

Priority Health Issue 2: Advocate for More Housing

Assets / Resources:

Existing relationships and collaboration between local nonprofits, shelter providers, housing developers, Housing and Redevelopment Authorities, city staff, county staff, and community housing groups reflect a strong dedication to addressing homelessness and local housing needs. The support of some local government leaders and their use of strategic plans, comprehensive plan updates, and local studies to address housing needs are other assets, providing additional data on community housing needs, future demographic changes, and future demand for housing needs. Dedicated and engaged community members of diverse backgrounds who are passionate about addressing housing needs and advocating for the needs of the homeless population also add to these efforts. Current opportunities for housing and program development are an asset due to large amounts of state and federal funds for housing and enough contractors and vendors.

Challenges / Barriers:

One challenge to addressing this goal is community pushback and lack of awareness on housing needs. This includes the “Not in my backyard” community opposition that prevents local housing developments from moving forward on a local level. In recent years, this has led to more opposition than community support at City Council/other community meetings regarding new housing developments. Major employers are also missing from this conversation. Representation of the local workforce affected by the lack of affordable options should be added to these efforts.

Other challenges and barriers include the high costs of housing development, housing rehabilitation, and program development. With an increase in housing, there will also be an increased need for other community infrastructure to support a growing population including roadways, healthcare, businesses, and other community resources. We will also need more public transportation as housing development moves further from city centers. The high cost of living, high rent, and low wage jobs in the community will continue to be challenges and barriers to be addressed in order for everyone, regardless of income and background to have a safe, stable, and healthy place to live.

Collaborative Partnerships:

Partnerships with local housing agencies, developers, nonprofits, shelter providers, the Goodhue County Homeless Response Team, Hands for Hope, and community members will have a large role in this health priority. GCHHS will work with the United Way of Goodhue, Wabasha, & Pierce Counties, developers including the HRA’s, Habitat for Humanity, and Three Rivers Community Action, housing providers, shelter providers, other nonprofits, city staff from across Goodhue County, and community members.

The Mental and Chemical Health Coalition of Goodhue County, the Goodhue County Homeless Response Team, and Hands for Hope will be informed of local opportunities for advocacy and community education.

Result: Everyone, regardless of income and background, will have a safe, stable, and healthy place to live

Indicator(s):

- Percent of cost-burdened renters (spending 30% or more of their income on housing)
- Rental vacancy rate (among all units, rental vs owned, rental type)

Strategies	Timeframe	Strategy lead	Performance measures (<i>how much, how well, is anyone better off?</i>)
Advocate for additional affordable and supportive housing units	2023-2025	Varies (GCHHS Housing Resource Specialist, developer, UWGWP Executive Director etc.)	<p><i># partners making public comments</i></p> <p><i>% formally supported opportunities approved</i></p> <p><i># affordable and/or supportive units created through formally supported opportunities</i></p>
Prepare a community education campaign to shift the narrative around the importance of a robust housing market that meets the needs of all community members	2023-2025	City of RW Community Engagement Facilitator, GCHHS Housing Resource Specialist	<p><i># Q & A articles / # people reached</i></p> <p><i># social media posts / # people reached</i></p> <p><i># radio interviews/ # listening audience</i></p>