

Overview of WISH Program

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Affordable Housing: What is the Issue?



- 100,000 workers in Mecklenburg County earn below the federal poverty level (\$18,500 for a family of 4).
- The majority of new jobs being created in Charlotte are below the federal poverty level.
- A full time worker earning \$8 per hour can afford \$275 per month in rent plus utilities. An average class “C” apartment rents for \$550 per month plus utilities and deposits.
- There are approximately 2,000 children in the CMS school system that are currently homeless per latest CMS census.
- Over 50% of the population in our homeless shelters are working poor.

The Solution: WISH



WISH

Workforce **I**nitiative for **S**upportive **H**ousing

Non-profit “faith-led” private permanent supportive housing program (based at the Foundation for the Carolinas) that provides case management, support services, and rental subsidies for Charlotte’s working poor.

The Solution: WISH



- Provide intensive case management and supportive services to our working poor to help them achieve self-reliance.
- Provide a rental subsidy for our working poor to bridge the gap between the families' ability to pay and current rental rates.
- Create opportunities for faith volunteers to help provide support services
- Take advantage of the large number of vacant apartment units scattered throughout Charlotte

Typical Clients for Wish



- Those households earning between \$10,000 - \$18,500
- Priority given for working families with children (although WISH will serve singles as well).
- Prospect of household moving toward self-reliance with adequate interim support.

A Client



- Single mom with 1 preschool aged child
- Lives at Charlotte Emergency Housing
- Does not have her GED
- Works full time as a nursing home aid for \$8.25 per hour (\$1,367/ month)
- Long term goal is to be a licensed nurse
- Her apartment rent is \$550 per month
- How can we help her?

The Investment



- Estimated annual cost per participant family is \$6,000, which includes case management and rent subsidy.
- Case manager to family ratio is 1 to 20.
- Assumed average rental subsidy per family is \$250 per month.
- Assumed average length of time for WISH family to reach self-reliance is 5 years.
- “WISH Pilot Program” = \$2,000,000; Should assist 70 families to achieve self-reliance.
- Goal is to move beyond pilot to major capital campaign to help many more families.

How Can You Help?



- Donate
- Volunteer to assist families
- Furnish and decorate apartments
- Spread the word

Collaborative WISH Agencies



- Foundation for the Carolinas (Fund Manager)
- Crisis Assistance Ministry (Co-fiduciary, landlord coordination).
- Lutheran Family Services (Co-fiduciary, case management and supportive services).
- United Way of Central Carolinas (Case management and volunteer training, strategic advocacy).
- A Way Home (Board Governance, advocacy, strategic planning).
- Mecklenburg Ministries/HELP (Inter-faith community advocacy).

For More Information on WISH



For more information on WISH, please contact:

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