

# Duncan Plaza Homeless Re-Housing Initiative



**February 1, 2008**

**A monumental humanitarian achievement**

# Duncan Plaza:

## A Humanitarian Crisis

- By November 2007, the Duncan Plaza homeless camp, just outside City Hall, had grown to 249 persons and included children and the elderly. Most of the residents suffer from serious mental and physical disabilities.
- In just 30 days, UNITY of Greater New Orleans and its government and nonprofit partners assisted 249 Duncan Plaza residents to voluntarily move off the street, first into low-cost hotels and then permanent apartments.
- By modeling national evidence-based practices in the Duncan Plaza initiative, New Orleans is creating a structure and system by which we can move people out of homelessness throughout the city.

# What We Have Accomplished So Far

- 249 people were assisted by UNITY & member agencies to move out of Duncan Plaza into low-cost hotels between Nov. 21 and Dec. 21, 2007.
- Of the 249, 168 persons – 68 percent -- were assisted to move into their own apartments as of Feb. 1, 2008.
- Case managers continue to work intensely to place the remaining clients in apartments of their own.

# A Three-Stage Initiative

- **Stage One:** Nov. 21-Dec. 21:
  - 249 persons assisted to move out of Duncan Plaza into temporary hotels (of these, 27 were placed in permanent apartments during Stage One)
- **Stage Two:** Dec. 22 – Feb. 29:
  - All clients being assisted to move into apartments that meet their needs & preferences. Case managers stabilize them and triage them into two groups:
    - **Non-disabled:** assisted to find jobs and apartments; other services as needed. Rent assistance and case management provided for three months.
    - **Disabled:** assisted to get into medical treatment and find apartments; other services as needed. Rent assistance and case management is to be ongoing.
- **Stage Three:** ongoing after Feb. 29:
  - Work with state and federal government to ensure that permanent supports (services and rent subsidies) are put into place for those residents who have serious disabilities through the state's hurricane recovery Permanent Supportive Housing initiative.

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## Two National Best Practices Used in Duncan Plaza Homeless Re-Housing Initiative Making Wisest Use of Scarce Resources

For clients with serious mental or physical disabilities:  
Permanent Supportive Housing = affordable apartments  
coupled with ongoing tenant-based services

- proven in research studies to be cost-effective solution to homelessness for vulnerable people
- services aimed at stabilizing clients, helping them be good tenants, keeping them housed, improving their self-sufficiency

For homeless clients without disabilities:

Rapid Rehousing = short-term rent assistance coupled  
with case management aimed at achieving self-  
sufficiency (job search, help with budgeting, etc.)

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# What Does it Take to Rehouse Duncan Plaza Residents?

- 20 street outreach workers.
  - Perform individualized client assessments of mental and physical disabilities, strengths and needs; provide supportive services to clients with disabilities and persuade them to accept housing; transport clients out of Duncan Plaza into 8 low-cost hotels
- 24 housing search case managers
  - Recruit landlords, assess clients' housing needs and preferences, transport clients to look at and choose apartments, perform apartment inspections, negotiate leases, assist clients with moving in and acquiring furniture and household and personal supplies
- 44 stabilization case managers
  - Perform more detailed client assessments and create client plans; visit clients in their hotels and apartments to ensure their needs are being met; link them to mental health care, health care, job search and other programs; do whatever it takes to keep clients stably housed.

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# Our Government Partners

Government agencies who have already committed to providing resources for this initiative:

- ❑ **Louisiana Dept of Social Services:** short-term rent assistance, hotel vouchers, rent and security deposits, housing search case managers
  - ❑ **U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development:** ongoing salaries of outreach workers and UNITY Housing Link housing search program, ongoing funding of the UNITY Continuum of Care
  - ❑ **Metropolitan Human Services District:** short-term case managers to stabilize people with mental and physical disabilities in their hotel rooms and apartments for 8 weeks
  - ❑ **City of New Orleans:** hotel vouchers, case manager supervisor, support for UNITY Continuum of Care
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# Our Non-Profit Partners

## Principal agencies moving clients out of Duncan Plaza into hotels and apartments:

- UNITY of Greater New Orleans and UNITY Welcome Home
- Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans
- In This Together
- Covenant House
- Alternatives Living
- Community Service Center
- NOPD Homeless Assistance Collaborative
- Odyssey House
- McCaleb Foundation
- House of Ruth
- Jefferson Parish Human Services District
- First Evangelist Community Development Corp.
- Responsibility House
- Resources for Human Development
- Louisiana Public Health Institute

## Emergency shelters providing safety-net shelter are:

- New Orleans Mission
- Ozanam Inn
- Salvation Army

# Many churches, organizations, and volunteers are helping to end homelessness by providing meals to Duncan Plaza residents in their hotel rooms and

## apartments:

- Ozanam Inn
- First Evangelist Community Development Corp.
- Celebration Church
- New Orleans Mission
- Journey Christian Church
- Campus Crusade for Christ
- Edgewater Baptist Church
- Holy Ghost Church
- St. John's Catholic Church
- Community Church Unitarian-Universalist
- Trinity Episcopal Church
- Mobile Fishes and Loaves
- Victory Gospel Chapel
- Jefferson Parish Council on Aging
- Kingdom Church
- Second Zion Baptist Church
- Just the Right Attitude
- Patty McRae volunteer group
- Ann Duffy volunteer group
- Ann Redell volunteer group
- Christine Breault volunteer group
- Belinda Henderson volunteer group
- Beverly Froese volunteer group
- Helen Cannon volunteer group
- Holly Reynolds volunteer group
- Yvonne Lopez volunteer group

# Donations Needed

- Tables and Chairs
- Unused Mattresses and Box springs
- Bed Linens
- Bath Towels
- Hygiene Supplies
- Cleaning supplies
- Bed Frames
- Lamps
- Small Household Appliances
- Other Kitchen Appliances (refrigerators, stoves, microwaves, coffeemakers)
- Kitchen utensils
  - Dishes and silverware
  - Glassware and coffee mugs
  - Pots
  - Pans
- Televisions and Radios

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**New Orleanians are accomplishing what seemed to be impossible:**

**End the homelessness of 249 Duncan Plaza residents.**

- Now we need the continued involvement of the entire community to:
    1. Help resettle each Duncan Plaza resident into their own apartment with the furniture and personal supplies they need,
    2. Work with the state to secure temporary rent subsidies and permanent supportive services for those with disabilities.
    3. Ask national congressional leaders for permanent rent subsidies for those with serious disabilities, and
    4. Keep the momentum going to replicate this success and end homelessness throughout our city!
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