Fairbanks Housing & Homeless coalition Strategic Plan

FHHC Strategic Plan for 2018-2019 based upon a review of the 2013 FHHC Ten Year Plan with input from the FHHC Strategic Planning Committee & FHHC Board

2018-2019



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# Executive Summary

July 1, 2018 will be the halfway point for the Fairbanks Housing & Homeless Coalition (FHHC) Ten Year Plan (TYP). The FHHC Strategic Planning Committee with oversite from FHHC Board members reviewed the TYP in May 2018. The group found eight objectives that had been completed, were no longer relevant, or were duplicated elsewhere in the TYP. The committee combined five objectives with other objectives to be more relevant to current situations. The committee left 13 objectives with little or no changes. The committee added two objectives for a total of 15 current TYP objectives. Additionally, the committee prioritized the objectives to establish the FHHC direction and goals for 2018-2019 (please see *figure 1*).

The top priorities for the FHHC include launching the Fairbanks Shared Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) program, implementing the Coordinated Entry System (CES), and continuing outreach to other local coalitions. Each of these projects are in the execution phase of project management.

Other notable priorities for the FHHC is exploring the possibilities of establishing a local Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team, a prospective Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), and a potential Transitional Housing (TH) project for youth (18-24 years old). To further explore the ACT concept the FHHC will host the Fairbanks Symposium on Homelessness II in February 2019 with the central focus of establishing an ACT team in the community.

Potential projects for the FHHC in 2018-2019 include hosting Bridges Out of Poverty training and imploring low income housing organizations to expand their operations to Fairbanks.

# 2018 Ten Year Plan Prioritization

*Core Element*

**Housing Services**

**Support Services**

**FHHC Operations**

Rapid Re-Housing

Permanent Supportive Housing

Master Lease Program

Transitional Housing

**Top Priority** *Strategic Objective*

Assertive Community Treatment

Coordinated Entry System

FHHC Sustainability

FHHC Outreach

Day Shelter

**2nd Priority** *Strategic Objective*

**3rd Priority** *Strategic Objective*

**4th Priority** *Strategic Objective*

**5th Priority** *Strategic Objective*

Additional Emergency Shelters

Two Project Homeless Connects

Bridges Out of Poverty

Top Priority: Actively pursuing / project in the execution stage

2nd Priority: Actively pursuing / project in planning stage

3rd Priority: Actively pursuing / project in the initiation stage

4th Priority: Considering / research needed

5th Priority: On hold / research completed / not actively pursuing, but open to project opportunities

Increased Low Income Housing

FHHC Involvement with other Coalitions

Figure : 2018 Ten Year Plan Prioritization

# TYP: Housing Services

## Rapid Re-Housing

Beginning in December 2017 the FHHC planned and developed a multiagency shared Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) program that promotes consumer choice in the private rental market for clients of the Coordinated Entry System (CES) through landlord engagement, case management, and tapering financial support. This program will follow the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) / Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) standards and benchmarks for RRH. While the FHHC facilitated the project development, this has been a truly collaborative endeavor and the Fairbanks Rescue Mission was unanimously chosen to host the program. The project has been fully funded and will launch in the summer of 2018. Partners on this project include:

* Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
* City of Fairbanks
* Fairbanks Housing & Homeless Coalition (FHHC)
* Fairbanks Native Association (FNA)
* Fairbanks Rescue Mission
* Fairbanks Youth Advocates (FYA)
* Interior AIDS Association (IAA)
* Interior Alaska Center for Non-Violent Living (IACNVL)
* Love INC
* No Limits Inc.
* The Salvation Army

## Transitional Housing

The Strategic Planning Committee closely examined Transitional Housing (TH) models this year. The committee found that there is still need for an expansion of TH programs in Fairbanks for specific populations that tend to be unsuccessful in or ineligible for RRH. For safety and practical reasons, people fleeing Domestic Violence (DV) tend to need more than a year to overcome their housing barriers. The FHHC will continue to look for ways to support local DV TH programs.

There is evidence that young adults (18-25) who experience homelessness tend to fair better in TH than RRH. There are two local agencies exploring TH programs for this people experiencing homelessness in this age demographic. The FHHC will support these efforts if possible. Additionally, the FHHC is already supporting the Alaska Coalition on Housing & Homelessness (AKCH2) efforts to apply for the Youth Homeless Demonstration Program, which would likely result in TH programs across the state for young adults experiencing homelessness.

## Permanent Supportive Housing

The FHHC remains committed to looking for more Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) opportunities. While there are currently not any FHHC led PSH projects, there are a few organizations actively exploring additional PSH units. The FHHC will support these programs as feasible. Additionally, Fairbanks was just awarded a Rural Technical Assistance grant, which will allow the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) to assist the FHHC in developing several projects including a multi-agency PSH. After initial conversations, TAC believes it is feasible to establish a new 15-unit PSH within one year. The TAC support should begin in July 2018.

## Increased Low Income Housing

The Strategic Planning Committee recognizes that despite a relatively high vacancy rate in Fairbanks there does seem to be a lack of low cost rentals. The FHHC has begun reaching out to low income housing organizations including Volunteers of America (VOA) and the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC).

## Master Lease Program

The FHHC Strategic Planning Committee observed that the FHHC needs to learn more about such programs. Master Lease programs are very limited in Alaska. My House in Wasilla, AK does have a successful Master Lease program.

# TYP: Supportive Services

## Coordinated Entry System

The Alaska Balance of State (BoS) Continuum of Care (CoC) is implementing the federally mandated Coordinated Entry System (CES). The Strategic Planning Committee updated the TYP objective “Increase HMIS Participation” to “Coordinated Entry System”, because CES naturally encompasses increasing the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

The Fairbanks Referral Zone is the entirety of Interior Alaska. This vast area is slightly larger than the state of Texas, but is sparsely populated with nearly the entire population living in the Fairbanks Metropolitan Area. Geographically the Fairbanks Referral Zone is the largest referral zone in the country.

Fairbanks is the first community in the CoC to have approved CES policies and procedures. The FHHC was selected by the CoC to be the Designated Lead Agency/Organization (DLA/O). This will add a significant workload to the coalition, but should make it easier for local agencies to participate in CES. Some of the additional duties include:

* Manage the prioritization list
* Ensure fidelity of local access points
* Coordinate marketing efforts
* Monitor system performance
* Serve as a liaison between the CoC and Referral Zone

## Assertive Community Treatment / Intensive Case Management

The Strategic Planning Committee combined and updated the TYP objectives “After Hours Case Management” and “Advocate for Behavioral Health Options” to “Assertive Community Treatment / Intensive Case Management”. In 2015, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) officially outlined the Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) and Intensive Case Management (ICM) program standards. Either program would meet the intent of the previous TYP objectives and developing such a program in Fairbanks appears to be achievable. Currently Anchorage has an ACT team and Juneau is in the process of building an ACT team.

Several local agencies have expressed interest in developing an ACT team in Fairbanks. In a recent FHHC online poll there was overwhelming support for hosting another symposium. Of those surveyed, exploring the ACT model was the first choice of topics for 48% and the second choice for an additional 20%. Shortly after the survey, the FHHC hosted a discussion about ACT and approximately 40 local stakeholders participated. The symposium is a collective project for the community and is part of methodical development of the local ACT model. The community has decided the development will include exploring alternatives such as Intensive Case Management (ICM). Much like the Rapid Re-Housing project of the first symposium, the community will also decide which agency (agencies) will host any future ACT/ICM team. The symposium will provide much of the information needed to make these important decisions.

## Two Project Homeless Connects

In 2017, the FHHC hosted a Summer and Winter Project Homeless Connect (PHC). The PHC last summer was poorly attended with only 140 participants. The Strategic Planning Committee discussed potentially limiting PHC to once per year due to the cost and limited impact of the summer event, but many committee members still saw a benefit in having a summer PHC. It was ultimately decided that our goal should be to strive for two PHCs per year. Since it is late in the planning cycle for this summer the FHHC will sponsor a resource fair hosted by Access Alaska on July 13, 2018. This event is modeled after PHC and will offer similar services to an expanded client base that includes people experiencing homelessness.

## Bridges Out of Poverty

In 2017, the FHHC explored the possibility of hosting Bridges Out of Poverty training, but ultimately decided it was too expensive. The Strategic Planning Committee suggested that we continue to explore the possibilities. Aha, the company that produces Bridges Out of Poverty, has offered the FHHC a one-day course for $5,000 for as many people as would attend the event. During the June 2018 FHHC meeting, the idea of paying $5,000 for the course was not received well. Instead the Re-entry Coalition offered to loan out 25 Bridges Out of Poverty books for anybody wanting to learn about the program.

## Additional Emergency Shelters

The Strategic Planning Committee noted that the January 2018 Point In Time Count identified 48 unsheltered individuals. These individuals were either unwilling or ineligible for any of the existing emergency shelters in Fairbanks. The committee agreed to explore the possibility of expanding emergency shelter options for these individuals.

## Day Shelter

In 2017, the FHHC extensively examined day shelter possibilities, but after several setbacks determined the project should be shelved until a suitable agency has the capacity to take the lead on such an endeavor.

# FHHC Operations

## Involvement with Other Coalitions

The FHHC remains committed to collaboration with other coalition style organizations including: Alaska Coalition on Housing & Homelessness (AKCH2), North Star Community Foundation (NSCF), Fairbanks North Star Borough Air Quality Stakeholders Group, Fairbanks Opioid Workgroup, Arctic Alliance for People, Re-entry Coalition, Mobility Coalition, and Wellness Coalition. The FHHC is in constant communication and cooperation with AKCH2. The NSCF is the FHHC’s fiscal agent and the FHHC assists NSCF and its member agencies as appropriate. The FHHC is very much aligned with Re-entry Coalition with both organizations in constant communication and continually supporting mutually beneficial projects. The FHHC has varying levels of engagement with the other listed organizations and will support their activities as appropriate.

## FHHC Sustainability

The FHHC is currently looking for long-term organizational sustainability. First it seems that the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority is willing to fund the coordinator position for another three years. The position is currently funded until 2020, but with the new funding allocation it is likely the position will be funded until 2023. During a March 2018 Trust meeting, the Trustees appeared genuinely pleased with the position. The Trust currently funds three municipal Housing & Homeless Coordinator positions. All three coordinators have organized significant housing projects. Fairbanks is the only community that has expressly stated that the position will also serve as the local coalition’s coordinator. In all other communities these positions are separated. This ensures the FHHC will have at least one full time employee until 2023. To extend beyond 2023 the FHHC will need to either find alternative funding sources or continue to demonstrate the effectiveness of the position.

The FHHC is under the fiscal supervision of the North Star Community Foundation (NSCF), because the FHHC is not a stand-alone 501c3 organization. This arrangement allows the FHHC to apply for grants that require 501c3 status, but often limits what funding sources may be used as it puts the FHHC in competition with other NSCF organizations. The NSCF is essentially operated by one person, who has an impressive travel schedule making the NSCF somewhat unreliable. This arrangement failed repeatedly in 2017 resulting in lost funding opportunities. While conditions have greatly improved over the past six months, the current arrangement should not be considered a long-term solution. The FHHC needs to be ready to become an independent 501c3 at any time. With the establishment of by-laws in 2017, and the election of a board in 2018 the FHHC is poised to meet the standards of the Alaska Nonprofit Corporation Act, should the need arise.

The FHHC currently operates in a project to project funding cycle that leaves little if any funding for operational expenses. Fortunately, outside project expenses, the FHHC operates with few overhead costs. In the past the coordinator has paid for outside expenses out of pocket, but in 2017 the FHHC was awarded approximately $5,000 from the 100 Golden Heart Women Who Care. This and smaller fund-raising activities gave the coalition general purpose funding. The coordinator is trying to maintain at least $5,000 in the FHHC account at all times. Long-term sustainability will require increased fund-raising activities, but the FHHC must never find itself in competition for funds with its member agencies.

FHHC Outreach

The FHHC has been granted an AmeriCorps VISTA to serve as a full-time Outreach Coordinator until August 2019. The Outreach Coordinator leads the Outreach Committee and coordinates FHHC outreach. The three primary outreach focuses are to people experiencing homelessness, to agencies providing services for people experiencing homelessness, and to the community in general. After August 2019 the Outreach Coordinator position will be filled by a volunteer from the FHHC.