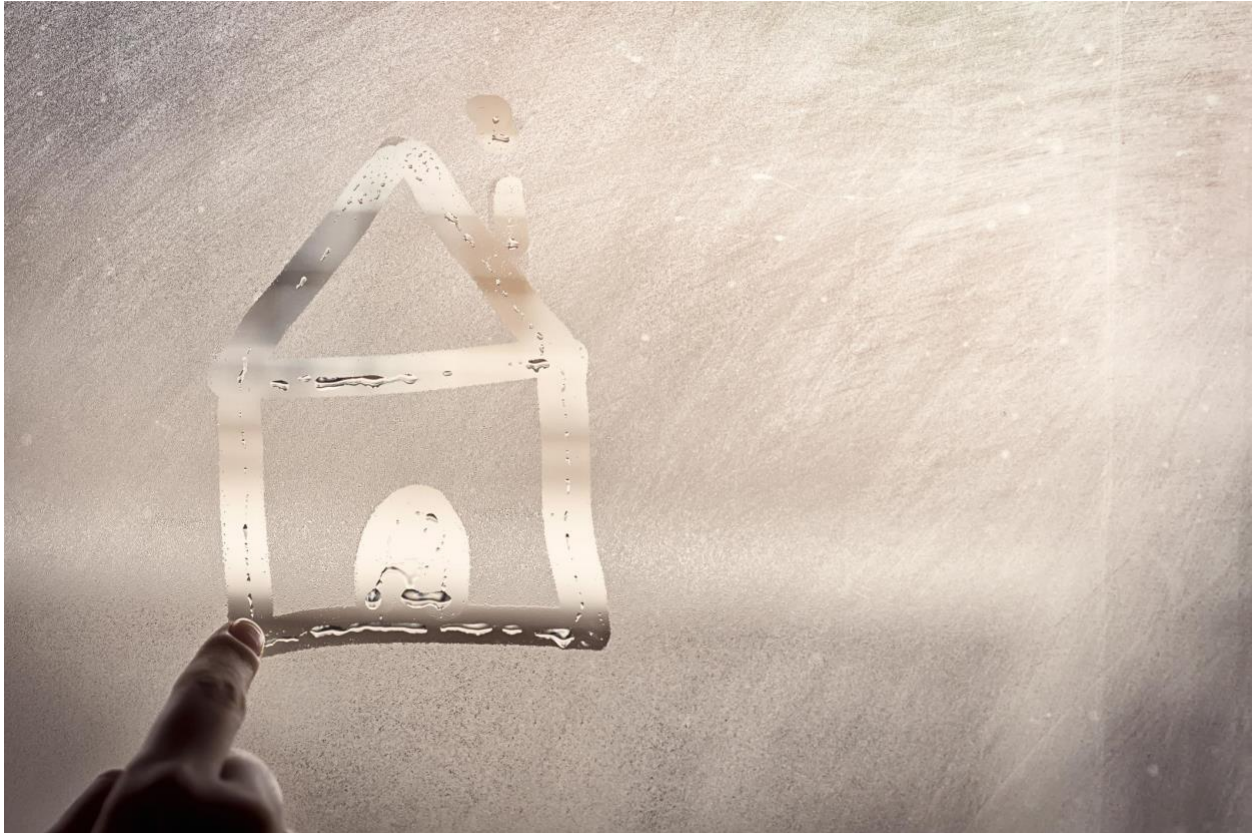


Governance, Costs, and Revenue Raising to Address and Prevent Homelessness in the Portland Tri-County Region



**A report by the Portland State University Homelessness
Research & Action Collaborative,
& Northwest Economic Research Center**

(Full Report Available at www.pdx.edu/homelessness)

I. GOVERNANCE

Introduction

In this section of the report, we describe various ways local governments might structure their responses to address homelessness, including ways to work together across jurisdictions. Governance may include formal arrangements between government and non-government entities to identify policies to address homelessness, or be a mechanism to administer a levy or bond. For context, we first discuss regional and collaborative governance, a familiar structure in the tri-county area. We then describe studies that focus on governance and homelessness specifically, though not all of those studies are regional in scope.

We then turn our attention to three places working on homelessness across the country. We focus most on Los Angeles (LA) County, California as our external example given its comprehensive efforts to address homelessness, and include shorter descriptions of Houston TX, Washington DC, and a local example, Multnomah County. We conclude by discussing what the guidance and examples of governance and homelessness could mean for the Oregon side of the Portland Metropolitan area.

Key Takeaways

- Planning and governing regionally offer important opportunities to create policies and programs to address inter-connected and cross-jurisdictional issues. Such efforts can reduce inefficiencies, reduce spatial disparities, and lead to more thriving regions.
- Planning and governing structures that work at a regional level require investment, politically and fiscally, and can take considerable time to structure justly and effectively.
- Identifiable leaders in government and civic society are needed to advance solutions for homelessness. They each play instrumental roles in building public support, and in raising revenue for addressing homelessness. They may work collaboratively or independently, or some combination of the two.
- Organizing and advocacy matter. The power of collaborative efforts is realized when they collectively advocate for policy and funding. Bottom-up organizing increases network power, and does not have to fully be subsumed within government driven processes.
- The best governance structure will not be effective if resources are too scarce to act on identified solutions; however, structures linked to or have advocacy agendas embedded in them could help identify those resources and apply pressure to obtain them.

- Some of the most successful governance groups included in this report focused on homelessness centered on racial equity. Poverty and race are inextricably linked, and communities of color face disproportionate rates of homelessness. In the four cases we describe, Black community members consistently experienced significant disproportionate rates of homelessness.
- We recommend the tri-county area form an exploratory committee or task force of an inclusive and committed set of stakeholders that is led by a government entity, or set of government entities, to examine in which ways better regional planning, policies, and program coordination around homelessness could help all jurisdictions meet their goals. This task force would do the following:
 - Deliberatively identify the “problem” to be solved. Problem identification should be the first step in both identifying who should be part of any future discussions as well as the first step of the group. Two examples of possible problem framings include: 1) Focusing on unsheltered homelessness; or, 2) Creating safe, quality, and affordable housing for all community members. Clarity about which problem(s) we are attempting to solve is essential to the success of any effort. We recommend the region carefully consider if we are trying to “solve” homelessness, or if we are trying to “solve” affordable housing.
 - We argue for the second framing, focusing on affordable housing. The second framing could include the first identified problem framing. *Supporting people experiencing homelessness who are unsheltered will not solve affordable housing, and affordable housing is integral to helping them. However, without weighing trade-offs, we cannot know for sure exactly which is the best path to addressing affordable housing.*
 - Include decisions and discussions about program and service coordination, policy making and implementation, and revenue raising and distribution.
 - Build on existing collaborative efforts, but not usurp them, and hold processes in an inclusive and equitable manner where equity refers to communities of color and people who have or are experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. Transparency will be central to ensuring democratic governance as well as public support. Encourage processes occurring in civic society to continue their work independently.
 - Have an identified decision-making date where the group will make formal recommendations about how the region should move forward.
 - Define the homelessness community to include people who are doubled up. This is a substantial population that cannot be easily dismissed.
 - Center the process on racial equity. The racial disparities for communities of color experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity do not exist by accident, and the only way to really address and prevent homelessness will be to focus on their

needs. By focusing on achieving racial equity, other racial groups that do not experience disparities will also be served.

Regional Collaborative Governance

Planning and governing across jurisdictions requires coordination, and commitment. Early 20th century planning focused regionally, understanding that people and systems, urban ones in particular, did not adhere to jurisdictional boundaries. Over time, planning and governing work fell within jurisdictions, where city and county governments had regulatory control. However, recognizing the utility of cross jurisdictional work, issues from sharing fire and police services across county lines to developing 20-year land-use plans have been developed across jurisdictional boundaries.

Often referred to as regionalism, some of these efforts happen through one off planning processes, others build regional governance structures to implement plans and continue governing regionally. Early examples of regional governance structures include county-city mergers and council of governments. One of the best-known regional approaches to planning and governing is the Portland Oregon government Metro. Voted to function as a home-rule entity in 1993, Metro remains the only regional government in the country with directly elected representatives.¹

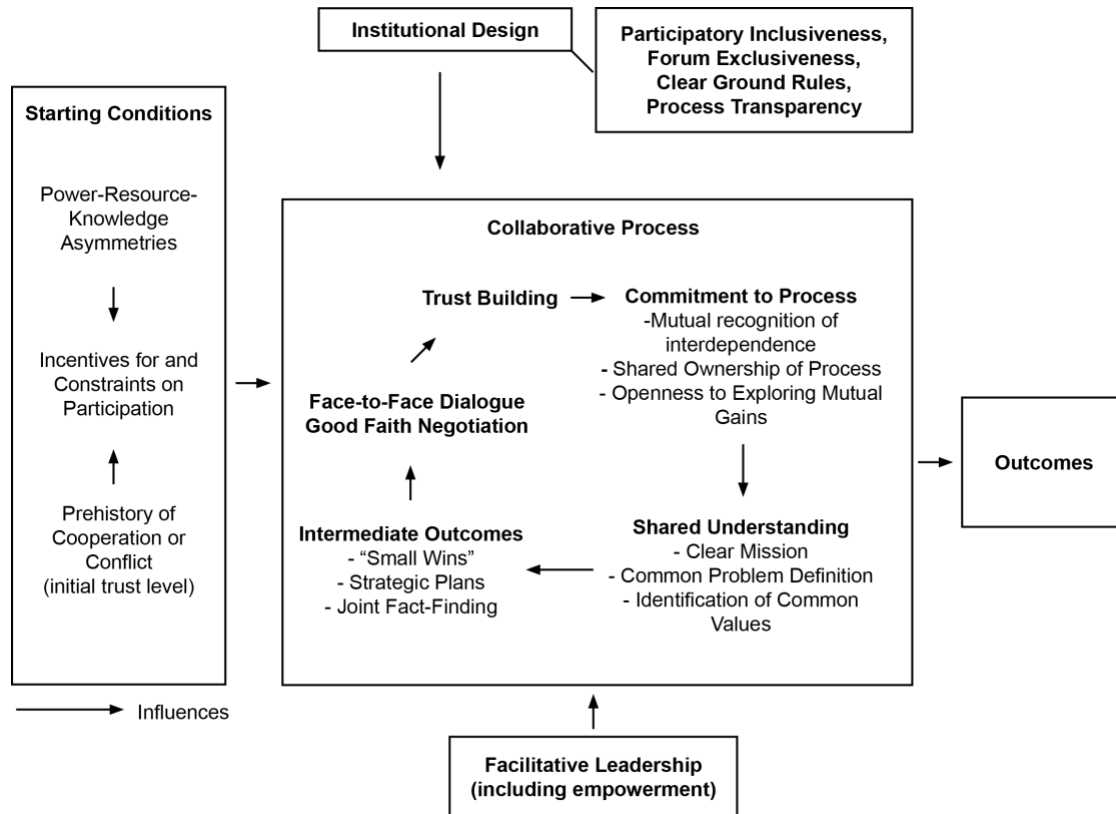
Best practices for developing and running regional governance abound in the academic and practitioner literature. Across the literature findings emphasize the importance of: 1) shared problem identification; 2) Actor willingness, interest, capacities, and resources; and, 3) inclusiveness of diverse actors in a well-designed process with clear leader(s) identified. See Figure 1.1 for a model of collaborative governance. Note that this model does not apply an equity lens, something that research has found important in successful governance cases.²

While many of these best practices could apply in any planning process or governance structure, process design and actor relationships matter in a different way at the regional scale. In a HUD study about regional collaborative planning, the report cited Foster (2010) saying: “because these relationships do not depend on legal authority to ensure that the goals are met, collaborative arrangements must rely on other forces and skills to create the cohesion necessary to achieve objectives.”

¹ See the following for a summary, and excellent summary table of regional governance options: Parr, J., Riem, J., & McFarland, C. (2006). Guide to successful local government collaboration in America's regions, Washington, DC: National League of Cities. As cited in: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD] (2015). *Strategies for regional collaboration*. Retrieved from: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/fall15/highlight2.html#title>

² Inclusive democratic practices and equity are not the same thing. Inclusiveness refers to the process, and how people experience it. Equity can refer the process where there are deliberate components put in place to address inequity, and also refers to the equity of the outcomes of the process. It is possible to have an inclusive process with no equitable outcomes.

Figure 1.1: Model of Collaborative Governance ³



Homelessness Continuums of Care

Collaborative governance is not new within the field of homeless services. The McKinney-Vento Act of 1987 was the first federal law to specifically address homelessness, and the Act provides federal support for a multi-tiered system of homeless service programs at the local level.

The local multi-tiered system to address homelessness became known as the Continuum of Care (CoC) model in 1994. There were two ultimate goals for establishing CoCs: 1) better system alignment, efficiency, and coordination; and 2) developing plans and recommend policy to address homelessness. The CoC system was designed to facilitate coordination and integration of services, and enable a smooth transition for clients moving from one tier of service to another on the path to permanent stable housing.⁴ The system was also meant to recognize that the causes of homelessness for each individual are complex and include a variety of unmet needs, in addition to shelter itself. Today, CoCs are expected to develop and implement long-

³ Ansell & Gash. (2008). Model of Collaborative Governance. From Bartenberger, M. & Grubmiller, V. (2014). The enabling effects of open government data on collaborative governance in smart city contexts. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. 6. DOI: 10.2139/ssrn.2474974.

⁴ Wong, Y., L. I., Park, J.M., & Nemon, H. (2006). Homeless service delivery in the context of Continuum of Care. University of Pennsylvania. Retrieved from https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1038&context=spp_papers

term strategic plans and planning efforts that evolve to meet changing needs of the various populations experiencing homelessness.

Three main programmatic branches made up, and continue to shape, the CoC model, and they were meant to operate as a series of stages. Emergency shelters were the point of entry in the system, and provide short-term housing in a crisis situation, for individuals in a variety of circumstances. Transitional housing was the next step, and entails service-intensive programming that aims to prepare clients to achieve self-sufficiency, aimed toward the next step. The final stage was either permanent supportive housing, or other housing options (market rate, subsidized), depending on the level of need. Permanent supportive housing serves individuals who are not able to live independently due to mental illness, substance abuse, physical disabilities, and/or other challenges.²⁰ While the need to progress across the system is not a central component, the range and types of organizations within homelessness are still viewed as a comprehensive network.

Shifting from allowing multiple applications, HUD now requires a community to submit a single application for funding rather than separate applications for each service provider.⁵ HUD mandated that CoCs are governed by a range of stakeholders, including nonprofit organizations and government entities working on homelessness. The HUD guidelines are explicit about the importance of stakeholder engagement and collaboration in implementing homelessness services.²¹

Studies on Continuums of Care

Several studies focus on how CoCs have functioned as governance structures. In a survey of CoCs around the nation in 2014, researchers found that of the 234 CoCs that responded to the survey, their structures (e.g. size, membership, lead organizations) varied considerably.⁶ The study further examined how those differences in structures, namely size, related to rates of reductions in service gaps. The study identified how group advocacy, networking opportunities, and government investment and support played pivotal roles in reducing service gaps.

For larger CoCs, like Multnomah and Washington counties, networking opportunities along with group advocacy were the strongest predictors of reductions in service gaps. The importance of advocacy mattered in service level reductions even when networking was low. For medium sized CoCs, which Clackamas County would have been at the time, reductions in services gaps were predicted by higher levels of government investment and support.

⁵ U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD]. (2009). *HUD's Homeless Assistance Programs: Continuum of Care 101* [PDF file]. Retrieved from <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/CoC101.pdf>

⁶ Jarpe, M., Mosley, J. E., & Smith, B. T. (2019). Understanding the collaborative planning process in homeless services: Networking, advocacy, and local government support may reduce service gaps. *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*, 25(3), 262-269.

A study about Chicago's CoC reinforced the importance of networking as a space for community building and advocacy.⁷ Representing a shift from past practices of non-profit organizations (NPOs), the NPOs in this CoC reported participating in advocacy work within the CoC intermediary organization, The Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness, as well as a traditional advocacy organization. Each group played important, and distinct, roles in influencing and operating within the Chicago policy context.

Based in Canada, the most in-depth and extensive study about collaborative governance and homelessness examined six different structures across three cities. The creation of a Canadian model similar to the HUD CoC program helped spur different collaborative models. One of the study's core findings illuminated that the more institutionalized processes were and the more inclusive they were, the better their systems were coordinated and created more innovative policy solutions. The study also illustrates the importance of having dual collaborative efforts where one can fulfill the CoC duties and another can take on greater advocacy. Lastly, the study examined overall policy-making environment assessing their degree of flexibility and how much the environment was influenced by the relevant CoC. The authors found that greater flexibility in policy-making and CoC visible influence on decision-making led to better outcomes.

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⁷ Mosley, J. E. (2012). Keeping the lights on: How government funding concerns drive the advocacy agendas of nonprofit homeless service providers. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 22(4), 841-866.

⁸ Jarpe, M., Mosley, J. E., & Smith, B. T. (2019). Understanding the collaborative planning process in homeless services: Networking, advocacy, and local government support may reduce service gaps. *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*, 25(3), 262-269.

⁹ Mosley, J. E. (2012). Keeping the lights on: How government funding concerns drive the advocacy agendas of nonprofit homeless service providers. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 22(4), 841-866.

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Below we discuss four contemporary examples of homelessness governance systems. Each case example includes: Background about the region, actors working on homelessness, governance structures, revenue-raising efforts (where relevant), and progress to date (where possible). We devote the most attention to LA County as they are similar to Portland in several ways. They are: 1) located on the West Coast; 2) have several groups planning and acting for homelessness; and 3) have recently adopted revenue measures.¹⁰ Table 1.4 summarizes general aspects of the four cases on the following page.

Table 1.1: Basic Facts about Cases

Name	Size	Total Population	PIT Count 2019	PIT Count 2017	2019 PIT Sheltered	2019 PIT Unshelter.	2019 PIT/Total pop.	African Americans % 2019 PIT vs. % tot. pop.	Key Distinctions
Los Angeles County (All CoCs)	4,084 sq mi	10,441,090	58,936	52,765	14,722	44,214	0.56%	33% HUD homeless vs. 8.3% tot. pop.	Extremely limited amount of housing affordability and supply

¹⁰ Each site had a slightly different methodology. For LA County, We interviewed and consulted with several representatives of key actors in Los Angeles, and reviewed public documents, news articles, reviewed non-governmental reports, and PIT reports and US Census data. For Harris County and Washington DC we conducted the same secondary data analysis. We were unable to obtain interviews with people in these two locations, but did receive answers to questions via email from Harris County. We also asked people in Multnomah County for their views about the three places. For Multnomah County, one of the report authors, Dr. Zapata, is heavily involved in the governance structure and CoC for the county, and has written papers and given presentations about it. She asked for feedback from that section from Multnomah County stakeholders; however, she made the ultimate decision on what was incorporated.

Harris County et al CoC	3,771 sq mi	6,047,402	3,640	3,866	2,112	1,528	0.06%	55% HUD homeless vs. 20% tot. pop.	Lower comparative housing values + higher comparative vacancy rates
Washington DC CoC	68 sq mi	633,427	6,521	7,473	5,913	608	1.03%	87% HUD homeless vs. 41% tot. pop.	Legal right to shelter in <32 or >95 degree weather
Multnomah County et al CoC	466 sq mi	811,000	4,015	4,177	1,978	2,037	0.52%	16.1% HUD homeless vs. 7.2% tot. pop.	Comparatively recent significant increases in property values and rents

* African Americans consistently present with high levels disproportionate rates of homelessness across the country. Other communities of color may be too small in some areas to report, or not have disproportionate rates

Los Angeles County

Los Angeles County, and its included jurisdictions, has developed a network of formal and informal governance structures. These structures include relationships between entities as well mechanisms to oversee the distribution of raised revenue.

Background

LA County is a massive county, spanning 4,084 square miles with more than 10 million people and 88 municipalities. LA County is divided into service planning areas to facilitate planning and service delivery for homelessness efforts (see figure 2.1: LA County Planning Areas).¹¹

¹¹ County of Los Angeles. (n.d.). Statistics [web page]. Retrieved from <https://www.lacounty.gov/government/geography-statistics/statistics/#1481130319389-8a1c0344-8add>

Figure 1.2: Los Angeles Planning Areas¹²



Los Angeles County has one of the highest homelessness rates in the nation. Persistent efforts to coordinate a response to the growing problem began several decades ago, and various government and non-government entities have played important roles in bringing entities together to identify shared ideas of how to address homelessness. Notably, discussions about racial equity have only recently entered into discussions about addressing homelessness.

The 2019 PIT Count revealed a 12% increase in the homeless population in LA County for a total of nearly 60,000 people.¹³ About 63% are experiencing homelessness for the first time, and 53% of that cohort cite economic barriers to retaining housing as a root cause.¹⁴ About 36% of individuals experiencing homelessness are Latino (47.7% of total population), 33.2% are Black (8.3% total population), 24.5% are white (27.8% of total population), and 0.8% are Asian (13.5% of total population), along with smaller percentages of other populations. This means Black people are four times more likely than Whites to experience homelessness.¹⁵

This increase comes even with an estimated 21,631 individuals who were housed through county programs, and 27,080 who were able to reenter housing independently. That represents a daily rate of 131 people exiting homelessness and 151 entering homelessness. About 75% of individuals experiencing homelessness have lived in LA County for at least five years, and 71% do not have a serious mental illness and/or report substance abuse. Meanwhile, a series of state-level bills that would have ameliorated California's housing crisis failed in rapid succession, despite a Democratic supermajority (Walker, 2019). Several jurisdictions have

¹² Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative. (2019). Measure H funded contracts [web page]. Retrieved from <http://homeless.lacounty.gov/measure-h-funded-contracts/>

¹³ Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (2019). *2019 Greater Los Angeles homeless count results*. Retrieved from <https://www.lahsa.org/news?article=557-2019-greater-los-angeles-homeless-count-results>

¹⁴ Chiland, E. (2018). When will LA's big homelessness strategy start paying off? *Curbed LA*. Retrieved from <https://la.curbed.com/2018/4/13/17229430/los-angeles-homeless-strategy-measure-h-results>

¹⁵ Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority. (2019). About LAHSA. Retrieved from <https://www.lahsa.org/abo>

enacted temporary emergency caps on rent increases, including the City of Glendale, and LA County, while the City of Inglewood formally adopted a rent control ordinance in 2019 (Chandler, 2019).

Select Entities Working on Homelessness

In LA County, a number of different organizations address homelessness. As government entities have the ultimate implementing role, we focus our attention on those organizations, and include a few non-governmental groups. This list is not exhaustive.

LAHSA

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority is an independent, joint powers authority, and is the lead agency in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care. It was created by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, the Los Angeles mayor, and City Council in 1993. Its creation solved a lawsuit between the city and county over who was responsible for addressing homelessness.¹⁶ LAHSA provides funding, program design, outcomes assessment, and technical assistance to more than 100 nonprofit partner agencies that serve those experiencing homelessness. This entails coordinating and managing over \$300 million annually in federal, state, county, and city funds.

LA County

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (CBOS) created the Homeless Initiative in 2015, as a response to the escalating crisis. The Homeless Initiative is situated within the Chief Executive Office (CEO), and provides the CEO with guidance on how to allocate and deploy funds gathered through the Measure H sales tax. The Homeless Initiative Action Plan is organized around six key areas: Prevention, subsidized housing, increasing income, case management and services, coordinated system, and affordable housing.¹⁷ Twelve lead agencies for the sub-areas of each of the key strategy areas administer the funds to community-based organizations, with support from collaborating County departments and agencies.¹⁸ Additionally, in 2017 the Board approved \$2 million in funding for cities in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care to develop their own homelessness plans, as well as \$500,000 for regional coordination services by Councils of Governments.¹⁹ These figures do not include Measure H funding, which is explained below.

Nongovernmental Actors

- The United Way of Greater Los Angeles has been instrumental over the last decade in helping partners articulate the fundamental role housing plays in preventing and ending homelessness. It launched the Everyone In campaign to engage community members in

¹⁶ Burt, M.R. (2007). *System change efforts and their results: Los Angeles, 2005–2006* [PDF file]. Urban Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/46426/411449-System-Change-Efforts-and-Their-Results-Los-Angeles---.PDF>

¹⁷ Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative (n.d.) The Action Plan [web page]. Retrieved from <http://homeless.lacounty.gov/the-action-plan/>

¹⁸ Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative. (n.d.). Measure H funded contracts. Retrieved from <http://homeless.lacounty.gov/measure-h-funded-contracts/>

¹⁹ Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative. (2018). *City homelessness plans*. Los Angeles County. Retrieved from http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lac/1043966_AllCitiesHomelessPlans_8.31.18--pdf.pdf

the Homeless Initiative in a variety of ways.²⁰ The project website clearly frames homelessness as a housing crisis, and their objective is to elevate hidden stories of progress, galvanize residents to fight for housing in their neighborhoods, and apply political pressure for solutions. They also provide grants to nonprofit service providers through a request for proposals process.

- Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) is a key partner for service provider resources, supportive housing funding, program development, and policy advocacy.
- The LA Community Action Network (LA CAN) is a grassroots, volunteer-led organization based in Downtown LA, that aims to build collective political power through leadership consisting exclusively of the low-income constituents they serve.

Revenue Raising

The two most recent and largest revenue mechanisms within LA County include Measure H and Measure HHH. LA County runs the former, and the City of LA runs the latter.

Measure HHH

In 2016 LA City voters passed Bond Measure HHH, a \$1.2 billion bond that aims to create 10,000 affordable residences over ten years in the City of LA. LA CAN launched a phone bank in support of Measure HHH in October 2016, and their results overwhelmingly indicated support of the measure, which passed in November 2016 with 76% of the vote. LA CAN attributes Measure HHH's success to strong coalition-building across sectors, with City Hall, business elites, philanthropic organizations, churches, stakeholders, and community-based organizations all on board.²¹

Measure H passed in a midterm election shortly after, in spring 2017. Measure H builds on the objectives of Measure HHH by creating the service infrastructure needed for supportive housing, which makes up a portion of the funding allocation for the bond: housing developers cannot secure bond money until service providers have been secured.²² As of April 2019, 33 developments were approved, with 457 affordable residences, and 1,637 supportive residences. The total number of housing units in some stage of the housing pipeline is 7,400.²³

²⁰ Everyone In (2019). [United Way campaign]. Retrieved from <https://everyoneinla.org/>

²¹ Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. (2017, February 7). *Motion by Supervisors Mark Ridley-Thomas and Sheila Kuehl*. Retrieved from http://homeless.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Board-Motion_-_Measure-H-Planning-Process-Strategies_2-7-17.pdf

²² LA Times Editorial Board. (2017, March 3). Measure H is the key to finally ending homelessness in Los Angeles County. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/editorials/la-ed-measure-h-vote-for-it-20170303-story.html>

²³ Garcetti, E. (2019). Rising to the challenge: helping homeless Angelenos. City of Los Angeles. Retrieved from: <https://www.lamayor.org/rising-challenge-helping-homeless-angelenos>

Measure H

Measure H was a Los Angeles County ballot measure in which voters approved a ¼ of a cent sales tax increase to pay for homeless services in 2017.²⁴ This measure implements strategies approved by County Board of Supervisors the previous year, which are mostly rooted in a “Housing First” approach. The tax increase will last ten years, and raise about \$355 million annually, and includes prevention services. The funds are administered by the Los Angeles County Homelessness Initiative.

Origin

The work of two regional bodies led to the creation of Measure H. First, the LA County Board of Supervisors adopted a set of 47 strategies to combat homelessness in 2016. They were devised through a comprehensive planning process led by the Homeless Initiative, which included 18 policy summits in 2015, that brought together 1,100 participants from 25 county departments, 30 cities, and over 100 community stakeholder organizations, including 4 focus groups with individuals with lived experience.²⁵

Housing First

HUD defines Housing First as an "approach to quickly and successfully connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment or service participation requirements. Supportive services are offered to maximize housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness as opposed to addressing predetermined treatment goals prior to permanent housing entry."¹

LAHSA conducted an analysis of housing gaps for people experiencing homelessness in LA County. This report estimated a \$450 million funding gap, with a need of over 15,000 units of permanent supportive housing.²⁶ The LA County Board of Supervisors approved the creation of Measure H, to fund the Homeless Initiative strategies, per the funding gap.²⁷ Measure H would increase sales tax by ¼ cent for ten years, and proposed to generate enough funds to house 45,000 people experiencing homelessness and help another 30,000 people avoid losing their

²⁴ Chiland, E. (2017). Measure H: A voter guide for LA County’s homelessness prevention ballot measure. March 7, 2017. *Curbed Los Angeles*. Retrieved from <https://la.curbed.com/2017/3/6/14829792/ballot-measure-h-march-election-los-angeles-homelessness>

²⁵ Ridley-Thomas, M. & Kuehl, S. (2017, February 7). *Motion: Measure H collaborative revenue planning process*. Los Angeles County. Retrieved from http://homeless.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Board-Motion_-_Measure-H-Planning-Process-Strategies_2-7-17.pdf

²⁶ Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. (2016). *Report on homeless housing gaps in the county of Los Angeles*. Retrieved from https://www.cacities.org/Resources-Documents/Policy-Advocacy-Section/Hot-Issues/Homeless-Resources/League-CSAC-Task-Force/Nov-28,-2016/la_county_housing_gap_analysis.aspx

²⁷ Ridley-Thomas, M. & Hahn, J. (2016, December 6). *Motion: Securing ongoing funding to address the homeless crisis*. Los Angeles County. Retrieved from <http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/109803.pdf>

homes.²⁸ It narrowly passed in the March 2017 special election, with just over the required two-thirds of the vote.²⁹

Citizens' Oversight Advisory Board (COAB)

Measure H is overseen by a community board. The COAB is comprised of five individuals, each of whom was nominated by a County Supervisor. The COAB meets quarterly, and meetings are open to the public. The board includes people from the nonprofit, foundation, and public service fields.

The COAB's official functions are threefold: semi-annual review of all expenditures from Measure H; annual accounting of allocations; and periodic evaluations of expenditures. Per Phil Ansell, director of the Homeless Initiative, the COAB may also incorporate other functions into their work.³⁰ Quarterly meetings typically feature presentations from lead agencies and committees (e.g. Ad hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness), discussion and questions from the Board, with opportunity for public comment and questions.

Progress to Date

The United Way of Greater Los Angeles said that funding has enabled them to quadruple the number of outreach teams on the streets, add 600 shelter beds, and provide subsidies to prevent 1,000 people from becoming homeless. The LA County Board of Supervisors has also approved \$20 million from the mental health budget for veteran services, and funding from the concurrent City of Los Angeles Measure HHH bond is funding low-income housing development.³¹ In August of 2018, LAHSA reported 7,448 people had been placed in permanent housing through Measure H, and 13,524 in interim housing.³² That number rose to 9,635 and 18,714 in November 2018.³³ For a current snapshot on Measure H, please see Figure 2.2.

²⁸ Gumbel, A. (2017, March 8). Los Angeles set to tax itself to raise billions for homelessness relief. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/mar/08/los-angeles-homelessness-sales-tax-approved>

²⁹ County of Los Angeles, Chief Executive Office. (2018, May 15). *Fiscal Year 2018-19 Measure H funding recommendations (All Supervisorial Districts)*. Retrieved from <http://homeless.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/FY-2018-19-Measure-H-Funding-Recommendations-.pdf>

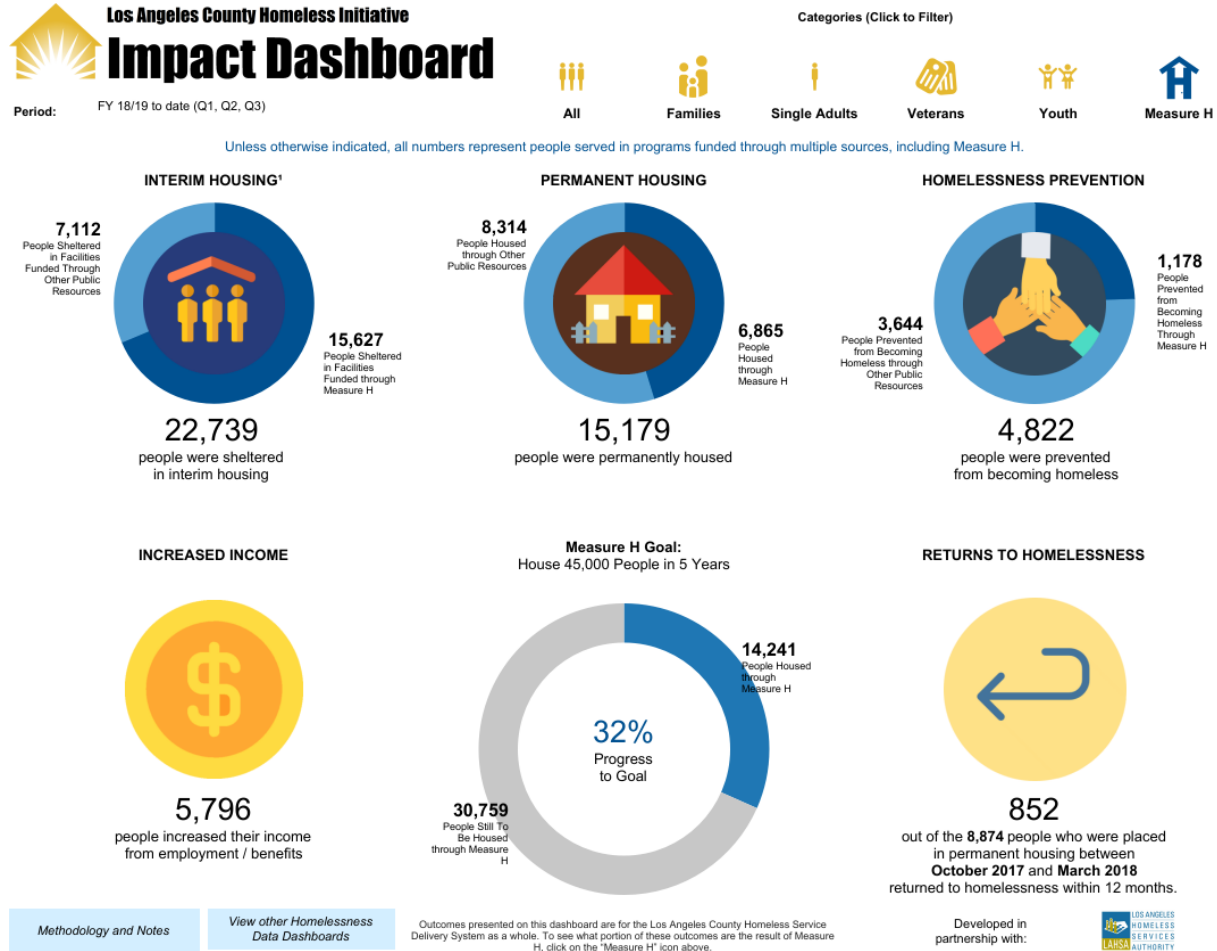
³⁰ The Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative. (2017, Dec 7). *Measure H Citizens' Oversight Advisory Board Meeting Minutes* [PDF file]. Retrieved from http://homeless.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/12.7.17-COAB-Minutes_FINAL.pdf

³¹ Denkman, L. (2018, May 31). Veteran homelessness in LA has dropped by 18 percent. *KPCC: Member-supported news for Southern California*. Retrieved from <https://www.scpr.org/news/2018/05/31/83625/veteran-homelessness-in-la-has-dropped-by-18-perce/>

³² CBS LA. (2018, August 17). 7,400 LA homeless now in permanent housing through Measure H, officials say. *CBS Local*. Retrieved from <https://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2018/08/17/7400-la-homeless-permanent-housing-through-measure-h/>

³³ NBC City News Service. (2018, November 2018). Measure H helped 10,000 homeless people into permanent housing, officials say. *NBC*. Retrieved from <https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/Measure-H-Helped-Homeless-Into-Permanent-Housing-501312852.html>

Figure 1.3: Measure H Dashboard³⁴



The overall homeless population countywide decreased by 3% in 2018, but the number of people experiencing homelessness for the first time increased. This perhaps foretells the 2019 PIT Count, where the enormous number of people entering homelessness for the first time pushed the total population up 12% county-wide, despite significant progress in re-housing. Unlike the 2018 PIT Count, 2019's data show increases in every service planning area. As such, these efforts have not been without criticism. Foreshadowing the numbers of 2019, a February 2018 article in *The LA Times* reported the homeless population was increasing faster than the projected supply of new housing. Furthermore, the Homeless Initiative was facing a \$73 million annual budget shortfall which could more than triple. Providing permanent housing would require building 20,000 homes, which is 5,000 more than projected. The latest version of the Housing Gap Analysis report³⁵ also estimated a shortage of emergency rental subsidies,

³⁴ The Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative. (2019). Homeless initiative impact dashboard [web page]. Retrieved from <http://homeless.lacounty.gov/impact-dashboard/>

³⁵ Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. (2018). *Report on homeless housing gaps in the county of Los Angeles: A homeless crisis response system model*. Retrieved from

and needed shelter beds also increased by double digit percentages.³⁶ To add to these challenges, construction costs in Los Angeles have increased by 20% since housing Measure HHH passed, diminishing the total potential impact of the funds.³⁷

Implementation Limitations

Additionally, there were concerns in early 2018 that LAHSA did not have the capacity to manage the extensive scope of the work. The County Auditor-Controller found the organization short on staff and late on payments to community group contractors. In response to these findings, LAHSA director Peter Lynn said the agency is already in a much stronger position than during the audit, with new staff and workflow systems.³⁸ Some local homeless advocates were also growing restless at what they perceive as a lack of substantive response to a crisis situation. Mel Tillekeratne of the Monday Night Mission and Shower of Hope felt that some cities were doing nothing at all.³⁹

Lastly, after criticism, the government entities working on homelessness pushed to integrate racial equity into their work. LAHSA created the Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness. In early 2019 the 26-member committee released a groundbreaking report that details how institutional racism is driving the enormous disparity in the percentage of Black people experiencing homelessness.⁴⁰ The report offers 67 recommendations to advance equity.

The Greater Houston Area

Background

The Greater Houston area is a sprawling metropolitan region, home to almost 7 million people. It includes nine counties, and covers about 10,000 square miles. The City of Houston itself has a population of over 2 million people, and includes 669 square miles. The cost of housing is among the lowest in major US metro areas, at 9.3% below the national average, and 47.8%

<https://www.sbceh.org/uploads/4/5/0/7/45075441/1865-2018-report-on-homeless-housing-gaps-in-the-county-of-los-angeles.pdf><https://www.lahsa.org/documents?id=1865-2018-report-on-homeless-housing-gaps-in-the-county-of-los-angeles.pdf>

³⁶ Smith, D., Holland, G., & Smith, D. (2018, May 31). Homelessness dips in L.A. and countywide, but Garcetti warns 'a real challenge' still remains. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-homeless-count-20180531-story.html>

³⁷ McGahan, J. (2019, March 8). Will a measure to help L.A.'s homeless become a historic public housing debacle? *Los Angeles Magazine*. Retrieved from <https://www.lamag.com/citythinkblog/proposition-hhh-debacle/>

³⁸ Los Angeles County Auditor-Controller (2018). Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, Measure H, Phase 1 – Fiscal operations assessment review [PDF file]. Los Angeles County. Retrieved from http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/auditor/cmr/1036006_2018-04-03LosAngelesHomelessServicesAuthority-MeasureH-Phase1-FiscalOperationsAssessmentReview.pdf

³⁹ Chiland, E. (2018, April 13). When will LA's big homelessness strategy start paying off? *Curbed LA*. Retrieved from <https://la.curbed.com/2018/4/13/17229430/los-angeles-homeless-strategy-measure-h-results>

⁴⁰ Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. (2019, February 26). Groundbreaking report on Black people and homelessness released. Retrieved from <https://www.lahsa.org/news?article=514-groundbreaking-report-on-black-people-and-homelessness-released>

below the 20 most populous metros.⁴¹ The Continuum of Care for Houston includes three of the most populous counties in the Greater Houston area (Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery Counties), representing about 3.1 million people from the metropolitan region.

The 2018 PIT Count recorded 4,143 individuals experiencing homelessness in the Houston area. Of these, 1,614 individuals were unsheltered, and 2,529 were living in shelters.⁴² The 2019 PIT Count shows a 5% decrease since 2018, which represents a 54% overall decrease since 2011.⁴³ However, Hurricane Harvey continues to make an impact, with 1 in 9 people citing the natural disaster as their reason for being unhoused.⁴⁴ The CoC received \$38,155,969 in federal funding for FY 2018; the largest amount to be awarded to the region to date. This includes funding renewals for 43 existing homeless services programs, and an expansion of CoC's Coordinated Access program. It also includes new funding for several domestic violence housing programs.⁴⁵

Primary Actors Working on Homelessness

The Way Home

The Way Home, Houston's Continuum of Care, serves the City of Houston and City of Pasadena as well as Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery Counties.⁴⁶ Their mission statement is "...to create a collaborative, inclusive, community-based process and approach to planning for and managing homeless assistance resources and programs effectively and efficiently to end homelessness in the jurisdiction..."⁴⁷ They partner with over 100 agencies to provide services, with a 'Housing First' approach to stabilizing individuals experiencing homelessness.⁴⁸ HUD recently merged Montgomery County's CoC into The Way Home due to infrastructure and efficiency concerns.

⁴¹ Jankowski, P., and Verhoef, M. (2019). Cost of living comparison. Greater Houston Partnership. Retrieved from <https://www.houston.org/houston-data/cost-living-comparison>

⁴² Coalition for the Homeless (2018). *2018 Homeless count & survey fact sheet* [PDF file]. Retrieved from http://www.homelesshouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Final_2018_PIT_FactSheet_Digital_3.pdf

⁴³ Coalition for the Homeless (2019). *2019 Homeless count & survey fact sheet* [PDF file]. Retrieved from <http://www.homelesshouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/2019-PIT-Fact-Sheet-Final-for-Digital.pdf>

⁴⁴ Edwards, S. (2019, May 17). New data shows promising decline in greater Houston homelessness. *Houstonia*. Retrieved from <https://www.houstoniamag.com/articles/2019/5/17/2019-homelessness-count-houston-harris-county-coalition-for-the-homeless-way-home>

⁴⁵ Wright, A. (2019, Feb 27). The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development announces final awards from FY 2018 [web page]. The Way Home. Retrieved from <http://www.thewayhomehouston.org/the-u-s-department-of-housing-urban-development-announces-final-awards-from-fy-2018/>

⁴⁶ The Way Home. (2019). Continuum of Care [web page]. Coalition for The Homeless. Retrieved from <http://www.homelesshouston.org/continuum-of-care/>

⁴⁷ The Way Home. (2017). *The Way Home Continuum of Care Charter*. Page 1. Coalition for The Homeless. Retrieved from <http://www.homelesshouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CoC-Charter-Revised-8-2017.pdf>

⁴⁸ Manouse, E. (2018, Oct 8). Houston's homeless situation - Working on a solution. *Houston Public Media*. Retrieved from <https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/in-depth/2018/10/08/307243/houstons-homeless-situation-working-on-a-solution/>

The CoC is governed by a Steering Committee comprised of representatives from across the community. These sixteen members are selected from the various counties served, and from the private, nonprofit and public sectors.⁴⁹ According to the CoC's charter, each member of the Committee must have fiscal and program authority of the organization they represent.⁵⁰ Organizations and jurisdictions on the Committee appoint their own representatives, while provider representatives are selected by the CoC Provider Forum, and Consumer representatives are selected from the Consumer Input Forum participants.

The Steering Committee's decisions are informed by service provider recommendations, which are discussed at the quarterly CoC Provider Forums.⁵¹ These forums are the "primary policy, input and planning group for the CoC provider community",⁵² and membership is comprised of homeless service provider agencies in the district. The Consumer Input Forum is a means to gather knowledge from the consumer population, and is composed of people with lived experience with homelessness, both past and present. It convenes no less than twice a year. Other components of the CoC are: The HMIS forum, the HMIS Support Committee, Provider Affinity Groups, Population Specific Work Groups, and Task Specific Work Groups.⁵³

In recognition that funding was not being effectively applied and a new overarching strategy was needed, The Way Home released their Action Plan in 2014.⁵⁴ Their new approach relies on data-driven decision making to allocate resources, and is organized by homeless population segment (e.g. veterans), rather than by strategies. This decision was made in accord with the Federal Plan, "Opening Doors," which provides a framework for ending homelessness by subpopulation, with an emphasis on veterans and the chronically homeless.⁵⁵

In July 2019, The Way Home launched a new Eviction Prevention Program Pilot, in partnership with the Coalition for the Homeless, CSH, Harris County Community Service, Harris County Precinct 7, Texas Southern University's Urban Research and Resource Center, and consultant Barbara Poppe (former Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness). The program aims to help low- and moderate-income tenants avoid eviction through three key

⁴⁹ The Way Home. (2019). Continuum of Care Steering Committee [web page]. Coalition for the Homeless. Retrieved from <http://www.homelesshouston.org/continuum-of-care/steering-committee/>

⁵⁰ The Way Home. (2017). *The Way Home Continuum of Care Charter* [PDF file]. Coalition for the Homeless. Retrieved from <http://www.homelesshouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CoC-Charter-Revised-8-2017.pdf>

⁵¹ The Way Home. (2019). Continuum of Care Provider Forum [web page]. Coalition for the Homeless. Retrieved from <http://www.homelesshouston.org/continuum-of-care/coc-provider-forum/>

⁵² The Way Home. (2017). *The Way Home Continuum of Care Charter* [PDF file]. Page 4. Coalition for the Homeless. Retrieved from <http://www.homelesshouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CoC-Charter-Revised-8-2017.pdf>

⁵³ The Way Home. (2017). *The Way Home Continuum of Care Charter* [PDF file]. Coalition for the Homeless. Retrieved from <http://www.homelesshouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CoC-Charter-Revised-8-2017.pdf>

⁵⁴ The Way Home. (2016). *Action plan: 2015-2017 Update* [PDF file]. Coalition for the Homeless. Retrieved from http://www.homelesshouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/1617_Action_Plan_Final_Digital_082216.pdf

⁵⁵ U. S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (2015). *Opening doors: Federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness*. Retrieved from <https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/opening-doors>

strategies: homelessness prevention funding; short-term case management; and research on strategies for avoiding eviction that can be replicated on a wider scale. The program was initiated by Judge Jeremy L. Brown, who felt a need to look toward preventative solutions in response to the staggering volume of eviction cases passing through the court system.⁵⁶

The Coalition for the Homeless

The Coalition for the Homeless is the lead agency within the CoC. It was established in 1982, incorporated as a 501(c)(3) in 1988, and has four program areas: Research, project management, system capacity building, and public policy.⁵⁷ Their role is to create a system that facilitates collaboration between service providers, government agencies, and community partners for the provision of services to people experiencing homelessness.⁵⁸ This collaborative model integrates partner service provider organizations with public sector efforts, under the direction of the Mayor's Office for Homeless Initiatives.⁵⁹

The Mayor's Office for Homeless Initiatives

The MOHI⁶⁰ coordinates the efforts of agencies like the Housing and Community Development Department, the Health and Human Services Department, the Houston Police Department, which has a Homeless Outreach Team.⁶¹ They also develop public policy for the City of Houston; guide the City's participation in regional planning around homelessness; and coordinate with federal, state and regional governments, national experts and local housing authorities.⁶²

Figure 1.4: Approach to redesigning the system⁶³

⁵⁶ Wright, A. (2019, July 3). Eviction prevention pilot launches in Houston [web page]. The Way Home. Retrieved from <http://www.thewayhomehouston.org/eviction-prevention-pilot-launches-in-houston/>

⁵⁷ Coalition for the Homeless (2019). About us [web page]. Retrieved from <http://www.homelesshouston.org/about-us/who-we-are/>

⁵⁸ Coalition for the Homeless (2019). About us [web page]. Retrieved from <http://www.homelesshouston.org/about-us/who-we-are/>

⁵⁹ Mayor's Office for Homeless Initiatives [web page]. (2019). City of Houston. Retrieved from www.houstontx.gov/homeless/

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Houston Police Department, Mental Health Division. (2019, April 2). Homeless outreach team [web page]. Retrieved from: <https://www.houstoncit.org/test/>

⁶² Mayor's Office for Homeless Initiatives [web page]. (2019). Retrieved from www.houstontx.gov/homeless/

⁶³ The Way Home. (2016). *Action Plan: 2015-2017 Update*. Retrieved from www.homelesshouston.com



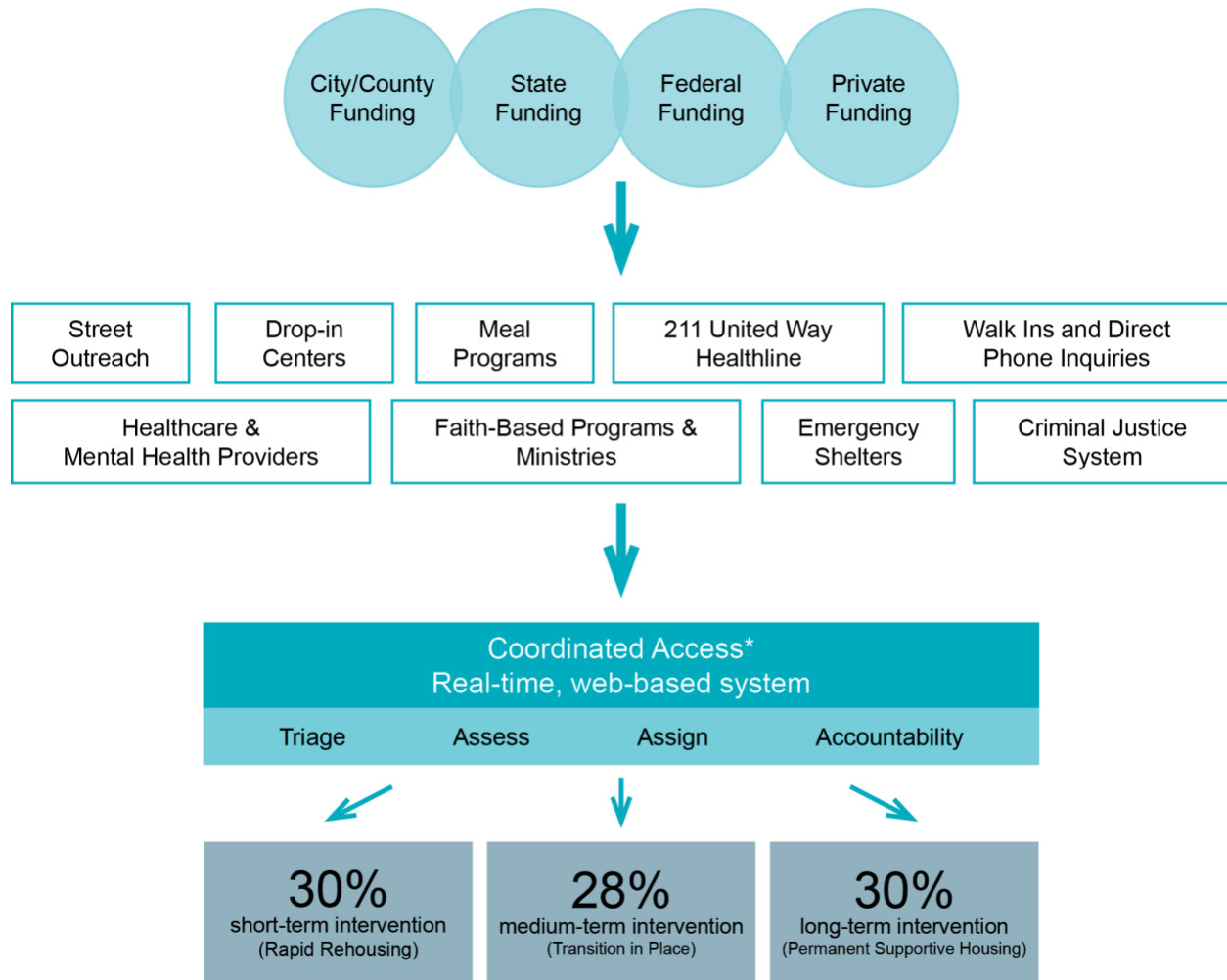
We began with governance,

added support from a lead agency, a political champion,
and community-driven strategic planning

we maintained focus to rightsize our system and
are creating bridges to other systems.

We support this change through performance standards,
capacity building and system flexibility.

Figure 1.5: The Way Home Homeless Response System⁶⁴



*12% of the homeless population will solve homelessness on their own

Progress to Date

Houston reports significant declines in their homelessness population. They credit increased support from HUD starting in 2011, and an articulated focus on a single population (veterans).⁶⁵ Lower housing values and land prices also factor into Houston’s successes. The last Point-in-Time count showed another decline in homelessness, after an uptick attributed to Hurricane Harvey.⁶⁶ In a recent visit to Houston, the City of Anchorage Alaska’s mayor noted the ability of government and private sector actors to work together in addressing homelessness as a

⁶⁴ The Way Home. (2016). *Action Plan: 2015-2017 update*. Retrieved from www.homelesshouston.com

⁶⁵ Garnham, J. P. (2019, July 2). Why homelessness is going down in Houston but up in Dallas. *The Texas Tribune*. Retrieved from <https://www.texastribune.org/2019/07/02/why-homelessness-going-down-houston-dallas/>

⁶⁶ Edwards, S. (2019, May 17). New data shows promising decline in greater Houston homelessness. *Houstonia*. Retrieved from <https://www.houstoniamag.com/articles/2019/5/17/2019-homelessness-count-houston-harris-county-coalition-for-the-homeless-way-home>

component of their successes in reducing the overall numbers of people experiencing homelessness.⁶⁷

Washington DC

Background

The District of Columbia has a smaller geographic footprint compared to the other case studies, at only 68 square miles. The population, however, is not far below Multnomah County, with 702,455 residents, making it the densest of the four areas studied. The PIT Count data discussed in this report refers to the city itself. Washington DC is situated within the Washington metropolitan area, which includes portions of Maryland and Virginia, and is the most educated and affluent region in the US.⁶⁸ The total population of the region is 5,441,979 people. The District is the fifth most expensive US city, with housing costs 2.7 times the national average.⁶⁹ Renters are the majority in the city, representing 62% of households, yet 48% of renters are cost-burdened.⁷⁰ Washington DC is the only of our case examples with a right to shelter at any time of the year.

Washington DC has an unusual governmental structure and history, due to its status as an independent city without a state. It was only in 1973 that the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act was passed, which provided for an elected mayor and 13-member Council. The act allows Congress to review and overturn any legislative act of Council within 30 legislative days. In 1997 Congress stripped financial authority from locally elected representatives in the face of mismanagement, and transferred control to the federal government. Local authority under the Home Rule Charter was restored in 2001.⁷¹ The city's budget is created through an iterative process between the Mayor and the Council, and must be approved by Congress. DC residents have long complained of "taxation without representation," as they have no official representative in the Senate.

⁶⁷ Howard, A. (2019, June 13). Anchorage mayor cites Houston model for best practices to end homelessness. *JHV*. Retrieved from <http://jhvonline.com/anchorage-mayor-cites-houston-model-for-best-practices-to-end-homelessness-p26128-89.htm>

⁶⁸ Homan, T. (2010, December 14). Washington suburbs are richest, most educated in U.S. *Bloomberg*. Retrieved from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2010-12-14/washington-d-c-metropolitan-area-is-wealthiest-most-educated-u-s-region>

⁶⁹ Burrows, D. (2019, April 21). 20 most expensive U.S. cities to live in. *Kiplinger*. Retrieved from <https://www.kiplinger.com/slideshow/real-estate/T006-S001-most-expensive-u-s-cities-to-live-in-2019/index.html>

⁷⁰ National Equity Atlas. (2017). *When renters rise, cities thrive*. National Equity Atlas, PolicyLink & USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity. Retrieved from <https://nationalequityatlas.org/node/50176>

⁷¹ Richards, M. (2002). History of local government in Washington, D.C. D.C. vote: Strengthening democracy. Retrieved from <https://www.dcvote.org/inside-dc/history-local-government-washington-dc>

Two years ago, the nation's capital had one of the highest rates of people experiencing homelessness in the country,⁷² with an increase of 50% between 2000 and 2015. That number represents almost 1% of all District residents, or 101 people per square mile. According to the 2019 PIT Count, 6,521 individuals were experiencing homelessness, which represents a 6% decrease from the previous year, and an 11% decrease since 2015. The count shows 608 of those individuals were unsheltered, 4,679 were in an emergency shelter, and 1,234 were in transitional housing. The decrease is primarily attributed to a reduction of families in the population, which diminished by 11.8%, and 45.3 % in 2016.⁷³

Selected Actors Working on Homelessness

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (MWCOC) is comprised of 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and the U.S. Congress. The council's Homeless Services Planning and Coordinating Committee manages the annual PIT Count, and convenes to share strategies "in addressing common challenges that are unique to living in a high-cost housing market such as metropolitan Washington."⁷⁴ The MWCOC also provides training, discussions and speaking events for members of the Committee. Membership is extended to representatives from human services departments of the various jurisdictions in the MWCOC, and to employees of nonprofit members of the CoC. They hold monthly public meetings in Washington D.C.

The District of Columbia Interagency Council on Homelessness

The District of Columbia Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) is the Continuum of Care, and includes representatives from government agencies, service providers, advocates, constituents, the private sector, and the CoC. Council members also meet as the following committees: Emergency Response and Shelter Operations, Youth, Strategic Planning, and Housing Solutions.⁷⁵

At the behest of newly elected mayor Muriel Bowser, the council developed *The Homeward DC Strategic Plan (2015-2020)*.⁷⁶ The overarching vision of the plan is to end long-term

⁷² Weiland, N. (2017, Jan 1). D. C. Homelessness doubles national average as living costs soar. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/01/us/washington-dc-homelessness-double-national-average.html>

⁷³ Chapman, H. (2019). *Homelessness in metropolitan Washington: Results and analysis from the annual Point-in-Time (PIT) count of homeless persons*. Retrieved from <https://www.mwcog.org/documents/homelessnessreport/>

⁷⁴ Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. (2019). Homeless Services Planning and Coordinating Committee. Retrieved from <https://www.mwcog.org/committees/homeless-services-planning-and-coordinating-committee/>

⁷⁵ District of Columbia Interagency Council on Homelessness (n.d.). *About us*. Retrieved from: <https://ich.dc.gov/page/about-ich>

⁷⁶ District of Columbia Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2015). *Homeward DC 2015-2020*. Retrieved from https://ich.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ich/page_content/attachments/ICH-StratPlan2.7-Web.pdf

homelessness in the District by 2020. Within that vision there are three major goals: End homelessness among veterans by the end of 2015; End chronic homelessness among individuals and families by the end of 2017; and to be able to rehouse any household experiencing a loss of housing within 60 days, by 2020. The plan is organized around five key strategy areas:

1. Develop a more effective crisis response system;
2. Increase the supply of affordable and supportive housing;
3. Remove barriers to affordable and supportive housing;
4. Increase the economic security of households in our system; and
5. Increase prevention efforts to stabilize households before housing loss occurs.⁷⁷

The collaborative process was led by the ICH, and took place between June 2014 and March 2015. It involved government representatives, nonprofit partners, advocates, people with lived experience, members of the business and philanthropic communities, and consultants from the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), Abt Associates, and Community Solutions.

The Plan mainly utilizes data collected through the HMIS, and is supplemented by additional data from other agencies. In keeping with ICH practice, standing committee and work group meetings were (and remain) open to the public, and during the process of developing the plan there were additional public meetings to solicit stakeholders' feedback. In total, twenty-six public meetings were held as part of the planning process, which took place at various locations and focused on different topics.

The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness

The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness (TCP) manages the Continuum of Care for the District of Columbia, and the HMIS database. They were established in 1989, and their mission is to “utilize community resources to create innovative strategies that prevent homelessness in our city.”⁷⁸

The Way Home

The non-governmental organization The Way Home (no relationship to the Houston organization) has been leading an independent campaign to end chronic homelessness in the city for several years. The campaign is partnered with nearly 100 local and national organizations, from healthcare providers to the private sector.⁷⁹ One of their key efforts is advocating for housing and services funding allocations in each year's Fiscal Year budget. This year they are requesting \$20.6 million, in addition to the \$35 million in the proposed 2020

⁷⁷ District of Columbia Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2015). *Homeward DC 2015-2020*. Retrieved from https://ich.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ich/page_content/attachments/ICH-StratPlan2.7-Web.pdf

⁷⁸ The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness. (n.d.). About us [web page]. Retrieved from: <http://community-partnership.org/about-us>

⁷⁹ The Way Home District of Columbia. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://thewayhomedc.org/miriamskitchen/?0>

budget.⁸⁰ In addition to more funding for housing and services, they are asking for funding specifically for a homeless street outreach network.⁸¹ The organization's position is situated in the belief that Washington D.C.'s homelessness strategy is *working*, per the 2019 PIT Count numbers, and needs robust continued funding.⁸² Their direct action, A People's Budget Action to End Homelessness, convened in front of the DC Council building May 8 to demand increased funding.

Funding and Progress to Date

In April of 2019 the ICH met publicly to discuss the draft Homeward D.C. progress report, which will be submitted to Mayor Bowser as a required precursor to the creation of Homeward D.C. 2.0. According to ICH Executive Director Kristy Greenwalt, the greatest strides have been made in reducing the number of families experiencing homelessness, which has gone down by 38% in two years. Greenwalt also stated the difficulties of contending with changing externalities like rising rents, while implementing the plan.⁸³

The mayor's proposed Fiscal Year 2020 budget includes \$103 million in housing funding, of which \$35 million would be explicitly dedicated to Homeward D.C., with the remainder going to affordable and workforce housing. The \$35 million will go toward supporting short-term family shelters, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing. These spending increases are enabled by making the commercial property tax of \$1.89 permanent (\$25 million) and increasing the deed and recordation tax on commercial properties over \$2 million from 1.45% to 2.5% (\$78 million).⁸⁴ Equity continues to be a major issue in the District, as 97% of families experiencing homelessness are African American, while that group makes up only 40% of the total population.⁸⁵

In June of 2019, Mayor Bowser, the ICH, and the Greater Washington Community Foundation launched the Partnership to End Homelessness.⁸⁶ The initiative aims to galvanize private sector

⁸⁰ Ibid

⁸¹ Rabinowitz, J. (2019, April 12). FY20 budget increases funds to end chronic homelessness, falls far short of need [web page]. The Way Home: Ending chronic homelessness in DC. Retrieved from <http://www.thewayhomedc.org/app/document/32967864>

⁸² Rabinowitz, J. (2019, May 1). Decrease in chronic homelessness shows DC on is on the right track, more funding needed [web page]. The Way Home: Ending chronic homelessness in DC. Retrieved from <http://www.thewayhomedc.org/app/document/33156804>

⁸³ Collins, A. (2019, April 17). In progress report, ICH looks at successes and shortcomings of plan to end homelessness. *Street Sense Media*. Retrieved from <https://www.streetsensemedia.org/article/in-progress-report-ich-looks-at-successes-and-shortcomings-of-plan-to-end-homelessness/>

⁸⁴ Telerski, N. (2019, April 17). The mayor's budget proposal contains \$103 million in support for affordable housing production and preservation. *Street Sense Media*. Retrieved from <https://www.streetsensemedia.org/article/dc-mayor-budget-support-affordable-housing-production-preservation/>

⁸⁵ Collins, A. (2019, April 17). In progress report, ICH looks at successes and shortcomings of plan to end homelessness. *Street Sense Media*. Retrieved from www.streetsensemedia.org

⁸⁶ The Greater Washington Community Foundation. (n.d.). Partnership to end homelessness [web page]. Retrieved from <https://www.thecommunityfoundation.org/partnership-to-end-homelessness>

investment, and coordinate the public and private sectors around a central strategy to address homelessness and housing insecurity in the city. ICH director Kristy Greenwalt cites the need for a “formal structure for better mobilizing and aligning the contributions of private sector partners” (ICH, 2019). The new partnership will increase philanthropic and private sector capital opportunities to nonprofits, in order to accelerate efforts under the Homeward DC strategic plan.

Multnomah County

Multnomah County has worked with the City of Portland, the City of Gresham, nonprofits and faith, philanthropic, and business communities and developed several mechanisms for addressing housing and homelessness in the area.

Background

Multnomah County, Oregon is home to eight incorporated cities, including the cities of Portland and Gresham, unincorporated land, and is 466 square miles. Multnomah County is the center of the Portland metropolitan statistical area, which includes seven counties and spans two states (Oregon and Washington). Four of the counties are located in Oregon (Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington, and Yamhill Counties). While all seven of the counties’ housing and labor markets are inextricably linked together, the regulatory environments are distinct. Policy work and program delivery related to housing and homelessness is further complicated by having two different state legislatures.

Unique in the nation, the regional government, Metro, serves as the MPO for three of the counties on the Oregon side of the border, which includes Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties. Here, representatives are directly elected to Metro council, and the representation system reflects traditional local government systems, as opposed to the more complex regional governance structures found across the country. About 811,000 people live in Multnomah County, or 46% of the tri-county regional population.

Efforts to coordinate a response to homelessness in Multnomah County go back about two decades with the creation of a 10-year plan to end homelessness (adopted in 2004).⁸⁷ At that time, Multnomah County worked with the homeless family system, and the City of Portland supported houseless single adults. While the plan faced implementation challenges, this early work on collaboration helped create connections among stakeholders addressing homelessness. In recent years, a flurry of governance agreements and revenue-raising tools have been adopted. According the 2017 Point-in-Time count, almost 4,200 people met the definition to be described as homeless according to HUD, about 0.5% of the population.

⁸⁷ Citizens Commission on Homelessness. (2004). Home again: A 10-year plan to end homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County [PDF file]. Retrieved from <http://www.mentalhealthportland.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/FULL-ACTION-PLAN.pdf>

Selected Actors Working on Homelessness

Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS)

Created in 2016, the JOHS coordinates homelessness services from Multnomah County and the City of Portland. The JOHS also manages the CoC, A Home for Everyone. The JOHS's IGA has a five-year term.

A Home for Everyone (AHFE)

Created in 2013, AHFE is a multijurisdictional governance structure to end homelessness in Multnomah County. The participating government partners include Multnomah County, the cities of Portland and Gresham, and the area housing authority, Home Forward. The entire structure brings together various stakeholders, including government, nonprofit, private sector, and community members who have experienced homelessness, to make plans, policy, and budget recommendations to address homelessness through a collaborative governance process. AHFE serves as the Multnomah County and Portland's CoC.

AHFE consists of several committees, boards, and task forces. The executive committee includes elected officials from the three participating jurisdictions, the local housing authority, philanthropic organizations, the coordinating board co-chairs, and selected civic leaders. The coordinating board includes about 40 stakeholders from social service agencies, government agencies (elected officials and staff), and community members who have experienced homelessness. The coordinating board makes recommendations to the executive committee based on their deliberations and input from other committees. The executive committee then makes decisions about what to recommend that jurisdictions do to address homelessness. Ideally, the elected officials on the executive committee take the recommendations back to their home jurisdictions and advocate for the decisions of the executive committee. The majority of the AHFE work focuses on making budgetary recommendations to the relevant jurisdictions, developing shared standards of care, recommending regional policy to address homelessness, and acting as the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care.

Early in its work, AHFE created *A Home for Everyone: A United Community Plan to End Homelessness* that included five supporting strategic plans for housing, health, employment, veterans, and safety off the streets.⁸⁸ This work also includes accessing services, system coordination, and several vulnerable populations such as veterans. Similarly to other locations, AHFE has made significant progress in housing veterans in part thanks to funding focused on this population made available during the Obama administration.

⁸⁸ A Home for Everyone. (2013). *A Home for Everyone: A united community plan to end homelessness for Portland/Multnomah County*. Retrieved from <http://ahomeforeveryone.net/the-plan>.

AHFE includes a stated goal to racial equity, and employs a racial equity lens. In 2018, AHFE created a standing equity committee, at the recommendation of its equity task force. A JOHS staff member started full-time in 2019 to help implement the goals of the equity committee.

As of August 2019, the IGA for AHFE has expired, and AHFE is undertaking a strategic planning process.

Multnomah County

Before the formation of the JOHS, Multnomah County managed the homeless family system, having responsibility for families, youth, and domestic violence services. In addition, the County maintained and maintains many of the mainstream programs that provide care to people who otherwise would be homeless—e.g. Aging Disability and Veterans Services, Mental Health and Addictions Services—and also oversees a range of anti-poverty programs, including school based anti-poverty programs that help stabilize families with children at risk of homelessness. While JOHS is a joint venture between Multnomah County and the City of Portland, the JOHS staff are classified as county employees.

Racial Equity Lens

A decision-making tool that helps people consider the disparate impacts and equity-making opportunities for policies, plans, programs, and projects.

City of Portland

As the largest city in the Portland region, the city is also home to significant influx of new community members, escalating housing prices, new luxury housing, and redevelopment catering to the upper end of the housing market. In 2015, the city declared a housing emergency to expand its powers to address the spiraling housing market. In 2016, trying to address the ever-shrinking amount of affordable housing, city residents approved a seven year \$258.4 million bond to provide housing. The City of Portland continues to have primary responsibility for developing affordable housing, and until the creation of the JOHS, managed the adult homelessness system. The city continues to maintain the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), both for Multnomah County and for CoCs across Oregon state.

Metro

The regional government sponsored a housing bond that passed in 2018 to raise \$652.8 million in revenue to build permanently affordable housing. The bond signified Metro's interest in expanding its role in addressing the housing crisis, requiring a revision of its charter.

Home Forward

Home Forward is the housing authority from Multnomah County, but goes beyond the traditional role of a housing authority. HF is an active participant in AHFE, and part of an integrated network of government entities committed to addressing homelessness.

Nongovernmental Actors

A wide range of faith, philanthropic, business, and nonprofit organizations have rallied in support of housing solutions to homelessness in the tri-county area. In the interest of space and to avoid leaving any partners out, we decided to talk about nongovernmental actors in more general terms. These partners are pivotal in many ways including oversight of governance, support for revenue measures, complementing regional efforts, advancing racial equity, and educating and encouraging the public to see housing solutions to homelessness.

Revenue Raising

Revenue in the Portland region has been raised through two funding mechanisms: a Portland housing bond and a regional housing bond. The City of Portland's Housing Bond was passed by voters in November 2016, and allocates \$258.4 million to create more affordable housing. The Portland Housing Bureau (PHB) is leading the effort in collaboration with city officials and community partners. The bond aims to create 1,300 affordable homes for 650 households making no more than 60% Area Median Income (AMI), over a five- to-eight-year period. At the time the bond was passed, state law stipulated that only a public entity could own housing built with bond proceeds, and Home Forward stepped into the role. This law changed in November of 2018, when voters passed a constitutional amendment allowing bond funds for affordable housing to be loaned to private entities. All housing under construction up until that time will be owned by Home Forward.

Allocation of funds is shaped by the 22-member Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG), which was convened in April 2017. Members were mainly representing community partners from the nonprofit sector, with a few public sector participants. The group met nine times over six months to develop the Housing Bond Policy Framework, which will be used to guide decision-making, and to evaluate expenditures in annual reporting. After the framework was in draft form, Portland Housing Bureau conducted five weeks of community outreach to solicit comments, which numbered nearly 1,000.⁸⁹ The Policy Framework established production goals, community values, communities to be served, services, reporting metrics, and guidelines for ongoing community engagement.

Oversight of the bond funds is handled by Portland's Housing Bond Oversight Committee (BOC), as stipulated by City Council when they referred the measure for the ballot.⁹⁰ The five-member committee is appointed by the commissioners and mayor, and is responsible for reviewing bond expenditures, and providing annual reports. This includes tracking implementation metrics against the Housing Bureau's Racial Equity Plan, and monitoring utilization of disadvantaged, minority, women, and emerging small business to support community benefits.

⁸⁹ Bond Stakeholder Advisory Group for the Portland Housing Bureau. (2017). *Portland's Housing Bond Policy Framework* (pp. 1-71). Retrieved from <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/article/659537>

⁹⁰ Portland Housing Bureau. (2017). *Portland's Housing Bond Oversight Committee: Charter and protocols*. Retrieved from <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/article/692098>

In November 2018, voters in the Metro area passed the nation's first regional housing bond, which sets out a goal of creating 3,900 affordable homes in five to seven years, using \$652.8 million in funds.⁹¹ About 1,600 of these will be set aside for households earning 30% AMI or less. Overall, the bond aims to house between 7,500 and 12,000 people. Unlike Portland's Housing Bond, the framework was developed in advance of the Metro Council referring it to the ballot. Core values are leading with racial equity; prioritizing people least served by the market; increasing access to public goods and preventing displacement; and creating fiscally sound and transparent investments.⁹² This framework was developed through months of engagement with partners and community members.

Between February and June 2019 a separate community engagement process was conducted. This effort focused on local strategies to address housing needs, providing a forum for stakeholder feedback, and identifying opportunities to create affordable housing. Public meetings were held in each of the jurisdictions, and facilitated by either nonprofit community partners or local governments.

The Metro Council voted to appoint thirteen members of the committee that will oversee the region's affordable housing program. They will be tasked with tracking construction of the 3,900 homes planned under the bond measure. Annual independent audits will also be conducted. The members of the committee are a mix of professionals from the private and nonprofit sectors. The committee meets once a month.

Progress to Date

Since the creation of AHFE, the following goals have been achieved: (1) expansion of system capacity to prevent and end homelessness using local general funds; (2) doubling the publicly funded shelter system; (3) because of the strength of the governance structure, investing and programming in alignment with AHFE identified values/priorities/practices, including culturally specific and responsive programs; and, (4) integrating disparate data collection, entry, and reporting practices to allow for system-level reporting.

A June 2019 audit of the Portland Housing Bond finds positive early results of the implementation process, with consistent project selection criteria.⁹³ To-date, 662 homes have been completed or are in-progress. The audit recommends greater attention to veterans, disabled and senior populations, and evaluating the target populations of each project.

The recently released Point-in-Time count found a small, but overall decline in homelessness in Multnomah County, but an increase in unsheltered people experiencing homelessness. African

⁹¹ Homes for Greater Portland. (2018). *Implementing Metro's affordable housing bond* [PDF file]. Retrieved from <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2019/02/12/housing-bond-fact-sheet-02122019.pdf>

⁹² Oregon Metro. (2018). *Affordable homes for greater Portland: Metro Chief Operating Officer recommendation*. Retrieved from: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/article/708741>

⁹³ Caballero, M., & Guy, K. (2019). *Portland Housing Bond: Early implementation results mostly encouraging*. Portland City Auditor: Audit Services. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/auditservices/article/734894>

American and Native American men saw significant increases in chronic homelessness. At the same time, A Home for Everyone served over 35,000 people experiencing or at risk for homelessness in fiscal year 2017–2018.

Moving Forward in the Portland Tri-County Area

The purpose of this report is to examine homelessness issues and possible responses for the Portland tri-county area, and its three CoCs (one in each county). Developing just and meaningful regional governance takes time, and requires both political and financial support. However, given the pivotal role housing and labor markets play in homelessness, and that these markets are regional in nature, identifying collaborative opportunities for the tri-county region could be instrumental in addressing homelessness. Further, service provision will likely be more effective if it occurs on a regional scale, mirroring how people and the relevant systems operate.

Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties and cities within their boundaries, along with Metro, should convene a task force or working group to examine the potential benefits of addressing homelessness through regional coordination. Such a group should have a clear deadline for making decisions and recommendations about how the region should move forward. The group should consider which issues and/or programs in particular could be better coordinated regionally related to homelessness. Problem identification will be essential in any coordinating work or long-term governance process. If the solution to homelessness is housing, then homelessness and housing discussions should be integrated while explicitly working to understand how any efforts to serve one part of the population needing affordable housing impacts others. ***Solving affordable housing is not the same thing as solving chronic homelessness.*** To address the need for affordable housing, we need to consider housing across the income spectrum, and weigh trade-offs and interaction effects between interventions. Solving chronic homelessness would mostly focus on creating permanent supportive housing through a Housing First model. Both creating more access to affordable housing for all relevant income groups, and supporting people who are chronically homeless are necessary. Achieving both would be remarkable, but doing so at the same time can only happen through deliberate and careful planning.

Metro, and its participating jurisdictions, started this work at the regional level with its affordable housing bond. However, this bond only covers capital costs and only for about 12,000 of the people in need across the region. A significant resource gap still exists in serving everyone experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity in the region.

A logical next step to the Metro housing capital bond, would be to raise revenue across the region to pay for services to match the capital bond. Section 3 of this report provides details on various ways that revenue could be raised in addition to Metro. Regardless of how revenue is raised and which government entity raises it, it is essential to have a transparent process that determines how the revenue will be spent including a public-facing body to oversee it that is based on a racial equity lens framework. Long-term planning work, and shorter-term work such as exploring other revenue measures could occur in tandem. For instance, the region moves

forward on existing efforts such as the Regional Supportive Housing Impact Fund, which is dedicated to raising funding for permanent supportive housing. At the same time, a government-driven process could begin to identify next steps in the region.

Government-led discussions must occur transparently and include those who are most marginalized in the region and have experienced homelessness or housing insecurity. These discussions should build on existing coordinating discussions about homelessness such as A Home for Everyone, other county CoCs, and groups like the Regional Housing Impact Fund,⁹⁴ but continue to allow these groups to work independently. For example, Los Angeles County represents a complex and intensive set of coordinated efforts to address homelessness. The efforts of different public and private actors in LA County created an overlapping set of activities largely focused on the belief that providing stable housing is the best path to addressing homelessness. Their present-day efforts build on over a decade of work to coordinate responses to addressing homelessness. In the tri-county area, encouraging the work of civic society groups, non-profit organizations, and advocacy movements, are, thus, also necessary to address and prevent homelessness across the region. Solutions to affordable housing and homelessness may not rely on one large multi-stakeholder table, but rather rest on several small to medium-sized tables.

⁹⁴ CSH. (2019). *Tri County equitable housing strategy to expand supportive housing for people experiencing chronic homelessness* [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://d155kunxf1aozz.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Metro_SupportiveHousing_Report_WithAppendices_March_Final.pdf