

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:
 - 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 | e.g., 40 beds | e.g., 65 individuals/night | -25 beds | Staffing shortages; Funding limits |
| Medical Respite Care | Unhoused individuals discharged from hospitals needing recovery time | e.g., 0 beds | e.g., 5 referrals/month | -5 beds | Licensing/Zoning; Operational funding |
| Transitional Housing | Youth (18-24) or those leaving incarceration | e.g., 12 beds | e.g., 30 applicants | -18 beds | Lack of suitable real estate |
| Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) | Chronically homeless with disabilities (Housing First model) | e.g., 50 vouchers | e.g., 120 qualified | -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 | e.g., X units | e.g., Y applicants | -Z units | Construction costs; High interest rates |
| Diversion/Prevention Funds | At-risk tenants facing eviction | e.g., \$50k annual budget | e.g., \$150k in requests | -\$100k* | Limited General Assistance (GA) flexibility |

The Regional Fiscal Impact Scorecard

The "Fair Share" Formula

The Formula:

(Total Housing Units \times 10% Target) - (Existing Affordable Units + Service Credits) = 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 | | | | | | |

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|-----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 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.