Summary of All Feedback Received on PIT Count Survey Topics at Community Meeting 11/1/21

Thanks so much to everyone that provided the rich and diverse feedback that was received at this meeting. Please note the following:

- It is important to keep in mind that there is very limited space to add questions to the survey without removing questions, so many factors will need to be considered when making modifications to the survey.
- For next steps, the PIT Count Planning Team will be reviewing all feedback and developing a draft survey. Any new questions for this survey will be piloted with individuals with lived experience of homelessness to gather their feedback. The updated survey will then be posted on the EveryOne Home Website where the community can review and share feedback during a public comment period in early December.

Poll Results for priorities of 5 survey topic areas:

1st Choice: 50% voted for race/equity, 20% voted for COVID 19, 15% voted for experience of the individual, 10% for employment, 5% for developmental disabilities

2nd Choice: 30% voted for race/equity, 30% voted for COVID 19, 15% voted for experience of the individual, 15% for employment, 10% for developmental disabilities

3rd Choice: 35% voted for race/equity, 20% voted for COVID 19, 20% for employment, 15% voted for experience of the individual, 10% for developmental disabilities

Overall top 3 choices in order are (1) race/equity, (2)COVID 19 and (3) lived experience of the individual.

COVID 19:

Proposed Questions:
Have you had access to the following during the COVID 19 pandemic?

Vaccination	Yes, and I am vaccinated	Yes, but I am not vaccinated	No
Facemasks and other COVID safety items	Yes, and I used them	Yes, but I did not use them at all	No
Covid 19 testing	Yes, and I have been tested	Yes, but I have not been tested	No

Were you able to access any of these financial supports during COVID 19?
- Unemployment insurance
- Stimulus checks

- Other financial support _____

Community Feedback on Proposed Questions for COVID 19

- Vaccination - maybe yes/no to being vaccinated, and then yes/no to have you had access to vaccination.
- Might be worth asking, have you had a full or partial vaccination.
- Ask if they have a positive test? Or might need to be more specific about the type of test. More helpful than access to COVID testing.
- Simplify questions – "access" can mean a lot of different things.
- Ask more about if had information about how to protect themself/provide safety (e.g. I had information on how to keep myself safe from covid (hand washing, distance,
- Did you have sufficient access to PPE and other equipment? Could be a better summary question. Did you have sufficient access to COVID testing.
- Stimulus check, some people are qualified or not, especially people in the Hispanic population, they don't have access to support
  - Don't assume that people have access or being able to be eligible for these financial support (Stimulus, ERAP)
- Face masks don't last very long, maybe asking instead do you have regular access to PPE? Get a better understanding of how the count/cities did?
- Won't necessarily know where folks get masks? Is it important to know where they came from?
- Vaccination should be a priority in the COVID questions. Can learn what regions might be lower rates, etc.
- Did you access vaccine, did you access stimulus resources? If not, why not? The <u>Why</u> part is very important.
- Important but need to be able to direct people where to go if they answer "no." yes, valuable.
- Will it be cross analyzed to see geographically as well?
- Don't know the utility or usefulness of if they've been tested or if they were able to access PPE.
- Good idea if we can use it in a timely manner, but what usefulness will this be over time? If we are looking for system change, is this the best use of the space?
- Asking about economic access to COVID funds is as valuable as vaccination and PPE access. The red tape has been very difficult and assessing if it has been a barrier to many would be useful. Add rental assistance associated with COVID but still may have fallen into homelessness despite the assistance provided. One of the questions should also be that an assumption is baked in that people knew that these options existed -- we may want to ask, "Did you know you could access…." rather than if they accessed. Yes, No, I Didn't Know as options for answers.

Community Feedback - Additional Questions on COVID 19 to Consider

- COVID is part of equity to community, may not be highest point of question.
- Did you get stimulus money or unemployment money during this period instead of "access".
- Did you have access to any of the safe hotels and then are you back on the streets again?
- To what end are we asking these questions: how has your homelessness been impacted by COVID? (caused, resolved, more services received)
- Can we ask income questions that includes covid stimulus?
- How did the pandemic impact you or of you staying homeless? What is the impact generally?
    - How did the pandemic impact our communities rate of homelessness?
- What will we do with the info that is gathered from this?
    - These are good questions. We are still trying to target vaccination, etc.
    - Feel mixed about these questions - hoping that they are time limited. Wondering in terms of prioritization, are we going to use this data for this thing?
    - Are we going to use these questions for eligibility for certain interventions?
- Access to services as the result of the shuttering of offices, like Social Security. When offices, clinics, etc. closed, how has that loss affected individuals?
- Generally across all questions: Does the act of asking these questions mean that we are also prepared to direct people to the resources if they answer "no."

RACE/EQUITY:

Proposed Question (to be disaggregated by race/ethnicity)

If you have returned to homelessness after being housed in the last year, what do you think is the primary event or condition that led to your return to homelessness?

a. Incarceration
b. Mental Health Issues
c. Physical Health Issues
d. Substance Use Issues
e. Eviction/Foreclosure
f. Family or friends couldn't let me stay
g. Argument with family/friend/roommate
h. Family/domestic violence
i. Divorce/separation/breakup
j. Death of a parent/spouse/child
k. Job loss

l.   Rent increase

m.   Other money issues

n.   Loss of subsidy or other housing financial support

o.   COVID 19 related issue

p.   Other _____

q.   Don't know

Community Feedback on Proposed Question for Race/Equity

- Why is it focused only on one year or a focus only on returning to homelessness in one year?
- Should be sure to include "Check all that apply?
- This list is very thorough.
- Add "rehoused away from their support/access area" -- group felt this was an important addition
- For choice K, include death of someone close to me (don't limit it to those specific relationships
- Overlap in some response categories: will need to emphasize primary. Like also having a question to ask for secondary reason or reasons using the same list.
- Consider adding "race" in the list, as explicit as possible.
- Would Medical bills resonates as an answer choice here.
- The opening phrase needs reworking for clarity, Is it returned to homelessness in last year or housed in last year?
- Good question to get at questions of equity.
- Thinking of how to capture, a lot of choices, general sense that are good number of people who get housed of system, and then support falls away
  - Way for us to streamline choices
- Good question to see the broad range of how people became homeless, but there's a lot of people that fit under a lot of these categories,
  - Put it under an umbrella to zero it down
  - How can we put certain things under one umbrella for those certain areas?
  - Do Groupings/header
- We need to think of using the word bills
  - Simplifying language
- Challenges with having your documents to apply for the support (Navigation Center, ERAP, etc)
- Mental health issue - make specific categories for youth and adults

- ○ Resources aren't the same.
- Can someone answer that mental health issues are the reason they came back to homelessness? <u>Lack of case management</u> can often be the reason for returns and initial homelessness. All of these response issues could be related to COVID 19. All of these could be subjective and self-identified. Perhaps selecting more than one option.
- Adding the case management option would be helpful. Or ask if someone was forced to leave their housing situation.
- Add racial bias as an option to this question and the question on first time homelessness.

Community Feedback – Additional Questions on Race/Equity to Consider

- Don't have a good way to make it into a survey but some people have just lost faith in the system. Would be interesting to know why -- is it because of race? Where does distrust of certain agencies/approaches/the homelessness system come from?
- We should have more than one concentrated area that explores race and race equity.
  - ○ What are the gaps for BIPOC people? Allow them to identify the gaps. They often say they have received a number of referrals and come to feel that the system just cannot help them. Often people with experiences of homelessness say there's no more help for them after a certain point. What might be that certain point?
  - ○ Ask, "In your attempt to get xyz type of help, what was your experience in…." examples include health, social services so that we are determining if race changes how helpful access is BIPOC.
  - ○ Weigh the value of 211 vs an agency for BIPOC

<u>EMPLOYMENT:</u>
<u>Proposed Questions</u>**:**

Are you currently working for money? *If yes, how many hours per week are you working?*
- 0, Not working
- 1-10 hours
- 11-20 hours a week
- 21-30 hours a week
- 30+ hours a week

Are experiencing any barriers to employment? If so which barriers are you experiencing?

Community Feedback on Proposed Questions for Employment

- Ask first about income sources, if includes income, then use these as follow-up/skip to questions.

- May want to ask: are you working Y/N, very simple and direct.
- Be sure to include gig and to clarify for people.
- Is it necessary to find out how many hours people are working?
- As a backup question, do we plan to ask what kind of work or are we only interested in if they are working
- Kind of information you want to be gathering if there are people who aren't able to work/ Put unable to work as an option
- Not sure if getting granular is this necessary, have fewer options and asking for a range of how much people make, or blank?
  - Helpful to know how much people are making
- Not screen people out because they are reporting disability or disability income,
  - An area that needs more focus in our CoC, there are people who can work on SSI
- Could ask about type of employment, part time/full time, freelance, cash jobs, multiple part time. Hours may vary from week to week.
- Barriers are listed in disabling conditions that might lead to unemployment.
- Could ask how many jobs are people working?

Community Feedback on Proposed Barriers to list as part of question related to barriers.

- Transportation, clothing, disability physically, childcare, being able to earn money while getting other benefits when money might make a person ineligible for continued benefits, gaps in employment history, how to interview, not having GED, license or ID out of date, people who have pets so can't leave them behind, criminal justice/criminal record, medical care/dental issues
- Not having a high school diploma could be a barrier
- Unsheltered
- Criminal record
- Not having access to technology
- May lose social security or other payments/MediCal if they work. Lack of transportation.
- There may be lack of knowledge about working and that there may be stigma and bias about working when folks could do better if they worked. Option could be concern or fear of losing benefits. Could be a lack of support for employment too.

Community Feedback on Additional Questions on Employment to Consider

- Not the same as employment but we should be asking about income. What is the source? Consider looking at broader time frame (year or two). Including one time or ongoing covid sources. What were all of your sources of income in past year?

- Questions about people's employment/job history
  - Last time you had paid employment,
  - Try to get at why are people losing their jobs? And how quickly can they get it back

EXPERIENCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL:

Proposed Question

If you had the opportunity to talk to officials and policy makers who are trying to end homelessness in Alameda County, what do you think would be important for them to know about your experience?

Community Feedback on Proposed Question for Lived Experience

- Seems like a good question.
- Too open ended. Surveyors will not have time to capture all the feedback.
- Consider replacing with "what are the three most important things that would be important to know?"
- Want good way to capture this. Will be so rich but too hard to use this level of qualitative survey. Don't want this question to hold up our report if it's a qualitative survey. Categories to select from or select top 3 would be better.
- Why call out officials and policy makers, Could we say "what do you want people to know about…?"
- Concerned about the ability of the survey takers to be able to capture this information both because of the transition from choices to open-ended.
- Concerned about if they will be accurate in summarizing responses.
- Are we training folks?
- Want to go back to previous surveys to define some of the response options. If it is an open question, it may not be a rich data source that is comparable.
- Think it should be an open-ended question.
- What is the subject we need to work on? Instead of what about your experiences.
- Do you think there is something specific the county could do to transition you out of homelessness?
- Question should read "in your homeless experience" -- great that it's broad enough to include a lot but it could also be far too broad for guides to jot down answers or for persons with lived experience to zero in on an answer
- Should be broken down into two questions

- - "Do you know ways to engage policymakers and officials" gets at how and if do we engage them in our decision making
  - Part two would be to get at their unique experiences.
- Too large as is -- what structural things need to change is a better question
- Asking why/how people engage in the system for homeless support is preferable to this question
- Phrase makes it sound like policymakers and officials are the only folks who can create change
- "What would you want people who are not in your position to understand." Phrasing it this way builds trust and embedded in it is "how can we engage with you in a meaningful way?"
- Think about if people have to go to other places when we think of how to understand the impact
- What would you prioritize as the most important things that would help end your current experience of homelessness.

Community Feedback on Additional open-ended question regarding lived experience to consider

- We should be asking about people's trust in the system and how they're treated. Ask what feedback they have around their consumer/client experience.
- Ask: How effective is the support offered, how are you treated, where do you get information?
- We should be asking about people's trust in the system and how they're treated. Ask what feedback they have around their consumer/client experience.
- Ask: How effective is the support offered, how are you treated, where do you get information?
- Should be asking open ended question about the effectiveness of Coordinated Entry and how well it coordinates care. Group really liked this focus: "Have you been told to call 211?" and Have you visited a shelter or coordinated assistance center?
  - Group felt there's a lot to cover that would be of value in a focus on CE.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES:

Proposed Question

Do you have a developmental disability?

Community Feedback on Proposed Question for Developmental Disabilities

- Yes, let's include this in the health section. Redo the prompt so it fits.
- Like the regional center question.
- Like adding "do you now or have you ever".
- Don't know if its information that is missing, means that it is information that is missing.
- When we ask about people's physical disability, how would that get captured? List?
- Asking if people ever received services from a regional center? (additional way to get at that questions)
  - Look to experts like Darin on how to phrase it
- Do you have a disability or in the household?
  - Caring for someone (child, parent, etc.)
- Or how do you have access? Resources?
- Question excludes physical disability
- That question only means one thing to people when you ask "developmental" Instead the question should read "do you have a disability?" and list a variety of disabilities so that people can choose
- Research careful wording to be sensitive: "significant impairment," "from birth, etc."
- Are we going to ask about the impact of their disabilities? This question assumes that it impacts homelessness and we shouldn't assume the effect on homelessness. Impact areas include employment, benefits, etc.
- Will only get answers from those that are diagnosed. If we ask about whether or not someone receives services from a regional center, that tells us only about those that are diagnosed.
- Could perhaps provide instructions to the surveyors about how this is defined. Might want to consult with a professional about what to include.
- Could frame it in the DSM, Do you have a developmental disability that impacts your day to day functioning.

Community Feedback on Additional Questions on Developmental Disabilities to Consider

- Does the system provide adequate support for disability? (vision, equipment, hearing aids, etc.)
- Do you have adequate support for your disability?
- Have you had resources to address DD? Really want to understand what people access care for and why not. But takes a lot of space to ask about barriers.
- Might be helpful to ask if people have primary care physician or connected to health provider if not asked in HMIS.

Community Feedback on Additional Topics to consider:

- **Digital Divide:** Questions about access to computers and technology. The lack of access is sure to be an impediment. Without access they cannot attend city council meeting and other decision-making venues
- **Fines and Fees:** Parking tickets and other areas that make it difficult. Does our system provide support for "enforcement," "rules and laws," "petty theft," that criminalize homelessness? Do the offenses really amount to offenses or are they a result of homelessness?
- **Race/Equity:** Add the intersection of criminal justice and the concept of "broken windows policing" -- would be interesting to find out interactions with police and criminal justice
- Whether people were a homeless youth, whether they are in foster care or not
- When did you lose your housing and how long were you living here at city level?
- Want to capture the actual number of working homeless?
- **People who live in RVs**
  - Make it generic
  - Are you homeless in an RV?
    - Are you good in your RV? Or where do you want to go for next steps?
    - People don't want to give up their mobile homes
  - An area that cities want to see
  - Not currently collected in any capacity
  - Look at how long they have been in this situation
- Details about growth of encampment (generally)
- **Disabilities:** Has a list of disabilities. A lot of the disabilities that people are affected by might not be these types of disabilities that are most impactful. Example: People consider themselves disabled by chronic health conditions rather than from an official diagnosis. Encourage us to think more broadly about other types of disabilities than standard expectations of what falls into that category
- **People Living in Their Vehicles:** Are there initiatives in Alameda County to address the increase in criminalizing homelessness? Asking people "Have you ever been approached by law enforcement while staying in your vehicle" Are there specific areas where you are forced to stay that are uncomfortable?" Have you lost your vehicle or your shelter because you were living in your vehicle?
- **Transportation Methods:** "How do you get around?"