Addressing Homelessness in Auburn, Maine

A Comprehensive Framework and Approach to Address Issues Through Prevention, Intervention, Treatment, and Recovery

Contents

Background

In March 2024, the Mayor's Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness was selected and convened by Auburn Mayor Jeffrey Harmon. The Committee met 14 times from March 2024 through January 2025, to assess the current state of homelessness in Auburn and identify a strategy and priority activities that the City of Auburn, with guidance from the Mayor and City Council, could take- in partnership with other organizations in the region.

Members of the Mayor's Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness, listed below, are pleased to present this report to the Mayor, City Councilors and City Manager. Our intent is to provide a framework and set of recommendations to assist in developing a comprehensive approach in addressing the issue of homelessness in our community on both a short and long-term basis. While the city of Auburn cannot and should not be responsible for all aspects of this framework, it is important to view the city's role through such a comprehensive framework. There are many agencies and organizations in our community already providing the services necessary to address many of these components.

Members of the Mayoral Ad-hoc Committee on Homelessness:

Sasha Anastasoff (Student Homelessness)

David Bilodeau (Co-Chair, Response Team)

Tim Cowan (Co-Chair, Ward 2 City Councilor)

Jen Edwards (Public Health)

Peter Floyd (Non-Profit)

Belinda Gerry (City Councilor At-Large)

Bonnie Hayes (Community Member)

Bill Lowenstein (Addiction Treatment)

Bruce Noddin (Community Member)

George Sheats (Clergy)

Marianne Veilleux (Non-Profit)

Vision

Addressing homelessness in Auburn, Maine, and Androscoggin County requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach that spans prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery. By implementing strategies within each of these frameworks, we can create a supportive environment that helps individuals and families achieve and maintain stable housing. This multifaceted approach not only addresses the immediate needs of those experiencing homelessness but also tackles the root causes and long-term challenges, paving the way for a future where homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

By leveraging data-driven insights and collaborating with community stakeholders, policymakers, service providers, and residents, our communities can work together to develop and implement effective solutions that make a meaningful difference in the lives of those affected by homelessness. Through sustained effort and commitment, we can build a more inclusive and supportive community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

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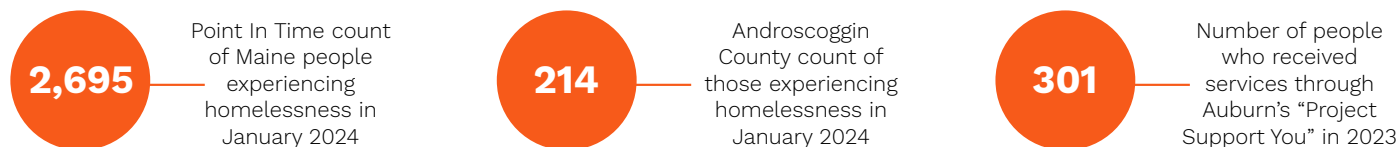
Current State of Homelessness

Point In Time counts indicate that the number of people living in shelters, temporary housing, tents or cars has increased substantially over 2022 and 2023.

- Point In Time counts are collected for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), for planning and budgeting purposes.
- Based on HUD's Point In Time counts, homelessness in the United States increased **18%** from January 2023 to January 2024 - to the highest level on record. (*Washington Post article, December 27, 2024; Kornfield M, Paquette D, Hennessy-Fiske, M.*)
  - The article reports that the tally collected on a single night in January 2024 was **771,480** people living in shelters, temporary housing, tents or cars.
  - Importantly, the article also stated that the estimate in January 2023 was 12 percent higher than the survey preceding it.
  - The HUD report estimated a **39% increase** in families with children who relied on shelters or slept outside- from January 2023 to January 2024.
- Maine also saw much higher counts in 2022, 2023 and 2024, compared to (2015-2021). [2024-point-in-time-report.pdf]
  - In January 2024, Maine's total count of people experiencing homelessness was **2,695**. Of these 2,695, **214** were in Androscoggin County.
- *Experts consider these Point-in-time assessments (data typically collected on one night in January) to be an undercount of the true total number of individuals who are homeless*; *we can consider these a minimum number of individuals who are homeless.*

Additional data about the scope of homelessness in the Lewiston-Auburn region:
- In 2023, Auburn's "Project Support You" workers, with support from OPTIONS liaison Dave Bilodeau, provided services to **301** individuals (unduplicated count) experiencing homelessness in Auburn. These services were provided through the City of Auburn's contract with Tri County Mental Health Services (now part of Spurwink Services) for the Project Support You program.
- Between February and early April, 2024, the Lewiston-Auburn Emergency Warming Center (partially funded by the City of Auburn) provided services to **241** individuals (unduplicated count). Of these 241 guests served, **109** stayed at the Warming Center 10+ days.

2,695 — Point In Time count of Maine people experiencing homelessness in January 2024

214 — Androscoggin County count of those experiencing homelessness in January 2024

301 — Number of people who received services through Auburn's "Project Support You" in 2023

- This year's Lewiston-Auburn Emergency Warming Center (at former Schemengees facility) averaged **70 guests per night** in January 2025, up from an average of 62 guests per night in December 2024. The peak number of guests in one night was 87 (through Nov '24-Jan '25). We don't yet have an unduplicated count of individuals served by the Warming Center this winter. Below are some additional data about those who stayed over at the Warming Center so far this winter.
  - **38%** of guests had been homeless for less than a year. 62% had been homeless for more than 12 months.
  - **52%** of the guests at the warming center were 40 years old or older.
  - **68%** of the guests at the warming center were male; 32% were female
  - **68%** reported their last stable housing was located in Lewiston or Auburn
  - **52%** of the guests did not currently have a case manager (highlights an opportunity for assisting individuals).
  - Only **7%** had housing vouchers (highlights potential opportunity to assist).
- The Drop-in Center, now located at 121 Mill Street, opened in February, 2022.
  - Since opening, the Center has served approximately **20,000** meals to those in need.
  - Over the past 4-5 months (Fall 2024 to present), the Drop-in Center has served over **350** individuals (unduplicated count), with most individuals coming to the Drop-in Center multiple times.
- The fastest growing segment of those experiencing homelessness in the Lewiston-Auburn region are people over the age of **65**. [Sun Journal article, May 2023]
- In Auburn, the number of students who are homeless or under-housed* has also increased substantially in recent years.
  - *Under-housed refers to students who are sleeping in housing with substandard conditions such as no running water, no heat, no electricity, overcrowding, etc.
  - The numbers of students identified/assisted has increased 4 times over five school years (see numbers below).
    - 2019-2020: **58** students, 19 unaccompanied (33% of total)
    - 2021-2022: **113** students, 29 unaccompanied (26% of total)
    - 2023-2024: **234** students, 46 unaccompanied (23% of total)
  - Further, the number of students identified so far in this current school (2024-2025) is higher than the number identified at the same time last year (170 students as of first week in January 2025, vs. 138 January 2024), suggesting the total number identified this school year could be higher than last year.

Framework for a Comprehensive Approach to Address Homelessness

Addressing homelessness requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery. By understanding and implementing strategies within each of these frameworks, we can work towards reducing and ultimately eradicating homelessness in our community. The concept of addressing challenging social issues using the 4 pillars of prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery has been used in Maine and nationally for many years to successfully address the issues related to substance use disorder.

The Committee recommends addressing the issue of homelessness in our community through a similar approach.

PREVENTION

Prevention is the cornerstone of addressing homelessness. It involves identifying and mitigating the root causes that lead individuals and families to lose their homes or apartments or other living arrangements. In Auburn and Androscoggin County, several prevention strategies are critical:

1. Affordable Housing
   A. Statistics: Approximately 40% of renters in Androscoggin County are cost-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing. According to the website Apartments.com, the median rent in Auburn was approximately $1,300 per month in July 2024. This would necessitate a yearly household income of over $52,000/year to afford these rent rates. As a reference, the 2024 median household income in Auburn was $66,552.
   Rent Ranges in Auburn, ME (updated July 2024)
      I.   Below $700/month   0%
      II. $700 - $1,000/month   33%
      III. $1,001 - $1,500/month   17%
      IV. $1,501 - $2,000/month   17%
      V.   Above $2,000/month   33%
   B. Policy Advocacy: Local government can implement policies that encourage the development of affordable housing. This includes zoning laws that require a certain percentage of new developments to be affordable units and tax incentives for developers who build low-cost housing. Mixed income development buildings have been successful in other communities and could be encouraged.
   C. Public-Private Partnerships: Collaboration between the public sector and private developers can lead to the development of housing projects that would not be possible by either of these sectors independently.
   D. Rental Assistance Programs: Expanding rental assistance programs, such as

A. housing vouchers, can help low-income individuals and families afford housing in the private market. These programs need to be well-funded and widely accessible to be effective. The effectiveness of this program is critically dependent on having an adequate number of housing units available to meet the need. At present, there are not sufficient numbers of housing units to meet the need.

B. Eviction and Foreclosure Prevention Programs:
   I. Utilize HUD HOME dollars to create a short-term rental assistance (TBRA) program to prevent evictions while also providing assistance with financial literacy and workforce development program referrals for eligible households to help them afford market rate units.
   II. Also consider programs to assist with foreclosure prevention, including programs to assist seniors who cannot afford or no longer desire to have to upkeep their homes to downsize into housing that will best meet their needs. There is a lack of case management type services that can assist seniors with this process. Addressing prevention of homelessness for both renters and homeowners with mortgages at risk of foreclosure would provide a broader range of protection to our community members.
   III. Advocate to continue the "Preventing Homelessness State Pilot Program", which provided funding that successfully kept Auburn students/families in their homes and apartments. Auburn's McKinney-Vento Liaison used the majority of funding ($97,059 for two school years- 2023-2024 and 2024-2025) to pay back and current payments for utilities, rent, mortgage payments, campground and hotel costs. Remaining funds were used for food, clothing, emergency car repairs, gas for cars, a furnace repair, and security deposits to secure new housing. Of note, it costs less to maintain a family in their current housing then to secure new housing.
   IV. Court Mediation support: Increase access to support plans and mediators in court cases, to help keep individuals housed.

C. Address housing discrimination: Eliminate disparities that perpetuate homelessness with specific populations (i.e. individuals with substance misuse and dependence, individuals who have been incarcerated, those with mental health issues, low-income, families with children, individuals with pets).

1. Economic Support:
A. Statistics: In 2022, an estimated 43% of households in Androscoggin County had incomes less than the costs for essentials needs in the county. Breaking this group down:
   a. 12% of households were in poverty.
   b. 31% of households earned more than the federal poverty level but less than what is needed to afford basic essentials. These households are referred by the acronym ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed)

    a. Costs of basic household essentials included housing, childcare, food, transportation, health care and a basic smartphone plan.

    b. The % of households with financial hardship (i.e. sum of % ALICE households + % households in poverty) varied by composition of the household and by age of householder:

        i. Household composition examples: 83% of single-female-headed households with children had financial hardship but only 15% of married couples with children did,

        ii. Age of householder examples: 58% of householders 65 yrs+ had financial hardship compared to just 36% of those aged 25-64 yr olds.

    c. For more information: Maine | UnitedForALICE

A. Poverty Reduction strategies: Incorporate poverty reduction strategies such as promoting workforce development programs and removing barriers to employment such as education, transportation, childcare, and access to case management services as well as mental, behavioral, & physical healthcare.

B. Job Training and Education: Providing access to job training and educational programs can help individuals gain the skills needed for stable employment. This includes vocational training, apprenticeships, and continuing education opportunities.

C. Financial Literacy Programs: Educating individuals on budgeting, saving, and managing credit can empower them to make informed financial decisions and avoid economic pitfalls that could lead to homelessness. The Auburn School Department includes such program offerings in their curriculum. Additionally, Auburn's support of the Bridges out of Poverty work that is already happening in the Lewiston – Auburn community should continue.

D. Living Wage Campaigns: Advocating for living wages can help ensure that full-time workers earn enough to cover basic living expenses, including housing. Raising the minimum wage to a livable level is a critical step in preventing homelessness.

1. Education and Awareness

A. Public Awareness Campaigns: Launching public awareness campaigns about the risks and signs of potential homelessness can encourage early intervention. These campaigns can also combat stereotypes, reduce stigma and foster a more supportive community environment.

B. School and Community Programs: Implementing programs in schools and communities to educate young people and families about homelessness and available resources that can help prevent future homelessness. These programs can include workshops, seminars, and informational materials.

INTERVENTION

Intervention strategies are essential for individuals who are at immediate risk of becoming homeless or who have recently lost their homes. In Auburn and Androscoggin County, effective intervention measures include:

1. Emergency Shelters:
   A. A continuum of services and locations are needed to meet the multiple needs of our neighbors experiencing housing difficulties. These would include drop-in services such as those presently being provided by the Drop-In Center, a full-time warming/cooling center and a full-time shelter. The recently created Community Resource Center at 121 Mill St. will help create and provide access to the variety of services described in this document.
   B. Current Shelters:
      I. At this time, there is no permanent 24-hour emergency shelter that serves the Lewiston-Auburn communities. However, the City of Lewiston is actively working on getting such a shelter built.
      II. Between February and early April, 2024, the Lewiston-Auburn Emergency Warming Center (partially funded by the City of Auburn) provided services to 241 unique individuals. The L/A Warming Center was reopened for winter 2025; in January 2025, the Center served an average of 70 guests per night.
   C. Recommended Components of Emergency Shelters:
      I. Safe and Dignified Accommodations: Emergency shelters should provide a safe and dignified environment for individuals and families. This includes private or semi-private sleeping arrangements, clean facilities, and access to basic necessities (including access to showers and ability to do laundry).
      II. Comprehensive Services: Shelters should offer a range of services to address the immediate needs of their residents. This includes meals, hygiene products, clothing, and access to medical care. Of note, there are limited access to medical care. There is only one federally qualified health clinic in the Lewiston-Auburn area- the B Street clinic- and an overall shortage of primary care providers.
   D. Outreach Programs: Mobile outreach programs are connecting with individuals in the community, including those living on the streets, providing them resource connections for behavioral health and substance misuse treatment as well as providing information about shelter options and transportation to shelters if needed for unsheltered individuals. Two such programs that serve Auburn currently are the state funded OPTIONS program and Auburn's Project Support You program through our partnership with Spurwink.
2. Crisis Intervention Services:
   A. 24/7 Hotlines: Establishing 24/7 hotlines staffed by trained professionals can provide immediate support and guidance to individuals in crisis. These

A. hotlines can offer information about emergency shelters, financial assistance, and other resources. These services are presently being provided through the 211-system statewide.
B. Rapid Rehousing Programs: These programs aim to quickly move individuals and families from homelessness to permanent housing. They provide short-term financial assistance, case management, and support services to help stabilize housing situations.
1. Mediation Services: Offering mediation services to resolve conflicts that could lead to homelessness, such as landlord-tenant disputes or family disagreements, can prevent individuals from losing their homes.
2. Legal Assistance:
A. Statistics: Legal aid organizations in Androscoggin County handled over 200 eviction cases in 2023, reflecting the high demand for legal support in housing matters.
B. Eviction Prevention Programs: Legal aid organizations can provide representation and advice to tenants facing eviction. These programs can help individuals navigate the legal system, negotiate with landlords, and access financial assistance to avoid eviction.
C. Access to Benefits: Helping individuals apply for and secure benefits they are entitled to, such as Social Security, unemployment insurance, and housing subsidies, can provide critical financial support.
D. Rights Education: Educating individuals about their rights can empower them to protect themselves from unjust practices that could lead to homelessness.

TREATMENT

Treatment addresses the underlying issues that contribute to homelessness, such as mental health problems, substance abuse, and chronic illnesses. Comprehensive treatment strategies in Auburn and Androscoggin County include:

1. Mental Health Services:
A. Statistics: Approximately 30% of individuals experiencing homelessness in Androscoggin County report having a mental health condition, highlighting the critical need for mental health services.
B. Integrated Care: Offering integrated care that combines mental health services with primary healthcare can address the complex needs of individuals experiencing homelessness. This includes co-located services and coordinated care plans.
C. Outreach and Engagement: Mental health professionals should engage with individuals in shelters, on the streets, and in encampments to build trust and encourage them to access services. This can involve street outreach teams and peer support specialists.

A. Crisis Intervention: Providing immediate access to crisis intervention services, including mobile crisis teams and crisis stabilization units, can prevent mental health crises from leading to or exacerbating homelessness.

1. Substance Use Disorder Programs:
   A. Statistics: Substance use disorder is reported by 25% of the homeless population in Androscoggin County, necessitating comprehensive substance use disorder programs.
   B. Harm Reduction Approaches: Implementing harm reduction approaches, such as needle exchange programs and naloxone distribution can reduce the health risks associated with substance use and connect individuals to treatment services.
   C. Access to Treatment: Expanding access to a range of treatment options, including detoxification, residential treatment, outpatient services, and medication-assisted treatment, can help individuals overcome addiction and maintain sobriety.
   D. Recovery Support Services: Providing ongoing recovery support, such as a peer recovery center, peer support groups, relapse prevention programs, and sober living environments, can help individuals sustain their recovery and avoid returning to homelessness.

2. Healthcare Access:
   A. Statistics: In Androscoggin County, over 95% of the homeless population is Mainecare eligible, highlighting the need for accessible healthcare services.
   B. Mobile Health Clinics: Deploying mobile health clinics to provide medical care to individuals experiencing homelessness can overcome barriers related to transportation and accessibility. These clinics can offer primary care, vaccinations, screenings, and referrals. Explore funding mechanisms the state can provide for such care in the field, including MaineCare or other insurance billing options.
   C. Health Insurance Enrollment: Assisting individuals in enrolling in health insurance programs, such as Medicaid or marketplace plans, can improve access to healthcare services. Outreach and education efforts can help individuals understand their options and navigate the enrollment process.
   D. Chronic Disease Management: Offering specialized programs for managing chronic diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension, wound care, hepatitis and HIV/AIDS, can improve health outcomes and prevent medical conditions from leading to or worsening homelessness.

3. Trauma support services:
   A. Many of our neighbors experiencing homelessness have a history of trauma (physical, sexual and emotional) which complicates providing services to them. This group of neighbors includes our veterans, who may have experienced the trauma of war. Many individuals do not trust agencies or

A. organizations. Many do not feel safe in large congregations of people and feel safer on their own. We have recently experienced the tragedy of a mass shooting in our communities. This has greatly impacted our community with many no longer feeling safe and some finding themselves unable or afraid to leave their living situations. We cannot adequately address the homelessness issues within our community without adequately addressing the trauma issues impacting many.
B. Students in our school district do not have timely access to mental health services. The City of Auburn can help provide leadership in conducting an assessment of needs and opportunities for addressing this issue.

RECOVERY

Recovery focuses on long-term solutions and support systems that help individuals reintegrate into society and maintain stable housing. Key recovery strategies in Auburn and Androscoggin County include:

1. Supportive Housing: Supportive housing is a type of housing that provides rental assistance and support services to help people live independently and achieve their goals. The goal is to create a safe and affordable place to live that gives people the support they need to be successful.
   A. Permanent Supportive Housing: This model combines affordable housing with comprehensive support services, such as case management, mental health counseling, and substance abuse treatment. It is particularly effective for individuals with chronic health or mental health conditions.
   B. Scattered-Site Housing: Offering supportive housing in scattered-site locations, rather than concentrated in a single area, can promote community integration and reduce stigma. This approach also allows individuals to choose housing that meets their preferences and needs
2. Housing First Approach: A Housing First approach prioritizes providing stable housing, without preconditions, in order to help individuals quickly transition from homelessness to housing. As part of the model, individuals are provided access to services, 24 hr/7 days per week, to address underlying issues that may have led to homelessness. For example, an underlying issue to be addressed would be case management for addressing substance abuse.

Recommendations

1) Create a permanent committee for the City of Auburn to continue to address homelessness.
    a) With the lack of affordable/attainable housing as the greatest contributor to the current prevalence of homelessness, consider creating one Committee that addresses both housing needs and homelessness issues.
    b) This committee could help ensure data-informed strategies/programs are used in Auburn to address the multiple issues contributing to the homelessness issue in our community.
    c) This committee can also help to ensure coordination and collaboration with the many organizations across the Lewiston-Auburn region that are working to address various issues influencing homelessness. Maine Homeless Planning is a key source of data-informed strategies/programs that the city can implement. [Maine Homeless Planning]
2) The City should work with state and regional partners to develop a Comprehensive Homelessness Strategy.
    a) Develop a thorough needs assessment of the local homeless population to understand the specific needs, including the demographics, causes of homelessness, and available resources, in collaboration with Hub 4 regional leadership.
    b) Create a long-term strategic plan using the framework provided in this report that includes goals, timelines, and benchmarks for reducing homelessness. This plan should involve stakeholders from various sectors-including non-profits, businesses, community members, and members of our homeless community.
    c) During Auburn's Comprehensive Plan development process, time should be allocated to consider how the City addresses homelessness.
3) Increase Affordable/Attainable Housing: Offer incentives such as tax breaks, grants, or reduced fees to developers who build affordable housing or convert existing properties into low-income housing units.
4) Auburn can use zoning regulations as a powerful tool to address and prevent homelessness by creating an environment that encourages the development of affordable and attainable housing and services for homeless individuals. Here are some zoning recommendations that can be implemented:
    a) Inclusionary Zoning: Mandate Affordable Units, by requiring developers to include a certain percentage of affordable housing units in new residential developments. This can help increase the availability of affordable housing across the community.
    b) Encourage Mixed-Use Development: Zone areas for mixed-use developments that combine residential units with commercial and social services. This can create opportunities for affordable housing units and

provide easy access to essential services for under-resourced and low-income individuals.

   c) Flexible Zoning for Shelters and Supportive Housing: Review and amend where necessary, zoning ordinances to allow homeless shelters, community resource centers, transitional housing, recovery residences etc. in more zoning districts, including commercial and residential zones. This flexibility can help distribute housing options more evenly across the community and reduce community opposition.

5) Implement Prevention and Early Intervention Programs

   a) Develop a "Housing First" facility: "Housing First" programs prioritize providing permanent housing quickly and without preconditions, followed by supportive services as needed.

   b) Rental Assistance: Offer rental assistance programs to help individuals and families at risk of eviction. This can include emergency financial aid, mediation between landlords and tenants, and legal assistance.

   c) Eviction and Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention:

      i) Work with local courts and landlords to create eviction prevention programs, offering tenants the support they need to stay in their homes, such as financial counseling or payment plans.

      ii) Utilize HUD HOME dollars to create a short-term rental assistance (TBRA) program to prevent evictions while also providing assistance with financial literacy and workforce development program referrals for eligible households to help them afford market rate units.

      iii) Consider allocating funding for a staff person to implement foreclosure prevention programs, including programs to assist seniors who cannot afford or no longer desire to have to upkeep their homes to downsize into housing that will best meet their needs. There is a lack of case management type services that can assist seniors with this process. Addressing prevention of homelessness for both renters and homeowners with mortgages at risk of foreclosure would provide a broader range of protection to our community members. (See recommendation 4).

      iv) Consider a landlord liaison program to encourage landlords to rent to individuals with higher needs by providing landlord incentives and pairing housing placements with continued behavioral health supports for the tenant. The City of Lewiston's current program could be studied as one possibility. Per information provided by Lewiston's Neighborhood Development Planner Jacqueline Crucet on February 5, 2025, the program was started as a two-year pilot program funded by Maine Housing, which will conclude in December 2025. They are currently working with 6 landlords, serving 70 people, in 23 apartments. The program takes a unique approach in providing financial and support incentives to local landlords looking to make improvements to their units and who are willing to rent to individuals at risk of, or having experienced, homelessness. The program includes a housing advocate who serves as a liaison between the landlord

and the tenant, and who provides mandatory supports to tenants enrolled in the program.

6) Be mindful of the impact of reassessment/mill rate increases on seniors when developing the city budget. Over 1/3 of Auburn seniors report being housing cost burdened presently and significant increases in property taxes can force seniors out of their present housing, increasing the homeless population. Consider items such as property tax payment deferrals, property tax freezes, or other options for seniors. See recommendation 4)c)iii) regarding the creation of a position or funding a contracted partner to work specifically with our aging population to address potential issues leading up to potential homelessness before it occurs.

7) Continue collaboration with the city of Lewiston in order to provide a comprehensive array of services for our residents experiencing homelessness. This would include ongoing operations of warming centers, shelters, community resource centers, drop-in centers, food pantries and other necessary resources to provide safety and shelter to at risk individuals and families. This could also include joint funding proposals and exploring the use of General Assistance funds in mutually beneficial ways.

8) Regional efforts need to be developed to address awareness and educational programs aimed at targeting the stigma attached to homelessness. There exists many myths and misconceptions regarding the causes and solutions regarding homelessness that should be discussed in order to enlist community-wide support and understanding of the problem. In addition, supporting efforts to reduce the stigma associated with substance use disorder and mental health challenges is also needed, as such stigma can create barriers to individuals seeking the help they need.

9) Explore funding opportunities to help address the multi-faceted issues that contribute to homelessness. This would include job training, mental health and substance use disorder services including medicated assisted treatment, medical care, trauma related issues including domestic &sexual violence as well as PTSD.
   a) The use of Opioid settlement funds from state, county, and local appropriations should be considered as a potential long-term funding source to help address some of these issues.
   b) Continue and expand diversion and deflection boots-on-the-ground programs such as Auburn's Project Support You program beyond the ARPA funded pilot period. This program helps to meet people where they are at in the community and triage individuals in need to the appropriate substance use and behavioral health treatment programs, as well as making referrals to housing navigators.
   c) Advocate state programs to provide additional funding for McKinney-Vento programs, such as the Preventing Homelessness State Pilot Program.
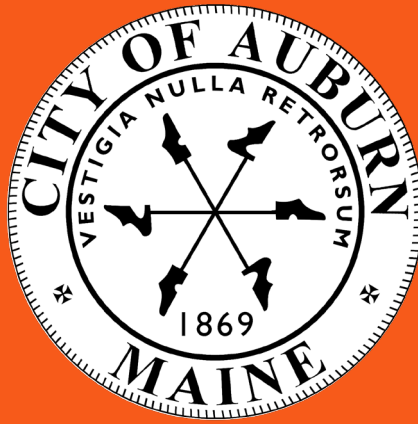
Mayor's Ad-hoc Committee on Homelessness
February 2025