

# HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN

## CURRENT NEEDS & GAPS



*Rev. 04/25/2016*

# ABOUT THIS PRESENTATION

## Presentation

This presentation describes 1) the number and characteristics of the homeless population in Austin and Travis County, 2) their current needs, 3) our current community public investments to address homelessness, 4) gaps in services, and 5) what we see as the main trends and takeaways.

## Methodology

Most of the data presented in this presentation was extracted from our Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) and comes from various sources including surveys from our *Coordinated Assessment* process, our annual *Point-in-Time Count* and our *Housing Inventory Count*.

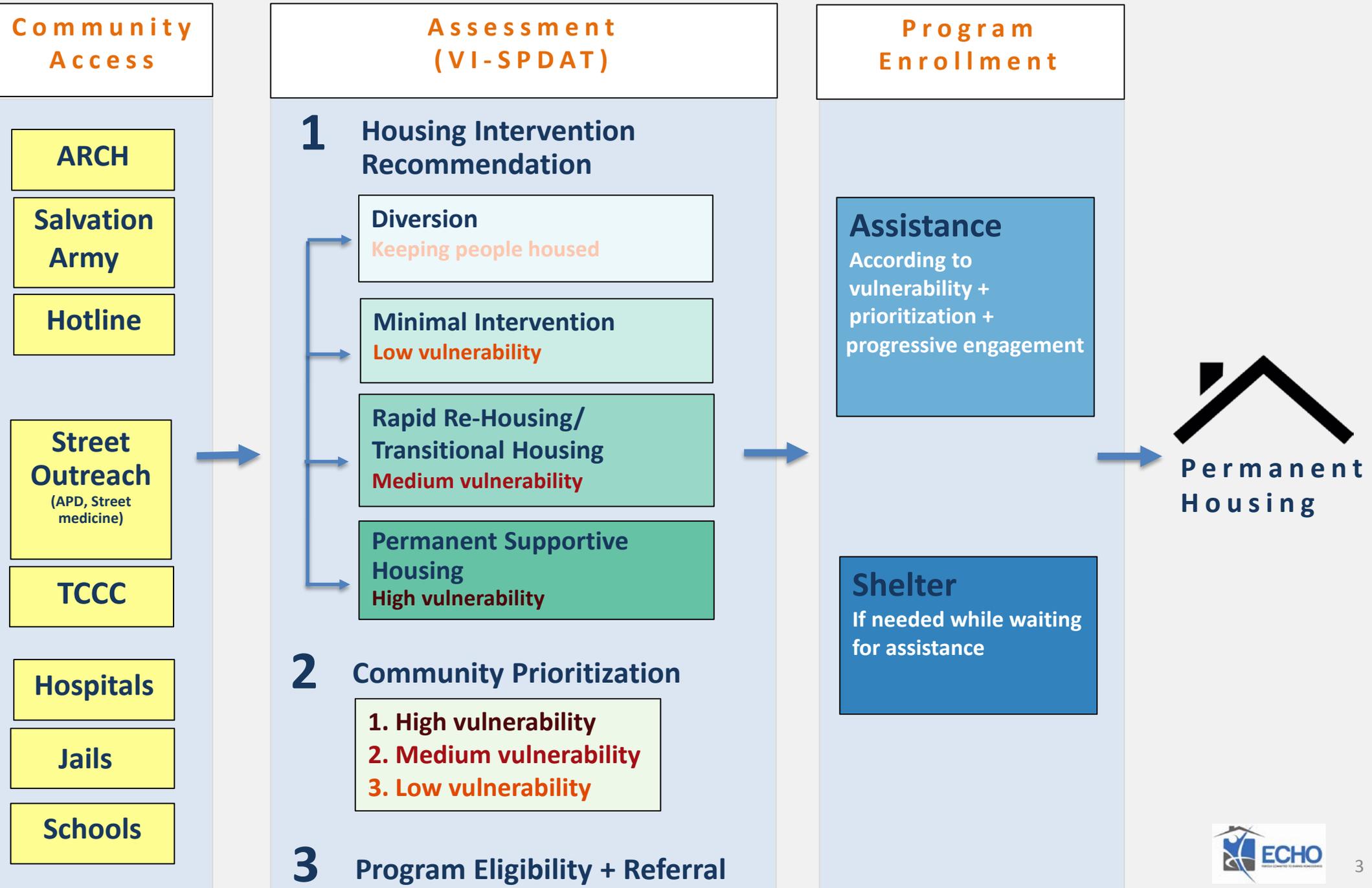
Supplemental data was used from the American Community Survey, other local studies and interviews from staff working on the ground with persons experiencing homelessness. We hope this information is helpful in efforts to improve programs, plan community investments, and shape local policies. We encourage users to borrow and cite this material.

## Questions or Comments?

For questions or for more information, please contact Ann Howard (Executive Director) at [annhoward@austinecho.org](mailto:annhoward@austinecho.org)



# FRAMEWORK FOR HOUSING STABILITY

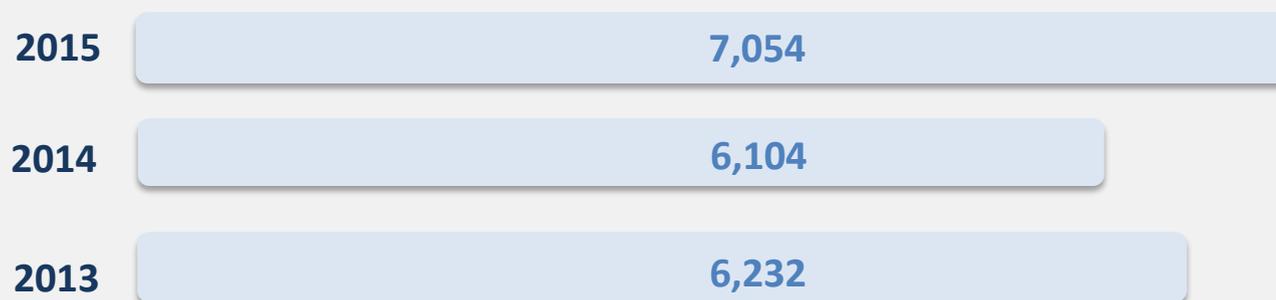


# HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN OVER THE YEARS

## Snapshot of persons experiencing homelessness on a given day



## Annual count of persons experiencing homelessness on a given year



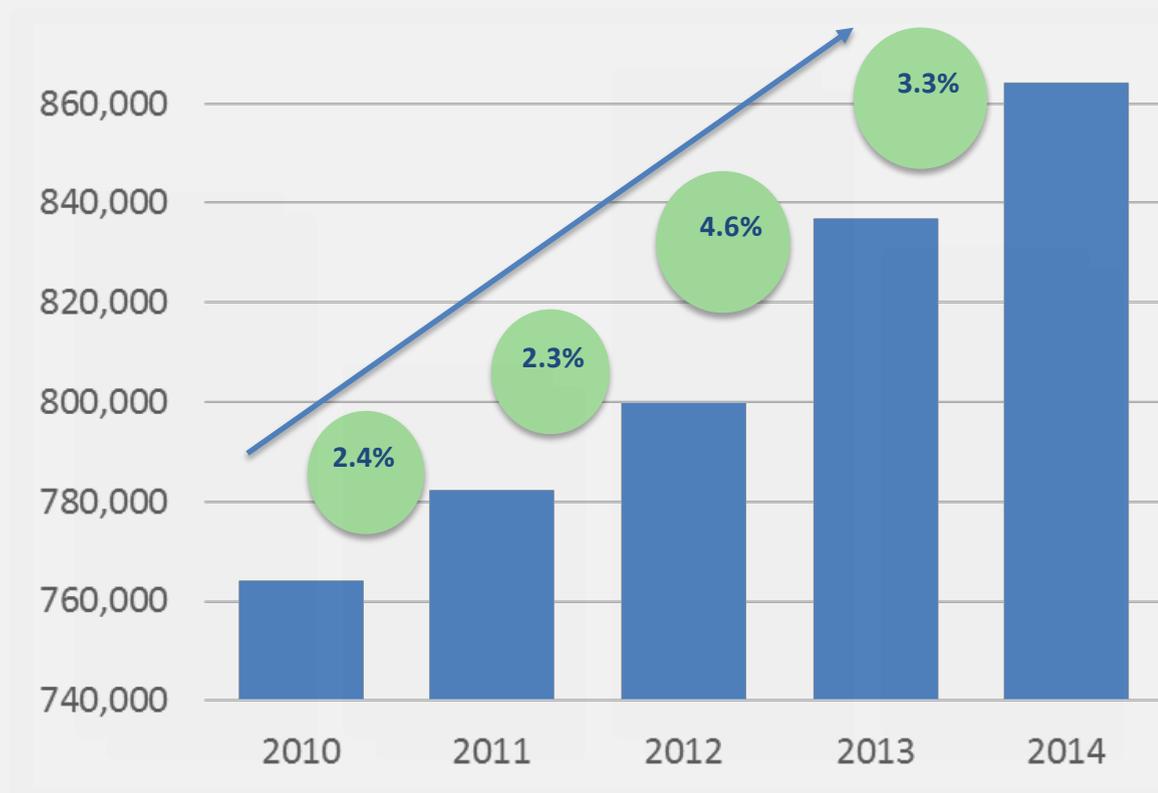
**Data source:** Point-in-Time (PIT) counts and HMIS data. The “sheltered homeless” on a given day, includes those in transitional housing as required by PIT guidelines. The annual count includes unduplicated persons from Emergency Shelters + Safe Haven + Transitional Housing + Street Outreach + Coordinated Assessment and those meeting the homeless definition for Rapid Re-Housing and Permanent Supportive Housing.



# WHY IS OUR HOMELESS POPULATION GROWING IN AUSTIN?

- *Are more people falling into homelessness?*
- *Are we getting better at counting more people that were already homeless?*
- *How is the homeless population being affected by Austin's demographic changes?*
- *Are some of the people who are moving to Austin everyday, falling into homelessness?*
- *Is minimum wage too small to support increased costs of living like rent?*
- *How is the tight rental market that Austin is experiencing & the affordability crisis, affecting the rate of the newly homeless? How is it affecting our ability to improve our housing placement rate?*

**Population Growth in Austin**



**Population increased over 100,000 from 2010-2014**

**Expected to double every 20 years**

**Fastest growing large (500K+) city in the U.S. from 2010-2013**

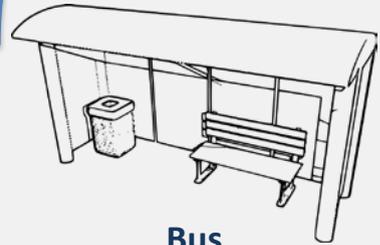


*Population sources: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates: Austin Geography, Population DP05 & A Demographic Snapshot of Austin, Experience Austin, 02/12/16, Ryan Robinson, City Demographer.*

# HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN

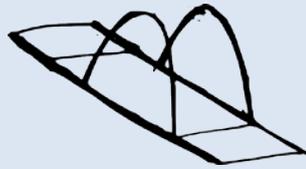
## WHERE ARE PEOPLE SLEEPING?

### Places not meant for human habitation



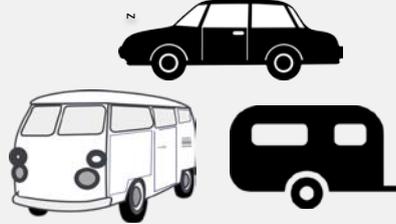
Bus  
Train

1.9%



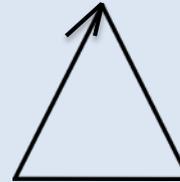
Other  
(e.g. Bridges,  
Abandoned  
Buildings)

9.2%



Car, Van or RV

13.1%



Beach  
Riverbed  
Park

15.7%



Street  
Sidewalk or  
Doorway

25.7%



Shelter

34.4%



- Percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 4,771 persons per 01/29/2016.
- The percentages for the people staying in “shelter” does not include those staying in transitional housing.

# WHO IS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN?

Over 7,000 persons experienced homelessness in 2015 staying in the streets, cars, parks and shelters



**80.0%**  
are unemployed  
(no earned income)



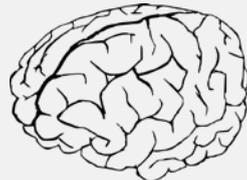
**79.7%**  
are individuals



**61.8%**  
are males



**60%**  
report a problem  
with drugs/alcohol  
sometime in their lifetime



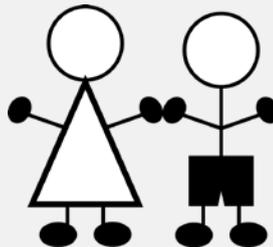
**45.0%**  
report having a current  
mental health problem



**28.3%**  
have experienced  
domestic violence  
in their lifetime



**22.1%**  
are chronically homeless



**19.9%**  
are children



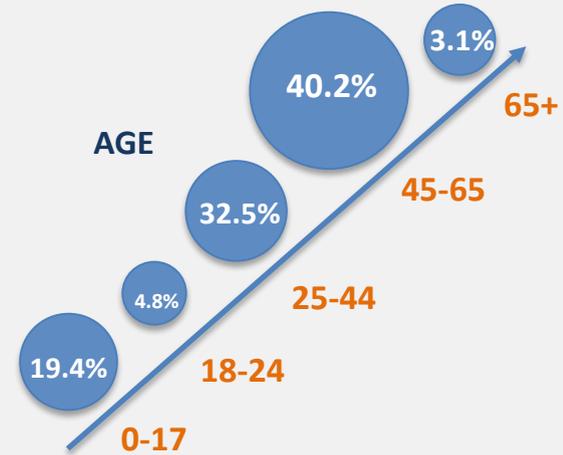
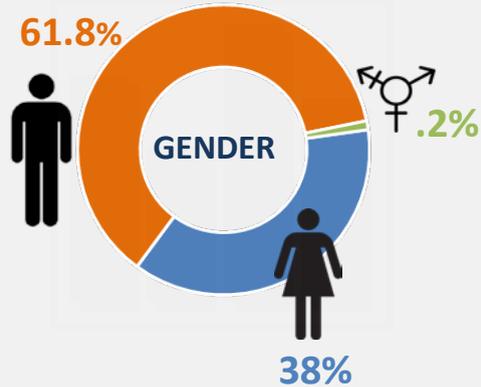
**14.4%**  
are veterans



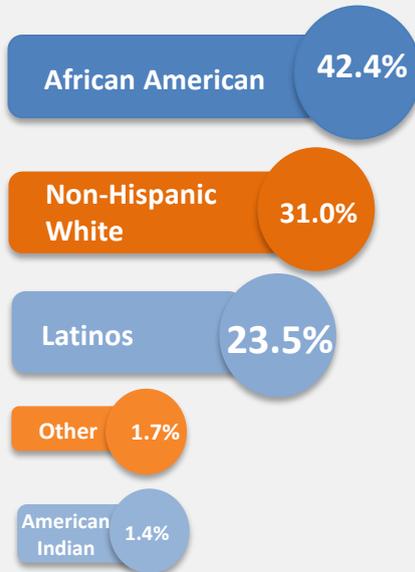
- Categories are not mutually exclusive
- Percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 4,771 persons per 01/29/2016.

# WHO IS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN?

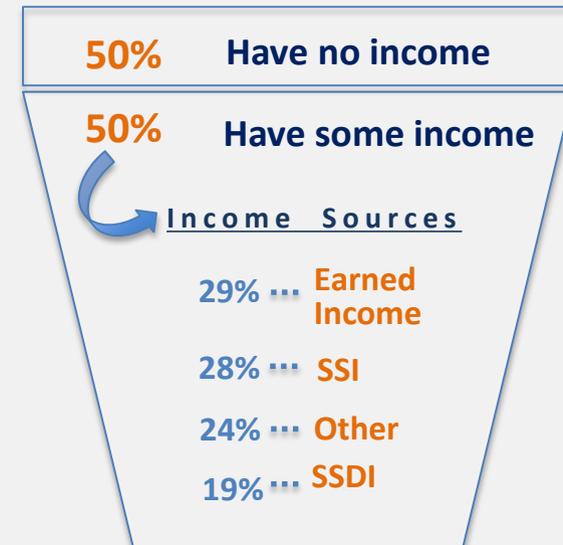
## DEMOGRAPHICS



### RACE + ETHNICITY



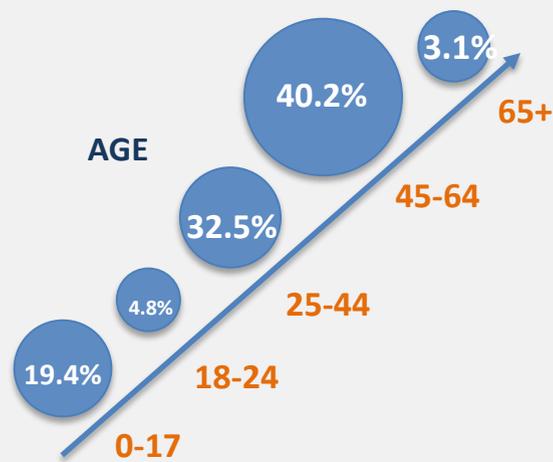
### HOUSEHOLD INCOME



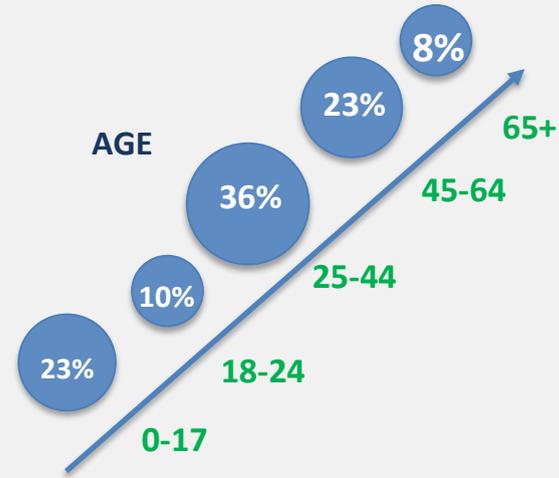
- Categories are not mutually exclusive
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# COMPARISON

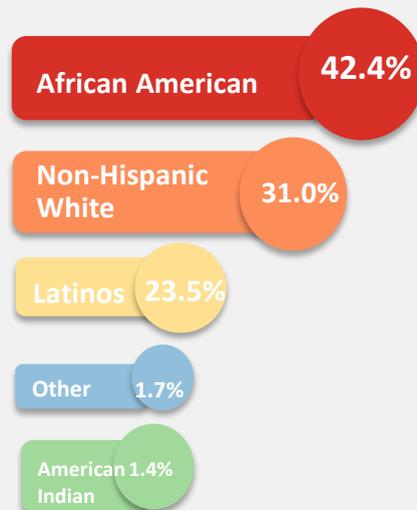
## HOMELESS POPULATION IN TRAVIS COUNTY



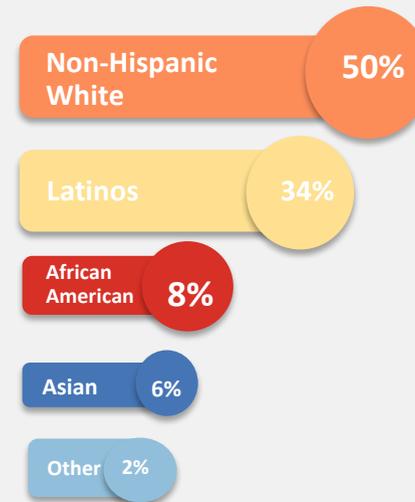
## ALL TRAVIS COUNTY RESIDENTS



## RACE + ETHNICITY



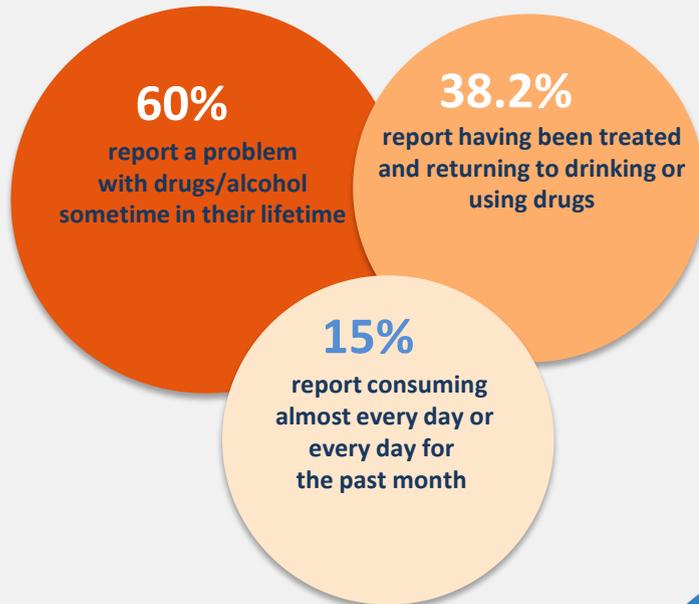
## RACE + ETHNICITY



- Source for homeless population: Coordinated Assessment surveys of 4,771 persons per 01/29/16.
- Source for Travis County Residents: Travis County Snapshot from the American Community Survey 2014.

# HOMELESSNESS + HEALTH IN AUSTIN

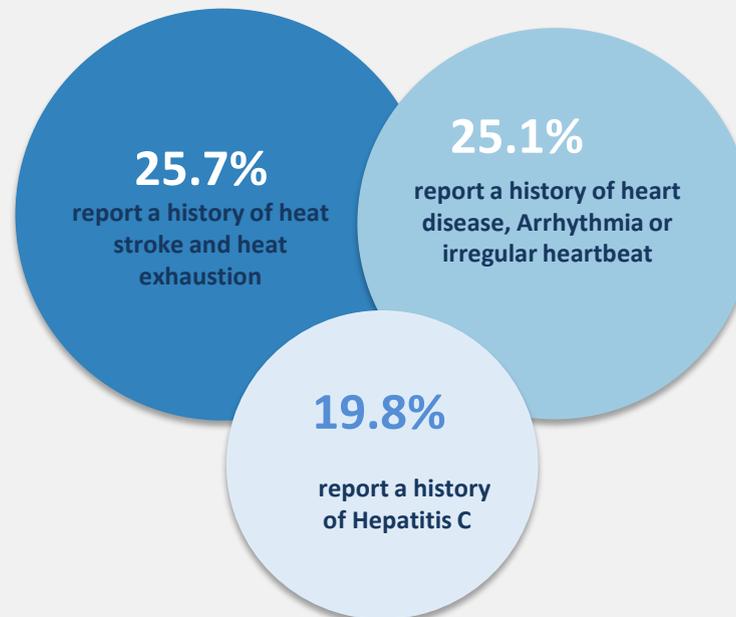
## DRUGS OR ALCOHOL



## MENTAL HEALTH



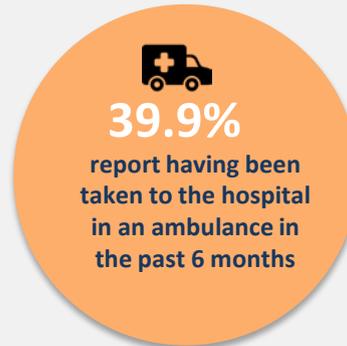
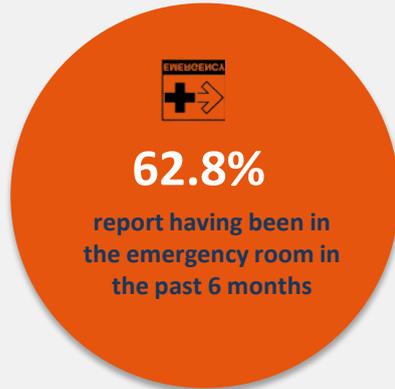
## CHRONIC CONDITIONS



- Categories not mutually exclusive.
- Percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 4,771 persons per 01/29/16.

# HOMELESSNESS + HEALTH IN AUSTIN

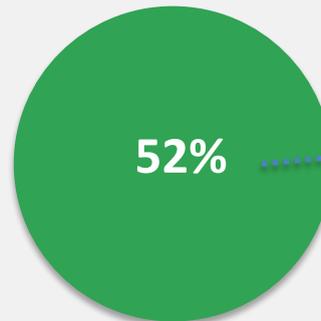
## Health Care Access



## Where do the homeless report going for care when they are not feeling well?



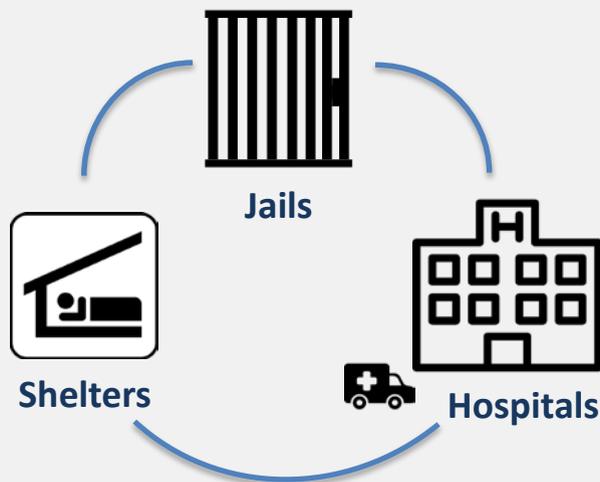
Well-being



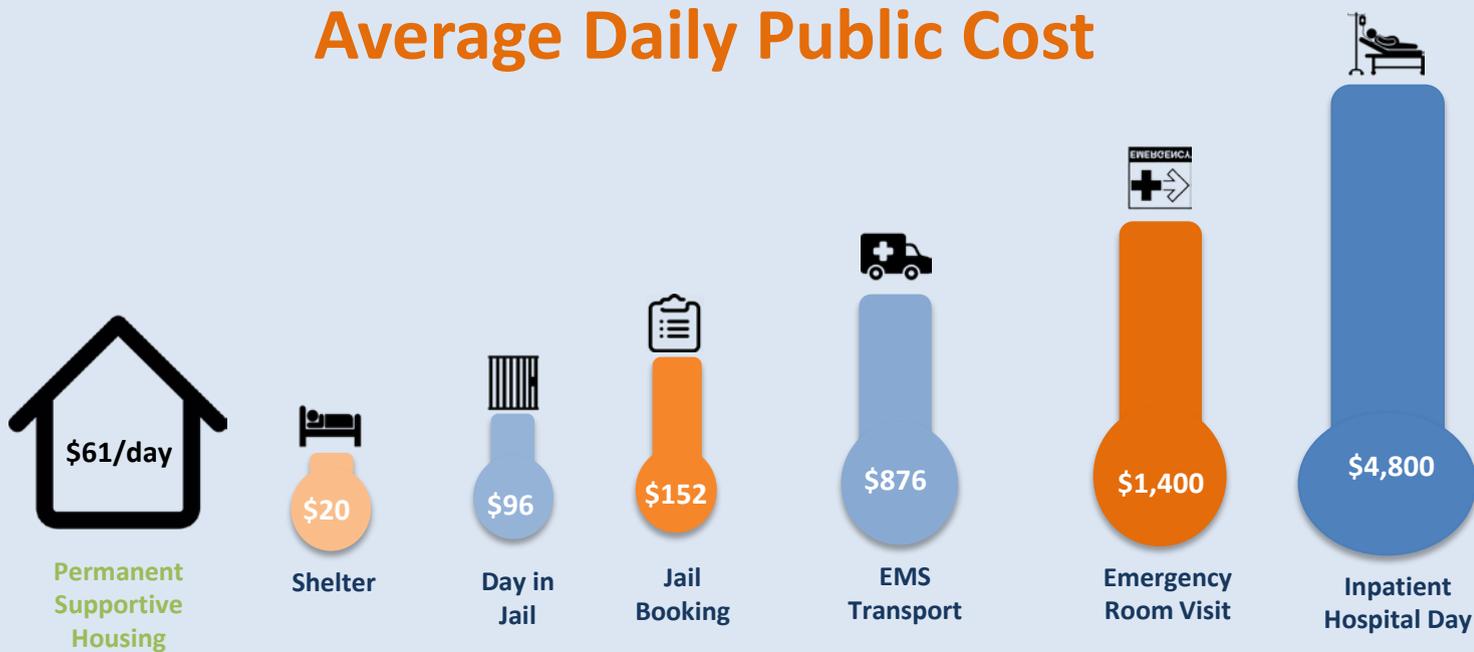
Report having no planned activities that bring them happiness or fulfillment

- Categories not mutually exclusive
- Percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 4,771 persons per 01/29/2016.

# THE CASE FOR SOME OF THE HOMELESS IN AUSTIN: A REVOLVING DOOR BETWEEN CRISIS CENTERS



## Average Daily Public Cost



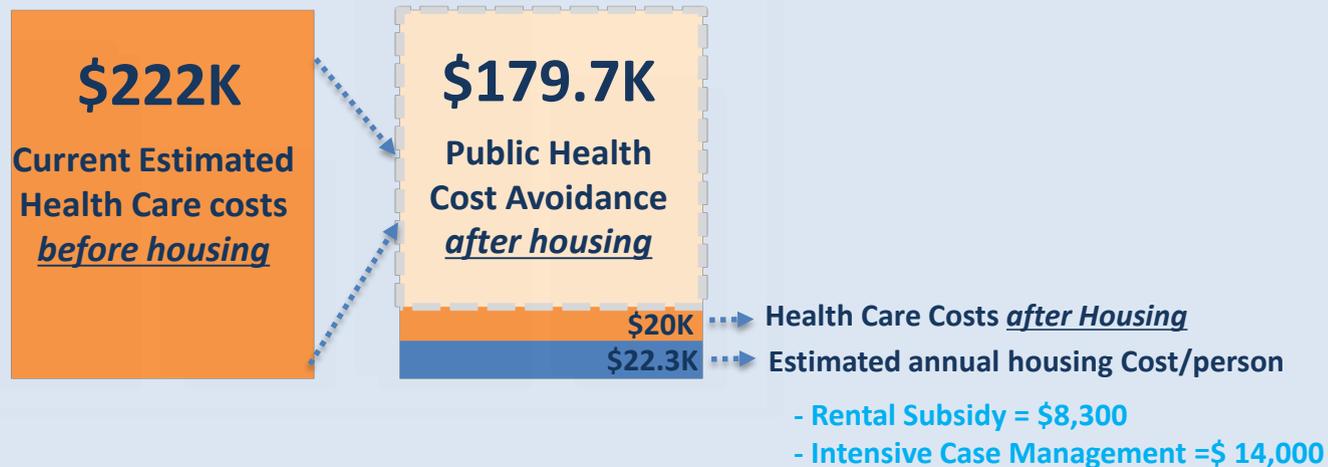
Data Source: Joint Analysis conducted by Central Health, Travis County Justice Planning and ECHO for a Pay for Success Initiative of high utilizers of crisis systems— Rev. 12/30/2015

# Annual Average Health Costs for top 250 High-Cost Homeless Users in Travis Co.

	Current Encounters/Person	Costs/Person
<b>Inpatient Hospital Days</b> 	37 days @ \$4,800/day	\$178K/year
<b>Emergency Room Visits</b> 	21 visits @ \$1,400/visit	\$30K/year
<b>EMS Transports</b> 	19 transport @ \$876/transport	\$14K/year

**Average total annual cost per person: \$222K**

## Sample estimated benefit of Permanent Supportive Housing



Data Source: Joint Analysis conducted by Central Health, Travis County Justice Planning and ECHO for a Pay for Success Initiative of high utilizers of crisis systems– Rev. 03/17/16.

# FREQUENT RENTAL HOUSING BARRIERS for the Homeless Population in Austin

## CRIMINAL BACKGROUND



Charged with  
*misdemeanors*



No renting  
if it happened  
recently



Charged with  
*felonies*



No renting  
at all

## INCOME/ DEBT



Low or  
no *income*



No renting,  
even if benefit program  
covers income



Usage of  
*vouchers*



Landlords not  
taking vouchers



Rental or  
utility *debt*,  
bankruptcy

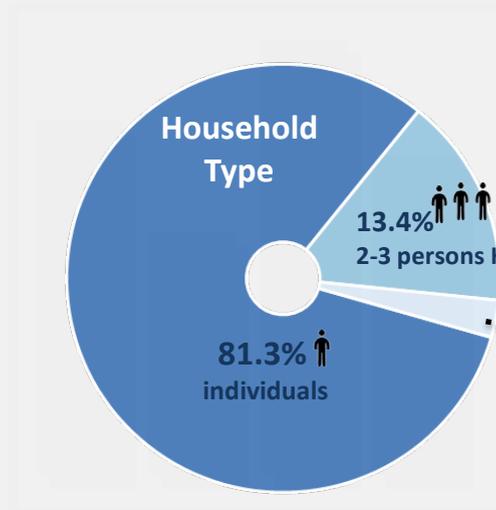


Screened out  
if outstanding

# HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN

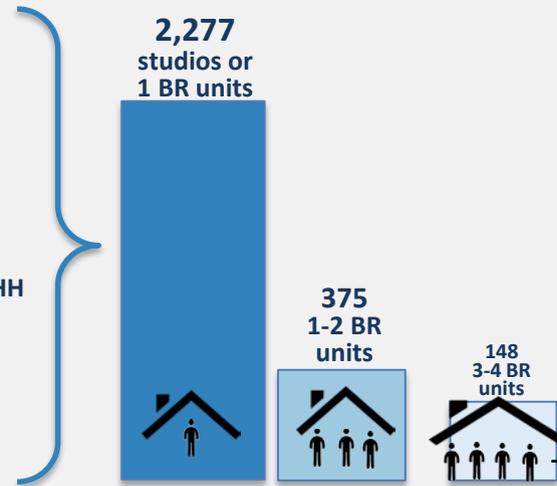
## KNOWN CURRENT NEED FOR 2,800 HOUSEHOLDS (3,700 persons)

### POPULATION

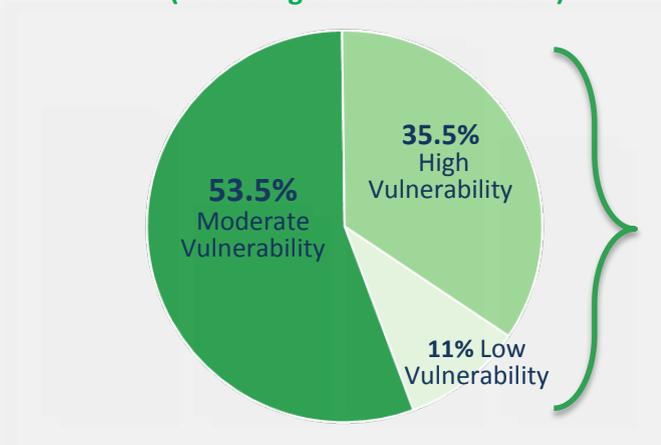


### HOUSING NEED

Affordable + Low Barrier housing units



### Vulnerability (according to VI-SPDAT Scores)

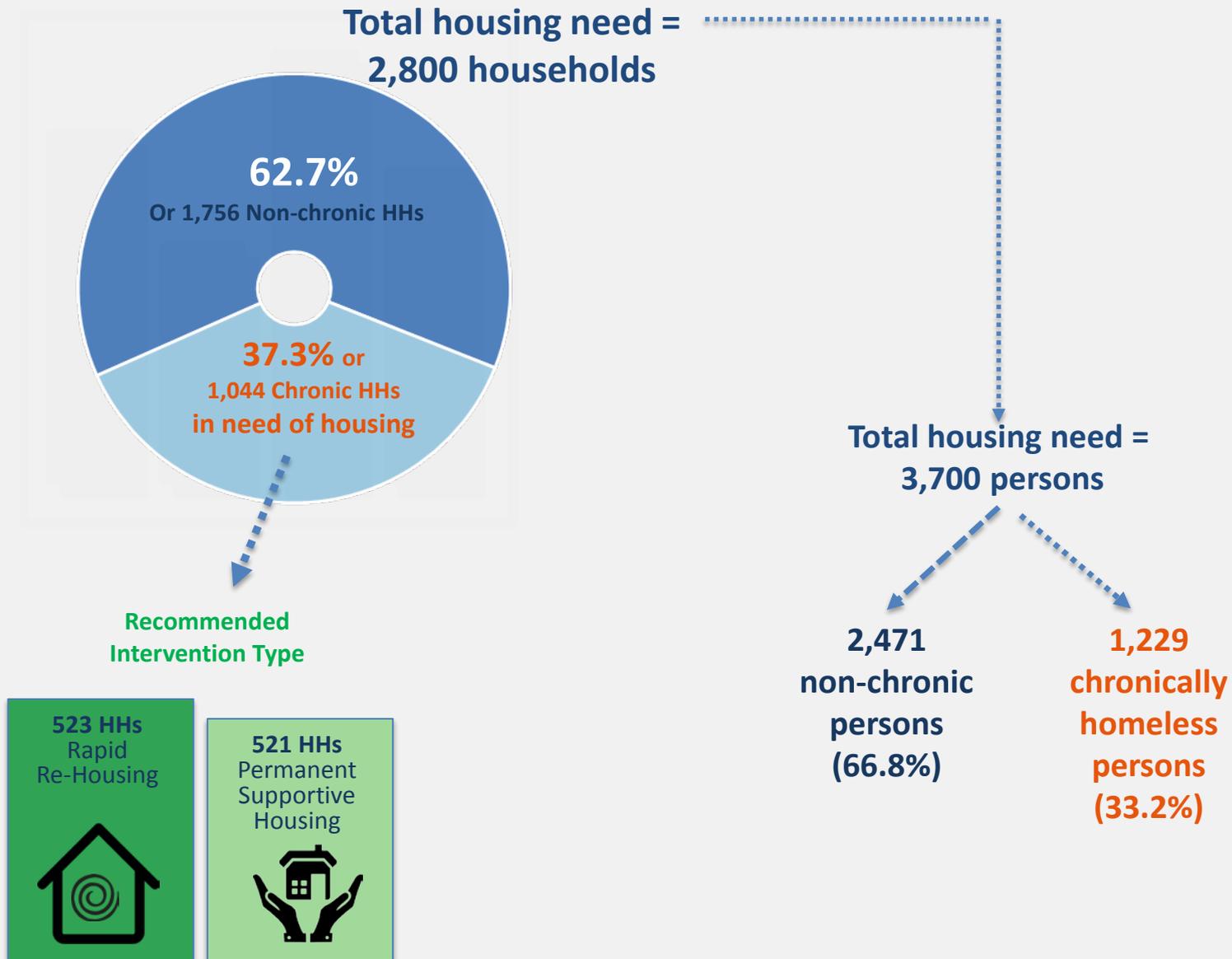


### Recommended Intervention Type

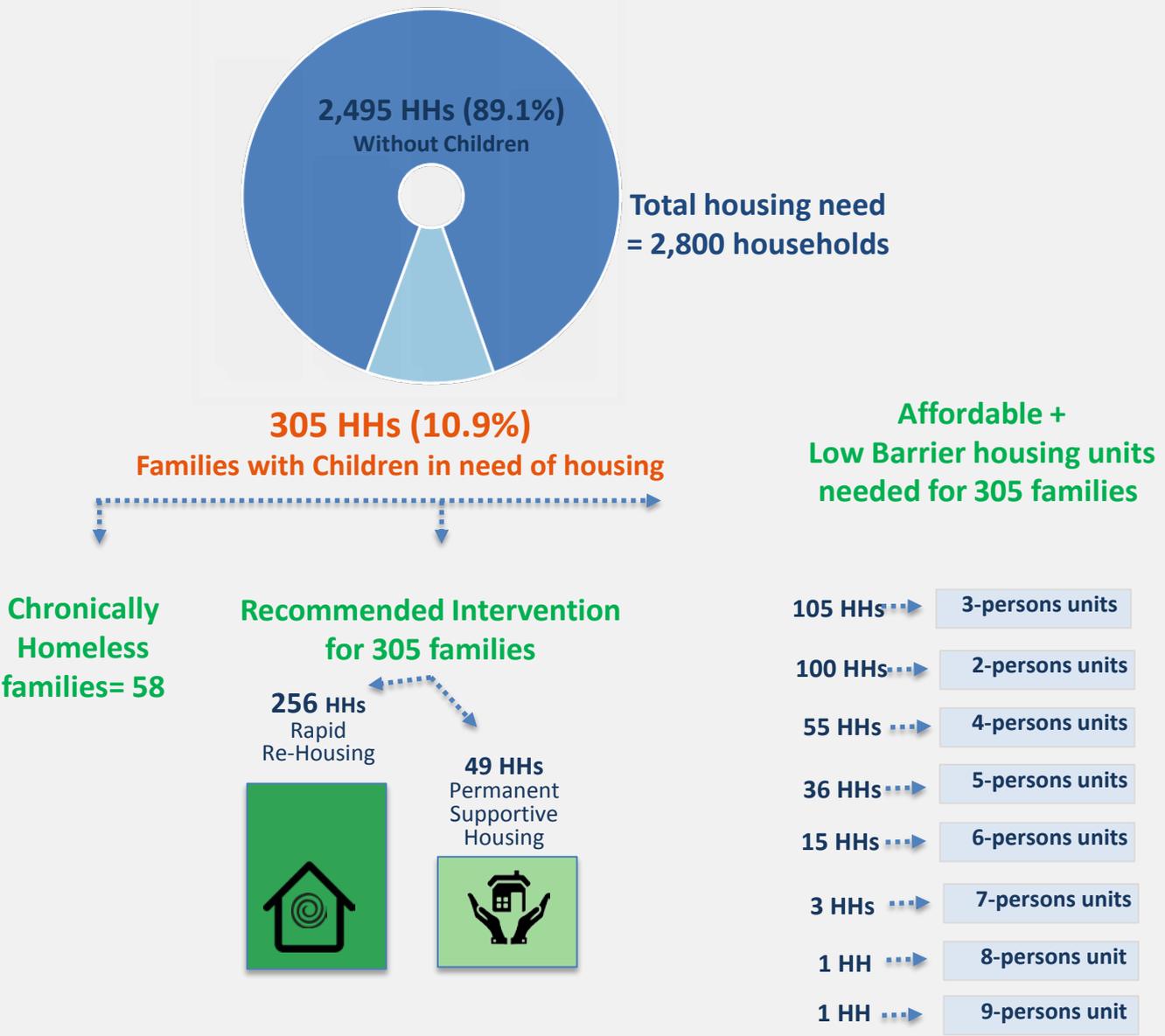


Numbers and percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys (VI-SPDATs) of 5,066 persons per 03/03/16.

# KNOWN CURRENT NEED FOR THE CHRONICALLY HOMELESS IN AUSTIN



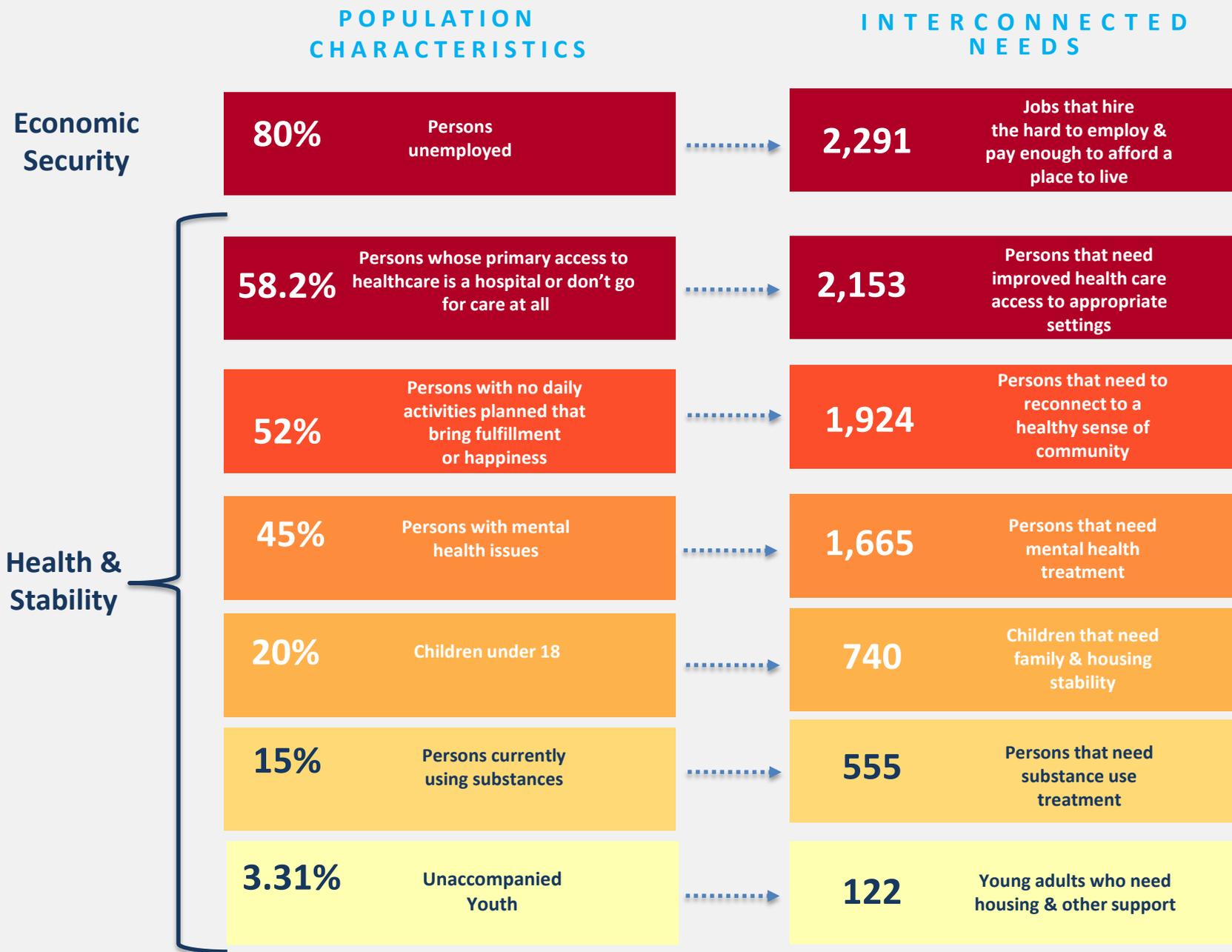
# KNOWN CURRENT NEED FOR LITERALLY HOMELESS FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN IN AUSTIN



Numbers and percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 5,066 persons per 03/03/16. Literally homeless families refer to households with children sleeping in the streets, cars or emergency shelters, it does not include families who are "doubled up" or living with friends or family due to economic need.

# HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN

## ESTIMATED NEEDS FOR 2,800 HOUSEHOLDS (3,700 persons)



Analysis based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 5,066 persons per 03/03/2016.

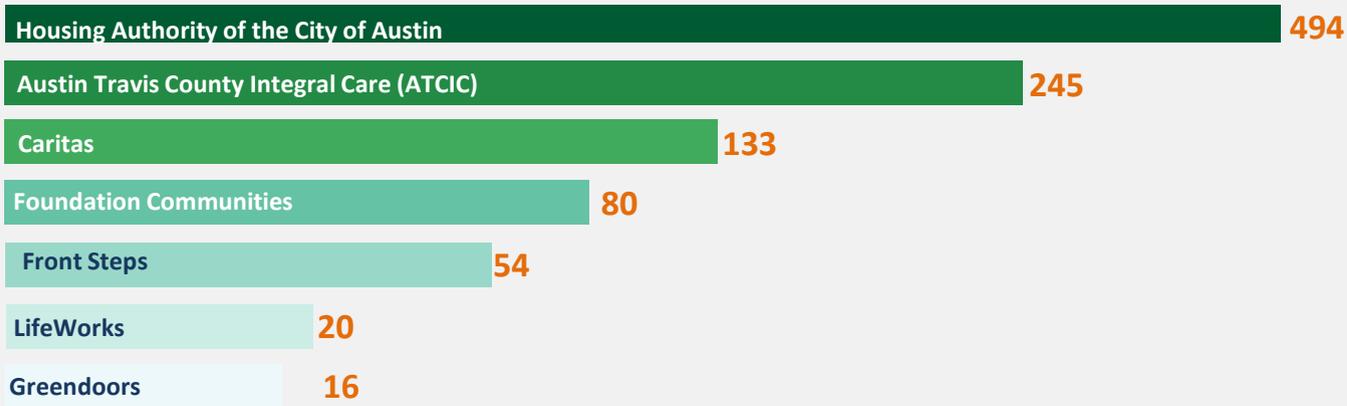


# HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN: 2015 COMMUNITY ASSETS

## 801 Emergency Shelter Beds



## 1042 Permanent Supportive Housing Beds



## 376 Transitional Housing Beds



- 6** Recuperative Care beds
- 0** Beds for end-of-life/hospice services



Source: 2015 Housing Inventory Count (HIC). Rev. 03/30/16.

# HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN

## 2016 PROJECTED COMMUNITY ASSETS?

### Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Investments

Individuals housed in 2015 through RRH =	820
RRH Public Investments in a given year =	2.3 Million
Av. RRH Public Investments in a given year/ housed person =	\$2,804

### Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Units

Estimated PSH units that turn over annually = (15% of 1,042)	156
Newly PSH units to be created in 2016 = (1/4 of the 400 currently committed 400 PSH units from the City of Austin)	100
	<hr/>
	256

### Minimal Housing Assistance Resources

Overall shelter capacity =	808
Overall recuperative beds capacity =	6
Individuals that can be diverted in a year =	360



*Individuals served through RRH is based on HMIS data. PSH units are based on the 2015 Housing Inventory Count (HIC). PSH turnover rate is based on HUD-estimated annual average turnover rate nationally.*

# HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN: PROJECTED 2016 GAP?

## Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)



## Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)



## Shelter beds



## Medical Recuperative beds





# HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN: TRENDS AND TAKEAWAYS

## 1. At least 2,800 households (3,700 people) are literally homeless and in need of 2,800 affordable and low-barrier housing units now.

➤ As of March 2016, our coordinated assessment process has surveyed and identified this many literally homeless persons as currently in need of housing. This is easily an undercount, considering not everyone who is literally homeless engages our system and a few providers in the community are not yet participating in our coordinated assessment process.

➤ What we currently need:

Given the household composition of the assessed homeless population, the types of housing units currently needed are at least:

- 2,300 studios or one-bedroom units,
- 350 one-to-two bedroom units, and
- 150 three-to-four bedroom units.

## 2. Access to affordable and low barrier housing remains the single greatest challenge to ending homelessness.

- In a city whose population is rapidly increasing with unprecedented demand for rental units, and whose overall affordability is collapsing, finding affordable housing stands as the single most pressing challenge faced by individuals experiencing homelessness themselves and by the services providers assisting them.
- People experiencing homelessness face even greater barriers than those already experienced by lower income residents when it comes to securing housing. These barriers may include having criminal history, substance use, poor employment history, poor credit history, poor rental history and very low or no income at all.
- Households experiencing homelessness face enormous competition for a limited number of affordable units, not only competing with other low income residents but also increasingly competing with other moderate and middle income residents attracted to the same affordable units.
- As a community, we have been developing a system to successfully house persons experiencing homelessness by 1) creating partnerships with private landlords to make units accessible and low-barrier, 2) using flexible funding to provide incentives to landlords, and 3) working with affordable housing providers including Public Housing Authorities to create homeless preferences.



# HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN: TRENDS AND TAKEAWAYS

## 2. Access to affordable and low barrier housing remains the single greatest challenge to ending homelessness.

What we currently need is:

- Flexible funding to work directly with landlords and provide the right incentives to house the homeless population.
- Access to public affordable low-barrier housing units ranging from Public Housing Authorities, Tax Credit properties to other HUD-funded multifamily properties, where households are not screened out based on their criminal history or use of substances.
- Landlords who do not screen out tenants because on household's source of income and are willing to accept tenants with *Housing Choice Vouchers* or whose rent will be covered by other assistance programs.



# HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN: TRENDS AND TAKEAWAYS

## 3. Considerable larger public and private investments are needed to significantly reduce homelessness in Austin.

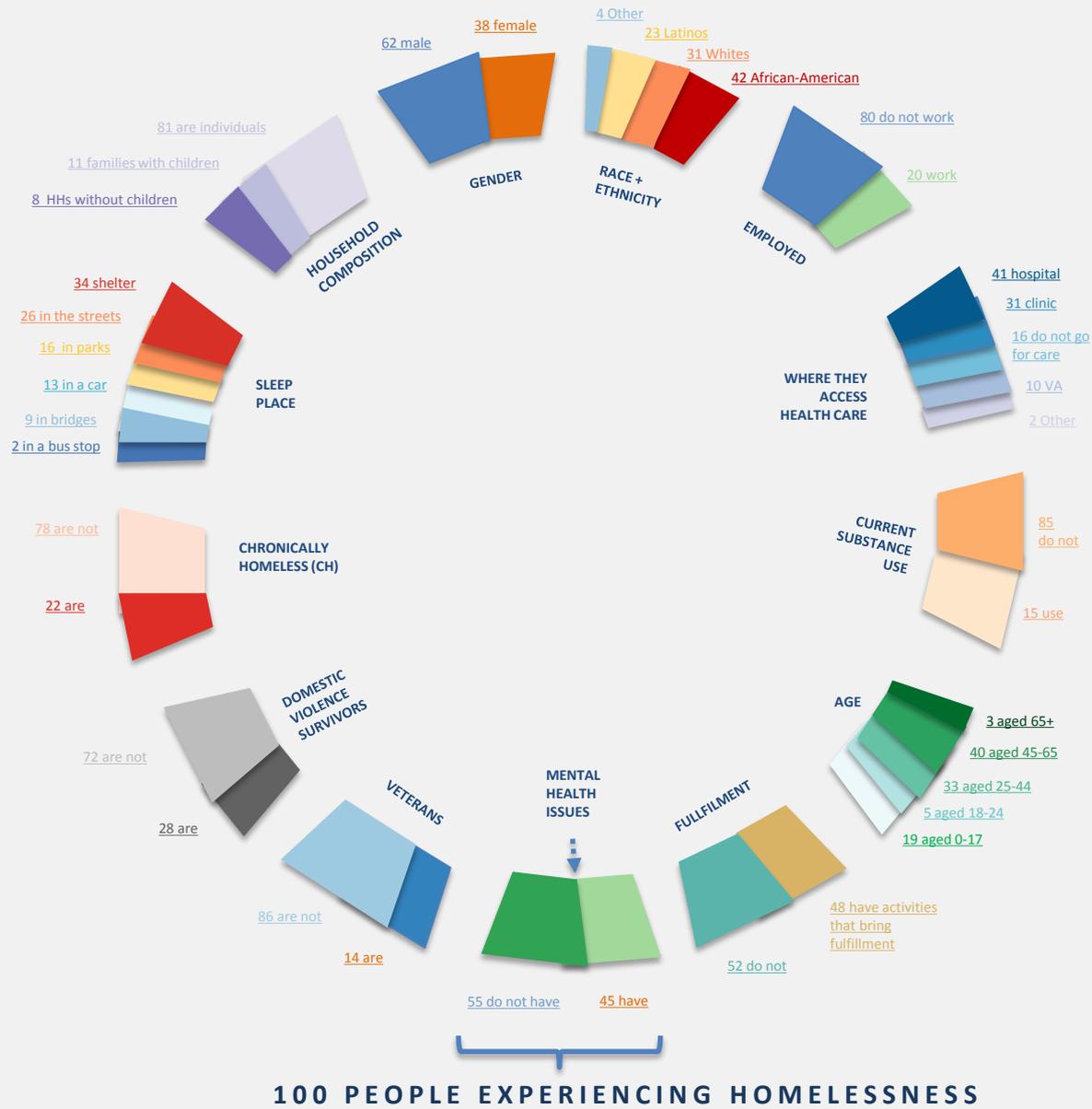
➤ Given the current needs for persons experiencing homelessness and our current assets, it will take a considerable larger allocation of resources to significantly reduce homelessness and get to a place where homelessness is brief, short and non-recurring for most persons who fall into homelessness.

➤ We know we has worked at a smaller scale.

### What we currently need is:

- Creating a dedicated funding stream for local homeless services.
- Scaling up of programs that work such as Permanent Supportive Housing.
- Adopting new funding models that leverage private and public funds such as Pay for Success.
- Supporting the community at large as it works strategically to end chronic homelessness by 2017 and family and youth homelessness by 2020.

# SNAPSHOT: HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN AS 100 PEOPLE



Data based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 4,771 persons per 01/29/2016.

Design inspired by the work of artist Jack Hagley, *The World as 100 people*, as published on *The Best American Infographics* 2014.



# HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN YOUR THOUGHTS?

## Questions or Comments?

For questions or for more information, please contact Ann Howard (Executive Director)  
at [annhoward@austinecho.org](mailto:annhoward@austinecho.org)

