



Initial Review of Recent and Current Initiatives

Prepared: May to July 2023

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

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The collective for impact

Background and Intent of Review of Recent and Current Initiatives

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 the City of 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 5-Year Strategic System Improvement Plan. (See last page of this document for full list of members of BPA consulting team.)

Matthew Doherty has led this initial review of recent and current initiatives, including the review of key document and materials for each initiative and interviews with key points of contact identified by the HRD and partners. It is important to note that: this initial review of these initiatives does not represent an evaluation or assessment of these initiatives; and the focus of the review has not been on determining the "correctness" of decisions or choices made in their design and implementation.



Rather, the focus of this initial review has been on: establishing a baseline understanding of recent and current initiatives; understanding how the community identifies efforts and initiatives to be prioritized; exploring the perceived impacts and benefits of each initiative, and what has helped to support success and impact; identifying expected impacts and benefits that have not been realized yet and what has helped to limit their success and impact; and considering the implications for potential priorities to be addressed within the Strategic System Improvement Plan.

Recent and Current Initiatives Included within Initial Review

The following eleven recent and current initiatives have been included within this initial review (click on initiative name to jump to summary):

- [Coordinated Access Model \(CAM\) Transition](#) (page 4)
- [Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program](#) (page 5)
- [Built for Zero](#) (page 6)
- [Detroit's Housing Justice Roadmap](#) (page 7)
- [C4 Racial Equity Initiative](#) (page 8)
- [2020 Gaps Analysis](#) (page 9)
- [City/CoC PSH Standards and Capacity Building](#) (page 10)
- [Community Standards for Shelter](#) (page 11)
- [Sheltered Housing Placements](#) (page 12)
- [Mental Health Co-Response Partnerships](#) (page 13)
- [Landlord Engagement](#) (page 14)

Content of this Summary Report

This summary report provides the following information for each initiative included within this initial review:

- The relevant documents reviewed
- A summary of key findings from the review of the initiative
- A summary of the initiative's key strategies or recommendations
- The identification of potential implications for the Strategic System Improvement Plan
- The identification of questions and issues that may merit further exploration

BPA Consulting Team's Key Findings Regarding Implications for the Strategic System Improvement Plan

- Despite intentions to focus on racial equity, design and implementation of most initiatives does not seem to be deeply focused on issues of equity and justice.
- Further, initiatives specifically focused on racial equity have stalled or struggled. The Housing Justice Roadmap's Vision has been adopted by the CoC and is perceived as still having relevancy and currency in the community and this planning process should consider how that Vision is reflected within, or helps structure, the Strategic System Improvement Plan. The Roadmap's conceptualization of Phase 2 of Housing Justice Roadmap has not been implemented to date and the C4 Racial Equity Initiative has not taken hold in the community as of yet.
- Some stakeholders also indicate that other equity issues and concerns, such as for people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ populations, women, families with children, survivors or domestic and intimate partner violence, and others are not being adequately addressed through current activities and initiatives.
- People interviewed indicate that system leaders and decision-makers are more aware of need to listen to and be guided by people with lived expertise than previously true, but improvements still needed for truly living the value of centering and being led by people with lived expertise.
- Several initiatives or planning processes have struggled at the implementation stage. System leaders may need to strengthen their partnerships with one another and the collaborative prioritization of efforts, and can look for opportunities to purposefully apply practices from "bright spot" efforts that are widely seen as successful and impactful (e.g., YHDP, Built for Zero) to other efforts.
- Implementation of some efforts has been impacted by lack of clarity regarding roles, leadership and implementation responsibilities, and accountability. Further, the capacity of, and staffing support currently provided to, existing structures (e.g., CoC Committees or Work Groups) may not be adequate for such structures to truly lead implementation activities
- Review of initiatives indicates that community needs to strengthen all elements of homelessness response system, including but not limited to:
 - Improving approaches to outreach and engagement to people experiencing homelessness, including people with mental health challenges, and re-examining the roles and partnerships within those efforts;
 - Improving the quality of shelters and how people are treated when seeking or participating in shelters;
 - Ensuring the effective transition of Coordinated Assessment Model (CAM), which brings opportunities to address concerns with system, but can expect that there will be bumps as implementation of new structures and partnerships continues;
 - Strengthening landlord engagement strategies, housing navigation and housing lease-up strategies;
 - Expanding supply of deeply affordable permanent housing units and rental subsidies; and
 - Strengthening partnerships with mainstream agencies and systems who need to play roles within the homelessness response system.
- Quality and consistency of programs, and of how people are treated within programs, is a significant issue. Work to identify and communicate standards for shelter and permanent supportive housing have been initiated, but accountability for achieving and supporting quality across the entire system not clearly defined or embraced. Quality of programs, and capacity to serve people with more complex needs, are significantly impacted by funding levels, including services funding in permanent supportive housing.
- Past planning efforts have produced many recommended strategies and activities, many of which have not been acted upon yet. These recommended strategies and activities should be cross-walked to find common elements, identify gaps in recommendations or in how subpopulations' needs are addressed, and should be used as source of ideas and recommendations for Strategic System Improvement Plan.
- The 2020 Gaps Analysis, and required "System Mapping" for the C4 Racial Equity Initiative should be further considered and understood for the system modeling activities to be implemented for this planning project and there may be opportunities to align efforts and information.

Initial Review of Initiatives and Potential Implications for Strategic System Improvement Plan

Please see the following pages for summaries of key information related to the initial review of these recent and current initiatives, the identification of potential implications for the Strategic System Improvement Plan that merit further consideration and analysis, and questions and issues for further exploration within the planning processes.

Coordinated Assessment Model (CAM) Transition

Leads: CoC and CAM Transition Team

Documents Reviewed

- *CAM Transition People with Lived Experience of Homelessness Feedback Summary*
- *CAM Transition Project Timeline and CAM Transition Team Meeting slide decks*
- *CAM Workshop Meeting Notes*
- *Detroit Continuum of Care Coordinated Assessment Model Request for Qualifications*
- *CoC Membership Meeting materials (May 25, 2023 meeting)*

Key Findings of Review of Initiative

- CoC had not sought new proposals for CAM services since first established in 2013, although had sought to do so in 2018 and recognized the importance of doing so; this transition effort was made necessary due to the current CAM lead organization indicating that they did not wish to renew their contract and roles when expire in August 2023.
- A comprehensive transition process was initiated beginning in late 2022, including the creation of a CAM Transition Team and 8 subcommittees addressing various elements of the transition process and key decisions points.
- CoC and HAND sought significant input from providers and people with lived expertise regarding elements of CAM that needed to be strengthened and key themes identified included: concerns with wait times, for both phone and in-person services; adequate resources not being available to meet people's needs; clients indicating that the process can feel dehumanizing; lack of clarity and understanding of process by people seeking help; communication breakdowns; and concerns and questions about the assessment tool being used and inequities. (See Feedback Summary for more information.)
- Based upon scoring assessments, the applications submitted in response to the RFQ did not provide for an immediate identification of organization(s) to implement the four service categories identified within the RFQ: CAM Lead Agency and Administration; CAM Access – Call Center; CAM Access – In Person; CAM Back Office. Identification of CAM Lead Agency and implementing partners were then negotiated before being brought to the CoC Membership body for approval. (Some elements of CAM operations, including assessments, housing navigation, and outreach, were not subject to the RFQ and will continue to be provided by the organization currently providing those services.)

Initiative's Key Strategies or Recommendations

- CAM RFQ was issued in order to identify provider(s) for all or any of the four service categories, and the RFQ communicated core values established by the CoC Board of Directors and how CAM implementers were expected to embody the values, including: Homelessness should be rare, brief, and non-recurring; Flexibility to respond to emerging ideas and challenges or try new and innovative ideas and projects; Racial equity as demonstrated through equitable outcomes; Transparent decisions that make the greatest possible use of data; and Collaboration and a cross-systems approach. (See RFQ for more details.)
- As approved by the CoC Membership, intention to move forward with the following approach to the CAM service categories included within the RFQ:
 - HAND: CAM Lead Agency and Administration
 - City of Detroit: CAM Access – In Person and CAM Back Office (through subcontract[s] with non-profit organization[s])
 - Wayne Metro Community Action Agency CAM Access – Call Center (through subcontract with HAND)

Potential Implications for Strategic System Improvement Plan (the Plan)

- Input received from people with lived expertise during the CAM transition process provides useful insights into homelessness response system that can help inform the development of the Plan.
- Important elements of implementation of the new CAM structures and improvements will be underway throughout the development of the Plan and will impact the Plan's implementation, and such efforts will need to be prioritized within the Plan's improvement strategies and activities and implementation activities to follow.
- further, success of the new CAM structure will depend upon the strength of partnership and clarity of roles and responsibilities between City and HAND, which have also emerged as important themes during other aspects of the discovery phase of this planning project.

Questions and Issues for Further Exploration

- Will need to further explore and understand activities and challenges with implementation of new CAM structure without interfering with pressing timeline for that structure being operational.

Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP)

Leads: Youth Advisory Board, YHDP Core Team, and HAND

Documents Reviewed

- **Overview of YHDP in Detroit**
- **YHDP System Planning Data slide deck**
- **Detroit Coordinated Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness 2022 – 2027**
- **CAM YHDP Proposal slide deck**
- **CoC RFP: Availability of New Project Funding for YHDP**

Key Findings of Review of Initiative

- After past unsuccessful applications, the Detroit CoC was successful in being awarded YHDP funding through its 2021 application, and that application was motivated by interest in securing more funding and in engaging into more purposeful planning and strategizing regarding supporting youth.
- The approaches to the development of the application and the Coordinated Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness (CCP) were deeply informed by the Vision and recommendations of the Housing Justice Roadmap and prioritized deeply engaging with and following the leadership of the Youth Advisory Board and other youth with lived expertise.
- Implementation activities include operationalizing the funding of system improvement strategies and programming that includes PSH, Transitional Housing-Rapid Rehousing (TH-RRH), and Crisis Mental Health Team. (The Crisis Mental Health Team was a high priority for youth in the community and the community worked hard to get approval to use HUD funding for those purposes, perhaps the only such project funded through YHDP in the country.)
- Partners are also actively pursuing the implementation of the CCP, which includes a comprehensive array of Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps focused on preventing and ending youth homelessness, but implementation challenges are being faced, including related to the engagement of mainstream systems with the homelessness response system.
- YHDP efforts in Detroit are widely regarded as a powerful example of collaborative efforts that are delivering new programming models for youth and are demonstrating different ways for engaging in planning and system change and for supporting the meaningful leadership and decision-making of people experiencing homelessness.

Initiative's Key Strategies or Recommendations

- YHDP grant resources are funding: systems improvement strategies, including compensating youth for participation in YHDP processes, dedicated staff positions to advance the work, improving how youth access the homelessness response system, and data collection, management, and analysis, among other strategies; and new programming, including PSH, Transitional Housing-Rapid Rehousing (TH-RRH), and Crisis Mental Health Team programming for youth, with these programs currently in start-up phase and expecting to begin taking referrals of clients in August 2023.
- The CCP identifies Objectives, Action Steps, Responsible Entities, and Timeframes for 6 Goals, spanning: 1. Prevention; 2. Identification; 3. Stable Housing; 4. Education & Employment; 5. Health & Wellbeing; and 6. Sustainability. (See *the CCP* for more details.)
- The Youth Advisory Board meets multiple times per week and involved in every element of design, planning, and implementation activities, and the YHDP Core Team meets weekly and is comprised of stakeholders, youth providers, YAB members, Committee on Youth Homelessness members, CoC Board members, funders, HAND, City, and other partners and stakeholders.

Potential Implications for Strategic System Improvement Plan (the Plan)

- The CCP's Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps should be cross-walked with other existing plans and recommendations and should serve as a source of ideas for strategies and activities for the Plan, so that the community's efforts to develop the CCP deeply inform the Plan.
- Challenges with engaging mainstream systems experienced by YHDP partners may also be indicative of an issues that needs to be prioritized within the Plan.
- Any Plan strategies related to supporting the leadership of people with lived expertise within efforts to improve the homelessness response system should consider how approaches within YHDP can be expanded and replicated through the homelessness response system.

Questions and Issues for Further Exploration

- Will need to delve more deeply into understanding the most successful elements of YHDP approaches and challenges bring faced in CCP implementation.

Built for Zero

Leads: BFZ Team and Community Solutions

Documents Reviewed

- **Slide deck communicating Detroit's Built for Zero workplan**

Key Findings of Review of Initiative

- Built for Zero (BFZ) efforts are perceived as driving very significant progress on Veteran homelessness in Detroit, with the community forecast to be on path for achieving Functional Zero for Veteran homelessness by June 2024, potentially the first community in B4Z Large City Cohort to do so.
- BFZ has supported the community to use Veteran-specific resources and programs in innovative and effective ways, including VA directly entering information into HMIS, SSVF being used as bridge people more successfully to HUD-VASH and right-sizing of Grant and Per Diem (GPD) bed inventory within community.
- BFZ initiative serves as potential model for improvements that may be needed throughout homelessness response system, including cross-sector and cross-agency coordination and collaboration, landlord engagement strategies, outcome-focused implementation activities, reducing inflow, and aligning programs to achieve greater flow through system, among others.
- The work and specific strategies being implemented through BFZ have not yet had a significant impact on how the community strives to achieve reductions in homelessness for other populations and may not be well understood or be as visible as they should be to CoC and community.

Initiative's Key Strategies or Recommendations

- Detroit's BFZ workplan is currently focused on the following Primary Drivers:
 - *Increase Outflow*: Including landlord database, leasing up Veteran-specific project at Piquette Square, and using SSVF to bridge people to HUD-VASH
 - *Reduce Inflow*: Including recidivism project focused on Veterans returning to homelessness and potentially prioritizing HUD-VASH prevention referrals
 - *General System*: Including consistent and streamlined data entry process between COC and VA, collaborative case management and clear messaging between providers, expanding system capacity with a Data Lead and BFZ Lead staff positions, and incorporating more Veterans with lived expertise at decision-making tables.
 - *Other*: Including striving to create low-barrier units for Veterans in areas desirable to Veterans, developing a goal and plan for long stayers in GPD, and rolling out community GPD policy.

Potential Implications for Strategic System Improvement Plan (the Plan)

- Will need to consider how the potential achievement of Functional Zero for Veterans should inform the Plan's goals and milestones.
- Planning should consider opportunities for replicating and/or building upon strategies and approaches that are driving progress for Veterans to homelessness response system's efforts to prevent and end homelessness for other populations.

Questions and Issues for Further Exploration

- Will need to further explore how collaborative efforts focused on Veteran homelessness have succeeded with implementation efforts more than seen for other initiatives and the potential for applying similar strategies and tactics to other efforts.
- Will need to stay informed on status of progress to Functional Zero through Plan development and adoption at end of 2023.
- May need to identify gaps in resources for Veteran populations, such as aging Veterans, that the Plan may need to prioritize and address.

Detroit's Housing Justice Roadmap

Leads: CoC and McGregor Fund

Documents Reviewed

- *Detroit's Housing Justice Roadmap*
- *Racial Equity Data Assessment Tool*
- *Phase 1 Overview document*

Key Findings of Review of Initiative

- Detroit's Housing Justice Roadmap provided a comprehensive Vision and recommended Actions for strengthening Detroit's homelessness response system, especially regarding how the system can lead with a focus on justice and equity but also identifying a full range on Actions for strengthening the system and its performance as a whole.
- The Continuum of Care (CoC) adopted the Vision expressed within the Roadmap and that Vision is perceived as still having value and influence in the community.
- The development of the Roadmap modeled approaches to leading with equity and supporting the power of people with lived expertise, and some of those approaches were challenging for how the community has typically implemented planning efforts and initiatives.
- The completion of the Roadmap was explicitly intended as Phase 1 of the work and the document outlines the work forecast for Phase 2 through which community co-design processes would be convened to engage the community in creating governance and goals for the system to be built, but the community has not been able to implement Phase 2 as described.
- The Roadmap process is seen as having had lasting impacts within the community, including the adoption of the community Vision, the work of the Detroit Advisors Group, revisions to CoC's governance charter, informing community's approach to Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program application and plan, and other impacts.

Initiative's Key Strategies or Recommendations

- Provides the community Vision that: Detroit's response to homelessness is led by people with lived experiences who reflect the community; Members of the community experience homelessness rarely, and when they do, it's for a short time and only once; Housing security will be achieved by keeping people in their homes, developing affordable options, and helping to recover generational wealth; Housing and services are rooted in dignity. (See Detroit's Housing Justice Roadmap for more detail.)
- Identifies 27 Strategies spanning across 7 Actions: 01. Build a System; 02. Focus Housing on Low-Income Detroiters; 03. Redesign the Crisis Response; 04. Improve the Quality of Services; 05. Support and Protect Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Detroiters; 06. Target Homelessness Prevention Resources; and 07. Coordinate and Improve Access to Other Systems.

Potential Implications for Strategic System Improvement Plan (the Plan)

- Will need to explore whether the Roadmap's community Vision should be used as an organizing vision for the Plan.
- The Roadmap's Actions and Strategies should be cross-walked with other existing plans and recommendations and should serve as a source of ideas for strategies and activities for the Plan, so that community's efforts to develop the Roadmap deeply inform the Plan.
- Challenges experienced in the development of the Roadmap and for the implementation of Phase 2 and the Roadmap's Actions and Strategies indicate that strengthening implementation structures and activities, across the system, may need to be a priority for the Plan.
- Will need to determine if there are meaningful pathways – and financial resources – available for moving forward on approaches to operationalizing the Roadmap's Vision and Strategies.

Questions and Issues for Further Exploration

- Further exploration of community's interest and commitment to implementing the Roadmap, or key elements of it, is needed.
- Identification of other impacts the Roadmap has had to date and if there are other relevant racial equity and justice-focused efforts within the community that merit exploration.

C4 Racial Equity Initiative

Leads: CERT and HAND

Documents Reviewed

- *CAM Transition People with Lived Experience of Homelessness Feedback Summary*
- *CoC Quantitative Data Findings and Analysis*
- *Racial Equity Design & Implementation System Mapping Guide*
- *Draft Racial Equity Strategic Action Plan (pending receipt)*

Key Findings of Review of Initiative

- The C4 Racial Equity Initiative was initiated by MSHDA and every CoC in the state was strongly encouraged to participate.
- Key elements and requirements of participation included:
 - Formation of a local CERT team with co-chairs to lead the work in the community
 - Preparation of a quantitative analysis of system data to identify disparities and inequities
 - Implementation of listening session to gather quantitative information, which Detroit did in conjunction with CAM Transition planning listening sessions
 - Preparation of a draft Racial Equity Strategic Action Plan, submitted to the State, and C4 will be rolling local plans up into a state-wide plan
- Detroit's CERT team struggled with leadership changes and lack of consistent participation by many members of the team and members felt that the Initiative, as structured, lacked clear direction, purpose, and intention, and the Initiative has not been able to receive adequate system-level attention yet due to competing priorities, especially the CAM transition.
- While Initiative carries forward similar ideas and priorities as the Housing Justice Roadmap, the way the Initiative was structured did not enable it to be vehicle through which elements of Roadmap could be purposefully implemented.

Initiative's Key Strategies or Recommendations

- The draft Racial Equity Strategic Action Plan submitted to the State on behalf of the CoC includes a particular focus on: implementation of CoC-wide training plans and curricula, especially focused on trauma-informed service delivery, de-escalation, and active listening, to both strengthen staff skills and to improve client experiences, especially in shelters; the need for a sustained landlord engagement plan and activities to help improve access to units; and stronger focus on advocacy by the CoC, especially focused on issues of tenant rights and renter protections.
- Next steps include:
 - Reaching decisions regarding on-going structure within CoC through which work will be led and guided, which might be a CoC Committee or Work Group, hopefully by early Fall 2023;
 - Development of guiding document with clear expression of values and ideals and an initial work plan; and
 - Advancing "system mapping" work intended to map out community's resources and assets and how they currently interact.

Potential Implications for Strategic System Improvement Plan (the Plan)

- The draft Racial Equity Strategic Action Plan should be cross-walked with other existing plans and recommendations and should serve as a source of ideas for strategies and activities for the Plan, so that community's efforts to develop the draft Racial Equity Strategic Action Plan inform the Plan.
- That plan's focus on developing skills of front-line staff, improving client experiences of programs and services, enhancing landlord engagement strategies, and tenant rights and protections, resonate with ideas and priorities that are emerging through other reviews and community input.

Questions and Issues for Further Exploration

- Will need awareness of any decisions made regarding implementation structures for the Racial Equity Strategic Action Plan and associated activities.
- Will need deeper understanding of the planned approaches to "system mapping" and opportunities to synchronize and align with system modeling activities and other analyses being implemented by the consulting team.

2020 Gaps Analysis

Leads: CoC and HAND

Documents Reviewed

- *2020 Gaps Analysis Final Report*

Key Findings of Review of Initiative

- The 2020 Gaps Analysis was initiated as a mechanism for meeting HUD's requirement for an annual gaps analysis, but also sought to develop a broader gaps analysis effort and embedded CSH's prior Permanent Supportive Housing gaps analysis.
- In late 2019 and early 2020 intentionally designed a process that would engage front-line staff, people with lived expertise, and other perspectives, to not just be a mathematical exercise, but had to switch to virtual format due to pandemic, which may have impacted the input received.
- The Gaps Analysis has been used to set priorities for CoC competition, but CoC resources are already primarily invested into permanent housing programs.
- Gaps Analysis has not been explicitly implemented or used to drive other funding decisions, including with CARES Act and ARPA resources, but using it to inform collaborative decision-making may be even more important now that that surge or resources has ended.

Initiative's Key Strategies or Recommendations

- Gaps Analysis report includes projections for scaling of resources needed for "Making Incremental Improvements" vs. "Making Significant Improvements" vs. "Meeting All Housing Needs" for families with children and for single individuals (inclusive of transitional aged youth).
- The Gaps Analysis report also identifies comprehensive sets of recommendations, including:
 - *Service-Level Gaps Recommendations*, addressing: street outreach services and treatment programs; emergency shelter services; access to flexible funds; employment services accessible in shelters; improvements in the delivery of rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing programs and services; and youth services and resources.
 - *System-Level Gaps Recommendations*, addressing: roles and responsibilities in housing planning, navigation, and placement processes; housing search and navigation; aging and elder care; childcare and education services; coordination and collaboration; diversity in staffing; and HMIS enhancements.
- See *2020 Gaps Analysis Final Report* for more details.

Potential Implications for Strategic System Improvement Plan (the Plan)

- Gaps Analysis report includes thorough summaries of feedback and input provided by people with lived expertise and services providers and leaders and can serve as a source for understanding challenges and considering priorities and strategies for the Plan.
- Gaps Analysis report also includes data, demographics, housing needs projections, and system analyses that should likely help inform the system modeling activities to be implemented for the development of the Plan.
- The Gaps Analysis report's recommendations and next steps should be cross-walked with other existing plans and recommendations and should serve as a source of ideas for strategies and activities for the Plan, so that community's efforts to develop the Gaps Analysis deeply inform the Plan.

Questions and Issues for Further Exploration

- May be worth exploring if there are other ways in which the 2020 Gaps Analysis has informed prioritization and investment decisions, and analysis of its perceived strengths and weaknesses could help inform the design of system modeling activities to be implemented for the development of the Plan.

Permanent Supportive Housing Standards and Capacity Building

Leads: CSH, HAND, MSHDA, and HRD

Documents Reviewed

- *Detroit CoC Policy – Providing a Letter of Support for Permanent Supportive Housing Development Projects*
- *HRD's Housing Rehabilitation and Development Program January 2023 NOFA and Application Package*
- *Supportive Housing Planning Quality Checklist*

Key Findings of Review of Initiative

- As CAM began referring people with more complex care needs to permanent supportive housing (PSH), not all PSH providers were prepared to meet those needs, highlighting to the CoC issues related to lack of services funding, staffing ratios and case management caseloads, and other challenges.
- CSH has been funded by Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) to provide technical assistance to PSH providers, off and on, for many years. CSH and HAND did on-site reviews of projects in 2018 and results of those reviews were used within the local CoC competition that year.
- HRD asked CSH to work with them on their January 2023 Rehabilitation and Development Program NOFA, including a Supportive Housing Planning Quality Checklist, and it is expected that the next NOFA, projected for July 2023, will delve even more deeply into standards and expectations.
- Responsibility for ensuring the quality of PSH programs in Detroit is perceived as not being clearly defined and currently depends primarily upon the motivation of provider organizations themselves.
- While there are some new PSH providers coming into the system with different mindsets and approaches, PSH programs are mostly operated by organizations who have larger portfolios of programs, the quality of PSH is not always prioritized within those organizations, and PSH being operated by behavioral health organizations is often operated in alignment with services philosophies not aligned with best practices for PSH. Lack of adequate services funding, including limited leveraging of Medicaid resources for PSH services, represents a significant barrier to strengthening the quality of PSH and the capacity to serve people with complex needs.

Initiative's Key Strategies or Recommendations

- The CoC policy provides clear expectations for PSH development proposals seeking letters of support from the CoC and communicates expectations aligned with PSH best practices, Housing First approaches, and harm reduction and trauma-informed practices.
- CoC request all providers to complete the CSH self-assessment tool, identifying where they need support to build capacity, and responses provided have indicate a need for not just training but a broader array of capacity-building supports.
- Project teams seeking funding through HRD's January 2023 Rehabilitation and Development Program NOFA are required to complete the Supportive Housing Planning Quality Checklist; the checklist does not impact application scores or funding awards, but will be used to connect PSH projects to support.
- While there is an increased focus on communicating standards for PSH, aligned with best practices, there does not seem to yet be an accompanying capacity-building and training strategy to ensure that such standards can be consistently achieved.

Potential Implications for Strategic System Improvement Plan (the Plan)

- The supply, targeting, and the quality of PSH in Detroit may need to be areas of focus for the Plan, which could include funding strategies, performance measurement and monitoring strategies, training and capacity building strategies, and other strategies, and may be important to directly engage PSH residents to better understand issues and priorities and to identify strategies.
- Access to adequate services funding, including pursuing increased engagement of Medicaid funding into PSH services budgets, should be considered for prioritization within the Plan.
- Defining roles, accountability, and collaborative strategies for ensuring and supporting the quality of PSH and other components of the homelessness response system, may also be an important area of focus for the Plan.

Questions and Issues for Further Exploration

- Will need to understand if there are other PSH quality and capacity building strategies being considered or implemented within the community that were not revealed through this initial review, and identify if there are ongoing efforts to engage PSH residents into program assessment and improvement efforts.

Community Standards for Emergency Shelter

Lead: HRD

Documents Reviewed

- **Community Standards: Detroit CoC's Emergency Shelters**
- **Homelessness Solutions Policies and Procedures Manual, Section 7: Emergency Shelter**
- **On-Site Emergency Shelter Monitoring Tool**

Key Findings of Review of Initiative

- Driven in part by concerns over issues with emergency shelter policies and operations identified repeatedly in client grievances, HRD has launched an effort to develop and enforce community standards for emergency shelters in Detroit.
- This effort appears to be moving forward in a purposefully collaborative manner, and HRD staff have engaged the Detroit Advisors Group, the CoC, and the Shelter Work Group (convened monthly by HRD staff), and shelter providers into the planned approach to the development of these standards, and will continue to engage with those partners and stakeholders as the effort moves forward.
- Primary areas of focus for standards and greater consistency in policies and procedures have been identified (see below) and HRD staff will be especially focused on those policies and procedures during annual monitoring visits scheduled to begin in July.
- By approximately September 2023, a final draft of Community Standards will be disseminated and provider organizations will be expected and supported to revise policies and procedures to achieve greater alignment of approaches, in alignment with community standards, across emergency shelters.
- This effort has not begun implementation activities yet and it is expected that there will be concerns from shelter provider organizations as the effort moves forward, but no significant concerns or objections have been raised to date.

Initiative's Key Strategies or Recommendations

- This effort has focused on policy and practice areas that are frequently the focus of client grievances and complaints, including but not limited to: Curfews; Bed Holding / Permissions for Overnight Stays; Client Work Schedules; Daytime Access for Clients; Service Animals; Bans/Suspensions; Personal Items; and Overflow Protocols, and HRD continues to also be focused on ensuring compliance with Equal Access Rule.
- HRD's proposed standards and the Emergency Shelter section of the Homelessness Solutions Policies and Procedures Manual, express expectations that are well-aligned with low-barrier, Housing First, and harm reduction practices, and clearly communicate expectations of client-centered, flexible, and tailored approaches to working with people seeking and staying in emergency shelters, but the Policies and Procedures Manual currently expresses very limited performance measures for shelters, focused on utilization rates and exits to permanent housing only.
- HRD intends to develop consistent mechanisms through which people with lived experience and shelter clients are directly informing implementation and achievement of community standards for shelter, but such mechanisms are not clearly defined yet.
- HRD will be monitoring grievances from shelter participants to determine if fewer grievances and concerns are being submitted related to policy and practice areas that are currently of frequent concern, including those areas identified above.

Potential Implications for Strategic System Improvement Plan (the Plan)

- Challenges providers are facing in their capacity to achieve alignment with community standards developed will need to be considered as potential priorities for addressing within the Plan, which could include funding strategies, performance measurement and monitoring strategies, training and capacity building strategies, and other strategies.
- Any Plan strategies related to supporting the leadership of people with lived expertise within efforts to improve the homelessness response system should likely consider how shelter program participants can and should help drive shelter improvement and/or transformation efforts.

Questions and Issues for Further Exploration

- Will need to understand findings and decisions coming out of HRD's July 2023 monitoring visits and ensure that community standards are responsive to issues and concerns raised through community engagement efforts and input processes for this Planning project.
- Will need to explore strategies for strengthening quality and enforcing standards while sustaining necessary capacity within the system.

Sheltered Housing Placements

Lead: HRD

Documents Reviewed

- **RRH: Sheltered Housing Placement overview document**

Key Findings of Review of Initiative

- The focus on sheltered housing placements developed out of the community's highly successful efforts to target and lease-up Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs) provided through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and a resulting intention to apply best practices and lessons learned from that effort to support people currently staying in shelters who are receiving Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) through MSHDA's homelessness preference.
- There is currently a high volume of such HCVs being provided, so that people experiencing homelessness are regularly being "pulled" (to use local terminology) for HCVs, i.e., being notified that MSHDA has a voucher available for their household.
- CDBG-CV resources have been used to fund Rapid Rehousing programming to support people to receive their vouchers and secure housing, through housing search assistance and rental deposits, but not requiring expenditures on RRH rental assistance.
- Data indicates that efforts are reaching people with long histories of stays in Detroit's emergency shelters, with an average length of stay of 11 months, and many of the people assisted meet the definition of experiencing chronic homelessness.
- The first person supported through these efforts to successfully lease a unit with their HCV did so in December 2022 and more than 100 people have now leased-up with their HCVs, but there is not information available yet about the rates of stability in housing that people are achieving and follow-up services and supports are not a central feature of these efforts.

Initiative's Key Strategies or Recommendations

- Use of services and supports associated with Rapid Rehousing, such as housing search assistance and assistance with security deposits, to improve people's ability to receive their vouchers and to rent housing and supporting more people to exit emergency shelters to permanent housing, without spending local Rapid Rehousing resources on rental assistance.
- This effort partners a provider within the homelessness response system with MSHDA's contracted housing agent, supporting that agent to achieve higher performance by tailoring strategies and approaches for people experiencing homelessness, and a strong collaborative relationship has been developed.
- The homelessness provider organization has implemented hands-on, work-around solutions to ensure that people experiencing homelessness who are "pulled" for HCVs receive timely and supportive assistance, including through using HMIS system to identify records and living situations for people who are identified only by name on lists of people "pulled" by MSHDA.
- The provider organization closely tracks data through the HMIS system and through "Go Section 8" system, to be able to act upon up to date information for their clients, to provide such information to other organizations working with people who are in process of receiving or using their HCVs, and to monitor and improve performance.

Potential Implications for Strategic System Improvement Plan (the Plan)

- Lessons from these efforts, and from the earlier lease up of EHVs, may be important if the Plan includes a focus on strengthening the homelessness response system's landlord engagement and other housing lease-up strategies.
- Will need a better understanding of whether the current level of vouchers being provided through MSHDA's homelessness preference is expected to be regular and sustainable or represents temporary availability of resources only.

Questions and Issues for Further Exploration

- Will need to develop a further understanding of the stability success rates for people being housed through these efforts to determine potential value for scaling this model and/or whether the model needs to be refined with more intensive follow-up services, including PSH-level services, for some participants.

Mental Health Co-Response Partnership

Leads: DPD and HRD

Documents Reviewed

- *Executive Briefing and Chief of Police's slide deck regarding the 5 Point Plan for the Mental Health Co-Response Partnership*
- *Detroit Policy Special Order Regarding Responding to Mental Health Crises*
- *Co-Response Initiative Scope of Services*
- *Mental Health Co-Response Standard Operating Procedures*

Key Findings of Review of Initiative

- The impetus for the Mental Health Co-Response Partnership was the high-number of 9-1-1 calls regarding mental health crises, including but not limited to people experiencing homelessness, and interest in reducing law enforcement involvement in responding to behavioral health crises. But, the partnership seems to be structured to still lead with response by police officers who can then access homelessness outreach or behavioral health care staff to support response.
- There are questions about the qualifications of behavioral health care staff assigned to the Partnership and whether they are providing enhanced clinical skills for engagement of people, and there are concerns from other homelessness outreach teams about DPD's activities, including through its Unsheltered Response Team.
- Many of the materials regarding the Partnership do not clearly express how the efforts are intended to better address the needs of people with mental health issues who are experiencing homelessness and do not seem to be deeply informed by understanding of homelessness and people experiencing homelessness.
- It is not clear that Partnership is achieving intended impacts or that alternative approaches to working with people experiencing homelessness are having impacts across other DPD activities, which often focus on moving unsheltered people around.
- Lead partners in the Co-Response Partnership need to strengthen their collaboration, coordination, and communication to ensure alignment of intentions and efforts.

Initiative's Key Strategies or Recommendations

- HRD is in process of finalizing and issuing a NOFA that will expand homelessness outreach to 24 hours a day and will fund shelters that currently operate only overnight to be able to operate 24 hours a day as well; this expansion of services has been driven in part by concerns raised by DPD about access to services for people they are encountering through Partnership efforts.
- Complementary efforts include:
 - The Detroit Homeless Outreach Team is operational about 8 – 12 hours each week and partners homelessness outreach staff from Motor City Mission and Cass Community Social Services with staff from behavioral health staff from Central City Integrated Health (CCIH) and with officers from Detroit Police Department (DPD), with a particular focus on chronic homelessness.
 - HRD has contracted with Housing Innovations to update and strengthen response to encampments of people experiencing homelessness.
 - HRD also plays role of coordinating other homelessness outreach teams and such teams are newly required to have navigators on their teams who can help navigate people into system, to CAM, and to other services, including sometimes navigating people all the way to housing placements.

Potential Implications for Strategic System Improvement Plan (the Plan)

- The Plan will likely need to consider opportunities for strengthening the community's response to unsheltered homelessness and people with mental health challenges, and the Plan may also need to identify strategies focused on defining the roles that DPD should be playing within homelessness response system.
- The Plan will likely need to include strategies for strengthening alignment between behavioral health care system and homelessness response system, an issue that has been identified through several different reviews of activities and through stakeholder input.

Questions and Issues for Further Exploration

- Will need a further understanding of community's efforts to address the needs of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness and the expected impact of expanded outreach hours of operation and expanded availability of 24/7 shelter programs.
- May need to explore DPD and other partners' perspectives on these efforts.

Landlord Engagement Strategies

Lead: HAND

Documents Reviewed

- *Reports summarizing surveys of landlords and homelessness services providers*
- *Deliverables Update from Detroit CARES Team*

Key Findings of Review of Initiative

- Identifying and engaging landlords with units in the private rental market has been of increasing importance as programs providing vouchers and rental assistance have increased.
- ESG-CV funding through the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) was used to intentionally hire a real estate agency to work with landlords, to help identify units and create stronger understanding, connections, and communication between people exiting homelessness, tenants, providers, and landlords.
- Initiative seems to have had a relatively narrow focus of trying to create a centralized list of landlords that providers could access and work from, but does not seem to have been aiming for truly centralized landlord outreach and engagement strategies or structures.
- These efforts do not appear to have been institutionalized within the system beyond end of ESG-CV grant resources and departure of key staff person from HAND, and the initiative has not been sustained.

Initiative's Key Strategies or Recommendations

- Community was excited about potential for a centralized list of landlords but efforts also faced some challenges with providers being willing to share information about the landlords that they worked with.
- Role of real estate agency was seen as very helpful in bridging gaps between homelessness response system and landlords and were better able to communicate with landlords in "language" that was understood, but they may have needed more support from homelessness response system to be as effective as possible.
- Efforts did not get too far into determining how information in centralized list would be managed and such centralized management has not been achieved.

Potential Implications for Strategic System Improvement Plan (the Plan)

- The Plan will likely need to consider opportunities to strengthen homelessness response system's landlord engagement strategies and to what extent such efforts should be prioritized with the Plan.
- Surveys implemented as part of this initiative serve as a source for understanding perspectives and challenges and for considering priorities and strategies for the Plan.
- Challenges experienced in sustaining implementation of such efforts are a further indication that implementation strategies across the homelessness response system's initiatives and change efforts may need to be a particular area of focus for the Plan.

Questions and Issues for Further Exploration

- Likely need to develop a deeper understanding of community's current landlord engagement intentions and efforts and explore capacity options for structuring and support such efforts, and any opportunities to provide incentives to landlords, if prioritized within the Plan.

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