



Date: March 19, 2015
To: Council Member Sally Clark, Chair, Housing Affordability, Human Services and Economic Resiliency Committee
From: Steve Walker, Director, Office of Housing
Subject: Director’s Report: Recent and Upcoming Activities

Committee to End Homelessness (CEH) Strategic Planning Process – Work Session

The focus of this working session was to come to agreement on strategic direction for making homelessness rare, brief, and one-time in King County. This meeting brought together the CEH Governing Board, Interagency Council, Consumer Advisory Council, and other key community leaders. A number of systems changes are being considered as we as a community move forward and chart our course to address the issues of homelessness.

Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda and Active Statement of Legislative Intent Work

We have heard many calls for bold proposals, and members from each of the subject-specific work groups have stepped up with some new ideas. The seven work groups will now begin to wind down and prioritize strategies to send back to the HALA Committee for consideration. A number of the strategies being discussed have a direct tie-in to the two 2015 SLIs that OH is responding to.

SLI 21-1-A-1, Development of an Affordable Housing Preservation Program, presupposed the work of the HALA, specifically the preservation work group. Per the SLI, we are generally on schedule for the work group’s recommendations to surface to the HALA advisory committee by the end of the month. Those preservation strategies will ultimately come before CHAHSER later in 2015.

SLI 130-1-A-2, requests that OH, CBO, and OPI “Investigate a capital project and bond sale to build housing on surplus property.” Separate from this SLI, various HALA work groups, e.g. finance and resources, have long been in discussion about the use of a variety of financing strategies, including credit enhancement and a capital bond issue to support other debt instruments, to help advance affordable housing. Options related to surplus property are also under discussion. Per the SLI, staff is scheduled to provide Council a response on its specific public financing concept by April 1. The HALA recommendations remain on target for end of May.

Personnel

Thanks to your actions in 2014, the Office of Housing gained authority to establish two critical positions: (i) a strategic advisor focused on equitable development policy and programs, and (ii) a community development specialist dedicated to compliance monitoring for units produced through OH's incentive-based programs. I am happy to announce that one position is now filled. Joining our policy team is Lindsay Masters who is being promoted from our lending staff. Over the past 7+ years at OH, Lindsay has proven her expertise in affordable housing development finance, her thoughtful and analytical approach to complex problems, and her leadership ability. We expect to announce a new hire for the second position in the coming week.

El Centro Groundbreaking

On Friday, March 6, El Centro de la Raza hosted a groundbreaking event for their new affordable housing project on Beacon Hill. This affordable housing project for low- to moderate-income families by the light rail station received nearly \$8 million in loans from the Office of Housing. Mayor Murray and OH Deputy Director Miriam Roskin spoke at the program. It was an exciting event and OH is continuing to work through some of the final funding details and close on the City financing for the project.