

AGENDA

AD HOC on Homelessness & Solutions AGENDA FOR OCTOBER 2, 2023 AT 3:30 PM



Lansing City Hall, City Council Conference Room
124 W. Michigan Avenue, 10th Floor

To provide input or ask questions on any item that is listed on the agenda,
members of the public may contact the City Council at city.council@lansingmi.gov or (517) 483-4177 prior to the meeting.
view on: <https://www.youtube.com/@lansingcitycouncil4446/streams>

Council Member Brown, Chairperson

Council Member Hussain, Vice Chairperson

Council Member Spitzley, Member

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Minutes**
 - A. September 18, 2023
4. **Public Comment on Agenda Items (Up to 3 Minutes)**
5. **Discussion/Action:**
 - B. ACTION - Adoption of Committee Report from 2023
6. **Other**
7. **Adjourn**

Persons with disabilities who need an accommodation to fully participate in these meetings should contact the City Council Office at 517-483-4177 (TTY 711) 24 hour notice may be needed for certain accommodations. An attempt will be made to grant all reasonable accommodation requests.



MINUTES
Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions
Tuesday, September 18, 2023 @ 4:00 p.m.
City Council Conference Room, 10th Floor City Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brown called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm

PRESENT

Council Member Jeffrey Brown, Chair
Council Member Adam Hussain, Vice-Chair
Council Member Patricia Spitzley, Member

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Office Manager
Lisa Hagen-Lawrence, OCA

MINUTES

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 18, 2023, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

DISCUSSION – Committee Recommendations and Reporting
DRAFT – Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions Committee Report

Council Member Brown went through the document, beginning on page 1 which outlined the purpose of the Committee and stake holders who attended over the year. Council Member Brown took a moment to recognize the Committee for their assistance in the meeting.

On page 2 the Committee started to review the recommendations beginning with Support for Lansing School District Families Overcoming Rough time (FORT). Council Member Spitzley asked for the Committee to consider adding a recommendation for the administration along with HRCS and NEC to seek funding and partners to assist with FORT and a priority with HRCS Grant applications.

Ms. Boak read back to the Committee and it was confirmed:
Strongly recommend the Administration along with Human Resources Community Service (HRCS) and Neighborhood and Citizen Engagement to seek funding and other partners to assist with FORT and consider this as a priority when reviewing HRCS grant applications.

The Committee reviewed and recalled the discussions with Sparrow Hospital on their Medical Respite Clinic.

The Committee consensus was to change the language to:

**** Advocating for Medical Respite Clinic:**

There is difficulty in the homeless population when they have medical needs, and a homeless shelter is unable to accommodate. We do encounter many of these very vulnerable, and often very ill, adult patients. In the Detroit market, the Salvation Army has initiated a “Medical Respite” clinic. This innovative approach to care transitions for the homeless is something completely lacking in the mid-Michigan area.

Many of the Medical health plans subsidize this type of setting. This allows a homeless individual to recover and heal in a supportive setting, connects them to medical care, and transitions them to the appropriate housing situation when recovery is complete.

RECOMMENDATION - Recommend for the Administration partner with and seek funding with Ingham County Community Health Centers to establish a medical Respite Clinic.

The Committee began a discussion on the topic of Homeless Management Information System Card, questioning if it is needed if there is already a state system, if it is important to keep this to connect the services, and briefly spoke on this history when the City was the fiduciary for these types of services. The Committee consensus was to review each policy in the report and provide tangible recommendations. Everything would need an actionable recommendation or letter and/or resolution of support.

Committee consensus was to take action on the budget priorities for tonight’s action but address the remaining items in the report at their next meeting on September 26, 2023. The report will then go out to Council on October 2, 2023, by the Committee chairperson.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPITZLEY TO INCLUDE THE BUDGET PRIORITIES FROM THE REPORT INTO THE FINAL BUDGET PRIORITIES FOR ACTION BY COUNCIL.

++Budget Priorities for EDP -Adopted 9/18/2023 – Resolution 2023-

1. Developing a comprehensive plan with HRCS and CoC to ensure that grant dollars are being utilized as intended with outcomes that can be defined and qualitative.
2. Complete the study of existing rental fees to ensure they are sufficient and consistent to meet the rigorous needs for safety housing with communities of similar size.
3. Create a landlord registry either through the BS&A portal or other platform that is publicly accessible that shows housing inspections and the status (i.e., in compliance, red tags, compliance).

++Budget Priorities for HRCS- Adopted 9/18/2023 – Resolution 2023-

1. Required DEI training by an outside organization to those provider agencies receiving HRCS funds who help the homeless, people with disabilities and other vulnerable populations.
2. Housing Ombudsman prepares education materials for renters. Included but not limited to:
 - i. Rights as a renter
 - ii. Know before you sign a lease.
 - iii. District Court Eviction Diversion information
 - iv. Conduct at least two housing fairs in City with MSU Law each year.
 - v. Creation of a brochure by the Administration on where tenants can go for assistance if they are forced to relocate due to red tags or violations by the landlord.
3. Utilizing all the Community Centers in the different areas of Lansing as warming and cooling centers during heat and cold events. This would require funding for after-hours operations, for security, staff and other expenses that may be included.

++Budget Priorities for Law/Courts- Adopted 9/18/2023 – Resolution 2023-

1. Support the creation of a Community Court within 54-A District Court and continued support for eviction diversion program.
2. Implement policy where Nuisance Actions filed against recalcitrant landlords enabling City Attorney to enter into voluntary compliance agreements.

MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

OTHER

No other topics.

ADJOURN

Adjourned at 4:26 pm

Submitted by

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on

DRAFT

DRAFT

Report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness & Solutions

INTRODUCTION

Resolution 2023-014 created the Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness & Solutions. The resolution directed the Committee to review policies, services, and resources to recommend assistance to connect the homeless to those services and resources. The resolution directed the Committee to provide a report of their findings and recommendations to the Committee of the Whole by September 11, 2023, and will be dissolved December 11, 2023.

Members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness & Solutions are:

- Councilmember At-Large Jeffrey Brown, Chair
- Councilmember 3rd Ward Adam Hussain, Vice-Chair
- Councilmember At-Large Patricia Spitzley, Member

The first meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee was January 24, 2023. On the onset, the Ad Hoc Committee committed to meeting with as many stakeholders as possible to gather information regarding the homelessness & solutions: Those stakeholders included:

- Members of the public
- HRCS
- Mayor's Office
- Downtown Lansing, Inc.
- Lansing Police Department
- Homeless Shelters
- Economic Development & Planning
- Capital Area Housing Partnership
- Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA)
- Clergy Forum

The following individuals made presentations or contributed to the Ad Hoc Committee:

- Judge Cynthia Ward, 54-A District Court
- Ulices Rosa, District Court Eviction Diversion
- Jennifer West, Lansing School District
- Rose Taphouse, Lansing School District
- Jason Gray, Seventh Day Homelessness Outreach Advocates
- Gabriel Biber, Haven House
- Cathleen Edgerly, Director of Downtown Lansing Inc.
- Julie Reinhardt, Downtown Lansing Inc.
- John Shaski, Sparrow Hospital
- Mike & Linda Karl Cardboard Prophets
- Hope Lovell, LoveJoy Community Services
- Sara Lurie, CEO of Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties (CMHA-CEI)
- Brooke Hall, Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties (CMHA-CEI)
- Erika Brown-Binion, Executive Director of Refugee Development Center
- Mark Pierce, Executive Director of Disability Network Capital Area

- Rita Dunlop, Rental Property Association of Mid-Michigan (RPAOMM)
- Representative Emily Dievendorf
- Natasha Atkinson, Legislative Director for Rep. Emily Dievendorf
- Kim Coleman, Director of Human Relations & Community Services (HRCS)
- Joe McDonald, Housing Ombudsman Human Relations & Community Services (HRCS)
- Toni Young, Contract Management Administrator HRCS
- Jordan Hankwitz, Director of Economic Development & Planning
- Barb Kimmel, Economic Development & Planning Department, Development Office
- Rawley Van Fossen, Chair of Continuum of Care
- Sharon Dade, Continuum of Care Member
- Pastor Damon Milton, Greater Lansing Clergy Forum
- Pastor Sarah Johnson, Greater Lansing Clergy Forum
- Bradley Funkhouser, CEO Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA)
- Lolo Robison, Director of Marketing, Customer Experience & Public Information CATA
- Numerous members of the public

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations contained in this report represent recommendations from the Committee based on the beforementioned participants.

Recommendations represent both policy recommendations and budget priorities. These are denoted by an asterisk (**) for Policy Recommendations and a plus (++) for Budget Priorities.

****Support of the Lansing School District Families Overcoming Rough Times (F.O.R.T.)** Advocating for the F.O.R.T program which assists qualified students who are living in temporary or inadequate living situations with:

- Transportation to and from school from wherever the student is living.
- Access to the free meal programs at the school.
- Uniforms and clothing necessary for the child to attend and participate in school.
- School supplies to the student.
- Cap and gown so they may participate in graduation commencement.
- Enrolling students within 24 hours even when the student does not have birth certificate and other vital record.
- Many other needs so that the student may fully participate and achieve at school.

In February of 2023 there were between 500-600 students in temporary or no housing. Summer camps to build resilience to the trauma students see, education support, and mental health support for students as well as staff.

RECOMMENDATION - Strongly recommend the Administration along with Human Resources and Community Services (HRCS) and Neighborhood and Citizen Engagement (NEC) to seek funding and other partners to assist with FORT and consider this as a priority when reviewing HRCS grant applications.

**** Advocating for Medical Respite Clinic:**

There is difficulty in the homeless population when they have medical needs, and a homeless shelter is unable to accommodate. We do encounter many of these very vulnerable, and often very ill, adult patients. In the Detroit market, the Salvation Army has initiated a “Medical Respite” clinic. This innovative approach to care transitions for the homeless is something completely lacking in the mid-Michigan area.

Many of the Medical health plans subsidize this type of setting. This allows a homeless individual to recover and heal in a supportive setting, connects them to medical care, and transitions them to the appropriate housing situation when recovery is complete.

RECOMMENDATION - Recommend for the Administration partner with and seek funding with Ingham County Community Health Centers to establish a medical Respite Clinic.

****Homeless Management Information System card**

Advocating with all appropriate agencies for less cumbersome processes to receive a HMIS card. HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) is an adopted system at state level, every Continuum of Care (CoC) in Michigan uses this for their grants. Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness is a state-wide advocacy group representing HMIS interest at the state level and locally they have one select administrator of HMIS, and Haven House is their administrator here for HMIS. If you are an agency selected for funding from CoC, they must be vetted, approved, and licensed into HMIS.

RECOMMENDATION - Recommend the Administration work with Continuum of Care (CoC).....

****Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties (CMHA-CEI); Housing & Residential**

Advocating for additional foster care homes in the Tri-County area that include support teams and varies internal programs. There are less than forty (40) adult foster care homes citywide, some are as small as six (6) beds, and we only have approximately one hundred and thirty (130) beds that deal with mental health clients.

Some individuals with mental health issues may not need inpatient care, and it may not be appropriate care for them to be placed in shelter environment which could increase their anxiety. Bridges Crisis Unit is a hospital diversion program that helps individuals connect to services and move clients onto next steps. It is a sixteen (16) bed short-term stay with a maximum of fourteen (14) days.

RECOMMENDATION –

****LoveJoy Community Services**

Investigating different models across the state in efforts to pilot a program in the Tri-County area, working with providers, Community Mental Health, and Human Relations & Community Services Department. LoveJoy Community Services is a provider for Community Mental Health, which finds ways to keep individuals integrated into the community setting to avoid institutionalization which in their language looks different, 1) hospital, 2) jail, and 3) nursing home. This includes those who are mentally ill, intellectually/developmentally mentally disable, chronically ill and traumatic brain injury, their goal and guide is to provide support so they can stay in the community whether it is room/board, group home, or home care with community living supports. Community living support is a network of services as example of someone who is mentally ill whose level of care does not need a group home with 24/7 assistance.

RECOMMENDATION -

****Disability Network Capital Area**

Advocating to increase the housing needs for those with disabilities by working with Disability Network Capital Area. Their Mission Statement is – Transforming thinking to improve the environment and quality of life for people with disabilities. The agency serviced 516 consumers (people), 30% are a minority. One of the biggest concerns is serving consumers that come through direct services and they cannot speak for themselves.

Homelessness means no name on a lease or mortgage, no address for mail. Disability Network has partnerships with other agencies like the Rescue Mission, Haven House, VOA, and more.

RECOMMENDATION –

****Representative Emily Dievendorf**

Advocating for comprehensive legislation with Sate on Michigan for the Renter’s Bill of Rights, HB 4919, and the White House Blueprint for Renter’s Bill of Rights along with 25 bill package that includes equitable housing. The bill of rights guarantees the unhoused populations have access to all their needs, programs, equitable access to resources and explicitly list protective right to public education for unhoused youth and the right to transportation. The series of bills would look at creating an application process to educate those that want to be landlords, including requirement of full disclosure to renters, and prior to eviction mediation prior to court, giving tenants resources for assistance including notices of rent increases, escrow, and finally eviction expungement.

To urge the passage of legislation to do away with exclusionary zoning, some municipalities use zoning to limit the supply of available housing units, such as by prohibiting multi-family residential dwellings or setting minimum lot size requirements.

RECOMMENDATION – Resolution to the legislature

****Economic Development and Planning (EDP) Development Office & Code Compliance**

Economic Development and Planning Department, Development office is the conduit to which HUD/ESG funds flow from HUD to HRCS. The Development office is the fiduciary for MSHDA grants for the Continuum of Care (CoC) and acts as the fiduciary MSHDA’s ESG funds, both the ESM and ESF funds (match and federal component respectively), including the shelter diversion grants. EDP, Development office act as the fiduciary for MSHDA and CoC. The CoC spends dollars making requests for reimbursement from EDP and working with CoC ensures the grantees/sub recipients have provided proper documentation, the request is eligible and provides funds and draw funds from trust.

Code is cause and effect (as an example a red tag is the cause, and the effect is not having a place to go). Require that rental properties must have both a rental license and a complete inspection before occupancy.

RECOMMENDATION -

++Budget Priorities for EDP -Adopted 9/18/2023 – Resolution 2023-232

1. Developing a comprehensive plan with HRCS and CoC to ensure that grant dollars are being utilized as intended with outcomes that can be defined and qualitative.
2. Complete the study of existing rental fees to ensure they are sufficient and consistent to meet the rigorous needs for safety housing with communities of similar size.
3. Create a landlord registry either through the BS&A portal or other platform that is publicly accessible that shows housing inspections and the status (i.e., in compliance, red tags, compliance).

****Continuum of Care (CoC)**

Advocating that Continuum of Care (CoC) work with Economic Development & Planning Department, Development office and HRCS to ensure that grant dollars are being utilized as intended with outcomes that can be defined and qualitative.

Continuum of Care (CoC) is a collaborative model started at fed level to address, prevent, and end homelessness in the community. CoC speaks only for their jurisdiction which is Ingham County related to funding assistance in those residing in the county, or agency's doing business in the county. Neighboring CoC is Housing Services of Mid-Michigan provides services Eaton and Clinton counties.

CoC is privately incorporated as a 501(c)(3) which is a membership based non-profit, some pay a membership dues to be part of it, but you can be a member at no cost. By showing HUD this collaborative it allows them to apply annually for CoC dollars. In Michigan CoC is unique because MSHDA also grants dollars and on a local level this puts dollars through CDBG.

As funds become available the membership decides priorities and along with regulations that CoC must follow. Both the State and HUD determine categories to create programs, such as shelters, street outreach, prevention, and all other eligible categories. Applications are vetted, approved, and ranked, scored with recommendation made to the Board of Directors. Ultimately, this is to ensure the community gets their fair share of federal and state dollars.

RECOMMENDATION -

****Human Relations & Community Services**

Advocating for consistent coordination between code enforcement and Housing Ombudsman when homes are pink and/or red tagged.

Housing Ombudsman should update Council annually concerning outreach, needs of the community and unmeant services that impact housing and the ability to get housing in Lansing.

RECOMMENDATION -

++Budget Priorities for HRCS- Adopted 9/18/2023 – Resolution 2023-232

1. Required DEI training by an outside organization to those provider agencies receiving HRCS funds who help the homeless, people with disabilities and other vulnerable populations.
2. Housing Ombudsman prepares education materials for renters. Included but not limited to:
 - i. Rights as a renter
 - ii. Know before you sign a lease
 - iii. District Court Eviction Diversion information
 - iv. Conduct at least two housing fairs in City with MSU Law each year
 - v. Creation of a brochure by the Administration on where tenants can go for assistance if they are forced to relocate due to red tags or violations by the landlord.
3. Utilizing all the Community Centers in the different areas of Lansing as warming and cooling centers during heat and cold events. This would require funding for after-hours operations, for security, staff and other expenses that may be included.

****Law/Courts**

54A District Court operates an in-court eviction diversion program that facilitates connections to legal aid, rental assistance, and financial counseling directly from the courtroom.

Amend Chapter 203 Municipal Civil Infraction and Section 297.15 Civil Infractions with the Specialty Court options of Eviction Court and Community Court.

Update annually on the statistics of enforcement and penalties for unsafe conditions in homes, per the administrative code of civil infractions.

RECOMMENDATION -

++Budget Priorities for Law/Courts- Adopted 9/18/2023 – Resolution 2023-232

1. Support the creation of a Community Court within 54-A District Court and continued support for eviction diversion program.

2. Implement policy where Nuisance Actions filed against recalcitrant landlords enabling City Attorney to enter into voluntary compliance agreements.