

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA
Our City, Our Home Oversight Committee
November 17, 2022
9:30 AM – 12:13 PM

Committee Members

Nina Catalano
Michelle Cunningham-Denning
Julia D'Antonio
Jennifer Friedenbach
Julie Leadbetter
Lena Miller
Ken Reggio
Shanell Williams

This meeting was held by WebEx pursuant to California Government Code Section 54953(e) and the Mayor's 45th Supplement to her February 25, 2020 emergency proclamation suspending and modifying requirements for in-person meetings. During the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) emergency, the Our City, Our Home Oversight Committee (OCOH) will convene remotely until the Committee is legally authorized to meet in person.

Note: The Our City, Our Home Oversight Committee meetings are live streamed at SFGovTV.org. The agenda, video recording, audio recording, and caption notes are posted at:

https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=209.

Supporting materials including presentations and reports are posted at:

<https://sf.gov/meeting/november-17-2022/our-city-our-home-oversight-committee-special-meeting>

1) ***Call to Order and Welcome***

Chair Williams called the meeting to order and welcomed the Members to the second day of the OCOH Oversight Committee Retreat.

Roll Call:

Member Catalano: Present
Member Cunningham-Denning: Absent
Vice Chair D'Antonio: Present
Member Friedenbach: Present
Officer Leadbetter: Present
Member Miller: Absent
Member Reggio: Present
Chair Williams: Present

Quorum confirmed.

Ramaytush Ohlone Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are on the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone, who are the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula. As the indigenous stewards of this land and in accordance with their traditions, the Ramaytush Ohlone have never ceded, lost nor forgotten their responsibilities as the caretakers of this place, as well as for all peoples who reside in their traditional territory. As guests, we recognize that we benefit from living and working on their traditional homeland. We wish to pay our respects by acknowledging the ancestors, elders and relatives of the Ramaytush Community and by affirming their sovereign rights as First Peoples.

2) Discussion Item/Possible Action:

Providing Guidance and Feedback on the City-Wide Strategic Plan Development, with possible action by the Committee.

Cynthia Nagendra, Deputy Director at the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH), and Matthew Doherty facilitated a discussion with the Committee Members about the components of the City-Wide Strategic Planning framework using [slides located here](#).

Data Officer Leadbetter asked about which City partners HSH is engaging in its city-wide strategic planning work? Deputy Director Nagendra said the department has engaged with partners including, but not limited to the Department of Public Health (DPH), The Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development, the San Francisco Housing Authority, and San Francisco Unified School District. Officer Leadbetter noted the Committee's interest in racial equity work taking place in the City and in other places. Deputy Director Nagendra described the Department's Racial Equity Action Plan and collaboration with the Department on the Status of Women as additional components of the department's work on racial equity.

Matthew Doherty facilitated gathering the Committee's input on the six components of the strategic planning framework, focusing on four questions:

- What are the most important objectives in each action area?
- What strategies or activities would help drive the greatest progress toward racial and housing justice in each area?
- What should the City start doing, or be doing more of? What should the City be doing less of or stop doing?
- How does work in each area need to be tailored for different communities and populations?

Advancing Racial Equity and Housing Justice

Member Friedenbach said many of the organizations doing the best work are BIPOC lead, but they aren't always the most competitive in contracting because they don't have the administrative capacity. So, finding ways to build capacity and "flip the script" in support of these organizations is important.

Member Friedenbach said shelter access is one place where policies and practices are producing racial inequity, but access could be simplified for better results. For example, de-emphasizing community complaints as a route into shelter and making shelter more accessible through health care referrals. She said that Street Outreach is important, but over-invested given that there aren't resources that can be distributed through Street Outreach.

Vice-Chair D'Antonio said there is a need for more low-barrier options; if people need shelter or housing they should be able to get it. She said that capacity to serve victims of domestic violence needs to be examined, as well as adherence to housing first practices, and inflow from public housing programs and permanent supportive housing. Overall, she said San Francisco just needs more affordable housing for people earning minimum wage.

Mr. Doherty thanked the Members and affirmed that the conversation will include a focus on shelter, outreach and other components of the system. He encouraged the Committee Members to talk more about strategies for advancing racial equity and housing justice.

Member Catalano said reducing the overrepresentation of minority groups in the homeless population must be a priority. She would like to see a quality-of-care measure that captures whether the services and housing people receive are meeting their needs.

Chair Williams said cultural responsiveness in contracting will make progress toward racial and housing justice. She said there must be a way to address housing discrimination in the private housing market. Chair Williams said that reparations will be a way to address intergenerational poverty and build prosperity. Lastly,

Chair Williams agreed with Member Catalano about the importance of a quality-of-care measure, because it's not helpful to spend on services that aren't meeting people's cultural needs.

Improving System Performance, Capacity, and Accountability

Member Reggio said building capacity of community-based providers, and particularly Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) lead organizations, is a priority. Ensuring nonprofits are adequately funded to hire and retain staff is fundamental to system capacity and performance.

Officer Leadbetter acknowledged a need for positive, energetic and populist voice to promote the good work on homelessness that is happening. She suggested rapid re-housing is a place to plan and develop capacity, accountability, and improved outcomes.

Member Friedenbach encouraged incorporating client satisfaction and user feedback into system performance measures. She echoed Officer Leadbetter's concern for ensuring positive outcomes from rapid re-housing programs.

Vice Chair D'Antonio said that the implementation of coordinated entry coincided with an unfortunate reduction in drop-in services like diaper banks. She also encouraged investment in front-line staff who are living paycheck to paycheck and many of whom experience housing instability. The lack of investment extends to social workers and therapists, which makes it difficult to retain these important workers. Vice Chair D'Antonio suggested implementing restorative justice programs may fill a need, not just for client conflicts but also staff conflicts. The restorative justice techniques will produce a better environment for all.

Member Catalano stressed the long-term benefits of investing time and energy in developing collaborative relationships that can solve problems.

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness & Enhancing Crisis Services and Shelter Options

Vice Chair D'Antonio said that routinely collecting client feedback through multiple avenues will lead to improved services.

Member Friedenbach said temporary supports like shelter should never be called "housing." She said that stability and choice are valued by people who are unhoused.

Member Reggio emphasized the need for health care supports in shelters to better serve homeless older adults and people with disabilities.

Officer Leadbetter endorsed integrated drop-in centers. Particularly coming out of the pandemic, a welcoming, supportive drop-in center would be a valuable system component and a good use of OCOH mental health funds.

Chair Williams agreed with Members' previous comments and added the need for gender-specific resources to support pregnant people, cis- and trans-women.

Increasing Permanent Housing Exits and Strengthening Housing Retention

Member Catalano said she would like to see more shallow subsidies and stronger connections between programs. Related to these, focused study of the time and likelihood of households increasing income.

Member Friedenbach said that when people encounter safety risks in subsidized housing or permanent supportive housing they have a difficult time transferring to a more secure housing situation. To address more acute health and mental health conditions, Member Friedenbach suggested expanding permanent housing solutions offered by DPH. These can be effective for people with dementia, as an example. She also said that isolation is a challenge, so programs for people who are currently or formerly homeless should prioritize building community. Last, she talked about developing more opportunities for drop-in centers to refer people into housing.

Officer Leadbetter endorsed shallow subsidies as a cost-effective strategy. She offered the concept of a “coordinated exit system,” wherein staff and teams work to ensure smooth and successful exits from one program to another.

Member Reggio raised food security as an important issue at the front door of the homeless response. Looking at different models of housing such as congregate living arrangements, would meet a variety of needs.

Vice Chair D’Antonio said that the system tends to match people to what’s available rather than what is best for the person. All programs, and particularly workforce programs should ask people about what they envision for their lives so that participants feel motivated and inspired. She said this approach has worked well in the youth system and should be expanded to all aspects of the system.

Vice Chair D’Antonio also encouraged prioritizing households with vouchers in affordable housing developments so that they don’t time out and lose the voucher. She suggested re-starting a successful program for young mothers that provided a housing subsidy for 5 years while they went to school. Perhaps there is an opportunity to expand the eligibility for this program to older parents and people without kids, too. Vice Chair D’Antonio said one barrier that lower income households confront has to do with who is on the lease in affordable housing and/or public housing, because when the lease holder dies, the caregivers in that household find themselves homeless. Vice Chair D’Antonio said there’s room for innovation in program and financing models.

Chair Williams said a gap in the system is long term residential care options for people with high health care needs. She emphasized the discrimination by landlords against people with vouchers. What strategies would incentivize and compel landlords and developers to house low-income people?

Preventing People from Experiencing Homelessness

Member Catalano said more surveying and asking people what could have prevented your homelessness, because we need to know more about the services and supports that will work. And second, it would be helpful to have more mediation services available to diffuse conflicts before they result in homelessness.

Member Friedenbach said this is an area where San Francisco is falling behind. In addition to programs, more communication will be needed to help people in housing to get connected. Member Catalano agreed and said that if the best thinking is that 9,000 households become homeless then there needs to be a plan to reach those households and meet the need.

Vice-Chair D’Antonio said that there’s much to be learned by following up with households who failed in order to understand where there are barriers to success.

Chair Williams shifted the discussion to next steps.

Member Reggio said he is hopeful about the possibilities of this plan, guided by Cynthia Nagendra, Noelle Simmons, and Shireen McSpadden.

Officer Leadbetter suggested repackaging insights from the Needs Assessment for public consumption.

Chair Williams agreed and said she would like to get the Needs Assessment out to public bodies and the Community. Member Catalano suggested a community meeting about the Needs Assessment.

Matthew Doherty said a public facing version of the City-Wide Homelessness Strategic Plan available during the first quarter of 2023. He said that the vision is to use the City-Wide Strategic Plan as a roadmap by revisiting and updating the plan over time.

Member Reggio asked about the approval process for finalizing the plan. Mr. Doherty said a final process hasn't been determined. Staff will follow up with the Department and share information as it becomes available.

Officer Leadbetter said the Committee would be willing to help develop community buy-in. Officer Leadbetter asked how the OCOH Oversight Committee's Needs Assessment will inform the Strategic Planning process? Matthew Doherty said that the Committee's Needs Assessment is particularly powerful where it brings the qualitative voices of lived experience into conversation with the data. He said because there is a great deal of alignment between the Committee's Needs Assessment and the Strategic Plan and it should be easy to see the connection between themes. The system modeling, particularly around the Place for All requirements are pushing forward the answers to what housing and support resources will be needed and how much it will cost.

There were no public comments on this agenda item.

Chair Williams recessed the meeting for a 5-minute break.

Roll Call:

Member Catalano: Present
Member Cunningham-Denning: Absent
Vice Chair D'Antonio: Present
Member Friedenbach: Present
Officer Leadbetter: Joined late
Member Miller: Absent
Member Reggio: Present
Chair Williams: Present

Quorum confirmed, the meeting resumed.

- 3) Discussion Item/Possible Action:
Closing discussion of Committee Priorities and Next Steps, with possible action by the Committee.

This agenda item was tabled.

- 4) Discussion Item/Possible Action:
Presentation from Ann Oliva, CEO of the National Alliance to End Homelessness, with discussion by the Committee.

Ann Oliva described the work the National Alliance to End Homelessness, which focuses on advocacy at the level of Policy and Programs, Capacity Building, and running the Homelessness Research Institute. Slides from this presentation are [available here](#).

Ms. Oliva described some critical high-level trends at the national level, and how that national picture compares with what data show is happening in California.

Then, Ms. Oliva provided findings from the Alliance's listening sessions across the country.

- Adequate affordable housing options and supports must be developed and targeted to communities most impacted by structural inequity.
- Dignity-based services led by communities most impacted by homelessness should be designed and supported post-COVID emergency.
- Current congregate emergency shelter options are inadequate.
- Prioritize ending practices that criminalize people experiencing homelessness.

Chair Williams asked Ms. Oliva what she sees as bright spots from the national perspective. Ms. Oliva said she has seen people collaborate and innovate in response to the pandemic. For example, a non-congregate shelter of tiny homes in a giant warehouse in the Twin Cities, Minnesota. She said the compassionate environment was inspiring. She pointed to the need for pro-active communication and

flexibility.

Vice Chair D'Antonio asked about the innovative practices, particularly around outreach practices. Ms. Oliva said that in communities that depend on police for homelessness outreach, she noticed an increased interest in multidisciplinary teams that include outreach workers, social workers, or mental health professionals. Additionally, she has seen more communities engaging people with lived expertise in homeless response planning and decision-making processes, including employing people with lived expertise as outreach workers.

Member Reggio asked if there are any promising examples of innovations toward improving racial equity. Ms. Oliva described the "racial equity cliff" where communities disaggregate data by race and bring people with lived expertise into decision making, but are unclear about how to move forward with implementing change in programs. Ms. Oliva said examining the data to identify barriers that can function as proxies for including particular communities.

Chair Williams thanked Ms. Oliva and Committee Members for the conversation.

There was no public comment on this agenda item.

5) Discussion Item/Possible Action:

Committee discussion of items for future meeting agendas, with possible action by the Committee.

This agenda item was tabled.

6) ***Adjourn***

Member Friedenbach moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Reggio seconded the movement to adjourn.

Roll Call:

Member Catalano: Absent
Member Cunningham-Denning: Absent
Vice Chair D'Antonio: Yes
Member Friedenbach: Yes
Officer Leadbetter: Yes
Member Miller: Absent
Member Reggio: Yes
Chair Williams: Yes.

The meeting adjourned at 12:13 pm.