BFZ Community Investments

Funding Programs for HSLC Communities

Flex Funds

Short-term (6 months - 1 year)

Unrestricted dollars to address individuals' barriers to housing, effectively stabilize, or prevent individuals from becoming homeless and achieve "quick wins" toward communities' goals/aims.

Funding purposes: Cover costs that are not otherwise covered by available programs and providers, such as:

- Back rent + utilities/debt
- Application fees
- Transportation
- Court fees
- Pet fees
- Deposits

Catalytic Investments

Mid-to-Long Term (1-2 years)

Investments to test and implement new models, proof of concept programs, or efforts to change structural conditions that have a high likelihood of achieving results on key BFZ metrics.

Funding examples:

- Diversion pilot → Reduce inflow
- Mental Health Triage → Reduce inflow
- Peer Outreach Model → Reduce LoT & Housing Placements

Flexible Funding

Flex Funding Overview

Flexible Funds clear the path on individual-level barriers to housing to accelerate community progress toward ending homelessness.

Rationale:

- **Existing programs and benefits are insufficient** to cover actual costs of individuals staying/becoming housed.
- From identification to housing, **investing in individuals' unique, short-term needs is more cost effective** than the longer-term, more expensive cost of experiencing homelessness.
- Resources that are **right-timed to meet emergent needs** are critical to clearing individual barriers to housing and/or remaining housed.
- Changing **community conditions influence the kind of flexible resources individuals' need** at a given time, in a specific community/region.
- Being **nimble in both funding administration and parameters** allows for real-time response to individuals' need in order to achieve the community's goals.
- Demonstrating the **value and effectiveness of flexible resources at driving reductions** makes the case for support from long-term funding sources.

Flex Fund Strategies to Drive Outcomes

Decrease Inflow (Prevention & Diversion)

Funds to help stabilize households/individuals who are at risk of losing permanent housing and entering into literal homelessness

- **Utility & Rental Payments** — Examples: First and last month's rent, back-owed rent, utility bills, utility and rental deposits
- **Transportation Assistance** — Examples: Car repairs, public transit, gas voucher or gas station gift cards, rideshare services
- **Engagement Support & Incentivization** — Examples: Phone or hotspots; gift cards as incentives for engagement, creative outreach
- **Short-Term Child Care Assistance** — Examples: Support for families to be able to have safe, consistent child care
- **Documentation Fees** — Examples: Assistance paying for photo identification, birth certificates, background checks, etc
- **Cleaning & Trash Removal Services** — Examples: Payments for removal of trash and items, pest control, cleaners
- **Relocation Assistance** — Examples: Plane, train, bus tickets, movers, moving costs, gas voucher or gas station gift cards
- **Emergency/Temporary Housing** — Examples: Short term payments for hotel/motel or other short-term housing
- **General Housing/Income Stability** — Examples: Items needed for employment, Connection to benefits, Other goods or payments needed related to housing and income stability
- **Move-in Costs/Administrative fees** — Examples: Application fees, holding fees, security deposits, truck rental, movers, storage, furniture/furnishings, realtor/broker fees, miscellaneous move in costs
- **Social Network Supports** — Examples: Assistance with groceries, utilities, childcare, other costs of cohabiting or utilizing family & social support networks
- **Clearing Rental & Financial History** — Examples: Justice-related fees and fines, large amounts of debt/wage garnishments, credit repair services, legal services, financial literacy courses

Increase Outflow (Housing Placement + Property Engagement)

Funds to support individuals experiencing literal homelessness to be able to quickly enter permanent housing

- **Utility & Rental Payments** — Examples: First and last month's rent, back-owed rent, utility bills, utility and rental deposits
- **Transportation Assistance** — Examples: Car repairs, public transit, gas voucher or gas station gift cards, rideshare services
- **Engagement Support & Incentivization** — Examples: Phone or hotspots; gift cards as incentives for engagement, creative outreach
- **Short-Term Child Care Assistance** — Examples: Support for families to be able to have safe, consistent child care
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- **Social Network Supports** — Examples: Assistance with groceries, utilities, childcare, other costs of cohabiting or utilizing family & social support networks
- **Clearing Rental & Financial History** — Examples: Justice-related fees and fines, large amounts of debt/wage garnishments, credit repair services, legal services, financial literacy courses
- **Risk Mitigation** — Example: Set-aside funds for hesitant property owners to assure that costs incurred by tenants are covered in the event of damage or lease termination.
- **Property Owner Incentivization** — Example: Offering incentives - such as double deposits - to property owners to extend leases to individuals who have/are experienced homelessness

Impact Measures:

Individuals returning to BNL, Newly Identified individuals

Impact Measures:

Housing Placement Rate, Length of Time on BNL & total exits from the BNL

Reductions in Actively Homeless

Functional Zero + Sustaining

Catalytic Investments

Catalytic Investment Overview

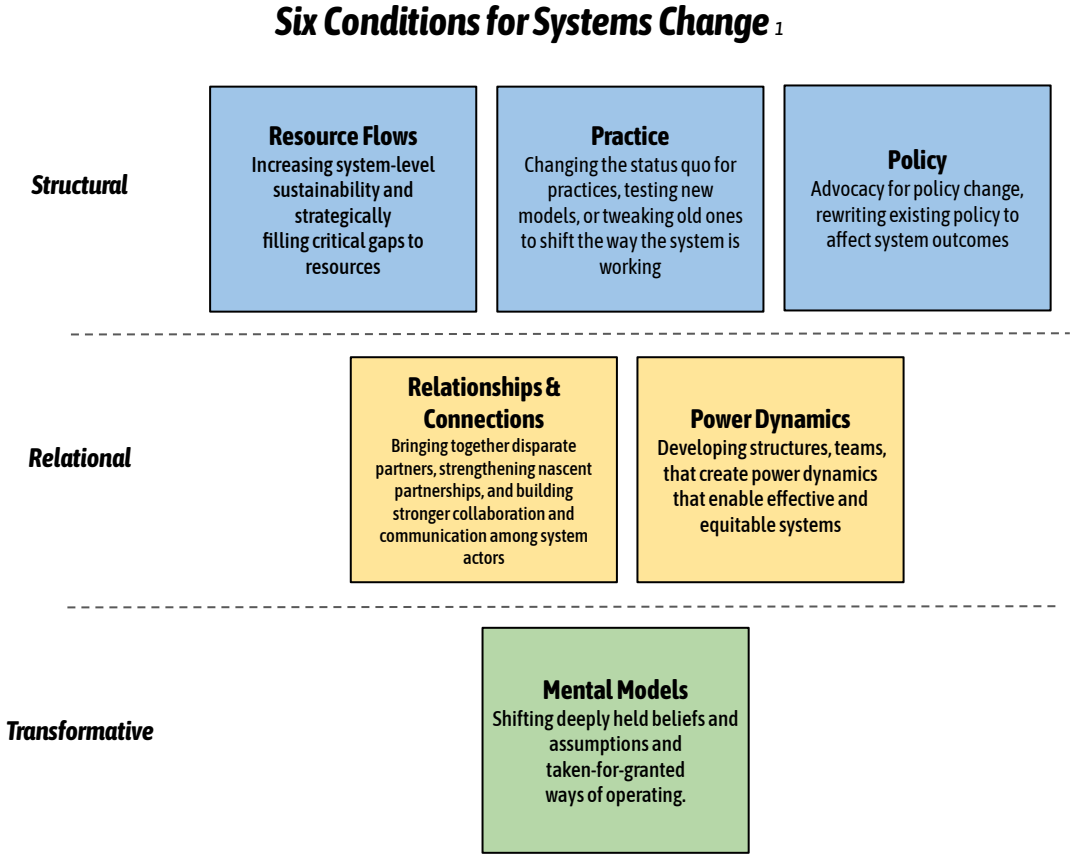
To achieve and sustain critical BFZ aims, resources are needed to shift the systems conditions that hold problems in place.

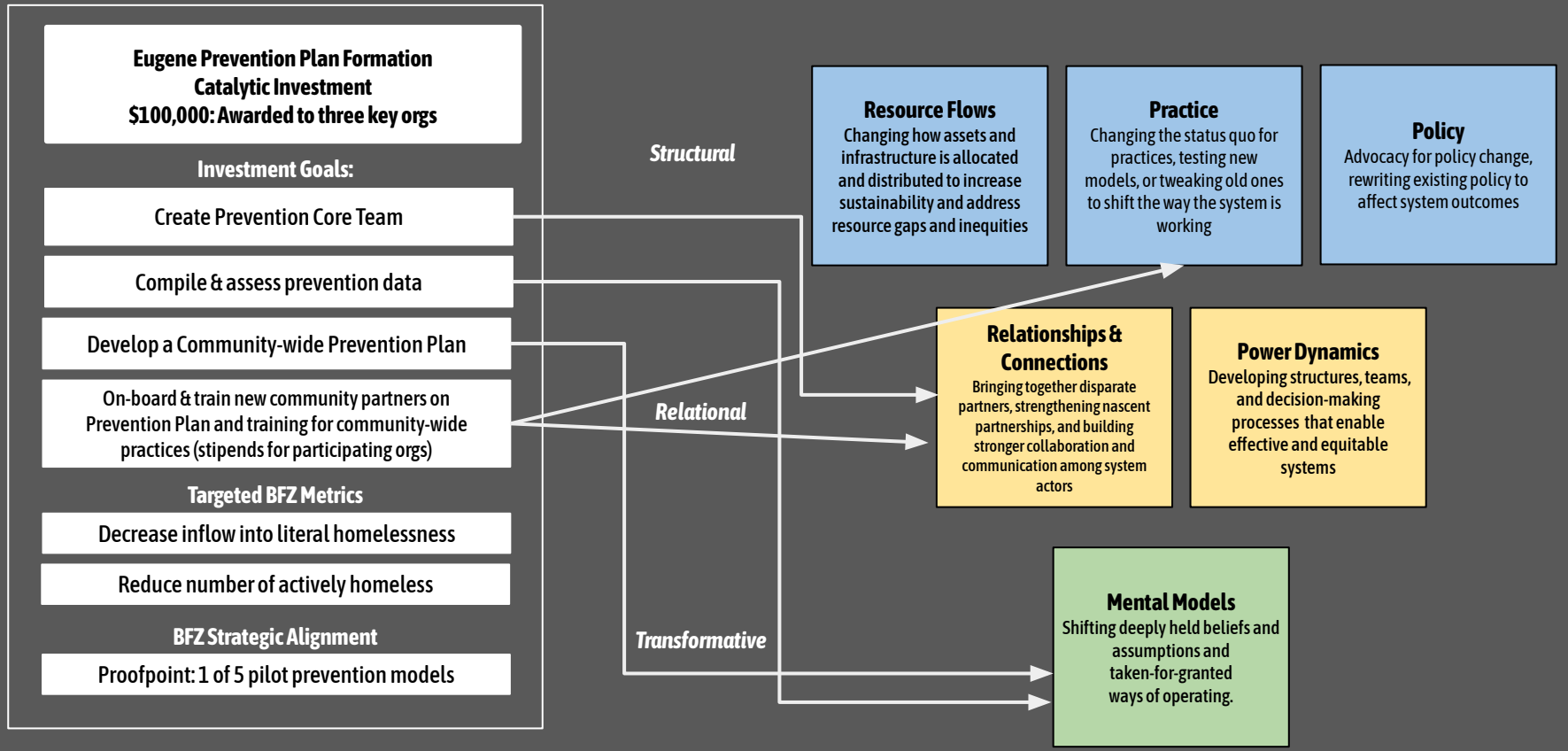
Rationale:

- **Resources are needed - but less available** from traditional funding sources - to address structural conditions that could unlock systems change.
- Investments in **solving "sticky" system-level problems may have a longer time horizon** to see shifts in population-level indicators, but early indicators of changing systems conditions can be detected.
- Approaches to catalyzing systems change can be varied such as:
  - **Testing new practices, creating proof of concept for continuation and scaling** (i.e. Peer Outreach, resource triaging, system-wide diversion and prevention, etc.)
  - **Enabling otherwise disparate partners for collaboration and action**
  - Funding that focuses on **embedding racially equitable practices and policies**
  - Support to **leverage the expertise of those with lived experience to improve the system for those it serves.**
- To be successful at changing the system, Catalytic Investments should **target multiple system conditions.**
- As a sector leader, Community Solutions is well-positioned to **support communities' to test models and scale successful efforts.**

Catalyzing System Change for Impact

- Interdependent conditions play a role in holding a social or environmental problem in place.[1]
- Targeting those conditions at different levels - **structural, relational, transformative** - increases the success of systems change.[1]
- BFZ Communities can detect the system-level problems and the conditions holding them in place through multiple data sources:
  - PMT Data
  - Systems Mapping
  - PDSA Cycles (what worked/did not)
  - Stakeholder experience/observation
  - Experience of those in the system
- Using the above sources, BFZ Communities can identify (with coaching support) which conditions they need to focus on to create change.



1. Based on FSG's "Waters of Systems Change"

Catalytic Investment Example