CONTINUUM OF CARE UPDATE

Presented by

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Community Development Division

Board of Commissioners Briefing

April 21, 2026

POINT IN TIME (PIT) COUNT

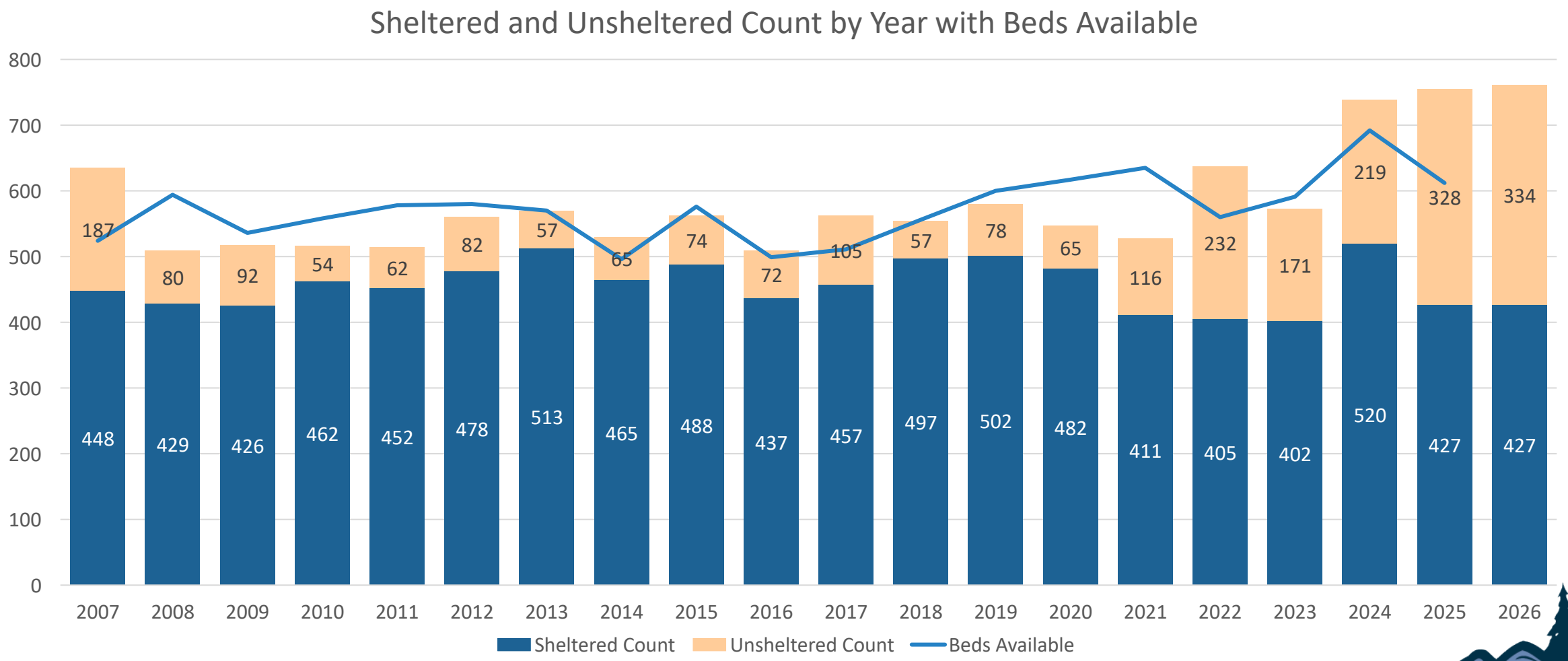
- **PIT Count:** Census of people who meet Federal definition of literal homelessness (persons in emergency shelters, transitional housing, or unsheltered)
- **Federal Requirements for PIT Count:**
  - Conducted every other year
  - Conducted within last 10 days of January*
- **Local Practice for PIT Count**: Conducted annually
- **Jurisdictions:** Buncombe County and its municipalities

The 2026 PIT Count

- 2/10, 4-7pm & 2/11, 10-2pm
- 137 Volunteers
- Activities: Street count, expanded service locations, encampment outreach
- Managed by CoC System Planning and Implementation Committee

*Rescheduled to February due to winter storm and extreme cold

POINT-IN-TIME TRENDS



Note: 2026 Bed availability numbers are anticipated to be released May 2026

POINT-IN-TIME COUNT RESULTS

Housing Status	2025	2026	Net Change
Emergency Shelter	270	**245**	-25
Transitional Housing*	157	**245**	+88
Unsheltered**	328	**334**	+6
Total	755	**824**	+69

*Includes Covenant Community Church RV village for families impacted by Helene (37)

**87 (26%) reported experiencing unsheltered homelessness because of Tropical Storm Helene.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Self-Reported Race & Ethnicity	County (2024)	2025	2026	Net % Change
American Indian, Alaska Native, Or Indigenous	0.6%	2.1%	2.2%	+0.1
Middle Eastern or North African	-	0.0%	0.1%	+0.1
Asian or Asian American (Only)	1.5%	0.5%	0.1%	-0.4
Black, African American, or African (Only)	6.0%	17.6%	18.8%	+1.2
Black, African American or African & Hispanic/Latinx	-	0.4%	0.4%	0.0
Hispanic/Latinx (Only)	1.0%	1.6%	2.7%	+1.1
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.5%	0.8%	+0.3
White (Only)	81.8%	68.1%	65.4%	-2.7
White and Hispanic/Latinx	7.6	1.7%	0.7%	-1.0
Multi-Racial & Hispanic/Latinx	-	0.3%	0.2%	-0.1
Multi-Racial (All other)	2.3%	2.9%	2.5%	-0.4
Unknown (Not available/Provided)		3.0%	5.9%	+2.9

DEMOGRAPHICS

Self-Reported Gender	Census (2024)	2025		2026	
Female	51.8%	31.8%	240	33.9%	279
Male	48.2%	65.8%	497	55.9%	461
Other*	-	0.6%	5	1.1%	10
Unknown (Not Available/Provided)	-	1.8%	13	9.0%	74

* Includes individuals who self-reported one of the following: culturally-specific identity, transgender, different identity, non-binary, or multiple gender

DEMOGRAPHICS

Self-Reported Age	Census (2024)	2025		2026	
Under 18	21.9%	3.0%	23	8.1%	67
18-24	56.3%	2.5%	19	5.6%	46
25-34		18.7%	141	14.9%	123
35-44		24.6%	186	24.4%	201
45-54		19.2%	145	20.5%	169
55-64		21.9%	165	17.5%	144
65 and older	21.8%	9.4%	71	8.3%	68
Unknown (Not Available/Provided)	-	0.7%	5	0.7%	6

HOUSEHOLD & GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

	2025	2026	
Individual Adults	94.2%	85.9%	708
Families	5.7%	14.1%	116
Child Only	0.1%	0.0%	0

Area	PIT Count %
Asheville	87%
Swannanoa	1.3%
Barnardsville	8%
Fairview	3%
Black Mountain	0.1%
Arden	0.1%
Weaverville	0.3%

ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS*

Self-Reported Characteristic	2025	2026	Change
Veterans	161	155	-6
Chronically Homeless	262	254	-8
Youth (ages 18-24)	19	46	+27
Serious Mental Illness	97	91	-6
Substance Use Disorder	70	62	-8
Living with HIV/AIDS	8	5	-3
Adult Survivors of Domestic Violence	58	67	+9
Ppl with a disability	417	382	-35

CoC BOARD ACTIONS

- Welcomed new Board Members
  - Business Community Representative Seat: Erica Waltemade (ADID)
  - City of Asheville Appointed Seat (Interim): Jade Dundas
- Approved Providers for CoC/HACA Local Admissions Preferences MOU: Helpmate, Homeward Bound, Safe Shelter
- Approved proposal for West Asheville collaborative street outreach
- Initiated collaborative effort to engage funders and expand available funding
- Approved additional members for established Committees and Work Groups

FUNDING UPDATE

HUD CoC Funding Program:

- Annual funding providing housing and planning support for the CoC
- Successful legal action against changes to FY2025 funding requirements:
  - All current programs will be renewed for an additional year in compliance with previous funding award structure
- Anticipate similar challenges for FY2026 funding cycle (Summer 2026)

Right at Home Homelessness Prevention Partnership

- Asheville region awarded minimum $5M over 3 years for implementation of system-wide plan with a target start date of September 2026
- Planning is ongoing and will be presented to Board prior to implementation

Asheville-Buncombe Continuum of Care

Updates to Buncombe County Commissioners
April 21, 2026



Progress on Within Reach

- In January 2023, the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) delivered 116 recommendations to improve homelessness response
- Recommendations included City and County actions
  - City should support strategies with resources it controls, provide administrative support to CoC Board, continue as Collaborative Applicant and HMIS Lead, participate in and align with CoC
  - Establish a full time Homeless Coordinator within Buncombe County to coordinate County homeless activities and participation in the larger system
  - County should support strategies with resources it controls. Safety net resources should be at the forefront of coordination with the CoC.
- All other recommendations require collaboration among multiple stakeholders and a shared decision-making system
  - #1 recommendation was to restructure the Continuum of Care (CoC) to establish shared planning, power, responsibility, and accountability with clear roles

Progress on Within Reach

- Asheville-Buncombe CoC was established February 29, 2024 via adoption of new governance charter
- CoC design was very deliberate to promote community ownership
  - Align decision makers across sectors on the Board
  - Engage subject matter experts to do detailed work on committees and work groups
  - Be inclusive of all stakeholders and sectors: no policy positions
- CoC is self-governing, developed with buy-in to make decisions meaningful
  - Completed strategic planning process with CoC Member input and 2-day Board retreat
    - Used Within Reach as reference
  - 2025 - 2028 Strategic Plan adopted in June 2025
- NAEH is tracking our progress: invited presentation on CoC governance at recent Leadership Summit

Progress on Within Reach

- CoC has not formally adopted Within Reach recommendations, but every Objective, Strategy, and Action in the CoC's 2025 - 2028 Strategic Plan are named in with Within Reach
- To date, of 116 recommendations
  - Completed: 18
    - City/County actions, CoC restructure, Coordinated Entry, HMIS training, Moving On strategies through the HACA, prevention development
  - Underway: 43
    - System design and development (funding, standards, data, service expansion)
  - Not begun, but named in Strategic Plan: 5
    - Performance measurement, training, capacity building
  - Not begun: 50
- Many recommendations have prerequisites (e.g. depend on quality data) and will take years: CoC's current work is building the foundation



CoC’s 2025 - 2028 Strategic Plan

Themes

- Establishing baseline data or understanding
- Evaluating utilization of existing resources and ensuring maximization
- Expanding capacity of particular interventions
- Building infrastructure

Implementation

- Each Objective has actions assigned to CoC bodies (Board, Committee, or Work Group)
- Annual Action Plan developed each year to prioritize actions, which creates work plan for responsible body



CoC's 2025 - 2028 Strategic Plan Objectives

1. Decrease unsheltered homelessness
    a. Increase utilization of existing shelter and transitional housing beds
    b. Expand emergency shelter capacity
    c. Support provider capacity to deliver low-barrier emergency shelter
2. Increase exits from homelessness to permanent housing
    a. Increase utilization of current housing interventions
    b. Expand capacity of housing interventions
    c. Develop system-level housing navigation infrastructure

CoC's 2025 - 2028 Strategic Plan Objectives

3. Coordinate and expand homelessness prevention, diversion, and rapid rehousing
    a. Develop system-level approach to targeted prevention
    b. Develop system-level approach to diversion
    c. Expand rapid rehousing
4. Build housing-focused system capacity
    a. Develop CoC Written Standards to promote consistency in quality service delivery
    b. Develop and implement annual CoC-wide training plan
    c. Develop and implement CoC-wide performance measurement



CoC in Action

- Very high engagement
  - 621 Members, with 103 serving on the Board, a Committee, or a Work Group
- Committees
  - Advocacy
  - Community Relations
  - Funding
  - Nominating and Membership
  - System Performance
  - System Planning and Implementation
- Work Groups
  - Code Purple
  - Coordinated Entry
  - Emergency Shelter Development
  - Homelessness Prevention

CoC in Action: Early Wins

- Code Purple and Winter Shelter
  - More beds, shared infrastructure for operations and data
  - Fair share funding approach
  - Received $75K from Mission Health
- MOU between CoC and Housing Authority for admissions preferences
  - Kicking off now, expands Rapid Rehousing and creates system flow through Moving On
  - Developed collaboratively
    - HACA CEO on CoC Board
    - Included in Strategic Plan and assigned to Board
    - Board identified group to collaborate with HACA on MOU, which Board and HACA Board approved
    - Committee issued RFP for providers approved by the Board and who will serve as cohort to develop Written Standards for Rapid Rehousing
    - Initiative kickoff happening now with all referrals through Coordinated Entry, shared data, monthly case review meetings, and ongoing CoC oversight

CoC in Action: Early Wins

- Selected in national initiative to demonstrate efficacy of prevention: Right at Home
  - One of 10 pilot communities to receive a minimum of $5M to serve at least 1,000 households over 3 years
  - Builds on proven model in Santa Clara County, CA with research demonstrating 90% of households still housed after 2 years + every $1 invested saved $2.47 in community costs
  - Goal: prevent thousands of families from losing their homes while creating a clear, evidence-based blueprint for a national homelessness prevention strategy
- Selection criteria
  - Demonstrated need for homelessness prevention
  - Committed public-sector leadership
  - Data capacity to implement rigorous evaluation
  - Strong local infrastructure, including a lead organization capable of coordinating service providers and managing funds
- Large-scale community planning, investment, and implementation that moves the needle on homelessness is what the CoC is built for.

CoC in Action: Key Focus Areas

- Foundations
  - Data: quality, reporting, public-facing dashboards
  - Funding Policy
  - System mapping
  - Building infrastructure for CoC-level projects
  - Coordinated Entry redesign: new assessment entering testing phase now
  - Written Standards for service delivery
- Emergency Shelter
  - Work Group has completed needs analysis and initial vision for new emergency shelter
  - CDBG-DR Planning Grant for project management and needed services
- Fund development
  - System-level collaboration on
    - Critical funding needs to maintain current capacity, especially related to Emergency Shelter, Code Purple, and Permanent Housing
    - Identifying opportunities to secure new funding to scale services
  - Need for reliable recurring funding CoC can base plans on and deploy strategically
  - Anticipate engaging funders this summer



NEXT STEPS

Upcoming Meetings

Membership: Thursday, April 23, 2026, 6pm (Harrah's Cherokee Center Banquet Hall)

Board: Thursday, May 14, 2026, 4pm (Virtual)

County Representatives to the CoC Board

Commissioner Jennifer Horton, Non-Voting Liaison

Lacy Hoyle, Homelessness Program Manager, Buncombe County Staff Appointed Seat

Questions?