

Mayor LaFrance's Health and Homelessness Strategy

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CONTACT

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ACTION

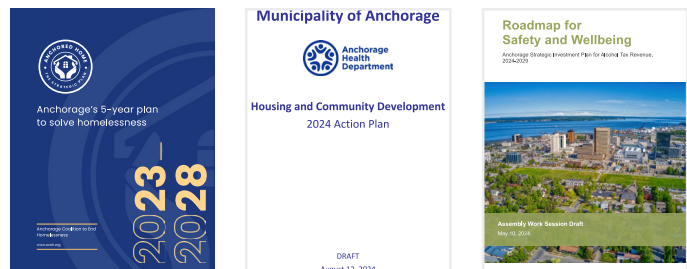
Our strategy includes:

- Maintain adequate year-round shelter and transitional housing.
- Connect people from shelter to reliable navigation, housing, and services.
- Improve access to behavioral and physical healthcare.
- Reduce racial disparities in access to shelter and housing.

RESULTS

In three years, we will see:

- Significant reduction in unsheltered homelessness.
- Fewer families experiencing homelessness.
- Higher quality of life and business confidence city-wide.
- More Anchorage residents have equitable access to health and safety.



This strategy builds from current MOA and partner plans, including:

1. Anchored Home Plan;
2. Housing and Community Development Plan;
3. Roadmap for Safety and Wellbeing;
4. Mayor LaFrance's Housing Strategy

INTRODUCTION

The LaFrance Administration is committed to a comprehensive and coordinated strategy to address homelessness and related health and safety issues.

With a public health approach that focuses on harm reduction and prevention, we can improve the health and safety of the entire community, including those experiencing homelessness, with immediate action and long-term solutions.

Root causes of homelessness include mental illness, substance misuse, financial hardship, personal and generational trauma, and lack of affordable housing. As we face another winter, nearly 500 people are living without shelter in our community.

The good news? That's fewer people living unsheltered than a year ago. Public, private, and nonprofit partners are bringing new resources to the table. We are making decisions with better data than ever before. The public is committed to being part of the solution. We've heard from businesses and community members (housed and unhoused) that high rates of substance misuse, camping along trails and in public spaces, and the impact of crime make Anchorage feel less safe. Addressing homelessness and improving public safety will make our community a safer place for all.

Our strategy does not reinvent the wheel. We are building on efforts already underway. We know we must work closely with housing, law enforcement, physical and behavioral health, social services, community groups, faith communities, businesses, and housed and un-housed residents.

We will adjust this strategy as we learn more and as conditions change. We will continue to create pathways to health and stability for people while reducing the impact of homelessness on neighborhoods, public spaces, and local business.



THREE-YEAR GOALS

1. Significantly reduce unsheltered homelessness through low-barrier shelter and connections to housing.
2. Increase access to behavioral and physical health services.
3. Add new housing and increase access to existing housing.
4. Harness community partnerships, funding, and data to reduce systemic contributors to homelessness.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Existing plans and lessons provide a starting point for Mayor LaFrance's Health and Homelessness Strategy. We've learned:

- It takes adequate year-round, very low-barrier shelter of different types, system navigation, and supports, for people to maintain housing.
- We must simultaneously address those in crisis today and prevent trauma that pushes people into crisis tomorrow.
- Anchorage needs new and rehabilitated housing, especially for households below 110% of the Area Median Income.
- Data sharing, coordination of services, housing, and employment are critical to get the right supports to each person.
- Funding must be leveraged on all sides from multiple public and private sources.
- Sharing leadership, partnership, and accountability to co-create solutions, implement strategy, and report results, is 100% necessary. We can't succeed without it.

First 100 Days
October 8, 2024

6 months
December 31, 2024

12 months
June 30, 2025

UNSHELTERED AND SHELTER

- ✓ Launch Anchorage Police Department HOPE (Homeless Outreach, Prevention, and Engagement) Team
- ✓ Increase outreach to camps before abatement
- ✓ Strengthen internal coordination among municipal departments
- ✓ Work with Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH) and other partners to coordinate shelter and housing resources for people moving from camps, prioritized by vulnerability
- ✓ Maintain 200 beds at E 56th Avenue Congregate Shelter
- ✓ Work with Anchorage Health Department (AHD) to complete RFP process and execute contracts for 400 beds of non-congregate shelter before winter



- HOPE Team and outreach partners continue engagement with camps before abatement
- Address issues related to vehicles when moving to shelter
- Identify and launch warming sites for November-February
- Maintain 200 beds at E 56th Avenue Congregate Shelter
- Launch 400 non-congregate beds
- Establish peer, transportation, and other navigation partnerships to increase movement from shelter to housing
- Use Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data to work with AHD and ACEH to monitor flow of people from unsheltered to shelter to housing, adjusting resources as needed
- Develop and release RFP for rapid re-housing operator for approximately 75 people

- Establish consistent low-barrier winter services, including congregate and non-congregate shelter, rapid re-housing, and case management
- Continue to engage peer, transportation, and navigation partners with people moving from camps
- Explore and launch legal parking sites available from May through October 15, 2025
- Maintain 200 beds at E 56th Avenue Congregate Shelter
- Maintain at least 50 non-congregate beds
- Identify and launch additional low-density, low barrier, year-round shelter and transitional housing options (i.e., tiny homes, palette shelters, and other innovations)
- Identify opportunities for day shelter and community spaces for people experiencing homelessness



HEALTH

- ✓ Establish a Behavioral Health provider workgroup and host initial meetings
- ✓ Assess the availability of behavioral health treatment in Anchorage today
- ✓ Support the establishment of a care coordination group for the highest utilizers of the Anchorage Crisis Collaborative



- Maintain and monitor active referral network to behavioral health services and a care coordination group for highest utilizers of the Anchorage Crisis Collaborative
- Expand and support access to physical health providers serving individuals with complex needs
- Support development of a full behavioral health crisis continuum and connection to community services
- Maintain relationship with Anchorage therapeutic courts to increase referrals for treatment



HOUSING

- ✓ Develop Mayor LaFrance's Housing Strategy that includes housing for low- and extremely low-income households



- Continue to implement Mayor LaFrance's Housing Strategy
- Leverage public-private partnerships to increase the supply of housing units for very low-income households
- Increase access to rental subsidies
- Identify and plan to redevelop blighted and abandoned properties



DATA, FUNDING, COORDINATION

- ✓ Develop and submit budget proposals for MOA funding of safety net services for Q4 2024 and 2025
- ✓ Re-establish relationship with the Homelessness Leadership Council
- ✓ Develop strong working relationships with the Assembly Housing and Homelessness Committee, ACEH, and other safety-net providers
- ✓ Convene i-Team and GIS team around homelessness data collection and reporting
- ✓ Apply to Bloomberg Philanthropy Collaboration Track
- ✓ Launch regular updates to Assembly and the public
- ✓ Reengage the Housing, Homeless and Neighborhood Development (HHAND) Commission



- Establish relationships with advocacy and funding partners, including: Alaska Healthcare and Hospital Association, Alaska Behavioral Health Association, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, and other business and philanthropy leaders
- Develop relationships with Tribal Health Organizations throughout Alaska
- Develop relationships with neighborhoods, faith-based, and community organizations to increase engagement to address homelessness
- Develop legislative priorities and participate in advocacy with state and federal delegations
- Evaluate MOA and partner expenditures related to homelessness and health, and develop MOA budget proposal for 2026
- Work with funding partners to fully leverage MOA funding with other sources

