Metro President's Work Group
Executive Summary of Insights and Learnings
Prepared by Drawbridge Innovations
June 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Metro Council President Peterson convened a work group from February to June 2025 to discuss and offer recommendations to the Metro Council President to guide the future of Metro's Supportive Housing Services fund. Co-chaired by Metro Council President Lynn Peterson and Clackamas County Commissioner Ben West, the work group consisted of leaders from the coalition of service providers and Community Based Organizations (CBOs), leaders from the business community, elected representatives from counties and cities in each of the three counties, and Metro councilors**.**

Work group members were asked to share input on a variety of topics, including:
- A **vision framework** with reviewed and refined performance goals
- Key performance indicators (**KPIs**) that support achieving a regional vision
- **Proposed governance structure** reforms
- A **system evaluation**, which Metro plans to commission in 2025

As an advisory body, the work group did not formally vote or reach consensus. The work group's role was primarily to provide feedback to Metro Council President to help inform Council direction and considerations on the future of SHS reforms.

Meeting cadence and agendas:
- **February 24:** regional SHS data overview and case study review
- **March 10:** case study review, TCPB and SHS oversight committee chair presentation about gaps and opportunities
- **April 7:** introduction of regional vision and goal framework
- **April 21:** system evaluation overview and presentation from Auditor Evans; further discussion about regional vision and goal framework
- **May 12:** proposed governance structure overview and exploratory conversation
- **June 2:** vision, goal and KPI feedback deep-dive
- **June 16:** system evaluation update, and proposed governance structure revisions based on feedback and discussion

SUMMARY OF INPUTS

Across all work group meetings, there were some consistent areas of feedback shared by work group members:

- An **integrated system view** of reforms and structures could help to break down siloes and ensure the whole system succeeds
- **Cities and counties share an interdependency** that may impact their ability to accomplish future goals
- **Clearer KPIs and goals** could improve the region's ability to **hold accountability**
- **Clearer definitions of governance roles** are needed after the work group concludes
- **Balance the need for structure with the need to take action** and work nimbly to catalyze change in shorter time frames
- Work to gain an understanding of **where the gaps in current data exist** before initiating future systems evaluations
- A **system-wide, integrated, regional data structure** could help further decrease siloes, increase shared knowledge, and enhance the ability for the region to measure goals more accurately

KEY INSIGHTS AND THEMES

In the following executive summary, Drawbridge Innovations identified some common themes that emerged on three core topics discussed throughout this process. Please refer to the comprehensive recap of each meeting for additional details.

Key theme topics:
1. Proposed governance reform
2. Vision framework for a healthy regional system
3. System evaluation

Topic 1: Proposed governance reform

At the May 12 meeting, President Peterson shared a preliminary overview of a proposed governance structure. Members were invited to provide feedback on four dimensions of governance (see the full meeting recap for details about the questions posed to members). This input informed a revision to the proposed governance structure, which President Peterson then presented at the June 16 meeting.

Across both meetings, common themes emerged:
- **Role definition and clarity:**
  - Avoiding self-interest when decision making occurs, including counties' perceived conflict of interest in being responsible for decision-making while also accountable for performance
  - Ensuring regional and community expertise in the various governance bodies
  - Involvement by cities in the various levels of governance
  - Further clarity on the roles, composition and responsibilities of the TAC and PAC

- **Need for independent review:** work group members identified a need for an independent body in the structure. President Peterson subsequently included this in her second proposed structure on June 16.
- **Perceived complexity:** members acknowledged that more structure is needed, however some members expressed concerns that both versions of the governance structure presented by Metro created potentially unnecessary complexity.
    - Complexity could inhibit the region from making more nimble and agile decisions
    - More examples were requested at the June 16 meeting about how exactly a policy change or system improvement might be handled using this new structure, so that members could understand a real-world application of the proposed structure
- **Compliance and accountability:** Members felt that entities should be measured using clear data and metrics, and that failure to achieve KPIs could result in performance-based corrections. Additionally, the process and parameters around compliance and performance improvements was unclear, including the dependency between cities and counties in meeting regional goals.

Figure 1: example of a facilitation board at May 12's discussion about the proposed governance structure

Additional feedback shared at the **June 16 meeting** about the revised governance structure proposal included:
- **Center community outcomes as the measure of success** versus the act of setting up governance structures
- More integration with **housing production** in the governance structure
- **Integration of state and federal housing requirements**, which cities are responsible for meeting

Topic 2: Framework for a healthy regional system

Three work group meetings invited members to share feedback about their hopes for a healthy regional system:

- In the April 7 meeting, Metro Council President Peterson communicated her ideas for a healthy regional system grounded in a common vision and set of goals and KPIs. (See figure 2.) Participants were invited to share their inputs, and begin to articulate their vision for success in our region.
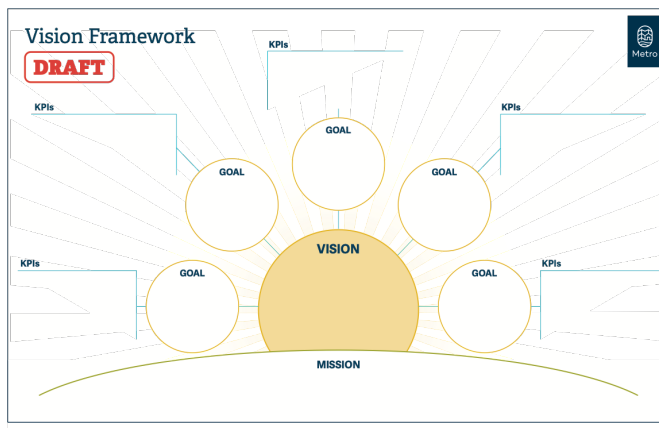- At the April 21 meeting, members brainstormed example goals and KPIs.

Figure 2: example of vision framework model

- At the June 2 meeting, Metro staff brought to the work group ideas for vision statements, as well as potential goals and KPIs. Members were invited to rate these elements against various criteria (for details about the evaluation criteria and work group member ratings, please refer to the June 2 meeting recap.)

Work group members shared some **common feedback about the proposed program and system goals**:

- Members reiterated **the highly integrated and connected nature of houselessness** – integration with other key systems (e.g. healthcare, recovery) across the region and reducing silos is key to achieving a fully regionalized system.
- Goals and KPIs rooted in robust data and outcomes **could help to define accountability** for the region.
- Work group members felt that most goals scored high on meeting community needs. However, **program goals that addressed the overall reduction of homelessness** or **prevention of people entering homelessness** best met community needs.
- **Reducing the length of time people experience homelessness** received the highest score from work group members as being the **goal and related KPIs that would most effectively drive results**. In contrast, the goal that scored lower for their KPI effectiveness was around increasing co-enrollment for health and behavioral services.
- More work could be done to **clarify the difference between system and program goals**, including who is accountable for each.

The two vision statements that received strong rankings from members, both very similar:

Vision Statement	Average Score
"Homelessness is addressed through a system of care that supports our neighbors to move from homelessness to permanent housing and rebuilding a community of support to achieve economic self-sufficiency."	**4.0**
"Homelessness is addressed through a recovery-oriented system of care, moving our neighbors from crisis to independence by building long-term stability with effective services, holistic support and increased self-sufficiency."	**3.7**
"Homelessness is rare, brief and nonrecurring for anyone who experiences it in the region."	**3.2**
"Everyone in the region can access an affordable, stable place to call home, along with the supports they need to recover and thrive."	**3.2**
"The region supports stable and thriving communities through a compassionate, coordinated and clear response to homelessness."	**2.8**

Additionally, feedback emerged throughout all three meetings around goalsetting and framing the vision for a healthy regional system:

1. **Balance the data collection efforts** required by providers with the time, effort and resources needed for collection pulls them away from delivering services.
2. Throughout the process, work group members debated the focus of goals and KPIs between community outcomes-based goals and goals that focus on system improvements. The June 2 meeting feedback suggested **a preference toward community outcomes-based goals,** as system-related goals rated lower.
3. The **connection between housing production and SHS** continues to emerge as a theme throughout several meeting. Work group members requested more information about production goals from counties, and some suggested integrating these production goals with SHS work.

Topic 3: System evaluation
April 21 and June 16 meetings provided an opportunity for the work group to receive updates about the system evaluation work Metro initiated on behalf of the work group.

Work group members' feedback introduced some key themes about **the system evaluation's focus:**
- Integration continues to be a significant theme of the work group, and showed up here when talking about the system evaluation:
  - The evaluation should take a system-wide look at the region, so that with better regional visibility, increased coordination could occur and siloes could be broken down
  - Better data integration across counties could help track outcomes, system flows and improve storytelling
- What systems aren't working, gaps and process improvements
- A comparison of our region to other regions around the country and the related metrics. Cost per service, etc.

- Explore alignment around contract and procurement standards. Do contracts and programming reflect the gaps that we know the system needs?
- Explore ways to reduce wait times for housing
- Focus on improvements that will help the region learn how long people stay in shelters and how people graduate from services.

Additional feedback from the work group on scope design for the system evaluation included:
- Change the nomenclature from "audit" to "systems review"
- Explore existing inventory of audits before launching into next one
- Remember that a systems review could encourage public trust by increasing transparency and accountability
- Recommendation for a clear, actionable scope that reflects the full ecosystem (including cities' roles) and leads to a meaningful end report that aligns to what information is most critically useful.
- Balance the need for a single moment in time snapshot that a system evaluation could provide, with the need for real-time data to help Metro, providers, counties and cities take faster action

APPENDIX

Work group participants:

- Alex Phan – Principal Broker, Portland Metropolitan Association of Realtors®
- Andrew Rowe – Member, Portland Metro Chamber
- Andy Mendenhall – President, Central City Concern
- Ashton Simpson – Councilor, Metro
- Ben West – Commissioner, Clackamas County
- Christine Lewis – Councilor, Metro
- Craig Roberts – County Chair, Clackamas County
- Elizabeth Mazzara-Myers – Executive Director, Westside Economic Alliance
- Jerry Willey – Commissioner, Washington County
- Joe Buck – Mayor, City of Lake Oswego
- Julie Brim-Edwards – Commissioner, Multnomah County
- Kathryn Harrington – County Chair, Washington County
- Keith Wilson – Mayor, City of Portland
- Lacey Beaty – Mayor, City of Beaverton
- Lisa Batey – Mayor, City of Milwaukie
- Lynn Peterson – Council President, Metro
- Melissa Erlbaum – Member, Here Together
- Mercedes Elizalde – Member, Welcome Home Coalition
- Nellie deVries – Executive Director, Clackamas County Business Alliance
- Rachael Duke – Board Chair, Housing Oregon
- Sahaan McKelvey – Member, Coalition of Communities of Color
- Shannon Singleton – Commissioner, Multnomah County
- Tim Rosener – Mayor, City of Sherwood
- Travis Stovall – Mayor, City of Gresham