In 2015, the D.C. Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) released its 5-year strategic plan, Homeward DC, a roadmap for ending homelessness in the District that is built on national best practices. A key benchmark of the plan is to end chronic homelessness by the end of 2017.

The Way Home is a grassroots campaign to end chronic homelessness in DC that is supported by 85 organizations and nearly 4,000 individuals. We support Homeward DC and urge the Mayor to fully fund the plan to end chronic homelessness within the next two fiscal years, meeting at least half of the need for PSH and TAH in FY 17.

The total amount of housing needed to end chronic homelessness for individuals is:
- 1,084 units of Permanent Supportive Housing
- 1,111 units of Targeted Affordable Housing
- 2,522 units of Rapid Re-housing

**Budget Recommendations**

1) **Invest at least $8.6 million in Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for 542 individuals**

Research and experience show that PSH that uses the Housing First approach is one of the BEST ways to end chronic homelessness. In the District, programs like the DHS Permanent Supportive Housing Program help residents who have been homeless for years to achieve and maintain housing stability and to improve their health.

2) **Invest at least $6.75 million for Targeted Affordable Housing (TAH) for 555 individuals**

Targeted Affordable Housing (TAH) is a program that is designed to meet the needs of individuals who are experiencing chronic homelessness, but who either no longer need the services offered by PSH or need longer term assistance than Rapid Re-housing offers.

3) **Invest at least $4.9 million in Rapid Re-housing for 455 individuals**

Rapid Re-housing helps individuals to find housing, pay for housing (through short-term financial and rental assistance), and stay in housing (through support like case management). Homeward DC estimates that approximately 2,600 units of rapid re-housing are needed for individuals. However, the District currently only has funding to serve approximately 455 people. At minimum, we think DC should try to double that number.

**Recommendation for one-time funding**

1) **Invest $250,000 in a flex fund** to cover the costs associated with moving people into housing quickly. This fund could be used to pay for things such as fees for obtaining identification documents, rental application fees, and security deposits.
**Additional recommendations**

1) **Invest $1 million to pilot of 38 outreach beds.**

   *Homeward DC* has identified the need for 38 “outreach beds,” or shelter that is filled through referral only for vulnerable individuals living on the street. The primary purpose is to provide a safe, low barrier, and service enriched setting for clients to build trust and begin the engagement process until a person moves into housing. These beds will make it easier to more quickly move highly vulnerable people into housing who can be hard to locate and consistently engage.

2) **Invest capital funding to redevelop low barrier shelters for individuals and invest in improvements for existing shelters.**

   The low barrier shelters in DC are in a state of disrepair. Due to myriad factors including outdated facilities, pests, and fear of theft and violence, many vulnerable individuals do not enter the shelter system. By improving shelter conditions and building smaller shelters, vulnerable individuals will be more inclined to engage in services designed to reduce the duration of their homelessness.

3) **Invest $100 million in the Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF)**

   HPTF is a key tool for the production and preservation of affordable housing in DC. Current regulation mandates that 5% of units in publicly financed developments are utilized for Permanent Supportive Housing. More high quality affordable housing is needed for individuals in the rapid re-housing program, and for people in need of permanent supportive housing.

   *The Way Home Campaign supports the leadership of the D.C. Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) and looks forward to the proposed budget request for the implementation of Homeward DC in FY17.*

   For more information, please contact Kurt Runge, Director of Advocacy at Miriam’s Kitchen, at kurt@miriamskitchen.org.