

Strategic Plan

Approved July 13, 2011

Overview of Document

This document is a detailed description of Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network's three-year strategic plan. This is GIHN's fourth three-year strategic plan.

Mission Statement

Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network is a community-based ministry providing emergency shelter for homeless families.

Core Values

We believe that every human being has inherent worth and should be treated fairly in all circumstances with respect for their uniqueness and personal dignity.

We believe that people should be given the opportunity to excel.

We believe that a community consists of people who are responsible to one another to ensure the well being of each individual as well as the whole community.

We believe that every child has the right to enjoy the opportunity to thrive in a loving, caring and stable environment.

We believe that homelessness has neither a single cause nor a single solution.

We believe that homelessness like poverty is an all-intrusive affliction that is injurious to the physical, emotional and spiritual self and families.

Internal Assessment

- GIHN has skilled and dedicated staff that are able and motivated to carry out the mission and goals of the organization. Maintaining appropriate staff policies and procedures, regular evaluations and affirmation, and providing avenues to reduce burnout help assure a strong organization.
- The GIHN Day Center is currently adequate for meeting the basic needs of providing a day center for our guests but does not have sufficient space to allow for regular structured day programs now being proposed by the organization.

- Our model of actively engaging individuals and churches as volunteers helping to meet the needs of homeless families in Elkhart County is a unique strength of our program.
- Our program depends largely on volunteers. Continuous training of volunteers is essential. Likewise, our process for screening guest families must be sensitive to the threshold of skills volunteers possess.
- Our financial position continues to be an area requiring consistent work.
- We need to assure GIHN continues to have a strong Board.
- GIHN has no debt – owning both the day center and two vehicles.
- GIHN has been in operation for over 15 years.
- GIHN has an established endowment fund and maintains a plan for continued small donation funding.

External Assessment

- Homelessness for many people is the image of individuals living on the street who are suffering from a mental illness or a chemical dependency. With the absence of these individuals, it is easy to believe that homelessness does not exist in Goshen.
- Homelessness is a problem in our community experienced by many who experience over crowding, inadequate or unsafe living conditions.
- Homelessness is often the result of repeated cycles. The problems grow if the cycles are not broken. A significant portion of homeless and at risk families would benefit from structured education, professional case management and long term mentoring which is mostly unavailable at this time.
- Many jobs in our community pay only modest wages, making it challenging to adequately support a family. This is especially tough for single parent families. A vehicle repair or unexpected medical expense can put a family on the street. Livable wages are a central issue.
- The availability of rent subsidy programs such as Section 8 (both Choice and Project Based Vouchers) and transitional housing is inadequate to meet the need.
- Affordable, low-income housing is not accessible to the families we shelter as the rental cost and qualifying criteria for acceptance into these units exceeds the income and history of our guest families.
- There is cooperation within our community of local service providers. Local agencies do not compete with GIHN in terms of either mission or programs, however, financial support and volunteer time are considered finite resources that must be shared by many organizations.

Core Competencies / Uniqueness

Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network is the only provider of emergency shelter exclusively for homeless families in Elkhart County. The only other established emergency homeless shelter in Elkhart County is Faith Mission which also provides some transitional housing services. In addition to Faith Mission, two other organizations in Elkhart County provide “transitional housing” for families. Of these three, two provide transitional housing for women and children in a group home environment and one provides individual apartments.

Faith Mission provides shelter primarily for homeless individuals but does have twelve rooms dedicated for families. Some of the policy differences that distinguish the two programs include Faith Missions limiting their services to married couples only, their mandate for residents to participate in church services and their willingness to admit childless couples. GIHN on the other hand admits unmarried couples and extended family members as part of the family unit but in every instance insists that children, born or unborn, are somehow involved with the “family”.

Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network is also distinguished from Faith Mission by the fact that GIHN does not make any type of religious activity a required part of staying in the shelter program. Additionally, GIHN relies on volunteers for 14 of every 24 hours of shelter for guest support, supervision and feeding.

Long Term Strategies

Position our staff for continued success. Maintain accurate job descriptions and equitable personnel policies, use good hiring practices and work to maintain the best staff.

Strengthen and grow our programs. Maintain our focus, work toward continued improvement, creatively leverage our uniqueness, forge stronger partnerships, and watch for new opportunities.

Call our community to respond. We need each other. We all have needs. We all have something to give. Opportunities for exchange make us all more whole.

Build and maintain a strong Board. The Board defines the governing policies and expected outcomes for the organization. This requires strong leadership, a diverse set of skills, good communication, and firm commitment.

Maintain the best equipment necessary. All organizations need equipment to conduct the activities of the organization. For the activities of any organization to be at their best, the equipment used must be appropriate, well maintained, efficient and cost effective.

Continue to build and maintain the financial resources of the organization. For an organization to provide the best services possible it is imperative that it have the financial

resources available to conduct its ordinary activities. In most instances no-fee new initiatives can be funded by grant monies, however, no-fee programs – even successful programs – must be maintained through donated monies – a responsibility shared jointly by the board and the executive director.

Annual Goals:

Strategy: Position our staff for continued success

Annual Goal:

1) Provide for and fund opportunities for staff enrichment with a focus on empowerment and renewal (Personnel Board and staff).

Actions:

- Identify opportunities for training and renewal (Board and staff).
- Include funding in annual budget for each full time staff person to participate in appropriate trainings or renewal experiences (Finance Committee)
- Plan for follow-up report to the Board a month or two subsequent to training / renewal time. (Personnel Committee)

Strategy: Strengthen and grow our programs.

Annual Goal:

1) Develop a curriculum for life skills education for guest that is appropriate to their strengths and situation. (Program Development Committee and Executive Director)

2) Identify funding needs and resources to implement the above referenced plan successfully. (Program Development Committee and Executive Director)

3) Implement the above noted plan (Program Development Committee and Executive Director).

4) Develop a tool and use it to evaluate the benefits of enhanced program. (Program Development Committee and Executive Director)

Strategy: Call our community to respond.

Annual Goals:

1) Maintain an active web site including: an event / action calendar which includes major events fundraisers and the hosting schedule. (Communications Committee)

- 2) Publish a newsletter three times per year that includes a variety of content over the course of the calendar year such as success stories, recognitions, needs and opportunities (Communications Committee).
- 3) Provide for additional opportunities for church host/volunteers to be more involved with guest families (Executive Director and Program Committee).
- 4) Increase the awareness and understanding of GIHN in every host congregation (Communications Committee).
- 5) Provide an annual thank you event for GIHN volunteers. (Communications Committee)

Strategy: Build and maintain a strong board.

Annual Goals:

- 1) Maintain a full board and slate of officers (Executive Committee).
- 2) Maintain all committees of the Board by insuring appropriate leadership, maintaining regular meetings and keeping recorded minutes of each meeting. (Board Chair)
- 3) Prepare an annual budget and monitor it regularly (Finance Committee).
- 4) Plan and conduct Board business retreats two times per calendar year (Board Vice Chair and Executive Director).
- 5) Maintain a board approved and affirmed strategic plan at all times (Executive Committee and Executive Director).
- 6) Watch for opportunities in our community for volunteer Board training. Encourage and support Board member participation (Board and Executive Director).

Strategy: Maintain the best equipment necessary.

Annual Goals:

- 1) Contract for technical support for all information technology. (Executive Director)
- 2) Insure that all needed maintenance on vehicles is completed as recommended by the mechanic. (Executive Director)
- 3) Insure that all building maintenance is completed in a timely manner. (Executive Director)

4) Insure that all fire and safety equipment is maintained in appropriate operating condition.
(Site Supervisor)

Strategy: Continue to build and maintain the financial resources of the organization.

Annual Goals:

- 1) Maintain an awareness of grant availability for any programs currently operated or proposed by the board (Executive Director).
- 2) Apply for all appropriate grants (Executive Director).
- 3) Build our donor database through tracking of gifts (Executive Director and Treasurer).
- 4) Prospect for new donors through target solicitation (Board and Executive Director).
- 5) Establish and maintain an annual calendar that includes but is not limited to major fundraising events. (Communications and Fund Raising Committee)
- 6) Develop and maintain a plan for continued funding of the GIHN endowment (Finance Committee).
- 7) Insure that both Board committees responsible for the maintenance and development of financial resources remain active and focused (Board Chair, Finance Committee Chair, Fundraising Committee Chair).