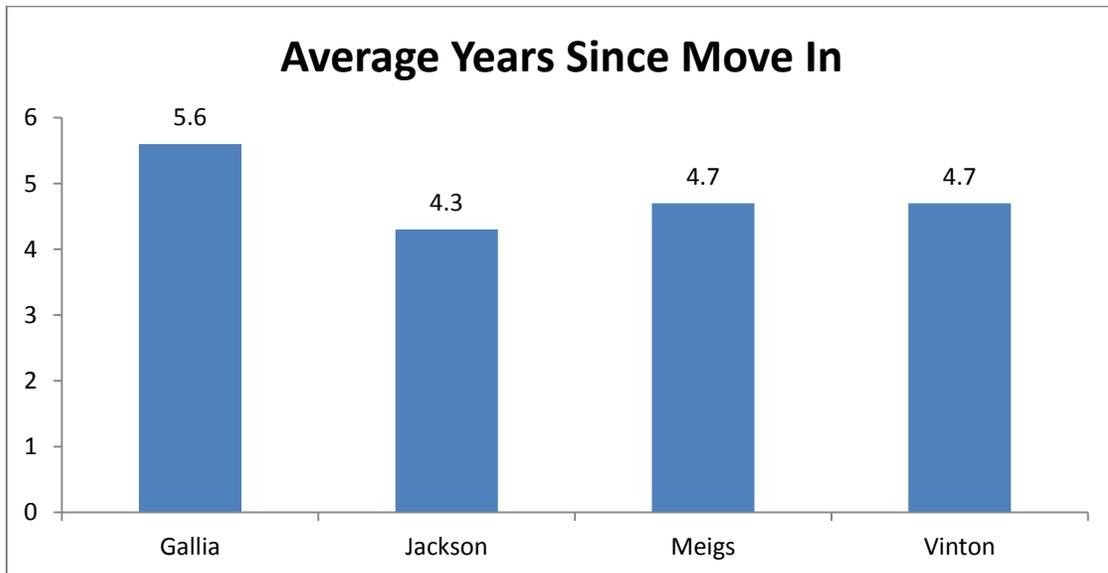
■ Average household contribution to rent per month
 ■ Average total household income per month



Source: Picture of Subsidized Households, 200



Source: Picture of Subsidized Households, 2008



Source: Picture of Subsidized Households, 2008

Additional Characteristics of HUD Program Participants by County

	Gallia	Jackson	Meigs	Vinton
Average total household income per year	\$10,200	\$10,000	\$9,400	\$8,600
Percent of households with income of less than 5,000 per year	19%	17%	20%	24%
Percent of household with income of less than \$15,000 per year	86%	85%	87%	89%
Percent of household with income of \$15,000 or more per year	14%	15%	13%	11%
Percent of households where the majority of income is from wages or business earnings	22%	18%	19%	21%
Percent of households where the majority of income is from welfare	11%	6%	4%	9%
Household income as a percent of local area median income	21%	24%	21%	20%
Percent of households with income below 50% of local area median family income	97%	96%	98%	98%
Percent of households with income below 30% of local area median income	80%	74%	82%	84%
Of households with children, percent with two spouses living in the unit	52%	40%	44%	48%
Percent of households headed by a female	72%	76%	71%	71%
Percent of all persons in household with a disability	22%	26%	22%	21%
Percent of households where head or spouse (whoever is older) is 85 or more	2%	3%	2%	1%
Percent of minority households	7%	1%	2%	0%
Average months on waiting list among new admissions	4	4	4	10
Percent of households in 0 – 1 bedroom units	19%	59%	38%	35%
Percent of households in 2 bedroom units	52%	26%	24%	45%
Percent of households in in 3 or more bedroom units	29%	15%	39%	20%
Percent of households with more bedrooms than people	22%	2%	20%	14%

Source: Picture of Subsidized Households, 2008

Housing Inventory Analysis for Gallia, Jackson and Meigs

This inventory includes 872 units in three counties attributed to 89 separate landlords. However, 51 of these landlords are listed as owning a single unit. The 22 owners with the most properties account for 786 units, 90% of all listed units (see below). However, it is worth noting that the U.S Census American Community Survey estimates that there are a total of 9,020 rental units in these three counties.

Landlords with Largest Numbers of Units

Name	Units (n=786)	Location	Contact	Phone
Stonecrest South	60	Jackson	Class A Properties	740-286-6296
First Holzer Apartments	54	Gallipolis	RLJ Management	740-441-1800
Colonial Park Apartments	48	Pomeroy	Woda Management	740-992-3711
Jackson Estates	48	Gallipolis	Betron Inc.	740-446-2568
Jackson View Apartments	48	Jackson	Fullarton Management	740-286-7187
Jackson Family Apartment	42	Jackson	Knoll Group Management	740-286-4839
Jackson Retirement	42	Jackson	Knoll Group Management	740-286-6198
Valley View Apartments	42	Rio Grande	Premier Management	740-245-9170
Wellston Pride	42	Wellston	Knoll Group Management	740-384-4181
Apple Hill Apartments	40	Jackson	Premier Management	740-286-5676
Wellston Villa Apartments	36	Wellston	Premier Management	740-384-5319
Wellston Manor	34	Wellston	Gorsuch Homes	740-384-3289
Honeysuckle Hills	32	Bidwell	T&T Management	740-446-3344
Cross Pointe Apartments	30	Middleport	First American	740-992-3055
Village Manor	29	Middleport	Betron Inc.	740-992-5064
Karen Apartments	28	Oak Hill	Premier Management	740-682-7570
Frenchtown Apartments	25	Gallipolis	Concerted Invest	740-446-6605
Coalton Senior VLG	24	Wellston	Knoll Group Management	740-286-8518
Oak View Manor	22	Oak Hill	Gorsuch Homes	740-682-6756
Elmwood Terrace	20	Racine	RLG Management	740-949-2012
Riverside Apartments	20	Middleport	Betron Inc.	740-992-5064
Waters Edge, Syracuse	20	Racine	First American	740-992-6419

Strategic Planning Session

The purpose of strategic planning is to help organizations reflect upon their current situation, identify realistic goals for the future, and agree upon a plan of action for working towards the achievement of those goals. On June 8, 2011, members of the Gallia, Jackson, Meigs, Vinton Continuum of Care gathered to participate in a three-hour strategic planning session facilitated by staff from the Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs. The day began with a series of activities designed to clarify the Continuum's role in the community as well as the role that individual members and organizations play in the Continuum. See Appendix D for the "bumper sticker" summaries developed during this portion of the process.

Next, Voinovich School staff introduced the Strategic Triangle, which is a model for evaluating strategic alternatives (see Appendix E for a graphic representation of this model). Developed by Harvard criminologist Mark Moore, the Strategic Triangle is based on the premise that successful public and nonprofit strategies must balance three related components:

Public Value: The strategy must have the potential to make a positive and meaningful difference to issue of concern (in this case, housing and homelessness).

Capacity: The organization must have (or be able to access to) the people, space, funding and other resources necessary to put the strategy into action.

Stakeholders: There must be sufficient support for the strategy among elected officials, agency heads, religious leaders and/or the general public.

After reviewing elements of the model and discussing their relationship to themes identified in the Community Readiness interviews, participants broke into three groups based on their interest in one of the three strategic priorities identified during the Root Cause Analysis completed in April, including increasing access to affordable housing, foreclosure and eviction prevention, and financial literacy training. Each group used the strategic triangle to evaluate their idea by answering the following questions:

Public Value: What is the five-year goal?

Capacity: What new or expanded capacity would be needed to reach this goal?

Stakeholders: Who would need to be at the table and how would we get them there?

Overall: What credibility score would you give this plan? (Or in other words, what is the likelihood that this would actually occur?)

Although separating the work of the COC from the work of individual participating organizations proved challenging, all three groups successfully generated realistic ideas about how the Continuum could have an impact on each of the strategic priorities. Summaries of these individual ideas are provided in Appendix F. Originally, the next step of this process called for the group to select one of the three plans to focus on for the next 18 – 24 months. However, once the groups presented their ideas, discussion

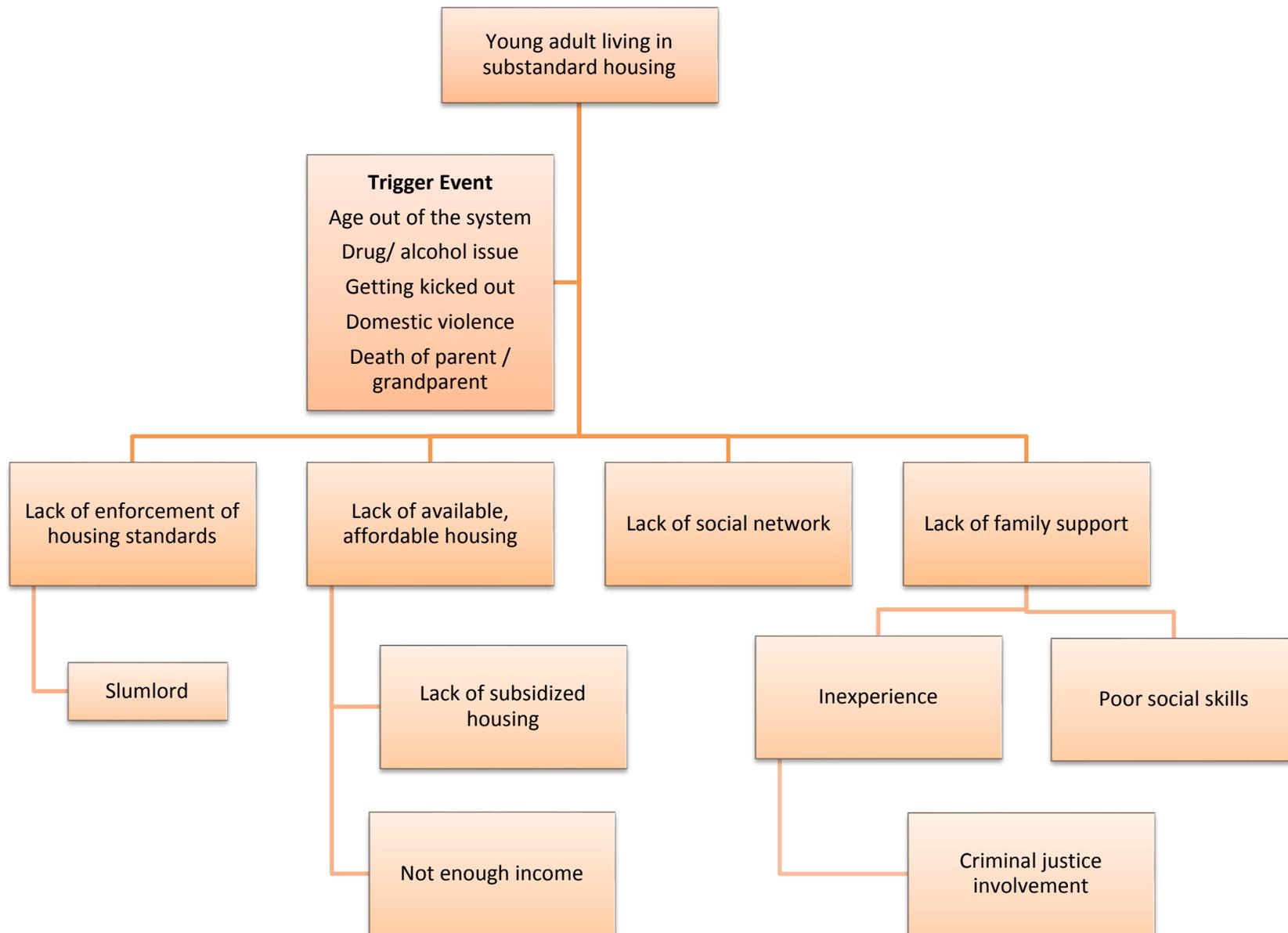
turned to the prominent role that advocacy related to funding for homelessness programs played in two of the three plans. Specifically, participants focused on the role of the COC in supporting the work of participant agencies, rather than providing services directly. In keeping with this vision, the consensus of the group appeared to be that the Continuum should continue to support members' efforts to increase access to affordable housing, prevent foreclosure / eviction and provide financial literacy training. However, instead of serving exclusively as an information-sharing organization, the Consortium would explore advocating for these issues at the local and/or state level. As a first step, the group identified three overarching goals to be achieved over the next year:

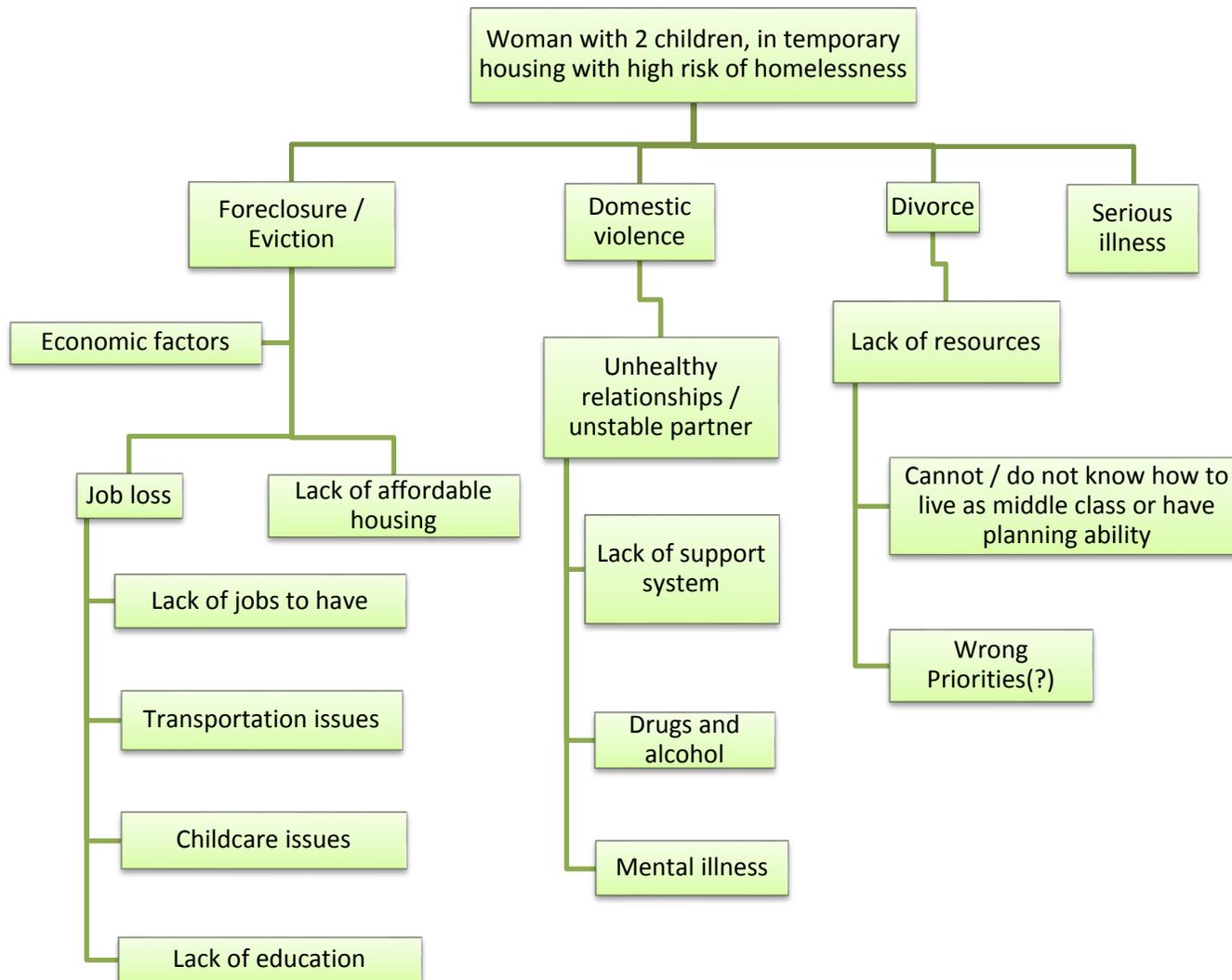
- Develop a communication plan describing the advocacy goals, talking points, targeted stakeholders, etc.
- Obtain training and technical assistance on how to develop and effectively use the communication plan
- By the end of the year, utilize the plan to organize an initial advocacy event or activity.

The strategic planning session closed with participants beginning to develop action plans for how each of these goals will be accomplished, including breaking out individual tasks as well as assigning responsibility and start/completion dates for each.

Appendix A: Fault Tree Analysis Maps







Appendix B: Community Readiness Interview Questions

**Gallia-Jackson-Meigs-Vinton Continuum of Care
Housing and Homelessness
Community Readiness Assessment Interview Questions**

Name:

Organization:

Phone number:

Introduction:

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me. My name is _____ and I am with Ohio University. I've asked to speak with you in connection with a strategic planning process being conducted by the Gallia-Jackson-Meigs-Vinton Continuum of Care. As part of this effort, we are interviewing various local leaders such as yourself about housing and homelessness issues in this county.

Your participation in this interview is strictly voluntary. You may choose not to answer any question and may stop participating at any time. There are no right or wrong answers - we are simply seeking your frank opinion about these issues – and no individual will be named as the source of any specific piece of information or comment.

To make sure I don't miss anything you say I'd like to record today's conversation. No one outside our office will have access to this recording and it will be erased after the project is complete. Do you have any questions before I turn on the recorder and begin?

- A. COMMUNITY EFFORTS (programs, activities, policies, etc.) AND
- B. COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE OF EFFORTS

- 1. Using a scale from 1-10, how much of a concern is homelessness and the lack of adequate housing in Gallia County (with 1 being “not at all” and 10 being “a very great concern”)? Please explain.**

2. **Please describe the efforts that are available in Gallia County to address housing and homelessness. (A)**
3. **How long have these efforts been going on in this area? (A)**
4. **Using a scale from 1-10, how aware are people in Gallia County of these housing and homelessness efforts (with 1 being "no awareness" and 10 being "very aware")? Please explain. (B)**
5. **What are the strengths of these efforts? (B)**
6. **What are the weaknesses of these efforts? (B)**
7. **Are there any segments of the community who have a harder time accessing housing or homelessness-related services? For example, people who are of a particular gender, age or ethnicity or who belong to a particular sub-group such as veterans or those dealing with a disability or addiction?**
8. **Is there a need to expand these efforts/services in Gallia County? If not, why not? (A)**
9. **Is there any planning for efforts/services going on in Gallia County surrounding this issue? If yes, please explain. (A)**

C. LEADERSHIP

1. **Using a scale from 1 to 10, how much of a concern is inadequate housing and homelessness to the leadership in Gallia County (with 1 being "not at all" and 10 being "of great concern")? Please explain.**
2. **How are these leaders involved in efforts regarding this issue? Please explain. (For example: Are they involved in a committee, task force, etc.? How often do they meet?)**
3. **Would the leadership support additional efforts? Please explain.**

D. COMMUNITY CLIMATE

- 1 **Are there ever any circumstances in which Gallia County residents might think that inadequate housing or homelessness should be tolerated? Please explain.**

- 2 **How does the community support the efforts to address this issue?**
- 3 **What are the primary obstacles to efforts addressing housing and homelessness in Gallia County?**

E. KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE ISSUE

- 1 **How knowledgeable are Gallia County residents about this issue? Please explain.**
- 2 What types of information or data are available in Gallia County regarding housing and homelessness? (For example, local statistics, available programs, etc.)
- 3 How would people obtain information about housing and homelessness in Gallia County?

F. RESOURCES TO ADDRESS (Housing and Homelessness)

- 1 If a person in Gallia County is struggling to find or maintain adequate, affordable housing, who do they generally turn to for help first? Why?
- 2 **What is the community's and/or local business' attitude about supporting efforts to address this issue by volunteering time, making financial donations, providing space, etc.?**
- 3 Are you aware of any proposals or action plans that have been submitted for funding that address this issue in Gallia County? If yes, please explain.

(Optional-if they are aware of any ongoing efforts as determined by earlier answers)

- 4 Do you know if there is any evaluation of efforts that are in place to address this issue? If yes, are the evaluation results being used to make changes in programs, activities, or policies or to start new ones?

Appendix C: Community Readiness Model Stages

Community Readiness Stage	Description
1. No Awareness	Issue is not generally recognized by the community or leaders as a problem (or it may truly not be an issue).
2. Denial/Resistance	At least some community members recognize that it is a concern, but there is little recognition that it might be occurring locally.
3. Vague Awareness	Most feel that there is a local concern, but there is no immediate motivation to do anything about it.
4. Preplanning	There is clear awareness that something must be done, and there may even be a group addressing it. However, efforts are not focused or detailed.
5. Preparation	Active leaders begin planning in earnest. Community offers modest support of efforts.
6. Initiation	Enough information is available to justify efforts. Activities are underway.
7. Stabilization	Activities are supported by administrators or community decision makers. Staff are trained and experienced.
8. Confirmation / Expansion	Efforts are in place. Community members feel comfortable using services, and they support expansions. Local data are regularly obtained.
9. High Level of Community Ownership	Detailed and sophisticated knowledge exists about prevalence, causes and consequences. Effective evaluation guides new directions.

**Come Fight Homelessness
with Us!**



GJMV Continuum of Care

Bridging the Gap



of Homelessness

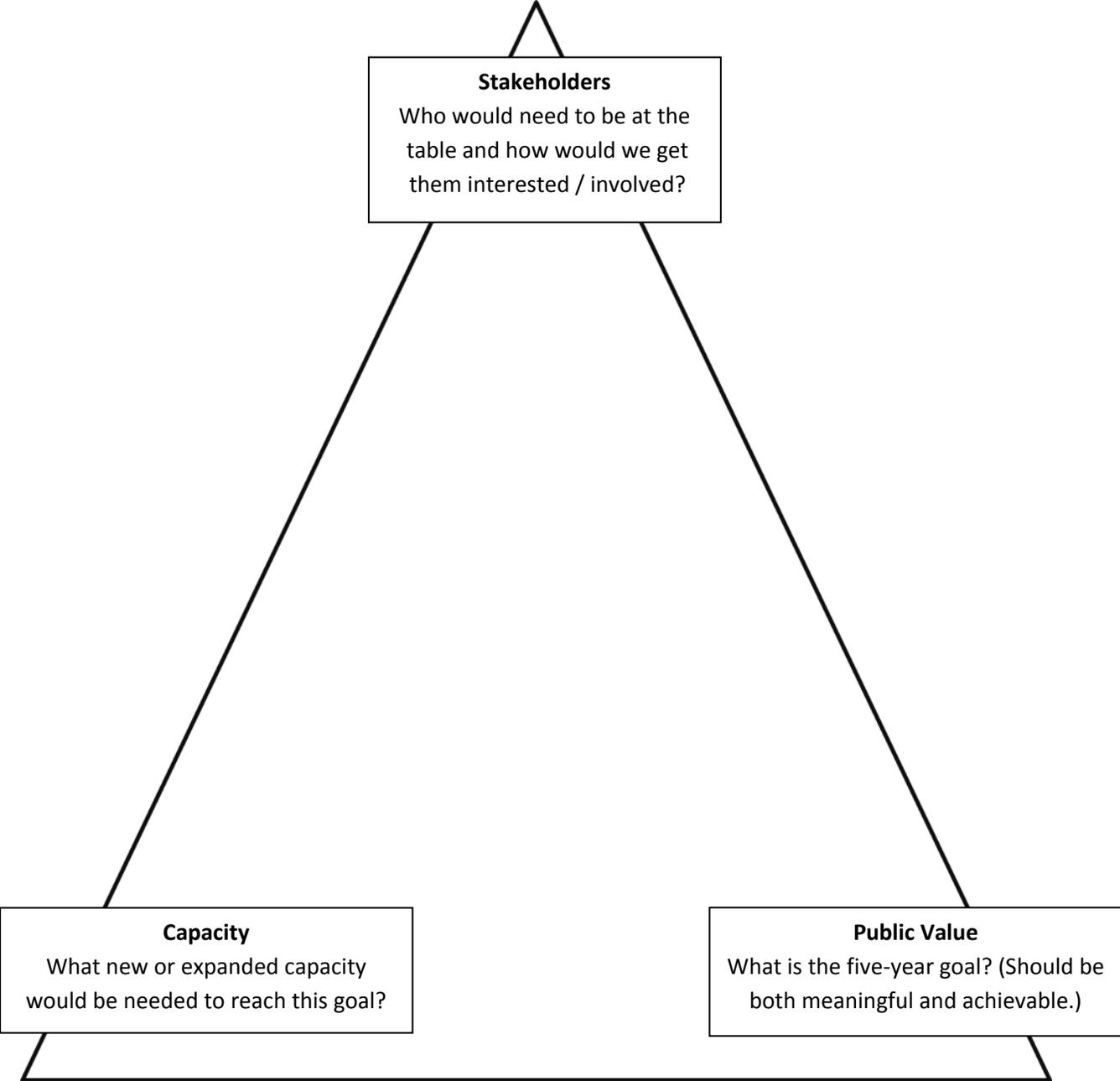
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Partners in Driving out Homelessness

GJMV Continuum of Care

Appendix E: The Strategic Triangle



Appendix F: Strategic Priority Analysis based on the Strategic Triangle

I. Increasing access to affordable housing

Five-year goal: To increase advocacy at the state level to direct more money for homelessness / housing in our region

Increasing access to affordable housing is typically thought of as a bricks and mortar project, but that may not be realistic for the COC (and is already being done by several member organizations).

Advocacy work would allow us to continue to do more of what we're already doing to support membership in their current efforts to increase access to affordable housing.

Show money that we've received and what we've done with it, 2004 – 2011.

Capacity: Commitment / involvement of membership to do advocacy (letter writing, email campaign, attendance at state-level meetings, etc.). Training on lobbying (COHHIO, Bill Faith).

Stakeholders: State and local politicians, community leaders, membership

This group identified their credibility score as good, commenting "We can do this."

Foreclosure and eviction prevention

Five-year goal:

1. Continue funding for existing programs such as HRPR, Homeless Assistance grants, CHIP / HOME, etc.
2. New funding programs with fewer restrictions on who can be helped so we can keep people in the housing they are in instead of having to wait to help them after they are homeless, evicted or in foreclosure.
3. Existing programs / grants need more flexibility so that the public service agencies here in rural Ohio can do what we know is needed here, not what works in a metropolitan area.

Capacity:

1. People – grant researchers and writers
2. People – funding to maintain existing staff and new staff for new programs.

3. People – COC member to lobby and contact state and federal legislators and funding agencies.

Stakeholders:

1. Board of Directors of Various COC agencies
2. State and federal legislators (Senators, Reps, etc.)
3. State and federal funding agencies (ODOD, HUD, OHFA)

This group identified their credibility score as good for maintaining current funding and fair for obtaining new funding.

Financial literacy training

Five-year goal: In five years, 50 percent of the service population of the COC members will have completed a financial course (or, alternatively, 75 percent of COC members will have committed to participate, provide training, make referrals, etc.).

Capacity: Location for trainings, secure funding and participation of COC members, Allstate Financial Literacy curriculum.

Stakeholders: COC members, Department of Job and Family Services, family and juvenile courts, county commissioners, banks,, schools and adult education groups, Gallia-Meigs Community Action Agency.

This group identified their credibility score as good or better because some of these services are already being provided.



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