

PATH FORWARD BEST PRACTICES

Considerations for the City of Seattle
Homelessness Investment Policy Framework
Seattle City Council
Human Services and Public Health Committee
June 8th, 2016

Barbara Poppe and associates
The collective for impact

Overview

- Work to Date
- Best Practices
- Interventions: families, youth/young adults and single adults/couples
- Housing Resource Center
- Accountability
- Governance
- Discussion: **Considerations for Path Forward**

Work to date --> Path Forward

- Core Team – Human Services Department and Office of Housing
- Goals, intended outcomes, and key opportunities
- Interviews with key local and national leaders; Coordination with other consultants working in Seattle/King County
- Community engagement and program visits
- Review of prior reports, research, and plans
- Best practices calls
 - effective communities, long term shelter stayers, landlord engagement
- CoC governance best practices
- SWAP analysis: *opportunities for improvement*
- 2 onsite visits (September 2015, February 2016)

Work to date --> Path Forward

- Onsite visit #3
- Learning from Best Practice Review
- Leadership input on ideas
- Onsite visit #4
- Focus Strategies Report release
- Barbara Poppe Associates Report release
- Draft Homelessness Investment Policy Framework
- Adoption of Homelessness Investment Policy
- Implementation

Primary Objectives

1. Reduce unsheltered homelessness.
2. Increase the throughput from homelessness to stable housing.

#JustDolt

Reminder: homeless crisis response is distinct from efforts to alleviate poverty and improve the affordability of housing

Today

- What is your overall reaction to the ideas?
- What guidance do you have for the Core Team as they prepare the HIP Framework?
- How do you envision that you can create the political will to adopt and implement the HIP?

SHIFT TO SYSTEMS APPROACH & BEST PRACTICES

#NotBusinessAsUsual

#BetterPath

Ending Homelessness

The HEARTH Act establishes:

“...a Federal goal of ensuring that individuals and families who become homeless return to permanent housing within 30 days.”

Opening Doors, As Amended in 2015:

“systematic response ...that ensures homelessness is ...a rare, brief, and non-recurring experience.”

A System to End Homelessness

Ending homelessness means building systems that:

- Divert people from entering homelessness
- Quickly engages and provides a suitable intervention for every households' homelessness
- Have short lengths of stay in programs
- Have high rates of permanent housing exits
- Use data to achieve continuous improvement



HUD: Best Practices & Requirements

- **Focus on goals in Opening Doors**
- **Create a systemic response to homelessness.**
 - **Comprehensive outreach**, engagement, and assessment plan that links homeless individuals and families with housing.
- **Effective Coordinated Entry process**
 - make it easier to access the appropriate housing and service interventions
 - prioritize persons with **the longest histories of homelessness** and the most extensive needs
 - lower barriers to entering programs or receiving assistance
 - ensure that persons receive assistance and are housed as quickly as possible
 - promote participant choice

HUD: Best Practices & Requirements

- **Housing First** approach to remove barriers to housing, remove service participation requirements or preconditions to program participation, and prioritize rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing.
 - Use data to more quickly and stably house homeless persons.
 - Engage landlords and property owners.
 - Remove barriers to entry.
- **Make the delivery of homeless assistance more open, inclusive, and transparent.** Ensure that service delivery is **client-centered and culturally competent.**

HUD: Best Practices & Requirements

- **Strategically allocate resources. Push for results.**
 - Comprehensively review project quality, performance, and cost effectiveness. Take actions towards poor performing projects.
 - Maximize the use of mainstream and other community-based resources.
 - Review transitional housing projects.
- **Functional HMIS.**
 - *Excerpted from the DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT [Docket No. FR-5934-N-01] Notice of Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Opportunity to Register and Other Important Information for Electronic Application Submission for the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Competition*

Benchmark Cities

Benchmark City County		2014 County Population Estimate	2015 Homeless PIT Count by CoC	2014 HUD CoC funding award	Change # Homeless 2010-2015	County FMR - \$2BR	30% of Area Median income (County)	2015 Rental Vacancy Rate by MSA
Houston	Harris	4,441,370	4,609	\$23,037,803	-28%	\$890	\$20,790	11.0%
Salt Lake City	Salt Lake	1,091,742	2,176	\$ 6,028,627	11%	\$901	\$21,660	5.8%
Las Vegas	Clark	2,069,681	7,509	\$12,561,109	-25%	\$969	\$17,760	7.4%
New Orleans	Orleans	384,320	1,703	\$16,779,545	-80%	\$950	\$18,000	9.3%
West Coast Peers								
Portland	Multnomath	776,712	3,801	\$15,478,198	-10%	\$944	\$22,170	2.4%
Seattle	King	2,079,967	10,122	\$28,087,080	12%	\$1,415	\$26,880	3.9%
Los Angeles	Los Angeles	10,226,705	41,174	\$91,956,831	24%	\$1,424	\$18,900	2.7%
San Francisco	n/a	852,469	6,775	\$ 25,648,425	16%	\$1,386	\$21,699	3.5%

Lowest	Lowest	Most improved	Lowest	Lowest	Lowest
Highest	Highest	Least improved	Highest	Highest	Highest

US Census, 2014
Population
Estimates

US Dept of
HUD, 2015
AHAR Part 1

HUD Exchange

NLIHC, Out of Reach 2015

U.S. Census
Bureau CPS/HVS,
2015 Q4

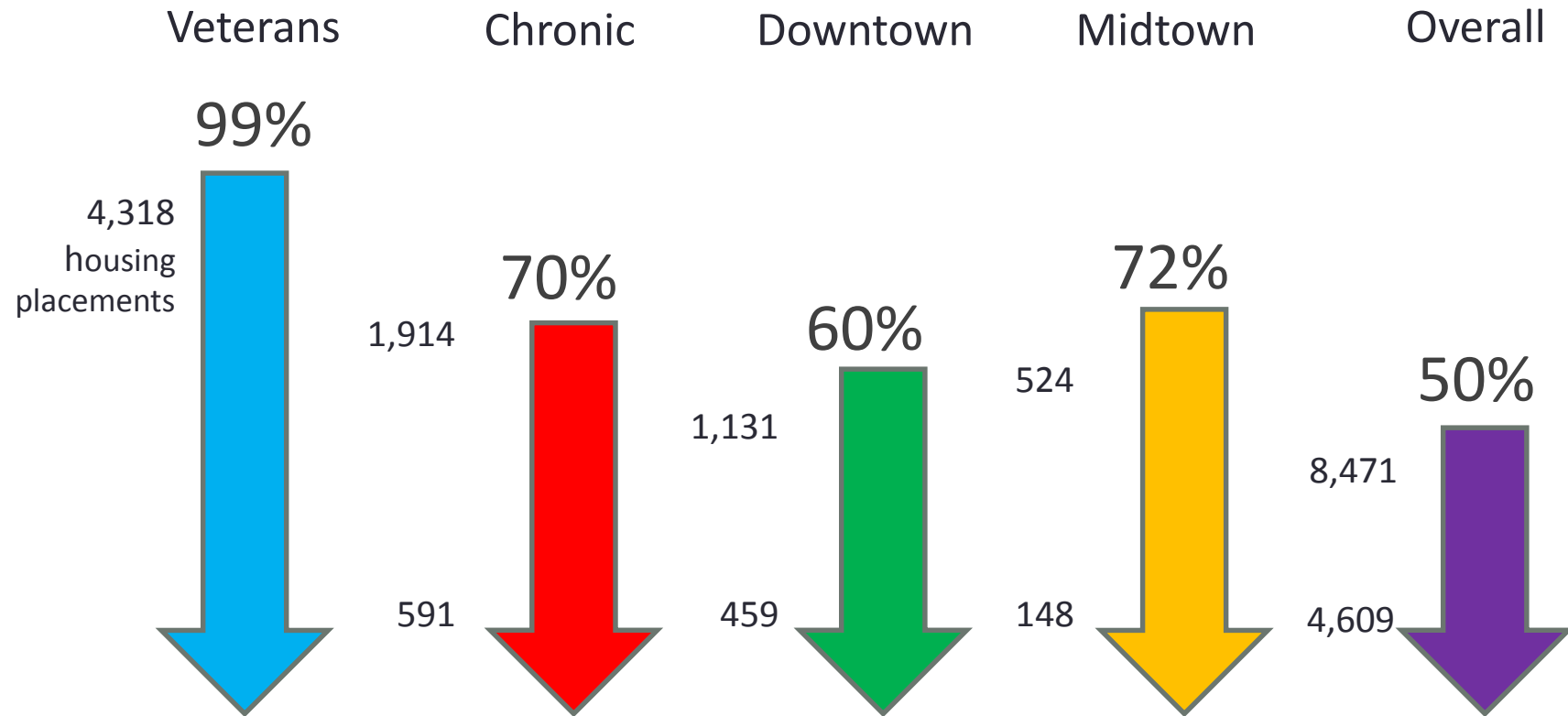
Houston/Harris County

- City and County elected officials identified a broken system and developed a strategic action plan to align resources toward a common goal
- Priorities and benchmarks were established and all funding aligned with those ideals
- Credit coordinated funding, shared data and measurement standards and continuous communication as essential elements of their success
- A robust system of coordinated entry is the backbone of the system
- Using a system of housing locators and housing navigators private landlords have been effectively engaged to access market rate units
- Strong funder-driven implementation management across multiple entities

What Houston/Harris County has achieved

January 2011 - January 2015

Reductions in Homeless Populations



Salt Lake City/County

- Salt Lake City is specifically focusing on Veterans and other single adults who experience **chronic homelessness** -- those who are most in need of a stable home.
- Increased capacity to shelter every person experiencing homelessness by housing chronic long term shelter stayers.
- Entire community embraces **Housing First** philosophy
- Programs must demonstrate efficacy to be considered for future funding.
- Found diversion to be more effective than homelessness prevention. Ending homelessness is not connected to anti-poverty efforts.
- Recently, county mayor convened a Collective Impact on Homelessness Steering Committee which adopted a common vision and unanimously recommends 14 strategically linked outcomes to help redesign the homeless service system and align funding.

Las Vegas/Clark County

- Achieved that White House's milestone initiative called the **Mayors Challenge to End Veterans Homelessness**.
- Identified all individuals experiencing homelessness in the community and place them on a "by-name list" and reviews and updates the list weekly.
- The entire community is committed to **Housing First**. Barriers for entry into all forms of housing were eliminated.
- All decisions are data driven. *"If it isn't in HMIS, it didn't happen"*. Established a data sharing process to allow better coordinated between agencies.
 - Uses scan cards to reduce costs and increase capacity to help people.
- Ongoing monitoring against benchmarks at least every 90 days to ensure the outcomes are continuously maintained and improving.

Hennepin County – Project 51

- Identified that 51 chronically homeless long term shelter stayers were continuously using 8% of total shelter capacity.
- Had access to 20 years of data on shelter stayers.
- Developed a 2.5 year pilot project to case-manage and house all 51 identified people.
- Utilized a **phased engagement** approach with significant effort put into engaging individuals prior to housing offer.
- Average length of time to housing placement is 8 months.
- After being housed utilization of all systems decreased.
- Multiple housing options must be available to suit the range of needs.
- Now is an on-going program that continually identifies those with **the longest length of stay** and focuses on re-housing.

Atlanta – Open Doors

- Public/Private partnership of real estate experts, developers and building owners, non-profit service providers and funders.
- Developed a business to business brokerage model to identify, recruit and educate property owners.
- Engaged property owners with sound business reasons to participate including financial incentives, guaranteed payments, increased occupancy, and tenant issue resolution.
- Finalized 17 MOU's with property management companies resulting in 70 complexes and over **16,000 potential units**.
- Signed MOU's with 30 service providers identify clients and provide the support needed to stabilize in housing.
- Provided capacity building grants to service providers to increase RRH skill sets.

CoC Governance Comparisons

- Community leaders (elected, senior government, philanthropy, civic, and business) are engaged and hold the CoC accountable to meet **measurable outcomes** and make wise **investment** decisions that **align with the community plan**.
- Local governments are driving strategy and have key role in making funding decisions.
- Providers primary role is to inform strategy and participate in execution of the strategies. When they participate in key decisions they are not the majority group at the decision table and have **strict conflict of interest** requirements.
- CoC's are structured with **clear roles, authority and responsibility** for the CoC (paid) leadership to exercise a greater level of control and accountability. Roles, authority and responsibility of volunteer leaders (e.g. committee chairs) are clear.

Keys to Success

- Funder-driven systems approach that is **client-centered**
- Relentless focus on housing placement
- Require Housing First practices
- Disciplined use of “By Name Lists”
- Use data for planning and funding – **drive for results**
- Break down silos – reduce fragmentation
- Aligned funding and actions (collaborative, cross-sector)



The high level of unsheltered homelessless indicates a broken response.

#NoExcuses
#JustDolt

Solutions are within imminent reach if political will and disciplined action is taken



Funder-driven Systems Approach

- Governance structures built to **ACT** not primarily seek input
- Government exercising greater authority and leadership for decisions and action
- Clearly identified authority and decision making responsibilities established
- Funders **directly engage providers** to support cross program accountability
- Funders hold agencies accountable for **performance outcomes** and implementing high quality programs and services
- Laser focus on **results for homeless people.** Reduce disparities.

Relentless Focus on Housing Placement

- **Diversion** is the primary tool for those at imminent risk of becoming unsheltered
- A seamless and integrated approach to outreach, rapidly engaging with the unsheltered to ensure placement is critical to reducing unsheltered homelessness
- Emergency shelter is reserved only for those who are truly unsheltered
- Shelters focus on housing placement not just survival needs - **Navigation Centers or Comprehensive Emergency Shelters** are more successful than overnight shelter

Relentless Focus on Housing Placement

- Those using the most shelter resources must be housed first in order to increase capacity to serve unsheltered
- Successful approaches such as PSH and Rapid Re-housing must be implemented with **fidelity to best practices** and at sufficient scale
- Households who have stabilized in permanent supportive housing and no longer require the intensive supportive services embedded in PSH should **“move on”** to other appropriate permanent housing options
- A business to business model is the most effective way to increase access to the full range of affordable and market rate housing resources

Use Data for Planning and Funding

- **HMIS** is the cornerstone of effective system management.
 - All people who receive homeless services must be entered into HMIS to achieve comprehensive system data
- **Modeling** is effective way to compare needs and resources then right-size the system
- Routine, **competitive funding processes** are data informed
- **Funders drive results**

Require Housing First Practices

- Increase the capacity of all homeless assistance organizations to implement **housing first placement practices**
 - Remove **admission barriers** on all publicly funded homeless housing options
- Utilize **progressive engagement** to right size interventions to match needs of individuals experiencing homelessness

Aligned funding and actions

- **Funders are actively engaged** in managing the system – not just passive conduits for funding
- Funders and programs must be supported with the **capacity** to shift culture to implement evidenced based, best, and promising practices
- **Mainstream services** are mobilized to provide critical services rather than relying on homeless system to fund supportive services
- **Support innovation** through piloting new solutions with strong evaluation to build the evidence of what works

Act now

#JustGetOnIt



- Well done is better than well said. ~Benjamin Franklin
- Never mistake motion for action. ~Ernest Hemingway
- Action is the antidote to despair. ~Joan Baez
- Success will never be a big step in the future, success is a small step taken just now. ~Jonatan Mårtensson
- A good plan today is better than a perfect plan tomorrow. ~George Patton

I believe we should stop talking about it and just get on it. ~Noah



DISCUSSION

Questions?

Discussion

- What is your overall reaction to the ideas?
- What guidance do you have for the Core Team as they prepare the HIP Framework?
- How do you envision that you can create the political will to adopt and implement the HIP?

Photo credits

- **America's Tent Cities for the Homeless** *The Atlantic*, February 11, 2015
- **Just Say Hello. Facing Homelessness. Facebook It.**
- **Plymouth Housing Group**

ONWARD!

Make homelessness rare, brief and one time