



A New Day.

Homelessness Plan to Address the Passage of State Law #1365
“HB #1365: Unauthorized Public Camping and Public Sleeping”

2024 - 2025

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Jacksonville Homelessness Plan to Address the Passage of State Law HB #1365

Introduction:

With the State Legislature passing the anti-camping bill, HB #1365, Mayor Donna Deegan directed her administration to bring together stakeholders working with the homeless population and devise a strategic plan to significantly address this issue. This plan mitigates homelessness and if followed, has the potential to achieve ***functional zero***. Functional zero is the term used to describe when the number of individuals who become homeless is the same number as those who find permanent housing during the same year. The recommendations in this document were taken from that five-year strategic plan, as they deal with enforcing and responding to the passage of the state law, HB #1365, which must be implemented locally by October 1, 2024.

The most recent Point in Time Street Homeless Count identified 566 street homeless individuals. This plan's recommendations include increasing shelter beds, creating a homeless bridge shelter village, and contracting with hotels for shelter and creating extremely low-income housing units.

While government cannot solve all social problems, there is an important role it can take to impact its most serious challenges. By the City of Jacksonville demonstrating its commitment to mitigating the number of homeless, it allows increased opportunities for accessing federal and state funding and private philanthropic partnerships also aimed at tackling this national dilemma.

It is important to note that HB #1365 is an unfunded mandate that leaves the City of Jacksonville at risk of being sued, beginning in January 2025, if the city does not comply with this new law. Furthermore, in our discussions with members of the Homelessness Work Group, representatives from the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO) emphasized that there is no enforcement element of the state law and therefore, the City of Jacksonville will need to create ordinances to allow for enforcement. For example, currently, there are no ordinances that prohibit public urination or defecation. The mayor's office is working with the Office of the General Counsel to draft legislation to enforce the anti-camping on public property bill. Once passed by the City Council, JSO will have the necessary laws in place to fully enforce HB #1365, which includes offering the shelter and services advocated for in this plan.

A crucial component of addressing the needs of our street homeless and chronic homeless population is having strong wraparound services to include homelessness prevention (rent/utility assistance), homeless diversion programs (CHOP, MHOP), rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, food/meals, clothing, transportation assistance, shower, laundry, outreach, employment assistance, HIV, Syphilis, Hepatitis testing, SNAP, social security applications, mail, mental health services, primary care, dental services, medication access, daytime storage, computers with internet access, and legal assistance.

Recommendation #1

(from Section 7, Objective #1 in the Five-Year Strategic Plan)

Identify a point person within the Mayor's Office to oversee this plan.

Homelessness is a complex issue that impacts and is impacted by multiple components of the City's government and structure. A single person dedicated to understanding and coordinating all homeless initiatives within the city will ensure resources are optimized and opportunities are not missed. The top recommendation from the work group is for the City of Jacksonville to identify a point person in the Mayor's Office or in the Housing and Community Development Division in the Neighborhoods Department to lead this effort. The Director of Strategic Partnerships (DOSP) in the prior administration convened the Downtown Homeless Task Force during the pandemic and will oversee the execution of this plan in the first year or two. It is expected that as we identify and implement elements of this plan, we will also continue to evaluate what is working and what is not.

The Director of Strategic Partnerships would serve as a "conductor" to lead all stakeholders and create "deep collaboration" and a high level of coordination, to result in a more efficient, effective, and coherent system. The Director of Strategic Partnerships would hold the City of Jacksonville spot on the Continuum of Care Governance Board. The Director of Strategic Partnerships would coordinate with Jacksonville's Affordable Housing Administrator to determine needs at the city level between housing, services and homeless initiatives, as well as liaise with the Jacksonville City Council's Homeless Initiatives Commission, and any other responsibilities as assigned.

Year 1

- Develop a "baseline" report to demonstrate the "current state" of the homeless continuum so progress may be measured.
- Develop reporting mechanisms to demonstrate to the Council and public outcomes and improvements within the homeless system.
- Work with a consultant to conduct a thorough assessment of all aspects of the homeless continuum to ensure the city is prioritizing resources correctly.
- Identify potential collaborations to support the homeless system of care.
- Determine the need for a department or division within the City of Jacksonville to continue addressing homelessness, as well as managing the response to HB 1365.

Budget Needed: **\$0.00**

Direct Contract or Request for Proposal (RFP): **N/A**

Recommendation #2

(from Section 7, Objective #3 in the Five-Year Strategic Plan)

Expand and improve the homelessness management data collection system (HMIS)

Reliable and transparent data must drive and document this initiative. The homeless data collection system is known as the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). This web-based software application is available to all members of the Northeast Florida Continuum of Care and is used to coordinate services, manage operations, and better serve clients. The Northeast Florida Continuum of Care, which is run by Changing Homelessness and covers Duval, Nassau, and Clay counties, per federal regulations, is responsible for selecting the HMIS lead agency. Each agency is responsible for entering client level data for their program. Better data collection and analysis will allow our community to know what is happening with the projects being funded. These positions invest in the backbone of the HMIS and keep it running smoothly.

Year 1

- Perform a weekly data check of key performance indicators for each project with the project lead. Publish monthly updates to the dashboard for each project.
- Conduct a quarterly in-person meeting to review key performance indicators.
- Staff needed: 3 ½ staff.
 - Total annual salary and benefits: \$290,640 per year
 - 1 - *Monitoring and Training Specialist*
 - Salary and benefits – \$54,500 + \$23,400 = \$78,000
 - 1/2 - *HMIS Analyst*
 - Salary and benefits – \$28,000 + \$12,000 = \$40,000
 - 1 - *Data Communication Technician*
 - Salary and benefits – \$54,500 + \$23,400 = \$78,000
 - 1 - *Coordinated Entry Inflow/Outflow Data Outcome Lead*
 - Salary and benefits – \$66,248 + \$28,392 = \$94,640
- Total Costs for HMIS Improvements:
 - Staffing at \$290,640 per year
 - Admin and overhead at \$49,277 per year
 - System costs due to increase users at \$120,000 per year
 - This comes from purchasing new licenses to support expanded HMIS system and access – next level up in the software package.

Budget Needed: **\$459,917.00**

Direct Contract or Request for Proposal: **Direct Contract – Changing Homelessness**

Recommendation #3

(from Section 1, Objective #1 in the Five-Year Strategic Plan)

Increase homeless outreach teams to ensure that all parts of Duval County are covered daily and nightly

Increasing homeless outreach teams will ensure all parts of Duval County receive consistent and comprehensive support, both day and night. This expanded coverage will help address immediate needs of those who are unsheltered, connect individuals to shelters and resources, and ultimately reduce homelessness throughout Jacksonville. We will expand outreach teams by adding: Four (4) HOPE Teams - eight (8) new staff – two (2) individuals per team. Teams will begin ongoing training and start conversations around discharge outreach with hospitals and jail.

Year 1

- Integrate the “Show the Way” app across all outreach teams. All teams will enter data on folks encountered and be able to geo-map where people are.
 - The cost of application and support is \$50,000 per year.
- Expand outreach teams by adding:
 - Four (4) new HOPE teams (two staff per team; eight total positions). Outreach staff will be reaching out and identifying unsheltered homeless throughout the community, while providing assistance.
 - Salary: \$47,320 + \$20,280 benefits = \$67,600 per person
 - Total cost for eight (8) salary positions: \$540,800

Budget Needed: **\$590,800.00**

Direct Contract or Request for Proposal: **RFP likely**

Recommendation #4

(from Section 2, Objective #1 in the Five-Year Strategic Plan)

Increase shelter bed capacity by working with existing shelter facilities

Utilize current bed capacity to 100% and add more bed capacity as needed in existing facilities in year one by responding to the changing need in number of beds (capacity) based on new demographic trends (large uptick in homeless women and persons aged 55+ and the need for low barrier shelter), and the need to respond to HB 1365. The budget numbers below were provided by the leaders of the organizations who provide shelter beds and would include all services and functions provided to individuals at the shelter (does not include just the cost of the bed; all-inclusive of services provided).

Year 1

- Stand up additional beds at existing shelters – 136 new beds can be added over the next year from four (4) shelters – at least one will become a low barrier shelter.
- Total cost for the four shelters below is \$1.79 million for the first year (at least 50 new beds for women among the four shelters).
 - **The Salvation Army** can add 40 beds (includes services):
 - \$500,000 for year one.
 - **Trinity Rescue Mission** can add 20 men beds (includes services):
 - \$250,000 total annually.
 - **City Rescue Mission** can add 26 female beds (includes services):
 - \$340,000 total annually.
 - **Sulzbacher** can add 50 beds (includes services):
 - \$700,000 total annually.
 - Will set up a special demographic shelter for 55+ or whatever the need is in early 2025.

Budget Needed: **\$1,790,000.00**

Direct Contract or Request for Proposal: **Direct Contracts with four (4) shelters listed above**

Recommendation #5

(from Section 2, Objective #2 in the Five-Year Strategic Plan)

Every shelter enters bed availability daily into Client Track (HMIS)

There are five (5) shelters currently operating in Duval County. Additional staff will ensure that bed availability is entered daily into Client Track (HMIS) and all partner agencies and law enforcement have access in real time to the beds available and will have a hotline number to call to access them. Coverage at the shelters will include nights and weekends (currently no access to this information). This will allow real-time updates to the HMIS system and help promote and expand the “No Wrong Door” policy, **while creating a 24/7 system of homelessness support.**

Year 1

- All shelters must hire staff to enter data for bed utilization, as this will give JSO and other agencies real-time access to beds. Shelter employees will work at the shelters and enter data into the HMIS system in real time. Will be assigned other duties, as required, by the shelter – not just a data entry position. This invests in the system to support the mitigation of homelessness.
- Twelve (12) positions will be hired.
 - Eleven (11) of these positions will be dispersed throughout the city at shelters and agencies – two (2) of which will be staff for Trinity Rescue Mission. One (1) position will handle the HMIS data hotline.
 - Salary: \$650,520 annually is needed for twelve (12) positions.
 - \$37,947 + \$16,263 benefits = \$54,210 per person, per position.

Budget Needed: **\$650,520.00**

Direct Contract or Request for Proposal: **RFP to the area shelters for hiring needs**

Recommendation #6

(from Section 1, Objective #3 in the Five-Year Strategic Plan)

Develop “No Wrong Door” (all doors are open) strategy for coordinated intake

Develop ‘No Wrong Door’ (all doors are open) strategy for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Coordinated Intake – intakes will happen all over the city with different agencies. The Coordinated Entry lead agency, as selected by the Continuum of Care, is Changing Homelessness, Inc. The budget recommendation detailed below is for Duval County only. Coordinated Entry will be facilitated by Changing Homelessness and these staff individuals could be placed at area shelters and agencies. The goal will be to ensure that available beds are always known.

Staff will be trained to do outreach, intakes, assessments, and enter data into HMIS (HUD Homeless Management Information System), work with clients to gather all necessary documentation for programs, staff the By Name List and case conferencing meetings, and refer clients to eligible programs. They intersect between outreach staff and moving into a housing program with case managers. Coordinated Intake handles finding locations of shelters, working on the initial assessment of the individual, identifying if it's a critical situation, and collecting all documents that are needed.

Year 1

- Train all Coordinated Entry staff on diversion and problem solving. Track all successful outcomes from this approach for homelessness.
- Probably Changing Homelessness staff but all will be placed at area agencies to support intake. This would be an RFP as well, as needed.
- A total of six (6) new staff will be added to Coordinated Entry:
 - Salary: \$47,320 + \$20,280 benefits = \$67,600 per person
 - Total cost for six (6) staff = \$405,600 per year
- One (1) team lead for six (6) employees hired to support Coordinated Entry:
 - Salary: \$70,980 + \$30,420 benefits = \$101,400 for team lead
- Overhead and Administration: \$60,840 per year

Budget Needed: **\$567,840.00**

Direct Contract or Request for Proposal: **RFP likely**

Recommendation #7

(from Section 3, Objective #3 in the Five-Year Strategic Plan)

COJ will contract with provider(s) for housing focused case management support for low barrier shelter and non-congregate shelter.

Outreach and engagement of the city's street homeless must ensure wraparound services are provided to help individuals get on their feet. The need for more case management support is paramount to reaching "functional zero" of homeless individuals in Jacksonville.

These case managers would be housed at the "homeless village," the hotels, and shelters to provide education, services, and to help move people to permanent housing, thereby getting us to "functional zero" homeless. This means the number of individuals becoming homeless will equal the number of individuals moving into permanent housing. Case managers work with individuals directly to move them into housing and work with them directly to get their lives in order. The funding outlined for this recommendation would be the maximum amount needed and hirings will be done based on need, not all at once.

Year 1

- Contract for one (1) case manager for every 20 clients, one (1) team lead for every four (4) case managers and one (1) housing locator for every 100 clients.
- The maximum estimate is 275 clients: 13 case managers, three (3) team leaders, and two (2) housing locators would be needed.
- The salaries for these positions would be as follows:
 - Case Managers = \$47,320 and \$20,280 benefits = \$67,600 per person
 - \$878,800 annually for 13 case managers.
 - Team Leads = \$70,980 and \$30,420 benefits = \$101,400 per person
 - \$304,200 annually for three (3) team leads.
 - Housing Locators = \$47,320 and \$20,280 benefits = \$67,600 per person
 - \$135,200 annually for two (2) housing locators.

Budget Needed: **\$1,318,200.00**

Direct Contract or Request for Proposal: **RFP out in pieces (as needed; quarterly)**

Recommendation #8

(from Section 3, Objective #2 in the Five-Year Strategic Plan)

COJ to contract with hotels to secure up to 200 non-congregate shelter beds

To provide more shelter opportunities in Jacksonville, and to respond to the need for new available shelter space across the county, the City of Jacksonville will contract directly with hotels for up to 200 rooms as non-congregate shelter. This will allow the City of Jacksonville to better respond to the state law by creating more available shelter resources. 100 rooms have been identified as being able to shelter two (2) people.

Year 1

- The contract will allow for the drop off or referral of homeless individuals by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, if there is an opening at the hotel.
- The contracts will be for 30 days at a time, allowing us to increase or decrease the available shelter bed options, as needed.
- The contract will include meals for clients and security at the facility(s). An initial estimate has been received for 25 rooms at \$50 per night, \$325 per week or \$950 per month plus security and food. The estimates below are for 200 people.
 - Estimated costs for 200 rooms:
 - 200 rooms monthly = \$190,000 (\$2,280,000 a year)
 - One full time Changing Homelessness staff for data monitoring, evaluation and reporting for each year of the program at each hotel location.
 - Food estimate: \$28 per day, per person (\$21,700 monthly)
 - 200 people x \$28 a day x 365 days = \$2,044,200
 - Security estimate: \$25 hourly x 24 hours = \$600 daily (\$18,600 monthly). Security estimate yearly for one guard: \$219,000 (would likely need two or three guards).

Budget Needed: **\$4,543,200.00**

Direct Contract or Request for Proposal: **RFP will be needed (hotel vendors)**

Recommendation #9

(from Section 3, Objective #1 in the Five-Year Strategic Plan)

COJ will contract with a developer to create a non-congregate, low barrier bridge shelter village (Container/“ModPod”) for a pilot of 100 beds located adjacent to the Urban Rest Stop or another location as determined by HB #1365

The state’s anti-camping legislation (HB #1365) requires municipalities and local governments to implement the state law prohibiting individuals from camping on public city streets, sidewalks, and parks. Instead, local governments are authorized to build temporary encampments or shelters to place homeless individuals, for local governments to enforce the law and the unfunded mandate.

Year 1

- Assess efficacy of a shipping container compared to a “ModPod” solution.
 - If a shipping container option is selected: Pay for 25 shipping container units to be built out (100 rooms) and lease the property (parking lot) next to the Urban Rest Stop to house.
 - If the ModPods option is selected: order 100 ModPods to be delivered to a leased location (likely parking lot next to the Urban Rest Stop).
- A developer would handle the building out of the housing village for the City of Jacksonville – including infrastructure. This would be a pilot program to start.
- Contract with Urban Rest Stop for meals and case management.
- Estimated Costs would include: 100 bed unit pilot – Housing Village
 - 100 ModPods x \$18,500 each = \$1,850,000 (one time cost).
 - Land lease - \$20,000 per month = \$240,000 a year.
 - Electricity - estimated at \$15 per day, per four (4) units = \$136,875 a year.
 - Portalets (4) - \$1,000 per month = \$12,000 a year.
 - Case Managers (4) = \$270,400 a year.
 - Meals - 3 meals per person, per day = \$273,750 a year
 - \$2.50 per meal x 3 x 365 days x 100 people
 - Private Security (two people) for housing village = \$525,600 a year.
 - 24/7, 365 days a year, at \$60 per hour
 - Cleaning - \$1,000 per week = \$52,000 a year.
 - Dumpster Service - \$100 per week x 52 weeks = \$5,200 a year.

Budget Needed: **\$3,365,825.00**

Direct Contract or Request for Proposal: **Likely RFP but Direct Contract is preferred due to timing (managed by Director of Strategic Partnerships in the Mayor’s Office and Affordable Housing Administrator in the Neighborhoods Department – success metrics provided to Council)**

Recommendation #10

(from Section 2, Objective #4 in the Five-Year Strategic Plan)

All shelters, in partnership, develop a 24/7 intake plan for staff and policies

Jacksonville currently does not have a 24/7 shelter system or intake plan.

To mitigate and reach functional zero for homelessness, and to enforce the state law passed in 2024, the City of Jacksonville must create policies and procedures to keep shelters (or at least one shelter) open 24/7 for intake of new homeless residents.

Year 1

- Convene appropriate staff from shelter(s) leadership to determine how 24/7 intakes could work and develop policies and processes to be shared.
- Work with Director of Strategic Partnerships and Homelessness Lead for the City of Jacksonville to identify the best solution forward to ensure at least one shelter is always open 24/7 in Jacksonville to receive new intakes from those unsheltered.

Budget Needed: **\$0.00 (no budget; policy)**

Direct Contract or Request for Proposal: **N/A – Administration will work with shelters.**

Recommendation #11

(from Section 6, Objective #5 in the Five-Year Strategic Plan)

COJ to expand the Homeward Bound Program

Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO) runs a homeward bound program, in coordination with Downtown Vision, Inc., that helps homeless residents in Jacksonville relocate to a stable location back to where they lived before becoming homeless (back to their permanent home).

Other cities are identifying communities that are not addressing their homelessness crisis and are transporting their homeless to those cities across the country. An example of this is Tallahassee, Florida, which has seen their homeless population rapidly increase over the past few years from individuals who have never lived in Tallahassee. In fact, in Jacksonville, we've seen an increase in non-locals being homeless across Duval County. We must address this by getting individuals back to their original communities, so they can receive the help, support, and treatment they need from those who know them best. This also allows Jacksonville to devote its resources to those individuals who live here.

This homeward bound program provides relocation support by covering the transportation costs and places the homeless individual into a program (or contacts willing family to support them) back home to support their success and get them housed. Downtown Vision, Inc. supports this program through their ambassador program, in coordination with JSO, with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding they receive.

Year 1

- Determine scope of eligible individuals for the program (the need).
- The Director of Strategic Partnerships, in coordination with JSO and Downtown Vision, will convene a working group to identify individuals who would likely qualify, and discuss plans and procedures that the city can support.
- Determine current funding provided by Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and identify needed funding from City for expanded program with JSO for future years.

Budget Needed: **\$50,000.00**

Direct Contract or Request for Proposal: **Direct Contract – JSO or Downtown Vision, Inc.**

Recommendation #12

(from Section 4, Objective #1 in the Five-Year Strategic Plan)

Expand and Increase Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Programs

Housing is the solution to homelessness. There are two ways to increase access to housing: development of new affordable units and making existing market housing affordable. With regards to homeless interventions, Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) provides long-term housing coupled with supportive, wraparound services for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and others with significant barriers. Utilizing mainstream vouchers, like Housing Choice Vouchers from the Jacksonville Housing Authority, to subsidize housing costs for homeless individuals and families, is an efficient way to increase access to stable and affordable housing.

Year 1

- Monitor the Ability Housing PSH pilot program just launched with the City of Jacksonville and determine its success and growth potential for 2025.
- Expand support for the award-winning Mental Health Offender Program (MHOP) PSH program, which is currently funded for 40 clients at \$1.2 million a year (\$600,000 a year directly from the City of Jacksonville (\$200,000) and Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (\$400,000) + \$600,000 matched from the State).
 - The MHOP program just won the Gold Award for most innovative program in the country from the American Psychological Association (APA) in New York in June 2024. This program needs \$447,500 added back into the budget to increase the active participants from 40 currently, up to 60 people. If we want to double the program up to 80 active participants, we will need to add \$847,500 into the budget.

Budget Needed: **\$447,500.00**

Direct Contract or Request for Proposal: **Direct Contract (Sulzbacher) for MHOP program**

Total Costs Overview

(from all recommendations listed above for year one funding needs)

The costs, listed below, are for each of the recommendations listed above for one year. Some of the costs are adjustable and could be decreased, based on the needs of the programs. You can find the total costs, over five years, in the overall five-year strategic plan to mitigate homelessness – to be released later once fully completed. This 2024-2025 investment will ensure that Jacksonville not only addresses homelessness and the newly enacted state law (HB #1365), this year as required, but will continue to invest in mitigating homelessness through incorporating the rest of the five-year strategic plan in the years ahead.

Recommendation #1:	\$0.00 total (internal hire)
Recommendation #2:	\$459,917.00 total
Recommendation #3:	\$590,800.00 total
Recommendation #4:	\$1,790,000.00 total
Recommendation #5:	\$650,520.00 total
Recommendation #6:	\$567,840.00 total
Recommendation #7:	\$1,318,200.00 total
Recommendation #8:	\$4,543,200.00 total
Recommendation #9:	\$3,365,825.00 total
Recommendation #10:	\$0.00 total (policy recommendation)
Recommendation #11:	\$50,000.00 total
Recommendation #12:	\$447,500.00 total

Total maximum costs (year one) to fully implement and address the state law (HB #1365) with recommendations made by work group on homelessness:

\$13,783,802.00