

The Path Home: Ending Chronic Homelessness

Newark Funder Affinity Group Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Luis Ulerio, Director
Mayor's Office of Homeless Services



City Accomplishments

Mayor Baraka, with the collaboration of several community partners, has already implemented many recent innovative projects, programs and strategies to address homelessness. For planning purposes it is important to understand what has already been done, some of it currently in progress. This plan builds upon that progress, and in some cases enhances these existing efforts.

Newark Commission on Homelessness
Mayor Baraka and the Newark Municipal Council reestablished the City of Newark Commission on Homelessness in September 2018, tasked with helping people experiencing homelessness transition to independent living and self-sufficiency, making related recommendations on city policies, plans and funding, and advocating for state and federal policies that affect the homeless in Newark.

Mayor's Office of Homeless Services
Mayor Baraka and the Newark Municipal Council created through legislation the Mayor's Office of Homeless Services, on March 16, 2022, to provide viable options for persons at risk of homelessness, those who are homeless, minimize the negative effects and stigmas associated with homelessness, and to end homelessness in the City of Newark.

Making Housing Homes Challenge
The city launched an expansive program to develop 100 units of permanent supportive housing in Newark.

Newark Hope Village
A 20-bed emergency shelter was developed using shipping containers, offering private rooms, and successfully piloting an innovative low-threshold model to better meet the needs of the most vulnerable residents without addresses.

Miller Street Shelter
A "state-of-the-art" 166-bed shelter was developed and expands the use of a low threshold model, serving 84 men, 44 women, 21 cold weather shelter beds, 17 beds for families or usable for isolation of single adults.

A Drop In Center
A Drop-in area was carved out of the Miller Street facility that offers individuals from the area community access to bathrooms with showers, washers and dryers, meals, a recreational area, and an opportunity for staff to engage and connect individuals to support.

Newark's Housing goals
The City's housing goals were announced in August 2021 and include commitment to support 10,000 vulnerable or unsheltered households annually by 2026, through actions such as promoting rent control compliance, connecting renters to legal assistance and eviction prevention services, disbursing federal emergency rental assistance funds, providing temporary and transitional housing, and developing supportive services to special populations.



Office of the Mayor Division of Homeless Services

Mayor Baraka and the Newark Municipal Council created the Office of Homeless Services through legislation, on March 16, 2022, to serve residents at risk or experiencing homelessness and develop a strategy to end homelessness in Newark.



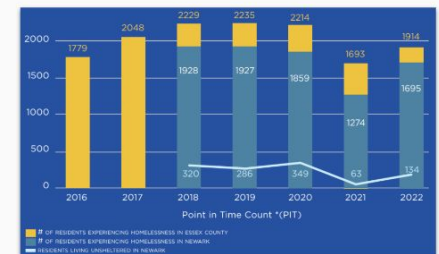
- Street Homeless Outreach
- Emergency Housing
- Low-Barrier Bridge Housing
- Homelessness Prevention
- Short-Term Rental Assistance
- Permanent Supportive Housing

Newark Residents who are chronically homeless are among the most vulnerable in our community. They experience prolonged homelessness and often have a disabling condition such as a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, or physical disability.

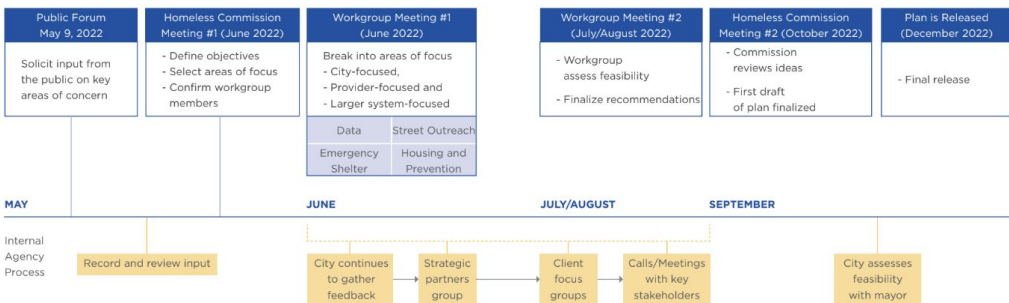


Stats on Homelessness in Newark

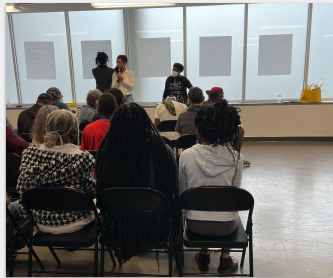
- **1,232** Chronically Homeless Residents in 2022 (OHP).
- Close to **40%** of homeless Newark residents have either a disabling condition or are experiencing prolonged homelessness (2022 PIT).
- Age range that is **most represented** was adults between 55 and 64 (2022 PIT).



THE PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING THE PLAN INCLUDED SEVERAL SEPARATE BUT INTERRELATED ACTIVITIES



100+ Community Partners



5 Shelter Focus Groups

Summary of Key Issues Identified	
Question	Notes
Have you ever stayed on the street? If so why?	Yes, because I didn't have no were else to go was out on the streets for about a month.
What do you like about the shelter? What don't you like?	Well I get kicked out of the 6th Ave because I was away more than 4 days.
What can we do to help you transition to independent living?	I Just need all my main documents that's all.
How did you lose your housing? Could it have been prevented?	Well I had a breakdown when my man passed I just have to upain by documents again.
Question	Notes

100+ Surveys

The Path Home: Collaborating Across Our Community
December 21, 2022
Homeless Persons' Memorial Day



STRATEGY 1: BETTER ADDRESS STREET HOMELESSNESS
Reduce the number of people living on the street through new approaches to engagement, better coordination among stakeholders, and alignment on outcomes.

- 1.0 DATA DASHBOARD:** Coordinate and leverage data to develop a real time dashboard for the street homeless population and implement a collaborative management structure that reviews, tests, and prioritizes solutions. Critical to the success of ending chronic homelessness is understanding the ever-changing population of the street homeless and using accurate and real time data through tools like a "By Name List", a "Hot Spot" heat map and case conferencing models.
- 1.1 ENHANCE STREET OUTREACH EFFORTS:** Enhance the effectiveness of street outreach teams through technology, training, and coordination. Better technology like handheld devices will allow outreach workers to capture and analyze data on the street population. Additionally, culturally competent training, peer outreach workers and the addition of staff with clinical skills will help to improve the success of engagement efforts.
- 1.2 MULTIPLE ENTRY POINTS:** Create clear and accessible entry points throughout the community to make it easier for residents to connect to shelters and services. Allow housing navigators to make direct referrals to shelter and add additional locations with staff to support people experiencing street homelessness to enter shelters.
- 1.3 MOBILE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES:** Partner with behavioral health service providers to bring services to the highest needs persons experiencing street homelessness. Coordinate with mobile medical, behavioral, and social service providers to reach unsheltered individuals living on the street in hotspot areas.
- 1.4 EXPAND DIVERSION EFFORTS:** Leverage existing and new diversion programs to strengthen and expand diversion efforts that connect individuals and families to homeless response systems statewide.
- 1.5 IMPROVE EFFORTS AROUND PENN STATION:** Tackle the complexity of homelessness at Newark Penn Station by increasing support and engagement. Open a new drop-in center nearby, study the causes and motivation, and pilot incentives for the hardest to house.
- 1.6 CRISIS RESPONSE HOTLINE:** Develop a city-wide Homeless Hotline for street outreach and other homeless services to residents can report concerns and street homeless can get help when in crisis.
- 1.7 HEALTHCARE PARTNERSHIPS:** Develop partnerships with Hospitals and Health Centers to increase service coordination for individuals experiencing homelessness with health needs. Improve coverage, training and access to link frequent users of crisis and inpatient care to community support services.



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STRATEGY 2: IMPROVE ACCESS AND SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE SHELTER SYSTEM

Improve access for the unsheltered and transform the culture in shelters to better support residents in their transition to housing stability.

2.0 CITY-WIDE SHELTER STANDARDS AND PRACTICE:

Develop city-wide standards of services for Emergency Shelter providers. Improve shelter conditions and experience with clear expectations and policies that include regular site assessments, consistent and accessible grievance policies and protocols, and expectations for length of stay.

2.1 HOMELESS SERVICES TRAINING:

Improve training for homeless services employees and emergency shelter providers to increase effectiveness and create a baseline for performance. Re-think engagement to follow best practices and include training for staff beyond just case managers.

2.2 EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM FOR SHELTER RESIDENTS:

Integrate employment and income resources at emergency shelters. Develop an employment program and provide professional development services for the clients while in shelter to support their transition to housing.

2.3 HOUSING NAVIGATORS:

Implement a housing-focused model across all emergency shelters. Create a cohort of trained housing navigators to help clients find housing and move out of shelter. Create performance outcomes tied to the city's efforts to reduce homelessness, in areas like reducing the average length of stay, improving exits to permanent housing, decreasing recidivism, and increasing income.

2.4 COORDINATED ENTRY:

Integrate Coordinated Entry into the emergency shelters to improve access to housing options for shelter clients. Partner with the Essex County Continuum of Care to train shelter providers to use Coordinated Entry to access CoC funded programs, services, and housing.

2.5 ACCESS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES IN SHELTER:

Facilitate behavior health services onsite or via telehealth at emergency shelters through partnerships.

2.6 MORE FLEXIBLE SPACE OPTIONS AT SHELTERS:

Expand private room options at emergency shelters through existing or new programs for the hard to house street homeless.

2.7 REENTRY COUNCIL PARTNERSHIP:

Collaborate with Newark's Reentry Council to understand and enhance efforts to provide emergency housing for returning residents experiencing

STRATEGY 3: EXPAND PREVENTION AND HOUSING SERVICES

Align existing resources to support residents in maintaining current housing and support the creation and access to new housing models and services.

City of Newark Housing Goals:

Add **3,000 new homes** across all five wards by 2026 and 8,000 homes by 2032.

Fund the creation or preservation of **6,600 affordable homes** by 2026, prioritizing affordability at or below 30% AMI.

Convey all city-controlled properties by 2026, with at least 30% affordable units. Support 1,600 new and 200 existing low- and moderate-income homeowners by 2026.

Support 10,000 vulnerable or unsheltered households annually by 2026.

3.0 PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS:

Develop a public and private funding plan to expand housing and services to serve more vulnerable or unsheltered Newark residents.

3.1 INCREASE EVICTION PREVENTION EFFORTS:

Partner with the Mayor's Office of Tenant Legal Services and other community and legal service providers to increase awareness of tenant rights, emergency rental assistance, and available legal assistance.

3.2 LANDLORD TASK FORCE:

Create a Landlord Task Force to better incentivize participation in government programs and increase available apartments to the homeless.

3.3 SECURE ADDITIONAL RENTAL SUBSIDY VOUCHERS:

Partner with local and state agencies to designate rental vouchers for people experiencing homelessness.

3.4 INCREASE LOW BARRIER HOUSING:

Add an additional 50 units of the Hope Village low-barrier housing model for a total of 70 units and explore other models such as safe havens and tiny homes to serve the most vulnerable unsheltered Newark residents.

3.5 CREATIVE HOUSING SOLUTIONS:

Support creative housing solutions that could help close the housing gap for homeless residents like, Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units, and Master Leasing models.

3.6 SUPPORTIVE HOUSING:

Develop a pipeline of Supportive Housing units, starting with 100 units through the Making Housing Homes initiative. This important housing model combines affordable housing with services that help people who face the most complex challenges to live with stability, autonomy and dignity.

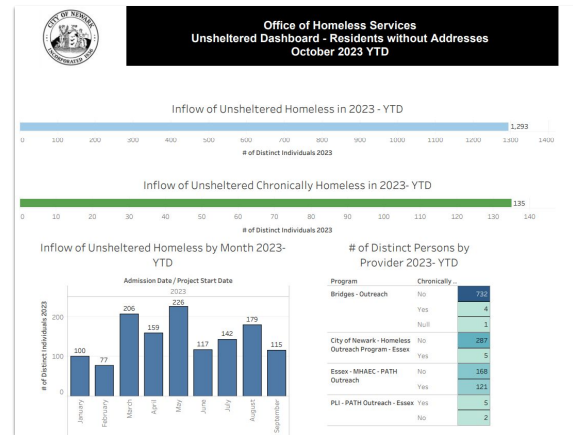
3.7 SUPPORT HOUSING STABILITY:

Develop an aftercare pilot that will provide supportive services to chronically homeless residents moving into permanent housing using evidence informed programming.

3.8 ADVOCACY AGENDA:

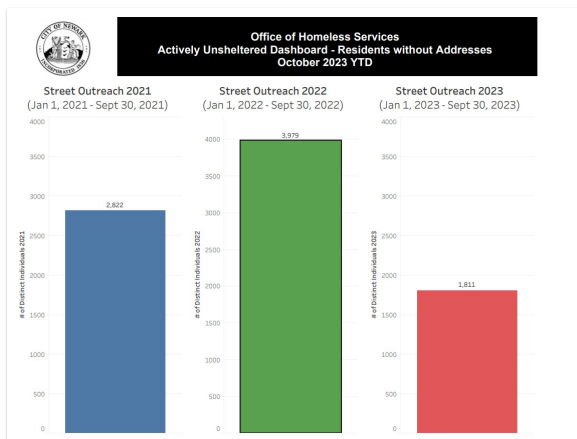
Collaborate with the Newark Community Development Network and Housing & Community Development Network of New Jersey to create a policy and advocacy agenda focused on ending homelessness in Newark.

1.0 Data Dashboard



COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

1.0 Data Dashboard



COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

1.3 Mobile Behavioral Health Services, 1.7 Healthcare Partnerships

Multidisciplinary Street Outreach Team

- Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner
- Licensed Social Worker
- Street Outreach Worker
- Community Resource Officer (NPD)



Community Crisis Response Partnership

Increase collaboration between Newark's crisis care system and homeless services to enhance the responsiveness to homeless individuals experiencing mental health crises.



1.5 Improve Efforts Around Newark Penn Station



Increased Collaboration
Street Outreach, Transit Police, Crisis Teams



Community Resource Center
Housing, Health and Workforce Services

2.0 Shelter Standards and Practice

CITY OF NEWARK
Mayor Ras J. Baraka

NEWARK WORKS TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS AT HOMELESS SHELTER AT 224 SUSSEX AVENUE
Residents will be relocated to temporary care facilities after inspections reveal numerous violations

Newark, NJ – May 25, 2023—Mayor Ras J. Baraka and the City’s Homelessness Care Luis Ulerio today announced that the City of Newark will take steps to improve the H.E.L.P. Center, which houses residents without addresses, after health and fire inspections revealed appalling conditions at the facility. Located at 224 Sussex Avenue, the facility is operated by the Sussex Avenue Renewal Corporation. Persons being sheltered at the center will be moved temporarily to emergency housing beds across Essex County with supports in place over the next several weeks.

Housing Code Enforcement, Fire Division, and Health and Community Wellness Department inspectors responded to complaints at the facility made earlier this month, and found an abundance of insects, no hot water, strewn garbage and debris, defective heaters and toilets, and damaged and missing windows. They also found that the kitchen was poorly maintained, which prompted officials to shut down the area during the inspection. Sleeping quarters were not properly kept up, and residents’ medications were not properly stored. There was no security at the front desk, defective smoke detectors, and hazardous conditions arising from improperly used or installed electrical wiring. The center was cited for all of these violations and is now facing action in Municipal Court.

“My administration has made the needs of residents without addresses a high priority, and we demand that organizations contracted to provide these residents with shelters treat them with the highest respect and quality of service in every way,” Mayor Baraka said. “This organization has violated their legal and moral responsibility to do so, and we will hold them fully accountable for their behavior.”

The Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services, under Director Ulerio, is holding meetings with the affected residents to discuss their living conditions and the actions the city is taking to address their complaints.

“Improving shelter conditions and experiences for Newark residents is one of the priorities of the Mayor’s Homelessness Strategic Plan. We are taking affirmative steps to address these concerns and better support our residents,” said Mr. Ulerio. “We will also work closely with management to develop a plan that will deliver a stronger shelter model for our residents without addresses.”

The city will consider alternative legal solutions to ensure the facility is brought up to code.

-NEWARK-

For more information on the City of Newark, please visit our website:
www.newarknj.gov

- Improve Conditions and Experience
- New RFP/Alignment with Mayor’s Plan
- 1st Cohort of Housing Navigators
- Rutgers Medical School/Behavioral Health Services

3.4 Increase Low Barrier Housing



Hope Village II
51-63 Elizabeth Avenue
20 Chronically Homeless Residents
November 2023

- NJIT: Welcome Building
- InterPort: Conference/Meeting Space
- Invest Newark: Broadband/Laptops
- Youthbuild/Workforce: Paid Interns
- Green Space: PNCT/Jacobs/TNC
- Project/Empty Space: Art/Branding

3.4 Increase Low Barrier Housing



Resilient Hope - Tiny Homes
25 Chronically Homeless Residents
Summer/Fall 2024

- Community Engagement**
- Stakeholders: Feb 27
 - Pamphlet and Surveys (April)
 - Residents: April 3, June 26
 - Community Canvassing (May)

3.5 Creative Housing Solutions



Hotel Riviera Conversion
 169 Clinton Ave
 210 Units, 6 Floors

Housing Models

- Emergency Shelter
- Transitional Housing
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Onsite Services

Year 1: Partnership Priorities



Better Address Street Homelessness

Reduce the number of people living on the street through new approaches to engagement, better coordination among stakeholders, and alignment on outcomes.

1. Community Resource Center

The City and State are partnering together to open a new drop-in center near Penn Station (on Raymond Blvd) to effectively support unhoused people living and congregating in and around the Penn Station/Downtown area. The city is contracting with two nonprofit providers to provide housing navigation, health, workforce, and other necessary services such as showers and laundry facilities.

Need: The project has funding for site acquisition and business hour services however, there is a funding gap to provide night and weekend operations and other specialized services.

2. Cash Incentives for Homeless

Numerous jurisdictions across world are experimenting with cash incentive pilot programs aimed at alleviating poverty. A few (in Canada and the UK) are targeted specifically to people who are homeless with promising preliminary results. On the last homeless Point in Time Count in 2022 there were 134 street homeless individuals in Newark. The city would like to develop a cash transfer program targeted toward to street homeless individuals.

Need: Private funding is needed to fund the incentives, a survey, and evaluation.

Year 1: Partnership Priorities



Improve Access and Services Through the Shelter System

Improve access for the unsheltered and transform the culture in shelters to better support residents to live independently.

3. Private Rooms

In order to incentivize chronic street homeless individuals to engage with shelter, the city would like to have short term private room options with supportive services available.

Need: Funding is needed to secure 25 private rooms with services.

4. Shelter Provider Training

The City has partnered with RUBHC Technical Center to develop a training program for shelter staff that provides instruction on current evidenced informed practices like de-escalation techniques and motivational interviewing. Participants will receive a certification at the completion of the training series.

Need: Funding is needed to support the training for multiple cohorts over next 3 years.

5. Employment Coordinator

The city would like to fund a new pilot position that will create an infrastructure to connection shelter residents to jobs.

Need: Funding is needed to bring on a coordinator for this effort.

Year 1: Partnership Priorities



Invest in Prevention and Housing

Align existing resources to support residents in maintaining current housing and support the creation and access to new housing models and services.

Overview

The City is working with Monarch Housing Associates on policy and process changes to expedite the development and deployment of housing for persons experiencing chronic homelessness. Models under review include: Master Leasing, Rapid Re-housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Single Room Occupancy (SROs), and Low-Barrier Housing



6. Opportunities

- Fund a residential unit, community room, or building at Resilient Hope
- Support operations at Transitional Housing sites with focus on housing street homeless (Positive Healthcare, Riviera Hotel)
- Provide gap funding for construction and operations to convert Fulton Street into Private Rooms/Transitional
- Support a flexible fund to support residents who do not qualify for traditional homeless prevention assistance



United States Interagency
Council on Homelessness



“It is amazing to see that Newark’s strategic plan to end homelessness The Path Home, Collaborating Across Our Community and All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness are seamlessly **aligned**”

- Nichele Carver, Senior Regional Adviser



State of the City 2023
Newark Leading and Proud of It

“We have an ambitious goal to end chronic homelessness in our city in three years. This is a heavy lift and would be impossible for us to get this off the ground without our partners.” - Mayor Ras J. Baraka

[Compassionate City - State of the City 2023](#)

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