



PLAN FOR ACCELERATING TRANSFORMATIVE HOUSING (PATH) INNOVATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

DATE: Thursday, September 21st, 2023, 9:00 am – 11:00 am

RECORDING OF MEETING:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/4ym4B_Q5iRtDTqvzL1RTqLtswgagFooJhr3TpWqa1H6ZQwhJvM-T9udqVsfQQjpi.USNA7WQAO5lx4ZWb

PASSCODE:

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Time	Agenda Item	Presenter/Facilitator
9:00	Welcome and Introductions	- <i>Matt Mitchell, Focus Strategies</i>
	Hybrid Meeting Norms	- <i>Matt Mitchell, Focus Strategies</i>
	Review and Approval of Minutes	- <i>Matt Mitchell, Focus Strategies</i>
	Public Comment – Open Period for public comment on items discussed or not listed on the agenda.	- <i>Members of the public</i>
9:20	Built for Zero Prevention Funding – Update on new funding and activities from Prevention Learning Cohort	- <i>Shelby Ferguson, H3</i>
9:35	2024 Workplan Development and Feedback – Discussion on Committee’s role, goal, and structure for the upcoming year	- <i>Jamie Schecter, H3</i> - <i>Shelby Ferguson, H3</i>
10:20	Stakeholder Spotlight: BALA – Presentation from Bay Area Legal Aid on homelessness prevention partnership	- <i>Abby Khodayari, BALA</i>
10:50	Announcements	- <i>All</i>
10:55	Next Steps	- <i>Matt Mitchell, Focus Strategies</i>



PLAN FOR ACCELERATING TRANSFORMATIVE HOUSING (PATH) INNOVATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Welcome and Introductions

Committee Members in Attendance: Tony Ucciferri, Iman Novin, Deanne Pearn, Shawn Ray

Staff and Consultants: Shelby Ferguson (H3), Jamie Schecter (H3), Matt Mitchell (FS), Matt Lemon (FS)

Additional Attendees: Abigail Khodayari (BALA), Stephanie Stovall, Jo Bruno (Delta Peers), Carl Mason (Hope Solutions), Caroline Miller (H3)

The meeting started at 9:23 am.

Hybrid Meeting Norms

Matt Mitchell described hybrid meetings norms including a recommendation to wear masks in person, practicing social distancing, raising your hand, saying your name before speaking and maintaining a safe and respectful environment. Individuals who behave in a manner that threatens the safety of the group or that does not honor meeting norms may be asked to leave.

Review and Approval of Minutes

Tony Ucciferri made a motion to approve the minutes from August 17, 2023. Deanne Pearn seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed 4 – 0.

Public Comment

No public comment was offered.

Built for Zero Prevention Funding

Shelby Ferguson announced that H3 was awarded \$194,955 in one-time funding from Built for Zero-Community Solutions to test and implement new or proven models including a Diversion pilot and mental health triage. She stated that the funding would be used to fund two positions within H3—a Coordinated Entry Specialist who will support tool development, implementation, outreach, and outcome monitoring and a HMIS trainer who will support prevention work by documenting processes/procedures, developing trainings, and analyzing data. Shelby Ferguson reviewed a Prevention Outcome Map that illustrates inputs, actions, outcomes, and aims associated with the two new positions and noted she would send an electronic version to the Committee members.

The Committee discussed the roles and responsibilities of the new staff positions. Tony Ucciferri and Deanne Pearn asked whether the Coordinated Entry specialist would be working on referrals and noted that the referral process has been challenging for both staff and clients. Shelby Ferguson noted that the specialist will be working more on innovative functions like tool development. Jamie Schecter stated that the new positions will be a portion of an FTE. She also noted that the new position may not eliminate immediate pressure points but will be working on new prevention approaches that should help to improve processes in the future.



PLAN FOR ACCELERATING TRANSFORMATIVE HOUSING (PATH) INNOVATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

The Committee also discussed outreach to property owners and the merits and challenges of centralizing that outreach. Iman Novin stated that landlords often have multiple contacts with providers and that a centralized or coordinated point of contact could be beneficial. Tony Ucciferri noted that there have been some efforts around creating a regional database in the affordable housing sector. Deanne Pearn stated that providers would need to be able to commit to a minimum standard of care if moving toward a more centralized approach. Committee members talked about the limited resources and capacity some landlords may have to understand the nuances of the system and suggested that landlord education programs could help.

2024 Workplan Development and Feedback

Jamie Schecter presented an overview of the work planning process. She noted that this Committee will adopt a final workplan in November and that H3 will be developing the draft workplan based on feedback and ideas from the Committee. She recapped achievements over the past year including expansion of prevention and rapid rehousing, providing additional training, increasing the number of prevention providers, and improving messaging.

Jamie Schecter reviewed the Committee's 2023 goals and priorities. The goal the Committee set was to monitor projects related to the countywide goal of reducing unsheltered homelessness in Contra Costa County by 75% in 2024. She then led a discussion on the Committee's role, including what worked well, what members would like to change, and how goals and priorities should be adjusted.

Committee members discussed progress toward the 2023 goal. Tony Ucciferri stated that it may make sense to stick with that goal if it has not yet been achieved and discussed the need to improve services and success rates. Iman Novin asked what baseline the 75% goal was measured from. Jamie Schecter discussed low vacancy rates and other community-level factors that make meeting the goal challenging. Tony Ucciferri noted that while many people have been housed, even more have become homeless and that the Committee's role should be setting a path to meet the goal.

Iman Novin suggested the Committee should put out a report that shows outputs and outcomes related to the individuals who were unsheltered at the time the goal was developed, discusses inflow into homelessness, and provides recommendations on what is needed to meet the goal. Tony Ucciferri suggested that any reports should be able to demonstrate impact to a lay audience. Jamie Schecter noted that the RED team could look into available data.

Deanne Pearn stated the Committee has evolved to focus on prevention and diversion and suggested the Committee could be renamed to reflect that focus. She noted that there are more resources now in place and the Committee could help identify additional resources and tools required to meet the increased number of people coming into the system. Shelby Ferguson noted that the Committee can continue to review prevention data and program models.



PLAN FOR ACCELERATING TRANSFORMATIVE HOUSING (PATH) INNOVATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Jamie Schechter asked about meeting logistics and how the Committee should be structured for 2024. She informed the Committee that some groups use structure with quarterly meetings supplemented by additional workgroup meetings. The Committee discussed this option. Iman Novin stated he liked the idea as it would allow more flexibility for hybrid workgroup meetings with some virtual attendance. Deanne Pearn stated she liked the idea but noted that a firm commitment to attending workgroup meetings would be needed to ensure time is not spent getting folks up to speed. Shelby Ferguson stated that a commitment to attend workgroup meetings would be important given the preparation required for staff and Committee members. Committee members also discussed the physical location of meetings. Tony Ucciferri shared his preference for the Martinez Room.

Jamie Schechter stated that H3 would take the feedback they heard today and put together a draft workplan for the Committee to review at the October meeting.

Stakeholder Spotlight: Bay Area Legal Aid (BALA)

Abigail Khodayari presented on legal support services that BALA provide. She stated that the program operates in partnership with H3 and provides free legal services related to eviction and some other housing issues. She noted that the program is funded by the California State Bar Association and that they hope to demonstrate positive impacts as they seek additional funding in the future.

Abigail Khodayari shared some examples of the cases they have worked on including getting an eviction dismissed for a single father who complained about the heat not working in his apartment and negotiating a favorable move-out deal for a family dealing with medical issues. She noted that BALA can help with a subset of legal issues related to housing including eviction defense in certain cases, reasonable accommodation requests, investigating denials for housing applications, assistance with Section 8 and subsidized housing, and housing discrimination complaint. However, she also noted that BALA cannot help with providing or finding housing, habitability, or issues with roommates or neighbors and suggested that providers refer clients to other agencies in those cases.

Abigail Khodayari stated that clients are connected to the program via referral and highlighted the work that H3 case managers do including helping to identify legal issues and coordinating with clients. She outlined the referral process and noted that communicating to the client that representation is not guaranteed is essential. She stated that their goal is to make at least two calls to potential clients within one week after receiving a referral. She stated that clients who are eligible can receive services ranging from providing information through to full representation in a jury trial.

Abigail Khodayari presented a brief overview of landlord's habitability duties, BALA's eviction defense services, Fair Housing laws and protected classes. She provided some examples of housing discrimination including intentionally treating someone differently based on protected status, rules or policies that create disparate impact, sexual harassment, domestic violence, and denying reasonable accommodation for a disability. Tony Ucciferri asked if they advised clients who face habitability issues to pay their rent into an escrow account instead of directly paying the landlord. Abigail Khodayari noted



PLAN FOR ACCELERATING TRANSFORMATIVE HOUSING (PATH) INNOVATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

that while they do have an escrow account, they believe the best practice is to continue paying rent and then working to recover the funds later.

Deanna Pearn asked about BALA's capacity, number of staff, and whether referrals can come directly from providers. Abigail Khodayari stated that BALA has four Housing Attorneys for the county and that capacity can be thin. She also noted that referrals can come from any provider and that Shelby Ferguson will be sending out the referral form to Committee members. She stated that BALA would be happy to provide training to providers and others who are interested.

Deanne Pearn asked how BALA captures data on their impact. Abigail Khodayari stated that they are working on putting together a report based on case codes, but that the codes do not capture all the referrals they receive nor all the other types of work they do such as providing information and advice. Carl Mason notes that some information is also captured in HMIS.

Announcements

Deanne Pearn announced that Hope Solutions will be hosting a stakeholder community meeting on October 26, 2023.

Next Steps

Matt Mitchell noted that the Committee will be moving into Quarter 4 next month. He stated that the Committee will review and provide feedback on the draft workplan at the October meeting and will vote on workplan approval in the November meeting. The Committee agreed to cancel the December meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 10:39 am.