ERIE COUNTY HOME TEAM STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVE 2017/2018
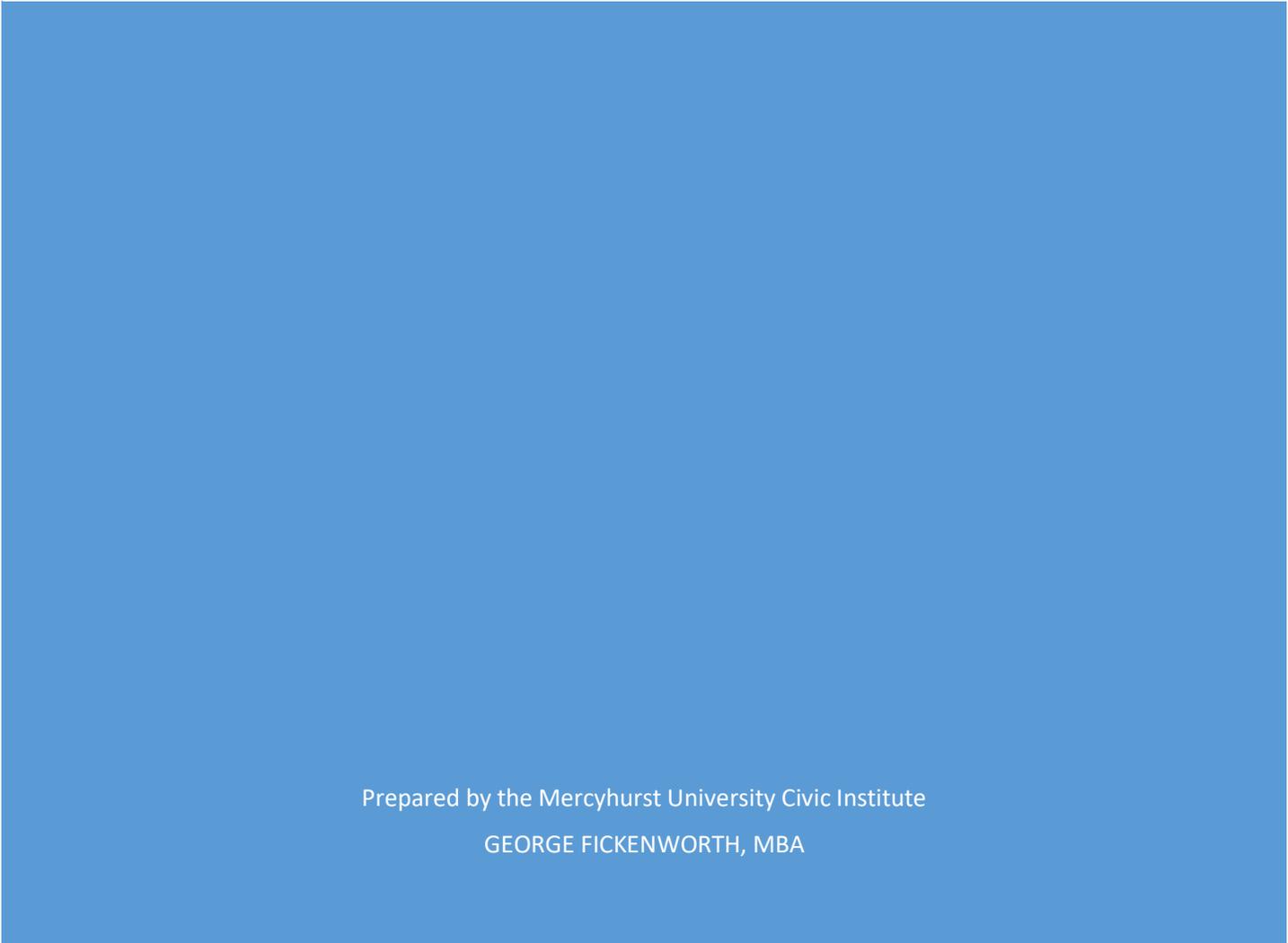
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Planning Session 1: 11.14.17

The first planning session of the Erie County Home Team was held on November 14, 2017 at the St Peter and Paul Social Hall. The meeting began at 2pm.

Attendance for all of the planning sessions can be found in a table located in the appendix.

To begin the meeting, facilitator George Fickenworth asked the attendees to identify what outcomes would make for a successful planning initiative. The following were identified by those in attendance. Several of the themes were duplicative, hence not repeated in this summary.

- Clear goals, with identification of a true direction
- Putting in place a vision and outcomes to work on
- Assuring that coordinated entry implementation is smooth
- Promoting good team work and collaboration
- Understanding roles of our 'teammates'
- Reducing homelessness of youth
- Getting the right agency fit at the table
- Making our Continuum of Care successful and the 'go to' group in the region to address homeless and housing issues
- Assuring an efficient use of funds
- Educating everyone on how our system works.

The purpose of the first planning session was to review with the larger group the results of the pre-planning surveys conducted during the fall of 2017. Key stakeholders were interviewed and asked a series of questions regarding how they viewed the current state of the Home Team. A total of 12 questions were included in this pre-survey, used as a basis to begin the planning process. During this session, the questions would be reviewed and attendees would have time to discuss and give their input as well. The full report of the interviews can be found later in this report in Appendix A.

The first question that was reviewed was *Explain what you and your agency are involved in the Erie County Home Team.*

Attendees discussed these results and noted that silos seem to prohibit proper collaboration with each other. At the meetings, there tends to be 'spinning of wheels' and not a lot of presenting of ideas. Not enough information is exchanged between agencies. During the meetings, many attendees tend to be frustrated, as 'politics' get in the way of what needs to be accomplished. Many show up because they feel they have to be there. There was agreement that the Home Team has potential to be a great leveraging body; however it is underutilized, lacks agency/industry diversity, and those outside the Home Team have little or know knowledge of what it is there to do.

The second question of the pre-interviews that was reviewed was *Why do you come to the meetings and engage, and what does your agency get out of being a member of the Home Team.*

Attendees responded by saying that the current status of the Home Team is that of being 'stuck in a box'. Things are done because it's the way it's always been done. Meetings are redundant and team

members are not utilized better during these meetings.   The group further divulged their issues with how the agendas are put together and who has input into this, wondering if there was full transparency of issues that needed to be brought to light. The subcommittee structure was also questioned, as well as how much time is devoted to their efforts during the meetings. Some felt that there was too much discussion and overseeing of their activities during the meetings, and that each subcommittee should be left to do their work outside and only have short report outs during the larger meeting. Regarding the structure of the meetings, they believed that they strategic plan should address this. Many also felt that this is a prime opportunity to tie into larger community plans such as those being worked on by county and city governments. One other key issue was discussed and that was of not knowing each other, meaning many are not sure what each agency/program does for addressing homelessness. Time could be spent on educating each other on programs during each meeting.

The third and fourth questions that were put forth to the group were *What do you view as the role/mission of the Home Team in serving Erie's homeless population, and is the Home Team meeting that mission, and what do you feel the mission should be?*

The discussion led to the common belief that the Home Team does not have a working mission to work off of. Future meeting time should be spent to reviewing what the Home Team currently does and why it is in existence. The group should also work on crafting a mission statement that it can adopt and base future planning efforts on.

The fifth topic addressed was *how is the governance structure viewed in terms of carrying out the mission of the Home Team.*

Most agreed with what was included in the pre-interviewed conducted, and thought that the bi-laws should be revisited. For some items the by-laws may need to be changed or amended to provide better governance and accountability for the group. Having clear responsibilities identified both in the by-laws and the strategic plan will likely help to solve issues that have been addressed. The group must also be cognoscente of what HUD requires in terms of governance operations.

The sixth topic addressed was *share your thoughts regarding the subcommittee's relevance and ability to get things done.*

Attendees were often confused about the purpose of the committees and the work that is being done within them. There is also hesitation to do much with them at this time because the planning process will identify new opportunities. Some priorities were identified however, which included marketing opportunities around the SPIT count, prioritizing a mission statement, assigning deadlines to committee work, as well as identifying clear responsibilities.

The meeting adjourned at 4pm.

Planning Session II: 12.14.17

The second planning session of the Erie County Home Team was held on December 14, 2017 at the St Peter and Paul Social Hall. The meeting began at 2:05pm

Attendance for all of the planning sessions can be found in a table located in the appendix.

During the first planning meeting, one of the key findings was that there was a lack of identifiable mission for the Home Team. Attendees determined that it would behoove the group to spend the next meeting working on crafting a statement that would be widely adopted for use and operations purposes. This was to take place at the second meeting.

To begin this session a review of what a mission statement consists of what went over with the attendees. The group agreed that the mission statement of the Home Team should be

- Clear and concise
- Short, similar to a 30 second commercial
- Distinctive to what their role is in the community
- Include the 4 '"W's": who you are, why you exist, what you do, who you serve

The attendees also noted that a mission statement has three primary functions.

- It can help inform others of what the Home Team does, allowing for follow-up conversations
- Focuses and motivates membership, giving them reason to believe in what they do
- Assists in guiding the planning process

Those in attendance were asked to divide themselves into 5 workgroups. Each table was given a handout with several questions on it that the table members were to use as prompts in formulating a mission statement.   The questions uses were

1. What is the problem that your organization exits to solve?
2. What is the purpose of your organization? Why does it exist? What are you trying to achieve?
3. What business are you in? What do you do to fulfill your purpose?
4. For whom do you work?
5. Where do you do your work, geographically?

Each table was given 45 minutes to conduct the exercise and pull together what they believed was a working mission statement. The following are the results from the initial walk-through.

Table 1: the Home team is a collaborative effort to end homelessness in Erie County, PA.

Table 2: The Home Team is a partnership of organizations and individuals committed to ending homelessness in Erie County.

Table 3: the Home Team of Erie County advocates from the homeless and near homeless and provides fair, safe and affordable housing and supportive services for all.

Table 4: The Home Team is the planning body that exists to collaborate, educate, share resources and information to address the effects and root causes of homelessness in Erie County PA

Table 5. Strengthening and collaborating the community who service those experiencing homelessness.

Each group had a representative read aloud what they had crafted, and discuss key reasons why they came up with what they did. Other groups were offered the chance to give feedback on each statement. Upon completion of this step, the attendees noticed many similarities between them, including key words that could be used to craft a statement that shared common themes and brought out the essence of what the Home Team identifies as.

FINALIZED MISSION: The Home Team is a community wide effort to end homelessness in Erie County PA through collaboration strategy advocacy and community awareness.

The next meeting date will be scheduled soon and notice sent out to the members of the Home Team.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 pm.

Planning Session III: 1.31.18

The third planning session of the Erie County Home Team was held on January 31, 2018 at the Community Room of the Achievement Center in Erie. The meeting began at 1:10pm.

Attendance for all of the planning sessions can be found in a table located in the appendix.

The purpose of this meeting was to finish reviewing the initial surveys conducted with key stakeholders, as well as to stimulate thought on key areas that the group may want to focus their efforts on moving forward. This exercise completes what was begun in the first meeting.

At the point where the group previously left off, the continued discussion of topic number 6, **share your thoughts regarding the subcommittee's relevance and ability to get things done.**

Because of the importance of this topic, more time was needed to allow for input from the attendees than was given at the previous meeting. During the first retreat there were many findings. Attendees were often confused about the purpose of the committees and the work that is being done within them. There is also hesitation to do much with them at this time because the planning process will identify new opportunities. Some priorities were identified however, which included marketing opportunities around the SPIT count, prioritizing a mission statement, assigning deadlines to committee work, as well as identifying clear responsibilities.

Discussion at the second meeting started off with members of the Housing Committee noting that they do not know what they should be working on and that there were questions regarding their direction. They noted that their prior meeting they discussed items such as rehabilitating old unused buildings for housing, working with landlords, and other topics. Their issue is not knowing what to do with this information. Further discussion alluded to this being a common problem with committees. It was pointed out, however, that historically speaking subcommittees are given authority to work on identifying issues, bring them to the greater Home Team for discussion, and then construct goals and action items to move forward. Planning is progressive, and the subcommittees should feel comfortable taking 'next steps' in what they are discussing and addressing. The issue at hand is that this has not been conveyed well to committee members, especially ones who have not been involved on the Home Team for many years. This generated further conversation on how to introduce expectations to new Home Team members (as well as re-instill the expectations with current ones).

Regarding the work of the subcommittees, most questioned the relevance of their construct. Currently, not much of the subcommittee work is guided by true goals of the Home Team, but they operate somewhat in a vacuum. The group discussed how the subcommittees are in place because they have always been there, but may not be integral to carrying out what needs to be accomplished. Looking at each group, they first pointed out that the new Coordinated Entry Subcommittee will be standing as its purpose is imperative to addressing a HUD-mandated requirement. The group discussed the Youth Committee as well, and they are the most active group in terms of discussing issues. They face the same dilemma as the Housing Committee, however; what are we trying to accomplish and what are our next steps? While they have done good work in discussing issues, there is a lack of direction to their efforts.

Regarding future subcommittee activity, there is a 'hold' on many meetings until the planning progress is finalized. Subcommittees can work off of each other, but their focuses should be on addressing the goals identified during this process. While forming subcommittees the Home Team should also be cognoscente of what the HUD priorities are. A couple points of interest for subcommittees moving forward that were suggested were holistic health integration in housing, and exploring non-traditional funding and outside partnerships.

The next topic discussed was question number 7, *what works with how the Home Team currently operates.* After reviewing the responses from the pre-interviews, attendees were asked to comment on the points made. Ironically one of the 'working' points was that the Home Team allows for an exchange of viewpoints. During this meetings though, some pointed out that views may be shared at the wrong times. The membership was said to be improving, as new people have joined over the past few years. Overall, the people involved seem to be committed to not just serving those in need but also working with membership to creating a better system.

It was pointed out that the effort to report on various data at meetings will be helpful during this process and moving forward. The attendees discussed that it's also important to understand the factors of *why* people are in their situation, not just the hard statistics. It may behoove the group to explore other data, not just what is found in HMIS and current systems. While the Coordinated Entry system will provide some needed information, there are also other places to gather information such as education, employment, and welfare systems, as well as the census. There was also discussion of the 'near homeless', and if it's the job of the Home Team to address this population and their needs. With the recent finding that the 16501 zip code is the poorest in the US, the thought of what is being done to prevent those that could find themselves homeless was brought up. Though Erie County's HUD rating makes it ineligible for prevention funds, there could be other opportunities and partnerships available that would allow the Home Team to work on this issue. Closing out this topic, attendees also pointed out that there is limited use of data to show whether or not the local programs work.

Following up this discussion was topic number 8, *what is not working and what can be done better.* Not much time was spent on this topic in terms of bringing up individual issues and points. Attendees felt that during the first few sessions the primary points had been made. Those at the meetings, however, did bring up the lack of clarity in who is the governing body; the entire Home Team, or the Executive Committee? Membership was also discussed, in that it is a very large board with over 90 individuals invited to each meeting. There was lack of clarity on whether individuals or agencies should have representation, and if the latter how many persons from each. Spending at least one meeting examining the contents of the by-laws and making amendments should provide better guidance for operations of the Home Team. The group briefly commented on meetings getting 'high-jacked' at times with ongoing discussions. One suggestion was to limit the time of meetings to an hour, and be mindful of the clock.

The next question reviewed was question 9, *what could you recommend for the Home Team to improve upon.* In terms of looking at being a more effective board, there are opportunities to explore other successful CoC's and how they have become functional. Members noted that ones they know of include Snohomish, WA and Philadelphia. One representative noted that she will make attempt to make contact through her offices with other state legislatures that may know what ones in Pennsylvania

would provide good examples. The attendees also understood that as a whole they need to be better educated on who is doing what within our community to serve those in need. Using data from Coordinated Entry and the United Way's 211 system should help with this issues. Other points made were that the group as a whole needs to be more positive in their efforts, and also to update and utilize the webpage better and more regularly.

To conclude the session from today, attendees were asked to give input on the last two questions posed during the pre-interview process. First, they were asked to review what was stated in *the top 3 things that could be said about the Home Team.* There was not much more to add than what was included in the previous interview responses. They did note that there is strong commitment from members, and that those who attend do bring a passion with them to serve those in need (though at times their passion may be constrained a bit by tunnel vision and not being able to see outside their own programs).

Next, they were asked to comment on *priority 'wish list' items that the Home Team would address and change to better the Continuum of Care system in Erie County.* Nothing else was added other than having a better understanding of HUD mandates.

Prior to concluding the meeting, the attendees agreed that it is important to establish momentum in the planning process, as it had been 'back-burnered' due to the importance of implementing Coordinated Entry at a county level. A schedule of meetings was set for the next two months, and advance notice given to members of the Home Team to plan accordingly. The following dates were established:

February 14th and February 28th; 1:30 – 3:30 at the CCBH Conference Room

March 7th and 21st; 1:30 – 3:30, location to be determined.

Meeting adjourned at 4pm.

Planning Session IV: 2.14.18

The fourth meeting of the Home Team Planning Initiative was held on February 14, 2018 at the conference room of CCBH. Those who were in attendance are noted in the Appendix.

The meeting began at 1:35, with introductions by those in attendance. After a quick recap of what took place at prior meetings, the group moved forward in their discussions.

The question "What does this group look like in 2 years?" was posed for feedback.

One of the first ideas brought up is that there should be a mechanism to demonstrate what funding streams are open and available for grant purposes, and who is receiving what dollars and from whom. It was noted there may have been situations where grants were put forward but were not able to be signed off on by county staff. The discussion turned to a general lack of understanding of funding streams, and where most of the local funding goes. Some wondered if there are providers that have been awarded dollars for projects that others may not have been aware of. It would be beneficial for the Home Team to become 'experts' in this process, and learn to leverage dollars locally. One of the suggestions that came out of the discussion was to have a physical document that illustrates what programs are out there, and the dollars that are received by public sources to fund them. This would help with implementing a system of transparency between the agencies. There are also 'cultural' issues that need to be improved upon in order to promote collaboration.

The point regarding collaboration and pulling resources turned to a focus on having a different board make-up, inclusive of individuals not directly involved in housing the homeless (i.e. not providers). It is understood that to identify and tap different funding streams to 'make things happen' there is a need to have a totally different looking board that understands outside systems. As dollars are being cut, there needs to be some creativity in how projects and programs are funded, and to explore other funding models that may be in place in different communities. The concept of 'my marbles – your marbles' was talked about, and though historically this is how member agencies have interacted, it cannot any further. A comment was made that the agencies at the table are technically competitors in many ways, but they are expected to share available resources, which is not a natural position to maintain. When discussing how to entice individuals to join the Home Team, the attendees noted that there is no systemic process in place. Years ago members would take prospective members to lunch and 'wine and dine' them, but this did not generate anticipated results, so the group got away from it. In order to bring the right people to the table, they need to first identify those who may work with homeless persons in ways different than current members. A manual or binder could be established as an orientation piece. The attendees also questioned the current structure and whether or not the current Home Team is actually the governance body. It was hypothesized that the Home Team, which is currently made up of mostly providers, could still exist but be overseen by a Board of Governors made up of 'outsiders'. Subcommittees would fall in the structure, but can be made up of those not directly involved in the Home Team.

The attendees discussed the relationship with CCBH, noting that they would not pay for peer specialists that help with housing issues. Over the years funding from this stream has been pulled back, though they are the biggest funder of MH services. Discussion of expanding the funding waiver to include other

disabilities was suggested.   In Arizona the managed care company is the top funder of housing, so why not in Pennsylvania. One of the reasons is that the Home Team as a whole does not advocate well and talk about what their issues are, and they need help in this area.   As the county contracts with CCBH, there were inquiries whether the county should look into this issue further.   To learn what other communities do, it was suggested that it be a priority to have county staff attend National Alliance conferences more often to bring what they learn back, including how to advocate better.

The attendees had conversation regarding how to identify the real priorities of the Home Team and gaps within the community.   Many say they know what they are, but there is a feeling that they lack 'authority' to do anything about them.   One way to gain traction in the community is to possibly align with other community plans/initiatives, i.e. Erie Refocused. Currently, Erie Refocused does not have a specific plan to addressing housing, but it is an issue that they have agreed to address; perhaps the Home Team may have an opportunity to help in this regard.   Many on the Home Team, however, were not even aware this aspect of the larger community plan. There is also significant movement, both city and county-wide, to start up land banks and address blight, which should be something that this group could and should part of.

Another topic that the group discussed they should be addressing is Homeless Prevention. At this time, the County is not eligible for HUD prevention funds. Many of the attendees discussed that it is imperative for the Home Team and County to look at other sources, i.e. PHARE funds. Currently, a few local agencies do receive dollars from this source for housing and supportive services. Other possible sources are Transfer Tax dollars and Act 113 funds.   The group agreed that part of the planning process needs to include an agenda on how to access funding for this effort.   The concept of Homeless and Healthcare was also brought up

Looking at data is also a priority. This will help to identify gaps that exist and how the Home Team talks about what the issues are. However, if gaps are identified will the Home Team be prepared to move on them? Recidivism is a key area, but unfortunately there is no way to access this data, as Bowman is not accepting requests for custom reports at this time.

Concluding the meeting, there were suggestions that the Home Team could explore Permanent Housing vouchers as done in the VA model, PHFA Section 8 vouchers, and using the Federal Home Loan Bank for affordable housing programs.

It was determined that at the next meeting, the group should spend time reviewing the Home Team by-laws and working on amending them to develop a better governance structure.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20.

Planning Session V: 2.28.18

The fifth full meeting of the Erie County Home Team Planning Initiative was held on February 28, 2018 at the CCBH Conference Room.   The attendance roster can be found in the appendix.

The meeting began at 1:30pm. To begin the session attendees were asked to introduce themselves and the program or agency that they represent.

As agreed upon at the previous planning session, the focus of upcoming efforts would be to review the by-laws of the Home Team and have discussions on how they can be improved upon. The last rendition of the by-laws as distributed to the Home Team prior to the meeting, which was dated January 2004. The attendees would use this document for review while discussion its' components. This document was also 'compartmentalized' and embedded into a power point presentation, which also included references from HUD manuals that reference operating boards of Continuum's of Care and what should be included in their operating procedures. Prior to the meeting, the facilitator researched and examined CoC by-laws from other communities as to their structure and used as reference point throughout the conversation.

The first section of the by-laws reviewed was *Section 1: Name and Location.*

- *The Erie County Continuum of Care Home Team shall be known as the Home Team.*
- *The principal office of the Home Team shall be 154 West 9th Street, Erie, PA 16501-1303.*
- *The locations and times of Home Team meetings and Committee meetings shall be established by the membership and/or committee Chairs.*

The attendees were asked to review this and give feedback regarding what is missing and what may be included or done away with to strengthen this section.   The first suggestion was to add the website address of the Home Team at the end of the section which would direct persons there for additional information and contact information on members.

Within the first bullet, the term 'Home Team' was thought to be redundant and should be removed. There was also discussion regarding how a CoC should have a governing body attached to it (per HUD regulations). At this local level, the CoC is the charter tied to Erie County government, and the Home Team would act as the governing body.   For clarification purposes, the group thought to amend this section to: "The Erie City and County Continuum of Care (PA-605) Governing board/charter/body shall be known as the Home Team."

In the second bullet, because of the differentiation between the CoC and the Home Team, it should be specified that the DHS office address is the correspondence office of record which handles the administrative aspect of both entities.

The third bullet point is irrelevant to this section, and should be referenced in a later document.

The second section of the by-laws focuses on *Section 2: Mission, Vision and Purpose.*

- *The Mission of the Home Team is to work collaboratively to effectively address and eliminate homelessness.*
- *Our Vision is a Community Without Homelessness.*
- *The purpose of the Home Team shall be to assess, plan, promote, establish, and evaluate a comprehensive, collaborative, sustained continuum of services for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in Erie County by:*
  - *(a) Meeting bimonthly to further develop the service delivery system for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in Erie County.*
  - *(b) Identifying available resources.*
  - *(c) Coordinating services among providers.*
  - *(d) Collecting data related to the homeless delivery system in Erie County.*
  - *(e) Identifying major gaps in the homeless delivery system.*
- *The definition of homelessness shall be defined by funding sources and the Home Team members.*

The Mission statement of the Home Team had been addressed at a previous meeting, and will be amended in the updated by-laws.

The vision statement was reviewed, and many felt that it was fine the way it currently is. However, after a bit more discussion the majority in attendance agreed that it lacks a sense of action and could be improved upon. Several attendees agreed to hold a side-meeting and work on crafting a stronger vision statement.

The third bullet point references the purpose of the Home Team. The consensus was that the current statement is very wordy and could be simplified to better illustrate what their objective is while not duplicating the mission statement. During the discussion of this section attendees suggested removing all the verbs and replace them with oversee or advise. "The purpose of the Home team is to oversee/advise a comprehensive continuum of services for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in Erie County."

The group discussed the sub-points under the purpose and believed that they were more strategic efforts that could be better placed elsewhere. These could be replaced by the four main components of the mission statement.

a) Promote collaboration among member agencies
b) Develop strategy to ….
c) Advocated for those in need
d) Make the community aware of the Home Team efforts and those in need.
e) Commit to quality improvement of our provided services

It was agreed that the final bullet point should be removed.

Section 3: Membership was the next area that the group discussed.

The Home Team membership should represent a cross section of the community. The membership shall include representation of all organizations or individuals supporting the Home Team mission and values. This will include representation by homeless or formerly homeless individuals.

The general theme was to align the by-laws more with what HUD states in their recommendation; membership will reflect community-wide commitment to end homelessness, and consist of both mandatory and suggested memberships. For sake of being consistent the work 'should' should be replaced with 'shall' in the first sentence. Regarding membership representation, it was discussed how the by-laws should note that the Home Team membership is 'including, but not limited to…' and list the primary agencies and focus areas that are at the table permanently. The membership committee will need to look at the current membership listing and identify what those areas are, as well as what organizations and areas are missing. While looking at the roster, the membership committee will also need to take into consideration that HUD says a person may represent more than one focus area (i.e. individual who was formerly homeless as well as a provider agency).

Throughout the entire conversation of membership, there was repeated discussion regarding how to better recruit new membership, and addressing needed resources to do so.

Section 3.A under membership addresses the Organization. As currently stated.

- *The Home Team shall have an Executive Committee consisting of four officers, to be elected annually by the membership. The Executive Committee will also include the Chairpersons of any standing committees, the County representative, the City representative, and others as from time to time are deemed necessary by the Executive Committee or Home Team Membership at large. The officers shall be Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. The past Chair may retain membership on the Executive Committee for one year to aid with transition.*
- *Committee Chairs are Housing, Membership/ Nominating, Gaps Analysis, Children and Youth, Education and Outreach, and Information (MIS).*
- *Committees may cease to exist or be added by a vote of the Home Team at a general meeting.*

There was much discussion regarding the Executive Committee structure and who should be involved in this committee. In addition, there was introductory discussion on the overall voting process for the Home Team. It was hypothesized that the Executive Committee could be the only 'voting' authority of the Home Team, and the general board make-up serve in an advisory role. There are some CoC boards structured in such a manner, and HUD guidelines somewhat allude to this being a preferred set-up. The difficulty making such a switch would be that many who currently attend could feel that they're not part of the process anymore, and they don't have a say. Additional comments were made on the structure of the Executive Committee including committee chairs. The potential problem is having inactive or irrelevant committees. By naming the committees in the by-laws, they are locked in until amended. Committees will most likely change and restructure more frequently. Other CoC boards have 'static'

representation such as county-leads, a consumer, funders, and housing authorities, as example to circumvent this problem. Further discussion led to comments on having committee chairs be part of leadership team as they are the conveyers of information between the Executive Committee and the groups. The Executive Committee should also be driven by what the Home Team is trying to accomplish. Because this section was taking up considerable time, the group felt that discussing the powers and structure of the Executive Committee could be put off until later.

The second bullet noted the committees. Though some are active, others are not. It was noted that HUD requires a CoC to have a Coordinated Entry and HMIS committee, but others are dependent of the planning of a board. Committees are vital to the Home Team carrying out its efforts, but most attendees reflected that they don't know if these are the right ones. More time will need to be spent on them, and after the by-laws are reviewed the planning process will examine the existing committees and see what are worth keeping. Regarding committees, a strategy needs to be in place for making sure everyone participates on at least one committee.

The attendees discussed other aspects of membership at this time. As noted prior, the current membership list needs to be examined as to who is a member and who is not. And for those who attend, who should get a vote. Bylaws note that two persons per agency may vote, but some felt that more than that attend via an agency, and often 'over-vote' (though that belief was questioned). Further discussion was had regarding how agencies/organizations are represented on the Home Team. HUD notes that the governing board should consist of high-level decision makers and if they can't make it, a delegate can be named and also given voting powers if applicable. The membership fee was also discussed. Though there was some understanding that there is 'buy-in' or 'being part of' with the feel, most felt that they get nothing out of this and, because it's not what most CoC boards do, the Home Team may want to look at scrapping it. If it is included, it then needs to be added to the by-laws as there is no mention of it at this time. This discussion then moved towards what exactly one finds beneficial as being a member. The Membership Committee will work on a survey to distribute and gather information on this topic.

Section 3.B Terms of Office/Voting Powers was the next section covered.

- *The Officers shall be elected at the November meeting of the Home Team and may hold office for one year or until their successors are elected. Officers may be elected for a second term of office, should the membership so decide, after which there will be at least one year before they are eligible for re-election.*
- *The new officers begin their term in January of each year. Other members of the Executive Committee may change more or less frequently based on the turnover in Chairs of the committees.*
- *Vacancies of offices may be filled by a majority of members voting at any Home Team meeting.*
- *A quorum shall consist of the total number of those present at all Home Team meetings. A simple majority of all those present and voting shall be required to pass any motion or resolution.*
- *When a single organization has more than two members sitting on the Home Team, only two members of that organization may vote on a motion or resolution.*
- *Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern the proceedings of all meetings*

of the Home Team, except as provided in these guidelines.

The group began discussion on several of the points under this section; however, it chose to bypass the points on the Executive Committee until that larger discussion is held.   Some of the issues brought up were regarding frequency of voting, mechanisms of casting votes, and term limits. The Home Team abides by Roberts Rules of Order; however, many are not familiar with this process and the entire body should be made aware of the standards set in it.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30. The group decided to pick-up at this point at the next meeting scheduled for March 7th.

Planning Session VI: 3.7.18

The sixth full meeting of the Erie County Home Team Planning Initiative was held on March 7, 2018 at the Family Services Independent Living Program's Conference Room.   The attendance roster can be found in the appendix.

The meeting began by revisiting **Section 3.B Terms of Office/Voting Powers** (see previous pages for summary of by-laws). Significant portions of this section revolved around powers of the Executive Committee; as noted prior, this will be a separate discussion held at a future meeting. What was briefly debated however was how to structure term limits for Executive Committee members, so as to prevent stagnation in serving these roles. Suggestions to this included serving a '2-1-2' method, where a person can serve two years in a role, take a year off, and then serve another two in a different Executive Committee position. All believed however, that there should not be term limits for those in the general membership.

The discussion move on to **Section 3.C Duties and Powers; Executive Committee**

A. Duties and Powers
1) Executive Committee: The Executive Committee shall meet bimonthly, prior to the Home Team meeting. Committees make their reports and the agenda is set for the Home Team meeting, with any changes to be made based on the reports.

- *The Home Team meeting is presided over by the Chairperson. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall preside over the meeting. The Chairperson also serves as an ex-officio member of all committees, and may appoint new or ad hoc committees with the approval of the Home Team.*
- *The Vice Chair is vested with all powers and shall perform all duties of the Chairperson during the absence of the latter.*
- *The Secretary shall keep all minutes of the Executive Committee and Home Team meetings and shall perform all the usual duties of that office, including making the minutes available to the Chairperson or other designated person for official mailings.*
- *The Treasurer shall report on such fiscal matters as the Home Team may request and shall perform all other acts incident to the position of Treasurer.*
- *The Executive Committee is charged with ensuring that all business brought before the Home Team is relevant to the purpose and mission of the organization.*
- *The Executive Committee shall be responsible for taking care of any business of the Home Team that cannot wait until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the full membership. Any decisions made by the Executive Committee affecting Home Team business must be brought before the full membership at the next regularly scheduled meeting for ratification.*

There were no concerns with how the duties of Executive Committee members were written. Attendees agreed that they covered responsibilities thoroughly.

2) Committees: Committees must meet at least bimonthly. The standing Home Team Committees are:

A. *Gaps Analysis*

 The purpose of the Gaps Committee is to identify the resources and unmet needs of the homeless delivery system in Erie County.

 The Gaps Committee meets to develop the Causes of Homelessness, Housing Needs, Direct Service Provider Survey, Agency information/inventory, and the Supportive Service Provider Survey: Agency information/inventory survey tools.

 Reports are generated for the community using these surveys for homeless planning purposes

B. *Information*

 The Information Committee is responsible for developing HITS= Homeless Intake Tracking System. It is a locally developed web-based system that will contain data used by Erie County to register and track the homeless. Their work is ongoing as they make revisions and additions to fine- tune the system.

C. *Education and Outreach*

 The purpose of this Committee is to educate the Home Team members and the community as to our projects and their impact and purpose; to create diverse community partnerships through education, public relations and special event strategies. By creating an awareness and consistent message among Home Team members we can win community support and partnership.

D. *Membership/ Nominating*

 The role of the Membership/ Nominating Committee is to expand membership in the Home Team by developing recruitment tools, developing and defining written information on roles, responsibilities for management, leadership, and membership. We invite, welcome, and orient new members, as well as, follow-up on members who have been present only sporadically.

E. *Housing*

 The role of the Housing Committee is to identify gaps and needs within the current housing system, and to originate new ideas to improve and expand upon current services in order to address these gaps and needs.

F. *Children and Youth*

 The role of this group is to identify the needs of homeless youth, to enumerate services and resources available to them, and to recommend development of resources needed for them.

One of the first things brought up during this discussion was that some of these may not be relevant any longer. As these had been added to the by-laws in 2004, there should be more output with what they've been working towards. The Information Committee and Gaps Committee have been consolidated into one effort. Children and Youth have been active, but not driven by any true goals. The others have met sporadically over time.   The attendees discussed how HUD CoC guidelines address this topic. HUD strongly recommends a PIT Count, Application Review and Coordinated Entry

Subcommittee. Others are based off of planning efforts and on-going needs of the body. These are not static, and fall into the category of 'Ad Hoc', and can come and go depending on needs.

The group also discussed the need for an Issues/Grievance committee, or at least to have a process in place (possibly overseen by another committee) to allow individuals/agencies to come forward should there be a need. In a previous session, there was mention of exploring Quality Assurance standards for providers; perhaps it could fall under this area should it move forward.

The final section of the by-laws discussed was **Section 3.D Dissolution**.

As currently stated:

> *The Home Team may be dissolved should it no longer be necessary for the business for which it is charged. A vote to dissolve the Home Team shall be made in writing to all members not less than two weeks prior to a meeting called for that purpose. Majority rule of the decision shall approve the action. Any funds or other items of worth shall be granted to the Erie County Department of Human Services.*

The main issue brought out by the current standard was that it doesn't identify who would vote on the disbanding; the entire Home Team or the Executive Committee? The attendees also questioned the process for potential mergers/acquisitions with other CoC's. As the Home Team has financial holdings, members noted that they would want to assure that money would carry over the new entity and not be relinquished to DHS.

As the attendees completed their analysis of the current by-laws they were given the opportunity to note any 'missing' pieces that they felt would solidify the document and allow for stronger governance structure moving forward.

As noted prior, there was a call for adding a Grievance section. Second, the members felt that the by-laws should incorporate conflict of interests (including how to disclose any conflicts, how to recuse oneself, and voting rights). While reviewing the HUD CoC guidelines, it was pointed out that there are sections that must be revisited on a regular basis (i.e. by-laws), and that should be written in. Members also discussed that it might behoove the Home Team to adopt a formal policy of distribution of minutes and other pertinent documents.   One other aspect that was brought about was that of what makes a members in good standing, regarding attendance. As many haven't shown up in years, why are they included still? The group should define what is a member in good standing (i.e. 75% of meetings, 2/3, etc), and identify a process of removal.

The meeting concluded at 3:10. The Civic Institute will work on identifying best practices and examples of how other CoC boards identify membership for Executive Committees, and work on a Conflict of Interest section.

Planning Session VII: 3.21.18

The seventh full meeting of the Erie County Home Team Planning Initiative was held on March 21, 2018 at the Family Services Independent Living Program's Conference Room.   The attendance roster can be found in the appendix.

At the previous meeting on March 7th, many of the issues regarding the updating and expanding of the by-laws were centered on not having a HUD-recommended CoC structure in place, including how to form a Governing Board out of the current body. In order to answer many of the questions regarding powers of the Executive Committee, how membership would be incorporated into the structure, voting limits, etc., the group needed to have a discussion regarding how to make a long-overdue transition into the HUD-recommended functional body. As the Home Team has been operating in its current state for over 20 years, a transition is bound to lead to much confusion and a possible feeling for some current members being disenfranchised. The primary purpose of today's session was to discuss what the HUD CoC model looks like and begin discussion of transitioning.

Currently, the Home Team is a big organization that is made up of providers and concerned individuals with an executive committee that oversees the body. There are guidelines and by-laws in place (currently being updated), but often do not meet the required standards. While the current set-up could be seen as offering a voice to many, it does in fact allow for significant amount of side-tracked conversations and fluxing attendance and commitment.   While not far off, to meet the recommended model there would need to be a shifting of mind-set of who has authority to make decision and enact on behalf of the Erie County CoC. Below is an illustration of what a restructured Home Team would look like.
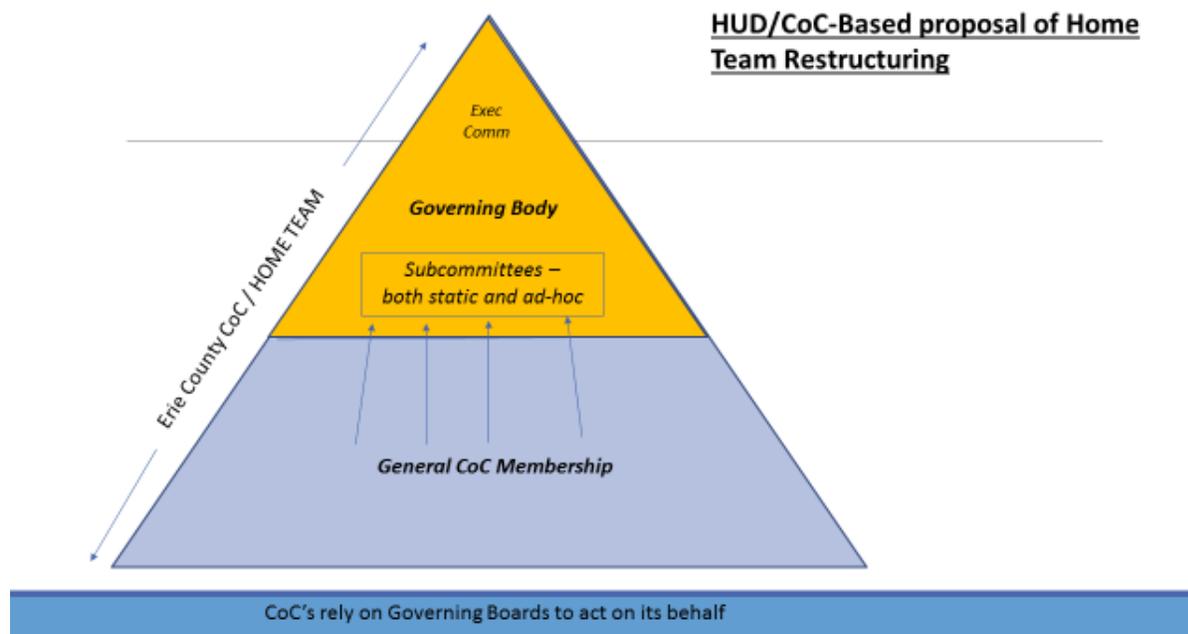
Throughout the process, one point that is lacking clarity is what exactly the CoC encompasses. In summation, a CoC is a body of agencies, individuals, and systems that work together toward the eradicating of homelessness. The CoC is not 'owned' by any said agency or department; it is a larger collaboration that works together.   Previously, some had thought that the County was the COC and presided over the Home Team; however that is not how it should be. The county is a part of the CoC, as is HMIS implementation, Coordinated Entry, etc.   As shown in the figure prior, the CoC is represented by the entire large triangle outlined in purple. A CoC is large in scope and as noted, encompasses many persons, provider agencies, and systems that are interested in caring for homeless persons or working toward affordable housing initiatives.   In a true-model, membership is open to all interested (upon approval) and willing to serve on at least one subcommittee. Anyone who wants to become a member that is in good standing only needs to attend 1 meeting.

What diverges the current Home Team structure is voting rights. In the HUD model, membership is not given to all. CoC's should have in place a Governing Body/Board that is given the authority to act in the CoC's behalf. This subset of the CoC membership is typically between 15 – 25 persons that have full voting rights on all matters at hand. While HUD notes that providers technically should not be part of the Governing Body due to conflicts of interest, many CoC's do not exclude them and have representation in limited numbers. The idea is to create a Governing Body made up of individuals that *would not* benefit from any decisions made.

The Governing Body would have a smaller Executive Committee that oversees the administration and operation of the CoC. Made up of officers, the Executive Committee often also includes subcommittee chairs (many who are representatives of providers of programs). Subcommittees are overseen by the Governing Body, but general CoC membership may serve.

To provide transparency and openness, there must be a great deal of communication to CoC membership and the public by making all minutes, agendas, and meeting times available to the public, as well as having Governing Body meetings open to both CoC membership and the public.

As summed up by a couple of the attendees….this will require a change in mindset on how the process works.

A great deal of comment and questions were discussed after a review of the model was conducted. While there wasn't significant pushback from attendees regarding the structure, what was noted was that there needed to be a strategic path of gaining buy-in to make the transition happen. Educating the current membership of the HUD model (and that it was supposed to be in place in 2014) will take time and effort. Many understood that the meetings have become somewhat unwieldly over time, and it is hard to get true direction and much accomplished in the meetings. Some of the questions that need to be addressed include:

- The number of individuals that would comprise the Governing Board
- What persons/agencies/programs would be represented on the Governing Board
- Time-limits for members of the Governing Board and procedures to replace them
- How to move from 'where we are' to 'where we need to be'
- Determine best practices for changing

During the meeting, there was a conversation regarding how to communicate what the Home Team is not just to the membership, but also to the public. Included in this would be workshops of what agencies do, video profiles/images of those who were homeless, increase in social media marketing, training videos, etc. This led to input and thought on a general awareness campaign. The group will come back to the topic at a later time.

To end the meeting, the attendees were asked to start thinking of what a Governing Board could look like. They came up with three buckets to pull individuals from; providers, government/funders, and the all-encompassing 'other'. Volunteers were asked to review the current membership role and compartmentalize which bucket everyone would fit into. In addition, they were asked to note who is missing from the roster that could be approached to be part of the body. They were asked to submit their results prior to the meeting on April 10th. In addition, MCI staff would look at what other CoC have done while falling in line with the HUD model, and would bring back recommendations to the group

The next meeting dates were established: April 10th & 24th May 8th & 22nd , 1:30 – 3:30 at the Family Services ILP program offices.

The meeting adjourned at 3:35

Planning Session VIII: 4.10.18

The eighth planning session of the Home Team was held on April 10, 2018 at the Family Services Independent Living Program conference room. The attendance roster can be found in the appendix.

The meeting focused on the prior discussion of creating a HUD CoC-model for Erie County and what some of the needs would be to move it forward. Several individuals were in attendance at this meeting who were not present at the March 24th gathering. Therefore a brief recap was given on what was discussed previously.

After this review and brief comment period, the HUD recommendations for Governing Board membership were shown to the group. It was made clear that we need to differentiate between the Governing board and CoC membership. What HUD states is:

The CoC Program interim rule requires CoC Boards to include representatives from relevant organizations and projects serving homeless subpopulations, such as

- Persons with substance use and/or mental health disorders;
- Persons with HIV/AIDS;
- Veterans;
- People who are chronically homeless;
- Families with children;
- Unaccompanied youth; and
- Victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
- The board must also include at least one individual who is homeless or formerly homeless.

In addition, several other CoC Governing Boards were looked at regarding the types of seat-holders make up the body. Some of the most commonly found include:

- Affordable Housing Developers
- Banks/Financial Institutions
- Business
- Chamber of Commerce
- Department of Job and Family Services
- Dept Health and Human Services
- Disability Services
- Domestic Violence
- Drug and Alcohol
- Economic/community Dev.
- Education Representative
- Elected Official
- Faith Based
- Faith Community Representative

- Foundation Representative
- Funder Representative
- Health Department
- Health/Hospital/Medical
- Homeless Service Provider
- Homeless/Formerly Homeless Person
- Housing Authority
- Law Enforcement / Public Safety
- Legal
- Mental Health Agencies
- Public Housing Agencies
- Real Estate & Building Industry Coalition
- Rep of Chronic Homeless
- Rep of SMI

- Rep of Unaccompanied Youth
- Representative of Families with Children
- Technology Business
- Veterans Affairs

Looking at the current Home Team roster, a rough classification was done of where members come from. The following table was put together.

CATEGORY	# members		
Business	1	from	1 agency
Collaboration	1	from	1 agency
Education	3	from	3 agencies
Faith-based	1	from	1 agency
Funding	5	from	4 agencies
Government	14	from	3 agencies
Health	3	from	2 agencies
Housing	4	from	2 agencies
Law Enforcement	1	from	1 agency
Provider	52	from	22 agencies
Veterans/VA	5	from	2 agencies
unknown	7		

At the conclusion of the last meeting, attendees were asked to do 'homework' regarding membership rosters and make-up. The group was asked to look at three main divisions that members may represent; government, provider/service, and funding/private/other. After perusing the current roster, they were asked to identify what is missing and if any of those entities are. The following listing was brainstormed.

- *2-1-1*
- *A hand in need*
- *Appliance places*
- *Attorneys*
- *Banks/credit unions*
- *Barber National Center*
- *Black Family Foundation*
- *Business associations*
- *Car dealers*
- *Career Link*
- *Caring Place*
- *Catholic Charities*
- *Catholic Diocese*
- *CCBH and other insurance companies*
- *Cell phone companies*
- *Children and Youth Services*
- *Chiropractors*
- *City*
- *City Council Representative*
- *City Housing Authority*
- *City of Erie – Mayor's Office*
- *Cleaning Services*
- *Code Enforcement (Erie & Millcreek)*
- *Community Care Behavioral Health*
- *Community Health Net*
- *Corry Memorial Hospital*
- *County Assistance Office*
- *County Council Representative*
- *County Executive's Office*
- *County Housing Authority*
- *County of Erie*
- *Crime Victim Center*
- *D&A*
- *DA's Office*
- *Daycares*
- *DCEC*
- *Dentists*
- *Dept. of Welfare*

- DHS (County MH/ID and D&A)
- Doctors, medical professionals, PCP's, Nurses, etc.
- Drug and alcohol providers
- Eire County Gaming Revenue Authority (this could be in the other bucket too)
- EMT's
- Erie Christian Business Leaders Association
- Erie Community Foundation

- Erie County Bar Association
- Erie County Care Management
- Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority
- Erie Downtown Partnership
- Erie Insurance, etc.
- Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership
- Families United Network
- Fire Departments
- Funeral Homes
- Grocery store/corner store owners
- Habitat for Humanity
- Health Department

- Hospitals – Hamot, St. Vincent, Millcreek, Lecom, Shriners, Specialty
- Hotel/Motel owners
- Housing Developers – Hands, Parade St Developers, Montagna
- Human Relations
- Kiwanis Club of Erie
- Landlords
- Law Enforcement
- LECOM
- LGBTQ groups
- Massage therapists
- MH/ID
- Moving companies
- Multicultural Community Resource Center
- Nami
- Nursing Homes
- NW Legal Services
- OCY
- Optometrist
- PA 211
- Parking Authority
- Pest Control
- Port Authority
- Preschools
- Primary Health Network Charitable Foundation

- Public Health
- Red Cross
- Restaurant owners
- Safe Harbor/Crisis Services
- Salons/barber shops
- Salvation Army
- School District Homeless Youth Liaisons
- Scott Enterprises
- Social Security Administration
- Social service agencies
- St. Vincent
- State and Federal Reps and Senators
- Teen Centers
- Temp agencies
- Township Supervisors
- Transportation
- United Way
- United Way of Erie County
- Universities/schools – Penn State Behrend, Mercyhurst, Edinboro, Gannon, Great lakes, Fortis, Erie Business Center, EIT
- UPMC Hamot
- VA
- WIC
- Women's Care Center

Throughout more discussion, it was obvious to the attendees that making this transition to the HUD-based CoC model will be a large undertaking given the current state of the group. In addition there are many logistic questions that need to be addressed to make this happen. The group decided that this effort would be a solid consideration for Strategic Area #1 of the plan: alignment of current structure to HUD-CoC model. Moving forward, the MCI will work w/ existing Home Team membership to devise an action plan to incorporate into the strategic plan that would allow for the transition. The next meeting will allow for discussion to begin of other areas of focus.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30pm

Planning Session IX: 4.24.18

The ninth planning session of the Home Team was held on April 24, 2018 at the Family Services Independent Living Program conference room. The attendance roster can be found in the appendix.

The purpose of this meeting was to have open discussion regarding major service points that individuals and families in need of housing utilize. Attendees were shown a listing that included:

- ✓ Shelters
- ✓ Transitional Housing
- ✓ Permanent Supportive Housing
- ✓ Rapid Rehousing Programs
- ✓ Other Housing Options
- ✓ Supportive Services

In addition, there was a listing that included goals identified by the US Interagency Council on Homelessness in their planning process.

- ✓ End to Veteran Homelessness
- ✓ End to Chronic Homelessness
- ✓ End to Youth Homelessness
- ✓ End to Family Homelessness
- ✓ Set a path to end all homelessness

Instructions for the discussion were given to note what is working, what's not, and what can be done better for each type of service. When addressed the second section would entail discussions around how Erie County at addressing each of the goals.

The first service discussed was Shelters. After a pause, some of the points that were identified were a need for more capacity, lack of feeling safe, waiting lists, locations are 'in town' and not scattered throughout geographic area, and the fact that many in need may not want to actually go into a shelter. Conversations veered to the fact that most of these comments lacked any verification from data, so we can't say that they're true or not. Some noted for instance that the shelters seldom have waiting lists and often have empty beds. Regarding data, there were suggestions to use the System Performance Measures found in HMIS as a start. Unfortunately, there are only two years' worth of data available, and the current year will not be available until most likely June. Many of the persons in the room also are not aware of what those measures are. PIT and HIC data has significant limitations as well, as it only shows one day in time.   When asked about what data could be looked at, the measures included 1. Where they are coming from 2. Zip code of last permanent address 3. Return to homelessness 4 .Exits. It was also pointed out that there are Housing First data points that HMIS does not collect. 2-1-1 may also be a source of data.

One suggestion that was brought up and met with resistance was shelters sharing information on 'problem persons' or situations, and collaborate better to address those with immediate needs. There is an identified lack of case managers within shelters that could be looked at as a solution. There could theoretically be volunteers used in shelters to assist.

There is also a lack of coordination within the community and education on what each agency does. Several attendees felt that they did not know enough on the differences between housing types to discuss what is working (or not) within each type. A follow-up will be sending an email with the definitions of what each is to the group. In addition to definitions, the types of programs and who offers them locally will help.

The attendees also had discussion regarding why certain funding is not fully used. It was suggested that not everyone is correctly using the same definition of Chronically Homelessness to service those in need. They also noted that there is probably a sub-population out there of 'not-quite chronically homeless' that is hard to reach and identify. There is also a lack of ability to match up community needs with availability of services as well as funding.

Moving forward with the discussion on data, and for the next meeting, the key things to look at are the 6 system variables (Length of Time homeless, 1st time homeless, increase in income, return to homelessness, exits to permanent housing, and # persons homeless). Other data that could be looked at include PIT/HIC, youth data, domestic violence, aging out of foster care, and VI-SPDT. MCI will meet with the county staff to begin seeing what is available from these sources currently. As has been the ongoing issue for the Home Team, many do not have access to pulling the data or know if it's available. PIT data is limited as well, as it reflects only 1 day.

The meeting ended at 3:25.

Planning Session X: 5.8.18

The tenth planning session of the Home Team was held on May 8, 2018 at the Family Services Independent Living Program conference room. The attendance roster can be found in the appendix.

At the prior meeting, there was significant discussion regarding the need for data. Though there have been limitations in what is available, it was decided that MCI would meet with DHS staff to gather what is available regarding the System Performance Measures in HMIS to present. In addition, longitudinal data from the PIT count would also be compiled for discussion. The purpose of this session would be to review the data and use it to drive discussion of system services.

The attendees first looked at the PIT count data, which was available from years 2007-2017. It was pointed out at the onset that there is limitations to analyzing this data, as it represents only one night in January. The 'truthfullness' of PIT data as counted in the past was also questioned.

The first data that was looked at was the Total Homeless Count, both sheltered and unsheltered.

Year	Total Homeless	Sheltered Homeless	Unsheltered Homeless	Homeless Individuals	Sheltered Homeless Individuals	Unsheltered Homeless Individuals	Homeless People in Families	Sheltered Homeless People in Families	Unsheltered Homeless People in Families
2017	369	361	8	264	256	8	105	105	0
2016	377	367	10	257	247	10	120	120	0
2015	410	394	16	289	273	16	121	121	0
2014	408	361	47	250	227	23	158	134	24
2013	435	383	52	258	232	26	177	151	26
2012	439	393	46	191	178	13	248	215	33
2011	405	372	33	229	205	24	176	167	9
2010	296	279	17	215	204	11	81	75	6
2009	389	350	39	176	167	9	213	183	30
2008	379	338	41	201	178	23	178	160	18
2007	393	317	76	221	189	32	172	128	44

Attendees were asked to give their thoughts and insights to what was presented in the table. Overall, the trend is a good sign, at least on paper. While our total homeless numbers have remained stable, the number of unsheltered has dropped by about 90% over the past ten years, as reported to HUD. Additionally, the number of sheltered persons has risen, which could identify a better placement of persons. Questions were raised regarding whether or not the capacity has changed (number of beds) to accommodate those in need. There were also validity concerns raised, including how unsheltered counts were so high before when the last few years there has been increased efforts to find those individuals but still only find a handful.   One provider representative said that they see many unsheltered people coming through their doors but they're not being reported. This opened a brief conversation on coming up with a process to inform PIT count participants where there is likelihood of finding homeless individuals. The local count has been bolstered the past few years with a larger number of volunteers, and has covered a larger geographic area.

Next, the attendees reviewed the chart containing Chronically Homeless data.

Year	Chronically Homeless	Sheltered Chronically Homeless	Unsheltered Chronically Homeless	Chronically Homeless Individuals	Sheltered Chronically Homeless Individuals	Unsheltered Chronically Homeless Individuals	Chronically Homeless People in Families
2017	29	29	0	22	22	0	7
2016	11	11	0	11	11	0	0
2015	30	30	0	28	28	0	2
2014	46	38	8	43	35	8	3
2013	42	32	10	38	28	10	4
2012	58	55	3	52	49	3	6
2011	74	66	8	61	56	5	13
2010	47	45	2				
2009	81	72	9				
2008	61	57	4				
2007	61	57	4				

One of the issues in tracking chronically homeless individuals is that HUD changed its definition and many are still unsure whom to count. There should be a greater emphasis on educating providers on how to determine this status.   The issue of providing better outreach to them was also brought up. As many find themselves in shelters, the idea of better case management in shelters was discussed. There is a need for 24/7 rapid response to meet the individuals where they are and conduct assessments of their needs.   Since Project Hope at EUMA was cut, there is a lack of street outreach funds in the community. Some commented that we should work toward crafting a strong response of local leaders to address this problem and look at other funding models (SAHMSA, FAIR Funds) to reinstate this program.

The next table presented was data on Homeless Veterans.

Year	Homeless Veterans	Sheltered Homeless Veterans	Unsheltered Homeless Veterans
2017	29	27	2
2016	23	22	1
2015	15	15	0
2014	21	20	1
2013	25	24	1
2012	18	17	1
2011	36	28	8

The attendees did not have much to note regarding this data. The system for working with Homeless Veterans is base in the VA system, and is somewhat stand-alone. There were no representatives from the VA system to comment, either. What was noted is that the individual who many have attributed the

success in working with local homeless veterans has left her position within the VA. While a new person will be hired, it will mostly likely take some time for this person to not only learn the job skills needed, but also to gain trust of the population in need. There was also mention of individuals self-reporting as veterans. Though they may have served, they could have been involuntarily discharged and hence not eligible for benefits. It is difficult for providers to decipher this.

The final tables regarding PIT count data were those pertaining to Youth data.

Year	Homeless Unaccompanied Youth (Under 25)	Sheltered Homeless Unaccompanied Youth (Under 25)	Unsheltered Homeless Unaccompanied Youth (Under 25)	Homeless Unaccompanied Children (Under 18)	Sheltered Homeless Unaccompanied Children (Under 18)	Unsheltered Homeless Unaccompanied Children (Under 18)	Homeless Unaccompanied Young Adults (Age 18-24)	Sheltered Homeless Unaccompanied Young Adults (Age 18-24)	Unsheltered Homeless Unaccompanied Young Adults (Age 18-24)
2017	30	30	0	2	2	0	28	28	0
2016	29	29	0	2	2	0	27	27	0
2015	41	41	0	0	0	0	41	41	0

Year	Parenting Youth (Under 25)	Sheltered Parenting Youth (Under 25)	Unsheltered Parenting Youth (Under 25)	Parenting Youth Under 18	Sheltered Parenting Youth Under 18	Unsheltered Parenting Youth Under 18	Parenting Youth Age 18-24	Sheltered Parenting Youth Age 18-24	Unsheltered Parenting Youth Age 18-24	Children of Parenting Youth	Sheltered Children of Parenting Youth	Unsheltered Children of Parenting Youth
2017	7	7	0	0	0	0	7	7	0	12	12	0
2016	8	8	0	0	0	0	8	8	0	10	10	0
2015	12	12	0	0	0	0	12	12	0	17	17	0

There was wide agreement that the youth data is difficult to gather. What is reported are those figures for kids who are at sheltered spaces that evening. Most agree that the large majority of homeless kids are not found in shelters, but are sleeping at friends' houses, relatives, cars, etc. A study of homeless youth was conducted by IU3 for Erie County and it showed large numbers. There needs to be better communication and coordination with the schools to better get a handle of this situation.

System Performance Measures

The next set of data points analyzed pertained to the System Performance Measures. Unfortunately there are only two years' worth of data to utilize, so no real trends can be derived from it. However, Year 3 data will be available in June and the Home Team can start using this data more frequently.

The following select tables contain information discussed during the meeting. The information is derived from HMIS and represents those agencies which report using this system.

Length of Time Persons Remain Homeless
a. Measure is of the client's entry, exit, and bed night dates strictly as entered in the HMIS system.

	Universe (Persons)		Average LOT Homeless (bed nights)			Median LOT Homeless (bed nights)		
	2015	2016	2015	2016	Difference	2015	2016	Difference
1.1 Persons in ES and SH	1180	1333	52	49	-3	32	30	-2

1.2 Persons in ES, SH, and TH	1354	1518	93	83	-10	46	41	-5

Regarding the Length of Time Homeless, many see this as a positive. There is a slight decrease over the course of the two years measured.   It was forewarned however that we need to consider *all* of the measures together and not rely on one or two to base findings or conclusions.

The Extent to which Persons who Exit Homelessness to Permanent Housing Destinations Return to Homelessness

	Total # of Persons who Exited to a Permanent Housing Destination (2 Years Prior)	Returns to Homelessness in Less than 6 Months (0 - 180 days)		Returns to Homelessness from 6 to 12 Months (181 - 365 days)		Returns to Homelessness from 13 to 24 Months (366 - 730 days)		Number of Returns in 2 Years	
		# of Returns	% of Returns	# of Returns	% of Returns	# of Returns	% of Returns	# of Returns	% of Returns
Exit was from SO	3	1	33%	0	0%	1	33%	2	67%
Exit was from ES	266	49	18%	23	9%	15	6%	87	33%
Exit was from TH	191	10	5%	9	5%	21	11%	40	21%
Exit was from SH	0	0		0		0		0	
Exit was from PH	257	13	5%	11	4%	16	6%	40	16%
TOTAL Returns to Homelessness	717	73	10%	43	6%	53	7%	169	24%

This is the measure that the data/gaps committee has suggested to look at frequently; the 'recidivism' rate for those leaving a permanent housing situation, or how long until they become homeless again. This data looks at those who exited the system in FY2014 and counts the number of those who became homeless again within 6 months, 6 months to a year, and between 1 and 2 years. Data is also broken down by street outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent housing. The overall figure was 24% returning to homelessness within 2 years. As expected, the highest figure was for emergency shelters (33%), and lowest was from permanent housing (16%). One question asked was if there are national benchmarks in place that we should be aiming towards; while not known, DHS staff mentioned they would look into it.

Employment and Income Growth for Homeless Persons in CoC Program-funded Project

Another performance measure that was of interest deals with change in total income while within a program, and after discharge.

Metric 4.3 – Change in total income for adult system stayers during the reporting period

	2015	2016	Difference
Universe: Number of adults (system stayers)	65	121	56
Number of adults with increased total income	2	32	30
Percentage of adults who increased total income	3%	26%	23%

Metric 4.6 – Change in total income for adult system leavers

	2015	2016	Difference
Universe: Number of adults who exited (system leavers)	110	146	36
Number of adults who exited with increased total income	38	40	2
Percentage of adults who increased total income	35%	27%	-8%

In this measurement, those deemed 'stayers' fared better, with 26% having an increase of income from 2015 to 2016. Those who are 'exiters' noticed a drop to 27% over the two years.

Number of persons who become homeless for the 1st time

Metric 5.1 – Change in the number of persons entering ES, SH, and TH projects with no prior enrollments in HMIS

	2015	2016	Difference
Universe: Person with entries into ES, SH or TH during the reporting period.	1247	1469	222
Of persons above, count those who were in ES, SH, TH or any PH within 24 months prior to their entry during the reporting year.	416	447	31
Of persons above, count those who did not have entries in ES, SH, TH or PH in the previous 24 months. (i.e. Number of persons experiencing homelessness for the first time)	831	1022	191

Metric 5.2 – Change in the number of persons entering ES, SH, TH, and PH projects with no prior enrollments in HMIS

	2015	2016	Difference
Universe: Person with entries into ES, SH, TH or PH during the reporting period.	1390	1660	270
Of persons above, count those who were in ES, SH, TH or any PH within 24 months prior to their entry during the reporting year.	453	499	46
Of persons above, count those who did not have entries in ES, SH, TH or PH in the previous 24 months. (i.e. Number of persons experiencing homelessness for the first time.)	937	1161	224

Successful Placement from Street Outreach and Successful Placement in or Retention of Permanent Housing

The last figure reported on illustrated those who ae deemed successfully placed in permanent housing from their initial enrollment.

Metric 7b.1 – Change in exits to permanent housing destinations

	2015	2016	Difference
Universe: Persons in ES, SH, TH and PH-RRH who exited	1183	1410	227
Of the persons above, those who exited to permanent housing destinations	440	646	206
% Successful exits	37%	46%	9%

In 2016, 46% of those who exited shelters, transitional housing, and RRH unis exited to permanent housing destinations, up from 37% the year prior.

While reviewing the data form SPM's, several comments were brought up by attendees. One, it was wondered if we prioritize homeless or if we do more 'diversion' of the population. Others asked if we can do SPM's for all programs and projects. While these are done, there is belief that they may not be looked at in detail by providers. Theoretically, these individual reports can be done for all projects and reviewed to help out those who need it, as well as better the entire system by identifying shortcomings. Another item brought about was the need to conduct 'warm hand-offs' with clients in transitioning from one housing type to another. There could/should be a case management piece in place to assist with identifying needs of clients and sharing information with the next program.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30.

Planning Session XI: 5.22.18

The eleventh planning meeting of the Erie County Home Team was held on May 22, 2018 at the Family Services Independent Living Program conference room. The attendance roster can be found in the appendix.

The purpose of this meeting was to begin a SWOT analysis of the Erie County Continuum of Care. This session would focus on the Strengths and Weaknesses portion of the analysis, with the next meeting devoted to external factors. At the beginning of the meeting, attendees were asked to form small workgroups to discuss strengths and weaknesses of the CoC, pertaining to several key areas of concern. They were:

- Brand, Membership, Influence, Governance, Services, Policy Objectives, Management, Subcommittee structure, Resources, Communication, Evaluation, and Other/Miscellaneous.

Each group was given a hand-out which included each of these areas of focus on them as well as sub-topics to prompt conversation. The groups were instructed to determine strengths and weaknesses of the CoC for each. They were given about one hour to complete this exercise. The second portion of the meeting would have each work group report out on their assessments. The following are summaries of what the groups determined to be Strengths and Weaknesses of each.

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Brand	- Transparency and accessibility of providers and what is trying to be accomplished - Communication and collaboration with each other - There is an abundance of invested and interested providers	- There is general confusion of the brand - Lack of awareness among local policy makers; gets worse the further one is removed as a housing provider - Seen as a bureaucracy, with a disconnect between agencies - Confusion, as not everyone knows what is happening within services offered
Membership	- It is an engaged and committed body of individuals at the table - Interest of the members, who have a long history and understanding of serving the population 'outsiders' who are involved helps membership (we need more)	- Serves no purposes – our messaging to members or potential members is not 'on point' - Need to communicate change - Need for more involvement from a broader base - The timing is wrong to bring in 'heavy hitters'; we need to get ourselves together before reaching out and brining more influential people into the CoC
Influence	- We are currently working towards a common goal - Setting a common direction will help with our influence - Our partnerships are strong when working together	- Would be more influential if we had more 'heavy hitters at the table - The CoC is weak on partnering with other entities - As a whole, we lack selling ourselves and 'air time' that is needed to talk about ourselves - All the fish do not swim in the same direction
Governance	- Regarding the board, governance is getting better and will get even stronger - It is inclusive and runs open meetings - Allows for differing opinions that can get shared with each other; if it wasn't strong the governance may not be willing to hear dissention - Passionate	- Lacks definition - There is great anxiety of some as what is to come with restructuring the CoC and appointments to the governance board
Services	- There is good coordination among providers engaged in the CoC process to best serve those in need - The CoC is beneficial to members for reasons such as grant assistance, networking, etc - Our services truly do get help for those who need it - We have a good opportunity to consider and work towards a holistic view of providers and services	- Not too many outsiders know of the CoC process of the services provided in the community - Many consumers are unaware of what is available to them - There is no community-wide marketing plan to benefit those in need

	• Positive movement with some services to include trauma-informed efforts	• Lack a holistic approach for agencies to work together (too many barriers and gaps)
Policy Objectives	• The discussion is happening and we're working on it, so that's good! • We will soon have updated written policies that we can work off of	• We don't have any • We can use an elevator speech to educate the community • We are reactionary in that often times services are up and running before policy is in place for those services • We don't have a clear policy of what the CoC is working towards
Management	• The discussion is happening • Opportunity for education and to carefully consider changes that could better the CoC	• There is no budget for the CoC to act on its own behalf • Improve education of those with authority to cast an informed vote • Not able to be effective is we keep saying 'put on the side for now' – we back-burner everything • Need for a continuity binder • Though regs and policies are on the website, no one could identify the website (eriehometeam.org)
Subcommittee structure	• Ability of governance board to review subcommittee work • The Strategic Plan can guide subcommittees and align efforts toward a common end goal	• Some are not aware that to be a member of the CoC you have to serve on a subcommittee • Not sure how they are structured or what they are aligned with • They lack authority as they currently stand • They really have to be based on strategic areas to be effective
Resources	• We have an abundance of agencies and knowledge of services and helping those in need	• We lack awareness of what everyone does
Communication	• Solid • We receive everything in a timely fashion	• We lack face-to-face interactions
Evaluation	• We have begun looking at data from systems • Opportunity to consider other external data and information to guide us in our evaluation of both our service providers but also us as a CoC	• Nothing in place • We have access to SPM's and APR's but we should look and compare to other communities

The next meeting will focus on the Opportunities and Threat portions of the SWOT analysis. Specifically, attendees will be asked to work in small groups again and use the PEST approach, which looks at external factors in the Political, Economic, Socio-cultural, and Technological areas.

The meeting concluded at 3:35.

Planning Session XII: 6.12.18

The twelfth planning meeting of the Erie County Home Team was held on June 12, 2018 at the Family Services Independent Living Program conference room. The attendance roster can be found in the appendix.

The purpose of the meeting on this day was to continue with the SWOT analysis exercise which began at the previous meeting. The content of this meeting is to complete the external analysis portion (opportunities and threats). Attendees were asked to sit among small groups. On each table were copies of three different tools to use for this exercise. The first document related to a PEST analysis. A PEST analysis is used during a planning effort to have participants identify various outside factors that could influence actions of others. The categories are **P**olitical (i.e. taxes, government lobbying, legislation, etc.), **E**conomic (unemployment, workforce issues, housing shortages, etc.), **S**ocial (demographics, consumer attitudes, religion, ethical issues, etc.) and **T**echnology (new technology, adaptation, etc.).   Attendees were asked to identify any factors that they foresee in each category that may be of importance to the operation of the CoC.

The other documents were Opportunity and Threat analyses. Opportunities and Threats are those in the external environment. One important distinction of these compared to Strengths and Weaknesses is, as they are in the external environment one has no direct control over these factors. Though difficult to discern these, it is important to note the difference when moving forward in the planning initiative. Opportunities and Threats can be addressed with Strengths and Weaknesses. The attendees were asked to use the PEST findings as a starting point in their group discussion to identify CoC opportunities and Threats. Groups were given about an hour to work on this exercise. Upon completion, each group reported out on their efforts. The following is a cumulative summary of the exercise.

OPPORTUNTIES	*THREATS*
Engaging new businesses for growth	Ongoing Opioid Crisis and impact on population
Framing homelessness as a healthcare issue	Lack of visibility of all homeless individuals and families
Increased visibility of Trauma Informed Care	Generational behaviors that may influence personal choices
New local leadership that has not been involved	Awareness of technology
Growth of cell phone use for all communication purposes	Poor historical use of data
Adaptation of Coordinated Entry	Lack of professional development, political power, organizational capacity
Strong local volunteer base	Current political climate may not be too friendly to those in need
Relationships among partner agencies	Inconsistent service delivery model
Usage of Mental Health First Aide	$60 billion cut to HUD programs over 10 years
Designation of Erie as a Refugee Resettlement Community	High rate of poverty among African-Americans, children
Numerous best practice interventions available for adaptation	Weather

Community has strong supply of prevention-related activities that can be used more effectively	Brain Drain and Shrinking population
Potential for a system-wide theory of change to used resources more effectively	Lack of good quality, affordable housing throughout county
Strong faith-based community at local level	Not recognized as ending veteran homelessness
Community has large supply of MH services at hand	Communications
Implementation of the Erie Innovation District to attract attention	Housing First policy from HUD is not for everyone
Downtown Improvements and investments	Lack of funding for ample shelter beds
Seasonal shelters	No community college concept locally to offer low-cost educational opportunities
Potential for existing buildings to be refurbished with renewable energy credits	General population has preconceived notions of homelessness
Behavioral modification and financial literacy can be taught to consumers	

Political	*Economic*
• Persistent availability of service grants • Collaborative lobbying for more resources • $60B cuts from HUD • New leadership in place at county and city level • High amount of MH services	• Poverty of African-American women and children • Cuts to budges for housing in legislation • We are an entitlement community, so unable to apply for certain funding
Social	*Technological*
• Local culture of clients • Gap between those being served in programs • Cited as being seen as a racially hostile community	• Information and storage of data • New tech companies moving to downtown

The meeting on June 26th will focus on having attendees prioritize the findings of the SWOT analysis and begin to create strategies from the points.

The meeting adjourned at 3:35.

Planning Session XIII and XIV: 6.26.18 and 7.12.18

The thirteenth and fourteenth planning meetings of the Erie County Home Team were held on June 26 and July 12, 2018 at the Family Services Independent Living Program conference room. The attendance rosters can be found in the Appendix.

The purpose of these meetings were to begin formulating key strategic areas of focus that can be adopted and carried out over the next three to five years by the Home Team. Over the course of the planning sessions, there have been many recurring issues that have come about. It was essential to categorize those points to determine future areas of focus. Additionally, the attendees had spent two meetings conducting a SWOT analysis which generated a significant amount of input from attendees. These were combined with the previous mentioned points. Over 150 key points were printed on individual sheets of paper and taped around the room. The groups were asked to begin reviewing the points and finding like categories and what 'fits' together, understanding that may of the items may be moved repeatedly upon further discussion, and new key categories may be created along the way. Upon completion of the initial sorting, the attendees revisited and further discussed proper categorization of each, and broke the categories into sub-categories and overriding themes. After these two sessions there were eleven key areas. The following are those areas, with created sub-categories, and items that fell under each.

Client Services		
Needed	*Existing*	*Gap (have but need more/improved)*
• Lacking prevention strategies • Holistic health integration within housing programs • Framing homelessness as a healthcare issue • There is a need for 24/7 rapid response to meet individuals where they are and conduct assessments of their needs • Lack low-cost educational opportunities in the community (i.e. community college) • Lacking formal funds for street outreach • Lack prevention dollars, as county is not eligible for HUD funds • Lacking a relationship with managed care companies, and subsequent funding for peer specialists	• We have an abundance of agencies and knowledge of services helping those in need • Large supply of MH services at hand • Our providers deliver services to those who need it • Seasonal shelters • Local providers offer financial literacy and behavior modification	• Case Mgmt. would benefit clients as they move from one provider level to the next • Managed care, hospitals, healthcare etc have dollars to potentially develop needed client services • How do we serve those who are not in PSH but need 'helps' (i.e. credit counseling, life skills, lawn mowers, etc) • Lack of good quality, affordable housing throughout county • How should the shelter community work with 'problem persons' and share info regarding them • Community has supply of prevention-related activities that can be used more effectively • Majority of homeless kids are not in shelters, but 'couch surfing'

		• Collaboration with schools
		• Shelter-based case manager positions to address immediate needs of clients
		• It is hard to identify chronically homeless; need better outreach and case management
		• Healthcare for homeless is available but we need more
		• Often undocumented MH and SA issues w/ population

Funding		
Can Do	*Can't Do*	*Maybe can do?*
• Leverage local leadership to create strong response to address lack of outreach funds • Look at other funding streams for outreach dollars (MH, SAHMSA, etc) • Lacking formal funds for street outreach • Explore PHFA and other streams for prevention dollars • Outside partnerships and non-traditional funding streams • We have strong partnerships when working together • Possible to rehabilitate old buildings to address housing shortages • Use of tax-credits for mixed-use housing	• $60 Billion cut to HUD programs over 10 years • Managed care dollars in other states are top funders of housing	• Lack funding for ample number of PSH slots • Potential for existing buildings to be refurbished with renewable energy credits

Community Alignment and E	*Best Practices*	*Community Alignment/ Engagement*
• Lack of good quality, affordable housing throughout county • Community has supply of prevention-related activities that can be used more effectively • Our providers do deliver services to those who need it • Seasonal shelters	• Increased visibility of Trauma Informed Care in the community • Use of Mental Health First Aide • Many services are moving to include trauma-informed efforts • Potential to explore what other communities are doing to creatively fund projects • Use data from coordinated entry, HMIS and SPM's (and other services) to guide decision making	• Improvements and investments in the downtown core • Opportunities to tie our work into larger community plans and initiatives • New local leadership that has not been involved with CoC • Strong faith-based community at local level • Opportunity to better engage and involve landlords in the

		• community to addressing housing issues • Setting a common direction will help w/ our influence over others • Issues of shrinking local population and 'brain drain' • Have a strong local volunteer base • We have an abundance of invested providers • We have strong partnerships when working together • Leveraging capability of the group is underutilized • Possible to rehabilitate old buildings to address housing shortages • Lacking a relationship with managed care companies, and subsequent funding for peer specialists • Implementation of Innovation District will attract attention to city center issues • Erie is a designated refugee resettlement community • Use of tax-credits for mixed-use housing
Data		**Marketing and Awareness**
Use of	*Collection of*	• Lack of visibility of all homeless persons/families • General population has preconceived notions of homelessness • There is a lack of understanding of what the 'brand' is for the CoC • Lack of awareness among local policy makers – gets worse the further one is removed as a housing provider • We do not advocate well • There is no community-wide marketing plan to benefit those with needs
• Efforts are increasing in presenting and looking at data • Nothing in place to evaluate our efforts 'as a whole' • We have access to SPM's and APR's but we should look and compare to other communities (now available via HUD) • Use data from Coordinated Entry and 211 system to drive decision making • Poor historical use of data • We lack understanding of SPM's and how to use them properly	• Youth data is difficult to obtain • Need to look at other data options, not just HMIS and PIT • Opportunity to consider other external data to guide in the evaluation of services and use in decision making (i.e. vital signs, hospitals, welfare, etc) • 'Truthfulness' in SPIT data • Re: SPIT, our homeless numbers have been stable, and unsheltered dropped by 90% • Adaptation of Coordinated Entry, need to collect right data	

• All programs should have their SPM's reviewed with them and looked at in detail • Lacking long-term data other than PIT • County is not recognized as having ended veteran homelessness • We have begun looking at data from various systems		• Not too many outsiders know of the CoC process or the services provided w/in the community • Timing is wrong to bring in 'heavy hitters'; we need to get ourselves together before reaching out and bringing in more influential people • Would be more influential if we had more 'heavy hitters' involved • Lack of knowledge of Home Team website • We lack selling ourselves and 'air time' that is needed to talk about ourselves • Many consumers are unaware of what is available to them • Generational behavior that may influence personal choices
Big Picture/Systemic Change	**Sub-Committees**	
• Agencies at the table are competitors, but expected to share available resources, which is not 'natural' • Potential for a system-wide theory of change to use resources more effectively • Inconsistent service delivery models • We have an opportunity to work towards a holistic view of providers and services	• Coordinated entry and HMIS/PIT are strongly suggested HUD committees • The Strategic Plan can guide subcommittees and align efforts toward a common goal • Some are not aware that to be a member of the CoC you have to serve on a subcommittee • How do our efforts and those of the subcommittees tie into what the HUD priorities are • Not sure if subcommittees are structured or what they are aligned with • Subcommittees need structure, regularity, and deadlines • Subcommittees lack authority as they stand	
Communications	**Governance**	
• Communication/collaboration with each other is strong • Home Team allows for an open dialogue and exchange of viewpoints	• We lack policy objectives as a whole • Interest of the members, who have a long history and understanding of serving the population	

- Relationships among partner agencies
- We lack awareness of what partner agencies do
- Lack of professional development, political power, organizational capacity
- Not everyone knows what is happening within services offered in the community
- All the fish do not swim in the same direction, therefore we lack clout
- There is good coordination among providers engaged in the CoC process to best serve those in need
- We operate in Silos that prohibit collaboration with each other
- The CoC is beneficial to members for reasons such as grant assistance, networking, etc
- Need for a transparent mechanism to demonstrate what program is receiving funding from whom
- Lack of understanding in membership base and in community on what different types of housing offer and encompass
- We receive information in a timely fashion
- We lack (and can use) an elevator speech to educate the community
- Allows for differing opinions that can get shared with each other; if the HT body wasn't strong the governance may not be willing to hear dissention
- Generational behavior that may influence personal choices
- Besides meetings, we lack face-to-face meetings with each other
- Lack of understanding that the CoC is not 'owned' by any agency or department; it's a collaboration of all partners and systems
- Passionate group

- The CoC is weak on partnering with other entities
- Need for binder/orientation piece for members
- Not having HUD-recommended CoC structure in place puts county at risk
- Ability of governance board to review subcommittee work
- Membership serves no purposes – our messaging to members or potential members is not 'on point'
- Opportunity for education and to carefully consider changes that could better the CoC
- Too much time spent discussing subcommittee work during meetings; they should be left to do their own work and give report-outs
- Governance lacks definition
- Having 'outsiders' who are involved helps membership (we need more)
- There is great anxiety for some as what is to come with restructuring the CoC and appointments to the Gov board
- Gov structure is seen as a bureaucracy, with a disconnect between agencies
- The Home Team is reactionary; at times services are up in running before policy is in place for those services
- Governance is getting better and will get even stronger
- Governance is inclusive and run open meetings
- Improve education of those with authority to case an informed vote
- Home Team meetings tend to be a lot of 'spinning of wheels' and

• We don't have a clear policy of what the CoC is working towards • Need to communicate change with membership and potential members • Growth of cell phone use for all communication purposes (w/ clients)	not a lot of presenting of ideas, topics, etc • We will soon have updated written policies that we can work off of • Lacking a holistic approach for agencies to work together • We are currently working towards a common goal • Need for a continuity binder to govern off of • Engaged/committed body of individuals at the table • There is a feeling that members come to meetings because they have to, and not much is gotten out of them • Have a board made up of those not directly involved in housing the homeless • Need for more involvement from a broader base	

At the following meeting to be held on July 24th, the group will continue their grouping process and categorization of bullet points. From there, key strategic areas of focus will begin to be developed after the top 3 to 5 areas are prioritized. It should be noted that in previous meetings, Governance was already identified and agreed upon to be the first strategic goal area in the Strategic Plan.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm

Planning Session XV: 8.1.18

The fifteenth planning meeting of the Erie County Home Team was held on August 1, 2018 at the Family Services Independent Living Program conference room. The attendance rosters can be found in the Appendix.

This meeting picked up where the previous one left off, in the revisiting of the key points and formulation of strategic areas of focus. During the previous sessions, all but the 'Communications' category was addressed. This session began by visiting that topic. The key points found in that category can be found in the summary on the previous pages. Attendees decided to subcategorize them into what they do well versus what they do not do well. Most of the responses found their way to the latter grouping. However, many of the points presented seemed to be based on opinion as opposed to factual. Further discussion was held on these points, which pointed out that these were 'internal' CoC communication issues, and that in some ways the body is already improving this area. It was also determined that this area differs from the Marketing and Awareness category, as that it focuses on consumers and 'outsiders'. Eventually, the group recognized that this most likely shouldn't be a stand-alone strategic area, but should be a highly-stressed component of the governance/CoC restructuring.

Upon completion of the initial strategic areas, the group revisited what was developed. As noted, the Communications was moved under the CoC/Governance restructuring. Much discussion was held regarding how the others fit moving forward. One of the categories that drew much discussion was the Funding topic. An area that is uncomfortable to many, further review identified this as directly tied to client services. Most agreed that seeking funding streams is not, nor should be, the priority of this group. This topic is geared more towards higher level persons, who are also involved with overseeing the CoC. This topic was moved over to the Governance/CoC restructuring topic as well.

The group now has five strategic areas identified

1. CoC restructuring/Governance (including funding and internal communications)
2. Data use, collection and implementation
3. Marketing and Awareness
4. Client services
5. Community Engagement

These five areas are strategic areas of focus, which the group will address by creating goals, objectives and action steps. While creating these, it needs to be kept in mind that the priority goals set by HUD are elimination of youth, veteran, family and chronic homelessness, and it would be of best interest to address these locally. In addition, the group should consider NOFA areas such as best practices, sharing information, and collaboration.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 pm.

FINAL STRATEGIC PLANNING DOCUMENT, as agreed upon by the Erie County Home Team:

USICH Federal Strategic Plan Goals recommended to be adopted by local Continuum of Care collaboratives.
A. End and Prevent Chronic Homelessness
B. End and Prevent Veteran Homelessness
C. End and Prevent Family Homelessness
D. End and Prevent Youth Homelessness
E. Set a path to end all types of homelessness

Strategic Focus Areas
In effort to meet the goals of the Strategic Plan, the CoC has identified five objectives that will guide our efforts toward these ends. To meet these goals, we will...
1. Ensure that the Erie County Continuum of Care membership and governance structure is efficient and built in a capacity to best provide leadership, funding and support for the community.
2. Meet the needs of our clients by offering a 'toolbox' of new and existing services and housing offerings based on best practices.
3. Develop and ensure efficient and effective practices of data collection and use, to base forward-thinking decision making and program implementation.
4. Increase our community awareness and marketing efforts within both the external community and with our internal stakeholders.
5. Strategically engage and align the CoC within the community with those initiatives that best meet our client's needs.

CoC Performance Measures (HEARTH PMs)
While working towards our strategic goals and objectives, our efforts will be guided by benchmarks that allow us to monitor our progress. Efforts will be tied to the following:
A. Reduction of average length of time persons are homeless.
B. Reduction in returns to homelessness.
C. Improvement of program coverage.
D. Reduction in number of families and individuals who are homelessness.
E. Improvement of employment rate and income amount of families and individuals who are homeless.
F. Reduction in the number of families and individuals who become homeless (first time homeless).
G. Prevention of homelessness and achieving independent living in permanent housing for families and youth defined as homeless under other Federal statutes.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA ONE:	*Ensure that the Erie County Continuum of Care membership and governance structure is efficient and built in a capacity to best provide leadership, funding and support for the community.*
Objectives	*Action Steps*
1. Oversee the process of ranking and distributing HUD-based funding and providing fiscal accountability.	➢ Work with Lead Collaborative Agency staff on a transparent process of ranking/scoring for grant application process, as well as provide leadership and recruit members to serve on application review team. ➢ Ensure that the CoC implements procedures and distributes notifications regarding requirements of the application process on an annual basis.
2. Seek other/additional funding opportunities to fill 'gaps' in services/programs that are identified by CoC data and assessment processes.	➢ Leverage local leadership to create strong response to address lack of outreach and prevention funds. ➢ Identify funding for gaps that are not currently identified, but may come about during future assessment processes. ➢ Develop and seek funding opportunities for formal street outreach. ➢ Continue to identify and monitor possible outside partnerships to expand funding opportunities
3. Ensure that the efforts of the CoC and member agencies are aligned with the mission.	➢ Ensure the committee structure is focused on meeting the goals and objectives outlined in the planning process. ➢ Address future issues by appropriating ad-hoc committees. ➢ In conjunction with 4:2, provide materials that educate membership on the mission and efforts of the CoC.
4. Align the board structure to be in accordance with the HUD-recommended CoC model.	➢ Review the current board structure and revise to meet the HUD-recommended model. ➢ Educate the Home Team membership the need for compliance with adoption of the HUD model. ➢ Develop an agreement on the timeframe and structure regarding the terms and functioning of the CoC. ➢ Regularly review and update the written standards and bylaws to be in compliance with HUD standards.
5. Establish a communications process that is transparent to the CoC and public at large.	➢ Establish website based off of models from other CoC's that effectively delivers information to the community with continually updated materials. ➢ Ensure that all documents, meeting notices, minutes and corresponding information are publicly available ➢ Institute process that allows for input and open comments during CoC meetings.

6. Work in conjunction with Lead Collaborative Agency to assure all policies, procedures, etc. are in compliance.	➢ The CoC will continuously examine the support staff components and address issues preventing them from meeting requirements. ➢ Educate the CoC membership of their expectations as a member and what their roles are in terms of following policies and procedures.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA TWO:	*Meet the needs of our clients by offering a 'toolbox' of new and existing services and housing offerings based on best practices.*
Strategy	**Action Steps**
1. Collaborate with mainstream resources to build a seamless transition to housing opportunities.	➢ Identify funding and expand the use of mentor and liaison programs (peer specialist/case manager approach) that will assist clients in service transition. ➢ Expand case management services within local programs to meet client needs. ➢ Engage with hospitals, prisons, mental health, drug and alcohol, law enforcement, court and judicial, education, and vocational rehab systems, as well as others that are to be identified. ➢ Educate systems regarding the roles that a wide-range of federal/state programs/resources can play to increase the impact within an efficient housing support system.
2. Develop a consumer/provider resource bank to guide consumers through the process of identifying needed helps and resources.	➢ Create an in-depth flow-chart to assist clients in understanding points of the housing/helps process. ➢ Use Coordinated Entry data to identify gaps in service needs, not just housing. ➢ Explore best practices of how other communities make clients aware of needed services, and develop plan to adopt a model that will work locally.
3. Develop a plan for and implement a mobile outreach component to take services and assessments to those in need.	➢ Engage 'non-housing' providers such as Overflow Shelter and Emmaus to identify those in need who may not currently be receiving services. ➢ Engage an outreach plan to better seek out and identify homeless youth. ➢ Develop a common process that can be adopted by providers that will allow clients in need of ID's to easily obtain them.
4. Increase community-wide prevention efforts.	➢ Assist individuals and families with financial aspects of finding and maintaining safe affordable permanent supportive housing. ➢ Assist individuals and families with supportive service aspects of finding and maintaining safe affordable permanent supportive housing. ➢ Identify root causes of homelessness in subpopulations. ➢ Increase outreach opportunities.

5. Explore FUSE (Frequent Users Systems Engagement) model approach to deal with high-end system users.	➤ Form ad-hoc committee to explore communities that have used the model. ➤ Conduct cost-benefit analysis of adoption of model.
6. Conduct ongoing analysis of housing stock and capacity, and identify innovative models to better serve clients.	➤ Study what other options are used for Community-based housing models. ➤ Develop sense of 'Community' among clients so persons can help each other in support (ex 5-6 unit housing models). ➤ Identify best practices in strengthening landlord/provider relationships.
7. Use of consumer feedback for program adaptation decision making	➤ Develop process of collecting year-round consumer input. ➤ Identify root causes of homeless in subpopulations. ➤ Discuss merits and adopt a homeless consumer committee under the Home Team that would have governance board representation.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA THREE:	Develop and ensure efficient and effective practices of data collection and use, to base forward-thinking decision making and program implementation.
Strategy	Action Steps
1. Ensure providers understand and know the requirements for collection, entry and use of data to meet HUD/HMIS standards.	➢ Develop a formalized process for requesting data from HMIS administrator. ➢ Provide training resources via meetings, webinars, etc. for providers to learn and understand how to better use HMIS data analysis tools on their own. ➢ Provide training resources via meetings, webinars, etc. for providers to learn and understand HUD standards.
2. Work towards 100% HMIS participation of homeless providers.	➢ Identify who is not currently using HMIS and identification of the barriers that are prohibiting them from doing so. ➢ Work with non-users to identify resources needed for their adaptation of HMIS use and work in conjunction with non-users to get these needed resources. ➢ Communicate the benefit to the non-user providers on how 100% adoption will benefit their agency and the whole CoC/community at large. ➢ Explore best practices and benefits for gathering homeless prevention data and begin entering all landlord evictions (as this may be mandated soon in future). ➢ Identify optional modules that can be used in HMIS which would allow for provider-specific customization of HMIS and assist the providers in efficient and effective system use.
3. Develop and implement external system data sharing and collection processes.	➢ Identify current data sharing practices currently in place. ➢ Hold discussions w/ outside systems regarding potential uses for sharing data and gaining support from those potential partners. ➢ Explore best practices of how other communities share client data. ➢ Update client privacy policy to assure protection of all client-confidential information. ➢ Implement plan to share information. ➢ Identify high-end system users for targeted intervention strategies.
4. Explore and discuss commonly-used data and performance measures on regular basis.	➢ Utilize Coordinated Entry for data reports/system needs and identification of data trends. ➢ Use other data resources and performance measures in conjunction with PIT and CE data for decision making.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA FOUR:	*Increase our community awareness and marketing efforts within both the external community and with our internal stakeholders.*
Strategy	**Action Steps**
1. Develop, implement and maintain a marketing plan aimed at consumers.	➢ Develop a simplified flow chart for both consumers and direct care staff that will help identify process of working through the system. ➢ Incorporate success stories identified in 4:4 and incorporate into plan and on website. ➢ Incorporate awareness activities developed in 4:5.
2. Develop, implement and maintain a marketing plan aimed at providers.	➢ Focus on provider-to-provider education regarding services in the community. ➢ Incorporate success stories identified in 4:4 and incorporate into plan and on website. ➢ Incorporate awareness activities developed in 4:5.
3. Develop, implement, and maintain a marketing plan towards general public.	➢ Incorporate issues that will assist in the reduction in the stigma of homelessness. ➢ Develop new 'branding' strategies around the CoC and incorporate into campaigns. ➢ Incorporation of awareness activities identified 4:5
4. Advocate to those in decision making roles/policy makers.	➢ Incorporate awareness activities developed in 4:5. ➢ Develop a series of success stories and use in marketing campaigns. ➢ Utilize trend data to advocate with policy makers for change. ➢ Conduct trainings such as Bridges out of Poverty trainings and/or similar events to convey message regarding the struggle of homelessness/near homelessness.
5. Develop homeless awareness activities that can be incorporated in 1 through 3.	➢ Explore what other communities have developed in terms of community-based events to bring awareness of housing and homelessness issues. ➢ Create local awareness activities geared towards marketing. ➢ Explore what other communities have done to bring homeless awareness to the forefront.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA FIVE:	Strategically engage and align the CoC within the community with those initiatives that best meet our client's needs.
Strategy	**Action Steps**
1. Educate and engage stakeholders from other community efforts on the CoC mission and systems.	➢ Use existing priority groups as starting point in analysis. ➢ Compile a 'bank' of community/state collaboratives that have ties to mission of the CoC ➢ Establish process to increase stakeholder involvement in CoC efforts.
2. Work towards a creation of synergy w/ other partners.	➢ Conduct formal and informal assessments to avoid duplication in efforts. ➢ Expand efforts to eliminate silos.
3. Development of 'a voice' facet on how to represent CoC.	➢ Done in conjunction with Objective 4:3. ➢ Educate and train CoC members.