

Hennepin County Progress Report

Pandemic Response Projects

October – December 2023



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Executive summary

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

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

Key principles and priorities have been set to build upon the county's approach to disparity reduction and to support pandemic recovery efforts. Hennepin County is committed to using a racial equity lens to target resources and focus outcomes on reducing disparities in the following domains: 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 October 2023 through December 2023. Projects are presented by disparity domain area. The following details are provided for each project:

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

Pandemic recovery funds

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

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

Principles

- Hennepin County embraces and embodies core values of continuous improvement, customer service, diversity and inclusion, employee engagement, and workforce development as we serve our residents.
- Hennepin County is committed to using a racial equity lens to target resources and focus outcomes on reducing disparities in the following domains: 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 October 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023. 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, additional Digital Navigation staff were hired to increase the team's capacity based on demand for service and to fill some recently vacated positions. The hiring process was completed in December, and onboarding is currently underway. Many of the staff are bilingual, increasing the team's ability to serve Spanish- and Somali-speaking residents in particular. The team operated at half capacity for most of the quarter, and number of people served reflects the staffing shortage.

Additional device distribution locations launched in neighborhoods with high rates of digital barriers.

As the pandemic relief period winds down, some Digital Navigation contracts have been completed. Eleven community-based providers delivered services during this time, with two contracts ending. These organizations all 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.

One notable accomplishment is the creation of digital skills training specifically designed for English language learners. This fills a gap noted by county staff and community providers. An evaluation process to test the curriculum with different community groups and types of residents was developed and the county is providing computers for participating residents.

Analysis of data by Education SuperHighway and Hennepin County indicates inadequate internet access to residents residing in affordable multifamily housing. Based on a successful pilot at Pursuit Hometel, four properties were identified as candidates for building-wide Wi-Fi and contract negotiations began. Of those, two organizations representing three total buildings entered into contracts and work commenced. Site surveys have been conducted on all buildings, and cabling and antenna installation and other work is underway.

The county's Human Services Department also issued a solicitation to currently contracted supportive-housing providers, seeking proposals for Wi-Fi amenities installed within their facilities. A number of proposals were received, which are currently being reviewed by the project team and technical advisors.

Outreach and promotion of the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) continued, with a media campaign launching in November to complement grassroots outreach through community providers. The target areas for this campaign will be communities with below average internet subscription rates and large numbers of eligible households, but lagging program participation based on analysis of ACP enrollment data. The campaign launched in November and will continue as long as ACP enrollment is feasible according to FCC guidance.

An internet-safety public awareness campaign is also underway. Based on stakeholder interviews and market research conducted in the spring, a co-creation process with Somali community members took place. The content includes specific tips that are culturally appropriate and empowering for youth, parents, and elders.

A Hennepin County Digital Equity Plan is being developed to 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

- 543 individual requests to support Hennepin County clients and library patrons were submitted to digital navigation team.
- 198 residents were served during the period by the internal digital navigation team; all residents received computers in addition to other digital inclusion supports.
- Approximately 1,300 Hennepin County residents received digital navigation support or training and an estimated 1,300 people were engaged in broadband adoption or outreach activities through 11 contracted community partners.
- Two additional computer distribution locations, one in South Minneapolis and one in North Minneapolis, launched to serve digital navigation clients through a contract with Free Geek.
- 191 phones are currently in use by Homeless to Housing program members.
- Nearly 55,000 Hennepin County households are enrolled in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).
- A promotional campaign for ACP subsidy has launched, targeting areas with lower-than-expected enrollment rates, resulting in 2,792 clicks and 580,690 impressions.
- Site surveys are complete for building-wide Wi-Fi at three residential housing facilities; cabling and installation are underway at two of the locations.
- Issues with video production for the online safety campaign occurred and have been resolved.
- Added two antenna towers at separate locations in support of the micro-targeted wireless ISP operated by PCs for People.

Next steps

- Evaluation and refinement of the digital skills training for English language learners
- A fully staffed digital navigation team will pilot a new approach to service delivery to increase efficiency and respond to resident needs more holistically.
- Continue installation of building-wide Wi-Fi at three residential housing facilities
- Complete evaluation of responses from supportive-housing providers for Wi-Fi installation. Enter into contract negotiations as appropriate.
- Online safety public awareness videos and other campaign materials will be finalized and launch. Content focusing on the unique needs of the Hmong and Native American communities will be explored.
- Additional computers will be available for eligible students enrolled in community and technical colleges.
- Some digital navigation contracted providers contracts will end; some additional community partners may receive short-term contracts to fill in gaps
- Due to the potential sunset of the Affordable Connectivity Program, plans are underway to adjust programming and to assist residents currently enrolled in the program maintain their internet service. Current outreach and marketing efforts will be responsive to FCC guidance.
- Socialize Digital Equity Plan draft and incorporate feedback
- Engage with Minnesota legislators during the 2024 session to raise awareness of digital equity issues impacting urban and suburban residents with lower household income

EMPLOYMENT DOMAIN

Employment Strategies

Allocation amount: \$15,580,000

Project description

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

Employment strategies will:

- 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 basic needs. Employment services provide intentional focus on readiness, skills training and occupational learning to help this population find and keep jobs.

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

Quarterly updates:

- 194 total referrals to the program (03/01/22–12/31/23)
- 39 new referrals this reporting quarter (10/01/23–12/31/23)
- PowerPoint program dashboard is in development
- Program referral training video is complete
- SharePoint site with referral mechanism is in testing phase, with access for GWES and AIOIC Takoda Stability; the site will roll-out by the end of January 2024 for case managers and advocates
- 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 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

Mental Health Collaborative

Diversifying the Workforce — RealTime Talent (RTT) and Prosperity Ready created a proposal and presentation for the Mental Health (MH) Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Employer Collaborative to explain what a custom TPM cohort could look like for the MH TPM team. RTT has asked Hennepin County to support the TPM initiative by funding the initial cohort to help MH employers diversify their workforce, fill positions, and provide quality wraparound services needed for employees.

DHS Chapter 245 Training — RTT continues to explore funding options for Phase 1 of 245 training. Phase 1 will involve working with Minneapolis College, St. Paul College, and TPM employers to develop curriculum that prepares current, newly hired, and future MH case managers for training that aligns with MH DHS 245 statutes..

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.

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:

- 194 total referrals to the program (03/01/22–12/31/23)
- 39 new referrals this reporting quarter.
- 103 participant cases are actively open:
 - 14 have obtained full-time employment
 - Eight have obtained part-time employment
 - 12 are actively participating in training
 - 10 have completed training
 - Three are enrolled in educational opportunities (GED or college)
 - 10 are currently attending GWES's 8-week work experience program
 - Nine have completed GWES's work experience program
- 60 cases have closed:
 - Four have achieved non-employment program goals
 - Three have achieved employment program goals
 - Six have transferred or were referred to another program / organization
 - 33 have exited the program for other reasons (e.g., voluntary, incarceration, moved)
 - 14 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:

- 235 people are currently enrolled in roster program initiatives
- 133 people are currently enrolled in a training program
- 41 people have earned credentials
- 24 open individuals are currently employed (15 full-time; 9 part-time)

- Seven people have obtained employment (average wage at exit is \$24.76)
- Three people have entered post-secondary education
- 18 people have exited the program for other reasons (e.g., voluntary, incarceration, moved)

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
- 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
- Roll out collaborative SharePoint site and new referral and ROI forms
- 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 will be held to foster partnerships between employers and training partners
- The Minneapolis Regional Chamber 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
- Provide technical assistance and support to awarded providers
- Develop Power BI program dashboard
- Monitor and evaluate quantitative and qualitative data and outcomes
- Monitor program budget

Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)

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

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

December 2023 marks the ending of one year and the beginning of the last year of the Pandemic Recovery funding for Behavioral Health initiatives. As we move into 2024, the focus is on gearing up for the post-ARPA phase including finalizing contracts and services for sustained provision of services, rehiring key positions as turnover requires, formalizing programmatic procedures for the long-term, and other activities oriented towards programmatic sustainability for those initiatives that will continue in the post-ARPA phase. All 11 Behavioral Health initiatives remain on target and have reported a status of “On track,” “Target met,” or “Target exceeded.”

During the final quarter of 2023, the Expanding School Based Mental Health initiative conducted a landscape assessment with 19 providers. A survey was utilized to capture updated information about covered schools and FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) amounts. The updated data is included in the milestones and reflects an accurate account of long-term services provided to students with more acute mental health needs. This adjustment focuses the direction of services in areas where the need is the greatest. This team holds monthly meetings with school districts and providers to communicate operational implementation and discuss relevant challenges and opportunities such as workforce and funding. These meetings typically include 20-30 attendees representing agencies, school districts, and parents.

Sustaining Family Home Visiting's PH doc integration is underway. PH doc is a database platform that helps manage and exchange electronic health records of individuals and organizations served by local public health agencies according to <https://ph-doc.com>. Activities in Q4 2023 included PH doc integration, training for the intake team, and process flow implementation.

The Reforming 911 initiative continues to experience an increase in referrals from dispatchers. Services also continue to expand, with two additional Alternative Response Teams to launch in Q1 2024 in partnership with Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center Police Departments, Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, and North Memorial.

The Expanding Access and Hours at 1800 Chicago initiative has sustained partnerships with the Minneapolis Police Department reaching all precincts and all shifts to participate in roll calls, monthly Crisis Intervention Team trainings, and to train all officers in use of the Drop-Off service as an alternative to jail or hospital for residents 18+ who have needs related to mental health and substance use. An incredible milestone was accomplished for the Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services (FRSS) initiative during Q4 2023. In December 2023, this team began partnering with the Community Outreach for Psychiatric Emergencies (COPE) to manage child crisis responses calls. During the FRSS operating hours (7 a.m. to 11 p.m. CST), the child crisis line is rerouted from COPE to FRSS. This new process was implemented in Q4 to eliminate service delivery duplication and increase cross collaboration of resources and responses across Hennepin County.

Key performance indicators

The 11 Behavioral Health initiatives have separate key performance indicators (KPI) based on their individual approaches to supporting the mental health and substance use disorder needs of Hennepin residents. The quarterly KPIs reported in Q4 2023 reflect that the following initiatives have met or exceeded their established project goal at this time:

- **Expanding School Based Mental Health:** 87% of target of Hennepin County schools receiving services. After a thorough landscape assessment, this team has focused on concentrating efforts in the areas with the greatest need.
- **Developing and Expanding a Network of Culturally Specific Mental Health Services:** Overall service goals have been reached, and in Q4 2023, this program reached nine cultural groups and served 121 residents.
- **Sustaining Family Home Visiting:** The third-party billed revenue goal was exceeded for 2023, and the 2024 goal was increased by 25%.
- **Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids:** The overall goal of screening 500 children has been exceeded, with a total of 833 children screened in 2023.
- **Reforming 911:** 45 cases were opened in Q4 2023, and 24 referrals were made for community supports.
- **Expanding Access and Hours at 1800 Chicago:** 601 unique individuals were served in Q4 2023 with 1,794 total visits, which is 9% more than Q4 2022.
- **Piloting a Family-Based Recovery Program:** 47 families were served in Q4 2023 with 89% of index youth remaining in in-home placements.
- **Launching a Mental Health Awareness Campaign:** 1,100 residents were directly engaged over 12 community engagement events in Q4 2023 with 128.8 million media impressions.

Next steps

Goals for Q1 2024 include:

- By March 31, 2024, the Expanding School Based Mental Health initiative plans to finish financial sustainability planning for 2024 and 2025 and work to extend provider contracts through December 31, 2024, including preparations to start the RFP process for school-based mental health contracts that will begin in January 2025.

- The Q1 2024 goal for Sustaining Family Home Visiting includes identifying any data issues in PH doc using new workflow processes. In the meantime, data quality assurance is maintained by double tracking in PH doc and Excel. Sustaining Family Home Visiting also applied for the Infant Mortality Prevention grant from MDH and will find out about funding in Q1 2024.
- Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids will improve the CC4K intake process and revisit the program goals and performance monitoring to ensure the program is on track to meet objectives.
- Launching a Juvenile Behavioral Health Initiative's Youth Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Programming is launching Q1 2024 at the Twin Cities Recovery Project (TCRP) and Little Earth Residents Association (LERA). This initiative will also launch their Parent and Caregiver Support Group Q1 2024.
- Piloting an In-Home Family Recovery initiative has a few goals for the In-Home Family Recovery (IHFR) program such as training child protection staff and developing IHFR training for implementing agencies.

HEALTH DOMAIN

Maternal Health

Allocation amount: \$10,000,000

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) supported the Minnesota Association for Children’s Mental Health’s annual Infant & Early Childhood Multidisciplinary Conference in November that brought together 610 experts, professionals, practitioners, and advocates in the field of infant mental health. Within the doula program, HHS saw doula staffing stability and maintained a full 24/7 doula on-call schedule with some shifts staffed with two doulas. An additional two doulas were onboarded to the program this past quarter. HHS also successfully transitioned vendors for their food bag program and distributed an increased 7,702 food bags across more than 40 locations. Hennepin Healthcare’s East Lake Clinic continued universal 24- and 28-week trauma-responsive screenings for all prenatal patients. The universal screening has helped identify patients who would not otherwise bring up concerns with their provider and connect them to social work and community health work referrals for support. NorthPoint Health & Wellness furthered integration of clinical services and social services through revisioning internal processes and continuing bi-weekly care huddles to ensure patients can holistically access the full range of NorthPoint services. NorthPoint has seen referrals at an all-time high with significant need for housing, food security, behavioral health, childcare assistance, and career services. NorthPoint also hosted 16 group and community-building sessions where a total of 157 individuals attended to learn valuable information, get connected to resources, and build community with one another. Roots Community Birth Center continued to

provide in-office and home visits. Midwives provided routine maternal, newborn, and lactation care as well as referrals for PT, pediatric care, and mental health services as needed.

Within Public Health clinical services, a Reproductive Health Educator has provided navigation support and addressed reproductive health care needs for patients at the Red Door Clinic. Staff also collaborated with communications to promote reproductive health services and awareness. 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 at the People Serving People clinic navigate maternal health resources and services. The Maternal Child Health Nurse became an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) and added this new visit type to offer patients.

Continuing community engagement process to create a birth justice strategic plan

The second phase of the Maternal Health Initiative 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 recently launched a new 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 officially launched on October 3, 2023, and centers on implementing the birth justice plan. Collective Action Lab and the Birth Justice Collaborative core partners are leading implementation coordination and oversight, supporting a governance structure that oversees implementation of the plan. Strategy groups, composed of community members and professionals, formed to refine and implement priority actions in the birth justice plan. Public Health staff and key maternal child health partners are also involved and connected to strategy implementation to ensure adequate support, problem solving, and internal learning that can be applied to county programs and services. Strategy groups regularly met this fall, conducting research, outreach, strategy sessions, and program pilot design activities to create work plans for each birth justice priority in coordination with the BJC partners, including:

- Researched home visiting and income support programs and selected an evidence-based model for the cultural parenting program pilot.
- Mapped out cultural advocacy and navigator programs, trainings, and certifications, and explored needs and gaps for a culturally meaningful workforce pathway.
- Identified improvements for anti-bias trainings for medical professionals and tools to share with community members in self-advocacy for anti-bias accountability in systems.
- Documented example provider networks and researched emerging models to inform the network of trusted cultural providers. Also, convened community members to identify what they trust and need.
- Developed two to three policy priorities for the 2024 Legislative Session and identified longer term legislative priorities along with a communication strategy to advance the shared policy agenda. Began planning community and provider education sessions on recently passed legislation impacting pregnancy and postpartum experience and care.

Key performance indicators

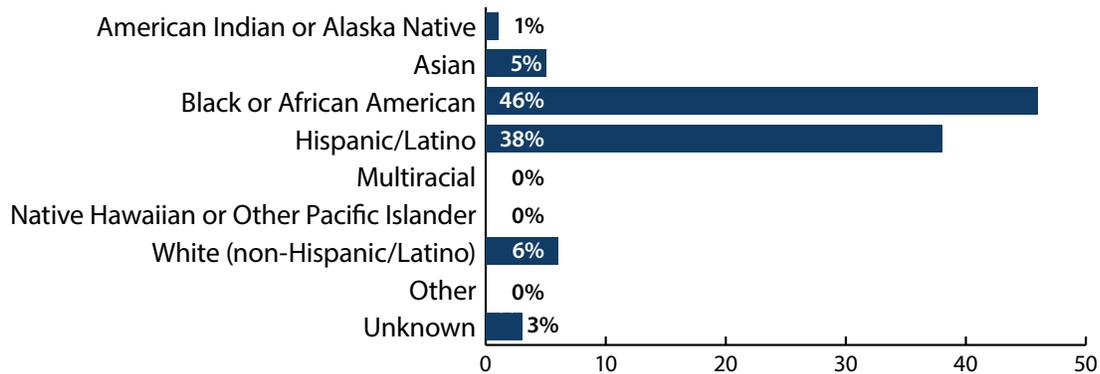
Over the last quarter, progress was made on expanding existing maternal health services and developing and investing in community-initiated solutions to reduce disparities:

Expand existing maternal health services

- Number of individuals served through expansion of Public Health Clinical Services
 - 99 individuals served

- Total number of individuals served through contracted providers Hennepin Healthcare, NorthPoint Health & Wellness Center, and Roots Community Birth Center
 - 1,364 total individuals served
- Number of training and educational sessions offered, topics covered and attendance
 - Three trauma-informed care trainings held
 - One infant mental health conference held
 - 16 family classes and group sessions held
 - 785 community members and health care professionals attended trainings and classes
- Number of individuals receiving referrals to supportive resources
 - Food support resources
 - Five high-risk pregnant and postpartum individuals enrolled in a meal program cohort to support food security
 - 7,702 culturally congruent food bags distributed to patients experiencing food insecurity
 - 56 individuals screened via East Lake Clinic trauma screening tool and referred to trauma-responsive supports
 - 421 individuals provided 729 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
 - 510 visits with practitioners
 - 89 visits with Maternal Child Health Nurse
 - 54 doula visits

Race and ethnicity of clients and patients provided services, July–September 2023



Develop and invest in community-initiated solutions to reduce disparities

- Birth justice plan implementation has begun, with participation from 76 leadership coalition members:
 - 44 Black or American Indian community members or cultural community agency representatives
 - 32 health or government systems representatives
- Continued support of and collaboration with the Birth Justice Collaborative

Data-informed decisions and evaluation efforts

Throughout 2023, Family Health area staff 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 Data and Assessment team. The scope of the evaluation focuses on the process and short-term outcomes of the initiative. This fall, evaluation activities included interviews with contracted providers, Collective Action Lab and the Birth Justice Collaborative partners, and county staff involved in early planning work for the initiative, as well as a survey that was sent to community members engaged in the development of the birth justice plan. Short-term outcomes related to systems changes, community engagement and connections to key stakeholders for improving maternal health, and results of expanding services will be included in the ongoing evaluation of the initiative through 2024.

Additionally, Maternal Health Initiative staff connected with other initiatives to help guide improvements in internal data monitoring and surveillance of maternal and child health, particularly for Black and American Indian residents of Hennepin County. In the last quarter, Hennepin County Public Health made progress on the requested research file for Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring Systems (PRAMS), including racial identifiers. This dataset will allow analysis of key risk and protective factors for maternal and child health otherwise unavailable through traditional birth surveillance. Connections were also made with MDH maternal health staff and other county initiatives for opportunities to collaborate and amplify efforts.

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, strategy groups, community advisory, professional advisory, as well as backbone communications and advocacy supports. Strategy groups will continue meeting regularly to design specifics of pilot programs and services. Plans will be vetted with a community and professional advisory for ongoing input. Contracted providers will continue to serve patients and clients in need of maternal health care, services, and supports. Additionally, the initiative evaluation activities will continue and move into synthesis and analysis of 2023 as well as additional planning for 2024.

HEALTH DOMAIN

Public Health

Allocation amount: \$10,000,000

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, the CBID team 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): The LTCF Infection Prevention team continued to implement the CDC Local Health Department Healthcare Associated Infection / Antimicrobial Resistance (HAI / AR) Strategy during Q4. The Antimicrobial Stewardship (AS) subcommittee within the coalition provided input on outreach and training planning for Infection Preventionists, clinicians, nurses, and administrators. The group planned a needs assessment to help inform the training. Subject matter experts from the Association for Professionals in Infection Control, the Institute for Healthcare Innovation, and the Minnesota Department of Health were contacted about participating as trainers. The goals of the training are to: 1) decrease antibiotic treatment of asymptomatic bacteriuria when it is not indicated and 2) decrease the impact of prescribing pressure that healthcare workers experience from LTCF residents / families. Trainings are planned for Q2 2024.

Prepare and respond to emergencies

Corrective actions aligning with the COVID-19 After Action Report and Improvement Plan were prioritized based on the immediate and long-term impact to the Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response program outcome and necessary resource requirements. The highest priority corrective actions reside within the categories of incident management personnel training and Public Health Emergency Response and Recovery Plan revision. Projects were initiated in November 2023 as a direct result of the COVID-19 After Action Report and Improvement Plan.

The first project is the development of a self-paced online learning module that aligns with doctrines of the National Incident Management System and the Incident Command System. This training module will be developed for public health emergency response personnel, while still retaining fundamental incident management principles that are offered by FEMA's Emergency Management Institute.

The second project is the revision and redesign of the Public Health Emergency Response and Recovery Plan to increase the plan's effectiveness through simplification and efficiency of use. Plan revisions currently in progress include: 1) Merging the Base Plan with the Direction and Control Annex and removing excessive procedural documents. 2) Eliminating definition sections in each annex and creating a master acronym list for the entire plan. 3) Reformatting the annex structures to eliminate duplicative narratives and increase navigation and ease of use. 4) Addition of virtual Department Operations Center as the primary operational coordination, with physical Department Operations Center locations serving as alternate operational coordination sites.

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 closed in September and 10 providers were awarded funding. Their contracts began December 1. Additionally, a stipend fund pilot program was launched, which was modeled after the stipend program used during the COVID-19 response. The pilot will be evaluated in January to determine successes and challenges, and plan the next steps. 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): As shared above, 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 specifically is now funding nine grantees. The intent of this funding is to enable local organizations to lift up community-driven ideas and recommendations to strengthen communities, build relationships, and promote healing from individual and community trauma. During this quarter, community providers got up and running with their projects. Mid-point workplan updates due in January will provide information on progress and barriers.

The 4th annual CHIP Trauma Informed survey was launched in November with CHIP collaborating organizations. Results were shared in December with the CHIP Executive committee. CHIP's community mental well-being action team and CHIP's Housing action team will now partner on becoming trauma informed.

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. Key informant interviews are completed, and the study is in the final phase. A logic model and evaluation plan are completed, and the team is tracking metrics related to community partnership, technical assistance, and long-term health outcomes. The team is also working on a mini-grant process to support community partners in implementing activities focused on older adults that will launch in early 2024.

Coordinate early childhood development strategies: The early childhood coordinator completed the pilot project between the Family Stabilization Services (FSS) in Human Services and the Parents As Teachers program in Family Health. There were significant learnings from the pilot, including that the referrals from FSS were more likely to enroll in Parents As Teachers services than other referral sources. The early childhood coordinator will use the lessons learned from this pilot to establish other partnerships with Human Services.

The early childhood coordinator continued to build relationships across Human Services. A tool was created to track the relationships between Family Health and Human Services programs. The early childhood coordinator met with six different Human Services programs, including one new connection, in Q3. Additionally, the early childhood coordinator has been an active participant in the Birth Justice Collaborative. This intersection has allowed for Family Health programs to be aligned with the work of the Birth Justice Collaborative.

Assure an adequate local public health infrastructure

Expand assessment capability and SHAPE survey: SHAPE (Survey of the Health of All the Population and the Environment) is an ongoing project of Public Health to provide data on the health status and factors that affect health for adults in Hennepin County that is used in planning, programming, and policy development. 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. A departmentwide health and racial equity survey was administered in October. Results are being analyzed and will be shared departmentwide, along with calls to action. Additionally, Strategic Initiatives staff are continuing to lead efforts to determine HCPH's role in violence prevention and in how the Health Department can best assist cities within Hennepin County that do not have their own public health department.

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

- In Q4, ongoing facility containment response ICAR (Infection Control Assessment and Response) activities continued with follow-up site visits and email communications with a new Infection Preventionist.
- Engagement of facilities in ICAR visits continues to be negatively affected by staff turnover, urgent matters that arise in daily work, and limited staff time available to dedicate to infection prevention. This is also the observation of staff at the Minnesota Department of Health.
- In Q4, a new in-person facility outreach strategy was implemented; 14 facilities received outreach resulting in eight 1:1 conversations with Infection Preventionists or Directors of Nursing. ICAR visits were offered as support for IP programs.

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 response 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, and providers have all joined at least one technical assistance session. Plans are in place to track forthcoming efforts for the second RFP and a technical assistance kickoff meeting was convened for all providers at the launch of their contract period.

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 continues to work on building relationships with Human Services as outlined in the early childhood strategic plan. A sample of the strategic plan is below:

Objective #2

By December 31, 2024, increase communication and referrals between Family Health and Human Services.

Action Plan

Activity	Target Date	Resources Required	Lead Person / Organization	Anticipated Product /Result	Progress Notes
Create standardized procedure for families applying for public assistance to be referred to family health services.	December 31, 2024	Technology, data sharing agreements, needs assessment results	Early Childhood Coordinator, Family Health	Families can receive referrals for all programs they may be eligible for participating in another program.	In progress: early childhood coordinator piloted referral process between FSS and PAT program.

Activity	Target Date	Resources Required	Lead Person / Organization	Anticipated Product /Result	Progress Notes
Schedule check-in meetings with key partners in early childhood work including front door, CC4K, CTSS, behavioral health, education, prevention-CFS, and well-being.	December 31, 2023	Staff time	Early Childhood Coordinator, Family Health	Regular connection points between teams allow for better information sharing.	Completed: Early childhood coordinator created a tracking document to quantify type of relationships between FH and other county partners. Most check-in meetings have been scheduled for 2024.

By December 31, 2023, 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, 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.
- Host a listening conversation 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.
- Continue to participate in containment-related activities with the Minnesota Department of Health to prevent the spread of antibiotic resistant organisms at affected facility.
- Continue in-person outreach to promote ICAR visits with facilities.
- Finalize plans to provide educational activities to infection preventionists and clinician staff to promote antibiotic stewardship.

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.
- Complete the evaluation of the pilot community stipend program focused on health promotion priorities with a goal of increasing community partnerships and removing barriers to accessing needed education, equipment, and resources.
- Complete the feasibility study on the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing program CAPABLE (Community Aging in Place).
- Develop a cross-departmental panel to discuss Age-Friendly Hennepin and educate on why the associated work matters.
- Complete a year-end report on Age-Friendly Hennepin.
- The early childhood coordinator will gather stakeholders in Hennepin County to finalize the early childhood strategic plan.

Assure an adequate local public health infrastructure

- Continue to disseminate SHAPE 2022 findings to internal partners, community partners, and residents, with upcoming presentations to the Highrise Health Alliance. The SHAPE team is also partnering with Hennepin University Partnership / School of Public Health at the University of Minnesota to organize a SHAPE survey data competition.
- Advance health equity work by identifying additional training needs through the health and racial equity assessment.
- Deploy and promote a new health and racial equity tool for all staff to use.
- Continue to move the city-focused work forward by completing a stakeholder map, a communication plan, and a general framework for evaluation.

HEALTH DOMAIN

Vaccine Incentives

Allocation amount: \$2,000,000

Project description

Hennepin County Public Health's (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 has been a hallmark of the effort. Community groups utilized funds in ways that met their communities needs such as offering gift cards, books, and transportation for those experiencing barriers. Much of 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: Each calendar year, 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 from future mailings during that year. In 2023, ImmuLink sent these letters in April, July, and December.

Key performance indicators

- **Reminder recall.** In December 2023, the third round of reminder recall letters were sent out. A total of 34,131 letters were mailed. 14,067 were mailed to 6- to 20-month-olds; 9,233 to 5-year-olds; and 10,831 to 15- to 16-year-olds. This project is in partnership with the MDH MIIC team. The letters included a list of low-cost clinics for the seven-county metro area that ImmuLink serves, the “Are Your Kids Ready” brochure that features the childhood and adolescent immunization schedule, the Docket flyer that provides information on how a guardian can request their child’s / adolescent’s immunization record, “Teens need Vaccines Too” for the 15- to 16-year-old letters and information on how to opt out of future mailings.
- **Reminder recall postcard, extra mailing.** In December 2023, the ImmuLink team sent out a postcard to families with children 3 to 11 years of age as of January 1 and who are currently recommended or overdue for a dose of MMR vaccine. The postcard served the dual purpose of reminding families to get up to date on routine childhood immunizations as well as plan for immunizations for any international travel planned in 2024. A total of 63,687 postcards were sent out to families in the seven-county-metro area.

Next steps

IQIP (Immunization Quality Improvement for Providers)

In 2024, Reminder recall letters will be sent out by MDH. Hennepin County ImmuLink staff (funded by a MDH IQIP grant) will focus on IQIP.

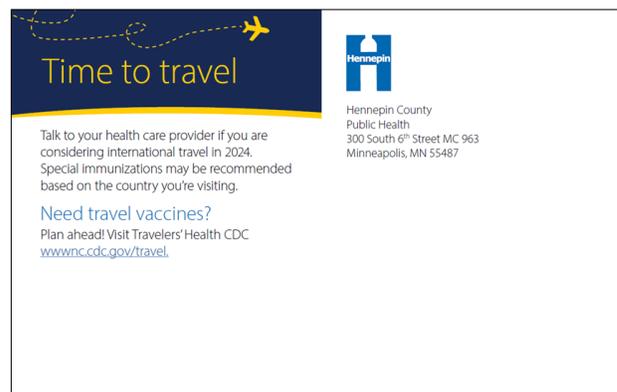
Community-based immunization clinics

Planning for 2024 Community-based immunization clinics has started. The kickoff will be held in April during National Infant Immunization Week. Six monthly Community Based Immunization Clinics will be held April through October. The purpose of the Community-based immunization clinics continues to be increasing childhood immunization rates by bringing childhood vaccinations to the community; reducing or eliminating barriers to access, and educating families about the importance of childhood vaccinations and the need to follow the CDC immunization schedule. Information on low-cost clinics and how to register for health insurance will be provided. Some of this funding will be utilized along with other grant funding.

Community outreach

Baby Tracks Community Health Workers (CHW) will continue to work with community partners to spread the word about the community-based immunization clinics. Community Partners include schools, day care centers, food shelves, religious organizations, local businesses directly serving the community, community organizations, and Hennepin County Libraries. The CHW will also continue to work with parents of young children, community-based organizations, and healthcare providers to address vaccine hesitancy and misinformation.

Reminder recall postcard



HOUSING DOMAIN

Housing Recovery

Allocation amount: \$46,000,000

Project description

The economic impacts of COVID-19 were felt most heavily by people with low incomes, and by Black and Indigenous people and people of color. 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 single room occupancy housing.

Since that time, four of the 35 projects determined they could not meet pandemic recovery fund encumbrance or expenditure timelines, one project underspent its contract, and two single room occupancy projects will no longer use housing recovery funds for rehabilitation and conversion. A request for proposals was released in July 2023 to re-allocate these remaining housing recovery funds. This resulted in modifying two existing awards, amending three contracts, and adding three new affordable housing developments, for a new total of 34 projects.

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 October through December of 2023, staff executed funding agreements for three (3) projects to create 131 affordable housing units. These agreements totaled \$1,636,463 in pandemic recovery funding.

- Housing recovery component: Affordable Housing Development Accelerator
 - Wangstad Commons (JO Companies): new construction of 54 affordable rental housing units in Brooklyn Center, 16 affordable to households at or below 30% area median income and 38 affordable at or below 60% AMI.
 - Union Park Flats (Project for Pride in Living): new construction of 60 affordable rental housing units in St. Louis Park; 16 units for households at or below 30% AMI, 27 at or below 50% AMI, and 17 at or below 60% AMI.

In total, HED has executed funding agreements for 24 of the 34 projects, which will create or preserve 2,151 units of affordable rental housing, and create 52 homeownership opportunities. The signed agreements total \$26.8 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	4 projects	\$2,250,000	52
NOAH Preservation	4 projects	\$5,080,520	4 projects	\$4,605,000	986
Pandemic Cost Increase	6 projects	\$3,492,314	5 projects	\$2,000,000	340
TOTALS	34 projects	\$40,335,847	24 projects	\$26,776,977	2,203

The remaining \$5.8 M remains allocated to SRO housing acquisition and rehabilitation. As of the end of 2023, HED:

- Completed rehab and conversion scopes for the University Inn and Metro Inn Motel.
- Finalized sales of the University Inn and Metro Inn Motel to experienced affordable housing operators, fully completing 83 units. The owners started lease-up in December 2023.

Since inception, HED has expended nearly \$5 million on SRO acquisition and rehabilitation, and nearly \$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 and 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 AMI

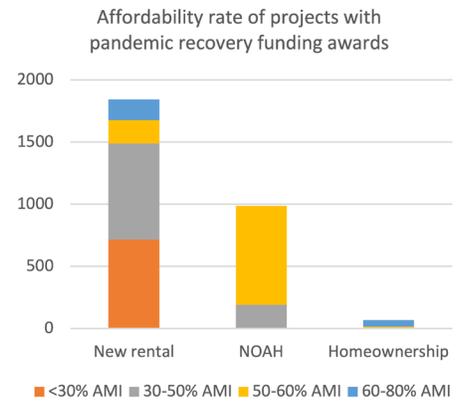
- Outcome: 41% of new units financed through Housing Recovery are affordable at or below 30% AMI

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% 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 (January through December 2023)		
Pandemic recovery-funded	13	520
Projects without pandemic recovery funding	7	412
Total	20	932

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 January–March 2024

- Complete final improvements on remaining SRO properties
- Release a request for proposals 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
 - WHAHLT, four additional affordable homeownership opportunities in suburban Hennepin County (amendment)
 - Minnetonka Boulevard Redevelopment, eight affordable homeownership opportunities in St. Louis Park
 - Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, four affordable homeownership opportunities through conversion of tax-forfeited land in Minneapolis

HOUSING DOMAIN

Services for People Experiencing Homelessness

Allocation amount: \$34,770,000

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

Housing-focused case management services: Homeless to Housing

- Added a Family unit to the Homeless to Housing team. This new unit is composed of 11 social workers who provide culturally appropriate, trauma and data-informed housing case management to families experiencing literal homelessness in Hennepin County.
 - This new intervention will initially target families staying in Hennepin County funded shelters.
 - During this reporting period, the team was hired and onboarded, and 10 families have already been assigned to case managers.
 - Two additional case aides will be hired to assist the family team with housing-related tasks, including obtaining vital documentation; assembling and delivering move-in kits to newly housed families; stocking and organizing the storage unit; transporting families to housing related appointment; etc.
 - An additional storage unit was added to ensure the program has vital move-in supplies available to families immediately upon move in.
 - The new Family Unit Supervisor will begin to facilitate a dynamic, real-time case consult using best practices and the by-name list of families experiencing homelessness to include service-providing agencies in the community.

- Added “system refreshers” for staff to ensure they understand and feel comfortable using all the data systems needed to do their jobs.
- Added three different cultural hair care kits available to clients to be included in the move-in kits.
- Added resource / housing information magnets to give to clients upon move in; these magnets will be filled out by the client and case manager and will include contact information for the client’s landlord, maintenance, their newly assigned case manager, benefit line, legal support, health insurance, primary care, etc.
- Streamlined onboarding process.
- Created a new social worker position to focus on those on the chronic index and to assist in mentoring new staff.
- Solicited feedback from staff, community partners, clients (former and current), and other county departments to ensure continuous improvement.
- Continued to staff up and stabilize workforce to continually sustain a full team, ensuring that the team is always utilizing all available FTEs.
- Continued training three existing case aides to be MNsure Assessors for the team — this will help streamline services and create further efficiencies.
- Two social workers focusing on the unsheltered population partner with the Homeless Action Team (HAT — part of Metro Transit) by offering services to people experiencing homelessness who are riding the light rail, buses, and staying near train / bus stations.

Board and lodge capital improvements

- Completed the outdoor gathering space and meditation garden at Pursuit Hometel.
- Began the construction phase of the Missions Inc. lodge renovation late November 2023.
- Continued renovations of 180 Degrees’ Clifton Place site into single and double bedrooms and a larger dining space.

Encampment response: Streets to Housing

- Streets to Housing provided street- and site-based engagements to households experiencing unsheltered homelessness.
- The team offers a variety of services, including
 - Connecting people with health and financial benefits
 - Reducing barriers to housing e.g., addressing legal and financial issues)
 - Conducting housing assessments
 - Providing transportation
 - Providing light-touch case management and navigation services
 - Connecting households to emergency shelter, treatment, and recovery services

24/7 emergency shelter

- Four agencies receive funding to operate 24/7 emergency shelter for single adults (18+ without dependents).
- This funding has been supporting up to six shelter locations.
- 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.
- Funded programs continue to correctly enter their data into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- Funded programs are changing some of their policies and practices to ensure all beds aren’t only spoken for, but also utilized each night.

Low-barrier shelters: Avivo Village and AICDC Homeward Bound

Avivo Village Shelter

- Worked with staff at Avivo Village to develop a shelter access prioritization process using HMIS data — this will increase equity in who is able to access this valuable shelter program and also increase transparency among people experiencing unsheltered homelessness and how they can gain access to the Village.
- Avivo staff were trained on ShelterPoint in HMIS — a bed reservation module — to match how other shelters enter data.
- Both initiatives will roll out in Q1 2024.

American Indian Community Development Corporation (AICDC) Homeward Bound Shelter

- Continued to work with staff at AICDC Homeward Bound to ensure accurate data quality.

Self-pay at Harbor Light Center Shelter

- 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 has been in operation for one year.
- Hennepin Shelter Hotline is spending down the additional \$450,000 that was added to their contract intended to fund five FTEs to better serve new arrival families and to reduce call wait times.
 - They've shared it has reduced voicemails, wait times, and costs associated with translation services.
- A new HMIS Hennepin Shelter Hotline report was finalized in late December.
- Contracted provider met with the county's Service Area Lead on a weekly and monthly basis to discuss challenges, data corrections, and more.
- Hennepin Shelter Hotline continues to report a steady inflow of new Americans / asylum seekers needing shelter.

Key performance indicators

Housing-focused case management: Homeless to Housing

- Housing-focused case management services: Homeless to Housing
- The team has been tracking consistent data points since launching the team.
 - Number of clients housed, numbers of vital docs obtained, stats on recidivism (return to homeless response system after housing), maintaining equitable housing outcomes by race, client satisfaction.
- 80 people housed during this reporting period.
 - Average days from assignment to a case manager to housed is 124
 - 66% of clients identify as people of color and 65% of people housed identify as people of color (statistically equitable)
 - 81% of clients have photo ID at closing; 62% have SS card
- 83% of client satisfaction surveys have been positive
- 94% of those housed are not back in the homeless response system currently (housing retention rate)
- 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 performance indicator for this project is the completion of all capitolly funded projects by the end of the 2024.

Encampment response: Streets to Housing

- Streets to Housing has served a total of 534 households during this reporting period.
- A public-facing dashboard has been created to share ongoing progress toward our goal to reduce and end unsheltered homelessness.
- Since August of 2022, Streets to Housing has recorded 194 exits to a permanent destination and 121 exits into emergency shelter.
- Streets to Housing is still currently engaged with approximately 320 households, nearly 60 of which have active housing referrals.

24/7 emergency shelter

- 616 people (18+, no dependents) used this type of emergency shelter
- 319 people left shelter
 - 24% (46% when excluding missing / don't know data) of people who left had a positive exit:
 - 48 exited to a permanent destination, 10 to an institutional setting, and 19 to a non-homeless setting
 - 73 people returned to homelessness
 - 151 people were missing data
- Worked with shelter providers and HMIS contracted administrator to clean-up incorrect, outdated data

Low-barrier shelters: Avivo Village and AICDC Homeward Bound

Avivo Village

- 126 people used shelter
- 31 people left shelter:
 - 42% of people who left had a positive exit: 10 exited to a permanent destination, three to an institutional setting, and 0 to a non-homeless setting
 - 15 people returned to homelessness, two people died, and one person went to 'an "other" destination'
- Among people who left shelter, eight people used shelter for less than 183 days, 18 people used shelter for 183-365 days and five people used shelter for more than 366 days
- When contract is updated, performance measures will be reported on a monthly basis vs annually

AICDC Homeward Bound

- 140 people used shelter
- 93 people left shelter:
 - 17% of people who left had a positive exit, 21 exited to a permanent destination, four to an institutional setting, and 0 to a non-homeless setting
 - 21 people went to 'an "other" destination,' and 47 people were missing data
- Among people who left shelter, 55 people used shelter for 7-30 days, 34 people used shelter for 31-182 days, and four people used shelter for more than 183 days

Self-pay at Harbor Light Center Shelter

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

System-wide shelter diversion: Hennepin Shelter Hotline

- 1,526 households were served (2,734 clients); 382 successfully diverted (25%)
- 1,047 single adult households served; 277 successfully diverted (26%)
- 467 family households served; 100 successfully diverted (22%)
- 12 unknown types of households served; 5 successfully diverted (42%)

Next steps

Board and lodge capital improvements

- We have set up meetings with each of the awarded board and lodge provider organizations to review their workplans, key milestones, and project timelines through December 31, 2024.

Housing-focused case management services: Homeless to Housing

- Increase caseloads for the new Family team
- Further align data with Streets to Housing (H2H's outreach partners)
- Hire social worker for the newly created chronic / mentor focus

Encampment response: Streets to Housing

- Hennepin County will be 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.
- The team will be expanding to include a Substance / Opioid Use Specialist that will provide comprehensive wrap-around treatment services to individuals with Opioid Use Disorder and any co-occurring substance use disorder / mental health conditions, including housing, transportation, education, job placement, job training, or childcare.
 - This position will enhance the efficacy of the Streets to Housing model to support households who are interested in exiting unsheltered homelessness by use of a substance recovery track.

24/7 emergency 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 cleanup 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 shelters: Avivo Village and AICDC Homeward Bound

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 fully transition to ShelterPoint in HMIS to match how other shelters enter data.
- 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 provide technical assistance for entering case management and exit destination data in HMIS to reduce the amount of "other" and missing data.
- Will ensure Adult Shelter Connect (ASC) and AICDC 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 Shelter

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

System-wide shelter diversion: Hennepin Shelter Hotline

- Will begin to use the diversion report to have more data points and show how diversion impacts the entire shelter system.
- Will correct data errors that occurred over the last year.
- Will continue to monitor the impact of the five new FTEs.
- 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.

INCOME DOMAIN

Economic Recovery

Allocation amount: \$19,000,000

Project description

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

To date, Housing and Economic Development has allocated or awarded \$17.9 million of the allocated \$19 million.

Small business-focused economic recovery strategies

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

New, targeted cohort learning opportunities have launched to address specific needs and recovery challenges identified by business owners through early focus groups, ongoing discussions, and client feedback surveys. Systematic improvements were made to 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 include:

- Expansion of the network of business advisors under contract to provide no-cost technical assistance and specialized expertise now includes a total of thirty-nine (39) 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 Q4 2023, seven (7) 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

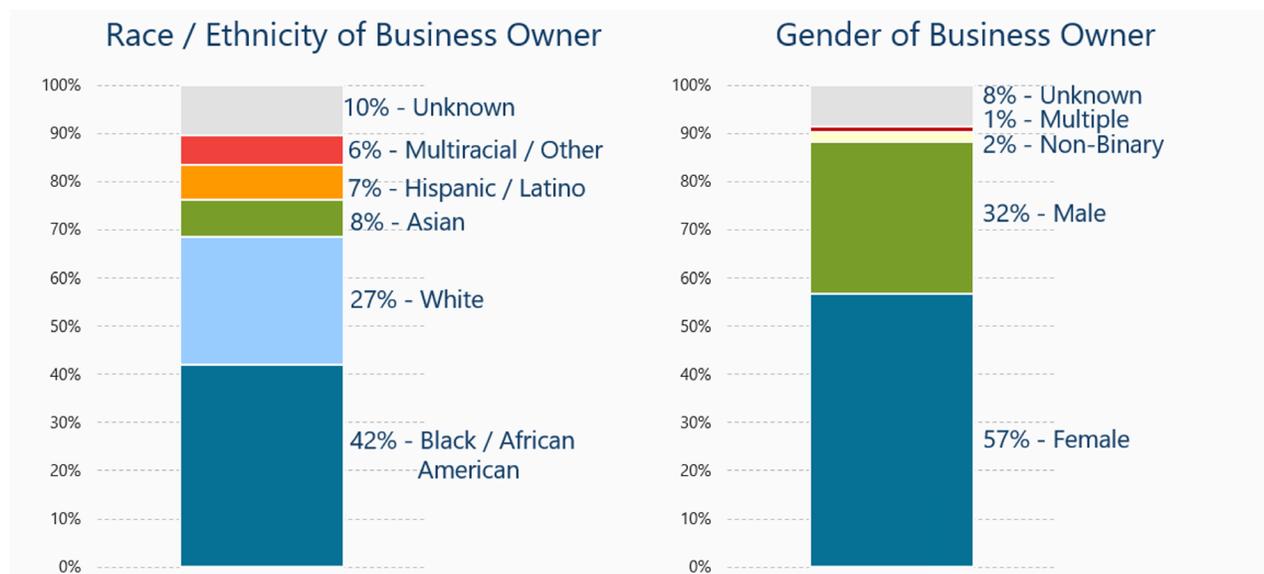
Initial Economic Recovery goals were to support 1,300 businesses and generate investment of \$30,000,000 in ways that build wealth in communities hardest hit by the pandemic.

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

Since the launch of Elevate Hennepin, results include:

- Over 1,925 businesses have accessed 16,941 hours of one-on-one technical assistance, “back-office” support, and cohort-based learning opportunities

Housing and Economic Development quarterly tracks the demographics of entrepreneurs and small business owners who access Elevate Hennepin consulting and one-on-one advising. Demographics from the most recent quarter shown below suggest that outreach efforts among communities of color and other disadvantaged groups are having an impact.



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

- 111 entrepreneurs received technical assistance to help their business launch
- \$17.5 million financing provided to Hennepin County businesses resulting in 279 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 strategies within the Elevate Hennepin portfolio:

- Continued outreach among communities of color, with particular emphasis on reaching Asian, American Indian / Native American, and Hispanic / Latinx entrepreneurs.
- Competitive procurement 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: \$4,000,000

Project description

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

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

The pilot is expected to serve approximately 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 reached full enrollment at 167 families.
- Families interested in joining the pilot received an individualized benefits comparison statement so they could make an informed decision about participation. Several individuals consulted with our Human Services Representatives regarding benefits impact and / or with Prepare + Prosper regarding tax implications.
- Families who chose to participate were enrolled in the program and received their ReliaCard debit cards. All families activated their ReliaCard successfully.
- All participating families have received payment.
- County Attorney and Privacy Officer consultation continued as needed to explore needs related to participant disclosure, consent, data sharing with partners, disenrollment, etc.
- Project for Pride in Living (PPL) connected with participants to offer supportive services
 - An outreach coordinator was hired to focus on this partnership
 - The coordinator was able to reach 84 Raise the Baseline families
 - Families were offered supportive services such as financial coaching and resume writing
 - 67 families indicated an interest; PPL program staff will connect directly to follow up

- The Improve Group met their participation goals as they completed research for their initial mixed methods evaluation.
- Quantitative analysis planning continued in collaboration with partners from the University of Minnesota as described below.
- Raise the Baseline won the Golden GovIT Innovation Award for the user-friendly data / customer relationship management PowerApp tool that was created to support the program. The work was highlighted at the statewide GovIT Symposium.

Key performance indicators

- Number of families participating:
 - 167 families fully enrolled
 - Final enrollment date: October 10, 2023
- Payment:
 - Percent of payments received on time: 100%
 - Percent with accurate payment amount: 100%
 - The Improve Group completed data collection for Round 1 of the Raise the Baseline evaluation.
 - Data collection was composed of:
 - 76 completed participant surveys
 - 30 completed participant interviews
 - 15 completed participant photo elicitation activity interviews
 - Two staff focus groups, one for administrative and policy staff and one for front line staff.
- Research was conducted in all languages spoken by residents interested in participating in the research, including Hmong, Dari, and French
- Participant advisors provided input on the final revisions of the interview and photo interview protocol, and on the survey and outreach letter
- The Hennepin-University Partnership’s Collaborative Grant focused on this pilot for the 2023 grant year, selecting Dr. Lynn Blewett’s proposal “Health Care Impact of Hennepin County’s Guaranteed Basic Income Program” for funding. 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.
- The Hennepin-University Partnership’s Hennepin Collaborative Research Assistant Anna Bokun is developing 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 is a University of Minnesota Sociology Ph.D. candidate and is advising the county on how to leverage existing administrative data to evaluate this program.

Next steps

- Families will continue to receive monthly payments they can use to meet their family’s basic needs and plan for their future.
- Year-end letters will be sent to families stating Raise the Baseline benefit amounts received in 2023.
- 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 disenrollment and reinstatement processes.
- County Attorney and Privacy Officer consultation will continue as needed to explore needs related to participant disclosure, consent, data sharing with evaluators, etc.

- Project for Pride in Living will offer supportive services
 - Program staff will connect with the participants who are interested in supportive services
 - The outreach coordinator will connect with all families again at the six-month point of their program participation
 - Families will receive services through PPL programming
- Both Hennepin-University Partnership programs will conclude. Hennepin County staff will implement quantitative data analysis recommendations.
- The Improve Group will move on to the next phase of their evaluation
 - Analyze and synthesize data
 - Create a preliminary findings document
 - Hold a preliminary findings meeting with key Hennepin County project staff to discuss findings and collaboratively interpret and contextualize the findings
 - Engage two to three participant advisors to review findings and provide insights and contextualization
 - Synthesize input to create findings from Round 1

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

The Anti-Hate Initiative focuses on several different areas, such as education/awareness, convening, and building organizational capacity.

Throughout the 4th quarter, providers continued their focus on capacity building. This involved activities like hiring staff, offering training, establishing technical assistance, and encouraging the exchange of best practices among local organizations. A notable emphasis was placed on supporting the Hennepin County community affected by the Israel / Palestine war. Considerable hours were dedicated to facilitating discussions and training for both the community and law enforcement.

The Anti-Hate Initiative has progressed in enhancing awareness, capacity building for organizations, and combating bullying. In the last quarter, the Anti-Hate Initiative has resulted in the development of seven training materials addressing various aspects of hate. Over 25 hours were dedicated to facilitating community and law enforcement discussions and training sessions on reporting hate and bias-motivated incidents. Moreover, an additional 90 hours were allocated to an extensive awareness campaign.

Furthermore, the coalition has welcomed five new organizations, fostering increased collaboration in our collective efforts against hate. The quarterly report reflects the impactful strides made by the Anti-Hate Initiative in promoting understanding, addressing incidents, and fostering a united front against hate, discrimination, and bias.

Key performance indicators

- December 2023 Community Collaborative Collaboration 2.0 partnered with The Man Up Club for an Anti-bullying symposium.
- Facilitated monthly meetings of the Anti-Hate Coalition.
- Held in-person all-day Anti-Hate Convening for community providers.
- Awarded organizations have conducted over 90 hours of community outreach awareness campaigns.
- Over 25 hours spent on facilitating community and law enforcement discussions and training sessions on reporting hate- and bias-motivated incidents.

Next steps

- Provide support to external and internal organizations to advance Hennepin’s anti-hate efforts including data collection, community awareness / education, and convening agencies.
- Collaborate among community-based organizations to identify any additional service gaps and plan for future work.
- Jewish Community Center (JCA), The City of Brooklyn Center, Reviving Sisterhood, and Asian Media Access collaborating to create social media videos, to be released spring 2024, to combat Asian hate, Islamophobia, and antisemitism.
- Organizations working to purchase system for collecting data.

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

For the fourth quarter of 2023, HCPD resumed responsibility for funding contract positions from the State. HCPD contracted with seven attorneys (5.25 FTE) and one legal office assistant (1.0 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.

During the fourth quarter of 2023, DOCCR's Adult Pre-Adjudication Services (APAS) staff dedicated to this effort include one Corrections Unit Supervisor, five Felony Investigation probation officers, and two Central Intake probation officers working at full capacity to assist with court referrals related to the court backlog. Felony Investigation probation officers complete Criminal Record Summaries (CRS) and Guideline Worksheets on all felony-level complaint filings. Additionally, they write complex investigative reports to assist judges and attorneys with sentencing decisions. Central Intake probation officers write domestic investigation reports, complete risk

needs assessments, and process felony and DWI cases ordered to probation without a pre-sentence investigation. For the fourth quarter of 2023, Felony Investigation and Central Intake workloads continued to level off as we see ourselves finding a new normal.

Key performance indicators

HCPD was able to provide caseload relief to attorneys to allow them more time to focus on their cases set for trial. In addition, the contracted attorneys handled trial cases as part of the caseload relief. The Adult Court contractors took on 205 new cases during the fourth quarter of 2023. The attorneys in Juvenile Court handled 32 separate half-day calendars and 14 new child protection cases.

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.

Within the DOCCR, the Adult Pre-Adjudication Services has two specific areas that support this effort, Felony Investigation and Central Intake, where the incoming referrals have continued to level off. These added resources have allowed DOCCR to provide uninterrupted client services for sentencing preparation and probation services. According to the Minnesota Fourth Judicial District Business Partners Hub, there continues to be approximately 400 major criminal cases (felony and gross misdemeanors) in the backlog, which is consistent over the last few quarters.

Next steps

As the backlog has decreased, HCPD is beginning to wind down some of the contracts. We will maintain contracts with four attorneys (2.75 FTE) in adult court as well as two legal office assistants (2.0 FTE). We will also continue the two juvenile attorney contracts (.4 FTE).

In 2024, the HCAO will have three positions funded through the court backlog project—two attorneys and one paralegal.

In 2023, DOCCR will have fully utilized its court backlog allocation. To continue the joint efforts with our criminal justice partners to assist District Court with reducing the backlog, the department has secured the funding for these eight staff in 2024.

JUSTICE DOMAIN

Violence Prevention

Allocation amount: \$10,000,000

Project description

In June 2021, the Hennepin County Board authorized \$5 million for efforts intended to prevent, reduce, and mitigate gun violence in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. The initial \$5 million was allocated for short-term efforts focused on getting resources into the community for violence interruption and intervention strategies, and for wraparound support services utilizing providers that had capacity and programming ready to provide immediate services. In March 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

Contracts were developed and executed for 46 providers who were awarded community violence prevention grants. These providers, who represent a broad array of services, programs, and culturally specific communities, have started providing programming throughout the county. All of the services fall into one of three areas of work, as developed by the Centers for Disease Control: Creating Protective Environments (Pillar 1); Connecting Young People to Caring Adults and Activities (Pillar 2); and Strengthening Young People's Skills (Pillar 3). 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 started meeting as a Community Violence Prevention Network. Planning is underway to include 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 are in need of assistance with meeting contracting requirements, have been formally connected with Elevate Hennepin Nonprofit to give them ongoing individualized technical support.

Key performance indicators

- Forty-six community providers now have fully executed contracts and are working in the three pillar areas of violence prevention.
- An initial Quarterly Convening of the Community Violence Prevention Network was held November 17, 2023. The in-person Convening Series allows the forty-six 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, are working closely with Elevate Hennepin Nonprofit with individualized organizational coaching and advising.
- Pillar 1 (Creating Protective Environments) providers and Pillar 2 (Connecting Young People to Caring Adults and Activities) providers met as cohorts to discuss best practices.
- Provider-reported key performance indicators:
 - 76 Hours of mental health supportive services provided
 - 2,553 Hours of mentoring
 - 66 Community events held
 - 305 Eligible persons signed on to Challenge for Change

Next steps

- February Quarterly Convening
- Functional teamwork:
 - All three Pillar cohort 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 work allocated for the HCGC HVAC Renovation Project has been completed in the previous quarter that expended a large portion of the grant funding.

Work has continued to evaluate the filter banks and system capacities under the contract with Northern Air Corporation. The remaining 16 buildings were evaluated for a total of 57 buildings completed. A review of the corrective actions necessary was completed. Several buildings will require some additional testing to confirm results. This will happen Q1 of 2024. In addition, any corrective actions will start being implemented in Q1 of 2024.

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

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.

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 4,752 filters were purchased and delivered. Sixteen buildings had HVAC systems evaluated this quarter, specifically filter banks and air flow capacities. Clean air evaluations will start in Q1 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 start the verification of clean air requirements in the identified subset of buildings.

More MERV13 filters will be ordered and installed as needed for the buildings to maintain a safe space for users 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

The Office of Digital Experience (ODX) reached a critical milestone in the last quarter of 2023. ODX received formal department status in the organization with the appointment of the Chief Digital Officer as the new department director. This quarterly report will continue to reference the work completed as ODX. The Digital Experience (DX) quarterly report is organized to reflect the work done that supports the three ODX 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 ODX structures, processes, and culture founded in our values.

DX Model partners are named in the relevant progress items demonstrating the continued collaborative nature of coordinating and leading this work.

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

Feedback from the "Help Us Improve Survey" on the public-facing website continued as an input to gather and understand users' experience while visiting Hennepin.us. This feedback will be organized by theme and integrated into the HennepinCounty.gov project.

The Web Infrastructure team implemented plans for the content management system (CMS) migration. This includes constant communication about plans and timelines with DX Model partner teams to ensure all public-facing sites can migrate without disruption.

ODX is partnering with the Hennepin Access project in the Strategic Planning and Initiatives Department. This project is about establishing an integrated technology-based solution that support efficiencies and coordinated service delivery to improve resident outcomes. Exploring IT solutions, equity and legal considerations, and community engagement are key activities during the discovery phase of this project.

ODX presented the 2024 operating budget to the County Board of Commissioners with the message of ways the office will continue to support the organization in growing accessible digital service delivery to residents.

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

ODX convened a DX Stakeholder meeting bringing together DX model partner teams and departments from across the organization. This meeting provides an opportunity for project teams to share updates and provide demonstrations, as well as for stakeholders to highlight their experiences of being part of the collaborative experiment approach and positive business outcomes.

In addition to the DX Stakeholder meeting, ODX also convened the DX Advisory Committee during this reporting period. This meeting provides a high-level strategic overview of the current and future direction of ODX and engages executive-level leaders to consider their future digital service needs through a consistent, useable, and accessible experience for users.

The design system progress continued with fine-tuning of the prototype and communication plan. The Website Communications and Web Infrastructure teams are heavily involved in the design system. The design system maintenance and governance plan was also created to maintain clear paths of updating and maintaining to keep the system current and relevant.

Work in the discovery phase of the public-facing website transition to HennepinCounty.gov continued. The project management structure was established for clear responsibility and authority.

Establish ODX structures, processes, and culture founded in ODX values

Two temporary positions in ODX were successfully converted to permanent budgeted positions during this reporting period.

A contracted vendor, AMO Enterprise, facilitated an office-wide conversation to ensure the strategic plan leads with an equity lens. Small group activities allowed for focused thinking about setting up the strategic plan for successful implementation in 2024.

ODX invited a facilitator from the Human Resources Organizational Effectiveness team to lead an office-wide workshop on team effectiveness.

Key performance indicators

- DX being elevated to department status demonstrates the investment the organization is making in the future of equitable and accessible service delivery for residents.
- Transitioning temporary positions to permanent budgeted positions gives validity to this work continuing to move forward in the organization.
- Analyzing data from the Resident Experience Survey (Hennepin Access project) and the Help Us Improve Survey will provide a deeper understanding to what residents need and how they wish to get it.
- Engagement teams have completed resident experience survey with over 530 residents as part of the Hennepin Access project.
- More than 50 people from across all lines of business attended the DX Stakeholder event in October. These events are an opportunity to increase awareness of the work of ODX and possible future engagement opportunities with other business areas.

- Leveraging outside facilitators helps build connection and trust for team members.

Next steps

- DX will have a role in completing the 2024 Digital Counties Survey in partnership with other stakeholders in Hennepin County.
- Three additional roles will be converted to permanent positions.
- One new role will be scoped to address the growing needs of the department.
- User research will take place for both internal and external stakeholders for the HennepinCounty.gov project.
- The Hennepin Access project will establish a Resident Experience Cohort in collaboration with Outreach and Community Supports.
- DX will convene a DX Stakeholder event.
- Map out remaining pandemic response dollars to ensure project and program needs can be resourced accordingly.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Engagement Services

Allocation amount: \$1,680,000

Project description

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

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

Progress narrative

Trusted Messengers Program

- Ongoing relationship management of 26 contracted community-based non-profit agencies.
- Continued ongoing check-in meetings and monitoring of reports, sharing of events, activities, deliverables, and issues / trends / themes, etc.
- Ongoing monthly large group meetings and ending last meeting in December 2023.
- Shared and communicated information on county programs / services.
- Shared RFP / grant opportunities within internal county and other cities, counties, and state.
- Shared consultation and feedback with departments / service areas.

Community Engagement Roster Program

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

Translations

- Translation policy project committee met to discuss a countywide policy regarding translation services and come up with recommendations.

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 that includes ordering and restocking handouts and engagement supplies.

Healing circles / community building

- During the reporting period, the department facilitated one healing circle / community building session and one gathering of all the healers to review what worked well this year and areas of improvement.
- The last healing circle was in celebration of Native American Heritage Month. The team worked with Shelly Belgarde again to host the same Energy Healing workshop as she had done previously in the year. The team heard earlier this year that people really wanted to attend the energy healing workshop but were not able to. The community was excited that the workshop was offered again, and one participant explained, "Community healing! Such a great class for our community we really need it now more than ever. Being in a room filled with people wanting to take part in healing was so powerful." There were also suggestions that people would like to see monthly healing sessions as well.
- The team ended the 2023 iteration of the healing circle program this year with reflections from the healers and supporting staff, as well as visioning for future healing circles and program needs.

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

- 26 contracts continued through the end of 2023
- Various departments came to seek feedback, updates, etc. (Climate Action Plan, Hennepin Health – healthcare renewals, Tech Essentials / Elevate Hennepin)
- Final evaluations report received

Community Engagement Roster Program

- 238 individuals and organizations registered
- Implemented the BLRT engagement cohort contracts
- Multiple projects / RFPs consulted and may utilized this program to achieve contracts

Translations

- Continued to meet and work with the Translation Policy Project committee
- Review draft translation policy document

Engagement vans

- Over the winter months, Streets to Housing is utilizing one of our engagement vans. During the reporting period, Streets to Housing served 534 households. With all households served, Streets to Housing supports 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

- 17 people attended Energy Healing Workshop: Awake *Restore* Ascend
- Five healers and two staff members were able to gather to evaluate best practices and planning for next year

Materials distribution

- During the reporting period, staff helped distribute 2,100 masks and 505 COVID-19 test kits.
- The team ordered new materials to support materials organization and distribution including wagons to haul supplies to events, containers for supplies, and supplies for community events including button makers, yoga mats, and more.
- 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 took place during this time.

Next steps

Trusted Messengers Program

- Ensure invoicing are timely and paid for 2023
- Review final reports
- Work on strategy for 2024 Trusted Messenger program

Community Engagement Roster Program

- Strategic plan: Find ways to improve and promote the roster program internally and externally

Translations

- Work and consult with project manager hired under the Communications department to discuss existing translations efforts and assess future needs. Work with translation policy project lead on countywide policy for translation services.
- Present translation draft with leadership in mid-January 2024.

Engagement vans

- Hennepin County Fleet Services has piloted a Key Valet reservation system for county vehicles. Two of our vans will be included in this system in 2024. The team is preparing to launch this system for the next engagement season.
- 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 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 on-going 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.
- The team is working 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, which will help staff in their individual healing as well as determine collective ways to advance racial equity work.

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: \$4,000,000

Project description

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

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

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

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

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

Progress narrative

Progress on the Enterprise Integrated Data System (EIDS) is a continuation of the strategies underway. These are focused on the continuous improvement of the underlying data infrastructure, advancing the use of graph databases, continuing progress on key analyses, and advancements in our framework to support the use of data.

The data engineers in Integrated Data and Analytics continue to mature our DataOps practices with small improvements in our ability to monitor and track the data lifecycle of all data being integrated into this system. These capabilities are providing important feedback about the ongoing development of our data model and the effectiveness of our data pipelines. The team's approach to this work is also being documented and packaged in a way that can be applied to other county data assets in the future. This work is expected to continue throughout the duration of the project based on lessons learned and feedback from the team's data scientists.

Quarter four of 2023 marked continued progress on our graph database work. As noted in the last report, the inclusion of graph databases as a mechanism to integrate a wide variety of data has been a part of the project since the beginning. As this work has accelerated, the team is now at a position where we have developed a robust data ingestion process designed with scalability in mind, developed a graph database model with key components around entity resolution and customer journeys, and applied graph data science techniques to identify early insights. Work in this area will continue as the team works to quantify our entity resolution approaches to benchmark progress and gets feedback from project teams on initial insights and next steps for analysis.

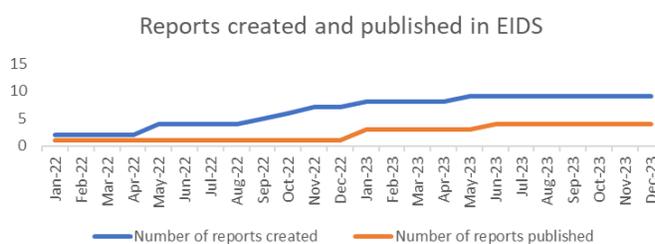
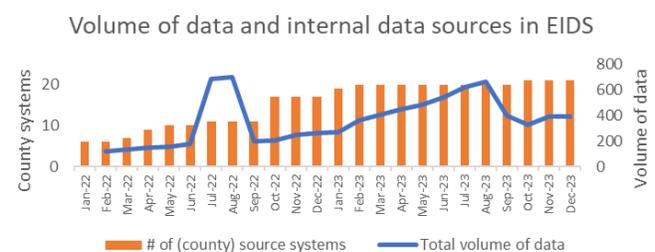
At the end of quarter four, 12 analysis projects have been established using this system. As noted in prior reports, the team has also established a backlog of projects and will be working closely with key business partners to identify the next slate of efforts, especially as a number of projects are close to wrapping up. Of the 12 projects that have been initiated, four have reached an initial conclusion where insights have been shared with the relevant business partners. Two are in the very final stages and while they were expected to be finished in quarter three of 2023, scheduling delays have pushed back the completion of those until quarter one of 2024. Of the remaining six, three are in the latter stages of their analysis and the other three are just getting started. 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.

The data strategy team in Integrated Data and Analytics also continues its work on developing a framework to support the meaningful use of data. In quarter three, the team held the county's first ever Data Week event. This event was a great success and included seventeen events (i.e., presentations) from 53 panelists over a five-day period. 390 unique county staff attended these events with 95% who gave feedback (117) reporting they could name at least one way they could use what they learned in their work. The data strategy team continues to implement the initial steps of a data literacy program. Lessons learned 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 is back to just under 400 GB with 21 county data systems included. This has followed the expected pattern as efficiencies in data management led to a decrease in total data volume that is now starting to increase as new systems are added.

There are 12 analytics projects leveraging this system. Four have been made available to stakeholders based on business need, two of them are nearing completion, and six are in active development.

Usage statistics have been revised as an omission led to undercounts over the past six months. On the one hand, usage over the summer was about 30% higher than originally reported indicating greater utilization of the reports being generated from this system. On the other hand, the overall trend remains the same. Lessons learned from this trend indicate that an initial growth in usage has leveled off and decreased slightly. This underscores the need to continually update these reports to maintain relevant findings for business users. It also may indicate the need for continued user adoption support as perhaps usage declines because the same level of support is no longer provided after the initial release. The team will continue to monitor these trends and continues to explore effective ways to get additional feedback.

Quality assurance metrics have been updated and continue to be refined. These include the success rates of our data pipeline processes (averaging above 95% success per month) and new measures are being developed to reflect the accuracy and reliability of subsequent data processing steps.

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 three months, 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.
- Plan the next phase of the graph database effort and begin initial steps of this work. In addition, the data scientists will continue to iterate on the existing graph analyses and entity resolution efforts.
- 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 of use of data by county staff.
- Continue to formalize and refine processes for coordination and feedback between data engineering and data analytics functions.
- Ensure that four new analytics projects have been identified with a goal to begin work on at least two of these by the end of quarter one.
- Incorporate ongoing feedback of the governance process to date and develop recommendations for improvement.

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 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 responsible 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
- Progress towards foster care referral system enhancements for initial placement matches with family whenever possible, and in family foster care when relatives are not available. Children and Family Services has prioritized stability for children and youth.

- Training and review of ADA website design to make online material more accessible.
- Investment in continuous deployment tool to accelerate application deployment and manage complexity.
- Modernized central services equipment to respond to pandemic-related and other special printing and mailing needs.
- Partial funding of hardware placed in collaborative work centers to enhance hybrid workforce and service delivery capabilities.
- Purchase and installation of digital signage at the Drop-off facilities in Brooklyn Park and Bloomington.
- Enhancements to workforce management system used by the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office

Next steps

Prioritized projects continue to proceed through IT intake to coordinate resources and ensure efficient use of enterprise tools. Projects have been identified across all lines of business and the majority of IT pandemic response fund expenditures will occur in 2024.

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 moved forward in two areas:

- \$1.0 million to accelerate plans to connect county facilities to fiber.
 - We received a preliminary estimate from Metropolitan Council for installation of fiber optic infrastructure along Lake Street from France Avenue to the Mississippi River. Metropolitan Council is managing the design, procurement, and installation of fiber along this corridor as part for the broader 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.
 - Procure 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:
 - \$636,000 spent for Server Infrastructure for the Video Management System (VMS) for the Traffic Management Center (TMC)
 - Over \$1.8 million spent to add over 25 miles of fiber to connect 35 intersections
 - Purchase of wireless modem equipment for traffic signals not connected to county fiber (14 intersections)

Next steps

Requisitions have been issued for fiber installation along Metro B Line and additional ATMS capital bid packages.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Voter Participation

Allocation amount: \$3,312,000

Project description

The Elections Department will:

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

Progress narrative

From October 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023, 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.

Hennepin County Elections contracted with 10 community organizations to conduct voter outreach work from May to November 2023. The contracted organizations encouraged their communities to register, vote, and learn about expanded voter eligibility. Organizations submitted their final invoices and reports on November 30, 2023. Work completed by contracted organizations during this reporting period include:

- Producing multilingual nonpartisan voter materials to distribute at outreach events
- Working with youth to create voter outreach graphics and social media content
- Creating election engagement videos
- Engaging students at community colleges about the importance of voting through events and class presentations
- Providing high school administrators with election toolkits
- Educating community members about expanded voter eligibility and felon voting rights

- Developing staff trainings on how to engage and assist voters
- Hosting candidate forums
- Registering and engaging voters around voter registration, absentee voting, and Election Day logistics

In October, Hennepin County Elections opened a request for proposal through the Hennepin County Community Roster Program for 2024 voter outreach contracts. Fifty-one organizations submitted proposals for contracts up to \$20,000. The selection committee met in November and chose twenty-three outstanding proposals from organizations committed to voter engagement work. Contracts will run from January to November 2024. Work will focus on engaging communities who face the highest barriers to voting. Organizations will encourage voter registration, voter eligibility, voting participation, and understanding new election laws.

During this reporting period, Hennepin County Elections has continued to build and support community partnerships. In advance of November 2023 elections, the Voter Outreach and Engagement Division hosted two community partner meetings. The October meeting focused on absentee voting and the November meeting focused on Election Day voting. Voter Engagement sent several communications leading up to Election Day reminding partners about ways they could support their communities to vote. Communications included information on Election Day registration, accessible voting, and expanded voter eligibility.

Through November 2023, Hennepin County Elections worked with an advertisement agency, developing content campaigns and placing ads with the goal to educate residents on voter registration, upcoming elections, and expanded eligibility. The ads focused on communities with historically low voter turnout including Black, Indigenous and 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 547,747.

During this reporting period, Hennepin County Elections staff tabled at 11 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 staff presented to members of Special Olympics MN and to students at Franklin Academy about accessible voting options.

In preparation for the March 5, 2024, presidential nomination primary, Hennepin County Elections is working to create and update voter outreach content. All content will be translated into the five most common languages used in Hennepin County and will be 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

Directly selected community contract organizations submitted final reports on November 30, 2023. Work and accomplishments are described in terms of the following:

- How many people organizations talked to, or registered to vote
- Materials developed, translated, distributed
- Media utilized and engagement
- Events held or attended, and materials shared

- Other quantitative or qualitative information or stories and other activities and accomplishments

Next steps

In the next three months, Hennepin County Elections will work to prepare voters for upcoming elections, including the presidential nomination primary and the County Commissioner District 6 special election. The Elections Department will work with a contracted media agency to conduct an advertisement campaign focused on voter registration, absentee voting, and expanded voter eligibility. Elections staff will continue to create, translate, and distribute voter outreach materials.

The twenty-three voter outreach contracts will begin in January 2024 with work focused on voter outreach including voter registration, education on expanded voter eligibility, and ensuring voters have the knowledge and resources needed to prepare for upcoming elections. Partner organizations will attend an orientation meeting in January and bi-monthly meetings updating Hennepin County Elections on their work and collaborating on outreach efforts.

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



Hennepin County

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