

- Project Homeless Connect: *Pastor Greg Dyson*, Springfield, MA

Springfield, Massachusetts, which recently posted a 39% decrease in chronic homelessness, sees the national innovation of Project Homeless Connect as a highly successful community engagement tool as the City implements its 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. According to Pastor Greg Dyson, who chaired the city's inaugural event in 2007, Springfield is using the "lessons learned" from the first PHC to insure the 2008 PHC has real time results in the lives of homeless people in Springfield. The city will have housing units available on the day of the upcoming PHC, so some participants will literally be given a key to an apartment on that day. A further innovation that Springfield is pursuing involves the identification of individuals whose expertise is in identifying and solving complex problems. The PHC planning committee will deploy business and other volunteers with this background to resolve within 30 minutes the most complex individual problems individuals or families present.