Strategic Plan Oversight Commission

Meeting Date: August 29

Meeting Attendees: Taura Brown, Julie Schneider, Amy Brown, Lydia Adkins, Sarah Rennie, Dr. Curley, DeAndra Matthews, David Bowser, Regina Hentz, Tasha Gray

Taura and Amy reminded the commission of the norms and values of the SPOC. The team went around and discussed how they felt about the work they were doing as a collective during the strategic system improvement planning process.

Project Updates

BPA gave the following project updates:

- July site visit has been completed
  - Had over 100 people participate in listening sessions
  - BPA team members visited agencies and programs
  - BPA team members interviewed elected officials and conducted focus groups with people with lived experience
- Interim Report will be shared in October
- Project Team has been sunset and former members are invited to participate in the workgroups and planning teams for the upcoming planning process

Input from Residents with Lived Experience of Homelessness

BPA team members discussed the emerging themes and feedback they heard from their conversations and focus groups with people with lived experience. This feedback from residents included the following:

- Accessing the homelessness response system of care
  - Common themes reported by people with lived experience:
    - Participants reported that word of mouth or calling around to find help was the primary way that people learned about how to access the homelessness response system or found any forms of help.
    - Some providers provided high-quality services, but that most providers were not able to offer a robust set of services and people needed to seek assistance from multiple programs and organizations.
    - Very long wait times to access CAM or shelters were noted.
    - Participants also report being treated rudely when seeking assistance from CAM, shelters, and/or other programs
- Shelter access, quality, and client experiences
  - Common themes reported by people with lived experience:
    - Participants' feedback focused especially on issues related to the quality of the shelter facility and availability of shelter beds, the professionalism of staff, and inconsistent and unreasonable rules.

- Participants have expressed problems with staff attitudes, unfair treatment and application of rules that are inconsistent.
- People reported significant levels of violence in the shelter system.
- Finding and securing housing
  - Common themes reported:
    - Market forces are making finding housing difficult for many low- or no-income participants.
    - Some people reported it took them 1 – 2 years to find housing, while others found housing within 3 months.
    - Many participants indicated that they did not receive any help with locating housing or that housing resource information they were provided (lists, pamphlets, numbers of landlords) were outdated.
    - Some participants stated that they received helpful assistance from providers in finding, locating, and securing housing, experiences that seemed to be connected to a special funding program.
- Training for Staff
  - Overwhelmingly participants have noted the need for staff to be trained more, including customer service training.
  - Other staff training topics prioritized include training that will support:
    - Implementation of trauma informed care.
    - Shifting of programs' cultures.
    - Shifting away from abusive behavior, including mental and verbal abuse.
  - Participants also noted that more staff should be hired.

SPOC members provided feedback on the above perspectives from residents with lived experience:

David was interested in what the plan's priorities will be given that the system is made up of several elements that all require different solutions for improvement.

Taura wanted to know how feedback from residents will be given back to agencies.

ReGina said she has witnessed front-line staff breaking down into tears because they were asked by managers to treat clients unsympathetically

Julie discussed what the city's role can be in the system, such as a convener or trainer. She also said conversations with executive director of agencies need to happen.

Eight Draft Priorities for Detroit's Strategic System Improvement Plan

The BPA team presented the following draft priorities to be the focus of Detroit's strategic system improvement plan:

- Urgent Improvements and Transformations

- o Urgent and profound issues with facilities, programs, and practices, resulting in traumatizing experiences for people within many shelter programs and people who are unsheltered, must be addressed.
  - o Rehousing strategies and services, and the utilization of rental subsidies, must be dramatically improved and reorganized to support people to successfully exit from homelessness into permanent housing more quickly, efficiently, and stably.
  - o Housing supply must be strengthened and scaled to create an expanded availability of quality housing affordable to people at the lowest income levels, and for people exiting homelessness.
- Partnerships and Collaborative Efforts
  - o Ongoing and meaningful community engagement processes and dialogues across partners must be implemented and must purposefully and transparently acknowledge, and strive to address, significant trust, power, and equity issues throughout the homelessness response system; most importantly the partnership between the City of Detroit and HAND must be strengthened and become more effective in supporting the community transformation that will be required.
  - o Collaborative partnerships, grounded in best practices and shared accountability, must be strengthened or developed with a broader range of systems, community partners, and organizations to leverage an expanded range of resources and strategies that can help prevent people from becoming homeless, address unsheltered homelessness, and support rehousing activities.
  - o The community's array of recent & current plans, recommendations, & initiatives are assets that provide powerful opportunities to implement new approaches to partnerships and leadership & should serve as the basis for strategies and activities, alongside new strategies that will be developed, to address these priorities for improving the system.
- Systemic Operations and Leadership
  - o System leadership roles must be clearly and collaboratively defined, embraced, and played in order to: drive progress on systemic issues; to strengthen system and program quality, performance, and accountability; and to effectively implement the Strategic System Improvement Plan.
  - o System leadership roles must be guided by a clear and coherent system vision and values that focus both on driving reductions in homelessness and on driving progress toward racial justice and equity for all people.

SPOC members provided feedback on the above priorities:

ReGina said she thinks the priorities capture the status of our current system. She said the team is describing phenomena that some community members have been repeatedly saying.

Lydia said she thinks community engagement is very important going forward, as well as ensuring we are doing something after we engage community members and learn about

challenges in the system. She said a lot of people have lost trust in the system or are scared of the system.

Julie said governance and accountability are important when it comes to implementation and institutionalization. She reiterated its critical that we make sure we know how this is being implemented and who is being held accountable for that.

Sarah said we often do a lot of things based on how we get funding and she asked how we will "de-silo" the system so that activities are integrated and the system moves to serving the individual versus solely focusing on compliance with regulations. She said our constituency should be residents, not providers.

David said knowing who is responsible for each piece of system failure is very important because it will help us create the right groups to focus on change and improvement.

Structure for Planning Process

In order to drive progress on the priorities identified, and to identify strategies and activities that will be prioritized within the Strategic System Improvement Plan, the SPOC, with the support of the Consulting Team, will implement three Work Groups and three community planning sessions. Strategies will be developed from September to November so that the SPOC can adopt the final plan in December.

Workgroups:

- Work Group 1: System Modeling
    - Develops various models of system reorganization which projects optimized system performance where all persons resolve their housing crisis in the most efficient and effective manner possible
    - Enables system to anticipate future demand for housing and services, configure different options for services and housing resources, model the impacts of various policy considerations, and enables intentional and thoughtful design of the homelessness response system based on a set of data-informed execution strategies
- Work Group 2: Implementation Framework
    - Determines how to address gaps, challenges, and weaknesses identified in the community's existing leadership, governance, and decision-making protocols
    - Paves the way for plan implementation and more active, coordinated system management
- Work Group 3: Building Momentum
    - Reviews strategies, recommendations, progress, and challenges from recent and current initiatives, plans, and reports
    - Identifies and prioritizes strategies and activities that should be sustained or strengthened and that will address the priorities for improving the system and build momentum for the implementation of the Strategic System Improvement Plan

Community Planning Sessions (community dialogues that are solutions-driven and identify strategies)

- Topic 1: Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness
- Topic 2: Reimagining Shelter / Interim Housing
- Topic 3: Improving Rehousing & Housing Supply

The composition of each workgroup and planning session team will include:

- Two Co-Chairs drawn from SPOC, including at least one SPOC member with lived experience of homelessness
- People with lived expertise
- Representatives from HRD, HAND, and CoC
- Additional members with relevant expertise

Next Steps

Next steps include:

- Taura and Amy will send out a survey to SPOC members to determine who will co-chair each group
- The workgroups and planning teams for community sessions will begin meeting once formed
- The BPA team will prepare the interim report
- Upcoming meetings for the SPOC are set for October 4 and November 1