

Addressing Homelessness in Terre Haute



“Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life.”

– Nelson Mandela

The Challenges for Terre Haute



Homelessness Rising



Insufficient Housing



Mental Health Needs Growing



City Service Provision Stretched



Thin

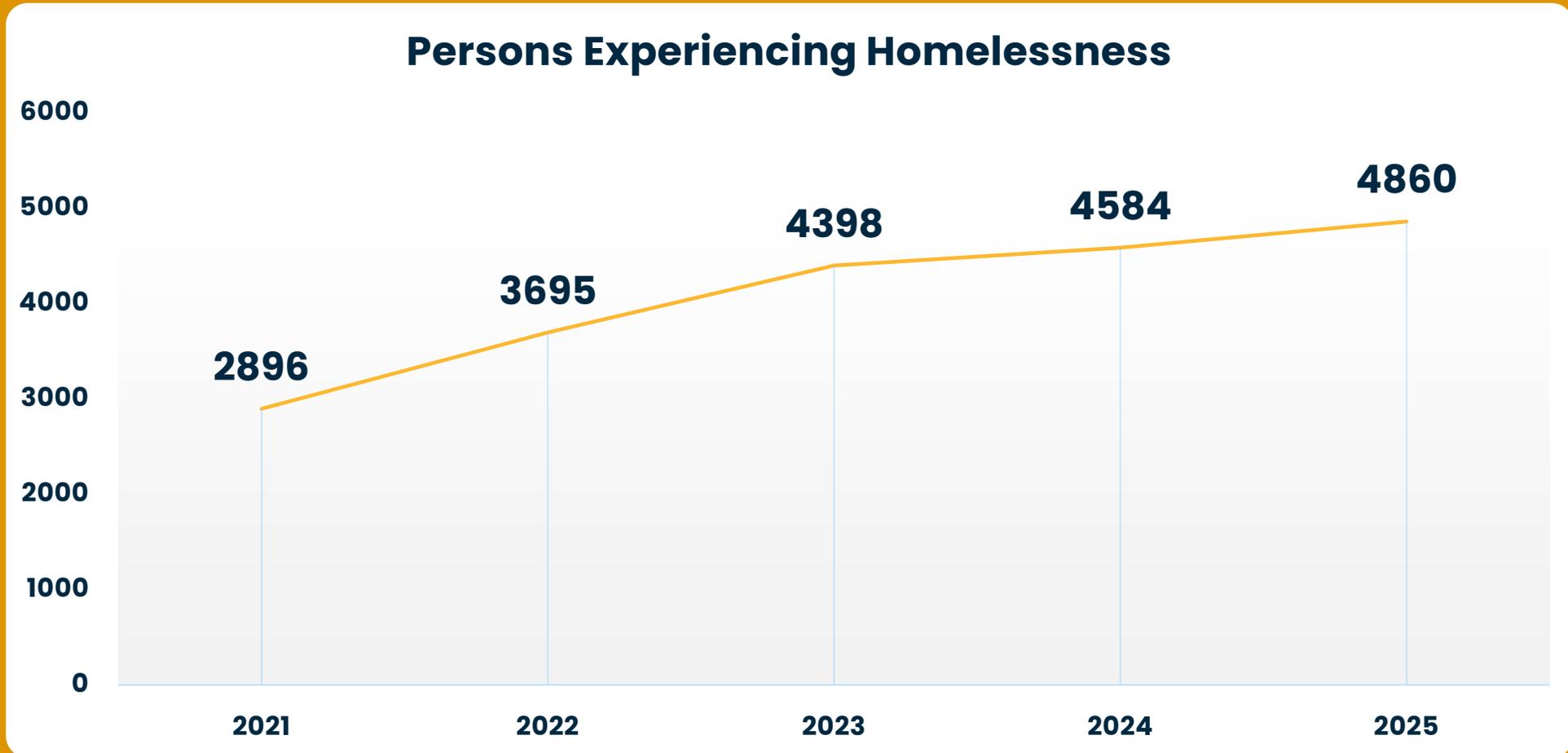
Budgets Tightening





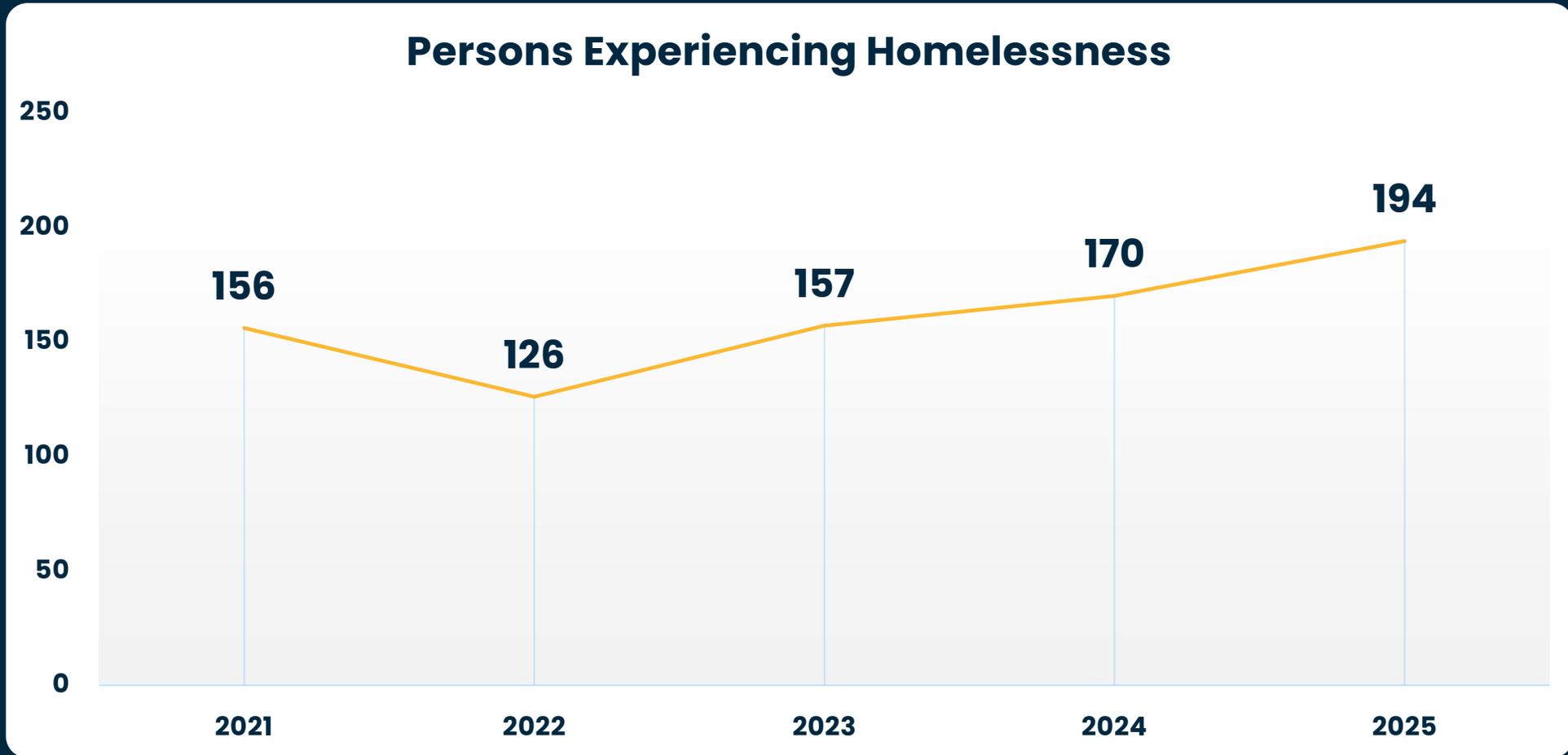
Homelessness

Indiana Statewide Homelessness (PIT 2021–2025)



Data Source: HMIS Data Portal

Vigo County Homelessness (PIT 2021–2025)



Data Source: HMIS Data Portal

24.4%

%

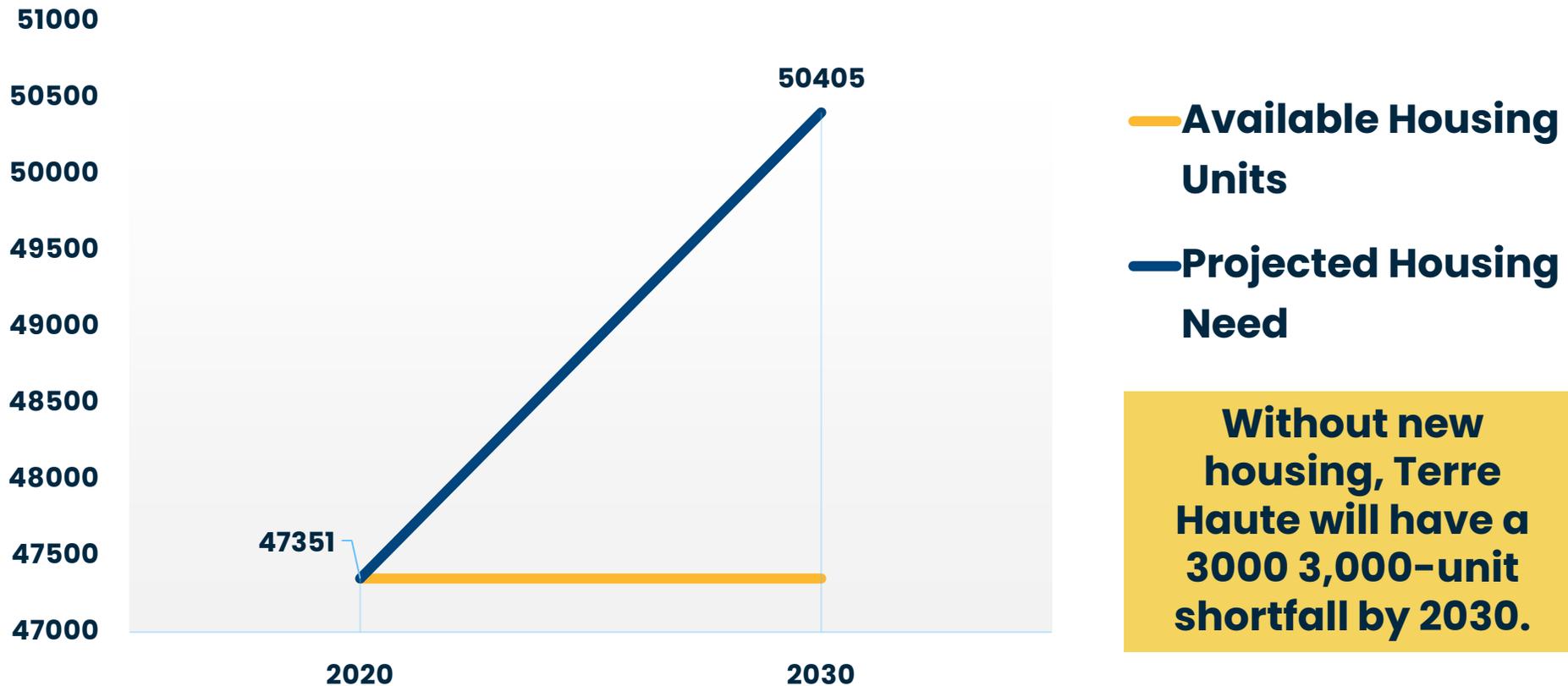
Increase in Homelessness in Vigo County
in the last 5 years



Housing

Housing Shortage in Vigo County

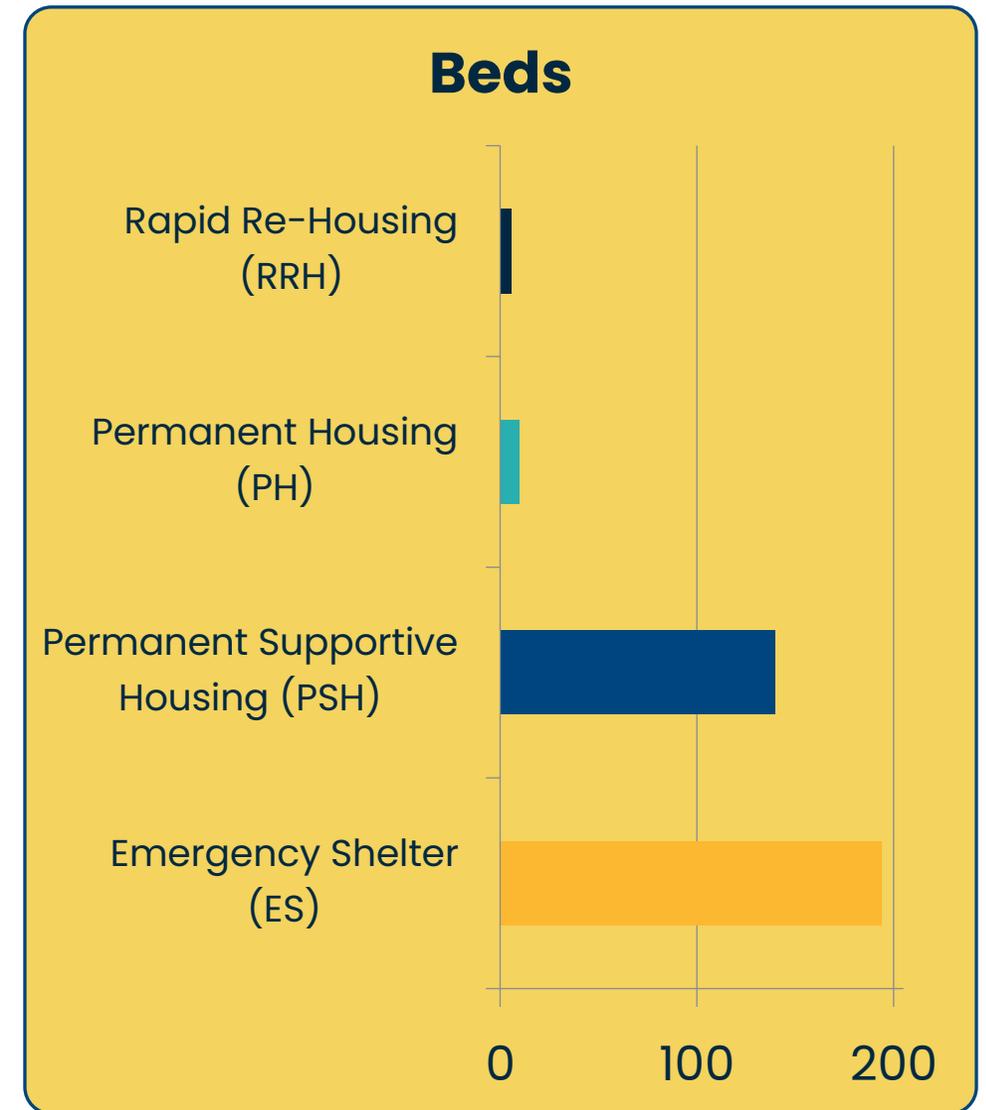
Vigo County Housing Shortage Projection



Data Source: THRIVE West Central 2022 Housing Inventory Study

Shelter Availability

- Total of **~200 emergency shelter beds** countywide.
- At the most recent coalition meeting, **every shelter reported being at full capacity — except Lighthouse Mission.**
- Permanent supportive housing (~140 beds) is also **consistently full**.
- Rapid re-housing resources are **almost nonexistent** (only 6 beds).



Data Source: 2025 HIC Inventory; IHADA



Mental Health

Mental Health Challenges

- **1 in 5 adults** nationally experiences a mental illness each year (NIMH, CDC).
- Nationally, about **25–30% of people experiencing homelessness** live with a serious mental illness.
- **Indiana ranks 43rd** in the U.S. for access to mental health care (Mental Health America, 2024).
- In Indiana, about **22% of adults** report mental illness symptoms annually.





Vigo County Resources

- Locally, caseworkers report that untreated **mental illness** and **substance use disorder** are frequently reported in people in experiencing **homelessness**.
- Our regional mental health provider often reports **long wait times** for therapy and psychiatric services.



City Service Provision

Impacts on City Services

Department	Impacts on service provision
Police Department	Receiving frequent complaints of right-of-way obstructions
Fire Department	Responding to vacant structure and encampment fires
Parks and Recreation	Challenges with individuals sleeping on park property
Inspection	Receiving calls regarding trespassing on private property
Maintenance and Custodial Services	Cleaning trash and human excrement left in right of way



Our Perspective

- We do not blame people—we blame **a broken system**
- We **cannot** say “this is just the way it is”
- We **must act** to help our neighbors in need

General Ordinance 12

- Ordinance filed on **right-of-way obstructions**
- The filing was **withdrawn**
- Withdrawal **does not mean inaction**





Moving Forward Together

- This is not a battle; it's a chance to **come together**
- City + County + Service Providers + Community
- We have a **responsibility** to our **entire community** to end homelessness

Two New Initiatives



Warming Center Working Group



**Housing, Homelessness, and
Mental Health Task Force**



Warming Center Working Group

An initiative to bring together the City, County, Public Safety, and Service Providers to plan for our winter response. No one should be left in the cold.

Housing, Homelessness, and Mental Health Task Force

A Joint Mayor/Council initiative with partners across community with a goal to achieve **functional zero homelessness** in 10 years.



Let's Get to Work

Any questions?