BLOOMBERG HARVARD | City Leadership Initiative

How Rockford Changed Course to Tackle Veterans' Homelessness

Using Data to Diagnose and Remedy Complex Problems

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"You can't do this without the data. You can't make progress. You can't understand the problems. You can't make changes. The data doesn't drive the work, per se; the data drives decision-making."

—Jennifer Jaeger, community services director, City of Rockford, IL

On a frigid night in November 2014, two unhoused men died in a fire in a brick railroad shed near downtown Rockford, Illinois; a third would die later in the hospital. That year, two other men experiencing homelessness were killed in Rockford fires. At least three of these five men could not be quickly identified; for another, no family could be found. At the same time, the men's shelter run by the Rockford Rescue Mission, a local non-profit, had had vacancies every night for months. In the aftermath of the November fire, a staff member expressed sadness, adding: "Sometimes homeless people can't accept their 7 pm to 7 am curfew," she said. "Whatever their normal is, is different from ours. They want complete control over their comings and goings."[1]

Situated in the northwestern part of the state, Rockford (population 147,000) was Illinois's third largest city. Ever since manufacturing began fleeing industrial cities of the Midwest, Rockford struggled with many of Illinois's worst rates of unemployment, depopulation, violent crime, opiate addiction—and homelessness. One newspaper article reporting on the fire estimated Rockford's population that was either homeless or in unstable housing at three thousand people, but even the outreach workers and agencies working on homelessness did not know for sure.[2]

Rockford's approach to homelessness was fragmented; shelters and other service providers all had their own methods, principles, and priorities. The city sometimes attempted to impose its will—for instance, trying to spread out shelters throughout the city rather than have them congregated downtown—but little was coordinated or standardized. Earlier in 2014, the city had forced a small church shelter to close for lack of proper zoning and sprinklers. The Rockford Rescue Mission was still waiting for city approval to expand its women's shelter at a downtown site.

Mayor Larry Morrissey felt he didn't have a handle on the city's homelessness problem, but he was adamant that he did not want what he called a "homelessness industry . . . enabling poverty rather than getting people out of it."[3] An ally who ran the regional association of agencies and partners that managed homelessness services, known as a Continuum of Care (CoC), agreed: "Just sleeping in a

shelter and repeating it is not the goal we're looking at,"[4] he said, acknowledging that clients needed more than a bed for the night on which to rebuild their future. The difficulty for everyone working on homelessness in Rockford was deciding what the goal should actually be.

One reason it was difficult to set clear, shared goals was the lack of data about the nature and size of the problem. The city relied primarily on the "point-in-time" or PIT count, a requirement for receiving federal funds. Once a year, city staff and volunteers spent twenty-four hours scouring streets, parks, shelters, and other sites counting every person experiencing homelessness. Federal allocations could depend on that one day's numbers.[i] Beyond this snapshot—an aggregate number based on an imperfect survey method—Rockford did not have good data to work with. The variety of databases did not produce accurate, accessible, and actionable data, Morrissey said: "The data was too abstract, [too] high level, as opposed to us thinking about [individual] human beings. For police and fire, they have 911—with call takers, every call is logged with response times—a lot of metrics. But for non-public safety departments with high-volume calls like public works or human services, we just didn't have a consistent system—we were all over the map." Incomplete or incorrect data from disconnected sources precluded analysis that could solve the problem; indeed, it meant they didn't fully understand the problem to begin with.

Mayor Morrissey's Frustration

Larry Morrissey was an unusual figure to become mayor of the ailing Rust Belt City. Thirty-six years old, Morrissey was a tech-savvy lawyer with an MBA who, running as a political independent, defeated the Democratic incumbent by a landslide in a historically partisan town. Morrissey ran on what he called a "governance" platform that was meant to offer "data-informed" and coordinated approaches to problem-solving that would drive decision making down to the most local level. Most issues he faced, homelessness among them, touched on many "units of government or agencies, a mixture of nonprofits, NGOs, faith-based organizations, criminal justice, housing systems," he said, and any mayor would learn that "you don't have . . . your hands on the actual levers that impact outcomes [unless you] face the governance issue." As part of his data-informed governance philosophy, Morrissey introduced Rockstat in his first term, a monthly public meeting to review performance data by department. Resembling Baltimore's CitiStat approach pioneered in 1999 by then-Mayor Martin O'Malley, Rockstat meetings featured department heads presenting data about their work and the mayor asking lots of questions.

Morrisey was highly motivated to make progress on homelessness, but by his own admission had been late coming to a vision for data-informed solutions to a persistent problem. The crisis of homelessness struck close to home: when he was a child, his alcoholic father—a veteran—risked ("but for the grace of God") becoming homeless before he got help. In 2014, after eight years in office, homelessness nagged at Morrissey as something Rockford had not come to grips with. Morrissey admitted, "I started off completely wrong. I didn't have buy-in [from the CoC] on the need to develop a shared vision and more effective governance." Starting at the top and from the perspective of existing policies, created bafflement: "Every homeless individual touches upon a vast myriad of federal programs and you could

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[i] For instance, three years later, the January 2018 PIT count of 262 resulted in $1.6 million in federal HUD funding to be distributed among the members of the Rock River Homeless Coalition for services.

scratch your head all day long and say, 'why is this person still homeless?'" He realized that understanding and dealing with homelessness required a lot more attention to the particular circumstances of the individual, "starting at the bottom and working up." This meant leaning heavily on outreach workers like Angie Walker (her official title was "housing advocate") who knew most homeless people in Rockford but was not making headway with the more coordinated, complex work of directing services efficiently among several partners. "We assumed a lot," Walker said. "For example, that if you're linked with this agency, this agency is helping you with housing. Without somebody being in charge to push things along, nothing would really happen. The people would just stay there on the list and never move."

Continuum of Care and Point-in-Time

Throughout the US, fighting homelessness was coordinated at the federal level through hundreds of cities or regions, each organized into CoCs. Rockford was the fiscal agent for the CoC (known as the Rock River Homeless Coalition) for the metropolitan area (pop. 350,000) that encompassed Winnebago and Boone Counties. It included nonprofit partners, the city housing authority, and the local office of the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).[ii]

Every CoC in the country drew on its local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) as its principal database.[iii] HMIS had its problems; it counted people who received services, but not all those who needed them. If they were simply unknown, for example, or frequented providers who did not report data into HMIS, or found their own help, or suddenly departed, they were often not included in HMIS. Rockford's CoC used other databases, like one from the state community services block grant program, but, said Jennifer Jaeger, Rockford's community services director and Walker's boss, "one of the failures we see in a lot of systems is they build the system and things sit in that system. The system functions as well as it's going to function, but unless people are willing to constantly use data to inform changes to the system, it stays static." As a result, Walker said the CoC data tended to disappear as "it just went into the database. It wasn't clear where you could look at it anytime and have it at your fingertips." A system that was neither user-friendly nor kept updated could seem adjacent to the work rather than aligned with it. Altogether, Jaeger said, the CoC was a source of frustration, oriented toward services but without direction. "It just wasn't goal-oriented. I like a goal. It helps us focus the work."[5]

Neither Morrissey nor his staff felt the Rock River Homeless Coalition was an effective CoC. For one thing, Walker said, they did not even know all the same people experiencing homelessness: "Because the agencies were all working separately, everybody had their own little pot of clients. One group had to come here; one group went to Crusader Clinic. They were all these people going to these separate

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[ii] See Appendix 1 for the members of Rockford's Continuum of Care (aka the Rock River Homeless Coalition, renamed the Northern Illinois Homeless Coalition in 2020). The CoC was meant to be inclusive; for instance, when Rockford closed the tiny Apostolic Pentecostals shelter in March 2014 for zoning and sprinkler violations, the CoC invited the minister to join. ("Rockford region has divergent views on ending homelessness," *Journal-Standard,* April 2, 2014.)

[iii] The U.S. HUD website describes HMIS as "a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness. Each Continuum of Care (CoC) is responsible for selecting an HMIS software solution that complies with HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards."

services, but they weren't connecting so they were not known as whole [persons]. While I might've known these specific twenty or forty people, there's another whole group that goes to Carpenter's Place that I've never seen before."

Additionally, the January PIT counts continued to frustrate Morrisey. People who knew homelessness understood it as a dynamic phenomenon, changing every day or even between night and day; counting one cold day of the year was crude data, at best. Until 2013, Rockford did not even count at night, Walker said, "something you're obviously supposed to do to count your unsheltered population."[6] The January 2014 PIT count was 410, down from 788 in 2013. Was that meant to suggest improvement? Rockford's whole approach to homelessness at that time, Walker said, was "reactive . . . we would go out to camps or places if the police or code enforcement called us," and maybe one person at a time would be helped. With so little coordination between the agencies who worked with homeless people, an annual PIT count, Morrissey said, wasn't "really changing or being integrated into our operation." The numbers could go up or down but did not tell you what action to take, or why people became or stayed homeless.

The whole effort to reduce homelessness seemed to get in its own way. The coalition charged with ensuring "a continuum of care" struggled to coordinate and streamline the patchwork of service providers. The information systems designed to exchange data failed to provide users with useful information. And the users spent valuable time and energy trying to address these issues without much success. Morrissey remembered: "At one point the group was getting hung up on a cloud-based case management system." What was supposed to be a tool to do the work became the work, but to Morrissey it was "a common tool without a common vision." Getting lost on tools and technologies, or being preoccupied with the interoperability of federal, state, and local systems or organizations risked, as far as social services were concerned, "chasing the wrong problem," or, in the case of homelessness specifically, making "the homelessness industry or housing industry the focus," instead of the people experiencing homelessness.

The Mayor's Challenge to End Veterans' Homelessness

In August 2014, First Lady Michelle Obama announced a nationwide challenge: The Mayors' Challenge to End Veterans' Homelessness. Since Rockford was a participant in the federal Strong Cities, Strong Communities program with a US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) official embedded in his office, Morrissey heard about this interagency federal initiative quickly, but was reluctant to commit. He worried that the city just was not ready, that they lacked the capacity, and that the efforts on homelessness they had made over his eight years in office had not gotten them anywhere. Political capital or will would be vital to success, and although he had just won a third term in 2013, it was with only 44 percent of the vote. Recalling his dilemma about signing on to the challenge, Morrissey was tempted to decline: "It's because I thought it was a losing battle and I had almost given up on it."

But the Mayor's Challenge did offer the type of goal that they had lacked: a concrete focus on a particular problem and a clear definition of success: reducing veterans' homelessness to zero. Morrissey felt the time was right, and the city could build on what it had learned over the years. They could focus on the desired social outcomes and not get stuck on means like shared software. "While it

is a good idea in theory to have everybody sharing a similar case management system with appropriate authorizations and requirements," Morrissey realized, "you can keep the team together and move things forward without everybody being on the same case management system . . . [instead] you wind up basically saying, 'bring whatever you got to the meeting and we will build one shared spreadsheet and work off that.'"

Furthermore, a solution for poor data infrastructure was within reach. Having started work as early as 2013, Rockford's CoC was close to meeting a January 1, 2015 HUD-mandated deadline on a data improvement mechanism known as "coordinated entry."[iv] This mechanism, which the CoC had to design and fund itself, would complement HMIS by allowing any person experiencing homelessness to be entered into the system at any single place (a shelter, a city office, a nonprofit), creating a record that could be shared by all.[v] From this, an individualized list of names with multiple subcategories could be created and true case conferencing could begin.

Built for Zero

At around the same time that Rockford officials heard about the Mayors' Challenge (mid-2014), Walker found a program by the New York-based nonprofit Community Solutions called "Zero: 2016," with seventy-five partners across the US starting in January 2015. The initiative would soon be called Built for Zero (BfZ), where "Zero" was the goal communities were meant to drive toward: functional zero, essentially a commitment to house anyone declared homeless within thirty days, ensuring homelessness was only "rare and brief."[vi]

Walker had found the new program by accident, surfing online. "Literally I printed it off and I went to Jennifer. 'I think we should do this,' I told her. 'They offer coaching and they can help us.'" Sending some questions through an FAQ portal, she found the application online, submitted it, and soon Rockford was in. Beth Sandor, BfZ's director, described the initiative as demanding a lot from participants. "Everyone had to agree they were going to work on getting to zero on veterans and/or chronic homelessness. You had to agree to a shared measurement framework. You had to agree to report your data every month. You had to agree to use quality improvement as an approach to problem-solving. You had to agree to Housing First—the principles behind it are evidence-based."[7]

Not everyone who worked in homeless services accepted "Housing First," a practice that emphasized the first priority with people experiencing homelessness was to house them, and from there, everything else—e.g., counseling, job training, mental health and substance abuse treatment—would be simpler to manage and produce better outcomes.[vii] In contrast, providers who did not accept Housing First might require homeless substance abusers to enter recovery before being eligible for

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[iv] The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides funding for homelessness services through nearly 500 CoCs throughout the country. More on what HUD requires of member CoCs can be found here: https://www.hudexchange.info/faqs/1545/what-is-a-continuum-of-care/

[v] Rockford's human services department absorbed most of the costs for developing Coordinated Entry, first with a community services grant and later with HMIS funding and emergency solutions grants.

[vi] Built for Zero considers a community to have formally achieved Functional Zero (for veterans) when it has "a data-driven, coordinated system that ensures fewer people are experiencing homelessness than can be routinely housed in a month."

[vii] See the National Alliance to End Homelessness "Housing First" fact sheet: https://endhomelessness.org/resource/housing-first/

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housing assistance. In Rockford's CoC, two organizations with a Christian mission—Rockford Rescue Mission and Carpenter's Place—believed case management came first and could restrict their own funds to meet their priorities. The city of Rockford, administering federal assistance, had leverage, but the human services team of Jaeger and Walker (and occasionally one or two other staff or interns) was mainly an outreach and liaising service; nothing got done without the array of partnerships with private organizations, agencies, or landlords who provided the actual beds, rooms or units, and the medical, training, and counseling services that accompanied working with homeless populations.

Furthermore, like other cities, Rockford's definitions of homelessness were not the same everywhere. Should people in transitional housing still appear as homeless on official lists? Until they were permanently housed, Rockford human services staff believed that they should. Also, the Rockford school district had over one thousand more names of homeless children than human services. "It's different definitions," Jaeger would realize. "The feds say to school districts, 'Count every kid who isn't living in their own home as homeless.' So, if you have a culture that typically lives two, three generations in their home, they're counting them as homeless, because it's more than one household." Veterans were easier to start with.

Taking the Pledge

Morrissey decided Rockford would accept the mayors' challenge to end veterans' homelessness. Accompanied by Jaeger and Walker, he traveled to Chicago in early 2015 for a kickoff event at the HUD field office downtown. "All the mayors had been invited," Walker recalled. "Larry was the only one who showed up." Both Walker and Jaeger remembered Morrissey as the "rock star" of the event, "fully invested at that point," in Walker's words, perhaps because it seemed like "it was really a movement." Morrissey confirmed: "I was a true believer after that HUD training." Immediately afterward the Rockford trio assembled on a freezing Chicago sidewalk where ice fell from the tops of skyscrapers above them. "If we're going to do this," Walker recalled the mayor saying, "you guys need to get going. You're going to come to Rockstat, and you're going to present your data every month and tell us how you're doing, because if I'm signing onto this, we're going to do it right and get it done."

For Jaeger, a very public pledge from Morrissey that put his reputation on the line was important as a signal to all city departments, workers, and partners that this was a turning-point. "You need others to get things done, after all." The first communication inviting a range of Rockford's partners in human services (e.g., nonprofit shelters, health clinics, and community programs) to join Walker for case conferencing—the sharing of information and working off the same individualized list—came from Morrissey himself.

As 2014 ended and 2015 began, Rockford was on two tracks to try to end veterans' homelessness. One was through the Mayors' Challenge, sponsored by the federal government with Michelle Obama as its very prominent figurehead. The second was through membership in BfZ's sophisticated data coaching operation that worked in all kinds of communities across the US, where circumstances varied enormously, including large cities where the numbers were too great for individual case conferencing.

The question then became how to do the actual work. Outside the social service providers and agencies who had their own personnel, Rockford's human services staff doing outreach and

coordination was tiny—not much more than Jaeger and Walker—and supported almost entirely by federal block grants.[viii] Jaeger was a data maven and manager in an office; Walker an outgoing housing advocate traveling throughout the city each day wherever her clients were, which often enough was the parking lot outside South Main liquor store. Jaeger described the partnership: "I'm always the one driving for that data point and getting impatient about meeting data goals. And she's the one saying, 'Remember, Jennifer, we're dealing with people here, not just numbers.'" Bottom line for both was the BfZ principle that people "should never be homeless more than a month ever in our community."

When it came to housing people experiencing homelessness, the resources available to Rockford varied. The nonprofit agencies or partners had their own resources, facilities, and rules although Rockford, as fiscal agent for the CoC, could direct federal funds or vouchers to them—and to private landlords—in accordance with federal and their own regulations, which included Housing First. One individual might be eligible for help from one funding stream but not from others, and a key part of the work was deciding who qualified for which kind of assistance. Fortunately, federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds that were the basis of Rockford's human services budget gave the group flexibility, since, in Walker's words, "they could be repurposed to go to homeless services," even if increases, over the years, were few. It was always a matching problem: finding the right combination of funder or funding, service provider and landlord, and of course the client, no two of whom were the same.

BfZ provided useful analytic frameworks and would soon offer data coaching. Rockford's staffers from the mayor down knew the solution had to start with a better list of Rockford's ever-changing homeless population than the city or CoC had ever managed: "a named list of individual homeless people where we started to see the connection between data and clinical interventions that results in improved outcomes," Morrissey called it. BfZ's term for it was the "by-name list," or BNL. Shortly thereafter, in his State of the City speech on March 5, 2015, the mayor suggested the functional-zero goal was manageable. "We're talking about for the whole state of Illinois a thousand veterans who are homeless," he said. "In Rockford, we think the number is under fifty. For our community, can we get fifty individuals housed? I think we can."[8]

But was he right about the numbers? What if they were much higher? A month after Morrissey's speech, Jaeger's division head said that of over 300 people experiencing homelessness who had applied for housing, more than half were previously unknown.[9] Quite likely, there was a similar underestimate of the number of veterans among them. How could you actually identify every homeless veteran each time one appeared in Rockford and achieve functional zero?

As mayor, Morrissey could use the authority of his office to control levers like the police and fire department. He could also use both the Rockstat performance-leadership strategy and his bully pulpit at the annual State of the City address to show that veterans' homelessness was his priority. He faced challenges: In governance, how could he get parties to work together? In policy, how could he develop and implement an approach that would actually solve veterans' homelessness? And in leadership, how could he drive change and hold parties accountable for progress? Underlying all of this was the

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[viii] Of a roughly $20 million human services budget nearly 90 percent came from federal programs. (Jennifer Jaeger email to case writers, March 2, 2020).

challenge of getting the right data and using it to inform action. Morrissey charged Jaeger and Walker with making sure the daily work would be data informed.[ix] But as they began, Jaeger said, "We didn't know how to measure progress or interventions." How would they know if they were succeeding in eliminating homelessness among veterans in Rockford?

[ix] More explicitly: "Governance" means the jurisdictional challenges of coordination and collaboration between various sectors and levels of government; "Policy" constitutes the programs, incentives, regulations, supports, and services to help reduce homelessness and increase well-being rooted in a more or less explicit theory of change; "Leadership" encompasses the ability to convene, coordinate, motivate, and hold people and organizations accountable for contributing to a shared purpose. "Data" constitutes the technology, analytic capabilities, and processes that help governments learn, improve, decide, predict, allocate, and evaluate.

Appendices

Appendix 1   Members of the Rock River Homeless Coalition (aka the Winnebago and Boone Counties Continuum of Care)
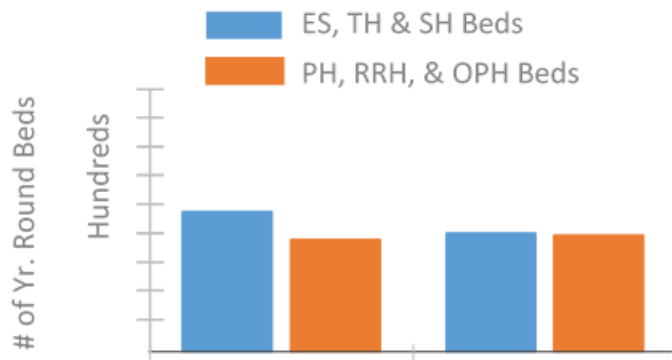
Name	Role/Service	Focus or type
Carpenter's Place	Case Management; Transitional Housing; Permanent Supportive Housing; Day-center & Food Employment & Training; Religious services	Christian mission
Casa of Winnebago County	Legal advocates for children	nonprofit
Rockford Human Services (Community Action Agency)	Coordination; Outreach	city agency
Crusader Community Health	Health services	nonprofit
U.S. Dept. of Veteran's Affairs	Housing funding; Health care funding; Education support services; Disability funding; Record keeping	federal
Hope Haven DeKalb	Emergency Housing; Rapid Rehousing; Permanent Supportive Housing; Homeless prevention; Life Skills Training	nonprofit
Institute for Community Alliance	Data & Technical Support (to agencies)	nonprofit
Meet my Shoes	Social resources for veterans & poor	nonprofit
Oak Street Health	Health care (primary)	nonprofit
One Body Collaborative, Inc	Religious connector (services to churches & religious organizations)	Christian mission
Prairie State Legal Services	Legal services	nonprofit
Regional Office of Education	Public education	county and state
Remedies Renewing Lives	Case management; Education; Advocacy; Emergency housing (domestic violence focus)	nonprofit
Rockford Fire Department	Code Enforcement; Emergency fire and paramedical services	city department
Rockford Housing Authority	Housing vouchers; Landlord connector	municipal corporation
Rockford Rescue Mission	Case Management; Transitional Housing; Emergency Housing; Day-center & Foody; Employment & Training; Religious services	Christian mission
Rockford Township	Township administration (excepting Rockford city)	governance
Rosecrance	Behavioral health; Addiction & substance abuse	nonprofit
Shelter Care Ministries	Emergency Housing; Transitional Housing; Rapid Rehousing; Permanent Supportive Housing; Day-center & Food; Religious services	religious mission
St Elizabeth Center	Emergency assistance (e.g. shelter, pantry, meals, clothing) plus youth and community services and outreach	Christian mission
United Way of Rock River Valley	Employment & Training; Legal support	nonprofit
Village of Machesney Park	Town administration	governance
Winnebago County Health Department	Funding for health programs	county
Winnebago/Boone County Housing Authority	Housing vouchers; Landlord connector	county
Winnebago County State's Attorney's Office	Legal services	county
Youth Action Board		
Youth Services Network	Emergency Housing; Transitional Housing Permanent Supportive Housing; Counselling & Case Management; Legal services	State-licensed child welfare agency

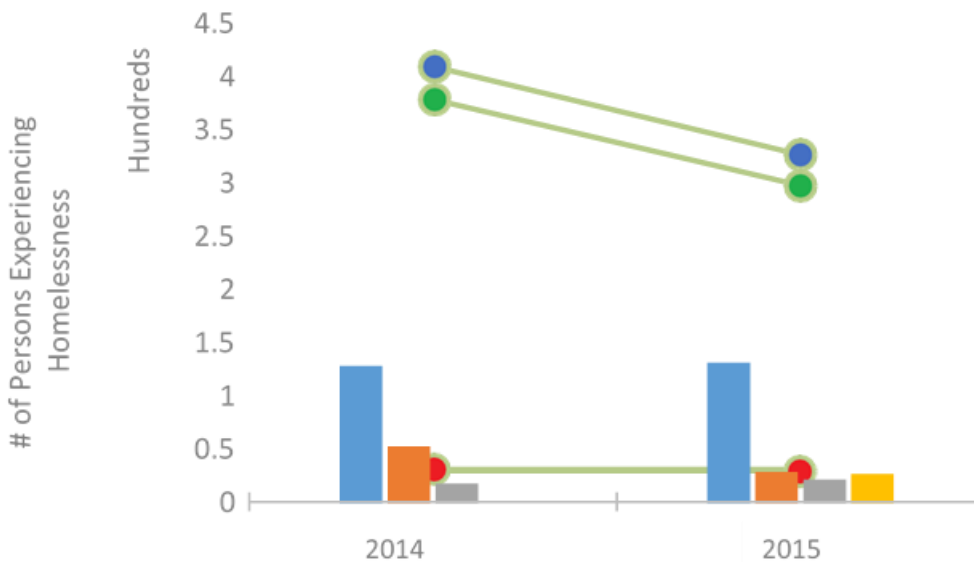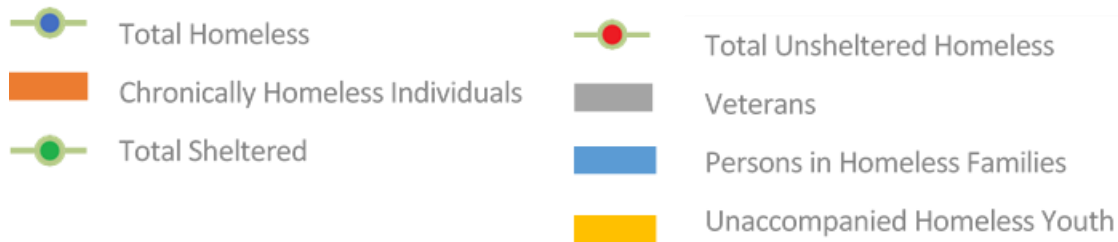Source: Northern Illinois Homeless Coalition https://www.rockriverhomelesscoalition.com/

Appendix 2   Tables and Charts from Rock River Homeless Coalition, now called Northern Illinois Homeless Coalition (a.k.a., the Continuum of Care for Winnebago and Boone Counties)
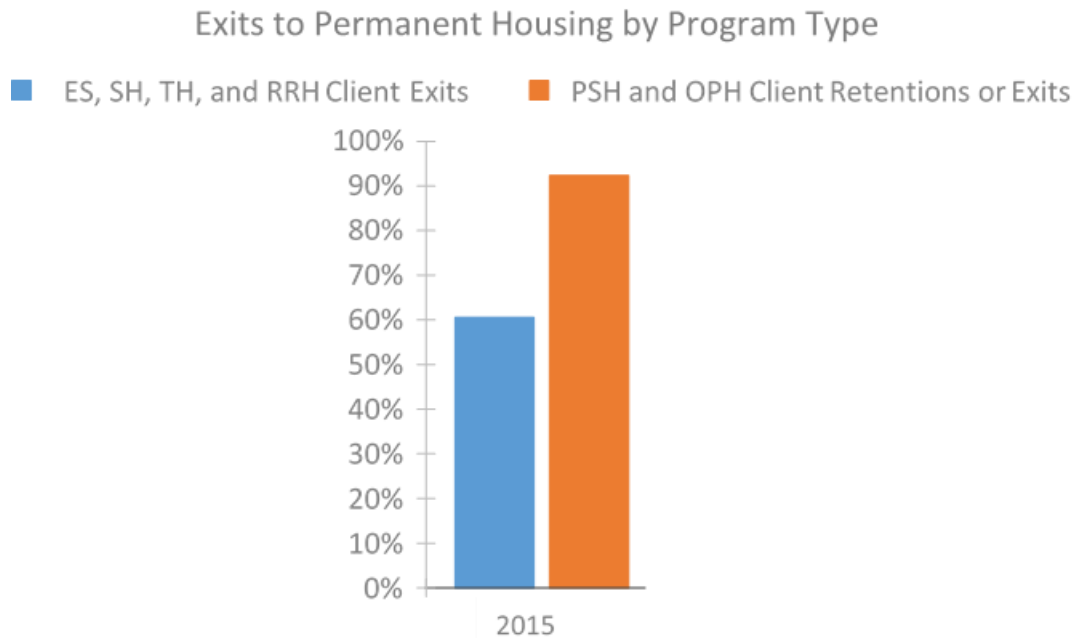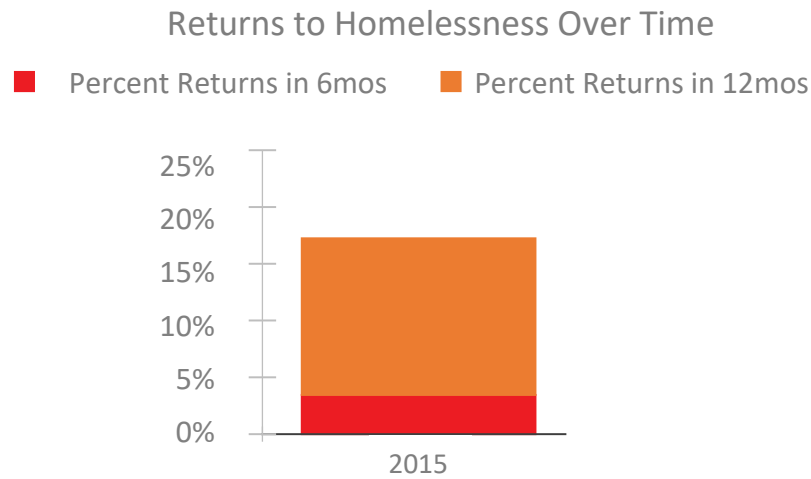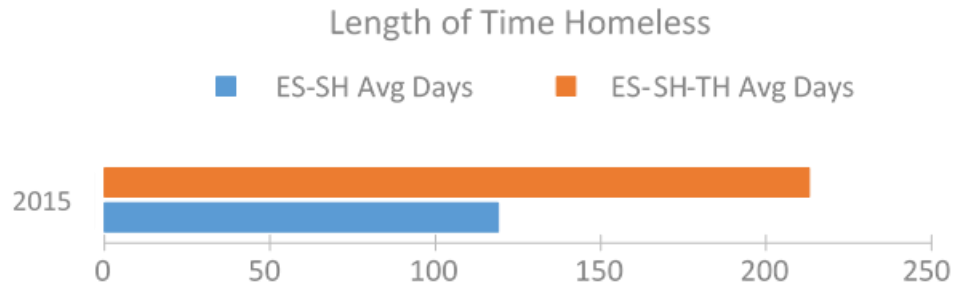

CoC Performance Profile IL-501
Rockford/Winnebago, Boone Counties CoC

Housing Inventory Count by Program Type

Homeless Population – Point-in-Time (PIT) Count

Length of Time Homeless

- ES-SH Avg Days
- ES-SH-TH Avg Days

Returns to Homelessness Over Time

- Percent Returns in 6mos
- Percent Returns in 12mos

Exits to Permanent Housing by Program Type

- ES, SH, TH, and RRH Client Exits
- PSH and OPH Client Retentions or Exits

Point-In-Time Count Summary

	2014	2015
Number of Sheltered Persons in Families	120	130
Number of Unsheltered Persons in Families	7	0
Number of Sheltered Individuals	259	168
Number of Unsheltered Individuals	24	29
Total Homeless Persons	**410**	**327**
Number of Sheltered Families	36	47
Number of Unsheltered Families	2	0
Number of Total Families	**38**	**47**
Sheltered Chronically Homeless Individuals	43	18
Unsheltered Chronically Homeless Individuals	8	9
Total Chronically Homeless Individuals	**51**	**27**
Sheltered Veterans	16	19
Unsheltered Veterans	0	1
Total Veterans	**16**	**20**
Sheltered Unaccompanied Youth (up to 24)	--	23
Unsheltered Unaccompanied Youth (up to 24)	--	2
Total Unaccompanied Youth (up to 24)	**--**	**25**

System Performance Measures Summary

	2014	2015
Average Length of Time Homeless (days)	N/A	213
Rate People Return to Homelessness in 6 Months	N/A	3.4%
Number of People who are Homeless for the First Time	N/A	363
Rate People Exit from ES, SH, TH, and RRH to PH	N/A	60.6%
Rate People in PSH and OPH Retain or Exit to PH	N/A	92.4%

Housing Inventory Count Summary

	2014	2015
Emergency Shelter (ES)	250	239
Transitional Housing (TH)	215	155
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	372	384
Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)	--	--

Award Summary

	2014	2015
Continuum of Care (CoC)	$1,627,385	$1,470,693
Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)	$166,875	$186,454

Endnotes

[1] "UPDATE: Third Man Dies After November Shed Fire," December 12, 2014, https://www.wifr.com/home/headlines/Two-Dead-One-Burned-in-Shed-Fire-282680741.html.

[2] Jeff Kolkey, "Two homeless men killed, one hurt in Rockford shed fire," *Rockford Register Star,* November 14, 2014, https://www.rrstar.com/article/20141114/NEWS/141119660.

[3] Unless otherwise specified, all Larry Morrissey quotations are from one of three phone interviews with case writers (January 21, February 19, and March 11, 2020).

[4] Chuck Sweeny, "Rockford region has divergent views on ending homelessness," *Journal-Standard,* April 2, 2014, https://www.journalstandard.com/article/20140402/NEWS/140409773.

[5] Jennifer Jaeger phone interview with case writers, February 6, 2020.

[6] Unless otherwise specified, all Angie Walker quotations and details are from interviews with case writers, December 3, 2019 and February 4, 2020.

[7] Beth Sandor phone interview with case writers, November 18, 2019.

[8] Mike Buda, "Morrissey delivers 10th State of the City Speech," https://www.wifr.com/home/headlines/Morrissey-Delivers-10th-State-of-the-City-Speech-295291851.html.

[9] Mike Buda, "UPDATE: Intake System Placing Dozens in Homes," April 23, 2015, https://www.wifr.com/home/headlines/Homeless-Coalition-Chance-4-Change-Initiative.html.