Metro President's Work Group
April 7th Discussion High Level Summary

Date: April 7, 12 pm to 4 pm
Location: Metro Regional Center
Summary prepared by Drawbridge Innovations

TABLE CONVERSATIONS SUMMARY - BUILDING A SHARED REGIONAL FOUNDATION

The text below summarizes the key conversation themes identified by the consultants at Drawbridge. Please note: the following high-level summary represents inputs received at the April 7 work group. All language included here is a reflection of discussions in the room and synthesis into key themes; it does not reflect recommended wording, language or final concepts from Metro.

Focus Area 1 | Healthy Regional System

What are the characteristics of a healthy regional system—what it is, and what it isn't?

A healthy regional system IS: ✅
- **Collaborative and regionally aligned**
  - Built on shared purpose, common vision, shared goals, and aligned regional priorities
  - Cross-jurisdictional collaboration with shared definitions, eligibility, access, and data
  - Resources and systems shared across regions and ready for future growth
  - Cross-sector alignment and coordination (e.g., ER, Jails, Schools, Federal govt, Medicaid)
  - Shared governance with appropriate and defined roles for each entity

- **Aligned through shared data and transparent reporting:**
  - Connected through shared metrics and data-driven decision-making
  - Enables accurate, real-time data sharing across sectors
  - Focused on tracking individuals and populations over time to measure longitudinal outcomes
  - Features a public-facing regional dashboard and annual systemwide reports

- **A "no wrong door" system across the region:**
  - Recognition that homelessness does not follow jurisdictional boundaries
  - Providing services regardless of city or county boundaries
  - Easy to navigate for users and decision-makers alike, enabling immediate access

- **Sustainable, designed for the long term:**

- Election proof: Designed to be sustainable long-term and resilient to political shifts
- Recognizes limitations of federal systems and plans accordingly

- **Flexible, nimble, and responsive to specific needs:**
    - Responsive to diverse population needs, including mental health, substance use disorders, needs of families, and shifting housing demands
    - Flexible funding, based on needs
    - Uses and aligns resources where they're most needed without jeopardizing future support
    - Nimble, reliable, and responsive at all levels

- **Action-oriented and accountable:**
    - Ensures those holding responsibility also hold accountability
    - Regional accountability and support (e.g., helping a struggling county succeed)
    - Focused on practical, results-driven actions
    - Oriented toward continuous improvement
    - Expanded focus on public safety, livability, and healthy neighborhoods

A healthy regional system is NOT: ✖

- **Driven by ego or blame:** Egos and boundaries, elected officials pointing fingers at each other, a system driven by the short-term political environment, and a lack of accountability by elected officials

- **One-size-fits-all:** A single, inflexible approach

- **Overly centralized:** Ignoring regional needs, putting what is working locally at risk

- **Piecemeal and uncoordinated:** A collection of different systems or programs thrown together, lacking coordination, siloes. A system unable to track individuals

- **Funded unevenly:** Spreading the peanut butter too thin, smaller cities having to fight for their share (e.g., Fairview, Wood Village, Troutdale)

- **Actively fostering unsheltered homelessness:** By handing out tents, having people suffering and dying on the streets

Focus Area 2 | Future State

What is our vision for success in the region?
What are the core beliefs that drive our approaches and actions?

Four key vision directions emerged from the group conversations. These have been lightly word-smithed and themed by the Drawbridge team. All language included here is a reflection of discussions in the room and synthesis into key themes; it does not reflect recommended wording, language or final concepts from Metro.

Vision Theme 1: Outcomes Focus—Reducing Homelessness in the Region

We will work towards resolving the homelessness crisis with urgency – where every person has timely access to the support they need, and no one is left to suffer or die on our streets. (Also known as *Functional Zero*.)

We envision a system that:

- Resolves the homelessness crisis with urgency and sustained coordination.
- Reduces unsheltered homelessness as a critical first step toward ending homelessness for all.
- Ensures no one is discharged into homelessness from hospitals, jails, or other institutions.
- Supports public safety and healthy neighborhoods.

Vision Theme 2: No Wrong Door—A Connected and Coordinated System

Every person experiencing homelessness or housing instability in our region will be able to access the same level of support—no matter where they are or what door they enter.

We envision a system that:

- Provides services regardless of city or county boundaries.
- Connects and coordinates across the region.
- Offers no wrong door to access help.
- Is easily navigable, with clear pathways and support.
- Ensures people know where to go, can get there, and are met with dignity and effective support.

Vision Theme 3: Compassion with Accountability

We will lead with compassion while supporting individuals experiencing homelessness to take accountability and meaningful steps toward better outcomes.

We envision a system where:

- Compassion is paired with clear expectations and support.
- Clients are empowered and held accountable to make positive decisions.

Vision Theme 4: A Full Spectrum of Housing and Support

To ensure a full continuum of housing and services so that everyone—regardless of their circumstances—can stabilize, recover, and thrive.

We envision a system that includes:

- Immediate access to stabilization and transitional services.
- A strong fabric of supportive services, including mental health and acute psychiatric care.
- Enough housing that people can afford, with sufficient access across the region.
- Tailored solutions that meet the diverse needs of different population segments.

Focus Area 3 | Key Shifts

What shifts in thinking, action and approach are needed to move from where we are to where we want to be?

Key shift 1: Intentionally move from county silos to a regional system

- Remember–re-organization is not centralization; don't put what is working at risk.
- Coordinated contracting, sharing resources and credit. Assess the proliferation of service providers (154 across 3 regions = dilution of $).
- Clear governance structure: What might an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) look like?

- Shift in thinking: "If a bed is available, provide it to someone in need, regardless of county lines."; no wrong door.

Key shift 2: Focus on robust data, move to outcome-based KPIs
- Data needs to be accurate to drive actions correctly.
- KPIs shift from activity-based to outcome-based.
- Reduce homelessness recidivation longitudinally over time. Count beds and doors, but also track individuals in a regional system to ensure stability.
- Reassess SHS regional goals (the program was intended to serve 5,000 chronically homeless households, but there are now 11,000 in the region).

Key shift 3: Design for sustainability
- Create a sustainable system that works on a multi-year human basis, not year-by-year.
- Ensure sustainability of programs.

Key shift 4: Ensure flexibility in funding and approach
- Shifting funds to the shifting needs – not locked into the same fixed allocations.
- Recognize that problems evolve and need to be tackled as they change.
- Understand not everyone being served is ready for a permanent solution.
- Geographic equity.

Key shift 5: Be more action-oriented
- Dial-up urgency—change to crisis management mode.
- Reduce system complexity and wasted time.
- Take practical action. Instead of providing tents, make sure there's access.

Key shift 6: Expand our network and focus
- Think of businesses and taxpayers as not just funders, but as full partners.
- DAs, the courts, and the criminal justice system need to be a part of the solution.
- Better connections between housing, mental health, and SUD treatments.
- Managing impacts on neighborhoods—livability is key to continued support.