

City of Boise Shelter Better Task Force Feasibility Criteria Q&A

On Week 2 of the Shelter Better Task Force, questions were collected from task force members regarding the feasibility criteria for the proposed emergency shelter. The questions have been recorded under each criteria listed below and will soon be answered by Our Path Home representatives.

Feasibility Criteria #1: Shelter Design

Shelter design must be manageable for Interfaith Sanctuary's sustainable operational needs and business plan.

Q: What does this mean in terms of size? Has IFS (Interfaith Sanctuary) determined what is currently manageable?

Q: Can we get a copy of the proposed plan, business plan, etc....?

Q: What are the operational needs and business plan?

Q: Should shelter design also focus on meeting the needs of its guests in a holistic and humanitarian way?

Q: Is concentration needed (Pros/Cons of one shelter)?

Q: Considering options outside of Interfaith's operating model could lead to better shelter in Boise. Can we consider these, too? (e.g. expanding Permanent Supportive Housing or housing stock to reduce need for shelter, especially from long term users; move to scattered site model with smaller distributed shelters, etc...)

Q: Can we address whether maintaining an increased private funding stream to support expanded shelter is sustainable? What if funds fall short?

Q: We should outline services needed in building.

Q: Must be manageable for surrounding community; shouldn't concentrate those in need.

Feasibility Criteria #2: Site Development

Site development proposal must accommodate the needs of the night-by-night crisis in terms of the proposed size of the shelter (total beds) and the parcel's ability to support that (code compliance).

Q: Can we entertain creative approaches, multiple smaller shelters for example?

Q: What is the best data to determine this fit? (e.g. Current occupancy, projected/potential growth of people experiencing homelessness, current housing solutions in the works?)

Q: How to balance night-by-night needs within the greater context of the community and neighborhood in which the shelter may reside? Define night-by-night needs.

Q: I don't understand what this is trying to say.

Feasibility Criteria #3: 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.

Q: How does this (does this?) incorporate the needs for EMS, fire, other emergency services?

Q: Can we better understand what these services are?

Q: What services will Interfaith Sanctuary provide? What is being duplicated?

Q: What are the services at or near the proposed location?

Q: What services are these and where are they located?

Q: Can we consider alternate options such as a private shuttle which SLC implements?

Q: Has there been research on what the most successful proximity is? How does public transport impact this?

Q: Where would those transit routes be that would easily provide that access?

Q: Which services are most important? Which services are used most often? Is walkable more helpful than bus?

Q: Transit should connect to needed destination conveniently.

Feasibility Criteria #4: 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.

Q: With land prices going up, is a new purchase really an option?

Q: Are there any other City owned properties, other than the Salvation Army building?

Q: The building has already been purchased by Interfaith Sanctuary, yes?

Q: With only one location?

Q: Will there be a map provided with alternate locations that currently meet this criteria?

Feasibility Criteria #5: 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.

Q: What is the timeline? Need specifics and what has to be done by when.

Q: What is the timeline? Are there proposed dates?

Q: What is the timeline in question? Are interim solutions available to bridge the gap? (e.g. Boise Rescue Mission absorbing folks, continuing hotel rental, etc...?)

Q: What is the current development/redevelopment timelines and how does this fit?

Q: I don't understand how Our Path Home is responding nightly to a crisis.

Feasibility Criteria #6: 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.

Q: What is the cost of the project?

Q: How will we get more investment? There is a funding shortage for the size of the problem.

Q: The prior proposed reflected an expansion of the number of emergency shelter beds in Boise. To effectively use more beds, can Boise commit to bringing on the equivalent number of additional affordable housing units per month?

Q: Will the investment include projected costs of fully supporting shelter operations in years to come?

Q: Can we entertain other funding models involving broader partners, gov'ts, etc...?

Q: Are the cost of operations considered in this proposal? Based on solution?

Q: Will Our Path Home be contributing private and/or federal or city/state funding?

Q: We should not build more permanent emergency shelter space than needed long term.

Additional Questions

Q: Can we utilize the tons of empty commercial buildings? For shelters and resources?

Q: There has been a lot of talk about impacts (Pros and Cons) about the shelter location on State St. How are those impacts being addressed?

Q: Why do the success criteria not include any metrics regarding surrounding land use, appropriate site selection, and public service availability?

Q: Neighborhood impacts need to be identified and addressed if possible.