**Homelessness prompts large P3s throughout America**

By Mary Scott Nabers | 8.20.2021

At least 580,000 people experienced homelessness on a given day in January 2020. That number has increased significantly since then. Today, reporting organizations say there is no recent accounting and gathering the data will be more difficult in the months to come. However, data does point to increases in America’s homeless population over the past four years.

Almost every municipality is struggling with decisions about homeless populations. The cost to resolve or reverse the problem will be incredibly high and there is little guidance for public officials. The problem is likely to result in some of the largest public-private partnership (P3) initiatives in this century.

Looking at what is already happening and what is being planned reinforces the fact that there will be an abundance of opportunities for government contracting because private sector expertise and resources will be required along with partnerships from health-care providers, social service nonprofit organizations and many visionary thinkers and community volunteers.

**Indiana**

Housing advocates in Hamilton County, warning of a looming homeless crisis, will ask lawmakers and other funding sources for at least $51 million to bring housing of some sort within reach of individuals and family units. The Hamilton County Association of Neighborhood Development has plans to consolidate approximately $31 million in funding from the American Rescue Act Program (ARPA) with federal Community Development Block Grant revenue. Private sector contractors will be needed to help with construction in established neighborhoods for "infill" housing. This will be less expensive than building in undeveloped areas where utilities would need to be connected. The coalition will work with municipal leaders to encourage public-private partnerships. A consultant will be selected to perform a feasibility study in September.

In another part of the state, Hogsett’s mayor has announced that $12 million is available for construction of a low barrier shelter site for individuals in need of emergency housing. The Office of Public Health and Safety is awaiting finalization of a $25,000 assessment study related to an encampment location. The assessment study will be completed in September, a budget will be adopted in October, and work will begin soon after that.

**California**

The governor recently signed the largest funding and reform package ever for housing and homelessness as part of the $100 billion “California Comeback Plan.” The funding includes $10.3 billion for affordable housing and $12 billion over the next two years to alleviate homelessness through:

* $5.8 billion to construct more than 42,000 new homeless housing units.
* $2.75 billion for assistance for Department of Housing and Community Development services.
* $3 billion for services from Health and Human Services for health-related services.
* $2 billion in Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention grant funding to aid counties, large cities, and continuums of care.
* $1.75 billion for 7,200 units of housing for extremely low-income families and people exiting homelessness.
* $150 million to place participants in hotels.
* $50.6 million for encampment resolution efforts.
* $45 million for services and housing for homeless veterans.

The city of Sacramento approved 20 sites for homeless shelters and tiny homes. Officials also sanctioned tent encampments as part of a plan to [address homelessness](https://sacramento.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=22&clip_id=5016&meta_id=639533). The city will use $100 million from ARPA funding and more from the state to develop the sites which will serve 2,209 people. A large 350-bed campus-style shelter at a location yet to be disclosed also will be developed, and six motels will be converted into shelter units for which housing vouchers will be issued.

**New York**

As part of the Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative, a $20 billion plan has been developed. The state’s sixth round of funding will provide $35 million in service and operating funds to provide 1,400 supportive housing units. The goal is to create 20,000 units over 15 years. An allocation of $25,000 per unit per year will be available for service and operating expenses. The state’s Fiscal Year 2022 budget includes an additional $250 million in capital spending for the housing initiative.

**Colorado**

Denver’s Department of Housing Stability (HOST) has released a five-year plan to eliminate homeless by 50 percent by 2026. HOST will deliver 7,000 homes and secure 950 income-restricted rentals. The mayor has proposed $28 million in ARPA funding and is creating a specialized team to prioritize projects for permit review and approval.

**Vermont**

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board has consolidated $53.8 million in funding to build 389 homes. The funding will be used for building or rehabilitating 288 apartments, 50 shelter beds, and 51 houses throughout the state.

Counties also have plans in place to reduce homeliness. Chittenden County has announced the following actions.

* Shelburne: The Champlain Housing Trust will convert 20 motel-style units to create permanent apartments with support services for previously homeless individuals and households. There are plans to also buy and rehabilitate a motel that will provide an additional 58 rooms with support services.
* Williston: The Champlain Housing Trust will purchase a motel and convert it to create 38 homes for formerly homeless households. It will have support services and an on-site project manager. Another 33 permanent apartments for low- and moderate-income families will be developed.
* South Burlington: A motel will be converted to provide 20 permanent homes for homeless households.
* Colchester: The Champlain Housing Trust and Evernorth will build 60 new apartments in three vacant buildings at Fort Ethan Allen. The project will include the redevelopment of a former army barracks to deliver 11 more apartments with supportive services.

**District of Columbia**

The District of Columbia’s Council approved a budget of $17.5 billion which includes spending on housing and homeless services. Increased funding was appropriated for the Housing Production Trust Fund. A total of $400 million is available to produce 2,800 units of housing, and another $17.7 million is available to preserve the affordable housing. The council also increased funding for repairs needed in public housing to $50 million.

**Kansas**

The Topeka City Council is considering plans for a $5.7 million “tiny home transitional village” with a capacity of 200 beds. This is one part of the Topeka Rescue Mission’s $8.1 million plan to address chronic homelessness. The tiny home units would be approximately 64 square feet each and have electricity, a heater and air conditioner. City leaders have announced community engagement sessions to kick-off the program.

**Massachusetts**

Massachusetts has announced an investment of $30 million in state funds for regional and statewide services to support homeless individuals. The bulk of funding will be allocated to a Housing First initiative, with $15.7 million directed to the Department of Public Health’s Bureau of Substance Addiction Services. Another $10 million is available for a new capital fund for permanent supportive housing.

Private sector partners and nonprofit organizations are in high demand as public officials struggle to help end homelessness throughout America.

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