

# Intergovernmental and Interagency Task Force on Homelessness in Gaston County

January 11, 2022



**GASTON COUNTY**  
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# February 2021 Resolution Establishing the Task Force

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**To address the concerns about homelessness in the County and produce a written report to include:**

- An assessment of homelessness in Gaston County; and,
- A compilation of efforts, initiatives and services addressing homelessness in Gaston County at the current time, including quantitative and/or qualitative descriptions of their progress; and,
- A summary of best practices from other communities and organizations, including successful strategies and tactics for addressing homelessness in Gaston County; and,
- Recommendations for action steps (or reinforcement of action steps already laid out through current efforts) to reduce homelessness in Gaston County, including actual or potential responsible parties and milestones.



# Task Force Members

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- Tracy Philbeck (County Commissioner/Task Force Chair)
- Dwayne Burks (The Gateway Gaston)
- Debbie Clary (former member NC House of Representatives)
- Robin Conner (Gaston Community Action)
- Michael Coone (Gaston County/Dept. of Social Services)
- Rev. Dr. Rodney Freeman (Mt. Zion Restoration Church)
- Kathy Gauger (Catherine's House)
- Rev. Thomas Gillespie (Lowell City Council)
- James Inman (Bessemer City Manager)
- Heath Jenkins (Stanley Town Manager)
- Robert Kellogg (Gastonia City Council)
- Brittain Kenney (County Health Department)
- Derrick Mackey (Cherryville Planning Director)
- Suzanne Mauney-Smith (County Police)
- Rev. Tim McCarn (CORE Church)
- John Mills (Salvation Army)
- Tina Peterson (Gaston County Schools)
- David Pugh (Cramerton Town Manager)
- Sheila Purello (Catherine's House)
- Brian Reagan (Mt. Holly Police Department)
- Linda Slade/Rita Davis (United Way)
- Maria Stroupe (Dallas Town Manager)
- Steffi Travis (Continuum of Care )
- Reid Washam (McAdenville Town Council)
- Tasha White (Hope Youth Network)
- Teena Willis (Partners)

# Task Force Process

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- Met for Eight Months (May –December 2021)
- Developed Outcomes and Deliverables for Each Meeting
- Invited Guest Speakers on the Homelessness Subject Matter
- Conducted a Poverty Simulation
- Developed Homelessness Findings for Report
- Based on the Findings, Developed Recommendations for Report
- Made Recommendation to Gaston County Board of Commission to Accept Written Report and Approve Actions to Address Immediate Needs



# Select Findings: Service Areas

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**HOUSING** (Address housing affordability and build more affordable housing)



**PERSONAL NEEDS** (Assist and expand existing initiatives and services, assist non-profits and faith community with transportation, hygiene, internet, food, and other personal needs, especially with emergency services for the unhoused)



**EDUCATION, TRAINING, and EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE** (Build skill development and education)



**HEALTHCARE** (Address the physical, mental, behavioral, and addiction of the unhoused )



**COORDINATION** (Improve/enhance coordination of homeless services with the homeless/unhoused)



**DATA COLLECTION AND EVALUATION** (Continue to collect and refine available data to support homelessness assistance efforts)

A person is sitting on a black plastic crate on a wet sidewalk. They are wearing a dark jacket and pants. In front of them is a small metal cup on the ground. They are holding a long, thin stick or piece of wood. The background shows a building with large glass windows and a brick base. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting an overcast day or early morning. The overall tone is somber and reflective of the theme of homelessness.

## Actions to Address Immediate Needs

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- Provide short-term emergency housing assistance for Gaston County residents facing housing insecurity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Task the County Manager to establish a County-wide Homelessness Prevention Committee
- Pursue long-term public-private partnerships to fund affordable housing development



# Requested Board of Commission Actions

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- Accept the Task Force Written Report
- Task the County Manager to establish a County-wide Homelessness Prevention Committee.
- Pursue long-term public-private partnerships to fund affordable housing development.
- Provide short-term emergency housing assistance for Gaston County residents facing housing insecurity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Questions?



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