

Meeting minutes

Meeting: Metro Housing Oversight
Committee Meeting 6

Date/time: Wednesday, July 24, 2019

Place: Metro, Council chamber, 600 NE Grand Ave, Portland, OR 97232

Purpose: Review two Local Implementation Strategies (LIS), provide time for committee to continue discussions on ongoing oversight duties.

Attendees

Manuel Castaneda, Serena Cruz, , Mitch Hornicker, Mesha Jones, Jenny Lee, Steve Rudman, Bandana Shrestha, Shannon Singleton, Tia Vonil, Melissa Earlbaum

Absent

Ed McNamara, Andrew Tull, Dr. Steven Holt

Metro

Emily Lieb, Eryn Kehe, Jes Larson, , Ashley McCarron, Valeria Vidal, Megan Gibb, Jonathan Williams, Patrick McLaughlin

Facilitators

Allison Brown, Hannah Mills

Next meeting

Wednesday, August 7, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Metro, 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland, Council chamber

Welcome and Agenda

The co-chairs welcomed the Committee and explained the purpose and agenda of the meeting. The Committee unanimously approved the last meeting summary. Emily Lieb, Metro, gave updates on the following:

- Final Phase 1 projects submitted by Washington County and Home Forward
- Letter from Metro Council responding to the Committee's letter on workforce requirements
- LIS process timeline schedule for 2019

Jes Larson, Metro, briefly updated the Committee on the recent U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) proposal which includes two rule changes that would impact mixed citizenship status households. She encouraged the Committee to share a video made by local leaders and Governor Kate Brown that speaks out against this proposal.

Public Comment

Allison Brown, facilitator with JLA Public Involvement, opened the floor for public comment. No members of the public submitted comment.

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LIS Review

Allison explained that the Committee has three decision making options on the LISs. The options include recommendation for approval, recommendation for approval with consideration, and returning the strategy to the jurisdiction for further review and refinement.

Strategy 1: City of Beaverton

Allison reviewed the questions submitted by the Committee that the City of Beaverton would be answering during their presentation, and asked if the members would like to include any additional questions. Cadence Petros and Javier Mena, staff with the City of Beaverton, briefly answered the questions put forth by the Committee. Questions and answers are summarized below:

- Are you aiming to meet or exceed the production goals?
 - *We are committed to producing 218 units, but we are likely to exceed that goal.*
- Are you using the same conservative assumptions that Metro used for projecting cost?
 - *We are using a similar model, but it is not identical. The model is built to be rational, but the goal is for expediency.*
- What is the general sense of the viability of building three to four-bedroom units? How many can you build? Do providers have any concerns about lease-up?
 - *Right now, the plan is to provide 13 three-bedroom units, and four four-bedroom units, but we are aware that that is not enough and we are planning to increase that number. The Portland Housing Bureau has some anecdotal evidence that suggests it takes longer to lease three- to four-bedroom units, but the demand for them is there.*
- Have you performed any studies to determine why minority-owned companies aren't getting certified?
 - *We have not done any studies, and we do need a process to make sure a percentage of the firms hired have MWESB certification. COBID is a way we ensure this. We currently have one agent for hiring firms, so we're stretched pretty thin. We are having a meeting with agents to better understand the problems.*
- What's the difference between "good faith" and "best faith" efforts?
 - *They are the same thing.*
- How many two-bedroom units are at 30% AMI?
 - *A total of 52 two-bedroom units are planned for 30% AMI.*
- What will trigger a formal review and adjustment of the LIS?
 - *We're considering a project-by-project review once each project is selected.*
- How are you preparing for cost? Can the cost be lower?
 - *Regulated affordable housing is more expensive, and cost containment is very important for us to be mindful of. We are trying to hit the appropriate balance between livable and sustainable.*
- Are there any benchmarks during operations around screening criteria, specifically regarding whether developments are successfully serving those who are "harder to house?"
 - *Different programming will have different needs, so we want to make sure we tailor the screening criteria to each. We want to be responsive to project sponsors.*
- What are your specific strategies for advancing racial equity? Do you use HTAG? How will the ad hoc subcommittee composition address racial equity?



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- *We want to be helpful to communities of color. We do use HTAG and will use a subcommittee. The goal is for the committee to be a combination of individuals with different experience in promoting equity.*
- How will you be promoting universal design?
 - *The goal is for each RFP to articulate the need for universal design.*

Strategy 2: Washington County

Allison reviewed the questions submitted by the Committee that Washington County would be answering during their presentation, and asked if the members would like to include any additional questions. Ruth Osuna, Shannon Wilson, and Komi Kalevor with Washington County briefly answered the questions put forth by the Committee. Questions and answers are summarized below:

- Are you aiming to meet or exceed the production goals?
 - *The goal is to achieve the target production.*
- Are you using the same conservative assumptions that Metro used for projecting cost?
 - *We are using the portfolio approach laid out in Appendix B of the development plan for modeling project costs.*
- What is the general sense of the viability of building three to four-bedroom units? How many can you build? Do providers have any concerns about lease-up?
 - *We have a high occupancy standard, which means an expectation of two people per bedroom, but it takes more time and money to lease to larger families.*
- Do you have current estimates of the percentage of proposed breakdowns of investments in geographic regions?
 - *We don't have specific percentages, but we worked to address that in the priorities section. We used the HUD qualified census tracts and prioritized by high frequency transit, but we don't have specific targets for specific regions. We want to see distribution throughout the County.*
- Is Appendix B an illustrative portfolio or are they actual projects?
 - *The goal of the appendix was to show the high level of interest. It was not intended to say they are approved.*
- Do you have current estimates of the percentage of funds expected to be released via NOFA/RFP?
 - *We will use the NOFA/RFP process to select projects, and we are currently performing outreach to those areas to make sure what we're proposing is in line with their plan.*
- Do you have an estimate for when the County wishes to develop/own affordable housing?
 - *We may purchase if it's an existing low-cost rental in the County or if the development doesn't have wraparound services.*
- What are the Housing Choice Voucher screening criteria?
 - *We used the recommendations from the Meyer Memorial Fund report to develop the criteria. The criteria need to meet the HUD standards because some of the units will be provided using vouchers.*
- Will housing providers support applicants with information about how they can secure documentation?
 - *We're working with our jurisdictional partners to determine how we can fund supportive services. We haven't found the answer, but we have committed to producing 100 supportive housing units.*
- How often are criminal convictions clearly tied to a disability?
 - *The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) tracks this information.*

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- If you are using a definition of disability from federal law, will substance use related disabilities be covered, even if the individual was actively using illegal substances at the time of their conviction?
 - *We are entering into discussions with law enforcement to determine the best way to navigate people into housing and to keep them from re-incarceration.*

Considerations and Recommendations

Following each question-answer session, the Committee was given time to discuss and determine their recommendation.

Voting Results

For the City of Beaverton's LIS, Manuel Castaneda moved to recommend Metro Council approval with considerations (listed below), which was seconded by Serena Cruz. The Committee unanimously voted to approve recommending the LIS to Metro Council with considerations (listed below).

For Washington County's LIS, Serena Cruz moved to recommend the LIS for Metro Council approval, subject to the County's revision of language related to screening criteria on Pg. 15, section B, item ii, as discussed by the committee. The Committee requested that the revised language be submitted to the Committee for review and approval at their Aug. 7th meeting. The motion was seconded by Mitch Hornecker. The Committee unanimously voted to approve recommending the LIS to Metro Council with considerations (listed below).

Considerations

The Committee identified the following considerations specific to the City of Beaverton's ongoing implementation and monitoring of outcomes:

- The City should further define strategies and outcomes that will be measured to demonstrate the advancement of racial equity, including low-barrier screening criteria, affirmative marketing, universal design, voucher prioritization, wraparound services, and contract and workforce diversity.
- The City should incorporate findings from the 2015 Meyer Memorial Trust study on cost efficiencies in affordable housing in evaluating project costs.

The Committee identified the following considerations specific to Washington County's ongoing implementation and monitoring of outcomes:

- The County should further define strategies and outcomes that will be measured to demonstrate the advancement of racial equity, including low-barrier screening criteria, affirmative marketing, universal design, voucher prioritization, wraparound services, and contract and workforce diversity.
- The County should provide further clarification regarding intentions for geographic distribution as part of project solicitations.
- The County should provide a plan and measurable outcomes that demonstrate progress toward reaching the 20% MWESB participation goal.

The Committee requested an early response from City of Beaverton and Washington County regarding the considerations above and ongoing updates as part of the jurisdictions' annual LIS progress reports.

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In addition to the above considerations, Committee members offered the following considerations for all jurisdictions participating in implementation of the Housing Bond. These considerations may be further refined as the Committee discusses Local Implementation Strategies from other jurisdictions in coming months:

- Use language that acknowledges intersectionality of populations; avoid differentiating between homelessness, disabling conditions including physical and mental health, and addiction.
- Identify screening criteria not relevant to likelihood of successful tenancy that should not be considered.
- Additional resources need to be identified to successfully serve tenants who need permanent supportive housing.
- Measuring outcomes regarding workforce equity should include all workers, not solely apprentices.
- Many minority owned businesses need additional support to successfully participate in the COBID certification program.
- Consider sustainability/durability and life cycle costs, and incorporate findings from the 2015 Meyer Memorial Trust study on cost efficiencies in affordable housing in evaluating project costs.

Metro Council Updates

Co-chair Steve Rudman introduced Metro councilors Sam Chase and Christine Lewis. Councilor Chase provided an update on Metro Council budget discussions regarding possible technical assistance resources to support local jurisdictions in advancing racial equity through implementation of the Housing Bond..

Committee Business

Due to time constraints, the majority of time scheduled for Committee business was reallocated to conclude the Committee's above LIS recommendations.

Next Steps and Close

Emily briefly recapped the points to be discussed at the next meeting, including time for reviewing Washington County's language revisions. She explained that the Committee would be considering Metro's Site Acquisition Program Implementation Strategy and Clackamas County's Local Implementation Strategy at the next meeting, and noted that she would be presenting the Committee's recommendations regarding the City of Beaverton and Washington County's LISs at the August 1 Metro Council meeting.. A majority of committee members requested that hard copies of the materials be mailed to them for the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.