

5-Year Strategic System Improvement Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in the City of Detroit

Project Update to Partners and Stakeholders October 27, 2023

Purpose of this Message

The City of Detroit Housing and Revitalization Department (HRD), the Homeless Action Network of Detroit (HAND), and the Detroit Continuum of Care (CoC) have come together to establish shared goals, priorities, and actions to prevent and end homelessness in Detroit and strongly recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The City has engaged Barbara Poppe and Associates (BPA) and its team of consultants, including two Community Consultants with lived expertise of homelessness in Detroit, to provide expert guidance and support for the development of a Strategic System Improvement Plan.

This message is intended to keep all partners and stakeholders, including people experiencing homelessness in Detroit, up to date on the status of efforts, particular areas of focus, and next steps. Please see the [July 2023 Update](#) for the update provided regarding earlier elements of this planning project.

BPA Consulting Team

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Planning Activity Spotlight

Sign up for Community Planning Sessions!

After six months of getting community feedback, critical community priorities have emerged. It's now time for the community to develop solutions to address these priorities. You are invited to participate in 2-hour virtual **Community Planning Sessions** to develop and prioritize ideas that can be included in the strategic system improvement plan. Each session will cover a different community priority area related to Improving Rehousing and Housing Supply and Reimagining Shelter. During each session you will receive information about resident experience, key trends, and data points. **You will then actively participate in a dialogue during the session to identify solutions that can be implemented and make meaningful changes in Detroit's system, programs, and housing resources.**

Sessions are open to all community members, including residents, nonprofit providers, city and state departments, etc. – **and you can join as many or as few sessions as you would like.**

Please go to the [Community Planning Sessions RSVP form](#) for more information and to RSVP for as many sessions as you would like to attend.

Interim Findings Report

An [Interim Findings Report](#) prepared by the BPA Consulting Team has just been released and is available for anyone to review. This Report provides an overview of key data regarding Detroit's homelessness response system, summarizes all of the planning efforts to date, and highlights the Consulting Team's key interim findings, identified through:

- Focus groups with people from lived experience of homelessness

- Listening sessions facilitated with people working within the homelessness response system and people with lived experience of the system
- Reviews of recent and current initiatives and of governance structures, performance, and funding.

Based upon the full range of planning and community engagement activities described within the Report, the Consulting Team and the [Strategic Plan Oversight Commission \(SPOC\)](#) guiding the planning efforts have identified the following **eight (8) priorities to be addressed through the next stage of planning activities and through the Strategic System Improvement Plan:**

Critical Improvements and Transformations

1. Critical and profound issues with facilities, programs, and practices, resulting in at times traumatizing experiences for people within shelter programs and people who are unsheltered, must be addressed.
2. Rehousing strategies and services, and the utilization of rental subsidies, must be dramatically improved and reorganized in order to support people to successfully exit from homelessness into permanent housing more quickly, efficiently, and stably.
3. Housing supply must be strengthened and scaled to create an expanded availability of quality housing affordable to people at the lowest income levels, and for people exiting homelessness.

Systemic Operations and Leadership

4. System leadership roles must be clearly and collaboratively defined, embraced, and played in order to: drive progress on systemic issues; to strengthen system and program quality, performance, and accountability; and to effectively implement the Strategic System Improvement Plan.
5. System leadership roles must be guided by a clear and coherent system vision and values that focus both on driving reductions in homelessness and on driving progress toward racial justice and equity for all people.

Partnerships and Collaborative Efforts

6. Ongoing and meaningful community engagement processes and dialogues across partners must be implemented and must purposefully and transparently acknowledge, and strive to address, significant trust, power, and equity issues throughout the homelessness response system; most importantly the partnership between the City of Detroit and HAND must be strengthened and become more effective in supporting the community transformation that will be required.
7. Collaborative partnerships, grounded in best practices and shared accountability, must be strengthened or developed with a broader range of systems, community partners, and organizations to leverage an expanded range of resources and strategies that can help prevent people from becoming homeless, address unsheltered homelessness, and support rehousing activities.
8. The community's array of recent and current plans, recommendations, and initiatives are assets that provide powerful opportunities to implement new approaches to partnerships and leadership and should serve as the basis for strategies and activities, alongside new strategies that will be developed, to address these priorities for improving the system.

Planning Structures and Activities

The [Interim Findings Report](#) also describes the planning structures and activities that are being implemented, culminating in the adoption of the Strategic System Improvement Plan. To identify strategies and activities that will be prioritized within the Strategic System Improvement Plan, the SPOC, with the support of the Consulting Team, are implementing three Work Groups:

Work Group 1: System Modeling

Work Group 2: Implementation Framework

Work Group 3: Building Momentum

In addition, the SPOC and the Consulting Team are implementing three Community Planning Sessions to develop strategies and activities that will drive progress in addressing the following prioritized topics:

Topic 1: Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness

Topic 2: Reimagining Shelter / Interim Housing

Topic 3: Improving Rehousing and Housing Supply

These planning structures and processes will delve more deeply into topics and issues not yet adequately explored through the planning efforts to date, ensuring that strategy decisions reflect the needs, concerns, and guidance of people inequitably impacted by homelessness and/or who may be inequitably served within the homelessness response system, including: people of color; transgender and gender non-conforming people; lesbian, gay, and bisexual people and people who identify as queer or questioning; survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence; survivors of human trafficking; people with disabilities; youth and young adults; women; and others.

For More Information

- Please see the full [Interim Findings Report](#) for much more detailed information.
- If you're interested in participating in any of the Community Planning Sessions, please go to the [Community Planning Sessions RSVP form](#) for more information and to RSVP for as many sessions as you would like to attend.
- Please also see HRD's [Homelessness Strategic Planning Project webpage](#).
- To contact the BPA Consulting Team, please email project manager Kourtney Clark at kourtney@poppeassociates.com.