

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

Meeting: Supportive Housing Services Tri-County Planning Body Meeting
Date: Wednesday, March 13, 2024
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 receive an update regarding Multnomah County’s Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) work and review and vote on the Landlord Recruitment and Retention Implementation Plan.

Member attendees

Co-chair Eboni Brown (she/her), Co-chair Matt Chapman (he/him), Zoi Coppiano (she/her), Yvette Marie Hernandez (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 Stadlander (she/her), Mercedes Elizalde (she/her)

Absent members

None

Elected delegates

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington (she/her), Metro Councilor Christine Lewis (she/her), Multnomah County Chair Jessica Vega Pederson (she/her)

Absent delegates

Clackamas County Chair Tootie Smith (she/her)

County staff representatives

Clackamas County – Adam Brown; Multnomah County – Breanna Flores (she/they), Dan Cole (he/him) Min Chong (she/her, Gartner consultant); Washington County – Nicole Stingham (she/her), Jes Larson (she/her)

Metro

Abby Ahern (she/her), Liam Frost (he/him), Valeria McWilliams (she/her), Patricia Rojas (she/her), Chris Pence (he/him), Ruth Adkins (she/her), Yesenia Delgado (she/her), Melia Deters (she/her), Giovanni Bautista (he/him)

Kearns & West Facilitators

Ben Duncan (he/him), Colin Baker (he/him)

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, introduced himself and welcomed the Tri-County Planning Body (TCPB) to the meeting and facilitated introductions between TCPB members.

Valeria McWilliams, Metro, introduced new Metro staff Chris Pence and Ruth Adkins.

Yesenia Delgado, Metro, provided update on the recent SHS Oversight Committee meeting and the development of its regional annual report. She indicated that the SHS Oversight Committee co-

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

chairs and staff will share the report with Metro Council and the Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington County Boards of Commissioners.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reviewed the agenda and objectives.

The TCPB approved the February Meeting Summary.

Public Comment

No public comment was received.

HMIS Strategic Sourcing Analysis Update – Multnomah County

Patricia Rojas, Metro, shared an overview of the Tri-County Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) technology strategic sourcing analysis that the Multnomah County IT team has completed with consultant Gartner.

Dan Cole, Multnomah County, introduced himself and his role on Multnomah County's Information Technology (IT) team, which has been leading the HMIS strategic sourcing analysis project with the support of Gartner. He reminded the TCPB that Multnomah County's IT team leads the technology infrastructure of HMIS for the Tri-Counties, while each county implements and operates HMIS itself. For context, he shared that the current HMIS system has caused concerns about data accuracy and quality and has created barriers to implementing new houselessness initiatives. Given this, Gartner has conducted an assessment of the current HMIS system, helped articulate a future-state vision for houselessness and housing services, identified gaps between the current system and a future-state system, identified the capabilities needed in a new system to support the future-state vision, shared insights into the current market of HMIS system products, and proposed recommendations for achieving the future-state vision with updated HMIS technology.

Min Chong, Gartner, presented more detail on the HMIS strategic sourcing analysis project. She shared findings from stakeholder engagement efforts and Gartner's assessment of legacy HMIS capabilities. Current HMIS capabilities cannot fully support an expanded vision for HMIS, which limits the effectiveness of houselessness coordination and response. She outlined how the current HMIS system fully performs only eight of fifty possible capabilities, with many capabilities partially or insufficiently performed and several not performed at all. Some of these capabilities are critical to achieving the future-state vision for houselessness services. She highlighted that the current HMIS system also has technical limitations that restrict its ability to perform important business capabilities, such as the inability to log geospatial data, upload and edit data in bulk, produce insightful data analysis with reports and dashboards, among others. Improvements could be made to the legacy system to mitigate some of these limitations, but it will still not meet the full future-state vision for data infrastructure. She shared other HMIS system options on the marketplace that would perform better, including two recommended vendors and two less capable vendors. Finally, she shared recommendations on how to achieve expanded HMIS vision, such as an initiating an HMIS governance model and expanded vision, developing a data reporting strategy, identifying priority improvements for a new HMIS system, selecting a new HMIS contractor, and implementing a new HMIS system.

Co-chair Eboni Brown asked if there would be any anticipated downtime during a system transition, and, if so, what the impact on HMIS usage and houselessness services would be?

Dan Cole, Multnomah County, responded that his team anticipates almost no downtime and little service impact. He clarified that the transition would likely be conducted over a weekend.

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington noted that the HMIS project's timeline could mean that full implementation of a new HMIS system might not occur until year seven of the ten-year term of service for the TCPB. This would require the Counties to continue to operate an insufficient system for several more years. She expressed a desire for the TCPB to make a motion to direct Metro staff to share the Gartner presentation with Metro Council and the SHS Oversight Committee. After sharing her hope that the Regional Investment Fund (RIF) would have sufficient funds, she asked about the cost of a new HMIS system.

Dan Cole, Multnomah County, responded that the current timeline for implementing a new HMIS system is two years, with a January 2026 target launch date. He noted that this project needs to be sufficiently resourced, so that it meets this target. He highlighted that, despite the two-year timeline, updating the HMIS system would, in the long run, save significant time, effort, and energy for all involved. He also shared that updating the HMIS system would ultimately improve the delivery of housing and houselessness services, in contrast with the current state of HMIS, which is a data collection tool that cannot be leveraged to improve the delivery of services. Finally, he noted that there is not yet a price for the proposed HMIS system updates.

Cristina Palacios asked for more clarity about what fully functioning housing eligibility capabilities would look like in a HMIS system and how they would be incorporated into a new system.

Dan Cole, Multnomah County, answered that this has not yet been decided, and prioritization of capabilities in a new HMIS system will be a future step in the process.

Co-chair Matt Chapman commented on the high quality of the presentation. He noted that large-scale systems transitions are lengthy and complex processes and cautioned against speeding up at the risk of compromising quality and functionality. He stated that the process should be rigorous and disciplined to achieve the desired future state of HMIS, and that trying to salvage the current system is not a viable option. He asked about what can be done in the interim to mitigate some of the challenges and inadequacies of the current HMIS system.

Dan Cole, Multnomah County, responded that there should be immediate action to get the process started. One possibility is to collaborate with TCPB members to advise on stakeholder engagement on critical user pain points that could potentially be addressed with temporary "Band-Aid" solutions, e.g. layering other systems onto the current system.

Mercedes Elizalde asked about the timing and process of vendor selection.

Dan Cole, Multnomah County, responded that vendor selection should occur between July 2024 and the end of the calendar year. His team will evaluate tradeoffs of each vendor and technology option, including comparing their relative strengths and weaknesses. He highlighted that one of the key features his team will look for is each option's ability to integrate with other technologies that would allow for more customization and flexibility with data reporting. He said the selection process will include input from a broad spectrum of community stakeholders to inform prioritization of capabilities and features.

Mindy Stadtlander noted that some housing services are included as "health related services" in Oregon and therefore can be billable to Medicaid and/or the state, so interoperability and the capacity to share individuals' information across platforms would be useful.

Multnomah County Chair Jessica Vega Pederson shared her strong commitment to this project and appreciation for others' sense of urgency on it. She reflected that the current HMIS is outdated, and an updated system is needed.

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

Michael Ong Liu noted that housing inventory management would likely be a feature in a new HMIS system and asked if comparisons to other housing inventory management systems have been made. He also asked about plans to ensure a new HMIS system remains a single, cohesive tool. Finally, he inquired about how a new system would relate to and/or work with Built for Zero.

Dan Cole, Multnomah County, answered that there still needs to be decisions made about the possible capabilities in a new system, including defining the minimum requirements, considering “nice to haves”, and identifying unnecessary features. Then, it can be determined if all the chosen capabilities can be implemented within a single product or via plug-in/integrated products. He shared that Built for Zero is a methodology or framework for how data is collected rather than a data tool or product itself.

Sahaan McKelvey questioned the complexity of deciding on a new HMIS system vendor. Noting that other communities with similar houselessness situations use one of the two recommended vendors, he recommended considering these examples to help expedite the decision-making process.

Dan Cole, Multnomah County, shared that a complete public procurement sourcing process is required by law.

Yvette Marie Hernandez expressed her excitement for this project.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reminded the TCPB that this project does not require a vote or funding from TCPB because it is led by Multnomah County.

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington reminded the TCPB of her desire for a motion that the project presentation be shared with the Metro Council and SHS Oversight Committee. Patricia Rojas, Metro, assured the TCPB that the presentation will be shared with these bodies.

Landlord Recruitment and Retention Implementation Plan

Valeria McWilliams, Metro, presented an overview of the Landlord Recruitment and Retention Implementation Plan (implementation plan) and reminded the TCPB that it is the first chapter that the body is being asked to approve. She reiterated that the implementation plan will help recruit and retain landlords in the Tri-County area. If approved, the next step for the implementation plan would be for the SHS Oversight Committee to vote on approval.

Breanna Flores, Multnomah County, focused the group’s attention on racial equity considerations in the implementation plan. She encouraged the members to be mindful of the ways equity considerations should arise in this work, given the deliberate ways that housing policies and practices have historically created and reinforced racial disparities in housing, so that the TCPB does not unintentionally continue these harms. She also expressed Multnomah County’s commitment to the implementation plan process.

Chris Pence, Metro, presented the first strategy of the implementation plan: a communication and education plan. Metro will hire a consultant to create a regional communications plan to recruit and educate landlords, with a specific focus on Black, Brown, and Indigenous landlords. The anticipated cost is between \$50,000 and \$150,000 and would start by June 2025.

Nicole Stingh, Washington County, presented the second strategy of the implementation plan, alignment of financial incentives, which will include research into changing and/or expanding existing landlord incentives and communications materials based on the research. The anticipated cost is \$100,000 and would start at the end of calendar year 2024 or early 2025.

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

Breanna Flores, Multnomah County, presented the third strategy, tracking and access to unit inventory, for which Multnomah County will pilot a unit acquisition and tracking program along with Housing Connector during FY24-25. After the pilot, the Counties will analyze outcomes and decide whether to expand the program regionally. The anticipated cost is \$810,000 and will recruit 30 property partners, house 72 households, and list 10 property units (70% of which will be below Fair Market Rent (FMR)).

Adam Brown, Clackamas County, shared the fourth strategy, prioritize quality problem-solving services, which Clackamas County will pilot. This strategy will include a 24/7 landlord hotline to alleviate strain on case managers and add support to landlords. Hotline staff will direct landlords to existing supports and services (e.g. risk mitigation programs, case managers, incentives, landlord-tenant law, fair housing law, etc.). The anticipated cost is \$500,000 and will be online by winter 2025.

Chris Pence, Metro, presented the fifth strategy: investigate needs for property management. Metro, with input from the Counties, will hire a consultant to study mission-driven property management and provide strategies to expand it. The anticipated cost is \$50,000 to \$100,000 and one or more strategies will be identified by spring 2025.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, facilitated a round robin discussion, where each member had the opportunity to express their perspectives on the implementation plan and then indicate their support with a thumb up, their opposition with a thumb down, or their support with reservations with a thumb sideways. He indicated that members who disapprove of the implementation plan must propose an alternative or suggestion to address their concerns for the TCPB to consider.

Mindy Stadtlander voted “yes” to support the plan.

Cristina Palacios voted “yes” to support the plan and commented about the need for tenants to have strong renters' insurance and that low-income renters who cannot afford it are not disqualified from the program.

Yvette Marie Hernandez voted “yes” to support the plan.

Zoi Coppiano voted “yes” to support the plan.

Steve Rudman voted “yes” to support the plan. He noted his approval of this plan because of the specific inclusion of landlords as a priority but raised concerns about the 24/7 landlord hotline because of potential implementation barriers beyond Clackamas County.

Co-chair Matt Chapman voted “yes” to support the plan and indicated his agreement with Steve Rudman’s points.

Metro Councilor Christine Lewis voted “yes” to support the plan.

Monta Knudson indicated his reserved support with a thumb sideways, noting that the TCPB has not been updated on the other goals.

Valeria McWilliams, Metro, responded that there was a crosswalk between this implementation plan and the goals that identified why some of the goals were incorporated into this implementation plan and why others were not. She offered to talk in more detail with Monta after the meeting.

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

Michael Ong Liu voted “yes” to support the plan. He also highlighted two areas of possible concern, the 24/7 landlord support hotline, and the source of funds for the risk mitigation program of the implementation plan and TCPB’s authority to approve the use of those funds for the risk mitigation program. He noted that 911 is struggling with wait and response times in the region, so the landlord support hotline must be adequately staffed for it to be effective. He asked when members think the TCPB should approach the Counties and/or the SHS oversight committee for financial support for the risk mitigation program, especially given that it is relatively expensive (\$6,000,000 of the \$7,810,000 - \$8,060,000 total anticipated cost of the implementation plan).

Valeria McWilliams, Metro, confirmed that these funds have already been approved and offered to follow up with more information after the meeting.

Adam Brown, Clackamas County, clarified that the \$6,000,000 figure represents the anticipated annualized cost of claims utilization through the risk mitigation program based on the number of housing units that will be online.

Michael Ong Liu expressed his opinion that TCPB funding should not be used for a reserve like this for the risk mitigation program.

Nicole Larson voted “yes” to support the plan and expressed her desire to have access to a cost breakdown of the risk mitigation program to better understand the source of funds (e.g. SHS funds going to Counties or TCPB funds from the RIF).

Liam Frost, Metro, confirmed with members that Metro will provide additional information about the risk mitigation program funding after the meeting.

Sahaan McKelvey voted “yes” to support the plan and asked to have a clearer line of sight into the forecast of future implementation plans to have a better understanding of overall costs. He shared that he believes the relatively high cost of this implementation plan assumes that future implementation plans will have lower costs.

Co-chair Eboni Brown voted “yes” to support the plan and noted that she would like the budget for the 24/7 landlord hotline to be increased so it can be fully staffed with at least two people always available. She indicated that for the risk mitigation program, she would prefer a policy in which a third party assesses unit damages so that housing providers and participants in programs are not taken advantage of and leveled with exorbitant repair costs.

Mercedes Elizalde voted “yes” to support the plan and stated that she is comfortable using RIF funding to expand the 24/7 landlord hotline to other Counties beyond Clackamas County. She also asked that Metro and the Counties be clear about which providers are responsible for landlord recruitment and which are responsible for landlord retention. In reference to the irregular reporting timeline structure on the slides, she asked that Metro and the Counties create a single, consistent way of reporting timelines to avoid confusion in the future. Finally, she asked if the approximately \$8,000,000 allocated to this implementation plan is flexible to shift around to fund the five strategies or if the funding for each strategy is fixed.

Patricia Rojas, Metro, responded that the costs presented today are estimated so Metro and the Counties will return to the TCPB with more exact amounts once the actual costs are known. She also

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

explained that if a strategy or project costs more than initially estimated, they will return to TCPB for its approval.

Multnomah County Chair Jessica Vega Pederson voted “yes” to support the plan and posed a question about the benefits to the implementation plan for landlord and property management companies, wondering if or how the plan would treat them differently than community development corporations. She noted that she can talk with the relevant people for a response after the meeting. Finally, she indicated her support for the risk mitigation program, saying that it is necessary for landlords to have that type of security.

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington voted “yes” to support the plan, expressing her readiness to approve funding so that “on-the-ground” work of the TCPB can start. She also asked that TCPB staff prepare “as you recall” documents of previous TCPB meetings and materials to provide context and reminders during preparation for upcoming meetings.

Co-chair Eboni Brown presented a motion to approve the implementation plan. The motion was seconded. The implementation plan was unanimously approved.

Closing and Next Steps

Co-Chairs Eboni Brown and Matt Chapman shared closing remarks and meeting reflections.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, noted that the next meeting is Wednesday, April 10th from 4:00 to 6:00 pm.

Next steps include:

- Metro to share HMIS Strategic Sourcing Analysis Update presentation with the Metro Council and the SHS Oversight Committee.
- Metro to share crosswalk of goals and the Landlord Recruitment and Retention Implementation Plan.
- Metro to share more details about the anticipated cost of the risk mitigation program.
- Jurisdictional staff to provide previous meeting materials to TCPB members ahead of future meetings.
- Co-chairs Eboni Brown and Matt Chapman will present the implementation plan recommendations to the SHS Oversight Committee.

Adjourn

Adjourned at 6:00 p.m.