

Update to Homeless System Gaps Analysis

October 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Orange County has made great strides in filling gaps in the homeless service system over the past two years. Service providers and local governments have significantly expanded programs and services to address the needs of people at-risk of and experiencing homelessness. Community members and other funders have also stepped up to finance new and expanded programs.

At the same time, **demand for homelessness prevention, services, and housing has also increased.** The COVID global pandemic exposed existing inequality and overwhelmed existing supports and systems. **There are currently fourteen gaps to be filled to meet the current need and end homelessness in Orange County.**

Filling the gaps will provide the right mix of client-centered and evidenced-based programs which will in turn result in **homelessness in our community becoming rare, brief and one-time.**

FILLED:

- Housing Access Coordinator
- Homelessness Diversion Funding
- Street Outreach



CURRENT GAPS:



• **HOUSING**

- Rapid Re-housing
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Youth Housing
- Landlord Incentives
- Housing Locator
- Furniture and Household goods



• **SERVICES – TEMP. HOUSING**

- Accessible, housing-focused shelter
- Medical respite beds
- Bridge Housing



• **SERVICES - CONNECTIONS**

- Housing Helpline staffing
- Sober Center
- Integrated Service Center



• **SERVICES - DIGNITY**

- 24 hour bathrooms
- Memorial service funding

GAP DETAILS



FILLED GAPS

Since the first homeless system gaps analysis in 2017, three gaps have been filled.

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Housing Access Coordinator	Position moved from CEF to Orange County	FILLED	Funded via OC Partnership to End Homelessness budget (local governments)	Continued program

Program Description:

The Housing Access Coordinator (HAC) position originated at the Community Empowerment Fund (CEF) in 2018 and moved to Orange County housing in 2020. This position works with landlords and property management staff to recruit existing housing units in our community to use Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) as well as other housing vouchers like Rapid Re-housing and veterans programs.

This position has a limited capacity to also work with people in housing search. The HAC would work closely and directly with the Housing Locator position, which is a current Housing Gap to be filled.

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Homelessness Diversion Funding	\$13,000 in diversion funding provided by Carolina Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI)	FILLED	Ongoing CHPI leadership development and funding continuing Funded via CHPI (nonprofit)	Continued program

Program Description:

Homelessness diversion funding is flexible funding that allows people to find safe alternatives to emergency shelter. Orange County has reduced the number of people entering the homeless system through flexible diversion funds provided by the Carolina Homelessness Prevention Initiative

(CHPI) as well as effective utilization of Emergency Housing Assistance and the Eviction Diversion program. CHPI was started by a group of undergraduate students at UNC who wanted to help people experiencing homelessness. After conversations with service providers and OCPEH staff, CHPI decided to tackle homelessness diversion, a gap at that time. CHPI has a system of ongoing member recruitment and leadership development to ensure ongoing continuation of this completely student-led and operated 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

GAP DETAILS



FILLED GAPS

Since the first homeless system gaps analysis in 2017, three gaps have been filled.

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Street Outreach	Program started October 2020, 3 FTE (1 clinical coordinator + 2 peer support navigators) - ocpehnc.com/street-outreach	FILLED THROUGH JUNE 2022	Funded initially via Emergency Solutions Grant COVID funding (Oct 2020 – November 2021); Orange County providing continuation funding with American Rescue Plan (ARP) Need ongoing annual program funding July 2022 and beyond; Potential fourth program position (additional peer support navigator) could be funded via Town of Chapel Hill Re-Imagining Community Safety Task Force for \$67,721	\$299,562 additional annual funding for July 2022 and beyond;

Program Description:

The Street Outreach, Harm Reduction, and Deflection (SOHRAD) program began operations in October 2020 with three full-time positions – a clinical coordinator and two peer support navigators. SOHRAD works with people who are living unsheltered to connect them with housing and services. Since beginning client work in November 2020 and through mid-September 2021, SOHRAD staff served over 200 people including helping 48 people enter housing, and assisted with over 50 deflections from law enforcement involvement, including arrest and jail. Funding for a fourth full-time position could be approved by Town of Chapel Hill in fall 2021.

Program Budget:

Salary & benefits for 3 Peer Street Navigators	\$185,763
Salary & benefits for 1 Clinical Coordinator	\$81,174
Training / Mileage	\$7,500
Supplies for engagement	\$25,125
TOTAL	\$299,562

GAP DETAILS



CURRENT GAPS: HOUSING

Orange County has made significant progress on filling some system gaps, there is also more work to be done. Here is the current status with some gaps added from previous editions of the Gaps Analysis.

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Expanded Rapid Re-Housing	Best practice program started April 2020, as of September 2021 have 2 FTE case managers	PARTIALLY FILLED	Best practice program funded via combination of Emergency Solutions Grant COVID (ESG-CV) funds, HOME funds for Tenant Based Rental Assistance, and County Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funding; ESG-CV funding for case manager and financial assistance to end February 2022; Program targeted long-term shelter stayers, plus others on HOME Committee list; Need funding for a total of 6 case managers plus client financial assistance to serve 180 households per year (30 per case manager per year)	\$1,373,133 additional annual funding

Program Description:

Rapid Re-housing provides a flexible mix of short-term rental assistance and case management with services provided in a trauma-informed, client-centered manner. As of September 2021, there are over 160 households each month who are connected to service providers and in need of permanent housing, almost all of whom would we be well served by Rapid Re-housing.

Program Budget:

Salary & benefits for 5 case managers	\$333,633
Expected ESG funding for RRH services	(\$ 40,500)
SUBTOTAL - case manager funding needed	\$293,133
Client financial assistance - \$1200/household/month x 12 months x 5 case managers	\$1,080,000
TOTAL	\$1,373,133

GAP DETAILS



CURRENT GAPS: HOUSING

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GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	2 current programs serve Orange County: IFC (best practice program) and Community Link	PARTIALLY FILLED	Need additional funding for program expansion, helpful to identify non-HUD source for services funding to serve as match for CoC-funded PSH	\$200,000

Program Description:

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) serves people experiencing chronic homelessness, providing housing subsidy and case management. The Inter-Faith Council for Social Service (IFC) is requesting funds for 3 FTE case managers to allow expansion of best practice PSH program. The current program cannot expand due to the need for match funding. The program currently has 2 FTEs funded by Continuum of Care (CoC) funding. Providing local funding for PSH services would allow the CoC dollars to be used for rental assistance, and adding another FTE case manager (3 total) would provide the staff capacity needed to administer additional rental assistance from reallocated CoC funds. Permanent Supportive Housing demand has been exacerbated by COVID, from an average of about 25 households per month in February 2020 who are experiencing chronic homelessness and have high service needs to about 40 households per month in September 2021. There have been zero program referrals to PSH in the past two years because current programs are full.

Program Budget:

Salary & benefits for 3 case managers + IFC overhead	\$200,000
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GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Youth Housing Program	Program that served Durham revamped to adopt Rapid Re-housing model	UNFILLED	Need program expansion funding to cover youth in Orange County	\$162,160

Program Description:

Funding LGBTQ Center of Durham for housing, therapy, and case management for youth (age 18-24) exiting homelessness in Orange County; program serves both LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ youth. The Center completely revamped their youth housing program in response to COVID - changing from a host home program model to rapid re-housing inclusive of rental assistance and services.

Program Budget:

Staff Salaries	1/3 Program Director and Case Manager	\$33,997
Therapy Services	Contract services with mental health service providers	\$36,663
Housing	\$1000/month for 7 clients for 12 months	\$84,000
Admin and overhead		\$ 7,500
TOTAL		\$162,160

GAP DETAILS



CURRENT GAPS: HOUSING

Orange County has made significant progress on filling some system gaps, there is also more work to be done. Here is the current status with some gaps added from previous editions of the Gaps Analysis.

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Sustained funding for Landlord Incentive Program (LIP)	Implemented LIP in April 2020 (flyer) to increase units available for people exiting homelessness and people with Housing Choice Vouchers	PARTIALLY FILLED	Funding requested via County American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding, to be decided Fall 2021	\$200,000 annually for 200 units

Program Description:

The Landlord Incentive program provides landlords with \$1000 signing bonus for new leases and \$500 for renewing leases for Housing Choice Voucher participants and participants in other programs like Rapid Re-housing, veterans programs, and for clients working with the Local Reentry Council and Compass Center. The County has funded LIP with CARES Act and HCV funds that all expire at the end of 2021. LIP is managed by the Housing Access Coordinator. COVID eviction moratorium created stagnation in unit turnover -- providing Landlord Incentives for new and renewing leases has proven an effective strategy during COVID to create unit availability for people with Housing Choice and other vouchers.

Program Budget:

100 new leases, \$1000 each	\$100,000
200 renewal leases, \$500 each	\$100,000
TOTAL	\$200,000

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Housing Locator	Orange County allocated the County portion for this position in the FY21-22 budget	UNFILLED	Housing Locator allow the HAC to concentrate on system-level unit recruitment	\$67,000

Program Description:

The Housing Locator would provide client-level assistance in locating units for people exiting homelessness, people with Housing Choice Vouchers, and other people at risk of homelessness who contact the Housing Helpline. The position will work in coordination with the Housing Access Coordinator (HAC) to develop and maintain landlord relationships. This will allow the HAC to focus more completely on system-level landlord recruitment, which is currently difficult due to demand for providing direct housing navigation support for the more vulnerable residents in housing search with vouchers in-hand. People are searching for units with Housing Choice Vouchers and other rental assistance without being able to locate units. As of September 2021, there are over 160 households experiencing homelessness who are connected to service providers and in active housing search, up from average of 102 households in 2019.

Program Budget:

Salary & benefits for Housing Locator position	\$67,000
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GAP DETAILS



CURRENT GAPS: HOUSING

Orange County has made significant progress on filling some system gaps, there is also more work to be done. Here is the current status with some gaps added from previous editions of the Gaps Analysis.

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Furniture and household goods	Orange County used state CARES Act funding for a furniture and household goods program in November 2020 – over 71 households applied in a 6 week period, of whom 39 were funded an average of \$800	PARTIALLY FILLED	The Furniture Program, St. Thomas More’s Caring and Sharing Center, and CommunityWorx thrift store offer some options for furniture and household goods for people entering housing. Gaps remain for returning clients, clients in Ashley Forest, and to meet community-wide need for all people exiting homelessness	\$160,000

Program Description:

People exiting homelessness often have little to no furniture or the other things needed to create a home, like linens, dishes, and cleaning supplies. Having items to make a housing unit livable and comfortable contribute greatly to housing stability. A best-practice program design would allow for a great deal of flexibility and client choice in allowing people to pick both what they need and what they would like for their homes. Orange County is on track to house over 160 households in 2021, the project budget estimates for 200 households understanding some do not come through the HOME Committee. The project budget estimates \$800 per household, understanding some people will be fully or partially served by existing community programs, but that gaps remain.

Program Budget:

200 households per year, \$800 each \$160,000

GAP DETAILS



CURRENT GAPS: SERVICES - TEMP. HOUSING

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Accessible, Housing-Focused Shelter	Noncongregate shelter program at local hotel funded by FEMA May 2020 – June 2021	PARTIALLY FILLED	Changes to the Chapel Hill Good Neighbor Plan are needed to allow IFC to implement best practice, low barrier approach and Emergency Shelter designation at IFC Community House; IFC also needs increased staffing to provide low barrier shelter	\$194,700 (revising Good Neighbor Plan) to \$3.17 million (building new shelter)

Program Description:

HUD recommends that emergency homeless shelters are accessible with low barriers to entry. Currently there is no same-night shelter availability in Orange County – people wait days, weeks, or months to enter and the wait time is highly variable. HUD further recommends that shelters are fully integrated into a housing-focused homeless service system. Stipulations in the current Good Neighbor Plan (GNP) agreement between shelter operator IFC and the neighbors of the men’s shelter, Community House regarding the designation and programming at IFC Community House do not allow this currently. OCEPH will convene facilitated community conversations around current restrictions to try to determine a way forward – changing the GNP, building a new shelter, or other option(s).

Program Budget: TBD

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Medical Respite Beds	Group of UNC Healthcare and homeless/housing service providers meeting regularly to advance plan; UNC Healthcare management is interested to pursue	UNFILLED	Working now on nursing-home based model 5 bed project proposal for potential funding by UNC Healthcare	Budget TBD

Program Description:

Beds with low level medical care available for people discharging from hospital without a place to live, 2-6 week stays previewed for people who are able to complete their activities of daily living but need skilled care such as wound care or IV medicine administered. Currently these patients are long-term stayers at the hospital or discharged to homelessness – a medical respite program would free up needed hospital beds and also ensure people experiencing homelessness are getting needed care. The program will be designed to meet community need, particularly being able to serve people with behavioral health issues and/or criminal justice involvement.

Program Budget: TBD

GAP DETAILS



CURRENT GAPS: SERVICES - TEMP. HOUSING

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Bridge Housing	Reentry House Plus opened summer 2021 to provide bridge housing to up to 3 participants at a time, plus a house manager who also has a history of incarceration	UNFILLED	Orange County Local Reentry Council (LRC) seeing 65 people exiting jail or prison per year needed an average of 60 nights stay	\$220,500

Program Description:

There is a critical need for short-term, low barrier reentry housing and supporting services to help reentering individuals re-integrate into the community, especially during COVID. Bridge Housing funds allow for short-term supportive stabilization housing at hotels for up to 60 days for 55 reentering individuals per year and supportive services for 65 individuals through Reentry House Plus. Reentry House Plus has contracted with the SWIT (Success While in Transition) program run by individuals who themselves have reentered successfully to provide a month-long course and ongoing one-on-one case management and peer mentoring for these individuals in collaboration with our Local Reentry Council. Bridge Housing and support is an evidence-based best practice for ensuring stabilization and support for people reentering from incarceration, which has been identified as a [critical priority by U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary, Marcia Fudge.](#)

Program Budget:

Hotels – 55 people per year, an average of 60 nights, \$55/night	\$181,500
Services – SWIT classes, \$600/person for 65 people	\$39,000
TOTAL	\$220,500

GAP DETAILS



CURRENT GAPS: SERVICES - CONNECTIONS

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Housing Helpline Staffing	Program moved to Orange County March 2020; expanded to full time hours (Monday-Friday, business hours) plus one day a week in-person in Chapel Hill as of September 2021 ocpehnc.com/housing-help	PARTIALLY FILLED	Have ongoing funding for 2 FTE from Continuum of Care grant; one-time 12 month funding for .5 FTE from ESG-CV; Have requested .5 FTE funding from ARP to make this 1 FTE; have funding for 4 temporary staff through June 2022	\$161,010 additional annual funding to add 2 FTE July 2022 and beyond

Program Description:

The Orange County Housing Helpline is the centralized access point for people in housing crisis, including people who need to access emergency shelter, homelessness diversion, eviction diversion, and homelessness prevention including rent and utility assistance. Since launching in March 2020 through mid-September 2021, Helpline staff have fielded over 24,000 calls and 18,000 emails, serving over 8800 households. In September 2021 the Helpline received an average of 82 calls and 47 emails per day of people in housing crisis. Helpline staff offer assistance using a trauma-informed and client-centered approach. The increased volume of people in housing crisis due to COVID results in increased need for Housing Helpline staff to answer calls and emails.

Program Budget:

Salary & benefits for 2 Coordinated Entry Housing Specialists \$161,010

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Integrated Service Center	IFC Commons opened January 2021 providing bathrooms, showers, service navigation	PARTIALLY FILLED	Continuing community conversations to explore potential integration with IFC Commons, Sober Center, Crisis Center	Budget TBD

Program Description:

An integrated service center is a central location where people in housing crisis could access many different needed services including housing navigation, service connections, showers, lockers, medicine storage, medical care, and food. Services would be provided in a trauma-informed and client-centered manner.

Program Budget: TBD

GAP DETAILS



CURRENT GAPS: SERVICES - CONNECTIONS

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Crisis/Diversion Facility	Orange County Behavioral Health Task Force subcommittee working since 2019 on program to divert people in behavioral health crises from jail and hospitals. Stakeholders are combining conversations about a Sobering Center with this project.	UNFILLED	UNC Healthcare seeing 10-15 encounters/5 people per week presenting at Emergency Department (ED) without medical conditions beyond alcohol use; discussion of rolling detox/sobering space into long-term planning for a best practice Crisis/Diversion facility	Facility to receive people who can be diverted from jail or hospitals

Program Description:

A best practice Crisis/Diversion Facility would provide anyone, anywhere, anytime support in a calming, non-institutional setting. The Facility would feature immediate 24/7/365 clinical services for assessment, stabilization, and treatment for patient experiencing behavioral health crisis (mental illness and substance use disorders) in a more appropriate/least restrictive setting. It would allow for law enforcement and EMS a default destination and provide community linkages to community treatment and social service providers in addition to urgent medical care services, on-site pharmacy services, and others.

Program Budget: TBD

GAP DETAILS



CURRENT GAPS: SERVICES - DIGNITY

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
Memorial Service Funding	CEF held vigil in December 2020 for people that passed the previous year; community member expressed interest in setting up GoFundMe to establish funding	TO FILL	\$1000 needed for basic funeral arrangements for about 5 people per year	\$5000 annually

Program Description:

Many people experiencing or with lived experience of homelessness are also medically fragile. Several times each year members of our community pass away. Oftentimes this is followed by case managers having to scramble to assemble funding and resources needed for a memorial service. Service providers have requested our community to establish a fund to use in these circumstances that would allow memorial services to occur with less stress, to provide needed closure for all community members.

Program Budget:

\$1000 for 5 services/year

GAP	PROGRESS SINCE JUNE 2019	STATUS	NOTES	NEEDED TO FILL
24 Hour Bathroom Access in Downtown	Need exacerbated with COVID, now returned to pre-COVID levels; Working group coordinated by the Town of Chapel Hill came up with pilot program in 2019	PARTIALLY FILLED - IFC Commons bathroom open	24-hour access and downtown location are key elements; OCPEH will touch base with Town of Chapel Hill planning group to determine next steps	Budget TBD

Program Description:

Bathroom and shower access in downtown Chapel Hill/Carrboro for all community members, including people experiencing homelessness.

Program Budget: TBD

BACKGROUND

The Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness is a diverse group of community stakeholders including services providers, local governments and community members who work to prevent and eliminate homelessness in Orange County. This collaborative seeks to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief and one time through a coordinated system of assessment and service delivery including prevention and diversion, emergency shelter and rapid re-housing and permanent housing options.

In 2016-2017 the Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness (OCPEH) gathered a series of meetings with people with lived experience of homelessness, homeless service providers, community leaders, and state homeless experts to map the homeless service system in Orange County. This process created the Orange County homeless system map and the homeless system gaps analysis. OCPEH staff work with community members to update the gaps analysis annually, the latest updated is previewed to be approved by the OCPEH Leadership Team in October 2021.

