

**DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY**  
**REDMOND COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS TASK FORCE**  
**MEETING 2 – MAY 13, 2015**  
**6:30 – 9:00 pm**  
**TOGETHER CENTER, 16225 NE 87<sup>th</sup> Street Redmond**  
**Building A, Rainier Room**

**Task Force Members in Attendance:**

Meghan Altimore, Pam Mauk, Steve Daschle, Gary Smith, Andrew Koeppen, Carolyn Mansfield, Chris Falco, Lara Bolger, Marian LaBeck, Andrea Liggett, Derek Wentorf, Tasha Witherspoon

**Staff in Attendance:**

Chief Ron Gibson, Commander Charlie Gorman, Jane Christenson, Colleen Kelly, Brooke Buckingham, Karen Reed-Facilitator

**Members of the Public Observing the Meeting:**

Clyde Wright

**Welcome, Introductions, Review of Agenda**

Karen Reed welcomed the group and reviewed the ground rules and agenda.

**Task Force Formation & Process**

The Task Force Charter was approved as presented with one change: September 30, 2015 will be the date by which the Task Force forwards its recommendations to Council.

**Re-cap of Meeting 1 and Response to Questions**

The draft summary of Meeting 1 was approved by the group, with the addition of a comment regarding the increase in crime in Redmond and the Police Chief's observation that this increase cannot be tied definitively to homeless individuals.

The staff have gathered responses to most of the questions submitted to date by the Task Force. Karen reviewed these answers with the group. This list will be updated for each meeting.

The raw data of all comments received at the March Community Meeting on Homelessness was circulated to the Group and is posted online:

<http://www.redmond.gov/Residents/HomelessnessInRedmond>

### **Task Force Homework on Concerns and Underlying Causes**

Karen gave a short presentation summarizing results of the homework submitted by Task Force members on concerns regarding, and underlying causes of, homelessness in Redmond. She observed there is a lot of diversity in the group, but some commonality as well. The concerns most frequently mentioned by Task Force Members include: safety and property concerns; homeless youth population concerns; inadequate services; inadequate shelter, housing and facilities; resources and policies that are misdirected; inaccurate/incomplete public understanding. The underlying causes most frequently identified include: lack of mental health care services; societal factors; the wrong policies being deployed; lack of social services/funding for same; lack of facilities (day shelters, etc.); lack of affordable housing; lack of public understanding and how to help; lack of jobs for the homeless; the homeless may not know how to get the services they need. Karen noted that many of the concerns identified are also listed as underlying causes.

### **Presentation on Current Systems Available to Address Homelessness in Redmond**

Brooke Buckingham presented data as to funding by individual cities and other governments/major stakeholders on homelessness; how the Eastside Cities compare to one another in human services funding investment, an inventory of the type and number of reported “beds” available for the homeless on the Eastside (defined for this purpose as Redmond, Kirkland, Bellevue and Issaquah). A summary of “point in time” homeless count of shelter and unsheltered individuals in 2012-2015 was also shared.

Additional information was requested by Task Force members on the “non-reported” facilities available—such as church parking lots where homeless live in campers, as well as the number of housing units that ARCH has helped to support in recent years.

Chief Gibson spoke to the public concern regarding homeless youth in downtown. Police assess that about three-quarters of the youth congregating and the Library are from the Landing or related to that population. It was noted that since the 25 foot perimeter no loitering/no smoking rule has been implemented at the Library that many of the youth have either moved to the public parks by the river, or moved inside the Library, but there is no longer a regular group congregating outside the door. It was observed that displacement is not necessarily a solution to this challenge.

The Chief reviewed the cost of arresting and incarcerating individuals who are breaking laws; he noted that many of the behaviors that make people uncomfortable (hanging out in groups in public parks) are not necessarily illegal and the police cannot arrest people simply for congregating peacefully in a public space.

The Chief and Colleen Kelly explained that the Eastside Cities are collaborating with Congregations for the Homeless to fund expanded outreach services for homeless men from a part time to full time position shared by several cities; the City also has one neighborhood resource officer spending a lot of time focused on outreach and response to the homeless. This focus diverts from other issues but the Chief thinks this is appropriate given public concerns. The Chief feels the increased presence of homeless individuals in the downtown area has had a negative impact on the community as a whole.

This situation has been more of a concern in the last two years. Derek Wentorf noted that Friends of Youth has 2 outreach workers to cover the Eastside. Steve Daschle noted that outreach services aren't very helpful if there is nowhere to take people for shelter.

**Site Visits:**

Over the next month, each Task Force member is asked to attend 2 site visits before the next Task Force meeting. Staff are working on six different opportunities for site visits, including: Congregations for the Homeless; The Landing; Camp Unity; Avondale Park; The Sophia Way; and Open Kitchen. A sign-up sheet was circulated. Colleen will follow up with members to set a firm date and time for each site visit.

**Preparations for Next Meeting:**

Before the next Task Force meeting, Colleen will be conducting focus groups with two to four different groups of homeless individuals (Landing clients; Camp Unity residents; women/family homeless; possibly youth at the library).

In addition, the Task Force support team recommends we get input from the business community impacted by homelessness. To this end, Colleen will work with downtown business representatives on the Task Force to develop a panel that can speak to impacts, concerns and ideas for potential solutions. While this will not be a broad survey, it should provide additional information and ideas for the Task Force's consideration, in addition to the input from the March Community Meeting.

The Task Force members identified questions they would like to be asked of the various homeless populations as well as the business community. (See Attachment A for list of questions offered). These questions may need to be consolidated, given the limited time available for discussion; Colleen will work with the Steering Committee on the final lists of questions to be posed.

Karen reviewed the agenda for the next meeting and the list of questions submitted at this meeting for staff follow-up.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

**Attachment A: Lists of suggested focus group questions as offered by Task Force Members**

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**Questions proposed to ask Landing Residents**

	Are you using other services in addition to the Shelter?
	What services would help you get back on your feet?
	Why are you here?
	How did you hear about the Landing?
	What hasn't worked for you?
	Where to you go during the day when you're not at the Landing?
	Do you have a job? Would you like one? What do you need to be able to get a job?
	How many nights are you at the Landing each week? Where do you stay the other nights?
	Do you feel safe at the Landing?
	Do you feel safe when you're not at the Landing? What makes you feel un-safe?

**Questions for Landings Operators**

	How many more staff do you need and what would you do with them?
	What other resources do you lack?
	What is the turn-away count?
	How many funders to you report to?
	Is government causing the problem? (federal/state/local)
	What day programs do you have available? What day programs to you wish you could offer?
	What's the rate of staff turnover? Why?
	How do you define success?
	Tell us the themes and needs that you see from the clients you serve
	Who provides "best in class" service to homeless youth – what do they do that's similar to what you do and what do they do differently?
	What are the top 3 things that your clients need to transition to a more productive way of life
	Are there things in the transcript from your clients that you disagree with, and if so, what are they?
	What 3 things do you want the community to know about the youth you serve?
	How do you admit guests and why do you use this process?
	What do you do for the kids you have to turn away?
	What are the negative influences the clients are experiencing?

**Questions proposed to ask Other Homeless Residents**

	Are you using other services in addition to the shelter?
	What services would help you get back on your feet? Are they available to you?
	Why are you here?
	How did you hear about this shelter?
	What hasn't worked for you?

	Where to you go during the day when you're not at the shelter?
	Do you have a job? Would you like one? What do you need to be able to get a job?
	How many nights are you at the shelter each week? Where do you stay the other nights?
	Do you feel safe at the shelter?
	Do you feel safe when you're not at the shelter? What makes you feel un-safe?
	What barriers do you face to securing permanent housing?

**Questions proposed to ask Camp Unity residents?**

	Why are you here?
	What would you need to transition out of here?
	Do you want to transition out of here?
	Do you feel safe / secure here?
	Do you like the structure here?
	Are you ok with the responsibilities you have here?
	What do you do during the day when you're not here?
	Do you have a job? Would you like one? What would it take to help make that possible for you?
	Would you prefer to be in housing—if it was affordable to you, clean and safe?
	What are the barriers you experience to getting permanent housing?

**Questions proposed to ask business owners**

	What impact is homelessness in downtown Redmond having: On your business? On your employees? On your customers?
	How often have you called the police about individuals who are apparently homeless?
	How much money and time have you spent to remedy the situation? (rough estimate)
	In general, what are the problems you experience
	Do you feel safe? How about your employees?
	When did you start experiencing these issues?
	What is your expectation for a solution—what does success look like? Zero presence of homeless individuals or?
	What solutions would you recommend the Task Force consider?
	Are there solutions you are willing to invest in?
	Have you experienced any property damage?
	How much do you know for certain about who is causing the problems for you (do they appear homeless or have you been able to confirm they are homeless)?
	Do you know what resources are available locally to which you can refer homeless individuals for help?