

# SUMMARY

---

## Our City, Our Home (OCOH) Fund

### Town Hall #1: Budget Transparency

March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022

9:30am – 11:00am

Virtual - Online

#### Attendees:

OCOH Committee Members: Chair Shanell Williams, Vice Chair Julia D’Antonio, Member Jennifer Friedenbach, Member Nina Catalano  
Controller’s Office facilitators  
Members of the Public

---

#### Welcome & Introductions

- Chair Shanell Williams provided an overview of the agenda.
- Vice Chair Julia D’Antonio asked attendees to answer a poll at the beginning of the session to understand how the audience was represented by certain areas. Not all audience members answered the poll. Here are the results:

Town Hall #1 - Poll		
Representation Type	Number Responded	Percent of Total
Direct Service Provider	31	50%
Lived Experience of Homelessness	6	10%
City Employee	18	29%
Community Member	8	13%
Business Community	1	2%
Nonprofit, other	12	19%
Total unique respondents	62	

#### OCOH Overview

- Jessica Shimmin from the Controller’s Office provided an overview of the OCOH Fund, introducing the work of the committee and the purpose of the Fund.

#### Strategic Action and Investment Plan

- Chair Williams introduced the Strategic Action and Investment Plan, providing an outline for how the OCOH Fund has been distributed to date, including details about each spending area (Permanent Housing, Mental Health, Shelter and Hygiene, and Homelessness Prevention).

#### Spending

- Member Jennifer Friedenbach and Jessica Shimmin presented a breakdown of the OCOH Fiscal Year 2021-2022 (FY21-22) Budget. The presentation covered the spending areas listed above. Specifically, the presentation reported on budget amounts, actual spending, and year end projections for both acquisition and program operations related to Permanent Housing, Homelessness Prevention, Mental Health, Shelter and Hygiene, and Fund Administration.
-

---

## Breakout Sessions

*General Summary* – Facilitators prioritized questions #2 and #4 given the allotted time but a few groups were able to discuss questions #1 and #3 as well. Town hall organizers distributed attendees across nine breakout rooms with Controller’s Office (CON) staff and OCOH committee members serving as facilitators and notetakers.

The responses below are color-coordinated by the organization represented by the respondent:

- **Green text** is for City employees
- **Orange text** is for members of the general public
- **Blue text** is for a program provider or nonprofit employee
- **Black text** is for unknown or no representation

### 1. What impact in the community have you seen from the OCOH funding?

*General Summary* – Only one breakout group responded to this question, but identified an increase in two key programs due to the roll-out of OCOH funding.

- Providers have seen implementation of the Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool, and OCOH program which is serving a greater range of individuals including TAY**
- Noticed an increase in shelter beds and services**

### 2. The OCOH Oversight Committee wants to create a more responsive and more impactful system. What are you most concerned about, or needs more attention in the OCOH Fund implementation?

*General Summary* – The OCOH Fund has a wide scope, ranging from housing to rehabilitation services. This section reflects the range of topics that attendees felt need more attention.

#### a. Budget

- **Hotel vouchers have not been distributed, or not enough**
- Concerned about effects of upcoming shortfalls
- Not enough funds directed to Bayview (two participants)
- Funding should be based on provider needs and not current contracts
- Desire for an increase in clarity of what OCOH has achieved so far
- Salary increases for case managers

#### b. Criminal Justice

- **Need a strategic focus on ensuring those in the criminal/legal system are part of housing priority**
- **The OCOH Committee should focus on addressing the legal and policy barriers to housing those involved in criminal/legal system**
- **Need an intentional connection for folks released from justice system and housing opportunities.**
- **Delivery timelines should be set on OCOH spending and that should be measured for performance**

#### c. Housing

- **Need rental subsidies for asylum seekers**
  - **Permeant Supportive Housing (PSH) providers need OCOH funding for housing rehabilitation projects, not just new construction**
  - **OCOH is missing a plan of action for people at risk for eviction or other strategies for preventing households from losing housing**
  - **The City should be moving more money for housing out the door faster**
  - **OCOH should monitor funding disparities across San Francisco neighborhoods**
-

# SUMMARY

---

---

- **Concern over overcrowding in housing due to economic issues. Need more programs to address housing or the programs that do exist are underfunded. Is it possible to help District 10 with more funding for housing. We're concerned about people who have been in SF for generations being displaced by loss of housing.**
  - **How do we get housing acquisitions to fit families in the community?**
  - **Criteria to receive housing is almost literally impossible to meet**
  - **Individuals living in cars aren't eligible for some housing options**
  - **2-year subsidies for housing hurt those who need long term help. This causes unstable housing.**
  - **Need to extend the time limit on Rapid Rehousing (RRH)**
  - **Families with <30% area median income (AMI) need more RRH subsidies**
  - **Need to consider a Rent to Own policy**
  - **Only individuals who commit high-severity crimes receive extensive case management support for housing search upon release and this disadvantages individuals with criminal records seeking housing**
  - Hotel vouchers are not enough for what families actually need, which is housing
  - If there are 763 assessments, why were only 3 people housed? Need to have faster housing options
  - Racial disparity in Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) housing placement into PSH
  - Concern over high costs of rent for RRH
  - Concern about Coordinated Entry placing SF families outside of SF or their neighborhoods
  - Permanent housing needs to be offered instead of transitional housing
  - Concern about how gentrification impacts home ownership in SF
  - Concern about how these programs will help undocumented families
  - More support is needed for existing households in Single Room Occupancy (SROs), owned by either City or private, to ensure everyone is living in good conditions
  - The OCOH committee should prioritize permanent housing units
  - There is a lack of services for single mothers who are survivors of domestic violence and whose children are over 18 now
  - Need to expand housing eligibility criteria for seniors and those with disabilities
  - **Need to focus on transitional or bridge housing so that clients are set up to remain housed. OCOH should backfill and balance their focus on transitional housing.**
  - Housing needs to go hand in hand with mental health services
- d. Outreach**
- **Pleased with OCOH's commitment to jobs; should be job focus in every housing program and housing focus in every jobs program. Pandemic caused a high amount of unemployment in San Francisco. All City departments should have collective workforce investments.**
  - **Need to have better outreach to immigrant community**
  - Need more targeted outreach to seniors
  - Need more outreach to Native Americans
- e. Service Expansion**
- **More housing options outside the Tenderloin are needed for individuals in recovery to help them avoid the drug use and sales that occur there**
- 
-

- 
- 
- **Bayview has the least amount of services for drug addiction, and there needs to be more.**
  - Unhoused clients have difficulty accessing behavioral health services
  - Need for better coordination to resources available and longer-term support
  - **Need to integrate the City's programs into one central spot for homelessness support services, including Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH), Criminal Justice, and others**
  - **Staff and case workers need better training to better support recipients of care**
  - Providers have serious staffing capacity issues, making it difficult to actually provide any OCOH-funded programs
  - Legal services need to work more with HSH
  - Need to increase In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) services to patients already in care system
  - Need more assistance with workforce development
  - Need more programs and funding for veterans
  - Expand services for severely mentally ill (SMI) and substance use disorder (SUD) populations

**3. What would it look like to make progress on that area of concern? What would show you that progress is being made?**

*General Summary* – OCOH Fund implementation is a massive undertaking. It can be difficult to see incremental impact due to the structure of the budget. Comments here reflect the need for further coordination with the public.

- a. Progress would look like OCOH Oversight Committee coordinating and monitoring the systemic issues affecting homelessness
- b. Progress would show if we held departments accountable for Fund implementation
- c. Progress would look like more clinical support for youth in TAY PSH
- d. Progress would look like better pay for staff at Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) delivering services

**4. How can OCOH-funded programs support the closure of racial equity gaps?**

*General Summary* –. Many comments focus on outreach and service expansion to the various communities in San Francisco who are overrepresented in the homeless population.

- a. **Outreach to keep African American families living in SF**
- b. **Increase RRH subsidies**
- c. Investment strategies at CBOs should mirror the community
- d. Listen to the community
- e. Increase pay to front line staff
- f. Increased utilization for economic justice and prevention
- g. Better outreach for access to Coordinated Entry (two participants)
- h. Expand services and resources more broadly to communities
- i. More options to house immigrants
- j. Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training at CBOs and City
- k. Education to residents about the impact of redistricting
- l. **Transitional service to BIPOC involved with the legal system**
- m. **Proposing the end of background checks as eligibility for housing**
- n. Funding should go to vulnerable not just visible

# SUMMARY

---

---

The OCOH Committee sent a survey to audience members following the meeting. The intent of the survey was to allow additional space for feedback on the OCOH budget as well as understand what information is desired at future meetings. All responses were anonymous. There were a total of six responses to the survey.

1. How informative was the OCOH Town Hall #1 meeting on budget? (1 - not informative at all; 7 - very informative)
    - a. Average response: 6
  2. What would you like the OCOH Oversight Committee to know that you weren't able to share at the listening session?
    - a. There is a lack of shelter access, and provider staff find it disempowering to not be able to offer or connect clients to shelter beds.
    - b. Providers wish to place individuals directly into available PSH spots but cannot despite there being over 500 vacancies as of February 2022. There is a concern over this significant delay, as well as geographic and racial equity impacts.
    - c. Providers are frustrated and confused over the Coordinated Entry and assessment process. The process is not transparent and the overall difficulty with the process jeopardizes relationships with clients, making it difficult to further engage down the line.
    - d. The City has not reinstated shelter self-referral, yet they conduct encampment "sweeps" of people sleeping in tents. Often a tent and a sleeping bag is all that a provider can offer.
    - e. There are insufficient amounts of population-specific housing options. This is seen with domestic violence survivors, families, those seeking gender-specific housing, and those with disabilities.
    - f. The City should move quickly to open overdose prevention programs city-wide that are evidence-based, rooted in the community, and non-coercive.
    - g. The City needs to address the shortage of hygiene and shower stations offered to people experiencing homelessness.
    - h. Providers desire a method to propose specific programs for funding as opposed to discussing larger budget ideas at the listening session. Survey respondent does not feel the Town Halls are transparent.
  3. What additional information do you want to hear at upcoming OCOH Town Hall meetings?
    - a. More about plans to speed up spending funds, and also more information about shelter access and self-referral.
    - b. Focus on justice involved populations and how to build a system to meet their housing needs.
    - c. Which community organizations and their programs specifically received OCOH funding?
    - d. Survey respondent wants more money dedicated to innovation and pilot projects.
    - e. Focus the future presentations less on budget information and more towards concrete services provided to those experiencing homelessness.
- 
-