

5-Year Strategic System Improvement Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in the City of Detroit

Initial Community Engagement Plan

Background

Community engagement will encompass gathering information from different partners throughout the term of the process.

- We will begin with engagement of residents with lived experience to ensure that the process and strategic plan will be centered and guided by their experience. This will begin in June 2023 and continue across both phases.
- We will conduct limited stakeholder interviews to clarify past initiatives, governance, and accountability activities.
- HRD will host a virtual community kick off which will serve as an orientation to the planning process and generate interest in participating in the community engagement processes.
- The full team will travel to Detroit during the week of July 24 through July 28 to visit local programs, observe service delivery, conduct listening sessions with providers and residents with lived experience, and meet with key stakeholders and partners.
- Once key community priorities have been solidified through the community engagement process, a virtual strategic improvement planning process will be designed and implemented, featuring continued guidance from residents with lived expertise, consultation with people working in a full range of roles within the homelessness response system, and close coordination with the Detroit Project Team and the Strategic Plan Oversight Commission This work commences in September.
- In consultation with the Detroit Project team and the Strategic Plan Oversight Commission, additional input opportunities through online surveys, listening sessions, and facilitated presentations may be deployed to supplement the structured onsite visit and planning meetings.
- Each quarter, we will provide a report to the community about completed, current, and upcoming analyses, planning activities, and implementation efforts. It is the intention for such communication to be broadly and transparently shared to ensure awareness and engagement of community stakeholders and partners and to provide opportunities for feedback through a designated project email address.

These values will guide community engagement.

- Center equity and justice - informed by intersectional analyses, across process.
- Provide multiple pathways for input to ensure all stakeholders, and especially people with current and past experiences of homelessness, are seen, heard, and involved in the design and implementation of this plan.
- Design a process that is collaborative, healing, inclusive, and strengthens partnerships and relationships.
- Identify and include organizations beyond the defined homelessness assistance system that interact and support people who are at risk of and experience homelessness.

Barbara Poppe, David Dirks, and Kourtney Clark will co-lead this stakeholder engagement work. Matthew Doherty will lead on communications. All members of the team will support this process.

Scope of the Initial Plan

This document is intended to describe the initial community engagement that will occur during June – August before the launch of the strategic planning process in September. This plan focuses on broad engagement; there is a separate document that describes the engagement with residents with lived experience. This work will be integrated into the overall process. Activities described in this document will also be available to residents with lived experience and every effort will be made to include them in the full range of community engagement.

Intent of Initial Community Engagement

- Primary: Engage key stakeholders to provide input and ideas to inform priorities and planning for the Plan
- Secondary: Provide consultants opportunities to observe program operations and services and directly engage with key stakeholders to inform their expertise about how Detroit system and providers operate.

Key Components of Initial Community Engagement

Online Opportunities

During this period, we will launch feedback and communication mechanisms for broader community engagement including the creation of a City-hosted strategic planning webpage in coordination with the Detroit Project Team to post community announcements about surveys, feedback forms, interim reports, community listening sessions, etc.

We are considering an online survey available during August that will help provide additional input into community priorities and opportunities.

City Leadership and other governments

During this period, HRD will organize and prep for onsite meetings for BPA team members with key city leaders to inform them of the planning process and gather any initial feedback for consideration as the planning process is being developed. Meetings with Key Leadership with scheduling conflicts may be scheduled virtually.

- Mayor, Deputy Mayor (in-person meeting)
- City Council members and staff (in-person meeting)
- Key department heads (in-person or virtual)
 - Department of Police
 - Department of Neighborhoods
 - Department of Transportation
 - Detroit Health Department
 - General Services Department
- Detroit Wayne Integrated Health Network (in-person meeting)
- Detroit Housing Commission (in-person meeting)
- Other public services (invite to general listening sessions)
 - Wayne County Department of Justice
 - Adult Protective Services
 - Detroit Public Schools Liaisons

Onsite Visit

All team members will spend four days onsite during July 24-29 to achieve several purposes:

- Conduct focus groups with residents with lived experience.
- Visit homelessness assistance programs to observe how housing and services are being delivered.
- Conduct listening sessions with people who have knowledge about the topic including providers – frontline staff, program managers, and organizational leaders as well as other community members, including people with lived experience. Sessions will be open to all people, except for two sessions that will be limited to invitation-only. No compensation provided to any participants.
- Individual meetings with key local government and system leaders.

During these sessions and meetings, we will test emerging priorities and incorporate equity conversations, collaborative, healing, and trust building features into the meeting design. Kourtney Clark will lead logistics planning for the onsite engagement. All team members will participate in the onsite visit.

Program observations during onsite visit

We hope to visit and observe operations at a range of programs during the onsite visit. These **will** include:

- Congregate single adult shelter
- Family shelter
- Street outreach provider ride-along
- PSH community
- Youth program

Listening Sessions

During this period, BPA will conduct in-person listening sessions with people who are responsible for implementing and managing the system of housing, services, and supports that focus on addressing and preventing homelessness as well as other community members, including people with lived experience. We want to hear from frontline, management, and leadership staff.

Topics:

- CoC board and membership (closed)
- Frontline staff (closed)
- Families with children
- Single adults, including unsheltered
- Youth and young adults
- Prevention and diversion
- Racial justice and advocacy

Listening sessions will cover the full range of population needs and interventions to increase the opportunity to garner as much feedback as possible.

Key Questions during Initial Community Engagement

- 1) What is working well about the community response to homelessness? What do you think are the most significant accomplishments over past four years?
- 2) How did the COVID-19 pandemic impact the community response to homelessness? What changes were made that should be considered for continuation or expansion?
- 3) What are the biggest community challenges to addressing homelessness in Detroit?
- 4) What new strategies should the community explore for adoption or adaptation for local replication? What promising partnerships that should be scaled up?
- 5) What bold goals and priorities should be considered for strategic investment of community resources?
- 6) What are the most important changes in how the community addresses homelessness that should be considered?