

Attendees

- Is this Ada County information or Boise City? If I live in Garden City, do I have input into this?
 - A. Response:** This is basically Boise City. I would say the records open, we've solicited the public whether the City wants to know whether or not what Garden City people think about how they spend it, that's up to them.

- Tell me what that chronically homeless individuals number is, 82 chronically homeless in the Point-in-Time count? We run a homeless day shelter and we get at least 110 people a day.
 - A.** Yes, that's what they had in the 2015 Point-in-Time count. That is interesting and that could mean the number is going up or also the PIT is fairly prescriptive in how that's counted. I wasn't here when that count was taken in Boise so I'm not sure how extensive it was. Sometimes there are people that don't want to go through the interview with the counter.

- So we know the HUD numbers nationally in 2015 were 43% of the people counted by HUD nationally were people with disabilities. Does Boise's reflect that same 43% amount or is that higher?
 - A.** I don't know.

- Why does HUD identify HIV/AIDS and veterans and things like that, but not people with disabilities because that's almost half the people nationally identified as being a person with a disability? Why wouldn't HUD be more apt to mention that in this? I use the analogy if 50% of the people counted by HUD said they were from Minnesota, I'm sure that would be reflected in the data. There are 16 disabilities listed in the SSA bluebook, and there are only 9 or 10 mental illnesses alone. So to only identify those populations of people I find curious.
 - A.** I think the data that we have on the disabilities somewhat reflects that. Beyond these categories, I don't know that HUD requires in the PIT anything beyond these categories, but that's a good point.

- One of the things, there's the PIT seems to be a flood and HUD is using that for funding. Do the people in HUD talk about that?
 - A.** Almost every community that I work in, people are very skeptical of the PIT numbers in general. I think that that's the case, but I will say on the other hand that once HUD kind of got this PIT thing where almost every community of any size now does it, it gave them at least some data that they could use with Congress to show the need out there and show how the existing appropriations and programs weren't satisfying all of the needs.

- But the PIT count doesn't reflect that though. We know that the PIT count does not specifically shed light to Congress on the entirety of the whole problem because they're only counting people that they find on the street, but the disability community and those who work with our population of people have an understanding that the people that we know are housing vulnerable may contribute to funding and things like this are coming from the middle down.
 - A.** That's true. One of the new important parts of research, and it's tricky, is trying to deal with people who are sharing housing, where they're basically couch surfing, and in some communities that number is much higher than those found on the streets or even people that are accessing shelters or services. One of the ways that we've looked at it is

Five-Year Consolidated Plan Open House Transcript | 12.8.15 4PM

tracking it in the school populations, some kids are in seven or eight schools in a year.

- You mentioned before that if you're on SSI, you're effectively drummed out of the housing market right then because immediate income for rent for a 1-bedroom I think is in the \$600 range where, as we know, the federal benefit rate is \$733, so that entire population of people is out.
 - A. The other thing that makes it more complicated too is originally the concept with the vouchers was that people were going to be able to get housing assistance on top of the SSA/SSI, but the vouchers haven't kept up with the need either so people with disabilities are on the waiting list just like homeless people.
- I am wondering when we're going to get to the part where you all hear from us because here's my thing, first of all—well this is a several part question I guess—why wasn't this information made available before time? This open house was organized way in advance; I came here to speak, not to be lectured. I know many people in this room who know all of this stuff that you're sitting here talking to us about and I think that I'm not the only one who came here to speak, not to be lectured. Like we have ideas, we know this information, or for the people who didn't know the information, you could have made the information available beforehand. And now I'm sitting here, I've been here for twenty minutes because I got here late, but I haven't heard anything new, and I haven't has an opportunity to tell you what I think needs to be done.
 - A. Well you will have an opportunity. I'm trying to give you the context and other people in the room don't have the context.
- I have the context. This could have been made available ahead of time. You're wasting people's time. Why wasn't it provided in advance?
 - A. It wasn't provided in advance because of the meeting schedule. As I said at the beginning, it's going to be up on the City's website, people can look at it, they can provide comment on it, I'm going to give you a place where you can provide your comments, you'll have a chance to speak here, we're going to go through an exercise where you have a chance to discuss and look at the priorities that you think should be set.
- Referring to the slide comparing the number of units available in a given price range vs. what people can afford, I was looking at a similar slide to this, so is what this slide is showing like for Boise, so the difference between the top of bar vs. the bottom of the bar, is that the difference between what we need in Boise?
 - A. For one level, yes. The danger with this data is that not everyone is in the market for a unit at the same time. The problem is timing it with what the demand actually is that's able to move.
- Referring to the Housing Authority Section 8 Voucher slide, where did those numbers come from? I sure hope I didn't provide them because they are incorrect. For Boise City Housing Authority the number of vouchers we have is a little over 1200 and probably 1100 are attached to. There are about 1000 households on the Section 8 waiting list and that's because we closed the waiting list and reopened it.
 - A. This data came from the contact you gave me and it should have been current in October. This is why these meetings are good because we figure out things like this.

Five-Year Consolidated Plan Open House Transcript | 12.8.15 4PM

- As far as public housing units go, what number is that reflecting? What's the difference between public housing program and public housing units?
 - A. I think this came from the person whose name you gave me. I think the public housing units are not the public housing program. I think that's Housing Authority owned units. Certainly before we get to the draft we want to get this information accurate.
- I just want to make sure that I understand, does that mean that if there are 1200 vouchers available, does that mean that there are 1200 people using them right now? And if there's 1000 waiting for one of those spots to open up.
 - A. Basically yes. We're a City and County Housing Authority and we have about 2000 total vouchers and some are assigned to the Ada County program. All the vouchers are being fully utilized, some have attached to housing, some are out searching for housing, about 10-15 vouchers get turned in on a monthly basis either because people no longer need them, they have passed away, they've been terminated, so those come back into availability so there's always some that are open.
- When they talk about supportive services, does that include salaries that are paid to the agencies as well as having the services to the homeless?
 - A. It does to the extent that a lot of the agencies that employ various types of people, you know medical people, health people, case managers, counselors, etc. under some HUD programs can be paid through this money.
- Could HUD distinguish that in terms of a certain percentage, say 35%, is spent on salaries and the rest is spent on other direct services to the homeless. What is the overhead of the \$1.7 million that the City of Boise receives? How much goes to salaries and how much is spent on services?
 - A. There is a category under the Community Development Block Program (CDBG) that is called Public Service, and a lot of the human service provision, the direct services that are offered, come out of that 15% allocation—HUD allows up to 15% of the City's allocation. Some agencies use that for salaries for case managers, some agencies use it for various types of financial assistance, it might even be eviction prevention, providing money for utility deposits, that sort of thing. It would be fairly difficult to clearly discern exactly how much goes into salaries. I'm not sure exactly how you draw the line between salaries and direct service if you have someone providing counseling and you have someone providing well-baby clinic, that sort of thing; it seems to me that's a direct service vs. administrative and usually most communities don't use this public service money for administrative services. They look at it and as they go through the funding process, once they have this plan then each year they'll go through an application cycle and they'll review those applications and try to see who's providing the best bang for the buck in terms of making the kind of impact on the priorities that are in the plan.
- We know there's a ton of duplication of services, I can assure you, because I say with people who take that Community Development Block Grant money a lot, and I can assure you there's a lot of outfits that are federally-funded and state-funded that do the exact same jobs and this we know. So I think that maybe that's a question as to whether the priorities are really square with the emergency that we're in at this time. I want people to have jobs indeed, I'm a service provider, but if a federally funded person isn't in office with somebody who takes that block grant money, and a federally funded person has to take control of the meeting because they're

Five-Year Consolidated Plan Open House Transcript | 12.8.15 4PM

both doing the same job and one may get paid to sit there silently while the other person is basically coordinating.

- A.** I think that's a challenge in public service and that's sometimes why it's so hard to get things done. How do you sort that out and one person's priority may not be the other person's priority. This is part of why today you'll have the chance to spend some money.
- I have a question, how long has Boise and HUD known that there's a lack of affordable housing? 10 years? 8 years?
 - A.** What this picture says to me without having actually lived in the community is that it's a growing trend. Obviously we had kind of the housing downtown in 2008, but the fact of the matter is the people in the lower income range have been lacking decent housing long before we had the housing downturn.
- So what's the big mystery? Why can't we roll up our sleeves and build affordable housing? Why can't the City give the contractors, you know subsidize them, maybe erase the fees, and make it profitable for contractors to come in and build affordable housing because that would happen.
 - A.** I think that's a good question and the same question communities everywhere face.
- \$600,000 on a study? More meetings, more gobbly-gook, and promises and nothing happens.
- I will say this, Matthew, this is really the issue. Housing's always been a disability issue because we've already established that folks who take SSI/SSDI there are incentives to work for worker's disability, disincentives for people to work with disabilities. LINC has been involved, for example say with maybe the Homeless Coalition, we're eight or ten years into this and LINC is probably one of the only organizations that sits on the Homeless Coalition that can earnestly say in the spirit of partnership that we have done exactly nothing to address this short term. Nothing has changed since we first started which is disconcerting to service professionals who have been so actively involved in things like this and we see that nothing has been done. And I don't mean to say to chuck bricks at people, but it's simply maybe to articulate Matthew's point that we've known about this since before the Mayor that's in office now and before that one.
 - A.** Well that's an ongoing challenge and the other reality of it is up until last week the HOME program, which is the largest federal program to try to build housing, Congress almost completely wrote it out. The City was going to get \$34,000 if the appropriation wasn't changed. What can you do with that, buy a few rows of insulation?
- I wondering if you could explain a little bit more about this Community Development Block Grant that we're going to get \$1.27 million of. There must be some strings attached to it or some objects that we have to fulfill so it isn't just we would like to see it used for building affordable housing, supportive housing, having those services available on site, but is that a possibility?
 - A.** Yes that can be done. That certainly falls under what CDBG can be used for. But then look at this last bullet too because this is the tricky one. The City has to put this plan together, those at HUD have to look at it and say okay it complies with what we want, but then we also have manuals of what's eligible, the type of activities that can be done, and so in some ways your job this afternoon is pretty easy because you can just say "I want to fund this priority," but the City has to actually then look at specific proposals from builders, nonprofit organizations, and then they have to take that and make sure that meets all the requirements that HUD has for CDBG or for HOME. For instance on

Five-Year Consolidated Plan Open House Transcript | 12.8.15 4PM

HOME, they have a requirement that any housing that you do with HOME money has to meet Section 8 housing quality standards. So that gets challenging when you're looking at things like homeless shelters or temporarily housing people because Section 8 standards again is the property standard that the Housing Authorities have to use in their Section 8 Housing Voucher program.

- I was looking at the City's draft of the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) and last year the City produced 10 units of affordable housing. This year it looks like about 9 units of production, and so I'm looking at that demand and for those making less than 30% AMI there's a need for about 6000 households, and so I'm doing the math which at 10 units a year that's 600 years. If I were the City I'd be so overwhelmed with that, but one of the other things you clarified a little was that if you built those 6000 units or whatever number it is in one year, that's not appropriate either. What would be really helpful to me and somebody who cares about this, if we were looking at those different income categories and the different kinds of housing there and we had unlimited money, how many units a year or five-year or ten-year period should we be building in each of those categories to kind of keep up with and catch up with the need? You get lost in all the alphabet soup here in the methodology of the CAPER, not you but the public, the City that work with that everyday can look at that and understand that, but it's hard for the general public—they can see the need and if they can't see it, they can feel it and because of some of the circumstances we're feeling it more and more I think in the community. And I'd really like some practical thing, even if it's outside beyond the scope of what the Consolidated Plan has where it has your investment of HOME and CDBG funds. But that, we already know that if they're investing that money and they're building 10 units per year, and I'm sure that's not the total potential, but that isn't going to get us anywhere. I think we need something to reassure us that this is in support of something bigger.
 - A. I fully agree and I think it's frustrating not only for people in the community, but also for local governments that their resource-base is really so minimal and we have this marvelous concept called leveraging where the City has a little bit of money, the Housing Finance Authority has a lot of money, it has low interest mortgages; I mean there are other financial resources out there that need to be leveraged and packaged together. I would say realistically if this community with the resources it has, if it had the development capacity to build 60 affordable rental units a year, it would be a major achievement.
- But the City's numbers suggest that they can house someone for \$24,000/year and we know as service providers that that number is foolish. It's so out of whack it's not even funny. Not hyperbole, we know this from surrounding intermountain states who are faced with the same issue that the \$24,000/year that the City is coming up with is inordinately high. So when we talk about this sometimes we feel like we don't get heard because whenever we seek to bring new numbers to the table we sometimes get long armed.
 - A. The only thing I can say in response to that since I'm not involved in the day-to-day of decisions the City makes, I would say that again as the City goes through its annual application cycles that people need to make a good numbers-based argument about why there's a method to do it that would be more cost effective for the City to invest in because I think that certainly the City would support that if they could get more bang for their buck.

Five-Year Consolidated Plan Open House Transcript | 12.8.15 4PM

- I know Tom that you're not involved in this maybe at the same level as all of us, but we want to think that too. But you know sometimes the City lacks those good faith efforts to try to participate and it's off putting to the people who are so involved and there are a number of instances just in the last few weeks where we thought "Where's the City? Where's the City?" And the only time really the City's ever been involved it seems like is...
- To ticket and arrest people. For being poor.
- We know this is a crisis and emergency and we know good leadership will allow us to think outside the box in these instances, however when we do have those opportunities to think outside the box and to promote ideas from neighboring states with similar issues to ours, when City staff don't participate in those meetings we sometimes have a hard time taking some of these comments at face value for how much we're listened to. And we are partners. We want to work with the City, but sometimes it's hard to be too enthusiastic when they say one thing and then don't follow through.
 - A. Well hopefully this process as the City tries to put together a new plan for HUD, hopefully some of those ideas can be incorporated. The other thing about development is that you see 60 units here would be nice, but you also have to have a ready, willing, and able developer that can get the land control, can get the financing from the finance authority, and I've heard something today that I found pretty amazing because of the way the tax credit allocation plan is structured at the Housing Finance Authority, Boise isn't necessarily able to compete for the full range of points that smaller communities get and to me that's something that if people from Boise need to be making their voice heard too from the Housing Authority that you have lots of data that shows the problem here and what can that finance authority do with its lots of resources and what can it do to help get something done here even something as humble as 60 units a year.
- Tom, I heard you say just a minute ago that you haven't lived in this community? K. So, you're standing in front of me making apologies explaining away the City's failure to act on creating affordable housing and apologizing effectively—if not explicitly, implicitly—for their decision to criminalize homelessness and poverty. I know from the past, I see you have a poster up here about 1968 was a year of change. I know from my history that when the government has the political will, it can make things happen. Johnson didn't think it was time to pass the Civil Rights Act until he passed it. And then all of a sudden in retrospect it all makes sense. If this city genuinely wanted to create affordable housing they would find a way to do it. These resources are not the only resources available. The Mayor could do all kinds of things that he's not doing, and instead is spinning his wheels, spending his time telling the people who work for him to tell us all the reasons why they can't do things. I don't want them to tell me why they can't do things and what they can't do, then what am I as a taxpayer paying them to do? Aren't they there to figure out what they can do that's meaningful? And I'm sorry, but I have a hard time with you, as a person who's not a member of my community, standing up here and making excuses for them. You haven't lived here. You haven't lived with this problem. I pay 43 percent of my gross income, that's not even my take home, gross income for rent. I bike 20 miles round trip to work. Why? Because upon leaving an abusive relationship the only work I was able to find was bussing tables in Eagle. I have a Master's degree in English. These are the economic conditions that I am existing in and my city has no compassion and no respect for that. Thank you.

Five-Year Consolidated Plan Open House Transcript | 12.8.15 4PM

- I have a question for you Tom, are you with HUD or with the City?
 - **A.** I am with Community Strategies Institute which is a private consulting group. For many years—15 years—I ran the entire state of Colorado housing program.
- What do you think of if the City or the County or the government waived some of these nefarious zoning rules and let people build houses in their backyard and rent them out like Portland, Oregon is doing? That would create thousands of housing units without the City spending a nickel.
 - **A.** A lot of communities have done that, they have done what they call accessory dwelling units.
- And that's out of the box, yeah.
- But Tom's just the messenger man. He's just here to...
- Yeah, yeah, yeah I know. But I'm just saying there are things like this that we could do. If the City would let us in on the process of ideas. But they're screening us out and only letting certain people to these Roundtable meetings and then feeding us this stuff which, you know, who needs this?
- I also understand even in Colorado that any sort of affordable or alternative housing programs that have been put into place were assisted by the county? Which has not been the case here; Ada County has nothing to do with the homeless or the impoverished. How do we address that? Is this something the City can lobby the County for? I mean why isn't that being done yet?
 - **A.** Well there are many communities where city government and county government work together cooperatively to sponsor a whole range of human service and housing programs and yes I think, again, because Boise is in Ada County and the County does represent a lot of people that live in Boise and represent those needs. So I think the more cooperation—and I would say the same thing with the state finance agency—the more cooperation you can get from them and help them understand how your problems are probably more pressing than some of the more rural communities.
- On that I think that you're making an excellent point about the Low Income Housing Tax Credits and the scoring of how the competitive process works. There are other things too where I see that the City could actually be partners with its own community and vice versa. If the City were to school people, like us sitting here, on what it is and how those Low Income Housing Tax Credits work and when it is that they need to tell IHFA or ask for change. So I think what you're saying over here is we're kind of poised to be advocates for solutions; we find ourselves often times in the position where the only thing left for us is to criticize because we don't understand that piece about Low Income Housing Tax Credits. And if the City helped us and gave us the tools we could advocate on behalf of the City.
 - **A.** I fully agree with that.
- And that in the long term is that we want that, it's not as though we don't. We're here. But we don't sacrifice the now because we have this Five-Year Plan we're looking so far into the future. And I say that very earnestly only because we know the history of where we are in this.
 - **A.** Well and we're also going to get the chance to take another shot at it. So that's good too.

Five-Year Consolidated Plan Open House Transcript | 12.8.15 4PM

- I would ask then, as reflected in the count from the survey that Stephanie Bloom asked us to take, don't underestimate the importance of community development and economic development; it was so low on what people thought was important, but we live in the slave-wage stage. Shavone has just articulated very distinctly that housing and employment go hand in hand. Even for people with disabilities, we promote this and scream it from the rooftops. That without, you know, housing first and then employment comes second, and when we live in a community where we lead the nation where single mothers have to work more than one job in order to put food on the table for their family effectively; I mean these issues, as we know, are all intertwined and you can't really discuss one without really kind of addressing the others. So as we spend our money, there are a lot of tumblers in the lock that have to fall into place in order to make these things come to fruition. But you know we don't hear the City talk too much about wages in the community.
- Okay I'm saying this with in mind that just recently we've watched the City have their spin on people talk about the good that they've done for the homeless by moving them out of Corpus. With that in mind, even though the spin doctors are out there. I can't see why HUD cannot say to the City of Boise, you get no money unless you come up with some kind of a plan. Like one of the things, what are you doing to alleviate this problem? And they'll say "Oh we have this place, we have so many people here, we have this and we have that." Still there are people out on the street. But what I really want to say is that there are things that the City could do that they are not doing. For example, we have a motel tax, where if you go into a motel some of that money goes into the City coffers on the City tax. Why can't we have a real estate tax? The realtors own Boise and every transaction that they have, if you could just get ten dollars out of them. If you have a \$400,000 deal, \$10 is nothing. Nothing. And yet the realtors would fight this like hell. When they put up a big building in the City of Boise, why can't the City say, "Hey, two of those units are for low income."? I mean all of these things they could do, but they don't because I think they're in bed with the realtors.
 - A. Well I guess the nice way to spin that is the political will there. And maybe if people like yourselves start showing up saying "We have some ideas."
- Here we are. Where are the City representatives?
 - A. I'm right here.
- Oh.
- Could you tell us your role with the City? Do you recommend things to the City? Do you administer funding?
 - A. Well we're going to get to that on the very next screen. We're going to have a menu. And again what we've tried to do for this meeting is keep it simple so people don't get too bogged down in some of the bureaucratic layers, but also to kind of start to layout some of the options on priorities and these are the things the City could invest in if that's what the community wants done.
- Now so, these dollars are specifically related to this box for HOME and CDBG is that correct? So I know a lot of us are here for out of the box ideas that we would like to present. So are we being recorded?
 - A. Yes, we're also taking notes.

Five-Year Consolidated Plan Open House Transcript | 12.8.15 4PM

- Okay, so I've got a laundry list of some ideas that I wanted to shout out to that reporter somewhere. Before I have to stay inside the box that is so unsuccessful and only becoming more-so. Some of these things have been touched on.
 - For specific dollars, I want to see more of it spent on the lowest income brought down to the 30% instead of it going all the way up to the 80%.
 - I would like to see all the dollars spent on housing rather than carving out some percentages for public works or services. There's some percentage that goes to other than housing, I want to see it all brought back to housing unless under services you can include some pay to plan or zone or somebody to work on codes, zoning or statues, to make way for what is going to get here a necessity which are tiny villages whether they are tiny homes, whether they're on wheels or not on wheels, and alternative shelter villages with detached bedroom structures with central bathroom/kitchen/laundry facilities such as those that are operating in other communities right now.
 - We need life boats. The City is working on sturdy ships; the long term Housing First, we want those, we have been crying for those for years. And of course we know the City started planning or at least spent a lot of time making a plan for those starting in 2008 and here we are in 2015. I am delighted, I hope we're moving in that direction as fast as we can, but that is long term sturdy ships, we need life boats now. That's going to require zoning and planning statues because a lot more of us are going to need to be in these detached bedrooms and small communities trying to make it work. We've got to do that.
 - I signed on for a levy for open space, but my comment when I said that to the woman who came to my door was "You know what? I would really, really feel better about this if I could be paying in for a levy that for every acre we set aside we are constructing this many affordable housing units in city limits in areas of opportunity not out in Timbuktu." So I don't know why, maybe the City could look into a levy? I think this is a prime time.
 - We have a declared state of emergency, we're in it right now. Supposedly because of the unsafe conditions at Cooper Court, so folks were scooped out of there and now they're scattered to the wind. Now we have a state of emergency because they were there. I think what we have, and the City needs to declare a state of emergency, for affordable housing right now. Other cities have done that right now and we have that because the people were not moved on to places necessarily, they were just cleared out of the community that they had built and they were organizing themselves to boot out undesirable elements and make the best they could helping each other and supporting each other through survival. So now they are scattered to the wind, they are under bridges, they are crying in corners; it's a desperate situation that should be declared a disaster; if living together is a disaster, their living along the river should be a disaster. And our lack of affordable housing has reached that proportion so I certainly advocate for that.
 - I'm speaking on behalf of the Boise/Ada County Homeless Coalition which represents 18 organizations and 17 individuals. I also represent the 2015 coalition, but the incoming 2016 president asked that I speak for her as well.
 - I also certainly want to see the City leverage more of their HOME funding with private funding and those Low Income Housing Tax Credits as much as they can to get more bang for the buck for more units. I wonder whether Allumbaugh House, which has been not fully funded for many years and I've toured the facility recently;

Five-Year Consolidated Plan Open House Transcript | 12.8.15 4PM

There is a part of that, oh six to eight beds, in a side of the building that's empty. If those partners that came together could do that, maybe some of this percentage that's services and not housing could actually sort of go to make those units temporary housing first for the people who get turned out after a certain amount of time, have no place to go and go back into the same situation. You've got a revolving door of people who are starting to get what they need, and things are looking good and then here they are, boom, back on the street—a cycle. So some of those places could be reserved for them to stay longer, more stable.

- Meanwhile these tiny house villages or these alternative shelter pieces together—I don't care about the numbers, 30 percent, 80 percent, that is really affordable which is a detached bedroom living in a community.
 - So there are also options for the City to lobby the State in a number of ways. We'll go back to the City one more time; I think, going back to James' comment, the Continuum of Care in Boise has too many agencies competing for the same dollars, the overlap of services, you've got many people doing many different things that all overlap. If they could restructure somehow so that they're not competing for the same projects, they could realign and consolidate by expertise and then this group does this, this group does this, your expertise level perhaps would rise and perhaps they would become more collaborative.
 - As far as what the City could do, lobbying the State—I know long shots—but some states are using Medicaid dollars for housing, that's a pretty new idea I think, but it's being done.
 - There's a Housing Choice Act in Oregon and Washington whereby law it prevents discrimination against individuals with vouchers—that's one of the huge problems here, people with vouchers can't use them, landlords won't rent them.
 - The HELP program that was touted by the City recently is as far as I last heard shutdown right now; I don't know whether it's coming back up or being restructured, but that was to help landlords work with and backup tenants to learn rental skills, it was supposed to help landlords. I don't know where that is right now, it needs to kick up in full force.
 - Lobby the State legislature to allow local option taxes. Lobby them to make inclusionary zoning an option. Lobby them to fund the Housing Trust Fund. I'll stop there. I probably have some more on here, but it's just a lot of out of the box things could be done.
- A. Well we'll come back. I think in order if folks want the opportunity to deal with their own investment and priorities and what I have here is basically the listing of the priorities with a basic action statement of what that would involve. And you'll see along the wall there each of these needs with the action statement below it kind of giving you a brief nutshell idea of what that investment might be involved with. So if you want to we can go through these and then you can invest your money, or if you want to just go walk along there and see them as they're laid out.
- You said that affordable housing was the number one choice of people that filled out the survey, but I don't quite see that there. You've got chronic, you've got becoming homeless, where is affordable housing?
 - A. Well, chronic homelessness, they need affordable housing. You've got a complete carryover. You've got supportive housing which is also affordable.

Five-Year Consolidated Plan Open House Transcript | 12.8.15 4PM

- I don't believe you answered my question. What is your relationship with the City and will you be recommending? Do you recommend solutions/proposals to the City?
 - A. Yes. We will be writing a draft plan. The City will take that. Obviously we're in communication with the Housing and Community Development Division at the City. As we write that, they're going to give their feedback on it. We're going to look at the comments from this meeting. We already have the notes from our key informant interviews. We have the online survey. We're going to try to take that and consolidate that and put it in a form that's required by HUD and then bring that back to the community and then let you provide your input on that. This first draft will be out in March 2016. On March 22 there's going to be a 30-day public review and comment period on it. Then the one-year plan for the first year will be presented in April. Then the final version of that plan and the annual plan will be submitted to HUD in July and the City Council will have to adopt those.

- Tom, I have an out of the box idea. This would be a really easy thing to do. All of that wording right there that I just videoed is easily above the eighth grade level. I used to teach writing. Here's one thing that I do know, when you run something through Microsoft Word it can tell you what level of writing that you're writing at. If you want the actual average public to understand what you're saying, you can just ask Microsoft Word "Am I writing at the eighth grade level or above?" That's probably college level writing over there. How many people actually understand what those things mean? I'm like reading those things being like this is gobbly gook. This is like Orwellian newspeak.
 - A. We're trying to provide people with the opportunity to make their comments and be kind of with a different direction to the activity that we have planned to allow for more comments. And so we're also trying to be respectful of time so if there's specific questions about the choice of words, we will take that as we move forward with our drafts to make sure that we bring the language level down, but I'd like to also be respectful of people's time. We have another ten minutes if people would like to provide additional comments, let's allow for those comments.

- I want to go back to the suggestion about working with the County. You probably all know that the County is the one single entity in the state of Idaho that, in its charter, is supposed to be responsible for indigent care, homelessness, poverty, and all that. The City does not have that and no cities do. So we are letting the County off the hook by not confronting them. I've talked about this for over a year with a lot of you folks in the advocacy community and I still have yet to find a single person that has done the research on how counties are supposed to behave and react. And if the charters need to be changed then what we do to get that changed. I don't know of anybody that has really gone in front of the county commissioners to talk to them. We are missing a big opportunity and for those of us that particularly keep bashing our heads against the City wall, to find a different wall for us to bash our heads into. When you're working with the State, I do not believe that testimony is going to work. I think that demonstration and willingness to be arrested is what it will take to get the attention of the State. That's a whole big process. You've got to have a lot in place to do that, but we know where that's been effective. And it will take several years of doing that, but testimony does not work with the State because poor people to most of the state legislatures are a failure and it's their own fault. It's not a community responsibility, it doesn't have anything to do with community failing, it's individuals that have failed. So we have to make that counterargument and you have to get in the faces of those legislatures to do that. I'm Ed Keener, Interfaith Sanctuary homeless shelter board president.

Five-Year Consolidated Plan Open House Transcript | 12.8.15 4PM

- I have a quick question because I'm not quite understanding this with the money. With the HUD funds, is it possible to use those funds to do something like Eugene, Oregon did with their tiny house community? Is that possible to use that money for that?
 - A. I would say theoretically it's possible. Basically HUD does require that the local grantee, whether it's the city or the county or the state, that it has some clearly described Housing Quality Standard. Now most communities have a building code, they have planning and zoning codes that's accepted by HUD. So if there were a way that the planning and zoning wither could be dealt with in a given area or some kind of special overlay zone could be created, if those units met basic health and safety requirements then I think it could be possible to have HUD-funded. But some of the knitty-gritty's, you get into electric, water, sewer, those issues.
- Sure, but a lot of other places have done it. Have they used HUD money?
 - A. I'm not aware of any community that's used federal money for tent cities. They may have used federal money for public services for case managers that are providing services to the people living in those tent cities, but I don't think they've actually funded the physical reality with federal money.
- So these dollars wouldn't really go for anything like that? If we put our money over there and put it where we want it to go, it wouldn't go to anything like this probably?
 - A. Well I would say it could. We could add another priority/option, but then again you get into how far down the road changing the zoning, getting HUD to accept that, I don't know.
- Well then I will give these back.
- Well chronic homelessness is back there.
- Because I think words have meaning, right? I would suggest that in the report we do not use the word homeless because homeless is a stereotype. And like in the paper we had one of the City spokespersons say they sent down a volunteer who was mugged and beat up down at Cooper Court. That never happened; an incident happened, but not what was in the thing. So I think that I would prefer the term in your report to put in "Citizens of Boise who find themselves without housing" rather than homeless and if you would do us that favor.
 - A. Right. We can in our commentary, but frankly HUD in the template for this plan uses the word homeless.
- But you can say "people who are now homeless" you don't have to say "the homeless."
 - A. Well that's just what I said, I said in our narrative we can do that, but you have headings and tables in the HUD-prescribed document that use the word homeless.
- Before we close, I just have an argument for Number 4, Supportive Services because there are critical needs out there for especially mothers and families. And we care for families that are literally on the street and their children are with us during the day in a safe, warm environment getting fed, while their parents are out looking for work or housing or whatever the case may be, so there are very important supportive services. The WCA is another one. Those are vulnerable households and the amount of money that goes to those services is so minute in that

Five-Year Consolidated Plan Open House Transcript | 12.8.15 4PM

\$1.27 million, I mean you're talking \$550,000, the amount that we're working on with supportive services to stop Number 1 and 2 and so on and so forth, that's not enough, but I would caution against saying we should just throw it all out and only focus on housing. If you're not working at all on supportive services or prevention how are you helping Number 1, 2, 3? You're not. You have to have a little bit of it, there's never enough.

- Here would be my thought, why can't funding for those services—which I agree are critical because with those you're just keeping people from dropping out—but can we find the funding somewhere else and leave the CDBG and HOME for housing?
- I would just like to say I'm supportive of what Henry said about having developers and builders put in some money towards this, there's already impact fees. If a developer wants to put in a new subdivision out in the county, yes the impact fees can help pay for the additional schooling that's needed, police coverage, etc. Why don't we just say that part of that is for housing and homelessness? It seems very logical to me. And then the other thing about what Ed Keener was saying about having the County take on this, whoever goes to talk to the County I imagine one of the first things they're going to say is it's a City problem, that's where the homeless are. Well there's Ada County Highway District who does all of our roads in the city.
- I have an idea and I don't know if I've missed it or if it's ever been thought of. But I like the idea of using what we already have. And I'm wondering if the City has ever reached out to real estate agencies or realtors with incentives; I know that there's some incentives with HUD and the housing program vouchers to maybe recruit some of these property owners who already have houses for rent rather than building of other structures. I mean we have rentals out there, but if there's more incentives with getting those people on board to help us house some of the homeless, I think that would be a really good outreach.
 - A. I think that's important because one of the things that we've heard consistently in our key informant interviews too is that people if they do have a voucher, if they are lucky enough to have their name come off of the waiting list, it's getting more and more difficult to find a landlord that will accept the voucher.
- But maybe increase some type of incentives for these landlords/possible landlords/property owners/homeowners to get on board.
- Earlier this year, AnaMarie and I think Deanna participated in that too, made an effort to sort of educate the City Council, and there's some pretty slick stuff here that I think is pretty good. The unfortunate thing, just building on what Barb was saying here, is outside the state of Idaho people look to other sources for funding affordable housing. And one of the things that I would really like to see as part of what's done, is to not only continue to educate the City Council and Mayor about options that are sort of in the box, but also options that either aren't too far out of the box that have been used other places. And then I also just want to say I really appreciate the fact that the City of Boise is looking into Social Impact Bonds to pay for a success option. I don't know if that's going to work, I think that's going to be troubled in some ways, but I think it's really great that they're doing that.
- And the Continuum of Care (CoC) also, what they're doing. They're trying to put everything together. I think it's an effort that should be continued.