

How to End Homelessness in Anchorage:

Local Solutions for a National Crisis

Speakers

- Anna Brawley and Molly Mylius, Agnew::Beck
- Jasmine Boyle and Melissa Hernandez, Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness
- Roger Branson, Homelessness Resource Advisory Council
- Nancy Burke, Municipality of Anchorage
- Katie Scovic, Cook Inlet Housing Authority

APA Alaska Chapter, 2020 Conference

February 10, 2020

Engage Plan Implement



Today's Session

Brief presentations from many perspectives:

1. What do planners need to know about homelessness?
2. How is Anchorage, as a community, responding to homelessness?
3. How is the Municipality responding to homelessness?
4. How are people with lived experience of homelessness engaged in this work, including advocacy and empowerment?
5. How are we making strides to help families find and maintain housing?

Group Discussion:

- What's happening in your communities?
- How can we all make homelessness a **rare, brief and one time experience** in Alaska?



Homelessness is ...

A **national** issue

An **Alaska** issue

A **local** issue

Homeless population rises for third year in a row

UPDATED ON: DECEMBER 20, 2019 / 9:04 AM / CBS/AP



West Coast cities see more unsheltered people...

Rural overcrowding: A different view of homelessness

This year, our board of directors held their August meeting in Nome. For one meeting each year, the board meets in a community outside of Anchorage in order to experience the challenges and opportunities in other communities in Alaska that we serve.

Board members also visited the village of Teller, toured Alaska Housing's public housing properties in Nome and hosted well-attended community gatherings. In discussions with community members, it was apparent that the general lack of safe and



Homelessness is ...

A **housing** issue

A **health** issue

An **economic** issue

A **moral** issue

A **community** issue

An **everyone** issue

Vision



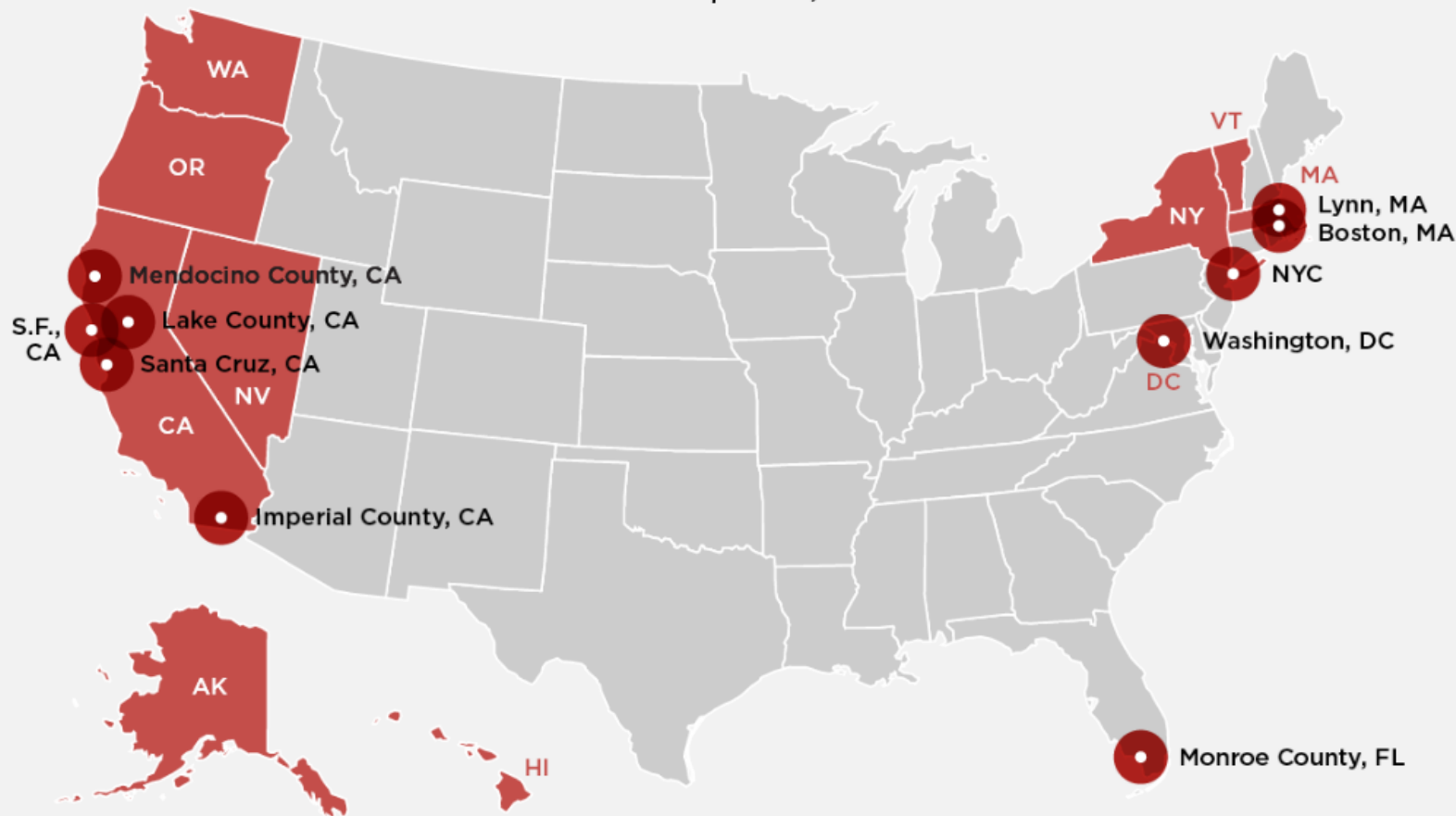
Homelessness is
rare, brief, & one-time



2019 Statistics (National Alliance to End Homelessness)

The States and Cities With the Highest Rates of Homelessness Are Clustered Along the Coasts

Top 10 States and Continuums of Care with Highest *Rates* of Homelessness per 10,000 Residents



What Causes Homelessness?



When Housing is Out of Reach: Now more than at any other time, there is a lack of housing that low-income people can afford. Without housing options, people face eviction, instability and homelessness.



Income and Housing Affordability: Low-income households often do not earn enough to pay for food, clothing, transportation and a place they can call home.



Other Barriers to Maintaining Housing: Many people struggle with mental illness, substance misuse, TBIs and other conditions that make day to day life more difficult. Others have criminal records and barriers to accessing housing.

Homelessness Is a Housing Problem

KEY FACTS

10,328
OR
19%

Renter Households that are extremely low income

\$30,380

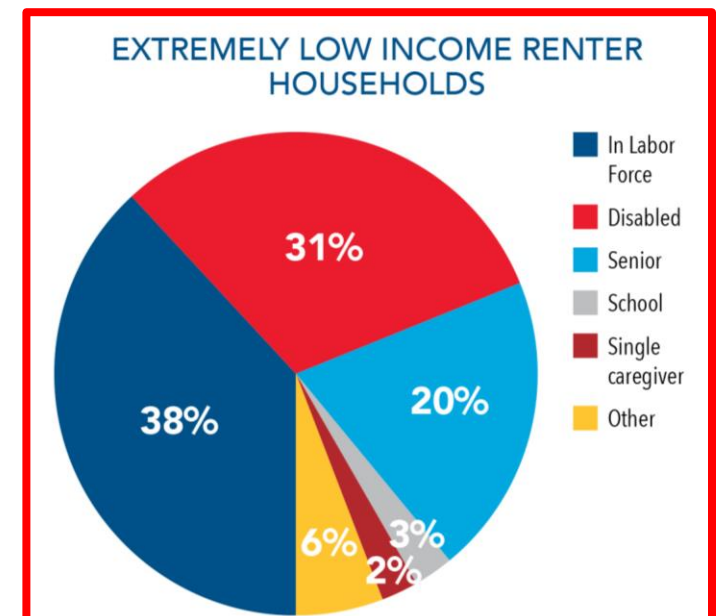
Maximum income of 4-person extremely low income households (state level)

-6,737

Shortage of rental homes affordable and available for extremely low income renters

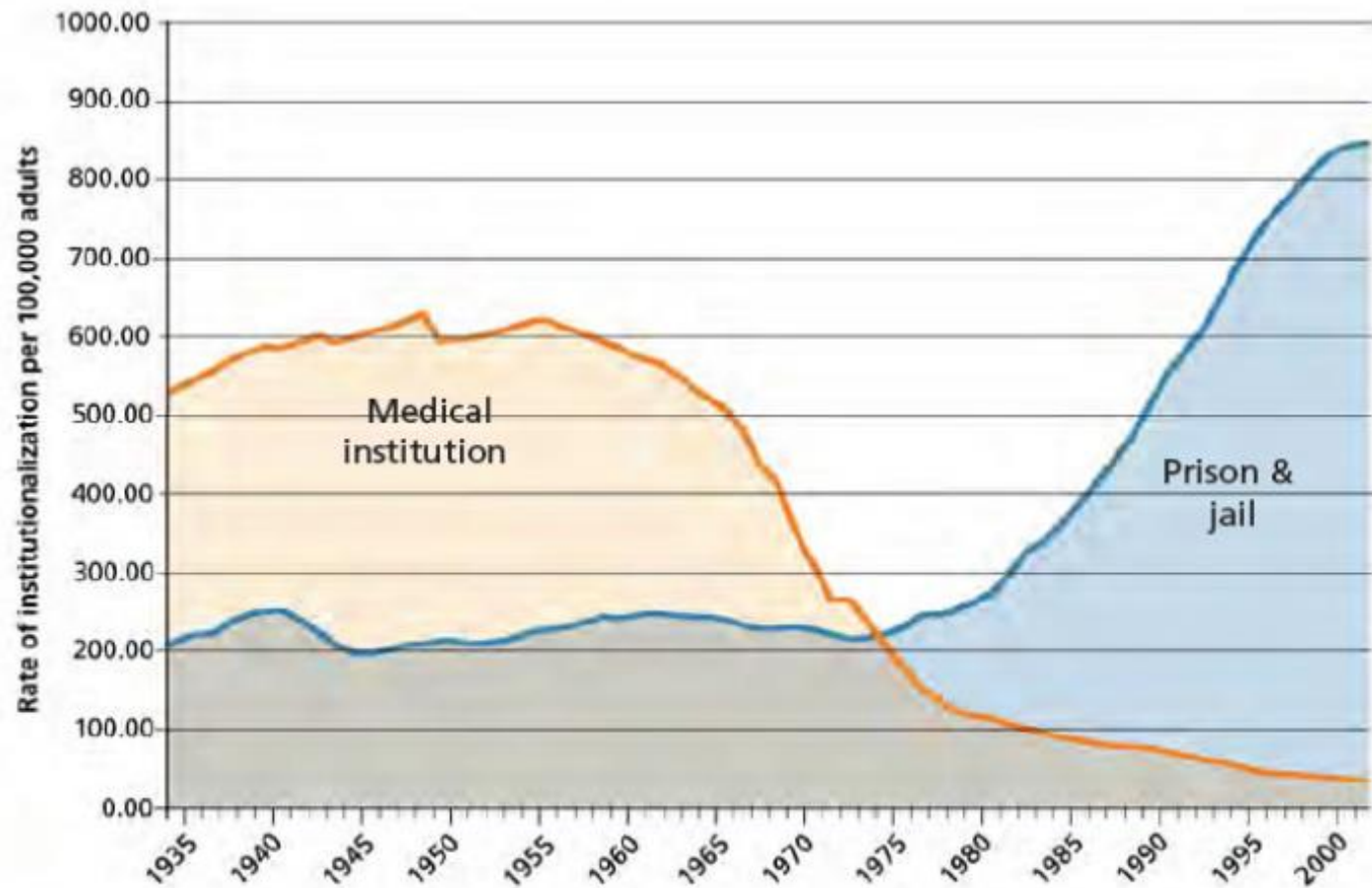
"Housing Wage" Needed to Afford a . . .	Anchorage HMFA
ONE-BEDROOM APT	\$19.90/hour
TWO-BEDROOM APT	\$25.71/hour

Estimated Mean Renter Wage in Anchorage: \$17.82/hour



Homelessness Is Also a Health and Justice Problem

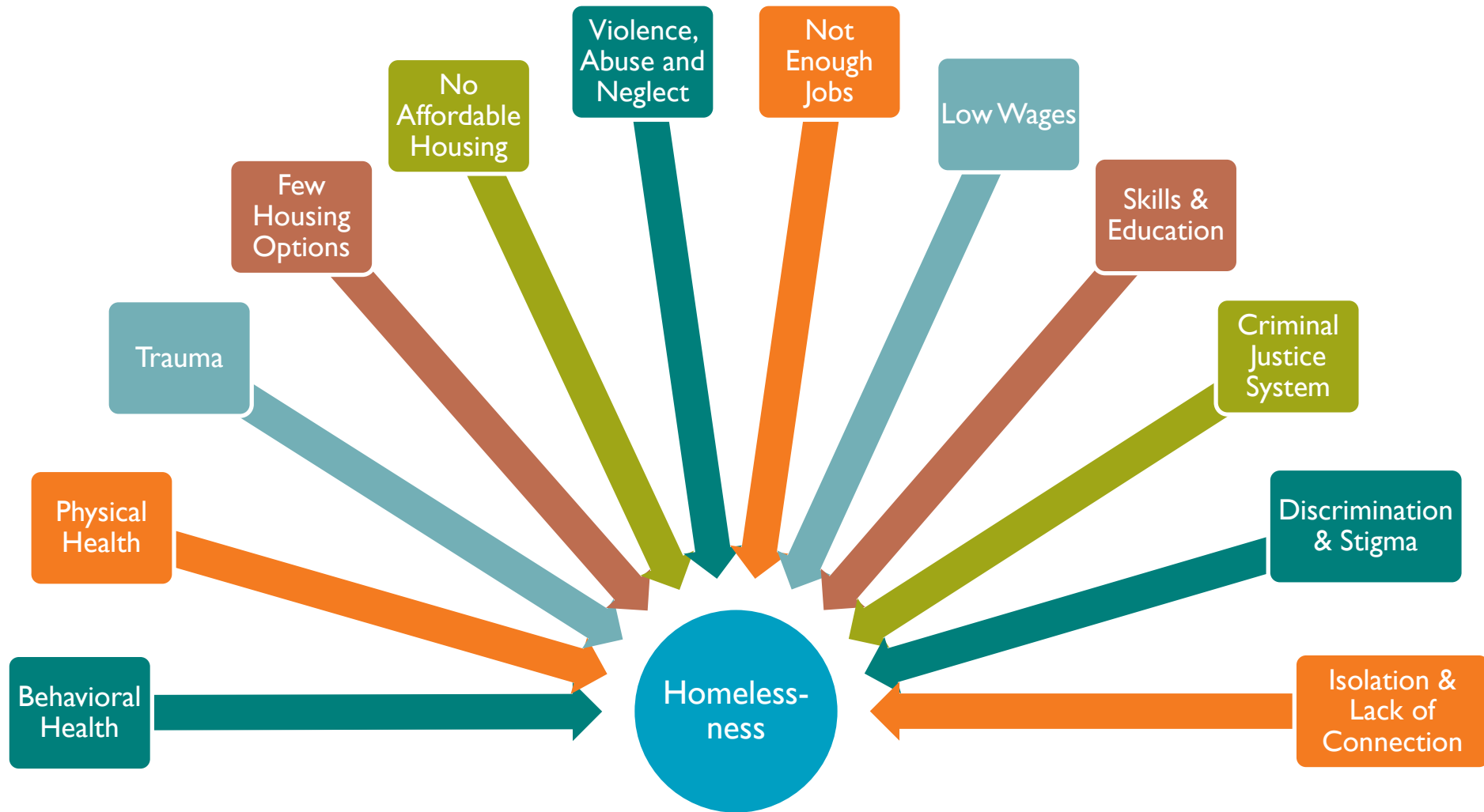
Figure 1. Location of Adults with Mental Illness: Medical Institution vs. Prison and Jail in the U.S., 1934–2001



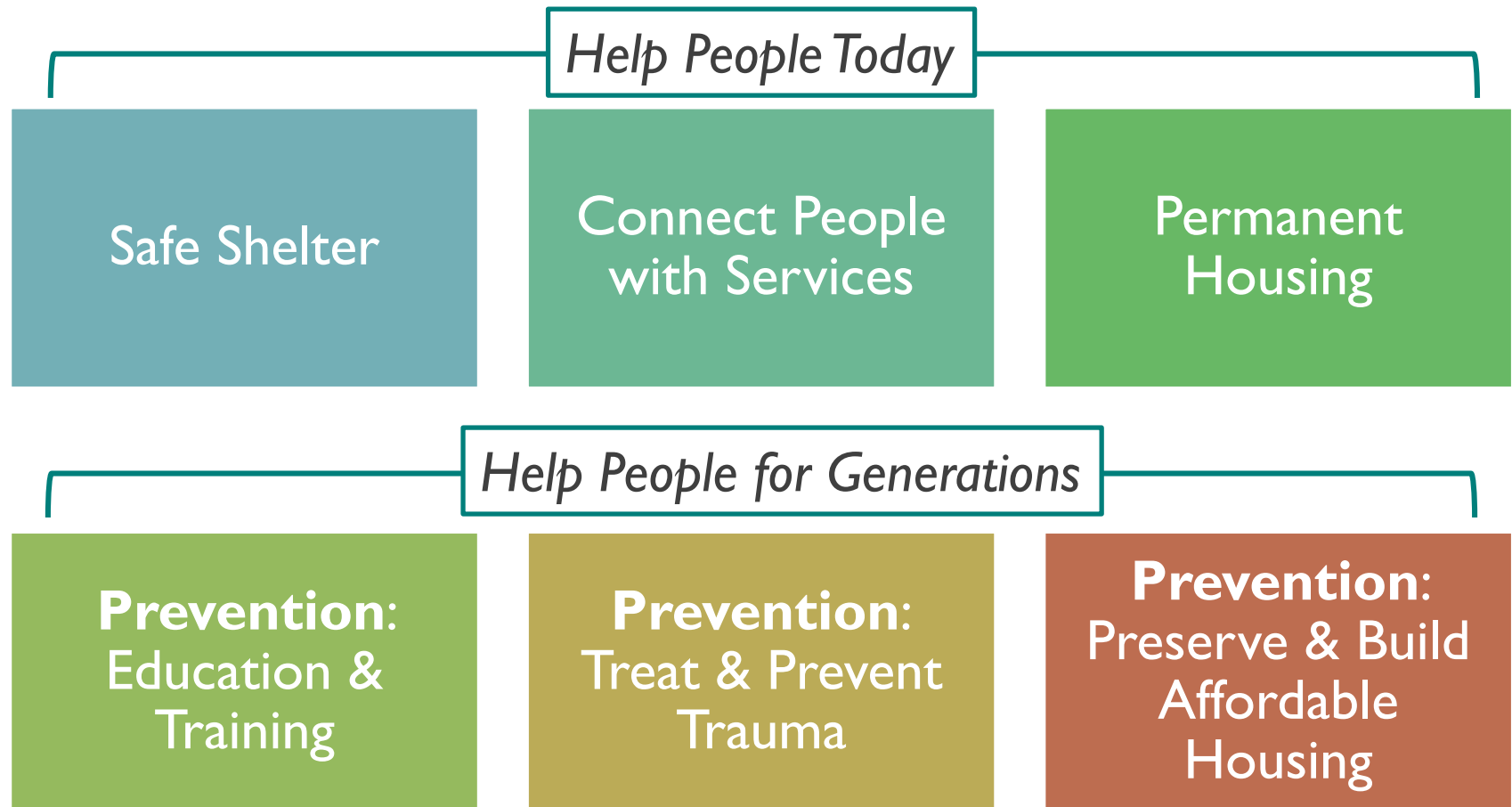
Adapted from "An Institutional Effect" (Harcourt, 2011).

Reproduced from Cravez, "Alaska's Lack of Psychiatric Beds and Consequences," *Alaska Justice Forum* 34:1 (Summer 2017), updated May 21, 2018. Published by University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center.

Why Is Homelessness a Growing Problem?



What Solutions Work?



“Housing First” is a principle, not a program:

The first, most important step to helping someone succeed is housing. All else follows from having a safe, warm place to live.

How Can We (Planners) Help?



Housing

- Affordable housing, especially rental housing



Transportation

- Access to job, school, health care, grocery store
- Safe streets, sidewalks and roads for all users



Public Spaces

- Outdoor: parks, trails, rights of way
- Indoor: libraries, civic buildings and other facilities



Connecting the Dots with a Systems View

- Convene partners: health care, workforce, education, businesses, developers, neighborhoods
- Understand how all the pieces fit together and building consensus to address what isn't working.

Homelessness and Planning: Two Examples

Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan: Zoning + Housing

Compatible-Scale Infill Housing (R-2 Zones)

A Title 21 zoning code change in Anchorage's R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M residential zoning districts



Project Overview

This project aims to increase the flexibility of building height and bulk limits to more easily fit all of the housing units allowed on properties in the R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M zones, while better ensuring that the height and scale of new development complements existing neighborhoods:

Why is this important?

Anchorage's Changing Housing Needs:

The Anchorage Bowl population is forecast to grow by up to 21,000 households by the year 2040. Construction of new housing is not keeping pace. There is a shortage of housing that is affordable to most families. Smaller households increasingly desire more compact homes.

Alaska cities, facing housing crunch, encourage backyard cottages and apartment additions

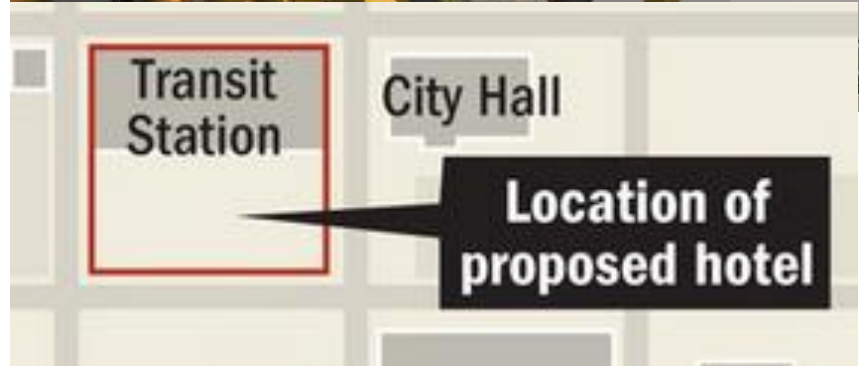
June 30, 2018 by Devin Kelly, Anchorage Daily News



Downtown Hotel Project at MOA Transit Center

5-star hotel to break ground this spring in downtown Anchorage

Wednesday, January 22nd 2020, 8:19 PM AKST

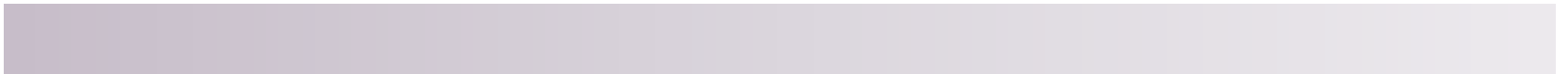


Questions to Ponder, Planners...

Planners serve **the community** and **the public interest**.

- Who is “the community” you serve?
Who lives in your community?
- Who can afford to live in your community?
Who is struggling? Are they visible or invisible?
- How do planning decisions and policies—
comprehensive plans, zoning, transit routes,
public facilities, road and infrastructure
projects, and others—contribute to the
complex issues that contribute to
homelessness?
- How could these policies help solve it?

Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness



About the Coalition

The Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH) is a convener around preventing and ending homelessness.

Vision

Make homelessness in Anchorage a rare, brief, and one-time event.

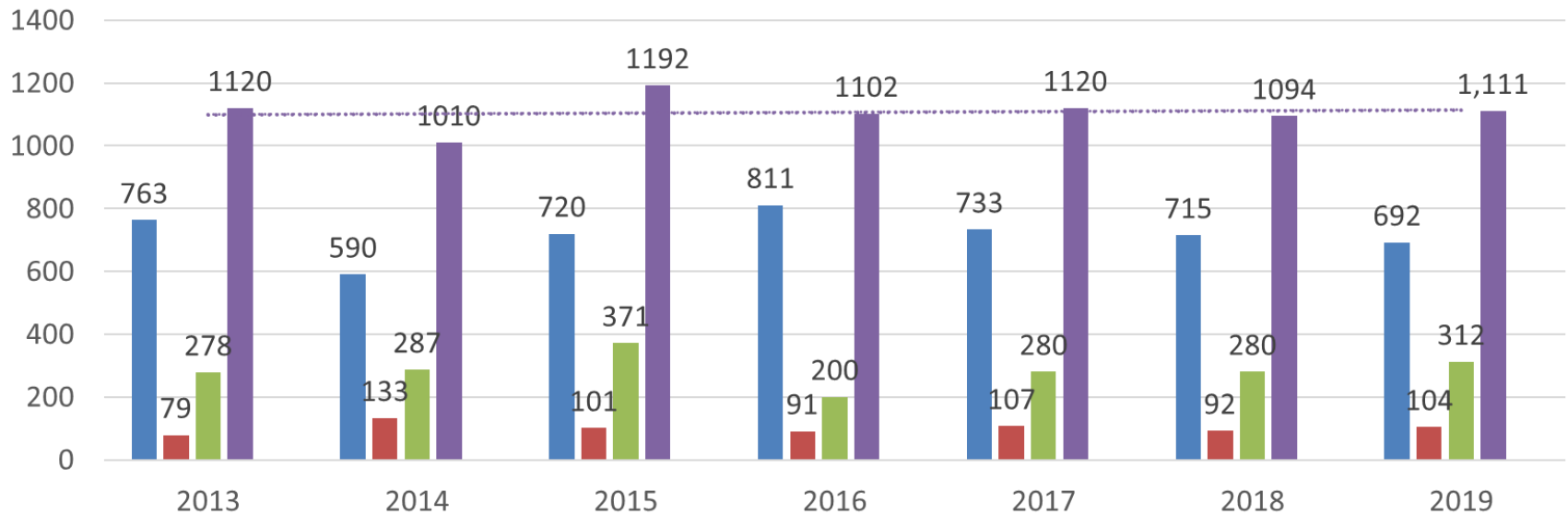
Mission Statement

Provide dynamic leadership that unites our community to build and sustain the Anchorage housing and supports system, making homelessness rare, brief, and one-time.

Values

Dignity, Respect, Equity, Compassion

Point in Time (PIT) Count



Flat is a success!

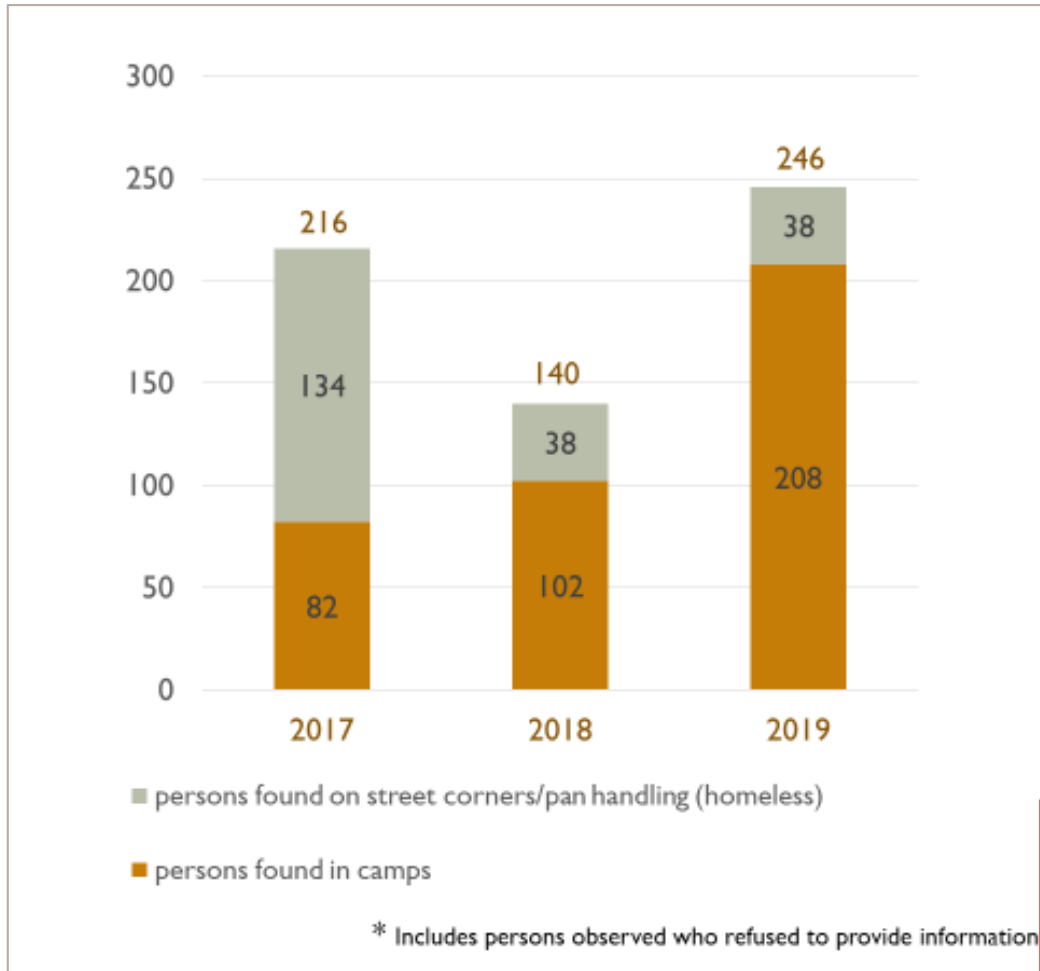
Other west coast cities are experiencing a drastic rise in homelessness, particularly unsheltered homelessness:

- Los Angeles: 16% total increase since 2018
- San Francisco: 17% total increase since 2017
- Seattle: 32% unsheltered increase since 2018
- Portland: 21% unsheltered increase since 2017

■ Adults over 24
■ Youth 18-24
■ Families
■ Community total: adult/youth + family

2020 PIT: January 28

Summer Community Count



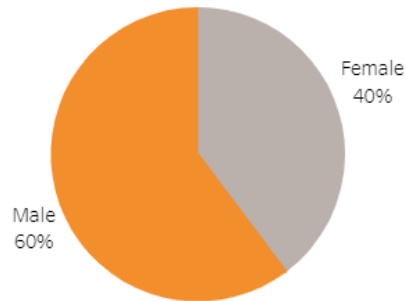
SUMMER
COMMUNITY
COUNT:

PERSONS
COUNTED IN
CAMPS AND ON
STREET CORNERS

Anticipated Increase: As our state and federal landscape changed, we anticipated the increase in unsheltered homelessness over the summer and saw the expected rise

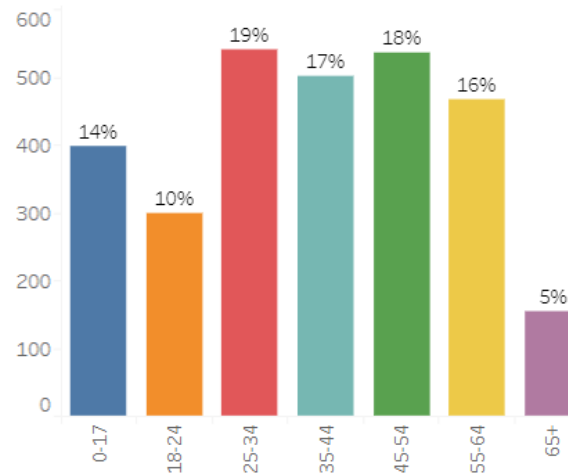
Who is experiencing homelessness?

Gender

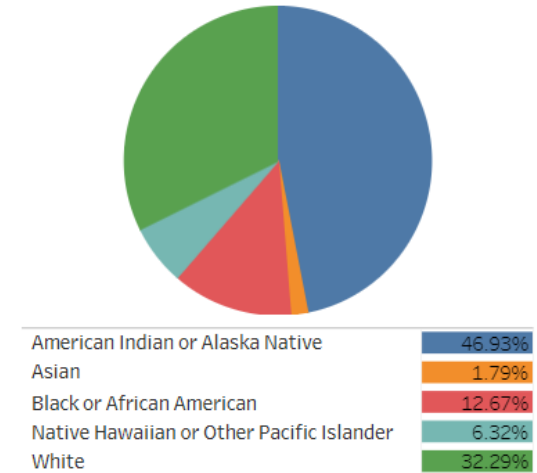


Gender Non-Conforming (i.e. not exclusivel..	2
Trans Female (MTF or Male to Female)	5
Trans Male (FTM or Female to Male)	4

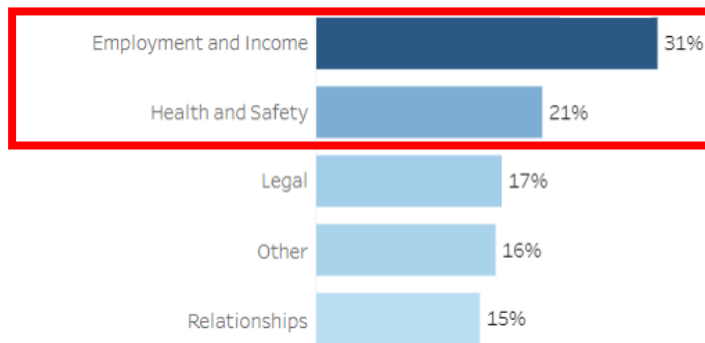
Age Category



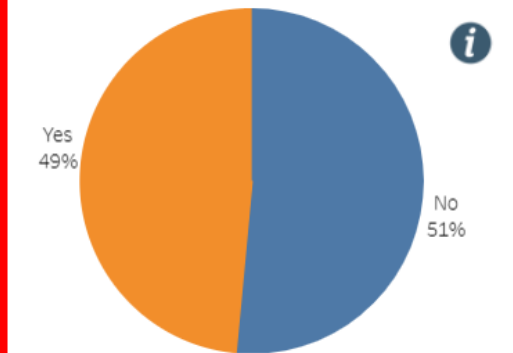
Primary Race



Reason for Seeking Assistance



Clients with a Disabling Condition



Advocate for and implement strategies to prevent homelessness and provide housing and work opportunities for all.

Who is most at risk?

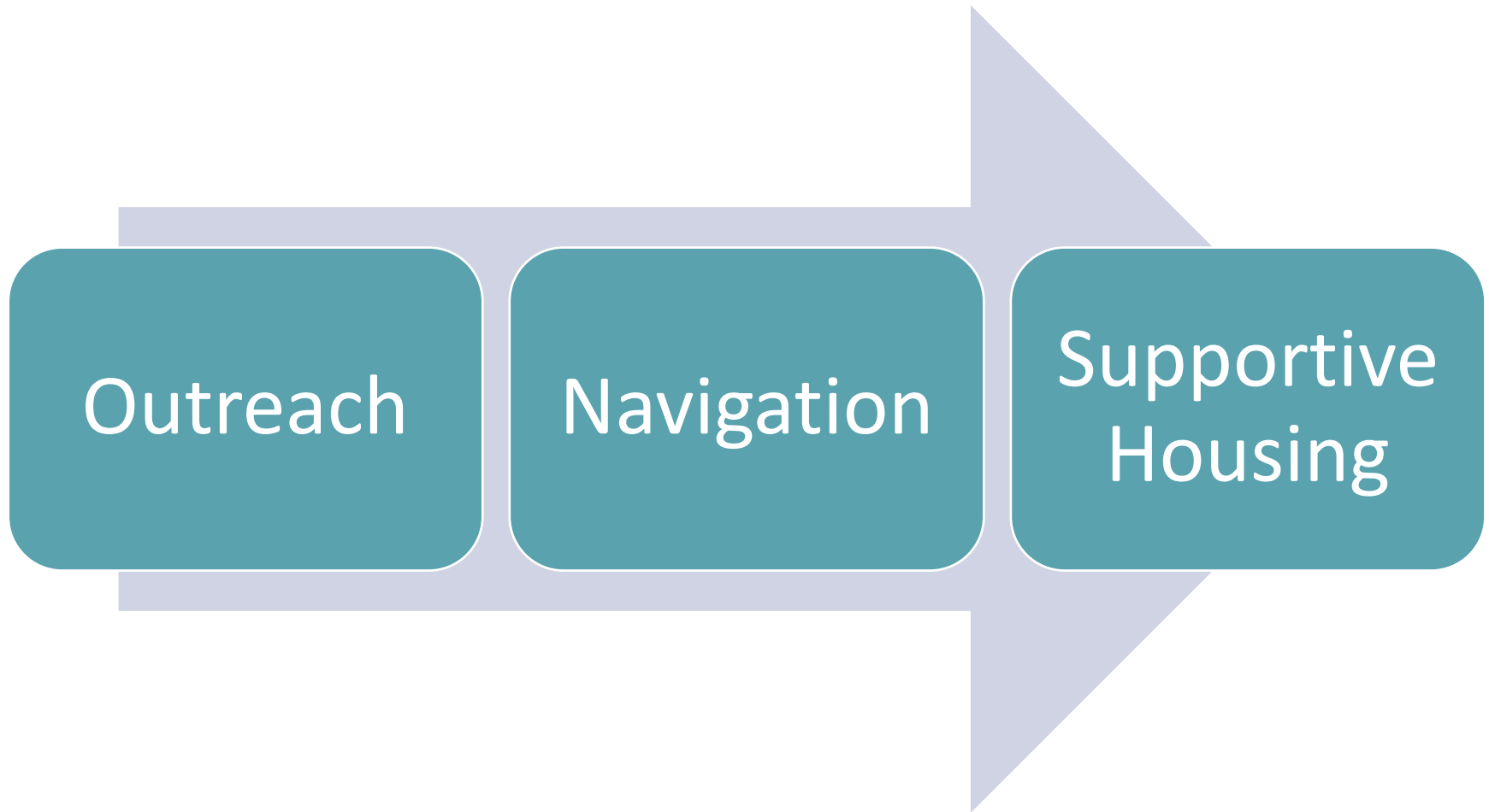
- **Those with economic challenges (38% of ELI households)**
 - Ex: 2018 earthquake
- **Elders and seniors: (21% of ELI households)**
 - Since 2008, Alaska is the # 1 state in the nation for per-capita 65+ senior growth
 - 17% of Anchorage's population is 60+ (increase expected through at least 2035)
 - Anchorage and Matsu house over half of the 60+ population in the state
- **Those living with disabilities: (31% of ELI households)**
 - Lack of ADA compliant housing
 - Two year plus wait list for those experiencing disabilities and elders
 - Rent to income ratio for those with a fixed income
- **Reentry community members:**
 - Formerly incarcerated people are almost 10 times more likely to be homeless than the general public*
 - Anchorage Reentry Coalition's recent survey shows 65.8% of reentrants are unsure (or do not have) a place to live upon release

Thank you :

- Access Alaska
- Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
- Anchorage Reentry Coalition
- Disability Law Center of Alaska

[*https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/housing.html](https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/housing.html)

What Works to End Unsheltered Homelessness?



Anchored Home is a roadmap...

To make homelessness a rare, brief and
one-time event



Anchored Home

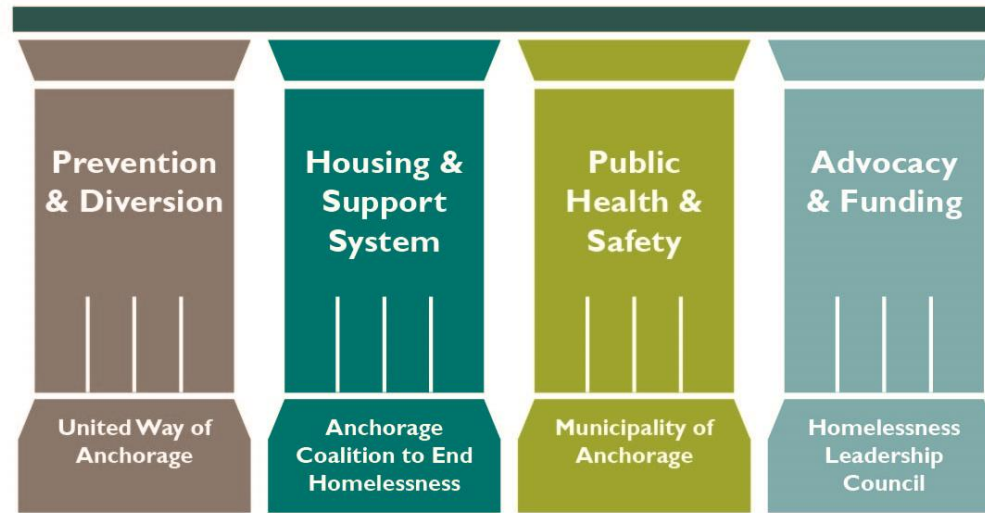
VISION



Homelessness is
rare, brief, & one-time

①

KEY Pillars



Progress Made:

- Established partnerships with local government, philanthropy and the business community to increase accountability, return on investment and reduce system inefficiencies
- Increased capacity for supportive housing options including several national projects
- Deepening community and public engagement with ACEH
- Building infrastructure for single point of entry and data management

Opportunities: The Future Ahead



- Both the Mayor and Anchorage Assembly are invested in finding solutions to solve homelessness
- The CoC has established a stronger backbone and is moving towards data informed decision making
- CoC collaboration among providers is creating enhanced process improvement
- Funders have come together to make a significant investment in solving homelessness

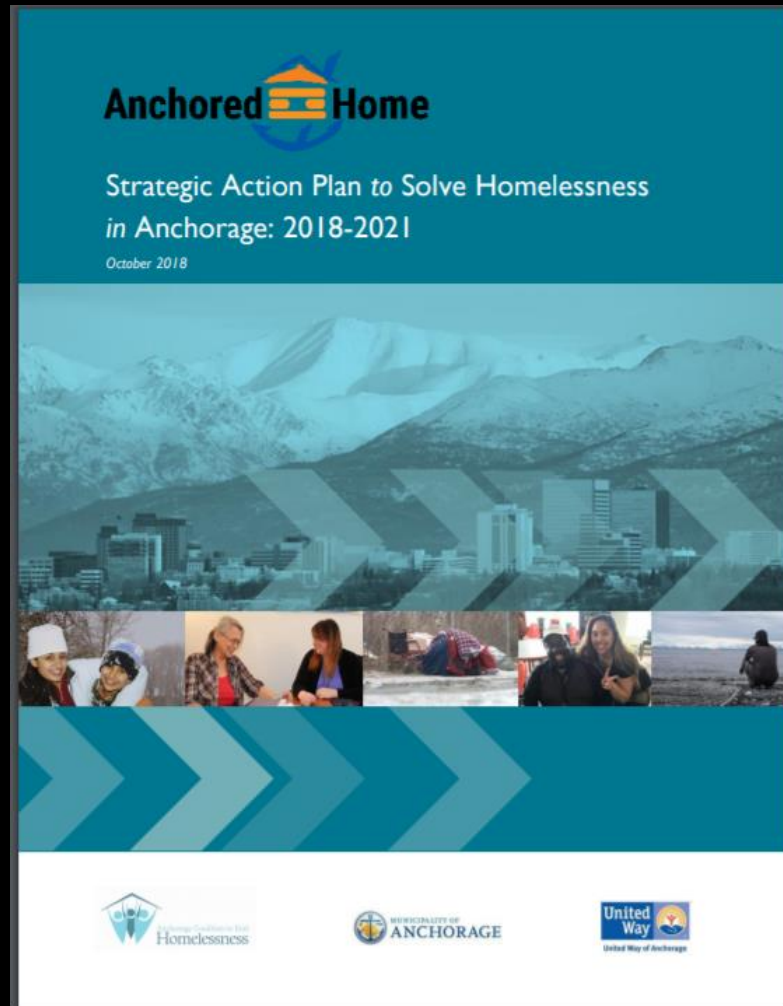


Homelessness Planning in the
Municipality of Anchorage
February 10, 2020

Things to know about Anchorage's work to end homelessness



Anchorage has a community plan: *Anchored Home*



View the full plan here:

[https://anchoragehomeless.org/
wp-
content/uploads/2018/10/Ancho
red-Home-1004018-FINAL-1.pdf](https://anchoragehomeless.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Anchored-Home-1004018-FINAL-1.pdf)

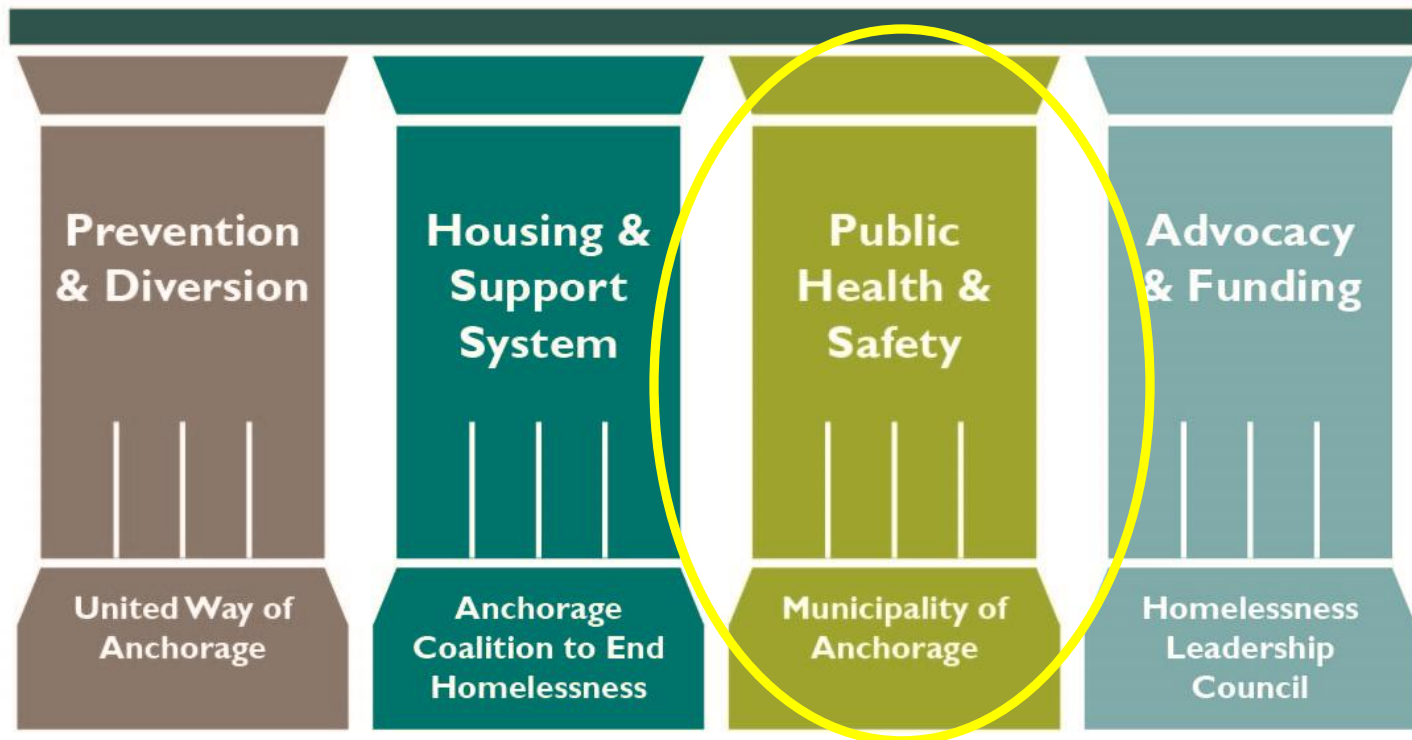
VISION



Homelessness is
rare, brief, & one-time

1

KEY Pillars



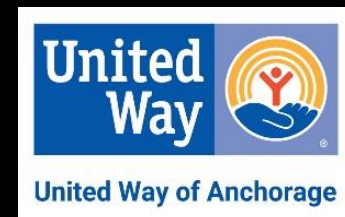
Updates on Anchored Home Priorities -

- **Additional/adequate shelter beds** for adult homelessness
- Increased **housing opportunities** for families and adults
- Increased **prevention and diversion** work to understand better avenues to prevent homelessness
- **Increase and improve data** on homelessness
- Increased **advocacy and connection** with the general public to support efforts

Partners: making a difference

Many community and philanthropic Partners are working on components of the plan:

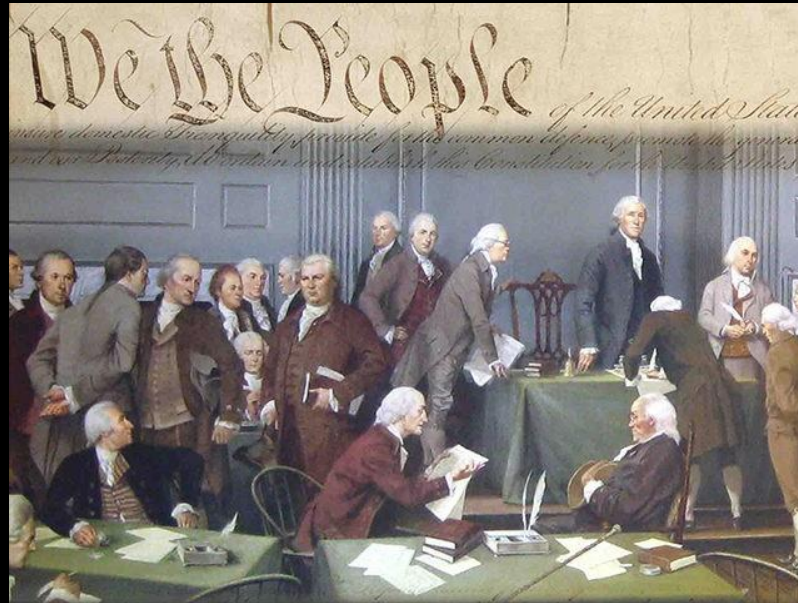
- Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness non-profit members including social service partners, housing providers and
- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- Rasmuson Foundation
- Cook Inlet Housing Authority
- Weidner Apartment Homes
- And many more.....



Applying legal and
planning tools in a
coordinated system
to end
homelessness



Camp Abatement: What are the rules?



Constitutional Rights of All Citizens

“The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.”

-Fourth Amendment, U.S. Constitution

“Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.”

-Eighth Amendment, U.S. Constitution

“All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

-Fourteenth Amendment, U.S. Constitution

Constitutional Rights, Continued

“No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law. The right of all persons to fair and just treatment in the course of legislative and executive investigations shall not be infringed.”

-Article 1, Section 7, Alaska Constitution

“The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses and other property, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated. No warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.”

-Article 1, Section 14, Alaska Constitution

“The right of the people to privacy is recognized and shall not be infringed. The legislature shall implement this section.”

-Article 1, Section 22, Alaska Constitution

What do the Courts Say?



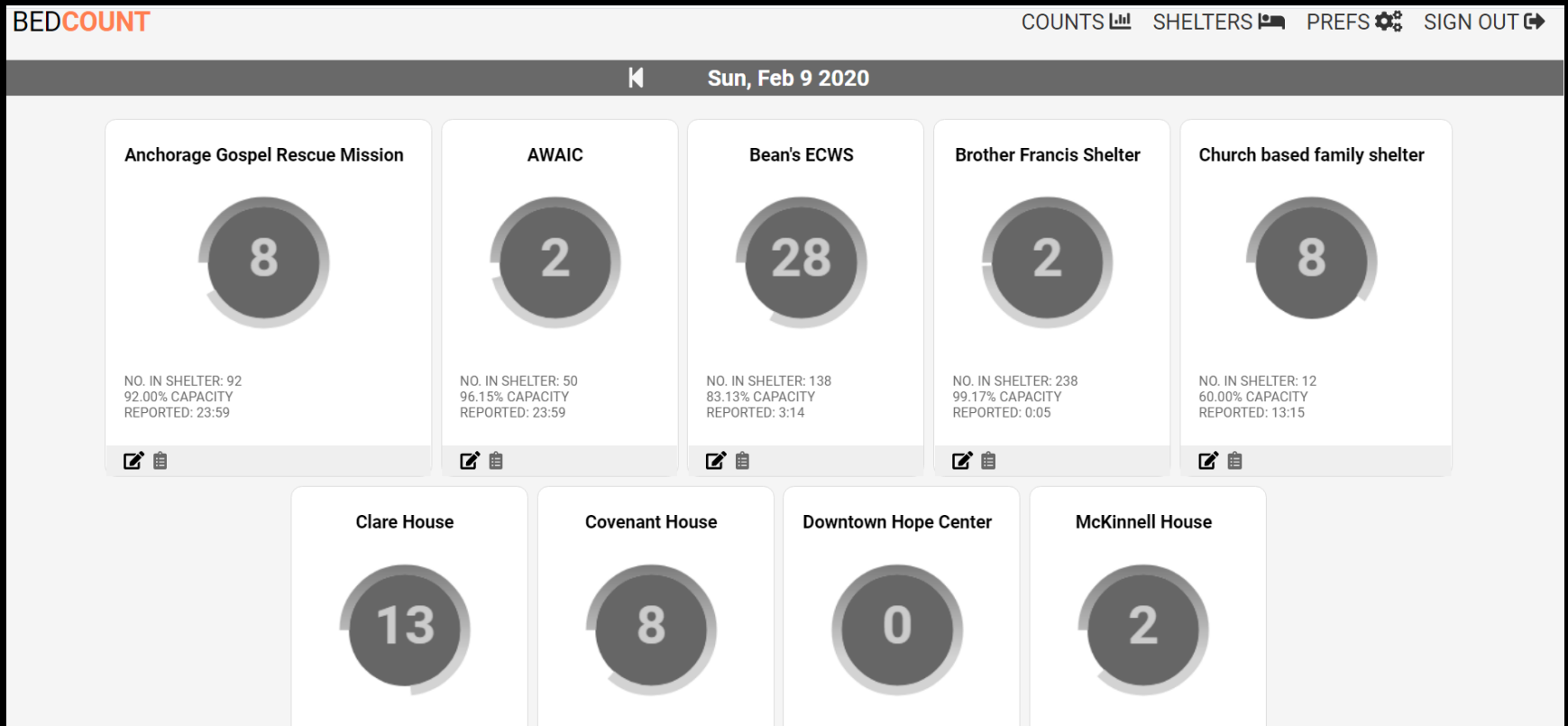
Lavan v. City of Los Angeles, 693 F.3d 1022 (9th Cir. 2012)

“Violation of a City ordinance does not vitiate the Fourth Amendment’s protection of one’s property. Were it otherwise, the government could seize and destroy any illegally parked car or unlawfully attended dog without implicating the Fourth Amendment.

Martin v. City of Boise, 902 F.3d 1031
(9th Cir. 2018)

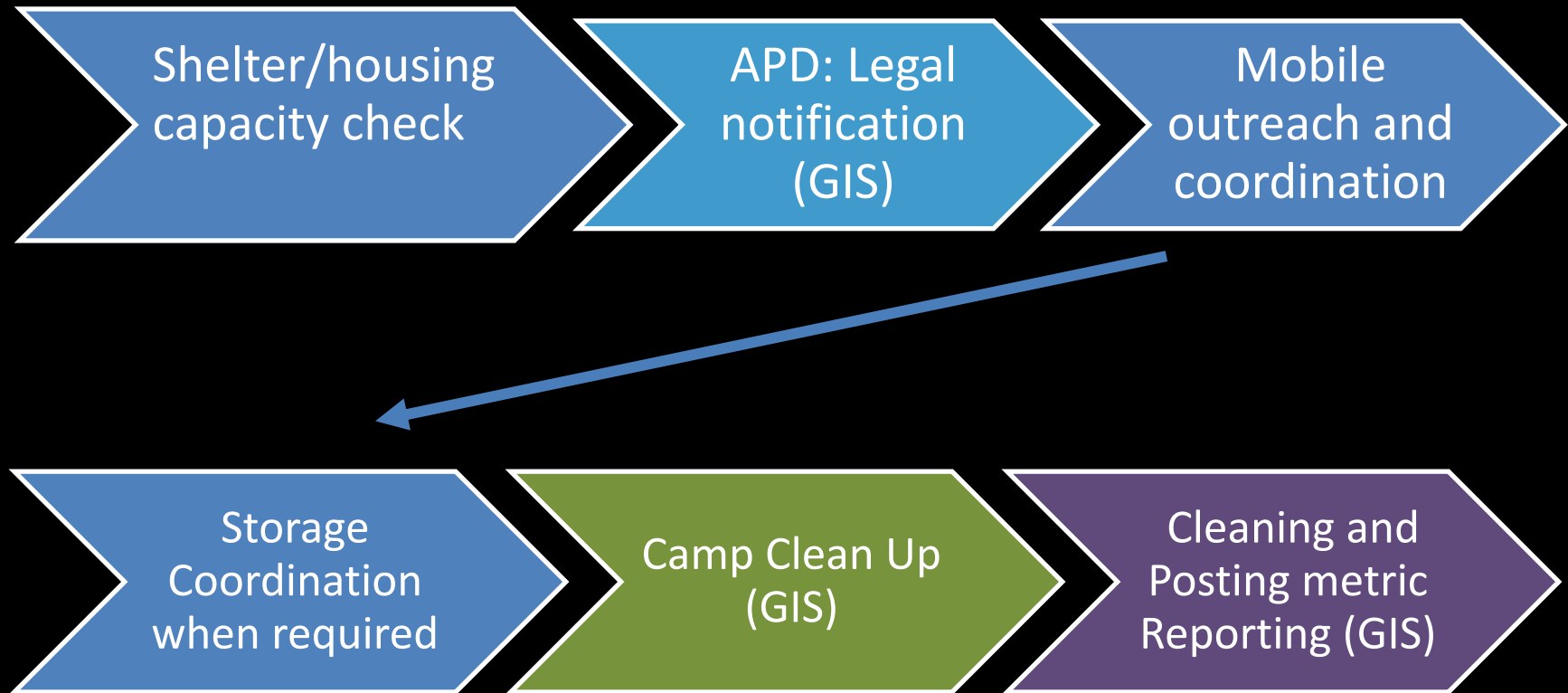


Start with Resources – are they adequate?



Municipality of Anchorage Camps Abatement Procedure Overview

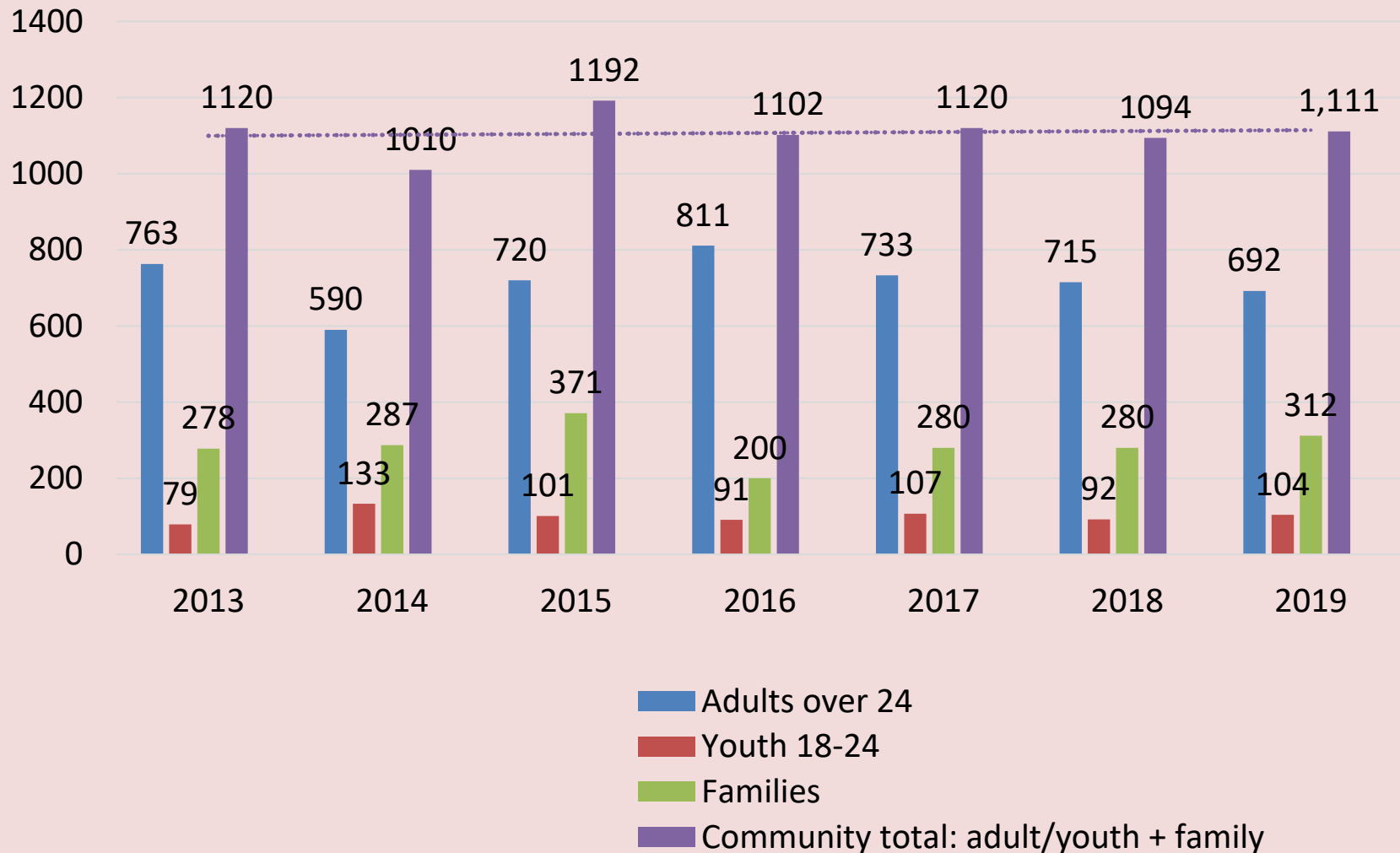
August 2019



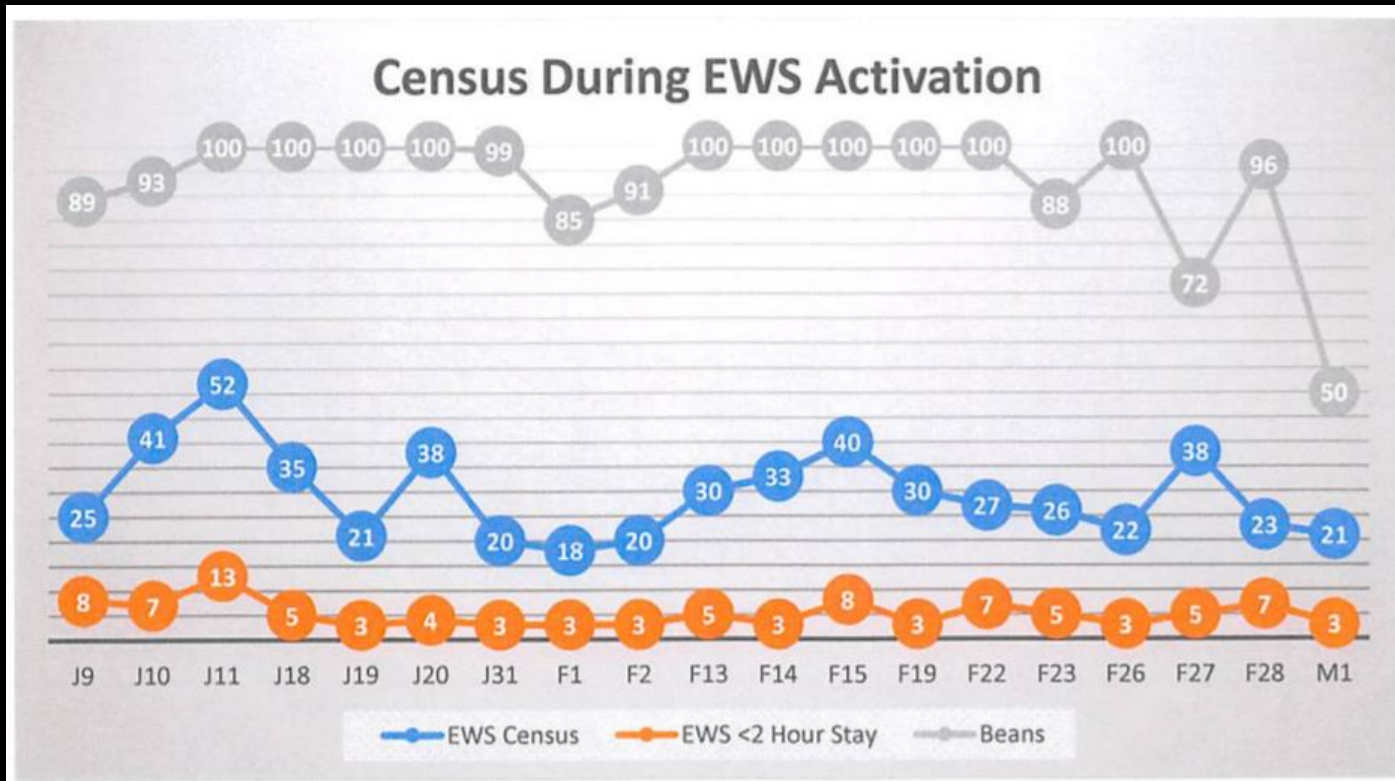
Understanding your data:

Anchorage Winter Homeless Counts

Point In Time 2013-2019



Understanding the pressure points: Anchorage Emergency Cold Weather Resources



Key:

EWS = Emergency Warming Station located at Transit Center. Opening at 10 degrees or below

Bean's = Municipal contract for Emergency Cold Weather Shelter (overflow shelter)

Average = 122 on coldest nights

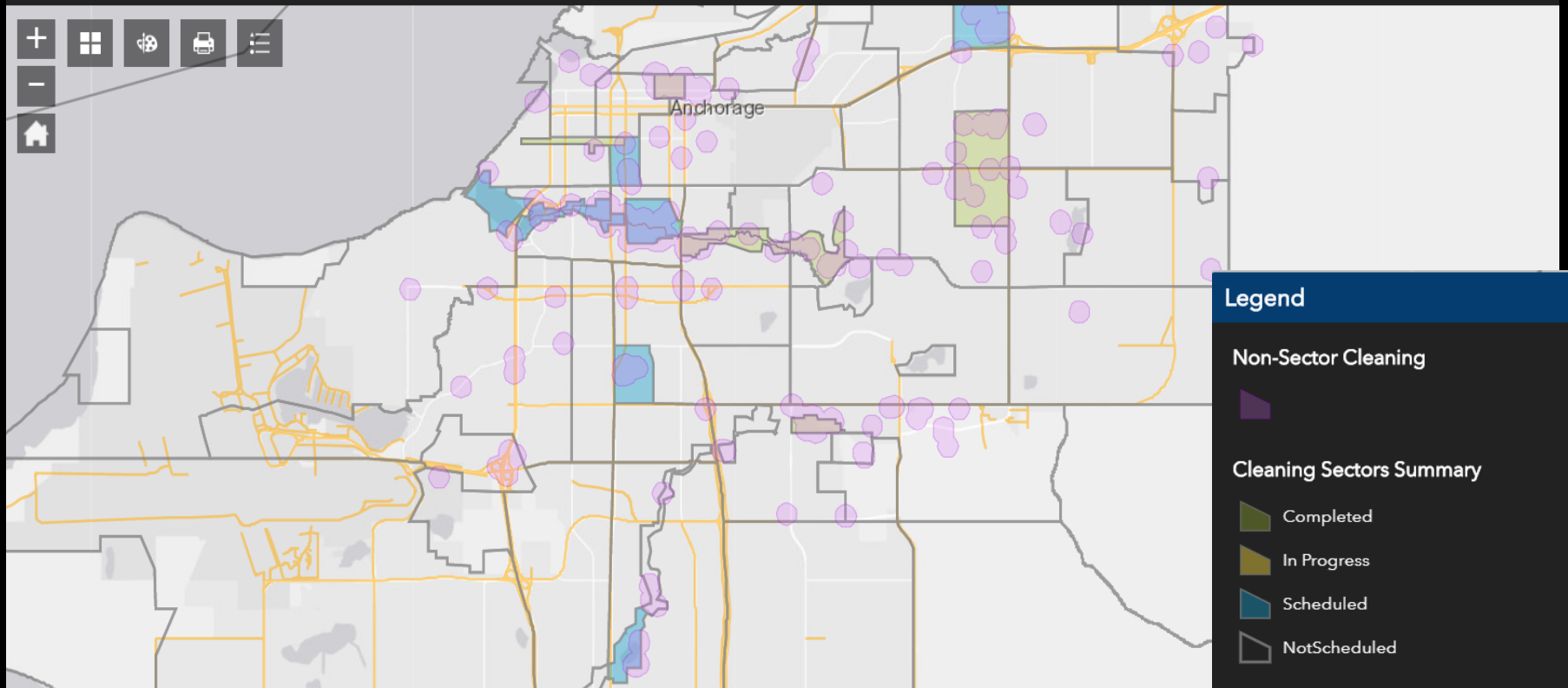
Understanding impacts



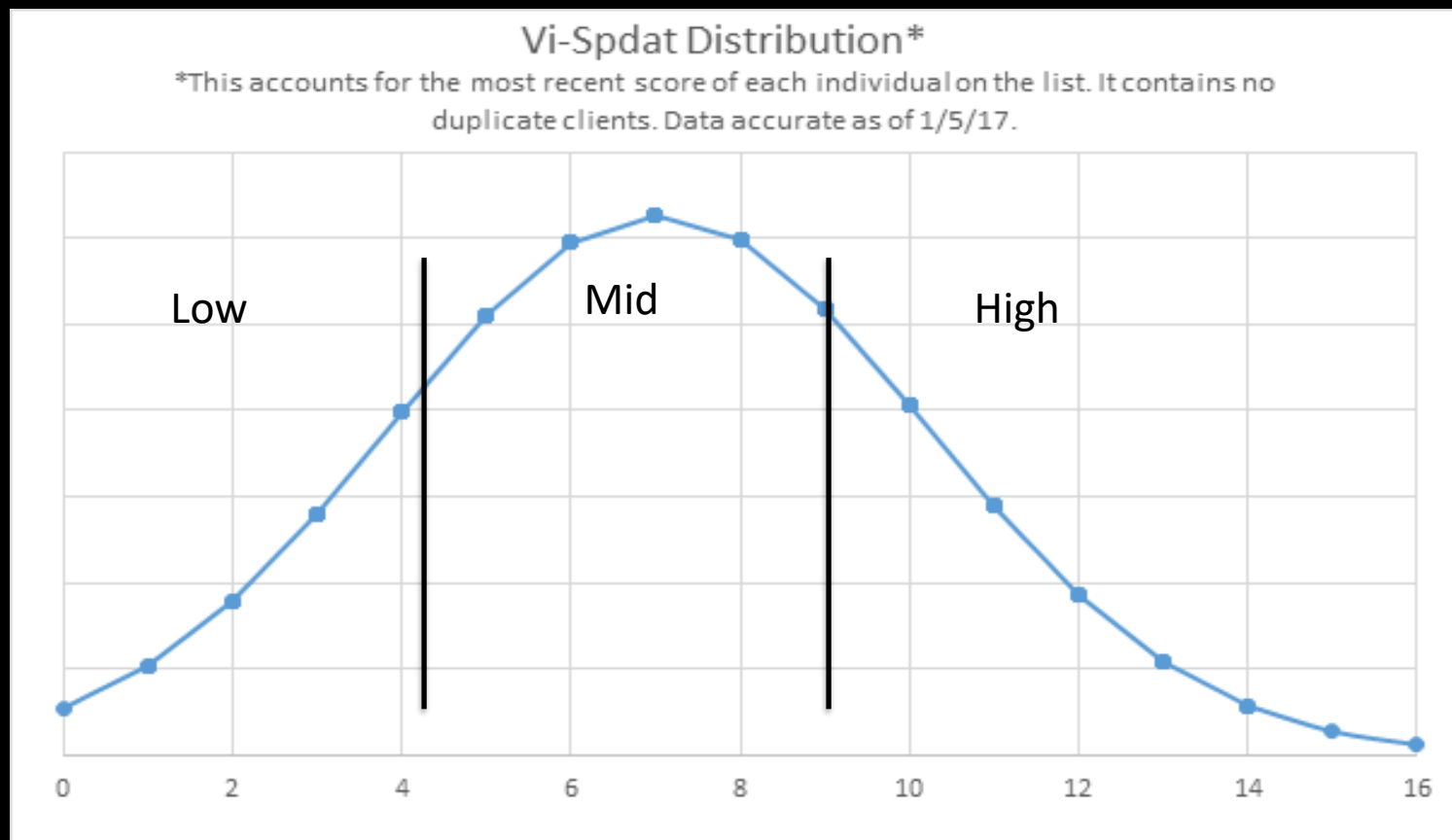
Parks and Recreation Cleaning Metrics

Municipality of Anchorage

[Report a Camp](#) [Parks and Recreation](#) [Housing and Homelessness](#) [GIS Home](#) [Instructions](#)



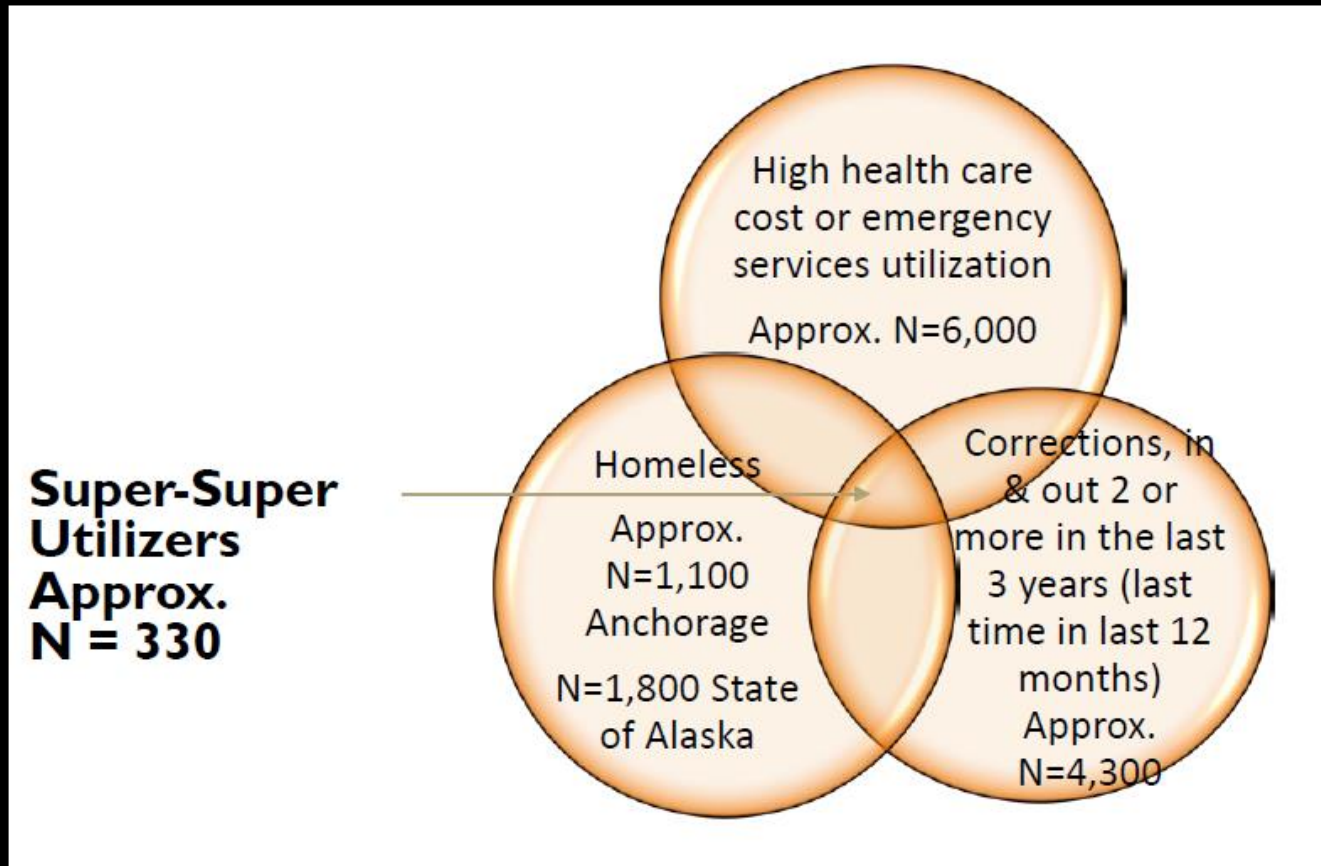
Understanding level of need: Screening/assessments



Anchorage Police Department



“Home for Good” project target population – very high vulnerability



- ❖ Homelessness is a **tragedy** that challenges the social fabric of our communities
- ❖ Homelessness is also an **opportunity** for health, corrections and housing services to improve communication and collaboration.

Planning for a healthy homeless response system

Knowing your housing stock and needs

- Understanding of the needs of the people and “pinch points” where negative impacts happen
- Community assessment of housing availability
- Assessment of number of housing units *with* social services needed
- Assessment of rental assistance
- Outreach staffing and navigation resources to help people move from community locations to shelter, housing and medical care

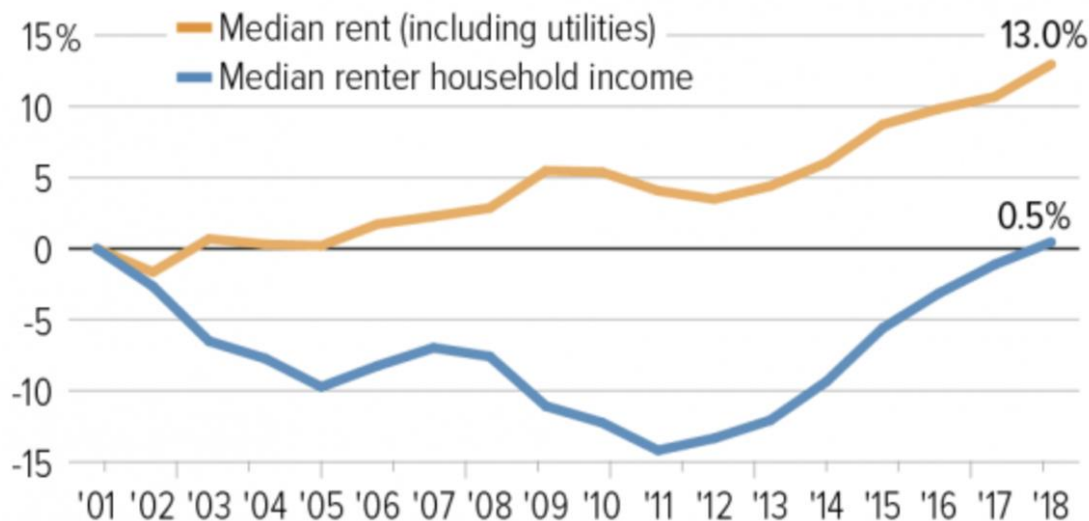
The Nexus of Housing & Homelessness

American Planning Association - Alaska Conference
February 10, 2020



Renters' Incomes Haven't Caught Up to Housing Costs

Percent change since 2001, adjusted for inflation



Source: CBPP tabulations of the Census Bureau's American Community Survey

CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES | CBPP.ORG

\$24.84
PER HOUR
**STATE HOUSING
WAGE**

*National Low Income Housing Coalition,
Out of Reach Report*

Understanding need & supply





Increasing Housing Supply:

- 1. Build new**
 - 2. Use our existing supply better**
- 

Adding new housing units

Elizabeth Place Downtown Anchorage





Accessing existing units

- Housing pilot program engaging private landlords to address homelessness
- 40 households (73 people) moved into housing in Year 1
- Over 20 funding partners



Takeaways from Path to Independence

- Private property owners are willing to engage as partners.
- Specific landlord supports, education, and risk mitigation can help to unlock private units.
- System navigation and coordination is key.



Thank you.

Katie Scovic
Associate Director,
Community Development & Homeless Initiatives
Cook Inlet Housing Authority



Group Discussion

1. What's happening in your communities to address homelessness?
2. How can we all make homelessness a rare, brief and one time experience in Alaska?

Resources and Contact Information



Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness

- Connect via ACEH's Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/AnchorageHomeless/>
- Connect via ACEH's web page:
<https://www.anchoragehomeless.org/>
 - Sign up for e-mail updates on the ACEH's website!
- Jasmine Boyle, Executive Director
director@anchoragehomeless.org
- Melissa Hernandez, Community Liaison
mhernandez@anchoragehomeless.org

Thank You!

Everyone in the community must work together to ensure that homelessness in Anchorage is a rare, brief and one-time experience.

