



Anchorage Coalition to End
Homelessness

Gap Analysis & 2021 Community Priorities

Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness

ACEH is the only local network of businesses, non-profits, and community members focused on the prevention and elimination of homelessness in Anchorage

Where did we begin?

- 2004: ACEH Formed
- 2012: Became an independent 501(c)(3)
- 2013: Became independent fiscal agent
- 2016: Hired first staff person
- 2017: Hired second staff person
- 2018: Partnered in the creation of Anchored Home with the MOA, Rasmuson Foundation and United Way

Where are we at today?

- ACEH
- Anchored Home
- Continuum of Care
- Coordinated Entry
- HMIS
- Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project
- Project Homeless Connect
- Community Coalition
- Advocacy Group
- Provider Support

ACEH Governance Structure

In late 2019, ACEH finalized a three-year strategic plan and underwent a change in governance structure. Today, ACEH has a Board of Directors that oversees ACEH as an organization and an Advisory Council that oversees the Homeless Prevention and Response System.



Assessment and Prioritization Process

Gap Analysis

Prioritization

Recommendations

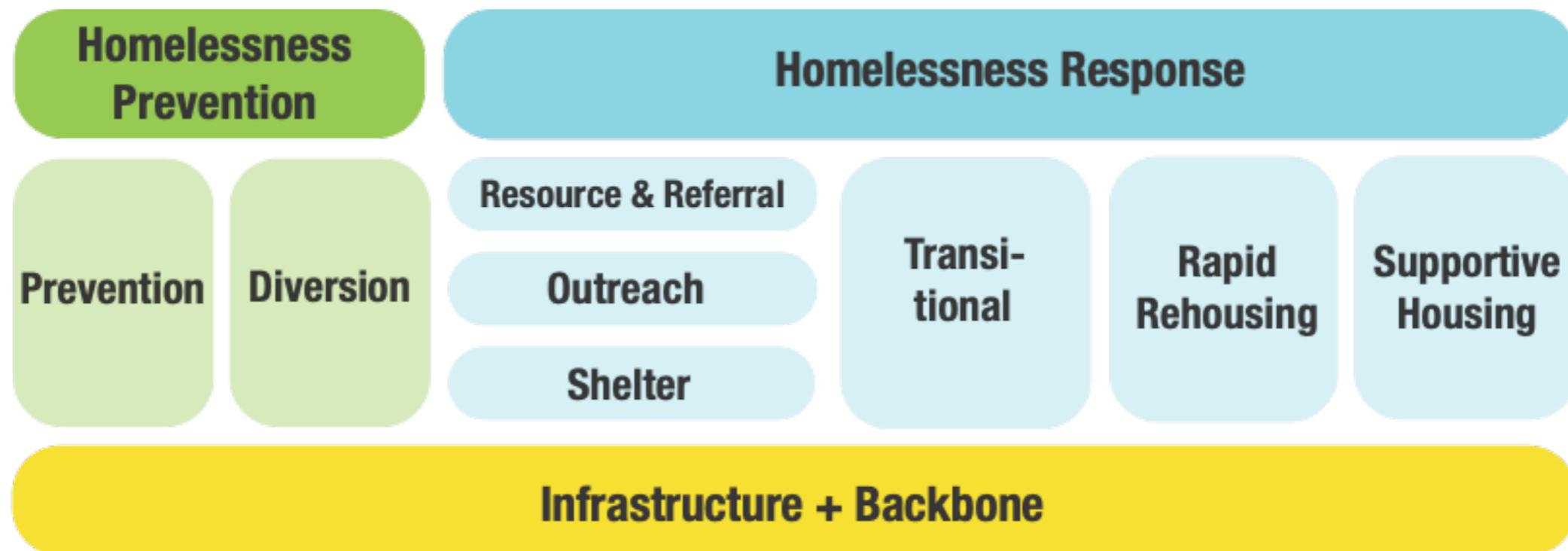


The Advisory Council started with a gap analysis, looking at the data to get a picture of **demand, supply, capacity** (or our ability to meet demand in a given year), and then the **gaps** between supply, demand and capacity.

Then, the Advisory Council underwent a prioritization process, ranking interventions to address these gaps and making concrete recommendations for the coming year.

Homeless Prevention & Response System

The Advisory Council's goal is to help Anchorage build a full continuum of evidence-based, cost-effective interventions.



Lower acuity/intensity

Higher need/intensity

2021 Community Priorities

- **Priority 1: Permanent Supportive Housing, Shelter, and Rapid Rehousing for Single Adults**

Single adult homelessness continues to be the largest area of need, and this gap between demand and capacity is projected to grow. This need can best be addressed by a combination of shelter (or shelter alternatives), Rapid Rehousing, and Permanent Supportive Housing for adults.

- **Priority 2: Prevention, Resource and Referral, and Outreach; Shelter and Rapid Rehousing for Families and Youth & Transition Aged Youth (TAY)**

Preventing or immediately addressing new inflow into homelessness is a significant need particularly during COVID-19. Additionally, increased capacity for shelter and rapid rehousing for families and youth & TAY is necessary to adjust to the economic impacts of COVID-19 and prevent intergenerational homelessness.

- **Priority 3: Diversion; Transitional Housing for all populations; Permanent Supportive Housing for Families & Youth; Housing Interventions for Veterans**

Other interventions have proven effective for specific subpopulations and should be scaled up to meet demand.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Permanent Supportive Housing is one of the highest priorities for 2021 and the best way we can address unsheltered visible homelessness in our community.

Current Gaps

Based on today's measured demand, Anchorage needs 700 additional units of Permanent Supportive Housing: 557 for adults, 28 for families, 95 for youth and transition aged youth, and 20 for veterans.



Recommendations

- Implement ongoing and predictable funding for capital and operational funding
- Facilitate sustainable payment structure for services (requires changes to Medicaid state plan)
- Direct allocation of housing voucher subsidies through mainstream resources to PSH

Shelter

Shelter is one of the highest priorities for 2021, particularly when taking COVID-19 impacts into account.

Current Gaps

Ensuring shelter capacity, especially during winter, is critical for public health and safety. Current gaps include the need for 400 shelter beds for single adults, at least 30 for families, and at least 20 beds for youth (under age 18) and TAY.



Recommendations

- Ensure that shelter capacity meets the need in smaller/low-barrier settings with day and night services in the same location
- Include resource & referral services, following lessons learned during COVID-19
- Ensure commitment for sustained funding from local and state government to address the public health challenge of emergency shelter for all populations
- Create separate shelter for youth (under age 18)

Rapid Rehousing (RRH)

Rapid Rehousing is one of the highest priorities for 2021 and one of the most effective ways to provide short term assistance for long term sustainable housing.

Current Gaps

Based on today's measured demand, Anchorage needs 1,695 additional units of Rapid Rehousing: 1,510 units for single adults, 23 for families, and 162 for Youth & TAY. Our recommendation is to scale up over time to allow for changes in demand as we better understand the impact of COVID-19.



Recommendations

- Coordinate engagement with landlords to increase access to existing housing
- Coordinate funding/capacity for rapid rehousing, especially to meet a large gap for single adults
- Expand Rapid Rehousing through pilot programs to demonstrate success in serving higher vulnerability populations, given the lower cost than PSH

Prevention

Prevention is a high priority for 2021 and one of the most cost-effective solutions for addressing increasing demand due to the economic impacts of COVID-19.

Current Gaps

Prevention work is taking place in Anchorage and new prevention resources are coming in to address COVID-19, but there is no formal, coordinated prevention system. A formal structure needs to be resourced and organized for prevention services, including data collection. There is also an opportunity to align new prevention efforts related to COVID-19 with existing work.



Recommendations

- Build and resource a formal system from existing prevention interventions, and ensure coordinated data collection
- Ensure resources for follow-up with clients who receive prevention resources to determine efficacy
- Work with community partners to align COVID-19 prevention with coordinated prevention system

Resource & Referral

Resource & referral is a high priority for 2021 and has been shown to be effective in Anchorage since March 2020 as we have piloted the work at Sullivan Arena with a strong provider partnership.

Current Gaps

Shelter provision during COVID-19 has shown the value of building in comprehensive resource & referral (sometimes called navigation) services into shelter settings. Shelter will be most effective as a service that is connecting individuals to other resources and interventions.



Recommendations

- Develop a formal network for resource & referral across shelters in the community, including data collection
- Support/invest in staff capacity to provide resource & referral services at all shelter locations using existing models that work; advocate for this service to be funded and included in all shelter settings

Outreach

Outreach is a high priority for 2021 and a critical piece of the work to end unsheltered homelessness. Outreach is particularly important for community safety during COVID-19.

Current Gaps

Outreach is an important part of a complete Homeless Prevention and Response System, especially for connecting unsheltered groups to necessary resources. Anchorage today lacks adequate capacity to conduct outreach to known unsheltered hot spots, which is a significant barrier to reducing unsheltered homelessness in camps and greenways.



Recommendations

- Increase outreach capacity to ensure all unsheltered hot spots (reported camps, libraries, and other public locations) have regular outreach year round, including both initial engagement and data collection and also capacity for intensive outreach to those with higher acuity needs

Diversion

Diversion is a lower priority for 2021 but an important intervention to pilot as it could help address new homelessness in the coming years.

Current Gaps

Diversion is working well in serving veterans, but there is no coordinated diversion system to serve other groups. Future prioritizations should consider Anchorage's ability to scale up a coordinated diversion system.



Recommendations

- Pilot diversion program for families and report findings back to community
- Allocate resources to develop a family pilot, including capacity for data collection and entry into HMIS; and sufficient services to ensure follow-up with clients who receive diversion funding to determine efficacy of services and outcomes

Transitional Housing

Transitional Housing is a lower priority for 2021. It has been scaled down in Anchorage in recent years due to federal priority changes but is a valuable time-based intervention.

Current Gaps

Federal funding for transitional housing has been reduced over time, but it is a necessary piece of the continuum and has proven effective, especially for specific populations including TAY. The current gap for transitional housing includes a gap of 154 units for single adults.

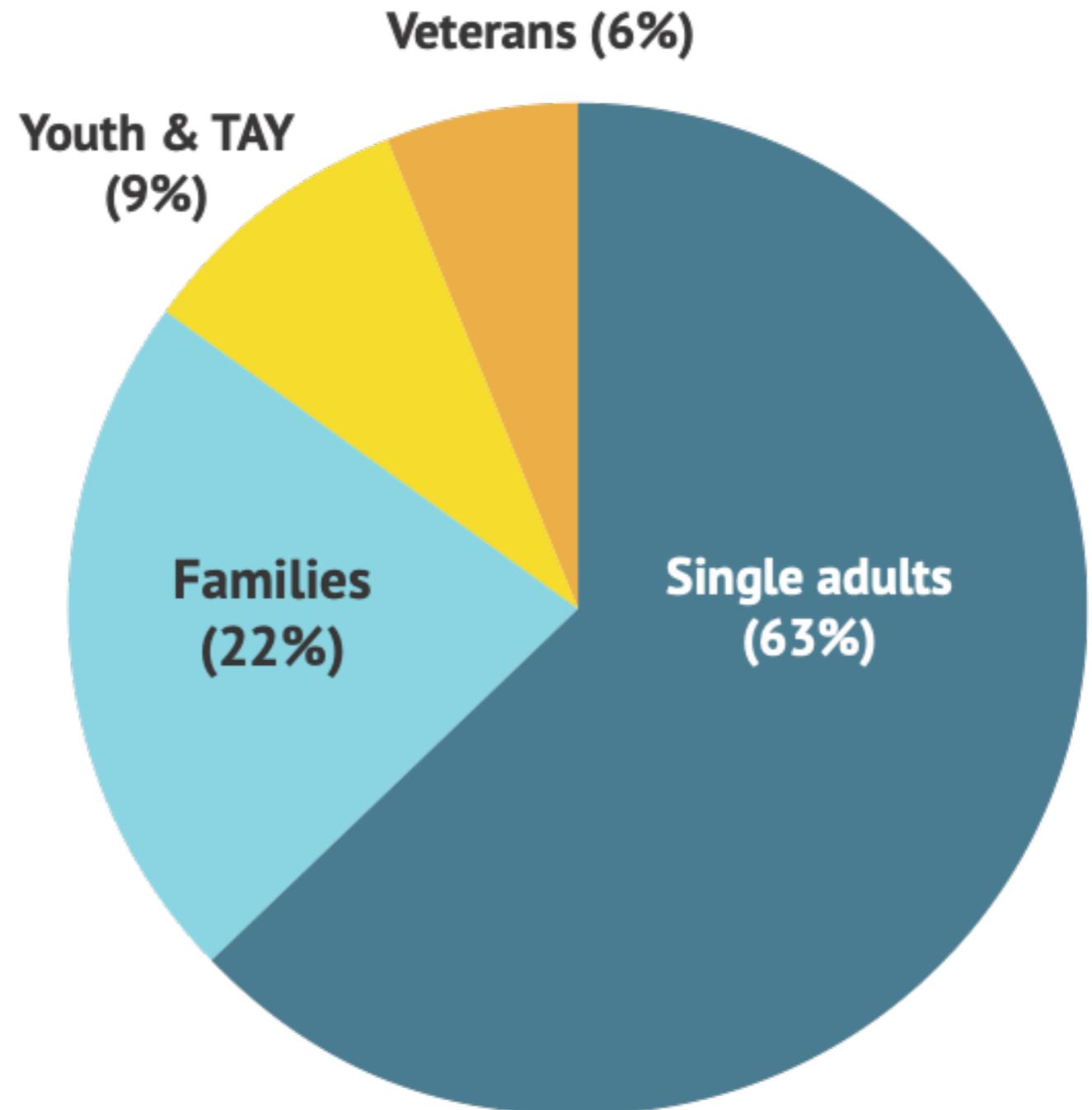


Recommendations

- Explore investing in additional transitional housing to meet demand across subpopulations, including 154 units needed for single adults

Gap Analysis: Demand

The Gap Analysis began with an analysis of demand, or need, across the system. As shown here, single adults account for 63% of measured demand viewed by subpopulation, families account for 22%, youth and transition aged youth (TAY) account for 9%, and veterans account for 6%.



Gap Analysis Findings: Gaps in the System

For some interventions, we do not yet have coordinated data to quantify gaps. For these interventions, gaps are explained qualitatively.

Intervention Type	Description of Gap
Prevention	We are missing data and coordination for a robust prevention system, need which is anticipated to grow due to COVID. Addressing problems early through prevention is lower cost than waiting for need in higher level of care.
Diversion	We know that diversion is working for veterans in Anchorage, and we know that there are many families and youth who meet the definition for homelessness and are not being served by our current system. Diversion helps people who are one situation away from homelessness from requiring more intensive interventions.
Resource & Referral	Intervention early after entering the system by connecting with available resources can lead to self-resolution. This is not currently available in shelters in Anchorage because they are not funded to include robust resource & referral supports.
Outreach	Outreach is particularly important in connecting people experiencing unsheltered homelessness with needed resources. We are significantly lacking outreach capacity to ensure all unsheltered hotspots have regular outreach year-round, including initial engagement and data collection and also capacity for intensive outreach to those with higher acuity needs.

Gap Analysis Findings: Gaps in the System

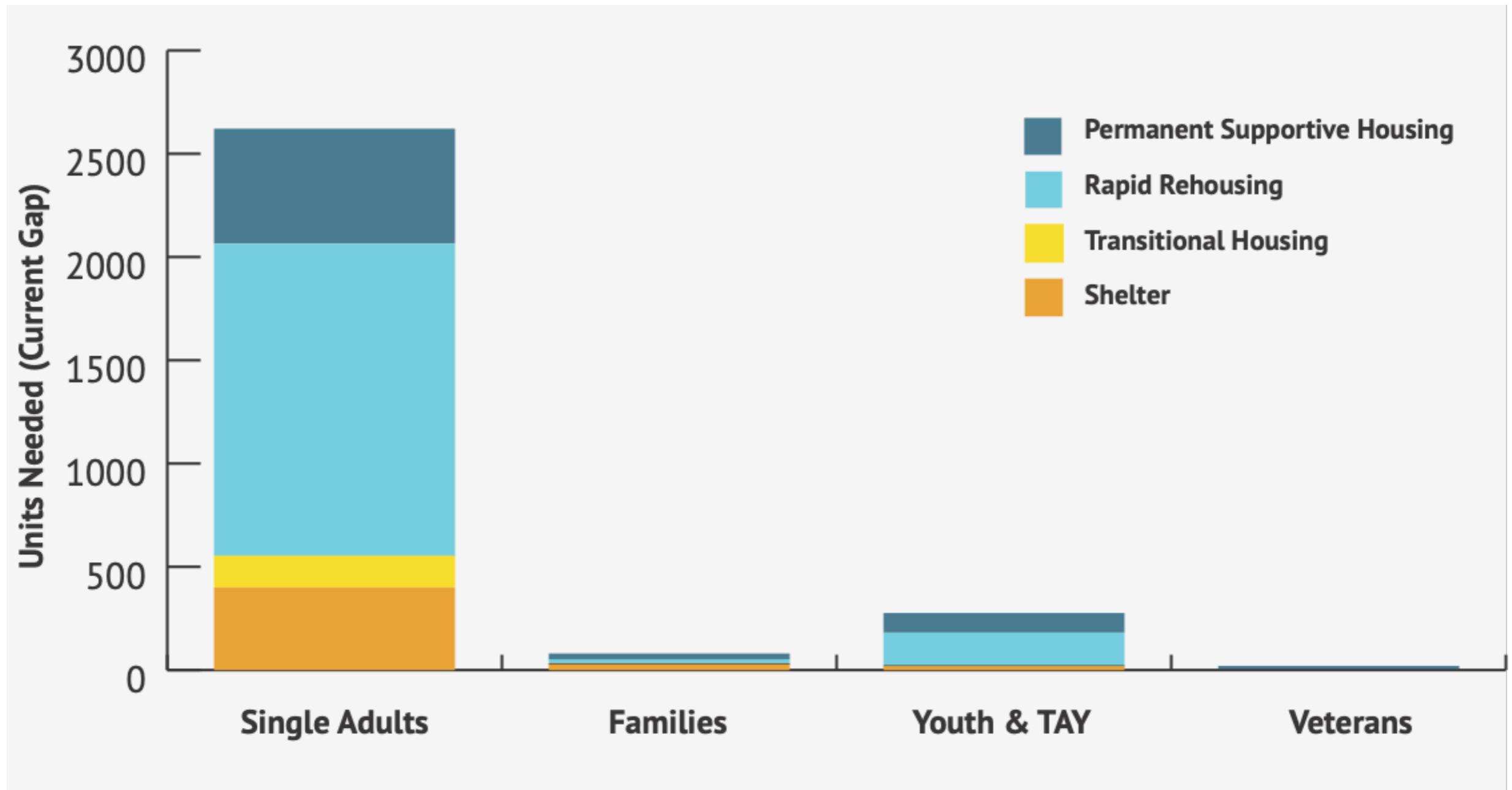
Gaps = Demand - Capacity

(X) = Sufficient capacity, system meeting demand
 X= Not enough capacity, demand exceeding capacity

	Single Adults	Families	Youth & TAY	Veterans	Gap <i>(units needed - current capacity)</i>
Shelter	400	30	20	0	450
Transitional Housing	154	(40)	(30)	1	155
Rapid Rehousing	1,510	23	162	(17)	1,695
Permanent Supportive Housing	557	28	95	20	700
Total	2,621	81	277	21	3,000

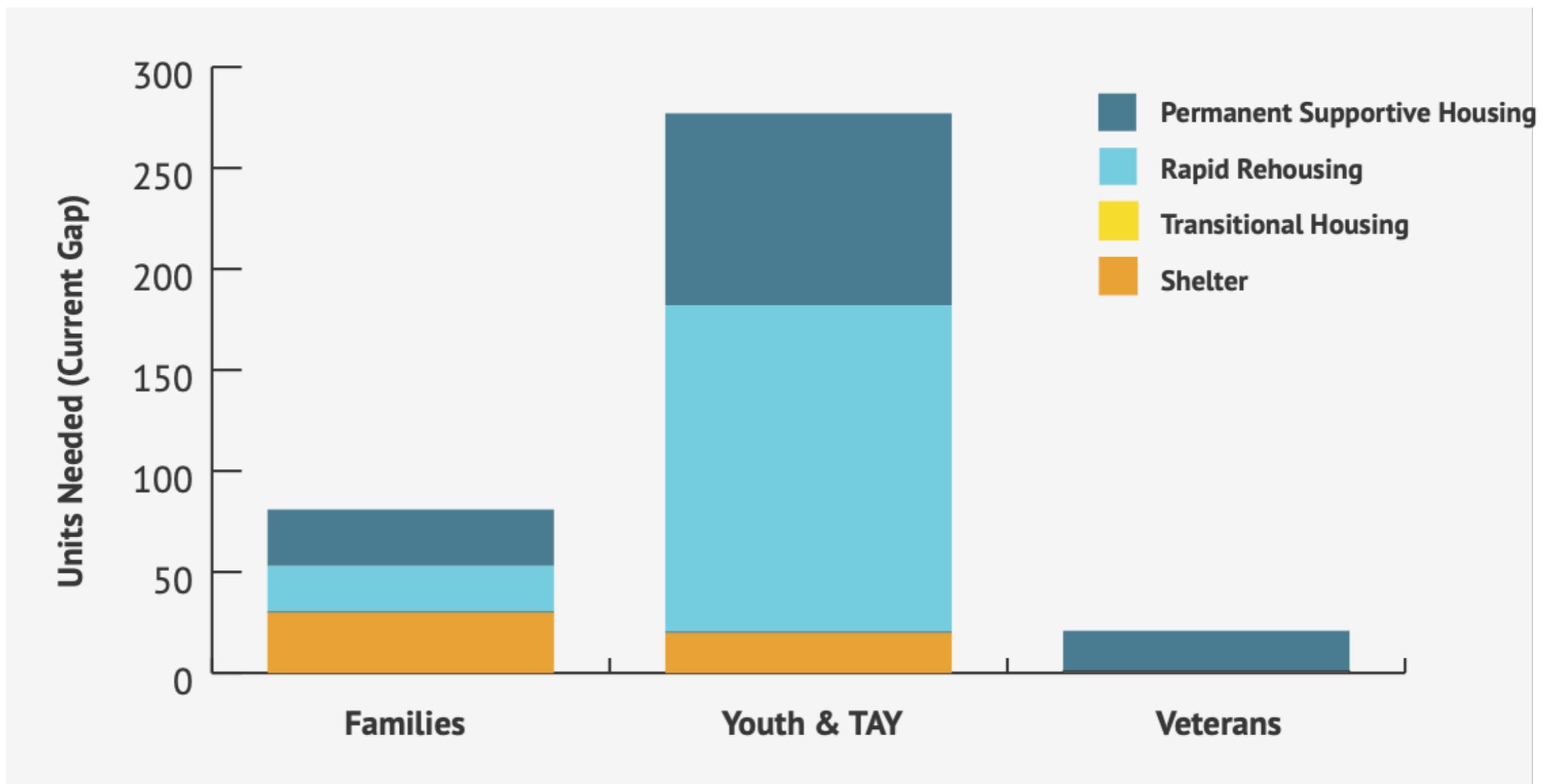
This data accounts for new funded projects coming online and COVID-19 impacts to the shelter system as of June 2020.

Needed Units by Subpopulation



Zooming In: Families, Youth, Veterans

Families, Youth & TAY, and Veterans show smaller gaps than single adults across all interventions. The following chart focuses in on the gaps for these subpopulations.



Next Steps

- Review the full report: <https://anchoragehomeless.org/gap-analysis-community-priorities/>
- Partner with ACEH to build a full continuum and solve homelessness: Align policy, funding and community work with the recommended priorities- we are available to support further partnership opportunities
- Join us for more detailed discussions or reach out and we can schedule time to review with your group (mhernandez@anchoragehomeless.org)
- Join the ACEH membership to add your voice to the conversation: <https://anchoragehomeless.org/get-involved/membership/>

Alcohol Tax

- For more immediate impacts on homelessness, this portion of the **Alcohol Tax** should be focused on items impacting public health and safety, particularly supporting shelters (including resource/referral and day capacity) or shelter alternatives, year-round outreach to unsheltered hotspots, and supporting housing for people with high acuity needs (which is also the most direct and cost effective way to reduce unsheltered homelessness).
- While rapid rehousing is the largest current gap in the system (1695 units) there are other sustainable funding streams to help address this gap.
- All investments in prevention (substance abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse) will support the long-term reduction of homelessness and are also an important part of the city's investment.
- **New funds** coming into the community due to COVID-19 (CARES ACT, FEMA, ESG etc.) should be positioned to address the additional gaps noted in the continuum (prevention, resource & referral, etc.)

