

*The Way Home
Continuum of Care
Houston, Texas*



Texas

- Texas means “friends”, as said by the Caddo tribe that greeted Spanish settlers by saying “Tay-yas”
- 268,596 sq miles or 695,662 km²
- Over 29.1 million people
- 2nd largest state in the USA

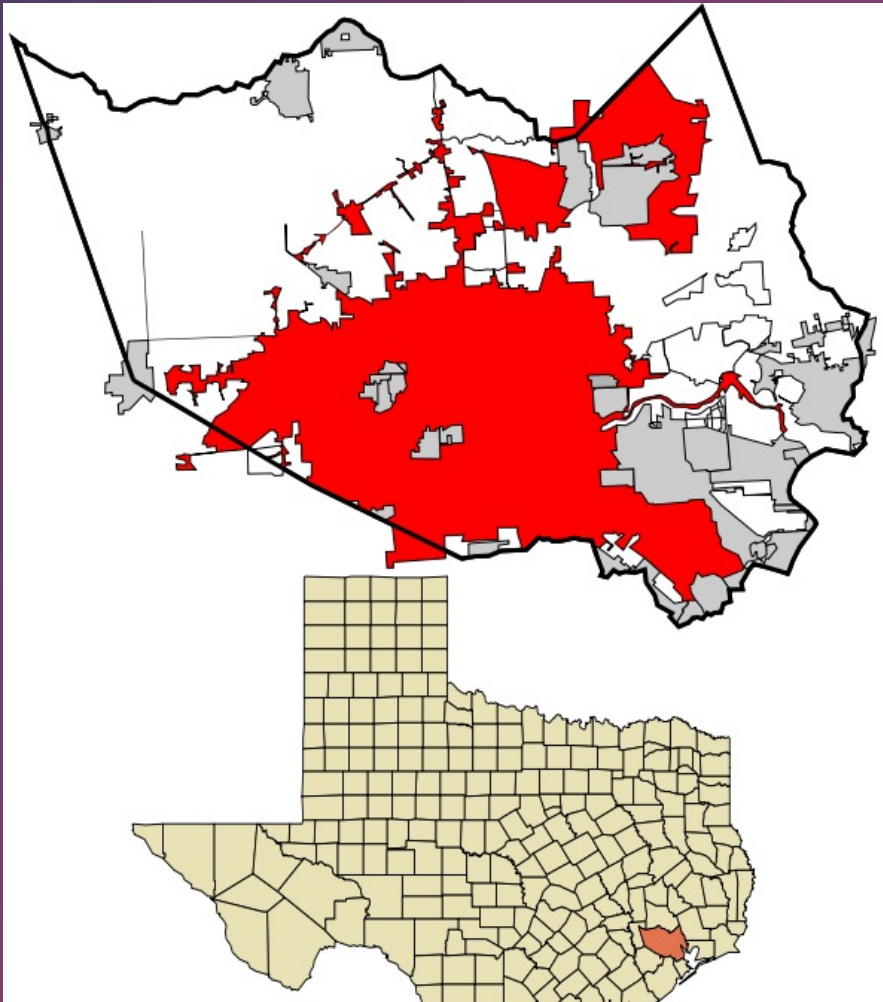




Houston



- 4th largest city in the USA
- 6th most populous in North America
- Over 2.3 million people
- 665 sq miles or 1,651 km²
- Houston government is led by the Mayor



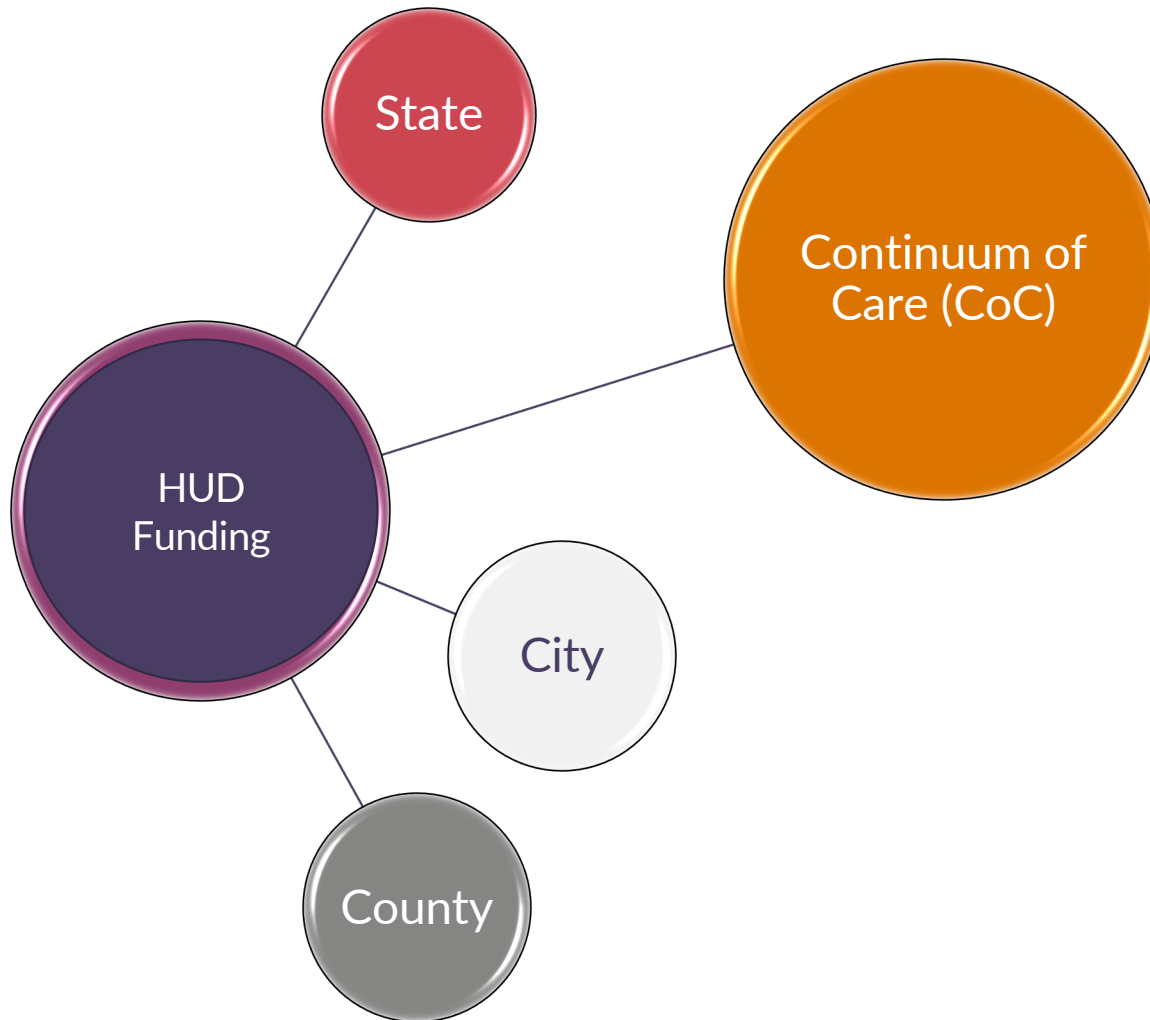
Harris County

- Houston lies within Harris County
- Houston is the county seat
- Harris County government is led by the County Judge



U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)

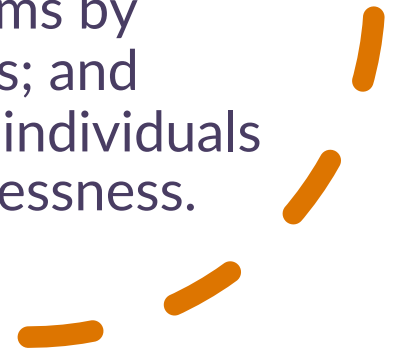
- Executive department of the U.S. federal government
 - Headed by a Secretary who reports directly to the President
 - Responsible for community planning & development, affordable home lending, homeless programs, public & Indian housing, & fair housing
-



- HUD funding flows to government offices in the states, cities, & counties
 - ✓ Those offices then allocate the funds to local agencies/partners
- HUD funding also goes to CoCs

Continuum of Care Program

- The Continuum of Care (CoC) Program is designed to promote communitywide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, and State and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families, and communities by homelessness; promote access to and effect utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families; and optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.



A map of the United States with red lines delineating the boundaries of 389 Community Development Corporations (CoCs). The map is divided into three color-coded regions: a grey region on the West Coast, a light green region in the central and eastern US, and a light blue region in the Northeast. The text 'CoCs' is overlaid in white on the grey region. A decorative pattern of white dots is in the top left corner. A list of statistics is in the bottom left.

CoCs

- HUD assigns the geographic boundaries & names of all CoCs
- 389 CoCs across the US
- 11 in Texas
- 24 in New York
- 44 in California
- Every CoC has a Lead Agency that works on behalf of HUD



Geographic Area – 3,711 sq miles



A stylized graphic of a house. The roof is a solid orange triangle. The base of the house is a dark purple shape that resembles a block letter 'H'.

Coalition for the Homeless

Mission:

- To provide leadership in the development, advocacy, & coordination of community strategies to prevent and end homelessness

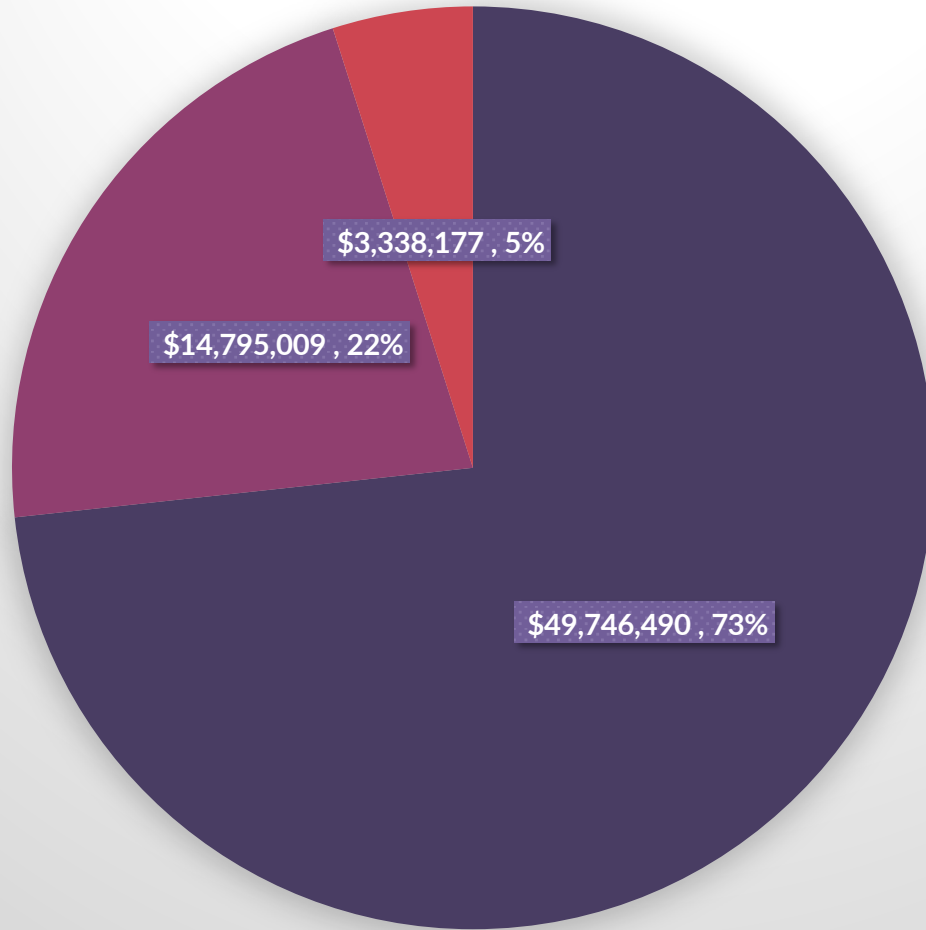
Role:

- Coordinate the community response to homelessness
- Lead agency for the TX-700 Continuum of Care (CoC)
 - ≈\$46M annual HUD allocation
 - Keeps ≈5500 people housed
- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) lead
- Coordinated Access Lead

- The collaborative model to prevent and end homelessness in Harris, Fort Bend, & Montgomery Counties
- Comprised of 100+ stakeholder partners from all sectors of the community
 - Nonprofits
 - Government
 - Philanthropy
 - Faith-Based Organizations
- AKA: TX-700 Continuum of Care

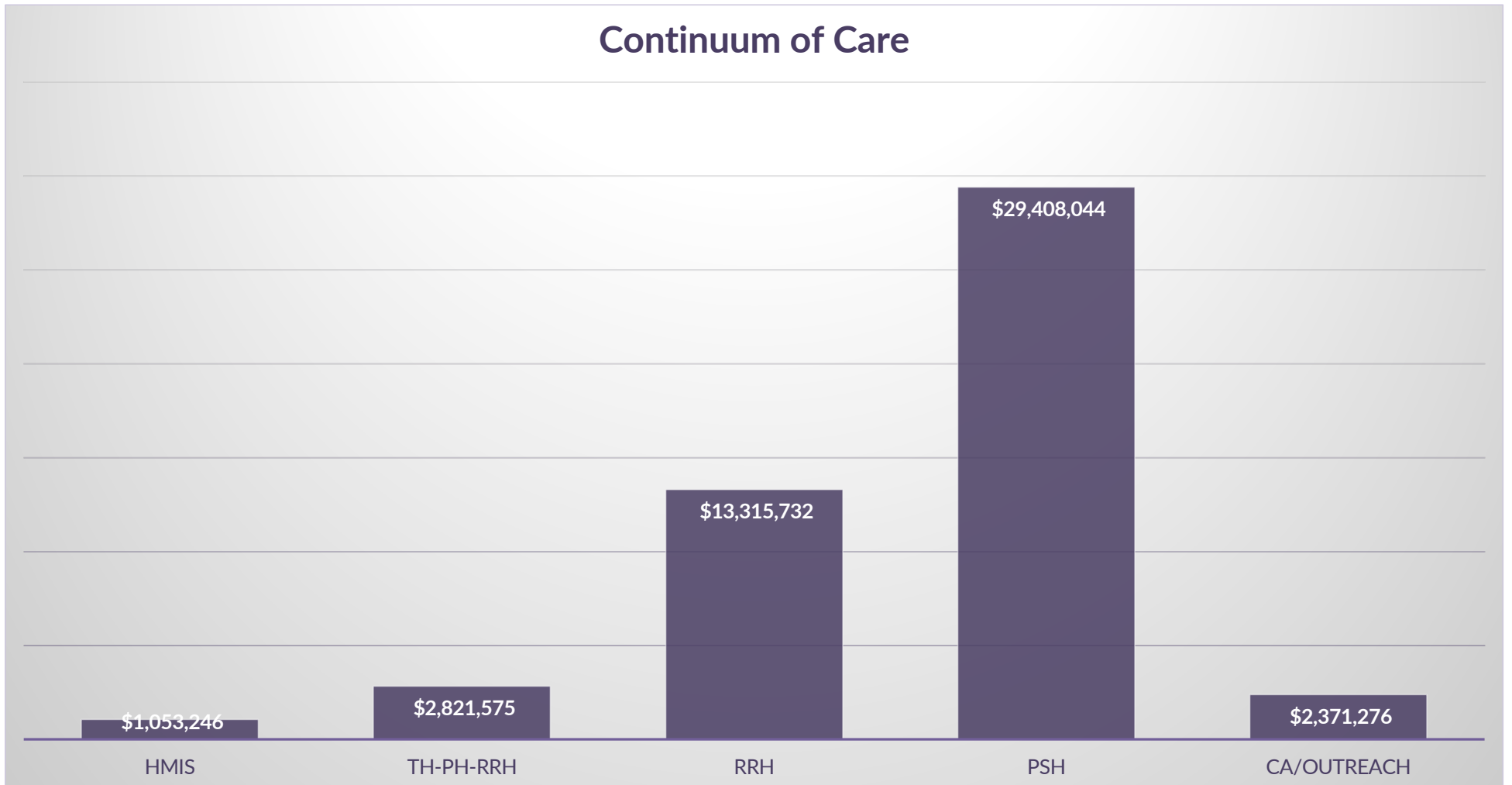
The logo for 'The Way Home' is centered within a large, stylized, light gray circular graphic that has a thick, layered border. The text 'The Way Home' is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Above the letter 'H' in 'Home', there is a red icon of a house with a chimney, where the roofline is formed by the top of the 'H' and the chimney is a vertical line extending from the center of the 'H'.

CoC Funding by Jurisdiction



- CoC
- City of Houston
- Harris County

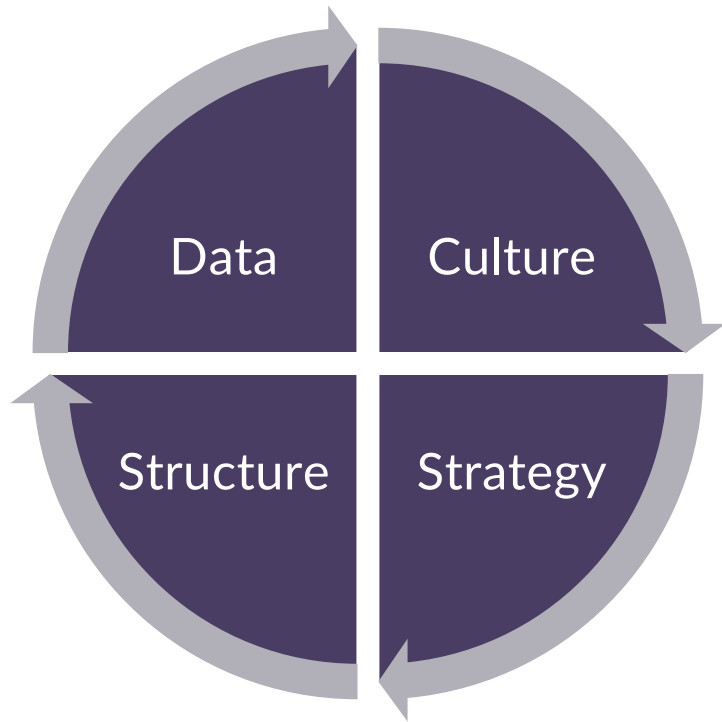
Continuum of Care



Reality in 2011

- ✓ Houston had the 6th largest homeless population in the country
 - 8th highest when adding in balance of states
- ✓ Homeless service providers were spending millions
 - Still leaving federal funds unused
- ✓ Homeless service providers were operating in silos, with no collaboration
 - Services depended on what door you walked into
- ✓ Recidivism was high (not matching people to the right programs)
 - “Housing ready” philosophy was keeping hard to serve on the street
- ✓ Homelessness is expensive
 - Responding to homelessness with emergency services but not with permanent housing

Initiating Action (the shift)



- Two important events in 2012

- **Technical Assistance**

- ✓ Houston was identified as a priority community by HUD

- **Community Charette**

- ✓ Brought everyone together
- ✓ Identified common goals for the homeless response system

Call to Action

“Transform homeless services into crisis response systems that prevent homelessness & rapidly return people who experience homelessness to stable housing.”

We needed to shift paradigms.....

From

To

A diverse collection of providers using different methods & providing different services

An integrated network of providers whose efforts are well-coordinated

A service delivery model that tends to trap client in an emergency housing/service loop that never leads to stable housing

A service delivery mode that delivers needed services to clients situated in stable housing, where such services have been shown to be much more successful

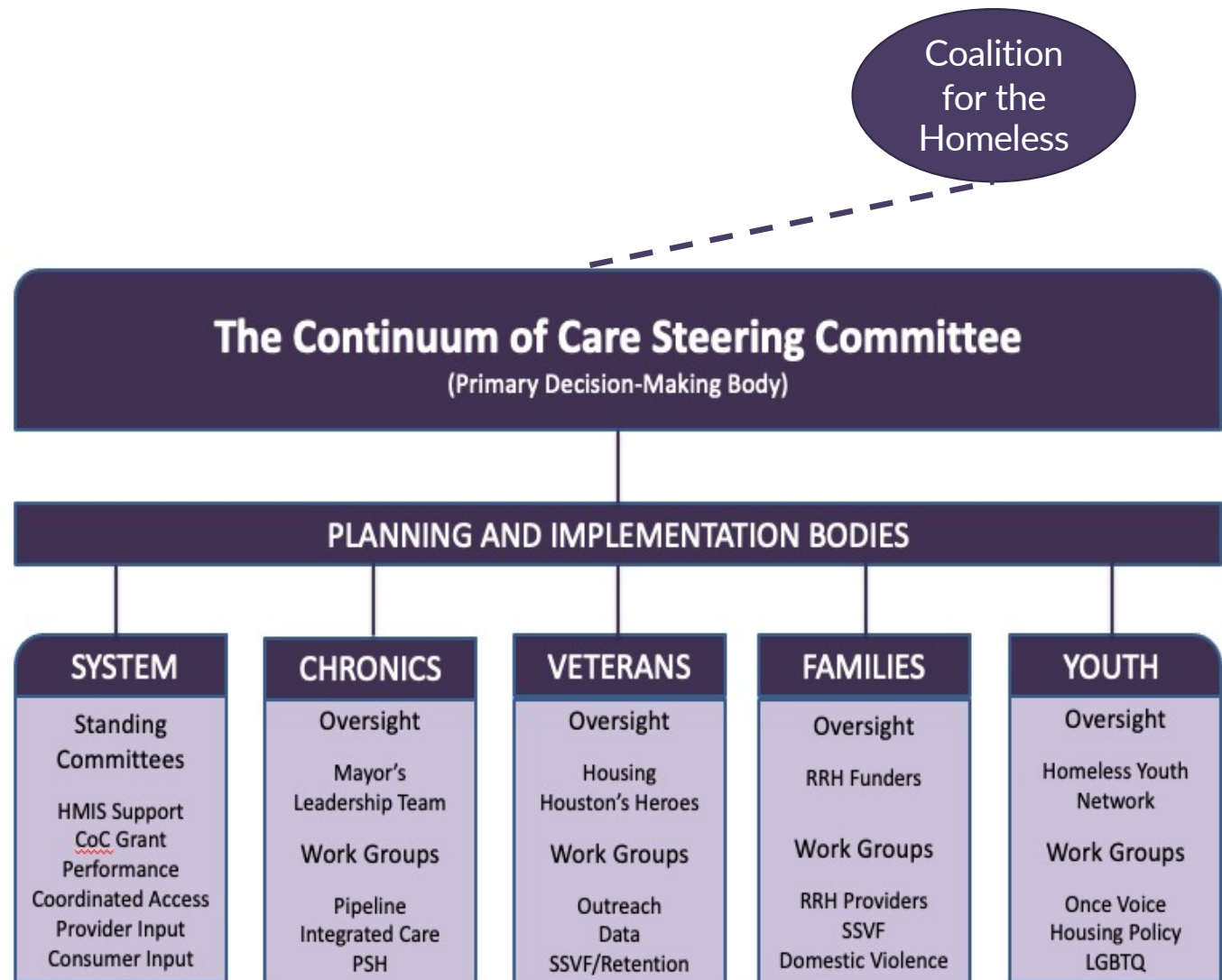
Achieving a Singular Collective Impact

Five key elements needed to achieve large-scale impact:

1. Common Agenda
 - ✓ End homelessness
2. Shared Measurement
 - ✓ PSH Placements
3. Mutually Reinforcing Activities
 - ✓ The Way Home
4. Continuous Communication
 - ✓ More & more & more....
5. Backbone Support
 - ✓ Coalition for the Homeless



Final Governance & Implementation



One Initiative, Several Plans 2012



End Chronic Homelessness by 2015

End Veteran Homelessness by 2015

End Family Homelessness by 2020

Set a Path for Ending All Homelessness

The Introduction of Coordinated Access

Web-based, electronic system that manages real-time unit availability (HMIS)

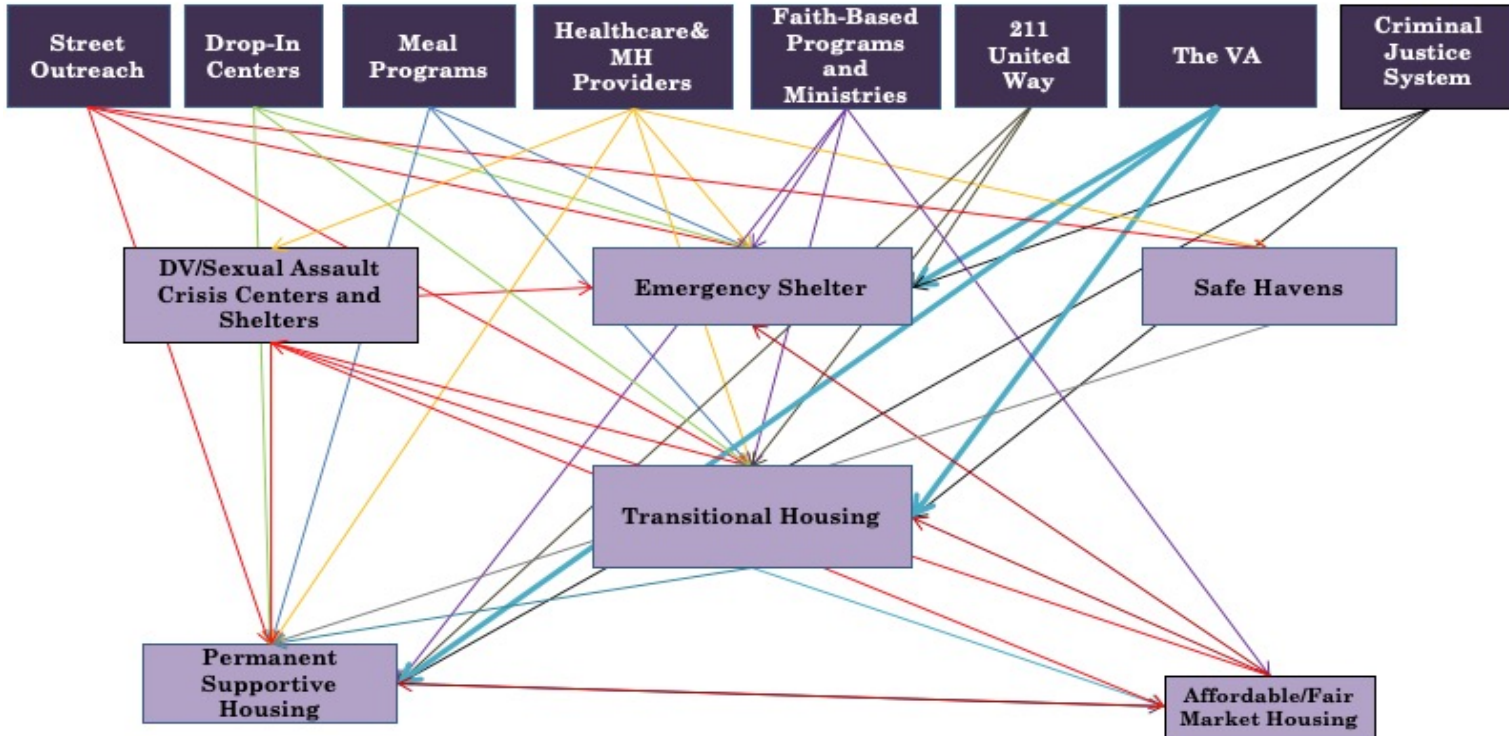


Matches homeless individuals to permanent housing with services based on level of service need

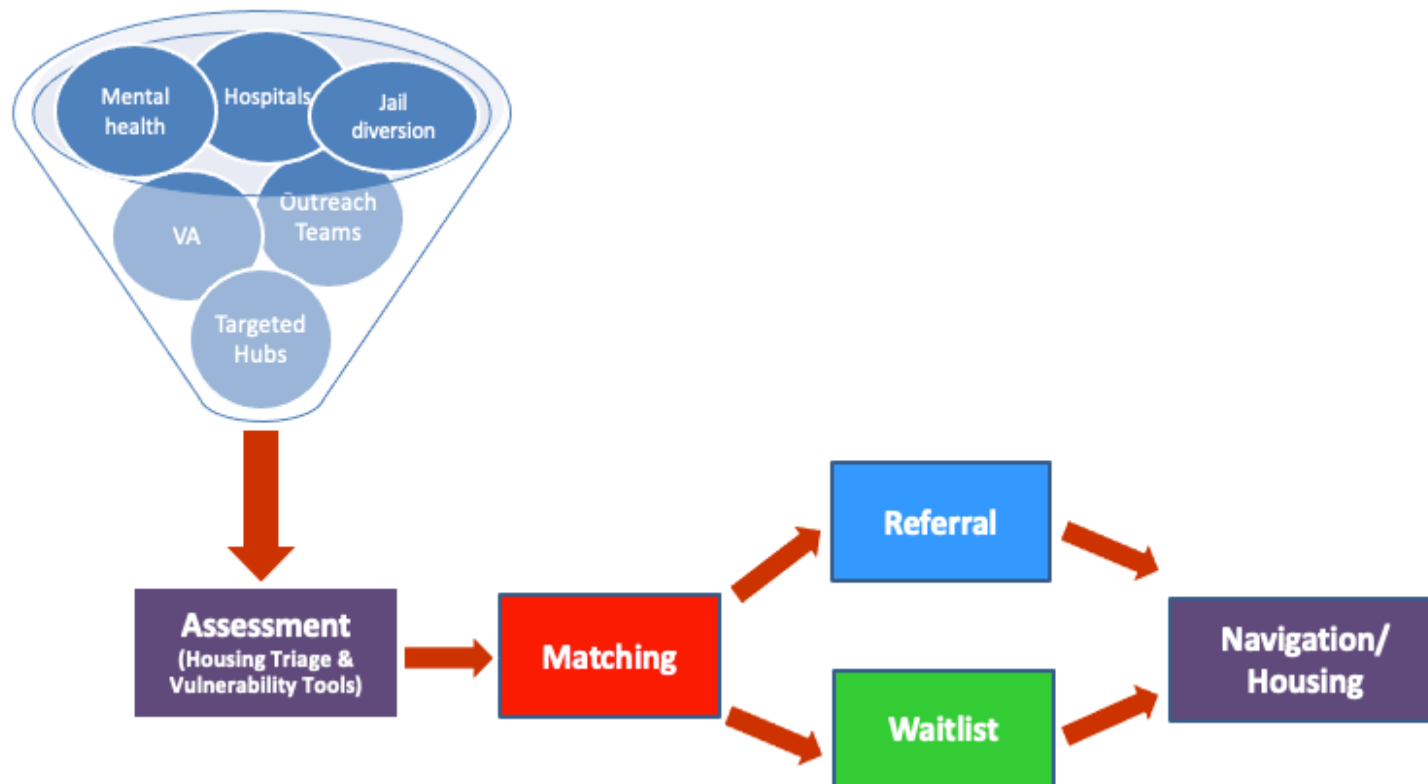


Simple, standard assessment used to determine need & support matching

Access to Housing in the Past

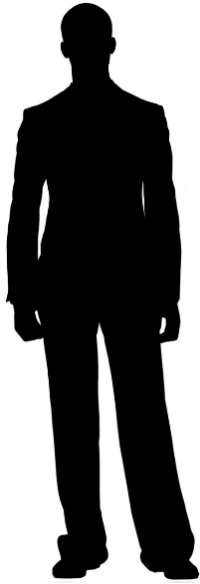


Access to Housing Today



With CA, No One Falls Between the Cracks

Housing Assessor



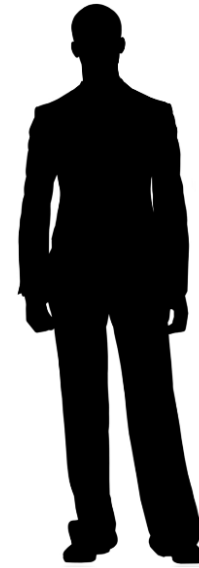
Utilizes Coordinated Access to assess the homeless individual, determine the appropriate intervention, and identify available housing options.

Housing Navigator



Assists homeless individual in gathering required documentation (ID, proof of income, etc.), executing the lease, and moving the individual into housing.

Housing Case Manager



Continuously meets with the client several times a week to tailor comprehensive supportive services responding to the client's needs.



Homelessness is expensive, costing Harris County taxpayers millions of dollars a year*



# People Housed	<u>Annual</u> Cost Savings to Harris County
10	\$760,000
100	\$7,600,000
500	\$38,000,000
1000	\$76,000,000
3000	\$228,000,000
5000	\$380,000,000
6000	\$456,000,000

*Harris County Homeless Cost Estimate Report

Increases

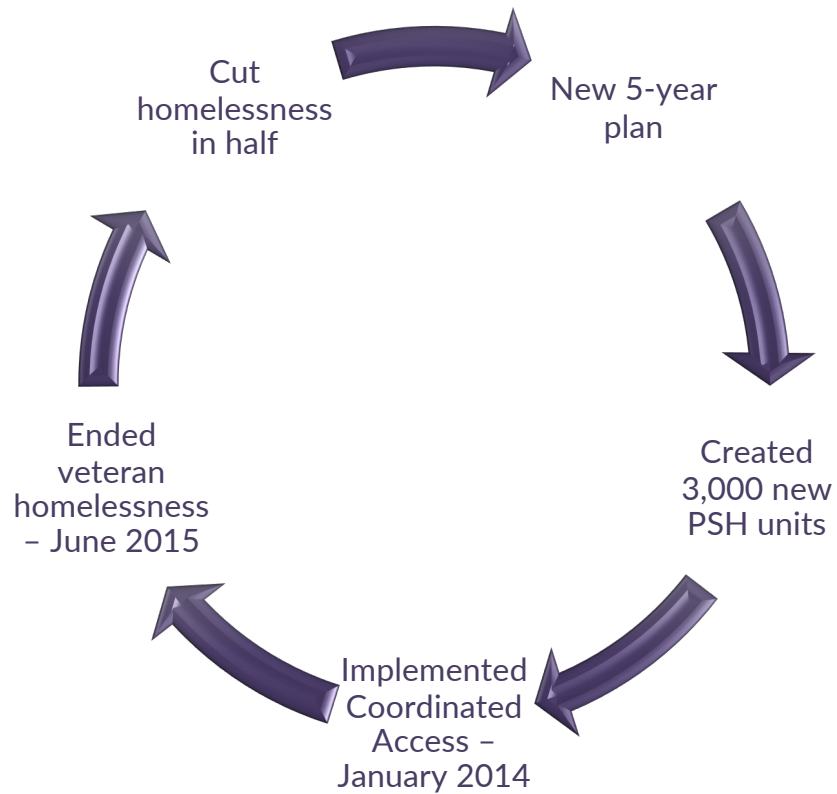
- Housing stability
- Employment
- Mental & physical health
- School attendance

Decreased use of...

- Homeless shelters
- Hospitals
- Emergency rooms
- Jails & prisons

Housing First & Supportive Housing Improves Lives & Generates Cost Savings to Public Systems

Accomplishments 2011 - 2017



spotlight on...

HOUSTON MAYOR: WE HAVE EFFECTIVELY ENDED VETERAN HOMELESSNESS



Congressman Al Green, Mayor Annise Parker, U.S. Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert F. McDonald, U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Julián Castro, U.S. Department of Labor Secretary Thomas E. Perez, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, and U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness Executive Director Matthew Doherty. Photo courtesy of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Houston Effectively Ends Veteran Homelessness

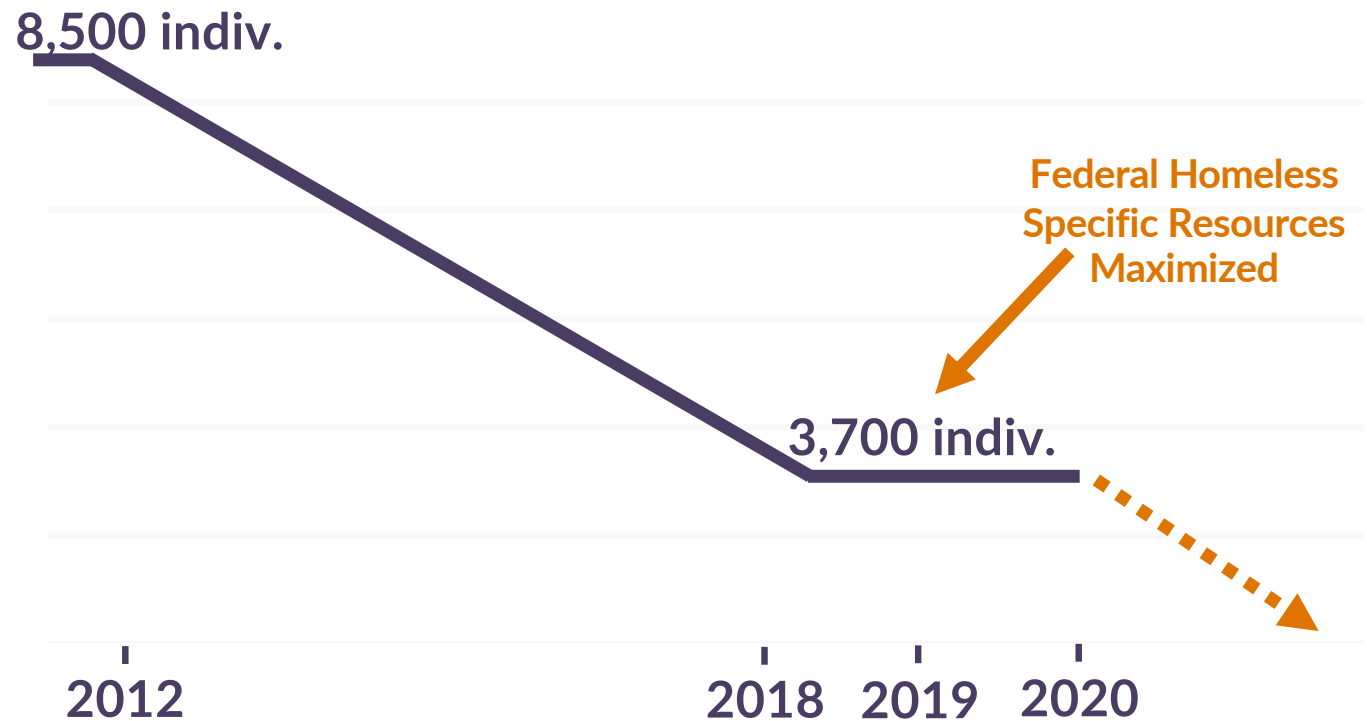
Becomes Largest City in the Nation to Create System to House any Homeless Veteran

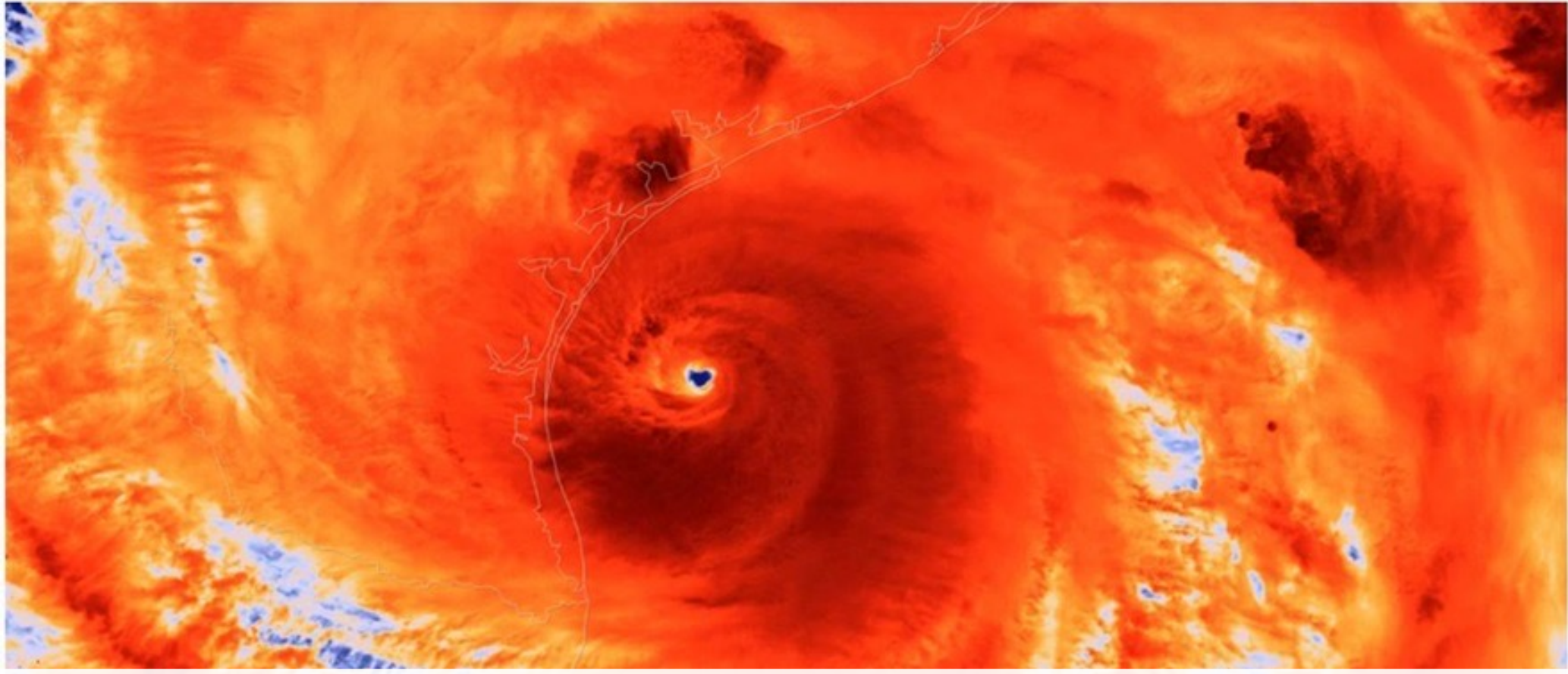
A note on: Functional Zero

- Just because we “ended” Veteran homelessness, it doesn’t mean that there are no homeless Veterans anywhere in our CoC.
- It means that our CoC has enough resources to house all of them.
- Veterans do not sit on our waitlist; they are referred immediately.
- Functional Zero happens when a CoC’s homeless response system is able to prevent homelessness whenever possible to ensure...
 - When homelessness does occur, it is rare, brief, and one-time.

What next?

- We had permanently housed more than 25,000+ individuals between 2012-2017.
- Nearly 90% remained housed two-years after placement.
- After reducing homelessness by 54%, we saw an 18% increase after Harvey.
- Much attention & resources were diverted to respond to the disaster.
- Our region's homeless population became stagnant, due to a lack of financial resources and tools.
- Continued support needed to "get over the hump"





Hurricane Harvey - August 2017

NOAA/NASA

Source: NOAA



**Tidwell St
Before**

**Tidwell St
After**



Source: Houston Chronicle



Source: Houston Chronicle

After Harvey Effects

More than 19 trillion gallons of rainwater fell on parts of Texas, causing widespread, catastrophic flooding

Nearly 80,000 homes had at least 18 inches of floodwater, 23,000 of those with more than 5 feet

The Houston area experienced the largest amount of rainwater ever recorded in the continental United States from a single storm (51.88 inches)

24 hospitals were evacuated, 61 communities lost drinking water, 23 ports were closed, 781 roads impassable

Nearly 780,000 Texans evacuated their homes, more than 42,000 housed temporarily in 692 shelters

Local, state and federal first responders rescued 122,331 people and 5,234 pets

Houston Housing Authority estimated 1000 affordable housing units destroyed

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The "rise" in street "issues"

54% homeless population

Visibility



Let's close an encampment!

- Wheeler Encampment (Caroline & Alameda)
 - March 2018
 - 73 individuals
 - ✓ 73% housed
 - ✓ 5% refused
 - ✓ 22% left



Housing Harvey's Homeless – H3

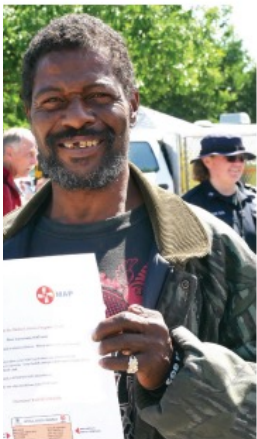
- September 2019
- Chartres Encampment (near Minute Maid)
- Several areas in downtown
- \$2,500,000
 - Qatar Harvey Fund via Mayor Turner's Complete Communities Improvement Fund
- \$500,000
 - Downtown Management District
- 286 individuals
 - 70% housed
 - 8% refused
 - 22% left



The Way Home



The Way Home's
Community Plan to End
Homelessness



The Way Home is the collaborative model to prevent and end homelessness in Houston, Pasadena, Conroe; and Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery Counties.



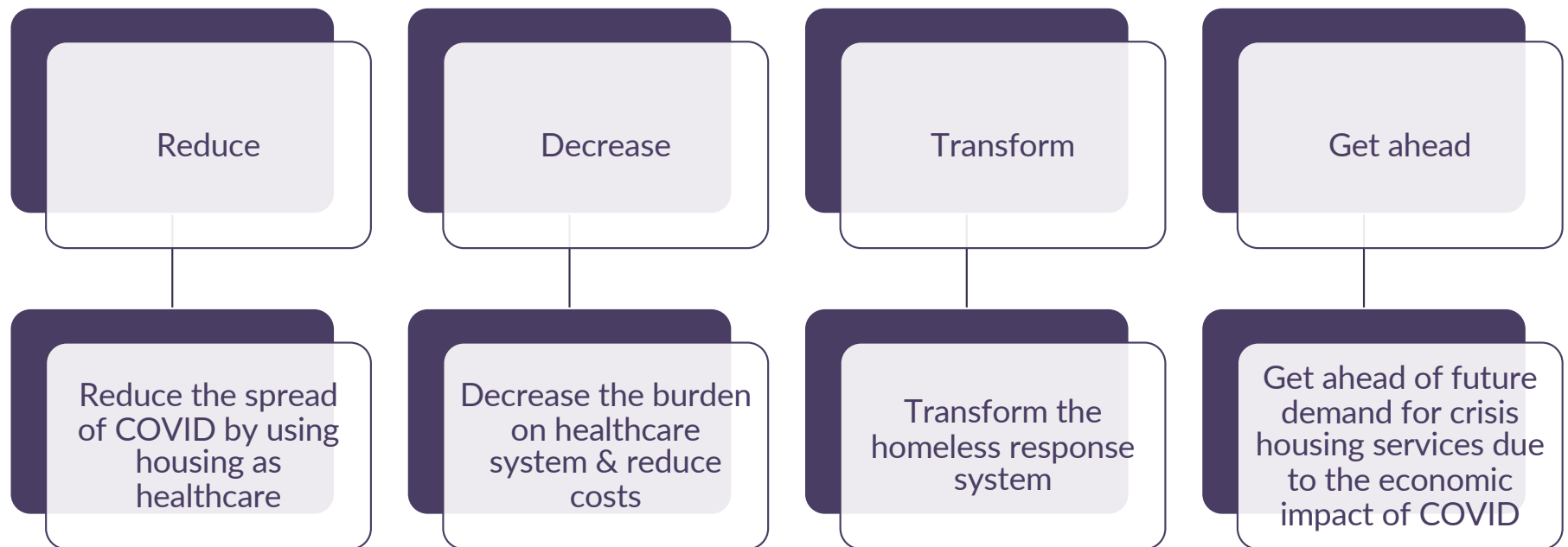
2021-2026 UPDATE

2019 New Strategic Plan – Landscape Need

Program Types	Current System (Units)	Demand	Difference (Need)
RRH for Singles	459	2,075	-1616
RHH for Families	553	948	-395
PSH for Singles	5,078	7,377	-2,299
PSH for Families	117	86	+31

COVID Funding:

- ✓ Once in a lifetime opportunity
- ✓ Accelerate the homeless response system



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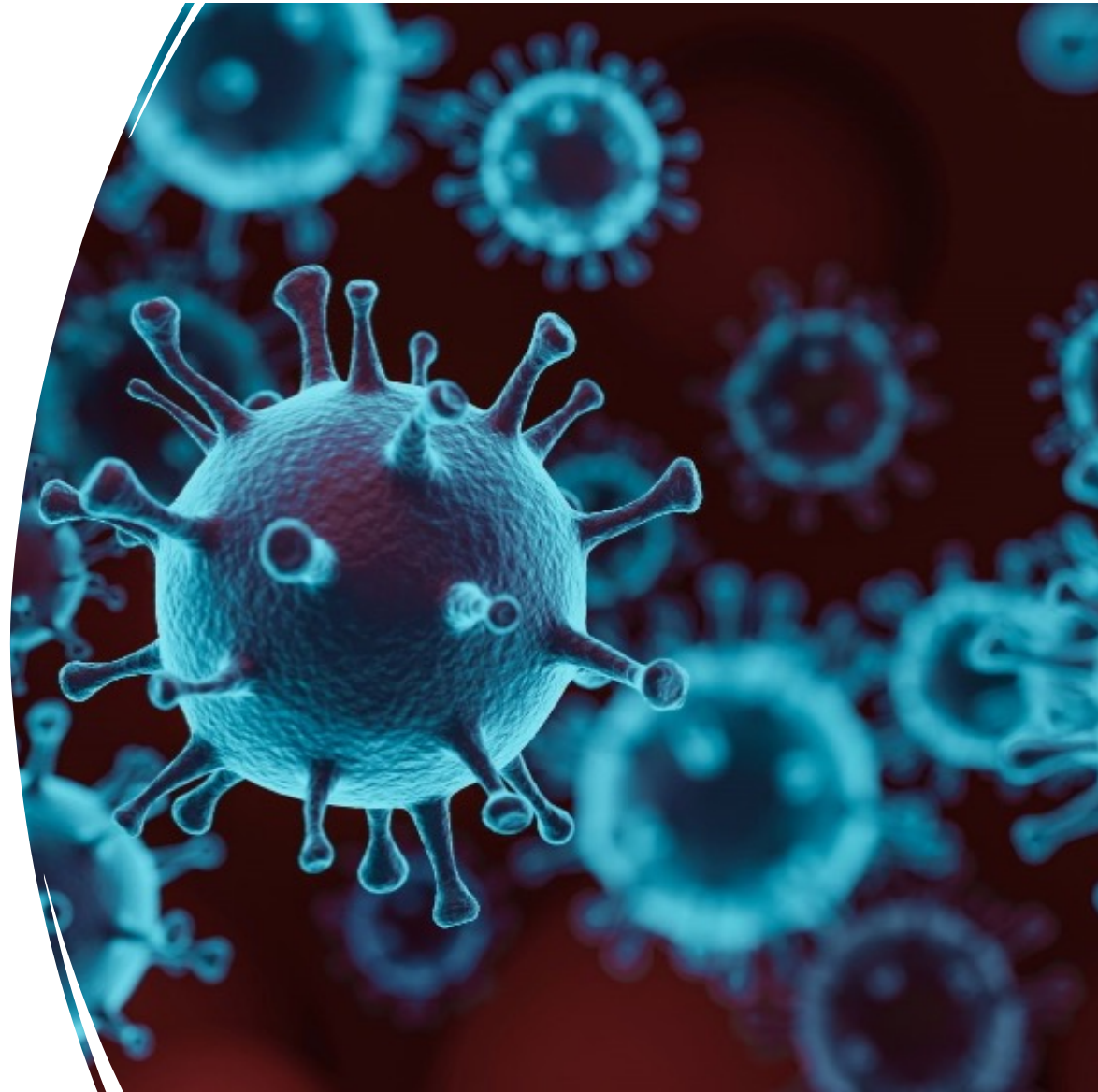
Community COVID Housing Program

On July 1, Harris
County, Houston, &
the Coalition
announced \$65M plan
to serve 5,000 people
by October 2022



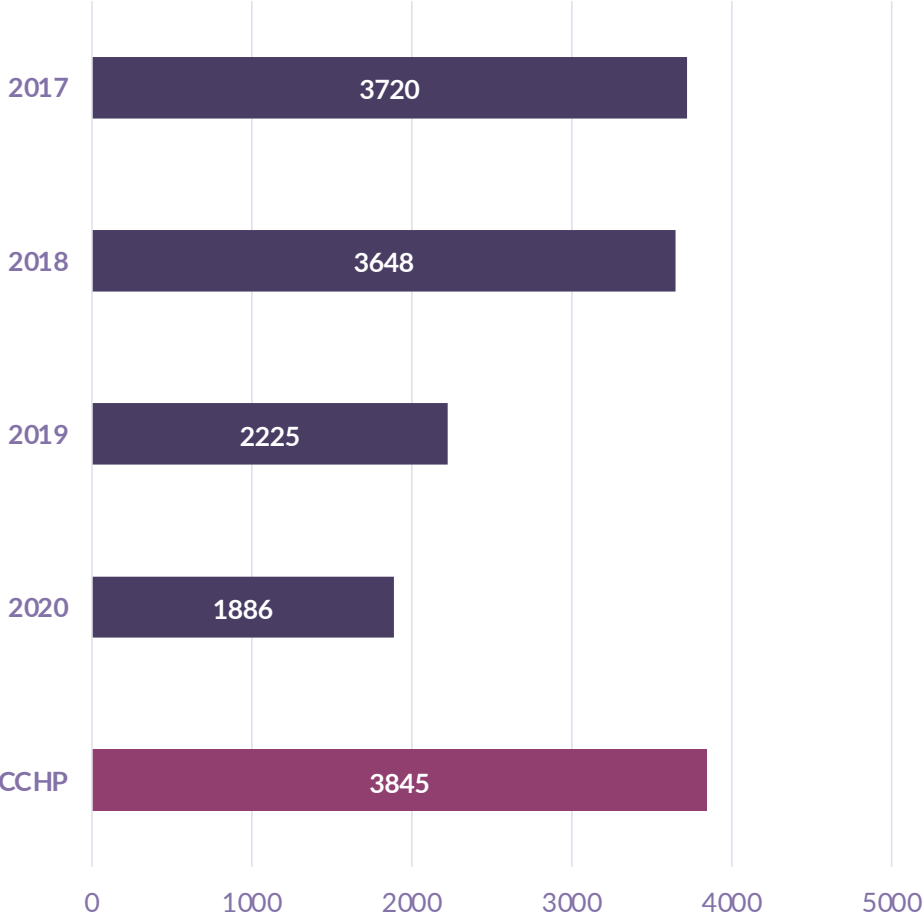
Results Suggest Housing-Focused Pandemic Response Kept Numbers Down

- In 2021 alone, partners of TWH placed more than 3,870 people into permanent housing through the CCHP
- 50% of these were living unsheltered prior to being housed
- 16% were sheltered



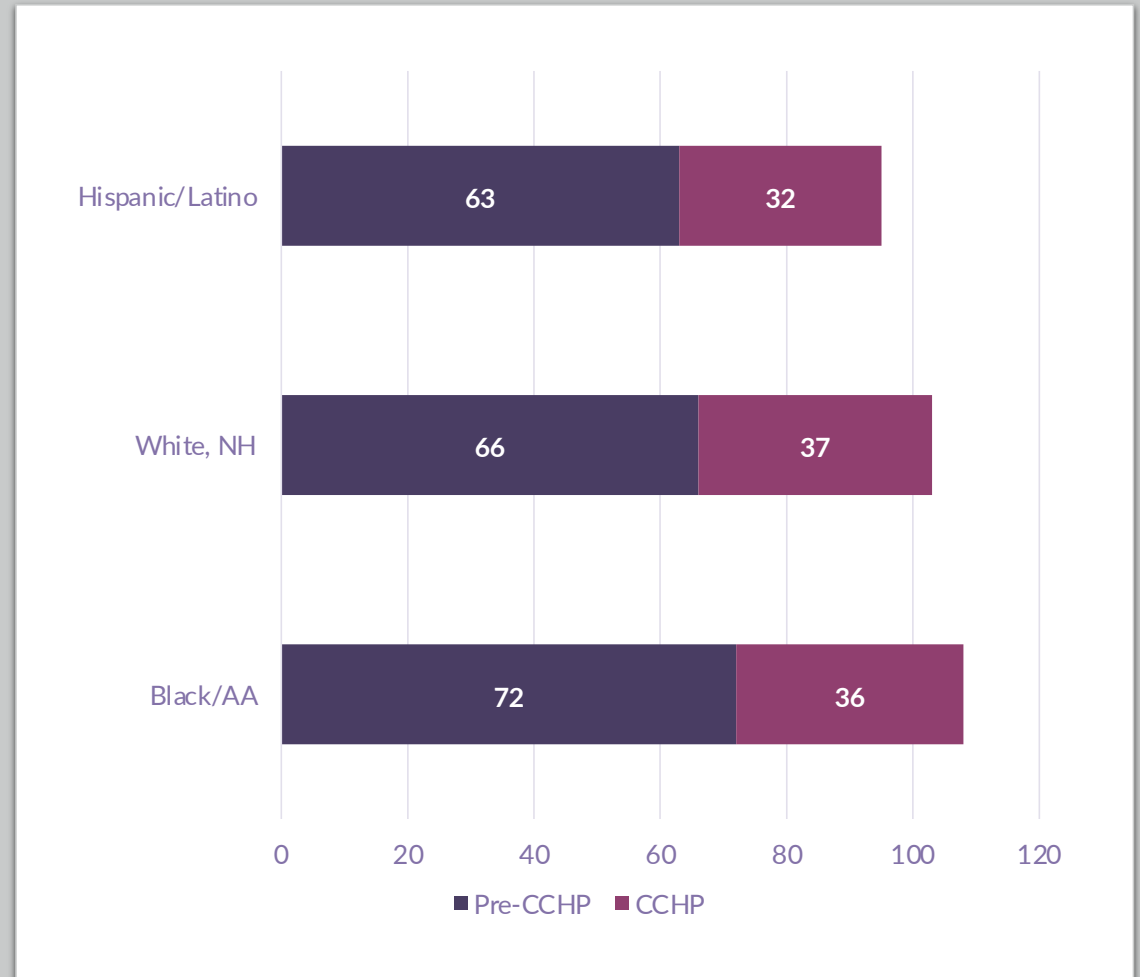
CCHP Impact

We housed as many people in one year of CCHP as almost the past two years combined, & more than the two years prior



Race/Ethnicity - Referral to Lease-Up

- Unit acquisition & holding fees has had positive effects on equalizing time to housing across racial demographics



Pandemic funding also allowed for expansion of 2 major initiatives

➤ Landlord Engagement

- ✓ Process designed to perform strategically focused recruitment efforts to expand affordable housing availabilities for program participants.

➤ Encampment Response

- ✓ Provides a system-wide and coordinated response to unsheltered homelessness that focuses on decommissioning large encampments by facilitating access to a full array of permanent housing choices and services options.



Landlord Engagement

Act as the primary advocate, or "case manager", for landlords

Simplify program funding streams, payment processes paperwork, and services


Use feedback from landlords to advise system changes in practice and funding

Check-in regularly with LLs to troubleshoot issues & provide updates

Provide education for office staff on vulnerable populations and housing programs

Payment of Landlord Incentive Fees for every unit dedicated to the system

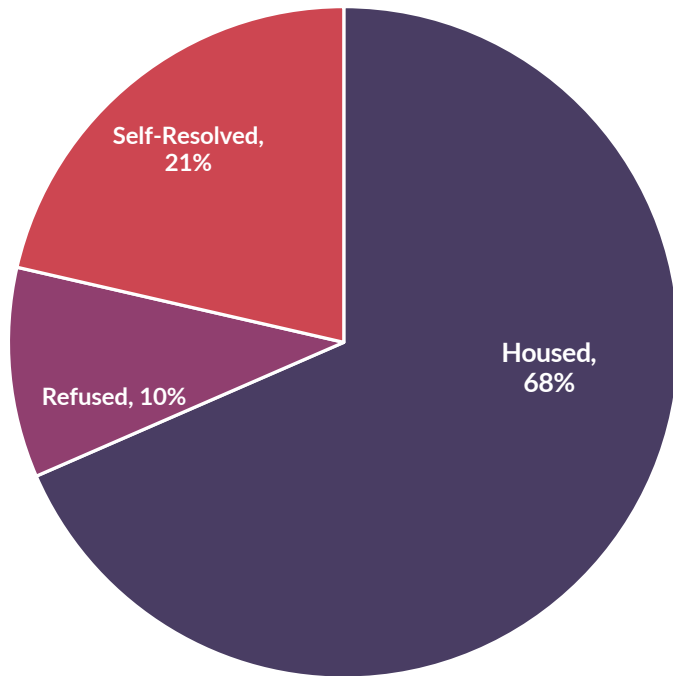
Encampment Response Strategy

- The Encampment Decommissioning program that has demonstrated proven results in placing individuals living on the streets into housing.
 - Official [Encampment Response Strategy](#) available.
 - Currently being used by HUD as a national best practice.
 - Houston Chronicle [cover story](#) featured our efforts.
- 

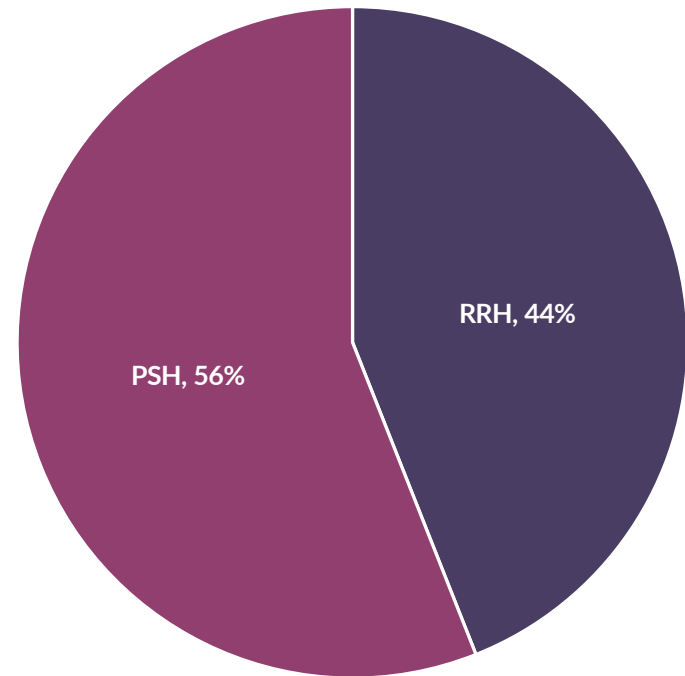


Houston's Encampment Response

Individuals Engaged, n=683

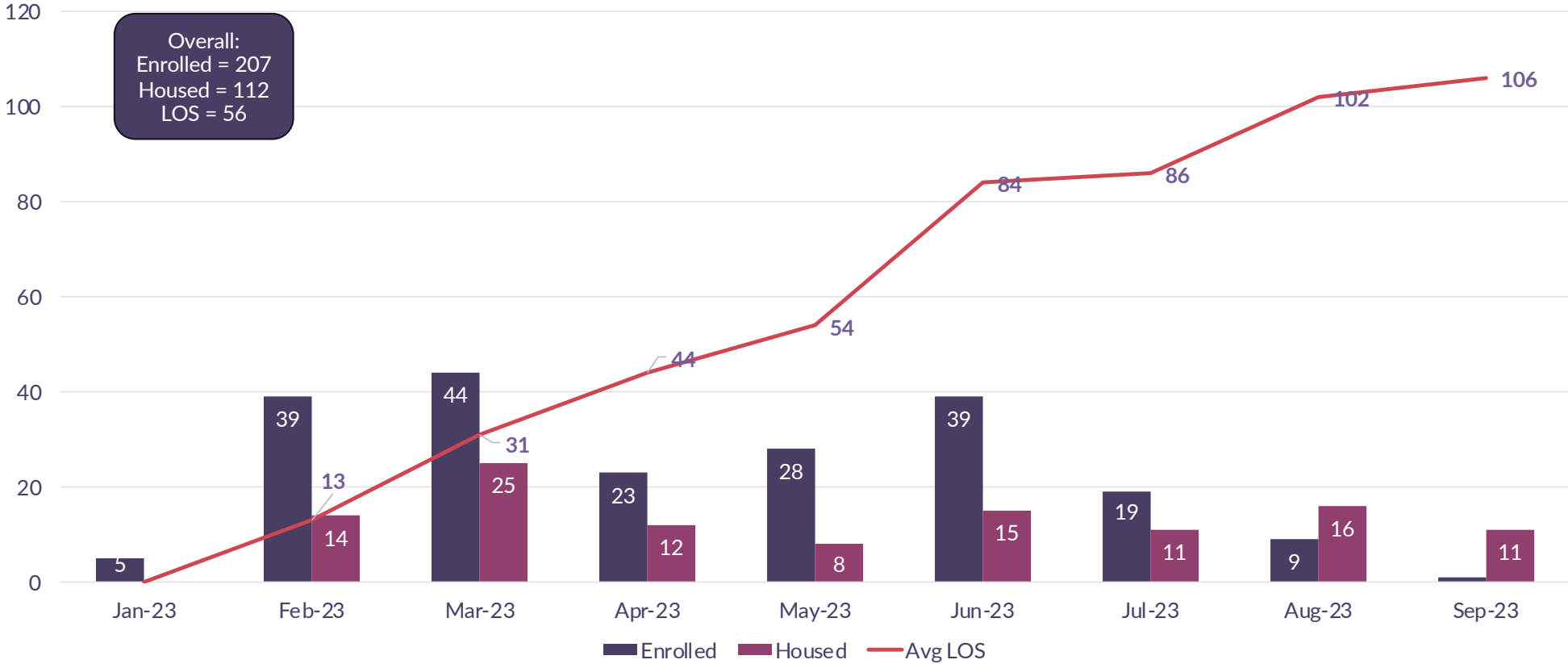


Permanent Housing



Encampments Decommissioned - 113

Navigation Center



HOUSTON CHRONICLE

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2022 • HOUSTONCHRONICLE.COM • VOL. 121, NO. 106 • \$2.00 ★★

City, Harris County invest \$100M in plan to cut homelessness in half

By R.A. Schuetz
STAFF WRITER

Houston and Harris County announced Wednesday afternoon a \$100 million increase in funds they are funneling into efforts to reduce homelessness in the area. They had previously committed \$65 million in federal COVID-related funding to the initiative.

"In Houston, we either go big or we go home," said Mayor Syl-

vester Turner in a press conference announcing the funds. "And today, we are going big so... Houstonians can go home." He said he hoped the funds would help cut the region's homeless population in half by helping people secure housing.

"Housing is a human right," said Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo. "And in Harris County, housing is something we fight for together."

The announcement came

hours after city council voted, 13 to 4, to fund the transformation of a city-owned building in Fifth Ward into a place where people moved out of an encampment can live, along with pets and loved ones, while they await their permanent housing. The facility, known as a navigation center, is key to a plan by the city, Harris County, and their partners to reduce the number of people living in the streets.

Homeless continues on A8



Jon Shapley / Staff file photo

Police officers hand out blankets last year. A new program is moving people from encampments to permanent housing.

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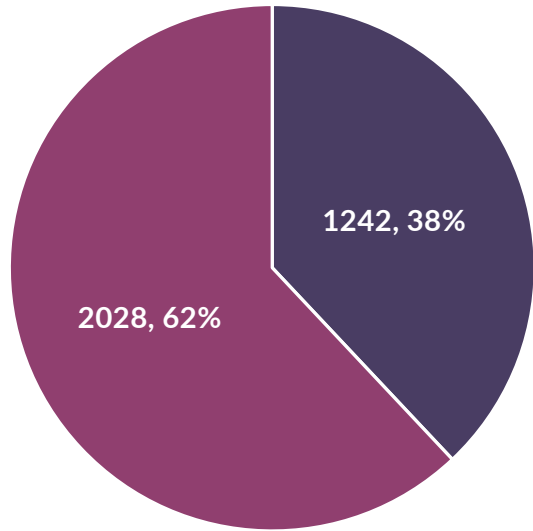
Visit now for breaking news, constantly updated stories, sports coverage, podcasts and a searchable news archive.



"In Houston, we either go big or we go home. And today, we are going big so...Houstonians can go home!" -Houston Mayor, Sylvester Turner

Houston and Harris County announce increased investment in efforts to reduce homelessness by \$100 million.


Houston Chronicle
Thursday January 27, 2022



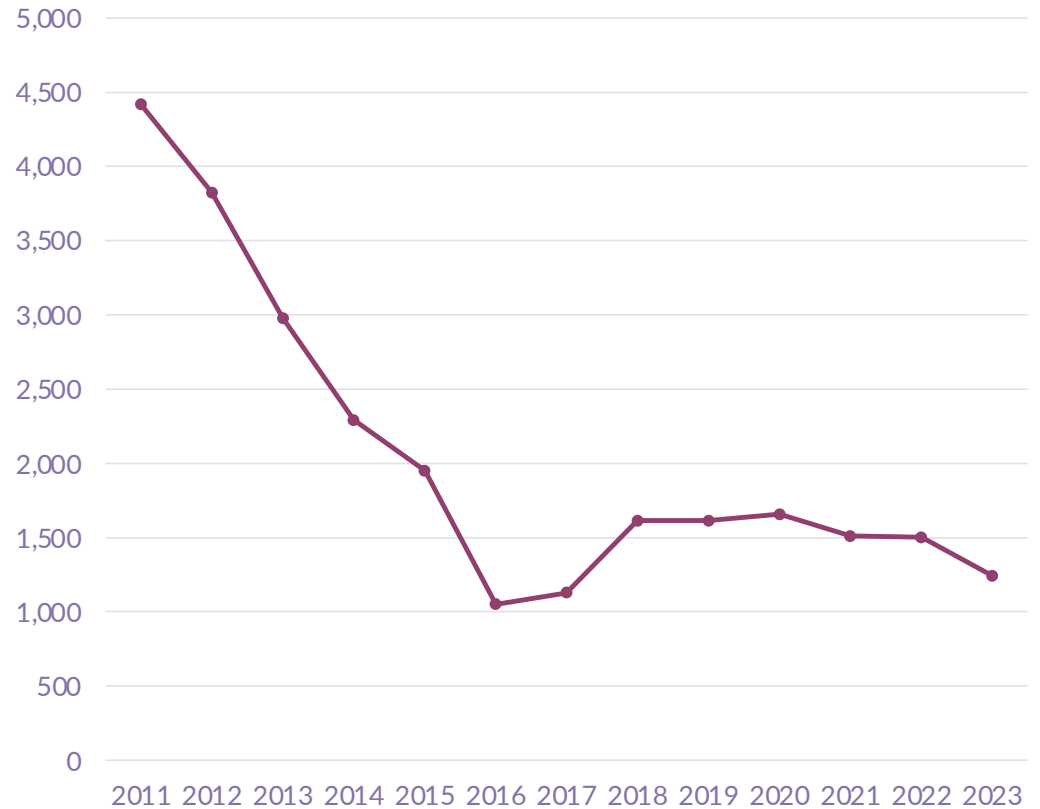

■ Unsheltered ■ Sheltered

2023 Homeless Count Results

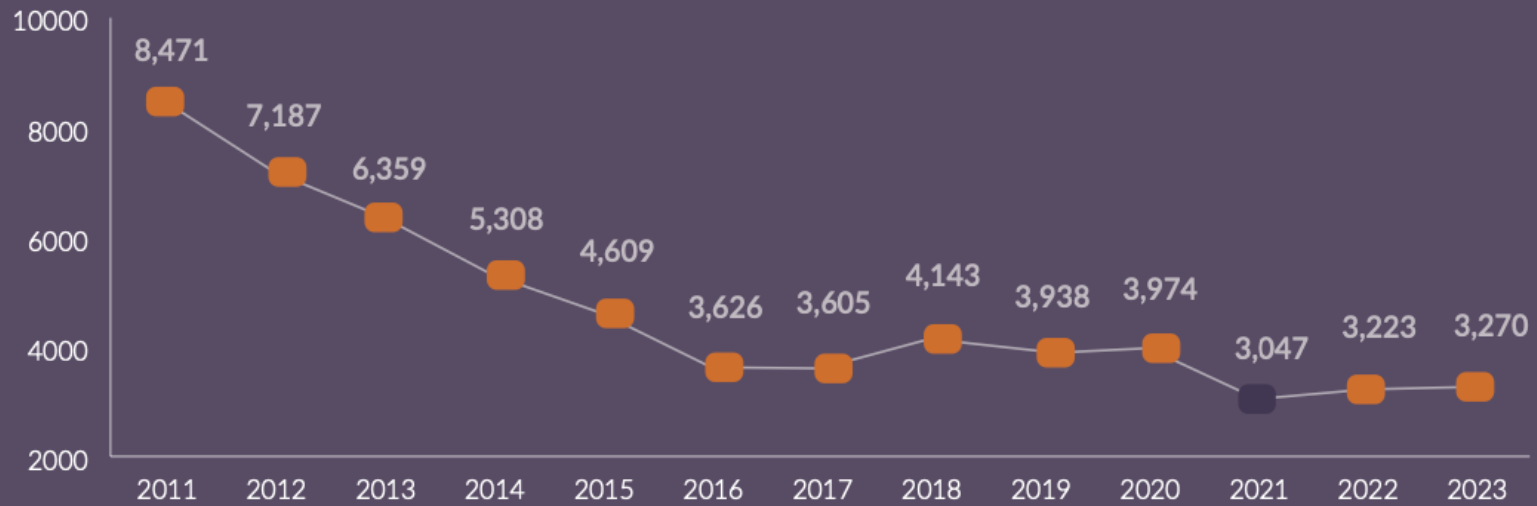




Unsheltered
count –
17%
decrease



COMPARING THE COUNTS: 2011 - 2023



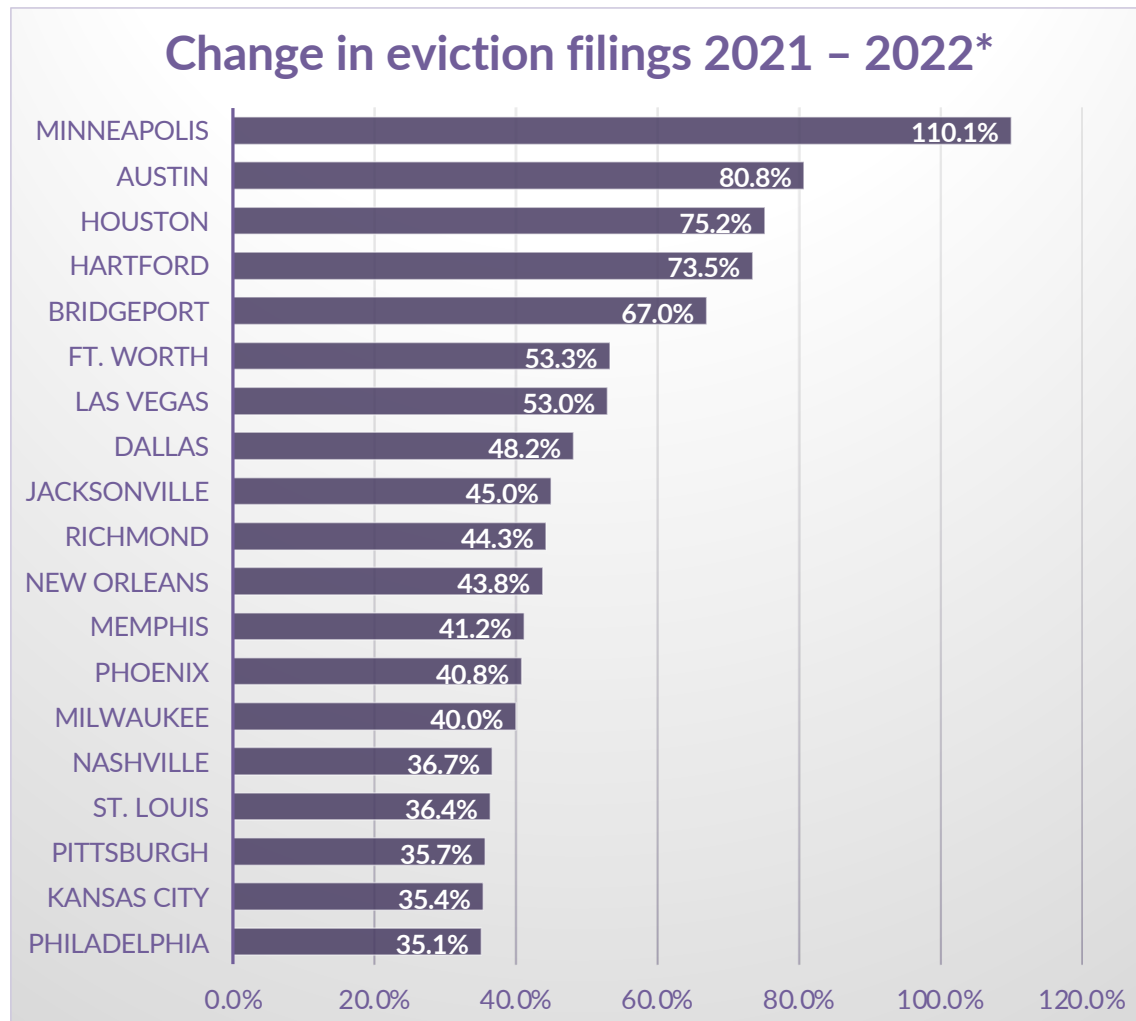
Note: Counts prior to 2017 include Harris and Fort Bend counties only. Counts 2017 and after also include Montgomery County.

2021 Count employed different methodology due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

FIGURE 5

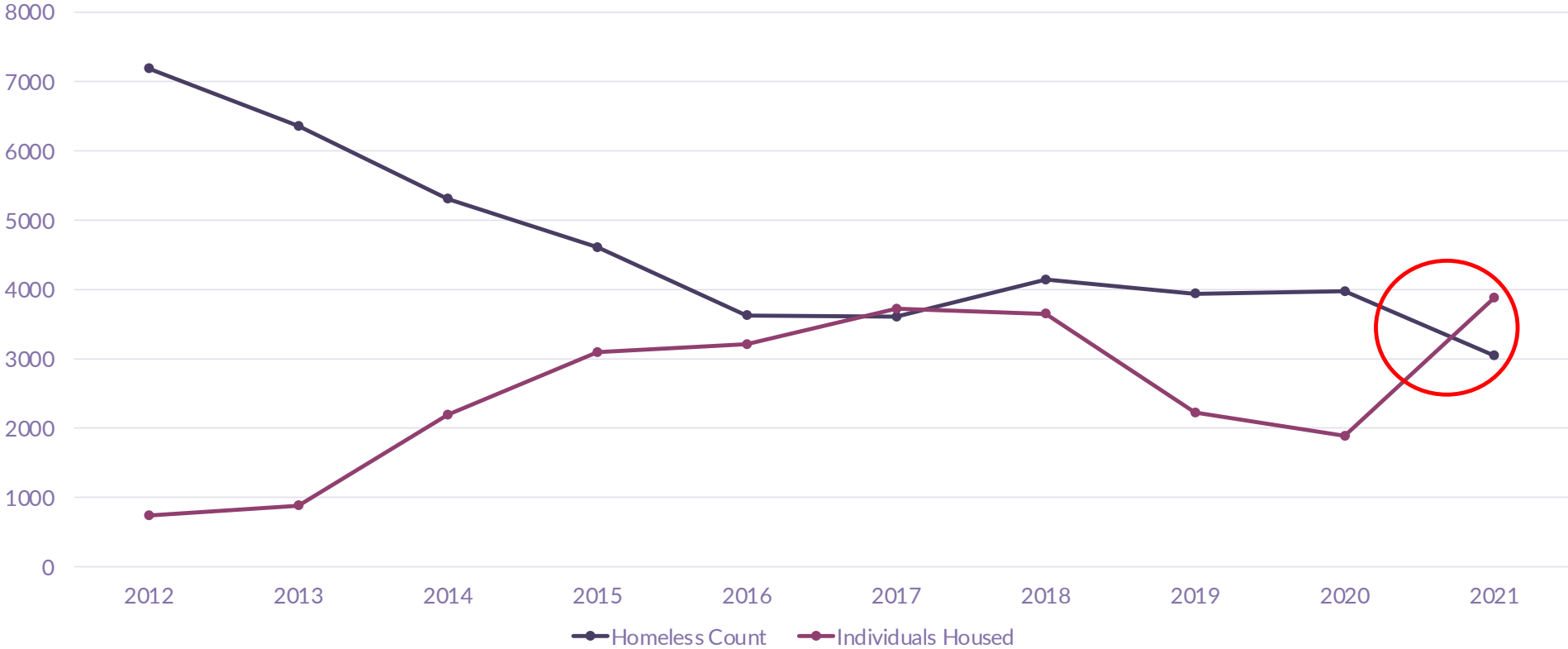
Houston leads the nation in housing & reducing homelessness

A decrease in unsheltered homelessness at a time when evictions are surging is good news.




*Eviction Lab

Houston leads the nation in housing & reducing homelessness



Lessons Learned

Set a goal, even before people agree on how to reach it, then make it public



PSH requires the unit, rent, & subsidy

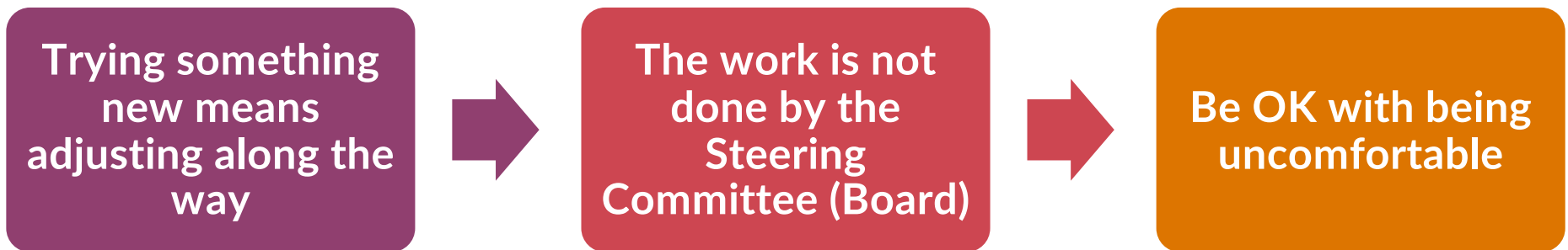


Supportive services & Housing First are not optional

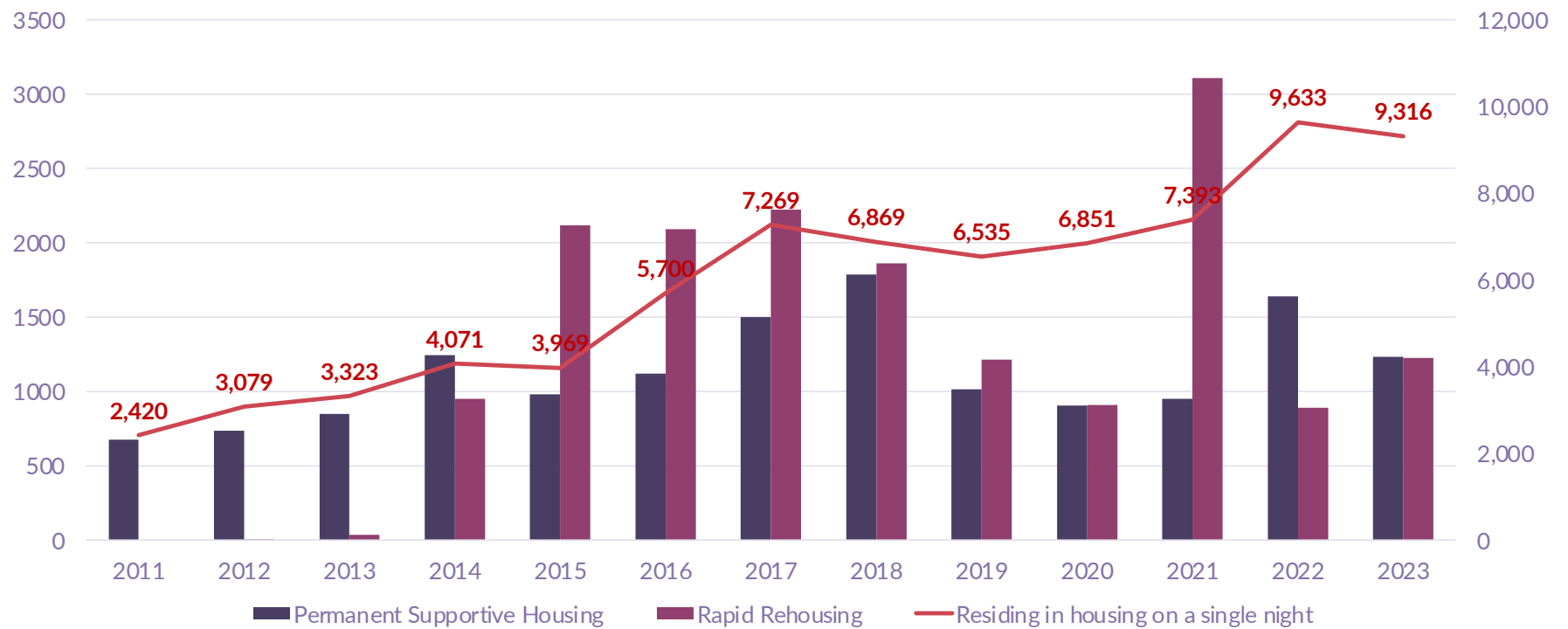


Be "data driven" & not "feeling driven"

Lessons Learned (cont.)



Individuals Housed 2011 - 2023





**30,000+ Housed
Since 2011**

- BBVA Stadium
- Capacity: 22,039

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