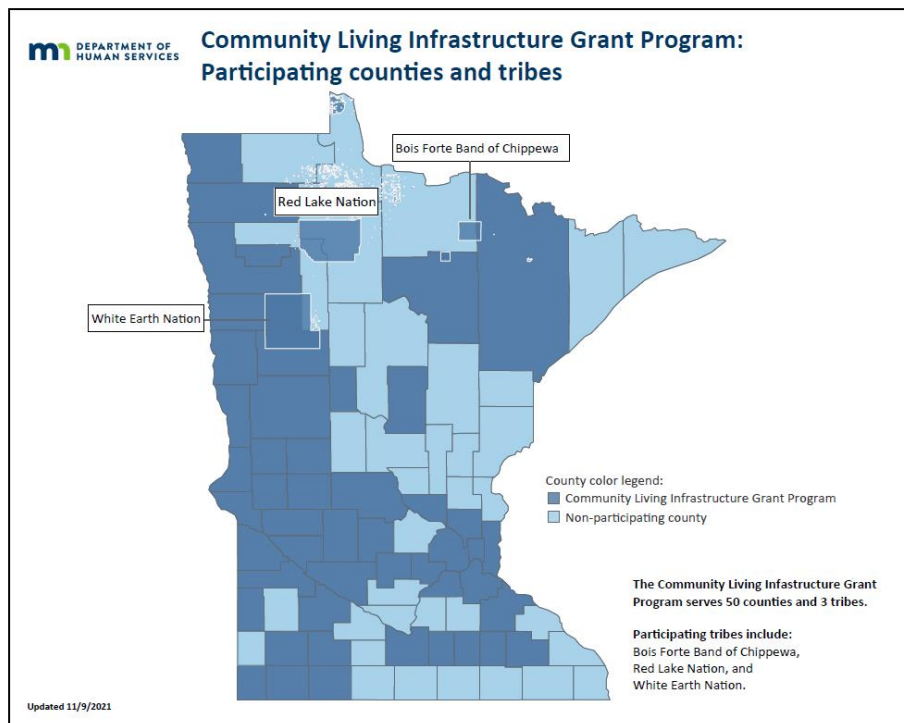


## Community Living Infrastructure

Housing is foundational to all other health and human service programs; without stable housing, it is difficult for a person to maintain their physical and emotional well-being, have reliable access to food, as well as sustain employment or consistent income. While housing is widely recognized as a critical component of the human services continuum, counties and tribes have not received consistent funding to build the system infrastructure necessary to support housing in their human services work.

Community Living Infrastructure funding was intended to fill this gap and help local governments establish this needed infrastructure. Since the program began in 2018, the funding has been transformative for the 50 counties and four tribes that have received funding. Figure 1 shows currently participating counties and tribes.

Figure 1: Community Living Infrastructure Program, Currently Participating Counties and Tribes



This program supports counties and tribes in integrating housing into their human services infrastructure through funding: 1) outreach; 2) housing resource specialists; and 3) administration of the Housing Support program. With federal money received last session, the state temporarily increased the

funding for the program and scope of allowable activities to include direct assistance to Minnesotans with disabilities in accessing and maintaining housing. This temporary funding expires on March 31, 2024. The Housing Stability Budget proposal adds to the base amount by \$11 million per year and permanently allows direct assistance to be an eligible grant activity.

## What Community Living Infrastructure funds

The Community Living Infrastructure funding is now eligible for use in one or more of the following four areas, with grantees being able to apply for direct assistance funding in the upcoming RFP process.

<p><b>Outreach</b> to people who are homeless, unstably housed, or who want to relocate from hospitals, treatment centers, corrections, or other facilities</p>	<p><b>Housing Resource Specialists</b> to act as local experts and provide information and resources for individuals who need housing</p>	<p><b>Administration and monitoring of the Minnesota Housing Support program</b></p>	<p><b>Direct assistance in helping Minnesotans access and main housing</b> through: 1) lease or rent deposits; 2) security deposits; 3) utilities setup costs; 4) essential furnishings and supplies; and 5) costs related to expungement</p>
---	---	--	---

In FY2020 alone, current grantees served nearly 10,000 households through outreach, housing resource specialist services, and the expansion of the Housing Support program. Even with the challenges connected with the COVID-19 pandemic, Community Living Infrastructure grantees found important ways to connect in their communities, including:

- **Outreach workers** served 1,310 households providing outreach services in settings including jails, halfway houses, crisis centers, churches, public libraries, homeless shelters, among others.
- **Housing Resource Specialists** served 2,700 households by providing training for providers and government staff on housing, supporting individuals experiencing homelessness with housing navigation services, and managing “Housing Help Desks.”
- **Housing Support administration** served 4,760 households by increasing Housing Support provider capacity in the state and opening up new housing opportunities.

These results are impressive in the communities served, and more will be possible with the temporary funding and expansion of activities. **While the results are encouraging, there is a clear, significant need for more state investment in this program to meet Minnesota’s growing housing and homelessness crises. As part of the Housing Stability Budget, the Governor recommends increasing the base amount and scope of activities for the Community Living Infrastructure Program.**

## Examples of Community Living Infrastructure at Work

**Hennepin County:** “In Hennepin County, 700 chronically homeless individuals have been housed since 2017. Housing Support and the Housing Resource Specialist, funded through the CLI grant, played a huge part in providing the funding and services needed to achieve this milestone. On average, these 700 chronically homeless individuals were homeless for more than three years before being housed, **and so those efforts ended a cumulative total of more than 2,000 years of homelessness.**”

**Olmsted County:** “Having Community Living Infrastructure led to some significant outcomes for residents of Olmsted County; 121 formerly homeless residents establishing housing, two new buildings dedicated to PSH and TH (a total of 30 units), the development and opening of a new day-center for services to those experiencing homelessness, and the expansion of an overnight shelter from 30 beds to 56.

“Beyond the numbers, the most enduring result of the CLI grant in Olmsted County was the system infrastructure that resulted. The Housing Resource Coordinator position worked with county departments in Health, Housing, and Human Services, non-profit service providers, and the faith communities to forge new collaboratives and innovative processes. **These allowed our entire community to maximize the impact of efforts made to end homelessness while assuring that every dollar spent was targeted effectively and efficiently.**”

**Ramsey County:** “Our community providers, internal County staff and current housing support participants depended on CLI staff to be responsive during COVID and the civil unrest by offering more housing and shelter opportunities, additional meetings and training, and support with finding and maintaining housing. During 2020, CLI staff quickly responded by developing a wrap-around service model in our hotel shelter programs (currently five sites). We housed 175 households from hotel shelter between June and December, and partnered with mental health case managers to get an additional 112 people housed from various resources. The coordination of the program would not have been possible without our current funding. The model has successfully helped participants with accessing services and housing. CLI also gave us capacity to recruit and onboard six new culturally specific housing providers.”

### **St. Louis County:**

“There is a huge need in St. Louis County for housing and supportive services. Without funding from the Community Living Infrastructure program, we wouldn’t have the Homeless and Housing Program Specialist position to build provider and community relationships and our housing support program, ensure quality assurance, provide technical assistance and opportunities for critical trainings (e.g. person-centered thinking, harm reduction, housing first principles, trauma informed care and cultural responsiveness). We also would not have been able to develop the incredible manual which has served as a guide and important tool for existing and new providers. As a result of that work, onboarding and other training for providers made possible by CLI funding, St. Louis County has been able to recruit more housing providers, expanding housing options for people who need it.”