

Department of Housing Stability Five-Year Strategic Plan

A Guide for Action 2022-2026



September 2021



DENVER
HOUSING STABILITY



Top left clockwise:
A man eats lunch at the National Western Auxiliary shelter during the COVID-19 pandemic. (Denver Rescue Mission)
Central Park Urban Living Condos exterior (Evan Semón)
A guest receives housing navigation support through Denver Rescue Mission (Denver Rescue Mission)
Interior of apartment at La Tela (Love Thy Neighbor)
A guest eats lunch at the women's shelter operated by Catholic Charities at 4330 E. 48th Ave. (Evan Semón)

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Key: Throughout the document, colors and colored circles represent the pillars of HOST's work:



Housing Opportunity



Housing Stability



Homelessness Resolution



Operations (Cross-departmental Operations)



Community Survey Rating



Helping all of our residents to have an affordable place to call their home has been and will remain one of my highest priorities. Over the past 10 years, I have worked with, community organizations, businesses nonprofits and city council members to address our housing crisis and help build solutions to shelter our unhoused neighbors. We have created long-term roadmaps for investing in our community, implemented new policies that encourage affordable housing development, and opened new supportive housing and new shelters that now operate 24/7. The aim of all these steps and our entire strategy is to help as many of our unhoused residents as possible to enter housing – and to stay housed. When homelessness occurs, we should do everything in our power – as a society, not just as a government – to make it brief and one-time.

I have prioritized collaboration across the city to drive innovative solutions, build upon best practices, and work to help individuals and families experiencing homelessness and housing instability. In late 2019, I took the necessary step of creating the Denver Department of Housing Stability (HOST) to establishing

housing and homelessness resources as a critical city service, efficiently consolidate functions, drive investments and build reporting infrastructure.

Addressing homelessness is also one of the top priorities for my administration as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, along with reducing crime and rebuilding our economy. In March and April of last year, while services across the region were shutting down, Denver stayed open to support those experiencing homelessness and those at risk of losing their homes. We mobilized nearly 1,000 hotel and motel rooms, stood up two 24-hour shelters, and deployed millions of dollars in federal aid to help people with rent and utility payments. Even more than we were before the pandemic, we became the central and sometimes only support system for these residents. It also gave us the opportunity to showcase the overwhelming benefits of 24-hour shelters and support new options like Safe Outdoor Spaces. And there is more to come.

As we move forward toward a sustainable and equitable economic recovery, we will leverage and invest local, state and federal dollars to have direct impacts on housing stability and homelessness, such as the \$49 million in rental assistance Denver received from the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Our challenges in homelessness and housing affordability are not unique; indeed, many communities across the nation are wrestling with these issues. Denver seeks to be a model for the country, and I am proud to participate in knowledge sharing sessions with other mayors and governors, as well as our federal agencies. We will continue to share best practices and knowledge to stabilize our housing and help our most vulnerable residents

Housing stability is the base that allows an individual to feel safer, connect to resources, engage with the community, including through employment and/or volunteer opportunities, and address comprehensive health needs. The creation of HOST, which unified work around homelessness and affordable housing across the city, is vital to the implementation of this vision. My many thanks to the HOST executive committee, provider and city agency partners, HOST staff, and community members who provided input for this plan. This five-year plan will carry us forward into that future, toward building a healthy, housed, and connected Denver.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael B. Hancock". The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Chief Housing Officer Britta Fisher

People need homes. This pandemic has shone a bright light on the essential nature of a home, its utility for so many important aspects of life, and the intertwined nature of one's health and the stability of one's home.

Making a home affordable is no small feat. It takes a team of problem solvers. While I am proud of the team we are building at the Department of Housing Stability, it takes a much bigger and wider team to get this work done in our community. It takes a big team of partners to find ways, tools, and creative problem solving to push to affordability. While the City of Denver is part of the regulatory framework and often the financing of affordable housing, it is largely our non-profit, market and industry partners who do the heavy lifting.

And I like the people in this work. Very few people involved have a degree in affordable housing or resolving homelessness. We work with people who want to help people and are willing to roll up their sleeves to find solutions. Some have lived expertise of housing instability or homelessness that taught them how important this affordable housing infrastructure is to our community. Others have taken their professional skills and applied them with meaning and purpose; whizzes with spreadsheets and agreements building toward a positive outcome and impact for people.

The dramatic shift in our world with health threats and economic crisis suddenly setting in with the COVID-19 pandemic called for shifts in our rescue and response. We ensured resources were used effectively and transparently and with the greatest impact to keep people in their homes and keep people supported if they no longer had housing. We opened shelters 24/7, and guests felt better rested, less anxious, and gave them a safe space to keep their things instead of having to take everything with them when they left each day. We utilized ready infrastructure in the form of hotels and motels to provide respite and shelter. We supported harm-reduction strategies like temporary managed campsites and saw people stabilize in staffed locations with sanitation, support, and services. We continued to provide legal assistance and rental assistance to support renters and help prevent evictions. And we never stopped financing affordable housing and rehousing people.

Knowing the full sacrifice and hard work of so many partners to adapt and to continue delivering services and homes, we still see the work before us. We see tents and tarps. We see families sleeping in cars. We know that Denver values her residents, our neighbors, and wants to see people supported and housed.

And that is why, on behalf of the Department of Housing Stability, I am pleased to present this five-year strategic plan. We listened to thousands of residents, stakeholders and partners. We heard directly from people utilizing our programs and valued their hard-earned lived expertise. We know housing is the foundation of the solution. Housing is big part of how Denver will recover. This plan relates how our work will continue to be person-centered, trauma-informed, data-driven, and culturally responsive. We join our colleagues across the city in our Mayor's call to lead with equity and we published our measures to ensure we take actions meaningfully aligned to these values.

Housing is the solution. Housing is how we will recover. The solution to homelessness is housing, and we're pulling every lever possible to meet the needs of our community. The success of this plan is in how we do it together. It will take all of us and our best efforts to do the work that is needed to see a healthy, housed and connected Denver.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Britta Fisher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Housing Stability Strategic Advisors Chair Darrell B. Watson



I am honored to serve as Chair of the Housing Stability Strategic Advisors (HSSA) for the Department of Housing Stability (HOST). HSSA is composed of six members appointed by the mayor and five members appointed by City Council. Appointed in the fall of 2020, HSSA is responsible for providing advice to the Executive Director of HOST. Our initial goal was to co-create a five-year strategic plan with the community, HOST, and the Strategic Plan Executive Committee. The strength of the HSSA is our varied backgrounds, which reflect the spectrum of individuals who face displacement, gentrification, and housing instability to individuals with professional expertise in housing policy. This is our strength: diverse perspectives and experiences to contribute to HOST's efforts to alleviate housing instability.

HSSA is working alongside the Strategic Plan Executive Committee (formed in 2020) as they guide and make recommendations for this plan. The Executive Committee was instrumental in guiding HOST through the COVID-19 pandemic and the writing and execution of the 2021 Action Plan, which aligned operations and spending during a chaotic year. Membership is composed of individuals with lived experiences, as well as service providers, housing developers, funders, city agencies and representatives of community organizations and neighborhoods.

HSSA meetings draw on our diverse experiences to hold meaningful discussions on how to prioritize programs and services, maximize investments, and ensure HOST's goals for the next five years are aligned with community needs. This requires extensive collaboration to accomplish.

Prior to creating this plan, HOST began a process of community engagement. HOST also held several meetings attended by a mix of nonprofit providers, funding organizations, non-governmental organizations, city colleagues, and our own advisors' group. HOST interviewed individuals with lived experiences of homelessness and other forms of housing instability. By bringing a broad swath of our community into the planning process, HOST has ensured a community-driven plan.

HOST shared a survey from late May to late June on the draft goals contained in this plan, which garnered more than 1,350 responses. The survey was offered in multiple languages and provided those not inside the planning process with an opportunity to make their voices heard. I wish to extend a heartfelt thanks to all the partners and individuals who promoted the survey; these voices are vital.

I would like to thank the members of the HSSA and the Executive Committee for their time, collaboration, and innovative ideas. It has been my pleasure to serve and work with each of you. Thank you to the HOST staff for their diligent leadership of this planning process to ensure that it is aligned with community needs.

Respectfully,

Housing Stability Strategic Advisors and HOST staff meet on Zoom to guide the development of the HOST Five-Year Strategic Plan.



Executive Summary

As cities around the country struggle to maintain affordable housing and resolve homelessness, the Denver Department of Housing Stability (HOST) has developed a bold five-year strategic plan to ensure Denver is healthy, housed and connected.

While housing prices in Denver have nearly doubled and median rent spiked 78% over the past decade, incomes have not increased as quickly. Despite Mayor Michael Hancock and City Council's increase of the minimum wage, more than 115,000 households pay more than the recommended 30% of their income for housing, putting them one unexpected car repair, major medical bill or job loss away from potentially losing their housing.

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the housing crisis. Denver saw unemployment quadruple, and requests for rent and utility assistance increased 270%. Today, more than 250,000 Coloradans report being behind on their rent and mortgage payments.¹ And while the last complete count showed more than 4,100 persons experiencing homelessness prior to the pandemic,² the number of people in shelters increased 60% during the year after the pandemic.³

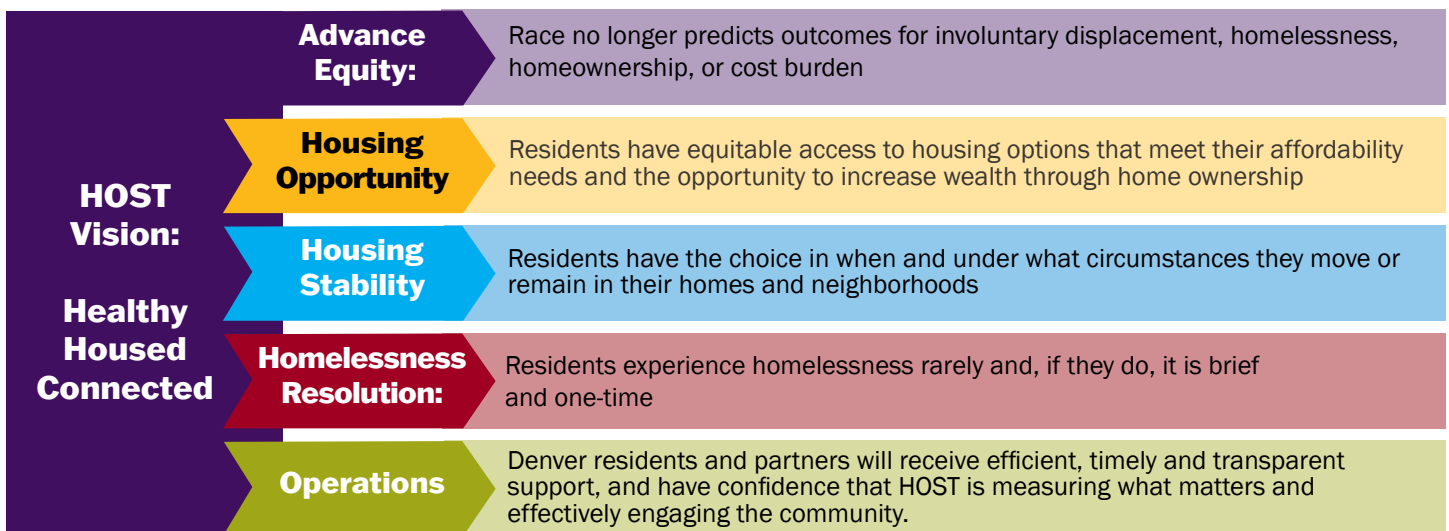
In a city where more than 115,000 households are struggling to keep a roof over their heads, and in which more than 4,100 people are experiencing homelessness, it is more important than ever for us to prioritize our citywide commitment to affordable housing. As we work to recover, we know that stable, affordable housing is essential to building a thriving community and economy.

HOST's vision is to create a healthy, housed and connected Denver. We do that by investing resources, creating policy, and building partnerships to provide housing stability, resolve episodes of homelessness, and create and preserve affordable housing. Our work is guided by our overarching core value of equity. Our work is person centered, trauma informed, and data driven.

HOST invests funds into affordable housing development and preservation, supportive housing, and affordable rental programs. HOST invests resources and partners with other organizations to provide rent and utility assistance, affordable rental housing and homeownership opportunities, tenant and landlord counseling services, eviction and foreclosure assistance, down payment assistance, and other services. We contract with nonprofits that operate shelters, rapid rehousing, diversion programs, and outreach teams who contact persons experiencing homelessness.

What This Plan Will Achieve

To advance this vision and address community needs, this plan establishes 14 important, measurable goals. By focusing community-wide efforts on strategies needed to reach these goals, in five years, HOST will help create a Denver where:



1 U.S. Census Bureau. (2021, June 16). *Week 31 Household Pulse Survey: May 26 – June 7*. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2021/demo/hhp/hhp31.html>

2 Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. (2020). *2020 Point-in-Time Count Report*. <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/mdhi/viz/MetroDenverHomelessInitiative-2020PITCountDashboards/Overview>

3 Department of Housing Stability. (March 2021). *COVID_19 Response: One Year Summary March 2021*. https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/housing-stability/documents/one_pager_final-1.pdf

Housing Opportunity

To advance equitable access to housing options, HOST will preserve affordable housing and create more truly mixed-income housing throughout Denver, with an emphasis on deeper affordability. We will connect our long-standing residents who feel housing-cost pressure to affordable housing in their neighborhoods. And we will increase homeownership in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)-households that have suffered from racist historic practices like redlining and higher rates of involuntary displacement.

This plan calls for the creation and preservation of 7,000 affordable homes in Denver over the next five years. This is an ambitious goal. The pace of affordable housing development is limited by the scarcity of federal and state resources that are needed to complement local funding. Without the ability to leverage these tools, the City will need to dramatically increase our investment per unit to move projects forward resulting in few units. Land is also in short supply at the same time that construction costs have increased. Expanding options for those earning at or below 30% of AMI is difficult without additional resources for ongoing rental subsidies. These challenges are significant, but the needs of our community are pressing and call for bold action. This goal cannot be achieved without collaboration, and we will work together to reach it.

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

- ✓ Increase the portion of total homes in Denver that are income restricted from 7% to 8% through the creation and preservation of 7,000 ownership and rental homes, including the creation of 900 supportive housing apartments.
- ✓ Reduce the rate of housing cost-burden among low- and moderate-income households from 59% to 51%.
- ✓ Preserve at least 950 apartments in income-restricted rental properties and ownership homes
- ✓ Increase the homeownership rate among low- and moderate-income households from 36% to 41% and the homeownership rate among BIPOC households across income levels from 41% to 45%.

Housing Stability

Our community has told us time and again that gentrification – and the resulting involuntary displacement of residents – is a major and growing area of concern. And yet, nationwide, few best practices exist for how to accurately measure, track and analyze involuntary displacement. As such, HOST will build capacity to survey residents and measure when and where involuntary displacement is happening, to whom, why, and what we need to do to stop it.

With this plan, we will work to ensure housing stability throughout our city, helping our residents remain in their homes and neighborhoods of choice. HOST will explore and identify possible funding sources for housing stability to increase levels of support that can be provided beyond emergency and pandemic recovery.

We will help renters and homeowners with disabilities, many of whom have few adequate housing options, to modify their homes to meet their needs. We will support our aging neighbors to age in the places they've long called home by providing them with home sharing options. We will provide financial assistance to help households catch up on rent, and in doing so, help people who just gained reemployment not have to consider moving across town from their new job to find affordable housing. We will fund navigation services through community partners to help connect residents to resources, so working parents don't have to move their children to new schools. And we will help tenants facing eviction, often after months of struggling to make ends meet through the pandemic, with legal representation to help them achieve a fair outcome.

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

- ✓ Reduce the number of evictions filed by 25% from 8,800 to 6,600 annually.
- ✓ Support advancement of prioritization policy to allow residents at risk of or who have been displaced priority access to new affordable housing.
- ✓ Benchmark other key measures such as foreclosures among income-restricted units and household mobility in 2022 to establish targets over the remaining plan period.

Homelessness Resolution

As we focus on making homelessness rare, brief, and one-time, we know that when someone is housed stably, they are better able to connect to resources, find and keep a job, get and stay healthy, address behavioral and mental health issues, feel safe and secure, and live fuller lives.

We will build confidence in the shelter system by connecting guests with housing, continuing to expand the diversity of shelter options, and reducing the barriers that prevent people who are unsheltered from seeking out shelter, including the creation of additional gender-inclusive shelter and more options for couples and pets. We will act with urgency to move resources nimbly and quickly so that no one is left to languish on the streets of our city; and we will reduce the length of episodes of homelessness by almost half, from 172 to 90 days.

By acting quickly, improving the diversity of available, accessible, and housing-focused shelter options, and by providing more housing, we will:

- Reduce the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in half between the 2022 and 2026 Point-In-Time counts;
- Create a coherent system of care that leads to stable housing for at least 50% of our families experiencing homelessness; and
- Measurably end veteran homelessness by achieving functional zero, which means we are placing at least as many veterans into permanent housing each month as there are veterans experiencing homelessness in our community

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

- ✓ Reduce unsheltered homelessness from 2022 Point-in-Time Count to 2026 Point-in-Time Count by 50%
- ✓ Increase the annual number of households served in rehousing and supportive housing programs from 1,800 to 3,000
- ✓ Measurably end veteran homelessness by achieving functional zero by 2026, i.e. placing at least as many veterans into permanent housing each month as there are veterans experiencing homelessness
- ✓ Increase the contract benchmark for the percentage of sheltered households who exit to housing from 30% to 40%
- ✓ Increase the number of family households who exit shelter and outreach programs to housing from 25% to 50%
- ✓ Reduce the average length of time residents experience homelessness to 90 days



Evening image of the Denver skyline (Stock photo)

Operations

Through our work in the Operations team, HOST will ensure Denver residents know what the city does to address housing instability and homelessness, how it makes a difference, and where to go when they need help. We will engage our community – especially those with lived expertise – so that our residents feel heard and see their feedback reflected in our approach.

As a data-informed organization, HOST will have the tools and data to support progress on our goals and to ensure we do not have racially-disparate outcomes.

We will be a regional leader in policy and a strong advocate for housing and homelessness plans and investment in the Denver metro region and throughout the state.

HOST will become the most efficient City & County of Denver department to contract with and be known as timely and transparent with public information. Denver's Pay for Performance approach works, and HOST will continue to focus on outcomes rather than outputs in our contracts whenever possible.

Denver residents will be confident in and proud of the wise investment they made by voting for the Homelessness Resolution Fund, as they see the effective outcomes of our work.

A Healthy, Housed and Connected Denver

This five-year plan to create a healthy, housed and connected Denver is ambitious and exciting. As we build on the many efforts that have come before us, we have learned from successes and challenges, and we have sought out and incorporated our community's feedback.

We cannot do this work alone. We need continued and expanded partnerships, evidence-based and innovative solutions to address our goals, and more public and private resources.

This plan sets the roadmap to our desired outcomes, and steps along the way that we are confident will get us there. We look forward to your partnership and ongoing participation.

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

- ✓ Improve communications channels, align them with community need, measure their effectiveness, and increase positive response regarding communications and engagement based on a baseline survey in 2022.
- ✓ Reduce average length of time from conditional approval of credit or award letter under a procurement process to fully executed contract to under 60 days for program contracts under \$500K, under 75 days for program contracts above \$500K and under 90 days for development contracts.
- ✓ Reduce procurement decision time from average of 47 days to 30 days from date of submission.
- ✓ Reduce average invoice processing time from 21 days to 7 days.
- ✓ Increase percentage of respondents to community and stakeholder feedback survey reporting satisfaction with the usability and transparency of HOST reporting tools, including publicly available finance and performance dashboards, based on a baseline survey in 2022.

Why We Focus on Housing

Our homes are where we wake and start each day. They are where we cook, eat, and nourish ourselves; where we bathe, dress, and primp; where we relax, rest, and recharge. They are places we share with our loved ones and pets, where we keep our most prized possessions, where we make and display a lifetime of memories. As Maya Angelou said, “The ache for home lives in all of us. The safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned.”

And yet, for far too many, having and keeping a home is increasingly out of reach.

Over the past decade, housing prices in Denver nearly doubled and the median rent spiked nearly 78%, reaching an average of \$1,443 per month in 2019. Meanwhile, incomes have not increased as quickly, putting pressure on Denver households to afford rent and mortgage payments.



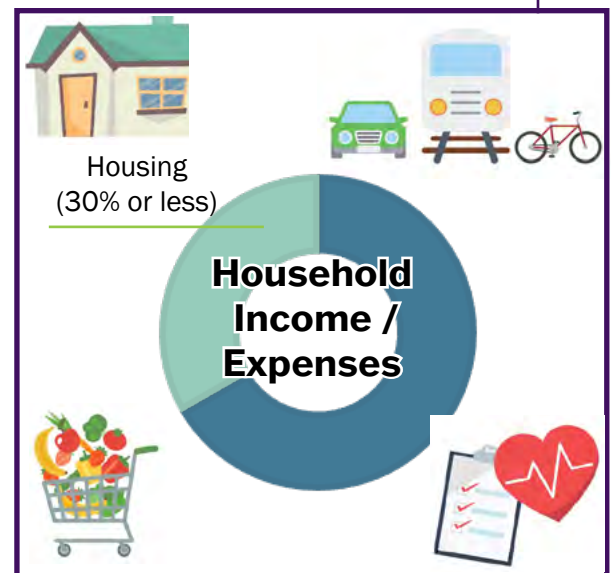
Roughly 40,000 homeowners and 87,000 renters in Denver earn less than 80% of the area median income.

While Denver’s growth has benefitted some, we have nearly 115,000 households paying more than 30% of their income toward housing making them housing cost-burdened. Even for homeowners, there is growing concern about the ability to meet new housing needs and remain financially secure. Roughly 40,000 homeowners and 87,000 renters in Denver earn less than 80% of the area median income (AMI)¹ – that’s less than \$55,000 a year for a single person or \$78,500 for a family of four. And we know that housing-cost burdened households are more likely to be led by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and concentrated in historically marginalized communities.²

When households are **housing cost-burdened**, the gap between their income and their housing expenses leaves too little for other necessities like utilities, food, transportation, childcare, education, and medical bills, often putting them just one misfortune away from losing their home.

Prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative’s 2020 Point-in-Time (PIT) count identified 4,171 individuals experiencing homelessness on a single night in Denver³ (this count doesn’t reflect people who have lost their housing and are living temporarily with friends and family.) Since that time, job loss experienced during the public health emergency increased the number of people living in unstable conditions and losing their homes. While the 2021 PIT did not include a count of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness due to the pandemic, the number of newly homeless doubled in the region and Denver experienced a 34% increase in people in emergency shelters.⁴

While Denver saw unemployment quadruple in the immediate wake of the pandemic, requests for rent and utility assistance increased 270%. As eviction and foreclosure protections put in place during the pandemic phase out, more than 175,000 Coloradans report being behind on rent and nearly 80,000 report being behind on their mortgage payments.⁵ As we work to recover from the pandemic and rebuild our economy, we know that stable, affordable housing is essential to building a thriving community and economy.



The federal government typically defines housing as affordable when it consumes no more than 30% of a household’s income.

1 U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). *American Community Survey 2019 1-Year Estimates Public Use Microdata Sample*.

2 Denver Community Planning and Development. (2021). *Tracking Vulnerability to Displacement*. <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4ca23abc1e21498fba6a356614353611>

3 Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. (n.d.). *Point in Time Count & Survey*. <https://www.mdhi.org/pit>

4 Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. (n.d.). *Point in Time Count & Survey*. <https://www.mdhi.org/pit>

5 U.S. Census Bureau. (2021, June 16). *Week 31 Household Pulse Survey: May 26 – June 7*. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2021/demo/hhp/hhp31.html>. Note: Census Pulse Survey data are not available at city or metropolitan levels.

What HOST Does

Created by [Executive Order 145](#) on Oct. 23, 2019, Denver's Department of Housing Stability (HOST) brought together teams working on both affordable housing and homelessness resolution from across the city into one comprehensive department. Our work is guided by our overarching core value of equity.

HOST's vision is to create a healthy, housed and connected Denver.

We do that by investing resources, creating policy, and building partnerships to provide housing stability, resolve episodes of homelessness, and create and preserve affordable housing. Our work is guided by our overarching core value of equity. Our work is person centered, trauma informed, and data driven.

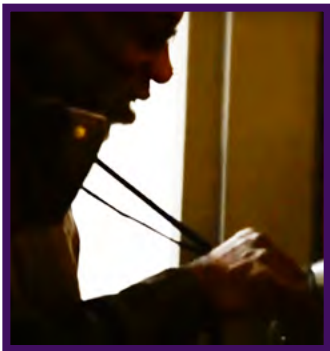
HOST exists to assist people experiencing housing instability and homelessness. We work with our partners to do everything we can to promote housing opportunity, housing stability, and to ensure episodes of homelessness are rare, brief, and one time. We work together to do all we can to help people stay in their homes, in their neighborhood of choice, and to help people find and maintain affordable rental and homeownership opportunities.

HOST invests funds into affordable housing development and preservation, supportive housing, and affordable rental programs. HOST invests resources and partners with other organizations to provide rent and utility assistance, affordable rental housing and homeownership opportunities, tenant and landlord counseling services, eviction and foreclosure assistance, down payment assistance, and other services. We contract with nonprofits that operate shelters, rapid rehousing, diversion programs, and outreach teams who contact persons experiencing homelessness.

HOST contracts with partners to provide most direct services, like mental health counseling, food assistance, job training or employment services, financial coaching, eviction and displacement protections. Our role is to ensure Denver residents are connected with the City agencies and other partners that do this important, interconnected work.

HOST engages partners and supports outreach to those living unsheltered on our streets in order to help connect them with housing, services, and shelter. It is also important to note that HOST is not responsible for enforcement of City ordinances, such as the unauthorized camping ordinance.

Our Housing First Approach



A Social Impact Bond Recipient enters his new home

HOST believes that a stable home is the foundation from which members of our community are much better able to meet their other needs, whether that's finding a new or better paying job, reconnecting with family, or engaging in behavioral health treatment. Based on this fundamental philosophy, HOST centers its response to homelessness resolution on a Housing First approach.

Housing First calls for us to offer people housing without precondition of treatment or compliance with rules beyond those we all abide by when renting an apartment, and for offering services and support on a voluntary basis while someone is in housing. In some ways, this approach is intuitive. It is easier to engage in a job search when you have a stable address to list on applications. It is easier to consistently take your medications when you have a medicine cabinet in which to store them.

But this philosophy can also raise questions. Perhaps the most common is about the role of behavioral health issues. We sometimes see people on the street who appear to have a mental health or substance use issue and assume they must also be experiencing homelessness. That isn't always the case.

It is important to remember that behavioral health issues are far more common than homelessness. More than 50 million adults in the United States have a mental illness, and more 13 million adults have a serious mental illness.⁶ More than 20 million people age 12 and older have a substance use disorder.⁷ The number of people experiencing

6 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2020, September). Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States: Results from the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt29393/2019NSDUHFFRPDFWHTML/2019NSDUHFFR1PDFW090120.pdf>

7 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2020, September). Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States: Results from the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt29393/2019NSDUHFFRPDFWHTML/2019NSDUHFFR1PDFW090120.pdf>

homelessness pales in comparison: only 1.6 million people experience homelessness annually in the United States (less than 1% of the nation's population).⁸ As these data show, the vast majority of people working to address behavioral health issues are housed.

The Housing First philosophy has also been proven to work better than approaches that require treatment and sobriety first, even when tested among those with co-occurring disorders. A randomized control trial, the gold standard for research, found that individuals who participated in supportive housing first spent less than 3% of time in shelters over a 6 month period as compared with the control group served in treatment first programs which spent more than 20% of time in shelter. The participants had documented diagnoses of mental illness, an average of 6.5 years of homelessness, and 4.9 psychiatric hospitalizations prior to the study.⁹ Additionally, the participants in supportive housing first versus those in treatment first programs had equal sobriety rates, even though the treatment first programs required sobriety as a condition of service. Further studies have consistently found that Housing First models achieve higher housing stability rates than other models.¹⁰

Simply said, our experience in Denver shows that housing with appropriate supports works.

The lack of affordable housing across the income spectrum is the biggest driving force behind homelessness in the United States.



If behavioral health is not the major driver of homelessness, then what is? The answer, based on decades of research, is simple. While personal circumstances may make someone more vulnerable to an experience of homelessness over another, the lack of affordable housing across the income spectrum is the biggest driving force behind homelessness in the United States.¹¹

Based on this evidence, HOST focuses its efforts on addressing the underlying issue: expanding available affordable housing resources with appropriate supports to help people maintain safe and stable housing.

We also recognize that other systems have already been established to provide health care, behavioral health treatment, employment services, etc. HOST partners with those systems and leads the city's efforts to ensure people experiencing and exiting homelessness have to housing from which to access those critical supports.

Background on this Strategic Plan

Building on the foundation of our [2021 Action Plan](#), the [Three-Year Shelter Expansion Plan](#), and [Housing an Inclusive Denver](#), and on the [City's Comprehensive Plan 2040](#), HOST has created this five-year strategic plan to create positive housing outcomes for the community over the next five years.

HOST had begun work on this strategic plan in January 2020, convening community members to help create a plan to achieve our vision of a healthy, housed, and connected Denver. Denver stakeholders representing nonprofits, community organizations, affordable housing developers, people with lived experience, City Council members, government agency partners, funding partners, and businesses were meeting regularly, when, in late March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic created a new reality where the needs of those without homes or at risk of losing their homes were even more paramount.

The City and the HOST team responded to the crisis, putting long-term strategic planning efforts on a new course. Though the strategic planning process continued, the level of community engagement necessary to create a long-term plan was not possible while also responding to the immediate needs of vulnerable populations impacted by the pandemic.

Even as response to the immediate impact of the pandemic was underway, through the combined leadership of Mayor Michael B. Hancock and Denver City Council, the voters were asked to consider providing additional funding for services to help those in need of housing. With overwhelming support of the Denver voters, a 0.25 percent sales tax increase was approved to create the "Homelessness Resolution Fund."

8 Shinn, Marybeth; Khadurri, Jill. (2020). *In the Midst of Plenty: Homelessness and What to Do About It*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell.

9 Shinn, Marybeth; Khadurri, Jill. (2020). *In the Midst of Plenty: Homelessness and What to Do About It*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell.

10 Shinn, Marybeth; Khadurri, Jill. (2020). *In the Midst of Plenty: Homelessness and What to Do About It*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell.

11 Cunningham, Mary. (2009). *Preventing and Ending Homelessness—Next Steps*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute. <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/30126/411837-Preventing-and-Ending-Homelessness-Next-Steps.PDF>

In consultation with stakeholders, HOST produced a one-year action plan for the short-term and postponed work on longer-term planning until 2021. In the fall of 2020, Denver voters strongly supported ballot Measure 2B, which provided significant new funding for housing, shelter, and services for those experiencing or exiting homelessness. As a result, HOST engaged in even further community outreach and planning for how to spend the [Homelessness Resolution Fund](#) created by Measure 2B. The department's 2021 Action Plan and supplemental addendum outlining the use of resources in the Homelessness Resolution Fund allowed HOST to provide effective emergency response, continued investment in housing opportunities and programs, and established important baseline data and procedures to support the successful creation of a five-year strategic plan.

With the support of Denver City Council and Mayor Hancock, HOST also proceeded to stand up a new advisory committee in 2020: the Housing Stability Strategic Advisors. The 11-member body was selected and formally seated in fall of 2020 to help provide input on HOST's work to address housing stability, including through the development of a new strategic plan. This committee is convening alongside a previously developed Strategic Planning Executive Committee started in early 2020 to support the five-year strategic planning process.

Our Five-Year Goals and Strategies

HOST has developed a theory of change we call the Impact Framework, which is designed to lead to immediate and long-term positive outcomes for the people of Denver. It is focused on three pillars of our work: housing opportunity, housing stability, and homelessness resolution. These are guided by our commitment to equity and supported operationally by staff. The goals detailed in this plan are categorized in each of these pillars.

Advance Equity

Race no longer predicts outcomes for involuntary displacement, homelessness, homeownership, or cost burden.

Housing Opportunity

Residents have equitable access to quality housing options that meet their affordability needs and the opportunity to increase wealth through homeownership.

Housing Stability

Residents have the choice in when and under what circumstances they move or remain in their homes and neighborhoods.

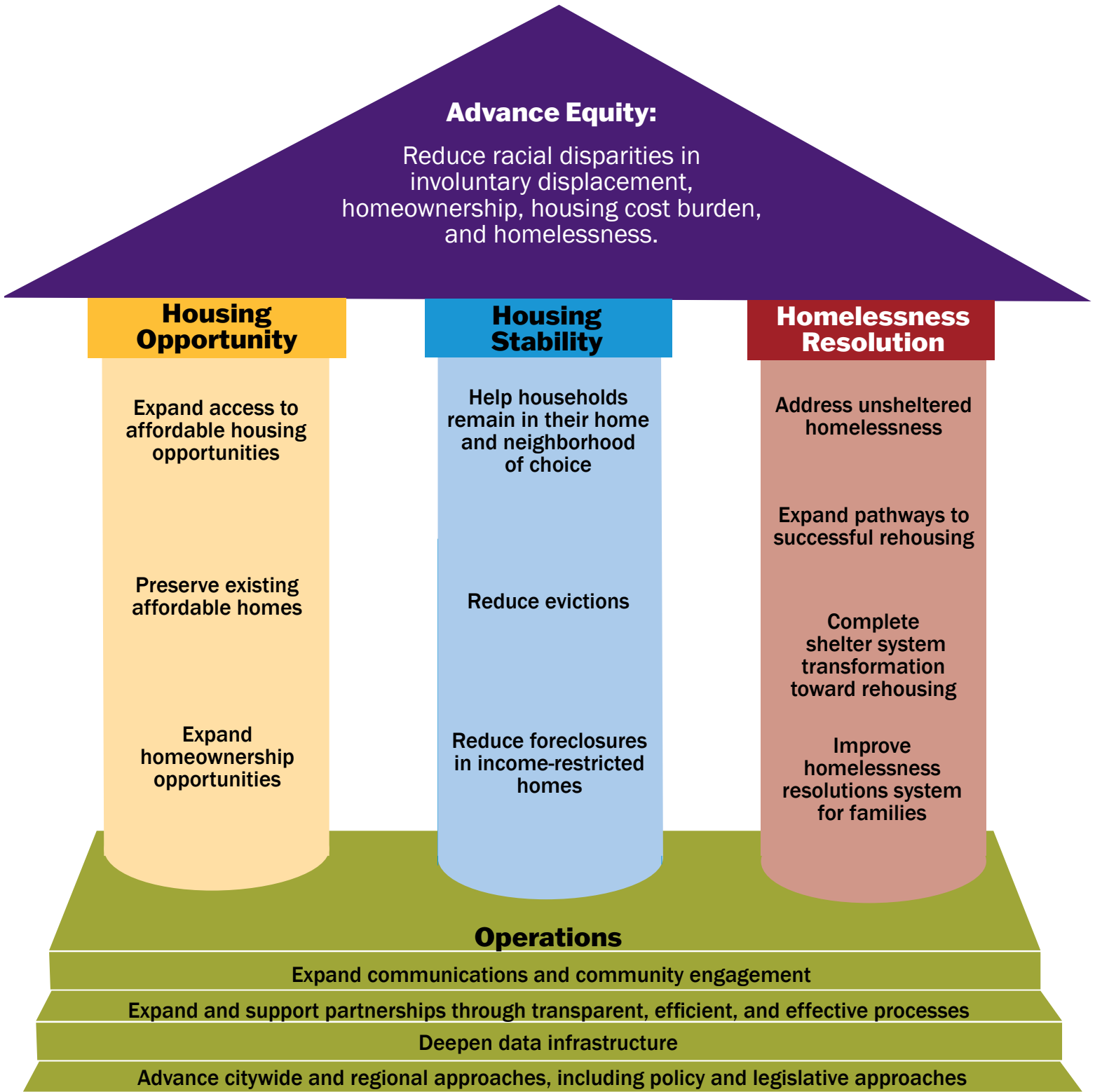
Homelessness Resolution:

Residents experience homelessness rarely and, if they do, it is brief and one-time.

Operations

Denver residents and partners will receive efficient, timely and transparent support, and have confidence that HOST is measuring what matters and effectively engaging the community.

The Defining Plan Priorities are outlined in the following sections, with detailed goals, measures, and strategies by which we will achieve our aggressive five-year targets. HOST intends to prioritize funding, policy, and other strategies to address these goals in annual action plans throughout the five-year strategic plan timeline. HOST will release draft annual action plans for public comment alongside the Mayor’s budget in September of each year with the exception of the 2022 Action Plan, which will be released by December 2021. The annual action plans will identify which goals and strategies have been prioritized and funded for that year, and help our partners to better anticipate and plan for upcoming efforts and needs.



In a city where more than 115,000 households are struggling to keep a roof over their heads, and in which more than 4,000 people are experiencing homelessness, it is more important than ever for us to prioritize our citywide commitment to a healthy, housed, and connected Denver.

This plan ensures that Denver has a long-term strategy to invest resources, create policy, and build partnerships that provide housing stability, resolve episodes of homeless and create housing opportunities. This plan further ensures that people throughout Denver have equitable opportunities to obtain affordable housing as the foundation on which to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and thrive well into the future.

Top right clockwise:

Central Park Urban Living Condos resident Zack Gibson smiles with excitement standing in his new home during the grand opening. He said the affordable condos enabled he and his wife to move back to Denver to be with their grandchildren after a long search to find something in their price range. (Evan Semón)

Urban Peak shelter guests receive assistance and support needed to become self-sufficient and to exit homelessness. Credit: John Johnston via Urban Peak

A guest at the men's congregate shelter operated by Denver Rescue Mission at 4600 E. 48th Ave. smiles while waiting for his laundry to be cleaned. (Evan Semón)



Setting the Stage

To ensure our plans can be as successful as possible, it's important to identify community needs and understand past efforts, to learn from their challenges and successes, and how the environmental context and available resources and tools impact these efforts. We also look to other communities across the country for best practices and innovations.

As such, HOST reviewed quantitative data on community need and interviewed and surveyed community members to learn more about their anecdotal and qualitative needs. We evaluated the financial landscape, detailing both revenue and expenditures. We took stock of federal, state, and municipal legal and policy constraints that could impact our work. And we mapped how our work intersects with other work throughout the city. In addition, HOST staff members have been learning from communities across the country and tracking innovations and best practices.

It is by thoroughly examining and understanding our place in the fabric of our community and how our environment impacts our work that we can accurately position our plans to be most effective in coming years.

The following summarize more extensive research included in the Appendices:

- **Data on Community Need**
- **Learnings from Community Engagement**
- **Financial Landscape**
- **Legal and Policy Environment**
- **Citywide Coordination on Housing and Homelessness**

Role of City Government and Other Partners in Meeting Housing Needs

While local government does not develop housing itself, the City and County of Denver has a responsibility to attend to the housing needs of our residents at the lowest income levels. The market does not provide housing that is affordable to all of our teachers, service workers, and hospitality workers. To ensure Denver can stay an inclusive city where everyone can share in our prosperity, it is our obligation as government to partner to help meet these needs.

Why doesn't the market meet the housing needs of all Denver residents? Housing developers secure financing to build new ownership and rental homes. While the cost of construction varies by location, size and other factors – land and building materials make the basic cost of constructing affordable and market rate homes similar. Because the amount of financing developers can secure to build new homes depends on the amount they can ultimately sell or rent those homes for, the vast majority of the homes that are built without public subsidies to help fill financing gaps are only affordable to residents at higher income levels.

None of the new rental units added to Denver's housing stock between 2010 and 2019 were affordable to households earning at or below 30% of the area median income without public funding. To build homes affordable to households at the lowest incomes, developers rely upon federal, state, and local resources. At the federal and state level, these include tax credits and bonds to help finance upfront costs, rental subsidies to provide operating income for the properties, etc. However, these resources are not scaled to meet the need.

The City and County of Denver uses policy tools and its local funding to better meet the needs of our residents. Through [Housing an Inclusive Denver](#), the City prioritized using its funds to focus on the areas of greatest need that will not be reached by market-based tools. In this plan, this commitment will continue.

Figure 1: Housing Spectrum



Data on Community Need

While housing affordability nationwide has declined for decades, the problem has been rapidly advanced by the significant growth Denver experienced over the past decade, particularly among higher income households. While Denver has added more housing to help meet these new housing needs, not enough of that housing reaches below 60% of the area median income (AMI), where the greatest unmet housing needs exist. Housing costs have risen faster than incomes, even before the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Together, these pressures compel residents to spend too much on their housing or make the difficult decision to move away from communities they have long called home.

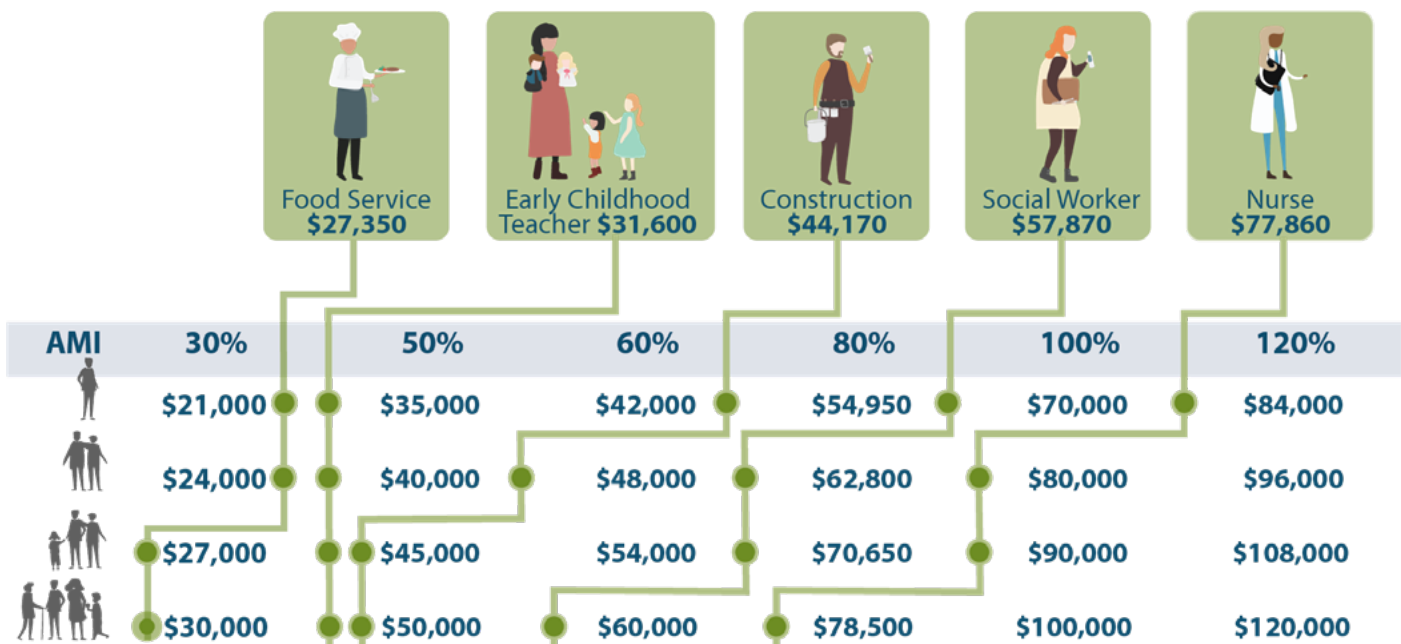
These trends are impacting Denver's racial and ethnic diversity and placing neighborhoods that have historically been home to residents of color at risk of gentrification and involuntary displacement. This instability has also pushed too many Denver residents into homelessness. For Denver to realize its goals of being equitable, affordable, and inclusive, as well as a community made up of strong and authentic neighborhoods, long-term housing strategies grounded in the needs of the community are critical.

Denver's Rapid Growth

In recent years, Denver has experienced rapid growth. From 2010 to 2019, according to estimates from Root Policy Research, Denver added more than 120,000 residents and 56,000 households.¹ This represents a 22% increase in the number of households living in Denver, far surpassing growth rates nationally (7%) and statewide (14%).² While this growth is a sign of Denver's strong economy and desirability, it challenges the affordability of the housing market. More households moving to Denver means more renters and home buyers seeking out the same apartments, condos, and homes.

The majority of these new households have higher incomes and may be able to afford to pay higher rents and buy more expensive homes.³ The vast majority of the growth (45,000 households) has come from households earning above 120% AMI. At the same time, Denver lost 10,500 households earning less than 60% of AMI. For Denver to remain inclusive, reversing this trend is critical.

Figure 2: Various AMI levels and corresponding professions for various family sizes.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (2019 Data)
 35-2015 Cooks, Short Order; 25-2011 Preschool Teachers; 47-2141 Painters, Construction and Maintenance; 21-1022 Healthcare Social Workers; 29-1141 Registered Nurses

1 Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

2 U.S. Census Bureau. *American Community Survey 2010 and 2019 1-Year Estimates*. [Data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

3 Change in the number of households by income can be due to several factors: in-migration and out-migration (i.e., households choosing to move to or move out of Denver), households choosing to form their own households (e.g., moving out of parent's house, living alone instead of having a roommate) or join an existing household (e.g., doubling up), and the same household changes income bracket.

Existing housing stock is not affordable to many Denver residents

As Denver has grown, the housing market worked to respond to this increase in demand, adding about 34,000 rental units from 2010 to 2019.⁴ However, Root Policy Research finds that most of that new development has only been affordable to those earning at or above 100% AMI.⁵ The same study finds that Denver has a 25,000-unit surplus for households at or below 100% of AMI. However, there is a shortage of affordable rental units for those earning at or below 60% AMI (see figure 3).⁶ While publicly-assisted units, which include housing choice vouchers, public housing as well as apartments that receive tax credits and other funding that require affordability, help lessen this imbalance, resources are not currently scaled to the need. As a result, Denver has a shortage of nearly 19,000 rental units at or below 30% AMI, a shortage of 20,000 rental units at or below 50% AMI, and a shortage of more than 11,000 rental units at or below 60% AMI.⁷ To address these critical gaps, HOST must continue to focus its efforts on creating deeper affordability.

Overall, Denver has 24,000 income-restricted units in the city.⁸ This is about 7% of the overall housing stock. This falls short of the more than 130,000 households with incomes at or below 80% of the AMI that market rate housing is not currently reaching.



Most of {Denver's} new development has only been affordable to those earning at or above 100% AMI.



Above: Rendering of Gateway South (HOST staff)



At right: Park Avenue Townhomes under construction (HOST staff)

4 Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

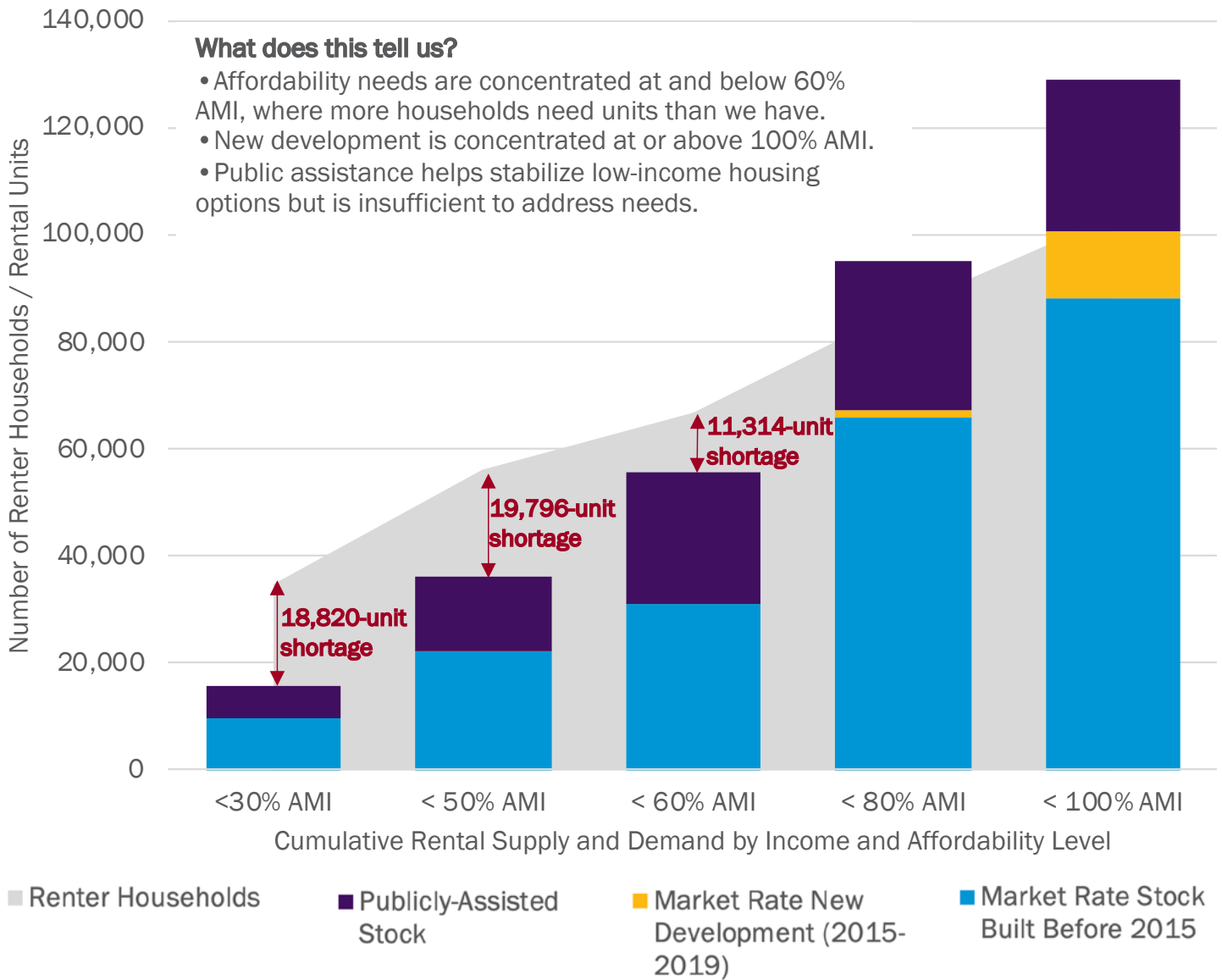
5 Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

6 Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

7 Note: Unit shortages are cumulative, so the unit shortage for households below 30% AMI are included in the unit shortage below 50% AMI. Source: Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

8 See Appendix D for more information on how HOST helps to create and preserve income-restricted affordable units in Denver.

Figure 3: Renter Households and Housing Units by Income and Affordability Level



Source: Reproduced with permission from Root Policy Research.⁹ American Community Survey 2019 1-year estimates, HOST Affordable Housing Dashboard, HUD Picture of Subsidized Households, CoStar, and Root Policy Research

Notes: Housing Choice Vouchers are included in Publicly Assisted Inventory; accounts for a 40% estimated overlap in HCVs and other publicly subsidized units (e.g., HCV use in LIHTC). The 2020 HUD AMI for a two-person household of \$80,000 was used.



Denver has 24,000 income-restricted units in the city. This is about 7% of the overall housing stock. This falls short of the more than 130,000 households with incomes at or below 80% of the AMI that market rate housing is not currently reaching.

⁹ Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

Housing costs have risen faster than incomes

For Denver to be an inclusive city, it is important for everyone to have housing that fits within their budget. For most people, rent or mortgage payments are the single biggest expense. Two factors – households' income and the amount they pay for housing – drive whether a household can pay for their housing without compromising other important goals, like buying food and medicine, saving for homeownership, or planning for their child's college education. In Denver, like other growing cities nationally, rents and home values have nearly doubled. These rapidly increasing costs have outpaced growth in household incomes, putting significant strain on a growing number of Denver residents.

The economic crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic worsened the financial situation of many Denver households. While unemployment rates in Denver reached historic lows in late 2019 (2.3% in November and December of 2019), the pandemic dramatically increased unemployment, and, in April 2020, the unemployment rate reached 12.3%. Though the unemployment rate later settled around 6-7% in late summer 2020, this masks an inequitable recovery.¹⁰ Denver's economy recovered more quickly for higher-wage sectors, while recovery for lower-wage sectors lagged, disproportionately harming women, people of color, and younger workers.

Residents are paying too much for housing, risking their stability

As a result of these trends, nearly 115,000 households in Denver (35%) pay more than the recommended 30% of their incomes on housing costs.¹¹ When people don't have access to housing options that fit within their budgets, generally considered to be 30% or less of household income, households may face difficult choices and housing instability. They may forgo other spending or savings goals. They may be forced to leave the communities they've long called home because they can no longer afford to stay. They may find housing in a cheaper area or double up with friends or family, perhaps leading to longer commutes to work or moving their children into a new school district, disrupting their child's education. Some may ultimately find themselves experiencing homelessness.

Housing cost burden is widespread among lower-income households. Four out of every five households earning 30% of the area median income or less are paying more than 30% of their income for housing, and 64% are paying more than half their incomes toward these costs. In contrast, only 6% of households earning over 120% of the AMI face this housing cost burden.



Nearly 115,000 households in Denver (35%) pay more than the recommended 30% of their incomes on housing costs.



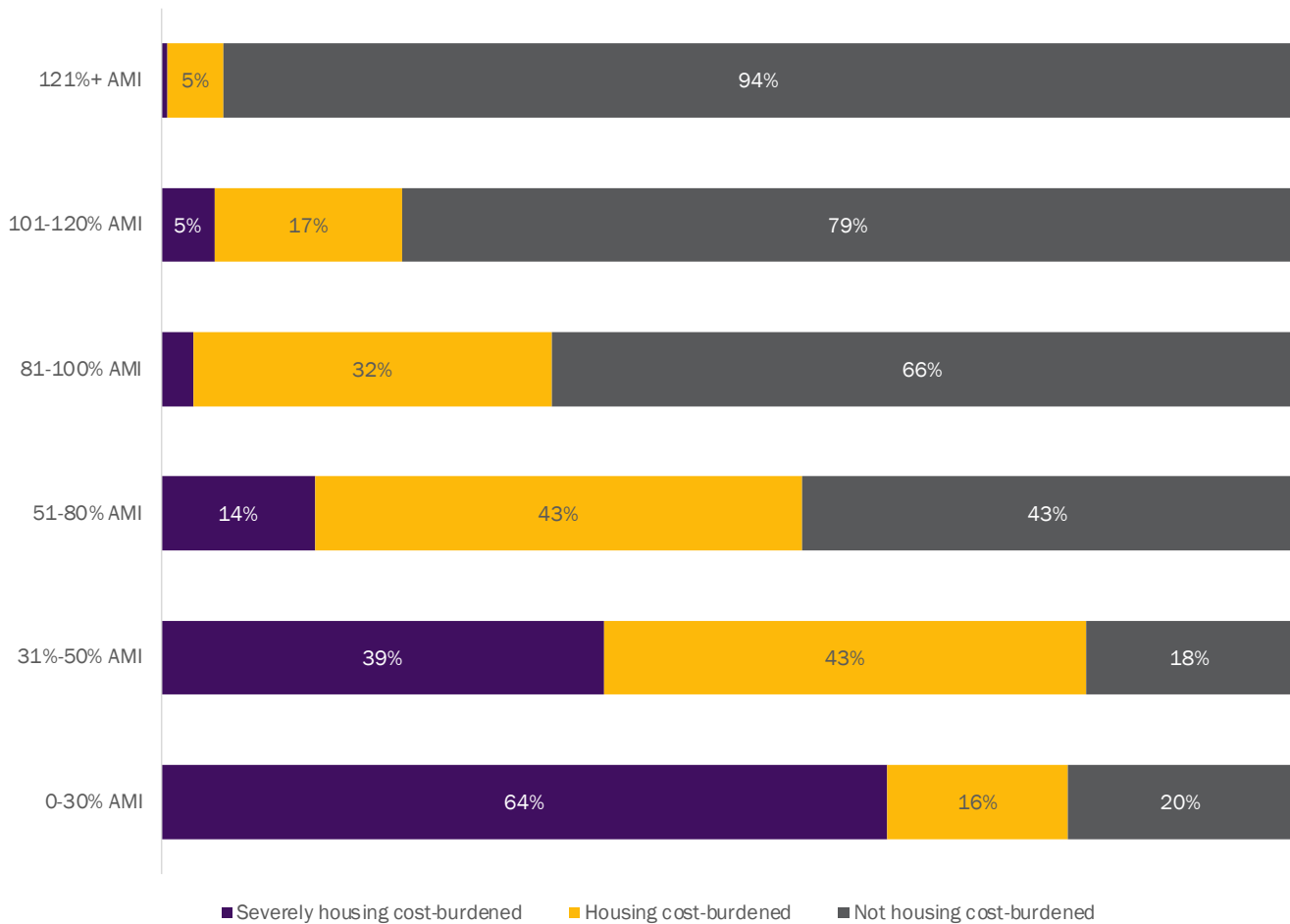
At left: Supportive housing provides a pathway to stability for youth experiencing homelessness. (John Johnston via Urban Peak)

At right: An entire city block in Denver's Elyria-Swansea neighborhood now is the site of 32 income-restricted homes. (Habitat for Humanity Metro Denver)

¹⁰ Svaldi, A. (2021, February 7). *Colorado paid a heavier price economically in its fight against COVID-19 than other states in 2020*. Denver Post <https://www.denverpost.com/2021/02/07/colorado-economy-covid-price-restaurants-businesses-unemployment/>

¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). *American Community Survey 2019 1-Year Estimates Public Use Microdata Sample*.

Figure 4. Prevalence of Housing Cost-Burden for Denver Households by Area Median Income, 2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019 1-year estimates, Public Use Microdata Series.
 Note: Data are for Denver County.

Denver neighborhoods have inequitable access to opportunity, and many are at risk of involuntary displacement

Many areas now at risk of gentrification and involuntary displacement are those that had been historically redlined, the practice of denying mortgages or making them difficult to obtain for non-white homebuyers in certain areas that supported racial segregation in Denver and communities across the country.¹² Helping residents remain in their homes and communities of choice is a core pillar of HOST’s work, as is expanding access to affordable housing opportunities in amenity rich areas.

Homelessness is increasing in a challenging environment

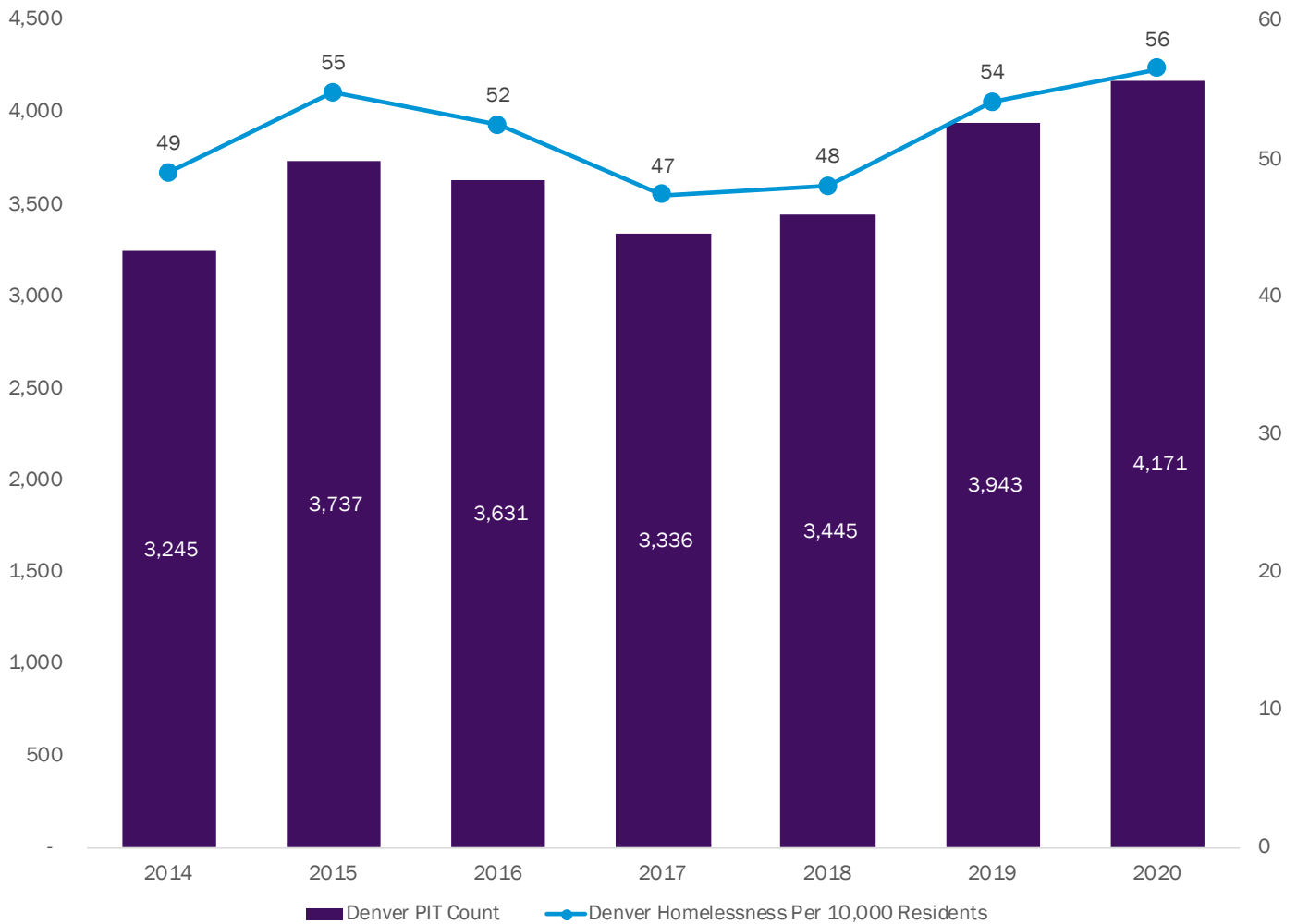
Too many of Denver’s residents experience homelessness and find themselves in need of a safe place to stay and resources to quickly regain housing. According to the Point-in-Time (PIT) count, an annual census of persons experiencing homelessness on a single night in January, 4,171 persons experienced homelessness in Denver on a single night in 2020.¹³ This is 56 out of every 10,000 Denver residents.¹⁴ In addition, 996 people (24% of everyone identified in the PIT count) were unsheltered. This is a substantial increase from 2019 and prior years when about 14% of those counted were unsheltered.

¹² Roy, A. (2018, November 30). New exhibit in Denver focused on redlining aims to educate and collect stories. <https://www.9news.com/article/news/local/next/new-exhibit-in-denver-focused-on-redlining-aims-to-educate-and-collect-stories/73-617891177>

¹³ The 2021 Point-in-Time Count was delayed and only included the sheltered portion of the count due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, this report only uses data through 2021. For more information, see: <https://www.mdhi.org/pit2021>

¹⁴ The per 10,000 rate of homelessness ranges widely across the United States, and Denver is in the middle of this range. For example, Washington DC has a 92.8 per 10,000 rate of homelessness, while Savannah, GA has a 23.9 per 10,000 rate of homelessness. For more information, see [https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-2020/.](https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-2020/)

Figure 5. Point-in-Time Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness in Denver County, 2014-2020



Source: Metro Denver Homeless Initiative, [Point-in-Time County-level Reports](#), 2014-2020; Colorado State Demography Office.
 Note: Data are for Denver County.

Persons experiencing homelessness in Denver are disproportionately BIPOC. While more than half (55%) of Denver residents are white, only 43% of those experiencing homelessness in the 2020 Point-in-Time Count are white. The majority of persons experiencing homelessness (56%) are BIPOC. Research has also shown that LGBTQ+ adults and youth also experience homelessness at higher rates.¹⁵

Ending veteran homelessness is achievable

In 2020, 627 veterans experiencing homelessness were identified across the Metro Denver region during the Point-in-Time Count; 479 of those veterans (more than 75%) were staying in Denver.¹⁶ Since that time, Denver has made strong progress reducing veteran homelessness. The veteran by-name list, which identifies the number of veterans experiencing homelessness at any given time, found only 432 veterans experiencing homelessness across the region in June 2021.¹⁷ Just under 300 of those veterans were in Denver.¹⁸ Ending veteran homelessness is

15 Wilson, B. D.M. et al. (2020). *Homelessness Among LGBT Adults in the US*. University of California Los Angeles School of Law Williams Institute. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGBT-Homelessness-May-2020.pdf>

16 Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. (2020). *2020 Point in Time Reports & Dashboard*. https://www.mdhi.org/2020_pit_reports.

17 U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs and Metro Denver Homeless Initiative veteran by-name list data, June 2021.

18 U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs and Metro Denver Homeless Initiative veteran by-name list data, June 2021.

possible. From 2010 to 2016, there was a 47% decrease in veteran homelessness. This success is largely attributed to the successful investment in supportive housing and other rehousing approaches specifically for veterans.¹⁹

A1 - Setting the Stage: Data on Community Need explores in more depth how all the following factors contribute to community need for affordable housing:

- Denver’s rapid growth,
- demographic characteristics,
- neighborhood access to opportunity and involuntary displacement,
- rising housing costs,
- housing-cost burden,
- eviction and rent arrears,
- lack of affordable housing stock,
- inequitable access to homeownership,
- and homelessness.

Learnings from Community Engagement

At the Denver Department of Housing Stability, people are at the heart of everything we do. Our mission is to create a healthy, housed, and connected city for everyone. We want to hear from and dialogue with the people we and our partners serve in order to better meet their needs.

It is our intent to create space and trust for meaningful, constructive, and ongoing dialogue to happen. We know how important it is for us to actively listen to our stakeholders, to acknowledge the lived experiences of those we serve, and to reflect back what we hear for verification. Through this process, we can utilize the input and feedback we receive to inform and continuously improve our work.

To that end, HOST created a comprehensive community engagement process to obtain input and feedback while developing this strategic plan. Engagement included thousands of people across as many audiences and stakeholders as possible, as well as offering numerous different engagement opportunities, from attending regular meetings to taking a five-minute survey to in-depth, hour-long interviews. Our goals were to meet people where they are, to give voice to our stakeholders – especially those with lived experience - and to incorporate what we heard into this plan.

As a result, this plan has been informed by thousands of stakeholders throughout the city, including residents and people who have themselves experienced or are experiencing housing instability or homelessness, as well as individuals representing nonprofits, community organizations, developers, City Council members, government agency partners, residents, funding partners, and businesses.

The work is also built on the foundation of multiple previous plans, all of which also included significant community engagement.

A2 - Setting the Stage: Community Engagement details extensive external stakeholder input sessions, in-depth consumer interviews, city staff and elected leader coordination, and a community survey on the draft goals.

We encourage you to read the insights shared with us in interviews with people experiencing homelessness, who have lived expertise. They shared what services and supports might have prevented them from losing their housing. They talked about why they were reluctant to go to a shelter, how the change to 24/7 sheltering during the pandemic literally saved their lives, what challenges they face while staying in shelter and what supports have been most helpful. These Denver residents envisioned a future when they once again have housing, and what support they would need to be successful in remaining housed. Their very personal stories illuminate the importance of the goals, strategies and outcomes outlined in this plan, and the urgency with which we must pursue them.



A guest sits inside his tent with his belongings at the Safe Outdoor Spaces site run by Colorado Village Collaborative at 16th Avenue and Pearl Street. (Evan Semón)

¹⁹ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2021, April 12). *Secretaries of HUD, VA joint statement on ending Veteran homelessness*. https://www.hud.gov/press/press_releases_media_advisories/HUD_No_21_059

We also encourage you to explore the results of a community survey we conducted in the Spring of 2021 asking residents to help prioritize our draft goals and to provide open-ended feedback on these goals. The ratings we obtained from more than 1,350 responses are noted alongside the goals in this place using a five star scale and the actual ranking priority the goal received.

 Community Survey Rating

Across thousands of diverse stakeholders with myriad experiences and interests, common themes emerged across all the input. While the language used and the ways the needs and desires were expressed varied, the messages were largely the same.

Our community has a vision for a Denver that has **safe, affordable, and healthy housing accessible to all** who need it; one **where race does not dictate outcomes**, but that is equitable and closes historical opportunity gaps. Our community wants all residents to have agency and be able to live in their community of **choice**, to feel safe, and have the opportunity to thrive.

Our community wants Denver to be a city where people can **find and connect to the services and supports** they need – and that we need to do a better job helping people find those resources. There should be no wrong door to accessing services, there should be room for everyone to be housed, and there should be access to services for all.

Our community nearly universally agrees that **housing is our “north star”** – it is the single most important means by which to ensure we achieve our collective vision. We need **more affordable housing, more quickly, with embedded support services** and fewer restrictions. To get there, we must shift from being reactive and scarcity-driven to a proactive, outcome-based approach. They also told us we must expand **regional approaches** with more cooperation across jurisdictions to share both ideas and resources, because we cannot be successful in this work alone.



Our community nearly universally agrees that housing is our “north star” – it is the single most important means by which to ensure we achieve our collective vision.

We heard that our community needs **help finding work**, especially jobs with **living wages**. They sometimes need **temporary rent and utility assistance** to help keep them afloat. And they need us to **remove barriers** – like having a criminal record or a poor credit score – that prevent people from obtaining and keeping housing. And our community told us that it needs much **stronger protections** for renters and homeowners to help safeguard against evictions and foreclosures.

Our community told us we must work to **reduce the stigma** around housing instability and an experience of homelessness, and to reduce the influence of “Not In My Backyard” (NIMBY) attitudes on our public discourse. We heard that residents who have lived experience with housing instability and homelessness want to be engaged meaningfully in the decisions we make that affect them, to have a voice and to be heard, and to be supported.

The community told us they want to see the City **guide and thought partner** with developers and shelter operators, not just fund them. We heard that we **can** do more to get money out the door and move beyond the mechanics of contracting to focus on how to **incentivize innovation, collaboration, best practices, and positive outcomes**. We also heard that we can do more to **coordinate effective wraparound services** and expand partnerships with smaller organizations.

Our community told us it needs **expanded services and supports onsite** at shelters, including **more case workers, mental health services, substance use treatment and job training**. Short of making those services available at shelters, our community told us it needs better access to **transportation** to get to services located elsewhere.

Finally, we heard that we can **do more to communicate** that all our efforts are connected along a **housing spectrum**, – from homelessness to homeownership. Within our work, we provide a clear front door to temporary shelter, a pathway to housing, and a clear connection from renting to homeownership. Our community should have a clear understanding of the resources we offer and how to access them.

Financial Landscape

The City & County of Denver prioritizes investments across departmental budgets to support residents in finding and maintaining stable housing. This funding is distributed across departments based upon programs and services that serve the various needs of the individuals and families served. However, much of this funding is allocated to the HOST budget. Other city agencies receive funding to support these needs, including Denver Human Services, Department of Public Health and Environment, Department of Safety, Office of Financial Empowerment and Protection, and Department of Finance.

HOST drives progress toward its goals by funding programs, services, and housing development and preservation to support residents along the entire housing spectrum. Funding comes from federal and local sources including grants, taxes, philanthropic efforts, and other revenues. Revenue and expenditure projections are given on an annual basis through the yearly budget process.

Annual budget numbers are established based upon actual appropriations for some sources like the City’s General Fund, projected amounts based upon historical levels for sources like federal grants, and current rates of spending for sources that can carry forward from one year to the next. HOST also receives federal dollars from grant-funded sources whose amounts may change year to year. Due to these things, the budget laid out herein, and in subsequent annual plans, will be different from the HOST budget in the City Budget Book, which is finalized in October and adopted by City Council in November of each year.

Some projects like affordable housing developments take time—funds may be designated for a project but not fully spent in the same year. Special Revenue funds in the city budget book indicate the amount expected to be expended in each given year; the HOST budget includes the unencumbered balance available to be budgeted for.

The 2022 budget projections cannot be extrapolated to estimate a five-year funding picture, as expenditures may vary annually and even within a given year based upon a variety of factors, including those indicated above. Additional impacts to revenues or expenditures may include an early loan payoff leading to unexpected program income, or unanticipated emergency response needs that could impact a planned budget.

Two men play chess at the men’s congregate shelter operated by Denver Rescue Mission at 4600 E. 48th Ave. (Evan Semón)



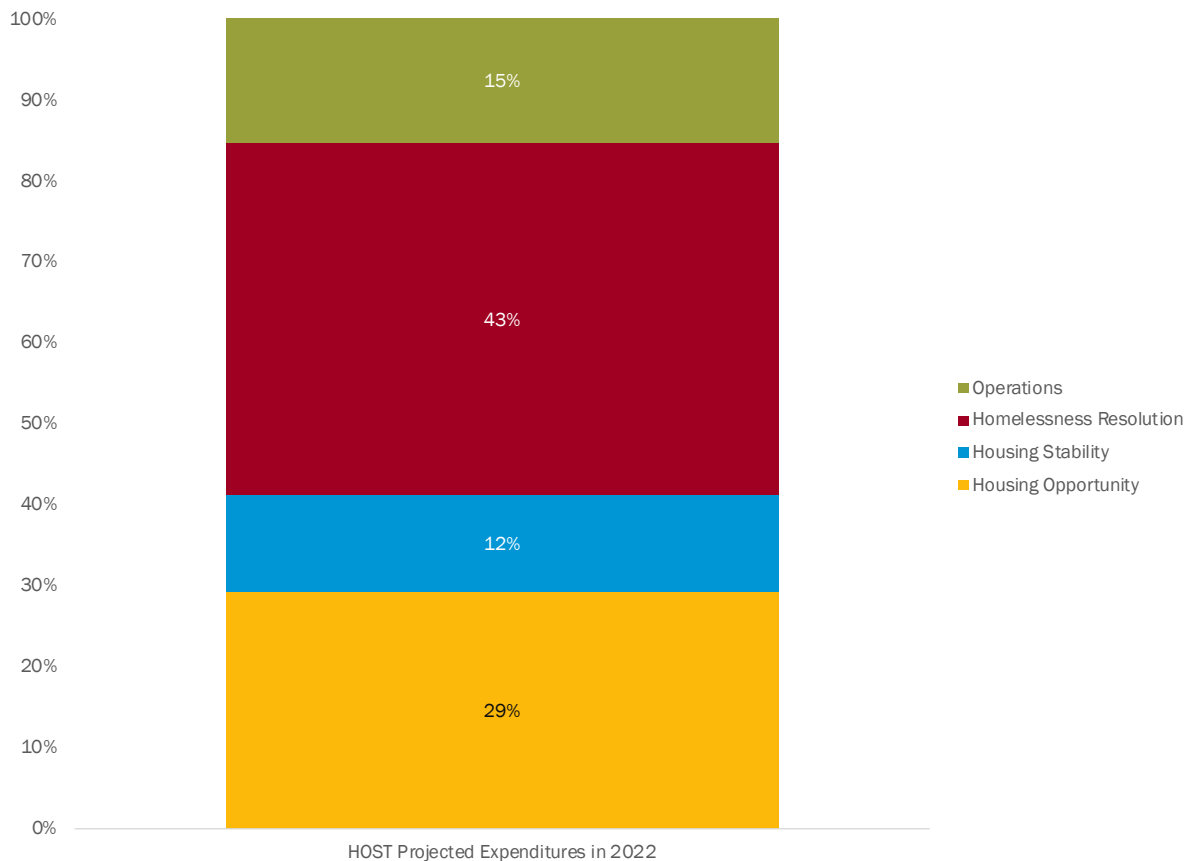
“If we all were housed and stable, we can handle the health and mental health issues. It creates stability.”
Becky, hotel guest

HOST Expenditures

HOST allocates the revenue it receives toward investments in housing development and programs, policy and systems change efforts, and data and reporting solutions to drive the impacts it seeks to create. Figure 6 below provides the projected expenditures for the department by pillar in 2022.

This reflects significant investment in homelessness resolution and housing opportunity, both of which are supported by specific dedicated funding sources. Where the uses of the Affordable Housing Fund focus primarily on development and preservation and the Homelessness Resolution Fund serves individuals experiencing or exiting homelessness, funding for HOST's work to keep people in their homes is reliant on annual budget allocations and decisions. As a result, a key strategy of this plan is to evaluate the opportunity for additional funding sources for housing stability.

Figure 6: HOST Projected 2022 expenditures by Pillar**



** Note that the amount for Operations includes resources that support all divisions of the department such as personnel or professional services, payments under existing agreements such as the DHA Delivers for Denver ("D3") contract in partnership with the Denver Housing Authority, and reserves that may support outcomes across HOST pillars.

A3 - Setting the Stage: Financial Landscape - Financial Landscape looks in more depth at how the following impact this five year plan:

- the budget context,
- revenue streams,
- the impact of pandemic recovery funding on this plan,
- other related funding streams, and
- expenditures.

All the referenced resources are deployed in the strategies set forth in this plan.

Legal and Policy Environment

The City & County of Denver is committed to adopting innovative and forward-looking strategies to promote housing opportunity, housing stability, and to resolve episodes of homelessness. Denver has historically taken a progressive approach to this work, and this approach continues with the strategies presented in this five-year plan. While Denver is committed to moving the needle forward, it's important to note that the City's ability to bring certain strategies forward is constrained by the legal landscape of legislation, regulations, and case law at the federal and state levels. As a city entity, we must adhere to these laws enacted by voters and elected leaders and further defined by the courts.

Unauthorized camping in Denver is illegal, per a Denver ordinance passed by City Council in 2012. Initiative 300, which would have effectively ended the unlawful camping ordinance, was overwhelmingly rejected by voters in 2019. In response to Denver voters, the City continues to enforce the unauthorized camping ordinance through a multi-step process that balances our deep concern for the safety and wellbeing of our unhoused neighbors, public health, and access to public spaces. The ordinance requires that the City first tries to connect the city's unhoused neighbors, who may be in crisis, with services and shelter. It also requires that, as a second step, the City provides warnings as an alternative to the issuance of a citation. The City continuously works with the community and our regional partners to address the immediate needs of persons experiencing homelessness while also advancing our long-term goal of ensuring adequate affordable housing.

While HOST is focused on the long-term solutions to homelessness and not part of city cleanup or enforcement efforts, we do partner with outreach organizations to try to connect our unhoused neighbors to services and shelter, and ultimately help people exit from homelessness as quickly as possible. And we are working to encourage and support innovative new approaches that help overcome barriers that may impact whether and how people seek shelter and services.

[A4 - Setting the Stage: Legal and Policy Landscape](#) lists legislative and policy restrictions and their impact on HOST's work, such as the prohibition of rent control in Colorado, the Civil Rights Act, the Fair Housing Act, the Age Discrimination Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, federal resource restrictions, the ability of cities to own and operate housing, property tax rebates and abatement, and importantly, Denver's unauthorized camping ordinance and voters' rejection of an initiative that would have effectively ended it.



At left: Atlantis Phase I: The City contributed \$800,000 for this 60-unit infill project serving disabled tenancy. Atlantis Phase II HOST contributed \$2.3 million for this 84-unit infill project serving disabled tenancy. This phase also has a high share of 30% AMI units. (HOST staff)

At right: Elisabeetta is a project that will bring 91 apartments to 5120 Broadway, with 22 reserved for people with disabilities. (HOST staff)

Citywide Coordination on Housing and Homelessness

Building the Denver of tomorrow takes thoughtful collaboration and coordination across City departments and the active engagement and participation of partners, businesses, residents, and other community members. HOST's Five-Year Strategic Plan has been informed by many important previous plans, including [Housing an Inclusive Denver](#) and the [Three-Year Shelter Strategy](#). Other plans, including the [Comprehensive Plan 2040](#), [Blueprint Denver](#), and [Game Plan for a Healthy City](#) and efforts such as the Denver Public Library's outreach team, and the [Caring For Denver](#) program have both informed this plan and been integrated in it, where appropriate, to reflect the collaborative nature of the work of housing and homelessness resolution across city agencies.

These efforts work together, steered by a shared vision for the city, in order to guide policy and funding decisions that build a healthy, housed, and connected Denver. Each of these plans include a commitment to building a Denver that is equitable, safe, connected, accessible, healthy, economically diverse, and vibrant.

While housing is a core component of the City's investments in promoting inclusive communities, addressing affordability takes more than just developing and preserving housing – it takes increasing access to higher paying wages, connecting residents to health and financial wellness, and promoting equitable access to mobility opportunities. Combined, these investments across multiple agencies help work to maintain and expand affordability throughout Denver neighborhoods, as well as provide the opportunity for the coordination of resources to address the complex issues of housing stability and homelessness resolution.

HOST works with other departments to guide the citywide work around housing and homelessness to build solutions that are grounded in data, provide for multi-departmental innovation, and collaborate to provide the best policies, projects, services, and programs to meet the changing needs of the people of Denver.

[A5 - Setting the Stage: Citywide Coordination](#) includes a review of the city's historic and current day housing and homelessness resolution plans and efforts.

[Housing an Inclusive Denver](#), adopted by City Council in 2018, set a five-year strategy for future housing policy and investments. HOST's [Three-Year Shelter Expansion Strategy](#) provides a roadmap for the City to expand and enhance its emergency sheltering systems. The [Comprehensive Plan 2040](#) is the 20-year vision that will guide City agencies and officials in the decisions that will shape Denver for the next two decades. [Blueprint Denver](#) is a 20-year citywide land use and transportation plan. Denver's [Game Plan for a Healthy City](#) is a park and recreation plan for Denver's urban and mountain park systems that proclaims safe and easy access to parks and open space, a healthy lifestyle, and a healthy environment are all basic rights for every resident.



Defining Plan Priorities - Impact Framework

The Department of Housing Stability's vision is to create a healthy, housed, and connected Denver, and it leads this work with a commitment to advancing equity. To achieve this, the department has aligned its efforts to impact in three critical – and interrelated – foundational pillars: housing opportunity, housing stability, and homelessness resolution.

- **Housing opportunity** expands affordable rental and ownership options for Denver residents.
- **Housing stability** helps to keep people in the homes they are already in and prevent involuntary displacement.
- **Homelessness resolution** helps residents experiencing homelessness regain housing and supports them while they experience housing crisis.

This work is mutually reinforcing. As we increase access to affordable housing, more households will have the foundation of a stable place to call home. Fewer households will face involuntary displacement or face the hardship of eviction and foreclosure. More households experiencing homelessness will be able to regain housing. As we are able to help more households stay in the homes they already occupy, fewer households will face the hardship of an experience of homelessness.

To clearly define the impacts HOST wants to achieve with the Denver community and to ensure progress can be measured toward that future, HOST developed a theory of change we call our Impact Framework. This framework was first introduced in the [2021 Action Plan](#) and has been refined with further community engagement. It articulates impacts in each of our pillars of work:

- Advance equity so that race no longer predicts outcomes for involuntary displacement, homelessness, homeownership, or housing-cost burden.
- Expand housing opportunity so residents have equitable access to quality housing options that meet their affordability needs and the opportunity to increase wealth through homeownership.
- Support housing stability so residents have choice when and under what circumstances they move or remain in their homes and neighborhoods.
- Resolve homelessness so residents experience homelessness rarely, and, if they do, it is brief and one time.

The framework creates a meaningful measurement strategy to define success and ensure progress can be tracked. It links the intended impacts to outcomes and measures of progress. Those measures directly relate to the outputs of our strategies and help identify what is working and opportunities to course correct along the way. It also articulates the foundational supports needed for HOST to achieve these goals: funding, communications and engagement, data systems and reporting infrastructure, and collaboration and partnership. Specific measures within each pillar can be seen within the framework itself.

How this framework informs this plan

Though there are many ways we could focus our efforts over the next five years, the goals identified in this plan have been selected because they drive the impacts HOST wants to create for Denver, move the needle on important outcomes, and respond to our City's most pressing needs as we recover from the pandemic and address long-standing community challenges.

We know that instability is looming for many as protections against eviction and foreclosure put in place during the pandemic are removed. We know that unsheltered homelessness has become a more visible presence in Denver even as we are sheltering more people nightly than ever before. We know that Denver has long been feeling the pressures of rapid growth – rapidly rising housing prices, increasingly unattainable homeownership, involuntary displacement – and that those pressures are unlikely to be abated as remote work offers Americans across the country greater flexibility in where they live. And we know that increasing the number of affordable housing opportunities we can provide to Denver residents is central to solving for all of these challenges.

As you will see in coming sections, we will measure our success in achieving these goals by achieving actual outcomes for our community. Rather than simply stating the number of units we will create or the number of households we will serve, we've gone a step further to try to anticipate how much this will change the day-to-day lives of Denver residents. For example:

- How will this change the homeownership rate among low- and moderate-income households?
- How will this change the overall composition of our housing market?
- How will this reduce the length of time residents experience homelessness?
- How will this reduce the number of evictions filed?

Defining success in this way is risky. Some of the needles we're trying to move are slow to show progress. Some are heavily influenced by factors we can't control like market forces and how many Denver projects are awarded crucial and scarce resources such as low-income housing tax credits. But we believe in making a difference for Denver and defining success in this way reflects that commitment.

To determine targets to quantify our success in this plan, HOST analyzed data on who we have served and the units we have created. We examined how different investments drive different outcomes, and we estimated how much we could support these crucial activities with the resources we have available through our funding, continued partnerships, and other efforts.

The targets identified here are stretch goals within the resources we have available, and some are further stretches than others. To achieve them, we will need continued partnership and leverage from other funders and funding sources. As we seek to implement this plan, additional resource and staffing needs may arise. Because the needs in our community dramatically exceed the resources we have available, even with these continued partnerships, this plan will not meet all of our needs. However, they represent measurable, improvements that will provide stability to thousands of households and make our community and neighborhoods stronger.

Achieving the goals articulated in this plan will require a community-wide response that focuses on reaching these targets collectively. We will need to align all our efforts and resources toward these goals in order to achieve them.



Top left clockwise:
Interior of studio apartment at LaTela.
(Love Thy Neighbor)

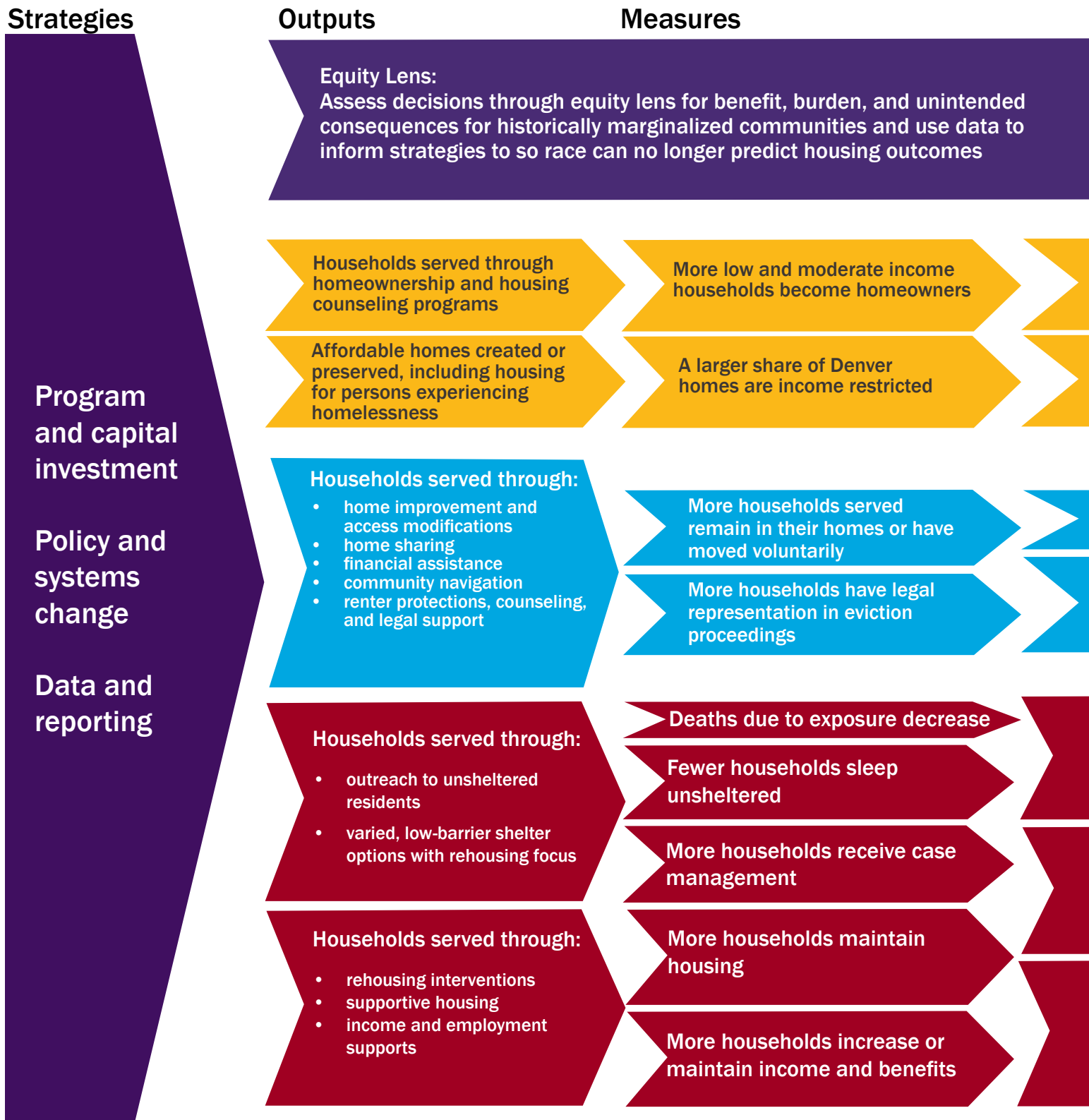
Mayor Michael Hancock congratulates Denver Rescue Mission team members with a fist bump at the opening celebration of the new congregate men's shelter at 4600 E. 48th Ave. (Evan Semón)

Employees provide three meals a day to guests at the women's shelter operated by Catholic Charities at 4330 E. 48th Ave. (Evan Semón)



A case worker meets with a guest at the men's congregate shelter operated by Denver Rescue Mission at 4600 E. 48th Ave. (Evan Semón)

Figure 7: HOST Impact Framework



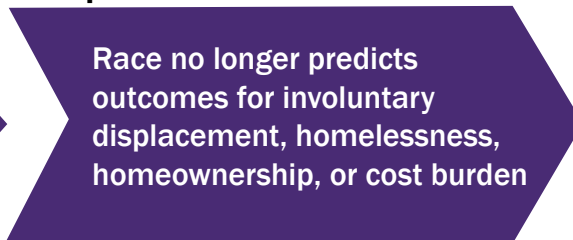
Cross-departmental Operations:

Denver residents and partners will receive efficient, timely and transparent support, and have confidence
Funding & Finance Data Systems and Reporting Policy Communications and Engagement

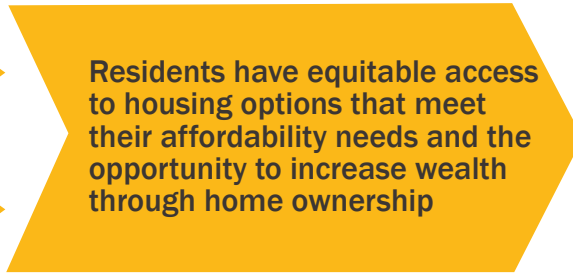
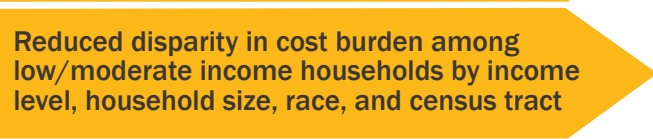
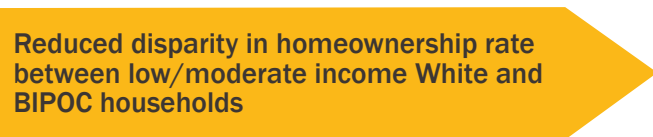
Outcomes



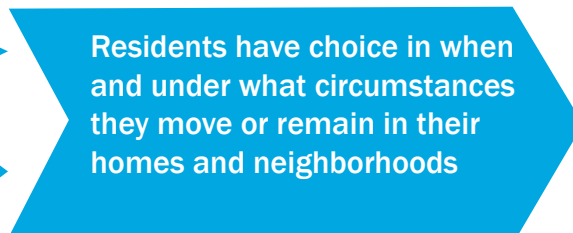
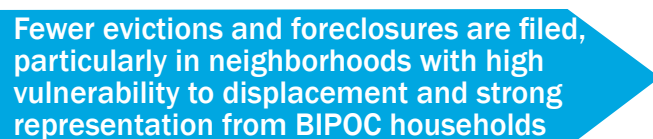
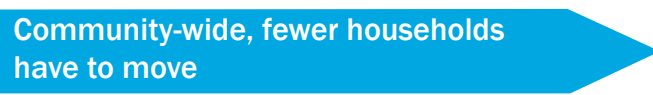
Impacts



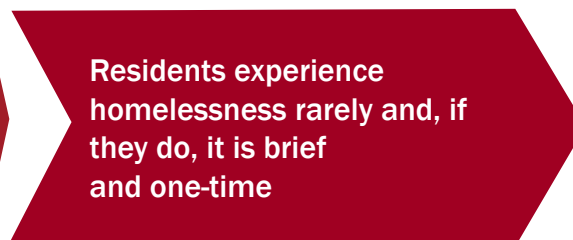
**Advancing
Equity**



**Housing
Opportunity**



**Housing
Stability**



**Homelessness
Resolution**

that HOST is measuring what matters and effectively engaging the community.
Contracting and Procurement Collaboration and Partnership



**Healthy
Housed
Connected**

Defining Plan Priorities - Advancing Equity

Equity is when everyone, regardless of who they are or where they come from, has the opportunity to thrive, and acknowledges that treating every person or place exactly the same may not result in fair opportunities to succeed.¹ Equity has been identified as a core value for the City & County of Denver, Mayor Hancock's administration, and the Department of Housing Stability (HOST). HOST assesses policy and spending decisions through a lens of equity for benefit, burden, and unintended consequences for historically marginalized communities. The department also uses data to inform our work so that race can no longer predict housing outcomes.

As part of this core value, HOST is committed to leading with race. This approach is crucial to equity because every major system in the nation (criminal justice, education, housing, workforce economics, etc.) contains racial disparities that influence experiences and outcomes. HOST leads with race explicitly but not exclusively because these inequities persist in every system across the nation, without exception.

Inequities also persist based on race inside other identifying dimensions such as age, gender, LGBTQ+ status, immigration status, disability, financial class, or geography. HOST leads with race because housing is inextricably intertwined with race. To correctly do its work, HOST must lead with race while naming the role that race plays in experience and outcomes. HOST works to dismantle systemic racism, which persists especially in housing due to racial segregation, redlining, housing discrimination, and other racist practices. Leading with race ensures that HOST looks at its work through the lens of a more equitable system.



Future state:

Race no longer predicts outcomes for involuntary displacement, homelessness, homeownership, and housing-cost burden.

In this work, HOST also understands the importance of intersectionality in equity; understanding that while leading with race, it is essential to acknowledge the barriers faced by other historically disenfranchised groups and the importance of tailoring HOST's equity lens to the nuances of those experiences. As we lead with race, you may not always see age, gender identity, disability, or income level, or neighborhood called out explicitly throughout this plan. Rest assured, we are examining this demographic data to address disparate outcomes in these populations.

HOST recognizes that LGBTQ+ adults and youth, in particular, experience homelessness at a higher rate and face discrimination. According to [youth.gov](https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/community-planning-and-development/documents/planning-general/comprehensive-plan/denver_comprehensive_plan_2040.pdf), it is estimated that approximately 20 to 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ+. Both adults and minors who identify as LGBTQ+ and experience homelessness face challenges within the shelter system, particularly with regard to safety and gender-affirming supports and can be at a heightened risk for violence. Transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals are also more likely to be unsheltered. While 26% of men and 19% of women counted in the 2020 Point in Time count were unsheltered, 32% of transgender individuals and 53% of gender non-conforming individuals counted were unsheltered.² HOST is committed to ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for LGBTQ+ individuals within the shelter system and in outreach programs with environments of acceptance and affirmation.

HOST also recognizes that persons with disabilities make up a large proportion of individuals experiencing homelessness. HOST is committed to programs, services, and facilities that are accessible and tailored for persons with disabilities so they can feel safe and secure in shelters, alternative sheltering options, and housing. In alignment with national standards, HOST requires that developers design and construct a number of units that are accessible for persons with mobility disabilities and hearing or visual disabilities.³ Most shelter facilities in Denver meet accessibility standards under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and HOST is committed to working with our partners toward full accessibility in shelter facilities. For example, HOST contributed funding to the 2021-completed improvements at Denver Rescue Mission's Lawrence Street Shelter, which include an elevator and entrance ramp for greater accessibility. When the Denver Coliseum was activated for emergency shelter during the

1 City and County of Denver. (2019, April 22). *Comprehensive Plan 2040: Denver's Plan for the Future*. https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/community-planning-and-development/documents/planning-general/comprehensive-plan/denver_comprehensive_plan_2040.pdf.

2 Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. (2020). *2020 Point in Time Reports & Dashboard*. https://www.mdhi.org/2020_pit_reports.

3 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). *Accessibility Requirements for Buildings*. https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/disabilities/accessibility

COVID-19 pandemic, HOST added portable bathrooms on the main level to accommodate guests who cannot navigate the stairs to the concourse level restrooms. HOST is also committed to ensuring its website and other communications are accessible under the guidance of the ADA.

Further, HOST's equity commitment is part of the City & County of Denver's citywide equity goals. Mayor Michael B. Hancock chartered the [Mayor's Office of Social Equity and Innovation \(OSEI\)](#) to lead efforts to eliminate social inequity, and race and social injustices by evaluating institutional and government systems, policies, and practices. Its citywide goals are:

1. ***Denver will be an inclusive employer where City staff is valued, supported, and given the tools to advance social equity, race, and social justice.***
2. ***Denver will be an inclusive City that integrates social equity, race, and social justice into policies, practices, programs, and budgetary decisions to create equitable outcomes.***
3. ***Denver will be an inclusive government that effectively engages the community to create equitable outcomes.***
4. ***Denver will use nationally recognized research and data-driven practices to support the City's progress toward social equity, race, and social justice.***

HOST's efforts align with these citywide commitments. By centering our commitment to advancing equity throughout the goals of this five-year plan, we will work to reverse the harms of systemic racism and ensure the progress we make leaves no one behind.

Throughout this plan, we center our commitment to equity through our goals and strategies. For example, this plan sets targets around increasing the homeownership rate among Black, Indigenous, and People of Color-led households. To achieve this, we will expand down payment assistance in historically redlined neighborhoods and intentionally target our outreach of homeownership programs. This plan also contains a strong focus on neighborhoods at risk of involuntary displacement, through land acquisition opportunities, housing stability programs, and other efforts. It emphasizes measurably reducing homelessness, particularly among residents who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness, which disproportionately impacts BIPOC residents and other historically marginalized groups. Throughout all of our work, HOST will also use data to identify disparities and work with our partners to address them.

Terminology for Equity and Inclusivity

In our commitment to equity, HOST recognizes that the language we use matters. It is our intent to honor the terms people use to identify themselves whenever possible. We sought out guidance from national and local experts in equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and asked our own EDI team to review the terminology used in this plan and our work more broadly. While not everyone agrees and standards are in constant flux, the terms below are defined here for reader understanding and will be updated with each annual action plan to reflect changes as needed.

We are committed to being specific whenever possible so as not to overgeneralize, calling out where certain populations have different experiences from one another.

And we are committed to using person-centered language that acknowledges we are all human first, and the adjectives used to describe us are neither permanent nor all encompassing of who we each are as people.

AAPI (Asian American Pacific Islander) – inclusive of people of Asian, Asian-American, or Pacific Islander ancestry

AIAN (American Indian or Alaska Native) – inclusive of people of Native American, American Indian, Alaska Native or other American indigenous ancestry

Black – inclusive of people of Black and African-American ancestry

BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) – inclusive of people of Black or African-American, Latino or Hispanic, Native American Indian and other indigenous ancestry, Asian-American and Pacific Islander, and others who do not identify as white/non-Hispanic

Home – a place where a person or people reside; we use this in place of unit, apartment, house, etc.

Latino – inclusive of people of Latin or Hispanic ancestry

LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/ Questioning and others) – the plus infers inclusion of other sexual and gender identities, including those who identify as intersex, asexual, pansexual, pangender, agender, genderqueer, bigender, and gender variant

PEH (persons/people experiencing homelessness) – a person who does not have a permanent place to live

Residents – people who live in a place, regardless of what type or location; we use this instead of tenants or owners

White – inclusive of people of Caucasian ancestry

Defining Plan Priorities - Housing Opportunity

Impact Statement:

Residents have equitable access to quality housing options that meet their affordability needs and the opportunity to increase wealth through homeownership.

5-Year Targets

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

Increase the portion of total homes in Denver that are income restricted from 7% to 8% through the creation and preservation of 7,000 ownership and rental homes, including the creation of 900 supportive housing apartments.

Reduce the rate of housing cost-burden among low- and moderate-income households from 59% to 51%.

Preserve at least 950 apartments in income-restricted rental properties and for-sale homes.

Increase the homeownership rate among low- and moderate-income households from 36% to 41% and the homeownership rate among BIPOC households across income levels from 41% to 45%.

Access to affordable housing has never been more important in Denver. Today 120,000 more people live in Denver than in 2010, with as many as 140,000 more projected by 2040.¹ While our city's population has spiked, the housing stock is simply not keeping pace with community needs, particularly for those earning at or below 60% of the AMI.² Ironically, while home prices have risen dramatically — generally good news for a city's economy — this boom is also increasingly making rentals and for-sale housing unaffordable for too many in Denver and across the nation.

In 2021, one out of every three Denver households pays more than 30% of their income for housing. The average rent in Denver for a two-bedroom apartment is nearly \$1,800 — much more than many working people can afford.³ Even a typical two-bedroom apartment renting at fair market rent (\$1,375) would require a household to earn \$30 an hour or \$62,640 per year in Denver in order to afford it.⁴ That's why it is so important that we work to create and preserve existing affordable housing and connect residents at any income level to new housing opportunities.

To address these pressing needs, we collaborate with partners to promote thoughtful, long-term housing solutions that help long-time residents continue to call Denver home. We help preserve existing affordable homes, support new affordable and mixed-income development to increase the supply of affordable homes in Denver, and create opportunities for wealth building through homeownership. Recent changes in state policy and opportunities for future legislation will allow us to broaden our impact and focus investments where the need is greatest.

We recognize that addressing affordability in Denver will take a multitude of different strategies over time, including those aimed at increasing the overall supply of housing in the city to keep pace with population. While increasing the overall supply of housing can help address the affordability of the City's new and existing housing stock, increased inventory alone is unlikely to produce housing affordable to the lowest income and most vulnerable residents.

In five years, we will preserve affordable housing and create more truly mixed-income housing throughout Denver, with an emphasis on deeper affordability. We will connect our long-standing residents who feel housing-cost pressure to affordable housing in their neighborhoods. And we will increase homeownership in BIPOC-households to narrow the gap with the citywide homeownership rate of 50% and eliminate that disparity entirely in the longer-term as these households have suffered from racist historic practices like redlining and higher rates of involuntary displacement. By providing more affordable housing and preserving the affordable housing we have throughout the city, we will combat involuntary displacement and contribute to the diversity of our neighborhoods.

1 Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

2 Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

3 Apartment Association Metro Denver. (2021). *Denver Metro Apartment Vacancy and Rent Report 4th Quarter 2020*. <https://www.aamdhdq.org/vacancy-and-rent>.

4 National Low Income Housing Coalition. (n.d.). *Out of Reach 2020: Colorado*. <https://reports.nlihc.org/oor/colorado>

This plan calls for the creation and preservation of 7,000 affordable homes in Denver over the next five years., including 900 new units of supportive housing. This is an ambitious goal. The pace of affordable housing development is limited by the scarcity of Low Income Housing Tax Credits and Private Activity bonds that are needed to complement local funding. Without the ability to leverage these resources, the City will need to dramatically increase our investment per home to move projects forward resulting in few homes. Land is also in short supply at the same time that construction costs have increased. Expanding options for those earning at or below 30% of AMI is difficult without additional resources for ongoing rental subsidies. These challenges are significant, but the needs of our community are pressing and call for bold action. This goal cannot be achieved without collaboration, and we will work together to reach it.

Within our goal to create or preserve 7,000 affordable homes Denver, HOST will prioritize deeply affordable homes (i.e., those affordable at or below 30% of AMI), three or-more bedroom homes, and supportive housing. This five-year plan does not set subgoals for each of these units types or by tenure type (e.g., rental or ownership homes), because the pipeline of affordable housing is difficult to predict over that time horizon. HOST will set annual targets in its action plans that provide this detail, published by December each year.

IMPACT: In the City & County of Denver, we want residents to have equitable access to quality housing options that meet their affordability needs and the opportunity to increase wealth through homeownership.

OUTCOMES: We want to reduce cost burden and the disparity in the housing-cost burden among low/moderate income households by income level, household size, race and census tract. We want to increase the homeownership rate among low/moderate income households, and reduce the racial disparity in homeownership between white households and BIPOC-households.

MEASURES: In order to measure progress toward these outcomes, we will track:

- How many low- and moderate-income households (households earning at or below 80% of AMI) and BIPOCI households become homeowners;
- The proportion of homes in Denver that are income restricted.

OUTPUTS: In order to impact these measures, we will increase:

- The number of households served through homeownership programs and
- The number of affordable homes created or preserved across the spectrum of housing need, from supportive housing to homeownership.

GOAL 1: Expand Access to Affordable Housing Opportunities

★ ★ ★ ★ ☆ **4.1** Community Survey Rating

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

- **Increase the portion of total homes in Denver that are income restricted from 7% to 8% through the creation and preservation of 7,000 ownership and rental homes, focusing on deep affordability, three or-more bedroom units, and including the creation of 900 supportive housing apartments.**
- **Reduce the rate of housing cost-burden among low- and moderate-income households from 59% to 51%.**

Program and Development Strategies

Implement locally-funded voucher program to supplement federal and state voucher resources (e.g., Housing Choice Voucher program and State Housing Voucher program) and expand rental subsidies for supportive housing in new development.

Development

- Explore financial innovations to accelerate the pipeline of supportive housing and homes for households below 50% Area Median Income.
- Implement a mandatory housing program to ensure that affordable units, both for-rent and for-sale, are created in every market-rate development across the City, and especially in areas of opportunity.
- Partner with agencies involved in the development review process to assess barriers to small-scale affordable housing and propose solutions that enable smaller projects (e.g., projects with a small number of units, accessory dwelling units, etc.).
- Ensure internal compliance monitoring systems are efficient and effective to accommodate a growing housing/loan portfolio, including underwriting and monitoring of locally and federally funded loans.

Land acquisition and preservation

- Coordinate with Department of Finance Division of Real Estate to complete land/property acquisitions in neighborhoods at risk of gentrification/involuntary displacement and in other areas of opportunity.⁵
- Pursue strategic acquisition of hotels and/or commercial properties for conversion/redevelopment into affordable housing.
- Maximize opportunities to partner with state or federal agencies (i.e., Regional Transportation District, Colorado Department of Transportation, State Land Board, etc.) regarding excess property disposition.

Policy and Systems Change Strategies

Implement mandatory housing policies. Establish standards and systems to document and track activity, reporting, and compliance.

Develop consistent guidelines and priorities for affordable housing and other community benefits in major redevelopment areas where outcomes beyond those required by policy may be more appropriate.

Coordinate with internal and external partners to apply these standards consistently in regulatory processes for high-impact developments (e.g., Large Development Review, Urban Renewal/Tax Increment Financing).

Partner with Community Planning and Development and other agencies involved in the development review process to prioritize affordable housing projects for permit review and approval to get affordable housing built sooner.

Data and Reporting Strategies

Strengthen data collection and reporting tools to effectively track outcomes by race and ethnicity.

Evaluate the effectiveness of programmatic support for accessory dwelling units for mitigating involuntary displacement, wealth-building, and other outcomes.

“ *It’s been a great process, a process I’ve never gone through before, but everybody that we have worked with has been excellent.*”

Zack, resident of Central Park Urban Living Condos

Zack Gibson at the Central Park Condos takes a piece of the ribbon cut at the grand opening celebrations as a memento as Deputy Mayor Murphy Robinson talks with him. He said the affordable condos enabled he and his wife to move back to Denver to be with their grandchildren after a long search to find something in their price range. (Evan Semón)



⁵ For more information on neighborhoods at risk of involuntary displacement and neighborhoods with access to opportunity, see Appendix A1.

GOAL 2: Preserve Existing Affordable Homes

★★★★☆ 4.0 Community Survey Rating

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

Preserve at least 950 apartments and for-sale homes, including:

- *At least 600 apartments in income-restricted rental properties, with a focus on covenants expiring over the next five years.*
- *At least 350 affordable homes, with a focus on covenants expiring over the next five years.*

Program and Development Strategies

Prioritize preservation of income restricted properties in neighborhoods that are at risk of gentrifying, vulnerable to involuntary displacement, investment impact neighborhoods, as well as high opportunity neighborhoods.

Develop a program that incentivizes property owners with expiring covenants to maintain long-term affordability. Leverage opportunities for preservation partners to proactively engage with landlords/ owners who wish to sell.

Negotiate greater affordability when funding rental preservation opportunities.

Specific to Rental

- Develop and implement a capacity-building program for small property landlords, connecting them to resources that preserve quality affordable housing.
- Invest in the Preservation Network's Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing Preservation Fund established by Colorado Housing Finance Agency (CHFA) and the State of Colorado to leverage funding for preservation projects in Denver.

Specific to Home Ownership

- Support community land trust models and other innovative concepts that preserve long-term affordability for homeownership and initiate wealth-building practices for homeowners as part of our commitment to creating and preserving at least 7,000 homes.

Policy and Systems Change Strategies

Update the Preservation Ordinance to align with long-term affordability goals and priorities for use of preservation funds.

Data and Reporting Strategies

Explore rental licensing data to identify opportunities for preservation.

Leverage HOST's affordable housing database to identify home ownership and rental properties with expiring covenants.



La Tela (HOST staff)

Leverage Colorado Futures Center’s small properties database to identify naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) preservation priorities.

GOAL 3: Expand Homeownership Opportunities



By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

Increase the homeownership rate for households earning 80% AMI or less from 36% to 41%, by assisting 10,000 households through homebuyer counseling, down payment assistance, direct subsidies, and mandatory housing policies.

Increase homeownership rate for BIPOC households across income levels from 41% to 45%, by assisting at least 4,600 households.

Program and Development Strategies

Using a prioritized and targeted geographic approach, increase awareness of homeownership opportunities and resources through public engagement efforts such as Housing Resource Fairs and local community events.

Increase the supply of affordable homeownership opportunities by supporting new construction of for sale homes as part of our commitment to creating and preserving at least 7,000 homes.

Implement intentional outreach education plans to focus on BIPOC/AAPI households for affordable housing, homeownership programs, and more opportunities.

Expand down payment assistance programs to build pathways to homeownership for households impacted by past redlining district practices.

Preserve affordable homeownership opportunities, including through the acquisition of naturally occurring affordable ownership homes as part of our commitment to creating and preserving at least 7,000 homes.

Enhance partnerships with state and local agencies and partners to advance affordable housing and overcome barriers to secure project funding (e.g., joint underwriting, proactive problem solving, coordinating to maximize deployment of resources).

Policy and Systems Change Strategies

Coordinate with Office of Financial Empowerment and Protection and other housing partners to provide financial counseling and literacy support.

Data and Reporting Strategies

Analyze resale pricing strategy for restricted for-sale homes in order to better ensure long-term affordability.

Leverage Prioritization Policy and associated data systems to improve access to affordable housing citywide.

Success Story: From Homeless to Housed

Not many people get excited about furniture like Willie.

“I mean wow, they gave me some amazing stuff,” he says of the furnishings that were made possible by volunteers Chris, Michelle, Adrienne, Ethan, Eleanore, and Julia from Senior Support Services.

Willie, who was formerly chronically homeless, recently moved into permanent housing. Willie is 63 years old and spent years living on Denver’s streets.

“Really, when you’re on the streets, it’s like being in a war,” he says. “So, I was really on the defense all the time.”

Deb Butte, Director of Intake and Diversion at Denver Rescue Mission, met Willie at the National Western Complex this summer, which HOST and service provider partners stood up as an auxiliary shelter due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time, Willie was in a wheelchair and had several other medical problems.



“Given where he was medically, we wanted to do everything we could to move him forward,” Butte says. So she pulled a chair beside his cot and started talking. She helped Willie collect vital documents, figure out what benefits he had, connecting him to long-term care, and setting appointments for him. Butte also had Willie assessed through OneHome, the regional coordinated assessment and housing placement system, where he scored high enough to be moved forward toward housing.

“Deb kept chasing me down; she had a whole book of papers for me to sign,” says Willie.

Butte says the collaboration between multiple providers made all the difference in keeping Willie on track and getting him through the process.

“It was Stout St. [Clinic] providing the right documentation, Senior Services reminding him to meet with his case worker at CCH, St. Francis Center receiving his mail so he could get his documents,” Butte says.

Another champion for Willie was Nanae Ito, Director of Case Management at Senior Support Services. While Willie has been a client at Senior Support Services for years, Ito leapt into action when Willie was identified in OneHome and started helping with the paperwork and documents.

Willie says he can see now how much work went into getting him his apartment.

“When I went to sign the lease, and copies of the paperwork had to go to this person and that person, I was like ‘wow,’” he says. “There’s a lot of people who helped me out...a lot of people had to work together to make this work.”

Often, individuals experiencing homelessness don’t have stable contact information or access to email and mail. This can make it difficult for providers to stay in touch and help them gather the documents they need to get housing. Another factor in finding housing success is the 24/7 sheltering model, Ito says. Having access to the same shelter all day, every day, instead of hopping between day and night shelters, allows guests to have a consistent place to stay and providers a consistent place to find them.

Willie says he’s extremely grateful for everyone who worked together to get him housed.

“I want people to know what everyone did for me,” Willie says. “I can’t believe it, my apartment looks so nice...I gotta go out and get a suit and tie; my apartment is too nice for regular clothes!”

Defining Plan Priorities - Housing Stability

Impact Statement:

Residents have choice in when and under what circumstances they move or remain in their homes and neighborhoods.

5-Year Targets

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

Reduce the number of evictions filed by 25% from 8,800 to 6,600 annually.

Support advancement of prioritization policy to allow residents at risk of or who have been displaced priority access to new affordable housing.

Benchmark other key measures such as foreclosures among income-restricted units and household mobility in 2022 to establish targets over the remaining plan period.

Housing stability means a lot of things to a lot of people. For HOST, housing stability means ensuring people aren't forced to move because they can no longer afford their home or to live in the neighborhood of their choice. It means families being able to remain in the places they have long called home and where their support networks are, even through one of life's disruptions. It means our residents can afford to live in homes that are safe and livable. It means children don't have to attend a different school because their family had no choice but to move to another neighborhood in order to afford housing.

More than 115,000 Denver households pay too much for housing, challenging this foundation and placing them at risk of frequent moves, needing to stay with family or friends, and even homelessness.

Denver has experienced significant growth over the past decade. While this has brought prosperity for some, it has made it harder for many to continue to call Denver home and remain in their communities of choice. Overall, Denver has added 45,000 higher income households between 2010 and 2019. At the same time, Denver now has 10,500 fewer lower-income households.¹ We want to ensure that, going forward, any loss of lower-income households is because people are earning more – not because people left who didn't want to.

Citywide, rents and mortgages are increasing dramatically, and incomes are not keeping up. More affordable neighborhoods that have been home to communities of color – after decades of racial segregation and redlining – are now susceptible to gentrification and involuntary displacement.

Our community has told us time and again that gentrification, and the resulting involuntary displacement of residents, is a major and growing area of concern. And yet, nationwide, few best practices exist for how to accurately measure, track and analyze involuntary displacement. As such, HOST will build capacity to survey residents and measure when and where involuntary displacement is happening, to whom, why, and what we need to do to stop it.

With this plan, we will work to ensure housing stability throughout our city, helping our residents remain in their homes and neighborhoods of choice.

The COVID-19 pandemic made the safety of a stable home paramount, and it concurrently made it even harder for many residents to continue to afford their housing. Throughout the pandemic, eviction moratoria and mortgage forbearance programs have helped to stave off a wave of evictions and foreclosures. However, more than 250,000 Coloradans report being behind on their rent and mortgage payments.² Solutions are urgently needed to

1 Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf. Note: Change in the number of households by income can be due to several factors: in-migration and out-migration (i.e., households choosing to move to or move out of Denver), households choosing to form their own households (e.g., moving out of parent's house, living alone instead of having a roommate) or join an existing household (e.g., doubling up), and the same household changes income bracket.

2 U.S. Census Bureau. (2021, June 16). *Week 31 Household Pulse Survey: May 26 – June 7*. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2021/demo/hhp/hhp31.html>

A Living Wage is defined as a wage that is high enough to maintain a normal standard of living. According to [this calculator](#) developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the living wage for a single adult with no children in Denver County is \$17.40. Though Denver has been progressive in pushing for increases to the minimum wage, this amount exceeds state law and Denver's minimum wage of \$14.77 in 2021.¹

1 Denver Mayor's Office. (n.d.). *A Livable Wage For Denver*. <https://www.denvergov.org/Government/Departments/Mayors-Office/Programs-and-Initiatives/Livable-Wage>

help them catch up on payments and stay in their homes. To that end, HOST will explore and identify possible funding sources for housing stability to increase levels of support that can be provided beyond emergency and pandemic recovery.

We will work to ensure that Denver residents don't have to leave their community to recover from a disruption in their life, health or income – and rather, have the ability to connect to resources to stay in their home while they work through these challenges.

The work to achieve these important aims is multifaceted. Over the next five years, we will help renters and homeowners with disabilities, whom often have few adequate housing options, to modify their homes to meet their needs. We will support our aging neighbors to age in the places they've long called home by providing them with home sharing options. We will provide financial assistance to help households catch up on rent, and in doing so, help people who just gained reemployment not have to consider moving across town from their new job to find affordable housing. We will fund navigation services through community partners to help connect residents to resources, so working parents don't have to move their children to new schools. And we will help tenants facing eviction, often after months of struggling to make ends meet through the pandemic, with legal representation to help them achieve a fair outcome.

Doing this work will include establishing partnerships and other solutions to help increase incomes to sufficient levels to afford housing. It requires a mix of investment strategies, partnerships, and policy solutions, as well as the ability to use data to identify needs and refine strategies. It also means working with our state government partners to ensure adequate and fair tenant protections and eviction and foreclosure laws.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Housing Stability has known that one of its most important tasks is to stabilize people in our community who are at risk of involuntary displacement and help them avoid falling into crisis and potentially homelessness. As we begin to recover from the public health emergency, it is more important than ever that we create the housing stability necessary for households to build on.



"I realize that we are all one emergency from becoming homeless or losing everything and now even more people are realizing that due to the pandemic."

Scott (read more of his story on page 55)

IMPACT:

In the City & County of Denver, we want residents to have a choice in when and under what circumstances they move or remain in their homes and neighborhoods.

OUTCOMES:

We want there to be fewer households throughout our community who feel they have no option but to move or be involuntarily displaced. We want to reduce the number of foreclosure and eviction filings, particularly in neighborhoods with high vulnerability to involuntary displacement and with strong representation of BIPOC households.

MEASURES:

In order to measure progress toward these outcomes, we will track:

- How many of the households served in HOST housing stability programs are able to remain in their homes or move voluntarily; and
- How many households served in HOST programs have legal representation in eviction proceedings.

OUTPUTS:

In order to impact these measures, we will increase the number of households served through:

- home improvement and access modifications,
- home sharing,
- financial assistance,
- community navigation, and
- renter protections and legal support counseling.

Shared Living or Home Sharing is defined within the elderly population as a voluntary living situation where a tenant pays reduced rent or lives rent-free in the home of an elderly individual in exchange for defined supports. [Sunshine Home Share Colorado](#) is an example of a program like this in Colorado. In contrast, a Group Living situation is where nonrelated adults live in the same house and share costs and responsibilities.

GOAL 1: Help Households Remain in their Home and Neighborhood of Choice



Benchmark the rate of household mobility in 2022 and set target for 2026.

Support advancement of prioritization policy to allow residents at risk of or who have been displaced priority access to newly developed affordable housing.

Program and Development Strategies

Expand community navigation partnerships in neighborhoods vulnerable to involuntary displacement in partnership with Denver Economic Development & Opportunity's (DEDO) Neighborhood Equity Stabilization Team (NEST).

Support expansion, improvement, and targeted outreach of housing stability programs (home repair, rehab, and accessibility modifications; home sharing) to help homeowners stay in their homes.

If suitable and feasible funding exists (see first bullet in next section) and is pursued, explore programs for households that are voluntarily “doubled up,” staying with family or friends in order to prevent an experience of homelessness. These programs might include first month’s rent and deposit assistance as well as longer-term rental assistance known as a “shallow subsidy.”³

Policy and Systems Change Strategies

Explore and identify possible funding sources for housing stability to increase levels of support that can be provided beyond emergency and pandemic recovery.

Advance prioritization policy, which would provide priority to residents who are at risk of displacement or who have been displaced for new affordable homes, for consideration by the Mayor’s Office and impacted city agencies, and, pending feasibility, move the project forward for subsequent adoption by City Council and implementation.

Partner with city agencies to conduct investment impact analyses on city capital investments and tailor strategies and budget requests to help mitigate involuntary displacement in areas where capital investments could contribute to involuntary displacement.

Support implementation of rental licensing program to better inform residents about their rights and available resources.

Build a partnership with Denver Public Schools to help measure involuntary displacement of families with children.

Work with Denver Public Schools and Denver Office of Children’s Affairs to develop communications strategies and referral systems for programs that support housing stabilization of families with children.

Partner with Denver Human Services to better target outreach and explore additional expansion of the property tax rebate program.

Data and Reporting Strategies

Implement long-term outcome tracking across housing stability programs.

Evaluate demographics and geography for households served in alignment with impact framework and utilize equity lens to examine and improve access and performance.

Support partners in developing data systems solutions to track applications in addition to households served to identify and remove barriers to service and improve targeting.

Explore an analysis of assessor’s office records regarding the sale of rental properties.

³ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). *COVID-19: Homeless System Response: Shallow Rental Subsidies*. <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/COVID-19-Homeless-System-Response-Shallow-Rental-Subsidies.pdf>

GOAL 2: Reduce Evictions



Reduce the number of evictions filed by 25% from 8,800 to 6,600 annually by 2026.

Program and Development Strategies

Provide legal counsel in eviction proceedings for at least 2,000 households annually; and increase proportion of low- and moderate-income households facing eviction who have legal representation.

Support expansion, improvement, and targeted outreach of housing stability programs (rent and utility assistance, legal assistance, tenant/landlord counseling) to keep renters in their homes.

Target rental assistance and housing navigation resources to households who do not receive a judgment after their eviction filing but who need assistance relocating to a new home.

Policy and Systems Change Strategies

Identify and develop policies to prevent evictions and provide comprehensive tenant protections where state and federal law allow (e.g., eviction diversion; just cause/no fault eviction policies).

Partner with Office of Financial Empowerment and Protection to help residents with strategies and services to increase income and provide financial counseling.

Continue to coordinate with the Office of Immigrants and Refugees to share information on available programs and ensure policies and programs are accessible to immigrant and refugee communities.

Data and Reporting Strategies

Utilize data on evictions from Denver County Court to evaluate what neighborhoods have the highest rates of evictions and use resulting analysis to target outreach and resources.

GOAL 3: Reduce Foreclosures in Income-restricted Homes



Benchmark the foreclosure rate in income-restricted homes in 2022 and establish target for reduction in 2023 to be achieved by 2026.

Program and Development Strategies:

Use lessons learned from COVID-related mortgage assistance program and statewide efforts to provide mortgage assistance to design, fund, and implement a foreclosure prevention program targeting income-restricted for-sale units.

Policy and Systems Change Strategies:

Collaborate across HOST and other city agencies to develop and implement a coordinated and evidence-based outreach strategy to homeowners of income-restricted for-sale units to inform them of available resources (e.g., financial coaching, property tax rebate program, state financial assistance programs, etc.).

Data and Reporting Strategies:

Partner with Denver Clerk and Recorder's Office to benchmark the foreclosure rate among income-restricted units and establish target for reduction.

Partner with Denver Clerk and Recorder's Office to analyze foreclosure trends (e.g., by neighborhood, among affordable and non-affordable homeownership units) to inform future planning.

Explore partnerships with utility providers or energy relief programs to identify and track indicators of housing instability.

Defining Plan Priorities - Homelessness Resolution

Impact Statement:

Residents experience homelessness rarely, and, if they do, it is brief and one time.

5-Year Targets

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

Reduce unsheltered homelessness from 2022 Point-in-Time Count to 2026 Point-in-Time Count by 50%.

Increase the annual number of households served in rehousing and supportive housing programs from 1,800 to 3,000.

Measurably end veteran homelessness by achieving functional zero by 2026, i.e. placing at least as many veterans into permanent housing each month as there are veterans experiencing homelessness.

Increase the contract benchmark for the percentage of sheltered households who exit to housing from 30% to 40%.

Increase the number of family households who exit shelter and outreach programs to housing from 25% to 50% by 2026.

Reduce the average length of time residents experience homelessness to 90 days by 2026.

The last time the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative did a complete Point-In-Time count of the number of people experiencing homelessness in Denver on a given night was prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. At that time, 4,171 individuals identified themselves as experiencing homelessness.¹ With a 54% increase in average shelter guests served per night in March 2021 over March 2020, it is clear that homelessness has increased during the pandemic. Other factors showing signs of economic distress have also increased: unemployment quadrupled (up from 2.7% pre-pandemic to 12.3% in April 2020),² Medicaid enrollment was up 19% (up 263,422 people – from 1.2m in March 2020 to 1.4m members in March 2021),³ and applications for rent and utility assistance increased 270%.⁴

In the City & County of Denver, we believe that everyone in our community deserves to be healthy, housed and connected. We know that when someone is housed stably, they are better able to connect to resources, find and keep a job, get and stay healthy, address behavioral and mental health issues, feel safe and secure, and live fuller lives.

Resolving homelessness requires outreach to people experiencing homelessness, especially the roughly 25% who are living without any shelter. It requires varied, temporary shelter options for people to stay in that meet their needs. It requires services and supports to provide for basic needs like food and hygiene, and other important support services like property storage, mental and behavioral health services, substance use disorder treatment, job training and placement, prisoner and re-entry services, help signing up for benefits, and more.

But most importantly, it requires housing. Access to safe, stable, affordable housing is the platform from which people can work on the factors that contribute to a housing crisis – whether those be finding a job that pays living wages, obtaining care for mental and physical conditions, addressing substance misuse, or seeking safety from abusive relationships.

We must have places for people to live in order to resolve homelessness, whether it's supportive housing with wraparound services or affordable rental units or programs that help someone with rent for a short time and support to increase income. We need to invest in the staffing and systems to connect people quickly to available housing and help them lease up, and we need to partner to help residents connect with strategies to increase their income.

Like communities across the country, Denver is impacted by the national housing affordability crisis. In the face of this challenge, Denver has taken important and innovative steps to expanding housing resources, particularly for

1 Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. (n.d.). *Point in Time Count & Survey*. <https://www.mdhi.org/pit>

2 U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021). *Denver Metro Area Labor Force Statistics* (https://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LAUMT08197400000003?amp%253bdata_tool=XGtable&output_view=data&include_graphs=true)

3 Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing – Health First Colorado and Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) enrollment administrative data.

4 Denver Department of Housing Stability administrative data.

residents experiencing homelessness, including creation of the Social Impact Bond supportive housing program, and dedicated funding sources for affordable housing and homelessness resolution. These initiatives have helped hundreds of residents regain housing, and yet, it is not enough to resolve homelessness. To achieve this critical goal, we must do more, and we must work regionally (see the page 50 for more on regionalism).

We know we must also work to address the systemic racism that causes a disproportionately higher percentage of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) to experience homelessness. More than 57% of outreach clients, 53% of those in shelters and 60% in rehousing programs are BIPOC compared to 46% of the population overall.

While our network of shelter providers serve the majority of those experiencing homelessness on a given night, we must acknowledge the myriad reasons people experiencing homelessness may not want to stay at a congregate shelter and we must work to provide options that meet people's needs. The City has worked to address these challenges by implementing shelter improvements called for in the [Three-year Shelter Strategy](#), including an expedited expansion of 24/7 sheltering during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, Denver has launched innovative alternatives to congregate shelter, including more autonomy in shelter options like motel rooms and tiny homes, as well as innovations to reduce harm like Safe Outdoor Spaces. We realize those efforts are not happening fast enough or on a large enough scale to meet immediate needs.

Person-Centered, Housing First, and Trauma Informed

We will continue to **expand the diversity of shelter options** to reduce the barriers that prevent people who are unsheltered from seeking out shelter, including the creation of additional gender-inclusive shelter and more options for couples and pets. We will act with urgency to move resources nimbly and quickly so that no one is left to languish on the streets of our city; and **we will reduce the length of episodes of homelessness by almost half**, from 172 to 90 days. By acting quickly, improving the diversity of available shelter options, and by providing more housing, we will **reduce the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in half** between the 2022 and 2026 Point-In-Time counts.

In five years, **our shelter system will help 40% of guests regain housing – a five-fold increase**. And we will create a coherent system of care that leads to **stable housing for at least 50% of our families** experiencing homelessness. And we will ensure **we have as many housing resources for veterans as there are veterans experiencing homelessness**, achieving a “functional zero” for veteran homelessness.

We will demonstrate that our shelter system successfully connects people to a housing outcome for everyone. We will actively work to remove barriers that prevent people from fully accessing the system, and to build confidence in shelter outcomes.

While we work together to improve immediate conditions for our unhoused neighbors, we must simultaneously remain focused on housing as the ultimate resolution to homelessness. We must remain committed to making episodes of homelessness in our city rare, brief and one time.

Below: A man plays fetch with his dog outside the tents at the Safe Outdoor Spaces site run by Colorado Village Collaborative at 16th Avenue and Pearl Street. (Evan Semon)



“

I served six years in the Army and owned my own house, and I never thought I would be homeless. ... The reason people who get housing end up on back on the streets is because we don't give them the help they need, help them understand how to do things, and not fall back on bad habits. It's not enough just to get into housing, you need someone to teach you how to start saving again ... I don't want to be right back out here, but I need help.”

Timothy, Safe Outdoor Spaces, 16th and Pearl guest

IMPACT:

In the City & County of Denver, we want episodes of homelessness to be rare, brief and one time.

OUTCOMES:

We want there to be fewer households in our city that experience homelessness, and to reduce racial disparity in experiences of homelessness. We want to see more households return to housing after an experience of homelessness. We want to reduce the average length of time people experience homelessness. And we want more households to be able to successfully maintain their housing after assistance ends.

MEASURES:

In order to measure progress toward these outcomes, we will track:

- How many households sleep unsheltered;
- How many deaths among persons experiencing homelessness are due to exposure;
- How many households maintain housing;
- How many households exit housing programs to another permanent housing outcome; and
- How many households increase or maintain income and benefits while enrolled in housing programs.

OUTPUTS:

In order to impact these measures, we will increase the number of households served through:

- outreach to residents who are unsheltered,
- varied, low-barrier shelter options with case management,
- rehousing interventions,
- supportive housing, and
- employment and income supports.

GOAL 1: Address Unsheltered Homelessness



4.1 Community Survey Rating

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

Reduce unsheltered homelessness from 2022 Point-in-Time Count to 2026 Point-in-Time Count by 50%, including to:

- *Increase exits to housing for outreach, tiny homes, and safe outdoor space programs, setting a baseline in 2022 and targets for increase by 2026.*
- *Reduce average length of time unsheltered residents experience homelessness to an average of 90 days by 2026.*

Reduce environmental exposure related deaths for persons experiencing homelessness from 12 to 0 annually by 2026.⁵

Program and Development Strategies

Better meet the diverse needs of residents experiencing homelessness by expanding support for range of safe, temporary options, including tiny homes, safe outdoor spaces and parking, and non-congregate shelter in addition to congregate shelter options with available recovery funding, including \$39 million of General Obligation Bond funding for housing and shelter facilities serving people experiencing homelessness, if passed, a portion of which would support the acquisition, conversion, and construction of non-congregate shelter.

Support housing outcomes for residents sleeping unsheltered by increasing rehousing support within outreach teams (e.g., case management, benefits and vital document acquisition, peer support) and coordinating access to expanded rehousing resources (e.g., through connection to OneHome)

Administer the Early Intervention Team outreach program to support residents in encampments with help regaining housing, connection to safe, temporary places to stay, and connection to behavioral health and crisis stabilization resources when needed to reduce harm.

Policy and Systems Change Strategies

Improve transparency of encampment related activities by coordinating with Mayor's Office and partner city agencies to implement a standardized process by which the City will assess encampment risk and prioritization for clean-up and/or enforcement actions based on a set of consistent, publicly available criteria.

⁵ Data for this measure comes from the Denver Office of the Medical Examiner within the Denver Department of Public Health and Environment.

Help connect residents to behavioral health resources and housing by coordinating with Denver Department of Public Health and Environment to expand medically assisted treatment and same day or on-demand treatment options and coordinate with the Solutions Center to integrate housing planning into discharge planning, and coordinate access to stabilization services and other care with homelessness service providers.

Retain the ability to provide Safe Outdoor Space as an alternative to unsanctioned camping by pursuing longer-term solutions to allow for expansion of Safe Outdoor Space beyond the COVID-19 emergency.

Improving efficiency of housing connections by conducting process improvement project for connecting persons experiencing homelessness with housing.

Data and Reporting Strategies

Develop and maintain real time, quality data (by name list) in Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) of people staying unsheltered.

Develop common outcome framework for all outreach teams and establish goals.

GOAL 2: Expand Pathways to Successful Rehousing

★★★★☆ 4.0 Community Survey Rating

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

Increase the annual number of households served in rehousing and supportive housing programs from 1,800 to 3,000.

Ensure at least 80% of households served in rehousing and supportive housing programs increase or maintain income while enrolled, and upon exit, maintain housing for at least one year.

Match housing resources to the number of veterans experiencing homelessness to reach functional zero for veterans.

Program and Development Strategies

Meet diverse resident needs and use resources efficiently by expanding a range of rehousing strategies, including rapid resolution, bridge housing, and rapid rehousing.

Support long-term housing stability for residents experiencing homelessness by partnering with Denver Housing Authority and Colorado Division of Housing to leverage federal and state resources, like the Emergency Housing Voucher program, to expand tenant-based long-term vouchers with the ability to layer on supportive services when needed.

Expand support for the permanent supportive housing pipeline through continued partnership with Denver Housing Authority and Colorado Division of Housing, local services funding, and creation of locally funded voucher program.

Explore innovative opportunities and financing models to bring on additional housing, including hotel acquisition and rehabilitation and social impact bond financing based on health savings created by supportive housing.

Support income-based strategies for homelessness resolution, including intentional targeting of employment programs and support for innovation (e.g., Universal Basic Income Pilot).

Policy and Systems Change Strategies

Demonstrate what works to resolve homelessness through regional participation in the **Built for Zero** effort to end veteran homelessness and use these learnings to improve supports for all Denver residents experiencing homelessness.

Partner with Denver Housing Authority (DHA) to effectively use existing housing choice vouchers to support homelessness resolution goals.

Built for Zero is a movement of more than 80 cities and counties working to solve homelessness, one population at a time. Using data, these communities have changed how local homeless response systems work and the impact they can achieve. Fourteen of these communities have ended homelessness for a population by reaching a standard called [functional zero](#).

Help residents experiencing homelessness increase their income and housing stability by partnering with Denver Economic Development & Opportunity (DEDO) and Denver Human Services (DHS) to expand access to benefits, job training, and apprenticeships, and other resources.

Explore opportunities for shared housing and other more affordable housing options.

Data and Reporting Strategies

Work with partners to gather real time, quality data in Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) for all populations.

Evaluate needs for landlord engagement to support rehousing outcomes.

Assess lessons learned from University of Denver evaluation of basic income pilot and other income-based strategies to identify promising practices.

GOAL 3: Complete Shelter System Transformation Toward Rehousing

★ ★ ★ ★ ☆ **4.0** Community Survey Rating

By 2026, HOST will:

Increase the contract benchmark for the percentage of sheltered households who exit to housing from 30% to 40%.

Reduce average length of time sheltered residents experience homelessness from an average of 172 days to an average of 90 days.

Program and Development Strategies

Better meet resident needs and make the shelter system more accessible and impactful by establishing clear, well-known access points for shelter that offer universal screening for rapid resolution resources and increasing case management within shelters targeted toward helping guests regain housing.

Provide consistent levels of service throughout the shelter system that reduce barriers to entry and improve guest experience by continuing to offer 24/7 models of service, including non-congregate options that can accommodate couples; support targeted, accessible transportation solutions; provide storage and support personal space and privacy, particularly in large shelters; targeted supports for youth and seniors within the shelter system; and offer at least one shelter for each subpopulation that can accommodate pets. Establish shelter standards of service.

Increase shelter options that are gender-inclusive and designed for all gender identities.

Policy and Systems Change Strategies

Improve access to supports by seeking partnerships with existing agencies to provide critical services to shelter guests. This includes coordinating with behavioral health providers to offer clinical staff within shelters to support de-escalation and behavioral health support, working with transportation providers to create accessible transportation options for residents experiencing homelessness, and forging connections with long-term care systems to increase access to needed services among guests who need support with activities of daily living (ADL).

Identify and overcome barriers to access by creating forum for systems collaboration to better serve guests with complex needs, including those with activities of daily living (ADL) needs, collecting data to determine the impact of these issues, and use that data to inform strategy.

Improve shelter system functioning to meet the needs of all guests by providing training, process improvement, and support for partners to minimize turn-aways and do-not-returns; support for translation and other support to ensure policies are culturally and language-level appropriate; implement inclusive policies for LGBTQ+ guests; and support Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations.

Partner with Denver Human Services to implement a Mass Care Department Operations Center (DOC) to standardize emergency and continuity of operations planning for shelter and other services, including options for persons experiencing homelessness.

Data and Reporting Strategies

Require real time, quality data in HMIS for all populations.

Develop plan, including contract reporting requirements, for tracking instances of temporary or permanent bans from a shelter location in HMIS and analysis to track demographics of clients who receive bans to identify any disparate impact.

Assess current data and create new data collection processes where needed to track inflow into homelessness and ADL needs.

GOAL 4: Improve Homelessness Resolution System for Families



4.3 Community Survey Rating - highest in survey

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

Increase the number of family households who exit shelter and outreach programs to housing from 25% to 50% by 2026.

Reduce average length of time families experience homelessness from an average of 156 days to an average of 90 days by 2026.

Program and Development Strategies

Better meet the needs of families experiencing homelessness by establishing clear, well-known access points that offer universal screening for rapid resolution and connection with safe temporary places to stay when needed.

Support families in crisis by expanding capacity in congregate and non-congregate shelter options for families as well as other time-limited options such as transitional or bridge housing alongside additional case management support.

Support family stability by increasing housing and income-based strategies, including homelessness prevention, time-limited rehousing supports (e.g., first month's rent and deposit assistance, rapid rehousing), dedicating long-term subsidies to families experiencing homelessness, integrating appropriate support services when needed, and exploring innovative financing models (e.g., social impact bond).

Policy and Systems Change Strategies

Ensure connections across the homeless service system by coordinating with Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) and OneHome on work to establish clear access points for homelessness services and housing.

Help meet the needs of all guests by providing training and support for partners to implement inclusive policies for LGBTQ+ guests and support ADA accommodations.

Maximize effectiveness of use of housing choice vouchers by partnering with Denver Housing Authority on strategic use of homelessness preference.

Help families increase income by collaborating with Denver Economic Development and Opportunity and Denver Human Services for benefits, job training, and apprenticeship opportunities.

Data and Reporting Strategies

Require real time, quality data in HMIS for all populations.

Develop plan, including contract reporting requirements, for tracking instances of temporary or permanent bans from a shelter location in HMIS and analysis to track demographics of clients who receive bans to identify any disparate impact.

Assess current data and create new data collection processes where needed to track inflow.

Defining Plan Priorities - Cross-Departmental Operations

Impact Statement:

Denver residents and HOST partners will receive efficient, timely and transparent support, and have confidence that HOST is measuring what matters and effectively engaging the community.

5-Year Targets

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

Improve communications channels, align them with community need, measure their effectiveness, and increase positive response regarding communications and engagement based on a baseline survey in 2022.

Reduce average length of time from conditional approval of credit or award letter under a procurement process to fully executed contract to under 60 days for program contracts under \$500K, under 75 days for program contracts above \$500K and under 90 days for development contracts.

Reduce procurement decision time from average of 47 days to 30 days from date of submission by 2026.¹

Reduce average invoice processing time from 21 days to 7 days.

Increase percentage of respondents to community and stakeholder feedback survey reporting satisfaction with the usability and transparency of HOST reporting tools, including the creation of publicly available finance and performance dashboards, based on a baseline survey in 2022.

¹ Submission date is the date the applications are due.

Operations is foundational in its support of all the department's work. The Operations Division provides the services needed to achieve HOST's goals of providing housing opportunity, housing stability and homelessness resolution by:

- ensuring HOST services and projects are informed by and equitably serve those in need in our community;
- utilizing data, evaluation, and engagement to drive decision-making, public policy and accountability;
- providing strong stewardship of public and private resources to achieve long-term outcomes;
- proactively communicating and engaging with residents and stakeholders to ensure they are informed and empowered as partners; and
- fostering a collaborative and connected work environment.

Through our work in the Operations team, HOST will ensure Denver residents know what our Department does, how it makes a difference, and where to go when they need help. We will engage our community – especially those with lived expertise – so that our residents feel heard and see their feedback reflected in our approach.

As a data-informed organization, HOST will have the tools and data to support progress on our goals and to ensure we do not have racially-disparate outcomes.

We will be a regional leader in policy and a strong advocate for housing and homelessness plans and investment in the Denver metro region and throughout the state.

HOST will improve contract timelines to help partners provide strong services to the community more quickly, and be known as timely and transparent with public information. Denver's Pay for Performance approach works, and HOST will continue to focus on outcomes rather than outputs in our contracts whenever possible.

Denver residents will be confident in and proud of the wise investment they made by voting for the Homelessness Resolution Fund, as they see the effective outcomes of our work.

IMPACT:

Denver residents and HOST partners will receive efficient, timely and transparent support, and have confidence that HOST is measuring what matters and effectively engaging the community.

OUTCOMES:

Since HOST partners with community organizations and developers to create and preserve housing and provide other housing, shelter, and services, our operational infrastructure is the foundation of our ability to implement the core outcomes and goals outlined for equity, homelessness resolution, housing stability, and housing opportunity in our Impact Framework.

MEASURES:

In order to measure progress toward these outcomes, we will track:

- Increase communications and community engagement
- Reduce length of time to complete contracts, procurements, and invoice payments
- Increase participation in/use of reporting systems
- Increase partnership and leadership in citywide and regional efforts
- Advance policy and legislation to support HOST's goals and objectives

GOAL 1: Expand Communications and Community Engagement

☆☆☆☆ 3.3 Community Survey Rating

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

Improve communications channels, align them with community need, measure their effectiveness, and increase positive response regarding communications and engagement based on a baseline survey in 2022.

Increase number and type of community engagement opportunities, including increased representation of people with lived experience; non-English speakers; Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC); the LGBTQ+ community; those who live in communities vulnerable to involuntary displacement; and others who are marginalized from conversations about where they live.

Program and Development Strategies:

• Establish a departmental standard operating procedure to ensure timely response to community concerns and inquiries.

Better utilize existing communications channels (media relations, newsletter, website) and create new ones as needed (social media, videography, blog, etc.).

Redesign HOST website with various audiences' information needs in mind, including answers to frequently asked questions and contact information, integrate translation tools, and ensure accessibility.

Develop internal trainings on communications and engagement, including City Council processes, media relations, public meetings, and open records requests.

Develop process for getting regular feedback from community members with lived expertise of housing instability, affordable housing, and homelessness to inform HOST annual planning, procurement, etc.

Develop system for compensating community members with lived expertise for their time contributing as a means by which to create equity with those providing professional expertise.

Develop and implement intentional communications and community engagement plans for each of our priority areas of work informed by best practices and a proactive, strategic approach.

Expand outreach to neighborhood groups and earn media opportunities on the impact of housing for Denver residents, including the use of storytelling.

Work with the homelessness resolution outreach teams to develop more effective shelter and services referral tools.

Develop framework for community engagement around new development or service locations with attention to including voices of those who need and benefit from affordable housing, as well as community residents, and integrating community-led development principles for development in historically marginalized communities.

Develop outreach strategy for HOST and other city housing programs targeted to residents/neighborhoods most in need (leveraging findings from temporary rental and utility assistance outreach randomized control trial) and that removes barriers to access (e.g., language, lack of internet access, etc.).

Ensure materials are co-created and translated to reach Denver residents who do not speak English; prioritize language access and culturally-appropriate messaging.

Develop and implement an engagement strategy that includes everyday people (beyond City Council and Registered Neighborhood Organizations) and focuses on two-way communication with more intentional listening.

Develop trainings and tools to help ensure HOST's communications and community engagement standards are extended and operationalized through our partners' work.

Produce a broad array of materials and presentations, and establish a HOST speakers bureau to help educate and inform city employees and the community about housing stability, affordable housing and homelessness.

Policy and Systems Change Strategies:

Lead citywide effort to coordinate communications about how the City works to address homelessness across agencies, including, in particular, the unauthorized camping ordinance and encampment clean ups.

Data and Reporting Strategies:

Create audience-segmented contact lists to ensure we are reaching the right people with the right information.

GOAL 2: Expand and Support Partnerships through Transparent, Efficient, and Effective Procurement, Contracting, and Financial Processes

 **3.4** Community Survey Rating

Contracts: Reduce average length of time from conditional approval of credit or award letter under a procurement process to fully executed contract to under 60 days for program contracts under \$500K, under 75 days for program contracts above \$500K and under 90 days for development contracts

Procurement: Reduce the average time it takes for a proposer to receive notification of procurement decisions from HOST from 47 days to 30 days between the proposal submission deadline and notice of a successful or unsuccessful application.

Finance: Reduce the average length of time to process an invoice from the date it was submitted from 21 days to 7 days.

Program and Development Strategies:

Procurement

- Improve transparency in the procurement process by:
 - Providing notice of expected procurements on the HOST website ahead of formal posting;
 - Notifying the community and applicants of proposals HOST intends to award by posting this information to HOST's website;

- Partnering with the City Attorney’s Office and General Services to clarify allowable communication between City and prospective applicants during procurement process; and
- Posting information on frequently asked questions to the HOST website.
- Further integrate commitment to advancing equity into the procurement process by continuing to gather data on staff demographics and organizational commitment to equity and develop expectations for contracted partners.

Contracting and Financial Processes

- Make it easier for partners to work with HOST by:
 - Assessing barriers to working with HOST and prioritizing improvements within legal parameters; and
 - Implementing trainings and onboarding processes to help partners meet contracting, budget, and invoice documentation requirements.
- Provide greater stability in funding by executing multi-year contracts whenever appropriate to better support partner agency planning and program implementation.
- Improve efficiency and transparency on how to work with HOST by:
 - Clarifying processes and procedures;
 - Developing resources to provide clarity on program components and frequently used expenditure types; and
 - Publicly posting relevant forms, instructions, and other resources on the HOST website related to contracting, budget and invoice documentation requirements.
- Implement timely, clear, and consistent process for contract monitoring.

Pilot performance-based contracting with a sample of HOST contracts to determine benefits, implementation challenges, and alignment with requirements of other funding sources.

Data and Reporting Strategies:

Expand functionality and use of HOST data systems to support more efficient electronic contracting and invoicing processes and tracking.

GOAL 3: Deepen Data Infrastructure to Provide Transparency and Accountability, Inform Decision-making, and Support Continuous Improvement



By 20216, HOST and its partners will:

Increase percentage of respondents to community and stakeholder feedback survey reporting satisfaction with the usability and transparency of HOST reporting tools, including the creation of publicly available finance and performance dashboards, based on a baseline survey in 2022.

Increase percentage of partners trained on reporting systems after establishing a baseline in 2022.

Increase percentage of training participants who report positive experience with the training they were provided reporting satisfaction after establishing a baseline in 2022.

Program and Development Strategies:

Develop and launch publicly available dashboard to report out on strategic plan outcomes and measures to track progress and provide transparency and accountability.

Develop and provide a publicly available finance dashboard showing available budget and expenditures.

Clarify partner reporting expectations by refining and implementing training plans for HOST partners on required reporting platforms and by providing technical assistance as needed to ensure data completeness and quality.

Data and Reporting Strategies:

Fund and implement data system to improve access to affordable housing citywide and support implementation of prioritization policy and help match residents with available affordable housing options.

Complete housing needs analysis to inform HOST investments to assess housing needs, identify neighborhood-level factors, track trends in households moves and homelessness, integrating data from related agencies and systems where available (e.g., utility shut off data, voucher utilization data, etc.).

Align output and outcome measures across HOST program types and integrate outcome measures more consistently across HOST contracts for programs starting in 2024.

Report on income-restricted units by detailed AMI ranges and tenure (e.g., at or below 30% of AMI, 31-40% of AMI, etc.).²

Develop, fund, and implement a survey of residents in HOST-supported affordable housing programs at least bi-annually to assess resident characteristics, long-term stability, and other outcomes, as well as to identify service needs to better support long-term stability.

Increase capacity to use data to advance equity (e.g. tracking households served by race / ethnicity, comparing demographics of households served to households in need, using data to identify strategies to improve access, etc.).

GOAL 4: Advance Citywide and Regional Approaches, including Policy and Legislative Approaches

☆☆☆☆☆ 3.5 Community Survey Rating

By 2026, HOST and its partners will:

Lead citywide efforts to address housing and homelessness.

Increase Denver's participation and leadership in regional programs and solutions.

Advance prioritization policy to allow residents at risk of or who have been displaced priority access to new affordable housing.

Program and Development Strategies

Work with partner organizations to reimagine the annual housing forum as a regional housing and homelessness conference.

Work with regional system partners to address and reduce substance use disorder, overdose and deaths, and deaths from weather exposure.

Policy and Systems Change Strategies

Lead coordination of citywide strategy to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time for Denver residents and ensure responses to homelessness and community needs are aligned with this impact.

Explore with regional partners and appropriate legislative bodies the feasibility of regional taxing measures to address affordable housing and homelessness.

Explore and identify possible funding sources for housing stability to increase levels of support that can be provided beyond emergency and pandemic recovery.

Advance prioritization policy, which would provide priority to residents who are at risk of displacement or who have been displaced for new affordable homes, for consideration by the Mayor's Office and impacted city agencies, and, pending feasibility, move the project forward for subsequent adoption by City Council and implementation.

A prioritization policy for housing increases the likelihood that residents who are at risk of displacement will obtain affordable housing. It would set aside a portion of newly developed affordable units for prioritized applicants for a set amount of time. Prioritization factors can include whether the household has already been displaced, is at risk of displacement, includes a household member with a disability, or is a family with children in school.

² HOST will report out on 10 percentage point ranges when possible. Exact categories for reporting will be determined based on the limitations of available data.

Support efforts to advance key land use strategies to advance affordable housing outlined in Blueprint Denver. These include:

- Diversify housing choice through the expansion of accessory dwelling units and remove barriers to the construction.
- Increase the development of affordable and mixed-income housing throughout the city and particularly in areas near transit, services and amenities. Additionally, support the creation of zoning incentives and other incentives to increase the supply of affordable housing in these developments.
- Diversify housing options to explore opportunities to integrate missing middle housing types (duplexes, row house, and small apartments) throughout the city.
- Support regulatory and zoning code changes that reduce barriers to the creation of affordable housing.

Partner with Community Planning and Development and community partners on the Neighborhood Planning Initiative and use area plans to inform HOST Annual Action Plans.

Explore policies to reduce discrimination in housing (e.g., criminal backgrounds, income/work requirements).

Advocate for efforts to expand federal and state supports for affordable housing (e.g., voucher programs).

Data and Reporting Strategies

Work with partners to ensure regional organizations are using HMIS (Homeless Management Information System).



Advocate Brian Loma speaks during a meeting between city officials and people experiencing homelessness in June 2021. (Sabrina Allie)

Analysis of Gaps and Associated Costs

The United States is in an affordable housing crisis and has been for decades. As recently as 50 years ago, the country had a surplus of affordable housing.¹ Today, we face an extreme shortage of affordable homes. Millions of Americans struggle to pay their rents and mortgages.² Only one in every five households who qualifies actually receives the housing assistance they need, and 1.6 million Americans experience homelessness annually.³

Denver is no exception to this reality. While solving this crisis demands a national response, Denver and other cities are leading the way and showing what works. They are testing new solutions, investing in proven strategies, and raising their own funds to help fill critical gaps.

Denver has taken bold steps to address our local needs:

- We established a dedicated fund for affordable housing and then doubled it.
- We established a dedicated fund for homelessness resolution.
- We implemented one of the largest and most successful social impact bond projects to create new supportive housing and reduce City costs.
- We unified our efforts to address housing and homelessness within HOST and are building structures to coordinate our efforts citywide.
- We are expanding access to legal counsel for tenants facing eviction.
- We are using regulatory tools to maintain our affordable stock for longer periods.
- We are resourcing 24/7 shelters, using hotels, and establishing safe outdoor spaces.

Though these efforts have made a real difference for thousands, many of our residents are still struggling. This plan cannot completely solve for the rapidly rising costs of housing. It cannot completely overcome the problem of stagnating wages. It cannot ameliorate all the day to day hardship that comes with that environment.

While it is important to acknowledge that reality, it is equally critical to focus on what is possible and rally together to create a more healthy, housed, and connected Denver.

This plan provides a path forward for our community to make the biggest impact we can across the broad spectrum of our City's housing needs. It seeks to maximize our existing resources and hold us accountable to outcomes. When needed, it calls for more resources and tools to help fill critical gaps, particularly our efforts to help people stay stably housed and mitigate the risks of involuntary displacement. By aligning resources and community-wide efforts behind important, measurable goals, we can focus our efforts and achieve more impact.

Cost of Housing Investment vs. the Cost of Doing Nothing

As we consider how this plan can move the needle for Denver residents, it is important to first consider the scale of the need and the costs required to do this work.

Many Denver residents have unmet housing needs:

- Nearly **160,000 households** have incomes below the area median and nearly 101,000 of those households are housing-cost burdened.
- **2,500** households needed and were able to receive rent and utility assistance.
- Nearly **9,000** evictions are filed in a typical year.
- **4,171** persons experience homelessness on a given night.

1 Covert, B. 2019. *The Deep, Uniquely American Roots of Our Affordable Housing Crisis*. The Nation. <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/give-us-shelter/>

2 Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University. 2019. *State of the Nation's Housing 2019*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University. https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/reports/files/Harvard_JCHS_State_of_the_Nations_Housing_2019%20%281%29.pdf

3 Cunningham, M. 2021 *Universal Vouchers: Ending Homelessness and Expanding Economic Opportunity in America*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute. https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/104335/universal-vouchers-ending-homelessness-and-expanding-economic-opportunity-in-america_1.pdf. Accessed: July 2, 2021. Shinn, Marybeth; Khadurri, Jill. 2020. *In the Midst of Plenty: Homelessness and What to Do About It*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell.

To meet the needs of Denver residents, HOST uses a range of tools. While HOST seeks to help as many households as it can and maximize its impact within available resources, these tools require significant investment. For example:



Average total **development cost per unit** of affordable housing: **\$300,000**

- Average **funding HOST provides per unit** of affordable housing: **\$20,000**

Average total **development cost per unit** of supportive housing: **\$340,000**

- Average **funding HOST provides per unit for supportive housing**: **\$45,000**

Average annual cost per household annually for rent and supportive services in supportive housing: **\$25,000**

Average annual cost per bed of 24/7 shelter: **\$25,000**

Average annual cost of non-congregate shelter: **\$32,000**

Average cost per household for rent and utility assistance: **\$10,000**

Average cost per household for eviction legal assistance: **\$700**

While the upfront costs are large and the needs are great, the impact on residents and our City is significant. Experts note that affordable housing is an important component of our city's economic engine.⁴ When we have greater access to affordable homes, more Denver residents have the strong foundation that is critical for stability and wellbeing. Fewer households are forced to leave their communities because they can no longer afford it or lose their home entirely. More households can move to areas of opportunity. Children who grow up in affordable homes in areas of opportunity go on to earn hundreds of thousands more in total lifetime earnings than children who grow up without that stability.⁵ When families experiencing homelessness receive a long-term housing subsidy, they regain stability and rarely experience homelessness again.⁶ When an adult experiencing homelessness and who has spent time in jail receives housing and the services they need, they stay housed and reduce their use of emergency services.⁷

Further, **the costs of inaction are staggering**. In a Colorado Supportive Housing study, Denver spent more than \$20,000 per person per year on public services before people entered supportive housing.⁸ That number dropped dramatically – to around \$5,000 per person – when living in supportive housing.

When people are in supportive housing, not only do they get the supports they need to successfully stay housed, we also reduce the social services they would otherwise use. For example:

- Emergency room visits decrease 24-34%,
- Hospital visit stays decrease 27-29%,
- Psychiatric admissions decrease 82-87%,
- Medicaid costs decrease 41-67%, and
- Involvement in the justice system decreases 42-45%.⁹



The costs of inaction are staggering.

Without doing more to meet our housing needs, Denver will continue to spend significant resources on emergency services to help manage the consequences of this crisis. Any life, health, or income disruption could displace a person from their neighborhood and their communities of support. Families will move from place to place, making it harder for their children to succeed in school, and we thus perpetuate a cycle of poverty and homelessness.

In contrast, when we provide housing with support services, 89%+ of people stay housed after one year.¹⁰

⁴ Urban Land Institute. (2016). *Overcoming Barriers to Affordable Housing in Colorado*. <https://colorado.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2018/08/Overcoming-barriers-to-affordable-ULI-CO-report-9-30-16.pdf>

⁵ Chetty, R.; Hendren, N.; Katz, L.F. (2015, August). *The Effects of Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children: New Evidence from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment*. http://www.equality-of-opportunity.org/images/mto_paper.pdf

⁶ Gubitz, D. et al. (2016). *Family Options Study 3-Year Impacts of Housing and Services Interventions for Homeless Families*. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research. <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/Family-Options-Study-Full-Report.pdf>

⁷ Cunningham, M. et al. (2021, July). *Breaking the Homelessness-Jail Cycle with Housing First: Results from the Denver Supportive Housing Social Impact Bond Initiative*. <https://www.urban.org/events/breaking-homelessness-jail-cycle-housing-first-results-denver-supportive-housing-social-impact-bond-initiative>

⁸ Colorado Supportive Housing. (n.d.). *FAQs about Supportive Housing Research: Is Supportive Housing Cost Effective?* <https://d155kunxf1aozz.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Cost-Effectiveness-FAQ.pdf>

⁹ Colorado Department of Local Affairs. "Tenancy Supports for Coloradans Experiencing Long-Term Homelessness"

¹⁰ Cunningham, M. et al. (2019). *Maintaining Housing Stability Interim Lessons from Denver's Social Impact Bond Initiative*. Urban Institute.

What this Plan will Achieve

In this plan, we are fortunate to already be building on a strong foundation from which to create a more healthy, housed, and connected Denver. We have established dedicated funding to support housing and homelessness needs in Denver. We have more than 24,000 income-restricted units with another 1,100 in the pipeline. We have the ability to shelter more than 2,000 guests every night while we work with residents experiencing homelessness on housing. This includes bringing many people inside through hotel options. We are innovating to provide safe temporary options that reduce harm, like Safe Outdoor Spaces.

Successful implementation of this plan will allow us to do more to meet the needs of Denver residents. We will work with our partners to create and preserve 7,000 affordable homes. We will be at the forefront in understanding and tackling involuntary displacement and household instability, including reducing eviction filings by 25%. We will work to resolve homelessness in Denver by continuing our commitment to our housing first philosophy, and reduce unsheltered homelessness by 50%.

While the needs of Denver are greater than can be achieved within the scope or resources of this plan, this plan is ambitious and aims to improve the lives of thousands of Denver residents over the next five years. This plan sets forth a path to grow stock of affordable housing and access to homeownership, to prevent involuntary displacement, eviction, and foreclosure to resolve homelessness by a focus on housing solutions. This plan will require the collaboration of our whole community, but we can do it together.

“

It is an absolute lifesaver to be a 24/7 facility, to not have to lug all my stuff everywhere. I would have probably died without the 24/7 shelter and [this hotel] because I can take care of my COPD and asthma here. ... A case worker could help me get things like my medicines, oxygen, etc., because I can't walk to Stout Street. Websites and phone lines are not always helpful like a person would be.”

Becky, hotel guest



At left: Three meals a day are served to guests at the men's congregate shelter operated by Denver Rescue Mission at 4600 E. 48th Ave. (Evan Semón)

At right: Tennis shoes sit beside a bed adorned with a quilt at the women's shelter operated by Catholic Charities at 4330 E. 48th Ave. (Evan Semón)

Success Story: A Journey to Protective Action

Food is one thing that brings people together, even those experiencing homelessness and those who aren't. At least, that's what Scott, a 59-year-old in a "protective action" hotel used to serve those who are at high risk for negative complications from COVID-19, says.

"I love to cook. I cook for the staff [at the protective action site] all the time. I've got a couple of crock pots and a fryer and can make some pretty good meals," Scott says.

Scott is a former chef who grew up in Denver and joined the Army in the 80s. He served six years active duty and four years in the reserves. In 2016, he experienced several difficult family losses, and was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.

"I'm an Army man. I didn't want to admit to having cracks in my armor," Scott says. He was able to get some help and now receives ongoing care that has helped him continue his recovery.



(McCleod Creative via Colorado Coalition for the Homeless)

However, last year Scott experienced another series of devastating events: his house burned down, and his best friend perished inside. Scott lost all his possessions in the fire and found himself without a home. He headed to Washington state, and was there when the COVID-19 pandemic began. Scott was initially unable to return to Colorado due to travel restrictions but made his way back in July when he needed surgery for a previous injury.

Scott was referred into protective action after his surgery, so he could access ongoing medical care and recuperate. Protective action hotel and motel rooms are available to unhoused individuals who may be vulnerable to COVID-19, such as those over 65 and those with underlying health conditions and injuries, like Scott. In protective action, Scott receives medical care three days a week from professionals with Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, who help manage his blood pressure and another wound on his foot that will require surgery later.

"The staff are great; they are all so kind," Scott says.

While Scott is eligible for transitional housing through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), he'll be staying in protective action for the time being, so he can continue to receive regular medical care. Scott says after his second surgery and when the pandemic is over, he'll move into housing with the VA. Staff at the protective action site also helped Scott apply for disability benefits, which will help him stay afloat until he's able to find work; he plans to work as a chef again.

This is Scott's only experience with homelessness, although he doesn't see himself as homeless since he has a safe place to stay. Scott says through this experience, he has realized how close many people are to experiencing homelessness.

"I realize that we are all one emergency from becoming homeless or losing everything and now even more people are realizing that due to the pandemic. I've made a lot of friends here and have learned a lot from them," he says.

Reporting on Plan Progress and Determining Annual Priorities

This strategic plan charts a path forward for the Department of Housing Stability and the Denver community to create a healthy, housed, and connected Denver. While it articulates our best vision and thinking at this stage, this plan is also meant to be a strategic vision that evolves with the community as needs change.

Regular reporting on the progress toward the plan will be critical for ensuring transparency and fiscal responsibility, and for identifying successes, as well as opportunities for improvement or course correction. A combination of ongoing and annual reporting strategies will be used to track progress, identify opportunities, and pilot new innovations. Outcomes from the prior year will also help inform an annual planning process to determine each year's priorities and use of resources.

Aligning reporting requirements to the Impact Framework

HOST will continue to align reporting required of funded partners to the Impact Framework. This will focus data collection and reporting on the outcome measures most important for understanding progress, in addition to reporting required by state and federal funds. Some measures may require HOST and its partners to fund and implement new data collection tools before reporting is available. HOST will also report on income-restricted homes at more detailed affordability levels and by tenure in order to understand the range of affordable homes available in the community.

To use data to identify how we are reducing racial disparities in our key outcomes, HOST will analyze all metrics related to households by race and ethnicity.

Reporting on implementation progress

To provide regular access to information on plan progress, HOST will employ a range of tools. First, HOST will create public-facing dashboards that track progress toward plan goals, as well as important contextual information like the affordable housing pipeline and HOST financial information. These will be updated on a regular basis at least quarterly. In addition, HOST will disseminate information on plan progress at City Council committee meetings and provide updates through the HOST website, newsletter, and press releases. To ensure information is accessible to interested community groups, HOST will provide updates on its progress to the Housing Stability Strategic Advisors. In addition, HOST will attend meetings with community groups that helped inform the strategic plan twice annually. These groups include Anti-displacement Policy Network, Homelessness Funders Collaborative, Homeless Leadership Council, and Neighborhood Development Collaborative.

Annual report to provide yearly snapshots

While public-facing dashboards will help keep the community apprised of progress closer to real time, HOST will complement this work with annual reports to provide a snapshot of progress made each year. These annual reports on housing and homelessness will summarize key accomplishments, identify progress toward goals, and report out on planned and actual expenditures during the year. These reports will be available online and we will request that Denver City Council and our stakeholders share them with constituents.

Annual planning with community to guide priorities going forward

To determine priorities for each year of this plan, HOST will develop an annual Action Plan with community input. Annual Action Plans will include the projected budget for the forthcoming year, as well as strategies HOST will focus on in that year to make progress on plan goals.

Annual Action Plans are anticipated to be developed alongside the budget process in the summer and fall ahead of the plan year (i.e., in Summer 2022 for the 2023 Action Plan) and released for public comment alongside the Mayor's budget.¹

The Housing Stability Strategic Advisors, HOST's publicly appointed advisory body, will provide input on the draft plan, and HOST will hold at least one annual public meeting to gather input from the broader community. Additional opportunity for community feedback on draft Annual Action Plans will be solicited via a widely distributed community survey translated for those who do not speak or read English as their primary language.

¹ Due to the development of and adoption process for the Five-Year Strategic Plan, HOST anticipates releasing the 2022 Action Plan by December 2021.

Conclusion and Call to Action

In the Wizard of Oz, Dorothy Gale said, “There’s no place like home.” While we wish it were as easy as clicking our heels, the work to provide stable, affordable housing to everyone in our community requires a long-term effort. To achieve the ambitious goals in this plan will require determination, hard work, creativity, and collaboration. But together, we believe we can achieve a healthy, housed and connected Denver for all of us.

What You Can Do

It starts with each of us as individuals. It’s easy to feel overwhelmed by the scope of a plan like this; to not know where to start or whether you can personally have an impact. But each of us can make a difference every day with just small actions.

Choose to be compassionate, and treat others with dignity and respect. You can change someone’s whole day simply by smiling, waving or saying hello to someone experiencing homelessness.

By reading this plan, you’ve demonstrated your interest and concern for your neighbors. Share what you’ve learned about the problem with others and be an advocate for the housing first philosophy. Share it on social media with #housingfirst. When issues like homelessness, affordable housing, and gentrification come up at family gatherings, around the water cooler at work, or happy hour, be the person who speaks up and encourages others to be part of the solution. Help change the conversation: consider the communities you can reach and help orient and organize them toward city efforts or community-based organizations providing housing assistance.

Be a housing helper: the family member and friend others can call when they are in a tough spot and need help. If you can’t offer someone financial help or a place to stay, remember you can refer them to 311 or denvergov.org/housing to connect with the city’s many resources. Welcome neighbors who have formerly experienced homelessness into your community and celebrate housing solutions in your neighborhood.

Allow people facing instability to help you: Employ people in a housing crisis or facing housing instability in meaningful work through [Denver Day Works](https://denverdayworks.org) or on your own.

If you have the time, volunteer or serve on the board of a nonprofit organization helping those in need. These organizations need skills in project management, finance, law, communications, and diverse perspectives at the table.

Think about your corporate responsibility goals and charitable giving and how they may align with the city and partner organizations. If you make direct investments, consider policy alignment with city goals to drive better data.

And as a voter and taxpayer, we ask that you hold us accountable to this plan, and that you thoughtfully educate yourself about ballot measures and initiatives brought forward that could impact this plan, for good or bad.

Continue to let us know what works in neighborhoods by partnering in policy review and shaping our annual action plans. [Sign up](#) for updates and our newsletter.

Partnership: All Together Now

This plan sets the roadmap to our desired outcomes, and while we are confident in the strategies we have selected as steps along the route, we know we will face obstacles that will require us to chart a new path or require tools we have yet to identify. We will be nimble and adjust to the circumstances with which we are faced, and act with urgency on behalf of the many people in our city who need our help.

This requires that we ask for help. We know we cannot achieve these ambitious goals alone. So much of HOST’s work is dependent on our partnerships with other organizations: funders, developers, providers, policymakers, taxpayers, and so many others.

As we work to invest resources, create policy, and build partnerships to provide housing stability, resolve episodes of homelessness, and create and preserve affordable housing in alignment with this plan, we invite you to join us. Whatever your role, we hope you see a wealth of exciting opportunities for you to contribute to this plan, and that you’ll start today.

For our program partners, this plan articulates the outcomes we expect to achieve together. You can immediately start meeting and working on alignment with these targets in your work planning.

If you are a developer, what big ideas do you have and what tools do you need to achieve these targets?

For policymakers and elected officials, we ask for your support and alignment on regional collaboration, public policy development, budget development, approval of contracts, and leadership to make necessary changes to our laws and codes.

Funders, we ask for your help aligning your grantees' work with this plan, and most especially with their utilization of the HMIS (Homelessness Management Information System). We also ask for coordinated support for the plan through private funding.

Impact and Outcomes

Together, we can build a healthy, housed, and connected Denver.

5-Year Targets

In five years, Denver residents will:

- have equitable access to quality housing options that meet their affordability needs and the opportunity to increase wealth through homeownership;
- have choice in when and under what circumstances they move or remain in their homes and neighborhoods;
- experience homelessness rarely, and, if they do, it is brief and one time; and
- receive efficient, timely and transparent support, and have confidence that HOST is measuring what matters and effectively engaging the community.

We will achieve these ambitious targets by 2026:

Housing Opportunity

- Increase the portion of total homes in Denver that are income restricted from 7% to 8% through the creation and preservation of 7,000 ownership and rental homes, including the creation of 900 supportive housing apartments.
- Reduce the rate of housing cost burden among low- and moderate-income households from 59% to 51%.
- Preserve at least 950 apartments in income-restricted rental properties and ownership homes
- Increase the homeownership rate among low- and moderate-income households from 36% to 41% and the homeownership rate among BIPOC households across income levels from 41% to 45%.

Housing Stability

- Reduce the number of evictions filed by 25% from 8,800 to 6,600 annually.
- Support advancement of prioritization policy to allow residents at risk of or who have been displaced priority access to new affordable housing.
- Benchmark other key measures such as foreclosures among income-restricted units and household mobility in 2022 to establish targets over the remaining plan period.

Homelessness Resolution

- Reduce unsheltered homelessness from 2022 Point-in-Time Count to 2026 Point-in-Time Count by 50%.
- Increase the annual number of households served in rehousing and supportive housing programs from 1,800 to 3,000.

- Measurably end veteran homelessness by achieving functional zero by 2026, i.e. placing at least as many veterans into permanent housing each month as there are veterans experiencing homelessness.
- Increase the contract benchmark for the percentage of sheltered households who exit to housing from 30% to 40%.
- Increase the number of family households who exit shelter and outreach programs to housing from 25% to 50%.
- Reduce the average length of time residents experience homelessness to 90 days.

Cross-departmental Operations

- Improve communications channels, align them with community need, measure their effectiveness, and increase positive response regarding communications and engagement based on a baseline survey in 2022.
- Reduce average length of time from conditional approval of credit or award letter under a procurement process to fully executed contract to under 60 days for program contracts under \$500K, under 75 days for program contracts above \$500K and under 90 days for development contracts
- Reduce procurement decision time from average of 47 days to 30 days from date of submission
- Reduce average invoice processing time from 21 days to 7 days.
- Increase percentage of respondents to community and stakeholder feedback survey reporting satisfaction with the usability and transparency of HOST reporting tools, including publicly available finance and performance dashboards, based on a baseline survey in 2022

And this work will result in the following outcomes:

- Reduced housing-cost burden and reduced disparity in the housing-cost burden among low/moderate income households by income level, household size, race and census tract.
- Increased homeownership among low/moderate income households, and reduced racial disparity in homeownership between white households and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color-households.
- Fewer households throughout our community that are forced to move, or be involuntarily displaced.
- Reduced foreclosure and eviction filings, particularly in neighborhoods with high vulnerability to involuntary displacement and with strong representation of BIPOC households.
- Fewer households in our city will experience homelessness, and reduced racial disparity in experiences of homelessness.
- More households will return to housing after an experience of homelessness, and more households will successfully maintain housing after assistance ends.
- Reduced average length of time people experience homelessness.

We look forward to ongoing collaboration and partnership, to feedback and innovation, to big dreams and accomplishments together. Thank you for being on this important journey with us.

Acknowledgments

The work of HOST would not be possible without our many partners inside the City & County of Denver and the greater Denver community. The engagement and contributions of our partners to this strategic planning process was vital.

Mayor Michael B. Hancock, Denver Mayor

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Jamie Torres, District 3
Kendra Black, District 4
Amanda Sawyer, District 5
Paul Kashmann, District 6
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Chris Hinds, District 10
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Deborah Ortega, At Large

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Jennie Rodgers	Enterprise Community Partners
Melanie Lewis Dickerson	Community Solutions
Kristin Toombs	Colorado Division of Housing
Marsha Brown	Denver Human Services
Thomas Allen	Denver Indian Center

Executive Committee for the Strategic Plan (not on HSSA)

Suzanne Banning	Florence Crittenton Services
Amy Duggan	Colorado Health Foundation
Allison George	State of Colorado, Division of Housing
Ismael Guerrero	Mercy Housing, Inc.
Tracy Huggins	Denver Urban Renewal Authority
Robin Kniech	Councilwoman, At Large
Heather Lafferty	Habitat for Humanity Metro Denver
Tracey Stewart	The Colorado Health Foundation
Lorez Meinhold	Caring For Denver
Brad Meuli	Denver Rescue Mission
Jenny Santos	Servicios de La Raza, Inc.
Desta Taye-Channel	Florence Crittenton Services
Dee Walsh	Mercy Housing, Inc.

Existing groups that participated:

Anti-Displacement Policy Network
Homelessness Leadership Council
Neighborhood Development Collaborative

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VISIT Denver

City Agencies

Denver City Employees
City Attorney's Office
Community Planning and Development
Denver Human Services
Denver Economic Development and Opportunity
Department of Finance
Division of Real Estate
Facilities Division
Denver Department of Public Health and Environment
Department of Public Safety
Department of Transportation and Infrastructure
Denver Parks and Recreation
Department of Parks and Recreation
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Mayor's Office

Community Participants:

People with lived expertise interviewees
Survey respondents

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Denver City and County
Building
(Stock photo)



Denver Coliseum
(Denver Media Services)

Success Story: A Lightbulb of Hope

For Timisha, moving to Denver ended up being the key to ending a five-year experience of homelessness.

“I came to Colorado and, in three months, I had a home,” she said.

Timisha, 49, had previously been a volunteer and staff worker at shelters for persons experiencing homelessness in Georgia and New York City. Timisha experienced homelessness in Georgia after an eviction, and in New York where she was living with family, but had to leave due to a conflict. She came to Denver in 2020 from New York looking for a fresh start.

“I did some research and learned about The Gathering Place. So, on April 29, my birthday, of 2020, I headed out to Colorado.”

Upon arriving in Denver, Timisha went to The Gathering Place, but was informed that many women’s shelters had closed during the pandemic and was directed to the emergency shelter at the Denver Coliseum. The Department of Housing Stability (HOST) operated the Coliseum as a 24/7 auxiliary shelter for women from March to August 2020.

“That’s where it all began for me,” she said. “Working in the homelessness sector previously, I was blown away with the way things were handled [at the Coliseum]. The dignity, the care, the respect. In New York City, if you’re homeless, they’re gonna treat you like you’re homeless.”

At the Coliseum, Timisha met Carol Baros from the Department of Human Services (DHS), who she says was working with clients who had a source of income to find housing.

Carol connected Timisha to Stacey Galvan from HOST to begin searching for an apartment. During this time, Timisha moved from the Coliseum to a motel room at the former Rodeway Inn. Stacey connected Timisha with an agency that helps people find affordable rentals.

“I had been homeless for five years,” Timisha said. “When I came to Colorado, it was a lightbulb of hope.”

Timisha returned to the hotel room in a mindset of prayer, she said.

“I had emailed Stacey and said, ‘I’m done; I don’t want to work with this management anymore. The apartments aren’t in good condition.’”

About 30 minutes later, Timisha got a call from Stacey, she said.

“She said, ‘Do you want to go out one more time? I have a colleague, he has a two bedroom in a really good neighborhood, practically brand new,’” Timisha said. “I met these wonderful people...they didn’t care about my past eviction, they didn’t care about anything, they just wanted to help me find a home.”

Currently, Timisha is living in her apartment and working for the U.S. National Park Service on a three-year contract as an administrative assistant, she says.

Timisha is very grateful for the help she received from everyone along the way, she said, particularly Stacey Galvan.

Activities of daily living (ADL) is an acronym used to refer to activities considered necessary to being able to live independently (showering, toileting, etc.)

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is an acronym used to refer to a smaller, independent residential dwelling unit located on the same lot as a stand-alone (i.e., detached) single-family home. ADUs go by many different names throughout the U.S., including accessory apartments, secondary suites, and granny flats.

Area median household income (AMI) is commonly used to generate data about geographic areas and divides households into two equal segments with the first half of households earning less than the median household income and the other half earning more.

Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) is a person-first language term that enables a shift away from terms like “marginalized” and “minority.”

By-name list is a dynamic and comprehensive list of people experiencing homelessness in your community that is updated at least monthly but as often as possible. The by-name list is a real-time, person-specific list of everyone experiencing homelessness within a population. The by-name list provides communities with a full and real-time view of homelessness in their geography. Using this data, cities and counties are able to triage individual cases, understand the broader patterns of homelessness in their community, and ensure that resources and efforts are driving down the overall number of people experiencing homelessness to zero.

Chronic Homelessness has been defined as a single individual (or head of household) with a disabling condition who has either experienced homelessness for longer than a year, during which time the individual may have lived in a shelter, Safe Haven, or a place not meant for human habitation, or experienced homelessness four or more times in the last three years.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers the **Community Development Block Grant** entitlement program and allocates annual grants to larger cities (and urban counties) like Denver to develop viable communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment, and opportunities to expand economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.

Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA) is an organization that works to offer financial resources to strengthen homeownership, affordable rental housing, and businesses.

A Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) is a private, nonprofit, community-based service organization that has the primary purpose to provide and develop decent, affordable housing for the community it serves.

Congregate Shelters are shared shelter facilities that house persons experiencing homelessness in common spaces, such as traditional day and overnight shelters. **Non-Congregate Shelters** house persons experiencing homelessness in single or roommate accommodations, such as motel rooms.

Continuum of Care (CoC) is the HUD term for our homeless service planning area for HUD funds. Denver’s CoC is the 7-county metro Denver region: Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson Counties. Metro Denver Homeless Initiative is a nonprofit that leads the Metro Denver CoC.

Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (CFR Title 29 Part 5), requires the payment of prevailing wage rates as determined by the U.S. Department of Labor to all laborers and mechanics on construction projects in excess of \$2,000.

Deeply affordable homes are those that are affordable to households earning at or below 30% of the area median income.

Denver’s Road Home is a previous comprehensive plan aimed at ending homelessness.

The Down Payment Assistance (DPA) Program is designed to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to qualifying households that purchase a home in Denver.

Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA) helps qualifying Denver residents live in safe and comfortable

housing by offering zero or low-interest loans to low and moderate-income homeowners for home repair, as well as grants to renters and homeowners with disabilities for access modifications to their home.

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) is a HUD (see below) grant that supports homelessness prevention, shelter, street outreach and rapid rehousing.

Emergency Solutions Grant- Corona Virus (ESG-CV) is an expansion funded under the CARES Act to support COVID-19 response. City and County of Denver has received about \$11 million in ESG-CV funds.

Equity is when everyone, regardless of who they are or where they come from, has the opportunity to thrive and acknowledges that treating every person or place exactly the same may not result in fair opportunities to succeed.

Fair Market Rents (FMR) are published annually by HUD to determine rent limits for Section 8 Housing and programs.

Functional zero for veteran homelessness is a milestone that means a community has fewer veterans experiencing homelessness than it can routinely house in permanent housing in a month. For example, if a community is placing four veterans per month on average in permanent housing, it must have four or fewer veterans experiencing homelessness. This reality must be sustained.

Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) are the federal government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Since housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual, participants can find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses, and apartments. Housing choice vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies (PHAs). The PHAs receive federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to administer the voucher program.

Housing-Cost Burden is defined by HUD as families who pay more than 30% of their income on housing, and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.

Housing First is an approach that offers permanent, affordable housing as quickly as possible for individuals and families experiencing homelessness, and then provides the supportive services and connections to the community-based supports people need to keep their housing and avoid returning to homelessness.

Housing an Inclusive Denver (HID) outlines strategies to create and preserve strong and opportunity-rich neighborhoods with diverse housing options that are accessible and affordable to all Denver residents.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a HUD-required integrated data system for homeless service providers. Any program that receives HUD funds is required to use HMIS. HOST also requires programs it funds to use HMIS, and, starting in 2020, is getting contract reporting from the HMIS system. Colorado has a statewide HMIS. Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) oversees the HMIS system for Metro Denver. MDHI's role includes setting up new programs, site monitoring to ensure standards are met (e.g., data quality, timeliness of entry, compliance with privacy notices and release of information practices), and reporting.

The HOME Investment Partnerships Program provides formula grants to states and localities used to fund a wide range of activities including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance to low-income households.

The Department of Housing Stability (HOST) is abbreviated as HOST taken from the letters HO in the word housing and ST in the word stability.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the federal government agency that receives appropriations from the principal agency for overseeing mortgage lending and securing housing for low- and moderate-income citizens.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) is a program for which state and local agencies allocate approximately \$8 billion in tax credits for the acquisition, rehabilitation, or new construction of rental housing targeted to lower-income households.

OneHome is the Metro Denver Coordinated Entry System. Coordinated Entry is a national best practice to match households experiencing homelessness with housing in a coordinated way across the community. Communities across the country use this type of coordinated approach to end homelessness. In Denver alone, over 2,000 households are assessed and entered into OneHome annually. OneHome uses the database, Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), to collect data needed for coordinated entry.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is an intervention that combines affordable housing assistance with voluntary support services to address the needs of persons experiencing chronic homelessness on an ongoing basis. The services are designed to build independent living and tenancy skills and connect people with community-based health care, treatment, and employment services.

Persons or People Experiencing Homelessness (PEH) is the preferred term for individuals who are unhoused.

Point in Time (PIT) Count is a one-night count of those experiencing homelessness in the Metro Denver area, administered through the Metro Denver Homelessness Initiative.

Redlining is the systematic denial of various services to residents of specific, often racially associated, neighborhoods or communities, either explicitly or through the selective raising of prices.

Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNO) are groups formed by residents and property owners within a neighborhood who meet regularly and whose organizational and contact information is kept on file with the City's Community Planning and Development Department.

The Regional Transportation District (RTD) serves the Denver metro area with transit services, primarily bus and light rail.

Section 8 is the previous name for the Housing Choice Voucher program. See HCV reference above.

Social Impact Bond programs are a unique type of performance-based contract where private and/or philanthropic lenders loan funds to accomplish a specific objective and are repaid based on whether the program achieves its goals.

Safe Outdoor Spaces (SOS) refers to a new approach for the City and County of Denver creating temporary, sanctioned camp sites with supportive services.

Supportive Housing is an intervention that combines affordable housing assistance with voluntary support services on an as-needed basis. The services are designed to build independent living and tenancy skills and connect people with community-based health care, treatment, and employment services.

Temporary Rental and Utility Assistance (TRUA) programs offer resources to Denver residents who are facing financial hardship to help prevent eviction.



At left: Habitat for Humanity workers raise a wall at the Aria affordable housing development as part of the Carter Building Week. This project will include Aria Apartments with 71 rental units and Aria Cohousing/El Jebel with 8 homeownership units.



At right: A guest eats lunch at the women's shelter operated by Catholic Charities at 4330 E. 48th Ave (Evan Semón)

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Appendix A1 - Setting the Stage: Data on Community Need

While housing affordability nationwide has declined for decades, the problem has been rapidly advanced by the significant growth Denver experienced over the past decade, particularly among higher income households. While Denver has added more housing to help meet these new housing needs, not enough of that housing reaches below 60% of the area median income (AMI), where the greatest unmet housing needs exist. Housing costs have risen faster than incomes, even before the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Together, these pressures compel residents to spend too much on their housing or make the difficult decision to move away from communities they have long called home.

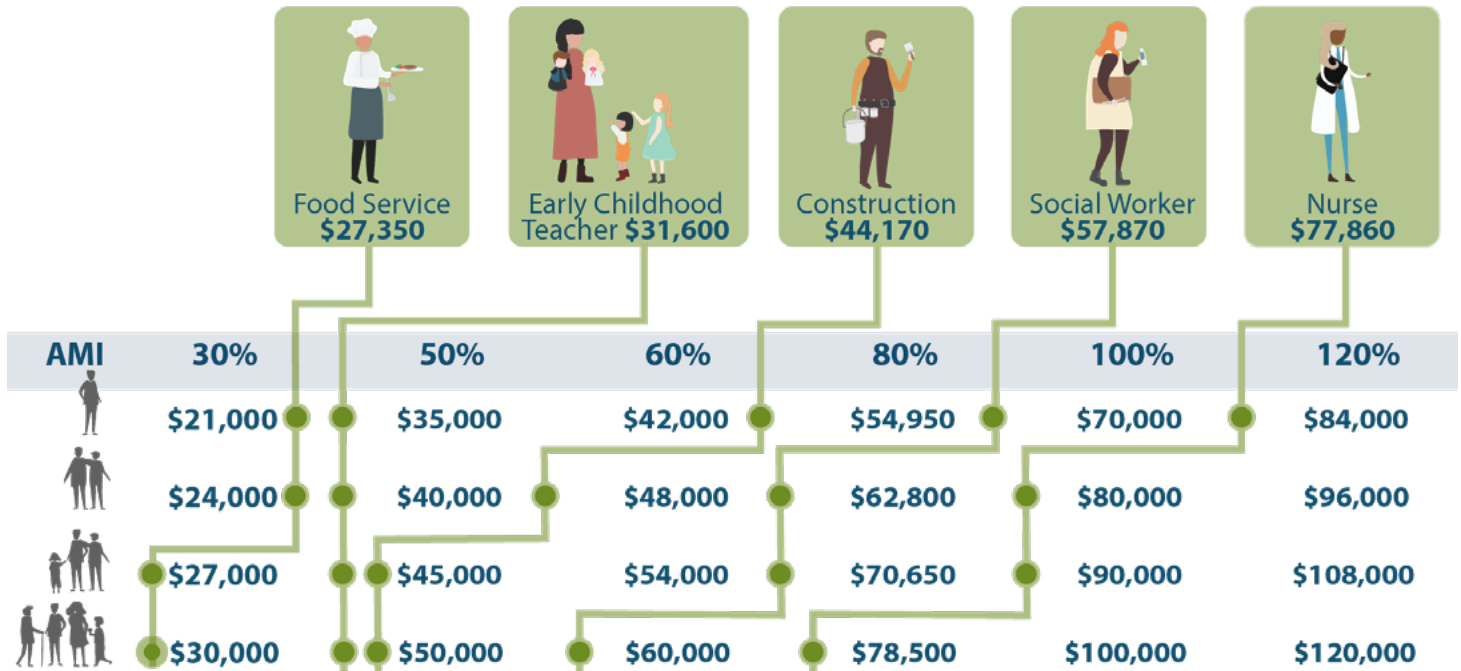
These trends are impacting Denver’s racial and ethnic diversity and placing neighborhoods that have historically been home to residents of color at risk of gentrification and involuntary displacement. This instability has also pushed many Denver residents into homelessness. For Denver to realize its goals of being equitable, affordable, and inclusive, as well as a community made up of strong and authentic neighborhoods, long-term housing strategies grounded in the needs of the community are critical.

Denver is growing rapidly

In recent years, Denver has experienced rapid growth. From 2010 to 2019, according to estimates from Root Policy Research, Denver added more than 120,000 residents and 56,000 households.¹ This represents a 22% increase in the number of households living in Denver, far surpassing growth rates nationally (7%) and statewide (14%).² While this growth is a sign of Denver’s strong economy and desirability, it challenges the affordability of the housing market. More households moving to Denver means more renters and home buyers seeking out the same apartments, condos, and homes.

The majority of these new households have higher incomes and may be able to afford to pay higher rents and buy more expensive homes.³ The vast majority of the growth (45,000 households) has come from households earning above 120% AMI. At the same time, Denver lost 10,500 households earning less than 60% of AMI. For Denver to remain inclusive, reversing this trend is critical.

Figure 8: Area Median Income and Associated Wages



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (2019 Data)
 35-2015 Cooks, Short Order; 25-2011 Preschool Teachers; 47-2141 Painters, Construction and Maintenance; 21-1022 Healthcare Social Workers; 29-1141 Registered Nurses

1 Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

2 U.S. Census Bureau. *American Community Survey 2010 and 2019 1-Year Estimates*. [Data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov/).

3 Change in the number of households by income can be due to several factors: in-migration and out-migration (i.e., households choosing to move to or move out of Denver), households choosing to form their own households (e.g., moving out of parent’s house, living alone instead of having a roommate) or join an existing household (e.g., doubling up), and the same household changes income bracket.

Demographic characteristics influence housing needs

During this period of rapid growth, Denver has also experienced demographic and socioeconomic changes that impact the City and its housing efforts. Shifts in Denver's racial and ethnic composition reinforce the need for efforts that ensure Denver is equitable, affordable, and inclusive as stated in [Comprehensive Plan 2040](#). Rapid population growth among older adults may impact future housing needs to support aging in place. With nearly 30% of Denver households including three or more people, providing affordable, larger units remains a critical need.

Race and Ethnicity

In recent years, [Denver started becoming less diverse](#). Until 2006, the percentage of Denver residents who were white was decreasing, reaching a low of 50% in that year. By 2016, that percentage had increased to 54%. More recent data confirm that trend. In 2019, 55% of Denver residents were white, non-Latino, and 45% were BIPOC. At the same time, the national population is becoming more diverse.⁴

Age

Denver's age distribution is also changing. Between 2010 and 2019, Denver saw particularly rapid growth rates among younger adults age 25 to 34 (39%) and older adults age 65 and older (39%). The latter trend follows the national trend related to the aging of the baby boomer generation. Nationally, the population age 65 and older increased by 33% from 2010 to 2019.⁵ As the population ages, needs for accessibility modifications and services to support aging in place may also increase.⁶

Education

Denver's population has also become more highly educated from 2010 to 2019. In 2019, more than half of Denver residents age 25 and older had at least a bachelor's degree, up from 41% in 2010.⁷ Between 2010 and 2019, the number of people age 25 and older with less than a high school degree declined from 16% in 2010 to 9% in 2019.⁸ Though national trends show the US population is becoming more highly educated overall, this pattern is more pronounced in Denver than statewide.⁹ Particularly given that the high school graduation rate in Colorado is below the national average, this may suggest that Denver may be attractive to in-migration from more highly educated residents.¹⁰ Increases in the percentage of more highly educated residents at the neighborhood level may signal neighborhood change and increased risk of involuntary displacement among existing residents.¹¹

4 PolicyLink and USC Equity Research Institute. (2021). *National Equity Atlas*. <https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Race-ethnicity/>

5 U.S. Census Bureau, *American Community Survey 2010 and 2019 1-Year Estimates*. [Data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

6 Spillman, B. C.; Biess, J.; MacDonald, G. (2012). *Housing as a Platform for Improving Outcomes for Older Renters*. <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/housing-platform-improving-outcomes-older-renters>.

7 Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

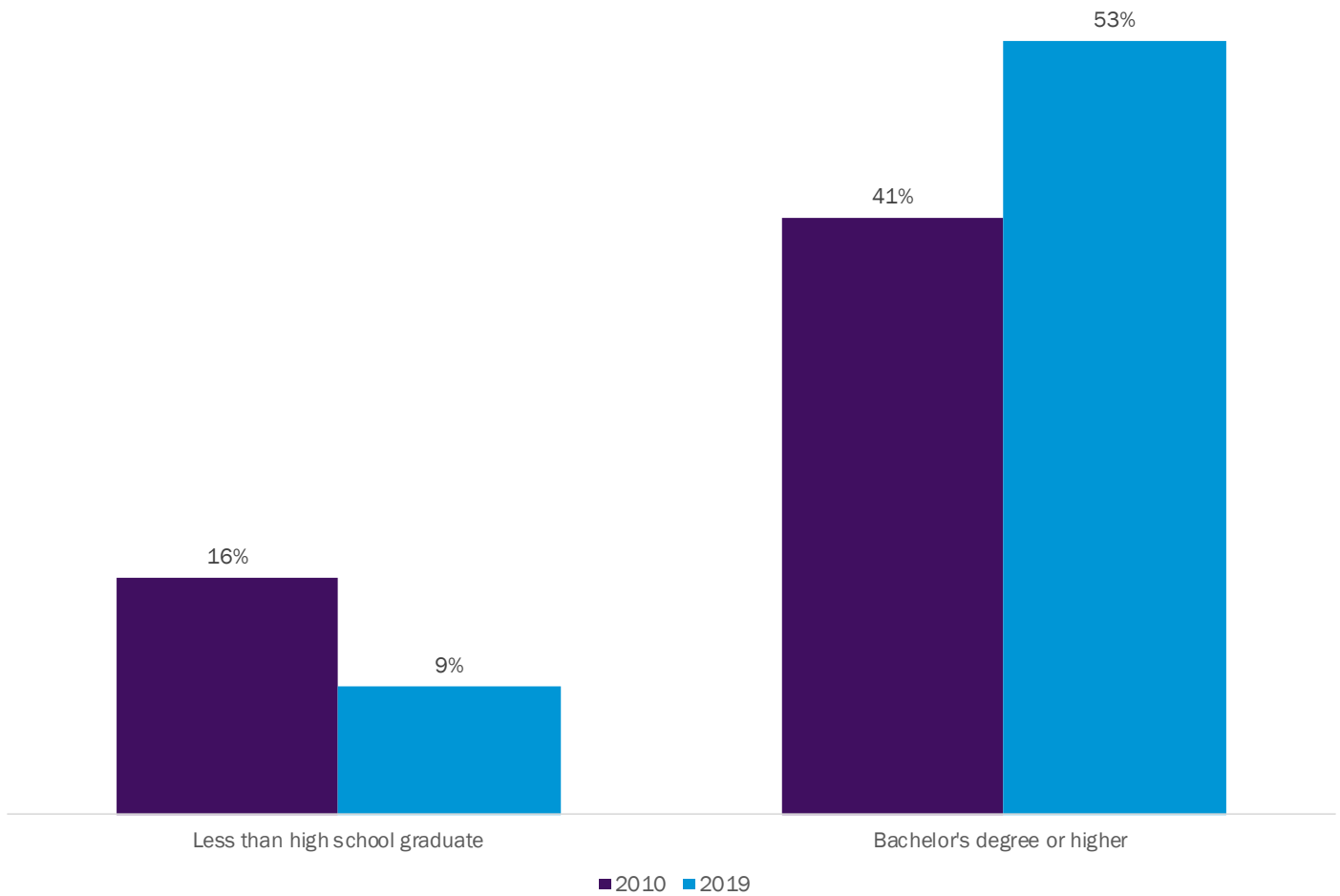
8 Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

9 National data: U.S. Census Bureau. *American Community Survey 2010 and 2019 1-year Estimates*. [Data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov). Statewide comparison: Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

10 Kerr, E. (2021, April 28). *See High School Graduation Rates by State*. U.S. News & World Report. <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/articles/see-high-school-graduation-rates-by-state>.

11 Cohen, M; Pettit, K.L.S. (2019). *Guide to Measuring Neighborhood Change to Understand and Prevent Displacement*. Urban Institute. https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/100135/guide_to_measuring_neighborhood_change_to_understand_and_prevent_displacement.pdf.

Figure 9: Educational Attainment Among Denver's Population Age 25 and Older, 2010 and 2019



Source: Root Policy, Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion, 2021, U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2010 and 2019 1-year Estimates. Note: Data are for Denver County.

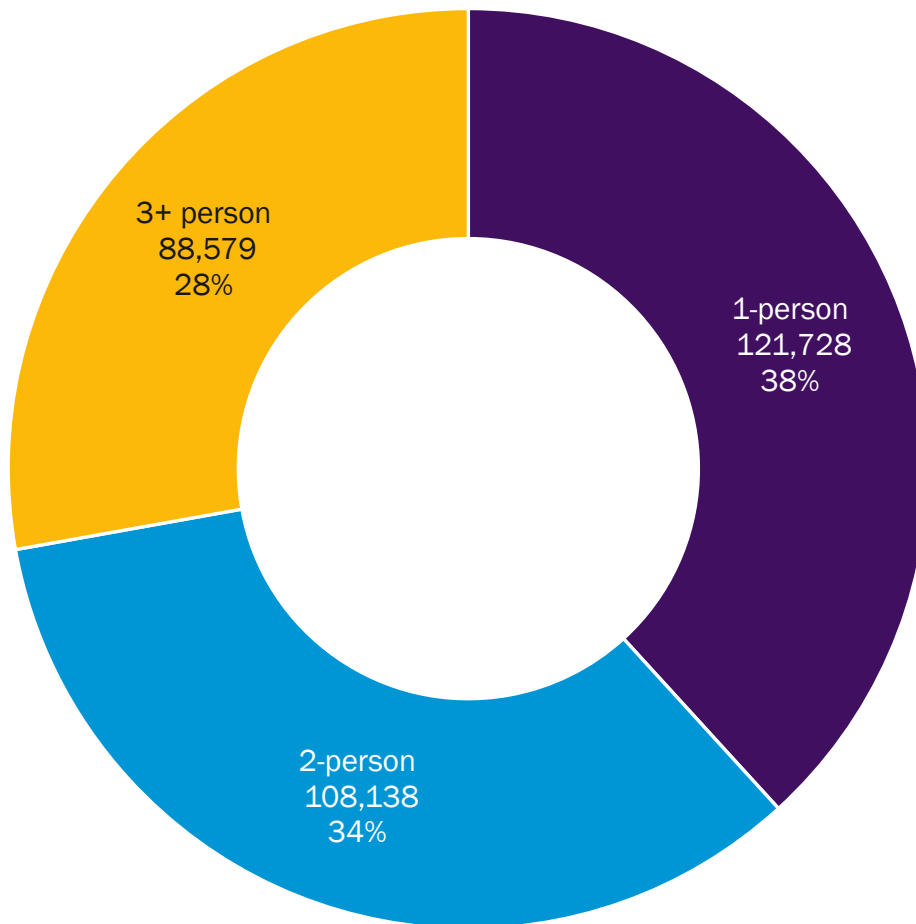


An Urban Peak case manager assists a youth guest. (John Johnston via Urban Peak)

Household size

Though most households in Denver are smaller one-and-two-person households, a substantial share are larger. In 2019, 72% of all households included one or two members. Nearly 90,000 households (28%) included three or more people.¹² Nearly 90,000 households in Denver with three or more people, and 20,000 included five or more members.¹³ Larger households require larger units with more bedrooms. While the housing market does not naturally produce deeply affordable larger units, Denver Housing Authority (DHA) provides affordable three or more-bedroom units through their public housing program and other properties. They currently support more than 1,500 three or more-bedroom units and plan to develop an additional 750 through the DHA Delivers for Denver (D3) initiative.¹⁴ Expanding the supply of units with more bedrooms at affordable price points is a critical need for working families.

Figure 10: Percentage of Denver Households by Size, 2019



Source: Root Policy, Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion, 2021, U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2010 and 2019 1-year Estimates. **Note:** Data are for Denver County.



Deeply affordable homes are those that are affordable to households earning at or below 30% of the area median income.

¹² Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf. Note: trends in household size have not changed significantly over time.

¹³ Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

¹⁴ Denver Housing Authority. (2021). 2021 Annual Budget. <http://www.denverhousing.org/aboutus/financialreports/Documents/2021%20Budget%20Document.pdf>. Planned development through D3 comes from DHA administrative data.

Denver neighborhoods have inequitable access to opportunity, and many are at risk of involuntary displacement

As articulated in the city's land use and transportation plan, [Blueprint Denver](#), centering our work on a foundation of equity as Denver changes remains critical to our citywide vision and goals. Denver seeks to be inclusive and a place where everyone can benefit from Denver's growth and prosperity. As the community works to realize this vision, some Denver neighborhoods have more access to amenities and opportunities that improve quality of life, while others face the pressures of gentrification, placing residents at risk of involuntary displacement when they can no longer afford to stay there. Many areas now at risk of gentrification and involuntary displacement are those that had been historically redlined, the practice of denying mortgages or making them difficult to obtain for non-white homebuyers in certain areas that supported racial segregation in Denver and communities across the country.¹⁵ Helping residents remain in their homes and communities of choice is a core pillar of HOST's work, as is expanding access to affordable housing opportunities in amenity rich areas.

Blueprint Denver annually measures neighborhoods' access to opportunity as well as their risk for involuntary displacement. Neighborhoods with more access to opportunity include those with greater access to transit, commercial centers and corridors, and better scores from Denver Department of Public Health and Environment's Neighborhood Equity Index (e.g., social determinants of health, access to first-trimester health care, childhood obesity, life expectancy, and access to parks and full-service grocery stores). Examples of neighborhoods with higher access to opportunity include Central Park, Speer, Platt Park, Washington Park, and Cherry Creek ([full map](#)).

Neighborhoods vulnerable to involuntary displacement include those where the data shows that households tend to have lower income and less formal education than Denver's population as a whole. These neighborhoods also have a higher proportion of renters. These factors are indicators that households may be less likely to have the financial capacity to withstand mounting housing costs and could be forced to move to find housing they can afford. These data show that median household income is lower than the citywide median household income, the percentage of renters is higher than the citywide rate, and the percentage of the population with less than a bachelor's degree is higher than the citywide percentage. Neighborhoods vulnerable to involuntary displacement are primarily, though not exclusively, located in North and West Denver, and include Globeville, Elyria Swansea, Northeast Park Hill, West Colfax, Villa Park, Westwood, Mar Lee, parts of Harvey Park, Sun Valley, Valverde, Montbello, and Green Valley Ranch ([full map](#)).

The Olin Hotel in downtown Denver (HOST staff)

View of 17th Street in Downtown Denver (stock photo)

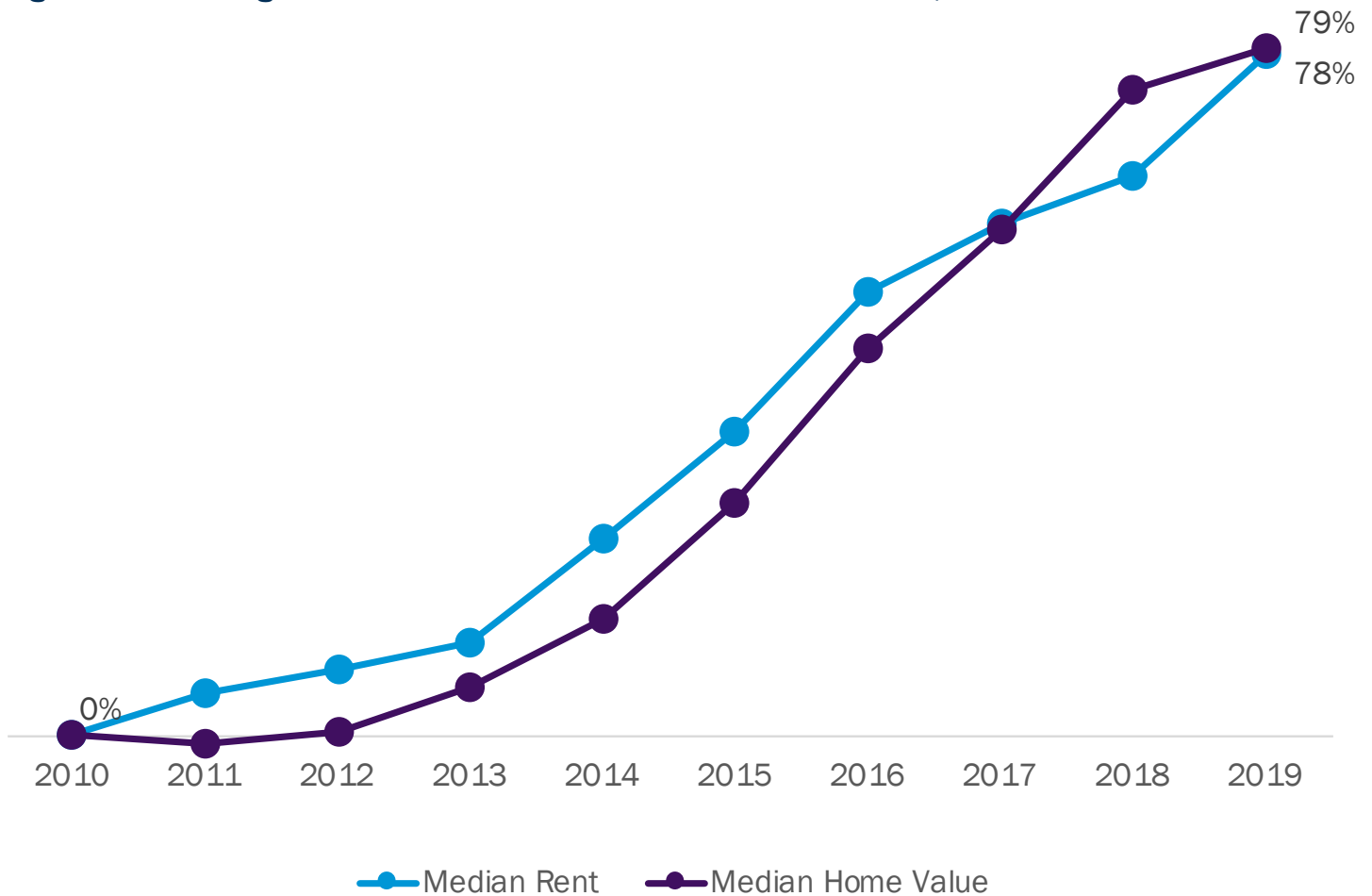


15 Roy, A. (2018, November 30). *New exhibit in Denver focused on redlining aims to educate and collect stories.* <https://www.9news.com/article/news/local/next/new-exhibit-in-denver-focused-on-redlining-aims-to-educate-and-collect-stories/73-617891177>

Housing costs have risen faster than incomes

For Denver to be an inclusive city, it is important for everyone to have housing that fits within their budget. For most people, rent or mortgage payments are the single biggest expense. Two factors – households' income and the amount they pay for housing – drive whether a household can pay for their housing without compromising other important goals, like buying food and medicine, saving for homeownership, or planning for their child's college education. In Denver, like other growing cities nationally, housing costs have grown faster than household incomes, putting significant strain on a growing number of Denver residents.

Figure 11: Percentage Growth in Median Rent and Median Home Value, 2010-2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates 2010-2019.
Note: Data are for Denver County.

Median Rent

The median rent in Denver has nearly doubled from 2010 to 2019. In 2010, the typical Denver renter household paid \$811 per month for rent. In 2019, that amount reached \$1,443.¹⁶ Rents have continued to remain high based on local data. In the first quarter of 2021, the median rent for all apartments was \$1,474.¹⁷ The median rent for a 1-bedroom unit was \$1,384, and the median 2-bedroom/2-bath apartment was \$1,786.¹⁸

¹⁶ U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey 2010 and 2019 1-Year Estimates. [Data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

¹⁷ Apartment Association Metro Denver. (2021). Denver Metro Apartment Vacancy and Rent Report 4th Quarter 2020. <https://www.aamdhq.org/vacancy-and-rent>. Data are for Denver County.

¹⁸ Apartment Association Metro Denver. (2021). Denver Metro Apartment Vacancy and Rent Report 4th Quarter 2020. <https://www.aamdhq.org/vacancy-and-rent>. Data are for Denver County.

Median Home Value

The median home value in Denver has also nearly doubled from 2010 to 2019. In 2010, the typical home in Denver was valued at \$250,100. In 2019, that amount has increased to \$447,500.¹⁹ Median sales prices are also high. As of December 2020, the median sales price for a single-family home was \$535,000, and the median sales price of a condo or townhome was \$410,000.²⁰

Wages, Income and Employment

In the face of sharp and consistent growth in housing costs, growth in incomes lagged for many. Nationally, wages are about today as they were in the late 1970s: in 1979, median weekly wages brought home about \$840 in 2018 inflation-adjusted dollars, only \$39 dollars lower than the median weekly wage in that year.²¹ Data since 2000 show that wages have increased for the top 10 percent and top 25 percent of earners, while wages have stayed flat for the bottom 10 percent and bottom 25 percent of earners.²²

From 2010 to 2019, the median household income in Denver grew by 68% from \$45,074 to \$75,646.²³ This increase reflects the substantial growth Denver has experienced among higher-income households. As identified by Root Policy Research, the share of renter households earning more than 150% of the AMI doubled from 2010 to 2019.²⁴ As housing costs increased in response to this new rental demand, the nearly 100,000 households with incomes at or below 60% of the AMI face acute housing affordability challenges.²⁵

During this period, Denver saw significant job growth in industries that pay more moderate or lower wages, like construction and leisure and hospitality.²⁶ Much of Denver's anticipated job growth in the coming years is projected to be in low- and moderate-wage earning industries.²⁷ Given this, imbalances between housing costs and income levels are likely to continue without additional efforts to increase affordable housing.

The economic crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic worsened the financial situation of many Denver households. While unemployment rates in Denver reached historic lows in late 2019 (2.3% in November and December of 2019), the pandemic dramatically increased unemployment, and, in April 2020, the unemployment rate reached 12.3%.²⁸ Though the unemployment rate later settled around 6-7% in late summer 2020, this masks an inequitable recovery.²⁹ Denver's economy recovered more quickly for higher-wage sectors, while recovery for lower-wage sectors lagged, disproportionately harming women, people of color, and younger workers.³⁰

Residents are paying too much for housing, risking their stability

As a result of these trends, nearly 115,000 households in Denver (35%) pay more than the recommended 30% of their incomes on housing costs.³¹ When people don't have access to housing options that fit within their budgets, generally considered to be 30% or less of household income, households may face difficult choices and housing instability. They may forgo other spending or savings goals. They may be forced to leave the communities they've long called home because they can no longer afford to stay. They may find housing in a cheaper area or double up with friends or family, perhaps leading to longer commutes to work or moving their children into a new school district, disrupting their child's education. Some may ultimately find themselves experiencing homelessness.

19 U.S. Census Bureau. *American Community Survey 2010 and 2019 1-Year Estimates*. [Data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

20 Denver Metro Association of Realtors, Local Market Update.

21 Desilver, D. (2018, August 7). *For most U.S. workers, real wages have barely budged in decades*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/08/07/for-most-us-workers-real-wages-have-barely-budged-for-decades/>

22 Desilver, D. (2018, August 7). *For most U.S. workers, real wages have barely budged in decades*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/08/07/for-most-us-workers-real-wages-have-barely-budged-for-decades/>

23 Dollars are not adjusted for inflation.

24 Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

25 Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

26 Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

27 Root Policy Research. (2021). *Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion*. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

28 U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021). *Denver Metro Area Labor Force Statistics* (https://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LAUMT081974000000003?amp%253bdata_tool=XGtable&output_view=data&include_graphs=true)

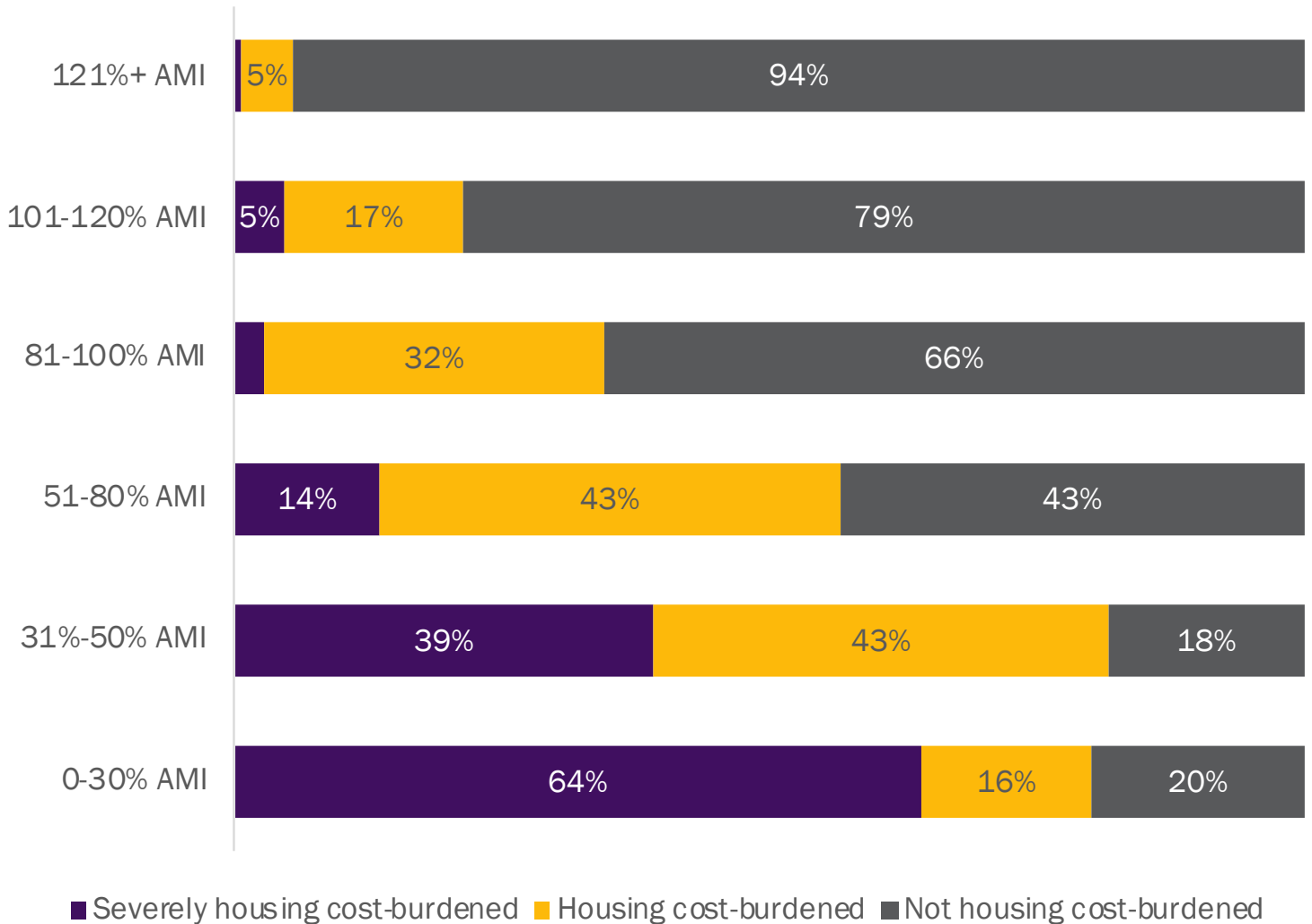
29 U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021). *Denver Metro Area Labor Force Statistics* (https://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LAUMT081974000000003?amp%253bdata_tool=XGtable&output_view=data&include_graphs=true)

30 Svaldi, A. (2021, February 7). *Colorado paid a heavier price economically in its fight against COVID-19 than other states in 2020*. Denver Post. <https://www.denverpost.com/2021/02/07/colorado-economy-covid-price-restaurants-businesses-unemployment/>

31 U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). *American Community Survey 2019 1-Year Estimates Public Use Microdata Sample*.

Housing cost burden is widespread among lower-income households. Four out of every five households earning 30% of the area median income or less (more than 30,000 households) are paying more than 30% of their income for housing, and 64% (nearly 25,000 households) are paying more than half their incomes toward these costs. In contrast only 6% of households earning over 120% of the AMI face this housing cost burden.

Figure 12. Prevalence of Housing Cost Burden for Denver Households by Area Median Income, 2019

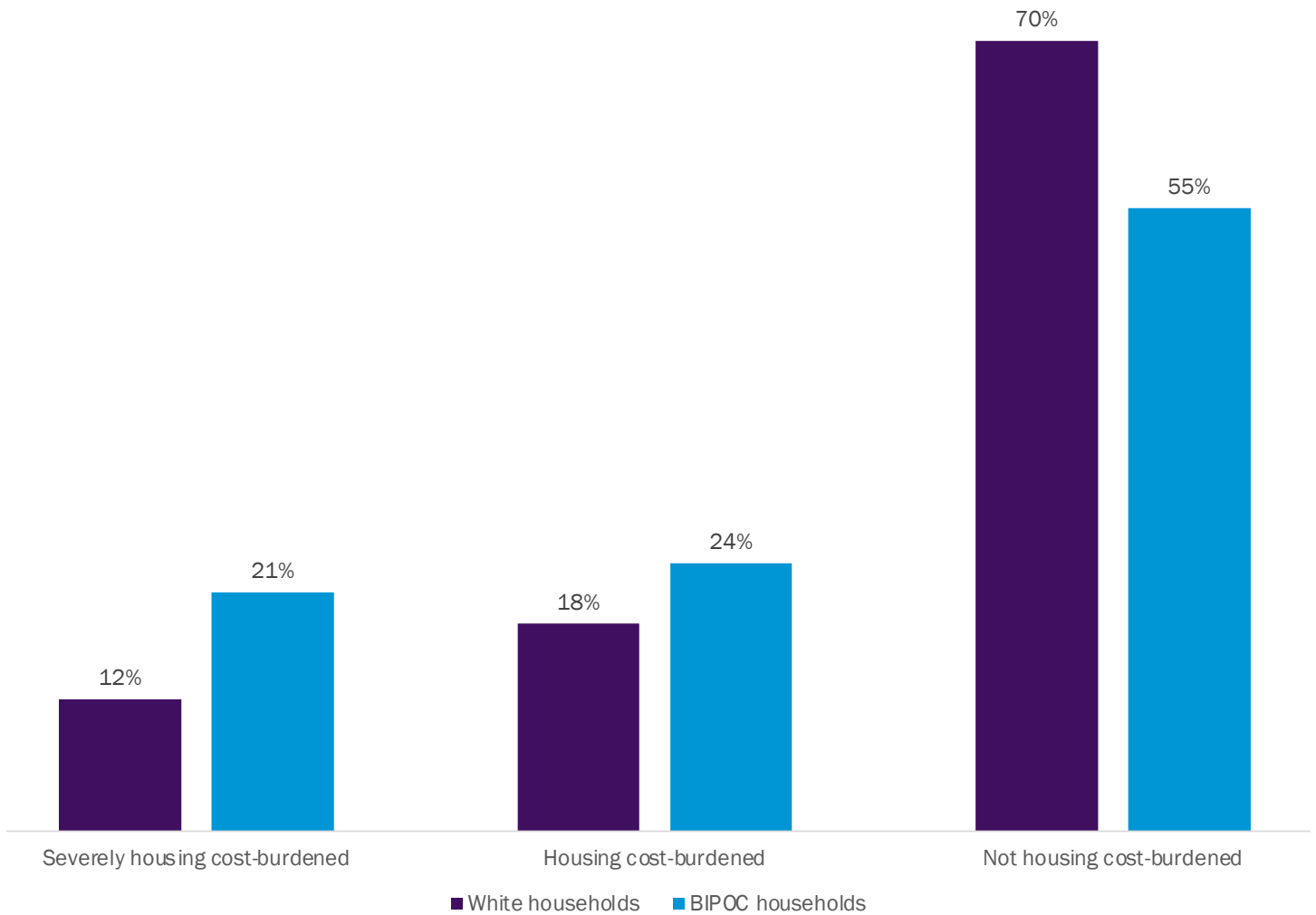


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019 1-year estimates, Public Use Microdata Series.
 Note: Data are for Denver County.

BIPOC-led households are more likely to pay too much for housing than white households. This disparity is likely due to systemic racism in employment (e.g., discrimination in hiring), housing (e.g., discrimination in mortgage lending), and other systems. Overall, 30% of white households in Denver are paying more than 30% of their income for housing, compared to 45% of BIPOC households.³² Further, while only 12% of white households spend at least 50% of their income on housing, 21% of BIPOC households pay this much, increasing their risk of housing instability.

³² Race of household is determined by the head of household.

Figure 13: Prevalence of Housing-Cost Burden by Race of Household, Denver, 2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019 1-year estimates, Public Use Microdata Series.
 Note: Data are for Denver County.

Too many Denver households face eviction or are behind on rent

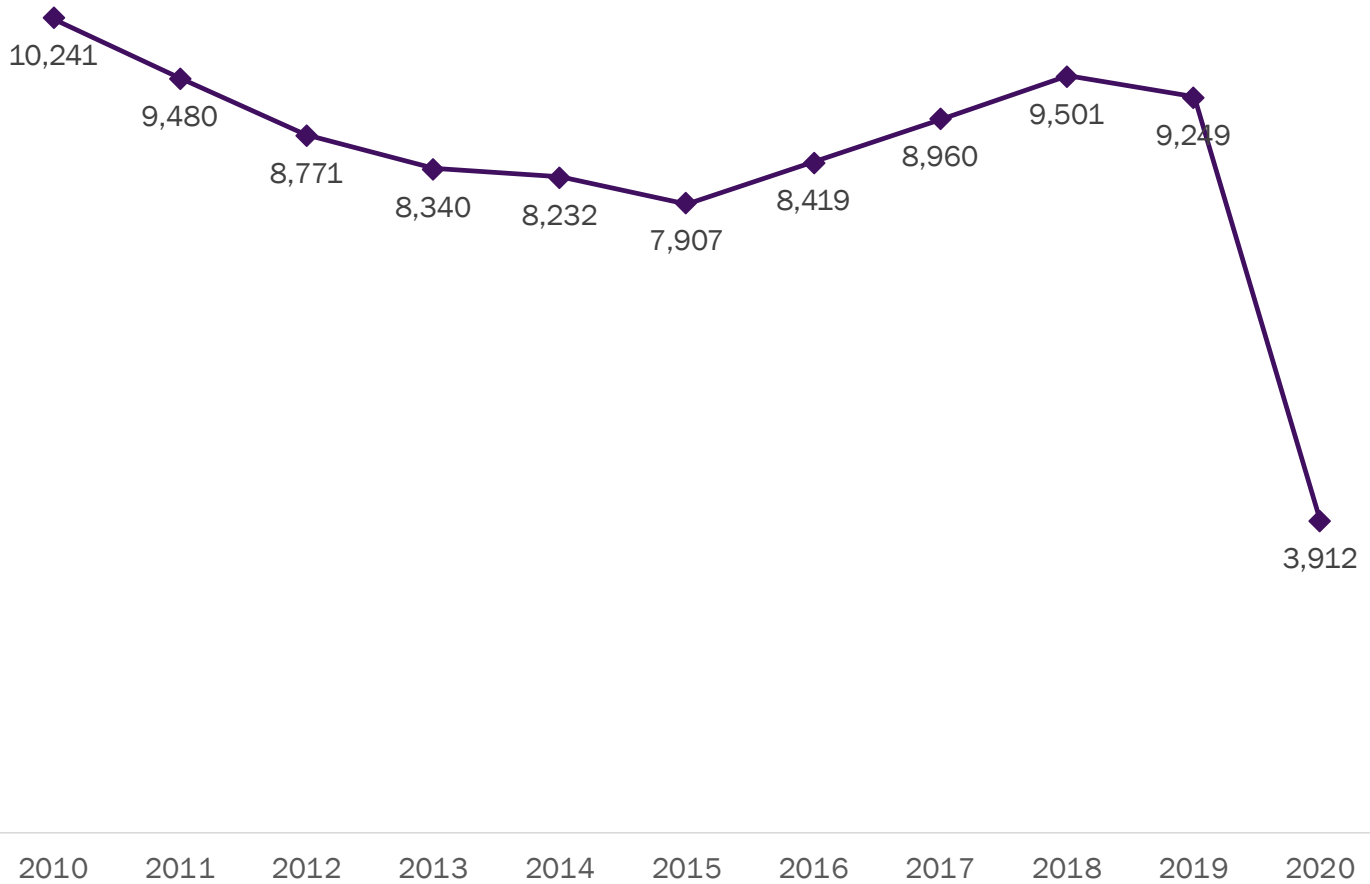
Prior to the pandemic, Denver County Courts saw an average of nearly 9,000 eviction filings every year.³³ With an eviction on their record, households face increased challenges regaining housing, creating instability.³⁴ Families may also leave their units before a formal filing. During the pandemic, federal and state action instituted moratoria on evictions to help keep people in their homes. As a result, far fewer, less than 4,000, eviction filings were made to the Denver County Court. However, many residents may still be behind on rent and vulnerable to losing their homes when moratoria are lifted. State-level data from the U.S. Census Bureau finds that more than 175,000 Coloradans report being behind on rent and nearly 80,000 report being behind on their mortgage payments.³⁵

33 Denver County Court administrative data, 2010-2020.

34 Gross, T. (2018). First-Ever Evictions Database Shows: 'We're In the Middle of a Housing Crisis.' National Public Radio (NPR). <https://www.npr.org/2018/04/12/601783346/first-ever-evictions-database-shows-were-in-the-middle-of-a-housing-crisis>.

35 U.S. Census Bureau. (2021, June 16). Week 31 Household Pulse Survey: May 26 - June 7. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2021/demo/hhp/hhp31.html>. Census Pulse Survey data are not available at city or metropolitan levels.

Figure 14. Denver County Court Eviction Filings by Year, 2010 – 2020



Source: Denver County Court administrative data, 2010-2020.

Foreclosures risk household wealth-building through homeownership

Though foreclosures have decreased significantly since the foreclosure crisis and Great Recession of 2007, continued attention should be paid toward foreclosure prevention, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2010, foreclosure filings were much higher than they are today. In that year, nearly 4,000 foreclosures were filed in Denver.³⁶ Prior to the pandemic that number has reduced substantially to an average of about 600 filings per year from 2015 to 2019.³⁷ During the COVID-19 pandemic, many owners were offered forbearance, and Denver saw foreclosure filings drop further to 210 in 2020.³⁸ However, about 80,000 homeowners in Colorado report being behind on mortgage payments, and may be at risk after forbearance ends.³⁹

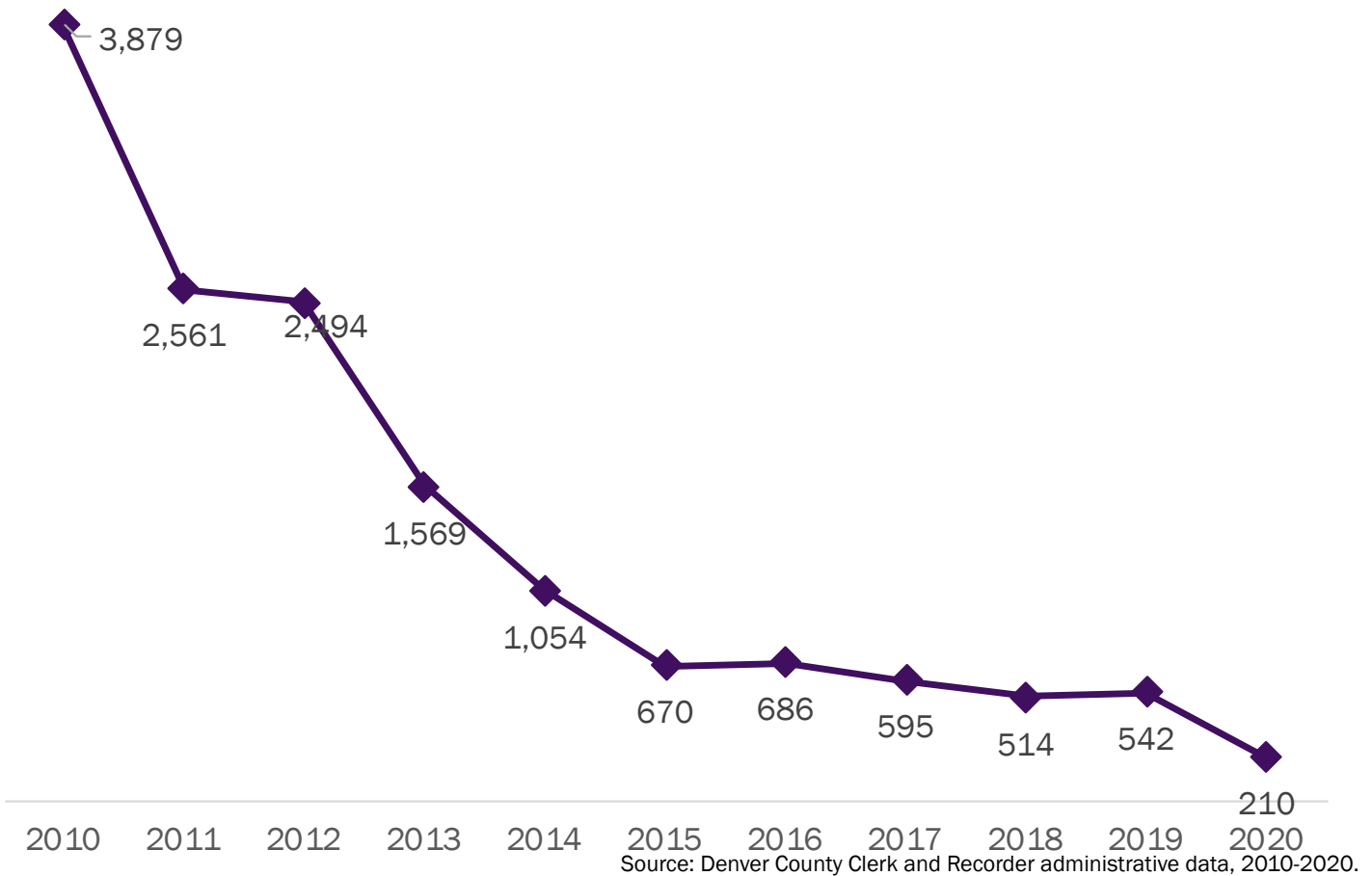
³⁶ Denver County Clerk and Recorder administrative data, 2010-2020.

³⁷ Denver County Clerk and Recorder administrative data, 2010-2020.

³⁸ Denver County Clerk and Recorder administrative data, 2010-2020.

³⁹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2021, June 16). *Week 31 Household Pulse Survey: May 26 – June 7*. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2021/demo/hhp/hhp31.html>. Note: Census Pulse Survey data are not available at city or metropolitan levels.

Figure 15. Denver County Court Eviction Filings by Year, 2010 – 2020



Existing housing stock is not affordable to many Denver residents

As Denver has grown, the housing market worked to respond to this increase in demand, adding about 34,000 rental units from 2010 to 2019.⁴⁰ However, Root Policy Research finds that most of that new development has only been affordable to those earning at or above 100% AMI.⁴¹ The same study finds that Denver has a 25,000-unit surplus for households at or below 100% of AMI. However, there is a shortage of affordable rental units for those earning at or below 60% AMI (see figure 7).⁴² While publicly-assisted units, which include housing choice vouchers, public housing as well as apartments that receive tax credits and other funding that require affordability, help lessen this imbalance, resources are not currently scaled to the need. As a result, Denver has a shortage of nearly 19,000 rental units at or below 30% AMI, a shortage of 20,000 rental units at or below 50% AMI, and a shortage of more than 11,000 rental units at or below 60% AMI.⁴³ To address these critical gaps, HOST must continue to focus its efforts on creating deeper affordability.

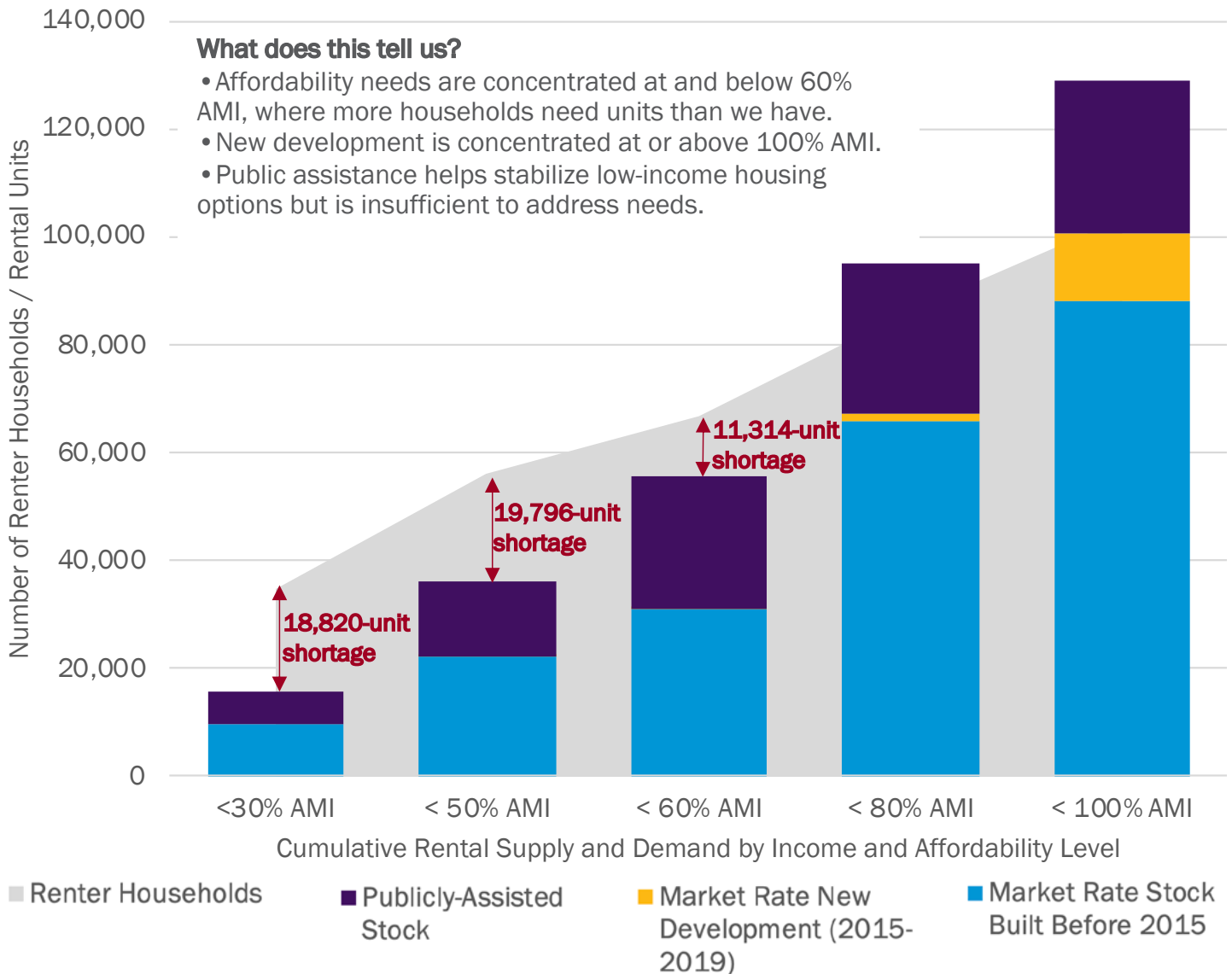
40 Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

41 Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

42 Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

43 Note: Unit shortages are cumulative, so the unit shortage for households below 30% AMI are included in the unit shortage below 50% AMI. Source: Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

Figure 16. Renter Households and Housing Units by Income and Affordability Level



Source: Reproduced with permission from Root Policy Research.⁴⁴ American Community Survey 2019 1-year estimates, HOST Affordable Housing Dashboard, HUD Picture of Subsidized Households, CoStar, and Root Policy Research

Notes: Housing Choice Vouchers are included in Publicly Assisted Inventory; accounts for a 40% estimated overlap in HCVs and other publicly subsidized units (e.g., HCV use in LIHTC). The 2020 HUD AMI for a two-person household of \$80,000 was used.

Most new development in Denver has been market rate. From 2010 to 2019, one out of six of the new units created were developed as income-restricted affordable units that are guaranteed to remain affordable over the long term.⁴⁵ Overall, Denver has 24,000 income-restricted units in the city.⁴⁶ This is about 7% of the overall housing stock. This falls short of the more than 130,000 households with incomes at or below 80% of the AMI that market rate housing is not currently reaching.

Denver’s housing market also includes some housing that is affordable to lower-income households without an income restriction, often called naturally occurring affordable housing. Typically, these units are affordable to

44 Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.
 45 Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.
 46 See Appendix D for more information on how HOST helps to create and preserve income-restricted affordable units in Denver.

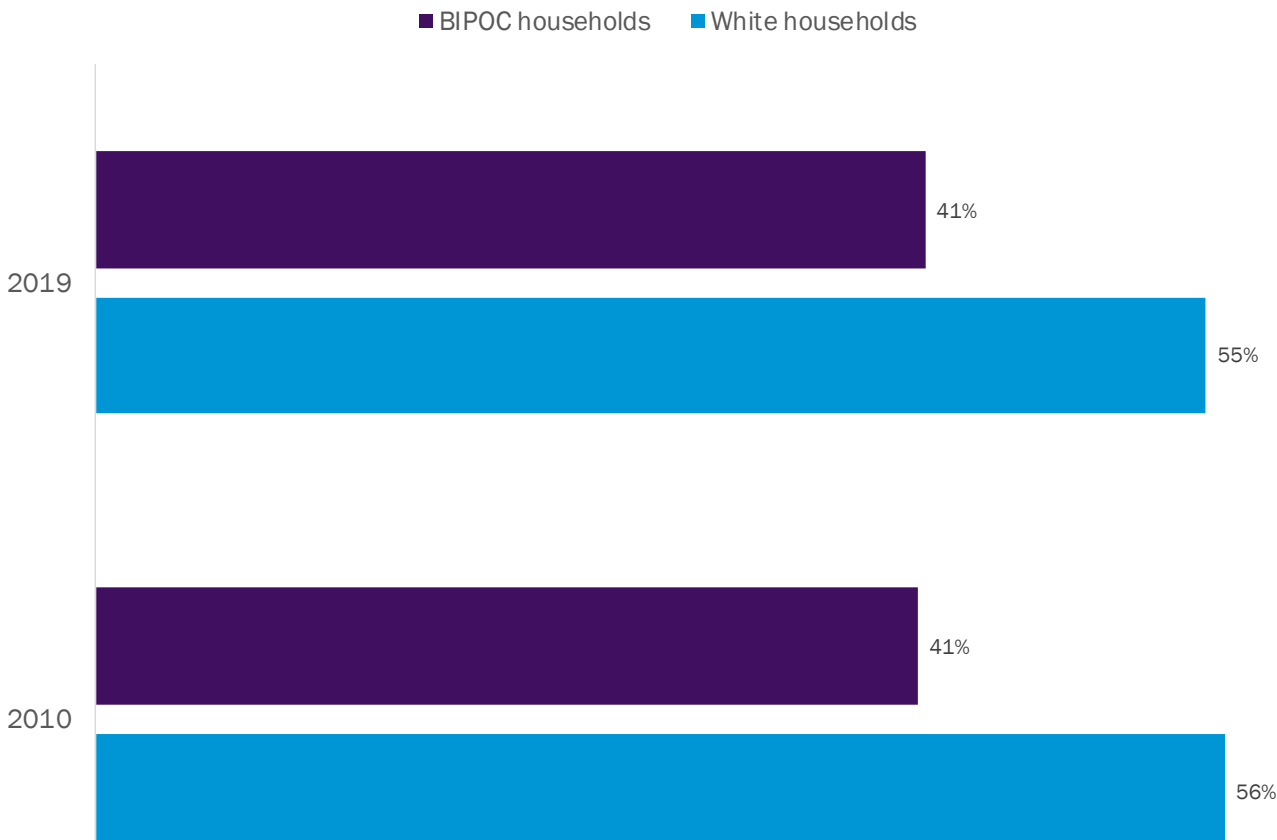
households earning 51-80% of the AMI.⁴⁷ As shown in Figure 17, there are about 31,000 market rate units built prior to 2015 that are affordable to households at or below 60% of AMI. This number has been decreasing over the decade. From 2010 to 2019, Denver lost 28,000 naturally occurring affordable units that were affordable to households at or below 60% AMI.⁴⁸

Affordable homeownership units are also relatively scarce. Most newly built ownership units are only affordable to households earning above 150% of the AMI.⁴⁹ Condominium units were more likely to be purchased by low- and moderate-income households.⁵⁰ However, these more affordable ownership opportunities are a small part of Denver’s overall housing stock.⁵¹

Access to homeownership is inequitable

Due to the historic exclusion from homeownership opportunities, particularly among Black households, BIPOC households have lower homeownership rates than white households.⁵² In Denver overall, about 50% of households own their homes. This rate is higher for white households at 54% and substantially lower for BIPOC households at only 41%. Given the role that homeownership plays in wealth-building, addressing this disparity is critical.

Figure 17. Homeownership Rates for White and BIPOC Heads of Household, Denver, 2010-2019



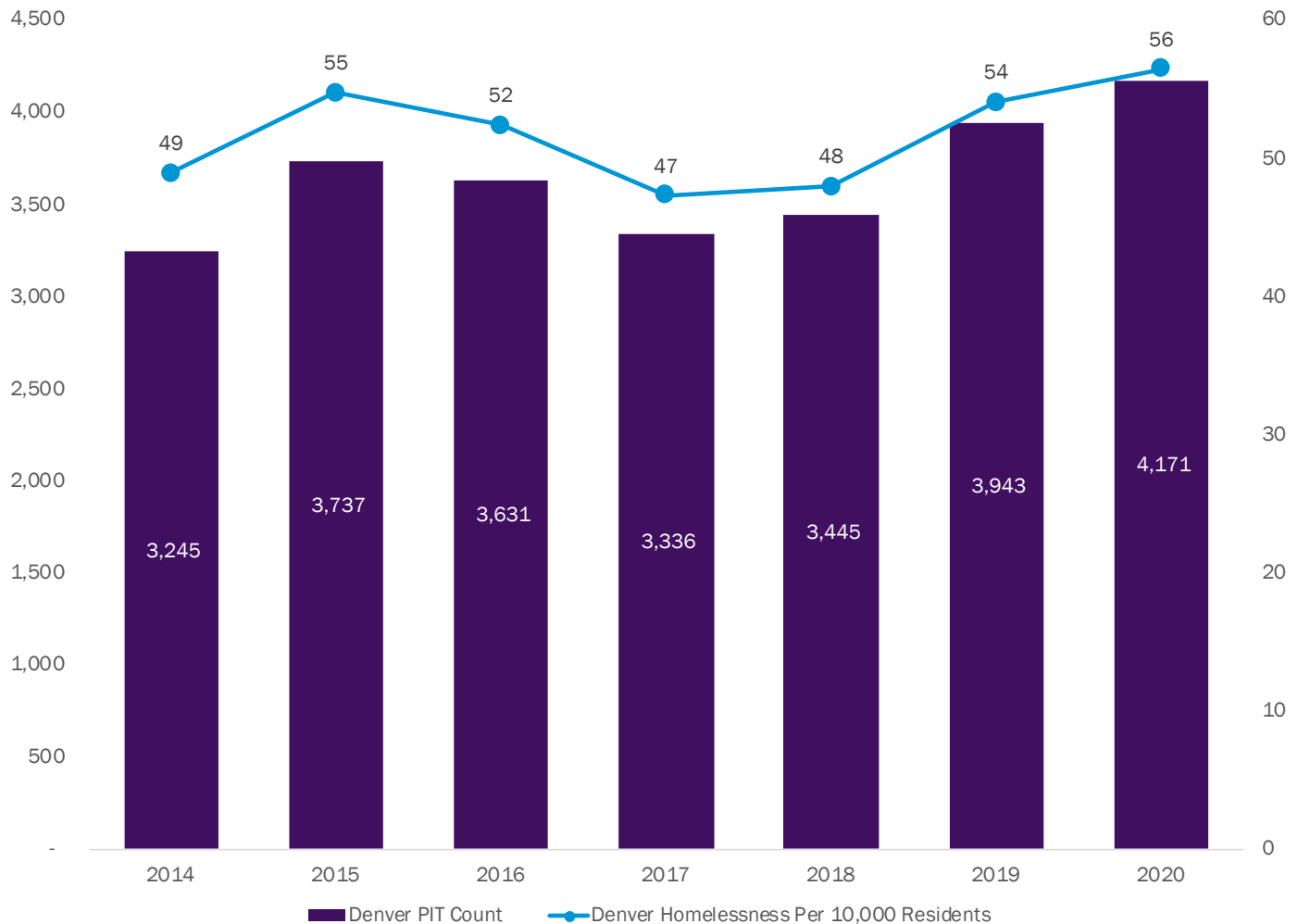
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates 2010 to 2019.
 Note: Data are for Denver County only.

47 Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.
 48 Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.
 49 Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.
 50 Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.
 51 Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.
 52 Rothstein, R. (2017). *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*. First edition. Liveright Publishing Corporation, a division of W.W. Norton & Company.

Homelessness is increasing in a challenging environment

Too many of Denver’s residents experience homelessness and find themselves in need of a safe place to stay and resources to quickly regain housing. According to the Point-in-Time (PIT) count, an annual census of persons experiencing homelessness on a single night in January, 4,171 persons experienced homelessness in Denver on a single night in 2020.⁵³ This is 56 out of every 10,000 Denver residents.⁵⁴

Figure 18. Point-in-Time Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness in Denver County, 2014-2020



Source: Metro Denver Homeless Initiative, [Point-in-Time County-level Reports](#), 2014-2020; Colorado State Demography Office.
 Note: Data are for Denver County.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only put more pressure on efforts to reduce housing instability and homelessness. Since the onset of the pandemic, as existing shelters worked to implement social distancing measures to reduce COVID-19 transmission, shelter capacity within those spaces was reduced by 56%.⁵⁵ At the same time, libraries and recreation centers that provided support for persons experiencing homelessness closed; the jail system discharged

⁵³ The 2021 Point-in-Time Count was delayed and only included the sheltered portion of the count due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, this report only uses data through 2021. For more information, see: <https://www.mdhi.org/pit2021>

⁵⁴ The per 10,000 rate of homelessness ranges widely across the United States, and Denver is in the middle of this range. For example, Washington DC has a 92.8 per 10,000 rate of homelessness, while Savannah, GA has a 23.9 per 10,000 rate of homelessness. For more information, see <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-2020/>.

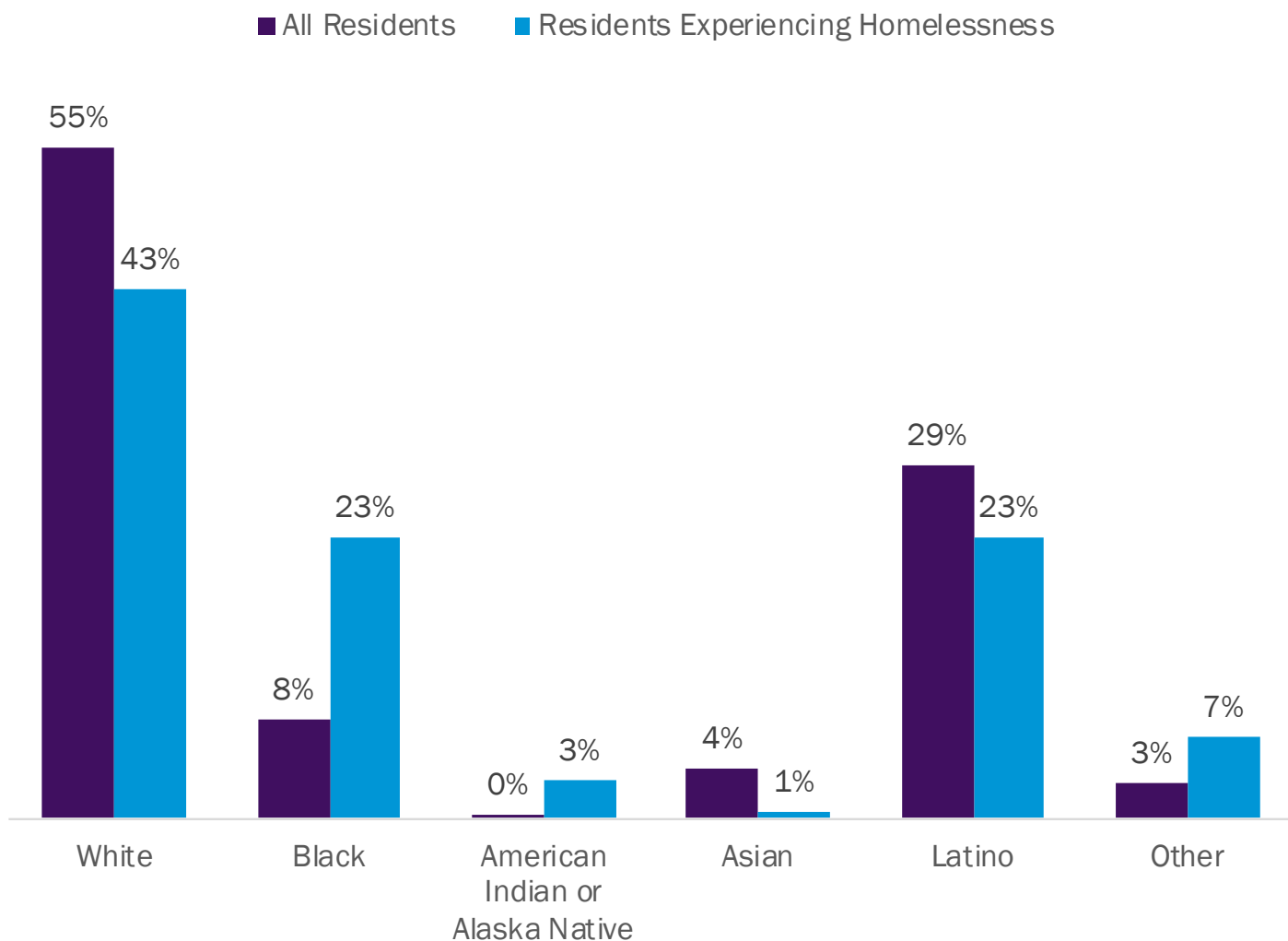
⁵⁵ Corporation for Supportive Housing analysis of change in Denver shelter capacity pre and post COVID.

41% of its inmates;⁵⁶ and hospitals closed for non-emergent procedures. As mentioned above, the unemployment rate spiked to 12.3%,⁵⁷ Colorado Medicaid enrollments increased by 19% (up 263,422 people – from 1.2m in March 2020 to 1.4m members in March 2021)⁵⁸ and requests for rent and utility assistance increased by 270%.⁵⁹ Within this environment, the need for Denver shelter services increased by more than 64%.⁶⁰

Persons experiencing homelessness are disproportionately people of color

Persons experiencing homelessness in Denver are disproportionately BIPOC. While more than half (55%) of Denver residents are white, only 43% of those experiencing homelessness in the 2020 Point-in-Time Count are white. The majority of persons experiencing homelessness (57%) are BIPOC. Disparities are particularly significant among the Black and American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN) communities. While only 8% of Denver residents are Black, 23% of those experiencing homelessness are Black. While less than 1% of Denver residents are AIAN, 3% of those experiencing homelessness are AIAN. Additionally, 3% of those counted in the PIT identify as AIAN and Latino.

Figure 19. Percentage of Denver County Residents by Race and Ethnicity



Source: Data for all residents from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimates 2019 as analyzed by Root Policy Research.⁶¹ Data for residents experiencing homelessness from the [2020 Point-in-Time Count](#).

Note: Data are for Denver County.

56 <https://www.denvergov.org/Government/Departments/Sheriff-Department/Data-Statistics#section-2>

57 U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021). Denver Metro Area Labor Force Statistics (https://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LAUMT081974000000003?amp%253bdata_tool=XGtable&output_view=data&include_graphs=true)

58 Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing – Health First Colorado and Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) enrollment administrative data.

59 Department of Housing Stability administrative data.

60 Department of Housing Stability administrative data.

61 Root Policy Research. (2021). Denver Housing Market Analysis Expansion. https://denvergov.org/files/c6a2e966-0f5c-4979-87c6-89c35057a6f8/Denver-Housing-Market-Analysis-Expansion_FINAL_8-31-21.pdf.

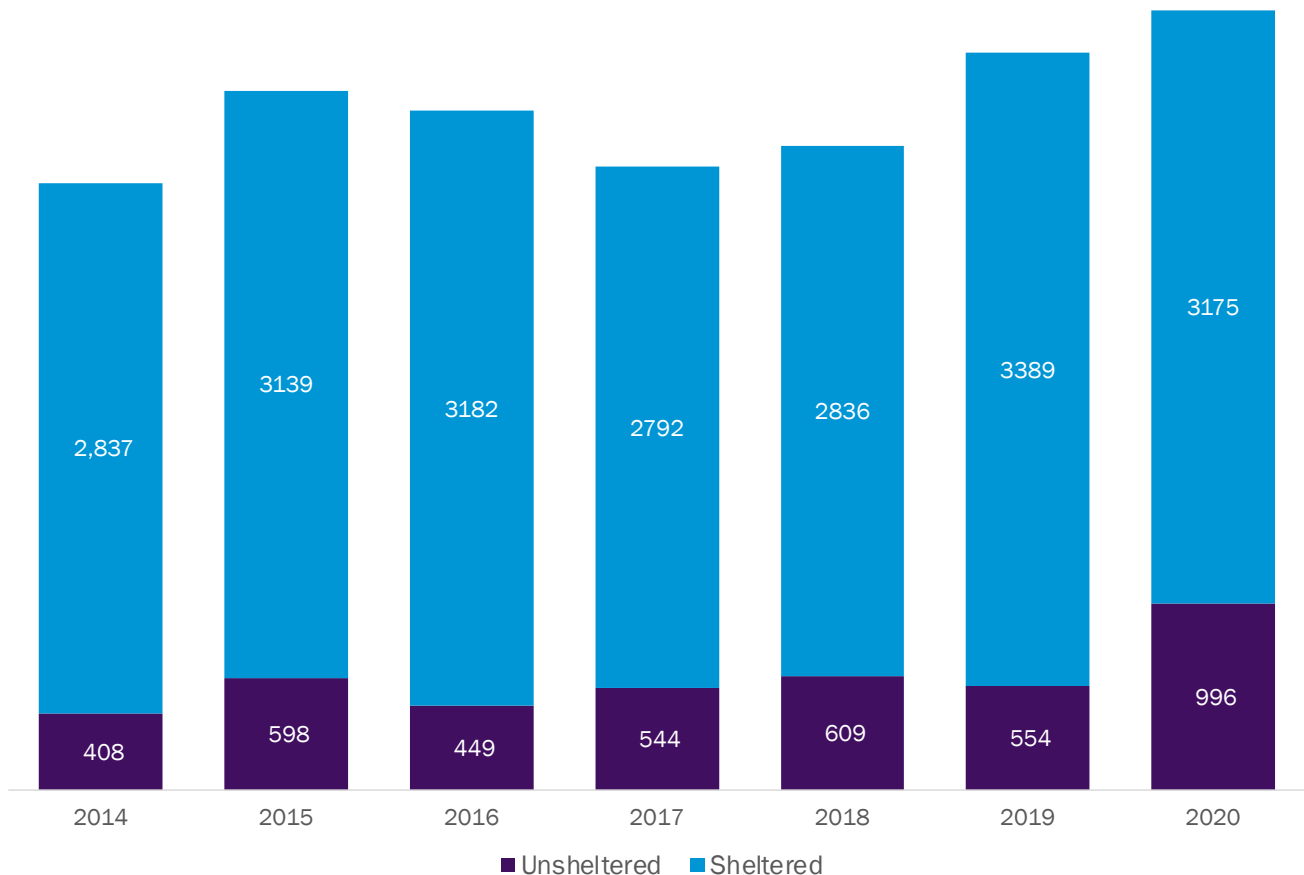
Chronic and unsheltered homelessness remains prevalent

In 2020, the PIT count identified a large number of individuals who were experiencing chronic homelessness and who were unsheltered. In 2020, 29% of people reported experiencing chronic homelessness.⁶² Someone is considered to be experiencing chronic homelessness if they have been homeless for at least 12 months continuously or in at least four separate episodes in the past three years and they have a disabling condition that affects their ability to maintain housing independently.

In addition, 996 people (24% of everyone identified in the PIT count) were unsheltered. This is a substantial increase from 2019 and prior years when about 14% of those counted were unsheltered. The 2021 PIT count was a partial count and did not include the unsheltered count. While we don't have a more current estimate, unsheltered homelessness has become more visible during the pandemic.

Disabling conditions are prevalent among residents experiencing homelessness, particularly among those experiencing unsheltered homelessness. About 42% of all residents counted in the 2020 PIT reported a disabling condition, while 37% reported a mental health concern and 31% reported a substance use issue.⁶³ Prevalence of behavioral health concerns are higher among those who were unsheltered on the night of the count: 51% reported a mental health concern and 56% reported a substance use issue.⁶⁴ Additionally, 6% of residents experiencing homelessness reported a TBI, and most (80%) of residents counted on the PIT with a TBI slept unsheltered.⁶⁵

Figure 20. Persons Experiencing Homelessness in Denver County by Sheltered Situation, 2014-2020



Source: Metro Denver Homeless Initiative, [Point-in-Time County-level Reports](#), 2014-2020. Note: Data are for Denver County.

⁶² Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. 2020. *2020 Point in Time Reports & Dashboard*. Accessed: July 21, 2020. https://www.mdhi.org/2020_pit_reports.

⁶³ Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. 2020. *2020 Point in Time Reports & Dashboard*. Accessed: July 21, 2020. https://www.mdhi.org/2020_pit_reports.

⁶⁴ Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. 2020. *2020 Point in Time Reports & Dashboard*. Accessed: July 21, 2020. https://www.mdhi.org/2020_pit_reports.

⁶⁵ Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. 2020. *2020 Point in Time Reports & Dashboard*. Accessed: July 21, 2020. https://www.mdhi.org/2020_pit_reports.

Gender and sexual orientation are important factors in experience and service needs.

While most people experiencing homelessness in Denver are men, it is important to account for the unique needs of women, transgender, and gender non-conforming residents. Overall, 70% of residents experiencing homelessness were men on the 2020 Point-in-Time count; 29% were women; 1% were gender non-conforming; and 1% were transgender. Women were more likely to be experiencing homelessness with a child under 18 in their care. Transgender and gender non-conforming individuals are more likely to be unsheltered. While 26% of men and 19% of women were unsheltered, 32% of transgender individuals and 53% of gender non-conforming individuals were unsheltered.⁶⁶

In 2019, MDHI found that 244 of people experiencing homelessness in Denver identified as LGBTQ+.⁶⁷ This is about 6% of people counted in Denver during the 2019 Point-in-Time count. However, due to limitations of existing data systems, not all PIT participants were able to be asked the question.⁶⁸ Homelessness is particularly prevalent among LGTBQ+ youth.⁶⁹ More recent research has also begun to study the relationship between sexual and gender identity and homelessness and housing instability among adults and has found that LGBTQ+ adults are more likely to experience homelessness than cisgender straight adults, and most (71%) LGBTQ+ adults in the study experienced homelessness for the first time as an adult.⁷⁰

Persons experiencing homelessness are aging

Furthermore, the population of persons experiencing homelessness is aging. One out of four people experiencing homelessness in Denver was age 55 or older, and 5% were age 65 or older. Researchers project that the number of people experiencing homelessness age 65 and older will increase in coming years, increasing use and costs of hospital services, shelter support, and nursing homes.⁷¹

Families experiencing homelessness lack sufficient system of support

While most persons experiencing homelessness in Denver are single adults or couples without children, too many families and unaccompanied youth experience homelessness. In 2020, 820 people in 247 households were experiencing homelessness as part of a family; this is 20% of all those counted in the PIT. Families experiencing homelessness in Denver are more likely to be newly homeless: 43% of people in families were newly homeless compared to 13% of everyone counted.⁷²

Addressing family homelessness is critical to protect and support children. Children who experience homelessness are more likely to experience family separation, academic achievement challenges, and behavioral health issues compared to children in general.⁷³ Additionally, 195 people (5%) were unaccompanied youth under the age of 25 who may need supports tailored to their age.⁷⁴

66 Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. (2020). *2020 Point in Time Reports & Dashboard*. https://www.mdhi.org/2020_pit_reports.

67 Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. (2019). *Point-in-Time Count Everyone Counts Interactive Dashboards*. <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/mdhi/viz/O-MDHI-PIT-2019-FINAL-Web/Title>

68 Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. (2019). *Everyone Counts Metro Denver's Point in Time Survey: 2019 Point in Time Report*. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5fea50c73853910bc4679c13/t/60aec0d2d3439919466643b0/1622065369840/mdhi2019PITReport_final.pdf

69 Youth.gov. (n.d.). *Homelessness & Housing*. <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/lgbtq-youth/homelessness>

70 Wilson, B. D.M. et al. (2020). *Homelessness Among LGBT Adults in the US*. University of California Los Angeles School of Law Williams Institute. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGBT-Homelessness-May-2020.pdf>

71 Culhane, D. et al. (2019). *The Emerging Crisis of Aged Homelessness: Could Housing Solutions be Funded by Avoidance of Excess Shelter, Hospital, and Nursing Home Costs?* University of Pennsylvania. <https://www.aisp.upenn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Emerging-Crisis-of-Aged-Homelessness-1.pdf>

72 Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. (2020). *2020 Point in Time Reports & Dashboard*. https://www.mdhi.org/2020_pit_reports.

73 Brown, S.R.; Shinn, M.; Khadduri, J. (2017). *Homeless Families Research Brief: Well-being of Young Children after Experiencing Homelessness*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/opre_homefam_brief3_hhs_children_02_24_2017_b508.pdf.

74 Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. (2020). *2020 Point in Time Reports & Dashboard*. https://www.mdhi.org/2020_pit_reports.

Ending veteran homelessness is achievable

In 2020, 627 veterans experiencing homelessness were identified across the Metro Denver region during the Point-in-Time Count; 479 of those veterans (more than 75%) were staying in Denver.⁷⁵ Since that time, Denver has made strong progress reducing veteran homelessness. The veteran by-name list, which identifies the number of veterans experiencing homelessness at any given time, found only 432 veterans experiencing homelessness across the region in June 2021.⁷⁶ Just under 300 of those veterans were in Denver.⁷⁷ Ending veteran homelessness is possible. From 2010 to 2016, there was a 47% decrease in veteran homelessness. This success is largely attributed to the successful investment in supportive housing and other rehousing approaches specifically for veterans.⁷⁸

Though they offer proven solutions, current housing resources are not sufficient to meet the need

The Department of Housing Stability funds community partners to provide housing programs. In 2020, 1,831 households (families and/or individuals) were served in rapid resolution, rapid-rehousing, supportive housing, transitional housing, and bridge housing programs.⁷⁹ However, far more households were served in programs that help Denver residents manage an experience of homelessness. Denver served 7,729 households in overnight and 24/7 shelter programs and 1,384 household in street outreach services. To improve Denver's ability to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time, housing resources and support services must be better scaled to meet the needs.

To further understand housing needs and match households to available resources, Denver participates in a regional coordinated entry system called OneHome. Coordinated Entry is a national best practice required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and led by the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI). In 2020, 2,395 households in Denver were assessed for housing needs through OneHome.

Many households are in need of housing but have not yet been connected with the coordinated entry system. Given limited case management resources, providers currently connect those they think are most in need of the limited housing resources available. Of those households assessed in 2019, about 1,300 households' assessments indicated a need for permanent housing subsidies with supportive services, and 675 households' assessments indicated a need for shorter-term rental assistance and supports.⁸⁰

Evidence demonstrates that investing in housing with services works. Results from Denver's project for supportive housing provide compelling evidence of the success of affordable housing coupled with supportive services. The project serves individuals experiencing homelessness who are high utilizers of the justice system. Of those in the program at least this long and still living, 81% maintained housing two years later, and 77% were still housed three years later. Participants used significantly fewer emergency services than those who did not receive housing, offsetting half the total per person cost of providing supportive housing, and were better able to access to non-emergent healthcare.⁸¹

75 Metro Denver Homeless Initiative. (2020). *2020 Point in Time Reports & Dashboard*. https://www.mdhi.org/2020_pit_reports.

76 U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs and Metro Denver Homeless Initiative veteran by-name list data, June 2021.

77 U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs and Metro Denver Homeless Initiative veteran by-name list data, June 2021.

78 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2021, April 12). *Secretaries of HUD, VA joint statement on ending Veteran homelessness*. https://www.hud.gov/press/press_releases_media_advisories/HUD_No_21_059

79 Because some of these programs, particularly supportive housing, are longer-term, space for housing programs to take new households every year is limited.

80 Metro Denver OneHome assessment data, 2019.

81 Gillespie, S.; Hanson, D.; Leopold, J.; Oneto, A.D. (2021, July). *Costs and Offsets of Providing Supportive Housing to Break the Homelessness-Jail Cycle*. Urban Institute. https://www.urban.org/research/publication/costs-and-offsets-providing-supportive-housing-break-homelessness-jail-cycle/view/full_report. Hanson, D.; Gillespie, S. (2021, July). *Improving Health Care Through Housing First*. Urban Institute. https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/104502/improving-health-care-through-housing-first_0.pdf

Appendix A2 - Setting the Stage: Community Engagement

At the Denver Department of Housing Stability, people are at the heart of everything we do. Our mission is to create a healthy, housed and connected city for everyone. We want to hear from and dialogue with the people we and our partners serve in order to better meet their needs.

It is our intent to create space and trust for meaningful, constructive, and ongoing dialogue to happen. We know how important it is for us to actively listen to our stakeholders, to acknowledge the lived experiences of those we serve, and to reflect back what we hear for verification. Through this process, we can utilize the input and feedback we receive to inform and continuously improve our work.

To that end, HOST created a comprehensive community engagement process to obtain input and feedback while developing this strategic plan. Engagement included as many audiences and stakeholders as possible, as well as offering numerous different ways to engage with us, from attending regular meetings to taking a five-minute survey to in-depth hour-long interviews. Our goals were to meet people where they are, to give voice to our stakeholders – especially those with lived experience and to incorporate what we heard into this plan.

As a result, this plan has been informed by thousands of stakeholders throughout the city, including residents and people who have themselves experienced or are experiencing housing instability or homelessness, as well as individuals representing nonprofits, community organizations, developers, City Council members, government agency partners, residents, funding partners, and businesses.

The work is also built on the foundation of multiple previous plans, all of which also included significant community engagement. (See also City Planning & Policy Landscape section.) That input was reviewed and incorporated early in the plan’s development process.



Above: A guest selects her lunch items at the women’s shelter operated by Catholic Charities at 4330 E. 48th Ave. (Evan Semón)

Stakeholder Input Sessions

HOST began engagement in early 2020 with external stakeholder groups representative of a diverse range of perspectives across the housing continuum and funder community. These groups included:

- **Homelessness Leadership Council**, providers and extended partners – leaders from organizations serving people experiencing homelessness, including shelter operators and service providers such as Denver Rescue Mission, Catholic Charities, Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, The Salvation Army, Colorado Village Collaborative, and advocacy organizations like Denver Homeless Out Loud
- **Anti-Displacement Policy Network** – representatives from community-based organizations, service providers and city staff focused on gentrification, involuntary displacement, neighborhood issues, and equity
- **Neighborhood Development Collaborative** – affordable housing developers focused on the affordable housing pipeline, preservation, and naturally occurring affordable housing
- **Private philanthropic funders** – including funders who have given such as The Anschutz Foundation, Colorado Health Foundation, Kaiser, the Downtown Denver Partnership, VISIT Denver, PDC Energy, Mile High United Way, Broe Family Foundation, General Contractors of Colorado, and others focused on aligning funding, homelessness resolution, and neighborhood mitigation
- **Housing Stability Strategic Advisors and Strategic Planning Executive Committee** – appointed stakeholders across the continuum providing plan guidance and for recommending the plan to the Mayor and City Council. This group includes members of all of the groups listed above, as well as people with lived experience.

In-depth Consumer Interviews

In addition to myriad stakeholders, HOST wanted to ensure this plan included the voices of **those experiencing homelessness and housing instability** by gathering and incorporating their input directly. HOST staff conducted a series of interviews with consumers of our services to find out what we can do to proactively help people, how we can better serve those in their situations, and what support they need to achieve long-term stability. Hour-long in-

depth interviews were conducted with people experiencing homelessness who are staying in congregate shelters, being temporarily housed in hotels, staying in one of the new Safe Outdoor Spaces campsites and in permanent supportive housing.

City Staff and Elected Leader Coordination

HOST staff met on a regular basis in teams dedicated to housing stability, homelessness resolution, housing opportunity, and cross-departmental operations – the pillars of our work. These teams gathered and discussed stakeholder feedback and synthesized it into the logic model for our work, called the Impact Framework, and the goals and strategies in each area. These teams came together to holistically discuss the plan in all staff meetings. The Department also had a team of people from the data, communications and community engagement teams coordinating weekly with external consultants and facilitators, attending all stakeholder meetings, and ultimately drafting the plan.

Staff from other **City agencies and the Mayor's Office** were invited to participate alongside external stakeholders in regular meetings. The draft was further reviewed by a special citywide housing and homelessness communications team and a subset of mayoral appointees and cabinet members whose staff intersect with HOST's work, particularly around homelessness. HOST also worked to coordinate with other existing City efforts to engage the community, including Cabinet in the Community, Expanding Housing Affordability, and the Department of Finance's recovery funding.

City Council members were also invited to participate alongside external stakeholders in regular meetings. HOST offered individual briefings about the strategic planning process, to present at their district meetings, and asked Council members to share the community survey on draft goals with their constituents.

Community Surveys

HOST published two **community surveys** asking residents and stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft goals and targets, and included the opportunity to provide open-ended comments, as well. The surveys were open from May 21 to June 19, 2021, and Aug. 4 to Sept. 3, 2021. The first survey was available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Arabic; the second in English and Spanish. The surveys were completed by more than 1,650 residents and stakeholders. The survey was shared with City Council, Registered Neighborhood Organizations, neighborhood-serving nonprofits, Denver Public Library, media, and HOST's external partners. It was also shared on the City of Denver and Mayor Hancock's social media channels.

High-Level Themes

Across thousands of diverse stakeholders with myriad experiences and interests, common themes emerged across all of the input. While the language used and the ways the needs and desires were expressed varied, the messages were largely the same.

Our community has a vision for a Denver that has **safe, affordable and healthy housing accessible to all** who need it; one **where race does not dictate outcomes**, but that is equitable and closes historical opportunity gaps. Our community wants all residents to have agency and be able to live in their community of choice, to feel safe and thrive.

Our community wants Denver to be a city where people are able to **find and connect with the services and supports** they need – and that we need to do a better job helping people find those resources. There should be no wrong door to accessing services, there should be room for everyone to be housed, and there should be access to services for all.

Our community nearly universally agrees that **housing is our "north star"** – it is the single most important means by which to ensure we achieve our collective vision. We need **more affordable housing, more quickly**, with **embedded support services** and fewer restrictions. To get there, we must shift from being reactive and scarcity-driven to a proactive, outcome-based approach. They also told us we must expand **regional approaches** with more cooperation across jurisdictions to share both ideas and resources, because we cannot be successful in this work alone.

We heard that our community needs **help finding work**, especially jobs with **living wages**. They sometimes need **temporary rent and utility assistance** to help keep them afloat. And they need us to **remove barriers** – like

having a criminal record or a poor credit score – that prevent people from obtaining and keeping housing. And our community told us that it needs much **stronger protections** for renters and homeowners to help safeguard against evictions and foreclosures.

Our community told us we must work to **reduce the stigma** around housing instability and the experience of homelessness, and to reduce the influence of “Not In My Backyard” (NIMBY) attitudes on our public discourse. We heard that residents who have lived experience with housing instability and homelessness want to be engaged meaningfully in the decisions we make that affect them, to have a voice and to be heard, and to be supported.

The community told us they want to see the City **guide and thought partner** with developers and shelter operators, not just fund them. We heard that we can do more to get money out the door and move beyond the mechanics of contracting to focus on how to **incentivize innovation, collaboration, best practices and positive outcomes**. We also heard that we can do more to **coordinate effective wraparound services** and expand partnerships with smaller organizations.

Our community told us it needs **expanded services and supports onsite** at shelters, including **more case workers, mental health services, substance use treatment and job training**. Short of making those services available at shelters, our community told us it needs better access to **transportation** to get to services located elsewhere.

Finally, we heard that we can **do more to communicate** that all our efforts are connected along a **housing continuum** – from homelessness to homeownership. Within our work, we provide a clear front door to temporary shelter, a pathway to housing, and a clear connection from renting to homeownership. Our community should have a clear understanding of the resources we offer and how to access them.

HOST staff has worked to actively listen to the extensive input and feedback received throughout this year-plus engagement process. We have reflected what we heard to check for understanding and clarify questions along the way. And we have worked to reflect the priorities and intentions of the community we serve throughout the entirety of this five-year strategic plan.



Above: A participant in the Social Impact Bond Program shares his experience.

(Denver Media Services)



At left: Guests laugh while having lunch at the women’s shelter operated by Catholic Charities at 4330 E. 48th Ave.

(Evan Semón)



Above: A client at the Denver Coliseum shelter speaks to others about the meaning of 24 / 7 shelter for her.

(Denver Media Services)

Unifying themes across all facility locations



More affordable housing, more quickly, with embedded support services and fewer restrictions.



Expanded on-site services and supports, including more timely access to mental health services and substance use treatment – and/or transportation to get to services located elsewhere.



Improved shelter infrastructure/utilities.



Help people maintain probation, take care of outstanding warrants; Remove barriers of having a criminal record that prevent people from obtaining and keeping housing.



Significant need for more, better trained/coordinated case workers, preferably on site, to help with navigating and accessing systems and services.



More job skills training/education, and people who can help find jobs.



People want privacy, but need to balance with need for supports and feelings of isolation.



Living wages.



Stronger renter protections.



Access to 24/7 shelter facilities with storage.

Appendix A3 - Setting the Stage: Financial Landscape

The City & County of Denver prioritizes investments across departmental budgets to support residents in finding and maintaining stable housing. This funding is distributed across departments based upon programs and services that serve the various needs of the individuals and families served. However, much of this funding is allocated to the HOST budget. Other city agencies that receive funding to support these needs include Denver Human Services, Department of Public Health and Environment, Department of Safety, Office of Financial Empowerment and Protection, and Department of Finance.

HOST drives progress toward its goals by funding housing development, housing preservation, programs, and services to support residents along the entire housing continuum. Funding comes from federal and local sources including grants, taxes, philanthropic efforts, and other revenues. Revenue and expenditure projections are given on an annual basis through the yearly budget process.

Budget Context

Developing HOST's annual budget is a complex process. Annual budget numbers are established based upon actual appropriations for some sources like the City's General Fund, projected amounts based upon historical levels for sources like federal grants, and current rates of spending for sources that can carry forward from one year to the next. HOST also receives federal dollars from grant-funded sources whose amounts may change year to year. Due to these things, the budget laid out herein, and in subsequent annual plans, will be different from the HOST budget in the City Budget Book, which will be finalized in October of each year.

This plan provides a projected 2022 budget for HOST. Annual action plans will provide this information for future plan years. This budget is different than the [City Budget Book](#) for a number of reasons. First, some projects like affordable housing developments take time. Funds may be designated for a project but not fully spent in the same year. Special Revenue funds in the city budget book indicate the amount expected to be expended in each given year (i.e. invoices paid under approved contracts); the HOST budget includes the unencumbered balance available to be budgeted for (i.e. funding that can be evaluated and committed to projects and programs). Additionally, the City Budget Book, which is adopted by City Council in November, may not include COVID-19 response and recovery resources available to HOST as part of HOST's budget. Those resources are included in this plan when known.

The 2022 budget projections cannot be extrapolated to estimate a five-year funding picture, as expenditures may vary annually and even within a given year based upon a variety of factors, including those indicated above. Additional impacts to revenues or expenditures may include an early loan payoff creating unexpected program income, or unanticipated emergency response needs impacting a planned budget.

HOST Revenue Streams

HOST receives revenues from a range of federal, state, and local funding streams, as well as from private donors and philanthropic partners. HOST will invest all of its resources strategically to advance the goals articulated in this plan. This will include leveraging federal, state, and local COVID-19 recovery funds as they are available to us, continuing to invest federal grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and other specialized sources, and making strategic use of the General Fund and local dollars for affordable housing and homelessness.

Mayor Hancock, City Council, and Denver residents have made historic efforts to expand funding for housing and homelessness. In 2016, Denver created the Affordable Housing Fund to establish local funding for affordable housing. In 2020, voters passed ballot measure 2B, establishing the Homelessness Resolution Fund to provide new resources to help Denver residents experiencing homelessness get the support they need to regain housing. These two funds complement other sources and allow us to do more to address these key issues.

The following sections describe how these funding sources will be prioritized over the next five years, how recovery funding impacts this plan, and provides a projected budget for 2022. When considering this information, it should be noted that the goals established in this plan are stretch goals within our currently available resources with expected leveraging of community and other resources. Disruption in current revenue sources will limit our ability to achieve these goals.

The Affordable Housing Fund

Created in 2016 and doubled in 2018, the Affordable Housing Fund is resourced through property tax, a per square foot fee on new development called a “linkage fee,” sales tax on recreational marijuana, and the General Fund. It is administered by HOST and provides approximately \$30 million annually to help address Denver’s affordable housing needs.

Specific uses of the Affordable Housing Fund are articulated in the [Denver Revised Municipal Code](#) and highlighted in Figure 23, with eligible uses including the production and preservation of rental, homeownership and supportive housing as well as programmatic supports such as homebuyer assistance and other services.

Prior planning efforts, captured in [Housing an Inclusive Denver](#), found that the production and preservation of affordable housing was the most critical use for this resource. From 2018 to 2020, the fund has helped to create or preserve nearly 3,000 units.

Priorities for the Affordable Housing Fund Under This Plan

Under this strategic plan, HOST will use the affordable housing fund to primarily fund the production and preservation of affordable housing: **approximately 80%** of the funding will be used to create and preserve units (projects), while **approximately 20%** will be used to support programmatic efforts that help households access key services like rental assistance, supportive housing, and down payment assistance (programs). Within these amounts, HOST may also use up to 8% of the total funds for administration.

The Homelessness Resolution Fund

In 2020, Denver voters adopted ballot measure 2B, establishing the Homelessness Resolution Fund, a 0.25% sales tax to support residents experiencing and exiting homelessness. The fund is expected to generate approximately \$40 million annually, though actual sales tax collection depends on economic factors. As outlined in the [Denver Revised Municipal Code](#) and highlighted in figure XX, eligible uses of the Homelessness Resolution Fund include capital, operations and as well as programmatic support for housing, shelter and other services for persons experience or exiting homelessness.

[Community engagement](#) to determine how the first year of the Homelessness Resolution Fund would be used demonstrated the importance of investing these dollars in housing solutions, while balancing needs to support shelter, support for residents experiencing unsheltered homelessness, and continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the campaign, specific goals were articulated for these new dollars: build 1,800 homes with support services over 10 years and create 500-600 units of new shelter and housing in catalytic projects.

Priorities for the Homelessness Resolution Fund Under This Plan

Under this strategic plan, HOST will align its use of funds toward the goals articulated to voters and the goals of this plan. It will use the Homelessness Resolution Fund primarily to support housing solutions – both by supporting the development of new units and by supporting programs that help people experiencing homelessness regain housing. Specific priorities include:

- Expansion of supportive housing, including the creation of a locally-funded voucher source to complement development and service funding;
- Expansion of rapid rehousing opportunities;
- Continued support for congregate shelters to operate as 24/7, rehousing-focused shelters;
- Expansion of non-congregate shelter to stabilize and bring more people inside, with a focus on how housing can be supported in the long-term;
- Support for catalytic projects that combine shelter and housing at the same locations; and
- Provide funding for innovative approaches as resources are available.

In addition to these priorities, HOST may use up to 8% of the Homelessness Resolution Fund for administration and may reserve funds to meet unexpected needs. Any funding that is unexpended in a given year will roll over to the next year and continue to be available to support the goals of this plan.

Impact of Recovery Funding on This Plan

While COVID-19 recovery funds such as those allocated to the City under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) have come to the city on a timeline different than the city budget process, use of these resources by the Department of Finance has been informed by a public process and in partnership with City Council. Denver received \$308 million to aid its overall recovery from the emergency.¹ Housing and support for people experiencing homelessness was the number one community priority for investment of recovery resources (40% of respondents) in townhall and online survey engagement conducted by the city's Department of Finance. As such, these valuable resources may play an important role in HOST's ability to achieve its goals for a portion of the time period of this plan.

The American Rescue Plan Act also allocated funding for housing and homelessness through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) through the U.S. Department of Treasury, which provided \$49 million to help Denver residents pay rent costs and maintain housing stability. \$22 million of this funding must be spent by September 2022, and the remaining \$27 million must be spent by September 2025.

Denver was awarded an additional \$10.8 million of HOME Investment Partnerships Program funds that can be spent to meet the needs of people experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness, including through development of affordable housing, tenant-based rental assistance, supportive services, and acquisition and development of non-congregate shelter units. Funds must be spent by 2030.² ARP already created the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program, which provides 70,000 additional housing choice vouchers nationally to local public housing authorities to expand rental assistance to households experiencing or at risk of homelessness and housing instability.³

HOST Projected Budget for 2022

Figure 22 outlines projected revenue streams and amounts for 2022. Actual revenue may vary from these projections for a number of reasons. For example, federal grant amounts are estimated based on historical levels; actual funding received may change. Further, economic conditions and consumer spending will determine the revenue from a sales tax in each year to support the Homelessness Resolution Fund. Where known, this table also includes revenues received in response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. These time-limited resources must be spent on specific schedules, ranging from 2022 to 2025.

Additionally, many of HOST's funding sources have specified uses, and HOST must allocate funds in accordance with those requirements. For more information on each funding source and how it can be used, see the Figure XX at the end of this section.

1 City and County of Denver Mayor's Office. (2021, May 10). *Denver to Receive \$308M from American Rescue Plan*. <https://www.denvergov.org/Government/Departments/Mayors-Office/News/2021/Denver-to-Receive-308M-from-American-Rescue-Plan>

2 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2021, April 8). *HUD Announces \$5 Billion to Increase Affordable Housing to Address Homelessness*. https://www.hud.gov/press/press_releases_media_advisories/HUD_No_21_055

3 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2021). *Emergency Housing Vouchers*. <https://www.hud.gov/ehv>

Figure 21. Revenue Streams and Amounts, 2022 (Projected)

Funding Source	Amount	Percentage
HOST General Fund Budget	\$33,708,545	22.4%
Affordable Housing Fund	\$37,142,590	24.7%
AHF Carry Forward	\$6,408,479	4.3%
Property Tax	\$8,606,481	5.7%
General Fund	\$3,700,000	2.5%
Recreational Marijuana Use Tax	\$9,603,700	6.4%
Linkage Fee Collection YTD and Carry Forward	\$8,823,930	5.9%
Homelessness Resolution Fund	\$37,128,521	24.6%
Federal Funds	\$29,353,124	19.5%
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	\$2,022,075	1.3%
HOME Investment Partnerships Program	\$2,985,485	2.0%
HOME Investment Partnerships Program ARP ⁴	\$2,164,066	1.4%
Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS	\$2,882,065	1.9%
Neighborhood Stabilization Program II	\$139,005	0.1%
Skyline Housing	\$3,385,897	2.2%
Rental Rehabilitation	\$572,000	0.4%
Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)	\$597,226	0.4%
Continuum of Care	\$2,315,418	1.5%
Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) ⁵	\$12,289,887	8.2%
Other Funds	\$13,292,091	8.8%
Metro Mortgage Assistance	\$3,000,000	2.0%
Revolving Affordable Housing Loan Fund	\$3,440,694	2.3%
Inclusionary Housing Ordinance	\$3,662,071	2.4%
Community Development - Donation	\$203,587	0.1%
Affordable Housing Fund	\$633,966	0.4%
HMLS Donations	\$220,042	0.1%
Homeless Services Fund	\$24,897	0.0%
Homeless Shelter Utility Support	\$24,897	0.0%
Housing Stability Private Grants Fund	\$2,081,937	1.4%
TOTAL	\$150,624,871	100.0%

⁴ 20% of total HOME ARP amount accounted for in 2022.

⁵ 25% of total ERAP amount accounted for in 2022.

Complementary Funding Streams Outside of HOST

While HOST manages a large amount of revenue, many other funders support housing development and programs to bolster housing stability and resolve homelessness. To ensure that these efforts maximize the use of available resources, HOST works with a range of supportive partners. To achieve the goals articulated in this plan, it will be critical for these partnerships to continue and align efforts.

City Partners: HOST coordinates with its partner city agencies in the use of these resources. It works with Denver Economic Development and Opportunity (DEDO) on the use of Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and HUD grant monitoring and reporting, Denver Human Services (DHS) on supports for families experiencing homelessness and property tax rebate approaches, and the Department of Finance (DOF) on the Social Impact Bond project.

Statewide Partners: HOST also works closely with the Colorado Division of Housing (CDOH) within the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and the Colorado Housing Finance Agency (CHFA). CDOH supports affordable housing development through the allocation of rental assistance vouchers and gap financing, and funds housing stability and homelessness resolution programming. CHFA awards low-income housing tax credits that are a critical component of an affordable development's capital stack.

Supportive Partners: HOST partners with Denver Housing Authority (DHA) and the development community to create new affordable housing. HOST works with DHA to create innovative solutions for land acquisition to support a strong pipeline of affordable and supportive housing units, including the DHA Delivers for Denver (D3) bond initiative. HOST also works with developers to provide gap financing after the developer has already raised other funds for the majority of their project costs.

Philanthropic Partners: Private funders, foundations, and businesses are also investing in interventions that support HOST's work. A collection of private funders came together in April 2019 to partner with the City and HOST to expand services available in Denver's shelters and bridge housing opportunities to provide more safe, stable places for people to stay while connecting to permanent housing. This also included capital investments in safety and accessibility improvements. In addition, the Caring for Denver Foundation provides an important new resource for mental health and substance misuse services.

Federal Coronavirus Response: To support its response to the pandemic, the City has been able to submit emergency response expenses for reimbursement from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds and utilize supplemental federal funds appropriated by Congress to support response (e.g., those resources allocated through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act). In the first year of the emergency, the City spent roughly \$109 million on COVID emergency response, including \$6.5 million on housing stability and rehousing assistance and \$56.3 million on sheltering support for residents experiencing homelessness. These funds helped Denver expand 24/7 sheltering and launch new non-congregate shelter models of service. However, these funds are time and use limited. While the Homelessness Resolution Fund offers an important new resource, it cannot fully replace these federal funds.

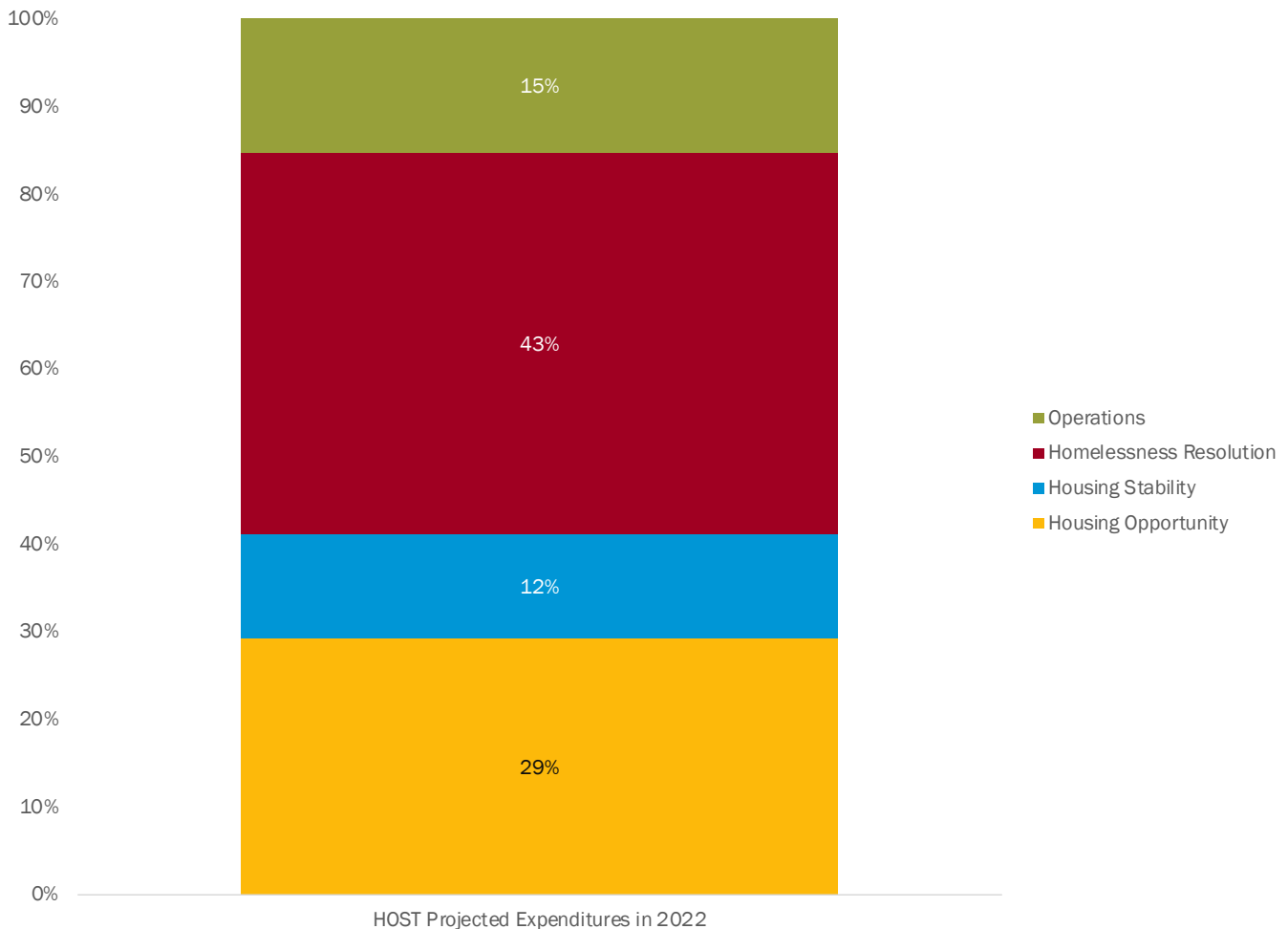
HOST Expenditures

HOST allocates the revenue it receives toward investments in housing development and programs, policy and systems change efforts, and data and reporting solutions to drive the impacts it seeks to create. Figure 23 below provides the projected expenditures for the department by pillar in 2022.

This reflects significant investment in homelessness resolution and housing opportunity, both of which are supported by local tax measures. Because of the requirements on the uses of the Affordable Housing Fund, which must focus primarily on development, and the Homelessness Resolution Fund, which must serve individuals experiencing or exiting homelessness, funding for HOST's work to keep people in their homes is reliant on annual budget allocations and decisions. As a result, a key strategy of this plan is to evaluate the opportunity for additional funding sources for housing stability.

Annual expenditures will be reported out in alignment with HOST's impact framework through ongoing and annual reporting.

Figure 22. HOST Projected 2022 Expenditures by Pillar



Note: The amount for Operations includes resources that support all divisions of the department such as personnel or professional services, payments under existing agreements such as the DHA Delivers for Denver (“D3”) contract in partnership with the Denver Housing Authority, and reserves that may support outcomes across HOST pillars

Note that the amount for Operations includes resources that support all divisions of the department such as personnel or professional services, payments under existing agreements such as the DHA Delivers for Denver (“D3”) contract in partnership with the Denver Housing Authority, and reserves that may support outcomes across HOST pillars.

Figure 23. Dedicated Funds and Eligible Uses

Source	Eligible Uses
<p>“\$15M” - Property Tax Revenue DRMC 27-150(c)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and preservation of rental up to 80% AMI • Development and preservation of for-sale up to 100% AMI • Homebuyer assistance up to 120% AMI (incl. DPA & mortgage assistance) • PSH including services (no more than 10% of annual revenue) • Programs for “low-income at-risk” individuals in danger of losing housing, to mitigate displacement, for emergency repairs, or other programs • 8% for admin
<p>“\$15M” - Linkage Fee Revenue DRMC 27-150(b)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Increase supply” of rental and for-sale up to 80% AMI • Renter assistance programs up to 80% AMI • Homebuyer assistance programs up to 80% AMI (incl. DPA & mortgage assistance)
<p>Metro Mortgage Assistance Ord. No. 15-0584</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary purpose to provide funding for down payment and mortgage assistance • “Affordable housing related activities as approved by the Manager of Finance and the Director of OED” • No staff costs
<p>Inclusionary Housing Ordinance DRMC 27-103(z)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary purpose to fund future IHO incentive payments • “Creation or preservation of affordable housing in accordance with applicable city plans” • “Consider” spending funds generated from high-need zones in high-need zones • 5% for admin if available
<p>Revolving Affordable Housing Loan Fund RAHLF Program Guidelines (Master Funding Agreement Exh. B-1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and acquisition/rehabilitation of rental up to 80% • Acquisition (land or property), hard and soft costs • Not for LIHTC-permitted “commercial property costs;” no hotels, motels, hospitals, nursing homes, dormitories, frat houses, sanitariums, or working capital • Interest rate is 30-day LIBOR + 2.6% (currently = 4.38%)
<p>Housing for the Mentally Ill</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goebel Lawsuit - 764 P.2d 785; 1988 Colo. LEXIS 200; 12 BTR 1614; settlement reached in 1994 whereby Colorado funds treatment services at city-provided housing • Provide housing units for the mentally ill
<p>Affordable Housing Fund Ord. No. 681 (2000) and 1030 (2000)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a fund that holds excess TABOR revenues. Ord 681 said these revenues would be used exclusively for affordable housing and transportation. Ord 1080 allocated \$2.4M to the Affordable Housing for the below purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-income and Section 8 housing • Development incentives • Lead-based paint abatement

Source	Eligible Uses
"\$15M" - Property Tax Revenue DRMC 27-150(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and preservation of rental up to 80% AMI • Development and preservation of for-sale up to 100% AMI • Homebuyer assistance up to 120% AMI (incl. DPA & mortgage assistance) • PSH including services (no more than 10% of annual revenue) • Programs for "low-income at-risk" individuals in danger of losing housing, to mitigate displacement, for emergency repairs, or other programs • 8% for admin
"\$15M" - Linkage Fee Revenue DRMC 27-150(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Increase supply" of rental and for-sale up to 80% AMI • Renter assistance programs up to 80% AMI • Homebuyer assistance programs up to 80% AMI (incl. DPA & mortgage assistance)
Metro Mortgage Assistance Ord. No. 20-1230	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary purpose to provide funding for down payment and mortgage assistance • "Affordable housing related activities as approved by the Manager of Finance and the Director of The Department of Housing Stability" • No staff costs
Inclusionary Housing Ordinance DRMC 27-103(z)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary purpose to fund future IHO incentive payments • "Creation or preservation of affordable housing in accordance with applicable city plans" • "Consider" spending funds generated from high-need zones in high-need zones • 5% for admin if available
Revolving Affordable Housing Loan Fund RAHLF Program Guidelines (Master Funding Agreement Exh. B-1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and acquisition/rehabilitation of rental up to 80% • Acquisition (land or property), hard and soft costs • Not for LIHTC-permitted "commercial property costs;" no hotels, motels, hospitals, nursing homes, dormitories, frat houses, sanitariums, or working capital • Interest rate is 30-day LIBOR + 2.6% (currently = 4.38%)
Housing for the Mentally Ill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goebel Lawsuit - 764 P.2d 785; 1988 Colo. LEXIS 200; 12 BTR 1614; settlement reached in 1994 whereby Colorado funds treatment services at city-provided housing • Provide housing units for the persons with severe and persistent mental illness
Affordable Housing Fund Ord. No. 681 (2000) and 1030 (2000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a fund that holds excess TABOR revenues. Ord 681 said these revenues would be used exclusively for affordable housing and transportation. Ord 1080 allocated \$2.4M to the Affordable Housing for the below purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-income and Section 8 housing • Development incentives • Lead-based paint abatement

Source	Eligible Uses
HOME Funds 24 CFR 92-205 through 92-217	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New construction, acquisition, and rehab of permanent or transitional housing (rental and for-sale); including hard costs, site improvements, acquisition related to construction, related soft costs, refi of existing debt on a rehab, and relocation assistance • Programs: Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA), down payment assistance • For TBRA & rental units, 90% of households must be 60% AMI and remainder 80% AMI; homeownership & DPA can be 80% AMI • NOT for public housing units except HOPE VI • CHDO operating expenses (up to 25% of grant amount) • 15% of grant amount is set aside for CHDOs to build affordable projects • 10% for admin and planning • Federal funds restrictions include: Davis-Bacon wages (if 12+ units funded by HOME), Section 3, environmental review
HOME Funds – American Rescue Plan Allocation (PENDING)	To help communities provide housing, shelter, and services for people experiencing homelessness and other qualifying populations.
Community Development Block Grant 24 CFR 570-201 & 570-206	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition or long-term lease of real property for any public purpose • Cannot be used to build rental housing • Can be used for construction or acquisition/rehabilitation of public facilities including shelters for the homeless, “halfway houses for run-away children, drug offenders or parolees; group homes for mentally retarded persons; and temporary housing for disaster victims” – but if owned by subrecipient, must be open for use by general public • Demolition and remediation of any buildings/improvements; predevelopment costs including market studies, and some financing costs • Fair housing enforcement, education and outreach • Landlord outreach to increase participation in Section 8 • Public Services programs, incl. housing counseling, DPA (up to 15% of grant amount) • Federal funds restrictions include: Davis-Bacon wages, Section 3, environmental review

Source	Eligible Uses
Skyline Housing Ord. No. 223 (1986) and attached “Expenditure Program for Skyline Funds”, March 18, 1986	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governed by CDBG rules except can also be used to construct rental housing • Primary purpose to provide additional housing opportunities to low/mod families and revitalize neighborhoods through new housing and rehab • Innovative housing solutions encouraged • Return vacant/boarded up buildings to use (acquisition and repair) • Finance rehab of rental apartment buildings and SF homes • Finance construction of new housing • Provide funds for creative housing programs • Provide grants for selected projects including housing for low income HHs • Provide housing services and related housing activities • Funds must revolve • 51% must be spent on low/mod income residents • Should have visible impact on community • Federal funds restrictions include: Davis-Bacon wages, Section 3, environmental review
Rental Rehabilitation 24 CFR 511	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governed by CDBG rules except can also be used to construct rental housing • Primary purpose to provide additional housing opportunities to low/mod families and revitalize neighborhoods through new housing and rehab • Innovative housing solutions encouraged • Return vacant/boarded up buildings to use (acquisition and repair) • Finance rehab of rental apartment buildings and SF homes • Finance construction of new housing • Provide funds for creative housing programs • Provide grants for selected projects including housing for low income HHs • Provide housing services and related housing activities • Funds must revolve • 51% must be spent on low/mod income residents • Should have visible impact on community • Federal funds restrictions include: Davis-Bacon wages, Section 3, environmental review

Source	Eligible Uses
Rental Rehabilitation 24 CFR 511	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are grant funds • Purpose is to provide affordable, standard housing for low-income families – generally requires that 100% of funds be used for low-income • Increase units for use by housing voucher and Sec 8 certificate holders • Sufficient certificates/vouchers must be made available to families in Rental Rehab projects who are required to move out because of physical rehab activities or overcrowding and, at PHA’s discretion, to help families whose post-rehab rents would exceed 30% of their income • Equitable share of funds spent on housing for families with children, esp. units with 3 or more bedrooms • At least 70% of funds spent on units with 2 or more bedrooms • Only used in neighborhoods where the median family income is <80% of the Denver SMSA median income • Only used in neighborhoods where the rents for standard units are generally affordable to low-income families at the time of the selection of the neighborhood, and the neighborhood rents are not likely to increase at a rate significantly greater than the rate for rent increases that can be reasonably anticipated to occur in the market for the five-year period following the selection of the neighborhood • After rehab, units must meet at least Sec. 8 Housing Quality Standards • Projects must be primarily residential rental use (e.g. >51%, except for 2-story buildings) • Projects must be in private ownership or have a plan to transfer to private • May be used for manufactured housing under certain conditions • Eligible costs include those to: correct substandard conditions, make essential improvements (including energy-related), permit handicapped accessibility, lead abatement, repair major housing systems in danger of failure, soft costs, relocation payments for those displaced by the rehab, information services to tenants • Some pre-commitment costs are eligible, under certain circumstances • Projects are not to be converted to condos, converted to another use, or sold for 10 years, and a covenant and lien must be recorded to this effect • Grants cannot exceed 50% of total project costs, with some exceptions • No more than \$5,000 per unit for studios, \$6,500 for 1-BR, \$7,500 for 2-BR, \$8,500 per unit for 3 or more bedrooms, except HUD may approve higher amounts (up to 240% of the original limits) in areas of high material and labor costs

Source	Eligible Uses
<p>Neighborhood Stabilization Program II OED NSP2 application and Federal Register Vol 81, No. 114, pp 38730-38732</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second mortgages, including counseling, marketing, project delivery • Acquisition/Rehabilitation SF and MF for-sale and rental including marketing/project delivery • Land banking • Demolition • Property redevelopment • Admin up to 10% of total • Can serve families up to 120% AMI • At least 25% of funds and program income used for <50% AMI families • After closeout, NSP program income may be transferred to CDBG program and will become CDBG program income
<p>HOST General Fund Executive Order No. 145</p>	<p>For investments along the housing continuum, from residents experiencing homelessness, to those seeking to find new housing opportunities, and stabilize in homes they already live in. The investments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • housing stability, • homelessness resolution, • and creation of housing opportunities that provide a range of options for residents throughout the City and County of Denver.
<p>FEMA Federal Authority to enter into this Grant exists in the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Public Law 93-288, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 5121-5206 and State Authority to enter this Grant exists in CRS §24-1-128.6</p>	<p>Federal share of the eligible FEMA Public Assistance Program expenditures incurred in the response to the disaster. These expenditures Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Protective Measures for establishing non-congregate shelters at hotels or motels for homeless persons who have tested positive for COVID-19, those who have been exposed, and high-risk individuals who have underlying health issues; • Emergency Protective Measures for congregate shelters for homeless persons to assist with dedensifying and social distancing per Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Public Health Order 20-24 dated March 25, 2020 • The execution of non-congregate and congregate shelters, temporary facilities, and anticipated construction, medical equipment, and emergency support.

Source	Eligible Uses
Continuum of Care 24 CFR part 578.1	<p>The CoC Program is designed to assist individuals (including unaccompanied youth) and families experiencing homelessness and to provide the services needed to help such individuals move into transitional and permanent housing, with the goal of long-term stability. Continuum of Care Program funds may be used for projects under five program components: permanent housing, transitional housing, supportive services only, HMIS, and, in some cases, homelessness prevention.</p> <p>One significant distinction between the Emergency Solutions Grants Program and the CoC Program can be found in the eligible activities and administration requirements for assistance provided under the rapid re-housing component in this interim rule.</p>
Emergency Solutions Grant 24 CFR Part 576	<p>Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) funds can be used to provide a wide range of services and supports under the five program components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street Outreach, • Emergency Shelter, • Rapid Rehousing, • Homelessness Prevention, • and HMIS.
Emergency Solutions Grant (CARES Act)	<p>The funds under this Agreement may only be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, among individuals and families who are homeless or receiving homeless assistance, and to support additional homeless assistance and homelessness prevention activities to mitigate the impacts created by coronavirus.</p>
Housing Stability Private Grants CB20-0076	<p>To administer private grants for the purpose of funding programs and services that are dedicated to individuals experiencing homelessness and other housing challenges. This Fund is sponsor-funded and non-lapsing.</p>
Shelter Support 2020 HOST-202057306	<p>To support of certain shelter facilities located within the City serving persons experiencing homelessness, specifically to offset the actual cost incurred by the Facilities for gas and electric utility services during the term of the Agreement.</p>

The City & County of Denver is committed to adopting innovative and forward-looking strategies to promote housing opportunity, housing stability, and to resolve episodes of homelessness. Denver has historically taken a progressive approach to this work, and this approach continues with the strategies presented in this five-year plan. While Denver is committed to moving the needle forward, it's important to note that the City's ability—and HOST's ability as a City agency—to bring certain strategies forward must be guided by the legal landscape of legislation, regulations, federal and state law and the direction of elected leaders and voters. Other laws, such as the Federal Civil Rights Act, Fair Housing Act, and Age Discrimination Act serve to set a legal context that other local and state laws and policy operate within, guiding our work from the federal and state level of government down to the local level.

Relevant Legal and Policy Landscape

The following federal/state legislation, regulations and laws provide critical context that must be taken into consideration relative to the City's housing and homelessness investments:

Rent Control Prohibition

Rent control generally refers to mandatory price controls on rental housing costs, established through legislation. State legislation passed in 1981 prohibits local governments in Colorado from imposing controls on rental housing rates.¹ How rent control is interpreted under this statute is largely guided by a Colorado Supreme Court ruling in 2000. In *Town of Telluride v. Lot Thirty-Four Venture, LLC* (the "Telluride decision"), the Court ruled that local governments cannot impose an affordable rental housing requirement on new developments. The courts said such a requirement violates a Colorado rent control statute which doesn't allow for the enactment of any city ordinance that controls rents on private residential property. This decision limits municipalities' use of some policy tools, including inclusionary housing ordinances, to produce affordable rental housing.

In 2021, Colorado Governor Jared Polis signed House Bill 21-1117, which clarified that the authority of local governments to regulate land use and development includes the authority to regulate development to promote the construction of new affordable housing, provided certain criteria are met. This law opens the opportunity for inclusionary housing to be used as a critical policy tool to create affordable rental housing alongside market rate development. However, the law also explicitly states that it does not authorize a local government to adopt or enforce any ordinance that has the effect of controlling rent on any existing private residence.

HOST is working with Denver Community Planning and Development (CPD) on the Expanding Housing Affordability project, which will recommend policy strategies to help Denver utilize these and other market-based tools to establish more affordable housing. Specifically, this effort will include the creation of an inclusionary housing policy (in alignment with HB21-1117) that will apply to all new rental and ownership housing in the city. This effort will also include an update to the city's Linkage Fee and the expansion of zoning incentives to support more affordable housing.

Title VI Civil Rights Act

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin under programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Under the act, individuals within these protected groups shall not be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination. According to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, "This prohibition applies to intentional discrimination, as well as to procedures, criteria or methods of administration that appear neutral but have a discriminatory effect on individuals because of their race, color, or national origin."

While HOST is not a direct provider of services, it contracts with partners to provide housing programs and services and all contracted partners of the City must ensure that discrimination does not occur as part of the housing programs and services provided.

Denver Anti-Discrimination Ordinance

First passed in 1990 and amended over the years, Denver's Anti-Discrimination Ordinance prohibits discrimination in employment, housing and commercial space, public accommodations, educational institutions and health and

¹ Colorado Revised Statute § 38-12-301.

welfare services. The ordinance prohibits discrimination that is based on several factors, including race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, citizenship, immigration status, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, military status, disability, protective hairstyle, and source of income. The ordinance prohibits discrimination of prospective renters based on their source of income (i.e. landlords or property managers cannot refuse to consider any lawful source of income, including housing choice vouchers, in the same manner as ordinary wage income in connection with an application for rental housing).

Under the ordinance, individuals cannot be denied full and equal enjoyment of services in places of public accommodation, including shelters. While the ordinance doesn't apply to government agencies including HOST, it does apply to HOST's contracted partners that operate shelters in Denver.

The Denver Anti-Discrimination Office (DADO) protects against discriminatory acts under this ordinance. Information about DADO is posted in shelter locations, providing guests with a referral point and steps to take in the event of suspected discrimination.

Colorado Anti-Discrimination Laws

The State has a series of laws that prohibit discrimination in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodations. Classes that are protected from housing discrimination include disability, race, creed, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, national origin, ancestry, and source of income. Similar to the Denver Anti-Discrimination Ordinance, these laws prohibit discrimination in public accommodations. Places of public accommodation include, but are not limited to, any place that offers services, facilities, or accommodations to the public.

Fair Housing Act

Enacted in 1968, the federal Fair Housing Act and its amendments prohibit discrimination in housing on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability. The act applies to the sale and rental of housing, and mortgage lending. The act also protects people from discrimination when they are seeking housing assistance or engaging in other housing-related activities. The Fair Housing Act limits the City's ability to provide housing investments for a specifically defined population.

HOST is committed to advancing equity and needs and while it is not a direct provider of services, it contracts with partners to provide housing programs and services. The Act creates a structure for whether and how HOST may prioritize services for specialized populations, and contracted partners must ensure compliance with the Fair Housing Act.

Age Discrimination Act

Discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance is prohibited by the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. Rules set forth under the act state, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

While HOST is not a direct provider of services, it contracts with partners to provide housing programs and services and all contracted partners must ensure that discrimination does not occur as part of the housing programs and services provided.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all programs, activities, and services provided or made available by state and local governments or instrumentalities or agencies thereto.

While HOST is not a direct provider of services, it contracts with partners to provide housing programs and services and its contracted partners must ensure that discrimination does not occur as part of the housing programs and services provided. In addition, during the COVID-19 pandemic HOST has leveraged partnerships to strengthen ADA compliance. Its partnership with The Agency for Human Rights & Community Partnerships, Division of Disability Rights has helped HOST ensure: 1) accessibility of expanded shelter services; and 2) that individuals of all abilities are able to request reasonable accommodations to ensure access to services.

Federal Resources

The use of federal resources to support housing stability investments comes with various requirements and guidelines. For example, Denver utilizes a number of different federal funds. Below are key restrictions of some of the different federal funds Denver utilizes to advance its programs:

When federal funds are utilized to support the construction, alteration, or repair of buildings, the contractor must meet a minimum wage for all construction workers, per the Davis-Bacon Act. Minimum wages are set for various classes of laborers employed under the contract.

Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 is designed to leverage federal community development funding to provide economic opportunities to low- and very low-income individuals. As stated by HUD: Per this statutory language, recipients of HUD funds (i.e., grantees and contractors) ensure that “to the greatest extent feasible,” when certain HUD funds are used to assist housing and community development projects, preference for construction-related training, jobs, and contracting opportunities go to low- and very-low income people and to businesses that are owned by low- and very-low income persons or businesses that hire them.

City-Owned Affordable Housing

State statutes contain provisions that govern a local government’s ability to own and operate affordable housing projects. Such activities are generally performed by housing authorities, such as the Denver Housing Authority. Under state law, the City & County of Denver may retain ownership of an affordable housing project, but if it does, the City must deliver possession of the project to the housing authority to operate and maintain.² Net receipts of the project are paid to the City after the housing authority deducts the cost of operation and maintenance of the project. Further clarification on the interpretation of current language and/or amendments to the state statute to fully leverage city investment in housing may be warranted.

Property Tax Rebate vs. Abatement

Article X, Section 3 of the Colorado Constitution provides: “1)(a) Each property tax shall be uniform upon all real and personal property not exempt from taxation under this article located within the territorial limits of the authority levying the tax.” This requires equal property taxation across properties as a baseline and prohibits HOST and other City agencies from offering reductions in property taxes to anyone, regardless of income level. However, Colorado law does allow for rebates on property taxes to be given once taxes have been collected. This is the basis for programs like the Denver Property Tax Relief Program currently run by Denver Human Services and other tax relief efforts.

Legal context of encampment cleanups

Unauthorized camping in Denver is prohibited, per a Denver ordinance passed by City Council in 2012 (D.R.M.C. § 38-86.2).

Initiative 300, which would have repealed this camping ordinance, was overwhelmingly rejected by voters in 2019. In response to Denver voters, the City continues to enforce the unauthorized camping ordinance through a multi-step process that balances several important interests. This includes ensuring outreach is provided with the hope of connecting the city’s unhoused neighbors, who may be in crisis, with necessary services and using warnings in an effort to obtain compliance before a citation is issued. The City continuously works with the community and our regional partners to address the immediate needs of persons experiencing homelessness while also advancing our long-term goal of ensuring adequate affordable housing.

When the City becomes aware of people living in an encampment, City employees and outreach teams visit the encampment on multiple occasions in an attempt to connect people to services and shelter. Voluntary free storage is also offered prior to any scheduled cleanup and on the day of the cleanup to enable persons experiencing homelessness to keep their belongings in a safe place.

Just as we look for new ways to enhance dignified services for people experiencing homelessness, the City must also continue to fulfill its chartered responsibility to protect the health and safety of the public, including people who are living on our streets and in encampments. This includes the enforcement of laws and engaging in large-scale cleanups to ensure public areas, including sidewalks and rights-of-way, do not pose public health or safety risks to for residents and visitors.

² Colorado Revised Statute § 29-4-107

Lyall Settlement

On September 23, 2019, a federal court judge approved a class action settlement in *Raymond Lyall, et al. v. City and County of Denver*. The settlement included a monetary settlement to the individually named class representative Plaintiffs, and several non-monetary terms, such as a specific notification process for large-scale cleanups and encumbrance removals conducted by Denver Public Works (now the Denver Department of Transportation and Infrastructure) and voluntary, free storage of personal property for up to 60 days at a specific location provided by the City. In addition to other obligations, the Agreement also memorializes the process the City uses to determine whether unattended personal property poses a public health or safety risk and will be immediately disposed of, further defines the process for DOTI and Parks and Recreation to follow when unattended property is encountered that does not pose a public health or safety risk outside of a large-scale encumbrance cleanup, and provides for the inclusion of additional trash receptacles at specified areas.

HOST is not part of the enforcement efforts created by the Agreement, but is directly involved in providing outreach to the unhoused in areas where encampments have arisen to ensure that the goal of connecting the unhoused to services and shelter is advanced. Additionally, under the Agreement, City officials meet with an advisory group of people experiencing homelessness and their representatives on a quarterly basis to obtain feedback on City programs, listen to concerns and discuss proposals of additional possible solutions. HOST is responsible for hosting these quarterly meetings as part of its ongoing work of building a healthy, housed, and connected City.

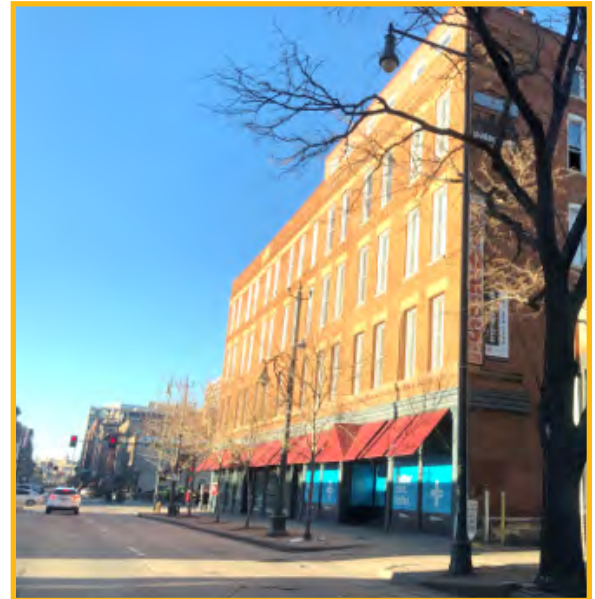
Valor on Colfax: The City acquired this site in conjunction with 8315 E Colfax and has selected Brothers and Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado as the development partners for a 72-unit supportive housing project. (HOST staff)



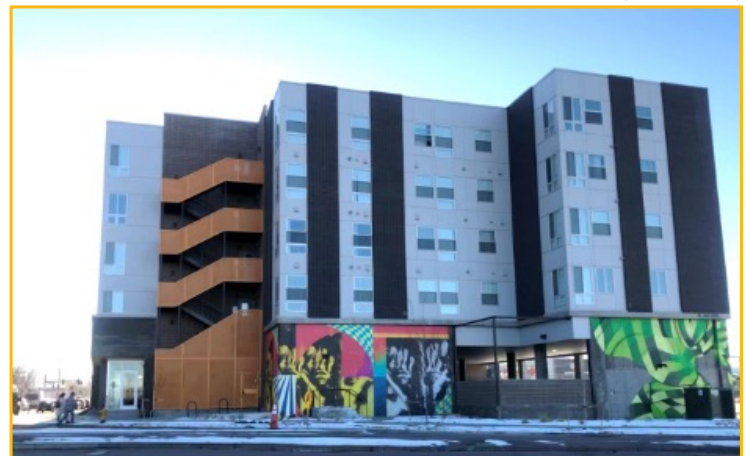
660 Broadway adaptive reuse. (HOST staff)



Studabaker preservation project. (HOST staff)



Walnut Flats: This 66-unit LIHTC project with an emphasis on very-low income tenancy in the heart of RiNo, two blocks from the A Line 38th and Blake Station. (HOST staff)



Appendix A5 - Setting the Stage: Citywide Coordination

Building the Denver of tomorrow takes thoughtful collaboration and coordination across City departments and the active engagement and participation of partners, businesses, residents, and other community members. HOST's Five-Year Strategic Plan has been informed by many important previous plans, including Housing an Inclusive Denver and the Three-Year Shelter Expansion Plan . Other plans, including the Comprehensive Plan 2040, Blueprint Denver, and Game Plan for a Healthy City and efforts such as the Denver Public Library's outreach team and the Caring For Denver Foundation have both informed this plan and been integrated in it, where appropriate, to reflect the collaborative nature of the work of housing and homelessness resolution across city agencies.

These efforts work together, guided by a shared vision for the city, in order to guide policy and funding decisions that build a healthy, housed, and connected Denver. Each of these plans include a commitment to building a Denver that is equitable, safe, connected, accessible, healthy, economically diverse, and vibrant.

While housing is a core component of the City's investments in promoting inclusive communities, addressing affordability takes more than just developing and preserving housing – it takes increasing access to higher paying wages, connecting residents to health and financial wellness, and promoting equitable access to mobility opportunities. Combined, these investments across multiple agencies help work to maintain and expand affordability throughout Denver neighborhoods, as well as provide the opportunity for the coordination of resources to address the complex issues of housing stability and homelessness resolution.

HOST works with other departments to guide the citywide work around housing and homelessness to build solutions that are grounded in data, provide for multi-departmental innovation, and collaborate to provide the best policies, projects, services, and programs to meet the changing needs of the people of Denver.

How we got here

As mentioned, the HOST strategic plan represents the culmination of years-long work across multiple agencies to continually examine the challenges posed in the building and preservation of affordable housing, addressing gentrification, and providing paths out of homelessness for individuals and families in order to ensure a healthy, housed, and connected Denver.

This historical work and the lessons learned provide guidance and perspective to this plan and enable us to build a structure to move forward together with clear roles, responsibilities, and areas for collaboration and coordination.

Citywide collaboration on housing and homelessness

Creating a healthy, housed and connected Denver takes collaboration across the entire array of City services. For example, the types and locations of housing and service locations HOST can invest in are influenced by local land use decisions recommended by Denver Community Planning and Development (CPD) and determined by Denver City Council. Access to benefits and employment programs provide critical income to help residents better afford their housing costs, and those programs are supported through Denver Human Services and Denver Economic Development & Opportunity. Access to behavioral health treatment can help support someone's overall stability and wellbeing, and Denver Department of Public Health and Environment is leading in this work. Libraries provide welcoming spaces that help connect residents to technology and support, and Denver Public Library is an innovative partner in this space. Many people who are experiencing homelessness spend time in the parks throughout the city, and employees and volunteers in the department are training to respond to health crises and provide resource information.

These are just a few ways citywide work comes together to support Denver's housing goals. The work of City agencies comes together with the support and leadership of the Mayor's Office. The following sections describe the efforts of partner city agencies to provide a fuller picture of these citywide efforts.

Denver Community Planning and Development

Denver Community Planning and Development (CPD) works with Denver's communities to prepare plans – as well as regulations for land use and design – that guide the city's growth, enhancement and preservation. The department's staff also reviews, permits, and inspects development applications to ensure that future construction meets the community-led regulations laid out in Denver's zoning codes as well as meets the rigorous standards of the city's building, fire, and energy codes. This work helps to ensure life-safety and quality-of-life standards, now and in the future. A cornerstone of this work is the [Neighborhood Planning Initiative](#), which is working with residents, neighborhood groups, and community leaders to create long-term visions for small areas of Denver.

With support from HOST, CPD is leading the [Expanding Housing Affordability](#) project, which is working to establish market-based programs that leverage new development and complement existing tools and resources, enabling the City to address housing needs for households in every neighborhood. This joint effort between CPD and HOST is examining how Denver can use the affordable housing linkage fee, new inclusionary housing regulations, and development incentives to leverage private market development to create mixed-income and affordable housing.

The CPD team also reviews, permits, and inspects development applications. All affordable housing developments go through this process, and CPD is exploring ways to support these projects through the [Affordable Housing Pilot Program](#).

Denver Economic Development & Opportunity

Denver Economic Development & Opportunity (DEDO) works to ensure an inclusive and innovative economy for all Denver residents, businesses, and neighborhoods. As part of this work, DEDO leads the City's workforce services and has prioritized residents experiencing homelessness for these supports. DEDO also supports work-based learning programming specifically for youth experiencing homelessness.

DEDO is home to the Neighborhood Equity and Stabilization Team (NEST), which works closely with HOST to mitigate involuntary displacement, including funding for community navigators within community-based organizations to help residents connect with available services.

DEDO is home to the City's administration of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant funds, working closely with HOST to support effective use of those funds to achieve City goals. In the past, HUD funds have been used to renovate shelters, support homeownership, and fund community services.

Department of Finance

The Department of Finance (DOF) oversees the City's finance and accounting functions. The Assessor's Office within DOF locates, appraises, and records all of Denver's real and personal properties, and is an important partner addressing property tax burden through strategies like the property tax rebate program through Denver Human Services.

The Budget & Management Office (BMO) oversees the City's budget, helping City agencies fund critical services while considering the totality of needs and services. It is also home to the Peak Academy team, which supports process improvement efforts citywide and which has been a critical partner in the formation of HOST.

DOF also includes the Real Estate and Capital Planning and Programming divisions, which are key partners as HOST seeks locations for critical housing and service investments. These divisions also support the ongoing improvements to and maintenance of city-owned properties, including city-owned shelter facilities.

DOF has also supported the Denver Social Impact Bond supportive housing program, which helped stably house hundreds of residents experiencing homelessness who frequently used justice system resources.

As the COVID-19 emergency wanes, DOF is also leading planning for the [RISE Together](#) stimulus investment.

General Services

The Department of General Services provides support citywide for procurement, contracting, security and other support services that have helped HOST with emergency needs related to pandemic response and recovery efforts. General Services' Facilities Management team works closely with the HOST, Department of Finance, Department of Transportation and Infrastructure, and other City agencies to provide building management and maintenance for approximately 700,000 square feet of city owned and leased shelters.

Agency for Human Rights and Community Partnerships

The Agency for Human Rights and Community Partnerships (HRCP) works to create lasting change for Denver's residents through advocacy, capacity building, partnerships, community engagement, and direct services.

HRCP includes the Division of Disability Rights, which is a key partner in ensuring that citywide services and programs, including those offered through HOST, are provided in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and accessible to people with disabilities.

HRCP also includes the Office of Financial Empowerment and Protection (OFEP), which strives to achieve economic mobility, generational wealth, and financial equity for Denver residents and small businesses. OFEP is a key partner in providing financial coaching and supporting Denver residents to become and remain homeowners.

HRCP's Anti-Discrimination Office supports anti-discrimination efforts and provides an avenue for residents to file a complaint of a discriminatory act in the City and County of Denver, including in housing broadly as well as under the city's source of income protections. HRCP also supports immigrant and refugee affairs, sign language services, Denver's aging population, partnerships with nonprofits, and cultural preservation through storytelling.

Denver Human Services

Denver Human Services (DHS) works to build well-being and resiliency for every child, adult, and senior in Denver through the provision of a wide array of community supports, including Child Support Services, Child Welfare, Adult Protective Services, Community Outreach and Resource Engagement (CORE), and Family and Adult Assistance.

The CORE team engages closely with many community agencies across Denver, particularly those providing homelessness services, to help connect residents with needed benefits and services (e.g., eviction assistance) and provide case management and service navigation to resources available outside DHS.

The Family and Adult Assistance Division helps connect residents with food, cash, and medical benefits. The team prioritizes residents experiencing homelessness for expedited Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, partners with homelessness service providers to overcome unique barriers residents experiencing homelessness face to accessing benefits, and has participated in street outreach teams to help support residents sleeping unsheltered. DHS is also providing dedicated staff to support benefits connection among residents experiencing homelessness via phone to make these services accessible to outreach workers.

The Child Welfare Division supports housing programs for youth to prevent homelessness among youth involved in the child welfare system. The Child Support Services team has also collocated staff with homelessness service providers to help remove barriers to housing created by arrears and negative credit.

Critical to HOST's efforts, DHS also runs the City's [Property Tax Rebate program](#), which pays back at least a portion of property tax or rent payments for qualifying older adults and families earning 60% of the area median income or less.

Denver Parks and Recreation

Denver Parks and Recreation (DPR) helps connect people to a network of open spaces, parks, and recreational activities that are essential for a healthy environment, healthy residents, and high quality of life for everyone. This work supports healthy neighborhoods alongside HOST's housing investments.

In addition, Parks and Recreation established the MY Denver and MY Denver PRIME programs, which provide youth ages 5 – 18 and older adults 60 years and older with free access to recreation centers, swimming pools, and various cultural facilities. It also created the PLAY Program, which provides memberships at affordable rates for low-income adults and families and has worked with HOST and homeless service providers to help make that program accessible to residents experiencing homelessness. Park rangers often serve in outreach roles as they encounter persons experiencing homelessness in parks and interact with them. Since the inception of the Denver Day Works Program, DPR has employed participants of the program and converted some positions from seasonal to fulltime. DPR has also supported and coordinated with nonprofit organizations such as Showers for All, Grow Local Colorado and Colorado Village Collaborative.

Denver Department of Public Health & Environment

The Denver Department of Public Health & Environment (DDPHE) empowers Denver's communities to live better, longer through support for community and behavioral health, animal protection, environmental quality, public health investigations, and the Office of the Medical Examiner.

The Office of Behavioral Health Strategies works to strengthen mental health services in Denver, including through their Wellness Winnie and Behavioral Health Solutions Center. The Wellness Winnie is a mobile support unit that travels throughout Denver to meet people where they are and provides peer support and navigation, harm reduction (e.g., syringe exchange), behavioral health screening and assessment, resource referral, and other supports. The Behavioral Health Solutions Center provides an innovative, treatment-focused, voluntary safe haven for adults experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Not open to the public, this 24/7 facility offers crisis stabilization services,

temporary housing and ongoing assistance for mental health and substance misuse issues, as well as assistance in transitioning to community living.

The Public Health Investigations division offers the Healthy Families Healthy Homes program that supports residents in making safety improvements to their homes. Public Health Investigations also conducts outbreak investigations and work to establish controls to limit the spread of diseases that are more likely to affect people who live unsheltered and without access to sanitation, such as hepatitis A, shigellosis, and trench fever.

Public Health Investigation staff have also been important partners to HOST and homeless service providers, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, to help partners offer shelter and other support services safely. DDPHE staff have supported shelters through their investigations to ensure healthy conditions, including food safety. In addition, staff provide systems level support for service providers (shelters) including training and resources relating to face coverings, prevention practices, and coordinating vaccine clinics with and person-centered, trauma informed approaches.

The Denver Animal Protection (DAP) team has also partnered with HOST to offer onsite shelter for pets at the new 48th Avenue shelter, overcoming a long-standing barrier to shelter use for residents. DAP also provides temporary housing for pets whose owners have been temporarily displaced and free spay and neuter services to people experiencing homelessness.

Denver Public Library

Denver Public Library (DPL) creates welcoming spaces where everyone is free to explore and connect. DPL identified eight priority populations for 2021, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), vulnerable youth, digitally isolated residents, unemployed residents, unhoused residents, immigrants, refugees, and older adults.

DPL staff have been innovative in their approaches to supporting residents experiencing homelessness. Libraries provide safe and welcoming spaces that are often used by residents experiencing homelessness who may not be connected to other services. DPL created a peer navigator program within the library system to help support unhoused guests. With the closure of libraries during the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift of many processes to online-only formats, including housing search, DPL staff partnered with outreach efforts and service providers to expand access to critical technology by making it mobile. DPL has continued this work, partnering with Safe Outdoor Space sites and offering Native American Talking Circles to engage Indigenous Denver residents experiencing homelessness.

Department of Safety

The Department of Safety (DOS) unifies efforts across Denver Police, Denver Fire, Denver 911, Denver Sheriff, Community Corrections, Public Safety Youth Programs, and the Gang Reduction Initiative of Denver to ensure Denver is a safe and welcoming city. DOS agencies support efforts to provide alternatives to policing. For example, the Denver Police Department established a Homeless Outreach Team that works to connect residents experiencing homelessness with services and shelter. DOS also implemented the Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) program, which provides a mental health clinician and paramedic to non-violent incidents instead of police response. The Denver Sheriff Department also oversees the Denver Jail, which has supported the implementation of the Social Impact Bond supportive housing program and funds some housing support programs to help with discharge planning.

Department of Transportation and Infrastructure

Denver's Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DOTI) focuses on increasing mobility and safety while reducing congestion and fighting climate change. One strategic priority is expanding and managing the City's transportation infrastructure in partnership with the Regional Transportation District (RTD) and the Colorado Department of Transportation. This includes support for fixed rail and high frequency bus networks, as well as first- and last-mile connections that support pedestrian and bike infrastructure throughout the city. DOTI also maintains clear rights of way.

Figure 24. Citywide Guiding Documents - Aligned with 2022-2026 Timeline of Strategic Plan

City Agency	Guiding Plans and Regulations
City-wide	Denver’s Comprehensive Plan 2040
Denver Community Planning and Development	Blueprint Denver Neighborhood Plans and Small Area Plans
Denver Economic Development and Opportunity	HUD Annual Action Plans
Department of Finance	City Budget and Annual Financial Reports
Denver Human Services	Human Together
Denver Parks and Recreation	Game Plan for a Healthy City
Denver Department of Public Health and Environment	Strategic Plan 2018 - 2022 Opioid Response Strategic Plan
Department of Transportation and Infrastructure	Denver Moves Mobility Action Plan Denver Strategic Parking Plan Vision Zero



Appendix B - Feedback from People with Lived Expertise

Stakeholder Engagement – People Experiencing Homelessness **March 17, 2021**

HOST Director of Homelessness Resolution Chris Conner and Director of Communications & Engagement Sabrina Allie conducted in-depth interviews with 16 people experiencing homelessness at three separate facilities on March 17, 2021. These interviews were tape recorded and detailed notes taken. All participants gave written permission to use their names and comments.

Participants were asked to share what might have helped keep them from becoming homeless, what resources and help they most need while experiencing homelessness, and what would best support them once they are rehoused. They were also explicitly asked “the million dollar question”: what would they spend the city’s funds on to help people experiencing homelessness. Answers to their questions were grouped into themes and highlights, and illustrated with direct quotes that may be used throughout HOST’s five-year strategic plan.

Unifying themes across all facility locations

Investment (Programs & Development)

- More affordable housing, more quickly, with embedded support services and fewer restrictions.
- Improved shelter infrastructure/utilities.
- Expanded on-site services and supports, including more timely access to mental health services and substance use treatment – and/or transportation to get to services located elsewhere.
- Significant need for more, better trained/coordinated case workers, preferably on site, to help with navigating and accessing systems and services.
- Help people maintain probation, take care of outstanding warrants.
- More job skills training/education, and people who can help find jobs.
- People want privacy, but need to balance with need for supports and feelings of isolation.

Policy & Systems Change

- Stronger renter protections.
- Remove barriers of having a criminal record that prevent people from obtaining and keeping housing.
- Living wages.
- Access to 24/7 shelter facilities with storage.
- More affordable housing, more quickly, with embedded support services and fewer restrictions.

Denver Rescue Mission, 4330 E. 48th Ave. congregate shelter for men

Preventing Homelessness

Investment (Programs & Development)

- Mental health and substance use treatment. Lack of help with opioid addiction, substance use disorder and mental illness contribute to people’s inability to stay in their homes.
- Agency supports. Ensure agencies providing support are actually available. One participant noted that he became homeless because there was no one available in the Section 8 housing office and he wasn’t able to reach them by phone.

Policy & Systems Change

- Renter protections. Multiple participants talked about situations in which their landlord did something they believed was illegal or unethical and caused them to lose their homes and marred their record so that they can’t get a new rental.

- SSI. Multiple participants talked about the income limits when receiving Social Security Income (SSI) stating that they disincentivize people from getting jobs, but they don't pay enough to qualify you for your own place to live, so you get stuck not making enough to live no matter what. People need help preparing to get off SSI and not need that check anymore. One participant said that many of the mental health services you get when you are homeless perpetuate keeping you jobless and on SSI so you will continue using their services. "You're court ordered to take medication. You are court ordered to go to group therapy. You have to do therapy during the work day," said Gary. "All I needed was a better job so I could build a better life."
- Rental restrictions. Some people would live with friends and family except that there are restrictions in many places that don't let you have visitors for more than three days.
- Legal system. Maintaining probation, outstanding warrants and criminal records prevent a lot of people from getting and staying in jobs and housing. "A person has to be free from the law for ... years to even qualify for a place to live – just to rent a house – it's kind of harsh," said David.
- Medical expenses. Medical expenses and health issues overall contributed to people losing their homes.

“

I don't have the job skills to help find a better job. For guys like me, wanting to start a new life, you need to be in a stable place to get the education.

- Toby

Improving shelters/supports while homeless

Investment (Programs & Development)

- "My simple dream is to get a job," said Toby. "I did 20 years working with horses. I don't have the **job skills** to help find a better job. For guys like me, wanting to start a new life, you need to be in a stable place to get the education. Lots of people change careers 2 and 3 times to succeed, but you need the education to help back that up."
- Get **employment specialists** to go to shelter facilities and help people identify their marketable skills and get the best paying jobs they can find. These people often have leads that PEH don't have and can help with resumes and application processes.
- **Storage.** The black storage tubs with wheels are hugely helpful. It would be nice to have the option to buy them and take them with you when you leave or get kicked out. "People don't realize that if you leave a shelter or get kicked out, you have to carry all of your stuff," said Gary. "I had to carry my backpacks and two trash bags with me at 2 in the morning."
- **Privacy.** People understand that you can't give guests too much privacy or many will shoot up and get high, but some people are really disruptive to others and it makes it difficult to get any rest. Participants suggested possibly segregating those who have substance use disorders from those who don't and allowing sober individuals to have more privacy. "The biggest thing you can give another human being is peace and serenity," said Toby. "It would be nice to build a little bit of walls to give people some privacy and serenity away from others, maybe somewhere to safely store our things. We don't have much, so the theft really bothers me."
- **Isolation.** Other participants spoke of how isolated they felt when they were segregated from others during the COVID pandemic, during addiction treatment or after being rehoused. They talked about feeling alone and disconnected from their community and support systems. For some recovering addicts, they turned back to drugs because of this feeling of isolation. "When you are in a little room, by yourself, your mind starts wandering, there was uncertainty and I had no one to talk to. I hate myself and broke down," said Toby Strickland. "Thankfully, I was able to get back on track. I still have my dreams, I'm not giving up."
- **Location and/or transportation.** Participants noted that many shelter locations are inconveniently located in places with no access to services, which forced people to spend money and time on transportation to get to

the things they need, carting their belongings everywhere with them so they aren't stolen. It would be much better if services could come to them or be co-located with the shelter. You have to pay \$6 to take the bus to [day shelter] to check to see if you have any mail (and they won't tell you when you call).

- **Adequate infrastructure/utilities.** Many of the shelters don't have adequate heating and the lighting is on very late and often throughout the night preventing people from sleeping.
- **Mental health.** A mental health services provider often has a two week wait. That doesn't help at all. We need on-demand services. They also have a lot of inexperienced staff who don't understand their clients' situations and are really prejudiced against people experiencing homelessness. Another participant noted that staff leave frequently, so you develop a relationship with a case worker or therapist and they are gone.
- **Case workers.** All of the participants indicated that they needed more case workers, ideally who could come to them at the shelter so they wouldn't have to travel all over town with their things looking for help. When they get access to good case workers, they said they are very helpful.
- **Security.** Shelters need real security to help ensure people's belongings aren't stolen, to help keep people from fighting, to help regulate behavior of people with substance use or mental illness issues, to prevent drug sales and keep people from smoking right outside the doors.
- **Customer service.** Many of the shelters have poor customer service skills; the staff are grump and can be mean, they don't answer their phones and keep people on hold for long wait times, they treat some guests better than others and play favorites.
- **Giving back.** Many guests had strong desire for social connectivity through active citizenship, "giving back," and charitable effort. This is not offered with any formality through programs, but individuals who were facing employment challenges or near despondence in their situation still wanted to find a way to be busy and productive beyond their own individual case plans and in ways that positively affected others and communities.

Policy & Systems Change

- **24/7 facilities.** It has been hugely helpful to have 24/7 facilities and a place where you can be all day, where you can eat and keep your belongings locked up. It's incredibly difficult to get your feet under you and get help if you have to leave for 4-5 hours a day carting all of your possessions with you. "The stability of having a place to stay and come back to during the day has been huge," said Gary. "If you can't rest, you can't work. If you aren't warm, you can't work. If you can't eat, you can't work. If you can't work, you can't pay rent."
- Help finding work is **rushed**. You aren't allowed to spend time looking for the best job; they just want you to accept the first minimum wage job that comes up and those don't pay enough to really afford housing and necessities.
- Big corporate employers are not paying a **living wage**. It leads to a hopelessness. People have nothing to look forward to when it takes them weeks to save up for simple entertainment like a TV. And that often leads people to steal or sell drugs and other things that get them in more trouble. Connecting people with jobs that make a living wage would make a world of difference. "I'm drug free and working and I can't afford to get food. I make too much to get help, but too little to survive," said Gary. "I haven't been high for 2 years. When you can't afford anything to make you feel good – you can't afford to work out, no sex life, no entertainment – then the only thing you can do to make you feel good is to buy drugs."

(Re)Housing

Investment (Programs & Development)

- Subsidized housing is great if you can get it. There isn't enough and it takes a long time to build.
- Rapid rehousing is super helpful but feels like there is favoritism in who gets it.
- The best thing you could do with the city's money is to give people the money (or **vouchers**) they need to meet the **income requirements** to get their own housing.

- A lot of low income housing or places that accept cash for rent are not good **places for people recovering from SUD**. Don't surround people who are recovering with people who are still addicted.
- Next biggest worry after getting housing is just having a vehicle. It's hard to get work in Denver without your own **transportation** because things are so spread out, especially if you have to have your own tools and things you have to take with you.
- "I've been homeless my whole life so hard to think about what I would do if I had a home," said David. "I think it would really help if people had access **work training** programs to help people learn jobs that they can do and get them back to work and feeling productive and successful."
- Toby said he would rather get a job and get a camper rather than paying rent to someone: "I want a simple little camper so I can pay it off, own it, and give back."

Policy & Systems Change

- Rent based on a percent of your income would be helpful.
- **Felonies** keep you out of housing. We need to change that. People need help maintaining **probation** in order to be able to stay housed. Permanent supportive housing would be great but isn't sure if he qualifies because of **criminal history** (violent).

Hotel, non-congregate shelter for women and transgender individuals

Preventing Homelessness

Policy & Systems Change

- **SSI**. Several participants are receiving SSI but it isn't enough for them to afford housing. "I want to have housing so that I can go out and get a job so that I can make some extra income. With social security, you only get a certain amount monthly. I want to work," said Becky.

Improving shelters/supports while homeless

Investment (Programs & Development)

- **Employment specialists**. Would be nice to have a work center on site, and a teacher to help people get their GEDs.
- **Case workers**. No one at this facility has case workers and they are desperately wanted. Guests were univocal in their desire for stronger case worker supports and that they'd like to have them come to them on site. **All participants voiced that this was the primary thing lacking in this location**. "If we had case management, people would be in a better position to take a next step. And without it, people lose hope and find whatever helps them in the moment," said Shoghi. "Something that helps move you forward so you know what your next step is, maybe therapy to deal with specific problems you may have, and not to be sent blocks away to try to find it." Most participants said if they had a million dollars to help, they'd invest it in case management. "A case worker could help me get things like my medicines, oxygen, etc., because I can't walk to Stout Street," said Becky. "Websites and phone lines are not always helpful like a person would be."
- **Systems navigation**. They are often told to call somewhere or go to a website or physically travel to some place, only to be referred elsewhere over and over. It's frustrating, time consuming and costly. They need help from people who know how to navigate various systems, like how to get signed up for Medicaid, get on job and housing lists, etc. In addition, for people who find themselves homeless in the suburbs, there is very little help and few people know where to refer you for help. You almost have to figure out how to make it to the city to get help.
- **Adequate infrastructure/utilities**. Participants said it would be incredibly helpful if shelter locations were like a one-stop shop with access to case workers, computers, counselors/therapists, job training and resume writing, systems navigators, medical doctors, and all the help you need on location.

Several participants struggled with the lack of consistent hot water availability in this facility, saying they needed it for bathing and addressing medical conditions.

It's particularly difficult to do many of the things you need to without access to computers. This location has one computer and you can only sign up to use it for an hour at a time. Libraries have been closed, are far and not always open convenient hours. Could there be more computers at shelter locations, with systems navigators available to help walk people through? Maybe even bookmark frequently used websites. And printers would be very helpful, too.

"I'm not from here, but I got kicked out and had nowhere to go, and had no idea where to go for help," said Ramona. "Websites are hard to figure out and navigate when you don't even know what search terms to put in."

Laundry facilities would be incredibly helpful. Smiley's laundromat is no longer open and laundry costs \$7 a load, which is prohibitive.

- **Food.** Participants were very grateful for food availability, though a couple noted that it's not always very healthy food, particularly for people with health conditions like diabetes. Things are typically high in sugar. There is only one microwave they have to use in the lobby so lots of people standing around at meal times.
- **Mental health.** Most of the participants said they suffer from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) and need help managing it.

"We have people here with mental health issues and they need some kind of supervision on site. As wonderful as staff are, they aren't trained for handling a psychotic episode and then the cops come in. It's very traumatic for people. And people like me with PTSD, but I don't know what's going to trigger me," said Ramona.

Would be nice to consider that some people need spirituality for mental health, and others really don't want or need that.

"A lot of homelessness is because people with mental health issues are not getting case management and help they need to pay their bills, stay on their meds, someone they can reach out to. It's really sad when you see so many homeless who are really not there and they are lost and there is no one there for her to help with," said Becky.

- **Privacy.** One participant mentioned disliking the mandatory room checks being allowed when they aren't in the room to see what is happening. They also think there should be another person there to verify what is being seen so there is no misunderstanding that leads to someone being kicked out.
- **Isolation.** "Being stuck in a room by ourselves where we can't talk with each other is isolating and really mentally difficult," said Shoghi. "A good day is to talk to people who co-habitate here and you can call your friends." One participant noted that she and her wife are having to stay in separate rooms, which just takes up an extra room that could be serving someone else and also makes both of them feel isolated and contributes to declining mental health. She also said she has health conditions and her wife has mental health conditions that they need to be able to monitor for one another and can't because of the physical separation.
- **Location and/or transportation.** Could the city bring in bus services just for the shelters that could take people to commonly needed places, like the library?

Policy & Systems Change

- **Certainty.** "We need some certainty. We just need one politician to say the pandemic was over before they kick us all out of here," said Shoghi "It's terrifying."
- **24/7 facilities and storage.** Participants were very grateful for having access to this 24/7 facility with their own rooms where they can safely store their things. "It is an absolute lifesaver to be a 24/7 facility, to not have to lug all my stuff everywhere," said Becky. "I would have probably died without the 24/7 shelter and the Ramada because I can take care of my COPD and asthma here."

(Re)Housing

Investment (Programs & Development)

- One participant said that if they had a million dollars, they'd put it all into **housing**. "If we all were housed and stable, we can handle the health and mental health issues. It creates stability. Having an income doesn't do it, we have to get a motel room, and we could be saving money to be put towards a place to live," said Becky.
- After being housed, **medical care and mental health** were the common next biggest worries. For some participants, it felt like their medical and mental health conditions were holding them back from getting housing. They'd like to see ongoing case management for mental health and help with doing daily things like getting groceries and paying bills, which some people don't have the life skills to know how to do.
- "I want to have a modest place, collect my disability and be able to write," said Shoghi.
- Would need a **car and tools** to get back to **work** and stay housed.

Safe Outdoor Spaces, 16th and Pearl

Preventing Homelessness

Investment (Programs & Development)

- **Affordable housing.** Multiple participants cited the out of control cost of rent in Denver plus the need for an up front security deposit as completely prohibitive. "I served 6 years in the Army and owned my own house, and I never thought I would be homeless," said Timothy.

Policy & Systems Change

- **Renter protections.** "I had a perfect record in my housing for 14 years and got booted out by a real estate company. They just buy properties and kick people out," said Allen. "No one is monitoring the real estate companies. They shouldn't be allowed to just kick people out."
- **Legal system.** "I have been denied housing five times because I am a convicted felon," said James. "I go through the application and wait two years on waiting list, get ready to move in, do a background check and get denied." In all five cases, he said he had a case manager and said he believes those individuals should have known not to get his hopes up because he wouldn't qualify due to his criminal record.

Improving shelters/supports while homeless

Investment (Programs & Development)

- Many don't have necessary **job skills**, there is no access to higher education, and so they can't learn new skills to get the work that may be available.
- "I am on social security and retired, so I'm set. But some of these other guys need a job, maybe doing maintenance on the building they live in, so they can earn and feel good about themselves, so they can have a little extra money," said Allen.
- **Storage.** "When I was [in an encampment], you can't leave your stuff, so you don't seek out help. Not once since I have been here have I heard an outburst about people's stuff being stolen," said Alan Mayfield. "There are people who have a LOT of stuff, and for me, I have to think about how much I'm moving around so I don't accumulate anything. Last winter, all I had was blankets and bare minimal, because I knew I had to lug it with me wherever I went and I didn't want to be out in the cold all day. Some people just need their possessions to feel like they are existing." Another participant said that the SOS sometimes just looks like it's a storage space, but it allows people to leave their belongings somewhere safe so they can go and do the things they need to get back on their feet. He said you cannot do that from a shelter or tent.
- **Privacy.** A big reason people like the SOS model is because it allows them to have their own private tent in a safe area. People don't like staying in big congregate shelters around a bunch of other people with problems.

- **Isolation.** It can be a little isolating not to be allowed to have visitors in your tent, but they do have common areas they can go to be around other people in the SOS community.
- **Adequate infrastructure/utilities.** Several participants noted how helpful it has been to have portable hygiene centers/showers where people can get cleaned up. They would like to see better power, heat and showers available at SOS sites like this.
- **Mental health.** Some stated there is a need for having someone who can help evaluate mental and physical health needs and get you the services you need.
- **Case workers.** “I’m homeless. People don’t want to talk to me, but they’ll talk to you. If we had stronger [case management] to help people find resources and get back on their feet, that would be better,” said Timothy Davis. “We are in the dark and we need people to come and help us, they can’t just tell us where a resource is and where to go. We need deeper follow up and help getting it. You go to one place and they send you somewhere else; it’s not just one place that you can get everything you need.”

Participants frequently cited feeling “run around in circles” and having “doors closed” on them, and said it helps when they have case worker support. Several participants mentioned that they had multiple case workers from different facilities and it was hard to coordinate among them.

“Case workers talk to you for a few minutes and say there are all these waiting lists and they never come back to talk to you again,” said Allen. “This community here, SOS, really started bringing help to us. This is a good start ... a real success.”

“The case management in this model is so helpful; they don’t have to be integrated in here, but if they were coming in and talking with us, that would help. The reason I don’t go to shelters is because the case management was so bad. In an unsanctioned encampment, the case workers were terrified to come out,” said Alan.

- **Safety/Security.** Participants said they didn’t feel safe in shelters or in tents, but that SOS feels incredibly safe. They like that it is a locked entry with a key code, that staff monitor who comes and goes. There is a feeling of community and people “self police” and take care of each other.

“SOS provides safety, security, peace of mind,” said Alan.

“For four years, I was running from campsite to campsite, and we knew the cops would kick us out again and again,” said John. “Here, we don’t have to worry about that. [SOS] allows us to keep up with case managers, the freedom to go look for a job and not have your things stolen. It’s about trust, completely.”

- **Customer service.** There is a feeling that the staff at this SOS really care about the people living here. They are trusted. The human element and that trust is what gets people off the streets.

Policy & Systems Change

- **24/7 facilities.** Participants were incredibly grateful that Safe Outdoor Spaces have been created. They didn’t like shelter environments where you can’t come and go, you don’t have privacy, your things get stolen. Many stated that they were completely unable to sleep in shelters and got extremely disrupted sleep in unauthorized camps and tents. “When you’re on the streets, you have to sleep with one eye open to protect yourself because there are people who will bust you in your head just for fun. I have not slept this well for a long time. ... They need more places like this,” said Timothy. “This place is wonderful. From the time I was homeless to get in here, they helped get me food, sleep and health care. So now I can properly think so I can get things going. This is the type of place that should be funded.”
- **Stability.** “It starts with stability. I was here day one and just coming in and not being worried about gun shots outside my tent, about being run out in the middle of the night, removes so much worry and helps stabilize a bit. That helps you truly go somewhere. This space gives peace of mind. I am able to rest when I sleep,” said Alan.

(Re)Housing

Investment (Programs & Development)

- “The reason people who get housing end up on back on the streets is because we don’t give them the help they need, help them understand how to do things, and not fall back on bad habits,” said Timothy. He said people need much stronger **case management** both while they are experiencing homelessness and after they transition back into housing. “It’s not enough just to get into housing, you need someone to teach you how to start saving again – that’s how people learn to be successful. I don’t want to be right back out here, but I need help.”
- “I had a good job. But when I do get a job now, when you are not in housing, you can’t get enough sleep, you can’t take care of your hygiene, so you can’t even get and keep a job to get a house,” said James. “If you house someone, then people can keep a **job**.”
- “Just provide **housing**. There are plenty of buildings that are available. I have been denied [rentals] only to hear from someone in the building that there are 80 units available,” said Allen.
- “Take the [city’s] money and spend it on putting up **homes** for the homeless. I know it’s not that simple, per se, but it really kind of is,” said Alan. “If you don’t want to see this on the streets, then support putting people into a solution: housing.”
- The city needs to buy **real estate** of existing properties they can buy and move people into quickly. The rent, requirements and restrictions need to be actually feasible for the people living there.
- People need time and help **re-acclimating** to regular life after being homeless. “You can’t just go from being out here and being part of homelessness and back to regular society. Give people some time to adjust,” said Alan.
- Many guests had strong desire for social connectivity through active **citizenship**, “giving back,” and charitable efforts. This is not offered with any formality through programs. At SOS, a couple guests spoke of establishing “street families” to galvanize a caretaker identity.

Policy & Systems Change

- “You wanna solve the problem? Take away these nonprofits’ contracts so they stop stealing from the people who need the help and turning people away, and put the money into **housing**.”

Permanent Supportive Housing

In addition to in-depth interviews with people experiencing homelessness, HOST Government and Community Affairs Specialist Elvis Rubio interviewed a guest in permanent supportive housing (PSH) in May 2021. Multiple residents in PSH and whom have received rent or utility assistance were asked to participate, but all but one declined. That participant asked that her identity remain confidential.

When asked what the city could have done to help her obtain supportive housing, she said the city helped her and her children get housing after experiencing homelessness. She relayed that it was difficult to find shelter for a family with minor children, and said there was a lottery for the limited spots available. She said getting on a list and waiting is incredibly difficult when you have young children, both for shelter and housing. She said the PSH program had also helped her get her GEd (General Education certification) and provided her with household necessities and food.

Asked how the city can help support her while living in PSH, she said safety is her number one concern. She said she and her children have had challenges with disorderly behavior and drug use of neighbors and other guests that the apartment complex management has not been able to address. She wondered how difficult it would be to transfer to another PSH location, and whether she could get a location closer to her work.

She said the PSH program has helped her a lot, and she is worried about leaving because she is eight months’ pregnant. She said it would help a lot to have funding available to assist with rent applications and deposit requirements when she does try to secure a home on her own.

Appendix C - Community Survey Response

HOST sent out two surveys to gain feedback from the community on the goals and targets in the draft Five-Year Strategic Plan. The surveys ran from May 24 to June 24, 2021, and from Aug. 4 to Sept. 3, 2021. Combined, they garnered more than 1,650 responses.

The survey was distributed through Mayor Michael B. Hancock’s office, members of City Council, nonprofit provider partners, philanthropic partners, developer partners, advocacy partners, Registered Neighborhood Organizations, and the greater Denver public. Outreach was conducted via email, phone calls, social media posts, and newsletter distribution.

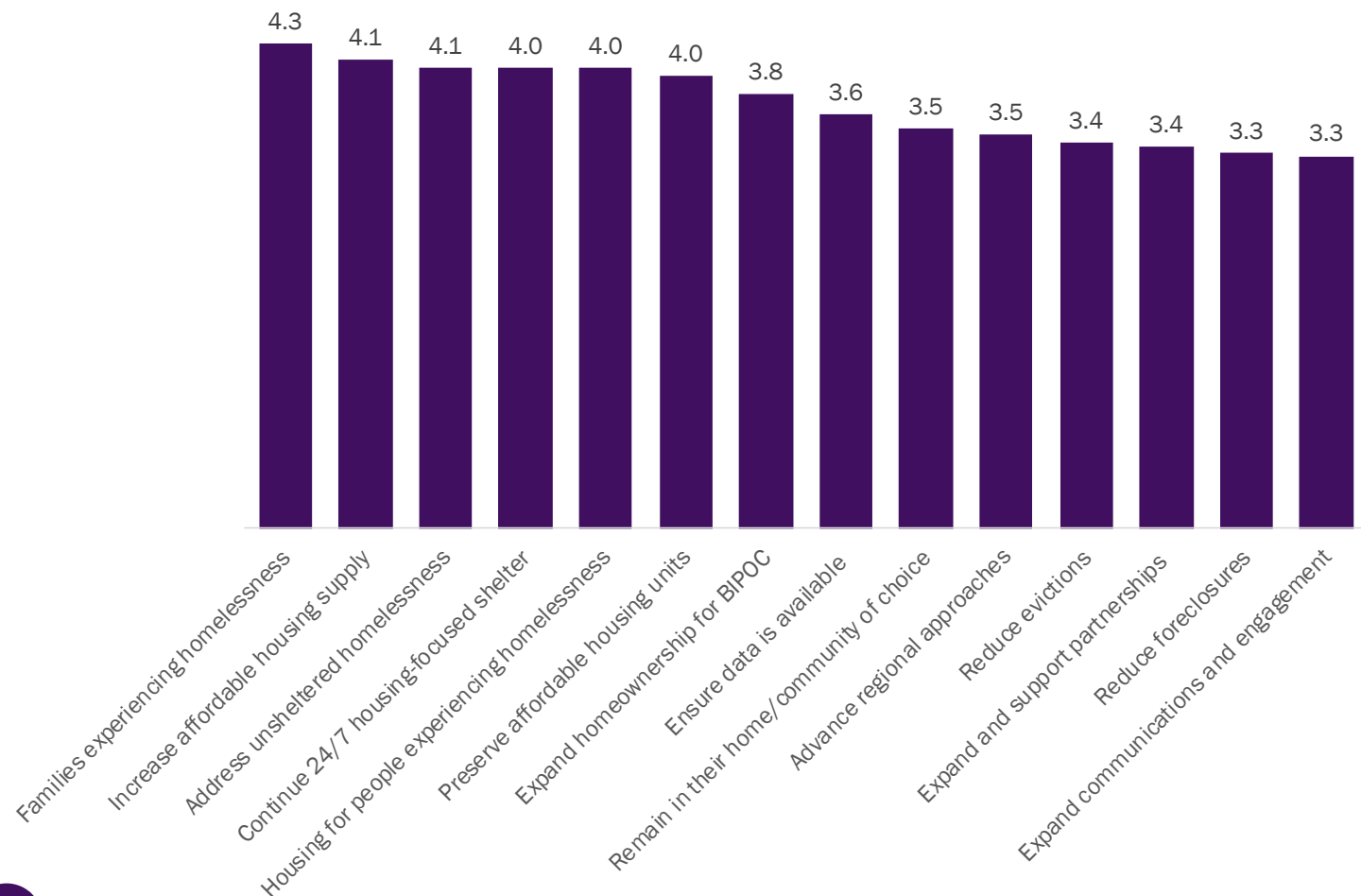
Overall, the majority of respondents (56%) supported or strongly supported the Five-Year Strategic Plan, and most (73%) felt strongly that affordable housing should be a focus of the city government.

In the open form feedback section, a heavy emphasis was placed on providing more resources for mental health and substance use disorders. Some respondents expressed a desire to see more enforcement action on encampments, while others urged less enforcement or no action and a more service-based approach to encampments. Providing more affordable and accessible housing was also a top theme, as well as incentivizing and/or requiring developers to build more affordable housing alongside or instead of market rate housing. Respondents presented many ideas, from rent control to utilizing Medicaid to leveraging funding for housing for persons with medical needs, and many suggestions on how to incentivize affordable housing.

Respondents were asked to rate the proposed goals in the plan on a scale of zero to five, with zero meaning they did not support the goal, and five being the strongest support. All of the goals ranked three or above, and all rankings are included throughout the plan with the goals.

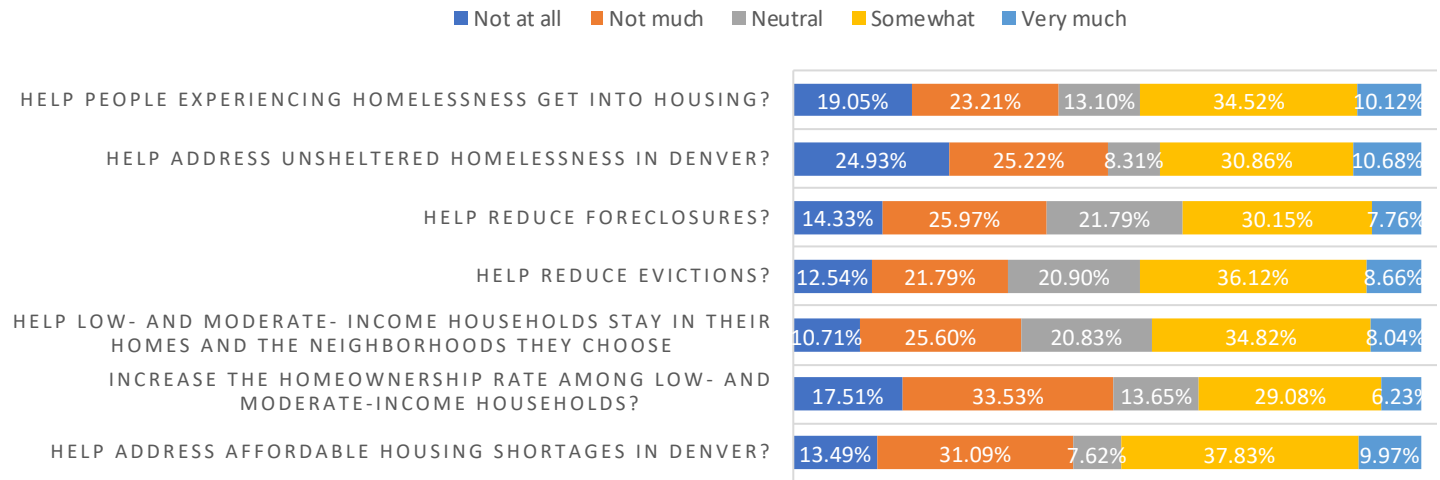
Figure 25: Community prioritization of proposed goals

Average Priority Level on Scale of 1 (Not a Priority) to 5 (Top Priority) for Draft HOST Strategic Plan Goals, Spring 2021 Community Survey



Asked how much this plan would help address the intended outcomes, respondents mostly felt the strategies identified would help somewhat or very much.

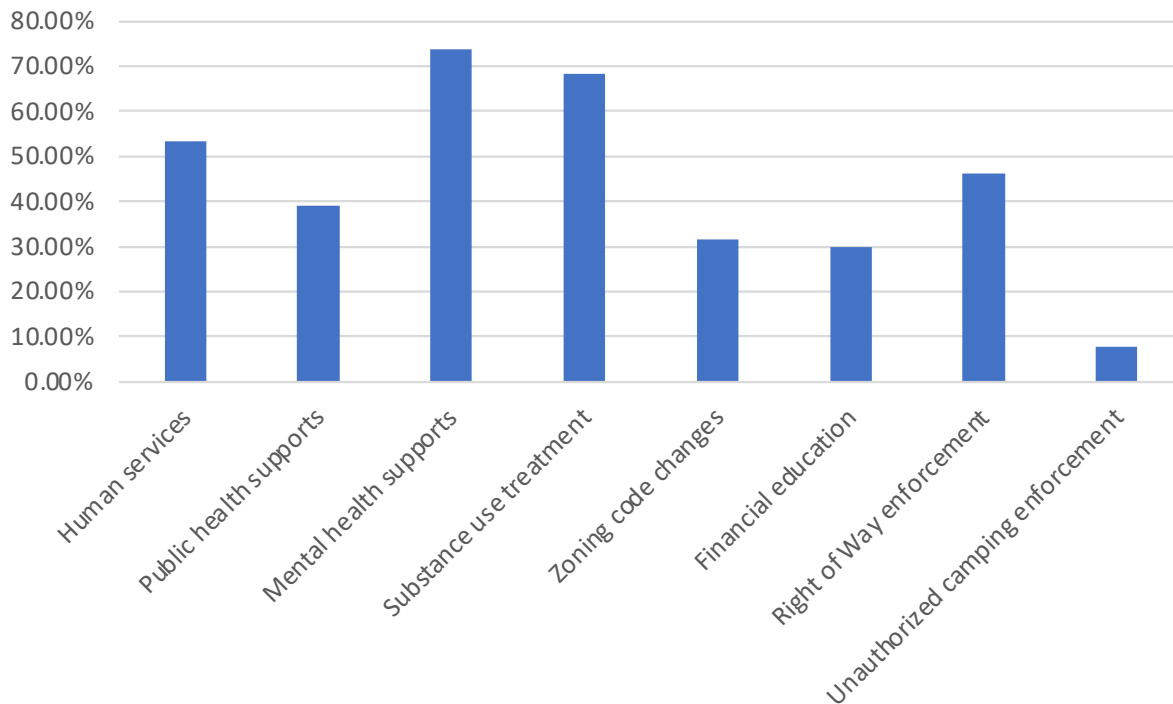
Figure 26: How much will this plan help?



When asked if the City should pursue additional partnerships and funding to expand efforts beyond what was outlined in the strategic plan, more than half said yes (50.59%) and nearly a quarter (24.71%) said dependent on the proposal.

When asked which areas respondents would like the city to emphasize in order to better support the work outlined in the strategic plan, a large majority of respondents selected mental health (73%), and substance use treatment (68%), and more than half (53%) selected human services such as emergency assistance and case workers. Only 7% of respondents said the city should emphasize enforcement of the unauthorized camping ordinance, while 46% wanted to see more enforcement of the City’s ordinances managing public and private property and rights of way.

Figure 27: What areas should the city emphasize to better support this plan?



Asked what ideas or concepts stood out as the most important in the plan, respondents cited the urgency of resolving unsheltered homelessness, reducing the average length of an experience of homelessness, as well as ensuring supports for those exiting homelessness are in place to help them maintain housing. Housing affordability and reducing evictions, as well as HOST's equity lens and goals were also highlighted. Some respondents applauded the Housing First approach. Many respondents expressed frustration at previous plans and systems that did not accomplish what they set out to.

Asked what they felt was missing from the plan, many respondents cited the need for increased enforcement actions in unsanctioned campgrounds. The need for comprehensive mental health and substance use disorder treatment was also a top theme. Some also cited a need for methods of guaranteeing affordable development. Several respondents expressed a desire to see more strategies and goals centered around homeless youth and families, while others said more outreach services could be added to the plan.

Respondent Demographics:

Figure 28: Respondents who have experienced homelessness or have a family member who has experienced homelessness?

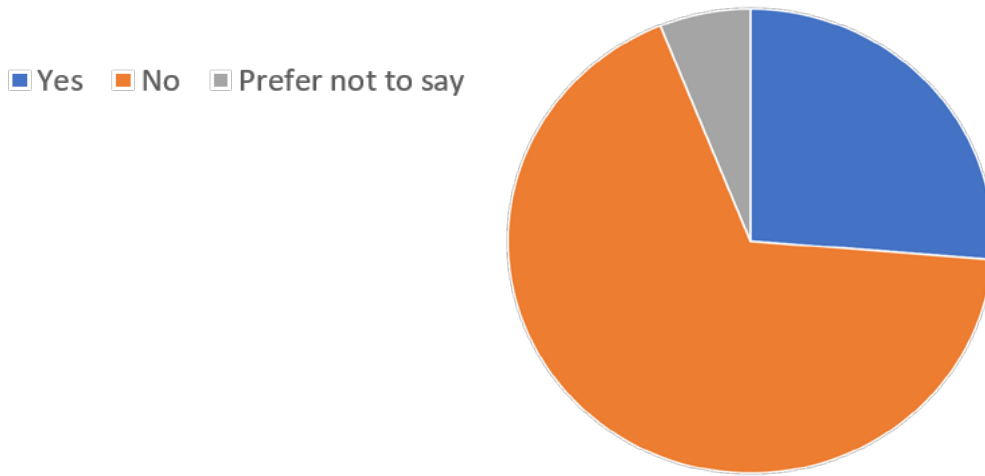


Figure 29: Respondents' relationship to housing and homelessness

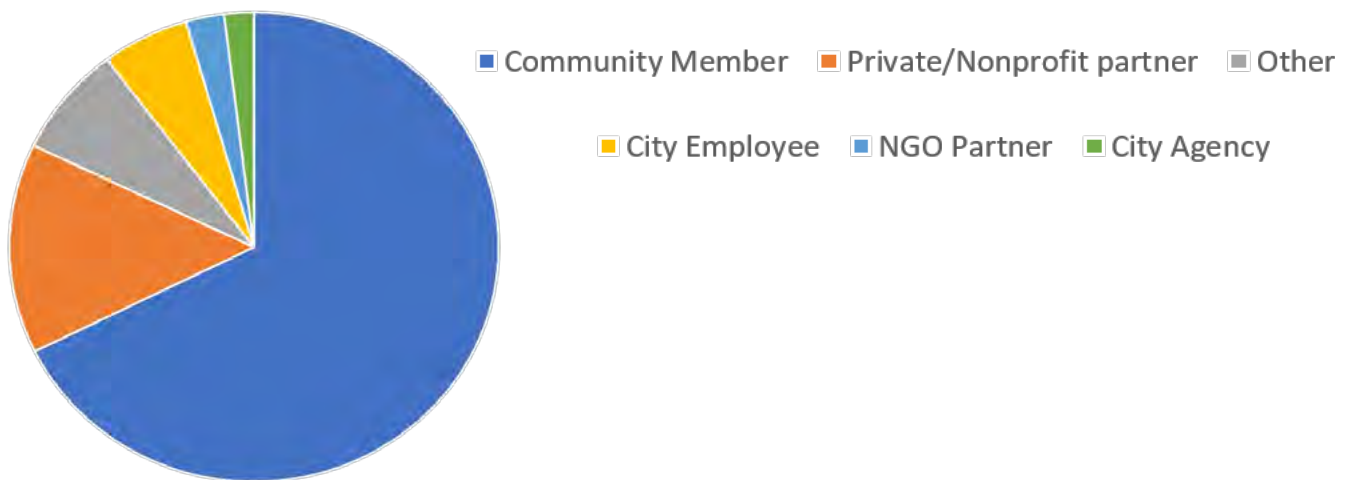
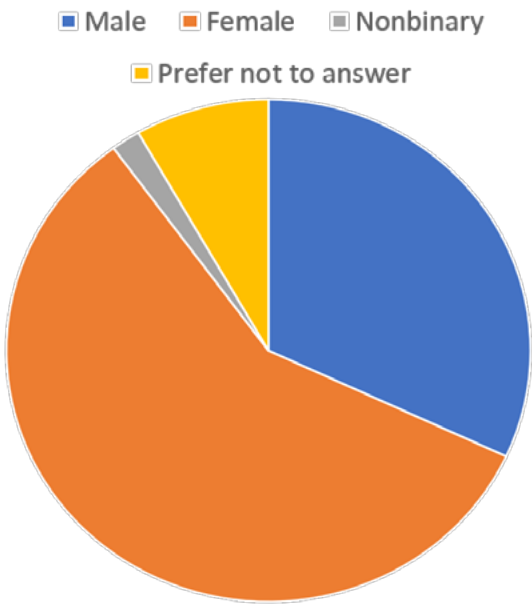


Figure 30: Respondents' gender identity

What is your Gender Identity?



Do you Identify as Transgender?

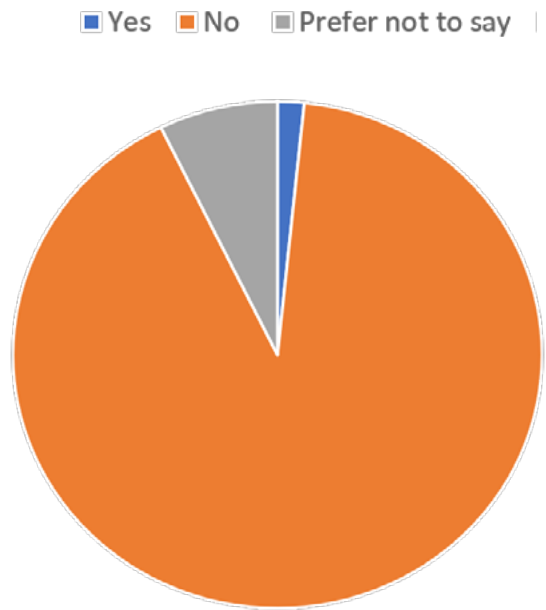


Figure 31: Respondents' race

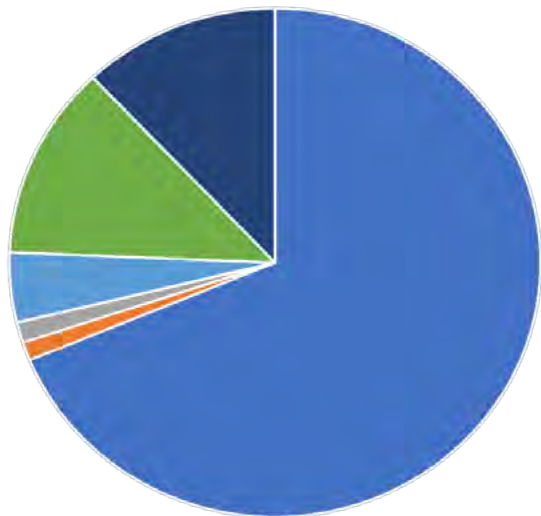
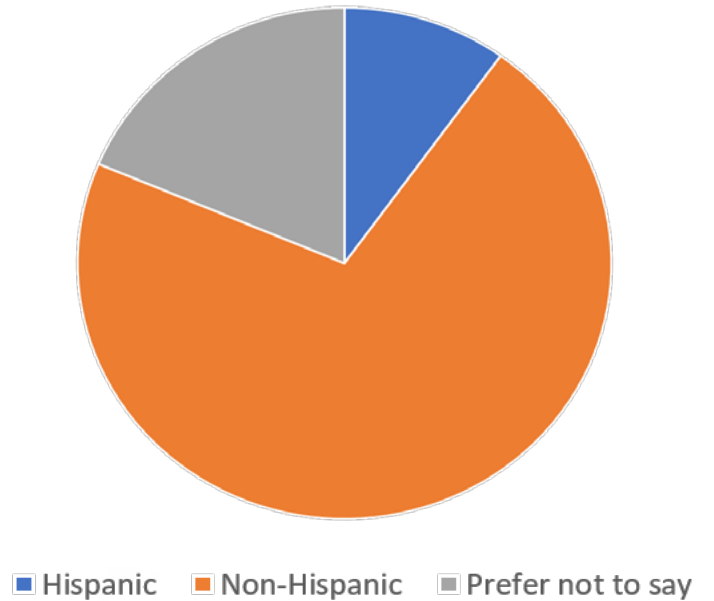


Figure 32: Respondents' ethnicity



- White
- Asian or Asian American
- Black or African American
- Prefer not to say
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Multiracial/Other

Figure 33: Respondents' age

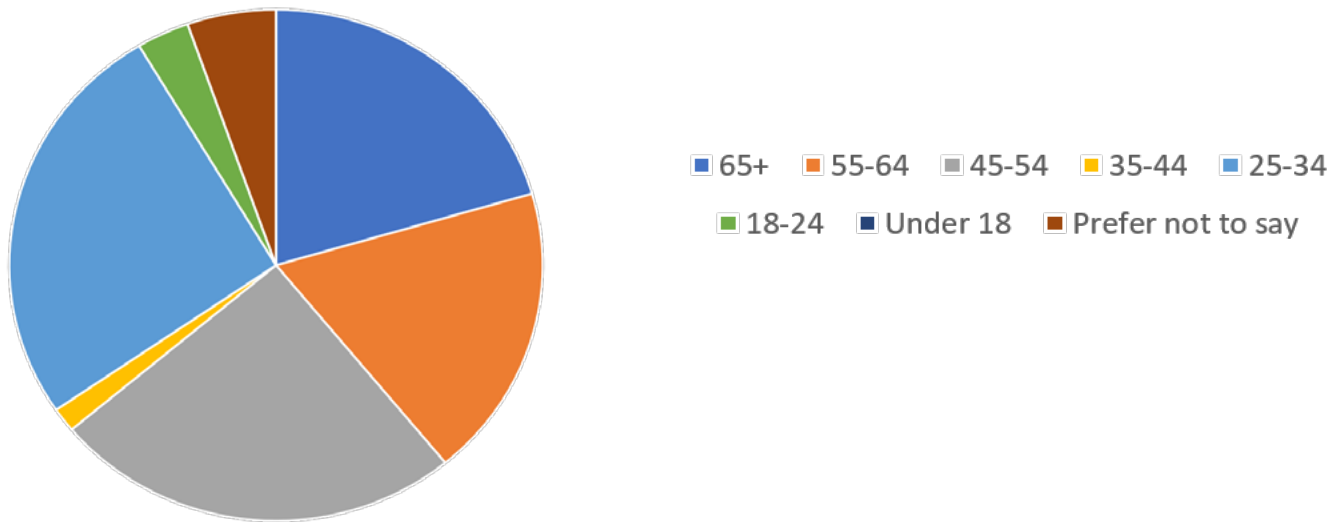
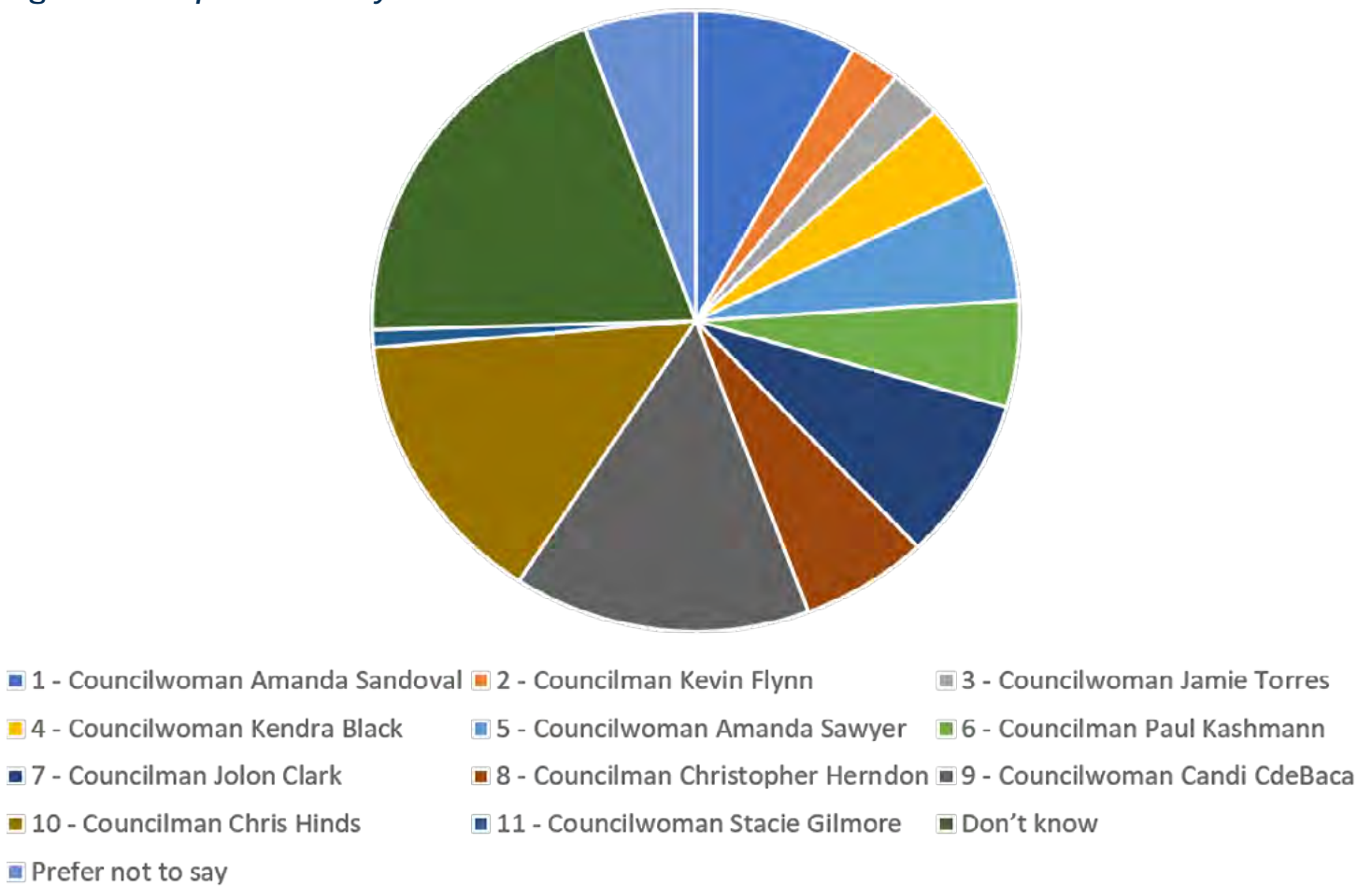


Figure 34: Respondents' City Council District



Appendix D - HOST Tools and Tactics

HOST uses a number of tools to support its mission of building a healthy, housed, and connected Denver. As we analyzed our current environment in preparation to draft this plan, it was important to review what tools we already have in our toolbox and how we are currently using them in various programs and projects.

Creating and Preserving Affordable Units

HOST a range of tools to create and preserve affordable housing in Denver. These include:

- Providing funding to help affordable developments fill financing gaps and reach deeper levels of affordability;
- Utilizing regulatory tools to require and/or incentivize affordable housing; and
- Negotiating the inclusion of affordable housing into market-rate developments.

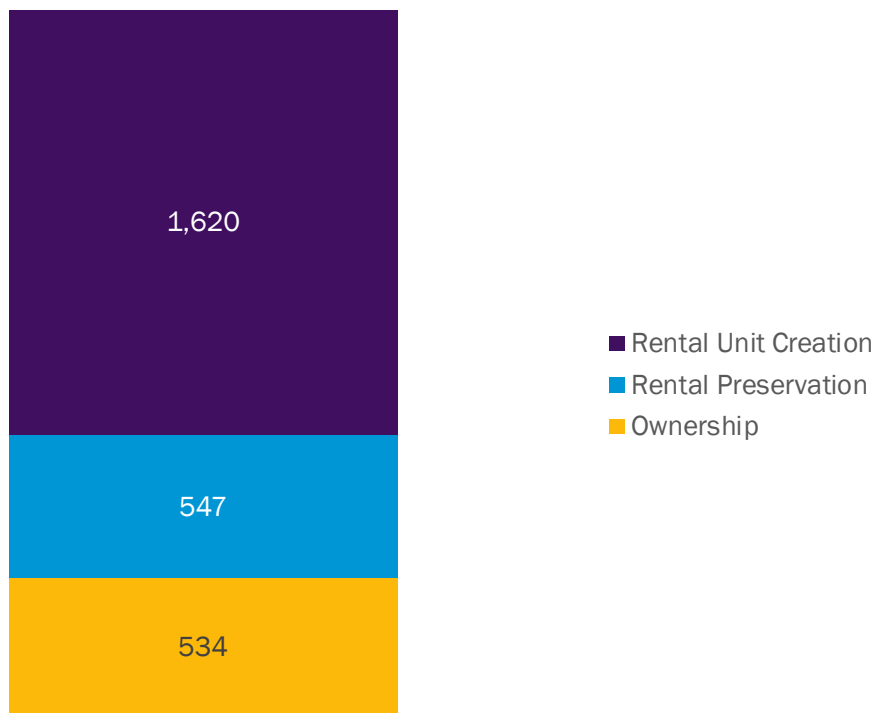
Gap financing

HOST’s primary tool for driving the development and preservation of affordable homes is by investing gap financing in affordable housing development projects. Gap financing helps close the “gap” between what the project costs to build and what funding the developer can access to do so. Because the rents a developer will charge to serve a low- or moderate-income household after the property is open impact the amount of financing they can get from traditional funding sources like loans, funding from HOST and other sources – including Low-income Housing Tax Credits – are needed to support development that will charge more affordable rents.

HOST’s investment within these projects has helped to create thousands of units. For projects that apply to HOST for funds and are approved by HOST’s Loan Review Committee (and by City Council for investments greater than \$500,000), HOST typically invests funds amounting to 5% to 7% of project costs. While this is a small portion of an overall project cost, even this gap financing is expensive. From 2017 to 2019, through Denver’s Affordable Housing Fund, HOST invested nearly \$52 million to support 2,598 income-restricted units, or about \$20,000 per unit on average. That means that each \$1 million HOST uses for gap financing helps to create or preserve about 50 units.

From 2018 to 2020, the city helped to create or preserve 2,701 rental and homeownership units. This included 534 newly created affordable homeownership units, 547 units of preserved affordable rental (47% of which were affordable to households earning between 0 and 30% of AMI), and 1,620 newly created affordable units, about a quarter of which were affordable to households at or below 30% of AMI.

Figure 35. Units Created or Preserved with City Funding 2018-2020



HOST Funded Units

For more information on income-restricted housing in Denver, please take a look at our [Affordable Housing Dashboard](#).

Source: HOST [Affordable Housing Dashboard](#).

HOST investments may be funded by either federal or local funds administered by the city, depending on the project type and availability of funds. HOST currently makes investments according to published term sheets, with different terms depending on the type of project. HOST offers financing products to support rental housing (both tax credit projects and mixed-income projects), for-sale housing, land acquisition, and acquisition and/or rehabilitation of existing housing.

It is important to note that City investments into gap financing leverage many other tools at the federal, state, and local level to make affordable housing development possible. The cost to create and preserve housing when these other tools, such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, are not available can grow dramatically. The total development cost of a unit of affordable housing, after all these other sources are accessed, is about \$300,000 per unit. Further, to rent units affordably to households earning at or below 30% of the AMI, additional rental subsidies, called vouchers, are often needed. The following sections provide more information on some of these other sources of leverage and operating subsidy.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program was created in 1986 and is the country's largest affordable housing production program, creating about 100,000 units nationally each year. Tax credits are awarded on a per-capita basis to states. States then award tax credits to proposed affordable housing developments. Developers awarded tax credits can sell the credits to investors in order to raise money for the project.

In 2020, the Colorado Housing & Finance Authority (CHFA), which administers Colorado's LIHTC allocation, awarded credits to 25 developments statewide, which will support nearly 1,800 units.¹ Nine of these developments, which included about 700 units, were located in Denver. While Colorado has worked to expand the availability of tax credits by creating a state tax credit program to supplement federal allocation, the current volume of tax credits does not produce enough units to meet the needs of Colorado and Denver residents, leading urban, suburban, and rural communities statewide to compete for these limited resources. Efforts at the state and federal level to expand tools like LIHTC can have significant impact on the ability to meet our housing needs in Denver and across the state.

Housing Choice Vouchers

Another primary federal tool to help households afford housing is through the Housing Choice Voucher program funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and administered locally through the Denver Housing Authority (DHA) and State of Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) Division of Housing.

The Housing Choice Voucher program provides a rental subsidy that can either be "project-based" or "tenant-based" to help low-income households afford housing. The project-based voucher program helps to ensure that rental units reach the level of affordability needed to serve low-income households through low rents. Tenant-based vouchers help an individual household afford an otherwise market-rate unit with the voucher making up the difference between the fair market rent of an apartment and 30% of the household's income.

Vouchers are critical resources to ensure affordability to renters earning the lowest incomes. However, the voucher program is not sufficiently funded to meet the need: only 1 in 5 households who qualify for housing assistance receive it nationally with many households waiting years to receive assistance if they do.² Further, despite the passage of source of income protections, Denver households continue struggle to find apartments to rent in our high-cost market that fit within fair market rent requirements of their voucher. A multi-city study found that a household had to review at nearly 40 advertisements for apartments to find a single unit where they could likely use their voucher.³

The State of Colorado sought to expand voucher assistance by creating a state-funded voucher program with marijuana tax fund dollars. Denver has partnered with the State of Colorado Department of Local Affairs Division

1 Colorado Housing Finance Agency (CHFA). (2020). *2020 Housing Credit Guiding Principles and Priorities Scorecard*. <https://www.chfainfo.com/arh/lihtc/Documents/2020HousingCreditScorecard.pdf>.

2 Cunningham, M. (2021). *Universal Vouchers: Ending Homelessness and Expanding Economic Opportunity in America*. Urban Institute. https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/104335/universal-vouchers-ending-homelessness-and-expanding-economic-opportunity-in-america_1.pdf

3 Cunningham, M. et al. (2018, September). *A Pilot Study of Landlord Acceptance of Housing Choice Vouchers*. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/Landlord-Acceptance-of-Housing-Choice-Vouchers.pdf>

of Housing to use these vouchers to expand supportive housing. So far, the program has provided more than 100 vouchers to Denver supportive housing projects. Though these are critical new resources, additional need remains.

Supporting Programs that Promote HOST Goals

HOST works to support those experiencing homelessness and housing instability through partnership for the provision of housing, shelter, and other services. While the City has stepped in to help provide direct service for those experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic, HOST does not anticipate an ongoing role in regular operations beyond emergency response. Rather, the department enters into contracts with a wide variety of partners to provide much needed housing access, housing stability, and homelessness resolution services to the community. These partners receive funding through HOST to provide direct services to Denver residents through programs such as rental and utility assistance, tenant and homebuyer counseling, down payment assistance to purchase a home, shelter operations and other critical services. In 2020, HOST programmatic investments served more than 27,000 households.⁴

Land Acquisition

HOST works with its partners to utilize every available tool to help provide housing and services for those in need, including the acquisition of property. HOST has worked collaboratively with the Department of Finance's Division of Real Estate to acquire properties that are critical to the advancement of the City's housing and homelessness goals. For example, the acquisition of Crossroads Shelter allowed the City to maintain a crucial walk-up shelter location for men experiencing homelessness.

The City also acquired two parcels of land along East Colfax, in a neighborhood where planned investment (e.g., bus rapid transit) places the neighborhood at risk of gentrification pressures. The City sold parcels to three development partners for a minimal amount to support projects that would bring affordable housing and community resources to the neighborhood. One project will build 72 units of supportive housing, specializing in services for those with brain injuries, and the other will create 83 new apartments affordable to residents earning up to 80% AMI alongside commercial space and affordable child education services. Acquiring property maximizes the ability of the City to influence eventual development.

Policy and Legislative Efforts

HOST also works to advance policy and legislative changes that can help achieve its goals. For example, in 2018, the City amended the preservation ordinance to clarify notice and right of first refusal requirements and increase the minimum affordability period for rental housing development from 20 to 60 years. In 2019, City staff supported amendments to group living regulations within the zoning code to better meet Denver's housing needs by allowing more unrelated adults to share expenses and live together and clarify regulations and processes for shelters. Additional policy and legislative accomplishments can be found in HOST's annual reports.

⁴ Department of Housing Stability administrative data.

Housing Opportunity

Impact:

Residents have equitable access to housing options that meet their needs with easy access to community resources.

GOAL: Expand Access to Affordable Housing Opportunities

Phase 1 (years 1-2)

- Implement locally-funded voucher program to supplement federal and state voucher resources (e.g., Housing Choice Voucher program and State Housing Voucher program) and expand rental subsidies for supportive housing in new development.
- Explore financial innovations to accelerate the pipeline of supportive housing and homes for households below 50% Area Median Income.
- Implement mandatory housing program to ensure that affordable units, both for-rent and for-sale, are created in every market-rate development across the City, and especially in areas of opportunity.
- Ensure internal compliance monitoring systems are efficient and effective to accommodate a growing housing/loan portfolio, including underwriting and monitoring of federally funded loans.
- Coordinate with Department of Finance Division of Real Estate to complete land/property acquisitions in neighborhoods at risk of gentrification/involuntary displacement and in other areas of opportunity
- Pursue strategic acquisition of hotels and/or commercial properties for conversion/redevelopment into affordable housing.
- Partner with Community Planning and Development and other agencies involved in the development review process to prioritize affordable housing projects for permit review and approval to get affordable housing built sooner.
- Strengthen data collection and reporting tools to effectively track outcomes by race and ethnicity.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of programmatic support for accessory dwelling units for mitigating involuntary displacement, wealth-building, and other outcomes.

Phase 2 (years 3-5)

- Partner with agencies involved in the development review process to assess barriers to small-scale affordable housing and propose solutions that enable smaller projects (e.g., projects with a small number of units, accessory dwelling units, etc.).
- Maximize opportunities to partner with state or federal agencies (i.e., Regional Transportation District, Colorado Department of Transportation, State Land Board, etc.) regarding excess property disposition.
- Implement mandatory housing policies. Establish standards and systems to document and track activity, reporting, and compliance.
- Develop consistent guidelines and priorities for affordable housing and other community benefits in major redevelopment areas. where outcomes beyond those required by policy may be more appropriate. Coordinate with internal and external partners to apply these standards consistently in regulatory processes for high-impact developments (e.g., Large Development Review, Urban Renewal/Tax Increment Financing).

GOAL: Preserve Existing Affordable Homes

Phase 1 (years 1-2)

- Prioritize preservation of income restricted properties in neighborhoods that are at risk of gentrifying, vulnerable to involuntary displacement, investment impact neighborhoods, as well as high opportunity neighborhoods.
- Specific to Rental: Invest in the Preservation Network's Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing Preservation Fund established by Colorado Housing Finance Agency (CHFA) and the State of Colorado to leverage funding for preservation projects in Denver.
- Specific to Home Ownership: Support community land trust models and other innovative concepts that preserve long-term affordability for homeownership and initiate wealth-building practices for homeowners as part of our commitment to creating and preserving at least 7,000 homes.
- Update the Preservation Ordinance to align with long-term affordability goals and priorities for use of preservation funds.
- Leverage HOST's affordable housing database to identify home ownership and rental properties with expiring covenants.
- Leverage Colorado Futures Center's small properties database to identify naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) preservation priorities.

Phase 2 (years 3-5)

- Develop a program that incentivizes property owners with expiring covenants to maintain long-term affordability. Leverage opportunities for preservation partners to proactively engage with landlords/ owners who wish to sell.
- Specific to Rental: Develop and implement a capacity-building program for small property landlords, connecting them to resources that preserve quality affordable housing.
- Explore rental licensing data to identify opportunities for preservation.
- Negotiate greater affordability when funding rental preservation opportunities.

GOAL: Expand Homeownership Opportunities

Phase 1 (years 1-2)

- Using a prioritized and targeted geographic approach, increase awareness of homeownership opportunities and resources through public engagement efforts such as Housing Resource Fairs and local community events.
- Increase the supply of affordable homeownership opportunities by supporting new construction of for sale homes as part of our commitment to creating and preserving at least 7,000 homes.
- Expand down payment assistance programs to build pathways to homeownership for households impacted by past redlining district practices.
- Preserve affordable homeownership opportunities, including through the acquisition of naturally occurring affordable ownership homes as part of our commitment to creating and preserving at least 7,000 homes..
- Enhance partnerships with state and local agencies and partners to advance affordable housing and overcome barriers to secure project funding (e.g., joint underwriting, proactive problem solving, coordinating to maximize deployment of resources).
- Coordinate with Office of Financial Empowerment and Protection and other housing partners to provide financial counseling and literacy support.
- Analyze resale pricing strategy for restricted for-sale homes in order to better ensure long-term affordability.
- Leverage Prioritization Policy and associated data systems to improve access to affordable housing citywide.

Phase 2 (years 3-5)

- Implement intentional outreach education plans to focus on BIPOC households for affordable housing, homeownership programs, and more opportunities.

Impact:

Residents have choice in when and under what circumstances they move or remain in their homes and neighborhoods.

GOAL: Help Households Remain in their Home and Neighborhood of Choice

Phase 1 (years 1-2)

- Expand community navigation partnerships in neighborhoods vulnerable to involuntary displacement in partnership with Denver Economic Development & Opportunity's (DEDO) Neighborhood Equity Stabilization Team (NEST).
- Support expansion, improvement, and targeted outreach of housing stability programs (home repair, rehab, and accessibility modifications; home sharing) to help homeowners stay in their homes.
- Explore and identify possible funding sources for housing stability to increase levels of support that can be provided beyond emergency and pandemic recovery.
- Partner with city agencies to conduct investment impact analyses on city capital investments and tailor strategies and budget requests to help mitigate involuntary displacement in areas where capital investments could contribute to involuntary displacement.
- Support implementation of rental licensing program to better inform residents about their rights and available resources.
- Build a partnership with Denver Public Schools to help measure involuntary displacement of families with children.
- Implement long-term outcome tracking across housing stability programs.
- Evaluate demographics and geography for households served in alignment with impact framework and utilize equity lens to examine and improve access and performance.
- Support partners in developing data systems solutions to track applications in addition to households served to identify and remove barriers to service and improve targeting.

Phase 2 (years 3-5)

- If suitable and feasible funding exists (see first bullet in next section) and is pursued, explore programs for households that are voluntarily "doubled up," staying with family or friends in order to prevent an experience of homelessness. These programs might include first month's rent and deposit assistance as well as longer-term rental assistance known as a "shallow subsidy."
- Work with Denver Public Schools and Denver Office of Children's Affairs to develop communications strategies and referral systems for programs that support housing stabilization of families with children.
- Partner with Denver Human Services to better target outreach and explore additional expansion of the property tax rebate program.
- Explore an analysis of assessor's office records regarding the sale of rental properties.

GOAL 2: Reduce Evictions

Phase 1 (years 1-2)

- Support expansion, improvement, and targeted outreach of housing stability programs (rent and utility assistance, legal assistance, tenant/landlord counseling) to keep renters in their homes.
- Target rental assistance and housing navigation resources to households who do not receive a judgment after their eviction filing but who need assistance relocating to a new home.
- Identify and develop policies to prevent evictions and provide comprehensive tenant protections where state and federal law allow (e.g., eviction diversion; just cause/no fault eviction policies).
- Partner with Office of Financial Empowerment and Protection to help residents with strategies and services to increase income and provide financial counseling.
- Continue to coordinate with the Office of Immigrants and Refugees to share information on available programs and ensure policies and programs are accessible to immigrant and refugee communities.
- Utilize data on evictions from Denver County Court to evaluate what neighborhoods have the highest rates of evictions and use resulting analysis to target outreach and resources.

GOAL: Reduce Foreclosures in Income-restricted Homes

Phase 1 (years 1-2)

- Collaborate across HOST and other city agencies to develop and implement a coordinated and evidence-based outreach strategy to homeowners of income-restricted for-sale units to inform them of available resources (e.g., financial coaching, property tax rebate program, state financial assistance programs, etc.).
- Partner with Denver Clerk and Recorder's Office to benchmark the foreclosure rate among income-restricted units and establish target for reduction.
- Partner with Denver Clerk and Recorder's Office to analyze foreclosure trends (e.g., by neighborhood, among affordable and non-affordable homeownership units) to inform future planning.

Phase 2 (years 3-5)

- Use lessons learned from COVID-related mortgage assistance program and statewide efforts to provide mortgage assistance to design, fund, and implement a foreclosure prevention program targeting income-restricted for-sale units.
- Explore partnerships with utility providers or energy relief programs to identify and track indicators of housing instability.

Impact:

Residents experience homelessness rarely, and, if they do, it is brief and one time.

GOAL: Address Unsheltered Homelessness

Phase 1 (years 1-2)

- Better meet the diverse needs of residents experiencing homelessness by expanding support for range of safe, temporary options, including tiny homes, safe outdoor spaces and parking, and non-congregate shelter in addition to congregate shelter options with available recovery funding, including \$30 million of Government Obligation Bond funding for housing and shelter system investments, if passed, for the acquisition, conversion, and construction of non-congregate shelter.
- Administer the Early Intervention Team outreach program to support residents in encampments with help regaining housing, connection to safe, temporary places to stay, and connection to behavioral health and crisis stabilization resources when needed to reduce harm.
- Support housing outcomes for residents sleeping unsheltered by increasing rehousing support within outreach teams (e.g., case management, benefits and vital document acquisition, peer support) and coordinating access to expanded rehousing resources (e.g., through connection to OneHome)
- Improve transparency of encampment related activities by coordinating with Mayor's Office and partner city agencies to implement a standardized process by which the City will assess encampment risk and prioritization for clean-up and/or enforcement actions based on a set of consistent, publicly available criteria.
- Retain the ability to provide Safe Outdoor Space as an alternative to unsanctioned camping by pursuing longer-term solutions to allow for expansion of Safe Outdoor Space beyond the COVID-19 emergency
- Improve efficiency of housing connections by conducting process improvement project for connecting persons experiencing homelessness with housing.
- Develop and maintain real time, quality data (by name list) in HMIS of people staying unsheltered
- Develop common outcome framework for all outreach teams and establish goals

Phase 2 (years 3-5)

- Help connect residents to behavioral health resources and housing by coordinating with Denver Department of Public Health and Environment to expand medically assisted treatment and same day or on-demand treatment options and coordinate with the Solutions Center to integrate housing planning into discharge planning, and coordinate access to stabilization services and other care with homelessness service providers.

GOAL: Expand Pathways to Successful Rehousing

Phase 1 (years 1-2)

- Meet diverse resident needs and use resources efficiently by expanding a range of rehousing strategies, including rapid resolution, bridge housing, and rapid rehousing.
- Explore innovative opportunities and financing models to bring on additional housing, including hotel acquisition and rehabilitation and social impact bond financing based on health savings created by supportive housing
- Support income-based strategies for homelessness resolution, including intentional targeting of HOST programs and support for innovation (e.g., Universal Basic Income Pilot)

- Demonstrate what works to resolve homelessness through regional participation in the Built for Zero effort to end veteran homelessness and use these learnings to improve supports for all Denver residents experiencing homelessness.
- Partner with Denver Housing Authority (DHA) to effectively use existing housing choice vouchers to support homelessness resolution goals.
- Help residents experiencing homelessness increase their income by partnering with Denver Economic Development & Opportunity (DEDO) and Denver Human Services (DHS) to expand access to benefits, job training, and apprenticeships.
- Work with partners to gather real time, quality data in Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) for all populations
- Evaluate needs for landlord engagement to support rehousing outcomes
- Assess lessons learned from University of Denver evaluation of basic income pilot and other income-based strategies to identify promising practices.

Phase 2 (years 3-5)

- Support long-term housing stability for residents experiencing homelessness by partnering with Denver Housing Authority and Colorado Division of Housing to leverage federal and state resources, like the Emergency Housing Voucher program, to expand tenant-based long-term vouchers with the ability to layer on supportive services when needed.
- Expand support for the permanent supportive housing pipeline through continued partnership with Denver Housing Authority and Colorado Division of Housing, local services funding, and creation of locally funded voucher program.
- Explore opportunities for shared housing and other more affordable housing options.

GOAL: Complete Shelter System Transformation Toward Rehousing

Phase 1 (years 1-2)

- Provide consistent levels of service throughout the shelter system that reduce barriers to entry and improve guest experience by continuing to offer 24/7 models of service, including non-congregate options that can accommodate couples; support targeted, accessible transportation solutions; provide storage and support personal space and privacy, particularly in large shelters; and offer at least one shelter for each subpopulation that can accommodate pets. Establish shelter standards of service.
- Increase shelter options that are gender-inclusive and designed for all gender identities.
- Improve access to supports by seeking partnerships with existing agencies to provide critical services to shelter guests. This includes coordinating with behavioral health providers to offer clinical staff within shelters to support de-escalation and behavioral health support, working with transportation providers to create accessible transportation options for residents experiencing homelessness, and forging connections with long-term care systems to increase access to needed services among guests who need support with activities of daily living.
- Improve shelter system functioning to meet the needs of all guests by providing training, process improvement, and support for partners to minimize turn-aways and do-not-returns, support for translation and other support to ensure policies are culturally and language-level appropriate, and implementing inclusive policies for LGBTQ+ guests and support Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations.
- Standardize emergency and continuity of operations planning for shelter options for persons experiencing homelessness
- Develop plan, including contract reporting requirements, for tracking instances of temporary or permanent bans from a shelter location in HMIS and analysis to track demographics of clients who receive bans to identify any disparate impact
- Assess current data and create new data collection processes where needed to track inflow

Phase 2 (years 3-5)

- Identify and overcome barriers to access by creating forum for systems collaboration to better serve guests with complex needs, including those with activities of daily living (ADL) needs, collecting data to determine the impact of these issues, and use that data to inform strategy.
- Require real time, quality data in HMIS for all populations

GOAL: Improve Homelessness Resolution System for Families

Phase 1 (years 1-2)

- Support families in crisis by expanding capacity in congregate and non-congregate shelter options for families as well as other time-limited options such as transitional or bridge housing alongside additional case management support.
- Ensure connections across the homeless service system by coordinating with MDHI and OneHome on work to establish clear access points for homelessness services and housing
- Help meet the needs of all guests by providing training and support for partners to implement inclusive policies for LGBTQ+ guests and support ADA accommodations
- Help families increase income by collaborating with Denver Economic Development and Opportunity and Denver Human Services for benefits, job training, and apprenticeship opportunities
- Require real time, quality data in HMIS for all populations
- Improve data on family members in HMIS

Phase 2 (years 3-5)

- Support family stability by increasing housing and income-based strategies, including homelessness prevention, time-limited rehousing supports (e.g., first month's rent and deposit assistance, rapid rehousing), dedicating long-term subsidies to families experiencing homelessness, integrating appropriate support services when needed, and exploring innovative financing models (e.g., social impact bond).
- Maximize effectiveness of use of housing choice vouchers by partnering with Denver Housing Authority on strategic use of homelessness preference.
- Explore housing stability of families after leaving rehousing strategies to identify returns to homelessness and explore need for shallow subsidies

Far Right:
A guests at Urban Peak
Drop in Center receives
employment assistance.
(Evan Semón)

Right:
A bulletin board
encourages guests at
the men's congregate
shelter operated by Denver
Rescue Mission at 4600 E.
48th Ave.
(Evan Semón)



Impact:

Denver residents and HOST partners will receive efficient, timely and transparent support, and have confidence that HOST is measuring what matters and effectively engaging the community.

GOAL: Expand Communications and Community Engagement**Phase 1 (years 1-2)**

- Establish a departmental standard operating procedure to ensure timely response to community concerns and inquiries.
- Better utilize existing communications channels (media relations, newsletter, website) and create new ones as needed (social media, videography, blog, etc.).
- Redesign HOST website with various audiences' information needs in mind, including answers to frequently asked questions and contact information, integrate translation tools, and ensure accessibility.
- Develop internal trainings on communications and engagement, including City Council processes, media relations, public meetings, and open records requests.
- Develop process for getting regular feedback from community members with lived expertise of housing instability, affordable housing, and homelessness to inform HOST annual planning, procurement, etc.
- Develop and implement intentional communications and community engagement plans for each of our priority areas of work informed by best practices and a proactive, strategic approach.
- Expand outreach to neighborhood groups and earn media opportunities on the impact of housing for Denver residents, including the use of storytelling.
- Work with the homelessness resolution outreach teams to develop more effective shelter and services referral tools.
- Develop framework for community engagement around new development or service locations with attention to including voices of those who need and benefit from affordable housing, as well as community residents, and integrating community-led development principles for development in historically marginalized communities.
- Develop outreach strategy for HOST and other city housing programs targeted to residents/neighborhoods most in need (leveraging findings from TRUA outreach randomized control trial) and that removes barriers to access (e.g., language, lack of internet access, etc.).
- Ensure materials are co-created and translated to reach Denver residents who do not speak English; prioritize language access and culturally-appropriate messaging.
- Develop and implement an engagement strategy that includes everyday people (beyond City Council and Registered Neighborhood Organizations) and focuses on two-way communication with more intentional listening.
- Lead citywide effort to coordinate communications about how the City works to address homelessness across agencies, including, in particular, the unauthorized camping ordinance and encampment clean ups.
- Create audience-segmented contact lists to ensure we are reaching the right people with the right information.
- Produce a broad array of materials and presentations, and establish a HOST speakers bureau to help educate and inform city employees and the community about housing stability, affordable housing and homelessness.

Phase 2 (years 3-5)

- Develop system for compensating community members with lived expertise for their time contributing as a means by which to create equity with those providing professional expertise.
- Develop trainings and tools to help ensure HOST's communications and community engagement standards are extended and operationalized through our partners' work.

GOAL: Expand and Support Partnerships through Transparent, Efficient, and Effective Procurement, Contracting, and Financial Processes

Phase 1 (years 1-2)

- Procurement: Improve transparency in the procurement process by:
 - Providing notice of expected procurements on the HOST website ahead of formal posting;
 - Notifying the community and applicants of proposals HOST intends to award by posting this information to HOST's website;
 - Partnering with the City Attorney's Office and General Services to clarify allowable communication between City and prospective applicants during procurement process;
 - Posting information on frequently asked questions to the HOST website.
- Procurement: Further integrate commitment to advancing equity into the procurement process.
- Contracting and Financial: Make it easier for partners to work with HOST by:
 - Assessing barriers to working with HOST and prioritizing improvements within legal parameters; and
 - Implementing trainings and onboarding processes to help partners meet contracting, budget, and invoice documentation requirements.
- Contracting and Financial: Provide greater stability in funding by executing multi-year contracts whenever appropriate to better support partner agency planning and program implementation.
- Contracting and Financial: Improve efficiency and transparency on how to work with HOST by:
 - Clarifying processes and procedures;
 - Developing resources to provide clarity on program components and frequently used expenditure types; and
 - Publicly posting relevant forms, instructions, and other resources on the HOST website related to contracting, budget and invoice documentation requirements.
- Contracting and Financial: Implement timely, clear, and consistent process for contract monitoring.
- Expand functionality and use of HOST data systems to support more efficient electronic contracting and invoicing processes and tracking.

Phase 2 (years 3-5)

- Pilot performance-based contracting with a sample of HOST contracts to determine benefits, implementation challenges, and alignment with requirements of other funding sources.

GOAL: Deepen Data Infrastructure to Provide Transparency and Accountability, Inform Decision-making, and Support Continuous Improvement

Phase 1 (years 1-2)

- Develop and launch publicly available dashboard to report out on strategic plan outcomes and measures to track progress and provide transparency and accountability
- Clarify partner reporting expectations by refining and implementing training plans for HOST partners on required reporting platforms and by providing technical assistance as needed to ensure data completeness and quality.
- Fund and implement data system to improve access to affordable housing citywide and support implementation of prioritization policy and help match residents with available affordable housing options.
- Develop, fund, and implement a survey of residents in HOST-supported affordable housing programs at least bi-annually to assess resident characteristics, long-term stability, and other outcomes, as well as to identify service needs to better support long-term stability.

- Increase capacity to use data to advance equity (e.g., tracking households served by race/ethnicity, comparing demographics of households served to households in need, using data to identify strategies to improve access, etc.).
- Report on income-restricted units by detailed AMI ranges and tenure (e.g., at or below 30% of AMI, 31-40% of AMI, etc.).

Phase 2 (years 3-5)

- Develop and provide a publicly available finance dashboard showing available budget and expenditures.
- Complete housing needs analysis to inform HOST investments to assess housing needs, identify neighborhood-level factors, track trends in households moves and homelessness, integrating data from related agencies and systems where available (e.g., utility shut off data, voucher utilization data, etc.).
- Align output and outcome measures across HOST program types and integrate outcome measures more consistently across HOST contracts for programs starting in 2024.

GOAL: Advance Citywide and Regional Approaches, including Policy and Legislative Agenda

Phase 1 (years 1-2)

- Work with partner organizations to reimagine the annual housing forum as a regional housing and homelessness conference.
- Lead coordination of citywide strategy to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time for Denver residents and ensure responses to homelessness and community needs are aligned with this impact.
- Work with partners to ensure regional organizations are using HMIS (Homeless Management Information System).
- Explore and identify possible funding sources for housing stability to increase levels of support that can be provided beyond emergency and pandemic recovery.
- Advance prioritization policy, which would provide priority to residents who are at risk of displacement or who have been displaced for new affordable homes, for consideration by the Mayor's Office and impacted city agencies, and, pending feasibility, move the project forward for subsequent adoption by City Council and implementation.
- Explore policies to reduce discrimination in housing (e.g., criminal backgrounds, income/work requirements).

Phase 2 (years 3-5)

- Work with regional system partners to address and reduce substance use disorder, overdose and deaths, and deaths from weather exposure.
- Explore with regional partners and appropriate legislative bodies the feasibility of regional taxing measures to address affordable housing and homelessness.
- Advocate for efforts to expand federal and state supports for affordable housing (e.g., voucher programs).
- Support efforts to advance key land use strategies to advance affordable housing outlined in Blueprint Denver. These include:
 - Diversify housing choice through the expansion of accessory dwelling units and remove barriers to the construction.
 - Increase the development of affordable and mixed-income housing throughout the city and particularly in areas near transit, services and amenities. Additionally, support the creation of zoning incentives and other incentives to increase the supply of affordable housing in these developments.
 - Diversify housing options to explore opportunities to integrate missing middle housing types (duplexes, row house, and small apartments) throughout the city.
 - Support regulatory and zoning code changes that reduce barriers to the creation of affordable housing.
- Develop and maintain real time, quality data (by name list) in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) of people staying unsheltered.

Photos from upper left clockwise:

Colburn Hotel preservation project
(HOST staff).

A v Volunteer helps set up the library an activity center at the National Western auxiliary shelter during the COVID-19 pandemic.
(Kevin Beaty)

A guest hugs Cuica Montoya at the Safe Outdoor Spaces site run by Colorado Village Collaborative at 16th Avenue and Pearl Street.
(Evan Semón)

A Guest at Urban Peak takes a moment to pose for the photographer.
(Urban Peak)

A man eats lunch at the National Western auxiliary shelter during the COVID-19 pandemic.
(Denver Rescue Mission)



Appendix F1 - Program and Development Strategies

- Implement locally-funded voucher program to supplement federal and state voucher resources (e.g., Housing Choice Voucher program and State Housing Voucher program) and expand rental subsidies for supportive housing in new development.
- Explore financial innovations to accelerate the pipeline of supportive housing and homes for households below 50% Area Median Income.
- Implement mandatory housing program to ensure that affordable units, both for-rent and for-sale, are created in every market-rate development across the City, and especially in areas of opportunity.
- Partner with agencies involved in the development review process to assess barriers to small-scale affordable housing and propose solutions that enable smaller projects (e.g., projects with a small number of units, accessory dwelling units, etc.).
- Ensure internal compliance monitoring systems are efficient and effective to accommodate a growing housing/loan portfolio, including underwriting and monitoring of federally funded loans.
- Coordinate with Department of Finance Division of Real Estate to complete land/property acquisitions in neighborhoods at risk of gentrification/involuntary displacement and in other areas of opportunity
- Pursue strategic acquisition of hotels and/or commercial properties for conversion/redevelopment into affordable housing.
- Maximize opportunities to partner with state or federal agencies (i.e., Regional Transportation District, Colorado Department of Transportation, State Land Board, etc.) regarding excess property disposition. Negotiate greater affordability when funding rental preservation opportunities.
- Prioritize preservation of income restricted properties in neighborhoods that are at risk of gentrifying, vulnerable to involuntary displacement, investment impact neighborhoods, as well as high opportunity neighborhoods.
- Develop a program that incentivizes property owners with expiring covenants to maintain long-term affordability. Leverage opportunities for preservation partners to proactively engage with landlords/ owners who wish to sell.
- Develop and implement a capacity-building program for small property landlords, connecting them to resources that preserve quality affordable housing.
- Invest in the Preservation Network's Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing Preservation Fund established by Colorado Housing Finance Agency (CHFA) and the State of Colorado to leverage funding for preservation projects in Denver.
- Support community land trust models and other innovative concepts that preserve long-term affordability for homeownership and initiate wealth-building practices for homeowners as part of our commitment to creating and preserving at least 7,000 homes
- Using a prioritized and targeted geographic approach, increase awareness of homeownership opportunities and resources through public engagement efforts such as Housing Resource Fairs and local community events.
- Increase the supply of affordable homeownership opportunities by supporting new construction of for sale homes as part of our commitment to creating and preserving at least 7,000 homes.
- Implement intentional outreach education plans to focus on BIPOC households for affordable housing, homeownership programs, and more opportunities.
- Expand down payment assistance programs to build pathways to homeownership for households impacted by past redlining district practices.
- Preserve affordable homeownership opportunities, including through the acquisition of naturally occurring affordable ownership homes as part of our commitment to creating and preserving at least 7,000 homes.
- Enhance partnerships with state and local agencies and partners to advance affordable housing and overcome barriers to secure project funding (e.g., joint underwriting, proactive problem solving, coordinating to maximize deployment of resources).

- Expand community navigation partnerships in neighborhoods vulnerable to involuntary displacement in partnership with Denver Economic Development & Opportunity's (DEDO) Neighborhood Equity Stabilization Team (NEST).
- Support expansion, improvement, and targeted outreach of housing stability programs (home repair, rehab, and accessibility modifications; home sharing) to help homeowners stay in their homes.
- If suitable and feasible dedicated funding exists (see first bullet in next section) and is pursued, explore programs for households that are voluntarily "doubled up," staying with family or friends in order to prevent an experience of homelessness. These programs might include first month's rent and deposit assistance as well as longer-term rental assistance known as a "shallow subsidy."
- Provide legal counsel in eviction proceedings for at least 2,000 households annually; and increase proportion of low- and moderate-income households facing eviction who have legal representation.
- Support expansion, improvement, and targeted outreach of housing stability programs (rent and utility assistance, legal assistance, tenant/landlord counseling) to keep renters in their homes.
- Target rental assistance and housing navigation resources to households who do not receive a judgment after their eviction filing but who need assistance relocating to a new home.
- Use lessons learned from COVID-related mortgage assistance program and statewide efforts to provide mortgage assistance to design, fund, and implement a foreclosure prevention program targeting income restricted for-sale units.
- Better meet the diverse needs of residents experiencing homelessness by expanding support for range of safe, temporary options, including tiny homes, safe outdoor spaces and parking, and non-congregate shelter in addition to congregate shelter options with available recovery funding, including \$30 million of Government Obligation Bond funding for housing and shelter system investments, if passed, for the acquisition, conversion, and construction of non-congregate shelter.
- Support housing outcomes for residents sleeping unsheltered by increasing rehousing support within outreach teams (e.g., case management, benefits and vital document acquisition, peer support) and coordinating access to expanded rehousing resources (e.g., through connection to OneHome)
- Administer the Early Intervention Team outreach program to support residents in encampments with help regaining housing, connection to safe, temporary places to stay, and connection to behavioral health and crisis stabilization resources when needed to reduce harm.
- Meet diverse resident needs and use resources efficiently by expanding a range of rehousing strategies, including rapid resolution, bridge housing, and rapid rehousing.
- Support long-term housing stability for residents experiencing homelessness by partnering with Denver Housing Authority and Colorado Division of Housing to leverage federal and state resources, like the Emergency Housing Voucher program, to expand tenant-based long-term vouchers with the ability to layer on supportive services when needed.
- Expand support for the permanent supportive housing pipeline through continued partnership with Denver Housing Authority and Colorado Division of Housing, local services funding, and creation of locally funded voucher program.
- Explore innovative opportunities and financing models to bring on additional housing, including hotel acquisition and rehabilitation and social impact bond financing based on health savings created by supportive housing
- Support income-based strategies for homelessness resolution, including intentional targeting of employment programs and support for innovation (e.g., Universal Basic Income Pilot)
- Better meet resident needs and make the shelter system more accessible and impactful by establishing clear, well-known access points for shelter that offer universal screening for rapid resolution resources and increasing case management within shelters targeted toward helping guests regain housing.

- Provide consistent levels of service throughout the shelter system that reduce barriers to entry and improve guest experience by continuing to offer 24/7 models of service, including non-congregate options that can accommodate couples; support targeted, accessible transportation solutions; provide storage and support personal space and privacy, particularly in large shelters; targeted supports for youth and seniors within the shelter system; and offer at least one shelter for each subpopulation that can accommodate pets. Establish shelter standards of service.
- Increase shelter options that are gender-inclusive and designed for all gender identities.
- Better meet the needs of families experiencing homelessness by establishing clear, well-known access points that offer universal screening for rapid resolution and connection with safe temporary places to stay when needed.
- Support families in crisis by expanding capacity in congregate and non-congregate shelter options for families as well as other time-limited options such as transitional or bridge housing alongside additional case management support.
- Support family stability by increasing housing and income-based strategies, including homelessness prevention, time-limited rehousing supports (e.g., first month's rent and deposit assistance, rapid rehousing), dedicating long-term subsidies to families experiencing homelessness, integrating appropriate support services when needed, and exploring innovative financing models (e.g., social impact bond).
- Communications and Community Engagement:
 - Establish a departmental standard operating procedure to ensure timely response to community concerns and inquiries.
 - Better utilize existing communications channels (media relations, newsletter, website) and create new ones as needed (social media, videography, blog, etc.).
 - Redesign HOST website with various audiences' information needs in mind, including answers to frequently asked questions and contact information, integrate translation tools, and ensure accessibility.
 - Develop internal trainings on communications and engagement, including City Council processes, media relations, public meetings, and open records requests.
 - Develop process for getting regular feedback from community members with lived expertise of housing instability, affordable housing, and homelessness to inform HOST annual planning, procurement, etc.
 - Develop system for compensating community members with lived expertise for their time contributing as a means by which to create equity with those providing professional expertise.
 - Develop and implement intentional communications and community engagement plans for each of our priority areas of work informed by best practices and a proactive, strategic approach.
 - Expand outreach to neighborhood groups and earn media opportunities on the impact of housing for Denver residents, including the use of storytelling.
 - Work with the homelessness resolution outreach teams to develop more effective shelter and services referral tools.
 - Develop framework for community engagement around new development or service locations with attention to including voices of those who need and benefit from affordable housing, as well as community residents, and integrating community-led development principles for development in historically marginalized communities.
 - Develop outreach strategy for HOST and other city housing programs targeted to residents/neighborhoods most in need (leveraging findings from temporary rental and utility assistance outreach randomized control trial) and that removes barriers to access (e.g., language, lack of internet access, etc.).
 - Ensure materials are co-created and translated to reach Denver residents who do not speak English; prioritize language access and culturally-appropriate messaging.

- Develop and implement an engagement strategy that includes everyday people (beyond City Council and Registered Neighborhood Organizations) and focuses on two-way communication with more intentional listening.
- Develop trainings and tools to help ensure HOST's communications and community engagement standards are extended and operationalized through our partners' work.
- Produce a broad array of materials and presentations, and establish a HOST speakers bureau to help educate and inform city employees and the community about housing stability, affordable housing and homelessness.
- Procurement:
 - Improve transparency in the procurement process by:
 - Providing notice of expected procurements on the HOST website ahead of formal posting;
 - Notifying the community and applicants of proposals HOST intends to award by posting this information to HOST's website;
 - Partnering with the City Attorney's Office and General Services to clarify allowable communication between City and prospective applicants during procurement process;
 - Posting information on frequently asked questions to the HOST website.
 - Further integrate commitment to advancing equity into the procurement process by continuing to gather data on staff demographics and organizational commitment to equity and develop expectations for contracted partners.
- Contracting and Financial Processes:
 - Make it easier for partners to work with HOST by
 - Assessing barriers to working with HOST and prioritizing improvements within legal parameters; and
 - Implementing trainings and onboarding processes to help partners meet contracting, budget, and invoice documentation requirements.
 - Provide greater stability in funding by executing multi-year contracts whenever appropriate to better support partner agency planning and program implementation.
 - Improve efficiency and transparency on how to work with HOST by:
 - Clarifying processes and procedures;
 - Developing resources to provide clarity on program components and frequently used expenditure types.
 - Publicly posting relevant forms, instructions, and other resources on the HOST website related to contracting, budget and invoice documentation requirements.
 - Implement timely, clear, and consistent process for contract monitoring.
- Pilot performance-based contracting with a sample of HOST contracts to determine benefits, implementation challenges, and alignment with requirements of other funding sources.
- Develop and launch publicly available dashboard to report out on strategic plan outcomes and measures to track progress and provide transparency and accountability
- Develop and provide a publicly available finance dashboard showing available budget and expenditures
- Clarify partner reporting expectations by refining and implementing training plans for HOST partners on required reporting platforms and by providing technical assistance as needed to ensure data completeness and quality.
- Work with partner organizations to reimagine the annual housing forum as a regional housing and homelessness conference.
- Work with regional system partners to address and reduce substance use disorder, overdose and deaths, and deaths from weather exposure.
- Work with regional system partners to address and reduce substance use disorder, overdose and deaths, and deaths from weather exposure.
- Work with regional system partners to address and reduce substance use disorder, overdose and deaths, and deaths from weather exposure.

Appendix F2 - Policy and Systems Change

- Implement mandatory housing policies. Establish standards and systems to document and track activity, reporting, and compliance.
- Develop consistent guidelines and priorities for affordable housing and other community benefits in major redevelopment areas. where outcomes beyond those required by policy may be more appropriate. Coordinate with internal and external partners to apply these standards consistently in regulatory processes for high-impact developments (e.g., Large Development Review, Urban Renewal/Tax Increment Financing).
- Partner with Community Planning and Development and other agencies involved in the development review process to prioritize affordable housing projects for permit review and approval to get affordable housing built sooner.
- Partner with Community Planning and Development to promote middle-density (2-19 units) development to create more pathways to homeownership for low- and moderate-income households.
- Update the Preservation Ordinance to align with long-term affordability goals and priorities for use of preservation funds.
- Coordinate with Office of Financial Empowerment and Protection and other housing partners to provide financial counseling and literacy support.
- Explore and identify possible funding sources for housing stability to increase levels of support that can be provided beyond emergency and pandemic recovery.
- Advance prioritization policy, which would provide priority to residents who are at risk of displacement or who have been displaced for newly developed affordable homes, for consideration by the Mayor's Office and impacted city agencies, and, pending feasibility, move the project forward for subsequent adoption by City Council and implementation.
- Partner with city agencies to conduct investment impact analyses on city capital investments and tailor strategies and budget requests to help mitigate involuntary displacement in areas where capital investments could contribute to involuntary displacement.
- Support implementation of rental licensing program to better inform residents about their rights and available resources.
- Build a partnership with Denver Public Schools to help measure involuntary displacement of families with children.
- Work with Denver Public Schools and Denver Office of Children's Affairs to develop communications strategies and referral systems for programs that support housing stabilization of families with children.
- Partner with Denver Human Services to better target outreach and explore expansion of the property tax rebate program.
- Identify and develop policies to prevent evictions and provide comprehensive tenant protections where state and federal law allow (e.g., eviction diversion; just cause/no fault eviction policies).
- Partner with Office of Financial Empowerment and Protection to help residents with strategies and services to increase income and provide financial counseling.
- Continue to coordinate with the Office of Immigrants and Refugees to share information on available programs and ensure policies and programs are accessible to immigrant and refugee communities.
- Collaborate across HOST and other city agencies to develop and implement a coordinated and evidence-based outreach strategy to homeowners of income-restricted for-sale units to inform them of available resources (e.g., financial coaching, property tax rebate program, state financial assistance programs, etc.).

- Improve transparency of encampment related activities by coordinating with Mayor's Office and partner city agencies to implement a standardized process by which the City will assess encampment risk and prioritization for clean-up and/or enforcement actions based on a set of consistent, publicly available criteria.
- Help connect residents to behavioral health resources and housing by coordinating with Denver Department of Public Health and Environment to expand medically assisted treatment and same day or on-demand treatment options and coordinate with the Solutions Center to integrate housing planning into discharge planning, and coordinate access to stabilization services and other care with homelessness service providers.
- Retain the ability to provide Safe Outdoor Space as an alternative to unsanctioned camping by pursuing longer-term solutions to allow for expansion of Safe Outdoor Space beyond the COVID-19 emergency.
- Improve efficiency of housing connections by conducting process improvement project for connecting persons experiencing homelessness with housing.
- Demonstrate what works to resolve homelessness through regional participation in the Built for Zero effort to end veteran homelessness and use these learnings to improve supports for all Denver residents experiencing homelessness.
- Partner with Denver Housing Authority (DHA) to effectively use existing housing choice vouchers to support homelessness resolution goals.
- Help residents experiencing homelessness increase their income by partnering with Denver Economic Development & Opportunity (DEDO) and Denver Human Services (DHS) to expand access to benefits, job training, and apprenticeships.
- Explore opportunities for shared housing and other more affordable housing options.
- Improve access to supports by seeking partnerships with existing agencies to provide critical services to shelter guests. This includes coordinating with behavioral health providers to offer clinical staff within shelters to support de-escalation and behavioral health support, working with transportation providers to create accessible transportation options for residents experiencing homelessness, and forging connections with long-term care systems to increase access to needed services among guests who need support with activities of daily living.
- Identify and overcome barriers to access by creating a forum for systems collaboration to better serve guests with complex needs, including those with activities of daily living (ADL) needs, collecting data to determine the impact of these issues, and use that data to inform strategy.
- Improve shelter system functioning to meet the needs of all guests by providing training, process improvement, and support for partners to minimize turn-aways and do-not-returns; support for translation and other support to ensure policies are culturally and language-level appropriate; implement inclusive policies for LGBTQ+ guests; and support Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations.
- Partner with Denver Human Services to implement a Mass Care Department Operations Center (DOC) to standardize emergency and continuity of operations planning for shelter and other services, including options for persons experiencing homelessness.
- Ensure connections across the homeless service system by coordinating with Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) and OneHome on work to establish clear access points for homelessness services and housing.
- Help meet the needs of all guests by providing training and support for partners to implement inclusive policies for LGBTQ+ guests and support ADA accommodations.
- Maximize effectiveness of use of housing choice vouchers by partnering with Denver Housing Authority on strategic use of homelessness preference.
- Help families increase income by collaborating with Denver Economic Development and Opportunity and Denver Human Services for benefits, job training, and apprenticeship opportunities.

- Lead citywide effort to coordinate communications about how the City works to address homelessness across agencies, including, in particular, the unauthorized camping ordinance and encampment clean ups.
- Lead coordination of citywide strategy to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time for Denver residents and ensure responses to homelessness and community needs are aligned with this impact.
- Explore with regional partners and appropriate legislative bodies the feasibility of regional taxing measures to address affordable housing and homelessness.
- Explore and identify possible funding sources for housing stability to increase levels of support that can be provided beyond emergency and pandemic recovery.
- Advance prioritization policy, which would provide priority to residents who are at risk of displacement or who have been displaced for newly developed affordable homes, for consideration by the Mayor's Office and impacted city agencies, and, pending feasibility, move the project forward for subsequent adoption by City Council and implementation.
- Support efforts to reduce barriers to affordable housing created through the zoning code and continue to implement land use strategies for affordability outlined in *Blueprint Denver*, such as:
 - Streamlining and facilitating the development of accessory dwelling units as a tool to stabilize residents at risk of involuntary displacement;
 - Strategies to promote a diversity of residential development types throughout Denver, including density as a tool to increase housing supply and introduce affordability; and
 - Development incentives that support affordable housing projects and promote the development of more mixed-income projects citywide.
- Partner with Community Planning and Development and community partners on the Neighborhood Planning Initiative and use area plans to inform HOST Annual Action Plans.
- Explore policies to reduce discrimination in housing (e.g., criminal backgrounds, income/work requirements).
- Advocate for efforts to expand federal and state supports for affordable housing (e.g., voucher programs).



At left: An employee folds guest clothing at the women's shelter operated by Catholic Charities at 4330 E. 48th Ave. (Evan Semón)

Appendix F3 - Data and Reporting

- Strengthen data collection and reporting tools to effectively track outcomes by race and ethnicity.
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of programmatic support for accessory dwelling units for mitigating involuntary displacement, wealth-building, and other outcomes.
 - Explore rental licensing data to identify opportunities for preservation.
 - Leverage HOST's affordable housing database to identify home ownership and rental properties with expiring covenants.
 - Leverage Colorado Futures Center's small properties database to identify naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) preservation priorities.
 - Analyze resale pricing strategy for restricted for-sale units in order to better ensure long-term affordability.
 - Leverage Prioritization Policy and associated data systems to improve access to affordable housing citywide.
- Implement long-term outcome tracking across housing stability programs.
 - Evaluate demographics and geography for households served in alignment with impact framework and utilize equity lens to examine and improve access and performance.
 - Support partners in developing data systems solutions to track applications in addition to households served to identify and remove barriers to service and improve targeting.
 - Explore an analysis of assessor's office records regarding the sale of rental properties.
 - Utilize data on evictions from Denver County Court to evaluate what neighborhoods have the highest rates of evictions and use resulting analysis to target outreach and resources.
 - Partner with Denver Clerk and Recorder's Office to benchmark the foreclosure rate among income-restricted units and establish target for reduction.
 - Partner with Denver Clerk and Recorder's Office to analyze foreclosure trends (e.g., by neighborhood, among affordable and non-affordable homeownership units) to inform future planning.
 - Explore partnerships with utility providers or energy relief programs to identify and track indicators of housing instability.
- Develop and maintain real time, quality data (by name list) in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) of people staying unsheltered.
 - Develop common outcome framework for all outreach teams and establish goals.
 - Work with partners to gather real time, quality data in Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) for all populations.
 - Evaluate needs for landlord engagement to support rehousing outcomes.
 - Assess lessons learned from University of Denver evaluation of basic income pilot and other income-based strategies to identify promising practices.
 - Require real time, quality data in HMIS for all populations.
 - Develop plan, including contract reporting requirements, for tracking instances of temporary or permanent bans from a shelter location in HMIS and analysis to track demographics of clients who receive bans to identify any disparate impact.
 - Assess current data and create new data collection processes where needed to track inflow.
 - Improve data on family members in HMIS.
 - Explore housing stability of families after leaving rehousing strategies to identify returns to homelessness and explore need for shallow subsidies.

- Create audience-segmented contact lists to ensure we are reaching the right people with the right information.
- Expand functionality and use of HOST data systems to support more efficient electronic contracting and invoicing processes and tracking.
- Fund and implement data system to improve access to affordable housing citywide and support implementation of prioritization policy and help match residents with available affordable housing options.
- Complete housing needs analysis to inform HOST investments to assess housing needs, identify neighborhood-level factors, track trends in households moves and homelessness, integrating data from related agencies and systems where available (e.g., utility shut off data, voucher utilization data, etc.).
- Align output and outcome measures across HOST program types and integrate outcome measures more consistently across HOST contracts for programs starting in 2024.
- Report on income-restricted units by detailed AMI ranges and tenure (e.g., at or below 30% of AMI, 31-40% of AMI, etc.)
- Develop, fund, and implement a survey of residents in HOST-supported affordable housing programs at least bi-annually to assess resident characteristics, long-term stability, and other outcomes, as well as to identify service needs to better support long-term stability.
- Increase capacity to use data to advance equity (e.g., tracking households served by race/ethnicity, comparing demographics of households served to households in need, using data to identify strategies to improve access, etc.).
- Work with partners to ensure regional organizations are using HMIS (Homeless Management Information System).

At right: Announcement of Stay Inn with local, federal, and state support (Theresa Marchetta)



At left: Habitat for Humanity makes the American Dream of homeownership a reality for families throughout Denver. (Habitat for Humanity Metro Denver)



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HOUSING STABILITY