

**CITY OF BETHLEHEM**  
**City Council Memorandum**

**Subject:** Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness  
**To:** Laura Collins, Director, Department of Community & Economic Development  
**From:** Michael Colón, President of Council  
**Date:** October 10, 2022

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At your request, the Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness has been placed on the October 18, 2022 agenda of the joint Public Safety and Community Development Committee Meeting. This matter will be the second item on the agenda during the meeting which will begin at 5:00 PM in Town Hall. Committee Chairs Leon and Van Wirt were consulted and agreeable to this addition to the agenda.

Your memo will be read as a Communication during the regular City Council Meeting that will follow at 7:00 PM. It will be announced that this matter will be the subject of a Public Hearing during the November 1, 2022 City Council Meeting.



Michael G. Colón  
President, Bethlehem City Council

cc: City Council, Brian Panella, Esquire

# CITY OF BETHLEHEM

## Department of Community and Economic Development Interoffice Memorandum

**Date:** October 6, 2022  
**To:** Michael G. Colón, President of City Council  
**From:** Laura Collins, Director of Community and Economic Development  
**Re:** Presentation on Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness

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Earlier this year, the City of Bethlehem began work with a consultant to complete a Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness. The focus of the work was to identify a feasible built solution that is part of a comprehensive approach to provide necessary sheltering and services to those who are experiencing homelessness in Bethlehem and the greater Lehigh Valley region.

We respectfully request the opportunity to present the recently completed Strategic Plan to City Council at the upcoming October 18<sup>th</sup> joint Public Safety and Community Development Committee Meeting. We will present the Plan recommendations and also outline the Plan development process, which included stakeholder and service provider interviews, a community-based survey of those experiencing homelessness, a comprehensive built solutions assessment of the Lehigh Valley and a corresponding gaps analysis, and an initial cost-estimate assessment for construction, operation, and maintenance of a potential built solution.

Sharing the Strategic Plan with Councilmembers is an important step to move from recommendations for a solution to actualization of a solution, which we hope to do without delay. To further a built solution, we intend to direct funds from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) American Rescue Plan Program (HOME-ARP). Accordingly, concurrent with this letter, we are requesting a public hearing on the City's HOME-ARP allocation plan to be held at the beginning of the October 18<sup>th</sup> regular City Council meeting. Shortly thereafter, we will be looking to City Council for approval of the allocation plan. Council's awareness and understanding of the Strategic Plan will be a necessary precursor to your consideration of the HOME-ARP allocation plan, so we hope to have the opportunity to present the Strategic Plan at the upcoming Public Safety and Community Development Committee meeting.

Thank you for considering this request. We are very grateful for City Council's commitment to this issue of utmost importance to the City and all of our unsheltered neighbors. Please let me know if you have any questions or desire additional information.

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Laura Collins  
Director of the Department of Community and  
Economic Development