



City of Durham & CASA

Joint Media Advisory

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Durham Ends Chronic Homelessness Among Veterans

*News Media Invited to CASA's Denson Apartments for Veterans Ribbon Cutting
September 27*

DURHAM, N.C. – Following a two-year effort led by City of Durham Mayor William V. “Bill” Bell to help disabled veterans who have been homeless for a year or more, Durham has been recognized by the federal government for effectively ending chronic veteran homelessness.

Last month, the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness [notified the City](#) that the Durham community has effectively ended chronic homelessness among disabled veterans. This achievement was made possible through a coordinated effort facilitated by the [Durham Homeless Services Advisory Committee](#), bringing together partners from across public and private sectors, the federal government, and multiple non-profit homeless housing organizations.

In June 2014, the Obama Administration issued the [Mayor's Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness](#) which set an ambitious goal of ending veteran homelessness. Mayor Bell was among hundreds of mayors nationwide who signed the challenge. “Durham has reached a milestone where we have transformed our homeless housing system into one where brave men and women who have served our country will be rapidly rehoused should they ever face homeless,” said Mayor Bell. “I am grateful for the efforts coordinated by members of the Durham Homeless Services Advisory Committee and for the federal resources Durham received to allow us to achieve this milestone.”

Since signing the challenge, Durham has housed 305 formerly homeless veterans through unprecedented collaborative efforts from the Durham VA Medical Center, Durham Housing Authority, City's Community Development Department, and Durham County. The weekly partner meetings that have effectively ended chronic homelessness among veterans in Durham will continue indefinitely in order to sustain the systems change needed to ensure veterans who become homeless in the future are rehoused quickly.

News media are invited to attend the celebration for Durham's milestone achievement as part of the ribbon-cutting ceremony for Phase II of [CASA's Denson Apartments for Veterans](#) on Tuesday, September 27 at 10 a.m. at 1594 Sedgefield St., Durham.

CASA is one of many community partners that helped Durham end chronic veteran homelessness. Phase I of the Denson Apartments for Veterans is already home to 11 veterans who moved into the first phase of construction when it was completed in November 2014. Phase II now includes 12 one-bedroom, one-bath apartments designated for formerly homeless veterans who live with disabilities. "With the construction of this community, CASA is ending homelessness for 23 veterans in Durham," said CASA Chief Executive Officer Debra King. "These men and women were there for us, and now we are there for them. We're very excited to add more affordable options to the Triangle community, and to help improve the lives of the veterans who live here."

As part of this ribbon-cutting ceremony, Mayor Bell will deliver remarks along with CASA CEO Debra King, HUD's North Carolina Field Office Director Curtis L. Davis, Durham VA Medical Center Director DeAnne Seekins, and Durham Housing Authority CEO Anthony Scott. A guided tour of the recently completed Phase II will be part of the program along with the Patriot Guard Riders of North Carolina presenting with a flag line to honor the veterans moving in.

Durham's federal recognition acknowledges that all known veterans experiencing chronic homelessness have either been housed or are on an immediate path to permanent housing, with the exception of those who have been offered housing, but have not yet accepted it. A person is determined to be chronically homeless if the person has a disability and has been continuously staying on the street or in emergency shelter for a total of a year or longer.

The following organizations have been contributors to the achievement of the Durham milestone: Durham Homeless Services Advisory Committee, Durham VA Medical Center, Durham Housing Authority, Durham County Veterans Services Office, City of Durham Community Development Department, Urban Ministries of Durham, Volunteers of America of the Carolinas, USA Veterans Help, Healing with CAARE Inc., Housing for New Hope, Alliance Behavioral Health Care, Families Moving Forward, Triangle Residential Options for Substance Abusers, CASA, Durham Community Land Trustees, North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness, Council to End Homelessness in Durham, North Carolina Department of Military & Veteran Affairs, and the Rapid Results Institute.

For more information about Durham's collaborative efforts to end chronic homelessness for veterans, contact Project Manager [Matthew Schnars](#) with the City's Community Development Department at (919) 560-4570, ext. 22249. For more information about CASA's [Denson Apartments for Veterans](#), contact CASA Housing Developer [Jess Brandes](#) at (919) 307-3429.

About the City of Durham Community Development Department

The [Community Development Department](#) is responsible for coordinating the City's housing resources and various housing assistance programs as well as promoting affordable housing by working with investors and community housing development organizations. The department also administers the City's entitlement programs from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. Guided by the City's [Strategic Plan](#), the department helps to ensure that the City has thriving, livable neighborhoods by enhancing housing quality and affordability for Durham residents.

About CASA

[CASA](#) is a non-profit housing provider whose mission is to develop and manage affordable housing, providing opportunities for successful living. Since 1992, CASA has focused on building and managing affordable housing for extremely low-income families and individuals, in particular veterans and people with disabilities. CASA manages more than 400 affordable apartments and homes in Wake, Durham, and Orange counties.

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