To: Members of the Advisory Committee to the California Interagency Council on Homelessness

From: Cal ICH Staff

Subject: Recommendations from Members of the Advisory Committee on Measuring Collective Impact and Strengthening Implementation of Funding and Programs

Date: August 9, 2023

PURPOSE

This memo summarizes the recommendations made from members of the Advisory Committee following the May 8th Committee Meeting. At this meeting, Committee Members were given the opportunity to comment on two high-level questions that would be used to inform the process for updating the Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness. Committee Members were also given the opportunity to continue the conversations in a smaller group to further develop and refine recommendations. These groups focused on the following prompts:

1. Implementation of Funding and Programs: How could the State better align funding and/or coordinate across programs to improve their collective impact?
2. Performance Measurement: How can the State best asses its progress on the commitments it has made in the Action Plan?

This memo summarizes the recommendations from each smaller group for discussion among the full Advisory Committee. The recommendations will ultimately go to the Interagency Council for consideration and discussion at their meeting on September 4th.

Full notes of each work session are available in attachments A and B below.

IMPLEMENTATION OF FUNDING AND PROGRAMS

Members of the Committee made the following recommendations:

The Council should pursue actions to reduce administrative burden for applicants, including:

- The creation of a unified homeless funding application, especially in cases where eligible applicants and uses are duplicative (such as Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP), Encampment Resolution Fund (ERF), Behavioral Health Bridge Housing (BHBH) programs), and potential consolidation of overlapping programs into one more comprehensive program.

- Consolidating audits across multiple programs.

- Aligning timelines/reporting with similar federal funding sources.

- Creating multi-year funding applications, as the federal government is considering for the CoC program.

- Direct generalized administrative funding to entities that administer homeless services, akin to CalFresh Administration or Medi-Cal Administration allocations to counties.

The Council should explore opportunities to strengthen capacity among funded entities and their service providers with an eye towards advancing equity, including:

- Providing guidance on minimum administrative support for providers that contract with state grantees, including direction to ensure admin dollars reach culturally-sensitive providers serving marginalized communities to allow these entities to invest in needed back-office functions.

- Reducing instances for awardees and their funded service to ''float'' costs of programs due to factors like A) lengthy gaps between award and execution of contracts or B) the cost-reimbursement basis of funding. The Council should lower the barriers to obtaining cash advances.

- The Council should work with grantees to lower barriers to smaller, culturally-sensitive providers accessing funding. This should include incentivizing grantees to remove procurement and contracting requirements that screen out organizations that are well-equipped to serve marginalized populations but may not meet all traditional procurement requirements.

- Fostering greater roles for people with lived experience of homelessness in decision-making among grantees, including allowing/incentivizing stipends for people with lived experience and greater support for peer support programs.

- Center marginalized communities: provide Technical Assistance for rural communities, invite tribal entities to the planning process, and ensure program data is disaggregated by race.

- Support the unique needs of different communities with funding that supports uses like fostering community buy-in, peer support programs and other workforce development programs, planning efforts to reduce permitting times, and other flexible, innovative uses.

The Council should advocate to the Administration and Legislature to prioritize changes to how state funding is structured, including:

- Providing ongoing funding or multi-year funding for programs like HHAP, including multiyear application cycles, which would reduce administrative burden and allow for longer-range planning and investments in uses such as Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) that successfully end people's homelessness.

- Consider baseline funding, coupled with increased funding beyond baseline for uses such as capital and innovation.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Members of the Committee made the following recommendations:

Action Area 1: Strengthening Systems

- Assessment of how people with lived experience are included in the decision-making process

- Assessment of partnerships across systems

Action Area 2: Unsheltered Homelessness

- Analysis of the adverse health impacts of COVID, opioids and substance use, and other factors for those experiencing unsheltered homelessness

- Assessment of whether communities have standard protocols or responses to encampments that mitigate sweeps or arrests of people using substances

- Analysis of the number of unsheltered people moving into managed encampments and sheltered settings or placed into permanent housing

- Expanding the count of people experiencing homelessness to include people in hospitals, jails, and other institutions

Action Area 3: Sheltering and Interim Housing

- Assessment of the length of time people spend in shelters and interim housing

- Analysis of the rate of successful exits from shelters and interim housing compared to a determined baseline measure

- Expand data from clients to include Coordinated Entry master lists

Action Area 4: Permanent Housing

- Analysis of racial disparities in access to permanent housing

- Analysis of how many permanent housing units need to be created, including unit production and rental subsidies, compared to the current creation of units each year

Action Area 5: Prevention

- Analysis of outcomes from specific programs, including the number of people returning to homelessness after exiting to permanent housing

- Assessment of the costs and investments received by clients through services and time spent with clients

- Assessment of housing retention over several time periods (6 months, 1 year, etc.)

Council Members also recommended that an analysis of racial equity disparities be conducted for every Action Area and that local communities should assess racial disparities as well.

NEXT STEPS

At the Advisory Committee Meeting on August 14th, Committee members will discuss and agree on a final set of recommendations. Then, members of the Advisory Committee will present these ideas to the Council on September 7th. The Council will discuss these recommendations with Committee members and may decide to incorporate them into the Action Plan or take other action to develop the recommendations further.

Additionally, Cal ICH Staff are working to determine other avenues to move these recommendations forward with the wide array of work groups and resources available. While some recommendations may require further discussion by the Advisory Committee to determine their scope or prioritization, others may be better suited for prioritization by the Cal ICH Racial Equity or State Funding and Programs Working Groups, specific Council member departments or agencies, or other groups.

ATTACHMENT A: Implementation of Funding and Programs Notes – July 7, 2023

Q1A. Strategies to Align Funding or Support Effective Use of Funding	Q1B. Examples	Q2. Utilization of Strategies
• **Reduce administrative burden**	• Provide a unified funding application for state homelessness programs • Streamline multiple funding applications • Counties submitting for multiple applications • Guidance on minimum rates of funding that should be expended on admin • consolidate programs into one (ex: dept. of social services that operate the same, review existing programs and identify the ones that can be streamlined • Streamlined audits – reduce number of audits • Streamlining with federal requirements (consistent timelines, eligible uses, and reporting) • Navigate County rules preventing cashflow advances • Mindfulness of changes made by legislation (legislation not passed) • Increase local flexibility to address needs of the community	• Programs (DSS) brought together- collaboration
• **Provide ongoing funding**	• Mutli-year applications (ex: HHAP application – differences in each app, reduce need to reapply) • Clearer guidelines for collaboration • Multi-year funding: Funding cycles in 3 years or more • 2 tiers for funding: Baseline funding and allow for additional funding (capital expenses, innovation, etc.) beyond baseline • Support timely administration of programs and continuity of funding (state contracts to agencies	•

Q1A. Strategies to Align Funding or Support Effective Use of Funding	Q1B. Examples	Q2. Utilization of Strategies
	awarded) – gap of time between award and contract, including reimbursement contracts- reducing financial burden on smaller organizations (i.e. using line of credit to make payroll) • Longer multi-year commitments for supportive housing development (10 year minimum)	
• **Simplify reporting requirements**	• Consistent data reporting on programs, populations served, one space to report (ex: one portal with information of funding sources)	•
• **Ensure financial resources, technical assistance, and guidance reach marginalized communities, including Tribal communities.**	• Communicate possibilities for funding extensions • Support/technical assistance for funding opportunities: understanding eligibility to apply, enough training for applicants to succeed • Easier process for advances, especially in smaller communities • Cash flow advancements at the beginning of the process to support sustainability • Directive on admin dollars for marginalized communities • Ensure that cities, counties, make resources available for smaller communities, assess procurement process and barriers to accessing resources • More technical assistance may be unnecessary (ex: duplicative TA), mindfulness of people's time • Support mentorships/relationships of applicants for TA • Allow for/allocate stipends at CoC/local-level for people with lived experience serving on advisory boards • Tribal set aside and tribal council/consultation in program design • Assess reporting by race (disaggregation)	• Support community buy-in for safe parking and other projects • Collaboration with environmental projects, including stipends • Reducing time needed for permits • Relationships with between people experiencing homelessness and service providers, including police and code enforcement • Provide incentives/support for education (increase job skills, candidate for mental health space work) – peer support

Q1A. Strategies to Align Funding or Support Effective Use of Funding	Q1B. Examples	Q2. Utilization of Strategies
	• Technical assistance focused on rural communities	
• **Provide greater consistency across state funding programs on definitions, performance measurements, questions asked.**	• Consolidate the following CDSS programs into one annual application - CalWORKs Housing Support, CalWORKs Homeless Assistance, HDAP, Home Safe, and Bringing Families Home.	•
• **Focus on equity and engagement with people with lived expertise**	• Creation of LEABs • Paying members with lived experience for their time/knowledge (stipends) – allow greater participation at the local level • Payment schedules and advances • Consulting with tribes on applications/funding/policies • Focus on connecting with rural communities • Require locals to change their procurement process to ensure nonprofits that are culturally sensitive and may be smaller receive funding, potential set-asides or other intentional efforts to include tribal leaders including through obtaining tribal consultation for any state programs • Prioritize permanent housing	•
• **Set performance measurement targets and how progress toward them will be measured**	• Streamlined audits or one audit that fits all requirements • Single portal for data reporting	•

Action Areas	Existing Measures	Additional Measures
Action Area 1: Strengthening Systems	• Comparison of **California's performance across these measures and data points to national and regional trends**.	• Racial disparities (across all action areas) • Guidance on how to address and measure racial disparities • Requiring racial disparities analysis • Inclusion of people with lived expertise in decision making • Measure/assess partnerships • Outcomes from specific programs
Action Area 2: Unsheltered Homelessness		• Health – adverse health impacts on unsheltered populations (covid, opioids, etc.) • Assess whether communities have standard encampment response protocols (prevent sweeps, arrest of people using drugs in public) • Successful placements to sheltered settings and permanent housing • Number of arrests of people who are unsheltered (reducing) • Number of people moving into managed encampments, shelters, other indoor settings. • PIT Counts that include people in hospitals, jails, and other places
Action Area 3: Sheltering and Interim Housing	• The number of **Californians experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness at a point in time**, including Veterans, people experiencing chronic homelessness, families with children, adults, and unaccompanied youth.	• Length of time in shelter/interim housing (by race) • Rates of people exiting from shelter/interim into permanent housing (eventually with a standard that we measure against) • Move toward using Coordinated Entry (master list) data

Action Areas	Existing Measures	Additional Measures
	• The number of **Continuums of Care in California reporting increases versus decreases** in the number of people experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness within Point-in-Time counts. • The number of **people spending time in emergency shelter and transitional housing in California annually**, including Veterans, people experiencing chronic homelessness, families with children, adults, and unaccompanied youth.	
Action Area 4: Permanent Housing	• The number of **Californians successfully exiting homelessness each year.** • The number of **children and youth experiencing homelessness at some point during the school year in California**, including students in families and unaccompanied students.	• Racial equity access to housing • Assessment of how many PH units are needed (production, rental subsidies, other) and how many are being created each year
Action Area 5: Prevention	• The number of **Californians experiencing homelessness for the first time each year.** • The number of **Californians returning to homelessness each year.**	• Returns to homelessness after PH • Dollars invested/received by clients through services and time with clients • Housing retention rate (overtime 6 months, 1 year, etc.)