

May Housing Security Update

We are committed to providing you with regular updates so you can follow the progress of all teams and understand how the work is connected. Thank you for your continued commitment to this process and the end result toward which we are all working – a meaningful and sustainable community plan that leads to equitable housing outcomes for marginalized communities.

Design Team

The Design Team has focused on defining the purpose of this collaborative work and what we are trying to achieve. Through those robust conversations, it has become clear that both the “why” (why we are doing this work) and the “how” (how we will create change) must be front and center. Therefore, the Design Team has developed both a Mission Statement and a Purpose Statement.

Mission Statement: The mission is to increase access to affordable housing and decrease homelessness for families, children, and youth, with an intentional focus on eliminating racial disparities in Kent County.

Purpose Statement: The purpose of our work is to align and connect system-level interventions that address homelessness and increase access to housing. Strategies must be intentionally designed with the end user in mind and targeted to people of color.

The work to define those statements was informed by data that show how widespread homelessness is among children, families, and youth in our community and the enormous racial disparities in who is homeless. Please see the attached Data Sheet for that information.

Content Experts Team

The Content Experts Team has refined its work on the Housing Stability Spectrum that is attached. The spectrum shows the range of housing situations in Kent County, from housed by choice (in a community in which the individual and/or family wants to live) to having no housing. The work has centered on reaching a common understanding of how people fall within the continuum and what factors – including policies and practices, power dynamics, and mindsets – contribute to those different housing situations.

Members of the Content Experts Team and Design Team have attended each other’s meetings and have met in small groups to better understand the current state and discuss what information each group needs from the other to advance our collective work.

Context Experts Team

This team is comprised of individuals who have experienced homelessness themselves, in some cases, multiple times as both children and adults. They began sharing their lived experience at the April Design Team meeting and in small group conversations

following that. Context experts will continue to be actively involved in helping all teams understand the problems and develop strategies to address them.

Their lived experiences include interactions with the homeless response system as well as instances in which they lacked safe and stable housing but found places to stay on their own and thus never connected to the system. Families and individuals who don't enter the system are not included in the data, which means that it's possible that even more community members are homeless or on the brink of homelessness than the numbers indicate.

Scout/Research Team

This team is working on locating and studying system-level interventions across the country and around the world. They will synthesize the data they collect and pass it on to the Design Team.

Communications Team

This team is focusing on how best to educate the broader community about the data and our work to address racial disparities in homelessness and access to affordable housing. The Communications Team acts as a resource to all the other teams. If there are any communications pieces you would find helpful, please contact KConnect's Communications Manager, Katie Hop, at khop@k-connect.org.

For more information, you can visit k-connect.org/housing.

Housing Accountability Partners Council

Please **save the date** for the Housing Accountability Partners Council (HAPC) meeting on **June 19th from 8 a.m. to noon at GRPS University**. HAPC will provide an opportunity for/to:

- The teams to share learnings from the first phase of the work.
- Build buy-in among the housing security network on our understanding of the current state.
- Obtain critical feedback from partners to enhance the work ahead.
- Move toward casting a vision toward the future state.