



Appendix 6: Equitable engagement summary

Engagement overview

The engagement approach for developing Metro's RHCS focuses on outreach and coordination with many individuals, governments and organizations from across the region. These efforts have centered on understanding barriers to housing production and equitable access and collecting ideas from a variety of perspectives about what Metro can do to fill regional gaps and support local work. The aim of this outreach was to foster stronger relationships with our partners and to create an impactful strategy that can be feasibly implemented over the next six years.

Engagement goals and objectives

- The strategies in Metro's RHCS are informed by barriers and needs identified by jurisdictions and housing advocacy groups and experts in the region.
- Existing programs and information available at Metro are lifted up and built upon in the strategies.
- Collaborative engagement leads to a regional strategy that is responsive to the OHNA mandate and spirit of promoting housing production and choice for all community members in our region.
- Engagement activities facilitate new connections, relationships and points of coordination between entities working to meet housing needs across the region.
- The engagement process for Metro's first ever RHCS informs the resources and approaches for future RHCS cycles so that it becomes integral and valuable to all entities in the region working to meet housing needs.
- Following the creation of the RHCS, the project team will reflect on project outcomes, identify areas for improvement and set up the next RHCS for success.

Key engagement phases and topics

Several phases of engagement encompassed the development of the RHCS. The primary intent of these phases was engaging with jurisdictional staff implementers, practitioners, advocates, service providers, and housing professionals with firsthand experience of the challenges in the region to hear their perspectives and ideas for meaningful and impactful actions for Metro to take. Not every engagement phase was a discrete amount of time. Many conversations covered several topics together and interrelated feedback was compiled across the engagement activities and over several months to influence the final RHCS.

The primary outcomes of the engagement activities were:

- A list of barriers to housing production and access

- A list of actions for Metro to take to promote housing production, affordability, access, and choice (the full list of action ideas can be found in Appendix 7)
- An evaluation framework to assess each action's impact on housing preservation and production, impact on affirmatively furthering fair housing, and organizational impact on resources and implementation feasibility.

Phase 1: Pre-scoping research and project preview (October 2024 – February 2025)

During the initial phase of the project, the project team focused on conducting foundational research and early outreach to shape the scope of work and engagement plan. This work included a review of existing Housing Production Strategies (HPS) that identify Metro as an implementation partner and interviews with several local jurisdictions to hear initial thoughts about the RHCS and gauge interest in future engagement. Additional interviews with partner organizations centered on assessing interest in participating in the RHCS development and gathering early input on how the strategy might support their ongoing housing efforts.

Additionally, staff reviewed key findings from recent engagement efforts conducted as part of Metro's housing work, including Permanent Supportive Housing and Supportive Housing Services Implementation Engagement, Affordable Housing Investment Opportunities Community Engagement, and Affordable Housing Investment Opportunities Technical Engagement (see Appendix 6 for summaries of these engagement efforts). This scan of recent Metro housing engagement helped inform the RHCS engagement plan by building on and leveraging relevant information and insights already shared by key industry stakeholders and experts.

Activities:

- Pre-scoping research and interviews
- MTAC meeting #1
- MPAC meeting #1

Phase 2: Scope of work and engagement plan (February 2025 – April 2025)

Following pre-scoping research, the project team presented the proposed scope of work and engagement plan to a range of advisory and oversight bodies, including the Metro Council, the Committee on Racial Equity (CORE), Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC), and Metro Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC). Additionally, an internal cross-departmental work meeting was convened to introduce the project more broadly within Metro. Staff reviewed the agency's existing efforts to support needed housing development, identified any gaps in that work, and began collecting preliminary ideas for strategies that could be incorporated into the RHCS. During this stage of engagement, the project team began to receive requests to present this work to outside groups such as the Washington County Planning Directors and 1000 Friends of Oregon. Responses to these requests resulted in additional opportunities to present this project and receive feedback.

Activities:

- Metro Council work session #1
- CORE meeting #1
- MTAC meeting #2
- MPAC meeting #2
- Internal cross-departmental Metro staff meeting #1

- Washington County Planning Directors meeting
- 1000 Friends of Oregon Land Use Leadership Initiative meeting
- Project web page created

Phase 3: Metro's roles in housing production, coordination, and access and barriers to meeting housing needs (April 2025-July 2025)

In this phase of engagement, the engagement events focused on understanding the specific barriers to housing production and access across the region and summarized these barriers into three categories – regulations and systems, market and financing, and equity and housing choice. Additionally, participants were asked to share their perspectives on the importance and impact of Metro's various housing-related roles on their own work and discuss which areas they would like to see continued investment in the future. Some of these conversations fed into new ideas for Metro to consider as part of the ongoing list of brainstormed actions. A key goal of this phase was to better understand how regional efforts can complement and support local housing initiatives through tools, capacity building, funding, convening, and other mechanisms.

An online survey tool was created during this period to provide a participation method for people who were invited to some of these meetings but who couldn't attend. Feedback from that survey was combined with information collected during meetings.

Activities:

- Implementers Work Group meeting #1
- Clackamas County Coordinating Committee meeting #1
- Coalition member meeting: Oregon Smart Growth
- Coalition member meeting: Housing Oregon (an industry group of organizations that build, finance, and support affordable housing)
- Coalition member meeting: Home Building Association
- Focus group: Housing advocacy and provider coalitions
- Focus group: Development and financial professionals with experience in innovative approaches to affordable housing outside of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)
- Focus group: Urban Native community-based organizations
- Metro Council work session #2

Phase 4: Preliminary list of actions and draft evaluation framework (May 2025 – July 2025)

Building on earlier engagement, this phase involved collecting ideas for specific actions that Metro might take to support housing production, affordability, and choice. These actions were considered through the lens of Metro's unique capabilities and responsibilities, with a focus on what is feasible and well-aligned with existing regional efforts or a new work program that would meaningfully address unmet needs. The feedback gathered during these activities also informed the development and refinement of an evaluation framework to filter and sort proposed actions.

Activities:

- Internal cross-departmental Metro staff meeting #2
- Implementers Work Group meeting #2
- MTAC meeting #3
- MPAC meeting #3
- CORE meeting #2

- Washington County Coordinating Committee (WCCC) and WCCC Transportation Advisory Committee

Phase 5: Evaluated, shortened list of actions and additional information about priorities (July 2025 - August 2025)

These engagement events shared results of the evaluation process and sought feedback on the resulting list of prioritized actions. The goal of this phase was to identify the most widely supported actions across the groups of stakeholders and continue to add details to the resulting “short list” to capture potential tradeoffs based on project budget and staffing impacts. Feedback during this engagement phase helped clarify community, jurisdictional, and internal priorities ahead of the public comment period.

Activities:

- Implementers Work Group meeting #3
- MTAC meeting #4
- MPAC meeting #4
- Metro Council work session #3

Phase 6: Draft RHCS, public comment period, and preparation for adoption (September 2025 – December 2025)

The final phase of the project will focus on drafting the RHCS and preparing it for adoption. A public discussion draft will be published in September to kick off the public comment period to gather any final input on the draft strategy. The discussion draft will be shared with all of the organizations and individuals that participated in the process, as well as appear on the project web page for comment. This feedback, along with any final comments from MTAC and MPAC will be incorporated into the final version of the RHCS. Staff will present a final document to the Metro Council for approval by the end of December 2025.

Activities:

- Implementers Work Group meeting #4
- Public comment period
- Share project information at Housing Oregon Conference
- Washington County Coordinating Committee (WCCC) and WCCC Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Clackamas County Coordinating Committee (C4)
- MTAC meeting #5
- MPAC meeting #5
- MTAC meeting #6 – recommendation of final strategy to MPAC
- MPAC meeting #6 – recommendation of final strategy to Council
- Metro Council work session #4 – receive committee recommendations
- Metro Council meeting to pass Resolution to adopt the final RHCS

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Pre-scoping research and interviews

Purpose: Pre-scoping engagement activities serve two primary purposes. The first is building an in-depth understanding of recent housing needs and production work in our region. The second is to inform the scope of work and engagement strategy for the development of the RHCS, building on what jurisdictions in the region have already done as a part of completing their Housing Production Strategies and what Metro has done in recent housing engagement efforts. This inventory will help to prevent over-engaging or burdening interested groups and community members and identify opportunities to add to the ongoing conversations and find places to fill gaps and add value. The project team will use lessons learned from pre-scoping activities to inform the engagement approach and begin an inventory of existing barriers to housing production and access and preliminary ideas for potential strategies.

Approach

To establish a baseline understanding of housing production work in the region, Metro began pre-scoping work by conducting interviews with staff from the cities who have completed their Housing Production Strategies (HPS) as of fall 2024 (Portland, Beaverton, Milwaukie, Gresham, and Hillsboro). Beyond speaking to staff directly, the project team also scanned the completed HPS documents to inventory actions that identify Metro as a potential implementation partner.

Additionally, the project team spoke to a few organizations that have been historically involved with housing legislature and rulemaking to gauge interest in participating in the development of the RHCS and to hear a few preliminary ideas for actions Metro could take as a part of this work. Community Visions and 1000 Friends of Oregon provided initial ideas such as a focus on better messaging and public outreach around the benefits of affordable housing and the creation of a listing service so community members with disabilities could be better matched with available accessible homes.

The Housing Department has led many housing engagement efforts over the past few years as a part of their work portfolio managing the Affordable Housing Bond and the Supportive Housing Services funds. Three different bodies of engagement were reviewed for key findings that could be carried forward into the work being done for the RHCS – Permanent Supportive Housing and Supportive Housing Services Implementation Engagement, Affordable Housing Investment Opportunities Community Engagement, and Affordable Housing Investment Opportunities Technical Engagement. This work provided a substantial amount of information related to existing barriers to housing access and included many ideas for Metro to take to continue to meet needs for high-quality, affordable housing.

Throughout 2024, an Urban Growth Report roundtable made of a wide variety of industry, government, elected officials, and community members met to discuss key elements of the Urban Growth Management decision. Several meeting topics involved future housing production and demand. The group generated a list of development barriers and several ideas for actions Metro could take like renewing funding for affordable housing, coordinated legislative advocacy, and increasing regional support for local planning efforts. This information was integrated into the ongoing list of barriers and action ideas as the starting point for development of the RHCS.

Key takeaways from research and interviews

1. Role clarity and coordination
 - Interviewees point to Metro's potential as a regional convener and facilitator of coordination between jurisdictions, agencies, and stakeholders to align strategies and efforts.
 - Need for Metro to provide clearer guidance on coordination and alignment, act as a central clearinghouse for resources, and convene forums for shared learning and strategy development.
 - *Connection to scope of work and engagement plan:* Metro's potential as a regional convener and facilitator of coordination between jurisdictions, agencies, and stakeholders to align strategies and efforts
2. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing
 - Gaps in knowledge/expertise from planners, consultants and lack clarity from State in addressing Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) requirements in HPS development process and implementation.
 - Need for greater focus on fair housing strategies, including analyzing displacement risks, addressing need for accessible housing, and promoting equity and access to high opportunity.
 - Barriers to housing access identified by jurisdictions include language discrimination, credit/screening requirements, and accessibility issues.
 - Desire for strategies prioritizing marginalized communities, addressing housing affordability for middle-income households, and preserving existing affordable housing stock.
 - *Connection to scope of work and engagement plan:* Need for greater focus on fair housing strategies, including analyzing displacement risks, addressing need for accessible housing, and promoting equity and access to high opportunity
3. Community and partner engagement
 - Importance of broad and inclusive engagement in developing housing strategies, including voices from marginalized groups.
 - Value of storytelling and effective communication to build public support and awareness about regional housing challenges and successes.
 - *Connection to scope of work and engagement plan:* City staff and partner organizations have limited capacity but are interested in supporting/participating in RHCS development process. Cities and partner organizations shared interest in convening at a regional level for shared conversations and learnings. Ideally, the engagement process is mutually beneficial for Metro and organizations that choose to be involved.
4. Innovative and collaborative approaches
 - Some cities experiment with innovative partnerships, like Gresham's participation in NYU's Housing Solutions Lab.
 - Need to align housing efforts with other regional goals, such as climate-friendly development and equitable transit-oriented development.
 - *Connection to scope of work and engagement plan:* Metro has a potential role in fostering collaboration among developers, providers, and jurisdictions to address shared challenges.

5. Funding and resource challenges
 - Persistent barriers due to insufficient funding for housing initiatives, particularly for affordable housing production and implementation.
 - RHCS provides opportunities to explore regional funding mechanisms, such as bonds, grants, tax incentives, land banking, and revolving loan funds.
 - Project perception as an unfunded mandate.
 - *Connection to scope of work and engagement plan:* Potential Metro role in helping cities secure funding by streamlining processes, advocating for resources, and sharing information on available opportunities.
6. Regulatory and policy opportunities
 - Several interviewees expressed a need or opportunity for stronger mandates or incentives to align equitable land use and housing policies from Metro, such as Title 6 and CFEC (climate friendly and equitable communities) rules.
 - OHNA creates opportunities to promote redevelopment and infill, especially in high-opportunity areas.
 - Interest in reforming zoning laws to facilitate housing conversion and production.
 - *Connection to scope of work and engagement plan:* Implementers work group can be used to share resources and ideas that have been tried at the local level and lessons learned. The RHCS can identify opportunities to align policies and programs to be better coordinated across the region.
7. Regional capacity and expertise building
 - Limited staff capacity in cities for housing-specific planning; most jurisdictions lack dedicated housing planners.
 - *Connection to scope of work and engagement plan:* Convene forums for shared learning and strategy development and ensure that the engagement process is mutually beneficial for Metro and city or partner organizations.
8. Long-term visioning
 - Emphasis on aligning housing strategies with broader regional goals, including sustainability, equity, and economic growth.
 - Desire for Metro to play a proactive role in legislative advocacy, infrastructure funding, and regional visioning for housing production and affordability.
 - *Connection to scope of work and engagement plan:* Important area for Metro internal staff focus group discussions – how do we see our individual bodies of work aligning under this project? Are there ways the RHCS can leverage work Metro is already doing?
9. Strategy planning and implementation
 - Interviewees saw challenges with state's long-term accountability and tracking progress beyond the initial phases of implementation.
 - Align RHCS with local implementation efforts so that the strategy is complementary and supportive to local plans to streamline housing production efforts.
 - Identify accountability mechanisms for meaningful impact.
 - *Connection to scope of work and engagement plan:* HPS and RHCS work often start with internal conversations but require broader community engagement and

cross-departmental collaboration. RHCS should focus on actionable and realistic strategies, ensuring feasibility within funding, capacity, and political constraints.

Recommendations for Metro

- Act as a central coordinator and resource hub for housing planning/production efforts. Increase role as a centralized clearinghouse for resources.
- Provide training and technical assistance to address capacity and expertise gaps in local jurisdictions, especially around AFFH.
- Metro can support long-term capacity-building through providing technical assistance to city/county partners, education programs/cohorts, and partnerships with universities or training institutions.
 - Interest in creating a pipeline for housing planning expertise (e.g., internships, targeted education initiatives).
- Advocate for sustainable funding sources and facilitate access to regional and federal funding.
- Align new housing efforts with existing regional goals, such as climate-friendly development, equitable TOD, and regional housing/SHS governance
- Enhance communication and messaging around housing challenges and solutions to build public and stakeholder support. Explore messaging reform and tested communication strategies to dispel stereotypes around affordable housing.
- Convene regular forums for knowledge-sharing and strategy alignment across jurisdictions.
- There are significant data gaps at regional level. Opportunity to use DRC as regional resource for data and analysis (e.g. tracking displacement at regional level, tracking availability of accessible units, mapping segregation, producing regional housing production affordability trends analysis, etc.)

Implementers Work Group (IWG)

Purpose:

Metro hosted four discussions with jurisdiction staff from the cities and counties in the region required to create a Housing Production Strategy. Both housing and land use planning staff were invited to participate and share their experiences of barriers to housing production and access and their thoughts about the most valuable roles Metro can play to support their local efforts. The final meetings will focus on reviewing the evaluation approach, prioritizing the evaluated list of actions, and discussing the final draft RHCS.

Approach:

Meeting #1 – project background, goals and scope of work; discussion of barriers to housing production and access; prioritizing Metro’s roles in housing work; preliminary discussion of action ideas, April 18, 2025

- The Implementers Work Group called out funding and investment, technical assistance, and data and analysis as the top three roles for Metro to support their housing work at the local level
- The remaining categories of partnerships and collaboration, convening, communication and public engagement, and best practices and research received generally positive feedback and were acknowledged as other important pieces of Metro’s role in the region.
- The only role to receive negative feedback through this engagement stage was regulation and regional policies, as many groups did not want to see additional requirements as an outcome of the strategy.
- Preliminary action ideas –convening funders, housing bond for more funding, land banking, developer partnerships, technical assistance and sharing housing expertise

Meeting #2 – Review the draft evaluation framework; providing feedback on improvements; further discussion of action ideas, May 16, 2025

- The project team presented the draft evaluation framework to the group and explained the proposed approach to scoring each action based on three categories – organizational impact, impact on housing production, and affirmatively furthering fair housing (AFFH)
- Discussion focused on ensuring the evaluation framework reflects regional priorities and addresses the needs of jurisdictions
- The members of the IWG provided valuable feedback, encouraging the project team to remove numeric scoring from the impact on housing production and AFFH categories so action effectiveness could be better differentiated
- New criteria were suggested, like one to represent an action that directly supports jurisdictions’ abilities to meet their own housing production strategy creation and implementation and another to measure how an action improves regional outcomes around housing production, accessibility, affordability, and AFFH
- Overall, the feedback encouraged a focus on operational considerations and impact to initially score and sort the actions, and then to focus on understanding the range of actions that would be needed, in combination, to achieve all objectives around housing production and AFFH

Meeting #3 – Review of final evaluation approach; prioritization of evaluated list of actions, June 27, 2025

- The project team presented the revised, final evaluation framework and highlighted the changes that were made based on the IWG feedback from the previous meeting.
- Members of the IWG confirmed that the edits to the evaluation approach reflected their feedback from the second meeting and made sense to use moving forward.
- After presenting the shortened list of actions based on evaluation, the group ranked their top priorities
- The top 10 actions selected by the group:
 1. New affordable housing bond
 2. SDC assistance fund
 3. Local HPS implementation funding and support
 4. Regional land bank plan
 5. Housing predevelopment and technical assistance
 6. Coordinated housing legislative agenda
 7. Evaluate alternative models for affordable housing financing
 8. Regionally available pool of housing professionals for technical assistance
 9. Expand funding for the brownfield grant program
 10. Alternative home ownership opportunities

Meeting #4 – Review the final package of proposed actions and the overall draft RHCS, September 19, 2025

- The project team presented a recap of all Implementer Work Group meetings and described how their feedback influenced the development of the RHCS, from brainstorming the list of actions to proposing changes to the evaluation approach.
- Participants reviewed the final proposed list of actions and discussed four questions:
 - o Is anything critical missing?
 - o Do any actions still seem unclear?
 - o What actions, once taken, will be most impactful for your jurisdiction?
 - o What could implementation look like locally?
- Overall, there was a shared sentiment that the proposed RHCS met the group's expectations and was an appropriate representation of actions that Metro is well suited to take to fill gaps on a regional scale.
- Members appreciated specific actions that would help smaller jurisdictions with less housing staff and highlighted the importance of the coordinated legislative agenda and a future housing bond.

Participants representing the following jurisdictions:

- | | |
|---|--|
| - Beaverton- housing and planning staff | - Oregon City |
| - Cornelius | - Portland- housing and planning staff |
| - Fairview | - Sherwood |
| - Forest Grove | - Tigard |
| - Gladstone | - Troutdale |
| - Gresham- housing and planning staff | - Tualatin |
| - Happy Valley | - West Linn |
| - Hillsboro- housing and planning staff | - Wilsonville |
| - Lake Oswego | - Clackamas County |
| - Milwaukie | - Multnomah County |
| | - Washington County |

- Housing Authority of Clackamas County
- Washington County Housing Authority
- Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development

Coalition member meetings and focus groups

Purpose:

Coalition engagement and focus groups provided targeted input from key stakeholders to help shape the RHCS. Participants explored the practical implications of proposed RHCS actions, offered insights into sector-specific barriers and opportunities, and ensured diverse perspectives are reflected in the final strategy.

Approach:

The project team attended six different coalition meetings and focus groups depending on organizational availability and needs. Despite differences in format, each meeting had the same shared goals - understanding barriers that different groups face related to housing affordability, production, and access, and hearing a wide variety of ideas about actions that Metro could take to support their work and fill regional gaps.

Housing Oregon coalition member meeting and survey

To confirm the findings and takeaways from the pre-scoping research about affordable housing and to hear new ideas about barriers and actions, the project team attended a Housing Oregon member meeting to present an overview of the RHCS and invite comments about each organization's perspectives and needs as they relate to the goals of the strategy.

Since the presentation time at the meeting was brief, the team shared a survey with members to capture their feedback on similar topics that were discussed during longer focus group events to ensure that these organizations had the same opportunities to communicate their needs and share their ideas. The intent was to give time for representatives to think through their priorities, discuss with their broader organization as needed, and provide information that was aligned with the qualitative responses from other events. Overall, 27 responses were gathered from representatives of public, private, and nonprofit affordable housing development and finance organizations.

Survey questions:

1. What organization do you represent?
2. Does your organization identify as a culturally-specific developer or service provider?
3. What community (or communities) do you primarily work with?
4. Which of the following best describes your role at your organization?
5. Metro has filled many roles, in the past and present, when it comes to housing production, coordination, and access. Please rank the roles that you think are most critical to support your work, now and in the future:
 - Regulation and regional policies
 - Research and innovation
 - Communication and engagement
 - Legislative advocacy
 - Convening
 - Technical analysis and capacity building
 - Funding and investment
 - Data and analysis
 - Partnerships and collaboration

6. Within the space of funding and investment, what actions do you think Metro should consider taking to advance housing production, affordability and choice? Please provide up to five ideas that you think Metro should consider including in the plan. You could draw from this list or provide new ideas not listed below.
- Pass a new housing bond to fund the creation and preservation of regulated affordable housing
 - Create an implementation plan for a regional land bank
 - Develop a coordinated strategy for investing in acquisition and preservation of “naturally occurring affordable housing”
 - Evaluate models and develop recommendations for alternative affordable housing financing and ownership models that could complement LIHTC/gap funding approaches (e.g. social housing, community land trust, resident-owned cooperatives)
 - Leverage Metro’s 2040 planning and development grants to fund predevelopment planning for affordable housing
7. Outside of funding and investment, what actions do you think Metro should consider taking to advance housing production, affordability, and choice? Please provide up to five ideas that you think Metro should consider including in the plan. Below are some examples of ideas we’ve heard through engagement to date. You could draw from this list or provide new ideas not listed below.
- Develop a proposal to create a regional consortium for buying materials or services needed to create housing at scale
 - Conduct research, convene partners, and develop an action plan for scaling mass timber, modular construction, and other innovative building methods
 - Expand Metro's Construction Career Pathways Program to address housing construction labor shortages
 - Map parcels that may provide housing development opportunities including public ownership, non-profit or faith-based ownership, location for use of SB8
 - Create a regional listing service for affordable housing units that includes information about availability, rent, income requirements, accessibility, and more
 - Work with county partners to improve regional portability of tenant-based long term rental assistance
 - Convene city/county staff and subject matter experts for ongoing “community of practice” conversations on topics such as clarifying codes and reducing permitting burdens for developers
 - Provide fair housing training and technical assistance to local jurisdictions and/or housing providers and property managers
 - Convene jurisdictional and industry partners to develop and lead a coordinated regional housing advocacy agenda for state and federal policy and resources
 - Develop a proposal for how to condition Metro's transportation and parks funding on jurisdictions' housing production performance as evaluated by DLCDC
8. Are there any additional thoughts you’d like to share about this project?

Key takeaways from Housing Oregon coalition members via survey results:

A majority of respondents listed Metro's role in funding and investment as "highly critical" for their organization's work. Roles related to data and analysis, technical assistance and capacity building, and partnerships and collaboration were ranked as "somewhat critical."

Funding-related action ideas included:

Bonds, grants, and loan funds

- Pass a new housing bond to finance creation and preservation of regulated affordable housing (acquisition, predevelopment, reserves, pooled operations).
- Issue green bonds
- Deregulate funding to flexibly address housing insecurity and homelessness.
- Launch a regional first-generation and first-time homebuyer Down Payment Assistance Fund.
- Establish a capital improvements pool for long-term property needs.
- Create low- or no-interest loan programs to support property acquisition, predevelopment, and innovative construction methods (e.g., 3D printing).
- Fund a Regional Predevelopment and Pipeline Support Program with flexible loans and grants.
- Provide direct financial support to community-based owners and developers, ensuring stronger coordination of SHS funds for deeper affordability.
- Create a dedicated fund for PHAs or tribes to exercise right-of-first-refusal on expiring affordability properties, seeding social housing inventory.
- Support acquisition funds that enable rapid conversion of market-rate housing into affordable homes.
- Introduce insurance subsidies to reduce operating costs and support long-term sustainability.

Land acquisition and land banking

- Develop and implement a regional land bank plan, using Clackamas County's model as a starting point.
- Collaborate on land acquisition for homeownership projects with OHCS LIFT funding.

Partnerships and coordination

- Partner with nonprofit service and housing providers to engage philanthropy for housing services, rent subsidies, and organizational capacity building.
- Coordinate with housing authorities across counties to ensure sufficient rent subsidies for very low-income tenants.
- Advocate for Metro to receive its state funding allocation directly, streamlining local distribution and reducing project delays.
- Establish a Metro Housing Counseling and Homeownership Center Network to guide buyers and funnel them into DPA programs.

Policies and regulations

- Fine-tune and expedite land-use and regulatory processes to accelerate affordable housing development.
- Advocate YIMBY regulations to allow greater density and eliminate restrictive zoning controls (height limits, setbacks, lot sizes).
- Protect existing resources (like SHS), require better coordination with affordable housing, and include nonprofit providers early in predevelopment.

Innovation

- Shift from rigid, bureaucratic approaches to rapid, risk-taking actions that lower costs and speed unit creation.
- Invest in construction innovations (e.g., 3D printing) and expand career pathways to address labor shortages.

Action ideas outside of funding included:

Land identification and site readiness

- Map public, nonprofit, and faith-based parcels for housing development (including SB8 uses).
- Launch a Regional Faith and Nonprofit Land Mapping & Technical Assistance Initiative.
- Study and support land-banking approaches; convene jurisdictions and faith partners to repurpose surplus land.

Policy, regulations and collaboration

- Form a cross-departmental/agency committee (local, state, Metro) to set rules and align funding for affordable housing.
- Clarify and streamline the roles of all jurisdictions on housing and homelessness to reduce redundant planning tables.
- Establish a Regional Anti-Displacement Policy Lab
- Create consistent thought leadership space (beyond elected officials and policy staff) to chart a shared theory of change on how we approach the crisis
- Advocate for YIMBY deregulation and work with jurisdictions to address NIMBYism locally.
- Condition Metro's transportation and parks funding on jurisdictional housing-production performance, as evaluated by DLCD.
- Convene a regional consortium to leverage bulk purchasing for cost savings.

Property management and supportive housing services

- Provide targeted training, certifications, and regional standards; learn from other states' property managers.
- Fund and structure programs to support permanent supportive housing operators, including mentorship from high-performers.
- Include nonprofit housing service providers in conversations about regional rent assistance portability.
- Support the creation of mission-based, client-centric property management companies (for-profit or nonprofit).
- Pair rent vouchers with nonprofit providers or limited-equity co-ops to minimize pass-through to for-profits and invest in people.
- Curb out-of-state, profit-driven developers and level the playing field for community stakeholders.
- Design a scalable regional plan to increase production, reduce homelessness, and prioritize high-impact initiatives.

Information and innovation

- Create a single, Metro-managed website or portal (like Housing Connector) listing all affordable units and linking renters to property managers.
- Build a culturally specific affordable-housing locator and intake portal.
- Research populations in need to align new housing models and quantify the real production and affordability impacts of proposals.
- Conduct an action plan for scaling mass timber, modular construction, and other innovative building methods.
- Explore free financial training and wealth-building coaching to expand low-income households' investment channels beyond homeownership.

Market rate developers – coalition member meetings

Three separate engagement events focused on hearing from market rate developers across single unit and multi-unit housing types.

Home Builders Association

- The Metro project team co-hosted a two-hour focus group with 14 members of the Home Building Association (HBA) at their offices. This time allowed for a robust discussion about barriers to housing production, priorities around Metro's roles in housing, and ideas for actions to include in the RHCS.
- First, the group reviewed a list of barriers to housing production and access from previous engagement. Additions were made around process inefficiency and inconsistency, expensive fees, public participation, and regional perceptions of growth.
- HBA members noted that Metro could play a stronger role in legislative advocacy to continue to advocate for better policies and more resources at the state and federal level. Metro's roles providing funding and investment and technical assistance and setting regional policies were also selected as priorities for this group.
- This group coalesced around a popular idea to create a permitting and production dashboard to track regional progress towards housing targets.
- At a follow-up meeting with the government affairs group, a new idea was suggested to audit middle housing codes and policies throughout the region to better understand what approaches have been the most effective in producing needed housing.

Oregon Smart Growth

- At an Oregon Smart Growth member meeting, the project team presented an overview of the RHCS and asked members to share their experiences with barriers to housing production and to suggest ideas that Metro could take as a part of the RHCS.
- Barriers cited during the discussion:
 - Negative perceptions of the greater Portland area hurt our access to financing
 - Economic development barriers – high taxes, homelessness and safety, lack of foot traffic downtown
 - Pre-development takes too long – can Metro cut through the permitting process to speed things up?
 - Too much regulation – zoning inflexibility
- Ideas for possible actions included:

- Acquiring existing housing instead of new construction
- Balance carrots and sticks
 - Metro could reward cities who are making progress – more funding for housing production success
 - Withhold funding for visioning, transportation, other grants, for cities that are not meeting production goals
- Address production of all housing – don't focus on just affordable housing
- Research messaging – how to talk about growth as a positive thing
- Metro needs to plan for all urban reserves

Focus group with development and financial professionals with experience in innovative approaches to affordable housing outside of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)

Focus group participants included representatives from the following organizations:

- Related NW
- Edlen & Co
- Community Development Partners
- Central Bethany Development
- Network for Oregon Affordable Housing (NOAH)
- ECONorthwest

Following an overview presentation of the project goals, deliverables, and timeline and Metro's role in housing, the group discussed opportunities for innovative financing for affordable housing development beyond Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC).

- What are some models (local, national, or global) that have successfully expanded housing supply at different affordability levels?
 - Create a recycled bond program that would allow for more tax-exempt debt for non-LIHTC deals (look to California and Washington for existing models)
 - Example of trying a new strategy to support middle income housing – create a mixed income project that is a public-private partnership. In Eugene, there is a project where 50% of units are at 80% AMI levels and the rest are at market rate. There was a way to provide public money in the deal without triggering prevailing wage requirements (cities may be in a position to provide \$1 million to a project, but that same project would need \$5 million if prevailing wages apply).
 - Create a 501c3 whose mission is to own and develop and operate middle-income housing up to 140% of AMI. If the non-profit owns the housing, you can use 100% tax exempt bond financing at the upper limit of those rents.
- How could Metro support efforts to expand innovative housing models? What approaches could help bridge financing gaps for projects that fall outside traditional funding models? What types of partnerships or collaborations could Metro foster to advance innovation in housing? How can Metro's research and data capabilities be leveraged to support the development and scaling of new housing strategies?
 - Middle income or moderate-income housing is a big missing piece right now because it is not economically viable. Find a way to subsidize these units even if they are for higher income people – the subsidy will be shallower.
 - Provide credit enhancement for 6% bonds to help with financing gaps
 - Advocate for changes to BOLI – the \$750,000 threshold for prevailing wages is 25-30 years old. Today, that amount equates to a small project and with inflation would be more equivalent to a \$3 million project today.

- Build up a land bank and feed it into projects
- Continue to provide project-based vouchers. They are an efficient tool to provide affordability at scale, but are very expensive and in-perpetuity.
- Respond to challenges and changes more quickly. Solutions need to be bigger in order to make a significant change. All the efforts of the State and Metro and local jurisdictions should be coordinated.
- Create a Metro loan program for missing middle-income housing.
- Stay flexible when writing new bond language to avoid limiting how funds can be used. Stay streamlined and simplified – don't add too many bells and whistles.
- Track the inventory of housing being produced and coordinate with the State to identify necessary interventions
- Create an operational stabilization or remodel program.

Housing advocacy and provider coalitions – focus group

A dedicated focus group with representatives from a broad range of housing advocacy and service provider coalitions was convened for participants to share their experiences with barriers to housing access and affordable housing development and to suggest ideas that Metro could take as a part of the RHCS.

Focus group participants included representatives from the following organizations:

- Fair Housing Council of Oregon
- Welcome Home Coalition
- Here Together
- Coalition of Communities of Color
- Unite Oregon
- AARP

Discussion of barriers:

Operational strains

- Developments combining Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) with affordable units often see low occupancy in the latter, eroding rent revenues and destabilizing operating budgets.
- Streamlining eligibility and reducing bureaucratic barriers will help fill affordable units and stabilize projects.

Service and delivery gaps

- Supportive services in PSH lack consistent, dedicated funding – too often they're unfunded mandates or expected to solve every resident challenge.
- Residents need more proactive, hands-on support than a referral card or hotline.
- Funders (OHCS, Metro, others) must mandate and finance resident support services within housing deals, and broaden eligible uses of credits and funding streams.

Partnership and capacity challenges

- Service plans drawn up during project bidding frequently fall apart by move-in, as the original proposers are no longer involved.
- Homelessness services and housing providers operate in silos, leaving tenants' housing and support needs disconnected.

- Providers lack the staff and bandwidth for ongoing social-cohesion efforts (weekly check-ins, peer specialists).
- Property management and social services require specialized, non-interchangeable roles.
- There's a critical need for trauma-informed property management practices.

Equity and fair housing

- Residents accessing homeless services face discrimination within the system.
- Housing policies and operations must center equity to ensure fair treatment and access.

Discussion of action ideas for the RHCS:

Preserve and convert existing housing

- Prioritize maintenance and repairs to keep current affordable units safe and functional.
- Use public funds to acquire private-sector properties for conversion to mixed-income housing or PSH.
- Collect and share best practices for preserving units with expiring affordability covenants.
- Establish a maintenance risk pool accessible to all property managers.

Reduce costs of homeownership

- Waive system development charges (SDCs) and fees to lower development costs.
- Promote innovative methods (mass timber, modular construction) and allow manufactured homes.
- Enable smaller lots and simple land divisions to expand entry-level homeownership.
- Launch programs helping renters become homeowners (down-payment assistance, shared-equity).

Funding and financial tools

- Tie bond and SHS dollars to deep, long-term affordability targets with cultural-competency and accessibility controls.
- Expand and sustain eviction-prevention funds and broaden rent-assistance eligibility region-wide.
- Create regional land banks in high-opportunity areas and direct land to affordable production.
- Support acquisition and predevelopment with low- or no-interest loans and flexible grants.

Embed community leadership and equity

- Require or incentivize community co-design in all publicly funded projects.
- Define "Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing" to include co-governance, culturally specific services, and data equity.
- Mandate displacement-impact reports for new developments, with binding mitigation plans.
- Fund community-led research and engagement as part of fair-housing strategy.

Prioritize resident services

- Fully fund on-site resident services as an integral affordability component, not an add-on.
- Support landlord liaison programs to assist tenants and reduce evictions.
- Defer additional PSH or mixed-housing projects until a proven operational model is in place.

Focus group with urban Native community-based organizations

A final focus group with representatives from several organizations that serve urban Native community members in the region was held at the Metro Regional Center in partnership with the Tribal Affairs team. The group was asked to share their experiences with helping their community access housing and to share culturally responsive ideas that Metro could take as a part of the RHCS.

Focus group participants included representatives from the following organizations:

- Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA)
- Native American Rehabilitation Association (NARA)
- Future Generations Collaborative
- Native Wellness Institute

Following a brief presentation about Metro's roles in housing and an overview of the RHCS goals and timeline, participants discussed the unmet housing needs in the communities they serve.

Permitting and flexible housing options

- Zoning and permitting must accommodate non-traditional dwellings (teepees, tiny homes) to meet diverse preferences.
- People on the spectrum often prefer standalone, small-scale units rather than large apartment complexes.

Trauma-informed environments

- Many supportive housing sites claim trauma-informed design, yet still pose challenges for residents.
- Healthy, sustainable materials, gardens, and gathering places support neural and generational trauma recovery.

Resident support

- On-site peer mentors or community health workers are essential — but hard to fund — to help residents with home maintenance, mental health, and addiction support.
- Projects should feature culturally resonant art, play areas, and gardens that welcome Native and other marginalized communities.
- All staff must understand and actively dismantle white supremacy within housing operations.

Financial considerations

- Traditional affordable-housing financing pressures projects to set rents too low or underfund resident services.
- Finance models need flexibility to serve out-of-state clients (e.g., NAYA) and ensure long-term quality property management.

- Grants and low-interest loans should cover both development and the full spectrum of resident supports.

Resident services and safety

- Service needs (mental health, peer support, cultural programming) consistently exceed available funding.
- Security must focus on culturally appropriate safety measures rather than enforcement – rethinking property security to be functional and welcoming

Community connection and engagement

- Housing designs should facilitate social cohesion and cultural practices, giving residents ways to connect with their heritage and community peers.

Participants then discussed ideas for priority actions related to Metro’s roles in housing production, coordination, and access. Katie McDonald, Metro’s tribal liaison, suggested Metro could help these organizations make a connection with local jurisdictions through implementation of the actions in the RHCS.

Creative solutions

- Establish a tiny-home village in Blue Lake Park, employing residents as park staff
- Replicate this model in other city parks to provide affordable homes and on-site jobs
- Prioritize smaller developments (10–12 units) for faster, community-oriented impact
- Collaborate with closing churches to acquire underused land for new housing stock
- Tie green construction to regional resilience and emergency preparedness goals

Collaboration

- Break down silos by partnering with municipal departments, non-profits, and volunteer networks
- Team up with groups like Housing Solidarity PDX to leverage community-driven homeownership programs.
- Advocate at the state level for housing projects that use environmentally sustainable materials (e.g., mass timber)

Culturally responsive solutions

- Donate land to establish Native-led neighborhoods as a form of reparations
- Increase production of housing that’s culturally tailored and supportive for Indigenous and other marginalized communities

Additional presentations to regional organizations and committees

Purpose:

As information about the RHCS was shared to jurisdictional and community partners, some organizations requested additional presentations to their membership. The project team responded to each request which resulted in six additional meetings to share information and answer questions about the project, hear about barriers that each group was facing, and solicit ideas for potential actions.

Meeting list and feedback:

Washington County Planning Directors, April 3, 2025

- The project team introduced the RHCS and provided an overview of requirements and approach
- The group asked questions about the proposed scope of work and engagement plan
- Following the presentation, participants discussed barriers they face at the local level and suggested preliminary ideas for Metro to support local efforts
 - o Providing regional level research about the past harms of discriminatory housing actions
 - o Working to recruit developers with innovative housing ideas into the region
 - o Seeing Metro more involved with state level rulemaking to represent the needs of the local jurisdictions
 - o Addressing workforce shortages for building inspectors and other works in the housing pipeline

1000 Friends Land Use Leadership Initiative (LULI), April 19, 2025

- The project team introduced the RHCS and provided an overview of requirements and approach
- The group asked questions about the proposed scope of work and engagement plan

Clackamas County Coordinating Committee (C4 Metro Subcommittee), November 24, 2024, May 14, 2025, July 16, 2025, October 15, 2025

- The project team introduced the RHCS and provided an overview of requirements and approach
- The group asked questions about the proposed scope of work and engagement plan
- Following the presentation, participants discussed barriers they face at the local level
 - o Barriers of the market – it can be hard to find developers to build what the jurisdictions are mandated to produce
 - o Impression in the private development community that government gets in the way more than anything else
 - o Infrastructure needs and other practical components of development are not sufficiently financed
- At the July meeting, members reviewed the preliminary list of evaluated action ideas and provided input related to their areas of strong support
 - o Important role of Metro to convene jurisdictions and coordinate with transportation and jobs planning
 - o Support for the ideas of land banking and meeting annually with Metro Councilors to discuss unique needs of each individual jurisdiction
 - o Continue to find more ways to fund infrastructure

- A final update in October reviewed the proposed list of actions for adoption and highlighted preliminary public comment themes. Members flagged the need of many local jurisdictions for more capacity, both to implement new programs and incentives being passed at the state level and to work on planning efforts in their communities concurrently. Technical assistance and planning grants are important for smaller cities without dedicated housing staff and for larger cities who could still use help in accelerating their housing work and connecting to additional funds and programs.

Washington County Coordinating Committee (WCCC) and WCCC Transportation Advisory Committee, July 10 and July 14, 2025; October 2 and 13, 2025

- The project team presented an overview of the project purpose and a summary of the work that had been completed so far including engagement and evaluation. Participants heard about the highest scoring actions from the evaluation period and shared their thoughts and priorities.
- Overall, the group felt that their ideas were represented in the narrowed list and agreed with many of the actions that were supported in the Implementers Work Group and in MTAC, including the new affordable housing bond, funding for infrastructure, and supporting work happening at the local level.
- At the project presentation in October to discuss the proposed list of sixteen actions for adoption, some questions came up around clarifying Metro's roles in actions that support supportive housing services. Members wanted to ensure that actions would capture the diverse needs of the cities and their approaches to housing production and access in their local context. The discussion ended with some inquiries about data collection for permitting and brownfield sites. Otherwise, the groups were primarily supportive of the version of the final draft RHCS that was released in September for public comment.

Internal Metro staff work sessions

Purpose:

Metro hosted two discussions with internal staff to provide additional institutional context to the development of the RHCS and to ensure coordination and alignment with intersecting Metro projects and programs. Internal Metro staff experts shared their input on the list of strategies and the evaluation framework and provided additional insights to ensure the final action list reflects accurate budget and staffing impacts, identifies the right teams for implementation, and coordinates with ongoing work programs as needed.

Approach and feedback:

Meeting #1: Suggest potential actions and strategies; inventory of measures already implemented by Metro to promote the development of needed housing, March 11, 2025

- Staff from across Metro departments weighed in on the draft deliverable inventory of measures that Metro has taken to support housing production and equitable access
- The discussion transitioned to brainstorming ideas for the strategy based on expertise:
 - o Embed historical due diligence activities in our work
 - o Explore new regulations to require local jurisdictions to amend codes that are barriers to housing production
 - o Provide more resources as incentives to implement best practices – like middle housing development, connections to 2040 grants
 - o Metro can continue to provide a point of connectivity for jurisdictions and to facilitate everyone to learn from one another
 - o Funding will be one of the biggest challenges in the coming years – role for Metro to convene funders regionally
 - o Good possibility to implement land banking
 - o Lowering the cost of production would allow for more housing to be produced using the same resources – connection to modular development or purchasing materials at scale. Could Metro help sponsor a collaborative insurance pool? Insurance cost is another huge barrier.
 - o Labor shortages are preventing the region in reaching our goals – look at Minneapolis/St. Paul example and how we can enhance the construction to careers pathways program
 - o Acquire existing market rate buildings and convert to affordable housing. Kind of a land banking strategy.
 - o Use this process to build up agreement about levels of affordability amongst our jurisdiction partners. TOD program is doing great with proof of concept.
 - o Has there been prior work to collect learnings around the strategies that advance racial justice? Will there be equity priorities? Seeing that there are 4 checkpoints in this process for the equity framework. Is there space to share that out with the engagement and wrap those learnings in an ending product.

Meeting #2: Review evaluation framework and full list of action ideas sorted by Metro's roles in housing, May 6, 2025

- The project team presented the proposed evaluation approach to the team for feedback

- Participants split up into four separate groups to review the running list of action ideas, sorted by the nine roles that Metro plays in housing work. The groups flagged ideas that needed more information, would be outside of Metro's scope of authority, or are duplicative to work being led by other organizations. Ideas that made sense for Metro to continue exploring were highlighted for evaluation.
- After some time working separately, the group came back together to discuss their primary takeaways with the rest of the attendees, focusing on answering these questions:
 - o Do you have suggested edits to this preliminary list of strategies?
 - o Do you have ideas for additional strategies, based on these categories of Metro's roles?
 - o Where do you see challenges for feasibility or implementation?
- Key feedback:
 - o Partnerships and collaboration – Some ideas need further explanation from the Implementers Work Group. Ideas about aligning partners around messaging is an opportunity for Metro to share more about our projects and success stories.
 - o Best practices – Really need to consider if Metro is the right organization to implement each idea – do we have the right staff or expertise? Is another organization leading this work already?
 - o Funding and investment – Many ideas are overlapping and related and some ideas are written more like a goal than as a strategy – opportunity to consolidate ideas and add more details. Add a new idea about improving voucher policies across the region.
 - o Data and analysis – Idea to create indicator comparisons across metro regions nationally so we can compare our progress; idea to collect data of time series of certain indicators to understand how conditions have changed over time
 - o Communication and engagement – Idea to convene standing working group of partners in the region focusing on housing or to host panel discussions from leaders from other jurisdictions, including nationally and globally
 - o Regulation and regional policies – Many of the existing ideas are not realistic or are not well positioned for Metro to undertake to meet the goal of the strategy. There's an opportunity for Metro to look at our own code and find potential areas to improve, simplify, or relax regulations. Jurisdictions can struggle with ambiguity of our terms.
 - o Technical assistance and capacity building – Investing in capacity and partnerships with industry could be its own category of strategies. If we provide that technical support, new staff would be needed for support. Possible to create presentations for 5-6 topics that Metro is strong on that could be shared as resources for partner jurisdictions.

In August, the short list of proposed actions for the draft RHCS was shared back with all participants from these cross-departmental meetings to allow for another round of feedback. Additional small meetings occurred with specific subject matter experts before the release of the public discussion draft to finalize the action description details and align expectations around implementation.

Racial equity

Racial equity framework check-ins

Purpose:

The RHCS applied the Metro Racial Equity Framework derived from Metro's Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity Diversity and Inclusion (SPAREDI) to prompt reflections at key project milestones. These check-ins dedicated time for the project team to discuss the racial equity outcomes and impacts of work related to the development of the RHCS and adjust the approach or activities accordingly. The framework was modified from its original form to meet the specific needs of the RHCS and address the areas of work like Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing and a focus on data justice.

Approach and feedback:

Check-in #1: Engagement plan and scope of work, December 17 and 18, 2024

- Discussed engagement approach and the right balance between hosting new events versus collecting information and feedback from recent previous engagement.
- Reviewed scope of work for areas of opportunity for data analysis, qualitative data collection, and engagement activities that would ensure diverse perspectives and needs were reflected in the RHCS

Check-in #2: Racial equity vision statement, principles, and process goals, March 14, 2025

- Established project specific racial equity process goals and guiding principles
- These goals were split into two categories – guiding principles that reflected the project's overall intended outcome, and process goals that reflected the team's approach to completing the work

Check-in #3: Preliminary engagement results and early themes; evaluation framework, May 7, 2025

- Discussed data analysis, presentation, and sources to balance margins of error with disaggregating data when possible to provide more representation. Thought through ways to improve data collection and analysis for the future RHCS process.

Check-in #4: Final strategy, implementation, and accountability, October 9, 2025

- Planned for accountability, tracking and measuring progress, reflected on areas for improvement, and discussed strategy to report back to engaged parties.

Project Vision

Create a roadmap for actions Metro will advance to promote housing production, coordination, and equitable access. This will be achieved by lifting up emerging best practices, coordinating and aligning local strategies, and addressing critical gaps that can be filled at the regional level.

Equity Guiding Principles

Promote the production and maintenance of housing that is of diverse types, high-quality, physically accessible, and affordable

- Support the development and preservation of affordable housing, including deeply affordable, permanent supportive housing
- Identify local or regional barriers to developing housing, including financial, regulatory, or capacity-related constraints

Promote access to economic opportunities, services and amenities

- Promote community wealth-building opportunities by decreasing rent burden and removing financial barriers to home ownership
- Expand contracting and workforce development opportunities in the housing production pipeline
- Ensure policies, funding, and programs prioritize access to high quality, stable housing for historically marginalized communities
- Coordinate strategies that help stabilize communities

Promote Fair Housing

- Address significant disparities in housing needs and access to opportunity
- Promote integrated and balanced living patterns with access to opportunity and housing choice
- Foster and maintain compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws

Equity process goals

Overall project

- Apply a racial equity framework and principles to our research, technical analysis, engagement, and overall strategy development
- Ensure accountability to our racial equity goals by evaluating our progress throughout the project and following completion of the strategy
- Reflect on internal processes and identify improvements for the next Regional Housing Coordination Strategy
- Apply an equity lens to the decision-making process

Evaluation framework

- Measure fair housing and racial equity impacts through the evaluation criteria
- Assess potential impact towards closing racial disparities in housing access and stability

Data

- Apply an equity lens to data collection, analysis and presentation

Engagement

- Coordinate with jurisdictional partners, aligning strategies across agencies and ensuring a strong regional approach to equitable housing solutions
- Ensure the experiences, priorities and expertise of community of color shape strategy development and implementation

Committee on Racial Equity (CORE)

Purpose:

Metro's Committee on Racial Equity brings together a diverse group of community advocates to advise Metro Council to advance racial equity across Metro's work areas. Specifically, the committee supports Council by:

- Advising on and evaluating the implementation of the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (SPARED)

- Providing community oversight and opportunities for Metro to have greater accountability to the community on the implementation of the Strategic Plan and its commitments to racial equity
- Maintaining relationships and building trust with communities of color
- Providing a concrete mechanism for keeping Metro accountable to its racial equity goals
- Communicating Metro's progress in implementing the Strategic Plan and other racial equity strategies.

Presenting the RHCS to CORE for their input on the application of the racial equity framework was an effort to ensure that equity considerations and reflections were woven throughout the project. Additionally, providing a project overview early in the project and asking CORE for their desired level of involvement allowed for responsiveness to their interests and enough time to make a plan that reflected their decisions.

Approach:

Meeting #1 – Project overview, presentation of the equity framework, gauge CORE interest in future project involvement, February 20, 2025

- Staff developed options for CORE's level of involvement, providing a selection between one and three additional meetings based on their level of interest in the project.
- CORE members selected the option to have one more additional meeting focused on engagement updates, the proposed evaluation framework, and results from the racial equity framework check-ins. Additional written updates about the development of the draft report and technical analysis would be provided to the committee as requested.

Meeting #2 – Project deliverables and engagement update, review of evaluation framework, review of preliminary list of actions, June 26, 2025

- CORE members heard a project update and key takeaways from recent engagement, reviewed details of the evaluation framework and the preliminary list of actions.
- One CORE member noted that the language used in certain evaluation criteria categories could be overpromising the impact of our actions on addressing access and affordability challenges. This observation resulted in additional language in the evaluation criteria section explaining that the evaluation language is connected to Oregon's Fair Housing Issue Areas and intended to help integrate outcomes that Affirmatively Further Fair Housing in the RHCS. The criteria reflect the goals that the strategy strives to meet through the combination of proposed actions taken together over the next six years.
- The group was in broad agreement that the project was moving in the right direction, but provided some comments highlighting the importance of transparency, accountability, and open communication with CORE during the implementation of the RHCS. These efforts will help ensure that the next RHCS is reflective of lessons learned and does even more to move the needle for housing production, affordability, and choice.
- CORE members were notified about the publication of the draft RHCS and invited to participate in the public comment period to provide any additional feedback.

Decision-making

Metro Council will approve the final Regional Housing Coordination Strategy (RHCS) via Resolution by December 2025. Following this adoption, staff will submit the final Strategy to the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) for review and approval.

Prior to the Council's adoption, the Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) made a recommendation about strategy approval and the final draft RHCS was shared with interested parties for a 30-day public comment period.

Metro Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC)

Purpose:

The project team presented regularly to MTAC to provide technical feedback as the strategies were developed and evaluated and shared their feedback and recommendations to the project staff and MPAC.

Approach:

Meeting #1 – Introduce the RHCS, October 16, 2024

Meeting #2 – Presentation of the work plan and engagement plan, March 19, 2025

Meeting #3 – Preliminary list of strategy ideas, draft evaluation framework, May 21, 2025

Meeting #4 – Evaluated list of actions, July 16, 2025

Meeting #5 – Review draft RHCS, October 15, 2025

Meeting #6 – Recommendation to MPAC, November 19, 2025

Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC)

Purpose:

MPAC followed the development of the RHCS and brought the perspective of local jurisdictions and relevant organizational leadership to recommend the final strategy to Metro Council.

Approach:

Meeting #1 - Introduce the RHCS, November 13, 2024

Meeting #2 – Presentation of the work plan and engagement plan, March 19, 2025

Meeting #3 – Engagement themes, Metro's roles in housing, preliminary strategy ideas, May 28, 2025

Meeting #4 – Evaluated list of actions, July 23, 2025

Meeting #5 – Review draft RHCS, October 22, 2025

Meeting #6 – Recommendation to Metro Council, November 19, 2025

Metro Council work sessions and meetings

Purpose:

Metro Council is the primary decision-maker regarding the adoption of the RHCS and will take action to adopt the plan by December 2025. Project staff periodically updated Council on the strategy development to provide findings from engagement and give Councilors the opportunity to shape the plan and voice their concerns and priorities along the way.

Approach:

Work session #1 – RHCS overview, present work plan and engagement plan for feedback, February 18, 2025

Work session #2 – Engagement update, Metro's roles in housing, preliminary list of strategy ideas, May 20, 2025

Work session #3 – Final evaluation framework, evaluated list of actions, July 29, 2025

Work session #4 – Receive MPAC recommendation, December 2, 2025

Meeting to adopt Resolution – December 18, 2025

Public comment period

Purpose:

The public comment period provided time for dedicated review and comment on the draft RHCS and lasted from September 15 – October 15, 2025. The draft RHCS, technical appendices, and executive summary were posted to the project web page. This provided the general public access to the full suite of project deliverables. Additional comments could be submitted via project email, phone number, or feedback survey.

Final presentations to review the draft RHCS were made to county committees based on invitation. The project team presented to the Washington County Coordinating Committee (WCCC), the WCCC Transportation Advisory Committee, and the Clackamas County Coordinating Committee (C4). Some public testimony was submitted via email from elected officials representing the City of Portland, Multnomah County, and Washington County.

Questions from the public comment feedback survey:

- How satisfied are you with the list of actions in the Regional Housing Coordination Strategy?
- Are there specific proposed actions you strongly support more than others?
- Do you think that any critical actions are missing from the proposed list of actions?
- Do you have suggestions for Metro's implementation of this strategy over the next six years?
- Do you have any other comments to share about the draft RHCS?
- Are you responding on behalf of an organization?
- What county is your organization located in/which county do you live in?

Feedback from the public comment survey and meetings focused on the draft RHCS (Implementers Work Group, MTAC, MPAC, C4 and WCCC). Some notes of support reflect review of the actions after the evaluation process.

ID	Action	Support and public comments
1	Create new housing pre-development and technical assistance funding for site specific housing development.	<p>SUPPORT: Implementers Work Group Top 5</p> <p>Survey: Pre-development grants/loans are best suited to be implemented by a gap funder to help with loan conversation. Adding another funder to the mix creates complications. In addition, the state currently funds pre-development but lacks resources. However, site-specific pre-development could mean more than direct funding to developers with identified land and this feedback is specific to pre-dev grants to affordable housing developers.</p>
2	Explore opportunities to expand resources available for brownfield cleanup.	<p>SUPPORT: MTAC Top 5</p> <p>Survey: Try to complement rather than duplicate existing programs (e.g. the brownfield remediation fund through Business Oregon).</p>
3	Funding and support for local Housing Production Strategy implementation	SUPPORT: Implementers Work Group Top 5
4	Consider developing a regionally available pool of housing professionals for technical assistance to smaller jurisdictions to support planning and implementation related to housing production, affordability and choice.	<p>SUPPORT: Support from Implementers Work Group</p> <p>C4 Metro subcommittee: Lots of new programs and incentives from the State – staff could use support in connecting to these programs and understanding how they can be used in the local community</p> <p>This would be helpful for jurisdictions of all sizes. Larger jurisdictions are often trying to work on simultaneous planning efforts but can't due to limited staff capacity. Additional resources for planning support could help them too.</p>
5	Evaluate lessons learned and effective practices from implementation of the 2018 Affordable Housing Bond; research models and best practices and develop and share recommendations to	<p>SUPPORT: Idea generated from fair housing consultant; additional support for communications and messaging from MPAC and through previous Metro housing-related engagement</p> <p>Survey:</p>

	strengthen fair housing and equitable access to affordable housing.	<p>Evaluation of voter-approved and taxpayer funded programs is a necessity. However, the additional evaluation identified are unlikely to increase access to affordable housing and may be administratively burdensome for implementing partners and developers. In addition, HUD requires Participating Jurisdictions to review fair housing and access broadly. Lessons from the bond could support the industry more broadly – understanding the capital/operation costs, ownership structures, funds leverages, lease up demographics, and equity in contracting results (including buy-ups if any). In addition, Metro should hire an independent entity to evaluate the Metro Land Acquisition Program to determine effectiveness and overlap with the State Land Acquisition Program.</p> <p>MTAC: There is a huge messaging and communication opportunity here to share the successes of the bond with the community when its impact can be easy to miss</p>
6	Building upon lessons learned and best practices from the 2018 bond and TOD grant program, strengthen requirements and incentives for community participation and co-design in the development and operations of affordable housing. Identify opportunities for Metro to support capacity building for community based and culturally specific organizations to participate in affordable housing development and operations.	<p>SUPPORT: Support from focus group with providers and advocates</p> <p>Survey: Metro should not add requirements for affordable housing developments or explore additional requirements given the limited capacity of affordable housing developers and operators as our field navigates challenges with the federal government. These requirements would need to come with local tools or investments, which Metro is not able to support without a new bond. In addition, a clear fiscal analysis should be complete.</p> <p>MTAC: There is a huge messaging and communication opportunity here to share the successes of the bond with the community when its impact can be easy to miss</p>
7	Research, evaluate and identify opportunities to advance innovative and non-LIHTC approaches to housing development/construction, financing, and ownership, including:	<p>SUPPORT: Strong support from survey respondents; support from financiers focus group; support from advocates and providers; support from Implementers Work Group</p> <p>Survey:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modular and manufactured housing and cross-laminated timber and smaller or expandable designs • Social housing and alternative homeownership models, including CLT and resident-owned multi-family housing models • Innovative financing approaches to support development of smaller scale (<20 unit) building types, including PSH <p>Assess barriers and opportunities and identify opportunities to pilot or scale up innovative approaches; approach would include market analysis, best practice research and engagement with public, private, and philanthropic partners to support coordinated research, development and investment strategies.</p>	<p>This feels like a worthwhile research effort, but it should not be limited to non-LIHTC financing. The change of the PAB rule from 50% to 25% could lead to new strategies to best pull down federal tax credits. In addition, any research of innovative ideas should include known challenges and obstacles to first-time efforts (as they often increase costs in pilots).</p> <p>MTAC: Support for innovative construction materials but would see that as having a high impact rather than medium</p> <p>PHB is exploring social housing –make sure to coordinate</p> <p>The crux of this action is how to implement the innovative approaches at scale – smaller, human scale development requires more subsidy for construction and longer term management</p>
8	<p>Conduct an assessment of middle housing in the region to identify best practices and common barriers.</p>	<p>SUPPORT: Support from HBA government affairs group</p> <p>Survey: Consider removal since legislation around middle housing is constantly changing. If it is not removed, we recommend moving its implementation further than 2026.</p> <p>What is the connection to the state MiRL program?</p> <p>Implementers Work Group: Interest in adding to the assessment more information about who is living in these units and their average price points to better understand who this development type is serving</p>
9	<p>Develop an affordable housing stabilization strategy to respond to industry-wide challenges due to rising</p>	<p>SUPPORT: Idea cumulated from several engagement conversations with affordable housing developers, operators, and service providers</p>

	operational costs, increased resident needs, and lack of coordination/alignment with homeless and supportive services.	<p>Survey: Explore pairing RLRA vouchers with buildings in need of additional subsidy and/or with vacant units.</p> <p>This is certainly need, but the challenges are not a Metro area issue but an issue across the state and nation. We disagree with the connection to production as it relates to land use planning, and implementation planning would have to occur with the funders of the affordable housing. For the most part, that would be OHCS.</p> <p>Implementers Work Group: Noted the importance of strategies focused on existing affordable housing preservation and not just production focus</p>
10	Evaluate and improve Metro SHS funded Regional Long Term Rent Assistance (RLRA) policies and implementation to address portability and to connect available vouchers with vacant regulated affordable housing units.	<p>SUPPORT: Housing Oregon survey responses</p> <p>Survey: It is not appropriate to include this recommendation the RHCS. It repeats myths, that RLRA isn't portable, and did not appropriately include implementation partners and SHSOC in the development of this action. While evaluation of the RLRA program would be a value to the SHS program, and is consistent with Metro's role in the SHS program, the related jurisdictional partners have not been sufficiently engaged to inform the development of this strategy that proposes to improve RLRA. The potential areas of evaluation outlined in this strategy don't match County implementor expertise concerns and questions that could be improved through the proposed evaluation and policy improvement process.</p> <p>Multnomah County Commissioner Shannon Singleton: While this has a low impact on housing production, it is a critical reform needed for SHS and will have a high impact for that funding and programs.</p>
11	Develop a centralized regional affordable housing listing service to support housing navigators and seekers in connecting with information about available units that meet their needs, with an initial focus on building out a	<p>SUPPORT: Interview with Community Visions and support from the focus group with housing advocacy groups and service providers</p> <p>Survey: This is a gap in our field and aligns well with the work of the TCPB. However, it is out of scope of the RHCS. WashCo is interested in being a partner as Metro</p>

	portal to assist housing navigators working with households in the homeless services system.	considers the idea of connecting low-income people with affordable housing (beyond those experiencing homelessness). This will be extraordinarily difficult to update and maintain.
12	Develop a proposed plan for a regional land bank that outlines the necessary legal framework, governance structures, and operational guidelines to support cross-sector collaboration and investment. Define clear policy priorities, including considerations related to Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, market conditions and funding opportunities.	<p>SUPPORT: Strong support from survey respondents; support from Habitat for Humanity and Proud Ground; Implementers Work Group Top 5; MTAC Top 5; MPAC support</p> <p>Survey: Coordinate with state and city-level land-banking strategies. Consider the state's Home Start Lands strategy in which the sale of some state properties funds a subsidy pool for future housing on state owned lands.</p> <p>Include an evaluation of the Metro Land Acquisition Program by an independent party. Evaluate land banking strategies against revolving loans for land acquisition (consider cost efficiencies of both approaches). Consider alignment with the state funded LAP. WashCo is an eager partner as you develop this idea.</p> <p>Multnomah County Commissioner Shannon Singleton: I think it is a critical tool that we can use to also address short term needs (like emergency shelter) until development is ready to begin.</p>
13	Explore how to create a permitting and production dashboard to track production trends across the region.	<p>SUPPORT: Home Building Association focus group support; MTAC and MPAC support</p> <p>Survey: In our experience, public works permitting is subject to much more delay as compared to building permits, so make sure to parse these two phases out.</p> <p>Benefits of this action are unclear. The proposed dashboard seems to duplicate information the state will track and include in its Housing Production Dashboard. Can the RHCS clarify any differences/unique benefits?</p> <p>Not needed and will end up creating an additional burden on local jurisdiction staff who are already heavily burdened.</p>

		<p>MTAC: Hear anecdotes about permitting timelines and costs dissuading developers from working in certain communities – would like to better understand if that’s true and how Metro can provide support to alleviate those challenges</p> <p>Weak data infrastructure currently to compare jurisdictions – HBA is connecting with jurisdictions to understand what data they have and how it can be used to compare across a few basic categories as a starting point</p> <p>Implementers Work Group: Concern that this action could be burdensome to staff and duplicative of work being done through the state</p>
14	Begin a Metro Urban Growth Management Functional Plan audit and cleanup of housing-related titles to align with new State requirements and regional priorities as identified in the 2027 Future Vision.	<p>SUPPORT: Internal staff idea with general support from Implementers Work Group and MTAC</p> <p>MTAC: Can this also look at Title 14 requirements and streamline to save money that could be used towards infrastructure funding</p>
15	Convene jurisdictional partners to develop a coordinated legislative agenda for state and federal housing/homelessness resources , including a regional priority to identify funding for infrastructure. The agenda would be updated as needed to meet changing regional needs (or every six years) and guided by appropriate Metro advisory committees for land use, housing and homelessness. Convene with Tribes that are interested in housing development to support urban Native populations to learn about their tribal priorities that can be addressed through Metro’s work.	<p>SUPPORT: Strong support from survey respondents; Implementers Work Group Top 5; MTAC Top 5; MPAC support; support from HBA focus group</p> <p>Survey: How would this complement existing coalitions (Housing Oregon and Housing Alliance)?</p> <p>We have concerns regarding Metro staff capacity as well as the implementation timeline for some of the actions. We recommend starting work earlier and phasing it in over time. This would enable the region to start building alignment towards this goal in the near term so that ultimately we can build up to a fully coordinated legislative agenda.</p> <p>This coordination makes sense. The action references advisory committees, and WashCo remains uncertain about the future of SHS/AHB governance. We don’t read this action to move governance but wanted to note that confusion.</p>

		<p>Implementers Work Group: Suggestion to separate into three actions: infrastructure funding support for housing; homelessness resources; Tribal priorities</p> <p>MTAC: Could this action begin sooner to allow time to be organized and implemented before the next long session? Can the impacts of prevailing wage be studied further and better understood? Consider going beyond infrastructure facilities funding – can this effort look at taxation structures?</p> <p>Multnomah County Commissioner Shannon Singleton: It may be inferred in #15 that we will have a regional housing development prioritized list for State budget allocations, I think it is critical to call this out separately and distinctly. The current practice of every project competing individually does not allow us to leverage funds or move forward geographic or population development priorities for our region. We coordinate to this level for transportation projects and desperately need the same for housing infrastructure projects.</p>
16	<p>Consider the viability and feasibility of new funding for affordable housing development and preservation.</p> <p>Ensure that any new funding framework is informed by public opinion research and engagement with public, private and nonprofit leaders as well as analysis of housing needs and market conditions, and lessons learned from the 2018 regional housing bond and best practices from other regions,, including evaluating opportunities to strengthen racial equity, fair housing and community resilience outcomes and alignment/integration with homeless and supportive housing services.</p>	<p>SUPPORT: Strong support from survey respondents; Implementers Work Group Top 5; MTAC Top 5; Strong support from focus groups with advocates and providers</p> <p>Survey: Put a new regional housing bond on the ballot, and use it to finance missing options, definitely including limited equity housing cooperatives, and possibly also other models.</p> <p>This is the most impactful action to increase affordability in our region. Metro should consider the impact of the Land Acquisition Program and whether to consider it. Metro should also provide guidance on any cost savings or benefits of property acquisition and conversion versus new builds. PSH and low-income requirements should include analysis of rental vouchers as PHAs fall into shortfall and RLRA is fully leased up.</p> <p>MTAC:</p>

		<p>Important that this is informed by impactful research (not just public opinion research)</p> <p>Is it possible a future bond could serve income bands in between the 30% and 60% levels dictated by LIHTC? There is often a large need for people who fall between those income thresholds</p>
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Survey feedback about missing actions

- HCAs done by cities/counties seem disconnected from Metro's work – how can Metro build on the work being done by cities and counties to inform future decisions?
- Stand up a fund specifically for predevelopment, development, and awareness of limited equity housing cooperatives
- Siting economic development with housing – provide oversight for the six TIF districts that are going to be enacted over the next 20 years so they can be leveraged to make as much of a dent in the backlog as possible – advocate for changing the URA rules at the state level
- Add TOD to the land banking action idea
- Housing bond funds seem to have been used for only buildings with affordable units instead of mixed income developments – are we concentrating poverty once again – could the funds be used in mixed income buildings or developments – how can we replicate New Columbia in North Portland?
- Talk more about the relationship between ownership as a source of equity and the rising cost of housing – when we treat housing as a source of equity, housing becomes more unaffordable. We need more affordable housing.
- Missing actions that propose recycling of capital – the housing bonds have been successful, but the resources are finite and now exhausted. Could there have been a more strategic model that recycles capital throughout the region in a way that funds can be managed more like inheritance rather than exhausting it. It could grow and have a multiplier effect over time – the next funding source will need to model out more creative capital recycling so that this can be a virtuous cycle

General feedback about Metro's roles

- The RHCS defines broad roles for Metro that overlap with Public Housing Authorities, the State's Housing Finance Agency, and new and longstanding programs. The actions read as a wish list from the development community, all great things that the industry needs. However, some of the actions are better suited for the state or a PHA to administer. These conversations about broader housing strategy should be distinct from the onerous timelines of OHNA implementation, at least for this next draft as Metro works to meet state timelines, to allow for role clarity conversations with all partners.
- Metro currently proposes its role as supportive and collaborative. Avoid adding reporting requirements/workload for local jurisdictions beyond what is already required for state reporting. It is also important to avoid duplication of reporting requirements at the state and regional levels.
- Could Metro produce an infographic of sorts that describes the roles and responsibilities of all the various local governments and agencies in the housing world? It is extremely confusing, even for people within the housing planning world. It's hard to assess whether some of the actions in the draft plan are needed when we don't know what other efforts are being made at the county level, city level, or state level. And by nonprofits and the federal level, for that matter. For example, the affordable housing listing service - what is the problem this will solve, and are there

others that are already working to solve it? Can you paint the picture for all of us so that we can understand how we already are coordinated, and where gaps and disconnects might still exist?

- Gather all the committees, councils, oversight, advisory board from Multnomah County, the City of Portland and the Metro Regional Government and come together as one to discuss (maybe two times a year) all the policies they are worked on.
- Telling the story of our region to our region is so important. We need to know who we are and what we stand for as we move into the future. This is a heavy lift, and something we need to come up with the culture to make happen. People are here, and more are coming, as a result of climate disruptions. And we need to reckon with all of it.

Feedback about RHCS focus and implementation

- Ensure that the strategy and implementation include significant focus on both affordable housing and unlocking private, market rate housing development.
- Prioritize actions that you assess to have the greatest impact on housing production.
- Focus on the strategies that have the most impact first in addressing housing affordability and stability first.
- Spend more time and energy on the direct funding or TA programs, and less on the studying and convening roles. Studies are useful, but at this point in time our industry knows the challenges and has been calling for direct help for years. Funding is limited and costs are rising, so the actions that are most critical are those that can have tangible outcomes for residents and organizations.
- The state has launched new programs (Moderate-Income Revolving Loan program) and revamped application processes that could benefit from a coordinated regional strategy. Some actions described are clearly efforts to support the region in drawing down federal and state funding for housing development.
- There seems to be need for a regional coordinated jobs strategy to support the increase in housing production. We need to ensure that people can afford to purchase and remain in the homes that are being built.
- Can there be a bigger investment in workforce development in the trades to increase labor capacity?
- MPAC should be encouraged to provide direction to Metro to focus on the items where Metro has either a high or medium impact on development of needed housing.

Lessons learned for the next RHCS

Following the completion of the draft RHCS and the end of the public comment period, the project team gathered to discuss lessons learned, celebrate what worked well, and identify concrete changes that would improve the process of developing and implementing the next RHCS.

Applying the racial equity framework

The team agreed the racial equity framework based on the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (SPAREDI) had been a central component to the evolution of the RHCS. Starting the process with this lens in place gave time for the project team to slow down and reflect on work while it was ongoing and adjust the approach as needed, from the scope of work and engagement plan to evaluating the actions and discussing plans for implementation. The framework helped to center fair housing considerations in both the evaluation criteria and in understanding the potential impacts for each proposed action.

The project team noted the cadence and timing of meetings felt mostly effective but recommended a small shift - begin future efforts with a meeting specifically to establish project racial equity goals before jumping into scope and engagement planning. Having the project equity goals and objectives clearly articulated at the outset and revisiting them to refine as the project moves forward would make the framework feel less abstract and more actionable.

The team also found that tailoring the racial equity framework to the RHCS context produced better conversations and clearer guidance throughout the project. Planning specific reflection time during development of the project schedule helped the team be more accountable and ensure this time did not fall off the radar.

Data collection and analysis

While the project team felt effective in meeting the requirements of the RHCS, in future processes there is an interest in strengthening internal capacity to analyze new data sources. Some timing mismatches between data publication and the analysis meant that not every desired data set was available. Additionally, in the next RHCS process, the data analysis could be more explicitly connected to the justification of each action and the potential action impacts, both demographically and geographically.

Internal engagement

Internal coordination and collaboration within Metro was very successful. The Housing and Planning, Development, and Research Departments shared responsibilities with outreach, analysis, evaluation, presentation, and review. This approach ensured that the right subject matter experts had a chance to weigh in on the strategy, especially when discussing the implementation steps, to make sure the final list was feasible within the next six years.

During the next RHCS development, the project team should continue collaborating early on with the Government Affairs team to ensure alignment with other regional and state coordination and to connect with the Tribal Affairs staff members to determine the right approach to engaging Tribal Governments and urban indigenous community-based organizations.

Metro committees were regularly updated on the progress of the RHCS, allowing for several opportunities to learn about the strategy development, ask questions, and share feedback. Involvement with the Committee on Racial Equity (CORE) was more limited based on the preferences of the membership and their interest in the project. In the future, CORE members should be brought into the work, as interested, to solicit their feedback about engagement, project goals, and accountability under the SPAREDI. Early brainstorming with CORE and deliberate planning to outline the purpose of their meetings will reinforce their oversight role.

External engagement and relationship building

External partners shared their perspectives on the roles that Metro should play and the actions that Metro should take to advance housing production, affordability, and choice. This feedback, including feedback from recent related housing engagement efforts, formed the foundation of the proposed action list. Continuing to deepen the relationships built through the Implementers Work Group and dedicated focus groups through the implementation of the strategy will lead to better outcomes and a stronger start to the next RHCS.

In the future, if more dedicated engagement staff are available, the team could consider expanding outreach efforts to more housing partners or creating events for the jurisdictional staff, developers, and service providers to meet at the same time to share across their sectors. Regardless, working to schedule engagement activities as early as possible will ensure flexibility for the right staff and partner organizations to be involved during the right stages of the project.

Strategy implementation and accountability

To track progress after adoption, the team proposed a few practical accountability tools. A centralized RHCS progress dashboard that would be updated through a biannual Planning, Development, and Research and Housing Department coordination meeting would provide a single place to view the status of action implementation. The dashboard would include metrics to track action impact and help the team understand effectiveness over time. Hosting that dashboard on the project website and providing updates through MetroNews and the housing related newsletters would increase transparency to the general public and partners.

Overall, centering equity through each step of strategy development, including time for reflection in the schedule, clarifying roles for internal coordination, expanding internal capacity to incorporate new data sources, deepening external relationships, and creating simple accountability mechanisms will make the next RHCS stronger.

Full list of engagement activities

Date	Group	Topic
October 16, 2024	MTAC	Meeting #1 – introduce RHCS
November 13, 2024	MPAC	Meeting #1 – introduce RHCS
December 17-18, 2024	Internal Metro project team	Equity check-in #1 – engagement plan and work plan
February 18, 2025	Metro Council	Work session #1 – project overview, work plan, engagement plan
February 20, 2025	CORE	Meeting #1 – project overview, equity framework, discuss future involvement
March 11, 2025	Cross-departmental Metro work group	Meeting #1 – brainstorm strategies, discuss inventory of existing Metro work to promote development of needed housing
March 14, 2025	Internal Metro project team	Team meeting to discuss racial equity goals
March 19, 2025	MTAC	Meeting #2 – work plan, engagement plan
March 19, 2025	MPAC	Meeting #2 – work plan, engagement plan
April 3, 2025	Washington County Planning Directors	RHCS overview, scope, engagement strategy
April 18, 2025	Implementers Work Group	Meeting #1 – project overview, Metro’s roles in housing production and access, preliminary action brainstorming
April 19, 2025	1000 Friends of Oregon LULI	Project overview, Metro’s roles in housing production and access
May 6, 2025	Cross-departmental Metro work group	Meeting #2 – review draft evaluation framework and preliminary list of strategies
May 7, 2025	Internal Metro project team	Equity check-in #2 – preliminary list of strategies and engagement; application of the project racial equity goals
May 14, 2025	C4	Meeting #1 - Project overview; Metro’s role in housing; brainstorming preliminary list of strategies
May 16, 2025	Oregon Smart Growth	Discussion of barriers and strategy ideas
May 16, 2025	Implementers Work Group	Meeting #2 – preliminary discussion of strategies and evaluation framework
May 20, 2025	Metro Council	Work session #2 – preliminary list of strategies, Metro’s roles, engagement update
May 21, 2025	MTAC	Meeting #3 – preliminary list of strategies, draft evaluation framework
May 28, 2025	Focus group: Housing advocacy	Project overview, discuss barriers to unmet housing need, brainstorm ideas for

	and provider coalitions	strategies Metro could take to address regional housing needs
May 28, 2025	MPAC	Meeting #3 – engagement themes, Metro’s roles and categories of strategy ideas
May 29, 2025	Focus group: HBA and market rate developers	Member meeting – project overview, Metro’s roles, barriers, strategy ideas
June 11, 2025	Housing Oregon	Member meeting – share brief project overview and advertise survey to provide feedback on Metro’s roles and preliminary action ideas
June 13, 2025	Focus group: Innovative approaches to financing and development	Project overview; discussion of barriers; discussion of strategy ideas with development and financial professionals with experience in innovative approaches to affordable housing outside of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)
June 19, 2025	HBA	Government affairs follow-up meeting
June 26, 2025	CORE	Meeting #2 – preliminary list of strategies, evaluation framework
June 27, 2025	Implementers Work Group	Meeting #3 – reviewing finalized evaluation framework and shortened list of evaluated strategies
July 10, 2025	WCCC TAC	Evaluation framework, list of evaluated actions
July 14, 2025	WCCC	Evaluation framework, list of evaluated actions
July 15, 2025	Focus group: Urban Native community-based organizations	Project overview, discussion of barriers to housing production and access, discussion of potential actions for Metro
July 16, 2025	C4	Meeting #2 – engagement updates and evaluated list of actions
July 16, 2025	MTAC	Meeting #4 – evaluated list of actions
July 23, 2025	MPAC	Meeting #4 – evaluated list of actions
July 29, 2025	Metro Council	Work session #3 – evaluated list of actions
September 15 - October 15, 2025	Draft RHCS released; public comment period	
September 19, 2025	Implementers Work Group	Meeting #4 – review draft RHCS
October 2, 2025	WCCC TAC	Final draft RHCS
October 9, 2025	Internal Metro project team	Equity check-in #3 – Implementation and accountability, process improvements
October 13, 2025	WCCC	Final draft RHCS
October 15, 2025	C4	Final draft RHCS
October 15, 2025	MTAC	Meeting #5 – review draft RHCS
October 22, 2025	MPAC	Meeting #5 – review draft RHCS and public comment themes

November 19, 2025	MTAC	Meeting #6 – Provide recommendation to MPAC
November 19, 2025	MPAC	Meeting #6 – Provide recommendation to Council
December 2, 2025	Metro Council	Work session #4 – receive MPAC recommendation
December 18, 2025	Metro Council	Adoption of final RHCS through Resolution

Additional full engagement summaries from pre-scoping research

Permanent Supportive Housing and Supportive Housing Services Implementation Engagement Summary

Overview

Metro's Housing Department staff conducted a scan of prior local and regional engagement efforts of key reports that have been developed for the implementation of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and Supportive Housing Services (SHS). We extracted key highlights pertaining to PSH and SHS units and services, the needs of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, as well as those of other priority populations. For this analysis, we identified recurring themes in both needs and recommendations from the scan, along with discernible gaps between the identified needs and corresponding recommendations.

The purpose of this scan is to honor prior community input, minimize unnecessary stakeholder engagement, and extract valuable insights from existing feedback provided by supportive services users, priority populations, service providers, and community leaders. The analysis synthesizes findings from the scan.

Limitations

The key community reports analyzed included varying level of detail regarding their engagement processes, methods, and stakeholders. Some reports identified key themes and sets of aligned recommendations resulting from their engagement processes, while others solely provided recommendations. The analysis mirrors this diversity in the breadth of themes and recommendations.

Analysis of select themes and recommendations

1. Cultural understanding and empowerment
 - Cultural gaps and racism/discrimination are identified as significant issues affecting BIPOC individuals. For example, Native Americans face invisibility in the homeless system due to limited specialized cultural supports and a lack of knowledge of different Nations' unique processes to apply for tribal resources and benefits, impacting their ability to access housing opportunities.
 - While recommendations include community engagement and capacity building, there are gaps in explicitly addressing the need for cultural competence training for service providers to enhance understanding and eliminate discrimination.
2. Avoidance of services and fear of oversight
 - BIPOC individuals, youth, immigrants, and refugees report avoidance of services due to unclear definitions, lack of cultural understanding, racism, and fear of intrusive government oversight. Homeless families with children may avoid seeking services out of fear their children will be taken away while many immigrants and asylum-seekers needing services may do the same, fearing negative impacts to their status in the country.
 - Several reports highlight these concerns, however they generally lack targeted strategies to address reasons for avoidance, including unclear

program screening definitions, lack of cultural understanding, racism, and fear of government oversight.

3. Person-centered services

- Community members and service providers express a need for person-centered services, including coordinated approaches to housing, health supports, documentation, financial assistance, and other aspects.
- The recommendations address the need for a person-centered system, but how this will be achieved for various aspects mentioned (housing, health supports, documentation, etc.) is not detailed. More detailed strategies for each area are needed.

4. System-thinking and improvements

- There is a general desire to enhance system capacity by refining assessment tools, standards of practice, and system mapping, along with improving information and referral processes.
- Providers seek increased technical assistance for staying current with ongoing developments in the homeless care system. Additionally, there is a specific call for comprehensive system mapping of culturally-specific services and programs, emphasizing the need for alignment and coordination with parallel systems such as school districts, foster care, criminal justice, health, employment services, and basic needs services.

Metro Affordable Housing Investments Community Engagement Report

Overview

Coalition of Communities of Color (CCC) worked with Metro to conduct community engagement during the spring of 2024 to inform Metro's future housing investments. CCC is an alliance of 18 culturally specific organizations across the Portland metro area. Additionally, CCC staff have participated in the implementation of Metro's Affordable Housing Bond and Supportive Housing Services Measure.

Purpose

For this project, CCC partnered with culturally specific member organizations most impacted by housing needs and conducted three focus groups that also included members from the Welcome Home Coalition. The purpose of this engagement was to:

- Better understand community members' housing desires and challenges, particularly regarding regulated affordable housing and services.
- Hear community perspectives on potential changes to the supportive housing services measure, including relative prioritization of housing development and services, population focus, and housing strategies.
- Provide information for pathways for future civic engagement on Metro's housing work.

Findings

Community members continue to be impacted by the region's affordable housing shortage, resulting in deep social impacts. Participants identified challenges and opportunities to finding

and maintaining housing that were common to all focus groups and others specific to individual

populations. There was an emphasis that communities are not monoliths and continued,

meaningful engagement is needed to ensure that collective and individual needs and desires are met in housing development and placement, as well as supportive services. Residents support investing in supportive housing resources in the development and acquisition of affordable housing while also maintaining sufficient services.

Key learnings:

- Housing affordability remains a pressing issue for families' well-being, including economic stability, mental health, and quality of life.
- Regulated affordable housing is very difficult to access and the supply is extremely low relative to the need.
- Both services and housing are essential for addressing homelessness and housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income households.
- More affordable housing is a long-term solution with the potential to better meet the needs and desires of households who cannot afford market rent.
- Services should not be reduced, but existing and future revenue beyond what is needed to maintain current service levels is a significant opportunity to invest in affordable housing.
- A wide range of services and assistance are needed to support housing stability for people with low and extremely low incomes.
- Community members have a wide range of ideas for types of housing, design elements, and increasing affordability, including conversion of existing residential and commercial buildings.
- Many housing desires and barriers that were identified in previous years' engagements remain salient, particularly desires related to the location of new affordable housing, amenities, and design features, as well as barriers around affordability and challenges maintaining housing stability.

Summary of Technical Engagement for the Evaluation of Affordable Housing Investment Opportunities

Overview

Between February and August 2024, Metro Housing Department interviewed industry stakeholders and experts in affordable housing development, finance, operations, and policy to inform future affordable housing funding recommendations. The process, led by Metro COO Marissa Madrigal, gathered insights on current market conditions, funding constraints, and opportunities for regional investment. Participants included developers, jurisdictional staff, and experts, whose feedback highlighted challenges such as escalating operating costs. Metro also engaged with Housing Oregon, a network of 75 organizations, through their Policy Council meetings and a dedicated listening session to address these concerns. The findings aim to improve Metro's affordable housing bond implementation and guide future strategies.

Summary of Input Received by Area of Analysis

Acquisition/Conversion/Adaptive Reuse

Metro's interviews with experts on property acquisition and conversion (sometimes referred to as adaptive reuse) highlighted that these opportunities are highly situational, influenced by factors such as property condition, location, zoning, and occupancy. Robust

assessments of capital needs, resident impacts, and conversion barriers are crucial. Key cost considerations include required renovations, seismic and zoning code upgrades, and accessibility improvements. Evaluations should focus on the needs of intended populations, especially for conversions like permanent supportive housing (PSH), while managing displacement risks for existing tenants. Despite funding constraints, SMEs emphasized that acquisition and conversion can be a cost-effective way to rapidly create affordable housing, including PSH, compared to new construction.

Preservation of Regulated Affordable Housing

Housing experts emphasized the critical need for reliable preservation funding, as current state and federal resources are insufficient and inconsistent. They advocated for a dedicated funding source, possibly established through partnerships. Inadequate preservation funding and rising operating costs pose significant risks to non-profits and the regional housing system, exemplified by the 2022 collapse of the Skid Row Housing Trust in Los Angeles. To ensure housing stability, experts suggested funding tenant protections, including regional vouchers for residents in properties with expiring affordability restrictions. Oregon's recent initiatives, such as the updated Publicly Supported Housing Preservation program and Affordable Housing Preservation Strategy Framework, provide valuable models for strategic investments and legislative advocacy.

Affordable Homeownership

Metro's bond funding will support nearly 160 affordable homeownership opportunities once fully expended, and experts suggested future actions to sustain this investment. Recommendations included exploring urban growth boundary extensions and drawing inspiration from initiatives like Seattle's Black Homeowner Initiative (BHI), which aims to create 1,500 new Black homeowners by 2027 through collaborative partnerships. The city of Hillsboro's approach—combining federal funding, land donations, and racial equity considerations—was highlighted as a potential model. Experts emphasized prioritizing racial equity to address historical disparities in homeownership and wealth. They also suggested fully funding projects rather than requiring multiple funding sources and expanding options beyond community land trusts to include traditional ownership structures, down payment assistance, and interest rate reduction programs.

Gap Financing of New Rental Construction

Metro's technical engagement aimed to refine gap financing assumptions and explore administrative improvements for multifamily rental construction. Experts emphasized better alignment with state and federal funders, reducing the burden of applications and fees, and addressing coordination issues with private activity bonds (PAB). Developers highlighted rising costs and recommended adjusting subsidy caps, expanding allowable uses, and clarifying underwriting guidelines. Concerns included restrictive developer fee caps, which they suggested should be tiered based on project complexity. Streamlining funding approvals and simplifying permitting processes were also proposed to reduce delays.

Operational challenges, such as insufficient funding for resident services and rising costs like insurance and interest rates, were identified as priorities. Suggested solutions included adjusting payment standards for supportive housing, creating pooled insurance funds, and improving coordination with lenders. Long-term stability in funding sources, such as extending the Supportive Housing Services measure, was also recommended to improve project viability and loan access.

Policies, Actions, Incentives to Support Affordable Housing Development and Operations

Metro and its consultants gathered feedback on supporting affordable housing, system gaps, and innovative strategies. Experts highlighted the need for streamlining processes, improving funding access, and addressing challenges faced by smaller, culturally specific developers. Recommendations included prioritizing pre-development and land acquisition funding, possibly through grants or below-market loans, to help these organizations compete with larger developers. Simplifying permitting, supporting land-use improvements, and offering incentives like tax abatements were also suggested, though concerns about their impact on infrastructure funding were noted.

Capacity-building support for smaller non-profits and culturally responsive organizations was emphasized to ensure equity in accessing funds. Innovations such as modular construction and mass timber were recommended for their potential cost savings, albeit requiring significant upfront investment. Experts also stressed the importance of direct funding for acquiring and converting existing properties, which could be more cost-effective than new construction. Overall, enhancing support for housing operators and improving administrative processes were seen as crucial to sustaining affordable housing efforts.

Urban Growth Report Roundtable Summary of Engagement Themes and Suggested Metro Actions

Housing production and affordability was a recurring important topic to UGR roundtable members. Participants expressed the need for renewing funding sources and establishing clear goals for affordable housing development to meet regional needs at various income levels. This affordable housing production should include units for both rent and ownership. Members mentioned that housing and land are resources for generational wealth building. Other roundtable members working in housing development cited the high infrastructure costs as a substantial barrier to housing affordability and production. This led to conversation about the need for policies to address historic underproduction and advocate for infrastructure funding. Some roundtable members advocated for workforce housing to support job growth in the region. By proactively planning for workforce housing at different income levels, including addressing the specific needs for farmworker housing, cost of living may become less of a barrier for workers here today and those considering moving in the future.

Actions:

- Renew funding for affordable housing
- Consider home ownership as an important tool for generational wealth-building
- Advocate for infrastructure funding that supports housing development
- Proactively plan for workforce housing

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice topics were woven throughout the UGR roundtable discussions. Staff heard from some members that it is important to center community in our conversation and remember the people that are represented in the technical analysis. Participants suggested connecting the data related to race, ethnicity with personal stories of lived experiences. This is a way to understand how different demographic groups have different needs and unique positions in the community.

Actions:

- Present numbers and data together with the stories and lived experiences of people in the region to provide a more complete picture

Development barriers and the feasibility of future development was another recurring topic in the group. The discussions included barriers to housing, commercial and industrial development. During an activity where participants identified development barriers, the list included:

- Price of property
- Zoning and market mismatch
- Market conditions outweigh subsidies
- Property owner motivations
- Cost of infrastructure to serve site
- Parcel assembly
- Site constraints
- Environmental challenges – brownfields, floodplains
- Absentee landowner
- Land banking
- Political challenges
- Public ownership
- Easements
- Regulatory requirements – frontage, trees, stormwater, fees
- Transportation infrastructure not well maintained and difficult site access

Members seek creative solutions and collaboration between the development community, local jurisdictions, Metro, and the State of Oregon. Some roundtable members specifically called out the long timeline from the beginning of the concept planning process to the start of construction and suggested reducing the amount of detail and procedures required to complete these steps. Others mentioned that their biggest barriers are expensive infrastructure and cost prohibitive development code requirements, especially on infill sites.

Actions:

- Collaborate with local jurisdictions and the State of Oregon to decrease development time and reduce code barriers for housing development
- Provide more regional support for local concept planning efforts

Discussing the variety of regional challenges and concerns led to conversations about the **role of Metro and local governments** in finding solutions. Roundtable members highlighted primary roles of Metro as listening to local concerns, partnering with cities to find infrastructure funding, advocating at the state level, and being nimble and flexible to change. Some of the local jurisdiction representatives mentioned the increasing need for fiscal balance in their community to continue to fund their local services.

Actions:

- Advocate for the region with the State
- Advocate for meaningful statewide revenue reform

Many of the topics brought to the roundtable inspired broader conversations about the **regional vision for the future**. As challenges and solutions grew beyond land use

interventions, members felt that it was important to be proactive about change rather than reacting. Some participants felt that the reputation of our region is at risk, and that bold, optimistic visions are needed to create a different future for the region. This will involve a messy process to bring many different voices, perspectives, and priorities to the table. Many of the challenges and concerns mentioned throughout this process go beyond the urban growth management decision itself and require continued leadership and collaboration to find new solutions and commitment to see them through.

Actions:

- Proactively plan for the region's future through regional collaboration and leadership
- Engage roundtable members and the jurisdictions and organizations they represent on the next steps to update to the regional future vision/growth concept

The need for **infrastructure funding** came up frequently in roundtable discussions. It was mentioned as a necessary solution in discussions of housing production and affordability, development barriers and the role of Metro and local governments. This is an area where many roundtable participants advocated for regional partnership in advocating for infrastructure funding at the State and with the Federal government.