

CJP Community Forum: Housing Goal

Tuesday, December 16, 2025

Meeting Notes

Attendees - in person

- John Wasiutynski - Project Staff, Mult Co Office of Sustainability
- Tim Lynch - Project Staff, Mult Co Office of Sustainability
- Monique Smiley - Project Staff, Mult Co Office of Sustainability

Attendees - Online

- Jairaj Singh - Project Staff, Mult Co Environmental Health
- Kenn Sutto - Multnomah County Health Department
- Hayden Farris - MultCo Commissioner Moyer
- Desiree Eden Ocampo - Rahab's Sisters
- Ariel Kane - City of Portland BPS
- Ashley Haight - Home Performance Guild
- Dani Swope - Home Performance Guild
- Anna Kurnizki - Community Warehouse
- Jai Daniels - Metro
- Mary Rudolph-Knobbe - NW Natural
- Kellye Dundon - NW Natural
- Tim Davis - Elevate Energy

Intros

John provided an overview from the slide deck:

<https://multco.us/file/draft-cjp-community-forum-slide-deck-housing.pdf/download>

Metrics

- Anna - Metric, yes and, tracking who is living unhoused. And shelter is not the same as housing. Important distinction.
 - John - County has a rich data set on this that we can look to.
- John - Typo - "Household" affordability typo?
- Ariel - Household and housing are different dimensions, different reflections of housing burden
- Ariel - A lot of the strategies are linked to funding, Metric should track the amount of funding and to whom and where it is being delivered.
 - Consistent theme to be able to track both the broader goals and short term impacts, aligned with strategies.
- Ariel - CHAS data from HUD is some of the best data, but tends to have a multiple year lag. Could provide a good resolution on what is affordable to and to whom. PUMS data is also something the County has access to.
- Anna K - MIT Living wage calculator, based on regional affordability.
- John - What about qualitative housing measures, emphasizing the safe and healthy.
- Tim Davis - Have some kind of break point in the data at 1978. Most of the affordable housing in Portland and the state was built in the 70's. Asbestos and lead paint was used until about

1980. Implicates the costs of retrofitting those types of homes. Asbestos in insulation and flooring. Tim has 50 years in the residential housing industry, formerly at WA County public health.

- Tim - A lot of metrics use a 6% energy burden, but that is on total income. Doesn't take into account state/federal housing, take home is 70-78%, missing about half of the folks who are energy burdened by not looking at take home income.
- Ariel - Self sufficiency standard is also used, available by County.
- Desiree-Eden - United Way - ALICE, measures the financial hardships of people, 47% of MultCo residents are below the ALICE threshold. Tied to the affordability and cost to the County. Broader, more robust indicator across transportation, housing
 - John - MultCo has experienced flat to modest population decline, at least in part due to housing affordability. Also seeing economic disparities by geographies within the County.
- Dani Swope - Have you considered the cost of energy? Goal to lower cost to heat and cool, power one's home?
 - Included under the energy goal.
- Ariel - PCEF generates data in terms of who is being served, but baseline data is challenging, looking to census can provide some sense of adequate kitchen/bathroom. Looking at the County's Heat Vulnerability Index to help understand
- Jairaj - Smart surfaces coalition just produced a suite of tools, cost benefit analysis of different interventions, Health Department might apply that to further research and recommendations

Strategies

- Anna - Suggest adding to rent assistance to include wrap around services, without services, housing is akin to a shelter, folks sleeping on the floor, without basic resources. Community warehouse offers access to used AC, heaters, and other resources. Thinking through the strategies to use resources that we already have to address these issues, rather than purchasing new. Risk of losing focus on sustainability when resources are strained, both time and financially. Reuse will allow folks to access more resources for the same money, and the community wins by moving from waste to re-use. Ideally CJP helps inform other efforts like in the Homeless Service Department. Have heard a lot of anecdotes from partners, individuals transitioning to housing back to sheltering for lack of resources, basic furnishing. Thinking of home, how people sustain themselves, heal. Also other essential wrap around services.
- Kenn - seconded Anna's comments. Conditions in permanent supportive housing can be a real reason while people move back to encampments. Including community space is important to help people continue to feel they are part of a community. PSH often has a lot of physical barriers, isolating. Can also be very dense, tend to be more prone to environmental health standards, bed bugs and other insects. People who have experienced houselessness can carry a lot of trauma, and dense spaces can be triggering. A solid percentage of people entering homelessness are coming from housing. Environmental considerations like quality of housing, density, can be a deterrent to housing. Work needs to be guided by direct experiences, needs.
 - John - Green building in NYC, one of the strategies was to put borax powder in the walls between apartments that prevent bug infestations. Barrier to prevent spread

across apartments. Tension between density and need for community spaces, design importance. Community spaces both in and around the building.

- Kenn - complex and nuanced, smaller sites that are less dense might be a better fit for many people. Dense multistory can work for some folks but not all. Green space is important as well.
- Anna - **Look to Albina 1 property as a model**, integrated community space. Integrated design, architects and community.
- Monique - Complex to put all the pieces together, innovative, clean energy and centering community. Have heard from housing providers, folks most impacted by climate crises and disparities, community connection is key. Also need more case managers and social support.
- Tim - has been in 2000 homes / apartments, maybe 40-50% are insufficient or are inoperable. Mostly low/moderate income strategies. Strategies - design strategy should include resiliency. Oregon code is above average. Heating is required, but AC and air filtration is not required. Would like the City and County to start including those in the baseline for new homes and eventually to existing. Voluntary retrofits and eventually mandatory. Folks are more likely to be able to stay in place with heat smoke events. People would not leave their pets, and chose to face the elements. Resiliency measure: cooling and filtration. Incentives for DHPs are strong at the moment serving lower income folks.
- Kenn - Gathering information, do some survey work to help understand what people need / are experiencing. Also, many people just don't know if they need to clean their fans. Need a PSA for folks.
- Kellye - Cold weather side of resiliency, gas appliances are still available when the power is out. Sharing resources. Need for education about how to operate systems. Keeping people warm is a key public health safety measure.
- Ariel - How does MultCo view its role in the re-use economy. Portland has a deconstruction / reuse pilot ongoing, how could that play into this Plan, County's role.
 - John - Surprised that solid waste did not come up as a topic. But also not concerned as the end of life of materials tends to have less direct impact on greenhouse gas emissions. The upstream impacts are important. Idea: Could the City's deconstruction program support a workforce opportunity to build furniture at the Comm Warehouse?
 - Clarified that the building pilot is for building deconstruction and sites, for reuse in new buildings.
- John - Are there opportunities in the commercial office for housing conversion? One action we don't mention is that the County has a commercial property financing tool called PropertyFit that could help with those conversions.
- John - County Homeless Response Action Plan - Any other strategies that we should look to?
 - Monique - Regional housing strategy coordination
- Kenn - The affordability aspect needs to be named. Need for large scale intervention to bring down the cost of housing development to make them broadly accessible. What about legislation that limits the number of higher end until affordable housing needs are met. Also recognize the need for better definitions about what affordable means.
 - John - Housing supply is a big part of this. Action around zoning changes in the draft speaks to that, one route.

- Anna - Add on, big push for researching social housing initiatives, opportunity to plug into future planning. People of all incomes living together, paying different rents to balance out. New to the US, but common in other countries. Can the CJP help drive and align the research with those initiatives? Right now, there is enough housing stock to go around, but not enough affordable housing. What does having enough stock actually mean?
- John referenced Montgomery County social housing efforts.
- Desiree-Eden - Ensuring that when we measure affordability, we are careful about labeling “affordable housing” as that is a specific definition in HUD/federal, affordable to people vs. officially deemed affordable housing. Ensure the metric reflects that. Another metric, not just measuring new affordable housing as new construction, that’s where folks jump to mind, but maybe the measure is that there are zero empty PSH slots for example. For example, apartments are open but unaffordable, no pressure for reducing costs to make them more affordable due to market forces.
 - John - reflecting Kenn, if housing is all based on markets, full strata of housing needs may not be met.
- Ariel - PHB interested in acquiring more market rate housing to create or preserve affordable housing. PCEF is also doing a lot of work on housing affordability and anti-displacement.
- Ashley - HomeShare Oregon - but may be out of funding. Taking retirees and connecting them with people needed housing, providing support to tenants and homeowners. Also noticed that one of the strategies is about supporting EV access through requirements. Emphasis of EV’s as a resilient measure. Can use its battery, recharge at another site, if you have vehicle to home capability. Also emphasize EV sharing at apartment complexes, connecting housing and mobility solutions.
- Tim - Renters, both SFR or rentals, up front utility information is important for folks to have when making their housing decisions. Aligns with building performance work. Informing people about the relative affordability. Has seen \$500/600 utility bills in apartments, people forced to move due to energy affordability, disrupting families.
- Ariel - Building performance standards, HEART standards. Important alignment.
- Kenn - Do we have any data about whether utility data is a factor in where renters choose to live?
- Tim - Split incentive challenge of rentals.
- John - Good to have that information, but many reasons that folks make housing choices
- Kellye - Oregon is rolling about building performance standards statewide, which will include larger multifamily housing.
- Tim - BPS will be really helpful for MF housing, but minimum is 35000 or larger, so only applies to ~30+ units projects, so may still miss a lot of renters WRT to both interventions and information
 - John - Does BPS apply to building scale or unit?
 - Tim / Kellye - full site, including if there are multiple buildings, may not lead to unit level information.
 - Kenn - A lot of buildings / units will be left behind.
- Ashley - Raised concerns about the energy use of data centers.

- Kenn - Suggested a statewide ban might be worth considering, not supporting a economy that benefits people. True climate justice plan should not encourage data centers.
- Tim - State of Ohio is looking at a rule that data centers have to bring 80% of their own energy.
- John - Referenced POWER act, limiting data center costs to data centers.

Close:

John closed out the meeting, welcomed invitation to join other spaces.

Ashley will connect with the Building Re

Zoom Chat Comments

- Anna K: MIT has a living wage calculator for housing affordability by regions in the US- we've used this various times <https://livingwage.mit.edu/>
- Anna K: One more is the "out of reach" report by the National Low Income Housing Coalition: <https://nlihc.org/oor/state/or>
- Ariel K: We also use the self-sufficiency standard it is available by county [Oregon - Self Sufficiency Standard](#)
- DesireeEden: Data from ALICE (Asset Limited Income constrained Employed) is a measure of financial hardship that is more accurate than the federal poverty limit or related official measurements. It calculates a survival budget across the country that varies on local costs and then calculates how households do not make enough to be above the threshold. Almost half of all households in MultCo make less than the ALICE Threshold. <https://unitedforalice.org/county-reports/oregon#7/44.180/-120.515>
- Dani: Have you considered specific metrics around energy affordability? Goal to lower cost to heat and cool, power one's home?
- Anna K: YES absolutely- people experiencing homelessness consistently say that one of the #1 things they want in housing is the ability to bring family and friends over.
- Anna K: Hear hear Kenn! The #1 indicator if someone is going to be homeless is if they have been homeless before. (How do we prioritize keeping people from becoming homeless in the first place?)
- Ariel K: Just sharing a popular article about trauma-informed housing design [What Is Trauma-Informed Design?](#)
- Anna K: Not only rent assistance but eviction prevention!! That could definitely be an addition to the strategies - helping people who need help with rent for a month or a few months to avoid eviction, and that would save a considerable amount of trauma, funds, climate issues, etc. of homelessness.
- Kenn S: I think gathering information from low income/affordable housing residents around their views on their housing, how they upkeep, don't upkeep their housing is a great idea. A survey project/interview project would garner very helpful data that could inform policy.
- Kellye Dundon (NW Natural): [Natural gas in a power outage - NW Natural](#)

- Anna K.: To the point about SHS goals earlier.. unfortunately a lot of that \$ has been redirected to shelter due to the city's goals, but the biggest gap/need we're seeing is in supporting people's moves OUT of shelter and into housing with wraparound services. (The more people you move out of shelter, the more beds open up for others - and folks are more likely to seek shelter if they hear it will actually lead to housing and isn't just a holding place.) Hoping that SHS measure reform drives a rebalance of the funds. Helpful and relevant data here: <https://welcomehomecoalition.org/finding-home/>
- Anna K: So into that! Green jobs + reuse + housing + so many intersecting awesome things :-)
- Ariel K: [Regional housing coordination strategy | Metro](#)
- Ariel K: For CoP I'd guess you all already are familiar with the PCEF plan re housing, but just in case [Climate Investment Plan: PCEF's five-year funding road map to climate action | Portland.gov](#)
- Ashley H: Does anyone know about HomeShare Oregon? I'm not really familiar with it but like the idea of matching seniors with people needing housing. <https://homeshareoregon.org/>, it looks like they're out of funding though.
- Kenn S: Do we have data on whether utility efficiency is a factor for renters in choosing a location to rent?
- Ariel K: [Developing standards for rental apartments | Portland.gov](#)
- Ariel K: I want to check with our climate team where this landed, but they had drafted a policy [About Multifamily Energy Reporting and Tenant Notice | Portland.gov](#)
- Kellee: [State of Oregon: Save Energy - Building Energy Performance Standards](#)
- Ashley H: Another innovative idea you've probably seen - data centers are being used to heat cities in Finland. They've closed a coal plant because it's not needed anymore...and Microsoft is planning to build a cluster of them to power 100,000 homes. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2025-05-14/finland-s-data-centers-are-heating-cities-too>