

## OAKLAND PATH FRAMEWORK GLOSSARY

**Affordable Housing** for lower-income households is defined in State law as not more than 30 percent of gross household income with variations (Health and Safety Code Section 50052.5). The comparable federal limit, more widely used, is 30 percent of gross income, with variations. When housing developers create affordable housing, this means that the housing provider must make units available and affordable to households below specific income levels, most often below 80% of Area Median Income. As a condition of public funding, affordable housing units may be restricted to households with lower levels of income, including Very Low Income, or Extremely Low Income.<sup>1</sup> In 2019 Area Median Income (AMI) for Oakland is \$78,200 for a household of 1 person. For a 3-person household AMI is \$100,550.<sup>2</sup>

- Extremely low income: 0-30% of AMI
- Very low income: 30% to 50% of AMI
- Low income: 50% to 80% of AMI; the term may also be used to mean 0% to 80% of AMI
- Moderate income: 80% to 120% of AMI

**Co-Governed Encampment-** Intervention model where unsheltered residents come to an agreement about how they will live together in a community setting of an encampment. This includes, but is not limited to, selecting site leadership, determining eligibility for participation, developing community expectations for behaviors and for staffing/running the site, holding each other accountable for the agreed upon expectations, and maintaining the health and safety of the community residents. A backbone agency (non profit/community based agency) works alongside residents to support the residents in the design, leadership and operations of the site. The backbone agency is the contracting entity with the City/funder and holds ultimate accountability for ensuring the safety and security of the site.

**Community Cabins** – see **Crisis Response Beds**

**Continuum of Care (CoC)** refers to three things:

- The cross-sector planning body in a community that addresses the needs of people who are homeless. The CoC includes representatives of local governments, people experiencing homelessness, providers of housing and services, and other community stakeholders. The CoC Board is selected to make decisions on behalf of this planning body. In Alameda County, EveryOne Home convenes this planning body and the EveryOne Home HUD CoC Committee functions as the CoC Board.
- CoC HUD funding program that provides grants for housing and services for people experiencing homelessness. In FY2018 the Oakland/ Berkeley / Alameda County CoC was awarded \$37.6 million in grant funding.
- The system of temporary and permanent services and housing interventions that provide for people's immediate safety and supports their exit from homelessness to permanent housing

**Coordinated Entry-** Coordinated Entry is a standardized method to connect people experiencing homelessness to the resources available in a community. Like the triage desk in an Emergency Department of a hospital, a Coordinated Entry System (CES) assesses the conditions of the people who

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<sup>1</sup> For more information see <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/income-limits/index.shtml>

<sup>2</sup> See <https://cao-94612.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/2019-City-of-Oakland-Income-Limits.pdf> for income limits, adjusted for household size in Oakland

are in need and prioritizes them for assistance. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, local funders, such as the City of Oakland and the Alameda County Health Care Services Agency and Alameda County Department of Housing and Community Development are also requiring that all dedicated homeless resources be accessed through Coordinated Entry.

**Crisis Response Beds**, as used in Oakland’s PATH Plan include beds in emergency shelters, community Cabins, Safe Parking, and transitional housing programs. All of these types of programs and facilities are intended to provide safe places for people to stay overnight when they are experiencing homelessness and don’t have other alternatives.

- **Emergency Shelter** is defined in California state law as “housing with minimal supportive services for homeless persons that is limited to occupancy of six months or less by a homeless person. No individual or household may be denied emergency shelter because of an inability to pay.”<sup>3</sup> Some emergency shelters operate only during cold weather or winter months, while others operate year-round. Some programs may provide emergency shelter through vouchers or other forms of assistance to pay for temporary stays in hotels or motels.
- **Low barrier** shelters have adopted changes in policies and operations to ensure immediate and easy access by reducing barriers to entry, staying open 24/7, eliminating requirements for sobriety or income, or other policies that make it difficult for people to enter or stay in shelter. Instead, low-barrier shelters establish clear and simple expectations for behaviors, in order to ensure that the shelter environment is safe for all. Staff members are trained in trauma-informed care and de-escalation techniques in order to help residents understand and conform to these expectations. Low barrier shelters frequently allow people to stay with their pets and/or partners, and provide opportunities for people to store their possessions.<sup>4</sup>
- **Navigation Center** model is defined in state law as a Housing First, low-barrier, service-enriched shelter focused on moving people into permanent housing that provides temporary living facilities while case managers connect individuals experiencing homelessness to income, public benefits, health services, shelter, and housing.<sup>5</sup>
- **Community Cabins** are a geographically based intervention designed to reduce the impact of a large encampment on both unsheltered and housed residents. Sites are selected based on proximity to large street encampments. Each site typically has 20 two-person cabins, with a goal of serving 80 residents a year (40 for 6 months each). Cabins are fully insulated with double-paned windows and locking doors. They have interior and exterior lights and offer enough electricity to charge mobile phones. Participants may bring their pets, possessions, and partners. The program is extremely low barrier and 100% voluntary. All sites are managed by service providers who are on the premises 24-7. Housing navigators help residents work toward self-sufficiency and housing exits, utilizing a budget of flexible rapid rehousing funds. Sites have controlled entry, portapotties, overnight security guard, two hot meals a day, a common area with TV, coffee and microwave, dog run, pet food, and shower truck visits weekly.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/community-development/building-blocks/housing-needs/people-experiencing-homelessness.shtml>

<sup>4</sup> For more information see [https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/emergency-shelter-key-considerations.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/emergency-shelter-key-considerations.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> See Article 12 (commencing with Section 65660) which was added to Chapter 3 of Division 1 of Title 7 of the Government Code by AB 101 (Chapter 159) in 2019. For more information about San Francisco’s Navigation Center model see <http://hsh.sfgov.org/wp-content/uploads/HSH-Nav-Slideshow-FINAL.pdf>

- **Overnight Safe Parking** is a new and emerging program model that is designed to provide safe and legal locations for people to stay overnight when they are living in cars or RVs.<sup>6</sup> Local programs vary, but usually provide access to a bathroom or portable toilet, overnight staffing for safety, and sometimes provide case management services to help people find housing. Some safe parking programs serve families with children, while others are limited to adults without children. Most safe parking programs require that participants complete an application and intake process in advance, leave during the day, and agree to program rules that are intended to balance the needs of participants and neighbors. Some Safe Parking programs set limits (e.g. 30 to 90 days) on how long people can stay. Some programs operate 24/7 in order to allow people and their vehicles to stay during the day and come and go at any time.
- **RV safe parking-** Safe RV parking sites are outdoor parking lots which accommodate anywhere from 17-60 RVs depending on the lot size. The safe RV Parking model is focused on increasing people’s health, stability, dignity, and safety. The intervention addresses the significant safety and sanitation impacts to both RV dwellers *and* their sheltered neighbors. The program is 100% voluntary, and people can come and go 24/7. The sites are designed to be extremely low barrier, with minimal rules designed to maintain a healthy and safe community. The sites include: porta-potties, handwashing stations, garbage service, on-site shower service weekly, 24/7 site security, low voltage electricity to each RV, and drinking water.
- **Transitional Housing** is rental housing or a residential facility that is designed to provide time-limited housing and supportive services to homeless persons, with the goal of facilitating movement to permanent housing. Generally transitional housing facilities offer participants greater privacy than an emergency shelter. Some transitional housing programs provide opportunities for people to live in an apartment with time-limited financial assistance, and in these programs the household may be able to stay in the apartment and pay rent without ongoing assistance after they “graduate” from the transitional housing program.

**Deeply Affordable Housing** means housing in which tenants pay rents that are affordable to extremely low-income (ELI) people who have incomes below 30% AMI. (Many people experiencing homelessness have incomes that are even lower – often below 20% of AMI.) Deeply affordable housing units that are targeted to households below 30% of AMI often rely on project-based rent subsidies to cover operating costs that are greater than tenant rent contributions. With project-based subsidies in deeply affordable housing, tenants’ rent contributions are based on actual household incomes.

**Emergency Shelter**– see **Crisis Response Beds**

**Functional Zero** is a standard that indicates that homelessness in that community is **rare** overall and **brief** when it occurs. Functional zero, or **ending homelessness** does not mean that no person will ever experience homelessness in a community. It means that systems are in place to ensure that any experience of homelessness is brief and permanently resolved, and rare overall.<sup>7</sup>

**Health and Hygiene Interventions-** a package of interventions provided to an encampment to improve health and hygiene of residents. Usually includes portable toilets, wash stations, mobile showers, and regular garbage pickup. Drinking water may also be included.

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<sup>6</sup> For more information see <https://socialinnovation.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Safe-Parking-Literature-Review.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Source: <https://community.solutions/key-definitions/>

**Homelessness Prevention** strategies represent a wide array of efforts to prevent housing crises from occurring and to prevent people who face such crises from experiencing homelessness. Prevention Strategies to protect community residents from being at risk of homelessness and prevent homelessness for individuals and families fall into the following categories:

- Activities that reduce the prevalence of risk of housing crises within communities, including multi-sector efforts that focus on big picture goals: (1) ensuring an adequate supply of affordable housing; (2) addressing systemic racial inequities; (3) improving education and meaningful and gainful employment; and (4) ensuring access to affordable child care, legal assistance, and physical and behavioral health care.
- Activities that reduce the risk of homelessness while households are engaged with or are transitioning from systems such as health care, child welfare, and corrections. Such collaboration includes increased awareness and attentiveness to housing stability, as well as effective transition and/or discharge planning.

and

- Activities that target assistance to prevent housing crises that do occur from escalating further and resulting in homelessness. Prevention services in this category often include a combination of financial assistance, mediation with landlords, legal services, and other supports.<sup>8</sup>

**Housing development pipeline** is a term that refers to housing development projects that are under development (new construction or rehabilitation of existing buildings) or proposed, including projects that are still being designed or submitting applications for funding or zoning approvals. This usually includes affordable housing units, including supportive housing and affordable housing developments, as well as units that may be included (or “set aside”) for low-income households or people with special needs (including homelessness or disabilities) within housing developments that will serve a mix of households at higher income levels.

**Housing First** is an evidence-based model that uses housing as a tool, rather than a reward, for recovery. Housing First provides or connects homeless people to permanent housing as quickly as possible and then offers services as needed, on a voluntary basis to support stability and meet other needs. Housing providers and their service partners offer robust support services that are based on assertive engagement. Participation in services is not a requirement for tenancy.

California [state law](#) enacted in 2016 requires the State to use Housing First principles in all state-funded programs that provide housing and assistance to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

“Core components of Housing First” means all of the following:

1. Tenant screening and selection practices that promote accepting applicants regardless of their sobriety or use of substances, completion of treatment, or participation in services.
2. Applicants are not rejected on the basis of poor credit or financial history, poor or lack of rental history, criminal convictions unrelated to tenancy, or behaviors that indicate a lack of “housing readiness.”
3. Acceptance of referrals directly from shelters, street outreach, drop-in centers, and other parts of crisis response systems frequented by vulnerable people experiencing homelessness.
4. Supportive services that emphasize engagement and problem solving over therapeutic goals and service plans that are highly tenant-driven without predetermined goals.

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<sup>8</sup> Source: [https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/Prevention-Diversion-Rapid-Exit-July-2019.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Prevention-Diversion-Rapid-Exit-July-2019.pdf)

5. Participation in services or program compliance is not a condition of permanent housing tenancy.
6. Tenants have a lease and all the rights and responsibilities of tenancy, as outlined in California's Civil, Health and Safety, and Government codes.
7. The use of alcohol or drugs in and of itself, without other lease violations, is not a reason for eviction.
8. In communities with coordinated assessment and entry systems, incentives for funding promote tenant selection plans for supportive housing that prioritize eligible tenants based on criteria other than "first-come-first-serve," including, but not limited to, the duration or chronicity of homelessness, vulnerability to early mortality, or high utilization of crisis services. Prioritization may include triage tools, developed through local data, to identify high-cost, high-need homeless residents.
9. Case managers and service coordinators who are trained in and actively employ evidence-based practices for client engagement, including, but not limited to, motivational interviewing and client-centered counseling.
10. Services are informed by a harm-reduction philosophy that recognizes drug and alcohol use and addiction as a part of tenants' lives, where tenants are engaged in nonjudgmental communication regarding drug and alcohol use, and where tenants are offered education regarding how to avoid risky behaviors and engage in safer practices, as well as connected to evidence-based treatment if the tenant so chooses.
11. The project and specific apartment may include special physical features that accommodate disabilities, reduce harm, and promote health and community and independence among tenants.

**Housing Navigation** is a set of services designed to support homeless households to locate, obtain, and retain housing. Navigation services include, but are not limited to, developing a housing support plan; searching for housing and assisting with applications and gathering required documentation; securing resources for one-time move-in expenses; coordinating move-in; and supporting housing retention (usually for a limited time period after move-in).<sup>9</sup>

**Housing Problem Solving** is a person-centered, short-term housing intervention that seeks to assist households in maintaining their current housing or identifying an immediate and safe housing alternative within their own social network. This strategy is a strengths-based approach that utilizes conversation and empowerment methods to help resolve the household's housing crisis, or quickly connect them to existing emergency or crisis housing services, by working alongside them in an empowering manner.<sup>10</sup>

This intervention includes the following activities / practices:

- Identify every household's strengths and existing support networks;
- Explore safe housing options outside the homelessness services system, even if temporary
- Connect households to community supports and services
- Focus on removing barriers to family /friend reunification (Ex: obtain income, begin substance use treatment)

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<sup>9</sup> Source: <http://everyonehome.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Everyone-Home-Strategic-Update-Report-Final.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Source: <https://www.lahsa.org/news?article=586-problem-solving-a-humanistic-approach-to-ending-homelessness>

**Landlord recruitment / engagement** strategies, such as Alameda County’s Landlord Liaison program, which is implemented by BACS and Abode Services, are designed to encourage landlords to rent their units to tenants who may have limited incomes, poor credit, prior evictions, a history of incarceration, or other potential challenges that often create barriers to getting housing. These strategies also work to encourage landlords to meet the requirements associated with participation in government programs that provide rent subsidies, such as the Housing Choice Voucher program. Strategies may include providing a point of contact who can be available 24/7 to help with resolving issues with tenants, and/or making one-time incentive payments to landlords, to encourage them to hold a unit vacant until it can be filled by a new tenant who is experiencing homelessness, or mitigate concerns about delays in receiving rent payments through a housing subsidy program.

- **Risk mitigation funds** provide added protections to landlords who are willing to rent to tenants who may have poor credit, prior evictions, or criminal history. The funds can cover excessive damages to the rental unit, lost rent, or legal fees beyond the security deposit. Reimbursement limits are set in advance and landlords typically submit a claim for reimbursement.<sup>11</sup>

**Mainstream Resources** are publicly funded programs that provide services, housing and income supports to poor persons whether they are homeless or not. They include programs providing welfare, health care, mental health care, substance abuse treatment programs and veteran’s assistance.<sup>12</sup>

**Mainstream Vouchers**— see **Rental Assistance**

**Moving on strategies** respond to the changing needs and preferences of formerly homeless people who are living in **permanent supportive housing**. When people have achieved some stability, if they no longer need the intensive services and supports that are available in supportive housing, they are offered the opportunity to move to other housing. Some supportive housing participants may want to live in a different neighborhood, move closer to family and friends, or seek housing in an area that is more convenient for work or educational opportunities. Alternatively, participants who live in a tenant-based PSH may wish to transition-in-place, using a tenant-based assistance (such as a housing voucher) to provide a housing subsidy. Both options allow participants to maintain stable housing without receiving intensive services. When people have the opportunity to move from permanent supportive housing into another stable housing opportunity, the resulting turnover creates availability in existing supportive housing that can be used to serve persons experiencing homelessness.

These principles guide development and implementation of moving on strategies:

- Transition is a voluntary process that PSH tenants choose.
- Collaboration of mainstream housing and services must be fostered.
- Connections to community-based supports are necessary for housing stability.<sup>13</sup>

**Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)** combines non-time-limited affordable housing assistance with wrap-around supportive services for people experiencing homelessness, as well as other people with

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<sup>11</sup> For more information see <https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/engaging-landlords-risk-mitigation-funds-community-profiles/>

<sup>12</sup> Source: Gale, K. (2003). Holes in the Safety Net: Mainstream Systems and Homelessness. Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation <http://www.schwabfoundation.org/files/PDF/SafetyNet.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Source: <https://www.hudexchange.info/news/snaps-in-focus-moving-on-strategies-to-support-stable-transitions-from-permanent-supportive-housing/>

disabilities. Supportive housing links decent, safe, affordable, community-based housing with flexible, voluntary support services designed to help the individual or family stay housed and live a more productive life in the community. There is no time limitation, and tenants may live in their homes as long as they meet the basic obligations of tenancy. While participation in services is encouraged, it is not a condition of living in the housing. Housing affordability is ensured either through a rent subsidy or by setting rents at affordable levels.

There is no single model for supportive housing's design. Supportive housing may involve the renovation or construction of new housing, set-asides of apartments within privately-owned buildings, or leasing of individual apartments that may be in scattered locations throughout an area. There are three approaches to operating and providing supportive housing:

- Single-site housing: Apartment buildings designed to primarily serve tenants who are formerly homeless or who have service needs, with the support services typically available on site.
- Scattered-site housing: People who are no longer experiencing homelessness lease apartments in private market or general affordable housing apartment buildings using rental subsidies. They can receive services from staff who can visit them in their homes as well as provide services in other settings.
- Unit set-asides: Affordable housing owners agree to lease a designated number or set of apartments to tenants who have exited homelessness or who have service needs, and partner with supportive services providers to offer assistance to tenants.<sup>14</sup>

**Pipeline Committee** is a forum for coordination and collaboration among partner agencies and jurisdictions that may be providing or considering funding for affordable and supportive housing development projects. A pipeline committee usually includes city and county agencies that provide funding for capital, operating, and supportive services in housing projects that are in the development pipeline, and may also include major funding or technical assistance partners from the private sector (e.g. foundations or Community Development Financial Institutions).

**Project based vouchers**— see **Rental Assistance**

**Progressive Engagement** is an approach to helping households end their homelessness as rapidly as possible, despite barriers, with minimal financial and support resources. More supports are offered to those households who struggle to stabilize and cannot maintain their housing without assistance. Progressive engagement recognizes that there is no way to accurately predict how much help someone may need to end their homelessness and avoid a return to the streets or shelter. While we know that many people can successfully exit homelessness and avoid immediately returning with a small amount of assistance, we also know that there are no dependable predictors to guide the amount of assistance needed. In this approach, participants are initially offered “light-touch” assistance, including help creating a reasonable housing placement/stabilization plan, housing information and search assistance, and limited financial assistance for arrears, first month’s rent, or security deposit. Programs using Progressive Engagement regularly re-assess housing barriers and seek to close cases as soon as housing retention barriers are resolved. Assistance is provided on an “as-needed basis” to keep a participant housed and, within funding constraints, programs offer more intensive support, additional rental assistance, or step-up referrals and help to access community-based assistance.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Source: <https://www.usich.gov/solutions/housing/supportive-housing/>

<sup>15</sup> Source: [https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Progressive\\_Engagement\\_Overview.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Progressive_Engagement_Overview.pdf)

**Rapid Rehousing** programs are designed to provide services and time-limited financial assistance to assist people who are experiencing homelessness to move into permanent housing as quickly as possible. Rapid re-housing programs offer help with identifying housing, and may recruit landlords willing to accept tenants who are experiencing homelessness and have barriers to housing (e.g. poor credit, eviction history, or other challenges). Rapid Re-housing Programs provide move-in assistance (e.g. security deposits and other one-time costs) and usually offer time-limited rental assistance, as well as case management services to help people overcome barriers to finding and keeping housing. Both financial assistance and case management services are usually limited to no more than 6-24 months, depending on the household's needs, local program design, and funding sources.

This intervention includes the following activities / practices:

- Support for housing search
- Flexible funds for move-in costs
- Time-limited housing subsidy support
- Services to support successful tenancy and linkages to community resources

### **Rental assistance**

**Section 8 / Housing Choice Vouchers** (HCV, also called "Section 8"): assist very low-income people, including families, seniors and people with disabilities to afford rental housing in the private market. Housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual, so participants are able to find their own housing (homes or apartments). The participant is free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program and is not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects.

Housing choice vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies (PHAs) such as the Oakland Housing Authority, using federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). A housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly by the PHA on behalf of the participating family or individual. Tenants generally contribute about 30% of their income for rent.<sup>16</sup>

- **Tenant based vouchers / Tenant-based rental assistance** is most frequently provided through the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, but other programs, including HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC) program also use federal, state, or local funding to pay for tenant-based rental assistance. A family or individual that is issued a housing voucher (or other tenant-based rental assistance) is responsible for finding a suitable housing unit of the family's choice where the owner agrees to rent under the program. This unit may include the family's present residence. Rental units must meet minimum standards of health and safety, as determined by the PHA or other agency administering the rental assistance..
- **Project based vouchers** are part of the Housing Choice Voucher program, and they are attached to a specific housing unit where the landlord has a contract with a PHA to rent to low-income tenants.<sup>17</sup> When a tenant moves out of a housing unit that has a PBV, another eligible low-income family or individual can move into the subsidized unit. Under some circumstances, people living in housing that is subsidized through a PBV can receive a tenant-based voucher if

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<sup>16</sup> Source:

[https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/programs/hcv/about/fact\\_sheet](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/about/fact_sheet)

<sup>17</sup> For more information see <https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/policy-basics-project-based-vouchers>

they want to move to another housing unit. When housing developers create supportive housing or housing that is deeply affordable to extremely low-income people, they often use PBVs, because the amount of rent tenants can afford to pay does not cover the operating costs for the housing.

- **Mainstream Vouchers:** Housing vouchers (awarded by HUD to Public Housing Authorities) to assist non-elderly (<62) persons with disabilities, including those who are currently homeless or previously homeless and currently a client in permanent supportive housing or rapid re-housing

**Sanctioned Encampment-** has a variety of meanings across the country ranging from allowing an existing encampment to remain in place without fear of arrest or citation to adding resources to an encampment setting with a goal of helping people stay in a safer and more sanitary environment. This term is not commonly used within Oakland.

**Safe Parking** – see **Crisis Response Beds**

**Section 8** – see **Rental Assistance**

**Self-Governed Encampment-** Self-selected group of unsheltered individuals who come to an agreement about how they will live together in a community setting. This includes, but is not limited to, selecting site leadership, determining eligibility for participation in the community, developing expectations for those who are living there, holding each other accountable for the agreed upon expectations, and maintaining the health and safety of the community residents.

**Shallow subsidies** provide financial assistance to help tenants pay rent. Shallow subsidies are sometimes funded by states or local governments, and generally provide smaller amounts of assistance compared to Housing Choice Vouchers or other programs. Tenants who participate in shallow rent subsidy programs often pay more than 30% of their income for rent, but if they receive a few hundred dollars a month to help pay rent, they may be able to keep their housing and avoid becoming or returning to homelessness.

**Tenant based vouchers / Tenant-based rental assistance**– see **Rental Assistance**

**Transitional Housing** – see **Crisis Response Beds**