

LHCB Community Input Session- Advanced Planning Working Group on Shelter and Housing

Tuesday July 14th

Del Seymour:

This meeting is meant to get community input and gain information about how to permanently house our people. So we can look back on this day, maybe a year from now and say, this was the start of very aggressive plan for people to do something as basic as putting a permanent roof over their heads. Can do so many great things here in Silicon Valley and that should include putting a roof over people's heads.

Abigail Stewart Khan: [Department Presentation](#)

Abigail Stewart Khan:

I'm the interim director of the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing. Along with Del are members of the Advanced Planning Working Group on Shelter and Housing. Dedria Black will also be presenting today but will leave majority of the time to get community feedback. With the COVID pandemic is never clearer that housing is healthcare and need all our community stakeholders and partners involved. And need everyone's voices in the conversation.

Some background, Mayor has created several advanced planning workgroups. They are all co-chaired by somebody in the city and a member of the board of supervisors. It is co-chaired by Supervisor Walton and facilitated by the controller's office.

The group is set on identifying cost effective strategies to increase housing opportunities so that we're exiting people from their homelessness. Tasked to identify increased congregate shelter capacity, so that there's more places for people to go from the streets safely and to determine, how COVID has impacted the conditions on the street.

Scope of the working group is clear: Ensure the COVID response system is demobilized such that nobody exists the system to the street or unsheltered homelessness. So nobody exits the system to the street. It has been codified by Supervisor Walton in a resolution before the Board of Supervisors.

Dedria Black:

So the community input session, the purpose is to hear the perspective and input of people with lived experience for homelessness, homeless service providers and the public and will also be a provider input session.

With COVID were required to quickly pivot and change the shelter system. Pre-COVID shelter city capacity was close to 1,900. But had to place people in hotels and thin the shelters.

Currently we have over 2000 hotel rooms that have been brought online for the emergency shelter.

Using DPH guidance we are trying to reach the most vulnerable. When looking at housing pre-COVID. We had 9,700 houses slots. We have opened two safe sleeping sites and three safe sleep and villages as part of our complete COVID response. We are trying to increase our capacity and looking for community input on the matter.

Del Seymour:

Can you explain exactly what you mean by a housing slot?

Dedria Black:

They are permanent housing and rapid rehousing slots as well.

Del Seymour:

There are no shelters in these slots or navigate or programs, is that correct?

Dedria Black:

Yes, that is correct.

Abigail Stewart Khan:

Reality is that the city is facing a large budget shortfall and a hard time for business and industry within the city. The last two LHCB meetings, HSH has brought its priorities about the budget, and explained the Mayor's budget instructions. This slide shows proposed budgets and cuts that every department was required to do and present to the Mayor's Office. I reminder, no cuts have been made to date. Budget will go to the Board of Supervisors in either July or August.

There is a quick timeline for the input and will be combined with input sessions from others and will be presented to the working group for the advanced planning working group for the consideration to think beyond our organizational and traditional approaches. Want input that is creative and bold and to have a relentless optimism. Underlying the importance of equity and holding racial and LGBTQ plus equity is central in our system. Members of the HSH executive team as well as City Controllers are a part of the facilitation of the process.

Del Seymour:

This is the time where we would like to receive community feedback.

Chris Block:

Director of the Chronic Homelessness Initiative at Tipping Point. Speaking from the role of a philanthropic investment and the role we would like to play in partnership. Important to know their investment is leveraging a larger and comprehensive effort to solve the problem. And to look across the state for best practices especially Los Angeles and Alameda County. We did some very initial analysis to start decisions with our stakeholders about what would look like for everyone to have exits post-COVID.

Looked at 1800 approximately people in SIP hotels right now. If you look at the existing capacity both shelter capacity, permanent supportive housing turnover, public housing, permanent supportive housing, that's coming online prior to January 1st of 2021, it looks like we can anticipate about 1200 units or 1200 slots or placements, and a deficit.

If we look at making sure that no one who is currently of the streets due to COVID was not returned that is a deficit of 600 or one third of the total amount of people that we've been able to get inside as a result of the COVID crisis. The Tipping Point accelerator fund will offer 18 to 20 million in August. Can use money to be nimble and get units online quickly. With help of city and state and using accelerator fund, hoping to create 300 new units-not exact but 300 units that had not existed before.

Additionally, had a flexible spending pool with the City had planned to house 200 people by the end of the year. Good news is that we have partnerships in place with City and Brilliant Corners, but also seeing that there will be a 600-slot deficit. Believe that working with partners can fill half of that deficit. Possibility to expand the flex spending pool to service more people. We estimate that's about \$10 million.

Flo Kelly:

I volunteer with the Coalition on Homelessness. Wanted to know what are the plans now? How long will people be able to stay in their hotels? What access is there going to be to a shelter once people are coming out of their hotels, who can refer people.... what's how is the access going to be administered? Third, we'd like to really recommend that folks that do not have tent should be taken to the shelters and how it is determined whether someone is vulnerable whether they are on the street's vs in a tent?

Del Seymour:

Maybe we can ask her one question, because again, we keep the focus of this, of moving forward. We know there are a lot of glitches going on right now in our system and the way we're taking people off the streets.

Abigail Stewart Khan:

Those are great questions. I think the most, the question of yours that is most focused on advanced planning to Dell's point is how long will people be able to stay in hotels? There is no clear answer and understand that causes a lot of anxiety. The entire City is engaged in that conversation and the winding down of SIP hotels. Many of the hotels will want to reopen and

running those hotels, is very expensive and highly reimbursed by FEMA. And we don't know when FEMA money will go away and has a lot to do about how long they will remain available. Question is so now what do we do? How do we make sustainable model and use the resources we have?

Chris from Tipping Pit just spoke of a scattered site model and now in the current real estate market would be the time to capitalize on all the buildings for sale. Hotels were a temporary solution to an emergency and need community help about making those gains sustainable.

Martha B:

Am an advocate who works closely with the Coalition on Homelessness but today am speaking on my own opinions. There is a letter from Chris Herring that some on the board have received and which I think is very relative. Depending on the time, I may read into the record. I really believe in the idea of democracy and full community membership when it comes to housing. Am afraid we are forming a two-tier system when it comes to 30-day tenancy rights, the right to not be evicted except by an unlawful detainer or right to come and go from their homes. And then there are people living in institutional physical and governments environments, and they don't have the same rights and freedoms.

And it seems like the city needs to move toward making settings as non-institutional as possible. And toward letting everybody be a tenant. There needs to be a consistent and extensive appeals policy like section 8 tenants or public benefits. If there is not a system to protect due process, with independent adjudicators...it is essential to the idea that ordered Liberty includes everybody, including poor people who don't have apartments or houses. Need to think about governance and democracy of governance.

The other thing is just to avoid or congregate settings. I mean, we know congregate settings are more dangerous than either hotels or streets, streets sleeping. And if the wellbeing of unhoused people is the primary goal, then the realization that other settings are safer. Early in the Crisis, HSH and Supervisor Haney determined that shelters were high risk for COVID infection and to move people to SIP hotels. Confused since now, spread is now greater than in March and know more about the spread and that shelters are higher risk. I will summarize his letter.

Why opening congregate shelters rather than hotels are safe, sleep, safe, sleep sites. What are your current projections and timeline for expansion? What about expanding outdoor safe sleep sites? What are your plans? If we have another MSC South size outbreak for shelters, do you have a plan to change course to shut down shelters again, to get folks into hotels or outdoors, safe sleep sites, and then moving forward concerned about equitable access and health risks. What is current and planned method? Will it be only people with tents that go to offer shelter? Shouldn't it instead be those it's on this is very much along the lines flow mentioned. Shouldn't

it be maybe those least susceptible to COVID like underage of 40 or 30 who get priority to shelter since infection risk is higher inside. Reading from Chris's letter.

Chris, letter quoted again. I'm concerned about how congregate shelter may be used to clear encampments. Are you able to assure that no one will be threatened with citation or move along order if they do not accept a congregate shelter option?

Terrace Faulty:

I'm a clinical case manager. I'm an ICM provider. I would like to provide some perspective as an ICM providers and working with the most vulnerable. To speak to the barriers that I have experienced trying to get clients housed since it is a difficult one.

As an ICM I assist clients through all the systems that they access, medical housing, behavioral health, we provide therapy, we do skill building. We link them with services, dental, PCP, like everything. In order to become an ICM client must go through an assessment by the city and considered highest risk and highest need by the City. Anyone who is in ICM are high risk and needs but find me having to do the same assessment over and over to get clients into housing. ICM have no access to place people into housing. And we have ourselves, we have to go through coordinated entry or medical systems and it takes so much longer than if we just had our own access to place people.

Example, we have access to the One System, and have client documents ready to get someone an assessment with CE and have them complete it and will even have an ICM client denied? Later we must complete a clinical evaluation form and then they tend to be prioritized? And the form is the same as the documentation application? The process takes months and months. And had a client die while he was waiting.

Feel that ICM workers work so closely with most vulnerable, have access to their documentation but not utilized in housing them. Would love to become frontline workers in housing them and not having people get lost in the shuffle. Too often people who do get placed, are not placed in the proper units. Had several clients in SIP hotels that am not longer able to communicate with and support.

I would just love for us to be more a part of this process of like architecting these systems because we really work very closely with people and we could streamline tremendously if we were utilized and that doesn't throw more work on us. Thank you

Sarah Short:

Community Housing Partnership. Am curious about the conversation about acquiring the hotels and converting them to PSH? I would highly recommend that process. My question again is where do people go after hotels? Think that we will need more hotel rooms and curious why we would shut down the SIP hotel program? I think the public should know more about the process? That leads to the opening and reopening of congregate shelters. We should be focusing on getting people into individual rooms and not congregate shelter.

Even the CDC points out that encampments should not be broken up. And people should be placed in PSH from encampments or placed in PSH after the SIP Hotels close.

I wanted to remind people who may not be aware that there are plenty of vacancies and numbers of these permanent supportive housing. I can speak for CHP that will have issues filling our vacancies and continually have units available. There is a mismatch since we have rooms available asking questions about where people are going after the SIP hotels close. I would strongly suggest looking at current vacancies and increasing access to PSH in ways that are equitable.

John Stiefel:

I'm a community development advocate here in San Francisco. Believe that we have a huge opportunity. I want to focus more on the discussion question around unsheltered homelessness and how to create better systems and spaces for long term permanent housing. There will be an enormous amount of people living unsheltered in San Francisco. There is an opportunity for us to provide a narrative from the city around unsheltered San Franciscans. We are dealing with a humanitarian crisis that started before COVID and been exacerbated with COVID. Seeing this as an opportunity to educate the community about the crisis.

As a community, have an obligation to most vulnerable. Ideally a two-tier approach. Working with people to achieve permanent housing options and how to provide better services to those who are unsheltered? I think this is an opportunity for the city to continue to invest, in better water, sanitation, hygiene, public health infrastructure. It's a high return on investment from a public health and a community resilience perspective. Biggest soft cost that the city has is to not criminalize people on the streets. There is the chance for the city to provide better services and create a healthy narrative. That our most vulnerable are not the problem but the ones being affected by societal large problems.

Colleen Rebecca:

I am Director of Community Organizing and Policy and Planning in DC and wanted to speak on diversity and equity. We all know that COVID is disproportionately affecting black and Brown communities in San Francisco, as well as nationwide and is disproportionately affecting the lowest income people in the city. These are communities with existing health disparities and are less likely to survive, illness and disease because of institutionalized racism because of systems that have cut them off.

Scarcity Model means that we are forced to make choices and communities of color continue to get the most basic level of services and literally ordered to shelter on the streets during a global pandemic. I don't think that we can couch our racial equity discussion in how we decide about a vastly inadequate number of people to serve and try to pick and choose. That is not equity since equity means growing. The pot equity is, you know, making strides to serve this population that's been disproportionately affected and to provide them with the basics and

providing more resources. We are in extraordinary times and have the chance to push back on racist policies.

In order to push back on racist policies during these extraordinary times, need to set our values first and then let the policies follow. We can achieve equity from a scarcity model but can't do if we are only trying to spend the least amount of money and need to be honest about that.

Del Seymour:

Wanted to clarify that the hotel acquisition or room programs has not been half-hearted. HSH has been working everyday to address and remove barriers from training staff to adding additional hotels.

My suggestion is the increased public and private collaboration to transfer people from hotels to PSH. To do this need to bring in real estate professionals. People who know the craft of real estate.

Talking to Air BnB yesterday about how units have been taken offline since no one was using them and how it could be an opportunity. Need professionals to reach those landlords and real estate companies. Using them to them convince people to house those who have been homeless. And frankly an easier sell when those people have been stable in SIP for two months.

In 1968 we were dispatched to Washington DC for the riot after dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated and 15% of Washington DC, low income neighborhoods burned to the ground. So we stayed in Washington stayed close to real estate people to get those people rehoused rapidly rehoused in existing vacancies.

Use private industries, some of the tech companies bring some of their professionals in, and they're real estate professionals and use them to aggressively acquire real estate.

Jennifer Friedenbach:

We need to do a better job at having these discussions where the people are at. People on the streets do not have access to these meetings and there lots of barriers to participation generally for unhoused people. Should think about alternatives about how to bring people into the conversation where they are at.

The post COVID hotel question needs a multiple prong approach and take advantage of the current real estate market. Purchasing hotels and buildings and doing rental subsidies in the private market. Need to be aggressive and use the Prop C 326 million sitting there and up to the controller's office to release the money.

There are so many concerns about congregate shelters and so many variables like ventilation systems, windows, shared bathrooms and how to create a cohort safely. And how are people supposed to sleep safely on a mat? Will there be barriers in sleeping areas? These safety concerns include the staff as well.

Am concerned that so much focused has been placed on tents. That from a public health perspective people without tents should be prioritized but realistically how protected are those in a tent from COVID?

There needs to be a process where input and knowledge from community organizations is used for people to access services in a rapid manner. For systems like CE to move more quickly there needs to be more equity built into the system.

Big Picture there is a lot of opportunity here like Abigail mentioned before, the access to the community resources and the chance to push things forward.

Del Seymour:

No you know the number of vacancies in permanent supportive housing.

Abigail Stewart Khan:

You have me, I'm kind of caught a little bit unprepared on in terms of the total numbers. We had significant improvement in this area in December when we all wrote in the same direction and had these sort of housing conferences and housed 10, 20, 30 people a day. We need to get to that pace and sustain it for the next two years. Going to need to partner with our coordinated entry providers to solidify the partnership. Salvador and our housing subsidies team has been working hard on this.

Abigail Stewart Khan:

Will need all your support as advocates as an opportunity to end homelessness and get out the positive narrative. Need to invest in every part of the system from problem solving to PSH. We need to invest in each of those aspects with these added resources. To lift the idea that equity is about growing the pot of resources.

Del Seymour:

Would love to sit down with Jennifer about expanding the dialogue to include more voices into the conversation.

Abigail Stewart Khan:

Thank you Del for your support and reminder that things will move quickly and we need the community's input in this process.

Del Seymour:

Thank you for attending