DRAFT Heartland HOUSED: Creating Housing Opportunities for Under-Served persons through Equitable Delivery

A commitment to do things differently

DRAFT Springfield & Sangamon County's 2022-2028 Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness

Leadership







The **City of Springfield**, **Sangamon County**, and the **Heartland Continuum of Care** have partnered with many agencies and members of this community to design a strategy to protect some of the most vulnerable members of our community and end their homelessness. All these partners have committed to work together to create the systems, housing, and resources needed to ensure our community can effectively support individuals and families to recover from homelessness and to improve our community. The strategies and actions proposed will require all of us, and all of us will benefit.





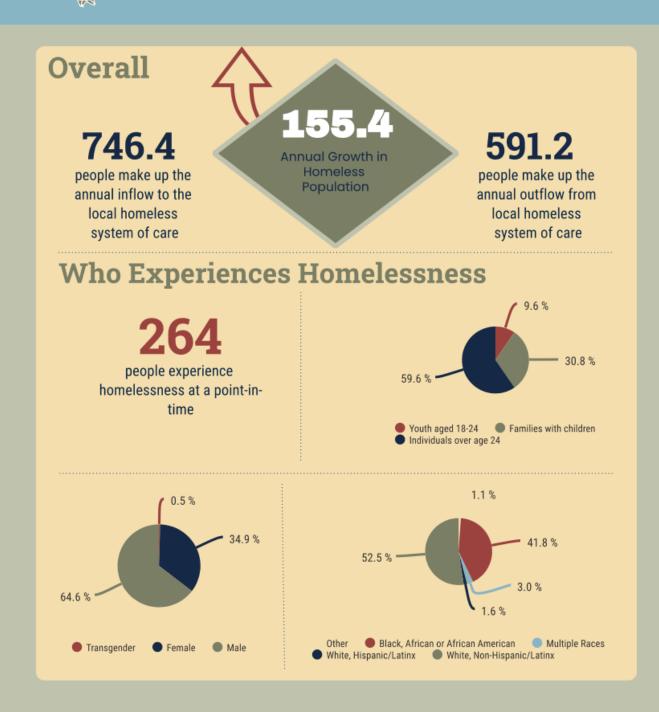




Heartland HOUSED: Springfield & Sangamon County's Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness

Create a collaborative, unified system that provides people experiencing homelessness an equitable, trauma-Vision: informed, and coordinated community system where all can access the housing and support services that each person needs to thrive. Goals: Reduce homelessness 1. to functional zero by 2028 1500 Reach functional zero 2. for chronic homelessness End unsheltered 2024 2025 2026 З. homelessness across the - Do nothing +155 per year - No progress - 5-year model ····· Functional Zero Line community Strategies & Key Action Steps Strategy 1: Work Together to Address Strategy 2: Create Safe, Effective Housing Homelessness Opportunities Create a representative Strategy Board and Create a cross-sector Housing Task Force to increase staffing to guide plan implementation oversee and advocate for housing funding, and Improve the collection and use of data to reduce implement a housing pipeline inequities and improve the system and create a Create more permanent housing opportunities two-way community communications strategy for people experiencing homelessness Respond to citizen concerns about · Build capacity in the community to build, homelessness and siting housing through rehabilitate, and provide housing to homeless information sharing and community and at-risk populations engagement. Ensure full and stable funding for permanent Create a Lived Experience Advisory Board to housing projects ensure the voice of people with lived experience of homelessness is heard and incorporated Reaching Strategy 3: Improve the Effectiveness of Functional Zero Strategy 4: Increase Cross-System the Homeless System for Coordination Homelessnes Build and improve systems for cross-system Identify and link unsheltered Sangamon County collaboration with healthcare, public safety, and residents to crisis and permanent housing and workforce development partners. other needed resources. Improve access to treatment and services Build diversion strategies and resources to system-wide by restructuring access and support returning households to housing program requirements to reduce barriers immediately (including transportation), implement best Create stable, effective, community-wide crisis practices, and ensure welcoming, culturallyhousing that serves all people experiencing specific, trauma-informed services homelessness. · Create a bridge housing pilot program for those discharged from hospitals and treatment facilities

State of Homelessness in Springfield & Sangamon County





State of Homelessness in **Springfield & Sangamon County**



94%



people are chronically homeless annually, meaning an individual has been homeless longer than a year and has a disability



of the unsheltered population is made up of

of the unsheltered population succeeds in 16% population succeeds in accessing permanent housing

of those successful in 80% accessing housing remain permanently housed

Homeless System of Care Effectiveness





State of Homelessness in Springfield & Sangamon County

A Commitment To Do Things Differently We are committing to do things differently, but what does that mean?

It means a **diverse group of leaders** from sectors across the community and people with lived experience of homelessness will be at the table leading an effort to end homelessness in our community.

It means we are committing to equity.

It means we will coordinate across the community to determine priorities for resources, using data to inform decisions.

It means we will leverage our local strengths to **build capacity in our community** to respond to homelessness.

It means that we will share our progress or our lack of progress with the community.

It means we will make better use of the resources we have and find the funding to make the resources we need.

It means we will create programs using evidence-based, best practices that end to homelessness for the households they serve.

It means that five years from now, we will have a system of care that is addressing the needs of our unhoused neighbors.

Where we have been...

Prior Efforts to Address Homelessness That Did Not Come to Fruition

- 2005: A Salvation Army shelter J. David Jones Parkway near Oak Ridge Cemetery
- 2006: A Salvation Army shelter on East Jefferson
- **2013:** A Helping Hands shelter on North Fourth Street
- 2015: A Salvation Army shelter on Ninth Street
- **2019:** Helping Hands' Center for Health and Housing on 11th

This pattern must change.

street

Commitment to Equity

While this Plan includes specific strategies to improve equity, we also want to confirm an overall commitment to equity in all our work.

This Plan's implementation bodies commit to equity and anti-racism throughout the local homeless system of care and in all partnership engagement, seamlessly at all points of practitioner and clinician service delivery, making this a priority for all people who experience homelessness in this community.

We acknowledge the past pains and root cause of inequities in our community, and we commit to doing things differently than we have done before. What we do, how we do it, who's at the table—that needs to change so that we can end homelessness efficiently, effectively, and equitably.

- The Strategy Board and the CoC Board that lead the Plan's implementation will use an anti-racist framework of operating, and all board members will receive training and support to be trauma-informed and anti-racist.
 - We are committed to making room for diverse voices.

LathanHarris, Inc.

In parallel to this Plan's development, **LathanHarris, Inc.** developed an Equity Analysis and a Need Assessment that have informed this plan's content and strategies, and which are available at [LINK].

- We want to be held accountable, internally, and externally.
- We understand that intent is not always the same as impact.
- We acknowledge the power and control dynamics of our community and will engage them from a collective empower approach.
- Within our housing, shelter, and outreach plans, we will integrate plans to deconstruct structural racism, and racial and LGBTQIA+ disparities where they exist.
- We commit to reducing disparities in the experience of people experiencing homelessness, including by focusing resources on populations who have been impacted intersectionally by gaps in multiple systems of care, including criminal legal systems, education, and health care.

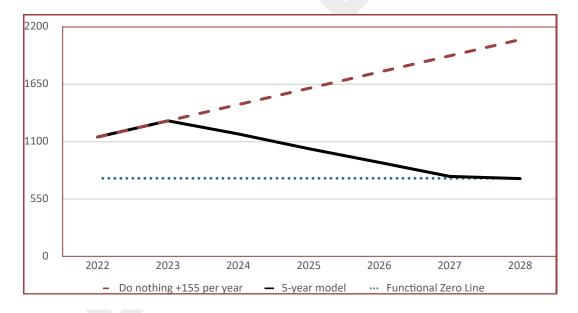
Ending Homelessness

Strategic Plan Vision:

Create a collaborative, unified system that provides people experiencing homelessness an equitable, trauma-informed, and coordinated community system where all can access the housing and support services that each person needs to thrive.

Strategic Plan Goal:

- Reduce homelessness to functional zero in five years, which means that our community will have the housing and service resources to support all people that become homeless to exit homelessness within 30 days. By reaching this goal, our community will also:
 - Reach functional zero for chronic homelessness, and



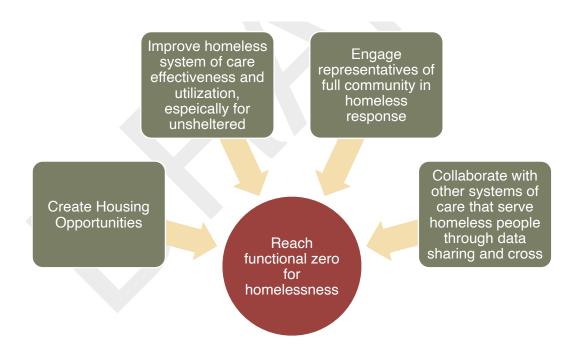
• End unsheltered homelessness.

Driving Strategies:

- Strategy 1: Community works collaboratively to address homelessness.
- Strategy 2: Create safe, effective housing opportunities.
- Strategy 3: Improve the effectiveness of the homeless system.
- Strategy 4: Coordinate with other systems of care to reduce homelessness.

Highest Priority Action Steps:

- 1. Create a **strategy board** that represents the whole Springfield & Sangamon County community to lead this plan's efforts using an inclusive framework and structure for operating
- 2. Improve the **collection and use of data related to homelessnes**s to improve the performance of the system of care and to reduce inequity by identifying unmet needs and improving service delivery.
- 3. Create a strong, sustainable **Lived Experience Advisory Board** to ensure the voice of people with lived experience of homelessness is incorporated throughout the homeless system.
- 4. Create **765 more permanent housing opportunities** for people experiencing homelessness and people at risk of becoming homeless through new construction, rehabilitation, or by accessing existing housing stock.
- 5. Develop practices to **identify and link unsheltered Sangamon County residents to crisis and permanent housing** and other needed resources
- 6. Create **stable**, **effective**, **community-wide crisis housing** that serves all homeless subpopulations and supports movement into housing.



Strategic Plan Strategies

Strategy 1: Community is working together to address homelessness

Goal: Share information, share responsibility, and improve success of ending homelessness in Sangamon County and Springfield.

Metrics:

- Increase funding from federal, state, and private sources by 50% from current levels.
- Design and maintain a two-way community communications strategy about homelessness and plan implementation throughout the plan timeline.

Lead: Heartland HOUSED Strategy Board

Staffing: Executive Director of Heartland HOUSED

Strategies:

1. Create a **strategy board** that represents the whole Springfield & Sangamon County community to lead this plan's efforts using an inclusive framework and structure for operating. The strategy board will give strategic direction to the Heartland Continuum of Care Board.

How will the Heartland HOUSED Strategy Board & Heartland CoC Board

Heartland HOUSED Strategy Board

The new strategy board will be a publicprivate, cross-sector, decision-making and leadership body that will guide policy and oversee strategic plan implementation.

Key Roles of the strategy board will include:

- Decision making and oversight of policy for the homeless system and the strategic plan
- Alignment and creation of resources for the homeless system
- Monitoring and communicating on progress in addressing homeless.

Heartland CoC Board

The Heartland Continuum of Care Board will continue in its current roles, including <u>meeting</u> <u>HUD requirements</u>, and will also be responsible for implementation of the plan's strategies.

Key Roles of the Heartland CoC Board would include:

- Implementation of the strategic plan strategies
- Utilization of funding towards strategic plan goals
- Implementation of HUD mandates

Heartland HOUSED Strategy Board Membership

Membership: The board may have up to 20 members. These members must include:

- 1. Mayor of Springfield
- 2. County Board Chairman
- 3. Key Leader from Continuum of Care
- 4. At least one Person(s) with Lived Experience of Homelessness (within the last 7 years)
- 5. Key leader from Springfield Housing Authority
- 6. Key leader from Springfield Memorial Hospital
- 7. Key leader from HSHS St. John's Hospital

The board must also include key leaders from at least 5 of the 7 entities listed below on the board:

- 8. Capitol Township
- 9. Urban League
- 10. NAACP
- 11. The Springfield Project
- 12. Community Foundation for Land of Lincoln
- 13. United Way
- 14. SIU School of Medicine
- 15. An impacted neighborhood association (designated by Mayor)

Additional at-large members may be invited by the board or through a public application process organized by the board to improve representation including:

- 16. At least one representative of a Faith Community
- 17. At least one DEIB professional

Other at large members may also represent additional homeless housing/shelter/service providers, business/commerce, philanthropy, or other community members. Members may represent more than one role.

At least 1/3 of the board must be people who are Black, Indigenous, or other People of Color (BIPOC). In selecting board members, the board should also consider representatives of groups that are overrepresented in the homeless system of care, which includes people who are LGBTQIA+, who are immigrants, who have experience with the criminal legal system, or who have behavioral health disorders.

2. Using hiring strategies to expand representation, **increase staffing** for homeless system to 4.0 FTE to ensure support for implementation of plan strategies.

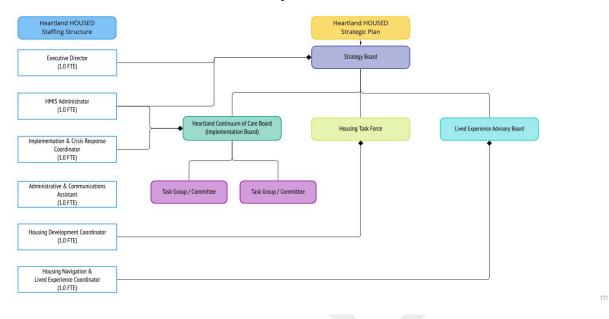
Plan Staffing Structure

Core Staff

- **Executive Director** (1.0 FTE) to staff the Strategy Board and CoC Board, lead public relations and communications, generate funding, and track, guide, and support strategy implementation.
- Implementation & Crisis Response Coordinator (1.0 FTE) to lead crisis response system, trainings, technical assistance, and respond to HUD mandates
- **Housing Development Coordinator** (1.0 FTE) to drive housing pipeline, including providing technical assistance to agencies to develop housing, coordinating community support, and identifying and braiding funding for housing.
- **HMIS Administrator** (1.0 FTE) to administer data system and undertake data analysis.

Additional Staff

- Housing Navigation & Lived Experience Coordinator (1.0 FTE) to support Lived Experience Board and unsheltered housing efforts.
- Administrative & Communications Assistant (1.0 FTE) to support team and public relations efforts.



Implementation Structure

- Expand funding dedicated to housing and services that reduce homelessness in this community.
- 4. Improve the **collection and use of data related to homelessnes**s to improve the performance of the system of care and to reduce inequity by identifying unmet needs and improving service delivery, including by:
 - Creating a web-based community dashboard to share progress on homelessness (broken out by demographics) and strategic planning efforts, including training opportunities.
 - Annually, conducting a gaps analysis and equity-centered evaluation plan to ensure equitable service models system-wide, to focus resources to underserved populations and to support the annual implementation plan.
- 5. Coordinate a two-way community **communications strategy** to both inform and gather information regarding:
 - The challenges and successes of this plan's implementation
 - The results of data analyses
 - How community members can help end homelessness and
 - How to connect people in need to resources.
- 6. Respond to **citizen concerns about homelessness and siting housing** throughout Springfield and Sangamon County through information sharing, community building activities, and community engagement.

- Create strategies to combat Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) community responses.
- Increase engagement, openness, information sharing, safety, awareness, and partnership with **neighborhood associations** and communities, particularly those that have been directly impacted by homelessness.
- Develop a Good Neighbor practice and policy, providing extra support to communities with existing or new homeless housing projects, which may include keeping the neighborhood clean, managing noise, or adding additional security staff or structures, to ensure community harmony and safety.
- 7. Create a strong, sustainable **Lived Experience Advisory Board** to ensure the voice of people with lived experience of homelessness is incorporated throughout the homeless system.

Strategy 2: Create safe, effective housing opportunities

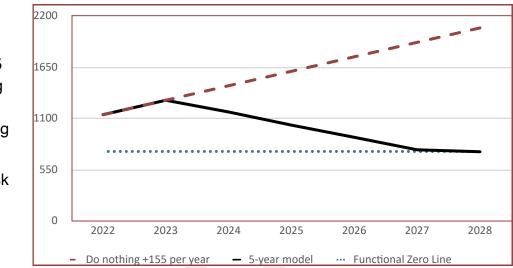
Goal: Increase the number of permanent affordable and supportive housing units available for people

experiencing homelessness.

Metric: Create 765 permanent housing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness

Lead: Housing Task Force

Staffing: Housing Development Coordinator



Current Inflow	747	Ideally, this average number will come down over time – but is not included in the model.				
Current Outflow	591	To reach Functional Zero, this average number needs to match the inflow number and is included in the model				
Unmet Need	155	With no action, this is the projected addition to the population each year. This is the number we are reducing to zero to meet Functional Zero.				
Total Active Homeless in HMIS	1142	This is current number served annually. To reach Functional Zero, it needs to match the new outflow number (747).				
		2022 2023 2024 2025 2026	2027	2028		

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Total Homeless Population if No Changes Are Made (red dashed line)	1142*	1297	1453	1608	1764	1919	2074
Proposed 5-year Model for Total Homeless Population (black solid line)	1142	1297	1171	1030	899	765	744

*1142 is the unduplicated number of people served in homeless programs (not permanent supportive housing) in calendar year 2022.

Additional Units Per Year							
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	
Annual Housing Resources							
Short-Term Rapid Rehousing	25	25	50	45	15	160	
Long-Term Rapid Rehousing	75	75	25	20	10	205	

Units Aggregate and Are Maintained Going Forward						
Permanent Supportive Housing	100	100	100	100	0	400

Notes:

- There will be an initial period of intense investment followed by a softening and sustaining period. For example, the rapid rehousing numbers increase to 100 each year in early years to address backlog, but Functional Zero will be sustainable with only 25 total annual units in addition to the current units available today going forward. In addition, the plan calls for 400 units of new permanent supportive housing in the first four years that will need to be maintained post-plan, but after the plan period, turnover in permanent supportive housing will serve all new people becoming homeless who need permanent supportive housing.
- This model assumes short-term rapid rehousing will serve a household for a year or less, longterm rapid rehousing will serve a household for up to two years, and permanent supportive housing will have a 15% turnover rate.
- The unit allocation was determined based on current coordinated entry assessments and may change as coordinated entry changes practices.
- This model assumes no current units will be defunded.
- By implementing diversion and ramping up prevention, potentially less units will be needed.

Strategies:

- 1. Create a **Housing Task Force** that meets quarterly to align funding and other development processes cross-community. Membership will include housing-focused representatives from the city, county, Springfield Housing Authority, people of lived experience, developers, landlords, and community stakeholders:
 - ✓ To develop and implement a housing pipeline for homeless housing that will meet the goals of this plan
 - ✓ To influence and align existing processes
 - ✓ To oversee and advocate for funding for housing (*e.g.*, CDBG, General Revenue, ARPA, CoC, health care resources, and philanthropy); and
 - Be responsible for needs assessment, strategic planning, and proposals to government funding sources related to housing for persons experiencing homelessness.
- 2. Create **765 more permanent housing opportunities** for people experiencing homelessness and people at risk of becoming homeless through new construction, rehabilitation, or by accessing existing housing stock.
 - a. To increase access to community-based units and use of available government subsidies for housing, develop a **landlord engagement and**

support program to recruit landlords and provide education, specialized supports, and financial supports to landlords.

- b. Create and maintain permanent **housing with wraparound services onsite** for those with serious mental illness, substance use disorders, and other health needs.
- c. Work alongside developers and landlords to identify strategies to create housing opportunities, which may include financial or other incentives or leveraging properties owned by the County and/or the City of Springfield.
- d. Support development of an **affordable housing plan** to support homelessness prevention and reduce returns to homelessness.
- 3. **Build capacity** in the community to build, rehabilitate and provide housing to homeless and at-risk populations.
 - a. Develop the **infrastructure and experience** to respond to housing opportunities and develop new housing, which includes identifying opportunities, funding, resources, and partners and investing in organizational capacity-building with existing providers.
 - b. Identify, recruit, and support **property management companies** to administer affordable and subsidized housing.
- 4. Ensure permanent housing projects are **fully and sustainably funded**, including funding for operations and supportive services that support people experiencing homelessness to maintain housing.
 - a. Capitalize on short-term and long-term funding to create and sustain permanent housing such as County CSBG, ARPA, HOME, and CDBG.
 - b. Build new public-private partnerships to develop permanent housing.
 - c. Build new partnerships with health care to develop permanent housing and services.
 - d. Develop a strategy and mechanism to monitor and apply for available federal, state, and private funding for housing and services (e.g., apply for IDHA funding annually for the next 5 years).

Strategy 3: Improve the effectiveness of the homeless system

Goal: The homeless system of care is effectively and efficiently meeting the needs of people experiencing homelessness and speeding their recovery from homelessness.

Metrics:

- Maintain communitywide housing retention rate of at least 95%.
- Increase rate of people who access shelter or outreach that exit homelessness into permanent housing from approximately 16% to 40%.

Lead: Heartland CoC Board

Staffing: Implementation & Crisis Response Coordinator

Strategies:

Permanent housing retention was 99% in federal fiscal years 2020 and 2021, a strong increase from 82% in 2018.

- 1. Develop practices to **identify and link unsheltered Sangamon County residents to crisis and permanent housing** and other needed resources.
 - a. Create a **By Name List of unsheltered persons** to help coordinate strategy and approach to housing each individual experiencing unsheltered homelessness.
 - a. Revise **Coordinated Entry system prioritization** to prioritize unsheltered persons and integrate equity principles.
 - b. **Coordinate, align & target outreach working and housing navigators** to reduce duplication and ensure housing-focused approach, including creating **community-wide outreach standards** to improve safety, housing outcomes and equity.
- 2. Build **diversion strategies and resources** and link to existing programs to support returning households to housing immediately.
- 3. Create **stable**, **effective**, **community-wide crisis housing** that serves all homeless subpopulations and supports movement into housing.
 - Annually, review data and identify current resources and community need to inform allocation of emergency shelter and transitional housing resources, including strategies to serve underserved populations and to flex units to serve different populations as needs arise.
 - Create and stabilize low-barrier, housing-focused shelter(s) that accepts all people experiencing homelessness and prioritizes placement for people who are unsheltered.

- Expand access to flexible funding for housing-focused needs (e.g., utility arrears, car repair, getting identification, transportation, relocation to friends or family, employment needs) to support diversion and rapid exit from homelessness.
- 4. Develop community wide standards for operating shelter, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing that include training requirements; equitable assessment, service and case conferencing expectations; strategies to expand consideration of representation and culture in hiring and engagement; support for peer-based services; and other guidance and tools to ensure success of agencies of to serve broader populations, to implement best practices, to improve equity, to expand diversity, and to expand access to housing. Standards should include regular review of program level performance and resources to improve outcomes at program level.
- 5. Community wide, strategically focus and prioritize supports for recently housed individuals to ensure housing stability.

Strategy 4: Coordinate with other systems to reduce homelessness

Goal: Create a county-wide, coordinated response to homelessness to minimize duplication of effort and improve system effectiveness to reduce homelessness.

Metrics:

- Reduce the system's length of time people experience homelessness to less than 60 days on average.
- System-wide, reduce rate of returns to homelessness from 28% to 15%.

Lead: Heartland HOUSED Strategy Board

Staffing: Implementation & Crisis Response Coordinator

Strategies:

<u>Cross System</u>

- Create systems to support cross-system data sharing including expanding HMIS usage, data exchange, and easily accessible dashboard to reduce duplication of services across full community, while protecting individual privacy.
- 2. Improve and expand **cross-system service coordination and referrals** to be more transparent and effective and to reduce duplication through strategies that include cross training, appropriate referrals (*e.g.*, leveraging primary care providers or specialty outreach), case conferencing, discharge planning, cross-siting, expanded on-site services, expanded service hours, expand adjacent supports (*i.e.*, legal, child welfare, employment, etc.) and real time data sharing.
- 3. **Improve access to treatment and services system-wide** by restructuring access and program requirements to reduce barriers (including transportation), implement best practices, and ensure welcoming, culturally specific, trauma-informed services.

Health Care

- 4. Build on coordinated entry system to improve navigation and coordination of the homeless and health care systems of care by individuals experiencing homelessness, including those with behavioral health issues, which may include improving equity in assessment, providing additional information to coordinated entry access points about eligibility and availability, adding additional screening tools or processes to intake, improving culturally-specific service provision, or may include more streamlined, integrated referral processes.
- 5. Improve access to **dental health care services** for people experiencing homelessness.

6. Improve discharge planning practices, ensuring access to medicine and appropriate supports for people experiencing homelessness, and specifically, create 10 units bridge housing with integrated case management for those discharged from hospitals and treatment facilities to ensure stability during transition to housing.

Public Safety System

- Engaging all facets of the criminal legal system and community supports, improve discharge planning to ensure people exiting public safety system have housing access and support.
- 8. Continue to provide clinical services for persons experiencing homelessness that coordinate with law enforcement and court services to increase engagement and collaboration with new and existing partners.
- 9. Improve access to **criminal legal system diversion court programs** for people experiencing homelessness, including by expanding programs, destigmatizing programs, and focusing engagement on underserved populations.
- 10. Improve access to **detox beds** and other community resources to avoid criminal legal system involvement.

Workforce Development

- 11. Identify and engage **employers** to hire and train people experiencing homelessness.
- 12. Create resources to address system gaps for **populations that experience economic disparities** in this community, including people who have disabilities, who are Black, or who are seniors.
- 13. Provide **case management support to employers and employees** who are currently or formerly homeless to improve relationships and placement success.
- 14. Leverage **supported employment programs** and resources designed for the specific challenges people experiencing homelessness may experience, which may include, for example, shelter or housing, identification document access, transportation, childcare, tools/uniform stipends, literacy education, and GED programs.
- 15. Create **Individualized Placement Support (IPS)** for employment for individuals with high needs or barriers.

Glossary of Terms

Bridge Housing – Interim housing that provides a temporary, stable experience that can facilitate placement into permanent housing. Often thought of as the missing link between the shelter system and permanent housing.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Federal funding supporting local community development.

Chronic Homelessness – People who have experienced homelessness for at least a year – or repeatedly – while struggling with a disabling condition such as a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, or physical disability.

Continuum of Care (CoC) – A network of stakeholders that coordinates efforts to end homelessness locally and applies for HUD CoC funding through a consolidated application.

Crisis Housing – Housing that provides a safe and adequate nighttime residence for homeless individuals and families during their transition to permanent housing. Shelter and bridge housing are types of crisis housing.

Diversion – A strategy for people seeking shelter by helping them identify immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing.

Functional Zero – The point when a community's homeless system of care can prevent homelessness whenever possible and ensure that when homelessness does occur, it is rare, brief, and one-time

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) – The data tracking system for client-level data on homelessness.

Homelessness – The state of people who are living in a place not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelter, in transitional housing, or exiting an institution where they temporarily resided. People who will lose their housing within 14 days or are fleeing from domestic violence, don't have a place to go, and don't have the resources to find a place to go are also considered homeless. This is the definition used in the strategic plan and to track data.

HUD – The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, primary federal funder of homeless resources.

Permanent Housing – Community-based housing without a designated length of stay where formerly homeless individuals and families live as independently as possible.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) – Programs providing permanent housing with supportive services (*e.g.*, case management, health services, financial services), usually for chronically homeless people.

Point-In-Time Count (PIT) – Annual sheltered and unsheltered count in January of all homeless persons in the area.

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) – Programs provide rental and financial assistance and services to quickly house homeless households in the community.

Trauma-informed Services – Services that recognize that most people have a history of trauma, are attuned to symptoms of trauma, and acknowledge the role that trauma may play in an individual's life.

Unsheltered Homelessness – The state of people who spend most nights in places not meant to be used as a regular sleeping place for human beings, such as the streets, makeshift shelters (tents, boxes) or vehicles.

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benefited from the

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