2024-281B

Alachua County, Florida

Gainesville.
Citizen centered
People empowered

Approaches to Reduce Homelessness

Joint Alachua County/City of Gainesville

March 25, 2024

Homeless System Consultants Recommendations

Iain De Jong - Org Code Summer 2016

- There is only one known cure to homelessness: housing. Absolutely everything in a homeless service delivery system should focus on getting people out of homelessness and into housing.
- Shelters must be a process by which people get housed again. They must not be a destination unto themselves. There must be steadfast focus on getting people out of shelter and into housing pronto. There must be nothing that delays people from that focus.
- Set up a robust diversion strategy so that as many people as possible that are seeking shelter can go to an alternate safe and appropriate place rather than shelter as much as possible.

Homeless System Consultants Recommendations cont'd.

Kay Mosier McDivitt – National Alliance to End Homelessness Summer 2017

Crisis/Emergency Housing and Crisis Services

- An effective Crisis Response System provides immediate and easy access to safe and decent shelter to anyone that needs it and aims to re-house people as quickly as possible.
- Emergency/Crisis Housing System Perspective:
  - Safe and appropriate
  - Immediate and low barrier
  - Housing focused
  - Only used when no other viable alternative
  - Serves as a first step to being quickly and permanent re-housed
  - System-wide policies and procedures.

Homeless System Consultants Recommendations cont'd.

An Effective Crisis Response System that Ends Homelessness and is Housing Focused

- ONLY interventions that end homelessness as quickly as possible
- Allocates all resources (not just HUD) to most cost effective and efficient strategies that quickly re-house all homeless people.

Quick Return to Permanent Housing/Rapid Re-Housing - Best Practice System Perspective

- Major component of the crisis response system portfolio, not just a "program"
- System-wide policies and procedures
- Not a "one size fits all" model
- Progressive engagement with a housing first approach
- Embraces the core components of Rapid Re-Housing
  - Short-term, individualized, shallow subsidy
  - Rapid re-housing is ***rapid***.

Comparison of the Approaches

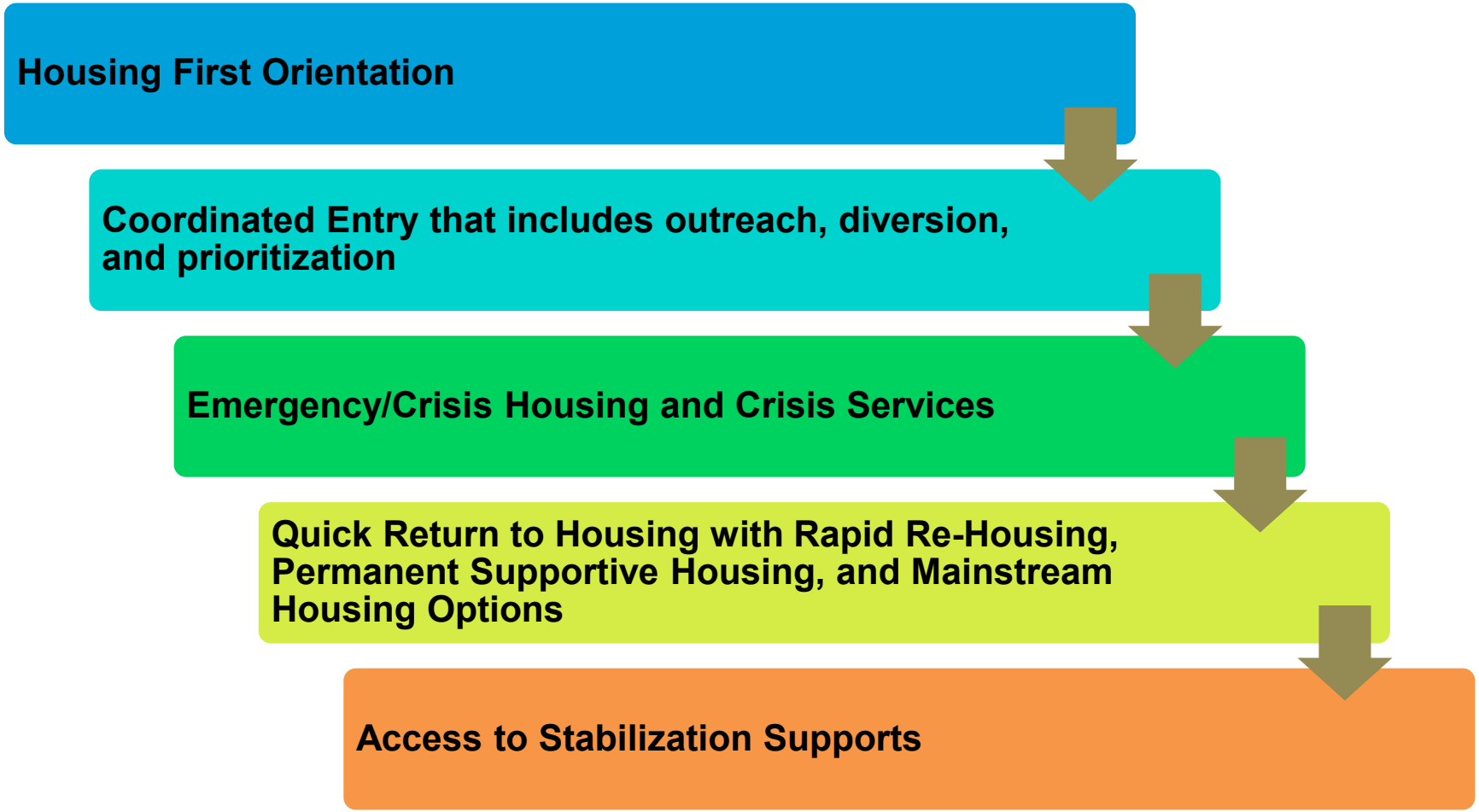
Managing Homelessness

- Outreach & Emergency Shelter
- Provides Services at Shelter
- Effectiveness measured by number of services provided
- Not Supported by Federal & State government funding sources

Housing Focused

- Outreach & Crisis Response System
- Provides Services in a Home
- Effectiveness measured by number of persons housed, how quickly & how long
- Supported by Federal & State government funding sources
- National Best Practice Model

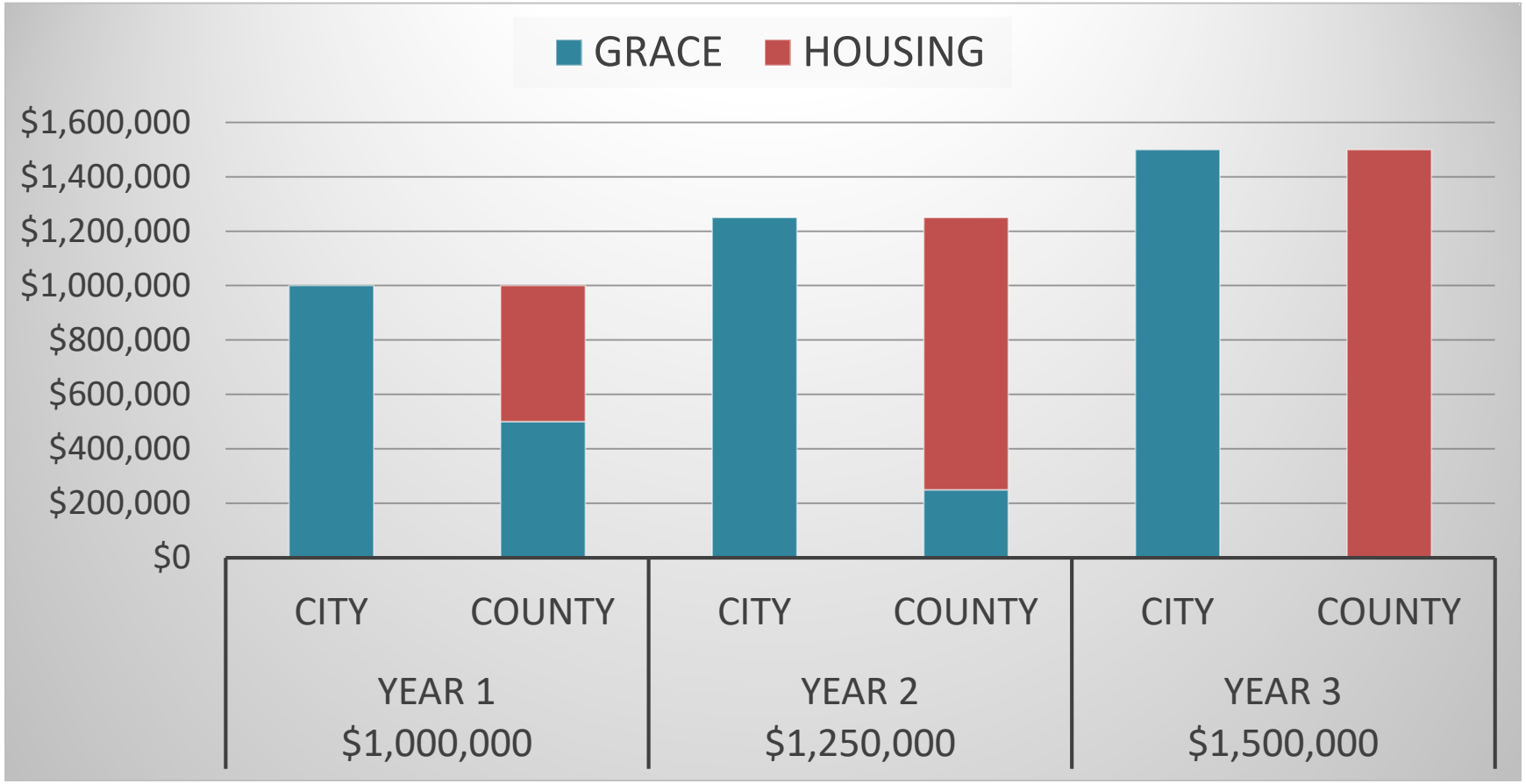
Housing Focused Approach
Elements of an Effective Crisis System Response



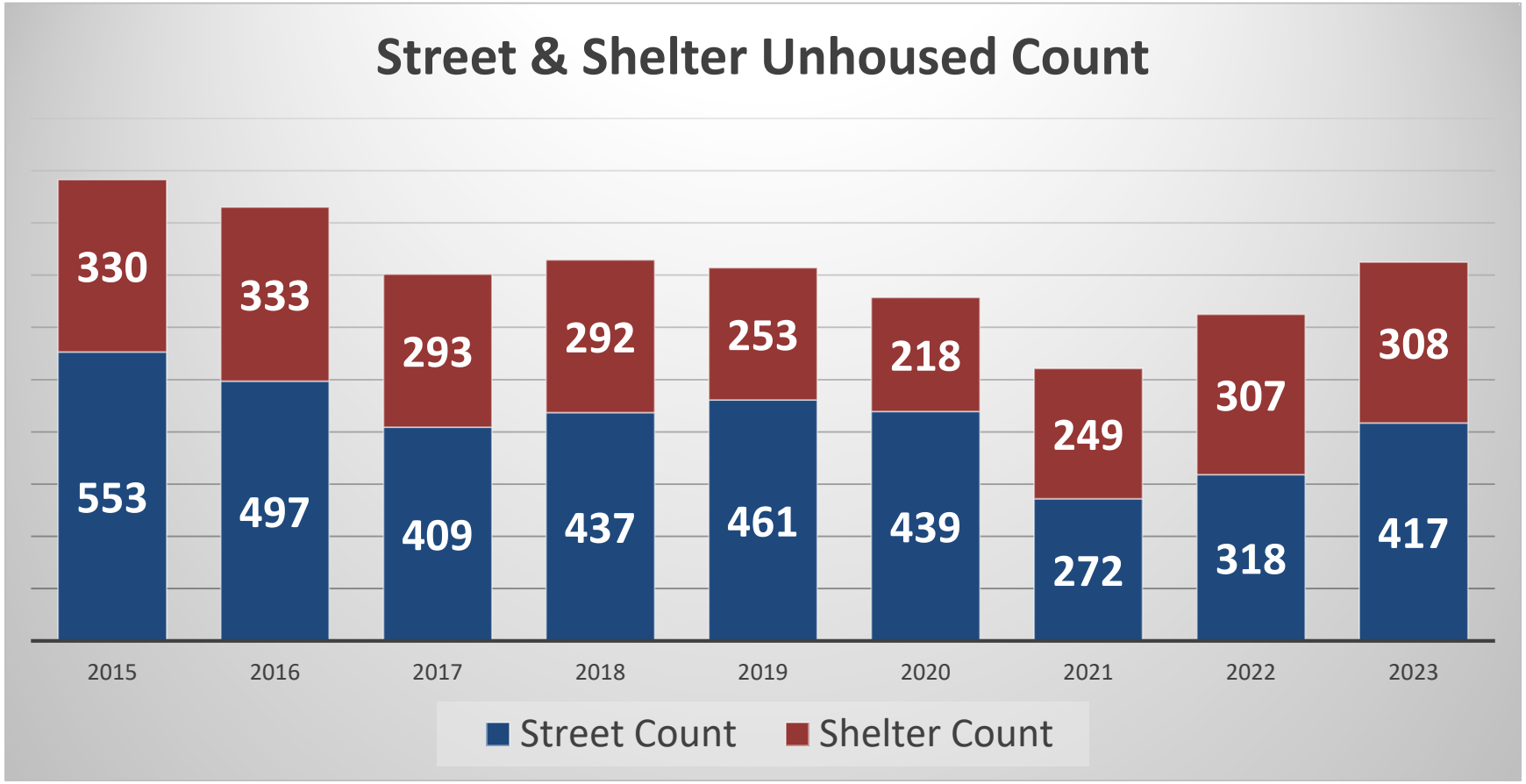
Actions since implementation in 2018

- Closed Dignity Village
- Closed Fire Station/South Main Street camp
- Action Plan replaced 10-Year Plan in 2017
- United Way of NCFL became CoC Lead
- Increased the funding for homeless services providing
  - $1.5 million to the Emergency Shelter from the City of Gainesville, and
  - $1.5 million for Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Rehousing from Alachua County
  - $350,000 for homeless outreach in FY 2024
  - $700,000 for emergency housing in FY 2024

Funding Over Time

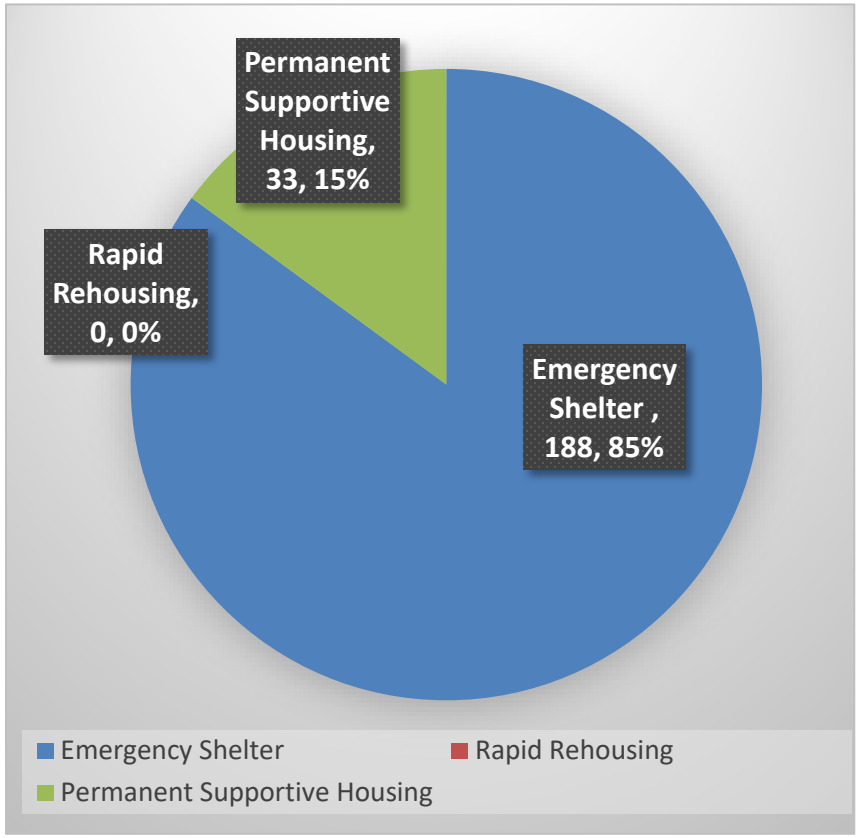


Alachua County Point-in-Time Homeless Count 2005 - 2023

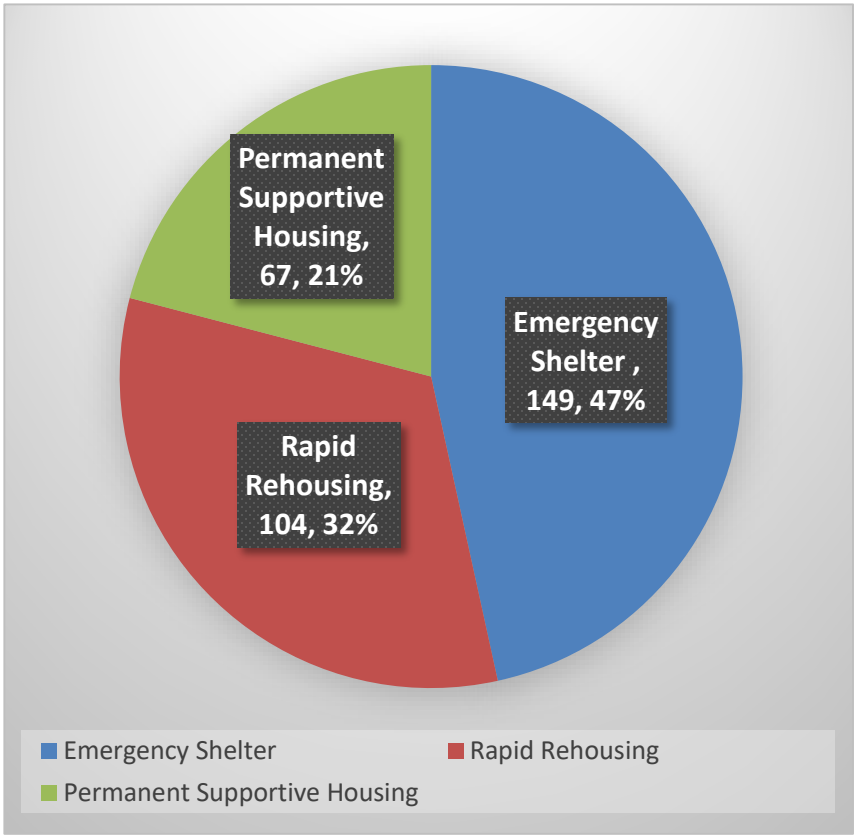


How is our bed inventory pie cut?

2017



2023



Data based on CoC HIC data for Gainesville/Alachua and Putnam Counties.

Alachua County Community Support Services Role Providing Homeless Related Services

- Provided over $21 million in rent and utilities under Federal **Emergency Rental Assistance Program** (2021 - 2023)
    - 4604 applications submitted
    - 4,189 applications received from Gainesville residents
    - $2.52 million to GRU for 1,554 households

Alachua County Community Support Services Role Providing Homeless Related Services, cont'd

- **Homeless Prevention services** to assist in keeping families housed in FY 2022-2023
  - 821 Individuals impacted through Emergency Financial Assistance (Rent, mortgage, & utilities) - $346,432.56
  - Assisted 112 Households move into permanent housing with deposit assistance - $103,401.25
- **Supportive Services**
  - 373 Individuals participated in primary care, prescriptions, and/or vision services
  - 111 Households received assistance for Property Non-Ad Valorem Assessments – reducing their housing instability – Over $29,000 in waivers/reimbursements
  - 165 Cremations & Burials
  - Unclaimed Memorial Service annually
  - Provided Information & Referral services to over 30,000 callers

Alachua County Community Support Services
Role Providing Homeless Related Services cont'd

PSH and RRH to unhoused individuals - $1.5 million annually

- PSH:
  - Served 70 Households/75 Individuals
  - 79% Housing Stability Rate
  - Average 40 days to permanent housing from program entry date
  - Average Monthly Rent is $ 1,141.43
  - Current Capacity: 30 slots (additionally, 2 case manager positions open – which would bring an additional 25 slots)
  - Current Caseload: Over capacity w/ 35 households
- RRH:
  - Served 36 Households/43 Individuals
  - 80% Housing Stability Rate
  - Average 26 days to permanent housing from program entry date
  - Average Monthly Rent is $1,215.33
  - Current Capacity: 25 slots
  - Current Caseload: At capacity

Alachua County Community Support Services
Role Providing Homeless Related Services cont'd

- 24/7 response to homeless individuals in crisis (Crisis Center)
- 24/7 response to victims of crime, sexual assault, and human trafficking (Victim Services)
- Linkage to VA funded providers to assist homeless veterans (Veteran's Services)
- CAPP/funding for local non-profit organizations - $415,125 annually
- Metamorphosis – 21-bed residential substance abuse treatment program with up to 12-month length of stay
- OPUS substance abuse and mental health counseling services

Future County Housing

- Budget Inn
    - 36 one-bedroom apartments
- Scottish Inn
    - 31 efficiency apartments
    - Up to 29 container homes
- Permanent Housing under Rehabilitation and Construction – open September 2025
- Funded with Federal and State grants, and local funds totaling over $13 million

Issues

Future use of the Grace Marketplace campus

Impact of CS/CS/HB 1365

Gaps analysis

Need for more affordable housing

Recommendation

- Create Grace Marketplace Master Plan
- Evaluate shelter length of stay and support earlier placement
- Continue to develop more affordable units
- Create local housing voucher following County Affordable Housing Trust pilot
- Engage efforts around the Homeless Continuum of Care's Action Plan