Overview and Executive Summary

Twelve thousand eight hundred and eleven (12,811).

In 2021, a statewide needs assessment of housing for Homeless and Special Needs Populations was completed by the Corporation for Supportive Housing, a national nonprofit that works to advance affordable housing aligned with services. The Corporation for Supportive Housing contracted with Florida Housing Finance Corporation to conduct a detailed analysis of the housing needs for homeless and special needs households throughout the state. At the point in time of this needs assessment, the number of households supportive housing need that was 12,811.

Permanent Supportive Housing is simply affordable rental housing with access to voluntary supportive services that help establish and maintain housing stability and include access to activities of daily living and community-based services. This affordable housing solution is leased to households for continued occupancy so long as the tenant complies with the terms of the lease.

In 2022, the Florida Supportive Housing Coalition convened a Policy Day with stakeholders from numerous state agencies as well as key housing and services providers to discuss the statewide needs related to households utilizing Permanent Supportive Housing. At this Policy Day, representatives from the Executive Office of Governor recommended the formation of a Statewide Workgroup that would focus on strategies and solutions to improve the overall Permanent Supportive Housing system of care that would streamline efforts and bring efficiencies to what has historically been a siloed approach.

This report reflects months of discussion through meetings of this Workgroup, review of housing philosophy and models, examination of data from the aforementioned needs assessment, an assessment of successful programs currently practiced in Florida, as well consideration of existing Florida programs that could be modified and/or enhanced to further support Permanent Supportive Housing in the state.

The culmination of this report presents the following recommendations:

1. Develop an Interagency Approach to Coordinating & Sustaining Permanent Supportive Housing.

   The state of Florida should consider adopting an interagency approach to the provision of Permanent Supportive Housing. A coordinated effort will allow for the best and most efficient use of resources to serve vulnerable households. Additionally, a coordinated interagency approach will allow Florida to design programs with longevity and continuing models in mind.

2. Coordinate Efforts to Design Programs & Braid Funding to Create Sustainable Solutions.

   A true interagency approach to solving the problems identified in the Permanent Supportive Housing system, will allow for a coordinated effort in both program design and funding for these programs. Basing (or integrating existing) programs into a more holistic model will allow state agencies to communicate regarding participating households. A coordinated effort would also allow households to seamlessly move between services without the challenges of "beginning again" with each funder.

3. Establish New Approaches to Assist Residents in Achieving Self-Sufficiency & Moving to Independent Housing.

   Through the interagency approach described within this report and a coordinated effort to truly integrate resources and programs, will allow the state to identify key opportunities to innovate and develop new approaches that can further the supports of Permanent Supportive Housing. This approach will allow Florida to examine new uses for existing funds, while also charting a path to lead the nation in providing critical housing supports and achieving self-sufficiency among residents in Permanent Supportive Housing.

The following data is pulled from the statewide needs assessment referenced earlier that was completed in 2021.

Subpopulations Assessed	Estimated SH Unit Need (households)	Estimated AH Unit Need (households)	Unit Need Totals (SH+AH)
Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness	4,664	518	5,128
Individuals Experiencing Non-Chronic Homelessness	1,580	13,866	15,446
Families Experiencing Homelessness*	296	913	1,209
Families Living Doubled Up or in Hotels/Motels	1,346	43,508	44,854
Individuals Exiting Prison	319	1,278	1,597
Youth Aging Out of Foster Care	625	1,875	2,500
Homeless Individuals with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI) and/or Substance Use Disorder (SUD) in Residential or Inpatient Treatment Settings**	726	1,742	2,468
Persons with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) Requiring Independent Living Services	995	1,990	2,985
Survivors of Domestic Violence	80	1,520	1,600
Child Welfare-Involved Families with an Adult with Special Needs	2,180	***	2,180
Individuals and Families Receiving SSDI, SSI, or Veterans Disability Benefits	****	76,941	76,941
State Totals	12,811	144,151	156,962

Introduction to the Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup

History

In 2022, the Florida Supportive Housing Coalition hosted a Policy Day in Tallahassee. Representatives from the Executive Office of the Governor, multiple State Agencies, and other key stakeholders gathered to discuss supportive housing and the households served. The group discussed the need to increase production of housing units for persons with special needs, how to improve access, coordination and funding for supportive services, and the importance of creating data-driven solutions that cross State Agencies and systems of care.

This group examined data from a recently completed statewide needs assessment and worked to identify and outline short- and long-term strategies to address the needs of households that require supportive housing services.

At this Policy Day, the Governor's Office recommended establishing a statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup consisting of State Agency leadership to identify housing and supportive services policies and actions that can be implemented to best address the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors.

Problem Statement

Despite a growing number of Permanent Supportive Housing units becoming available each year, and a strong presence of supportive services providers in the state a true coordinated effort at addressing the Permanent Supportive Housing needs is missing. There have been attempts at coordinating pilot(s) or demonstration-type efforts to connect housing and services, but these initiatives have been managed at the local level rather than by state policy makers and funders of the housing and supportive services.

In an effort to identify solutions, this Workgroup presents the following report identifying the specific need to address Permanent Supportive Housing throughout the state as well strategies to address these needs.

Defining Permanent Supportive Housing

To ensure consistency among definitions the Workgroup adopted the following definition of Permanent Supportive Housing.

> *Permanent Supportive Housing shall support housing stability, access to activities of daily living, community-based services, and inclusion in the general community through voluntary participation in supportive services.*

Permanent Supportive Housing is defined as affordable rental housing leased to households for continued occupancy. Tenancy is based on a lease for term as long as the tenant complies with lease requirements.

Charge of Workgroup

The State's Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup has been identified as a group of key policy makers for the purpose of developing a statewide Action Plan that will bring together State Agencies for the purpose of identifying efficiencies, improving existing efforts, and charting a course of future collaboration and coordination including the development of budget and policy recommendations for consideration by the Governor and the Legislature.

Needs Assessment

During the 2017 legislative session, the Florida Legislature created a short-term Affordable Housing Workgroup to develop recommendations to address the state's affordable housing needs. The Workgroup recommended that Florida Housing should find the resources to conduct a state level needs assessment to identify the statewide affordable and supportive housing needs by special needs and homeless populations and perform financial modeling to address the housing needs of each subpopulation.

Florida Housing contracted with the Corporation for Supportive Housing to carry out this statewide housing needs assessment. The report is meant to help Florida better understand the more specific housing needs across these sub-populations – for example, how many Permanent Supportive Housing units versus general rental units are needed for these populations. The assessment also projects the cost of subsidizing a portion of operating expenses, as well as costs that supportive service providers or property owners subsidize in lowering cost barriers to entry (application costs, security deposits and the like) for the lowest income, hardest to serve of these tenants. While a very important part of providing successful supportive housing, the assessment does not consider the need for and cost of supportive services that many of these households need to assist them in living successfully in independent housing.

Based on the findings from this needs assessment, an estimated 156,962 homeless and/or Special Needs households were identified as having a need for either supportive or affordable housing. Of the total number of households in this analysis, 12,811 (8%) require Supportive Housing, while the remaining 92% need affordable housing supports only.

A Foundational Pilot Initiative

Studies around the country show that cost savings to public systems, particularly for crisis services, occur when individuals who are high utilizers of these services are provided with supportive housing. In late 2012, Florida Housing hosted a forum with state agencies and key stakeholders to discuss best practices to integrate supportive housing and community-based services. The group agreed it would be helpful to pursue a pilot to develop supportive housing targeting persons experiencing chronic homelessness who are high utilizers of expensive, publicly funded crisis services, such as emergency rooms and jails. The purpose of the pilot would be two-fold: to evaluate whether cost savings are possible in Florida when providing supportive housing; and to measure whether residents participating in the pilot could also have improved personal outcomes.

In 2021, a final report including the findings from this pilot was released summarizing the results of the cost savings evaluations as well as residents' personal outcomes. In addition to the pilot's results, the report discusses concerns that arose during implementation related to the fragmentation of the housing and services infrastructure in Florida, particularly around coordination and funding of services in supportive housing settings.

Using $10 million appropriated by the State Legislature, Florida Housing awarded development financing through a competitive application to three experienced non-profit housing providers with committed local supportive service partners. In addition to the applicant's ability to successfully develop and manage a property and experience serving persons experiencing chronic homelessness, Florida Housing sought housing organizations that were part of a broader community partnership with a network of participating organizations that would be able to provide the services and supports necessary for the pilot.

Each pilot committed to partner with knowledgeable researchers to carry out a multi-year study. The purpose of the research was to evaluate whether cost savings are possible through coordinated local and state public-private partnerships to provide Permanent Supportive Housing – that is, affordable rental housing with supportive services. The research was also required to provide an evaluation of the residents' health, self-sufficiency, and other outcomes over the study period. Resident participation in the studies was voluntary. Each study included costs of any residency/shelter and services for two years before residency, and for two years after the supportive housing and services were provided. In addition to housing costs, the public system utilization costs include the judicial system, emergency shelters, emergency and inpatient hospital/clinic stays, physical and behavioral health services and other homelessness services.

The full report and individual pilot reports may be found on Florida Housing's website.

Members of Workgroup

Members of the Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup include representatives from the following:

- Agency for Health Care Administration;

- Agency for Persons with Disabilities;

- Department of Children and Families;

- Department of Elder Affairs;

- Department of Veterans Affairs;

- Executive Office of the Governor, Office of Policy and Budget; and

- Florida Housing Finance Corporation.

In addition to serving as a member of the Workgroup, staff from Florida Housing Finance Corporation provided administrative support.

Current Models and Programs

This report presents the current state of Permanent Supportive Housing in Florida, while also providing recommendations and strategies for addressing any opportunities for improvement.

The earlier definition of Permanent Supportive Housing provides an objective, more clinical approach. To understand the long-term more nuanced aspects of Permanent Supportive Housing, one must examine it from both a broader scope and in a more meticulous manner.

Pillars of Permanent Supportive Housing

There are three core fiscal tenets or investments that are essential to the successful implementation of Permanent Supportive Housing: Development Financing, Supportive Services, and Rental Assistance. Together these three investments ensure the success of the vulnerable households being served.

- *Development Financing.* Capital for development financing is essential for the creation of Permanent Supportive Housing units. The design and models implemented will vary based on individual communities and the needs therein. Ideally an individual accessing Permanent Supportive Housing only knows that the home they are living in is their own. The model(s) for designing and coordinating Permanent Supportive Housing fall into two broad categories: Scattered Site and Site-based Permanent Supportive Housing. The broader design concepts of each model will depend on who is being served, the needs of the households being served, and the community where the housing is placed.

- *Supportive Services.* As noted earlier Permanent Supportive Housing includes a bevy of supportive services aimed at housing stability, providing access to activities of daily living, community-based services, and inclusion in the general community all of which are voluntary. Access to and funding for these services is necessary for the long-term stability and self-sufficiency.

- *Rental Assistance.* Because of the complex needs of households that occupy Permanent Supportive Housing units, many struggle with financial security. Based on any abilities that may be limited – intellectual, physical and/or mental health – many of the individuals and households may lack the financial capabilities to access market rate or even affordable housing, so additional rental assistance may be required for stability. This rental assistance may come in the form of short-term rental assistance or longer-term rental assistance vouchers.

Permanent Supportive Housing Models

As defined earlier in this report, Permanent Support Housing is achieved through an individual's access to independent housing and is designed to support and increase an individual's housing stability, improve access to activities of daily living through community-based services, and address place individuals in the general community. An individual's continued access to the housing is based upon compliance with lease requirements and any participation in supportive services is voluntary. Evidence-based Best Practices and research have established that successful outcomes of Permanent Supportive Housing are achieved through fidelity to the Housing First approach or philosophy.

- *Housing First Philosophy.* Housing First is a model for addressing homelessness and housing instability for vulnerable populations providing households with decent and stable permanent housing as quickly as possible without required conditions of sobriety or participation in treatment. While this philosophy is based in values of individual autonomy and flexibility, it should not only encompass housing, but rather have services and supports offered throughout.

The definition included in this report of Permanent Supportive Housing emphasizes the environment in which a household accesses Permanent Supportive Housing is truly individualized through an affordable option with a lease for tenancy. This autonomy is fundamental for the shift toward self-sufficiency of each individual being served.

- *Scattered Site Permanent Supportive Housing Model.* The scattered site housing model places households experiencing or at-risk of housing instability in apartments scattered throughout a community. Rental assistance often covered through vouchers connected to the individual renting the apartment.

- *Site-based Permanent Supportive Housing Model.* A site-based (or project-based) housing model uses a number of strategies to ensure rental assistance and/or vouchers are utilized to support a specific apartment complex or development. This approach ensures that housing remains affordable within the broader community.

Existing Programs with the Ability to Strengthen Permanent Supportive Housing Efforts

The state of Florida is well positioned to continue its support of Permanent Supportive Housing initiatives. As noted earlier, Florida is adding additional Permanent Supportive Housing units each year and has a strong foundation of supportive services needed for housing stability among households accessing Permanent Supportive Housing. The following programs are

examples of existing efforts by state agencies to support vulnerable households to address housing instability and work toward household self-sufficiency.

- *Agency for Persons with Disabilities iBudget Program.* The iBudget Florida waiver administered by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities offers supports and services to assist individuals with developmental disabilities to live in their communities. Services are provided based on need. The primary categories include different levels of Life Skills Development, Medical Supplies and Equipment, Personal Supports, Residential Services, Supportive Services Coordination, Transportation, Dental Services and Therapeutic Supports and Wellness Services.

- *Agency for Health Care Administration 1115 Medicaid Waiver Program.* The Agency for Health Care Administration implemented a housing assistance pilot, in collaboration with certain health plans, beginning in late 2019. Through this program, Florida Medicaid is providing evidence-based community supports and services that assist in securing housing for Medicaid recipients ages 21+ who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and have a serious mental illness or substance use disorder. Covered services include but are not limited to tenancy sustaining services, mobile crisis management, self-help/peer support services, and limited incidental coverage.

- *Florida Housing Finance Corporation High Utilizer Housing and Services Pilot with Housing Providers and Managing Entities.* Florida Housing awarded $40 million in financing to three Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) properties for a new pilot. A small portion of the units – 20% or a minimum of 15 units – will house "High Utilizers" of public behavioral health crisis services or individuals that are a high priority for diversion from acute health care services and institutional settings. The focus of this new 3-year pilot is on those High Utilizers who part of the state's behavioral healthcare system through the Managing Entities and are facing housing instability due to their behavioral health care situation. The long-term objective of the pilot is to create a collaborative approach to state-administered funding for both housing and services to build a replicable model for the future.

- *Department of Children and Families Hope Florida: A Pathway to Prosperity.* The Hope Florida: A Pathway to Prosperity program is designed to provide individualized supports to ensure economic self-sufficiency. Staff of this program help connect individuals and families to supportive services in the private sector, faith community, and nonprofit organizations while developing long-term goals to address the needs identified by the participating households.

- *Department of Children and Families and Continuums of Care Collaboration.* The Department of Children and Families' Homelessness Prevention Program administers

funding to the 27 Continuums of Care (CoCs) and serves as a single point of contact for the CoCs and other agencies, organizations, and stakeholders serving individuals at-risk of homelessness and individuals experiencing homeless.

- ***Department of Children and Families Independent Living Program for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care.*** An example of [Permanent Supportive Housing for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care](#) includes scattered site placement into individual apartments throughout the community. These efforts are aimed at supporting youth exiting the foster care system that are Extremely Low-Income. The Community Based Care agencies support youth through continual communication with the property, as well as offering supports for the specific youth. Eligible young adults ages 18-23 receive wrap-around services including financial assistance and help navigating adulthood through Extended Foster Care, Postsecondary Education Services and Support (PESS) and Aftercare programs.

- ***Florida Housing Finance Corporation Housing Stability for Homeless Schoolchildren Initiative.*** This [initiative](#) pairs federal rental assistance with wrap around supports from a network of local providers including the Public Housing Authority, the School District's homeless liaison, and a case management organization. A local network of providers supports families with school-aged children through improved employment opportunities, access to community-based supports and services, and educational supports. Participating households have seen marked improvements in school attendance, academic performance, and increased housing stability.

- ***Continuum of Care and Housing Authority Rental Assistance Programs.*** In each community the local homeless Continuum of Care lead agency, as well as the local Housing Authority provide critical rental assistance for income qualifying households. Rental assistance may be provided directly to the individual household through tenant-based rental assistance or through project(site)-based rental assistance.

Note: The projects described above provide a critical service to the households served, yet not all households as eligible for participation in any one program. As with all state and federal funding resources, the funding is often restricted to households that meet eligibility criteria of the funding sources and/or the administering agency/organization.

The following table provides a summary of how the existing model programs described above supports the three core tenets of Permanent Supportive Housing.

Program/Activity	Development Financing	Supportive Services	Rental Assistance
iBudget Program		x	
Medicaid 1115 Wavier Program		x	

High Utilizer Pilot Program	x	x	
Pathways to Prosperity Program		x	
Independent Living Program for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care		x	x
Housing Stability for Homeless Schoolchildren Program			x
Continuum of Care & Public Housing Authority Rental Assistance Programs			x

Enhancements to Existing Efforts

The prior section highlights specific programs that provide critical services and supports for residents of Permanent Supportive Housing. Equally as important is examining programs where slight modifications can be made (or similar programs replicated from these examples) to improve upon or further the tenets of Permanent Supportive Housing in a way that does not unnecessarily duplicate efforts or detract from the existing program(s). Below are minor examples that have been discussed by the Workgroup in an effort to improve upon existing programs.

- *Moving to Independence Link Referral Program.* Consider establishing a similar program to Florida Housing's Link Referral Program, that assists households moving out of Permanent Supportive Housing to independent housing.

- *Rental Assistance Programs.* State agencies should examine eligible uses of funds to determine if rental assistance may be provided. When the costs of short-term rental assistance may prevent higher cost services and/or disrupt the household, rental assistance should be prioritized.

- *Updates to the Certified Peer Support Program.* The Certified Peer Support Specialist Program provides a valued service and perspective. However, the current program includes significant barriers that prevent interested individuals from serving as a Certified Peer Support Specialist such as criminal history. Possible enhancement may include revisiting existing requirements to ensure that there are not unintentional barriers that prohibit interest and utilization of this valuable service.

- *Resident Councils.* Encourage the implementation of Resident Councils in Permanent Supportive Housing Developments. Resident Councils are positioned to welcome new members to the community and build a more collective shared environment. Resident

Councils often provide a platform for residents to discussed common needs or observations with owners and property management.

- *Healthcare Assistance Available Onsite.* In Permanent Supportive Housing developments with individuals or households with more acute medical and/or behavioral health needs, the value of having healthcare assistance (i.e., nurse practitioners) available is advantageous. This is often best accomplished through partnerships with other community organizations/agencies. Sustained funding for these types of positions would be helpful.

- *Expanding Definitions of Community Health Workers and Peer Specialists.* In order to provide a broader level of support for individuals living in Permanent Supportive Housing that also utilize medical and/or behavioral health supports, consider revising and/or defining specific terms that will allow for a broader use of existing federal and state resources.

- *Data Sharing Agreements.* Efforts should be made to increase collaboration between state agencies and contracting entities through data sharing agreements. Improved coordination can help facilitate smooth transitions of the funder of service while minimizing disruption in services regardless of the funding source.

- *Housing Providers as Medicaid Providers.* Conduct outreach to Permanent Supportive Housing providers to determine interest in adding Medicaid as a possible source of billing for supportive services provided. Examine ways to encourage (and simplify) enrollment for nontraditional Medicaid providers.

- *Increased supports as needs increase.* Establish a way to identify increased needs and ensure there is a way to pair more intensive services with these needs to maintain stability for households that are in Permanent Supportive Housing.

- *Turn Successful Pilots into Ongoing Initiatives.* Each state agency should explore ways to establish a continued funding path for successful pilot initiatives into expanded ongoing funded initiatives. Emphasis on new innovations (pilot projects) should not decrease, but also include possibilities for new funding.

- *Public Permanent Supportive Housing Dashboard.* Develop a public facing dashboard that integrates eligibility requirements, so households can determine what housing options they qualify for.

Challenges Faced with Existing Efforts.

Independently, Florida has many strong programs that are accomplishing important work in the realm of Permanent Supportive Housing. However, despite adding to the stock of Permanent Supportive Housing units annually, and a strong base of supportive services available to residents, many times these efforts are siloed and operate independently of one another. This unintentional disconnect can lead to unnecessary duplication of services, missed opportunities for the individuals being served, and creates inefficient systems of service delivery.

The following recommendations are designed to create a system in which state agencies are able to self-assess and reflect on missing opportunities, as well as having policy makers ask the broader question of "what are we not addressing, and why?"

Opportunities for Future Innovation & Solutions

Throughout meetings of this Workgroup, three topics continued to surface as strategies for improvement and creating a coordinated approach that will allow Florida to serve as a model to the nation for the provision of Permanent Supportive Housing:

1. Develop an Interagency Approach to Coordinating & Sustaining Permanent Supportive Housing;

2. Coordinate Efforts to Design Programs & Braid Funding to Create Sustainable Solutions; and

3. Establish New Approaches to Assist Residents in Achieving Self-Sufficiency & Moving to Independent Housing.

The following recommendations provide a broad overview of strategies that can be used to better coordinate and facilitate the delivery of Permanent Supportive Housing throughout Florida. These recommendations seek to ensure that a holistic system is designed that addresses the development financing needs required to create new Permanent Supportive Housing throughout the state, as well as coordinate and fund the array of supportive services utilized by individuals living in Permanent Supportive Housing, and ensure that rental assistance is available for income constrained households living in Permanent Supportive Housing.

Develop an Interagency Approach to Coordinating & Sustaining Permanent Supportive Housing

Multiple versions of an interagency approach have been discussed by the Workgroup. This could come in the form of more intentional coordination and data sharing or through the creation of a new Office within the Executive Office of the Governor, whose purpose would be to facilitate alignment and coordinate efforts of state agencies for the delivery and implementation of Permanent Supportive Housing throughout Florida.

Regardless of the approach these efforts should explore formal interagency agreements aimed at prioritizing Housing First referrals and providing additional supportive services for vulnerable households living in Permanent Supportive Housing. Interagency coordination could take several forms, including but not limited to several of the following recommendations.

- *Increase in designated housing stock.* The shortage of affordable housing is evident for all populations. An emphasis should be placed on developing additional Permanent Supportive Housing for populations identified in the Florida Assessment of Housing for Homeless and Special Needs Populations. Specific efforts should take into account age demographics within each of these populations, specifically vulnerable seniors.

- *Housing Stability/Supportive Services Funding.* Identify a dedicated funding source designed to ensure housing stabilization supports and services for individuals living in Permanent Supportive Housing.

- *Rental Assistance & Arrearages Funding.* State agencies should examine eligible uses of funds to determine if rental assistance may be provided. When the costs of short-term rental assistance may prevent higher cost services and/or disrupt the household, rental assistance should be prioritized. State agencies should examine eligible uses of funds to determine if arrearages assistance may be provided.

- *Data Sharing Agreements.* Efforts should be made to increase collaboration between state agencies and contracting entities through data sharing agreements. Improved coordination can help facilitate smooth transitions of the funder of service while minimizing disruption in services regardless of the funding source.

- *Public Permanent Supportive Housing Dashboard.* Develop a public facing dashboard that integrates eligibility requirements, so households can determine what housing options they qualify for.

- ~~*Creation of a Coordinated Entry System for Permanent Supportive Housing.* The HUD-designated Homeless Continuum of Care lead agencies manage a Coordinated Entry System at the local level currently.~~

Coordinate Efforts to Design Programs & Braid Funding to Create Sustainable Solutions

In an effort to build upon the initial recommendation to develop an interagency approach, the Workgroup recommends further coordination for the purposes of program planning and design as well as taking an intentional approach to funding. Taking a true interagency approach will help to create more comprehensive services model designed to support individuals and households by reducing the duplication of services, while also ensuring that key resources are invested in each community and that specific needs are not overlooked.

A fully integrated state program and policy effort to develop and (re)design programs that best serve vulnerable Floridians will also create a more efficient and effective statewide delivery system. Examples of how this can be achieved may include but are not limited to the following efforts.

- *Long Range Program Planning.* State agencies participating in the interagency efforts to coordinate Permanent Supportive Housing should take into account and review the Long Range Program Plan for each respective agency. This level of coordination and collective planning will ensure that efforts are not duplicative in an unnecessary

manner, nor are there key services that are missed for households accessing Permanent Supportive Housing.

- *Evidence-based Best Practices.* Policy makers should collaborate to ensure that program design is rooted in Evidence-based Best Practices, while also allowing for customization. Joint consultation in program design will allow for the maximization of innovative program and potential for braided funding to create new programs.

- *Flexible Services Funding.* Funders that provide resources dedicated to supportive services should explore pairing resources or dedicating flexible resources to create innovative approaches through pilot programs. This process should allow services providers to customize evidence-based best practices in ways that further an individual's or household's housing stability and self-sufficiency.

- *Provider Enrollment & Capacity Building.* Targeted efforts to expand provider enrollment and capacity building will allow agencies to establish new partnerships while also increasing the number of community partners and grow local expertise for Permanent Supportive Housing and supportive services providers. Examples of capacity building measures may include Permanent Supportive Housing development institutes or an intensive training aimed at helping prepare providers to engage in all aspects of this work.

- *Sustainability Planning.* State agencies should explore permanent funding options for any rental assistance and supportive services. Additionally, a sustainable model for operational funding should be considered given that in cases where individuals and households attain stability and work toward self-sufficiency the billing for supportive services will likely decline, yet the infrastructure will likely need to remain in place should the individual or household need to come back from additional supports.

Establish New Approaches to Assist Residents in Achieving Self-Sufficiency & Moving to Independent Housing

After working to design a truly coordinated interagency approach to Permanent Supportive Housing, and exploring ways to design programs and interweave funding, the Workgroup recognizes that conducting evaluations and assessing for new innovative approaches will allow Florida to lead the nation in the quality provision of Permanent Supportive Housing.

In addition to understanding successful programs, Florida should invest in new, innovative approaches that help its most vulnerable citizens achieve housing stability and self-sufficiency, when possible. To accomplish these efforts there must be an introspective approach to

evaluating existing programs, defining success and exploring new ways to achieve results. Examples include but are not limited to the following.

- *Analyze Existing Programs.* State agencies participating in this Workgroup should conduct a careful analysis of existing programs and identify both successful and unsuccessful metrics of programs identified within this report and others that may be related to Permanent Supportive Housing.

- *Re-evaluate Success.* Any analysis of existing programs must also consider the definition of success. Recognizing that success is defined differently by each program, funder, and individual can present a challenge, however taking a holistic approach can provide opportunities to re-assess criteria and discover new approaches for assessing metrics and outcomes.

- *Interagency Discussion & Planning.* By following the recommendations laid out in this report, the Workgroup recognizes the cyclical nature (and importance) of collaborative planning to design 0the most effective approaches. After reviewing existing programs and determining efficacy and identifying new possibilities for targeted approaches, continued discussions about future programmatic evolution and innovation is essential.

- *New Program Funding (or Repurposed Funding).* For new approaches and programs, state agencies should identify new funding resources. In cases where older programs are not meeting the intended outcomes the state agency should explore other eligible uses and reallocate these funds to newer and/or more successful projects.

- *Develop Strategies for Expanding & Enhancing Successful Pilot Projects.* With an emphasis on investing in new and innovative strategies to address Permanent Supportive Housing, there must be an intentional effort to maintain success. An interagency effort to identify opportunities to continue new projects is essential. Efforts should be made to codify newly identified programs and best practices in state policy and statute to ensure that funding is available to support high performing projects and providers.