

### **Overview of the Continuum of Care Collaborative:**

The Continuum of Care is a group of government agencies, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations that work to prevent and reduce homelessness. MCAG holds monthly meetings to discuss homeless issues, establish goals and measure achievements. Agencies participating in Continuum of Care are eligible for roughly \$600,000 per year in funding from HUD.

### **Past Continuum of Care Grant Projects:**

In 2005 the Merced County Continuum of Care was awarded \$565,953 from HUD to fund a data collection project known as a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and a supportive housing project known as Project Home Start.

The 2006 Continuum of Care Plan and Grant Application requested \$570,338 for an expansion of Project Home Start, which would have provided permanent supportive housing to six additional individuals. Merced was notified in February of 2007 that the project had not been awarded funding.

The 2007 Continuum of Care Plan and Grant Application submitted in June 2007 requested \$81,165 to sustain the HMIS system for another year or, in the alternative, to expand HMIS with additional funding of \$105,000 per a year for three years. HUD anticipates award notification to take place in February 2008.

### **MCAG's Role is to:**

- Compile survey data from providers of homeless services;
- Hold community meetings and workshops, at least 20 over the course of the year;
- Distribute a brochure of current resources in Merced County for services to the homeless;
- Research potential grant opportunities (in addition to HUD) which may address gaps in current homeless service delivery system; and
- Work with local providers of homeless services on potential projects to be included in the Continuum of Care grant applications to HUD.

### **Facts About Homelessness in Merced County:**

- The results of the 2007 Homeless Providers Survey indicate that there are 2,641 homeless persons in Merced County, only less than 8% of who are sheltered.
- It is estimated that 29% of the homeless population in Merced are chronically homeless and nearly two-thirds struggle with physical and/or mental disabilities.
- At this time, four permanent supportive housing beds are available for the estimated 1,284 homeless persons in need of this type of housing in Merced on any given night.
- The unmet housing need for emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing totals 2,311 beds.