

Updated SAG Talking Points 7/31/17

Hi I'm Amanda Saul from Enterprise Community Partners. Enterprise and CSH submitted a letter to the SAG recommending that bond funding be used to help create 300 units of Permanent Supportive Housing for chronically homeless people. PSH is a well-known, effective tool to reduce visible homelessness and address the underlying causes of poverty. We know based on a study that CSH did last spring that we need at least 1700 units of PSH to fill our current need.

We have a rare opportunity with the Bond. You need 3 funding sources for PSH – capital, on-going rental assistance/operations and on-going services. With the bond and the rental assistance from Home Forward we have 2 of the 3 resources needed to develop PSH. I understand that no one wants to create PSH and then not be able to provide the needed services. Luckily it will take 5 – 7 years to create bond funded projects and with time, our funding partners at Multnomah County can find resources or allocate resources differently to help pay for services. I also hope that in the next 5 – 7 years as a community we will pass new, local funding mechanisms to help pay for needed services – like we did with this bond. And find new opportunities by using resources such as Medicaid in new ways. There are many people working on this right now.

You've received letters of support for additional PSH units from the Chair's office, JOHS and from Care Oregon. All these partners understand that more PSH is needed in our community. I'm pleased to see that "Households experiencing homelessness or at imminent risk of becoming homeless" are a priority community for the bond funding. I encourage the SAG to be clear in the unit and population targets in order to hold ourselves accountable to delivering those targets. If the SAG makes PSH a clear goal and comes to the table with 2 of the 3 resources needed, I believe either through partnerships, the reallocation of existing resources or new resources we can build 300 units of PSH.

When considering locations for PSH properties it is important to be near health services, mental health services, public transportation, access to public benefits and healthy food. I am concerned that the wording in #4 of the DRAFT Selection Criteria for Acquisition may unintentionally make it difficult to place PSH in neighborhoods with access to nearby services, such as downtown and the Pearl. I encourage you to provide options for flexibility and opportunity for placing PSH projects and other affordable projects.

Thank you.

Amanda Saul

Senior Program Director

Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.

1001 SW 5th Ave., Suite 300, Portland, OR 97204

Desk: 503.553.5646 | Cell: 503.740.7594

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