



Missoula Housing Policy Public Education & Outreach Technical Working Group

Meeting 1 Notes [9/13/18]

Introductions

- Montana James
- Ginny Merriam
- Linsey Wallace
- Anne Hughes
- Eran Pehan
- Mike Nugent

Update on the Process To-date

- The Werwath Associates “Making Missoula Home” report was release in January 2018
- The Housing Policy Steering Committee was formed and reviewed the recommendations in that report; provided guidance.
- In August and September the seven Technical Working Groups (TWGs) were formed. This kicks off Phase II of the Housing Policy efforts.
- Phase II will consist of community outreach and engagement and ultimate recommendations presented to City Council. This is slated for early 2019.

The Group Purpose and Charter

Group Purpose

To collaboratively design a community education and advocacy campaign to support 1) housing policy change recommendations to City Council, 2) potential future voter-approved initiatives for housing in Missoula, and 3) changes to state-level policies.

Goals & Deliverables

4.3 Affordable housing community education and advocacy campaign

- 4.3-1 Affordable Housing Educational Campaign
- 4.3-2 Form a Housing Advocacy Coalition
- 4.3-3 Expand Public Sector Outreach to Affordable Housing Constituencies

→ Housing Policy Steering Committee Guidance

Work with partner agencies and through established neighborhood hubs to education the community on why attainable housing benefits everyone.

Products: Messaging Guide, Communication Plan for the Group Purpose?



1.5 Advocate for changes to state-level policies impacting affordable housing.

→ Housing Policy Steering Committee Guidance

Identify areas of alignment between local housing policy and state-level policies that impact affordable housing.

Products: Recommended timeline and roster for a City/County Coalition?

Discussion

Communication Tools to Consider

- Consider use of social media in a communication plan. Posting housing policy updated on the main City Facebook page could be advantageous. A key to social media would be connecting with community leaders and asking them to elevate our information/postings.
 - Montana will research the City Social Media Policy
- HCD could find funding to do a Big Sky Poll to get a baseline understanding of the community feelings about housing:
 - What are the primary concerns/frustrations (affordability, stock available, etc.)
 - This could also give information about where people get their info about housing/news.
- Many compelling campaigns use video and storytelling. We could use MCAT for some video production.
 - They tend to take a while to produce
 - These videos could also be linked widely through social media.
 - Missoula Votes has done some videos recently
- Mountain Line bus ads can be really effective. This could be used for a “did you know” or educational campaign.

Logistics

- We may need to consider an “internal” (city, county, and partners) and “external” communication strategy.
 - We would use different tools and time them differently.
- The Missoula Organization of Realtors (MOR) could potentially help find grant funding for specific asks as we have them. (Mike)
- We need to spend time clearly defining our problem in order to be able to map out who our audience is, which tools to use, and how to connect our various audiences.
- Being concise, using info-graphics is ideal.
 - “Houses are where jobs sleep at night.”



Meeting 2 Notes [9/20/18]

Attendees

- Montana James
- Ginny Merriam
- Linsey Wallace
- Anne Hughes
- Penny Cope
- Jessica Burson
- *Eran Pehan (absent)*
- *Mike Nugent (absent)*

Review of our Charter

- We are comfortable with the charter draft and agree on the key resources and deliverables.

Montana Housing Coalition Messaging Matters Committee

Jessica Burson (Homeward) and Penny Cope (Montana Department of Commerce)

- The [Montana Housing Coalition](#) is made up of a diverse group of housing stakeholders.
- They formed the Messaging Matters Committee to align members around common language and messaging in order to help their efforts be successful. Core Committee Members are:
 - Jessica Burson, Homeward
 - Penny Cope, MT Department of Commerce
 - Katie Biggs, NeighborWorks Montana
 - Mary Melton, Missoula Housing Authority
- They have worked on:
 - Developing a list of trigger terms and more positive/effective alternative words
 - Presentations to interested groups (which have gotten very positive feedback)
 - Media outreach, including Jessica and Andrea Davis appearing on “Face the State”
 - Infographics and other tools to help get their message out
 - Supporting 3 key bills for the 2019 legislative session
 - Housing Lobby Day on February 12, 2019
- In early October, they hope to launch a webpage where anyone can access tools and messaging help. It will include:
 - Links to resources that other organizations have developed
 - Infographics that they have developed
 - Document templates
 - Data



- A webinar about their messaging approach

Next Steps

- We will all review the sample campaigns and articles this week.
- On 9/27 we will start to work on our Public Education Campaign, implementing and using the resources we have looked at this week and continuing to build a list of others doing this good work.
- [Document Sharing Location here!](#)



Meeting 3 Notes [9/27/18]

Attendees

- Montana James
- Linsey Wallace
- Anne Hughes
- Eran Pehan
- *Ginny Merriam (absent)*
- *Mike Nugent (absent)*

Debrief on Campaigns from Last Week

- We are excited about the messaging alternatives list. We can build from this and add our own terms and alternatives for housing policy.
- We need to work on replacing “housing” with “home” – that is a big one.
- “Economic Development” messaging and terms will be key for us. Two things to think about that would be better are:
 - To talk in dollar amounts rather than “low income” – so say “those making \$10/hr” or the equivalent. That is more impactful.
 - We also need to counter this tendency to say or imply that if you make money you work harder than people who don’t make as much money. We need to be very cautious about how our language might be perpetuating that.
- Providing updates on what the other TWGs are doing will be helpful for this group as we work on public education and outreach.

Review of Draft Communication Plan Outline

- Initial reactions to the plan outline is that it is too vague and too “euphemistic” – we need to be specific and drill down on what our goals are. What are our intended outcomes?
- In each phase, what are we asking people to do?
- It seems clear that we need to decide what entity will “host” this initial campaign. Where will the website be located?
 - We want a branded campaign for housing policy improvements.
 - Some other campaigns we might model are:
 - [Make Your Move](#)
 - [Missoula Votes](#)
 - This site would be a place to collect peoples’ housing stories and establish a list of “supporters” who can opt in to supporting the efforts. This might be modeled off of the [Portland for Everyone](#) story solicitation portion of their website.
 - Some organizations that might support this work could include:
 - Missoula Interfaith Collaborative
 - Neighborworks Montana



- Homework
- And our other key resources
 - In terms of staffing this first phase, we could use a UM class or students
- Tell Us Something is another good resource if we want to get on their radar to have a housing policy conversation.

Next Steps

- Montana will send around a new draft of the Communication Plan Outline.
- This week Work Group Members will contribute to:
 - The new draft of the Communications Plan Outline
 - Developing our own Backfire Terms and Alternatives
 - Brainstorming a list of tools, including all free tools available to us
- [Document Sharing Location here!](#)



Meeting 4 Notes [10/4/18]

Attendees

- Montana James
- Linsey Wallace
- Anne Hughes
- Eran Pehan
- Ginny Merriam
- Mike Nugent
- Sean Kopetz

Intros and Updates

- Biweekly meetings
- 2 phase approach outline
- Developing a strategy without policies
 - “Inching forward”- Market the importance of housing, then support that goal with new policy.
 - Marketing affordability at all income levels, not just low income (MBIA, Chamber)
- Grow empathy for why housing is important for everyone, and the overall positive effects it has on the community.

Our Audience

- How might we describe the categories of people we want to reach?
 - Influence Vs Interest for how we approach gaining/growing support
 - Begin thinking how different geographies or groups will react to the same policy changes i.e. U District Vs Rattlesnake Vs Northside/Westside
 - Marketing at Developers Vs Nonprofits, too much vs not enough change
 - Ensure voices are heard and represented

Our Coalition Partners

- Which individuals and organizations do we want as our coalition partners?
 - Landlord Groups
 - NARPM
 - ASUM
 - Forward MT
 - Outreach to Families
 - MCPS
 - Developers
 - LIHTC developers



- City Boards and Elected Officials
- Labor Unions
- Transportation groups
- Focus Groups
 - Developers
 - Nonprofits
 - Transportation

Our Opposition

- Who do we expect to show up for opposition to policy change?
- Identify old policy changes that were strongly opposed, who opposed them and why.
 - Neighborhoods
 - Tax resisters
 - Builders
 - Developers
 - Nonprofits
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Agriculture Land
 - CFAC and 5 Valleys Land trust



Meeting 5 Notes [10/18/18]

Attendees

- Eran Pehan
- Montana James
- Linsey Wallace
- Anne Hughes
- Ginny Merriam
- Sean Kopetz
- Spider McKnight

Overview of Public Education & Outreach Charter and Goals

Montana James

Discussion on Messaging for Housing Policy

Spider joined the group as a Key Resource to support messaging plans

- The first question to ask is “Why”
- The group discussed our “why”
- Where is the community on housing?
 - Widespread acknowledgement that there is a problem
 - What we haven’t identified are the barriers people face to opting in to potential solutions
 - It is important to provide a vision for the future
- The vision and questions we ask need to vary by neighborhood, since each neighborhood has different concerns and ideas.
- Community Outreach should be the foundation of the process.



Meeting 6 Notes [11/1/18]

Attendees

- Eran Pehan
- Lindsey Wallace
- Anne Hughes
- Ginny Merriam
- Daniel Werwath

New Outreach and Engagement Plan

Group members provided positive feedback regarding the new plan. It's starting to take shape and feels comprehensive and community focused. Specific feedback:

- Holding canvassing until after the election is smart, generally the schedule feels well thought out.
- The group loves open houses, and feels this is a great way to reach the community.
 - Daniel cautions that open houses are only effective if you ensure inclusion by mitigating barriers like childcare, transportation, etc. He also discussed at length having reasonable expectations of engaging low income citizens specifically for that voices and representations – given the need to self-identify and the vulnerability that comes with that. A better idea is to look to advocates for at risk or marginalized groups.
- We need a really good script and training if we are using volunteers to canvass.
 - Daniel recommended thinking about neighborhood based canvassing/ recruitment of volunteers.
- We need to capture and analyze what we hear in open houses, through coding or possibly use of the SSRL. This requires thorough training of canvassers.
- It would be interesting to think about how we tap into cross initiative with open houses down the road (i.e. jail diversion plan, housing and health care).
 - Daniel recommended pulling aligning language from all master plans to show how housing is a thread throughout (Jail Diversion Master Plan, Reaching Home, Growth Policy, etc). This shows how making progress on housing also helps us make incremental progress in all our other planning efforts. *Eran editorial: This would be really powerful in an opening narrative.
 - Daniel recommended co-sponsoring public events (open houses, educational events).

Public Outreach to Coalition and Campaigns

Daniel Werwath lead the group in a general discussion about community outreach plans, barriers, obstacles, and how good design and mitigate these.

- Strong private and public sector involvement is key.
- Initial messaging needs to be strongly grounded in fact.
- The city has a unique role, which is to catalyze a private sector advocacy campaign.
 - City: public education, transparency, convening.
 - Private Sector: Local champions to carry a campaign, startup funds to support coalition work, long term fundraising, etc.
 - Put together teams of unlikely partnerships
 - Think about how to make social media easy (pre-record intros and outros for iphone videos about housing)
 - Find areas of agreeance. There is enough to agree on and to focus on initially without arguing about the 20% people don't agree on.
- What does an advocacy coalition look like?
 - Needs fiscal sponsor
 - Community Foundation?
 - Needs champion and administrative support
 - Ven diagram necessary participants
 - Ensure representation from die hard advocates to your chamber reps. It needs to be broad and inclusive.
 - Make sure people really feel heard before a convening. Know individual issues, points of connect between issues, etc.
 - Craft your strong community arguments.
 - Health Department Director, "we can't even begin to address maternal health until the housing situation is dealt with".
 - All, "we can't do x,y,z because of the lack of housing. Until this is addressed, nothing else we do will be as effective".
 - Be thoughtful about where energy goes. Intentions will always outpace resources. Focus should be on high impact, high outcomes.

Wrap up:

Group members were inspired by the conversation. Several though about guiding vision statement, messaging. "Home is where we all start" . . . the group wanted to come back to this and brainstorm more.

We addressed meeting schedules and what we hope to achieve in the last two meetings. The group eagerly offered to keep meeting past the scheduled dates if helpful/required.



Meeting 8 Notes [11/29/18]

Attendees

- Eran Pehan
- Lindsey Wallace
- Anne Hughes
- Ginny Merriam
- Sean Kopetz

Review Outreach plan for Recommendation to Leadership Team

- Strategies that are currently being implemented
 - Office of Housing and Community Development has adjusted its messaging to align with current recommended strategies
 - Contacts have been made to incorporate UM student canvassing
 - Neighborhood councils have been contacted and are eager to become familiar
- Strategies That have not yet been utilized
 - Community Councils
 - Can contact County Grants and Planning
 - Leadership Team
 - Recommendations presented 11/30

Run through and review of Communication Plan

- Timeline
- Vision
- Community level Coalition
 - Neighborhood Listening sessions
 - Field Specific Listening Sessions
 - Neighborhood Leadership team meetings
 - Prioritize based on
 - Population
 - Income Levels
 - Renters Vs Homeowners
 - Community Forum
 - All neighborhoods represented
 - County Outreach
 - Missing Opportunities
 - Online Survey in Conjunction with canvassing
 - Mapping tool
 - Social pinpoints
 - Statewide Advocacy and Outreach Plan



- Utilizing existing councils and lobbyists
- Montana Housing quarterly meetings
- Communication Tools
 - Coalition resources
 - URL Redirect for “Missoula Housing Policy”
 - Facebook and Instagram Pros and Cons
 - Utilizing existing accounts to promote events and progress
 - Blogs and Podcasts
 - Neighborworks
- Future Engagement
 - Public Outreach and Education becomes a steering committee
 - Monthly check-ins beginning in January
 - Summary Reporting when necessary
 - Opportunity for course correcting with outreach plan