

Outreach Committee Meeting Minutes

SEPTEMBER 29, 2026 | 3:00 - 4:00 PM

Virtual – Microsoft Teams



FACILITATOR: Bryan Holt

MEETING ATTENDEES: Maddie Martin, Artemis Tally, Elisha Pritchett, Erik Ryder, Inez Escareno, Bryan Holt, Jennifer Shields, Francine Kalnins, Marsha Mooney, Michael Maher, Brandon O'Neal, Benjamin Rance, Kevin Sears, Spencer Husch, Tanya Coffman, Tyler Kregel, Tammy Vincent

TIME CONVENED: 3:00 PM

TIME ADJOURNED: 3:57 PM

BUILT FOR ZERO (BFZ) OUTREACH MAPPING TOOL – *Elisha Pritchett*

DISCUSSION: Elisha shared that she was onsite in Grand Rapids in July and heard about the great work being done across the community's homelessness response system.

Elisha from Community Solutions presented BFZ's "Outreach Mapping Tool".

- The tool is housed within the Open Reporting Process (ORP) on the BFZ website, the same platform used for monthly data reporting.
- The tool is one of several resources available to outreach teams through the BFZ website. The tool is designed to support coordination among outreach teams by creating a visual representation of outreach activities without collecting or tracking personally identifiable information (PII).
- Communities can use the tool to identify coverage gaps, understand where outreach is occurring, and monitor outreach efforts over time.

Elisha demonstrated the tool's functionality for the group.

- Users can create maps by drawing outreach areas and adding details such as descriptions, addresses, categories (such as parks), and color coding.
- Outreach schedules and coverage areas can be layered on the same map, allowing users to visualize where multiple teams may be working.
- Specific points/pins can be dropped on the map.
- Maps can be named, assigned an outreach period, customized with different themes and display settings, and shared with specific users.
- Inez shared that communities can determine access permissions based on local needs, and separate maps can be created when teams prefer not to share information broadly.

Elisha then opened the floor for questions and invited the group to share their thoughts, concerns, and potential uses for the tool.

- Michael asked whether the tool is mobile-friendly and Elisha confirmed that it is.
- Tammy said the tool could be helpful particularly in planning and coordinating efforts related to the PIT Count. Tammy also shared that several CoC partners

will be attending the upcoming Built for Zero conference in Seattle. She noted that the City of Grand Rapids has applied for a STREETS Grant and expressed concern that potential grant requirements could require changes to current outreach practices, which may ultimately impact the use of this tool.

- Elisha said that even if the tool is not implemented community-wide, it could still be useful for specific teams or limited purposes.
- Inez asked who would be able to view information entered into the tool beyond street outreach teams. Elisha explained that access is determined by the community, with CoC administrators controlling permissions. Maps are not publicly available and can be restricted to specific users or teams. Inez expressed concern about the ability to download or print maps, noting concerns about information potentially being shared with law enforcement and the impact that could have on clients. Elisha acknowledged those concerns and confirmed that maps can be downloaded or printed, noting that communities would need to determine whether and how the tool should be used locally.

Elisha also noted that users can leave feedback directly within the tool and that Community Solutions will work to incorporate suggestions and improvements as quickly as possible.

Tyler asked how pilot communities have found the tool most useful. Elisha shared that communities are still exploring best practices, but common uses have included mapping outreach coverage to identify service gaps and coordinating schedules among providers with different outreach responsibilities.

Elisha concluded by sharing that communities interested in exploring the tool further could continue discussions with CoC staff or contact her directly (epritchett@community.solutions.com) with additional questions.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING – *City of Grand Rapids Office of Emergency Management*

DISCUSSION:

Benjamin Rance, Emergency Management Administrator for the City of Grand Rapids Office of Emergency Management (OEM), provided an overview of his team's work and invited group discussion on opportunities for collaboration with homeless and housing service providers. He shared that the office's work includes emergency planning, staff training and exercises, community preparedness, resilience initiatives, stakeholder engagement, and public emergency communications.

Benjamin provided an opportunity for membership to ask questions about OEM and discuss possible areas for collaboration:

- Bryan asked whether OEM weather alerts and emergency information could be shared with outreach teams through an existing email distribution list. Benjamin shared that OEM is working to create a distribution list for external partners who may benefit from receiving this information and can include CoC partners.
- Tyler asked whether there was a strategy or plan for warming centers and cold-weather response efforts in the coming months. Tammy shared that the City of Grand Rapids has funded Degagé's daytime warming center operations from November 1 through March 31. She noted that the City does not coordinate

overnight shelter planning during the winter months and instead looks to the CoC and community partners for those efforts.

- Bryan asked whether outreach teams could access supplies through OEM. Benjamin explained that OEM has limited emergency supplies available and does not maintain a large inventory for distribution. However, he noted that smaller items, such as face masks, may occasionally be available and encouraged outreach teams to reach out for specific needs.

ACTION ITEMS: **Outreach Workgroup:** For further ideas on how the Office of Emergency Management may collaborate with the community, please contact Ben by phone at 616-490-9824 or by email at brance@grand-rapids-mi.us.

STREET OUTREACH POLICY UPDATE & NEXT STEPS

DISCUSSION: Tyler shared that the Street Outreach Policy was approved by Steering Council in September. The next step is to develop process workflows to support implementation of the policy. He asked whether anyone would be interested in helping draft workflows that could eventually be distributed to outreach partners.

- Bryan suggested forming a smaller workgroup to develop workflows. Artemis indicated he would be willing to participate once the scope and goals of the workflow development process were more clearly defined.
- Bryan noted a smaller group could help establish more focused objectives before bringing recommendations back to the larger workgroup. Marsha expressed support for that approach.

Tammy noted the potential impact of the pending STREETS Grant Application. While she encouraged the group to continue moving forward, she noted that if the community is awarded the grant, outreach processes may be impacted significantly.

Tyler asked when grant award announcements are expected, noting that communities had originally anticipated hearing back by Sept. 1. Tammy shared that the application has completed SAMHSA review and advanced to the review council stage. Tammy noted that the implementation date was originally expected to begin on Sept. 30, but the process appears to be delayed. She added that other communities have not yet received award notifications and that only eight communities nationwide will ultimately receive awards.

Bryan suggested tabling further workflow discussions until November. Tammy agreed that waiting may be beneficial and expressed hope that CoC representatives attending the Built for Zero conference at the end of October will be able to gather guidance and implementation strategies related to the opportunities from the STREETS Grant.

ACTION ITEMS: **CoC Staff:** Add workflow discussion to the November Outreach Workgroup agenda.

INDIVIDUALIZED HOUSING PLAN UPDATE & NEXT STEPS

DISCUSSION: Tyler shared that the Individualized Housing Plan (IHP) was recently tested with several clients. A few additional revisions were made following the trial run and an instructions document is currently being developed to assist outreach teams in filling out the form. Tyler is hopeful that the IHP and accompanying materials will be ready for distribution within the next few weeks.

Tyler also reported that a pilot cross-sector case conferencing process is expected to begin in October. The goal is to develop a list from the By Name List and work with participating clients to create individualized housing plans. He noted that Mark Contreras will send invitations to those who will participate in the cross-sector case conferencing effort.

ADJOURNMENT – *Next meeting: October 27*