

# Exploring a Holistic Approach to Performance Measurement and System Planning

## Focus Strategies

Tracy Bennett, PhD

Michael Hatch, PhD

Genevieve Williamson, MS



**Increasing Capacity &  
Building Connections:  
Bridging to the Future**



## **What This Session Covers**

- Performance measurement and system planning requires:
  - Holistic, action-oriented approach
  - An evaluative and policy development strategy that looks at multiple interconnected aspects of the system simultaneously
- We discuss the framework we use to look at data and
  - develop recommendations for reducing inflow to homelessness,
  - optimize homeless system performance, and
  - maximize housing options



## **Focus Strategies**

Support communities to end homelessness through smart system design and mixed-method analytics (blended qualitative and quantitative approach)

- System planning and performance measurement
- Coordinated entry design and development
- Disparities analysis
- Program evaluation
- Affordable and supportive housing technical assistance

## Understanding and Addressing Homeless System Flow Requires Balance

- Reduce Inflow
- Optimize Performance
- Increase Housing Options





## **When Something Interferes with Balance**

## Inflow in Homeless System

- Many factors impact housing stability\*
  - Rent Costs
  - Income
  - Life events
  - Personal history
  - Social networks
- Not all households become homeless or enter the homeless system
- Can the homeless system impact inflow?
  - Prevention
  - Housing Problem Solving/Diversion
  - *Coordinated Entry/Exit*





## **Inflow: Prevention**

- What is Prevention? Key is that households are not yet homeless
- Not much strong analytic work about who will or will not become homeless exists
- How do you measure effectiveness or success?



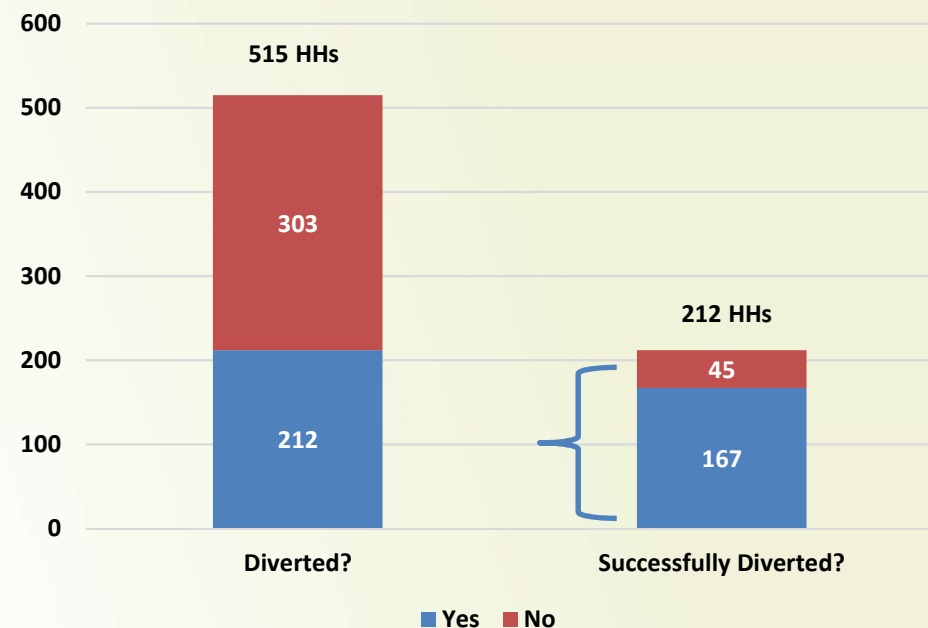
## **Inflow: Housing Problem Solving/Diversion**

- What is Diversion? Key is that households are already homeless or nearly so
- How do you measure effectiveness or success?
- Three community examples

## Inflow: Housing Problem Solving/Diversion

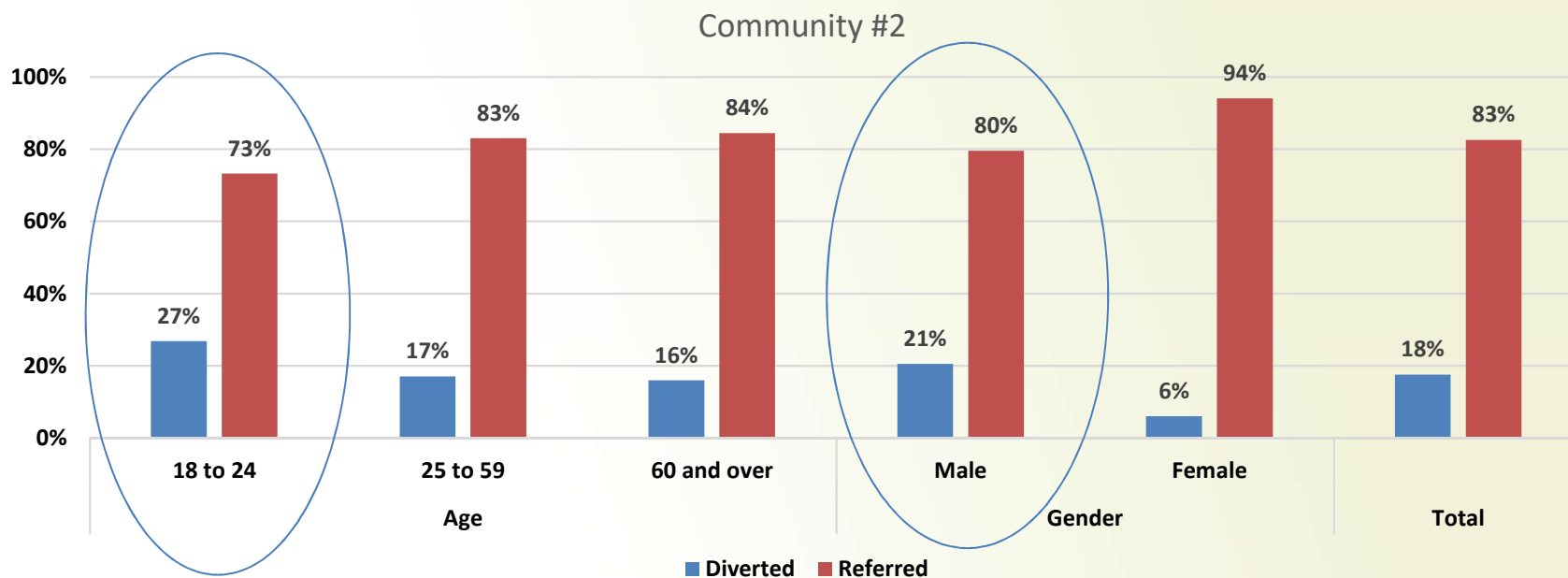
### Community #1

- 515 households entered diversion
- 212 households diverted (41.2%)
  - 167 households “successfully diverted” (32.4%)
  - 45 households enrolled in ES/TH in 6 months (21.2%)





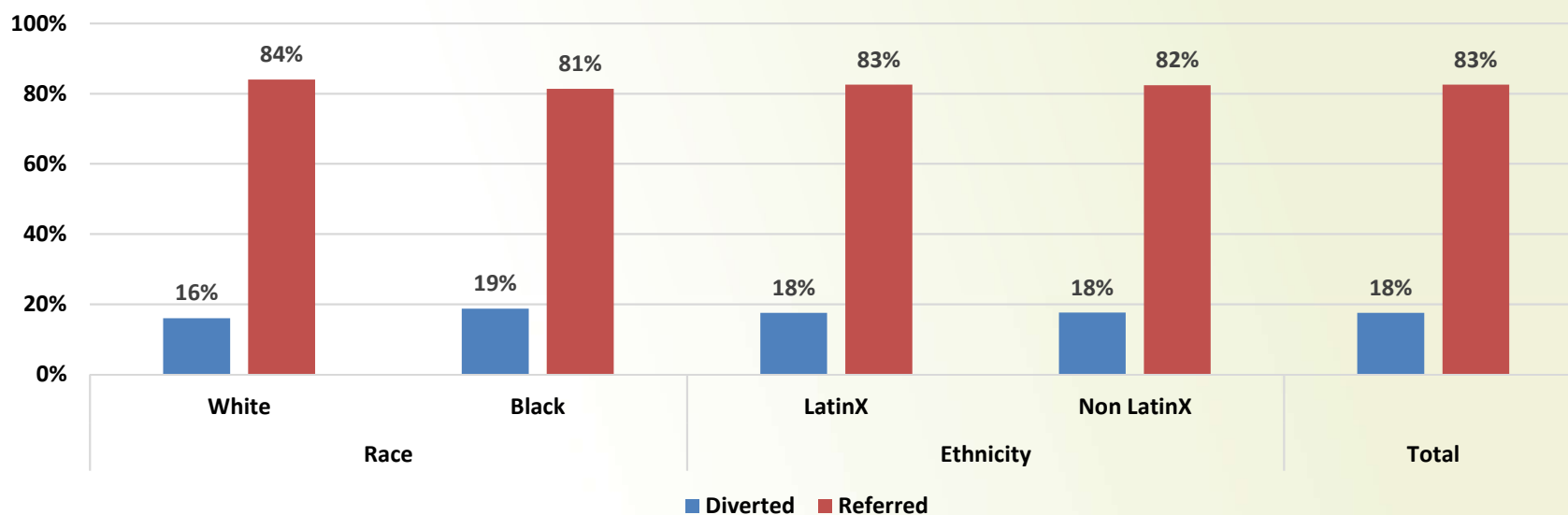
## Inflow: Housing Problem Solving/Diversion





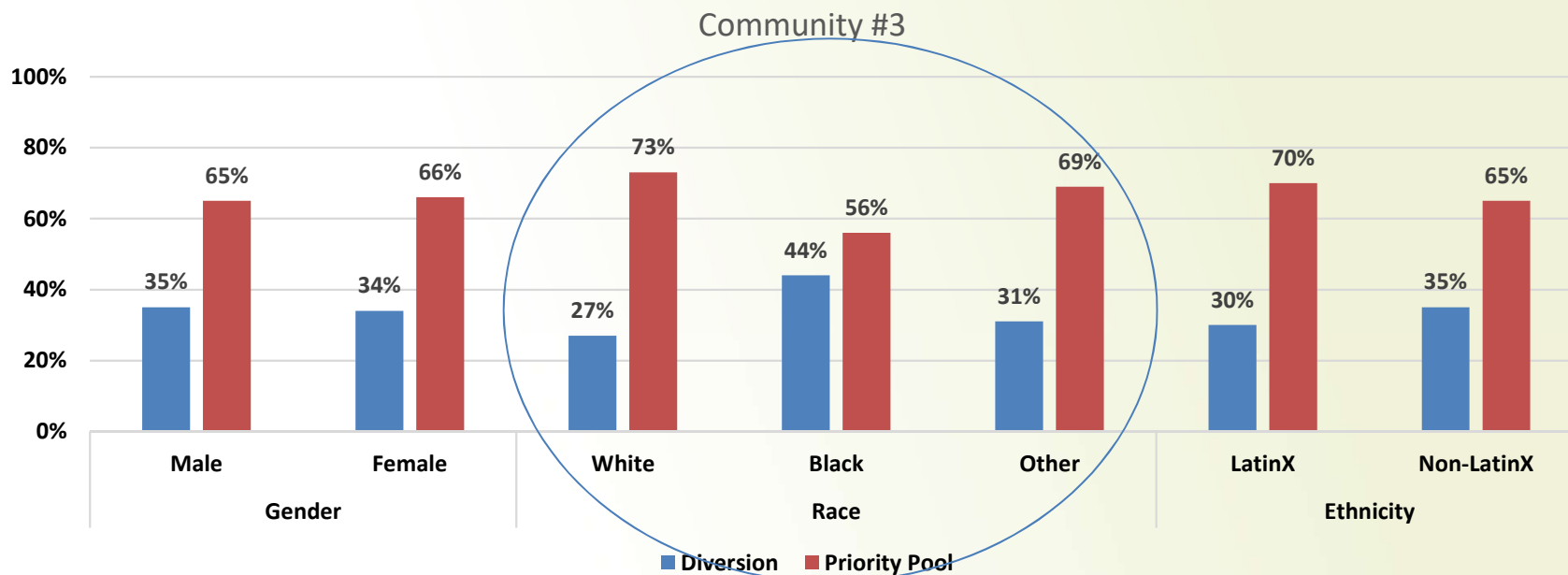
## Inflow: Housing Problem Solving/Diversion

Community #2

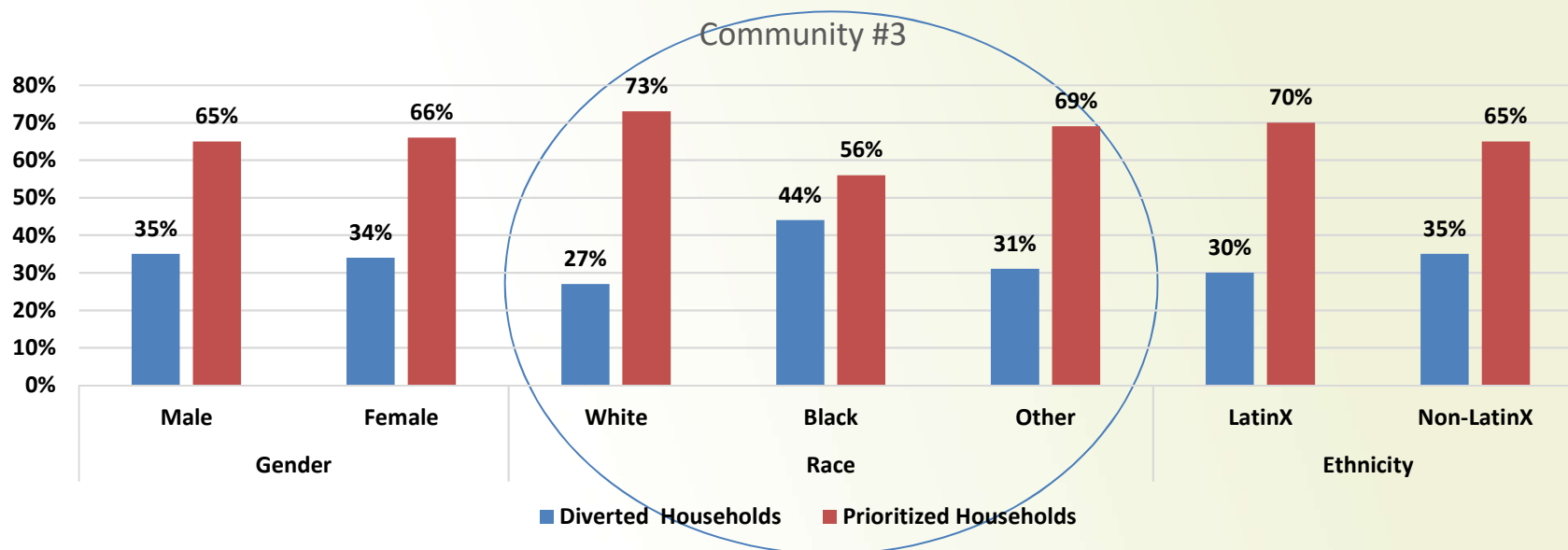




## Inflow: Housing Problem Solving/Diversion



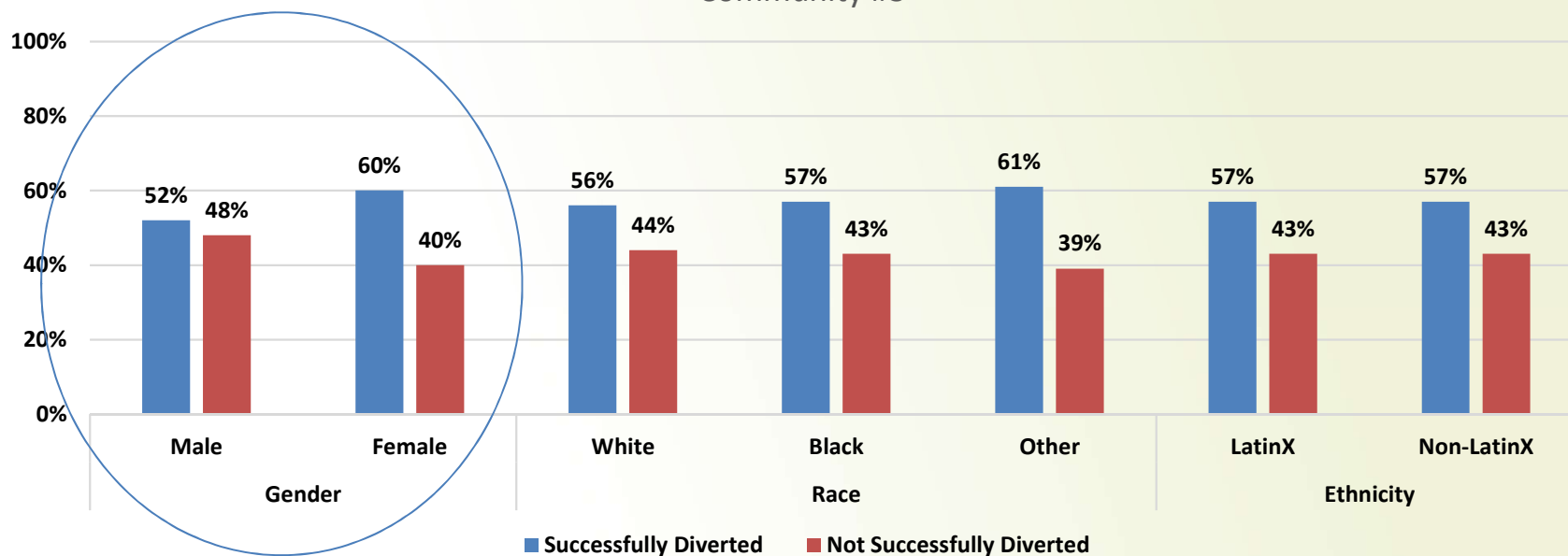
## Inflow: Housing Problem Solving/Diversion





# Inflow: Housing Problem Solving/Diversion

Community #3



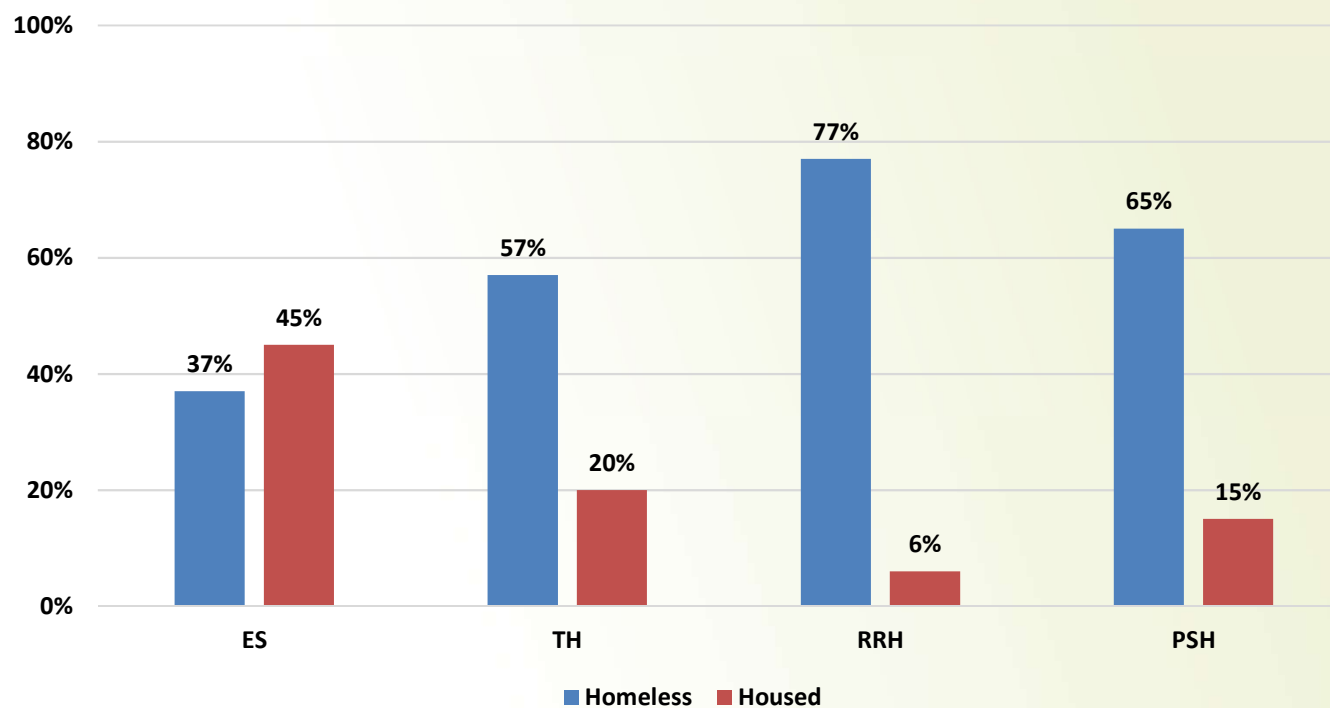


## **Optimizing System Performance**

- Prior living (are programs enrolling literally homeless households?)
- Length of stay (how quickly are programs helping households end their homelessness?)
- Exits to permanent housing (are programs helping households find permanent housing?)
- Returns to homelessness (are programs helping people find housing they can maintain?)

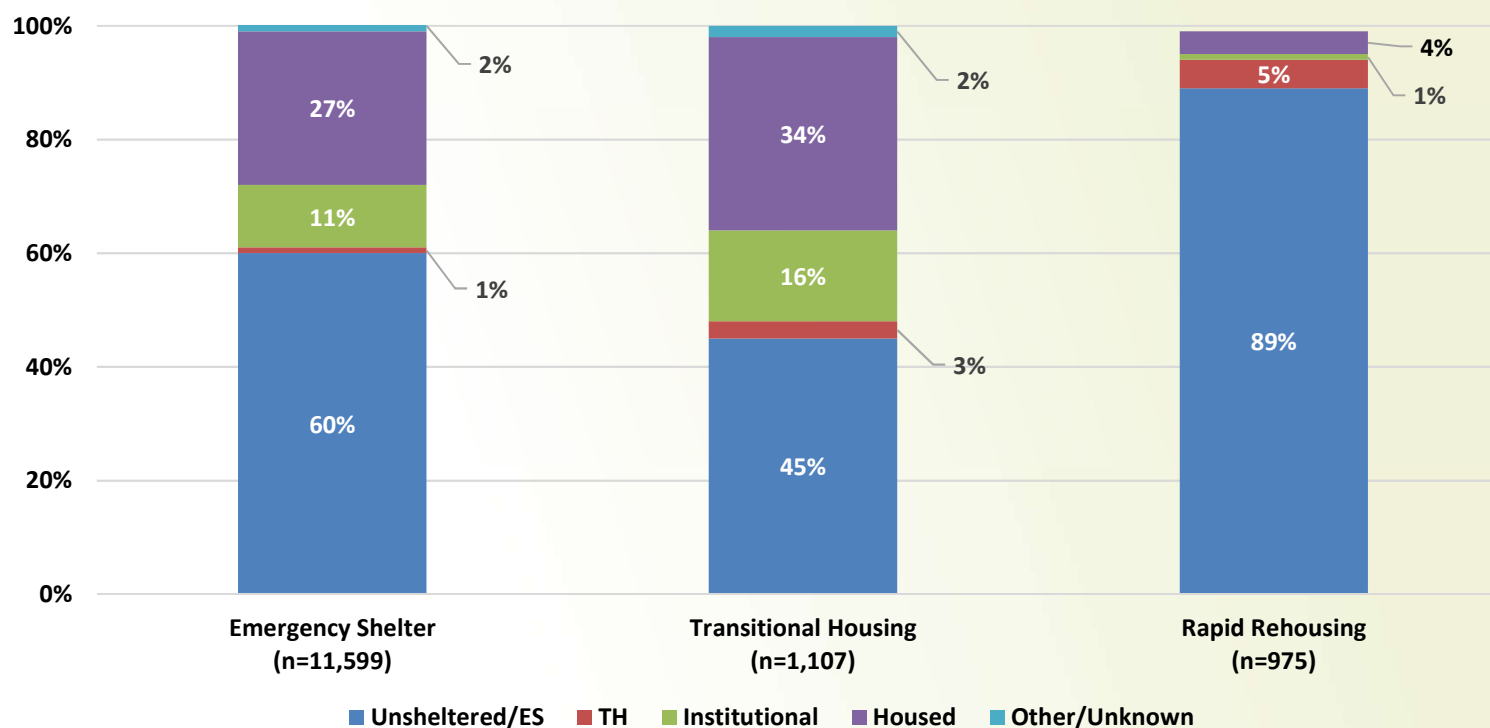


## Program Entry: Jacksonville, FL (2016)





## Program Entry: Maricopa Regional CoC, AZ (2017)

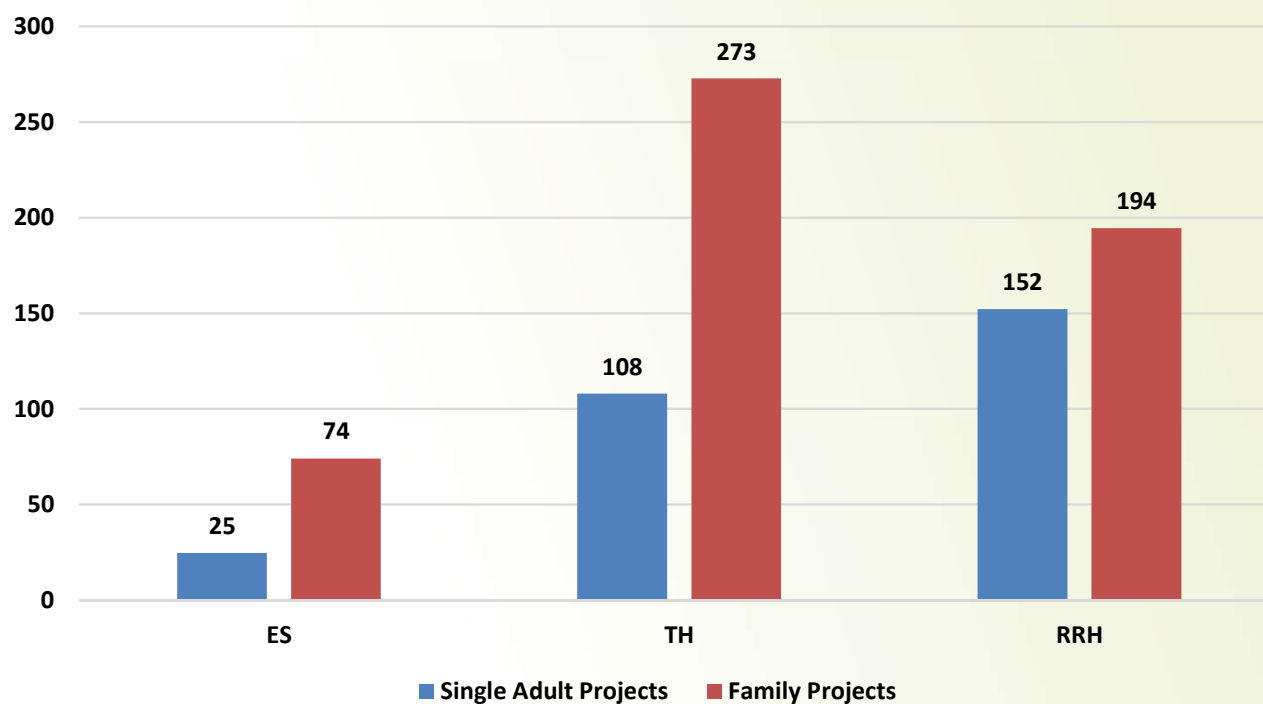




## **Increasing Program Entries from Homelessness**

- Consider the diversion strategy being used
  - Where does it happen?
- Are there alternative ways to get into the system?
- Determine why households entering transitional housing from housing
- Consider working with institutional settings on discharge planning to allow for more capacity for literally homeless households

## Length of Stay: Maricopa Regional CoC (2017)



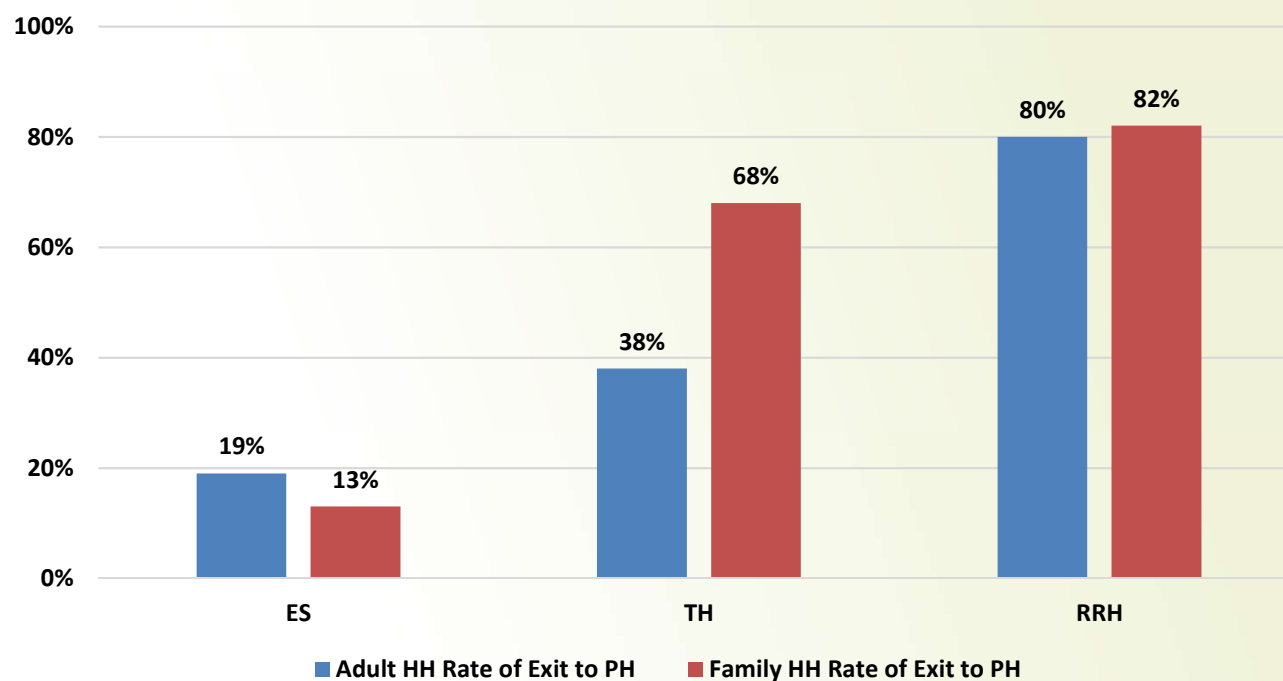


## Reducing Length of Stay

- If median lengths of stay are long
  - Focus on shortening stays while retaining high permanent housing exits
- If median lengths of stay are short, but average is long
  - Focus on long-term stayers and identify specific intervention to shorten length of stay
- For shelter especially, people moving from shelter to shelter after short stays
  - Reconsider time limits to reduce shuffling

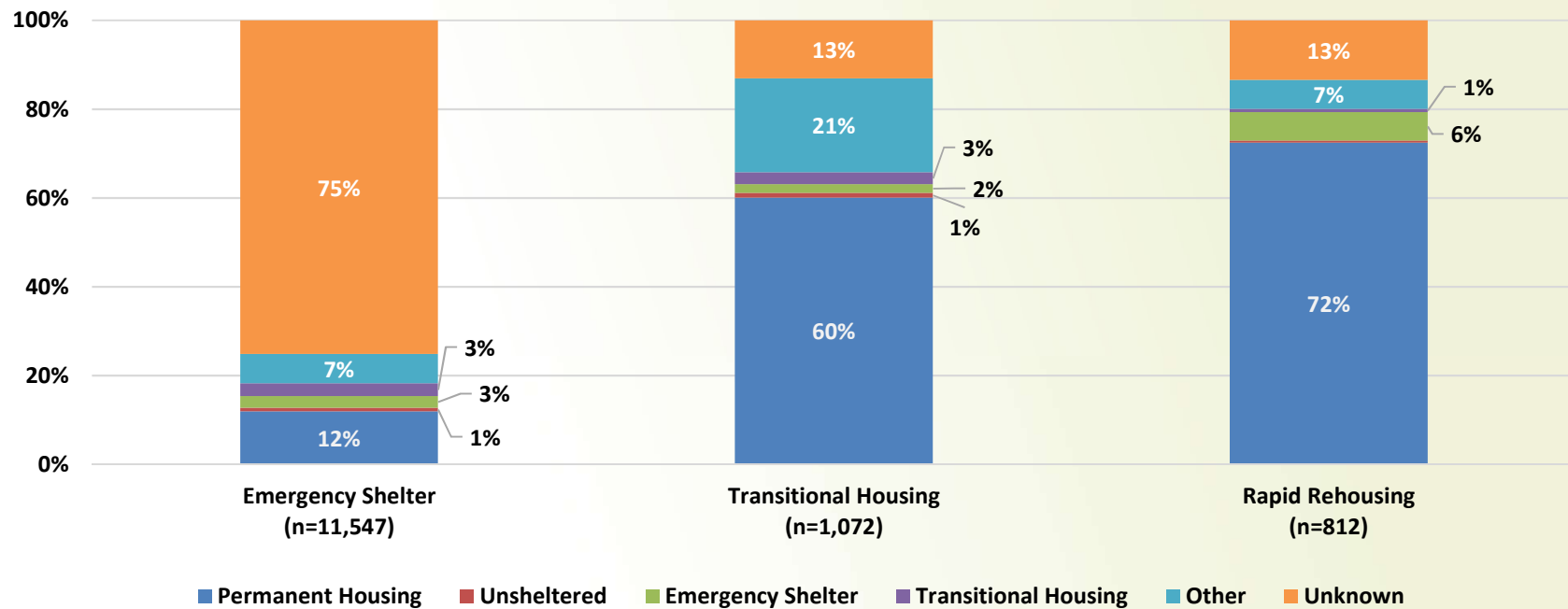


## Exit to PH: San Mateo County, CA (FY 14/15)





## Program Exit: Maricopa Regional CoC (2017)



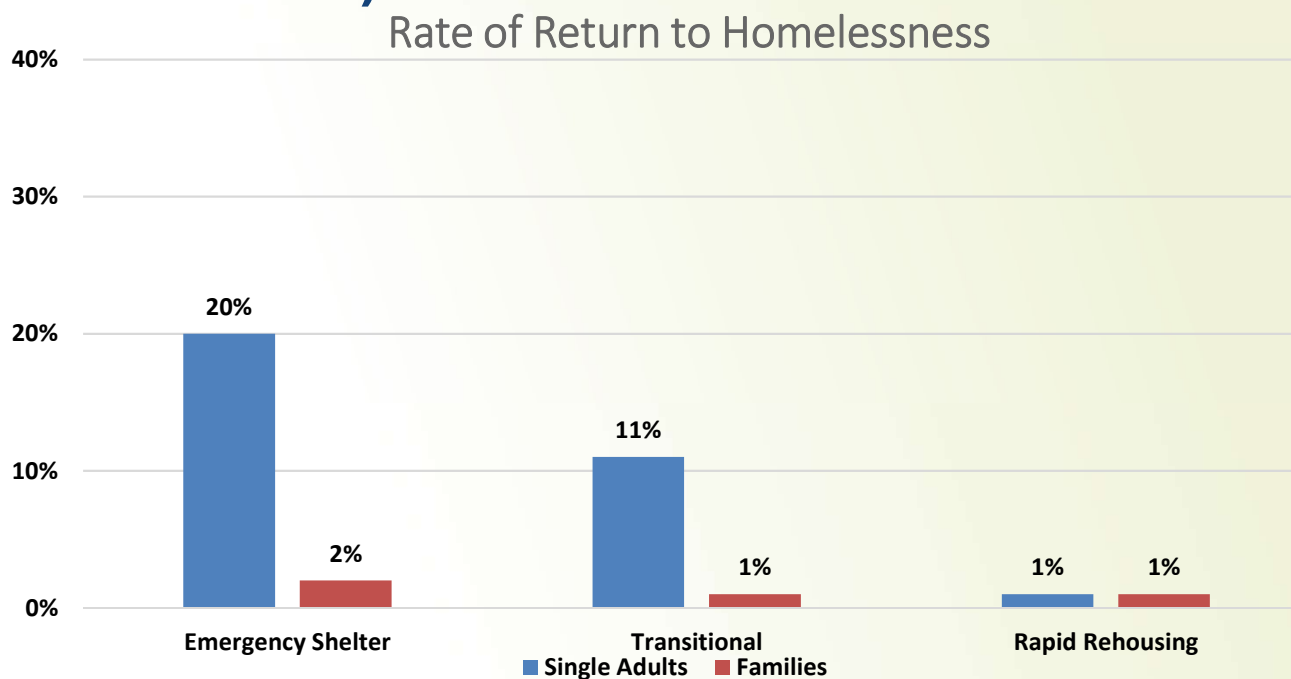


## Increasing Permanent Housing Exit Rates

- A high rate of “unknown” exits mean we don’t know where many/most people go
  - Need to improve exit destination data to know where people exit to
- If very few people leave shelter for permanent housing, focus on rehousing as a main goal of shelter
- Low rate of exit to PH can indicate system needs more capacity to provide landlord recruitment, housing navigation, housing-focused case management
- Expand RRH funding



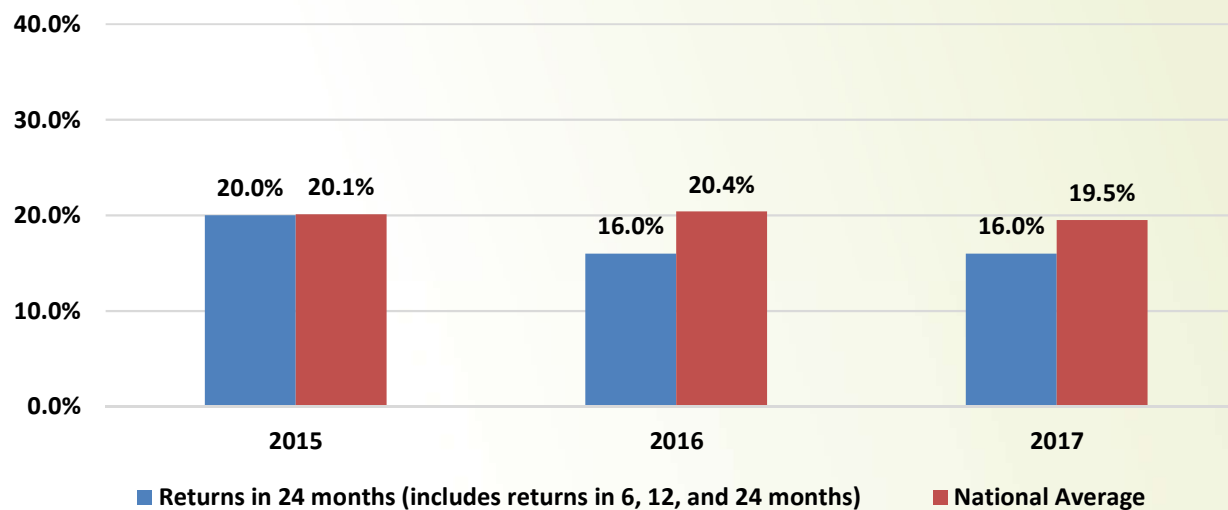
## Returns to Homelessness: San Mateo County, CA (FY 13/14 & 14/15)





## Returns to Homelessness: San Mateo County, CA

HUD System Performance Measure 2:  
Returns within 24 Months





## **Minimizing Returns to Homelessness**

- Develop a housing plan as soon as possible after program entry
- Use housing specialists to help secure housing that can be maintained
- Link households with community supports

## Outflow

- Need to understand
  - Housing needs of people experiencing homelessness
  - Local housing market dynamics and opportunities
- Recent publications
  - USICH
  - National Low Income Housing Coalition
  - Zillow Research Group





## **Outflow: Coordinated Entry/Exit**

- Focus on exits
- Dynamic Prioritization



## Outflow: Housing Stock

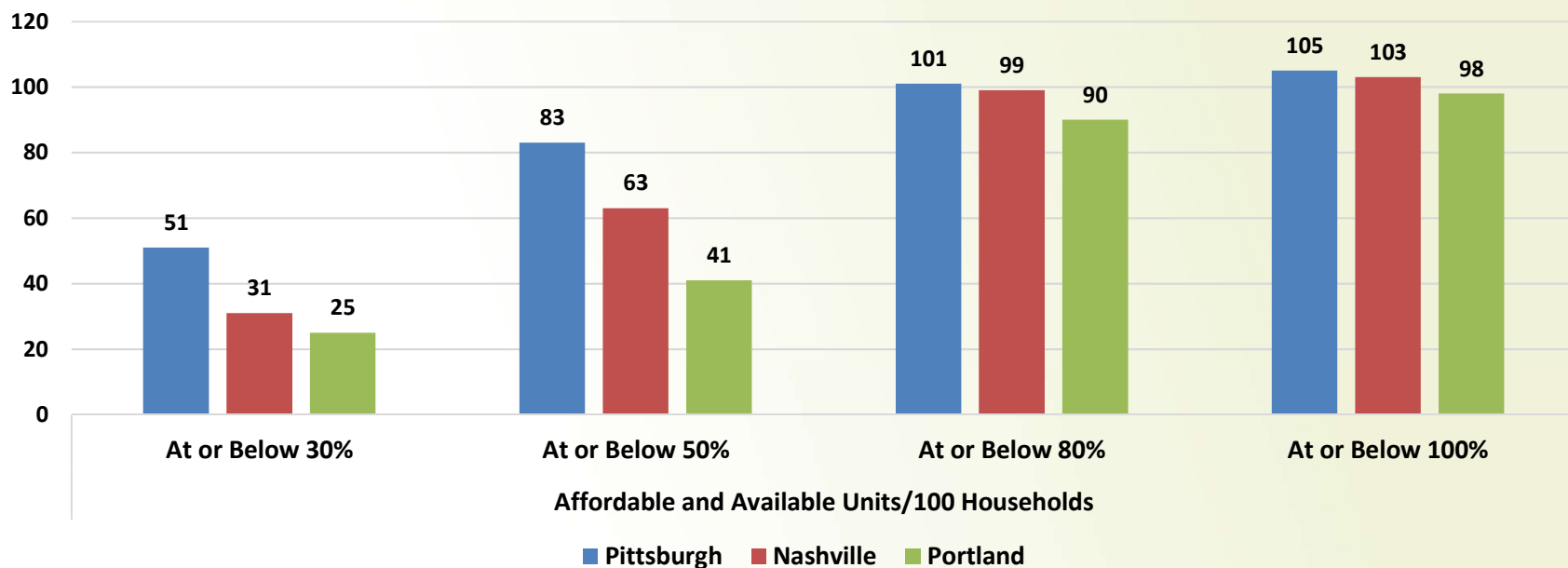
The 2019 NLIHC GAP report says:

***“..no state has an adequate supply of affordable and available homes for extremely low-income renters.”***

There is more competition for units renting on the lower end of the market because as rents increase, more people vie for units with lower rents

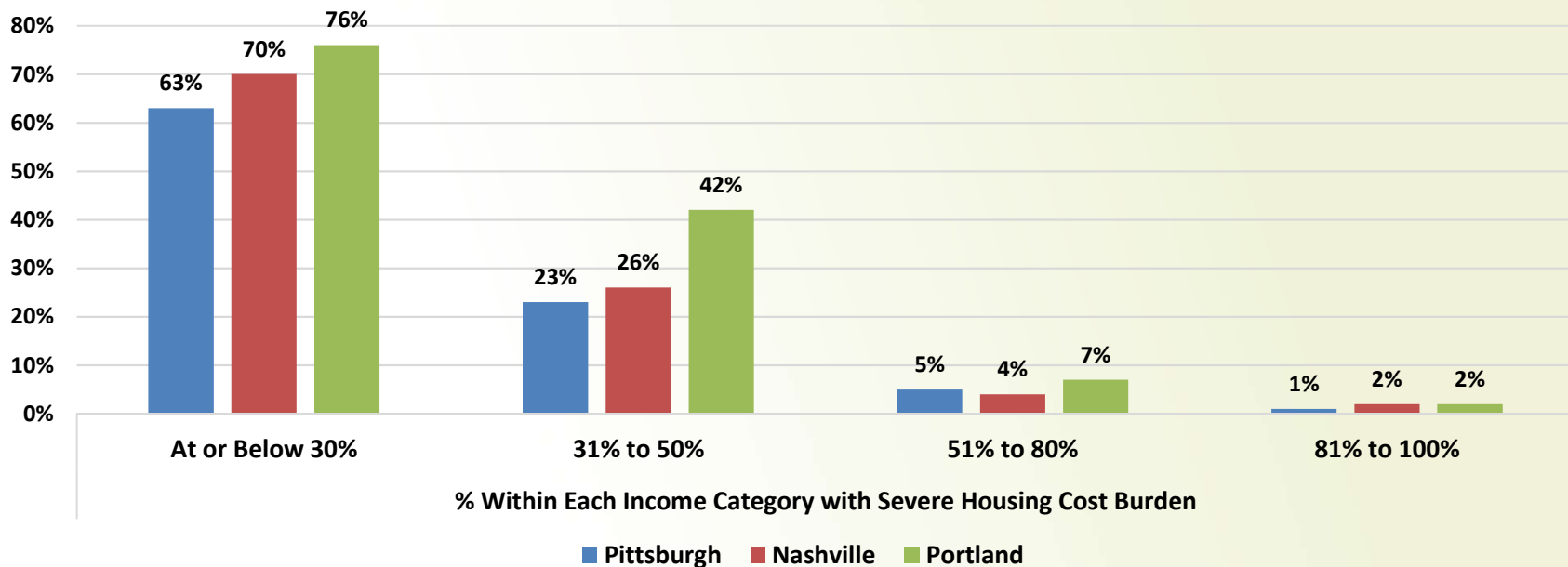


## Outflow: Housing Stock, 2017





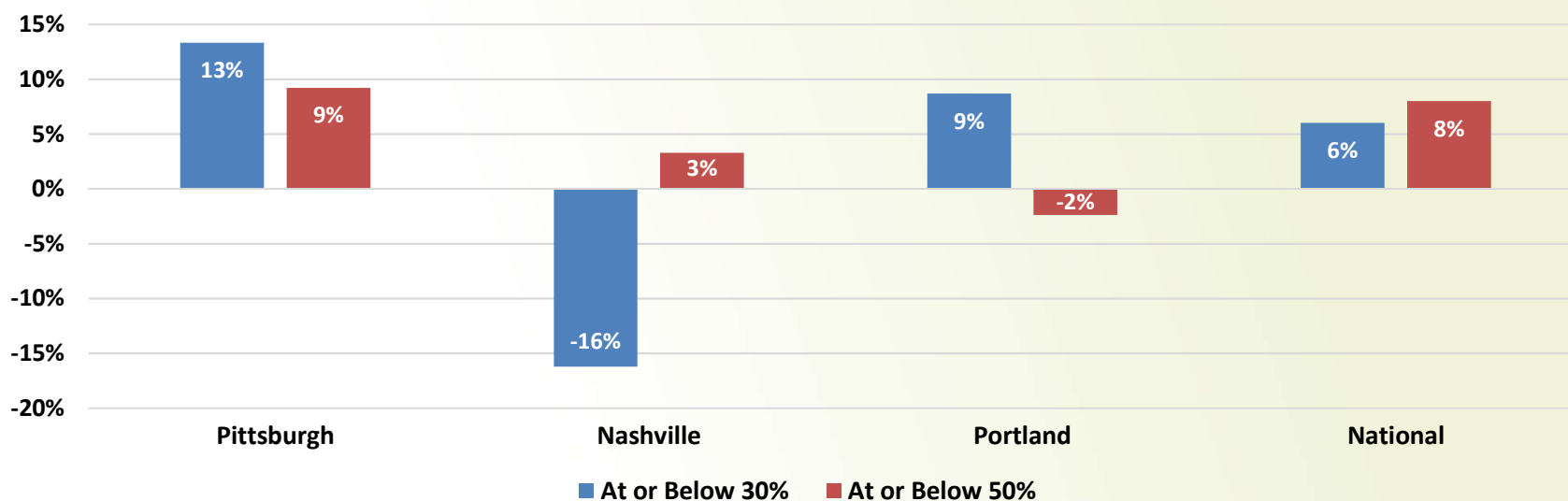
## Outflow: Housing Stock, 2017





# Outflow: Housing Stock, 2015 to 2017

Change in the Number of Affordable and Available Units Below 30% and 50% AMI





## Outflow: Housing Market and Homelessness

- More competition at the lower end of the market
- As households compete for the least expensive options, they are at higher risk of falling off the housing market ladder if something happens
- Recent work by the Zillow Research Group
  - Strong relationship between rising rents and increased homelessness
  - In communities where people spend more than 32 percent of their income on rent, a more rapid rise in homelessness occurs



## **Outflow: Creating Community Options**

- No universal template for how homelessness evolves and responds in a given community; every community needs to focus on what is happening locally
- To make progress on reducing homelessness, need a particular focus on creating more units affordable for people at or below 30% AMI
- Regional plans for affordable housing development
- Strategy to preserve current supply of affordable units
- Public education/awareness campaign focusing on housing as the solution to homelessness

***WE STARTED HERE***

## Understanding and Addressing Homeless System Flow Requires Balance

- Reduce Inflow
- Optimize Performance
- Increase Housing Options





*WHAT IT REALLY IS*

## Understanding and Addressing Homeless System Flow Requires Balance

- Reduce Inflow
- Optimize Performance
- Increase Housing Options





## Concluding Remarks

- Develop system wide evaluation strategy; simultaneously look at all three pieces
- Qualitative very important
- Response to “less than perfect” data (data quality or unexpected results)



## Questions and Discussion

