

**Metro Council President's Work Group on Future SHS Implementation**April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025 | Metro Regional Center Council Chamber | Zoom

Metro Council President Peterson called the work group to order at 4:04 p.m.

**Welcome and Introductions**

Metro Council President Peterson thanked everyone for their continued participation in the work group and the willingness of regional partners to engage in productive discussions and identify shared priorities. She shared optimism about the progress being made and noted that the group's overarching task was to figure out how to come together to build a healthy regional system. President Peterson referenced the exercise from the previous meeting as a launching point for the discussion and reminded the room that the purpose of the Work Group was to lay a foundation for shared priorities and action around goals and KPIs. She expressed gratitude toward the service providers in the room and recognized the authority of the elected and appointed independent auditors to conduct assessments of the system.

President Peterson invited Liam Frost, Deputy Housing Director, Metro, to share information about the recent audits.

Frost emphasized the importance of independent audits for accountability and provided an overview of the various audits. He noted that audits focused on Supportive Housing Services are not necessarily the same as an audit of the homeless response systems that SHS helps to fund. Frost highlighted the recently launched Metro-sponsored SHS system evaluation led by Dr. Marisa Zapata with PSU's Homelessness Research and Action Collaborative (HRAC). Frost shared that Metro staff have been coordinating with staff at the counties to generate ideas for further evaluations.

President Peterson introduced the members of Drawbridge to facilitate the conversation.

**Facilitated Discussion: Regional Systems Review/Audit**

Facilitators asked regional partners in the room to share which focus areas they would like the effort to explore and address.

Mercedes Elizalde advised against further audits and recommended using existing audits to inform decisions.

Rachel Duke: What are the systems that people are coming from and why are they not working? How many people are homeless as a result of rent prices? How can we keep new people from entering the system?

Sahaan McKelvey: Where are the jurisdictions lacking in alignment? He expressed that the current situation is a result of the inability to work cohesive manner toward accomplishing the same goals.

Chair Kathryn Harrington emphasized the use of “system review” as a descriptor rather than “audit”. How to reduce the time for people waiting? How are people graduating from these services? How to reduce the spread of funds?

Commissioner Ben West: What is already working well? Must include four jurisdictions, i.e. the three counties and Metro. How to bring the public along with the group? Transparency about how failures are being fixed.

Mayor Joe Buck: Building trust in the program. Thinking about how children are being served by the system.

Commissioner Shannon Singleton: What do we already know? How are we using that information to inform? It is not a system; it is a patchwork of programs that has been built over time based on funding source. A real system would not be limited to SHS but include other funding flows.

Andy Mendenhall: There is value in aligning and ensuring and exploring alignment around contracting and procurement standards. Does contracting reflect the work and how it is done? Regarding data use: assessment around the nature of data utilization

Mayor Tim Rosener: Getting partners involved in an audit is important. On the financial side, comparing the greater Portland area to other regions and their metrics.

Liam Frost thanked Angela Martin of Here Together for coordinating the opportunity for work group members to hear more about the Housing Strategic Initiatives (HSI) sponsored report, “The Role of Stabilization Programming in Successful Transitions from Homelessness.”

Frost shared that the Tri-County Planning Body (TCPB) voted to adopt and fund the regional implementation strategy for healthcare and homeless services integration, and had identified three key strategies:

- 1) A regional plan for medically enhanced housing and shelter models
- 2) A regional cross-system care coordination system
- 3) A regional cross-system data sharing infrastructure

### **Facilitated Discussion: Homeless Strategic Initiatives (HSI) Insights**

Commissioner Singleton: There are other places outside of SHS that feed KPIs. The counties should not be held accountable for things beyond their control.

Elizalde: Comprehensive healthcare through co-enrollment is a must; treatment alone is too small. Accessing other treatment modalities through primary care. SHS is not obligated to fund programs that have other funding sources. Co-enrollment and HSI efforts are the housing and health integration plan.

Mendenhall amplified Elizalde’s and Singleton’s comments. There is a need to address the broader platform of healthcare delivery by 1) setting a goal for the percentage of people leaving residential treatment facilities and 2) setting a goal for people leaving higher acuity physical healthcare environments to places that can better suit their needs.

Andrew Rowe: The remedy to the fragmented and disjointed healthcare system is case management and hands-on coordination of people.

## **Revisiting the Exercise**

Commissioner West: What is our roadmap? Through brainstorming exercises the group can identify key themes, goals, and KPIs. The inspiration for these activities is how the partners can learn from each other to promote healthy regionalism.

Singleton shared the proposal to start making reforms where needed now, advised by the SHS Oversight Committee. Singleton recommended that jurisdictional partners adjust and make changes to their local implementation plans based on what they are seeing locally; then, counties come back to Metro and give updates as changes are made to the plans.

West: Returned to the concept of a “system” and referenced Clackamas County’s focus on a recovery-oriented system of care. What does a care continuum and recovery look like for street level homelessness all the way to stability, productiveness, and community? West also emphasized improving hospice care and elderly care services within homeless and at-risk populations.

## **Small Group Conversations: Regional Goals and KPIs**

Drawbridge facilitators provided a framework for the small group discussions. They requested each breakout group identify and list a few important regional goals and KPIs to report back to the main group. The activity started shortly before 5:00 p.m.

At 5:30 p.m. the Work Group reconvened to share the regional goals and KPIs identified during the activity.

### **Group I (Spokesperson: Andy Mendenhall)**

**Goal:** Amplify eviction prevention as a strategy

**KPI:** Reduced evictions for rental non-payment

**Goal:** Housing build strategy to meet the need for physical space and services

**KPI:** Clear reporting on existing inventory and utilization of that inventory

**Goal:** Care and service transition planning and accountability

**KPI:** Tracking number of people discharged to homelessness

**Goal:** Follow Commissioner Singleton’s recommendations regarding KPIs

**KPI:** Reduction in duration of homelessness, better measurement of engagement with services that prevent returns to homelessness

### **Group II (Spokesperson: Councilor Christine Lewis)**

**Goal:** Services and strategies center lived experiences of people in or at risk of homelessness

**KPI:** Track the specific cause and entry point for every individual experiencing homelessness

**Goal:** Community resources are efficient and reduces strains on related systems  
**KPI:** Number of nights spent in various types of shelter before temporary or permanent housing placement

**Group III** (Spokesperson: Sahaan McKelvey)

**Goal:** Agency, autonomy, and financial means/support to maintain housing and quality of life  
**KPI:** Qualitative data, measuring increases in economic sovereignty

**Goal:** Equal inflow and outflow across shelters, streets, etc.; not overfunding one component at the expense of others

**KPI:** 100% of participants who enter housing system exit with a permanent housing solution

**Goal:** Enhancing system integration  
**KPI:** Regional system efficiency score via surveys

**Goal:** Build public trust through transparency and access to information  
**KPI:** Frequency of publicly shared reports and reporting dashboards

McKelvey additionally highlighted Commissioner Singleton's reform proposal.

**Group IV** (Spokesperson: Commissioner Ben West)

**Goal:** SHS interventions lead to reduction in the amount of time people are unhoused  
**KPI:** Length of time between contact with coordinated access and housing assistance

**Goal:** Co-enrollment  
**KPI:** Collecting data on which services and resources are requested and how often people are connected to those services and resources

**Group V** (Spokesperson: Andrew Rowe)

**Goal:** Map the current state of the system and sub-systems in the care continuum  
**KPI:** Evaluate the disparities and measure resources, populations of different components

**Goal:** Developing a regional integrated information system  
**KPI:** Tracking location data using technology

**Goal:** Integrating smaller programs into the system  
**KPI:** Measuring number of transitions between programs and services

**Goal:** Resource allocation in alignment with the needs of each county  
**KPI:** Reporting dashboards with financial data

Drawbridge facilitators provided a summary of the comments and general themes from the discussion. Members of the work group shared additional comments.

Rosener: KPIs need to align with federal programs in order to secure funding.

Singleton: Identify opportunities to utilize local funding. Map other systems that lead to homelessness and re-align housing services with health services.

Elizalde: Ease of use and response time is important.

Duke: We can review and rethink established rules that are potential obstacles.

### **Closing Remarks**

Metro Council President Peterson provided a few reflections from the meeting and noted that members generally favored the language and approach of a systems/gaps analysis over a performance or financial audit.

Councilor Lewis offered that “audit” has strength in terms of effectiveness at a program level as a counterpoint.

President Peterson reminded the group that auditors would be reporting back soon and thanked everyone for their participation.

The meeting concluded at 5:59 p.m.