



## Oregon Housing and Community Services Five-Year Strategic Plan Consultation Roundtable Meetings Summary (April and May 2015)

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The Federal Planning Unit and Public Affairs Staff traveled to the following cities to discuss issues related to housing and homeless services to support the consolidated planning process and the development of the strategic plan: Ontario, Coos Bay/North Bend, Klamath Falls, Tillamook, McMinnville, Medford, The Dalles, Hood River, Pendleton, and Redmond.

Below is a summary of the responses we received when we asked service providers and our community partners' what the top issues and priorities were for services and housing needs in their communities. This information will support OHCS' Consolidated Plan and our strategic planning efforts.

### **1. Housing**

- Not enough units
- Affordable housing is far from work
- Multiple families in units lead to overcrowding
- Large gaps between subsidized or low income housing and market rate housing
- Unrealistically high market rate rents
- Not enough new housing developments
- Increase in foreclosures is increasing the number of renters
- Long waiting lists and higher standards for potential tenants
- Child care is not considered in expense calculations
- Increase in population means fewer housing options
- Not enough accessible units or units for seniors to age in place
- Not enough units for families with more than four persons

### **2. Living Wages**

- Not enough qualifications for higher wage jobs- need work readiness programs
- Don't have funds to move – deposits and application fees are barrier to housing
- Increase in tuitions keeps many from furthering education
- Fair Market Rent (FMR) allowances are not sufficient; do not take into account high cost of utilities and low wages
- People have to commute long distances for work- cannot afford to live in many communities

### **3. Limited reentry options**

- Not enough drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs
- Post-prison supervision and criminal history make finding housing impossible
- No housing plan for people re-entering communities after incarceration, treatment and medical discharge

#### **4. High cost of utilities**

- Housing doesn't have appropriate weatherization, creating unhealthy standards and high electric bills
- Long wait lists for energy assistance, funds run out early every month
- Rent plus utilities exceeds FMR

#### **5. Housing doesn't meet inspection standards**

- Poor overall condition of low income housing throughout state
- Many rentals have bug infestations and mold issues
- Rural areas don't have enough inspections for cleanliness and safety
- People will live in poor quality and unsafe housing because of the lack of units

#### **6. Discrimination against tenants with specific issues**

- Discrimination against voucher holders still persists, despite recent legislation
- Discrimination against undocumented and limited English speaking individuals
- Discrimination against those with criminal backgrounds
- Discrimination against protected classes persists

#### **7. Need for supportive services and education**

- Those receiving program assistance don't know program specifics
- Both tenants and landlords need fair housing education
- Second chance programs and Rent Well education is needed
- Tenants need education on budgeting skills
- Permanent supportive housing is critical for some populations
- Benefits cliff is a problem for persons moving off assistance, need continuation or scaled benefits as income increases

#### **8. Other compounding problems**

- Transportation costs are high and public transportation is unreliable or non-existent
- Many go hungry as they have to pay bills over food
- Excessive medical bills or debt
- Past rental history
- Domestic violence and associated complications
- FMR rates are out of date and not reflective of community
- Difficulty meeting federal program requirements, cost of reporting, and lack of coordination between service providers