

A large, abstract graphic composed of several overlapping, curved lines in a light blue color, resembling a stylized sail or a wave, positioned behind the title text.

A Framework for Action: Addressing Human Trafficking and Exploitation in Minneapolis

The City of Minneapolis is committed to ending human trafficking, sexual and labor exploitation, and to address the harms trafficking and exploitation cause. This Framework for Action (The Framework) sets out the next steps in establishing an effective city-wide response, and it could be used as a stand-alone document. The primary goals of The Framework and future work on human trafficking are that residents of Minneapolis have the resources, knowledge, and support that make them less vulnerable to both sex and labor trafficking and exploitation. In addition, City staff is trained to recognize and respond to human trafficking and are committed to working to end the labor and sexual exploitation that can give rise to trafficking.

The City of Minneapolis has made numerous commitments to racial equity, equity for Trans/GNCⁱ populations, immigrant communities, and others. Combating human trafficking is another component of those commitments. Though data on human trafficking is limited, it indicates that victims are more likely to be ethnic or racial minorities, immigrants, youth, people with physical or intellectual disabilities, or Trans/GNC individuals.ⁱⁱ Traffickers target individuals who are vulnerable for a variety of factors: inability to earn an adequate standard of living, fear or mistrust of government agencies that could help victims, isolation or newness to the community, unfamiliarity with workplace or relationship norms, among others. The City's commitment to vulnerable or marginalized communities demands a commitment to ending human trafficking. The City's existing work on empowering and supporting vulnerable and marginalized communities provides an opportunity to effectively identify and respond to human trafficking situations.

There were other key themes, elaborated below, that surfaced from the engagements, over the course of this project. It is therefore highly recommended that the City invest in these themes and processes for the successful implementation of the recommendations.

- Community Partnership is Key
- Community Engagement
- Build on Current Achievements
- Training
- Referral Process
- Coordinated Response
- Special Funding and Rapid Response
- Policy Improvements
- Address the Gaps

Community Partnership is Key

Partnership with trusted community organizations is a key foundation for anti-trafficking work. Survivors and victim advocates report that people trapped in trafficking situations are often mistrustful of or disconnected from government agencies due to the current and past practices which have caused tremendous harm to survivors, many of whom are from BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) communities, those living in poverty, Trans/GNC, and those with other vulnerabilities. Survivors do not know about City resources or programs that can help them. The money provided to service providers has been too little to have any real impact. Finally, survivors often do not feel safe contacting City staff

to report their exploitation. Community organizations – including cultural groups, neighborhood organizations, faith communities, and workers’ rights centers - can serve as a bridge, providing education and outreach, connecting with potential victims, and helping them navigate a potentially confusing process. Funding is crucial to an effective partnership. Further, the City needs to proactively work to foster trust and show a commitment through intentional outreach, provide practical support, and leverage its political capital to secure funding from external sources whenever possible to fund essential services and programs to be delivered through partnership.

Leadership by people with lived experienceⁱⁱⁱ is another priority for anti-trafficking work. Interventions and responses can cause unintended harm or overlook the unique needs of highly vulnerable populations. People with lived experience can uncover these potential problems and unmet needs. Such leadership, integrated within different arms of the City, also builds trust that City staff and policies will respond appropriately to trafficking situations. These two priorities – *community partnership* and *leadership by those with lived experience* - are woven throughout The Framework.

Community Engagement

Meaningful community engagement has been identified as the foundation to any future process in the implementation of The Framework. Minimum wage, sick and safe time, wage theft, and adult entertainment ordinances are considered as examples of excellent outcomes due to robust community engagement with the concerned stakeholders led by grassroots organizations. The Framework has been informed fully by a series of such engagements with internal and external stakeholders despite the pandemic, which forced us to be even more creative and strategic in our approach. The engagement process of Objective #5 serves as another model for future engagement on the implementation of The Framework. The Framework should also be considered a work-in-progress, so it can easily adapt to the changing trends and needs in the community and continue to receive feedback from stakeholders in the future.

Community stakeholders, in many different settings, often described their experience of engaging with the City as insincere, futile, and often mired in government bureaucracy that limited their ability to influence policy and see their ideas implemented. Community engagement requires a commitment throughout the City enterprise that the input and experiences of community members receive equal weight as the views of policy professionals in designing programming, and that successes as well as problems or challenges in implementing community recommendations be brought back to community stakeholders for further deliberation. The recommendations in Objective #5 came from one such process, which is why they are included as they were drafted by community participants, as a starting point for further work directly with those stakeholders.

Build on Current Achievements

The City of Minneapolis has already accomplished several key steps over the course of the grant. Each of these steps offers a foundation upon which to build future policies and practices. Many of these accomplishments focus on labor trafficking. However, it is worth noting that the City’s work to implement Minnesota’s Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Youth Act and its subsequent No Wrong Door service delivery system helped to mobilize wider internal support for concrete actions. Massage

ordinances, the Health Department's commissioned report on adult entertainers, and labor-related ordinances have established a solid foundation on which the more enhanced response should be built upon.

Training

An effective City response requires that City staff be trained to recognize sex and labor trafficking and know how to respond when it is identified. In partnership with The Advocates for Human Rights, the Senior Advisor developed a City-specific training on identifying and responding to labor trafficking (found on the City's trafficking webpage). Two divisions have already received this training: Environmental Health and Labor Standards Enforcement. Other divisions have expressed interest in the training and will schedule it for the next year.

Although City staff have received training on sex trafficking prior to the implementation of the Pathways to Freedom initiative, stakeholders have identified a need for a new kind of training. A training on sex trafficking and sexual exploitation that is developed in consultation with survivors and those who might not identify as victim/survivors which will ensure that people are not criminalized regardless of whichever situation they identify with and to avoid any kind of profiling. In either labor and/or sex trafficking, City respondents first approach should always be focused on immediate harm and safety of a potential victim.

Referral Process

When trafficking situations are identified, victims must be quickly connected to service providers for housing assistance, mental and physical health care, immigration assistance, and more. Helping traumatized individuals assess their needs and make decisions about their safety is a complex process requiring specialized training, something difficult for City staff to undertake directly. Instead, City staff will refer victims to advocates who can assist them. The Senior Advisor established Cornerstone General Crime Victim Services to be the referral source for labor trafficking victims. The existing Safe Harbor network of organizations already serves as a referral source for sex trafficking victims. A list of organizations that provide services for adult victims/survivors of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation and others who do not clearly fit into these victimizations can be found on the City's trafficking webpage.

Coordinated Response

The City will continue to coordinate its anti-trafficking efforts through the Senior Advisor on Human Trafficking, which has been established as a permanent position. Having a single point of contact is a widely recommended best practice for responding to complex trafficking situations where many different City departments and outside organizations may be involved. The Senior Advisor will also re-launch the Human Exploitation and Trafficking (HEAT) team, which will bring together staff from key City departments to regularly consult on outreach, cases, and next steps in implementing the Blueprint.

Likewise, it is equally important to collaborate and coordinate with external government agencies and stakeholders to strengthen Minnesota's existing response to human trafficking by advocating to incorporate labor trafficking and adult victims of sexual exploitation and resources to provide supportive services to victims/survivors.

Special Funding and Rapid Response

There are significant gaps in the resources and services available to victims of sex and labor trafficking in the community, especially for key groups like labor trafficking victims, adult victims of sex trafficking, and members of cultural communities. The Senior Advisor piloted a program that filled one of those gaps by funding a leadership development program for young girls^{iv} at risk of trafficking, in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood.

The Senior Advisor also distributed funds, by repurposing the Pathways to Freedom technical assistance dollars, as part of a rapid response to COVID, which has a disproportionate impact on those already at risk of trafficking. Recent research found that, “7 in 10 Black employees have filed unemployment claims during the COVID-19 pandemic, compared to a little more than 1 in 3 non-Hispanic White employees.”^vThe pandemic is a stark example of why there needs to be a proactive approach in dealing with such a crisis in order to avoid further victimization. However, it is recommended that existing models are appropriated instead of creating a new one to maximize efficiency.

Policy Improvements

Over the course of the grant, the City of Minneapolis passed several ordinances that strengthen anti-trafficking efforts by reducing labor exploitation and expanding the oversight of potentially exploitative industries.

- Wage Theft ordinance
- Freelance Worker Protection ordinance
- Adult Entertainment Protection ordinance

The Framework provides additional opportunities for the development of new policies and specific areas for improvement in existing policies. Objective #5 particularly lays out key pieces in existing City policies and practices that continue to create barriers for survivors of commercial sexual exploitation who had/have contact with criminal justice systems and how dismantling these systematic barriers will offer new pathways to victims/survivors to reach their full potential, eliminate racial disparities, and thereby improve the environment and promote social well-being for all living in Minneapolis. This is **the vision of Minneapolis** actualized in the truest sense.

The conversation succeeding the death of George Floyd¹ around violence prevention and a new vision on community safety is yet another opportunity for victims/survivors to reframe “seeking justice” through healing, supported by needed services in lieu of a criminal path. It is therefore imperative that trafficking explicitly be included in that conversation as an area of opportunity rather than a hindrance to a reimagining of community safety.

¹ On May 2020, George Floyd, an African American man was killed by a Minneapolis Police Officer, that sparked an uprising in Minneapolis advancing the much needed conversation on community led safety strategies and violence prevention which has since then found a home in the Office of Violence Prevention, Minneapolis Health Department.

Address the Gaps

Despite the City's numerous achievements, the City's efforts to address human trafficking continue to face significant challenges because of the elements outlined below. The Framework for Action provides clear objectives and activities to address these challenges:

- Lack of awareness on human trafficking– particularly, exploitation and labor trafficking
- Minimal focus on adult victims of sexual exploitation
- Lack of coordination of services and response within the city enterprise and with providers
- Lack of funding in services/programs
- Unaffordable housing/homelessness
- Poverty/underemployment/unemployment in BIPOC communities

The Framework for Action lays out the next steps of the process to transform the City of Minneapolis into a leader in the anti-trafficking field. The work is ongoing – policies, funding, and staffing still need to change to meet the needs of trafficking victims. In the recommendations below, key tactics have been identified for several departments based on their needs assessment and feedback received from the staff. For examples, providing funding to the **Civil Rights Department** to conduct outreach and education on rights of vulnerable communities, especially immigrants and Trans/GNC, and the survivors' recommendations in Objective #5 recommends that the City of Minneapolis **Human Resources Department** update the background check processes and criteria to remove barriers to City-enterprise employment for survivors of sexual exploitation/prostitution.

Though much remains to be done, with leadership and commitment, the objectives laid out in this Framework can be met. Few municipalities have created a comprehensive response to sex and labor trafficking and exploitation. By continuing to fund and support this work, Minneapolis can serve as a model to others and can build a strong and safe community for all.

Recommendations

Based on the opportunities and needs identified in conversations with city staff and community members, the blueprint proposes **five** key objectives:

1. *Strengthen and empower City residents to prevent human trafficking*
2. *Improve the City of Minneapolis' response to human trafficking*
3. *Ensure all relevant City of Minneapolis policies respond to and prevent human trafficking*
4. *Coordinate and partner with county and state government to strengthen Minnesota's response to human trafficking and exploitation*
5. *Adopt a comprehensive response to adult victims of sexual exploitation driven by survivors' input*

Supporting each objective are foundational goals to undertake within 1-3 years, intermediate goals, with a timeline of 3-7 years, and long-term goals, which will require an ongoing commitment from the City beyond 7 years.

Objective 1: Strengthen and empower City residents to prevent sex and labor trafficking

Prevention is a crucial component to any response to human trafficking. Prevention includes immediate intervention that raise awareness of sex and labor trafficking, enforcement of laws to reduce impunity for individuals, entities, and industries that thrive on exploitation, and an ongoing commitment to reduce the vulnerability of city residents to trafficking.

Foundational Goal 1.1: Raise awareness of sex and labor trafficking and how to find help for people experiencing exploitation.

Activities:

- Identify trusted community partners, especially those that have strong relationships with Trans/GNC and immigrant communities
- Provide funding to community partners for conducting outreach and education
- Continue to strengthen and formalize a relationship with workers' rights centers
- Create a basic campaign (handouts, posters, flyers, restroom posters, etc.), in collaboration with community partners, on sex and labor trafficking in several languages
- Add human trafficking information to other outreach on related issues such as labor rights (Labor Standards Enforcement), violence prevention (Office of Violence Prevention), teen empowerment (Health Department), and immigrant rights (Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs)

- Fund Civil Rights Department to conduct outreach and education on rights of vulnerable communities, especially immigrants and Trans/GNC

Foundational Goal 1.2: Enforce City protections for workers to eliminate impunity for exploitation.

Activities:

- Invest in City resources for investigation of workplace violations
- Robustly enforce City ordinances relating to wages and conditions

Long-term Goal 1.3: Meet basic needs of City residents to reduce vulnerability to human trafficking, such as affordable housing or access to employment.

Activities:

- Provide City funding to ensure all residents can meet their basic needs, especially access to safe housing and stable employment (establish and advocate for policies and laws at the city, county, and state level to support these changes, access to legal services, including related to immigration^{vi})
- Leverage the City’s resources to secure housing primarily for vulnerable populations including Trans/GNC people
- In consultation with the survivor advisory board (see Objective 5), create a human trafficking impact analysis for City staff to use when evaluating policies and spending^{vii}

Objective 2: Improve the City of Minneapolis response to human trafficking

City staff are already encountering sex and labor trafficking cases in the course of their work and identification will increase as more staff receive training. The city must ensure efforts are coordinated across departments and with outside partners, while also collecting information to evaluate the effectiveness of the response. Furthermore, over the course of the grant, the Senior Advisor on Human Trafficking established a referral process for labor trafficking cases identified by City staff.^{viii} The existing referral system through Safe Harbor, for sex trafficking and sexual exploitation cases, could be used upon discovery of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation by the City staff, and/or directed to the Senior Advisor for further consultation.

Foundational Goal 2.1: Facilitate coordinated response between City departments.

Activities:

- City systems and responses require leadership by people with lived experience. This leadership must reflect the diverse communities that experience trafficking and exploitation. People with

lived experience must be engaged both in the professional leadership and in other meaningful ways throughout the design, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation of the City's response. It is imperative that the city fund and include people with lived experience to lead the development and implementation of the City's response.

- Continue to retain the position of Senior Advisor who specializes in coordinating efforts to combat human trafficking in the City Coordinator's Office
- Engage the Senior Advisor to conduct regular needs assessments every 3-5 years to determine if the City's response is effectively meeting the needs of community members and of people experiencing trafficking and exploitation
- As the home to the United States' largest urban Native American community, the City must engage with tribal nations and indigenous communities in planning and implementation of the blueprint
- Require City departments to create formal SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) on addressing human trafficking and to train all relevant staff on identifying and responding to human trafficking
- Formalize the HEAT (Human Exploitation and Anti-Trafficking) Task Force through the creation of MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding) for internal City departments
- Continue to foster communication between departments regarding trafficking cases through HEAT

Foundational Goal 2.2: Train City staff to identify sex and labor trafficking and to refer victims to assistance.

Activities:

- Develop a 30-minute training for all staff after hiring and make it mandatory for existing City staff to review as well
- Train frontline staff from business licensing, housing inspectors, environmental health, fire inspectors, tenant navigators, small business team, NCR, the Youth Congress Board and outreach team at Youth Coordinating Board
- Explore opportunities with CPED to provide training on labor trafficking and labor exploitation to Step Up participants
- Conduct 6-9 month follow up with departments that have already received training (Civil Rights and Environmental Health)
- Create a mechanism for evaluation and develop future trainings based on the evaluation results

Foundational Goal 2.3: Formalize the referral process for trafficking survivors to access services and evaluate its effectiveness

Activities:

- Incorporate referral process into trainings and departmental SOPs

- Keep a record of referrals while ensuring that information is kept in a confidential manner (especially as it relates to immigration status)

Foundational Goal 2.4: Empower divisions and departments to identify how they can prevent and intervene as necessary to address human trafficking and assist survivors

Activities:

- Strengthen existing tools (screening, inspections) to identify potential trafficking situations
- Cross-train division and departmental staff on intersecting issues, such as Complaint Investigation and Labor Standards Enforcement
- Create specific language within Civil Rights that defines addressing economic discrimination against Trans/GNC and immigrant individuals as prevention of human trafficking
- Require key divisions to identify and designate a staff person to collaborate with the Senior Advisor to implement, execute, and evaluate the blueprint and integrate it into their workplan
- Evaluate the progress of key divisions at implementing these recommendations

Foundational Goal 2.5: Equip applicable departments to respond to sex and labor trafficking cases identified by or referred to City staff

Activities:

- Fund staff positions so divisions have capacity to respond to human trafficking cases
- Connect potential trafficking victims to victim services through the designated referral process
- Alert the Senior Advisor to suspected or known labor or sex trafficking cases

Intermediate Goal 2.6: Evaluate data on sex and labor trafficking cases identified by or referred to City staff and use the findings to improve the City's response

Activities:

- Scrub the data on human trafficking cases to allow anonymous tracking of outcomes while preserving the confidentiality of victims
- Conduct case reviews to identify how cases were identified, and whether cases could have been identified any earlier
- Analyze, evaluate, and report findings to the City Council annually
- Consult the City's IT department to create a shared database to share and track violations of city codes, analyzing what types of violations signal human trafficking, in order to improve and strengthen the City's response

Intermediate Goal 2.7: Secure and manage resources to fund community partners to provide missing services needed by survivors of trafficking and exploitation

Activities:

- Establish a pot of funding, in the Office of Violence Prevention or City Coordinator’s Office, for use in developing rapid response programs to trafficking situations
- Incorporate the topics of domestic violence, sexual violence, gun violence, gang violence, gang-involved youth, etc., in the Office of Violence Prevention programming
- Seek external funding to regrant to community organizations that fill gaps in the state and federal responses to trafficking: housing for labor trafficking victims, culturally specific, gender-responsive (especially for Trans/GNC people), and non-judgmental supportive and legal services for adult victims of commercial sexual exploitation, those with lived experience in transactional sex, sex trafficking, all victims of labor trafficking, older youth and adults, boys/men, and parenting survivors with their children

Objective 3: Ensure all relevant City of Minneapolis policies respond to and prevent human trafficking

Exploitation and human trafficking flourishes due to the existing social/economic inequalities and policies and practices that have marginalized certain groups of people. It is imperative that any new policy should undergo a thorough racial equity analysis and be vetted through rigorous community engagement processes. And, similarly, an inclusive space needs to be created to review and reform existing policies and practices that will advance the goal of preventing and ending human trafficking and exploitation.

Foundational Goal 3.1: Foster participation and ensure the concerns of human trafficking survivors are fully incorporated into the City’s new approach to community safety

Activities:

- Hold focus groups specifically for sex and labor trafficking survivors as part of the Future of the Community Safety Workgroup, overseen by the Office of Violence Prevention
- Incorporate best practices on working with human trafficking victims into any proposed alternatives to policing^x
- Create a system to route non-life-threatening calls related to sexual exploitation, mental health, homelessness, disability, etc. to a community-based resource group instead of 911
- Explore the possibility of expanding and strengthening existing resources, through additional investment, such as Safe Harbor regional navigators or Day One statewide hotline
- Develop educational material, in multiple languages and multi-media formats, to generate awareness on the alternative to the 911 system so people with the above-identified conditions/situations can avoid police involvement

- Law enforcement training needs to be inclusive of how to work with Trans/GNC, people living with intellectual and mental disabilities, and the Deaf, blind, DeafBlind, and hard of hearing communities on an ongoing basis
- End criminalization of those who identify as victim/survivors of commercial sexual exploitation
- End criminalization of people, especially Trans/GNC, with lived experience in transactional sex^x
- Create a streamlined process within the Civil Rights Department to report the police abuse of adults involved in transactional sex^{xi}
- End criminalization of homelessness, poverty, and mental health
- Work with the City Attorney's Office to develop an innovative system, with programs and services, as an alternative to incarceration of adult victims of sexual exploitation

Intermediate Goal 3.2: Review City policies for areas where they could be modified or strengthened to better prevent trafficking and support survivors

Activities:

- Research best practices in municipal contracting to ensure no city contracts are awarded to companies with histories of labor trafficking and that contractors have effective anti-trafficking measures in place
- Develop permitting, inspections, and other policies to ensure commercial and residential building projects prevent trafficking
- Analyze City contracts and business licensing standards for the potential to incorporate anti-trafficking provisions
- Implement policies that reduce the vulnerability of LGBTQ people to exploitation and human trafficking (for example: increase in hiring of Trans/GNC people; install gender-inclusive bathrooms; collaborate with local businesses to create a Trans/GNC inclusive workplace, etc.)
- Increase the hiring of youth/people from BIPOC communities
- Advise the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department (NCR) to develop a policy on labor trafficking and specific programming to conduct outreach to cultural, immigrant, and refugee communities
- Work with the Transgender Equity Council to strengthen policies affecting Trans/GNC people. Specifically, adopt and take action on Transgender Equity Council 2021 and future recommendations
- Pass a "Good Samaritan"^{xii} policy for those with lived experience to provide immunity when calling 911 to report life-threatening situations so they can fully avoid criminalization for prostitution or drug possession
- Amend City ordinances and policies to remove any references to prostitution
- Amend the City's loitering ordinance so that it cannot be used to target people engaged in transactional sex.

- Enact an ordinance defining criminal history or prior convictions (prostitution for example) as a protected class so people with certain criminal records aren't barred from employment in the City

Intermediate Goal 3.3: Create an emergency rapid response toolkit to prevent human trafficking during times of crisis such as natural disasters and future pandemic

Activities:

- Identify key internal stakeholders
- Work with OEM (Office of Emergency Management) to develop a plan to mitigate harm caused by crisis leading to human trafficking and exploitation^{xiii}
- Research existing models and appropriate those whenever possible
- Coordinate with internal and external partners including government bodies to better plan, communicate, and quickly develop a plan of action
- Collaborate with victim service providers in developing a response including services, such as homelessness response during the COVID pandemic (Research what groups already exist working on such issues)

Objective 4: Coordinate and partner with county and state government to strengthen Minnesota's response to human trafficking and exploitation

Minnesota has a robust system to respond to sexual exploitation and human trafficking of youth through the statewide Safe Harbor service delivery system managed by the Minnesota Department of Health and some elements of it through the Department of Human Services. The Bureau of Criminal Apprehension's Human Trafficking Investigation Task Force provides expertise to investigate human trafficking in collaboration with law enforcement throughout the state. Likewise, Hennepin County has instituted its response through its "No Wrong Door" program resulting in an investment in services and providing direct care. It is, therefore, imperative for the City to continue to collaborate with these agencies in enhancing the existing system and expanding to include sexual exploitation of all people and labor trafficking.

Long-term Goal 4.1: With the support of the City's Senior Advisor, assume a leadership role in anti-labor trafficking and exploitation efforts both within Minnesota and nationally

Activities:

- Promote the City's labor ordinances as prevention tools at the national level
- Uplift the co-enforcement mechanism, such as with CTUL, as a strategic investment to end labor exploitation and trafficking

- In collaboration with the City Attorney’s Office and Labor Standards Enforcement, develop a training for City Attorneys on how to investigate violations of a city’s labor ordinances
- Facilitate coordination between the Hennepin County Attorney’s Office on labor exploitation and labor trafficking cases
- Collaborate with the City Attorney’s Office and the Minnesota Department of Health and other stakeholders to identify and implement recommendations from the Safe Harbor for All Strategic Planning Process (Objective #5)
- Find intersecting areas in the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) report for implementation where applicable
- Collaborate with the Youth Coordinating Board’s Youth Congress to advocate for increasing the age for decriminalization to 24 to be consistent with Safe Harbor service eligibility
- Work with the Youth Coordinating Board to incorporate human trafficking and exploitation of children and youth in Child Friendly City, designated by UNICEF, implementation plan
- Explore areas of collaboration with Indigenous leaders and organizations for the successful implementation and execution of the MMIW mandates in Minneapolis
- Collaborate with the Minnesota Department of Health, Department of Human Services, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension’s Human Trafficking Task Force, and Youth Services Network (YSN) to expand and implement labor trafficking into the state’s Safe Harbor service delivery system
- Find areas of interest and opportunities for collaboration on issues related to exploitation and human trafficking with Attorney’s General Office, Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry, U.S Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and other national agencies focusing on human trafficking

Long-term Goal 4.2: Partner with external stakeholders to develop and advance legislative priorities at the Capitol that will directly address human trafficking

Activities:

- Advocate for state funding for housing for all as an effective trafficking prevention strategy
- Advocate for statewide massage licensing legislation that is survivor-led and developed in consultation with people with lived experience and members of cultural communities
- Funding for housing and supportive services for labor trafficking victims
- Work with Transgender Equity Council, Race and Equity Division and external stakeholders to strengthen legislation (housing, employment) protecting rights of Trans/GNC people
- Explore areas for collaboration with those working on statewide criminal justice reform (such as cash bail reform, post-conviction relief, driver’s license issues, juvenile justice reform, second chance reform, and declining to call ICE.)
- Explore areas to support reform efforts of the child welfare/foster care system to prevent exploitation and trafficking of children, majority from Indigenous communities, under the leadership of native and indigenous leaders in Minneapolis
- Advocating for health care access for all without regard to immigration status

Objective 5: Adopt a comprehensive response to adult victims of sexual exploitation through survivors' input

The existing system continues to create barriers for adult victims of sexual exploitation, specifically those who had prior contact and interaction with the criminal justice system on prostitution and other related charges, despite research pointing to the connection between sexual exploitation and trafficking, and how often survivors find themselves in both of these situations at different times in their victimization. With limited supportive services and care targeted for adult victims of sexual exploitation and a lack of a holistic, compassionate, and non-judgmental response, they continue to fall through the cracks and end up back in the hands of exploiters and traffickers who profit on their vulnerabilities – homelessness, addiction, mental health issues, disability, etc. Only by eliminating these barriers, inherently manifested in policies such as housing, employment, can we level the playing field for people from BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and immigrant communities who have been marginalized the most, but, unfortunately, have little access to resources and care they deserve. A municipal response to human trafficking and exploitation, in any form, is inauthentic and incomplete without a deeper engagement with those who are impacted most by its policies and practices; the recommendations below are a direct outcome of that process of a series of engagements with survivors who were victimized and re-victimized by multiple levels of government systems.

Long-term Goal 5.1: Commit to hiring and employment for survivors at all levels where the City has influence, including creating specific positions internally for survivors within the City enterprise, removing barriers for hiring within the City enterprise, and encouraging businesses in partnership with the City to do the same.

Activities:

- Update City of Minneapolis Background Check processes and criteria to remove barriers to City-enterprise employment for survivors
 - Update criminal background procedure to put a 3-year time limit on felonies as a disqualifying factor
 - Update criminal background procedure to remove shoplifting as a disqualifying factor
 - Update criminal background procedure to include a statement of hiring support for survivors of sexual exploitation. Explicitly name lived experience as a survivor of sexual exploitation as a consideration if a conviction directly relates to the position of employment sought
 - Update criminal background procedure to explicitly inform applicants of their options to challenge disqualification for survivors of sexual exploitation
- Create preferential hiring for survivors of sexual exploitation and people with lived experience in commercial sex
 - Craft statement of employment support to demonstrate commitment to hiring survivors, people with lived experience in commercial sex, and those with felonies. Include language on job descriptions and postings. Preferentially hire survivors at the

- City in the same way veterans and people of color are encouraged to apply and add explicit language that survivors of sexual exploitation are encouraged to apply
- Create an optional way for applicants to confidentially self-identify as a survivor of exploitation to allow for monitoring of hiring
 - Demonstrate valuing lived experience in accordance with other forms of professional credentialing. Commit to an ongoing hiring ratio of 1:1 to preferentially hire people with lived experience in commercial sex within the City enterprise, particularly in departments who interface with community or survivors
 - Create new positions to infuse survivor-leadership within the City enterprise system, honor expertise of lived experience, and ensure trauma-informed City system response, particularly in the following departments: City Attorney’s Office, Police, 911, 311, Health, Civil Rights, Neighborhood Community Relations, Office of Violence Prevention, and Regulatory Services (particular to housing and business inspections)
 - Review and update current existing positions to explicitly hire for lived experience including positions such as: Crime Prevention Specialists, Community Specialists, Community Relations Specialists, Community Navigators, Public Health Specialists, Rental Housing Liaisons, and Victim/Witness specialists. Survivors bring skills in engaging with residents in relational and trauma-informed ways and are uniquely equipped to identify and recognize the nuances of “red flags” in a situation that would be invaluable in these positions
- Encourage Minneapolis-based businesses to similarly hire people with prior convictions and remove barriers to employment
 - Review requirements for procurement and contracting; identify ways to incentivize contractors hired by the City to subcontract with survivors; eliminate barriers for survivors to pursue independent contracts with the City
 - In the same way, businesses get tax credits for hiring veterans or people with felonies, create parallel incentives specifically for businesses located within city limits to hire people with prior prostitution charges as a way of demonstrating a commitment to the employment and well-being of survivors in our City
 - Commit to continued efforts to make expungement accessible
 - In partnership with the Attorney General’s Office, increase outreach, waive fees, offer pro-bono legal support, and otherwise support survivors in accessing expungement.
 - In addition to conviction records, seal arrest records as well so they cannot be found during employment or housing searches

Through the Civil Rights Department, clarify survivors’ rights and process to report being unlawful denial of employment due to prior convictions, including expunged and sealed records

Intermediate Goal 5.2: Create a survivor-led first response system in partnership with police response to potential trafficking victims along with the adoption of a non-arrest policy for people selling sex. Increase police accountability and accountability of City staff who purchase sex.

Activities:

- Adopt a non-arrest policy for people selling sex

- Minneapolis Police Department should adopt a non-arrest policy for anyone who would otherwise be picked up for a prostitution charge. Follow model adopted by St. Paul Police
- Stop the practice of confiscating survivor belongings
- Commit to establishing MOUs and partnerships with organizations such as Breaking Free, the PRIDE program at the Family Partnership, The Link, and emergency housing providers for survivors of violence. Instead of arrests, in partnership with service providers offer resources or ride to detox
- Invest in the creation of a survivor-led response system
 - Fund efforts to create a survivor-led system response to public safety. Ensure this funding goes to community-based groups and individuals with direct lived experience in commercial sex
 - Fund and create a survivor-led street outreach team. Likewise, preferentially hire survivors for this initiative
 - Review and re-route calls related to street-based commercial sex exchange from a police response to a survivor-led street outreach team. If someone calls 911 to report solicitation, someone selling sex, or related issues (loitering, etc.), re-route that call to the survivor community response team that can go out and respond to that situation, offer services, and support survivors without law enforcement presence
 - Create a protocol for staff in other departments (i.e. Regulatory Services, Health, etc.) to engage the survivor-response team to respond to and advise on situations where trafficking or exploitation is suspected
 - Create a protocol for law enforcement and survivor-response team to jointly respond to calls where there is a threat of immediate violence. Once a scene is secure and the potential survivor is separated from potential aggressors, ensure the survivor-response team has the authority to respond to the potential survivor
 - Include process for special considerations for survivors without immigration status; route to City attorney and OIRA to provide immigration support and resources
- Increase Police accountability and accountability of City staff who purchase sex
 - Clarify how to report harmful, derogatory, or violent interactions with officers and City staff; how to report when police officers sexually assault someone
 - Hire a survivor to do outreach and increase community knowledge of survivors' rights when dealing with City officers
 - Increase employment penalties for City staff convicted of purchasing sex

Foundational/Long-term Goal 5.3: Prioritize permanent housing for survivors. Through private-public partnerships and tax incentive models, prioritize the creation of scattered site housing for survivors, remove the current barriers to housing, and increase tenant know-your-rights education.

Activities:

- Remove barriers to housing for survivors
- Create a program to waive or pay for housing application fees for survivors

- Remove requirements for driver's license/state ID and social security number which poses an additional barrier for undocumented survivor
- Amend the Renter Protection Ordinance in the following ways:
 - Explicitly allow the option for potential tenants to provide landlords with a free credit report instead of paying for credit pull as part of the application fees
 - Re: Limits on screening for criminal history
 - Amend to include exceptions to felony convictions if applicant can demonstrate domestic violence, sexual violence or trafficking victimization
 - Amend to prohibit screening based on any misdemeanors (remove time limit qualifier)
 - Re: Limits on screening for rental history
 - Amend evictions time limit from three or more years to one or more years. (Limit to only include the last year of time.)
 - Explicitly allow exceptions for eviction due to domestic violence, sexual violence trafficking or related issues
 - Amend income requirement exceptions to include the ability to pay security deposit and first month rent. Waive requirement to demonstrate a pay stub
 - Explicitly include consistent attendance at a shelter, halfway house, hotel stay, or treatment programs as adequate demonstration of rental history if the person has stayed there for six months or longer
 - Add a new section to explicitly limit screening based on unlawful detainers. (i.e. cannot consider unlawful detainers where the judgment was entered three or more years from the date of application OR one year if the tenant has paid in full.)
- Increase housing availability for survivors
 - Explicitly include survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence and trafficking for priority in Section 8 housing
 - Invest in additional scattered site housing specific to survivors of sexual exploitation and human trafficking. Give tax credits or other forms of incentives to housing developers and nonprofit housing providers to secure units in mixed income housing for survivors— don't require all survivors to live in one place. Ensure survivors have access to housing in various neighborhoods throughout the city instead of concentrating available housing
 - Invest in first time home-owners program specific to survivors of sexual exploitation and human trafficking
 - Investigate options to cap rental increases based on years of residence
- Better utilize City infrastructure to protect renters from exploitation
 - Create and advertise a hotline in multiple languages within the Civil Rights Department where someone can report if they are being barred from housing despite renter's protection ordinance. Work with community partners to disseminate information through trusted organizations and community leaders
 - Create a position in the City to help tenants navigate the system who are experiencing exploitation or unsafe situations by their landlords, like a victim advocate to support the process within small claims court. Ensure current Tenant Navigators within the City have been trained by survivors; preferentially hire survivors for these positions. Ensure language accessibility and translation support is available

- Increase the amount of time in which a grievance can be reported so survivors can report housing discrimination after the fact
- Invest in efforts to educate the public and survivors about their housing rights and what they can do when their rights are being violated. Fund a *know your rights* campaign related to civil rights complaints in multiple languages and formats
- Include language that defines and describes solicitation by landlords, and who a renter can call if their landlord solicits them for sexual acts. Include language on what to do if a landlord is unjustly taking security deposits. Explicitly identify rights of a domestic violence or trafficking survivor (i.e. the right to leave in the next 24 hours; the right to flee without being charged.)
- Increase penalties for landlords who are exploiting or soliciting renters including revoking their licenses
- Require inclusion of this language in lease agreements and to be shared on a yearly basis; require this language to be displayed in public spaces within a rental complex with four or more units; ensure dissemination and availability in multiple languages and formats
- Improve City standards for clean dwellings in low-income places; improve rental regulation to ensure clean, safe, rental units for low-income residents
- Prioritize survivors of color for positions related to educating residents on their rights, staffing helplines, and compliance checks of landlords
- Train all housing and business inspectors on signs of sexual exploitation; ensure training is led and developed by survivors
- Develop a protocol for business and housing inspectors to mandatory report concerns of suspected trafficking to survivor-response team in partnership with survivors. (i.e. A mandatory internal report in response to too many mattresses, mattresses in uninhabitable places such as garages, etc.) Include in follow-up protocol disclosure to survivor-led service agency for survivor-led wellness checks

<p><i>Intermediate Goal 5.4: Invest funding in community-driven violence prevention and healing services specific to sexual exploitation.</i></p>
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Activities:

- Explicitly fund sexual exploitation prevention efforts
 - Integrate sexual exploitation as a priority within current violence prevention funding and efforts
 - Create survivor-specific positions within the Office of Violence Prevention to lead, design and implement prevention efforts
- Fully invest in holistic wraparound services for survivors
 - Commit to investment in the following components for survivor services:
 - Fund wrap-around survivor-led peer support plus enhanced services for adult survivors. Commit funding to an organization like “Breaking Free” to replicate services in Minneapolis or commit to funding new survivor-led nonprofits or

- social enterprises to provide direct services from a peer to peer lens in Minneapolis
 - Invest in substance abuse treatment. Offer more support for substance abuse for survivors. Understand the unique experiences of survivors who are using substances to numb trauma
 - Prioritize the immediacy of treatment when someone is ready. Update 211 process to increase access to a live person; eliminate wait times for Rule 25s and treatment
 - Invest in mental health services that are culturally specific and understands the complex trauma survivors have experienced: childhood sexual abuse, generational trauma, historical trauma
 - Invest in financial services for survivors including access to loans, financial education, and pathways to build entrepreneurial skills to support survivors in becoming independent consultants, launching small businesses, and non-profits
 - Invest in legal services including immigration legal support services, expungement support, etc.
- Ensure future funding is driven by survivors
 - Actively seek out and engage survivors in the community in ongoing discussions on funding priorities
 - Include a requirement for survivor-leadership in Request for Proposal language for related funding. Prioritize funding to survivor-led organizations, groups, and independent survivor consultants. Provide technical assistance to independent survivor consultants throughout the contract period for successful implementation of the project
 - Include survivors in budgeting, financial, and RFP selection discussions related to services for survivors, as well as determining evaluation and accountability of money distributed
 - Establish a survivor board or commission to direct this work and provide ongoing accountability

Foundational Goal 5.5: Review adult entertainment ordinance to prioritize protections for sexually exploited people.

Activities:

- Increase training and emphasis on sexual exploitation within the current adult entertainment ordinance
 - Amend the current adult entertainment ordinance in the following ways:
 - Require mandatory training to performers about trafficking, exploitation, know your rights and who to call if someone thinks exploitation is occurring
 - Include this information in performer contracts
 - Require mandatory staff training of adult entertainment business employees for sexual exploitation bystander intervention training (i.e. how to recognize trafficking behaviors) and who to call if someone thinks exploitation is occurring

- Require *know your rights* information and who to call if there are suspicions of exploitation to be posted in the back area of adult entertainment businesses
Ensure hotline numbers and information is available in multiple languages and formats
 - Amend to require businesses to report how they are adopting anti-trafficking policies
- Contract with or hire survivors to lead these trainings and ensure compliance
- Set aside a portion of taxes or cover charge from adult entertainment business to allocate towards services for survivors

Foundational Goal 5.6: Demonstrate City-enterprise wide commitment to supporting survivors through systemic training and language review.

Activities:

- Name commitment to supporting survivors through the adoption of survivor-specific language
 - Craft a statement declaring a commitment to support survivor-led system change
Include acknowledgment of systematic racism as it relates to City policies and practices related to survivors of sexual exploitation
 - Review city codes and remove the word prostitution
- Review and address practices and procedures in each department that continue to cause harm to survivors of color
 - By department and in partnership with a paid survivor consultant, review processes and procedures that continue to cause harm to survivors of color. Consider where City staff are unnecessarily contributing to the removal of parental rights from parents who are survivors or separating survivors from their children. Consider where trauma-informed and healing-centered processes would improve how the City engages with community members
- Train City staff on how to partner with survivors in responding to sexual exploitation
 - Contract with survivors to train City staff in knowing what to look for, how to intervene and respond to survivors; how to partner with survivor-consultants in crafting system responses. Schedule trainings at minimum once every two years, so that information is refreshed, and new department staff are onboarded

Endnotes:

ⁱ “Transgender people are people whose gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be at birth. “Trans” is often used as shorthand for transgender.” GNC (Gender Nonconforming)

ⁱⁱ https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/statistical-analysis-center/Documents/2018%20Human%20Trafficking%20Full%20Report_FINAL.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://uroc.umn.edu/sites/uroc.umn.edu/files/SH4ALL-Findings-and-recommendations-1.13.19.pdf>

^{iv} <https://thebeautywell.org/Program/young-womens-wellness-and-leadership-initiative/>

^v <https://www.mncompass.org/data-insights/articles/minnesotas-workers-color-and-immigrants-bear-brunt-covid-19s-impact>

^{vi} Survivor for System Change report

^{vii} Survivor for System Change report

^{viii} Referral process URL placeholder

^{ix} Survivor for Systems Change report

^x Safe Harbor for All Strategic Planning Process report

^{xi} Safe Harbor for All Strategic Planning Process report

^{xii} <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/604A.01>

^{xiii} <https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-10-05/human-trafficking-hidden-aftermath-natural-disasters>