



Boulder **Homelessness Strategy Update**



4869 Broadway



All Roads Shelter



The City of Boulder, in alignment with the Citywide Strategic Plan and City Council's 2024-2025 priority on Homelessness Strategies and Innovations, committed to updating its Homelessness Strategy, originally created in 2017. That strategy laid the foundation for a coordinated regional response and helped the community achieve new outputs and outcomes in addressing homelessness.

However, in the eight years since its creation, economic, social, and cultural landscapes have shifted dramatically—both nationally and locally. As housing costs and unsheltered homelessness have become urgent challenges, the need to reflect this reality in our strategy is clear.

In 2024, Homeless Solutions for Boulder County (HSBC), the community's homelessness service network, conducted a system evaluation. Conducted by Public Policy Associates, this evaluation provided a strong foundation for the city's robust strategy refresh.

In February 2025, the city built upon this previous study and launched its own inclusive update process, bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders, individuals with lived experience, service providers working on the front lines, business leaders, and many others, to help shape the evolution of our strategy. We are especially grateful for our ongoing partnership with Boulder County staff and their deep and meaningful contributions throughout this process – it is undeniably stronger because of their collective wisdom and expertise.

Although the strategy update is focused on the City of Boulder, we recognize that building a system capable of reaching key milestones on the path to ending unsheltered homelessness will require our continued regional partnerships.

Just as the authors of the 2017 Strategy could not predict the changes of the past eight years, there may be unknown challenges and opportunities ahead during this strategy's five-year outlook. Already, the city is navigating a constrained budget due to overall economic headwinds, including unprecedented federal cuts. Still, we are confident that this strategy provides a clear framework to guide local decisions and maintain momentum in our collective response to homelessness.

Together, the Boulder community has already achieved significant progress—developing more affordable housing than ever before, helping more than 2,100 vulnerable people secure housing, and building a strong network of high-quality social services. This updated strategy builds on that foundation, enabling us to invest strategically and work in new ways to achieve a shared goal: a community where no one has to sleep outside.

—City Manager Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde

Overview/Summary



In 2017, the City of Boulder launched a new plan to respond to homelessness anchored to a vision that all residents in the city can achieve and maintain safe, stable housing within the community. Since the adoption of this first set of homeless strategies, Boulder has substantially expanded its emergency response system, shifted and experimented with new programming, introduced new affordable and specialized housing solutions and made progress in effectively managing public spaces.

In the past 8 years, the Boulder system scaled its ability to rehouse individuals experiencing homelessness. Between 2016 and 2024, the system went from utilizing 161 housing vouchers to having 3,539 in service in 2024. And the community expanded its stock of dedicated Permanent Supportive Housing Units by ten times, growing from 41 units in 2016 to 469 units in 2024.

Boulder has also strengthened its offerings to keep families stably housed. In 2017, the city and a local partner launched Keep Families Housed, providing short-term supports, with all participating families remaining in their housing during the program. In 2022, the city expanded its approach with the Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance Services program, offering legal, mediation, and rental assistance; 96% of program participants avoided eviction.

The 2017 Homelessness Strategy built a foundation that positioned the city and its partners to respond to the evolving landscape of homelessness during a pivotal period that included the COVID-19 pandemic and extreme rises in cost of living and housing unaffordability. Despite these challenges, the Boulder region was able to move incrementally and pragmatically towards the city's original vision.

Boulder confronts two distinct challenges: addressing the regional migration of individuals experiencing homelessness and responding to the displacement of local families and individuals. In response, this strategy update establishes separate approaches and milestones—one tailored for individuals experiencing homelessness and another for families facing housing instability.

Underpinning these strategies is the need for continued investment and expansion of creative affordable housing solutions across the region. The focus on preserving and expanding affordability as a separate and distinct goal from homelessness response has been a critical factor in the region's success, both in creating housing stock to help resolve homelessness and in supporting housing stability and preventing homelessness.

The homeless response strategies outlined in this plan build on this shared commitment to safe and stable housing options by continuing the city's trajectory toward ending rough sleeping or unsheltered homelessness, eliminating long-term homelessness, and supporting housing retention and stability for everyone.



Response Plan for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness in the Boulder Community



Preamble

Like many thriving communities, Boulder has confronted the dual challenges of affordability and growth. These constraints have underscored the need for proactive strategies to help current residents remain in the city and to welcome newcomers seeking to build a life here. In response, Boulder committed to ensuring all residents can achieve and maintain safe and stable housing in the community.

Since setting this course in 2017, Boulder has achieved measurable results—helping over 2,100 individuals transition from homelessness into housing. At the same time, the City of Boulder is committed to ensuring that its hallmark public spaces are clean, safe, and enjoyed by the whole community. To mitigate the effects of entrenched unsheltered homelessness, the City of Boulder enhanced its no-camping ordinance, with an intensive focus on enforcement in areas for community use including the Boulder Creek corridor. In 2023, voters approved a ballot measure that ensured enforcement efforts near local schools and along the routes to those schools.

These initiatives stemmed from a deliberate balance of compassion and accountability. The city remains committed to that balance as it embarks on a new phase aimed at **ending unsheltered homelessness in Boulder and across the region.**

To that end, the next chapter builds on previous progress by expanding affordable living options, driving down unsheltered homelessness year by year, and setting clearer boundaries to preserve health and safety for all.

Current Conditions

Below are current conditions that inform the strategy update's major goals and timed implementation strategies.

City Strategies Are Working to Stop Homelessness from Growing

- Since reaching a high in 2023, the City of Boulder has seen consistent point-in-time count reductions in 2024 and 2025.
- Since 2022, there has been a consistent inflow of 1,250 individuals entering homelessness each year in Boulder, despite headwinds such as the end of the eviction moratorium and winding down of COVID-homelessness response strategies.
- This suggests that homelessness is not growing and the city's efforts to manage homelessness are resulting in shorter lengths of stay and thus lower point-in-time counts.

Targeted Strategies to Rehouse Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness Are Making an Impact but Need to Be More Robustly Resourced

- The number of individuals with long episodes of homelessness in Boulder County, or those who are experiencing homelessness for more than 365 days, has also remained flat at about 250 individuals.

- This suggests that the community's efforts to rehouse individuals experiencing chronic homelessness have helped to prevent an increasing population stuck in long-term homelessness.
- Boulder's investments are working to limit that number, but as new individuals are remaining in homelessness long-term, it is staying flat instead of going down. Further investment is needed to effectively reduce and eliminate chronic homelessness in the Boulder community.

Regional Homelessness Response via the Homeless Solutions for Boulder County (HSBC) Initiative Has Worked to Align Investment and Programming, But Future Success Hinges on Strategic Alignment and Better Data Sharing to Understand Impact

- The 2024 HSBC evaluation by Public Policy Associates underscores the need for a shared data solution, echoing public discussion about a need for stronger data sharing practices.
- The HSBC structure can play a critical role in shaping implementation of shared strategies using work groups to activate consolidated planning, testing and phased implementation, helping to avoid duplication of effort and enhancing standardization across programs and funding formulas.

With Improved Rehousing Capabilities and New Space Management Practices, The Boulder Community is On the Path to End Unsheltered Homelessness Through Deeper Integration of These Practices

This timeline describes the City of Boulder's major developments in rehousing and space management since 2017:

Improved Rehousing Capabilities

- 2019 – 2021: **Building Rehousing Capacity:** City reaches first milestone generated from 2017 Strategy, housing 200 individuals
- 2023: **Housing Stabilization Support Activated:** Building Home, a retention and peer support program, to stabilize individuals moving into housing begins
- 2024: **More Affordable Units Come Online:** Since 2017, more than 1,000 units of affordable housing are completed with another 1,000 over the next five years including 152 units of PSH, to be developed over the next 5 years. Bluebird, Boulder's second permanent supportive housing development opens.
- May 2024: **Shelter Services Expand to Meet Community Needs:** City partners open new Day Service Center as a hub for service provision with integrated behavioral healthcare and physical health services initially developed at Boulder's COVID Resource Center. 20 overnight beds added at All Roads Shelter.

New Space Management Practices

- 2021: **Behavioral Health Care Teams Deployed in Crisis Settings:** The City of Boulder launched the CIRT pilot, pairing case managers and licensed behavioral health clinicians with police on crisis calls, sometimes involving unhoused individuals. The program expanded in 2024 with CARE, a non-police response.
- 2021: **City Amplifies Space Management Practices:** Safe and Managed Public Spaces (SAMPS) program kicks off with an 18-month pilot, encompassing Public Space Management, BThERE Outreach, Urban Park Rangers, Downtown Ambassadors, and dedicated Boulder Police Support
- 2023: **City Begins Coordinating High Utilizer Response:** System creates High Utilizers Leadership and Operations teams with justice system partners, local government departments, housing and homelessness entities, and mental health providers to coordinate care for highest acuity individuals who are ending up in jail as a result of their homelessness.



The Community is Mobilizing Investments Toward Deeply Affordable Supportive Housing, But There Are Still Gaps in Housing Supply Especially for Individuals Traveling to Boulder with Limited Incomes

- The city is planning to add 1,160 units of affordable housing, including 152 of permanent supportive housing units through 2029.
- The voter approved Boulder County Affordable and Attainable Housing Tax can help fund the supportive services and housing development across this new affordable housing pipeline and expand affordable housing development throughout the region.
- A significant portion of Boulder's unhoused population are from outside the city, often comprising individuals with limited incomes traveling to the community. Approximately 60% of those screened for homeless services have lived in Boulder County for less than one month at the time of assessment, and most will not reside in Boulder long-term, making the need for short-term affordable living solutions critical.

A Small Percentage of Boulder's Unhoused Population Has Severe Behavioral Health and Substance Use Conditions, Needing Access to Higher Levels of Institutional Care That Is Not Available Locally at Scale

- Boulder's Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT) pairs behavioral health professionals with law enforcement to support individuals in mental health crises, as well as (CARE) Community Assistance Response and Engagement, a clinician response separate from police involvement, to address crisis calls. While clinicians from the CIRT program can compel individuals into care, the community lacks long-term mental health beds where individuals can receive long-term psychiatric care to stabilize and be connected to housing and supports upon discharge.
- Boulder County launched a Behavioral Health Roadmap in 2023, indicating a need for "long-term mental health beds, and assisted living facilities with capacity to care for people with chronic behavioral health issues," especially those that are unhoused. At this time, there are no existing regional funds to provide access to those resources for the local community.
- A new behavioral healthcare facility in Louisville could be expanded and equipped to provide short- and medium-term transitional care, given the necessary resources.

Roadmap: Ending Unsheltered Homelessness in the City of Boulder and Across the Region



Key Milestones

1. Eliminate and prevent long episodes of homelessness (over 365 days).

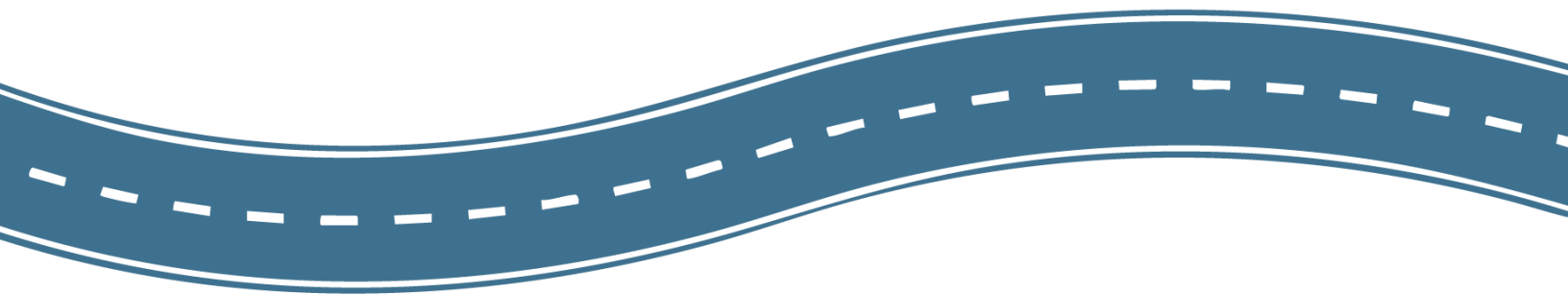
Boulder's first key milestone in eliminating and preventing long episodes of homelessness is an essential step toward building an optimized homelessness response system. While Boulder's commitment to rehousing individuals experiencing chronic homelessness has kept those numbers relatively flat, new individuals are still falling into chronic homelessness each year. To create a system capable of serving everyone that becomes homeless in a given year, Boulder must focus on reducing chronic homelessness through rehousing and by creating faster, earlier exits that prevent individuals from becoming chronically homeless in the first place.

2. Reach an end to rough sleeping.

Rough sleeping, often referred to as unsheltered homelessness, describes individuals sleeping outdoors or in places not meant for habitation, such as streets or parks. Boulder's strategy uses the term "rough sleeping" to emphasize the harsh and dangerous conditions faced by those living without shelter and the public health necessity to prevent such behavior.

The second key milestone focuses on ending rough sleeping, given its risks to both unhoused individuals and the broader community. Over the past five years, the City of Boulder has leveraged general city programs and homelessness responses to tackle unsheltered homelessness—including a behavioral health crisis team, coordinated care and housing placements for high-needs individuals, and expanded public space management practices. This strategy builds on those efforts by uniting rehousing and service provision conducted by the homelessness response system with space management practices to end and sustain an end to rough sleeping in Boulder.

In order to reach these milestones, the strategy sets out key measures of success related to unsheltered homelessness, length of time in homelessness, number of individuals experiencing chronic and long-term homelessness, and returns to homelessness.



Core Strategies

1. Continue to strategically invest in and expand supportive rehousing and stabilization programs that quickly return individuals to safe and stable housing solutions across the region, reducing and preventing long-term homelessness.

- a. Foster regional supportive housing models that include access to robust housing retention services and moving-on solutions.
- b. Stretch existing housing subsidy resources using shared housing models and time-limited rental supports that focus on stabilization and transition, like rapid rehousing programs.
- c. Adopt best practices in diversion, reunification, relocation, and rapid exit solutions, including the use of dedicated diversion specialists, to shorten shelter stays and prevent rough sleeping.
- d. Create dedicated housing navigators to support timely document collection, enrollments, unit selection and move-ins for individuals assigned to rehousing interventions.
- e. Strengthen initiatives to prevent individuals from losing their housing and increase stabilization services across the city, including the expansion of housing retention services within permanent supportive housing and other affordable housing environments.

2. Support local access to institutional behavioral health facilities with crisis beds and transitional and long-term care options for the most complex cases.

- a. Collaborate with county and state partners to enhance local access to crisis stabilization and transitional care beds for individuals with complex behavioral health needs.
- b. Support the county in securing sustainable funds for high-needs behavioral healthcare services.
- c. Align capacities for complex care coordination between stakeholders from the City of Boulder, Boulder County, the criminal justice system and other systems of care to provide intensive coordination and placement for complex cases.
- d. Prioritize complex cases for appropriate housing placements across the region.

3. Maximize and expand affordable housing development to include alternative and short-term options for traveling and transient individuals.

- a. Continue building traditional affordable housing, including Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) within Boulder and expand throughout Boulder County
- b. Consider opportunities that allow private sector development of short-term affordable accommodations such as microunits, boarding houses, hostels etc.



4. Set clear boundaries to prevent rough sleeping and ensure health and safety for everyone in the City of Boulder.

- a. Reimagine engagement with transient populations by actively managing the location of engagement events focused on newcomers to encourage responsible citizenship and healthy living arrangements – ex. replace food and supply distribution at public parks with events at the day shelter.
- b. Communicate clear boundaries around expectations for behaviors in public space in Boulder. Scripts for frontline staff engaging with individuals sleeping outside can include language like: “We don’t allow sleeping outside in public spaces in Boulder. You’ll have to go to a shelter, find other indoor accommodations in Boulder or head to your next destination. We can help with that.”
- c. Expand dedicated capacity to assist individuals in returning to safe housing options outside Boulder when appropriate, with dignity and support.
- d. Build on the SAMPS model to effectively enforce the camping prohibition within city limits, continuing with efforts to proactively manage critical public spaces such as the Boulder Creek corridor and the Civic Area.

Integrated Accommodations for Special Populations

Among individuals experiencing homelessness are a small number of unique subpopulations that are best served with specialized services integrated into the larger homelessness response system. This ensures all individuals are supported to access the full range of homelessness response pathways and not limited to only specialized services.

These integrated services include designated safe spaces and trained staff for unaccompanied youth, young adults, victims of intimate partner violence and LGBTQI+ individuals as well as mobile services that can support individuals to safely utilize the non-specialized homelessness response services.

This applies to crisis interventions, rehousing pathways and housing stabilization services, making integration of tailored support services a more scalable solution than creating distinct and segmented systems. Given this, sustaining these existing services or making adjustments to ensure specialized services can meet individuals’ needs regardless of where and how they use the homelessness response system is a core strategy.

- a. **Unaccompanied Youth** – While only a small population of unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness present in Boulder County each year, it is the primary responsibility of the County to ensure seamless integration of safety planning within the homelessness response network and provide emergency and long-term sheltering of unaccompanied minors.
- b. **Young Adults Ages 18-24** – Young adults experiencing homelessness need access to developmentally appropriate and reliable relationships that can assist them in navigating to safe shelter, transitional supports and stable living arrangements. Drop-in locations, specialized outreach teams and integrated shelter and housing capacity with specialized services can effectively meet this need and should be sustained to ensure homeless episodes are brief and non-recurring for young adults.
- c. **Victims of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)** – Individuals fleeing IPV often face heightened risks of continued harm, especially when attempting to access homelessness services that

are not designed with their specific safety and confidentiality needs in mind. Integrating IPV-informed practices into the broader homelessness response system ensures that victims do not have to choose between personal safety and shelter. This includes the availability of confidential and trauma-informed shelter options, safety planning integrated into all intake and referral systems, and staff trained to recognize and respond to signs of abuse. Partnerships with domestic violence service providers are essential to embedding these protections into mainstream service delivery, while also offering seamless referrals to specialized IPV programs when needed. These efforts support survivors in accessing crisis interventions, rapid rehousing, and stabilization services without re-traumatization or exclusion.

d. LGBTQI+ – People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, or otherwise gender or sexual minority can encounter discrimination, stigma, and violence in traditional homelessness services, leading to underutilization or unsafe experiences. Ensuring the homelessness response system is inclusive and affirming of LGBTQI+ individuals involves embedding culturally competent and identity-affirming practices across all service types. Transgender and gender non-conforming individuals, in particular, may need access to gender-affirming facilities and housing placement supports that align with their identity while ensuring full access to the array of rehousing pathways articulated in this strategy document.

System Modeling to Guide Strategic Investments



System modeling and predictive analytics were used to consider the array of investments needed and possible timelines to reach an end to unsheltered homelessness in Boulder County. While the input data had some limitations due to inconsistent data entry between the HMIS and the county database, the resulting model for individuals experiencing homelessness provides adequate insights to guide strategic investments over the next five years. It is recommended that this exercise be repeated every two years to evaluate impact and future conditions.

To achieve an end to unsheltered homelessness, the Boulder region must:

- 1. Scale investments to effectively serve and exit all inflow each year (1,250 individuals)**
- 2. Invest targeted resources to quickly reduce and eliminate long episodes of homelessness (250 long-staying individuals with over 365 days of homelessness in Boulder County)**

Two important factors drive strategic considerations when using this system model. First, the longer it takes to scale the system to serve all annual inflow, the more long-staying individuals accumulate in the system.

Second, the longer an individual remains homeless, the more intensive and costly the required intervention is to exit homelessness. Given this, this strategy includes tactics to intervene in homelessness early and quickly exit individuals from homelessness. Simply put, it is better to move individuals through a process toward remedy, progressively adding supports, than to let them languish and deteriorate in homelessness while awaiting a solution that is difficult to access.

As a result, the plan aims to strategically balance investments to:

- Serve as many individuals as possible with the existing shelter capacity by reducing the average length of stay from 73 days to 46 days.

- Rapidly reduce the number of unsheltered individuals by setting boundaries and intervening to provide diversion and problem-solving supports early, when applicable.
- Leverage the pipeline of new affordable housing and permanent supportive housing for long-staying individuals.

With these factors in mind, the following system model was prepared to guide strategic investments for the City of Boulder and its partners.

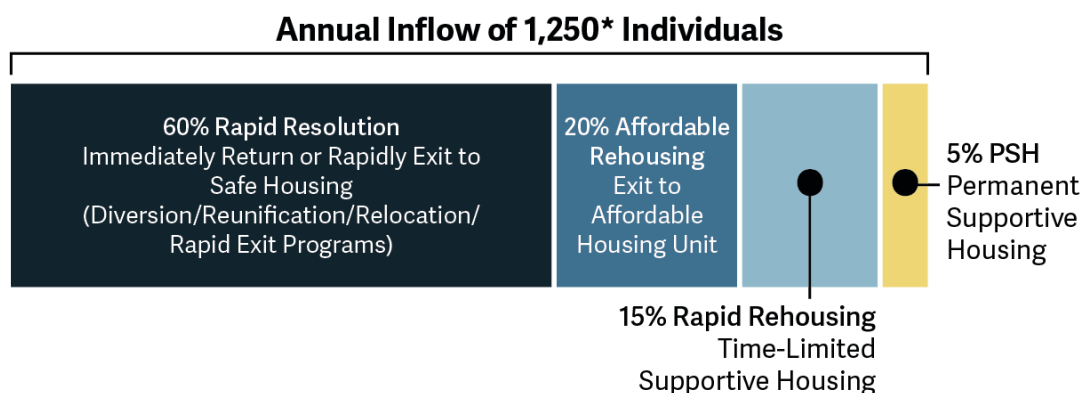
Exhibit 1 - Desired Future State: Fully Optimized Homelessness Response System

This fully Optimized Homelessness Response System defines the scale and structure of a homelessness response system that can provide timely, effective housing solutions for every individual entering homelessness each year. It offers a clear framework for how the community can meet the full range of housing needs, with the goal of ensuring no one remains unhoused longer than necessary.

Undergirding this optimized system is a redesign of service delivery that organizes all investments around these pathways with standardized programming, funding formulas, and dedicated service capacity, while also sustaining current levels of interim housing options.

The following details the required exit pathways and relative scale needed to provide timely remedy for every individual experiencing homelessness each year.

- **Rapid Resolution:** Through enhanced diversion and rapid resolution programming that offers timely one-time assistance coupled with skilled problem-solving, 60% of individuals can be assisted to return or rapidly exit to safe housing.
- **Affordable Housing:** Another 20% of individuals will occupy shelter and transitional housing programs while waiting on access to affordable housing solutions in Boulder, averaging about 120 days in homeless programs.
- **Rapid Rehousing & Permanent Supportive Housing:** The final 20% of individuals will require a deeper intervention of supportive housing, both permanent supportive housing and time-limited rapid rehousing programs and will be quickly assisted to navigate the enrollment, document collection, unit selection and move-in process within 45 days on average.
- For a small number of individuals, temporary institutional care will be required before entering supportive housing and these complex cases will need to be managed and prioritized to avoid long and repeated stays in homelessness.



*Annual inflow and exit data calculated using Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Average Time from Entry to Exit:
46 Days

Individuals Experiencing Homelessness > 364 Days: 0

Return to Homelessness Within 12 Months: <9%

Exhibit 2 - Investment and Programmatic Priorities to End Rough Sleeping in Boulder By 2028

To reach an effective end to unsheltered homelessness and the ability to prevent rough sleeping, the system model calculated the relative investment gap in each pathway (presented as a five-year average), the required performance targets to ensure continuous shelter availability, and the necessary practice adjustments to reach the goal in three-years. The following summarizes these results, establishing the investment priorities and practice requirements to guide city contracting. Appendix A includes a detailed mapping of current city investments against these priorities.

Health and Safety Response

Intervention Type	Description	Target Population	Average Cost per Person	Annual Resource Gap (5 Yr Avg)	Target Length of Stay (Avg)	Practice Requirements
Sustain Emergency Shelter (Night/Day)	Serve as central intake for individuals experiencing homelessness and provide for basic needs of individuals experiencing homelessness including overnight beds, meals, and hygiene services.	All individuals experiencing homelessness	\$3,496	\$0	46 Days	Fully integrate day services focused on dedicated capacity to divert or rapidly exit individuals from homelessness and provide targeted housing navigation.
Targeted Unsheltered Engagement (SAMPS, HOT)	Primary response team to bring individuals into care and maintain health and safety of public spaces once encampments have been resolved.	Encampments and other individuals sleeping rough	NA (Total current budget \$4.1m)	\$0	< 1 night outside	Create an approach that includes zone management, workflows and escalation protocols with targeted outreach and engagement partners.

Intervention Type	Description	Target Population	Average Cost per Person	Annual Resource Gap (5 Yr Avg)	Target Length of Stay (Avg)	Practice Requirements
Public Space Management and Closure Maintenance	Primary managers of public space enforcing rules and assisting individuals to safely and legally use public spaces	All users of public spaces	NA	City-wide services funded through an array of sources	NA	Will become the first level of engagement and enforcement once community reaches an end to rough sleeping.

Accelerating Exits from Homelessness

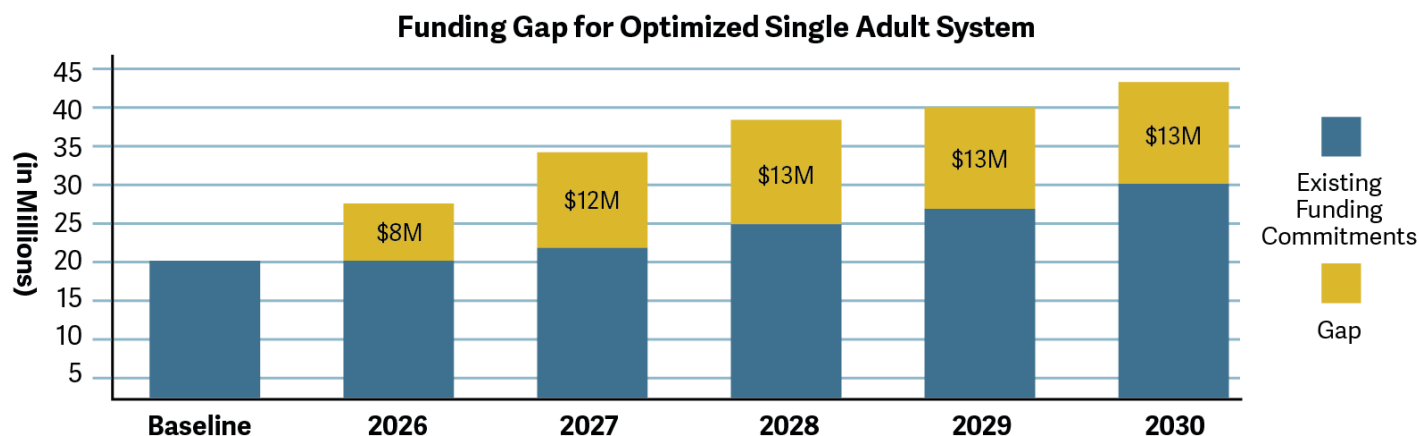
Intervention Type	Description	Target Population	Average Cost per Person	Annual Resource Gap (5 Yr Avg)	Target Length of Stay (Avg)	Practice Requirements
Rapid Resolution (Diversion, Reunification, Relocation, Rapid Exit)	Early intervention to quickly return or relocate to safe housing	60% of Annual Inflow 30% of current long-staying individuals	\$2,507	\$2,053,855	14 Days	All new entrants offered rapid resolution through dedicated specialists with access to flexible pool of resources guided by standardized training and workflows.
Affordable Housing	Extended shelter stay while waiting for access to an affordable housing unit with residential services	20% of Annual Inflow	City of Boulder Affordable Housing Development Pipeline with Resident Services (resident services may require additional financing strategies and are not included in this model)	NA	120 Days	Establish wait-list preferences for individuals experiencing homelessness in city funded affordable housing developments.

Intervention Type	Description	Target Population	Average Cost per Person	Annual Resource Gap (5 Yr Avg)	Target Length of Stay (Avg)	Practice Requirements
Rapid Rehousing	Twelve months of rental subsidy and stabilization supports	15% of Annual Inflow	\$41,454	\$9,647,134	60 Days	Standardize rental assistance formulas and process, case load ratios, access to regional rental units, and stabilization practices and reporting through training and workflows.
Permanent Supportive Housing	Non-time limited rental subsidies and stabilization services	5% of Annual Inflow 65% of current long-staying individuals	\$43,774 (excludes capital costs)	\$3,228,49 (excludes capital costs)	60 Days	Standardize case load ratios and access to retention team and peer supports across all PSH.
Higher Levels of Care	Immediate crisis intervention coupled with institutional care to stabilize	5% of current long-staying individuals	Funded via Behavioral Health System (will require expanded funding)	NA	NA	Empower crisis intervention team to compel individuals into care and provide institutional care until able to live independently. Coordinate discharge direct to housing.



Exhibit 3 - Total System Funding Needed to Reach & Sustain an End to Rough Sleeping in Boulder by 2028

Exhibit 3 represents the total funding required each year to reach the strategic goal of ending rough sleeping. The calculation is agnostic of funding source and based on a slot cost figure, the estimated annual cost per “unit” of service. This is not an accounting of existing funds but rather a projection of the funding that supports the homelessness response system (dark blue) and the projected costs to create a fully optimized system to handle annual inflow (yellow). The charts above provide a more detailed breakdown of the line items costs averaged over five-years.



Measuring Success

An optimized homelessness response system functions to make homelessness brief and nonrecurring, regardless of the shifting economic and affordability conditions that can impact inflow. As such, the following system performance measures can serve as critical vital signs to measure the relative health of the response system and its progress toward optimization.

System Performance Measure	Measurement Tool	Target for an Optimized System
Unsheltered Homelessness	Point-In-Time Count	0
Length of Homelessness	HMIS - Entry to Exit	46 Day Average
Chronic and Long-Term Homelessness	Point-In-Time Count, HMIS Long-Staying List	0
Returns to Homelessness	HMIS – Return to receive homeless services within 12 months of exit from homelessness	<9%

Existing dashboards should be enhanced to include additional initiative-based operational information, to track real-time performance. These dashboards should focus on exits from homelessness and performance of each exit pathway, including lease-up rates, return rates and timeliness measures aggregated by race and other equity considerations.

Implementation Plan Overview



Milestone 1: Eliminate and prevent long episodes of homelessness (over 365 days)

- **Strategy 1: Prioritize current long-staying individuals for exit interventions.**
 - Identify all long-staying individuals and maintain a by-name list.
 - Actively manage the by-name list to prioritize individuals for exit interventions using case conferencing and a shared data system.
 - Secure funding to expand exit interventions for long-staying individuals, including negotiating for more waitlist preferences within affordable housing properties, expansion of regional rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing units.
 - Assign complex cases to a complex needs team for intensive coordination and appropriate long-term, service-rich housing placements throughout the region.
 - Actively manage by-name list, sorting by length of stay to monitor for timely intervention and prevention of long-stays.
- **Strategy 2: Expand and enhance exit interventions to prevent long lengths of stays.**
 - Create standardized program model for rapid resolution and rapid rehousing interventions.
 - Create workflows to integrate rapid resolution into day and night shelter.
 - Secure funding to expand and scale rapid resolution across day and night shelter.
 - With the help of experts, train rapid resolution specialists on scripts, workflows, problem solving best practices, and use of flexible funds.

Milestone 2: Reach an end to rough sleeping

- **Strategy 1: Enhance crisis care and stabilization pathways for complex cases.**
 - Partner with county and state entities to secure access to local and state crisis beds and institutional care for treatment and stabilization.
 - Assign cases to the complex needs team to coordinate discharge planning and ensure continuity of care and appropriate housing options are secured.
 - Assist individuals with complex cases in returning to or accessing specialized housing outside Boulder when appropriate.
- **Strategy 2: Establish clear boundaries to ensure health and safety for all.**
 - Building on past experiences of SAMPS, implement an approach of focused enforcement of the camping prohibition critical public spaces.
 - Centralize all unsheltered engagement and supply distribution events at the Day Service Center to ensure more comprehensive access to basic needs services and exit pathways.
 - Amplify diversion, reunification and relocation interventions from Day Shelter to prevent rough sleeping.
 - Continue to maximize affordable and accessible housing development region-wide including the integration of short-term affordable accommodations such as hostels, boarding houses, microunits etc.

Response Plan for Families Experiencing Housing Instability in the City of Boulder



Preamble

The City of Boulder's 2017 Homelessness Strategy anchored to a vision of a community where both families and individuals have access to stable housing in Boulder. Since the creation of this strategy, the Boulder community has united to respond to family homelessness and economic instability, with a rigorous commitment to housing as the key driver for a stable family life.

This community is leveraging city and county investments in stabilization-focused interventions to support at-risk families before they fall into literal homelessness—and the results are clear: with few families experiencing literal homelessness, these efforts are working to prevent displacement and support a pathway to stabilization.

But Boulder's limited stock of attainable housing and continued increases in cost-of-living present challenges for ensuring all families have stable futures in Boulder.

This strategy builds from the collaborative work of the countywide Family Resource Network to prevent literal family homelessness, stabilize families at-risk of displacement, and reach a future state where all families in Boulder have reliable housing and stable futures.

This strategy update proposes a vision for formalizing and scaling a comprehensive, coordinated housing and services delivery system referred to in the document as "family response system," comprised of the City of Boulder, Boulder County, City of Longmont and several nonprofit service providers. This ecosystem of partners will deliver housing services to stabilize all low- and moderate-income families in the Boulder community.

The role of a coordinated system is not just to respond to the crisis of homelessness, but to deliver preventative services to stabilize families long-term that are intertwined with other public services that enhance Boulder's economic vitality, unique local culture, and population health.

To that end, this strategy update defines a more refined vision to guide investments and programming, one rooted in enhancing the economic vitality, longevity and health of Boulder through the stabilization of families. It asserts that housing is the basis for family stabilization and a necessary precursor for positive social, economic and health outcomes across the region.

Current Conditions

1. Many families served by the city's stabilization programs are from Boulder, indicating that economic shocks are impacting local families desiring to stay in the community.

- In 2023, EFAA—Boulder's primary access point for families experiencing housing instability—reported that the average annual household income among families seeking support was just 11% of the Area Median Income, equivalent to \$14,600 for a family of four.
- The family response system, comprised of the City of Boulder, Boulder County, City of Longmont and several nonprofit service providers served an estimated 1,452 households in Boulder in FY24.
- Although comprehensive data is not available, estimates informed by this strategy's system modeling exercise showed that the family response system is serving about half of families at or below 50% of area median income.



2. While the City of Boulder has invested heavily in its affordable housing stock since 2017, there is still limited availability of attainable family housing and increases in cost of living are creating continued instability for thousands of families in Boulder.

- Since 2019, rents have increased by nearly 50% in the City of Boulder, with a current three-bedroom Fair Market Rent between \$2,700 and \$3,000, requiring a family of four to have an income of over \$108,000.
- The City of Boulder has 1,160 affordable units in its affordable housing development pipeline, with 188 earmarked for families over the next five years.

3. A formalized family response system would be uniquely positioned to focus on preventing literal homelessness among families, operating with practices and policies distinct from those serving literally homeless single individuals.

- Since 2017, the region has advanced a proactive approach to family homelessness prevention through the creation of the Family Resource Network (FRN) and its Family Homelessness Subcommittee.
- Participants in the FRN Family Homelessness Subcommittee use the expanded McKinney-Vento Act definition of homelessness to reach families before they need emergency shelter and allows providers to proactively reach families at risk, remove barriers to stabilization, and expand access to housing interventions that go beyond immediate shelter needs.
- The following goals guide the region's homelessness prevention activities:
 - Ensure that no family is living unsheltered.
 - Shorten episodes of family homelessness by providing resources that enable families to safely reenter permanent housing as quickly as possible.
 - Link families to the benefits, supports and community-based services they need to achieve and maintain housing stability.
 - Identify and implement effective prevention methods to help families avoid homelessness.
- The City of Boulder utilizes this framework and local access point to integrate unique solutions within the Boulder city limits, given the extreme economic conditions necessitating a collaborative approach that braids limited public resources.
- By blending targeted prevention and housing stabilization strategies, the system extends beyond traditional homelessness response—promoting family well-being and strengthening the resilience of both families and the broader community across the region.

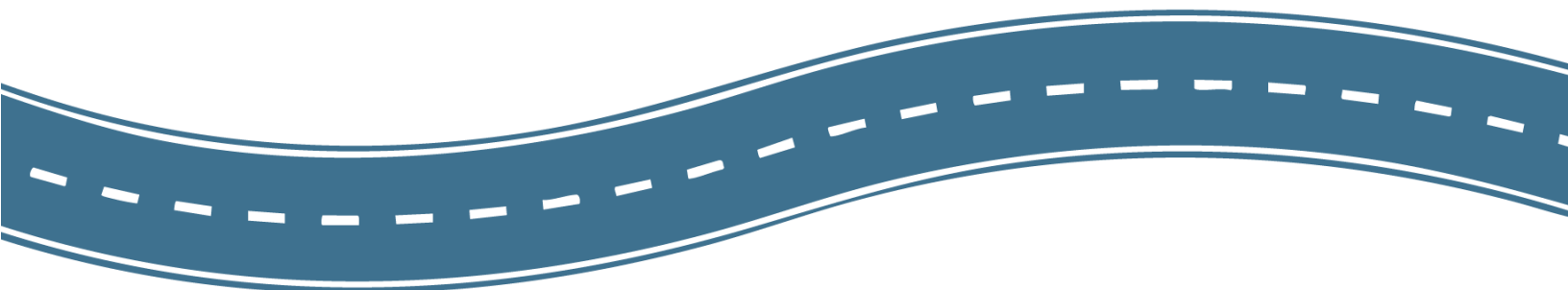
Roadmap: Stabilizing All Low- and Moderate-Income Families Living in Boulder



Key Milestone

In Boulder, families with children earning 50% of the AMI— approximately \$75,300 for a household of four— do not earn enough to live in the city without assistance. According to the Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado (2022), a family of four requires an estimated \$107,500 annually to meet basic needs without public or private support. While the City of Boulder has expanded its supply of affordable housing to assist low- and moderate-income households, families at or below 50% AMI threshold still face a significant gap and represent 35% of households in Boulder.

Currently, Boulder’s family response system reaches only about half of the eligible households at or below 50% AMI. Closing this gap by scaling the full array of supportive services— prevention, temporary housing, housing navigation, and stabilization supports— is a logical and achievable next milestone in the broader goal of stabilizing all low- and moderate-income families in Boulder.



Core Strategies

1. Move from a Collection of Programs to a Formalized Boulder Family Response System That Offers Standardized Solutions

- a. Develop standard, shared program models that reflect each component and pathway represented in the system modeling to create efficiency, predictable capacity, and the ability to scale to meet demand.
- b. Create a standard triage tool to assess the level of economic subsidy and support services needed to achieve immediate housing stabilization.
- c. Use system model as a planning framework to target resources to standardized tiers of economic subsidies tailored to varying levels of need and focused on immediate housing stabilization.
- d. Integrate the Critical Time Intervention Model, a time-limited, evidence-based case management model designed to support individuals and families during periods of transition to stable housing.

2. Create a Shared Data System to Track Outcomes, Effectively Plan and Target Resources, and Infuse Predictive Analytics to Reach all At-Risk Families

- a. Create a shared data system for all city and county-funded programs to track standard system-wide outcomes.
- b. Infuse system modeling into annual planning and budgeting exercises to organize for scaled investments.
- c. Then, utilize a data warehouse structure to store and track data across public entities serving families including county safety net services, positioning the family response system to use predictive analytics to proactively identify families at risk of housing instability and homelessness.

3. Expand Accessible Housing Options for Families

- a. Engage with the private market and landlords to identify, secure, and preserve “naturally occurring affordable housing” for rehousing efforts, with a focus on units that are suitable for families with children.
- b. Expand dedicated vouchers and affordable housing units for families in Boulder experiencing housing instability.
- c. Expand the residential service program through the Housing Authority as an essential homelessness prevention and stabilization service.

System Modeling to Guide Strategic Investments



System modeling was used to consider the array of pathways needed to serve an estimated 1,700 households with children earning 50% or below Area Median Income in the City of Boulder. With no single, shared data system available, data was collected manually from different partners and in work sessions utilized to make reasonable assumptions about pathways to support the system model and gap calculations. Because each agency provides assistance at different cost levels per family, there is not any standardized cost data. It is recommended that this exercise be repeated by the city once some standardization of program models is complete and cost data can be considered.

To reach the first milestone of stabilizing all families with children living at or below 50% Area Median Income and set a course for stabilizing all low- and moderate-income families, the Boulder region must:

- 1. Sustain investments to effectively prevent or limit literal homelessness among families with children.**
- 2. Incrementally scale services that provide safety net and stabilization support for any low- to moderate-income family experiencing housing instability and at-risk of displacement and/or homelessness.**

In Boulder, a combination of prevention and immediate rehousing solutions effectively prevents or limits literal homelessness among families with children. While about 400 families with children experience some form of homelessness (under the expanded definition), these families receive immediate program support from at least one, if not multiple, government and/or nonprofit agencies to put them on a path to safe and stable housing.

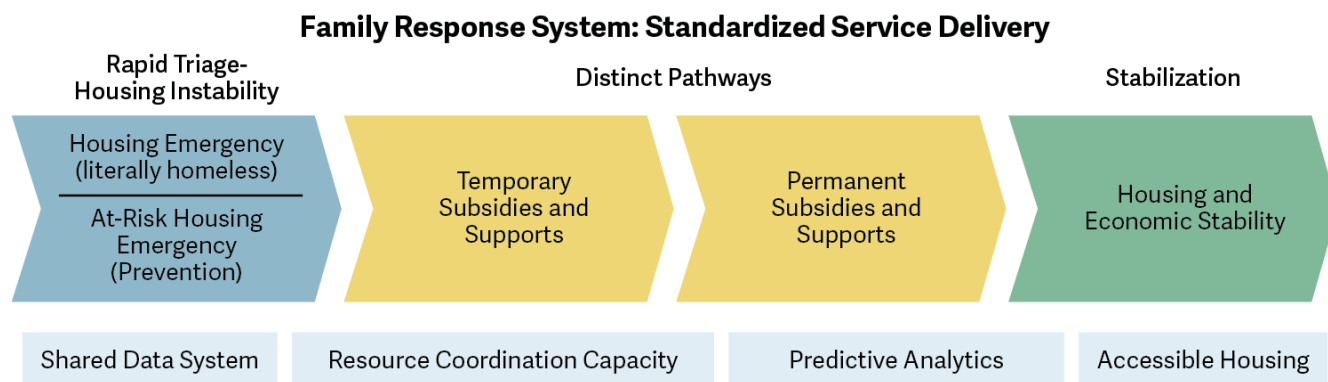
These programs work to prevent families from experiencing long periods of homelessness. Unlike the single adult homelessness response system, where more emphasis and resources are needed to target chronic homelessness, this strategy places additional focus for the family response system on housing stabilization efforts.

Given this, the focus of this system modeling exercise is to identify the total amount of capacity required to meet the milestone of stabilizing all households with children living at or below 50% Area Median Income over the next five years.

Exhibit 1 - Desired Future State: Family Response System

This system model defines the scale and structure of a homelessness response system focused on families that can provide timely, effective housing stabilization solutions for every household with children at or below 50% AMI. It offers a clear framework for how the community can meet the full range of housing stabilization needs, with the goal of ensuring no family at-risk of displacement or homelessness is without access to stabilizing support.

Ungirding this system is a vision for a desired future state where families are easily assessed and stabilized through a comprehensive and formalized family response system. The following framework was the initial guide for all system modeling activities.



Next, the model sought to detail required intervention pathways and relative scale needed to provide timely remedy for every household with children in the target income range experiencing housing instability each year.

- **Prevention Programs:** Tailored prevention programs typically fall into three categories: one-time assistance to resolve immediate threats to housing stability, short- to medium-term stabilization services, and longer-term financial support. Local examples reflect this range of support, such as the Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance Services (EPRAS) Program, EFAA's Keep Families Housed initiative, and the Elevate Boulder guaranteed income pilot, which offers up to 24 months of unrestricted assistance. 76% of households can be stabilized in their existing housing and prevent displacement or further crisis.
- **Emergency Sheltering or Short-Term Housing:** If families experience displacement from their existing housing (an estimated 400 households annually or 23% of households at 50% AMI or below), a variety of options are available to ensure immediate health and safety of families, including access to motel vouchers, short-term housing, or secure shelters for victims of intimate partner violence. All crisis interventions are connected to the following exit pathways:

- **Transitional Housing:** Designed for families who need more time and support to regain stability, transitional housing offers structured living environments with case management and services. It typically lasts 12-24 months and helps families work toward permanent housing while addressing barriers like employment or childcare.
- **Rapid Rehousing:** Rapid Rehousing connects families experiencing homelessness with up to 12 months of rental assistance and case management. It's focused on preventing displacement and promoting long-term housing stability.
- **Supportive Housing:** Affordable housing communities are setting aside dedicated units for families exiting homelessness that include rental subsidies and supportive resident services. Residents pay approximately 30-40% of their income towards rent, and the remainder is subsidized through federal funding. These communities also offer onsite services tailored to the needs of families experiencing homelessness or those who may have members with disabilities. Resident service coordinators provide personalized support to promote independent living, including healthcare referrals, financial counseling, wellness programming, and opportunities for community engagement. These efforts support families reintegrating into communities and foster connected, resilient housing environments.

To reach the defined milestone, the system must be scaled to effectively stabilize all at-risk households in the target income range. Using data provided by the city it was estimated that each year, approximately 1,700 families at or below 50% AMI will enter the Boulder Family Housing Stabilization System. The majority—around 76% or 1,300 families—will be screened and connected to targeted prevention services that stabilize families before crisis escalates. An additional 14% access shelter via domestic violence (DV)-specific channels, while 9% receive short-term motel placements for immediate safety and triage. These initial routing mechanisms serve as gateways to tailored stabilization options including rapid rehousing, transitional housing, and long-term affordable units with services. By aligning and standardizing these pathways within a coordinated system, the strategy ensures swift access, appropriate service matching, and efficient progression toward permanent housing solutions for at-risk families.

Boulder Family Stabilization System Modeled for Households at or Below 50% AMI

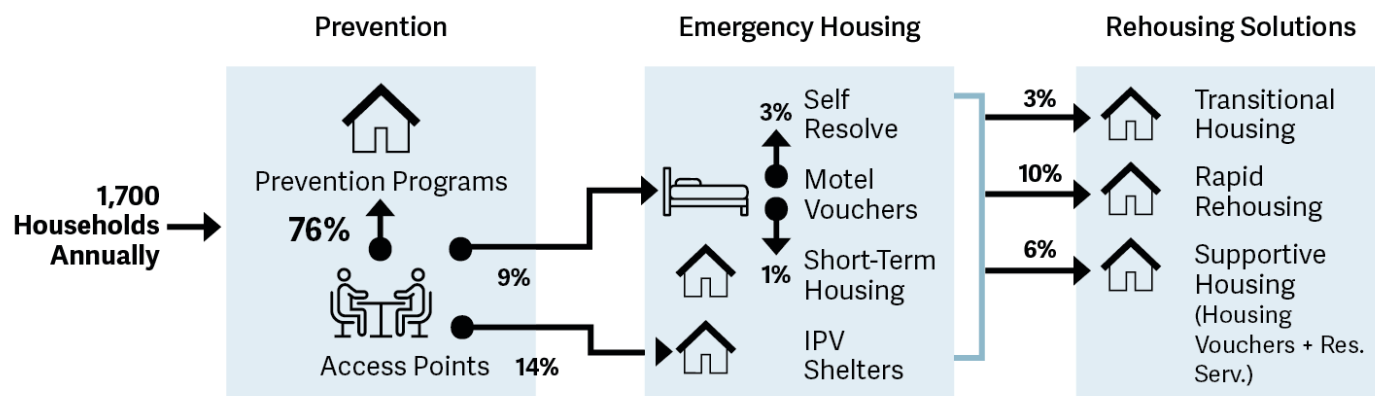
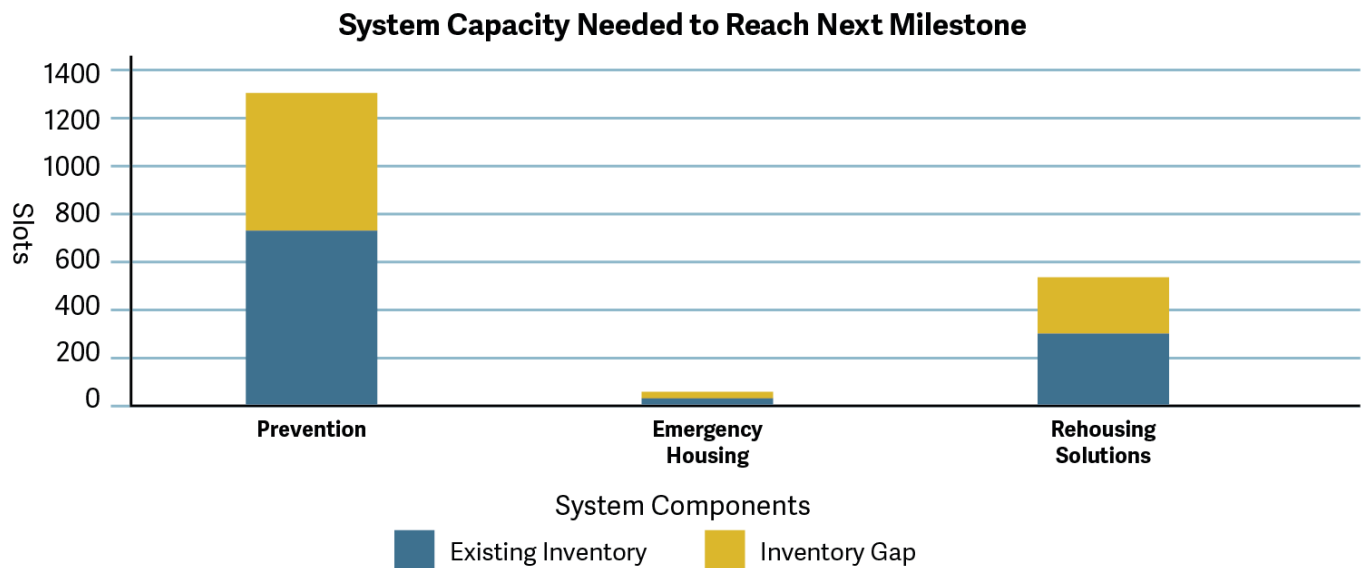


Exhibit 2 - Investment and Programmatic Priorities to Reach Milestone

To prevent homelessness for approximately 1,300 families annually and to rehouse approximately 400 each year, the system must strategically scale interventions that provide adequate levels of tailored support to stabilize families and avoid displacement. This analysis highlights where focused investment can deliver measurable impact, build system resilience, and meet shared commitments to family stability.

The chart below outlines existing gaps based on the projected need for each intervention pathway. The most significant gap—over 500 slots—is in prevention followed by rapid rehousing and supportive housing programs, underscoring the role of subsidies and services to stabilize families.

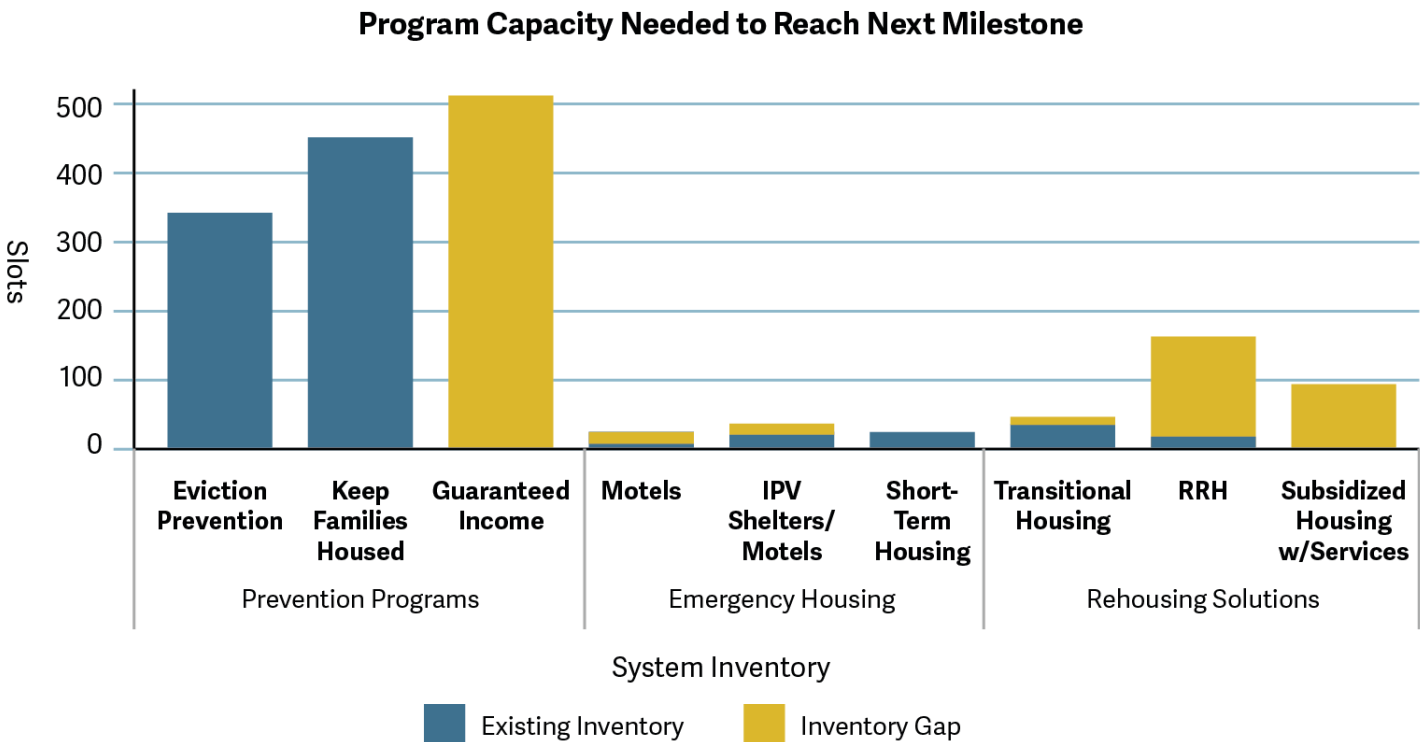


The City of Boulder, Boulder County and the Metro Denver Continuum of Care (CoC) each contribute programming toward a comprehensive family housing stabilization system in Boulder. This manifests as an array of programs that provide a full spectrum of interventions within each program pathway. The system model considered these programmatic differences and provided a more detailed model based on the programs defined below.

Intervention Pathway	Current Program	Description	Target Length of Assistance (Avg)
Prevention and Stabilization	Eviction Prevention	One-time problem solving and assistance	One-time
	Keep Families Housed	Up to 3 months of assistance	3 Months
	Guaranteed Income	Up to 24 months of assistance	12 Months
Emergency Housing	Emergency Hoteling/ DV Shelter	Centralized Emergency hoteling and DV sheltering	30 Days
	Short Term Housing	Short term housing and services	4 Months
Rehousing Pathways	Transitional Housing	Up to 24 months of housing and services	12 Months
	Rapid Rehousing/ Housing Stabilization Program (HSP)	Up to 24 months of housing and services	12 Months
	Supportive Housing	Housing vouchers with services	12 Months

The chart below outlines existing gaps based on the projected need for each program included within the intervention pathways.

- The most significant gap is in the guaranteed income pathway. Currently, the City of Boulder has a guaranteed income pilot that serves both single individuals and families, Elevate Boulder; it does not have sustained funding. Data indicates that guaranteed income programs allow participants to experience greater housing stability and feel less risk of eviction, as part of increased long-term financial stability.
- The other prevention programs, eviction prevention and Keep Families Housed, could be rebalanced to add this additional program once the pilot is complete.
- Motel capacity is limited and flexible resources are needed to expand and contract the program to meet demand in real-time.
- Existing rapid rehousing capacity is managed by the CoC and Boulder County. Significant expansion is required to support families to remain in Boulder and will require local investment to provide flexible subsidies to families.
- The demand for subsidized housing with services for families remains high. While Boulder is assertively investing in the development of subsidized housing with services as well as permanent supportive housing for households experiencing chronic homelessness, there continues to be specific demand for deeply affordable and housing with services for families exiting homelessness with more intensive and longer-term needs.



Measuring Success



As the Boulder Family Housing Stabilization System takes shape, the following performance metrics will serve as baseline measures for the growth and success of the new system. Performance metrics will center on measurable outcomes that reflect system effectiveness and equity. Core targets include:

- Increased housing retention rates and faster rehousing timelines, sorted by demographics—indicators of a streamlined, responsive, and equitable intervention system.
- Reduced episodes of homelessness or housing instability – indicators of effective triage and integration of the critical time intervention model.
- Number of families served sorted by AMI and system exit destinations – indicators of scale and effectiveness at keeping families from being displaced from Boulder.

These benchmarks should guide annual investment decisions and operational adjustments as the community builds and scales.

Implementation Plan Overview



Milestone 1: A scaled and coordinated family response system that effectively serves all households with children earning at or below 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

- **Strategy 1: Standardize program models for efficiency, predictability and scalability.**
 - Fully map current program landscape—document service providers, funding streams, target populations, and intervention models.
 - Define standardized components and pathways based on system modeling (e.g., prevention, rapid rehousing, stabilization).
 - Convene providers to co-design shared program models for each component that define target population served, amount of financial assistance and type of services provided, and desired outcomes.
 - Revise and fully deploy triage framework to guide system efforts—identify key variables (income, housing history, risk factors) and align with desired service tiers.
 - Create and implement a standard triage assessment for agencies to more efficiently match households in need to the right resource allocation and services
 - Codify tiered subsidy guidelines aligned with housing stabilization targets; build capacity estimates for each tier.
 - Embed the standard models and tools into contracts, training, and referral processes system wide.

- **Strategy 2: Establish a shared data system to drive results and predictive action.**
 - Define system-wide outcomes and metrics tied to housing stability, service engagement, and equity.
 - Form a data governance group with city, county, nonprofit, and IT representation to guide buildout
 - Select a shared platform for programs to use; prioritize ease of use, local ownership, and integration with HMIS where possible.
 - Design and build a family risk data warehouse. Pull from shared platforms, HMIS, and safety net systems (e.g., TANF, child welfare, Medicaid).
 - Develop predictive analytics protocols to flag at-risk families early and route to stabilization pathways.
- **Strategy 3: Expand housing access and stabilization options**
 - Quantify voucher and unit needs based on system modeling and secure new resources.
 - Train staff across agencies in Critical Time Intervention (CTI); develop supervision and fidelity monitoring structure.
 - Expand the residential service program through Boulder Housing Partners, the Housing Authority for residents of Boulder.
 - Implement a unified case management approach that scales services based on household needs, while integrating economic resilience strategies to strengthen long-term housing stability.
 - Integrate economic empowerment through a coordinated structure to support training opportunities for families, financial literacy, and internship or workforce opportunities integrated with housing programs.



Appendix A: Planning Process and System Modeling Analysis



Planning Period: January – July 2025

The City of Boulder contracted with Clutch Consulting Group to implement a homeless strategy update planning process in 2025. This process focused on two key activities:

Stakeholder Engagement & Service Provider Collaboration

From February to July 2025, the city hosted four half-day working sessions with service providers, key funders, and partner systems to establish an updated vision, goal, and milestones, to inform system modeling inputs and to guide core strategies and implementation roadmaps. Additional targeted stakeholder engagement included the downtown business representatives, law enforcement and the SAMPS team, a Clinica Family Health behavioral health provider, TGTHR youth provider, individuals with lived experience, area administrators across Boulder County, and City Council Members. Finally, three internal city team work sessions were conducted to understand current conditions and guide strategies, explore city funding practices and alignment with emerging strategies, and generate implementation recommendations and supports.

February	March	April	June	July
Provider Work Session	Provider Work Session	Provider Work Session	Provider Work Session	City Team Work Session
SAMPS Leadership	City Team Work Session	Business Community	City Team Work Session	City Council Preview Meetings
City Council Presentation & Office Hours	Lived Experience Focus Group	SAMPS Leadership	Youth Provider Work Session	
Youth Provider Interview		Area Administrators	Behavioral Health Meeting	

System Modeling & Predictive Analytics

Clutch Consulting Group utilized the HUD STELLA tool accessed via the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) CoC portal to perform the system modeling analysis. MDHI assisted Clutch to extract data using additional HUD tools to analyze inflow, service utilization, and collective performance of the programs across Boulder County serving single adults experiencing homelessness. Clutch worked with the City of Boulder to define Boulder specific programs and capacities to include in the analysis.

The model is built from assumptions for each of the following:

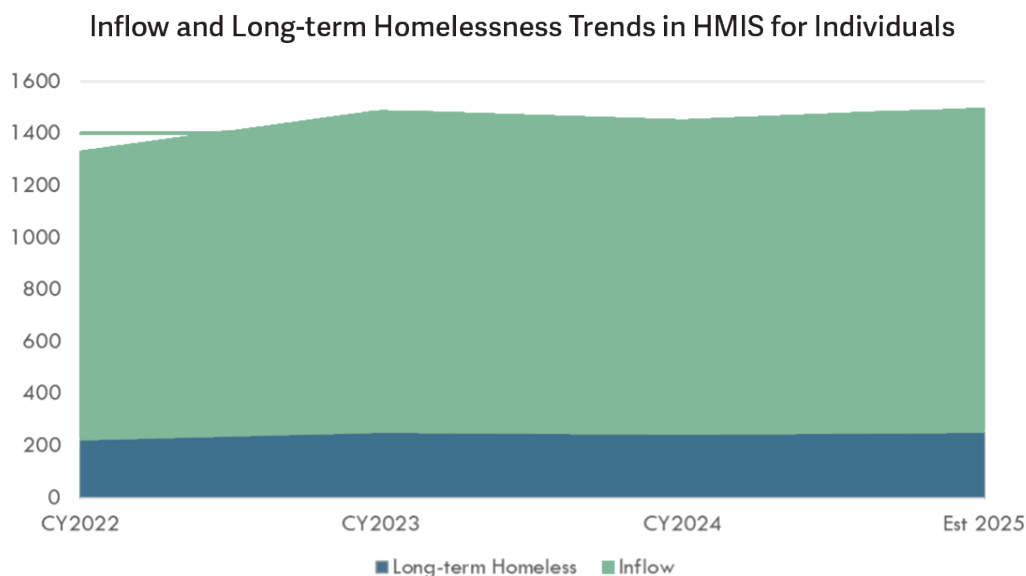
- Number of people expected to become homeless annually (first-time and people returning to homelessness) that the system needs to be able to rehouse each year in the future;
- Number of people currently experiencing long-term homelessness who need housing;

- Service strategies needed to rehouse people experiencing unsheltered and sheltered homelessness;
- Proportion of people who are unsheltered and sheltered who are expected to need each service strategy;
- Average slot costs of each project component;
- Estimates of the current inventory of shelter and permanent resources;
- Projected turnover of existing permanent supportive housing units.

Based on these inputs, system projections and resource gaps can be identified, and the associated costs can be estimated.

Estimates of the Number of People Experiencing Homelessness (Single Adults)

Annual inflow represents the number of people becoming homeless in Boulder each year, including people newly becoming homeless and returners to the homeless service system. Long term, or chronic homelessness, represents people that continue to be unhoused over multiple years. The needs of these groups are different and need to be modeled differently. The inflow and long-term estimates in the sustainability system model are based on some initial analysis of the sub-region's HMIS data, using a HUD-provided tool, known as Eva. Eva analyzes HMIS data from emergency shelters, transitional housing, permanent housing programs, street outreach and coordinated entry projects to produce estimates of the number of people flowing into homelessness annually. The annual inflow estimates from Eva for calendar years 2022-2024 indicate approximately 1,500 became homeless annually in City of Boulder and parts of Boulder County. However, we assume that a portion of those individuals are actually people who are long-term homeless but were not active in a program at the beginning of the year.



For purposes of the model, we assumed the system would need to be scaled to serve an annual inflow of 1,250 single adults, and 250 single adults experiencing long-term homelessness, or chronic homelessness. These estimates will serve to create a model that is directionally accurate and will provide community partners with a sense of the scale of investment needed. The city should work with the CoC to incorporate data from each year's annual Point-in-Time count and to conduct more detailed HMIS analysis to refine the model projections and update these estimates annually.

Projected System Response Needed to End Unsheltered Homelessness by 2028

The array of housing and service strategies used to rehouse people experiencing unsheltered and sheltered homelessness are reflected in the system model. While we assume that some will be housed directly from the streets, all pathways are modeled through shelter to ensure the system projections include enough shelter for everyone who needs a safe place to stay while working through the rehousing process. Because no single strategy will meet the needs of everyone, the model includes different combinations of outreach, shelter, and permanent housing programs, which are referred to as “pathways” to rehousing. Similar pathways may be used for people experiencing long-term homelessness and for those newly homeless, but the pathways are expected to be offered in different proportions between these two groups.

Table 1: Pathway Assumptions for the Proposed System Response summarizes these projections and estimates of the proportion of single adults expected to need each housing pathway.

Housing Exit Pathway	Est. % of Inflow Universe Using Each Housing Pathway	Est. % of Longterm Universe Using Each Housing Pathway	Avg Time in Emergency Shelter (with Housing Navigation)	Avg Time in Rapid Rehousing	Avg Time in Permanent Supportive Housing
Divert from or Rapidly Exit from Emergency Shelter	60%	35% (including 5% to Higher Levels of Care)	14 Days	-	-
Emergency Shelter to Affordable Housing	20%	-	120 Days	-	-
Emergency Shelter to Rapid Rehousing	15%	-	60 Days	1 Year	-
Emergency Shelter to Permanent Supportive Housing	5%	65%	60 Days	-	5 Years

The pathways included in the sustainability system model are described below:

Rapid Resolution (inflow and long-term pathway): Some people can resolve their homelessness without the need for shelter, when they are immediately offered problem-solving support to locate an option within their existing social network and/or a small amount of financial assistance to help access housing or reunification. This type of intervention is also called **diversion**. This group is not expected to use any nights of shelter.

Some people may need a brief stay in shelter to resolve the crisis or conflict that contributed to their homelessness. With problem-solving support and/or a small amount of financial assistance to help access housing or reunification, shelters are often able to help people with rehousing very quickly, minimizing the time someone needs to stay in shelter. This type of intervention is also called rapid exit. The average length of time this group is expected to need emergency shelter is 14 days, though some may only need a few days to resolve their crisis and others up to 30 days.

Emergency Shelter followed by Affordable Housing (Inflow pathway): Some people may be able to resolve their homelessness with only limited support from emergency shelter and simply need time before an affordable housing unit becomes available for them. This number of individuals assigned to this pathway is based on the availability of affordable housing stock in the City of Boulder rather than need, as most individuals need affordable housing. Given that the City of Boulder has maximized its affordable housing development capacity for the next five years, we can calculate this availability and account for longer lengths of stay to maximize the use of the inventory for those experiencing homelessness. The average length of time in emergency shelter for this group is expected to be 120 days.

Emergency Shelter followed by Rapid Rehousing (Inflow pathway): Some people in emergency shelter will be prioritized for Rapid Rehousing (RRH), which provides participants with temporary rental assistance and case management. People with RRH are also connected with housing navigation support that can help them find an apartment or room for rent. RRH is designed to help people stabilize in housing, find employment, enroll in benefits and identify other strategies that can help them sustain housing after assistance ends. The average length of time in emergency shelter for this group is assumed to be 60 days (of which the last 45 days will include housing navigation assistance to find a housing unit), followed by 6-24 months (average 12 months) of RRH assistance.

Emergency Shelter followed by Permanent Supportive Housing (Inflow and Long-term pathway): Many people experiencing long-term homelessness are expected to have a chronic disabling condition and will need permanent supportive housing (PSH), which provides a long-term housing subsidy, tenant-based or project-based, and intensive supportive services. In the model, those prioritized for PSH will also receive housing navigation support to expedite the housing application process and, for tenant-based PSH, the unit search process. Some portion of the people placed in PSH are expected to need a higher level of care than is typically provided as part of permanent supportive housing. If those needs are identified, PSH providers will aim to connect people with higher needs to nursing care and augmented services, when possible. People with higher needs can also be referred to enriched residential care. For others, this model includes an overlay of robust housing retention supports provided by trained peers and clinicians. This is a critical feature of the local PSH model as avoiding a return to homelessness is a paramount objective of the program and many individuals need added layers of support to stabilize.

Outreach and Housing Navigation (HN) Support: All rehousing strategies rely on outreach teams to engage those who are living in encampments and other unsheltered settings to get people inside as quickly as possible. Outreach teams are tasked with supporting encampment resolution; offering problem solving to support rapid resolution of homelessness; helping people obtain identification and other documents needed to secure housing, employment, and other benefits; rehousing people in permanent housing directly when possible; and facilitating immediate access to emergency shelter when immediate permanent housing is not possible. These same teams can and should pivot to provide housing navigation assistance to those in shelter or can provide support between those two spaces.

System Resources Needed by Project Type

Stella M, a system modeling tool developed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), was used to estimate the resources needed to support City of Boulder’s proposed rehousing strategy. The number of resources needed is directly impacted by the projected length of assistance for each project type within each pathway. For instance, based on an average length of stay of 90 days, each shelter bed will be able to serve four people per year, whereas with an average length of assistance of 12 months, each Rapid Rehousing slot would serve only one person per year. So, a different mix of resources will be needed if assumptions change about the length of assistance or the proportion of people who will need different types of assistance. Stella M can be used to model alternative scenarios as needed. (As shorthand, resources are often referred to as “slots”, a generic term for a program’s capacity to serve a household. Depending on the project type, a slot could be a shelter bed, a service slot, or a housing subsidy with supportive services.)

For the homeless response system to be effective, the system needs to have ongoing, reliable capacity to serve people experiencing homelessness. Therefore, the system model frames funding discussions around system capacity and the number of “slots” of each project type that are needed in the system, rather than on the number of people each project is contracted to serve. The chart below shows the number of slots of each type of resource needed within the system to rehouse an estimated annual inflow of 1,250, as well as a surge of resources to rehouse 250 people currently experiencing long-term homelessness, based on the pathway assumptions outlined above in Table 1. As more analysis is conducted to refine estimates of inflow and long-term homelessness, the inventory estimates should be updated.

Resources Needed to Rehouse All Long-Term Homeless by 2028 and Annual Inflow of 1,250 Single Adult Households

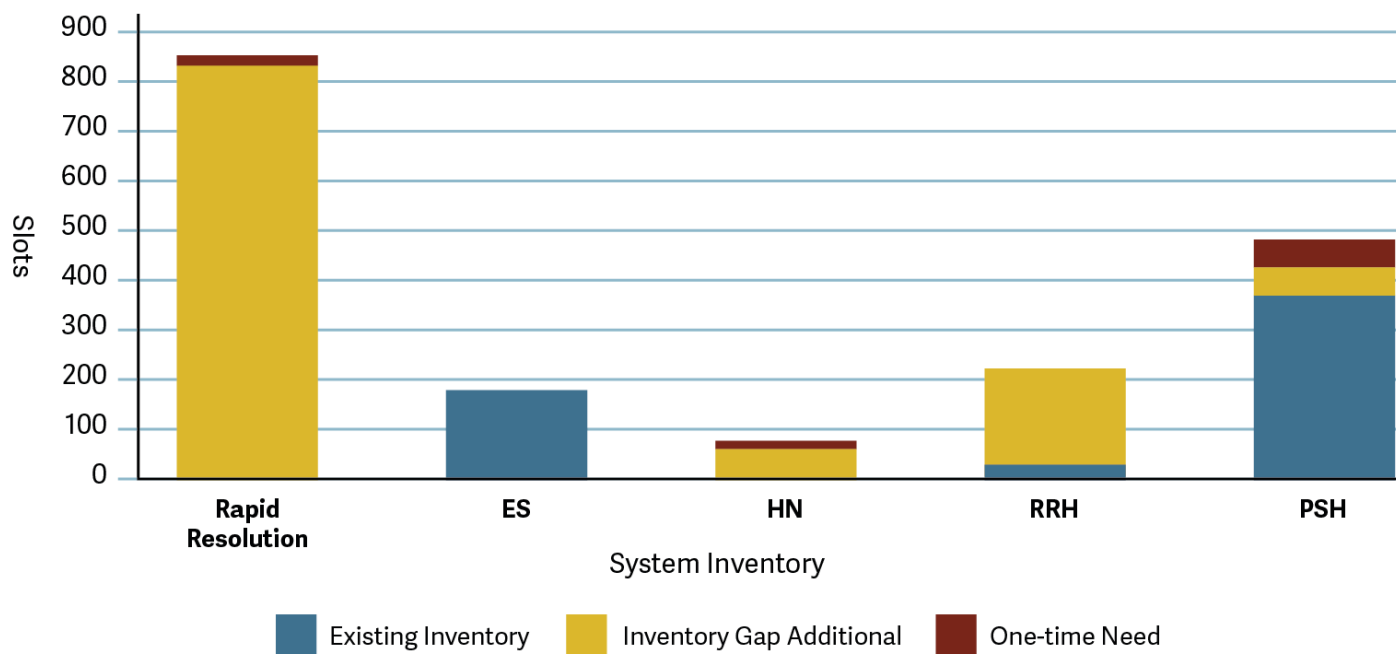


Table 2: Projected Inventory by Project Type to Sustain a Fully Optimized System shows the projected inventory needed to be added to the current inventory to rehouse those experiencing long-term homelessness, as well as those expected to become homeless annually. While some of the slots in the current system can be used to support the new housing placements, others will still be occupied by those currently enrolled. Therefore, the table shows the new inventory needed, the current inventory in the system, and the combined total projected inventory for each project type to create adequate throughput to permanent housing and ensure an emergency bed is available for everyone experiencing homelessness each year.

Project Type	Current Inventory (2025 HIC, Slots Rounded)	Estimated Resource Gap (Slots)	Total Projected Inventory Needed (Slots)	Number of Placements (People Served) Annually
Rapid Resolution	Limited	824	824	824
Housing Navigation	Limited	69	69	550
Emergency Shelter	186	-	186	1374
Rapid Rehousing	38	168	206	206
Permanent Supportive Housing	385	50	435	69

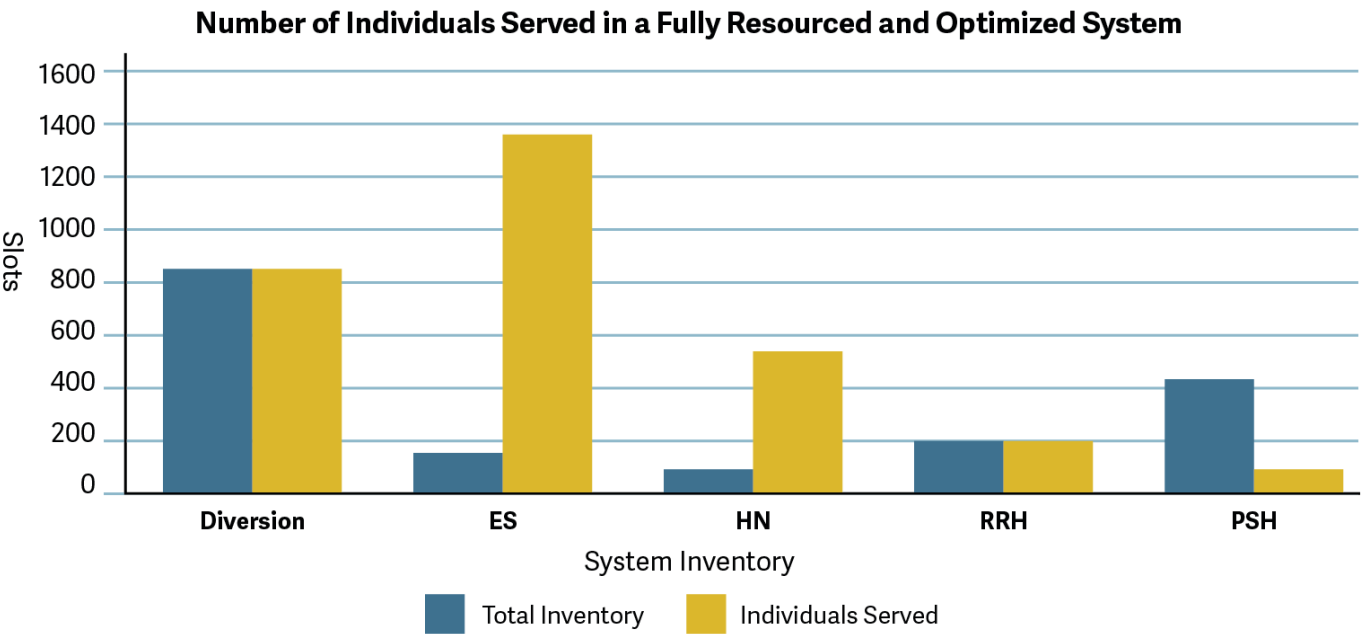
Current Inventory: The first column lists the approximate emergency and permanent housing resources already funded in the community. This current inventory will need to be sustained in order to meet throughput goals. Then the community would work to expand capacity of other project types, aiming to achieve balance across project types to maximize opportunities for throughput.

Resource Gap: The modeling underlying this plan leverages turnover slots within the current inventory to meet the needs of those expected to be served. However, for almost all project types, additional inventory is needed to balance the system and maximize the use of existing resources. Once balanced, the system can be further scaled across all project types in order to increase its capacity to rehouse more people in a year. If only part of the system is scaled, then the system will not be able to operate efficiently or fully use its resources to achieve the expected throughput.

Projected Inventory: The third column shows the sum of the new resources needed and the existing slots that must be maintained for each project type.

New Placements (New People Served) Annually: The final column shows the estimated number of people who are expected to enroll and be served by this inventory each year. Some project types like diversion and shelter have short lengths of assistance, so they are expected to serve multiple people in a single slot/unit per year. Programs like rapid rehousing that have an expected length of assistance of a year will serve one new person a year. And programs like permanent supportive housing that have lengths of stay of 5+ years, will only turnover every 5 years and therefore, the number of people served represents the fraction of units that are expected to become vacant within a given year.

A comparison of the total resources and people served is shown in the chart below.



Investments Needed to Create and Sustain a Fully Optimized Homeless Response System

New investments of approximately \$11 million annually (2026-2028) will be needed to fund the resource gap associated with a homeless response system that is scaled to meet annual demand and exit and prevent long-staying individuals by 2028. In addition, the system will need to sustain the current inventory, including investments to improve the conditions and performance of current shelter operations. Table 3 shows the estimated annual cost per unit (or slot), the estimated number of people that can be served annually per unit (slot), and the associated cost to serve a person within that project type. The \$11 million estimate is based on the annual slot cost, multiplied by the number of units within each project type that are projected to be needed to scale the system (from Table 2). These costs are initial estimates calculated with input from city staff and will need to be refined with community partners, based on a more systematic budgeting exercise. Current practice is not to fund by slot. This will be a necessary contract modification to align with the model and create more accurate slot cost estimates.

Assuming the cost of rental assistance and services will increase by approximately 10 percent each year, the amount needed grows annually to keep pace with the increased costs of program delivery (rents, salaries, and operations). Estimated annual costs to sustain the new resources in 2029 and beyond are shown in the last column of Table 3.

Project Type	Average Annual Slot Cost (2026-2028)	Estimated Number of People Served Per Slot	Approximate Cost Per Person	Estimated Average Annual Resource Gap (2026-2028)	Average Annual Investment Gap (2026-2028)	Total Estimated Investment Gap to Sustain Optimized System in 2029
Rapid Resolution	\$2,265	1	\$2,265	812	\$1,845,141	\$2,257,081
Emergency Shelter*	\$30,647	8	\$3,776	-	-	-
Housing Navigation**	\$0*	-	-	77	-	-
Rapid Rehousing	\$37,458	1	\$37,458	228	\$6,090,517	\$7,636,679
Permanent Supportive Housing***	\$39,555	1	\$39,555/year	83	\$3,344,925	\$3,483,294
Total Investment Needed					\$11,280,583	\$13,377,054

* If there are adequate housing resources, current emergency shelter should be sufficient to meet immediate shelter needs of those becoming homeless, but current facilities and programming are expected to need additional investment to improve conditions and performance.

** Dedicated housing navigation does not currently exist, but it is believed that FTEs are being funded that could be repositioned to create this dedicated capacity. As such it is not included in cost estimate at this time.

*** The cost for PSH is the cost associated with operating these new units and does not account for any development costs. This model is based on individuals living in PSH for an average of 10 years.

System Model: Family Response System

The family response system in Boulder is rooted in an expanded definition of homelessness that includes preventing families from being displaced from housing. As such, the programming and associated data is not recorded in HMIS and thus the EVA tool could not be used to calculate inflow. Instead, Clutch worked to obtain data from the City of Boulder's Department of Housing and Human Services, the primary family provider and operator of the family access point in Boulder (Emergency Family Assistance Association, EFFA), Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence (SPAN), Boulder Valley School District, and Boulder County to calculate the annual rate of literal homelessness, set a logical milestone for system expansion and estimated the number of households with children in Boulder at or below 50% Area Media Income (AMI), approximately 1,700 households annually.

Further, because the current system operates as a set of programs and not an intentional and connected array of standardized interventions, the system modeling activities were limited to a more rudimentary approach that will serve as a precursor to more sophisticated modeling. The exercises themselves prompted partners to consider their respective program funding and appreciate the need to align and scale a more predictable system that can be measured and systematically adjusted to reach critical expansion milestones.

The resulting model should be utilized as a directional marker and exercises repeated once better data is available, including existing slot capacity and slot costs. The following details the analysis performed.

Projected System Response Needed to Serve 1,700 Households Annually

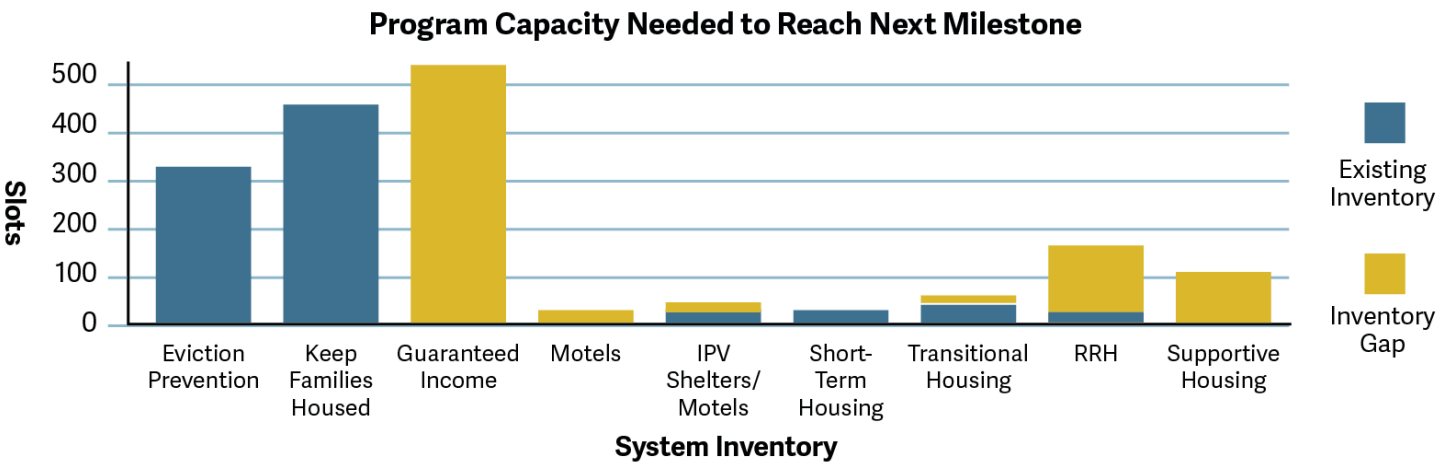
To consider all possible pathways, partners participated in work sessions to:

1. Identify current triage pathways
2. Array of prevention programs
3. Array of rehousing pathways from emergency housing

Table 4: Boulder Family Housing Stabilization System Model Assumptions

Inflow Groups	Pathways	Est. % of At-Risk Universe Using Prevention Pathway	Est. % of Literal Homeless Universe Using IPV Sheltering	Est. % of Literal Homeless Universe Using Motels	Est. % of Literal Homeless Universe Using Rehousing Pathways	Est. % of In-flow Universe Using Each Intervention Pathway
1,300 At-Risk Households	Eviction Prevention	25%				19%
	Keeping Families Housed	35%				27%
	Guaranteed Income	40%				31%
400 Literal Homeless Households	Emergency Housing Only	14%	20%	5%	3%	3%
	Short-Term Housing	2%	0%	5%	1%	1%
	Transitional Housing	14%	10%	20%	3%	3%
	Rapid Rehousing	44%	50%	35%	10%	10%
	Supportive Housing	26%	20%	35%	6%	6%

System Resources Needed by Project Type



Projected Inventory by Project Type

Inflow Groups	Pathways	Current Inventory (2025, Slots Rounded)	Estimated Resource Gap (Slots)	Total Projected Inventory Needed (Slots)	Number of Placements (Households Served) Annually
At-Risk Households	Eviction Prevention	374	(49)	325	325
	Keeping Families Housed	693	(231)	462	462
	Guaranteed Income	0	531	531	531
Literal Homeless Households	Emergency Motels	2	18	20	160
	Short-Term Housing	19	(13)	6	17
	IPV Shelter	17	14	31	240
	Transitional Housing	43	8	51	51
	Rapid Rehousing	20	151	171	171
	Supportive Housing	0	103	103	103

