

Regional Homelessness Strategy Across Larimer County

A Five-Year Strategic Plan to Prevent and
Address Homelessness



Executive summary

The number of individuals experiencing homelessness and housing instability has risen across Larimer County in recent years, driven by rising housing costs, a shortage of affordable units, and complex economic, social, and health challenges. In response, the county and its municipalities have expanded resources, strengthened service delivery, and built collaborative partnerships across the region.

Building upon local efforts, *The Regional Homelessness Strategy Across Larimer County* provides a shared vision and framework for a more coordinated response across Larimer County and Northern Colorado. Developed by Homeward Alliance in partnership with Larimer County, Fort Collins, Loveland, Estes Park, and the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care, the plan is grounded in extensive stakeholder engagement, data collection and analysis, and national best practices.

Vision

A Larimer County where a unified support system helps people avoid homelessness and rapidly secure and maintain safe, stable housing when it occurs.

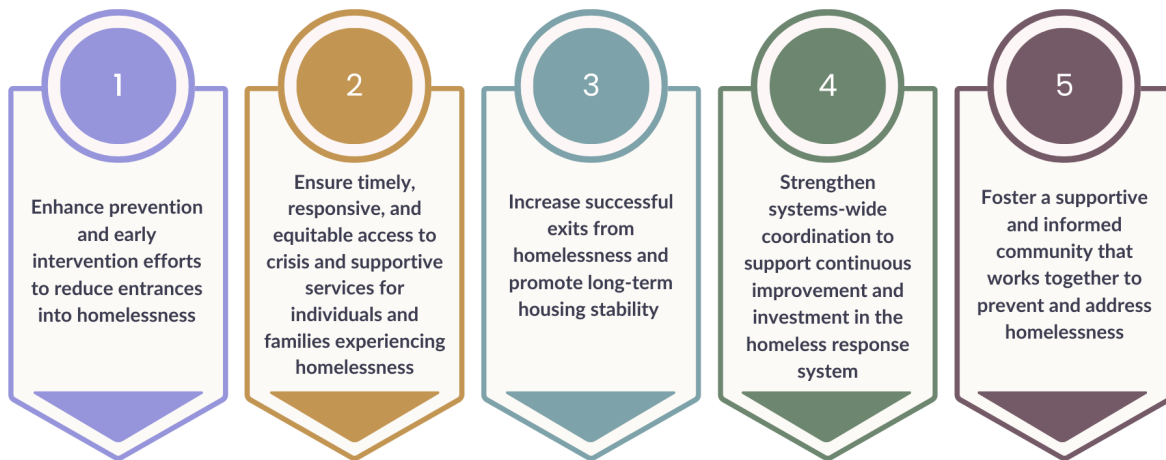
Mission

Advance a successful, countywide support system for people experiencing homelessness, built on collaboration, adaptability, and solutions that reflect the unique needs of Larimer County communities.



Key goals and strategies

The plan is organized around five overarching goals, each with its own set of strategies, designed to strengthen the homeless response system across Larimer County:



| Goal 1: Prevention and early intervention

- 1.1** Leverage existing data systems and referral processes to better identify households at imminent risk of homelessness and enhance outcome tracking of prevention interventions
- 1.2** Expand and coordinate prevention programs to keep households at imminent risk of homelessness stably housed

| Goal 2: Rapid, equitable access to supportive services

- 2.1** Promote best-practice shelter and diversion models that respond to the unique needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness
- 2.2** Continue to strengthen holistic healthcare access for people experiencing homelessness by scaling effective local partnerships and enhancing cross-system integration
- 2.3** Expand and strengthen access to light-touch, rapid response resources and coordinated wraparound supports to help households stabilize quickly
- 2.4** Explore opportunities to diversify emergency shelter options, identify shelter alternatives, and expand their geographic reach to ensure equitable access across the county

| Goal 3: Increase exits to stable housing

- 3.1** Explore opportunities to expand supportive housing options, including rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing programs

| Goal 4: Strengthen systems-wide coordination

- 4.1** Facilitate ongoing coordination among county and municipal partners to support strategic plan implementation, strengthen system alignment, and ensure integration with regional efforts
- 4.2** Identify opportunities to regionally coordinate funding mechanisms that provide flexible resources to support adaptive responses and incentivize collaboration among service providers

| Goal 5: Foster an informed and supportive community

- 5.1** Develop and promote clear, consistent language and messaging for utilization across

service providers and the homeless response system

5.2 Coordinate ongoing countywide communication efforts to keep the community informed about available homeless resources and services and share opportunities to engage in solutions to homelessness

Homelessness in Larimer County

An estimated 6,816 individuals experienced homelessness in Larimer County in 2024 and another 28,250 were at risk of homelessness due to financial instability. Populations most impacted include single adults, households with children, and adults over age 55. Among the population experiencing homelessness, there is an overrepresentation of people identifying as Black or African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Pacific Islander, and multiracial when compared to the total population of the county. At least 32.5% of residents experiencing homelessness in the county remain unsheltered, often due to limited shelter availability, safety concerns, or restrictions. Many individuals experiencing homelessness in Larimer County also have disabling conditions, with nearly half reporting mental health needs and over one-third reporting chronic physical health conditions.

| What's needed

To strengthen the existing homeless response system across Larimer County with the goal of making homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring, key housing and supportive service needs include:

- **More prevention and early interventions:** Coordinated resources for rental assistance, eviction prevention, and financial literacy programs are needed to keep people from entering homelessness.
- **Expanded emergency shelter:** Current capacity cannot meet demand, leaving hundreds unsheltered each year. Expanding beds, geographic distribution, and alternative models is critical.
- **Stronger healthcare access:** Gaps persist in behavioral and physical health care access for people experiencing homelessness. Integrated, trauma-informed, and low-barrier options are needed to support people in meeting their healthcare needs.
- **Additional wraparound supports:** For many experiencing homelessness, housing alone is not enough to successfully exit homelessness over the long-term; case management, employment support, and resource navigation services are needed to support lasting exits from homelessness.
- **Increased housing supply:** The county faces a significant shortage of both supportive and affordable housing for people seeking to exit homelessness. Expansion of Rapid Re-Housing and Permanent Supportive Housing programs is critical to an effective homeless response system.

| What's working

While there are acute needs across the system, Larimer County's homeless response system has a strong foundation of collaboration, leadership, and effective programs, which this strategic plan seeks to build upon. Aspects of the response system that are currently working well include:

- **Regional coordination:** The Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (NoCO CoC), established in 2020, has strengthened regional governance of the homeless response system through partnerships with over 40 agencies across Larimer and Weld Counties.

- **Partnerships and leadership:** Local governments, service providers, and community groups frequently collaborate to address emergent needs within the homeless response system, with municipalities and the county investing staff and resources to support these partnerships.
- **Dedicated providers:** Larimer County has many homeless service providers who are dedicated to serving people experiencing homelessness with dignity and compassion.
- **Healthcare progress:** A dedicated behavioral health sales tax, co-responder teams, and co-located healthcare at the Murphy Center have expanded crisis response and healthcare access for people experiencing homelessness.
- **Permanent supportive housing:** Existing permanent supportive housing units in the county demonstrate strong housing retention for people exiting homelessness.
- **Outreach and engagement:** Street outreach teams and community-based programs effectively connect people to resources and support positive exits from homelessness.

What's next

This strategic plan marks a pivotal step toward a stronger, more coordinated homeless response system in Larimer County. Its success will depend on continued collaboration among local governments, service providers, funders, and the community. Early implementation will focus on clarifying roles, setting milestones, and advancing system modeling to guide decision-making. Progress will be monitored and evaluated regularly, ensuring strategies remain responsive and effective in moving toward the goal of making homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring across Larimer County.



Letter from Advisory Committee

Homelessness is a complex and evolving problem in Larimer County. The county, and the cities within it, face many of the same challenges as communities all across the nation: a shortage of affordable housing, a rising cost of living, service-area gaps, and systemic inequities in the healthcare, criminal justice and other systems.

At the same time, Larimer County faces challenges unique to its location, including a particularly unaffordable housing market, a rapidly growing disparity between household income and the cost of living, and unpredictable weather conditions that make unsheltered homelessness a life-or-death proposition.

On behalf of the advisory committee whose members represent the organizations listed on the following page, it is our privilege to present this strategic plan to address homelessness in Larimer County.

Larimer County is one of two counties (Weld and Larimer) in the HUD-designated Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (CoC)—a CoC that was formed in 2020 and remains in its developmental stages. Weld County has adopted a strategic plan to address homelessness, but Larimer County has not, until now, had a plan specific to homelessness.

The need for a strategic plan is of particular importance in late 2025.

That is because during the COVID-19 pandemic, Larimer County and the agencies within it received an unprecedented influx of federal relief funding that, for a time, led to a surge in new housing programs and associated positive outcomes. As that funding expires (the last COVID-relief contracts conclude at the end of 2026)—and given current uncertainty around homelessness funding at the federal and state levels—it is more essential than ever that communities create strategies that maximize resources in their homelessness response systems.

This plan is the result of more than one year of research, including focus groups, surveys, key stakeholder interviews, and data collection and analysis. That work was led by two contracted organizations—JG Research & Evaluation and Omni Institute—who were selected via a competitive process and overseen by an advisory committee comprised of representatives from Larimer County, the cities of Fort Collins, Loveland, and Estes Park, United Way of Larimer County, and Homeward Alliance (Homeward Alliance as the Homeless Management Information System, or HMIS Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant for the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care).

Thank you to the hundreds of individuals from nonprofits, faith-based organizations, municipalities, foundations, businesses, and the broader community who participated in this process. Thank you also to the State of Colorado’s Division of Housing, which funded the development of this plan and the next year of implementation, via a transformational homelessness response grant.

Over the coming year, an implementation committee will chart the course forward, translating these strategic objectives into action items with target outcomes and timelines. For us, the work has just begun. If you are reading this, we hope you will join us. Together, we can create a Larimer County where homelessness is rare, short-lived, and non-recurring.

David Rout

David Rout

Executive Director, Homeward Alliance

Acknowledgements

This document, Regional Homelessness Strategy Across Larimer County, was prepared by JG Research and Evaluation (JG) and Omni Institute, with guidance and approval by Homeward Alliance and the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee, and with additional support from the NoCO CoC's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data team. The development of this plan was informed by an extensive stakeholder engagement process and made possible through the active participation of homeless service providers, city and county staff, and individuals with lived experience of homelessness.



If you have a question regarding the plan implementation, contact Linda Nuss at linda@homewardalliance.org or Sandra Wright at sandra@homewardalliance.org. If you have questions about how this plan was developed or methodology, contact Brandn Green at brandn@jgresearch.org or Erika Berglund at erika@jgresearch.org.

This project was made possible through a transformational homelessness response grant awarded by the State of Colorado's Division of Housing.

Data collection protocols for this project were reviewed and found to be exempt by WCG IRB, a private Institutional Review Board (work order 1-1824728-1).

Strategic Plan Advisory Committee

The Strategic Plan Advisory Committee is responsible for providing guidance, approval, and operationalization of the Regional Homelessness Strategy. The Committee is comprised of representatives from Larimer County, Town of Estes Park, City of Fort Collins, City of Loveland, the NoCO CoC, and Homeward Alliance. The Committee played a vital role in shaping this strategic plan by offering feedback, sharing updates within their networks, and supporting stakeholder engagement. Their contributions were essential in ensuring the strategy reflects a collaborative, community-driven approach to addressing homelessness across Larimer County.

| Advisory Committee members

Alea Rodriguez, Larimer County

Alison Hade, City of Loveland

Beth Yonce, City of Fort Collins

Brittany Depew, City of Fort Collins

Carlie Bangs, Town of Estes Park

Christine Koepnick, Northern Colorado
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Rupa Venkatesh, City of Fort Collins

Sandra Wright, Homeward Alliance

Vanessa Fenley, City of Fort Collins



Participating organizations

Alianza NORCO	Loveland's Community Kitchen
Alternatives to Violence	Loveland SafeLot Parking
Catholic Charities	The Matthews House
Cheyenne Veterans Affairs	Neighbor to Neighbor
City of Fort Collins	North Colorado Health Alliance
City of Loveland	Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (NoCO CoC)
Community Foundation of Northern Colorado	One Health Outreach
Crossroads Ministry of Estes Park	Outreach Fort Collins
Crossroads Safehouse	Peak Community Church
Disabled Resource Services	Poudre Fire Authority
Estes Park Housing Authority	Salvation Army of Fort Collins
Estes Park School District	Salvation Army of Loveland
Estes Valley Crisis Advocates	SummitStone Health Partners
Estes Valley Investment in Childhood Success (EVICS) Family Resource Center	Thompson School District
The Family Center/La Familia	Thompson Valley Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
Family Housing Network	Together Colorado of Larimer County
First Christian Church	Town of Estes Park
Food Bank for Larimer County	Town of Johnstown
Fort Collins Rescue Mission	Town of Windsor
Homeward Alliance	United Way of Larimer County
House of Neighborly Service	Volunteers of America
Housing Catalyst	Yarrow Collective
Larimer County	

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Plan overview

The Regional Homelessness Strategy Across Larimer County serves as a strategic plan for the geographic region of Larimer County focused on expanding and enhancing the countywide homeless response system. The development of this plan was led by Homeward Alliance in collaboration with Larimer County, the City of Loveland, the City of Fort Collins, the Town of Estes Park, and the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (NoCO CoC), a regional coalition of homeless service providers serving both Larimer and Weld Counties. The plan aims to generate a shared vision and foundational approach to responding to homelessness throughout the county as the basis for an actionable roadmap for local government, service providers, funders, non-profit agencies, and communities to meaningfully maintain and enhance the countywide homeless response system.



As with many communities across the country, Larimer County and its municipalities have seen a rise in both the number of people experiencing homelessness (PEH) and those at risk of entering homelessness in recent years as housing costs continue to rise. At the same time, communities across Larimer County and the Northern Colorado region have taken important steps to more effectively address these trends and support individuals and families facing homelessness. As communities seek to sustain and continue to strengthen the countywide homeless response system in alignment with both local and regional policy and initiatives, this strategic plan was developed to:

- Create a unified, collaborative vision and strategy.
- Support systemwide coordination and enhanced service delivery.
- Foster broad community buy-in.
- Establish a framework for data-driven decision-making.

The Regional Homelessness Strategy Across Larimer County calls for collective action to strengthen the homeless response system throughout the region. It is designed to guide how local governments, service providers, funders, nonprofits, and community members can work together to prevent and reduce homelessness, improve outcomes for people experiencing homelessness and housing instability, and build a more coordinated and effective system for the future.

As a critical first step to support the implementation of this strategic plan, Homeward Alliance and partners are advancing system modeling through Stella M, a nationally recognized tool that helps communities understand how housing and service interventions work together as a system and how individuals move through the system. The results of this modeling effort will inform priorities, highlight resource gaps, and continue to support more effective, data-driven decision-making as partners across Larimer County carry this strategic plan forward.

What is Stella M system modeling?

Stella M is an interactive system modeling tool developed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It allows communities to visualize their local homeless response system, estimate the level of need among those experiencing homelessness, and model an ideal system to meet the need.

Through Stella M, communities can perform the following:

- System flow mapping: Understand how individuals move through various housing and service pathways.
- Inventory modeling: Assess current capacity across the system and test future scenarios.
- Resource and performance projections: Set benchmarks and anticipate needed resource investments.
- For more information, visit the HUD Exchange [Stella M system modeling page](#).



How was this plan created?

The Regional Homelessness Strategy Across Larimer County was developed through an inclusive, collaborative process across twelve months that brought together local governments, service providers, community organizations, people with lived experience of homelessness, and other key stakeholders across the county. The process of creating the plan (outlined in Figure 1 and further detailed in Appendix D) began in the Fall of 2024 and was completed in the Fall of 2025.

Figure 1. Plan development process



Guided by robust data collection and the input of a broad range of stakeholders, the plan reflects the diverse perspectives, priorities, and expertise across Larimer County. The process included:

- **Advisory Committee leadership** made up of representatives from local governments, service providers, non-profits, and NoCO CoC.
- **Stakeholder engagement**, including interviews, focus groups, surveys, and community conversations.
- **Research and analysis** to assess the current state of homelessness, system capacity, and service gaps, using HMIS and population-level datasets.
- **Collaborative workshops and strategy sessions** to refine goals, strategies, and shared priorities.

Vision, mission, and core approaches

Vision statement

A Larimer County where a unified support system helps people avoid homelessness and rapidly secure and maintain safe, stable housing when it occurs.

Mission

Advance a successful, countywide support system for people experiencing homelessness, built on collaboration, adaptability, and solutions that reflect the unique needs of Larimer County communities.

The Regional Homelessness Strategy outlines shared, community-driven goals and strategies to strengthen Larimer County's homeless response system in partnership with regional stakeholders. Collectively, this plan seeks to guide progress toward the following long-term goals:

- The homeless response system is coordinated across municipalities and the county and designed to equitably meet community needs.
- Service providers have the resources, flexibility, and support to meet diverse community needs.
- Prevention and early intervention efforts support households in avoiding homelessness.
- Crisis and supportive services, including shelter and healthcare supports, are accessible when and where they are needed and are delivered with dignity, quality, and person-centered care.
- There is robust supportive and affordable housing inventory to support rapid and stable exits from homelessness.
- Community members are engaged, informed, and actively involved in preventing and addressing homelessness.

This five-year strategic plan provides a shared roadmap to guide collective action across Larimer County. It reflects community priorities, aligns efforts, and supports a collaborative approach to preventing and addressing homelessness. By working together across sectors and municipalities, partners in Larimer County can strengthen local capacity, improve service delivery, and expand access to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and nonrecurring.

Core approaches

The following core approaches reflect the shared principles that guided the development of this strategic plan. They emphasize the importance of housing as a foundation for stability, the need for person-centered and trauma-informed care, and the power of community engagement and regional collaboration. Together, these approaches shape a system that is equitable, responsive, and grounded in best practices for addressing homelessness.

| Housing-focused

A housing-focused approach emphasizes that securing stable housing is a foundational step in overcoming homelessness. By prioritizing connecting people experiencing homelessness with

housing solutions starting at their point of entry into the homeless response system and at every following point of contact, this approach promotes rapid housing placement that meets individual needs and effectively leads to successful exits from homelessness. Stable housing provides the foundation for improving health, employment, and overall well-being. It can lead to better long-term outcomes than supportive services alone, ultimately reducing the time spend unhoused, improving housing stability, and supporting other personal goals.

| People-centered

A people-centered approach recognizes that each individual's experiences, background, and challenges are unique, and solutions should be tailored to the specific needs of the individual, fostering personal dignity and autonomy throughout the process. By focusing on the strengths and preferences of each person, services within the response system are respectful of cultural differences and responsive to the varying circumstances that impact individuals and households on their journey toward housing stability.

| Trauma-informed

Trauma-informed care creates a safe and supportive environment where individuals feel empowered to take control of their lives. This approach recognizes the deep impact of past traumas on individuals' ability to engage in services and make lasting changes. By offering compassionate, non-judgmental support and incorporating harm reduction strategies, the response system provides the necessary time and space for healing at each person's pace, ensuring that they feel safe and supported as they move forward in finding stability in their lives.

| Community engagement

Community engagement is a cornerstone of the strategic plan, focused on building public understanding, reducing stigma, and fostering broad-based support for the homeless response system. By engaging faith communities, schools, employers, community groups, and residents as active partners, the strategic plan ensures the response system is rooted in the broader community, creating a safety net of support that reaches across the county. By mobilizing the community, this approach empowers people to contribute their time, expertise, and resources toward a shared goal of preventing and addressing homelessness.

| Regional collaboration and alignment

A regionally coordinated approach is essential to building an effective and equitable homeless response system across Larimer County and the Northern Colorado region. Homelessness does not stop at city boundaries, and meaningful progress for all municipalities will only be possible if every community actively participates and contributes to the solution. The success of this plan depends on municipalities, service providers, and stakeholders continuing to come together to share goals, align resources, and coordinate efforts during the implementation phase of the project, leveraging the relationships and engagement that has produced the strategic plan. Each community has a vital role to play in ensuring individuals and families can access consistent, effective support no matter where they are in the county. By committing to collective action, the region can maximize impact, avoid duplication, foster shared accountability, and build a unified framework for achieving lasting solutions.



Countywide goals and strategies

Goals	Strategies
 <p>1. Enhance prevention and early intervention efforts to reduce entrances into homelessness</p>	<p>1.1 Leverage existing data systems and referral processes to better identify households at imminent risk of homelessness and enhance outcome tracking of prevention interventions</p> <p>1.2 Expand and coordinate prevention programs to keep households at imminent risk of homelessness stably housed</p>
 <p>2. Ensure timely, responsive, and equitable access to crisis and supportive services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness</p>	<p>2.1 Promote best-practice shelter and diversion models that respond to the unique needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness</p> <p>2.2 Continue to strengthen holistic healthcare access for people experiencing homelessness by scaling effective local partnerships and enhancing cross-system integration</p> <p>2.3 Expand and strengthen access to light-touch, rapid response resources and coordinated wraparound supports to help households stabilize quickly</p> <p>2.4 Explore opportunities to diversify emergency shelter options, identify shelter alternatives, and expand their geographic reach to ensure equitable access across the county</p>
 <p>3. Increase successful exits from homelessness and promote long-term housing stability</p>	<p>3.1 Explore opportunities to expand supportive housing options, including rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing programs</p>
 <p>4. Strengthen systems-wide coordination to support continuous improvement and investment in the homeless response system</p>	<p>4.1 Facilitate ongoing coordination among county and municipal partners to support strategic plan implementation, strengthen system alignment, and ensure integration with regional efforts</p> <p>4.2 Identify opportunities to regionally coordinate funding mechanisms that provide flexible resources to support adaptive responses and incentivize collaboration among service providers</p>
 <p>5. Foster a supportive and informed community that works together to prevent and address homelessness</p>	<p>5.1 Develop and promote clear, consistent language and messaging for utilization across service providers and the homeless response system</p> <p>5.2 Coordinate ongoing countywide communication efforts to keep the community informed about available homeless resources and services and share opportunities to engage in solutions to homelessness</p>

Goal 1: Prevention and early intervention

Strategy 1.1 Leverage existing data systems and referral processes to better identify households at imminent risk of homelessness and enhance outcome tracking of prevention interventions

Population Impact

All ✓ **At-risk** Newly Homeless Currently Homeless Chronically Homeless

Description

Preventing homelessness leads to better outcomes for at-risk households and reduces demand for the homeless response system (HRS). There are challenges to successfully implementing prevention interventions, including identifying and contacting those at imminent risk (i.e., households who are within 14 days of losing housing) and demonstrating successful prevention efforts, since avoided cases are often not reflected in standard HMIS data. While Larimer County, as part of the NoCO CoC, has a robust system for assessing and collecting data on households engaged in homeless services, data related to prevention—particularly identifying at-risk households and the use and outcomes of prevention programming—is limited. This strategy aims to support enhancements to data collection and sharing and outcome tracking to better capture households at imminent risk and evaluate the local impact of prevention efforts.

WHY IT'S NEEDED

- Estimates show as many as 28,250 county households are at risk of entering homelessness.
- Tracking of engagement in prevention programs and related outcomes across the county is currently limited.

Potential actions

- Establish data sharing partnerships across HMIS and other existing local data systems (e.g. County Department of Human Services, school districts) to identify households at imminent risk.
- Analyze administrative data across partners to identify key risk factors leading to homelessness.
- Inventory existing prevention programs and identify opportunities to track utilization in HMIS.
- Assess current prevention programs to identify opportunities for alignment with best and/or emerging practices.
- Develop and implement common follow-up protocols across service providers operating prevention programming.
- Enhance outcome tracking among households enrolled in prevention programs within HMIS.

Performance metrics

- Number of households receiving prevention assistance by assistance type
- Number of timely and successful referrals informed by data sharing partnerships

Outcome measures

- Proportion of prevention programs actively tracked in HMIS

Goal 1: Prevention and early intervention

Strategy 1.2 Expand and coordinate prevention programs to keep households at imminent risk of homelessness stably housed

Population Impact

All ✓ **At-risk** Newly Homeless Currently Homeless Chronically Homeless

Description

Along with efforts to enhance data collection focused on homelessness prevention, ensuring access to prevention programs for those who are at imminent risk of losing their housing is key to successful prevention. These homelessness prevention programs include direct financial assistance (e.g., rent, utilities, security deposits, moving costs), housing navigation, case management, legal and mediation services, and financial counseling. Access to these programs can sometimes mean the difference between a household staying housed or entering homelessness, and several service providers within Larimer County currently operate prevention programs. This strategy relies on the success of strategy 1.1 and seeks to build upon existing prevention programs, as well as support and coordinate them across the county for a more comprehensive approach to prevention.

WHY IT'S NEEDED

- Key stakeholders frequently highlighted prevention as a significant gap in the homeless response system.
- National evidence demonstrates that prevention is one of the most effective interventions for limiting chronic homelessness.
- The benefits of prevention interventions have been shown to significantly outweigh the costs.

Potential actions

- Identify lead organization for coordination.
- Assess gaps within existing prevention programming.
- Develop a Best Practice Guidebook to support coordination of prevention funding, align program eligibility, and promote equitable access to programs.
- Coordinate with landlord engagement programs to identify households at imminent risk and connect them with prevention programming.

Performance metrics

- Number of enrollments in prevention programming and number of services provided
- Proportion of eligible households who receive prevention assistance
- Cost of providing program per household served

Outcome measures

- Proportion of households enrolled in HMIS that receive prevention services and remain housed for at least 6 months post-assistance
- Increase in the number of prevention programs available in the county by year
- Increase in the funding invested in prevention programming across county

Goal 2: Rapid, equitable access to supportive services

Strategy 2.1 Promote best-practice shelter and diversion models that respond to the unique needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness

Population Impact

All At-risk ✓ Newly Homeless ✓ Currently Homeless ✓ Chronically Homeless

Description

Emergency shelters are an essential component of an effective homeless response system, providing immediate safety and stability for households experiencing homelessness. They also offer an important opportunity to support diversion efforts by helping households identify safe, alternative housing options and avoid prolonged shelter stays whenever possible. This strategy seeks to both ensure that emergency shelters within the county are consistently operating according to best practices, informed by the NOCO CoC and national standards, and have the training and resources to support diversion efforts. Promoting shelter operations that are low-barrier, trauma-informed, and responsive to diverse needs while integrating diversion practices will help increase access to available shelter beds, shorten the time households spend without housing, and improve pathways to long-term stability.

Potential actions

- Review shelter screening tools to ensure they align with best practices and appropriately identify those suited for diversion.
- Develop and standardize workflows for diversion and rapid exit pathways across system access points.
- Ensure all access point staff receive appropriate assessment and diversion training.
- Identify immediate alternatives to shelter and/or prolonged response system engagement.

WHY IT'S NEEDED

- Shelter capacity across the county is strained, and expanding it is both costly and time-intensive.
- Key stakeholders identified inconsistencies with how shelters operate as a barrier to efficient use of available resources and equitable access.
- Diversion programs can link households with lower cost supports to ensure safety and linkage to services while freeing up shelter beds for those with higher needs.

Performance metrics

- Proportion of coordinated entry engagements that are assessed for diversion or rapid exit
- Proportion of households diverted or rapidly exited from the response system within 30 days of entry
- Average time from diversion assessment to housing resolution

Outcome measures

- Increase in proportion of diversion participants who do not re-enter HMIS within 6 and 12 months
- Increase in proportion of diversion participants who do not require higher levels of engagement with services

Goal 2: Rapid, equitable access to supportive services

Strategy 2.2 Continue to strengthen holistic healthcare access for people experiencing homelessness by scaling effective local partnerships and enhancing cross-system integration

Population Impact

All At-risk ✓ Newly Homeless ✓ Currently Homeless ✓ Chronically Homeless

Description

People experiencing homelessness often face complex, overlapping health needs, including chronic conditions, mental illness, and substance use disorders. Untreated health conditions lead to frequent emergency room visits, greater instability, and higher barriers to exiting homelessness. Providers across Larimer County continue to expand healthcare access through local investments in services, community-based care models, robust street outreach, and cross-sector partnerships (e.g. Murphy Center clinic operated by SummitStone Health Partners). However, gaps remain in the availability of treatment programs, engagement in preventive care and management of chronic conditions, and integration across the homelessness response and healthcare systems. Building upon effective partnerships and community-based care models, this strategy seeks to lower barriers and expand access to care, while strengthening cross-system integration to better understand how healthcare engagement affects outcomes among people experiencing homelessness.

WHY IT'S NEEDED

- In 2024, 45% of those engaged in homeless services self-reported a mental health condition.
- 35% self-reported a chronic health condition.
- 30% self-reported a physical health condition.
- 26% self-report a substance use disorder.
- Lived experts often noted challenges consistently accessing healthcare as a barrier to stability.

Potential actions

- Establish data sharing partnerships among HMIS and healthcare providers consistent with federal data privacy protections for individuals (i.e., HIPAA and CFR Part 42C).
- Assess how referral and treatment engagement affect housing outcomes for HMIS clients.
- Build upon existing harm reduction approaches to lower the barrier to engagement in care.
- Coordinate with local agencies to strengthen outreach and enrollment assistance for Medicaid.

Performance metrics

- Number of data sharing partnerships between HMIS and healthcare providers
- Proportion of HMIS clients who self-report a health condition, are referred to healthcare providers, and successfully engage in at least one healthcare appointment

Outcome measures

- Increase in number of exits to permanent housing among people engaged in healthcare services
- Decrease in number of returns to homelessness within 12 months among people engaged in healthcare services

Goal 2: Rapid, equitable access to supportive services

Strategy 2.3 Expand and strengthen access to light-touch, rapid response resources and coordinated wraparound supports to help households stabilize quickly

Population Impact

All At-risk ✓ Newly Homeless ✓ Currently Homeless Chronically Homeless

Description

Rapid access to flexible assistance and support navigating the homeless response system are essential for households experiencing homelessness and can be particularly effective for those who are likely to regain stability with minimal support. These light-touch resources—such as short-term financial assistance, housing navigation support, case management, and job and financial literacy training—allow the system to respond quickly and effectively without overextending more resource-intensive services. At the same time, maintaining consistent contact with households ensures they don't fall through the cracks if their needs change. This strategy focuses on expanding access to rapid response tools and strengthening coordinated wraparound supports so resources are appropriately matched to household needs, helping more people stabilize quickly and preserving capacity for those requiring deeper interventions.

WHY IT'S NEEDED

- Emergency shelters often operate at capacity, underscoring the need for innovative and cost-effective approaches to meet growing needs.
- Some households can successfully stabilize with minimal resources and support.
- Evidence shows the shorter length of time households spend homeless, the better their outcomes.

Potential actions

- Identify sources of rapid response resources that are available in county but not yet integrated into the homeless response system (e.g. faith entities, mutual aid groups).
 - Establish partnerships with these providers to coordinate and refer HMIS clients to available resources.
- Integrate rapid response process with all coordinated entry access points, ensuring equitable access to resources regardless of point of entry.
- Track outcomes among those receiving these types of resources in HMIS.

Performance metrics

- Proportion of coordinated entry point engagements that include connection to rapid response resources within 30 days
- Median time from homeless response entry to housing resolution

Outcome measures

- Increase in proportion of households who receive resources and remain housed after 6 and 12 months
- Decrease in the median length of time households experience homelessness

Goal 2: Rapid, equitable access to supportive services

Strategy 2.4 Explore opportunities to diversify emergency shelter options, identify shelter alternatives, and expand their geographic reach to ensure equitable access across the county

Population Impact

All At-risk ✓ Newly Homeless ✓ Currently Homeless ✓ Chronically Homeless

Description

Ensuring equitable access to emergency shelter and shelter alternatives requires balancing support for existing programs with efforts to address geographic gaps across the county, especially during extreme weather. People experiencing homelessness have diverse needs that traditional shelter models do not always meet, underscoring the importance of exploring alternatives such as small-scale and decentralized sites, safe parking programs (e.g., Loveland SafeLot Parking), and other innovative, locally appropriate options. While planned expansion in Fort Collins will increase shelter capacity, the City of Loveland plans to close its shelters, and rural areas currently lack both traditional shelter and alternative overnight options. This strategy takes an important first step toward aligning community needs with local opportunities, strengthening existing shelter infrastructure, and expanding access in underserved areas.

WHY IT'S NEEDED

- Shelters often operate near or at 100% capacity and rely on a lottery system to allocate beds.
- Demand for shelter exists throughout the county, but current options are geographically concentrated.
- Subpopulations with unique needs may not be adequately served by traditional shelters.
- Local ordinances related to camping and parking are most effective when paired with accessible shelter and supportive service options. (see Appendix C)

Potential actions

- Leverage Stella M system modeling to identify:
 - Areas of high need but no overnight sheltering options.
 - Geographic patterns of shelter demand.
- Explore partnerships with facilities (e.g., hotels, recreation centers, churches) in underserved areas to provide shelter during inclement weather if other options do not exist.
- Integrate geographic coverage as consideration in county-level funding opportunities.
- Explore opportunities to enhance transportation linkages to shelter and shelter alternatives.

Performance metrics

- Number of emergency shelter beds by municipality and shelter bed utilization rates
- Proportion of specialized shelter beds available to varied populations

Outcome measures

- Increase in the number emergency shelter opportunities accessible to various populations
- Reduction in the number of people turned away from shelter due to capacity, eligibility, or geographic barriers
- Client-reported satisfaction with accessibility and safety of shelter options

Goal 3: Increase exits to stable housing

Strategy 3.1 Explore opportunities to expand supportive housing options, including rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing programs

Population Impact

All At-risk ✓ Newly Homeless ✓ Currently Homeless ✓ Chronically Homeless

Description

Supportive housing, including Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), is a proven approach that helps some of the most vulnerable individuals and families exit homelessness and achieve long-term housing stability. These programs not only provide housing but also tailored services that address the complex needs of people experiencing chronic homelessness, disabling conditions, or other barriers to maintaining stable housing. While capacity in Larimer County remains limited, this strategy emphasizes both scaling evidence-based models (e.g. scattered-site supportive housing) and strengthening partnerships to expand and improve access. By leveraging existing resources and identifying creative, locally appropriate approaches aligned with community needs, the county can incrementally build a more responsive and sustainable supportive housing system that enables successful exits from homelessness and long-term housing stability for some of the community's most vulnerable populations.

WHY IT'S NEEDED

- Current capacity includes 52 RRH and 409 PSH beds.
- PSH utilization rate is often at or near 100%.
- All 52 RRH beds are population specific and none are available to single adults.
- Stakeholders frequently identified a need for increased access to supportive housing.
- Supportive housing is proven to successfully exit households from homelessness.

Potential actions

- Enhance HMIS tracking of outcomes after housing placement.
- Evaluate RRH utilization patterns for opportunities to reduce length of stay and optimize resources.
- Assess current barriers and opportunities to developing and operating PSH units in the county.
 - Assess feasibility of expanding scattered-site PSH programs.
- Include RRH and PSH targets in county and municipal affordable housing plans.
- Establish consistent follow-up protocols (e.g., 6 and 12-month check-ins) to support housing retention after placement and ongoing outcome tracking in HMIS.

Performance metrics

- Proportion of eligible households enrolled in RRH and PSH housing
- Median length of time between the start of a homeless episode to enrollment in RRH or PSH

Outcome measures

- Proportion of RRH households exiting to permanent housing and maintain housing at 12 months
- Proportion of PSH households who remain housed at 12 months

Goal 4: Strengthen systems-wide coordination

Strategy 4.1 Facilitate ongoing coordination among county and municipal partners to support strategic plan implementation, strengthen system alignment, and ensure integration with regional efforts

Population Impact				
✓All	At-risk	Newly Homeless	Currently Homeless	Chronically Homeless

Description

Successful implementation of the Regional Homelessness Strategy and sustainable, long-term improvement of the homeless response system depend on ongoing coordination and collaboration among county and municipal partners across Larimer County. This effort relies on collective action and shared responsibility, recognizing that addressing homelessness requires engagement and contributions from all communities within the county. By facilitating regular communication across jurisdictions, coordinating cross-system data sharing, aligning system goals, and integrating efforts with regional initiatives (including active participation in NoCO CoC), this strategy seeks to strengthen partnerships and create a unified response to homelessness that benefits the entire region, with an emphasis on accountability and transparency throughout the implementation process to ensure partners remain committed to shared goals.

WHY IT'S NEEDED

- Implementation of the strategic plan depends on collective action and buy-in from communities and partners across the county.
- Local government has a unique role in convening cross-system partners, aligning policies, and generating community support.
- Misalignment in local policies could lead to undue burden on particular communities (see Appendix C).

Potential actions

- Secure commitment to ongoing implementation of strategic plan by the county and municipalities.
- Formalize an implementation committee with representation from all municipalities.
- Create a formal agreement (e.g. Memorandum of Understanding) with each municipality and the county, outlining roles, responsibilities, and reporting expectations.
- Track and provide regular public updates about plan implementation progress.
- Develop a standardized tracking rubric so progress is measured consistently across providers.

Performance metrics

- Meeting attendance rates among county, municipal, and regional partners
- Proportion of partners actively contributing (e.g., providing data, leading initiatives, funding programs) to implementation activities

Outcome measures

- Proportion of partners reporting that coordination has improved year-to-year
- Municipal- and county-level progress reported toward strategic plan goals and strategies

Goal 4: Strengthen systems-wide coordination

Strategy 4.2 Identify opportunities to regionally coordinate funding mechanisms that provide flexible resources to support adaptive responses and incentivize collaboration among service providers

Population Impact

✓All

At-risk

Newly Homeless

Currently Homeless

Chronically Homeless

Description

To build a more responsive and collaborative homeless response system, providers need access to flexible funding that allows them to adapt to changing needs and deliver the right interventions at the right time. Often, existing financial resources are rigid and narrowly defined, making it difficult to innovate or coordinate effectively across organizations. This strategy seeks to better support adaptive service provision by identifying opportunities to pool and align funding at the county level and creating mechanisms that reward collaboration and amplify the impact of available resources. By fostering a regional approach, the system can empower providers to respond nimbly to emerging challenges and ensure investments are allocated in such a way that they will make the greatest difference for the homeless response system as a whole.

WHY IT'S NEEDED

- Service providers identified challenges with a funding landscape that does not necessarily encourage collaboration.
- Coordinating available funding resources can support more impactful systemwide outcomes.
- Federal funding for homeless prevention and response is shifting and may necessitate local and regional leadership.

Potential actions

- Compile inventory of all regional funding sources and conduct review of current priorities and application processes.
- Leverage strategic plan to develop common funding priorities and performance measures across regional funders focused on enhancing homeless response system.
- Leverage Stella M system modeling to identify resource needs by service type.
- Explore interest in and feasibility of a collaborative application process among funders.

Performance metrics

- Number of funding streams inventoried across county, municipal, and regional partners
- Dollar amount leveraged through an aligned, regional fund
- Number of providers or households served through a regional fund

Outcome measures

- Increase in number of supportive services supported by regionally coordinated funds
- Increase in number of collaborative cross-agency projects funded
- Reported satisfaction among recipient organizations with funding structure and flexibility

Goal 5: Foster an informed and supportive community

Strategy 5.1 Develop and promote clear, consistent language and messaging for use across service providers and the homeless response system

Population Impact

✓ All At-risk Newly Homeless Currently Homeless Chronically Homeless

Description

Clear, consistent language is essential for building alignment across service providers and ensuring that individuals experiencing homelessness and the broader community receive accurate information that is easy to understand. Currently, variation in how programs describe services, eligibility, and system processes can create confusion and limit effective engagement. This strategy focuses on developing and promoting shared messaging and terminology for use throughout the homeless response system. By supporting providers in communicating in a unified way and ensuring information is accessible and clear, this effort will strengthen coordination within the system and foster greater understanding and trust among people experiencing homelessness and the wider community.

Potential actions

- Develop dictionary of common terms related to homeless and housing services.
 - Update local program and funding guidance in alignment with dictionary.
- Ensure consistent use of agreed upon terms across service providers.
- Ensure information and messaging is accessible to non-English speakers.
- Develop a follow up usage or implementation rubric.

WHY IT'S NEEDED

- Key stakeholders noted inconsistent language and messaging across the homeless response system, contributing to barriers to access for those seeking services and confusion among the general public.
- Information and paperwork for housing programs and supportive services may not always be accessible to non-English speakers.
- Consistent language and messaging can support advocacy efforts and collaborative projects.

Performance metrics

- Number of organizations and partners that receive dictionary and messaging guidance
- Number of trainings and/or implementation supports for shared messaging

Outcome measures

- Number of providers/partners who adopt shared language and messaging
- Consistency of language in partner materials (i.e., follow-up usage or implementation metric)

Goal 5: Foster an informed and supportive community

Strategy 5.2 Coordinate ongoing countywide communication efforts to keep the community informed about available homeless services and share opportunities to engage in solutions to homelessness

Population Impact

✓ All

At-risk

Newly Homeless

Currently Homeless

Chronically Homeless

Description

Keeping the community informed about resources, services, and ways to engage in the homeless response system is critical to building broad support for solutions to homelessness. This strategy focuses on coordinating countywide efforts to expand access to information and promote consistent messaging across jurisdictions. In addition to aligning and promoting existing opportunities for engagement (e.g., volunteer events, donation drives, and advocacy efforts), it emphasizes transparency about ongoing work within the homeless response system to help residents better understand local challenges and progress. By making it easier for community members to stay informed and get involved, this effort will strengthen trust, foster engagement, and reinforce the work of providers and partners throughout Larimer County.

WHY IT'S NEEDED

- Households who may need access to prevention/rapid response resources may be unaware of them.
- Stigma was identified as a significant barrier among lived experts to accessing resources.
- Community members often expressed a desire for more transparency about local efforts and interest in getting involved in solutions.

Potential actions

- Identify entity responsible for coordination.
- Provide guidance to providers for tailoring messaging for at-risk individuals and community members interested in donating/volunteering.
- Develop centralized communication channel to compile and advertise volunteer opportunities.
- Regularly publicize CoC tracking and system improvement efforts.
- Publicly highlight system-wide successes and challenges to raise awareness of countywide efforts.

Performance metrics

- Number of countywide public updates issued annually
- Number of partners contributing to centralized channel for volunteer opportunities

Outcome measures

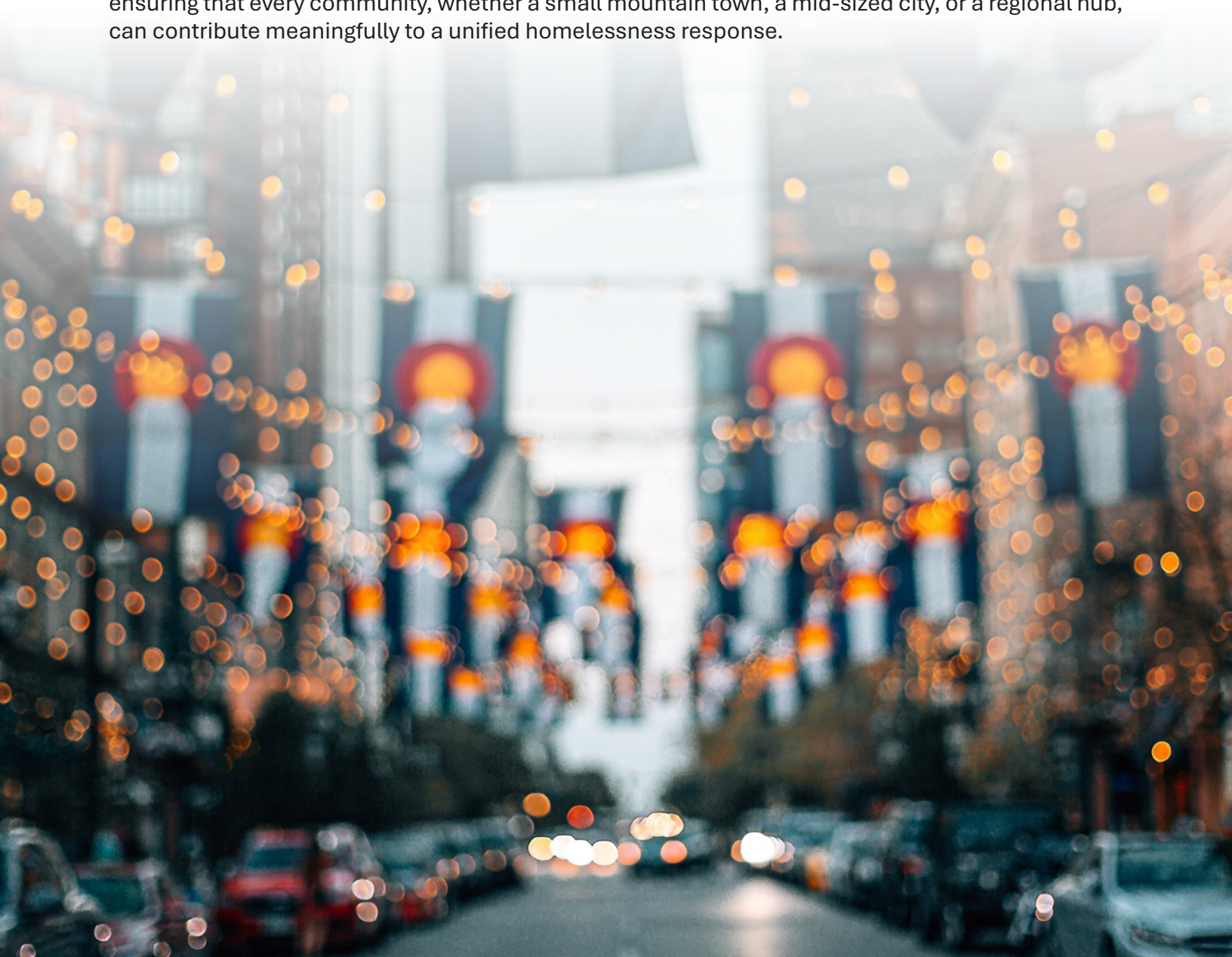
- Engagement by views, or direct inquiries, disaggregated by geography and demographics
- Growth in the number of volunteers, donations, or advocacy actions attributed to countywide communication efforts

Community-level strategic frameworks

The Regional Homelessness Strategy Across Larimer County is focused on providing a countywide roadmap to strengthening the homeless response system, and the realities, needs, and resources in each community within the county vary considerably. Factors such as population size, available housing and services, local economic conditions, and rurality shape how the countywide strategic plan will be most useful to each community within the county, and how that community would ideally engage in implementation to achieve the shared goals outlined in the countywide strategic plan.

These community-level frameworks are not intended to be prescriptive. Rather, they provide initial thinking about how Estes Park, Fort Collins, and Loveland can interpret their role within the broader Regional Homelessness Strategy based on the input of local stakeholders and system assessment findings. Each framework summarizes community context, highlights local considerations, and identifies potential roles and early actions that connect local priorities to countywide goals and strategies.

Recognizing that the success of the Regional Homelessness Strategy relies on collective action, these frameworks aim to strengthen the link between local realities and regional coordination, ensuring that every community, whether a small mountain town, a mid-sized city, or a regional hub, can contribute meaningfully to a unified homelessness response.



Community-level framework: Estes Park

Community context

Estes Park’s seasonal tourism economy and high cost of housing create significant challenges for residents earning median or below-median wages, with many workers commuting from other communities to find more affordable housing options. Homelessness in Estes Park often takes the form of doubled-up living or temporary housing arrangements, particularly during peak tourist seasons. With no emergency shelter or formal supportive housing, residents in crisis often travel to Fort Collins or Loveland for services. Local providers are committed to supporting people experiencing homelessness in the community but are not currently enrolled in HMIS, limiting system integration. Strengthening participation in regional coordination efforts could support Estes Park in maximizing locally available resources while supporting stronger partnerships to support warm hand-offs to outside services when needed.

Assessment snapshot

At-risk population	People experiencing homelessness	Overview of services	Key considerations
Like the rest of the county, Estes Park has a significant proportion of renters who are cost-burdened, with nearly half of (42.6%) spending more than 30% of their income on rent. When additional demographic and economic factors are considered (e.g. median rent, poverty rate, % of households receiving public assistance), the overall population at risk of homelessness in the Estes Valley is high.	Without local service providers reporting in HMIS, it is difficult to capture an accurate number of people experiencing homelessness in Estes Park. The 2025 (point-in-time) PIT count recorded two individuals experiencing homelessness; however, 2023-2024 school district data identified 43 school-aged children as experiencing homelessness, suggesting the number is significantly more than what is captured in the PIT count (which does not include doubled-up homelessness).	A handful of local non-profits and community organizations provide crisis and supportive services in Estes Park, but due to limited resources and the lack of shelter, referrals are often made to regional providers.	As a small, geographically isolated mountain town, Estes Park has unique challenges when it comes to homeless response. Stakeholders stressed the need to better support service workers, improve data collection and sharing, strengthen coordination with the rest of the county, and better communicate about issues of homelessness to the broader Estes Park community.

| Engagement in strategic plan

The countywide strategy offers Estes Park an opportunity to better connect limited local capacity with regional resources, ensuring residents experiencing homelessness have access to shelter, housing, and supportive services. Participation in shared data systems, prevention initiatives, and system coordination efforts will strengthen local response while amplifying regional efforts.

| Policy alignment

The Regional Homelessness Strategy aligns with and is supported by the following goals within the *Estes Forward Comprehensive Plan* (see Appendix C for more details):

- Address housing shortages with affordable, workforce, and multigenerational options
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goals 1 and 3
- Advance transportation and infrastructure that supports accessibility and sustainability
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goal 2
- Promote health equity and access to essential community services
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goal 2
- Facilitate cooperative governance between Town, County, and regional partners
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goal 4

Potential level of engagement

Goal	Strategy	Engagement type		Description
1	1.1 Improve tracking of prevention programs	Partner		Work with CoC and countywide partners to share data and monitor the reach and effectiveness of prevention programs
	1.2 Expand prevention programs	Support		Align municipal policies and funding to help scale up prevention programs
2	2.1 Best-practice shelter & diversion models	Support		Encourage local providers to align with evidence-based shelter and diversion approaches
	2.2 Holistic healthcare access	Partner		Collaborate with providers and county agencies to improve service integration
	2.3 Rapid, light-touch resources	Support		Align municipal policies and funding to support rapid exits from homelessness
	2.4 Diversify shelter & shelter alternatives	Partner	Elevate	Work with countywide partners to identify need and opportunity for shelter alternatives in Estes Park; Advocate for broader geographic access to shelter
3	3.1 Expand supportive housing	Support		Align municipal policies and funding to support additional supportive housing
4	4.1 County & municipal coordination	Partner		Estes Park takes active role in coordination and representing community needs and opportunities
	4.2 Coordinate regional funding	Elevate		Track and communicate local service demand and funding needs
5	5.1 Clear, consistent language	Support		Encourage local providers to use shared definitions and terminology in communications
	5.2 Countywide communication	Partner		Collaborate with countywide partners and local service providers to share accurate, timely information with the public
Key				
Elevate: Advocate local needs and opportunities				
Partner: Collaborate with county, providers, municipalities, stakeholders, and others				
Support: Align local policies and funding support				

Recommended next steps

- Commit to ongoing engagement in the strategic plan implementation (e.g. formal adoption, MOU)
- Enroll at least one local provider in HMIS to improve data collection and sharing
- Establish a formal protocol for Estes Park service providers referring clients to down-valley services
- Assess need for health services among people experiencing housing instability and homelessness
- Assess feasibility to provide rapid re-housing units and scattered-site PSH in Estes Valley
- Identify partnerships to provide wraparound care for emerging safe parking program
- Develop formal partnerships between Estes Park Housing Authority and local service providers



Community-level framework: Fort Collins

Community context

Fort Collins is the largest city in Larimer County and serves as one of the region’s primary hubs for homeless services. The city has made significant investments in shelter capacity, supportive housing development, and street outreach. While many services and programs exist in Fort Collins for people experiencing homelessness, high housing costs, low vacancy rates, and gaps in affordable housing continue to drive housing instability and homelessness within the city. Strong regional coordination, coupled with continued investment in innovative housing and service models, will be critical to ensuring Fort Collins can maintain its leadership role while balancing resources across the county.

Assessment snapshot

At-risk population	People experiencing homelessness	Overview of services	Key considerations
Fort Collins has the highest percentage of cost-burdened (25%) and severely cost-burdened (14%) residents in the county, with over half (52%) of renters experiencing housing cost burden, suggesting a significant proportion of residents are at risk of entering homelessness as housing costs continue to rise.	The 2025 PIT count recorded 398 individuals experiencing homelessness in Fort Collins, 27% were considered unsheltered.	Fort Collins has the county’s largest year-round emergency shelter , which is currently preparing to expand its bed capacity. The city also has several resources to meet basic and healthcare needs, robust street outreach , the largest inventory of supportive housing , and strong cross-system partnerships . People experiencing homelessness in other parts of the region and county often access services in Fort Collins out of necessity.	Stakeholders emphasized Fort Collins’ commitment to serving as a regional service hub and leader , while also underscoring the need for neighboring communities to contribute their share of resources and services to support a comprehensive, countywide response to homelessness.

Engagement in strategic plan

The countywide strategy aligns closely with Fort Collins’ own housing and homelessness goals, particularly around prevention, supportive housing development, and coordinated service delivery. By leveraging its existing infrastructure and partnerships, Fort Collins can share data-driven practices, pilot new interventions, and guide the countywide expansion of housing solutions.

| Policy alignment

The Regional Homelessness Strategy aligns with and is supported by the following goals within the *Fort Collins City Plan: Planning Our Future Together* (see Appendix C for more details):

- Support healthy, inclusive, equitable communities
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goals 1 and 2
- Provide a diversity of housing options and increase affordability
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goals 1 and 3
- Expand transportation and mobility options for all users
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goal 2
- Coordinate regional planning and infrastructure investment
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goal 4
- Use the health equity index and triple bottom line to assess policy impact
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goal 2
- Support housing affordability, diversity and accessibility
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goal 3

The Regional Homelessness Strategy also complements the goals and strategies within the City's *Housing Strategic Plan* by sharing core priorities:

- Expanding diverse and affordable housing options
- Strengthening housing stability and prevention
- Centering equity and inclusive engagement
- Fostering cross-sector collaboration.

Both strategic plans emphasize creative housing models, flexible resources, and measurable, adaptive implementation, making the city's housing plan a complementary, place-specific policy that can be leveraged to support the Regional Homelessness Strategy.

Potential level of engagement

Goal	Strategy	Engagement type		Description
1	1.1 Improve tracking of prevention programs	Partner		Work with countywide partners to share data and monitor the reach and effectiveness of prevention programs
	1.2 Expand prevention programs	Support		Align municipal policies and funding to help scale up prevention programs
2	2.1 Best-practice shelter & diversion models	Partner	Support	Collaborate with local and countywide providers to establish and apply standardized workflow
	2.2 Holistic healthcare access	Partner		Collaborate with healthcare providers and county agencies to strengthen service integration and accessibility
	2.3 Rapid, light-touch resources	Support		Align municipal policies and funding to expand quick stabilization supports
	2.4 Diversify shelter & shelter alternatives	Elevate	Support	Work with county and municipalities to support expanded geographic reach; Align policies and funding to support safe parking areas
3	3.1 Expand supportive housing	Partner	Support	Identify barriers and opportunities to expansion within Fort Collins
4	4.1 County & municipal coordination	Partner		Fort Collins takes active role in coordination and representing community needs and opportunities
	4.2 Coordinate regional funding	Partner		Work with other jurisdictions and funders to align funding priorities and leverage resources
5	5.1 Clear, consistent language	Support		Encourage local providers to use shared definitions and terminology in communications
	5.2 Countywide communication	Partner		Collaborate with countywide partners to share accurate, timely information with the public
Key				
Elevate: Advocate local needs and opportunities				
Partner: Collaborate with county, providers, municipalities, stakeholders, and others				
Support: Align local policies and funding support				

Recommended next steps

- Commit to implementation of and ongoing engagement in the strategic plan (e.g. formal adoption, MOU)
- Continue to strengthen partnerships with neighboring communities to balance service demand and coordinate resources
- Identify opportunities to strengthen and formalize local partnerships with faith-based organizations providing basic needs and temporary shelter
- Address policy and administrative barriers to incentivize development of supportive housing
- Share data-driven practices and evaluation results with countywide partners to inform regional decision-making



Community-level framework: Loveland

Community context

Loveland is considered one of the most affordable communities in Larimer County but rising housing costs and wage stagnation continue to contribute to housing instability and homelessness in the community, and the city experiences the highest rate of unsheltered homelessness in the county (43.3% in most recent PIT count). While the community has invested in outreach teams and partnerships with local nonprofits, shelter access remains a key challenge and service availability is more limited than in Fort Collins. People experiencing homelessness in the area frequently move between Loveland and Fort Collins to access essential services, underscoring the interconnected nature of the county’s homeless response system. Loveland’s recent decision to cease city-funded shelter operations will have direct consequences on Fort Collins’ shelter and service capacity, likely increasing demand there. However, strong engagement by Loveland stakeholders in the countywide plan presents an important opportunity to support existing resources, enhance coordination, and collaboratively build stronger, more effective pathways to stable housing for people experiencing homelessness in Loveland and across the county.

Assessment snapshot

At-risk population	People experiencing homelessness	Overview of services	Key considerations
The proportion of Loveland residents who are cost-burdened (17.7%) and severely cost-burdened (8%) is similar to county-wide estimates , suggesting a moderate number of all Loveland households are at risk of homelessness; however, nearly half of renters (46.3%) are cost-burdened. If local housing costs continue to rise, it will likely push more households toward housing instability.	The 2025 PIT count recorded 180 individuals experiencing homelessness in Loveland, 43.3% were considered unsheltered (the highest proportion in the county).	Several key homeless services operate in Loveland, providing critical access to basic needs, healthcare, case management, and housing navigation . The city is currently planning to phase out city-funded emergency shelter operations, significantly reducing the community’s capacity to provide shelter to those in need.	Stakeholders emphasized the need to maintain local service access, explore alternative shelter and housing models, and shift to a solutions-oriented approach to addressing homelessness.

Engagement in strategic plan

The countywide strategy provides Loveland with a framework for expanding local prevention, improving service coordination, and increasing access to shelter and housing options through partnerships. Aligning with the plan’s system coordination and accountability goals will help integrate Loveland into a seamless regional response. The plan also supports Loveland’s own housing and service priorities by encouraging flexible shelter models and data-driven decision-making.

Policy alignment

The Regional Homelessness Strategy aligns with and is supported by the following goals within the *Create Loveland Comprehensive Plan* (see Appendix C for more details):

- Support housing affordability, diversity and accessibility

- Regional Homelessness Strategy Goals 1 and 3
- Improve mobility, connectivity, transportation
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goal 2
- Advance equity and inclusive community engagement
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goal 5
- Support high quality infrastructure and public services
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goal 2
- Foster regional collaboration and intergovernmental partnerships
 - Regional Homelessness Strategy Goal 4

Potential level of engagement

Goal	Strategy	Engagement type	Description
1	1.1 Improve tracking of prevention programs	Partner	Work with countywide partners to share data and monitor the reach and effectiveness of prevention programs
	1.2 Expand prevention programs	Support	Align municipal policies and existing funding to help scale up prevention programs
2	2.1 Best-practice shelter & diversion models	Partner	Collaborate with local and countywide providers to align with best practices
	2.2 Holistic healthcare access	Partner	Collaborate with healthcare providers and county agencies to strengthen service integration and accessibility
	2.3 Rapid, light-touch resources	Support	Align municipal policies and local funding opportunities to expand quick stabilization supports
	2.4 Diversify shelter & shelter alternatives	Partner	Identify needs, barriers, and opportunities to providing shelter and shelter alternatives in Loveland
3	3.1 Expand supportive housing	Partner	Collaborate with countywide partners to identify level of need and opportunities for expansion
4	4.1 County & municipal coordination	Partner	Loveland takes active role in coordination and representing community needs and opportunities
	4.2 Coordinate regional funding	Partner	Work with other jurisdictions and funders to align funding priorities and leverage resources
5	5.1 Clear, consistent language	Support	Encourage local providers to use shared definitions and terminology in communications
	5.2 Countywide communication	Partner	Collaborate with countywide partners to share accurate, timely information with the public
Key			
Elevate: Advocate local needs and opportunities			
Partner: Collaborate with county, providers, municipalities, stakeholders, and others			
Support: Align local policies and funding support			

Recommended next steps

- Commit to implementation of and ongoing engagement in the strategic plan (e.g. formal adoption, MOU)
- Define local needs related to people experiencing housing instability and homelessness and how these might be met by a collaborative, countywide approach
- Develop a transition plan to sustain local shelter capacity and explore alternative shelter models following the phase-out of city-funded shelter operations
- Develop collaborative agreements with countywide and regional partners to reduce service gaps and manage cross-community demand
- Collect and share data on local service needs, demand, and outcomes to guide resource allocation



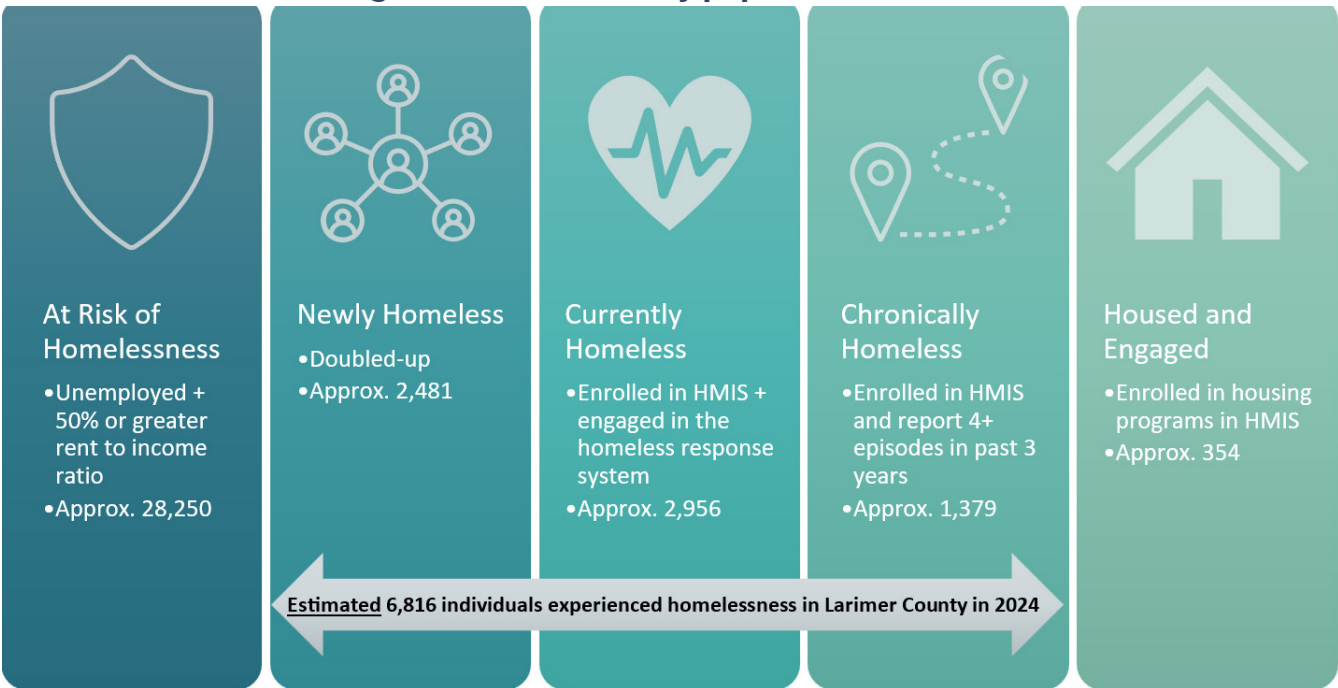
System assessment key findings

The strategic goals, strategies, and recommended actions outlined in this plan were initially developed based on a needs assessment of the homeless response system across Larimer County completed in the first project phase. The assessment applied a mixed-methods approach, combining various primary, administrative, and secondary data sources to generate a comprehensive understanding of key system strengths, barriers, and gaps. Key findings from the needs assessment are highlighted here.

Who is experiencing homelessness in Larimer County?

In 2024, an estimated 6,816 people experienced homelessness in Larimer County. An additional estimated 28,250 people within the county were at risk of entering homelessness based on the unemployment rate and ratio of households with severely cost-burdened housing (50% or more of income spent on rent). Another 354 households were recently exited from homelessness into housing programs but still are enrolled in HMIS and receiving supportive services.

Figure 2. Larimer County population estimates



At risk of entering homelessness

Across the county, a significant proportion of households have been spending 30% or more of their income on rent, which is a notable risk factor for homelessness, and as many as 9.3% of all county residents have been considered severely cost-burdened over the past five years, spending 50% or more of their income on rent (Table 1). In examining the cost burden among those who are renting with the most recently available public data, nearly half (48.8%) are cost-burdened and over one-quarter (26.1%) are severely cost-burdened in Larimer County (Figure 3).

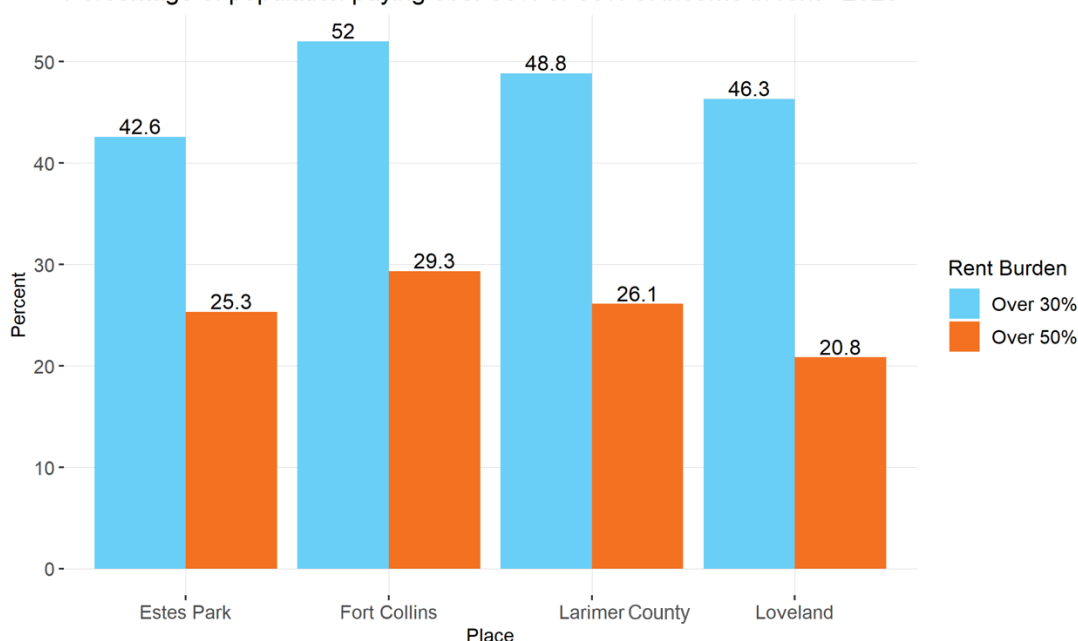
Table 1. Housing cost burden among all residents by geography

Geography	Percent of population with rent over 30% of household income	Percent of population with rent over 50% of household income
Larimer County	17.4%	9.3%
Fort Collins	24.9%	14.0%
Loveland	17.7%	8%
Estes Park	13.1%	7.8%

Source: 2023 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Figure 3. Housing cost-burden among renters by geography

Percentage of population paying over 30% or 50% of income in rent - 2023



Newly homeless

While a total of 4,335 individuals were considered literally homeless (including currently and chronically) in Larimer County in 2024, an additional estimated 2,481 individuals experienced doubled-up homelessness in the county (when multiple households temporarily share housing, often in overcrowded conditions).

Even within our doubled-up families, their situations look very different. Some families need specifically bedding, some folks need support with utilities. The needs within our doubled-up families look different.
– Service provider

Currently homeless

For those who are currently homeless, we utilized HMIS data to report the total number of active cases in HMIS who are not yet housed and do not meet the definition of being chronically unhoused, a total of 2,956 individuals. The demographics of those classified as currently homeless and who experienced their first unhoused episode in 2024 vary from the other unhoused populations examined in this assessment. Among those experiencing homelessness for the first time, there was a higher proportion of Hispanic/Latino individuals than those classified as chronically unhoused or housed.

Chronically homeless

Of the 4,335 individuals who were experiencing homelessness and enrolled in HMIS within the County, 1,379 were considered chronically homeless, having experienced homelessness for at least a year and/or had four or more episodes of homelessness over the past three years. Chronic homelessness often reflects systemic gaps that necessitate more comprehensive care and resources to support long-term stability. Individuals who were chronically homeless were more likely to identify as male, making up over 66% of this group.

We have a pretty high percentage of people who are chronically homeless... So, we obviously lack the housing stock and the supportive services to address the issue of chronic homelessness.
– Service provider

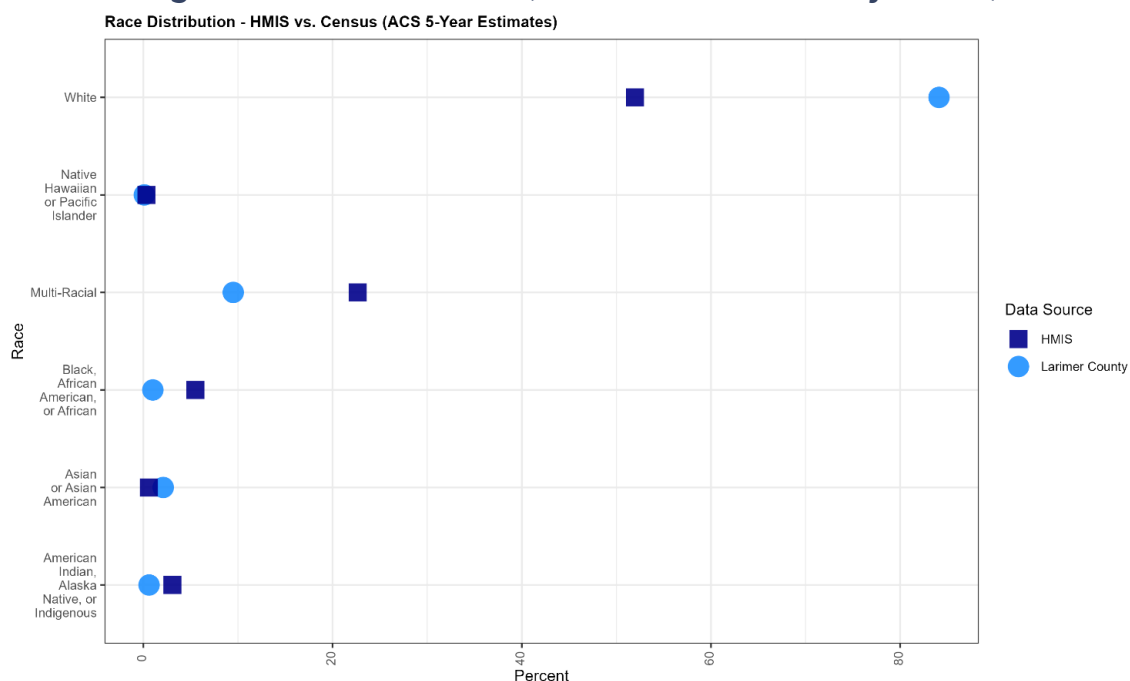
Housed and engaged

In 2024, 354 individuals were exited from homelessness and enrolled in housing programs while maintaining their enrollment in HMIS. An additional 994 Individuals were engaged in supportive services or homelessness prevention programs in 2024 but not considered homeless. Between 2020 and 2024, at least 15% of individuals were documented as moving into permanent housing and about 5% into temporary housing (Figure 10). These numbers, likely understate the full extent of housing outcomes, as 73% of exits were categorized as “other” due to missing or incomplete follow-up data.

Key demographics of those experiencing homelessness

The majority of people experiencing homelessness in Larimer County who have been engaged in the homeless response system over the past five years self-reported as White; however, compared to the overall Larimer County population, people identifying as multiracial, Black or African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Pacific Islander are overrepresented in Larimer County’s homeless population (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Race distribution (HMIS vs. Larimer County census)



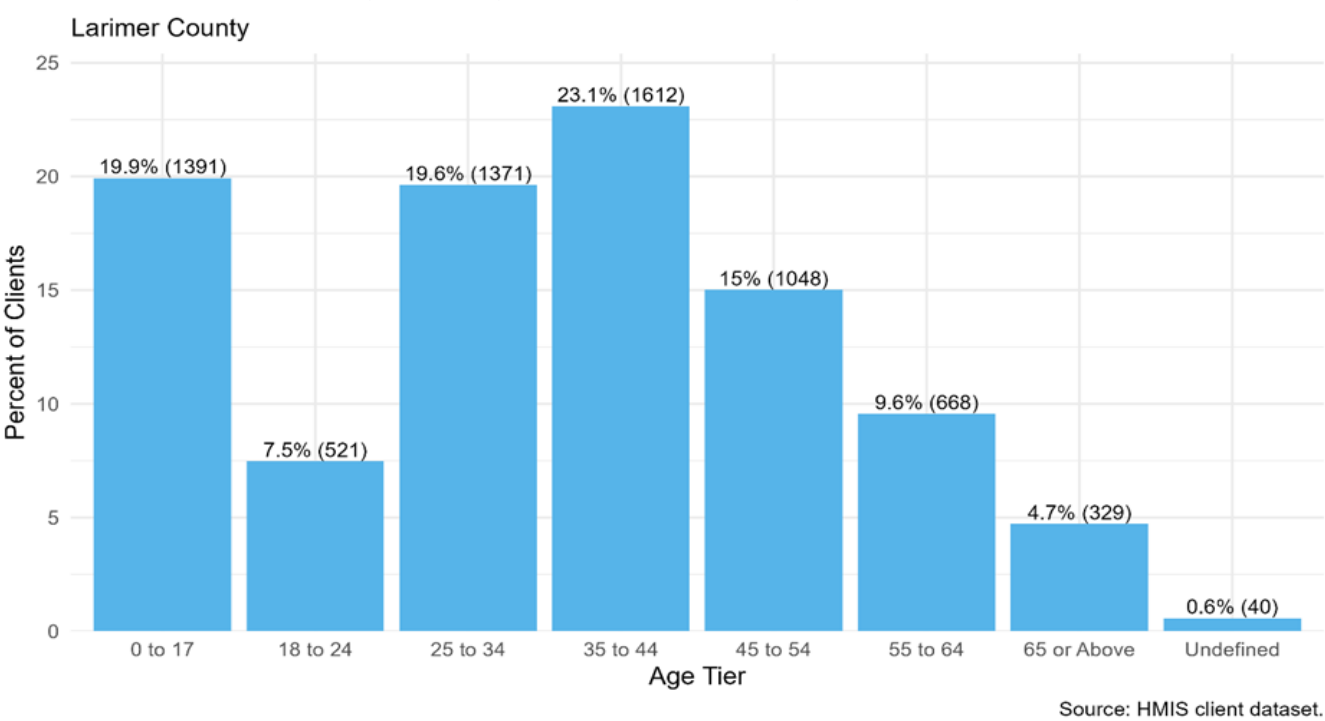
Overall, men are more present in the population than women or non-binary/transgender individuals. These gender distribution patterns are consistent across the different categories of homelessness discussed above.

Table 2. Client gender total (2020 - 2024)

Gender	N	%
Man (Boy, if child)	3,383	58.0%
Woman (Girl, if child)	2,357	40.4%
Non-Binary	21	0.4%
Transgender	21	0.4%
More than one gender indicated	48	0.8%
Source: HMIS client dataset.		

The most prevalent age groups are those between 25 and 54, accounting for more than 50% of all enrolled clients in HMIS across the study period (Figure 5).

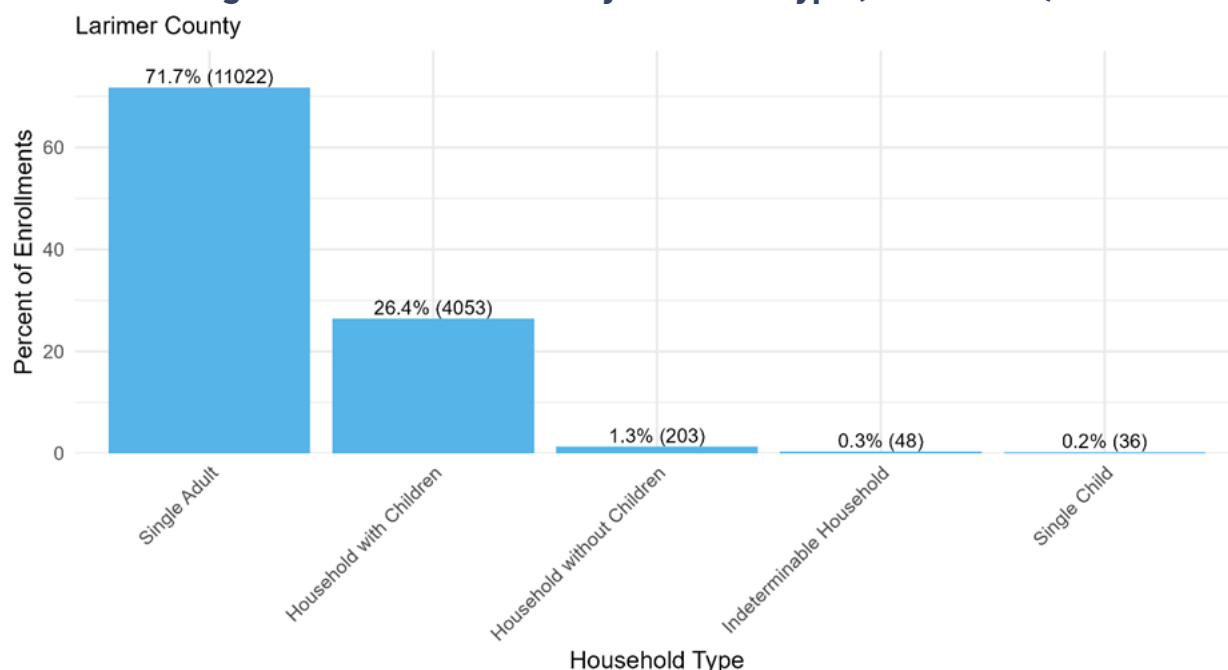
Figure 5. Age distribution among HMIS clients



Types of households

Although the largest share of individuals experiencing homelessness over the past four years in Larimer County have been single men between the ages of 25 and 54, a notable number of households with children and adults over age 55 are also affected. Nearly three-quarters (71.7%) of those enrolled in the system were single adults, while the remaining quarter were families with children (Figure 6). Single adults also made up the majority (71.8%) of people experiencing chronic homelessness in the county, compared to families or children.

Figure 6. Total enrollments by household type (2020 - 2024)



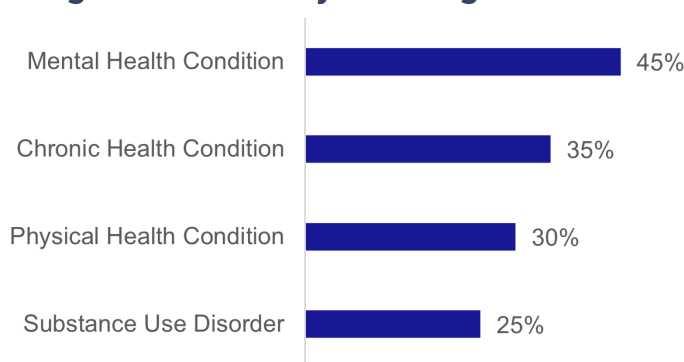
Source: HMIS enrollment dataset.

People with disabling conditions

A significant proportion of homeless individuals receiving services self-report mental and physical health conditions upon entry into the system (Figure 7), indicating a high need for integrated healthcare options. Nearly half of those enrolled in HMIS in 2024 self-reported having a mental health condition, and about one-third reported a chronic health condition and/or physical health condition.

Mental health [services] ... we struggle connecting people to that. There's just such a demand for it that typically it's full. Addiction programs— they're full. So, it's very hard to find resources for that.
– Service provider

Figure 7. HMIS entry screening conditions



Source: HMIS enrollment dataset.

Unsheltered homelessness

For a significant proportion of people experiencing homelessness in Larimer County, securing safe, reliable overnight shelter is not always an option. Some individuals choose to stay unsheltered to maintain autonomy, while others are unable to access congregate shelter because current options do not fully accommodate needs such as staying with pets, managing health conditions, or ensuring personal safety and privacy.. Several lived experts shared stories about the stress, danger, and criminalization they face when lacking legal alternatives to outdoor living.

According to the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count conducted in 2025, about one-third (32.5%) of those experiencing homelessness across Larimer County were considered unsheltered (Table 3). The City of Loveland had the highest rate of unsheltered individuals. Compared to the 2022 and 2024

PIT counts, the total number of unsheltered individuals within the county has stayed relatively the same, but Loveland’s rate of unsheltered homelessness first decreased, from about 63% to 32%, and then jumped again to 43%. During this same time frame (2022-2025), the City of Loveland began operating two new emergency overnight shelter locations but currently has plans to cease city-operated shelters.

The thing is, it’s so tiring being out here on the streets. You’re tired of being tired and just carrying all your things. And I have a big bag and two backpacks with me now, and I have to take them everywhere with me.
– Lived expert

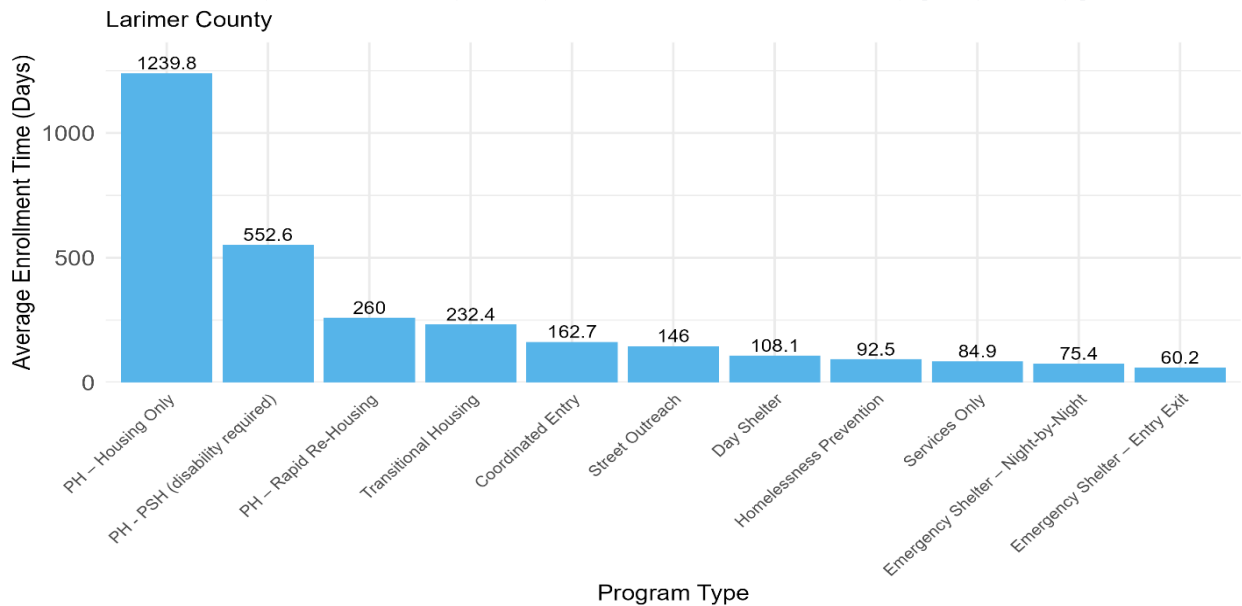
Table 3. 2025 Point-in-Time count data: Larimer County

Location	Sheltered	Sheltered %	Unsheltered	Unsheltered %	Grand Total
Fort Collins	290	72.9%	108	27.1%	398
Loveland	102	56.7%	78	43.3%	180
Estes Park	2	100%	0	0%	2
Wellington	0	0%	1	100%	1
Total	392	67.5%	189	32.5%	581

Length of time homeless

Among individuals engaged in HMIS within Larimer County, clients accessed services an average of about two times between 2020 and 2024 and were enrolled in the system for just over an average of 100 days, or about 3.7 months. Figure 8 shows the average length of enrollment across program types.

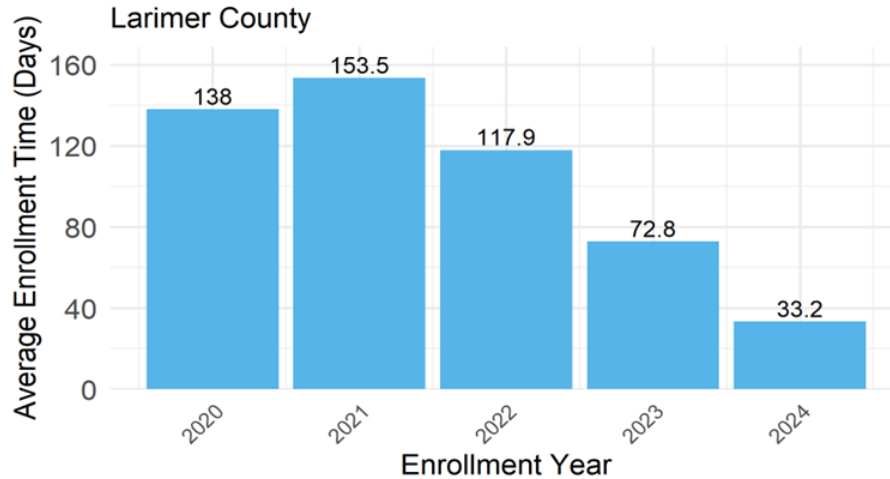
Figure 8. Average length of HMIS enrollment by program type



Source: HMIS enrollment dataset.

The pattern in the average length of enrollment in HMIS is that of a steady decrease since 2020, suggesting that the organizations providing data to HMIS have both improved data collection and reporting standards, and improved their capacity to link individuals with services more quickly.

Figure 9. Average length of HMIS enrollment by year (2020-2024)



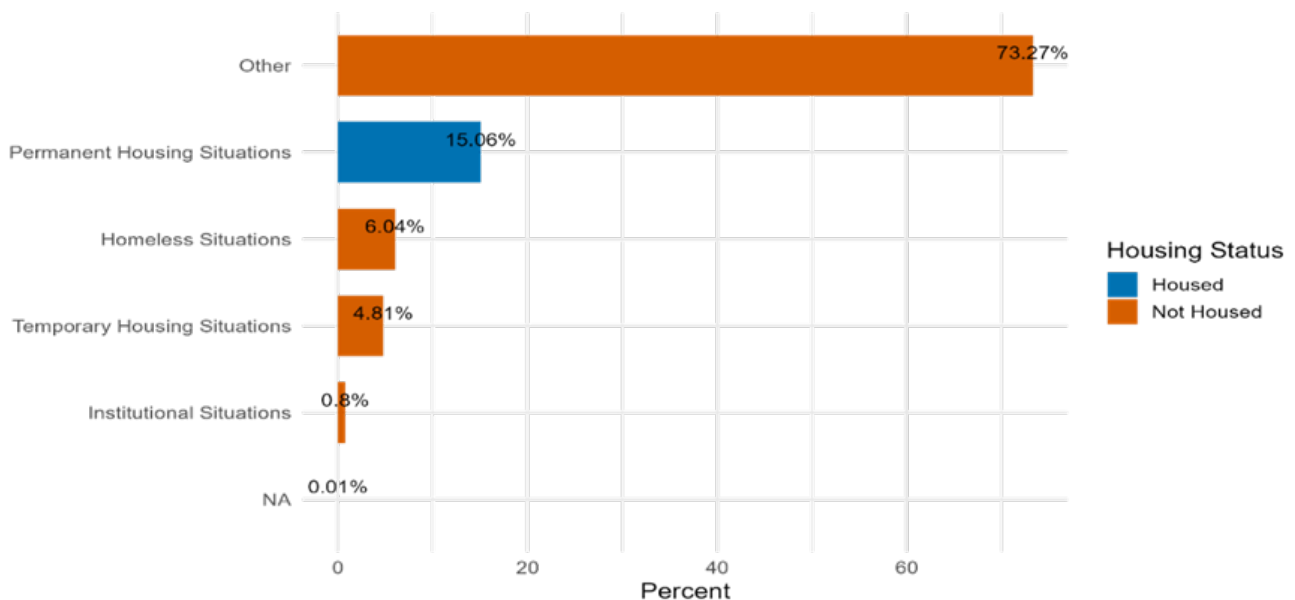
MIS enrollment dataset. Includes all closed episodes, any client with no exit date was excluded.

Exits from homelessness

Of all enrolled HMIS clients, 15% were documented as exiting to permanent housing situations, while more than 73% were classified as “other” (a category that reflects clients lost to follow-up, incomplete exit interviews, or deaths) (Figure 10). An additional 6% of clients exited back into homelessness and 5% into temporary housing or institutional settings. Because of the large “other” category, actual exits to housing are likely higher than what the data currently capture. In 2024, 304 single adults and 153 families were confirmed to have successfully exited into permanent housing.

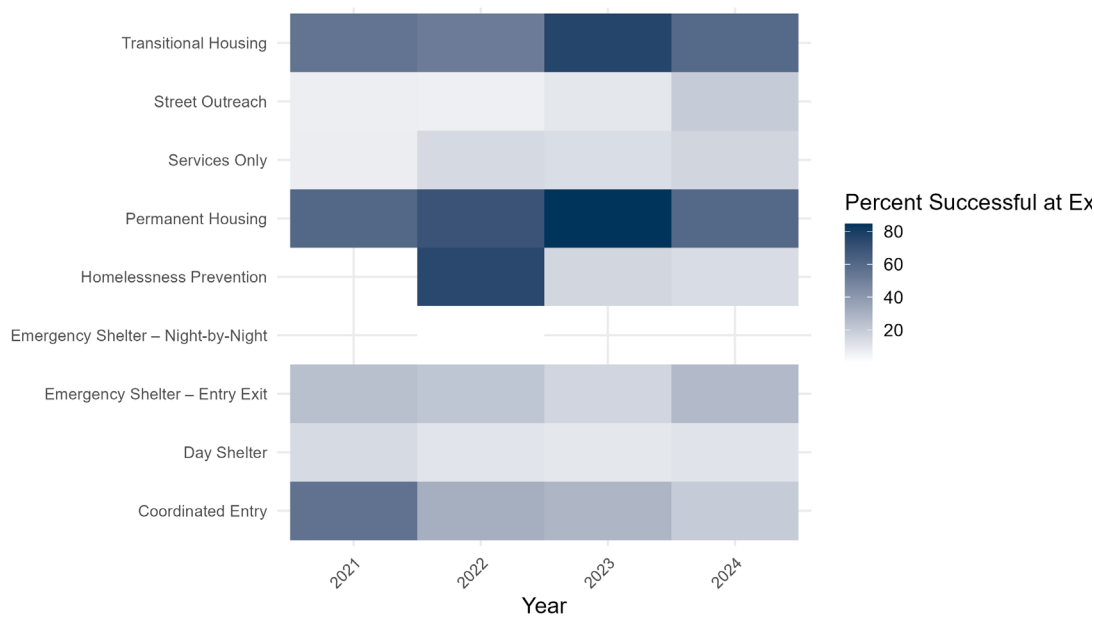
I’m not here because I want to be here. I want to have a job and be right there next to the next person. It’s so expensive. We need more low-income things for us people, and we wouldn’t be on the streets in the tents and stuff. We need to be able to make it, because we like it here. This is my home.
– Lived expert

Figure 10. Exit destinations by category (2020-2024)



Different entry points into the homeless response system exist along a continuum, and these different entry points have different types of outcomes that can be classified as successful engagement. For example, a successful outcome of street outreach is to link an individual with a bed in an emergency shelter, whereas a successful outcome for someone who is receiving temporary housing is permanent housing. Figure 11 provides an overview of the proportion of individuals who had a successful outcome between 2020 and 2024 based on the specific type of program they were exited from. In general, transitional and permanent housing programs consistently have the highest rate of successful exit outcomes.

Figure 11. Successful exits for individuals by entry program



What’s working

| System governance

The Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (NoCO CoC) is a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-designated regional coalition. Established as its own CoC in January 2020, NoCO CoC coordinates homeless response across Larimer and Weld Counties through shared data, housing-focused strategies, and a streamlined entry system (known as the Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement System, or CAHPS) connecting individuals and families to housing and supportive services. Since its establishment, NoCO CoC has built a network of more than 40 partner agencies in Larimer and Weld Counties and effectively supported the expansion of rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing, and case-conferencing across the region.

Local control of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) has enhanced data sharing and collaboration among agencies within Larimer County and the broader Northern Colorado region. Stakeholders often cited the creation of and commitment to the NoCO CoC as a major accomplishment in strengthening local homeless response in recent years.

Having such a large number of agencies on HMIS, which was not the case before, and having the local control over the system ... I would point to that as one of the biggest successes over the last five years. It by default induces collaboration because we’re all using the same system and sharing data.
 – Service provider

Partnerships and collaboration

Strong partnerships among service providers, community organizations, and local governments across Larimer County support a coordinated and effective homeless response system. Shared data systems like HMIS and CAHPS enable real-time coordination and seamless housing placements, and

There have been very positive developments in the county, both in Fort Collins and Loveland communities, in building new housing, especially both communities coming with the permanent supportive housing available for people. I see it as a very positive trend.

– Service provider

service providers and community organizations often work together to create innovative programs, share resources, and align services to meet diverse client needs. Further, several initiatives to collaborate across sectors (e.g., law enforcement, healthcare, faith community, schools) have strengthened the response system’s ability to rapidly meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness in the community. Stakeholders, including service providers and community members, often highlighted the collaborative spirit and numerous formal and informal partnerships among organizations as testaments to what is working well with the local homeless response system.

Leadership support

In recent years, municipalities like Fort Collins, Loveland, and Estes Park, as well as Larimer County, have demonstrated a concerted effort to address homelessness, including creating dedicated staff positions focused on housing and homelessness and fostering partnerships between government agencies and homeless service providers. Local government leadership has also made financial investments into the homeless response system, including support for direct service providers and funding for permanent supportive housing projects and other key initiatives.

| Dedicated providers

In addition to a strong foundation for the governance and coordination of the homeless response system, Larimer County has many service providers and community organizations that are dedicated to and passionate about serving their community. Stakeholders, including lived experts and community members, frequently highlighted the quality and compassion of these providers as a defining strength of the system.

Providers demonstrate a strong commitment to serving people experiencing homelessness with flexibility and care, often going above and beyond to meet individual needs. Outreach programs, such as Outreach Fort Collins and Loveland’s new outreach team, effectively meet people where they are and connect them to critical resources. Successful programs and facilities—including resource centers, Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) apartments, safe lots, mental health facilities, and community kitchens—offer a strong network of support that helps address both immediate needs and long-term stability.

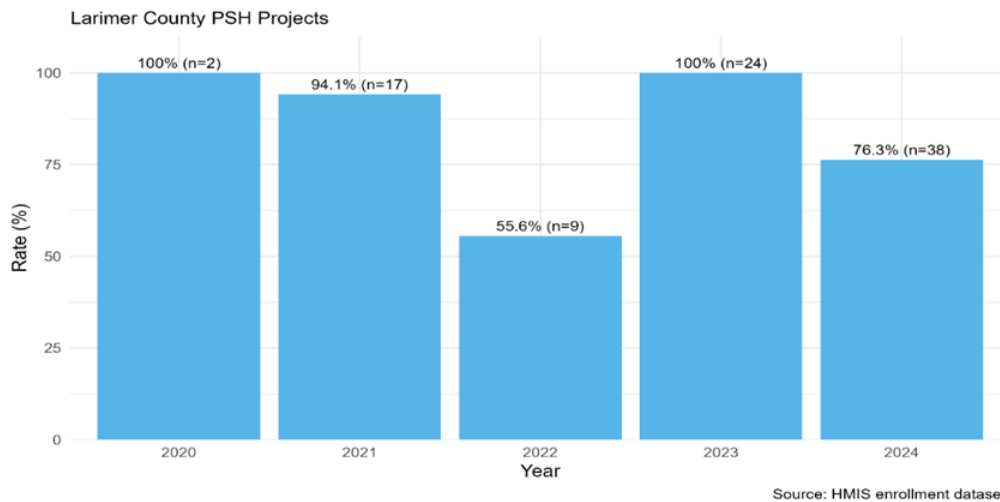
They go over and beyond to help. “What do you need?” This and that. And they’re great ... They’ve seen me at my lowest and my worst. And they’ve seen me just come out of treatment ... they’ve seen me through everything, and they’re here. And I know they do care.
– Lived expert

Permanent supportive housing

Based on stakeholder feedback and HMIS data, permanent supportive housing is also a promising element of the homeless response system in Larimer County. The number of PSH units has grown

over time, and the proportion of those enrolled in PSH either staying in PSH or moving to another permanent housing situation has remained consistently high (Figure 12). In 2024, a total of 38 households, or 76% of those enrolled in PSH, in Larimer County retained permanent housing. Stakeholders often highlighted PSH as a major asset to the homeless response system and something the community needs more of.

Figure 12. Successful exits to permanent housing or retention of current PSH



Basic needs

Service providers and lived experts often emphasized that basic needs—such as food, clothing, gear, showers, laundry, and mail services—are largely well met through a collaborative network of resources among homeless service providers, community organizations, and faith-based groups across the county.

Access to healthcare

In recent years, significant progress has been made in Larimer County and its communities to strengthen access to both physical and behavioral health care. In 2018, Larimer County voters approved a 0.25% sales tax levy to fund behavioral health for 20 years, generating roughly \$12–15 million annually for behavioral health services. This funding has been leveraged to establish the Longview Campus—a 24/7 acute care behavioral health facility—support co-responder teams, and fund dozens of local impact grant programs to expand crisis intervention and prevention services.

If it wasn't for this day center... I wouldn't have been able to prosper because ...if you are living in your car, where are you showering, where are you eating, where are you fixing food?
– Lived expert

[Longview] is great because we never had any kind of detox in Fort Collins before. It is crisis stabilization ... So, a huge gap being met.
– Municipal housing staff

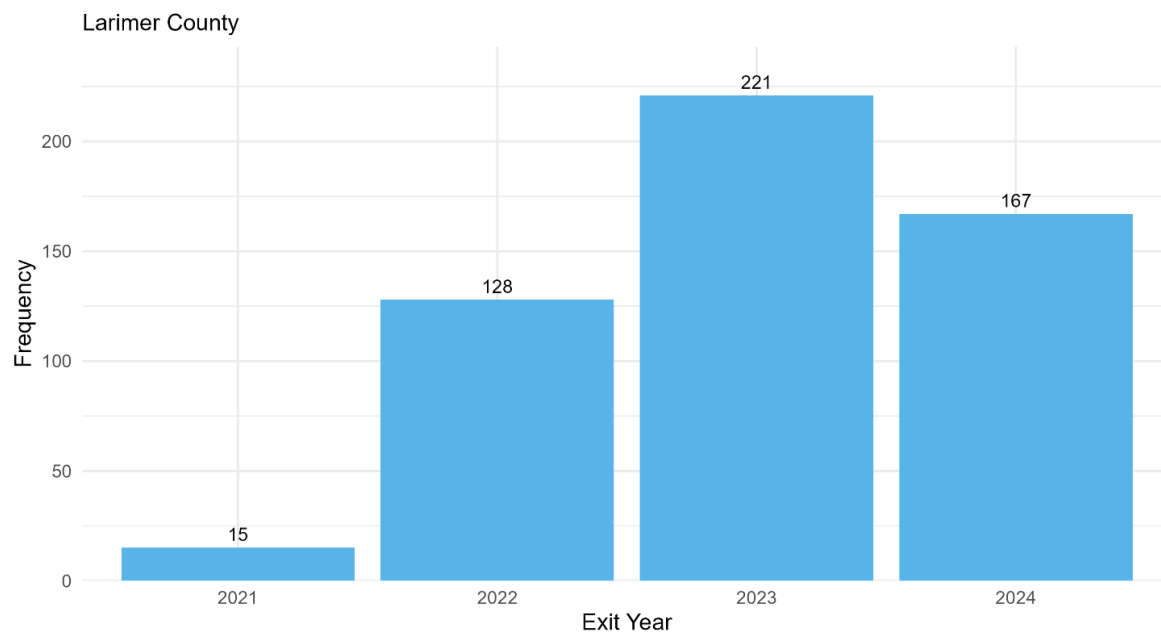
The Murphy Center clinic operated by SummitStone I think was a huge win ... It has been a long dream to have that in this place that's supposed to be a one-stop shop for people experiencing homelessness.
– Service provider

Another recent initiative to strengthen access to health care among people experiencing homelessness is the co-location of a clinic, operated by SummitStone Health Partners, at the Murphy Center in Fort Collins.

Street outreach

Stakeholders often highlighted street outreach programs, operating since 2016 in Fort Collins and starting in 2024 in Loveland, as a notable strength within the system, effectively meeting people experiencing homelessness where they are and connecting them to available resources. In general, the number of those served by street outreach programs in the county has grown over the last several years. The number of individuals engaged in street outreach services who exited to housing has grown steadily since 2021. Most recently, a total of 167 individuals enrolled in street outreach exited to housing (Figure 13).

Figure 13. Exits to housing from street outreach



Source: HMIS enrollment dataset.



What's needed in Larimer County

Through the system assessment and strategic planning process, several key housing and supportive service needs were identified within Larimer County's homeless response system.

| Prevention and early intervention

Prevention services are a critical component of the effort to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring across Larimer County. In 2024, nearly 28,250 residents were at risk of housing loss due to financial instability and/or paying over half their income toward rent. National studies consistently show that prevention strategies—such as rental assistance, eviction prevention, case management support, and financial literacy tools—not only reduce the number of people entering homelessness but can also be highly cost-effective.

By ramping up prevention services, Larimer County can interrupt the cycle of housing loss before crisis begins, reducing the experiences of the traumatic and destabilizing conditions of homelessness. Investing upstream not only stabilizes households but also alleviates strain on emergency shelters, healthcare systems, and public safety resources—freeing up capacity to serve those most in need.

There is a huge unmet need in homelessness prevention, whether that is for the regular population that's just housing insecure or supporting older adults, which we know is an exploding demographic, so they can age in place.
– Service provider

| Crisis and supportive services

An effective homeless response system relies on more than housing alone. Crisis and supportive services, including emergency shelter, healthcare, and wraparound supports, are essential to meeting immediate needs, stabilizing individuals, and creating pathways out of homelessness.

Emergency shelter

Emergency shelter capacity in Larimer County is insufficient to meet current needs, leaving many individuals experiencing homelessness without access to safe, stable shelter. In the 2025 Point-in-Time count, 581 people were identified as homeless, with 189 (32.5%) unsheltered. Countywide, 334 emergency shelter beds—including congregate and voucher-based options—frequently operate at or near capacity. For example, both the Fort Collins Rescue Mission (145 beds) and the City of Loveland shelter (65 beds) were at 100% utilization during the PIT count. Traditional congregate shelters also do not meet the needs of everyone, particularly those with pets, partners, children, disabling health conditions, or concerns about safety. Stakeholders and individuals with lived experience emphasized the importance of alternative models, such as safe parking and sanctioned camping, as harm reduction strategies and critical entry points to services and housing pathways.

Expanding both emergency shelter capacity and access to alternative shelter options is essential to reducing the number of people living unsheltered and improving overall system effectiveness. Currently, there is an effort underway to expand emergency shelter bed capacity in Fort Collins, but at the same time, the City of Loveland is expected to close its emergency shelter facilities. While an increase in the total number of beds available is a critical step to reducing experiences of unsheltered homelessness and supporting exits from homelessness, the geographic distribution of shelter options as well as the diversity in option types is also an important consideration for supporting an effective countywide response system.

Access to healthcare

Access to healthcare—both behavioral and medical—remains a critical need within Larimer County’s homeless response system. While there have been notable efforts in recent years to improve access to care, including the expansion of street outreach teams, implementation of co-response programs, and new investments in the behavioral health system, significant gaps persist given the high proportion of individuals experiencing homelessness who also report a physical or behavioral health condition. As many as one-third of those enrolled in HMIS in 2024 reported a mental health condition and nearly one-quarter reported a physical health condition.

We’re seeing an increase in acuity of mental health and substance use issues within our [client] population, and your generic case management is really not what they need. We’re needing co-responders, ambulances, and more in-depth mental health care that doesn’t seem to exist or there’s not a good way to get people connected to those things.
– Service provider

Despite this high level of need, stakeholders and individuals with lived experience reported significant barriers to accessing care, including limited availability of providers, difficulty navigating fragmented systems, and challenges maintaining consistent contact with care teams. To build on recent progress, stakeholders emphasized the need for expanded integrated healthcare responses, including mobile crisis teams, low-barrier and trauma-informed treatment options, and stronger coordination between homeless response and healthcare systems.

Wraparound supports

Many individuals experiencing homelessness in Larimer County face multiple, intersecting challenges that require more than housing to achieve stability. Stakeholders and individuals with lived experience emphasized that housing alone is not enough—people experiencing homelessness, especially those who are chronically homeless, also need wraparound supports (i.e., intensive case management, behavioral health services, employment assistance, and life skills coaching) to sustain housing and rebuild their lives.

Currently, limited service capacity and fragmented coordination across providers make it difficult to deliver these holistic supports consistently across the various subpopulations of people experiencing homelessness. Often, individuals face challenges with resource navigation, meeting documentation requirements, and accessing services that are sometimes siloed and/or underfunded. At the same time, there is growing recognition of the importance of integrated, trauma-informed, and person-centered supports that address the whole person. Expanding these wraparound services and ensuring they are well-coordinated across the homeless response system will be critical to helping individuals exit homelessness permanently and prevent future returns.

| Housing

Safe, stable, and affordable housing provides the foundation individuals and families need to maintain stability in their lives and flourish. A range of housing options, such as rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing, and affordable rental units, are critical to ensuring people can exit homelessness and remain housed long-term.

Supportive housing

Supportive housing, including both Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) programs, is a critical component of Larimer County’s strategy to address homelessness, yet current capacity falls far short of meeting demand. Between 2020 and 2024, there were 2,426 individuals actively enrolled in Coordinated Entry. Of those individuals, 641 were newly enrolled in

supportive housing programs, including 373 in RRH and 271 in PSH.

Stakeholders and lived experts consistently identified supportive housing as a priority, citing its proven effectiveness in helping individuals to successfully exit and avoid returning to homelessness. However, providers report that even when PSH units are available, some residents require more intensive services than current models can deliver. Expanding both RRH and PSH will be critical to meeting the diverse needs of households experiencing homelessness.

Affordable housing

Affordable housing remains a critical gap contributing to homelessness in Larimer County, as housing costs continue to outpace growth in median incomes. In 2023, about 17% of county residents were housing cost-burdened, spending 30% or more of their income on housing, and nearly 10% were severely cost-burdened, spending over 50%. These households are at heightened risk of homelessness, and as housing costs continue to rise, the proportion of cost-burdened residents is likely to grow. The 2021 Larimer County Affordable Housing Needs Assessment identified a shortfall of nearly 10,000 affordable units for low-income households. This lack of affordable housing not only increases the risk of homelessness but also creates significant barriers for individuals seeking to exit homelessness. In 2024, only about 20% of households exiting homelessness in Larimer County secured housing, underscoring this gap.

While the preservation and development of affordable housing lies largely outside the scope of the Regional Homelessness Strategy, strong coordination with ongoing countywide housing efforts is essential. Aligning the homeless response system with broader affordable housing initiatives will support both prevention and diversion strategies and ensure individuals exiting homelessness have access to stable, permanent housing.

Evaluation & next steps

This strategic plan represents a key period of growth and enhanced coordination within the long-term, collective effort to maintain and strengthen the homeless response system across Larimer County. Its success will depend on the continued commitment and collaboration of county and municipal partners, service providers, funders, community organizations, and residents. The shared vision outlined here is a foundation for action built upon diverse and extensive engagement from the community, but the work ahead will require broad buy-in, sustained engagement, and a willingness to adapt as needs, resources, and opportunities evolve.

The implementation phase will seek to establish clear roles and responsibilities for all partners, set milestone timelines for achieving key actions, and create mechanisms for transparent communication across jurisdictions. As an early implementation step, Homeward Alliance is engaging a consultant to conduct system modeling of the local homeless response system. This modeling will build on the robust data collection and analysis that informed the strategic plan, offering additional projections and scenario testing to help partners understand the potential impacts of different interventions and resource allocations. The results will provide another layer of insight to guide coordinated decision-making and further align strategies with local needs.

Progress toward the implementation of the Regional Homelessness Strategy will be monitored continuously, with updates shared regularly among partners and the broader community. It is recommended that at least once per year, partners will conduct a formal evaluation of the plan, assessing both fidelity to the goals and strategies and identifying any needs for adaptation in response to emerging challenges, data, and lessons learned. This cycle of implementation, evaluation, and refinement will help ensure Larimer County's collective efforts remain coordinated, impactful, and responsive in order to move steadily toward the shared goal of making homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring across the county and region.



Appendix

Appendix A: Glossary of key terms

Affordable Housing: Housing that is built specifically to be affordable for households earning below a certain Area Median Income (AMI).

Chronic Homelessness: Individuals or families with a disabling condition who have been continuously unhoused for a year or more, or who have experienced at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

Continuum of Care (CoC): The Continuum of Care (CoC) Program, through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is designed to promote communitywide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, and State and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families, and communities by homelessness; promote access to and effect utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families; and optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Coordinated Entry System: A standardized process to assess and prioritize unhoused individuals and families for housing and services based on their level of vulnerability and need. The primary goals for coordinated entry systems are that assistance be allocated as effectively as possible and that it be easily accessible.

Cost-burdened: Households who pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care. Severely cost-burdened households pay more than 50% of their income on housing costs.

Doubled-up homelessness: Households who are living in “doubled-up” accommodations, that is, are sharing housing with other families or individuals due to a loss of housing or other similar situation.

Emergency Shelter: Short-term accommodation providing immediate refuge for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. These shelters offer basic services such as beds, meals, and basic hygiene facilities.

Harm Reduction: An evidence-based approach to engaging with people who use substances and equipping them with life-saving tools and information to create positive change in their lives and potentially save their lives. This approach emphasizes engaging directly with people who use substances to prevent overdose and infectious disease transmission; improve physical, mental, and social wellbeing; and offer low barrier options for accessing health care services.

Homelessness: The state of lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence, which may result in individuals living in emergency shelters, transitional housing, cars, motels, parks, or public spaces.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS): HMIS is a locally administered, electronic data collection system used by homeless service providers to capture client-level information over time. Its purpose is to support care coordination, case management, and system-level performance monitoring. It enables the tracking of housing and service utilization trends across programs and communities.

Homeless response system: The coordinated network of systems, providers, organizations, and resources that respond to homelessness (i.e., shelters, outreach teams, rapid rehousing, supportive services, and local government coordination) within a given geographic area.

Imminent risk of homelessness: A HUD-recognized category describing individuals or families who are likely to lose their primary night-time residence within 14 days, have no alternative housing lined up, and have insufficient resources or support to obtain housing.

Literal homelessness: Individuals or families lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence. This includes those sleeping in places not intended for habitation (e.g., cars, streets, parks), in emergency shelters or transitional housing, or exiting an institution (after ≤ 90 days) where they had previously been in a shelter or place not meant for habitation.

Lived expert: Individuals with lived experience of homelessness, whether previously or currently (e.g., individuals who have utilized housing services and experienced housing barriers or homelessness in Larimer County).

Low-barrier: Programs that are designed to reduce or eliminate common eligibility requirements that keep people from accessing shelter or services, focusing on meeting immediate needs first and connecting people to longer-term solutions without preconditions.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH): Long-term, non-time-limited housing combined with wraparound supportive services (e.g., case management, health care connections, and tenancy support).

Point-in-Time Count (PIT): A one-night, annual count of both sheltered and unsheltered unhoused individuals conducted by communities to provide a snapshot of houselessness on a specific date.

Prevention and diversion Services: Services aimed at preventing houselessness before it occurs or diverting individuals and families away from shelter systems by offering financial assistance, mediation, or alternative housing arrangements.

Rapid Re-Housing: Short- to medium-term intervention that helps individuals and families quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing by providing housing search assistance, temporary rental and move-in support, and time-limited case management.

Sheltered homelessness: Unhoused individuals or families staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing, or safe havens designated for unhoused individuals.

Trauma-informed care: An approach that recognizes the widespread impact of trauma and integrates this understanding into policies, practices, and interactions. It emphasizes safety, trust, empowerment, and collaboration to avoid re-traumatization and support individuals in regaining stability and control over their lives.

Unsheltered homelessness: Unhoused individuals living on the streets, in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, or other public spaces without access to regular shelter accommodations.

Wraparound services: Comprehensive and individualized support services that address multiple aspects of an individual's life, such as housing, health, employment, and social integration.

Appendix B: Financial landscape scan of the homeless response system in Larimer County, CO

Background

As part of the regional homeless response system assessment and strategic planning process, JG Research & Evaluation conducted a financial landscape scan to provide a snapshot of public investment in the homeless response system. This analysis focused on funding from federal, county, and municipal sources that directly support the homeless response system as defined in the strategic plan.

The purpose of this scan is to help stakeholders understand the relative scale and distribution of public investment in homelessness response activities, rather than to capture a detailed accounting of all investment across the housing continuum. The findings are intended to provide context about the financial environment in which the response system operates and to highlight how that environment may shift in the coming years.

In addition to local funding data, JG compiled information on projected changes to federal funding streams that support homeless response systems across the country. These projections may help stakeholders anticipate potential shifts in available resources based on federal priorities and appropriations.

Local government funding

Representatives from local jurisdictions, including Larimer County, Estes Park, Fort Collins, and Loveland provided data on direct investments in the homeless response system for the 2024–2025 and 2025–2026 fiscal years (FY). Across the county and the municipalities, total investment in the homeless response system was \$5,343,569 in 2024–2025 (Figure 14) and is anticipated to be \$3,826,557 in 2025–2026 (Figure 15), a year-over-year decrease of \$1,517,012 (approximately 28%). These totals do not include investment in affordable housing or financial support for reimbursable health services.

Figure 14. Local government funding of homeless response system, FY 2024-2025

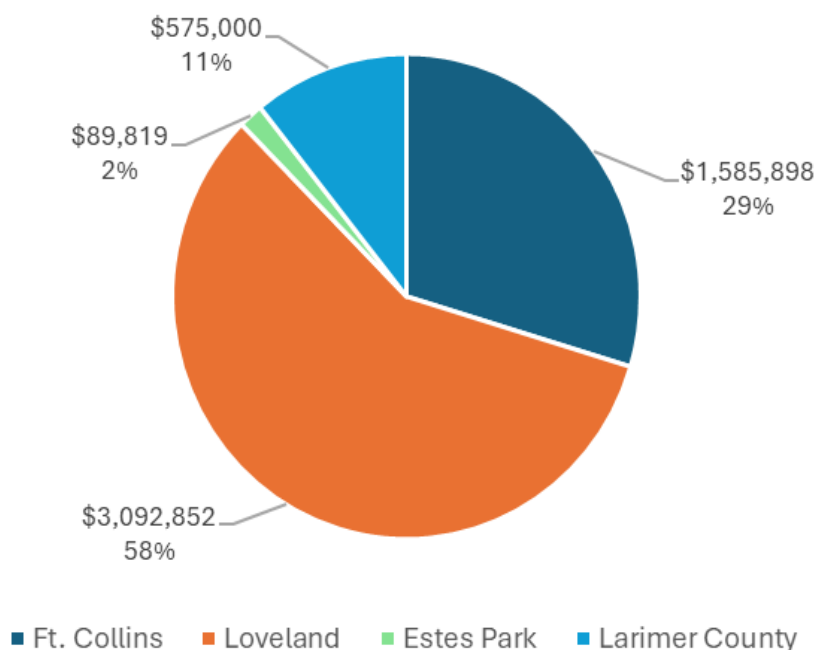
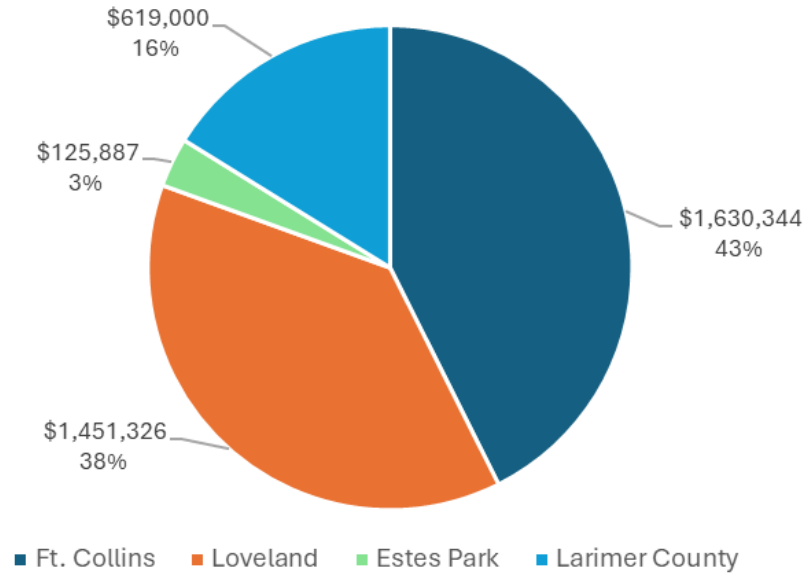


Figure 15. Local government funding of homeless response system, FY 2025-2026



When reviewing Table 4 below, it is important to note that these figures reflect funding directed specifically toward the homeless response system as defined in the strategic plan. The totals include direct services and capital costs but exclude personnel expenses, medical and behavioral health costs reimbursed through Larimer County, and local investments in affordable housing. As such, these amounts should be interpreted as a relative picture of public investment in the response system, offering context about the scale and focus of funding in a changing financial environment, rather than a complete accounting of all resources available to meet housing needs in the county.

Table 4. Local government investments in homeless response system

Homeless Response System Category	Program type	Fiscal year	Larimer County	Loveland	Estes Park	Ft. Collins
Prevention & Early Intervention	Eviction Legal Funds	2024-2025	150,000 ^a			220,000
		2025-2026	150,000 ^b			220,000
	Rental Assistance	2024-2025	275,000 ^c		89,819	54,316
		2025-2026	289,000		125,887	70,000
Crisis & Supportive Services	Emergency Shelter	2024-2025		2,347,852		461,707
		2025-2026		576,326		631,485
	Homeless Outreach (service providers)	2024-2025		400,000		364,000
		2025-2026		400,000		325,000
	Homeless outreach (law enforcement)	2024-2025				5,000
		2025-2026				10,000
Housing stability	Rapid-rehousing/ supportive housing programs	2024-2025				16,000
		2025-2026				
	Tenancy supports	2024-2025	30,000 ^d			66,500

Homeless Response System Category	Program type	Fiscal year	Larimer County	Loveland	Estes Park	Ft. Collins
		2025-2026	60,000 ^d			
System coordination	Financial support of CoC	2024-2025	15,000	5,000		60,000
		2025-2026	15,000	5,000		30,000
Ancillary Services	Encampment response	2024-2025		340,000		179,375
		2025-2026		410,000		183,859
Other	Home improvement programs (low interest loans for home repairs)	2024-2025	105,000			
		2025-2026	105,000			
	Grants to non-profits	2024-2025				159,000
		2025-2026				160,000

A: Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) funds, B: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, C: ARPA funds, D: ERAP funds

Federal funding - Potential changes in fiscal year 2026

As noted above, the current priorities of federal agencies as they prepare for Fiscal Year 2026 reflect a shift from recent historical patterns of investment in continuums of care for homelessness at local levels. Table 5 is a summary of federal funding sources that are expected to be cancelled for FY26 and the resultant estimated impact within Larimer County by either units or dollars. These projections are based on publicly available information from the National Alliance to End Homelessness, the Bipartisan Policy Center, and the HUD.¹ It should be noted that the federal budget is not entirely finalized as of the writing of this document and the totals may increase or decrease following the finalization of the FY 26 budget.

Table 5. Federal programs expected to be removed in FY26 budget and projected impacts in Larimer County

Federal Funding Source	Current utilization in Larimer County	Current utilization in Four Collins	Estimated potential impact (loss)
Planned to be removed			
Rental assistance – Tenant-based rental assistance (Housing choice voucher program)	532 leases, \$1150 per unit, 154,130	1254 leasing, \$1159 avg per unit, \$5.83 million budget	1768 units
Project-based rental assistance	421 project-based vouchers		421 units
Public housing	No “public housing” in Larimer. 476 Section 8 units.		
Section 202 housing for the elderly	3 properties, 212 units	4 properties, 319 units	531 units
Section 811 housing for persons with disabilities	1 property, 80 units	3 properties, 91	171 units

¹ [National Alliance to End Homelessness – FY2026 Budget Proposal Overview](#); [Bipartisan Policy Center – FY2026 Budget Overview](#); [HUD – FY2026 Congressional Justifications](#)

Federal Funding Source	Current utilization in Larimer County	Current utilization in Four Collins	Estimated potential impact (loss)
CoC programs	CO505 (Fort Collins, Greeley, Loveland/Larimer, Weld) - CoC competition Homeless assistance award total: \$1,553,786.		\$1,553, 786
Permanent Supportive Housing	Across CoC - 604 total beds		604 beds/units
Youth Demonstration Program Projects	CO state CoC - 2021 - \$2.98 million		
Dedicated Coordinated entry grants	\$175,032	\$73173	\$248,205
Dedicated grants for HMIS	-	-	-
Housing Opportunities for Persons with Aids (HOPWA)	0	0	0
Eliminates CDBG	-	\$1,107,934	\$1,107,934
HOME Investment partnership (HOME)	-	\$602,014	\$602,014
Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO Housing)	0	0	0
Eliminates the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS), Jobs-Plus Pilot, and Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) programs	-	-	-
Eliminates the Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP)	-	-	-
Eliminates HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)	0	199 awards, 175 leasing	175 units
Eliminates Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	-	-	-
USDA: Removes rural housing vouchers, single family direct loans, housing preservation grants and mutual and self-help housing grants	-	-	-
Totals (estimated)			3670 units \$3,511,939

In addition to these shifts, there are a few areas of anticipated increased investment as well as a few changes to policies and procedures within the following programs.

Changes to existing program policies:

- Increase to a dollar-to-dollar match for the ESG funded programs, in contrast to the 25% match within the CoC program
- Eliminate federal rental assistance programs and replace them with new state rental assistance programs – Tenant-based rental assistance, Public housing, Project based rental assistance, Section 811 and Section 202
- Dedicated funding to support unhoused students in schools will be combined with a broader calculation for state funding distribution
- Imposes a 2-year limit on assistance for nonelderly, able-bodied adults

Increased investments:

- Planning to create a new rental assistance voucher program for homeless Veterans – Building Rental Assistance for Veteran Empowerment (BRAVE).
- Foster Youth to Independence grants at \$25 million for youth aging out of foster care
- Reforms Emergency Solutions Grant to provide emergency, short- and medium-term assistance (limited to two years) targeting geographic areas with greatest need (How is this defined)
- Renewal of USDA rental assistance grant
- Expansion of low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC)

Appendix C: Policy crosswalk

Alignment with existing plans

To ensure the Regional Homelessness Strategy Across Larimer County builds upon and reinforces existing efforts, a policy crosswalk was conducted to compare its strategies with those outlined in relevant local and regional plans and policies. This review included comprehensive plans, housing strategies, homelessness response plans, and other guiding documents from across Larimer County and neighboring jurisdictions. Each strategy in the Regional Homelessness Strategy was assessed for its presence and alignment in these existing plans, using a three-tier rating system: **full alignment** (green), **partial alignment** (blue), and **not present** (purple). The resulting crosswalk highlights where strong alignment already exists, providing opportunities for coordinated implementation, as well as gaps where further collaboration or policy development may be needed to achieve a consistent, countywide approach.

Existing plans that were reviewed to determine level of alignment with strategies <i>Key</i> <i>Green - Strategy is present in the plan in full alignment with strategic plan</i> <i>Blue - Strategy is present in the plan, in partial alignment with strategic plan</i> <i>Pink - Strategy is not present in the plan</i>	1.1 Use data to ID households at risk	1.2 Expand prevention programs	2.1 Best practice shelter models	2.2 Strengthen holistic healthcare access	2.3 Light- touch resources and wraparound supports	2.4 Expand shelter geography/ alternatives	3.1 Expand supportive housing (RRH, PSH)	4.1 County/ municipal coordination	4.2 Coordinate regional funding	5.1 Consistent messaging system wide	5.2 Countywide education campaign
City of Loveland Homelessness Strategic Plan											
Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) 2024											
Create Loveland Comprehensive Plan											
Estes Forward Comprehensive Plan											
Fort Collins City Plan: Planning Our Future Together											
Housing Strategic Plan City of Fort Collins											
Larimer County Affordable Housing Needs Assessment											
Larimer County Comprehensive Plan											
2024 State of Homelessness: Northern Colorado Continuum of care (NoCO CoC)											
Northern Colorado Continuum of Care: Plan to Serve People Experiencing Homelessness with Severe Service Needs											
Weld's Way Home 2.0											

Camping and parking policy review

In recent years and especially following the *Grants Pass v. Johnson* (2024) Supreme Court decision, communities across the country have been reexamining how they address unsheltered homelessness. In Larimer County and neighboring Weld County, local governments are navigating changing legal requirements, community expectations, and resource limitations. This review looks at current camping and parking rules, enforcement practices, and available alternatives such as safe parking programs. By comparing policies across jurisdictions, it highlights where approaches align, where they differ, and how these choices shape the options available to people living without shelter.

People experiencing homelessness often move across city and county boundaries, and decisions made in one jurisdiction inevitably influence conditions in others. A stricter camping ban in one community, for example, may shift the visibility of unsheltered homelessness or increase demand for services in a neighboring city. Likewise, the availability, or absence, of safe parking programs in one municipality affects the service capacity across the region. Recognizing this interconnectedness is critical: no single jurisdiction operates in isolation, and coordinated policies can help ensure that enforcement practices and alternatives are both legally defensible and responsive to community needs.

In the table below, dark orange cells mean there is a clear ban on parking or camping, light orange means that there are strict limits on parking or camping, and light green means there are allowed ways to park or camp.

Jurisdiction	Camping on public property	Parking on public property	Enforcement considerations	Camping on private property	Parking on private property	SafeLots
City of Fort Collins	No camping 10-17-181 for general public space and 11-23 for natural areas	No parking for sleeping Traffic code 1213	City follows Martin v. Boise (2018) precedent and City of Fort Collins v. Wiemold (2020) on enforcement; police only issue a citation if shelter is available. The Homeless Outreach and Proactive Engagement (HOPE) Team responds to non-emergency calls involving people experience homelessness and to emergency calls with law enforcement.	No more than 7 consecutive days and no more than 14 days per year 10-17-182	No more than 7 consecutive days and no more than 14 days per year 10-17-182	No safe lots
City of Loveland	No camping unless sanctioned (none currently) 9.47.020	No sleeping in a parked vehicle and no parking for more than 72 hours 10.20.030	City ordinance follows Martin v. Boise (2018); on 8/5/2025 City Council proposed to update to reflect Grants Pass v Johnson (2024) but did not pass so police policy is still to enforce only if shelter is available	Yes with permission 9.47.020	No parking to sleep unless allowed in zoning code 16.24.020	One organization operates 8 designated spaces
Town of Estes Park	No camping 9-16	No sleeping in vehicles 9-16		None	None	No safe lots
Town of Berthoud	None	No parking vehicles meant for sleeping for more than 4 days in a 30 day period 17-20		None	Parking vehicles meant for sleeping for more than 4 days in a 30 day period requires a permit 17-20	No safe lots

Jurisdiction	Camping on public property	Parking on public property	Enforcement considerations	Camping on private property	Parking on private property	SafeLots
Larimer County	No camping outside of designated campgrounds; no more than 14 days in a 30 day period without moving 42-3	County has the right to set parking requirements based on managing traffic as well as public health and safety 58-3		Campgrounds either prohibited or require special review in all zoning districts – no use by right for campgrounds	None	No safe lots
Garden City	None	No sleeping while parked 8-3-20		None	None	No safe lots
City of Greeley	No camping unless sanctioned (none currently) 16-14-491	No parking for more than 72 hours 16-2-672	Camping ban was just passed 6/3/2025	No more than 7 days 16-14-491	None	No safe lots
Weld County	No camping 17-7-30	No parking to sleep 17-7-30		Camping allowed by right on property zoned agriculture; Campgrounds require special review on property zoned agriculture 23-3	None	No safe lots
US Bureau of Land Management	Camping for 14 days in a 28 day period and then must move 30 miles away	Camping for 14 days in a 28 day period and then must move 30 miles away				

Appendix D: Methods and engagement process

This appendix summarizes the methods used to develop the Regional Homelessness Strategy, drawing on two primary sources of information: a comprehensive system assessment and series of strategic planning stakeholder engagement efforts. The system assessment combined quantitative data from administrative and public datasets with qualitative insights from interviews and focus groups to provide a detailed understanding of homelessness and the homeless response system in Larimer County. Strategic planning engagement activities included surveys, workshops, and community conversations and gathered input from service providers, local officials, people with lived experience, and the broader public to refine priorities and shape actionable strategies.

| System assessment

The system needs assessment used a mixed-methods approach to provide a comprehensive understanding of homelessness and the homeless response system in Larimer County. The data collected and analyzed as part of the assessment included the following:

Primary data

- One-on-one interviews were conducted with 67 participants, including 31 key informants (e.g., service providers, local government staff, and elected officials) and 36 individuals with lived experience of homelessness across Fort Collins, Loveland, and Estes Park.
- A focus group held in December 2024 engaged 26 participants from service provider agencies throughout the county.

Administrative data

- Data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) covering the years 2020–2024 were analyzed to assess client demographics, service utilization, program enrollments, and outcomes.
- School district data collected through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento) program was used to understand family and doubled-up homelessness.
- Program utilization rates were calculated using Point-in-Time (PIT) Count data to evaluate system capacity and coverage.

Secondary data

- Publicly available datasets were used to provide broader demographic and housing context, including data from the American Community Survey (ACS), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Bureau of Labor Statistics, Colorado Demography Office, and Zillow.
- Risk mapping was conducted using census-level indicators, such as poverty rate, rent burden, and unemployment, to identify areas of elevated housing instability.
- Estimates of annual homelessness and doubled-up housing were developed using ACS microdata and established methodologies adapted from national research.

| Strategic planning: stakeholder engagement

Kick-off sessions

In March 2025, JG/OMNI facilitated a series of strategic planning kick-off sessions to engage key stakeholders and gather input on preliminary strategies for strengthening Larimer County's

homeless response system. Two distinct groups participated:

- **Community partner representatives:** Service providers, first responders (police, co-response, code enforcement), nonprofit leaders, and faith-based organizations. Discussions focused on system coordination, resource availability, and service delivery.
- **Lived Experts:** Individuals with direct experience of homelessness. Conversations emphasized personal barriers, service accessibility, and equitable, dignified support.

Purpose and process

Each session began with a presentation of high-level system assessment findings, followed by structured discussions focused on key needs, priorities, and potential solutions. Participants then engaged in a dot-voting exercise, allocating a set number of votes to the strategies they believed would have the greatest impact. Results were analyzed to identify shared priorities as well as differences between the two groups.

A summary of low, medium, and high priority strategies across sessions is shown in the table below.

Category	Strategy	Priority across sessions
Prevention & early intervention	Regional emergency assistance fund	Medium
	Expand prevention programs	High
	Enhance transition services	Low
Crisis & immediate services	Expand and diversify shelter options	Medium
	Expand regional outreach programs	Low
	Expand bridge housing	Low
	Hotel/motel acquisition program	Low
	Expanding safe parking	Medium
	Enhance transportation system	Low
	Expand SUD treatment	Low
	Expand mental health care options	Low
Housing stability	Expand supportive housing capacity	High
	Countywide landlord engagement	Low
	Expand below-market housing options	High
	Workforce and vocational training	Medium
	Frequent utilizer program	Low
System improvement	Expand funding for service providers	Medium
	Expansion of HMIS and CAHPS	Low
	Countywide coalition	High
Community engagement	Public education campaign	High
	New opportunities for engagement	Low
	Community outreach program	Medium

Key takeaways

- Common priorities:
 - Both participant groups emphasized the importance of enhancing service coordination on a countywide scale and the need to improve access to all types of below-market and affordable housing options
 - Another common priority was being more flexible with resource allocation and developing creative solutions and partnerships that could be more responsive to immediate needs (e.g. leveraging publicly-owned property, communal living, scattered-site supportive housing)
- Diverging priorities:
 - Community Partners prioritized inter-agency collaboration, prevention programs, and system improvement
 - Lived experts focused more on immediate service access, dignity in service provision, and reducing stigma
- Top-ranked strategies:
 - Expand existing prevention programs and strengthening coordination across diverse partners
 - Expand supportive housing capacity for key subpopulations (elderly, severely disabled)
 - Explore public-private partnerships to expand below-market/subsidized housing options
 - Develop a countywide coalition with municipal working groups to implement strategic plan and strengthen homeless response system long-term
 - » Support effort to expand HMIS engagement across the county
 - Develop a regional public education campaign to reduce stigma toward people experiencing homelessness and strengthen community buy-in

Surveys

As part of the strategic planning process for Larimer County’s homelessness response system, two complementary surveys were conducted to gather perspectives from both the general public and key system stakeholders: 1) key stakeholder survey, 2) community awareness and attitudes survey. Together, these surveys provided critical insight into community priorities, system gaps, and opportunities to strengthen the homeless response system.

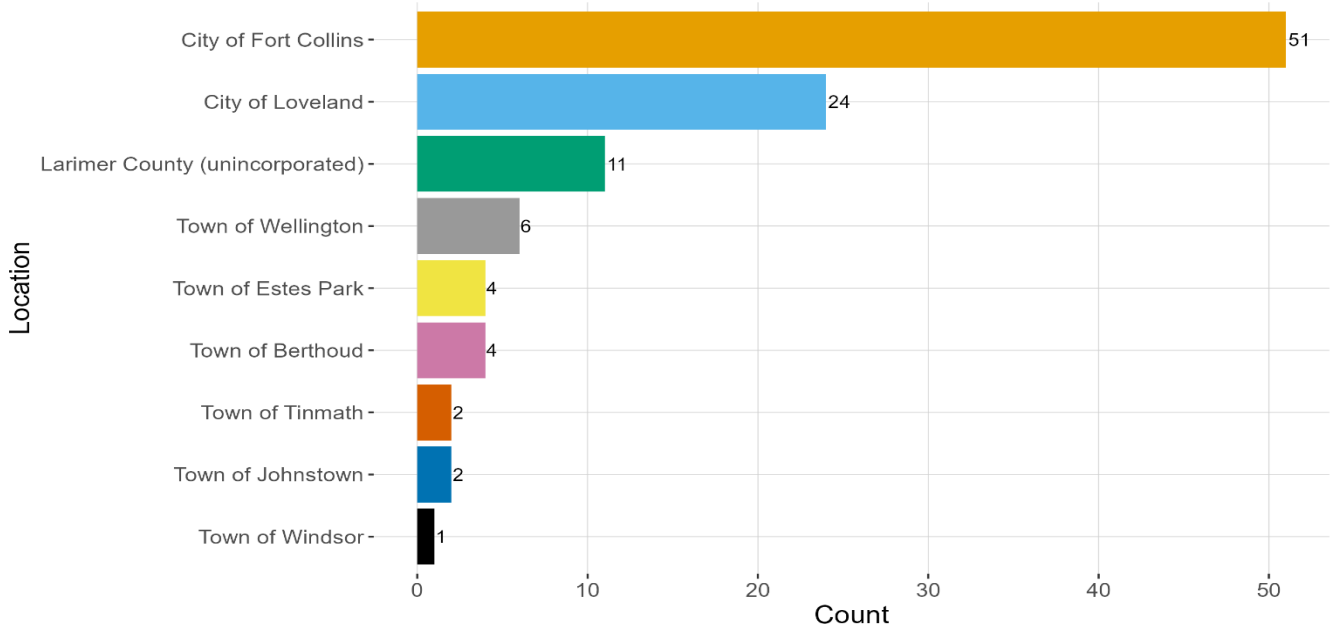
Key system stakeholder survey

- **Purpose:** Gather feedback from individuals who are professionally engaged in the homeless response system in some capacity, including the following:
 - Elected officials
 - Local government staff
 - Homeless service providers
 - Faith-based and nonprofit organization staff
 - Healthcare providers
 - Law enforcement and first responder partners
- **Format and distribution:** Online via web survey platform Alchemer; shared through the strategic planning Advisory Committee and partner organizations.
- **Timeline:** Mid–late April 2024.
- **Content:** Ranking of strategies within each of five strategy categories, plus open-ended questions on system strengths, needs, and recommendations.
- **Intended use:** Validate system assessment findings, refine strategic priorities, and incorporate operational/policy expertise into the plan.
- **Participation:** In total, 65 key stakeholders from across the homeless response system participated in the survey.

Key findings

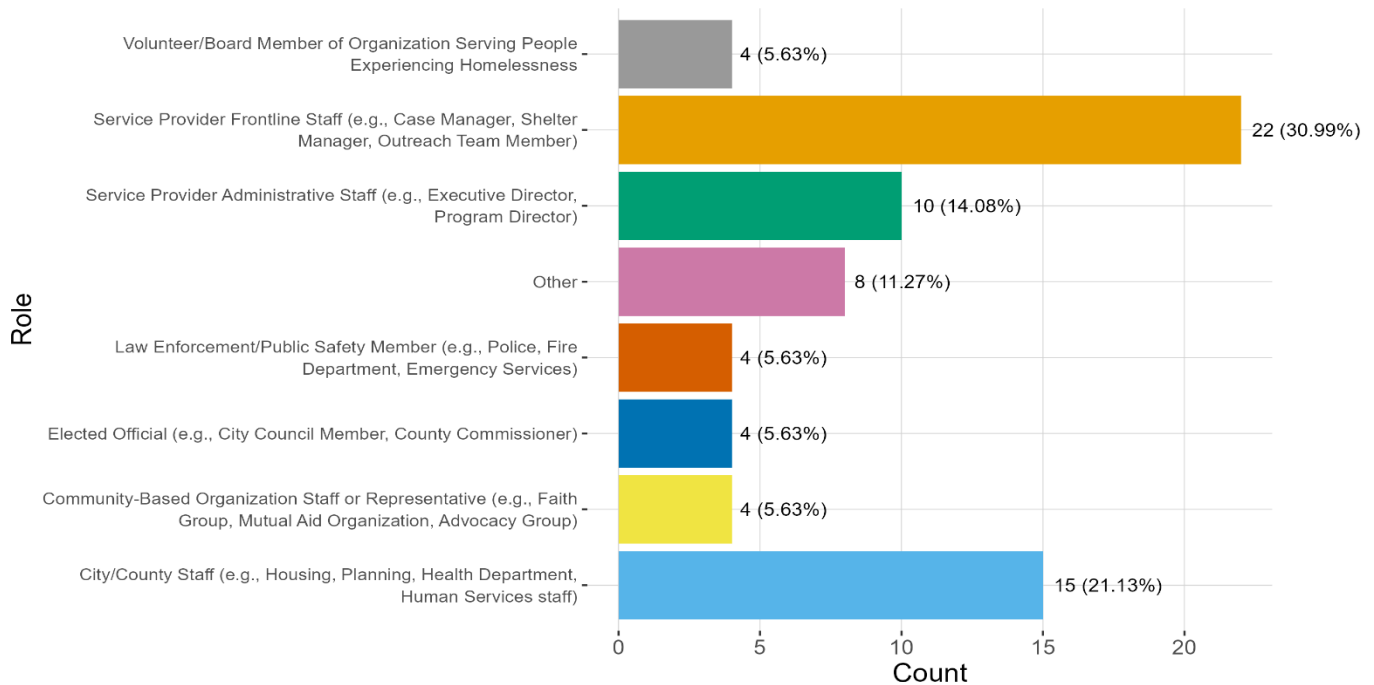
The largest proportion of participants of the key stakeholder survey reported primarily serving the City of Fort Collins area, followed by the City of Loveland (Figure 16).

Figure 16. Jurisdiction served



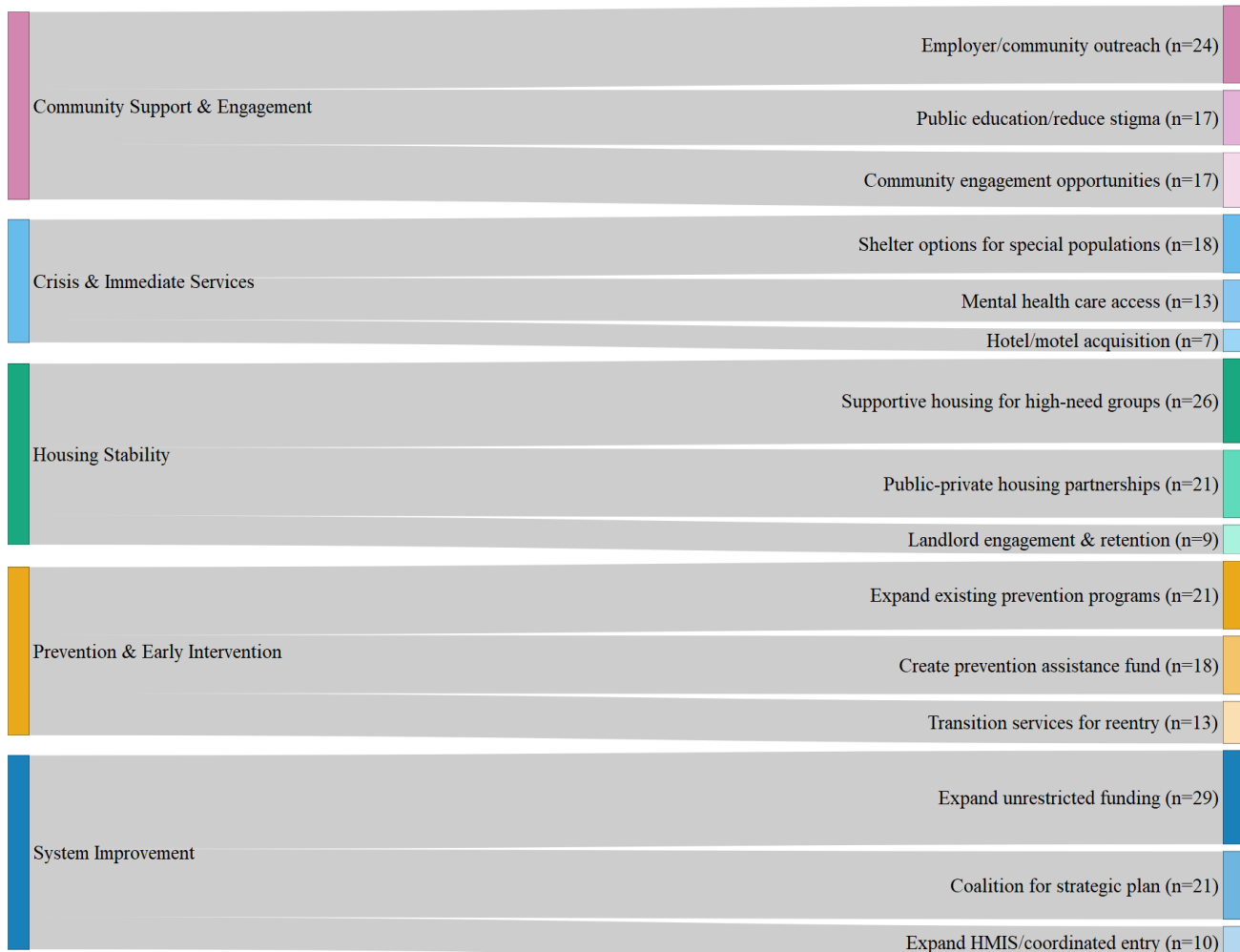
When asked about their role as it relates to the homeless response system, the largest proportion of participants (31%) reported working as frontline staff for a direct service provider (Figure 17).

Figure 17. Role in homeless response system



When asked to rank the preliminary strategies across each strategy category, there was strong consensus among survey participants for the top three strategies in each. Figure 18 shows the top-ranked strategy in each category, with the number of participants who gave the strategy a top ranking noted in parentheses.

Figure 18. Key stakeholders - Top three strategies in each category



Key takeaways by strategy category included:

- **Prevention & early intervention:** Top strategy was to expand existing prevention programs and enhance coordination across resources. Stakeholders stressed upstream approaches, targeted assistance for high-risk groups, and integration of prevention funding with broader initiatives.
- **Crisis & immediate services:** Highest priority was expanding and diversifying emergency shelter options for special populations (e.g., families, LGBTQ+, elderly, people with disabilities, pet owners), with attention to trauma-informed care.
- **Housing stability:** Expanding supportive housing capacity, particularly for aging individuals and those with severe disabilities, was the most frequently cited need. Affordability was flagged as a major systemic barrier.
- **System improvements & coordination:** Stakeholders prioritized expanding city and county funding mechanisms with flexible, operational support for providers, alongside

stronger regional collaboration.

- **Community support & engagement:** Public education campaigns to reduce stigma and unify regional messaging were emphasized, along with outreach to employers and opportunities for community involvement.

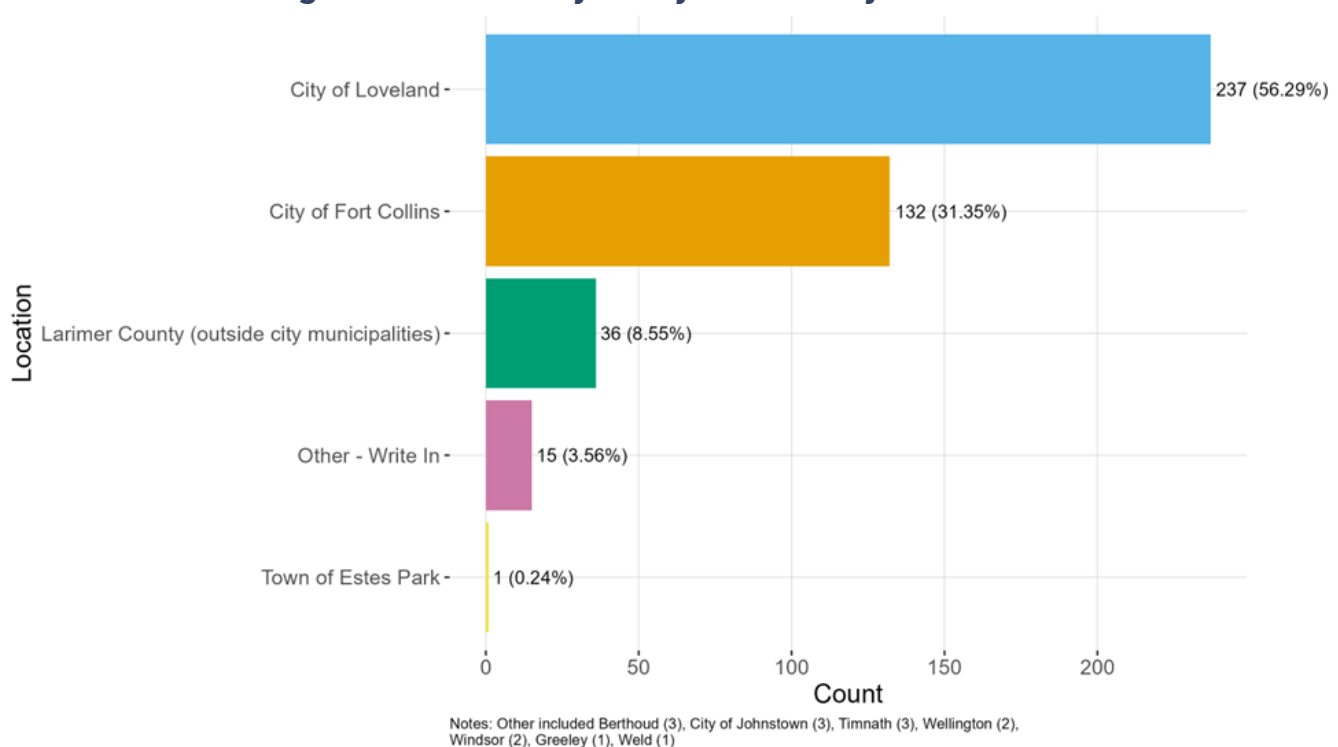
Community awareness and attitudes survey

- **Purpose:** Understand county residents' awareness, perceptions, and attitudes toward homelessness and proposed strategies.
- **Format and distribution:** Mobile-friendly online survey; promoted through paid social media ads, and partner organizations, with outreach targeting geographic and demographic diversity.
- **Timeline:** Mid-April to early May 2024.
- **Content:** Ranking of the five strategy categories, with open-ended questions on priorities, gaps, and opportunities; Questions regarding awareness of, information sources about, and engagement in homeless response system.
- **Intended use:** Establish baseline public opinion, identify communications needs, and gauge community openness to strategies.
- **Participation:** In total, 421 Larimer County residents completed the survey.

Key findings

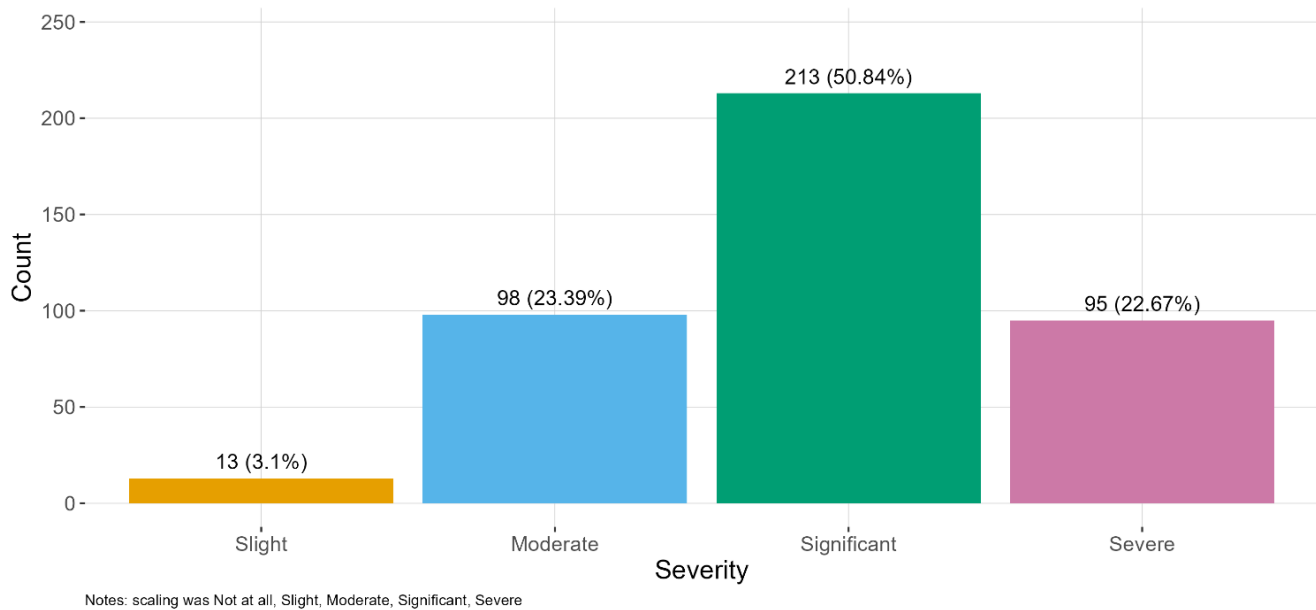
The majority of community survey participants reported living in Loveland (56%), while about one-third (31%) reported living in Fort Collins, and the rest in other parts of the county (Figure 19).

Figure 19. Community survey - Community of residence



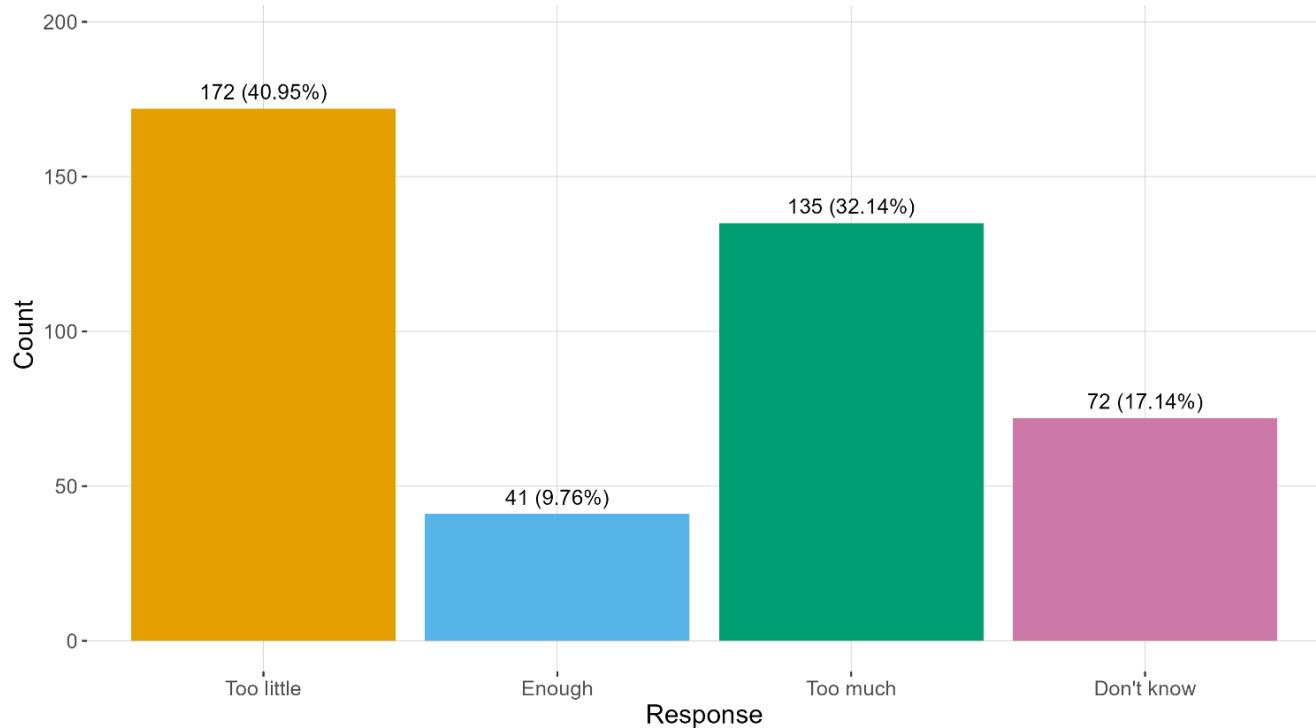
When asked about how much of an issue homelessness is in their community, just over half (51%) of participants reported that it is a “significant” issue (Figure 20).

Figure 20. Severity of homelessness in community



When asked their perspective on how much local government spends on addressing homelessness, the largest proportion of participants (41%) reported that it spends “too little” (Figure 22). However, nearly one-third reported that local government spends “too much,” suggesting a notable divergence in opinion among members of the public.

Figure 21. Opinions on government spending on homelessness



When asked to rank the top strategy categories, *prevention and early intervention* mostly commonly received the highest ranking (Table 6). Participants consistently highlighted the importance of

proactive strategies to prevent homelessness, focusing on early intervention and public education to build awareness and mitigate risk factors. The primary concerns centered on enhancing early intervention strategies, increasing resource availability, and fostering community education.

Table 6. Strategy category ranking counts

Strategy	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Community Support & Engagement	32	44	58	79	159	49
Crisis & Immediate Services	85	107	95	52	25	57
Prevention & Early Intervention	170	85	53	33	37	43
Housing Stability	62	74	88	74	67	56
System Improvement & Coordination	41	64	77	120	71	48
Notes: 1 being the most important to 5 being the least important.						

Crisis and immediate services received the second highest ranking. Participant comments focused on crisis response, immediate support, emergency services, urgent needs, and funding gaps. Respondents conveyed a sense of urgency in addressing crises, advocating for rapid response mechanisms and accessible resources to manage acute needs effectively. The most frequent concerns revolved around funding, emergency shelters, and immediate crisis intervention.

Final strategic planning sessions

Community partner collaborative workshops

In late June 2025, two in-person collaborative workshops were held with community partners, including service providers, local government representatives, and nonprofit leaders, in Loveland and Fort Collins. These sessions built on the March strategic planning kick-off meetings, providing an opportunity to:

- Review and refine the draft vision and mission statements for Larimer County’s homelessness response system.
- Discuss countywide and community-specific priority strategies identified earlier in the process.
- Identify actionable steps, roles, and coordination mechanisms to implement the strategic plan.

The workshops emphasized small-group discussions, strategy refinement exercises, and open dialogue focused on the balance between a unified countywide approach and local flexibility. A total of 27 representatives from various partner organizations attended the workshops.

Key findings

- **Shared priorities across communities**
 - Expand below-market and supportive housing, including creative models (e.g., shared housing, transitional options).
 - Strengthen prevention resources, with more flexible, locally administered funds to keep people housed.
 - Improve access to crisis and immediate services, especially mental health care and emergency shelter in underserved areas.

- Foster an informed, supportive community through coordinated public education and stigma reduction.
- **Governance, accountability, and funding**
 - Clear call for defined roles among county government, municipalities, the Continuum of Care, and nonprofits.
 - Interest in a coordinating entity (potentially new or existing) that can pool and distribute funding, tie resources to collaboration, and hold partners accountable.
 - Need for metrics, timelines, and transparent progress tracking to sustain commitment and demonstrate impact.
- **Collaboration and communication**
 - Strong support for ongoing cross-community coordination through regular meetings, shared messaging, and peer accountability.
 - Emphasis on engaging diverse voices, including lived experts, culturally and linguistically diverse populations, and faith-based organizations.

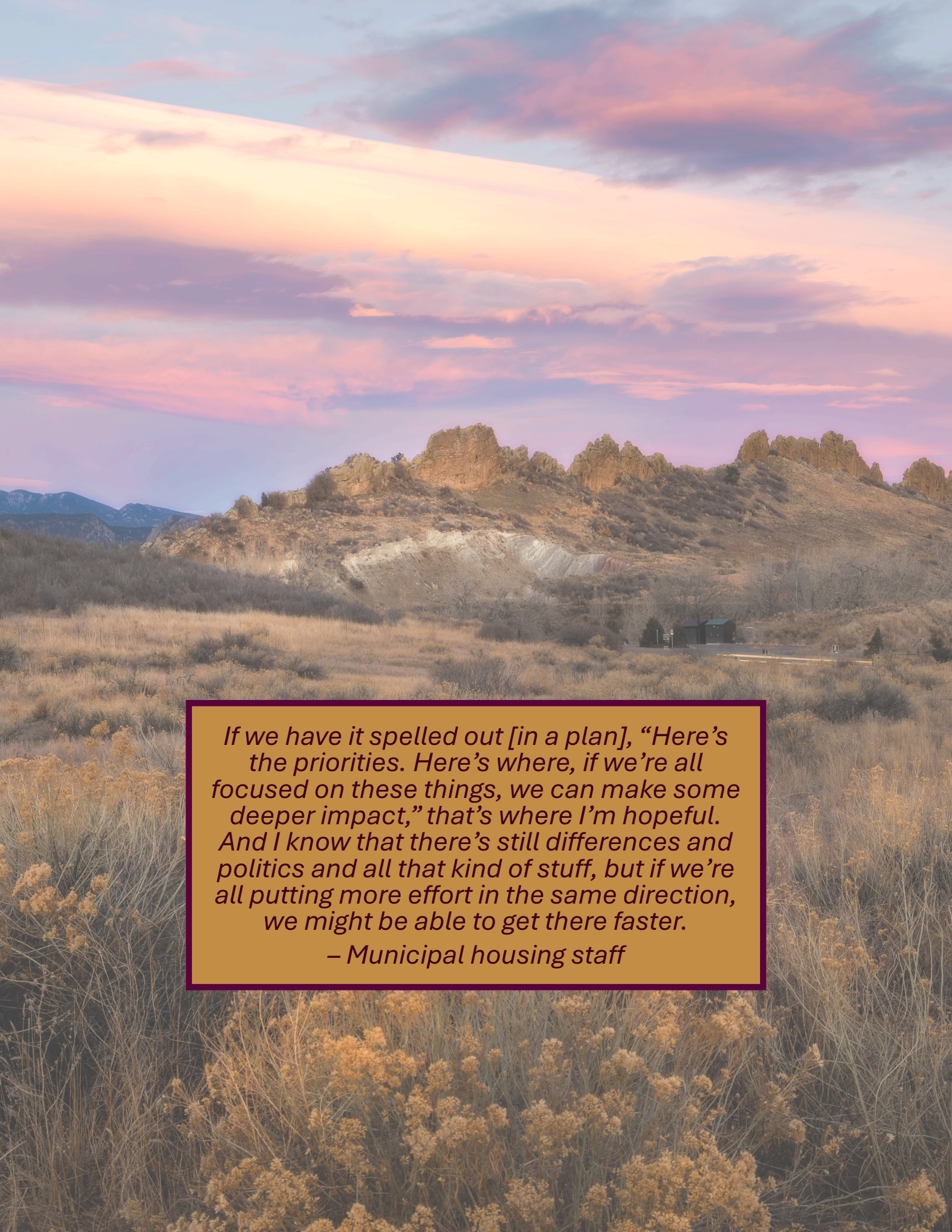
Community conversations: World Cafés

In June, four in-person World Café style community conversations were held, two in Loveland and two in Fort Collins, to gather public perspectives on homelessness in Larimer County. These interactive events brought together residents in small-group discussions to share experiences, identify priorities, and explore solutions. Participants included a diverse mix of community members, with conversations designed to encourage dialogue across different perspectives. Insights from these sessions helped highlight shared values, surface concerns, and generate ideas to refine strategies to strengthen the county's homeless response system. A total of 54 community members attended these events.

Key findings

- **Strong shared values and desire for solutions**
 - Across locations, participants expressed a sense of responsibility to care for neighbors and a shared belief that everyone deserves dignity, safety, and stable housing.
 - There is broad willingness to be part of the solution, with appreciation for opportunities to have open, constructive dialogue.
- **Fear and misinformation are major barriers**
 - Public fear of people experiencing homelessness and leaders' fear of constituent backlash shape decision-making.
 - Misinformation and stigma persist, with a tendency to reduce homelessness to substance use or criminality.
 - Participants stressed the need to acknowledge and validate fears while shifting narratives toward empathy, shared safety, and common benefit.
- **Build on existing assets and partnerships**
 - Larimer County already has strong resources and programs, such as the Murphy Center, permanent supportive housing (PSH), safe parking, mobile services, outreach teams, and faith-based initiatives.

- There is a desire to leverage and expand what works, improve coordination, and ensure consistent communication about available services.
- **Importance of inclusive, community-wide messaging and engagement**
 - Effective responses require bringing diverse voices together, including lived experts, underrepresented groups (e.g., Spanish-speaking, immigrant communities), and those outside HMIS.
 - Suggestions included shared meals, storytelling, neighborhood information sessions, and community-building events to humanize homelessness and reduce stigma.
 - Participants want transparent updates on what services exist, what is working, and how strategies are progressing.
 - Data is viewed as essential for demonstrating impact, gaining public trust, and overcoming skepticism about whether plans will lead to action.
- **Diverse needs require flexible and creative approaches**
 - Different subpopulations (families, elderly, vehicle dwellers, people with pets, individuals with substance use disorder (SUD) or mental illness) require tailored responses.
 - Interest in innovative housing models (tiny homes, communal living, ADUs, mobile homes) and workforce/housing stability



If we have it spelled out [in a plan], “Here’s the priorities. Here’s where, if we’re all focused on these things, we can make some deeper impact,” that’s where I’m hopeful. And I know that there’s still differences and politics and all that kind of stuff, but if we’re all putting more effort in the same direction, we might be able to get there faster.

– Municipal housing staff