

Week 1 Summary: Introductions and Task Force Charge

Summary: The focus this week was on *getting to know one another* as Task Force Members, thinking about the importance of *grasping different perspectives* and values on the topic of homelessness shelter siting, and *introducing some norms and principles* for working together in the coming weeks.

Opening: Mayor McLean offered opening comments to the Task Force thanking members for participating, and pledged to take seriously the recommendations that will be made by the Task Force at the end of this process. Courtney Washburn, the Mayor's Chief of Staff, reviewed goals for the Task Force, which include the following:

- Enlist a diverse group of multidisciplinary community leaders who represent critical stakeholders involved and committed to responding strategically, objectively and compassionately to the housing and homelessness crisis.
- Analyze all data points to ensure the solution(s) are informed and supported by data and matched to evidence-based interventions.
- Understanding that shelter will remain a critical component of Boise's response to homelessness, prepare a recommendation for a specific siting and suite of best practices for doing shelter better.
- Strengthen relationships between the city, residents and community partners.
- Provide a clear course of action and a foundation for shelter as part of Boise's long-term response to homelessness.

And Maureen Brewer, the City's Our Path Home Administrator, reviewed some feasibility criteria for shelter siting that the Task Force is to take up in the coming weeks. Those are as follows:

- **Land Availability:** The proposed location needs to be on land owned by the City of Boise, Interfaith Sanctuary, another partner agency, or available for purchase.
- **Timeline Driven:** The proposed location needs to be available to develop/redevelop in a timely manner to ensure that Our Path Home is able to respond to the night-by-night crisis.
- **Right-Sized Investment:** The cost of the proposed project needs to preserve Our Path Home's ability to invest in housing first solutions that end homelessness, not just manage it.
- **Proximity to Services:** The proposed location needs to be in close proximity to services for those experiencing homelessness or be along transit routes that easily connect community members to services.

- **Site Development:** proposal must accommodate the needs of the night-by-night crisis in terms of the proposed shelter size (total beds) and the parcel's ability to support that (code compliance).
- **Shelter Design:** must be manageable for Interfaith Sanctuary's sustainable operational needs and business plan

Norms and Principles: After introductions and some discussion about the assigned readings and proposed feasibility principles, there seemed to be some group consensus that:

- a) The language we use to describe homelessness matters, but we will focus on being generous with one another as we learn this new language, on listening carefully to one another and asking questions, and on centering the dignity and shared humanity of those experiencing homelessness.
- b) Neighborhood perspectives are complex and varied, and must be taken into account as decisions move forward.
- c) Shelter siting is not a new problem, nor is it unique to Boise. There was some excitement expressed that we might be able to work together to move forward toward workable solutions to care for our fellow Boiseans.

Group Recommendations from Day 1

The Task Force facilitator and planners will work to address the following:

- a) The feasibility criteria will be further explored.
- b) The Partner Statement of Commitment needs to be revised based on feedback and reintroduced next meeting.
- c) The City has pledged to interview people who represent constituencies who may not be present on the current Task Force.
- d) Some contacts in the room did not receive an email from the facilitator, so we need to make sure contacts are up to date.