

Metro

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Metro

Minutes - Final

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

10:30 AM

Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber,
<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> Webinar ID: 615 079 992 or
888-475-4499 (toll free)
[https://www.youtube.com/live/nl7UMTpUJN0?
si=X60ldiUHTE3faymυ](https://www.youtube.com/live/nl7UMTpUJN0?si=X60ldiUHTE3faymυ)
Council work session

This meeting will be held electronically and in person at the Metro Regional Center Council Chamber.

You can join the meeting on your computer or other device by using this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> (Webinar ID: 615 079 992)

10:30 Call to Order and Roll Call

Deputy Council President Hwang called the Work Session to order at 10:30 a.m.

Present: 7 - Councilor Gerritt Rosenthal, Councilor Mary Nolan, Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Duncan Hwang, Christine Lewis, Ashton Simpson, and Lynn Peterson

10:35 Work Session Topics:

Council President Peterson introduced Marissa Madrigal (she/her), COO, Metro to present on the Regional Housing Funding: Engagement and Chief Operating Recommendation Update.

10:35 Regional Housing Funding: Engagement and Chief Operating Officer Recommendation Update

Presenter(s): Marissa Madrigal (she/her), COO, Metro

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)
[Attachment 1](#)

Council President Peterson introduced Marissa Madrigal (she/her), COO, Metro to present on the Regional Housing Funding: Engagement and Chief Operating Recommendation Update.

Presentation Summary:

Marissa Madrigal (she/her), COO, Metro, shared a few key insights on the Regional Housing Funding that emphasized the urgency of addressing the housing crisis, citing the region's diminishing funding sources and escalating rent burdens leading to increased homelessness and evictions. Stressing the interconnectedness of housing and

homelessness, she highlighted the critical need for affordable housing investments to prevent downstream impacts. Reflecting on stakeholder input and public opinion, she underscored the consensus around expanding the SHS tax to include affordable housing while maintaining commitments to services. She outlined ongoing efforts to refine recommendations based on community engagement, stakeholder feedback, and public opinion research, aiming for a comprehensive approach that aligns with Metro's core values and addresses the region's housing challenges effectively.

Council Discussion

Councilor Lewis thanked the COO and the housing department for their efforts in gathering data, holding stakeholder meetings, as well as meeting deadlines on time. She expressed concerns about the vulnerability of individuals experiencing homelessness, particularly highlighting their socio-economic challenges compounded by societal factors like mental illness and addiction. Emphasizing the need to preserve stability in services and protect the rights of this population, she urged a focused approach in any ballot initiatives to avoid further marginalization. She underscored worries about the future availability of deeply affordable and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) units, noting the critical role these units play in housing stability for vulnerable individuals and families.

Councilor Nolan (they/them), expressed a need for clarity on the status of the recommendation, seeking assurance on

which aspects have been finalized amidst the gathered information and deliberations. They emphasized the importance of understanding what has been decided versus what is still under consideration to make informed decisions moving forward.

Marissa Madrigal (she/her), underscored the importance of not disrupting the progress made by counties in their implementation efforts. He proposed that involving counties in outlining their desired spectrum of services and housing outcomes would be a prudent approach to ensure alignment with the broader goals and values set forth by the council.

Councilor Nolan followed up with wanting to know if the housing team hasn't already done that with their LIPS?

Marissa Madrigal (she/her), acknowledged the current limitations of SHS and its focus solely on what SHS could presently offer. She recognized the merit in expanding its scope but stressed the critical need for governance reforms to address concerns about unclear outcomes and lack of transparency in program implementation. This presented an opportunity to consider comprehensive reforms, potentially including ballot measures, to ensure alignment with program goals and restore public trust in the system.

Councilor Nolan (they/them), questioned the criteria for altering current approaches, noting their ineffectiveness despite the involvement of capable and dedicated individuals in past efforts. Recognizing the need for fundamental change, they emphasized the importance of implementing strategies that diverge from conventional

methods, even if they provoke discomfort among Metro and city partners unaccustomed to such approaches.

Marissa Madrigal (she/her), reflected on the dysfunction of the system over the past 25 years, particularly during her tenure at Multnomah County, highlighting chronic underfunding that prioritized immediate survival over long-term system strengthening. Despite recent funding injections, the existing system struggled to absorb and effectively utilize these resources. She emphasized the need for clear regional standards, shared definitions, and improved communication between Metro and its community partners to establish mutual expectations and track progress effectively, underscoring these as critical areas requiring collective attention moving forward.

Councilor Hwang (he/him), reflected on the extensive stakeholder engagement process, acknowledging Metro's commendable effort in convening inclusive discussions despite bureaucratic complexities. He expressed concerns about the multitude of governing bodies involved in policymaking across the Portland metro region, which often hindered efficient course corrections and decision-making. His primary focus was on streamlining this process to enhance transparency, accountability, and shared decision-making, suggesting that fewer, more empowered bodies might be a solution to the current challenges of coordination and responsiveness.

Marissa Madrigal (she/her), highlighted the complexities in the SHS program audit, emphasizing the multilayered governance structure, ambiguity in roles, and inefficiencies observed. Her recommendation aimed to streamline the process by reducing committees, establishing a clear pathway from program implementers to an independent

oversight body with defined roles and responsibilities.

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Councilor Simpson (he/him), reflected on recent meetings with east county city manager, highlighting their concerns regarding engagement with Multnomah County and the joint office. He sought to understand how his recommendations could enhance smaller jurisdictions' capacity to address homelessness effectively, especially after devoting a significant portion of a recent meeting to this pressing issue.

Marissa Madrigal (she/her), noted from discussions with city managers and elected mayors that while some cities were effectively utilizing county funding, others struggled despite available resources. He emphasized the importance of addressing city concerns in any future initiatives, recognizing cities as pivotal in addressing community needs. Though specific solutions weren't outlined, he underscored the value of cities as critical partners and emphasized the need to incorporate their perspectives in forthcoming recommendations.

President Peterson (she/her), thanked and acknowledged the work of the COO's office as well as the work and dedication of Metro's housing department to further the region's goals.

Councilor Lewis (she/her), questioned the proposed timeline for July, suggesting the consideration of presenting multiple phases of recommendations. She preferred exploring actions that could be implemented sooner without needing voter approval, despite potential risks associated with such approaches. She aimed to accelerate actions rather than waiting for the entire process of referral, passage, and implementation.

Marissa Madrigal (she/her), had been actively discussing the components of a potential referral recommendation and distinguishing them from other tasks that could proceed independently. Elements such as governance were identified as crucial, with recognition from audits that immediate action was necessary, possibly through a ballot measure. She aimed to delineate these aspects and engage further with partners to ensure collective success beyond Metro's interests.

Councilor Nolan (they/them), questioned if the projected estimates will reduce homelessness in the next five years. They emphasized the need for measurable impact beyond simply constructing housing units, aiming to effectively reduce the number of unhoused individuals and families. Marissa Madrigal (she/her), emphasized the housing department's team generated multiple scenarios for stakeholders and county discussions to explore different approaches. She emphasized the importance of defining clear goals for housing and serving a specific number of people, suggesting counties could benefit from flexibility in using affordable housing as part of their strategies.

11:35 Chief Operating Officer Communication

Marissa Madrigal, COO provided an update on the following events or items:

There were none.

11:40 Councilor Communication

Councilors provided updates on the following meetings and events:

Councilor Rosenthal noted that the restoration project on the Coffee Creek wetlands in Wilsonville involved revising the hydrology, increasing habitat, and removing invasive species. He emphasized that the project was a significant undertaking with the full support and cooperation of the city of Wilsonville, and he looked forward to the natural areas that everyone could enjoy

11:45 Adjourn

There being no further business, Council President Peterson adjourned the Metro Work Session at 1:15pm

Respectfully submitted,

Anushka Kargathara

Anushka Kargathara, Legislative Assistant