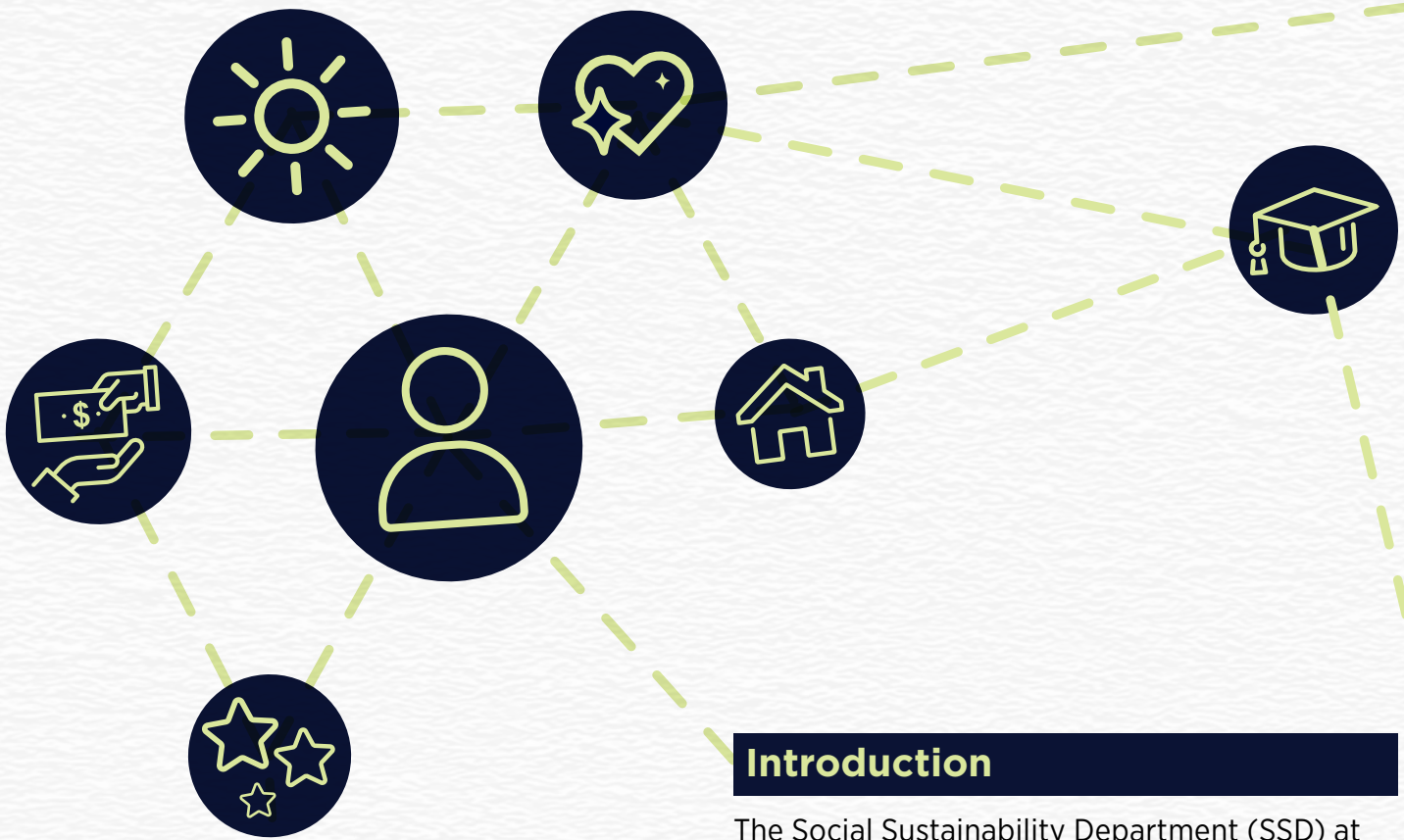




**HUMAN SERVICES  
& HOMELESSNESS  
Priority Platforms**



January 2025



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**Introduction**

The Social Sustainability Department (SSD) at the City of Fort Collins was formed in 2012 with the realignment of existing Affordable Housing and Grant Program Administration functions and staff. This new department was created to deliver greater impact in the community and to inform the City’s focus on braiding together social, economic, environmental, and equity interests. Funding, policy and partnerships have historically been and continue to be the core roles of SSD when working with other organizations in the community and within the City on social issues. SSD’s efforts have primarily addressed the systems and structures influencing affordable housing, human services, homelessness, poverty, equity and diversity, and pandemic response and recovery.

The Social Sustainability Department aligns its work to advance the goals and priorities within the following City of Fort Collins documents: Housing Strategic Plan, Human Services Priority Platform, Homelessness Priority Platform, and the Fort Collins Consolidated Plan for the US Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD).

## About this Project

Human service and homelessness needs in the Fort Collins community are complex and interconnected. The Social Sustainability Department (SSD) has historically addressed these issues with a broad approach of supporting many diverse organizations and causes, limiting the potential impact of addressing systemic and sustainable solutions. To ensure that City resources are effectively directed to the community's most pressing human service and homelessness priorities, the Human Services and Homelessness Priority Platforms have been developed for use in competitive funding programs and to influence staff work plan activities.

The project began in early 2024 and involved the following staff-led activities to collect voices, insights and trends from the community:

- Analyzed 16 existing data sets, reports and plans, allowing staff to utilize recent, relevant and local materials to help identify potential data trends and topics.
- Examined the local funding landscape of leading human service funders and the focus areas they support.
- Direct community input data was gathered via a questionnaire, with over 350 responses received.
- Convened a series of nine focus groups and listening sessions, attended by over 100 nonprofit, housing and human service leaders and staff.

- Conducted 50+ interviews with nonprofit, housing and human service leaders, businesses, institutions and internal City departments.
- Presented to five City Boards and the autumn 2024 Super Issues Board meeting, soliciting input from Council-appointed community volunteers.
- Facilitated discussions with four Lived Experience Groups of residents experiencing homelessness (or formerly homeless) and residents of income-restricted housing.

The insights from this engagement journey were then deliberated by a team of City staff, including consultation with the City's Equity Office and Attorney's Office. Role alignment with the City's adopted strategic interests was also assessed. The resulting framework and priorities were then circulated for public review and technical feedback, before receiving a final endorsement from the City's Human Services & Housing Funding Board in November 2024.

To ensure these Priority Platforms remain relevant and responsive, community conditions will be scanned annually to identify any systemic or technical changes that may necessitate updates. This will include intentionally melding the homelessness priorities with county-wide strategic planning efforts underway in 2025.





## Equity Focus

Of foremost importance within these Priority Platforms is to preserve and embed the values of the City's Strategic Objective related to advancing equitable outcomes for residents, including those with disproportionately impacted identities (see page 5). Both human services and homeless services in Fort Collins offer opportunities to address the root causes of generational inequities in the community. Maintaining this awareness while implementing the Priority Platforms can initiate and increase support and stability for those residents most impacted.

## Expanding Roles for Social Sustainability

The core roles of the Social Sustainability Department are to provide funding, advance policy, and cultivate partnerships around the issues of housing, human services and homelessness. To remain responsive to community needs, expanding roles for SSD may involve:

- Promoting human services programs available to residents
- Convening nonprofit organizations for networking, capacity building and training
- Supporting efforts to nurture collaboration, improve client outcomes, and reduce service duplication



## Housing

Housing affordability remains a top priority for the City of Fort Collins and the Social Sustainability Department. The City's Housing Strategic Plan (2021) thoroughly recognizes the community's challenges to yield affordable, stable and attainable housing options, and presents a comprehensive collection of 26 prioritized strategies addressing the issue. These strategies drive SSD's work to overcome housing inequities, cost and availability in Fort Collins.

In the Human Services and Homelessness Priority Platforms, affordable housing is recognized as a consistent and underpinning barrier to the wellbeing and stability of residents with limited-incomes and other disproportionately impacted identities. The Housing Strategic Plan compliments these Priority Platforms and the systems work of SSD.

## Funding Landscape

Funding in the Fort Collins community for human services and homelessness is diverse, with gaps remaining between the costs for such services and funding availability to meet local needs. The high volume and close engagement nature of these services create significant personnel and system administration costs.

In addition to City support, core funding largely is delivered from county, state and federal sources. Meaningful investments from individual donors, businesses, and local or state foundations also support budget needs. Program fees charged to participants for various services, such as caregiving, are also revenue options utilized by some direct service providers.



The community benefits from Larimer County's Behavioral Health Services Impact Fund Grant Program, which distributes \$2.8 million annually to organizations filling gaps in behavioral health care throughout our county. This represents a portion of the sales tax that voters approved in 2018 and that also funded the construction of a dedicated behavioral health facility. Over \$800k from the 8th Judicial District's allotment of Victim Assistance Law Enforcement (V.A.L.E.) funds are also awarded county-wide.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, many millions of dollars of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) have been granted to human and homeless service providers in Fort Collins. The ARPA funding concluded at the end of 2024, leaving an unfilled funding shortage in the community for life-sustaining services to high-need and at-risk residents.

The nonprofit, public and private sector organizations in Fort Collins can resolve funding challenges and other system stressors by continuing to secure outside funding, promote philanthropy, expand collaborative and complimentary programming, and build capacity for local funding initiatives.



## Gratitude

Thank you to the over 500 community members, nonprofit organizations, City staff members, and partners who contributed their insights, experiences and expertise to this project! The collective voices from everyone involved have influenced the priorities and equity considerations that will guide the Social Sustainability Department's work and funding initiatives in the future.

## Additional Information

For additional information about this document and the Social Sustainability Department, please visit us at [fcgov.com/socialsustainability](https://fcgov.com/socialsustainability)



# Disproportionately Impacted Identities

Fort Collins residents with disproportionately impacted identities, especially those with overlapping identities, may experience complex and compounding challenges affecting their daily lives. The Human Services and Homelessness Priority Platforms underscore the importance of adapting and promoting programming to reduce these barriers and create greater access to services for the following populations.<sup>1</sup>

## Limited-Income Socioeconomic Status

Households with income between 0-80% of Area Median Income (AMI)

## Housing Status<sup>2</sup>

Unhoused or unstably housed

## Geographic Location<sup>3</sup>

City-designated Opportunity Neighborhoods with the highest number of vulnerability indicators for historic marginalization

## Communities of Historically Excluded Racial and Ethnic Backgrounds

Native American, Latinx/Latine/Hispanic, Black and African American, Middle Eastern, Asian or Pacific Islander

## Immigration Status and National Origin<sup>4</sup>

Residents from low- and middle-income countries, with or without documented immigration status

## Language

Persons with linguistic barriers from the direct translation and understanding of words and phrases between languages and cultures

## Age

Children | Youth and Young Adults | Seniors (62+)

## Gender Identity/Expression and Sexual Orientation

LGBTQIA+ and Women

## Disability

Condition that substantially impairs a person's stamina, dexterity, mobility, physical capacity, executive functioning, adaptive behavior, and/or social development

## Survivor

Victims/Survivors of interpersonal violence

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1 The order of Disproportionately Impacted Identities is for easy referencing; the order does not imply priorities of any kind.

2 Housing Status is only applied within the Homelessness Priority Platform.

3 Geographic Location is only applied within the Human Services Priority Platform.

4 As classified by the World Bank.

5 CITY OF FORT COLLINS

# Human Services Priorities Platform

The Human Services Priorities Platform is an adaptable, role-clarifying blueprint for how the City’s Social Sustainability Department delivers resources, programming and partnership toward human services in the community. The Platform profiles the human service issues of greatest significance to Social Sustainability and will form the basis for future work. Preserving the values of equity, diversity and inclusion are foundational in the Platform, and the adversities experienced by residents with disproportionately impacted identities are recognized throughout this work.

The key priorities identified will inform staff activities and grant-making for the next five years, beginning in October 2025. To ensure the Platform remains relevant and responsive, community conditions will be scanned annually to identify necessary updates.

Caregiving	Prevention	Intervention	Food Security	Financial Stability and Opportunity
Children Youth Adults Seniors	Education, training, and direct client services to reduce risk factors	Counseling Case Management Social Connections	Access Nutrition Education	Direct Client Assistance Career Pathways Transportation

## Disproportionately Impacted Identities

Limited-Income Socioeconomic Status      National Origin      Language  
 Communities of Historically Excluded Racial/Ethnic Backgrounds  
 Disability      Geographic Location      Survivor      Age  
 Immigration Status      Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation

Preferred Future State	Preferred Future State	Preferred Future State	Preferred Future State	Preferred Future State
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## **Caregiving**

### **Scope**

Programs that provide caregiving services to children, youth, adults and seniors.

### **Preferred Future State**

Community members will have access to quality caregiving services that are affordable to them and meet their needs.

### **Alignment**

- City of Fort Collins Strategic Objectives ECON.1 and NVC.2 (2024)
- City Council Priority #2 (2024-26)
- City Plan Principles LIV.8.2, LIV.8.3 (2019)
- Economic Health Strategic Plan Outcome 3.1 (2023)
- Fort Collins Resilient Recovery Plan Outcome 3C (2022)

## **Prevention**

### **Scope**

Programs that provide education, training, or direct client services to reduce risk factors that may lead to further/future involvement in human services.

### **Preferred Future State**

Evidence-informed prevention service models that can clearly demonstrate program efficacy will be available to community members in need.

### **Alignment**

- City of Fort Collins Strategic Objectives NVC.2 & SAFE.1 (2024)
- City Council Priority #2 (2024-26)
- City Plan Principles LIV.8.2, LIV.8.3 (2019)
- Fort Collins Resilient Recovery Plan Outcome 1C (2022)

## **Intervention**

### **Scope**

Programs and local initiatives that increase accessibility to:

- Counseling: programs that create access to mental and behavioral health counseling services.
- Case Management: programs that assess, plan, implement, coordinate, monitor, and evaluate care or assistance for a client.
- Social Connections: programs that build social networks, combat isolation, and promote inclusion.

### **Preferred Future State**

Community members will have access to quality intervention services that are affordable to them and meet their needs.

### **Alignment**

- City of Fort Collins Strategic Objective NVC.2
- City Council Priority #2 (2024-26)
- City Plan Principles LIV.8.2, LIV.8.3 (2019)
- Fort Collins Resilient Recovery Plan Outcome 1C (2022)



# Food Security

## Scope

Programs and local initiatives that increase accessibility to nutritious food, address food insecurity, and/or provide community education on food-related issues.

## Preferred Future State

Community members will have access to food that meets their nutritional needs and is culturally relevant. The wider community is knowledgeable about the importance of food-related issues.

## Alignment

- City of Fort Collins Strategic Objective NVC.2 (2024)
- City Council Priority #2 (2024-26)
- Our Climate Future Big Move 8 – Local Affordable Healthy Food LAHF3 (2021)
- City Plan Principles SC.4.4, SC.4.5, LIV.8.2, LIV.8.3 (2019)
- Fort Collins Resilient Recovery Plan Outcome 1B (2022)

# Financial Stability and Opportunity

## Scope

Programs that ensure residents have equitable access to tools and resources to develop their short-term and long-term stability, including:

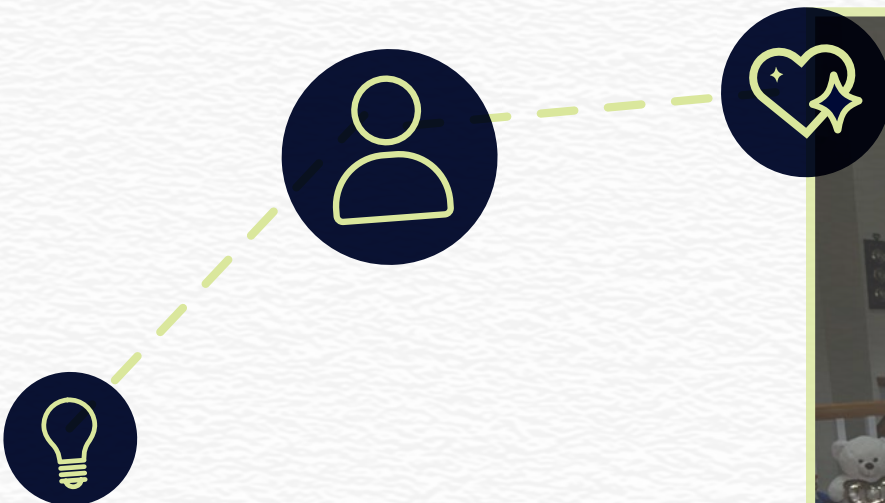
- Direct client assistance
- Career pathways that narrow skill gaps and remove barriers to employment
- Transportation to get to essential services, products and places

## Preferred Future State

Community members will have equitable access to resources for stability and self-sufficiency. Patterns that perpetuate generational poverty are disrupted.

## Alignment

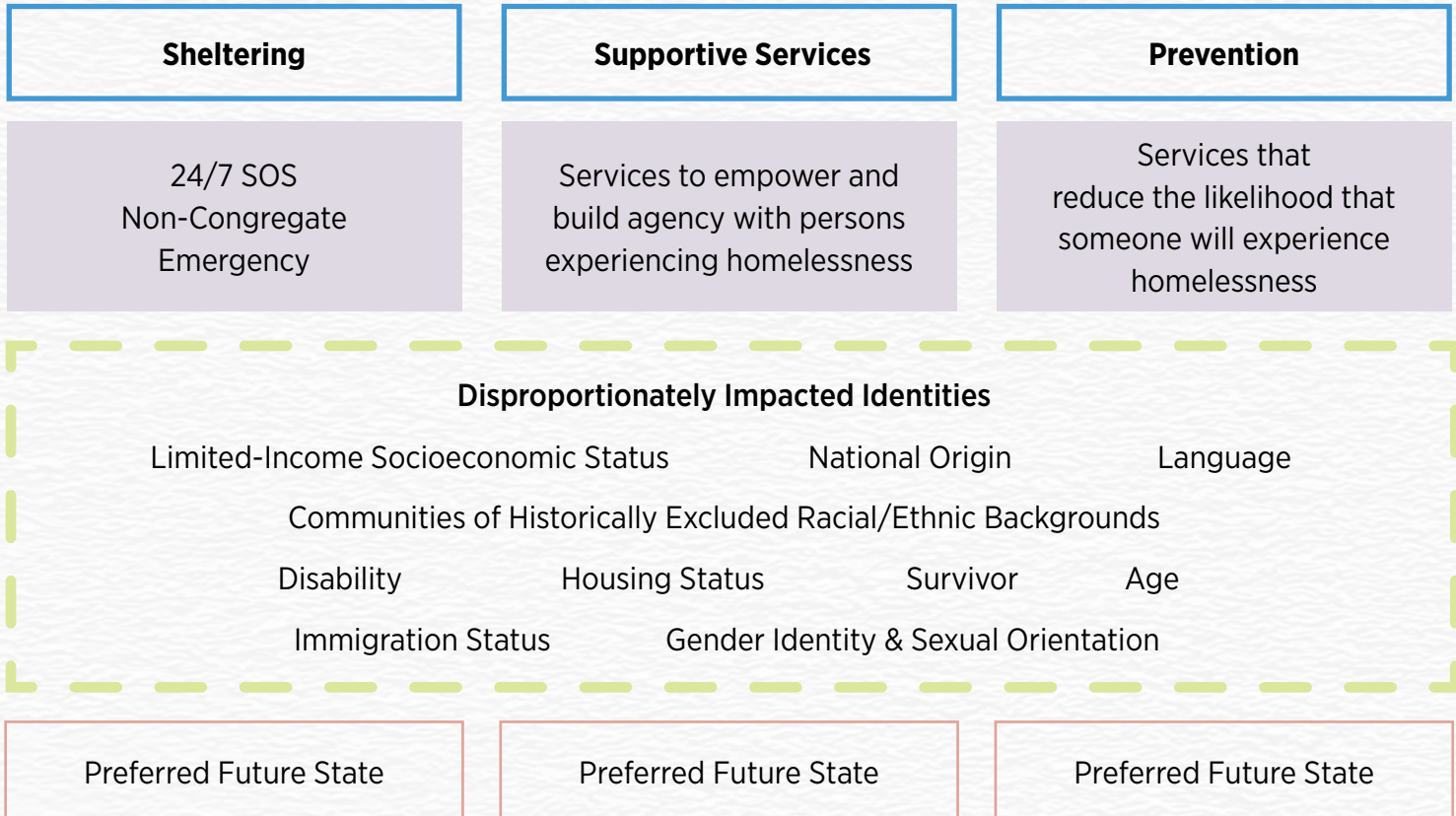
- City of Fort Collins Strategic Objectives NVC.2 & ECON.1 (2024)
- City Council Priorities #2 & #4 (2024-26)
- City Plan Principles LIV.8.2, LIV.8.3, EH.6.2, T.9.1 (2019)
- Fort Collins Transportation Master Plan Principles T5 & T9 (2019)
- Economic Health Strategic Plan Outcome 3.1 (2023)
- Fort Collins Resilient Recovery Plan Outcome 1B & 3B (2022)



# Homelessness Priorities Platform

The City’s goal for homelessness is to put systems in place so that when a person does experience homelessness, it is rare, brief, and non-recurring, and the number of people entering homelessness does not exceed the system’s housing capacity. This is called “functionally ending homelessness” or “functional zero.”

The Homelessness Priorities Platform will inform how Social Sustainability supports local systems with resources, programming and partnership towards achieving a functional zero community. The Platform will identify leverage points along the spectrum of intervention and prioritize programs of highest impact. The City also aligns its homelessness work with regional plans and response strategies.



## **Sheltering**

### **Scope**

Programs that provide 24/7 shelter, seasonal overflow shelter, non-congregate shelter, and emergency shelter.

### **Preferred Future State**

Capacity is available to meet the shelter needs of all who are unhoused; no one is turned away due to space constraints.

### **Alignment**

- City of Fort Collins Strategic Objective NVC.2 (2024)
- City Council Priority #2 (2024-26)
- City Plan Principles LIV.6.2, LIV.8.2, LIV.8.3, LIV.8.6 (2019)
- Housing Strategic Plan Strategies 2 & 4 (2021)
- Our Climate Future Big Move 7 – Healthy Affordable Housing HAH4 (2021)
- Fort Collins Resilient Recovery Plan Outcome 1B, 2B & 2C (2022)

## **Supportive Services**

### **Scope**

Variety of services to empower persons experiencing homelessness and assist them in building agency, including wraparound models, mental and behavioral health, resource navigation, rapid rehousing, rental subsidies/affordable rent, case management, and permanent supportive services.

### **Preferred Future State**

Supportive services are recognized as critical to move people experiencing homelessness into permanent housing and keep them there.

Permanent supportive services are available to people who need them.

### **Alignment**

- City of Fort Collins Strategic Objective NVC.2 (2024)
- City Council Priority #2 (2024-26)
- City Plan Principles LIV.6.6, LIV.8.2, LIV.8.3, LIV.8.6 (2019)
- Housing Strategic Plan Strategy 4 (2021)
- Our Climate Future Big Move 7 – Healthy Affordable Housing HAH4 (2021)
- Fort Collins Resilient Recovery Plan Outcome 1B, 2B & 2C (2022)

## **Prevention**

### **Scope**

Services that reduce the likelihood that someone will experience homelessness and interventions to stabilize when someone is at-risk of becoming unhoused.

### **Preferred Future State**

Prevention services, like rent assistance, employment search assistance, rapid rehousing and diversion prevent people at-risk of homelessness from becoming unhoused.

### **Alignment**

- City of Fort Collins Strategic Objective NVC.2 (2024)
- City Council Priority #2 (2024-26)
- City Plan Principles LIV.6.6, LIV.8.2, LIV.8.3, LIV.8.6 (2019)
- Housing Strategic Plan Strategy 1 (2021)
- Our Climate Future Big Move 7 – Healthy Affordable Housing HAH1 (2021)
- Fort Collins Resilient Recovery Plan Outcome 1B, 2B & 2C (2022)



**HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS** **Priority Platforms**

