Housing Action Plan

In May 2024, leaders from Bloomington's homeless service-providing agencies and Heading Home of South Central Indiana convened to create an actionable plan for addressing street homelessness. The group met several times over a two-month period to reach consensus on all but one of the recommendations detailed in this plan.

Immediate Priority Needs

1. Support robust, coordinated street outreach and linkage to services, including emergency shelter and housing.

2. Strengthen case management support.

3. Strengthen diversion efforts to prevent homelessness.

4. As a short-term measure to address inflow, enact a temporary moratorium on welcoming people from outside our region to overnight emergency shelters, provide reunification services for out-of-region people, and explore other ways to mitigate the increase of non-regional residents experiencing homelessness. *(Note: The group did not reach full consensus on this recommendation.)*

5. Increase the number of housing units with rents under $500/month.

6. Bolster security and services for permanent supportive housing to reduce exits to homelessness.

7. Increase the number of beds for medical respite.

8. Determine any need for additional shelter beds.

Long-Term Priority Needs

- Restructure the local criminal justice system to emphasize in-patient recovery and mental health care for people experiencing homelessness who repeatedly commit crimes in the community.
- Continue to invest and advocate for additional housing to address the 9,777 gap in available units (both owner-occupied and rental) at $500/month or less.

Addressing the Crisis of Unsheltered Homelessness

Unsheltered homelessness is a public health and safety crisis. That's true for those living on the streets and for the broader community. We must unite our resources and energy to tackle this challenge. We believe we can build a better quality of life for all and have created this Housing Action Plan to achieve that goal.

The Housing Action Plan for Bloomington/Monroe County provides a targeted, strategic approach to create the necessary shelter, housing units and supportive services with the goal of reducing unsheltered homelessness in Bloomington/Monroe County by at least 50% by the end of 2027 and 70% by 2030. The South Central Housing Network and Heading Home of South Central Indiana will conduct annual surveys of unsheltered residents to track progress on these goals.

While this plan focuses on addressing unsheltered homelessness, the actions here will also result in decreasing the overall population of unhoused residents.

Unhoused Survey Results

In 2019, 29 people were reported unsheltered in Monroe County, according to that year's Point-in-Time (PIT) count. Since 2019, unsheltered homelessness has increased dramatically. A survey conducted in May 2024 by the South Central Housing Network (SCHN) found that 117 people *in Monroe County alone* are currently unsheltered – staying in places not fit for human habitation, including cars, encampments, abandoned buildings and on the streets. This is likely an undercount and does not include people who refused to participate in the survey or who could not be reached. The results of that survey helped inform the Housing Action Plan.

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Unhoused Survey Results