

# “Housing First” Programs

## Addressing Homelessness in Minneapolis



Egalitario Case Study | 2025

Dave Fleming

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

What is Housing First (HF)?	7
Comparison to Other Programs	7
Benefits of Housing First	7
Challenges of Housing First	8
Effective Examples and Countries	9
Canada:	9
United States:	9
European Countries	9
Australia:	9
Citations:	10
HF Advantages over Traditional Treatment-First Programs	10
Housing Stability	11
Mental Health Outcomes	11
Community Integration	11
Healthcare Utilization	12
Consumer Satisfaction	12
Challenges and Considerations	12
Citations:	13
Minneapolis Housing First Programs	14
Housing First in Minneapolis	14
Key Features of Housing First in Minneapolis	14

Broader Context	15
Citations:	15
Mpls Challenges: Implementing the Housing First program	16
Limited Resources and Supply	16
Alternative Solutions	17
Tesla's Tiny Homes	17
Opportunities:	17
Challenges:	18
Program Implementation Challenges	19
Systemic and Policy Barriers	20
Community Perception and Integration	21
Citations:	21
Comparing Mpls to Other Cities	22
Minneapolis Program Outcomes	22
Comparison with Other Cities	23
Positive Outcomes Elsewhere	23
Success Rates and Housing Stability	24
Possible Explanations for Minneapolis Results	24
Conclusion	25
Houston's Leading HF Strategy	26
A Collective of Progressive Leaders	26
The Mayor of Houston:	26
Mandy Chapman Semple:	26

Kelly Young:	27
Leaders of Non-profit Organizations:	27
Outreach Coordinators:	27
Minneapolis Challenges with HF Implementation	27
Shortage of Affordable Housing	28
Discrimination and Barriers	28
Limited Support Services	28
Funding and Resource Constraints	29
Alternative Solutions	29
Public Perception and Opposition	29
System-wide Coordination	30
Citations:	30
_____	31
Summary	31
Housing First in Minneapolis	31
Successful Housing First Programs Elsewhere	32
Tesla's Tiny Homes: A Potential Solution	32
AI Enhancements for Housing First Programs	33
Houston's "A Way Home" Success Factors	33
_____	34
Next Steps   Action Items	34
Discover, Assess, Consult, Implement	34



1. Learn what Minneapolis has tried in Housing First initiatives.	34
2. Identify the most successful Housing First models	34
3. Identify key stakeholders in Minneapolis	35
4. Study Emergency Protocol for Homeless Needs	35
5. Connect with local nonprofits	35
6. Develop a strategy for augmenting local initiatives	35
7. Study Homeless Shelter apps	36
Homeless Apps   Research	36
Developing Effective Apps to Support Homeless Individuals	36
Introduction	36
Challenges in Developing Homeless Apps	37
Role of AI in Homeless Apps	38
User Feedback and Effectiveness	39
Best Practices for App Development	40
Integrating Emergency Hotlines	41
Ensuring Seamless Integration with Existing Emergency Response Systems	42
App Examples	44
OurCalling App	44
Shelter App	45

Samaritan App	45
How do Users Rate the Apps Effectiveness?	47
User Experience and Usability	47
Effectiveness and Clinical Benefits	47
Personalization and Customization	48
Retention and Engagement	48
Overall Satisfaction	48
Credibility and Evidence Base	48
Improving upon the current offering of Apps	49
Real-Time Resource Availability and Accuracy	49
User Accessibility and Digital Literacy	50
Integration with Existing Systems	50
Emergency Response and Real-Time Assistance	51
Skills and Job Training Integration	51
Data Quality and Analytics	51
Community Engagement and Feedback	52
Payment and Donation Systems	52
Superlative Models to Emulate	52
Bringing it to Fruition	53
Questions for Successful HF Leaders	54
APPENDIX	55
Tesla's Tiny Houses	55

# What is Housing First (HF)?

Housing First is an innovative approach to addressing homelessness that has shown significant promise in solving this complex social issue. This program differs from traditional approaches by prioritizing immediate access to permanent housing without preconditions, such as sobriety or treatment compliance.

## Comparison to Other Programs

Traditional homeless services often follow a "treatment first" model, requiring individuals to address issues like substance abuse or mental health before accessing housing. In contrast, Housing First operates on the principle that housing is a fundamental right and a foundation for stability[6].

<b>Housing First</b>	<b>Traditional Services</b>
Immediate housing access	Step-by-step approach
No preconditions	Requirements for housing
Wrap-around support services	Limited support services
Client-centered approach	Program-centered approach

## Benefits of Housing First

1. Improved Housing Stability: Studies show that 89.5% of families who completed a Housing First program remained consistently housed without repeated episodes of homelessness over 2-7 years[8].

2. Enhanced Well-being: Participants report fewer psychiatric symptoms and improved community integration compared to those in traditional services[6].
3. Greater Consumer Choice: Housing First programs offer more consumer choice, better perceived housing quality, and higher satisfaction with services[6].
4. Cost-Effective: Evidence suggests that Housing First generates positive and cost-effective housing and non-housing outcomes[2].
5. Adaptability: The model can be tailored for specific populations, such as youth (Housing First for Youth) and domestic violence survivors (Domestic Violence Housing First)[1][7].

## **Challenges of Housing First**

1. Implementation Complexities: Adapting the model to different contexts and populations can be challenging[1].
2. Landlord Engagement: Securing private market landlords willing to rent to program participants can be difficult[3].
3. Ongoing Support: Providing continuous, mobile case management services requires significant resources[5].
4. Housing Availability: Limited affordable housing stock can hinder program effectiveness.
5. Public Perception: Overcoming stigma and misconceptions about homelessness and the Housing First approach.

## Effective Examples and Countries

---

### Canada:

The Making the Shift Youth Homelessness Social Innovation Lab is testing the effectiveness of Housing First for Youth (HF4Y) in Ottawa and Toronto[1].

---

### United States:

Beyond Shelter's Housing First Program in **Los Angeles** has shown long-term efficacy in ending and preventing family homelessness[8].

**Houston's** "A Way Home" program became a penultimate example and huge success, due largely to the cross-disciplinary collective of government, police, landlords, and nonprofit support groups.

---

### European Countries

A study across seven European countries found that **Housing First** participants reported better outcomes compared to those in traditional services[6]. While specific countries were not named, this indicates widespread adoption and success in Europe.

---

### Australia:

Although not explicitly mentioned in the search results, Australia has implemented **Housing First** programs with success in several cities.

Housing First represents a paradigm shift in addressing homelessness, focusing on rapid rehousing and comprehensive support. While challenges exist, the

growing body of evidence suggests that this approach is effective in promoting long-term housing stability and improving overall well-being for individuals experiencing homelessness across various countries and contexts.

## Citations:

[1] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10548326/>

[2] <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/9082a3eedf2719f0bd3188dc3baa657dca9a3d86>

[3] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25845664/>

[4] <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/2fdf80abc7ba3f77bc49a5c7d40caf78161da8f1>

[5] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10150866/>

[6] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31793001/>

[7] <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/54fce5e94b23c26b83092deb5f0c7b64471a0e38>

[8] <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/d5edb1620144053ec17a5ee4c08b30717e8b0b3d>

## HF Advantages over Traditional Treatment-First Programs

Housing First (HF) programs have shown significant advantages over traditional treatment-first approaches in terms of long-term outcomes for individuals experiencing homelessness, particularly those with mental illness or substance use disorders. The evidence from various studies demonstrates that HF is more effective in several key areas:

## **Housing Stability**

Housing First programs consistently outperform traditional services (TS) in achieving long-term housing stability. Participants in HF programs report a greater proportion of time spent in independent accommodation compared to those in traditional services[4]. This increased housing stability is a crucial foundation for addressing other aspects of participants' lives.

## **Mental Health Outcomes**

HF participants generally experience better mental health outcomes over time:

- Fewer psychiatric symptoms are reported by HF participants compared to those in traditional services[4].
- The approach appears to be particularly beneficial for Indigenous parents, with a higher proportion reporting positive changes in their relationships with their children compared to those in treatment as usual (TAU)[9].

## **Community Integration**

Individuals in HF programs report better community integration outcomes than those in traditional services[4]. This improved integration is vital for long-term social stability and well-being.

## Healthcare Utilization

HF interventions have shown positive effects on healthcare utilization patterns:

- High-need participants receiving HF with assertive community treatment (HF-ACT) showed a significant reduction in both primary care physician visits and non-primary care physician visits over a 7-year follow-up period compared to TAU[8].
- These reductions in healthcare utilization suggest potential cost savings and more efficient use of healthcare resources.

## Consumer Satisfaction

Across multiple studies, HF participants report:

- More consumer choice
- Better perceived housing quality
- Higher satisfaction with services

compared to those in traditional programs[4].

## Challenges and Considerations

While HF shows many advantages, it's important to note some challenges:



- For individuals with substance use disorders (SUD) but without serious mental illness, those not treated for SUD before moving into supportive housing had a longer tenure in housing but were more likely to be incarcerated compared to those who received treatment[10].
- The implementation of HF programs may require significant resources and adaptations to local contexts, which can be challenging for some communities.

In conclusion, Housing First programs demonstrate superior long-term outcomes in housing stability, mental health, community integration, and healthcare utilization compared to traditional treatment-first approaches. While challenges exist, the overall evidence supports the effectiveness of Housing First as a long-term solution for addressing homelessness, particularly for individuals with complex needs.

## Citations:

- [1] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36811902/>
- [2] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8382791/>
- [3] <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/15d47fe5b6258e800c674a9e682e88c5f0b48980>
- [4] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31793001/>
- [5] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9079194/>
- [6] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38817740/>
- [7] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35178708/>
- [8] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8274120/>
- [9] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37603013/>
- [10] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29528786/>

# Minneapolis Housing First Programs

The Housing First model has been adopted in various forms across the Twin Cities area, including Minneapolis, as part of their local efforts to combat homelessness.

## Housing First in Minneapolis

The city of Minneapolis, along with other agencies and organizations in the area, has embraced the Housing First approach:

1. **Catholic Charities** operates a Housing First program in Minneapolis and Saint Paul, providing scattered-site housing for adults who have experienced long-term homelessness[5].
2. **Supportive Living Solutions** offers a Housing First program with locations throughout Minneapolis, providing apartment-based housing for adults experiencing long-term homelessness[7].
3. **The Link**, a youth-focused organization, runs a Housing First program offering 30 units of scattered-site supportive housing in Hennepin County (which includes Minneapolis) for homeless youth aged 18-24 with mental health, chemical dependency, or physical disability diagnoses[9].

## Key Features of Housing First in Minneapolis

These Housing First initiatives in Minneapolis typically include:

- Low-barrier entry into housing
- Supportive services to help maintain housing stability
- Connections to community resources and healthcare
- Assistance with employment and education
- Focus on reducing returns to homelessness

## Broader Context

The adoption of Housing First in Minneapolis is part of a larger statewide and nationwide trend:

- Minnesota has developed a statewide plan called "**Crossroads to Justice**" that aims to reduce homelessness by 15% by 2026, incorporating Housing First principles[3]./
- The state has invested **\$2.6 billion in housing stability efforts**, some of which will support Housing First initiatives[3].

While specific data for Minneapolis is not provided in the search results, the implementation of Housing First programs in the city demonstrates a commitment to this evidence-based approach to addressing homelessness.

## Citations:

[1] <https://www.beaconinterfaith.org/blog/housing-first-series/how-housing-first-service-impacts-residents/>

[2] <https://www.mac-v.org/housing-first-minnesota-foundation-ending-homelessness-with-macv/>

[3] <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2024/01/30/firstofitskind-statewide-plan-to-combat-homelessness-in-minnesota-rolls-out-this-spring>

[4] <https://lms.minneapolismn.gov/Download/RCAV2/46128/Housing-First-and-Homelessness-Prevention-Strategies-Staff-Direction.pdf>

[5] <https://cctwincities.org/services-and-locations/affordable-housing-solutions/housing-first/>

[6] <https://www.womenspress.com/deep-dive-why-the-housing-first-model-works-nationwide-documentary-insights/>

[7] <https://gosupportive.com/service/the-housing-first-solution/>

[8] <https://www.carvercda.org/news/p/item/57494/minnesota-housing-first-generation-homebuyer-loan-program>

[9] <https://thelinkmn.org/housing-program/housing-first/>

[10] <https://newsroom.housingfirstmn.org>

## **Mpls Challenges: Implementing the Housing First program**

### **Limited Resources and Supply**

1. Insufficient housing units: Minneapolis, like many cities, faces a significant housing shortage. The city is estimated to be short by 106,000 housing units, which is four times the current rate of production[8].

2. High construction costs: Building new affordable housing is expensive. For example, a recent Minneapolis Public Housing Authority plan to build 84 new units is estimated to cost \$34 million, or over \$400,000 per unit[5].

3. Lack of affordable options: There are consistently almost no housing units affordable for residents making 30% of the area median income or less without public subsidy[6].

## | Alternative Solutions

### Tesla's Tiny Homes

Compared to the more affordable solutions such as Elon Musk's \$10K pre-fab "tiny house," this seems like a no-brainer. Why spend \$390,000 more on each residence? However, with this approach, broad stretches of land and/or other structures would be needed to handle the sprawl.

Musk's tiny house presents both opportunities and challenges for affordable housing.

---

#### Opportunities:

- **Affordability:** The base price of \$6,789 for the tiny house is significantly lower than traditional homes, which average around \$400,000 in the US. This makes homeownership more accessible to first-time buyers and those facing financial challenges.
- **Reduced Construction Costs:** The modular design and rapid assembly process of the tiny house reduce labor and material costs. The cost is about \$182 per square foot compared to the average construction cost of \$150 to \$250 per square foot for a standard home.

- **Speed of Construction:** The tiny house can be assembled and made livable in less than a day, in contrast to traditional homes which can take months to complete.
- **Sustainability:** The tiny house incorporates high-performance insulation, with an R24 rating for walls and R40 in the roof, which minimizes heat transfer and reduces reliance on heating and cooling systems. Optional solar panel integration offers renewable energy options.
- **Adaptability:** The tiny house is designed to be modular and adaptable to modern lifestyles. Buyers can customize various aspects, such as cabinetry, flooring materials, and finishes.
- **Compact and Functional Design:** The interior of the 375 sq ft tiny house is smartly designed with multifunctional furniture, optimizing space while providing comfort. It includes a kitchen area with a two-burner induction cooktop, a mini fridge, a stainless steel sink, and a bathroom with a full-size shower and water-saving fixtures.
- **Potential to Redefine Home Ownership:** The tiny house could make home ownership viable for first-time buyers and those facing financial hurdles, and may redefine how millions think about owning a home.

---

## Challenges:

- **Additional Costs:** While the base price is low, additional costs such as land, utility connections, customizations, and delivery can increase the overall expense.
  - Land costs can range from \$3,000 to \$10,000 per acre in rural areas to \$100,000 or more for a small plot in urban areas.
  - Utility connections can cost between \$1,500 to \$5,000 on average, with potential costs reaching \$10,000 or more if infrastructure upgrades are needed.

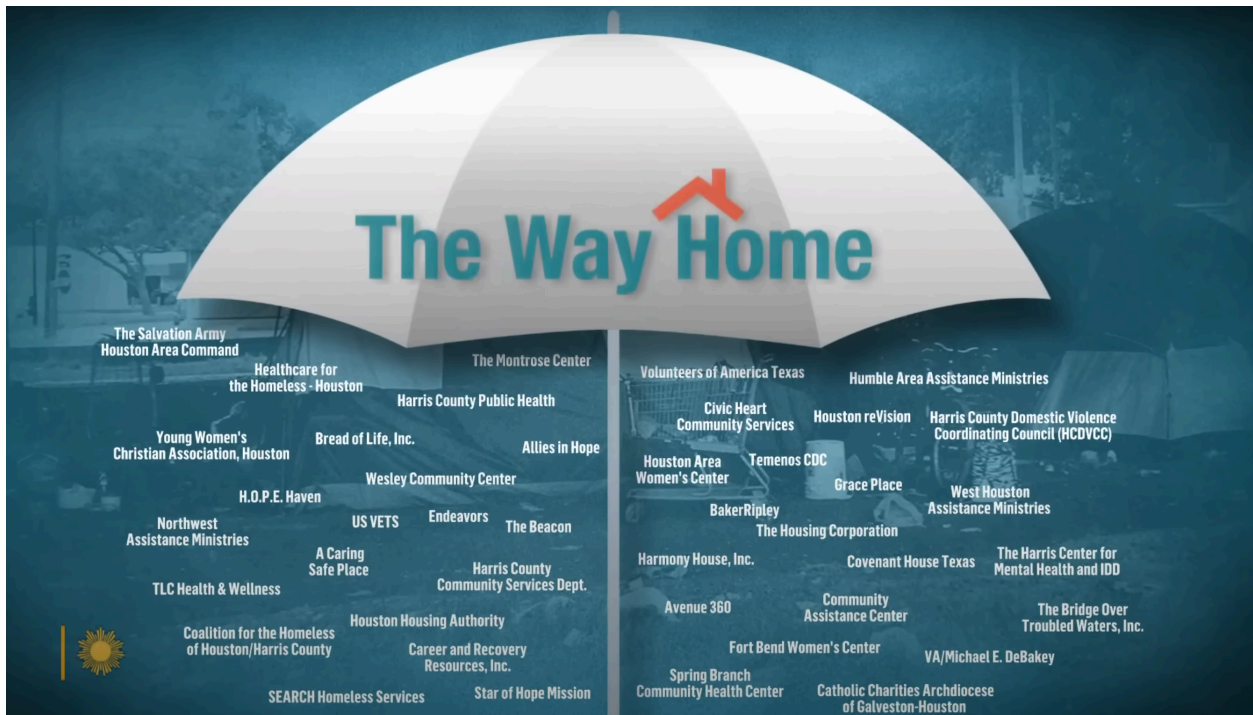
- Adding solar panels can cost \$4,000 to \$8,000, and upgrading interior finishes might add another \$1,000 to \$33,000.
- Delivery and setup can range from \$500 to \$2,500.
- **Zoning Laws:** Strict zoning regulations in many municipalities can make it challenging to secure permits for tiny homes, especially in urban areas.
- **Financing Options:** Traditional mortgage lenders may not be structured to finance tiny homes, so new financing solutions may be necessary.
- **Market Competition:** While Musk's tiny house offers unique advantages, other brands like **Living Homes** and **Tiny Heirloom** offer prefabricated homes, starting at around \$50,000.

Musk's tiny house initiative represents a bold step toward making sustainable homeownership accessible to more people. However, overcoming the challenges related to zoning laws, financing, and additional costs will be crucial for its widespread success.

## Program Implementation Challenges

1. Inadequate support services: In some cases, the Housing First model was not implemented with sufficient supportive services. For example, an early report on HUD-VASH clients in Minneapolis showed poor outcomes, possibly due to a lack of intensive engagement and treatment availability after housing placement[2].

2. Balancing rules and flexibility: There's a need to strike a balance between having necessary rules for housing stability and being flexible enough to



accommodate residents who may struggle with addiction or mental health issues[1].

3. Staff concerns: Social workers and program staff often worry about potential "nightmare scenarios" where clients are evicted or experience severe problems after being housed[2].

## Systemic and Policy Barriers

1. Zoning restrictions: Historic neighborhood policies and current zoning rules in some areas of Minneapolis limit the construction of diverse, affordable housing types[6].

2. Complex funding: Affordable housing projects often require multiple funding sources, making development complicated and time-consuming[5].



3. Income retention issues: The Housing Support program, while valuable, has been criticized for leaving people who receive Social Security Income to pay almost 90% of their income toward housing, trapping them in poverty[3].

## Community Perception and Integration

1. Public concerns: Some community members have expressed concerns about the impact of homeless encampments on public spaces and safety[5].

2. Stigma and misconceptions: There are persistent stereotypes about homelessness that can hinder community support for Housing First initiatives[1].

Despite these challenges, Minneapolis continues to work on implementing and improving its Housing First approach, recognizing its potential to address long-term homelessness effectively.

### Citations:

[1] <https://www.womenspress.com/deep-dive-why-the-housing-first-model-works-nationwide-documentary-insights/>

[2] <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4487871/>

[3] <https://www.hennepinpublicdefender.org/-/media/hennepinus/your-government/projects-initiatives/coc/housing-stability-strategy-2020-2025.pdf>

[4] <https://www.beaconinterfaith.org/blog/housing-first-series/how-housing-first-service-impacts-residents/>

[5] <https://www.minneapolisfed.org/article/2023/people-need-a-place-to-live>

[6] <https://www.southwestvoices.news/posts/challenges-to-affordable-housing-housing-shortages>

[7] <https://thelinkmn.org/housing-program/housing-first/>

[8] <https://blog.housingfirstmn.org/minnesotas-growing-housing-crisis-discussed-by-expert-panel/>

[9] <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2150131910385248>

[10] <https://ampers.org/housing-first-kmoj-explores-housing-challenges-and-opportunities-hour-1/>

## Comparing Mpls to Other Cities

The Housing First program in Minneapolis presents a stark contrast to the success stories reported in other cities across the United States. While many cities have demonstrated significant positive outcomes with the Housing First approach, the Minneapolis program, based on the limited data available, shows concerning results.

## Minneapolis Program Outcomes

A study from Minneapolis reported troubling outcomes for the first 8 HUD-VASH (Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing) clients in their Housing First program:

- 7 out of 8 clients returned to heavy substance or alcohol use within 1 month of placement
- At the 1-year mark, all 8 were classified as "readdicted"

- 7 out of 8 lost housing
- 4 developed new addiction-related medical diagnoses[2]

These results are significantly worse than those observed in most other Housing First programs across the country.

## Comparison with Other Cities

---

### Positive Outcomes Elsewhere

Many cities have reported much more favorable results with their Housing First initiatives:

- **Houston:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEu2w1FtWME>

- Reduced homelessness by 63% since 2011, housing over 30,000 people[8]

- **Milwaukee:**

- Decreased overall homelessness by 46.3% and unsheltered street homelessness by 91.8% in five years[7]

- **Rockford, Illinois:**

- Achieved "functional zero" for both veterans and chronically homeless individuals[9]

- **Abilene, Texas:**

Cut wait times for housing in half for the chronically homeless, also reaching functional zero[9]

- **Utah:**

- Implemented Housing First statewide in 2005, resulting in a 91% decrease in chronic homelessness over 10 years[9]

---

## Success Rates and Housing Stability

In contrast to Minneapolis, other Housing First programs typically report much higher success rates:

- National average: 70-90% of Housing First participants remain stably housed two to three years after receiving services[6]

- HUD-VASH program: A large-scale analysis of 29,143 HUD-VASH clients found that 65% to 69% met the criterion of >60 days housed in the past 90 days at the 6-month mark[2]

- Collaborative Initiative on Chronic Homelessness: Clients typically attained 80 days housed in the preceding 90 days[2]

- Chicago supportive housing: 65% of clients attained stable housing at 18 months[2]

- New York: 70% to 90% success rate in maintaining stable housing for participants over two to three years[10]

## Possible Explanations for Minneapolis Results

The poor outcomes in Minneapolis may be due to several factors:

1. Early implementation issues: The study focused on the first 8 clients, which may not represent the program's long-term effectiveness.
2. Lack of comprehensive services: The report suggests that treatment may have terminated once clients were housed, contrary to Housing First principles[2].
3. Small sample size: The study's limited scope (8 clients) makes it difficult to draw broad conclusions about the program's overall effectiveness.

## Conclusion

While the Minneapolis results are concerning, they appear to be an outlier when compared to the broader national data on Housing First programs. Most cities implementing this approach have seen significant reductions in homelessness and high rates of housing stability. The Minneapolis case underscores the importance of proper implementation, including ongoing support services and adherence to Housing First principles, to achieve the positive outcomes observed in other cities.

Citations:

[1] <https://www.beaconinterfaith.org/blog/housing-first-series/how-housing-first-service-impacts-residents/>

[2] <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4487871/>

[3] <https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Housing-First-Research.pdf>

[4] <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/research-papers/housing-first-an-evidence-review-of-implementation-effectiveness-and-outcomes>

[5] <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/housing-first/>

[6] <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/housing-first/>

[7] <https://www.womenspress.com/deep-dive-why-the-housing-first-model-works-nationwide-documentary-insights/>

[8] <https://www.groundcovernews.org/read-online-1/houston-has-success-with-housing-first-strategy>

[9] <https://klcjournal.com/is-housing-first-a-cure-for-homelessness/>

[10] <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/homelessness-in-us-cities-and-downtowns/>

## **Houston's Leading HF Strategy**

### **A Collective of Progressive Leaders**

While the sources do not name specific individuals as "key leaders" in the movement to end homelessness, they do highlight key roles and figures that were crucial to Houston's success. These include:

---

#### **The Mayor of Houston:**

The sources emphasize that Houston's strong mayor system was crucial for bringing together and directing the non-profit organizations involved in addressing homelessness. The mayor used the powers of that office to ensure that all organizations were working toward the same goals. The sources do not name the specific mayor.

---

#### **Mandy Chapman Semple:**

Described as the architect of Houston's success story, Semple developed the strategies that led to the reduction in homelessness. She now advises other cities on how to replicate Houston's model.

---

## Kelly Young:

As the head of Houston's Coalition for the Homeless, Young leads the organization, "The Way Home," that oversees the coordinated approach to addressing homelessness in the city.

---

## Leaders of Non-profit Organizations:

While specific names aren't given, the leaders of the approximately 100 non-profit organizations in Houston that work with people experiencing homelessness are also crucial to the coordinated approach. These leaders work together using a central database to ensure that services are delivered effectively and efficiently.

---

## Outreach Coordinators:

Individuals like Jessalyn Dimonno, who visit homeless encampments and connect people with services, are vital for the success of Houston's approach. They use the system-wide database to log information and coordinate care. It's important to note that the sources emphasize that Houston's success is due to a coordinated effort that involves political leaders, non-profit organizations, and outreach workers, all working together with a common goal, rather than to a single individual.

# Minneapolis Challenges with HF Implementation

Minneapolis has faced several challenges in implementing the Housing First program. These challenges include:

## Shortage of Affordable Housing

Minneapolis is grappling with a severe shortage of affordable housing options[2]. Despite numerous multi-unit housing projects being developed across the city, the majority do not include affordable options. This shortage makes it difficult to find suitable housing for Housing First program participants.

## Discrimination and Barriers

Housing discrimination remains pervasive in Minneapolis, creating additional obstacles for Housing First initiatives[2]. Landlords may discriminate against tenants based on race, religion, or familial status, making it challenging to secure housing for program participants.

## Limited Support Services

One of the critical components of the Housing First model is providing comprehensive support services alongside housing. However, Minneapolis has faced challenges in offering adequate support:

1. Insufficient case management: Some Housing First programs in the city have been described as "Housing First Light," with inadequate staffing ratios (e.g., one case manager for 20 high-need individuals)[3].
2. Lack of intensive engagement: Early implementations of the program may not have provided the necessary level of engagement and treatment options for clients with substance use disorders[1].



## Funding and Resource Constraints

Implementing a comprehensive Housing First program requires significant financial resources. Minneapolis has struggled with:

1. High development costs: The expense of building new affordable housing units is substantial, often requiring multiple funding sources[6].
2. Ongoing support costs: Providing long-term housing and support services is more expensive than traditional shelter services[6].

## | Alternative Solutions

1. Explore the less costly housing offered by Elon Musk. Will it prevail as the least costly housing for short and long term?
2. Are there networks of churches, synagogues, and mosques that could offer temporary housing during emergent situations where people are evicted, displaced when housing become dilapidated and condemned, fires, and or other situations? This is an essential avenue to explore, learning about the history of these efforts, as well as the contemporary level of cooperation.

## Public Perception and Opposition

There have been challenges related to public perception and opposition to Housing First initiatives:

1. Neighborhood concerns: Some residents have expressed concerns about the impact of Housing First programs on their neighborhoods, leading to complaints about encampments and public spaces[6].

2. Misconceptions: There are persistent myths about the Housing First approach, such as the belief that it provides housing with no rules or expectations[3].

## **System-wide Coordination**

Effective implementation of Housing First requires coordination across multiple agencies and sectors. Minneapolis has faced challenges in creating a cohesive system:

1. Fragmented services: Coordinating outreach, housing placement, and support services across different organizations can be complex[3].
2. Transition from traditional models: Shifting from a "treatment first" approach to Housing First has required significant changes in mindset and operations for service providers[3].

While Minneapolis has made progress in addressing homelessness through Housing First initiatives, these challenges highlight the ongoing need for continued investment, policy refinement, and community engagement to fully realize the potential of the Housing First model in the city.

## **Citations:**

[1] <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4487871/>

[2] <https://www.tptoriginals.org/10-insights-on-the-challenges-facing-minneapolis-renters/>

[3] <https://www.womenspress.com/deep-dive-why-the-housing-first-model-works-nationwide-documentary-insights/>

[4] <https://ampers.org/housing-first-kmoj-explores-housing-challenges-and-opportunities-hour-1/>

[5] <https://www.beaconinterfaith.org/blog/housing-first-series/how-housing-first-service-impacts-residents/>

[6] <https://www.minneapolisfed.org/article/2023/people-need-a-place-to-live>

[7] <https://lims.minneapolismn.gov/RCA/23255>

[8] <https://thelinkmn.org/housing-program/housing-first/>

[9] <https://conservancy.umn.edu/items/fd588fad-f054-4b0b-be33-562486e499a4>

[10] [https://www.reddit.com/r/Minneapolis/comments/1ccqd3h/the\\_way\\_out\\_of\\_the\\_housing\\_crisis\\_how\\_minneapolis/](https://www.reddit.com/r/Minneapolis/comments/1ccqd3h/the_way_out_of_the_housing_crisis_how_minneapolis/)

---

## Summary

In this case study we examined the implementation of Housing First (HF) programs in Minneapolis and compared them with successful initiatives in other cities, particularly Houston. We also explored the potential of Tesla's tiny homes as an alternative affordable housing solution.

## Housing First in Minneapolis

Minneapolis has adopted the Housing First model, but faced significant challenges:

- Limited affordable housing supply
- High construction costs (over \$400,000 per unit for some projects)
- Inadequate support services

- Zoning restrictions
- Complex funding processes
- Community opposition and stigma

Early results from a small HUD-VASH study in Minneapolis showed poor outcomes, with 7 out of 8 clients losing housing within a year. However, this small sample may not represent the program's long-term effectiveness.

## **Successful Housing First Programs Elsewhere**

Many cities have reported much more favorable outcomes:

- Houston reduced homelessness by 63% since 2011
- Milwaukee decreased overall homelessness by 46.3% in five years
- Rockford, Illinois and Abilene, Texas achieved "functional zero" for certain homeless populations

The national average shows 70-90% of Housing First participants remaining stably housed after 2-3 years.

## **Tesla's Tiny Homes: A Potential Solution**

Tesla's \$6,789 tiny house offers several advantages:

1. Affordability: Significantly cheaper than traditional housing (\$182/sq ft vs \$150-\$250/sq ft average)
2. Rapid assembly: Can be set up in 24 hours
3. Sustainability: High-performance insulation and optional solar integration
4. Adaptability: Modular design allows for customization

5. Reduced construction costs: Prefabricated design minimizes on-site labor

Challenges include zoning restrictions, financing difficulties, and additional costs for land, utilities, and customization.

## **AI Enhancements for Housing First Programs**

While not explicitly mentioned in the case study, AI could potentially enhance Housing First programs in several ways:

1. Predictive analytics: Identify individuals at high risk of homelessness for early intervention
2. Resource allocation: Optimize distribution of housing units and support services
3. Personalized support: Tailor interventions based on individual needs and preferences
4. Automated case management: Streamline administrative tasks and improve coordination
5. Real-time data analysis: Monitor program effectiveness and make data-driven improvements

## **Houston's "A Way Home" Success Factors**

Houston's success was attributed to:

1. Strong mayoral leadership and coordination
2. Collaboration between government, non-profits, and outreach workers
3. Centralized database for coordinating services
4. Dedicated outreach coordinators connecting with homeless individuals

By combining Tesla's affordable tiny homes with AI-enhanced program management and Houston's collaborative approach, Minneapolis could potentially overcome its Housing First challenges and achieve better outcomes for homeless individuals. At Egalitario, we plan to become a part of the initiatives that will bring lasting change to the community at large, affecting the lives of those underserved populations that need it the most.

---

## **Next Steps | Action Items**

### **Discover, Assess, Consult, Implement**

---

1. Learn what Minneapolis has tried in Housing First initiatives.
    - 1.1. Success and setbacks
    - 1.2. Study the history of homeless initiatives
    - 1.3. Conduct Task Analysis of people serving, and people served; this exercise enables us to empathetically identify the primary actions/use cases that make up the homeless solutions ecosystem.
  2. Identify the most successful Housing First models
    - 2.1. Houston's "The Way Home"
    - 2.2. Identify key stakeholders and connect with them
    - 2.3. Explore the options available to learn their steps to success
-

---

### 3. Identify key stakeholders in Minneapolis

- 3.1. Connect and discuss the latest challenges and future plans
- 3.2. Conduct outreach and discovery regarding the condemned apartment complex and the people forced to leave; and then after being relocated to a hotel for two weeks, they were told they would have to go because there was no more funding to cover them. (Late December, 2024)

---

### 4. Study Emergency Protocol for Homeless Needs

- 4.1. How to house people who are unexpectedly forced to leave or vacate due to weather, fires, condemned buildings, or the like.

---

### 5. Connect with local nonprofits

- 5.1. Current projects
- 5.2. Future plans
- 5.3. Barriers
- 5.4. Best Outcomes

---

### 6. Develop a strategy for augmenting local initiatives

- 6.1. Are there gaps? If so, what are they?
- 6.2. Is it possible to incorporate the HF model?
- 6.3. Identify the key resources and professionals: academic partners, social workers, NGOs, police, hospitals, and homeless people
- 6.4. Utilize AI techniques to track relevant data, such as tent city locations
- 6.5. Gather team members (contractors to start with) who can join in the project
  - 6.5.1. Conduct a Discovery Workshop session with stakeholders, advisors, team members, and the relevant SMEs.

- 6.6. Reach out to local, state, and Federal agencies to discover more resources and to connect with them as new partners, advisors, and facilitators.

---

## 7. Study Homeless Shelter apps

- 7.1. Study the apps that are available and improve upon them where possible and practical, i.e., we don't have to recreate the wheel if apps work well, but we do need to study, interview, and test to appropriately confirm our findings.
- 7.2. Reach out to the local shelters to learn how effective they are and also try to conduct deeper interviews that target the practical needs of the staff and those who come for help.

# Homeless Apps | Research

## Developing Effective Apps to Support Homeless Individuals

---

### Introduction

Homelessness is a complex and multifaceted issue that requires innovative solutions to connect individuals with vital resources. Mobile apps have emerged as a powerful tool in this effort, providing real-time information, emergency assistance, and personalized support. This page outlines the challenges, best practices, and strategies for developing effective apps to support homeless individuals.



---

## Challenges in Developing Homeless Apps

### Data Integration and Accuracy

- Integrating accurate, real-time data on shelter availability, service offerings, and other resources is crucial but challenging. This requires partnerships with local shelters, NGOs, and government agencies to ensure data accuracy through APIs and other data integration tools.

### User Accessibility and Digital Literacy

- Many homeless individuals have limited digital literacy and unstable internet access, making it difficult for them to navigate complex apps. The app's design must be user-friendly, with key features easily accessible, offline access to crucial information, and multilingual support.

### Data Privacy and Security

- Homeless apps handle sensitive user data, such as personal information and health-related details. Ensuring the privacy and security of this data is critical, requiring strong encryption, anonymized profiles, and secure data management practices.

### Technological and Bandwidth Issues

- Homeless individuals often face technological barriers, including issues with battery life, limited data plans, and inadequate bandwidth for certain digital services.

### Resource Allocation and Sustainability

- Developing and maintaining a homeless app requires significant resources, including funding, technical expertise, and ongoing support. Ensuring the

sustainability of the app through secure donation gateways, partnerships, and community engagement is vital.

#### Widespread Adoption

- Ensuring widespread adoption of the app among both the homeless population and the organizations that support them is a significant challenge. This involves addressing issues of trust, awareness, and the availability of devices and internet access.

#### Fragmented Systems and Lack of Expertise

- The underlying structure and operations of federal and local programs can be highly fragmented, making it difficult to provide coordinated care and support. Service providers may lack the expertise and experience needed to serve homeless individuals effectively.

---

## Role of AI in Homeless Apps

#### Data Collection and Mapping

- AI can document and map the locations of homeless camps, providing a clearer picture of the extent of homelessness.

#### Predictive Analytics and Early Intervention

- AI algorithms can predict individuals at risk of homelessness by analyzing data from various sources, enabling proactive interventions.

#### Personalized Decision-Making

- AI aids social workers in matching services with a person's specific needs, enhancing the effectiveness of the support provided.

### Resource Allocation and Outreach

- AI optimizes resource allocation by coordinating support from multiple channels and predicting future adverse outcomes.

### Ensuring Privacy and Security

- AI systems can handle sensitive data with a focus on privacy, ensuring that data is transformed into a format only the models understand.

---

## User Feedback and Effectiveness

### Usability and User Experience

- Users appreciate apps that are simple, intuitive, and well-structured. Positive comments include praise for visually appealing interfaces and clear instructions.

### Personalization

- Customization options are highly valued, enhancing the user experience and making the app more effective for individual needs.

### Credibility and Evidence Base

- Despite positive user experiences, many apps lack rigorous research to support their effectiveness. Only a small percentage of apps receive top-tercile scores for credibility and evidence base.

### Information and Clinical Benefits

- Users find apps informative and clinically beneficial, especially when they explain mental health issues from a scientific perspective in a clear and comforting way.

---

## Best Practices for App Development

### Real-Time Resource Availability

- Integrate real-time updates on shelter availability, food banks, medical services, and other resources.

### Offline Access

- Design the app to provide offline access to critical resources such as shelter addresses, contact details, and service hours.

### Geolocation Services

- Utilize geolocation services to help users find nearby shelters, food banks, healthcare facilities, and other essential services.

### Emergency Hotlines and Quick Access

- Include instant access to emergency hotlines and services, enabling users to quickly contact authorities or crisis response teams during emergencies.

### Transportation Assistance

- Integrate features that help users find transportation to shelters, including information on public transportation routes and ride-sharing services.

### Mental Health and Counseling Services

- Provide direct access to mental health and counseling services, including nearby mental health facilities and helplines.

### Crowdsourced Shelter Information

- Enable users, volunteers, and shelters to contribute real-time updates about shelter availability, occupancy, and operating hours.

#### Multilingual Support

- Offer the app in multiple languages to ensure it is accessible to a broader user base.

#### User-Friendly Design

- Ensure the app has a simplified UX/UI that is easy to navigate, even for users with limited digital experience.

#### Partnerships and Data Integration

- Partner directly with local shelters, NGOs, and government agencies to ensure accurate and up-to-date information.

#### Community Engagement and Feedback

- Allow users to report outdated information and provide feedback through features like a "Flag" button or a "Give Feedback" option.

---

## Integrating Emergency Hotlines

#### Real-Time Alerts and Notifications

- Implement a system to send real-time alerts and notifications for emergency situations.

#### Direct Access to Emergency Hotlines

- Provide direct access to emergency hotlines within the app, such as a single-touch panic button or a dedicated emergency call screen.

### Location Sharing

- Utilize GPS tracking and location services to enable users to share their real-time location with emergency services or designated emergency contacts.

### Customizable Emergency Plans

- Allow users to create customized emergency plans that include setting up emergency contacts and defining specific emergency procedures.

### Integration with Existing Emergency Systems

- Integrate the app with local emergency response services and agencies, ensuring automatic alerts to emergency services and real-time updates on emergency situations.

---

## Ensuring Seamless Integration with Existing Emergency Response Systems

### Adopt Open Standards and Interoperable Technologies

- Emphasize the use of open standards to ensure compatibility across different systems and technologies.

### Seamless Integration with Existing Infrastructure

- Design the system to integrate smoothly with the existing IT infrastructure and emergency response frameworks.

### Real-Time Data Sharing and Analytics

- Utilize real-time data analytics and mapping to provide current and precise information, enabling quicker and more informed decision-making among responders.

#### Two-Way Communication and Feedback

- Implement two-way communication systems that allow responders to provide feedback, confirm receipt of messages, or request assistance.

#### Training and Support

- Invest in comprehensive training and dedicated support to ensure that users are proficient in utilizing the system.

#### Cross-Jurisdictional Collaboration

- Facilitate cross-jurisdictional collaboration by connecting public safety agencies through a bi-directional data-sharing network.

#### Addressing Integration Challenges

- Recognize and address the diverse needs and operational contexts of different agencies, ensuring the technology is customizable and scalable.

#### Regular Testing and Maintenance

- Regularly test the system to ensure it operates efficiently and reliably during emergencies, conducting drills and exercises to fine-tune the processes.

By following these guidelines, developers can create effective apps that connect homeless individuals with vital resources, provide emergency assistance, and integrate seamlessly with existing emergency response systems. This holistic approach ensures that the apps are user-friendly, reliable, and sustainable,

ultimately contributing to the well-being and stability of those experiencing homelessness.

## App Examples

There are several apps designed to help homeless individuals find shelter and access various essential resources. Here are some examples and their key features:

---

### OurCalling App

- This app enables users to search for resources such as shelters, food pantries, domestic violence centers, and addiction recovery resources across the U.S.[3][6].
- It features a crowdsourced database of service providers and allows users to report homeless individuals or encampments in Dallas County, triggering outreach visits.
- The app is funded by donations and provides a way for users to help homeless individuals by connecting them with local resources.

**ShelterApp**

Home About Features Impact Screenshots Feedback Volunteer

Donate Contact

Connecting People In Need to Services

Watch the video

Web App GET IT ON Google play Download on the App Store



---

## Shelter App

- This AI-powered chatbot connects homeless and low-income families to a wide range of services, including youth drop-in centers, homeless and run-away youth shelters, food banks, soup kitchens, medical and dental clinics, mental health centers, and more[1][4][5].
- Users can switch between list view and map view, filter currently open services, and get details such as contact information, transit directions, and schedules for each service.
- The app allows service providers to update the number of beds available in real-time, and users can report any outdated information.
- It is available in several counties across the U.S., including Los Angeles, Seattle, Portland, and others.

---

## Samaritan App

- This app provides a network of support by connecting people experiencing homelessness with individuals who can fund their specific needs, such as haircuts, groceries, or job interview attire[7].
- It aims to empower users toward self-sufficiency by creating a personalized support network over a 6-12 month period.

### **Effectiveness**

These apps are highly effective for several reasons:

#### 1. Real-Time Information:

- Apps like Shelter App and OurCalling provide real-time updates on shelter availability and other resources, reducing the time spent searching for assistance[2][3].

## 2. Comprehensive Resource Database:

- These apps offer a broad range of resources, including shelters, food banks, medical services, and more, making them invaluable for homeless individuals[1][3][5].

## 3. User Engagement and Feedback:

- Features such as the ability to flag outdated information, submit new resources, and provide feedback enhance the accuracy and usefulness of the apps[1][3][6].

## 4. Community Involvement:

- Apps like OurCalling and Shelter App involve the community by allowing users to report homeless individuals and contribute to the database of resources, fostering a collaborative approach to addressing homelessness[3][6].

## 5. Personalized Support:

- The Samaritan App provides a personalized support network, which can lead to more sustainable outcomes for individuals experiencing homelessness[7].

Overall, these apps serve as critical tools in connecting homeless individuals with the resources they need, making them highly effective in addressing the issue of homelessness.

## Citations:

[1] <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/homeless-resources-shelter-app/id1494186592>

[2] <https://www.matellio.com/blog/homeless-app-like-shelter/>

[3] <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/ourcalling/id973424513>

[4] <https://thehomemoreproject.org/why-get-the-shelter-app/>

[5] <https://www.shelterapp.org>

[6] <https://www.ourcalling.org/app/>

[7] <https://standtogether.org/stories/the-economy/samaritan-app-offers-resources-for-overcoming-homelessness>

[8] [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.strappd&hl=en\\_US](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.strappd&hl=en_US)

## How do Users Rate the Apps Effectiveness?

The effectiveness of apps, particularly those focused on mental health and behavioral support, can be evaluated through various user feedback and review analyses. Here are some key points on how users rate these apps:

---

### User Experience and Usability

- Users often praise apps for their simplicity, intuitive design, and clear instructions. For example, users appreciate visually appealing interfaces, step-by-step guides, and the ability to customize features such as breathing exercises and reminders[1].
- The user experience is a crucial aspect, with many users highlighting the importance of a well-structured and easy-to-use interface. Apps that provide clear visuals and guide users through activities are highly appreciated[1].

---

### Effectiveness and Clinical Benefits

- Users report positive outcomes from using mental health apps, such as feeling connected to others with similar issues and experiencing clinical benefits. For instance, apps focused on schizophrenia showed a high retention rate of 92% and an average of 3.95 interactions per day, with users reporting broad-range clinical benefits[6].

- Users find apps informative and comforting, especially when they explain mental health issues from a scientific perspective in a clear and accessible way[1].

---

## Personalization and Customization

- Customization options are highly valued by users. Features such as customizable pictures, reminders, breathing session lengths, and labels enhance the user experience and make the app more effective for individual needs[1].

---

## Retention and Engagement

- Studies show that certain types of apps, such as mindfulness/meditation and peer support apps, have higher retention rates compared to others. For example, mindfulness/meditation apps had a 30-day retention rate of 4.7%, which is significantly higher than breathing exercise apps[3].

---

## Overall Satisfaction

- Sentiment scores from user reviews indicate a generally positive acceptance of these apps. For instance, sentiment scores for apps designed to reduce mobile phone use ranged from 61 to 86 out of 100, indicating a positive user acceptance[4].

---

## Credibility and Evidence Base

- While users appreciate the science behind the apps, there is a noted lack of rigorous research supporting many behavioral health apps. Only 26% of the top 25 apps received top-tercile scores for credibility and evidence base across different frameworks[2].

In summary, users rate these apps highly for their usability, effectiveness in providing clinical benefits, and the ability to customize features. However, there are inconsistencies in expert reviews and a need for more rigorous research to support the credibility and evidence base of many of these apps.

Citations:

[1] <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1460458219896492>

[2] <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41746-019-0129-6>

[3] <https://www.jmir.org/2019/9/e14567/>

[4] <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10498313/>

[5] [https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?](https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0258050)

[id=10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0258050](https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0258050)

[6] <https://remedypsychiatry.com/mobile-apps-for-mental-health-do-they-really-work/>

## Improving upon the current offering of Apps

Improving homeless shelter apps involves addressing several gaps and incorporating advanced features to enhance their effectiveness. Here are some key areas for improvement and superlative models to emulate:

---

### Real-Time Resource Availability and Accuracy

- One of the primary challenges is ensuring real-time updates on shelter availability, service offerings, and other resources. Apps should partner directly with local shelters, NGOs, and government agencies to integrate accurate, up-to-date information using APIs[1][2].

- Crowdsourcing can also be used to allow users, volunteers, and shelters to contribute real-time updates about shelter availability, occupancy, and operating hours, enhancing the accuracy and timeliness of the information provided[1].

---

## User Accessibility and Digital Literacy

- Many homeless individuals have limited digital literacy and unstable internet access. Apps should be designed with a simplified UX/UI, easy navigation, offline access to crucial information, and multilingual support to enhance accessibility[1][2].

- Ensuring the app is user-friendly, even for those with minimal digital skills, is crucial. Features like instant uploads of information to the database can reduce the need for redundant data entry and keep information current[2].

---

## Integration with Existing Systems

- Current systems often lack compatibility, leading to data inconsistencies and inefficiencies. Developing apps that integrate with existing Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) and other local databases is essential. This includes making the HMIS more mobile-friendly and compatible with various platforms[2][3].

- Better Angels' approach to creating a mobile-friendly prototype for outreach workers, shelter operators, and a comprehensive database for shelter beds is a model to emulate. This approach ensures real-time data entry and reduces errors associated with manual data transfer[2].

---

## Emergency Response and Real-Time Assistance

- Integrating emergency hotlines and real-time assistance features is critical. Apps should provide direct access to emergency services, location sharing, and customizable emergency plans to ensure quick and effective responses during emergencies[1].
- The ability to map locations where homeless individuals have been encountered can help case managers narrow their search and provide more targeted support[2].

---

## Skills and Job Training Integration

- Incorporating resources for skills and job training, life skills training, mentorship, and education and employment assistance can help users transition towards self-sufficiency. This holistic approach addresses the broader needs of homeless individuals beyond immediate shelter and food[1].

---

## Data Quality and Analytics

- Poor data quality is a significant issue, often due to manual data entry and delays in updating information. Implementing systems that ensure data is entered in real-time and reducing the need for redundant data entry can improve data accuracy[2].
- Using data analytics to generate insights and visualizations on the movements of homeless populations and areas of high concentration can help in strategic planning and resource allocation[2].

---

## Community Engagement and Feedback

- Encouraging community engagement through feedback mechanisms is vital. Apps should allow users to report outdated information and provide feedback, which helps in maintaining the accuracy of the app and improving user satisfaction[1].
- Collaborating with a cross-section of community leaders and stakeholders to set short and long-term goals for system improvement can also enhance the app's effectiveness[3].

---

## Payment and Donation Systems

- Integrating secure donation gateways can enable NGOs and shelters to receive support directly. Using well-known platforms like PayPal or Stripe ensures the app's donation system is reliable and secure[1].

---

## Superlative Models to Emulate

- **Better Angels' Mobile-Friendly Prototype:** This prototype, designed for outreach workers, shelter operators, and a comprehensive database for shelter beds, is a model for real-time data integration, user-friendliness, and reducing errors associated with manual data transfer[2].



- **Shelter App:** This app is notable for its real-time resource availability, crowdsourced shelter information, and user-friendly design. It serves as a benchmark for providing accurate and timely information to homeless individuals[1].

By addressing these gaps and emulating successful models, homeless shelter apps can become more comprehensive, effective, and user-friendly, ultimately better serving the needs of homeless individuals.

Citations:

[1] <https://www.matellio.com/blog/homeless-app-like-shelter/>

[2] <https://apnews.com/article/homeless-data-los-angeles-app-shelter-tech-faf6d31b0851fc9053b07cffb07607a4>

[3] <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Strategies-for-System-Performance-Improvement-Brief.pdf>

[4] <https://archives.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/2450/11304/Gaps%20Analysis%20FINAL%204-28.pdf?sequence=1>

[5] <https://www.wired.com/story/app-fight-homelessness-community-service/>

## Bringing it to Fruition

This outline shows the preliminary next steps. Ultimately, it's a good way to move ahead in our first pilot study and represents a real-world challenge that we can use to demonstrate our skills, value, and ability to succeed..

## Questions for Successful HF Leaders

1. Considering the affordability of Tesla Tiny Homes or other affordable housing companies, what has been your experience using this type of approach? What barriers pose the biggest challenges?
2. What have you explored regarding other affordable, small housing units?
3. How can other communities learn from your success? Do you offer programs to train interested parties? Published guidelines? Videos?
4. Who are the key governmental officials to court as future partners?
5. Have you considered making a documentary movie that explains your success and then outlines the path for others to emulate?

# APPENDIX

## Tesla's Tiny Houses

### FAQs on Elon Musk's \$6,789 Tiny House

- 1. What are the key features of Elon Musk's \$6,789 tiny house?** The tiny house is a 375 square foot modular home designed for affordability, sustainability, and adaptability. It includes a living area with multi-functional furniture, a compact kitchen with a two-burner induction cooktop, a mini-fridge, and a stainless steel sink. The bathroom has a full-size shower with water-saving fixtures, an eco-friendly toilet, and a sink. The house features high-performance insulation and optional solar panel integration for energy efficiency. Buyers can also customize aspects such as cabinetry and flooring materials.
- 2. How is the tiny house assembled and what makes its construction unique?** The tiny house utilizes Boxable's foldable modular technology. The unit is transported folded, at only 8 feet wide, allowing for easy and cost-effective delivery. Once on site, it unfolds and can be assembled on a prepared foundation in just 24 hours. The rapid assembly and low labor costs associated with the modular design contribute significantly to its affordability, while traditional homes can take 6 months to a year to complete. This modular approach also opens possibilities for various applications, from individual homes to larger communities.
- 3. What does the \$6,789 base price of the tiny house cover?** The \$6,789 base price covers the core structure, including the modular frame and essential interior features such as the living area, kitchen, and bathroom. However, this price does not include additional customizations, land costs, utility connections, or delivery and setup fees. Upgrades like solar panels and interior finish upgrades will cost extra.
- 4. What additional costs should potential buyers expect beyond the base price?** Beyond the base price, potential buyers should budget for several additional costs. These include land acquisition or leasing which can vary widely based on location (from \$3,000 to over \$100,000 per acre), utility connections (\$1,500 to \$5,000, potentially more for new infrastructure), delivery and setup (\$500 to \$2,500), and optional upgrades like solar panels (\$4,000 to \$8,000) or

interior finish upgrades (\$1,000-\$3,000). These expenses can significantly increase the overall cost.

5. **How does the affordability of the tiny house compare to traditional housing?** While additional costs exist, Musk's tiny house remains a significantly more affordable option than traditional housing. The average cost of a traditional home in the US is around \$400,000 with an average monthly mortgage payment exceeding \$1,500, whereas this tiny house, even with added costs, is designed to be a low-cost, low-maintenance solution for those seeking affordable housing. The price per square foot of the tiny house is approximately \$182 compared to the average \$150-\$250 for traditional housing.
6. **What are the potential hurdles to the widespread adoption of tiny homes like this one?** Several hurdles exist. Zoning laws in many municipalities are strict, and securing permits for tiny homes can be difficult, especially in urban areas. Also, obtaining financing can be challenging, as traditional mortgage lenders are often geared towards conventional homes. New, specialized loan products may need to be developed to make tiny homes more accessible.
7. **What is the environmental impact of Musk's tiny home?** The tiny home is designed with sustainability in mind. Its high-performance insulation reduces reliance on heating and cooling systems, minimizing energy consumption. Optional solar panel integration provides a renewable energy option, making it possible to operate the home almost entirely off-grid, which reduces utility costs and minimizes the carbon footprint. Additionally, the small size of the home minimizes material use and its modular nature reduces waste during assembly.
8. **How does Elon Musk's tiny home differentiate itself from other tiny homes on the market?** Musk's tiny home differentiates itself through its focus on rapid assembly, portability and cost effectiveness. It features a unique foldable design that facilitates ease of transport and allows it to be set up within 24 hours. While other brands offer pre-fabricated homes, Musk's design prioritizes a fast, convenient and budget-friendly approach to solving housing needs.

#### **Musk's Tiny House Assembly and Installation:**

- **Modular and Foldable Technology:** Musk's tiny homes use innovative foldable modular technology developed by Boxable. This allows the homes to be compactly folded to just 8 ft wide for transportation.
- **Rapid Assembly:** The most significant difference is the speed of assembly. Once delivered to a prepared foundation, Musk's tiny house can be expanded

and assembled within 24 hours. This is significantly faster than traditional construction methods.

- **Simplified Transportation:** Due to their foldable design, these homes can be transported by standard truck. This reduces logistics costs and simplifies delivery.
- **Professional Installation:** A professional team is involved in connecting the house to essential utilities, including a 200 amp electrical service, water supply, and sewage systems. The house also includes a standard 30 amp power outlet.
- **Reduced Labor Costs:** The rapid assembly and modular design minimize on-site construction time, labor, and material waste, which significantly contributes to affordability.
- **Foundation:** A prepared foundation is required, indicating that some site preparation is necessary before delivery.
- **Utility Connections:** Connections to utilities such as water, sewage, and electricity are made by professionals once the home is assembled. These connections can incur additional charges.

#### **Traditional Home Assembly and Installation:**

- **Lengthy Construction Time:** Traditional homes can take anywhere from 6 months to over a year to complete.
- **On-Site Construction:** Traditional homes are built on-site, which involves a complex and lengthy process requiring significant labor, materials, and time.
- **Higher Construction Costs:** Average construction costs for a standard home in the US are around \$150 to \$250 per square foot, while Musk's tiny house costs about \$182 per square foot. The base cost of Musk's tiny house is significantly lower at \$6789.
- **Complex Logistics:** Traditional construction involves complex logistical challenges including material transportation, on-site storage, waste management, and coordination between multiple trades.
- **Extensive On-Site Labor:** The construction process involves extensive labor, which contributes significantly to the overall cost and timeline.
- **Variable Timeline:** The timeline for construction can vary widely based on weather conditions, supply chain issues, permit approvals, and labor availability.

#### **Key Differences Summarized**

<b>Feature</b>	<b>Musk's Tiny House</b>	<b>Traditional Homes</b>
<b>Assembly Method</b>	Foldable, modular, rapid assembly	Built on-site from the ground up
<b>Assembly Time</b>	Less than 24 hours	6 months to over a year
<b>Transportation</b>	Compactly folded for standard truck transport	Requires delivery of materials to the site
<b>Labor</b>	Minimal on-site labor	Extensive on-site labor
<b>Logistics</b>	Simplified by modular design	Complex, multi-stage logistics
<b>Cost</b>	Lower per square foot, less labor and material	Higher per square foot, lengthy labor and materials

In essence, Musk's tiny house is designed for speed and simplicity, taking a completely different approach from the traditional building process. It leverages modular construction and prefabricated components to minimize time, labor, and costs. Traditional homes involve a longer, more complex construction process.