
Gwinnett County Human Services Advisory Board
Thursday, October 17, 2024 at 5:30pm

One Justice Square – Conference Room 106
446 West Crogan Street, Lawrenceville, GA 30046

Present: Shameka Allen, Matt Elder, Paul Epperson, Tina Fleming, Marlene Fosque, Victoria Huynh, Janice Jackson, Tracy Joseph, Regina Miller, Kim Phillips, Michelle Vereen, Justin Wilson

Absent: Melanie Conner, Aisha DeBerry, Dr. Jeffree Fauntleroy, Andy Harrell, Monica Martinez, Brianna Parades, Randy Redner

Via Teleconference: Barry Henson, Babak Mostaghimi, Maria Najlis

1. Call to Order
2. Welcome/Announcements
3. Approval of Agenda
{Action: Approved; Motion: Epperson; Second: Miller; Vote: 11-0: Allen-Yes; Elder-Yes; Epperson-Yes; Fosque-Yes; Huynh-Yes; Jackson-Yes; Joseph-Yes; Miller-Yes; Phillips-Yes; Vereen-Yes; Wilson-Yes}
4. Approval of Minutes: September 19, 2024
{Action: Approved; Motion: Phillips; Second: Joseph; Vote: 11-0: Allen-Yes; Elder-Yes; Epperson-Yes; Fosque-Yes; Huynh-Yes; Jackson-Yes; Joseph-Yes; Miller-Yes; Phillips-Yes; Vereen-Yes; Wilson-Yes}
5. Presentation – **Housing and Community Development Update** – Matt Elder
6. Human Services Advisory Board Work Groups Reports
7. Comments from Audience
8. Adjournment
{Action: Approved; Motion: Allen; Second: Huynh; Vote: 11-0: Allen-Yes; Elder-Yes; Epperson-Yes; Fosque-Yes; Huynh-Yes; Jackson-Yes; Joseph-Yes; Miller-Yes; Phillips-Yes; Vereen-Yes; Wilson-Yes}

Meeting Minutes for Health and Wellbeing Group

10/17/2024

Activities since the last workgroup meeting

1. Shameka sent out a survey to all group members. Barry created survey. Survey was initially described and sent to workgroup on September 10, 2024
2. 15 people responded to the survey, which included over 40 initial people
3. Respondents were sent an email invite to place dates on the calendar for November and then January-May 2025 today, 10/17/2025.
4. Next meeting is scheduled on November 8th at 1 PM.
5. Respondents who will compose final group is attached and should be included in the minutes.



Housing and Community Development Update

Human Services Advisory Board

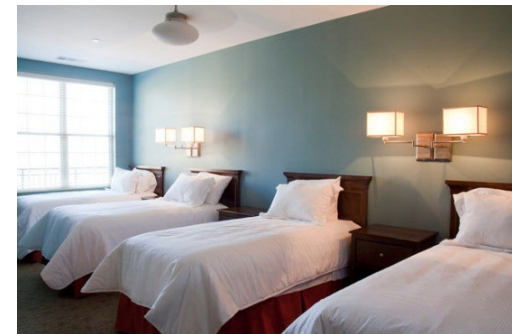
10.17.24

Housing and Community Development Division

- Established January 1, 2023
- Two Primary Functions
 - HUD Grant Administration
 - Affordable Housing Strategy

HUD Grant Administration

- Community Development Block Grant
 - Public Facilities, Public Services, Economic Development, and Homeowner Rehab
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program
 - Affordable Housing Development, Rental Assistance, and Down Payment Assistance
- Emergency Solutions Grant
 - Emergency Shelter, Rapid Re-Housing, Homelessness Prevention, and Street Outreach



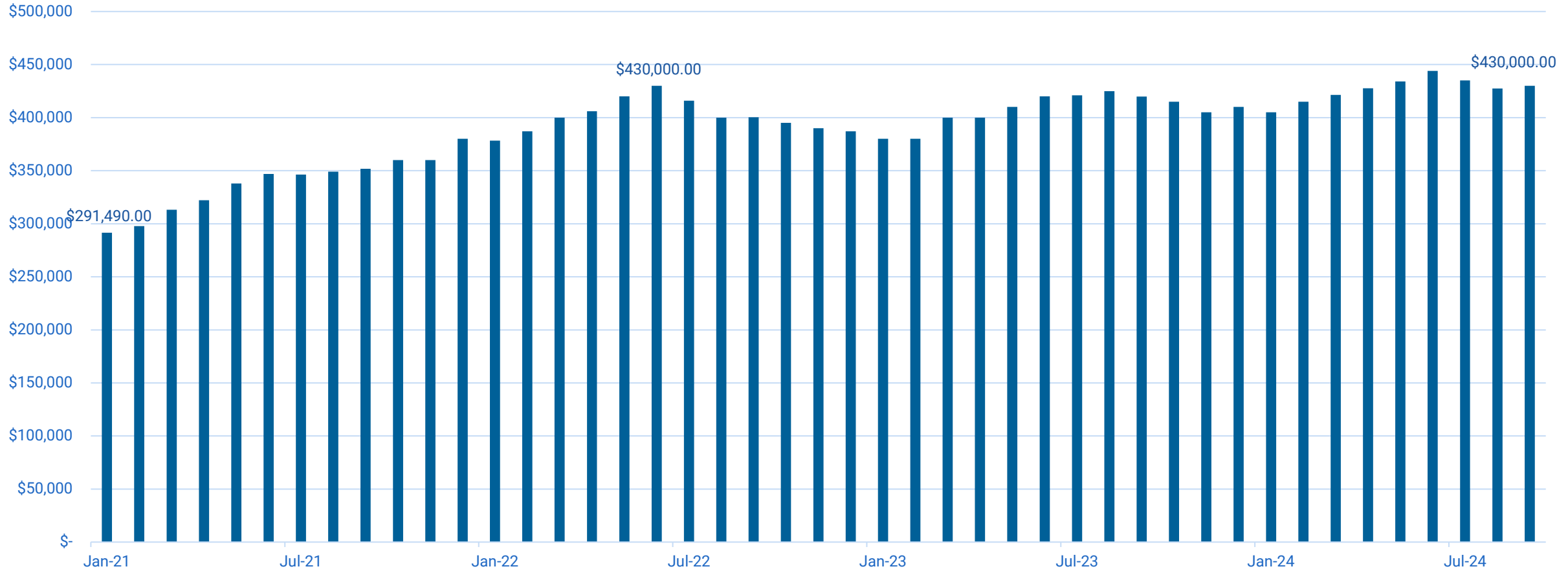
Affordable Housing

- So what is affordable housing?
- It's not...
 - a price point;
 - an income level; or
 - a complicated formula
- It is simply, housing that costs no more than 30% of your gross monthly income.

Every person should strive to live in Affordable Housing

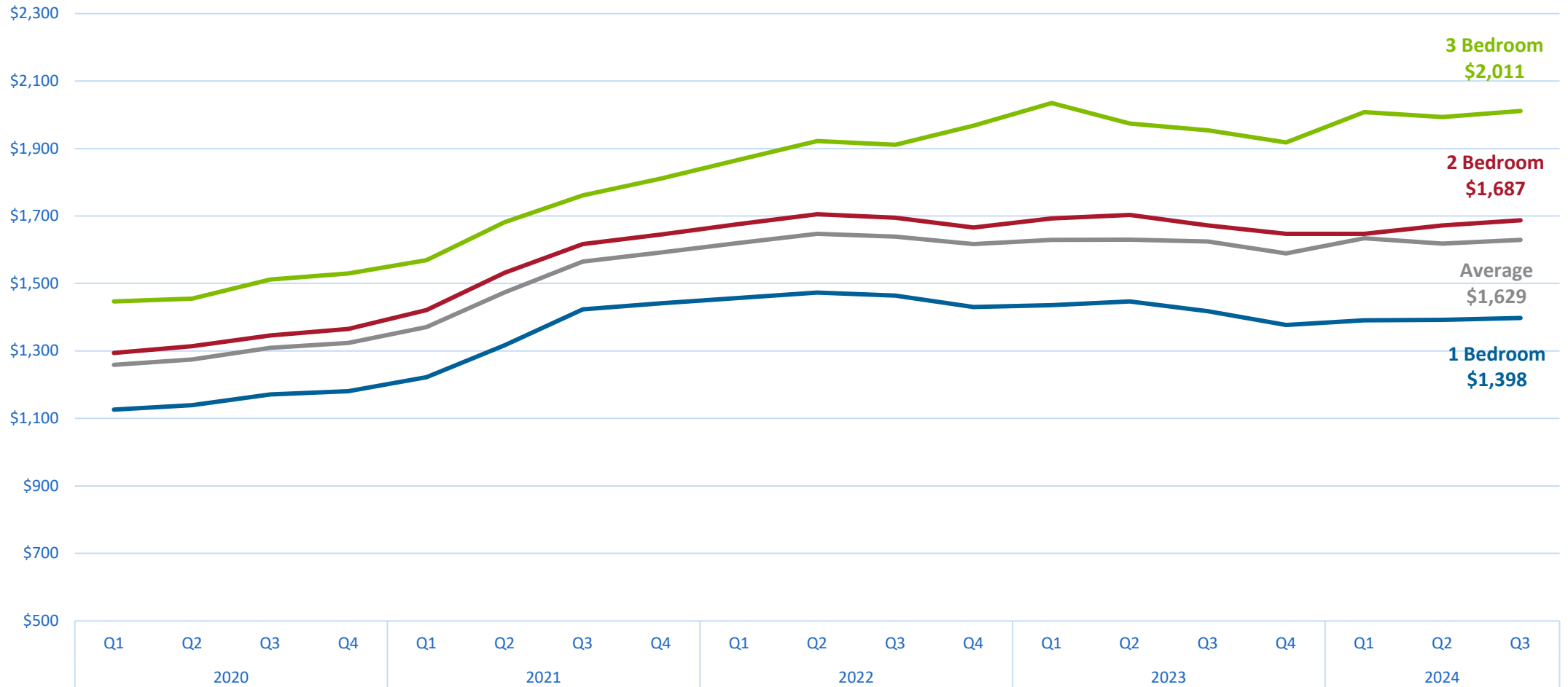
Housing Costs

Home Sales Median Price



Housing Costs

Rental Rates



— 1BR — 2BR — 3BR — Avg

What is Affordable in Gwinnett?

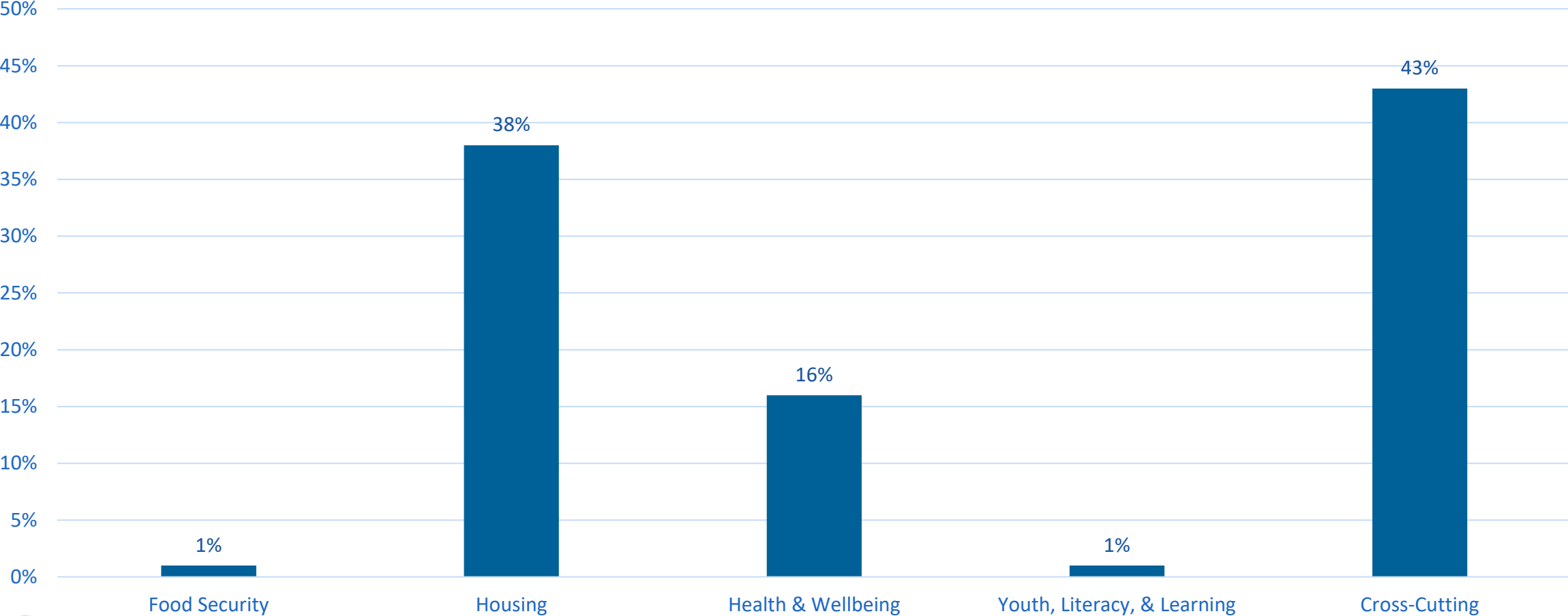
- Median Household Income: \$83,917

% Median HH Income	Affordable Rent	Units Available	Affordable Ownership*	Units Available
30% - \$25,175	\$629	4	\$77,953	0
60% - \$50,350	\$1,258	795	\$197,940	2
80% - \$67,133	\$1,678	2,935	\$206,827	1
100% - \$83,917	\$2,097	1,243	\$269,046	35
120% - \$100,700	\$2,517	413	\$331,260	258
140% - \$117,483	\$2,937	166	\$393,475	807

**30 Year Mortgage with 10% downpayment and a 6.46% interest rate.*

HSAB Alignment

HCD FFY 2024 Funding



Results - Impact

HUD Grants

- In 2023 -
 - \$10.9 million expended
 - 16,516 low-income residents assisted
 - \$664/resident

Affordable Housing

- In 2024 –
 - 263 Units Completed
 - 5 Ownership
 - 258 Rental
 - 918 Units In Progress
 - 126 Ownership
 - 792 Rental



Questions?

Subject Area	Highest Priority Issue	P1-1 Year Vision	P1 - 3 Year Vision	P1 - 5 Year Vision
Health Care Access	Requires cross-department/sector intervention	Gwinnettians that speak languages other than English at home have increased knowledge of how to access and navigate local health care services, and what support they qualify for	More Gwinnettian families can access preventative health services without acquiring additional medical debt	State health insurance policy has changed to eliminate uninsured Gwinnettians aged 19-64 (currently 17%)
Health Care Access	Assist families to health care insurance and access to care	Hold seminars, send information home to families,		
Health Care Access	Access to Pregnancy Medicaid in a timely manner	Medicaid offices set up on site at health departments and organizations like Obria		
Health Care Access	Health literacy			
Health Care Access	Access to affordable preventive care	Women's Health education and access to include children.	Easier access to preventive care for the families. The aging included in this	No one turned away simply because of economic status
Health Care Access	Health Literacy/engagement (knowledge)			
Health Care Access	Need more access for financial aid for my patients	The ability to find funds earmarked for cancer patients	Cancer is not going away anytime soon therefore neither will the need for assistance	I would love to have a dedicated building for our patients to be able to come to and have fellowship and address their needs
Health Care Access	Access for the underserved; for the more than 100,000 residents in Gwinnett county impacted with rare diseases and			
Health Care Access	Lack of access to a primary care provider	I would like to see the county provide courses that define what Primary Care is and how it is different from Urgent Care or the ER.	Vetted Insurance Companies are available to speak with potential customers about plans that include coverage with	Gov't contracts with said providers that can provide a fast track to coverage.
Mental and Behavioral Health	More fentanyl awareness workshops for parents especially in Latinx communities.	Creating quarterly workshops for families to learn about fentanyl at local churches or even apartment	Decrease in fentanyl overdoses	The workshops will be quarterly
Mental and Behavioral Health	Add a 24/7 crisis walk-in center in Gwinnett	Secure funding for a 24/7 Crisis Walk In Center	Expand the number of Crisis Beds and Temporary Observation Beds	Have improved access to Mental Health care and reduce the utilization of crisis and emergency
Mental and Behavioral Health	Mental Health in Youth Advocacy			
Mental and Behavioral Health	Residential Recovery Funding for the Uninsured	Case management services and coaching to provide continuity of care	Directory of available services and sponsorship resources	24 Hour access to services and case management

Human Services Advisory Board Attendees

- Tracy Joseph, Streetwise, tracy.joseph@streetwisegeorgia.org
- Kim Phillips, North Gwinnett Co-op, kphillips@ngcoop.org

Food Work Group Attendees

- Michele Chivore, Atlanta Community Food Bank, michele.chivore@acfb.org
- Wendy Palmer, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Strong4Life, Wendy.Palmer@choa.org
- Muriam Nafees, Volunteer Gwinnett, Muriam.Nafees@gwinnettcounty.com
- Brad Livesay, Harvest Gwinnett, Bradley.Livesay@gwinnettcounty.com
- Latarsha Williams, Health and Human Services, Latarsha.Williams@gwinnettcounty.com
- Eric Marlowe, UGA Extension Gwinnett, Eric.Marlowe@gwinnettcounty.com
- Chef Hank, Lettum Eat, chefhank@lettumeat.com
- Ryan Jones, Neighbored Cooperative Ministries/The Pantry at Hamilton Mill, ryan@ournem.org
- Paul Ryerson, Salvation Army, Paul.Ryerson@uss.salvationarmy.org
- Ken Yant, Gwinnett County Public Schools, Ken.Yant@gcpsk12.org
- Chris Minor, Parks and Recreation, Chris.Minor@gwinnettcounty.com
- Karen Hallford, Gwinnett County Public Schools, Karen.Hallford@gcpsk12.org
- Lindsey Jorstad, Community Services, Lindsey.Jorstad@gwinnettcounty.com

Not Able to Attend

- Randy Redner, Wellspring Resource, Randy@wellspringresource.com
- Andre Castro, GNR Public Health, Andre.Castro@gnrhealth.com

Overview

Tracy provided an overview of the [Gwinnett County Human Services Advisory Board](#), their charge with the [2023 Gwinnett Human Services Five-Year Strategic Plan](#) as it relates to Food Insecurity.

Introductions

Atlanta Community Food Bank Overview

Michele spoke towards three documents that will be attached to the follow-up notes email. Highlights included:

- **Increased Demand and Distribution:** The Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB) is distributing significantly more food than initially estimated due to increased demand across its 29-county network.
 - Gwinnett County (GC) remains unique, experiencing continued growth in food needs since the start of the pandemic, while other counties saw a decrease in food distribution starting in 2021.
 - 57 partners of ACFB are serving in Gwinnett.
- **Gwinnett's Growth:** Despite overall decreases in food distribution in other areas, Gwinnett has continued to see increased distribution.
 - Gwinnett contributes 23% of the total ACFB distribution and has maintained a strong response through collaboration and effective communication about available resources.
- **Factors Influencing Demand:** Various factors contribute to Gwinnett's ongoing need for food resources, including:
 - A possible impact of Medicaid as an eligibility qualifier for Gwinnett's free and reduced lunch program and the rise in poverty rates, which have increased by 8-10% since pre-COVID.
 - Statewide efforts to use Medicaid eligibility for free and reduced meals, including expansions in Title I schools.
 - Increased awareness and outreach about available services.
- **Community Impact:** Participants have reported that some counties have stopped offering services, leading to increased travel for food assistance. Economic pressures are causing more communities to seek help.
- **Strategic Goals and Plans:** ACFB is focused on several strategic goals:
 - Ensuring food access as a core service.
 - Transforming access together, closing service gaps, and expanding work.
 - Incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) into their work.

**HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD
FOOD WORKGROUP I SEPTEMBER 12, 2024**

- Updating strategic plans and sharing them.
- **Operational Improvements:** Four key behaviors for improvement:
 - Extending provider hours and increasing service capacity.
 - Removing barriers to accessing food.
 - Improving SNAP access and referral processes.
 - Enhancing client intake systems.

Next Steps for the Group

Tracy emphasized the need to clearly define the group's objectives in addressing food insecurity, as tasked by the Board of Commissioners (BOC). He raised key questions:

- Are we aiming to develop a meaningful 5-year plan to truly impact food insecurity, or are we simply checking a box? Tracy suggested that a different approach may be needed compared to previous plans, which focused on meal numbers. The group should explore how to better define success and assess the role of large agencies that are "too big to fail," as their collapse would have widespread consequences.
- Michele highlighted the challenge that, despite sourcing record amounts of food, the need continues to outpace supply. The group should seek ways to narrow this gap, though it may not be possible to fully close it.
- Chef Hank emphasized the importance of understanding how much the services are genuinely impacting families and which community indicators can be used to measure this. Michele echoed this sentiment, questioning whether families are receiving what they truly need or simply taking whatever is available.

To improve service, the group should focus on being culturally responsive and expanding partnerships with more diverse vendors. Consideration of seasonal needs and cultural relevance of food products should be incorporated as well.

Action Plan:

- This core group to set clear goals and establish a schedule of meetings.
- Define the specific objectives and research options to present to county and community leadership.
- Convene within the next few weeks, continuing discussions and posing questions via email to move the work forward.

YOUTH, LITERACY, & LEARNING

WORK GROUP REPORT

October 2024

A photograph of a pink flower stalk in a white pot, positioned on the left side of the page. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others as buds. The background is a solid light brown color.

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Purpose

The Youth, Literacy, and Learning Subcommittee is committed to enhancing literacy outcomes and supporting the overall development of youth in Gwinnett County, with a special focus on English Language Learners (ELLs), low-income, and immigrant families. By partnering with schools, community organizations, and local government, we strive to ensure equitable access to literacy resources, educational programs, and behavioral health services. Our mission is to create an inclusive and nurturing environment where every young person can succeed—academically, socially, and emotionally—regardless of their language or cultural background. Through targeted partnerships, we aim to address service gaps and create empowering opportunities for youth, both inside and outside the classroom.

Our Mission

Our mission is to ensure equitable and culturally responsive educational opportunities for all youth in Gwinnett County, focusing on breaking down literacy and language barriers. By partnering with Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS), Buford City Schools, and local community organizations, we strive to improve youth development by providing multilingual resources, literacy support, and programs designed to foster academic success and overall well-being. Our primary goal is to improve outcomes for English Language Learners (ELLs), low-income, and immigrant youth through initiatives that promote literacy, positive development, and active community engagement.



Ensuring that all youth in Gwinnett County, regardless of language or cultural background, have equitable access to literacy resources and support systems.

Core Values

Equity

We are dedicated to ensuring that every young person, particularly those from underserved and marginalized communities, has fair access to literacy, language, and behavioral health resources. Our focus is on leveling the playing field for all youth.

Collaboration

We believe in the strength of partnerships. By working closely with schools, community organizations, and local government, we provide comprehensive, integrated services that support the holistic needs of youth in our community.

Inclusivity

Our programs are culturally responsive and designed to be accessible to everyone, regardless of their language, background, or socioeconomic status. We aim to make sure no one is left behind.

Community Engagement

We foster a strong sense of community by involving families, faith-based organizations, and local leaders in our initiatives, helping to build connections and reduce feelings of isolation, particularly for immigrant youth.

Innovation

We are committed to finding creative and forward-thinking solutions to the evolving challenges faced by Gwinnett County's youth. Through evidence-based practices and listening to community feedback, we continuously work toward impactful, lasting change.

Alignment with Gwinnett County Goals

Our mission directly supports Gwinnett County's broader goals of boosting literacy, promoting mental well-being, and creating culturally responsive services. Here's how we align:



Enhancing literacy outcomes for children, particularly from non-English-speaking households and underserved populations.



Partnering with community organizations to offer multilingual resources and family support.



Ensuring every child, regardless of language barriers, has the opportunity to thrive academically.

In line with Gwinnett County's strategic objectives, we are committed to closing the literacy and language support gap by providing accessible, high-quality resources and encouraging community collaboration to foster a love of learning in all children.

Key Focus Area

As part of our strategic approach, we have decided to focus on one key area at a time, beginning with literacy. While our current focus is on supporting youth from families where English is not the primary language, we plan to expand our efforts to address literacy challenges faced by students and families whose primary language is English.

Our current Initiatives:

Projects	Details	Outcome
Expanding Access to Literacy Resources	Increasing the availability of multilingual books to support reading in the home language	Pending
Supporting English Language Learners (ELLs)	Providing targeted resources and support for ELL students and their families	Pending
Community-Based Literacy Programs	Engaging with local organizations to foster collaboration and build accessible literacy programs.	Pending



Action Items

1. Expand Access to Multilingual Literacy Resources

- Action: Organize multilingual book drives and distribute culturally appropriate reading materials in the languages spoken at home by ELL families.
- Partners: Local libraries, community organizations (e.g., Corners Outreach), faith-based organizations.
- Goal: Provide every ELL household with access to reading materials in their home language.
- Timeline: Launch the first book drive in 6 months; ongoing quarterly drives.

2. Engage ELL Families with Literacy and Learning Workshops

- Action: Host quarterly family literacy workshops in partnership with local schools, teaching parents how to support literacy development at home, even if they are not proficient in English.
- Partners: Schools, faith-based organizations, libraries.
- Goal: Increase family involvement in literacy activities, fostering a home environment that supports learning.
- Timeline: Launch the first workshop within 6-12 months.

3. Promote Collaboration Between Schools and Community Organizations

- Action: Build strong partnerships with community-based organizations, libraries, and non-profits to coordinate wrap-around services that support both literacy and social-emotional needs of ELL students.
- Partners: GUIDE, Gwinnett County Libraries, Gwinnett Parks and Recreation, UGA Extension.
- Goal: Increase the availability of holistic, community-supported programs that engage ELLs and their families.
- Timeline: Ongoing partnerships; establish memorandums of understanding (MOUs) within 6 months.

Equitable access
to literacy
resources

Next Steps

1. Schedule Initial Meeting with Key Partners
 - Next Step: Arrange a meeting with GCPS, community centers, and local nonprofits to discuss potential partnerships for the multilingual book drive and tutoring programs.
 - Assigned to: Subcommittee members.
 - Timeline: Within the next month
2. Identify Funding and Resource Needs
 - Next Step: Conduct an assessment to identify funding sources, resource gaps, and potential sponsors for the book drive.
 - Assigned to: Subcommittee member.
 - Timeline: Within 2 month.
3. Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
 - Next Step: Establish a system to track the progress of ELL students participating in the literacy initiatives. This will include setting measurable goals and benchmarks.
 - Assigned to: Subcommittee member.
 - Timeline: Framework developed within 2 months.

Members of the HSAB Culturally Responsive Care Workgroup

First Name	Last Name	Email	Name of Organization
Aisha	DeBerry	aisha.deberry@gwinnettcounty.com	
Amira	Abdulhafid	amira@guideinc.org	GUIDE Inc.
Candy	Isabel	candy@khamaistrategies.com	Khamai Strategies
Carmita	Rivera	crivera@gwinnettcg.org	Gwinnett Clean and Beautiful
Katha	Blackwell	katha.blackwell@padv.org	PADV
Larry	Campbell	larry.campbell@cornersoutreach.org	Corners Outreach Inc
Victoria	Huynh	victoriadothuyh@gmail.com	Georgia AAPI Hub
Meeting Dates	Platform		
Tuesday, September 17, 2024	Online		
Tuesday, October 15, 2024	Online		
Tuesday, November 19, 2024	Online		
Tuesday, December 17, 2024	Online		
Tuesday, January 21, 2025	Online		
Tuesday, February 18, 2025	Online		
Tuesday, March 18, 2025	Online		
Tuesday, April 15, 2025	Online		
Tuesday, May 20, 2025	Online		
Tuesday, June 17, 2025	Online		
Tuesday, July 15, 2025	Online		

Definition of Culturally Responsive Care

Culturally responsive care in human services refers to practices and approaches that recognize and respect the cultural landscape of our community and integrate this understanding into the care and services provided, thereby improving outcomes and overall fulfillment.

This involves:

1. Awareness and Sensitivity: Recognizing personal biases and understanding their impact on interactions with diverse community members. This includes reflecting on one's own cultural background and how it shapes perceptions and behaviors.
2. Knowledge: Gaining a deep understanding of various cultural practices, beliefs, values, historical contexts, and societal norms. This includes continuous learning and staying informed about the evolving cultural dynamics within the community.
3. Skill Development: Building skills for effective communication, including using culturally appropriate language, practicing attentive listening, and developing conflict resolution techniques. It also involves learning to observe and appropriately respond to non-verbal cues from different cultural contexts.
4. Adaptation: Tailoring services and interventions to meet the cultural needs and preferences of community members. This involves integrating diverse cultural perspectives into everyday practices, policies, and procedures, and ensuring all interactions are respectful, affirming, and culturally relevant.

Objectives for the Culturally Responsive Care Workgroup

1. Implement Comprehensive Cultural Humility Training

Objective: Ensure all human services staff are proficient in cultural humility to provide inclusive and respectful care.

Key Actions:

Develop and mandate a comprehensive cultural humility training program for all staff.

Schedule regular training sessions and workshops to maintain and enhance cultural awareness.

Evaluate training effectiveness through assessments and feedback surveys to ensure continuous improvement.

2. Improve Accessibility and Equity of Services

Objective: Identify and eliminate cultural barriers in service delivery to ensure equitable access for all residents.

Key Actions:

Conduct a detailed audit of current services to identify gaps in cultural accessibility.

Implement translation and interpretation services to support non-English-speaking clients.

Develop targeted outreach programs to reach underserved cultural communities and ensure they are aware of available services.

3. Integrate Cultural Responsiveness into Policy and Program Development

Objective: Embed cultural humility into all policies and programs to address the diverse needs of the county's population.

Key Actions:

Form a review committee to assess and update existing policies and programs for cultural responsiveness.

Collaborate with cultural leaders and organizations to incorporate their insights and recommendations.

Pilot culturally and linguistically tailored programs and measure their impact to guide broader implementation.

4. Establish Strong Community Partnerships

Objective: Build and strengthen partnerships with community organizations to enhance the delivery of culturally responsive care.

Key Actions:

Host regular meetings and forums with community partners to identify needs and opportunities for collaboration.

Develop joint initiatives with local cultural organizations to address specific cultural gaps in services.

Create a community advisory board composed of diverse cultural representatives to provide ongoing guidance and feedback.

5. Ensure Equitable Data Disaggregation

Objective: Achieve equity in data collection through precise disaggregation of population data to accurately reflect and address community needs.

Key Actions:

Develop or adopt best practices for comprehensive data collection standards and implement robust tools (i.e. multilingual resources, translation services, and cultural humility training to ensure inclusivity) to gather detailed and accurate data from diverse populations, emphasizing the importance of data desegregation to identify and address disparities effectively..

Train staff on equitable data collection practices, ensuring they understand the significance of disaggregated data in revealing trends and areas needing improvement.

Regularly analyze, audit, and report disaggregated data to stakeholders, utilizing insights to inform and enhance culturally responsive policies and programs.

These definitive objectives aim to fill existing gaps in cultural responsiveness within the human services system, ensuring that all residents receive equitable, respectful, and effective care.

7/16/2024 Feedback:

1. Like the cultural humility tenant
2. Data Disaggregation - keep eye on data and how data can be best used and uplift our people in this County and can inform the 4 priorities
3. Consideration and evaluation
4. Group will later vote on Traditional Positions (e.x. Vice Chair, Administrator, etc vs. Objective Leads). A doodle poll will be sent with some descriptors as well as a hybrid option as well.
5. August 13th is our next meeting date, although virtual would like to have an in person meeting in the future.
6. Work group will be one year (1 year) commitment

Date: Tuesday, July 16th 5-6pm EST / 3-4pm PST

Agenda:

1. Introductions: Name, Affiliation(s) (15 minutes)

Ice Breaker Question: What was the most culturally welcoming event you've ever been to? Why was it so memorable?

2. Workgroup Goals and Objectives (20 minutes)

Brief introduction about HSAB

HSAB WorkGroups

Food Security

Housing

Health & Wellness

Youth Literacy & Learning

Link with comments/suggestions to your Objective/Goals Document: HSAB CRC definition and Objectives

Objectives

Key Actions

3. Roles/Responsibilities: (15 minutes)

Meeting cadence for Workgroup (monthly before the 3rd Thursday of each month)

HSAB public meeting on 3rd Thursday (join virtually/in person)

HSAB CRC Shared folder

HSAB CRC Definition & Objectives

Goals and Objectives of Gwinnett County's Human Services Needs Assessment

Contact Sheet

Roles:

Co-Chairs

Vice Chair

Recorder/Administrator

Members

4. Next Steps/Next Meeting Date (10 minutes)

HSAB CRC Working Meeting Notes

Date: August 13, 2024

Time: 5:00 PM

Attendees:

Aisha DeBerry

Victoria Huynh

Amira Abdulhafid

Candy Isabel

Larry Campbell

Katha Blackwell

Graydon Yatabe

Discussion Summary:

- 1. Goals & Objectives:** These will be further developed at the in-person meeting on Thursday, August 15, 2024.
- 2. Meeting Schedule:** It was finalized that meetings will take place on the 3rd Tuesday of every month via Zoom.
- 3. Chair Selection:** Candy Isabel volunteered to serve as Chair.
- 4. Decision Quorum:** It was agreed that at least 5 attendees must be present for decisions to be made as a group.
- 5. Committee Commitment:** The committee's duration is set for one year, from July 2024 to July 2025.
- 6. Graydon Yatabe's Transition:** Graydon announced his transition out of the workgroup.

Next Meeting:

Date: September 17, 2024

Time: 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM