

a) Leveraging Housing Resources

1. **Development of new units**-Our CoC is working closely with the city and state to bring developers into our community and to areas that need affordable units. Specifically, we have had conversations with them on how to utilize HOME-ARP funds to meet the gaps in the community or strengthen developments that are in process and not duplicate the work that the other is focused on. Our local housing commission in partnership with the City of Jackson was recently awarded a HUD Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant. This work is closely in line with CoC strategies and the CoC is updated monthly on the work being done. We work closely with HCV, PBV, and 811 Mainstream vouchers to house unsheltered homeless households outside of CoC and ESG programs. Our HCV through the housing commission and MSHDA both have a homeless preference on them, and they prioritize to those that are literally homeless to fill these vouchers. Everyone that we meet through coordinated entry is placed on the waitlist for HCV through the homeless preference as well as screened for housing services through ESG, SSVF or CoC funds. Our CoC has written a letter support for MSHDA to apply for Stability Vouchers to continue to bring affordable housing to our community.
2. **Landlord Recruitment**-Currently the CoC is working on improving landlord outreach across the county. We are working with MSHDA (Michigan State Housing Development Authority) on utilizing landlord incentives with lease up and with needed damage reimbursement in the ESG and HCV programs. This allows landlords to feel more confident in agreeing to lease up or work with a tenant that has a difficult history. We have landlord liaisons employed at our local lead agency to help with landlord recruitment and engagement for both veterans and non-veteran populations. Over the past 3 years we have done landlord surveys and landlord informational trainings as a way to gather information on why landlords may not want to participate with subsidy program and look at what we could be doing differently to incentivize participation. Moving forward we are looking at how can we communicate easily with landlords on available units and how we can quickly match tenants looking for units to those available units. We will continue to use the data gathered to look at ways to incentivize landlord participation with subsidy programs, especially in the city of Jackson where many of our local landlords have units and many of our tenants would like to live.

b) Leveraging Healthcare Resources

While we are not developing any new permanent supportive housing units through this grant application, our CoC does have a strong commitment to partnering with healthcare locally. We worked very closely with our healthcare system to help develop a countywide electronic referral system that would allow us to link both community and clinical resources a person may need. This system allows us to screen for need no matter which side the person presents in and then refer directly to the providers that could benefit the person. The agency can easily respond back with outcomes of meetings or additional referrals allowing for a closed loop system for all involved. This referral system also allows for those involved in longer term case management programs, like permanent supportive housing, to have their case manager be point on the referral system so that they can easily coordinate with multiple providers involved and avoid a duplication of services for participants.

In addition to these connections to our local healthcare system we also work very closely with our local mental and behavioral health agency to ensure that those in permanent housing programs are receiving services that they need to maintain housing. A recent permanent supportive housing development was created in our community in the last year that preferences

those in substance use recovery. This project allowed us to collaborate between housing staff, our local court system, substance use recovery programs and mental health agency. We are able to provide, through collaboration, on site services for residents in need of counseling, and support to help them remain stably housed and maintain sobriety.

c) *Strategies to Identify, shelter, and house those experiencing homelessness*

1. We currently have one street outreach provider that is funded primarily through PATH funds. Our CoC has been working closely with this provider to expand their reach in our community and with street outreach. They have been given some funds through our local ESG-CV application and then also encouraged to apply and expand through this application. Outreach is closely connected to our coordinated entry team and staff working directly with this process so that anyone that may be living on the street or unsheltered is connected to providers that can screen them for services that could help to move them to housing as quickly as possible, even when this person may not want to go to shelter. Street outreach teams contain staff that have experienced homelessness themselves and also have diversity within them to try and connect to anyone that may be unsheltered in the community. Street outreach teams are trained in how to complete screenings for coordinated entry, and have technology needed to work remotely in the community, so that anyone they may find that is unsheltered can be screened on spot and referred for permanent housing options right away.
2. Our local shelter is also low-barrier so that there is a greater likelihood that someone unsheltered may be able to go there and get off of the street while they work with providers to secure permanent housing. During the past three years we have been able to utilize funding to secure the option of temporary motel stays for those that are in need of shelter but may not do well in a congregate setting. We have been able to make connections through our local healthcare system to support some of this work as well as local motels that would like to support this work to keep our unsheltered homeless numbers down. This is an area that we may look to our healthcare system to help support this continued need.
3. Our community is fully invested in a housing first approach in moving people to permanent housing. We work closely with our Public Housing Authorities with preferencing homeless households to vouchers and units within the county. Through our coordinated entry process, we preference those households that have high acuity levels and need the most support to obtain and maintain housing into programs where there is availability. Our goal is to continue to build the relationship with our local healthcare network to help support the work with are doing with permanent housing and those that are high utilizers to their systems as well. We have some data forming around this as we work through our referral system and coordinating services to those, we are seeing on both the clinical and community side.

d) *Updating CoC's strategy with data and performance*

Our current street outreach team fully participates in our coordinated entry process and in data entry into HMIS. They give our CoC monthly updates on outcomes and trends they are seeing but through the data we can also see where we can benefit by expanding our street outreach. This past summer we were able to outreach to a lot of the businesses in our downtown area but we would like to see this same work done outside of the main city of Jackson to other townships across the rural areas of our community. We have a good connection to our City and County law enforcement agencies but again would like to expand our reach to the other townships where we

may be able to connect to those experiencing homelessness, but it is less visible to the greater community. Being able to educate business owners on homelessness across the entire county and how to connect those that may be identified to shelter or a street outreach team or the HARA in the community to quickly connect the person experiencing homelessness to shelter and permanent housing resources is key to ending homelessness in our community. Being able to show the need in the community and that there is need outside of the city limits is a major part of expanding our street outreach team.

e) *Identify and Prioritize households experiencing unsheltered homelessness*

By utilizing funds from this NOFO to increase street outreach services allows us to truly put a greater focus on reaching those that are unsheltered in the community and those that are truly difficult to engage with normal resources that may be available. We recognize that many times those that may be hardest to house are also those that are hardest to engage with and having a larger street outreach team will allow trained staff to work on building rapport and engaging the unsheltered population to bring them to permanent housing options. We are hoping that combining this work with the other work happening in the community with development and diversion from services will allow opportunities for this population to have intensive housing case management that may not have been an option to them previously. We will continue to preference those that are unsheltered and are the most difficult to house to services and permanent housing to continue to lower unsheltered homelessness across our community. Because our street outreach team is connected to the coordinated entry process and understands the need for data, they will be able to quickly connect to services and begin working with staff on permanent housing options right away. We are working closely with our state and local ARPA funding to increase supportive services in our community and meet the need of those needing assistance with housing navigation and identifying documents in order to obtain housing. It is our plan to have additional staff will be brought on in the community to help focus on this work for those that are unsheltered.

f) *Involving those with lived experience in decision making*

Our CoC has been working to actively engage households with lived experience into our CoC to assist us with decision making. We have done surveying with people experiencing homelessness or those that have previously experienced homelessness on how we can better serve the community and to note what was missing in their experience that could have made the situation easier, less traumatic, and shorter. This data is used in collaboration with our data collected through HMIS to look at gaps in services and to prioritize funding as it becomes available. We have also been working to incentivize attending CoC and engaging with decision making to those with lived experience. We have been able to offer equipment or assistance with connectivity to attend meetings, or a stipend to cover the time that they contribute to our meetings, and planning of work done at the CoC. We have tried to also reach out to diverse demographics to get the most robust information possible and make sure we are covering the need for all experiencing homelessness. We are hoping that this incentive will allow us to fully develop a workgroup of those with lived experience to act as a consult to our CoC in decision making. This group would work in coordination with our service providers that may or may not have lived experience and our youth board that also may have some lived experience on it. We encourage housing providers to continue to employ those that have lived experience when able to help them strengthen their work they are doing with direct services and enact change in their agencies as well.

g) *Supporting underserved communities and equitable development*

we continue to look at our data to identify where services may not be distributed in an equitable way. We bring data to the full CoC to evaluate quarterly and look at how we can adjust priorities or preferences with services to meet this need. With expanding our street outreach, it will allow us the opportunity to interact with those that may be underserved in our community. We recognize that we don't have as much diversity within providers and staff as there are in the homeless community and are working to make that more equitable in hiring and recruiting for open positions. As we point out underserved areas or populations in the community the outreach team would be able to connect to that community and focus on education and referral so that all populations in the community have an equal opportunity to housing.