

Chapter 4: Social Determinants of Health

The health of individuals and communities are affected by a variety of combined factors. More common factors such as access and use of healthcare services do not carry as great an impact on our health as our income, education level, relationships with friends and family, and environment. Health can be determined by circumstances and environmental factors beyond our control (WHO, 2008).

Research from the World Health Organization suggests that employed individuals and those who can control their working conditions are healthier. Higher income and social status, as well as social support networks, safe water, communities, and roads also contribute to good health. However, lower levels of education are conducive to more stress which then leads to poorer health. These factors, often called social determinants of health, contribute to poverty, inequality, and the development of poor health outcomes in Rockingham County and worldwide (North Carolina Department of Commerce, 2008).

Infrastructure

The Rockingham County Partnership for Economic and Tourism Development is the county's public-private collaboration that exists to promote and service business, industrial, and tourism growth. The core mission of the partnership is to create jobs. It works to make improvements to local infrastructure to attract business and industry (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007). Key areas of focus include:

- New business recruitment
- Existing industry
- Tourism

The nationwide decline of tobacco and textiles, the county's historic economic cornerstones, has forced the local economy into transition. While textiles still play a major role in the local economy, the partnership has created a more diverse economy that includes commercial printing, distribution centers, and computer-related businesses. The partnership also provides value-added services to existing industries as well as promoting community development projects (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007). Although major industries play a key role in Rockingham County's economy, small businesses are also vital to its health. To support small businesses, Rockingham County provides a small business space and Joblink, a program providing employment services, to individuals (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007).

Industrial Parks

Over the past few years the construction of shell buildings and the development of the industrial parks have led to more growth potential for the county. Public-private partnerships between the county, the Economic Development Partnership, private businesses, towns, cities, and developers have resulted in many new local options for available office and industrial space.

Reidsville Technology, an Industrial Park in Reidsville, is a 300-acre park. There are 17 lots ranging in size from 3 to 40 acres. This \$9.1 million park is an ideal location for businesses and industries. It is located just one mile from U.S. Highway 29 and approximately 35 miles from Piedmont Triad International Airport (PTIA) in Greensboro.

Watlington Industrial Park is also located in Reidsville. This 222-acre park features 8 lots ranging in size from 2 to 70+ acres. It is an excellent location for commercial or industrial businesses and is located just off U.S. Highway 29 (future I-785) and 35 miles from PTIA.

The town of Madison has one business park. Madison Business Park is a 65-acre park with 14 lots ranging from 5 to 25 acres. It features a 44,398 square-foot shell building. The park is located off NC 311 and is approximately 30 miles from PTIA.

In Stoneville, Northstar Business Park spans 18 acres with lot sizes of 5 acres. It features one 64,000 square-foot shell building, and is designed for 3 additional shell buildings of the same size.

In Eden, a study has been completed on an industrial-to-go site that will handle new buildings, and identify a number of viable industrial sites.

Rockingham County continues to be aggressive with infrastructure expansions. With the construction of a new elementary school on U.S. 220 (future I-73), Rockingham County is extending water and sewer lines within a few miles of the Guilford County line. The county's goal is to be prepared for the anticipated growth from the new Federal Express Hub slated to open in 2009 at PTIA.

Transportation

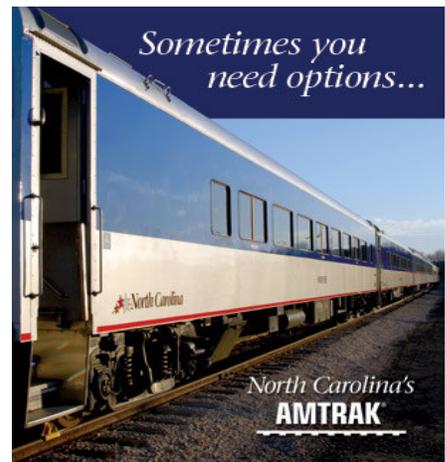
Rockingham County is geographically located along the transportation corridor between Washington, D.C. and Atlanta, Georgia, and is served by existing Interstates 85 and 40, and the proposed I-785 and I-73. The county has valuable transportation resources available to its residents.

The Piedmont Triad International Airport (PTIA), one of the nation's fastest growing airports, is located only 30 miles from the county. It serves as both a foreign trade zone, and a major commercial facility. As of February 2008, PTIA provides options to fly to nearly 86 non-stop destinations per day. A variety of the airlines also provide frequent direct and connecting flights to the nation's top business destinations at competitive fares. PTIA is part of a 4,000-acre campus that employs more than 4,000 people with an economic impact of more than \$1 billion annually (Piedmont Triad International Airport, 2008). PTIA is also the site of the planned Federal Express (FedEx) Mid-Atlantic Hub. The hub will be FedEx's primary east coast sorting distribution center which will move cargo between the northeast and southeast regions of the United States.

Intermodal rail service is also available to Rockingham County residents through CSX Intermodal and Norfolk Southern Railroads, and is located approximately 30 miles north of the county. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NC-DOT) Rail Division sees a need for improving the infrastructure of the passenger rail service. In order for the state to improve existing tracks, install new signals, and build stretches of new track NCDOT is investing state,

federal and surface transportation funds. Norfolk Southern Railway will actually provide the final plans and complete the construction for the project (NC-DOT, 2008).

Figure 7.
Transportation Corridor Map



Employment

With access to the railroad systems and rivers, Rockingham County developed into a large industrial base in the early 1900's and prospered well until the last decade. Over the course of the last four years Rockingham County has suffered the loss of additional agriculture and manufacturing based jobs. However, in recent years, Rockingham County has seen improvements in the challenges faced around health and the vitality of the local economy. There were a reported 202 announced layoffs in 2007, but with several 2007 project announcements, jobs and large investments are being brought back to the county. Rockingham County is on the way to fulfilling its economic health once again (Rockingham County Department of Economic and Tourism Development, 2006).

Table 10.

Rockingham County Job Announcements, 2007

| Announced Project | Investment | Jobs | Product MFG. |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| General Tobacco | \$55,000,000 | 199 | Tobacco Products |
| JLA Fabrics | \$500,000 | 40 | Mfg. Textile Fabric |
| Glass Dynamics | \$4,959,611 | 100 | Mfg. Glass Products |
| Tiger Tek | \$830,000 | 40 | Industrial Maintenance Repair |
| Loparex | \$2,285,572 | 33 | Release Paper |
| Wek South | \$6,220,000 | 40 | Blow Molded Plastics |
| Weil-McLain | \$1,700,000 | 10 | Mfg. Boilers |
| Total | \$71,495,183 | 462 | |

Source: Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007

Table 11.

Top Employers in Rockingham County

| Top 10 Employers | # Employees |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Rockingham County Schools | 2,043 |
| Unifi, Inc. | 895 |
| Wal-Mart Associated, Inc. | 860 |
| Morehead Memorial Hospital | 840 |
| Rockingham County | 837 |
| Hanesbrands, Inc. | 700 |
| Miller Brewing Co. | 639 |
| Mohawk Industries | 595 |
| Frontier Spinning Mills | 567 |
| Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital | 515 |

Source: Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007

- Due to the job market increase, unemployment rate has been on a downward trend
- The annual unemployment rate has decreased from 7.7 percent in 2004 to 6.0 percent in 2007

According to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the total employment growth rate of Rockingham County has increased from -0.3 percent in 2004 to 1.3 percent in 2006 and in 2007 it decreased -1.9 percent. Wages in the county continue to lag behind state averages in all categories, however for both the state and the county, wages are on the rise.

Table 12.

Rockingham County Employment and Wages Compared to NC, by Sector, 2nd Quarter
June 2007

| Industry | Rockingham County | | | North Carolina | | |
|--|-------------------|---------|---------------------|----------------|---------|---------------------|
| | Employees | % Total | Average Weekly Wage | Employees | % Total | Average Weekly Wage |
| Total All Industries | 29,615 | 100 | \$602 | 4,086,630 | 100 | \$718 |
| Total Local Government | 3,392 | 11.5 | \$632 | 421,763 | 10.3 | \$682 |
| Total Private Industry | 25,428 | 85.9 | \$594 | 3,426,095 | 83.8 | \$711 |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting | 106 | 0.4 | \$449 | 31,611 | 0.8 | \$517 |
| Mining | * | * | * | 4,042 | 0.09 | \$1,176 |
| Utilities | 199 | 0.7 | \$1,074 | 15,315 | 0.4 | \$1,334 |
| Construction | 1,931 | 6.5 | \$623 | 258,954 | 6.3 | \$729 |
| Manufacturing | 7,780 | 26.3 | \$845 | 540,037 | 13.2 | \$876 |
| Wholesale Trade | 1,126 | 3.8 | \$624 | 183,889 | 4.5 | \$1,020 |
| Retail Trade | 3,682 | 12.4 | \$395 | 469,810 | 11.5 | \$467 |
| Transportation & Warehousing | 807 | 2.7 | \$724 | 139,922 | 3.4 | \$773 |
| Information | 193 | 0.7 | \$741 | 74,686 | 1.8 | \$1,015 |
| Finance and Insurance | 519 | 1.8 | \$673 | 154,005 | 3.8 | \$1,184 |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | 199 | 0.7 | \$370 | 56,237 | 1.4 | \$673 |
| Professional and Technical Services | 456 | 1.5 | \$517 | 184,137 | 4.5 | \$1,081 |
| Management of Companies and Enterprises | * | * | * | 70,164 | 1.7 | \$1,374 |
| Administrative and Waste Services | 1,492 | 5.0 | \$367 | 250,977 | 6.1 | \$506 |
| Educational Services | 2,374 | 8.0 | \$631 | 344,162 | 8.4 | \$695 |
| Healthcare and Social Assistance | 3,578 | 12.0 | \$611 | 534,500 | 13.0 | \$724 |
| Arts, Entertainment and Recreation | 331 | 1.1 | \$262 | 64,790 | 1.6 | \$547 |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 2,365 | 7.9 | \$207 | 352,125 | 8.6 | \$260 |
| Other Services Excluding Public Administration | 621 | 2.0 | \$391 | 107,715 | 2.6 | \$478 |
| Public Administration | 1,700 | 5.7 | \$624 | 231,303 | 5.7 | \$765 |
| Unclassified | 114 | 0.4 | \$459 | 18,249 | 0.4 | \$651 |

Source: ESC, 2008^b

Tourism Development

Tourism plays a vital role in the economic health and development of Rockingham County. There has been a great economic impact in Rockingham County due to the domestic tourism industry. There are a variety of activities to engage in from canoeing on the Dan River to a getaway retreat at the Autumn Creek Vineyards. These fun indoor and outdoor activities contribute to the 2006 tourism economic impact of \$60.04 million according to the study prepared for the North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film, and Sports Development by the Travel Industry Association of America. This was an 11.27 percent change from 2005. Rockingham County ranked 49 of North Carolina's 100 counties in travel impact for 2006. The tourism industry directly employs more than 600 people in Rockingham County.

Rivers & Lakes

- The Dan River: Scenic Family Fun
- The Mayo River: Rushing Rapids and Smooth Currents
- The Smith River
- The Haw River
- Lake Reidsville
- Belews Lake

Golf Courses

- Stoneville-3
- Eden-2
- Reidsville-4
- Summerfield-1

State Parks

- Haw River State Park
- Mayo River State Park

Heritage

- Civil War Trails
- Karastan Rug Mills
- Chiqua-Penn Plantation

Other Tourism Activities

- Horse Park of the South-*Coming Soon!*
- Rolling Hills Cycle Park
- Autumn Creek Vineyards
- Festivals and Events

Source: Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007

Rivers

The Dan River stretches 38 miles through Rockingham County with calm waters that allow for paddlers of all skill levels. Spending the day on the Dan River has been known for its relaxing pace, beautiful scenery, and historical significance. You may see well-preserved 19th century towns and plantation manors, fossils more than 200 million years old or Native American relics 300 to 10,000 years old. Rockingham County is the only place in the nation with a commercial bateau which played a major role in the river transportation during the 19th century (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007).

The Mayo River flows through a gorge with rock bluffs and two natural waterfalls. It stretches 16 miles and can be divided into two sections, one for beginners and one for the experienced. You may see Native American fish traps or early dams used to generate power in Mayodan and the former town of Avalon (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007).

Portions of both the Smith and Haw Rivers flow through Rockingham County. The Smith River begins in Virginia and runs through Eden until it converges with the Dan River. The Haw River flows from Guilford County into Rockingham County just south of Reidsville. Currently, there are no public access points on either the Smith or Haw River.

State Parks

Both the Mayo and Haw River State Parks were established in 2002 and will open soon. The Mayo River State Park, located in Madison and Mayodan is the county's first state park. It has more than 1,900 acres and has unique historic structures. The first superintendent of the Mayo River State Park was named in July, 2006. The Haw River State Park will be in both Rockingham and Guilford counties and will feature a retreat and conference center for youth and adults (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007).

Vineyard and Wine Tasting

Among many other tourism activities in the county is the new Autumn Creek Vineyards located seven miles off U.S. 220 in Mayodan. Autumn Creek Vineyards has more than 8-acres of land and grows red and white grape varieties. The land was a hay, cattle, and tobacco farm more than 100 years ago. The Vineyard has two cabins. "Cabins in the Vines" overlooking the vineyard and featuring one bedroom and a loft offers accommodations for romantic getaways, relaxation and special events. Located on the other side of the vineyard, the "Cabernet Cabin" has two bedrooms and can accommodate larger groups. Autumn Creek Vineyards is planning to construct an eight-room inn and special events center to host conferences, special events, and retreats, in addition to a third getaway cabin on the property. The Autumn Creek's Tasting Room is open to the public Thursdays through Sundays (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007).

Heritage

Rockingham County's heritage revolves around water, its greatest natural resource. Much history can be found around riverbanks where the county's early inhabitants left their mark. Rockingham County is the only place in North Carolina where you can see remainders of bateau systems (boats used in the 19th century for commercial river transportation) (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007).

The Karastan Rug Mill which manufactures oriental rugs was introduced in 1928, and was known for the "wonder rug." You can tour the mill for free and see the computerized setting of spooled yarn for the beautiful rug patterns, dye, and finishing operation (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007).

Chinqua-Penn Plantation, an American treasure that reflects the lifestyle of travel, entertainment, and art collecting is near Reidsville. It is a 27-room countryside mansion filled with furniture from more than 30 countries, and surrounded by a 22-acre garden and historic landscape. Chinqua-Penn can be a destination for weddings, conferences, banquets, and retreats. The growing of grapes and making of wine plays a large role in the history of Chinqua-Penn. In the Wine Tasting Room, located adjacent to the gift shop in the main entrance area, you can purchase and taste wine at your leisure (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007).

Rockingham County also has seven sites on the North Carolina Civil War Trails in Eden, Madison, Reidsville, and Wentworth (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007).

Golf

Rockingham County's moderate climate and terrain makes golf a year-round sport. The courses offer varying degrees of difficulty to golfers of all levels to enjoy. There are six 18-hole golf courses and four 9-hole courses, with a new championship quality disc golf course located at Lake Reidsville for the residents' enjoyment (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007).

Parks

Rockingham County's 17 public parks offer a variety of activities for the citizens of the county from playgrounds to motor cross racing. The county is in the fundraising phase for the development of a 400-stall equestrian center, "Horse Park of the South," that will be the site for regional equestrian competitions. Secured funding sources from North Carolina and Rockingham County have totaled \$3,235,000. The facility will have a large indoor arena, covered ring, four outdoor rings, an administration building, vendor facilities, and ample camping/parking spots. In Reidsville, 155 acres off U.S Highway 29 have been secured for this project that is tentatively set for opening in mid to late 2010. This equestrian center will have a major impact on tourism and the economy of Rockingham County (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007).

Riverside Raceway Park located in the rolling hills of Mayodan features a 1/5-mile banked clay track. The park has been teaching kart racing to citizens of all ages since 1986. They have racing events Friday and Saturday nights during racing season. This has become a great place for kids to learn the sport of racing, and for amateurs of all ages to enjoy fast-track fun (Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, 2007).

Festivals and Events

Rockingham County hosts annual events and festivals that are very successful, and brings local and non-local residents to the county. The variety of events held range from the annual music festivals to the Dan River Boat Race and generate revenue for the county. A complete list of events and activities in the county can be found at www.ncnorthstar.com.

- In May, the annual Ribfest is held in Eden, at Freedom Park. The event features ribs, music, and children's entertainment for the entire family.
- Western Rockingham County is the home of the Dan River Boat Race held in August. Individuals and families gather in Madison at the Lindsey Bridge Boat access to take part in a 2.5 mile race down the Dan River.
- In the town of Stoneville, the Rotary sponsors the annual Fall Festival in September. Citizens can enjoy musical entertainment, crafts, food, games, and activities.
- The town of Mayodan has the annual Homecoming in September. This event includes food, crafts, games, activities, and musical entertainment for the family to enjoy.
- In September, the annual Riverfest is held in Eden, where citizens can enjoy two stages of musical entertainment, historic exhibits, Kid's Zone, and crafters.
- Also in September is the annual Rockingham County Folk Festival which is held at Rockingham Community College. This event includes food, crafts, games, activities, and musical entertainment for the family to enjoy.
- Madison has the annual Heritage Festival which is held the 1st Saturday in October. Citizens can enjoy food, crafts, games, activities, and musical entertainment.
- The Reidsville Downtown & Antique Alley Street Festival is held on the 2nd Saturday in October, and features children's activities, antique dealers, pottery, craft, musical entertainment, food vendors, and a car show.

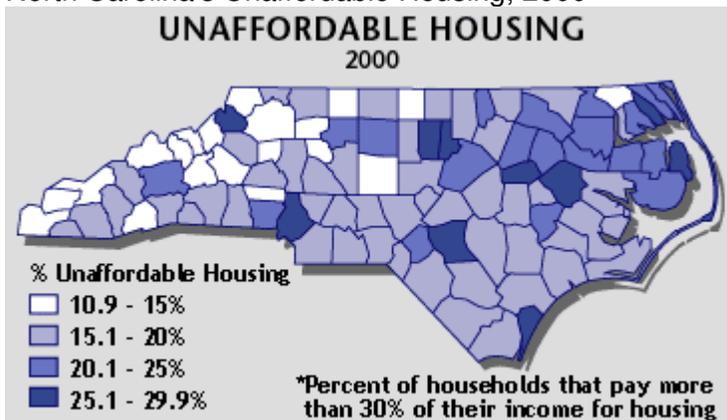
Housing

The majority of housing data available dates back to the 2000 U.S. Census. Fortunately, supplemental housing data was found for 2006. According to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, in 2006 Rockingham County's home-ownership rate was an estimated 68.4 percent compared to 73.7 percent in 2000. The U.S. Census Bureau in 2000 states 18.2 percent of unaffordable housing was located in Rockingham County. There are many contributing factors for unaffordable housing. Home ownership remains more difficult today for young families and low-income households.

As reported in the American Community Survey of the 25,378 owner-occupied housing units, all homes are equipped with complete plumbing facilities and kitchen facilities. Of the 11,711 renter-occupied housing units, 2.7 percent of the homes do not have complete plumbing facilities and 3.4 percent do not have complete kitchen facilities. In both owner-occupied and renter-occupied units, electricity is used to heat the homes. The economy plays a major role in the physical housing characteristics of occupied housing units. Unfortunately, those homes that are rented are older structures and are more likely to go without specific necessities. Low-income households have a higher rate of spending; 50 percent or more of their income is spent on rental housing or living in severely substandard housing.

Having consistent output of affordable housing units would alleviate much of the housing problem in the county. Unaffordable housing creates a major problem when low-income neighborhoods are demolished and their residents must disperse throughout the county to find affordable housing.

Figure 8.
North Carolina's Unaffordable Housing, 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, n.d^c

The following Table shows the American Community Survey, 2006 and U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 physical housing characteristics and the value of occupied housing units.

Table 13.
Rockingham County Housing Characteristics and Housing Value, 2000 & 2006

| Subject | Owner-occupied housing units | Renter-occupied housing units |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Selected Characteristics, 2006 | | |
| Lacking complete plumbing facilities | 0.0 | 2.7% |
| Lacking complete kitchen facilities | 0.0 | 5.1% |
| No Telephone Service | 1.2% | 10.9% |
| No Vehicle available | 4.5% | 14.6% |
| Specified owner-occupied units | | |
| VALUE, 2000 | | Percent |
| Less than \$50,000 | | 19.6% |
| \$50,000 to \$99,999 | | 48.6% |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999 | | 21.0% |
| \$150,000 to \$199,999 | | 6.8% |
| \$200,000 to \$299,999 | | 3.1% |
| \$300,000 to \$499,999 | | 0.80% |
| \$500,000 to \$999,999 | | 0.0 |
| \$1,000,000 or more | | 0.0 |
| Specified renter-occupied units | | |
| GROSS RENT, 2000 | | |
| Less than \$200 | | 8.3% |
| \$200 to \$299 | | 9.1% |
| \$300 to \$499 | | 41.0% |
| \$500 to \$749 | | 27.4% |
| \$750 to \$999 | | 3.3% |
| \$1,000 to \$1,499 | | 0.4% |
| \$1,500 or more | | 0.2% |
| No cash rent | | 10.30% |

Source: American Community Survey, 2006^a & U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.^c

Homelessness

*“The goal is not to put a Band-Aid on it; its to put an antibiotic on it so it can heal.”
-Robert Broome*

This is how the Coalition Chair from the Rockingham County Coalition to End Homelessness and the Joy A. Shabazz Center for Independent Living feels about the issue of homelessness in the county. There are various groups who are working to end chronic homelessness and reduce all homelessness within Rockingham County through implementation of evidence-based practices in the community.

The 2000 U.S. Census Report listed 451 persons in Rockingham County as homeless. Homeless, as identified by the Census Report, is any individual who cannot claim a permanent residence. This includes those people who are living with friends or family members on an impermanent basis, or are living in a place temporarily until they secure permanent housing. However, the Census Report for 2010 is in the process of updating, therefore agencies in Rockingham County count the number of homeless individuals yearly, called a “Point in Time Count”.

The Point-in-Time Count of 2008 identified 226 homeless people in Rockingham County with 46 of those being children under 18 years-of-age. The Department of Housing and Urban Development requires an annual count of the homeless in each continuum of care area, therefore Rockingham County Coalition to End Homelessness recruited 15 agencies to participate in this one-day count of the homeless who may visit their agency or facility. These individuals are defined as homeless if they are sleeping on the streets, under bridges, or in temporary shelters. On the other hand, the point-in-time count does not identify those persons living with family members who do not have permanent housing. Along with homelessness come issues such as mental illness, substance abuse disorder, and/or domestic violence. When the point-in-time count was conducted, adult people were asked to complete a questionnaire regarding aspects of their lives. Out of those who completed the questionnaire or from records that were previously on file from shelters, 4 individuals identified themselves as seriously mentally ill (diagnosed by a mental health professional), 16 individuals were identified as having a diagnosable substance use disorder, and 8 as victims of domestic violence (Rockingham County Coalition to End Homelessness, 2007).

Upon receiving a \$4,000 continuum-of-care grant in 2007, the coalition will implement a 10-year plan to prevent and end homelessness among families and individuals. They are anticipating a \$10,000 grant that was written to receive technical assistance to write the 10-year plan (Rockingham County Coalition to End Homelessness, 2007).

Over the course of 5 years, the Rockingham County Coalition to End Homelessness had some amazing accomplishments.

- Received HUD Shelter + Care grants that provided a total of 20 housing vouchers for disabled homeless individuals.
- In 2007, vocational and educational training was made available to assist the recipients with job searches.
- Through Mental Health, Council on Aging Public Access Transportation, and Rockingham County Help for Homeless, Inc. transportation services were arranged.

Rockingham County Help for Homeless, Inc., a coalition member and lead agency, provides housing in leased units in the county and also provides transportation and case management for individuals

and/or families who are moving from homelessness. This agency diligently partners with Reidsville Housing Authority, Joy A. Shabazz Center for Independent Living, Department of Social Services, Mental Health, and others to provide financial assistance and supportive services to Shelter and Care grant recipients and others in need. They also have been successful in working to end homelessness in the county (Rockingham County Coalition to End Homelessness, 2007). Some of their accomplishments are:

- Awarded a total of 15 Transitional Housing Units through grant funds.
- Currently purchasing a building for offices and temporary shelter.
- Sponsors the Room-in-the-Inn, a temporary seasonal emergency shelter operated by volunteers from the churches within Rockingham County. Provides transportation with a van that was donated by Rockingham County Commissioners.

The purpose of these groups in Rockingham County is to aid the homeless population as they move toward stable housing and maximum self-sufficiency. Their ten-year plan to end homelessness focuses on two major strategy areas:

- Housing
- Prevention and Supportive Service

As a community, Rockingham County has and is still making big strides to end the plight of homelessness in the county.