

Week 5 Summary: Defining Shelter Better in Boise

Summary: The focus for week 5 was on *defining shelter better in Boise*. We heard from Interfaith Sanctuary, the City's partner in addressing the night-by-night crisis. Interfaith operates the only low-barrier, housing-first emergency shelter in Boise. IFS presenters discussed the specific types of programming Interfaith provides, and Interfaith Executive Director Jodi Peterson covered shelter operations. In particular, she discussed why maintaining multiple, smaller shelters scattered around the City is expensive, resource-intensive, and creates unsustainable organizational demands on IFS.

Opening Business

Neighborhood Engagement Plan. Task Force Chair Courtney Washburn reminded task force members that the City is responding to neighbor requests for increased engagement by holding half-hour workshop opportunities after task force meetings, as well as a longer workshop for invited neighborhood leaders this upcoming Wednesday. These leaders will have an opportunity to present to the Task Force at the next meeting (Week 6).

Courtney also explained why Interfaith is the City's primary partner in addressing emergency shelter in Boise.

Presentations

Task Force members heard from Interfaith Sanctuary presenters about programs offered by Interfaith, as well as operations and operational constraints.

Presentations included the following:

- Andy Scoggin, President of the Board of Interfaith Sanctuary, provided opening remarks about the history of Interfaith and the need to site a new shelter somewhere in the City and in one location
- Jodi Peterson, Executive Director of Interfaith, gave an overview of Interfaith programming and partnerships, and described the operational strain caused by operating different locations under COVID. She also described Interfaith's flexibility as part of the response system. Members from the IFS management team each also briefly presented on various aspects of shelter operations and programs:
 - Maranda Jay, Director of Case Management
 - Thomas Bernier, Director of the Hotel Shelter
 - Terrence Sharrer, Supervisor of Project Recovery
 - Nicki Vogel, Supervisor of Project Well Being

Task Force questions were collected on index cards or entered in the Zoom chat, and were answered by IFS staff and leadership during the meeting. Q&A can be viewed via the meeting recording posted on the [City's Shelter Better Task Force website](#).

Closing announcements:

- Next week the Task Force will hear from neighborhood leadership regarding their concerns, and also from a brokerage firm and Our Path Home Administrator Maureen Brewer on the “land scan” and list of potential shelter sites being analyzed for consideration.
- The FAQ generated from Task Force members in response to shelter feasibility criteria was handed out and will also be posted on the [task force website](#).
- The Task Force leadership respectfully requests that the public submit all comments and questions to the Task Force facilitator, Dr. Jen Schneider, at jenschneider@boisestate.edu. This reduces email burden on task force members, ensures questions and comments are properly routed, and respects the privacy of task force members to the extent possible.