

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date: May 19, 2025

Action Required: This report is to provide the City Council and the public with an update on the state of the unhoused and those facing housing insecurity, which may likely lead to homelessness in our community, from the local community partners who focus on homelessness for single adults and families.

Presenter: Shayla Washington, Owen Brennen, Anna Mendez, Cameron Moore, Cindy Chambers

Staff Contacts: Ashley Marshall, Deputy City Manager

Title: **Homelessness in Focus: A Community Briefing**

## **Background**

Homelessness remains a complex and pressing challenge in the City of Charlottesville, impacting individuals, families, and the broader community. While local partners have made significant strides in service coordination and outreach, housing affordability, economic instability, and gaps in supportive services continue to drive housing insecurity. The City remains committed to advancing equitable solutions through collaboration with nonprofit providers, regional partners, and those with lived experience. This briefing workshop offers an opportunity to understand current conditions better, highlight ongoing efforts, and inform future strategies to address homelessness with compassion and accountability.

## **Discussion**

Below, the Council and community will find information on the community partners who will present during this report.

**Blue Ridge Area Coalition for the Homeless (BRACH)** - Presenter: Executive Director Shayla Washington - Website: <https://blueridgehomeless.org/>

- The Blue Ridge Area Coalition for the Homeless (BRACH, formerly TJACH) aims to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring in our community. At BRACH, they work to reduce homelessness by initiating solutions and coordinating regional resources and services. BRACH was founded in 1998 and is the lead agency for our community's HUD Continuum of Care (CoC), which is the primary organization within a CoC responsible for coordinating and administering the CoC's activities, especially the annual application process to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

**The Haven** - Presenter: Executive Director Owen Brennen- Website: <https://www.thehaven.org/>

- The Haven endeavors to end homelessness in the greater Charlottesville community. Motivated by radical hospitality, we strive to be the point of entry for people seeking stable housing. We open the doors wide for any and everyone, no matter their circumstances. The Haven is a multi-resource organization located in downtown Charlottesville whose day shelter is open 365 days a year [Hours of operation are Monday-Friday from 7 am to 5 pm (closed from 12-1 pm daily), and Saturday-Sunday from 7 am to 12 pm]. The organization provides access to breakfast, showers, laundry, computers, phones, storage bins, and mail for unsheltered people. They also provide various housing services.

**The Charlottesville Corps of the Salvation Army** - Presenter: Major Mark VanMeter -  
 Website:<https://charlottesville.salvationarmypotomac.org/>

- Currently led by Captains Mark and Jennifer Van Meter, the Charlottesville Corps engages in “boots-on-the-ground” actions as those we help transition from crisis to community. The agency’s goal is for all who enter our program to become part of a supportive community with a network of resources, family, and friends. We are the primary safety net for the greater Charlottesville area. The Salvation Army has 58 emergency shelter beds year-round and partners with PACEM to provide overflow shelter during winter through its “Warm Room” program. The Army also provides meals through their Soup Kitchen, which is open 365 days a year and serves meals several times a day (breakfast and supper Monday-Saturday, breakfast and a midday meal on Sundays, which are open to the public). The Soup Kitchen also houses a food pantry in partnership with the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank’s Food Pantry Program.

**Shelter for Help in Emergency (SHE)** - Presenter: Anna Mendez, Executive Director -  
 Website:<https://www.shelterforhelpinemergency.org/>

- The Shelter for Help in Emergency is committed to providing a safe, supportive, confidential, and respectful environment in which survivors of domestic violence are empowered with the knowledge of personal and community resources as well as the skills needed to make informed decisions for themselves and their families. **If you or someone you know is a victim of domestic/intimate partner violence, please call their 24-hour hotline at (434) 293-8509.**

**Alignment with City Council's Vision and Strategic Plan**

None.

**Community Engagement**

Report for information only.

**Budgetary Impact**

None.

**Recommendation**

**Alternatives**

**Attachments**

None