

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Orange County takes a community-driven approach to mapping out the homeless service system. This analysis is critical to identifying existing resources, determining what resources are needed to prevent homelessness and when homelessness cannot be prevented to ensuring that it is brief and non-recurring, and enumerating the gap between what resources are currently available and what needs remains.

Orange County has made great strides in filling homeless system gaps in recent years with four gaps permanently filled. Services providers and local government have significantly expanded programs and services to address the needs of people at-risk of and experiencing homelessness. These efforts have led to pilot funding for two systems gaps during FY 2023-24. The Continuum of Care has also increased avenues for feedback and decision-making by people with lived expertise of the local homeless services systems.

At the same time, demand for homelessness prevention, housing that is affordable and supportive services continues to increase while COVID relief funds are winding down. There are fourteen system gaps that need ongoing funding and one system gaps that remains completely unfilled.

Filling the system gaps will provide the right mix of client-centered and evidence -based programs which will ensure that when homelessness is not prevented, that it is resolved quickly and permanently.

FILLED

- Housing Access Coordinator
- Homelessness Diversion Funding
- Street Outreach
- Accessible, housing-focused shelter

PARTIALLY FILLED - HOUSING

- Rapid Re-housing (DV and mainstream)
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Income Based Rental Units
- Youth Housing
- Landlord Incentives
- Housing Locator
- Furniture and Household goods

PARTIALLY FILLED – SERVICES - TEMPORARY HOUSING

- Bridge Housing
- DV shelter

PARTIALLY FILLED – SERVICES - CONNECTIONS

- Housing Helpline staffing
- Crisis/Diversion Facility

- Integrated Service Center

PARTIALLY FILLED – SERVICES - DIGNITY

- 24 hour bathrooms
- Memorial service funding

UNFILLED – TEMPORARY HOUSING

- Medical Respite Beds

GAP DETAILS

FILLED GAPS

Since the first homeless system gaps analysis in 2017, four 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
<p>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.</p>				

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
<p>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</p>				

ongoing member recruitment and leadership development to ensure ongoing continuation of this completely student-led and operated 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

Gap	Progress since June 2019	Status	Notes	Needed to Fill
Street Outreach	Program started October 2020, fully staffed at 1 clinical coordinator + 3 peer support navigators - ocpehnc.com/street-outreach	FILLED THROUGH JUNE 2024	Funded initially via Emergency Solutions Grant COVID funding (Oct 2020 – November 2021); Orange County providing continuation funding with American Rescue Plan (ARP) Ongoing funded secured via OC Partnership to End Homelessness budget (local governments)	Continued program
<p>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 and hired a fourth member in June 2022. SOHRAD works with people who are living unsheltered to connect them with housing and services. Since beginning client work in November 2020, SOHRAD staff served over 280 people including helping 117 people enter permanent housing, and assisted with over 150 deflections from law enforcement involvement, including arrest and jail.</p>				

Gap	Progress since June 2019	Status	Notes	Needed to Fill
Accessible, Housing-Focused Shelter	Incorporating guidance from ToCH Housing staff and OCPEH, the Good Neighbor Plan was significantly amended to reduce barriers to entry and increase access	FILLED	IFC staff are working with Coordinated Entry staff and the CE Planning committee so that referrals into available emergency shelter beds come directly from CE thereby reducing delays playing “phone tag”	Continued program
<p>Program Description: HUD recommends that emergency homeless shelters are accessible with low barriers to entry. Currently there is no year-round, 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.</p>				

Updates to the Good Neighbor Plan (GNP) agreement between shelter operator IFC and the neighbors of the men's shelter, Community House have enabled programming at IFC Community House to be more flexible to meet the needs of people needing emergency shelter and reduce the stigma and harms of the previous agreement.

PARTIALLY FILLED GAPS - HOUSING

Gap	Progress since June 2019	Status	Notes	Needed to Fill
Expanded DV Rapid Re-Housing	Newly proposed in 2023; \$120,000 annually of Victim of Crime Act Funds between Oct 2018-2022. \$107,208 in CoC funds for DV Housing Coordinator and rental assistance starting January 2023, currently \$157,208 starting Jan 2024	PARTIALLY FILLED	FY22 CoC funds provides rental assistance for six households and part of the DV Housing Coordinator's supportive services; Grant transfer from Compass Center to Orange County was approved by HUD, will take effect January 2024	\$114,392 annually – rental assistance to support all participants on the DV Coordinator's caseload

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. DV Housing Coordinator can provide services for up to 12 households at one time. Additional rental assistance dollars would maximize the number of survivors the Coordinator can serve.

Program Budget:

Salary and Benefits for 1 case manager	\$70,000
FY22 CoC funding for supportive services	(\$64,244)
Client financial assistance \$100 / household / month	\$201,600
FY22 CoC funding for financial assistance	(\$88,464)
Administrative	(\$4,500)
Total Funding needed	\$114,392

Gap	Progress since June 2019	Status	Notes	Needed to Fill
Expanded Rapid Re-Housing	Best practice program started April 2020, as of June 2022, the	PARTIALLY FILLED	Best practice program funded via combination of Emergency Solutions Grant	\$574,660 additional

	mainstream program has 4 FTE case managers		COVID (ESG-CV) funds, ESG, Continuum of Care (CoC) funds, HOME funds for Tenant Based Rental Assistance, and County Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funding;; Need funding for a total of 6 case managers plus client financial assistance to serve 160 households per year (20 per case manager per year)	annual funding																								
<p>Program Description: Rapid Re-housing provides a flexible mix of short to mid--term rental assistance and case management with services provided in a trauma-informed, client-centered manner. As of September 2023, there are over 160 households each month who are connected to service providers and in need of permanent housing, almost all of whom would be well served by Rapid Re-housing.</p>																												
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Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	2 program currently serves Orange County: IFC for people experiencing chronic homelessness and Durham VA for Veterans experiencing homelessness; County Commissioners budgeted for \$150,000 annually for PSH starting in FY24; IFC PSH applied for \$59,000	PARTIALLY FILLED	Need additional funding for program expansion, non-HUD source for services funding to serve as match for CoC-funded PSH secured Alternative program models could use site-based PSH units to reduce costs (e.g. set-aside units with rental subsidy attached to the unit) rather than case	Depends on approach

	expansion in FY23 CoC competition		managers depending on the private market	
<p>Program Description: Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) serves people experiencing chronic homelessness, providing housing subsidy and case management. Orange County has allocated \$150,000 to expand the availability of PSH in Orange County. The Inter-Faith Council for Social Service (IFC) program currently has 2 FTEs funded by Continuum of Care (CoC) funding and local funding for PSH services and rental assistance. Permanent Supportive Housing demand has been exacerbated by lack of expansion in recent years and lack of access to enhanced community-based health supports. The ongoing need has increased from an average of about 25 households per month in February 2020 who are experiencing chronic homelessness and have high service needs to about 61 households per month in September 2023. There have been three program referrals to PSH in the past two years because of lack of program capacity.</p>				
<p>Program Budget:</p> <p>Depends on approach</p>				

Gap	Progress since June 2019	Status	Notes	Needed to Fill
Income-based rental housing	Some units available in the community from Town/County subsidies and HUD subsidies, with majority of referrals not coming through Coordinated Entry; Expanded availability of Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) since Oct 2020 with 100% of vouchers available through coordinated entry. OCPEH has written several letters of support for AH project applications to prioritize people experiencing homelessness	PARTIALLY FILLED	Progress has been made with Master Leasing and development of new income-based units but barriers exist in the application process that exacerbate the lack of affordable housing options for people with criminal justice backgrounds and eviction histories resulting in longer time homeless for our most vulnerable community members	9,553 households are currently “rent burdened” meaning they spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs; There are 3x more households experiencing homelessness than the max number of LITHC units to be developed
<p>Program Description: Having an adequate supply of housing that people can afford is one of the key drivers of ending homelessness. People are less likely to become homeless if they are not rent burdened and more likely to exit homelessness faster if they can find housing that is affordable. Income based rental housing uses household income to determine amount of rent paid by clients.</p>				

Program Budget:

Average subsidy/unit has increased drastically with increased construction costs and interest rates. The current average subsidy for new unit development is \$80,000 per unit

Gap	Progress since June 2019	Status	Notes	Needed to Fill
Youth Housing Program	Program that served Durham revamped to adopt Rapid Re-housing model; LGBTQ Center was awarded \$284,771 in CoC funds in the FY2022 competition	PARTIALLY FILLED	Need program expansion funding to cover youth in Orange County	TBD
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	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, funded with CARES Act, HCV funds, and County ARP funds	PARTIALLY FILLED	Funded with County funds and HCV administrative funds	\$200,000 annually for 200 units

<p>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, Permanent Supportive Housing, Veterans programs, and for clients working with the Local Reentry Council and Compass Center. LIP is operating with County funds and is managed by the Housing Access Coordinator. HAC is currently exploring the impact of the incentive and risk mitigation for landlord recruitment and retention as the incentive levels have not changed since 2020.</p>							
<p>Program Budget:</p> <table> <tr> <td>100 new leases, \$1000 each</td> <td>\$100,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>200 renewal leases, \$500 each</td> <td>\$100,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>\$200,000</td> </tr> </table>		100 new leases, \$1000 each	\$100,000	200 renewal leases, \$500 each	\$100,000	TOTAL	\$200,000
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Gap	Progress since June 2019	Status	Notes	Needed to Fill		
Housing Locator	Orange County, Carrboro and Hillsborough approved this position in the FY21-22 budget; OC Partnership to End Homelessness secured grant funding for 0.5FTE through the Foundation for Health Leadership and Innovation	PARTIALLY FILLED	Housing Locator allows the HAC to concentrate on system-level unit recruitment	Continued funding after June 2024		
<p>Program Description: The Housing Locator provides 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 works 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. People are searching for units with Housing Choice Vouchers and other rental assistance without being able to locate units. As of September 2023, 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.</p>						
<p>Program Budget:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Salary & benefits for Housing Locator position</td> <td>\$70,000</td> </tr> </table>					Salary & benefits for Housing Locator position	\$70,000
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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; OCPEH staff are re-starting a workgroup to address this gap	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
<p>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 200 households in 2023, 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.</p>				
<p>Program Budget: 200 households per year, \$800 each \$160,000</p>				

PARTIALLY FILLED GAPS: SERVICES – TEMPORARY 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 peer house manager; Program has not operated according to best practices and has not seen program flow ; OCPEH, CJRD, Alliance Health, and Caramore are	PARTIALLY FILLED	Orange County Local Reentry Council (LRC) seeing 65 people exiting jail or prison per year needed an average of 60 nights stay	Ongoing funding after June 2024

	contracting for FY23-24 for an alternative site and operator															
<p>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 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.</p> <p>Approach One: 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.</p> <p>Approach Two: Bridge Housing funds allow for a home-based short-term supportive stabilization and connection with permanent housing for individuals experiencing homelessness and exiting institutions. Caramore would provide site-based supportive services with support from Alliance Health. OCEPH partners would provide referral via Coordinated Entry and connection to permanent housing, including Rapid Re-housing, Behavioral Health housing like Transition to Community Living, and other permanent housing where appropriate. Program would serve up to six individuals for stays up to ninety days for up to twenty-four people served annually.</p>																
<p>Program Budget:</p> <p>Approach One:</p> <table data-bbox="203 1207 1177 1312"> <tr> <td>Hotels – 55 people per year, an average of 60 nights, \$55/night</td> <td>\$181,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Services – SWIT classes, \$600/person for 65 people</td> <td>\$ 39,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>\$220,500</td> </tr> </table> <p>Approach Two:</p> <table data-bbox="203 1375 1177 1491"> <tr> <td>Operating Costs – rent, utilities, client supports, staffing</td> <td>\$221,831</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alliance Health – 2 beds</td> <td>\$73,944</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Orange County – 4 beds</td> <td>\$147,887</td> </tr> </table>					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	Operating Costs – rent, utilities, client supports, staffing	\$221,831	Alliance Health – 2 beds	\$73,944	Orange County – 4 beds	\$147,887
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Gap	Progress since June 2019	Status	Notes	Needed to Fill
Accessible, Housing-Focused Domestic Violence Shelter	Noncongregate shelter program funded by using fundraised dollars beginning in October 2020 - current	PARTIALLY FILLED	Current non-congregate shelter program uses a scattered site model and is comprised of three units. Amount needed to fill includes cost for 3 units with	\$435,000 – annual cost for 9 units and supportive services

Gap	Progress since June 2019	Status	Notes	Needed to Fill
Crisis Diversion Facility	OC Behavioral Health Task Force subcommittee working since 2019 on program to divert people in behavioral health crises from jail and hospitals. The County is working with Architect and potential provider on siting and zoning	PARTIALLY FILLED – in progress	OCPEH Staff are working with the subcommittee to incorporate the housing needs and benefits into facility and service planning	Depends on approach
Program Description: A Crisis Diversion Center would provide a therapeutic environment in which to resolve a presenting mental health or substance use crisis while facilitating connections to interdisciplinary supports				
Program Budget: TBD				

Gap	Progress since June 2019	Status	Notes	Needed to Fill
Integrated Service Center	IFC Commons opened January 2021 providing bathrooms, showers, and drop-in service navigation; CEF Hub providing appointment based supportive services; BH Taskforce Day Center Workgroup has not been meeting; Community connections have enabled additional on-site office hours, such as Street Outreach, Coordinated Entry, and Legal Restoration	PARTIALLY FILLED	Continuing community conversations to explore additional service integration with IFC Commons	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. Behavioral Health Taskforce Day Center Workgroup has				

recommended the following positions to address people in crisis in early engagement with additional service connections: Harm Reduction Therapist and Harm Reduction Peer Support Specialist.
Program Budget: TBD

PARTIALLY FILLED GAPS: SERVICES – DIGNITY

Gap	Progress since June 2019	Status	Notes	Needed to Fill
Memorial Service Funding	CEF held vigils in 2020 and 2022 for people that passed the previous year; community member expressed interest in setting up GoFundMe to establish funding	PARTIALLY FILLED – CEF has received a \$1500 grant from UNC	DSS can assist with cremation if person is unclaimed; can explore receiving discounted rate while allowing person to be claimed by community members; Quarterly community memorial services and on-call grief support	\$6000 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. Service providers have also stated a need for grief counseling for service providers experiencing compounded losses and additional training on end of life planning for community members				
Program Budget:				
\$1000 for 5 services/year			\$5000	
\$75/hour for chaplaincy services			\$1000	

Gap	Progress since June 2019	Status	Notes	Needed to Fill
24 Hour Bathroom with showers and drinking water Access in Downtown	ToCH approved funding for expanded hours of operation for Wallace Deck facilities in November 2022 and remains operational 24/7. Carrboro Town	PARTIALLY FILLED - IFC Commons bathroom/showers open; Carrboro Town Commons open; Chapel Hill Wallace Deck open 24/7	New downtown CH Parking Deck adopted some of the recommendations from the 2019 workgroup; Accessible showers remain a need	Budget TBD

	Commons is also open 24/7; There are no 24/7 showers in the downtown area			
Program Description: Bathroom and shower access in downtown Chapel Hill/Carrboro for all community members, including people experiencing homelessness.				
Program Budget: TBD				

UNFILLED GAPS – TEMP. HOUSING

Gap	Progress since June 2019	Status	Notes	Needed to Fill
Medical Respite Beds	UNC Health is interested to pursue a pilot project providing lodging and per diem costs within Chapel Hill / Carrboro	UNFILLED	Explore community-based congregate versus scattered site models; OCPEH staff are working with Carrboro town and UNC staff to explore a known site close to services in Carrboro that currently has some HUD funding	Depends on approach and whether a partner secures funds for operating costs; Cost savings to UNC Health will be significant
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, connect people with community-based social work and occupational therapy, and particularly being able to serve target people with behavioral health issues and/or criminal justice involvement for additional support.				
Program Budget: Depends on the approach – contracting for beds in an existing facility vs. renting a home and contracting for on-site services				