

Regional Homelessness Portfolio of Strategies Framework

Updated 3.23.21

I. Mission for Regional Strategy Portfolio

On the basis of research, data analysis, and extensive outreach, the following **mission statement** will be used as a one of the criteria to prioritize the regional strategies and as the basis for performance metrics.

The desired impact is to catalyze communities to provide an increased and geographically dispersed regionwide range of housing-focused options for people experiencing and/or at risk of experiencing homelessness. This will be achieved by creating a collaborative regional initiative that uses a coordinated suite of evidenced-based, sustainable strategies that centers people with lived experience, racial equity, and inclusion.

Housing-focused options include, but are not limited to, prevention and diversion assistance, emergency shelter, Rapid Rehousing, Permanent Supportive Housing, bridge housing, affordable housing, and wrap around services.

II. Regional Strategy Portfolio Process and Timeline

Fall 2020/Winter 2021 - Strategy Research Begins - Research on local strategies and national best practices to develop strategy portfolio of over 12-15 potential strategies and approaches

Winter 2021 - Analysis of Feedback and Local Data - Launched extensive, ongoing stakeholder feedback process, including one-on-one interviews, surveys, committee meetings; conducted comprehensive analysis of data, reports, evaluations and other local qualitative and quantitative data

January 2021 - Develop Guiding Principles - Guiding Principles approved by Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care, MAG Management Committee, and MAG Regional Council

Feb - March 2021 - Develop Regional Goals - Regional Goals vetted with the Maricopa Regional CoC Board, CoC, MAG Management Committee, and MAG Regional Council in March 2021.

March - May 2021 - Identify Priority Strategies for Action - Seek Approval by CoC Board, MAG Management Committee, MAG Regional Council and other partners

June 2021 - Implementation Launch

Fall 2021 - Regional Plan Kickoff - Development of Regional Plan to End Homelessness begins with a focus on subpopulations and more extensive analysis

III. Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles were approved in January 2021 by the Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care, MAG Management Committee, and MAG Regional Council.

Per the principles, this work will be:

- **Regional**
 - Housing, shelter, services and assistance need to be available throughout the region. All communities have a role in the regional response to homelessness.
 - Establishing a strong regional infrastructure to address homelessness will benefit local communities in their efforts. Infrastructure includes “hard” assets such as housing and shelter, as well as “soft” assets like benefits and services.
- **Sustainable**
 - The regional infrastructure must be sustainable financially. A diversity of funding sources and other resources are needed for the long-term.
 - The infrastructure also needs to be politically viable. Elected officials have an important role in catalyzing community support.
- **Inclusive**
 - Development of the strategies to strengthen the infrastructure needs to be grounded in the expertise of the municipalities, nonprofit agencies, and community leaders, including business. Homelessness cannot be solved by any one sector. The most effective solutions will reflect diverse perspectives and priorities.
 - The work to develop the regional infrastructure strategies will leverage existing bodies of work, emerging opportunities, and the most effective practices nationally as well as locally.
 - The strategies, as well as the process to develop the strategies, will reflect the region and the population being served. This means fully and consistently incorporating the voices of people who have directly experienced homelessness and the diversity of this population, including, but not limited to, different races, ethnicities, national origin, abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities, and religions.
- **Accountable**
 - This work will be driven by high quality data shared in a neutral manner.
 - The end outcome will be the implementation of impactful strategies that strengthen the regional infrastructure to address homelessness, resulting in fewer numbers of

people experiencing homelessness and a stronger safety net to prevent additional people from becoming homeless.

- The outcome must be measurable and sustainable. Progress made will be monitored and mid-course adjustments will be made as needed.

IV. Regional Goals

Regional Goals were vetted with the Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care, MAG Management Committee, and MAG Regional Council in March 2021. These goals will be founded on diverse perspectives, including people with lived experience, a racial equity lens, and high-quality data.

Five Goals were identified:

- Substantially increase flexible funding for homeless assistance and diversion programs from (amount) to (amount) by (timeline) to get and keep people stably housed.
- Geographically disperse homeless shelters.
- Expand the supply, variety and location of permanent housing options that are affordable to people at 80 percent below average median income.
- Strengthen multi-sector collaborations to close gaps in homeless service delivery.
- Increase prevention and diversion programs.

Goals with Justifications and Potential Strategies

Goal 1: Substantially increase flexible funding for homeless assistance and diversion programs from (amount) to (amount) by (timeline) to get and keep people stably housed.

- Justification: Providers identified the need through outreach, demonstrated national best practice

Examples of Possible Strategies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct an inventory of existing pools and funding sources to determine gaps. Utilize the funding sources analysis previously developed to start this analysis and supplement with information as needed. - Identify an existing pool to supplement existing funding pools if the efforts are aligned and the partners are receptive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If no other pool meets this need, develop a new funding pool specifically designed to provide flexible funding that fills in gaps left by other funding sources with intentional messaging that differentiates the efforts. Be diligent in structuring the pool with the purpose of funding items left uncovered by other pools. Promote the usage of other pools for eligible
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	<p>costs and use this funding pool for the remaining uncovered expenses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (For example, some funders will cover non-refundable deposits and fees, but it is uncommon but still necessary to cover refundable fees.)
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Goal 2: Geographically disperse homeless shelters.

- **Justification:** The majority of current homeless assistance programs are centralized in high density geographic locations. This creates a strain on the communities that house these programs and leaves service deserts in communities that do not house the programs.

Examples of Possible Strategies

Work closely with communities to develop the will and resources to site new small shelters utilizing the following options. Use siting study results to help with community acceptance.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hotel rooms - Shared housing, temporary setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New shelter facilities

Goal 3: Expand the supply, variety and location of permanent housing options that are affordable to people at 80 percent below average median income.

- **Justification:** Increasingly, residents in the valley report being unsure that they can pay their rent in the next month, with up to 274,000 households at risk of eviction statewide. In the Phoenix Metro Area, nearly half a million households spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing and more than 200,000 households spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing. Some people experiencing homelessness are precluded from obtaining housing because their incomes are too low to qualify. More support needs to be given to ensure that people with little to no income can access and maintain housing. Also, barriers like previous judgements can prevent a person from accessing housing even when it is otherwise available.

Examples of Possible Strategies

Work closely with communities to develop the will and resources to site new housing utilizing the following options. Use siting study results to help with community acceptance.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovative options such as tiny homes, pallet homes, etc. - Apartments - Shared housing, permanent setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Home ownership - Landlord engagement and incentives

Goal 4: Strengthen multi-sector collaborations to close gaps in homeless service delivery.

- Justification: Reported gaps and opportunities among a variety of sectors such as law enforcement, education, healthcare, and domestic violence stakeholders.

Examples of Possible Strategies

Develop sector-specific interventions, such as:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closer coordination with the homelessness liaisons to connect homeless families with assistance more quickly - Revised homeless screening tools that better reflect HUD’s full definition of homelessness and regional priorities that better assess all people for housing, including special populations such as survivors of domestic violence. - Continue to enhance existing service delivery and partnerships through training, capacity building, and removal of barriers to multi-sector collaborations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional Misdemeanor Offender Program with law enforcement - Increase access to safe and diverse coordinated entry sites and alternatives to physical access points through virtual options. - Strengthen the access to high quality data that supports informed decision-making, program development, and strategic planning. - Continue building capacity in the Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care to serve as a leader in regional homeless policy. - Continue the Regional Collaborative on Homelessness to support regional planning efforts.

Goal 5: Increase prevention and diversion programs.

- Justification: Data indicates many people are not confident of their ability to their rent or mortgage in the coming months. The current COVID-19 relief funding has temporarily stalled the full impact of this being felt in the region. When this assistance ends, the current programs will not be enough to keep people stably housed long term. Some populations are fairly well-served by existing diversion programs, while other populations such as single individuals need more focused support. There is a need to increase the number and capacity of diversion programs, as well specifically target new diversion programs on the areas of greatest need.

Examples of Possible Strategies

Work closely with diverse community partners in key areas such as:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening support for existing rental and utility assistance programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replicating successful models of employment programs.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amplifying landlord engagement campaigns to increase the supply of housing available. - Developing tenant education campaigns to help them know their rights and options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding mitigation programs to divert people from entering homeless shelter and service programs. - Supporting diversion/rapid exit programs that make homelessness rare, brief and non-reoccurring.
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V. Four Key Factors for Prioritization

Factor 1: Is the strategy *ripe for action*?

- Demonstrated success in this region or other communities in the country?
- Support of local stakeholders?
- Can progress on the strategy be measured and support structures for accountability, including via input and feedback of those with lived experience?
- Sustainable over time, building a system to end homelessness?
- Create opportunities for capacity building?
- Deepen buy-in of providers and other key partners?

Factor 2: Is the strategy *impactful in making homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring*?

- Significantly increase overall number of people exiting homelessness?
 - e.g. by increasing supply, diversity, location, and quality of housing options
- Significantly reduce the overall number of people becoming homeless and meaningfully support upstream solutions?
- Significantly increase the number of people exiting homelessness who remain housed?
- Emphasize solutions or processes to help the most vulnerable populations, including those experiencing exploitation?
- Address the needs of people at risk of homelessness when COVID-19 eviction moratoriums are lifted?
- Integrate best practices such as trauma informed care and other harm reduction approaches?
- Support self-sufficiency and engage partners who can assist with workforce development efforts?

Factor 3: Does the strategy center and advance *equity*?

- Improve equitable access and outcomes for historically disadvantaged populations such as people of color, LGBTQ+ people, and individuals experiencing exploitation?
- Reflect the input and feedback of people with lived experience at all stages of the process?
- Protect from unintended harm/consequences or further inequities?

Factor 4: Does the strategy deepen efficient use of resources?

- Reflect a cost-effective model for achieving impact?
- Reduce redundancies and gaps in the system?
- Streamline coordination, including with social services, health care, transit, employment, other partners and upstream solutions?
- Expand the resources/support needed to address homelessness regionally?