

**Vision Council
North Star Workgroup Meeting
April 19, 2022**

Attendees:

Greg Bellville
Andrea Dencklau
Ana Clymer
Tim Wilson

Amal Barre
Kristie Oliver
Marlo Nash

North Star Workgroup Name: Holdover name. This workgroup is now focusing on housing. In addition, there will a discussion on possibly taken up another activity item.

[Vision Council North Star Workgroup 4-19-22 Slide Show](#)

Context: This is a continuation of an action planning process that began at the end of March. [Results Action Plan](#).

- The Results Action Plan is everything that the Vision Council has agreed to work on. We have pulled out the relevant sections for each workgroup for the action planning process.

Purpose: Continue planning the action steps to implement the 2022 priorities identified by the Vision Council on February 4, 2022.

Meeting Results:

The North Star Work Group (NSWG) will:

1. Determine if NSWG will expand its scope of work beyond Housing in 2022)
2. Complete the Results Action Plan Worksheet for its 2022 priority/priorities.
3. Identify the partners to convene to implement the Action Plan.
4. Make Action Commitments that advance the work

Meeting Materials:

- [3-29-21 NSWG Notes](#)
- [Vision Council One-Pager](#)

Action Commitments from Last Meeting:

- Request new HHS to identify a liaison for Housing/or get with the new Housing staff person.
 - Not assigned.
- **Connect to Karen Hyatt**
 - Marlo
- Asking Stephanie if she wants to invite Ashley to next meeting
 - Kristie
 - Stephanie recommended, Ashley Velez for the purpose of the Vision Council and our Equity work. Ashley was a supervisor at FRI for years and is now the CEO of Humility home and services. They have shelter

services and wrap around services.

<https://www.humilityhomes.org/hmh-hms>

- Kristie to follow-up with Stephanie
- Connect with Cody at IDPH
 - Ana
 - She messaged him to set up a time to talk through what is happening at the local and state level. They are looking at a date to meet.
- Talk with Housing leaders. Using a map of relationships; will reach out too them.
 - Andrea

Background: The Vision Council went through a process of looking at all of the action items that we believed are needed. We then picked the ones that were appropriately timed to work on in 2022.

North Star Workgroup

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.

There are Some Overarching Action Items:

VC.1: Development of Performance Measures and Action Steps.

- Naturally every workgroup is going to work on these because this is how the action planning is set up. So, no further work needs to be done.

VC.2: Build Roster of Aligned Partners.

- All of the workgroups are trying to identify which partners to bring into the work.

1.1.3: Build a culturally competent human services workforce that reflects the diversity of Iowa Communities. (In 2022, take first Action Step: Formal agreement between the Vision Council and the Cultural Equity Alliance.)

- The Vision Council has prioritized it for 2022, but it is not assigned to a particular workgroup.
- **Question:** Does it make sense for the North Star Workgroup to do the action plan around item 1.1.3?
 - **Consensus:** Yes

What is the Cultural Equity Alliance?

- The Cultural Equity Alliance has been in existence for over 10 years aligned with the Breakthrough Series Collaborative looking at disproportionality and disparity within Child Welfare at key decision points.
- The Alliance was formed with DHS leadership at the table, community contracted partners, advocates, allies, tribal representatives, youth and parents as part of the steering committee to develop statewide training, learning, workforce, developing plan, do, study efforts to make practices changes. The steering committee navigates 10 equity teams across the state in focusing on disproportionality and disparity around local data and figuring out how to collaborate with other local key partners.
- The Alliances work is focused on workforce, practice, and centering equity. The work is focused on data and what the Alliance can access. There are 3 workgroups aligned around the 3 strategies.

- Workforce is looking at can we access information from DAS system or the HR within DHS to see what can be learned who is represented in the DHS workforce and identify the gaps and challenges in having a diverse DHS workforce.
- The other areas are practice in regard to training, learning, and developing culturally competent staff and workforce and centering equity around data and being accountable to black and brown, indigenous communities, immigrants, and refugees.
- It is statewide yet localized to county teams and connected with trying to put an equity lens to the disproportionality and the disparity that is in the system.

Question/Reflection: In regard to 1.1.3, what scale are we talking about when utilizing the term human services? There is also a difference with culturally competent and reflects the diversity. They are different priorities. Culturally competence is historically in the context of trainings and have people to be able to interact respectfully and effectively with people from a variety of cultures. Diversity reflects that you have the skin tones and generative entities that reflect the population that is being served.

- When the Alliance looks at workforce, they are looking at all of those things. What are the demographics of the current workforce? If workforce left, why did they leave? They are trying to hone in on DHS social workers within child welfare and leadership. They are looking at retention and promotion representation. This was by gender, age, and race.
- We could probably pull some of the DHS By the Numbers (<https://dhs.iowa.gov/reports/child-abuse-statistics>) information and compare it to service area, county or statewide.
- For the cultural competence piece some of the stakeholders on the workgroups were talking about it is not about the one and done training, but how training is delivered and how the curriculum is accessed and does the trainings have an equity lens. It should not be a one-off training but woven into the curriculum and how it is delivered and how conversations are facilitated. The intercultural development inventory is utilized to support capacity building for DHS social workers and supervisors and then building the training and learning to enhance those skills and access it.
- Recommendations to Bureau of Service Support & Training to show what the frontline is experiencing with a majority of white female workforce. What does cultural competence look like in regard to DHS child welfare workers specifically.
- From the context of the Vision Council's goal, it is both/and how do we make sure whoever is going in working with families is aware of those preferences, strengths, needs are and also how to we make sure the workforce is more representative of the state.
- The Vision Council is not ultimately limiting the workforce conversation to child welfare but starting there because the Cultural Equity Alliance has a depth of work that it is already doing there which gives it a good place to start and learn things. Then other human services positions can be reviewed.
 - Is housing workforce considered human services workforce? This goal could crossover with the housing goal.
 - With the HHS Alignment, is it possible to look at building a culturally competent health and human services workforce? Does health capture housing?

- Yes, if we consider the social determinants of health.

This a great example of how we might want to work through 1.1.3 as an action step.

- In 2022, we are focused on the DHS Child Welfare Workforce, but we want to amend the way the goal is written to say health, housing, and human services.

The Vision Council has acknowledged all along, while it is lifting up priorities for the state, it does not need to be, and does not have the band width to be the lead on everything that is in the action plan. A part of the work is beginning to figure out if the Vision Council is lead, partner, supporter, etc. What role can the Vision Council plan to make things happen.

- For 1.1.3 joining forces with the Cultural Equity Alliance and asking how the Vision Council help can amplify and strengthen and add to the Cultural Equity Alliance work. The Vision Council will probably not lead in this space but be a strong voice for what the Cultural Equity Alliance is already doing.

3-29-21 NSWG Notes

- **Page 4 (Begin with the North Star Workgroup Priority in Housing) - Page 5 (Stop at Karen Hyatt)**
 - Do we have the right people at the table to talk about our housing priority?
 - Iowa's housing system is locally based so having state solutions is a challenge.
 - **Recommendation:** Both Ana and Four Oaks are already working in Linn County to connect child welfare data to housing stability, could this be a starting point?
 - **Recommendation:** Meet with HHS to have a housing discussion to see how/where it fits into the HHS Alignment/Change package.
- **Page 5 (Karen Hyatt) - Page 5 (Vision Council Roles for Advance Its Plan)**
 - Do we have the right people at the table?
 - Question: Reference to Iowa Total Child program. There is a funding and scalability question to learn more about.
 - **Recommendation:** Is this something that we want to be part of the Vision Council work?
- **Page 7 (top) - Page 7 (Stop at Housing needs to be taken more seriously)**
 - Collaborative Planning and advocacy effort with MCOs.
 - There is reason to believe that there will be openness.
 - Identifying and gathering data that can be used to define a project.
 - What initiatives and projects out there that are geared towards our focus populations?
 - What would we need to do in terms of accessing the families' housing needs?
 - Amal: Un-Evict Iowa is doing coalition building and working with all the social service organizations across the state on housing issues.
 - **Action Step: Housing Needs Assessment** (She is developing right now and will share.) The intent is to have people utilize as a tool and adapt it to their own needs.
 - **When it is available Amal will share with the Vision Council.**
 - Ethical dilemmas raised in this section: is it right for us to do an assessment when we don't have knowledge of the right resources to

refer people to? Also, if we ask these questions what the implications are of potentially further involving a family in the child welfare system.

- **Recommendation:** It makes sense to think more about it and figure out ways we can strengthen the resources that are available to our network.
- Housing service providers deal with is the housing available question a lot. Can we match the family once we identify how many beds they need? This is even with the flood of resources though the American Recovery Act. There is not enough housing in Iowa for the price points that are needed.

- **Page 7 (A decade or so ago the domestic violence question) - Page 8 (very top)**

- **Page 8 (Question to Action Commitments)**

- Synthesis. Clarifying if there is a housing focused collaborative statewide. If so, how do we partner with, join, inform, and be informed by their efforts. Once identified can shared goals be discussed and clarification of key screening questions that would provide the context.
- **Recommendation:** Clarify potential collaborative to interface with and who will take the lead in identifying if it exists?
 - Does it exist?
 - If it does, then we figure out who engages to orient them to the Vision Council work.

There is not truly a collaborative at this point. There is a system and there are resources available throughout the state for rapid rehousing, which is rental assistance and case management. It is the inspiration of the [Iowa Council on Homelessness](#) to build that.

- The Iowa Council on Homelessness is reforming and making itself into a useful size.
- The Iowa Council on Homelessness is a hybrid of service providers, general public and the various state departments that have some resources to bring to housing.

Recommendation: Something to consider is looking at all the focus on childcare and the connection with the business community stepping in. Is there some kind of a link to be made with “workforce housing” and “supportive housing”? Can there be some policies that would encourage the creating of more housing? This may be something to politically consider. There may be a more natural alliance right now with the conversations, concerns, and recognition that there is not enough childcare that perhaps housing can be a central element to getting at a solution.

- Affordable Housing Preservation. Iowa does not have an affordable housing preservation model.
 - Over the last 10 years Iowa has lost 20%-25% of its affordable housing stock. Housing that has been affordable and accessible to low-income households and/or people that have multiple barriers to housing (eg those with criminal history, bad credit, fixed incomes) has been lost over the last decade.
 - In Des Moines alone in the last year, 530 affordable housing units.
 - The county board of supervisors announced that they will be making a \$50 million investment of affordable housing development for individuals at 30% or below AMI. This will help produce about 600 units of affordable housing so that is this is going to create 70 new units on the market and mitigate the experience of the loss of the 530.

- Most of the focus in policy making strategy it is on affordable housing production, home ownership support for new homeowners. There is very little investment being made in keeping hold of the housing that we already have in the communities.
- By 2030, Iowa is set to lose about ½ of the current affordable housing that we have in stock because the contracts are expiring.
- **Action Steps:** Amal: Des Moines: Created a [mapping tool to archive housing loss](#). It that maps our where the homes have been lost over the last 10 years.
 - Many of the homes are being lost in centrally located neighborhoods. Places where public transportation is already accessible. Grocery stores and health care facilities are within walking distance or on the bus line. These are neighborhoods that you want low income, older adults, persons with disabilities, and families that have barriers (e.g. Language barriers).
 - Biggest threats is local landlords leave the market because they cannot sustain it themselves and then national investor groups buy them out.
 - **Advocacy:** Support Affordable Housing Preservation Legislation.

What is the Vision Council's Role in this?

- We are not in the position to be the lead on housing.
- As we get more data and information to have policy recommendations this is where we can be helpful by sharing the children and family impact or incorporating that into our various organizations legislative packages.
 - How do these housing issues fit into everyone's agendas?
- Our activities should not have the North Star Workgroups take the lead, but how we can get better informed and support housing efforts and identifying the natural allies and the people who are not thinking about children and families.
- Is it a twist on establishing a statewide collaborative...do we need an official collaborative?
 - **Action Step:** Establishing a voice for children and families and housing decision making and conversations.
 - We can present at meetings where the other groups exist and help provide talking points. We can provide value instead of recreating another collaborative.
 - This could be also packaged to have messaging and policy at the local/community level. The results may be uneven at first. [We want to make our communities stronger so we have healthy places that people can raise their families.](#)

Examples: How can we bring together two of the largest counties in Iowa and talk about some of the work that is being done? Work has been localized how do we bring together the conversations on what do we know. How do we create a collaborative to infuse this knowledge into?

- **Polk County**
- **Linn County Community Services**

- Ashley created an assessment of the whole continuum of homelessness, access to housing, housing development, housing quality, housing development, and equity all across the continuum.
- They have had two or 3 years working with the cities in Linn County, United Way, businesses, the faith community, and service providers.
 - The conversations in Linn County are carried forward to the Service Area Manager (SAM)
 - What are efforts within child welfare that are proactive or preventative in creating more compelling issues that they walk a family to child welfare, juvenile justice, or other systems? There are pieces that they are trying to put together.

We want to be speaking the same language, understanding root causes, and promoting legislative action/inaction.

Recommendation: The MCOs should be aware of this work.

- Shape this up enough to have an ask of support and engagement to keep the work going.

Data Resources:

- <https://icalliances.org/> is a good place for data on homelessness at the state level and they have a network of connections across the state.
- National Association of Counties has housing data: <https://www.naco.org/topics/housing>

Action Commitments:

Kristie: Talk with Four Oaks re: Iowa Total Child (next meeting)

Amal: Housing Map for Des Moines (Prototype) (next meeting)

Amal: Housing Needs Assessment (Summer 2022)

- Can the Vision Council bring a springboard for release of the Housing Needs Assessment?

Ana: Following up with Cody, Linn County, and Ashley, and Matt Majeski (next meeting)

- **Ana:** Including Amal in conversation w/ Linn County

Kristie & Marlo: Cull options for the next NSWG mtg agenda and work w/ Marlo to plan

Tim & Marlo: Shape up today's conversation for the next meeting