



Heading Home Minnesota

FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2020–2025

Approved by the HHMFC Steering Committee [Date]



MESSAGE FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

We are pleased to share the Heading Home Minnesota Funders Collaborative's (the Collaborative) Strategic Framework for 2019-2024. As we designed this Framework, participating members of the Collaborative agreed to the following shared beliefs and values. We believe:

- Quality housing is a moral human right,
- Homelessness is a solvable problem,
- Philanthropy plays a critical role in the solution, and
- We must be accountable to people with lived experience of homelessness.

Recently, our state has experienced a rise in overall homelessness, including exponential growth in the number of people sleeping outside. Woefully inadequate supply of rental housing, wages not keeping pace with rising rents, and record low vacancy rates have led to housing being out of reach for too many of our neighbors. Addressing this issue has never been more important.

We see the inextricable connection between homelessness, institutional racism, and bias, where people of color (Minnesota are more likely to experience homelessness than are white Minnesotans. Existing data also shows us that adjacent systems, such as criminal justice, child welfare and housing court, are not only failing to prevent housing instability, they often exacerbate disparities.

Despite these realities, we see hope and opportunity in a shared commitment to ensuring all Minnesotans have a safe and dignified place to call home.

This new Strategic Framework builds on the Collaborative's accomplishments to date. In our (six?) year history, we have invested in greater statewide levels of coordination and accountability, including the establishment of the Minnesota Interagency Council and Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, the development of the Heading Home Together: Minnesota's Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, and efforts that have helped end Veteran homelessness in over half of our State's regions.

We've also strengthened our community's collective capacity to address disparities directly-by investing in tenant organizing and leadership, funding a racial equity analysis of the homeless response system, and by responding quickly to the State's largest homeless encampment, the Wall of Forgotten Natives, where collective compassion was guided by Indigenous leaders and residents.

We have a lot to build on, and still a lot to do and learn.

Over the next five years, we will continue to seek opportunities for public-private partnership and innovation. We commit to elevating individuals closest to this issue in our work and to decision-makers in the broader community. We will focus on building public will toward quality housing as a basic human right, and on eliminating the barriers people face in getting the help they need.

We hope you will hold us accountable to these goals and challenge us to leverage our resources and power to ensure all Minnesotans have safe, affordable, and stable housing.

In collaboration and partnership,

BRIAN PAULSON, *Senior Program Officer, Pohlad Family Foundation*, Heading Home Minnesota Funders Collaborative Steering Committee Chair and **KYRRA RANKINE**, *Incoming Chair, Partnership and Initiatives Director*, Graves Foundation

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Our mission is to maximize philanthropy's role in preventing and ending homelessness.

Our vision is to make sure that every Minnesotan has safe, affordable, and stable housing. We are guided by a belief that homelessness is a solvable issue and that our best decisions will be strongly influenced by the people closest to the issue. HHMFC builds community influence into its work through ongoing conversations with people with lived experiences of homelessness.



1 Introduction

This document presents Heading Home Minnesota Funders Collaborative's (HHMFC) Strategic Framework for 2020 through 2025. HHMFC is a member organization composed of grant makers and intermediaries committed to working together to prevent and end homelessness in Minnesota. The Collaborative brings a strong working relationship with policymakers and the unique contributions of philanthropy to support the implementation of Heading Home: Minnesota's Framework to Prevent and End Homelessness.

Over the past 6 years, HHMFC has invested more than \$2 million to leverage state resources and change statewide systems that impact homelessness, including the following:

- Playing a key role in the creation of the Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness, the State Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, and Heading Home Minnesota: Minnesota's Framework to Prevent and End Homelessness.

- Providing capacity to end veterans' homelessness in Minnesota.
- Improving data systems and intake processes so that Minnesotans without homes can access housing and services more effectively and efficiently.
- Funding the initial staffing costs and technical assistance services of the Homework Starts with Home initiative.

We believe that safe, affordable, and stable housing is a precursor to achieving all other measures of well-being, including good health, educational success, economic self-sufficiency, and racial and gender equity. As a collaborative composed of representatives from organizations charged with making charitable investments to improve the well-being of individuals and communities, HHMFC is uniquely positioned to innovate, incubate, and advocate. We believe that an approach that supports schools to reliably identify student housing instability, coupled with a targeted, culturally sensitive, and coordinated response to connect

families to additional resources, will advance our shared goals of stable housing, educational achievement, equitable outcomes, and preventing homelessness before it occurs.

To build on this progress, HHMFC will engage new partners, support changes that will positively transform the ways systems serve people who do not have shelter, and address issues across a greater geographic area to transform how systems serving people without homes do business. This 2020-2025 Strategic Framework identifies goals that will build on HHMFC's existing work and accelerate innovation in systems that serve people without homes.

To guide the delivery of HHMFC's mission and vision, this Strategic Framework outlines a strategic goal and a set of objectives and associated activities that will serve as a guide for what HHMFC will achieve, how we will achieve it, and how we will measure our success.

Five core values are foundational to our work:



ACHIEVABLE

We believe housing is a human right and homelessness is solvable.



COMMUNITY DESIGNED

We are guided by people who have experienced homelessness.



EQUITABLE

We work and act with an understanding that homelessness is connected to culture, gender, identity, race, economics, and privilege.



RESPONSIVE

We act on emerging and immediate needs.



INFLUENTIAL

We affect the field of philanthropy and prioritize homelessness work and all conditions in which homelessness occurs.

2 Strategic Framework Process

The process of developing this Strategic Framework involved a retrospective analysis of HHMFC's operations and impact, a study of best practices, and the incorporation of valuable input from members, allies, partners, and key informants. The result is a modification of our vision and mission statements and a statement of our goal and strategies for 2020-2025 that will serve as our roadmap for the next 5 years. This process included the following:

- Evaluation of current organizational operations and functions, including review and analysis of HHMFC historical documents and processes and conversations with former staff.
- Evaluation of the environment in which HHMFC operates and areas of possible improvement through feedback from key informants gathered through one-on-one telephone interviews, a listening session with people directly impacted by homelessness, and research

on collaborative funders' best practices.

- Identification of strategic issues that will help HHMFC move forward.
- Discussion sessions with HHMFC Steering Committee members and allies.
- SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis and identification of strategic directions (see table below).
- Development of a goal and strategies that address key issues identified through the process.
- Development of a framework for impact and growth over a 5-year period.

The data gathered from these activities collectively served as the foundation for the 2020-2025 Heading Home Minnesota Funders Collaborative Strategic Framework. Together, this information provided insights regarding HHMFC's performance and its reputation in the community; offered perspectives on the homelessness environment

and actions needed to address it; and suggested the best role that HHMFC could play in the region and state to bring about the desired goal.

One-on-one interviews with 32 key informants were designed to identify why Minnesota needs HHMFC; HHMFC's strengths, challenges, and opportunities; and trends in the environment (e.g., political, social, economic, technological, demographic, legal) related to HHMFC's work. They also sought feedback regarding HHMFC's mission, how HHMFC can be a better partner, HHMFC's relationship with government, what HHMFC should most focus on, and what HHMFC should pursue in the next 3 to 5 years to best advance its homelessness work.

Numerous key themes emerged from the interviews, listening session, and research, including the following:

- HHMFC is a committed group of funders working together to advance Minnesota's homelessness agenda.
- HHMFC is viewed as one of the two best homelessness collaboratives in the U.S.
- HHMFC's major role is as a convener and influencer across sectors.
- The need for more community education and outreach to clarify the identity, role, and impact of HHMFC.
- Concerns about HHMFC's relationship with the state of Minnesota (state offices are perceived as the biggest beneficiary of HHMFC's resources).



- The need to fund on-the-ground homelessness work along with HHMFC’s focus on the big picture.
- The need for a direct and implementable way to incorporate the experiences of people who have lived with homelessness into HHMFC’s ongoing decision making.
- The need to use an equity lens in HHMFC decision making.
- The importance of expediting

- decision-making more quickly than in the past.
- The importance of having an Executive Director for HHMFC continuity and goal advancement.
 - The importance of visibly impacting public policy and social change as a disrupter as well as a supporter when necessary.
 - The value of growing the HHMFC fund and setting an end date for HHMFC.

Key informants were asked a range of questions in relation to their knowledge of HHMFC and awareness of HHMFC’s ongoing work. The interviews revealed that although nearly all of the key informants were knowledgeable about HHMFC’s existence, about a third believed that HHMFC could do a better job of communicating about its work and engaging a greater segment of the community in partnering to address homelessness.

SWOT Analysis

INTERNAL FACTORS *(inside collaborative)*

STRENGTHS

One of a kind in Minnesota (e.g., independence, sustained overtime)

Funders willing to invest in the work (e.g., collective voice, aligned around a specific issue; moral and resource influence, commitment; pooled resources)

Nimble/flexible (e.g., respond quickly in same direction with coherence)

Credible, good track record

Good partnerships (e.g., across political lines)

Committed to staffing

Honest conversations about what’s not working

In touch with state efforts

Greater participation from higher levels at foundations

Collaboration with Interagency Council and State Office to Prevent and End Homelessness

WEAKNESSES

Not enough resources/limited budget

Governance and staffing (e.g., finding the compelling center; number of agencies and perspectives; maintaining the attention of those at table; remaining focused; clarity about what HHMFC is trying to accomplish)

2018-19 Priorities viewed as having limited impact and less inclusive of innovative agencies close to the issues

Getting HHMFC’s work to the top two people in philanthropic organizations

No time certainty for HHMFC’s lifespan (e.g., 8-10 years)

System is broken, only short-term solutions

Limited representation from outside of foundations (e.g., folks closest to the ground, lived experiences)

Need to address systemic injustices

EXTERNAL FACTORS *(outside collaborative)*

OPPORTUNITIES

Take on new partnerships for greater impact (e.g., regional capacity building)

Improve visibility through local convening and local/regional/national reporting

Get clearer on priorities and improve decision making

Commit to systems change work around evictions

Imbed an equity lens in all HHMFC actions

Include voices of those most affected at decision tables

THREATS

Funding shifts

Potential decrease in membership

Inflexible and broken systems

3. Strategic Goal, Conditions, and Objectives

HHMFC's 2020-2025 Strategic Framework

Mission

Maximizing philanthropy's role in preventing and ending homelessness.

Vision

Everyone in Minnesota has safe, affordable, and stable housing.

Goal

Cultivate the conditions to end homelessness.

CONDITION	OBJECTIVE	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES
1. Collective Ownership and Accountability (i.e., all members of the homeless ecosystem have a role to play in ending homelessness and ensuring transparency and inclusion when deciding homeless priorities and policies).	1.1. Address issues of fragmentation in the homelessness service delivery system.	1.1A: Invest in the development of a structure that moves the homelessness service delivery system from a county-by-county model to a statewide structure that offers comprehensive, human-centered approaches to preventing and ending homelessness.
		1.1B: Be responsive to emerging and existing opportunities in Greater Minnesota.
	1.2. Build public will to see housing as a basic right.	1.2A: Continue building awareness and influencing policy changes (e.g., member learning and spring convening; workgroup to explore policy environment and potential role).
		1.2B: Support a robust ecosystem of public engagement, including grassroots and grasstops advocacy and people of all backgrounds working at state and regional levels (e.g., renters' rights policy—organize the organizers for greater impact).
	1.3. Support governments to play their best role and do their best work at regional, statewide, and tribal nation levels.	1.3A: Continue to test, evaluate, and advance promising practices (e.g., Homework Starts with Home).
		1.3B: Continue public-private strategies (e.g., partnership with Interagency Office; Heading Home Together: Minnesota's Action Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness).



CONDITION	OBJECTIVE	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES
<p>2. Grounded in Experience (i.e., the best solutions at every homelessness system level are closest to those who experience homelessness).</p>	<p>2.1. Build and sustain a network of people with lived experience to guide decisions related to policy and advocacy.</p>	<p>2.1A: Identify key groups that engage people with lived experience of homelessness and support work that drives capacity to sustain a lived experience network.</p> <p>2.1B: Institute a HHMFC structure that is inclusive of people with lived experience.</p>
	<p>2.2. Use input from those with lived experience when making decisions.</p>	<p>2.2A: Establish a formal lived experience presence in homelessness systems change discussions at regional and state levels (e.g., governor’s office, legislature, regional policy analysis and advocacy organizations, regional expert network).</p>
		<p>2.2B: Help shape organizing and advocacy directions that are grounded in lived experiences and hold lawmakers accountable for policy decisions.</p>
		<p>2.2C: Support reforms that allow homelessness systems to become more responsive and adaptive and spur large-scale and transformational change (e.g., regional expert model across HHMFC workgroups).</p>
<p>3. Rooted in Equity* (i.e., homelessness systems change recognizes diverse approaches, identities, and ways that identities are privileged and/or marginalized by institutional structures and societal norms).</p> <p><i>*Equity is giving everyone what they need to be successful.</i></p>	<p>3.1. Identify systemwide policies and practices that influence the flow into homelessness and intentionally use associated learning to move people to greater housing stability.</p>	<p>3.1A: Stop the flow into homelessness from the most common systems in which racial and tribal nations’ disparities manifest (e.g., out of corrections, foster care/child protection).</p>
	<p>3.2. Help the homelessness response system become more equitable in access and outcomes.</p>	<p>3.2A: Engage a more diverse cross-section of the state’s population in generating and implementing solutions to social and racial injustices associated with homelessness.</p>
		<p>3.2B: Continue supporting work to prevent and end homelessness throughout the State of Minnesota.</p>

CONDITION	OBJECTIVE	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES
<p>4. Evidence-Based Decisions (i.e., a process grounded in the best available research and informed by experience from the field and relevant contextual evidence).</p>	<p>4.1. Continue to rely on multiple sources (e.g., homelessness workers, academic evidence, and lived experiences) to test and promote practices to end homelessness.</p>	<p>4.1A: Research foster care/housing to identify opportunities to mitigate the risk of homelessness for youth as they transition out of the foster care system (e.g., follow up HUD's 2012-2014 report to inform concrete strategies for advancing health and housing stability for youth aging out of systems such as foster care and juvenile justice—including Twin Cities agencies).</p>
	<p>4.2: Use reliable, informed data to drive decisions addressing homelessness.</p>	<p>4.2A: Make strategic investments in capacity building (e.g., help communities respond to new and emerging challenges and opportunities) to address homelessness.</p>
		<p>4.2B: Work to increase financial investments in services that eliminate homelessness (e.g., test new models).</p>
<p>5. Collaborative Readiness** (i.e., the ability to successfully build the strongest relationships and alliances to plan, implement, and manage strategies and initiatives).</p> <p><i>**2009 Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act suggests that collaboration is a condition necessary to address homelessness.</i></p>	<p>5.1. Maximize philanthropy's collective impact.</p>	<p>5.1A: Continue engaging philanthropy in informational forums and collaborative actions that advance homelessness work.</p>
	<p>5.2. Improve mission-critical organizational infrastructure and capacity to meet future collaboration needs.</p>	<p>5.2A: Increase investments in collaborative work (e.g., build membership; increase amount of pooled funds; research, develop, and expand giving opportunities among the business community, foundations, and other sectors).</p>
		<p>5.2B: Ensure committee decision making aligns with collaborative's responsiveness value and embed an equity lens in all decision making.</p>
		<p>5.2C: Ensure effective committee and staff leadership succession.</p>
		<p>5.2D: Sunset Heading Home Minnesota Funders Collaborative 11 years from now on December 31, 2030.</p>

4 Implementation

HHMFC will align its work around the new Strategic Framework. We will identify champions for our strategic goal and objectives and work with the HHMFC Steering Committee, workgroups, and staff to successfully execute them. The primary responsibility for the overall implementation of the goal and objectives will lie with the new Executive Director working in

close alignment with our Steering Committee to create the necessary impact.

HHMFC will continue to place a high priority on collaboration between state agencies, nonprofit organizations, and regional partners, recognizing that all of us working together will be necessary for the successful implementation of the

strategic goal and objectives. We recognize that future success is dependent upon strong and lasting relationships with our partners.

The Steering Committee and Executive Director will regularly evaluate our progress and make appropriate adjustments to continue on the journey of realizing our goal for 2020-2025.

5 Conclusion

As Minnesota’s only collaborative focused exclusively on leveraging resources to prevent and end homelessness, HHMFC has a unique leadership opportunity—and responsibility—to support the achievement of this big ambition. HHMFC acknowledges that preventing and ending homelessness is a bold mission. .

Change of this magnitude will only be possible with the active engagement and support of many organizations and individuals. That is why HHMFC is eager to partner with state government, regional leaders, business and labor organizations, nonprofits, peers in philanthropy, and others committed to making the right to housing (i.e., the economic,

social, and cultural right to adequate housing and shelter as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights) a reality for thousands of Minnesotans who are now without homes.



Acknowledgments

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Investors & Members

Ameriprise Financial Services*
Bush Foundation
Butler Family Foundation*
Corporation for Supportive Housing
Douglass Brandenburg Family Foundation*
Family Housing Fund
Frey Foundation*
Graves Foundation*
Greater Minnesota Housing Fund*
Greater Twin Cities United Way*
Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Minnesota*
The McKnight Foundation
The Minneapolis Foundation*
Otto Bremer Trust*
Pohlad Family Foundation*
Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation*
Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation*
Sundance Family Foundation
WCA Foundation*
Wellington Management
Wilder Foundation
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