



## STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2024

*Making Homelessness  
Rare, Brief, and Non-Recurring*



**Tulsa** CITY OF  
A New Kind of Energy.

**LIVE UNITED**



Tulsa Area United Way



**COMMUNITY  
SERVICE  
COUNCIL**

Improving Oklahomans' Lives Through  
Research, Planning & Action



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*For many years,* Tulsans have offered their ideas, hopes, concerns and strategies for making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring for the members of our community. From their ideas and passion came the decision to embark on a year-long strategic planning process in 2019. The process engaged hundreds of stakeholders in forums across Tulsa, including a community-wide kick-off event with more than 300 participants, committee meetings, online surveys, and focus groups. Conversations included feedback from experts who confront homelessness on the front lines daily, as well as individuals with lived experience of homelessness. This valuable information came from youth, chronically homeless individuals, women who have experienced domestic violence, people living outside, and people with serious mental illness. From all of these stakeholders came a plan that is a true reflection of the community's priorities and offers a clear path toward a healthier, safer and more livable Tulsa.

*The strategies outlined in this plan* emphasize not only housing people currently experiencing homelessness in Tulsa, but also proactively preventing future homelessness among Tulsa's citizens. The strategies also reflect nationally recognized evidence-based practices and innovative thinking at the local level. The work will be significant and will require collaboration across sectors, but the passion of Tulsans and their commitment to the well-being of all members of our community can—and will—make positive change.

*Thank you* to all who have contributed so far and for your continued commitment to this cause. For others who are still looking to get involved, please contact A Way Home for Tulsa so we can help you find your place in this community effort.

*We are excited to keep hearing your ideas—and get to work.*

- A Way Home for Tulsa Partner Agencies

## VISION

*Improve the quality of life for all people living in Tulsa by creating a community where homelessness—if it occurs—is rare, brief, and non-recurring.*



## The current state of HOMELESSNESS in Tulsa

On the night of January 24, 2019, an estimated 1,188 homeless individuals—including children—were experiencing homelessness in Tulsa. Of these, 892 (75%) were living in emergency shelters or other crisis housing, and 296 (25%) were living outside.



**34%**  
chronically  
homeless



**11%**  
veterans



**45%**  
reported  
mental illness



**33%**  
reported  
physical disability



**20%**  
employed



**14%**  
foster care involvement



**27%**  
reported substance abuse

Between June 2018 and May 2019, Tulsa's homeless systems of care saw an average of 85 new veteran or chronically homeless individuals per month. During this same period, an average of 60 veteran or chronically homeless individuals left the systems of care—for a net average increase of 25 veteran or chronically homeless individuals entering the systems of care each month.



**25 veterans and chronically  
homeless individuals enter  
the system each month**



**Unsheltered homelessness  
up 15% each year**

From 2016 to 2019, the total number of individuals experiencing sheltered homelessness during the annual one night count (that is, people staying at emergency shelters, safe havens or in transitional housing) decreased by an average of 2% year-over-year. By contrast, the total number of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness (living outside in parks, in cars and on the streets) saw a significant increase every year—averaging 15% growth each year.

***If we keep doing the same thing we have been doing, we will see over 2,000 people living in Tulsa's streets and parks on a given night by 2029.***





Annual One Night Count Trend Estimate using 2016-2019 Point-in-Time Count Data to Establish Rate of Change

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01

|                                                                   | Average Change 2015-2019 | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  | 2023  | 2024  | 2025  | 2026  | 2027  | 2028  | 2029  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total People Living in Emergency Shelters or Other Crisis Housing | -2%                      | 829   | 816   | 803   | 790   | 777   | 764   | 752   | 740   | 727   | 716   |
| Total People Living Outside                                       | 15%                      | 341   | 419   | 515   | 632   | 777   | 954   | 1,172 | 1,439 | 1,768 | 2,172 |
| Total People Experiencing Homelessness                            | -                        | 1,170 | 1,235 | 1,318 | 1,422 | 1,554 | 1,718 | 1,924 | 2,179 | 2,495 | 2,888 |

***To respond,*** Tulsa must decrease the number of people becoming homeless, and significantly increase the housing resources available to people who are homeless. ***Only permanent housing solutions end homelessness.***

Estimated Demand, Supply and Gap of Units in Tulsa from 2020 to 2029

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H  
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02

|                                                 | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  | 2023  | 2024  | 2025  | 2026  | 2027  | 2028   | 2029   |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| Demand (Number of People Experiencing Homeless) | 1,170 | 1,235 | 1,318 | 1,422 | 1,554 | 1,718 | 1,924 | 2,179 | 2,495  | 2,888  |
| Supply (Number of Units Available)              | 1,457 | 1,457 | 1,457 | 1,457 | 1,457 | 1,457 | 1,457 | 1,457 | 1,457  | 1,457  |
| Gap of Units                                    | +287  | +222  | +139  | +35   | -97   | -261  | -467  | -722  | -1,038 | -1,431 |

***This plan calls for actions*** to reduce homelessness inflow, expedite housing placement, and increase access to housing for people who are homeless. With the right mix of energy and intentionality, Tulsa and its leaders can reduce the housing gap and make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.





## GOAL 1

# *Stop Homelessness Before It Begins*

**A** | *Reduce unnecessary evictions and support those who are or might be evicted to avoid homelessness.*



### POLICY CHANGE

Improve policies and processes related to eviction court.

**Eviction Court.** Increase resources for eviction court (e.g., judges' docket times) to allow for more consideration of individual eviction cases.



### PROCESS CHANGE

Identify and challenge landlords with excessively high numbers of evictions.

**Consequences.** Enforce consequences for landlords and their legal representatives that violate laws and professional standards.

**High Numbers of Evictions.** Identify and expose property owners and landlords with a disproportionate number of evictions or egregious eviction practices, such as charging exorbitant fees and using serial evictions as a revenue source.

Provide information, tools and legal support to people who are, or are at risk of, being evicted.

**Courthouse Support.** Establish a well-advertised, highly visible office or location at the courthouse to provide legal assistance for tenants.

**Utility Records.** Use utility bill records to identify households at risk of eviction and relay targeted eviction prevention resources.

**Public Information.** Create and distribute materials to the public about tenant rights, options and available resources.

**Centralized Coordination.** Leveraging Community Service Council's All Doors Open and Community Service Council's 211 Eastern Oklahoma, develop a robust, centralized entity to function as a conduit for eviction prevention information and resource coordination.

**Support for Expungement.** Provide expungement support for people with criminal records or prior evictions.

Provide support to landlords to prevent evictions.

**Partnership.** Enhance partnership with Tulsa Apartment Association and other like entities to inform landlords of resources available to prevent eviction proceedings, such as tenant mediation services, financial services or other supportive resources.

**Landlord Incentives.** Incentivize landlords and landlord attorneys to partner in eviction prevention strategies.





## RESOURCES

Improve and expand eviction prevention funding resources.

**Flexible Funding.** Increase the availability of flexible funding resources available to tenants and/or landlords to prevent evictions.

*“After an eviction, it was impossible to find another place.”*

—Tulsa Experiencing Homelessness



### *Tulsa's High Eviction Rate*

In 2016, Tulsa had the **11th highest eviction rate** in the country.

**11th  
highest**

Tulsa landlords file more than **1,200 evictions/month**.

While landlords have lawyers, the tenants do not, and often do not show up to court to contest their evictions.

This unequal process leads to few wins by tenants; .07% of cases in the Tulsa County District Court were ruled in favor of the tenant in the past decade.

## **B** *Improve discharge policies and supports to reduce the number of individuals that exit institutions and systems of care and end up in homelessness.*



### **POLICY CHANGE**

Change discharge policies to ensure safe exit from institutions and systems of care, including corrections, health care and foster care.

**Jail Discharge.** Partner with David L. Moss Criminal Justice Center to reduce the number of discharges that occur at night and provide for safe discharge.

**DOC Discharge.** Collaborate with agencies working with the Department of Corrections administration to adjust policies and processes that support effective transitions at discharge.

**Health Care Discharge.** Share information with health care providers to ensure connections to necessary resources at discharge from hospitals or other health care institutions.

**Foster Care Discharge.** Support youth exiting foster care to access employment and housing resources after they age out.



### **PROCESS CHANGE**

Create processes to improve service connections before and after discharge from corrections, health care and foster care systems.

**Connect Before Exit.** Create opportunities for individuals leaving a system of care to connect to community resources while still in the institution or in custody.

**Mentorship.** Strengthen mentorship and peer support programs and networks, including the faith-based community.



### **RESOURCES**

Extend resource availability for a longer period of time after discharge, including housing, employment support and community connections.

**Transition Resources.** Extend service periods after discharge from foster care and corrections systems of care for resources such as housing search support, case management, job training, substance abuse and mental health treatment, home-based services, family supports, mentorship programs, or community connections to effectively support transition and recovery.

**Continuous Case Management.** Provide enhanced case management starting prior to release and continuing for at least six months after release, as needed, for persons leaving foster care and corrections systems of care, rapid rehousing, safe haven beds, shared housing, bridge housing, and host home models.

**Housing for Transitions.** To respond to individualized needs, expand availability and variety of short-term housing models for transition period between institutional custody and independence, such as medical respite beds, targeted crisis beds with specialized services, rapid rehousing, safe haven beds, shared housing, bridge housing, and host home models.

*“I feel like I left a hurricane and got thrown into a tornado.”*

— Homeless Youth in Tulsa



## GOAL 2

### *Transform the Homeless System of Care to be More Effective, Equitable and Person-Centered*

**A** | *Understand the need, allocate resources and support implementation at the system level.*



#### **POLICY CHANGE**

Create Outcome and Service Standards for homeless programs.

**Standards.** Leveraging Data Quality Committee evaluation and ongoing practices, create system-wide Outcome and Service Standards (with variations for each program type and homeless subpopulation, as needed) and evaluate quarterly. Standards must include expectations regarding client satisfaction, inclusivity (e.g., people of color, LGBTQ, mental health status), actions for assertively addressing racial discrimination and systemic racism, performance expectations, efficiency, and fidelity to evidence-based or innovative practices.

Analyze the system annually to identify gaps, inequities and inefficiencies to create annual funding and action priorities.

**System Analysis.** Annually, undertake a system analysis by collecting broad, cross-sector input and reviewing community needs and system resources (including housing, transportation and services). Identify gaps in services provided or populations served (e.g., sex offenders, justice-involved, women, young adults, couples, people with pets, people with mobility impairments, people with severe mental illness), inequity in populations served (e.g., analyzed by race or LGBTQ status), duplications or inefficient practices, or other opportunities. Then, ascertain annual priorities for use of funding and community action.



#### **PROCESS CHANGE**

Direct resources to effective and/or innovative programs.

**Direct Resources.** After initial transition period and in alignment with annual system analysis priorities, funders will partner with providers to allocate federal, state, city, county, and private resources to programs that are complying with community Outcome and Service Standards or are implementing innovative programs.

Provide training, technical assistance and resources to providers and community partners.

**Training.** Provide training and consultation for agencies including agency leadership, frontline staff, volunteers and community partners to support implementation of best and innovative practices and strengthen cultural competency. Training must recognize the frontline staff challenges and support practical program improvements.



**Technical Assistance.** Provide technical assistance and resources to support providers in auditing and amending program practices to eliminate barriers to accessing and using homeless programs and resources. Build provider capacity to implement programs that better meet community needs.

**Lower barriers to access the homeless system of care.**

**Coordinated Entry System.** Audit and amend Coordinated Entry System procedures to better align with Housing First principles.

**Program Policies.** Reduce barriers to entry throughout the system by amending program-level policies (e.g., related to pets, possessions or prior suspension) or developing resources to support program access.

**Shelter Alternatives.** Informed by annual system analysis, develop shelter alternatives, including diversion and prevention programs, increased housing navigation supports, and crisis housing for persons banned from shelters.



## RESOURCES

As determined by the annual system analysis, increase needed resources.

**Resources.** Informed by the annual system analysis, expand or scale resources for homeless programs that are effective and needed, which may include case management availability, employment programs, education, services for certain vulnerable populations, health care services, transportation or mentorship programs, among others.

## B

*Provide services to reduce barriers to housing.*



## POLICY CHANGE

Support Medicaid expansion and other policies to reduce homelessness in Oklahoma.

**Medicaid.** Advocate and support efforts to expand Medicaid in Oklahoma in order to provide health insurance and health care access for more people who are homeless and at risk of homelessness.

**Policy to Prevent and Reduce Homelessness.** Support efforts to increase the minimum wage and other policies that will result in prevention and reduction of homelessness.



## PROCESS CHANGE

Co-locate services to reduce barriers to access.

**Benefits Applications.** Partner with additional government and benefits agencies to increase access to income and other benefits by: doing more on-site application events, accepting applications at homeless agencies or other community locations, or accepting applications that are submitted electronically. Ensure opportunities are available to all people experiencing, or who have recently experienced, homelessness.

**Access to Physical and Mental Health Care.** Ensure all people experiencing homelessness can access health care, including by considering expanded availability of mobile physical health teams, adding physical and mental health care providers to existing teams, providing opportunities for virtual appointments, or other strategies to provide preventative care and shorten benefits documentation processes.

**Substance Abuse Treatment.** Utilize staff from Oklahoma State University or other providers to provide on-site substance abuse treatment support at homeless agencies and housing or workforce development programs.

**Medical Legal Partnerships.** Build Medical Legal Partnerships between legal, medical and mental health providers to address barriers to housing and stability.

#### Improve access to employment and education resources.

**Employment and Education.** Increase access to mainstream and other resources to support access to employment, including job training and education programs, for persons experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness.

#### Provide trauma-informed care.

**Trauma Response.** Adopt best practices across the systems of care to identify and respond to trauma.

#### Coordinate services across systems of care.

**Provider Coordination.** Improve coordination among providers across systems of care to improve outcomes for individuals experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness.

**Inter-System Coordination.** Establish processes to communicate with neighboring systems of care, including medical facilities and law enforcement, about program capacity and resources to support successful transitions and respond to trauma.



## RESOURCES

#### Increase case management to support access to housing.

**Case Management.** To support housing access and retention, increase case management availability across the systems of care for people at risk of homelessness, for people not yet in housing, and for people recently housed.

**Peer Specialist and Volunteer Support for Case Management.** Develop peer specialist and volunteer models to support case management expansion. Both peer specialists and volunteers will be trained to accompany and support persons experiencing homelessness (e.g., attending appointments), allowing case managers to prioritize their time for more professional tasks.

#### Expand access to transportation to and from court, services, education and employment.

**Public Transportation.** Increase access to public transportation by asking the City of Tulsa to subsidize or eliminate the cost of bus passes for social service agencies.

**Transportation as a Service.** Rather than putting the onus on individuals experiencing homelessness, create an expectation for provider agencies to bring social services to clients, co-locate, or provide transportation for clients they serve.

**Alternative Transportation Options.** Expand ridesharing services and other alternative transportation options - such as access to bicycles and bicycle maintenance - to improve transportation options for people experiencing homelessness.

*“I need a job to get housing, but I need housing to get a job.”*

— Tulsan Experiencing Homelessness





## GOAL 3

# *Increase Access to Housing*

**A** | *Revise policies to prioritize affordable housing.*



### POLICY CHANGE

Change local policies to produce quality, affordable housing and preserve existing housing stock.

**Development Policy.** Review Tulsa area housing development policies and requirements to identify gaps and weaknesses and create strategies for pro-affordable housing changes.

**Reduce policy-level barriers to housing.**

**Barriers.** Reduce policies that create barriers to housing for individuals who have interacted with the justice system, including individuals with sexual offenses, or who have prior evictions or poor credit history.

**Implement a five-year affordable housing plan.**

**Affordable Housing Plan.** Implement a five-year affordable housing plan focused on need, development, retention, and anti-displacement strategies for extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income Tulsans.



### PROCESS CHANGE

Build partnerships to implement new housing creation strategies.

**Affordable Housing Advisory Board.** Participate in the City of Tulsa Affordable Housing Advisory Board to strategically pursue and utilize affordable housing solutions such as project-based vouchers, Opportunity Zone resources, low-income tax credits, and vacant and abandoned properties to create housing for people who interact with the homeless systems of care.

## *Fair Market Rent in Tulsa*

In the Tulsa HUD\* Metro Fair Market Rent (FMR) Area, the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment was **\$865** in 2019. A household must earn **\$33,680** annually in order to afford this level of rent and utilities without paying more than 30% of income on housing. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year, this level of income translates into an hourly Housing Wage of **\$16.19/hour**, which is **more than double** the Oklahoma minimum wage of **\$7.25/hour**.

\* U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development



## B | *Connect tenants to units.*



### PROCESS CHANGE

Create systems and tools to support households at risk of or experiencing homelessness to find and access housing.

**Inventory.** Develop and maintain a centralized inventory of available units.

**Housing Search.** Support households not connected to services with their affordable housing searches and application submission.

**Skill-Building Services.** Develop a community-wide program to improve financial management, credit repair and household management skills for persons exiting homelessness, or at risk of homelessness.

**Household Items.** To reduce barriers to exiting homelessness, coordinate availability of necessary household items (e.g., linens, cleaning supplies, furniture) at move-in so households can easily access them.

Engage and support landlords and housing providers to increase housing availability.

**Landlord Engagement.** Implement a comprehensive landlord engagement, recruitment, retention and education strategy that will help alleviate risk for households with sub-optimal history (i.e., eviction history, criminal history, poor credit score, no utilities in their name, etc.) through risk-mitigation funds and access to service providers.

**THA Partnership.** Partner with Tulsa Housing Authority to identify an increased number of apartment complexes that will accept housing vouchers and persons with criminal backgrounds, records of eviction or other housing barriers.

Support tenants who have stabilized in homeless housing to transition to other housing options, increasing service and unit availability for people who are currently homeless.

**Move On.** To open permanent supportive housing units for persons exiting homelessness, build additional Move On strategies to transition permanent supportive housing residents who no longer need intensive services to move to or transition to subsidized housing (e.g., Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency, Tulsa Housing Authority).

*“If you want to live somewhere safe, it’s expensive.”*

—Tulsa Mom Experiencing Homelessness



### RESOURCES

Increase availability of permanent housing for people who are experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness.

**Permanent Housing.** Increase availability of permanent housing for people who are experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness.

Create a flexible fund(s) to reduce barriers to housing.

**Flexible Fund.** Create flexible funds to offset financial barriers to obtaining housing (e.g., security deposit, application fees, furniture, movers, etc.), which could be structured as micro-lending or as a revolving loan fund to create an ongoing resource and to overcome cultural barriers to seeking assistance.



## GOAL 4

# *Partner Across Tulsa to Build Solutions and Access Resources*

**A** | *Increase community support.*



### PROCESS CHANGE

Increase community support for people exiting homelessness through partnerships with employers, faith-based organizations, businesses, volunteers, formerly homeless individuals, and other community members.

**Employers.** Identify Employer Champions that currently hire and work with at-risk individuals to partner with to identify and engage additional employers in this effort.

**Employee Support.** Educate employers how to identify and support employees in a housing crisis to ensure long-term stability.

**Peer Support.** Connect people who have experienced homelessness and are now housed and employed with individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness to offer peer mentoring through one-on-one relationships or group gatherings.

**Schools.** Collaborate with area schools to share resources and provide support for students at risk of, or currently experiencing, homelessness.

**Sharing Information.** Provide community members, including faith-based organizations and businesses, with information about how this community is responding to homelessness.

**Advocacy.** Advocate for federal and state changes to reduce barriers to housing for people who are experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness.

**Opportunities to Give.** Coordinate community donations of time, money or other resources to end homelessness in Tulsa.

**Identify leadership to support plan implementation.**

**Leadership Council.** Identify and maintain a diverse group of community leaders who participate in a leadership council to guide and support plan implementation.

**Coordinator.** Identify a plan coordinator to support partners, manage processes, and track progress to ensure plan is fully implemented.

***We need faith-based organizations and governmental organizations to get more involved in the solutions instead of just donating funds.”***

—Tulsa Experiencing Homelessness

## B | *Increase state and federal support.*



### PROCESS CHANGE

Improve data collection and sharing across the systems of care serving people experiencing homelessness.

**Data Sharing.** Work to implement shared data systems to better understand and respond to homelessness in Tulsa.

**Tracking Progress.** Report, at least quarterly, about plan progress to support plan implementation, and adjust strategies as needed.



### RESOURCES

Increase inflow of federal, state and local resources for ending and preventing homelessness.

**Increase Federal Funding.** Take steps to improve Tulsa's competitiveness for federal funding that supports responses to homelessness.

**Local Funding.** Increase city funding dedicated to responding to homelessness, which may include housing trust funds or land banks.

## *Low Federal Funding*

Tulsa receives significantly less federal funding than other Continuum of Care Programs (CoCs) of similar size. In 2017, compared to the average award of \$8,050,545 across 10 similarly-sized CoCs, Tulsa received **\$2,589,093**.







# IMPLEMENTATION: GOAL 1

## *Stop Homelessness Before It Begins*



### HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES

**Eviction Court.** Increase resources (e.g., judges' docket times) for eviction court to allow for more consideration of individual eviction cases.

**Courthouse Support.** Establish a well-advertised, highly visible office or location at the courthouse to provide legal assistance for tenants.

**Public Information.** Create and distribute public information materials about tenant rights, options and available resources.



### ACTIONS FOR YEAR ONE

- 1** Add two attorneys and one paralegal (full-time equivalent) to be in court every day.
- 2** Work with court for improvements like increased docket times.
- 3** Work with court on dedicating space in new building.
- 4** Develop strategies in the cross-functional team meeting about lowering eviction rate in Tulsa related to other Goal 1 strategies (e.g., creating public information materials, hosting expungement expos).
- 5** Share information and tools as part of the Business Resource Guide outreach.
- 6** Enhance coordination between Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma and Restore Hope Ministries related to availability of flexible funding resources available to tenants and/or landlords.
- 7** Create corrections and health care inter-system task forces for information-sharing and making adjustments to current policies, processes and communication strategies.
- 8** Provide training and information sharing opportunities for corrections, health care or foster care staff, which may include training regarding completion of housing or benefits application materials.



### RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

- Cross-Functional Team to lower eviction rate in Tulsa
- Becky Gligo, Housing Policy Director
- Michael Figgins, Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma
- Lead Agency



### INTERNAL METRICS

- Decline in number of overall evictions in county year over year
- Number of successful mediation/interventions prior to court year over year
- Number of landlords interacting with the Abode Initiative
- Point-in-Time count data related to evictions, corrections, health care and foster care
- Frequent User System Engagement (FUSE) data

## IMPLEMENTATION: GOAL 2

### *Transform the Homeless Systems of Care to be More Effective, Equitable and Person-Centered*



#### HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES

**Create Outcome and Services Standards.** Building from current Data Quality Committee evaluation and other ongoing practices and resources, create system-wide Outcome and Service Standards (with variations for each program type and homeless subpopulation) and evaluate quarterly. Standards must include expectations regarding:

- Client satisfaction (e.g., felt respected, felt safe, supported success);
- Inclusivity in access and service (e.g., people of color, LGBTQ, mental health status);
- Actions for assertively addressing racial discrimination and systemic racism;
- Performance expectations;
- Efficiency;
- Fidelity to evidence-based or innovative practices.

**System Analysis.** Every year for this five year plan, undertake a system analysis by collecting broad, cross-sector input and reviewing community needs and system resources (including housing, transportation and services) to identify gaps in services provided or populations served (e.g., sex offenders, justice-involved, women, young adults, couples, people with pets, people with mobility needs, people with severe mental illness), inequity in populations served (e.g., analyzed by race or LGBTQ status), duplications or inefficient practices, or other opportunities, and creating annual priorities for use of funding and community action.



#### MEDIUM PRIORITY STRATEGIES WITH SIGNIFICANT FOCUS & ACTION

**Training.** Provide training and consultation for agencies, for agency leadership, front-line staff, volunteers and community partners to support best and innovative practices and support cultural competency. Training must be informed about the on-the-ground reality and support practical program improvements.

**Technical Assistance.** Provide technical assistance and resources to support providers in auditing and amending program practices to eliminate barriers to accessing and using homeless programs and resources and to build provider capacity to implement programs to meet community needs.

**Coordinated Entry System.** Audit and amend coordinated entry system procedures to better align with Housing First principles.



#### ACTIONS FOR YEAR ONE

- 1]** Create Outcomes Standards with Data Quality Management Committee and Service Standards with Housing Stability Committee. Implement and monitor Outcome and Service Standards in 2020. Begin discussing alignment process and standards with funders which will ramp up in Years 2-3.
- 2]** Create a process/tool for annual system analysis to use annually to measure equity, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 3]** To support agencies and providers, identify core components of training needs informed by system analysis. Develop and provide training and TA content and provide at least 12 training



events (which may include: large group, blended, one-on-one, online/recorded with knowledge checks) and online onboarding training for all provider staff. Training and TA may include focus on the following topics:

- Support to programs to amend program policies and practices to complete common assessment on all relevant clients to identify housing intervention needed;
- Criminal background policies;
- Diversion/problem-solving practices and making use of current resources;
- Increasing access to income;
- Trauma-informed care;
- Service coordination (including through Unite Us);
- Transportation resources;
- Other trainings that support effective, equitable and person-centered services.

**41** Audit and amend current Coordinated Entry system to align with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) standards, especially changes in procedures that reduce length of time on the list and improve system performance measures. These include:

- Audit documentation collected for various programs;
- Revise timeline related to documentation;
- Complete more common assessments;
- Include progressive engagement in coordinated entry system procedures;
- Add benefits applications to Coordination Center process;
- Build out diversion program, including by identifying case management resources and quick, flexible funding source and leveraging All Doors Open app (or other e-resource) to share information and resources with Coordination Center and outreach teams with goal of using same system for diversion techniques and By-Name List access;
- Pilot a dedicated housing-focused case manager to work with people prioritized at top of By-Name List (building on Frequent User System Engagement (FUSE) work);
- Add St Francis to Unite Us.

**51** Pilot efforts to host on-site services and benefits access opportunities to increase service access and income.



## RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

- Housing Stability Committee
- Data Quality Management Committee
- Lead Agency
- Coordinated Entry Coordinator



## INTERNAL METRICS

- System Analysis Outcomes, year over year *(including related to equity)*
- Improvements in System Performance Measures (Homeless Management Information System)
- Reduce length of time homeless
- Reduce returns to homelessness
- Reduce number of people homeless
- Reduce first-time homelessness
- Increase income for people in Continuum of Care (CoC) funded projects
- Successful placement and retention in Permanent Housing
- Equitable Access to Service and Outcomes (Unite Us)
- Number of agencies that meet Service and Outcome Standards *(including standards related to equitable and person-centered practices)*



# IMPLEMENTATION: GOAL 3

## *Increase Access to Housing*



### HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES

**Policy Review.** Review Tulsa area housing development and preservation policies to identify gaps/weakness and identify strategies for pro-affordable housing changes.

**Affordable Housing Plan.** Implement a five-year affordable housing plan focused on need, development, retention, and anti-displacement strategies for extremely low-income, low income and moderate-income Tulsans.

**Affordable Housing Advisory Council.** Participate in City of Tulsa Affordable Housing Advisory Board to strategically pursue and utilize affordable housing tools such as project-based vouchers, Opportunity Zone resources, and vacant and abandoned properties for housing for people who interact with the homeless systems of care.

**Engage and Support Landlords and Housing Providers in Increasing Housing Availability.**



### ACTIONS FOR YEAR ONE

- 1]** Review and develop housing development and preservation policies and strategies as part of Affordable Housing Advisory Council development of City of Tulsa Affordable Housing Strategic Plan.
- 2]** Implement "Ban the Box" Initiatives to reduce barriers for Tulsans who have interacted with justice department.
- 3]** Complete Downtown Tulsa Housing Study.
- 4]** Expand Affordable Housing Advisory Council membership to include individuals with lived experience.
- 5]** Develop centralized unit inventory.
- 6]** Plan landlord recruitment event.
- 7]** Develop cohort of formerly homeless persons to be part of landlord recruitment strategy.
- 8]** Identify units that will accept housing vouchers and persons with varied backgrounds.
- 9]** Develop additional Move On strategies.
- 10]** Convert Altamont Apartments from Safe Haven to permanent supportive housing.



### RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

- Affordable Housing Advisory Council
- Becky Gligo, City of Tulsa Housing Policy Director
- Lead Agency



### INTERNAL METRICS

- Number of units facing affordability expiration that maintain affordable status
- Decline in code violations and health department reports for affordable housing units year over year
- Utilization of affordable housing stock in Tulsa
- Project-based voucher utilization
- Number of affordable units created
- Decrease in Point-in-Time count
- Increase in number of rehoused individuals
- Decrease in time between homelessness and permanent housing solution
- Increase in number of units Permanent Supportive Housing available annually (i.e. turnover)



## IMPLEMENTATION: GOAL 4

### *Partner Across Tulsa to Build Solutions and Access Resources*



#### HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES

**Sharing Information.** Provide community members, including faith-based organizations and businesses, with information about how this community is responding to homelessness.

**Opportunities to Give.** Coordinate and support capacity building to support community donations of time, money or other resources to end homelessness in Tulsa.

**Leadership Committee.** Maintain a diverse group of community leaders who participate in a leadership committee to guide and support plan implementation.

**Coordinator.** Identify a plan coordinator to support partners, manage processes and track progress, ensuring plan is fully implemented.

**Data Sharing.** Work to create ways to share information across systems of care, whether through shared data systems or data warehousing, to better understand and respond to homelessness in Tulsa.

**Tracking Progress.** Report, at least quarterly, about plan progress to support plan implementation, and make adjustments in strategies as needed.

**Increase Federal Funding.** Take steps to improve Tulsa's competitiveness for federal funding that supports responses to homelessness.



#### ACTIONS FOR YEAR ONE

##### 1] Community Support

- Continue Business Resource Guide distribution downtown and in greater Tulsa area and work with Tulsa Regional Chamber and Tulsa Area United Way. Leverage Guide outreach to identify potential employer partners.
- With schools, host Resource Fair for Unaccompanied Minors/Precariously Housed Youth.
- With people with lived experience (e.g., Participant Advisory Group), create opportunities for peer support, including potentially hosting quarterly events.

##### 2] Share Information and Understand Progress

- Define and measure success, and develop tools, benchmarks and externally facing metrics. Develop report structure to report plan progress.
- Communicate plan progress to community, including potentially by using a dashboard and/or "Fly the W"-type strategy.
- Create position/resource to support data analysis and sharing across systems of care, including technical role as well as leading effort to build partnership.

##### 3] Advocacy

- Monitor advocacy opportunities at state and federal level that move plan goals forward, audit current state and federal legislation creating barriers to plan progress, and prioritize action, including focusing on Medicaid expansion.

**4] Opportunities to Give**

- Identify specific donation requests as part of launch/plan build up (e.g., funds for certain types of services).
- Identify volunteer opportunities and how to communicate them, create web-based volunteer coordination tool, and develop training for volunteer roles.

**5] Plan Leadership**

- Create leadership group to guide plan implementation.
- Create lead agency to support and track plan implementation.

**6] Increase Funding**

- Increase competitiveness for Federal applications for funding to support housing, shelter and services across systems of care (including though increased effort with CoC application in Fall 2019 and YHDP in Summer 2019) and identifying and pursuing opportunities to fill resource gaps in systems of care.
- Advocate for change in use of city resources, including CDBG, for homeless housing, shelter, and services.

**RESPONSIBLE PARTIES**

- Lead Agency
- Becky Gligo, City of Tulsa Housing Policy Director
- Participant Advisory Group and Youth Action Board
- Data Quality Monitoring Committee

**INTERNAL METRICS**

- Improvements in System Performance Measures (HMIS)
- Decrease in Point-in-Time count and number served annually as recorded in HMIS
- System Analysis Outcomes, year over year (System Analysis)
- Number of people or entities donating resources
- Amount of resources locally dedicated to homelessness
- Contributions to Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- Increase in HUD CoC and other federal grant award for Tulsa







# MEASURING *Success*

## BY 2025, HOMELESSNESS WILL BE **RARE**.



- The total annual Point-in-Time count of people experiencing homelessness will decrease at least **40%** (at least 475 less people experiencing homelessness).
- The annual Point-in-Time count of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness will decrease from 25% of the count to **less than 5%** of the total count (less than 50 people living unsheltered).
- The total number of chronically homeless people, homeless veterans, and homeless youth will functionally be **zero**.
- Tulsa will create **850** safe affordable housing opportunities for people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness.

## HOMELESSNESS WILL BE **BRIEF**.



- The number of days that chronically homeless people who are prioritized for housing wait for placement will decrease from 171 days to **30** days.
- The average length of time of homelessness across the system of care will decrease from 64 days to **30** days.

## HOMELESSNESS WILL BE **NON-RECURRING**.



- Tulsa's eviction rate will decrease from 7.77% to the national average. (In 2019, **2.34%**.)
- The percentage rate of returns to homelessness within two years across the system of care will decrease from 23% to **15%**.
- The percentage of people who are successfully placed in permanent housing from emergency shelter or other short-term housing will increase from 13% to **40%**.
- The percentage of formerly homeless persons in permanent housing who retain or exit to other permanent housing will maintain at **95%** or above.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*This strategic plan was developed with the guidance and support of the following individuals and agencies. Additionally, many more community partners came together, putting in over 2,000 hours of committee work, community meetings and strategy sessions to lay the groundwork for the critical initiative. A list of these partners can be found on our website.*

## STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL

- **Mack Haltom**, Tulsa Day Center
- **Greer Fites**, Family & Children's Services
- **Greg Shinn**, Mental Health Association Oklahoma
- **Jeff Hall**, Tulsa Housing Authority
- **Karen Keith**, Tulsa County Commissioner
- **Amy Brown**, City of Tulsa
- **Becky Gligo**, City of Tulsa
- **Bill Major**, Zarrow Family Foundations
- **Melanie Stewart-Goldman**, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- **Lucky Lamons**, Ascension St. John
- **Brent Sadler**, Tulsa Area United Way
- **Ann Domin**, INCOG
- **Brian Paschal**, Foundation for Tulsa Schools
- **Dan Eslicker**, D&L Oil Tools
- **Jason Beaman**, Oklahoma State University
- **Karen Pennington**, Tulsa Community WorkAdvance
- **Emily Hutton**, Tulsa Public Schools
- **Reggie Ivey**, Tulsa County Health Department
- **Brian Kurtz**, Downtown Coordinating Council
- **Jill Young**, Family & Children's Services
- **Nancy Curry**, Zarrow Family Foundations
- **Rhene Ritter**, Community Service Council
- **Stephanie Horten**, Criminal Justice Collaborative
- **Beth Svetlic**, Youth Services of Tulsa
- **Grace Burke**, Morton Comprehensive Health Services
- **Tania Pryce**, Youth Services of Tulsa

## A WAY HOME FOR TULSA AGENCIES

- 12 & 12
- City Lights Foundation
- City of Tulsa
- Community Service Council
- Counseling and Recovery Services of Oklahoma
- DaySpring Villa
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Domestic Violence Intervention Services
- Family & Children's Services
- Family Promise of Tulsa County
- INCOG
- Iron Gate
- John 3:16 Mission
- Legal Aid Services of OK
- Mental Health Assoc. Oklahoma
- Morton Comprehensive Health Services
- National Resource Center for Youth Services
- Oklahoma Department of Human Services
- Oklahoma Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services
- Participant Advisory Group
- Restore Hope Ministries
- Surayya Ann Foundation
- The Salvation Army Tulsa
- Tulsa Area United Way
- Tulsa CARES
- Tulsa County Social Services
- Tulsa Day Center
- Tulsa Housing Authority
- Tulsa Police Department
- Volunteers of America
- Workforce Tulsa
- Youth Action Board
- Youth Services of Tulsa
- Youth Villages
- Zarrow Family Foundations



## STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2024

*Thank you to the leaders and partners who were vital to the development and implementation of this plan. Together with our whole community, we can help make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring in Tulsa.*

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