

Hennepin County Annual Report

Pandemic Response Projects

July 2022 – June 2023



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Executive summary

Hennepin County will leverage its American Rescue Plan Act — State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (ARPA- SLFRF) to further its mission and vision to support residents who are adversely affected by disparities; to support innovative, equitable and sustainable changes in service delivery; to promote private and public partnerships within our community, and to seek other funding sources to maximize our investments and best position Hennepin County for the future.

Through the ARPA-SLFRF program, Hennepin County has a total award of \$245.9 million to respond to the economic and public health impacts of COVID-19 and to mitigate its impact on the community, residents, and businesses. In March 2022, the county board took action to use the dollars from ARPA-SLFRF for government services. Starting in 2022, the county has used other revenue sources for pandemic response and recovery efforts, which is anticipated to result in efficiencies. Programs and services previously authorized by the board will continue but will be funded through other sources outside of the ARPA-SLFRF.

Key principles and priorities have been set to build upon the county's approach to disparity reduction and to support pandemic recovery efforts. Hennepin County is committed to using a racial equity lens to target resources and focus outcomes on reducing disparities in the following domains: education, employment, health, housing, income, justice, and transportation. In addition to the domain areas, overarching infrastructure and supports have been prioritized.

This progress report summarizes Hennepin County's pandemic response projects from July 2022 through June 2023. Projects are presented by disparity domain area. The following details are provided for each project:

- Project name
- Allocation amount
- Project description
- Progress narrative
- Key performance indicators
- Next steps

Pandemic recovery funds

Hennepin County continues to leverage federal funding to serve residents and to advance disparity reduction efforts. Various federal funding streams, identified below, have allowed the county to provide timely services and programs for residents in crisis. Specifically, ARPA-SLFRF has enabled the county to continue investments in the public health response, jump-start disparity reduction strategies, and drive transformational change.

As described in the 2021 Recovery Plan for ARPA-SLFRF, Hennepin County has established the following principles and priorities to guide pandemic response efforts.

Principles

- Hennepin County embraces and embodies core values of continuous improvement, customer service, diversity and inclusion, employee engagement, and workforce development as we serve our residents.
- Hennepin County is committed to using a racial equity lens to target resources and focus outcomes on reducing disparities in the following domains: education, employment, health, housing, income, justice, and transportation.
- In response and recovery efforts, Hennepin County embraces opportunities for transformative change including lasting investments and more efficient, effective, and accessible service delivery for residents in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.
- Hennepin County will pursue and leverage other available federal and state funding before using CARES or SLFRF funding to support the recovery of residents, communities and businesses.
- Hennepin County is committed to a people-centered, inclusive, and equitable approach in policymaking and service delivery.

Priorities

- Fund health programs to respond to COVID-19.
- Ensure legally required functions of county government can continue during COVID-19 pandemic.
- Invest in capital resources and infrastructure that help improve service delivery, remove barriers and mitigate health risks.
- Prioritize strategic investments that will have long-term value or cost reductions.
- Support the recovery of communities, residents, small businesses and nonprofits impacted by COVID-19 in ways that will help our region emerge from this crisis with an even stronger, more inclusive and resilient economy over the long term.
- Expand support and outreach to culturally specific human services and health care providers to strengthen their long-term ability to meet community needs.

Revenue replacement

In early 2022, Hennepin County took action to use the dollars from ARPA-SLFRF for the provision of government services. The revenue replacement calculation was submitted in the April 2022 Project and Expenditure Report and applies to expenditures from January 1, 2022, through the duration of ARPA-SLFRF. Programs and services previously authorized by the Hennepin County Board will continue but will be funded through other sources outside of ARPA-SLFRF.



Project inventory

Hennepin County will continue to support residents through the pandemic and beyond as residents and communities work to recover. This progress report includes a summary of Hennepin County’s pandemic response projects from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. Projects are presented by disparity domain area. The following details are provided for each project:

Project name

Allocation amount—This is the amount of funding allocated for the project.

Project description

Progress narrative

Key performance indicators—This is a description of the key performance indicators set for each project. Results and outcomes vary by project due to implementation timelines.

Next steps — This is the work that will occur in the next three months.

EDUCATION DOMAIN

Educational Services

Allocation amount: \$775,000

Project description

Hennepin County is providing academic tutoring services to county-connected children and youth who are negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic through its Education Support Services Department. County-connected youth are referred to the program from other services such as Children’s Mental Health, Child Protective Services, and the juvenile justice system, as well as other county services and programs. Hennepin County’s Education Support Services Department strives to address the racial and educational disparities faced by youth who receive county services and address the academic achievement gap of county-connected youth to increase engagement, academic skills, and educational outcomes for students in grades K-12 and GED seekers. Academic tutoring services are provided by a contracted provider, and students are assessed when they enter the program and again after receiving 30–50 hours of tutoring. The project’s goal is to provide tutoring services to county-connected youth and help them to grow their skills in math, reading, and other academic subjects.

Progress narrative

Students from over 200 different schools across the state who are connected to county services have received academic tutoring from Huntington Learning Center (HLC) since the program began. When starting academic tutoring, students are given an academic assessment to determine if they are behind academically, and if so, how far behind grade level they are testing. Tutoring schedules are determined based on the outcome of the initial assessment, and a tutoring plan is developed to address any academic needs identified in the assessment. Additional assessments are completed after a student receives 30-50 hours of tutoring.

Assessment tests include:

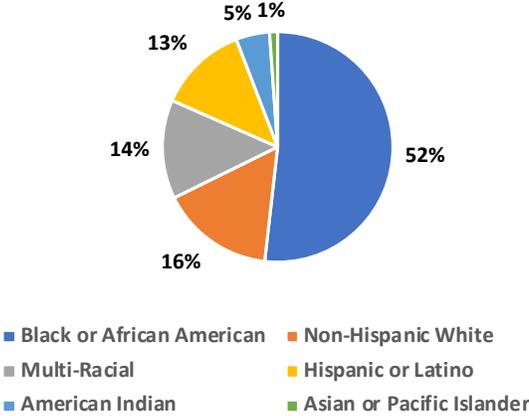
- Performance Series/STAR Reading Test
- Performance Series/STAR Math Test
- Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT)
- Test of Phonics (early learners and non-readers)

To support success in tutoring, assistance is provided to families as needed to help them ensure the students attend tutoring on a regular basis to support the student’s educational success. In addition, program staff engage with schools on a regular basis to support tutoring and get input on academic needs for students.

Key performance indicators

- The key performance indicators for this project are:
- Number of students enrolled in academic tutoring
 - Improvement on test scores in reading and math
 - Improvement in grades and confidence in school (specifically in math and reading)
 - Increase in grade-level equivalent

HLC Student Race/Ethnicity



Evaluation efforts

Results of the initial academic assessments and subsequent assessments are evaluated to determine if student test scores improve after a student receives tutoring, and if there is a relationship between the number of hours of tutoring and the degree of improvement. Evaluation efforts are also examining whether the students are improving in the key outcome variables listed above. The information from the evaluation is being used to improve the program with the goal of further reducing education disparities.

Academic tutoring outcomes

Since the program began, 490 students have been referred for academic tutoring. Between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023, 215 students received tutoring services. Results below are reflective of all tutoring students participating in this program.

- Students demonstrated increased scores on reassessments in math and reading, with an average increase of 23.4 points in reading and 26.4 points in math.
- Early readers improved their reading readiness and building blocks (phonics) score by 48% after several months of tutoring. These skills are the foundations of reading that are incredibly important to future academic success.
- Students started an average of 33.92% below grade level on the SORT deficit assessment, which is about 2-4 grade levels behind. After tutoring, the average deficit score is only 9.72% below grade level.
- After several months of tutoring, students' confidence and feelings about math and reading improved. On average students also experienced a 25% average increase in As and Bs in reading or English and math.
- A very strong positive statistically significant linear relationship exists between pre- and post-test scores on the SORT.

HLC Student Grade Level

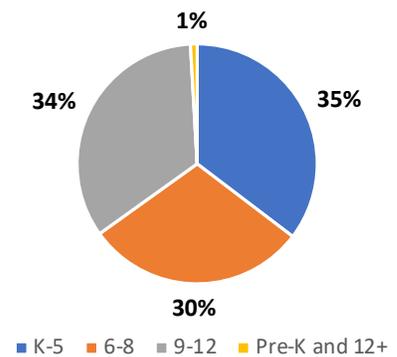


Figure 1: Pre - Post Sort Test

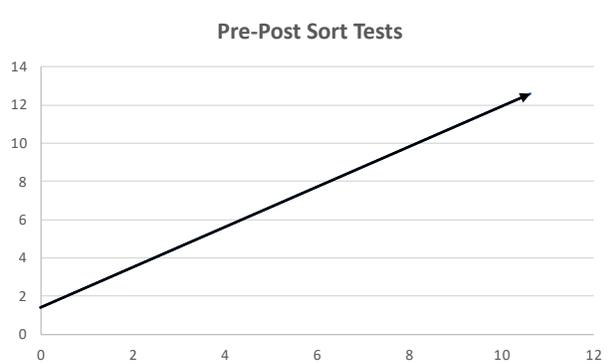
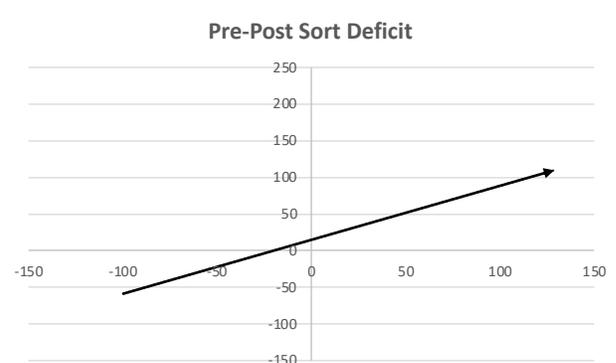


Figure 2: Pre - Post Sort Deficit Test



Academic progress with tutoring support

A first grader was performing below grade level when he began working with Education Support Services. His teacher reported that he was displaying behavioral problems in class and attended school less than half of the time. After working with his Education Support Services Specialist and academic tutor for several months, the teacher reported that the student is excited and eager to learn. His attendance has improved to 85% and his academic skills have increased. On a retest of his skills with the tutoring provider, the student more than doubled his scores on measures of early reading, phonics, and math skills.

Next steps

All pandemic response dollars have been spent for the Education Support Services Program as of June 2023. Given the significant, positive outcomes of the educational tutoring services provided by Huntington Learning Center, this program will continue to operate after the depletion of the pandemic response funds.

EMPLOYMENT DOMAIN

Employment Strategies

Allocation amount: \$16,580,000

Project description

Sustainable employment can make a difference in people’s ability to pay for basic needs, bringing stability to individuals and families. This project aims to create and implement a number of employment strategies that will benefit county residents and employers, and, ultimately, the county’s overall economic landscape. The county cannot do this work alone. The business community, community-based organizations, educational institutions, and the public workforce system are all critical partners in creating jobs and facilitating access to jobs that pay a livable wage and are in demand. The project team will work collaboratively to promote equity through the development and implementation of workforce development programs, employment readiness services, and other strategies that prepare and connect residents to employers.

Employment strategies will focus on:

- Partnering with the Housing Stability area to provide employment and training services that will supplement case management and housing-related supports for anyone who is interested in work, is 18 years or older, is single (no dependents), and is currently or recently experiencing homelessness. Services under this project include, but are not limited to, employment coaching, skills development through training and education, and assistance with placement and retention.
- Creating a consortia of workforce development providers that can provide just-in-time employment and training services leading to living-wage jobs by ensuring participants have the skills employers are seeking.
- Creating the Workforce Leadership Council (WLC), which is the platform the county will use to convene business partners for cross-sector sharing of ideas, promising practices and resources, and for cultivating strong partnerships to address pandemic-related economic hardships.

Progress narrative

Employment and Training Services for People Exiting Homelessness initiative

In 2021 the Hennepin County Board authorized funds to be used to provide meaningful employment services to individuals who are experiencing or have recently experienced homelessness. The board agreed that to improve long-term success in maintaining permanent housing and achieving self-sufficiency, persons transitioning from homelessness to permanent housing need to earn an income that meets basic needs. Employment services provide intentional focus on readiness, skills training and occupational learning to help this population find and keep jobs.

Hennepin County has partnered with Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota (GWES) and American Indian Opportunities Industrialization Centers Takoda Stability (AIOIC Takoda Stability) to provide low-barrier, supportive employment and training services to people experiencing or recently exited from homelessness. Hennepin County Housing Stability case managers and selected community-based adult shelter case managers and advocates assess individuals they serve for readiness and interest in employment and training services. If a person is deemed appropriate and interested, the case manager/advocate submits a referral for one of two partner organizations chosen by the individual being served. GWES and AIOIC Takoda Stability each have designated Career Navigators to support individuals referred.

Annual progress updates:

- The pilot launched March of 2022 in partnership with Workforce Development and Housing Stability's Homeless to Housing area.
- 122 referrals have been received, 45 in 2022 and 77 to date in 2023. GWES has received 54 referrals, and AIOIC has received 68.
- Efforts to expand the referral base began in November 2022. To date, Agate shelter, Streets to Housing, Catholic Charities Higher Ground, Simpson Shelter, and the Dignity Center have been onboarded to refer participants to the pilot. Additional referents will onboard soon.
- Workforce Development facilitates monthly case consultations between Housing Case Managers, AIOIC and GWES staff in effort to reduce participant barriers and provide wrap-around services.
- Participants have been provided support services to assist in their ability to participate in training and/or employment. Support services have included bus cards, funds for groceries, transportation assistance, interview clothing, work uniforms/required materials, pay-to-stay shelter nights, rent/eviction emergency assistance, fees to obtain certifications/licenses, and more.
- A stipend program was developed and added to the pilot January 1, 2023. Twenty participants have benefited from the stipend program thus far.
- A secure SharePoint collaborative site for Hennepin County and external community-based providers has been established. The site houses a secure referral mechanism with program management capabilities.
- A program brochure was recently developed and will be disseminated to referral sources soon.
- The creation of a Power BI program dashboard is currently under design.
- Internal Hennepin County monthly management meetings are held with Housing Stability and Workforce Development leaders to provide programmatic updates and a space to collaborate and plan program expansion and sustainability.

Workforce Development Roster Program

In October 2021, the Hennepin County Board authorized \$10 million for career pathways programming as an employment strategy to address the unequal impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency on certain Hennepin County communities, especially residents who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color. The strategy created a consortium of nonprofit organizations who can provide just-in-time employment and training services leading to living-wage jobs by ensuring participants have the skills employers are seeking. To accomplish this, project staff planned, prepared, and facilitated the creation of the Workforce Development Roster Program. Additionally, a partnership was formed with the Greater Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce to connect training graduates with living wage jobs. The Chamber also works with the Roster providers to both connect them to employers and to aid in ways to strengthen existing business relationships. Having a firm understanding of business needs ensures programs are created in a way that ensures participants have the most appropriate skills to be competitive in the workforce.

Annual progress updates:

Sixteen roster program contracts and two MOU's have been finalized; three additional initiatives are in process. Programs are as follows:

- Sector based programs bring employment and training opportunities to seven high-demand job sectors including IT; healthcare; manufacturing; finance/banking; green/energy; hospitality; and transportation. Eleven grants have been awarded, including
 - Finance: Goodwill Easter Seals MN (GESMN) was awarded \$153,845 for programming that serves women and people of color with Securities Industry Essentials (SIE) skills training that qualify participants for entry-level jobs in the finance sector. GESMN provides customized coaching, support, and work readiness training in conjunction with the SIE training to ensure participant success.

- Green: Tree Trust was awarded \$320,000 to implement the Summer Advanced Training program which prepares young adults through a combination of innovative, hands-on, field training and classroom-based work readiness and career exploration training to transition from programming directly into employment in the Green/Energy sector with family-supporting salaries. Participants earn wages (\$16.80/hr) throughout training, in addition to a stipend (\$2,000) to address barriers to employment. Follow up services are also provided to mitigate barriers and issues when transitioning from programming to employment.
- Healthcare: CAPI USA was awarded \$188,000 to expand their Healthcare Career Pathways training by increasing the number of people served who identify as English Language Learners with CNA training. In addition, CAPI is offering eight hours of knowledge test practice for North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) language exam and three hours of Mental Health First Aid training to increase the state exam passage rate. Programming also offers participant stipends (\$2,500), support services, work-readiness, and financial coaching.
- Healthcare: Hired was awarded \$300,000 for recruitment, training, and preparation for credential attainment of CNA Licensure. Training includes a pre-training model that incorporates employment and computer skills training, as well as real-life realities of the CNA profession. Employer engagement is also incorporated throughout the program delivery design.
- Hospitality: MN Training Partnership, Inc (MTP) was awarded \$156,750. MTP will partner with nine hotels in Bloomington and Minneapolis by offering comprehensive work readiness and job skills training to prospective new hires. The training incorporates customer service, housekeeping, and culinary occupational skills. Program design also integrates case management, workshops, networking, and job search assistance.
- Information Technology (IT): Project for Pride in Living (PPL) was awarded \$106,608. Through a partnership with Minneapolis College, PPL will pilot a Computer User Support Specialist 16-week, 5-course cohort that results in a Google IT Support Certification. Participants will concurrently receive job-readiness and financial empowerment education. PPL will leverage new and existing employer partners to connect successful program participants to job vacancies.
- Manufacturing: Emerge was awarded \$82,410. Emerge is providing a Manufacturing Career Pathway training that connects individuals to manufacturing careers following a flexible, high-touch and hands-on approach to develop skills in metal work, machine operation and precision manufacturing. The training program incorporates work readiness and industry knowledge, industry foundations, and comprehensive support services with job search support upon completion with connection to new and existing employer partners.
- Manufacturing/Green: Spark-Y was awarded \$165,000. Spark-Y Youth Pathways Program will offer career readiness training, hands-on engagement opportunities to explore interests, and then match youth to real-world community projects that offer opportunity to earn industry-backed certifications. Upon graduation from Youth Pathways Program, participants can engage in the alumni network to ensure success beyond programming and in the field.
- Transportation: Mind the G.A.P.P. (MTG) was awarded \$300,000. Centering a culturally specific approach, offering an experiential learning environment, and incorporating mentorship for career development strategies prepares participants for success in MTG's programming. The Driving Beyond Barriers program offers credentialed Commercial Driver's License training and direct access to job opportunities through their employer network. Job placement, career development, financial literacy, and support services are incorporated throughout programming to mitigate barriers.
- Transportation: MN Teamsters was awarded \$300,000. Through employer and education partners, Teamsters will build a pathway for Transportation careers through CDL training, work readiness workshops (soft skills, customer service, financial literacy), and wraparound support services coupled with a learn and earn tiered stipend component when meeting training milestones and securing employment. Programming also incorporates a mentorship program for new drivers to increase job retention.
- Transportation: People's Development Services (PDS) was awarded \$221,896. In partnership with Interstate Truck Driving School, PDS will support participant's CDL training and incorporate work readiness assessments and training, developing individual training plans, support during CDL training, job placement assistance and job retention.

- HOPE program: Emerge was awarded \$225,000 to implement the Helping Others by Providing Education (HOPE) Program in collaboration with the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, Adult Detention Center (ADC), and the Hennepin County Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCCR). The HOPE program provides GED programming, vocational training, and direct employment pathways to residents referred from Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, ADC, and DOCCR.
- Hennepin County Library Career Navigator: Asian Media Access (AMA) was awarded \$137,368 to provide Career Navigation services to patrons of Hennepin County libraries. AMA will designate staff at three Hennepin County libraries (Minneapolis Central, Brookdale, and North Regional) to assist residents with career exploration needs and offer some programmatic opportunities (e.g., Technology Education Workshops). AMA staff will assist with navigating technological and social barriers to seeking stable employment, assist with online job search and resume writing, and conduct referrals to other community-based organizations that offer resources that are needed by individuals (e.g., support services, training, housing, access to technology, etc.).
- Be@School/Juvenile Prosecution Diversion program: Lutheran Social Services was awarded \$300,000 to provide career development and career placement services for youth referred by Hennepin County Be@School and the Juvenile Prosecution Division. Services will include career exploration assessment, goal development, job search assistance, training, and support services.
- Security Officer Pathway: Hired was awarded \$225,000 to provide a Career Pathways program for Security Officers on behalf of Hennepin County Facility Services, with Hennepin County as the employer partner. Hired is working in partnership with Hennepin County Facility Services, Human Resources, and the Office of Workforce Development to develop and implement the pathway program.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU's):

- Medical Examiner Apprenticeship in the amount of \$193,773 was provided to support a 2-year apprenticeship program to recruit, train and retain talent to increase the diversity of the workforce in the Medical Examiner's Office. The funds support salary and benefits cost of four (two per year) non-registered apprenticeship positions.
- The amount of \$150,000 was provided to DOCCR to partner with Tree Trust to provide employment and training services for youth and adults who are on probation. The program consists of a combination of field and classroom training to provide DOCCR clients with necessary skills to work in the tree care industry. The work of the crew will include tree removal, tree planting and tree care and maintenance. Forestry Pathway participants will have an opportunity to perform forestry-related work year-round according to the seasons and will be paid an hourly stipend while in the program.
- NorthPoint Health & Wellness/Northside Job Creation Team (NJCT) initiative was awarded \$50,000 to create sustainable, living wage jobs in or near North Minneapolis for North Minneapolis residents. NJCT is working to recruit businesses to locate in or near North Minneapolis, with a special focus on African American entrepreneurs and other firms needing to expand and that will commit to hiring North Minneapolis residents.

Initiatives in progress:

- 38th Street Youth Initiative: \$400,000 has been allocated. This initiative will focus on bringing employment and training services to youth, ages 14–24, who live within a three-mile radius of George Floyd Square (38th and Chicago) in Minneapolis.
- Youth Gun Violence Prevention: Employment Strategy: \$500,000 has been allocated. Workforce Development has partnered with leaders from Educational Services, Safe Communities, and Community Engagement to develop a Scope of Service and Request for Proposal (RFP) for community-based providers to apply to provide innovative career and/or entrepreneurship opportunities that are strengths-based, youth- and trauma-informed, and provide a path for youth to achieve their career goals and aspirations. The program is developed to support youth, ages 11-24, who face an increased risk of gun violence.
- Non-Custodial Re-engagement Program: \$225,000 has been allocated. In partnership with Child Support Services and Adult Representative Services, this initiative aims to provide non-custodial parents facing court involvement/sanctions a diversion opportunity through employment and training services with a goal of obtaining a livable wage that provides an opportunity to fulfill child support obligations.

Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)

- Greater Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce participated in and promoted the Rework America Alliance’s skills-based practices training session designed to increase inclusive hiring for employers.
- 62 employers that have participated in 1:1 conversation regarding talent needs, resources available to them, and potential for partnerships
- Held planning meetings for manufacturing group on January 25 and May 24, 2023
- Held Regional Advisory Board meeting on May 9.

Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)

The Workforce Leadership Council (WLC) is the platform the county uses to convene small- and mid-sized business owners and stakeholder organizations to better understand employment and business operations needs and challenges and to explore opportunities for improvement and innovation. The WLC provides space for critical conversations, learning, new partnerships, and collaboration.

The WLC is a partnership between Hennepin County and small to mid-sized employers to better understand their challenges and needs and identify opportunities for innovation. By creating strategic business partnerships, we have a council that is aligned to meet industry demands. Through the collaboration of regional employers, business leaders, and other partners, we can exchange and share the experiences, know-how and expertise necessary to then align resources and champion strategies that prepare residents for careers and meet employers’ needs.

The members of the WLC have identified various pain points in employee attraction, recruitment, retention, and advancement, thus they have broken into three work groups to dig deeper to garner a better understanding of their challenges and opportunities for collective solutions. The purpose and focus of each work group is as follows:

1. The Technology Workgroup is focused on addressing the unmet technology needs of small- to medium-sized businesses and its employees. For businesses this means assisting them in identifying appropriate technology solutions to enhance their business operations. For employees, this means gaining a better understanding of the essential technology skills needed for successful employment. The workgroup is exploring the feasibility/utility/use of a digital tool kit that could be offered through the Elevate Hennepin Platform. This tool would be focused on providing a comprehensive list of resources available to small businesses. The workgroup will also strategize with small businesses to understand the technology skills needed by their workforce.
2. The Talent Pipeline Workgroup is focused on building career pathways into roles experiencing current/ projected shortages in the private sector — with a focus on engaging small- to medium- sized businesses. The workgroup is comparing and analyzing high demand, hard-to-fill occupations. The workgroup seeks to better understand the minimum qualifications pay scales skill requirements, etc., which will then create opportunities to expand a potential hiring pool. The information learned from this will not only benefit businesses but aid in creating pathways to skill residents of Hennepin County. The Talent Pipeline Workgroup has engaged a local workforce development organization to implement two cohort programs of small and mid-sized businesses. The two cohorts are focused on creating employment/career pathways for Mental Health Workers and Commercial Truck Drivers respectively. Findings and insights from this proposed intervention will inform how the WLC and the county approaches the development of additional pathway programs.
3. The Barriers to Employment Workgroup is focused on helping small- to medium-sized businesses be “employers of choice” by helping them identify and implement promising talent attraction and retention strategies. The Barriers to Employment Workgroup is currently planning a partnership with Elevate Hennepin to deliver cohort-based targeted programming to small- and medium- sized businesses. This program would be focused on connecting businesses in the cohorts to teams of consultants/SMEs in HR, Compensation, Budgeting, and Finance who can help the businesses develop implementable and scalable solutions. As part of this intervention, programming focused on financial wellness and asset building as well as potential financial subsidies that may come in the form of wages, childcare assistance, savings, etc., will also be offered to employees of businesses enrolled in the cohort. Staff will work closely with the program to ensure unintended consequences for employees (e.g., impact on public benefits, etc.).

Key performance indicators

Employment and Training Services for People Exiting Homelessness initiative

Key performance indicators are:

- Obtain employment
- Obtain stable housing
- Short-term job retention
- Long-term job retention

Annual results data (July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023):

- 95 new referrals received within this annual time period
- 87 program participants currently open (four of whom began working with the pilot prior to this annual report period)
- Nine participants employed part-time (seven of whom referred within this annual report period); 16 participants employed full-time (nine of whom referred within this annual report period)
- Nine participants enrolled with Goodwill Easter Seals work experience program during this annual report (one completed; seven actively participating; one did not complete)
- 10 participants currently seeking employment
- 20 participants currently enrolled in training courses; 13 participants currently exploring training opportunities
- Four participants currently enrolled in GED class; four participants exploring educational opportunities
- 20 participants have participated in the stipend program; 32 participants have utilized support funds (work clothing, bus passes, groceries, etc.)
- 43 participants obtained/maintained stable housing; one person obtained but did not maintain housing

Evaluation efforts include:

- Continuing program and participant data monitoring and evaluation
- Ongoing discussion with implementing partners and Hennepin County management regarding data needs and long-term program sustainability needs

Workforce Development Roster Program

Key performance indicators:

- Participants earn credentials and/or job skills
- Participants obtain employment
- Participants retain employment (retention captured at 3, 6, and 12 months)

Annual results data:

- No annual results data to date; contracts recently began

Evaluation efforts include:

- Program and participant data monitoring and evaluation
- Ongoing discussion with implementing partners and Hennepin County management regarding data needs and long-term program sustainability needs

Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)

Key performance indicators:

- Identifying pain points, exploring solutions to meet business and resident needs, piloting solutions, implementing services that solve for barriers to employment.

Results data:

- Business members have been recruited, have identified pain points and are researching strategies to address their talent pipeline, barriers to employment and technology needs.

A participant story from AIOIC

'Kim' has been working with the program for three months. She was experiencing homelessness due to an abusive partner and lost her job because of the circumstances. We helped Kim file a police report and acquire an order for protection against her abuser; we connected her with employment in her field of expertise, and now she has advanced to a higher position because of her previous experience. Kim is also in the process of obtaining stable housing; she is very dedicated and takes necessary steps to be successful. It has been wonderful to help her navigate the past few months as she restabilizes her life.

A note from a referent at The Dignity Center

Just want you to know that I visited with K just now and he was all smiles and feeling so good getting connected with Goodwill. One person, for today, feels accomplished and like he is on the right track. Who knows what tomorrow will be, but today is a very good day for someone due to this program.

Next steps

Employment and Training Services for People Exiting Homelessness initiative

- Continue program coordination and management efforts (ongoing partner meetings, internal management meetings, support to providers and case managers)
- Plan for program sustainability (identify/obtain data, funding sources, etc.)
- Obtain program feedback from participants
- Continue to monitor quantitative and qualitative data and outcomes
- Roll out collaborative SharePoint site and new referral and ROI forms
- Complete initial program Power BI dashboard
- Expand referral source to additional adult homeless shelters
- Monitor program budget

Workforce Development Roster Program

- Initiate remaining Roster program contracts
- Provide technical assistance and support to awarded providers
- Provide program monitoring and evaluation
 - Develop Power BI program dashboard
 - Monitor quantitative and qualitative program data
- Monitor program budgets

Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)

WLC meetings and work groups continue to refine scope and purpose statements and to learn about potential solutions to their business needs.

HEALTH DOMAIN

Behavioral Health

Allocation amount: \$20,000,000

Project description

The Behavioral Health project will invest in early interventions, prevent overreliance on deep-end services, and reduce disparities for Hennepin County residents through behavioral health strategies and interventions.

Initiatives toward these intended outcomes include:

1. Expanding School Based Mental Health
2. Developing and expanding a network of culturally specific mental health services
3. Expanding Family Home Visiting
4. Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids
5. Reforming 911
6. Expanding hours at 1800 Chicago
7. Expanding the embedded police social worker initiative
8. Launching a juvenile behavioral health initiative
9. Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services
10. Piloting a family-based recovery program
11. Launching a mental health awareness campaign

The measures supported through this effort will increase access for more than 11,000 people annually to low-barrier, upstream, whole-person and family supports designed to meet the complex needs of diverse communities. They will leverage multiple funding sources and expand the reach of Hennepin's current investment.

Progress narrative

There has been a consistent and strong effort throughout the 11 initiatives as work continues forward. As expected from committed and empowered staff, the initiative teams are setting, meeting, and often exceeding performance goals and, where relevant, establishing and working towards expanded performance goals. Where others may have seen challenges, these teams find only additional goals to accomplish. July 2022 through September 2022 saw the execution of contracts and the onboarding of preliminary staff. Starting October 2022 these initiatives focused on development of teams and preparing for full implementation by December 2022. The end of March 2023 would reveal that the programs were fully operational and making excellent progress. By June of 2023, all initiatives have achieved or made marked progress in reaching their performance goals.

The goal for Q1, 2023 of the Expanding School Based Mental Health initiative, for example, was to work with agencies to submit proposals in response to the MN DHS School Linked Mental Health RFP (Request for Proposal). By March of 2023, 23 of these agency providers submitted 11 proposals. June of 2023 revealed that six of these proposals would go into negotiations with DHS. In the last year, the Reforming 911 initiative launched its first Alternative Response Team (ART) pilot in December of 2022 with the initial sustainability and expansion plan to move the original ART to grant funding. Despite a setback in which a grant funder awarded funding to the Hennepin County ART initiative in error, this team doubled down and persisted in their pursuit of sustainability funding. They sought and acquired additional grant funding for expansion from the Department of Justice to support a second ART, shortly after which the team was notified by SAMHSA that additional funding was secured and Hennepin County's ART initiative was to be awarded

grant funding after all. The team's ability to overcome financial challenges and persevere has helped them to triple their original goal of funding a single team, with new grant funding from SAMHSA in place to expand to a third ART by Q1 2024.

Key performance indicators

All eleven initiatives have separate KPI's based on their individual approaches to supporting the mental health needs of Hennepin residents. The Annual KPI's reported in Q2, 2023 reflect very strong efforts of the 11 initiatives working towards and exceeding their goals. In the state fiscal year ending June 2023, Expanding School Based Mental Health has maintained their 100% public, non-charter schools' access to school-based mental health services. Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids (CC4K) has exceeded their annual goal of 500 children screened annually. From July 2022 through June 2023, this team has screened 755. Reforming 911 has completed 346 assessments since the program launched in December of 2022. In the previous year, this team reported 296. For State Fiscal Year ending June 2023, Expanding Hours at 1800 Chicago had a total of 6,700 visits wherein 13,000 referrals to services were made. Expanding the embedded Police Social Worker initiative identified 30 police departments within Hennepin County that support individual cities. This initiative is actively finalizing contracts with the remaining two police departments which equates to 100% of target.

Key milestones Annual Report July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023

– Expanding School Based Mental Health

- In 231 schools/100% Hennepin districts with 193.5 FTEs serving nearly 7,700 youth annually
- Monthly meetings with school districts and providers to address operational implementation, workforce, and funding--approximately 20-30 attendees who represent agencies, school districts and parents
- Approximately 23 providers were represented in approximately 11 proposals that were submitted in response to the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) School Linked Mental Health RFP; of the 11 proposals submitted, approximately six are in negotiations with DHS
- Updated performance measures for contracted School Based Mental Health providers to include treatment plan outcomes and demographic data
- 86% of parents/caregivers reported being satisfied with the school-based services they received in June-December 2022

– Developing and expanding a network of culturally specific mental health services

- Awarded a National Association of Counties 2023 Achievement Award for increasing mental health care access by investing in culturally specific mental health providers
- Third collaboration meeting with providers held June 2023
- Annual report data due July 12 and will update report once received
- Contracts extended with no additional funding until 12/31/2023

– Sustaining Family Home Visiting

- 32 public health nurses, five supervisors and Family Home Visiting (FHV) program manager started in their positions on January 1, 2023
- Successfully implemented three evidence-based Family Home Visiting models under Hennepin County Public Health Operated Family Home Visiting services (Family Connects, Nurse-Family Partnership, Healthy Families of America)

– Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids (CC4K)

- The program is fully staffed with seven screeners, one administrative assistant, and one OSIII. Hiring for a supervisor is planned for this summer
- 755 children's mental health screenings were completed resulting in 118 positive screening results (~15% positive screening rate) and 97 (82%) of those were referred for diagnostic assessments (DAs). Of the 115 positive screenings, 79 (68%) children were 0-5 years old, and 78 (98%) were referred for DAs
- Screening of all children birth to 18 years in open Child Protection (CP) case management workgroups is occurring at this time

- Data collection processes were improved with updates made to CC4K's Power BI report to collect data related to screening, demographic information (including race/ethnicity disaggregation), and referrals for additional mental health services
- Completed a program logic model and an evaluation plan for ongoing monitoring, learning, improvement, and effectiveness
- Project workgroups began for continuous quality improvement including the development of a CC4K Policy and Procedure Manual and the exploration of a referral process from CC4K to family home visiting programs
 - Update: Exploration of a referral process between CC4K and FHV discontinued as FHV is unable to accept referrals from CC4K due to children being involved in CPS. CC4K will connect families to FHV staff for parenting and other family health resources outside of CC4K capacity until a separate non-FHV referral process is established.
 - Update: CC4K administrative assistant will assume the task to develop a CC4K Program Manual and will consult/review the manual with the current internal services project lead
- Collaborative meetings were held with the Hennepin County Mental Health Center (HCMHC) to enlist the participation of trained mental health staff to participate in children's mental health consultations for expanded partnership and additional resources and supports for kids
 - Update: HCMHC will reserve two slots a month for CC4K to submit DA referrals for children 6-18. HCMHC will provide assistance in participating in CC4K's CMH Consultations starting in July
- Continuous support and assistance from Children and Family Services is strong. The department is currently providing two data analysts, Electronic Case File technical support, legal support regarding agreements/contracts, and continues to provide case management assistance (CMA) support to CC4K. Department area managers are seeking out with current partners on how to improve and/or reduce CMH DA referral waitlists

– Reforming 911

- Social workers are taking calls from officers and Hennepin Health staff Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 10 p.m.
- During Q2, 2023 some program staff transitioned to other roles in the embedded social work program leaving two open positions
- Referrals from dispatchers continue to increase; 80 cases opened in Q2, 2023; 61 referrals made for community supports
- Alternative Response Team (ART) pilot dispatched to 174 calls in Q2, 2023
- Planning continues in the development of a second Alternative Response Team in partnership with Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center Police Departments, Hennepin County Sheriff's Office and North Memorial Community Paramedic Program with anticipated launch Q4, 2023
- Planning continues in the development of a Co-Responder Pilot with anticipated launch Q3, 2023
- Behavioral Health was awarded a SAMSHA Grant to develop a third Alternative Response Team
- Contracting process underway for three additional cities
- Partnership with Hennepin Health began at the end of Q2 to support high utilizers of emergency medical services by connecting emergency room care coordinators with a patient's existing social service providers

– Expanding access and hours at 1800 Chicago

- Maintaining 12-hours/day, weekday operations (M–F, 9 a.m.–9 p.m.); services and hours kept updated on our website
- Enhancing collaboration with Public Safety Facility (PSF), including monthly meetings to review booking data, and targeted outreach from PSF to Officers about diverting low-level livability or nuisance offenses to the Behavioral Health Center for voluntary social service engagement, when possible
- Completed roll calls with Metro Transit, Minneapolis Police Department (all precincts, all shifts), and monthly Crisis Intervention Team trainings, to train in all Officers about how to use the drop-off function at 1800 Chicago for any adults who have needs related to mental health or substance use, as an alternative to jail or hospital, whenever possible
- Launched a Resident Advisory Group to continue to solicit input and feedback from those we serve, to enhance our approach and service delivery model
- Continued increase in Walk-in Center traffic, ranging from 500-700 visits/month
- 1,784 unique residents were served from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023

- Hired and onboarded supervisors, social worker, and senior social worker to serve adults with needs related to mental health or substance use

– **Expanding Police Embedded Social Workers**

- Social workers embedded in 28 police departments that support 42 cities
- 24 staff in place
 - Remaining one staff projected to be in place by end of Q3, 2023
- 2,118 cases opened in Q2, 2023 with 740 referrals made for community supports
- All new departments that came online in 2023 are expected to be fully staffed by the end of Q3, 2023
- Develop and share embedded social worker role clarity document by end of Q3, 2023

– **Launching a juvenile behavioral health initiative**

- Examining current pilots for opportunities to increase services and collaboration
- Monthly initiative meetings, vision and strategic direction created
- Shared one-pagers for juvenile probation, juvenile detention center, and rule 20 youth efforts
- Designed and implemented Trauma-Informed Care trainings (3X) and offered CEU's to internal and community-based providers
- Continued community engagement and partnerships being formed
- Designed and implementing culturally specific support for youth with substance use disorder needs

– **Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services (FRSS)**

- 303 families called FRSS for services
- 88 of those calls were repeat families representing 29% of our call volume
- Calls (41 Q3, 68 Q4, 94 Q1, 100 Q2)
- Three additional FRSS staff
- Expanded FRSS hours to include weekend hours (every day 10a.m. – 10p.m.)
- Hired a Lead Family Coordinator to support youth and parent engagement efforts
- Created an FRSS Manual to standardize our service practices, protocols, and policies
- Completed a comprehensive FRSS evaluation to meet county and SAMHSA requirements

– **Piloting an In-Home Family Recovery program (Previously Family-Based)**

- Pilot launched Q4 with nine child protection units including ongoing and investigations, Indian Child Welfare Act
- 25 families served to date
 - 23 youth remain with family to date – feedback from child protection that if not for this program, two youth would have been placed out of home
 - 1 youth in out-of-home placement requesting reunification with parent
- Hired and onboarded a social work unit supervisor to support expansion of programming to support parental substance use in CP
- Interviewing for senior psychiatric social worker to support expansion of programming
- Initial formal outcomes anticipated Q4, 2023

– **Launching a mental health awareness campaign**

- Nearly 97M total impressions since campaign media launch in January; approximately 30M increase since previous report
- Traditional media yielded 69M impressions (e.g., billboards, transit (58%), mall advertising, etc.)
- Digital media yielded 16.7M impressions (Facebook, Programmatic display, Instagram, Tik Tok, etc.)
 - 60% increase since Q1, 2023 report
 - More than 76,880 digital ad clicks
 - Nearly 52K visitors to the seementalhealth.org campaign page. Over 2,300 visitors have reached the site directly; a sign the traditional campaign is effectively delivering visitors

- Visitors on www.seementalhealth.org non-English pages (Spanish, Somali, Hmong) spending over three minutes on pages
- The Senior (2.55%) Click Through Rate (CTR) and Veteran (1.97% CTR) videos are significantly outperforming the Youth (1.31% CTR) video on Snapchat
- 39M total Black, Indigenous, and communities of color impressions; 9.4M digital impressions; 56% of all ad placements
- 10M impressions reached by community media (e.g., Telemundo (30%), KFAI (20%), Univision (18%), etc.).
- 16 people representing diverse youth, veterans, and seniors were filmed for website's real people real stories showcase
- Nearly 4,500 residents reached in the May-June events
- Attended 16 events May-June; 12 with fully electric and campaign- branded engagement van.
- Five media features including *Latino American Today*, *Spokesman Recorder*, *The Sheletta Show*, *WCCO*, and *Lavender Magazine*

Next steps

Goals for Q3 of 2023 include:

- The Sustaining Family Home Visiting initiative will implement coordinated intake/referral system for Hennepin County Operated FHV operated and contracted services by the end of Q3, 2023
- Goals for the Expanding Caring 4 Kids (CC4K) initiative include drafting a policy and procedure manual by end 2023. This will include documented process for case consultations and collaboration
- Expanding the Embedded Police Social Workers Initiative is exploring ways to increase worker safety in the community in Q3
- The Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services (FRSS) initiative is working to establish FRSS school partnerships in five new schools
- Q3, 2023 Goals for the Piloting an In-Home Family Recovery program initiative will focus on stabilizing contract partner teams. Because this initiative is expecting to reach full capacity by the end of Q3, their goals also include strategizing to increase capacity

HEALTH DOMAIN

Food Insecurity

Allocation amount: \$5,825,000

Project description

The purpose of the Food Insecurity project was to provide financial support to organizations providing food access to communities impacted by COVID-19. Awards were made through an application process.

Organizations that received funding met following criteria:

- Provide for the food insecurity needs of Hennepin County residents through the distribution of perishable and non-perishable food items, including culturally specific food to mitigate the disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 public health crisis for people of color and low-income communities, since the organizations' services prioritize racial equity, inclusion, and culturally specific outreach
- Be registered as “active/good standing” with the Minnesota Secretary of State
- Have the capacity to serve Black and Indigenous people and people of color in a manner that considers culturally specific foods
- Deliver healthy food items whenever possible
- Be a trusted faith-based organization, community organization, educational institution, or nonprofit
- Be part of a longer-term strategy to address food insecurity issues in Hennepin County

Progress narrative

The 71 agencies that received funding through this project represented a broad selection of small, medium, and large community organizations, some well-established and others relatively new. The agencies also represented specific communities such as seniors, Somali, Spanish-speaking, Asian, East and West African, American Indian, students, and others. Many organizations reported that while originally focused on a particular community or culture, they ultimately served individuals beyond their target group, including newly arrived Afghan and Ukrainian families. The organizations also reported that new arrivals are showing up at distribution sites/events in record numbers, including newly arrived Ecuadorian families who have migrated to Hennepin County from the southern border.

The availability of funding to support the food needs of our communities was warmly received and very much appreciated by our community partners. The ability to identify partners, engage communities, and quickly process payments all contributed to the success of this process. The major themes identified as successes were:

- The ability to deliver culturally appropriate food to communities that struggle to keep food on the table
- The ability to reach socially isolated individuals such as seniors and those experiencing homelessness and offer them food and food choices
- Distributing food items in environments that were safe and trusted by the community. No shaming. Distribution of prepared meals to those suffering from food instability
- The ability to buy food in larger quantities (bulk) which kept normally higher prices lower

Next steps

Pandemic response funding has been exhausted for this project. Hennepin County will continue to find more ways to connect with residents in the community to support their food needs.

Maternal Health

Allocation amount: \$10,000,000

Project description

This project focuses on strengthening and expanding existing services, partnerships, and resources to improve maternal health outcomes for Black, Indigenous, and birthing people of color. The resources will expand Hennepin County Public Health's (HCPH) capacity to provide and assure maternal and child health surveillance (data gathering, monitoring, assessment) and health education, and promote access to health care in the community. To facilitate community-driven solutions to maternal health, HCPH is using these funds to invest in community-based efforts and providers focused on improving outcomes. This includes forging new partnerships and developing contracts and grants for community-based services.

The project activities include:

- Expanding existing programs focused on improving maternal health outcomes for Black and Indigenous persons and people of color affected by disparities
- Developing and implementing a birth justice plan to improve maternal and infant health outcomes
- Investing in community-initiated solutions and culturally congruent and innovative practices to reduce disparities
- Increasing departmental capacity for data collection, reporting, and analysis to support measurement strategies

Progress narrative

Phase one

Over the past year, the Maternal Health Initiative continued phase one strategies of expanding existing programs focused on improving maternal health outcomes. Within Public Health Clinical Services, Health Care for the Homeless onboarded a Maternal Child Health RN to address gaps in care and better serve families at the People Serving People clinic. The role expanded services including one-on-one patient education visits from early pregnancy through postpartum, navigation services to reduce barriers in attending prenatal visits, lactation visits to promote breastfeeding, and connections to additional resources such as Pack 'N Plays for safe sleep, breast pumps, and outreach for well-child checks and vaccinations. A Reproductive Health Educator was also onboarded in March to address needs surrounding reproductive health care for patients at the Red Door Clinic. This position expanded services for reproductive health activities through patient education, navigation services, and engagement at outreach events.

The contracted providers delivering care and services in the community continued to make progress on expansion of maternal health programs and services, many of whom focused on social determinants of health and connecting patients to supportive resources. Hennepin Healthcare (HHS) trained the entire staff at East Lake Clinic to be trauma-informed and embedded a trauma-informed lens in prenatal care with referrals to trauma responsive supports. Hennepin Healthcare also piloted a new tool for screening food insecurity, which helped identify more patients experiencing food insecurity. They responded with food support resources, providing over 17,000 pre-packaged culturally congruent food bags for patients. HHS also worked to return to a fully staffed 24/7 on call schedule for doula services where doulas supported over 200 visits with pregnant patients. Additionally, HHS worked with Everyday Miracles to support the training of new community doulas to help replace the many doulas who left the field during the pandemic. In partnership with the Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health (MACMH), HHS has supported nine infant mental health trainings for health professionals and the spring MACMH conference which saw over 1,600 attendees. NorthPoint Health & Wellness Center has worked to more fully integrate clinical services to provide holistic care coordination that addresses a patient's perinatal range of needs. Staff have done visioning for perinatal care and established processes involving medical and social services staff to consider the full range of medical care and social determinants of health. Roots Community Birth Center fully resumed and increased home visits since the onset of the pandemic, and Roots has returned to a near 100 percent breastfeeding rate that they saw pre-pandemic.

In support of increasing internal capacity for data collection, reporting, and analysis, the Public Health Assessment team completed a review of birth and death data for Hennepin County in January. The Assessment team also created a new birth data dashboard that includes indicators of low birth weight, preterm births, and early prenatal care, disaggregated by age, race, and ethnicity for more consistent monitoring of birth data in Hennepin County. HCPH prepared a draft report of maternal deaths in Hennepin County, and the report is under review by epidemiologists at Minnesota Department of Health (MDH).

Phase two

The Maternal Health Initiative launched the second phase of work, centered on forming a birth justice collaborative and strategic plan. During the months of November and December, the collaborative hosted community engagement opportunities that included three large in-person convenings, two virtual convenings, and small group and one-on-one discussions. Outreach efforts engaged over 300 individuals across Hennepin County. Beginning in January, a leadership coalition of 50 individuals were then charged with transforming the community engagement themes into strategies and actions. The draft birth justice plan was brought back to community in April for additional feedback.

Themes and strategies in the birth justice plan centered around five categories of action for improved maternal health, including:

- 1) acknowledge and address impacts of racism,
- 2) advocate for and radically reform policy and payment for care delivery,
- 3) create culturally meaningful workforce pathways,
- 4) enforce a coordinated system of anti-bias accountability, and
- 5) invest in a network of community-credentialed healing providers and resources.

To support the transition into the implementation phase of the birth justice plan, a birth justice collaborative coordinating organization was designated, Collective Action Lab (CAL). CAL will coordinate and support a governance structure that oversees implementation of the birth justice plan. CAL will provide project direction and management, partnership and strategy group maintenance, community engagement, and communications and advocacy coordination to implement the five strategy areas in the birth justice plan.

Key performance indicators

Key performance indicators were established for the initiative as well as performance measures with contracted providers. Over the last year, progress was made against strategies of expanding existing maternal health services and developing and investing in community-initiated solutions to reduce disparities.

Expand existing maternal health services

- Expanded programs and services available through Public Health Clinical Services by hiring two FTEs to support the People Serving People clinic and Red Door Clinic
- Number of individuals served through expansion of Public Health Clinical Services
 - 210 individuals served
- Total number of individuals served through contracted providers Hennepin Healthcare, NorthPoint Health & Wellness Center, and Roots Community Birth Center
 - 4,096 total individuals served (includes 1,621 MACMH conference attendees)
- Number of training and educational sessions offered, topics covered and attendance
 - Six trauma-informed care trainings held
 - Nine infant mental health trainings held
 - 20 childbirth classes and group sessions held
 - 2,861 community members and health care professionals attended trainings and classes
- Number of individuals receiving referrals to supportive resources
 - Food support resources
 - 25 high-risk pregnant and postpartum individuals enrolled in a meal program cohort to support food security
 - 17,041 culturally congruent food bags distributed to patients experiencing food insecurity

- 67 individuals screened and connected to trauma responsive support resources
 - 406 referrals to social determinants of health resources, including behavioral health, nutrition, dental, social work and human services
- Number of visits completed with patients, including prenatal and postpartum OB/Gyn, doula, and midwifery care
- 795 visits with practitioners
 - 328 visits with Maternal Child Health RN
 - 218 doula visits

Develop and invest in community-initiated solutions to reduce disparities

- 300 community members across Hennepin County engaged through outreach efforts
- Summary report of community engagement attendance and themes received December 2022
- 50 individuals participated on the leadership coalition to draft the birth justice plan: 30 community members, 20 healthcare systems and government representatives
- Initial draft of birth justice plan and draft implementation plan received April 2023

Data-informed decisions and evaluation efforts

Throughout 2023, Family Health area staff have scheduled quarterly check-ins with contracted providers to maintain regular communication about program updates, invoicing, and support needed from the county. Through these regular touchpoints, numerous providers shared challenges of hiring delays and staff turnover over the last year. Responsiveness to the circumstances on the ground allowed partners to focus on the necessary stabilization work for expanding programming while county staff remained informed about program budgets and spending.

The team supporting management and implementation of the initiative is focusing on evaluating the process and short-term outcomes of the initiative. Short-term outcomes related to systems changes, community engagement and connection to key stakeholders for improving maternal health, and results of expanding services will be included in the ongoing evaluation of the initiative through 2024.

Birth Justice Plan — Five Organizing Strategies

Art by Andres Guzman



Next steps

Over the next quarter, the Maternal Health Initiative expects to receive the completed birth justice plan that will be a blueprint to guide the final phase of work. The process and results of the birth justice plan will be shared through an overarching communications plan. The initiative will then launch the final phase of work, implementation of the birth justice plan. CAL and the birth justice collaborative partners will lead initial implementation coordination and oversight, supporting a governance structure that oversees implementation of the birth justice plan. The Maternal Health Initiative core team will work with Public Health leadership to identify internal opportunities for advancing and implementing the plan, as well as maintaining connection to key partners in this work such as the Birth Equity Community Council (BECC) led by Ramsey County Public Health and the MDH Maternal Health Innovation Perinatal Subcommittee. Contracted providers will continue to serve patients and clients in need of maternal health care, services, and supports.

HEALTH DOMAIN

Public Health

Allocation amount: \$10,000,000

Project description

This project focuses on rebuilding and strengthening critical public health capabilities and services to protect community health. This work is vital as we continue to respond to COVID-19 and its effects as well as other disease outbreaks, while also providing basic public health prevention services for residents of all ages. Efforts focus on bolstering public health infectious disease response and coordinated immunization outreach and delivery; increasing and enhancing capacity to respond to public health emergencies; strengthening health promotion programming to mitigate the impacts of COVID in the community; and coordinating early childhood development strategies to improve access to early childhood services for families. Foundational to these efforts will be expanded assessment capabilities and increased project management capacity with the aim to address long-standing and newly emerging public health challenges. Project activities include:

- Investing in community-initiated solutions and culturally congruent and innovative practices to reduce disparities.
- Increasing departmental capacity for data collection, reporting and analysis to support measurement strategies.

Progress narrative

Public Health implements strategies in all aspects of this project. Embedded in the project are community-initiated solutions and a commitment to utilize data to drive activities.

Promote healthy communities and healthy behaviors

Infectious disease response: The Community-Based Infectious Disease (CBID) response team was formed in summer of 2022 to ensure a rapid, effective, and culturally competent response to emerging infectious disease outbreaks, especially those affecting communities of color. Through ongoing community presence, CBID aims to build trust, reducing the historical gap between marginalized communities and the healthcare system. Now a year old, CBID continues to evolve and instill valuable lessons learned. Since June 2022, CBID has completed a total of 1,299 infectious disease screening tests, in 223 patients. The team has also been providing weekly screening events at Avivo Villages for over nine months, and weekly screening events at Homeward Bounty (homeless shelters); providing eight Mpox community events at the Saloon, CLUES, and Pride Institute; case managing up to 18 people on the HIV outbreak list; partnering with Healthcare for the Homeless (HCH) Hep C team to pilot a collaborative approach to Hep C engagement and treatment in homeless populations; partnering with Baby Tracks and providing three childhood immunization events in the community; staffing a community syringe service program weekly for the past year, offering HIV screening, education, and treatment; and completing 12 vaccine events at six homeless shelters.

Infection control in long-term care facilities (LTCF): The LTCF Infection Prevention program has held two virtual tabletop exercises in 2023 for long-term care facilities to test their response plans using a simulated mystery illness occurring at their facility. The first exercise occurred in January and had 200 participants and the second occurred in June with over 80 participants. The team also concluded a pilot test of an infection prevention toolkit designed to provide facilities with guidance on developing and maintaining plans and procedures in areas such as personal protective equipment use, hand hygiene, risk assessment, and device and procedure associated infections. Once complete, the toolkit will be distributed to infection control staff in LTCF. The team also advanced work on a project to strengthen its capacity in Healthcare Associated Infection and Antimicrobial Resistance (HAI/AR) prevention and response. A sub-committee dedicated to this work was formed and has prioritized action steps for the next three months to move the work forward. The team also completed an Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICAR)

which involves completing assessments of facilities' infection prevention practices and recommending quality improvement efforts to facility infection prevention programs.

Prepare and respond to emergencies

A COVID-19 Improvement Plan (from the After-Action Report) was completed which details strategic and operational corrective actions. The Improvement Plan will assess the county's response against Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response strategic priorities to inform a Corrective Action Plan. This plan uses the strengths and areas for improvement to develop a list of specific activities that must be completed to improve ongoing and future responses. The plan also provides details for who is responsible for each plan item and the expected date of completion and will be monitored regularly to ensure progress and completion of the identified activities. There were 151 corrective actions, with 81 of them related to the Emergency Operations Coordination capability, including training Public Health staff to be sure they have knowledge, skills, abilities, and training for key incident management positions.

Promote healthy communities and healthy behaviors

Chronic disease: Public Health has filled the two positions allocated to this work — the Coordinator began in August 2022 and the Senior Planning Analyst began in January 2023. The work is focused on themes that include reconnecting community to primary care and preventive services, and mental well-being. This initiative partnered with the Community Health Improvement Project (CHIP) (updates below) to include funding focused on reconnection to primary care and mental well-being in the Request for Proposal (RFP) that closed the end of March 2023. The RFP received 85 applications and this initiative is funding four proposals. Projects include community pop-up clinics to increase access to primary care, train-the-trainer models for mental well-being practices in communities of color, expanding referral networks for primary and mental health care, and increased access to dental care for children and youth without insurance. All projects layer in a focus on mental well-being and trauma-informed practices. Public Health Promotion will continue to partner with CHIP to develop a grantee cohort and reporting guidelines. A second community RFP round is scheduled for release towards the end of the summer with a focus on reconnection to primary care, mental well-being, and other health promotion activities that focus on policies, systems, and environmental change. The initiative will also support a Community Health Worker (CHW) project with Pillsbury United Communities to expand CHW access in Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center.

Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP): Between June 2022 and July 2023, 33 projects were funded through CHIP mini-grants. A quality improvement process found that 93% of funding was distributed to priority communities and that the current mini-grant process works well for communities and CHIP leadership. An overarching evaluation of all nine rounds of mini grant funding found overwhelming support by communities for community-led projects. In addition, the CHIP [GIS map of mini grant projects](#) was updated to include the latest round of grantees.

The third annual CHIP trauma-informed survey was completed by CHIP partner organizations, and a three-year analysis was conducted to determine trends toward becoming trauma informed. A collaborative RFP process was conducted among CHIP, the public health trauma-informed team, and Public Health Promotion. The RFP received 85 project applications (double what had been expected) and 20 organizations were funded for a total of over \$695,000. Three of the 20 projects funded are led by former mini grantees, demonstrating the growth of these organizations from volunteer/shoestring to more fully fledged organizations. Finally, the CHIP executive committee added four new members including two from organizations that represent communities CHIP serves and funds.

Age Friendly: The Public Health Age-Friendly Coordinator continues to be deeply immersed in the implementation portion of the countywide Age-Friendly Action Plan. The Age Friendly team completed an initial county policy scan using an age-friendly lens with the goal to look for areas where internal policies and practices can be improved to better support older employees. One key finding was that employees who are retiring from the county may desire to keep a connection to opportunities for short-term work. The Age-Friendly team worked with Human Resources to develop a question related to this during exit interviews and is developing a process for retraining employees to stay connected to potential work. The team continues to look for additional departments to partner with on age-friendly policy scans. A web presence devoted to Age-Friendly was posted in Q2, 2023 ([Age-friendly Hennepin County | Hennepin County](#)) and the team is working on additional communications strategies to share the initiative more broadly with partner organizations and residents. The

initiative is also partnering with communications on a COVID-19 booster campaign focused on older adults in the county. The Age-Friendly team was successful in securing an Age-Friendly Communities MN grant. The grant focus is on conducting a feasibility study for the Community Aging in Place (CAPABLE) model. CAPABLE's goal is to help older adults age better at home with support from an occupational therapist, small home improvements, and a coordinated care team. The team has identified a potential contractor to conduct the study, which will be complete by March 2024. A logic model and evaluation plan are complete and were shared with the implementation team in Q2, 2023.

Coordinate Early Childhood Development Strategies: The Early Childhood (EC) Coordinator's goal is to strengthen connections across programs in Hennepin County to improve early childhood outcomes for county residents. From July 2022 - June 2023, the EC Coordinator drafted an early childhood strategic plan, led the community advisory board for Family Home Visiting (FHV), and made partnerships across multiple internal county partners. The early childhood strategic plan was completed in March 2023 and will be presented to community groups in Q3, 2023. In January 2023, the EC coordinator started another pilot project between FHV and Family Stabilization Services (FSS) in the Well-being area of Human Services that resulted in 15 referrals being made from FSS to FHV in Q2, 2023. The EC coordinator also facilitated a meeting with the community advisory board where gaps were identified in outreach strategies for families with young children. These gaps will be used to inform the early childhood strategic plan.

Assure an adequate local public health infrastructure

Expand assessment capability and SHAPE survey: SHAPE (Survey of the Health of All the Population and the Environment) is an ongoing project of Public Health to provide data on the health status and factors that affect health for adults in Hennepin County that is used in planning, programming, and policy development. The project also provides baseline data to help measure changes in health indicators and status over time. Project results are used to support health equity data analysis and surveillance of health disparities. Data collection for SHAPE 2022 spanned May–November 2022. Data analysis is complete, results have been published, and are available to the public.

Increase planning and project management capacity: Strategic Initiatives hired a new staff person in December 2022 to increase planning and project management capacity and to advance health and racial equity practices across Public Health. The department now has expanded capacity to enhance and expand health and racial equity efforts, including the project management of the Health Equity Leadership Team, and support of Public Health's Health and Racial Equity Champions. The new staff person completed the 2023 Health and Racial Equity Plan in March 2023. Additionally, the staff person is leading efforts with a small team composed of individuals across the county to determine Public Health's role in violence prevention. Central to the violence prevention work is highlighting and addressing disparities in violence, and disparities in risks for violence.

This staff person is also scoping out how best to meet the ongoing needs of cities within Hennepin County that do not have their own public health department and creating a plan for enhancing city/county partnerships. A newly formed advisory group of staff from across Public Health is focused on completing an internal environmental scan of program areas that have existing relationships with cities and how they work with cities.

Key performance indicators

Efforts are underway to meet all key performance indicators.

By December 31, 2023, 70% of HCPH patients of any race will be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

- COVID-19, MPOX and other infectious disease screening and vaccination progress is being captured internally using Power BI.
- Completed 12 vaccine events at six homeless shelters with 95 vaccines given.
- Partnered with the Baby Tracks team to provide three childhood immunization events in the community.

By December 31, 2023, the Long-Term Care Infection Prevention unit will provide seven infection prevention site visits to long-term care facilities.

- Staff completed one site visit in Q2 of 2023 and a total of six visits since June 2022.
- Engagement of facilities is negatively affected by continued staff turnover, urgent matters that arise in day-to-day work and limited staff time available to dedicate to infection prevention.

By December 31, 2023, 90% of HCPH staff will be trained in Emergency Preparedness.

- Staff are being hired in the Emergency Preparedness & Response program area to fill vacant positions.
- The Workforce Development Coordinator is developing a strategy to meet staff training needs. This includes training on various skill sets and levels of training and providing opportunities on multiple mediums to ensure staff accessibility to trainings and staff learning preferences.
- Developing department-wide e-learning module to train Public Health staff so they will be able to confidently serve in an emergency response role.

By December 31, 2023, all health promotion community partners will have received technical assistance in implementing policy, system and environmental (PSE) changes to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in the community.

- Age-Friendly Hennepin County worked with the Public Health Assessment Team to develop a robust logic model and evaluation plan. Information and data will be incorporated into a Power BI dashboard to track progress. Metrics include tracking initiative awareness, number of new and emerging partners, tracking the technical assistance provided both to internal county partners and to external city and organizational partners and communities, and systemic changes made as a result of applying an age-friendly lens.
- The Chronic Disease COVID-19 recovery work is developing outcomes in line with the policies, systems, and environmental changes that Health Promotion already tracks. Evaluation plans are complete for projects funded by the joint RFP with CHIP, and plans are in place to track forthcoming efforts with the second RFP and other smaller community partnerships.

By December 31, 2022, develop early childhood systems coordination strategic plan.

- The strategic plan first draft was completed by March 2023. The plan will be presented to community stakeholders and finalized in Q3, 2023.

By December 31, 2024, implement key activities of early childhood strategic plan.

- When identified, key activities will begin.

By March 2023, the SHAPE 2022 project will have achieved the goal of 700 completes per 10 geographic reporting areas.

- The final sample for each of the 10 reporting areas was above the goal of 700 completed surveys.

Public health infrastructure

Public health infrastructure is not physical infrastructure — like roads or bridges — but rather the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to successfully implement the essential public health capabilities that ensure community health and help achieve equitable health outcomes. While Hennepin County Public Health is an accredited organization, the pandemic highlighted the need for enhanced capabilities. The Pandemic Response funding enabled Public Health to address identified needs such as the creation of the Community-Based Infectious Disease (CBID) response team and the Public Health Informatics team to better meet the community's needs and ensure Hennepin County is better prepared for the next public health emergency.

Next steps

Prepare and respond to emergencies

- Focus on the continuous quality improvement cycle through implementation of the COVID-19 AAR Improvement Plan and associated activities.
- Coordinate with Hennepin County departments and other response partners that have been identified in the After-Action Report through the formation of the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee.

Prevent the spread of communicable diseases

- CBID will continue infectious disease screening in homeless and unsheltered populations.
- Communicable disease efforts will continue to focus on other infectious disease outbreaks such as HIV, Hepatitis, and Syphilis.
- Continue to monitor trends in Mpox cases, and CBID may be deployed to increase staffing in the Public Health Clinic if cases increase.
- Continue outreach to long-term care facilities to encourage participation in infection prevention site visits.
- Explore collaboration with the Association of Professionals for Infection Control and Epidemiology to deliver trainings to infection prevention staff.
- Complete grant deliverables for the National Association of Counties and City Health Officials Antibiotic Stewardship project.

Promote healthy communities and healthy behaviors

- Release a second RFP to the community late summer focusing on mental well-being and community-clinic linkages.
- Partner with new staff across the county to build out mental well-being initiatives and activities. Manage four new contracts funded by the joint RFP with CHIP.
- Finalize the development of a pilot community stipend program focused on health promotion priorities and with a goal of increasing community partnerships and removing barriers to accessing needed education, equipment, and resources.
- The CHIP mini grant report form will be transitioned to Qualtrics to simplify reporting for grantees and increase ease of analysis.
- The CHIP housing stability team will revise its vision to focus on social connectedness among residents to better reflect community led ideas.
- Age-Friendly Hennepin County will utilize an Age-Friendly Minnesota Community Grant to hire a consultant to conduct a feasibility study on the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing program CAPABLE (Community Aging in Place) to be completed by end of March 2024.
- Identify a Hennepin County service area or program to pilot the age-friendly policy tool to consider areas where internal policies and practices can be improved to support older employees.
- Participate in developing a media campaign to increase awareness and uptake of the COVID-19 bivalent booster shots among Hennepin County residents aged 65 and older.
- Development of cross-departmental panel to discuss Age-Friendly Hennepin and educate on why the associated work matters.
- The early childhood coordinator will present the early childhood strategic plan to the Hennepin County Early Childhood Coalition, and the Family Home Visiting Community Advisory Board. Once their feedback is incorporated into the strategic plan, implementation of activities can begin. Additionally, a senior planning analyst was hired, and will support the development of early childhood outcomes.

Assure an adequate local public health infrastructure

- Continue to disseminate SHAPE 2022 findings to internal partners, community partners, and residents.
- Advance health equity work by identifying additional training needs through a Health and Racial Equity assessment, input from staff and leadership, and guidance from the county's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion program.
- Move the city-focused work forward by completing a stakeholder map, a communication plan, and a general framework for evaluation.

HEALTH DOMAIN

Vaccine Incentives

Allocation amount: \$2,000,000

Project description

Hennepin County Public Health's response to the COVID-19 pandemic includes significant efforts to provide vaccines to communities. The vaccine incentive program uses funds for the provision of incentives and stipends to support those efforts. The research is mixed on the overall effectiveness of vaccine incentive programs, but a widely accepted strategy to increase vaccination uptake involves a focus on rebuilding trust in communities: Partnering with communities that have historically experienced medical exploitation, experimentation without consent and marginalization is most effective at decreasing vaccine hesitancy^[1]. The vaccine incentive program is designed to build trust between Hennepin County and its residents with the goal of increasing vaccination rates.

The vaccine incentive program includes:

- Partnering with trusted community groups to host vaccine events and support the provision of free meals, groceries, and/or entertainment.
- Distributing “Thank You” packs to residents who receive vaccinations, with contents tailored to the targeted population and event location. Community-based businesses may be prioritized for the contents of the “Thank You” packs, (e.g., gift cards to local businesses and youth-specific contents such as sports-related items and technology-focused gifts).
- Hosting a lottery program; or
- Other incentives for individuals who get vaccinated, tailored to the needs of the communities served.

In July 2021 the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners authorized funds to distribute incentives to our community partners and organizations to plan and host COVID-19 vaccine events in their communities. Each organization is eligible for a \$3,000 stipend for an individual event, or up to \$5,000 for two events in one calendar year. Public Health has simplified the approval process to remove barriers in allocating stipends, with the ultimate goal of more people getting vaccinated.

Progress narrative

Public Health implemented numerous strategies to encourage the use of incentives and stipends to improve vaccination rates. Partnerships with community organizations to promote and support vaccination opportunities and provide the organizations with stipends to offset their costs has been a hallmark of the effort. Community groups utilized funds in ways that met their communities' needs such as offering gift cards, books, and transportation for those experiencing barriers. Much of the focus during summer 2022 was on vaccinating children under age five with newly approved Pfizer and Moderna vaccine options. Some community groups requested new stipends in order to ensure access to vaccines for the youngest community members. Stipend funds helped make spaces more child-friendly, with rental of space with private rooms and other child comfort items. Hennepin County Public Health (HCPH) community vaccine events and the community stipend program concluded at the end of 2022. It is at this time when new strategies were implemented to help improve childhood vaccination rates. To promote vaccines within the community, HCPH strengthened the Reminder/Recall Immunization Program and launched a Childhood Immunization Marketing Campaign

[1] National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Framework for Equitable Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccine. National Academies Press; 2020.

Reminder/recall immunization efforts:

ImmuLink sends out three rounds of reminder/recall letters or postcards to a portion of the population who are overdue for or recommended to receive immunizations per the Minnesota Immunization Information Connection registry each calendar year. The same cohort is used during the year and if a child receives the needed immunizations or if the letter or postcard is returned, they are removed from future mailings during that year.

During round three in December 2022, letters were sent to the childhood cohort and postcards were sent to the adolescent cohort. Childhood letters include a list of low-cost clinics for the seven-county metro area ImmuLink serves, the “Are Your Kids Ready” brochure that features the childhood and adolescent immunization schedule, instructions on how to request their immunization record, and how to opt out of future mailings. The adolescent postcards included links to a list of low-cost clinics, how to obtain their immunization record, and how to opt out of future mailings. In December 2022, 14,715 letters were sent to the six to 18 month cohort and 6,998 postcards were sent to the adolescent cohort born in 2006 for a total of 21,713 pieces mailed.

In 2023 ImmuLink will again send three rounds of reminder recall letters to a portion of the population who are overdue or recommended to receive immunizations. In April 2023, 21,466 letters were sent to the six- to 18-month cohort, 12,996 letters were sent to the five-year-old cohort and 13,993 postcards were sent to the 15–16-year-old cohort for a total of 48,455 pieces mailed.

This Reminder/Recall Program is in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) MIIC team, and mailings will occur in April, July, and October. Results will be tracked by running assessment reports in MIIC based on the cohort list prior to the initial mailing and six weeks after for each round.

Childhood immunization marketing campaign:

Hennepin County Public Health’s response to COVID-19 includes efforts to improve childhood immunization rates, which have declined during the pandemic. As part of this effort, the department used its pandemic response funds to launch a childhood immunization marketing campaign that ran from November 3 to December 5, 2022. The campaign targeted all county parents with children birth to 17 years, with additional emphasis placed on parents who lived in Hennepin County ZIP codes with lower-than-average childhood vaccine rates.

The objective of the campaign ads was to build awareness and encourage residents to get their children vaccinated. Additionally, the campaign ads directed people to Hennepin County’s childhood immunization resources website (hennepin.us/immunizations) and the county’s main phone line where people could get help connecting to childhood immunizations in English, Spanish, Somali, and Hmong.

Ads appeared on radio, streaming audio, paid social media, digital video, and display banners. Hennepin County and CCF — the marketing company hired to place campaign ads — chose these channels after conducting market research. The initial campaign generated seven million total impressions and over 7,000 clicks to the childhood immunization resources website. It’s estimated that this campaign reached 49% of Hennepin County parents with children birth to 17 with an estimated frequency of five times.

The campaign ran twice during 2022 and included advertising on social media and digital platforms. Utilizing the lessons learned from the phase two campaign evaluation, the department decided to update the campaign messaging and images and re-run the campaign a third time in the second quarter of 2023 to coincide with National Infant Immunization Week. This third iteration of this campaign ran from April 3–May 22, 2023, and targeted parents who lived in Hennepin County ZIP codes with lower-than-average childhood vaccine rates: 55343, 55344, 55401, 55403, 55404, 55408, 55413, 55414, 5541, 55425, 55435, 55454. Ads appeared on Facebook, Instagram, programmatic display (i.e., website display ads that target people by demographics, interests, or behaviors), and via streaming video.

Key performance indicators

Hennepin County Public Health's response to the COVID-19 pandemic included significant efforts to provide vaccines to communities. The Vaccine Incentive program used funds for the provision of incentives and stipends to support those efforts.

Community partners provided a total of approximately 220 vaccination events and \$3,000 to \$5,000 stipends were provided to more than 130 organizations since incentives began in July 2021. Organizations included places of worship, schools, childcare centers, small businesses with nontraditional workforces (e.g., shift workers), cities, mental health and substance treatment facilities, and small community-based and cultural organizations. The vast majority went to organizations who serve primarily Black, Indigenous and people of color, and/or low-income communities. The vaccine stipend program concluded at the end of 2022.

Hennepin County Public Health's Community-Based Infectious Disease (CBID) response team includes nurses and community health workers who respond to infectious disease threats by bringing testing, treatment, and vaccination to impacted community locations. This team also utilized incentives to increase vaccination rates with the following results:

- The CBID team completed nine vaccine clinics at six shelters within Hennepin County.
 - These shelters included: Homeward Bound, People Serving People, Agate — First Covenant, Agate — "510" building, YouthLink, and Simpson Shelter
- The CBID team distributed 71 \$10 Target gift cards to vaccine recipients.
 - Each person that was vaccinated was given one gift card. If the individual chose to receive both COVID-19 and influenza vaccines, they received one gift card - as opposed to one gift card for influenza and one gift card for COVID-19.

Of the 80 individuals that were vaccinated:

- 12 received the COVID-19 monovalent primary series (either initiating or completing the series)
- 45 received the COVID-19 bivalent booster
- 45 received the quadrivalent influenza vaccine

The Childhood Immunization Marketing

Campaign had millions of impressions and clicks on the childhood immunization resources website. This has been a successful tactic to assist in improving childhood immunization rates in Hennepin County.

Catch up on
childhood immunizations

Contact your primary care provider
or reach out to Hennepin County.

612-348-8900
hennepin.us/immunizations

Next steps

Childhood immunization marketing campaign

With the challenges of topic fatigue, vaccine messaging campaigns are difficult. Research shows that consistent information and reminders are effective for behavior change. HCPH will take campaign performance metrics and lessons learned into account in determining whether to launch another marketing campaign later in 2023.

Reminder/recall immunization efforts

The second round of reminder recall letters will be sent out in July, and the third round will be sent out in October.

NEW 65+ COVID-19 Reminder Recall Project

This new project is targeting individuals aged 65 and older living in Hennepin County who have received at least one COVID-19 immunization dose, but zero bivalent doses.

There are roughly 162,000 individuals aged 65 and older living in Hennepin County, 95% of which have completed the initial COVID-19 vaccination series. However, roughly 30% of those who have completed their initial series have not received an updated bivalent booster. This reminder recall project aims to deliver a mailing to the roughly 49,000 individuals who have not received a bivalent booster. Included in the mailing will be a letter expressing Hennepin County's interest in keeping seniors healthy, information about where to obtain their bivalent booster, a link to a voluntary survey seeking to obtain information on a senior's perceptions of the COVID-19 bivalent booster, and a flyer educating seniors on the importance and where to obtain the booster vaccine. Using data from MIIC, names and addresses of individuals who have not received a bivalent dose has been generated. Individuals in this cohort will receive this one-time mailing. Target mailing date is mid-July.

HOUSING DOMAIN

Eviction Reduction

Allocation amount: \$2,200,000

Project description

The COVID-19 public health emergency caused many Hennepin County households to suffer a dramatic loss of income due to under and unemployment. This placed residents at high risk of losing their housing. While evictions were suspended during the eviction moratorium, it was a short-term solution to what is now a broad issue of housing instability for our most vulnerable renters. Large overdue rental balances are making it nearly impossible for renters to gain stability in this tight housing and rental market.

The Eviction Reduction project was developed to provide legal representation to tenants facing eviction and to connect those facing eviction with economic and social services that will avoid eviction or otherwise achieve housing stability. This project reflects a strong partnership between two Hennepin County departments: Housing Stability and Adult Representation Services (ARS). The two departments work in concert to provide wrap-around services to tenants both in and out of Hennepin County Housing Court. Through this effort, both agencies have hired navigators, attorneys, and social support staff to aggressively work together to keep tenants housed.

Progress narrative

More than 85% of tenants in housing court face eviction for the non-payment of rent. As predicted, the eviction filings went up dramatically after the moratorium was lifted and continue to spike to numbers higher than pre-pandemic filings. The Court has moved to in person first appearance for eviction matters requiring a close alliance with Adult Representation Services and Housing Stability to ensure that clients are holistically served.

Since 2021 all clients who appear in housing court are offered an attorney as well as tenant navigation and support services. The most recent data shows that tenants served are approximately 80% Black, Indigenous and people of color and experiencing extreme poverty. Additionally, tenants who reach out prior to court for legal or navigation services are immediately connected with resources.

With the addition of four Tenant Resource Navigators (Navigators) in the Housing Stability department, 100% of tenants in housing court who seek rental assistance and navigation services have been served. Navigators staff every court calendar and are available by phone outside of court hours to respond to the high demand for rental assistance. Navigators partner with the Economic Assistance department to secure the maximum financial support for tenants as well. These expedited processes have yielded funding approvals within a week of a tenant's application.

Tenant outreach has played a key role in the success of this project. The Housing Stability department has created an online renter's help tool to not only provide information and resources, but to link individuals to the application process for assistance. ARS and Housing Stability have each established a phone helpline and ARS has created an email contact box to triage emergency issues as they arise. Both departments commit to a fast response time recognizing the stress that tenants facing eviction are under.

The coupling of legal and navigation strategies has been the key to success for this project. Attorneys representing tenants facing eviction advocate to:

- Secure more time to pay outstanding rent balances
- Secure more time to vacate the premise to find alternative housing
- Defend against allegations of material lease violations
- Improve housing conditions

– Expunge eviction records

Tenant resource navigators:

- Coordinate financial resources
- Assist tenants with applications
- Connect tenants with community resources
- Field tenant concerns about their housing
- Partner with the legal staff to accomplish tenant goals
- Respond to court inquiries about rental assistance issues

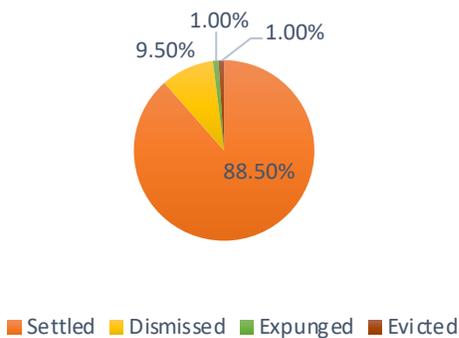
Key performance indicators

Pandemic funding was exhausted in December 2022. For this reason, the annual data for this report is limited to July 2022 through December 2022.

As background, from August 1, 2021, through December 31, 2022, ARS served 2,803 families facing eviction. From January–June 2022 to July–December 2022, ARS saw a 20% increase in the number of clients represented which correlates to the lifting of the eviction moratorium. Notably, from January 2023–June 2023, ARS represented 2,168 clients which is a 41% increase from the second half of 2022 reflecting the increasing overall eviction rate in Hennepin County.

The legal outcomes for the families served in this reporting period (July 2022–December 2022) are as follows:

Legal Outcomes



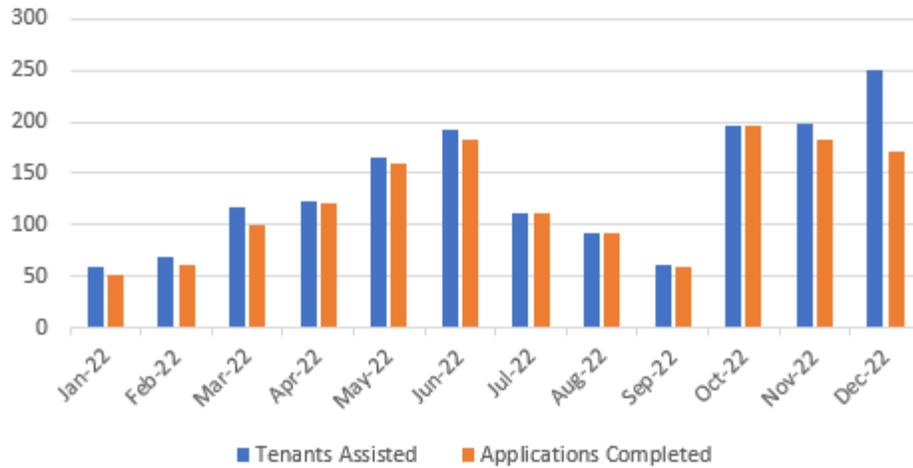
Legal advocacy and resources improve the outcomes of tenants facing eviction. Most settlements include an agreement to expunge which reduces barriers to renting homes in the future. And, while some settlements involve vacating the premises, most involve an opportunity for tenants to move out with time to find housing or store property.

In addition to handling eviction matters in court, ARS provided legal advice to more than 215 clients who did not have open court cases and fielded hundreds of calls on our helpline. For those who ARS could not serve, we sought outside resources to support the clients.

Similarly, from October 2021 through December 2022, Navigators have assisted 1,709 tenants in court with rental assistance applications. In addition, from July 2022 through December 2022, 813 applications for rental assistance were completed in court.

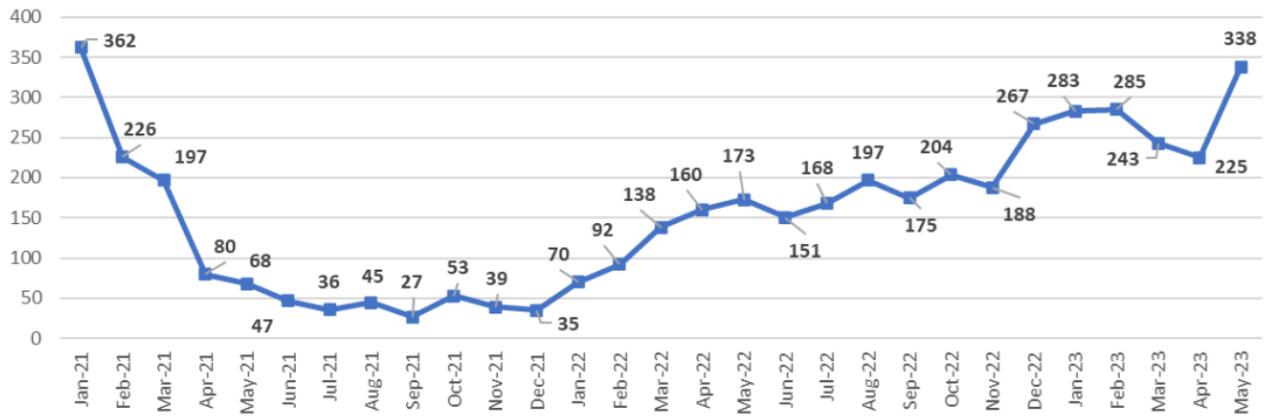
Outcomes for tenants continue to improve due to most tenants having legal representation at court along with assistance and navigation. The Tenant Resource Center helps tenants secure rental assistance resources before they attend court which puts tenants in a better position to negotiate their eviction matter once in court.

Tenants Assisted At Court



In addition to their work in court, Navigators fielded approximately 1,199 intake calls on the helpline between June and December of 2022. Most calls were for rent assistance, followed by housing resource issues and requests for legal assistance.

Tenant Resource Center Calls January 2021 to May 2023



The Housing Stability department maintains a robust eviction dashboard so that stakeholders have quick access to key data points regarding evictions in Hennepin County. As the work of the Tenant Resource Center expands, so will the evaluative data collected to efficiently target populations with the greatest need.

Next steps

As of December 31, 2022, pandemic response funding has been exhausted for this project. Pandemic response funding successfully supported thousands of tenants in Hennepin County during the pandemic and helped build a permanent infrastructure to support legal representation and economic services for tenants. Housing Stability and Adult Representation Services will continue to find more ways to connect with clients in the community with the hopes of avoiding an eviction.

HOUSING DOMAIN

Housing Recovery

Allocation amount: \$46,000,000

Project description

The economic impacts of COVID-19 were felt most heavily by people with low incomes, and by Black, Indigenous, and people of color. The pandemic exacerbated existing inequities from the very beginning, and while emergency response efforts in 2020 and 2021 ameliorated these impacts — keeping people fed and in their homes — the economic fallout continues to disproportionately impact those who had less before the pandemic.

As Hennepin County moved from emergency response to long-term recovery, the county board approved \$46 million in funding to support equitable housing recovery strategies. These strategies aimed to create or preserve approximately 2,000 units of affordable housing and support more than 100 households in buying homes by directly addressing both causes and symptoms of the economic fallout from the pandemic. Planned activities included:

- Investments to immediately increase affordable multifamily housing production, such as:
 - Gap funding to kick-start projects delayed by pandemic-related construction cost increases.
 - Financing to accelerate the development of affordable housing projects serving populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency: those most vulnerable to economic recessions.
 - Investments to address a backlog of deferred rehab needed in naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) properties and support for additional nonprofit preservation acquisition of at-risk NOAH properties, which are a primary source of housing for populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Acquisition of properties supporting affordable housing along the housing continuum, especially for single adults who were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency and are now struggling with homelessness and housing instability.
- Homeownership programs targeting populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Progress narrative

Since Housing Recovery funds were authorized in August 2021, Housing and Economic Development (HED) has successfully accelerated development of affordable housing and surpassed impact goals. In a typical housing development, the county does not spend funds until 2–3 years after a funding award, and units become available another year after that. In the years between the award and unit availability, the developer secures additional financing, works with all funders to negotiate complex project specifications, agrees upon a common set of legal documents, executes a financial closing, and completes construction.

HED used Housing Recovery funds to implement new tools and strategies to drastically shorten this process while focusing the impact. This included:

- Affordable housing development accelerator: providing larger-than-ever award sizes to reduce the time and money needed to secure complete financing,
- Pandemic-related cost increase assistance: providing “top-off” funding to keep projects on track — or get them back on track — after being hit by increased costs,

- NOAH preservation: infusing cash into existing housing properties with decreased rent revenues available to keep up with deferred maintenance, and ensuring ongoing affordability through this investment,
- Homeownership assistance: targeting for-sale housing development funds to projects that create homeownership opportunities to people who've been historically excluded from them, and
- Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing: acquiring and rehabbing properties to fill a gap in the affordable housing continuum the private market hasn't taken on — deeply affordable, independent housing for people experiencing homelessness who can afford modest rent

Expediting development meets county goals to open doors faster.

Single Room Occupancy housing strategy progress

In the last year, HED, the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), and the Facility Services department have collaborated on property renovations that are only months from providing new SRO units. Key milestones:

- Completed HVAC improvements to the Federal Plaza
- Financed acquisition of the Robin Hotel (by third-party MAC-V) for future conversion
- Acquired the Aqua City Motel, completed structural and feasibility analysis, which revealed untenable building conditions, secured City approvals and neighborhood support to demolish the building in order to facilitate future development of high-value, safe and stable SRO housing on the site
- Completed design work, zoning and permitting processes, set-aside contracting, and substantial rehab for Metro Inn Motel and University Inn
- Expended \$2.8 million to acquire and rehab properties

In addition, staff completed competitive selection processes to select buyers for the Metro Inn Motel and University Inn. Pending Board approvals and due diligence processes, these buyers will operate the properties as SRO housing for people with extremely low incomes. (This will be enforced by 30-year deed restrictions recorded against the properties.)

Housing development finance progress

Within just the last year, HED finished its fifth request for proposals for Housing Recovery Funds, bringing the total funds awarded to \$37.9 million. More crucially, HED executed 16 financial closings that utilized Housing Recovery Funds, and celebrated completion of eight of those projects. These eight projects improved and stabilized homes for almost 1,000 households, and created almost 350 new affordable homes.

Program component	Number of project awards	Award amount	Project agreements executed	Project/affordable units completed
Affordable Housing Accelerator	18 projects	\$27,666,076	6 projects	0
Homeownership	7 projects	\$3,328,000	1 project	0
NOAH Preservation	5 projects	\$4,905,924	4 projects	4 projects / 986 units
Pandemic Cost Increase	5 projects	\$2,000,000	5 projects	4 projects / 261 units
Total awarded	35 projects	\$37,900,000	16 projects	8 projects / 1,247 units

Key performance indicators

Financing goals

Housing Recovery goals were to finance the creation or preservation of 2,000 units of rental housing, and 100 homeownership opportunities, while meeting the county's ongoing goals to maximize affordability. HED surpassed the rental goal with funding awards to multifamily projects containing 2,810 affordable units, including pending SRO units, and is close to the homeownership goal with 77 units.

Affordability goals

Current progress is also surpassing the county and HRA's affordability goals.

30% AMI Rental Goal: 25% of new units financed are affordable to households with incomes below 30% of the area median income (AMI)

– Outcome: 37% of new units financed through Housing Recovery are affordable at or below 30% AMI

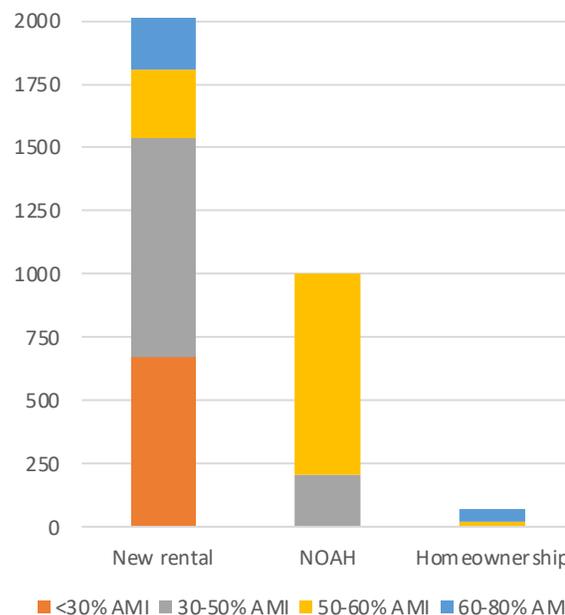
50% AMI Rental Goal: 75% of new units financed are affordable to households with incomes below 50% AMI

– Outcome: 85% of new units financed through Housing Recovery are affordable at or below 50% AMI

Homeownership goal: 25% of homeownership opportunities financed are affordable to household incomes below 60% of the area median income

– Outcome: 32% of homeownership opportunities financed through Housing Recovery are anticipated to be affordable at or below 60% AMI

Affordability rate across awarded project types



Production goals

Creating affordable rental housing typically takes 5–7 years. Since the county and HRA's role is to provide gap financing for affordability goals, HED has not historically reported on progress of project's financial closings or completion and unit availability. With HED's Housing Recovery goal of accelerating production, we have added measures of increased production, which show that we have more than doubled our production from average years.

	Number of projects closed	Number of affordable units in those projects
Average (non-pandemic) annual	11	615
Last 12 months (July 2022 through June 2023)		
Pandemic recovery-funded	16	1,912
Projects without pandemic recovery funding	11	647
Total	27	2,559

In future reports, HED will additionally report on projects and units opening.

Affordable housing projects in action



HED aimed to accelerate the pace of housing development, and set goals and strategies to do so while also ensuring deep affordability, and supporting efforts to rebuild neighborhoods impacted by civil unrest of 2020. One key demonstration of this impact was the Calvary Apartments project.

The future Calvary Apartments sit one block south of George Floyd Square in Minneapolis. The project combines both historic adaptive reuse and new construction at the former Calvary Lutheran Church, whose congregation was looking to sell the property. The project will convert the existing church building into housing, maintaining gathering spaces and an on-site food shelf, and also expand the building footprint to add even more critically needed affordable housing to a community hard-hit by civil unrest and economic recession.

In response to neighborhood input, all 41 units will be reserved for and affordable to households at or below 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI). That translates to about \$33,000 a year for a family of three.

Additionally, fifteen units are designated for people experiencing homelessness. And all units will have some form of rental assistance to further affordability for residents, including 26 units with project-based section 8 and 15 units with Housing Support.

"It typically takes round after funding round, taking maybe five years for such a complex project," said Elizabeth Flanner, CEO of Trellis. "I get goosebumps when I think about it." Dan Walsh, Vice President of Housing Development at Trellis added, "Without Hennepin County, we might still be fundraising. It's really because of the county that this project was possible."



Next steps

Over the next three months, HED will continue to progress undertaking financial closings and expenditures in order to open even more doors to new and preserved affordable housing.

Planned activities for July-September 2023

- Complete rehabilitation of two SRO properties, execute sales and begin lease-up of at least one of those properties
- Release a request for proposal to sell and activate a third SRO property
- Complete additional improvements on remaining SRO properties
- Release a final RFP to award remaining Pandemic Recovery funds
- Negotiate and execute five funding agreements:
 - Whittier Community Housing, 85 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis
 - Emerson Village, 40 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis
 - Wangstad Commons, 54 units of affordable housing in Brooklyn Center
 - Union Park Flats, 60 units of affordable housing in Saint Louis Park
 - Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, four homeownership opportunities converted from tax-forfeited lots in Minneapolis
 - Harrison Townhomes, 17 homeownership opportunities in Minneapolis
- Expend over \$7.5 million
- Continued outreach to all funded projects to confirm all will close by 12/31/2024

HOUSING DOMAIN

Services for People Experiencing Homelessness

Allocation amount: \$36,070,000

Project description

There are multiple projects involved under this umbrella project description, including (but not limited to) housing-focused case management (Homeless to Housing team), system-wide shelter diversion, low-barrier shelters, shelter and board and lodge capital, 24/7 shelter, eliminating self-pay in shelter, and encampment response (Streets to Housing).

Hennepin County’s Office of Housing Stability (OHS) has an existing strategy in place that guided funding decisions to ensure that this influx of vital and never-before-seen funding will create concrete results to make homelessness as brief as possible for anyone experiencing it in Hennepin County. Hennepin County believes that homelessness is unacceptable and that there are solutions for it. The focus of the Services for People Experiencing Homelessness was to infuse national best practices that will simplify and improve the system for the people in crisis who are accessing it, such as system-wide diversion. There was also intent to actively work to lower barriers for people who are accessing emergency shelter so that more people would be willing to seek the safety of our emergency shelter system and thereby gain access to housing resources and services. The project team has accomplished this by bringing culturally specific low-barrier shelters online and investing in much-needed infrastructure that will improve the day-to-day experience of people experiencing homelessness. Throughout OHS staff have emphasized a laser focus on quick connections to housing. Even with thoughtful and impactful investments in shelter, there are some people who simply will not come inside. Using “housing first” principles, the encampment response program — called Streets to Housing — will focus on quick connection to resources including housing. The team is collecting data so that not only the needs of unique encampments are known, but the housing priorities and barriers for each person staying there.

Progress narrative

System-wide diversion: Hennepin Shelter Hotline

Hennepin Shelter Connect officially launched on January 1, 2023 after months of intensive planning and engagement with the chosen service provider, Catholic Charities, and people with lived experience of homelessness. This is the first of its kind of program in Hennepin County that has created a front door for all populations who are seeking shelter to receive diversion services, meaning that if there is a safe and better alternative to shelter, the Hennepin Shelter Hotline staff will help people get there which in turn creates more space in shelter for people who have no alternative for that night. Below is some basic information about the program to date.

- Eligible Persons are defined as single adults, youth and families, who are:
 - Seeking shelter for the first time; or
 - Seeking shelter and have not been in shelter within 90 days of last shelter exit
- Eligible Persons seeking emergency shelter will be able to access immediate on-the-spot diversion services in person or over the phone.
- Quality Assurance Areas:
 - Monitoring of services to current Eligible Persons (including case review, treatment plan review, and clinical peer review).
 - Eligible Person satisfaction surveys or consumer input.
 - Feedback from referral sources or other service providers.

- Staff assessment (including performance evaluations, and group or individual productivity or workload assessments).
 - Other quality assurance and program evaluation and monitoring activities.
- Diversion report currently in development which will provide an extremely comprehensive tool for regular program performance and analysis; hoping for an August 1, 2023 launch

24/7 shelter for single adults experiencing homelessness

- Four agencies were funded to operate 24/7 emergency shelter for single adults (18+ without dependents).
- This funding was awarded to six shelter locations through a competitive process including people with lived experience of homelessness.
- All funded programs have been at full capacity, operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week while providing shelter guests with meals, housing-focused case management, access to laundry and more.
- This year, an improvement in funded programs entering their data correctly into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and quickly has been observed with, as well as sustained, improvements in exits to permanent housing destinations in the system overall.
- There was a recent evaluation done on this funding through the University of Minnesota CAPSTONE program which confirmed that 24/7 shelter mixed with one night only shelter has resulted in better service delivery, access and housing outcomes for this population.

Low-barrier shelter

Avivo Village

- This year Avivo Village continued to offer safe, low-barrier shelter to people primarily experiencing unsheltered homelessness (with a specialization in people coming directly out of encampments).
- OHS Planners started working with staff at Avivo Village to ensure more equitable shelter access with intention to continue to work on this issue.

AICDC Homeward Bound

- This year AICDC Homeward Bound continued to offer safe, low-barrier shelter to people primarily identifying as Indigenous or Native American.
- OHS staff have been working with staff at AICDC Homeward Bound to ensure accurate data quality.

Eliminated self-pay at Harbor Light Center

- Salvation Army Harbor Light Center continues to shelter all guests without requiring payment.
- Salvation Army Harbor Light Center is renovating their 2nd and 3rd floors of shelter, which includes their men's emergency housing program.
- Shelter bed capacity has increased from 51 to 54 to account for reductions in their other shelter programs for males.
- Beds have been relocated to the building's 1st floor during construction. Construction has been mostly finished, but some materials are still on back order, delaying the transition back to using the 2nd and 3rd floors of shelter.

Encampment response: Streets to Housing

- Streets to Housing has had 103 exits to Permanent Housing since August 2022 when this program went fully online and became operational. The team continues to lead with a trauma informed street-based triage and system navigation team that focuses on assertive engagement, and housing solutions for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.
- Streets to Housing continues to make a significant impact in the landscape of unsheltered homelessness. The Streets to Housing team spends time working in encampments and other known locations to conduct housing assessments and triage to benefits, other mainstream resources, health care, and support to access shelter or other safe, appropriate alternatives to sleeping in places unmeant for human habitation. Engagements occur at encampments and other known locations.

- Streets to Housing began facilitating an ‘unsheltered’ case consultation that focuses on households with open referrals, households that are new to unsheltered homelessness, families, and other special sub-populations to ensure coordination and non-duplication of services. This case consultation will also provide a real-time opportunity for data quality to ensure data in HMIS is accurate and up to date. This service coordination meeting will also review the various encampments to ensure full coverage and reduce duplication of street outreach teams.

Housing focused case management: Homeless to Housing

How the program works:

- Housing focused case managers and case aides begin rapport building and outreach upon assignment to a new person experiencing homelessness.
- Once connected, the case manager provides housing-focused case management using a trauma-informed lens and person-centered approach.
- These teams work with people experiencing literal homelessness both in sheltered and unsheltered settings.
- Goal plans are created with clients that include obtaining vital documents, and locating safe, affordable, and desirable housing while connecting clients with available resources and subsidies.
- Case managers help house clients and then work to stabilize them in their new homes with wraparound services and supports.

Progress over past year:

- Person-centered and trauma-informed approach to case management; streamlined onboarding process; and solicited feedback from staff, community partners, clients (former and current), and other county departments to ensure continuous improvement.
- Stabilized staffing — added overages and a structured onboarding program to minimize turnover and support recruitment.
- Added to case aide tasks and workflows including having case aides at the two largest shelters every week to connect with current and prospective clients.
- Moved to a more streamlined and inexpensive move-in kit process for clients moving into housing.
- Forged a partnership with Office of Broadband and Digital Inclusion to distribute cell phones to clients to assist them in contacting their housing case managers, and professional and family support systems.
- Created an Intake Specialist on the team who does file clearances for case managers which has allowed case managers to focus more time on housing people on their case load and better information to start off with.
- Created a nimble, more streamlined and equitable process of assigning cases using the singles by-name list in HMIS versus a standard referral/waiting list.
- Created a client feedback system and survey and set up quarterly meetings to review as a team and ensure we are consistently responding to consumer feedback.
- Continued partnership with Metro Transit on the trains and buses to support people experiencing homelessness in quick connection to resources.

Board and lodge capital improvement projects

- At Pursuit Homotel, work has begun on the air conditioning unit installation project.
 - The project is currently working through the permitting process with the City of Minneapolis, after which installation will begin.
 - The hope is that this installation will be completed by fall 2023.
 - In addition, bids have been completed on the outdoor meditation space with the project to be completed sometime during fall 2023.
 - The WiFi installation project was also finished in the fall of 2023.
- At Cullen Homes, both improvement projects, air conditioning installation and deck installation, are in the permitting process with the city.
 - Contracts are signed and completed.
 - The goal is that the projects will be completed before the end of 2023.

- Missions Lodge is expected to start construction in September 2023 for its capially funded renovations.
 - It has been in the design development and schematic pricing phases of the project over the last quarter and its staff continues to meet weekly with the architectural and construction teams.
- 180 Degrees has had its facility renovation work underway during the last three months.

Key performance indicators

System-wide diversion: Hennepin Shelter Hotline

Hennepin Shelter Hotline has been fully operational for six months as of June 30, 2023.

- 2,285 households served and 514 (23%) of the total diverted:
 - 1,521 single adults served
 - 331 people (22% of total) diverted
 - 752 families
 - 181 families (24% of total) diverted
 - Three only children
 - One child (33% of total) diverted
 - Nine unknown household type
 - One household (11%) diverted
- Established target performance measures include:
 - 70% of eligible Persons who are part of a family or under the age of 25 years are successfully diverted from entering emergency shelter.
 - 40% of eligible Persons who are 25 years and older are successfully diverted from entering emergency shelter.

24/7 shelter for single adults experiencing homelessness

- 1,768 people used shelter
- 1,432 people left shelter
 - 19% (50% when excluding missing/don't know data) of people who left had a positive exit:
 - 192 exited to a permanent destination
 - 52 to an institutional setting
 - 35 to a non-homeless setting
 - 221 people returned to homelessness
 - 876 people were missing data on type of exit destination
- Among people who left shelter, 397 people used shelter for six days or fewer, 460 people used shelter for 7-30 days, 50 people used shelter for 183–365 days, and 10 people used shelter for 366 days or more.

Low-barrier shelter

Avivo Village

- 218 people used shelter
- 119 people left shelter:
 - 47% of people who left had a positive exit: 48 exited to a permanent destination, 7sevento an institutional setting, and one to a non-homeless setting
 - 41 people returned to homelessness and 11 people were missing data
- Among people who left shelter:
 - 24 people used shelter for 30 days or fewer
 - 28 people used shelter for 183-365 days
 - 30 people used shelter for 366 days or more

AICDC Homeward Bound

- 407 people used shelter
- 357 people left shelter:
 - 21% (31% when excluding missing/don't know data) of people who left had a positive exit:
 - 61 exited to a permanent destination
 - Seven to an institutional setting
 - Six to a non-homeless setting

- 164 people returned to homelessness
- 117 people were missing exit destination data
- Among people who left shelter:
 - 109 people used shelter for six day or fewer
 - 133 people used shelter for 7-30 days
 - Six people used shelter for 183-365 days

Eliminated self-pay at Harbor Light Center

- 647 people were served by Harbor Light Center’s emergency housing programs and 100% of those people had no fee for stay.

Encampment response: Streets to Housing

- 782 unduplicated households served
 - 312 (40%) female identified
 - 453 (58%) male identified
 - 10 (1%) trans or no single gender
 - 6 (.7%) missing/unknown
- Breakdown of population by race
 - 240 (41%) Black or African American
 - 174 (22%) Indigenous
 - 185 (24%) White
 - 77 (10%) Multiple Races
 - 10 (1%) Don’t Know/Missing/Refused
 - 5 (.6%) Native Hawaiian/PI
 - 7 (.8%) Asian
- Breakdown of population by ethnicity
 - 654 (84%) Non-Hispanic
 - 66 (8%) Missing/Refused
 - 62 (8%) Hispanic
 - 3 (.5%) Don’t Know
- 409 exits
 - 181 (44%) Missing data
 - The team follows best practice of exiting a household if there has been no contact in 90 days
 - For the next quarter there is a focus on data quality with a goal to greatly decrease the percentage of ‘missing’ HMIS data
- 103 or 25% Permanent destination
 - 94 (23%) Homeless — this may mean Emergency Shelter which is a positive outcome as it is a known safe, appropriate alternative to sleeping in places not meant for human habitation
 - 14 (3%) exited to an institutional setting
 - 13 (3%) exited to a non-Homeless setting
 - 3 (.7%) exited to a destination coded as ‘other’
 - 2 or (.4%) were exited due to death

Housing-Focused Case Managers: Homeless to Housing

Quote from a client feedback survey: “My case manager was awesome — helped me every step of the way.”

Housing focused case management: Homeless to Housing (H2H)

- The key performance indicators for the project are:
 - Number of clients housed
 - Numbers of vital documents obtained
 - Stats on recidivism (return to homeless response system after housing)
 - Maintaining equitable housing outcomes by race
 - Client satisfaction

- In the past year:
 - 217 people were housed since 2022
 - 67% of clients identify as people of color and 65% of people housed identify as people of color — statistically equitable housing outcomes by race
 - 80% of clients have photo ID at closing and 60% have their social security card at closing
 - 83% of client satisfaction surveys have been positive
 - 96% of the people that H2H has not housed back in the homeless response system currently
- Data is utilized for continuous improvement and increased performance outcomes

Board and lodge Capital Projects

- The key performance indicator is that all funded capital projects are completed by the December 31, 2024, timeline — on track to meet that target.

Next steps

System-wide diversion: Hennepin Shelter Hotline

- Next steps will be diving into a micro evaluation of target performance measures: are they being met and if not, what additional support is needed?
- Realities for next quarter:
 - The county currently has time limited funding for this program, so the goal is to to fully implement and show the system efficacy of this system intervention in reducing trauma on households experiencing a housing crisis and increase overall system capacity.
 - The county will continue to have overflow in both single adult and family shelter.
 - The team will continue to monitor ongoing, iterative, evaluation and quality assurance practices.
 - The plan is to conduct a full review at six months by hosting an operational meeting to review target performance measures and identify challenges and areas for continuous improvement.
- The Service Area Lead is hosting quarterly meetings to support issues that arise and to create intentional space for risk mitigation across system partners at the front door of the homelessness response system.
- The Service Area Lead will continue 1:1 monthly meetings with Hennepin Shelter Hotline’s Program Director to analyze data, trends, gaps and opportunities to ensure excellent customer service and satisfaction and progress toward target performance measures.

24/7 shelter for single adults experiencing homelessness

- The team will continue to monitor performance measures to ensure progress is moving in the right direction.
- The Service Area Lead will continue to provide technical assistance for entering housing outcomes and other data in HMIS as needed.

Low-barrier shelter

Avivo Village

- Will monitor Avivo Village’s performance measures to ensure progress is moving in the right direction. Will continue to work with shelter staff to ensure shelter access is equitable and quickly moving people into housing is a priority to reduce shelter length of stays.

AICDC Homeward Bound

- Will monitor Homeward Bound’s performance measures to ensure progress is moving in the right direction. Will provide technical assistance for entering case management and exit destination data in HMIS to reduce the amount of missing data.

Eliminated self-pay at Harbor Light Center

- Will continue partnering with Harbor Light Center’s program managers to ensure self-pay remains eliminated.

Eliminated self-pay at Harbor Light Center

Key results that shows the impact of the work:

- From 1/1/2018 to 1/31/2020 there were 58 documented incidents of clients not paying for their shelter stay and as a result they were asked to leave the program.
- With the elimination of self-pay, no clients are asked to leave Harbor Light Center for financial reasons.
- Likewise, more clients are able to access these programs as a result of the payment component being eliminated.

Encampment response: Streets to Housing

- Continue to strategize and be responsive to unsheltered households in the current landscape of encampments being closed quite quickly, making ‘encampment engagement events’ less feasible; however, the Streets to Housing team continues to be creative and solution-focused to engage with highly mobile households.
- Support and train the team on the spectrum of housing opportunities in our community and how to make strategic connections with existing systems and resources.

Encampment response: Streets to Housing

A quote from a participant:

Streets to Housing staff were doing an outreach engagement at a rest stop in a Hennepin County suburb at 8 a.m. They came across a 74-year-old veteran sleeping in his broken-down car with no heat while it was 5 degrees Fahrenheit that day. Within 35 minutes they were able to connect with a veteran specialist who utilized veteran-specific benefits, got him into a veteran-specific hotel, and supported him with resources to have his vehicle towed. He said, “Wow you guys move fast!”

Housing-focused case management: Homeless to Housing

- Adding MNSure Assistors to the teams
- Adding culturally appropriate hair care kits to the move-in kits for newly housed clients
- Continuing to work towards being fully staffed and optimizing our new onboarding program

Board and lodge capital projects

- It is anticipated that the capital improvement renovations work at Missions Lodge will begin construction in September 2023. The team will touch base with them in August 2023 to make sure plans are proceeding according to schedule.
- The capital improvements at both Cullen Homes locations will begin.
- The renovation of the 180 Degrees Board & Lodge Facility will continue.
- The outdoor space for residents at Pursuit Hometel will begin construction and work on the AC installation project will continue. The team hope to have final bids for the bathroom and laundry renovations at the site within the next three months.

INCOME DOMAIN

Economic Recovery

Allocation amount: \$19,000,000

Project description

The pandemic devastated Hennepin County small businesses, with disproportionate impacts to very small businesses, minority-owned businesses, and businesses in low-income communities. As a result, the number of businesses open in early 2021 declined by 22% over early 2020. Race- and gender-based disparities in business ownership and access to capital pre-date and were exacerbated by the pandemic.

Many nonprofit organizations provide services critically important to the economic recovery of disadvantaged communities. In some cases, the same nonprofits that faced the most acute financial hardship from the pandemic are now called upon to increase programming to meet higher levels of need in the communities they serve. Some organizations have physical space constraints in light of increased capacity needs, and face challenges accessing capital to expand or renovate.

Hennepin County economic recovery strategies are designed to address these challenges and promote an equitable economic recovery that will rebuild more inclusive, prosperous business districts and communities over the long term, and help tackle long-standing disparities in income and wealth, business ownership, and economic mobility exacerbated by the pandemic.

Economic recovery investments will assist the recovery of over 1,300 small businesses and nonprofits and stimulate investment of over \$30 million in ways that build wealth in communities hardest hit by the pandemic.

Progress narrative

Since mid-2022, the Hennepin County Housing and Economic Development Department has simultaneously executed strategies to achieve three interrelated Economic Recovery objectives:

1. Build the long-term capacity of small businesses to recover, succeed and grow
2. Accelerate investment in, and driven by, disproportionately impacted communities
3. Explore innovative ways to advance economic mobility

To-date, Housing and Economic Development has allocated or awarded \$16.2 million of the allocated \$19 million.

Small business-focused economic recovery strategies

Housing and Economic Development's small business-focused economic recovery strategies have gained increasing visibility and interagency support in part due to the successful branding of a suite of programming under the banner "Elevate Hennepin." Activities over the past year have increased the depth and breadth of Elevate Hennepin's core offerings: in-depth technical assistance, "back-office" support, access to capital, and specialized expertise available at no-cost to small businesses in Hennepin County. New, targeted cohort learning opportunities have launched to address specific needs and recovery challenges identified by business owners through early focus groups, ongoing discussions, and client feedback surveys. Systematic improvements were made to our online small business resource platform, generating measurable results in our ability to reach and serve entrepreneurs from specific cultural communities and business owners of color.

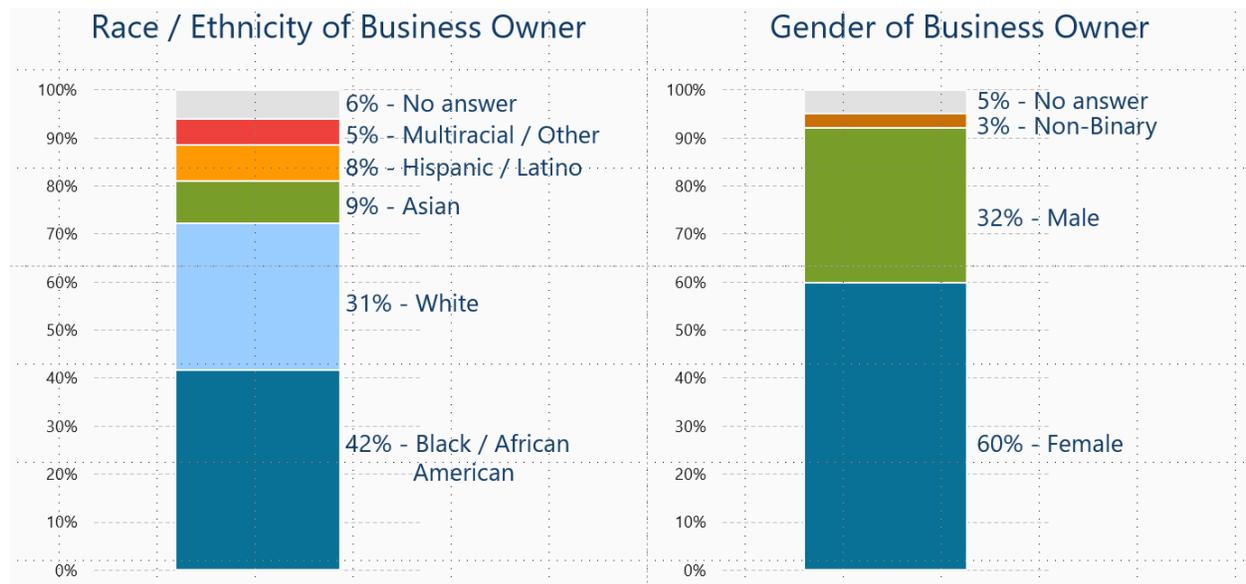
Highlights include:

- Expansion of the network of business advisors providing no-cost technical assistance and specialized expertise provided to a total of thirty-seven (37) organizations

- Expansion of the no-cost professional consulting to include technology and human resources
- Certified Access Academy, cohort-based program to build capacity among women business owners of color to contract with government and corporate entities
- Elevate Hennepin Construction Advising, Workshop Series and Working Capital Cohort programs, providing technical assistance for smaller scale local construction businesses, with an emphasis on providing support and financing for contractors of color (in collaboration with Purchasing Department)
- Elevate Nonprofits, providing customized consulting and capacity building for nonprofit organizations that are currently under contract with Hennepin County (in collaboration with Purchasing Department)
- CEO Now, cohort-based training for growth-minded businesses to build systems and scale
- Elevate Tech Essentials, offering training and support to meet small businesses' technology needs and help tackle the digital divide among many microbusinesses
- Launch of a new "one-stop" digital platform, www.elevatehennepin.org, offering improved filtering and navigation, making it easier for entrepreneurs to find specific types of expertise, connect with consultants who speak different languages, and sign up for business-focused events (in collaboration with Communications and IT departments)

Outreach and communications efforts for all of the above were executed by a collaborative team of Housing and Economic Development and Communications staff, and supported by an external consultant.

Preliminary data on the demographics of aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners who accessed specialized consulting and one-on-one advising through Elevate Hennepin in Q4, 2022 and Q1, 2023 suggest that outreach efforts among communities of color and other disadvantaged groups are having an impact. The data also suggest that additional outreach efforts are needed to better serve Asian, American Indian/Native, and Hispanic/Latinx entrepreneurs.

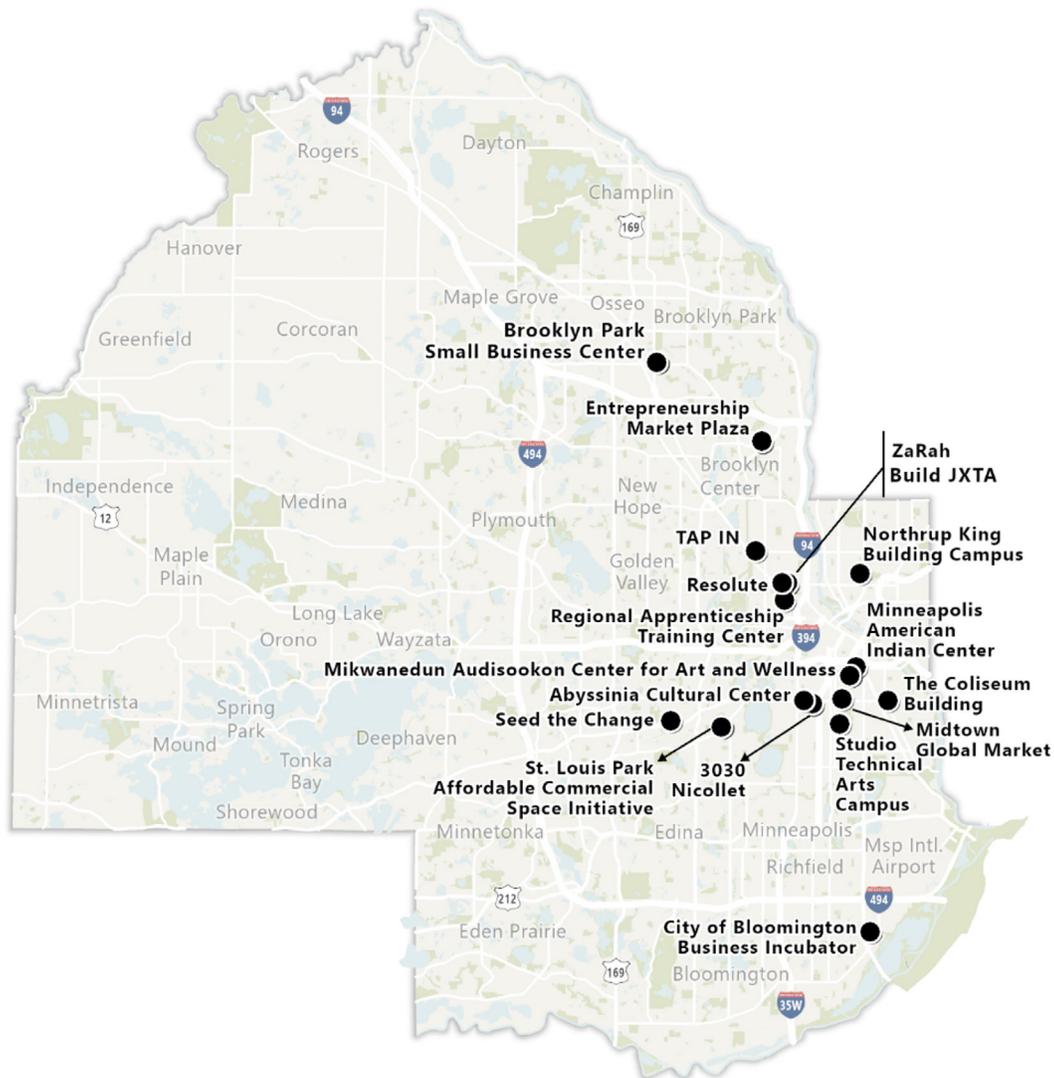


Community-focused economic recovery strategies

To accelerate investment in communities that experienced disproportionate economic impacts of the pandemic, Hennepin County launched the Community Investment Initiative (CII) in 2022 awarding \$10 million to eighteen (18) redevelopment projects that create new affordable commercial space, business incubators, or support nonprofits critical to economic recovery in Hennepin County.

Consistent with program objectives, 79% of program funding was awarded to projects in low-income communities or communities of color.

Community Investment Initiative Projects — 2022



Housing and Economic Development has implemented two innovative initiatives to advance economic mobility. Hennepin County teams collaborated with Economic Supports and other departments to plan a Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) pilot, including a Hennepin University Partnership (HUP) Collaborative Research Assistantship (HCRA) to develop pilot design recommendations. Economic Recovery funds have been allocated to implement a mixed-methods evaluation, including focus groups, surveys, and interviews as part of an overall evaluation framework for the pilot.

Work continued on a feasibility study exploring national models and the readiness of the local landscape to create or expand social impact investing, assessing current needs and promising strategies for activating private capital among local investors to support local small business growth.

Affordable Commercial Project	Developer	Affordable commercial space	Businesses/ Entrepreneurs	Jobs created/ retained	Award Amount	Low-income community
3030 Nicollet	Project for Pride in Living	15,200	4	60	\$ 750,000	X
Abyssinia Cultural Center	Ibys LLC	20,100	9	34	\$ 375,000	X
Brooklyn Park Small Business Center	Brooklyn Park Economic Development Authority	27,000	60	65	\$ 500,000	X
City of Bloomington Business Incubator	City of Bloomington	6,600	15	2	\$ 400,000	
Entrepreneurship Market Plaza	City of Brooklyn Center	19,100	30	89	\$ 750,000	X
Midtown Global Market	Neighborhood Development Center	80,000	37	125	\$ 450,000	X
Northrup King project	Artspace Projects, Inc.	8,100	350		\$ 500,000	
Regional Apprenticeship Training Center	Renewable Energy Partners	19,800	4	20	\$ 250,000	X
Saint Louis Park Affordable Commercial Space Initiative	St. Louis Park Economic Development Authority	8,300	7	21	\$ 380,000	
TAP IN Project	New Rules	2,700	4	12	\$ 275,000	X
The Coliseum	Seward Redesign	70,000	25	120	\$ 1,500,000	X
The Resolute	Riverfront Development Partners	14,100	3	46	\$ 800,000	X
ZaRah Project	1200 KMA Development LLC	23,600	20	184	\$ 800,000	X
Total		314,600	568	778	\$ 7,730,000	10
Community Asset Project	Developer	Community space	Community members served	Jobs created/ retained	Award Amount	Low-income community
Build JXTA	Juxtaposition Arts	40,000	1,600	31	\$ 300,000	X
Minneapolis American Indian Center	Minneapolis American Indian Center	65,000	4,400	45	\$ 550,000	X
Mikwanedun Audisookon Center for Art and Wellness	Indigenous Peoples Task Force	12,600	5,600	13	\$ 750,000	X
Seed the Change Project	Perspectives, Inc.	38,100	977	110	\$ 370,000	
Studio Technical Arts Campus	Pillsbury United communities	5,200	150	5	\$ 300,000	X
Total		160,900	12,727	204	\$ 2,270,000	4
COMBINED TOTAL		475,500		982	\$ 10,000,000	14

Key performance indicators

Initial Economic Recovery goals were to support 1,300 businesses and generate investment of \$30,000,000 in ways that build wealth in communities hardest hit by the pandemic.

To-date, Housing and Economic Development's multi-faceted Economic Recovery strategies have supported a total of 2,256 businesses and stimulated investments valued over \$122,000,000 in low-income communities and communities of color, vastly exceeding our goals.

Since the launch of Elevate Hennepin, results include:

- Over 1,688 businesses have accessed over 13,915 hours of one-on-one technical assistance, “back-office” support, and cohort-based learning opportunities

From April 2022 – March 2023

- 70 entrepreneurs received technical assistance to help their business launch
- \$8.7 million financing provided to Hennepin County businesses and 205 jobs created

Community Investment Initiative (CII) projects will generate the following results:

- Over 315,000 square feet of affordable commercial space
 - 522 business incubation/startup/innovation spaces
 - 30 longer-term affordable commercial spaces, including 18 ownership opportunities
 - Creating or retaining over 760 jobs
 - Generating \$206 million of total investment value
- Over 160,000 square feet of nonprofit and community space for 5 nonprofits
 - Creating and retaining over 200 jobs
 - Supporting economic recovery services for 12,000 community members
 - Generating \$67.7 million in total investment value

CII projects in low-income communities and communities of color will provide:

- Direct capital investment of \$7.9 million (or 79% of program capital)
- \$122 million in total investment value

Quotes from Elevate Hennepin participants

“This program is incredibly helpful. As a small business owner with very little extra resources, we are not able to retain a large marketing firm to help us make strategic choices and grow in this space. Having access to the insight and skills through this program is such a gift.”

“The Elevate program has been what I’ve needed for the last 18 years of running a business as a full-time artist. I’m SO grateful for the moral support, helpful suggestions, direct education and resource sharing that has come straight through the 4 advisors I’ve worked with.”

Next steps

In the next three to six months, Housing and Economic Development will launch new strategies within the Elevate Hennepin portfolio:

- Cohort programming to help entrepreneurs in a wide range of fields adequately test, refine, and validate their business idea at the pre-launch stage
- Targeted programming to support talent recruitment and retention, including increasing entry level pay to a living wage (in collaboration with the Office of Workforce Development)
- Targeted outreach among communities of color, with particular emphasis on reaching Asian, American Indian/ Native, and Hispanic/Latinx entrepreneurs.

Success stories

See articles and photos at [Hennepin County Economic Development | Impacts](#), including

- “Certification, new network propel Diversity Institute forward” (see also short version of article here: [The power of cohorts: training + network \(govdelivery.com\)](#))
- “Elevate Hennepin helps Balloon Fancy ‘blow up’” (see also short version of article here: [Balloon Fancy ‘blows up’ with help from Elevate Hennepin \(govdelivery.com\)](#))
- “Mx. Founder taps Elevate for ‘everything’ to start their business” (see also short version of article here: [A back office ‘in my back pocket’ \(govdelivery.com\)](#))
- “Coliseum project highlights power of equitable development” (see also short version of article here: [Power of equitable development highlighted in Coliseum project; Funding opportunities for community development; and more! \(govdelivery.com\)](#))

INCOME DOMAIN

Raise the Baseline — Empowering Families with Guaranteed Income

This project was formerly known as Guaranteed Basic Income

Allocation amount: \$4,000,000

Project description

Hennepin County's Raise the Baseline pilot is a cash transfer program that provides monthly payments to residents who were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and who meet the pilot's eligibility criteria. The pilot gives recipients agency to decide how they would like to use the money to meet their family's needs and plan for their futures. Participants also have access to optional supportive services throughout the 15-month pilot period. Raise the Baseline differs from most public assistance programs, which commonly tie benefits to parameters such as fluctuations in recipients' earned income, and which restrict how recipients can use the money.

This pilot is intended to coexist with other public assistance programs, not replace them. Programs that are not carefully designed risk causing harm to recipients who unexpectedly lose their eligibility or receive a reduction in public assistance benefits on which they depend. It may also not be effective if it simply supplants the benefits a participant had been receiving prior to the pilot.

The pilot is expected to serve approximately 200 very low-income Hennepin County residents with dependent children under age 5. A pool of potential participants will be identified through analysis of benefits enrollments gaps and calculations of who is least at risk for facing a reduction or loss in public assistance benefits.

The pilot will explore the impact of payments on participant's economic mobility, housing stability, employment outcomes, health and education factors, and quality of life. Pilot findings will help inform future policy and program decisions to better support working families.

Progress narrative

- Proposed pilot population has been recommended to leadership; proposal is under review.
- Pilot model has been developed and adjusted, including payment structure and length of program. Disbursement amount and timelines have been proposed; will be finalized as budget and other pieces continue to be explored.
- Customer journey mapping determined options for resident-county interaction and led to the creation of the customer experience and to staffing needs.
- A hiring model was created based on customer journey mapping. The pilot manager hired the Raise the Baseline Coordinator and five Customer Service Representatives, and all have begun working.
- Pro forma budget has been drafted and revised as model shifts. Dedicated staff are charging time to the pilot.
- Analysts explored individual benefits loss mitigation strategy via the creation of a tool to look at the interaction of public assistance benefits and pilot payments. A loss mitigation tool has been completed and staff determined timing of payments. The tool will be tested with Human Service Representatives and adjusted as needed. The pilot is timing monthly payments to minimize the impact on SNAP benefits and reporting requirements.

- DHS Policy leads have been consulted regarding benefits loss mitigation interpretation for assistance programs. DHS subsequently released a bulletin clarifying interaction of public assistance with Guaranteed Basic Income programs; benefits loss mitigation tool has been updated with new DHS policy.
- A Customer Relationship Management tool is under development to provide work direction and case management tracking. The tool will be tested with Customer Service Representatives and adjusted as needed. The loss mitigation tool is included as part of the Customer Relationship Management tool.
- A phone line and an email address have been created for the pilot.
- The Communications Naming Team has created a name and tag line for the pilot: Raise the Baseline – empowering families with guaranteed income. A communication plan has been developed.
- US Bank has been selected as the vendor for payments to families. Families will use US Bank ReliaCards to receive GBI funds. Pilot staff and Office of Budget and Finance staff worked with a US Bank project manager to set up pilot ReliaCard process and accounting. A test was completed and funds transferred to the new account as planned.
- County Attorney and Privacy Officer consultation occurred regularly to explore needs related to participant disclosure, consent, data sharing with evaluators, etc.
- The Hennepin University Partnership (HUP) has had multiple touchpoints over the past year. Hennepin Collaborative Research Assistant (HCRA) Channel Lowrey conducted research and delivered findings to project leadership in August 2022, and a sociology PhD candidate may be placed through the HCRA program for the summer of 2023. Raise the Baseline was one of three topics included in the 2022 HUP Leadership Retreat and was the topic of a HUP Mixer which was well attended both by Hennepin project leadership and by a cross-section of University faculty, staff, and graduate students. The Hennepin University Partnership’s Collaborative Grant focused on this pilot for the 2023 grant year, selecting Dr. Lynn Blewett’s proposal “Health Care Impact of Hennepin County’s Guaranteed Basic Income Program” for funding.
- Minnesota Management and Budget’s (MMB) Impact Evaluation Unit collaborated with lead staff to determine quantitative research design. As the model evolves, MMB’s role will shift to consultation.
- On March 21, 2023, Resolution 23-0105 authorized the County Administrator to negotiate an agreement with The Improve Group to conduct a mixed-methods evaluation of the pilot. Housing and Economic Development is managing the contract in coordination with Human Services. The mixed-methods evaluation services will include evaluation design; primary data collection, including surveys, interviews, and participatory methods; and evaluation analysis to support a deeper understanding of outcomes and increase learnings to better inform future policy decisions for economic development and public assistance programs. The panel selected The Improve Group because their proposal demonstrated a clear alignment with county goals, values, and disparity reduction priorities, as well as low-burden participatory methods for engaging low-income populations in the evaluation and alleviating barriers of literacy or limited English proficiency.

Key performance indicators

Measures will be developed as program design is finalized.

“The Improve Group, a local women-owned small business, was selected through a competitive process for the mixed-methods evaluation. Their proposal demonstrated a clear alignment with county goals, values, and disparity reduction priorities, as well as low-burden participatory methods for engaging low-income populations in the evaluation and alleviating barriers of literacy or limited English proficiency. They bring a highly-qualified team including multilingual representatives from Hmong-, Somali-, and Spanish-speaking local communities. Their evaluation services will create opportunities for people to tell their stories, which will provide a robust understanding of how the pilot affects individuals’ and families’ lives.”

Next steps

- Updated pilot features will be finalized.
- A pool of families meeting pilot eligibility requirements will be created.
- Disbursement model and timelines will be finalized as budget and other pieces continue to be explored.
- Customer Relationship Management tool will be completed, tested and adjusted as needed. Staff will be trained in use of the tool.
- County Attorney and Privacy Officer consultation will continue as needed to explore needs related to participant disclosure, consent, data sharing with evaluators, etc.
- The Hennepin Collaborative Research Assistant and the University of Minnesota’s State Health Access Data Assistance Center will continue their work with the pilot.
- The Improve Group will revise their evaluation plan to reflect pilot design updates and goals; design surveys, interviews, and participatory data collection tools; engage participants; and administer survey, interview, and participatory data collection.
- A test ReliaCard will be created so staff can test the participant experience.
- Families will be invited to participate in the pilot.
- Families will receive an individualized benefits comparison statement so they can make an informed decision about participating in the pilot.
- Families who choose to participate will be oriented to the program and offered supportive services.
- US Bank will issue ReliaCards to families who have completed enrollment.
- Families will receive monthly payments they can use to meet their family’s basic needs and plan for their future.

JUSTICE DOMAIN

Anti-Hate Initiative

Allocation amount: \$1,000,000

Project description

The Anti-Hate Initiative supports community providers engaged in raising community awareness about the prevalence of hate crimes and bias related incidents, including how to report incidents and seek services, and seeks to enhance data collection efforts to determine the scope and prevalence of hate-based violence. The project allocated funds to hire a program coordinator responsible for working with community providers to develop a common understanding of the scope of the issue, and for managing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to support local organizations involved in addressing hate-based violence.

Progress narrative

The Anti-Hate Initiative (AHI) Coordinator first collected data from various sources, including law enforcement agencies, community organizations, and victim support services, to gain a more concrete understanding of hate crimes/incidents, and response in Hennepin County. The data shows that collecting data is difficult due to complex reporting requirements that are not uniformly followed, and a lack of understanding by victims and survivors about how to report crimes and seek services. Culturally specific information is not readily available, and there is no common understanding of what it means to be “anti-hate” and how to achieve that goal.

Working with community providers, the initiative brought together a work group of stakeholders to further identify what service and data collection gaps exist. Meeting over the winter months, the work group developed a sound understanding of the various forms of hate- and bias-motivated incidents that exist in our community and crafted a common definition of what it means to be “anti-hate” as well as a theory of change. The shared definition of “anti-hate,” created by and with community stakeholders, is the individual, local, and collective opposition to oppressive systems and authority (e.g., racist, ableist, sexist, heteronormative, and biased systems) through action, engagement, and intention to ensure equity and justice in all aspects and stages of human life. The group also clarified that hate-based violence encompasses acts of discrimination, prejudice, and aggression that are motivated by bias against individuals or groups based on their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other protected characteristics.

As a result of the work group’s conclusions, the county issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit innovative and impactful proposals for addressing the gaps in service provision and data collection. Contracts are now being finalized for organizations to do community engagement (raising community awareness about hate crimes and bias related incidents), increase data collection, and convene stakeholders to develop community-wide plans for anti-hate work.

The project recognizes the urgent need to enhance data collection efforts to accurately determine the scope and prevalence of hate-based violence within the county. By improving the quality and quantity of data, the initiative seeks to obtain a clearer understanding of the patterns, trends, and factors contributing to these incidents. As a result of recent legislative action, the Minnesota Department of Human Rights is writing a report to document the reporting and data collection issues with civil rights violations (including hate crimes). The AHI will be supporting community providers to work closely with Department of Human Rights to provide the background data for this report, which will potentially lead to future legislative changes in how hate-based crimes are reported.

The Anti-Hate Initiative acknowledges that tackling hate-based violence is a complex and ongoing process. By fostering collaboration, promoting education, awareness, and improving data collection, the Anti-Hate Initiative aims to create a safer, more inclusive, and harmonious environment for all residents of Hennepin County.

Key performance indicators

Workgroup/Community Engagement: Four community engagement sessions were held in winter 2023, leading to the development of the Request for Proposal.

Community Engagement: The initiative seeks to actively involve the community in efforts to reduce hate-based violence, and to provide information to community members from specific cultural communities about how to report hate crimes, and how to seek services for survivors. Contracts are being finalized now, and key performance indicators will include the number of community events organized, the level of community participation, and feedback from participants.

Support to Local Organizations: The initiative aims to provide financial support and resources to local organizations involved in addressing hate-based violence. Contracts are being finalized now; key indicators will include convenings of community providers and the creation of a community-wide anti-hate plan, demonstrated involvement in the writing of the Minnesota Human Rights Department legislative report, creation of media (including websites and other forms of media) for community awareness, and demonstrated dissemination and use of that media.

Next steps

Capacity building: The initiative will prioritize capacity-building efforts among local organizations to enhance their effectiveness in addressing hate-based violence. This includes providing training, technical assistance, and sharing best practices.

Evaluation and impact assessment: The initiative will develop an evaluation framework to assess the impact of community engagement activities and funded projects. This will help measure progress, identify successful strategies, and inform future initiatives.

Contract development and management: Develop and manage contracts with organizations that demonstrate the necessary experience, expertise, and commitment to address hate and bias incidents in Hennepin County.

Collaborative efforts: Continue to work with external and internal organizations to further Hennepin's anti-hate efforts, including developing a plan to support the development of data collection, community awareness/education, and convening agencies.

JUSTICE DOMAIN

COVID-19-Related Court Backlog

Allocation amount: \$4,511,066

Project description

The Hennepin County Public Defender's Office hopes to use contract positions to divert cases away from attorneys with a disproportionate number of backlogged felony trials. This allows the Hennepin County Public Defender's Office to maintain vertical representation while also freeing attorney time to focus on the oldest cases which can only be resolved through a trial. In addition, it provides the office with the flexibility necessary to respond to any increased filings as a result of the Hennepin County Attorney's Office processing its backlog of referred but uncharged cases.

The Hennepin County Attorney's Office hopes to use the contract positions to address the large backlog of charged and uncharged felony cases and address the large and excessive caseloads handled by Hennepin County attorneys. The additional contract positions will allow the office to fill vacancies and hire additional attorneys to meet the demands of the increasing and excessive caseloads handled by attorneys. Additionally, the contract positions will also provide necessary caseload relief by providing additional staff to meet the demands created by the backlog and the increased caseloads.

The work of the Hennepin County Public Defender's Office, Hennepin County Attorney's Office and Hennepin County Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCCR) are all interconnected. Therefore, attempts by the Hennepin County Attorney's Office and Hennepin County Public Defender's Office to address the backlog of cases created by the pandemic will directly affect the DOCCR and its caseloads. The DOCCR will use the contract positions to address the backlog and manage the increased workloads created by the attempts of the County Attorney's Office and Public Defender's Office to address and reduce the backlog of cases created during the pandemic.

Progress narrative

During the past year, Adult Pre-Adjudication Service (APAS) onboarded and trained one Correction Unit Supervisor, five Felony Investigation probation officers, and two Central Intake probation officers. By the end of March 2023, all ARPA-designated staff were fully trained and working at capacity. Felony Investigation probation officers complete Criminal Record Summary (CRS) and Guideline Worksheet on all Felony level complaint filings. Additionally, they write complex investigative reports to assist judges and attorneys with sentencing decisions. Central Intake probation officers write domestic investigation reports, complete risk needs assessments, and process felony and DWI cases ordered to probation when a Pre-Sentence Investigation (PSI) is not requested before sentencing. During the State fiscal year July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, Central Intake work increased by 60% compared to the previous State fiscal year 2021–2022. Felony Investigation and Central Intake workload increase directly correlate with the efforts to reduce the court backlog.

From July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023, the Hennepin County Public Defender's Office (HCPD) contracted with 11 attorneys (7.5 FTEs) and one full time Legal Office Assistant to address the backlog in adult court. The HCPD contracted with four juvenile attorneys (1.35 FTE) during the same time period. The attorneys in adult court are on trial teams, handling cases from arraignment through trial. The attorneys in juvenile court are staffing twice-weekly calendar, handling delinquency cases from first appearance through trial or resolution as well as any Termination of Parental Right (TPR) cases arising out of the initial child protection cases. The juvenile contracts have allowed HCPD to avoid transferring attorneys from the adult division to fill juvenile vacancies.

The Hennepin County Attorney's Office continues to use the seven identified FTE positions to address the backlog of cases created during the pandemic. The following seven FTE positions: three attorneys,

two paralegals, one legal secretary and one victim advocate have been vital in addressing the backlog of cases created during the pandemic. The positions have provided much needed caseload relief for attorneys, paralegals, legal secretaries, and victim advocates by freeing up resources to address the backlog of cases created during the pandemic and reduce the heavy caseloads handled by attorneys, paralegals, legal secretaries and victim advocates.

Key performance indicators

During the ARPA grant fiscal year, APAS's court referrals for investigations and intake have steadily increased. The added ARPA resources have allowed DOCCR to provide uninterrupted client services for sentencing preparation and probation services. There have been no delays in meeting the goal; cases are assigned, and the work is completed on time. During the State fiscal year July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023, Felony Investigation work increased by 20% compared to the previous fiscal year 2021–2022. During the State fiscal year July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023, Central Intake work increased by 60% compared to the previous fiscal year 2021–2022. Felony Investigations and Central Intake workload increase are direct correlation with the efforts to reduce the court backlog. According to the Minnesota Fourth Judicial District Business Partners Hub, there continue to be 677 Major Criminal cases (felony and gross misdemeanors) in the backlog. At the end of the 3rd quarter, there were 1,384 Major Criminal cases in the backlog.

The adult court contractors handled 768 cases during this time period. The juvenile court contractors handled 122 calendars and 114 new child protection cases along with many of the child protection cases which carried over from the previous 12-month period.

The Hennepin County Attorney's Office has identified areas in need of caseload relief and assistance to address the backlog of uncharged cases created during the pandemic. The Hennepin County Attorney's Office continues to focus its additional resources on filling positions in the Adult Prosecution Division, Community Prosecution Division and Juvenile Prosecution Division. The additional resources will help reduce overall caseloads, help reduce the backlog of uncharged cases, and provide additional staffing resources throughout the office. The key performance indicators will be the overall reduction in staff caseloads and the overall reduction in the total amount of uncharged cases.

Court backlog for major criminal cases (felony and gross misdemeanors)

In April of 2022 the Minnesota Fourth Judicial District Business Partners Hub reported a backlog of 2,310 cases. This is a backlog count for Major Criminal cases (felony and gross misdemeanors). As of July 2023, the reported backlog is 677 cases.

Next steps

DOCCR is well-positioned to assist our criminal justice partners in our joint efforts to reduce the court backlog. All ARPA staff are fully trained and prepared to assist District Court in meeting its backlog goals.

HCPD has struggled to keep the attorney contracts filled. HCPD currently has 9 contract attorneys (6.5 FTEs) and one full time legal office assistant in adult court and three attorneys (1.15 FTEs) in juvenile court. HCPD continues to explore options for filling remaining contracts, and hopes to still fill 1.5–2.0 FTEs worth of contracts in the upcoming months.

The Hennepin County Attorney's Office will continue to hire and allocate staff and resources throughout the office to areas where they will have the most significant impact in addressing the increased caseloads and backlog of cases created during the pandemic.

JUSTICE DOMAIN

Violence Prevention

Allocation amount: \$10,000,000

Project description

In June 2021, the Hennepin County Board authorized \$5 million for efforts intended to prevent, reduce, and mitigate gun violence in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. The initial \$5 million was allocated for short-term efforts focused on getting resources into the community for violence interruption and intervention strategies, and for wraparound support services utilizing providers that had capacity and programming ready to provide immediate services. In March 2021, the county board authorized an additional \$5 million to support continued programming, the expansion of and/or creation of new programming and funding for a coordinator to support the ongoing violence reduction and community engagement strategies, a formal evaluation process and development of a long-term proposal for future services aligned with other county programming focused on reducing disparities.

Youth and young adults, particularly those in communities of color, are disproportionately impacted by violence. Black and African American residents of Hennepin County are disproportionately impacted by gun violence, with firearm-related death rates that are more than twice that of White residents. Hennepin County is committed to reducing gun violence through a holistic approach that identifies drivers of the violence, addresses risk and protective factors, and adopts evidence-based policies and programs and effective strategies that improve outcomes for communities impacted by gun violence.

Progress narrative

Over the last year, 48 community organizations funded through this project provided services across Hennepin County which increased protective environments through violence intervention, neighborhood revitalization and street outreach; connected youth to caring adults and activities through a wide variety of youth programming and services; and strengthened young people's skills through mentoring, job shadowing, workforce development, conflict resolution training and cognitive skills development.

A second Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued in spring 2022, with an extremely robust response. Panels composed of internal and external/community partners reviewed the responses and are preparing to issue the second round of funding.

Initial plans are complete for the development of a community violence prevention network made up of community providers and others; the network is planned to begin meeting quarterly in the third quarter of 2023.

Key performance indicators

Youth programming

Twenty-five youth programming providers served nearly every community in Hennepin County in 448 events. All providers reported reaching at least one of their stated goals. In total, 448 youth programming events were held in 2022 totaling 10,509 hours of service as listed below. Fund recipients report positive outcomes such as youth feeling safer than before the grant period and providers supporting youth trips to the North Shore and other parts of Minnesota.

Program	Individual MH Services	Individual Mentoring	Life Skills	Crisis/Drop-in	Diversional Programming
Total hours	425	3,780.15	2,527.85	1,093	2,683
n%	4.04%	35.97%	24.05%	10.40%	25.53%

Violence interruption

Eighteen violence interruption providers primarily focused on the City of Minneapolis. Combined, providers offered violence intervention to 8,631 individuals, with 3,306 reported as youth. 359 staff provided 31,026 hours of violence interruption patrol. Through these efforts, \$84,286 total or \$35.87 per client was spent on direct support such as bus passes, rental assistance, or travel stipends. Providers in this category report positives such as handing out over 2,000 gun locks through the year; increased skyway patrol by MAD DADs; and several examples of direct violence interruption, including at drop-in sessions throughout the city.

Restorative Practices/Healing Centered Engagement

Eight providers participated in the wide-reaching Restorative Practices/Healing Centered Engagement category. 92 community events were held across the county, including safe gun storage events, case management programs, listening circles with unhoused community members, and outdoor events that introduced participants to new activities. \$61,049 total or \$60.87 per client was spent on direct support programs. 966 clients received trauma intervention services across all providers.

Neighborhood revitalization

The Lake Street Council and Project for Pride in Living represented the two neighborhood revitalization providers. Both providers combined for 24 events including neighborhood clean-up sessions, art mural development/creation, and safety planning events with other local non-profits. In total, neighborhood revitalization efforts logged 1,539 paid or volunteer service hours and issued/approved \$80,000 in direct grant funding for art installations in the Lake Street/Uptown neighborhoods.

Providing support for positive change

One of our providers, YouthLink/JK Movement, which offers housing for homeless youth, told us about a young man who was actively involved in violent behavior to support himself on the street. As a result of this funding, YouthLink found him a place to live and offered supportive services. This young man turned away from violent behavior and illegal substance use. He maintained his own housing by following the requirements of the program, and also brought in his partner and her child.

He also brought two other youth to the programs. The three of them attend group sessions regularly, and the partner is back in school. This young man is continuing to make positive changes in his life.

He told the adult mentor that if it wasn't for him and the JK Movement, he would not have made these changes and become what he is now: a young man finding and sharing housing, recruiting others to supports and resources, and being proud of his accomplishments.

What we learn from this is our programs will be successful when we give young people hope, meet them where they are, hold them accountable, and offer ongoing supports.

Next steps

In July, RFP funding decisions will be completed, award letters will be issued, and contract negotiations will take place. A provider kickoff conference will be held in August and the first meeting of the Community Violence Prevention Network will take place.

TRANSPORTATION DOMAIN

Broadband and Digital Inclusion

Allocation amount: \$10,000,000

Project description

The mission of the Office of Broadband and Digital Inclusion is to build and promote safe access to technology so that all residents of Hennepin County are empowered to thrive in the digital world. This funding continues the most successful parts of the Connecting Hennepin initiative: to ensure all county residents have access to, and can easily and safely use, modern technology to help realize their life goals. Research on digital inclusion identifies three aspects of the digital divide — computer access, internet access, and lack of digital skills — and this program includes programming in all three areas.

Data from the American Community Survey and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, among other sources, show geographic, racial and economic disparities in digital equity.

Households that are Black, Indigenous, Hispanic or other people of color are less likely to own PCs and have home broadband. There are geographic, racial, housing and economic disparities in access to technology, which, among other effects, cause an inherent disparity in the awareness of new public programs and supports.

To overcome these barriers, this project plans to invest funds in community engagement, public and nonprofit partners and multimedia communications to ensure that all residents in need are aware of and able to engage with the programs. It also includes infrastructure projects to resolve broadband gaps in underserved communities, areas with limited providers, and low-income neighborhoods with low broadband uptake rates. The office also coordinates with federal, state and local government partners, internet service providers and community organizations to develop and implement a digital equity plan for Hennepin County.

Progress narrative

During the reporting period, the Office of Broadband and Digital Inclusion (OBDI) continued to mature the core digital navigation services, and also focused on broadband expansion and adoption initiatives.

A team of Digital Navigation staff serve county clients and library patrons with digital barriers. All county staff are aware of this service and can refer the people they serve. The largest number of referrals come from the library, human services, and corrections. The most common purpose cited by staff for the technology referral were to access county services online, followed by virtual job training. When asked, clients indicated they would use technology to meet various needs; the most common related to job seeking or education.

All residents interacting with the digital navigators have a digital skills assessment, and training and devices are provided based on the residents' needs. Support is provided to help residents access the Affordable Connectivity Program benefit, and hotspots and Comcast Internet Essentials Sponsored Service are leveraged when needed.

Most people receiving technology assistance identify as Black or African American, are currently unemployed and have an income at or below 180% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Households served have annual incomes at or below \$65,000. Recipients report primarily using a smartphone for their technology needs, and either lack a computer or rely on shared devices at a location like a library. A significant portion do not have home internet, although the majority who have internet access report it meets their needs all or most of the time. Most people referred for technology support are digitally ready – they demonstrate basic digital skills and online safety practices but lack ready access to this technology. Eighteen percent have limited or no digital skills; these residents receive more robust training and technology support than those who demonstrate competency or advanced skills.

Devices provided include Windows laptops for most clients, Chromebooks for youth, and computers in the Public Safety Facility for GED classes through the Helping Others by Providing Education (HOPE) program. Through a partnership with Housing Stability, a continuum of technology and navigation support to people transitioning to permanent housing is being developed. As part of this work, flip phones are provided as a temporary support for the Homeless to Housing program. Once these individuals are housed, case workers will submit a referral for additional technology supports.

A team from the University of Minnesota conducted a program evaluation to refine the digital navigation service model to increase efficiencies, maximize all county resident touchpoints, and maintain a high level of service. Enhancements to the case management tool have been deployed, and additional improvements are underway to increase the team's capacity.

Thirteen community-based providers have contracts for digital navigation services, helping thousands of residents get online and improve their digital skills. These organizations have varied service models which include home visits for digital navigation, open technology labs in areas where residents lack personal devices or home internet, broadband adoption and outreach, access to assistive or adaptive devices, and skill-building training. These organizations collectively are providing services across the breadth of the county and can provide culturally appropriate digital navigation and support in multiple languages including but not limited to Spanish, Somali, Hmong, Vietnamese, and Chinese. They are also providing specialized services to seniors and people with disabilities. Partners have also produced outreach materials about the Affordable Connectivity Plan in Spanish and Chinese to raise awareness of this program. Ads have run on Radio Jornalera, an online Spanish-language radio station, and are planned for Telemundo; significant outreach has been conducted at Asia Mall alongside COVID-19 vaccination clinics and at other Chinese community events.

OBDI pledged \$398,000 to leverage more than \$8 million in funding to expand fiber optic infrastructure to residents in western and northwestern Hennepin County. These projects will provide high-quality broadband to 1,991 unserved or underserved households, farms and local businesses in the cities of Greenfield, Rogers, Corcoran and Independence. These projects came in addition to a prior partnership that will serve nearly 500 homes in Minnetrista, which also utilized pandemic recovery funding to leverage a multiple of other funding streams.

An RFP to Hennepin County cities was also developed, soliciting project ideas from cities for broadband infrastructure and adoption activities. OBDI has four contracts in place and is currently developing another two proposed projects. These projects complement continuing efforts to fill broadband access gaps, including the Minneapolis Wireless Internet project and efforts in different multi-tenant properties, including county-owned facilities and other county-funded affordable housing projects. **One example of that work is a project to upgrade wiring at a group residential facility. This project was completed in May and provides internet access to 175 client residents, as well as staff, at a five-building property in South Minneapolis.** Speed test data and client feedback have all been positive.

Analysis of the FCC fabric data released in November 2022 was completed to ensure it represents the broadband needs of Hennepin County as accurately as possible. Geospatial analysis focused on new development in the rural western edge of the county and multi-family dwellings in qualifying census tracts. Thousands of challenges were submitted to the FCC in January.

During the reporting period, OBDI also engaged in qualitative and quantitative data collection activities to better understand community needs, adjust services, or develop new programs to fill in gaps. In the summer and fall of 2022, a graduate fellow conducted research on barriers to enrolling in the Affordable Connectivity Program and what messages were effective to improve uptake rates; updates to the county website and promotional materials were made to help residents understand the enrollment process. As part of expanding online safety training and

awareness, interviews with community members and subject matter experts were conducted, followed by two focus groups, one with seniors and another with Somali residents. An awareness campaign and other activities are planned.

The State of Minnesota's Office of Broadband Development invited stakeholders to provide feedback to their Digital Equity Plan by forming Digital Connection Committees and focus new data collection efforts during the April 1 to June 30 time frame. Hennepin County's Digital Connection Committee modified the state survey and distributed it at community events like Juneteenth, in county spaces, and digitally. An asset inventory of digital inclusion resources available across the Twin Cities region was developed. Additional interviews with Spanish-speaking residents and apartment dwellers were conducted to learn more about how they are accessing the internet, and the unique challenges related to broadband access in multi-family dwellings. The final data submission was submitted on June 30 and included a synthesis of previous all engagement work, feedback from residents, community partners such as schools and nonprofit service providers, and frontline staff. Insights from prioritized populations and the staff who work directly with them were emphasized. Community partners also participated in this work; their state submissions will be reviewed to incorporate this additional feedback into Hennepin County's Digital Equity Plan.

Key performance indicators

- **2,145 individual requests to support Hennepin County clients and library patrons** were submitted to digital navigation team by Hennepin County staff. 42% are complete and 30% are in progress. The remainder are cancelled, duplicates or ineligible.
- **898 resident households** were served during the period by the internal Digital Navigation team. **A total of 3,898 interventions were reported** including device distribution, support with the Affordable Connectivity Program enrollment process, digital skills assessments, and training. Some households have multiple members receiving assistance or multiple types of support.
- **Six planned projects will provide an additional 225.7 miles of fiber and are anticipated to serve 2,482 households**, local businesses, farms, and community anchors in areas that lack access to high-speed broadband. These projects are scheduled for the 2023 and 2024 construction seasons.
- Infrastructure upgrades have been completed at two residential locations, a multi-family apartment building and six-building board and lodge facility. **These projects provide building-wide Wi-Fi that meets the needs of the residents, serving 206 people.**
- Thirteen contracted community partners provided **digital navigation support and training to an approximately 2,377 Hennepin County residents and an estimated 10,000 people were engaged in broadband adoption or outreach activities.**
- **Three projects were developed with cities through the Broadband Expansion Fund.** These projects include enhanced Wi-Fi at twelve parks that is also estimated to serve nearby homes and schools, providing free internet access to an estimated 2,118 households. Another project will provide computers and digital skills training to 100 newly arrived refugees.
- **191 cell phones** were used by Homeless to Housing program members during the reporting period and **31 computers** are in use by students enrolled in Hennepin Technical College.
- **47,413 Hennepin County households** are enrolled in the Affordable Connectivity Program
- **More than 7,200 challenges** were submitted to the FCC on the accuracy of the fabric data for Hennepin County.

Building connections for county clients

OBDI partnered with Hennepin County's Housing Stability and Housing and Economic Development (HED) on projects to provide internet access at a number of county-owned single resident occupancy (SRO) housing facilities and a group home facility, Pursuit Hometel. During the reporting period, the project to upgrade internet access at Pursuit Hometel was completed, the others remain under way.

Pursuit Hometel is a 205-bed board and lodge facility serving adult self-identifying males at risk of long-term homelessness. The facility includes five different buildings in the Phillips community of South Minneapolis, an area with relatively low broadband adoption.

The project involved telecommunications cable installation throughout all five Pursuit Hometel buildings, impacting 123 rooms and 205 individual beds.

With this new internet infrastructure, clients will have greater access to resources and services now delivered online. This includes Zoom court hearings, AA meetings, telehealth or therapy appointments, meetings with correctional officers such as parole and probation officers, attending job fairs or virtual job training, and connecting with family or friends. An average of 500 clients are served annually at Pursuit, with approximately 175 clients currently in residence.

Next steps

- Continue work on an online safety public awareness campaign, incorporating findings from market research conducted in the spring of 2023.
- Launch additional promotion of the Affordable Connectivity Program.
- Finalize two remaining Broadband Expansion Fund contracts, support partner cities in project implementation.
- Expand the number of computer distribution sites to align with community needs and locations that are more accessible for residents.
- An RFP to provide free building-wide Wi-Fi to four multi-tenant apartments closes July 25. A total of 141 households will receive a minimum bandwidth of 100/20 through this project. The apartments are located in Bloomington, Robbinsdale, and New Hope and provide affordable housing for people with disabilities and/or living with HIV.
- Develop an RFP targeting board and lodge facilities and affordable housing units to improve internet access based on successful deployment at Pursuit Hometel.
- Continue work on Hennepin County Digital Equity Plan. Further community engagement with prioritized groups. Draft plan based on feedback from residents, trusted messengers, and community partners; evaluation of current programming; county goals and strategies; and future funding streams.
- Review and provide comments on the State of Minnesota's draft Digital Equity Plan. Facilitate regional gathering on behalf of the State of Minnesota's Office of Broadband Development.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Countywide HVAC COVID-19 Response

Allocation amount: \$5,000,000

Project description

As a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency and based on recommended best practices per the Centers for Disease Control and the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers for providing safe buildings to the public, Hennepin County made improvements to the ventilation system in its facilities to reduce the spread of COVID-19. This project will maintain this safe level of ventilation while improving operational efficiency and reducing energy use. By providing safe buildings the county is protecting the health and wellness of staff and residents who visit the facilities. Priority will be given to 24/7 facilities such as correctional institutions, plus other key buildings serving residents such as the Hennepin County Government Center.

Funding will be used to study and implement needed improvements to building heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) and control systems in county facilities. This will allow better management of energy use and reduced operational costs associated with maintaining pandemic-level ventilation requirements.

Progress narrative

Over the past year, the consultant Erickson Ellison and Associates (EEA) evaluated 14 buildings for pandemic HVAC operation. These site visits were used to provide a sample of building types and operational strategies. Based on the information gathered from these visits and from staff, recommendations for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of operating county buildings in a pandemic were provided. The county reviewed these recommendations and is working on implementing in two key phases. The first phase which is underway includes inspecting the filter banks for all county operated buildings to assure no air leakage to reduce any bypass of contaminated air. In addition, each air handling unit is being evaluated for required air capacity due to the increased resistance of the higher-rated filters. As of June 30, 2023, a total of 23 buildings have been evaluated and reports have been submitted to the county to review.

The work being done at the Adult Correctional Facility (ACF) is 85% complete. Most of the equipment was installed over the past year and the system is currently working. The project is currently waiting on a couple control components that are expected to arrive in July. Once these parts are installed and the system is commissioned, it will be completed. Completion is expected by the end of September in 2023.

In addition, COVID-19 related upgrades were included as part of the Hennepin County Government Center (HCGC) larger HVAC renovation project. These upgrades are critical to the effective control of airborne contaminants. This project started on December 19, 2022. Over the past 6 months, equipment has been purchased and installation has started. The project is about 70% done with pandemic-related work and is expected to be fully expended by the end of 2023.

Finally, Hennepin County is using MERV 13 or higher filters in the air handling units which have been effective in reducing the spread of COVID via the HVAC system. Since July 1, 2022, a total of 4,369 filters were ordered, received, and invoiced by June 30, 2023.

Key performance indicators

Key performance indicators are as follows for this reporting period:

- 4,369 filters ordered, received and invoiced
- 23 buildings evaluated and reported on as part of Phase 1
- Two buildings have implemented upgrades

Next steps

- Over the next three months the remaining building HVAC systems will be evaluated and reported on. Issues will be compiled and any correctional actions will be addressed.
- Over the next three months, the ACF HVAC project will be completed and final invoices will be processed.
- Over the next three months, the HCGC HVAC project will continue as equipment will be installed.
- Over the next three months, more MERV 13 filters will be ordered, received and invoiced based on need.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Digital Experience

Allocation amount: \$5,700,000

Project description

From the beginning, the COVID-19 pandemic required Hennepin County to rapidly shift to providing services to residents from in person to online. When physical locations closed to the public, the ability to serve digitally was critical to meeting ongoing resident needs. To date, the ongoing pandemic continues to fundamentally shift the county's service approach, making clear our need to build on these initial changes and provide a consistently positive and accessible experience for residents. This project is using funding to sustain and advance the digital transformation that has been required to respond to the pandemic by piloting a scalable, repeatable digital experience delivery model.

The Digital Experience team in the Operations line of business will lead this work in partnership with Hennepin County's communication and engagement teams, the IT community, and departments delivering resident services. This model will join key business, technology, communication and engagement partners together to deliver a digital experience that meets residents' varying digital needs. Funding will also support increasing digital content, user experience, and web infrastructure work for the county's digital service platforms, including the Hennepin.us and HCLib.org websites. Teams will address both technical debt and continuous improvement needs to keep pace with increasing digital delivery.

The Digital Experience team will manage rapid change with an agile mindset and principles, determine long-term staffing and resource needs to support the model, and drive identified digital priorities that support Future Ready Hennepin. These efforts create digital equity and engagement for Hennepin County residents.

Progress narrative

The Digital Experience pandemic response project continues to grow and meet goals in this reporting year. All of the experiments and projects are rooted in the four Office of Digital Experience (ODX) values which informs how to approach the work. The four ODX values are:

1. We prioritize people. We take a proactive people-centered approach to digital service delivery. We believe in the empowerment of all people. Understanding the human experience is critical to our work.
2. We proactively collaborate. We approach the work with an open mind to people's processes and perspectives. We listen attentively, practice flexibility, share information, and seek inclusive feedback. We strive to build strong, continuous partnerships, which result in outcomes beneficial to residents.
3. We practice curiosity. We operate with a spirit of curiosity. We have a growth mindset that cultivates continuous learning and development. We take pride in our ability to be resilient, flexible, responsive, and adaptable to change.
4. We advance accessibility, diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. By prioritizing accessibility, diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice, we ensure our people-centered work has meaningful impact.

Additionally, ODX established three strategic directions which will inform the kind of work the team does. As ODX grows and matures, so does the vision and approach to aligning the work to the strategic directions. Each of the strategic directions support work at the community, organization, and team levels. The three ODX strategic directions are:

1. Drive an equitable and inclusive digital experience for Hennepin County community members.
2. Build and foster a culture of User Experience (UX) across Hennepin County.
3. Establish ODX structures, processes, and culture founded in our values.

A significant accomplishment this year is nearly fully staffed teams in the Digital Experience (DX) model. In the past year three people joined the Website Communications team, two people joined the Web Infrastructure team, and six people, two of which are graduate fellow interns, joined ODX.

ODX continues to prioritize creating digitally accessible information and products for users. ODX contracts with vendor and digital accessibility expert WeCo to provide digital accessibility training, accessibility audits, user testing specifically with people living with disabilities, and accessibility consultative services. Presently, this pandemic response project manages WeCo's training and consultative services for the entire organization.

Driving accessible, user-centered experiences is at the heart of ODX. A new employee program, DX Champions, launched this reporting period. A DX Champion is a helpful resource who promotes user-centered and racial equity principles. Employees become DX Champions by completing training and a knowledge assessment. Upon successful completion of the pathway, ODX issues a certificate that recognizes the employee's commitment to advancing user-centered digital experiences in their area of work and on behalf of the entire organization.

ODX is creating a new design system that integrates accessibility standards, web standards, and the pattern and component library into a single resource. The project team leading this effort comprises developers, designers, and content creators from various areas across the organization.

ODX continues to work with lines of business (LOB) on narrowly-scoped experiments that aim to improve the user's digital experience. Findings from the experiments inform if additional iteration is needed or if the solution can be scaled more broadly throughout the line of business or across the organization. There have been many successes in developing relationships with lines of business and initiating experiments in the past year.

Hennepin County is transitioning its web presence from hennepin.us to hennepincounty.gov. This project is jointly sponsored by ODX, Communications, and IT. The project kicked-off in Q2, 2023.

Key performance indicators

Identifying ODX values and strategic directions guides and aligns the work in a way that is transparent, and communicates shared goals with partners. ODX business partners incorporate visuals of the team values and strategic directions in engagements with business partners. ODX values and strategic directions visuals are attached separately.

Fully staffed teams across the DX model is a necessity to move coordinated work forward. Below is a brief list of accomplishments this year that were only possible because of the people power across all teams.

- The Website Communications team has:
 - Completed several site improvements, including accessibility improvements, to the public-facing website, hennepin.us
 - Developed operational procedures for making site improvements
 - Managed the transition to the new data analytics tool used on hennepin.us, which includes providing training, creating new reports, and implementing quality assurance checks to ensure no data are lost during the transition
- The Web Infrastructure team has:
 - Created and directed the implementation of content management system (CMS) improvements
 - Led the effort for web server and data maintenance provider migration
- Within ODX, the UX team has:
 - Led and completed the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office website redesign
 - Transformed the Racial Equity Impact Tool (REIT) to a usable web form that will increase access and usage of the form
 - Increased capacity for UX reviews and design elements that support the organization's UX maturity
- Within ODX, the DX team has:
 - Led the three-year strategic planning process
 - Initiated several engagements that led to digital experiments to increase the end user's experience
 - Implemented a tool that supports community listening and feedback

WeCollege is the online digital accessibility training for employees. A product from WeCo, WeCollege is a self-paced training program for employees to increase their knowledge and understanding of how to create digitally accessible content, products, and experiences for users. This year, 83 employees representing several areas throughout the organization have registered for WeCollege. Additionally, Hennepin County has a contract with WeCo to provide digital accessibility audits, consultation, and planning services. ODX manages this engagement with WeCo to ensure a consistently positive experience for both lines of business and the vendor. This will elevate the ability for designers, developers, and creators to build accessible experiences for users at every stage of a project and reduces the need to go back to fix elements that are inaccessible.

The DX Champions program launched in early 2023. So far, 37 employees have become DX Champions and committed to apply accessibility and web standards to their own work and to provide support to their colleagues, while leveraging equity and UX resources. All the principles of becoming a DX Champion support the county's priorities to reduce disparities and participate in the county's climate action plan.

The Design System project team is composed of employees from across the organization who have diverse skills and expertise. The DX model has allowed this multi-faceted team come together with ease to jointly create a single source of design, accessibility, and web standards for the organization. User research model practices are integrated in this project and include surveys, card sorts, and tree tests. The high-fidelity prototype is continually tested with a focus on design, content, and accessibility.

The hennepincounty.gov project kicked off in this reporting year. A discovery event was held with partners from ODX, Communications, and IT to begin to identify activities necessary for the initial discovery phase of the project. Work tasks and assignments were assigned to each of the three project managers leading this sizeable project. Two of the project managers are existing employees and an additional new project manager was hired to support this work.

Launching a Resident Services chatbot

The chatbot experiment incorporated social vulnerability index (SVI) data in the design to understand how to maximize a better experience for people experiencing greater disparities. Residents had a voice in the development of this project as well. 25,000 chat transcripts were analyzed to understand the types of questions residents asked when using the chatbot. Creating an automated service system, or chatbot, for the most frequently asked questions allowed staff to dedicate more time to serving residents with more complex needs. This project was recognized by winning a Golden GOVIT award at the GOVIT Symposium and NACo Achievement Award.

www.hennepin.us/your-government/facilities/service-center-info (“Chat”)

Improved Sheriff’s Office website

The Sheriff’s Office website redesign intentionally focused on the user voice and had a mobile-first design method. The data-driven, mobile-first, and content-intensive approach incorporated multiple rounds of usability testing with diverse, representative community members as well as accessibility-specific testing. The final product improves site readability, access, and success.

www.hennepinsheriff.org

Next steps

- Strategic plan planning will continue with a proposed timeline for the next three years
- Continued testing and back-end development work on the Design System
- Shelter verification web form field testing with residents/users
- Data analysis will be completed on PINS project
- Hennepincounty.gov discovery work will continue to be identified, scoped, and assigned across DX model teams ahead of an early 2025 launch
- Engage LOB project teams in accessibility consulting services with — WeCo

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Engagement Services

Allocation amount: \$1,680,000

Project description

The Engagement Services project will increase and enhance engagement staffing, services and programs as part of the county's ongoing COVID-19 pandemic response. The community will be connected to new and expanded programs and services, including continued mask distribution and education about the importance of getting vaccinated, as well as a variety of human services, housing, economic development, and employment resources.

With a focus on disparity reduction, these efforts will demonstrate the county's commitment to our residents along with providing Hennepin County's Engagement Services area the capacity to advance engagement systems and practices while sustaining community relationships. While this work is foundational to the county and will require long-term funding strategies to support continued development, immediate resources are needed now to continue the county's response to COVID-19.

Progress narrative

Trusted messengers

- Completed contract period for 2021-2022 trusted messengers, consisting of 36 contracts, in December of 2022.
- Received final report on 12/31/22 from trusted messengers regarding the outcomes of their work.
- In February 2023, the fourth round of community contracts commenced through the program. The fourth round consists of a one-year contract with 26 community organizations who are trusted messengers in priority communities, covering a wide range of racial and ethnic demographics. These organizations help staff identify needs as well as promoting resources and services available from the county to residents. Following lessons learned from previous rounds of funding, the decision was made to contract with less community organizations (36 to 26) but the 26 community organizations were awarded higher contract amounts.
- In the first few months of the program with the fourth round of contracts, they were onboarded onto the program.
- Staff meet with the organizations on a monthly basis for individual check ins, and also on a monthly basis for large group meetings, which consist of highlighting work the organizations are doing, providing program updates, and answering any programmatic, reporting or billing-related questions.
- Shared and communicated information on county program/services.
- Shared RFP opportunities within internal county staff and other cities, counties, and state.

Community Engagement Roster Program

- Continued to consult with other departments and promote contracts/agreements via the roster program.
- Continued to meet as a team to assess best practices, user experience and potential areas for improvement for the program.

Translations

- Community Engagement Leadership Program (CELP) cohort presented on translation findings/strategy and recommendations.
- Continued to meet with key collaborators across the county to assess the current translations strategies and identify improvements.
- Translation Policy project committee met to discuss a county-wide policy regarding translation services.

Engagement vans

- Over the reporting period, the three community engagement vans continued to be a crucial strategy that allowed staff to strengthen relationships and build trust with residents.
- In September 2022, the team received an electric Ford Transit van that was equipped with solar panels, flat screen TV, computer, printer, WiFi hotspot, shelving and engagement supplies to fully furnish an Engagement Services mobile office. This van was launched in May of 2023 through a special use agreement with Behavioral Health Campaign.
- During the reporting period, the three vans were used by Public Health, Child & Teen Checkup, Latino Liaison, Streets to Housing, Office of Multi-Cultural Services, Hennepin County Libraries, Hennepin County Attorney's Office, Environment & Energy, Transportation/Blue Line LRT and the Behavioral Health Campaign.

Healing circles/community building

- In 2022, there were three healing circles within the reporting period- one Latino/Latinx healing circle held in Spanish, in person at Centro Tyrone Guzman, and facilitated by Susana De Leon and Nancy Rocha; one Juneteenth liberation celebration, an intergenerational event for black men of all ages led by TC from Mind Body Spirit Wholistic Fitness and Kendrick Walton; and a staff community building event that was a Hennepin County "Lunch & Learn," hosted by the cities of Minneapolis and Brooklyn Park, and Hennepin County. The event gave staff the opportunity to learn about the LGBTQIA+ community and the history of "Coming Out Day," facilitated by guest speaker Ryan Fouts, Executive Director of RECLAIM.
- In January 2023, the team participated in the National Day of Racial Healing with other local jurisdictions. Local governments in the Twin Cities including Hennepin County partnered to bring together two free, virtual events to recognize National Day of Racial Healing on January 17, 2023. One event was focused on local city and county staff, and the other was open to all community members.
- Since April 2023, Outreach and Community Supports have held five events on the different ways community heals. The team held three events of the Collective Restoration Freedom Series focusing on the healing of Black Boys and Men. This event reoccurs monthly and is led by community healer TC. On April 19, the team kicked off the first healing circle online, via Zoom, and this event was focused on "The Importance of Pouring In." On May 27, TC led "Free the Body," an intentional movement and breathing workshop with the community. On May 31, Shelly Belgarde led an Energy Healing workshop with the Native American community. On June 13, Nancy Xiong and her sister, Pagnia Xiong, led a Sound Healing Bath with the Asian American community. On June 29, "Dads, Do's, Don'ts, and Donuts" was co-facilitated by Dr. Kasim Abdur Razzaq and they led conversations around raising healthy Black boys and men.

Materials distribution

- With a focus of engagement low-income communities and communities of color, Hennepin County engagement staff handed out COVID-19 informational handouts, COVID-19 testing kits, masks, Hennepin County helpline handouts, county program information plus additional giveaway items such as tote bags, rice paddles, water bottles.
- The Outreach and Community Supports department continued to utilize ARPA funds to distribute these giveaways to community members, through their own staff and through sharing the items with engagement staff from across the county for their outreach events. As more events transitioned to being back in person following COVID-19, the demand for items has only continued to increase during the reporting period.
- The team developed a new system for checking out and tracking materials, which staff began using in June 2023.

Urban Scholar interns

In the summer of 2022, Outreach and Community Supports hosted two Urban Scholar interns for 16 weeks. The Urban Scholars program provides internships to college and graduate students who want to work in the public sector. The team provided these interns with the hands-on learning experience of the day-to-day work of our department. These interns provided support with:

- In-person engagement about county programs such as the Trusted Messenger, Blue Line LRT Extension, COVID-19 relief information with key community partners.
- Giveaways and handout inventory.
- Restocking engagement motor pool vans with basic supplies of giveaways and handouts

- Updating our community-based organizations stakeholder contact list.
- Researched and documented annual events and celebrations across 45 Hennepin County cities to help guide 2023 engagement planning.
- Historical research on Pierre Bottineau for the METRO Blue Line extension project in the Bottineau Corridor.

Key performance indicators

Trusted messengers

- 26 new contracts executed as part of the fourth round of program contracts.
- Resumed ongoing monthly large group meetings.
- Resumed ongoing check-in meetings (sharing events, activities, deliverables and issues/trends/themes, etc.).

Community Engagement Roster Program

- By the end of 2022, 6+ projects/RFPs utilized this program to achieve contracts.
- Over 210 individuals and organizations registered.
- Multiple projects/RFPs consulted and may utilized this program to achieve contracts.
- Organized engagement staff from 11 different departments to provide 78 networking orientation meetings with roster agencies/organizations to encourage collaboration, information sharing and identify opportunities for potential contracts.

Translations

- Continued to work with the Translation Policy Project in partnership with Communications.
- OCS served as a liaison and provided guidance to the internal service areas/departments.

Engagement vans

- During the reporting period, the two Dodge Grand caravans were requested 133 by Hennepin County staff for engagement events.
- Outreach and Community Supports facilitated special agreements with Streets to Housing use of one van with the ability to transport clients that was supplied with engagement equipment, Hennepin County handouts on services including maintenance, gas, parking arraignments, and car washes. Outcomes from this special agreement include:
 - Streets to Housing goals and purpose of engagement: Conduct outreach with individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness providing them with assistance to connect to resources such as housing, food and cash assistance, medical and other benefits.
 - Number of people directly engaged: Over 500 individuals primarily living at encampments.
 - 156 days of van use typically an average of 3x week.
 - Outcomes: 101 individual exits to permanent solutions and 78 individuals exits to shelters.
- Behavioral Health Campaign goals and purpose: the yearlong \$1.7M pandemic recovery funded countywide mental health awareness campaign, titled “See Mental Health”, serves to normalize conversations and connections as a way forward. The multimedia campaign comes to life through a variety of channels including traditional media, digital, and community engagement.
 - During May 2023 – June 2023:
 - Attended 12 campaign events with the van.
 - Engaging nearly 4,500 people across our diverse Hennepin County communities.
- Between all three vans, they were used 145 times during this reporting period and were present across all seven Hennepin County districts.

Materials distribution

- During the reporting period, the team managed and distributed approximately 3,000 outreach items/giveaways to community, both through the team’s tabling and engagements as well as distributing the items throughout the organization to various departments to use at their engagement events.
- Since April 2020, Engagement Services has distributed more than 1.3 million masks to 140+ community organizations. Within this reporting period, the team distributed 150,300 masks to community organizations.

Healing circles/community building

- During the reporting period, the team facilitated/participated in a total of eight healing circles. These focused on African American, Latino/Latinx, Asian American, American Indian and LGBTQIA+ populations (3 in 2022, 5 in 2023.)



“The opportunity for black men to engage authentically in a space where they can feel free to do so amongst themselves.”

— Participant from one of TC’s healing circles within the Collective Restoration Freedom Series.

Next steps

Trusted Messengers Program

- Assist with new initiatives on community engagement boosters’ campaign and others.
- Provide guidance/consultation to various departments.
- Work with and guide current Trusted Messenger organizations.

Community Engagement Roster Program

- Potential training for Community Engagement staff throughout departments as needed.
- Offer communication and RFP strategy training course for organizations.
- Strategic plan: find ways to improve and promote the roster program internally and externally.

Translations

- Continue to work and consult with project manager hired under the communications department to discuss existing translations efforts and assess future needs.
- Continue to work with Translation Policy Project lead in Communications on countywide policy for translation services.

Engagement vans

- Outreach and Community Supports will continue to explore ways to improve utilization and efficiency of their three vans, working with Fleet Services to streamline maintenance and cross-departmental usage/agreements.
- The team will continue to work with internal partners to ensure the vans are being fully utilized and ensure the most impactful outcomes.

Healing circles/community building

- In the next coming months, the team will be hosting two healing circles, one for Latino youth and one for Latino adults. Both healing circles will be held in Spanish. Additionally, the next Collective Restoration Freedom Series will be in August.
- In debriefs with the community healers, many of the participants of these healing circles responded that they want more of these spaces. When asked in a survey, “what is something positive from this session that you will take with you,” people responded:
 - “The opportunity for black men to engage authentically in a space where they can feel free to do so amongst themselves.”
 - “That I too am a healer.”
- The team will continue to incorporate feedback and lessons learned into future opportunities.

Materials distribution

- The team will continue to manage current inventory of materials and distribute them to staff and community accordingly, as well as order more items to cover the remainder of the engagement season.
- The team will continue to participate in a cross-departmental work group dedicated to creating new policies and procedures around outreach items, which will help improve efficiencies as well as ensure that items are environmentally friendly, cost-effective, relatively easy to carry and transport, culturally specific, and usable by community members.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Enterprise Integrated Data

Allocation amount: \$4,000,000

Project description

The Enterprise Integrated Data System aims to integrate data from across county systems to discover summary insights that enable the county to better respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, reduce disparities, and support key strategic initiatives. The project includes four key components: integrated data infrastructure, summary analytics, governance and security, and data use.

The integrated data infrastructure entails the development of the technical infrastructure required to integrate county data and modernize county data systems safely and securely. This work leverages modern data infrastructure tools to bring county data together effectively and iteratively to meaningfully create summary reports and analytics.

Summary analytics entails the development of a variety of summary reports that provide ongoing holistic insights into county services. Analyses focus on the county's ability to rapidly respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative impacts; how residents navigate county services across lines of business; the impact of county services on the well-being of residents, and county disparity reduction efforts, among others.

The governance and security component entails the development of a robust and transparent governance structure that supports the development of strategic data insights while ensuring data security, privacy, and the ethical use of data. This work is done in coordination with existing data governance activities including the county's responsible authorities, legal counsel, and IT and data security staff.

Lastly, this effort includes a framework for data use that is intended to provide support for how the summary data insights created from this system can be used for effective decision making.

Progress narrative

Over the past year, substantial progress has been made across all facets of the Enterprise Integrated Data System. First, the governance and security components of this system have been established and continue to be refined. A total of eleven projects have now gone through the governance process for this system. This process includes a number of key steps to ensure all analytics projects are aligned with enterprise priorities, receive a thorough legal review, and go through an equity impact review. Eleven projects have gone through this process to date with an average time of thirty-four business days from project conceptual to approval to begin. All planned security protocols have been implemented to ensure only a limited group of staff have access to these data with full audit logging implemented to monitor and verify the ongoing acceptable use of all data in this system.

In the first year of this project, the initial data infrastructure and processes to ingest data were established. The second year of this effort was marked by the continued expansion of the data sources being incorporated into this system and the continuous improvement of these processes. The underlying architectural design and data models were refined substantially based on early lessons learned. Efficiencies in the data processing steps were discovered that led to an initial decrease in the overall volume of the data in the system. This trend was then reversed as new data sources were incorporated with a steady upward trend in total data volume. The system is now incorporating data from over twenty internal systems and over thirty external systems. In addition, substantial improvements were made to metadata capture and design of this system. Improvements to our ability to monitor data processes, data lineage, and usage were all implemented in the past year.

Two other accomplishments related to data infrastructure and processes are also worth noting. The first is continued improvement in our record linkage processes and data modeling transformations. Multiple refinements of the system's conceptual data model were completed and this is driving iterations of our data transformation processes and record linkage mechanisms. In particular, an improved method of dealing with incomplete records was established that drove better alignment with line of business reporting. Second, solid progress was made on the adoption of a graph database. Early proof-of-concept efforts were expanded and reinvigorated that further demonstrated potential to improve data integration processes — particularly related to entity resolution — and as a mechanism to derive new insights that are either not possible or extremely difficult with tabular data structures.

As the data infrastructure has expanded, so too has the ability to create summary analytics. The number of summary analytics projects rose from seven to eleven over the course of the year. The number of projects with at least draft and/or initial summary reports or findings more than doubled, growing four to nine. Three additional projects were approved for publication to their relevant audiences within the county. Early lessons from these efforts are yielding system insights about how county government functions as a whole that are: 1) helping county staff identify disparities and opportunities to reduce them; 2) tell the broader story of what the county does and who it serves; and 3) identify opportunities for service integration and coordination. While still too early to demonstrate specific impacts on business processes or resident outcomes, early anecdotal feedback has highlighted the strategic potential of these new reports.

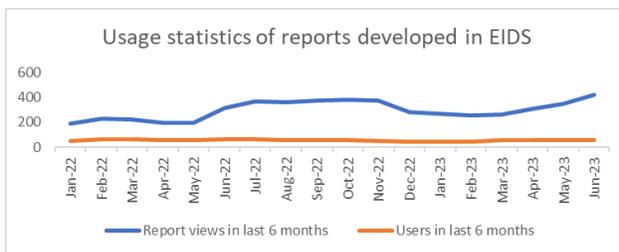
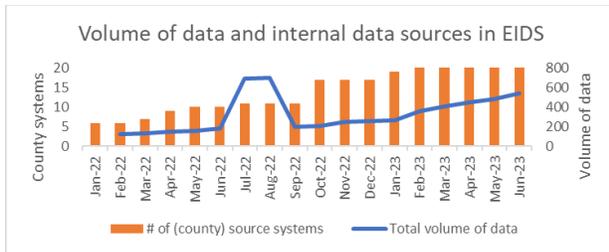
The completion of these projects and the insights they are yielding are just a few of the key accomplishments in this space. As the analytics work has grown, early lessons related to maintaining effective relationships with line-of-business analysts and county leaders are being incorporated into data science processes. Of note, there is a close integration with the work around a framework for data use that has resulted in the development of a user adoption plan. This plan was developed in conjunction with data strategists in Integrated Data and Analytics (IDA) to support staff and leaders interpret new data insights and identify ways to effectively use them in their work. As noted below, this is closely tied with progress on a county data literacy program. IDA analysts also continue to monitor utilization data of these reports. To date, the strategic nature of these summary analytics has resulted in relatively stable utilization patterns in terms of both total users and number of views.

The latter part of this year has also seen critical accomplishments around the development of a data use framework. Two county staff received data literacy program lead certifications and have made substantial progress towards the implementation of the county's first data literacy program. This is building off the initial Hennepin County as a data-informed organization framework that identified three key aspects or areas where county leaders and staff can take action to be data-informed. First, leaders and staff can value data by investing in data resources and/or better mechanisms to collect data itself. Second, leaders and staff can embed data insights throughout business processes (as opposed to just using a year-end or quarter-end report) to drive continuous improvement. Lastly, leaders and staff can use data in their operational and strategic decision making. The data literacy program being developed aims to support all county staff to have the right level of skills and competencies to effectively integrate the use of data into their work.

Key performance indicators

The key performance indicators for this project include:

- Total volume of data incorporated
 - 544 GB as of June 30.
- An evolving set of QA metrics related to data quality and fidelity with established definitions
 - Still in development. One example, 93.8% of all data processes ran successfully in June 2023, down from 97.8% in May.
- The number of analytics projects utilizing this system
 - Eleven projects to date, eight of which have a report in development or published.
- Number of days it takes for a project to go through the governance process
 - Average of 44 days from conceptual to approval to begin.
- The number of report views as a proxy for utilization
 - 422 views across 61 county leaders in the past 6 months.



No summative evaluations have been conducted to date as the effort is still in development. All of these metrics are informing ongoing continuous improvement activities and guiding the strategic development of this system. For example, the relatively flat usage trends were one of the drivers of the development of a user adoption plan to support county leaders and staff effectively use the data insights created by the analytics teams across the county.

Who We Serve report

The completion of the Who We Serve report, a summary of cross-program utilization across Human Services and the Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation programs, is helping to illustrate the types of summary insights made possible by this system. This report aims to help county leaders and staff track and mitigate disparities, tell the broader story of what the county does, and align client experiences across services. This report illustrates that about 40% of those receiving services from the county are involved with more than one, demonstrating the need for more integrated approaches. This report also illustrates the extent to which disparities exist across the county, not just in the urban cores.

As one director stated,

“One insight I took from this report when looking at the data disaggregated by race ... is that a disparity reduction approach needs to be countywide.”

Next steps

- The implementation of a newly improved configuration database to manage the automation and monitoring of all data ingestion and transformation processes.
- Implementing the next iteration of the Enterprise Integrated Data System data model.
- Establishing a production version of an entity resolution graph database and customer (i.e., resident) journey graph database to provide insights into the patterns of county service utilization as a whole.
- Establish ongoing data processes to enable automatic updates of existing summary reports.
- Ongoing development of summary analytics projects, including the completion of at least one effort, and draft/preliminary results expected for three others.
- The launch of the county’s first data literacy program with a series of carefully planned pilot initiatives.
- Continued improvement of DataOps reporting and practices.
- Maturation of metadata and data lineage capture.
- The launch of two new summary analytics projects.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Information Technology

Allocation amount: \$10,000,000

Project description

The IT Department will partner with all business lines to develop and deliver solutions to technology needs resulting from the pandemic. By engaging with each line of business, IT is identifying numerous applications and technology solutions that will significantly advance the county's ability to deliver services digitally. Funds will support IT work in four areas:

Improving the design and execution of health, public health, and relief programs

Improvements include modernizing systems, automating manual transactions, and gathering and using data to make informed decisions to support public health and relief programs.

Modernizing hardware and software

Future Ready Hennepin includes working and delivering services remotely. IT seeks to ensure staff will have the necessary technology to work in any approved county location and residents will be served by upgraded hardware for new or updated service offerings and provided with additional technology for public use. A modernized technology infrastructure allows for greater agility and faster innovation.

Protecting our critical infrastructure

To help protect county and resident data, IT will need to ensure our hardware and software is as up to date and secure as possible.

Modernizing business processes

IT created new solutions to connect residents with health care and services during the pandemic. These solutions and the relief programs they support now need to be operationalized and improved so Hennepin County can continue to dedicate resources to provide care to impacted persons, improve health outcomes for residents and build a healthier environment for all.

Progress narrative

Twenty-six projects have been identified in the three areas listed above. Eighteen projects have begun and the other eight are in the initial planning and development stages.

Notable accomplishments include:

- Backfile conversions that reduce offsite storage costs and make records more accessible to both the public and county employees. These efforts support decision making, data integrations, remote working and resident services.
- Technical solutions for remote desktops to support remote work.
- Progress towards foster care referral system enhancements for initial placement matches with family whenever possible, and in family foster care when relatives are not available. Children and Family Services has prioritized stability for children and youth.
- Training and review of ADA website design to make online material more accessible.
- Investment in continuous deployment tool to accelerate application deployment and manage complexity.
- Modernized central services equipment to respond to pandemic-related and other special printing and mailing needs.
- Partial funding of hardware placed in collaborative work centers to enhance hybrid workforce and service delivery capabilities.

- Purchase and installation of digital signage at the Drop Off Facilities in Brooklyn Park and Bloomington.
- Enhancements to workforce management system used by the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office.

Improving access to files and records

Over the past year, pandemic funding has helped the IT Department's Imaging Operations unit increase efforts to digitize and index existing county records. Backfile conversion efforts have included county attorney records, autopsies from the medical examiner's office, land record abstracts and plat maps, board meeting materials and a variety of other documents.

The department is continuing a multi-year effort to reduce offsite storage costs and make records more accessible to both the public and county employees. These efforts support decision making, data integrations, remote working and resident services.

Next steps

Prioritized projects continue to proceed through IT intake to coordinate resources and ensure efficient use of enterprise tools. Projects have been identified across all lines of business.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Information Technology: Community Connectivity

Allocation amount: \$4,000,000

Project description

The IT Community Connectivity project aims to meet the growing need for high-speed broadband by establishing secure, reliable, and redundant high-speed broadband connections to county facilities and equipment. The project partners with the State of Minnesota, the Metropolitan Council, cities and school districts within Hennepin County, and other public agencies to share fiber assets and provide mutual benefits. This project supports critical public service program needs such as 911 dispatch, libraries, human services and public health regionalization and data redundancy. The project works closely with the Public Works line of business to leverage existing fiber infrastructure for traffic management programs, and to share fiber planning, funding, and maintenance services. This project is the backbone that provides the foundation for future expansion of the county's fiber infrastructure.

Progress narrative

The Community Connectivity project focuses on two areas:

- \$1.0 million to accelerate plans to connect county facilities to fiber.
 - A preliminary estimate was received from Metropolitan Council for installation of fiber optic infrastructure along Lake Street from France Avenue to the Mississippi River. Metropolitan Council is managing the design, procurement and installation of fiber along this corridor as part for the broader B Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. Once completed, the county will hold ownership of the trunk line fiber infrastructure and will lease strands back to Metro Transit for BRT operations at no cost.
- \$3.0 million with Public Works to increase fiber connections and expand the Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS). This includes
 - Server infrastructure for the Video Management System (VMS) for the Traffic Management Center (TMC)
 - Adds over 25 miles of fiber to connect 35 intersections.
 - Purchase wireless modem equipment for traffic signals not connected to county fiber (14 intersections)

Next steps

Fiber connections will be constructed in 2023. Additional county facility fiber projects are in the planning stages.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Voter Participation

Allocation amount: \$3,312,000

Project description

The Elections Department will:

- Support a countywide voter registration campaign and an absentee voting education campaign, building on the successful absentee voter outreach campaign that was conducted in 2020. Investing in pre-registering voters prior to election day and in ensuring absentee voters do not make mistakes on their absentee voting materials is cost-effective. Processing voter registrations prior to election day saves in time and materials as compared to processing election-day registrations, and reduces wait times in polling places. Helping absentee voters complete their paperwork correctly the first time saves time and materials costs in avoiding the necessity of issuing replacement materials to correct mistakes.
- Upgrade poll book hardware. The poll book system is used in all polling places during every election conducted in the county. This system upgrade is critical to the county’s ability to maintain useability of the poll book system and directly impacts the county’s ability to administer accurate and secure elections.
- Replace the current central ballot scanners with new upgraded models. Absentee voting rates increased significantly in 2020 to approximately 70% of voters, compared to 30% in previous years, and is expected to remain high for upcoming elections. New upgraded central ballot scanners will enable the county to continue to effectively manage the increase in absentee ballots. New models feature hardware upgrades that improve the efficiency of ballot processing, ultimately supporting timely results reporting despite the larger volume of absentee ballots.

Progress narrative

From July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, Hennepin County Elections has continued to implement two key outreach and engagement strategies: establishing community partner contracts for voter outreach and education services and a tailored voter outreach media campaign focusing on registration and expanded voter eligibility.

Islamic Civic Society of America, a community organization contracted to do voter outreach work shared: “We connect the act of voting with our cultural values and norms, connecting ideas of who we are as a people and as citizens to be those who work for the benefit of all.”

In 2022, the Elections Department contracted with 23 community organizations to conduct voter outreach work. Contracts started in June 2022 and were completed in November 2022. The organizations were selected through the Hennepin County Roster Program and were awarded up to \$20,000 to conduct their work. Hennepin County Elections hosted weekly meetings for contracted organizations to learn more about election topics, ask questions and collaborate with other organizations. The 2022 contracted organizations reached an estimated total of 562,000 people, of which an estimated 49,400 were face-to-face. The contracted organizations registered/pledged to register an estimated 8,900 people. Some of the work performed by contracted organizations in 2022 include:

- COPAL (Comunidades Organizando El Poder y la Acción Latina) developed an outreach campaign based on “¡Triple el voto. triple el poder!” (Triple the vote, triple the power) in which they encouraged voters to bring two eligible voters with them to vote, increasing turnout. The campaign includes 14 videos which were shared on

- social media and local radio stations, as well as Univision. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3iVLex22iSU>
- League of Women Voters MN conducted a Pledge to Vote text service to reach Hennepin County residents. They also produced and translated (into Hmong, Spanish and Somali) their 411-election voter guide voter toolkit, mailed the guide to 200 Hennepin County high schools; developed partnerships with the Student Council and Student Honor Society Association, MN Teen Activists, MN School Board Association and Education Minnesota to help reach schools and students.
 - CAPI led the Ignite Minnesota Asian Power (IMAP) collaboration to reach immigrants, refugee and communities of color in many languages including Hmong, Vietnamese, English, Karen/Karenni, Nepali and Bhutanese; led 59 volunteers and talked with 2,338 voters about their voting plans.
 - HIRED and Acer conducted GOTV events together as well as hosted a Brooklyn Park candidate forum. HIRED hosted GOTV canvassing sessions with volunteers and hosted two online Voting Rights information seminars.
 - Project for Pride in Living provided voting information to young adults in alternative schools.
 - LeadMN had a segment on MPR “Ballot Box 101: How to get first-time voters to the polls” and conducted a ‘class rap blitz’ week during which 125 volunteers delivered 5–10-minute talks in 658 college classes about how to register to vote and why elections are important for students; registered 3,021 students, and over 7,500 students developed a plan to vote.
 - Catholic Charities focused on peer-to-peer outreach. One peer-to-peer educator shared: “Voting is a privilege, a privilege that not all of us had at one point in history. Voting is important to make your voice heard to those who will represent us.”
 - Lutheran Social Services worked with Disability Services Staff to provide election information and did a “Voter Fellow Model” through peer-to-peer education to reach community members.
 - Hmong Broadcasting Company produced an election awareness episode with the Hennepin County Elections Manager about the importance of voting. The organization reached over 24k people on social media. Their absentee balloting social media post was reshared by elected officials and reached over 178k people.
 - Daryeel Youth Services spread election information through KALY Radio (Somali American Radio) and Tusmo Times (a bilingual monthly newspaper). Daryeel also attended and tabled at Somali Independence Day, Somali Week Soccer Tournament, Lake Street Open Streets, and Brian Coyle Annual Health Fair.
 - Center for Leadership and Neighborhoods focused a lot of their work on churches, partnering with local congregations to host 10 Table Fellowship community cookout events in their five neighborhoods of North Minneapolis and provide election information.
 - RISE conducted outreach on National Muslim Voter Registration Day at local mosques, encouraging registration, especially among Muslim women.
 - The ANIKA foundation partnered with the MN Timberwolves, YMCA, and other local organizations to put on GOTV events.
 - Somali TV of MN conducted voter outreach events at local mosques with mostly young adult participants.
 - The Aliveness Project centered their work around providing election information in tandem with resource distribution (meals, food shelf, etc.) focusing on ‘Why Voting is Important to the HIV Community’.
 - FairVote focused on in-person outreach (Open Streets, local parades, candidate forums, etc.)
 - People Serving People engaged kids and parents in voting simulation using cookie types. They also helped their residents understand how to vote and distributed flyers with instructions on how to get to their polling place.
 - Islamic Civic Society conducted outreach at mosques after Friday prayers, led informal discussions about the importance of voting and distributed community focused flyers about voting.
 - Center for Community Services conducted door knocking and provided transportation to polling places.

In 2022, contracted voter outreach organizations reached an estimated total of 562,000 people, of which an estimated 49,400 were face-to-face.

Also in 2022, Hennepin County Elections and Minneapolis Elections collaborated on a high school peer-to-peer education project. Four high school students met four times during the summer of 2022 to come up with a school-year voter outreach plan. The students focused on election education and registering eligible students to vote. The plan was then implemented by Minneapolis Elections interns in the fall of 2022.

Through December 2022, advertising strategies and media campaigns focused on preparing for 2022 elections using local radio outlets (Hmong Radio, KMOJ, La Raza, Somali American Radio), local print media (The Circle Newspaper, North News, Spokesman Recorder) and social media (Facebook). This information and messaging focused on preparing residents to vote and reached more than 950k residents.

After the November 2022 election, Hennepin County conducted a [post-election survey](#) to better understand voting methods and barriers to voting. 1,984 individuals responded to the survey which was an increase of 564 responses from the 2021 post-election survey. In January 2023, Elections staff conducted debriefs with several of the community organizations contracted in 2022. The feedback received during these sessions helped inform plans for 2023 contracts and outreach strategies.

So far in 2023 the Elections Department has continued to build on the success of the community partner outreach contracts project. Starting in May 2023 the Elections Department contracted with ten community organizations to do voter outreach work focusing on voter registration and expanded voter eligibility. These contracts will run through November 2023 and are up to \$10,000 per contract. The Elections Department used a direct-select process for establishing the ten voter outreach contracts in 2023. The contract organizations chosen for the 2023 election cycle were organizations who had previously contracted with Hennepin County Elections and completed successful voter outreach campaigns. These ten organizations serve a broad range of communities that experience various disparities in voter registration and turnout.

Hennepin County Elections is continuing work on a planned media campaign (digital advertising, print and radio advertising, on-air programming) focused on voter registration, expanded voter eligibility and absentee voting. An advertising agency has started social media advertisement placements encouraging voter registration. The advertising agency has drafted creative for campaigns focused on expanded voter eligibility and absentee voting. Ad placement began in late June 2023 and runs through the November 2023 election.

Additionally in 2023 the Minnesota legislature passed several historic election law changes including expanded voter eligibility for people on felony supervision and pre-registration eligibility for 16- and 17-year-olds. These two laws went into effect on June 1, 2023. The department will utilize various outreach strategies to inform voters of these and other election law changes impacting voter registration, voter eligibility and ensure voters are prepared to participate in their next election.

Key performance indicators

Hennepin County Elections evaluates the accomplishments of the contracted organizations based on the following:

- How many people they talked to, or registered
- Materials developed, translated, distributed
- Media utilized and engagement
- Events held or attended, and materials shared
- Other quantitative or qualitative information or stories and other activities and accomplishments

Key performance indicators for Hennepin County Elections outreach and engagement efforts include:

- Increased institutional knowledge of election process among contracted organizations
- Number of community organizations Hennepin County Elections contacts and engages
- Number of toolkits developed, translated materials and other voter education materials Hennepin County Elections produced and distributed
- Number of people reached through Hennepin County Elections' targeted media campaign
- Number of trainings for community organizations and service providers

In March 2023 Hennepin County Elections began hosting monthly office hour meetings with community partners to increase institutional knowledge, build trust and provide space for collaboration. Organizations who are invited to these meetings serve a wide variety of communities in Hennepin County including communities who face high barriers to voting. Topics for each meeting are informed by the interest of the organizations and have included voter registration tips, voting with special circumstances, election law changes, and explaining ranked choice voting. Over 120 staff from partner organizations are invited to these sessions.

In the past year, the Elections Department has updated seven outreach handouts based on recent election law changes including a new Restore the Vote handout and poster. In addition, all outreach materials that Hennepin County Elections has created have been or are in the process of being translated in the five most used languages in Hennepin County (Spanish, Somali, Hmong, Russian and Oromo).

Hennepin County Elections' 2023 digital advertisement campaign ramped up in June 2023 focusing on voter registration and Restore the Vote. As of June 30, 2023, Elections' advertisements on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube have had 13,131 impressions.

Next steps

In the next 3 months (July 2023–September 2023):

- Contracted community organizations will continue engaging their communities through a diverse set of tactics including in-person and virtual events, social media campaigns, educational material development and distribution and phone banking
- Contracted organizations will submit both midpoint progress reports and invoices in August (with final reports and invoices in November)
- Hennepin County Elections will continue to host monthly meetings with community partners to increase institutional knowledge, build trust and provide space for collaboration
- Hennepin County Elections will continue to work with community partners to educate communities that experience disparities in voter registration and turnout
- Hennepin County Elections will partner with the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State to place educational advertisements on Metro Transit buses and light rail trains to educate the public about expanded eligibility for people under felony supervision
- Hennepin County Elections will continue to translate and distribute voter outreach materials
- Hennepin County Elections will continue work on our targeted advertising campaign to ensure voters have updated voter eligibility information, voter registration information and are prepared to participate in their next election



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