

**SECTION VI: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Seven core fair housing Impediment Themes were identified through this planning process. The advisory bodies developed multiple recommendations for addressing each of the Impediment Themes; except where noted, the Committee reached consensus on the recommendations. Given limited resources and funding, the recommendations have been listed in priority order; initial prioritization was developed through a survey sent to committee members, and then interactive dialogue to finalize. The Committee first considered recommendations that would have the highest impact on addressing the impediments. When making policy and program decisions, the City of Portland, City of Gresham, and Multnomah County (the Consortium) should focus the most efforts and resources are the *top* priority items, shown in **bold**. Whenever possible, Consortium members and partners should strive to achieve the other recommendations listed:

<b>Table 29 : Identified Impediments and Recommendations</b>	
<b>A. DISCRIMINATION IN HOUSING</b>	
<b>Impediments</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin. Discrimination includes refusal to rent, harassment, quoting different terms and conditions including rent levels, different documentation requirements, steering, refusal to improve sub-standard conditions, and less opportunity to achieve homeownership. Discrimination is also apparent in the housing crisis since 2008, with a disproportionate number of high-cost loans, and therefore foreclosures, affecting people of color and national origin.</li> <li>2. Discrimination on the basis of physical or mental disability. Discrimination includes failure to make reasonable accommodations or reasonable modifications, as well as “end of tenancy” evictions to tenants with these disabilities.</li> <li>3. Discrimination on the basis of familial status. Discrimination includes refusal to rent, steering families to different units or properties not of their choice, as well as quoting different terms or conditions including rent levels.</li> <li>4. Discrimination on the basis of Domestic Violence Victims. Discrimination includes refusal to rent and different terms and conditions.</li> <li>5. Discrimination on the basis of Sex. Discrimination includes refusal to rent and different terms and conditions.</li> <li>6. Discrimination on the basis of Religion. Discrimination includes refusal to rent and different terms and conditions.</li> <li>7. Multnomah County adds the following classes as having protections under fair housing law, Marital</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Commit to county-wide funding and support to continue and enhance the <u>education</u> of fair housing laws.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Commit to county-wide funding and support to continue and enhance <u>enforcement</u> of fair housing laws.</b></li> <li>3. <b>Conduct audit testing to document discrimination against Protected Classes seeking housing, with special focus on homeownership and affordable rental units.</b></li> <li>4. Partner with housing providers to modify screening and credit criteria (such as requiring Social Security Numbers) that have an inadvertent impact on protected classes, especially persons of differing national origin and women experiencing domestic violence.</li> <li>5. Strengthen inter-jurisdictional communication and decision-making to improve coordination of the Housing Authority of Portland, Multnomah County, City of Gresham, City of Portland, non-profits, the State and other partners to improve services and programs.</li> <li>6. Develop and promote policies that remove negative housing information and low level law enforcement contacts, including 911 calls from records of persons who report domestic violence and other protected classes, to prevent use of this information as a basis of eviction or refusal to rent.</li> </ol>

<p>Status, age over 18, Sexual orientation, Gender Identity and type of occupation. Discrimination includes refusal to rent and different terms and conditions.</p>	
<b>B. FAIR HOUSING UNDERSTANDING</b>	
<b>Impediments</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. While many organizations put effort toward fair housing issues and ending discrimination, Multnomah County lacks a clear, focused champion for fair housing.</li> <li>2. Lack of understanding of Fair Housing Laws by rental property managers, agents and renters, and common screening criteria can lead to disparate treatment of renters.</li> <li>3. Lack of understanding of Fair Housing Laws and housing opportunities by renters and buyers are specifically impeded by a lack of educational materials, culturally appropriate information, linguistic isolation, and lack of capacity by government and culturally connected organizations to do effective outreach.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Create a fair housing advocacy committee that meets on an at least quarterly basis to focus on fair housing issues and to be a strong advocate voice in Multnomah County. Committee needs a clear, focused champion in a strong leadership and decision making position, as well as a diverse, representative membership.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Partner with landlord trade associations and other community organizations to ensure frequent and accurate trainings for property managers, owners, regulators and social service providers to understand Fair Housing law and reasonable accommodations and modifications.</b></li> <li>3. <b>Commit resources for a public information campaign about Fair Housing Rights and current issues to change attitudes, practices and public policies, using culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to reach all members of the public.</b></li> <li>4. Increase overall outreach and education to the general public about Fair Housing law; provide easily accessible and culturally and linguistically appropriate information regarding rights and resources.</li> <li>5. Fund homeownership education for communities of color and immigrant and refugee communities by partnering with organizations that provide homebuyer education, encouraging use of materials in multiple languages.</li> <li>6. Fund education services for workers in assisted living and nursing facilities to better understand the varying needs of the aging population.</li> </ol>
<b>C. AREAS OF REDUCED ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY</b>	
<b>Impediments</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is inequity and segregation in neighborhoods that lack good access to public transit, schools, grocery, even sidewalks. This can disproportionately affect those with disabilities, low-income, communities of color, and immigrant and refugee communities.</li> <li>2. There are neighborhoods which are rich in resources such as access to quality transportation, education, food, healthcare, recreation and housing. Those communities are also often segregated and would</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Develop opportunity mapping as a foundation of housing policy development to illustrate areas of Multnomah County where there is limited access to opportunity. Advocate for prioritizing resources, including transportation resources, to these areas to increase opportunity and equity, and tie the mapping into the update of Portland's <i>Comprehensive Plan</i> and <i>Location Policy</i>.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Partner with Tri-Met and other local agencies, the State, major employers and school districts</b></li> </ol>

<p>benefit from policies that break up the patterns of segregation.</p>	<p><b>to encourage development and rehabilitation of affordable/accessible housing close to jobs, transportation, groceries, schools, employment and other amenities.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. <b>Partner with regional housing organizations and City and County partners to emphasize the development of Healthy Connected Neighborhoods. Based on mapping, advocate for prioritizing investments in East Multnomah County and areas concentrations of low-income households.</b></li> <li>4. Continue programs that improve employment outcomes and increase incomes, including development and availability of jobs close to affordable/accessible housing, transportation and other services.</li> <li>5. Where housing is already affordable/accessible focus on creating quality jobs and linking residents to quality jobs through education and other supports.</li> <li>6. Work with neighborhoods to increase understanding of the need for affordable/accessible units for people with high-needs to reduce NIMBY (not in my backyard) reactions.</li> <li>7. Use local political leadership to support national efforts to change the loan modification process, which will help homeowners prevent foreclosure.</li> </ol>
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**D. FAIR HOUSING DATA**

<b>Impediments</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unreliable and/or unavailable data on discrimination of other protected classes such as age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, and/or source of income. Fair Housing Planning is impeded by this lack of data.</li> <li>2. There is a lack of Fair Housing complaint data available for East County/Gresham, which leads to imperfect analysis of fair housing impediments.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Fund audit testing for all areas of the County using the most inclusive list of Protected Classes to document discrimination.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Conduct data research and analysis to determine the shortage of various housing types especially accessible units for people with disabilities.</b></li> <li>3. <b>Encourage partners currently serving people vulnerable to discrimination to capture and document discrimination, by encouraging use of the current reporting portals and by using a variety of low-barrier intake techniques.</b></li> <li>4. Jurisdictional partners should conduct a regular review of data and recommendations to respond quickly to changing Fair Housing needs.</li> </ol>

**E. ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING STOCK**

<b>Impediments</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Location of affordable/accessible or subsidized rental units limits the opportunities of lower-income households to exercise housing choice, and creates more blighted areas of fewer opportunities and</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Increase the number of affordable/accessible housing choices for all household sizes, especially family-sized housing with three or more bedrooms.</b></li> </ol>

<p>lower incomes, and also leads to increased segregation of people with disabilities, communities of color, and immigrant and refugee populations. Local zoning constraint and NIMBYism restrict inclusive housing production policies; existence of such policies may not be in the spirit of affirmatively furthering fair housing.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Lack of available accessible units and/or a lack of an accurate inventory of available affordable/accessible units restrict the housing choice of people with disabilities.</li> <li>3. There is a lack of affordable/accessible housing units with supportive services for those with mental health disabilities and seniors with cognitive decline; this leads to more people becoming unnecessarily institutionalized or discharged into homelessness.</li> <li>4. There is a shortage of quality housing units affordable/accessible to 30%MFI and below; this shortage is expected to continue. This can disproportionately affect protected classes who are low-income, including some communities of color, immigrant and refugee communities and people with disabilities.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <b>Increase housing choice for people with disabilities by creating a database of available accessible units, linking it to those who need it, and partnering with property owners and managers to better market accessible units to people with disabilities.</b></li> <li>3. <b>Continue to fund home repair and modification programs.</b></li> <li>4. Develop strong building guidelines to ensure consistent standards of what features an “accessible” unit includes.</li> <li>5. Develop a range of housing and supportive services to better match the needs of different populations living with mental illness; one size does not fit all.</li> <li>6. Research feasibility of a county-wide ordinance that requires newly constructed housing units to be built in a way that would make them easily accessible or “visitable” by people with disabilities, as well as easily modified for future accessibility needs.</li> <li>7. Improve the quality and safety of existing affordable/accessible housing through home repair loans, partnering with housing providers, and rental housing inspections.</li> <li>8. Require annual training for staff and partners of government entities, pseudo-government entities and contract recipients to review accessible development and construction standards.</li> <li>9. Link housing and supportive services for residents through inter-jurisdictional partnerships and streamlining of services and increased funding.</li> <li>10. Work with housing providers to provide two-weeks’ notice to advocacy groups and interest lists for when an accessible unit becomes available.</li> </ol>
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**F. UNINTENDED GENTRIFICATION THROUGH POLICIES**

<b>Impediments</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Urban Renewal Development often has the unintended consequence of residential displacement and pricing-out of market-rate housing. This disproportionately affects persons of color, those with disabilities, and low-income families.</li> <li>2. The denial rate for Section 8 voucher holders fluctuates as the market does, restricting housing choice of very low-income households, often leading voucher holders to rent in low-opportunity, segregated areas of the county.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Make public investments that mitigate the effects of displacement and that encourage diversity through mechanisms including, but not limited to, “community agreements,” housing development linked to schools/ transportation/employment, mixed income housing, and rental assistance tiered to market rate rents.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Encourage the renewal of Portland’s 30% Tax Increment Funding affordable housing set-aside; encourage other cities in Multnomah County to devote Urban Renewal funds to housing programs and projects that can further fair housing goals.</b></li> <li>3. <b>Focus on resource development to acquire</b></li> </ol>

	<p><b>funding outside of Urban Renewal Areas to develop and preserve affordable/accessible housing in all areas of the County.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Over the next five years, fund a representative advisory group, such as this Report’s proposed fair housing advisory committee, to work with the Housing Authority of Portland to understand the various data sets HAP evaluates to determine how much housing choice Section 8 participants have. Work with rental housing owners associations to understand more precisely where Section 8 is and is not accepted and the denial rates of Section 8 voucher holders from owners that accept Section 8. Compare this information with information available from jurisdictions that do include Section 8 under the protected class “source of income.”</li> <li>5. Collaborate with the Housing Authority of Portland, housing providers and community advocates to ensure Section 8 vouchers are used as a tool to increase housing choice throughout the county, especially areas of high opportunity.</li> <li>6. Continue partnering with housing providers to increase participation in the Section 8 voucher program.</li> <li>7. Meaningfully involve community members in the redevelopment of their neighborhoods, especially communities of color and others historically not invited to participate in the development and decision-making regarding redevelopment, especially around URAs.</li> <li>8. Continue funding homeownership programs, including but not limited to Down Payment Assistance, to continue efforts to close the minority homeownership gap.</li> <li>9. Research the feasibility of developing subsidies to help current low income residents remain in URAs as rental prices increase.</li> </ol>
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**G. LOW-INCOME AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS**

<b>Impediments</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Female heads of households experience poverty at a higher rate of other familial statuses, disproportionately affecting housing choice for this protected class.</li> <li>2. Employment and income issues of all kinds including layoffs, wage levels, location of employment, training, access to benefits and discrimination have the largest impact on housing choices.</li> <li>3. The aging population, which is expected to increase as Baby Boomers age, has a unique set of needs that restrict housing choice, including elders with disabilities, elders with limited English proficiency, and elders from the LGBTQI community.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Continue, and consider increasing funding for, Rent Assistance for low-income residents.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Increase funding for social services known to assist in stabilizing households, including but not limited to addiction services, childcare, employment assistance, and other support services.</b></li> <li>3. <b>Continue funding <u>development</u> of subsidized, accessible housing units for individuals and families below 30%MFI, working to increase the <u>number of</u> units available to meet the demand. Develop subsidies to encourage private landlords to rent to low-income individuals at little to no</b></li> </ol>

<p>4. Households of color and national origin experience poverty at a higher rate than other households due to historical and institutional employment, credit and education discrimination leading to lower wages and less job security than the general public.</p> <p>5. People with disabilities face unique challenges to accessing and staying in housing, especially given the limited number of mobility device-accessible units; this group faces increased negative impacts as a result of “end of tenancy” notices and no-cause evictions.</p>	<p><b>risk to them.</b></p> <p>4. Partner with advocacy groups who provide human assistance to help households navigate the benefits process to increase the income of extremely low-income households.</p> <p>5. Adopt new household income measurements regarding housing cost burden to take into account, transportation, childcare, food, energy, and other household costs.</p> <p>6. Work with partners to increase employment and income outcomes for households through education, training of workers, and enforcement of employment law.</p> <p>7. Enforce existing housing and safety laws where health and human safety is endangered, including but not limited to pest control, heating/cooling, and lead and mold removal.</p> <p>8. Work with partners to increase understanding and enforcement of retaliation laws to avoid illegal “end of tenancy” notices for vulnerable populations, especially people with disabilities.</p> <p>9. Increase outreach about available affordable/accessible housing and social services for all needy populations.</p> <p>10. Increase efforts to prevent predatory reverse mortgages targeted to seniors.</p>
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