

## Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

Meeting: Supportive Housing Services Tri-County Planning Body Meeting  
Date: Wednesday, September 13th, 2023  
Time: 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM  
Place: Metro Council Chambers, 600 NE Grand Ave, Portland, OR 97232 and Zoom Webinar  
Purpose: The Tri-County Planning Body (TCPB) will learn about and weigh in on Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) opportunities and constraints and receive preliminary information about the regional investment fund.

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### Member attendees

Co-chair Eboni Brown (she/her), Co-chair Matt Chapman (he/him), Zoi Coppiano (she/her), Mercedes Elizalde (she/her), Monta Knudson (he/him), Nicole Larson (she/her), Michael Ong Liu (he/him), Sahaan McKelvey (he/him), Cristina Palacios (she/her), Steve Rudman (he/him), Mindy Stadtlander (she/her)

### Absent members

Yvette Hernandez (she/her)

### Elected delegates

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington (she/her), Multnomah County Commissioner Susheela Jayapal (she/her), Metro Councilor Christine Lewis (she/her), Clackamas County Chair Tootie Smith (she/her)

### County staff representatives

Clackamas County – Vahid Brown (he/him), Multnomah County – Kanoe Egleston (she/her), Washington County – Jessi Adams (she/her)

### Metro

Abby Ahern (she/her), Giovanni Bautista (he/him), Melia Deters (she/her), Liam Frost (he/him), Patricia Rojas (she/her)

### Kearns & West Facilitators

Ben Duncan (he/him), Ariella Dahlin (she/her)

*Note: The meeting was recorded via Zoom; therefore, details will be mainly focused on the discussions, with less detail regarding the presentations. Presentation slides are included in the archived meeting packet.*

### Welcome and Introductions

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, welcomed the Tri-County Planning Body (TCPB) to the meeting, facilitated introductions between TCPB members, and reviewed the agenda.

The TCPB approved the August Meeting Summary.

### Public Comment

No public comment was received.

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### Staff Updates

Abby Ahern, Metro, shared updates on the TCPB's six regional goals. Metro has contracted with Focus Strategies who will present on landlord recruitment progress in November, and has contracted with Home Base for coordinated entry, health care systems alignment and employee recruitment and retention work.

Liam Frost, Metro, added that Metro's Housing Department is expanding to include a team for technical assistance. He shared that the State has changed the primary population for the Medicaid Waiver to households who are at risk of homelessness. Metro will rearrange the tables involved in the healthcare alignment goal to account for the shift. He added that Metro is recruiting for the TCPB member vacancy.

Patricia Rojas, Metro, highlighted that Israel Bayer is now Metro's Communication Manager and that three manager positions are open in the Metro Housing department, including a Supportive Housing Services (SHS) Program Manager.

Steve Rudman asked if landlord recruitment models are being analyzed across the country as part of the consultant work and if the Population A definition still includes with people chronic illnesses.

*Liam Frost, Metro, replied that the consultant is completing a micro and macro assessment, the latter including a nationwide assessment. He added that there is overlap in the definition, but since the Medicaid waiver is limited to 6 months of rental assistance, it will be more difficult to weave the funds for both populations.*

*Patricia Rojas, Metro, added that while Metro would like to see more overlap for Population A, only 25% of SHS resources can be used for prevention.*

Co-chair Eboni Brown asked if the TCPB co-chairs could be elected this year since they were appointed last year and suggested sending out a survey for co-chair interest.

*Patricia Rojas, Metro, thanked Eboni for her leadership and noted that Metro staff would have to check with Metro Council on the process.*

*Clackamas County Chair Tootie Smith stated that the charter should be checked.*

*Liam Frost, Metro, confirmed that Metro staff will check with Metro Council and the charter to check the process, and then could share a survey to collect member interest.*

### August Meeting Questions

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, shared that the survey results showed that most members left the meeting with a greater knowledge and understanding of the meeting topics than they came in with.

Multnomah County Commissioner Susheela Jayapal stated that she is interested in learning more about the challenges and opportunities regarding data to determine where the TCPB goes as a next step.

### HMIS Opportunities and Constraints

Dan Cole, Multnomah County, introduced himself and presented the background of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and its use to date in the Portland metropolitan area. He shared that there is an interest and need for improved HMIS functionality, so Multnomah County contracted Gartner for an HMIS strategic technology analysis. This analysis will include a forward-range view of technology and needed capabilities. The four-step process of the analysis includes

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stakeholder interviews, market analysis, gap analysis, and strategy and vision to improve the delivery, monitoring, and outcomes in the homeless services landscape.

Michael Liu asked if HMIS had been in place regionally since 2006 or if Multnomah County began using HMIS in 2006.

*Dan Cole, Multnomah County, replied that the whole state began using HMIS in 2006, and in 2019, the Tri-County area split off.*

Mercedes Elizalde asked if those who are experiencing homelessness would be a part of the stakeholder interviews and suggested including them as stakeholders.

*Dan Cole, Multnomah County, replied that they could include those stakeholders, but they are not a part of the current plan.*

Co-chair Matt Chapman seconded Mercedes's point and asked what questions would guide the interview process and where Dan thinks the TCPB should focus on topics related to HMIS.

*Dan Cole, Multnomah County, replied that he is not sure what questions will be used and that the TCPB has an opportunity to focus on technology investments to improve data quality, metrics, and user experience.*

*Liam Frost, Metro, added that it would be great for the TCPB to receive touchpoints from Dan throughout this process.*

Vahid Brown, Clackamas County, stated the Coalition of Communities of Color has done work using HMIS as a coordinated entry system in Clackamas County to advance racial equity and recommended interviewing them.

*Dan Cole, Multnomah County, replied that he could bring this information back to Gartner and noted that he is focused on the nuts-and-bolts side of technology.*

Co-chair Matt Chapman seconded Liam's suggestion for having Dan or Gartner back to the TCPB and suggested having Gartner present their stakeholder plan to the TCPB to receive feedback.

*Liam Frost, Metro, replied that he will work with Multnomah County to confirm if this is possible.*

Mercedes Elizalde noted that there are two types of functionalities between those who input data and those who collect data and that it is important to meet with those who collect data to determine capability needs.

*Dan Cole, Multnomah County, replied that they will meet with folks across counties to hear needs, and then based on those findings, will determine the correct tools to meet the capabilities needed.*

Cristina Palacios stated that some questions can make certain populations, such as immigrants and those who are undocumented, feel unsafe and suggested developing questions in an inclusive way.

*Abby Ahern, Metro, replied that the 2024 data standard combines race and ethnicity questions, indicating that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) listens when feedback is provided on inclusive questions.*

Multnomah County Commissioner Susheela Jayapal asked if determining what data will be gathered is within Gartner's scope and stated that it would be great if the TCPB could receive a preliminary report.

*Dan Cole, Multnomah County, replied that is not part of the analysis and that the team would look at it from a capability standpoint to add and remove data as needed.*

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Sahaan McKelvey noted that it is impossible to meet everyone's expectations. He added that who asks the questions is important as well and that the ultimate driver for data collection is to want to help improve people's lives. He stated that it's important to not let the desire for comprehensive data impact the services provided.

*Dan Cole, Multnomah County, replied that a mindset shift will help shift the tools and capabilities needed to support efforts. He clarified his role is to support data analytics work by developing tools and infrastructure.*

*Liam Frost, Metro, responded that the endpoint is to advance someone's wellbeing, and clarified that Dan's work is to pull the IT structure together, and the data points themselves are another conversation.*

Co-chair Matt Chapman stated that while the conversation on questions and methodologies of data collection is a separate topic, it is an important one.

Cristina Palacios added that screening questions are important and that as service providers, data is of lower importance than building trust and relationships. She noted that being able to skip data questions is an important function and that there are two roles for providers: providing services and collecting data.

*Abby Ahern, Metro, noted that there are HUD-required questions, but for other questions, it is important to consider asking those in a culturally responsive way.*

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington asked if this presentation was the only time to provide feedback. She stated that it was unusual to get into the details and assumed those points would come out of stakeholder interviews. She added that she has some feedback and data to share.

*Dan Cole, Multnomah County, replied that the feedback process will be launched in a few weeks, and the presentation was meant to be informational. He added that we will connect with Chair Harrington to get that feedback. He noted that they do want feedback from the TCPB but are constrained in how many interviews they can do.*

Zoi Coppiano shared that as a long-time user, it is exciting to see what capabilities HMIS could expand to, including coordinated entry. She added that many of the issues discussed today are likely to come up in the stakeholder interviews.

*Abby Ahern, Metro, noted that the coordinated entry group is exploring this topic as well.*

Multnomah County Commissioner Susheela Jayapal stated that it is always important to be clear on the purpose of asking for data and technology, which should be to improve services and decision-making around investments. She added that report functions should be included since they are accountable to the public.

Sahaan McKelvey noted that others use data to provide better services and asked how current technology can be used to improve services. He shared that getting to know someone is the best way to get information about them on their needs and barriers.

Patricia Rojas, Metro, shared that Gartner and Multnomah County will hear more of this when they start the engagement process, and while the goal is technical, it will bring up this conversation.

Mercedes Elizalde noted that historically, homeless service systems were designed with a scarcity mindset which resulted in denial of services to folks to maximize resources. She added that now there is more funding to support services, so it's important to design plans and systems in a new way.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West thanked everyone for the conversation and noted the clear ask to come back regularly and share updates.

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### Regional Investment Fund

Liam Frost, Metro, presented background information on the Regional Strategy Implementation Fund, sometimes called the Regional Investment Fund or RIF. He shared that each county must contribute at least five percent of its SHS allocation towards the RIF and that the TCPB is required to approve and monitor county expenditures after the TCPB has developed goals and provided a plan detailing those goals. He noted that the TCPB is developing the plan iteratively, each goal being a chapter. He clarified that once a chapter is approved, it is part of the plan.

Mindy Stadlander asked if the counties would approve the plan.

*Liam Frost, Metro, responded that the workflow is consultants will present their findings, and then the TCPB will have a discussion. After that, the counties will develop a proposed implementation plan with a budget, which will be presented to the TCPB. Then, the TCPB would approve or further discuss.*

*Patricia Rojas, Metro, added that the discussion where consultants share findings will be a full dialogue with the group, then based on the findings and discussion, the counties will develop the plan.*

Steve Rudman asked if the counties develop one regional plan together or develop individual plans.

*Liam Frost, Metro, responded that it depends on analysis and findings, and highlighted that the intent is to provide regional solutions, which sometimes may be individualized per county.*

*Patricia Rojas, Metro, added that the reasoning for three independent plans is due to budget authority and its functions. She clarified that there would be a collective strategy, but the budget allocation and management are at the county level.*

Mercedes Elizalde asked if the RIF was paying for the consultant work and what would happen if one goal impacted another. She noted that if each county has its own plan, it's not a regional plan. She challenged the TCPB to build a plan that's not limited to one fund at a time.

*Liam Frost, Metro, responded that the 5% Administration Funds Metro receives is paying for the consultants and that it is up to the TCPB to consider and ask questions when receiving the consultant presentations on how each goal will impact each other. He added that there will be braided funds as there are some goals that the RIF cannot cover.*

*Patricia Rojas, Metro, noted the difference between centralization and regionalization and added that the plans should be seen as a living document. She shared that as goals roll out, relationships may be identified and that is an opportunity for the TCPB to discuss.*

Steve Rudman asked for guiding principles the TCPB could use for making decisions on when to use the RIF, such as enhancements and innovations.

Metro Councilor Christine Lewis acknowledged the limited duration of funds and emphasized the need to implement quick innovative test cases which if they succeed, can be transferred to county funds. She noted that SHS funds will be a strong thread in a braided fund.

Nicole Larson asked if there are time limitations for the RIF and to frame the next presentation on the RIF on how the TCPB can clearly engage with it. She suggested providing a RIF outline and process and where the TCPB fits into it.

*Liam Frost, Metro, replied that the RIF timeline is the same as SHS revenue, which is 10 years. He added that the next presentation will touch on those points and that he is happy to dive into more details offline.*

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### Closing and Next Steps

The next steps include:

- Next meeting: October 11th, 4-6 pm.
  - Part II of the RIF presentation.
- Metro to check with Metro Council and the charter on the co-chair process.
- TCPB to receive touchpoints from Dan Cole, Multnomah County, as the HMIS Strategic Technology Analysis moves forward.
- Multnomah County to share Coalition of Communities of Color information with Gartner.
- Washington County Chair Harrington to share feedback with Dan Cole.
- TCPB to consider RIF use guiding principles.
- Focus Strategies to present on landlord recruitment progress in November.

### Adjourn

Adjourned at 6:00 p.m.