

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

Meeting: Supportive Housing Services Tri-County Planning Body Meeting
Date/time: Wednesday, October 12, 2022, 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Place: Virtual meeting (Zoom)
Purpose: Update the Tri-County Planning Body (TCPB) on supportive housing services regional coordination and discover areas of interest.

Member attendees

Co-Chair Eboni Brown (she/her), Co-Chair Matt Chapman (he/him), Zoi Coppiano (she/her), Mercedes Elizalde (she/her), Yvette Hernandez (she/her), Monta Knudson (he/him), Nicole Larson (she/her), Michael Ong Liu (he/him), Sahaan McKelvey (he/him), Steve Rudman (he/him), James Schroeder (he/him), Cristina Palacios (she/her)

Absent members

Alicia Schaffter (she/her)

County staff representatives

Clackamas County - Vahid Brown (he/him), Multnomah County – Yesenia Delgado (she/her), Washington County - Jes Larson (she/her)

Elected delegates

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington (she/her), Multnomah County Commissioner Susheela Jayapal (she/her), Metro Council President Lynn Peterson (she/her)

Absent elected delegates

Clackamas County Chair Tootie Smith (she/her)

Metro

Nui Bezaire (she/her), Ash Elverfeld (she/they), Liam Frost (he/him), Patricia Rojas (she/her), Valeria McWilliams (she/her)

Kearns & West Facilitators

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

Welcome and introductions

Liam Frost provided opening remarks and welcomed the Tri-County Planning Body (TCPB) to the meeting.

Ben Duncan introduced himself as a neutral third-party facilitator and facilitated introductions between TCPB Members.

Public comment

Keith Wilson provided verbal public comment. Documents he shared in the meeting will be included in the final meeting record.

A written public comment by Tom Cusack was received and sent to the committee one day before the meeting.

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November meeting summary approval

Co-Chair Eboni Brown asked for the November meeting summary to be shared on screen for a brief review. The TCPB then voted on approval of the November 9, 2022, TCPB Meeting Summary.

Thumbs up: 13

Thumbs sideways: 0

Thumbs down: 0

Abstain: Commissioner Susheela Jayapal, James Schroeder

The July 29, 2022, TCPB Meeting Summary was approved.

Group agreements

Co-Chairs Eboni Brown and Matt Chapman reviewed the group agreements.

Chair Kathryn Harrington suggested adding “maintain work scope”.

Co-Chair Chapman recommended the inclusion of “members will receive meeting materials one week in advance to review and come prepared to meetings.”

Liam Frost clarified that the slide deck will not be final a week in advance, but Metro can share a draft slide deck and follow-up with the final slide deck a day in advance.

The TCPB unanimously voted to approve the TCPB Group Agreements with these additions.

Tri-County Regional Coordination

Vahid Brown, Yesenia Delgado, and Jes Larson presented on regional coordination between the three jurisdictions. They shared challenges and opportunities related to the Regional Long-Term Rent Assistance (RLRA) Program, the Regional Service Provider Network, and regional data systems and standards.

Co-Chair Eboni Brown asked if the 120% Fair Market Rent (FMR) is at the state or county level, if that was an equitable amount, and if it is adjusted as rent increases.

Vahid Brown responded that FMR is inclusive of all counties in the Portland metropolitan region.

Jes Larson added that this is where program evaluation comes in. It is important to watch what happens in the market and to not flex the value of the subsidy. There is a sweet spot for efficiency and effectiveness.

Commissioner Jayapal asked the presenters to elaborate on voucher saturation.

Vahid Brown shared that saturation relates to vacancy rates. Vacancy rates fluctuate between 2-7% of available units. People who have vouchers compete with those who can afford these vacant units as housing infrastructure is underbuilt.

Commissioner Jayapal replied that it would be beneficial to have regional data coordination and tools for this issue.

Yesenia Delgado responded that the recommendation makes sense as services tend to be siloed, even though people do not experience boundaries. Yesenia noted that counties are open to exploring all opportunities.

Monta Knudson stated that housing voucher issues related to equity and the regional market rate exacerbates gentrification. It is impossible to find a one-bedroom unit in Portland for \$1,300. He asked if there are strategies and support options for smaller organizations around data collection.

Yesenia Delgado replied that the counties have looked at capacity building funds, which can be used to hire additional staff to help providers develop a regional strategy.

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Monta Knudson shared that from a provider standpoint, the burden is placed on them when they are asked to scale up provider administrative services. He asked for the group to consider giving providers funds up front so they can be successful.

Steve Rudman remarked that there is great regionalization information for RLRA that Tom Cusak shared during his written public comment. Steve shared his hope that the group can have a detailed discussion on RLRA in November. He noted the complication of the subject as RLRA units are in the private market space.

Michael Liu suggested focusing on building capacity for data collection or increasing services. He noted that with RLRA, as rent increases, the amount of people served decreases, so TCPB dollars may be better suited to link the region. Michael read that federal vouchers were going unused, so he cautioned focusing on RLRA if there are other categories the TCPB can focus on.

Mercedes Elizalde mentioned that it would be good to have a discussion on this topic. Rent assistance is shown to end homelessness through research and she is not aware of a better solution. She noted that this is a problem that the private market will need to fix. Mercedes suggested a quarterly report on RLRA voucher use data to help the TCPB understand this issue in greater detail.

Jes Larson shared that on November 15, the counties will be submitting their data all in the same template.

Co-Chair Eboni Brown asked if there is any coordination with other local governments to provide long term leases.

Vahid Brown replied that part of the regional framework includes partnership agreements. Clackamas County is exploring master leasing and have received a few proposals.

Liam Frost responded back to Michael's comment that the reason federal vouchers decreased was because they were released at the same time as local RLRA vouchers. Since RLRA vouchers have more flexibility, folks applied for local vouchers instead of federal.

Yesenia Delgado added that federal vouchers do not serve communities of color well.

Michael Liu clarified that he was not suggesting cutting RLRA, but instead identifying if the dollars can be better maximized by expanding capacity.

Chair Harrington asked if the county teams should continue having a process of delivering results per county, then developing a regional set of metrics and reports. The Washington County Board requires data reflective of local work so that voters know where Washington County stands in delivering its commitments to Populations A and B.

Cristina Palacios shared that this is an opportunity to serve more diverse communities and that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color providers should share information about their programs and inform the process going forward.

Co-Chair Matt Chapman in response to Chair Harrington noted that this would be a complex data gathering and synthesis task, and the best way to go about it would be in a way that does not add work to field workers. He heard that the counties have coordinated in collecting the same data elements, and the next step would be building off that base and identifying what is missing from different data systems and sources. He noted that this an opportunity for the TCPB to advance its work.

Zoi Coppiano seconded what Co-Chair Matt Chapman said and added that it would be best practice to have a data coordination system. It would be good to know how long it takes in each county for voucher inspection and data points for how long and difficult it is for different racial groups to receive a voucher and a housing unit.

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Closing and next steps

Ben Duncan reflected what the TCPB shared today.

Chair Harrington shared she would like to focus on regional outcome metrics, and that RLRA would benefit from further discussion. She noted her concern for developing a TCPB workplan and how that relates to each county's Local Implementation Plan timelines.

Co-Chair Matt Chapman clarified that there is a process for agenda setting between the jurisdictions and the co-chairs, and that ideas are welcomed and considered.

Commissioner Jayapal noted that it would be helpful to review the TCPB's role during the next meeting.

Nicole Larson requested that the workplan include an overview of the year and topics of discussion.

Liam Frost thanked everyone for participating. Next steps include:

- Publish the September 14, 2022, meeting summary.
- Distribute approved group agreements.
- Pilot hybrid meeting in November.

Adjourn

Adjourned at 6:00 pm.