



**Metro**

600 NE Grand Ave.  
Portland, OR 97232-2736

# Agenda

Meeting: Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee Meeting 4  
Date: Monday, Feb. 22, 2021  
Time: 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.  
Place: Virtual meeting (Zoom link)  
Purpose: Review the Multnomah County Local Implementation Plan (LIP).  
Outcome(s): Discuss and vote on Multnomah County LIP.

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9 a.m. Welcome and Introductions

9:20 a.m. Conflict of Interest Declaration

9:30 a.m. Public Comment

9:40 a.m. Presentation: Local Implementation Plan (LIP) process review

9:55 a.m. Discussion and vote: Multnomah County LIP

- Review considerations
- Question for discussion: Does the committee recommend the plan for approval by the Metro Council?

11:25 a.m. Next Steps

11:30 a.m. Adjourn



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# Meeting minutes

Meeting: Metro Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee  
Date/time: Monday, January 25, 2021, 9 AM – 11:30 AM  
Place: Zoom Virtual Meeting  
Purpose: Finalize group protocols, discuss Multnomah County LIP, and potentially vote on approval of Multnomah County LIP.

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## **Member attendees**

Gabby Bates, Heather Brown, Co-chair Susan Emmons, Dan Fowler, Armando Jimenez, Ellen Johnson, Jenny Lee, Seth Lyon, Carter MacNichol, Felicita Montebianco, Jeremiah Rigsby, Roserria Roberts, Jahed Sukhun, Mandrill Taylor, Co-chair Kathy Wai

## **Members absent**

Roserria Roberts

## **Elected delegates**

Multnomah County Commissioner Susheela Jayapal, Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington, City of Portland Commissioner Dan Ryan, Clackamas County Commissioner Sonya Fischer, Councilor Christine Lewis

## **Metro**

Jes Larson, Ash Elverfeld, Craig Beebe

## **Facilitators**

Allison Brown, JLA Public Involvement

## **Welcome and introduction**

Allison Brown covered online meeting housekeeping items and roll call.

Susan Emmons and Kathy Wai, Co-Chairs, provided welcoming words and shared their excitement to have Multnomah County's local implementation plan (LIP) here today.

## **Conflict of interest declaration**

Some members declared their affiliations that could be perceived conflicts of interest. Jenny Lee works with the Coalition of Communities of Color, which partners with community-based organizations in the region that may receive funding through the SHS program; Commissioner Sonya Fischer owns a rental property; Co-chair Kathy Wai is on the board of TriMet which is connected to the Metro TOD program; Dan Fowler is one member of four on a piece of property where the buyer may use the property to develop affordable housing; Carter MacNichol is a board member of Transition Projects which is a likely applicant for SHS funds in the future.

## **Public comment**

There were no public comments.

## **Group protocols update**

Kathy stated that her and Co-chair Susan Emmons have reviewed and agreed that the group protocols document is finalized at this time, reminding members that it's a living document that can be updated at any point of time upon group agreement.



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Allison proposed a hybrid of Robert's Rules for voting. A motion must take place, a second, and then all the motions may be discussed and voted on. The motions may change through discussion, eventually being brought to a place where a vote occurs. Verbal statements of yes or no will be required, with an opportunity to add considerations to each vote.

Allison also proposed that for meetings with votes a quorum be required of ten members. If the meeting is more informational in content, meetings won't be cancelled if there isn't a quorum. If unable to meet a consensus when voting, they will look to a  $\frac{3}{4}$  threshold of voting members to move forward.

- Suggestion was made for the facilitator to state how many voting members there are at the beginning of each meeting.

Members decided to move forward with the new protocols document. The protocols document wasn't included in the packet because of staff error. It was sent to members after the meeting and will also be included in the next meeting packet.

## **Presentation: Committee roles**

Jes Larson, Metro, shared that the Multnomah County local implementation plan has been:

- Approved by A Home For Everyone Coordinating Board
- Approved by the A Home For Everyone Executive Committee
- Approved by Multnomah County Commissioners

Craig Beebe, Metro, clarified the committee's role.

- Role of committee, generally:
  - To provide transparent oversight and accountability to voters and ensure programmatic values are achieved throughout implementation

Local implementation plans are a high level set of strategies described to achieve the goals of the Supportive Housing Services program work plan. They are a framework of an overall approach, and the committee's role is not to judge on merits of individual strategies and investments, but to consider each plan as a whole. Questions to consider in preparing for the vote:

- Does the plan advance program goals and guiding principles?
- Does the plan meet required elements in the SHS program work plan?
- Does the committee recommend the plan for approval by the Metro Council?

The committee can include conditions and considerations. Conditions would require the county to adjust the plan before the approval. Considerations ask the county, Metro, and the committee to closely watch the particular considerations during the implementation of the plan.

## **Presentation: Multnomah County LIP**

Commissioner Susheela Jayapal provided a brief statement and introduction to the plan. She particularly appreciates the elements of a commitment to investing in system wide capacity and coordination, creation of a local long-term rental assistance program, and investment in data structure.

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Commissioner Dan Ryan also provided a brief statement. He believes this system will break down silos and coordinate programs, while building data infrastructure.

Allison welcomed Stacy Borke and Marisa Espinoza from A Home For Everyone Coordinating Board, and Marc Jolin and Nui Bezaire of the Joint Office of Homeless Services.

Marisa, also of NW Pilot Project, said that the work of putting together the plan involved much coordination and planning with partners. She punctuated the focus on racial equity and the intersection with homelessness during the community input process.

Stacy, of Transition Projects, sees a more just future with the implementation of this plan. Providers will be able to house people immediately and provide rent assistance for long term support.

Marc introduced Nui Bezaire who has led the LIP efforts at the Joint Office of Homeless Services.

Marc and Nui went on to answer the written questions received from members of the committee prior to the meeting.

*(Responses from Marc and Nui to the committee questions are italicized from here forward.)*

## Engagement and data:

- How can you build the trust with communities that have been harmed by public systems so that you would get better data? What is Multnomah County doing to assure people that their data is protected and will not be shared with law enforcements and other federal agencies?
  - *Building trust requires that the communities who have been harmed are the ones in charge of what data is collected and have a voice in all aspects of the data systems. Multnomah County is committed to that shift.*

## Geographic considerations:

- Can you further describe the identified needs and strategies to address the needs of Multnomah County cities outside of Portland?
  - *East County has a deficit of services and supports especially for those living outside and who are chronically homeless, in addition to communities of color, immigrants and refugees. There's a framework in the plan to help address those needs and that will occur in phase two of the plan. They're already speaking with Gresham about long-term rent assistance.*
- How can Multnomah County support the need and plans to ensure increased service provision capacity in Clackamas and Washington Counties?
  - *Multnomah County has been meeting regularly with Washington and Clackamas County since summer 2020 to offer support. So far they've offered support around procurement, contracting practices, data collection and reporting, as well as capacity building. They also have created a technical assistance RFQ together that all counties will be able to use. Data teams, procurement teams and more are all meeting to coordinate.*

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## Services provider considerations:

- Multnomah County describes a plan to hire 13 staff but does not describe specific investments planned for increasing community-based organization (CBO) capacity. Can you provide more information about this level of investment?
  - *To be able to plan and build out the program, more staff are needed at the Joint Office of Homeless Services. The technical RFQ will support CBOs, and they're also looking at CBO grants, along with an idea about an incubator program for smaller CBOs that aren't currently able to contract within their existing system.*
- What is Multnomah County's plan to increase minimum wage to help workers deal with the low wages that we currently have?
  - *In the LIP the County committed to initiating a study on compensation levels in the supportive housing system and it will be a regional study. They need consistency across the region.*
- What is your proposal to ease procurement procedures to help CBO's apply and get services out more efficiently?
  - *Evaluating existing procurement processes and reducing those barriers, creating regional consistency amongst all three counties, and the technical assistance for CBOs.*

## Planned investment priorities and budgeting:

- Has the County established a budget for the estimated \$52 million or considered the scale of outcomes that can be achieved with this level of funding? This would help the committee evaluate outcomes and accountability at annual review.
  - *Metro measure funds have to be budgeted annually and this first year's budget will be available to review in February. Outcomes are tied in with the budget process and the Joint Office is confident that they will be sufficiently vetted and reviewed prior to approval of the budget.*
- Long-term rent assistance is critical to ending homelessness – has the County considered making a commitment that 50% of the funds would be used for long-term rent assistance?
  - *It will likely be about 50% or more but unsure what the future holds and what leverages can be made.*
- How did the County weigh considerations for program investments in homelessness prevention considering the increased risk caused by COVID?
  - *To address looming risk of eviction due to COVID-19, in short term they will provide financial assistance.*
- Will any funds be going to programs that stakeholders did not identify as a priority? Was sheltering identified as a priority by stakeholders?
  - *No plan to invest in things that stakeholders didn't identify as a priority. Shelter was mentioned as a priority by stakeholders and there will be short-term investments in shelters during the first year.*

## Planned investment program specifics:

- How will decisions for setting aside reserves be made? More information is needed to understand the value of reserves in the program.
  - *Some portion of year one funding will be held in reserve as the longer term investment strategies materialize. For project-based vouchers and affordable housing there's typically a 15-year financing of projects, and this is only a 10-year measure. Conversations are happening with the finance team about how much will need to be*

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*reserved for the 10 years of the measure and 15-year project-based vouchers. Developments on this topic will be brought back to the committee in the future after there is more information available.*

- Given the importance of client choice and long-term rent assistance, could some mention of the importance of partnering and building relationships with the landlord community be included in the plan?
  - *Not much detail in the plan about this, but the County is committed to investing in this area.*
- Given the potential of Medicaid to fund Supportive Services – could you call this out in the plan as a leveraging opportunity? Specifically to bolster and align behavioral health capacity, and ensure equitable outcomes for BIPOC communities.
  - *All three counties were in a conversation with Health Share of Oregon just last week about this. It's a critical leveraging resource.*
- What considerations have been made for addressing gender -related needs in your planned investments for sheltering?
  - *The County has been diversifying offerings for gender-specific and multi-gender shelters. An investment in a transgender specific shelter will be seen in this next fiscal year.*
- What programs will help people be a productive member of the community rather than just keep receiving rent assistance?
  - *After people are housed we make sure there are connections to social supports and community resources.*

## Outcomes:

- Can the county describe more specifically its goals to correct racial disparities in the program such as:
  - setting goals to address the disparities identified in the chart on page 7
  - setting specific targets for communities of color?
    - *Through more work this year they'll have a clearer picture after results from data investments are returned. As the system is expanded there will be continued progress in reducing racial disparities. Rate and return to homelessness analysis needs more investment.*
- Can the county describe more specifically outcomes or targets expected after the first year of programming?
  - *Objectives are around total number of additional permanent supportive housing units and total number of placements in general, and more. In phase two there will be more of a concrete road map set out based on analysis that will have occurred in phase one, and the County will be back in front of the committee to share those plans next year.*

## Q&A in committee meeting

- How many and where are dual diagnosis recovery entities located? –Ellen Johnson
  - *A conversation is happening with the health department and other counties. The capacity of our specialized healthcare and housing systems is going to be a challenge. Where is specialized treatment and how can we increase those places?*
- Can we get a quick reminder about the timeline...will the County come back in a year and report how things are going? –Felicita Montebianco

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- *Anticipate a high level quarterly expenditures report that the committee can review. Outcome metrics will be gathered on an annual basis. July 2021 is when programming begins and July 2022 is when the annual report will be due.*
- Some CBOs are small and don't have the resources to meet the requirements for these contracts and the phrase "smaller emerging organizations" was used in the presentation, does that mean that they have to be a registered 501(c)(3), or be fiscally sponsored? –Jahed Sukhun and Kathy Wai
  - *Smaller organization working in BIPOC communities want to be part of the services offered but don't have infrastructure. The County is looking at their contracting policies and practices and finding ways to lower the barriers. They may be a nonprofit but not 501(c)(3), and they're going to be providing funding and technical assistance to help position those nonprofits for success.*
- Regarding the upcoming budget, understand you are developing that now. Generally, what share of the \$52 million will go to services (rent assistance, supportive housing units etc.) versus staff, capacity building, etc. –Carter MacNichol
  - *Significant majority will go to services.*

## Break 10:26-10:35

### Discussion of Multnomah County LIP

The discussion that follows was a response to the question, "Is there an element you think is very strong, and one that you think is not as strong?"

#### Strengths:

- A strong approach that recognizes the need to invest in CBO capacity and be flexible as needs change
- Careful attention to centering BIPOC communities, more detail desired about CBO investments in time
- Strong inclusive engagement work. Many voices included.
- Language was comprehensive and intentional. What's often missing was included: trauma informed, culturally responsive, etc.
- Attention to building capacity as critical infrastructure investment
- Attention on geographic challenges and strategies across the County
- Focus on equity and engagement to inform the plan
- Detailed analysis of gaps analysis data – plan demonstrates actual commitment to racial equity as a priority
- Strong strategic framework and commitment to equity
- Cultural specificity to the plan, and acknowledgement of racial disparities
- A strong framework. Has addressed all required LIP elements.

#### To be strengthened or clarified (not necessarily in this plan, perhaps throughout implementation):

- Better understanding needed (more data) about racial disparities
- Specific plan to address workforce needs (pay equity), especially culturally specific
- Planned investments could have included additional detail, while remaining high-level
- Not just training of staff, also need to consider support to staff (to prevent burnout, etc.)
- Planned investment section could have included more specificity about prioritization
- Specificity on Phase 1 investments - reserves are critical, more detail desired
- More description of what we will be doing differently? Is it just about additional capacities needed, or do we also need to make operational changes?
- Sometimes real quantified numbers, not just percentages, are needed



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- More clarity desired about mental health and health system integration, culturally specific investments for behavioral health needs (critical to housing stability).
- Strategies to help people experiencing homelessness not just into housing, but also into self-sufficiency
- More specificity desired about racial equity strategies to address disparities
- More specificity desired about outcomes expected
- More specifics desired on how Multnomah County plans to meet people where they are: culturally-specific, culturally-responsive, trauma-informed, and person-centered approaches that are adaptable.
- Clackamas and Washington counties should also affirm commitments to regional coordination as Multnomah County has. Similarly, CBO investments and capacity building need to be approached regionally.
- This is an opportunity for bold goals to be stated affirmatively, and measured. Another possible goal: No person of color enters homelessness – BIPOC people prioritized in coordinated entry. Similarly, goals for the workforce.
- More specificity desired on Dual Diagnosis racial disparities, possibly a condition of approval
- More in depth analysis desired on the state of behavioral health to better ensure confidence with implementation and integration

## 'Bike Rack' questions for Multnomah County:

- Can you define what if any proactive steps are in place to provide culturally specific behavioral care?
- How many and where are dual diagnosis recovery entities located?
- Would there be any help to soup kitchens or food banks to help the homeless as part of this plan?
- Can the County expand on their strategy in addressing the barrier of existent supportive housing entities that maintain discriminatory policies based on their interpretation of recovery?

A vote on the Multnomah County LIP did not occur.

The members expressed a desire for further discussion and written responses from Multnomah County to questions raised during the meeting. Susan and Kathy concurred. There will be a February meeting to allow for more discussion before the vote.

## Next steps

- Next meeting February 22, 9-11:30 AM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ash Elverfeld, Housing Program Assistant.



# Meeting guidelines | Supportive Housing Services Regional Oversight Committee



December 31, 2020

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The meeting guidelines are designed to help facilitate productive, meaningful meetings for committee members. Members may choose to change these as they begin the committee process, to ensure that they best meet the needs of the group (especially in consideration of the high likelihood that the group will meet remotely for an extended period of time). Members may also choose to revisit this document as needed to refine these guidelines or add additional protocols.

All participants agree to act in good faith in all aspects of decision-making. This includes being honest and refraining from any actions or undertakings that will undermine or threaten the process in any manner. This also includes behavior outside of meetings. Expectations include:

- Arrive on time and prepared.
- Share the air – only one person will speak at a time, and we will allow others to speak once before we speak twice.
- Express our own views or those of our constituents; don't speak for others at the table.
- Listen carefully and keep an open mind.
- Respect the views and opinions of others, and refrain from personal attacks, both within and outside of meetings.
- Avoid side conversations.
- Focus questions and comments on the subject at hand and stick to the agenda.
- When discussing the past, link the past to the current discussion constructively.
- Seek to find common ground with each other and consider the needs and concerns of the local community and the larger region.
- Turn off or put cell phones on silent mode. Focus on full engagement in the meeting, and refrain from conducting other work during meetings as much as possible
- Notify committee chairperson and Metro staff of any media inquiries and refer requests for official statements or viewpoints to Metro. Committee members will not speak to media on behalf of the committee or Metro, but rather only on their own behalf.

## Ensuring Participation

The committee will utilize a few rules of order to ensure that discussion meets the needs of the group. The facilitator, with support from the co-Chairs, will be responsible for reminding the group of these rules and helping to clarify uncertainty and recommend a way forward if the group gets stuck.

- If a voting member would like to propose something for group discussion, they may 'make a motion' and state what they would like to discuss. For example, "I move that we change X in this document." The facilitator will ask for a second to this motion, to ensure that there is enough interest in this discussion to warrant bringing the topic to the larger group.
- If a voting member feels that they are ready to vote, they may make a motion to bring discussion to an end and move into voting. For example, "I move that we vote on X." The facilitator will ask the entire group to indicate if they feel ready to vote (this may be giving a thumbs up, raising hands, or otherwise acknowledging readiness). If most members indicate

that they are ready, the facilitator will move into voting procedures. If most members indicate that they are NOT ready, discussion will continue with the assistance of the facilitator.

- If the co-Chairs feel that the group needs to vote, they may instruct the facilitator to begin voting procedures. This may be appropriate if the group is short on time, and needs to make a critical decision.
- If the co-Chairs and a majority of the committee feel that they need additional discussion time outside of the designated meeting time, Metro staff and the facilitator will work together to provide the group options for additional discussion before formal voting procedures.
- When the committee is formally voting on a recommendation, the facilitator will ask each voting member to verbally state their vote (along with any additional considerations) so that it may be recorded. For less-formal voting or temperature checks (for example, when approving meeting summaries), the group may be asked to give a visual indication of their approval (for example, a thumbs up).

### **Committee Recommendations**

- Quorum is 2/3 of all voting members (10 members). A quorum is needed for a meeting where there is a likely vote by the committee, to ensure that any formal recommendation reflects as many diverse perspectives as possible. A quorum of members is not needed to conduct a meeting where there is no anticipated formal vote.
- The committee will strive to make recommendations by consensus, understanding that recommendations to Metro Council are strengthened by high levels of agreement. Consensus is defined as the point where all members agree on an option, and are willing to move this option forward as a recommendation. Committee recommendations will be understood as the most viable approach for the overall program, even if they do not achieve each individual member's personal preference.
- If a consensus cannot be reached, then a 3/4 majority of the members present will be required for an outcome to be represented as a recommendation of the committee. If this level of agreement cannot be reached, then there will be no recommendation from the committee and all perspectives will be forwarded for consideration by the decision-makers.
- If any member holds a different opinion than the majority, they may ask that this opinion be documented and forwarded along with the committee recommendation, to ensure that all viewpoints are respected (even if they are not in the majority).
- Decisions will be respected as final to avoid backtracking, unless a majority of the committee agrees there is sufficient new information to reconsider a previous decision.

### **Metro Roles and Responsibilities**

- Metro Council will appoint committee members and delegate one Council member to serve as a non-voting delegate.
- Metro Council is responsible for final approval and policy making decisions. The Council will take these actions with full consideration of committee recommendations.
- Metro staff will provide key policy and program information and context as needed to the committee.
- Metro will provide the facilities and support staff necessary to conduct the meetings and support the activities of the committee.

## **Elected Delegate Roles**

One representative from each of the following jurisdictions will participate on the committee as non-voting delegates (Metro, Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties and City of Portland)

- Receive feedback and direction from the committee relevant to program implementation and outcomes
- Transfer knowledge and communication to respective jurisdictions
- Provide context and information particular to jurisdiction's needs in support of the committees' evaluative work.

## **Chairperson(s) Roles**

Responsibilities of the committee chairperson(s) include:

- Allows facilitator to lead discussions and keep the group to time/task.
- Participates in committee discussions and forming committee recommendations.
- Starts and ends meetings on time unless the group agrees to extend the meeting time.
- Provides guidance (if needed) on content and ideas to meet the committee goals.
- Encourages consensus decision making.
- Leads discussions when all attempts at reaching consensus have been exhausted.
- May speak for the committee in any public requests for comment.
- Participates in development of meeting agendas, in coordination with Metro staff and facilitator.

## **Facilitator Role**

As necessary, a facilitator may be used. The facilitator's role includes the following responsibilities:

- Draft meeting agendas and compile meeting materials in coordination with Metro staff.
- Facilitator has no stake in the outcome of the meeting.
- Does not evaluate or contribute content ideas.
- Keeps the group focused on the agreed upon time/task.
- Makes suggestions about alternative methods and procedures to achieve consensus.
- Encourages participation from all group members.
- Helps the committee find solutions that meet everyone's needs.

## **Public Comment**

- While the primary purpose of the committee meetings is to provide a forum for the deliberation of the committee, meetings will be open to the public for observation.
- As needed, up to a total of ten minutes of each meeting will be reserved for public comment. This amount may be extended by the chairperson, in consultation with the committee, if needed and if time allows. Those who wish to provide comment should check in with Metro staff before the start of the meeting. The length of individual comments should be limited based on the number of individuals who wish to address the committee but should be no more than three minutes.

- The public comment period will typically be at the beginning of a meeting but may be moved by the facilitator (in consultation with staff and the co-Chairs) to best help inform committee decision-making. The co-Chairs will be consulted with any change in public comment timing.
- Interested members of the public are encouraged to provide more thorough comments in writing. All written comments will be circulated to each member of the committee and noted in meetings

To: Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee members  
From: Co-chairs Susan Emmons and Kathy Wai  
Re: Proposed considerations for the Multnomah County LIP recommendation  
Date: February 15, 2021

The Multnomah County Local Implementation Plan is a comprehensive, thoughtful, and values-based plan, developed with extensive community engagement, that the Oversight Committee generally believes meets the requirements as defined by Metro's Supportive Housing Services work plan. However, the committee believes there are opportunities to strengthen this plan through implementation with further clarity and commitments. Therefore, we propose the following considerations for Metro Council and Multnomah County.

These considerations are in addition to our recommendation of the plan, and do not require any immediate action to change the current Multnomah County LIP. They are intended to inform accountability systems and steps that should be addressed in the first year of implementation. We expect Multnomah County to address these considerations in writing and/or in person to the committee, in advance of the first annual review process. We also expect Metro to define accountability processes, including the annual report, with these considerations in mind.

We believe the Multnomah County LIP represents a strong starting place for implementation, and that throughout implementation more data and clarity will emerge to strengthen, clarify, and amend the plan. These considerations are points of clarity that the committee expects Multnomah County to prioritize in implementation.

### **Considerations for the Multnomah County LIP recommendation**

1. **Provide an annual budget and summary of goals related to annual investments.** The budget should summarize commitment to, and prioritization of, the planned investments described in the LIP. The budget should further clarify how any reserved funding is committed, as well as programmatic investments in long-term rent assistance. The budget should also describe numeric and annual outcome goals desired, in correlation to program investments described in the budget.
2. **Provide a comprehensive and regionally coordinated plan for expanding and supporting culturally specific service capacity.** The plan should include concrete steps to address pay equity goals for service providers, training and ongoing supports for service providers, and regional coordination for expanding the system of culturally specific service provision.
3. **Provide a detailed outline for how the program will align with, invest in, and leverage the mental health system.** The plan should describe approaches and a timeline for leveraging and improving Medicaid-funded mental health services. The plan should provide further data analysis of the racial disparities in mental health and dual diagnosis services. Finally, the plan should address needs for culturally specific mental healthcare and describe how the SHS system will augment the Medicaid system to provide these services.

*(continued)*

### **Measurable goals required in Metro's regional Supportive Housing Services work plan**

In addition to the above considerations, the committee will be closely tracking counties' performance on the following measurable goals as defined in the Metro work plan, and the other outcome metrics described annually during our review process.

*Metro SHS work plan, section 5.2*

- Housing equity is advanced by providing access to services and housing for Black, Indigenous and people of color at greater rates than Black, Indigenous and people of color experiencing homelessness.
- Housing equity is advanced with housing stability outcomes (retention rates) for Black, Indigenous and people of color that are equal or better than housing stability outcomes for non-Hispanic whites.
- The disparate rate of Black, Indigenous and people of color experiencing chronic homelessness is significantly reduced.
- Increase culturally specific organization capacity with increased investments and expanded organizational reach for culturally specific organizations and programs.
- All supportive housing services providers work to build anti-racist, gender-affirming systems with regionally established, culturally responsive policies, standards and technical assistance.
- Black, Indigenous and people of color are overrepresented on all decision-making and advisory bodies.
- Black, Indigenous and people of color and people with lived experience are engaged disproportionately to inform program design and decision making.



Multnomah  
County

## JOINT OFFICE OF HOMELESS SERVICES

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To: Metro Supportive Housing Services (SHS) Oversight Committee  
From: Joint Office of Homeless Services, Multnomah County's SHS Lead  
Re: Response to SHS Oversight Committee Deliberation of Multnomah County's Local Implementation Plan

Dear Members of the SHS Oversight Committee:

Thank you for hosting us at last month's meeting. We appreciate your careful review of Multnomah County's Local Implementation Plan (LIP) for the Supportive Housing Services program, and for the follow-up questions shared with us by Metro staff. Our responses to these questions follow.

### **Overall**

The majority of the questions posed in the Oversight Committee deliberation pertain to what we have committed to as our 'next-phase planning' of SHS implementation - our county's stakeholder-informed process to develop specific SHS programs and establish policies that set more detailed priorities for SHS investments. As the LIP is not a detailed action plan, we understand that translating from high-level strategy to actionable investments will require considerable additional specificity in several critical areas. We have already begun to develop our stakeholder engagement plan to inform the next-phase planning process, which will begin in March 2021 and will continue through the Fall.

### **Community-Based Organization Capacity Building**

Identifying and providing the resources that community-based -- especially culturally specific -- organizations need will be a key priority in our next-phase planning process. This includes setting a wages strategy and advancing pay equity within organizations, across the County and the region. As we mentioned in our presentation on January 25, there are several reasons why we need to take a county-wide approach to the living wage and pay equity questions; however, we also understand that we need to take concrete steps quickly to stabilize current provider capacity if we hope to succeed with the Metro Measure.

We also recognize that in addition to increasing wages, the success of our CBO partners at attracting and retaining staff depends on offering those staff manageable workloads and additional supports. We expect SHS to support solutions in both of these areas. We are still developing the scale of the CBO capacity building investments for Fiscal Year 2021-22, which begins July 1. However, we know we are projecting at least \$1 million in technical assistance funding, that will include organizational development and training supports for CBOs, and have made a \$1 million investment in expanding capacity among our current culturally specific providers to work with adult-only households experiencing homelessness.

## **Planned Investments & Budget**

As mentioned in our January 25 presentation, the Metro Measure funds must be budgeted as part of the County's annual budgeting process. The Fiscal Year 21-22 budgeting process is currently underway, which includes budget requests for SHS activities in program Year 1 (FY 21-22), taken directly from the Year 1 investments outlined in the LIP. The proposed investments will focus on (1) capacity building; (2) the expansion of the long-term rent assistance program and supportive housing inventory; (3) certain proposed ongoing programmatic investments aligned with the LIP's focus on behavioral health; and (4) short-term investments that support recovery from the impacts of COVID 19. The full proposed budget will be publicly available for review and comment in the Spring prior to adoption by the County Board. We will share a breakdown of the Year 1 proposed Metro Measure investments when they are publicly available, and review those investments with the Committee as part of our regular updates.

Regarding reserves, there are several dimensions and many unknown factors such as, for example, the total funding our county will receive in Year 1 and whether funding will fluctuate in future program years. There is also a question of whether we need to set aside in reserves a to-be-determined amount for project-based longterm rent assistance. We promised in the LIP to engage in next-phase planning to prioritize and specify what long-term investments would look like. This requires not pre-committing or pre-programming the majority of Year 1 funding before this work is completed. We anticipate that some portion of Year 1 funding will either be held in reserve for program Year 2 or programmed for short-term needs such as COVID response. We commit to working with stakeholders to create a policy that would guide reserve allocations after Year 1, and can share this with the Oversight Committee before we enter the budgeting process for program Year 2.

Regarding long-term rent assistance investments, we appreciate the question on whether we would commit 50% of the budget to this activity, as stakeholders uplifted permanent supportive housing as the highest priority for investment. At this time, we don't think committing to fixed percentage allocations in one tool - albeit a critical one - will lead to the best outcomes from the Measure. We are fully committed to maximizing the creation of supportive housing opportunities for people experiencing, or at imminent risk of chronic homelessness, and stabilizing as many households as possible who experience episodic homelessness. This will require a large investment in long-term rental assistance; however, the right balance between long-term rental assistance and other supportive services critical to maximizing supportive housing opportunities will depend on what other resources are available to be leveraged at any given time. Similarly, the ratio of long-term rent assistance to shorter term rent assistance and services for those who are episodically homeless must remain flexible enough to capture leverage opportunities and changing needs.

## **Geographic Equity & Coordination**

We benefitted from input from cities and areas outside of Portland through targeted engagement with community groups and stakeholders in East County and with the City of Gresham in the development of the LIP. However, we recognize this to be only the beginning of collaborating more closely with jurisdictions across the county, including smaller cities in East County, which have some of the highest levels of unmet need for Communities of Color and immigrant and refugee communities. Our second-phase planning will include a strategy for more robust



engagement with East County cities to identify opportunities for the expansion of permanent supportive housing options and services across the homeless system of care.

In terms of behavioral health services coordination, several of the strategies to expand supportive housing in program Year 1 are directly tied to aligning and expanding behavioral health services that build from emerging initiatives underway in the community, including our Frequent Users Systems Enhancement (FUSE) initiative and our Metro 300 program that collaborates with the health sector to provide rent assistance and services to older adults. Clients experiencing homelessness who are on ACT caseloads and have significant behavioral health needs, for example, will have an opportunity to connect to permanent housing in Year 1. Work is already underway with our County Health Department to operationalize these opportunities. In addition, our county has requested staff resources to focus on coordination and alignment projects - including data sharing - between JOHS, the Health Department, and the Department of Community Justice. Additionally, we will leverage our A Home For Everyone Health workgroup to map behavioral health resources and identify services gaps and solutions to close them.

Regionally, we are coordinating weekly with Clackamas and Washington counties to identify opportunities for regional programming and to align our LIP structures, procurement strategies, contracting, data collection, staffing and service provider capacity building. We feel confident that the other two counties will affirm ongoing commitments to coordination in their local plans, and that they will outline the steps they have already taken to strengthen regional coordination and alignment.

### **Goals, Outcomes, Evaluation and Metrics**

Our LIP affirms our county's commitment to the regional outcome metrics included in Section 5.2 of Metro's Supportive Housing Services Program Work Plan. Collaboration is already underway, between the three counties, to develop metric definition and methodologies for consistent and accurate data collection and reporting.

As we build out the budget for Year 1 and work to contract those dollars out to specific programs, we will begin to have a clearer idea of not just, for example, how many additional housing placements and preventions we can expect to see in Year 1 and beyond, but also how many of those will be BIPOC households. There are, however, some already-identified goals that are quantified numbers in the LIP, starting on page 30. For example, we plan to increase our systemwide exits to permanent housing and preventions by 2,500 households as we expand supportive housing and housing placement and retention in Year 1. Also, based on the number of supportive housing opportunities coming into operation in Year 1, we expect that the new placements will include at least 500 people who meet the Metro priority population definition for Population A (see Section 4.2 of the Metro Supportive Housing Services Program Work Plan). We set these Year 1 goals but also recognize that there may be continued impacts of COVID-19 on our provider community that make achieving these goals unusually challenging.

Developing additional and more specific outcomes requires a second phase of the planning work that is already under way. We have set goals for PSH expansion in the LIP, but we will be setting more specific goals around the kind of supportive housing, for which sub-populations, in what geographic areas, and so forth, during the Phase 2 planning work, and we will be able to share those goals with this Oversight Committee as we go into next year. Similarly, with other

intervention types, like Prevention, and pre-housing services (outreach and shelter), we will be setting specific capacity targets and outcomes goals for those intervention types as well, and will share those with the Oversight Committee.

We would like to thank the SHS Oversight Committee once again for the opportunity to respond to your thoughtful questions. We look forward to our continued work with the Committee as we transition from the stage of initial planning to more in-depth planning and program implementation next year and in the years to come.

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Joint Office of Homeless Services