

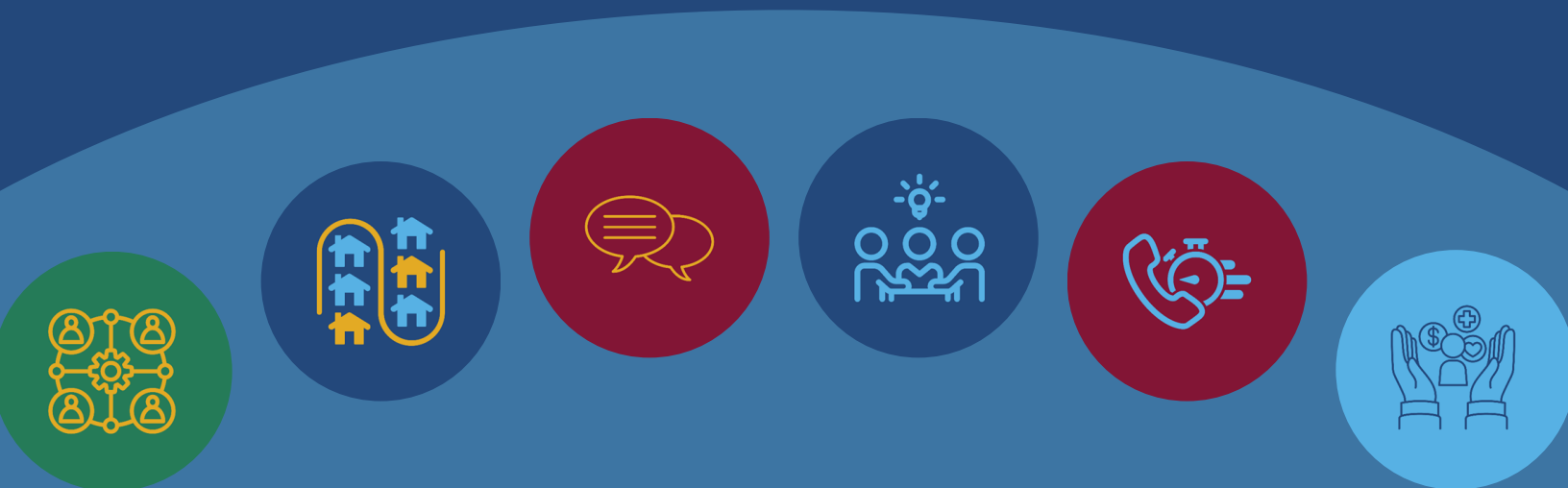


**Benton  
County**  
OREGON

Coordinated Homeless Response System

# Strategic Plan

2023-2027



Benton County Health Department  
Coordinated Homeless Response Office

[health.bentoncountyor.gov/coordinated-homeless-response](http://health.bentoncountyor.gov/coordinated-homeless-response)

# Benton County Coordinated Homeless Response System

## Strategic Plan

2023-2027

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## Executive Summary

The Benton County Coordinated Homeless Response Office is proud to present the 2023-2027 Benton County Coordinated Homeless Response System 5-year Strategic Plan. This document is the result of deep countywide collaboration with diverse community partners, and organizations dedicated to responding to and preventing homelessness.

This Plan does not replace previous planning efforts, rather it centralizes the many years of meaningful planning and research at the local, state, and federal level. A large portion of the work to develop and document Benton County's Coordinated Homeless Response System and the Plan to guide its work has been the investigation of existing frameworks at the federal, state, and local level that influence and impact the local response to homelessness. This investigation is essential to prevent creation of redundant systems and the diversion of resources from existing successful programs. The resulting Plan provides high level guidance to enable flexibility and responsiveness in an everchanging policy and funding landscape.

The Coordinated Homeless Response 5-year Strategic Plan outlines 6 priority areas for targeted work over the next five years and serves as a guide for collective community efforts to address and measure progress towards our shared vision, ***that everyone in Benton County has the opportunity to live in decent, safe, and affordable housing.***

### **What** this Plan includes:

- A summary of the work and history that got us where we are today in Benton County.
- Six priority areas that are inclusive and relevant to community partners working to reduce and end homelessness in our rural and urban communities.
- An overview of the Coordinated Homeless Response System and its' components with explanations on how each component plays a part in our community's response to homelessness.
- A community roadmap that will guide countywide work and prioritization of resources over the next five years.

## **Why** we have a Plan:

- Benton County, the City of Corvallis, the City of Philomath, and Community Service Consortium (CSC) are part of a pilot program sponsored by Oregon State House Bill 4123 (2022) to support a coordinated response to homelessness. As required by House Bill 4123 (HB 4123) staff from the newly formed Benton County Coordinated Homeless Response Office (CHRO) with staff and leadership support from the City of Corvallis, the City of Philomath and CSC have facilitated the development of this Plan.
- To make real progress towards our shared vision, we need to align community priorities to collectively target our efforts towards specific solutions.
- A shared language to communicate about all the work being done on this topic is necessary for transparency, accountability, and understanding at the local and state level.
- The six priority areas will be used to develop a focused work plan that aligns with the identified priorities and highlights our shared community work.

Since the 2017 release of the “Update to the Ten-Year Plan to Address Issues Surrounding Housing and Homelessness,” the COVID-19 pandemic underscored that homelessness is a public health crisis for everyone. People who experience homelessness have an increased exposure to threats of violence, adverse weather, disease, and other dangers worsened by the lack of a stable and safe place to call home. Homelessness is a social justice crisis demonstrated by nationwide and local homelessness data exposing alarming racial and ethnic disparities<sup>1</sup>. The strategies in this plan keep our community’s values front and center to prioritize vulnerable populations, community safety for all, and racial and ethnic justice.

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<sup>1</sup> See page 5 for an overview of local data on homelessness.

## Purpose of the Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan brings policy leadership developed within the structure of the Coordinated Homeless Response System into a framework where the community can take action and make progress on the community's priorities. Policy guidance — gathering information, weighing options, and setting long-term goals for the community — is one of the most important parts of developing the Plan and forms the foundation of the document. Additionally, community partner input and participation in the development of the Plan maximizes opportunities for alignment, reduces duplication, and enables collective impact of strategies in the Plan. This Plan steers our community towards a shared vision to assure that **“everyone in Benton County has the opportunity to live in decent, safe, and affordable housing.”**



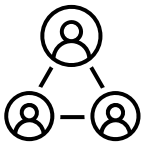
### Community Roadmap

By presenting community priorities in the same document, leaders can make well-informed, long-term decisions.



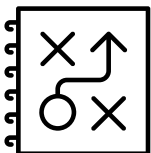
### Work and Resource Prioritization

Our goal is to have collective impact by coordinating our actions with community partners to work together and tackle an issue from all sides. This Plan will guide the development of the annual Coordinated Office work plan and operational decision-making to prioritize projects and funding in a strategic way for a countywide homeless response.



### Accountability/Stewardship

Strategic coordination among funders maximizes the impact of limited resources. Transparent collaboration reinforces our role as public stewards. Implementation of metrics for successful programs bolsters accountability across the system of services.



### Strategic Priorities

The topic of homelessness solutions is complex. Implementing solutions in a complex environment requires strong organization and coordination with many community partners. The Strategic Priority areas in this Plan reflect years of research and best practices (local, state, and federal), are key to reducing and preventing homelessness and will guide the work of the Coordinated Homeless Response System. The Plan works to integrate the community's housing and homelessness response planning (i.e. HOPE Policy Recommendations) with the requirements of House Bill 4123 into one document.

## Vision and Values

### Our Vision

In 2016, diverse partners throughout Benton County, within the structure of the Housing Opportunities Action Council (HOAC), and supported by funding from Benton County, City of Corvallis, and Samaritan Health Services, initiated a planning process to update the Ten-Year Plan to Address Issues Surrounding Housing and Homelessness in Benton County, Oregon. The result was **Community Strategies to Overcome Homelessness and Barriers to Housing (Update to the 10-year Plan)**<sup>2</sup>, a far-reaching document that outlines goals and strategies aimed to represent the Ten-Year Plan’s original vision of assuring that “everyone in Benton County has the opportunity to live in decent, safe, and affordable housing.”



**Vision:** “Everyone in Benton County has the opportunity to live in decent, safe, and affordable housing.”

Following the Update to the 10-year plan, Benton County and the City of Corvallis formed the Home, Opportunity, Planning, and Equity (HOPE) Advisory Board to improve leadership and coordination in Benton County’s response to homelessness and housing insecurity.

Starting in 2020, the Home, Opportunity, Planning, and Equity (HOPE) Board<sup>3</sup> engaged in a planning process that included research on successful best practices, extensive public engagement, and a local gap analysis. The HOPE Board’s work was informed by specific strategies outlined in the Update to the 10-year plan, was guided by their values, and was driven by local data on priority populations.

### Guided by Values

The values listed in the HOPE Advisory Board bylaws are embedded into Benton County’s Coordinated Homeless Response System. The Coordinated Homeless Response Office is guided by the vision and values in the HOPE Bylaws, as well.

<sup>2</sup> <https://health.bentoncountyor.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/hope-benton-county-tenyearplan-update-2017.pdf>

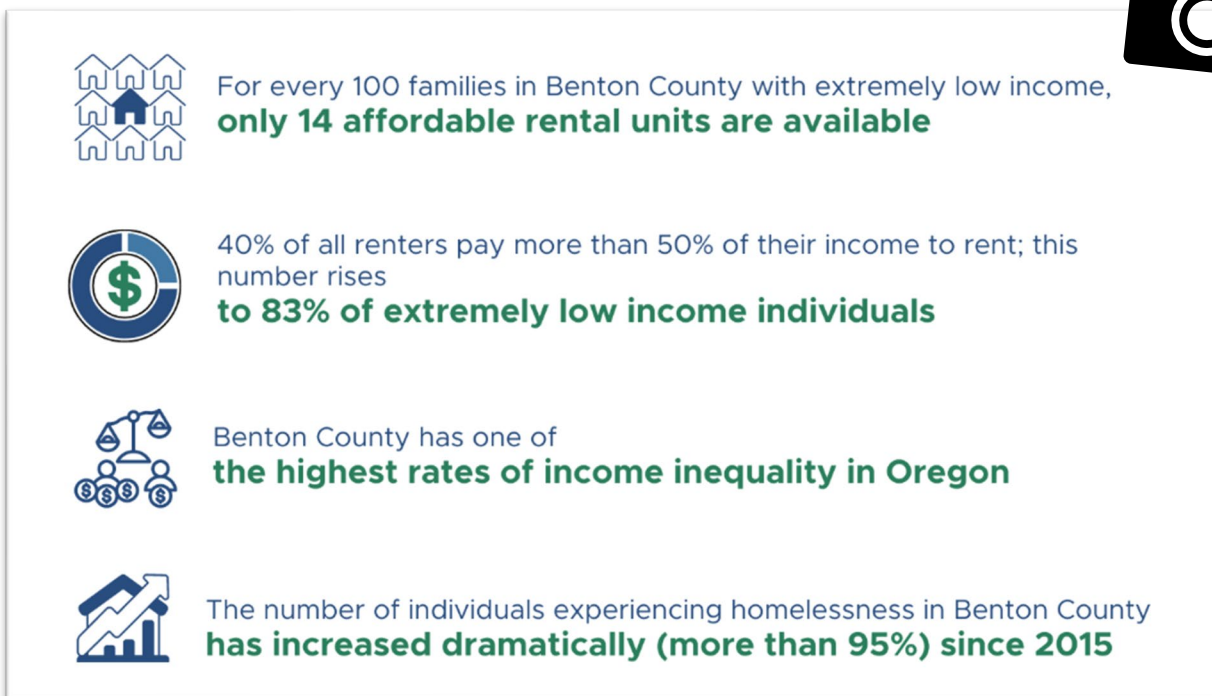
<sup>3</sup> <https://health.bentoncountyor.gov/advisory-committees/#hope-board>

These values are pillars of this Strategic Plan and continue to guide our daily work.

- **Use data to drive assessments, prioritization, and accountability.**
- **Take a comprehensive systems and multi-sector approach.**
- **Engage and involve the community, not just direct service providers.**
- **Prioritize vulnerable populations.**
- **Promote community safety for all.**
- **Promote racial and ethnic justice.**

## Data Driven

Our local data shows an alarming overrepresentation of certain subpopulations in Benton County’s sheltered and unsheltered populations experiencing homelessness. This data focused the HOPE Advisory Board’s development of twelve policy recommendations to prioritize **vulnerable populations**, **community safety for all**, and **racial and ethnic justice**.<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> HOPE Recommendations: <https://health.bentoncountyor.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/HOPE-Advisory-Board-2021-0428-PolicyRecommendations.pdf>

We gathered a variety of data to inform our analysis of the different groups experiencing homelessness. The sources we reviewed comprise the 2023 Point in Time Count (PIT)<sup>5</sup>, Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and Coordinated Entry<sup>6</sup> data from CSC, 2022-23 school year McKinney-Vento data, and reports from two local providers, Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center (CDDC) and Unity Shelter. The variety of sources is necessary to understand our local population of people experiencing homelessness as each source has its insights and limitations.

### ***Data Limitations***

Compiling accurate data about people experiencing homelessness is a challenge due to many factors. Limited resources for outreach and engagement impact the reach of data collection efforts. For example, the Point in Time (PIT) count is an unfunded mandate by the federal government that relies almost solely on volunteer efforts and is conducted only once per year. Discussing personal history for purposes of assessment and data collection can be traumatic for the individual. This affects Coordinated Entry data as it is limited to those who are able to/choose to complete a lengthy assessment and constrained by staff time available to conduct the assessment. The data generously shared by local service providers represents information gleaned from regular contact and trust building with people experiencing homelessness but has definitions and categories specific to each providers needs and reporting requirements, making direct comparison and combining difficult.

With that said, we have used the data we currently have to better understand the homeless population in our area. The information included in this document is a selection of the data that has been collected but is not all inclusive of all data sources.

### ***Vulnerable Populations***

2023 Coordinated Entry Data for Benton County shows that **87% of all people who have completed a VI-SPDAT<sup>7</sup> assessment report at least one risk factor**

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<sup>5</sup> PIT count: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hdx/pit-hic/#2024-pit-count-and-hic-guidance-and-training>

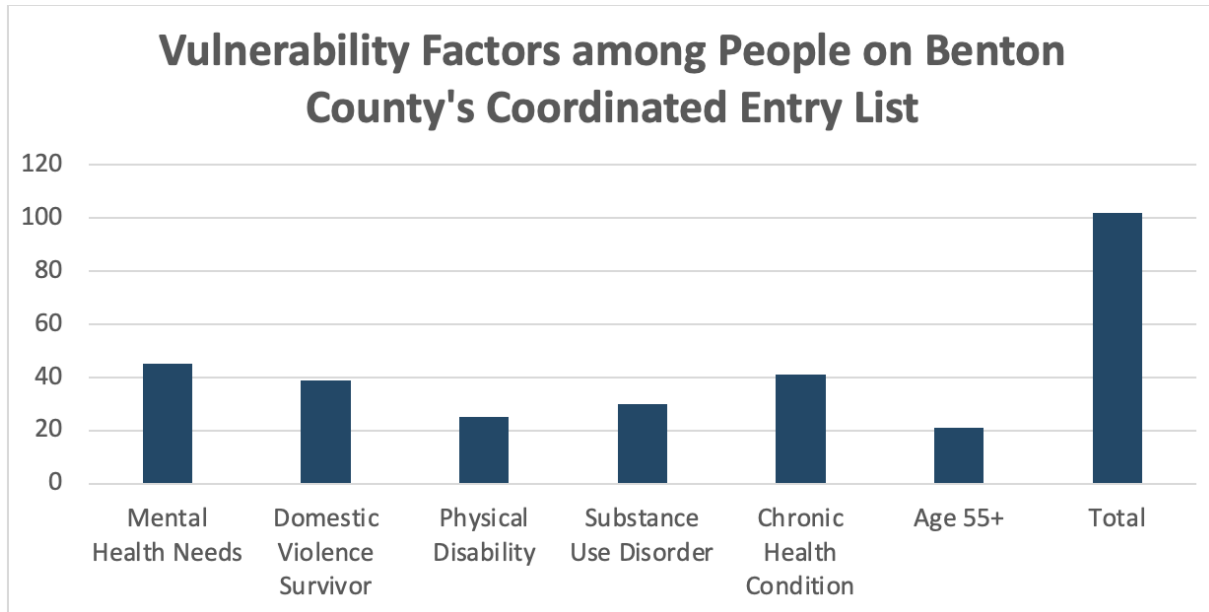
<sup>6</sup> HMIS: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hmis/hmis-requirements/>

Coordinated Entry: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/6643/coordinated-entry-data-and-system-performance/>

<sup>7</sup> The Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) was developed as a pre-screening tool, which is completed with people who are literally homeless to highlight areas of vulnerability to help inform the type of support and housing intervention that may be most beneficial to improve long term housing outcomes.



**that indicates higher need and/or urgency for support to exit homelessness. Nearly half of this group (45%) reports four or more vulnerability factors,** including age 55 or older, domestic violence victim/survivor, alcohol and/or drug use disorder, chronic health condition, developmental condition, HIV/AIDS, mental health needs, and/or physical disability.



Source: reported occurrences of factors among the 102 people in the Coordinated Entry Data for Benton County as of July 10, 2023.

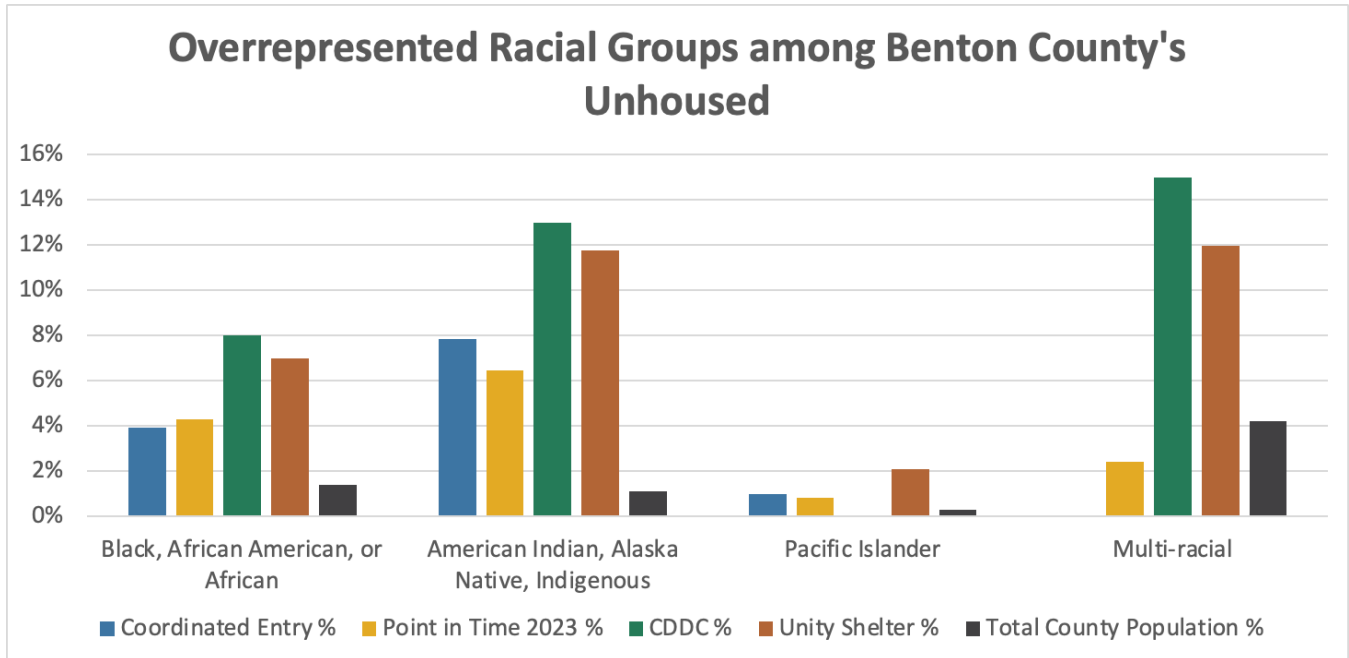
### **Community Safety for All**

People are safer when they have secure, permanent, and stable housing. Living unhoused increases a person’s chance of harm from violence and crime. Without shelter, people are at higher risk of exposure to health threats, like tuberculosis and COVID-19, and have fewer resources to practice basic hygiene that can stop the spread of disease. Access to a physically safe place, such as shelter or housing, both reduces these safety risks for those experiencing homelessness and reduces the interconnected effects of these risks throughout the community.

### **Racial and Ethnic Justice**

The graphics below illustrate the representation of different racial and ethnic groups in the local homeless population as compared to their overall representation per the U.S. Census. Note the significant overrepresentation of Black, Native American, Pacific Islander, and multi-racial groups in the first chart. The second table shows the representation for all racial and ethnic groups in the homeless population for which data was collected in comparison with the total

county population (per U.S. Census data). (Data sources are shown separately in the chart both because of difference in collection methods and to show the representation of different groups in different phases of the homelessness experience.)



### Overview of Racial and Ethnic Groups among Benton County's Unhoused and Total Populations

	Coordinated Entry	2023 Point in Time	CDDC	Unity Shelter	Benton County Total Population
<b>Asian or Asian American</b>	0.98%	0.81%	1.70%	1.49%	6.60%
<b>Black, African American, or African</b>	3.92%	4.30%	8.00%	6.97%	1.40%
<b>American Indian, Alaska Native, Indigenous</b>	7.84%	6.45%	13.00%	11.75%	1.10%
<b>Pacific Islander (incl. Native Hawaiian)</b>	0.98%	0.81%	x	2.09%	0.30%
<b>Latino/a/x</b>	6.86%	11.02%	9.40%	8.76%	8.60%
<b>Multi-racial</b>	x	2.42%	15.00%	11.95%	4.20%
<b>White or Caucasian</b>	86.72%	74.46%	x	81.08%	86.40%

# The Coordinated Homeless Response System: We All Play a Part

Homelessness in Benton County has escalated in recent years and demands a system for comprehensive coordination of all the pieces that play a part in our community's response. We call this system the **Benton County Coordinated Homeless Response System**.

Benton County's Coordinated Homeless Response System provides a framework to provide cross-sector operational coordination to support countywide efforts to support all of its communities' and providers with the ultimate goal to add housing options and sustain housing in every community in Benton County.

## I. Federal Best Practices for a Coordinated System

Federally recommended best practices come from a variety of sources, including the Federal [Housing and Urban Development](#) (HUD) Department, the [National Alliance to End Homelessness](#) (HAEH), the [United States Interagency Council on Homelessness](#) (USICH), the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) (SAMHSA), and various other federal funders. These funding streams require best practices in housing and homelessness solutions as part of their agreements to fund services. Best practice guides range from how to address racial inequities to low barrier approaches to fair housing laws. Benton County's Coordinated Homeless Response System prioritizes incorporating these best practices into the entire spectrum of shelter and housing.

In December 2022, The Biden-Harris Administration released [All In: The Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#). The federal strategic plan is built around three foundational pillars – **equity, data and collaboration** – and three solution pillars – **housing and supports, homelessness response, and prevention**. As demonstrated throughout Benton County's Coordinated Homeless Response 5-year Strategic Plan, these same pillars provide foundational guidance to our community's response to homelessness.

## II. Sustainable Resources and Infrastructure

The HOPE Advisory Board recommended three foundational components to have a sustainable, communitywide impact in Benton County's response to homelessness.

## Foundational HOPE Recommendations

- a. Capacity:** organizational capacity is needed to work on and implement these recommendations, and organizational capacity needs to be built within social service organizations to manage and provide the services.
- b. Funding:** explore state, federal, and private funding to expand organizational capacity to work on these topics and to fund the implementation and permanent provision of all these recommended services. In partnership with providers, assess current funding streams to ensure funding is not being taken away from existing services but that additional funding is pursued. Allocate resources to organizations that work toward implementing these policy recommendations. Prioritize resource allocation based on community feedback.
- c. Legislative Advocacy:** advocate for state and federal leadership on local capacity building with necessary technical assistance and funding to support sustainable operations.

### **III. A Locally Led Structure**

Guided by these three foundational recommendations, Benton County, in partnership with the City of Corvallis, pursued House Bill 4123 (2022), a state sponsored pilot program that provided funding for dedicated staff and a framework for increased county and city operational alignment. This HB 4123 framework supports Benton County's development of a **Coordinated Homeless Response System** for countywide implementation of housing and homelessness strategies and includes the following components:

#### **Benton County's Coordinated Homeless Response Office**

The purpose of the Coordinated Homeless Response Office (Coordinated Office) is to provide dedicated staff for systems-level coordination, centralized communication, and strategic resource planning to support more equitable, accessible, and responsive solutions to housing and homelessness in Benton County. The Coordinated Office staff convene, lead, schedule, facilitate, research, coordinate, manage, plan, communicate, and support a variety of efforts across the community to move forward complex system solutions.

The Coordinated Office will annually review and develop work plans based on the strategic priorities outlined in this Plan. Equity will guide the ongoing work of the Coordinated Office to make system improvements with intentional partnership and community engagement.

### **HOPE Executive Committee**

The HOPE Executive Committee works together with the Coordinated Office providing cross-jurisdictional leadership, policy, and operational coordination. The Executive Committee provides input and direction to support countywide development and implementation of the strategies within this Plan. The Executive Committee consists of a chief executive, or their designee, and elected official from each member government (County and Cities) who have formalized partnership by agreement to Benton County's Homeless Response System. The Executive Committee will provide regional operational and resource coordination between members on housing and homelessness efforts and serves as liaison between the HOPE Advisory Board and each member government. The availability and needs of each community will inform the HOPE Executive Committee's scope of work.

### **HOPE Advisory Board**

The Home, Opportunity, Planning, and Equity (HOPE) Advisory Board serves as a key forum for community and stakeholder engagement, consisting of a wide array of community expertise and representation of groups working on homelessness, housing, and social determinants of health. The HOPE Advisory Board will serve as a policy liaison between the community and the governing boards of each member government represented through the Executive Committee in collaboration with the Coordinated Office. The HOPE Advisory Board provided input to support the development of this Plan. The Coordinated Office will utilize the HOPE Board, the community engagement body of the System, to periodically review for updates and improved communication.

## Service Provider Network

Many people in our community help our neighbors experiencing homelessness in a variety of ways. We call these helpers, service providers. They form a connected network and routinely come together to improve our local system of services. The Coordinated Office works in collaboration with our service provider network to support their organizations, coordinate efforts, adopt best practices, and leverage resources. The work and initiatives of the local service provider network informed the development of this Plan



*Figure 1: A community member receives counseling services at Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center*

through direct engagement by Coordinated Office staff to identify opportunities for collective impact to reach shared goals.

The local service provider network includes compassionate community members, many of whom volunteer and remain unpaid for the work they do to help our neighbors. Others may earn wages low enough to qualify for assistance programs they provide to the community. These essential workers help save lives of people experiencing homelessness while facing funding cuts, staff burnout, traumatic situations, and ever-changing federal and state landscapes that threaten sustainable funding. The community members who dedicate their time and efforts to helping our most vulnerable neighbors remain the unsung heroes of this work.

## Organization of Strategic Plan

This Plan centralizes years of planning and research at the local, state and federal levels in a structure that enables flexibility in an ever-changing service and resource landscape. The development of each Strategic Priority was informed by the Update to the 10-year Plan, HOPE Policy Recommendations, and focus areas required by HB 4123 (as illustrated in the table below). The resulting Strategic Priorities provide high level guidance to enable flexibility and

responsiveness as essential characteristics of Benton County’s Coordinated Homeless Response System.

The HOPE Policy Recommendations and HB 4123 focus areas are included in the Plan (table below) for reference and general guidance; they offer historical context for the development of the Strategic Priorities and provide examples of potential strategies to achieve our priorities. The annual Coordinated Office work plan will identify specific operational strategies for implementing the Strategic Priorities. Key dates and milestones will be provided for each strategy as they are developed and updated annually by the Coordinated Office to support the local and regional response to homelessness.

### Coordinated Office Strategic Priorities Alignment at a Glance:

*VISION:*

*Everyone in Benton County has the opportunity to live in decent, safe, and affordable housing.*

This table provides an overview of how the Coordinated Homeless Response System 5-year Strategic Plan aligns with the HOPE Policy Recommendations developed by the HOPE Advisory Board and the requirements of HB 4123. This alignment tool provides examples of current and future work occurring in our community to respond to homelessness and will be used to calibrate the work of the Coordinated Office.

#### **I. Community and Organizational Systems and Policy Change**

***Homelessness in Benton County demands a comprehensive, coordinated response from the County, cities, and diverse community partners, leaders and persons experiencing homelessness. Therefore, WE WILL:***

***A. Strengthen capacity in our systems,***

***B. Better align and leverage our resources, and***

***C. Increase coordination and collaboration of all community partners.***

**HOPE Policy Recommendations:**

Policy #1: Facilitate and coordinate data improvement efforts with community partners.

Policy #2: Work with providers to create metrics for successful program goals.

Policy #4: Collaborate with social service and health care partners to increase the number of paid, full time case managers to support people transitioning out of homelessness.

Policy #12: Increase supportive services and stable funding streams to provide services to residents at more affordable housing locations.

**HB 4123 Requirements:**

Sustainable funding to support the ongoing operations of the coordinated homeless response system.

Creating pathways.

Increasing or streamlining resources and services to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

## **II. Comprehensive Care Coordination**

***WE WILL inform an improved system of care coordination and data sharing.***

### **HOPE Policy Recommendations:**

Policy #1: Facilitate and coordinate data improvement efforts with community partners.

Policy #3: Prioritize collaboration and coordination of providers and partners with routine meetings for improved care coordination facilitated by a full-time staff member.

### **HB 4123 Requirements:**

Increasing or streamlining resources and services to people experiencing homelessness.

Incorporating best practices for ending homelessness.

Creating pathways to permanent and supportive housing that is affordable to local populations experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

## **III. Prevention**

***WE WILL prevent homelessness with strategies focused on upstream prevention to reduce housing instability for households most likely to experience homelessness. These strategies will support the needs of both rural and urban communities.***

### **HOPE Policy Recommendations:**

Policy #7: Facilitate and support the creation of a Resource Center.

Policy #8: Explore and investigate the need and the barriers to accessing housing for individuals and their families in our community whose past history has impacted their ability to secure housing.

Policy #11: Increase available rental/income assistance options.

Policy #12: Increase supportive services and stable funding streams to provide services to residents at more affordable housing locations.

### **HB 4123 Requirements:**

Increasing streamlining resources and services to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Eliminating racial disparities within homeless services within the services area

Creating pathways to permanent and supportive housing that is affordable to local populations experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Incorporating best practices for ending homelessness.

Sustainable funding to support the ongoing operations of the coordinated homeless response system.



## **IV. Street Outreach and Rapid Response**

### ***WE WILL:***

- ***Promote access to safe and accessible crisis response.***
- ***Support expansion of street outreach to transition more people out of homelessness.***

#### **HOPE Policy Recommendations:**

Policy #4: Collaborate with social service and health care partners to increase the number of paid, full time case managers to support people transitioning out of homelessness.

Policy #5: Pursue implementation of a crisis response team and collect data on the scope and scale of need for crisis response.

#### **HB 4123 Requirements:**

Sustainable funding to support the ongoing operations of the coordinated homeless response system.

Increasing streamlining resources and services to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Eliminating racial disparities within homeless services within the services area

## **V. Housing**

### ***WE WILL expand housing and sheltering system options and capacity.***

#### **HOPE Policy Recommendations:**

Policy #4: Collaborate with social service and health care partners to increase the number of paid, full-time case managers to support people transitioning out of homelessness.

Policy #6: Provide organizational capacity to facilitate and coordinate providers in establishing a 24/7/365 Sheltering System for all populations with onsite resources at shelter locations to transition people out of homelessness.

Policy #10: Increase development or acquisition of affordable housing units for permanent supportive housing (PSH) by 20 new units per year for the next eight years to add at a minimum 160 new units of PSH in Benton County (might need to evaluate metric).

#### **HB 4123 Requirements:**

Sustainable funding to support the ongoing operations of the coordinated homeless response system.

Increasing streamlining resources and services to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Incorporating best practices for ending homelessness.

Eliminating racial disparities within homeless services within the services area

Creating pathways to permanent and supportive housing that is affordable to local populations experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

## **VI. Community Engagement, Inclusion, & Neighborhood Belonging**

***WE WILL foster a community in which everyone has opportunities to participate and feel valued and supported.***

### **HOPE Policy Recommendation**

Policy #8: Explore and investigate the need and the barriers to accessing housing for individuals and their families in our community whose past history has impacted their ability to secure housing.

Policy #9: Provide routine communication, notice, and opportunities for community involvement on the topic of homelessness services.

### **HB 4123 Requirements:**

Central point of communication

Intergovernmental Agreement

# Strategic Priority Areas

## I. Community and Organizational Systems and Policy Change

### Why?

To provide a home for everyone, we must increase coordination and collaboration of service providers and strengthen efficiencies in our current system and better align our resources.

### How?

The coordinated office will facilitate:

- improved coordination community and regional services,
- increased cooperation and knowledge sharing across the community,
- improved cooperation and collaboration among services,
- strengthening cross-sector relationships.



## II. Comprehensive Care Coordination

### Why?

Coordination of care helps us prioritize our highest need populations and better help people.

### How?

Our community will need training, funding, and development of shared definitions to build our provider capacity to support people with complex needs. The Coordinated Office works to improve our system of care coordination in which residents have access to case management services and are supported in maintaining or accessing affordable housing and other community supports. We will ensure planning aligns with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), including a system with coordinated entry, assessment, and application.



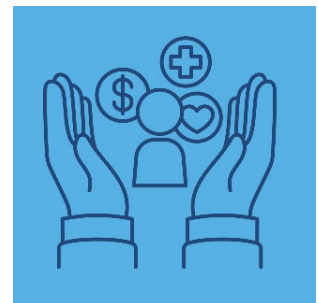
## III. Prevention

### Why?

Providing early intervention can address problems that contribute to homelessness and housing instability in both rural and urban communities.

### How?

We can prevent homelessness from occurring by improving the systems and structures that allow it to occur.



## IV. Street Outreach and Rapid Response

### Why?

Implementing best practices helps navigate people out of homelessness and improve outcomes.

### How?

Increase safe, accessible well-resourced crisis response and immediate supports. We will increase and streamline access to services by supporting best practices like harm reduction, low barrier approaches, and trauma-informed response.



## V. Housing

### Why?

Expanding housing and sheltering options along the entire housing continuum ensures everyone in the community has a place to live.

### How?

Leverage and increase resources to improve housing affordability and accessibility.



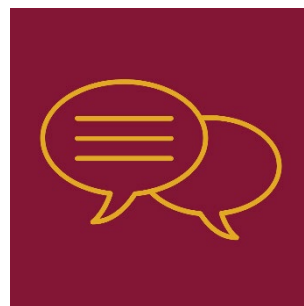
## VI. Community Engagement, Inclusivity, and Neighborhood Belonging

### Why?

Communities must be part of the solutions at many levels to feel like we own our progress.

### How?

Our Coordinated Office strives to facilitate community education and dialogue about the causes and community impacts of homelessness. We work to create visibility for the solutions making local progress. We value our local wisdom and lived experiences by elevating the voices of service providers and people who have experienced homelessness. We will embed inclusivity and accessibility in all solutions.



## Glossary of Terms and Index

**Community Services Consortium (CSC):** a part of a national network of over 1,000 Community Action Agencies, and a statewide network of 17 in Oregon, dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other, building strong, resilient communities. CSC provides a suite of wrap-around services to meet basic needs and achieve long-term goals, with the focus of building stability in the communities we serve. In partnership with a caring community, CSC helps people in Linn, Benton and Lincoln counties to access tools and resources to overcome poverty and build brighter and more stable futures. (pages 2 and 6) Website: <https://communityservices.us/>

**Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center (CDDC):** daytime resource and navigation hub in the Corvallis, OR area serving individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty. Our goal is to reduce the social exclusion, stigma, and isolation that so often comes with being poor. We are structured around a community-first model that believes every person, regardless of identity or status, deserves to be treated with care and dignity—as well as given space to share their voice, perspective, and experience. (pages 6, 8, and 11) Website: <https://corvallisddc.org/en/>

**Home, Opportunity, Planning, and Equity (HOPE) Advisory Board:** formed in 2019, a joint advisory board to the City of Corvallis and Benton County on the topic of homelessness policy solutions. The HOPE Board provides policy recommendations to member governments when requested. HOPE meetings also serve as community forums for updates, education, questions, and discussion. In 2023, the City of Philomath signed on to participate in HOPE Board activities and coordinate efforts through the HOPE Executive Committee. (pages 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14) Website: <https://health.bentoncountyor.gov/advisory-committees/#hope-board>

**HOPE Executive Committee:** a subset of the HOPE Advisory Board members who serve as liaisons to the members governments, the City of Corvallis, the City of Philomath, Community Services Consortium, and Benton County. The HOPE Executive Committee provides guidance for HOPE agenda setting, educational components at HOPE meetings, and requests for policy recommendations from the HOPE Board. (page 10) Website: <https://health.bentoncountyor.gov/event-category/hope-executive-committee/>

**Housing Opportunities Action Council (HOAC):** active from approximately 2016-2019, HOAC included diverse partners throughout Benton County. Supported by funding from Benton County, City of Corvallis, and Samaritan Health Services, HOAC initiated a planning process to update the Ten-Year Plan to Address Issues Surrounding Housing and Homelessness in Benton County, Oregon. (page 5)

**McKinney-Vento:** The McKinney-Vento Act's Education of Houseless Children and Youth Program, ensures that houseless children and youth are provided a free, appropriate public education, despite lack of a fixed place of residence or a supervising parent or guardian. The state public school admission statute assuring the right of houseless and other children and youth in similar circumstances to enroll in schools is Oregon Revised Statute [ORS 339.115\(7\)](#). Every school district in Oregon has at least one designated Houseless Student Liaison to provide direct assistance to families navigating houselessness and unaccompanied youths to access and achieve in school. (page 6) Website: <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/schools-and-districts/grants/esea/mckinney-vento/pages/default.aspx>

**Unity Shelter:** Unity Shelter is a young non-profit 501(c)3 corporation (est. January 2020). Unity shelter has a very specific mission to help provide housing for those in our community who have none. Unity Shelter includes programs that share its mission to "Provide Safe Shelter Through Collaborative Care." Programs such as The Mens Shelter, SafePlace, Room at the Inn and Third Street Commons provide emergency shelter and transitional housing in a trauma-informed setting. Unity Shelter provides fiscal and operational leadership/management for each of the programs (pages 6 and 8) Website: <https://www.unityshelter.org/home.html>