Housing Capacity Committee
February 19, 2025
12:00 – 1:30pm
Minutes

Link to Zoom Meeting
Phone: +1 386 347 5053
Meeting ID: 849 5675 4929

Meetings are public. Alameda County residents with lived experience of homelessness are encouraged to attend. Public Comment will be taken at the beginning of each meeting and is limited to 2 minutes per person. Click here to learn more about the public participation policy.

Helpful links:

- **Google Drive Folder for Housing Capacity Committee:**
  https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1DcTO6Wv9sDCq9fdmfBhAUtrHsZWNZJtL?usp=sharing
- **Website page** (on EveryOne Home website) for the Housing Capacity Committee:
  https://everyonehome.org/about/committees/housing-capacity-committee/
- **Acronyms and Glossary**: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1l8hFMAU2lE-FqYmK8TZ9Hp40vmS1zRck9EBEbPIbwy8/edit?usp=drive_link

Committee Purpose

The purpose of the Housing Capacity Committee is to support expansion of the supply of permanent supportive and dedicated affordable housing opportunities available to people experiencing homelessness in Alameda County. To achieve these ambitious goals the group will advocate that funding should be targeted to housing dedicated to households at 10% or less of Area Median Income (AMI), coordinate funding, track units apart from and in HMIS, coordinate with housing authority resources, and plan proactively for funding and expansion. Learn more about the Committee's purpose here.

Meeting Purpose / Overview

The purpose of this month's meeting was to: (1) receive a presentation on Alameda County Housing Crisis Response AI (ACHCRAI) Assistant, (2) discuss an affordable housing site visit, and (3) discuss the Point in Time (PIT) Count.

Email: Alameda@Homebaseccc.org

Minutes

> 1. **Welcome/Introductions (Sharon Cornu and John Lo, Co-Chairs)**

> 2. **Review Ground Rules/Approval of Minutes (John Lo, Co-Chair)**
>   a. Minutes from November 20th, 2024 approved.

> 3. **Announcements and Public Comment (Sharon Cornu and John Lo, Co-Chairs, and Kris Maun, Homebase)**
>   a. Kris Maun: The Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab (GPL) invites you to join our Data-Driven Decision-Making Training series. These trainings are virtual and open to anyone working in and around homelessness prevention and response work in Alameda County. The intended audience is those new to data.
>   i. Please register for the training here: bit.ly/gpltraining.
>   ii. Unpack & Interpret Data | Friday, March 14 at 10 am - 12 noon: Learn strategies for disaggregating data to better understand what your data is telling you.
>   iii. Communicate with Data | Friday, April 11 at 10 am - 12 noon: Bring all your learnings from previous sessions together and focus on how to present data to support action-oriented meetings and conversations.
>   iv. Please reach out to Sky Mihaylo (skymihaylo@hks.harvard.edu) if you have any questions.
>   b. Kris Maun: Workgroup Opportunities:
>   i. These three workgroups are looking for volunteers:
>   1. The Performance Measures Workgroup will update the Performance Measures for CoC projects, last updated about 10 years ago. The updated measures are planned to be used as a part of scoring the 2026 NOFO project applications.
>   2. The Data Quality Workgroup will develop a data quality plan for the community
>   3. SCF is developing a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Toolkit in its NOFO Workgroup. The toolkit will be designed to help orient new applicants to the NOFO process of Continuum of Care funding.
>   ii. Seeking members who are: providers, people with lived experience of homelessness, Racial Equity Committee members, and Youth Committee members
>   iii. Please email alameda@homebaseccc.org if you are interested, no later than February 19th.
>   c. Vivian Wan shared an update on the City of Fremont ordinance that bans camping on public and private property, therefore criminalizing homelessness. The penalty is a misdemeanor, a $1000 fine, and up to six months in jail. The ordinance was passed February 11th. Thought to be the most severe, most restrictive camping ban in the state. There is also an "aiding and abetting" piece that has caused some confusion. The City Manager and City Attorney have said it doesn't apply to service providers or folks who are giving out tents and blankets, but the ordinance itself

Email: Alameda@Homebaseccc.org

doesn't read that way. Vivian is concerned it will have a chilling effect on service providers. The "aiding and abetting" piece has the same penalties. This has been a very Council-driven decision and many City of Fremont staff have shared that this ordinance goes against other City of Fremont strategic plans. It was passed 6-1. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Bay Area Community Services (BACS), Abode, and the Democratic Party have voiced opposition to the ordinance.

    i. Moe Wright shared that this is one of the items Leadership Board will discuss and try to take a stance on in their February meeting.

    ii. Colleen Budenholzer shared that Supervisor Márquez (District 2) and the acting Director of Alameda County Health submitted a letter against the ordinance. Vivian also shared that Supervisor Haubert backed out of the letter at the last minute and instead tried to offer the Council housing vouchers for displaced people. Vivian shared those housing vouchers don't exist and it's not a real solution.

    iii. Vivian also shared that there is talk of a lawsuit, it's not initiated by Abode. Berkeley had a narrow ban previously but also was previously sued.

        1. Jared DeFigh: Anthony Prince with the Homeless Union is putting together a lawsuit.

    iv. Nic Ming said the Leadership Board's conversation tomorrow will be a starting point for how we follow-up and do advocacy and look at the impact of this action. Us as a CoC talking in a singular way about Fremont is one thing, but messaging and narratives outside of the CoC is another. We want to think how as a CoC about how to be proactive and utilize the communication channels we have.

    v. Courtney Pal asked if the population of Fremont for the ban fully understands.

4. **Racial Equity Committee Report Out (Ms. Shelley Gonzalez)**

    a. Ms. Shelley shared that the Racial Equity Committee recently discussed the various Executive Orders related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). She also shared that there is a lot of information coming out and the Committee worked to compile some resources to help process the work and fact check statements and news stories. The Committee is also discussing how to take advocacy stances and make sure people are comfortable even talking about these issues with each other.

    b. Resources from the Racial Equity Committee:

        i. Article and list of resources: https://www.racialequitytools.org/resources/fundamentals/special-topics/countering-attacks-on-racial-equity

        ii. snopes.com – Helps fact check news and information

        iii. Article: 10 ways to be prepared and grounded now that Trump has won

        iv. 7 Free Mental Health Apps

        v. Bay Area Local Emergency Dispatch Numbers

        vi. 988 Lifeline as a 24/7 resource

        vii. Mental Health First: 510-999-9641

        viii. Self-care workshop at the April 15th CoC Learning Community, Zoom link here

    c. Vivian Wan said a lot of the CoC funded activities are funded from HUD and there has been orders that everything related to DEI will be cut. DEI is throughout all EveryOne Home documents and workplan. Do we think our CoC funding will be cut? Or our consultant and planning grants that support DEI work?

        i. Moe Wright said that this conversation will also be part of the Leadership Board conversation tomorrow.

        ii. Ms. Shelley offered that in other spaces, they are re-writing grants and documents to change the equity-specific language. The work isn't changing but how we talk about it is being modified.

5. **Alameda County Housing Crisis Response AI (ACHCRAI) Assistant Presentation (Nic Ming, Social Impact Wheel and Leadership Board member)**

    a. Clickable link to the tool

    b. This tool began development in 2023 between Social Impact Wheel and Donada, a tech development firm. The purpose of the tool is to provide reliable information regarding housing and homelessness at a large scale. As we all know, we struggle in our work with high staff turnover rates which results in knowledge gaps.

USERS SUPPORTED WITH INFORMATION

PERSONS WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE	**SERVICE PROVIDERS**
Seeking programs, resources and services information.	Information about Providers' service and resource; service delivery practices training information.
SYSTEM LEADERS	**CoC COMMITTEE MEMBERS**
Policy and Planning information.	Committees Activities and Decisions.

    c. This tool has the following features:

        i. Chat interface

        ii. Alameda County Based Knowledge – largely based on public shared documents and housing resources

        iii. Links to key sits – Icons below that welcome note that links to key websites

        iv. Updated information – Information shared auto refreshes from source web pages

        v. SMS – Texting capability

    d. Nic Ming did a live demo of the tool on a desktop and on mobile.

Email: Alameda@Homebaseccc.org

e. Moe Wright asked what "subscribing" means?
  i. Nic shared that subscribers would get email alerts and a newsletter of the content that is generated.
f. Colleen asked how the tool has been tested to make sure the information is correct? We know it's frustrating to get wrong information and it can be really damaging for service providers giving clients incorrect information.
  i. Nic said they have been testing that, and they acknowledge AI is not 100% accurate. They're working on refining the tool and increasing the body of knowledge that it draws from. That should increase the level of accuracy. But it's still overall being developed and is not 100% accurate. One component in interacting with AI is asking for its to show its accuracy. They've also tried to roll it out slowly so that they can test it and make sure they gauge its accuracy. They aren't releasing it right away to everyone so that they can test, roll it out in phases. They want feedback from the initial users about errors.
g. Sharon Cornu asked if there is a fee? She also asked for clarification that the information is from publicly accessible sources and agreed with Colleen's point about the importance of information being updated.
  i. Nic said yes, it's free and part of the purpose of this tool being a website instead of a PDF is so that it can be refreshed more frequently.
h. Nic demonstrated how to use the AI chat bot function.
  i. Vivian offered feedback on the demonstration as some of the information was incorrect.
  ii. Nic appreciated the feedback and shared that part of the work in the next phase of development is increasing how many tools are being fed into the model
  iii. Caroline Topeé asked if the organizations linked on the ACHRSAI site are aware of this resource being shared? She experienced incorrect information via 211 when unhoused and it is very frustrating!
  iv. Sharon said she is excited about the potential of AI! She hopes we can keep up a good feedback loop of how the tool is working. Her team at St. Mary's has been working on a similar project so will reach out further.
i. Ms. Shelley said this is the collaboration we seek in this work. For example, MyChart [a medical communication resource] was built without patient input until after complaints. It was built admin friendly by admins. She thinks AHCRAI aims to get ahead of that.

6. **Discussion of Affordable Housing Site Visit (Sharon Cornu and John Lo, Co-Chairs, and Moe Wright)**
   a. Moe explained that many of the affordable housing solutions are bound by building codes. However, in some scenarios and emergencies, other solutions are allowed. One example was utilizing hotels for housing during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Currently, a developer Moe knows is running a prototype of small units that are under 200 square feet. Each unit has a bathroom, a bed, a desk, and a kitchen.

They don't meet the criteria for a permanent residence, but they meet the criteria for transient housing.

     i. Clickable link to the site – it will be open sometime in 2025.

     ii. Moe shared that this is in the very early stages and so doesn't know if vouchers can be used to pay for it. It's supposed to be a commercially viable solution that doesn't need a subsidy, but extremely low-income people would probably need vouchers. It may come into the category of supportive housing. This housing is open not just to people who are currently homeless; students or other low-income people can live there.

b. Christoverre Kohler asked if they have "preferred tenants"?

c. John, Sharon and Moe proposed organizing a site visit to this development. It would be on a volunteer basis and there is no available budget to support. Moe suggested sending out a Doodle poll to help find a time.

d. The organization running the units is called Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency (BOSS).

e. Vivian is interested in the cost, operating cost, the financial model, the tenant selection, and prioritization. It's a good opportunity for some but has lots of questions about the financing piece. Was it private? How long did construction take? What labor was utilized? Can this be scaled? Seeing pretty buildings is one thing but seeing pretty buildings that can help with housing and homelessness is different.

     i. Moe will share more information with the Committee as he knows.

f. Ms. Shelley asked how is this marketed? Who is this targeted to? What category of HUD housing would this be? This is 39 units and she overall has questions about vouchers and upfront costs. There is not a lot of information available on the website. Curious about viability.

g. Committee members can email Moe Wright (mwright@bbiconstruction.com) if they are interested in going to the tour.

h. Colleen Budenholzer said she would also like to understand if this is a permanent housing solution or just a transitional or temporary housing.

     i. Moe agreed that's important, some of that depends on the jurisdiction which is Berkeley in this scenario.

i. Christoverre shared an article about a ribbon cutting for another BOSS property (Linked here). The event could be a good opportunity to see the other players.

j. Sharon overall wants to continue the conversation in the future during the Committee about different types of housing and what vouchers or funding are available for each model. It looks like this project is trying to straddle a few different kinds of forms. It's also important for this Committee to be clear about the different housing types, assistance types, and who the Committee is trying to serve.

k. Vivian offered that the vouchers aren't all we need as a threshold, we also can leverage shallow subsidies. This model will be interesting to analyze as a Committee to see how low the rent could be and what kind of assistance could support that. Can we think about where money could be found to fill the gaps?

l. Colleen also clarified that vouchers are not how interim housing is funded.

m. Caroline said the type of housing is important for knowledge within CoC housing coverage reach.

n. Ms. Shelley said these are good hands-on projects, places, locations to build a current database of information. We historically have this built for us but not maintained and often missing new opportunities. We see more on Telegraph Ave, in Alameda, in places we occupy in any given day in real time than a HUD or 211 search produces.

o. Colleen shared the CoC approve document: Alameda County Homelessness Response System Written Standards - 2/8/23

p. Sharon proposed for a future training on affordable housing types. Moe will organize a field trip via email.

7. **Discussion of Point in Time (PIT) Count (Sharon Cornu and John Lo, Co-Chairs)**

a. Sharon shared the various city infographics and data dashboard from the 2024 PIT count.

b. John also clarified that the PIT count numbers were included in the Alameda County Housing and Community Development 10-Year Housing Plan. John also reminded the Committee that the PIT Count looks at unsheltered and sheltered homelessness and the Housing Plan goes beyond that.

c. Vivian also pointed out the common narrative is that people who are homeless are coming from outside of the County, but our PIT data shows that around 80% of people were already living in Alameda County and are from here.

d. Due to time, John proposed that we continue the PIT count conversation in combination with an Affordable Housing 101 discussion.

e. Ms. Shelley asked more questions about where the survey lives and who was surveyed.

   i. Sharon proposed the Committee can get more into detail about the PIT count methodology in a future meeting.

8. **Questions and March Agenda Items**

a. The next meeting of the Housing Capacity Committee meeting is Wednesday, March 19th from 12pm to 1:30pm.

b. Committee members can email agenda items and suggestions to alameda@homebaseccc.org.

c. Vivian: Can this Committee get real-time information and data on the flow into housing and addressing bottlenecks or celebrating successes? Could that be part of the standing agenda?

   i. Colleen said the Outreach, Access, and Coordination Committee gets those updates quarterly framed as access to our existing inventory. She sees this Committee as addressing expanding our inventory. Don't want to duplicate efforts but open to discussing it further.

d. Courtney also wanted to raise this Committee could discuss the existing funding housing and homelessness inventory, using the California Governor's budget – which has no increases for housing and homelessness – as one reference document.
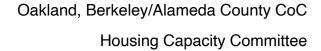
Email: Alameda@Homebaseccc.org

Committee Members Attendance

John Lo	Alameda County Housing and Community Development	Present
Colleen Budenholzer	Alameda County Health, Housing and Homelessness Services	Present
Xochitl Ortiz	City of Oakland	Present
Moe Wright	City of Berkeley	Present
Stacey Burmaster	Insight Housing	Present
Vivian Wan	Abode	Present
Sharon Cornu	St. Mary's Center	Present
Jared DeFigh	Representative with Lived Experience	Present
Isamar Ochoa Dominguez	Representative with Lived Experience	Present
Ms. Shelley Gonzalez	Representative with Lived Experience	Present
Caroline Topeé	Representative with Lived Experience	Present

Public Attendance

- Nicole Adibi, Family Violence Law Center
- Morgan Bernados, Homebase
- Qimmah Hameed, Bay Area Community Services
- Christoverre Kohler, Community Member
- Alicia Lindfors, Swords to Plowshares

Email: Alameda@Homebaseccc.org

- Kris Maun, Homebase
- Nic Ming, Social Impact Wheel
- Courtney Pal, Resources for Community Development

Email: Alameda@Homebaseccc.org