

Meeting minutes

Meeting: Metro Housing Bond Oversight Committee
Date/time: Wednesday, March 16, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Place: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)
Purpose: Discuss implementation progress with four jurisdictions.

Attendees

Kira Cador, Brandon Culbertson, Mitch Hornecker, Co-chair Jenny Lee, Ann Leenstra, Mara Romero, Co-chair Steve Rudman, Andrea Sanchez, Karen Shawcross, Trinh Tran, Juan Ugarte Ahumada, Tia Vonil

Absent

Melissa Erlbaum, Nicole Stingh

Metro

Ash Elverfeld, Rachael Lembo, Emily Lieb, Jimmy Oporta, Alison Wicks

Facilitators

Allison Brown, JLA Public Involvement; Shilo George, Lush Kumtux Tumtum Consulting

Note: The meeting was recorded via Zoom and therefore details will be focused mainly on the discussion, with less detail in regards to the presentations. Presentation slides are included in the packet.

Welcome and opening remarks

Allison Brown, facilitator with JLA Public Involvement, welcomed the Committee. Shilo George provided a land acknowledgement and Allison provided a labor acknowledgment.

Co-chairs, Jenny Lee and Steve Rudman welcomed members and thanked them for being at the meeting.

Allison asked the members to respond to the question, “Home is so much more than just our physical location: where is your home located?” Members responded in chat, verbally, and on a Jamboard.

Members confirmed the meeting summary from March 2, 2022.

Allison invited committee members to disclose roles or work they are involved in that may intersect with topics discussed today.

- Ann Leenstra stated that she is the Housing Commissioner for Clackamas County
- Kira Cador stated that her development company, Rembold, is potentially going to work with Hillsboro on a project. It isn't affordable housing.
- Andrea Sanchez stated that her employer, Housing Development Center is a partner on the Nueva Esperanza project in Beaverton. She also said that Housing Development Center is working as a consultant on the Mary Ann project and that she is assigned to the project.
- Brandon Culbertson left a comment in the chat that he may be contracted to do Native American community housing feedback sessions in Washington County and City of Beaverton.

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Public comment

No written or verbal public comment was received.

Annual progress report: Clackamas County

Devin Ellin, Housing Development Director, Clackamas County (she/her pronouns) joined the meeting as a presenter and provided a brief update on their program progress in 2021. Her responses are italicized.

Jenny asked how they're working to ensure that their investments serve households experiencing homelessness. What opportunities is Clackamas exploring to expand supportive housing services (SHS) integration and permanent supportive housing (PSH) in their portfolio?

- *56 additional permanent supportive housing units will be supported in the 4 projects underway. Also strategizing with Metro on how to project base Regional Longterm Rent Assistance (RLRA). The County is working with financial partners to get them more comfortable with RLRA and not require huge reserves.*

Andrea asked how the oversight committee could potentially be of assistance with that underwriting issue.

- *They're looking at applying RLRA post-closing which could be a way that lenders and investors are agreeable. Steve hopes that if this plan works in one county it should work in others and commended them on their dedication to permanent supportive housing.*

The next questions were, how are you working to ensure low barrier lease up? How are you monitoring lease up to ensure that households with barriers are served?

- *Although they don't currently have any projects leasing up at the moment they're starting to strategize on it. Tukwila Springs is a full PSH project and the County is contracting with Home Forward on property management and service coordination. They want to use a trauma informed approach to connect homeless households with housing. They're also looking at culturally-specific service providers to work on affirmative marketing.*

Kira asked how they'll make decisions about how to invest the additional air-conditioning funds? Why are some projects able to pay for air-conditioning (A/C) in their additional development costs and others are asking later?

- *All bond projects in their pipeline are already providing energy efficient A/C. They're requiring it in future Requests For Proposals (RFPs). They're supporting hardwired A/C.*

Steve said that they need to diversify their workforce to meet Bond goals and asked what they have planned?

- *Staff have connected with Workforce Clackamas and are working on building out tracking capacity with support from a technical assistance grant from Metro.*

Annual progress report: Washington County

Komi Kalevor, Director of Housing Authority of Washington County, joined the meeting as a presenter along with Shannon Wilson, Housing Development Manager (she/her pronouns). Their responses are italicized below.

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How are you working to ensure low barrier lease up? How are you monitoring lease up to ensure that households with barriers are served?

- *They're working with service providers for their PSH units and culturally specific providers who they also worked with in initial community engagement to continue those relationships and build upon them. Specifically for Viewfinder, they're working closely with the Housing Authority of Washington County's SHS program. They're learning about the nuances of lease up processes and is a work in progress that they're fully engaged in and are committed to serving clients on low barrier screening.*

Karen Shawcross asked about their Site Acquisition Program (SAP) collaboration?

- *They're working with SAP and looking at the geographic dispersal of Washington County's current ten Bond projects and areas where they would want another project. A site has been identified and they're in very early negotiations.*

Brandon asked if there were any plans in the future to work with tribal entities or government for tribal housing?

- *They would be very interested in tribal housing. With their initial community engagement work they had a hard time connecting with Native American communities who lived in Washington County.*

Kira asked if for any projects in pre-construction, whether the development partners have come back and asked for more funds due to cost increases of materials?

- *They're seeing that generally all projects are coming back with higher asks at the final approval stage because they're getting final construction pricing and it's coming up significantly higher than initial estimates. They aren't currently asking for more bond funds to be used, instead they have a Housing Production Opportunity fund at the County and may be pursuing that for one of the projects.*

Andrea asked how the oversight committee can help the County? Should they advocate to get money out the door?

- *They're not at a point yet where they need help with advocacy but may at some point in the future.*

Karen asked what the status was of Aloha Inn?

- *Renovation work is underway now and is scheduled to be completed by the end of the summer to convert it to PSH. The SHS program has been leading the work to find an operator of the site.*

Steve asked if for the remaining Bond money that they haven't used whether they would be trying to integrate it with the SAP?

- *Their timeline may sync up with the site they're looking at but may not and also would involve negotiating that with SAP.*

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How will you make decisions about how to invest A/C funds?

- *Four out of ten current pipeline projects were interested in A/C additions and would need additional funding, it mainly depended on where they were within their development projects. After those allocations they would intend on releasing remaining funds with the final NOFA and anticipate A/C being required.*

Annual progress report: Beaverton

Javier Mena, City of Beaverton, joined the meeting as a presenter. He said that although it's been a challenging year, they're hopeful and working to solve for various funding gaps. Scholls Ferry Road has the biggest funding gap and they're working with the State of Oregon and City of Beaverton to bridge those gaps. The final project they have their eye on but are in very early stages of planning for is a senior housing project on a City-owned site that is currently used as a severe weather shelter. It would have the deepest affordability in their Bond portfolio. They're working with the City and County on that because of code changes that would need to occur as well as the need to identify another location for the severe weather shelter.

Bianetth Valdez (she/her/ella), Outreach Coordinator, City of Beaverton also presented. She does community engagement with their housing projects. The City engages with various stakeholders: the public, their advisory committees that include folks with lived experience, trade associations and COBID engagement by letting the community know of projects coming online. She will be following the community members living in the Mary Ann to learn about their experience and take that learning to better future projects.

Their responses to questions are italicized below.

Allison asked how they are working to ensure that their investments serve households experiencing homelessness? What opportunities are you exploring to expand SHS integration/PSH in your portfolio?

- *The future senior housing project will partner with Washington County's SHS program for PSH units. For pre-development projects, Elmonica may add PSH. South Cooper Mountain project is not prepared to have PSH.*

How will you make decisions about how to invest A/C funds? Mary Ann didn't have A/C, for Elmonica could you now get it fully air-conditioned?

- *They're prioritizing putting those funds into Elmonica because they didn't have A/C in their design. The developer has also been having community conversations and is doing research into costs. South Cooper Mountain will have A/C, and for the future Senior Housing project an A/C or cooling system will be required.*

Annual progress report: Hillsboro

Chris Hartye, Senior Project Manager, City of Hillsboro joined the committee as a panelist. The City has 149 units in production. They're working with SAP on a Tanasbourne property and hoping SAP will close in June on it. His responses to committee member questions are italicized below.

How are you working to ensure that your investments serve households experiencing homelessness? What opportunities are you exploring to expand SHS integration/PSH in your portfolio?

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- *They're making sure their projects are leveraging project-based vouchers (PBVs) through the Housing Authority of Washington County. Other types of housing may be used in the future for PSH and would integrate with SHS.*

How are you working to ensure low barrier lease up? How are you monitoring lease up to ensure that households with barriers are served?

- *Hillsboro is supported by two consultants who have experience with low barrier screening. They're also working to find project sponsors. Nueva Esperanza has affirmative marketing practices particularly for Latinx people and some of their immigration statuses. When community based organizations help provide referrals, they also need orientation so that they're prepared to assist their applicants with applying.*

Kira asked in the chat how Hillsboro going to track and verify the \$10.7M success in equitable contracting dollar allocation?

- *The City purchased a software platform called B2GC Now and they're using it for the first time for tracking.*

Brandon asked in the chat if tenants are able to provide professional letters to assist in the review process within their first or primary language(s)?

- *He will have to look into that and follow-up to confirm.*

How will you make decisions about how to invest A/C funds?

- *Nueva Esperanza has included A/C. Each RFP from Hillsboro going forward will require a cooling plan. Extra funding will be used to support that. They believe it's a life safety issue and not an amenity.*

Local implementation plan discussion

All jurisdictional partner staff who were previously presenting rejoined for a group discussion.

Kira asked if there is an opportunity to support partners with software programs, could Metro or State provide support to create consistency amongst reporting?

- *Emily Lieb said that this is an ongoing challenge. Metro has the Construction To Career Pathways program meant to create inter-jurisdictional alignment on workforce goals. At the moment, Metro is working to get their own software running. At the committee's recommendation Metro offered technical assistance to support partners in acquiring tracking software if they don't already have this capacity. So far, Clackamas County has requested that funding. Metro is also working with local jurisdictions and OHCS to support alignment in tracking to ensure that data can be easily rolled up and to avoid duplicated reporting requests.*

Andrea said that she heard some themes of integration of SHS rental assistance into projects, are they finding solutions to underwriting challenges? Other theme with pipeline projects, which will be reliant on PABs and how does that impact the pipeline? At a state level, there is a need to increase per unit subsidy amounts to spread what PAB and LITHC is available, do members agree?

- *Devin said that Emily has been reaching out and collecting information from them and housing authorities are reaching out to the state.*



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- *Javier said yes it's a challenge, their modeling was all based on 4% tax credits. Beaverton is working closely with Metro.*
- *Shannon agreed with Devin and Javier.*
- *Chris said an advocacy component may be appropriate.*
- *Emily said Metro will continue to engage with local jurisdictions and OHCS to ensure coordination and alignment.*

Steve posed that since RLRA is available now are there ways to share learned information regionally and maximize this new resource? He also said he is disappointed in the lack of diversification of the workforce and encouraged partners to reach their goals in the upcoming year.

Program updates

- Staff provided an overview of dashboard and expenditure report by Emily Lieb and Rachael Lembo.
 - Emily shared unit production dashboard from website.
- Mitch asked for a detailed update on PSH and allocating the \$23 million dollar for Project Turnkey style investments and Emily responded.
 - Emily said Metro is working with the Counties to understand near term opportunities to advance investments that support rapid PSH creation beyond the initial Bond goals. The goal is to first understand near term opportunities and then structure a process that can best support the counties in pursuing them.
 - Mitch expressed concern about need to deploy funds quickly, to try to have units in service by next winter.
- Mara asked whether, given challenges with PABs, Metro would advocate for or a shift away from tax credit model?
 - Emily said they're working with partners to develop more specific recommendations and will continue to update the committee as the conversation moves forward.
 - Andrea said it's important to coordinate amongst state and local partners and it is incumbent on all of us to advocate for better coordination. She asked how we mix different funding sources? She said we've become reliant on PABs and LIHTC, why not look at allowing Bond and LIFT funds to be used simultaneously?

Next steps

The next oversight committee meeting is March 30, 9:00 AM-12:00 PM

Allison adjourned the meeting at 12:00 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ash Elverfeld, Housing Program Assistant, Metro.