

EDUCATE THE COMMUNITY ABOUT THE HOMELESS SYSTEM GAPS & NEEDS ANALYSIS

1 ACTION: Finalize the Washtenaw Continuum of Care (CoC) Homeless System Modeling Report.

Once final, the report will be shared out to educate the community about the homeless system gaps and needs so that policymakers, funders, service providers, people with lived experience of homelessness, and community members have a deeper understanding of the needs of the homeless system of care.

DEMAND HOMELESS SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

2 *The Washtenaw County homeless system of care has undergone significant transition during the COVID-19 pandemic and with the transition in lead entities of Housing Access for Washtenaw County (HAWC). The homeless system and its provider agencies have also experienced funding challenges and uncertainties.*

ACTION: Advocate for improvements in the homeless system of care such as:

- ⇒ Engagement with, and funding for, outside expert(s) to help the homeless system of care create a strategy or set of recommendations for the system of care
- ⇒ Adequate funding, support, and monitoring for coordinated entry (HAWC)
- ⇒ Additional financial and staffing resources for eviction prevention; Support for low barrier emergency sheltering and Housing First (permanent housing) programs
- ⇒ Increase emergency shelter capacity (such as hoteling); Increase permanent supportive housing and affordable housing opportunities, and related funding, for people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity
- ⇒ Ensure the Washtenaw County Continuum of Care (CoC) follows its Governance Charter, Policies & Procedures, and Housing Prioritization processes

ADDRESS FUNDING GAPS

3 *The Washtenaw County homeless system of care has experienced significant funding challenges and uncertainties in the past two years. We also acknowledge the deep connections that the For approval: February 2023 homeless system of care has with sectors addressing food insecurity, health disparities, youth services, and re-entry services.*

ACTION: Address funding gaps within the homeless system of care, and other sectors, as follows:

- ⇒ Ensure Washtenaw County conducts a human services mapping and planning process during 2023 in partnership with non-profit human services organizations
- ⇒ Work to replace and enhance the long-term local human services / housing / homelessness funding that was lost because of the end of Coordinated Funding (CoFu), in partnership with other sectors, including those addressing hunger, health, and youth services
- ⇒ Support state- and federal- efforts to increase appropriations for homeless services, affordable housing, and other related supportive services
- ⇒ Support other advocacy efforts that provide increased support, resources, and income for households experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity

2023 Policy Priorities

ENHANCE TENANT PROTECTIONS

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ACTION: Advocate for increased tenant protections, including:

- ⇒ Source of Income (SOI) protections at the local- and state-levels
- ⇒ Legislation that limits excessive fees landlords can charge tenants beyond security deposits and throughout one's tenancy
- ⇒ Right to counsel during evictions and expanded resources for eviction prevention financial assistance
- ⇒ Educate tenants about tenant rights
- ⇒ Provide landlord education about SOI protections in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, and other tenant protections in local jurisdictions
- ⇒ Increase the WHA's Landlord Guarantee Fund to provide incentives and other payments so that homeless households can obtain and maintain permanent housing
- ⇒ Work with partners to quantify the need for more barrier free units and affordable housing for larger families

INCREASE COMMUNITY AWARENESS, EDUCATION, AND ACTION

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ACTION: Increase awareness, education, and action in the community as follows:

- ⇒ Advocate for public policy changes that can increase affordable housing resources
- ⇒ Publicly support affordable housing developments
- ⇒ Help people with lived experience share their stories and experiences
- ⇒ Promote the WHA's Affordable Housing Pledge
- ⇒ Educate and inform stakeholders about the Sister Yvonne Gellise Fund for Permanent Supportive Housing Services (SYG Fund)
- ⇒ Ensure Washtenaw County regularly updates the Affordable Housing Dashboard, that tracks units of affordable housing that are new, in the pipeline, and lost in the community
- ⇒ Encourage Washtenaw County to update its 2015 Affordable Housing and Economic Equity – Analysis

The mission of the Washtenaw Housing Alliance (WHA) is to end homelessness in our community and a primary goal of the Blueprint to End Homelessness is “Engaging the Community” – which means we will advocate vigorously on issues related to homelessness at local, state and federal levels and communicate the measurable effectiveness of our strategies to end homelessness to the community. It is with this vision in mind that WHA is ready to be a strong advocate in 2023 for Washtenaw County’s homeless assistance system and the people who depend on it.