

Updates and Discussions

Working Group Reports Due May 26

Food Security & Shelter Working Group to provide a summary report with concrete steps to achieve recommendations by May 26.

Shelter Subcommittee

Housing and Renter Protection Measures

- Federal moratorium on eviction through July 24. Applies only to federally funded or insured properties.
- Recommendation to coordinate Bexar County moratorium be extended to match federal date. Will need to coordinate with Justice of the Peace courts – and request to extend across Bexar County.

LISC Affordable Housing Playbook

- Outlined proposal including recommendations and next steps to implement priority projects built on current infrastructure and naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH).
- Emphasis on diversion and prevention of homelessness and transitioning homeless from emergency housing to more permanent housing. Plan does not address jail population.
- LISC requesting CDBG waiver to use funds for acquisition.
- Discussions regarding a possible second distribution of assistance package as unemployment numbers continue to rise.
- People not paying rent will become a systemic issue, rather than individual issue.
- Hopeful that future stimulus funds will help with recovery housing plan.

CARES Act Funding for Housing Authorities

- Initial allocation provides operations funding to Housing Authorities to make up non-payment of rent for existing clients of Housing Authorities. Did not provide additional voucher to SAHA.
- Additional funding released may support vouchers. Key ask is for project-based vouchers to support affordable housing projects.

Hotel Shelter for High Risk Homeless

- 300 room hotel – allows Haven for Hope to provide social distancing. Second downtown hotel sheltering high-risk homeless identified through outreach and the Homeless Hotline.
- Haven has housed 10 people from hotel during the pandemic crisis
- Permanent supported housing team continues to get people housed – even those with mental health issues. However, still not enough housing units for homeless.
- No reported COVID-19 diagnosis in a homeless individual.

Food Security Subcommittee

Food Bank

- Food Bank received \$9.1 million through STAR Disaster Request on May 8- will supply enough food for approximately 4 weeks.
- Additionally, philanthropic efforts, community donated an additional \$5.4 million to Food Bank.
- Food Bank procurement team purchasing product as quickly as possible.
- State passed Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (PEBT), which adds funds for school meals to SNAP or EBT cards.
- PEBT - ability to roll out subsidy for children in school. If low participation rate in that program, then demand for

COVID-19 Community Action Working Group

Food Security & Shelter – May 8, 2020

food bank will remain high. Need to get word out to school districts.

- 50% families Food Bank is serving continue to be regular customers and 50% increase due to COVID crisis.
- On the 1st of the month, a little bit of dip in demand due to SNAP benefits being distributed.
- Food Bank is anxious about their ability to meet demand level of service once unemployment runs out.
- Currently, food supply remains strong – and can continue most likely through summer. However, anticipate Food that current influx of client needs not ending until late august or September.
- Continue to request State ease restrictions including SNAP eligibility asset test.

Urban Gardens

- Councilwoman Andrews Sullivan asked when community/urban gardens would be harvested. Food Bank indicated they have helped support hundreds of community gardens over the years and crops would generally be harvested by summer.
- Councilwoman Cabello Havrda indicated the Food Security Subcommittee conversations are focused on urban farming. Discussed need to ease City restrictions to make it easier for people to grow their own food and potentially distribute.

Donated Food

- Council Districts 2 and 6 are trying to organize business to donate (bakery goods, tortillas etc).
- Food bank reiterated they could not distribute homemade items, if not regulated/approved by Metro Health.

School Districts

- Need to get word out to school districts about PEBT transfer of school meal funding to families’ Electronic Benefit Cards.
- Northside ISD - will continue to supply food to students through their summer program. Hoping to return to school in September.

Action Items

Item	Status	Lead
STAR Disaster Request	Completed: \$9.1 M received	Eric Cooper/Com. Rodriguez
Identify Youth Shelter Options	Erin Berry reported on issue to Shelter Subcommittee.	Com. Rodriguez/CW Andrews-Sullivan
Extend Eviction Protections	Extend JP Courts moratorium to match federal	Com. Rodriguez/CW Andrews-Sullivan
Ease SNAP Eligibility Restrictions (Asset Test)	Pending State approval	Eric Cooper/State & Federal Legislation Working Group
Ease City Restrictions on Urban Gardening	Proposed by Food Security Subcommittee	CW Cabello Havrda

Referrals to Other Working Groups

- **State & Federal Legislation Working Group**
 - Advocate to State to ease SNAP eligibility restrictions including Asset Test.
 - Support LISC request for federal waiver allowing CDBG CARES Act funding to be used for acquisitions.

