

Hennepin County Progress Report

Pandemic Response Projects

January – March 2023



Executive summary	3
Pandemic recovery funds	4
Project inventory	5
EDUCATION DOMAIN	
Educational Services.....	6
EMPLOYMENT DOMAIN	
Employment Strategies	8
HEALTH DOMAIN	
Behavioral Health	12
Maternal Health.....	17
Public Health.....	20
Vaccine Incentives.....	24
HOUSING DOMAIN	
Housing Recovery.....	27
Services for People Experiencing Homelessness	30
INCOME DOMAIN	
Economic Recovery	35
Guaranteed Basic Income	39
JUSTICE DOMAIN	
Anti-Hate Initiative	41
COVID-19-Related Court Backlog	42
Violence Prevention.....	44
TRANSPORTATION DOMAIN	
Broadband and Digital Inclusion	46
OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE	
Countywide HVAC COVID-19 Response	48
Digital Experience.....	49
Engagement Services.....	53
Enterprise Integrated Data System	56
Information Technology	59
Information Technology: Community Connectivity	60
Voter Participation	61

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. 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.

In March 2022, the county board took action to use the dollars from ARPA-SLFRF for government services. Starting in 2022, the county will use 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.

This progress report summarizes Hennepin County's pandemic response projects from January 2023 through March 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 January 1, 2023 through March 31, 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 to six 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 178 different schools across the state who are connected to county services have received academic tutoring from Huntington Learning Center 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 math and reading)
- Increase in grade-level equivalent

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, 380 students have been referred for academic tutoring. Between October 1, 2022, and December 30, 2022, 113 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 24 points in reading and 26 points in math.
- Students started an average of 34.87% below grade level on the SORT deficit assessment, which is about 2-4 grade levels behind. After tutoring, the average deficit score is only 10.26% below grade level.
- Students have increased confidence levels and positive feelings towards school after receiving tutoring.
- A very strong positive statistically significant linear relationship exists between pre- and post-test scores on the SORT.

Figure 1: Pre - Post Sort Test

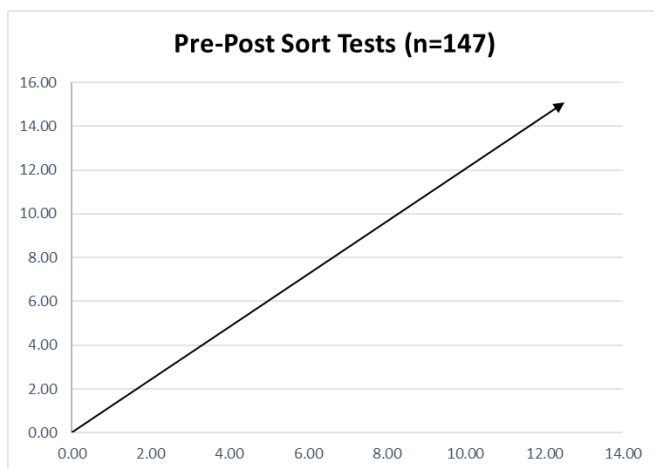
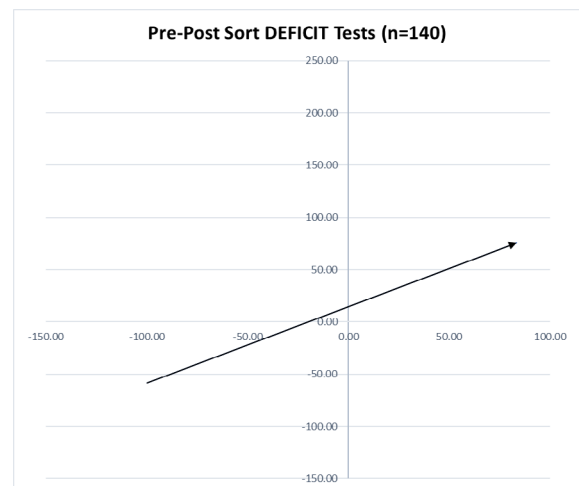


Figure 2: Pre - Post Sort Deficit Test



Next steps

During the next three to six months, tutoring services will continue for students currently receiving tutoring as needed and new students will continue to be enrolled in academic tutoring services. Academic assessments and reassessments will be completed on a schedule set by the contracted tutoring agency. Evaluation of tutoring outcomes will continue.

Given the significant positive outcomes of the educational tutoring services provided by Huntington Learning Center, this program will continue to operate after the pandemic response dollars are depleted. Funding for the program will be supported by property tax dollars, and ongoing efforts will be made to secure additional grant funding.

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 and single (no dependents), 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 one designated career navigator to support individuals referred (AIOIC is currently onboarding a second staff due to an increase in referrals).

Quarterly updates:

- To date, 76 referrals have been received (37 to AIOIC and 39 to GWES). 45 referrals were received in 2022 and 31 received in the first quarter of 2023.
- 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, a bicycle, steel-toed boots, interview clothing, work uniforms, pay-to-stay shelter nights, assistance with utilities and rent, fees to obtain certifications/licenses, and more.
- Monthly case consultation meetings are held for cases with program participation barriers identified by case managers and/or career navigators.
- Internal Hennepin County monthly management meetings are held to provide updates and discuss program planning.
- Expansion of pilot referral sources is underway. Agate Housing & Services, Hennepin County Streets to Housing, Catholic Charities Higher Ground, and Simpson Shelter case managers and advocates have been onboarded since December 2022. The Salvation Army and AICDC Homeward Bound shelter onboarding is in process.
- The stipend program rolled out January 1, 2023. Eight participants are currently earning stipends.
- A SharePoint collaborative site for Hennepin County and external community-based providers is nearing completion.
- A new referral form and combined Tennessen Notice/Privacy Rights/ROI form are in the works; the new forms will capture program data automatically.
- A program brochure is underway; the content has been approved by all partners and the Hennepin County design team is currently working on branding and designing it. Brochures will be provided to all onboarded case managers/advocates to share with interested participants.
- A PowerBI dashboard is currently being designed.

Workforce Development Roster Program and Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)

In October 2021, the Hennepin County Board authorized \$10 million for career pathways programming and \$3 million for the Workforce Leadership Council (WLC) as employment strategies 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 initial strategy for the \$10 million career pathways was to create a consortium of nonprofit organizations that could 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 what became the Workforce Development Roster Program.

The Workforce Leadership Council (WLC) is the platform the county will use 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 will provide space for critical conversations, learning, new partnerships and collaboration.

Quarterly updates:

- Three WLC work groups have been meeting with a continued focus that prioritizes three main challenges in the workforce:
 - Talent stability: The right salary and resources to do their jobs (ie.g., availability, retention, development, “finding the worker,” innovation, readiness, etc.).
 - Barriers to job participation: Any challenges that may prevent a person from getting or keeping a job or advancing their career (e.g., child care, transportation, housing).
 - Technology gaps: Businesses being equipped with the right technology and aligned training needed to compete and sustain in the virtual marketplace. Employees having right, relevant and aligned training to perform their jobs. Includes hardware and software.
 - Workforce Development Roster Program released a request for proposals covering the seven highest job sectors in demand: IT, health care, manufacturing, finance/banking, green/energy, hospitality, and transportation.
 - 20 roster organizations submitted proposals for consideration.
 - 11 organizations have been selected to implement career pathways programming for each of the job sectors. Contracts are currently being negotiated.
 - A total of \$2,275,109 has been awarded for the multi-sector program.
 - Workforce Development Roster program released a request for proposals for a career pathways program for security officers on behalf of Facility Services at Hennepin County, with Hennepin County as the employer partner.
 - The solicitation closed on March 28 and two roster organizations submitted proposals for consideration.
 - These proposals are currently undergoing evaluations for a recommendation.
 - Workforce Development Roster Program released the Helping Others by Providing Education (HOPE) Program request for proposals in collaboration with the Hennepin County Sheriff’s Office Adult Detention Center (ADC) and the Hennepin County Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCCR) to provide GED programming, vocational training and direct employment pathways to residents referred from these departments.
 - The RFP solicitation closed on March 28 and a total of four roster organizations submitted proposals for consideration.
 - These proposals are currently undergoing evaluations for recommendation.
 - Workforce Development Roster Program has executed a contract with Asian Media Access, Inc., (AMA) to provide services as a library navigator to patrons of Hennepin County libraries.
 - AMA will designate staff at three Hennepin County libraries (Minneapolis Central, Brookdale, and North Regional) to assist residents as they are referred by library staff. They will have drop-in hours, as well as offer some programmatic opportunities in the libraries (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.)
- Workforce Development Roster Program has executed a contract with Lutheran Social Services (LSS) to provide career development and career placement services for youth referred by Hennepin County.
- Program will serve individuals experiencing inequality, including people with disabilities, communities of color, low-income families, immigrants and refugees, dislocated workers, transition-age youth, justice-involved individuals, and workers needing individual placement and support services.
 - Services will include career exploration assessment, goal development, job search assistance, training and support services.
 - LSS staff will operate out of Center for Changing Lives in Minneapolis.

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

Evaluation efforts include:

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

Quarter results (January 1 – March 31, 2023):

- 31 new referrals received
- 48 participants currently open
- 8 participants employed part time; 6 participants employed full time; 2 participants are participating with Goodwill Easter Seals work experience program
- 18 participants currently seeking employment
- 6 participants enrolled in training courses and 15 participants exploring training opportunities
- 1 participant enrolled in GED class; 2 participants exploring educational opportunities

Workforce Development Roster Program and Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)

Evaluation efforts focus on:

- Workforce development services/solutions that directly address negative economic impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency and include a strong partnership with businesses
- Alignment with the country's disparity reduction efforts

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 PowerBI dashboard
- Expand referral source to additional adult homeless shelters

Workforce Development Roster Program and Workforce Leadership Council (WLC):

- Initiate roster program contracts, provide technical assistance to awarded grantees
- WLC meetings and work groups continue to refine scope, purpose statements and 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

The first quarter of 2023 has been a very successful start to the year. Ramp-up at the end of 2022 provided a solid foundation and the drive to start the new year off strong. Initiative teams have been successful in meeting their first-quarter goals as projected in the final quarter of 2022. With support from the Expanding School Based Mental Health Initiative team, the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) received 11 requests for proposal from approximately 23 providers within Hennepin County in response to its School Linked Mental Health grant. The goal is to get all contracted school mental health providers connected to the DHS grant to continue providing services post-ARP. This team also maintains service provision to 100% of Hennepin public and intermediate districts. There were incredible gains by the brand-new Sustaining Family Home Visiting's team of Public Health Nurses who were hired and onboarded beginning January 1, 2023. This team already implemented three evidence-based Family Home Visiting models during the first quarter of 2023.

The Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids initiative also made significant strides in the first quarter. Team members completed an incredible 307 mental health screens for children, an increase of 220 screens over the fourth quarter of 2022. The Embedded Social Workers initiative data reflects a 20% increase in opened cases, with 1,752 in the first quarter of 2023 compared to 1,467 in the fourth quarter of 2022. To manage the surge of service demands, this initiative team is working to hire additional social workers as they continue to expand their partnerships with police departments in Hennepin County. The Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services (FRSS) team hit a major milestone in the first quarter by meeting the anticipated goal of expanded weekend hours. FRSS services are now available every day.

Key performance indicators

All eleven initiatives have separate KPIs based on their individual approaches to supporting the mental health needs of Hennepin residents. The KPIs reported in the first quarter of 2023 reflect a jump start to the year. We continue to reach up to 7,700 students in our Expanding School Based Mental Health work, even as our initiative team reports that the post-pandemic level of support needs have continued to increase. The Developing and Expanding a Network of Culturally Specific Mental Health Services initiative consistently reached 15 cultural groups in Q1 with 479 residents served. While the Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids initiative screened 87 of the 369 cases assigned for screening in the last quarter of 2022, this team completed 307 mental health screenings in the first quarter of 2023. The number of residents served under the Reforming 911 initiative increased by 59%, from 68 in the fourth quarter of 2022 to 108 in the first quarter of 2023. 1800 Chicago served 634 residents, an increase of 28% over the previous quarter. A total of 1,752 residents were served this quarter under the Embedded Social Workers initiative. The Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services initiative served 80 families in the first quarter, which is 40% of the total 2023 goal.

Key milestones as of 01/2023

– Expanding School Based Mental Health

- In 231 schools/100% of 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 represented in the approximately 11 proposals submitted in response to the Minnesota DHS School Linked Mental Health request for proposals.
- Goals for second quarter: Update performance measures for contracted School Based Mental Health providers to include treatment plan outcomes and demographic data.
- Sustainability: Partners to maximize health insurance reimbursements services, DHS School Linked Mental Health grants, and school district contributions. Working with our lobbyists around potential state and federal funding opportunities for school-linked mental health.

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

- Second collaboration meeting with providers held March 2023.
- Impact report available in April 2023 after provider site visits conclude.
- 15 cultural groups consistently reached.
- 7 awareness workshops, 11 healing circle engagements
- 476 residents served
- Goals for second quarter: Continue provider engagement for mental health awareness campaign. Convene providers for June conversation on service opportunities and gaps.
- Sustainability: Contracts intended to be one-time funding; plan to sustain a portion of the contracts via other funding sources such as AMHI grant.

– Sustaining Family Home Visiting

- 32 public health nurses, five supervisors and Family Home Visiting program manager started in their positions on January 1, 2023.
- Successfully implemented three evidence-based Family Home Visiting models under Hennepin County Public Health Family Home Visiting services (Family Connects, Nurse-Family Partnership, Healthy Families of America).
- Goals for second quarter: Establish capacity-tracking data for Family Home Visiting services by completion of the quarter.
- Maintain 60% of Family Home Visiting target case capacity in the second quarter.
- Hire supervisor for the intake, referral and outreach team by completion of second quarter.

Implement coordinated intake/referral system for Hennepin County Public Health Family Home Visiting services.

- Sustainability: Explore partnerships and options for ongoing funding.

– Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids (CC4K)

- The program is fully staffed with seven screeners, one administrative assistant, and 1 office support specialist.
- 307 children’s mental health screenings were completed, resulting in 27 positive screening results (~8.8% positive screening rate) and 13 (48%) of those were referred for diagnostic assessments.
- Screening of all children birth to 18 years in open child protection case management work groups is occurring.
- 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 work groups began for the development of a CC4K policy and procedure manual and the exploration of a referral process from CC4K to family home visiting programs.
- Collaborative meetings were held with the Hennepin County Mental Health Center to enlist the participation of trained mental health staff to participate in children’s mental health consultations.
- Goals for second quarter: Hire a new CC4K supervisor; enhance the CC4K Power BI report to include ZIP codes and begin to target specific cities’ resources to support children and families residing in those locations; develop strategies to address the identified disparity of White children being referred for children’s mental health services more than Black, Indigenous, and children of color; continue to see an increased number of screenings completed.

– Reforming 911

- Program is fully staffed as of January 1 and taking calls from officers Monday – Friday 9 a.m.– 10 p.m.
- Referrals from dispatchers continue to increase: 106 cases opened in first quarter, 68 referrals made for community supports.
- Alternative Response pilot dispatched to 139 calls in the first quarter.
- Planning continues in the development of a second Alternative Response Team with anticipated launch third quarter.
- Planning continues in the development of a co-responder pilot with anticipated launch third quarter.
- Contracting process underway for three additional cities; anticipated completion date end of second quarter.
- Exploring partnership with Hennepin Health to support high utilizers of emergency medical services.
- Goals for second quarter: Identify additional ways to increase officer utilization of program.
- Sustainability: Explore opportunities via Medical Assistance billing, local investments and grants

– Expanding access and hours at 1800 Chicago

- Expanded to Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 9 p.m. April 1, 2022, and updated website.
- Continuing collaboration with public safety partners to increase utilization including ongoing monthly Crisis Intervention Team trainings with new officers, roll calls with Minneapolis Police Department, and administrative announcements for officers. Completed roll calls with morning, mid-day, and evening shifts in all five precincts within Minneapolis Police Department.
- Continued increase in Walk-in Center traffic, up to 650 visits per month.
- 634 unique residents served in first quarter.
- Hired and onboarded RN, supervisors, and peer support specialist (person with lived or living experience with mental health, substance use and/or criminal justice system involvement).
- Goals for second quarter: Continue to collaborate with the Public Safety Facility (PSF) to encourage officers to bring residents directly to the Behavioral Health Center at 1800 Chicago in lieu of the jail for low-level livability or nuisance offenses — the type of offense that is generally driven by some underlying condition that could be addressed at the center; provide PSF with printed materials to review and share with officers in the booking area, which train officers how to use the first responder drop-off function: Behavioral-Health-Center-1800-Chicago-Drop-Off-Directions-First-Responders.pdf (hennepin.us).
- Sustainability: Financial plan includes billing mechanisms for operated social service staff and philanthropic partners, and partnering with Hennepin County Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic for psychiatric services.

– Expanding the Embedded Police Social Workers program

- Embedded in 28 police departments that support 42 cities by end of second quarter 2023.
- 21 staff in place; remaining 4 in place by end of second quarter.
- 1,752 cases opened in first quarter with 665 referrals made for community supports.
- Hiring process underway for new departments coming online; expected completion by end of second quarter.
- Develop and share embedded social worker role clarity document by end of third quarter.
- Goals for second quarter: Increase number of individuals served face to face in the community.
- Sustainability: Explore sustainability opportunities via Medical Assistance billing, local investments and grants.

– 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 three Trauma-Informed Care trainings and offered CEUs 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.
- Goals for second quarter: Launch Rule 20.01 Triage and Response Implementation, initiate subgroup workplans (Juvenile Legal System Collaboration, SUD Youth Supports, Family & Caregiver Support, Exploration of Youth & Family Center) and deliverables, select Juvenile Detention Center behavioral health screening tool, continued facilitating trauma resiliency workshops and communities of practice, and initiate Children’s Mental Health expansion within the Transitional Age Youth Unit.

– Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services (FRSS)

- Expanded FRSS hours to include weekend hours (every day 10 a.m. – 10 p.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.
- Goals for second quarter: Integrate Child and Adolescent Needs and Strength tool (CANS) with FRSS providers, identify FRSS school partnerships 5 new schools, recruit parent organizations.

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

- Pilot launched fourth quarter 2022 with 9 child protection units including Ongoing Investigations and Indian Child Welfare Act
- 24 referrals since October 2022; 14 families served.
 - 13 index 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 non-index youth in out of home placement requesting reunification with index parent.
- Initial formal outcomes anticipated fourth quarter 2023.
- Goals for second quarter: Stabilize contract partner teams; stabilize consultation aspect; ensure child protection staff awareness; reach full capacity by end of third quarter; strategize to double capacity; host expansion planning meetings with key stakeholders; proceed in hiring process for two additional staff; continue outreach to partners.
- Sustainability: Provider to ensure Medical Assistance billing is maximized; utilize cost savings from out of home placement to cover gaps.

– Launching a mental health awareness campaign

- First quarter reporting (media impact since March 21, 2023):
 - African American therapist and Hennepin representative on air with KMOJ radio March 20; interviewed about awareness campaign and value to Black community.
 - Traditional media (e.g., billboards, transit (77%), mall advertising, etc.) yielded 29 million impressions.
 - Community media (e.g., KMOJ (31%), KFAI (27%), Hmong Times (20%)) yielded 1 million impressions.
 - Digital media yielded 10 million impressions (Facebook, programmatic display, Instagram, Tik Tok, etc.)
 - Although traffic on www.SeeMentalHealth.org non-English pages (Spanish, Somali, Hmong) is not extremely high, engagement is — with users spending over four minutes on non-English pages.
 - The videos targeting seniors (2.17% click-through rate) and veterans (1.55% click-through rate) are significantly outperforming the youth (0.98%) video on Snapchat.
 - The traditional campaign is effectively driving website traffic (www.seementalhealth.org), with 1,118 users reaching the site directly. 30,955 new users.
- Goals for second quarter: Continue media outlet interview opportunities. Launch press release to media networks. Work on community engagement and partnership building with priority audience.
- Sustainability: Strategize communication and coordination across multiple stakeholders and media traffic and adapt messaging tactics based on key performance indicators.

Next steps

Goals for second quarter 2023 include:

- The Sustaining Family Home Visiting initiative will establish capacity tracking data for Family Home visiting services by completion of second quarter.
- Goals for the Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids (CC4K) initiative include hiring a new CC4K supervisor and enhancing the CC4K Power BI report to include ZIP codes, which will help target specific cities' resources to support children and families residing in those locations and sustain or increase the number of screenings completed.
- The Reforming 911 initiative plans to identify additional ways to increase officer utilization of the program.
- The Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services (FRSS) is planning to integrate the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strength tool (CANS) with FRSS providers, identify FRSS school partnerships in 5 new schools and recruit parent organizations.
- Second quarter goals for the mental health awareness campaign initiative include the continuation of media outlet interview opportunities, launch of press release to media networks, and community engagement and partnership building with priority audiences.

HEALTH DOMAIN

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

The contracted providers delivering care and services in community are continuing to make progress on expansion of programs and services for maternal health clients as part of phase one of the initiative. Many providers are focusing on social determinants of health and connecting patients to supportive resources to address the full range of patients’ needs. Hennepin Healthcare continues to embed a trauma-informed care model for staff at East Lake Clinic. Community health workers and social workers are using a trauma-informed care lens with patients, developing a process to survey and connect patients to trauma-responsive resources. To ensure the best mental health outcomes for infants and families, Hennepin Healthcare is carrying out infant mental health trainings in partnership with Minnesota Association for Children’s Mental Health for early intervention. One of the ways Hennepin Healthcare is addressing food insecurity is by providing patients in need with immediate food support in the form of culturally inclusive food bags that are distributed to more than 40 locations across the health care system. They are also partnering with UCare and Open Arms of Minnesota to support a cohort of high-risk pregnant persons selected by midwives and OB/GYN providers with nutritious meals during their pregnancies and for eight weeks postpartum. NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center has completed hiring two community health workers and additional staff to support maternal health programming and full integration across the organization, with the vision of providing holistic perinatal care that addresses social determinants of health and referrals to internal and external resources. Roots Community Birth Center has increased postpartum home visits, and this greater accessibility has helped connect patients with services and treatment for those experiencing stressors. Home visits have also helped increase the breastfeeding rate back up to 99% of patients, a rate Roots saw pre-pandemic.

To support expansion of services within Public Health clinical services, a reproductive health educator was onboarded in March and will provide navigation support and address needs surrounding reproductive health care for patients at the Red Door Clinic. The second clinical position supported through expansion of services is a maternal child health RN with Healthcare for the Homeless who is working to address gaps in care and help patients at the People Serving People clinic navigate maternal health resources and services.

The birth justice collaborative that formed through phase two of the Maternal Health Initiative is making progress on a birth justice strategic plan. Community feedback gathered at convenings last fall was foundational to developing strategies in the birth justice plan. Beginning in January 2023, a leadership coalition of 50 individuals were charged with transforming the community engagement themes into draft strategies and actions. The draft plan will be brought back to community in April for additional feedback. Then, the leadership coalition will deliver a finalized birth justice plan that will be a blueprint to guiding the final implementation phase of the initiative. Themes and strategies are currently centering around five categories of action for improved maternal health, including: acknowledge and address impacts of racism, advocate for and radically reform policy and payment for care delivery, create culturally meaningful workforce pathways, enforce a coordinated system of antiracism accountability, and invest in a network of community-credentialed healing providers and resources. The process and results of the birth justice plan will be shared through an overarching communications plan. The Maternal Health Initiative core team will work with HCPH 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 led by Ramsey County Public Health.

Key performance indicators

Key performance indicators were established for the project overall, as well as performance measures with contracted providers. In the first quarter of 2023, 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

- Number of individuals served through expansion of Public Health clinical services
 - 74 individuals served
- Total number of individuals served through contracted providers Hennepin Healthcare, NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center, and Roots Community Birth Center
 - 895 total individuals served
- Number of training and educational sessions offered, topics covered and attendance
 - 1 trauma-informed care training held
 - 3 infant mental health trainings held
 - 12 childbirth classes held
 - 525 community members and health care professionals attended trainings and classes
- Number of individuals receiving referrals to supportive resources
 - Food support resources
 - 21 high-risk pregnant and postpartum individuals enrolled in a meal program cohort to support food security
 - 5,103 food bags distributed to patients experiencing food insecurity
 - 31 individuals screened and connected to trauma-responsive support resources
 - 74 individuals referred to social determinants of health resources, such as behavioral health, nutrition, dental, and social work and human services
- Number of visits completed with patients, including prenatal and postpartum OB/GYN, doula and midwifery care
 - 365 total visits with practitioners
 - 80 doula visits

Develop and invest in community-initiated solutions to reduce disparities

- Number of individuals participating on the leadership coalition who are creating the birth justice plan
 - 50 total individuals: 30 community members, 20 health care systems and government representatives
- Initial findings report of birth justice plan received March 2023

Throughout 2023, Family Health area staff are planning quarterly check-in meetings with contracted providers to maintain regular communication about program updates, invoicing, and support needed from the county. Numerous providers were challenged by hiring delays and staff turnover in 2022, and responsiveness to the circumstances on the ground allows partners and providers to focus on the necessary stabilization work for expansion of programming while county staff remain informed about program budgets and spending.

Evaluating the initiative

The team supporting management and implementation of the initiative is focusing on evaluating implementation of the initiative and completion of deliverables. Additionally, 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. The University of Minnesota's Center for Antiracism Research for Health Equity will be re-engaged when the initiative is in a place for outcomes evaluation focusing on the impacts of actual interventions provided to individuals and families to align to their expertise and timing for implementation.

Next steps

Over the next three months, the birth justice plan will continue to be developed and revised, with anticipated finalization in July 2023. The plan will be a blueprint for the final phase of the initiative, where additional investments will support community models implementing the recommendations set forth in the birth justice plan. By acting upon the strategies identified in the plan, implementation intends to center and uplift the wisdom inherent in communities, reduce institutional power, transfer power to community through design/re-design, decision making, and resources, and leverage partnerships.

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: In the first quarter of 2023, the community-based infectious disease (CBID) team completed 10 immunization clinics at six homeless shelters within Hennepin County. There were 80 adults experiencing homelessness vaccinated: 12 received the COVID-19 monovalent primary series, 45 received the COVID bivalent booster, and 45 received the quadrivalent influenza vaccine.

COVID caused major disruptions in routine health services including childhood vaccinations, and rates of childhood immunizations declined, particularly for children living in poverty. In the second quarter of 2023, the CBID team will pilot easy-access, community-based pediatric vaccine clinics to improve vaccine rates in children post-pandemic. The first clinic is scheduled at Hennepin County Brookdale Library during CDC's National Infant Immunization Week on April 27. Measles immunizations will be an area of focus due to a number of recent measles cases in the metro area. More to come on childhood immunization efforts in the second quarter of 2023.

Infection control in long-term care facilities (LTCF): The LTCF Infection Prevention program held a virtual tabletop exercise on January 10 with over 200 participants who tested their response plans in response to a simulated mystery illness occurring at their facility. The team also began 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. Participants include infection prevention staff at LTCFs who review and provide feedback on toolkit modules weekly. The team also began work on a project to strengthen its capacity in Healthcare associated Infection and Antimicrobial Resistance (HAI/AR) prevention and response. The team held two strategy planning meetings with stakeholders including Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) subject matter experts, LTCF infection preventionists (IPs), infectious disease physicians, acute-care IPs, and gerontologists. The intended outcome of these meetings is to create a plan that guides local stakeholders' collaborative data collection and sharing, ultimately informing HAI/AR prevention activities in our community. Action plan implementation will take place via a newly formed HAI/AR subcommittee of the Long-Term Care Infection Prevention Coalition of Hennepin County.

Prepare and respond to emergencies

A COVID-19 after-action review was completed on December 30, 2022. Findings from the review were assembled in an after-action report which identified improvements that can be made to Hennepin County Public Health's workforce capability and capacity for responding to public health emergencies. The report's findings have been incorporated into a COVID-19 improvement plan which details strategic and operational corrective actions associated with timelines for completion occurring during the next two years. Hiring processes are underway to fill vacant Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response positions and in February a new position was hired for workforce capacity development and implementation.

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. Community conversations focused on the initial themes of the work continued, including reconnecting community to primary care and preventive services, and mental wellbeing. A full budget and work plan for funding allocations for 2023 and 2024 is complete and includes a large community request for proposals planned for release in later 2023, support for smaller community organizations on their path to increasing wellbeing, community-clinic connections, and internally focused work on health education. This initiative partnered with CHIP (updates below) to include funding focused on reconnection to primary care and mental wellbeing in the request for proposals that closed the end of March 2023. The request received 85 applications and we anticipate funding between one and three projects.

Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP): CHIP collaborated with public health promotion/chronic disease colleagues (above), with the department's Trauma Informed Team, and with the Hennepin County Children's Mental Health Collaborative to post a request for proposals in February 2023. Collective funding among the organizations is roughly \$480,000. The request received 85 project applications (double what had been expected) and the review process has begun to select awardees. This funding followed the latest round of mini-grants dispersed in summer 2022. The nine rounds carried out since 2020 have sparked an exponential increase in community interest in CHIP's work such that 32% of the recent applicants have either been funded previously by CHIP or are affiliated in some way with CHIP. One example is The Hope Project which received a \$5,000 mini-grant in the summer of 2022. The Hope Project focused on Black and Indigenous males in North Minneapolis and was called "Permission to Grieve." After project completion, the executive director presented the work to the CHIP executive committee. Following this meeting, Allina Health provided The Hope Project with an additional \$10,000 to replicate the work in South Minneapolis. Further, additional donations including baby clothes and other necessities were provided to community members in need connected to the project. Since these two projects were so well received, the organization stated intent to apply for the larger request for proposals. If funded, this would further build the organization's capacity to serve communities impacted by health disparities.

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 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. The team is currently analyzing the findings from the scan. A web presence devoted to Age-Friendly will be posted on hennepin.us in the second quarter of 2023 and the team is working on additional communications strategies to share the initiative more broadly with partner organizations and residents. A logic model and evaluation plan are complete and will be shared back with the implementation team in the second quarter.

Coordinate Early Childhood Development Strategies: The Early Childhood (EC) coordinator continues to make connections across programs in a variety of ways. The WIC and Family Home Visiting (FHV) pilot developed and launched by the EC coordinator has resulted in a 65% increase for referrals of families to FHV per quarter. Additionally, the coordinator led the planning and implementation of a new community advisory board. This board will create connections between early childhood programs in Hennepin County and advise on continuous quality improvement projects for the FHV team, and meet grant requirements for the FHV program. Finally, the EC coordinator completed a draft early childhood strategic plan. Next steps for this work include presenting the plan to the community advisory board and other early childhood community partners for feedback and identifying opportunities to collaborate on activities of the 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 Hennepin County Public Health to provide data on the health status and the factors that affect health for adults in Hennepin County, for use 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 began in May 2022 and was complete as of November 30, 2022. During this reporting period data was cleaned and duplicate surveys were removed. The research team is currently weighting the data and preparing reports for public dissemination, to begin in early April 2023. The final sample for each of the 10 reporting areas was above the goal of 700 completed surveys.

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 further 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. In addition to this work in health and racial equity, this position will scope out how best to meet the ongoing needs of Hennepin County cities that do not have their own public health department and understand public health's role in violence prevention. The new staff person completed the 2023 health and racial equity plan in March 2023 and created a project charter for the project with Hennepin County 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 and MPX vaccination progress is being captured internally using Power BI.
- Beginning to address childhood immunizations with a focus on measles prevention, by providing community-based immunization clinics, and by monitoring measles immunization status of children in Hennepin County shelter. The past two measles outbreaks in Hennepin County have disproportionately impacted children living in shelter.

By December 31, 2023, 90% of HCPH staff will be trained in emergency preparedness.

- Currently staff are being hired in the Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response program area to fill vacant positions. The workforce development coordinator who was hired in February has initiated a training needs assessment project that will inform an integrated preparedness plan to outline multi-year training and exercise activities which will support achieving this goal.

By December 31, 2023, all health promotion community partners will have received technical assistance in implementing policy, system and environmental changes to mitigate the impact of COVID 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.
- The Chronic Disease COVID-19 recovery work is developing outcomes and metrics in line with the policies, systems, and environmental changes that Health Promotion already tracks.

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

- The strategic plan first draft has been completed. The next steps include review by community partners in early childhood work.

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.

Next steps

Prepare and respond to emergencies

- Two new positions dedicated to Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response workforce capacity development have been hired and they will work on a training plan for departmental personnel. Following formal approval of the COVID-19 after action report and improvement plan, corrective actions that are based on the report's findings will be completed to support increasing our capacity and capability to respond to future emergencies.

Prevent the spread of communicable diseases

- Communicable disease efforts will include transitioning some efforts to other infectious disease outbreaks such as TB, HIV, syphilis, and childhood-vaccine-preventable diseases like measles and polio.
- The LTCF infection control team will complete seven site visits with facilities to improve infection prevention practices by the end of 2023.

Promote healthy communities and healthy behaviors

- Release an initial request for proposals to the community focusing on mental wellbeing and community-clinic linkages. Partner with new staff across the county to build out mental wellbeing initiatives and activities. Award contracts to strong applicants in the request released in partnership with CHIP and begin contract management activities. Complete an environmental scan and work plan focused on health education activities.
- The CHIP executive committee will expand membership to include several new community organizations representing Black, Indigenous, and people of color. An interactive map showing funded projects will be revised to include the latest round of 33 summer grantees.
- The Age-Friendly implementation team will report back to the implementation team on the results of the six-month priorities identified in the second quarter of 2023. The team will create action steps based on the internal policy scan to increase age friendliness and launch a more comprehensive communications plan. A new set of six-month priorities will be identified in April 2023.
- The early childhood coordinator will present the first draft of 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.

Assure an adequate local public health infrastructure

- Prepare SHAPE 2022 reports for public dissemination.
- Share the Health and Racial Equity five-year plan departmentwide and begin implementation in second quarter 2023.
- Launch an internal work group to scope out the department's role in violence prevention in second quarter 2023.
- Develop a plan to establish a coordinated approach for working with cities to further public health goals by third quarter 2023.
- Begin implementation of a coordinated plan for working with cities by four quarter 2023.

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

Reminder/recall immunization efforts:

ImmuLink sends out three rounds of reminder/recall letters or postcards to a portion of our population who are overdue for or recommended to receive immunizations per the Minnesota Immunization Information Collection (MIIC) 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 mailing during that year.

In 2023 ImmuLink will be sending three rounds of reminder recall letters to a portion of our population who are overdue or recommended to receive immunizations. Cohorts that will be receiving letters include children aged 6–20 months, 5-year-olds, and 15–16-year-olds. Estimated first-round mailing numbers include:

- 21,502 letters to the 6–20-month cohort
- 14,855 letters to the 5-year-old cohort
- 14,632 letters to the 15–16-year cohort

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

If a child or adolescent is recommended or overdue for one or more shots in the respective ACIP (Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices) immunization series, they will be sent a letter at their current mailing address. This 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 general 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. 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 (April). During this period work on this activity focused on campaign planning.

Target audience:

The campaign will target all Hennepin County parents with children birth to 17 years. Additional emphasis will be placed on parents who live in Hennepin County ZIP codes with lower-than-average childhood vaccine rates.

Objectives:

The campaign ads will build awareness and encourage residents to get their children vaccinated. Additionally, the campaign ads will direct people to Hennepin County's childhood immunization resources website (hennepin.us/immunizations) and the Hennepin County main phone line where people can get help connecting to childhood immunizations in English, Spanish, Somali, and Hmong.

Channels:

Ads will appear on diverse community radio, streaming TV (kids programming), paid social media, digital video, and display banners. Hennepin County and Metre — the marketing company selected to place campaign ads — chose these channels after conducting market research.

Results and next steps:

No results to report for this period. The new campaign will be in market during April and May 2023. Campaign analytics will be shared in the next quarterly update.

Key performance indicators

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.

- As of March 24, 2023, nine vaccine clinics have been held at five shelters within Hennepin County.
 - These shelters include Homeward Bound, People Serving People, Agate — First Covenant, Agate — "510" building, and YouthLink.
 - The team is scheduled to go to Simpson shelter on March 27 and April 24 and return to YouthLink on March 29.
- The CBID team has 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 and influenza vaccines, they received one gift card (as opposed to one gift card for influenza and one gift card for COVID).
- Of the 80 individuals that were vaccinated:
 - 12 received the COVID monovalent primary series (either initiating or completing the series).
 - 45 received the COVID bivalent booster.
 - 45 received the quadrivalent influenza vaccine.

- The CBID team has currently depleted its supply of influenza vaccine and will only be offering COVID vaccine moving forward.
 - Unfortunately, because it is late in the influenza season, the CBID team was unable to acquire additional influenza vaccine from our suppliers (Cardinal Health and McKesson).

Next steps

Public Health will continue the effort to reduce vaccine disparities while leveraging existing trusted community leader influence. Additionally, Public Health will continue incentive use to address post-COVID vaccine efforts to get families on track with lagging immunizations.

COVID-19 has had direct and indirect impacts on the health of our community including sharp decreases in regular childhood immunizations. The percentage of two-year-old children in Hennepin County who are up to date with immunizations fell from 65.8 percent to 60.5 percent between 2019 and 2021.

Strategies include:

- Additional childhood immunization campaign activities: A campaign will likely run again in 2023 after the results of the December 2022 campaign are analyzed.
- Additional reminder/recall immunization efforts: Reminder/recall efforts target parents whose children have fallen behind with immunizations and alert them to their child’s vaccine status and provide information about where to obtain low-cost immunizations.

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 and Indigenous people and people of color. Of individuals requesting pandemic-related emergency rental assistance in Hennepin County from 2020-2022, nearly two-thirds had incomes below 30% of the area median income (AMI), and 80% were Black and Indigenous people and people of color affected by disparities.

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 aim to create or preserve approximately 2,000 units of affordable housing and support more than 100 households in buying homes through the following activities:

1. Investments to immediately increase affordable multifamily housing production, such as:
 - a. Gap and acceleration funding for affordable housing projects serving populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.
 - b. 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.
2. 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.
3. Homeownership programs targeting populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Progress narrative

At the end of 2022, Hennepin County Housing and Economic Development (HED) had completed a fifth request for proposals for affordable housing, totaling \$37.9 million in awards to affordable housing developers to create or preserve 2,939 units of affordable housing across 35 projects. Those 35 projects span five program components: affordable housing accelerator, homeownership, NOAH upreservation, and pandemic cost increase.

In a typical housing development, the county does not spend funds until two to three years after a funding award, and units become available another year after that. Between the award and unit availability, the developer is securing additional financing, working with all funders to negotiate complex project specifications and agree upon a common set of legal documents, executing a financial closing, and completing construction.

For pandemic recovery funds, staff have implemented policies to drastically shorten this process. Expediting the process meets funding requirements, and more importantly meets county goals to open doors faster.

In January through March 2023, staff executed a funding agreement for one project to create 17 homeownership opportunities. This agreement totaled \$600,000 in pandemic recovery funding.

- Housing Recovery component: Affordable homeownership from conversion of tax-forfeited land
 - Project: Minneapolis TFL Properties: Contract with the City of Minneapolis to fund conversion of 17 properties on tax-forfeited land to affordable homeownership opportunities

In total, HED has executed funding agreements for 14 of the 35 projects, which will create or preserve 1,754 units of affordable rental housing, and create 17 homeownership opportunities. The signed agreements total over \$15 million in pandemic recovery funding.

Program component	Number of project awards	Award amount	Project agreements executed	Funds encumbered	Affordable units funded
Affordable Housing Accelerator	18 projects	\$27,666,076	4 projects	\$7,833,000	428
Homeownership	7 projects	\$3,328,000	1 project	\$600,000	17
NOAH Preservation	5 projects	\$4,905,924	4 projects	\$4,605,000	986
Pandemic Cost Increase	5 projects	\$2,000,000	5 projects	\$2,000,000	340
Total awarded	35 projects	\$37,900,000	14 projects	\$15,038,924	1,771

The remaining \$8.1 million is allocated to single room occupancy (SRO) housing acquisition and rehabilitation. As of the end of March 2023, HED:

- facilitated acquisition of the Robin Hotel (by third party MAC-V);
- awarded funding to create housing at the University Inn, and completed the bidding for the conversion to permanent housing;
- completed building inventory, structural analysis and environmental assessment of the Aqua City Motel, and submitted applications to the city;
- finalized building plans for the Metro Inn, and released a request for proposals for an operator; and
- completed HVAC improvements to the Federal Plaza.

Since inception, HED has expended over \$2.3 million on SRO acquisition and rehabilitation, and nearly \$7.9 million on pandemic recovery contracts.

Key performance indicators

Production goals

Housing Recovery production goals were to create or preserve 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 2,939 units, and is close to the homeownership goal with 77 units.

Affordability goals

Current progress is also surpassing the county and HRA 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)

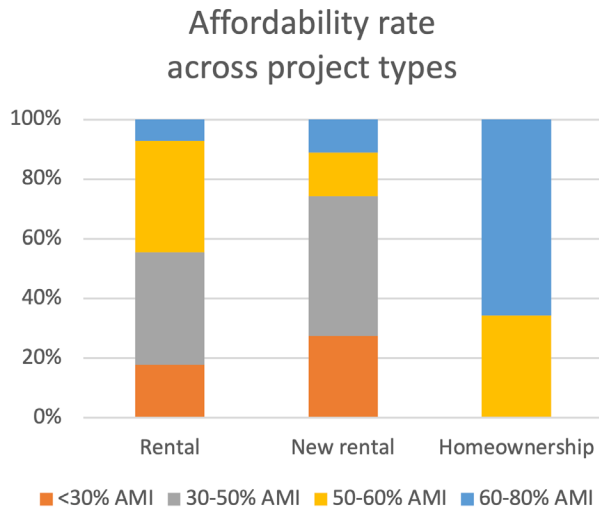
- Outcome: 27% of new units financed through Housing Recovery are affordable at or below 30% AMI

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

- Outcome: 74% 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: 33% of homeownership opportunities financed through Housing Recovery are anticipated to be affordable at or below 60% AMI



Next steps

Over the next three months, HED will continue undertaking financial closings (at which funding agreements are executed) and expenditures in order to hit our ultimate goal of opening doors to new and preserved affordable housing.

Planned activities for April-June 2023

- Continue rehabilitation of SRO properties, with estimated completion in third quarter of this year for two buildings
- Negotiate documents for sale of University Inn for long-term SRO housing
- Plan for transfer of additional SRO properties to develop long-term housing
- Negotiate and execute seven funding agreements:
 - Emerson Village: 40 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis
 - Plymouth Avenue Apartments: 63 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis
 - Shelby Commons: 46 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis
 - Tessman Ridge: 63 units of affordable housing in Brooklyn Park
 - Union Park Flats: 60 units of affordable housing in Saint Louis Park
 - Whittier Community Housing: 85 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis
 - Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity — TFL conversion: 4 homeownership opportunities in Minneapolis
- Expend over \$2 million
- Continue outreach to all funded projects to confirm all will close by December 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

Hennepin Shelter Hotline — diversion

- Hennepin Shelter Hotline went live on January 3, 2023.
- Selected provider started off with a slightly smaller staff than originally planned due to hiring issues, so Hennepin Shelter Hotline schedule has been adjusted until the agency is able to be fully staffed. Anticipated date for this is April 1, 2023.
- Community presentation made on March 28, 2023, to introduce and garner feedback from community partners including people with lived experience on March 28, 2023.
- Communications toolkit shared with broader community on January 1, 2023.

Streets to Housing — encampment response

- Streets to Housing continues to make a significant impact in the landscape of unsheltered homelessness. Leading with trauma-informed, housing-focused services, Streets to Housing spends time working in encampments and other known locations to conduct housing assessments and triage to benefits and 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 and are transparent and posted here: [Help for unsheltered homelessness | Hennepin County](#)
- Streets to Housing along with another Hennepin County planning analyst, are facilitating an "unsheltered" case consultation meeting that focuses on households with open referrals, that are new to unsheltered homelessness, are 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 Homeless Management Information System (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.

Board and Lodge Capital

- All Board and Lodge Capital Improvement contracts have been signed as of this quarter, with the exception of the outdoor addition and bathroom/laundry renovations at Pursuit Homotel. It is anticipated that the contract will be signed within the next quarter. Planning and ordering of supplies happened this quarter for the renovations of the 180 Degrees Clifton Place building, and the first of the board and lodge award funds were drawn for this work in January 2023.
- In addition, bids were completed and selected for the contractors of the 180 Degrees, Missions Inc., and Pursuit Homotel projects.
- Missions Inc. signed its contract this quarter and conducted a construction kickoff meeting on March 20, 2023, with its staff and staff from its contractor and architect.
- Pursuit Homotel began work on the installation of air conditioning units in its building.
- Cullen Homes and Pursuit Homotel are working with the City of Minneapolis and a representative from the Hennepin County Facilities Department on approval/building code requirements for the installation of air conditioning units in their buildings.

24/7 shelter

- Four agencies were funded to operate 24/7, which impacted six shelter locations.
- All funded programs have been at full capacity, operating 24/7 and providing shelter guests with meals and housing-focused services.
- Four of the six shelter locations have been trained or will be trained in the next month for the Hennepin County Education and Training Pilot Program.
 - Through this pilot, shelter case managers will be able to make referrals to community organizations that help people experiencing homelessness meet and exceed their education and training goals, which will increase employment and income.

Low-barrier shelter

Avivo Village

- Working with staff at Avivo Village to move their shelter referral form to HMIS, which will make their referral process more data-informed and equitable.

AICDC Homeward Bound

- Worked with AICDC Homeward Bound to participate in the Hennepin County Education and Training Pilot Program. They will be trained in the next month.

Self-pay at Harbor Light Center

- Harbor Light Center continues to shelter all guests without requiring payment.
- Harbor Light Center is renovating their second and third 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 first floor during construction, which is expected to be finished by the end of June 2023.

Homeless to Housing — housing-focused case management

During this reporting period, the Homeless to Housing program continued to fill open positions. The team is closer than ever to being fully staffed with only four open positions between the four units. Likewise, onboarding newer staff has continued and the supervisors are ensuring that all staff are assigned full caseloads (18–20). Our unsheltered specialists continued their partnership with Metro Transit's Homeless Action team and provided resources, referrals and housing case management in the community to our unsheltered residents who frequent the transit system. Homeless to Housing began using the by-name list in HMIS to identify clients. This new practice will allow us to more equitably assign clients to case managers and focus in on system gaps and needs identified in the data.

Additional work during this quarter:

- Created a “BOLO (be on the lookout)” list so staff could have one location to note clients they are looking for; case aides refer to this list and are assisting case managers in locating these clients to connect/reconnect them to their housing case managers.
- Continued case consults in the larger staff meeting – facilitating problem-solving and barrier-busting between units.
- Set up a central location for staff to meet to obtain resources from supervisors (bus tokens, phones, etc.) and encourage peer support and connection.
- Brought in trainers on fentanyl abuse and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Supervisors participated in “Reflective Conversations” with Human Resources – a guided conversation reconnecting staff with their purpose for doing this work.
- Created a workflow and coverage schedule for case aides to address same-day/ last-minute tasks related to housing clients.

Key performance indicators

Hennepin Shelter Hotline — Diversion

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- From January 3 – March 22, 2023:
 - 719 households served that were in the target population
 - 199 or 28% successfully diverted
 - 117 single adults
 - 82 families

Streets to Housing — encampment response

- 333 households engaged
- 52 households exited to a permanent housing destination
- 49 households currently referred to housing

Board and Lodge Capital

The key performance indicators for this work are to finish all of the capitolly funded board and lodge renovations by December 31, 2024, when this funding expires.

24/s Shelter

- 688 people used shelter
- 382 people left shelter

- 16% (38% when excluding missing data) of people who left had a positive exit: 37 exited to a permanent destination, 15 to an institutional setting, and 8 to a non-homeless setting
- 78 people returned to homelessness and 226 people were missing data

Low-barrier shelter

Avivo Village

- 119 people used shelter
- 24 people left shelter:
 - 33% of people who left had a positive exit: 7 exited to a permanent destination, 0 to an institutional setting, and 1 to a non-homeless setting
 - 10 people returned to homelessness and 4 people were missing data

AICDC Homeward Bound

- 162 people used shelter
- 113 people left shelter:
 - 14% of people who left had a positive exit: 12 exited to a permanent destination, 4 to an institutional setting, and 0 to a non-homeless setting
 - 28 people returned to homelessness and 69 people were missing data
- Among people who left shelter, 31 people used shelter for 6 days or less and 39 people used shelter for 7-30 days

Self-pay at Harbor Light Center

- 162 people were served by Harbor Light Center’s emergency housing programs

Homeless to Housing — housing-focused case management

- 53 housed during this quarter (426 overall)
- 437 active cases
- 240 active case aide tasks

Next steps

Hennepin Shelter Hotline — Diversion

- Ongoing support of the provider, Catholic Charities, as they continue to staff up, train, and operationalize this expanded and enhanced intervention. Specifically:
 - Ensuring fully staffed and at operational capacity by end of April 2023 — no further accommodations to the proposed schedule will be allowed after that
 - Creating a feedback form for consumers and community partners to share thoughts, suggestions, and feedback
 - Hennepin County staff will lead a six-month review of their contract to review progress and performance so far and establish timeline of goals not yet achieved and from any concerns identified from the feedback form.
 - Operational meeting at six months to review target performance measures and identify challenges and areas for continuous improvement
- Bimonthly meetings to address issues that arise and create intentional space for risk mitigation
- Monthly 1:1 meetings with program director to analyze data, trends, gaps and opportunities to ensure excellent customer service and satisfaction and progress toward target performance measures

Streets to Housing – encampment response

- Increase service engagements in suburban Hennepin County, starting in Maple Grove and Bloomington
 - As the weather warms up more street-based engagements are anticipated
- Increased marketing and distribution of flyers about Streets to Housing through a variety of media, all geared toward increasing transparency for households experiencing unsheltered homelessness

Board and Lodge Capital

- At Cullen Homes, deck installation work and air conditioning installation work will take place during this period.
- Construction-related renovation work will begin at 180 Degrees’ Clifton Place building.
- Pursuit Hometel will continue its work in receiving bids for outdoor space addition and bathroom/laundry room renovation work. It will also complete its air conditioning installation project.
- Missions Inc. will continue planning and ordering items during this period and plans for construction-related renovation work to break ground in August 2023.

24/7 shelter

- Will continue to monitor performance measures to ensure progress is moving in the right direction.
- Will provide technical assistance for entering housing outcomes and other data in HMIS.
- Will work with remaining two shelter locations to receive training for the Hennepin County Education and Training Pilot Program.

Low-barrier shelter

Avivo Village

- Will continue moving the shelter referral form to HMIS and thoughtfully roll out the new process to community partners.
- Once the referral form is complete and there’s an established process, will update contract language and performance measures to reflect changes.

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.
- Will ensure they receive training for the Hennepin County Education and Training Pilot Program.

Self-pay at Harbor Light Center

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

Homeless to Housing — housing-focused case management

- In the upcoming quarter, Homeless to Housing will fill the remainder of the open positions and continue onboarding staff.
- Case aides will also begin weekly shifts at the larger shelters to connect folks with their case managers, get forms signed, and assist shelter guests with indicating their interest in housing case management in HMIS.
- Program leadership plans to offer a “reflective conversation” to staff to reconnect them with their purpose in this job. This can lead to higher productive and job satisfaction but equates to the best service for our clients.

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

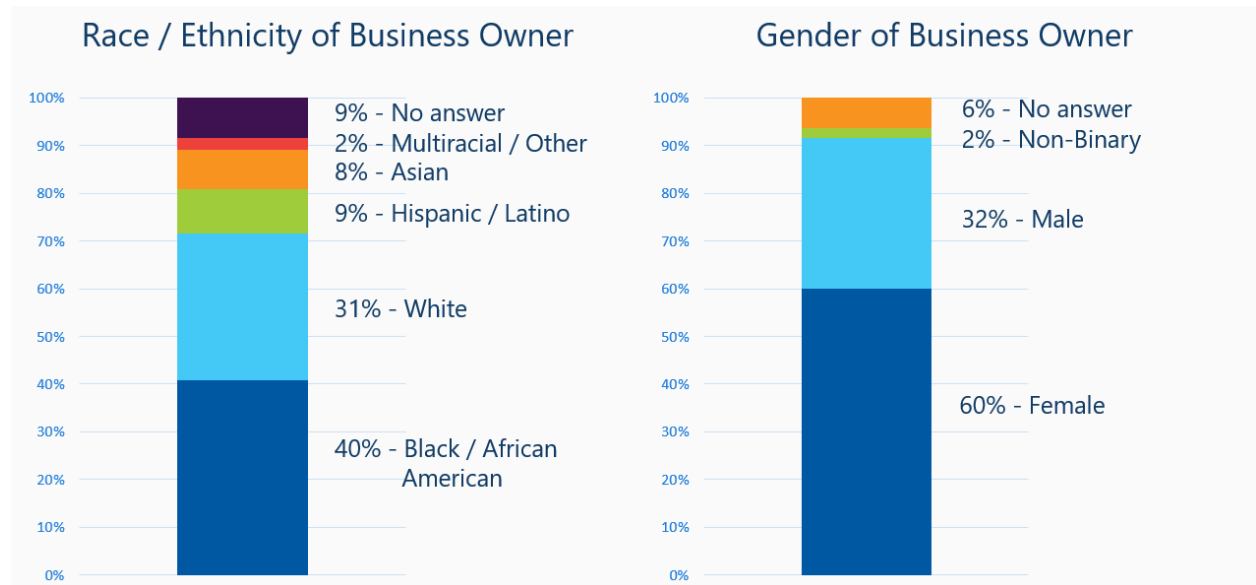
Economic Recovery activities in 2021 focused on gathering data, engaging community members and stakeholders, and designing approaches to economic recovery strategies centered in racial equity and addressing both place- and race-based disparities. Over 65 participants representing Hennepin County's diverse cultural and geographic communities provided input through listening sessions and interviews.

Small-business-focused economic recovery strategies

In 2022, Hennepin County redoubled efforts to support small businesses through the multi-faceted strategy now known as Elevate Hennepin, designed to build the long-term capacity of pandemic-impacted local businesses to succeed and grow. Highlights of the overarching Elevate Hennepin strategy implemented in 2022 include:

- In-depth technical assistance, “back office” support, and specialized expertise provided at no cost to small businesses in Hennepin County by an expanded network of 23 business advisors
- A digital platform with one-stop access to a wide array of business support resources provided by multiple agencies
- Certified Access Academy, a cohort-based program to build capacity among women business owners of color to contract with government and corporate entities
- Elevate Hennepin Construction Advising, Intensive 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
- Elevate Nonprofits, providing customized consulting and capacity-building for nonprofit organizations that are currently under contract with Hennepin County
- CEO Now, cohort-based training for growth-minded businesses to build systems and scale

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 2022 suggest that outreach efforts among communities of color and other disadvantaged groups are succeeding in reaching Black business owners and the services are effective in helping businesses grow and recover. In a survey of 2022 clients, 80% of respondents reported that they received practical guidance, materials, tools or resources they could apply to their business and 75% said the services helped propel their business forward.* The data also suggest that additional outreach efforts are needed to better serve Asian, American Indian/Native, and Hispanic/LatinX entrepreneurs.



From January to March 2023, additional procurement processes were undertaken to address gaps in services to meet current demand from business owners, including:

- Consulting services focused on a range of human resources needs, such as hiring, retention, and development of workplace policies.
- Training and support to meet small businesses’ technology needs and to help tackle the digital divide among many microbusinesses.
- Additional marketing expertise, with a focus on social media and digital communications.

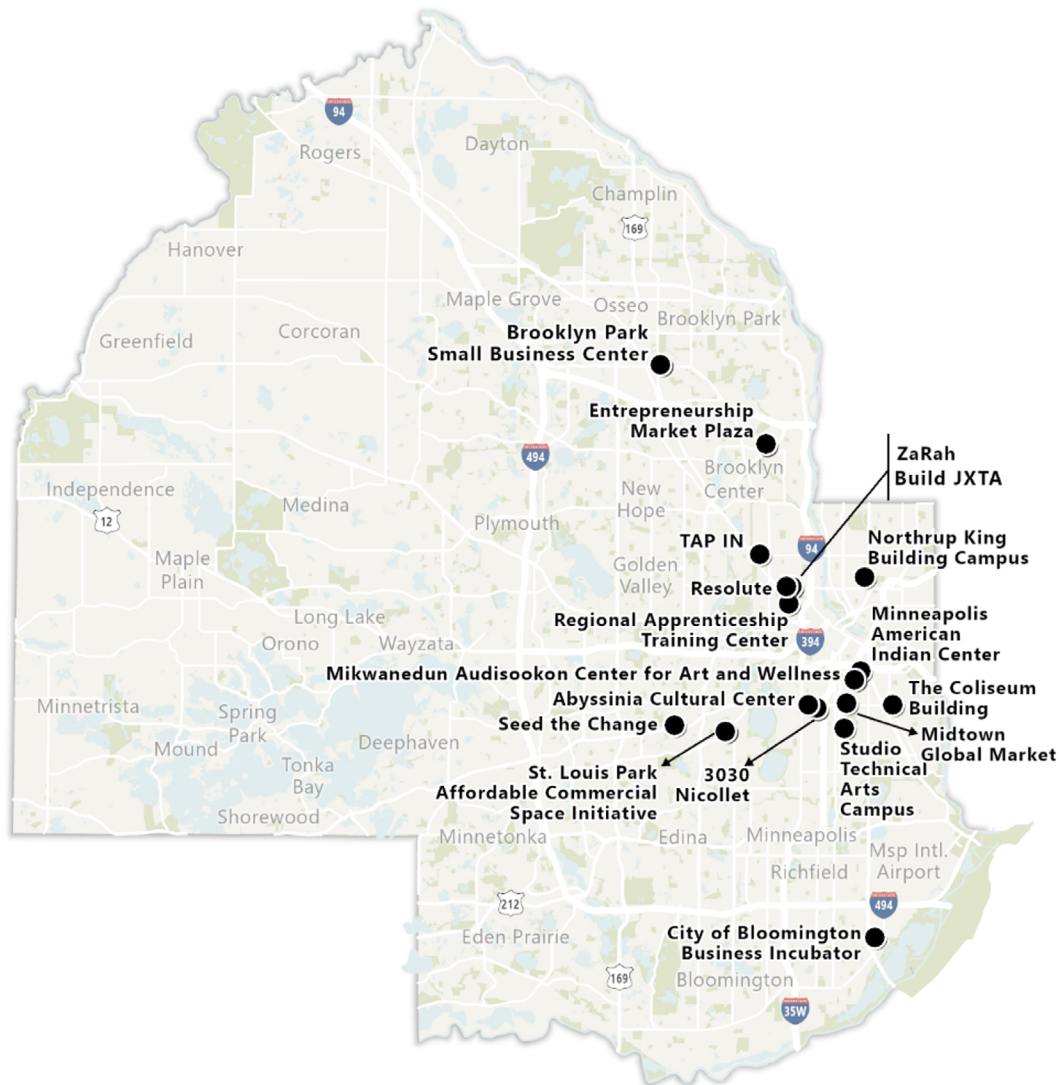
In February 2023, in response to client and advisor feedback, a new “one-stop” digital platform, www.elevatehennepin.org, launched, www.elevatehennepin.org, offering improved filtering and navigation, making it easier for entrepreneurs to find specific types of expertise, connect with consultants who speak different languages, and sign up for business-focused events.

Community-focused economic recovery strategies

To accelerate investment in communities that experienced disproportionate economic impacts from the pandemic, Hennepin County launched the Community Investment Initiative (CII) in March 2022. In the third quarter of 2022, Hennepin County Board Resolution 22-0325 authorized \$10 million in CII funding for 18 redevelopment projects that will create new affordable commercial space and business incubation spaces and support the expansion of nonprofits critical to economic recovery in Hennepin County.

* County staff administered a survey in English and Spanish to all 2022 Elevate Hennepin clients with an email address or phone number and received 167 responses. The racial and ethnic make-up of respondents reflected the overall client demographics.

Community Investment Initiative Projects — 2022



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

During the current reporting period from January to March 2023, contracts were being negotiated and finalized. Two of the 18 projects successfully closed on financing and began in earnest, fully drawing down \$1.8 million in program funds.

Economic mobility-focused recovery strategies

Work continued on two innovative initiatives to advance economic mobility. Hennepin County teams collaborated across departments to plan a Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) pilot, including a Hennepin- University Partnership collaborative research assistantship to develop GBI pilot design recommendations. During the reporting period, an evaluation consultant was selected to design and implement a mixed-methods evaluation, including focus groups, surveys, and interviews as part of an overall evaluation framework for the GBI pilot.

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

Key performance indicators

Key performance indicators for Economic Recovery strategies achieved to date are summarized below.

Small-business-focused economic recovery strategies

The multi-faceted Elevate Business strategy began in late 2020, with expanded pandemic recovery programming through this project beginning in April 2022.

Since the launch of Elevate Business in late 2020, results include:

- A total of over 2,300 Hennepin County businesses have engaged with the online resource hub, accessed technical assistance, or participated in a cohort-learning program.
- Over 1,400 businesses have accessed over 9,500 hours of one-on-one technical assistance and “back office” support.*

From April to December 2022, expanded pandemic recovery investment generated the following results:

- 420 businesses benefited from 4,300 hours of one-on-one advising through Elevate Business
- 47 entrepreneurs received technical assistance to help their business launch
- \$7.1 million in financing was provided to Hennepin County businesses and 154 jobs created

*Note: Total number of businesses reported involves data gathering and reconciliation from multiple sources. While data have been deduplicated to the extent possible, totals may reflect some level of duplicate reporting.

Community-focused economic recovery strategies

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

Next steps

Economic recovery efforts that will launch during upcoming reporting periods include additional programs within the Elevate Business strategy:

- Cohort learning to tackle the digital divide among microbusinesses
- Based on data gathered from business clients served in 2022, targeted outreach to advance Hennepin County’s equity and disparity reduction goals among communities of color, with particular emphasis Asian, American Indian/Native, and Hispanic/LatinX entrepreneurs

INCOME DOMAIN

Guaranteed Basic Income

Allocation amount: \$4,000,000

Project description

Hennepin County is developing a proposal for a Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) pilot. GBI is a series of unconditional cash payments to a targeted group of people. This direct cash payment model allows recipients full agency to decide how they would like to use the money. GBI differs from most public assistance programs, which commonly tie benefits to parameters such as work requirements or fluctuations in recipients' earned income, and which restrict how recipients can use the money.

A GBI program that is not carefully designed risks 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. This GBI pilot is intended to coexist with other public assistance programs, not replace them.

The pilot is expected to serve approximately 200 very low-income Hennepin County residents with dependent children under 18. A pool of potential participants will be identified through analysis of benefits enrollments gaps and calculations of who are least at risk for facing a reduction or loss in public assistance benefits.

The pilot will assess the impact of unconditional, low-barrier payments on economic mobility, racial disparities, health and education factors, and quality of life at the participant, family and community level. Pilot findings will inform potential policy change for public assistance programs.

Progress narrative

- Proposed pilot target population has been approved by leadership; pilot will serve families with the following characteristics:
 - Have at least one child in the household
 - Have income less than 100% of federal poverty guidelines
 - Are on food support (SNAP) and are not on cash assistance (MFIP)
 - Have applied for emergency assistance (EA) in the past three years
- Disbursement amounts and length of time have been approved by leadership.
 - Payments are based on family size.
 - Each family will receive a monthly payment equal to a \$550 base payment per family plus an additional \$100 per child.
 - There will be 18 months of payments, plus an additional three taper months at half the regular monthly amount.
- Analysts are exploring individual benefits loss mitigation strategy via the creation of a tool to look at the interaction of public assistance benefits and GBI payments.
- Analysts are timing monthly payments to minimize the impact on SNAP benefits and reporting requirements.
- DHS has released a bulletin clarifying interaction of public assistance with GBI programs; benefits loss mitigation tool has been updated with new DHS policy.
- Interviews for the GBI coordinator have been completed and a hire is pending as of this writing. The post for direct service staff is open as of this writing.
- Customer journey mapping continues, including building out options for resident-county interaction.
- A phone line and an email address have been created for the pilot.

- A customer relationship management tool is under development to provide work direction and case management tracking.
- US Bank has been selected as the vendor for payments to families. US Bank is assigning a project manager to this pilot. Families will use US Bank ReliaCards to receive GBI funds.
- Pro forma budget is completed. As of January the pilot manager and analysts are charging time to the pilot.
- County attorney and privacy officer consultation continues as needed to explore needs related to participant disclosure, consent, data sharing with evaluators, etc.
- Minnesota Management and Budget's Impact Evaluation Unit, the project's quantitative evaluator, has been meeting with lead staff to determine research design. MMB has received Institutional Review Board approval to move forward with the quantitative evaluation.
- The Improve Group was selected through a competitive RFP for a mixed-methods evaluation. The selection has been approved by the board and as of this writing contract negotiations are underway as well as planning for an initial evaluation kickoff workshop and Institutional Review Board approval.
- Lead staff are meeting with the University of Minnesota's State Health Access Data Assistance Center to determine the health care and health status impacts of the pilot. Survey questions are being finalized and the group will seek Institutional Review Board approval.
- The Communications Naming Team has created a name and tag line for the pilot: Raise the Baseline – empowering families with guaranteed income.

Key performance indicators

Definition of key performance indicators is in development and will be in place before pilot launch.

Next steps

- GBI coordinator will begin work in the position on April 10.
- GBI customer service representatives will be hired with a target start date of June 5. Human Services staff will assist with the rollout in the months of April and May.
- Loss mitigation tool will be completed and staff will determine timing of payments. Tool will be tested with human service representatives and adjusted as needed. Office support staff will be trained in use of the tool.
- Customer relations management tool will be completed. Tool will be tested with human service representatives and adjusted as needed. Office support staff will be trained in use of the tool.
- Team will work with US Bank project manager to set up pilot ReliaCard process and accounting.
- County attorney and privacy officer consultation will continue as needed to explore needs related to participant disclosure, consent, data sharing with evaluators, etc.
- Minnesota Management and Budget's Impact Evaluation Unit will collaborate with lead staff to determine randomization methodology, scripts to be used by staff, etc.
- The Improve Group contract will be completed. Following an evaluation kickoff workshop survey materials will be created and submitted for Institutional Review Board approval.
- The University of Minnesota's State Health Access Data Assistance Center survey questions will be finalized and submitted for Institutional Review Board approval.
- A pool of families meeting pilot eligibility requirements will be created.
- First families will be invited to participate in the pilot.
- Interested families will be randomly assigned to the treatment or the comparison group.
- Families in the treatment group 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.
- US Bank will issue ReliaCards to families who have completed orientation.
- Families will receive Guaranteed Basic Income payments to use as they see fit in order to meet their family's needs.

JUSTICE DOMAIN

Anti-Hate Initiative

Allocation amount: \$1,000,000

Project description

The primary goal of the Anti-Hate Initiative is to enhance data collection efforts to determine the scope and prevalence of hate-based violence, and to support community engagement activities to reduce the occurrence of hate-based violence. Program efforts include hiring a program coordinator who is managing the research phase of the project to gain a more concrete understanding of hate crimes/incidents and the response to them in Hennepin County, and issuing an RFP to support local organizations involved in this work.

Progress narrative

During this quarter, the Anti-Hate Initiative made progress in several areas: creating a workgroup, preparing for the request for proposals (RFP) process, and identifying people with lived experiences for the evaluation of proposals.

First, program staff brought together a working group of community providers addressing this issue, and conducted three facilitated, intensive planning sessions. The workgroup sessions aimed to identify and understand the driving forces that lead to hate while developing a comprehensive action plan to address the issue. The workgroup 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 final session was an essential step in creating a sustainable anti-hate initiative that is rooted in the community’s needs and experiences.

Second, program staff have met with Purchasing and Contract Services contract services to create a scope of services and evaluation criteria for the RFP which will support the work going forward. The RFP will be announced in coming weeks.

Third, program staff have identified a diverse group of individuals with lived experiences of hate to serve on the RFP panel. Having individuals with first-hand knowledge of hate incidents will enhance our understanding and ability to address the issue effectively. Finally, work began on identifying existing anti-bullying efforts in the county, and potential gaps or opportunities for the Anti-Hate Initiative to address in making anti-bullying curriculum available and accessible.

Key performance indicators

- Created a working group to create a theory of change for AHF strategies to address hate and bias incidents and crimes. The group met three times for facilitated planning sessions.
- Completed scope of services and evaluation criteria.
- Finalized role and process for people with lived experience in RFP evaluation.
- Continue to meet with Anti-Hate Coalition, a statewide coalition with significant overlap with Hennepin-based providers.
- Staff are currently examining anti-bullying efforts within Hennepin County.

Next steps

AHI to publish the request for proposals in April, conduct evaluation panel review, and develop contracts with organizations that demonstrate the necessary experience, expertise, and commitment to address hate and bias in our community. Additionally, staff will continue to work with external and internal stakeholders to further our anti-hate efforts, including developing a plan to support the development of an anti-bullying curriculum for school-age children.

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

The Hennepin County Attorney's Office has identified and assigned seven FTE positions to the pandemic response fund: three attorneys, two paralegals, one legal secretary and one victim advocate. The office also intends to add one FTE position for one additional attorney in 2023. The positions have provided caseload relief for attorneys, paralegals, legal secretaries, and victim advocates by freeing up resources to address the backlog of cases created during the pandemic.

During the first quarter of 2023, Adult Pre-Adjudication Service (APAS) finalized the onboarding and training of the five Felony Investigation probation officers and two Central Intake probation officers. As staff progresses through their training, more cases are assigned to them. Through much of the first quarter, the felony investigation staff worked at 80–90% capacity. The Central Intake staff worked at 70–80% capacity. By the end of March 2023, all designated staff were fully trained and working at capacity.

For the first quarter of 2023, the State Board of Public Defense assumed financial responsibility for most of the attorney contracts. HCPD continued to fund two attorneys (.4 FTE) who staffed mandatory child protection calendars and represented children in those child protection cases. In addition, HCPD contracted with a full time (1.0 FTE) legal office assistant to provide support for the some of the state-funded contract attorneys.

Key performance indicators

For the first quarter of 2023, APAS's court referrals for investigations and intake have been steadily increasing. The added 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. In the first quarter of 2022, APAS completed 528 felony pre-sentence investigation reports compared to 665 in the first quarter of 2023, a 26% increase. Using the same time frame comparison for pre-sentence and post-sentence investigation work for the Central Intake unit, in the first quarter of 2022, 767 referrals were completed compared to 1,303 referrals in the first quarter of 2023, a 69% increase. According to the Minnesota Fourth Judicial District Business Partners Hub, there continue to be 1,384 major criminal cases (felony and gross misdemeanors) in the backlog.

For the first quarter of 2023, the HCPD contract attorneys staffed 26 separate half-day mandatory calendars. The contract attorneys continued to provide legal representation for children from 2022 child protection cases. The attorneys also assumed legal representation for 17 new children in child protection matters. All of the adult clients charged with felonies, and juveniles alleged to have been delinquent, were handled by state-funded contract attorneys.

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 has focused 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.

Next steps

DOCCR is well-positioned to assist our criminal justice partners to reduce the court backlog. All pandemic response staff are fully trained and prepared to assist District Court in meeting its backlog goals. According to the Minnesota Fourth Judicial District Business Partners Hub, District Court must maintain a 167% clearance rate (combined incoming and backlog) cases to meet their established goals. There are currently 1,384 backlog cases awaiting resolution.

HCPD has been able to secure funding from the State Board of Public Defense to offset most of the attorney-related contract costs through June 2023. This state funding supplements the pandemic response allocation and extends our ability to combat the continuing backlog. The HCPD will resume using the pandemic response fund allocation in the second half of 2023. HCPD is continuing to fund a full-time legal office assistant. HCPD continues to engage with the private legal community, and hopes to add an additional contract attorney to further reduce the backlog of felony cases.

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

In addition to overseeing extended providers funded this quarter, staff worked with Vendor Selection in preparation prior to publication of requests for proposals, began managing an additional youth involvement program, initiated two research projects with Hennepin-University Partnership and continued development of data scans for Violence Prevention measurements, goals and dashboard.

Key performance indicators

- Collaboration with others around violence prevention and request for proposals formation
 - Staff met with 76 external providers, partners and community-based organizations and held 72 meetings with internal service areas.
 - Next round of requests has an emphasis on systems of care and an enhanced person-centered approach in an effort to prevent community violence and mitigate disparities.
- Hennepin-University Partnership
 - In January, Hennepin Evaluation Apprenticeship and Humphrey School Spring Capstone Cohort have formed research questions, designed data gathering methods and began implementation of an environmental scan and gap analysis around violence prevention work being done, measurements, successes and barriers.
 - Hennepin Evaluation Apprenticeship focus is internal and will include research findings and Results Based Accountability recommendations at the end of this year-long project.
 - Humphrey School Spring Capstone Cohort is working externally and will forward their work to the Summer Capstone Cohort.

Next steps

Second quarter 2023 will focus on:

- Publication of request for proposals, request provider kickoff meeting, evaluation of proposals and awarding of contracts.
- Establishing norms for the Community Violence Prevention Services providers.
- Internal/external co-creation of quarterly convenings.
- Interim research reports from Hennepin Evaluation Apprenticeship and Humphrey School Spring Capstone Cohort.
- Continued development of violence prevention vision, measurements, goals and dashboard.

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, Digital Navigation staff continue to serve county clients and library patrons who face digital barriers. Referrals for this service have increased significantly as more staff are aware of this resource. Due to increased demand, additional navigators will be hired to expand the team.

Eleven community-based providers have contracts for digital navigation services. 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 digital navigation and support in multiple languages including but not limited to Spanish, Somali and Hmong.

The Minnesota Office of Broadband Development launched a planning process for its Digital Equity Act funding in January. OBDI is actively participating and has established a Digital Connection Committee. A consultant has been hired and planning is underway for a series of community engagement activities. Data about local needs and priorities will be submitted to the state following its timeline and process; this work will inform Hennepin County's long-term digital equity strategies.

Work has begun on broader Affordable Connectivity Program outreach and promotion, targeting ZIP codes with larger numbers of qualifying households but more modest enrollment rates. An online-safety public awareness campaign is also underway, starting with market research. To date, multiple stakeholder interviews with community leaders, educators, IT professionals, and experts in preventing sexual exploitation of youth have been conducted during the reporting period.

A rolling request for proposals for the Broadband Expansion Fund solicited project ideas for broadband infrastructure and adoption activities from Hennepin County cities. OBDI is currently developing seven 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. Wiring for one of these projects was completed during the current reporting period. This project ensures internet access to community and private spaces in a group residential housing setting where seniors and adults with disabilities who have low incomes reside and receive services.

Analysis of the newly released FCC fabric data 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.

Key performance indicators

- 628 new requests to support Hennepin County clients and library patrons were submitted to digital navigation teams by Hennepin County staff. 39% are complete and 41% are in progress. The remainder are cancelled, duplicates or ineligible. Some referrals from last quarter are also in progress, totaling 354 requests with the majority on hold while awaiting action by the resident.
- 318 households were served by the Digital Navigation program. 814 interventions were reported including device distribution, support with the Affordable Connectivity Program enrollment process, digital skills assessments, and training.
- 149 phones are currently in use by Homeless to Housing program members.
- 31 computers are in use by students enrolled in Hennepin Technical College.
- 474 residents received digital navigation support and training from 11 contracted community partners. Another 1,500 people were engaged during broadband adoption outreach activities.
- More than 7,200 challenges were submitted to the FCC on the accuracy of the fabric data for Hennepin County.

Next steps

- Participate in state and local planning and community engagement efforts related to the creation and adoption of a digital equity plan. Multiple activities are planned for the next reporting period.
- Continue market research for an online safety public awareness campaign, including focus groups with prioritized communities.
- Finalize scope and implementation partners for broadband infrastructure and adoption projects through the Broadband Expansion Fund.
- Continuously improve the digital navigation process, implementing identified enhancements to the system used to manage and track client interactions and expanding locations where services are provided.

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

Work has begun to evaluate the filter banks and system capacities under the contract with Northern Air Corporation. A total of four buildings have been evaluated and reports are forthcoming. This work has been delayed a bit due to staffing issues and background check processing.

A second action item identified in the report is to develop the sequence of operations for the pandemic mode and determine the required schedules and set points to operate in pandemic mode. It was determined that the existing report provided enough information for implementation. Buildings will be verified that they are following the recommended sequence of operations over the next quarter.

The strategies outlined in the report will be implemented as part of the Hennepin County Government Center HVAC Rehabilitation project which will also be partially funded using this grant funding as it will be replacing the filter banks, increasing the heating and cooling coils, upgrading the air handling units and adding additional programming. This work directly impacts how the building operates during a pandemic and allows it to operate more efficiently. The increase in the heating and cooling coils provides the building the ability to bring in more fresh air while maintaining comfortable space temperatures. This project is just getting started and expected to ramp up in the second quarter of 2023.

The HVAC work related to reducing cross-contamination at the Adult Correctional Facility (a 24/7 facility) is currently underway. About 50% of the work is complete with the remaining being completed by June 2023.

Key performance indicators

Another 1,479 filters were purchased and delivered in this reporting period. A portion of the Adult Correctional Facility HVAC system has been modified, totaling 1,200 square feet. A total of four buildings have had their HVAC systems evaluated, specifically the filter banks and air flow capacities.

Next steps

It is expected that work will continue for the building evaluations of the filter banks and air testing with an expectation to be nearly complete by the end of the second quarter.

Staff will confirm that buildings are operating per the recommended sequence of operations outlined in the report.

The HVAC Rehabilitation project at the Hennepin County Government Center will be starting with equipment being ordered. As equipment is being delivered on-site, demolition will begin and installation of new equipment will follow.

The HVAC work at the Adult Correctional Facility is expected to be completed by the end of the second quarter. Additional MERV-13+ filters will be purchased for building maintenance as needed.

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 Office of Digital Experience (ODX) continues laying the foundation for creating positive, consistent, and accessible digital experiences for Hennepin County users. As ODX grows and matures, so does the vision and approach to aligning the work to the strategic directions named during the previous reporting period. The three ODX strategic directions are:

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

Successes shared in this progress report align with each of the three strategic directions at the community, organization, and team levels.

ODX created a practice framework to assess the current state and establish a path toward a desired future state for digital touchpoints when working with departments and lines of business across the organization. The five elements of the practice framework are:

1. Accessible
2. Usable
3. Equitable
4. Feedback ready
5. Inclusive

With strategic directions in place, ODX developed a timeline for a three-year strategic plan. The first year of the three-year plan is 2024, which allows for future planning and implementation beyond the pandemic response funding timeline.

Advancing digital accessibility is a top priority for ODX and for Hennepin County. In this reporting period, ODX launched digital accessibility training with the contracted vendor WeCo. WeCollege is the e-learning management platform provides web developers, designers, content creators, and department communicators a training pathway to enhance knowledge and build skills for approaching all work through an accessibility-first lens. Additionally, the team added a new public [accessibility](#) page in the footer of all [hennepin.us](#) and affiliate sites. Users can click on the accessibility footer link to learn how Hennepin County is committed to providing digital information and services to everyone, regardless of ability. It also links accessibility guidelines the county follows and where a user can report an accessibility issue.

ODX kicked off an engagement with Human Services partners to improve a digital shelter verification submission process. By focusing on the “submit” step in a three-part find>submit>verify journey, the team will test three hypotheses before scaling any conclusions more broadly:

- Guiding the resident and a third party through completing the form creates an improved user experience.
- Allowing the resident and shelter owner to complete the form through their desired choice (digital or hard copy) improves the user experience.
- Lessons from the experiment will inform future forms standards and best practices.

ODX launched the Digital Experience (DX) Champions program during this reporting period. The DX Champions program is available to all employees who voluntarily want to be a resource to promote user-centered and racial equity principles. DX Champions read and understand the digital accessibility policy, web standards and the pattern and component library, participate in the UX Community of Practice and Community Engagement Community of Practice, and complete racial equity training.

ODX is also creating a new design system that integrates accessibility standards, web standards, and the pattern and component library into a single resource. Progress on the design system for this reporting period include conducting design system research, creating mockups, developing a communication plan, and building a high-fidelity prototype.

ODX worked with the Facilities Department to identify a physical space in a county building that is a UX lab. The team has researched industry standards for UX research and identified space and technology requirements that will allow for an accessible and inclusive space for user research and testing.

Three new people joined ODX on the UX team, including two UX specialists and one UX/UI designer. These new positions complete the full staffing complement of ODX.

The Property Information Search (PINS) experiment kicked off with the Real Property Group (RPG) in the Resident Services line of business. The PINS experiment aims to test two different methods to get customer feedback on the property search page to determine if one method is more effective than the other.

1. The first method is an intercept with a picture of a thumbs up (positive/helpful experience) or thumbs down (negative/not helpful experience). If a user selects the thumbs down icon, a window pops up prompting the user to type how the experience could be better.
2. The second method is a seven-question pop-up survey for the user to answer about their experience searching for property information. The results of this experiment will inform a broader use case across RPG and possibly throughout the organization.

The Website Communications team made accessibility improvements on several sites and created an operational process to make these improvements. In addition to accessibility improvements, the team also completed quality assurance improvements to public-facing sites.

The Website Communications team led coordinating training for the Google Analytics 4 migration project. The team organized and participated in formal training with a vendor partner and developed the workplan to migrate from Google Analytics Universal to Google Analytics 4.

The Web Infrastructure team hired a senior admin/developer to create and direct implementation of the organization's content management system roadmap, ensuring technical capacity for service delivery to internal business partners. The Web Infrastructure team posted a request for proposals for a web server and data center maintenance and support provider. Additional administrative work such as cleaning up permissions, removing old databases, and reviewing new features was done to prepare for the migration to the new provider. Team members completed content management system training and received system admin certification.

Key performance indicators

- The ODX practice framework will become an assessment tool and be used to measure growth and maturity throughout the organization.
- 25 employees signed up in WeCollege during the soft launch of the training program.
- The accessibility footer demonstrates the county's commitment to creating digital service journeys that are accessible for all and transparent for users to hold the county accountable when information and resources do not meet accessibility standards.
- 25 DX Champions joined the program 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, when complete, will serve as a single resource for all content, development, and design standards for Hennepin County. A consistently branded, look, feel, and functional digital product help the county build trust with community members.
- A dedicated space to conduct user research and testing allows ODX to incorporate the user voice in every step of the design and development process. It is imperative for the county to understand how users interact with the information and tools developed for public use and to incorporate feedback and input from users into each phase of the project.
- The fully staffed UX team allows for increased UX capacity and for some UX practitioners to play a more strategic role in creating a culture of UX across the organization, which aligns with one of the ODX strategic directions.
- ODX is able to lead with an iterative approach by setting up small experiments with departments. The PINS experiment tests different ways the county can listen and gain insight from users about how positive or negative the experience is of completing a search task. Results from this experiment will be an input to a larger community listening and feedback strategy in the future.
- Google is sunsetting the current analytics functionality and transitioning to Google Analytics 4 mid-year. The Website Communications team recognizes the effort needed to help the county transition from the current system to the new system and is creating a plan to ensure there is no disruption in the ability to collect data analytics from county web sites and applications.
- Increasing capacity and resources on the Web Infrastructure team ensures the content management system remains current and issues can be properly addressed when they arise.

Next steps

- ODX will implement and socialize the ODX practice framework with department partners.
- ODX will continue to hold quarterly equity training with AMO Enterprise.
- A smaller subgroup, the strategy group, will develop the ODX three-year strategic plan.
- ODX will post a request for proposals for a community listening and feedback system that will help with collecting feedback from customers, analyze what the feedback means, and provide insights on how to take meaningful action on the feedback and how to close the loop with customers to know if the change was helpful.
- Work will continue on the design system with additional testing with prototypes.
- Hennepin County is transitioning its web presence from hennepin.us to hennepincounty.gov. The project is jointly sponsored by ODX, Communications, and IT. The project kick-off will take place in the second quarter of 2023.
- ODX will explore a clear path to getting a digital accessibility consultant retainer contract for any department to leverage when needed. This resource will provide necessary accessibility testing, auditing, and consulting services that are beyond the capacity of the county.

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

- Started new contract period for 2023; awarded contracts to 26 community-based non-profit agencies that provide diverse geographic and demographic coverage across Hennepin County.
- Conducted kick-off/orientation meeting with agencies.
- Shared and communicated information about county programs/services.
- Shared request for proposal opportunities internally to Hennepin County and to other cities, counties, and state.
- Began monthly check-in meetings with county program staff and agency staff to ensure collaboration and optimize program participation and outcomes.

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.
- Developed schedule for and participated in the training of Hennepin County staff and community organizations on using the roster program.
- Developed communications for Hennepin County staff and community organizations.

Translations

- Continued to do research at similar counties and other internal departments on strategy.
- Continued to meet with key collaborators across the county to assess the current translation strategies and identify improvements.

Engagement vans

- Hennepin County "Streets to Housing" continues to use a van for reaching out to encampments where people experiencing homelessness live. This is proving to be an effective and productive way to connect people to much needed services. Vans are used as mini-offices and for phone charging and transport to Hennepin County Service Centers.
- The team continues to meet with departments across the county to explore opportunities for optimizing use of the vans for the upcoming 2023 engagement season.

Healing circles/community building

- Created plan for healing circles and wellness panels for 2023 and worked on getting budget approvals.
- Resumed meeting with program staff to plan and execute healing circles.
- Helped with planning and communications efforts with the multijurisdictional cohort (made up of cities and counties throughout the Twin Cities) to put on National Day of Racial Healing on January 17.

Materials distribution

- The team continued to provide materials such as handouts, rice paddles, masks, frisbees, pens, and COVID-19 test kits to departments across the county.
- The team also continued strategizing how to better track countywide materials distribution, including exploring options such as a survey for staff to use when they use materials. This would help get a better understanding of needs for countywide outreach materials usage and best practices.

Key performance indicators

Trusted messengers

- 26 new contracts executed.
- Resumed ongoing monthly large group meetings.
- Resumed ongoing check-in meetings (sharing events, activities, deliverables and issues/trends/themes, etc.).
- Have strengthened reporting templates and guidelines to support monthly reporting/invoicing, which will help the team more closely track budget outcomes and progress of the organizations.

Community Engagement Roster Program

- Over 209 individuals and organizations registered.
- 3 projects/requests for proposals consulted and may utilize this program to achieve contracts.

Translations

- Continued to do research at similar county and other internal departments on strategy.
- Provided guidance to the Community Engagement Leadership Program cohort specifically focusing on a voluntary roster of internal staff who can perform interpretations/translations services and represent the county in a public speaking capacity

Engagement vans

- The new electric Ford Transit van is ready for use. Equipment is finalized for the van in collaboration with IT.
- We are scheduling a training on how to use the equipment, safety procedures, and driving.
- Hennepin County Mental Health Campaign “See Mental Health” has reserved the van for May and June for outreach and engagement primarily in communities of color.
- The team is currently meeting with Fleet Services to determine how to best utilize the other two vans in terms of budget and staff usage.

Healing circles/community building

- Contracted with TC, or Thomas Collins, who is a community healer. He will offer monthly sessions with a focus on intergenerational community of Black men and boys and their mental, emotional, and social health. These sessions will be within a series titled “Collective Restoration Freedom Series.” The first of these sessions will be April 19. The team is working to promote this work in collaboration with Communications to maximize community attendance and participation.

Materials distribution

- During the first quarter of 2023, Outreach and Community Services distributed 5,000 COVID test kits from the Minnesota Department of Health to 10 organizations. We collected general data on where and to who these test kits were distributed.
 - Ethnicity and race:
 - Asian American (Hmong, Lao, Chinese, Thai)
 - East African (Somali)
 - Black/African American
 - Latino
 - South American
 - White
 - ZIP codes of distribution:
 - 55411, 55407, 55106, 55401, 55404, 55432, 55427, 55428, 55429, 55444, 55445, 55379, 55117, 55119, 55025, 55443, 55425
- The team is seeing a decrease in mask requests in the first quarter; however, there is a steady community who continues to make these requests on a monthly/bi-monthly basis. Requests for test kits are steady and community organizations continue to distribute them at events.

Next steps

Trusted messengers

- Introduce new initiatives on community engagement boosters campaign.
- Various department guidance/consulting (mental health presentation, end of public health emergency, etc.)

Community Engagement Roster Program

- Training for Engagement Services team and community engagement staff throughout departments.
- Offer communication and request for proposals strategy training course for organizations.
- Strategic plan: Find ways to improve and promote the roster program internally and externally.

Translations

- Work and consult with project manager hired under the Communications department to discuss existing translations efforts and assess future needs.
- Meet with King County to learn more about their language access program.
- Continue with analysis and research.

Engagement vans

- Engagement season begins soon and we are busy preparing the vans for this year's engagement by equipping them with handouts and giveaways, and parking in convenient locations for Hennepin County staff use.
- The team will continue to explore opportunities to work with Fleet Services and how to minimize costs while maximizing staff utilization of the vans for engagement purposes.

Healing circles/community building

- Will continue to plan and develop programming for the 2023 year.
- Will continue to meet weekly with TC to ensure he is supported in his work and that we can ensure best outcomes for community members.
- Will continue to meet with program staff to help ensure we are serving as many communities as possible through healing circles/community building programming, including hopefully planning events for American Indian Month, Asian American Heritage Month, Juneteenth, Latino Heritage Month, etc.

Materials distribution

- The team will be placing orders for additional outreach materials for the upcoming engagement season. The goal of these items is to help engagement staff across Hennepin County engage with community. These items often help begin conversations and build trust with community members who come up to us while we're tabling at community events. The goal is for items to be environmentally friendly, cost-effective, relatively easy to carry and transport, culturally specific, and usable by community members. Learning from best practices and feedback about items from seasons past, the team is looking at purchasing the most popular items and buying new items that fit in with its ideal parameters.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Enterprise Integrated Data

Allocation amount: \$4,000,000

Project description

The Enterprise Integrated Data System aims to use meaningful integrated data from across county data systems to discover summary insights that enable the county to better respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, improve its disparity reduction efforts, and support key county strategies and enterprise initiatives. The project is framed around 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 would leverage modern data infrastructure tools to bring county data together effectively and iteratively in ways that meaningfully support ongoing reporting and analytics.

The analytics component entails the development of a variety of summary reports that provide ongoing and holistic insights into county services. Analyses would focus on the county's ability to rapidly respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative impacts; the ways in which 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 robust strategic data insights while ensuring data security, privacy, and the ethical use of data. This work will be 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 will also include 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

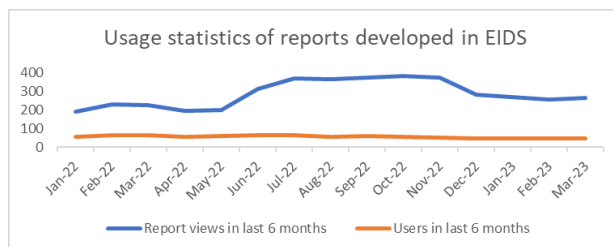
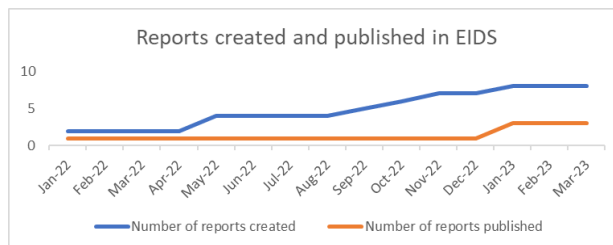
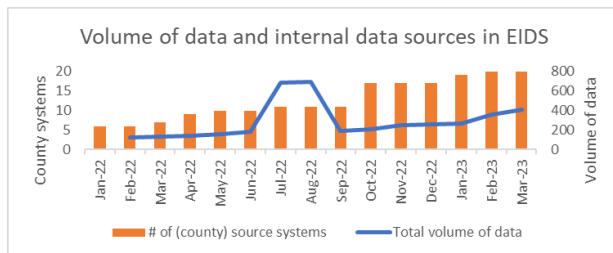
In the first quarter for 2023, progress on the Enterprise Integrated Data system built upon the planning and prep work completed in the prior quarter. The focus continued to be on the underlying data infrastructure and model. In this quarter, the team completed the implementation of the second iteration of the data model. This work also included the development and implementation of the data processes and pipelines to support this model, including improved data curation and management practices. Of note, the team improved our underlying record linkage process to better handle records with missing information, and improved ways to monitor the workflows and implementation processes. Completing the second iteration of the data model for this effort and its associated processes marks continued progress towards integrating data from across the county in ways that are highly secure and done in accordance with our design standards with a high degree of quality. This work includes the continued close consultation between Integrated Data and Analytics (IDA) data engineers, IDA data scientists, and county analytics professionals and business subject matter experts.

During this period, substantial progress was also made on analyses and data-informed decision-making frameworks. Two analysis projects were approved by the governance board for internal release and we have made substantial progress on all other active analytics projects. The IDA team continues to identify and prepare for new analytics opportunities and expects to launch at least two new efforts in quarter two of 2023. Data strategists within IDA continue to make strides on the county's data-informed decision-making framework. Of note in this quarter was the development of a plan to establish a robust data literacy/fluency framework for the county and a prototype of a user adoption plan whereby additional supports for the use of data are embedded into report development and publication phases.

Key performance indicators

The key performance indicators for this project include:

- Total volume of data incorporated
- An evolving set of quality assurance metrics related to data quality and fidelity with established definitions
- The number of analytics projects utilizing this system
- Number of days it takes for a project to go through the governance process
- The number of report views as a proxy for utilization



Evaluation efforts to date have been formative in nature. For example, monitoring the total volume of data and other internal quality assurance metrics related to data architecture, design, and quality have led to constructive changes to ensure adherence to key standards. Each iteration of the data model results in new insights that are incorporated into our processes and design standards. Increased auditing capabilities also help to ensure system security and derive insights from the usage of the data itself.

- Total volume of data is now just over 400 GB with 20 county data systems included.
- There are 10 analytics projects leveraging this system. Two of them are nearing completion (i.e., internal publication), five are in active development, and three have been made available based on business purposes.
- Usage statistics leveled out in the past quarter, suggesting that a point of saturation has been reached with the current reports published. As new reports are made available in the next quarter, usage is expected to increase. These insights are being carefully evaluated in support of the data-informed decision-making framework. Insights into what is driving or diminishing these trends are being incorporated into key lessons learned to help the county effectively use its data.
- Quality assurance metrics have been updated to ensure ongoing fidelity to design standards and data quality.
- The current average length of days for an analytics effort to go through the governance process is 44.2 days (inclusive of non-business days). This has remained constant compared to the prior quarter as no new projects were taken on during this period.

Next steps

In the next three months, the following efforts are expected:

- Finalize and share the results of two analytics projects to key county stakeholders. Include specific user adoption activities as part of the data-informed decision-making framework to support their use.
- Continue to make meaningful progress on all analytics projects in adherence to the system’s principles of partnership, careful governance, and data security.
- Evaluate the second iteration of the Enterprise Integrated Data System’s data model.
- Plan and implement the next iteration of the Enterprise Integrated Data System’s data model.
- Continue to update our DataOps practices with new metadata components with a focus on incorporating audit log data.
- Continue to phase out ad hoc data inputs and establish ongoing data pipelines.
- Review and update the governance process based on feedback and performance metrics.
- Continue to refine short video segments and micro-learning strategies to support the effective use of data by county staff.
- Continue to formalize and refine processes for coordination and feedback between data engineering and data analytics functions.
- Take on four additional 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-five projects have been identified that fit under the four areas listed above. Most projects are in the initial planning and development stages. Some notable accomplishments during 2022 include:

- 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. Hennepin County 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.

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 including major backfile conversions to digitize paper files, implement kiosk solutions for residents, improve online payment options and location technology improvements in the jail. The majority of IT pandemic response expenditures will occur in 2023.

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 Pandemic Response Projects will move the Community Connectivity project forward in two areas:

- \$1.0 million to accelerate plans to connect county facilities to fiber.
 - We received a preliminary estimate from the 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) system for the Traffic Management Center (TMC)
 - Adding over 25 miles of fiber to connect 35 intersections
 - Purchasing 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 January 1 – March 31, 2023, Hennepin County Elections staff reflected on voter education campaigns and strategies utilized throughout 2022 and started planning voter registration and absentee voting education campaigns and tactics for voter outreach and education work to be conducted in 2023.

Hennepin County Elections and Communications staff met to discuss effectiveness of 2022 voter education advertising and media campaigns. Together, staff drafted plans for advertising and media campaigns to be conducted in 2023. The plans continue to focus on communities who have historically faced the highest barriers to voting. Staff are also in the process of analyzing data gained through a post-election voter survey conducted in 2022. This data will inform continued outreach goals and voter needs and support department efforts to reduce voting disparities in Hennepin County.

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. Hennepin County Elections is contracting with 10 community organizations in 2023. These organizations will support voter outreach and education focused on voter registration and building election knowledge and resources. Elections staff have completed review of 2023 community contract proposals and budgets. Community contract work will begin in the second quarter of 2023.

Hennepin County Elections staff began 2023 monthly office-hour sessions available to all community partners supporting voter education and outreach. These sessions increase election knowledge among organizations, increase collaboration between organizations and help inform Hennepin County election outreach work. The first session of the year focused on voter registration drives and voter eligibility requirements. Future sessions will include topics such as absentee voting, rank-choice voting, importance of voting, review of legislative changes impacting elections, and more.

Key performance indicators

Key performance indicators for Hennepin County-led outreach and engagement may include:

- Increased institutional knowledge of election process among contracted and partner organizations
- Number of toolkits developed, translated materials and other voter education materials produced and distributed
- Number of community organizations contacted and engaged with Hennepin County
- Number of people reached through targeted media campaigns
- Number of trainings for community organizations and service providers

Directly selected community contract organizations submitted their budgets and proposals for the 2023 election cycle. Work will begin in the second quarter of 2023. Work and accomplishments are described in terms of the following:

- How many people organizations talked to or registered to vote
- 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

Next steps

Staff will continue efforts to organize and maintain advertising and media campaign strategies (social media, digital advertising, print and radio advertising, on-air programming) focused on voter registration and absentee voting education. Targeted media campaigns will focus on ensuring voters have the knowledge and resources needed to support participation in future elections.

Contracted community organizations will begin their work supporting voter outreach and education in the second quarter of 2023. Elections staff will continue to work with community partners to provide resources and education for voter outreach.



Hennepin County

300 South 6th Street
Minneapolis MN 55487

hennepin.us