

UNDERSTANDING HOMELESSNESS IN CHARLOTTESVILLE

Homelessness is the most visible and damaging manifestation of the affordable housing crisis in the Charlottesville area. Solutions to homelessness exist. However both common misunderstandings of the causes of homelessness and dehumanizing attitudes towards our unhoused neighbors combine to weaken our collective political will to implement effective solutions.

This document is intended to be a resource for those interested in making homelessness in the Charlottesville area rare, brief, and non-recurring. It covers the current state of local homelessness, background on how we got here, and best practices and policies gathered from advocates and service providers. It also highlights local organizations involved in this work.

Livable Cville believes housing is a human right. The community members most harmed by homelessness are the people experiencing homelessness. Their wellbeing should be the highest priority in addressing this issue. Homelessness is fundamentally a housing problem that requires a range of housing interventions - from shelters to supportive housing to more market and subsidized housing - in addition to [wrap-around services](#).

We hope you find this document helpful; if you would like to stay informed on this issue, please [sign up for our newsletter](#), which provides information on this and many other important issues. You can also email livablecville@gmail.com if you have any questions or feedback.

The Current State of Homelessness in the Charlottesville Area

[“I’m going to die out here’: Homelessness is on the rise in Charlottesville,”](#) Haley Sandlow, Daily Progress, 8/29/2023

[“Homelessness in Charlottesville: From stigmas to solutions,”](#) Livable Cville webinar featuring Laura DeLapp from The Haven and Anthony Haro from Blue Ridge Area Coalition for the Homeless, 12/15/2022

[“The last day at Charlottesville’s Market Street Park encampment,”](#) Meghin Moore, VPM, 10/25/2023

[“Housing First and Homelessness in Charlottesville,”](#) Presentation slides, Anna Mendez, former executive director at The Haven, November 2023

[“The homeless population in Charlottesville has grown, but its shelter space has shrunk,”](#) Jason Armesto, Daily Progress, 11/16/2023

[“Where to warm up,”](#) Catie Ratliff, Cville Weekly, 12/7/2023

[“Council approves Charlottesville’s purchase of CRHA property on Avon Street,”](#) Sean Tubbs, Information Charlottesville, 2/11/2024

[“A seasonal shelter in Charlottesville is serving more people than ever – which presents challenges now that it’s closed,”](#) Erin O’Hare, Charlottesville Tomorrow, 4/24/2024

[“Local agencies shock Charlottesville City Council members with latest data on the number of folks experiencing homelessness,”](#) Erin O’Hare, Charlottesville Tomorrow, 6/21/2024

[“‘People are afraid’: Charlottesville business owners call on city to round up homeless. Many in city horrified and disturbed by ‘inhumane’ proposal,”](#) Emily Hemphill, Daily Progress, 8/11/2024

[“Crews set to break ground on project aimed at halving Charlottesville’s homeless population,”](#) Emily Hemphill, Daily Progress, 10/10/2024

[“SupportWorks breaks ground on Vista 29,”](#) Kate McCarthy, SupportWorks Housing, 11/14/2024

[“A year after Charlottesville City Manager’s ‘homeless intervention strategy,’ a bold plan to assist area’s growing unhoused population unfolds,”](#) Erin O’Hare, Charlottesville Tomorrow, 11/20/2024

Charlottesville-specific Background on Homelessness

[“Coming to terms with the city’s homeless problem,”](#) Jayson Whitehead, Cville Weekly, 7/15/2008

[“Some Mall businesses are irked by panhandling. Is the new Downtown shelter to blame?”](#) Cville Weekly, 7/20/2010

[“HUD funding holdup continues to keep nine out of Crossings,”](#) Jayson Whitehead, Cville Weekly, 6/12/2012

[“City pulls benches in effort to stop Mall loitering,”](#) Laura Ingles, Cville Weekly, 7/3/2012

[“Panhandling payout: City to settle suit over anti-begging ordinance,”](#) Graelyn Brashear, Cville Weekly, 5/14/2014

[“Off the streets: Spring has sprung for homeless housing in the city,”](#) Jordy Yager, Cville Weekly, 3/18/2015

[“What’s Behind the Uptick in Hostile Architecture?,”](#) Elizabeth Wallace, Architectural Digest, 3/21/2018

[“Determined to Stay,”](#) Jordy Yager, Charlottesville Tomorrow, 5/28/2020

[“Crossings II postponed for at least a year, \\$670k returned to the city,”](#) Nolan Stout, Daily Progress, 2/1/2020

[“Unsettled: The Haven, PACEM face challenges housing guests during the pandemic,”](#) Brielle Entzminger Cville Weekly, 8/12/2020

[“Homelessness in Charlottesville is a Housing Problem,”](#) Livable Cville webinar featuring Dr. Gregg Colburn from University of Washington and Anna Mendez, former executive director at The Haven, 3/2/2023

[City of Charlottesville Affordable Housing Plan,](#) approved by City Council in March 2021

Best Practices and Stories From Outside Charlottesville

["Myths and Facts About Homelessness,"](#) Coalition for the Homeless

["State of Homelessness: 2024 Edition,"](#) National Alliance to End Homelessness

["Chapter 3: Housing First,"](#) 99% Invisible Podcast, 12/8/2020

["Homelessness Is a Housing Problem,"](#) Gregg Colburn, Sightline, 3/16/2022

[Research on Various Topics Related to Homelessness,](#) National Coalition for the Homeless

["Low-Barrier Shelter: Policies into Practice,"](#) Homeless and Housing Resource Center, March 2024

[Emergency Shelter Learning Series,](#) National Alliance to End Homelessness

["Rapid Rehousing Works,"](#) National Alliance to End Homelessness

["The Invisible Man,"](#) Patrick Fealey, Esquire, 11/14/2024

["Types of Housing Support for the Homeless,"](#) United to End Homelessness

["Homelessness And Health: Factors, Evidence, Innovations That Work, And Policy Recommendations,"](#) Garcia, Doran, and Kushel, Health Affairs, February 2024

["Violence Against People Who Are Homeless: The Hidden Epidemic,"](#) Margot Kushel, Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative

["US Homelessness Up 18% As Affordable Housing Remains Out of Reach for Many People,"](#) Michael Casey, Associated Press, 12/27/2024

Local Homelessness and Related Services Organizations

1. [The Haven](#)
2. [PACEM](#)
3. [Salvation Army](#)
4. [Blue Ridge Area Coalition for the Homeless](#)
5. [Shelter for Help in Emergency](#)
6. [Support Works Housing](#) (formerly Virginia Supportive Housing)
7. [MACAA](#)
8. [Home to Hope](#)
9. [Region Ten](#)
10. [STREET SHEET](#) - Resources in Charlottesville/Albemarle (alternative versions, including in other languages [here](#))