



**Housing &
Homelessness
Alliance of
Vermont**

A Just Response to People Experiencing Homelessness

Testimony to House Human Services
Chad Simmons, HHAV Executive Director
January 27, 2026

For Today...

- Housing & Homelessness Alliance of VT (HHAV)
- Continuum of Care (CoC)
- Coordinated Entry (CE)
- Point in Time (PIT) count
- Recent CE data
- Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)
- H.594 & our collective homelessness response

Build a Vermont where the fundamental right
to housing is enjoyed by all

Guiding Principles



HHAV

Balance of State
Continuum of
Care (CoC)

Advocacy

Continuum of Care (CoC)

- VT has two US Dept of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)-recognized CoCs:
 - Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)
 - VT Balance of State (HHAV)
- CoC is a community plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people experiencing homelessness. It includes action steps to end homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness.
- A CoC consists of a partnership of service & resource providers, housing developers, state agencies, and others in the homelessness or low-income service system in a geographic region.

Continuum of Care (CoC)

- CoCs monitor and address housing and service gaps through:
 - Community-led proactive solutions
 - Annual **Point in Time Count** of those experiencing homelessness
 - Manage the **Coordinated Entry (CE) and HMIS system** (below)
 - Apply for and manage annual funding from the HUD
- **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS):** Required by federal HEARTH Act that all communities collect unduplicated counts of individuals and families experiencing homelessness, use of services & the effectiveness of VT's homeless assistance system.
- Use of HMIS is required by HUD for recipients of CoC Program & Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG).

Local Housing Coalitions (LHCs)

LOCAL COALITIONS & LEAD AGENCIES

**ADDISON
COUNTY**
Charter House

**BENNINGTON
COUNTY**
BROC

**BRATTLEBORO
AREA**
Groundworks
Collaborative

**CALEDONIA,
ESSEX, ORLEANS
COUNTIES**
NEKCA

**FRANKLIN/
GRAND ISLE
COUNTIES**
CVOEO

**LAMOILLE
COUNTY**
Capstone
Community Action

**ORANGE/
WINDSOR NORTH**
Upper Valley
Haven

**RUTLAND
COUNTY**
Homeless
Prevention Center

**WINDSOR SOUTH/
WINDHAM NORTH**
Springfield Supported
Housing

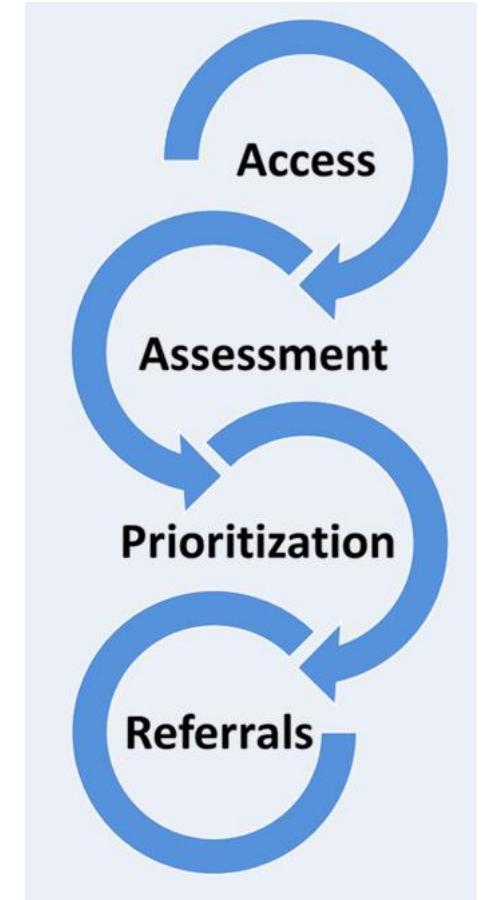
**WASHINGTON
COUNTY**
Capstone
Community Action



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Coordinated Entry (CE)

- Improves referral appropriateness and coordination
- Increases understanding among partners of what resources are available
- Decreases the time that people experience homelessness
- Helps people move in and out of the “homeless system” as quickly as possible
- Supports community-wide or system level planning and outcomes



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Coordinated Entry Process

Screening & Access

Assessment

**Master Lists &
Prioritization**

**Referral to Housing
Programs & Services**



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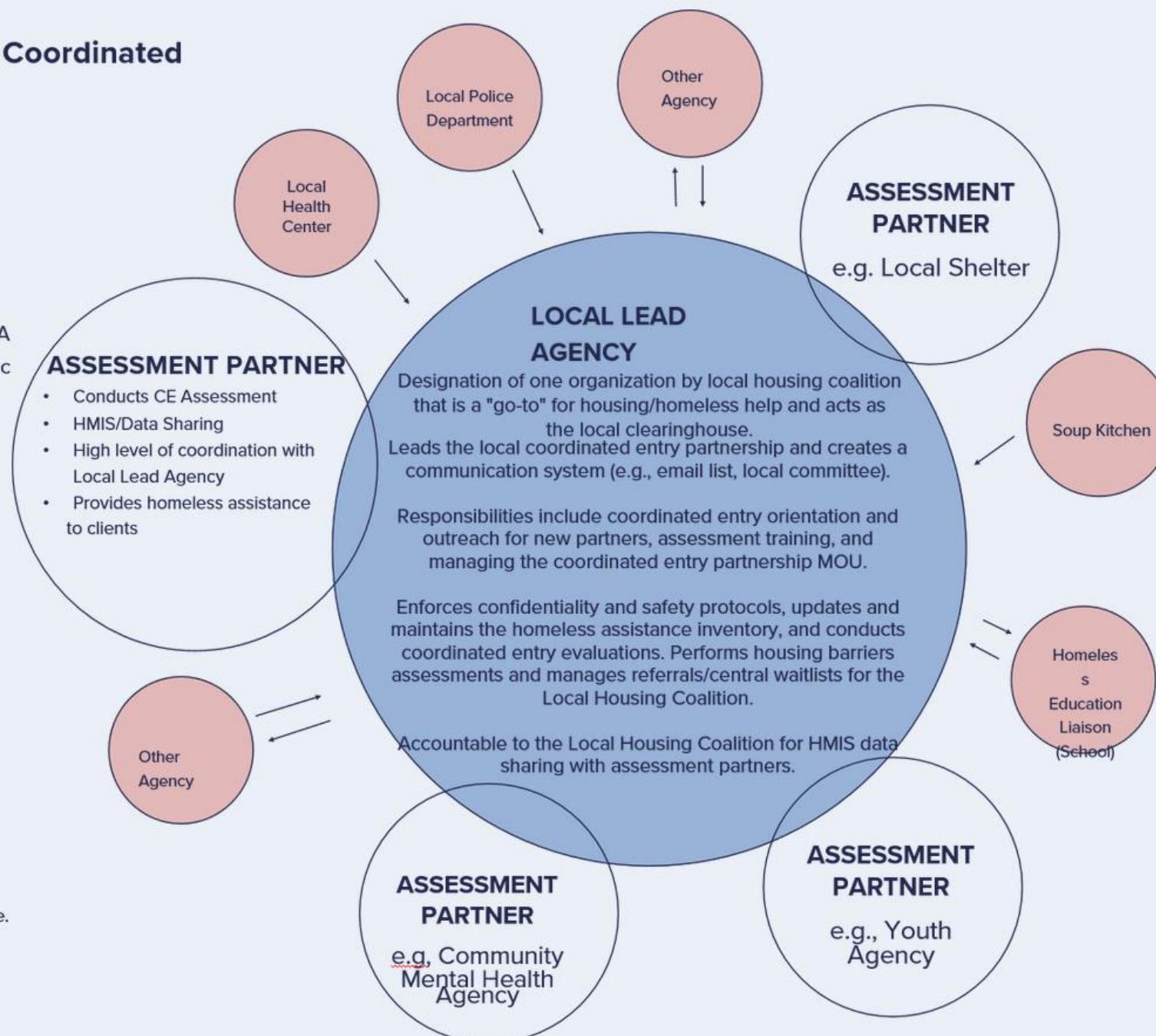
Vermont Balance of State CoC Coordinated Entry (CE) Partnership

Key Partners:

Community Mental Health Agency
Homeless Shelter
Pathways Community Action Agency
Domestic Violence Shelter/Service Provider
VA
VCRHYP Partner
Parent Child Center
Economic Services Office 2-1-1
And more



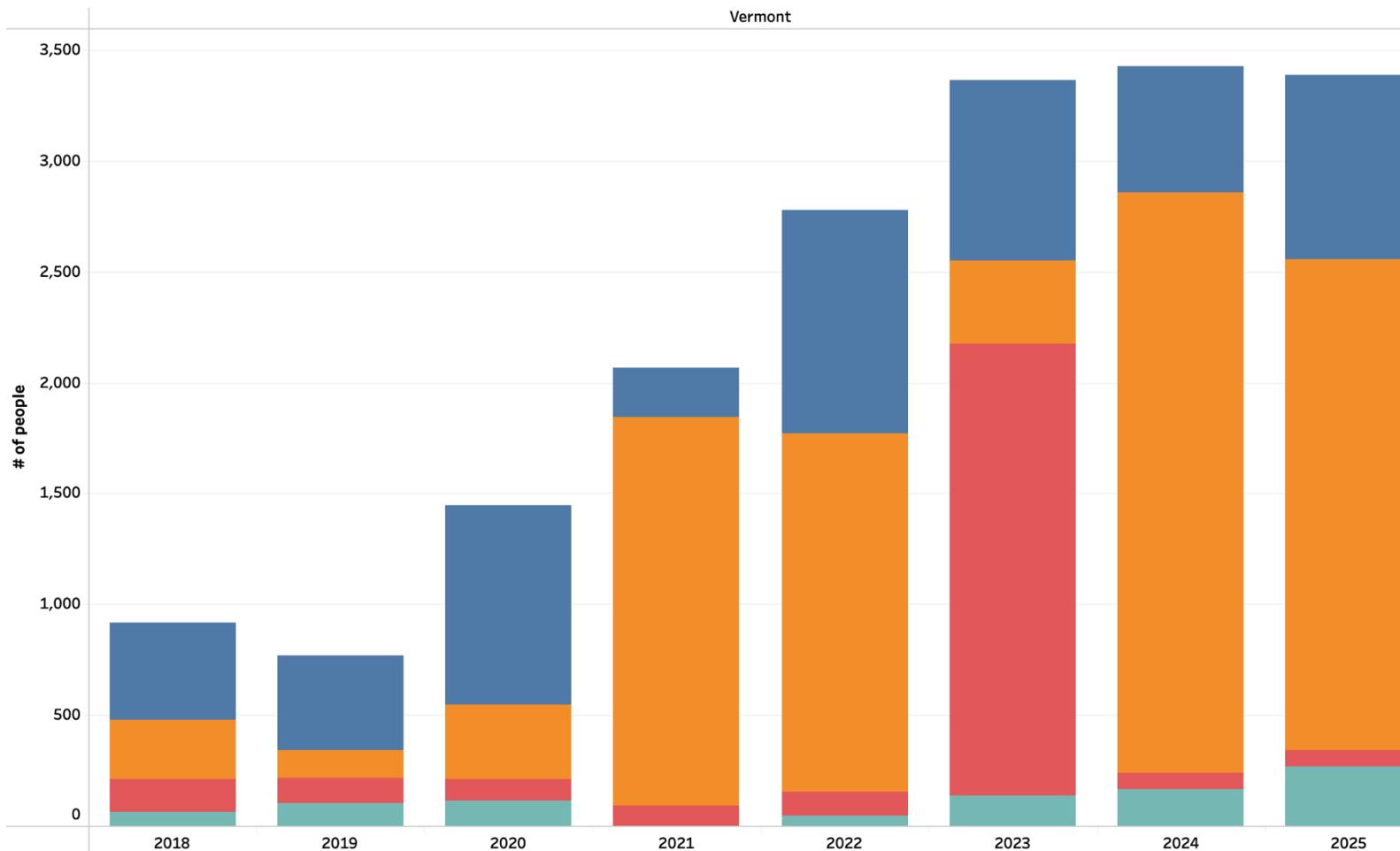
Completes Referral/ Housing Screen and sends to Lead Agency for Housing Barriers Assessment
Agencies may begin as a Referral Partner and become Assessment Partners over time.



Point in Time (PIT)

- A count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. HUD requires that CoCs conduct an annual count of people experiencing homelessness who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Safe Havens on a single night.

People experiencing homelessness



Individuals experiencing homelessness by shelter type

Shelter Types

- Individuals In Emergency Shelter
- Individuals In Publicly Funded Hotel
- Individuals In Transitional Housing
- Individuals Unsheltered

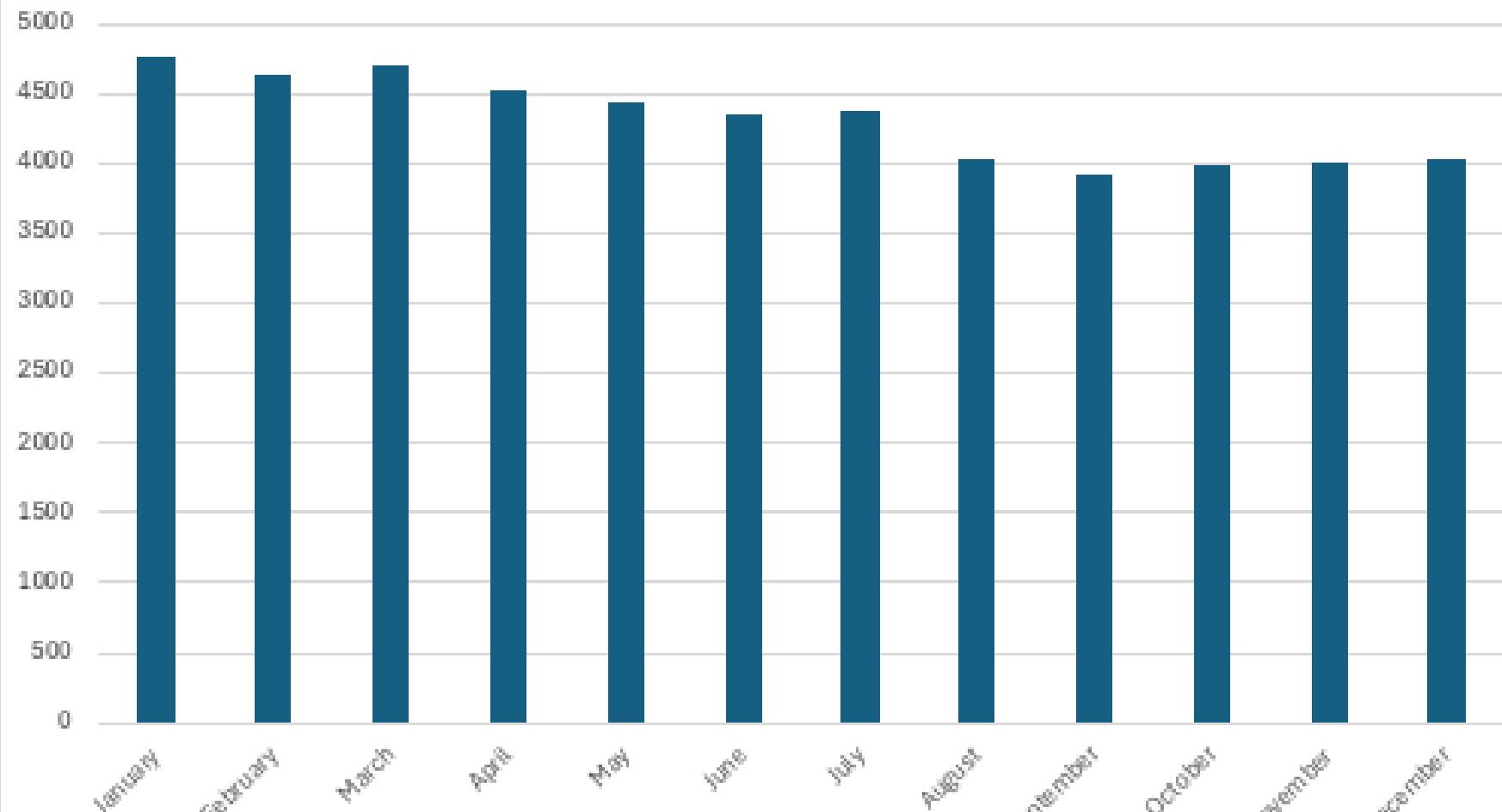


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Housing Inventory Count (HIC)

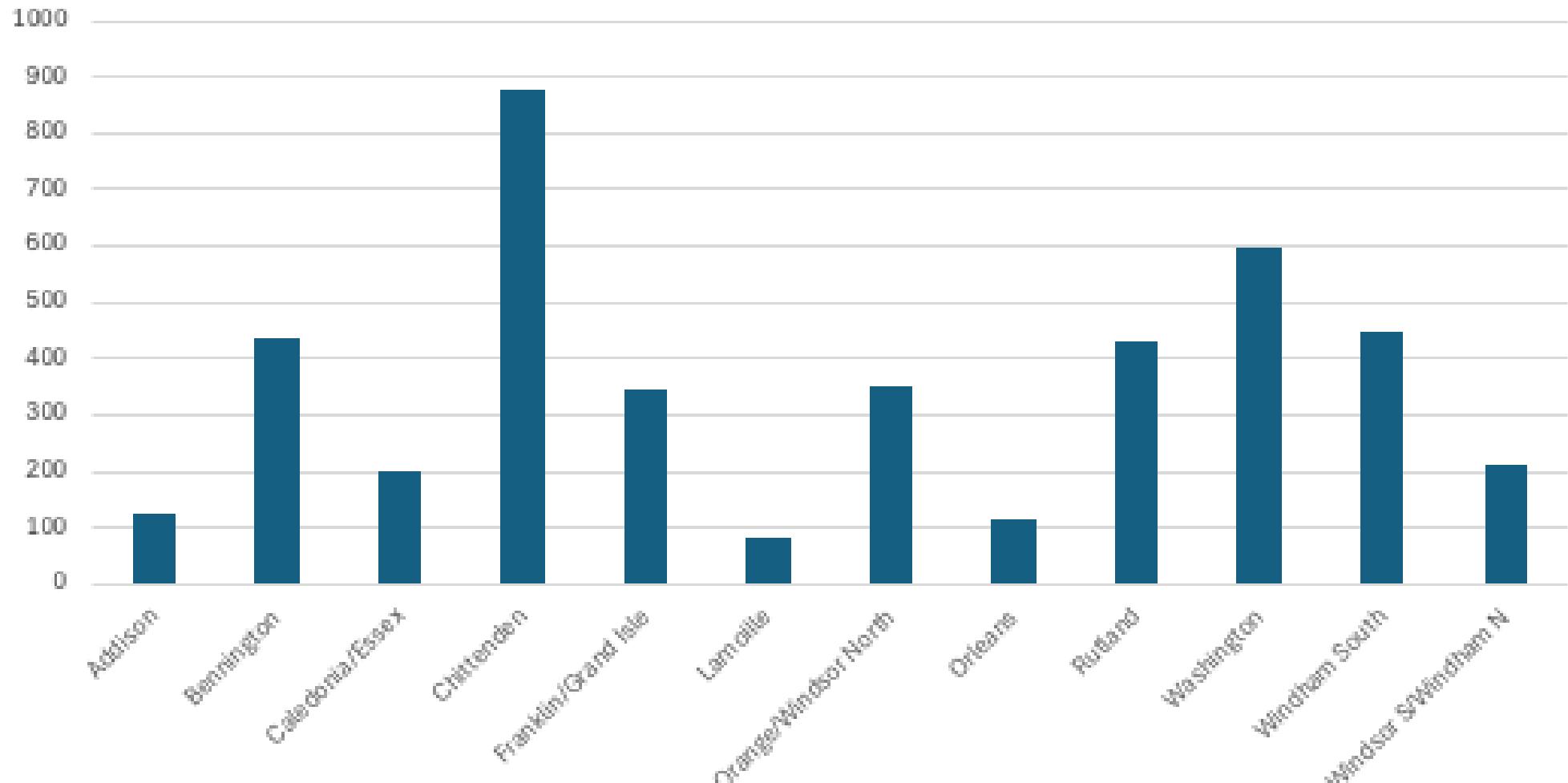
- A point-in-time inventory of provider programs within a CoC that provide beds and units dedicated to serve people experiencing homelessness (and, for permanent housing projects, where homeless at entry, per the HUD homeless definition), categorized by five Program Types: Emergency Shelter; Transitional Housing; Rapid Re-housing; Safe Haven; and Permanent Supportive Housing.

People Enrolled in Literal Homeless CE Throughout 2025



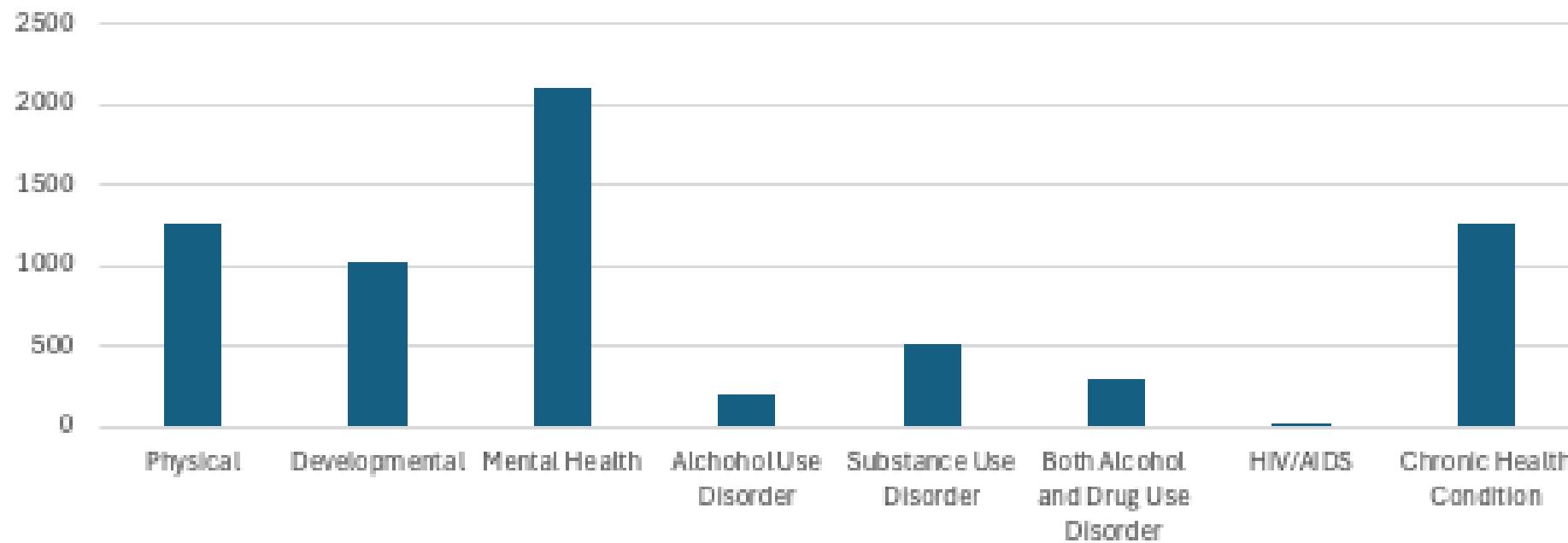
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December 2025: People Enrolled in Literal Homeless CE



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December 2025: Number of People with Disabling Conditions



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Vermont's Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)

- Done every five years
- Required as part of the HUD Consolidated Plan
- Comprehensive analysis used to identify current & projected housing needs
- <https://vhfa.org/pubs/housing-needs-assessment>
- '23 HOME Act & '24 Act 181 requires the development of statewide & regional housing targets. This includes setting targets to “eliminate homelessness”

VT's Top Housing Needs '25-'29

Housing shortage

Vermont's housing shortage deepened in 2020 with rippling economic and social impacts.

Housing quality

Thousands of Vermont homes have physical vulnerabilities, largely due to the old age of the housing stock.

Hardest hit

Low-income households and renters are hardest hit by home shortage and increased housing costs.

Service needs

The number of residents with needs for service-enriched housing is rising.



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Home Size Compared to Household Size

Figure 7-11 Large homes outnumber large households

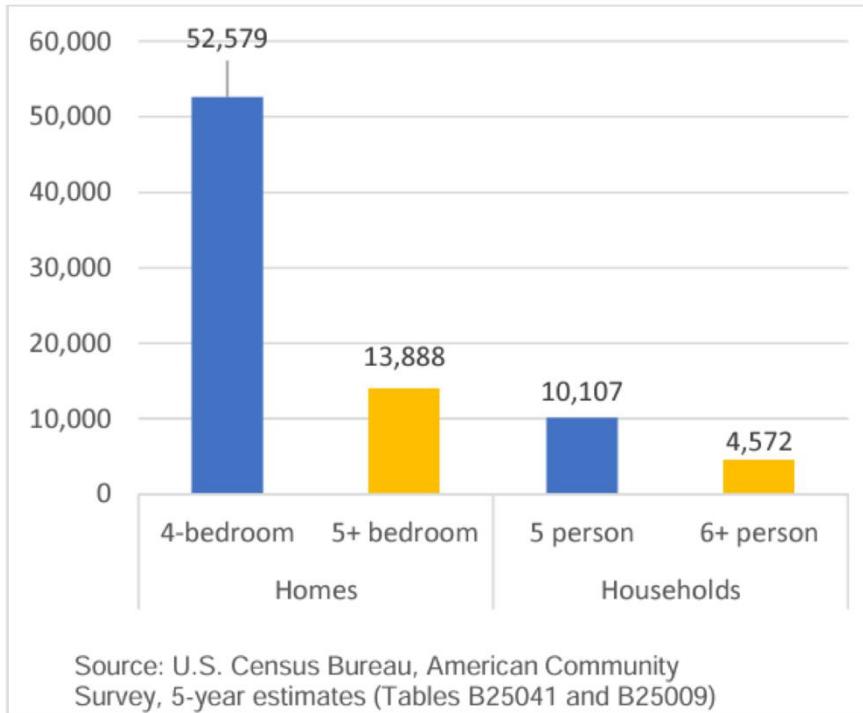
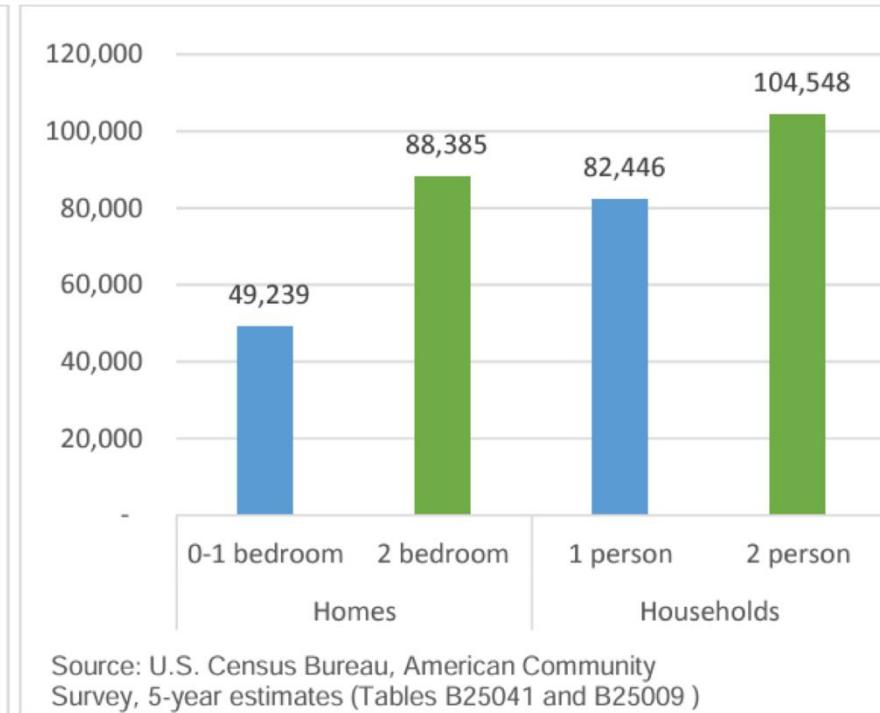


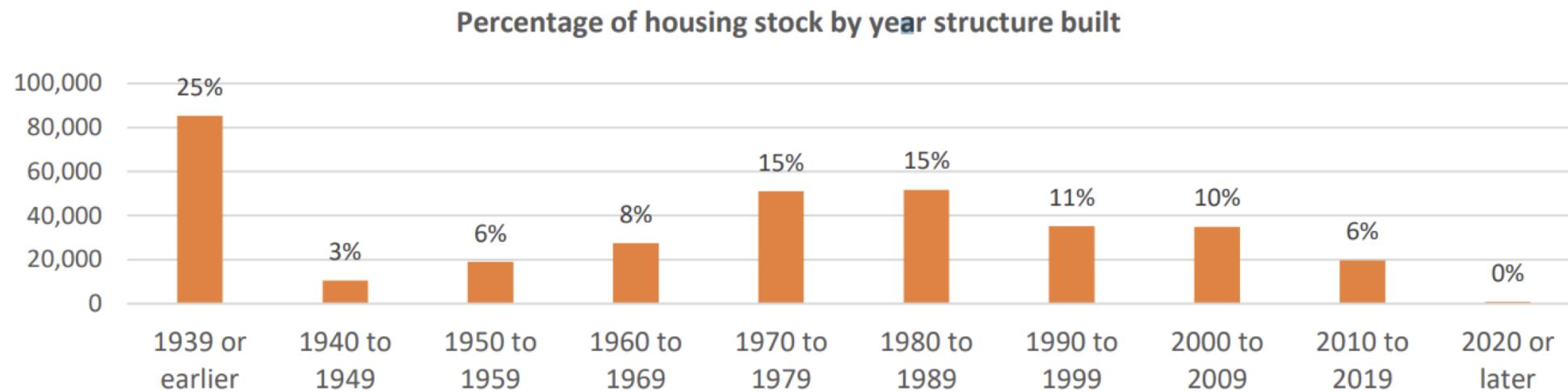
Figure 7-12 Small households outnumber small homes



- Household – people living together
- Home – physical dwelling structure accommodating one household

Source: Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA)

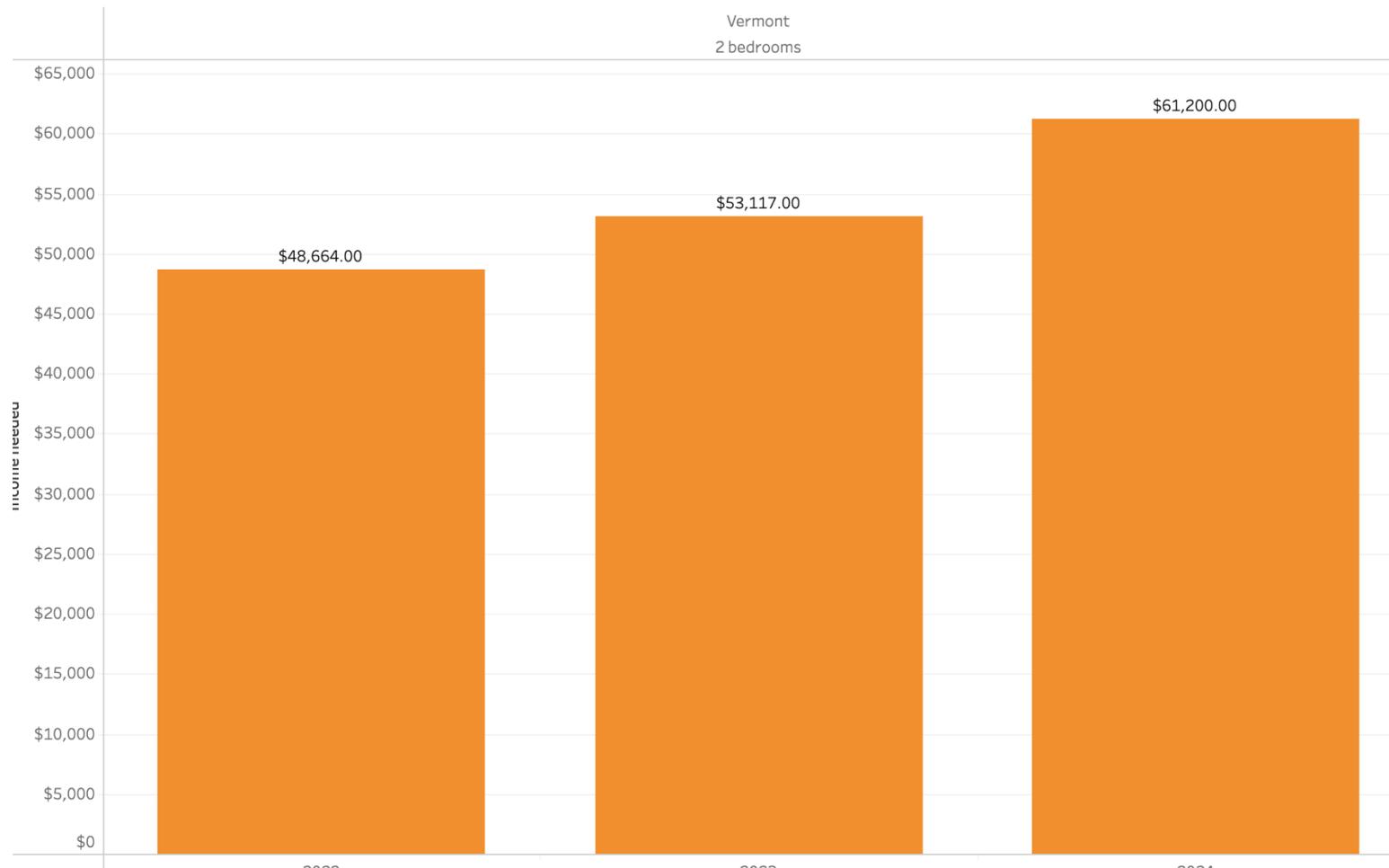
VT's At-Risk Housing Quality



- 25,000 rental homes were built before 1940
- 96,000 homes built before 1950 when lead-based paint was widely used.

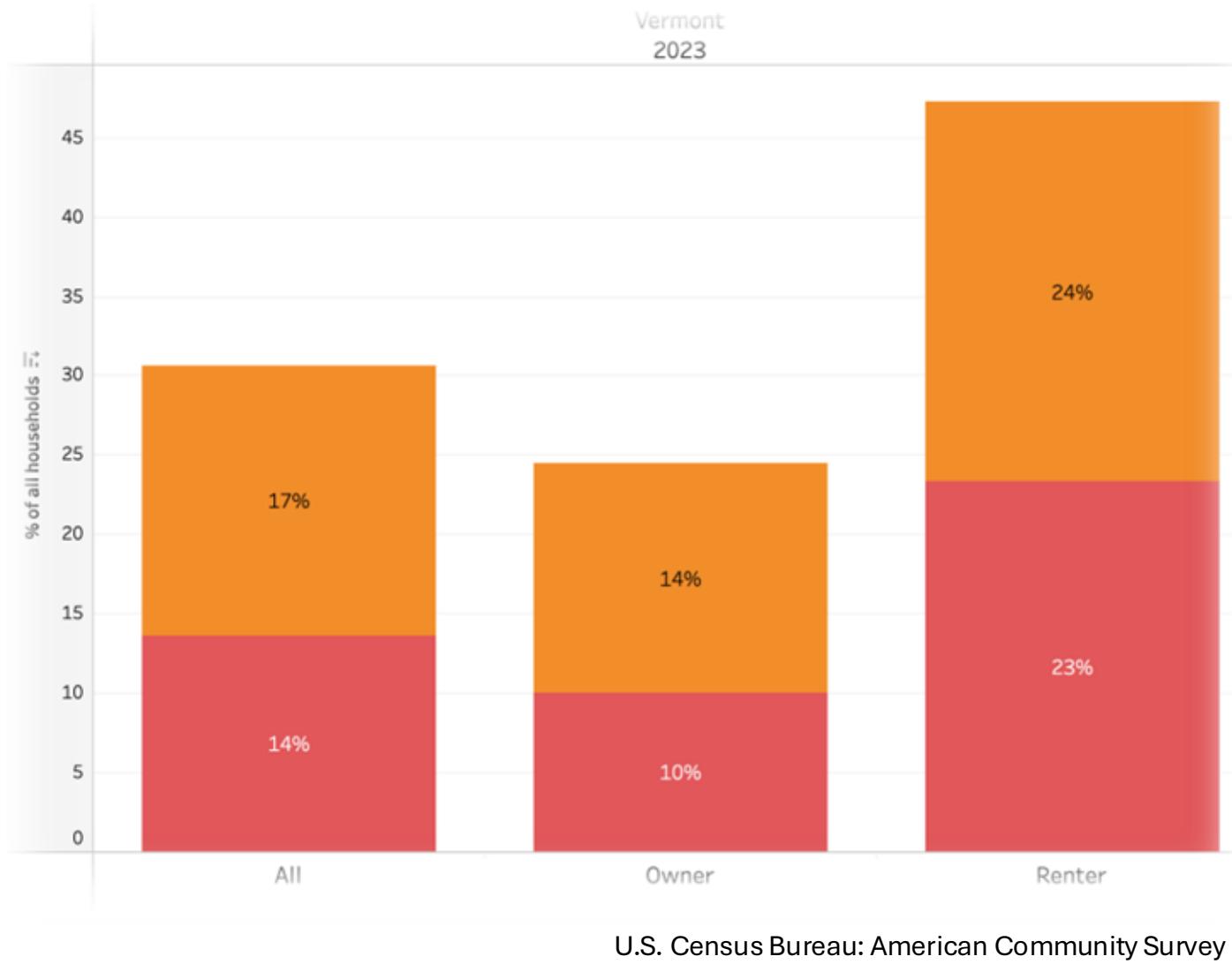
Source: Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA)

Housing wage needed is growing



Source: National low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)

Housing costs are overwhelming

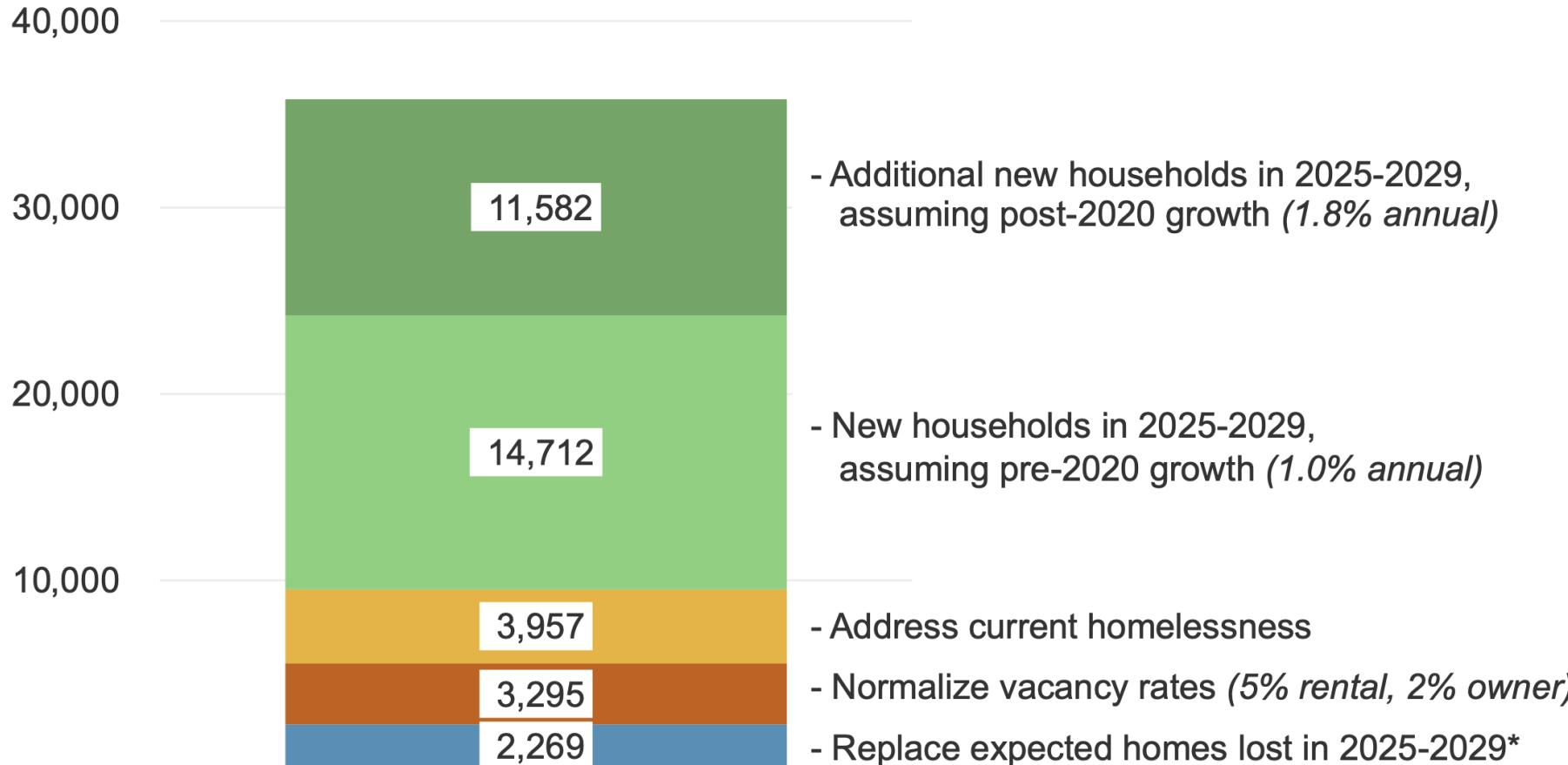


Housing Cost Burden:
Housing costs as a % of
household income

Cost burden level

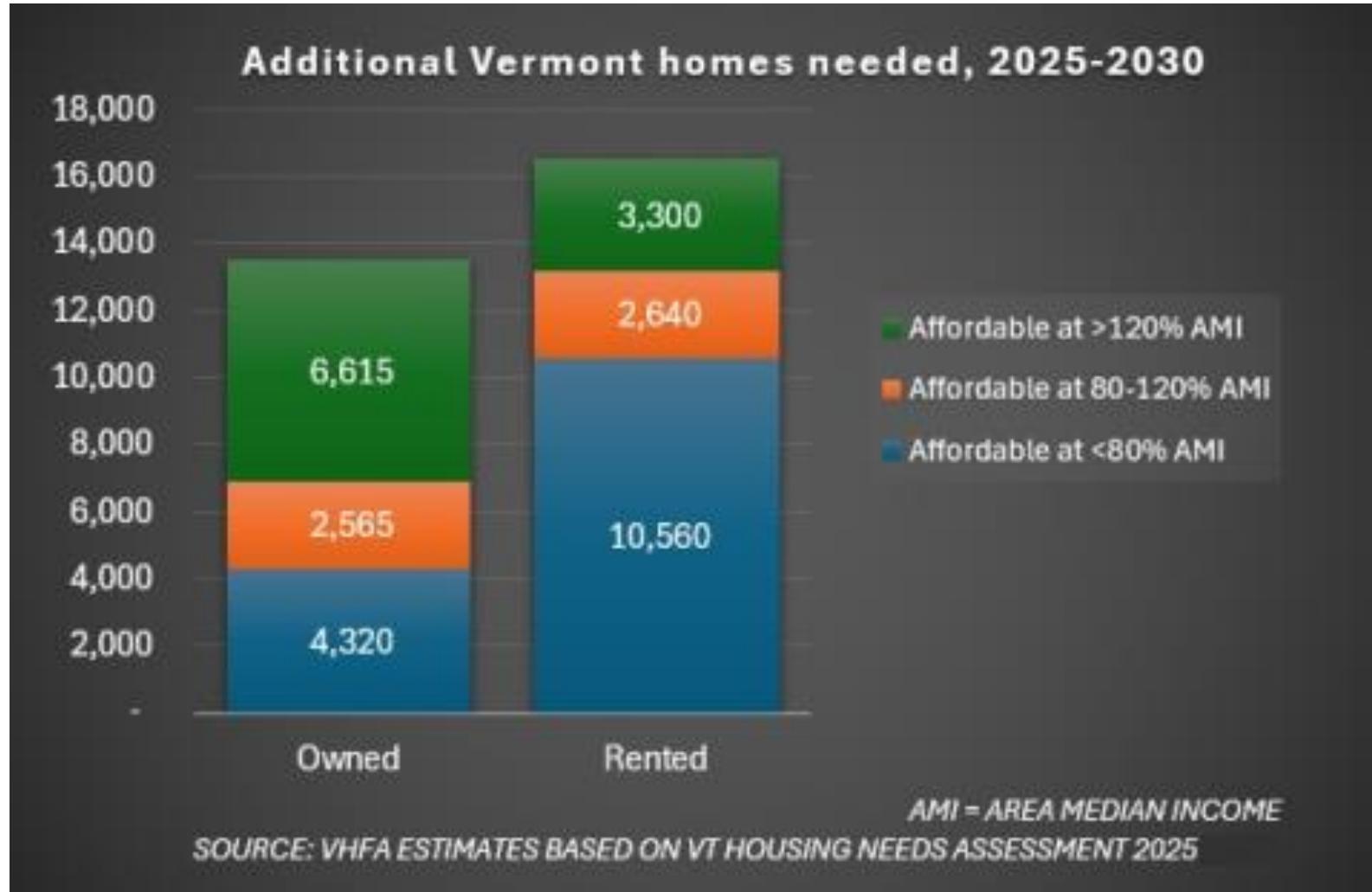
- Paying 30-49% income
- Paying 50% income or more

VT Needs More Homes



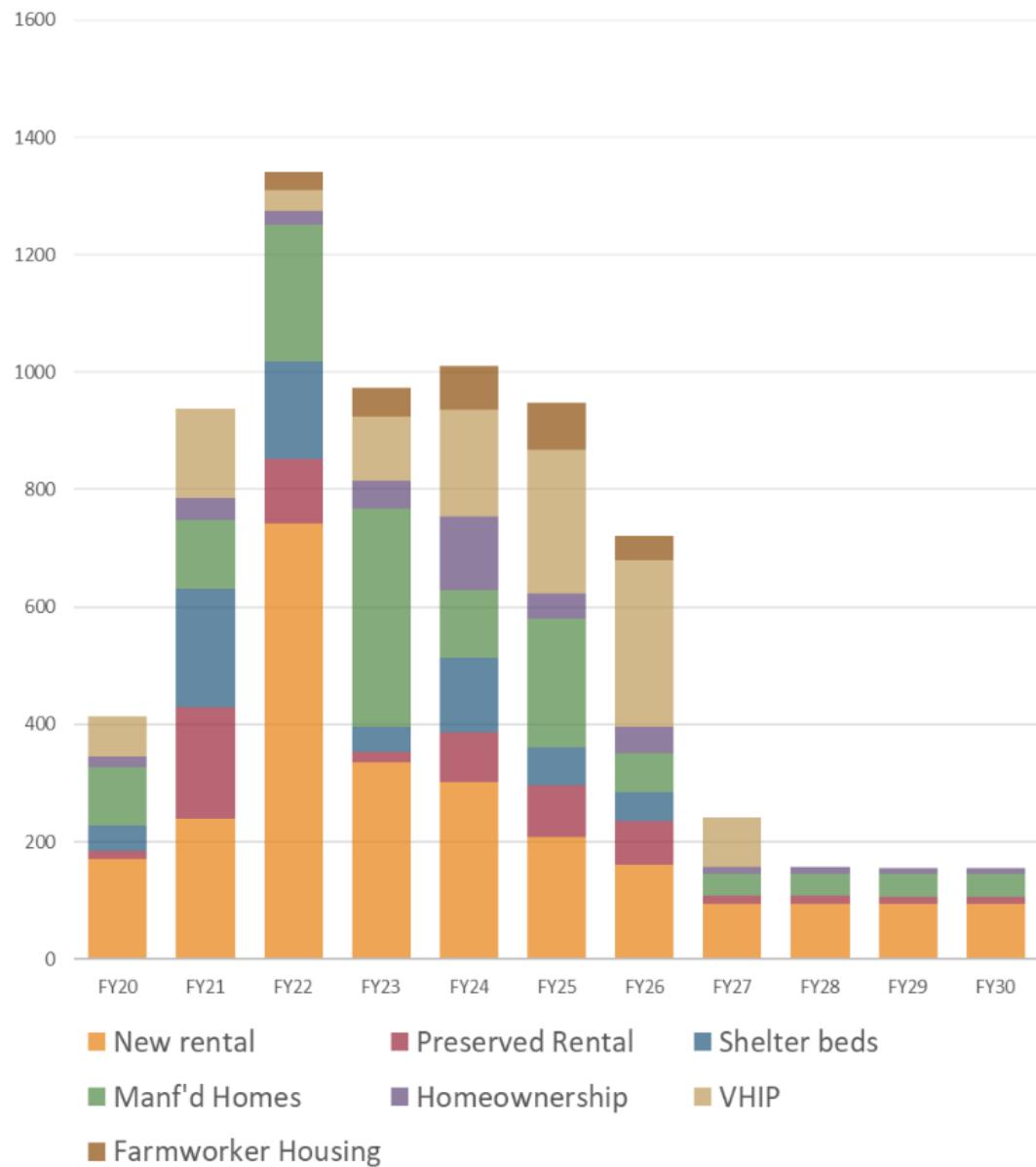
Source: Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA)

Homes needed by 2030



Source: Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA)

HOUSING PRODUCTION AND PRESERVATION FY20-26, PROJECTED THROUGH FY30



Estimated
Affordable
housing
production

Source: VT non-profit housing providers

What VT has invested in since 2020

Total units turned over (July 1, 2023 - Oct. 31, 2025)	2,449
Of these units, number leased to households who experienced homelessness	871
Percentage of turned units leased to households experiencing homelessness	36%

1,933

VHCB investments helped to house
since 2020

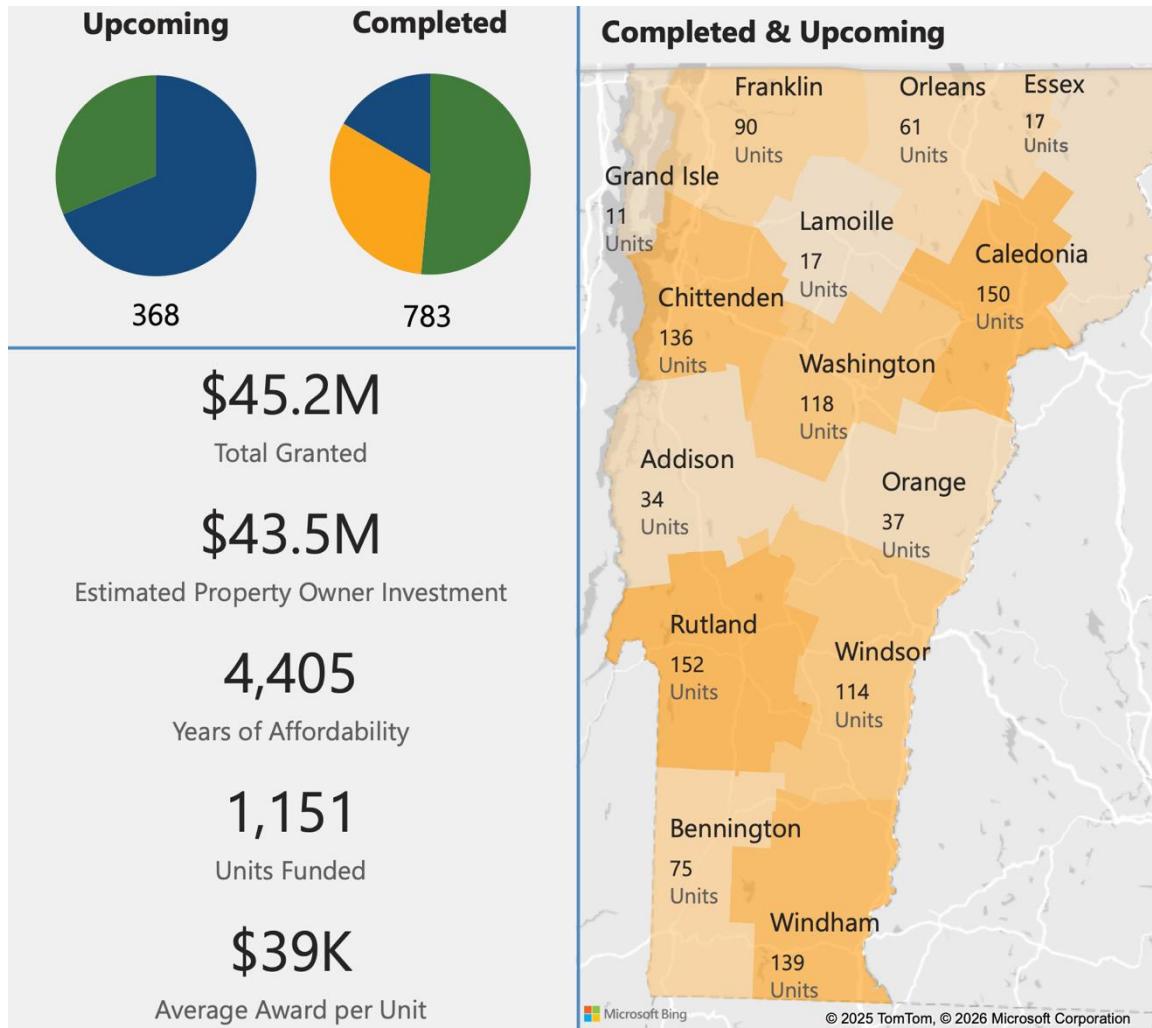
Source: VHCB



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State investments made for permanently affordable rental homes through the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB)

What VT has invested in since 2020



Source: Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD)

State investments made to rehabilitate rental homes through the Vermont Housing Improvement Program (VHIP)

People are complex.
Systems should be simple.



Performance by **Yoann Bourgeois**



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People are complex.
Systems should be simple.

H.594

- Does H.594 move VT towards a just, effective and dignified prevention of & response to homelessness?
- We do share the goal of decreasing hotel/motel use, ***but only if*** there is adequate shelter and homes to access.
- Does not align with our guiding principles, strategic plan or priorities for this legislative session.
- Does not take into account the current system as it exists, lived-experience realities within our communities & actual funding required to meet those realities
- Accountability to whom? For whom?
- Thank you for remaining open to suggestions

Opportunities to prevent & address homelessness

- Fully resource evidence based, data-informed and person-centered approaches that we know work
- Tailor those resources to the supports/services/housing navigation to individual and family needs
- Human-centered framework that prioritizes dignity, choice, and long-term stability
- Local/regionally driven

Opportunities to prevent & address homelessness

- Build from what already exist and what we know works.
- Fully and sustainably resourced. i.e. funded adequately and consistently year after year
 - FY27 appropriations for housing development, preservation & rehabilitation (VHCB & VHIP)
 - FY27 appropriations for HOP
 - FY27 appropriations for GA
 - FY26 BAA for VSHA “Voucher Contingency Fund”
 - FY26 BAA for HOP Financial Assistance
- Land use, zoning & regulatory reform to increase housing production, access and affordability as well as community-led and innovative housing type inclusion (recovery housing, single room occupancy (SRO), accessory dwelling units)

Opportunities to prevent & address homelessness

- Proposal leading with clear policy purpose
- Listen to our experienced, knowledgeable & mission-driven community partners