Presentation to the
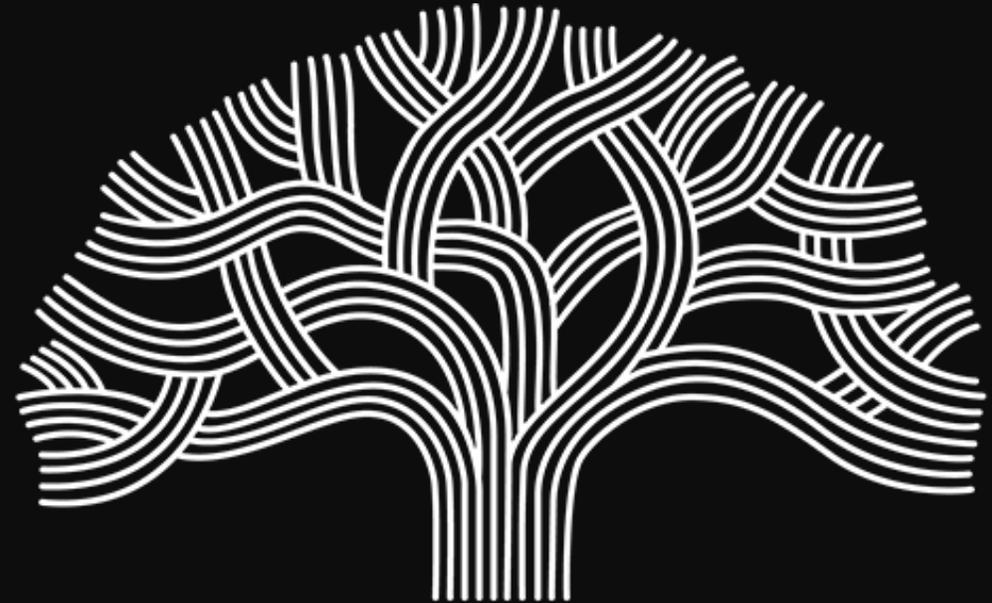Commission on Homelessness

Homelessness Services Audit

October 26, 2022

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CITY OF OAKLAND
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City of Oakland Homelessness Services

Audit Objectives & Scope

- Quantify the number of people receiving short-term, long-term, and permanent housing and their lengths of stay.

- Evaluate the performance of contracted service providers against intended program outcomes.

- Identify disparities in how the City's short-term, long-term, and permanent housing are provided to various subpopulations.

- Assess the coordination and partnerships between City departments, other governmental agencies, and select service providers.

- Audit Scope: FYs 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21

PERFORMANCE AUDIT OF THE CITY OF OAKLAND'S HOMELESSNESS SERVICES: *Better strategy and data are needed for more effective and accountable service delivery and positive outcomes for Oakland's homeless residents*

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September 19, 2022

City of Oakland Homelessness Services

Report Overview

Section 1: The City's Homelessness Services Housing Programs: Participants Served, Exit Destinations, and Lengths of Stay

Section 2: Maintaining and Increasing Incomes and Enrolling Participants in Benefit Programs

Section 3: Data on Programs, Outcomes, Service Providers, and Participants

Section 4: Proportionate Service Delivery and Racial Equity

Section 5: Contracting with Service Providers

Section 6: Strategy, Public Reporting, and Oversight

City of Oakland Homelessness Services

Report Overview

- City had mixed results in:

    - placing people into permanent housing and better information is needed to determine whether they remain housed.

    - the City's ability to facilitate enrollment in various income and health benefits.

- Underlying these mixed results:

    - City's access to timely, accurate, and complete data and its ability to use this data to adequately evaluate performance of the service providers contracted to provide direct homelessness services.

City of Oakland Homelessness Services

Report Overview

- This was compounded by:

  - the fact that the City's contract monitoring activities were incomplete, inadequately documented, and did not sufficiently address service delivery concerns.

- The audit did however find:

  - the City was delivering homelessness services in proportion to the racial make-up of the City's homelessness population per the latest Point-in-Time Counts
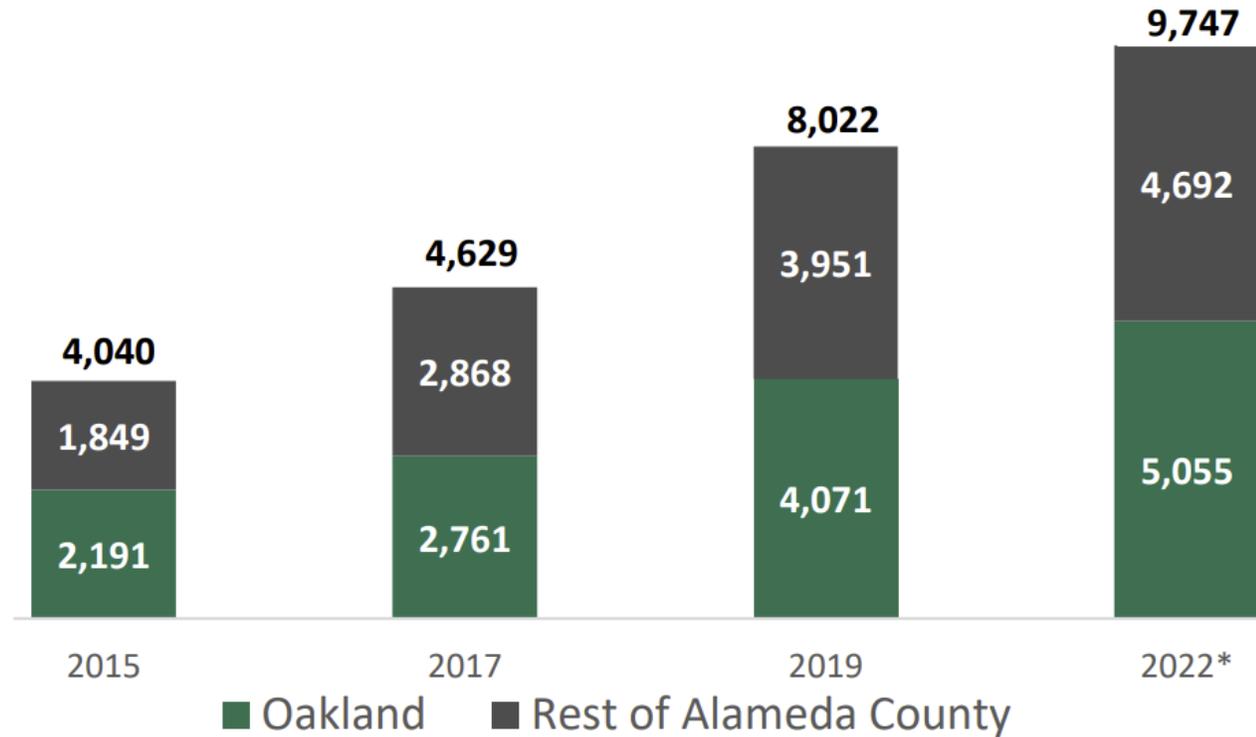
City of Oakland Homelessness Services

The demand for housing far exceeds supply – Alameda County's Home Together 2026 Community Plan

In April 2022, Alameda County released a draft of the Home Together 2026 Community Plan (Plan) that stated every year new people experience homelessness in Alameda County, but the homelessness response system does not currently have enough capacity to keep up with annual inflow. The Plan predicts that by 2026, Alameda County will need an inventory of approximately 26,000 permanent housing units. As of 2021, there were 3,215 existing units, meaning the permanent housing inventory must increase eightfold by 2026.

City of Oakland Homelessness Services

The total number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Oakland and the rest of Alameda County in 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2022

City of Oakland Homelessness Services

Community Homelessness Services Division expenditures in fiscal years 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 - $78 million

Expenditure Category	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21
Contract Service Expenditures	$ 19,653,092	$ 23,821,831	$ 25,039,728
Employee Personnel Service	$ 1,468,234	$ 1,758,421	$ 2,314,506
Service Expenditures	$ 42,389	$ 30,672	$ 564,276
Other Expenditures	$ 234,777	$ 319,354	$ 323,360
Capital Acquisitions	$ 121,196	$ 1,510,985	$ 305,599
Supply and Material	$ 74,868	$ 71,742	$ 201,534
Internal Service / Work Order	$ 55,836	$ 131,427	$ 126,115
Travel and Education	$ 61,643	$ 74,777	$ 35,415
Total	**$ 21,712,034**	**$ 27,719,209**	**$ 28,910,533**

City of Oakland Homelessness Services

Sources of funding for Human Services' Community Homelessness Services Division contract services expenditures in fiscal years 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 – nearly $69 million

Funding Source	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21
Federal Government	$ 9,851,633	$ 9,086,358	$ 12,369,480
State of California	$ 1,916,643	$ 7,390,040	$ 5,315,480
City of Oakland	$ 1,931,129	$ 1,851,336	$ 4,003,935
Alameda County	$ 4,399,448	$ 4,169,602	$ 2,189,781
Private Grants	$ 723,604	$ 851,397	$ 1,075,110
Social Services Grants	$ 434,309	$ 225,597	$ 57,724
Total	**$ 19,256,767**	**$ 23,574,331**	**$ 25,011,509**

City of Oakland Homelessness Services | Homelessness Services Programs

Crisis Response Housing Programs

- Community Cabins
- Emergency Shelters
- RV Safe Parking
- Transitional Housing
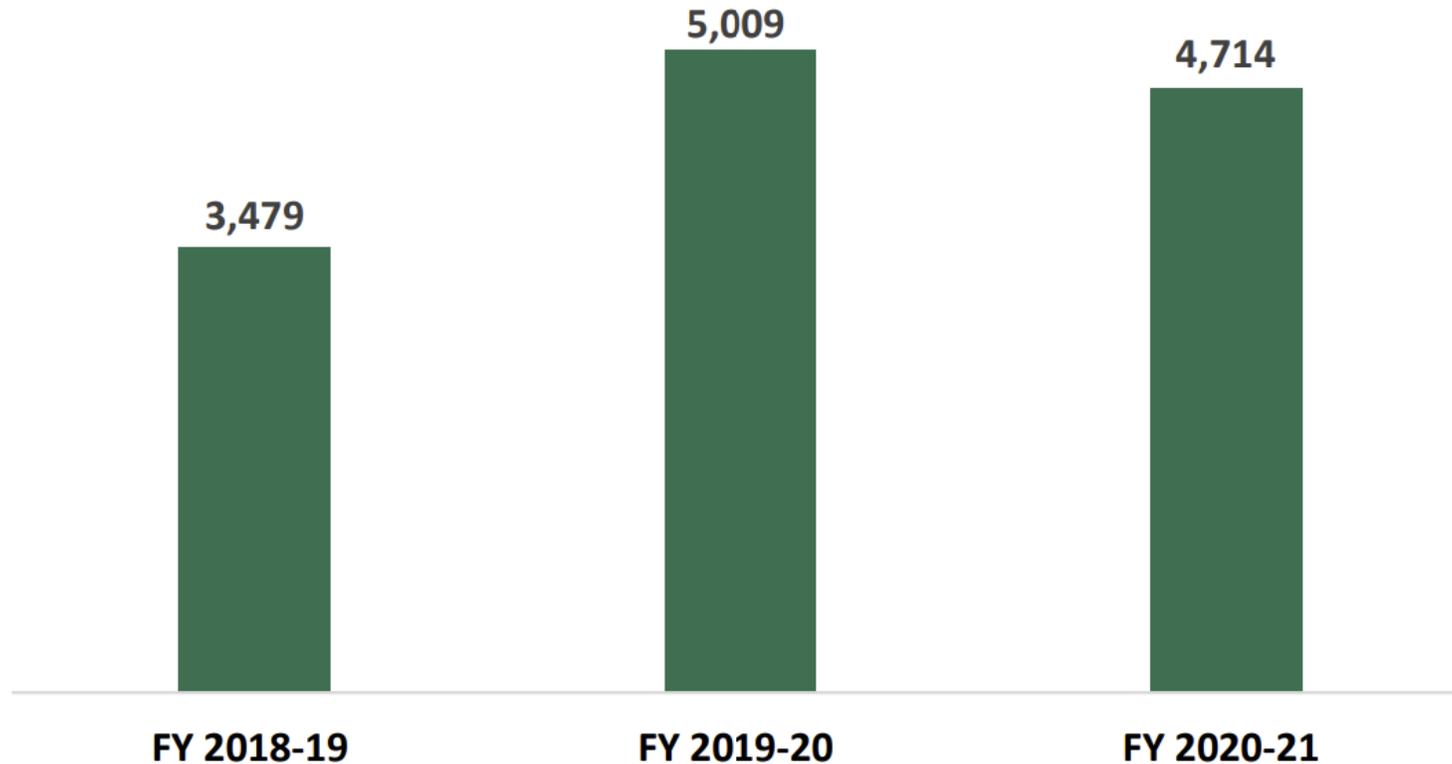- COVID Response

Longer-Term Housing Programs

- Rapid Re-Housing
- Oakland Path Rehousing Initiative (OPRI)
- Permanent Housing Services

Supportive Services

- Hygiene Services
- Street Outreach
- Workforce programs

Section 1

The City's Homelessness Services Housing Programs: Participants Served, Exit Destinations, and Lengths of Stay

- This section quantifies the number of people served by the City's various homelessness services housing programs and discusses the City's performance against established performance metrics and targets including how successful the City was at exiting participants to permanent destinations versus back to homelessness.

- **FINDING:** The City had mixed results in helping program participants exit to permanent housing, many crisis response and longer-term housing participants' long-term outcomes are unknown, and lengths of stay need more analysis.

Section 1 | Exit Destinations

CoC Defined Metrics

- Exits to permanent housing (ex: PSH, rental by the participant with or without subsidies, staying with family or friends, etc.)

- Exits to homelessness (ex: non-habitable places like the streets, emergency shelters, transitional housing, etc.)

City Defined Metrics

- Exits to positive destinations (ex: all permanent housing, some temporary housing like emergency shelters and transitional housing)

- Exits to streets or unknown destinations

Section 1
Community Cabins

Exits to permanent housing, homelessness, positive destinations, and streets or unknown destinations

Fiscal Year	CoC-Defined Metrics		City-Defined Metrics	
	Exits to Permanent Housing TARGET: 50%	Exits to Homelessness TARGET: <10%	Exits to Positive Destinations TARGET: 70%	Exits to Streets or Unknown Destinations TARGET: N/A
2018-19	31%	58%	50%	44%
2019-20	29%	42%	51%	40%
2020-21	27%	44%	63%	22%

Section 1
Community Cabins

Number of participants who exited and those who exited to positive destinations and to streets or unknown destinations

Fiscal Year	Participants who exited	Participants who exited to positive destinations	Participants who exited to the streets or unknown destinations
FY 2018-19	80	40	35
FY 2019-20	321	163	129
FY 2020-21	298	189	67
Total	699	392	231

Section 1
Emergency Shelters

Exits to permanent housing, homelessness, positive destinations, and streets or unknown destinations

Program Type	Fiscal Year	CoC-Defined Metrics		City-Defined Metrics	
		Exits to Permanent Housing TARGET: 30%	Exits to Homelessness TARGET: N/A	Exits to Positive Destinations TARGET: N/A	Exits to Streets or Unknown Destinations TARGET: N/A
Family Emergency Shelters	2018-19	77%	20%	83%	17%
	2019-20	52%	33%	67%	33%
	2020-21	34%	42%	82%	11%
Single Adult Emergency Shelters	2018-19	24%	39%	62%	25%
	2019-20	7%	14%	22%	74%
	2020-21	15%	53%	47%	43%

Section 1
Emergency Shelters

Participants' exit destinations

Program Type	Fiscal Year	Participants who exited	Participants who exited to positive destinations	Participants who exited to the streets or unknown destinations
Family Emergency Shelters	2018-19	30	25	5
	2019-20	21	14	7
	2020-21	97	80	11
	Total	148	119	23
Single Adult Emergency Shelters	2018-19	380	236	96
	2019-20	1,430	312	1,059
	2020-21	481	228	207
	Total	2,291	776	1,362

Section 1
Transitional Housing

Exits to permanent housing and homelessness

Program Type	Fiscal Year	Exits to Permanent Housing TARGET: 80%	Exits to Homelessness TARGET: <10%
Family Transitional Housing	2018-19	100%	0%
	2019-20	97%	3%
	2020-21	83%	5%
Single Adult Transitional Housing	2018-19	76%	6%
	2019-20	61%	17%
	2020-21	57%	22%
Transition-Aged Youth Transitional Housing	2018-19	72%	13%
	2019-20	62%	17%
	2020-21	71%	24%

Section 1
Rapid Re-Housing

Exits to permanent housing and homelessness

Program Type	Fiscal Year	Exits to Permanent Housing TARGET: 80%	Exits to Homelessness TARGET: <5%
Family Rapid Re-Housing	2018-19	98%	0%
	2019-20	95%	4%
	2020-21	99%	0%
Single Adult Rapid Re-Housing	2018-19	69%	19%
	2019-20	86%	10%
	2020-21	98%	0%
Transition Aged Youth Rapid Re-Housing	2018-19	63%	6%
	2019-20	76%	20%
	2020-21	89%	11%

Section 1
OPRI

Remain housed for one year or longer and exits to homelessness

Program Type	Fiscal Year	Remain Housed for One Year or Longer TARGET: 95%	Exits to Homelessness TARGET: <5%
Single Adult OPRI	2018-19	99%	3%
	2019-20	97%	15%
	2020-21	99%	0%

Section 1
Permanent Housing Services

Remain housed for one year or longer and exits to homelessness

Program Type	Fiscal Year	Remain Housed for One Year or Longer TARGET: 95%	Exits to Homelessness TARGET: <5%
Permanent Housing Services	2018-19	98%	25%
	2019-20	98%	0%
	2020-21	99%	10%

Section 1 | **Participants' long-term outcomes and program effectiveness are unknown**

- Returns to homelessness: status 6, 12, 24 months after exiting to permanent housing

- Except for OPRI and permanent housing services

Section 1
OPRI and PHS

Percentages of OPRI single adult and Permanent Housing Services participants who remained housed for 1+,2+, 3+, 4+, and 5+ years after permanent housing placement

Oakland Path for Rehousing Initiative (OPRI)

Number of years remaining housed	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21
1+	99%	97%	99%
2+	96%	92%	95%
3+	81%	76%	83%
4+	80%	60%	71%
5+	65%	57%	59%

Permanent Housing Services (PHS)

Number of years remaining housed	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21
1+	98%	98%	99%
2+	97%	95%	97%
3+	94%	90%	95%
4+	93%	87%	92%
5+	84%	85%	88%

Section 1 | Summary

- Out of the 8,683 participants served over the three fiscal years, 6,697 participants were in crisis response programs and 1,986 were in longer-term housing programs.

- During the audit period, 4,110 participants exited crisis response programs and 729 exited longer-term housing programs.

- Generally, longer term housing programs were more successful than crisis response programs in terms of finding permanent housing for participants.

- Generally, family housing programs were more successful than those for single adults and transition-aged youth.

Section 1 | Recommendations

1. Access data on "returns to homelessness," to identify how many participants who exited to permanent housing, return to homelessness 6, 12, or 24 months later.

2. Adopt exits to positive destinations and exits to streets or unknown destinations as metrics for Emergency Shelters and set performance targets.

3. Continuously review performance metrics and targets and consider adjusting and developing new ones as needed.

4. Ensure that requirements within service provider contracts reflect adopted performance metrics and targets and ensure consistency.

5. Collect and analyze lengths of stay.

Section 2

Maintaining and Increasing Incomes and Enrolling Participants in Benefit Programs

- This section addresses the City's performance in maintaining or increasing participants' incomes and enrolling participants in non-cash benefits and health insurance programs as a critical step to ending homelessness.

- **FINDING:** The City had mixed results in facilitating enrollments in benefit programs critical to improving homelessness services participants' life circumstances and housing stability.

Section 2

Maintaining and Increasing Incomes and Enrolling Participants in Benefit Programs

Maintaining and increasing income and enrolling in benefits is critical for people experiencing homelessness

- Incomes – Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), etc.

- Mainstream/non-cash benefits: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- Health insurance

Section 2

Performance data and targets for maintaining or increasing income by program type and fiscal year

Program Type	FY 2018-19		FY 2019-20		FY 2020-21		Target
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Crisis Response Programs							
Community Cabins	49	61%	218	66%	214	66%	80%
Emergency Shelter - Family	11	79%	9	82%	38	81%	75%
Emergency Shelter - Single Adult	298	78%	911	63%	304	61%	75%
Transitional Housing - Family	12	39%	27	77%	27	79%	80%
Transitional Housing - Single Adult	165	83%	201	87%	207	90%	80%
Transitional Housing - Transition Aged Youth	51	73%	40	61%	28	68%	80%
Longer-Term Housing Programs							
Permanent Housing Services	94	80%	112	82%	116	82%	75%
OPRI	49	52%	58	66%	59	69%	75%

Section 2

Performance data and targets for enrollment in mainstream benefits by program type and fiscal year

Program Type	FY 2018-19		FY 2019-20		FY 2020-21		Target
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Crisis Response Programs							
Community Cabins	33	41%	162	49%	172	53%	83%
Emergency Shelter - Family	8	57%	8	73%	27	57%	80%
Emergency Shelter - Single Adult	120	31%	450	31%	202	41%	80%
Transitional Housing - Family	17	55%	18	51%	18	53%	83%
Transitional Housing - Single Adult	80	40%	96	42%	89	39%	83%
Transitional Housing - Transition Aged Youth	26	37%	24	36%	15	37%	83%
Longer-Term Housing Programs							
Rapid Re-Housing - Family	20	51%	35	61%	33	57%	85%
Rapid Re-Housing - Single Adult	4	17%	17	32%	33	47%	85%
Rapid Re-Housing - Transition Aged Youth	10	31%	23	40%	16	26%	85%
Permanent Housing Services	51	44%	66	49%	96	68%	78%
OPRI	41	44%	31	35%	26	30%	78%

Section 2

Performance data and targets for enrollment in health insurance benefits

Program Type	FY 2018-19		FY 2019-20		FY 2020-21		Target
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Crisis Response Programs							
Community Cabins	64	80%	257	78%	268	82%	80%
Emergency Shelter - Family	25	69%	22	85%	89	92%	90%
Emergency Shelter - Single Adult	356	92%	1,172	81%	414	81%	90%
Transitional Housing - Family	47	55%	93	98%	73	91%	80%
Transitional Housing - Single Adult	174	87%	207	90%	205	89%	80%
Transitional Housing - Transition Aged Youth	69	87%	65	93%	42	98%	80%
Longer-term housing Programs							
Rapid Re-Housing - Family	90	96%	136	89%	141	99%	85%
Rapid Re-Housing - Single Adult	18	75%	47	89%	64	91%	85%
Rapid Re-Housing - Transition Aged Youth	24	67%	54	89%	57	92%	85%
Permanent Housing Services	112	90%	148	96%	157	99%	90%
OPRI	80	68%	82	80%	81	83%	90%

Section 2
RV Safe Parking

No established performance targets consistent with other programs

Metric	FY 2018-19		FY 2019-20		FY 2020-21	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Maintaining or Increasing Income	N/A	N/A	17	61%	76	54%
Enrollment in Mainstream Benefits	N/A	N/A	8	29%	45	32%
Enrollment in Health Insurance Benefits	N/A	N/A	19	68%	91	64%

Section 2 | Recommendations

6. Evaluate the maintaining/increasing income metric and enrollments in mainstream and health insurance benefits metrics to identify successes and failures related to participant enrollment.

7. Review participants' income data across programs to reveal the range of incomes and use this information to inform the development and adaptation of City programs to provide deeply affordable housing.

8. Clarify what the RV Safe Parking program is intended to accomplish in terms of outcomes for its participants.

Section 3

Data on Programs, Outcomes, Service Providers, and Participants

- This section discusses data quality, timeliness, and usefulness.

- **FINDING:** The City lacked access to timely, accurate, and complete data to fully understand service provider performance, bed utilization, and participants' returns to homelessness.

Section 3

Data on Programs, Outcomes, Service Providers, and Participants

- **The CoC has a target of getting data into HMIS within three days**

- **The need for more accurate data within the County's HMIS has long been established**
    - A shelter provider exited only 10 program participants in fiscal year 2018-19, when it exited far more.

    - For one shelter provider, the majority of the exits recorded in fiscal year 2019-20 were classified as "unknown."

    - COVID Response programs entered any data related to benefits, making it appear as though program participants had no income data and were not enrolled in benefits for a fiscal year.

Section 3

Data on Programs, Outcomes, Service Providers, and Participants

- **The City lacks quality bed utilization data, a key performance metric for efficiently placing participants with available services**
  - Community Homelessness Services uses two deficient methods to calculate bed utilization

- **The City needs data on returns to homelessness**

- **Robust analysis of HMIS data can provide valuable insights into program and service provider performance**

Section 3

Recommendations

9. Add a dedicated staff member with requisite analytical and technical skills to consistently track and monitor HMIS data, analyze data, and present results for management to review

10. Work with the County HMIS Lead to identify and develop standard and custom reports within HMIS, including reports for real-time bed utilization and returns to homelessness

11. Secure training on HMIS data entry and how to produce various reports.

12. Adopt and negotiate with service providers, a performance metric and benchmark for timely input of client data into HMIS, preferably in alignment with the CoC's three-day target

13. Advocate for the County to improve its HMIS data and reporting capabilities, including disaggregating program outcomes by race.

14. Implement dashboards.

Section 4

Proportionate Service Delivery and Racial Equity

- This section evaluates the City's efforts to eliminate racial disparities in homelessness services.

- **FINDING:** The City provided homelessness services to participants of different races roughly proportionately to their share of Oakland's homeless population except for the RV Safe Parking program. More data is needed to ensure the City is meeting its racial equity goals and identifying disparities affecting groups underserved or underrepresented by the City's homelessness services.

Section 4

Homelessness in Oakland has disproportionately affected Black/African Americans

Racial Demographic	2019 PIT Count	2022 PIT Count	2020 Census
Black, African American, or African	70%	59%	21%
White	11%	20%	30%
Asian or Asian American	1%	5%	16%
Multiple Races	13%	11%	12%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1%	2%	1%
American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous	4%	4%	2%
Other and Unknown			18%

Section 4

Racial Demographic	Homelessness Services Program Participants			PIT Counts	
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2019	2022
Black, African American, or African	71%	68%	69%	70%	59%
White	16%	19%	18%	11%	20%
Asian or Asian American	2%	2%	2%	1%	5%
Multiple Races	6%	5%	5%	4%	11%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous	3%	2%	3%	13%	4%
Other/Unknown	2%	2%	2%		

Section 4

The RV Safe Parking program does not reflect the overall racial make-up of Oaklanders experiencing homelessness

Racial Demographic	FY 2018-19		FY 2019-20		FY 2020-21	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Black, African American, or African	6	55%	46	28%	50	29%
White	4	36%	96	59%	99	57%
Other	1	9%	20	12%	25	14%

Section 4

Proportionate Service Delivery and Racial Equity

- Exits to permanent housing across all programs were generally proportionate to the populations served by the City's homelessness services programs.

- The City needs the ability to break down program outcomes by race

  - Due to the limitations of the County-run HMIS, CHS cannot access other outcome data by race.

- More data is needed to ensure the City is meeting its racial equity goals and identifying disparities affecting groups underserved or underrepresented by the City's homelessness services.

Section 4 | Recommendations

15. Work with the County HMIS Lead to identify and develop standard and custom reports within HMIS that break down data by race.

16. Continuously review racial and other demographic data from HMIS, PIT Counts, and the U.S. Census to ensure the City is identifying and serving communities particularly vulnerable to, or impacted by, homelessness.

Section 5

Contracting with Service Providers

- This section reviews the effectiveness of contract monitoring and oversight procedures.

- **FINDING:** Improvements are needed in the monitoring, oversight, and administration of the City's homelessness services contracts.

Section 5 | Contracting with Service Providers

- Contract monitoring activities were incomplete, inadequately documented, and did not sufficiently address service delivery concerns and risks

- Contract terms can promote more accountable service delivery

- Providers started work before contracts were fully approved

Section 5 | Recommendations

17. Design, document, and implement improved monitoring procedures that comprehensively incorporate risks, ensure enforcement of contract deliverables, and ensure corrective action plans are implemented.

18. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of implementing multi-year contracts to minimize the administrative burdens presented by annual contract renewals.

19. Consider how to design contracts to promote accountability for reaching performance targets, including both incentives and consequences based on level of performance.

Section 6

Strategy, Public Reporting, and Oversight

- This section provides guidance for the City Administration on how to more effectively manage homelessness services while optimizing the City's limited resources to ensure our most vulnerable residents are receiving timely services to improve their living situations and secure and maintain permanent housing.

- **FINDING:** The City needs to move homelessness services forward by adopting an actionable strategic plan and increasing oversight.

Section 6 | Recommendations

20. Develop written goals and objectives for the City's homelessness services. These goals and objectives should formally communicate what the City aspires to achieve with its homelessness services. Audit findings and recommendations should be considered in the development of these goals and objectives.

21. In coordination with the Commission on Homelessness, develop a strategic plan that includes written strategies for achieving the City's homelessness services goals and objectives, and establish formal systems for assessing the City's progress in implementing these strategies.

22. Develop annual workplans to accomplish the strategic plan by identifying goals and deadlines for the next year and the strategies for achieving them.

23. Report annually on activities, progress, and results of the strategic plan.

24. Consult with the City Council and the Commission on Homelessness to develop comprehensive financial reports on homelessness services funding that include funder, program type, and service provider. We recommend these financial reports be both retrospective and prospective and cover multiple years.

Section 6 | Recommendations

25. Periodically, at least annually, compile and present a comprehensive report on homelessness services including detailed information on the service providers, such as performance metrics and targets. Staff should consult with the City Council and the Commission on Homelessness about the information needed to provide adequate oversight and use their input to develop a standard report format that can be updated annually and modified as needed.

26. Perform a staffing analysis to assess the City's staffing requirements for homelessness services. The staffing analysis should not only address the number of staff needed to carry out homelessness service activities, but it should also address the appropriate mix and composition of staff needed to effectively manage homelessness services and address the audit findings.

27. Clearly define and document roles, responsibilities, and authority of all staff working on homelessness services, including the Homelessness Administrator's staff.

Section 6 | Recommendations

We recommend the City Council:

28. Designate the Commission on Homelessness as the entity to oversee the development of the initial strategic plan for the City's homelessness services, and its ongoing monitoring.

29. Adopt the Oakland homelessness response strategic plan once completed.

We recommend the Commission on Homelessness:

30. Determine and request the additional resources needed to develop and monitor the strategic plan for homelessness services.

QUESTIONS?

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