



Funders Together
TO END HOMELESSNESS
BALTIMORE



**Maryland
Philanthropy**
NETWORK



Photo by Aimintang / Getty Images

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

2024 - 2026

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FUNDERS TOGETHER TO END HOMELESSNESS BALTIMORE SETS STRATEGIC DIRECTION TO END HOMELESSNESS

In 2019, a passionate group of Maryland Philanthropy Network (MPN) members formed Funders Together to End Homelessness Baltimore (FTEHB). Born out of previous collaborative efforts of MPN's Basic Human Needs Affinity Group, the founders of Funders Together-Baltimore saw a need to harness their resources towards ending homelessness and increasing the supply of affordable housing.

FTEHB is a local network of the national Funders Together to End Homelessness, which “mobilizes its members to use philanthropy’s voice, influence, and financial capital to end homelessness by creating and advancing lasting solutions that are grounded in racial and housing justice, driven by love and disruption, and centering people with lived expertise.”

Since 2019, FTEHB member organizations have collectively contributed between \$12 to \$15 million a year towards efforts to prevent and end homelessness in Baltimore.

In addition, FTEHB has formed a collaborative relationship with the Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services (MOHS), identified critical gaps that need additional resources and established a continued learning agenda. FTEHB members serve as leaders on Baltimore’s Continuum of Care Board of Directors, the Capacity-Building Committee, and Resource Allocation Committee as well as Maryland’s Interagency Task Force on Homelessness.

FTEHB would like to thank the individuals and organizations that contributed their time, ideas, and passions to developing this Strategic Direction including:

Strategic Direction Work Group

Sara Cooper, The Annie E. Casey Foundation
Scott Gottbreht, formerly of the United Way of Central Maryland
Amy Kleine, The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation
Erin O’Keefe, The France-Merrick Foundation
Terry Staudenmaier, The Abell Foundation

Maryland Philanthropy Network Staff

Kathy Shulman, FTEHB Facilitator
Elisabeth Hyleck, Vice President of Programs and Engagement
Charlotte Haase, Communications Manager

BACKGROUND

Setting a Strategic Direction:

In 2023, Funders Together to End Homelessness Baltimore (FTEHB) members set out to determine the ways in which they could collectively make the greatest difference in ending homelessness and increasing the supply of affordable housing in our region.

A work group was established and partnered with FTEHB's new Facilitator to develop a multi-year FTEHB Strategic Direction. The workgroup integrated the following data points into a draft 2024-2026 FTEHB Strategic Direction:

- One-on-one interviews with FTEHB members;
- Presentations by government leaders;
- Members' experience as leaders on relevant committees and as participants in various coalitions related to homelessness and housing;
- Best practices shared by Funders Together to End Homelessness networks around the country;
- FTEHB meetings focused on the roles, actions and value added of philanthropy.

This document presents a new Strategic Direction, which describes how our funder network will carry out specific actions in three areas to achieve our goal of ending homelessness in our region. It sets forth a set of values, pillars, and proposed actions.

This plan is a work in progress. We will adapt to the changing circumstances of those who are unhoused, the realities faced by government leaders, public and private funding, and what we can learn from emerging best practices.

We are excited to have come this far but recognize that we are just beginning this new chapter of our work together. As we move forward, we welcome likeminded funders to join our dedicated and vibrant group.



PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of Funders Together to End Homelessness Baltimore is to bring private and public funders together to focus on structural and racial inequities related to housing instability, homelessness, and supportive services, and to prevent and end homelessness in the Baltimore region. We will collaborate with stakeholders and those with lived experience to inform our grantmaking, identify critical gaps that need additional resources, and establish a continued learning agenda.

VISION STATEMENT

Baltimore has a supply of affordable and safe housing for all our residents, and those residents who need services to achieve stability can receive those services in a manner that best meets their needs. Baltimore is a model for other medium-sized cities for how to prevent and end homelessness.



Photo: Jon Bilous / Getty Images

VALUES

These values represent why our members are at the Funders Together to End Homelessness Baltimore table and guide how we carry out our work.

- Safe and affordable housing is a basic human right. All Baltimoreans must have access to safe, affordable, and dignified living conditions.
- Equitable access to housing has been denied to our communities of color for generations. Therefore, we take a housing justice approach to our work. We are particularly attuned to this as redlining was invented in Baltimore.
- People with lived experience of homelessness should be engaged in crafting solutions to homelessness.
- We envision a homeless services sector staffed with mission driven workers who are paid adequately. This will ensure continuity in this important work.
- Permanent supportive housing is an essential resource for people experiencing chronic homelessness.
- Eviction prevention is a key strategy for preventing homelessness.
- Maryland is a resource rich state which has the resources to take care of all its residents.

Photo: FG Trade / Getty Images





STRATEGY

FTEHB STRATEGIC DIRECTION

PILLARS OF OUR WORK

FTEHB's efforts stand on three pillars: Invest; Convene and Partner; and Influence.

Organized around these three pillars, this plan describes actions that FTEHB will take to further the goal of ending homelessness in the Baltimore region. The plan is intended to be a flexible, adaptable document that can be revised, as needed, in response to changing conditions. Each pillar has a coordinating and ongoing workplan.



Invest

FTEHB will strategically use philanthropic dollars to prevent and end homelessness and increase the supply of affordable and supportive housing.



Convene and Partner

To end homelessness, our collective must remain informed and aware of trends in this field. FTEHB will work with key stakeholders, homeless service providers, government agencies, and people with lived experience to identify needs and opportunities to address those needs.



Influence

FTEHB members can serve as bridges between their grantees, their networks, and decision-makers. FTEHB will engage with policy makers, inform policy proposals, and represent the social sector on these issues.

INVEST

Overarching Goal:

FTEHB will strategically use philanthropic dollars to prevent and end homelessness and increase the supply of affordable and supportive housing.

Photo: anyaberkut / Getty Images



Actions:

- 1. Leverage strategic and focused investments from FTEHB members and partners.**
 - Seek additional investments from new members and/or external sources (other funders, government funding, etc.)
 - Investments may be leveraged through aggregating/pooling funds
- 2. Identify and attract external resources and forge multi-sector partnerships.**
- 3. When helpful to FTEHB members, facilitate communications to shared grantees.**
- 4. Conduct annual FTEHB investment survey to inform funders and demonstrate the power of FTEHB's collective efforts.**
 - Through this process, FTEHB members will learn what entities FTEHB members are dispersing funds and to what use these funds are being directed (supportive housing, youth homelessness, etc.)

CONVENE & PARTNER

Overarching Goal:

To end homelessness, our collective must remain informed and aware of issues and activity in this field. FTEHB will work with key stakeholders, homeless service providers, government agencies, and people with lived experience to identify needs and opportunities to address those needs.



Actions:

1. Coordinate regular FTEHB meetings that educate and engage members and increase the collaborative's strategic partnerships.

- Convene experts and stakeholders so that we can share best practices with our members, governmental and nonprofit partners, and grantees
- FTEHB members have identified some issue areas about which to learn:
 - Affordable Housing: with focus on supportive housing, the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, etc.
 - Medicaid/Health/Payer Models: Engage representatives from hospital foundations.
 - Homelessness Prevention: Work with advocates and providers to prevent homelessness in the region.
 - Youth Homelessness: Supporting efforts to meet the unique needs of young people experiencing homelessness.

2. Collaborate with stakeholders -- including those with lived experience, Continuum of Care leaders, and colleagues in the homelessness and affordable housing ecosystem -- to inform grantmaking and identify critical gaps that need additional resources.

- Ensure that the voices of Baltimoreans with lived experience are included when policies are set and that they contribute to decision making
- Advocate for the well-being and sustainability of service providers in the homelessness and affordable housing field
- Some issues that have been raised by members and CoC members include living wage salaries to keep staff; timely payment from government agencies; technical assistance; recognition and wellness

3. Maintain satisfaction of current members

- Reach out to members annually with a short survey to determine what is going well and what could be improved.

4. Recruit new members to FTEHB

- Ensure that they are oriented to our efforts and can be active members

5. Learn from and grow with FTEH

- Share best practices and questions with fellow FTEH regional networks

INFLUENCE

Overarching Goal:

FTEHB members will serve as bridges between their grantees, their networks, and decision-makers. FTEHB will engage with policy makers, inform policy proposals, and represent the social sector on these issues.



Photo: Maryland Philanthropy Network



Actions:

1. Work with public agencies to ensure optimal processes

- Partner with government agencies charged with ending homelessness and increasing safe and affordable housing
- Promote transparency and accountability
- Seek information from agency leaders if stated outcomes are not being realized and processes are not being followed
- Promote the collection and sharing of accurate and comprehensive data about homelessness

2. Meet with, learn with and from, and influence local and state leaders

- Promote policies that help make homelessness rare and brief
- Determine when FTEHB's voice can make a difference

3. Shore up advocates

- Support advocates in seeking changes in policies and practices aimed at preventing and ending homelessness



STRUCTURE

FTEHB STRATEGIC DIRECTION

MEMBERSHIP MODEL

Funders Together to End Homelessness Baltimore (FTEHB) involves public and private funding institutions and individuals in the Baltimore region who seek to prevent and end homelessness and do not seek grants from other members of the group. FTEHB members are aligned to support the mission, vision, and values of FTEHB.

Our alignment, and thus our effectiveness and efficacy as a collaborative, is grounded in several key factors. For our group to be successful, we ask group members to:

Commit to Our Purpose Statement

The purpose of FTEHB is to bring private and public funders together to focus on structural and racial inequities related to housing instability, homelessness, and supportive services, and to prevent and end homelessness in the Baltimore region. We will collaborate with stakeholders and those with lived experience to inform our grantmaking, identify critical gaps that need additional resources, and establish a continued learning agenda.

FTEHB is a collective built on trust and effective collaboration. FTEHB members work by the following agreements.

FTEHB's Working Agreements

- Assume good intentions
- Extend grace to each other and ourselves
- Have a spirit of curiosity about issues, comments, ideas, etc.
- Address issues in real time, for shared learning
- When thoughts are not fully informed, name it in the moment and create space to come back to further discuss

Actively Participate in Our Collective

- Members participate actively in at least 50% of the meetings.
- Actively engage in programs, projects between meetings and/or leadership.
- Contribute to support the core budget at a level, consistent with their capacity.
- Members balance a desire to make information about our work open while protecting relationships of trust among members and with applicants and grantees.
- Members agree to not publicly disparage or discredit FTEHB activities.

OPERATIONS

Affinity Group of MPN:

Maryland Philanthropy Network, in which Funders Together to End Homelessness Baltimore (FTEHB) resides, has a long and strong track record of nurturing and sustaining funder groups, networks, and collaboratives in service of improving community conditions.

Since its inception, FTEHB members have aligned around opportunities that have presented themselves, specifically to support various pandemic-related needs, ensure that leaders and volunteers who are people with lived experience are actively engaged in determining policy solutions, and matching grants for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project.

Network of FTEH:

FTEHB is one of seven regional funder networks of the national Funders Together to End Homelessness, which works nationally to support strategic, innovative, and effective solutions to homelessness.

Funders Together National provides FTEHB with in-person and online programming and learning opportunities, important policy updates, and connections to other local networks to learn about how they are approaching their work, and initiatives and innovations across the country that might benefit Baltimore.



GOVERNANCE

Funders Together to End Homelessness Baltimore (FTEHB) is composed of a membership collaborative and a steering committee. FTEHB operates as an affinity group under the governance of Maryland Philanthropy Network (MPN). MPN is governed by a board of, and elected by, its members.

Any press releases or official public comments must be approved by the President of MPN in accordance with policies set forth by the MPN Board of Directors.

Collaborative:

Currently, FTEHB meets every other month. Time sensitive issues may necessitate more frequent meetings.

Steering Committee:

FTEHB designates Steering Committee members to provide support, guidance, and thought partnership to staff for overall strategic and fiscal management of FTEHB; to serve as an ambassador for FTEHB when appropriate; and to assist staff to run Collaborative meetings. Committee members serve two-year renewable terms.

See [Appendix I](#) for *Steering Committee Membership and Guidance*.

Photo: Maryland Philanthropy Network



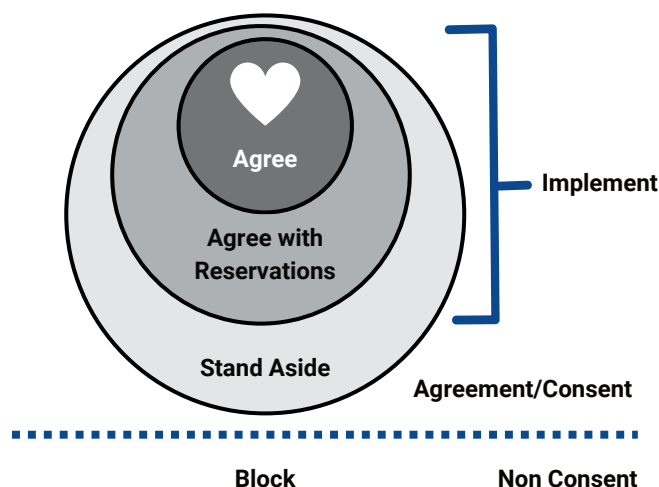
DECISION MAKING

FTEHB utilizes a blended decision-making model:

- For decisions that have broad impact for group function and direction we engage in consensus decision making and utilize a “testing for agreement” model.
- For smaller operational decisions, we will use voting.

Testing for Agreement

Adapted from Seeds for Change



Agreement

- I support the proposal and am willing to help implement it.

Reservations

- I am willing to let the proposal go ahead but have reservations about it that I need to be acknowledged.

Stand Aside

- I have objections, but I will not block the proposal. Or, I like the decisions but don't have the time or authority to implement it.

Block

- I have a fundamental objection to the proposal. I may need to leave the group if this goes ahead.

Members Opting Out of Decisions

Below are some examples of when FTEHB members may opt out of decision-making.

- Members agree to recuse from participation in decision-making where the organization they represent may be competing for the allocation of grant funds or have other personal or monetary interest in the outcome.
- Occasionally, FTEHB will release statements regarding certain policies, practices, or decisions, or engage in other activity that may fall outside of the scope of members' organizational goals and/or commitments.
- While members are committed to the vision, operating principles, and objectives of the Collaborative, they may opt out of specific FTEHB activity.
- Opting out can include leaving the abstaining organization's logo from releases and media announcements, or other activities as discussed by the members.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Determining How to Receive Input from Key Stakeholders

It is important for FTEHB to regularly receive input from key stakeholders. The best way to do so has not been established. To aid this effort, FTEHB solicited suggestions from other MPN affinity groups and FTEH regional networks for ways to incorporate the advice, suggestions, and input from service providers, people with lived experiences, and other key stakeholders.

Here are some examples:

- **Baltimore Workforce Collaborative:** Community Conversations Sub-Committee is composed of local partner organizations and at least one FTEHB member. The Sub-Committee develops agendas and a shared facilitation plan for each Homelessness and affordable housing Community Conversation. The Sub-Committee is led by three Co-Chairs (two service providers/ intermediaries and one FTEHB member). If appropriate and feasible, the Sub-Committee may opt to bring in outside facilitators and/or guest speakers to support Community Conversations.
- **Chicago Funders Together to End Homelessness:** Heard from tens of community stakeholders as they did their strategic planning. One of their strategic plan goals is to: “Amplify the voices of and fairly compensate people with lived expertise within CFTEH’s practices and at key systems tables (CoCs, regional planning efforts, etc.) CFTEH will meaningfully incorporate people most impacted by homelessness into CFTEH’s governance, decision-making and accountability structures.”

At the next review of the FTEHB Strategic Direction, the group will determine the best way for FTEHB to get stakeholder and community input.

STAFFING

Currently, FTEHB is staffed by a consultant, a facilitator, employed by Maryland Philanthropy Network (MPN). The facilitator ensures the FTEHB's Strategic Direction's goals and objectives move forward, and its initiatives are in alignment with the mission and values of MPN. The position oversees general and day-to-day operations of FTEHB and is an active member of the MPN staff team.

Some of the FTEHB functions carried out by the facilitator include:

- Meeting planning, coordination, and facilitation
- Tracking and sharing with members the following: news on key topics, local and national policy options, relevant meetings and conferences, and best practices in the field
- Ensuring compliance of efforts with the 2024-2026 Strategic Direction
- Member and partner engagement and communication
- Other special initiatives of the collaborative

Additional support is provided on a limited basis by additional MPN staff members to assist its affinity groups like FTEHB with meeting logistics, communications, data collection, fundraising and more.

See [Appendix II](#) for Facilitator Scope of Work.

SUSTAINABILITY

Member Contributions and Support

FTEHB members contribute to support the FTEHB budget at a level consistent with their capacity and based on their organizational structure and policies. Some members provide financial support to FTEHB with annual grants to cover the costs of creating capacity for FTEHB's efforts.

FTEHB members also support the affinity group with in-kind contributions such as:

- Time spent serving on the FTEHB Steering Committee, a work group, etc.
- Underwriting the costs of a program or event
- Serving serving on a committee of the Continuum of Care or other committees involved with addressing housing needs



APPENDIX

FTEHB STRATEGIC DIRECTION

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP & GUIDANCE

The FTEHB Steering Committee is the primary leadership body for Funders Together to End Homelessness Baltimore (FTEHB), working closely with staff to advance the goals in FTEHB's Strategic Direction.

The Steering Committee is intended to reflect the experiential and cultural diversity of our FTEHB members and the movement to advance housing justice. FTEHB values expertise and contributions in all forms and from all funders, regardless of size.

Terms:

Members are asked to commit to a two-year term of service, and committee members may serve up to two consecutive terms.

Time Commitment:

We estimate the time commitment involved in Steering Committee participation is five to ten hours per month, which includes a one-hour Steering Committee meeting every other month, additional meetings to consider time-sensitive opportunities, and staff support.

Steering Committee Responsibilities: (not a definitive list)

- Regular participation in every other month steering committee meetings
- Monitor and help implement FTEHB's Strategic Direction plan and support future planning
- Advise on and approve strategic grantmaking by FTEHB
- Plan FTEHB meetings that are informative, interactive and that lead to action and decision-making
- Review and monitor FTEHB's annual revenue and expense budget
- Plan and participate in member education, programming, and community events
- Support efforts to retain FTEHB members and cultivate new members
- Support FTEHB fundraising efforts
- Represent FTEHB and serve as an ambassador for FTEHB in the community

FACILITATOR SCOPE OF WORK

Implement FTEHB Action Plan Deliverables – 60%

- Coordinate Funders Together to End Homelessness – Baltimore (FTEHB) initiatives as spelled out in the 2024-2026 Action Plan.
- Use a racial equity and social justice lens throughout this process.

Invest

- Assist FTEHB members in aligning, pooling, and coordinating their grants in this issue area for maximal impact and using effective coordination.
- Support FTEHB members around group investments as they develop.

Convene and Partner

- Coordinate regular FTEHB meetings that result in members increased knowledge in the field, a deepening of partnerships between members and key partners, and ensure that the trust built between members remains strong.
- Ensure that FTEHB has effective communication with key stakeholders (including people with lived experience) and policy leaders so that members can incorporate their experiences and suggestions into FTEHB's decision-making and actions.
- Attend and actively participate in relevant external meetings as the FTEHB representative.

Influence

- Support the FTEHB members who are in leadership roles with the Continuum of Care, Mayor's Office of Homeless Services, Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Mayor's Leadership Committee on Homelessness and Housing to ensure their success.
- Determine how FTEHB can be most effective in its advocacy work related to its mission and carry out the efforts approved by the membership.
- Coordinate additional initiatives as they are approved by the membership.

FACILITATOR SCOPE OF WORK

Planning – 20%

- Complete the 2024-26 Action Plan process by coordinating and facilitating a half day FTEHB retreat to finalize the 2024 Action Plan.
- Work with members to determine how to best measure FTEHB's outcomes according to its Action Plan and other measures.
- Develop a decision-making process for current and new initiatives with FTEHB membership.
- Make changes to the Action Plan as needed.
- Measure and report Action Plan outcomes annually.

General Administration – 10%

- Organize and facilitate FTEHB meetings, including maintaining mailing lists, securing space, drafting, and distributing agendas and other materials, and providing summary notes to FTEHB members.
- Participate in FTEHB meetings and conferences as appropriate to meet FTEHB's mission and Action Plan.
- Take on other tasks pertaining to supporting FTEHB as needed and appropriate.

Miscellaneous as Needed – 10%

- Respond to inquiries & technical assistance requests from Maryland Philanthropy Network members related to homelessness issues, as requested.
- Collaborate with Maryland Philanthropy Network staff for grant and board reports, provide support when needed for organization-wide events.
- Attend relevant Maryland Philanthropy Network meetings and/or programs as requested by Maryland Philanthropy Network leadership.
- Participate in MPN Affinity Group staff meetings to share and learn best practices of engaging MPN members.
- Review research, reports, and information items relevant to the work of the FTEHB and disseminate to members.