

Homeless Continuum Report

2021-2022



Winnebagoland Housing Coalition

An inventory of the services and housing resources that support individuals at risk of and experiencing homelessness in Oshkosh and Southern Winnebago County, WI

Winnebagoland Housing Coalition
Homeless Continuum Report 2021-22

July 2021

Acknowledgements

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The Winnebagoland Continuum of Care represents the counties of Fond du Lac, Green Lake and Winnebago. It is one of 21 coalitions that are a part of the Wisconsin Balance of State Continuum of Care. This report focuses on Oshkosh and Southern Winnebago County and the programming of the Winnebagoland Housing Coalition.

Homeless Continuum Report: 2021-2022 Summary



The Winnebagoland Housing Coalition (WHC) sits on the verge of a transformational period that has the potential to elevate the care and support our communities deliver to individuals experiencing homelessness to a level unprecedented in our community. Built upon the vast expertise of members and an excitement that now is the time, WHC and its members are in a position to realistically fill three major service gaps within the next 24 months while also implementing targeted actions designed to strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of the WHC organization.

Essential to the success of all new initiatives and the long-term sustainability of our existing core programming is an informed and engaged community of support including service providers, funders, policy makers, and our neighbors; working collaboratively with sufficient resources to achieve a comprehensive and inclusive homeless continuum that serves as a model of excellence.

The Homeless Continuum Report: 2021-22 was developed following an early 2021 community meeting hosted by the Oshkosh Community Foundation that concluded with two key unanswered questions: who is doing what, and how can we better collaborate. Information from more than 20 interviews of WHC members and stakeholders has been compiled, with the incorporation of additional feedback received through the May 2021 planning session and a six week comment period.

Gaps in our continuum reveal areas of high concern where our community is failing to meet the needs of individuals who are amidst or on the verge of crisis. The Oshkosh area offers no formal services or options for unaccompanied minors experiencing homelessness. One of our primary responses for families experiencing homelessness is to pay for hotel stays – a costly response deficient in client support or long-term program sustainability. Day by Day Warming Shelter, a key institution in our continuum, continues to operate on the uncertain grounds of temporary conditional use permits in a space that limits the scope and effectiveness of their programming. WHC as an organization has ineffectively led the community conversation regarding homeless information and data, while individual members resist the foundational collaboration concepts of homeless data sharing and communication about new program planning.

Seven recommendations are presented within the report intended to address many of the gaps identified while strengthening WHC capacity. The recommendations are that:

1. All homeless program developments and changes be coordinated in collaboration with WHC.
2. Day by Day Warming Shelter develop a permanent shelter
3. Oshkosh Kids Foundation develop a transitional housing village for families facing homelessness
4. WHC develop an online Homeless Continuum Decision Tree
5. ADVOCAP lead a task force on the issue of youth homelessness
6. WHC create a Public Relations officer position
7. WHC host an annual planning meeting

We have the knowledge, experience, and resources necessary to make considerable progress towards achieving a comprehensive continuum of excellent. This report provides navigational directions to help guide our community as we collaboratively and decisively close the service gaps in our continuum.



1 Goals of the Homeless Continuum Report

We have written this report amidst a global pandemic that will be one of the most disruptive forces many of our readers will experience in their life. Fear, anger, worry, sadness, and defeat are daily emotions for many as the COVID-19 crisis infects nearly all aspects of life. In the United States, 40% of adults reported experiencing serious challenges with mental health or substance abuse associated with the pandemic, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Mental health professionals worry about the impacts of stress and isolation, while community leaders struggle to respond to COVID's social impacts on student learning, food insecurity, and income insecurity.

Another crisis is also underway here; though with much less fanfare and regard. Every night in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, members within our community will face the reality that they do not have a home to sleep in. Children within our Oshkosh Area School District will leave school uncertain as to where they will sleep tonight. A single father laid off from work and in need of shelter for his family must decide if it is better to find a way to a neighboring community or to remain in Oshkosh and place his kids with strangers so they can be sheltered. A woman suffering from severe untreated mental health disabilities retreats to her familiar bench, relying on the comfort of alcohol to get her through the stormy evening –another night in which no one is looking for her or any other individual in crisis out on our streets and in our parks.

Homelessness is one of the most disruptive experiences that one can go through in life. Fear, anger, worry, sadness, and defeat are constant realities for nearly everyone living this crisis. Substance abuse, physical and mental health disabilities, and isolation confound the impacts of homelessness, rendering key notions of learning, nutrition, and income as distant, passing thoughts.

With COVID, we are beginning to see a light at the end of the long pandemic tunnel. Health professionals, community leaders, businesses, non-profits, and engaged community residents came together, dedicating considerable resources and support to the fight. Individuals experiencing COVID have been served in aggressive, well-designed systems that target the symptoms of the virus and work to return the patient back to their life as quickly and safely as possible. Teams of professionals seek out how the patient contacted COVID, tracking down avenues that led to COVID's spread. A nation-wide public relations effort has diligently worked to inform the public while countering the persistent flow of false and hostile information. And we implemented a preventative

system unparalleled in speed and scale, creating and distributing a vaccine that has now reached 50% of the state.

We made defeating COVID a priority.

Can we make defeating homelessness a priority?

One goal for this report is that it serves as a resource for homeless service providers and front line workers who interact with individuals experiencing homelessness; providing a reference guide for available services that support individuals experiencing homelessness. Community planners and affordable housing professionals can utilize the guide to better learn about our housing systems and how those experiencing homelessness “flow” through the continuum. As a practical matter, the report includes basic descriptions the populations that each agency in our continuum services, along with contact information and eligibility criteria.

The second goal of this report and the May 2021 companion planning session is to strengthen the collaborative bonds of our community’s homeless response network. Operating in an isolated bubble is as ineffective at responding to a global health pandemic as it is a responding to a community’s homeless crisis, and this report demonstrates how entwined, reliant, and supportive we are and need to be.

Our third goal is that this report helps facilitate the needed discussion around gaps in our continuum and what work still needs to be done before our community has in place an efficient and comprehensive homeless continuum that brings together housing professionals, community leaders, businesses, non-profits, and engaged community residents who are all collaborating with sufficient resources and support to combat homelessness; where aggressive and well-designed systems are in place that ensure access to shelter while targeting the symptoms that are contributing to the individual being homeless while guiding them back to a stable life with a home of their own as quickly and safely as possible; where teams of professionals seek out the causes, tracking down gaps and faults in our social systems that have contributed to homelessness; where a community-wide public relations effort diligently works to inform the public while countering the persistent flow of false and hostile information; and where our community implements a preventative system unparalleled in speed and scale, creating and distributing rental assistance and related affordable housing support that pushes us ever closer to defeating homelessness. 

2 Introduction: Homelessness & Poverty in Winnebago County

Poverty is a crisis. It affects individuals and families, from newborn babies to frail elderly. It is a crisis that is seen across the globe. Winnebago County is no exception.

According to U.S. Census data, more than 11% of Winnebago County residents fall below the Federal Poverty Level. Nearly 19,000 individuals live in households that do not have the minimum income our government says is necessary to successfully meet their basic needs without the support of anti-poverty programs.

The Federal Poverty Standard measures income. It defines a family of four earning less than \$26,500 as living in poverty.

The 2020 ALICE report, sponsored by the Oshkosh United Way, looks at a broader picture of income, assets, cost of living, and related contributors to financial well-being. ALICE is an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed. The Winnebago County assessment shows that 23% of residents have insufficient income to meet basic cost of living needs.

Housing affordability standards place an affordable rent or mortgage at or below 30% of a household's gross income, with households exceeding this standard considered at high risk for default on rent, mortgage, or other high-importance financial obligations. Calculations by the Federal Reserve estimated that 26% of Winnebago County households were "housing cost burdened" in 2019.

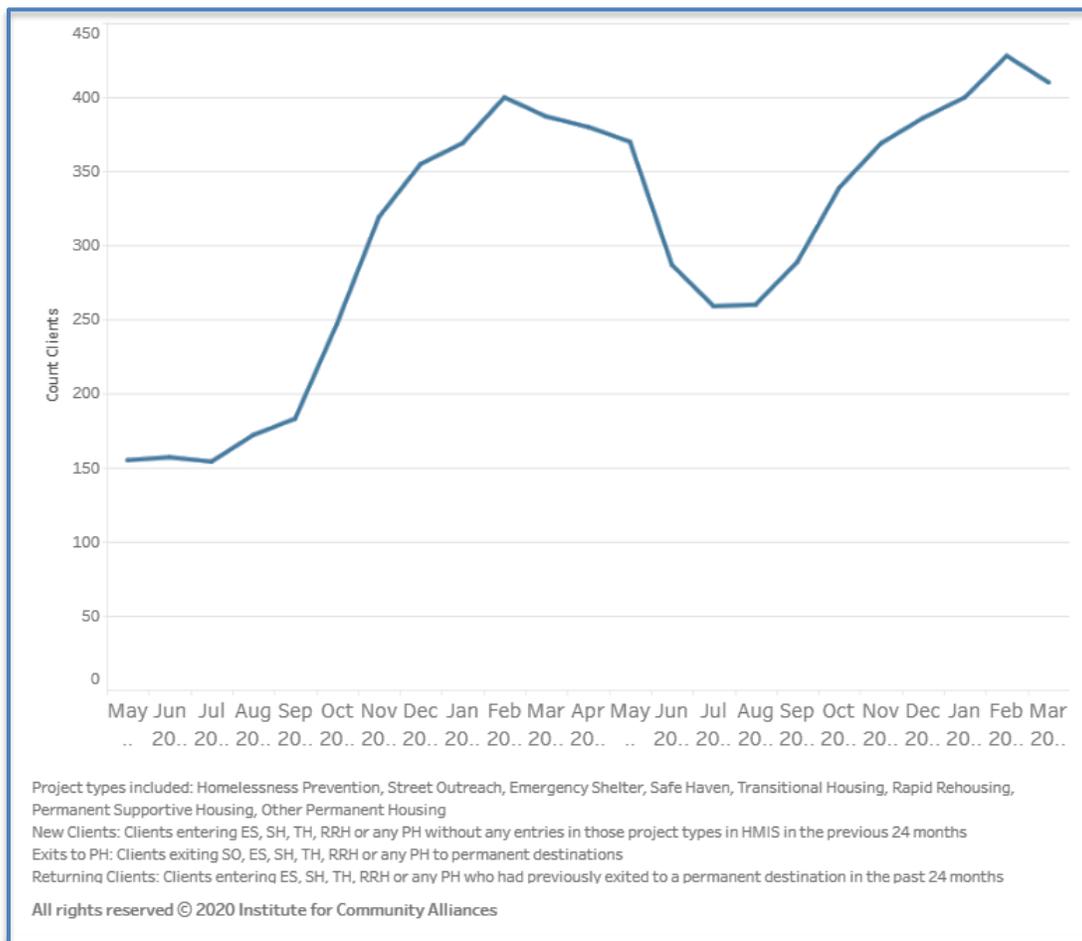
One outcome that has emerged from the confluence of poverty and a community housing portfolio that is unaffordable for many is that a small and steady number of individuals and families fall out of safe and secure housing and are at risk of falling into the crisis of homelessness. Where our community's prevention systems are ineffective, unknown, or intentionally resisted, the crisis of homelessness becomes the reality.

Statistics surrounding homelessness are often unreliable or incomplete; in part due to the common disconnect of individuals in homelessness from formal society. In addition, communities such as that which the Winnebago Housing Coalition represents lack a collaborative and verifiable data collection methodology that reliably provides data on homeless prevalence and other related key indicators. While recipients of government homeless funding are mandated to report through a single data management system, homeless service and shelter providers that do not accept this public

funding are not mandated to utilize this system, and are able to choose their own data sets to report absent means of verification.

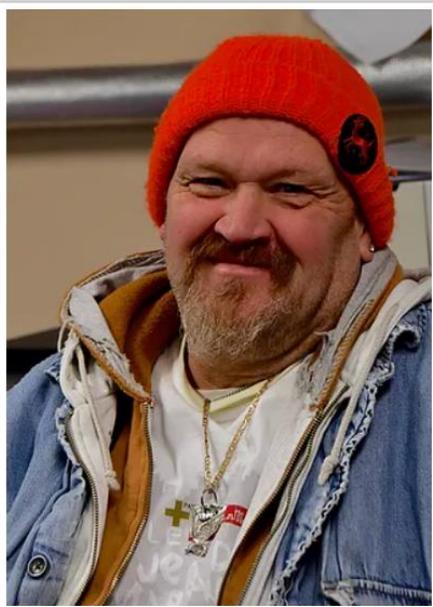
As a result, often times numbers related to homelessness that are included in media, in community programming, and in reports such as this under-represent the full scope of the present and past homeless crisis.

Data available through the Institute for Community Alliances, who serves as the state of Wisconsin lead homeless data organization, shows that the number of individuals receiving homeless services through State Continuum of Care (CoC)-funded organizations in the Winnebagoland Housing Coalition region was at the highest we have seen in the last three years, with 428 individuals receiving homeless services in February 2021; the four-month total for December 2020 through March 2021 was 1,624. (Chart below shows May 2019 through March 2021)



The Winnebagoland Housing Coalition region has experienced an increase in the number of individuals receiving homeless services over the past three years, with a peak of 428 individuals in February 2021.

The WinnebagoLand Housing Coalition region does not have an entity collecting and publishing comprehensive data related to homelessness in our community. Individual entities publish their own statistics, while those receiving CoC funds submit data to the State as previously noted.



Since our opening in 2011, Day By Day Warming Shelter has served a total of 1,195 unique individuals, provided 34,295 nights of shelter, and served 69,049 warm meals.

Season 10 - 2020/2021 Shelter Stats:

Guests:

Unduplicated Guests - 154

Times we had to turned away due to being at capacity - 72

Guests left for housing opportunities - 77

Guest employed - 41 out of 121 that were able to work

Employees/Volunteers:

Trained Frontline Shelter Staff (seasonal) - 17

Administrative Staff (3FT, 2PT year-round) - 5

Volunteers provided over 2,600 hours - 408 volunteers

Above: An example of an individual agency publishing their own organization's homeless data.

(From www.warmingshelter.com/guests 5/2021)

Despite the homeless data limitations present in the WinnebagoLand region, the available evidence shows that our community has a consistent and growing population of households experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless. We are able to confirm that the existing services play an engaged and interactive role with the homeless community, and that the homeless community relies of these agencies for many of their basic needs. We are also able to see that despite a growing awareness within our region of the effectiveness of comprehensive homeless prevention programs, more individuals than ever are falling through the cracks of our system and into homelessness. 

3 Continuum Mapping

A continuum reflects a continuous sequence of interconnected parts that work together to comprise a comprehensive system. The Homeless Continuum is comprised of interconnected agencies working together to manage and deliver a comprehensive homeless services system. The Winnebago Land Housing Coalition serves as Oshkosh and Southern Winnebago County's Homeless Continuum, most often referred to as the Continuum of Care (CoC).

According to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), a CoC is "a community plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximize self-sufficiency."

The value in mapping the continuum is that it allows for visual recognition and comprehension of the flow through the interconnected parts of the homeless service system, from preventative services through the end goal of permanent housing and back to preventative services.

The Winnebago Land Housing Coalition 2021-2022 Homeless Continuum Map is a living document and should be examined and improved annually. The full page continuum can be found in the appendix of this guide, as well as online at <http://winnebagoandhousing.blogspot.com>.

The core components of a Homeless Continuum were laid out by Congress as part of The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH ACT) with the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development responsible for broad implementation and include: Outreach, Intake & Assessment; Emergency Shelter; Transitional Housing; Permanent and Permanent Supportive Housing.

HUD Core Components of a Continuum

- Outreach, Intake & Assessment
- Emergency Shelter
- Transitional Housing
- Permanent & Permanent Supportive Housing

Additional requirements such as data collection through an integrated management system and the biannual "Point-in-Time" count are attached to homeless funding that HUD makes available to approved CoC regions.

Communities are empowered to implement unique strategies to solve their own unique homeless and affordable housing challenges, with continuum models building upon the core HUD components and forming an interconnected web of services, housing, and advocacy.

The Winnebagoland Housing Coalition Continuum of Care has been mapped into seven main categories that address HUD's components while expanding to include key programs and other housing resources essential to our community's housing inventory.

The seven categories of the Winnebagoland Housing Coalition:

- Prevention
- Outreach, Intake & Assessment
- Emergency Sheltering
- Transitional Housing
- Rapid Re-Housing
- Community/Specialized Housing
- Permanent Housing

Prevention

The primary goal of homeless prevention programming is to keep individuals and families who are at risk of becoming homeless in their home and away from becoming homeless. In an effort to lessen the amount of individuals and families that end up in shelters or on the street, services are provided to support those at risk.

Many organizations within our community provide important prevention services. Some examples of services provided by agencies under the 'Prevention' category include:

- Education and Living Skills
- Legal Services
- Eviction Prevention Programs
- Homeless Case Management
- Rent and Related Financial Support Programs

Outreach, Intake & Assessment

The front line of our community's response to homelessness is categorized as Outreach, Intake & Assessment. These agencies are the entry point for individuals experiencing homelessness as they enter our shelter-related services of the continuum (whereby shelter refers to any service that directly results in a roof, and is not limited to the traditional "homeless shelter" notion).

Outreach programming entails “on the pavement” services that actively work out in the field to locate individuals experiencing homelessness with the purpose of connecting them to the services of the continuum, as well as other needed support systems. As initial contact may not always succeed at connecting the prospective individual with services, street outreach programs often provide necessary supplies for living unsheltered; especially during the extreme temperature periods of the year.

Intake and Assessment serve as the entry points for individuals that are or will soon be experiencing homelessness. Organizations that provide intake and assessment services are typically considered to be crisis intervention destinations or resources, though Winnebagoland Housing Coalition members – such as the Boys & Girls Club – have reported multiple instances of families experiencing homelessness first connecting with their programming. When an agency such as the Boys & Girls Club takes initiative to assess the family’s needs and to provide staffing to assist with the coordination of sheltering and supportive programming, the agency becomes more than a referring community partner, instead playing an important front line response.

The HUD definition of assessment includes one or more standardized assessment tools to determine one’s current housing situation, risk of harm, housing and service needs, risk of future or continued homelessness, and other adverse outcomes. The process of calculating and interpreting the vulnerability, need, and risk levels of an individual or family based on the information gathered during the assessment is known as scoring. The purpose of scoring is to develop a concrete method that clearly identifies the need and risk of a given person and the urgency of the situation. This process is able to prioritize the individuals or families with the most severe needs and that are the most vulnerable in order to get them assistance in a more urgent manner. Once level of risk or prioritization is established, the programs will access potential housing options for a given individual based on their needs. In order for an intake to be done, an individual must meet the program eligibility criteria and meet the HUD definition of homeless.

All Winnebagoland Housing Coalition members who receive homeless CoC funds participate in an approved and integrated intake assessment program and data integration system. This report makes recommendations in the *Next Steps* section related to training and formal designation of agencies not receiving CoC funds.

Each organization included in the Outreach, Intake & Assessment section of the Continuum also offer support to individuals experiencing homelessness including some combination of case management / coaching, financial assistance, or other related resource coordination.

Emergency Sheltering

For many within our community, the programs listed within Emergency Sheltering will encapsulate what a community’s response to homeless is: shelters that provide a place to sleep for individuals without a home. Emergency sheltering refers to any facility in which the primary purpose is to provide a temporary shelter for those experiencing homelessness or facing a crisis that has rendered

their housing options to be unsafe. Sheltering programs do not require occupants to sign leases or resident occupancy agreements. They often serve as either a “last case option” or a brief “pass through” for many experiencing homelessness. While almost always designed as a short-term stop on the passage up the continuum, individuals who are at chronic risk for homelessness commonly end up at a program providing emergency sheltering –potentially highlighting an inadequacy or gap in a local continuum.

While most programs within the Emergency Sheltering category administer traditional “bricks & mortar” sheltering, we included the hotel voucher services provided by two local organizations in this category based upon the similarity in service design: no other housing option; housing that is temporary; no lease contract; and the absence of ongoing supportive services typically administered by programs further along in the continuum.

Transitional Housing

Transitional Housing refers to a specific homeless housing and case management model that includes temporary shelter paired with intense supportive case management / coaching. These programs are meant to bridge the gap from homelessness to permanent housing by offering structure, supervision, access to physical and mental health services, life skills education, resident training, parenting and family training, financial management, and income stability planning.

Transitional Housing programs will always entail a timeline such as 6, 12, or 18 months; with limited opportunity for extensions.

The goal of Transitional Housing is to provide access to the necessary and appropriate education, skills, and stabilization support needed to attain and maintain permanent housing independently.

Often, once an individual or family is able to move from transitional housing to permanent housing, they remain connected to the programs and resources provided by the transitional housing both through formal program support programming as well as through professional mentorship relationships that developed during the time in which the two parties worked together to overcome the crisis of homelessness.

Specialized Housing

A category for Specialized Housing was created to acknowledge the important role that multiple agencies provide in housing and supporting targeted populations within our community. The programs within the Specialized Housing category focus their services on a specific at risk population. In many cases, participants in these programs receive either a referral or are placed within these programs by coordinated case management that may include law enforcement, health professionals, and aging and disability support professionals.

Specialized Housing is often similar to Transitional Housing, with temporary shelter paired with targeted support services. However, these programs are delivered in a community-based setting similar to a residential care facility.

While recognizing the important role all housing facilities take in providing housing, we centered on Specialized Housing programs that support individuals who, if these programs did not exist, are likely to lack the necessary family and related support networks to maintain housing and would be at significant risk for homelessness.

Rapid Re-Housing

Rapid Re-Housing has proven to be one of the most efficient and cost-effective solutions to helping transition families out of homelessness and into permanent housing. Based upon the Housing First approach, Rapid Re-Housing rapidly connects families and individuals experiencing homelessness to permanent housing while providing short-term services targeted specifically at accessing housing – such as rent assistance.

Households are identified through the formal CoC intake process as good candidates for Rapid Re-Housing assistance. While these households may have additional challenges they are facing, Rapid Re-Housing works to eliminate the challenges of homelessness by quickly re-housing the household. By stabilizing their housing, the household will be better able to focus on work, education, and challenges that they may be facing, while avoiding the significant, harmful effects of prolonged homelessness.

According to HUD, the only households that are not good candidates for Rapid Re-Housing include those that can exit homelessness with little or no assistance, those who experience chronic homelessness and who need permanent supportive housing, and households who are seeking a therapeutic residential environment, including those recovering from addiction.”

Rapid Re-Housing is typically offered without preconditions, including requirements for employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety.

Permanent Housing

Permanent Housing sits as the end-goal for the continuum in our work with households experiencing homelessness, where the possibility exists of the household successfully living independently in their own home or living in their own home with close connection to ongoing supportive services.

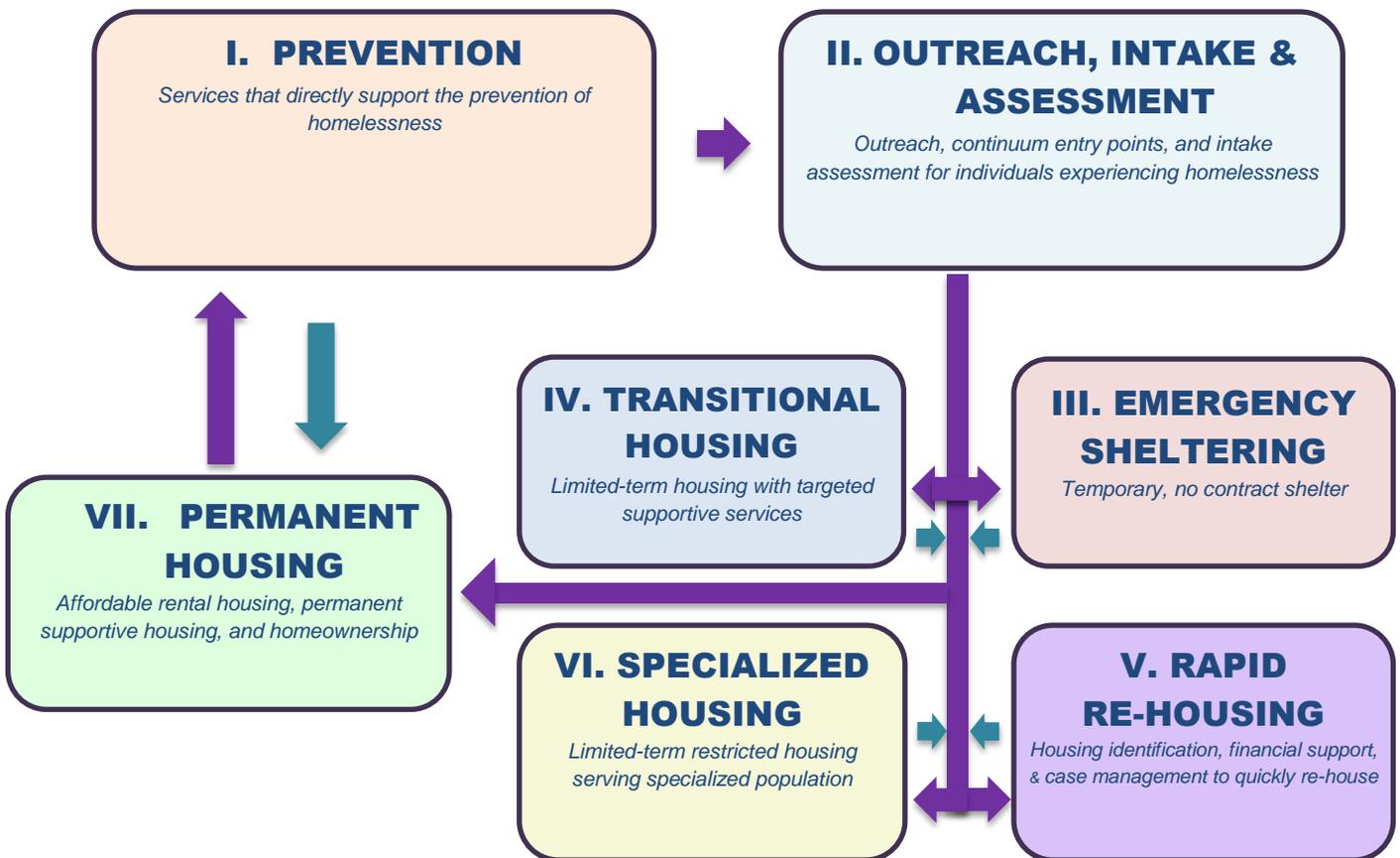
Permanent Housing is defined as housing without a designated length of stay in which formerly homeless individuals or families live as independently as possible, largely removed from an ongoing

relationship with the continuum. Examples may include homeownership or renting an apartment that is subsidized as part of an affordable housing program or is a private market rental unit.

Permanent Supportive Housing recognizes that some households will need ongoing access to supportive services to successfully maintain their permanent housing, while recognizing that mandated services may pose a barrier for some households to accessing or succeeding in this type of program. The program is targeted at the chronically homeless, with proven effectiveness at reducing shelter presence, hospitalization, and conflict interactions with law enforcement.

Support services are offered on a voluntary basis; with the primary focus on developing the skills and behaviors that are important to maintaining an apartment and connection to other people. 

Categories of the WinnebagoLand Housing Coalition (WHC) 2021-2022 Homeless Continuum



4 The Winnebago Land Housing Coalition

The Winnebago Land Housing Coalition is comprised of the following agencies and services:

Winnebago Land Housing Coalition

WEB: <http://winnebagoandhousing.blogspot.com>

The Winnebago Land Housing Coalition (WHC) is a group of community service agencies, local units of government, rental property owners, and partner stakeholders working together to maximize resources that identify and address affordable housing needs in the Oshkosh and Southern Winnebago County region. WHC plays an important role in local homeless programming, helping to lead the community's Homeless Continuum of Care programming in partnership with ADVOCAP.

WHC is a part of the Winnebago Land Continuum of Care, which represents the counties of Fond du Lac, Green Lake and Winnebago as one of 21 coalitions within the Wisconsin Balance of State Continuum of Care (BOSCO).

- **Prevention:** Anti-poverty planning and coordination

ADVOCAP

PHONE: (920) 426-0150

WEB: <http://advocap.org>

ADVOCAP provides an array of services focused around their goal to reduce poverty and increase self-sufficiency. Their services include: affordable housing, business development, employment and training, head start, getting out of poverty, home energy conservation, transportation, and food and nutrition.

ADVOCAP owns housing properties in Winnebago; most have a maximum income limit of 50-80% CMI.

- **Prevention:** Rental assistance (Bridges), AHEAD foreclosure prevention loan (6 month deferred loan up to \$5,000), WERA (Wisconsin Emergency Rental Assistance program), and down payment assistance. Foreclosure counseling, homebuyer education program, strength-based case management, individualized assistance and information, employment training and training, and referrals.
 - **Intake/Assessment:** Through case management, clients' needs are identified and they are provided the assistance they are in need of. They are assisted with preparing paperwork, making appointments, completing applications, documentation, transportation, and given referrals.
 - **Rapid Rehousing:** Financial assistance for a maximum of 2 years.
 - **Transitional Housing:** For people coming out of shelter and working with a case manager through homeless services. ADVOCAP offers transitional housing for adults and families.
 - **Permanent Housing -- Rental Housing:** Families and single persons living in efficiency units up to 4/5 bedroom homes.
 - **Permanent Supportive Housing:** Persons with disabilities where 2-4 unrelated adults live in the same home; sharing living costs and case management or care staff.
 - **Permanent Housing -- Home Ownership:** Requires a home buyer education and financial readiness program. Eligible home buyers receive down payment assistance in the form of a 0% deferred loan.
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Bella Medical Clinic

PHONE: (920) 231-6006

WEB: <https://bellamedicalclinic.org>

Formerly known as ‘Labor of Love’, Bella Medical Clinic works with men and women facing an unintended pregnancy. Their free supportive services qualify under the category Prevention, as they provide clients with information and resources necessary to avoid homelessness. They also provide training related to parenting, marital support, vouchers (St. Vincent de Paul and Goodwill), and infant furniture.

- **Prevention:** provides employment, educational, and housing information. They also provide referrals.
-

Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh

PHONE: (920) 233-1414

WEB: <https://bgcosh.org>

The Boys and Girls Club works with children ages 6-18 and their families. They offer multiple programs centered on youth development and family outreach support. Providing families with basic needs, programs designed to support and develop skills in youth, education, mentoring programs, tutoring, support networks, family support outreach, and referrals to specific supportive services.

- **Outreach/Intake/Assessment:** Family support outreach, referrals to specific supportive services, and often serves as a contact point for children and families experiencing homelessness.
-

Center for Veteran Issues

PHONE: (414) 345-4254

WEB: <https://www.cviet.org/>

The Center for Veteran Issues (CVI) provides housing and other supportive services to veterans and their families. This organization has an array of services and programs that share the same goal of addressing the problems faced by low-income veterans. To be eligible for the services provided by CVI one must be a member of a veteran family and must not exceed 50% of their area median income. Clients work with a case manager to establish housing and additional supportive services. They provide Transitional Housing to male and female veterans with a focus on reintegration services. CVI offers Supportive Housing which includes strength-based case management, additional mental health services, and no requirements of additional participation in other programs. Locations in Green Bay, Racine, and Milwaukee.

- **Prevention:** Rental assistance, security/utility deposits, emergency supplies, rental and utility arrangements, moving costs, short-term storage, and childcare costs. CVI provides an organic therapy program, assessments and referrals, case management, education, training and employment services, counseling, addiction therapy, life skills training, access to community resources, transportation, motivation and self-esteem classes, veteran benefit, and entitlement counseling.
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Christine Ann Domestic Abuse Services Inc.

PHONE: (920) 235-5998

WEB: <http://www.christineann.net/>

Christine Ann Domestic Abuse Services Inc. (CADSI) is a 37 bed emergency shelter for victims of domestic abuse. CADSI provides support for their clients through advocacy, outreach, and emergency shelter.

- **Prevention:** 24 hour crisis help line, teen/children programs, community education and prevention, client advocates, case management, connects clients to other services in the community.
 - **Intake/Assessment:** Victims of domestic abuse go through intake and assessment upon presenting at the shelter for emergency shelter.
 - **Emergency Sheltering:** Community living facility for victims of domestic violence in imminent danger; accepts men, women, and children (when entering with guardian).
-

City of Oshkosh Community Development Department

PHONE: (920) 236-5000

WEB: <https://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/>

The City of Oshkosh provides information and funding for organizations that serve low-income individuals.

- **Prevention:** Provides homeowner occupied rehab programs, interest free loans for qualifying home owners (meets HUD's qualifications), provides grants and loans for other organizations that serve this population, and participates in community anti-poverty planning.
 - **Home Ownership:** Offers market-rate housing and information on available units.
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Clarity Care

PHONE: (920) 236-6560

WEB: <https://www.claritycare.org/>

Clarity Care serves persons with developmental disabilities, physical disabilities, traumatic brain injuries, mental illness, and the elderly. Clarity Care has varying services; from skills training that strengthen clients ability to live independently to supportive housing units. Clarity Care also offers older adults (55+) the option to transition from home ownership through their Independent Apartment Community, Heritage Court. Other residential services they offer include: Community Based Residential Facilities (CBRF), Licensed and Non-licensed Adult Family homes (AFS) (high or low functioning individuals), supportive home care, and respite services. In home care services are meant to assist individuals for the purpose of allowing them to live independently for as long as possible. Overall, they provide their clients with the resources to attain and maintain housing through the use of education, training, and direct caregiving.

- **Prevention:** Day service programs are designed to further develop daily living skills, enhance client's abilities to make their own decisions, heighten potential to direct their own lives, assistance and education to support problem solving skills, and money management skills.

- **Intake/Assessment:** Community Employment Services works with clients who face employment barriers to obtain and retain employment within their community with or without a job coach (dependent on needs). The case managers work with clients to understand their strengths and help them to find appropriate employment while also providing resources for them to be successful in those jobs.
- **Supportive Housing:** Clarity Care has a Community Based Residential Facility in Oshkosh. This home has 7 beds for adult men and women, is handicap accessible and has a staff member present 24 hours a day 7 days a week to provide care and assistance.

COTS

PHONE: (920) 734-3609

WEB: <https://appletoncots.org/>

Functioning in Winnebago, Outagamie, and Calumet, COTS helps individuals and families experiencing homelessness transition into permanent housing by providing them with resources and temporary shelter that will allow them to achieve self-sufficiency and live independently. In order to be eligible for shelter through COTS, individuals must be: committed to sobriety, meet the HUD definition of homeless, capable of paying the program fee and security deposit, employed or have a legal source of income, and committed to working in COTS programs. Although COTS does have additional shelters, only the services or programs offered in Oshkosh are depicted on the Continuum.

- **Prevention:** COTS Positive Placement Program is available for clients for an additional 3 years following their move to independent housing. This program is designed to prevent another incident of homelessness. This program has 4 key focuses: stable housing, employment/education, pro-social connections, and well-being.
- **Intake/Assessment:** All individuals interested in residing in one of COTS residential sites must fill out an application (located on website). Each client is required to participate in the Living Skills Program where they will be provided support with money management, obtaining/maintaining employment, personal responsibility, personal care, decision making for self-management, and AODA recovery and relapse prevention.
- **Transitional Shelter:** COTS transitional shelter in Oshkosh is for single women. Each resident pays a monthly program fee of \$285 and \$100 dollar security deposit.

Day By Day Warming Shelter

PHONE: (920) 203-4865

WEB: <https://www.warmingshelter.com/>

This emergency shelter operates from mid-October until mid-April and serves any individual experiencing homelessness that is over the age of 18 and able to independently manage their own basic needs. As long as there is a bed available, Day by Day is able to welcome clients into their shelter and offer a meal, a shower, and a bed for the night. There are no continuous stay or commitment requirements required for an individual experiencing homelessness to receive services from this shelter.

- **Street Outreach:** The summer outreach team encourages adults to stop into the shelter during the time of year that the building is not open for shelter. These adults are able to come into the shelter, during designated hours, and shower, nap, etc. During this time, the Day by Day Warming Shelter serves as a resource center and the street outreach team works to connect individuals with available resources.
 - **Intake/Assessment:** The resource coordination/ coaching program consists of setting goals and helping clients to follow them.
 - **Emergency Sheltering:** Individuals experiencing homelessness can temporarily stay at the Day by Day Warming Shelter when it is open and operating without any contract required. There is a 25 bed capacity that is based on a first come first serve basis. There are no eligibility requirements besides an intake packet being completed on a person's first night staying at the shelter. Inappropriate or aggressive/ violent behavior in the shelter would likely result in the termination of their stay. This shelter is currently not handicap accessible.
-

East Central Regional Planning Commission

PHONE: (920) 751-4770

WEB: <https://www.ecwrpc.org/>

The East Central Regional Planning Commission provides clients with access to adequate supply of decent, safe, and affordable housing through staff referrals. Their goal is for the housing market to meet the needs of urban and rural households of all types, ages, incomes, cultures, and mobility statuses.

- **Prevention:** Works with individuals to decide what type of planning is appropriate, and provides clients with housing information and choices.
-

Extension Winnebago County

PHONE: (920) 727-8643

WEB: <https://winnebago.extension.wisc.edu/>

Extension Winnebago County has a host of resources to assist low-income individuals, with one of its focuses being on community development.

- **Prevention:** Through education and connections to resources (Rent Smart), individuals are given an opportunity to learn how to be responsible renters.
-

Fair Housing Council of NE WI

PHONE: (877) 647-3247

WEB: <https://www.fairhousingwisconsin.com/about-us>

The Fair Housing Council of NE WI provides services to individuals experiencing homelessness as well as other organizations that serve this population. Although Fair Housing Council does not provide housing, their programs are designed to combat illegal housing discrimination and to create and maintain racially and economically integrated housing patterns.

- **Prevention:** Investigative services, outreach and education, professional support to government agencies, fair lending and inclusive communities programs, case intake, and counseling.

Father Carr's Place 2B

PHONE: (920) 231-2378

WEB: <https://fathercarrs.org/>

Father Carr's Place 2B offers temporary emergency shelter for adult men and women, as well as accompanied children. As long as an individual does not have any sexual or violent crimes on record, they can be added to the shelter waitlist.

- **Intake/Assessment:** Father Carr's services include: a life enrichment center, a food bank, and work with clients to set goals and strive towards self-sustaining life. All clients must fill out an application for the shelter intake process.
- **Emergency Sheltering:** Shelter stay is contingent on an individual's commitment to sobriety and following shelter guidelines. Before COVID, shelter stay ranged from 0-6 months but is more indefinite now. Three meals are provided every day and basic needs are provided, residents receive support and guidance to transition to independent housing. Family Villa supports women and children and Bethlehem Inn supports men. There are also 2 efficacy apartments for eligible families.

FISC/Goodwill NCW

PHONE: (800) 366-8161

WEB: <https://www.goodwillncw.org/programs/financial/fisc/>

FISC/Goodwill NCW has several programs that are designed to help clients achieve self-sufficiency through financial planning, education and counseling.

- **Prevention:** FISC has community programs to address the need for ongoing financial support and assistance to individuals and families through educational workshops, homebuyer education and counseling, debt management program, bankruptcy education and counseling, student debt counseling, individual and family financial/budget/ credit counseling, long-term assistance (tax assistance program, payment partner representative payee services), and work programs.

Forward Services

PHONE: (920) 292-1330 **WEB:** <https://fsc-corp.org/>

Forward Services provides clients with resources specific to their personal goals and dreams. Forward Services has many programs that will allow for clients to become more educated and self-sufficient, giving them the information and resources necessary to live a successful and independent life.

- **Prevention:** Financial assistance is provided (if an individual has a dependent living with them) in the form of: establishing housing with first month's rent or security deposit when leaving a shelter or temporary living place, have left your home due to domestic violence, or have lost your home to fire, flood, or natural disaster, rental assistance to prevent eviction or foreclosure, utilities assistance, and/or job access loan. Forward Services also provides career seeking services, education and training (WIOA, trANS, W2, FSET/foodshare), parental guidance, help finding child-care, helping students with graduation and post-graduation career planning (JAG-WI), and first generation college student guidance (Upward Bound).
 - **Intake/Assessment:** Their Road to Livelihood program is a service that helps provide assistance to refugees so they can be successful in their new communities.
-

Habitat for Humanity

PHONE: (920) 235-3535 **WEB:** <https://www.habitatoshkosh.org/>

“Habitat” develops owner-occupied affordable housing subsidized with zero-interest loans. Habitat builds affordable, modestly-sized homes while keeping the construction and maintenance costs to a minimum so they can achieve their goal of providing the opportunity of home ownership to low-income families.

- **Permanent Housing -- Home Ownership:** The application for Habitat is open April 15th-June 15th and is available for families living or working in Winnebago County and that have a maximum income of 30%-60% of the CMI. Habitat’s home-buyer program allows qualified low-income families 0% interest mortgage loans. Monthly mortgage payments include repayment to Habitat, property taxes, and home insurance.
-

Lakeland Care Inc.

PHONE: (920) 906-5100 **WEB:** <https://www.lakelandcareinc.com/>

Lakeland Care Inc. provides managed long-term family care for eligible frail elders and individuals with physical and/or intellectual/developmental disabilities through Wisconsin’s Family Care program. The Winnebago County Department of Aging and Disability establishes contracts, function, physical eligibility, and makes referrals. From there, the department of Economic Support determines financial eligibility.

- **Prevention:** Through care management, Lakeland Care is able to coordinate specialized family services for their clients through respite care providing their clients with the opportunity to still live independently.
-

Legal Action**PHONE:** (920) 233-6521 **WEB:** <https://www.legalaction.org/>

Legal Action provides services for those living in poverty through legal assistance and systemic change. Legal Action provides free legal assistance to low-income people and specializes in Housing Law and their Reentry Legal Service Program. Their Housing Priority Committee works to remove barriers of injustice for this population and prevent homelessness by advocating in the legal system.

- **Prevention:** Legal Action assistance goals are to prevent homelessness and evictions, prevent and protect against foreclosures, ensure government tenant protection laws, secure and protect tenant rights to public laws, and to secure and protect tenants' rights to public and subsidized housing. Legal Action also works with clients to secure and protect safe, affordable, and decent housing. The Reentry Legal Service Program works with individuals transitioning from incarceration back into their communities to establish housing and employment.

Office of Wisconsin Assembly, Representative Gordon Hintz**PHONE:** (608) 266-2254 **WEB:** <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/54/hintz>

The Office of Wisconsin Assembly, Representative Hintz represents the City of Oshkosh and advocates for working families and sensible fiscal policy on the legislature's budget committee.

- **Prevention:** Through advocacy and representation and community anti-poverty planning.

Office of Wisconsin Senate, State Senator Dan Feyen**PHONE:** (608) 266-5300 **WEB:** <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/18/feyen>

The Office of Wisconsin Senate, State Senator Dan Feyen represents the City of Oshkosh and advocates for working families and sensible fiscal policy on the legislature's budget committee.

- **Prevention:** Through advocacy and representation and community anti-poverty planning.

Options for Independent Living**PHONE:** (920) 490-0500 **WEB:** <http://optionsil.org/>

Options for Independent Living is a non-residential agency that provides support so that individuals with disabilities can live independently and productively. The focus of their services is to help individuals achieve self-sufficiency through advocacy, education, provision of information, technology, and other related services.

- **Prevention:** By providing their clients with independent living skills, information and referrals, peer support, and by advocating for them, ILC provides their clients with the resources necessary to maintain housing. The information and referrals they often provide for their clients include details on community resources and services, adequate equipment, housing information, funding, alternatives, and any benefits they may qualify for.
-

Oshkosh and Winnebago County Housing Authority

PHONE: (920) 424-1450 **WEB:** <http://www.ohawcha.org/>

The Oshkosh and Winnebago County Housing Authority provides affordable rental housing assistance, homebuyer support, and resident services to low and moderately low income families living in Winnebago County.

- **Permanent Housing – Affordable Rental:** The Housing Authority now maintains more than 650 Public Housing units (including family, single, disabled, and elderly units), administers over 400 Housing Choice Vouchers, owns and maintains the properties of multiple group homes, and coordinates a family self-sufficiency program (qualifications may vary based on location).
 - **Permanent Housing – Home Ownership:** The Home Ownership program offers 0% interest down payment financing to qualified LMI homebuyers who complete program requirements and who purchase a qualified home in Winnebago County.
-

Oshkosh Area Community Foundation

PHONE: (920) 426-3993 **WEB:** <https://www.oshkoshareacf.org/>

The Oshkosh Community Foundation provides support for organizations that serve the population struggling with poverty through grants and partnerships.

- **Prevention:** The funding provided by the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation allows for organizations within the community to be effective and involved in community anti-poverty planning.
-

Oshkosh Area School District

PHONE: (920) 424-0395 **WEB:** <https://www.oshkosh.k12.wi.us/>

The Oshkosh Area School District creates a level-playing field for students in regards to education while also connecting families with other resources in the community. Social workers connect with students and their families by providing them with basic needs for their education; such as transportation, immediate enrollment, and school stability.

- **Intake/Assessment:** At risk students and their families may receive supportive services from school Social Work professionals. OASD also has a homeless liaison that works to address obstacles and meet the needs of students experiencing homelessness and often serves as a Continuum entry point.

Oshkosh Area United Way

PHONE: (920) 235-8560 **WEB:** <https://www.oshkoshunitedway.org/>

Oshkosh Area United Way improves lives by using people and resources to create innovative solutions to local needs.

- **Prevention:** OAUW offers community antipoverty planning and directs individuals towards the appropriate services that best meet their needs (2-1-1 resource and referral hotline).

Oshkosh Kids Foundation (OKF)

PHONE: (920) 376-5882 **WEB:** <https://oshkoshkids.org/>

The services provided by the OKF are centered around the organization's mission to provide crisis intervention to children and their families that are currently, or on the verge of, experiencing homelessness.

- **Prevention:** OKF provides emergency rental assistance to families living in the Oshkosh area through security deposits. They also provide other resources such as bike locks, haircuts, and transportation.
- **Intake/Outreach:** OKF is often a first responder, or an entry point into the Continuum, to address the needs of families experiencing homelessness. By providing their clients with referrals they are able to connect families to services they may be in need of.
- **Emergency Sheltering:** Through hotel vouchers, OKF provides a temporary solution to stabilize crisis situations for women with youth.

Oshkosh Landlord Association

PHONE: (920) 230-9221 **WEB:** <https://www.waaonline.org/>

The Oshkosh Landlord Association provides support for those engaged in the ownership and management of residential rental properties. Members of this association are encouraged to supply and maintain rental units that are safe and secure, and provide tenants with a healthy environment for living with dignity.

- **Private Market Rental:** Owns and manages single-family homes, duplexes, and large apartment complexes. Eligibility varies by location and management.

Oshkosh St. Vincent de Paul Society

PHONE: (920) 235-9368

WEB: <https://svdposhkosh.org/>

The Oshkosh St. Vincent de Paul Society is able to assist those in need of emergency rental assistance who already have established housing. They also frequently provide vouchers for furniture and household items to low-income households.

- **Prevention:** The St. Vincent de Paul Society can provide rent assistance once a year to individuals struggling. This assistance will only be granted to those who have a job and a lease (no subleasing). This rental assistance is not available for security deposits or first month's rent as its purpose is to prevent eviction or foreclosure, not to establish housing.
-

NAMI: NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL HEALTH

PHONE: (920) 651-1148

WEB: <https://www.namioshkosh.org/>

Working to address the great barrier of mental illness, NAMI provides supportive resources that allow for individuals and families to recover and heal. To receive services from NAMI, individuals just need to call or show up and they will be able to begin their journey towards recovery.

- **Prevention:** NAMI has support groups and free educational programs that give individuals and families the opportunity to experience mutual support and positive impact.
-

NOVA Counseling Services

PHONE: (920) 231-0143

WEB: <https://www.novaoshkosh.com/>

NOVA is an AODA treatment center that provides inpatient rehab as well as a treatment program through their half-way house. As a result of their dependency, those who suffer from addiction often struggle to maintain housing. NOVA is a local solution that can help prevent the cycle from continuing. NOVA now accepts Medicaid so their services are more accessible to a greater amount of people in the community. Individuals are admitted and begin receiving treatment through NOVA starting with a referral (can come from anywhere), a screening, and physician examination.

- **Prevention:** NOVA has services for those with a chemical dependency and for families of individuals suffering from addiction. Through addiction support resources and rehabilitation options, there are services being offered to support those struggling.
 - **Specialized Housing:** Terra House is a licensed residential half-way house; it is a 90-day program available for adults that successfully completed primary inpatient addiction treatment. Clients are provided with tools and skills training to develop constructive relationships with others. Terra House houses 10-12 individuals at a time where individuals will participate in a 4 stage recovery program to prepare them for success in their independence.
-

Salvation Army

PHONE: (920) 232-7660 **WEB:** <https://centralusa.salvationarmy.org/oshkosh/>

The Salvation Army provides direct services to assist individuals and families experiencing homelessness, as well as low-income populations through their food pantry, bus passes, soup kitchen, and vouchers.

- **Prevention:** Salvation Army is able to provide emergency rental assistance to prevent evictions and foreclosures. This is a temporary solution, as there cannot be continued rental assistance provided.
-

Solutions Recovery Inc.

PHONE: (920) 233-0888 **WEB:** <https://sri-wi.org/>

Solutions Recovery Inc. works to provide support and resources to individuals struggling with substance addiction and their families. By providing treatment and recovery services, they provide necessary support and intervention to prevent relapses. They offer a transitional program, a recovery club, recovery support groups, and meetings.

- **Outreach:** connecting clients with services they are in need of through community outreach. The Solutions in the Community program is a collection of awareness, education, and advocacy events.
 - **Specialized Housing:** Solutions' Sober Living provides a six-month transitional environment for women seeking long-term treatment after an initial 28-day stay at an inpatient facility. This program focuses on economic self-sufficiency, relationships, safety from substance abuse, health and well-being, mindfulness, and other services.
-

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)

PHONE: 800-698-2411 **WEB:** <https://www.va.gov/homeless/nchav/models/ssvf.asp>

The goal of the SSVF is to eliminate the amount of veterans and family members that are experiencing homelessness and provide solutions for those who are. Financial assistance may be provided in accordance with a request with VA and other resources in the community.

- **Prevention:** Loans through VA, rental support, and other assistance.
 - **Emergency Sheltering:** Veterans can receive hotel vouchers when there are not other options for emergency shelter available in the community. The SSVF Program Office encourages grantees to communicate with VAMC staff and other stakeholders to coordinate emergency sheltering placements as needed.
-

Winnebago County: Aging and Disability Resource Center

PHONE: (887) 886-2372

WEB: www.co.winnebago.wi.us/adrc

The Winnebago County Aging and Disability Resource Center helps older adults and people with disabilities receive access to information on programs and services, long-term care options, and assistance applying for programs and benefits.

- **Prevention:** Provides support and connections for seniors, families, and people with disabilities by connecting and empowering them to achieve independence, maximum quality of life, dignity, and security.
 - **Intake/Assessment:** This resource center serves as an access point for publicly funded long-term care. Medical and disability assistance and information is provided for clients and referrals are made to appropriate services.
-

Winnebago County: Economic Support

PHONE: (920) 236-4700

WEB: www.co.winnebago.wi.us/human-services/divisions/economic-support

Winnebago County: Economic Support provides services that connect individuals to benefits and assistance such as healthcare, childcare, and food share.

- **Prevention:** Connects individuals to programs and services they qualify for and refers them to other organizations.
-

Winnebago County Health Department (WCHD)

PHONE: (920) 232-3000

WEB: <https://www.co.winnebago.wi.us/health>

The WCHD connects individuals with resources to promote and protect health through services partnerships and equitable practices. The health department comprises of six divisions: Administration; Communicable Disease; Community Health and Prevention; Environmental Health; Healthy Lifespan; and Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

- **Prevention:** Helps clients to receive BadgerCare and get connected to other supportive services through referrals. The Health Department also provides supportive services that reach individuals that may be experiencing homelessness; including WIC, LifePoint Needle Exchange Program, and Narcan distribution. Within the department's Community Health & Prevention division, there is collaboration with organizations that serve the homeless population through coalition work and there is an emphasis on policy and systems changes to improve housing stability in Winnebago County.
-

Winnebago County: Human Services

PHONE: (920) 236-4700

WEB: <https://www.co.winnebago.wi.us/human-services>

Winnebago County: Human Services focuses on prevention, protection, mental health, family integration, self-determination, and recovery. The assistance provided by the Department of Human Services relies on trauma informed care and cost-effective services to best meet the needs of their clients. They are able to connect clients to appropriate services in the community through partnerships and referrals.

- **Prevention:** Provides case management that assists clients in accessing resources and services related to mental health.
- **Intake/Assessment:** They are able to provide resource information on options and referrals for individuals that will connect them to resources that will enable them to be self-sufficient or to receive services to meet their needs.
- **Specialized Housing:** The Summit House is a community based residential facility that provides a room for individuals facing a crisis in their life. Specifically, the Summit House is meant to serve as an alternative to hospitalization or housing related to psychiatric purposes.

Winnebago County: Veterans Services

PHONE: (920) 232-2400

WEB: <https://www.co.winnebago.wi.us/veterans>

Winnebago County: Veterans Services provides a wide variety of services for veterans.

- **Prevention:** Assistance with VA loans, case management, health benefits, and disabled services.
- **Intake/Assessment:** Through case management, veterans are assessed based on their needs and provided the resources to attain the required information, assistance, or referrals to be provided with appropriate services.

World Relief Fox Valley

PHONE: (920) 231-3600

WEB: <https://worldrelieffoxvalley.org/>

World Relief Fox Valley provides vital supportive services for refugees resettling in the Fox Valley. Some of the services provided include: preparing their new home with furniture and basic household items, enrolling in ESL classes or public school, an orientation to life in America, and providing job skills and employment services. With initiatives in education, health, child development, agriculture, food security, anti-trafficking, immigrant services, micro-enterprise, disaster response, and refugee resettlement. World Relief Fox Valley works with local churches to stand for the sick, the widow, the orphan, the alien, the displaced, the devastated, the marginalized, and the disenfranchised.

- **Intake/Assessment:** Assistance obtaining refugee benefits and other necessary services, provides case work, and service enrollment.



5 Next: Opportunities for Progress and New Impact

The Winnebagoland Housing Coalition features a considerable strength that will serve as an important foundation as the community develops strategies and actions to strengthen the homeless continuum: human capacity. The knowledge, dedication, leadership, and ability to “get things done” that can be found amongst the staff of the agencies listed in section 4 of this report is capable of conquering the greatest of challenges our community will face in the effort to create a comprehensive and seamless homeless continuum.

This sentiment – that our human capacity amongst the professionals working locally on homeless programming (and related services) is capable of great progress and new impact on local homeless programming – was a repeated theme by many of the agencies interviewed for this report.

Many also agree that at this moment our community is experiencing an energy and excitement surrounding the belief that we are capable of considerable progress and that now is the time to do it. Evidence of this can be found in developments detailed below that have been initiated this past year or are being revisited with new momentum. Further evidence of this energy is the many new faces and engaged organizations present during the April 2021 planning session.

The Winnebagoland Housing Coalition and our community’s response to homelessness is poised to take considerable strides, and below are the notable opportunities and considerations to make this possible.

Principles for Making Progress Possible

In addition to the identification of gaps, creation of new solutions, and development of any programming, a core set of principles should be adhered to base upon WHC’s mission:

- Working Together
- Maximizing Resources
- Addressing Affordable Housing (Homeless) Needs

As agencies move forward on program and project development, staff should assess how they can work together with other continuum partners. The agency should commit to working with WHC at an early stage in idea development. An assessment must be completed of how the new program or development may impact existing services, and if opportunities are present to maximize the limited dollars available for homeless programming. And lastly, we must center our ideas and feedback on the affordable housing and homeless need, and commit to working with external partners on the development of a shared purpose-centered mentality.

Recommendation 1:

All new programs, program changes, or other notable program developments are shared with the Winnebago Housing Coalition at the early “ideas” stages.

Effective: Immediately, ongoing.

Gaps and Opportunities

Day by Day Warming Shelter

Day by Day Warming Shelter has become an established pillar of our local continuum. They serve a segment of the homeless population that is not served by any other agency, and they provide increasing leadership in all areas of the continuum. We believe no member of WHC would like to see Day by Day cease as an organization. Yet Day by Day continues to operate on uncertain grounds, with no long-term guarantee of the current space they use, which also requires regular waivers from local government to enable operations in their current location. The current location lacks accessibility features, poses difficulty for site monitoring, and lacks space for many core functions (confidential meeting room; guest possession storage; etc.).

The services offered by Day by Day are not inherently “seasonal” as the shelter currently is. Guests need a place to sleep in June, as they do in February. Access to a shower, laundry, and a caring voice continues throughout the year. However, the current space has created limits on times of the year and extent of services able to be offered.

Day by Day’s status and impact potential has shifted from what started out as an ambitious pursuit of a dedicated individual in our community and has grown into a foundational organization. Now is the time for their physical status to match their importance.

Recommendation 2:

Day by Day Warming Shelter develop a permanent shelter location that is designed to meet the specific needs of their guests and the services of the agency.

Effective: Immediately, opening of facility by September 2022. Provide progress updates 10/2021; 3/2022; 6/2022; 9/2022

Housing Options for Homeless Families with Children

Housing options for families with children who face homelessness is challenging in our community. Christine Ann Domestic Abuse Services provides shelter for victims of domestic abuse, with limited space. Father Carr's offers a large hotel-room-style shelter that can provide temporary emergency shelter, though challenges posed by staffing and set up (families with 2 parents are not able to shelter together, nor are men able to shelter with their children) prevent many families from being able to access these services.

The current solution is to pay for hotel rooms to house these families. This costly solution fails at most key elements of an effective homelessness response: insufficient intake assessment; absence of supportive services; no long-term housing strategy; and limited options for facilitating and tracking progress.

Oshkosh Kids Foundation, in collaboration with multiple WHC partners, is currently pursuing a housing development featuring a village of 20-30 homes with recreational space and a community center to support families with children facing homelessness. The program is being designed as a transitional living program, with subsidized rents, resident lease, tenant training, and on-site supportive services. Upon completion of the transitional program, the families will have the skills, financial means, and verifiable tenancy history to enable access into permanent housing.

Beyond housing, providing stable housing will have broad-reaching impacts on student learning, family health and wellness, and many other areas of life.

Recommendation 3:

Oshkosh Kids Foundation move forward with WHC support for the development of a transitional housing village which services families with children facing homeless.

Effective: Immediately, opening of phase 1 by October 2022. Provide progress updates 11/2021; 3/2022; 6/2022; 9/2022

A Decision Tree to Support Community Social/Human Services Professionals

While this report and supplemental Continuum Inventory map are an important development that will be helpful for WHC members and our partners in navigating local homeless and affordable housing programs, it does not provide specific guidance as to what specific agency should be called for this specific “case”. The result is that many service providers are left guessing, potentially referring a client to the wrong agency, giving the client a list of possibilities without guarantee, or trying to come up with their own solution.

A Homeless Continuum Decision Tree provides an If–Then sequence of questions, leading the user along a path towards the eventual “call here” concluding answer. This resource removes the requirement that a staff member at (for example) the Boys & Girls Club know each homeless services agency, who they serve, their eligibility criteria, the best contact, and how to connect their client with this agency.

Recommendation 4:

WHC and stakeholders develop an online Homeless Continuum Decision Tree, with an agency providing annual staffing to update contacts and information.

Effective: Create committee / identify responsible individual or agency by October 2021; Draft of Decision Tree by February 2022; Completed Decision Tree by April 2022; Annual review / update of Decision Tree completed by April.

Unaccompanied Youth Services

One of the primary gaps identified at the initial 2021 homeless planning meeting hosted by OACF at the Best Western Premier was the lack of homeless services for individuals under the age of 18 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and are not with parents or other legal guardianship. Members present reported that Oshkosh as experienced multiple cases of unaccompanied homeless youth this past school year. The Fox Cities are currently served by a Boys and Girls Club youth center based in Menasha. These services are not present in southern Winnebago County.

A tragedy of a community’s failure to serve this highly vulnerable population is the high probability that the minor comes in contact with the criminal justice system rather than the needed supportive care system.

The State of Wisconsin Balance of State CoC issued notice of a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program through HUD in May 2021, seeking guidance from members including WHC as to whether the state should apply for funds to enable collaborative programming serving this population.

ADVOCAP submitted a notice of support for this proposal the beginning of June 2021, and will apply for funds if they become available.

Recommendation 5:

ADVOCAP lead a task force on the issue of youth homelessness, with a specific focus on unaccompanied homeless youth. If funding is available through the state, an application should be submitted. If funding does not become available through the state, alternative strategies / funding should be developed to support this population.

Effective: Immediately, with new resource and/or service implemented by November 2022;
Provide progress updates 10/2021; 1/2022; 4/2022; 8/2022

Available WHC Information and Homeless Data

In the beginning of 2021, a group of highly-engaged and well-connected leaders from the community met to discuss local homeless programming, with one goal being to identify the existing homeless services offered in our community. The WinnebagoLand Housing Coalition was not mentioned for the first 115 minutes of the 120 minute meeting. While multiple agencies present are members of WHC, most present were unsure of what WHC is doing, how they operate, and what WHC's role might be.

The current public outreach by the WHC is primarily through an email list serve that one must somehow know about to join. The agency maintains a website that members can contribute to, but updates are infrequent. Notices of upcoming meetings and follow up posting of minutes are not completed with the timeliness required for effectiveness. Homelessness data does not appear to be compiled or shared locally, with information only available agency by agency in sporadic meeting minutes.

The current state of WHC "public relations" is understandable, given than the coalition lacks any formal staff and those that are participating are largely front-line workers trained in providing services to individuals experiencing homelessness, and not marketing and PR.

However, if the group is to achieve their mission of collaborative programming that maximizes resources, considerable improvement must be made.

Recommendation 6:

An officer position be created responsible for WHC information sharing. This Public Relations officer should pursue relations with partners that may help with group PR such as the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation (funding / expertise), the city of Oshkosh Community Development Department (data), the UW Oshkosh Journalism Department, and local media outlets.

Effective: WHC agenda item August 2021; officer position filled by September 2021. Provide semi-annual progress updates to WHC each February and September.

WHC Annual Review

WHC's last published continuum map was from 2008. The 2021 update should be assessed annually, along with an updated plan identifying new (and old) gaps, areas in need of improvement, and new strengths. Without this regular, scheduled planning and assessment, it should be expected that agencies move forward independent of each other without collaboration, without consideration of how to maximize resources, and without any reliability that this new program actually fits a need using best practices. Fundamentally, all members of WHC, community stakeholders, and the general interested public should know what we have and do not have, what our strengths and weaknesses are, and what we are doing about it.

Recommendation 7:

An annual meeting of the WinnebagoLand Housing Coalition should be set aside as a planning meeting with a trained facilitator, assessing the current continuum, needs and gaps, and a priorities list for the upcoming year.

Effective: Annually in February.



6 Closure – 2021 WHC Report

More than 20 agencies participated in interviews discussing their programs, local homeless programming, and the challenges present within our community. The professionals interviewed celebrated the strength of the agencies working in our continuum as well as the considerable experience and expertise of the leaders within those organizations. Those interviewed were also keenly aware of the gaps of our local homeless programming. Many also discussed the challenges posed by the COVID pandemic, from material inflation to an absence of in-person contact.

Many also shared a difficulty securing emergency shelter for families, including single adults. This important insight highlights the importance of an agency routinely assessing if their programs and requirements are best designed to meet the needs of homeless clients and the community's affordable housing and homeless needs.



WHC conducted a planning session May 2021 gathering feedback and guidance on the development of the Homeless Continuum Report and Inventory Map.

Our research suggests that Winnebago County would benefit greatly from the development of housing options that would serve adults and families year-round. A major gap identified was the absence of any services for unaccompanied homeless youth. Multiple times we heard the question of who is responsible for addressing a gap.

Progress towards developing answers and solutions is possible through careful planning and close collaboration among service providers, funders, and stakeholders. In the mix of ideas it is also important to diligently work to solicit guidance from those who use our services.

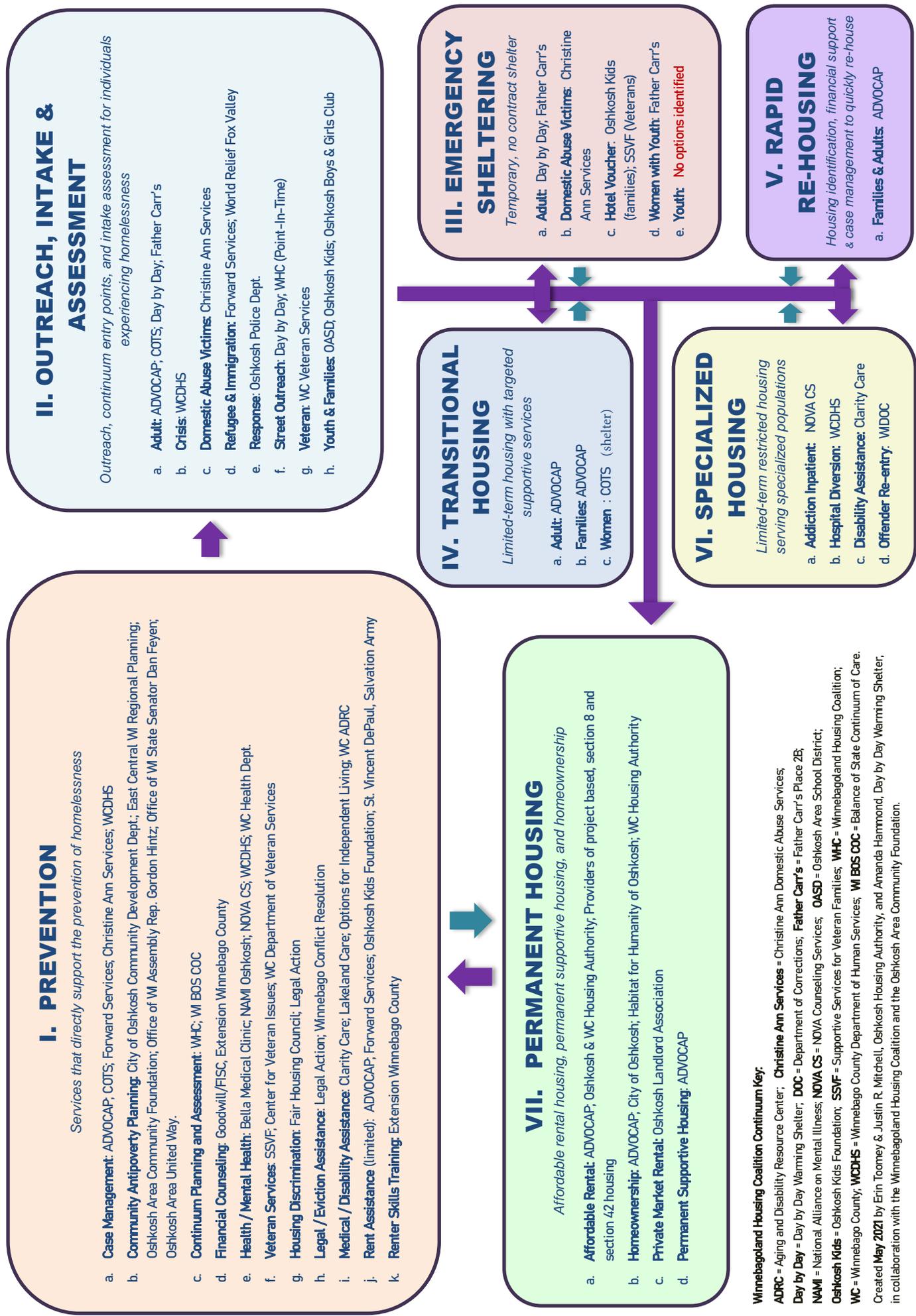
Messaging and conveying an image of professionalism is important, and absent effectiveness of either leads to questioning of the relevancy or benefit of an organization. If the WHC is to achieve any part of its mission, progress is needed in the organization's public sharing of information.

The near unanimous sentiment of WHC members is that through increased collaboration and improved messaging; the gaps in services within the continuum can be addressed and closed.



Winnebago and Housing Coalition (WHC) 2021-2022 Homeless Continuum

An inventory of the services and housing resources that support individuals at risk of and experiencing homelessness in Oshkosh and Southern Winnebago County, Wisconsin



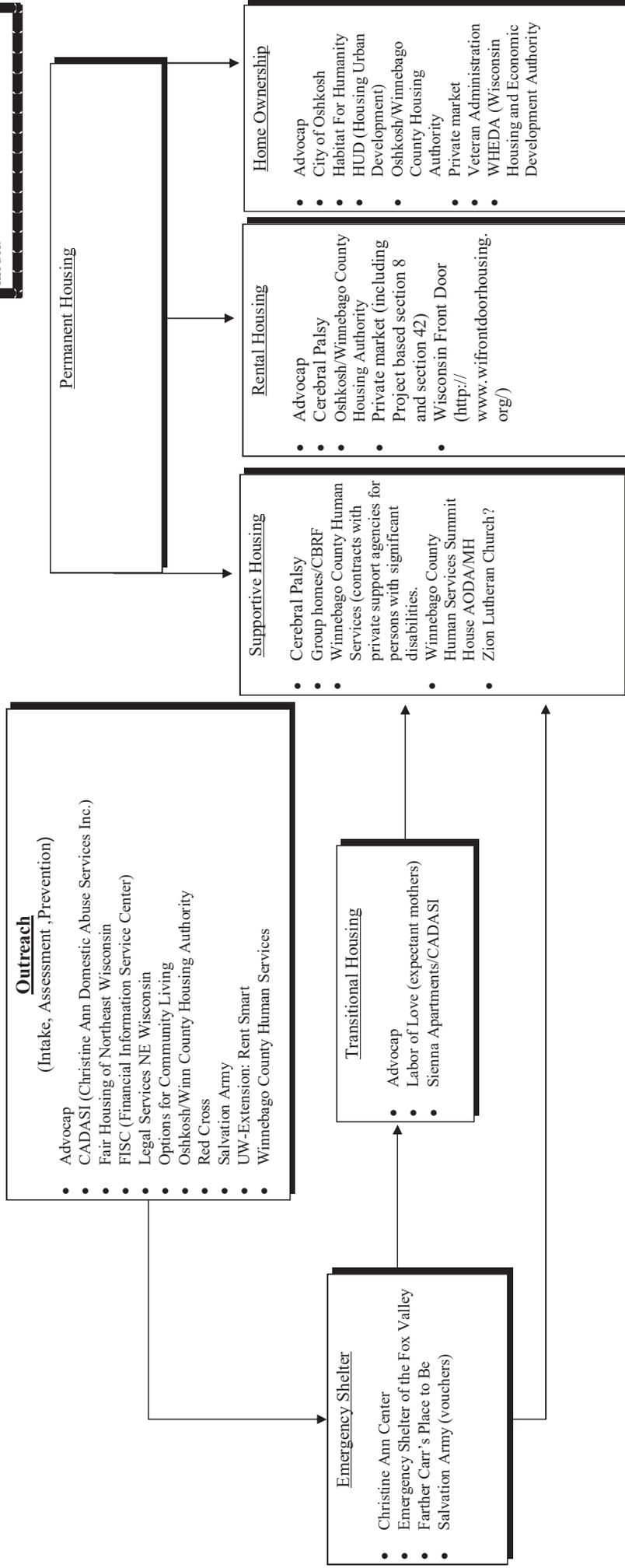
Winnebago and Housing Coalition Continuum Key:
ADRRC = Aging and Disability Resource Center; **Christine Ann Services** = Christine Ann Domestic Abuse Services;
Day by Day = Day by Day Warming Shelter; **DOC** = Department of Corrections; **Father Carr's** = Father Carr's Place 2B;
NAMI = National Alliance on Mental Illness; **NOVA CS** = NOVA Counseling Services; **OASD** = Oshkosh Area School District;
Oshkosh Kids = Oshkosh Kids Foundation; **SSVF** = Supportive Services for Veteran Families; **WHC** = Winnebago and Housing Coalition;
WC = Winnebago County; **WCDHS** = Winnebago County Department of Human Services; **WI BOS COC** = Balance of State Continuum of Care.
 Created May 2021 by Erin Toomey & Justin R. Mitchell, Oshkosh Housing Authority, and Amanda Hammond, Day by Day Warming Shelter, in collaboration with the Winnebago and Housing Coalition and the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation.

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2006 WHC Model

Winnebago Land Housing Coalition Continuum of Care*

*Although this matrix may not be inclusive of all parties, the intent is to demonstrate the Continuum of Care model.



Supportive Services

To locate specific support services by topic select from one of these options:

1. From land line phone call 2-1-1
2. From cell phone call (920) 236-5209
3. Log on to www.211winnefox.org
4. Fax (920) 236-5227

The 2006 WHC model was included in this report for historical reference. We were unable to locate an updated model more recent than this 2006 model. No additional information was included with this model, such as contact information or program description. - JRM 7/2021

2006 WHC Model