

# Meeting Notes - July 23, 2015

<b>Mission:</b>	Federal, state, local, and non-governmental leadership working together to improve housing and economic opportunities for the agriculture workforce.
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	Oregon Housing and Community Services 725 Summer St., NE STE. B, Salem, OR 10:00-12:00 PM, Meeting Room 124B
<b>Facilitator:</b>	Theresa Wingard, Policy Analyst, OHCS
<b>Attendees:</b>	Amanda Dalton, Columbia CFG/BMG, Don Herman/OHCS, Laurie Hoefler/LSO, Shoshanah Oppenheim/OHCS, Daniel Quinones/OED, Tomas Schwabe/OR-OSHA, Kim Travis/OHCS, Shelly Wilkins-Ehenger/MCHA, Kathryn Walker/ODA
<b>Agenda:</b>	<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p><b>Presentations:</b></p> <p><b>OHCS' Consolidated Plan (ConPlan) update: Shoshanah Oppenheim OHCS Federal Planning and Policy Manager</b></p> <p>The plan is a five year look ahead at how the state will address the needs identified in the plan and the strategies that will be put in place to address housing, services, and needs of those experiencing homelessness in Oregon communities.</p> <p>We've engaged the communities through a series of public engagement meetings, and are currently in the process of developing the needs assessment and market analysis, both required by HUD. We are working internally to develop a more accurate picture of the needs of persons in Oregon for housing and homeless services. The next step is to draft strategies related to the needs that are identified.</p> <p>OHCS has a stakeholder advisory committee for the Consolidated Plan. The committee includes advocates for housing and homeless services, people who work in the field, corrections, partner agencies. The group reviews Consolidated Plan documents and develops strategies to help us move forward.</p> <p>We've presented to the housing council two times to provide a status of where we are in our planning, and to gain their feedback.</p>

You can find all of the Consolidated Plan materials on the OHCS website.

<http://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/pages/consolidated-plan-five-year-plan.aspx>

The new 2016-2020 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI), is available for review. <http://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/pages/equal-access-to-housing-in-oregon.aspx> The AI informs the strategies put in place in the ConPlan, and, in chapters seven and eight, addresses some of the needs of the agriculture workforce. Feel free to give additional comments to Shoshanah. The more information we have, the more we can use for our planning efforts.

Public engagement included several activities throughout the state. We've conducted roundtables with providers and housing services (developers, service industry/pantires DV), and community events (panel/screened American Winter). The kind of outreach offered depended on the city's needs. We offered surveys in English and Spanish. The response to the Spanish survey was not high, which was expected. We decided that a more targeted conversation and forums were better geared to the Spanish speaking community. OHCS hired a contractor to provide leadership and develop an outreach strategy for the Spanish speaking communities. Six community forums have been held in Salem, Woodburn, Madras, Metolius, Coos Bay, and one other.

The contractor's report reiterates what we learned from the English speaking outreach, and gives you a sense of the housing needs. The results show there are not enough units, they are not affordable, they are not large enough for families, not close to where people are working, and any mark on their credit history or criminal background makes it hard for the Spanish speaking community to find affordable housing units. More specifically, they are concerned about immigration issues, are living in substandard housing because housing is so limited, and don't want to complain because of their immigration status or the fear of not finding another place to live. The turnout has been smaller at these events than those held in English. The total participants for all of the events held in English was over 300. Seventy three participants attended the forums, and 27 were present at focus groups for the Spanish speaking communities.

In addition to all issues across the spectrum, Spanish speaking communities had

concerns about reporting or engaging with leadership and management. The report shows that this group often uses their children’s social security numbers and documentation to secure housing. This later can create credit history issues for their children. This report will be used to shape what we understand the needs to be, and provide depth to the reporting that is required by HUD. The community engagement activities are telling us what the needs are on the ground; not enough units, units are not affordable, and are not located near services that people need.

The contractor’s final report will be available soon, and will be included as a supplemental report to the Conplan. This Conplan will be a more strategic plan and have a higher emphasis on fair housing.

**Discussion:**

Shelly Wilkins-Ehenger reported that the Marion County Housing Authority has used some of the data from the OHCS outreach to support their planning efforts. She noted that it tracks with what they are seeing as the needs in the community.

Q: Is there a member on the SAC representing the agriculture workforce? Maybe this group could engage him to help communicate concerns to the bigger group as a whole.

A: Roberto Jimenez is a developer of farmworker housing and is a member of the SAC.

Q: Is there a way to add temporary housing now for farmworkers? The Ag industry is a five billion dollar industry.

A: As OHCS develops housing, farmworkers will be a consideration. It makes sense for this team to develop a plan and make a recommendation. OHCS would be interested in knowing what this group thinks is the best path. The Agriculture Workforce Housing Tax Credit (AWHTC) is available to use for agriculture workforce housing.

**AWHTC Status:**

Don Herman, OHCS, reported there will be a total of nine projects this year, two projects have been completed for on-farm full time employees in the Hood River, Parkdale area. All tax credits will have been used once the last project has been reviewed.

**Oregon Employment Department (OED): Daniel Quinones/Migrant workers:**

Daniel provided an update on migrant worker housing, noting that farmers have

enough workers and don't appear to be concerned about providing housing. The weight falls on the local contractors to bring in the workers.

Q: Do you have any data on projected needs.

A: No specific numbers. Usually workers live with other families. They don't have knowledge of local services when they arrive. OED takes food baskets to the fields, educates workers about eating crops that have been sprayed. The workers need a safe place to come to. They are only here for a few months. Contacted parks department, but they don't have any parks that could be used for temporary housing.

Q: How many migrant workers are there?

A: Currently 12,000 in the valley. Usually 15 to 16,000.

Q: Any decision or thoughts on how to improve use of H2A in Oregon. Washington uses the H2A program quite a bit.

A: H2A listings are very few in Oregon (30). Last meeting's presentation did not include a discussion on the laws and rules and what changes that could be made here in Oregon.

Q: Is the H2A program underutilized or not a good fit?

A: Good fit when there is a shortage of workers. Has to do with work availability and wages. Dora Herrera, OED, runs program.

A: Most of the housing is pre 70s and has not been updated. The owners don't want to lose the right to the housing. The units may even be empty.

A: Employers must give the jobs to the local workforce before H2A workers. And, local worker's salaries must be raised to those of the H2A workers. ( currently \$13.80)

**OHCS Housing Integrators: Kim Travis**

OHCS has two Housing Integrators, formerly known as Regional Advisors to the Department (RAD). The RADs were field based, working in the communities, but now the new positions work out of Salem and statewide, and deal with issues rather than being regionally specific. Kim Travis and Kenny LaPoint share the functions of these positions. The positions were repurposed six months ago, and are still in the development stage. The Integrators work with OHCS colleagues including the planning unit, and others on the NOFAs.

**The three basic functions of these positions include:**

- **Working with various regional collaborative efforts:**
  - Engage with Regional Solutions Teams around the state where housing has

	<p>been identified as a priority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work with Coordinated Care Organizations on ways to align services. Kenny’s primary focus is to work with Coordinated Care Organizations on Community Health Improvement Plans. He is tracking where housing has been identified as a priority and working on ways to influence housing in plans where it is not identified.</li> <li>○ Engaging with Workforce Investment Boards to integrate better with them to help ensure people living in affordable housing units are provided opportunities to access living wage jobs, and potentially move into home ownership.</li> <li>○ Early Learning Collaboratives are in the early stages of development. We are working to determine the best way to be involved with this group, but we know that housing stability leads to improved outcomes for students.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Working with partners to explore innovative examples of best practices and improved outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Kenny is working with a team to find ways to integrate health and housing. For example, health clinics, dental clinics, and service providers on site.</li> <li>○ Researching key areas like reentry housing for those coming out of various institutions, for which housing stability is critical for improved outcomes.</li> <li>○ Land use and fair housing issues, and how to incentivize developers to build more affordable housing</li> <li>○ Manufactured home replacements in parks and on fee simple land. We know these units are beyond their useful life and are often unhealthy, as well as high energy costs creating a burden on the tenant or owner.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Serving as representatives of OHCS with advisory groups and committees:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DHS housing policy efforts/workgroup,</li> <li>○ Local housing advisory communities, including Hood river group working on housing issues to inform city council</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion:</b>                  Help is needed to develop creative community based temporary migrant housing independent of any one grower. Ways of meeting housing needs</p>
--	---

Meyer Memorial is looking for best practices. Potential for planning and implementation possibly looking at Washington's farmworker housing development process and how to duplicate it in Oregon. Marion County Housing Authority (MCHA) offered to partner with Oregon Employment Division (OED) to develop migrant worker housing through Meyer Memorial Trust. Meyer Memorial may have up to nine additional opportunities. The board of directors wants to give more funding to housing, and is okay with risk taking. MCHA has a piece of property in Woodburn. Rural Development (RD) is part owner of this property. MCHA and RD are open to using this property for migrant worker housing. It was suggested MCHA and OED talk about the planning process and implementation with Meyer Memorial Trust. Daniel noted this would be beyond the scope of his position, but he will work to connect parties. Also want Laurie and Amanda's expertise on this possible project. MCHA has four houses that are empty in Woodburn, and if HUD would allow it, could use these for migrant housing.

It was noted that migrant housing has not come up in Regional Solutions as an issue in the valley, and suggested that this group connect with Regional Solutions. If the lack of seasonal migrant housing were determined to be an economic impediment working with Regional Solutions could help bring the right parties (Ag partners/industry) together to address some of the issues and obstacles.

**Sub-Committee Reports:**

- Needs and Research: Laurie Hoefler/LSO, Marc Overbeck/OHPR – Still gathering information and putting it into an easier to use document.
- Alignment and Streamlining: Claudia Cantu/CASA, Doug Carlson/HUD – No report

**What do Regional Solutions Teams do? What resources do they offer?**

There are 11 regions across the state with five regional solutions centers. Each center has a coordinator and an advisory committee that engage with the cities and counties to develop regional priorities. State agencies are tasked with pooling their resources and expertise to address the priorities. The state agencies assigned are OHCS, ODOT, DEQ, DLCD, and Business Oregon. Other agencies and resources may become engaged to respond to specific priorities. You can see who is assigned to lead each region on the Regional Solutions website.

Regional Solutions information is located at this website:

	<p><a href="http://www.oregon.gov/gov/admin/regional-solutions/Pages/default.aspx">http://www.oregon.gov/gov/admin/regional-solutions/Pages/default.aspx</a></p> <p><b>Information Sharing:</b>                  Marion County Housing Authority’s (MCHA) wait list is open on line in English and Spanish. The wait list is open now because those who were on the list no longer need housing, others don’t want to live outside of Salem and Keizer. The list won’t close anytime soon. They are looking for Marion county residents outside of Salem and Keizer. There are preference listed online (homeless etc.) Really looking for Marion County residents to keep vouchers here. So many people get the voucher and take it back to their communities, but MCHA still pays for it. Happy to train partners on how to complete the application. OED offered space at their office to help people complete applications.</p> <p>OSHA is busy with safety and health concerns. The weather has caused a flood of complaints on field sanitation, lack of water, and lack of facilities. This will likely continue through September. The number of calls is significantly higher because the workers have cell phone numbers for return calls. Now we are able to reach them right away. They are better informed and able to provide good directions.</p>
<b>Action Items</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theresa will research a replacement for Natasha Detweiler/OHCSs on the Needs and Research team.</li> <li>• Daniel will prepare for a possible presentation in September</li> </ul>
<b>Next Meeting:</b>	<p>Thursday, September 24, 2015                  Oregon Housing and Community Services                  10:00a-12:00p, Room 124B</p>
<b>Contact:</b>	<p>Theresa Wingard, Policy Analyst, OHCS                  (503) 986-0999   <a href="mailto:theresa.wingard@oregon.gov">theresa.wingard@oregon.gov</a></p>

