HENNEPIN COUNTY
MINNESOTA

Hennepin County Progress Report

Pandemic Response Projects

July – September 2022

Executive Summary

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

Through the ARPA-SLFRF program, Hennepin County has a total award of $245.9 million to respond to the economic and public health impacts of COVID-19 and to mitigate its impact on the community, residents and businesses. Key principles and priorities have been set to build upon the county's approach to disparity reduction and to support pandemic recovery efforts. Hennepin County is committed to using a racial equity lens to target resources and focus outcomes on reducing disparities in the following domains: education, employment, health, housing, income, justice and transportation. In addition to the domain areas, overarching infrastructure and supports have been prioritized.

In March 2022, the county board took action to use the dollars from ARPA-SLFRF for government services. Starting in 2022, the county will use other revenue sources for pandemic response and recovery efforts, which is anticipated to result in efficiencies. Programs and services previously authorized by the board will continue but will be funded through other sources outside of the ARPA-SLFRF.

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

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

Pandemic recovery funds

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

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

Principles

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

Priorities

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

Revenue replacement

In early 2022, Hennepin County took action to use the dollars from ARPA-SFLRF 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.

Pandemic response contracts

Hennepin County has outlined principles and priorities to guide the pandemic response efforts, then projects have been identified across disparity reduction areas. Each project includes an implementation plan and key performance indicators. Many projects also include contracts with external partners to execute and support the work. This progress report includes an initial summary of Hennepin County's pandemic response contracts from March 2, 2021, through September 30, 2022. Additional contract reporting and analysis will be included in future progress reports.

Hennepin County has used pandemic response funding in 412 goods, services and human services contracts with 294 different vendors. Thirty-nine percent of these vendors had not worked with the county before 2020; 58 new vendors were contracted between 2021 and 2022.

Vendor types

Sixty-seven percent of contracts with pandemic response funding were with nonprofit entities. Privately held businesses account for 25 percent of contracts.

Type	Number of contracts
Nonprofit Entity	278
Privately Held Businesses	102
Publicly Held Company	11
Government Entity	7
Information unavailable	14
Total	**412**

Contracts by vendor type
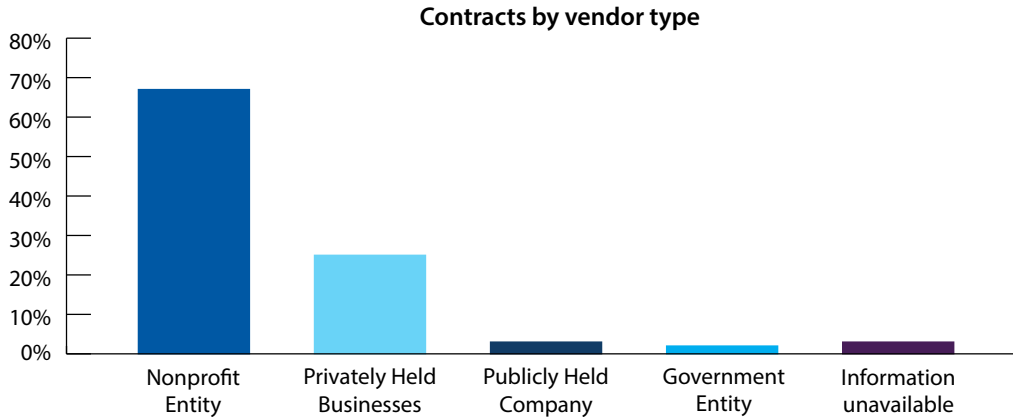
Business ownership

Of contracts with privately held businesses, 33 percent of contracts were with female-owned businesses and 25 percent were with small business enterprises (SBEs).

Thirty-three percent of contracts are with privately held businesses whose owners are Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, or Hispanic/Latino.

Business Ownership

Hispanic 6%
Asian/Pacific IS 67%
Black 9%
White/Caucasian 67%

Contract examples

Here are a few examples of the contracts that have been executed through the pandemic response projects.

Gun Violence Prevention

Art is My Weapon's Healing heARTs Program held workshops in partnership with three schools for North Minneapolis youth ages 14-24. The workshops focused on using abstract art to help the youth deal with trauma caused by violence and gun-related crimes. Participants learned how to tap into their trauma and express emotion through using color. The workshops culminated with an art exhibition where students displayed their work for community members and leaders.

Project for Pride in Living is addressing violence in the area around the intersection of Franklin and Chicago avenues in Minneapolis, which includes an alternative school and local businesses. Project for Pride in Living has partnered with a peacekeeping organization called Brothers EMpowered to build relationships in the neighborhood. Funds also have been used to improve signage and for a community-driven mural/public art project.

Black Army Brigade provided culturally competent Immersive Violence Prevention (IVP) training to Black youth aged 20 and older within North Minneapolis to empower program participants to deter, detect, and de-escalate threats to themselves and their community. Black Army Brigade also administered the Fellowship for Freedom Fighters program, which is a 10-week leadership and creative exploration course for youth. The program includes workshops that engage community stakeholders to build community consensus around intercommunal gun violence, ways to foster community collaboration for conflict resolution, and supportive topics that foster personal empowerment.

Behavioral Health

845s.org provides mental health outreach services to youth of color and connects them with culturally appropriate mental health services. 846s.org has provided extensive outreach in the neighborhoods around George Floyd Square to help community members there to access needed supports.
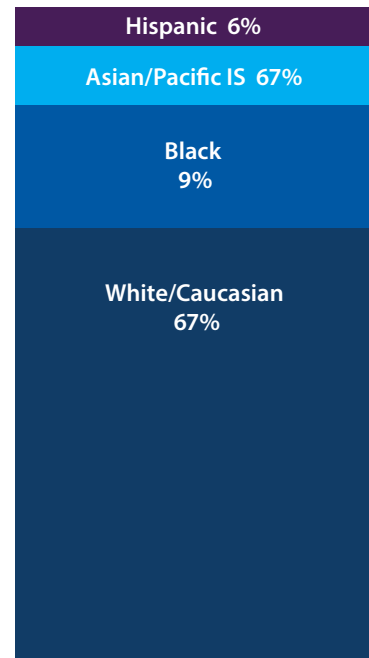
Broadband and Digital Inclusion

Senior Community Services aims to enhance digital inclusion among Hennepin County seniors through providing one-to-one support and training to help them with using county services online, accessing telehealth, and using other online tools. In addition, Senior Community Services engages in community outreach, education, and other activities related to broadband adoption and digital inclusion and shares information about the Affordable Connectivity Program and low-cost internet options to promote broadband adoption.

Food Insecurity

Friendship Community Services used funds to support the purchase and distribution of culturally appropriate foods to African-descendant and Hispanic families who have limited access to resources. FCS FoodHub serves people metro-wide, but with a special focus on families in south Minneapolis. Delivery is also available to the elderly and home-bound families.

Church of the Incarnation used funds for the church's food shelf which serves seniors, underserved populations, people experiencing homelessness and many cultural communities.

Minneapolis Community and Technical College used funds to support the Minneapolis College Student Food Pantry, which serves college students experiencing food insecurity. The campus community is very diverse in that 64% of enrolled students are students of color or Native American, 27% are first- generation college students, 45% are from low-income families, and more than two-thirds of enrolled students receive financial aid (72%).

Project inventory

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

Project name

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

Project description

Progress narrative

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

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

EDUCATION DOMAIN

Educational Services

Allocation amount: $775,000

Project description

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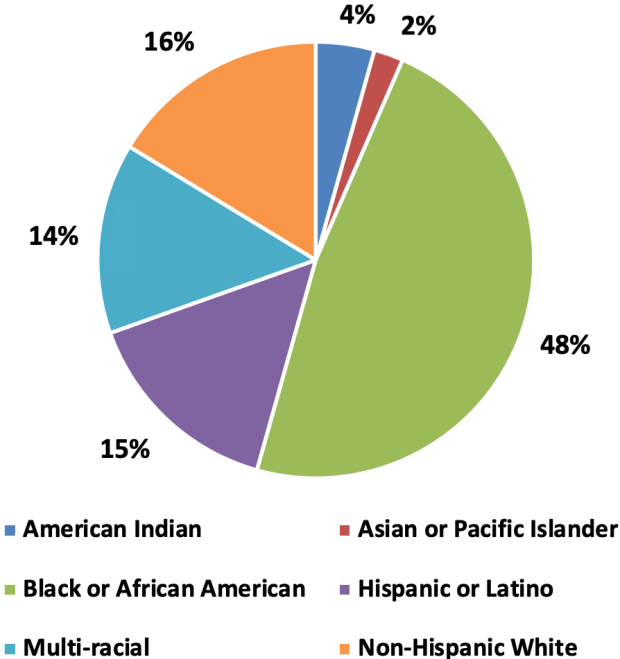
Progress narrative

Students from 77 different schools across the state who are connected to county services received academic tutoring from July 1, 2022, to September 30, 2022, from Huntington Learning Center. When starting academic tutoring, students are given an academic assessment to determine if they are behind academically, and if so, how far behind grade level they are testing. Tutoring schedules are determined based on the outcome of the initial assessment, and a tutoring plan is developed to address any academic needs identified in the assessment. Additional assessments are completed after a student receives 30-50 hours of tutoring.

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

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

Student Race/Ethnicity Q3 (N=92)

- American Indian — 4%
- Asian or Pacific Islander — 2%
- Black or African American — 48%
- Hispanic or Latino — 15%
- Multi-racial — 14%
- Non-Hispanic White — 16%

Key performance indicators

The key performance indicators for this project are:
– Number of students enrolled in academic tutoring
– Improvement on test scores in reading and math
– Improvement in grades and confidence in school, specifically math and reading (this was not assessed during summer tutoring)
– Increase in grade-level equivalent

Evaluation efforts

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

Academic tutoring outcomes

Since the program began, 343 students have been referred for academic tutoring. Between July 1, 2022, and September 30, 2022, 92 students received tutoring and 66 of these students completed a reassessment. The results below reflect the scores of these students.

– Students demonstrated increased scores on reassessments in math and reading, with an average increase of 14 points.

– Students started an average of 31.48% below grade level on the SORT deficit assessment, which is about 2-4 grade levels behind. After tutoring, the average deficit score is only 11.24% below grade level.

– A very strong positive statistically significant linear relationship exists between pre- and post-test scores on the SORT.

Figure 1: Pre - Post Sort Test – Active Students (July – Sept 2022: n=49)
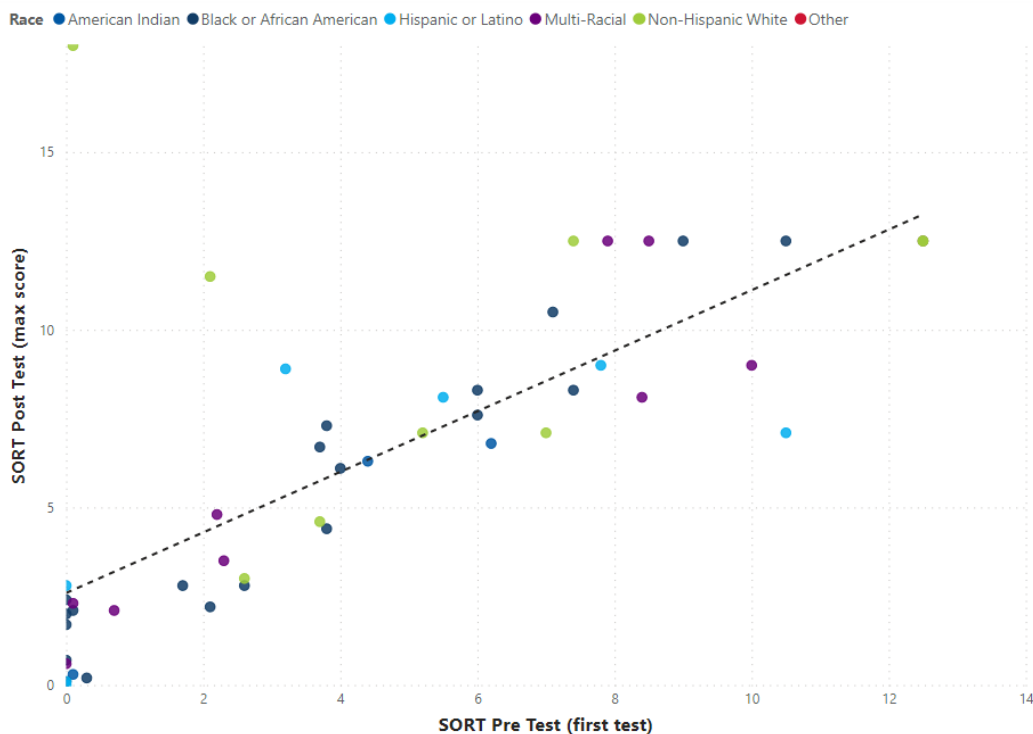
Figure 2: Pre - Post Sort Deficit Test – Active Students (July – Sept 2022: n=46)
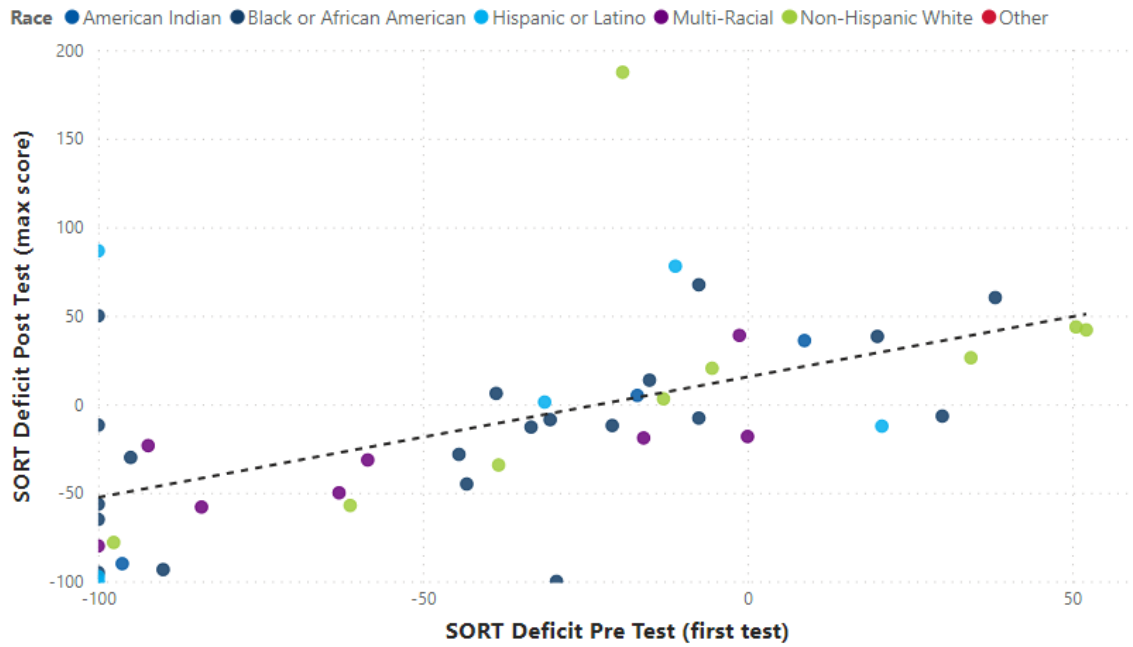
Next steps

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

EMPLOYMENT DOMAIN

Employment Strategies

Allocation amount: $16,580,000

Project description

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

– Partnering with the Housing Stability area to provide employment and training services that will supplement case management and housing-related supports for anyone who is interested in work, is 18 years or older and single (no dependents), is currently or recently experiencing homelessness. Services under this project include, but are not limited to, employment coaching, skills development through training and education, and assistance with placement and retention.

– Creating a consortia of workforce development providers that can provide just-in-time employment and training services leading to living-wage jobs by ensuring participants have the skills employers are seeking.

– Creating the Workforce Leadership Council (WLC) which is the platform the county will use to convene business partners for cross-sector sharing of ideas, promising practices and resources, and for cultivating strong partnerships to address pandemic-related economic hardships.

Progress narrative

Employment and Training Services for People Exiting Homelessness initiative

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

Hennepin County has partnered with Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota (GWES) and American Indian Opportunities Industrialization Centers Takoda Stability (AIOIC Takoda Stability) to provide low-barrier, supportive employment and training services to people experiencing or recently exited from homelessness. Hennepin County Homeless to Housing (H2H) case managers assess individuals they serve for readiness and interest in employment and training services. If a person is deemed appropriate and interested the H2H case manager submits a referral to one of the two partner organizations chosen by the individual being served. GWES and AIOIC Takoda Stability each have one career navigator designated to serve individuals in the pilot program.

Program updates to date:

– To date, 39 referrals have been received (19 to each organization). The first-year pilot goal is to serve a total of 50 individuals.

– Individual participants have been provided support services (bus cards, funds for groceries, one new bike, one pair of steel-toed boots, interview clothing, assistance with utilities). Five participants have been referred to Hennepin County's technology assistance program for digital support needs (laptops and hotspots).

– Monthly case consultation meetings are held with GWES, AIOIC, and the Hennepin County Housing Stability area.

– Internal Hennepin County monthly management meetings provide updates and discuss program planning.

– On August 2, 2022, the county board approved contract extensions through December 31, 2023, with GWES and AIOIC Takoda Stability.

Workforce Development Roster Program and Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)

In October 2021, the Hennepin County Board authorized $10 million for career pathways programming and $3 million for the Workforce Leadership Council (WLC) as employment strategies to address the unequal impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency on certain Hennepin County communities, especially residents who are Black, Indigenous and people of color.

The initial strategy for the $10 million career pathways was to create a consortium of nonprofit organizations that could provide just-in-time employment and training services leading to living-wage jobs by ensuring participants have the skills employers are seeking. To accomplish this, project staff planned, prepared and facilitated the creation of what became the Workforce Development Roster Program.

The WLC is the platform the county will use to convene owners of small- and mid-sized businesses and stakeholder organizations to better understand employment and business operations needs and challenges, and to explore opportunities for improvement and innovation. The WLC will provide space for critical conversations, learning, new partnerships and collaboration.

Progress updates:

– Hired and onboarded workforce innovation manager, principal planning analyst and program coordinator

– Officially launched the WFD Roster Program

– Finalized roster program RFP process

– Successfully posted library navigator onto supplier portal and solidifying other internal requests for services (Talent Garden, Youth Diversion/Be@School)

– Developed mini-RFP focusing on developing innovative and rapid job training programs in seven in-demand sectors (manufacturing, IT, finance/banking, health care, transportation, green energy, hospitality)

– "Soft-launched" the WLC, convening approximately 30 small/medium-sized businesses, educational institutions and other business partners

Key performance indicators

Employment and Training Services for People Exiting Homelessness initiative

– Key performance indicators are:
- Obtain employment
- Obtain stable housing
- Short-term job retention
- Long-term job retention

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

Quarter results (July 1 – September 31, 2022):
- 12 new referrals received (7 AIOIC, 5 GWES)
- 29 participants currently open
- 2 participants employed part-time; 2 participants employed full-time
- 10 participants seeking employment
- 3 participants enrolled in training courses and 9 participants exploring training opportunities
- 2 participants enrolled in GED classes; 2 participants enrolled in college courses
- 5 participants obtained stable housing
- 3 participants obtained vouchers and have secured housing in October (4th quarter)
- 4 participants obtained vouchers and are working to secure housing

Workforce Development Roster Program and Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)

Key indicators at this time (subject to change):

– Number of leaders of small/medium-size businesses engaged in WLC
– Number of businesses connected with roster program providers, by in-demand job sectors identified by Hennepin County
– Number of people hired
– Employment retention data
– Mitigation of negative economic impact of COVID-19
– Increased employer engagement strategies
– Number of WLC members
– Number of pilot programs launched
– Number of strategies or tools identified and/or implemented
– Quarterly plans with contracted vendors

Evaluation efforts will focus on:

– Workforce development services that directly address negative economic impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency and include a strong partnership with businesses
– Alignment with the country's disparity reduction efforts
– Use of pandemic recovery project funding for culturally specific and/or culturally responsive services
– Expediting the process of soliciting and engaging well-qualified workforce development providers

Next steps

Employment and Training Services for People Exiting Homelessness initiative:

– Continue program coordination and management efforts (ongoing partner meetings, internal management meetings, support to providers and case managers)

– Plan for program sustainability (identify/obtain data, funding sources, etc.)

– Obtain program feedback from participants

– Continue to monitor quantitative and qualitative data and outcomes

– Determine 2023 program budget and complete a ministerial adjustment

– Roll out training and education stipend ($20/hr up to 20 hrs/wk)

– Expand referral source to Housing Stability's contracted street outreach workers

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

– Post and approve first round of sector-based RFP

– Finalize roster program evaluation plan and review process

– WLC meetings scheduled and planned for 4th quarter of 2022 and 1st quarter of 2023

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

In service of increasing upstream and person-centered supports to residents impacted by the pandemic, the 11 initiatives funded through the behavioral health project are underway. All initiatives have contracts executed with community providers and staff hired to increase access to supports. This funding has allowed Hennepin to increase funding to more than 20 different culturally specific providers. Culturally specific providers are proven to help residents achieve better outcomes toward their mental well-being. For example, the Family-Based Recovery pilot will bring 24-hour in-home supports to families involved with Child Protection. This wraparound support, provided by a culturally specific agency, will improve behavioral health outcomes, and reduce out-of-home placement annually for up to 48 families involved in Child Protection.

Key performance indicators

All 11 initiatives have separate KPIs based on their individual approaches to supporting the mental health needs of Hennepin residents. To date in 2022, initiatives have focused heavily on hiring staff, executing contracts, and developing data analytics capacity. The primary KPIs to date are persons served. Overall, more than 4,500 residents were served in Q3 of 2022. This is likely an undercount due to the lack of reports from all contracted agencies at this point. And, that number is beyond what was anticipated in the original proposal where initiatives anticipated serving more than 11,000 annually. At this rate, this investment will reach more than 18,000 residents annually. As appropriate, initiatives will continue to build out analytics capabilities and incorporate outcomes in 2023.

Next steps

– Ongoing outreach to contracted agencies for training, iteration on initial approaches, and relationship-building with new providers.

– Launch the mental health awareness campaign to run through Q1 of 2023. Analytics capacity-building including data management and reporting development.

– Expanding hours to improve access for services such as 1800 Chicago, embedded social workers, 911 expansion, and Family Response and Stabilization.

– Additional outreach and awareness to ensure all residents know how to access expanded services and supports.

– Continued hiring in response to staff turnover. The system-wide turnover and challenges with hiring for some positions impact many of these initiatives.

HEALTH DOMAIN

Food Insecurity

Allocation amount: $5,825,000

Project description

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

Organizations must meet the following criteria:

– Provide for the food insecurity needs of Hennepin County residents through the distribution of perishable and non-perishable food items, including culturally specific food to mitigate the disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 public health crisis for people of color and low-income communities, since the organizations' services prioritize racial equity, inclusion, and culturally specific outreach.

– Be registered as "active/good standing" with the Minnesota Secretary of State.

– Have the capacity to serve Black and Indigenous people and people of color in a manner that considers culturally specific foods.

– Deliver healthy food items whenever possible.

– Be a trusted faith-based organization, community organization, educational institution or nonprofit.

– Be part of a longer-term strategy to address food insecurity issues in Hennepin County.

Progress narrative

Currently there are 72 organizations receiving funding in amounts ranging between $4,000 and $50,000 depending on the type of organization and the type of request made. Payment requests are processed on a regular basis and payments are made in two allocations. Some organizations have expended all of their funds, others have not requested their first payment. Each organization must submit receipts for the initial payment before additional payments can be made. County staff review each receipt/invoice to ensure it meets the conditions of the agreement, contains healthy food choice purchases and matches the payment amount issued. Organizations are informed electronically of the work taking place to distribute funds and reconcile receipts, and what is needed to fulfill the current funding agreements.

A small group of Human Services and Public Health staff are meeting to discuss new deliverables for continued funding and develop a strategy for a request for proposals that will be issued in the future. The funding structure and amount for 2024 will be determined as part of this process.

Key performance indicators

Performance indicators are:

– Number of individuals served

– Number of distribution events held

– Pounds of food distributed

Currently evaluations/project reporting is due by January 15, 2023. There are no results available for this quarter that speak to the performance indicators.

Next steps

Over the next three months, organizations will continue to spend their allocations and wrap up funding for 2022. A process is being implemented to develop a new request for proposals for 2023 which will afford organizations throughout the county the opportunity to apply/reapply for funding. The emphasis will remain on culturally appropriate healthy food. RFP responses will be evaluated as to the effectiveness of each organization in distributing food and meeting the food insecurity needs of the community. Significantly less money will be available for distribution in 2023 ($1.65M versus $2.67M) which will limit the number of organizations receiving food insecurity funding.

HEALTH DOMAIN

Maternal Health

Allocation amount: $10,000,000

Project description

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

The project activities include:

– Expanding existing programs focused on improving maternal health outcomes for Black and Indigenous persons and people of color affected by disparities.

– Developing and implementing a birth justice plan to improve maternal and infant health outcomes.

– Investing in community-initiated solutions and culturally congruent and innovative practices to reduce disparities.

– Increasing departmental capacity for data collection, reporting and analysis to support measurement strategies.

Progress narrative

Strategies in the first phase of the initiative are all successfully underway. Fully executed contracts are in place with NorthPoint Health & Wellness Center, Hennepin Healthcare System, and Roots Community Birth Center, which expanded existing maternal health programs and services. To increase capacity for data collection, reporting and analysis, a contract was finalized for a project evaluator. The Center for Antiracism Research for Health Equity at the University of Minnesota will conduct an ongoing evaluation of the initiative. The evaluation will draw on equity-oriented, rigorous evaluation techniques to assess progress and inform improvement on health care services, access, resources, and overall maternal morbidity and mortality outcomes.

Another strategy in the first phase of funding involved offering public health clinical services, including family planning and reproductive health. Health Care for the Homeless successfully recruited a maternal child health RN who began on August 15 to support the clinic at People Serving People. The focus of this position is to reduce maternal and child health disparities by providing direct care to patients, offering group and individual educational sessions, and relationship building and maintenance with community partners.

The initiative has now entered the second phase of work, which centers on forming a birth justice collaborative. In early August, Hennepin County finalized a contract with Collective Action Lab to serve as the community engagement consultant to convene and facilitate a birth justice collaborative and develop a Birth Justice Strategic Plan. Maternal and Child Health staff met with Collective Action Lab and core partner organizations involved in leading the community engagement work: Liberty Northside Healing Space, Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center, Native American Community Clinic, and the University of Minnesota Robert J. Jones Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center. Initial steps for the birth justice collaborative will include a literature review of models and promising practices in maternal health and birth justice in Black and Indigenous communities. The collaborative is also in the process of planning convenings scheduled for November that will bring together and engage community to inform and co-create the strategies of the birth justice plan.

Key performance indicators

The Center for Antiracism Research for Health Equity is leading the development of a process-and-outcomes evaluation for the initiative. The evaluator will further define specific indicators for assessing progress and improvement in health care services, access, resources and overall maternal morbidity and mortality outcomes. While each of the contracted service partners will have independent program activities and services, the internal Maternal and Child Health team is collaborating with each partner and the contracted evaluation consultant to identify and select a limited number of shared measures for evaluating impact and progress.

Next steps

Over the next three months, Collective Action Lab and the Birth Justice Strategy Collaborative will host individual conversations, small group discussions, and large community convenings to gather input that will inform the strategies of the Birth Justice Strategic Plan. This intentional, authentic community engagement process is foundational to centering and uplifting the wisdom and expertise already in community, reducing institutional power, and transferring power to community through design/re-design, decision-making, resources, and ultimately implementation. To support successful and efficient implementation of the Birth Justice Strategic Plan recommendations, leaders from the internal Hennepin County core team are working to develop an equitable application and award strategy that will align to the community-centered approach of the birth justice project, as well as the capacity of small and minority-led and focused organizations in the maternal health field.

To learn about the impacts of the initiative, the Center for Antiracism Research for Health Equity will work on developing a process-and-outcomes evaluation for the initiative. Draft evaluation plans for the project evaluator include establishing baseline de-identified clinical and nonclinical data on death and near misses to the extent data is available and accessible; collecting information on broader social determinants of mortality and morbidity; and facilitating the creation of identifying and selecting measures of structural racism in maternal health for ongoing data collection, reporting, and analysis. Additionally, the evaluator will provide analysis and findings on implementation fidelity for participating service providers and development of the birth justice plan, barriers to and facilitators of success, and the extent to which the process was informed by community input.

On top of the consulted evaluation for the project, the internal capacity to track and monitor important maternal health outcomes will advance. Collaboratively, the Maternal and Child Health program manager and the data and assessment team are preparing to do an exploration of maternal mortality in Hennepin County. A planning meeting was held in September and a review of birth and death data will begin in October.

HEALTH DOMAIN

Public Health

Allocation amount: $10,000,000

Project description

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

– Investing in community-initiated solutions and culturally congruent and innovative practices to reduce disparities.

– Increasing departmental capacity for data collection, reporting and analysis to support measurement strategies.

Progress narrative

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

Prevent the spread of communicable diseases

Infectious disease response: A Community Based Infectious Disease Outreach team was formed to continue providing COVID-19 related testing and vaccination in community. The team also remains prepared to respond to new, emerging infectious disease outbreaks such as when faced with the need to rapidly respond to monkeypox (MPX). By augmenting existing staff efforts and through this team, Hennepin County Public Health diagnosed over 40% of Minnesota cases and administered over 75% of all MPX vaccines in the state.

Infection control in long-term care facilities (LTCF): The LTCF Infection Prevention program continued to build capacity to support facilities by participating in a National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) technical assistance project and implementing tele-infection control assessment and response tools with four facilities during this reporting period. The Long-Term Care Infection Prevention Coalition has continued to meet quarterly and developed two subcommittees: 1) the Education subcommittee is working to prepare and deliver an infection-prevention-related tabletop exercise, and 2) the Toolkit subcommittee has a compendium of infection prevention tools and an information toolkit that will be piloted with facilities.

Prepare and respond to emergencies

A COVID-19 after action review (AAR) is underway to identify improvements to workforce capacity to respond to public health emergencies. Findings of the AAR will be incorporated into a COVID-19 improvement plan. Hiring processes were put in motion for two positions dedicated to workforce capacity development and implementation.

Promote healthy communities and healthy behaviors

Chronic disease: Public Health has filled one of two positions allocated to this work with the second position in process. An internal environmental scan was completed with leaders in Public Health, Community Engagement, and key community partners regarding plans to address health concerns related to COVID-19 and associated traumas. Some initial themes emerged, including reconnecting community to primary care and preventive services, and a focus on mental wellbeing. Work is also underway on an RFP process to put community investment dollars to use.

Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP): All 33 approved mini-grants received funds during the reporting period. Recipients are completing projects and reports. A quality improvement process to review the mini-grant process launched in August. The third annual CHIP trauma-informed survey was sent to all 20+ CHIP partner organizations to determine collective trends toward becoming trauma informed. The Public Health assessment team also facilitated a qualitative evaluation discussion for the CHIP executive committee on progress toward CHIP's evaluation goals. In addition, an RFP development process is underway to award funds to seven to 10 organizations to help achieve CHIP's priorities.

Age Friendly: The new Public Health Age-Friendly coordinator continued onboarding with grounding in the Age-Friendly Hennepin County action plan and building relationships across the county and community. A six-month action plan was developed ranging from a countywide policy scan with a focus on the gaps in Age-Friendly policies, supporting an emerging ERG for staff ages 50 plus, and partnering across the county on food insecurity. Additionally, a new AmeriCorps member joined Public Health to support six-month priority items.

Coordinate Early Childhood Development Strategies: The Early Childhood coordinator began the strategic planning process by reviewing other county-level early childhood strategic plans across the United States. The coordinator also began building relationships across internal Hennepin County programs that work in early childhood including libraries, Child Access and WIC. The coordinator is a key participant in the federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) workgroup and provided a key informant interview, and identified participants for end-user interviews for the development of the PDG hub.

Assure 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 health status and factors that affect health for adults in Hennepin County, for use in planning, programming, and policy development. The project also provides baseline data to help measure changes in health indicators and status over time. Project results are used to support health equity data analysis and surveillance of health disparities. Data collection for SHAPE 2022 began in May 2022; as of September 19, 2022, seven of 10 reporting areas have achieved the goal of 700 completed surveys. The other three reporting areas have additional data collection underway and are approaching 700 completed surveys.

Increase planning and project management capacity: The hiring process began for a new Strategic Initiatives staff person to increase planning and project management capacity, and to advance health and racial equity practices across Public Health.

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.

– Progress is being captured through internal PowerBI reports and will be shared at a later date.

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

– Currently staff are being hired in the Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response program area. When the positions are filled, work will begin on training all Public Health staff.

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 in the community.

– Age-Friendly Hennepin County is working with the Health Disparity domain leaders and Public Health Assessment Team to develop a dashboard to track progress.

– The Chronic Disease COVID-19 recovery work is just beginning. Health Promotion already tracks policies, systems, and environments (PSE) changes for its current work and will incorporate this project into its tracking system.

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

– The strategic planning process is underway.

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

– When identified, key activities will begin.

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

– As of September 19, 2022, seven of 10 reporting areas have achieved the goal of 700 completed surveys. The other three reporting areas have additional data collection underway and are approaching 700 completes.

Next steps

Prepare and respond to emergencies

– Two new positions dedicated to Emergency Preparedness and Response workforce capacity development will be hired. Following a review of the COVID-19 After Action Report, an improvement plan will be developed and implemented.

Prevent the spread of communicable diseases

– Communicable disease efforts will include transitioning some efforts to other infectious disease outbreaks such as HIV, syphilis, and monkeypox.

– LTCF infection control work will expand to four visits by year-end 2022.

Promote healthy communities and healthy behaviors

– Release an initial RFP to the community, focusing on mental wellbeing and community-clinic linkages. Additionally, the support staff person will be hired and work specifically on the mental wellbeing activities in partnership with other Public Health staff. Other next steps include exploring the mobile health units currently operating in the county, as well as Community Health Worker models and exploring ways for systems integration.

– The CHIP mini-grant quality improvement project will be completed, and improvements integrated for the next funding cycle; the joint RFP will be released for community organizations to apply; the CHIP executive committee will expand membership to include several new community organizations representing Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; and an interactive map showing funded projects will be revised to include the latest round of 33 summer grantees.

– The Age-Friendly implementation team will work through the six-month priorities including starting an ERG for employees over age 50, completing a policy scan, solidifying connections, working with the Hennepin County Library system, considering some expanded snow and ice removal plans, and beginning to build an evaluation plan.

– Early childhood strategic planning processes will continue and include key county leaders and community partners. A quality improvement project will be initiated to improve the referral relationship from WIC to Family Home Visiting.

Assure an adequate local public health infrastructure

– Further roll-out of the SHAPE survey and data collection.

– Hire the Strategic Initiatives staff person and finalize an annual plan to continue advancing health and racial equity.

– Update the Public Health quality improvement work plan including a quality improvement project inventory.

HEALTH DOMAIN

Vaccine Incentives

Allocation amount: $2,000,000

Project description

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

The vaccine incentive program includes:

– Partnering with trusted community groups to host vaccine events and support the provision of free meals, groceries, and/or entertainment.

– Distributing "Thank You" packs to residents who receive vaccinations, with contents tailored to the targeted population and event location. Community-based businesses may be prioritized for the contents of the "Thank You" packs, (e.g., gift cards to local businesses and youth-specific contents such as sports-related items and technology-focused gifts).

– Hosting a lottery program; or

– Other incentives for individuals who get vaccinated, tailored to the needs of the communities served.

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

Progress narrative

Public Health has implemented numerous strategies to encourage the use of incentives and stipends to improve vaccination rates. Partnerships with community organizations to promote and support vaccination opportunities and provide the organizations with stipends to offset their costs have been a hallmark of the effort. Community groups utilize funds in ways that meet their communities' needs, such as offering gift cards, books, and transportation for those experiencing barriers. Much of the focus during this time period was on vaccinating children under age five with newly approved Pfizer and Moderna vaccine options. Some community groups requested new stipends in order to ensure access to vaccines for the youngest community members. Stipend funds help make spaces more child-friendly, with rental of space with private rooms and other child comfort items.

Key performance indicators

To date, community partners have provided more than 210 vaccination events, including 31 during July – September 2022, and received stipends ranging from $3,000 to $5,000 to support their efforts such as hosting vaccination clinics at their locations where community members are familiar and comfortable, providing cultural meals to volunteers, and hosting vaccinations at work sites. The requests for stipends to support COVID-19 vaccination community events continue, but in reduced numbers. It is anticipated that the COVID-19 vaccine stipend program will end November 1, 2022.

Next steps

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

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

Accordingly, Public Health plans to utilize a portion of the COVID-19 vaccine incentive funds to address post-COVID vaccine efforts to get families on track with lagging immunizations.

Strategies include:

– Support for general childhood immunization campaign activities: A campaign is in process and incentives could be used by the community engagement team to boost the campaign.

– Reminder/recall immunization efforts: Reminder/recall efforts target parents whose children have fallen behind with immunizations and alert them to their child's vaccine status and provide information about where to obtain low-cost immunizations.

– Grants to Federally Qualified Health Care Centers (FQHCs) health care homes in high Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) codes: Provide FQHCs with funds to use for client incentives.

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

HOUSING DOMAIN

Eviction Reduction

Allocation amount: $2,200,000

Project description

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

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

Progress narrative

– Outreach at eviction filing to offer legal and economic support — rent assistance triage occurs at first appearance and pre-trial hearings.

– Legal staff represent tenants at no cost to help avoid eviction both at the eviction hearing and prior to court.

– Staff address barriers for housing stability such as health, economics and legal record of eviction.

– Direct financial support is provided for clients with outstanding rental balances.

Key performance indicators

As of September 30, 2022, 100% of clients experiencing poverty have received representation on eviction matters in Hennepin County. Of the clients represented in court, the majority have had a favorable outcome which often includes a settlement that expunges the filing from the client's record to remove barriers for future rentals. Clients with representation have consistently improved outcomes and are more likely to appear in court if free legal representation is made available.

Between July 1 and September 30, 2022, the Eviction Prevention project has served 504 clients. Of the 504 clients, 81% are Black, Indigenous and people of color. Housing Stability and Adult Representation Services partnered to broadly communicate with residents by creating help lines and sending resources to tenants in all filed eviction matters. Both departments staff all the eviction court calendars to be readily available to connect tenants to legal, economic, and social services.

In September 2022 the Housing Stability department began using pandemic recovery funds ("the Gap Fund") to directly assist Housing Court tenants with rental assistance. Funds are being used selectively to fill gaps in existing rental assistance programs and to supplement local funds to cover the total amount of rent needed to keep tenants housed. The Gap Fund is only used for tenants who have received an eviction filing. If a tenant has been approved for local funding but the balance exceeds the local fundings options, the Gap Fund covers the difference.

Local emergency rental assistance funds are used first, and if it is determined that an application is denied for certain reasons, the Gap Fund is used. Court navigators:

– Determine the need.

– Ask the tenant what they can cover.

– Cover any remaining with Gap Fund — up to $5,000.

Next steps

Housing Stability and Adult Representation Services continue to find more ways to connect with clients in the community in the hope of avoiding evictions. This includes outreach, community engagement and availability of legal, social, and economic services before court. As the court keeps adding calendars to clear the eviction filing backlog, Adult Representation Services and Housing Stability strive to find more resources to staff calendars and provide tenants with financial support. Project funds are focused on direct staffing and financial support for eviction-related services. This funding is likely to be exhausted by the end of year as we aggressively work to keep tenants housed.

HOUSING DOMAIN

Housing Recovery

Allocation amount: $46,000,000

Project description

The economic impacts of COVID-19 were felt most heavily by people with low incomes, and by Black and Indigenous people and people of color. Of individuals requesting pandemic-related emergency rental assistance in Hennepin County from 2020-2022, nearly two-thirds had incomes below 30% of the area median income (AMI), and 80% were Black and Indigenous people and people of color affected by disparities.

As Hennepin County moved from emergency response to long-term recovery, the county board approved $46 million in funding to support equitable housing recovery strategies. These strategies aim to create or preserve approximately 2,000 units of affordable housing and support more than 100 households in buying homes through the following activities:

1. Investments to immediately increase affordable multifamily housing production, such as:
    - Gap and acceleration funding for affordable housing projects serving populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.
    - Investments to address a backlog of deferred rehab needed in naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) properties and support for additional nonprofit preservation acquisition of at-risk NOAH properties, which are a primary source of housing for populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.

2. Acquisition of properties supporting affordable housing along the housing continuum, especially for single adults who were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency and are now struggling with homelessness and housing instability.

3. Homeownership programs targeting populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Progress narrative

As noted in the pandemic response annual report, by June 2022, the Housing and Economic Development Department (HED) had awarded or allocated $37.8 million of the $46 million. These awards and allocations would create or preserve 2,500 units of affordable housing across 30 projects. From July through September 2022, staff made progress toward implementing awards and awarding additional funds.

In a typical housing development, the county does not spend funds until 1-2 years after a funding award, and units become available another year after that. Between the award and unit availability, the developer is securing additional financing, working with all funders to negotiate complex project specifications and agree upon a common set of legal documents, executing a financial closing, and completing construction.

For pandemic recovery funds, staff have implemented policies to drastically shorten this process. Expediting the process meets funding requirements, and more importantly meets county goals to open doors faster. In the last quarter, staff executed funding agreements for 9 of the 30 projects to create or preserve 735 units of affordable rental housing. These agreements will total nearly $4 million in pandemic recovery funding.

– **Pandemic-related construction cost increase assistance**
  - 3301 Nicollet (Alliance Housing): 64 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis
  - The Crest (Aeon): 171 units of affordable housing in Brooklyn Center
  - Rise on 7 (CommonBond Communities): 12 units of affordable housing in St. Louis Park
  - Sound on 76th (Aeon): 70 units of affordable housing in Edina
  - BloomLake Flats (Project for Pride in Living): 42 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis

– **Preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH)**
  - Carrington Drive (Aeon): 128 units of affordable housing in Brooklyn Center
  - 3416 Park Ave, 2924 35th Ave (Alliance Housing): 12 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis
  - Next Step Housing (Haven Housing): 12 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis

– **Affordable Housing Development Accelerator**
  - Blake Road — Building A (Alatus): 116 units of affordable housing in Hopkins

In addition, the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) completed acquisition of the Aqua City Motel, which is the fifth property acquired for conversion into Single Room Occupancy housing (SRO). Staff continued extensive negotiations with organizations to secure operating agreements for the ultimate SRO housing.

To make progress toward implementing awards and awarding additional funds, staff issued an RFP on September 1 to solicit proposals for Affordable Housing Development Accelerator and NOAH Preservation funds. Staff also worked with Hennepin County Resident and Real Estate Services toward a project to convert tax-forfeit properties to affordable housing opportunities.

Key performance indicators

Production goals

Housing Recovery production goals were to create or preserve 2,000 units of rental housing and 100 homeownership opportunities while meeting the county's ongoing goals to maximize affordability. HED surpassed the rental goal by June 2022, with 2,450 units, and is close to the homeownership goal with 73 units. Since no additional funds were awarded in the last quarter, performance remains the same as the last report.

Affordability goals

Current progress is also surpassing the county and HRA's affordability goals. Since no additional funds were awarded in the last quarter, performance remains the same as the last report.

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

– Outcome: 30% 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: 79% of new units financed through Housing Recovery are affordable at or below 30% AMI.

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

– Outcome: 42% of homeownership opportunities financed through Housing Recovery are affordable at or below 60% AMI.

Affordability rate across project types
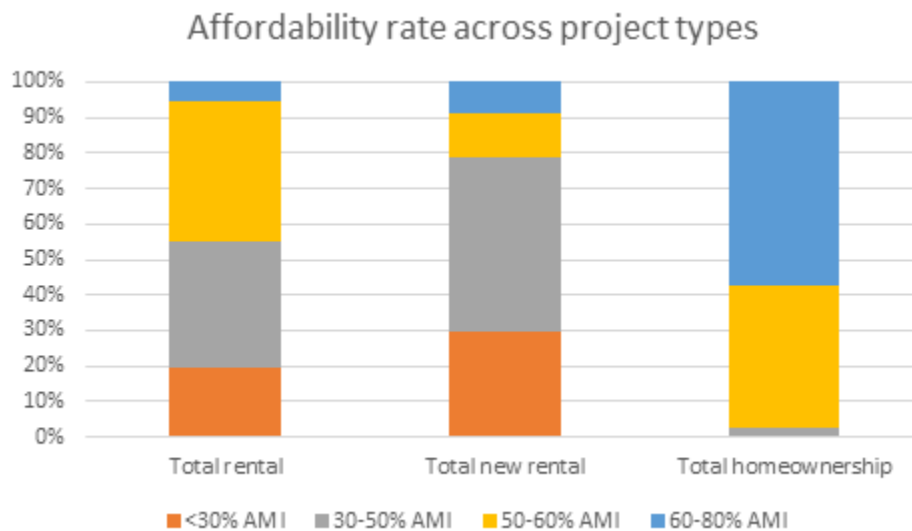
Next steps

Over the next three months, HED aims to award or allocate all remaining Housing Recovery funds, and to continue progress in financial closings and expenditures, in order to hit our ultimate goal of opening doors to new and preserved affordable housing.

Planned activities for October–December 2022

– Review the 27 proposals received for additional Affordable Housing Development Accelerator and NOAH Preservation funds.

– Present funding award recommendations to the HRA board.

– Continue rehabilitation of SRO properties.

– Negotiate agreements for SRO operations.

– Negotiate and execute funding agreements, estimated to total six projects in the next quarter, committing an additional $11.3 million under executed agreements, and creating or preserving 1,167 more affordable housing units.

HOUSING DOMAIN

Services for People Experiencing Homelessness

Allocation amount: $36,070,000

Project description

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

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

Progress narrative

Homeless to Housing (H2H)

Homeless to Housing has been in existence for almost a year now. In the past three months the team committed to adjusting the intake and referral process in order to better meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness and the system. The team finished working through the former waitlist. H2H has also been strengthening their partnership with Emergency General Assistance through team meetings and continued hiring efforts. Two new case managers were onboarded, and two case aids were promoted to case managers.

A case manager on the Long-Term Homeless team just housed a client who has been homeless for several years. He had a stroke in February and the right side of his body is paralyzed. He was terrified of shelters and staying outside. She built rapport with him, got him hooked up with Cooper Law and Social Security benefits, received a Long-Term Support Services assessment and a Coordinated Entry referral to Endeavors (new Catholic Charities facility) and toured the building with him. The case manager helped to get all paperwork in and now he's housed! Once housed, he couldn't get to the TV room on the first floor of his new building due to physical disability and was feeling lonely in his new apartment, so his case manager purchased a TV for his room, and he has now stabilized.

Another case manager got extensions on an Emergency Housing voucher that was set to expire and was able to quickly house two partners who wanted to live together.

25 flip phones were distributed during this time period to people who would otherwise have no connection to services or housing.

Two Homeless Access social workers continue to partner with the Metro Transit Homeless Action Team, joining them once a week in rounds.

The team is creating a new position called 'intake specialist' to streamline the referral and intake process and increase efficiency for staff and people being served.

24/7 shelter

Eight agencies applied for 24-hour shelter funds. Four were funded and notified they were selected for a contract and completed the contracting process, with contracts starting September 1, 2022. As a result, 24-hour shelter went uninterrupted when ESG-CV funds ended on August 30, 2022.

Hennepin County planners wrote the contracts for 24/7 to be housing focused and encouraged quick connection to resources and housing.

New quarterly performance measures were created to ensure that the shelters are using the extended hours to make quicker connections to case management and housing to reflect the following:

– % who used shelter program for less than 183 days (6 months)

– % who received housing-focused case management during shelter stay

– % who received housing-focused case management and exited shelter to a permanent destination, institution, or non-homeless setting

Low-barrier shelters

Avivo Village — Began working on contract for supplemental funding through the State of Minnesota (will fund January 1 – June 30, 2023). Avivo Village is a robust yet expensive model, so Hennepin County is braiding its investment into shelter operations with city and state funding, hoping to be able to fully fund the project moving forward.

Avivo Village housed their 100th person since opening.

AICDC Homeward Bound — The shelter hired two additional case managers for a total of three on site. Began working on contract for funding through 2024.

Eliminated self-pay

Shelter beds continue to be fully utilized nightly. Staff began working on contract amendments to continue funding through the end of 2024. New quarterly performance measures will match those of the 24-hour shelter programs.

Capital for board and lodge

The contracts for the board and lodge capital funding are in process. The board and lodge providers are in the process of seeking bids from contractors to complete their capital funding projects.

Housing Stability staff are meeting with each of the providers before October 1, 2022, to confirm their plans and intended construction schedules for the projects, and to finalize any outstanding items needed to complete signature of the contract.

Streets to Housing (S2H)

Operations began officially on August 15 with a supervisor and three of four navigators onboarded. S2H has developed a monthly calendar of engagement events, and in six weeks has actively engaged with over 105 households experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Much of this initial work is focusing on getting everyone into and/or updated in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and all engagements are housing focused. S2H is identifying people who have active housing referrals and are making connections between client and housing provider, and some of the assessments that S2H did in August already have resulted in housing referrals.

S2H staff are uniformed to provide transparency and clarity in the field, and are using the Hennepin County Community Engagement van to promote Hennepin County as a leader in the service sector for assisting unsheltered households to identify and secure housing.

The team is currently operating at four large encampments on a scheduled, consistent basis from week to week; the rest of the week is for identifying individuals and following up with referrals that have come through via the referral form, email, or H2H request.

One household who was camping at a local encampment had a Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA) voucher but didn't want to live where MPHA had chosen for him. S2H staff brought him down to meet with a MPHA staff member, helped the person complete all the necessary paperwork for an apartment transfer request, and worked with the household's daughter for any additional needs related to income verification. The person is now stably housed.

Key performance indicators

Homeless to Housing (H2H)

The Homeless to Housing leadership team meets bi-weekly to review data and adjust any policies or practices that aren't working well for the team and clients.

The team finalized a survey that will be offered to every client served through H2H to get consistent feedback from the people H2H is serving, and has committed to reviewing the feedback bi-monthly and making needed changes and adjustments based on people's feedback and needs.

H2H rolled out the Power BI report enabling us to quickly view program data and help inform decisions on the program. H2H is continuing to increase housing outcomes weekly and continuing to onboard new case managers, which will help get the program up to full capacity, which will increase outcomes and overall impact.

– 61 housing outcomes this quarter (over 282 overall)

– Equitable housing outcomes — disaggregated by race

– 428 active cases during this quarter

Low-barrier shelters

Low-barrier shelters provided safe and culturally specific services to many people who would otherwise not have accessed Emergency Shelter.

Avivo Village

– 115 people used shelter

– 26 people left shelter:

- 73% of people who left had a positive exit: 13 exited to a permanent destination, 5 to an institutional setting, and 1 to a non-homeless setting.
- 1 person died, 5 people returned to homelessness, and 1 person was missing data.

AICDC Homeward Bound

– 169 people used shelter

– 117 people left shelter:

- 25% of people who left had a positive exit: 22 exited to a permanent destination, 2 to an institutional setting, and 5 to a non-homeless setting.
- 81 people returned to homelessness and 7 people were missing data.
    - 39 people used shelter for 6 days or less and 38 people used shelter for 7–30 days.

Streets to Housing

Streets to Housing is fully implemented and operational. The team is already seeing the significant impact of this housing-focused intervention. Unsheltered households have been extremely welcoming of this resource and swarm the service tables. At this phase, S2H is keeping a fast pace with our attempt to engage with everyone the team possibly can before the cold weather arrives, actualizing housing referrals, coordinating with Health Care for the Homeless and other street outreach teams, and setting a great example of how street outreach can be an extremely effective intervention to keeping homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring if done correctly and using best practice.

As noted, this phase is really about data collection and data accuracy in the system as this was a very serious and consequential gap. The team will be reviewing positive housing outcome data and doing some deeper analysis at the end of October 2022.

24/7 shelter finalized the contracts and performance measures and ensured that this important part of the system continued without a gap.

Next steps

Homeless to Housing (H2H) will roll out the new interest list in the Homeless Management Information System, will utilize the by-name list in HMIS to make prioritized case assignments, and will work closely with Streets to Housing to add people to HMIS when needed. The team is utilizing additional office support assistance to create efficiencies in hiring, onboarding and supporting the case managers and case aides in having up-to-date and reliable resources and references.

24/7 shelter will continue to support the contracted providers in providing high-quality care and work to become more housing-focused. It will connect people in shelter with housing-focused case management quickly and achieve higher housing outcomes.

Low-barrier shelters will finalize contracts and funding braiding. Staff will monitor performance measures to ensure progress is moving in the right direction.

Capital for board and lodge: It is anticipated at this time that the deck and outdoor recreational space at Cullen Homes will be the first project to start for board and lodge capital projects, followed by HVAC work.

Streets to Housing: One of the program goals is to increase community collaboration by continuing to promote our scheduled engagement events. S2H will host a bi-monthly case consultation utilizing the by-name list to identify which street outreach agencies are working with which households to reduce duplication and increase service coordination. This will identify households that are no longer active and need to be exited. It will identify any emerging trends to which the team needs to respond, and generally, to have a better sense, and provide direction for who is doing what, where, and with whom.

S2H will be posting for two new CES assessors (funded with federal HUD Continuum of Care) which will increase the S2H team to six direct service staff. This will increase the capacity of the team, provide a mobile CES option for Hennepin County residents in need of an assessment, and offer support for site-based agencies such as drop-in centers and food locations that do not have staff providing CES assessments.

INCOME DOMAIN

Economic Recovery

Allocation amount: $19,000,000

Project description

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

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

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

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

Progress narrative

Economic Recovery funding was allocated on October 5, 2021 by Hennepin County Board Resolution 21-0370. Economic recovery activities in 2021 focused on gathering data, engaging community members and stakeholders, and designing approaches to economic recovery strategies centered in racial equity and addressing both place- and race-based disparities. Over 65 participants representing Hennepin County's diverse cultural and geographic communities provided input through listening sessions and interviews.

In 2022, Hennepin County redoubled efforts to support small businesses through the multi-faceted Elevate Business strategy designed to build long-term capacity of pandemic-impacted local businesses to succeed and grow. Components of this strategy in the implementation phase during the reporting period between July and September 2022 include:

– In-depth technical assistance, "back office" support, and specialized expertise provided at no cost to small businesses in Hennepin County by an expanded network of 23 business advisors

– A new digital platform available at www.elevatebusinesshc.com with one-stop access to a wide array of business support resources provided by multiple agencies

– Programming dubbed "Certified Access Academy" to build capacity among women business owners of color to contract with government and corporate entities

Procurement for several strategic small business support initiatives was also underway during the current reporting period, including:

– Cohort-based programming for "pre" second-stage businesses

– Elevate Nonprofits, to support nonprofit organizations currently under contract or which seek to do business with Hennepin County

– Technical assistance for small and emerging local construction businesses and a new working capital loan program to serve small commercial construction contractors, with an emphasis on providing financing for emerging contractors of color

A new pilot program, the Community Investment Initiative (CII), designed to accelerate community investment, launched in March 2022. CII seeks redevelopment projects that support business incubators, long-term affordable commercial space, or nonprofits providing economic recovery services to disproportionately impacted communities.

In the third quarter of 2022, Hennepin County Board Resolution 22-0325 authorized $10 million in CII funding for 18 projects that create new affordable commercial space and business incubation spaces and support the expansion of 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. CII contracts are being developed and executed, along with annual monitoring and reporting documents.

Work progressed on two innovative initiatives to advance economic mobility. First, collaborative planning and research continued to advance a Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) pilot, including a Hennepin University Partnership (HUP) Collaborative Research Assistantship (HCRA) to develop GBI pilot design recommendations. Please see the GBI section of this progress report for more details. Second, the first phase of a study to explore the feasibility of launching a local impact investing hub got underway, assessing current needs and possible models for activating private capital among local investors to support local small business growth.

Key performance indicators

Key performance indicators for Economic Recovery strategies include:

– Businesses receiving technical assistance, including hours and types of technical assistance

– New business formations receiving technical assistance

– Financing provided to small businesses, including number and amount of loans and total financing leveraged

– Businesses provided affordable commercial space or commercial property ownership

  Impacts expected at completion of CII projects:
  • Over 500 business incubation/startup spaces
  • 30 longer-term affordable commercial spaces, including 18 ownership opportunities

– Jobs created or retained as a result of a business securing financing, a business securing affordable commercial space or commercial property ownership, or a nonprofit securing capital for expansion

  Impacts expected at completion of CII projects:
  960 jobs total:
   • 760 jobs in projects that provide business incubation/startup spaces
   • 200 jobs in projects that support the expansion of community-based nonprofit organizations

– Direct capital investment and total investment value generated in communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic

  Impacts generated by CII projects:
  • $7.9 million direct capital investment in low-income communities and communities of color, which reflects 79% of capital invested
  • $122 million in total investment value generated in low-income communities and communities of color

Performance indicators will be disaggregated by race to the extent possible to track the effectiveness of strategies in reducing racial disparities and place-based impacts in low-income communities and communities of color.

Next steps

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

• Cohort-based programming for "pre" second-stage businesses

• Elevate Nonprofits, to support nonprofit organizations currently under contract or that would like to contract with Hennepin County

• Construction technical assistance and working capital with wrap-around support for emerging contractors

• Cohort learning to tackle the digital divide among microbusinesses and spark growth-oriented businesses

INCOME DOMAIN

Guaranteed Basic Income

Allocation amount: $4,000,000

Project description

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

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

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

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

Progress narrative

– Minnesota Management and Budget's Impact Evaluation Unit has been selected as the project's quantitative evaluator.

– An RFP is being developed to guide the selection of the project's qualitative evaluator.

– Analysts met with the Children's Defense Fund to review findings from their Economic Stability Indicator.

– Analysts are exploring benefits loss mitigation strategy via the creation of a tool to look at the interaction of SNAP benefits and GBI payments. This will lead to the identification of a target population for the pilot.

– Customer experience journey mapping has begun, which will lead to the creation of the customer experience and to staffing needs.

– Research on disbursement methods has begun.

– Disbursement amount and timelines have been proposed and will be finalized as budget and other pieces continue to be explored.

– Hennepin Collaborative Research Assistant Channel Lowrey completed her research and delivered findings to project leadership.

– GBI was one of three topics highlighted at the Hennepin University Partnership's Leadership Retreat.

– The Hennepin University Partnership's Collaborative Grant will focus on GBI for the next grant year. GBI was the topic of a HUP mixer, which was well attended both by Hennepin project leadership and by a cross section of University faculty, staff, and graduate students.

Key performance indicators

Project funding sources have been clarified, leading to the submission of this report.

Next steps

– RFP for pilot qualitative evaluation will be released.

– Hennepin Collaborative Grant proposals will be submitted and reviewed, and one will be selected for funding.

– Proforma and initial budget will be created.

– County Attorney's Office will be consulted to explore needs related to participant disclosure, etc.

– Disbursement option will be selected, with contract to follow.

– HR will be consulted to explore staffing options for the pilot (mobility, etc.).

– Customer journey mapping will continue; stages will be built out with options for resident-county interaction. Staffing model will follow.

– Power app tool will be developed to provide individualized benefits analysis for participants pre-enrollment.

– Target population will be finalized.

– Communication plan will be created.

JUSTICE DOMAIN

Anti-Hate Initiative

Allocation amount: $1,000,000

Project description

The primary goal of the Anti-Hate Initiative is to enhance data collection efforts to determine the scope and prevalence of hate-based violence, and to support community engagement activities to reduce the occurrence of hate-based violence. Program efforts include hiring a program coordinator who is managing the research phase of the project, to gain a more concrete understanding of hate crimes/incidents and the response to them in Hennepin County. We intend to make policy recommendations based on the results of that research.

Progress narrative

– The Hennepin County Board authorized up to $1 million in federal funds for eligible costs, operations, staffing and services to support an analysis of hate- and bias-motivated incidents in Hennepin County, and to make recommendations for reporting, data collection, investigation, system support, increased awareness, and outreach.

– The board also authorized the creation of a Safe Communities Area within the county organization to facilitate long-term strategy to address violence (including hate crimes and incidents).

– In the last quarter the Safe Communities director and program coordinator (Anti-Hate) were hired.

– The program coordinator is researching hate crimes/incidents within Hennepin County, with a goal of informing our work across lines of business. The information from the research will help guide recommendations for how to effectively provide public education, anti-hate campaign strategies, and methods for building local community capacity to respond to and prevent acts of hate effectively.

– The program coordinator is currently meeting with stakeholders, gathering data and information. Recommendations for the program initiative will be prepared by the end of November 2022.

Key performance indicators

– The program coordinator is gathering data and formulating recommendations. No project or program initiatives have been initiated to date, therefore no evaluation efforts have been conducted as of Q3 2022.

– Performance indicators are being developed in this quarter with evaluation methodology and will be included in the recommendations.

Next steps

– The program coordinator will present recommendations for a framework to address hate-motivated incidents within Hennepin County, and will work with Safe Communities leadership to begin implementation of the recommendations.

– Evaluation methodology will be included in the recommendations.

JUSTICE DOMAIN

COVID-19-Related Court Backlog

Allocation amount: $4,511,066

Project description

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

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

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

Progress narrative

The DOCCR has hired one correctional unit supervisor (April 2022), five felony investigation probation officers and two probation officers for its Central Intake unit. Three of the five felony investigation officers started in July and are currently in training. One felony investigation officer started September 26, with the final hire to start late October 2022. One of the two Central Intake probation officers started at the end of July 2022 and is currently in training. The final Central Intake position started late September and has begun training. DOCCR is close to fully staffed and is currently training new probation officers. As new staff are onboarded and trained they receive cases and assist with the increased pre-sentence investigations, case processing and general supervision associated with the felony backlog.

For the third quarter of 2022, the Public Defender's Office has contracted with 13 attorneys representing a total of 6.9 FTE. Three attorneys (1.15 FTE) have freed attorney resources to address the backlog in Adult Court by staffing mandatory calendars and handling juvenile delinquency cases. The remaining 10 attorneys, (5.75 FTE) have handled cases in Adult Court, and through resolution or trial are mitigating growth in the current backlog.

The County Attorney's Office has identified and hired for seven FTE positions: three attorneys, two paralegals, one legal secretary and one victim advocate. The positions have provided caseload relief for attorneys, paralegals, legal secretaries, and victim advocates by freeing resources to address the backlog of cases created during the pandemic.

Key performance indicators

The DOCCR has started the process to hire probation staff for both Central Intake and Felony Investigation. The DOCCR's Adult Pre-Adjudicated Services has completed the hiring process and is now onboarding and training new staff. Incoming referrals for investigations and intake have been steady and manageable. With these added resources, client services for sentencing preparation and probation services have not been interrupted. The goal of the pre-sentence investigation and referral intake work is to connect with clients to complete investigations, work through preparing for sentencing and connect with the court on their sentencing timelines. There have been no delays in meeting this goal; cases have been assigned and the work has been completed on time. Data indicates the pre-sentence investigation and central intake referrals are nearly identical, or slightly lower than the third quarter of 2021. The DOCCR's work is dependent on referrals from the Fourth Judicial District and many factors effect disposition of cases. According to the Minnesota Fourth Judicial District Business Partners Hub, there continue to be 2,358 felony and gross misdemeanors cases in the backlog.

For the third quarter of 2022, Public Defender's Office contract attorneys have staffed 28 separate half-day mandatory calendars and handled 38 child protection and delinquency cases in Juvenile Court. In addition, contract attorneys handled 383 adult cases. While the COVID backlog has increased over the past three months, the use of contract attorneys has allowed the Public Defender's Office to minimize this increase.

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

Next steps

The DOCCR will complete the hiring and onboarding of the final hires for central intake probation officers and felony investigation probation officers.

The Hennepin County Public Defender's Office hired a .5 FTE starting in October to offset a cancelled .5 FTE contract which ended in June. In addition, the office is in negotiations with two other .5 FTE contractors who will hopefully start at the end of October or early November. Hopefully these additional contractors will help mitigate the increase in filings resulting from Hennepin County Attorney's Office efforts to clear up its backlog of cases referred for charging.

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

JUSTICE DOMAIN

Violence Prevention

Allocation amount: $10,000,000

Project description

In June 2021, the Hennepin County Board authorized $5 million for efforts intended to prevent, reduce, and mitigate gun violence in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. The initial $5 million was allocated for short-term efforts focused on getting resources into the community for violence interruption

and intervention strategies, and for wraparound support services utilizing providers that had capacity and programming ready to provide immediate services. In March 2021, the county board authorized an additional $5 million to support continued programming, the expansion of and/or creation of new programming and funding for a coordinator to support the ongoing violence reduction and community engagement strategies, a formal evaluation process and development of a long-term proposal for future services aligned with other county programming focused on reducing disparities.

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

Progress narrative

– Hired director and Safe Communities and Gun Violence Prevention Program coordinator.

– Director and coordinator have met with multiple internal departments, external agencies and community meetings to introduce Safe Communities Department, identify gaps and build relationships ahead of 2023 Gun Violence Reduction provider quarterly convenings.

– Coordinator has initiated internal process for 2023 request for proposals.

– Conducted progress meetings with over 70% of the current Gun Violence Reduction providers.

– Safe Communities is midway through an internal strategic planning process which will ultimately result in a county-wide framework for violence prevention.

Key performance indicators

Here are the key performance indicators for the project. Data and results will be reflected in future reports.

– Number of youth served

– Hours of mental health services provided

– Hours of mentoring services provided

– Hours of life skills services provided

– Hours of diversional programming provided

– Number of people receiving trauma intervention services

– Hours of crisis or drop-in services provided

– Number of community events held

– Amount of funds spent of direct assistance

– Hours spent on violence interruption patrol

– Number of staff assigned to violence interruption patrol

– Number of individuals that received violence interruption intervention

– Hours of group mental health services provided

Next steps

– Document experiences and results from 2022 Gun Violence Reduction providers and internal areas (Community Corrections and Rehabilitation; Public Health; Behavioral Health; Racial Equity Impact Tool; Disparities Reduction; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and others).

– Create recommendation work groups to analyze harvest, provide feedback and create draft content for RFP.

– Engage Contract Management Services in preparation to assist with RFP process.

– Establish internal and external RFP evaluation teams.

– Complete strategic planning for Safe Communities.

TRANSPORTATION DOMAIN

Broadband and Digital Inclusion

Allocation amount: $10,000,000

Project description

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

Data from the American Community Survey and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, among other sources, show geographic, racial and economic disparities in digital equity. Households that are Black, Indigenous, Hispanic or other people of color are less likely to own PCs and have home broadband. There are geographic, racial, housing and economic disparities in access to technology, which, among other effects, cause an inherent disparity in the awareness of new public programs and supports.

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

Progress narrative

During the reporting period, Digital Navigation staff continue to serve county clients and library patrons with digital barriers. All residents interacting with the digital navigators have a digital skills assessment, and training and devices are provided based on the residents' needs. Support is provided to help residents access the Affordable Connectivity Program benefit, and hotspots and Comcast Internet Essentials Sponsored Service are leveraged when needed.

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

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

Five community-based providers received contracts for digital navigation services in June, and another four signed contracts in late September. Referral processes are being established and providers are scaling up their work. These organizations have varied service models which include home visits for digital navigation, open technology labs in areas where residents lack personal devices or home internet, and skill-building training.

Research was conducted into effective messaging to improve uptake rates of the Affordable Connectivity Program. Updated handouts and website are in progress to make it easier for residents to complete the two-step process.

Multiple pilot efforts continue to test different broadband models to fill access gaps. This includes the Minneapolis Wireless Internet project and planned fiber deployments in Minnetrista, Corcoran and Rogers. Broadband projects are underway in different multi-tenant properties, including county-owned facilities and other county-funded affordable housing projects. One facility is currently shovel ready, pending contract negotiation. Others remain in the planning phase, with the goal of early 2023 implementation.

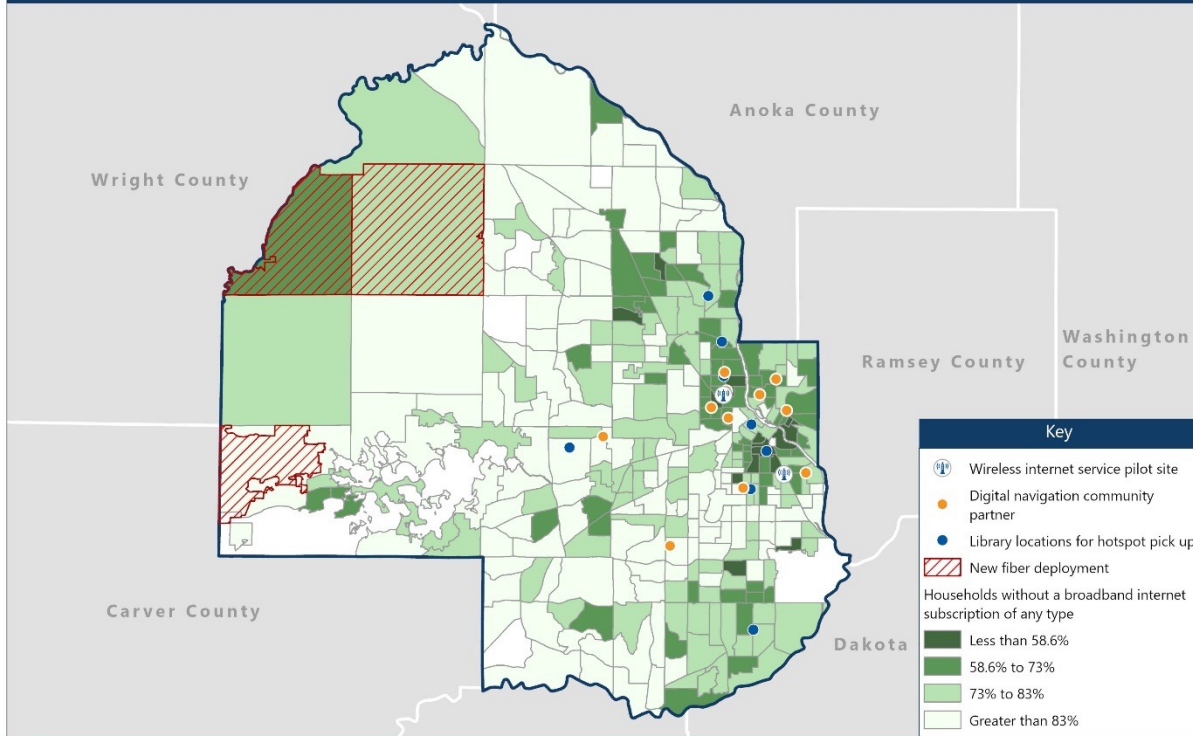## Key performance indicators

Digital Navigation

– 333 new requests to support Hennepin County clients and library patrons were submitted to digital navigation team by Hennepin County staff.

– 163 households were served during the period, providing digital inclusion services to 433 total household members. Some households have multiple interactions. A total of 538 interventions were reported including device distribution, support with the Affordable Connectivity Program enrollment process, digital skills assessments and training.

– 33 phones are currently in use by Homeless to Housing program members.

– 31 computers are in use by students enrolled in Hennepin Technical College.

– Five contracted community partners provided digital navigation support and training to 187 Hennepin County residents and another 234 people were engaged during broadband adoption outreach activities. Additional outreach includes a media spot on Spanish language media and social media outreach in English and Spanish.

Broadband Infrastructure

– Five planned projects will provide an additional 225.7 miles of fiber and are anticipated to serve 2,724 households in areas that lack access to high-speed broadband. These projects are scheduled for the 2023 construction season.

– Planning work continues on multiple projects to provide wireless internet service in multi-tenant households. Site assessments have been conducted and network design proposals are being reviewed.

Broadband and Digital Inclusion Projects — HENNEPIN COUNTY MINNESOTA

Key
- Wireless internet service pilot site
- Digital navigation community partner
- Library locations for hotspot pick up
- New fiber deployment

Households without a broadband internet subscription of any type
- Less than 58.6%
- 58.6% to 73%
- 73% to 83%
- Greater than 83%

Disclaimer: This map (i) is furnished "AS IS" with no representation as to completeness or accuracy; (ii) is furnished with no warranty of any kind; and (iii) is not suitable for legal, engineering or surveying purposes. Hennepin County shall not be liable for any damage, injury or loss resulting from this map.

Publication date: 9/9/2022   Data sources (if applicable): Hennepin County, ACS 2016-2020 5 year estimates, Midco

Next steps

Technology Support to Households:

– Hire an additional two digital navigators to support Minneapolis residents.

– Grant access to external community partners to refer residents for technology supports.

– Expand promotion of the Affordable Connectivity Program.

– Execute additional contracts with community-based organizations to deliver culturally appropriate digital navigation and training.

– Add additional contracts for refurbished computers for low-income residents.

Broadband Infrastructure:

– Pilot different approaches to bringing high-speed internet to multi-unit housing, with the goal of at least one project completed in 2022.

– Develop solicitation process for municipalities to initiate fiber-to-the-home projects with the goal of funding projects for the 2023 construction season.

Evaluation:

– Integrate Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA) library patron tech survey led by Wilder Research and stakeholder feedback evaluation conducted by the University of Minnesota into digital equity plan.

– Expand feedback loop evaluation to assess services and impact.

– Evaluate wireless internet pilot project.

– Report on and assess contracted service providers' digital navigation services.

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

The HVAC Pandemic Study first draft was reviewed by county staff and the consultant (Erickson Ellison and Associates) and comments were made. Discussions with staff and grant managers were had to determine how to implement the tentative actions recommended in the report. The first action item is to inspect and document filter banks in the air handling units at county facilities for any issues or air bypass. A scope of work is currently being developed to get a price proposal. A final draft of the study has been submitted to the county and a review with the consultants and county staff will happen early next quarter.

In addition, Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) 13+ filters continue to be purchased by staff as needed to continue to provide safe spaces for county staff and patrons.

Finally, the HVAC work related to reducing cross contamination at the Adult Correctional Facility (a 24/7 facility) is moving forward. A contract was awarded to Moltron Builders, Inc. on 8/14/2022. Work is expected to start next quarter.

Key performance indicators

Another 1,199 filters were purchased and delivered in this reporting period. No buildings have been modified yet in this project.

Next steps

It is expected that the HVAC Pandemic Study will be finalized and an action plan to implement will be started. It is also expected that the first phase of that study to inspect the filter banks in the air handling units within the county-owned facilities will be started.

The work at the Adult Correctional Facility making modifications to the HVAC system will start.

Additional MERV-13+ filters will be purchased for building maintenance as needed.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Digital Experience

Allocation amount: $5,700,000

Project description

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

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

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

Progress narrative

The Office of Digital Experience (ODX) continues to make progress in all four focus areas: 1) establish digital experience (DX) model, 2) foster intentional DX culture, 3) establish resident listening program, and 4) demonstrate the DX value within Hennepin County.

ODX held the third quarter roadmap alignment session with the four DX model partner teams: DX, User Experience (UX), Website Communications in the Communications department, and Web Infrastructure in the IT department.

ODX completed a series of strategic planning sessions that identifies the team's values and strategic directions for how the team can work to provide a consistently positive, accessible, and equitable digital experience for Hennepin County customers.

Contract negotiation continued with the selected community vendor to create and provide digital accessibility training to all Hennepin County employees who have a content creation and web development role. The process is on track for an October signing.

ODX completed the first phase of the digital navigation work with the Real Property Group (RPG) in Resident and Real Estate Services (RRES). The first phase includes a digital touchpoint environmental scan to determine how many digital touchpoints are available on the RPG pages on Hennepin.us and how many of those touchpoints are functional. A digital touchpoint is any form or information that is exchanged between Hennepin County and a resident or customer. A SWOT analysis identified various issues that RPG needs to consider when ensuring a consistently positive, accessible, and equitable resident digital experience.

The RRES chatbot prototype was completed in this reporting period. The chat experiment was a need identified during the pandemic and ODX has engaged and collaborated with RRES and IT the past several months on developing this protype.

The office also kicked off an engagement with Health and Human Services (HHS). Similar to that of RPG, the effort will include an environmental scan and analysis to identify critical service touchpoints to improve.

The UX team's focused effort on a redesigned Sheriff's Office website is on track to launch in late October. Project work includes iterative rounds of usability testing between design and development phases. The team also engaged local partner WeCo to facilitate an accessibility review of the site by professionals with disabilities.

The Website Communications team scoped and hired critical positions to support the team's bandwidth for website content and development work. These team members support the vision of having appropriately resourced teams for each part of this digital service model.

Similarly, the Web Infrastructure partner team made significant progress in establishing roles and responsibilities to support the public web vendors. As of August this team is now the primary point of contact for incidents and is also leading the engagement to assess and improve the existing architecture.

Key performance indicators

– The DX model roadmap alignment session allows each DX model partner team to share accomplishments from the most recent quarter. It also provides an opportunity for each partner team to share what work is coming up in the next and future quarters so teams can identify collaboration opportunities and work through issues together.

– The ODX strategic plan is in draft form and will be formalized in the next quarter. This is the first step in creating a guiding framework to align the work of ODX.

– The RPG SWOT digital touchpoint environmental scan and SWOT analysis is a repeatable process that can be scaled and used with other business areas. ODX continues to consult and collaborate with RPG to gain a deeper understanding of their role in providing a consistently positive, accessible, and equitable digital experience for customers.

– Through the current DX experiments, a gap has been identified. There is a need for an additional data analyst to measure ODX strategic direction metrics as well as provide additional quantitative and qualitative data analysis on additional experiments.

– The RRES chatbot prototype provides a faster response to customers for simple questions and creates greater capacity for RRES employees to address more complex issues and problems.

– The Sheriff's Office web redesign effort provides a content-first, user-focused project model that will be the basis for future and larger scale redesign efforts such as the planned move from Hennepin.us to HennepinCounty.gov.

– The more fully staffed teams provide critical bandwidth to maintenance responsibilities for the county's public web portfolio. This adds skills and resource to support outage and incident response, content review, and proactive architecture planning.

Next steps

Two ODX team members, who are also Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Champions for the county, began drafting goals and objectives that center equity, inclusion and accessibility. These goals and objectives will keep ODX accountable for prioritizing the user experience over business process in this work.

In partnership with Engagement Services, ODX finalized questions for engagement staff to use with residents at community engagement events. The questions are the first phase of the resident listening program experiment and will provide an opportunity for residents to share feedback about their experiences with Hennepin County and for the team to test the closed loop feedback system.

ODX will begin a DX engagement with Health and Human Services to advance digital navigation in that line of business. ODX will use the repeatable process developed for the RRES engagement.

To continue advancing digital accessibility for both county employees and residents, ODX will finalize the process and procedures for receiving and addressing digital accessibility questions and complaints.

ODX management team will scope and post remaining positions.

ODX will pilot a DX Champions learning program to support knowledge development and capacity building for UX, accessibility, and equity-focused skills.

ODX will also lead the scoping of a HennepinCounty.gov website redesign effort in partnership with all DX model teams. This project work will kick off in 2023.

The DX Advisory Committee will reconvene in the next reporting period to endorse the direction of ODX and address new opportunities, issues, or gaps.

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

– Finalized and signed contract amendment

– Drafted 2023 Trusted Messenger Request for Proposal (RFP)

– Conducted biweekly check-ins and large monthly meetings with trusted messengers

– Connected the community to COVID-19 resources, services, and programs available at Hennepin County

– Engaged individuals, families, and community organizations to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other public health issues

– Provided mask and test kit distribution from the county to organizations, individuals and schools

– Advised county departments on strategy, projects, and initiatives

Community Engagement Roster Program

– Continued to promote roster program

– Worked with RFP request

– Created four-month strategy work plan

Translations

– In the past quarter, the team has worked to lay the groundwork for exploring a countywide translations program, including evaluating existing translations resources, identifying areas for improvement with current resources, and thinking through next steps.

– Developed and finalized a charter identifying key stakeholders across the organization with institutional knowledge on the translations process, and outlining key goals.

– Established a translation and accessibility committee.

Engagement vans

– Meeting community where they are at supports Hennepin County in strengthening relationships and trust with our residents.

– With a focus on engagement of low-income communities and communities of color, Hennepin County engagement staff handed out COVID informational handouts, COVID testing kits, masks, and Hennepin County help-line information plus additional giveaway items such as tote bags, rice paddles and water bottles.

– In September, Engagement Services received an electric Ford Transit van that will be equipped with solar panels, flat screen TV, computer, printer, WiFi hotspot, shelving and engagement supplies to fully furnish an Engagement Services mobile office.

– From July 1 – September 30, 2022, our two engagement vans were utilized by Public Health, Child and Teen Checkups, Latino liaison, Streets to Housing, Office of Multicultural Services, Hennepin County Library, Hennepin County Attorney's Office, Environment and Energy, Transportation and the Blue Line LRT extension project.

Materials distribution

– Through a busy engagement season, the team continued to provide materials such as handouts, rice paddles, masks, frisbees, pens and COVID-19 test kits to departments across the county.

– During July, August and September we distributed 61,720 masks and 10,020 COVID test kits to community organizations.

Key performance indicators

Trusted messengers

– 36 contracts — monthly meeting and check-ins, continuing to communicate information about vaccinations/ boosters and health outbreaks, and referral to county program/services

– Four community organizations spotlighted (impact of the program, programs/services they provided, etc.)

– Five different county division/departments utilized feedback:

    I. Navigation and Information Services (NIS)

    II. Public Health

    III. Hennepin Health

    IV. Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation

    V. Department of Human Services

Community Engagement Roster Program

– Over 170 individuals and organizations registered

– 2–3 projects/RFPs utilized this program to achieve contracts

Translations

– Continue to do research at similar counties and other internal departments on strategy

Engagement vans

– During this time period, the vans for used for over 20 events, engaging thousands of Hennepin County residents with COVID health information and county programming.

Materials distribution

– While supporting engagement for the Engagement Services team and for engagement teams across the organization, the team exhausted their supply of $15,739 worth of pens, backpacks, tote bags, wrist bands, rice paddles, frisbees, hand sanitizer, water bottles and handouts by September.

– In September, the team ordered 500 hand sanitizers, fidget spinners and rice paddles, primarily for the Hmong Day at the State Fair event where our team engaged hundreds of fairgoers.

– In the last quarter, this team distributed about 37,270 masks and 5,790 COVID-19 test kits.

– The team shared materials including approximately 5,000 items for more than 30 engagement events through the last quarter.

Next steps

Trusted messengers

– Release trusted messenger RFP

– Host information session

– Review panel selects organizations

– Award notifications

– Sign contracts

Community Engagement Roster Program

– Implement strategy work plan to:

  • Educate and promote the use of the roster program internally across all Lines of Business (LoB).

  • Facilitate LoB relationship building with community-based partners on the roster program.

  • Educate community on the goals, purpose, and processes of the roster program.

Translations

– Continue to research and explore options of hiring consultant and project manager to bring in an external perspective and additional expertise and to facilitate conversations around translations and move the work forward.

– Continue to work on establishing the translations program and process countywide by meeting biweekly with key county stakeholders from across the organization and working with leadership to pursue potential solutions and new systems.

– Come up with recommendations from a workgroup with leadership endorsement.

– Check in with other counties on their translation grounding work and process.

Engagement vans

– The new Ford Transit vehicle will complete our fleet and increase the capacity of Hennepin County engagement staff to meet our residents where they are to engage and motivate them to county services and programming.

– We will continue to work on this over the next quarter by working with the design team to create and finalize a design for the van wrap, ensure the van is stored for the winter, ensure it is equipped with the right materials in a timely manner, and strategize its use for the next engagement season.

Healing circles/community building

– We had an additional healing circle October 1, "Latino Healing Circle: Healing Circle for our Community."

– An upcoming staff community building event is a Hennepin County "Lunch & Learn," hosted by the Cities of Minneapolis and Brooklyn Park and Hennepin County. The event will give staff the opportunity to learn about the LGBTQ+ community and the history of "Coming Out Day."

Materials distribution

– The team will make one more order of materials in October for roughly $5,000 to get through the rest of the engagement season and the winter, before planning to make a large order of supplies in late winter/spring for the 2023 engagement season.

– The team will evaluate what areas across the county use materials and how they use them.

– Engagement Services will continue to provide materials including program handouts, hand sanitizer, rice paddles, and other items, and will evaluate more in depth what items are most effective.

– Engagement Services will make new orders for the remaining events of the engagement season to fulfill some minimal needs; from there, the team will evaluate effectiveness and usage of the materials, and plan to make orders for next engagement season (April- October) based on effectiveness, environmental sustainability, cost per item, and cultural competency.

– Additionally, the team will continue to work on a clearer intake and tracking system for materials distribution.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Enterprise Integrated Data

Allocation amount: $4,000,000

Project description

The Enterprise Integrated Data System aims to use meaningful integrated data from across county data systems to discover summary insights that enable the county to better respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, improve its disparity reduction efforts, and support key county strategies and enterprise initiatives. The project is framed around four key components: integrated data infrastructure, summary analytics, governance and security, and data use.

The integrated data infrastructure entails the development of the technical infrastructure required to integrate county data and modernize county data systems safely and securely. This work would leverage modern data infrastructure tools to bring county data together effectively and iteratively in ways that meaningfully support ongoing reporting and analytics.

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

The governance and security component entails the development of a robust and transparent governance structure that supports the development of robust strategic data insights while ensuring data security, privacy, and the ethical use of data. This work will be done in coordination with existing data governance activities including the county's responsible authorities, legal counsel and IT and data security staff. Lastly, this effort will also include a framework for data use that is intended to provide support for how the summary data insights created from this system can be used for effective decision-making.

Progress narrative

Progress updates for the third quarter:

Work on the Enterprise Integrated Data system during the third quarter focused heavily on improving the underlying data infrastructure. This included advancements to our DataOps practices and specifically to our ability to monitor the volume and underlying processes involved in data ingestion and transformation. Ongoing review of these data led to improvements in the underlying design standards and data architecture. All data stored in the enterprise integrated data system are now in full accordance with the updated guidelines. Key insights from the initial data transformations have helped to advance the integration of additional data sources and improvements to our current data model. Continued progress was made across all ongoing analyses with preliminary results identified in over half of the existing efforts. Feedback mechanisms from key business partners and between our data science and data engineering teams continues to improve with the creation of an issue tracker to quickly identify and address any problems with our data pipeline, model, or other aspect of a data transformation. An initial method to make public data available to a broader array of county analysts was established and is ready for testing. Lastly, progress was made on data-informed decision-making supports with the creation of a data-informed decision-making framework and a draft set of outcome definitions to support ongoing evaluation and impact analyses.

A great deal of the current work continues to focus on data integration. County data engineers are working to establish ongoing data processes to bring together data from across the county in ways that are highly secure and are done in accordance with our data architecture design standards to a high degree of quality. This includes close consultation with our data science and analytics professionals and business subject matter experts from across the county. County data scientists continue the early phases of data analysis to identify meaningful data insights in support of county strategies and initiatives. These preliminary results are being shared and vetted by county subject matter experts to ensure accuracy and inform the next phases of these analyses. The project team continues to meet regularly and refine its processes to continually advance this work. This involved an updated structure for tracking progress and the development of quarterly goals for key aspects of this work (e.g., ensuring fidelity with data architecture standards, establishing ongoing data feeds, leveraging audit log data, iterating on the data model, etc.).

Key performance indicators

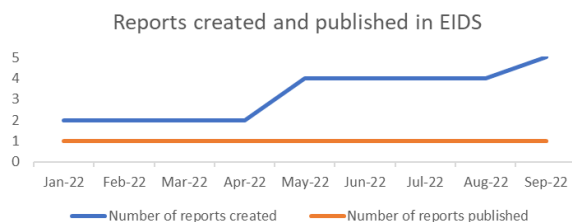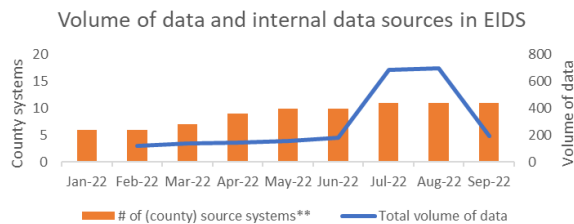The key performance indicators for this project include:

– Total volume of data incorporated

– An evolving set of QA metrics related to data quality and fidelity with established definitions

– The number of analytics projects utilizing this system

– Number of days it takes for a project to go through the governance process

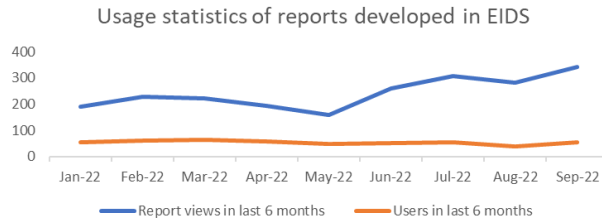– The number of report views as a proxy for utilization

Evaluation efforts related to the project:

– Evaluation efforts to date have been formative in nature. For example, monitoring the total volume of data and QA metrics has led to constructive changes to ensure adherence to design standards.

Results available from this quarter:

– Total volume of data is now around 200 GB with 11 county data systems included. This is down from the prior quarter as redundancies have been removed due to improved standards.

– There are now seven analytics projects leveraging this system. Five of these have preliminary insights and one project has been made available to county staff more broadly.

– Usage statistics of the reports available to staff continue to steadily increase.

– QA metrics have been updated to ensure ongoing fidelity to design standards and data quality.

– The current average length of days for an analytics effort to go through the governance process is 52.3 days (inclusive of non-business days).

Volume of data and internal data sources in EIDS

Reports created and published in EIDS

Usage statistics of reports developed in EIDS

Report views in last 6 months Users in last 6 months

Next steps

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

– Refine and establish updates to the underlying design architecture, data model, and DataOps procedures and reporting.

– Further leverage the audit data to solidify and monitor ongoing data security.

– Improve existing and establish new ongoing data pipelines while phasing out ad hoc data inputs.

– Continue to iterate upon the underlying data model.

– Review and update the governance process based on feedback and performance metrics.

– Continue to develop materials to support the effective of use of data by county staff.

– Test initial mechanism for public data to be leveraged by county staff.

– Refine processes for coordination and feedback between data engineering and data analytics functions.

– Continue to make meaningful progress on all analytics projects in adherence to our principles of partnership, careful governance, and data security.

– Take on two additional analytics projects.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Information Technology

Allocation amount: $10,000,000

Project description

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

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

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

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

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

Progress narrative

More than 20 projects have been identified that fit under the four areas listed above. Most projects are in the initial planning and development stages. Some notable accomplishments this year include:

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

– Training and review of ADA website design to make online material more accessible.

– Investment in continuous deployment tool to accelerate application deployment and manage complexity.

– Modernized Central Services equipment to respond to pandemic-related and other special printing and mailing needs.

– Partial funding of hardware placed in collaborative work centers to enhance hybrid workforce and service delivery capabilities.

– Purchase and installation of digital signage at the drop-off facilities in Brooklyn Park and Bloomington.

– Enhancements to workforce management system used by the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office.

Next steps

Prioritized projects continue to proceed through IT intake to coordinate resources and ensure efficient use of enterprise tools. Projects have been identified across all lines of business including major backfile conversions to digitize paper files, implement kiosk solutions for residents, improve online payment options, and make location technology improvements in the jail.

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Information Technology: Community Connectivity

Allocation amount: $4,000,000

Project description

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

Progress narrative

The pandemic response projects will move the Community Connectivity project forward in two areas:

– Accelerating plans to connect county facilities to fiber.

– Working closely with Public Works to increase fiber connections and expand the Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS).

During the first half of 2022, the Public Works line of business bid $1.5 million of work to add over 25 miles of fiber to connect 35 intersections in Hennepin County. This work will also provide fiber redundancy in multiple south and southwest Hennepin cities.

Additional infrastructure is also being purchased for a new video management system for the Traffic Management Center.

Next steps

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

OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

Voter Participation

Allocation amount: $3,312,000

Project description

The Elections Department will:

– Support a countywide voter registration campaign and an absentee voting education campaign, building on the successful absentee voter outreach campaign that was conducted in 2020. Investing in pre-registering voters prior to election day and in ensuring absentee voters do not make mistakes on their absentee voting materials is cost-effective. Processing voter registrations prior to election day saves in time and materials as compared to processing election-day registrations, and reduces wait times in polling places. Helping absentee voters complete their paperwork correctly the first time saves time and materials costs in avoiding the necessity of issuing replacement materials to correct mistakes.

– Upgrade poll book hardware. The poll book system is used in all polling places during every election conducted in the county. This system upgrade is critical to the county's ability to maintain useability of the poll book system and directly impacts the county's ability to administer accurate and secure elections.

– Replace the current central ballot scanners with new upgraded models. Absentee voting rates increased significantly in 2020 to approximately 70% of voters, compared to 30% in previous years, and is expected to remain high for upcoming elections. New upgraded central ballot scanners will enable the county to continue to effectively manage the increase in absentee ballots. New models feature hardware upgrades that improve the efficiency of ballot processing, ultimately supporting timely results reporting despite the larger volume of absentee ballots.

Progress narrative

From July 1 – September 30, 2022, voter registration and absentee voting education campaigns continued to utilize strategies focused on community partner grants for voter outreach and education services, media campaigns and production and translation of printable voter outreach and education materials.

Twenty-three contracted community organizations conducted voter outreach and engagement through a variety of tactics focused on voter education for the August 9 primary election, and laid groundwork for the November 8 general election reaching over 64,000 Hennepin County residents.

– COPAL developed an outreach campaign based on "¡Triple el voto. triple el poder!" (Triple the vote, triple the power) in which they encourage voters to bring two eligible voters with them to vote, increasing turnout. The campaign includes high-production videos. www.youtube.com/watch?v=3iVLex22iSU

– League of Women Voters MN conducted a Pledge to Vote text service to reach Hennepin County residents. They also produced and translated their 411 election voter guide.

– ACER conducted two candidate forums, one each in Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center.

– Catholic Charities put together outreach materials.

– Lutheran Social Services engaged 1,600 people at in-person community outreach events.

– ICSA focused on mosques and shared messages during Friday services. "We connect the act of voting with our cultural values and norms, connecting ideas of who we are as a people and as citizens to be those who work for the benefit of all."

– Hmong Broadcasting Company reached over 24,000 people on social media. Their absentee balloting social media post was reshared by elected officials and reached over 178,000 people.

– Daryeel Youth Services spread election information through KALY Radio (Somali American Radio) and Tusmo Times (a bilingual monthly newspaper). Daryeel also attended and staffed a table at Somali Independence Day, Somali Week Soccer Tournament, Lake Street Open Streets and Brian Coyle Annual Health Fair.

– Aliveness Project is ramping up their outreach and are focusing on "Why Voting is Important to the HIV Community."

– Center for Leadership and Neighborhoods collaborated with partners to host 10 Table Fellowship community cookout events in their five neighborhoods of North Minneapolis.

Through September advertising strategies and media campaigns focused on preparing for 2022 elections using local radio outlets (KMOJ, La Raza, Somali American Radio), local print media (The Circle Newspaper, North News, Spokesman Recorder) and social media (Facebook). Information and messaging focused on preparing residents to vote and has reached more than 600,000 residents.

Production and translation of nine printable voter outreach and education resources and production of a comprehensive 2022 voter guide were completed. 4,500 voter guides have been printed and distributed.

Key performance indicators

Contracted community organizations have submitted the first of two progress reports highlighting their work and accomplishments through the August primary election. A second and final report will be completed by each contracted community organization after the November general election. Work and accomplishments are described in terms of the following:
– How many people they 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

Key performance indicators for Hennepin County led outreach and engagement may include:
– Increased institutional knowledge of election process among contracted 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

Next steps

Contracted community partners will continue their outreach and education work in advance of the November 8 election engaging their communities through a diverse set of tactics including events, social media campaigns, educational material development and distribution, and phone banking.

Contracted community partners will submit final project reports and invoices following the November 8 election.

Training and support to increase organizational knowledge of election processes and education among communities experiencing disparities in voter registration and turnout will continue for community partner organizations about the 2022 election information, resources and strategies, including weekly office hours leading up to the November 8 election.

Efforts to maintain contracts and media campaign strategies (social media, digital advertising, print and radio advertising, on-air programming) focused on voter registration and absentee voting education will continue. Targeted media campaigns will focus on ensuring voters have the knowledge and resources needed to support participation in 2022 elections.

Promotion and distribution of voter outreach materials and resources will continue through the November 8 election.

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