May 2014 Steering Committee Meeting

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AGENDA

I. Call to Order – Celene Meyer
   a) Roll Call

II. CoC Highlight: – Eva Thibaudeau

III. Technical Assistance Phase III – Liz Drapa/Irene Pijuan

IV. Approval of Minutes – Tory Gunsolley
    a) April 10, 2014 CoC Steering Committee Meeting

V. Lead Agency Report – Eva Thibaudeau

VI. HMIS Administrator Report – Eva Thibaudeau

VII. Old Business
    a) Agency Performance Report – Eva Thibaudeau
    b) 2014 Action Plan – Eva Thibaudeau

VIII. New Business
    a) Funders Together To End Homelessness Goals – Celene Meyer
    b) Communication/Change Management Plan– Eva Thibaudeau

IX. Public Comments

x. Adjournment
1. Create a new service delivery model that allows services to be provided in-home or in close proximity to housing throughout the Houston, Harris County and Fort Bend County region by December 2013.

2. Create 2500 Permanent Supportive Housing Units targeted to the chronically homeless and frequent users of services by December 2015.

3. Rebalance the homeless response system based on need (as determined by data analysis) primarily through the reallocation and alignment of funding resources by December 2015.

4. Create and implement a coordinated assessment and triage system to connect people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness to the most appropriate housing model based on the agreed upon definitions and target criteria by 2014.

5. Implement a Change Management Process to minimize the change impacts and avoid distractions.
Council Focuses on Support for Local Communities

Last week, members of the Cabinet and leaders from 19 Federal agencies, who together make up the Interagency Council on Homelessness, met to take action on Federal efforts to support and advance progress on ending homelessness in local communities.

"One of the areas where I really want to make sure we’re stepping up is to deepen our partnership with mayors around the country," said HUD Secretary and USICH Council Chair Shaun Donovan. "We’ve seen that where mayors and local government are engaged we’re making remarkable progress."

Community leaders from Houston and Phoenix were invited to discuss the impacts that Federal partnerships have had on local efforts to end homelessness. Houston and Phoenix represent two of the growing number of communities around the country that are making significant progress toward reaching the goals of Opening Doors. These communities are demonstrating that—by engaging in strong local and Federal partnerships and taking strategic actions to maximize Federal, State, and local resources, increase evidence-based housing and services models like permanent supportive housing, and focus on outcomes—solving homelessness is possible and within reach.

“We are really showing, through the course of our work, that homelessness is not an intractable problem," said USICH Executive Director Laura Zeilinger. "It’s actually a problem we’re solving."

Mandy Chapman Semple, Special Assistant for Homeless Initiatives to Mayor Annise Parker of Houston, told the Council that Houston is expecting to end homelessness among Veterans in 2014, one year ahead of the national goal. “We believe by the end of 2014, Houston will have achieved a steady state system, meaning that no Veteran has to be homeless,” said Chapman Semple. “We’ve built a system that can house those individuals within a 30-day period with a strong retention in their permanent housing.”

The City of Houston has also made significant progress to end chronic homelessness, connecting 1,402 individuals with permanent supportive housing since 2012. In the same time, Houston has reduced unsheltered homelessness by 50 percent in the downtown area. Houston has made stable housing the foundation of the response to homelessness and has aligned their efforts with the goals and objectives of Opening Doors.

In the expert brief she provided to the Council, Chapman Semple notes that "Health care, mental health treatment, substance abuse, employment, education and economic growth are rarely optimized without adequate housing. However, responses across these sectors often do not recognize their inter-dependence. Houston’s success is the
result of understanding the connections between these systems and creating a framework to define when systems can operate in parallel and when they must intersect and interweave.

Amy Schwabenlender, Vice President, Community Impact of Valley of the Sun United Way in Phoenix/Maricopa County, Arizona shared similarly impressive results with the Council. Phoenix, where Mayor Greg Stanton recently announced an end to chronic homelessness among Veterans, is on track to end homelessness among all Veterans in 2015.

“In Phoenix and Maricopa County, we are very excited by our progress,” said Schwabenlender. “We want to help achieve the goals of the Federal plan, Opening Doors.”

Schwabenlender examined ways in which increased Federal and community partnership could accelerate progress, highlighting the benefit of more guidance on best practices to connect individuals who have experienced homelessness with workforce opportunities.

“Many of [the individuals who have been connected to stable housing in Phoenix] are now ready to go back to work,” said Schwabenlender. “We’re looking for best practices that would teach our community how to work with those individuals and help them be matched with the employment that is best suited for them.”

Schwabenlender also examined the role of Public Housing Authorities and the education system in local efforts to end homelessness, as well as the opportunities created by the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid expansion in Arizona.

Secretary Donovan, Labor Secretary Thomas Perez, Education Secretary Arne Duncan, and Laura Zeilinger led discussions focused on increasing employment strategies, strengthening connections between local educational systems and homelessness crisis response systems, and ensuring the opportunities created by the Affordable Care Act can be realized in local communities.

Ending homelessness in communities requires both strategic local policy changes as well as new resources. At a time when difficult budget choices are being made, the Obama Administration continues to invest in what is working for communities: evidence-based solutions like Housing First, permanent supportive housing, and rapid re-housing.

“We put out a budget under this President that makes a very powerful statement that we’re going to put our money where our mouth is,” said Secretary Donovan, noting the proposed 12 percent increase to homelessness assistance funding over fiscal year 2014.

President Obama's 2015 Budget proposal includes historic new investment to prevent and homelessness, including the recourse necessary to end homelessness among Veterans in 2015 and chronic homelessness in 2016 and sustain the progress made on ending homelessness among families, youth, and children.
Mandy Chapman Semple was appointed the first Special Assistant to the Mayor for Homeless Initiatives in Houston by Mayor Annise Parker in 2013. Mandy is responsible for designing and supporting the implementation of the region’s plan to end homelessness in partnership with the Continuum of Care. She supports the Mayor’s Leadership Team to monitor progress on ending chronic homelessness, co-leads the Housing Houston’s Heroes initiative to end veteran homelessness, and serves as a liaison to the business community, constituents, City Council, and other systems of care on issues related to homelessness. Mandy also leads interagency collaboration efforts, particularly related to the development of rapid rehousing strategies, supportive housing and alignment of supportive service resources.

Mandy holds a Master of Science degree in Public Health from Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine and a Bachelor of Science degree in Microbiology from Kansas State University. Prior to her appointment at the City of Houston, Mandy was a Senior Program Manager at CSH in the national Consulting and Training Division providing HUD technical assistance and other consulting services throughout Texas. She moved to Houston in 2010 from Kansas, where she was Executive Director of the Manhattan Emergency Shelter, Inc. During her tenure, she transformed the single shelter system into a comprehensive homeless response system that included diversion, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing as well as served as an active member of the Kansas Balance of State Continuum of Care.
Houston: Connecting Mainstreams Systems to a Housing First Homeless Response Strategy

Starting in 2011, Houston underwent a major shift in leadership across multiple entities including City and County Government, Housing Authorities, the Coalition for the Homeless, and the philanthropic community. In addition, Houston was named a Priority Community and designated as one of the first OneCPD communities. This convergence helped support innovation and drive transformative initiatives focused on solving the challenging social issue of homelessness.

In 2012, HUD engaged CSH, a partnership that was instrumental in establishing the foundation for transformation. With the infusion of technical experts, community leaders simultaneously focused on Continuum of Care (CoC) strategic planning and governance, developing a coordinated assessment and placement system, completing a “right-sizing” analysis and system flow map, defining the financial model and implementation plan for permanent supportive housing (PSH), completing HMIS data-quality evaluation, and transitional housing conversion analysis. These efforts led to establishing performance measurements and more data-driven decision making.

At the core of Houston’s Continuum of Care is the CoC Steering Committee, a unified funding and decision making body created in 2012 that is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the community’s strategic plan. Additionally, CSH facilitated an in-depth and structured planning process (Charrette). The Charrette included participation from over 400 stakeholders and 36 local and national experts, resulting in enhancements to the local strategic plan. With a renewed community consensus and a new leadership structure in alignment with the federal goals in Opening Doors, the CoC defined an initial action plan and set in motion major system changes to support a housing-centric model.

Stable housing is the foundation of Houston’s response. Healthcare, mental health treatment, substance abuse, employment, education and economic growth are rarely optimized without adequate housing. However, responses across these sectors often do not recognize their interdependence. Houston’s success is the result of understanding the connections between these systems and creating a framework to define when systems can operate in parallel and when they must intersect and interweave.

Veterans and CoC – The CoC and VA have learned how to function as a single system over the last two years, connecting more than 2,226 homeless veteran households to stable housing. Achieving our collective goal of ending homelessness among veterans is within reach. We are slated to announce that we have achieved the goal in 2014. This will be a major triumph for our local VA medical center and a shining example of how no single system, even when it has all the resources, can achieve success without intimate partnership. A lingering broad policy question remains:

• How can this partnership evolve to sustainably prevent veteran homelessness post-2015?

PSH and Medicaid – Endeavoring to create 2,500 additional units of PSH in just three years has forced Houston to pursue a more permanent and sustainable funding source for supportive services. Through the use of an 1115 Medicaid Waiver, Houston is driving a new integrated care service delivery model. Placing Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) as the primary provider of supportive services in PSH, Houston is embracing the “housing is healthcare” concept and using medical health homes to maximize use of mainstream resources. This strategy has forged new partnerships with the local hospital district,
public health departments, primary and behavioral health care providers, and homelessness service agencies. Even as Texas refuses to expand Medicaid, this integrated care approach offers a viable model for healthcare expansion for this cohort and begs the question:

- For states not choosing to expand Medicaid coverage, what Federal funding options are available/possible to pay for supportive housing services?

**PSH and Employment** – Houston recently explored connections with employment services and determined that supported employment was the most viable model for meaningful workforce connection for people with significant disabling conditions and long histories of homelessness. The SAMHSA model of Supported Employment works from the same premise as Housing First: individuals are connected to jobs first and supportive services are available to help maintain employment. Unfortunately, no mainstream employment services agencies funded by the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) are offering supported employment programs in Houston, and those that offer the Ticket to Work Program are targeting lower risk clients rather than those experiencing or exiting homelessness. Based on this experience, Houston has generated three policy questions:

- Can the WIB or a revamped Ticket to Work Program be encouraged to fund supported employment?
- Can supported employment be classified as an on-the-job training program?
- Are mainstream employment services agencies equipped to offer supported employment or should it be interwoven into the PSH service package? If so, how do we connect WIB funding?

**Expanding Rapid Rehousing (RRH)** – Houston has identified nearly $6 million in public resources to repurpose for expansion of RRH. Another $5-$10 million will be sought from private investors. This will increase substantially the number of homeless families rapidly returning to permanent housing. Unfortunately, this is not enough. Our future success is predicated on access to quality affordable housing, income enhancement programs, and mainstream services like affordable healthcare and education. The CoC is exploring how to achieve broad and meaningful connections to these systems to enhance housing stabilization. These questions arise:

- How can the CoC and employment services connect individuals to jobs within a RRH timeline?
- How can the CoC and HUD promote access to quality affordable 30 percent AMI housing units?
- How can the CoC and PHAs work to transform the use of housing choice vouchers as a RRH tool?
- How can the CoC and Department of Education work with schools to enhance stabilization services?

**Transitional Housing (TH) and Treatment** – The right-sizing analysis revealed nearly 40 percent of Houston’s homeless housing stock was TH beds, and only 60 percent of clients were exiting to permanent housing, making it the most costly positive exit in our system. Conversions to either RRH or PSH are slated for 2014 – 2015. This shift has brought to light critical issues. In Houston, substance abuse treatment is only available via these TH programs. The CoC is grappling now with how to retain both substance abuse treatment services independent of CoC funded housing, raising these challenges:

- Can more substance abuse funding be dedicated for homeless and formerly homeless individuals?
- Could HUD reframe eligibility policies and performance metrics for transitional housing to provide flexibility to deliver these services to those in PSH and RRH? If you must experience homelessness to receive substance abuse services, then a Housing First system cannot be achieved.
Steering Committee Meeting

April 10, 2014

Minutes

Present: Melissa Carroll (Pasadena ESG), Thao Costis (SEARCH Homeless Services- Homeless Services Rep), Tory Gunsolley (Houston Housing Authority), Donna Herron (Consumer Rep), Clay Kibler (Consumer Rep), Marilyn Kindell (Fort Bend County ESG), Rebecca Landes (Northwest Assistance Ministries - Provider Rep), Daphne Lemelle (Harris County Community Services Dept), Celene Meyer (Episcopal Health Foundation- Private Funder Rep), Eva Thibaudeau (Lead Agency Staff)

Absent: Barbara Dawson (MHMRA rep), Tom McCasland (Harris County Housing Authority), Dr. Laura Marsh (VA), Neal Rackleff (COH), Stephen Williams (CFTH Rep - Houston Dept of Health and Human Services)

The meeting of the Continuum of Care (CoC) Steering Committee was held on April 10, 2014 at the Neighborhood Resource Center, 815 Crosby St., pursuant to proper notification of all Steering Committee members.

Welcome and Introductions
Chair Tory Gunsolley called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. Secretary Celene Meyer conducted roll call. Gunsolley noted that there was a quorum.

CoC Progress Highlight – Presented by Eva Thibaudeau
- Thibaudeau shared an announcement from HUD – all of the Houston/Harris County CoC Tier 1 renewal projects will be renewed. The CoC should hear later in the year about New and Tier 2 projects.
- Thibaudeau also shared two articles recently in the Houston Chronicle – one regarding Mayor Annise Parker’s comments on the downtown unsheltered homeless population, the second regarding the Harris County Housing Authority.

Approval of Minutes
Minutes from March 13, 2014 were presented. Gunsolley called for a motion to approve the minutes. Kibler motioned, Costis seconded. The motion carried and the minutes were approved.
Lead Agency Report – Presented by Eva Thibaudeau

- Leadership from the Housing Houston's Heroes workgroup attended the 25 Cities Rapid Results meeting on March 27 & 28 regarding ongoing planning to end veteran homelessness.
- Houston is one of two cities in the U.S. to receive HUD Technical Assistance regarding LGBTQ youth homelessness prevention. There will be an all-day kickoff of this initiative on April 17.
- Performance dashboards have been presented to all CoC programs. Thibaudeau and Takeshia Richardson have been meeting with program staff and the meetings have been going well with a willingness for programs to want to clean up their performance data.

HMIS Administrator Report – Presented by Eva Thibaudeau

- HMIS has been working hard on performance dashboards.
- Gunsolley noted that Houston is still in the 100,000 Homes 2.5% Club.

Old Business

- **CoC Membership Policy – Presented by Eva Thibaudeau**
  - Gunsolley asked if there were any changes since last month. Thibaudeau answered no, and commented that since there are no dues/fees for CoC membership, when a vote is needed, there should be some way of defining what a voting member is. Wording and guidance from other CoCs were used.
  - Gunsolley called for a motion to approve the CoC Membership Policy. Costis motioned, Kibler seconded. The motion was approved.

- **PSH Prioritization of Turnover to Chronically Homeless Policy – Presented by Eva Thibaudeau**
  - Thibaudeau stated that HUD is asking that all PSH turnover now be prioritized for chronically homeless individuals. This policy will support the HUD priority and will be in place until there are no more chronically homeless individuals.
  - Gunsolley called for a motion to approve the PSH Prioritization of Turnover to Chronically Homeless Policy. Meyer motioned, Herron seconded. The motion was approved.

- **Voluntary Reallocation Policy – Presented by Eva Thibaudeau**
  - Thibaudeau noted that this policy is the same as was presented at the March Steering Committee meeting with one addition – programs have to meet the minimum performance threshold and receive the endorsement of the lead agency and CoC Steering Committee.
  - Landes clarified that the CoC thresholds will be used, not the HUD thresholds.
  - Gunsolley called for a motion to approve the Voluntary Reallocation Policy. Lemelle motioned, Kibler seconded. The motion was approved.

- **Involuntary Reallocation Policy – Presented by Eva Thibaudeau**
Thibaudeau stated that this policy has not changed since Howard Burchman's presentation of the policy in March.

Gunsolley called for a motion to approve the Involuntary Reallocation Policy. Costis motioned, Herron seconded. The motion was approved.

New Business
- CoC Action Plan – Presented by Marilyn Brown
  - Marilyn Brown (Coalition for the Homeless) presented the draft of the CoC Action Plan to the Steering Committee who reviewed the plan page by page. A final draft of the Action Plan should be presented at the May 2014 CoC Steering Committee Meeting.
  - Meyer presented the idea of having an epidemiologist review data that comes from HMIS, which may help relieve some of the responsibility for numbers that are reported, and would also help to increase credibility.

Public Comments
- There were no public comments.

Adjournment
Upon approval, the meeting was adjourned at 4:29 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,                      Approved,

_________________________________________  ___________________________
Celene Meyer, Secretary                      Tory Gunsolley, Chairman

__________________________
Date
A. Work/Affinity Group Activities
   a. Networks, Initiatives and Affinity Groups
      i. CoC Provider Forum
         1. Next meeting is scheduled for May 27, 9am to 10:30am at the NRC
         2. Initial Case Manager Resource Exchange convened on May 7, 2:30p to 4pm at Houston Recovery Center including a panel on the process for working with PHAs
      ii. HMIS Forum
         1. Held March 20th; next meeting June 19, 2pm-4pm at HCDE
      iii. Consumer Forum
         1. Will be held on May 16, from 2pm-3:30pm at the NRC featuring Needs Assessment Focus Group(s). Next Forum will be October 17 from 2pm-3:30 at the NRC
      iv. Housing Houston’s Heroes
         1. HHH meeting held on April 11th with report out on the 25 cities initiative
         2. RRH –HP subcommittee met weekly 4/17, 4/24, 5/1, and 5/8 and developed standardized RRH template forms
         3. The Regional SSVF Coordination visit is scheduled for June 26
      v. Youth/Young Adult Affinity Group
         1. Homeless Youth Network Forum May 12, 2014
         2. LGBTQ Homeless Youth Prevention Initiative Kick-off meeting was held at Montrose Center on April 17 9am-4pm
      vi. One Voice Texas Affinity Group
         1. Housing Workgroup met April 23, 9:30am-11am
         2. Children/Young Adults Workgroup May 2nd meeting was cancelled; next meeting is scheduled for June 6, 1:30 to 3:30pm at the United Way
      vii. ESG Funders Workgroup
         1. Met on April 30th from 9:00am to 12:00 noon
      viii. Coordinated Access Workgroup
         1. PSH affinity workgroup is meeting weekly 4/30, 5/7, 5/14, 5/21 and 5/28
         2. Transition team meetings weekly at the BEACON Thursdays from 2:00 to 3:00pm

B. Point in Time and HIC data
   a. The CoC’s PIT and HIC data were entered into the HDX before the deadline with no errors

C. Performance Measurement
   a. Continued individual agency and program meetings on performance measurement

D. Other CoC Activities
   a. CoC Roundtable scheduled for June 18th from 1-3pm; Coalition staff to represent CoC on conference call
   b. SOAR training scheduled for May 14-15th and is full with over 30 participants
   c. Nominated two case managers from CoC agencies to attend a Texas Homeless Network Case Management Training Institute, all-expenses paid, in Austin

E. Informational Updates
   a. Texas Homeless Network Housing Summit will be May 21-22; several members of the CoC will be attending including Eva Thibaudeau and Marilyn Brown from the Coalition
A. Work Group Activities
   a. Networks, Initiatives and Affinity Groups
      i. Housing Houston’s Heroes
         1. No meetings held in April
      ii. Coordinated Access Transition Team Meeting
         1. Meets weekly at The Beacon
         2. Developed Phase 2 Coordinated Access Scope of Work for ClientTrack

B. Reporting
   a. Continued data analysis and support of the U.S. Veteran Affairs Supportive Services of Veteran Families program and the 100,000 Homes Campaign
   b. Provided ongoing HOPWA technical support and system customizations for the City of Houston

C. Other CoC Activities
   a. Developed crosswalk for the standard service list in ClientTrack
   b. Continued to review and develop HMIS policies and procedures

D. Support
   a. Site Visits
      
      | Site                | Project Joy & Hope |
      |---------------------|---------------------|
      | Corder Place        |                     |
      | U.S. Vets           | Ultimate Changes    |
      | Career & Recovery   | Westside Homeless Partnership |

   b. IssueTrak
      
      | Date                  | Count |
      |-----------------------|-------|
      | Opened Before April 1, 2014 | 5     |
      | Opened in Period       | 91    |
      | Closed in Period       | 90    |
      | Left Open On April 30, 2014 | 6     |

   c. Training
      
      | Type     | Count |
      |----------|-------|
      | New User | 28    |
      | Refresher| 0     |
      | Reports  | 22    |
      | Data Explorer| 0     |
      | No Shows | 17    |

   d. Participating Agencies
      
      | Type | Count |
      |------|-------|
      | Active | 69    |
      | New | 0     |

   e. Users
      
      | Type | Count |
      |------|-------|
      | Active | 532   |
      | New | 21    |

   f. Clients
      
      | Type            | Count |
      |-----------------|-------|
      | Enroll at any point | 20,999 |
      | New Enrollments  | 3,380 |