



Fulfilled Potential. Community Prosperity.

November 22, 2019

Dear Housing Security Initiative Partner,

Thank you for your continued support of KConnect's Housing Security initiative. Together, over the past twelve months, we made marked progress and began informing the broader community about the complexity of the housing environment. We strengthened relationships and centered on a sense of urgency and a commitment to effectively address the systemic inequities plaguing, in particular, children and families of color in Kent County.

Among the accomplishments thus far was consensus around the following purpose and mission statements that would serve as a charter for the ongoing work as it progressed through 2019. Those grounding statements follow:

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.

Over the past year, system findings have been shared and nine root causes for homelessness have been identified. There was a comprehensive data analysis that illuminated the deep racial disparities and implications for children and families. Shortly thereafter, we launched a communication strategy and compiled research on promising practices from communities across the county as well as some international examples. This work has been intensive, time-consuming, and most of all, vitally important to our community. The shift in mindsets and mental models happening within the system is encouraging.

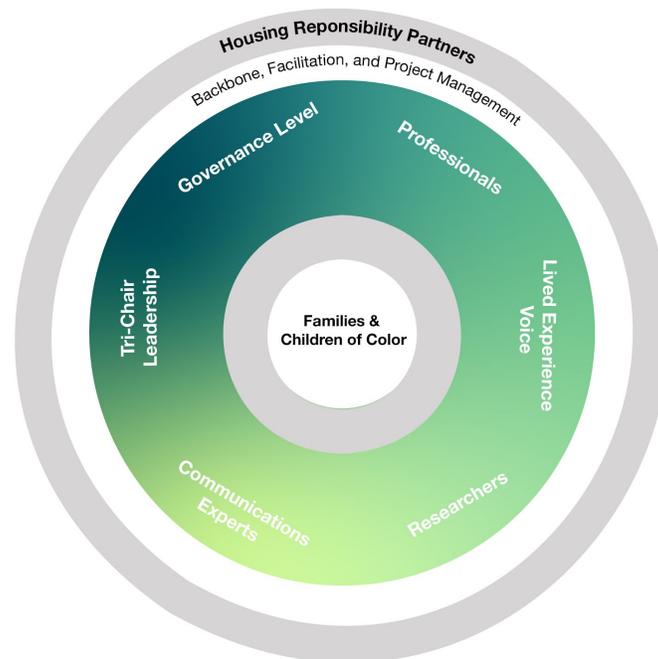
Due to the promising future of this work, the KConnect Housing Security Design Team requested a 6-month extension from the KConnect Board of Trustees which was approved in mid-October pending funding. The Design Team felt as though they could achieve a more complete Common Agenda and Roadmap with an additional time - not to exceed six months - to achieve a shared and meaningful community plan that encompasses neighbor voice, system-level collaboration, accountability, and a framework for continuing the work after KConnect transitions its support activity to a more permanent partner by June 2020.

To further clarify our six-month effort leading to a Common Agenda & Roadmap, we felt the need to clarify the scope. The agreed-upon scope follows:

Scope: Recognizing the disparate overrepresentation of families of color among homeless populations, our work through June 2020 will be focused on creating a community framework that will reduce the disparity in our housing efforts over the next five years.

At the onset of the Housing Security work, a formalized structure was created that separated the various teams into areas of expertise; Design, Context, Content, Scout, and Communications.

These teams working independent and interdependently yet, by September, we heard a consistent call for readiness for less “teaming” and more collective work. In an effort to address this very positive development, the way in which we organize ourselves - our work structure - will change to a **System Building Team** which will help eliminate delays in communication and strengthen our overall alignment. This new approach is visualized below.



In addition to blending the expertise of the previously segmented teams, a public and private sector leadership team will be created to provide overall leadership to the Housing Security initiative and afford KConnect’s backbone team a point of contact for on-going thought leadership. The periodic broad network convening will transition from the Housing Accountability Partners Council to the **Housing Responsibility Partners Council**. The leadership team will also provide leadership to this convening.

You will be receiving an invitation to The Housing Responsibility Partners Council meeting which will take place on **Friday, December 6 from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** [Add this meeting to your calendar](#). THIS IS A CRITICAL MEETING TO ATTEND. CivicLab will be facilitating most of the meeting on December 6 and from that meeting, we anticipate emerging with a new system



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thinking approach and common language that will impact the work from January through June. The finalized meeting location will be coming soon.

Pam Parriott and Mark Woltman will be hosting a webinar on **Tuesday, December 3 at 8:30 a.m.** to provide more information on this transition. [Add this meeting to your calendar](#). A reminder email will be sent prior to the webinar and the link for connecting can be found in the description of the event. If you have any specific questions that you would like to submit prior to this meeting, please reply to this email.

Thank you for your commitment as we aspire to create an equitable system for children and families in our community.