

Hennepin County Progress Report

Pandemic Response Projects

January – March 2024



Executive summary	3
Pandemic recovery funds	4
Project inventory	5
CONNECTIVITY DOMAIN	
Broadband and Digital Inclusion	6
EMPLOYMENT DOMAIN	
Employment Strategies	9
HEALTH DOMAIN	
Behavioral Health	16
Maternal Health	19
Public Health	24
Vaccine Incentives.....	30
HOUSING DOMAIN	
Housing Recovery.....	32
Services for People Experiencing Homelessness	35
INCOME DOMAIN	
Economic Recovery	41
Raise the Baseline — Empowering Families with Guaranteed Income.....	45
JUSTICE DOMAIN	
Anti-Hate Initiative	48
COVID-19-Related Court Backlog	49
Violence Prevention.....	51
OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE	
Countywide HVAC COVID-19 Response	53
Digital Experience.....	55
Engagement Services	59
Enterprise Integrated Data System	63
Information Technology	66
Information Technology: Community Connectivity	67
Voter Participation	68

Executive summary

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

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

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

This progress report summarizes Hennepin County's pandemic response projects from January 2024 through March 2024. 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: connectivity, education, employment, health, housing, income, and justice..
- 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, 2024 through March 31, 2024. Projects that have expended their full allocation amount are no longer included in this report. Projects are presented by disparity domain area.

Project name

Allocation amount—This is the amount of funding allocated for the project. Minor allocation changes are included in this report. The allocation changes were approved through the budget process.

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.

CONNECTIVITY 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 continues to serve clients and improve the service model. The two additional computer distribution locations, in neighborhoods with high rates of digital barriers, are more accessible for residents and offer additional digital skill-building opportunities.

As the pandemic relief period winds down, some Digital Navigation contracts have been completed. Eight community-based providers delivered services during this time. These organizations have varied service models that 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. Where possible, these organizations leverage the county library system to offer additional classes and support.

Notable accomplishments this reporting period include piloting digital skills training specifically designed for English language learners. This was an identified gap in the available training materials and a curriculum was developed last year. In the current reporting period, this new curriculum is being tested. Feedback from this pilot notes the breadth of English language proficiency among the participating students in the class, which requires adapting the content to meet the students where they are to ensure inclusivity and effectiveness.

An existing partnership deepened to provide computers and digital-skills training to residents of Pursuit Hometel, which received project-funded infrastructure upgrades in 2023 that provided free Wi-Fi access. Pursuit Hometel is a 205-bed board and lodge facility serving adult self-identifying males at risk of long-term homelessness in South Minneapolis. These devices and training help ensure that residents can use the internet safely and access supportive services.

Computers for residents are also available through additional partnerships with community and technical colleges. Eighty student testimonials described the value of having their own laptop and the freedom to complete studies without relying on a computer lab, their phones, or out of date or borrowed device. One noted: "I've never received such a valuable and life-changing device."

Analysis of data by Education SuperHighway and Hennepin County indicates inadequate internet access to residents residing in affordable multifamily housing. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was also developed with Human Services to upgrade or install Wi-Fi internet infrastructure in multi-dwelling units that have existing Housing Support Agreements with Hennepin County. Eligible facilities include board and Lodge, assisted living, and site-based community-based housing support settings. This RFP closed in November and four contracts were executed with providers.

Outreach and promotion of the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) continued as long as permissible during the ACP wind down period. A planned outreach campaign was shortened and information about the transition and other next steps was shared via email, the county website, social media, and other communications channels. The campaign collateral was updated where feasible to include the final enrollment date.

Multiple partners have noted the lack of affordable internet options and concerns about how to support their communities without the ACP or a meaningful alternative. Hennepin County has advocated for the continuation of ACP and community members have also been engaged. One partner organization organized a phone bank for North Minneapolis residents and youth to contact legislators in Congress and express support for the program. In parallel, to address the impact of the end of ACP on vulnerable residents, Hennepin County has explored a bridge "Hennepin Connectivity Program" to provide a partial subsidy to ACP eligible households who might otherwise lose their wired broadband service. This program is a partnership with local internet service providers who participated in the ACP and is planned to run from May – December 2024.

An internet-safety public awareness campaign launched in February encouraging residents to "Think before you click" with social media, educational videos, and an online resource hub at <https://think2click1.com>. The content includes specific tips that are culturally appropriate and empowering for youth, parents, and elders.

A draft of the Hennepin County Digital Equity Plan was completed. This strategic plan will guide continued digital activities after the pandemic relief funds expire at the end of 2024. The report is a synthesis of community and staff feedback, quantitative data on digital needs, and an assessment of current programming.

Key performance indicators

- 601 individual requests to support Hennepin County clients and library patrons were submitted to the Digital Navigation team. 381 residents were served during the period by the Digital Navigation team, who distributed 347 computers to residents in addition to other digital inclusion supports
- Approximately 1,397 Hennepin County residents received digital navigation support or training through eight contracted community partners
- 191 phones are currently in use by Homeless to Housing program members.
- Through partnerships with local community and technical colleges, 914 computers were provided to eligible enrolled students; 80 students submitted testimonials in support of the program.
- 140 residents of Pursuit Hometel received computers and digital skills training to make use of the Wi-Fi connectivity provided to the buildings in 2023.

- More than 55,000 Hennepin County households are enrolled in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) on the final enrollment date of February 8.
- A promotional campaign for ACP subsidy ran from November 2, 2023 – February 7, 2024, targeting areas with lower-than-expected enrollment rates, resulting in a total 6,003 clicks and 1,286,497 impressions including 3,316 clicks and 729,121 impressions during this reporting period.
- An online safety public awareness campaign launched in February with 7,578 clicks and 652,010 ad views; the online resource hub had 3,828 unique visitors through paid ads, organic search, and referrals, with 5,767 individual page views.
- The RFP to upgrade or install internet infrastructure in multi-dwelling units that have existing Housing Support Agreements with Hennepin County has closed and contracts were executed with four providers.
 - Completed Broadband Wi-Fi Installation at National Handicap Housing Institute (Garfield Commons)
 - This complex includes 75 Bedrooms with Wi-Fi capacities.

Next steps

- Finalize Digital Equity Plan and make available to county staff, stakeholders, and residents. Socialize the plan, incorporate feedback, and begin implementation planning.
- Collaborate with the State of Minnesota Office of Broadband Development on Digital Opportunity Plan and Digital Connection Committees.
- Scaling up of the online safety public awareness campaign for online safety month in June and translation of content into Spanish, Somali, and Hmong.
- Advocate for additional funding and support for ACP; launch the Hennepin Connectivity Program if the ACP does cease operations in May 2024.
- Continue to engage with Minnesota legislators during the 2024 session to raise awareness of digital equity issues impacting urban and suburban residents with lower household incomes.
- Begin installation of Wi-Fi services in multi-dwelling units that have existing Housing Support Agreements with Hennepin County.
 - Initial assessment completed and work is underway at Norpol Residence.
 - Once complete, this project will be offering 38 bedrooms with Wi-Fi.
- Develop a bridge “Hennepin Connectivity Program” to provide a partial subsidy to ACP-eligible households that might otherwise lose their wired broadband service.

EMPLOYMENT DOMAIN

Employment Strategies

Allocation amount: \$9,280,000

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:

- Partner 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.
- Create 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.
- Create 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 their 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 Center’s 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 the individuals they serve for readiness and interest in employment and training services. If a person is deemed appropriate, the case manager / advocate submits a referral for one of two partner organizations chosen by the individual being served. GWES and AIOIC Takoda Stability each have designated Career Navigators to support individuals referred.

Quarterly updates:

- 249 total referrals to the program (03/01/22–03/31/24)
- 54 new referrals this reporting quarter (01/01/24–03/31/24)
- 85% of referrals have been enrolled and received services
- Program Power BI Dashboard is in its final edits
- Program evaluation plan is under development with Hennepin County Strategic Planning & Initiatives Department
- SharePoint site with referral mechanism has launched and is being utilized by both internal and external partners for referrals
- Monthly case consultations continue

Workforce Development Roster Program

In October 2021, the Hennepin County Board authorized \$10 million for career pathways programming as an employment strategy to address the inequitable impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency on Hennepin County residents, particularly those who are Black, Indigenous and people of color. The strategy created a consortium of nonprofit organizations, able to provide just-in-time employment and training services leading to living wage jobs, by ensuring participants have the skills employers are seeking. To this end, the Workforce Development Roster Program was created. The WDRP partnered with the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce to connect training graduates with living wage jobs and to work with providers to both connect them to employers as well as strengthen existing business relationships.

Quarterly updates:

- 22 WDRP contracts have been executed to date.
- Two MOUs have been executed to date.
- Three new contracts were finalized for the Youth Gun Violence Prevention Initiative that provides career readiness and employment service opportunities to youth ages 11–24 who have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and gun violence. Contracts run 12/01/2023–11/30/24 with the following organizations:
 - Emerge: \$200,000
 - Let’s Learn Collectively on Our Life’s Journey, LLC: \$90,900
 - Chinese American Chamber of Commerce — MN: \$198,000
- One new contract was finalized with Lutheran Social Service for the Parent Re-engagement Pilot Program that provides employment and training services and supports to non-custodial parents referred by Hennepin County Child Support Services. Contract runs 11/01/2023–10/31/2024 in the amount not to exceed \$225,000.
- Workforce Development staff and assigned contract managers meet with providers at least once per quarter to discuss progress and to identify potential barriers.
- WDRP collaborative meetings have been organized to provide space for organizations to work together to enhance service delivery for the residents they serve.

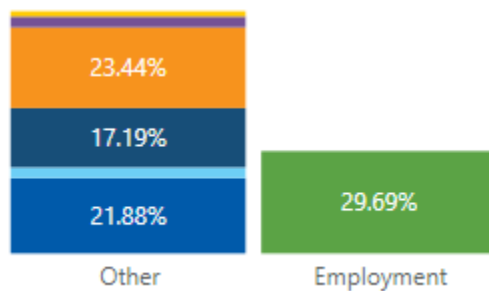
Workforce Development Roster Program (WDRP)

In October 2021, the Hennepin County Board authorized \$10 million for career pathways programming as an employment strategy to address the inequitable impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency on Hennepin County residents, particularly those who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color. The strategy created a consortium of nonprofit organizations, able to provide just-in-time employment and training services leading to living wage jobs, by ensuring participants have the skills employers are seeking. To this end, the Workforce Development Roster Program was created. The WDRP partnered with the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce to connect training graduates with living wage jobs and to work with providers to both connect them to employers as well as strengthen existing business relationships.

Quarterly updates:

- 23 WDRP contracts and two MOUs have been executed to date.
- Workforce Development staff and assigned contract managers meet with providers at least once per quarter to discuss progress and to identify potential barriers.
- WDRP collaborative meetings have been organized to provide space for organizations to work together to enhance service delivery for the residents they serve.
- 248 participants are currently enrolled into Roster Programs from which 64 are exited.
- Majority of participants are BIPOC.
- The overall outcome of roster programs to date are as follows:

● Education ● Health ● Moved ● Other ● Program transfer ● Training ● Unsubsidized empl.



Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)

The Workforce Leadership Council is a partnership between Hennepin County and small and mid-sized business owners and stakeholder organizations to better understand employment and business operations needs and challenges and to explore opportunities for improvement and innovation. The WLC provides space for critical conversations, learning, new partnerships, and collaboration.

By creating strategic business partnerships, the WLC is aligned to meet industry demands. Through the collaboration of regional employers, business leaders, and partners, members exchange experiences and know-how, as well as the expertise necessary to align resources and champion strategies that prepare residents for careers and meet employers' needs.

The WLC has identified various pain points in employee attraction, recruitment, retention, and advancement. Three work groups were created to dig deeper to foster a better understanding of their challenges and opportunities for collective solutions. The purpose of each work group is as follows:

1. The Technology Work Group focuses on the unmet technology needs of small to mid-sized businesses and its employees. This workgroup is advising and learning from two Elevate Hennepin pilot programs: 1) to assist employers in identifying appropriate technology solutions to enhance their business operations; and 2) to help employees gain a better understanding of the essential technology skills needed for successful employment. Additionally, the work group has added translation services to the Elevate Hennepin platform to allow employers to utilize available services where English is not their primary language.
2. The Talent Pipeline Work Group focuses on building career pathways into roles experiencing current and projected shortages in the private sector. The work group compares and analyzes high-demand, hard-to-fill occupations and seeks to better understand minimum qualifications, pay scales, and skill requirements, to create opportunities to expand a potential hiring pool. The work group has implemented two cohort programs focused on creating career pathways for Mental Health (MH) workers and Commercial Driver's License (CDL) truck drivers respectively.
3. The Barriers to Employment Work Group focuses on helping businesses identify and implement promising talent attraction and retention strategies to become "employers of choice." The work group partnered with Elevate Hennepin to deliver cohort-based, targeted programming focused on connecting businesses to teams of subject matter experts in human resources, compensation, budgeting, and finance to develop implementable and scalable solutions. Programming focused on financial wellness, asset building, and potential financial subsidies that may come in the form of wages, childcare assistance, and savings, and will be offered to employees of businesses enrolled in the cohort.

Quarterly updates:

Diversifying the workforce

RealTime Talent (RTT) is continuing to identify talent pipeline issues and solutions for the mental health and commercial driver's license positions. This work has led us down the path of needing to identify stackable opportunities for employers to engage in the Talent Pipeline Management initiative. This strategy would meet employers where they are at, enhance participation in the initiative based on time availability of employers, and bring in new talent quicker.

Our Barriers to Employment work group is deploying human resources technical assistance to five small to medium-sized businesses, and our community-based organization has conducted an analysis in partnership with the employers and their employees to identify appropriate income, financial supports, training, and retention needs.

Skills-based hiring for employers

The Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with GWES, promoted, hosted, and helped facilitate the Rework America Alliance's skills-based practices training. This program helps employers revamp hiring practices to be more inclusive and places a strong emphasis on working with community-based organizations (CBO) to identify new talent pools. There were 30 individuals who attended the last networking event to learn more about possible connections between the employer and the workforce provider.

Key performance indicators

Employment and Training Services for People Exiting Homelessness initiative

Key performance indicators:

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

Quarterly results data:

- 249 total referrals to the program (03/01/22–03/31/24)
- 54 new referrals this reporting quarter
- 122 participant cases are actively open:
 - 18 have obtained full-time employment
 - 19 have obtained part-time employment
 - 14 are actively participating in training
 - 23 have successfully completed training
 - Five are enrolled in educational opportunities (GED)
 - 13 are currently attending GWES's 8-week work experience program
 - 16 have successfully completed GWES's work experience program
- 89 cases have closed:
 - Four have achieved non-employment program goals
 - Eight have achieved employment program goals
 - Five have transferred or were referred to another program / organization
 - 55 have exited the program for other reasons (e.g., voluntary, incarceration, moved)
 - 17 have lost contact with the program

Evaluation efforts:

- Program and participant data monitoring and evaluation
- Ongoing discussions with implementing partners and the county regarding data and long-term program sustainability needs

Workforce Development Roster Program

Key performance indicators:

- Total number of participants enrolled in all roster program initiatives
- Participants earn credentials and / or job skills
- Number of participants actively enrolled in a training program
- Participants obtain employment
- Participants retain employment (retention captured at 3, 6, and 12 months)

Results data (January–March 2024):

- 248 people are currently enrolled in roster program initiatives
- 231 people are currently enrolled in a training program
- 63 people have earned credentials
- 57 open individuals are currently employed (40 full-time; 17 part-time)
- Fourteen people have obtained employment (average wage at exit is \$21.05)
- 15 people have exited the program for other reasons (e.g., voluntary, incarceration, moved)

Also, service providers provide Support Services including training materials, transportation, housing or rental assistance, clothing for job interview and employment, gas vouchers, student activity fees, trainings, etc. The following graph captures which support services have been provided to date:



Evaluation efforts:

- Program and participant data monitoring and evaluation
- Ongoing discussion with implementing partners and the county regarding data needs and long-term program sustainability needs

Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)

Key performance indicators:

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

Quarterly results data:

- 43 individuals representing 30 companies have participated in six stand-alone sessions and coaching sessions.
- Five businesses have been selected and are receiving human resources consulting services via Elevate Hennepin, and their employees will soon receive training, financial wellness, and supportive services from a workforce development provider.
- The MH Employer Collaborative defined the key metric formulas to measure vacancy factor, race and gender demographics upon hire, and onboarding costs. These three metrics will continue to support and assess employer ROI as codesigned solutions continue to be created and implemented.

Next steps

Employment and training services for People Exiting Homelessness initiative

- Program management (e.g., ongoing partner meetings, internal management meetings, support to providers and case managers)
- Plan for program sustainability (e.g., identify / obtain data, funding sources)
- Obtain program participant feedback
- Complete Power BI dashboard
- Expand referral source to additional adult homeless shelters
- Monitor quantitative and qualitative data and outcomes
- Monitor program budget

Workforce Development Roster Program

- Business networking events hosted by the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce will continue to be offered.
- The Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce will create webinars geared for employers on best practices for CBO relationship building and how to support new Americans and refugees, and fair chance hiring.
- Office of Workforce Development will provide technical assistance and support to awarded providers.
- Complete development of Power BI program dashboard.
- Monitor and evaluate quantitative and qualitative data and outcomes.
- Monitor program budget.
- Second collaborative meeting will be hosted in person on April 18 with the focus on establishing employer's partners.
- Story mapping is underway to capture the qualitative / narrative data part of roster programs.

Workforce Leadership Council

- Provide technical assistance and support to awarded providers
- Monitor and evaluate quantitative and qualitative data and outcomes
- Explore Employee Assistance Fund models
- Monitor program budget and identify 2025 strategies for the WLC

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

January 2024 starts the final year of the ARP Funding. Most programs have met or exceeded target. A few programs have already sunset and are finalizing contracts and reporting and are preparing for closeout. Other programs are managing sustainability plans with providers to continue services using non-ARP funding. There is one resounding message from the 11 Behavioral Health initiatives during this period: This was an incredible opportunity to support programs that serve the community and residents of Hennepin County.

The Expanding School Based Mental Health (SBMH) initiative remains just shy of 100% of public (non-charter) schools receiving services. During Q1 2024, this program implemented performance measures for contracted SBMH providers to include treatment plan outcomes and demographic data.

Developing and Expanding a Network of Culturally Specific Mental Health Services is one of our programs that is sunsetting. This quarter finalizes this program. Concluding reports reflect 12,120 residents served presenting fifteen cultural groups for the period July 2023 – December 2023.

The Sustaining Family Home Visiting initiative hired a Principal Planning Analyst. This position is important to help move past a 2023 delay to develop the performance measurement dashboard that will track key performance measures such as number of families served and the program's overall capacity.

Caring Connections 4 Kids (CC4K) completed 193 children’s mental health screenings, up from the previous quarter by eight additional screenings. This also resulted in a slight uptick of positive screens and referrals to diagnostic assessments; 65% of the positive screens were from children ages 0 – 5.

Q1 for the Expanding Access and Hours at 1800 Chicago initiative was all about the ramp-up to launch the weekend hours starting the week of April 1, 2024. This team was busy onboarding and training newly hired staff, updating communication materials and reaching out to residents, community partners, and local law enforcement to inform them of the new hours of availability.

All 30 police departments in the Embedded Police Social Worker (ESW) initiative in Hennepin County now have access to receiving support from a Hennepin County-embedded social worker. This team increased their opened ESW cases by 184 from the previous quarter and the County Attorney Behavioral Health Youth pilot has received 13 referrals for this period.

Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services (FRSS) managed 224 calls for services during Q1 2024, which is a 27% increase in calls. This initiative has recently begun collaborating with the Community Outreach for Psychiatric Emergencies (COPE) program and is supporting rerouted child crisis line from COPE to FRSS between 7 a.m. – 11 p.m. and the rerouted FRSS line to COPE from 11 p.m. – 7 a.m. This update in services occurred during Q4 2023 to eliminate service delivery duplication and increase cross collaboration of resources and responses.

Key performance indicators

The 11 Behavioral Health initiatives have separate key performance indicators (KPIs) based on their individual approaches to supporting the mental health and substance use disorder needs of Hennepin residents. The quarterly KPIs reported in Q1 2024 reflect that the following initiatives have met or exceeded their established project goal at this time:

- **Expanding School Based Mental Health:** 93% of target of Hennepin County schools receiving services. This is an increase from 87% in the previous quarter.
- **Developing and Expanding a Network of Culturally Specific Mental Health Services:** Goal Met. Target Complete. Final reporting: 12,120 residents were served with fifteen cultural groups represented (July 2023 – December 2023).
- **Sustaining Family Home Visiting:** Secured 2 million in funding for County Strong Foundations Family Home Visiting programs in 2024, and 2 million in funding from the City of Minneapolis to serve city residents. Agreement is in place with funders through 2027. Expansion funds are being explored ongoing.
- **Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids:** Annual goal of 500 children screened. The Q1 2024 is ahead of target with a total of 193 children screened or 39% to goal at the start of the year.
- **Reforming 911:** 45 cases opened in Q1 2024 and seven referrals were made for community supports.
- **Expanding Access and Hours at 1800 Chicago:** 2,225 total visits and 627 unique individuals were served in Q1 2024. This represents an increase of 431 visits, 24% over Q4 2023.
- **Piloting a Family-Based Recovery Program:** 52 families were served in Q1 2024 with 78% of index youth remaining in in-home placements.
- **Launching a Youth (Juvenile) Behavioral Health Initiative:** This initiative has less quantitative metrics but progress towards key performance indicators for Q1 2024 include the hiring and onboarding of two Childrens Mental Health Case Managers and monthly trauma-resilience workshops.

Next steps

Goals for Q2 2024 include:

- By June 30, 2024, the Expanding School Based Mental Health initiative plans to write the request for proposal for school based mental health contracts that will begin in January 2025. This program will also work with contract managers to extend some provider contracts through December 31, 2024.
- The Q2 2024 goal for Sustaining Family Home Visiting (FHV) includes adding an additional Intake Specialist and a full-time Principal Office Specialist to the team in Q2 due to the increasing volume of referrals for FHV programs.
- Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids (CC4K) will hire a new CC4K Public Health Nurse, update CC4K goals and program strategy including pilot testing new or adapted strategies, meeting with children's mental health providers to increase collaboration and communication with children's mental health team and partners to address gaps in support and services for families.
- Within the next quarter, launching a Youth (Juvenile) Behavioral Health initiative will continue to evaluate the Rule 20.01 Triage and Response Implementation, maintain and support two newly solidified subgroup workplans (Juvenile Legal System Collaboration, Family and Caregiver Support) and deliverables, select Juvenile Detention Center behavioral health screening tool and continue facilitation of Trauma Resiliency workshops and Communities of Practice.
- During Q2 2024, Piloting an In-Home Family Recovery initiative will stabilize contract partner teams, host expansion planning meetings with key stakeholders, connect and outreach to partners, and host resident advisory boards.

HEALTH DOMAIN

Maternal Health

Allocation amount: \$9,500,000

Project description

This initiative 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 partner with the community to influence systems change, provide maternal and child 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 for those facing the worst disparities. This includes forging new partnerships and supporting a sustainable birth justice and maternal health infrastructure for systems change to get at the root causes of inequities.

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

Expanding access to care and services

The contracted providers funded in the first phase of the initiative continued to deliver care and services in the community and make progress on expansion of maternal health programs and services. Hennepin Healthcare (HHS) has been formally evaluating their doula on-call program, and so far, surveyed doulas, providers, and patients about their experiences in addition to tracking patient outcomes. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive about the program. HHS also facilitated new partnerships to expand their food bag program. To lower costs and meet the rising need for food support, HHS partnered with MATTERBox to provide healthy ready-to-eat snack packs to more patients. Additionally, HHS partnered with Osseo school district to engage students in a work-based learning program to assemble the rising volume of ready-to-eat food bags. Hennepin Healthcare’s East Lake Clinic continued trauma-informed care (TIC) trainings with staff. East Lake Clinic staff also presented about the TIC model to primary care leaders with hopes that the model can be shared and scaled to other community clinics. NorthPoint Health & Wellness continued scaling up empowerment group sessions for participants and saw increased attendance. NorthPoint also integrated human services staff in using EPIC so that patients’ experience and data are tracked in one system, reflecting the unified maternal health services within NorthPoint’s wide range of clinical, social, and human services. Roots Community Birth Center continued home visiting, childbirth education, and parenting classes. Roots has seen an increase in the volume of clients, and enrollment in all Roots services has increased overall.

Within Public Health clinical services, a Reproductive Health Educator has addressed reproductive health care needs for patients at the Red Door Clinic. This quarter, the Reproductive Health Educator increased outreach opportunities and partnerships with community organizations and provided patients donated items including Plan B and menstrual hygiene products. The second clinical position supported through the initiative, a Maternal Child Health Nurse with Healthcare for the Homeless, addressed gaps in care and helped patients navigate maternal health resources and services. The Maternal Child Health Nurse served patients at People Serving People, Youthlink, and St. Anne's Place providing pregnancy-related care coordination, breastfeeding support, prenatal education, birth control education, and STD/STI testing. This staff also secured funds to purchase gift card incentives for participants in upcoming women's health education classes next quarter.

Continuing community engagement process to create a birth justice strategic plan

The second phase of the Maternal Health initiative has wrapped up, which began with the formation of a Birth Justice Collaborative (BJC) and culminated in the completion of a birth justice strategic plan. The BJC launched a website with more information about the birth justice plan and strategies, accessible at www.birthjusticecollaborative.com.

Implementing the birth justice strategic plan

The final phase of the initiative centers on implementing the birth justice plan. Collective Action Lab and the Birth Justice Collaborative partners are leading coordination and oversight, supporting a governance structure that oversees implementation. This past quarter, strategy groups met regularly, conducting research, outreach, strategy sessions, and program pilot design, participant enrollment, and contracting activities for each birth justice priority in coordination with the BJC partners, including:

- Two culturally-based home visiting organizations recruited participants for the postpartum cultural parenting program pilot.
- Hosting two of three community education forums providing information on the rights of pregnant and postpartum individuals, tools, and resources for self-advocacy and care.
- BJC has partnered with Ramsey County's Birth Equity Community Council (BECC) to develop doula supports, and increase awareness of and appreciation for doulas. An event is planned for next quarter.
- Collaborated with a hospital system on a joint application to participate in a patient-reported experience measure in obstetric racism pilot.
- Identified improvements for anti-bias trainings for medical professionals and hosted community forums for self-advocacy and anti-bias accountability in systems.
- The strategy group met and scoped out the budget and work for an American Indian-focused Birth Center and an African American-focused Homeplace.
- BJC finalized and has been advocating for legislative priorities for this session to advance a shared policy agenda, including bills seeking planning funds for the American Indian Birth Center and African American Homeplace model.

Key performance indicators

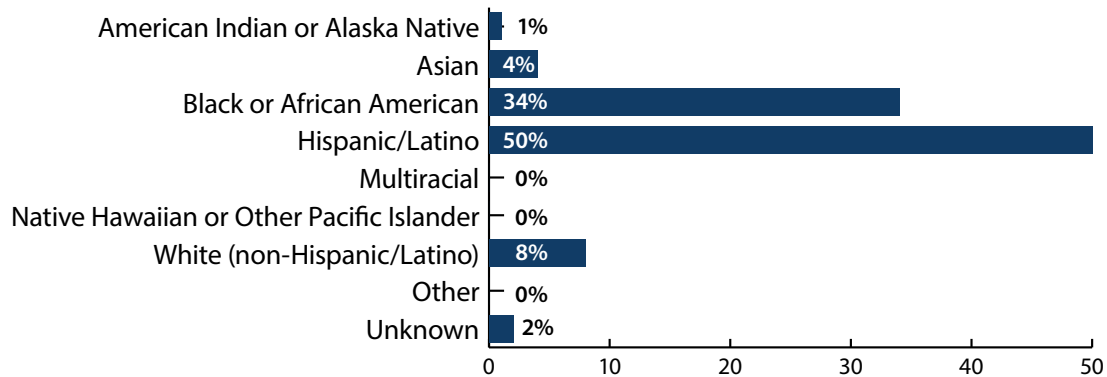
Over the last quarter, progress was made on expanding existing maternal health services and developing and investing in community-initiated solutions to reduce disparities:

Expand existing maternal health services

- Number of individuals served through expansion of Public Health Clinical Services
 - 89 individuals served
- Total number of individuals served through contracted providers Hennepin Healthcare, NorthPoint Health & Wellness, and Roots Community Birth Center
 - 717 total individuals served

- Number of training and educational sessions offered, topics covered, and attendance
 - 4 Four trauma-informed care trainings held
 - 25 family classes and group sessions held
 - 302 community members and health care professionals attended trainings and classes
- Number of individuals receiving referrals to supportive resources
 - 8,238 culturally congruent food bags distributed to patients experiencing food insecurity
 - 35 individuals screened via East Lake Clinic trauma screening tool and referred to trauma responsive supports
 - 288 individuals provided 573 referrals to social determinants of health resources including behavioral health and mental health supports, nutrition, dental, childcare, social work, and human services
- Number of visits completed with patients, including prenatal and postpartum OB/GYN, doula, and midwifery care
 - 481 visits with practitioners
 - 49 visits with Maternal Child Health Nurse
 - 58 doula visits

Race and ethnicity of clients and patients provided services, January–March 2024



- Develop and invest in community-initiated solutions to reduce disparities
 - Birth justice plan implementation includes participation from 81 leadership coalition members:
 - 66 Black, American Indian, or other person of color participants
 - 51 Black or American Indian community members or cultural community agency representatives
 - 30 health or government systems representatives
 - 43 community members attended the Birth Justice Collaborative’s community education forums on pregnancy and parenting advocacy and resources
 - The BJC trained, hired, and oriented 11 Black, American Indian, or mixed-race cultural home visitors in the Family Spirit model to provide services and supports to the 42 pregnant and postpartum families in the pilot
 - A total of 25 home visitors were trained, increasing capacity in community for cultural home visiting services
 - Supported the creation of a new Family Spirit home visiting affiliate, African American Babies Coalition (AABC)
 - HCPH continued support of and collaboration with the Birth Justice Collaborative (BJC)
 - Supporting both bills the BJC developed for the American Indian Birth Center and African American HomePlace
 - Identified and applied for funding opportunities to support the ongoing work of the initiative and birth justice project

Data-informed decisions and evaluation efforts

Family Health area staff have met quarterly with contracted providers to maintain regular communication about program updates, invoicing, and support needed from the county. Evaluation of the initiative continued with support from the Public Health Assessment team. The scope of the evaluation focuses on the process and short-term outcomes of the initiative.

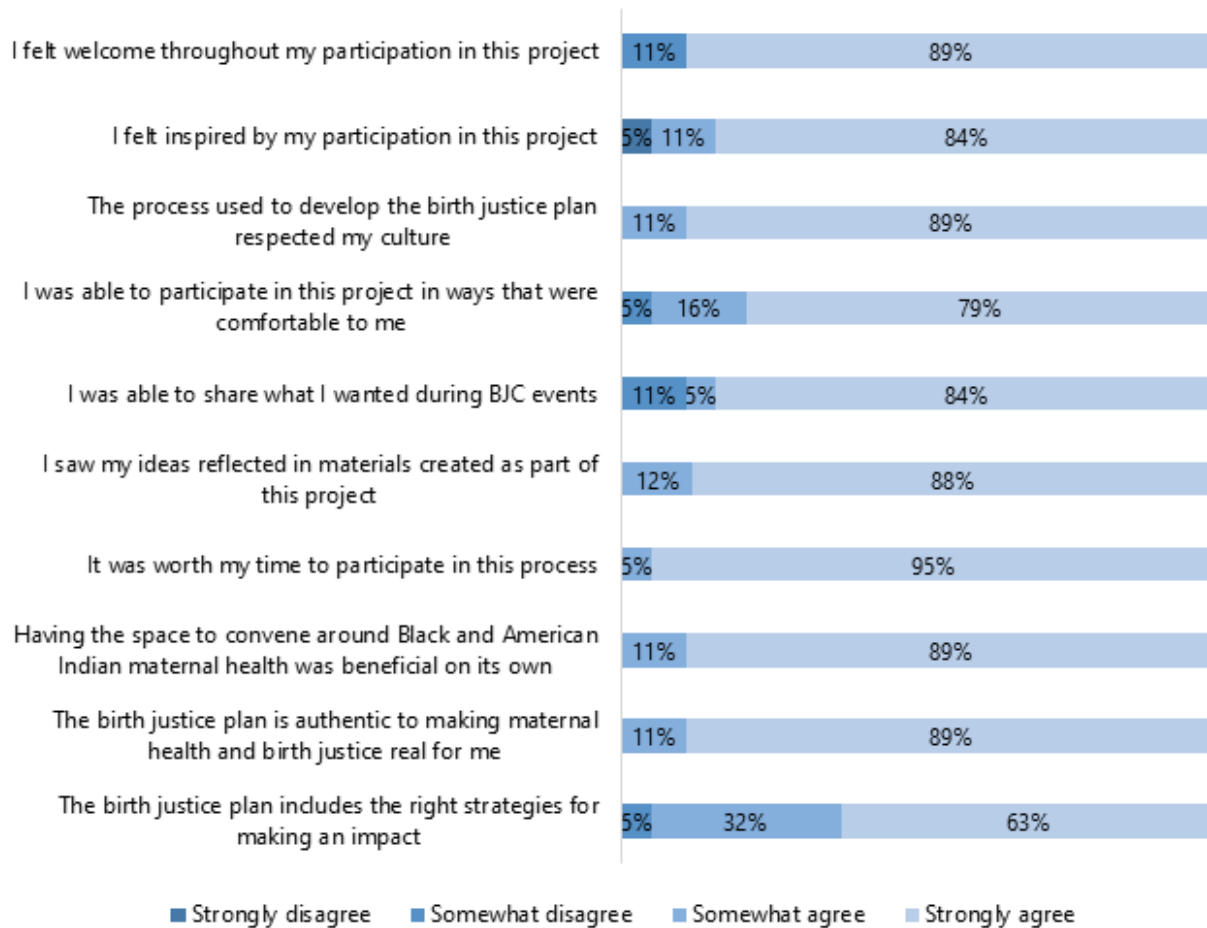
Evaluation learnings around early successes:

- Contracted providers shared that the funding enabled them to get work off the ground, move development forward more rapidly, maintain their work, and / or expand to new audiences. Their projects have promoted equity and offered services in culturally appropriate ways.
- Providers believed the funding strengthened their organizational capacity by allowing them to make improvements to internal coordination and processes, which has helped them do their work better.
- Providers shared the funding has been important for demonstrating the value of what they're doing, with hopes that they may scale the work to other parts of their organization or other agencies.
- Birth justice project partners remarked that the county's community-led approach has been a true partnership where they felt trusted by the county, and in turn, they trusted the county to follow through on community recommendations.
- Birth justice project partners shared the intentional process of convening community members and centering community voices has built relationships and trust, which has been missing from past engagement through systems. They felt the birth justice strategic plan solidly reflects the complexities of maternal health disparities that need addressing in order to create meaningful change.
- County staff involved in the initiative thought the way of working with community and incorporating community engagement was a significant achievement. It formed new partnerships, strengthened relationships, and established trust. Staff all agreed it was appropriate for HCPH to serve in this role, provide resources necessary to advance maternal health, and function as a neutral convener for community.

Birth Justice Project participant survey

Birth justice coalition and community members who were convened to inform and develop the birth justice strategic plan responded to a survey (n=17) about to what extent they agree or disagree with the following statements about their experience:

Survey of Birth Justice Project Participation



Next steps

Over the next quarter, Collective Action Lab and the Birth Justice Collaborative partners will continue leading implementation and oversight of the birth justice plan through a governance structure involving lead agencies for each strategy, community advisory, as well as backbone communications and advocacy supports. The post-partum cultural home visiting pilot program will begin visiting families; another community education forum will occur in April; and subcontracts for evaluation and research on the birth justice plan’s pilot program will be executed. Contracted providers will continue to serve patients and clients in need of maternal health care, services, and supports. Additionally, initiative sustainability planning will continue, and the evaluation will move forward analyzing interviews with Public Health clinical services staff and Public Health Assessment team members, as well as synthesize data from evaluation activities conducted so far.

HEALTH DOMAIN

Public Health

Allocation amount: \$9,700,000

Project description

This project focuses on rebuilding and strengthening critical public health capabilities and services that are essential to protect community health during the pandemic and in a post-COVID-19 era. 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-19 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.

Prevent the spread of communicable diseases

Infectious disease response: The Community-Based Infectious Disease response team (CBID) was formed to ensure a rapid, effective, and culturally competent response to emerging infectious disease outbreaks. Now a year old, CBID continues to evolve and instill lessons learned. This past quarter, CBID helped maintain stable staffing levels in the Public Health Clinic and Healthcare for the Homeless sites to ensure delivery of HIV medications, continuous infectious disease screenings, syphilis treatment, and continuation of suboxone services.

Infection control in long-term care facilities (LTCF):

Antibiotic stewardship. The LTC Infection Prevention (IP) team continued to implement the CDC Local Health Department Healthcare Associated Infection/Antimicrobial Resistance (HAI/AR) Strategy during Q1 2024. The coalition’s antimicrobial stewardship (AS) subcommittee, in collaboration with the Health Evaluation and Assessment Team (HEAT), developed and implemented a LTCF healthcare personnel (HCP) needs assessment to inform the upcoming eight-session Antibiotic and Urine Culture Stewardship in LTC: HCP Education Series, Data Use Collaborative and Subject Matter Expert Forum. The Minnesota Medical Association deemed these activities eligible for continuing medical education credits. One hundred healthcare providers (HCPs), including infection preventionists, clinicians, nurses, and administrators responded, yielding valuable data that were shared with presenters. On March 20, Dr. Kabbani, Director of CDC’s Office of Antibiotic Stewardship, delivered the kickoff presentation to 225 LTCF HCPs. Of the 109 people who responded to the evaluation, 106 (97%) agreed or strongly agreed that they found the session to be a valuable use of their time. The HEAT-developed registration platform for the next seven sessions, slated to take place in Q2 2024, recently launched; registrant totals for April events are approaching or surpassing 100 people.

LTCF outreach. In-person facility outreach strategy continued; visits to 46 skilled nursing facilities (SNF) completed, including all SNF located in areas of high and medium-high social vulnerability. Visits yielded 20 face-to-face discussions with infection prevention and control (IPC) program leaders, 18 new or updated facility contacts, 10 new LTC IP coalition memberships, and four follow-up phone calls introducing available program services and supports. HCPH services and supports include IPC program consultations — proactively oriented and in response to HAI/AR outbreaks — and assistance onboarding new IPs.

LTCF containment response.

1. The LTC IP team collaborated with the Epidemiology team and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to explore a potential infection cluster involving LTCF residents receiving dialysis.
2. MDH continues to engage the Hennepin County LTCF involved in an ongoing multidrug-resistant organism (MDRO) containment response; MDH updated the LTC IP Team in February.

Prepare and respond to emergencies

Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (PHEPR) program personnel continued to make progress on corrective action projects relating to the COVID-19 After-Action Report and Improvement Plan. Three corrective actions received focus for the reporting period:

1. **Self-paced online learning module development** that aligns with doctrines of the National Incident Management System and the Incident Command System. Initially, the development of learning modules was to be completed through contracting with the University of Minnesota. After learning about another jurisdiction that developed these successfully without contracting with external partners, a decision was made to manage the project internally and develop modules using Hennepin County resources. PHEPR hired a certified project manager for the Training and Exercise Coordinator position in March to manage and lead work on this project.
2. **Emergency Response and Recovery Plan (ERRP) revision:** the Base Plan and the Direction and Control Annex has been merged and content has been revised. The Risk Communication Annex, Epidemiology Annex, Isolation and Quarantine Annex, and the Medical Countermeasure Dispensing and Administration Annex are currently being revised in coordination with document subject matter experts.
3. **Hennepin County Point of Dispensing sites:** Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and Facility Use Agreement (FUA) documents were revised in coordination with the Hennepin County Attorney's Office on 2/5/2024. The FUA has been included as an attachment to the MOA for just-in-time execution to govern specific use of facilities. Ten Point of Dispensing (POD) MOAs are currently in development with Hennepin County school districts to support Hennepin County Public Health's POD planning and response operations.

Promote healthy communities and healthy behaviors

Chronic disease: Through a partnership with the Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP), this initiative is funding four projects including community pop-up clinics to increase access to primary care, train-the-trainer models for mental well-being practices in communities of color, expanding referral networks for primary and mental healthcare, and increased access to dental care for youth without insurance. A second community RFP focused on reconnection to primary care, mental well-being, and other health promotion activities awarded nine providers. Their contracts began December 1 and projects include addressing delays and gaps in primary care, chronic disease management, support to expand Community Health Worker programs, mobile health screenings, and whole-person wellness initiatives. The initiative also supports a Community Health Worker (CHW) HUB project with Pillsbury United Communities and that work began in December.

Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP): A collaborative RFP process was conducted among CHIP, the public health trauma-informed team, and the Public Health Promotion program area for the Community Led Well-being and Trauma-Informed grant. CHIP is funding nine grantees. The intent of this funding is to enable local organizations to promote community-driven ideas and recommendations to

strengthen communities, build relationships, and promote healing from individual and community trauma. During this quarter, community providers continued their efforts in community healing, organizational change toward becoming trauma informed, social connections in rental communities, and spiritual / faith / cultural trauma response. Mid-point workplan updates from providers demonstrated steady progress. CHIP's community mental well-being action team and CHIP's Housing action team are collaborating on a mini-grant proposal for second quarter and community events for the third and fourth quarters of 2024.

Age friendly: The Public Health Age-Friendly Coordinator and team continue to implement the countywide Age-Friendly Action Plan. The team was awarded an Age-Friendly Communities MN grant that focuses on conducting a feasibility study for the CAPABLE model. CAPABLE helps older adults age at home with support from small home improvements and a coordinated care team. The team is now exploring how the program can be implemented at the county in partnership with NorthPoint Health & Wellness. A logic model and evaluation plan are complete, and the team is tracking metrics related to community partnership, technical assistance, and long-term health outcomes. The team also launched a mini-grant process to support community partners in implementing activities focused on older adults and social connection. Forty organizations applied for funding and the team is making final funding determinations. The Age-Friendly team also completed the application process to become a certified Age-Friendly employer.

Coordinate early childhood development strategies: The early childhood (EC) coordinator has been working with Child Care Assistance Program staff to implement the Strong Beginnings child care program. Centers in this program are expected to provide services above and beyond what is expected of child care centers in order to support child development. Using the Early Childhood Strategic Plan, work has begun to expand the Strong Beginnings centers to more suburban Hennepin County partners through a Request for Information process.

Additionally, the EC coordinator has been working with the Outreach team and the Family Home Visiting team to establish a baseline for resource navigation among the nurse home visitors. This strategy will help families with young children to access the right services to support child development by ensuring all nurse home visitors have access to the same information about available resources.

Assure and adequate local public health infrastructure

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

Increase planning and project management capacity: Strategic Initiatives staff are continuing to enhance and expand health and racial equity efforts across the department and align with other county efforts. Results from a recent Health and Racial Equity survey have been analyzed and shared with department leaders and staff, along with calls to action. Additionally, Strategic Initiatives staff are continuing to lead efforts in violence prevention and building partnerships with cities within Hennepin County to better serve local needs through innovative tools and initiatives.

Key performance indicators

Efforts are underway to meet all key performance indicators.

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

- COVID-19, MPOX, and other infectious disease screening and vaccination progress is being captured internally using Power BI.

By June 28, 2024, the final date of the Antibiotic and Urine Culture Stewardship in LTC training series, >50% participants will:

- Indicate an intention to monitor urine culture and antibiotic use trends and implement an improvement process (e.g., Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA)) via their quality assurance / performance improvement (QAPI) / interdisciplinary committee.
- Indicate an intention to review / revise IPC / antibiotic stewardship policies / protocols for opportunities to incorporate best practices, including CDC's urine culture recommendations.
- Perceive increased confidence about communicating with residents and families about managing a resident's change in condition.

By June 28, 2024, >50% LTCFs implement at least one recommended practice improvement following a consultation with the LTC IP team.

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

- The Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Program is currently interviewing candidates for the Training and Exercise Coordinator position. This position will be responsible for instructional design of public health emergency preparedness and response related trainings and exercises. Two main components of this position include developing, coordinating, and facilitating trainings to Public Health Department staff and community partners regarding all-hazards public health emergency preparedness and response, and developing and conducting exercises to test public health emergency preparedness and response plans.
- The Workforce Development Coordinator developed four trainings for Public Health Department staff and implemented a departmentwide communication strategy with the goal of increasing department personnel's knowledge of Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response concepts and expectations of their role during public health emergency response activations.
- 81% of Public Health Department personnel (425 completed training of the 523 total department personnel) completed at least one of the Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) trainings that were offered. In total, 788 EPR courses were completed by department personnel in 2023.

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

- Age-Friendly Hennepin County completed a logic model and evaluation plan. Metrics include tracking awareness, number of new and emerging partners, technical assistance provided both to internal and external partners, and systemic changes made as a result of applying an age-friendly lens.
- Evaluation plans are complete for projects funded by the joint RFP with CHIP, the Chronic Disease Prevention RFP, and all other contractual partners. Partners receive support and technical assistance along the way to improve outcomes.
- All evaluation work is ongoing through the end of 2024.
- Evaluation plans are complete for projects funded by the joint RFP with CHIP, and providers have all joined one technical assistance session. Workplan updates show steady progress from community providers.

By December 31, 2023, develop early childhood systems coordination strategic plan.

- The strategic plan was revised after feedback was shared from Family Health program staff.

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

- The early childhood coordinator has taken on working with five contracts that fund early childhood services at community agencies. The EC coordinator has begun working to align the contract outcomes across programs and providing technical assistance to these contracted programs. This falls under the following section of the Early Childhood Plan:

Priority area: Capacity-building

Goal:

Community agencies have the funding and resources to deliver high-quality early childhood services.

Objective #1

Community agencies have the funding to deliver high-quality early childhood services.

Action Plan

Activity	Target Date	Resources Required	Lead Person / Organization	Anticipated Product /Result	Progress Notes
Identify and connect with current early childhood contracts. .	March 30, 2024	Staff time	Meg Thell, Family Health	All early childhood contracts assigned to early childhood coordinator.	Contracts have been assigned to the early childhood coordinator.
Activity	Target Date	Resources Required	Lead Person / Organization	Anticipated Product /Result	Progress Notes
Provide technical assistance to support contracted partners in Hennepin County .	June 30, 2024	Staff time	Meg Thell, Family Health	Improved early childhood services contracted by Hennepin County.	Meg continues to work with the providers.

By March 31, 2024, the SHAPE 2022 project will have shared and presented the SHAPE data to internal staff, community partners and stakeholders, and continue to support data needs.

- The SHAPE team has made presentations to the county board, Hennepin County executive team, Hennepin County Public Health staff, Disparity Reduction Governance Group, Trusted Messenger Group, CAPI, Adult Mental Health Local Advisory Council, Climate Action workgroup, Climate and Resiliency group, Hennepin County Library, Twin Cities Research Group, NorthPoint Health & Wellness staff, Highrise Health Alliance Leadership team and the Metro Public Health Analysts Network group.

Next steps

Prevent the spread of communicable diseases

- CBID will continue infectious disease screening in homeless and unsheltered populations.
- Engage with leaders from Little Earth to talk about supporting them and potential infectious disease screening.
- Communicable disease efforts will continue to focus on other infectious disease outbreaks such as HIV, hepatitis, and syphilis.
- Continue to monitor trends in Mpox cases, and CBID may be deployed to increase staffing in the Public Health Clinic if cases increase.
- Coordinate with SME presenters to develop and facilitate activities for LTCF HCPs that promote antibiotic and urine culture stewardship. Collaborate with HEAT to evaluate the extent to which session objectives are met; use data to continuously improve future session content.

- Remain available to assist MDH with MDRO containment-related activities at affected LTCF.
- Continue LTCF outreach efforts to promote IPC consultations (e.g., ICAR visits, new IP onboarding support).

Prepare and respond to emergencies

- Continued development of the Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP) to include multi-year training activities and a comprehensive exercise plan, based on corrective actions identified in the COVID-19 Response After Action Report / Improvement Plan, Drug Resistant Infectious Disease Response After Action Report / Improvement Plan, MPOX (Monkeypox) Response After Action Report / Improvement Plan, and the Immigrant Arrival Response After Action Report / Improvement Plan. The IPP integrates improvement planning activities identified by the Workforce Development Plan, the workforce training needs assessment, and Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response strategic and operational planning activities. Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response planning and exercise activities are represented in the IPP, based on requirements set forth by the Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) grant, the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) grant, the Medical Reserve Corps grants, the Response Sustainability grant, the Health and Racial Equity work plan, and the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) Project Public Health Readiness (PPHR) and the CDC's Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response criteria elements.

Promote healthy communities and healthy behaviors

- Partner with new staff across the county to build out mental well-being initiatives and activities.
- Develop a cross-departmental panel to discuss Age-Friendly Hennepin and educate on why the associated work matters.
- Plan activities with city and community partners for Older Americans Month in May.
- Support newly funded Age-Friendly mini-grant partners.
- Continue to support partners in project implementation and evaluation.
- The early childhood coordinator will work with the community health intake, referrals, and outreach supervisor to establish an outreach plan for 2024.

Assure an adequate local public health infrastructure

- Continue to disseminate SHAPE 2022 findings to internal partners, community partners, and residents. The SHAPE team is also partnering with HUP / School of Public Health at the University of Minnesota to organize a SHAPE survey data competition in fall 2024. The SHAPE survey results will also be shared at the upcoming LGBTQ+ Health in Hennepin County: Data, Resilience, and Action Forum in April 2024.
- Advance health and racial equity work by identifying additional training needs through the health and racial equity assessment.
- Promote a new health and racial equity tool to increase integration for programs and staff across the department.
- Move forward city-focused work by finalizing talking points and other communications, developing data tools for use, planning for kickoff meetings, and refining a general framework for evaluation.

HEALTH DOMAIN

Vaccine Incentives

Allocation amount: \$2,000,000

Project description

Hennepin County Public Health's (HCPH) 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. By partnering with communities that have historically experienced medical exploitation, experimentation without consent and marginalization, authentic relationships are built, leading to decreased vaccine hesitancy. 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.
- Hosting a lottery program.
- Other incentives for individuals who get vaccinated as appropriate.

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 was 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 goal of more people getting vaccinated.

Progress narrative

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

Reminder / recall immunization efforts: ImmuLink sends out three rounds of reminder / recall letters or postcards to a portion of the population who are overdue for or recommended to receive immunizations based on the Minnesota Immunization Information Connection (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 mailings during that year. In 2023, ImmuLink sent these letters in April, July, and December.

During Q1 2024 some efforts have shifted to work with identified disparate populations to include our newly arriving families that are immigrating from Central and South America. There is a concentration of some of the families in Hennepin County's Family Shelters and among the many needs identified, assurance of having immunizations up to date to prevent disease outbreak was one of those. Therefore, along with providing Community Vaccine Clinics in 2024, clinics will also be provided in specific Family Shelters to assist families in need. Routine childhood and adult vaccines will be available along with COVID-19 vaccines to assure that this new population has the opportunity to access this preventative health care without additional barriers.

HOUSING DOMAIN

Housing Recovery

Allocation amount: \$45,500,000

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. The pandemic exacerbated existing inequities from the very beginning, and while emergency response efforts in 2020 and 2021 ameliorated these impacts — keeping people fed and in their homes — the economic fallout continues to disproportionately impact those who already had less before the pandemic.

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

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

Progress narrative

Housing and Economic Development (HED) programmed funds through its program components: Affordable Housing Development Accelerator, Homeownership, NOAH Preservation, Pandemic-Related Cost Increase, and Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing. In total, from late 2021 through 2022, HED competitively awarded \$37,900,000 to 35 affordable housing developments, and advanced the budgeted \$8,100,000 for the acquisition, rehabilitation, and conversion of properties to SRO housing.

In 2023, HED used a request for proposal process to re-allocate funding from projects that could not meet pandemic recovery fund encumbrance or expenditure timelines or no longer needed full funding. This resulted in modifying two existing awards, amending three contracts, and adding three new affordable housing developments, for a new total of 34 projects.

In addition, in early 2024, \$500,000 was moved from the Housing Recovery fund to other projects, reducing overall funding available to \$45,500,000.

As noted earlier, staff have implemented policies to drastically shorten the development process to meet funding requirements, and more importantly to open doors faster. In January through March 2024, staff executed funding agreements for three (3) projects to create 28 affordable housing units. These agreements totaled \$2,042,665 in pandemic recovery funding.

- Housing recovery component: Homeownership
 - Homes within Reach (Western Hennepin Affordable Housing Land Trust): acquisition and rehabilitation of 16 homes for affordable homeownership in suburban Hennepin County; two affordable to households at or below 60% affordable median income (AMI) and 14 affordable at or below 80% AMI.
 - Minnetonka Boulevard Redevelopment (Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation): new construction of eight homes for affordable homeownership in St. Louis Park; two affordable to households at or below 60% AMI and six affordable at or below 80% AMI.
 - Tax forfeited lot conversion (Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity): new construction of four homes for affordable homeownership on tax forfeited land; two affordable to households at or below 60% AMI and two affordable at or below 80% AMI.

In total, HED has executed funding agreements for 27 of the 34 projects, which will create or preserve 2,151 units of affordable rental housing and create 72 homeownership opportunities. The signed agreements total \$28.3 million in pandemic recovery funding.

Program component	Number of project awards	Award amount	Project agreements executed	Funds encumbered	Affordable units funded
Affordable Housing Accelerator	16 projects	\$27,970,348	11 projects	\$17,921,977	825
Homeownership	7 projects	\$3,792,665	7 projects	\$3,792,665	72
NOAH Preservation	4 projects	\$5,080,520	4 projects	\$4,605,000	986
Pandemic Cost Increase	7 projects	\$3,492,314	5 projects	\$2,000,000	340
TOTALS	34 projects	\$40,335,847	27 projects	\$28,319,642	2,223

The remaining \$5.2M remains allocated to Single Room Occupancy housing (SRO) acquisition and rehabilitation. As of the end of March 2024, HED completed rehab and conversion for the University Inn and Metro Inn Motel, and sold them to experienced affordable housing operators with long-term affordability restrictions for a total of 83 units. The owners started lease-up in December 2023.

Since inception, HED has expended \$5 million on SRO acquisition and rehabilitation, and \$22 million on pandemic recovery contracts.

Key performance indicators

Financing goals

Housing Recovery goals were to finance the creation or preservation of 2,000 units of rental housing, and 100 homeownership opportunities, while meeting the county’s ongoing goals to maximize affordability. HED surpassed the rental goal with funding awards to multifamily projects containing 2,714 affordable rental units, including pending SRO units, and is close to the homeownership goal with 72 units.

Affordability goals

Progress also surpassed the county's and the Housing and Redevelopment Authority's affordability goals and has greatly increased in significance with new funding awards in the last quarter.

30% AMI rental goal: 25% of new units financed are affordable to households with incomes below 30% of the AMI

- Outcome: 41% 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: 86% 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 AMI.

- Outcome: 22% of homeownership opportunities financed through Housing Recovery are anticipated to be affordable at or below 60% AMI

Production goals

Creating affordable rental housing typically takes 5–7 years. With HED's Housing Recovery goal of accelerating production, measures show that we have more than doubled our production from average years.

	Number of projects closed	Number of affordable units in those projects
Average (non-pandemic) annual	11	615
Last 12 months (April 2023 through March 2024)		
Pandemic recovery-funded	13	444
Projects without pandemic recovery funding	7	807
Total	19	1,251

Next steps

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

Planned activities for April – June 2024

- Complete final improvements on remaining SRO properties
- Finalize a request for proposal to sell two SRO properties to create affordable housing
- Negotiate and execute seven funding agreements:
 - Carrington Drive, 128 units of affordable housing in Brooklyn Center (second funding project)
 - Bimosedaa, 48 units of affordable and supportive housing in Minneapolis
 - Union Park Flats amendment, additional funding for 60 units of affordable housing in St. Louis Park
 - Wadaag Commons, 38 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis
 - 3030 Nicollet, 109 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis
 - Kyle Garden Square, 55 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis
 - 550 West Lake, 65 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis
- Expend \$3.3 million
- Continued outreach to all funded projects to confirm all will close by 12/31/2024

HOUSING DOMAIN

Services for People Experiencing Homelessness

Allocation amount: \$35,495,000

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

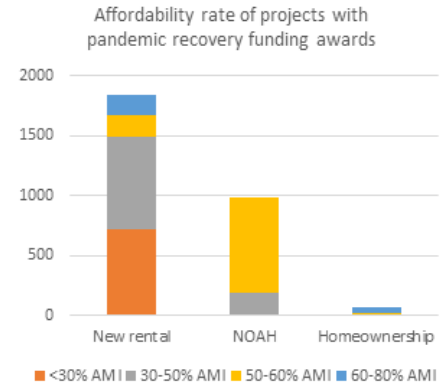
24/7 shelter

- Four agencies have funding to operate 24/7 emergency shelter for single adults (18+ without dependents).
- This funding impacts six shelter locations.
- The majority of funded programs have been at or near full capacity, operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week while providing shelter guests with meals, housing-focused case management, access to laundry, and more. Two shelters have been undergoing more repairs and renovations this quarter than normal, so capacity was slightly reduced.
- Funded programs continue to correctly enter their data into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- Funded programs had access to more new housing and housing barrier funds to help breakdown financial barriers to housing, which likely contributed to the increase in positive exits.

Low-barrier shelters

Avivo Village

- Avivo Village starting using ShelterPoint in HMIS to match how other shelters enter data.
- Avivo Village was funded to add 20 extra mats for four weeks, starting in January to serve individuals with housing plans who were in an encampment that closed.
- Continued to work on a new prioritization tool to help equitably allocate openings to people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, but there were delays due to HMIS updates. Will roll out new process in 2024 Q2.



AICDC Homeward Bound

- Continued to work with staff at American Indian Community Development Corporation (AICDC) Homeward Bound to ensure accurate data quality.

Self-pay at Harbor Light Center

- Harbor Light Center continues to shelter all guests without requiring payment.
- Capacity is now 104 in the emergency housing programs where self-pay was eliminated.
 - The program serves 52 men and 52 women daily.

System-wide shelter diversion: Hennepin Shelter Hotline

- Hennepin Shelter Hotline is spending down the \$450,000 added to their contract (in mid-2023) for five FTEs. Four FTEs have been hired.
 - They've shared it has reduced voicemails from an average of 55 per day in October 2023 to 10 per day in March 2024.
 - The influx of additional funding and focus on hiring Spanish-speaking staff has also reduced the costs associated with translation services from \$10,085 in October 2023 to \$4,617 in February 2024.
- Hennepin Shelter Hotline staff were trained on using the new report and corrected all past data entry errors, now correcting new data entry errors within a week.
- Staff meet with the county's Service Area Lead on a weekly and monthly basis to discuss challenges, data corrections, and more.

Homeless to Housing

- During this reporting period, Homeless to Housing (H2H) continued to onboard the new Family Team, hiring the final team member at the end of March 2024.
- Additionally, two case aides who support the family social workers joined the Family Team.
 - These case aides obtain vital documents for clients, stock the storage room, build move-in kits, and perform other vital tasks to help families move towards permanent housing.
- The dynamic family case conference meeting continued but emphasis was made on inviting additional housing providers and making deeper connections with the shelters serving families.
- Another family storage unit was rented and has been fully stocked with items needed for a family to move into their new home with dignity, basic needs, and household goods.
 - Feminine products were added to the expanded personal needs items offered to clients.
- The program rented a van during this reporting period, which has been instrumental in helping our case managers and case aides transport families to housing appointments and delivering the larger move-in kits.
 - This van was so helpful to the teams that we ordered one for purchase (versus monthly rental) and it should arrive by the end of 2024. Until that time, we will continue to rent the current van.

- Homeless to Housing streamlined case aide task assignments during this reporting period using a new task request system through Microsoft forms. This increased efficiency for both case managers and case aides.
- H2H started Community Integrated Task assignments during this review period.
 - Case aides will be assigned one of these tasks after an individual or family has been housed but needs some assistance in getting connected to resources in their new community.
 - Examples of tasks would be taking clients to their local food shelf and helping them get signed up; touring the closest Community Support Program (CSP) to their new home and learning of the social opportunities available there; and locating their closest pharmacy, library, park or other places that may help them feel connected and acquainted with their new neighborhood.
- Homeless to Housing is both data driven and informed. This is stressed to staff regularly and quality data is essential to track our successes and growth, in addition to providing opportunities for continuous improvement. As such, a monthly quarterly data quality (QDQ) drop-in meeting was scheduled to demonstrate and assist staff with any documentation questions or concerns.
- The program's two unsheltered specialist social workers worked approximately four hours a week at the winter warming spaces. They provided outreach, completed CES assessments, helped obtain vital docs, shelter beds, etc.

Board and lodge capital improvements

During this time period, we completed check ins with each awarded organization regarding the status of the capitolly funded board andlodge projects.

- Renovation of the first floor scheduled at Mission Lodgetook place during this time period.
 - Missions Inc. also submitted a proposal for upgrading its dining facilities in response to additional funding that came available due to one of Pursuit Hometel's projects being determined as not feasible by the end of these funds.
- A construction project manager was hired by Pursuit Hometel to oversee their capitolly-funded projects.
 - Drawings and a project plan were created for the renovation of bathrooms and laundry facilities at the site.
 - Pursuit Hometel also determined that its awarded air conditioning installation project faced barriers that prevented the project from being completed by 12/31/24. The funds from this project were redirected to Missions Inc.'s dining room renovation.
 - Pursuit Hometel has been given a deadline of 7/1/24 to begin the construction phase of its project.
- Cullen Homes received three bids for air conditioning installation at its two buildings, including the electrical upgrades that will need to be made for this renovation.

Encampment response: Streets to Housing

- Streets to Housing provided street- and site-based engagements to households experiencing unsheltered homelessness, offering a variety of services including getting people connected with benefits, assisting with reducing barriers to housing including assistance with reducing legal and financial barriers, conducting housing assessments, and providing transportation and case management support, as well as connecting households to emergency shelter, treatment, and recovery services.
- Streets to Housing is a team of one Program Manager, one Supervisor, and six System Navigators.
- Streets to Housing completed interviewing and made a conditional offer to a new Opioid Use Specialist to join the Streets to Housing team, providing enhance services and navigation for households who are interested in exploring recovery and treatment options as part of their pathway out of homelessness.

Key performance indicators

24/7 shelter

- 598 people used shelter
- 318 people left shelter
 - 31% (53% when excluding missing / don't know data) of people who left had a positive exit: 65 exited to

- a permanent destination, 18 to an institutional setting, and 16 to a non-homeless setting
- 82 people returned to homelessness and 130 people were missing data
- Worked with shelter providers and Initial Contact and Access to clean-up incorrect, outdated data

Low-barrier shelters

Avivo Village

- 175 people used shelter
- 85 people left shelter:
 - 67% of people who left had a positive exit: 51 exited to a permanent destination, five to an institutional setting, and one to a non-homeless setting
 - 18 people returned to homelessness, 0 people died, two people went to an 'other' destination, and eight people were missing data
- Among people who left shelter, two people used shelter for less than seven days, 34 people used shelter for 7–30 days, 28 people used shelter for 31–182 days, and seven people used shelter for 183–365 days, 14 people used shelter for more than 365 days

AICDC Homeward Bound

- 128 people used shelter
- 78 people left shelter:
 - 21% of people who left had a positive exit: 13 exited to a permanent destination, two to an institutional setting, and one to a non-homeless setting
 - 21 people returned to homelessness, and 41 people were missing data
- Among people who left shelter, 12 people used shelter for less than seven days, 38 people used shelter for 7–30 days, 27 people used shelter for 31–182 days, and one person used shelter for more than 183 days

Self-pay at Harbor Light Center

- 216 people were served by Harbor Light Center's emergency housing programs

System-wide shelter diversion: Hennepin Shelter Hotline

- 2,085 households were served (3,331 clients) with 464 being successfully diverted (22%)
 - 1,487 single adult households served with 284 being successfully diverted (19%)
 - 598 family households served with 180 being successfully diverted (30%)

Homeless to Housing

- 81 people housed during this reporting period
 - Average days from assignment to a case manager to housed is 105, which is down by 19 days from last quarter
- 69% of clients identify as people of color and 67% of people housed identify as people of color (statistically equitable)
- 83% of clients have photo ID at closing, 65% have SS card, 87% of client satisfaction surveys have been positive
- 94% of those housed are not back in the homeless response system currently
- Data is reviewed bi-weekly to ensure positive progress and to make program adjustments and invest in continuous improvement

Board and lodge capital improvements

- The key performance indicators are for all capitably funded projects to be completed by December 31, 2024.

Encampment response: Streets to Housing

- Streets to Housing served 527 households during this reporting period.
 - Approximately 46% identify as Black or African American, 23% identify as White, and 13% Indigenous or American Indian.
 - 35% meet the definition of Chronically Homeless.
- A public facing dashboard has been created to share ongoing progress toward our goal to reduce and end unsheltered homelessness by connecting households to a robust system that can assist them to resolve their housing crisis as quickly as possible, while exploring safe and appropriate alternatives to sleeping in places unmeant for human habitation.
- Since August 2022, Streets to Housing has served 1,090 unduplicated households experiencing unsheltered homelessness, of which 496 or 45% have a known destination.
- We have recorded 264 or 53% exits to a permanent destination and 144 or 29% exits into emergency shelter.
- Currently, Streets to Housing is engaged with approximately 300 households, nearly 60 of which have active housing referrals.

Next steps

24/7 shelter

- Will continue to monitor performance measures to ensure progress is moving in the right direction
- Will continue to provide technical assistance for entering housing outcomes and data cleaning in HMIS as needed
- Will move away from a first come, first serve way of accessing these shelter beds through the Adult Shelter Connect
- Will use new Daily Program Participation report in HMIS to monitor capacity of these programs more closely

Low-barrier shelter

Avivo Village

- Will update Avivo Village's contract and performance measures to reflect their current practices
- Will implement the new prioritization tool to identify people interested in shelter
- Will evaluate new prioritization tool at one month of use

AICDC Homeward Bound

- Will monitor Homeward Bound's performance measures to ensure progress is moving in the right direction
- Will work with Adult Shelter Connect's (ASC) new manager and AICDC to partner more closely, so anyone leaving AICDC has the option to go somewhere else, and callers to ASC have the ability to access AICDC as needed

Self-pay at Harbor Light Center

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

System-wide shelter diversion: Hennepin Shelter Hotline

- Will continue to monitor the impact of the four new FTEs and develop a thoughtful plan to ramp down surge funding
- Will continue to host weekly meetings with program manager and monthly meetings with program director to analyze data, trends, gaps, and opportunities to ensure excellent customer service and satisfaction and progress toward target performance measures

Homeless to Housing

- Participate in the newly launched chronic case conference
- Start a new 'Lunch and Learn' series for staff highlighting different partner programs in the area
- Continue having the staff tour the local CSPs
- Further discussions about creating a new opportunity for a landlord specialist with the team
- Continue to increase caseloads for new Family Team

Board and lodge capital improvements

- Missions Inc. will begin Phase 2 of its renovation project. The project team will conduct a site visit to see the progress of these projects in person.
- 180 Degrees will be between 50%–75% of the renovation of its Clifton Place site during these months.
 - The project team will conduct a site visit to see the progress of these projects in person.
- Cullen Homes will select a contractor to complete its air conditioning project and begin installation. The project team will check in again with this organization in mid-April regarding its progress.
- Pursuit Hometel will begin the first phase of its bathroom and laundry facility renovation. The project team will check in again at the end of April with this organization regarding its progress.

Encampment response: Streets to Housing

- Hennepin County is partnering with the University of Minnesota for a program evaluation in 2024 to evaluate the efficacy and efficiency of this model of street-based service delivery that will inform program- and system-level policy.
- Hennepin County is eager to enhance our partnership with other jurisdictions and sectors regarding a housing-focused, trauma-informed response to encampment resolution. We will hopefully be embarking on this in early 2024.
- Streets to Housing has ordered a van to support the transportation and program needs of the project, allowing for more robust street-based support in the form of a mobile homelessness response team and office. We hope to see this added to our fleet in spring 2024 in time to increase our street-based engagements in partnership with community partner agencies and people with lived experience.

INCOME DOMAIN

Economic Recovery

Allocation amount: \$17,900,000

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 were exacerbated by the pandemic.

Economic impacts of the pandemic were most deep and long-lasting in low-income communities and communities of color. In addition to small business impacts, many nonprofit organizations based in deeply impacted communities have been leading effective response and recovery efforts and providing services critically important to economic recovery. In some cases, the same nonprofits that faced the most acute financial hardship from the pandemic have been called upon to increase programming to meet higher levels of need in the communities they serve.

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

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

Progress narrative

Since 2022, the Hennepin County Housing and Economic Development Department (HED) has executed concurrent strategies to achieve three interrelated Economic Recovery objectives:

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

Small business-focused economic recovery strategies

Housing and Economic Development’s small business-focused economic recovery strategies have gained increasing visibility and interagency support in part due to the successful branding of a suite of programming under the banner “Elevate Hennepin.” Activities over the past year have increased the depth and breadth of Elevate Hennepin’s core offerings: in-depth technical assistance, “back-office” support, access to capital, and specialized expertise available at no-cost to small businesses in Hennepin County. To achieve an unprecedented level of inclusive access to resources, HED has invested in three critical strategies:

- An innovative web platform at www.elevatehennepin.org that curates and filters 133 business resources provided by city, county, state, and federal agencies
- Access to live interpreters who speak over 200 languages enabling business owners who speak languages other than English to benefit from county-funded one-on-one business consulting in multiple areas of expertise

- Providing easy access to book appointments with Hennepin County's Business Navigators who can offer customized recommendations and referrals to the wide range of business consultants available

New, targeted cohort learning opportunities have launched to address specific needs and recovery challenges identified by business owners through early focus groups, ongoing discussions, and client feedback surveys. Systematic improvements were made to the online small business resource platform, generating measurable results in our ability to reach and serve entrepreneurs from specific cultural communities and business owners of color.

The final pandemic recovery strategy featuring a cohort-based approach launched in December 2023. The program, Elevate Hennepin Talent, is designed to tackle the challenges of attracting and retaining talent in the context of the current post-pandemic worker shortage. The program represents a collaboration between the county's Economic Development and Workforce Development teams, and provides two tracks of small business support:

1. A high-level of support for employers to improve their overall operations, with a focus on human resources policies and practices
2. A range of supports for employees, including financial counseling, savings incentives, and one-time emergency funds to better enable workers to weather specific hardships

Highlights of ongoing small-business-focused economic recovery strategies:

- Expansion of the network of business advisors under contract to provide no-cost technical assistance and specialized expertise now includes a total of forty-one (41) organizations
- Certified Access Academy, cohort-based program to build capacity among women business owners of color to contract with government and corporate entities
- CEO Now, new cohort-based training for growth-minded businesses to build systems and scale
- CEO Start, new cohort-based training for entrepreneurs at the idea stage
- Elevate Tech Essentials, offering training and support to meet small businesses' technology needs and help tackle the digital divide among many microbusinesses
- Elevate Hennepin Construction Advising providing technical assistance for smaller scale local construction businesses, with an emphasis on providing support for contractors of color (in collaboration with Purchasing Department)
- Elevate Nonprofits, providing customized consulting and capacity building for nonprofit organizations that are currently under contract with Hennepin County (in collaboration with Purchasing Department)

Community-focused economic recovery strategies

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

Consistent with program objectives, 79% of program funding was awarded to projects in low-income communities or communities of color. As of first quarter 2024, eight (8) of the 18 projects have closed on financing and are under construction.

Economic mobility-focused recovery strategies

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

In July 2023, a feasibility study was completed that explored national models and the readiness of the local landscape to create or expand social impact investing, assessing current needs, and promising strategies for activating private capital among local investors to support local small business growth. The study concluded that the small business ecosystem in Hennepin County and the broader metropolitan region has seen improvements in access to financing over the past five years, yet significant gaps remain for entrepreneurs, especially entrepreneurs of color, women, and LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs. Recommendations include establishing a well-connected tiered system of small business capital and building a locally-based high net-worth investor network to provide ongoing impact investment education, vetted investment opportunities, and foster relationship-building among investors and capital seekers.

Key performance indicators

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

Actual results indicate that Housing and Economic Development's multifaceted Economic Recovery strategies have supported a total of 2,731 businesses and stimulated investments valued over \$122 million in low-income communities and communities of color, vastly exceeding our goals.

Since the launch of Elevate Hennepin, results include:

- 2,444 businesses have accessed 26,427 hours of one-on-one technical assistance, "back-office" support, and cohort-based learning opportunities

Housing and Economic Development tracks the demographics of entrepreneurs and small business owners who access Elevate Hennepin consulting and one-on-one advising on a quarterly basis. Demographics of businesses served in 2023 (shown below) suggest that outreach efforts among communities of color and other disadvantaged groups are having an impact.

From April 2022 – December 2023 (note that December 2023 is the most recent reporting period for which outcomes data are available)

- 135 entrepreneurs received technical assistance to help their business launch
- \$19.5 million financing provided to Hennepin County businesses resulting in 405 jobs

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 of nonprofit and community space for five 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

In the next quarter, Housing and Economic Development will focus efforts on the following strategy within the Elevate Hennepin portfolio:

- Completion of the procurement process to launch a new strategy to improve capital access among Hennepin County entrepreneurs and small businesses

INCOME DOMAIN

Raise the Baseline — Empowering Families with Guaranteed Income

Allocation amount: \$3,000,000

Project description

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

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

The pilot is expected to serve approximately 175 very low-income Hennepin County residents with dependent children under age 5. A pool of potential participants was identified through analysis of benefits enrollments gaps and calculations of who is least at risk for facing a reduction or loss in public assistance benefits.

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

Progress narrative

- This quarter Raise the Baseline served 167 families.
- All participating families received monthly payments.
- A reinstatement process was created. Through this option, two families who disenrolled were then able to reenroll in the pilot.
- Year-end letters were sent to families stating Raise the Baseline benefit amounts received in 2023.
- Recognition and sharing:
 - Raise the Baseline was selected as a Hennepin County submission for a National Association of Counties Award.
 - Raise the Baseline was selected as a departmental nominee for the countywide Disparity Reduction in Action award.
 - Raise the Baseline's manager presented to leaders from 17 counties across the nation at a Results in Action Sprint led by Counties for Guaranteed Income.
- Quantitative analysis planning continued as the pilot closed out collaboration with partners from the University of Minnesota as described below. Hennepin County staff will implement quantitative data analysis recommendations.
- Customer Relationship Management PowerApp tool to provide work direction and case management tracking continued to be built out, including disenrollment and reinstatement processes.

- County Attorney and Privacy Officer consultation continued as needed to explore needs related to participant disclosure, consent, data sharing with partners, disenrollment, and reinstatement.
- Project for Pride in Living (PPL) connected with participants to offer supportive services:
- The outreach coordinator connected with 21 participants (15%) from the August and September enrollment cohorts to offer PPL services as the families received their sixth Raise the Baseline payment. Families were offered supportive services such as financial coaching and resume writing.
- Of the 21 families, nine indicated an interest in supportive services and were referred within PPL.
- Last quarter, 67 families indicated an interest in PPL services. PPL program staff connected directly with 19 of these families to discuss services.
- As of March 31, one family was receiving services from PPL.
- The Improve Group completed Round 1 of their mixed methods evaluation:
 - Analyzed and synthesized data from Round 1 surveys and interviews
 - Created a preliminary findings document
 - Held a preliminary findings meeting with key Hennepin County project staff and a participant advisor to discuss findings and collaboratively interpret and contextualize the findings
 - Synthesized input from the preliminary findings meeting discussions into the findings document to finalize learnings from Round 1

Key performance indicators

- Number of families participating:
 - 167 families fully enrolled
- Payment:
 - Percent of payments received on time: 100%
 - Percent with accurate payment amount: 100%
- The Improve Group completed the first round of the Raise the Baseline evaluation. Their research reflects people's experiences in the first months of pilot participation. The mixed methods evaluation included surveys, interviews, participatory methods, and focus groups.
- One research question explored how families spent Raise the Baseline payments. Themes included meeting basic needs and appreciation for the person-centered flexible funds.
- "We didn't have to take money away from the electric bill to buy my son shoes."
- "Now I don't have to choose whether to go to my kids' doctor's appointments or stay at work to make sure there is food on the table where you win one but lose another."
- "It's just having the flexibility to meet the needs of my children or my household. That freedom and flexibility is not always there with other types of benefits."
- Researchers also explored the impact Raise the Baseline funds had on the lives of participating families.
- "It helped me get my head above water. Now I can focus on other things like finding a new job."
- "I am happy this program has helped relieve stress for me and my family when I didn't have money to buy clothes for my kids or when my gas is empty and not having money to put gas in my car."
- "I am more motivated to finish my degree, being able to use the funds to go back to school. Now I want to level up in life and am motivated to keep this going without the program."
- The Hennepin-University Partnership's Collaborative Grant focused on Raise the Baseline for the 2023 grant year, selecting Dr. Lynn Blewett's proposal "Health Care Impact of Hennepin County's Guaranteed Basic Income Program" for funding. The results of this work will guide administrative study of the health utilization impacts of the pilot. The team delivered two memos with recommendations for data analysis. This work concluded with discussion and planning around next steps for the county to move forward with this evaluation.

- The Hennepin-University Partnership's Hennepin Collaborative Research Assistant Anna Bokun developed recommendations and methodologies for a quantitative evaluation of Raise the Baseline, focusing on outcome measures that may include housing stability, economic well-being, and health. Bokun, a University of Minnesota Sociology Ph.D. candidate, concluded her work this quarter. County staff will move forward using her recommendations to leverage existing administrative data to evaluate Raise the Baseline.

Next steps

- Families will continue to receive monthly payments they can use to meet their family's basic needs and plan for their future.
- Pilot staff will begin planning for the taper and closure phases of the pilot.
- Customer Relationship Management PowerApp tool to provide work direction and case management tracking will continue to be built out for upcoming phases of the pilot, including taper and program closure.
- County Attorney and Privacy Officer consultation will continue as needed to explore needs related to participant disclosure, consent, data sharing with evaluators, etc.
- Hennepin County staff will create an administrative data evaluation plan building off the recommendations from University of Minnesota partners.
- Project for Pride in Living will offer supportive services:
- The outreach coordinator will connect with families from the September and October enrollment cohorts at the six-month point of their program participation
- Program staff will connect with the participants who are interested in supportive services
- Families will receive services through PPL programming
- The Improve Group will begin Round 2 of their mixed methods evaluation:
- Adjust outreach and administration process based on learnings from Round 1
- Translate minor updates in documents into Hmong, Dari, and French
- Obtain approval from the Institutional Review Board
- Conduct Round 2 surveys, interviews, and participatory method

JUSTICE DOMAIN

Anti-Hate Initiative

Allocation amount: \$1,000,000

Project description

The Anti-Hate Initiative supports community providers in raising awareness about hate crimes and bias-related incidents, encouraging reporting, and accessing services. It also aims to improve data collection to understand the extent of hate-based violence. Funds were allocated to hire a program coordinator responsible for fostering a common understanding among community providers and managing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to support local organizations addressing hate-based violence.

Progress summary

Throughout the first quarter, the Anti-Hate funds were channeled into programs focusing on education / awareness, convening, and organizational capacity building. Providers prioritized partnership and awareness activities, such as updating the “Communities Combating Hate” website (www.stophatemn.org), hosting events to counter hate, recruiting staff, delivering training sessions, and facilitating the exchange of best practices among local organizations.

Collaborative efforts with the Jewish Community Center (JCA), the City of Brooklyn Center, Reviving Sisterhood, and Asian Media Access yielded educational social media videos targeting Asian hate, Islamophobia, and anti-Semitism, along with allyship. Progress was also made in enhancing awareness, organizational capacity, and combating bullying, with ongoing close collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights in the fight against hate.

The coalition continues to welcome new organizations, bolstering collaboration in our collective fight against hate. This quarterly report highlights the impactful strides of the Anti-Hate initiative in promoting understanding, addressing incidents, and fostering unity against hate, discrimination, and bias.

Key performance indicators

- Partnered with other organizations for anti-bullying initiatives.
- Conducted monthly meetings of the Anti-Hate Coalition.
- Collaborated on producing and sharing educational videos addressing Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and Asian hate on social media platforms.
- Reviving Sisterhood held the Rise Up against Hate Muslim Women’s Leadership Conference in March 2024.
- The City of Brooklyn Center hired interns to create a Youth Participatory Evaluation plan with students and staff who will participate in creating data collection tools for anti-hate work.

Next steps

- Provide support to external and internal organizations to advance Hennepin’s anti-hate efforts, including data collection, community awareness / education, and agency convening.
- Collaborate with community-based organizations to identify additional service gaps and plan future work.

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

With the decrease in the court backlog, HCPD has started to phase out some of the contracts. The HCPD contracted with four attorneys (2.75 FTE) and two legal office assistants (2.0 FTE) to handle adult felony cases. The HCPD continued to fund two attorneys (.4 FTE) who staffed mandatory child protection calendars and represented children in those child protection cases.

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

Key performance indicators

The HCPD was able to provide ongoing caseload relief to attorneys to allow them to focus additional time on older cases set for trial. In addition, the contracted attorneys handled trials as part of the caseload relief. The Adult Court contractors handled 114 new cases during the first quarter of 2024. The contract attorneys in Juvenile Court staffed 22 separate half-day calendars and 15 new child protection cases.

The HCAO continues to identify areas in need of caseload relief and assistance to address the backlog of uncharged cases created during the pandemic. The HCAO continues to focus its additional resources on filling positions in the Adult Prosecution Division, Community Prosecution Division, and Youth 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

The HCPD will maintain the existing contracts through the end of 2024 as we continue to work through the remaining backlog cases.

In 2024, the HCAO will have three positions funded through the court backlog project—two attorneys and one paralegal. The HCAO expects to fully expend the funding allocation by 12/31/24.

JUSTICE DOMAIN

Violence Prevention

Allocation amount: \$12,500,000

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 2022, the county board authorized an additional \$5 million to support continued and new programming.

Youth and young adults, particularly those in communities of color, are disproportionately impacted by community 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 community and 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, with particular focus on young people.

Progress narrative

The contracted providers, who are offering services in multiple areas most impacted by community violence, offer programming specifically for members of a variety of culturally specific communities, including Black and African American, Native American, Hispanic, Liberian, East African and Somali, West African, LGBTQ+, Asian /-Pacific Islander, and Hmong communities. Providers have met twice as a Community Violence Prevention Network and are also meeting quarterly in their subgroups. Ongoing work planning includes technical capacity building, sharing of best practices, and relationship building. Each contract includes required reporting metrics, evaluation standards, and the requirement that the provider work internally to develop a “Challenge for Change” with their participants.

Data analytics staff have developed a detailed survey with qualitative and quantitative metrics, which each provider will use to document and report progress during the contract terms, allowing for ongoing evaluation.

Members of the Community Violence Prevention Network who are new to contracting with Hennepin County, or who need assistance with meeting contracting requirements, have been formally connected with Elevate Hennepin to give them ongoing individualized technical support and / or work closely with Contract Management Services.

Key performance indicators

- Data analytics staff are now analyzing responses to a detailed survey with qualitative and quantitative metrics, which each provider will use to document and report progress during the contract terms, allowing for ongoing evaluation.
- Thirty community providers have submitted their respective Challenge for Change workplan.
- The second Quarterly Convening of the Community Violence Prevention Network was held February 28, 2024. The in-person convenings allows providers to create a community of practice that will lead to growth and future sustainability. Providers will meet as a large group and in functional teams, review expectations, receive technical advice, and develop plans for future convenings.
- Nine providers, who are new to working with Hennepin County, continue to work closely with Elevate Hennepin with individualized organizational coaching and advising.
- Pillar 1 (Creating Protective Environments) providers are aligning work to cover gaps.
- Pillar 2 (Connecting Young People to Caring Adults and Activities) and
 - Pillar 3 (Strengthening Young People’s Skills) providers collaborated to:
 - Hosted a career fair for over 200 young people at North Hennepin Community College
 - Conducted an arts and healing workshop at Grassroots In Action site and met to plan a Summer Series Camp open to participants countywide.
- Provider-reported key performance indicators:
 - 114 Hours of mental health supportive services provided
 - 3,830 Hours of mentoring
 - 99 Community events held
 - 458 Eligible persons signed on to Challenge for Change

Next steps

- Safe Communities Summit: May 16, 17 and 18
- Functional teamwork:
 - All three Pillar cohort meetings
- Teams are now collaborating in addition to scheduled and required meetings
- Regular functional coaching is available between Quarterly Convenings, Pillar meetings, and Community of Practice sessions

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 continues on the HVAC COVID-19 Pandemic projects.

The Hennepin County Government Center HVAC Renovation Project was completed in Q3 2023, which expended a large portion of the grant funding.

The HVAC work related to reducing cross contamination at the Adult Correctional Facility (a 24/7 facility) has been completed. All invoices have been processed and funding expended.

Evaluation of the filter banks and system capacities under the contract with Northern Air Corporation is moving forward. Sixteen buildings were evaluated for a total of 57 buildings completed. A review of the corrective actions necessary was completed. Several buildings required additional testing to confirm results, and implementation of corrective actions began in Q1 and will continue in Q2 2024. Completion of this work is expected in Q2 2024.

A Request for Proposal was issued for a consultant to study all county buildings to verify compliance with the new ASHRAE Standard 241 Control of Infectious Aerosols and to create Building Readiness Plans. Proposals were received and the scope of work was determined to be too broad. A revised Request for Proposal was issued to study a large subset of the county's facilities (41 total), focusing on verifying the clean air compliance at each facility and excluding the Building Readiness Plan until evaluations have been completed. Proposals were received and the work authorization was executed early Q1 2024. Work started shortly after with 21 library facilities successfully completed to date and all work expected to be completed by the end of Q4 2024, including the remainder of the buildings in Phase 2.

In addition, MERV 13+ filters continue to be purchased by staff as needed to continue to provide safe spaces for county staff and patrons.

Key performance indicators

During this reporting period, another 1,348 filters were purchased and delivered. A total of 16 buildings had their HVAC systems, specifically the filter banks and air flow capacities, evaluated this quarter. Clean air evaluations will continue in Q2 2024.

Next steps

Work to be completed in the next three months include addressing and verifying any corrective actions identified as part of filter bank and system capacity evaluations.

In addition, the consultant hired will continue the verification of clean air requirements in the identified subset of buildings.

More MERV 13+ filters will be installed as needed for the buildings to maintain a safe level of ventilation for residents and staff.

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 Department 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 Department 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

Digital Experience (DX) and its DX Model partner teams, Website Communications and Web Infrastructure team in the Communications and IT departments respectively, continues to make progress and achieve accomplishments the first quarter of 2024. This DX quarterly report is organized to reflect the work done that supports the three strategic directions at each of the community, organization, and team levels:

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

The accomplishments in this report demonstrate the shift in focus from establishing DX structures, processes, and culture to more organization and community-facing efforts. This demonstrates the ongoing maturity of the department and how DX is influencing prioritizing people, a county value, throughout the organization.

Drive an equitable and inclusive digital experience for Hennepin County community members.

For the first time in county history, all staff who work on digital products have a single source of truth for creating and sustaining quality digital products called the Hennepin County Design System. The design system combined four distinct artifacts (pattern and component library, web standards, writing guide, and branding guide) and provides standards and guidance for design, development, and content. The design system is grounded in user research, usability best practices, and accessibility. This project, led by DX, spanned more than a year of work including planning, designing, testing, and finally implementation.

Having a design system supports the county's expansion of services residents can access online.

The site went live February 28 and is available at hennepin.us/design-system.

The Web Infrastructure and Website Communications teams conducted a major upgrade to the county's content management system, Sitecore. Staff moved Sitecore to version 10.3. The county uses Sitecore to manage, design, and publish [Hennepin.us](https://hennepin.us), and about 20 other public websites and applications. Sitecore is a central tool to provide public information and transactions online.

The teams also migrated Sitecore to the cloud. For 10 years, the county had hosted Sitecore through its vendor, Atomic Data. Now Sitecore is hosted through Sitecore Managed Cloud.

DX continued to gain important knowledge about people's experience using the county website. DX staff put in place listening strategies, or listening posts, to get feedback from website visitors on their experiences. Listening strategies included web surveys, satisfaction ratings for web page content, and ticketing systems for web visitors to submit requests for help.

Build and foster a culture of User Experience (UX) across Hennepin County.

DX convened a multi-disciplinary team including Data Compliance and IT Architecture teams to create guidance for a sign-in method for digital products.

Most web visitors access county information and transactions without needing to log in. However, there are times when requiring a user login is necessary.

The county's Technology Policy Committee endorsed this new guidance for implementation.

The guidance is easily available to all staff in the design system at www.hennepin.us/design-system/patterns/governance/external-logins.

DX convened a DX stakeholder meeting on March 21. Meeting participants included assistant county administrators, business information officers, and lines of business partners. DX model teams provide progress on projects, give demonstrations of solutions, share findings, and communicate upcoming plans.

Establish DX structures, processes, and culture founded in DX values.

Three temporary DX staff were transitioned to permanent positions in this reporting period. The project manager and two business partner roles are critical to organizing and coordinating work and in building and maintaining relationships with other departments and lines of business throughout the county.

Key performance indicators

The Hennepin County Design System has over 500 new users since it launched at the end of February. The project team avoided a major delay in making the design system available to users by launching it ahead of the content management system upgrade.

The design system is a credible resource and is grounded in industry best practices:

- Staff used insights from usability testing to make essential improvements to the system before it launched
- Staff thoroughly researched every piece of new content for adherence to industry standards and best practices
- Multiple lines of business collaborated to offer subject matter expertise and editorial input:
 - Communications
 - Digital Experience
 - Human Services
 - Information Technology
 - Library
 - Public Health
 - Resident Services

Benefits of Sitecore migrating to the cloud include:

- Greater stability of available online services
- Faster response time and better service since Hennepin County staff built and will run the new architecture, rather than a vendor
- Longer-term support for websites and other public online infrastructure—foundational to preparing for the coming redesign of the main website, hennepincounty.gov

The Sitecore upgrade and move to the cloud required a publishing freeze of all content for close to one month, between February and March 2024. Residents experienced no disruptions to online services during the upgrade and move to the cloud because all relevant teams coordinated and communicated with each other to create an emergency publishing plan. This allowed for emergency publishing as needed. It also allowed for the publishing of the county's new design system without interfering with the Sitecore upgrade and migration.

The login guidance is focused on the desired user experience by giving the user the choice to log in for completing actions or transactions that are not required. Providing a choice for the user to decide to create a login account removes accessibility barriers and supports greater participation in the digital space.

Staff evaluated data from the listening strategies. The data gave them insight into which methods work best for getting feedback from web visitors. The data also revealed what tools work best for allowing web visitors to ask for help or report a problem.

The combined listening strategies revealed that:

- 57% were able to complete their task
- 59% found the content easy to understand
- 80% said it was easy to complete the task
- 49% were satisfied with their experience

DX staff also took specific strands of data to understand the web visitor. For example, the data included how much effort web visitors had to make to complete their task. And the data included whether users succeeded in their task.

DX is working to refine how the county listens to and understands web visitors. This will lead to improvements in county digital services as the county becomes more responsive to its online users.

The DX stakeholder events are a way to demonstrate the value of the digital experience model across departments and an opportunity to share work successes more broadly.

Next steps

- The new design system maintenance oversight group will meet regularly to prioritize backlog items, make improvements to the system, and discuss long-term maintenance needs and goals. Members of the oversight group will also present overviews and trainings to staff countywide to socialize the design system.
- Members of the maintenance and oversight group will conduct weekly “open office hours” for other staff to learn about the design system, how to use it, and discuss suggested improvements.
- A sub-workgroup will convene to continue identifying use cases when a user is required to log in or when it will remain a user’s choice to log in when it’s not required.
- Website Communications and Web Infrastructure teams will work on continuous improvement projects with the new Sitecore Managed Cloud
- Continued work to understand input from listening posts on the website
- Conduct quarterly sponsor meeting for the HennepinCounty.gov project
- Explore tools for artificial intelligence to translate content from English to other languages
- Complete user research and usability testing for HennepinCounty.gov project
- Identify a physical space for a user experience lab
- Enhance the Digital Experience Champions program
- Strengthen partnerships with Communications; Information Technology Workforce Development; Disparity Reduction; Broadband and Digital Inclusion; and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Continue promoting and using the consulting services of digital accessibility vendor, WeCo
- Another digital experience stakeholder event takes place in the next six months.
- Convert two more temporary positions into permanent positions

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Engagement Services

Allocation amount: \$3,180,000

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 Messenger Program

- Final report capturing testimonials and outcomes submitted.
- Drafted new scopes of services, work plan, and budget document.
- Review submitted work plan and budgets for the 2024 Trusted Messengers.
- Purchasing and Contracting Department to send out principal agreements and set up in system.
- Shared and communicated information county programs / services.

Community Engagement Roster Program

- Continued to consult with other departments and promote contracts / agreements via the roster program.

Translations

- Translation policy presented and draft recommendation sent to leadership for review.

Engagement vans

- The three community engagement vans continued to be a crucial strategy in meeting community where they gather in supporting Hennepin County's relationships and trust with residents.
- Winter months are the time to conduct the annual maintenance on the vans, park the vans for the winter, and plan for the next engagement season, which includes ordering and restocking handouts and engagement supplies.

Healing circles / community building

- During the reporting period, the department facilitated three healing circles / community building sessions. All three of these sessions were focused on the Black and African American community.
- One session was with community healer Isaiah Frandsen, focused on breathwork, body movement, and community connection.

- The other two sessions were facilitated by community healer TC, the first two sessions of a longer series focused on breathwork, body movement, and community connection.
- The team also worked with Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, City of Bloomington, Edina, City of Minnetonka, Ramsey County, St. Paul, and St. Louis Park on a staff event honoring the National Day of Racial Healing, with the goal of helping staff in their individual healing.

Materials distribution

- The team continued to work with the Minnesota Department of Health on distribution of COVID-19 test kits and masks.
- The team also continued to share promotional items with community, including lip balms, frisbees, drawstring backpacks, tote bags, program handouts, and more.

Key performance indicators

Trusted Messengers Program

- 25 contracts that need to be created and implemented

Community Engagement Roster Program

- 266 individuals and organizations registered
- Implemented multiple department / service area contracts

Translations

- Continued to meet and work with the Translation Policy Project committee

Engagement vans

- During this reporting period, Streets to Housing utilized one of the team's engagement vans 48 days and connected with 300 unsheltered households to access benefits, basic needs, emergency shelter and to identify a safe, appropriate alternative to sleeping in places not meant for human habitation.

Healing circles / community building

- Participation for each of the three events hosted in this reporting period ranged between 10 – 20 people.
- The National Day of Racial Healing staff event took place on January 16, 2024, in the form of a two-hour virtual event. Dr. Joy DeGruy was the keynote speaker and led a discussion on the impacts of racial trauma inside the workplace, as well as tools to engage in racial healing and how to create a healthy workplace. Participation for the National Day of Racial Healing consisted of more than 400 government staff in the Twin Cities area. Event feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

Materials distribution

- In January, the team gave out 3,500 masks and 438 test kits.
- In February, there were no distribution of masks and test kits, but the team sent out an email to all the organizations who requested masks and test kits since 2020 to examine the need in the community. The team got an overwhelming response from community for mask and test kit needs. Although small in quantity, there are over 20 organizations still needing these distributions.
- In March, the team had 12,000 masks requests and 2,128 test kits distributed.
- The team continued sharing engagement supplies and materials across county departments, although less during this reporting period as there are less community engagement events that take place during this time.

- The team worked on putting together a large order of promotional items for the upcoming engagement season.

Next steps

Trusted Messengers Program

- Finalize contracts and host kick-off meetings
- Schedule check in meetings and work with Trusted Messengers on their work plan and activities

Community Engagement Roster Program

- Find ways to improve and promote the roster program internally and externally through strategic planning

Translations

- Work and consult with project manager hired under the Communications Department to discuss existing translations efforts and assess future needs
- Work with translation policy project lead on countywide policy for translation services

Engagement vans

- Hennepin County Fleet Services has piloted a Key Valet reservation system for county vehicles. Two of the team's vans will be included in this system in 2024. The team is preparing to launch this system for the next engagement season.
- After the pilot launch of the team's Ford Transit E van by Behavioral Health last year, the team is adding on some equipment that will maximize the amenities installed in this van. The team is also ordering the team's promotional items to launch this engagement season with fully stocked engagement vans. In addition, the team is coordinating across Hennepin County lines of business to collect a standard set of county handouts for the vans.
- The team will continue to explore ways to improve utilization and efficiency of their three vans, working with Fleet Services to streamline maintenance and cross-departmental usage / agreements. The team will also continue to work with internal partners to ensure the vans are being fully utilized and ensure the most impactful outcomes.

Healing circles / community building

- Staff are working on new contracts with community healers and planning community events for 2024.
- The team envisions that these monthly healing circles will transform to other opportunities to engage with the communities in an ongoing basis and not just a one-time event. Through these healing circle sessions, it is the hope that the county can become more grounded in addressing systemic racism and that the team can help the community become healthier and better able to thrive.

Materials distribution

- The team will continue to work with other departments across the county to create new policies and procedures around outreach items, which will help improve efficiencies. The team will work to ensure that items are environmentally friendly, cost-effective, relatively easy to carry and transport, culturally specific, and usable by community members.
- The team will evaluate which items are the most popular, the quality, and the communication with the vendors as they plan for procuring more items for the 2024 engagement season.
- The large orders of promotional items will arrive in April and May.

Materials distribution

- The team will continue to work with other departments across the county to create new policies and procedures around outreach items, which will help improve efficiencies as well as ensure that items are environmentally friendly, cost-effective, relatively easy to carry and transport, culturally specific, and usable by community members.
- The team will evaluate which items were the most popular, the quality, and the communication with the vendors as they plan for procuring more items for the 2024 engagement season.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Enterprise Integrated Data System

Allocation amount: \$3,000,000

Project description

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

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

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

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

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

Progress narrative

In Q1 2024, there was continued progress on the Enterprise Integrated Data System (EIDS). Key strategies already in place are focused on continuous improvement of the underlying data infrastructure, advancing the use of graph databases, continuing progress on key analyses, and advancing in our framework to support the use of data and data literacy programming. While progress was made across these strategies, the focus on data updates did not enable the team to do a formal review of the governance process. In addition, as the effort enters its final year, there is an increased focus on sustainability and ensuring staff have the right skills and knowledge based on early lessons learned.

The data engineers in Integrated Data and Analytics continue to mature the underlying data infrastructure. Improvements to the record linkage process and ability to monitor data pipelines was made along with key recommendations on how to manage cross-tenant data resources. Planning for the next phase of how to incorporate insights from the graph database was completed and work on incorporating graph-based record linkage insights is set to begin in Q2. Overall, the iterative approach to our data engineering work will continue throughout the life of the project with ongoing feedback from Integrated Data and Analytics' data scientists and data strategists.

As of the end of this quarter, a total of twelve analysis projects have been established. Progress in the last quarter included the conclusion of one effort, an effort moving into its final review, and important advancements in updates to the data and quality assurance processes for ongoing efforts. To date, five of the 12 projects launched have now reached an initial conclusion where insights have been shared with the relevant business partners. One effort is expected to wrap-up in Q2 2024. Of the remaining six, three are in the latter stages of their analysis and the other three are now in their initial phases. Data scientists in Integrated Data and Analytics continue to work closely with business stakeholders and analysts within each line of business to make progress on these efforts and identify new opportunities. This work also includes ongoing monitoring of the usage data to guide their work. For example, the team has hypothesized that the decrease in utilization of EIDS reports is due to the timeliness of the data. As data are made timelier, the team expects utilization to increase in Q2. Q1 also saw the development of several proposals that are likely to be launched sometime in 2024.

The data strategy team in Integrated Data and Analytics also continues its work to support the meaningful use of data and continues to implement the initial steps of a data literacy program. In this reporting period, the team launched a data literacy community of practice with monthly events being attended by an average of 170 participants across all lines of business. The team also launched a monthly microlearning series, with the initial content viewed by 130 staff to date. The team continues to add to its curated data literacy resources, which have been accessed by 524 staff during Q1. Planning work for data week 2024 has also begun. Finally, it has provided technical assistance to three different areas of the county during this quarter and is in discussions with Human Resources to embed data literacy into county leadership development training programs. As noted in prior reports, lessons from these early steps will be used to finalize and scale a broader data literacy program for the county.

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

Monitoring of key performance indicator data continues to be formative in nature.

Total volume of data has increased to over 800 GB as of the end of Q1 with 22 county data systems included. The data engineering team continues to look for ways to ensure a carefully managed data ecosystem where any redundant copies are deleted. The current increase is due primarily to adding more timely data from existing systems as opposed to the addition of new systems.

There are 12 analytics projects leveraging this system. Five have been made available to stakeholders based on business need, another is nearing completion, and six are in active development.

Usage statistics trended downward over the past quarter. In the prior quarter, the team identified two possible reasons for this: 1) if reports are not updated with more current data, they become less relevant to users and 2) if users don't have enough support for how to use the data in a given report, they are not likely to use it. For one key report, a process to update the data in a timelier way was developed along with new quality assurance processes. This is expected to lead to an increase in utilization in the next quarter. The team will continue to monitor these trends and continue to explore effective ways to get additional feedback.

Quality assurance metrics have been updated and continue to be refined. Data pipeline success rates continue to average above 95% success per month and improved monitoring of data refreshes has been established.

The current average length of time for an analytics effort to go through the governance process remains at 44 days (inclusive of non-business days).

Next steps

In the next quarter, the following efforts are expected:

- Continue to make meaningful progress on all analytics projects in adherence to the system's principles of partnership, careful governance, and data security.
- Continue to implement the user adoption plan for each completed analytics project.
- Begin implementation of the next phase of the graph database effort focused on incorporating graph-based insights to improve our entity resolution process.
- Continue to refine and implement the Enterprise Integrated Data System's data model.
- Continue to update the team's dataOps practices with the addition of soliciting input and feedback from analytics teams across the county.
- Identify lessons learned from the initial components of the data literacy program to support the effective use of data by county staff.
- Build off the initial planning work for the next suite of analytics projects with a goal of three being brought to the governance process by the end of Q2.
- Incorporate ongoing feedback of the governance process to date and develop recommendations for improvement.
- Formalize training and skill requirements for the tools and knowledge needed to sustain this system and support staff training in these areas.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Information Technology

Allocation amount: \$10,000,000

Project description

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

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

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

Modernizing hardware and software

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

Protecting our critical infrastructure

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

Modernizing business processes

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

Progress narrative

Twenty-six projects have been identified in the three areas listed above. Nineteen projects have begun spending pandemic response fund allocations and the other seven are in the initial planning and development stages.

Key performance indicators

Some notable accomplishments include:

- Modernization and migration to Azure for secure, cost-effective and environmentally responsibility provision of services
- Backfile conversions that reduce offsite storage costs and make records more accessible to both the public and county employees. These efforts support decision making, data integrations, remote working, and resident services.
- Key valet for motor pool vehicles available at multiple locations

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Information Technology: Community Connectivity

Allocation amount: \$4,000,000

Project description

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

Progress narrative

The Community Connectivity project has completed requisitions and purchases for the entire allocation:

- \$1.0 million to accelerate plans to connect county facilities to fiber.
 - \$617,880 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 Metro 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.
 - 344,552 for materials, including fiber cable, to add to stock for future and ongoing projects.
- \$3.0 million with Public Works to increase fiber connections and expand the Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS). This includes:
 - \$523,325 spent for Server Infrastructure for the Video Management System (VMS) for the Traffic Management Center (TMC)
 - \$2,364,526 spent to add over 25 miles of fiber to connect 35 intersections
 - \$108,909 for purchase of wireless modem equipment for traffic signals not connected to county fiber (14 intersections)

Next steps

This project is completed.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Voter Participation

Allocation amount: \$5,312,000

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, 2024 – March 31, 2024, Hennepin County Elections staff have continued to implement two key outreach and engagement strategies: contracting with community organizations for voter outreach and education services and a tailored voter outreach media campaign focused on registration and expanded voter eligibility. This reporting period includes the presidential primary held on March 5, 2024.

Hennepin County Elections is contracted with 22 community organizations to conduct voter outreach work from January to November 2024. The contracted organizations encourage their communities to register, vote, and learn about expanded voter eligibility. Organizations attended an orientation meeting in January and a check-in meeting in March. The organizations' main focus during this reporting period was engaging voters around the March 5 presidential primary.

Hennepin County Elections staff continue to build and support community partnerships. In advance of the presidential primary, the Voter Engagement Division hosted three open community partner meetings. The meetings focused on voter registration, absentee voting, and Election Day voting. Voter Engagement sent several communications to partner organizations providing outreach resources and encouraging them to engage their communities around the election.

Voter Engagement continues to work with an advertisement agency, developing content, and placing ads with the goal of educating residents on voter registration, upcoming elections, and expanded voter eligibility. The ads focus on communities with historically low voter turnout including Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC); people experiencing homelessness, disabilities, or language barriers; seniors; renters; and veterans. The total number of impressions on these campaigns during this reporting period was 1,412,450.

During this reporting period, Hennepin County Elections staff tabled at 17 Hennepin County Libraries to help register voters, talk about the importance of voting, and educate residents about expanded voter eligibility. At these events, staff provided residents with voter guides, handouts on voting in special circumstances, and translated voter outreach materials. Additionally, Hennepin County Elections partnered with Minneapolis Elections and the League of Women Voters Minneapolis to do voter outreach at local high schools. Staff visited seven high schools and registered / pre-registered 247 students.

In preparation for the March 5, 2024, presidential primary, Hennepin County Elections created and updated voter outreach content. All content is available to the public on the Hennepin County Elections website and at in-person outreach events.

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

Contract organizations will submit mid-point reports in August 2024. Work and accomplishments will be described in terms of the following:

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

Next steps

In the next three months, Hennepin County Elections will prepare voters for upcoming elections, including the Hennepin County Commissioner District 6 special election, the Robbinsdale special election, and the August state primary election. Voters in Commissioner District 6 will receive a postcard in April reminding them to vote in the special primary and general elections. Elections staff will continue to work with a contracted media agency to conduct an advertisement campaign focused on voter registration, absentee voting, and expanded voter eligibility.

The 22 voter outreach contracts that began in January will continue through the next three months. Contracted organizations will submit their first invoices at the end of April.

In the next three months, Hennepin County Elections staff will continue to conduct in-person outreach events throughout the county. Events will focus on communities who face the highest barriers to voting and in areas with low voter turnout rates.



Hennepin County

300 South 6th Street
Minneapolis MN 55487

hennepin.us