



Heading Home Minnesota

FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2020-2025

Approved by the HHMFC Steering Committee
December 2019

MESSAGE FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

We are pleased to share the Heading Home Minnesota Funders Collaborative's (the Collaborative) Strategic Framework for 2020-2025. 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 Communities of Color in Minnesota are more likely to experience homelessness than 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. Since our formation, 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 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, *Pohlad Foundation (Steering Committee Chair)*

STEPHANIE BATTLE, *St. Paul & Minnesota Foundation (Incoming Steering Committee Co-Chair)*

KYRRA RANKINE, *Graves Foundation (Incoming Steering Committee Co-Chair)*

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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.

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 believe that homelessness is a solvable issue and that our best decisions should be guided by the people closest to the issue. HHMFC builds community influence into its work through ongoing conversations with people with lived experiences of 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 *Homework Starts with Home* initiative, focusing on homeless and highly mobile students and their families.

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 their work. 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, 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 it can be a better partner, the relationship with government, areas to focus, and what the Collaborative 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.

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
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.
	1.2. Build public will to see housing as a basic right.
	1.3. Support governments to play their best role and do their best work at regional, statewide, and tribal nation levels.
2. Grounded in Experience (i.e., the best solutions at every homelessness system level are closest to those who experience homelessness).	2.1. Build and sustain a network of people with lived experience to guide decisions related to policy and advocacy.
	2.2. Use input from those with lived experience when making decisions.
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).	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.
	3.2. Support the homelessness response system becoming more equitable in access and outcomes.
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).	4.1. Continue to rely on multiple sources to test and promote practices to end homelessness.
	4.2: Use reliable, informed data to drive decisions addressing homelessness.
5. Collaborative Readiness** (i.e., the ability to successfully build the strongest relationships and alliances to plan, implement, and manage strategies and initiatives).	5.1. Maximize philanthropy's collective impact.
	5.2. Improve mission-critical organizational infrastructure and capacity to meet future collaboration needs.

**2009 Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act suggests that collaboration is a condition necessary to address homelessness.

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. Still, our work and experience suggest that it is essential to the state's economic and social well-being and that preventing and ending homelessness is possible.

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* a reality for thousands of Minnesotans who are now without homes.

**Right to Housing: 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.*

Acknowledgments

HHMFC acknowledges the support of our dedicated Steering Committee, members, allies, consultants, and key informants in the development of this Strategic Framework. A special thanks goes to community partners and leaders who provided valuable input through interviews and information sharing. We are very grateful to all who provided support and guidance over the last few months as we embarked on this planning process.

Investors & Members

(HHMFC 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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