



# **Homelessness in Fairfax County: *Progress and Meeting the Challenges Ahead***

**Board of Supervisors Housing Committee**

Maura Williams, Lauren Leventhal, Tom Barnett

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# Speakers

- **Maura Williams**

- Chair, Continuum of Care Committee
- Vice President, Housing and Community Services, Cornerstones

- **Lauren Leventhal**

- Vice-Chair, Continuum of Care Committee
- Director of Compliance, Pathway Homes

- **Tom Barnett**

- Deputy Director, Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development

# 2008 – 2018: Ten Year Plan

Overview of the strategies, successes, and challenges in the execution of the “Blueprint for Success” and “Implementation Plan” to prevent and end homelessness.

# Strategies from 10-Year Plan

1. Prevent homelessness due to economic crisis and/or disability.
2. Preserve and increase the supply of affordable housing to prevent or remedy homelessness.
3. Deliver appropriate support services to obtain and maintain stable housing.
4. Create a management system for plan implementation with the collaboration of the public and private sectors that ensures adequate financial resources and accountability.

# 10-Year Plan Retrospective

- **Successes**

- 46 percent reduction in homelessness.
- More effective, efficient homeless services.

- **Challenges**

- Demand for temporary shelter and permanent housing programs consistently exceed capacity.
- Racial disparities in homelessness.
- Community understanding about causes of homelessness.

# 2019 – 2022: Current Era

Overview of latest trends in annual Point-in-Time count results, lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic, evidenced based best practices, and Countywide Strategic Plan homelessness metrics.

# OPEH Merger with HCD

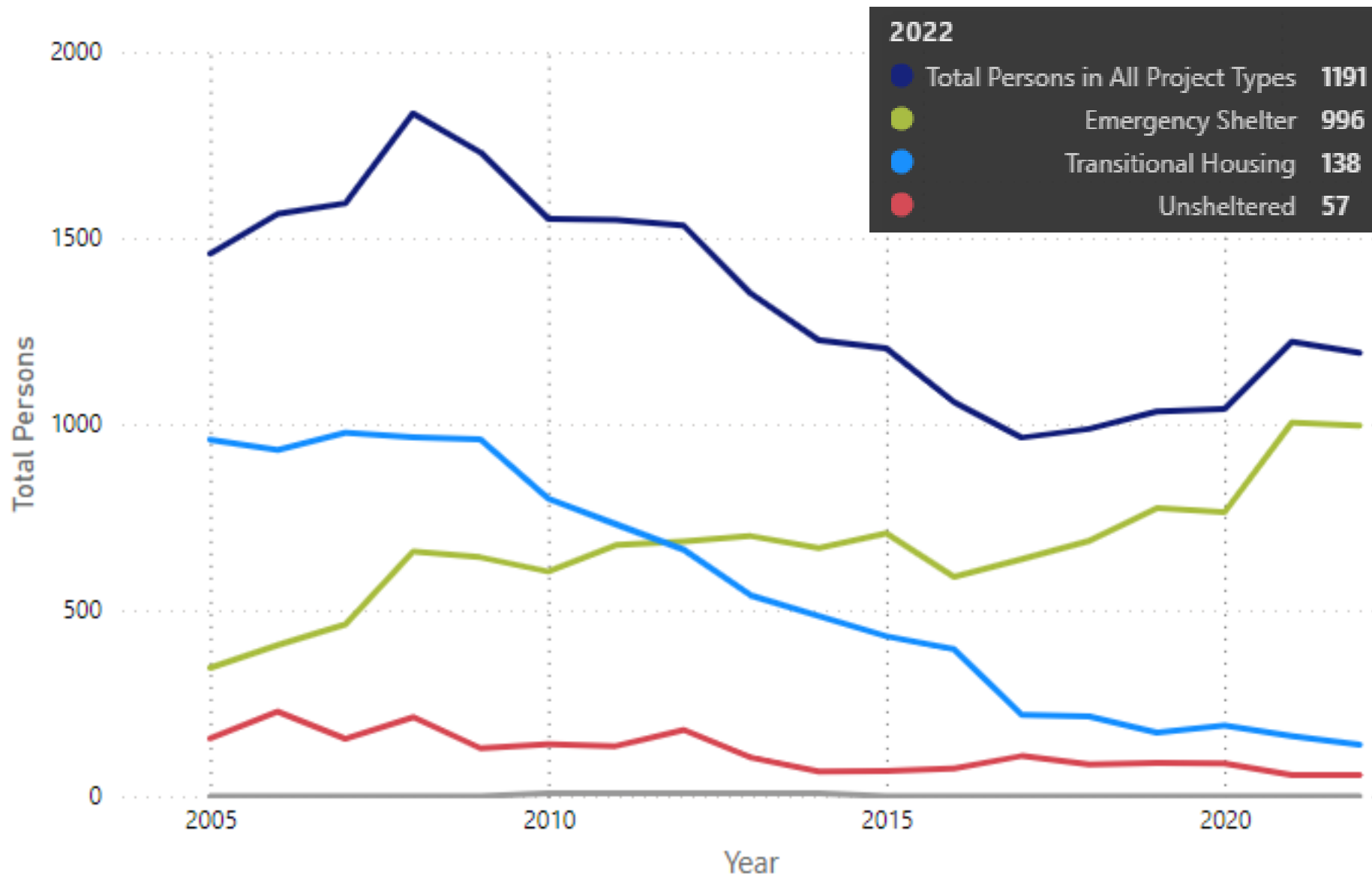
- One department, a continuum of housing needs
- **Early Benefits**
  - Retooling Bridging Affordability
  - Broader staff expertise to support the development of new permanent supportive housing
  - Emergency Housing Vouchers

# Lessons from COVID-19 Pandemic

- QPID shelters were response to a health crisis, not homelessness.
- **Successes**
  - Rapid isolation and quarantine.
  - Protect individuals at high risk of serious illness.
  - Decompress shelters to mitigate spread of virus.
  - Over 700 people housed from the hotels.
- **Challenges**
  - Increases in temporary shelter increases homelessness.
  - Insufficient affordable, permanent housing for guests.



# Point-in-Time Count Trends



# Evidenced-Based Best Practices

- Housing First
- Built for Zero
- Permanent housing with support services:
  - Permanent supportive housing
  - Rapid rehousing

# Countywide Strategic Plan

- **Community Outcome Area:** *Housing & Neighborhood Livability*
- **Indicator of Success:** *Preventing and Ending Homelessness*
- **Strategies:**
  - HNL 14. Expand the availability of permanent supportive housing units and services for people experiencing homelessness, including both individuals and families.
  - HNL 15. Provide incentives so that nonprofit and for-profit housing developers and landlords will set aside units for people experiencing homelessness.

# Moving Forward

- **Planning for Zero: Ending Homelessness in Fairfax County**
  - Seek community input on updating existing strategies
    - Community forums, surveys
  - Process to update performance metrics
- **Governance**
  - Evaluate current structure and make recommendations

# Moving Forward

- **Operations**

- Conduct operational assessment of the effectiveness of county and private homeless services
- Analyze hotel usage

- **Longer Term Solutions**

- Find locations for permanent supportive housing
- Review zoning requirements
- Identify new or under-utilized options

# Moving Forward

- Create more capacity in emergency shelters and reduce the population of various encampments
- Share findings and recommendations at Nov. 22, 2022, Housing Committee



# Questions?

## Contact:

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