



CITY OF BANGOR

**Government Operations Committee
Monday, December 15, 2025
73 Harlow Street, Council Chambers
*Immediately following Business & Economic
Development Committee meeting***

AGENDA

1. Committee Overview
2. Community Connector Fare Study Presentation
3. Remote Meeting Policy Discussion
4. Homelessness Encampment Response Discussion
This item includes materials from former City Councilor Jonathan Sprague. Additional materials may be provided at the meeting.
5. Advisory Committee on Housing & Homelessness Discussion

Upcoming Items (subject to change)

(Items may go to Government Operations Committee or be moved to another committee, depending on timing.)

- *Community Connector Update*

MEMO

To: Government Operations Committee
From: Courtney O'Donnell, Assistant City Manager
Date: December 12, 2025
RE: Government Operations Committee Overview

Welcome to the Government Operations Committee, commonly referred to as Gov Ops.

The purpose of this memo is to provide an overview of the committee and provide some additional information Councilors may find useful. As the Assistant City Manager (ACM), I serve as the staff point person for this committee.

This committee typically meets once a month with additional meetings, as required. Gov Ops covers proposed items related to City Clerk, Public Safety, Public Health, Parks & Recreation, Insurance, and Administrative Services. This also includes Community Connector items, changes to parking regulations outside of the Downtown Parking Management District, and matters concerning intergovernmental affairs.

Some examples of items discussed at this committee over the last year include but are not limited to:

- grant application requests;
- accepting and appropriating grant funds, particularly for Public Health;
- bench donations and related policy;
- vacant building ordinance;
- public restroom discussions;
- updates from related departments; and
- naming of city-owned property, most recently Golf Course Clubhouse.

Items for discussion can be requested by contacting myself, Committee Chair Councilor Beck, or the City Manager. We keep an updated list of items we know to be coming before the committee at a future date at the bottom of the agenda.

I look forward to the upcoming year. Thank you!

BACTS

Community Connector Fare Structure Analysis

Government Operations Committee Meeting

December 15, 2025



Prepared by:



Content

- Project Overview
- Study Findings and Goals
- Proposed Changes and Implementation Approach
- Outreach Update





Project Overview

Activities since August, Overview, Assessment Findings (Refresher)

Project Update

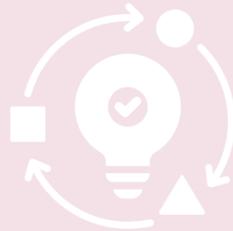
- What has happened since August:
 - Developed **phasing** approach and **implementation plan**.
 - Engaged with the public at **pop-up events** and **public hearings**.
 - **Drafted** the scope of work for a fare technology **RFP**.



Project Overview



Current
Fare Structure
Assessment



Project Goals,
Alternatives,
Impact Analysis,
Transition Planning



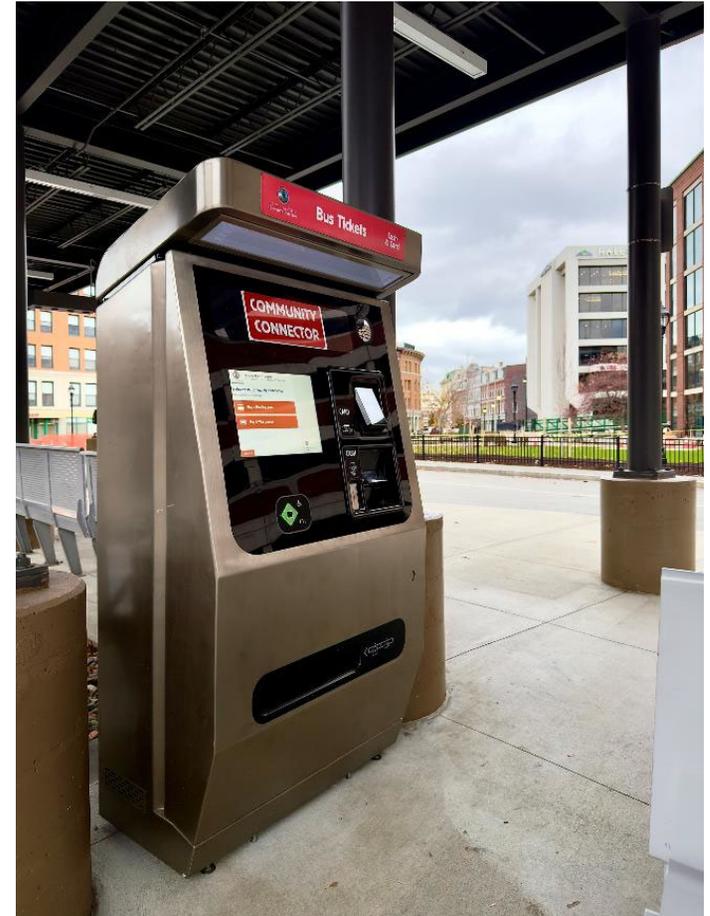
Pop-Up Events
Public Hearing
*(In person
and virtual)*



Implementation
Plan, RFP, and
City Council
Approval

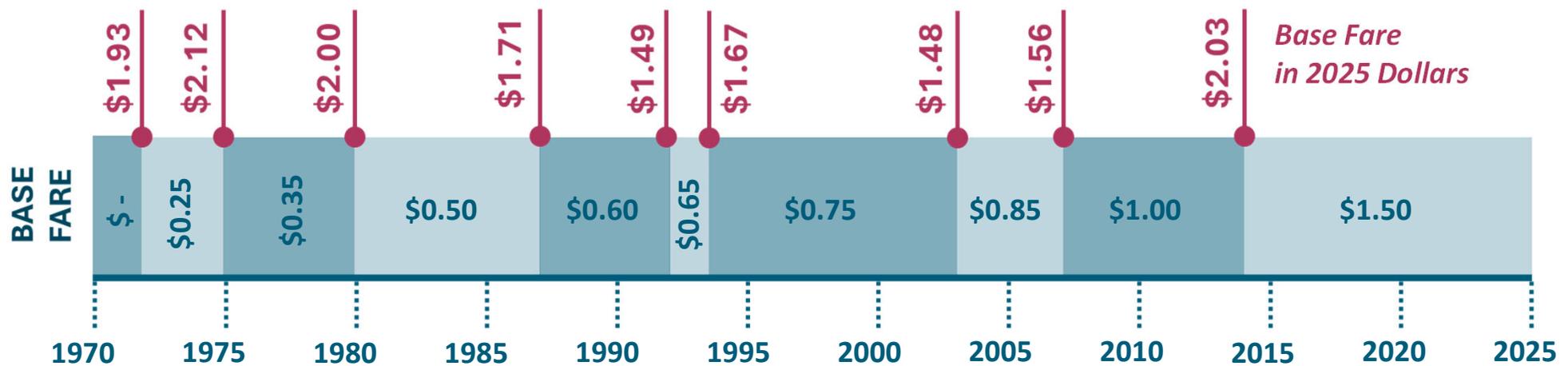
Recent Improvements

- 2018 ● New Administrative Building, In-House ADA Paratransit
- 2019
- 2020 ● New Buses and ADA
- 2021 ● Paratransit Vans
- 2022 ● New Transit Center
- 2023
- 2024 ● New Fixed Stops and Rider App
- 2025 ● New Ticket Vending Machine



Project Background

- Fare revenue now covers a smaller share of operating expenses than before the pandemic, decreasing from 20% in 2019 to 12% today.



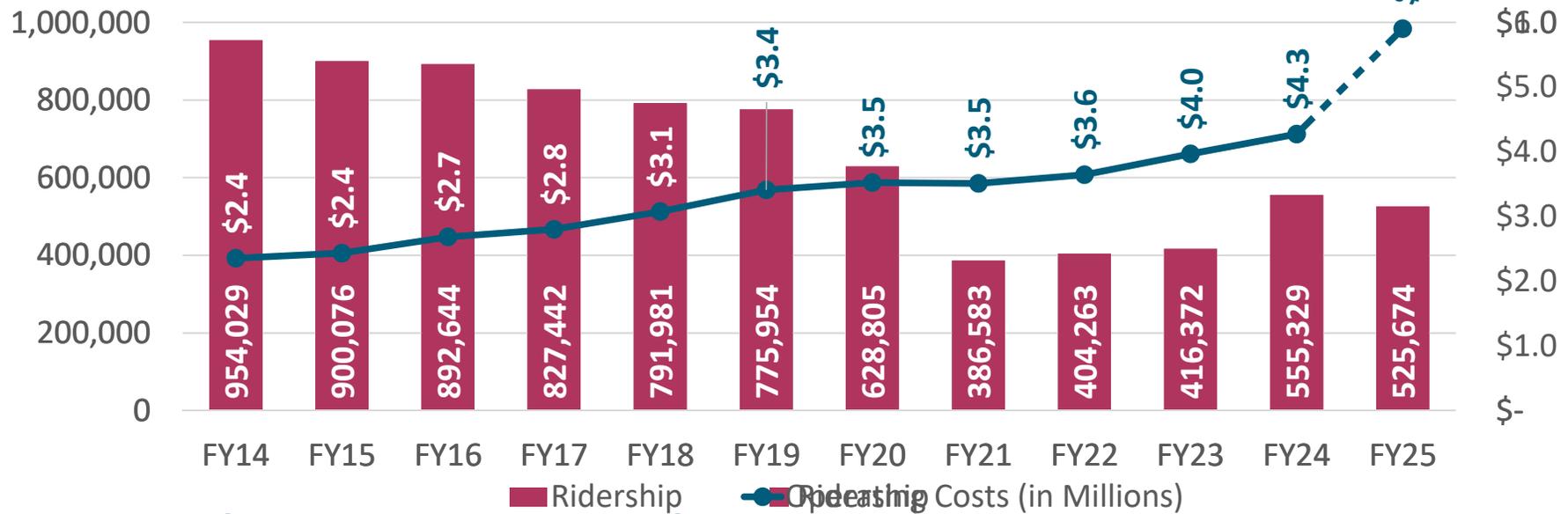


Current Fare Structure Assessment

Assessment Findings and Project Goals

Study Key Takeaways

System improvements have strengthened the foundation for **ridership growth and serving our community**, but operating costs continue to increase for several reasons.



Study Key Takeaways

CITY OF BANGOR COMMUNITY CONNECTOR

Help Shape the Future of Fares!

Community Connector is conducting a survey to better understand who rides our buses and how you use fares. Your feedback will help us improve our fare structure to better serve the community.

COMPLETE THE SURVEY FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A \$50 E-GIFT CARD!

We Want to Hear from You!

Take our survey at:
www.SurveyMonkey.com/r/CommunityConnectorFares

Analysis - RIDER SURVEY

Wants to better understand who rides our buses and how you use fares so that we can offer a fare structure that meets participation!

8. Does a local agency provide your tickets/passes?
 No
 Yes (please specify agency)

6. What are your thoughts on tickets/passes?
 Tickets/passes are too expensive than cash
 It is a hassle for the time taking to get tickets
 I do not buy tickets/passes
 I don't get access because I don't use it all day
 I don't get tickets/passes as per convenience
 Other

When using Community Connector, do you usually need to transfer to another bus or route to complete your trip?
 No

What do you think of the current fare prices? Please select the option that best aligns with you.
 Very low
 Low
 Medium
 High
 Very high

What would you pay more for than a paper service (if applicable, I use a contactless ID)?
 None of the following alternative payment options would you be most interested in?
 Tap to go (from a card or app)
 Mobile app (from a card or app)
 Mobile app (from a card or app) with a QR code
 Mobile app (from a card or app) with a QR code and a photo of your face

4. If you buy tickets/passes, how do you pay?
 Cash
 Credit
 Debit
 Apple Pay
 Google Pay

10. Are you familiar with the Bangor Community Connector app?
 Yes, and I frequently use it to track my bus
 Yes, but I don't use it time that helpful
 No, I don't know an app exists and I do not probably use it
 No, but I'm excited to try it.

"I would easily pay \$2.50 for a ride [for] the ability to pay via credit card, and I would need longer bus hours."

"More frequent service and later hours are worth more money."

"Good value for reasonably fast transportation"

FOR BUS LEAVING TRANSFER POINT AT (FOR BUS PUNCHED TIME ONLY)

1	2	3	4	5	6	BN	BS	
7	8	9	10	11	12	C1	C2	
TRANSFERS ARE FREE							CS	HA
COMMUNITY CONNECTOR							HS	MT
SUBJECT TO TERMS ON REVERSE SIDE							ML	SW
							O1	O2
							:45	
							:30	
							:15	
							:00	
							M	T
							W	TH
							F	S



Challenges

- Operating the system keeps getting more expensive.
- Fare revenue covers an increasingly smaller share of the operating costs.

- The paper ticket and passes distribution is time-consuming and complicated.
- Cash fare payments create additional challenges for both operators and staff.

- The cost of a monthly pass can be a burden for lower-income riders.
- Cash remains a key payment method for many riders.

Project Goals

GOAL 1

Increase Fare
Revenue

GOAL 2

Decrease
Fare Collection
Burden and
Inefficiencies

GOAL 3

Consider the
Impact on
Riders



Proposed Changes

Fare Collection Modernization and Proposed Fare Options and Prices

Mobile Ticketing App

- The mobile ticketing app allows you to **pay your fare right from your phone.**
- You can buy fares anytime via the app with credit cards or Apple/Google Pay, or at the transit center and authorized sellers in the region with cash or other payment modes.
- Then just show or **scan your phone** when boarding the bus.



Smart Card

- A smart card is a **reloadable plastic card** that **stores values for fares**.
- You can **add money** to it via a **website** or **in person** at the transit center and other authorized sellers.
- You **tap** on the fare reader **when boarding**.
- The **system automatically** takes the fare **from the card**.



Fare Capping

- **Fare capping** means you **never pay more than a set value in a month**.
- You **pay one trip at a time**, and once you **reach the price cap**, the **rest of your rides** during that period **are free**.

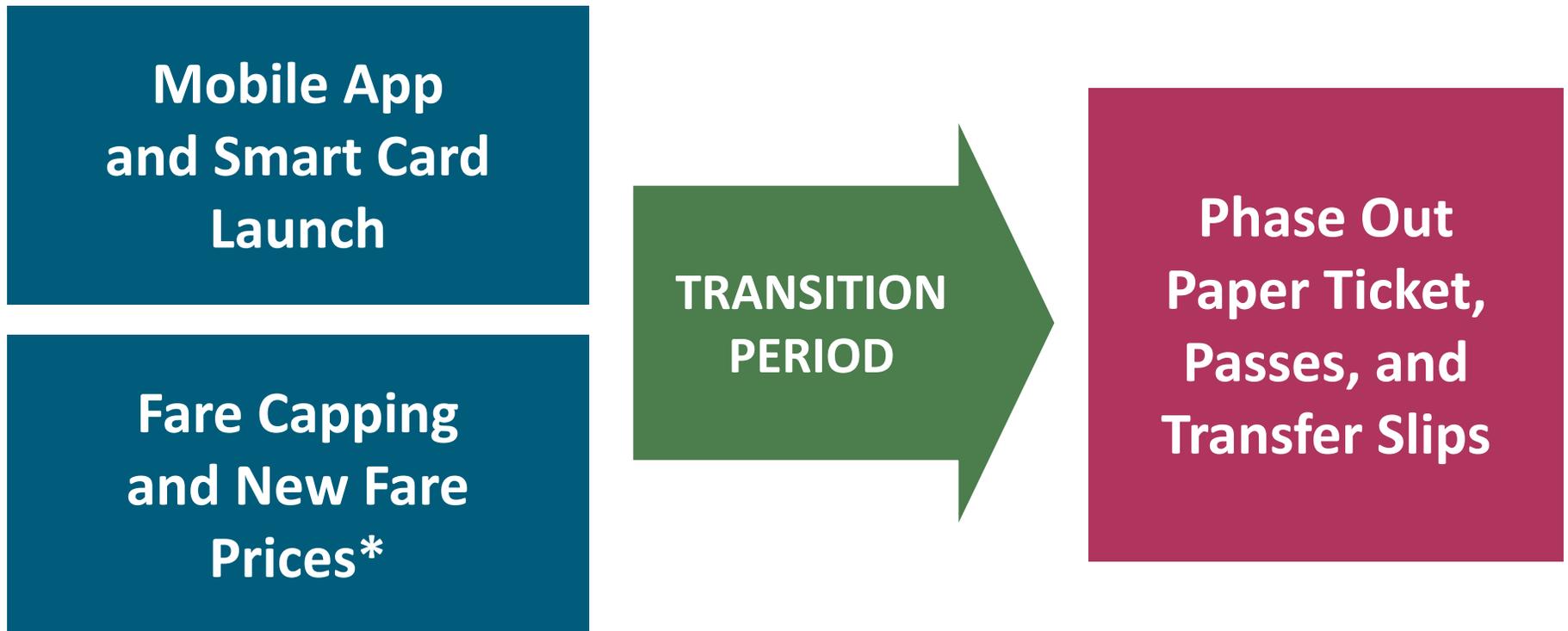
Take **30** paid trips in a month

and ride **FREE** for the rest
of the month!



PRODUCT	CURRENT PRICE	NEW PRICE RECOMMENDATIONS
Single Ride	\$1.50	\$2.00*
Half Fare	\$0.75	\$1.00
Children's Fare	\$0.75	\$1.00
Five-Ride Ticket	\$6.00	<i>Eliminated</i>
Monthly Pass	\$45.00	<i>Replaced</i> with Fare Capping
Student Monthly Pass	\$20.00	<i>Replaced</i> with Half-Fare Capping**
Transfer	Free	Free with Mobile App or Smart Card payments
College/University ID	Free	Free
ADA Paratransit	\$3.00	\$4.00
Fare Capping (Monthly)	N/A	<i>New product</i> \$60.00
Half-Fare Capping (Monthly)	N/A	<i>New product</i> \$30.00**

Implementation Approach



**Pending City Council Approval*



Outreach Update

Feedback Summary and Recommendation Changes

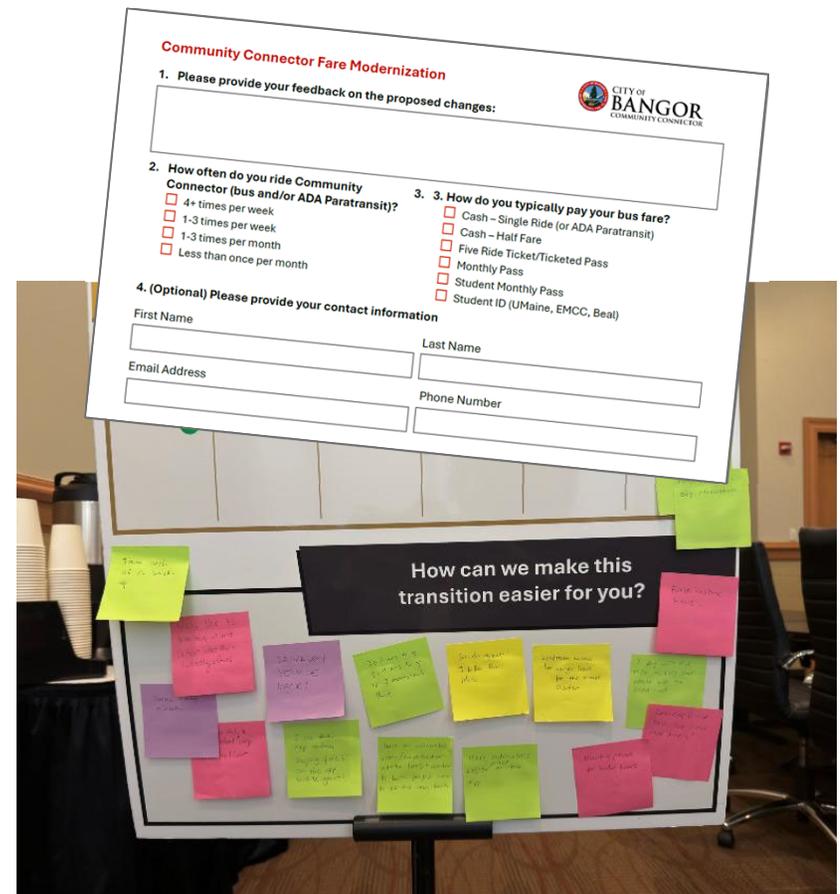
Outreach Activities

- We held six pop-up events
 - Talked to almost 90 people at the transit center and bus stops in Old Town, Hampden, and Brewer.
- We hosted in-person and virtual public hearings.
- We gathered 27 feedback comments from online and in-person events.



Public Feedback

- Survey respondents were overwhelmingly **open to new fare payment options**.
- In-person events **reinforced the public's preference for smart cards** and openness to mobile apps.
- The public supports maintaining **cash as a payment option** and a network of **authorized sellers**.



Public Feedback

- While the feedback on potential fare increases was mixed, **participants generally supported fare increases, particularly if the level of service improvements followed.**

"I would love being able to use my phone wallet and/or an app to pay for fares."

"Modernize! But please leave the option for BOTH for those that do or cannot afford a smartphone."

"I support modernizing the fare system but want to ensure equity and accessibility for all riders."

Response to Feedback

- Fare and **half-fare capping**
- Robust implementation plan and stakeholder engagement
- **Future proofing** the fare collection with RFP requirements and optional components
 - Future open payment capability
 - Student ID use
 - ADA Paratransit ticketing solution approaches:

TRIPMASTER TICKETING SOLUTION
FOR ADA PARATRANSIT

SINGLE TICKETING SOLUTION FOR
FIXED ROUTE AND ADA PARATRANSIT



Thank you!

Learn more at FoursquareITP.com



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MEMO

To: Government Operations Committee
From: Carollynn Lear, City Manager
Date: December 15, 2025
RE: Remote Public Comment

At the November 10, 2025 Council meeting, Council voted to amend the City's Remote Meeting Participation Policy to discontinue the practice of accepting remote public comments. This change was implemented to address a large number of disruptive, offensive, and racist public comments being made via Zoom. Council has asked city staff to investigate possible strategies to bring back remote participation in the Council's public comment period while better controlling the incidence of disruptive public comments. City staff propose the following:

- **Registration:** Implement mandatory pre-registration to participate in remote public comment through a form on the City's website to include name, town of residence, and topic to discuss. We propose a cutoff of Monday at 9am that gives City staff time to review the pre-registrants. The pre-registration would include a disclaimer that should the speaker go off topic for any reason, or otherwise violate the City's Public Comment policy, that their time will end. A spreadsheet of registered individuals will be provided to the Council Chair and only those individuals appearing on the pre-registration list will be provided the opportunity to give remote public comment.
- **Council Chair:** The Council Chair should enforce the requirement that the individual speaking state their name and whether they are a resident of Bangor at the start of their time. The Council Chair should gavel and call for the speaker to be cutoff immediately when an individual gives remarks that violate the City's Public Comment Policy. We will investigate the possibility of giving the Chair a mute button in the future.
- **Cutting Off Access at Meeting Start:** We have investigated the possibility of "closing the doors" on Zoom access at the time the meeting begins so that speakers cannot leave and then come back under a different name. This solution will require additional action on the part of staff, which is another reason for the registration cut off.
- **Video:** We do not recommend that we allow members of the public to have their video displayed at this time. Although this could potentially result in fewer disruptive speakers it could also result in the video stream becoming the method that the speaker uses to cause the disruption by displaying inappropriate images.

We believe that a trial period implementing the above strategies for effectiveness should be implemented to determine whether disruptive comments are adequately mitigated. We do not believe this, or really any method, will ensure that disruptions never happen. But if these measures are insufficient, we can evaluate additional measures.

If Council is amenable to the above recommendation, we will draft amendments to the Remote Meeting Participation Policy to appear on the next Council agenda. It is anticipated if approved at the December 22, 2025 meeting, that the change would be implemented in January.

To: City Council

From: Jennifer Gunderman, Director Public Health and Community Services

Date: December 12, 2025

RE: Current Strategy for Addressing Train Track Encampment

Train Track Encampment Closure

Current Strategies	Reference/Evidence
Prioritize train track location due to safety concerns- active train track, snow plow discharge from street above, challenges with access for EMS, fire.	
Create and monitor by-name list. HUB 7 Coordinator updating by-name list created by PATH team.	
Hold care coordination meetings. With facilitation by HUB 7 Coordinator and using the by-name list, direct service providers discuss each person staying in the encampment with updates, needs, and solutions.	19 Strategies for Communities to Address Encampments Humanely and Effectively
Provide outreach. Case manager, outreach workers, resource navigators, street medicine are working with people to determine housing/shelter plans, barriers, etc. Predominant organizations routinely working in the encampment include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- PATH Team (CHCS)- HOME Team (PCHC)- Community Choice Behavioral Health- PCHC Street Medicine- OPTIONS Team- City of Bangor- BCAT, City Outreach, Intensive Case Management This is not an exhaustive list. Some organizations providing material needs to individuals staying in the encampment.	Interim Strategies for Responding to Unsheltered Homelessness U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness 7 Principles for Addressing Encampments End Street Sleeping Collaboration
Tracking shelter availability. HUB 7 Coordinator collecting and sharing warming shelter availability. Bangor Area Homeless Shelter providing updated availability. Hope House at full capacity.	
Routine community stakeholder updates and resource sharing. Bangor Public Health and Community Services providing weekly email updates and Thursday virtual drop in time.	
Provide storage options: City of Bangor will provide storage of belongings (2 30-gallon totes per person).	

Provide transportation: City of Bangor providing City bus tickets. BCAT providing rides to warming shelters. Church 207 exploring transportation options.	
Provide option for pets. City of Bangor will pay for pet to be boarded at Humane Society.	
Use a Housing First model. Rental assistance vouchers (City of Bangor or Maine DHHS vouchers) are primary method for providing permanent supportive housing. Some individuals in the encampment have vouchers and seeking housing.	
Councilors have begun engaging encampment residents to gain feedback on potential encampment closure and the desirability and feasibility of alternatives.	
Engaging with neighboring property owners and business to hear concerns, collaborate on solutions, and communicate plans.	

Short Term Barriers	Summary
Limited day space	The Well is the largest day space. It is a well-known and attended day space resource opening December 15. However, there is need for more day space.
Limited rental units	Many landlords will not rent units to people with housing vouchers.
Lack of shelter for individuals with complex needs	Some people experience significant challenges and are not able to stay in congregate shelters.
Documents	Getting birth certificates and IDs can take some time.
Overnight Warming Center Stress	Recent conversations with the organizations hosting warming centers revealed that although there are sufficient spaces, the already very cold and snowy winter combined with the high level high need visitors is placing stress on this safety net.

Authorized Encampment Information

Resources

- A Practical Guide for Authorized Encampments: <https://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/hrap/13/>
- Temporary Supported Communities: <https://nhchc.org/resource/temporary-supported-communities-strategies-for-serving-unsheltered-people/>
- Designated Camping: [Designated Camping: A Safer Solution | Cicero Institute](#)
- Key components include: Set goals/reason, clear policies/governance, designated perimeters, community involvement, intentional and routine case management and support service, sleeping structures provided, basic hygiene and meals on site

Models/Examples of Sanctioned Encampments/Safe Outdoor Spaces

- St. Francis Center (Colorado): <https://www.sfcdenver.org/safe-outdoor-space/>



- Salvation Army (Colorado): https://westernusa.salvationarmy.org/intermountain_us_west/news/safe-outdoor-spaces-more-than-a-bed-in-a-tent-for-denver-areas-unhoused/



- Radian (Colorado): <https://radianinc.org/portfolio/safe-outdoor-spaces/>



- The Other Ones Foundation (Texas): <https://toofound.org/esperanza-community/>



- Safe Rest Villages (Oregon): <https://www.portland.gov/united/saferestvillages>



Homelessness and Suggested Strategies

Setting the Stage

It is a great understatement to say that homelessness in Bangor is a significant and complex issue. It is complicated by having several variations of homelessness and inconsistent definitions.

Parable of the Blind Men and the Elephant comes to mind

A group of blind men heard that a strange animal, called an elephant, had been brought to the town, but none of them were aware of its shape and form. Out of curiosity, they said: "We must inspect and know it by touch, of which we are capable". So, they sought it out, and when they found it, they groped about it. The first person, whose hand landed on the trunk, said, "This being is like a thick snake". For another one whose hand reached its ear, it seemed like a kind of fan. As for another person, whose hand was upon its leg, said, the elephant is a pillar like a tree-trunk. The blind man who placed his hand upon its side said the elephant, "is a wall". Another who felt its tail, described it as a rope. The last felt its tusk, stating the elephant is that which is hard, smooth and like a spear.

The rest of the parable is that they did not believe each other; thought the others were lying; and violence ensued, until a wise person stepped in, calmed them down, and got them to talk with each other.

These are not technical or “official” definitions, but I think in terms of **Homeless** (anyone lacking safe reliable housing); **Homeless but Sheltered** (which includes those who are homeless but sheltered in temporary settings, which can include designated “shelters,” and **Homeless but Unsheltered**.

Some Causes of Homelessness

The root causes of homelessness are manifold. *It is rare that homelessness is caused by one variable*; it is almost always multifactorial including several variables, such as: a lack of affordable housing, poverty, mental health challenges—including PTSD, substance use, the economy and losses of jobs, extreme medical bills, young people being forced out of their homes, racism and other forms of discrimination, educational levels, transitions out of incarceration, a lack of community support services, and individual choices.

Homelessness

Categories to Consider

While each homeless person has individual circumstances it is helpful to consider a few broad groupings: (These are not mutually exclusive, e.g., the ability to find suitable affordable housing cuts across all.)

- Individuals and families who would be able to independently maintain an apartment or house—if they could find one at an affordable price (There is a whole separate interrelated set of housing issues for all these categories that this paper does not address.)
- Temporarily homeless individuals and families, who, with some targeted help, can work through their rough spots in a short time
- Individuals who may be able to maintain an independent apartment (but only if they have support, such as housing vouchers and in many cases other supplemental services, including counseling services) but who cannot find a local rental, even with a voucher
- Individuals who have difficulty staying in independent apartments even with assistance, but who could live in managed/structured settings with others to reduce isolation risks and to receive support (formal transitional living or a living setting such as Fresh Start)

- Those who might be willing to be and could live in a shelter, but no shelter exists that meets their needs (wide range of individual perceptions of “needs,” including couples wanting to stay together—but no family shelters available and people with pets)
- Those who do not want to be in any shelters and resist help; many of whom have significant substance use and mental health problems, some of whom have trouble staying in shelters or have complexities for the care they need that exceed what shelters provide
- Some who want the freedom to use drugs without scrutiny or intervention
- Some who just do not want to be told what to do and want to live independently
- Those with other concerns such as, “What do I do with my stuff? My pets? It is all I have.”
- Those who are so problematic that being in a shelter with others is not realistic in most cases (e.g., due to violence and/or other disruptive behaviors)
- Those who once they get a shelter/roof over their head (like a hotel room), are unwilling to further work their way to a better, more stable situation

Compounding Complexity—complexity is compounded by several variations of how or where homeless people are living. Most settings are particularly precarious shelters. They include, but are not limited to:

- Temporary stays with family or friends—for some, defined as couch surfing—which creates a substantial, but undetermined number of “invisible” homeless people (Sometimes these options are only available seasonally, e.g., in the winter.)
- Stays in shelters, such as the Bangor Homeless Shelter or Hope House, sometimes moving around between shelters
- Short-term subsidized rentals of hotel rooms, often through the Maine State Housing Authority (to the extent that funds are available, and hotels are willing to accept homeless people)
- Subsidized apartments or other housing rentals using housing vouchers
- Supportive housing (e.g., Fresh Start) or transitional housing with more support services
- Tents and other encampments, which may be clustered or just found in random locations
 - At one point, last fall, in Bangor, there were eleven encampments and over two hundred individuals. There have been substantial issues related to food, water, clothing, healthcare, sanitation, and crime.
 - *Unfortunately, this is what many people think of as the homeless population. This is the in-our-face, awful, the most visible aspect of the problem, but it is just the tip of the iceberg.*
- Some people, including some children, living in cars
- Some, who are homeless and outside and unsheltered for most of the time, shelter in various buildings, such as the library and Bangor’s daytime shelters some of the time. When it is cold, they may use warming centers offered by several organizations, some of which may provide limited additional support such as food and clothing. Bangor Homeless Shelter, Hope House, and the Mansion Church are examples.

Just imagine the permutations of two or more of the above variables. There is clearly no single definition of homeless. **Those who are homeless must be viewed as individuals and not lumped together.** This greatly complicates the challenge of framing a cohesive approach.

Some Exacerbating Factors...Just To Add More Complexity

Inadequate Data

No local organization, the State, or the City has accurate data on the number and types of homeless individuals or families in Bangor. We do not know how many fit in which of the above categories. Thus, we do not have an adequate needs assessment and are trying to define solutions without clear targets. This is a major constraint in addressing our challenges. Solving the encampment “problem,” as important as this may be, does not address the needs of our homeless population.

Insufficient Health Services and Services for those who are disabled

There are insufficient health services for most homeless people with multiple barriers to accessing care (e.g., too few providers, financial barriers, transportation). This is especially a challenge for providing mental health and substance use related services. The lack of services prevents addressing some core issues and it has a collateral effect on local emergency rooms, the Police Department, and EMS providers. There are further gaps in care for those who have disabilities.

People From Other Places—The complexity is further amplified by the fact that many of those who are homeless are not from Bangor. The data is not clear, but this may be greater than 30-40%. Many are here because surrounding towns have not developed the capacity to meet their needs and Bangor is a “service center.” In some instances, individuals, from other areas in Maine, migrate here on their own and sometimes they are sent or even transported here. Some individuals and families also arrive from more distant locations because they have heard that Bangor is a city with services. Sometimes they learn about Bangor through word of mouth, or even the internet. Sometimes they are sent here from out-of-state, after even being provided with free bus tickets).

Affordable Housing/Rents

Housing and Homelessness are intertwined. *In Bangor, there is limited, available, affordable housing/apartments, particularly for low income individuals and families.* This is frequently cited as the major cause of homelessness, although the factors related to mental health and substance use are a significant overlay. *Just having more housing units is not the solution.*

There are multiple housing development initiatives in the city by private developers, Bangor Housing and Penquis. More than between 350 and 500 units have recently been built or are in the pipeline. Some of these units have had City support (e.g., Penquis projects). This development may slow down due to increasing interest rates. The housing market is expected to ease, and our population is not projected to increase substantially; but this will not erase needs.

COVID, Substance Use, and Needles

We face growth of an unprecedented mix of substance use disorder issues, mental health issues, and effects of economic conditions that have caused or heightened the challenges faced by those needing shelter. ***This has been compounded by COVID-19 related issues,*** which are easing. At times there have been issues related to housing the homeless with adequate physical distancing and the ability to quarantine. There have been further overlays of mental stress and substance use exacerbated by isolation and loneliness.

Covid conditions and expanding use of opioids, coupled with the efforts of various organizations and the State to promote harm reduction, have led to increasing issues related to needles used by the homeless that

are not disposed of properly. This is one, bad, unintended consequence of efforts to provide greater access to clean needles.

Enforcing Trespassing

Tents or encampments along the waterfront or in any small tent cities are inhumane, unsightly, unhealthy, and unsafe for the homeless and for others in the community. This is simply wrong, and it should be ended, but there have been limited good strategies locally (and nationally) to prevent this. In addition, there are court cases that limit options. (Unfortunately, this is a problem in hundreds of cities.)

The Police Department has professionals working with them on addressing the needs of individuals they encounter, including mental health professionals and a homeless coordinator. The City is also implementing a new *Bangor Community Action Teams (BCAT)* system of non-police officers being available to address many non-emergent service needs and requests. This includes not only encampments but the challenges resulting from individuals or small groups of homeless people who occupy public or private property.

Addressing homeless encampments and other situations through legally enforcing laws against trespassing on City or private property is a last resort option, after other options are pursued. No one I have talked to wants to criminalize homelessness, particularly in the case of mental illness or substance use.

Recently, progress has been made in addressing Bangor's to largest encampments—eliminating one—with the cooperation of several local organizations and technical assistance from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. This cooperation may result in a sustainable model for addressing encampments. The City must continue to address options for limiting the use of City property. Private landowners and businesses have the right not to have their businesses compromised by homeless individuals.

Professional Staff Burnout and Associated Workforce Shortages

Working with homeless individuals in multiple settings, particularly individuals and families who are unsheltered is an on-going stress for the Police Department, the Fire Department (and its Emergency Medical Services providers), and for other professionals such as the Public Health Department staff and the staff of other organizations. There are many factors that can lead to burnout as well as being deterrents to hiring (For example, hiring police officers who may spend 50% of the time on calls related to homelessness is an increasing challenge.)

Multi-agency Collaboration, Program alignment/consolidation and merging /or Braiding of Funding

Bangor does not have a multi-organization/agency plan that defines shared responsibilities for serving the homeless and how entities will collaborate optimally with each other. In 2022, the Bangor City Council invited over twenty organizations to its Government Operations Committee to address programs for the homeless. This did not even address the work of many local churches. It was clear that there are many, dedicated, caring people and good programs, as well as and examples of some cross-organizational collaboration...but there too much “siloing”, much too much room for fragmentation, non-aligned funding, miscommunication, and failure to gain sufficient leverage on our problems. There is substantial detrimental competition among programs for influence and available funding. The City has made some recent progress pulling groups together working with a HUD technical assistance team. The lasting effects on the future of expanded collaboration are uncertain.

The fragmentation and lack of adequate coordination of programs and assets is staggering. No one has an accounting of all the funds that are flowing into Bangor or being generated by local organizations to support housing and the homeless. It is likely to be tens of millions of dollars. I am confident that local taxpayers would be astounded by the scope of activity and shocked the funding is not better applied.

We need a fresh look at how various strategies can be woven together with input from ALL agencies, who have programs for the homeless, regional communities, the State. There is a substantial need for reduced fragmentation. There is also a great need for more shared accountability.

What is the City Doing?

Limitations

Bangor’s City government (and certainly not the City Council) cannot solve the challenges we face through Council or administrative actions alone. Addressing many of the issues is not solely a Government responsibility, it is a Community Responsibility. The City may provide incentives, but it cannot compel other community organizations to work more closely together. Bangor taxpayers cannot provide an open checkbook to increasingly shoulder responsibility for humanely addressing the needs.

Comments on 2021 Homeless Cost Summary

In 2021, City staff pulled together an estimate of the funding that was being provided through the City for services to the homeless and for housing. This is a substantial, unrecognized City investment. (It does not include the millions of dollars of funding flowing through community organizations.) Consideration was given to:

Housing/ General Assistance	Nursing services
Community Funding Support (Community Development Block Grant—CDBG) and Cares Act	Shelter + Care
Public Health and Community Services	Parks and Recreation (Clean-up)
Homelessness Outreach Program	Police and EMS (For a third of all Police Calls)
Overdose Response Team	Mental health liaisons
Narcans distribution	Community Relations Officer
	Overdose response team
	Built for Zero

The following expenses were identified:

\$2,575,062	City Funded (<u>Not including</u> the value of administrative time or the time of Councilors)
<u>\$4,593,289</u>	Grants administered through the City from various entities
\$7,169,351	Sub-total
<u>\$2,883,386</u>	State of Maine General Assistance
\$10,052,737	Total

The current fiscal year budget continues to include similar funding. In addition, the City has recently allocated almost fifteen million dollars to address various aspects of homelessness, housing, mental health, substance use disorder, and childcare.

Short-term Action Package for Addressing Homelessness

The City of Bangor should have a clearly stated, readily and publicly available, 12-18 month Homelessness Plan that embodies the following elements and provides a bold statement reflecting commitment to action. Most of the following actions are currently in progress (IP) and a tremendous amount of work is being done; *despite what some public critics think is far too little*. Nonetheless, actions steps have not been integrated into a cohesive framework and, thus, it is hard to identify and to communicate the City’s commitments or vision.

- I) Assure sufficient warming center capacity daily and overnight shelter beds during extreme temperatures (Complete for the past winter/spring season, but needs will reoccur later this year)

- II) With other community organizations, consider and implement the recent Department of Housing and Urban Development's, technical assistance recommendations for reducing the number of homeless individuals in encampments (IP)
 - A) Find alternative options for the residents of encampments (IP)
 - B) Clean up the encampments (IP)
 - C) Evaluate effects of Portland's ban on homeless encampments on public property (IP)
 - D) Develop a strategy to mitigate repopulation of encampments (IP)
 - E) Promote continuing adaptation and use of HUD "best practices" (On-going)
 - F) Evaluate Results (Upcoming)
- III) Consider the needs and options for short-term diversion strategies (such as short-term, emergency, rent or heating assistance) to prevent slippage into homelessness (Partially funded and to be considered further) Continue to develop a rapid response assistance mechanism for those who are in danger of becoming homeless integrated with the State's 211 number.
- IV) Continue and as appropriate expand Community and Public Health Department programs and look for additional grant funds, e.g., Shelter Plus Care Program, Homeless Outreach Caseworkers, plus programs such as Narcan distribution (IP)
- V) Continue implementation and then evaluate the Bangor Community Action Teams (BCAT) (IP)
- VI) Continue to evolve policies, consistent with state law, for police officers to direct unhoused people accused of committing low-level crimes to help rather than charging them
- VII) Continue to promote expanded community collaboration (On-going)
 - A) Develop a City-wide, multi-organization, homelessness work group and planning process like the 2019 Bangor Housing Study (This has been suggested by not yet agreed to.)
- VIII) Where possible reduce barriers to individuals and families finding and keeping housing
 - A) Tenants' Rights Ordinance that has recently been adopted (IP)
 - B) Continue to develop the Landlord Liaison Program (IP)
 - C) Continue to identify and promote available funding options, including Community Development Block Grant funding and voucher programs
- IX) Identify options for supporting community organizations in their efforts to expand mental health and substance use disorder services (IP), including:
 - A) Clarifying and updating status of strategies to mitigate opioid use and align with recently received grant funds, the opioid settlement funds, and State plans (IP)
 - B) Supporting organizations providing housing and treatment options (e.g., detox beds) for individuals with substance use or mental health disorders (On-going)
 - C) Supporting workforce development for mental health and SUD treatment professionals (City actions steps have not been clearly identified.)
- X) Work with organizations such as the Health Equity Alliance, Needlepoint Sanctuary, and the State to develop strategies to mitigate needle waste (IP with a recent agreement for a program with HEAL)
- XI) Adopt a goal that every child in Bangor will be adequately sheltered and nourished; and have timely access to appropriate mental health or substance use-related services (This must be done in conjunction with the Bangor School Department, while recognizing that there are children in need who are not in Bangor's schools. (This includes a school-based health program at the High School and funding for other programs at the middle schools.) The overall goal has been suggested by not adopted.

- XII) Continue to collaborate with the State, Community Health and Counseling Services (as HUB 7 leader for the State), and other partners in the Built for Zero initiative (a coordinated entry to care system) to improve our ability to identify and stay connected with those in need, build a data base, including appropriate metrics, and sharpen integration of BFZ initiatives with other Bangor strategies (IP)
- XIII) Support Bangor's Public Health and Community Services Department in obtaining accreditation, developing a community needs assessment and a strategic plan, and updating homelessness and housing related strategies (IP)
- XIV) Explore the depth of involvement by area faith communities and options to encourage expanded support for the homeless (particularly as collaborators in multi-party shared strategies) (Not yet IP)
- XI) Remain open to the development of small temporary shelters pilot projects, if groups can develop well-thought-out proposals, *supported by multiple organizations* that show reasonable likelihood of success (Has been mentioned but not IP)
- XII) With other community organizations and the State clarify the need for shelter beds and develop better strategies to address the needs of the short-term homeless and the chronic homeless (Discussed, but no definitive needs assessment or action steps)
- XIII) Initiate discussion with the State about operating shelter beds and expanded mental health and substance use disorder treatment facilities and programs at the Dorothea Dix site (IP)
- XIV) Develop services, a clear protocol, and a phone number, in addition to access through the City's website, for rapid response assistance for residents and businesses experiencing homeless encampments, trespassing, or needle waste on their private property (IP)
- XV) Address the use of the Bangor Public Library for homeless individuals seeking daytime shelter
 - A) Develop a plan to reduce reliance on the library as a daytime sheltering space (IP)
- XVI) Develop (with the Downtown Partnership) and fund a more complete plan for addressing hospitality, cleanliness, and security for downtown Bangor and the waterfront (IP)
 - A) Consider constructing additional downtown bathrooms (IP)
- XVII) Continue development and expand promotion of the Homelessness Response section the City's website's (On-going)
- XVIII) Hold other communities to greater accountability for caring for their homeless; and continue to pressure the State to assume greater responsibilities. (IP)
- XIX) Hire a Homelessness Strategist/Specialist to coordinate all City strategies (IP)
- XX) Develop a 12-18 month housing development plan that integrates with homelessness strategies, including the hiring of a housing specialist to coordinate all housing programs (IP)
- XXI) Improve identification of strategies targeted to the root causes of homelessness, not only to addressing the symptoms) (IP and on-going)
- XXII) Consistently and rigorously evaluate results of all action steps
- XXIII) Seek input from the Advisory Committee on Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights
- XXIV) Listen to the homeless (On-going)

XXV) Judiciously apply some of the City’s American Rescue Plan Funds (ARPA) to the identified strategies (IP)

Limitations

Bangor’s City government cannot solve the challenges through Council or administrative actions alone. Addressing the issues is not solely a Government responsibility, it is a Community Responsibility. The City may provide incentives, but it cannot compel other organizations to work more closely. While Bangor has some resources that it can use wisely, taxpayers cannot provide an open checkbook to increasingly shoulder responsibility for humanely addressing all needs.

A Critical Point and a Dilemma

In addition to the above points, there is a great dilemma. If we develop a solid community plan to care for those in need in humane ways, and we execute it well, we will become an increasingly attractive community for more unsheltered people. Although Bangor is a service center for many things, it is highly unlikely that a majority of Bangor residents and businesses want this City to become a magnet for more homeless people, even if supportive resources were to be available. Many also want to see a “tough love” approach with compassion coupled with enforcement of limitations and better defined expectations.

How the City can best balance its humanity, its resources, its caring capacity, and its goals is a great challenge and still a great unknown.

It's unacceptable that Bangor has no plan to address homelessness

No city plan, not even a very good one, is going to solve the myriad issues contributing to homelessness in the Bangor area by itself. Not in the next year. Not in the next year and a half. That is not a reason to let the city's ongoing and future efforts exist independently without the structure of a unified plan. Quite the contrary. So we welcome the draft proposal from Councilor Jonathan Sprague, discussed at a Bangor City Council committee meeting this week, that seeks to shape a 12- to 18-month plan for tackling homelessness in Bangor.

We don't see this as some sort of perfect, all-encompassing solution to address converging challenges like housing availability, economic hardship, mental health, substance use and others. But neither does Sprague, who rightly sees it as a conversation starter rather than a final product. "There is no written plan of the city's intentions for addressing homelessness," Sprague said during a government operations committee meeting Wednesday. "I do not believe that this should ever have been acceptable." We don't believe so, either. Sprague has compiled a list of 30 items in a "Short-term Action Package for Addressing Homelessness." Some of these action items involve continuing or building on existing programs and efforts, like the city's new Community Action Team that responds to local crises and complaints without a police presence. Others seek to guarantee warming shelter capacity and overnight beds during extreme temperatures, set a goal that all Bangor children are "adequately sheltered and nourished" and consider short-term diversion strategies to try to prevent less people from slipping into homelessness.

All of this merits continued discussion and structured action from the City Council, which a definitive plan can help enable. As Bangor Daily News reporter Valerie Royzman detailed, there appear to be mixed feelings about this proposal among city councilors. "If you want us to have an overarching, 18-month strategy that we get behind as a council, then that document should be developed with a professional who understands what we may have missed and who can guide us toward the appropriate strategy," Councilor Cara Pelletier said at the meeting this week. To Sprague and Pelletier, we say this: Yes, and yes. Yes, a cohesive plan is needed to most effectively and efficiently marshal the city's resources and efforts. And, yes, the development of that plan should be guided by expert input. But waiting to start this conversation and develop this plan until that input or that new role materializes seems to us a recipe for inaction not unlike the delay in getting federal COVID-19 rescue funds out the door.

We tend to agree with Councilor Joe Leonard, who — as Royzman reported — liked the idea of an action plan, agreed with Pelletier that an expert should be involved and viewed the proposal as an evolving document. This perspective, it seems to us, offers a product path forward for the full council starting at its upcoming workshop and meeting on Monday.

In short, Sprague's document offers a mix of aspirational goals and concrete steps to achieve them. Setting those goals and outlining a path to meet them can start now, with refinements to come as the city works with experts. We are cautiously optimistic about where this conversation can go, but feel some caution about language in the existing proposal, particularly what is described as a "great dilemma" in the discussion draft. "If we develop a solid community plan to

care for those in need in humane ways, and we execute it well, we will become an increasingly attractive community for more unsheltered people,” the discussion draft says. “Although Bangor is a service center for many things, it is highly unlikely that a majority of Bangor residents and businesses want this City to become a magnet for more homeless people, even if supportive resources were to be available.” The concern over this “dilemma” is not a new addition to the debate about homelessness, and it is not helpful, either. As a community, we can’t prevent ourselves from helping others out of fear that it might make other people want to be treated well, too. Once again, that is a recipe for inaction. City councilors should get a specific plan on the books to help address homelessness. But they, and everyone across the Bangor region generally, also should make sure we’re thinking about people experiencing homelessness as neighbors to help, not a faceless problem to manage.



CITY OF BANGOR

Jennifer Gunderman, Director
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To: City Council Workshop
From: Jennifer Gunderman, Director Public Health and Community Services
Date: December 8, 2025
RE: Advisory Committee on Homelessness Models & Staff Recommendation

Over the course of the last several weeks, as the City has discussed the encampment located along the Penobscot River that exists on a combination of City and railroad property, Council has coalesced around the idea of creating an Advisory Committee to help advise Council on the City's strategy for homelessness response.

An Advisory Committee on the topic of homelessness response is a strategy used nation-wide and as a result, there are numerous models for Bangor to pull from. City staff have review several models, some of which we highlight below, and have identified common themes that inform the following recommendation:

Staff Recommendation

- **Advisory Committee Composition** – The Advisory Committee should include local partners, leading experts, and a robust cross-section of the impacted community. Representatives of the City, local service providers, the expert community with experience both inside and outside of Bangor, individuals with current or recent lived experience, businesses, schools, property owners, and families should all have a role so that the needs of the entire Community are reflected in the Committee's work.
- **Discrete Tasks with Time Limitation** – Rather than create an Advisory Committee with an ongoing role and an indeterminate length, we recommend that the Advisory Committee start with a discrete task and a firm deadline. Starting with a discrete and deadline driven task will serve to focus the Committee's work on the area that Council wishes the Committee to prioritize. Having a stated Committee expiration date will provide Council with the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the Committee and thoughtfully consider whether to request additional specific work from the Committee when and if the Committee is extended.
- **Initial Task** – We recommend that the initial task for the Committee be the creation of a strategic plan for the City's response to homelessness that is data driven, evidence informed, and that considers regional and structural coordination. Critical components will include specific strategies for homelessness prevention, encampment response, and other necessary City policies. We think this work would substantially benefit from the assistance of a hired facilitator to assist the Advisory Committee in the strategic planning process.
- **Plan Operationalization** – After an initial strategic plan is established by the Advisory Committee, the Plan would be operationalized by City staff (we envision the Homelessness Response Coordinator) along with community partners and social service organizations.
- **Future Committee** Tasks - If Council determines that the Advisory Committee is effective, their existence could be extended with added tasks such as monitoring plan implementation, providing support and guidance on emerging issues, federal/state policy advocacy, completing gap analyses to inform City budget and grant funding decisions, and ongoing City policy review.



CITY OF BANGOR

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Background Information

City of Atlanta: The Atlanta City Council authorized the formation of a 90-Day Homelessness Task Force to critically examine the City's existing policies and procedures related to homelessness, with a key focus on creating standardized protocols for encampment decommissioning. The legislation designated 33 organizations and key City departments to serve on the Task Force, which includes nonprofit, faith based, advocacy, and government stakeholders.

The Task Force was facilitated by APD-Urban and structured into four topical subcommittees: (1) Standard Operating Procedures and Policies, (2) Medical and Mental Health, (3) Prevention and Diversion, and (4) Alternative and Emerging Solutions.

<https://www.atlantaga.gov/government/mayor-s-office/the-mayor-s-cabinet/city-of-atlanta-90-day-homelessness-task-force>

City of Dallas: Dallas created The Hope Taskforce. One of the leading organizations that led this effort, Housing Forward, is one of the most innovative and effective models for managing encampments and supporting folks who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Their Crisis Systems Senior Director, Hannah Sims (hannah.sims@housingforwardntx.org), has been a thought partner for Jena Jones, particularly during the Camp Hope closure. The group was tasked to be data-informed and to try to build consensus around a series of solutions to a complex problem.

About task force: <https://dhantx.com/city-of-dallas-task-force/>

Report: <https://dallascityhall.com/government/Council%20Meeting%20Documents/hopetaskforcereport.pdf>

City of Denver Task Force: Created a strategic plan for a collaborative approach to addressing homelessness.

Strategic Plan: <https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/1/housing-stability/documents/denver-housing-stability-action-plan-2025-eng-final.pdf>

City of Lexington: This task force is charged with conducting a focused review of the city's emergency shelter system and programming and providing formal recommendations to the Mayor regarding strategic next steps. Their work should be grounded in the data and findings of the 2025 Emergency Shelter Study and informed by national best practices, local context and community input.

About the task force: [Task Force on Homelessness | City of Lexington, Kentucky](#)

City of Lowell: In Winter 2019 the City Manager formed a Task Force comprised of various community leaders to change how the City at large responds to growing homelessness, housing, and other associated issues. Under the guidance of a nationally renowned consultant, the Task Force determined a shift towards a "housing first" model would make the biggest impact on these collective problems.

About Task Force and Report: <https://www.lowellma.gov/1354/Task-Force-on-Homelessness-and-Sustainab>

I: Homelessness and Housing Standing Committee Purpose & Duties

Section I: Establishment of the Homelessness and Housing Standing Committee

Purpose. The purpose of the Homelessness and Housing Standing Committee is to advise the Bangor City Council about the development and implementation of a comprehensive, data-driven strategy to prevent and end homelessness. Recognizing Bangor's unique status as the region's primary service center, the Committee shall focus on creating a Full Continuum of Housing—ranging from emergency shelter to permanent supportive housing (for households earning 30% or less AMI), and workforce units (for households earning 60% to 100% AMI). The Committee's overarching goal is to transition the City's response from reactive crisis management to proactive structural solutions that reduce the burden on municipal emergency services and taxpayers.

Specific Duties and Directives. To achieve this purpose, the Committee is charged with the following five specific directives:

1. Regional and Structural Coordination

- a. **Fiscal Impact Analysis:** The Committee shall annually evaluate the correlation between the regional shortage of supportive housing and the rising costs of municipal and county emergency services (including the Penobscot County Jail and Bangor Police/Fire).
- b. **Fair Share Advocacy:** The Committee shall produce a "Regional Fiscal Impact Report" quantifying the housing contributions of neighboring municipalities. This report shall be used to advocate for equitable County-level funding and to encourage neighboring communities to adopt zoning changes that alleviate the concentration of high-acuity needs within Bangor.
- c. **Hub Alignment:** The Committee shall align its strategic planning with the State of Maine's Hub 7 structure to ensure municipal resources complement, rather than duplicate, regional "By-Name List" interventions.

2. Service Gap Analysis

- a. **Annual Deficit Matrix:** The Committee shall annually identify and quantify specific gaps in the local housing inventory. This analysis must distinguish between the need for:
 - i. Low-Barrier Emergency Shelter (immediate crisis response).
 - ii. Medical Respite & Detox Beds (post-hospitalization recovery).
 - iii. Permanent Supportive Housing (long-term housing with case management).
 - iv. Workforce Housing (units affordable to those earning 60–100% of Area Median Income).
- b. **Zoning Recommendations:** Based on these identified gaps, the Committee shall recommend specific amendments to Land Use ordinances to incentivize private

and non-profit development of the needed unit types.

3. Data Monitoring and Deliverables

- a. **Outcomes vs. Output:** The Committee shall monitor data focusing on outcomes (e.g., "length of time homeless," "returns to homelessness," and "placements into permanent housing") rather than simple output metrics (e.g., "number of meals served").
- b. **Functional Zero Targets:** The Committee shall set measurable benchmarks for achieving "Functional Zero" for specific sub-populations (e.g., veterans, youth, families) and report progress to the City Council semi-annually.

4. Sustainable Funding and Revenue Strategy

- a. **Advisory Role on Municipal Bonding:**
 - i. **Immediate Bond Support:** The Committee shall serve as the primary citizen advisory body to the City Council regarding the proposed Affordable Housing Bond (targeting the June ballot). The Committee shall review the proposed bond language to ensure it aligns with the "Full Continuum" of housing needs (from PSH to workforce units) and assist in defining the permissible uses of bond funds to maximize developer participation.
 - ii. **Oversight & Transparency:** Should the bond pass, the Committee shall act as the oversight body to review bond expenditures, ensuring funds are deployed rapidly and in accordance with the voter-approved mandate.
- b. **Threat Mitigation & Voucher Preservation:** The Committee shall immediately develop a "Voucher Cliff" contingency plan. This includes identifying state (MaineHousing) and private bridge funding to maintain tenure for the estimated 150 households currently relying on federal Continuum of Care (CoC) Permanent Supportive Housing vouchers, should federal eligibility criteria change to exclude "Housing First" models.
- c. **Fiscal Sustainability:**
 - i. **Incentivizing Sustainable Models:** In its advisory role regarding municipal funding (e.g., CDBG recommendations, Opioid Settlement Fund allocations, or Housing Bond expenditures), the Committee shall give priority weighting to proposals demonstrating a long-term, diversified revenue strategy.
 - ii. **MaineCare Alignment:** The Committee shall encourage service providers to maximize federal and state reimbursement streams (e.g., MaineCare Section 17, 21, 29, or 1115 Waivers) for ongoing supportive services. The goal is to ensure limited municipal funds are utilized for "gap" financing (e.g., capital costs, pilot programs) rather than permanent operating subsidies.
 - iii. **Capacity Building & Advocacy:** The Committee shall identify barriers preventing local providers from billing MaineCare (e.g., administrative burden, licensing requirements) and advocate to State DHHS officials for necessary waivers or technical assistance to unlock these federal funds for the Bangor region.
- d. **Exploration of Innovative Revenue Models:** The Committee is charged with

researching and presenting feasibility studies to the City Council regarding non-traditional funding mechanisms. These may include, but are not limited to:

- i. **Municipal Housing Trust Funds:** Investigating the viability of a dedicated local fund supported by revenue streams such as short-term rental fees, vacancy fees, or payment-in-lieu of development options.
 - ii. **"Pay for Success" Initiatives:** Exploring social impact financing models where private capital funds high-risk housing interventions, with municipal repayment contingent upon verified cost-savings in emergency services and jail reductions.
 - iii. **Public/Private Partnerships:** Identifying opportunities to leverage private philanthropy and hospital "Community Benefit" obligations to subsidize capital costs for supportive housing developments.
- e. **Hospital Community Benefit Alignment:** The Committee shall formally request Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center and St. Joseph Hospital allocate a specific percentage of their federally required "Community Benefit" dollars directly to the Housing Trust Fund, classifying these housing contributions as a "Social Determinant of Health" interventions.

5. Public Education and Engagement

- a. **Fiscal Responsibility Narrative:** The Committee shall develop public-facing educational materials clearly articulating the cost-savings of Permanent Supportive Housing compared to the costs of emergency room usage, incarceration, and long-term shelter stays.
- b. **Neighborhood Integration:** The Committee shall proactively engage with neighborhood watch groups and business districts to address concerns regarding new housing projects, facilitating "Good Neighbor Agreements" balancing the needs of unhoused residents with neighborhood safety and aesthetics.

6. Operational & Staff Alignment

- a. **The "Policy Intake" Function:** To ensure the City's Homelessness Response Manager (HRM) can focus on operational execution, the Committee shall serve as the primary legislative drafting body for the position. When the HRM identifies ordinance-level barriers to housing (e.g., zoning restrictions, shelter licensing rules), the Committee is responsible for researching and developing the necessary policy amendments for City Council review.
- b. **Operational Feasibility Checks:** The Committee shall formally designate the HRM as an ex-officio technical advisor to vet all proposed "innovative plans" for operational realism prior to their submission to the City Council.

Section III: Mandatory Deliverables and Reporting

To ensure the Committee remains action-oriented and accountable, it shall be required to submit the following work products to the City Council on a recurring basis. These are not merely status updates, but actionable documents requiring Council review or vote.

A. The Annual Legislative Action Plan (Due: 2nd Council Meeting of January)

- a. **Purpose:** To set the legislative agenda for the upcoming year.
- b. **Requirement:** The Committee must submit a prioritized list of specific municipal ordinances, zoning amendments, or policy changes it intends to draft or review for the coming year. This plan must identify:
 - i. Specific zoning districts targeted for density increases or use-changes.
 - ii. Ordinance barriers identified for removal (e.g., parking minimums, lot size restrictions).
 - iii. State legislative bills the City should support or oppose regarding housing.
 - iv. Recommended new State legislation to address identified barriers and opportunities.

B. The Semi-Annual Housing Inventory Report (Due: July & January)

- a. **Purpose:** To track real-time progress against housing production goals.
- b. **Requirement:** A data report quantifying the net change in Bangor's housing stock over the previous six months. It must include:
 - i. Number of new units permitted (broken down by AMI affordability levels).
 - ii. Number of units lost (due to condemnation, conversion to short-term rental, or fire).
 - iii. Current occupancy rates of emergency shelters.

**Strategic Note: The January report shall serve as the "Report Card" for the previous year.

C. The "Gap Analysis" Matrix (Due Annually in April)

- a. **Purpose:** To inform the municipal budget process and grant applications.
- b. **Requirement:** A quantitative analysis identifying the specific deficit between the current inventory of beds/units and the population need. This report must quantify the exact deficit of:
 - i. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) vouchers/units.
 - ii. Low-barrier emergency shelter beds.
 - iii. Medical respite beds.
 - iv. Transitional housing units for special populations (youth, re-entry).

D. Regional Data & Fiscal Analysis

- a. **The Regional Fiscal Impact Report:** By October 1 of each year (prior to the County Budget cycle), the Committee shall produce a "Regional Fiscal Impact Report." This report shall:
 - i. **Define "Fair Share":** Utilize the State of Maine's goal of 10% affordable housing stock as the baseline for all municipalities in Penobscot County.
 - ii. **Calculate the "Regional Infrastructure Contribution":** Develop a weighted formula recognizing the diverse ways municipalities support the region. This metric shall grant "Service Credits" to any municipality that hosts critical shared regional infrastructure (e.g., county facilities, major medical centers, waste management systems, or higher education institutions). This ensures the final housing goals reflect a holistic view of each community's existing land-use commitments and service to the region.
 - iii. **The "Tax-to-Housing" Correlation:** Specifically analyze the correlation

between the County Jail’s occupancy rates/funding deficit and the regional lack of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH).

- iv. **Distribution:** This report shall be formally presented to the Penobscot County Commissioners and the Budget Advisory Committee to advocate for the use of County funds to support municipal housing projects alleviating jail overcrowding.

II. Membership Appointment & Terms

Section I: Membership Structure and Appointment Process

Appointment Authority. All members shall be appointed by the City Council.

- **Institutional Seats:** For seats designated for specific organizations (e.g., Bangor Housing, Northern Light/St. Joe’s, Penobscot County), the governing body of that organization shall submit a nominee for Council confirmation.
- **At-Large/Expert Seats:** For seats designated for specific expertise (e.g., Landlord, Lived Experience, Harm Reduction), the Personnel Committee of the City Council shall interview applicants and recommend appointments to the full Council.

Staggered Terms. To ensure continuity of institutional knowledge while allowing for fresh perspectives, the 11-member committee shall serve 3-year terms, staggered as follows upon the committee's inception.

Group	Term Length (Initial)	Seats Included (Examples)	Reappointment Year
Group 1	1 Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Developer/Landlord • Lived Experience Rep • Planning Board Rep 	Reappointed/Selected every 3 years starting 2026
Group 2	2 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm Reduction Specialist • Hospital System Rep • City Councilor 	Reappointed/Selected every 3 years starting 2027
Group 3	3 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangor Housing Authority Rep • Homeless Shelter Director • County Rep • 2 At-Large Members 	Reappointed/Selected every 3 years starting 2028

Vacancies and Removal.

- Any member who misses three (3) consecutive regular meetings without prior notice to the Chair shall be considered to have vacated their seat.
- Vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term using the same

appointment process as for the original seat.

Section II: Ex-Officio and Technical Advisory Membership

To ensure the Committee's recommendations are operationally viable, legally sound, and integrated with existing state systems, the following positions shall hold permanent Ex-Officio (Non-Voting) seats on the Committee. These members shall have full speaking rights and may serve on sub-committees, but shall not count toward a quorum nor vote on final recommendations.

The Homelessness Response Manager (HRM): To serve as the primary bridge between the Committee's legislative planning and the City's daily operations. The HRM shall review all proposed "Action Plans" to ensure they can be realistically executed by City staff. The HRM is responsible for bringing systemic barriers encountered in the field (e.g., specific ordinance conflicts) to the Committee for legislative remedy.

The Region 3 (Hub 7) Homeless Response Coordinator: To ensure the City of Bangor does not duplicate existing regional efforts. This member is responsible for:

- Ensuring the City utilizes the regional "By-Name List" data rather than creating disparate tracking systems.
- Advising the Committee on available State housing resources (MaineHousing) to prevent the use of municipal funds for services that could be state-subsidized.
- Providing monthly updates regarding Hub 7 resources, gaps, and barriers at each meeting to give a broader perspective of successes and areas needing more attention.

The Planning Officer (or Designee): To advise the Committee on land use, zoning, and building code realities. When the Committee proposes strategies such as increasing housing density or creating "Low-Barrier" shelters, this advisor must immediately flag potential conflicts with State Fire Codes or Municipal Land Use Ordinances to ensure proposals are legally viable before reaching the Council.

Public Safety Liaison (Police or Fire Command Staff): To provide data regarding overdose trends, encampment safety issues, and emergency service call volumes. This member ensures housing locations and service models recommended by the Committee adequately account for the safety of both the residents and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Recommended Committee Timeline: Year 1 (2026)

Assumption: Committee members are appointed and seated by late January 2026. This schedule balances the immediate need to support the June Housing Bond with the structural work of getting the committee running.

Phase 1: Foundation & Bond Strategy (Feb – April 2026)

February:

Meeting 1: Orientation, Election of Chair/Vice-Chair, Establishment of Meeting Cadence.

Action Item: Review draft language for the June Affordable Housing Bond. Provide formal feedback to Council to ensure bond funds act as flexible financing through low-interest loans for both "new construction" and "adaptive reuse."

March:

Data Dive: Staff Liaison presents current baseline data (shelter census, waitlists).

Action Item: Finalize endorsement and public education talking points for the June Bond.

April:

Deliverable Due: The Initial "Gap Analysis." (Note: This will be a "Version 1.0" based on available data, but crucial to have before the bond vote to prove the need).

Policy Work: Begin review of the "Regional Fiscal Impact" formula (the Jail/Tax connection).

Phase 2: Advocacy & The "Fair Share" Framework (May – Aug 2026)

May:

Public Engagement: Hold a public workshop regarding the Housing Bond to answer resident questions.

Sub-Committee: Form a "Zoning Review" subcommittee to start identifying barriers for the next year's Legislative Plan.

June:

ELECTION: Housing Bond Vote.

Meeting Focus: Post-election strategy. If Bond passes -> Draft oversight criteria. If Bond fails -> Draft "Plan B" contingency options.

July:

Deliverable Due: Bi-Annual Housing Inventory Report (First Edition).

Regional Work: Send data requests to neighboring towns (Brewer, Hampden, etc.) to populate the "Regional Fiscal Impact Scorecard."

Phase 3: Legislation & Budget Prep (Sept – Dec 2026)

September:

Drafting: Review initial drafts of the "Regional Fiscal Impact Report" (The Tax/Jail report).

Grant Review: Review potential CDBG allocations or winter emergency shelter funding needs.

October:

Presentation: Present the Regional Fiscal Impact Report to City Council and County Commissioners (timed for County budget season).

November:

Strategic Planning: Workshop the specific legislative goals for 2027.

Voucher Cliff Check: Review status of CoC Vouchers and federal funding outlook.

December:

Finalize: Vote on the 2027 Annual Legislative Action Plan.

Review: End-of-year review of Committee effectiveness and attendance.

Phase 4: The Cycle Begins (Jan 2027)

January 2027: Submit the Annual Legislative Action Plan to Council. The regular cycle is now established.

The Gap Analysis Matrix

Objective: To quantify the deficit between existing resources and the actual population needs in Greater Bangor.

Housing / Service Type	Target Population	Current Inventory (Beds/Units)	Current Demand (Waitlist/PIT Count)	The Gap (Deficit)	Barriers to Expansion
Emergency Low-Barrier Shelter	Adults with active SUD or behavioral health issues	<i>e.g., 40 beds</i>	<i>e.g., 65 individuals/night</i>	-25 beds	Staffing shortages; Funding limits
Medical Respite Care	Unhoused individuals discharged from hospitals needing recovery time	<i>e.g., 0 beds</i>	<i>e.g., 5 referrals/month</i>	-5 beds	Licensing/Zoning; Operational funding
Transitional Housing	Youth (18-24) or those leaving incarceration	<i>e.g., 12 beds</i>	<i>e.g., 30 applicants</i>	-18 beds	Lack of suitable real estate
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	Chronically homeless with disabilities (Housing First model)	<i>e.g., 50 vouchers</i>	<i>e.g., 120 qualified</i>	-70 units	Lack of landlords accepting vouchers; Lack of case management staff
Workforce Housing (30-60% AMI)	Service workers, those exiting homelessness who are employed	<i>e.g., X units</i>	<i>e.g., Y applicants</i>	-Z units	Construction costs; High interest rates
Diversion/Prevention Funds	At-risk tenants facing eviction	<i>e.g., \$50k annual budget</i>	<i>e.g., \$150k in requests</i>	*-\$100k*	Limited General Assistance (GA) flexibility

The Regional Fiscal Impact Scorecard

The "Fair Share" Formula

The Formula:

$(\text{Total Housing Units} \times 10\% \text{ Target}) - (\text{Existing Affordable Units} + \text{Service Credits}) = \text{The Housing Deficit}$

- 10% Target: Based on Maine’s goal that 10% of a community’s housing stock should be classified as affordable.
- Service Credits: A collaborative "bonus" for towns hosting regional burdens (Jail, High Schools, Hospitals). This acknowledges why Bangor’s number is already high.

The Visual Matrix (To be presented to Council/County)

Municipality	Total Housing Units	Statutory Goal (10%)	Current Affordable Inventory	Regional Service Credit	Net Deficit (Units)	Est. Jail Tax Impact
Bangor	15,000	1,500	2,200	+500 (Hosts Shelter/Jail)	+1,200 (Surplus)	\$0
Brewer	Ex. 4,000	Ex. 400	Ex. 50	Ex. 0	Ex. -350 (Deficit)	Ex. \$ High
Hampden	Ex. 2,500	Ex. 250	Ex. 0	Ex. 0	Ex. -250 (Deficit)	Ex. \$ Med
Hermon	Ex. 3,000	Ex. 300	Ex. 290	Ex. +10 (Hosts Transfer Station)	Ex. 0 (Balanced)	Ex. \$0
Orono						
Old Town						
Orrington						

Veazie						
Glenburn						
Eddington						
Holden						

The "Est. Jail Tax Impact" Column:

This is the "teeth." You calculate this by saying: "The Jail is 20% over capacity. 40% of inmates are homeless. Therefore, the housing deficit in Town A contributes to the \$4M jail shortfall."

Collaborative Strategy: "The Tax-Shed Coalition"

To keep the tone collaborative, the Committee shouldn't just mail this report to the towns and say "Fix it." They should invite the towns to a "Tax-Shed Working Group."

The Pitch to Neighbors:

"Bangor doesn't want to tell you how to zone your town. But the County tax bill just went up 20% because the jail is full of people who need housing, not handcuffs. If we work together to build 50 supportive units regionally, we can drop the daily jail count and lower everyone's property taxes."

Why this works:

1. It respects autonomy: You aren't forcing them to build; you are showing them the bill for *not* building.
2. It shares the pain: It acknowledges that Bangor is hurting from the tax hike too.
3. It targets the Wallet: Town Managers in the suburbs care about their mill rate more than social justice. This speaks their language.