



Strategic Plan

for Preventing and Ending Homelessness
in Summit County

LANDSCAPE & EQUITY ANALYSIS COMPANION REPORT

August 2025



Summit County
Continuum of Care

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Landscape Assessment: Key Findings

The following describes key findings compiled as part of the Landscape Assessment conducted to inform the development of this plan. Planners used a data-driven approach, starting with a review of various quantitative data sources, complemented by interviews and listening sessions with key groups and individuals to gather qualitative insights. As the work progressed, additional listening sessions were added to ensure comprehensive coverage of community perspectives.

Homelessness and Housing Insecurity in Summit County: Current Conditions and Responses

Population and Housing Trends

Summit County, Ohio, with an estimated population of 535,733 as of 2023, has seen a slight population decline since 2008. Housing insecurity has become a growing concern, with fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment rising 26% since 2018. Nearly 34% of households are cost-burdened, spending over 30% of their income on housing. Renters, who require a \$19.98 hourly wage to afford a two-bedroom unit, face particular challenges as their average hourly wage is \$16.97. Extreme housing cost burden, which occurs when households spend more than half of their monthly income on housing costs, impacts 16% of all households, highlighting persistent affordability issues.

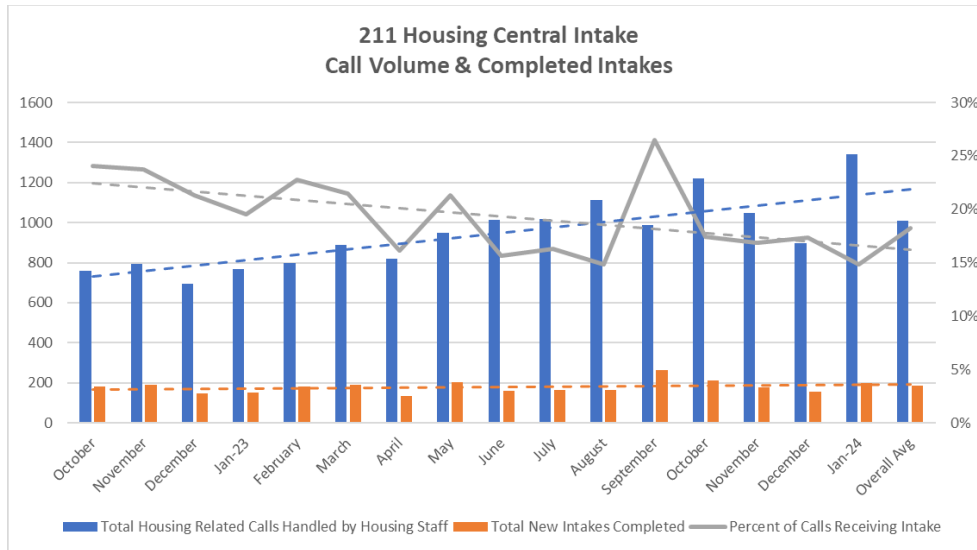
Homelessness Trends

The January 2024 Point-in-Time (PIT) count identified 695 individuals experiencing homelessness, a 56% increase since 2022 and an 18% increase since 2018. Unsheltered homelessness rose by 59% since 2018, driven by systemic capacity constraints. At the same time, chronic homelessness has surged by 196%, with 62% of chronically homeless individuals unsheltered as of the January PIT count.

Disproportionate impacts are evident among Black/African American individuals, who constitute 14% of the population but 49% of those who experience homelessness. Rising rates of people with severe and persistent disabilities and chronic conditions, as well as an overall trend toward more older adults experiencing homelessness, is also further increasing vulnerability among those who are unsheltered.

Community Responses and Challenges

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Summit County distributed \$63 million in federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) to prevent homelessness. However, post-pandemic eviction rates have risen sharply, and the demand for emergency housing assistance continues to grow, outpacing system capacity. In 2023, the United Way's Housing Assistance Crisis Line saw a 50% increase in call volume compared to 2022, underscoring escalating needs.



In FY2023, 3,525 adults and children in Summit County accessed homeless assistance services, including street outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent housing programs, representing approximately 0.66% of the county's total population. While the county's crisis response system includes emergency shelters, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing, resource limitations remain a barrier.

There has been little growth (+3%) in the Summit County's capacity to provide emergency shelter and other forms of temporary housing since 2018, resulting in a rising number of Summit County residents forced to sleep outside or in unsafe conditions when in need. During this period permanent supportive housing capacity grew by 27% but remains insufficient given the rise in chronic homelessness and, while there has been some growth in rapid rehousing capacity it has not kept pace with demand.

System Performance

A review of key system performance indicators in Summit County from FY2018 to FY2023 highlights several concerning trends in the homeless response system:

1. **Length of Stay:** The average length of stay in emergency shelters (ES), safe havens (SH), and transitional housing (TH) has significantly increased, reducing bed turnover and contributing to higher rates of unsheltered homelessness:
 - Average stay in ES, SH and TH rose to 78 days (+34%), with the median increasing to 29 days (+61%).
2. **Successful Exits to Housing:** Fewer individuals are transitioning successfully from homelessness to stable housing:
 - Exits to permanent housing from ES/SH/TH, RRH, or PSH fell to 26% in FY2023, down from 31% in FY2018.
 - Street outreach exits to housing or shelters dropped sharply to 22%, compared to 41% in FY2018.

3. **Returns to Homelessness:** Overall, the rate of returns to homelessness within 24 months has improved, but people who are assisted to housing by street outreach, rapid rehousing or permanent supportive housing experiencing more stable housing and lower rates of return:
 - 20% of individuals returned to homelessness in FY2023, compared to 27% in FY2018.
 - Return rates vary by program type, with lower rates for those supported by Street Outreach (13%) and RRH or PSH (14%).

Equity Analysis

An analysis of the 2024 Point-in-Time (PIT) count and FY2023 data highlights critical inequities and performance challenges within Summit County's homelessness response system.

Disproportionate Representation

- **Black/African Americans:** Represent 49% of those experiencing homelessness but only 14% of the population, with 2.4% accessing homeless crisis services compared to 0.66% overall.
- **White individuals:** Make up 43% of the homeless population despite being 75% of the general population, with only 0.38% accessing services.

Higher Rates of Unsheltered Homelessness

- Vulnerable groups with high unsheltered rates include 61% of people with a substance use disorder and 62% of people who are disabled and experiencing chronic homelessness.

Longer Time to Permanent Housing

- On average, it took 120 days for individuals to move from homelessness to permanent housing via Rapid Rehousing (RRH) or Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). However, **disabled heads of household** (183 days) and **Hispanic/Latino households** (158 days) experienced much longer episodes before securing housing.

Lower Permanent Housing Outcomes

- In FY2023, only 17.6% of households exited to permanent housing, with **households without children** exiting at an even lower rate (14.4%).

Street Outreach Program Challenges

- Only 22% of individuals assisted by street outreach in FY2023 exited to shelters, housing, or care facilities, a decline from 58% in FY2021. This disproportionately impacts **people with disabilities** who are also disproportionately unsheltered.

These trends emphasize the need for increased investments in crisis response capacity and more robust rehousing interventions to address growing system challenges *effectively and equitably*.

Community Experiences

Local collaborators participated in interviews and a series of listening sessions conducted between June and September 2024. Participants, including people with lived experience of homelessness, shared their insights regarding the challenges and recommendations for addressing housing insecurity and homelessness in Summit County, which are summarized at a high level below.

Housing Insecurity and Affordability

- **Rising rental costs and a lack of affordable housing** exacerbate housing instability, while low wages and limited job training hinder long-term stabilization.

Service Gaps and Coordination

- **Disparities in Access:** Marginalized groups, including individuals with criminal records, mental health issues, single mothers, and unaccompanied youth, face significant barriers.
- **Fragmented Services:** Poor coordination between housing, healthcare, mental health, and other services leads to a disjointed experience for clients, with long wait times and complex eligibility requirements often delaying assistance.
- **Transportation Needs:** Insufficient transportation support limits access to critical services.

Capacity and Resource Constraints

- **Rising Demand:** Homelessness growth outpaces available resources, with significant shortages in affordable housing, transitional housing, and emergency beds.
- **Underdeveloped Rehousing Infrastructure:** Approximately 300 additional units are needed for the chronically homeless, alongside expanded wraparound services integrating housing, employment, and mental health support.
- **Understaffed Workforce:** Burnout, high turnover, and insufficient training limit the capacity of frontline workers to provide effective, culturally responsive care.

Sub-Population Challenges

- **Families:** Single-parent households face gaps in childcare and employment support.
- **LGBTQ+ and Unaccompanied Youth:** Crisis housing and mental health services are inadequate for these groups.
- **Older Adults:** Prevention and emergency resources for seniors are limited.
- **Individuals with Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders:** Specialized facilities and workforce capacity are insufficient to meet complex needs.
- **Undocumented Individuals:** Tailored services for undocumented individuals remain underdeveloped.

Systemic Challenges

- **Law Enforcement Tensions:** Mistrust between law enforcement and people experiencing homelessness creates barriers to engagement.

- **Post-Rehousing Support:** Insufficient follow-up services, such as mental health care and employment assistance, hinder long-term stability.

Recommendations

- **Capacity, Coordination, and Core Competencies:** Participants emphasized the need for expanded prevention programs, coordinated service delivery, trauma-informed care, and targeted interventions for vulnerable sub-populations to improve outcomes and address systemic inequities effectively.

Landscape Assessment: Detailed Findings

The following discusses in detail findings compiled as part of the Landscape Assessment conducted to inform the development of this plan.

Summit County Population & Housing Insecurity

In 2022, Summit County, Ohio, had a population of approximately 541,700, representing a 0.26% decline since 2008. The City of Akron accounts for 35% of the population, followed by Cuyahoga Falls (9%), Stow (6%), and Barberton (5%). Just over 12% of the population lives at or below the poverty line. Akron and Barberton have the highest poverty rates at 23% and 22%, respectively, while 65% of the county's impoverished residents live in Akron. Household composition has also shifted over time, with a 3% decline in total households since 2008, reflecting an increase in renter households (up 7%) and a decline in owner households (down 9%).

Housing insecurity is a pressing issue in Summit County. Fair market rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment has risen 26% since 2018, reaching \$1,039 in FY2024, although some areas like downtown and West Akron have experienced declining FMRs recently. Affordability remains a challenge as renters require an hourly wage of \$19.98 to afford a two-bedroom unit, while the estimated mean renter wage is \$16.97.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines cost-burdened families as those “who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing.”¹ In Summit County, 78,312 households (34% of all households) are housing cost burdened. This includes 42,242 renter households (45% of all renters) and 36,070 owner households (26% of all owners). While the number of cost-burdened households has decreased by 4,627 since 2008, this improvement is primarily due to a reduction of 6,653 cost-burdened household owners, offset by an increase of 2,206 renter households experiencing cost burdens. These trends reflect a slight overall improvement in housing affordability rates for both owners and renters.

However, “extreme housing cost burden”, defined as spending more than 50% of income on housing, affects 36,853 households in Summit County (16% of all households). This includes 22,208 renter households (24% of renters) and 14,645 owner households (11% of owners). Since 2008, there has been a reduction of 2,545 extremely cost-burdened households, driven by a decline of 2,929 owner households in this category, while renter households experiencing extreme cost burdens *increased slightly* by 384. Despite modest changes in rates for both groups, the data

¹ Note that, while useful, housing cost-burden as measured by a ratio of income to housing costs is a simple measure with significant limitations. For example, a household paying 50% of income toward housing costs that earns \$22,000 per year has much less remaining for other essential costs (e.g., food, transportation, childcare) compared with an equally “cost burdened” household earning \$400,000 per year. See: [Rental Burdens: Rethinking Affordability Measures | HUD USER](#)

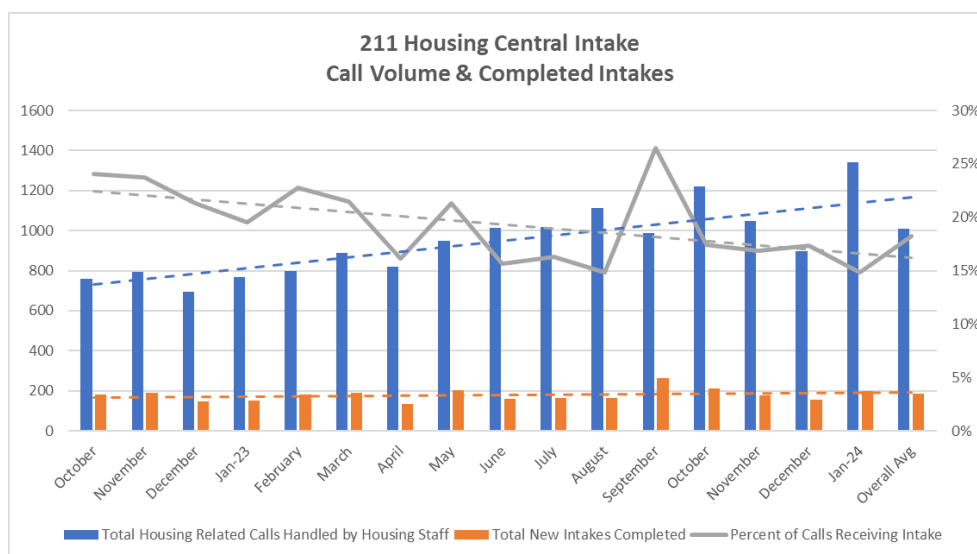
highlights an ongoing challenge, particularly for renters, who represent a growing share of cost-burdened and housing-insecure households.

Prevention, Crisis Response & Rehousing Assistance Needs

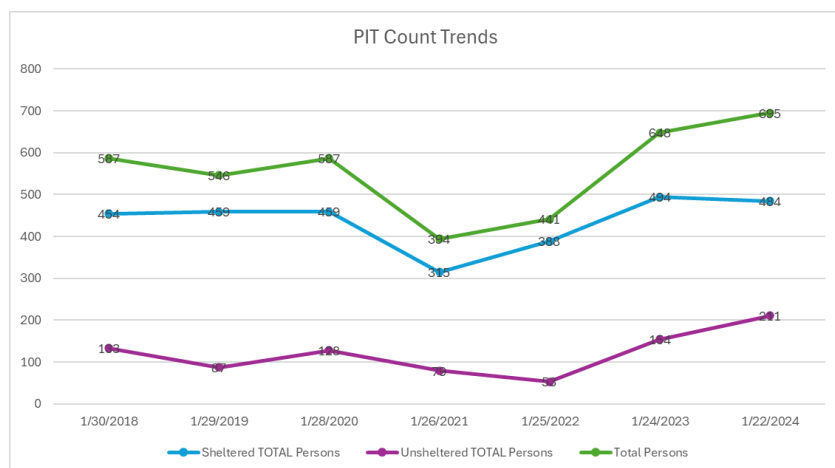
Summit County partners made significant efforts to address housing instability during the COVID-19 pandemic, helping thousands of households avoid housing loss and homelessness. Driven by a massive infusion of federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program funding, the Summit County Cares Program distributed \$63 million in housing and utility assistance to 8,750 households across all 31 communities in Summit County between June 2020 and October 2022 facilitated by a collaboration between United Way of Summit and Medina, Community Action Akron Summit, and other local organizations. This substantial effort highlights the community's ability and commitment to prevent housing insecurity and homelessness when provided appropriate resources.

Eviction rates have surged since the end of pandemic-era protections and federal ERA Programs, including 262 Summit County eviction filings in August 2024 alone, underscoring a broader state and national trend of increased housing instability. Additionally, in 2023, the United Way operated Housing Assistance Crisis Line through 211 received 11,519 calls and completed 2,154 intakes and call volume is rising significantly, with a 50% rise in average monthly calls since 2022 reflecting a growing demand for emergency housing assistance.

Despite this increased demand, system capacity for new intakes has remained relatively unchanged, resulting in approximately 20% of callers repeatedly inquiring about shelter availability, further taxing the already limited Crisis Line and reducing the time call specialists for problem-solving conversations that would increase the number of callers diverted to alternative resources.



Point-in-time (PIT) count trends in Summit County reveal significant shifts in homelessness patterns over time.² The January 2024 PIT count identified 695 individuals experiencing homelessness, including 211 individuals living unsheltered. Overall, this is a 56% increase in the total homeless population compared with the 2022 PIT count. However, looking back to 2018, this represents an increase in the overall homeless population of 18% (+108 people), driven by a 7% rise in sheltered individuals (+30 people) and a substantial 59% surge in unsheltered individuals (+78 people).



The 2024 PIT count identified 136 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness (CH), representing 20% of the total homeless population. Among these, 62% were unsheltered, accounting for 40% of all unsheltered individuals. Chronic homelessness has risen dramatically since 2018, with a 196% overall increase (+90 people), including a 121% rise in unsheltered chronic homelessness (+46 people).

In contrast, the 2018 PIT count recorded only 46 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, representing 8% of the total homeless population, with 83% unsheltered. These trends highlight a concerning growth in chronic homelessness and underscore the urgent need for targeted, long-term solutions for this vulnerable population.

In FY2023, 3,525 adults and children in Summit County accessed homeless assistance services, including street outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent housing programs. This represents approximately 0.66% of the county's total population. Further analysis is required to fully assess annual demand for services such as street outreach and shelter by

² Annual point-in-time counts are required by HUD and are conducted during the last 10 days of January nationwide, with some exceptions. PIT counts enumerate people who are either unsheltered and living in a place not meant for human habitation and people who are sheltered living in an emergency shelter, Safe Haven, or transitional housing for people experiencing homelessness.

accounting for people who experience homelessness but are not accessing services due to limited system capacity, system barriers, or other reasons.

Disaggregated data shows that 2.62% of households without children (such as single adults or adult couples) in Summit County accessed assistance in FY2023, compared to 0.22% of households with at least one adult and minor child. Black/African American individuals in Summit County also face homelessness at disproportionate rates. While they make up 14% of the county's population, they represent 49% of those experiencing homelessness. Furthermore, 2.4% of Black or African American residents utilized homeless crisis response services, compared to just 0.66% of the overall population, highlighting a significant disparity in homelessness among Black or African American communities in the area.

The January 2024 PIT count also reveals significant disparities among people experiencing homelessness, particularly for those with disabilities generally and those with disabilities who are homeless for 12 or more months in a three-year period (i.e., "chronic homelessness"). Of the 695 people experiencing literal homelessness in Summit County in January 2024, 30% (211 individuals) were unsheltered. However, people with certain conditions experience much higher rates of unsheltered homelessness, including:

- 61% of adults with a substance use disorder (70 out of 114 individuals)
- 51% of adults with significant mental illness (79 out of 155 individuals)
- 62% of individuals classified as chronically homeless (84 out of 136 people). Chronically homeless individuals also represent 40% of all unsheltered people (84 out of 211).

This data highlights the growing vulnerability of individuals with disabilities and chronic conditions to unsheltered homelessness in Summit County and the need for more robust, coordinated solutions with healthcare partners.

In Summit County, 74% (2,209 people) of individuals who entered a homeless assistance program in the past year (2,972 people) were considered "newly homeless," as defined by HUD. This means they had no previous enrollment in a homeless assistance program within the prior two years. This rate is relatively consistent with the data from the previous two fiscal years. Additional analysis is needed to identify subpopulations that may be experiencing significantly lower rates of newly homeless people compared to the overall population.

These trends underscore the critical need for expanded resources to both prevent homelessness and reduce the need for crisis response and rehousing services, while also increasing crisis response capacity to meet the rising demand for housing crisis assistance and ensure no one is forced to be unsheltered when other permanent or temporary housing options are unavailable.

Community Capacity to Address Needs

The Summit County Continuum of Care oversees the planning, development and service coordination activities of the local homeless crisis response system, which includes specific projects that strive to work together to address and resolve housing crises. These program types

are defined by HUD and include street outreach, diversion/prevention, emergency shelter, Safe Haven, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, and other dedicated permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness.

With regard to street outreach, the community currently has three primary outreach providers. Additional analysis is needed to determine current street outreach capacity relative to demand. However, by all accounts street outreach services are under-resourced and insufficient to meet the needs of a growing number of unsheltered people. Absent more intensive outreach and rehousing assistance, Summit County should expect current trends to continue and a every growing rise in people who are unsheltered and living in harm's way.

As of the January PIT count, Summit County has 483 year-round emergency shelter, Safe Haven, and transitional housing beds for individuals and families experiencing homelessness with no safe alternative housing, representing a mere 3% increase in emergency and transitional sheltering capacity since 2018, leading to increases in unsheltered homelessness. Additionally, all beds are located in Akron with the exception of 10 transitional housing beds for youth, creating access barriers for those not residing in or not desiring to reside in Akron.

Rapid rehousing (RRH) is currently offered via 13 programs serving different populations that work collaboratively with the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority (AMHA) to rehouse people experiencing literal homelessness. Since 2018, Summit County has added RRH capacity for households without children but concurrently decreased capacity for families with minor children. Further analysis is needed to determine the caseload capacity of these programs, but it is evident that additional rapid rehousing capacity is needed as local partners report that any added funding in recent years has been consumed by rising housing costs and has not led to increased capacity.

Permanent supportive housing (PSH) is provided through 24 projects, offering 784 beds, 92% of which were occupied as of the January 2024 PIT count. Since 2018, there has been a 27% increase in PSH capacity (167 beds, including 75 since 2023). Given the rapid rise in the number of people who are disabled and unable to secure housing, thus "aging into" chronic homelessness (196% increase since 2018, +90 people), additional PSH is needed to reverse this trend.

System Performance: Key Indicators

Looking at select key system performance indicators provides a picture of how well the system is currently performing and whether performance is improving or declining over time.

Length of Stay

Between FY2018 and FY2023, Summit County saw a significant increase in the length of time individuals spend in emergency shelters (ES), safe havens (SH), and transitional housing (TH). This upward trend in length of stay has reduced turnover and bed availability, contributing to an increase in unsheltered homelessness over time.

- In FY2023, the average stay in ES/SH rose to 46 days (+25%), with the median remaining at 15 days.

- For ES/SH/TH combined, the average stay increased to 78 days (+34%), and the median jumped to 29 days (+61%).

Successful Exits to Housing

Between FY2018 and FY2023, the percentage of individuals successfully exiting homelessness or otherwise making positive movement from street to shelter in Summit County has declined:

- Exits to permanent housing from ES/SH/TH and permanent housing (PSH and RRH) dropped to 26% in FY2023, down from 31% in FY2018.
- Exits from street outreach to permanent housing, ES, SH, or TH fell sharply to 22% in FY2023, compared to 41% in FY2018.

Growing length of stay in emergency and transitional shelters and decreasing rates of successful movement from crisis to housing underscores the need for greater investment and more robust rehousing interventions.

Returns to Homelessness

In FY2023, 9% of people who exited to permanent housing returned to the homeless system within 6 months. Between FY2018 and FY2023, the percentage of individuals returning to homelessness within 24 months after exiting to permanent housing (PH) in Summit County decreased overall:

- In FY2023, 20% of those exiting to PH returned within 24 months, compared to 27% in FY2018.
- Most people who exit homelessness to PH do so without the assistance of Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) or Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH).
- Breakdown of return rates within 24 months by program type:
 - Street outreach: 13% (down from 15% in FY2018)
 - ES: 24% (down from 33%)
 - TH: 26% (down from 28%)
 - RRH or PSH: 14% (slightly up from 13%)

These trends indicate a reduction in the overall rate of returns to homelessness, although return rates vary by program type, with those assisted by Street Outreach, RRH or PSH having the lowest rates of return.

Community Experiences

The following summarizes themes identified from a series of interviews and listening sessions conducted June through September 2024 to better understand local experiences, insights and recommendations for improving our collective response to housing insecurity and homelessness. For a detailed list of community collaborators who participated, see Appendix A. The following themes reflect the experiences and viewpoints of those who participated.

Housing Insecurity

Housing Affordability Crisis: The lack of affordable housing options, combined with rising rental costs, exacerbates the need for long-term stabilization programs. There is a significant gap between the demand for affordable units and what is available.

Employment and Income Stability: Underemployment and low wages continue to be significant drivers of housing instability. The gap in job training and employment support services prevents many from achieving long-term stability, especially in underserved populations.

Capacity to Respond, Effectiveness, and Equity

Disparities in Access: There are significant barriers to accessing housing and services for marginalized groups, including individuals with criminal backgrounds, mental health issues, and those not meeting strict chronic homelessness criteria. Single mothers and unaccompanied youth reported additional obstacles.

Limited Prevention Resources: Prevention programs are underfunded and lack the capacity to meet the growing demand for housing stabilization, financial assistance, and job support services. Many individuals fall into homelessness due to a lack of timely intervention.

Rising Demand, Outpacing Resources: The growth in homelessness, particularly following economic downturns and the COVID-19 pandemic, has exacerbated significant shortages in affordable housing and emergency resources. Many indicated long waitlists for public housing, insufficient transitional housing, and limited funding for emergency housing for diverse populations and long-term housing solutions create severe bottlenecks in service delivery.

Service Coordination Gaps & Fragmented Service Experience: There is frustration over the lack of coordination between housing, healthcare, mental health services, and law enforcement. While some coordination exists, silos among organizations prevent an efficient, unified response to rising homelessness. Individuals seeking assistance frequently report navigating complex, disjointed systems. The lack of integration between service providers, housing agencies, and mental health or employment services makes it difficult for clients to receive seamless support. This lack of coordination can create confusion and frustration, leading to missed opportunities for stabilization. Complex eligibility criteria, required documentation, and long wait times can overwhelm those in crisis, making it difficult to transition smoothly into permanent housing. Warm handoffs and personal navigation support are crucial but inconsistent.

Transportation: There is a significant need for an increase transportation support for participants in crisis.

Underdeveloped Rehousing Infrastructure: There is a notable shortage of both short-term and permanent supportive housing; key providers estimate need at approximately 300 additional units for the chronically homeless.

Strengthening Wraparound Services: Effective stabilization requires a comprehensive approach that integrates housing, employment, mental health, and financial support. Current responses

often address one need at a time, leading to incomplete solutions that fail to sustain long-term stability.

Staffing and Training Needs: Many organizations struggle with staff burnout, inadequate training in trauma-informed care, person centered case management, and have limited capacity to meet complex needs related to mental health and substance abuse.

Trauma-Informed and Culturally Responsive Care: Those experiencing homelessness or housing instability often have trauma histories, making stabilization difficult without trauma-informed services that address both immediate and long-term needs. The importance of culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches is widely recognized, but gaps remain in ensuring that frontline workers have the skills and understanding needed to address diverse needs effectively. The current system may not fully consider the varying cultural contexts and needs of specific groups, resulting in inequitable outcomes.

Understaffed and Overworked: Frontline workers, including outreach staff, case managers, and housing navigators, are stretched thin, leading to burnout and high turnover rates. This limits the system's ability to provide consistent, high-quality care and prevents the development of trusting relationships with clients.

Law Enforcement and Community Tensions: There is growing tension between law enforcement and homeless individuals, creating mistrust and barriers to engagement. The community also faces challenges related to fear and stigmatization of homeless individuals.

Limited Post-Rehousing Support: People who are successfully rehoused often find themselves without sufficient follow-up services, such as ongoing case management, employment support, or mental health services, which are crucial for long-term stability.

Sub-Populations

Families with Children: Rehousing families, particularly single-parent households, requires more comprehensive support that includes childcare, education, and employment services. Gaps in these areas often result in unstable housing situations for families.

LGBTQ+ and Unaccompanied Youth: There are significant crisis housing and service gaps for LGBTQ+ individuals and unaccompanied youth, particularly regarding mental health services, basic needs support, and housing.

Older Adults: The aging population is growing more vulnerable to housing crises. Current prevention efforts rarely focus on this group, and emergency resources for older adults are limited, leading to increased instability among seniors.

Individuals with Mental Health and Substance Use Issues: The system struggles to address the needs of individuals with complex mental health and substance use disorders. There are too few specialized facilities, and those that do exist require workforce development on best practices.

Individuals with Criminal Histories: Many people with criminal records face housing discrimination or are excluded from rehousing programs due to background checks, which complicates their efforts to exit homelessness. This population is often overlooked in rehousing strategies, despite being at high risk of recidivism and chronic homelessness. Many individuals with lived experience of unsheltered homelessness reported having an outstanding warrant that was their biggest barrier to housing.

Undocumented Individuals: Services for undocumented individuals are underdeveloped, with insufficient mental health support and lack of tailored housing options.

Equity Measurement Framework & Analysis

The SCCoC Strategic Plan incorporates an **Equity Measurement Framework** designed to provide a measurable basis for gauging current system inequities and charting a corrective course to ensure anyone facing homelessness has equitable access to high quality, individualized services that assure everyone can resolve their housing crisis with similar speed and results.

Key measures used to examine equity include:

- A. Overall rates of homelessness
- B. Rates of unsheltered homelessness
- C. Rates of those newly experiencing homelessness
- D. Average length of time people experienced homelessness
- E. Permanent housing outcomes
- F. Returns to homelessness
- G. Successful exits from Street Outreach programs

In addition to system- and program-level performance measures, a commitment to continuous improvement of our homelessness response system requires ongoing monitoring of quantitative and qualitative data related to service access, quality, and outcomes. Overall population and subpopulation monitoring should occur with an equity lens to understand the impact assistance has on different subpopulations experiencing homelessness and where adjustments may be needed to ensure equity in access and receipt of homelessness prevention and crisis services and their related outcomes.

Ongoing system monitoring will occur following publication of the plan and will include ongoing and direct engagement with and feedback from people with current and past lived experience via the CoC Lived Experience Committee (LEC), as well as periodic comparison of each system-level performance measure disaggregated at a minimum by race, ethnicity, gender identity, and disability status.

Analysis of 2024 Point-in-Time Count and Fiscal Year 2023 (October 2022-September 2023) data around key system utilization (demand) and performance metrics reveals the following inequities in Summit County.

A. Overall population-level rates of homelessness

In Fiscal Year 2023 (FY2023), the following groups were disproportionately represented among those who experienced literal homelessness:

- Black or African American people represented 49% of all people who experienced homelessness in Summit County compared with being only 14% of the overall Summit County population. Overall, 2.4% of Black or African American people in Summit County used homeless crisis response assistance, compared with .66% of the overall population. In contrast, White people represented 43% of all people who experienced homelessness compared with being 75% of the Summit County population and only .38% of White people in Summit County used homeless crisis response assistance.

B. Rates of unsheltered homelessness

During the January 2024 point-in-time count, 30% of all people experiencing literal homelessness in Summit County (695) were unsheltered (211). All people counted as unsheltered in the January count were in households without minor children present. The following groups experienced significantly higher rates of unsheltered homelessness compared to the overall population and other sub-populations, in order of disparity:

- Adults with a substance use disorder: 61% unsheltered (70 out of 114 people)
- Adults with significant mental illness: 51% unsheltered (79 out of 155 people)
- Chronically Homeless: 62% unsheltered (84 out of 136 people)
 - 40% all unsheltered people are Chronically Homeless (84 out of 211 people)
- White people: 43% unsheltered (133 out of 311 people)
- Veterans: 36% unsheltered (16 out of 44 people)
- Unaccompanied youth who are 18-24 years old: 35% unsheltered (19 out of 55 people)
- Additionally, each of the following groups were disproportionately represented. Note these groups each had less than 10 people, so percentages may not accurately reflect the typical experiences of those experiencing homelessness over the course of a year.
 - Adults who are Transgender: 100% unsheltered
 - American Indian or Alaska Native people: 40% unsheltered
 - Asian or Asian American people: 50% unsheltered

C. Rates of those newly experiencing homelessness

In FY2023, 74% (2,209) of all people who entered a homeless assistance program (2,972) were “newly homeless”, which is defined by HUD as having no previous enrollment in a homeless

assistance program in the prior 2 years. The FY2023 rate (74%) is relatively consistent with the prior two fiscal years (FY2022 at 78%, FY2021 at 73%).

- **Additional analysis is needed** to identify subpopulations that may be experiencing significantly lower rates of newly homeless people compared to the overall population and, conversely, higher rates of people who were not newly homeless and are experiencing prolonged or repeat episodes of homelessness.

D. Average length of time people experienced homelessness while accessing permanent housing via rapid rehousing or permanent supportive housing

In FY2023, it took 120 days on average for people to move from literal homelessness into permanent housing with rapid rehousing assistance and/or permanent supportive housing, based on the initial enrollment date in street outreach, emergency shelter, or transitional housing. The following groups experienced significantly longer average time to housing, in order of disparity:

- Adult heads of household who are disabled: 183 days on average (53% longer)
- Hispanic/Latino heads of household: 158 days on average (32% longer)
- Adult heads of household currently fleeing Domestic Violence: 151 days on average (26% longer)
- Households with at least one adult and one minor child: 146 days on average (22% longer)

E. Permanent housing outcomes

In FY2023, 17.6% of all households who accessed homeless rehousing assistance exited to permanent housing. The following groups had significantly lower rates of exit to permanent housing:

- Households without minor children (e.g., single adults, couples): 14.4% exited to permanent housing

F. Returns to homelessness within 6 months of exiting to permanent housing

In FY2023, 9% of people who exited to permanent housing returned to the homeless system within 6 months. The following groups experienced significantly higher rates of return within 6 months:

- Hispanic/Latino people: 100% returned within 6 months

Understanding who is not being as well served by the local homeless crisis response system is also informed by examining rates of return based on where people last exited the system over the past three fiscal years (FY2021 to FY2023), whether after being assisted by street outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, Safe Have shelter, or a permanent housing program (Rapid Rehousing or Permanent Supportive Housing). The overall rate of return for people who exited to a permanent housing destination in the two years prior to FY2024 was 20% (142 people). However, people who

exited the following project types to permanent housing returned to homelessness in FY2024 at a higher rate:

- People exiting transitional housing to permanent housing (74): 26% (19) returned to homelessness within two years, representing 13% of all people returning to homelessness over two years.
- People exiting emergency shelter to permanent housing (322): 24% (78) returned to homelessness within two years, representing 55% of all people (142) returning to homelessness over two years
 - This is a proportional increase from the original share of permanent housing exiters (322 or 45%) from emergency shelter in the prior two years.
- By contrast, among people who exited homelessness to permanent housing with Rapid Rehousing or Permanent Supportive Housing experienced lower rates of return overall, with only 14% (32) returning to homelessness after two years.
 - 237 total exits to permanent housing, representing 33% of all people exiting to permanent housing.

G. Successful exits from Street Outreach programs

In FY2023, among the 456 people assisted by street outreach who exited, 99 people (22%) successfully exited to emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing or an institutional setting providing an appropriate level of care.

- Positive exits from street outreach have declined over the past three years, with 58% and 34% successfully exiting in FY2021 and FY2022, respectively.
- Given the general higher vulnerability among people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, an overall reduction in street outreach success is negatively impacting efforts to improve equity.

Community Needs Data

Summit County Population – Key Data

- Total population 2022: 541,700 people (.26% decrease since 2008)
 - 35% City of Akron, 9% Cuyahoga Falls, 6% Stow, 5% Barberton
- Percent at or below poverty: 12.3% overall^{3 4}
 - 23% City of Akron, 22% Barberton, 11% Cuyahoga Falls
 - 65% of people below poverty in Summit County live in City of Akron
- Total households: 232,700 (3% decrease since 2008)
 - 94,500 renter households (7% increase)
 - 138,200 owner households (9% decrease)

Summit County Housing Insecurity – Key Data

- FY2024 Fair market rent for 2-bedroom apartment: \$1,039⁵
 - 26% increase since 2018 (\$826)
 - Downtown Akron and West Akron are seeing decreasing FMRs⁶
 - Downtown Akron: 11% decline since 2023 for 2-bedroom FMR
- Rental vacancy rate in Summit County is roughly 6.3%.⁷
- Hourly wage needed to afford 2-bedroom apartment: \$19.98/hour
 - Estimated hourly mean renter wage: \$16.97⁸
- Since March 2020: over 11,000 eviction filings in the county
 - August 2024: 262 eviction cases filed^{9 10}
 - Consistent with broader trend in Ohio, where eviction rates have surged, following expiration of pandemic-era protections, like the CDC eviction moratorium, which ended in October 2021¹¹

Housing Cost Burden Data

- 78,312 of all households (34%) pay >30% income for housing and are housing **cost burdened**, including:
 - 42,242 renter households (45% of all renters)
 - 36,070 owner households (26% of all owners)
 - Since 2008: 4,627 fewer households overall paying >30% income for housing:
 - -6,653 owner households

³ [Akron, OH | Data USA](#)

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, [Summit County, OH - Profile data - Census Reporter](#)

⁵ [FY 2024 Fair Market Rent Documentation System — Calculation for Akron, OH MSA \(huduser.gov\)](#)

⁶ [Rental Market Trends & Average Rent in Akron, OH | Rent.](#)

⁷ [Summit County, OH 2024 Fair Market Rents | USHousingData.com](#)

⁸ 2024 Out of Reach Report, Coalition on Homelessness & Housing in Ohio. [Ohio 2024 StatePages.pdf \(cohho.org\)](#)

⁹ [Eviction Tracking System | Eviction Lab](#)

¹⁰ [Landlord - Tenants \(akronmunicipalcourt.org\)](#)

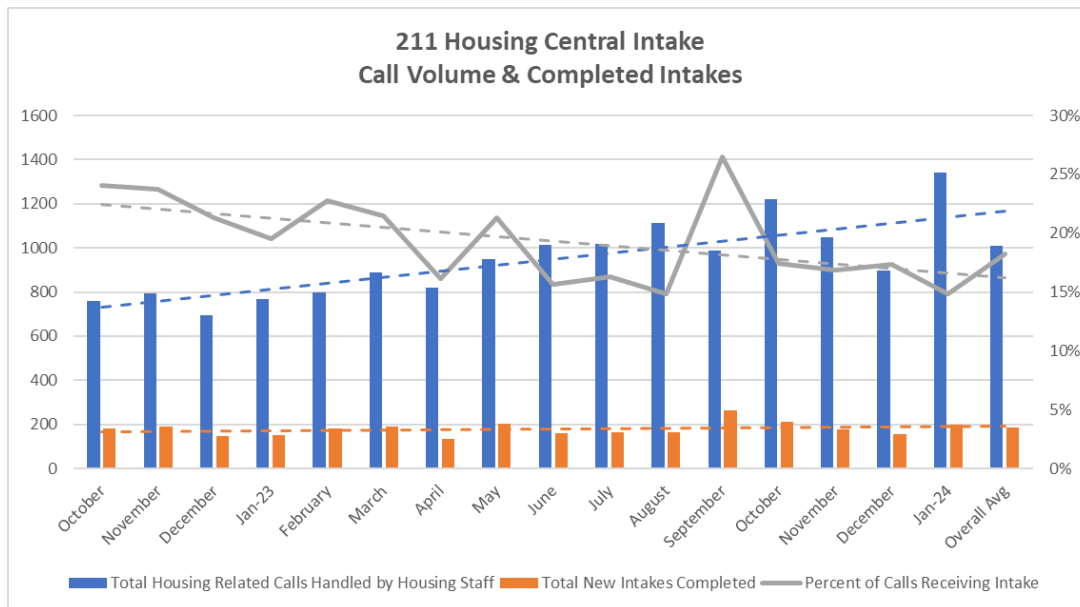
¹¹ [Overview-of-National-Eviction-Moratorium.pdf \(nlihc.org\)](#)

- +2,206 renter households
 - Slight improvement in overall rate and rates for both owners and renters
- 36,853 of all households (16%) pay >50% income for housing and are extremely housing cost burdened, including:
 - 22,208 renter households (24% of all renter households)
 - 14,645 owner households (11% of all owner households)
 - Since 2008: 2,545 fewer households overall paying >50% income for housing:
 - -2,929 owner households
 - +384 renter households (but representing only 6% of net new renter households)
 - Slight improvement in overall rate and rates for both owners and renters
- Bottom-line: slight improvement in overall rate and rates for both owners and renters – but more renter households overall who are cost burdened and housing insecure

Prevention/Diversion, Crisis Response, and Rehousing Needs – Key Data

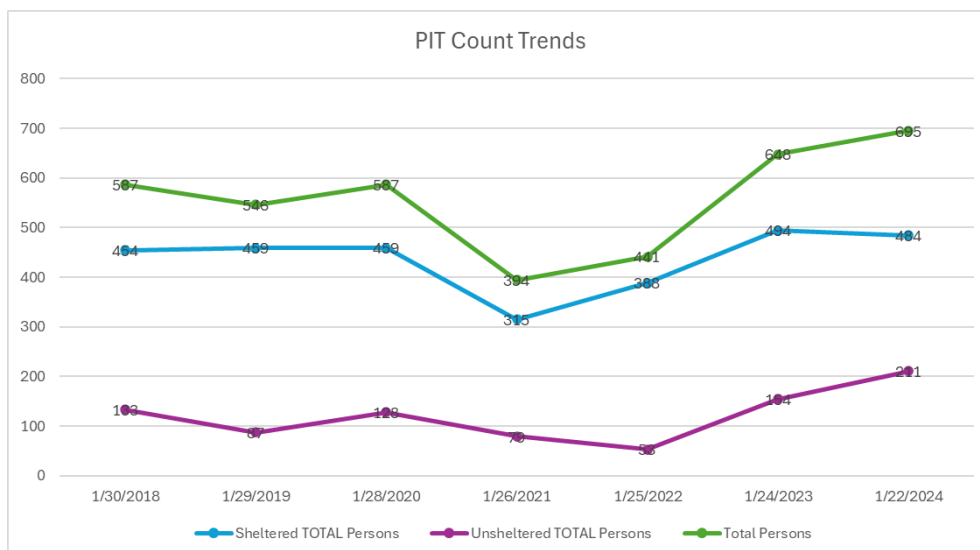
Prevention/Diversion Needs Data

- Emergency Rental Assistance
 - June 2020 – October 2022: Summit County Cares program issued \$63 million in housing and utility assistance to 8,750 households in all 31 communities
 - Collaboration among the United Way of Summit and Medina, Community Action Akron Summit and other local organizations.
- Housing Assistance Crisis Line
 - CY2023: 11,519 calls, 2,154 intakes
 - 50% increase in avg/month volume comparing Oct 22-Jan 23 and Oct 23-Jan 24
 - Call volume steadily increasing, while system capacity for new intakes has stayed relatively flat (approximately 20% of callers are calling back to inquire about shelter availability)



Homeless Assistance Needs: PIT Count Data

- Since 2009: 15% overall decrease (-125 people)
 - 26% decrease in people sheltered (-174 people)
 - 30% increase in people unsheltered (+49 people)
- Since 2018: 18% overall increase (+108 people)
 - 7% increase in people sheltered (+30 people)
 - 59% increase in people unsheltered (+78 people)



- Chronic homelessness:

- 2024 PIT: 136 people
 - 20% of all people in PIT Count
 - 62% unsheltered (40% of all unsheltered)
 - 196% increase in CH since 2018 (+90 people)
 - 121% increase in unsheltered chronic homelessness (+46 people)
- 2018 PIT: 46 people
 - 8% of all people in PIT Count
 - 83% unsheltered (29% of all unsheltered)

Homeless Assistance Needs: Annual Data

- Additional analysis needed to determine annual demand for crisis response assistance, including street outreach and shelter
- FY2023:
 - 3,525 adults and children accessed homeless assistance services (Street Outreach, ES, SH, TH, and permanent housing programs for people who are homeless)
 - Approximately 1% (.66%) of all Summit County residents accessed homeless assistance, including:
 - 2.62% of households without children (e.g., single adults, adult couples)
 - .22% of households with at least one adult and minor child
 - Additional groups experienced disproportionately higher rates of use – see equity analysis, below

Capacity to Respond & Gaps

Prevention & Stabilization

- **System uses Housing Problem-Solving and diversion practices**, including use of flexible funding, to help people avoid literal homelessness and divert from shelter
- Current capacity is mostly TANF/PRC for households with minor children with a priority for families on shelter waitlist
 - Assistance access via United Way and Family & Community Services in partnership with other providers
 - Current funding: \$750k/year.
 - PRC requirements and limits (e.g., 3 months max)
 - Not currently tracking turn-aways for ineligible or non-priority households
- Little prevention assistance for households without children with exception of Veterans and other special population sources

- Small amount of federal Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program funding allocated locally for homelessness prevention
 - Requires court filed eviction notice
- **Minimal other, non-targeted prevention resources** (e.g., annual formula funding from Federal Emergency Food & Shelter Program funding)
- **Growing partnership with Medicaid Managed Care Organizations (MCOs)**, including pilot funding for coordinated prevention/stabilization supports

Crisis Response

Housing Central Intake:

- Available M-F, 9a-4p
- 211 staff (4 FTE) conduct diversion, triage to resources, and assessment if entering homeless system (not diverted), in concert with Street Outreach staff and homelessness assistance providers
- General community awareness of how to access services, though significant number of community members are unaware of how or where to access services
- New HUD CoC Program funding to support coordinated entry for DV/IPV survivors
- Veterans are largely screened/triaged/admitted via local VA and VA funded partners

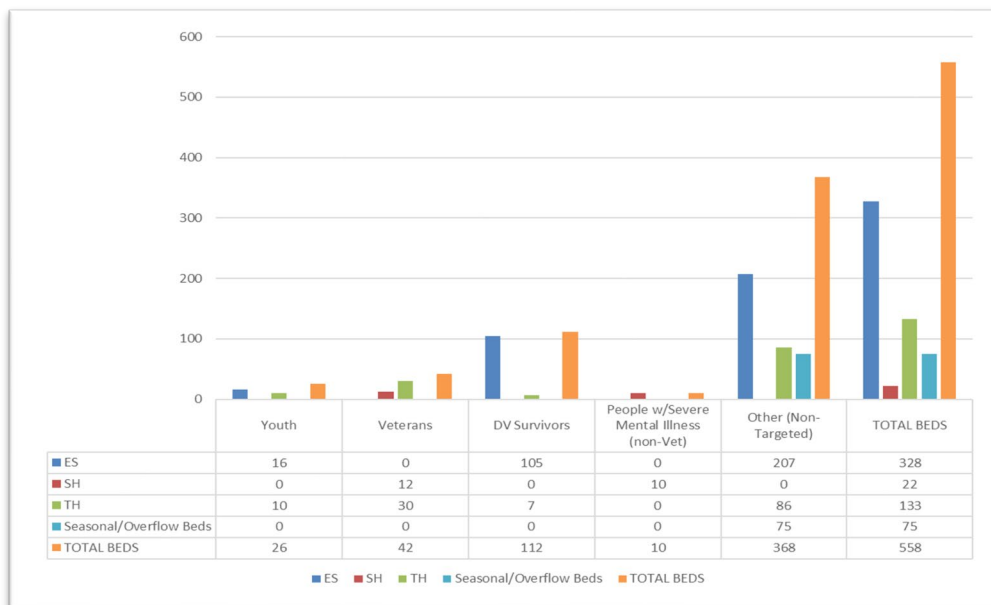
Street Outreach:

- Primary providers: Community Support Services (CSS), Akron Aids Collaborative (AAC), Shelter Care (youth)
- CY2023:
 - CSS: 604 people
 - AAC: 88 people
 - Shelter Care: 146 youth
- Additional analysis needed to understand current staffing/FTEs and caseload capacity

Emergency Shelter (ES), Safe Haven (SH), and Transitional Housing (TH):

- Primary providers, bed capacity, and 2024 PIT census (see **Appendix A**)
- Overall Capacity:
 - Total ES, SH, and TH Capacity (all populations, including year-round and seasonal/overflow): 558 beds
 - Since 2018: +16 beds, 3% increase
 - 483 year-round beds
 - DV: 112 beds (105 ES, 7 TH)
 - Veterans: 42 beds (12 SH, 30 TH)
 - Youth: 26 beds (16 ES, 10 TH)
 - Total ES Beds (including year-round and seasonal/overflow): 403 beds
 - Year-round: 328 beds
 - Seasonal/overflow: 75 beds
 - Since 2018: +93 beds, 30% increase

- +43 year-round beds
- +50 seasonal/overflow beds
- ALL ES/SH/TH beds are in Akron with exception of 10 TH beds for youth (Talmadge)
- Sub-population capacity:
 - Households with minor children: 100 units ES/TH (184 beds): 92 ES, 8 TH
 - Households without minor children: 277 beds: 145 ES, 22 SH, 110 TH
 - Households with only minor children (unaccompanied minors, parenting minors): 22 beds: 12 ES, 10 TH
 - Youth: 26 beds: 16 ES, 10 TH
 - Veterans: 42 beds: 0 ES, 12 SH, 30 TH
 - DV: 112 beds: 105 ES, 7 TH
 - DV: 112 beds: 105 ES, 7 TH



Rapid Rehousing (RRH):

- 13 RRH projects; 281 households enrolled in RRH as of 2024 PIT and being supported in permanent housing
- Standardized assessment recently updated via statewide Equity Initiative
- Routine “by-name list” updated/reviewed regularly by service and housing providers, with active AMHA involvement
- Lack of real-time data in HMIS for some receiving RRH assistance, impeding system coordination
- Since 2018:
 - Overall increase driven by increase in RRH capacity for households without minor children
 - Overall decrease in RRH capacity for households with minor children

- Additional funding for RRH consumed by rising costs of housing and stabilization supports

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH):

- 24 PSH projects; 784 year-round beds; 720 beds occupied as of 2024 PIT (92%)
 - 575 PSH beds dedicated for CH individuals and families (312 for households without children, 273 for households with minor children)
 - 108 PSH units for households with minor children
- Since 2018:
 - 27% increase in overall capacity (+167 beds, incl 75 added since 2023)
- Veterans in HUD-VASH beds not entered in HMIS (133 beds)

Emergency Shelter, Safe Haven, and Transitional Housing Capacity

EMERGENCY SHELTER			
Organization Name	Project Name	2024 Pit Count	Total Beds
Battered Women's Shelter (BWS)	Battered Women's Shelter (BWS)	102	105
ACCESS, Inc.	ACCESS, Inc.	36	42
Community Support Services, Inc.	Emergency Overnight Shelter EOS (CSS)	75	75
Family Promise	Family Promise	30	46
Harmony House	Harmony ODH Emergency Shelter (Harmony House)	5	4
Haven of Rest Ministries (HoR)	Haven of Rest Ministries (HoR)	63	66
Haven of Rest Ministries (HoR)	Harvest Home ES (HoR)	10	18
Haven of Rest Ministries (HoR)	Harvest Home Women's Day Room ES (HoR)	15	23
Shelter Care	Safe Landing for Boys and Girls RHY ES (Shelter Care)	8	12
Tarry House	Respite ES (Tarry House)	8	12
TOTAL		352	403

SAFE HAVEN			
Organization Name	Project Name	Pit Count	Total Beds
Community Support Services, Inc.	Weissman House Safe Haven CoC (CSS)	10	10
Community Support Services, Inc.	VA Safe Haven (CSS)	8	12
TOTAL		18	22

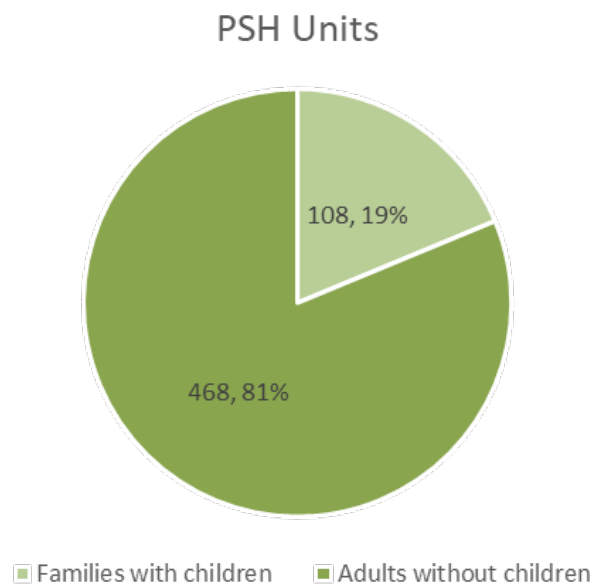
TRANSITIONAL HOUSING			
Organization Name	Project Name	Pit Count	Total Beds
CANAPI	Lavender Landing LGBTQ Youth CoC TH (CANAPI)	4	4
Family & Community Services	Valor Home GPD TH (FCS)	22	30
Battered Women's Shelter (BWS)	Opportunity Home TH (BWS)	7	7
Gus Johnson Community Foundation INC	Infant Vitality Project ODH TH (GJCF)	7	8
Harmony House	Transitions to Independence CoC TH (Harmony House)	5	5
Haven of Rest Ministries (HoR)	Haven of Rest Men's Residence Program TH (HoR)	13	14
Haven of Rest Ministries (HoR)	Other TH Men's Program (HoR)	43	44
Haven of Rest Ministries (HoR)	Women's TH Program (HoR)	0	5
Legacy III, Inc.	Pathways to Freedom CoC TH (Legacy III)	7	6
Shelter Care	Highlands RHY TH (Shelter Care)	6	10
TOTAL		114	133
GRAND TOTAL		484	558

Capacity by Sub-Population: Youth, Veterans, Survivors	Youth	Veterans	Survivors	Persons w/Severe Mental Illness (non-Vet)	Other (Non-Targeted)	TOTAL BEDS
ES	16	0	105	0	207	328
SH	0	12	0	10	0	22
TH	10	30	7	0	86	133
TOTAL Year-Round Beds	26	42	112	10	293	483
Seasonal/Overflow Beds	0	0	0	0	75	75
TOTAL BEDS	26	42	112	10	368	558

Capacity by Household Type	HHs w/minor children		HHs w/o minor children	HHs w/only minor children	Other (Non-Targeted)	TOTAL BEDS
	Beds	Units	Beds	Beds	Beds	
ES	171	92	145	12	0	328
SH	0	0	22	0	0	22
TH	13	8	110	10	0	133
TOTAL Year-Round Beds/Units	184	100	277	22	0	483
Seasonal/Overflow Beds	0	0	0	0	75	75
TOTAL BEDS	184	100	277	22	75	558

Permanent Supportive Housing Capacity

Household Type	Units	Beds	Unit %	Bed %
Families with children	108	316	19%	40%
Adults without children	468	468	81%	60%
TOTAL	576	784		



Appendix A: Participants in Interviews and Listening Sessions

Steve Arrington	Abby Morgan
Cindy Bach	Georgann Mirgliotta
Debbie Barry	Jennifer Montisanto
Vanessa Beane	Imokhai Okolo
Fred Berry	Marie Payden
Chris Brewer	Tia Payne
Lerryn Campbell	Jesse Reed
Julie Carneal	Brian Rink
Colleen Cicero	Annaliese Russell
Jim Cole	Shannon Shippe
Becky Cool	Keith Snodgrass
Deniese Cutting	Margo Sommerville
Holly Cundiff	Keith Stahl
Tim Edgar	Teresa Stafford
Anne Face	Cheryl Stephens
Erin Franz	Toree Stokes
Cassie Harhager	Peggy Szalay
Michael Harhager	Aimee Wade
Jackie Hemsworth	Susan Wong
Greta Johnson	
Mayor William Judge	
Amanda Kostura	
Kyle Kutuchief	
Annie McFadden	
Melissa Massey-Flinn	
Chris Miller	