

**Vision Council
North Star Work Group Meeting
March 29, 2022**

Attendees:

Greg Bellville
Andrea Dencklau
Ana Clymer
Stephanie Hernandez

Anne Starr
Amal Barre
Kristie Oliver
Marlo Nash

[Vision Council North Star Workgroup 3-28-22 Slide Show](#)

Context: Each of the Vision Council Workgroups meeting this week. This is the first meeting since the Vision Council approved the [Results Action Plan](#).

Purpose: To continue planning the action steps to implement the 2022 priorities. Also there are three business items that we are asking each workgroup to weigh in on.

Meeting Results:

The North Star Work Group (NSWG) will:

1. Weigh in on three business items;
2. Understand the 2022 priorities that are within the NSWG's boundaries;
3. Complete the Results Action Plan Worksheet for its 2022 priorities;
4. Identify the partners to convene to implement the Action Plan;
5. Make Action Commitments that advance the work

We acknowledge that these are meeting result that might take more than one meeting to accomplish. We wanted to lay out the pathway and we will get as far as we can in this meeting.

North Star Work Group is different from the other two groups in the Vision Council, as the other two work groups focus on populations.

- Substance Use Disorder Workgroup: Families living with substance use disorder with children ages 0-10.
- Older Youth Workgroup: Youth of Color ages 10 and older and their families

The North Star Work Group from the beginning has taken on some of the overarching work of the Vision Council. This work group is the one that did the research and help identify financial instability and housing insecurity are root causes that lead to families being involved in in the child welfare system. This work group also has done some work around continuing to ensure that the work of the Vision Council is Trauma Informed and Equity Informed.

The term North Star Work Group is now a relic because through the approval of the results action plan there was a shift from using the term North Star Outcome to Vision. The initial excise that was used to get to the Vision was termed North Star.

- The North Star Work Group may want to change their name.

- Since the Results Action plan is approved it is possible that the North Star Work Group will want to shift its focus and/or the organization of the Vision Council may change so that may mean this group changes.

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- How are you as we start today's meeting? One word can be shared at a time.
- What is one thing you think people who are newly connected with the Vision Council need?
 - Context: We are going to be inviting many new partners to participate in the Vision Council in different ways. They are going to need orientation - packet of materials or live session. It can be a piece of information that the need a format for receiving the information. Is there something unwritten about the Vision Council and how it works that people need to know to participate.
 - Members old and new understanding the culture focus and system focus
 - Knowing where we got started and all the work that has been accomplished in a short amount of time
 - Why we are doing this work
 - To hear when and why we started
 - Clarity of direction and intersection with their roles at work.
 - Background and purpose
 - Alignment: Understanding why we are coming together and why it matters to our overall work.
 - How we can document progress and outcomes
 - The understanding of purpose of connecting the work that they are doing and the Vision Council, rather than just information sharing.
 - Who will use the work product from the Vision Council?
 - Synthesis: Generally, the comments are all related to the difference in the Vision Council from many of the other groups that Vision Council members sit on which is that we are actually present to do something. It is not about just showing the new person the plan, but everyone understands the Vision Council is not a sit and get meeting. We are getting together to try and figure out how the work that we are doing connects. We are trying to accomplish something.

Overview of Results-Based Facilitation Program

How can we begin to "lowanize" the Vision Council's work? How can we do this work whether Marlo is involved or not, as the number of partners grows, and as we want to have various/different people hold the role of neutral facilitator so we can pass the task around.

The leadership and development program is a three session program that the Vision Council offered about this time last year that trains people in the results-based facilitation skills that are used to run the Vision Council. Offering it again is something that we are going to check in on people's level of interest. This can be offered before the end of June this year.

- This is part of the strategy to equip more of the Vision Council members to lead the work so that we are not relying on an outside facilitator to keep the work going

- Members of the Vision Council have been exposed to the Results based facilitation process - meeting check in, the check-out, tracking action commitments, results, and the culture work. The leadership and development program is a little deeper dive.

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- Question: This is personal interest versus interest on behalf of other people?
 - Yes, this is personal interest in participating this spring.
- Question: What if there is someone in an organization that it would be helpful for them to go through the training? Is that an opportunity? The more people that have the understanding about the model and the framework the better for communities. How open will this be?
 - We would be open to having additional people participate. The last time, we opened it up to Vision Council members first and then asked Vision Council members who else should we invite, that would help the work of the Vision Council.

Scheduling the Work Group Meetings

- Possibility of the North Star Workgroup Meeting two more times before the full Vision Council meets in June.
- Kristie to send out a doodle poll today (3/29/22) and members are to respond by the end of business on Friday, April 1st.

Action Planning

- **Review of the [Vision Council 2022 List of Priorities](#)**
 - 1st Page information is in numerical order
 - 2nd Page organized by work group
 - If information is in tracked changes it is because the priority was added by the Vision Council. It was not on the original proposed list of priorities for 2022.
 - Older Youth Work Group: 3 priorities that are specific to them
 - Substance Use Disorder Workgroup: 3 priorities that are specific to them
 - There are priorities that are cross cutting for both populations. The way the Vision Council's Results Action Plan was approved is that there some things that came up different Work Groups but apply to both Work Groups. Rather than reassigning them to the Work Group that generated the priority/action step, they were grouped that both focus populations need to work on them.
 - This raises the question of how to we organize the Vision Council's work and the cross-cutting work between the two focus populations?
(Tabled but acknowledging that this is a new situation for the Vision Council to have the cross-cutting work.)

Vision Council Overarching (Each/Both Focus Populations; Vision Council Overall)

VC.1 Development of Performance Measures and Action Steps

Complete a detailed set of Action Steps according to implement the Strategies, and Activities in the Results Action Plan. (Working on in today's meeting)

VC.2 Build Roster of Aligned Partners

VC.2. a Identify, build relationships with, and invite partners (entities) & participants (people) with the position, knowledge, expertise and commitment to implement the Strategies. Note: This will be an ongoing process. In 2022, focus on securing formal partnerships with organizations that have already demonstrated interest or are already leading work related to the Vision Council's Strategies.

- It is the work of the North Star Work Group to do this around housing.
 - The North Star Work Group can decide what we want to weigh in on and take on. If this group wants to take on the culturally competent workforce work for example.

Begin with the North Star Work Group Priority on Housing

2.1.1 Forge a collaborative planning and advocacy effort with the MCOs and other entities known to work on ensuring sufficient permanent housing for families, including determining what is needed to bridge families in the VC Focus Populations to stable housing.

Context: At the Vision Council meeting in February, there was a question asked, do we have anyone from supportive housing in the Vision Council: [Excerpt of notes from VC's 2.4.22 meeting \(housing\)](#)

- In Polk County, as well as with other colleagues around the state there are a lot of communities that are using their COVID dollars to create and enhance their affordable housing. Can we leverage this to help us springboard into the Vision Council's conversations? Polk County is committing \$30-\$35 million to affordable housing.
 - There is a lot of money in the COVID relief packages from the federal government directly linked to housing. There is also the flexible funding that the state, counties, Metro areas and small communities have access to. It is about who advocates to get access to those dollars.
- It is not only about attaining affordable housing, people having access to housing, but it is also about sustaining it. Life events and income qualifications to keep people stable in housing takes a lot of work and support.
- Ana reached out to local housing person in Linn County, and she guided the dollars through the county. They are talking about connecting child welfare data points with housing stability data points. (Four Oaks has been at multiple tables for those conversations). If collectively we can say this is a priority - what needs to fall in place for that conversation to carry out actionable items? Looking at data, determining what is in the way and what has been tried the community and is no longer available because of funding and/or leadership changes, etc.
- Is there an opportunity to think about the new [HHS Alignment](#)? Can we request a liaison at the new agency just for housing? This is a starting point. Housing is a basic need for families, and it does not have the intentional focus that the Vision Council wishes it did have.
 - In the Vision Council's meeting with Director Garcia, Director Garcia recognize that lack of housing is leading people into the systems she does oversee.
 - Under Mental Health, there is a housing component.
 - In the mental health community, that is such a need for adults with mental illness. They can get into the housing, but if they have a psychotic break or need to be hospitalized or return to substance use, often times their home is in jeopardy. In the mental health/substance abuse community, there are looking at how do we create safe,

affordable, housing that people don't leave if they relapse. Do you offer supportive housing all the time? There are a lot of conversations around it.

- Four Oaks (fire at Genova Towers): Time was spent at the shelter talking to people. People were thankful and/or upset because of the fire which affected their mental health. EMA connect Four Oaks to the Abbe Center and Foundation 2 - making sure that people were seen by providers. Providers were given access to the building. This needs to continue to happen because Four Oaks is not necessarily the provider for the population. Four Oaks going to meet with local community leaders on how to partner better.
- Karen Hyatt serves as Iowa's Disaster Behavioral Health Coordinator and administers both the Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team and the FEMA funded COVID Recovery Iowa grant administered by the Iowa Department of Human Services.
 - She also is the program manager for the [PATH Program](#)
 - Karen worked with Marlo when she works with United Ways of America on the 211 system. Marlo will reach out to Karen.
- In the beginning of the housing discussion, we met with Stephanie, Ashley and Tim making sure the focus shift is not always on elders, elders aging in place and veterans. We want to consider families. Families is not focused on as a population in housing.
 - There are distinct needs for families, especially families with very young children.
- There is also Cody at IDPH. [Unassigned Action Commitment](#)
- Four Oaks, Iowa TotalChild Program tries to keep families stable. The program is funded by fundraising. There is some System of Care money that is utilized, but it is mainly supported by fundraising to help with housing and coordination of services for children and families.

Question: If there are partners that we identify, such as Karen and Cody, what would be our message in inviting them in? What would we say the work is and why we need that person? What is the message? What are we asking for?

- **Reframe Question:** What would you say to someone that you want to start talking to about this work who might be brought in, in some way?
 - **Answer:** There is a one-pager on the Vision Council that has been developed.
 - [Kristie will send it out for the group to review.](#)
 - It needs to be reviewed to make sure it is current.
 - [Andrea will send to Kristie and Anne what she sent to Amal.](#)
- (Tabled...when we get to action planning, specific to housing, should this be put into the action plan of what needs to be done.)

Vision Council Roles for Advancing Its Plan (Draft)

The Vision Council has imagined a large body of work. It seems overwhelming when you think that the Vision Council has to do all of the work. The reality when you start cultivating the alignment, the Vision Council does not always have to be the doers. They can be the leaders, they can partner and support. This document tries to put definitions around the different roles that the Vision Council can play, so when the terms are used, we are all clear

on what it means. This is pre-work before action planning, but it is important, because every action is going to be tagged with are you a leader, partner, supporter, or networker.

- There is a table with the 4 quadrants of alignment contribution with some brief definitions on the 2nd page. In general terms the Vision Council will always want to be in high action and high alignment. Very action around shared commitments and the shared plan. Sometimes we might be in high alignment, but in low action, because by design there does not have to be a lot of shared action.
 - Alignment grid assumes that there is a static condition. It may be fluid and change over time out of necessity.
 - Marlo will add a sentence to top paragraph that acknowledges that the work is iterative, and relationships may change over time and any of these roles could shift for either the Vision Council or any partnering entities.
 - A couple of them say that there will be formal agreements maybe this is also acknowledged in the language of formal agreements, the way that the two partners will need a change procedurally in those agreements.
- Like the examples, under Networker, it solidified what it is and provided clear expectations related to the category.
- The other two work groups meet this week, so there may be other changes that they suggest.

IA VC Action Planning Worksheet

Activity:	Start (Complete By)	Performance Measure(s)	VC WG & Role of the Vision Council (Leader, Partner, Supporter, Networker)	Partners/Participants and Notes	Advocacy Item(s)
				Anything that is in here is held over from the work plan.	<p>If there are advocacy items, we wanted to have a place to capture them. We have acknowledged that there will be at some point an advocacy activity for the Vision Council.</p> <p>We need to identify what they are and decide how does the Vision Council want to advocate for the items.</p>

Activity: Priority for 2022: 2.1.1 Forge a collaborative planning and advocacy effort with the MCOs and other entities known to work on ensuring sufficient permanent housing for families, including determining what is needed to bridge families in the VC Focus Populations to stable housing.

2.1.1 a Conduct a national landscape review of housing initiatives and projects that are geared toward the VC's Focus Populations.

2.1.1.b Explore the concept of assessing for housing needs as a universal question in any client needs assessment by any agency, but definitely CWS, BH, MH and family resource agencies.

- **Comment:** May providers across human services and health care have to do health screenings. This questions about housing would be a great health screening.
 - Agree with including it in screenings and that it would raise awareness...however, it could be harmful if we don't hve any resources to offer. And moral distress for workers.
- There is something in the HHS change package revamping the assessments. Who do we advocate to do make sure they are included in the revamped assessments?
- Housing needs to be taken more seriously in any HHS program, especially child welfare.
- A decade or so ago the domestic violence question started being utilized by primary care physicians or health care professionals. The question...are you safe at you? That direct question as part of a health screen changes the way people think about housing. It certainly made domestic violence more visible to a broader group of people who needed to be paying attention to it and were not. Just the question alone being imbedded in a health screen and people have to ask it makes it a more visible issue to more people. It absolutely impacts people's health. There is a strong argument to make sure it is included in the Medicaid health screenings, child welfare and juvenile justice youth.
 - Potential Pushback: They are asking for an address. Where do they currently live.
 - Putting in an address is not getting the information we need. An address does not mean someone is not sleeping on someone else's couch. They have to have a mailing address to continue with benefits, but that is not necessarily where they are living. Asking the right question is imperative.
 - The context of the questions is different. It is not being asked in the context of a health screening - do you have a home to go home to?
 - To be able to analyze are questions like that being asked and then clarifying does everyone define what the answers are the same and do systems interface to pull data and make sense of the information.
 - Define universally, what do we mean, why are we asking, and what are we doing with the information to access and address root cause issues is all woven together?
 - It raises the issue to the next level - if we are going to ask for this, we also need to have resources because it is unethical to ask and not be able to offer something.
 - What is available and what resources do we have now?
 - There is also the risk or the consequence to asking that question that their answer may mean their children are removed. If we are thinking

forward of all the potential impacts of asking and answering that question?

Question: Are we trying to start up another collaborative focused on housing? Is this a goal or would the North Star Work Group be the collaborative?

- If there are others working on more of the statewide housing approach or at least try to get to that. There are more people that understand what is happening statewide that we need to talk to.
- **Question:** Do we want to prioritize, who would be the collaborative effort for our next meeting? Is this the first thing to talk about when convening for the next meeting.
 - Yes, it is a good starting place.
 - **Reframed Question:** The activity that was prioritized for 2022 was forging the collaborative in 2.1.1. Is a collaborative a precursor to all of the other activities? If so, do we want to make it a first thing that we action plan around the next time that we meet?
 - A collaborative is not necessary to advocate to HHS that we start including that question in all their screenings. The two correlates but are exclusive on one another.
 - **Caveat:** If that question is included there needs to be training around it and other resources that are offered.
 - If there are people already doing it and there needs to be a focus shift then let's tap into people and have conversations.

Action Commitments:

- Stephanie: My commitment will take time to review the work plan on our strategies for next meeting and be ready to jump in on our next steps.
- Andrea did her own mapping of who she knows in the housing realm. They are all local, but they have statewide ties and interest. Andrea's action commitment is to talk with them before the next meeting to better understand what some of the statewide efforts look like.
- Greg talked with Tim, and he is willing to come to these meetings as well. Greg will provide a brief orientation to Tim before he participates in the next meeting.
- Anna will reach out to Cody to see what he is working on to bring him into the conversation.
- Other commitments imbedded and highlighted in notes.