

Homeless Initiative Advisory Committee

Buncombe County Commission

June 24, 2013

What is the Homeless Initiative Advisory Committee?

- Appointed by City Council and County Commission representing agencies, the homeless and the public.
- Successful City/County collaboration
- Primary assignment to date: Implement the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness, adopted by City & County, that focused our community on “Housing First”.

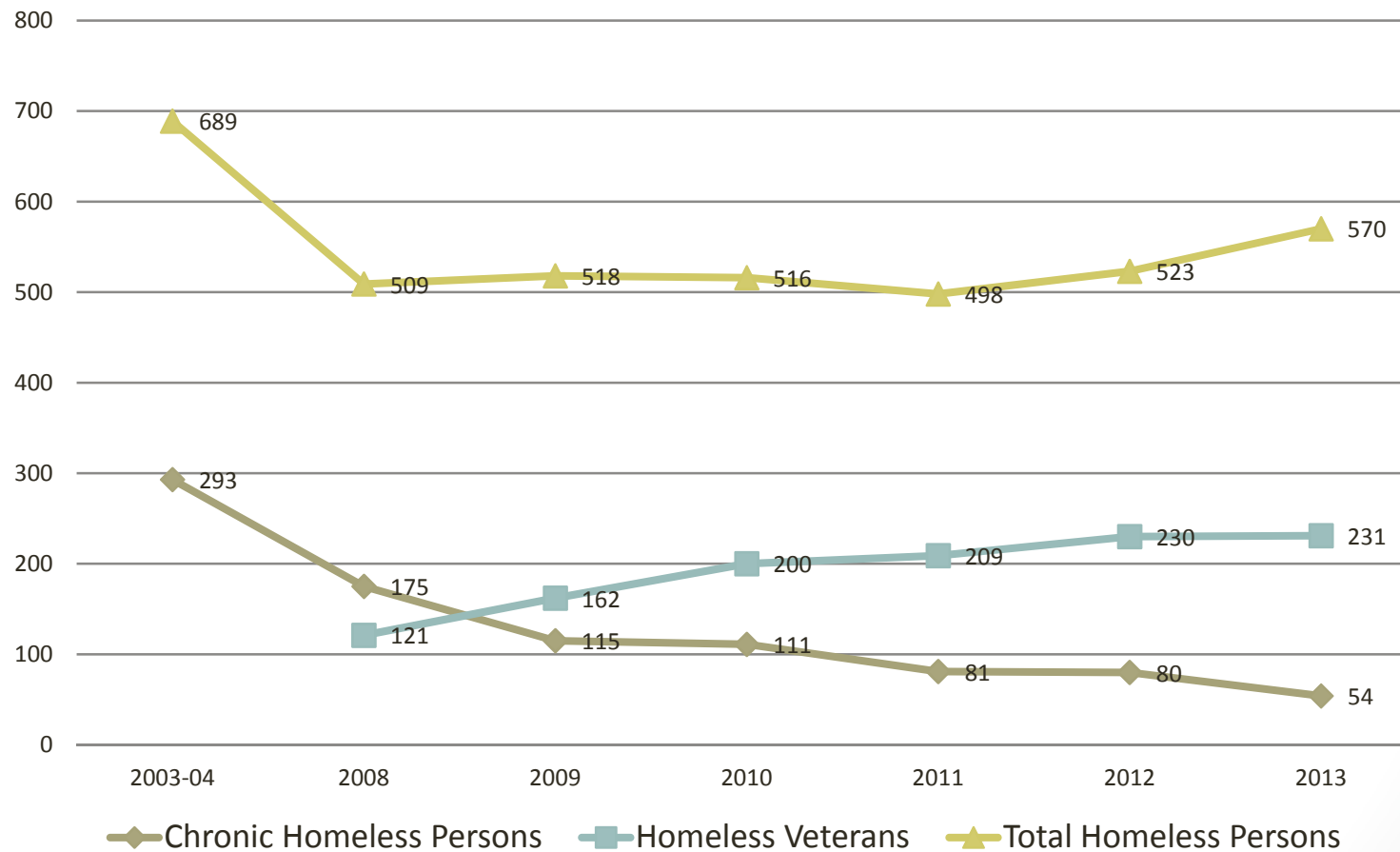
What is Housing First?

- Fundamentally: the solution to homelessness is a home.
- High costs to the community of homelessness, particularly chronic homelessness – law enforcement/jail, first responders/emergency room, health, mental health, and social problems.
- Moving the highest need folks into permanent housing with supportive services helps them stabilize and reduces the overall cost.
- Housing First is not the only approach. We have a number of successful emergency and transitional programs in our community.

Chronic/Veterans Homelessness

- Chronic homelessness is down 82% in annual Point in Time Counts since the 10 Year Plan was published. Nine out of 10 placed in housing are successful.
- Homeward Bound has placed more than 500 people in permanent supportive housing, focusing on chronic.
- VA Supportive Housing Program has placed more than 250 homeless veterans in permanent supportive housing, focusing on chronic.
- Note: the number of homeless vets is technically up, but primarily that number represents the transitional housing at ABCCM's Vets Quarters, where they receive strong supportive services and job training.

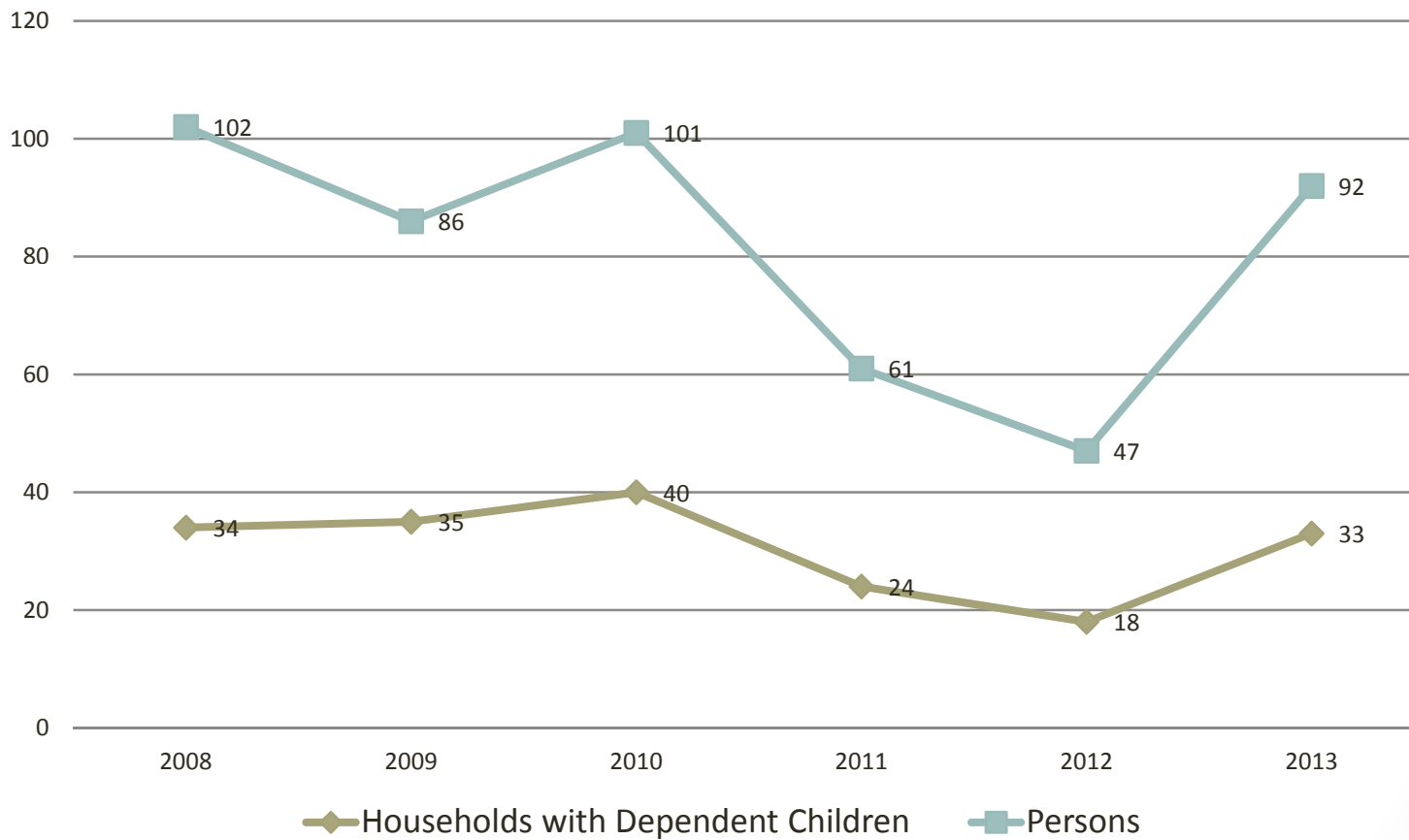
Chronic, Veterans & Total



Families with Children

- Homelessness among families with children, though generally more episodic (not chronic), remains persistent.
- Trend was down for a couple of years with ARRA funding, but spiked up again this year.
- Subcommittee is looking at strategies for reducing this number – including identifying new resources for rapid re-housing.

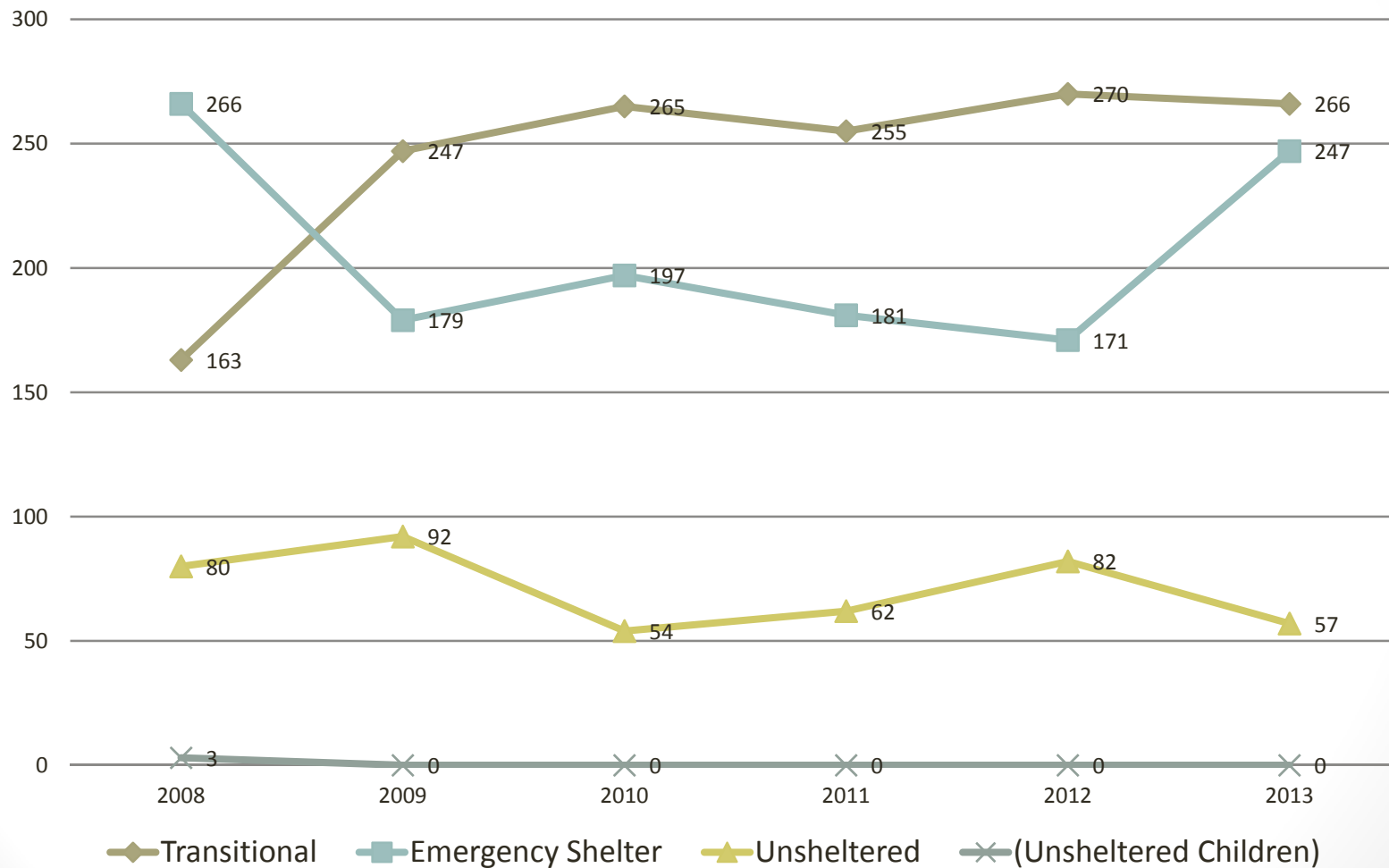
Families with Children



Other Strategies

- Agencies shifting from former emphasis on congregate emergency shelter to other strategies.
- Homeward Bound closed its shelters.
- ABCCM closed its large shelter on Coxe Avenue and opened the Vets Quarters – transitional in semi-private rooms.
- Western Carolina Rescue Mission is working now to add more private family room options at its shelter.
- Based on all strategies and committed, coordinated efforts, the number of unsheltered homeless is gradually going down.
- No unsheltered children have been identified in our annual count since 2008.

Other Strategies



Hard-to-House Summit

- County funding through Western Highlands helped us bring in experts from around the state and country last November to look at the needs of the hardest to house.
- Estimated number: 25-30 individuals
- Frequent users of jail and emergency room; most have uncontrolled mental health and substance abuse issues, many have failed in our current programs.
- Subcommittee is looking into new/different housing options for this group.

Thank You!

- For your authorization of the Advisory Committee and appointment of members.
- For financial support of the case managers who support formerly homeless people placed in permanent housing.
- For support of the Hard-to-House Summit and invaluable contribution of County staff time to the Initiative.