

Barbara Poppe and associates

The collective for impact

**5-Year Strategic System Improvement Plan to Prevent and End
Homelessness in the City of Detroit
Seventh Meeting of the Strategic Plan Oversight Commission**

Table of Contents

	Page
Agenda	1
Nov 29th Meeting Minutes	3
Updated SPOC Meeting Schedule	6
Summary of Director's roundtable	8
Draft Engagement Plan	10

5-Year Strategic System Improvement Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in the City of Detroit

Meeting of the Strategic Plan Oversight Commission

12/13/23

10:00-12:30PM EDT

Meeting Purpose: Review and adopt/modify recommendations for the Plan and establish next steps toward Plan adoption and roll out.

Advance materials:

- November 29th Meeting Minutes
- Updated SPOC meeting schedule
- Engagement Plan
- Summary of Director's roundtable

Agenda

- 10:00 a.m. **Welcome and agenda review:** Taura and Amy
- 10:05 a.m. **Introductions and Check-in:** Who within or outside of the homelessness response system have you engaged about the Plan since we last met?
- 10:15 a.m. **Presentation and Decision:** System Modeling update – Co-Chairs
- 10:20 a.m. **Presentation and Decision:** Framework for Equity and Lived Experience Participation – David
- 10:30 a.m. **Presentation and Decision:** Recommendations for Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness – Co-Chairs
- 10:45 a.m. **Presentation and Decision** Recommendations for Reimagining Shelter/Interim Housing – Co-Chairs
- 11:05 a.m. **Presentation and Decision:** Recommendations for Improving Rehousing and Housing Supply – Co-Chairs
- 11:25 a.m. **Presentation and Decision:** Recommendations from Building Momentum Work Group – Co-Chairs
- 11:35 a.m. **Presentation and Decision:** Recommendations for Implementation Framework – Co-Chairs
- 12:00 p.m. **Discussion and Next Steps:** Creation of vision for the Plan

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12:05 p.m. **Next Steps to Comprehensive Plan document** - Matthew

12:15 p.m. **Presentation and Discussion** – Julie & Tasha

- Executive Roundtable report out
- Recommendations for plan roll-out and continued community engagement

12:30 p.m. **Adjourn**

Kourtney Clark, Project Manager, Kourtneyclarkconsulting@gmail.com

Strategic Plan Oversight Commission Meeting 11/29

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

- ReGina Hentz
- Amy Brown
- Julie Schneider
- Safiya Merchant
- Sarah Rennie
- Taura Brown
- Dr. Curley
- Donna Price
- Ma'Jenaya Johnson
- Kourtney Clark
- Matt White
- Barbara Poppe
- Matthew Doherty
- David Dirks
- Kristy Greenwalt
- Tasha Gray
- David Bowser

Framework for Equity and Lived Experience Participation

David Dirks went over a proposed framework for equity and ensuring participation of people with lived experience of homelessness (PWLEH) during the implementation of the strategic system improvement plan. The framework included the following elements:

- Implementing an Equity, Belonging and Justice lens to each of the emerging themes
- Developing an equity training plan for system leaders, organizations, and front line staff
- Elevating and engaging Detroit Advisors Group and the Youth Action Board in the implementation process
- Supporting and enhancing resources for continued participation for PWLEH throughout implementation and beyond
- Expanding participation and providing professional development
- Recommendations
 - Identifying disparities, barriers and solutions in each of the working groups
 - Identifying what DEI structures currently exist in the system of care and assess effectiveness of those structures
 - Establishing equity metrics for system of care
 - Drafting equity and anti blackness training

In response to the framework, SPOC members had the following feedback:

- Member Amy Brown appreciated the calling out of white dominant culture in a majority black homelessness system. Member Taura Brown highlighted that residents being served and front-line staff are Black while decision-makers are White or people of color who may exhibit anti-blackness
- Member Julie Schneider discussed that this topic is often discussed but then won't be addressed on a continual basis. She applauded that these conversations have resulted in concrete recommendations to be incorporated into the strategic system improvement plan
- Member Sarah Rennie said this kind of work has to be a long-term priority with intentionality and that White people in the system need to do the work
- Member ReGina Hentz said we must all be accountable to our positions and ourselves

Dirks asked SPOC members to think about who will lead this work from a systems perspective. He also presented recommendations to continue to engage residents with lived experience in the strategic system improvement planning initiative. This included:

- Plugging in the Detroit Advisors Group and the Youth Action Board into implementation work
- Establishing normal outreach to PWLEH regarding updates on implementation
- Establishing meaningful roles on any newly established committee or system
- Securing funding to expand compensation, including an emergency fund
- Creating professional growth opportunities for PWLEH to take the lead
- Investing in mental health resources
- Investing in stable housing resources for PWLEH engaged in this work

System Modeling

BPA team member Matt White discussed preliminary findings from the system modeling exercise and the assumptions undergirding these calculations. Among his findings, these included:

- The homelessness system is primarily lacking resources for single adults and youth (an optimized system would have 228 more units of emergency shelter and 759 more units permanent supportive housing for this population)
- The homelessness system would also need more resources for families to be truly optimized, including 26 more emergency shelter beds and 132 units of other permanent housing for this population

Rennie said she thought the calculations were missing data on households experiencing domestic violence because not all programs supply data to HUD. Schneider asked the consulting team if they have seen communities using a model of directing funding away from emergency shelter to rehousing resources.

SPOC members approved the assumptions for the modeling exercise but wanted to revisit the data calculations.

Next Step: HRD Project Manager Safiya Merchant will work with White and Rennie to provide additional data for the system modeling exercise. White will come back to the SPOC with updates in December. Merchant will also invite SPOC members to the next system modeling workgroup meeting.

Updates on Building Momentum Workgroups and Planning Session For Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness, Reimagining Shelter, and Improving Rehousing and Housing Supply

The consulting team provided emerging recommendations and themes from the community feedback sessions hosted in November on reducing unsheltered homelessness, reimagining shelter, and improving rehousing and housing supply. They also provided an update on the Building Momentum workgroup's activities.

SPOC member feedback included the following:

- The importance of looking at best practices and developing standards to improve street outreach activities
- Increasing training and compensation for provider staff could be a recommendation outlined by funders of homelessness services
- The importance of discussing staff compensation with provider leadership
- The importance of providing funding to smaller, grassroots organizations started by Black residents
- Landlord engagement is challenging and housing supply is often not affordable for both those on fixed incomes or who work full-time jobs. Properties also do not pass property quality inspections.

Implementation Framework Workgroup Update

The implementation workgroup gave an update, and that workgroup has looked at reevaluating CoC committee structures to support the strategic plan and the possibility of forming an interagency council on homelessness. They will soon be discussing timelines and staffing needs.

Community Engagement

SPOC members discussed upcoming priorities for community engagement, including engaging residents, City Council, and the CoC Board and Executive Committee.

Next Step: Merchant, HRD's project manager, will develop a draft communications and engagement plan for the SPOC to review.

5-Year Strategic System Improvement Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in the City of Detroit

Strategic Plan Oversight Commission

Proposed meeting schedule (updated 12/10/23)

June 14 11:00AM-12:30PM	Kick off
July 12 1:00-2:30PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key project updates ▪ Determine values for SPOC ▪ Share working draft of prior related work ▪ Share working draft of governance, funding system data, and accountability. ▪ Approve draft priorities to test based on findings and prepare for community engagement and facilitation. ▪ Present onsite engagement itinerary
August 29 3:30-5PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key project updates • Present recommendations for the structure and process for planning sessions to develop the 5-Year Strategic System Improvement Plan to SPOC
October 4 11:00AM-12:30PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key project updates • Review and approve the Interim Report • Work Group & Team updates
November 1 11:00AM-12:30PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key project updates • Work Group & Team updates • Discuss framework for equity and lived experience engagement • Discuss emerging structure for implementation framework
November 29 10:00AM-12:30PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key project updates • Work Group & Planning Team updates • Review and modify or approve system modeling recommendations • Review and discuss recommendations for equity and lived experience engagement • Review and comment on emerging themes – unsheltered, reimagining shelter, rehousing and housing supply, and building momentum
December 13 10:00AM-12:30PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key project updates

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and discuss recommendations for implementation framework • Review and modify or approve proposed recommendations – unsheltered, reimagining shelter, rehousing and supply, building momentum • Discuss rollout plans
February 7 10:00-12:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key project updates • Review and modify or approve recommendations for implementation framework • Review and modify or approve recommendations for performance management framework • Review and modify comprehensive draft plan • Finalize rollout plans
March 7 11:00-1:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key project updates • Adopt final comprehensive plan

Executive Director Roundtable Attendees

- Billy Kangas, Pope Francis Center
- Raeda Dabaja, Michigan Veteran Foundation
- Amy Good CEO, AFG
- Celia Thomas, AFG Chief Operating Officer and outgoing COC board chair
- Faith Fowler, Cass Community Social Services
- Kevin Roach, MCHS
- Carolyn Render, Travelers' Aid Society
- Thaddeus Dean, Neighborhood Legal Services
- Elizabeth Orozco-Vasquez, Freedom House
- David Sampson, Mariners Inn
- Cheryl Johnson, COTS
- Louis Piszker and Mia Harnos, Wayne Metro
- John Stoyka, Community Home Supports
- Tim McCabe, Pope Francis Center
- Chief Operating Officer Barbara Willis and Chief Program Officer Japheth Agboka, DRMM
- Mark Erwin, Ruth Ellis Center
- Courtney Smith, Detroit Phoenix Center
- Meagan Dunn, Covenant House

At the December 7 Executive Director Roundtable, HRD Director Julie Schneider, HAND Executive Director Tasha Gray, and SPOC Co-Chair Amy Brown presented an update on the strategic plan, community feedback on system challenges as detailed in the Interim Report, and emerging community priorities and solutions.

The executive directors began discussion by talking about what they've been focusing on in their organizations. Neighborhood Legal Services said they are conducting quarterly engagement meetings with landlords to make rehousing processes more effective, and they launched training this year for newly placed clients about how to care for properties. Alternatives for Girls has worked on improving compensation for staff and have noticed a decrease in staff turnover. Freedom House is also working on increasing wages, especially for front-line staff, and are changing how they frame their operations from calling themselves a shelter to calling themselves a community.

Representatives from COTS and Travelers Aid highlighted the importance of changing the narrative about homelessness and residents experiencing homelessness within their own agencies, and that it's important for training to occur, including at the executive level, to understand this population.

Specific discussions then ensued. A summary is below.

Discussion on Training and Staff Qualifications

Freedom House said without training, hiring people with lived experience can set them up for failure. Training also needs to be available for staff who work outside the traditional 9 AM to 5 PM shift. CHS reps said often, the first person a resident experiencing homelessness speaks to is the person with the

least amount of experience, which can affect service quality for clients. Phoenix Center reps highlighted the work of YHDP and said it was helpful for people with lived experience and staff conduct peer to peer support trainings. The more people can share practices and collaborate, the better. She also wanted leadership to question what they mean when they say if staff have the right credentials.

However, the Michigan Veterans Foundation rep highlighted the urgent challenges of what providers are facing, such as at her agency, there is a lack of funding and she has had to step in and fill positions herself.

Discussion on Collaboration, Trust, and Standards

Leaders discussed that they aren't collaborative and it stems from a lack of trust and that agencies have to compete for the same pot of minimal funding every year. AFG reps said providers don't operate with the same standards and they all need to agree on a baseline service level for clients and a baseline wage structure for staff. They then need to find the funding to support this baseline level of service.

Father McCabe from Pope Francis Center said on the issue of trust, the system changed the VISPDAT tool so that people are sent to RRH because there isn't enough PSH available. He said he sat in CoC meetings where they allowed shelters to operate at 60% capacity when they were paid for 100% utilization.

Discussion on Urgent Shelter Needs

Father McCabe from Pope Francis Center said they have seen a huge increase in clients and that they can't find shelter beds for them. The city has gone from six shelters for single men to two in the matter of a few months. People are dying on the streets, and some of the existing shelters are inhumane.

The MVF rep said her male veteran shelter is full and sometimes she takes in clients without getting paid for assisting them. Providers also said they are experiencing long wait times through CAM.

Discussion on Advocacy

Providers asked why we aren't in Washington lobbying for our needs. Tasha said HAND does send reps but that more of us need to participate and have a collective voice. Covenant House reps said we need to advocate as one voice and coordinate messages and lobbying efforts. She also said these roundtables need to happen more often.

Kevin Roach from MCHS cited successful lobbying efforts from the child welfare system, which funds his operation. He said it was important for child welfare orgs to establish an aligned definition of trauma-informed care and agree on a standard level of care. Funding opened up when agencies failed to meet that standard of care. He said it was important for them to advocate for outcomes, not just for the need. When they started to focus on discussing outcomes and how they could attach money to outcomes and improve these measures, they got a better response from who they were lobbying.

Draft Engagement Proposal

Strategic System Improvement Plan for Detroit

Executive Summary and Engagement Goals

As community priorities are being finalized for the strategic system improvement plan, we will need to gain buy-in from potential implementation partners who will be key to fulfilling these priorities. The goals and key audiences for this engagement proposal are:

- **Provider leadership** – Integral to community recommendations to improve provider services and facilities and increase accountability for provider outcomes
- **Funders** – Integral to community recommendations to find more funding for the system outside of traditional federal sources
- **State agencies** – Integral to community recommendations to find more resources for the system, to improve provider services and facilities regardless of funder, and to streamline rehousing processes
- **Local institutions** – Integral to community recommendations to find more resources for the system, to improve provider services and facilities regardless of funder, to streamline rehousing processes, and to meet the needs of clients holistically
- **City Council** – Integral to securing more funding for the system and to ensure community standards for provider services are not disregarded during funding approval season

Proposed Engagement Recommendations for Q1 2024

1. **Continue executive director roundtable monthly**
 - a. The executive director roundtable can serve as a space to raise awareness of the strategic system improvement planning process and have discussions on how providers can implement community priorities. By hosting these meetings monthly before plan approval, we can start laying the foundation for implementation of community priorities. Aligning with community recommendations to share best practices across agencies and improve training, we can include 15-minute “Detroit Homelessness Program Highlight” presentations during these roundtables so we can uplift current best practices being deployed in the system by providers.
2. **Launch In Person CoC Board Convenings**
 - a. Updating the CoC Board at virtual board meetings has not proven to be the most effective at gaining buy-in for the strategic planning process, especially since most of the board isn’t as actively engaged. Now that new members are coming onto the board and we are fleshing out implementation framework structures that will ultimately shift governance expectations, convening the CoC board in person at least twice before the plan’s approval will help prepare CoC board members on upcoming governance model changes.
3. **Conduct shelter, PSH, and RRH visits**
 - a. HAND and HRD should conduct site visits together (if possible) to shelters, PSH facilities, and RRH agencies to build relationships with front-line staff and get a better

understanding of facility conditions, which will help inform the implementation of the plan during Q2.

- 4. Conduct one-on-one conversations with key state and local agencies (MSHDA, MDHHS, DHC, DWIHN, housing agents, other emerging priority institutions)**
 - a. One-on-one conversations with the state, DHC, and DWIHN will help HRD and HAND understand the barriers that will need to be overcome to fulfill community priorities related to additional funding/resources and improved processes between the homelessness system and these agencies.
- 5. Socialize plan recommendations with City Council**
 - a. The BPA team will be making two presentations to City Council members in the next two months. Besides those presentations, HRD should use its check-ins with City Council members to socialize forthcoming recommendations in the Plan before final Plan approval in March.
- 6. Meet with funders**
 - a. Given that many of the recommendations for the plan will require additional funding, meeting with key philanthropic partners before plan approval may help us design the Plan in ways that resonate with funders and secure additional dollars.
- 7. Host a community celebration in March**
 - a. It's important to make room for joy and celebration during this process, especially given the amount of time people have dedicated to these projects. When the plan is approved, we should host a community celebration to both honor the contributions of community members and create energy and excitement around plan implementation.

Engagement Timeline

See attached timeline.

Marketing/Comms Collateral

- One pagers
- An accompany strategic plan webpage on HAND's website
- Social media campaign collateral
- Earned media placements
- Material for City Council, HRD, HAND, CoC newsletters and listservs

Engagement Strategy Tasks

