



DATE: July 8, 2024

TO: Homelessness-Housing Task Force

FROM: Acting Assistant City Manager

SUBJECT: Discussion on Converting the Homelessness-Housing Task Force to a Council Committee

RECOMMENDATION

That the Homelessness-Housing Task Force (HHTF) discuss converting the HHTF to a Council Committee for Council Consideration.

SUMMARY

On May 21, 2024, City Council authorized an additional HHTF meeting to allow the HHTF members to determine if the HHTF should continue on a temporary basis, turned into a permanent committee or be placed on a hiatus. Through this report, staff have responded to Council feedback for consideration of the HHTF members. If the HHTF members decide to maintain the HHTF or convert it to a standing committee, staff have proposed a role for the HHTF consistent with the purpose while considering the current limitations and concerns. Additionally, should it be determined the HHFT continue as a committee or task force, staff request feedback from the members regarding future agenda items.

Staff recommend that the HHTF discuss whether the task force should be maintained as a temporary taskforce, consider converting it to a standing committee of the City Council, or placing a hiatus on the task force.

BACKGROUND

On January 29, 2019,¹ the City Council established the HHTF to address the homeless-housing crisis. The HHTF met on a quarterly basis for a two-year period. Council extended

¹ January 29, 2019 City Council Meeting Agenda and Materials:
<https://hayward.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3846296&GUID=CA787A4B-E77D-4818-BC82-B022B6B4649D>

the timeframe of the HHTF twice through consent. The first extension occurred on December 8, 2020,² in which Council approved a two-year extension through March 2023. On February 7, 2023,³ Council approved a one-year extension of HHTF through March 2024, at which point the HHTF would determine the future of the task force. The HHTF had scheduled to discuss the future of the task force at the March 2024 meeting; however, due to the cancellation of the March 2024, HHTF quarterly meeting, HHTF members did not have an opportunity to discuss the body's future. Consequently, the term of the task force has since lapsed.

On April 23, 2024,⁴ Council considered converting the task force into a committee, reestablishing the task force on its limited-term basis, or disbanding the task force (allowing staff to refer relevant agenda items to the full Council directly). Staff provided Council with reasons for maintaining the Task Force and reasons for elimination of the task force. Feedback from the full Council during the April 2024 meeting centered around a desire to convert the task force into a committee; however, there was also discussions about deferring to HHTF members and placing the task force on a hiatus to provide staff some time back for implementing their projects and policies. Feedback in support of converting the task force into a committee include:

- The importance of continuing the conversation about homelessness (e.g., the City's State of Emergency, pending federal court decisions, and perpetuity of homelessness);
- Concern that the housing crisis is not over;
- The desire to have more data and progress reports;
- Providing preliminary program, project, and policy review opportunities amongst a subset of the Council; and
- Providing opportunities for community input and engagement.

On May 21, 2024,⁵ the full Council authorized staff to extend the HHTF through an additional meeting for the HHTF members to determine next steps. Staff scheduled this meeting for June 20, 2024 during the regularly scheduled time slot for the HHTF meetings.

² December 8, 2020 City Council Meeting Agenda and Materials:
<https://hayward.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4711809&GUID=0131C7CC-7CF2-4D08-B76D-6979B7979BEA&Options=&Search=>

³ February 7, 2023 City Council Meeting Agenda and Materials:
<https://hayward.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6016042&GUID=C496D77A-40FE-428C-A02A-8857121D52B9&Options=&Search=>

⁴ April 23, 2024 City Council Agenda and Materials:
<https://hayward.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6642371&GUID=A5C506D8-AE00-47BF-B889-9F3856C0DE90&Options=ID|Text|&Search=>

⁵ May 21, 2024 City Council Agenda and Materials:
<https://hayward.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6697432&GUID=A13EBE7A-BAAF-49D0-AB12-D095234AA575&Options=&Search=>

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this item is to determine whether there is a need to maintain the HHTF as a permanent committee, maintain the body as a task force on a limited basis, or allow the task force to lapse so that all homelessness and housing policy discussions are directed to the full Council.

Reestablishing the HHTF as a task force would be appropriate if the HHTF members determine that additional work specific to homelessness and housing policy development is required and could be accomplished within a defined timeframe not to exceed an additional small number of years. Reorganizing the HHTF into a standing committee would be appropriate if the HHTF members determined that the conversations regarding homelessness and housing policy should be ongoing without a clear end with no term limit. Both pathways, reestablishing the HHTF as a task force or converting it to a standing committee, would require approval from the full City Council. In the following sections, staff have examined the feedback that Councilmembers raised during the April 2024 meeting for consideration by the HHTF members.

Continuing Conversations about Ending Homelessness

City Council members emphasized the importance of continuing conversation to address homelessness and to be informed about the progress as rationale to maintain the HHTF.

Expediting Homelessness-Related Items to City Council

While the City needs to continue working on efforts to end homelessness, given the current State of Emergency on homelessness, adopted by Council in January 2024, and the current practice of presenting items related to homelessness directly before City Council, staff raised concern that bringing all items to the HHTF prior to City Council action will slow adoption of policies intended to serve people experiencing homelessness.⁶ Therefore, staff recommends that these items continue to go directly before the City Council as opposed to the task force as an intermediary to streamline the legislative process and receive final authorization.

Contributing Solutions to End Homelessness

While it may affect expediency to vet current projects related to ending homelessness through the HHTF, some Councilmembers have expressed interest in using the HHTF to identify additional strategies to end homelessness. If there are additional interventions identified by the HHTF not included in the Let's House Hayward (LHH) plan, staff could evaluate if the proposed intervention or policy is consistent with the objectives identified in the LHH plan. Staff would evaluate the extent such proposals would impact the implementation of the rest of the plan and whether they recommend modifying the plan with the full Council.

⁶ January 30, 2024 City Council Meeting Agenda and Materials:

<https://hayward.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6497824&GUID=27C372BA-05E2-4727-B184-0EB72948365B&Options=&Search=>

Continuance of the Housing Crisis and Providing Preliminary Review

As noted by City Councilmembers, housing affordability continues to be a concern and the HHTF has been a useful venue for vetting complex and highly impactful policies.

Useful for High-Impact & Long-Term Projects

Continuing the HHTF as a committee or task force could provide valuable preliminary feedback for programs, policies, and projects considered contentious, affecting a significant number of community members, and/or long-term endeavors for the upcoming fiscal years. The task force is a useful forum for refining policy before review by the full Council. Based on the anticipated future agenda item, at least one of the future items falls within this category.

Delays Low-Impact & Urgent Projects

For other homelessness and housing related items that must receive final approval from the City Council expeditiously (e.g., time-sensitive projects), scheduling the item for the HHTF will slow approval. Staff recommend that such items continue to go directly before the full Council to expedite final approval. Such items would include applications for funding, homelessness related items, and routine contracts. The added step of the task force may create a legislative redundancy of facilitating two work sessions.

More Data and Reports

Council members expressed the desire to maintain the HHTF because they want more information about progress made on improving housing affordability and ending homelessness.

Potential Redundancy

If the full Council desires more information about efforts to end homelessness, reporting to the HHTF would create redundancy if this information is required to be shared with both the HHTF and the full Council. Additionally, HHTF members would need to hear the report again with the full Council.

Delegating Reports to the HHTF

If the City Council desires to delegate annual reports related to housing to the HHTF for review, it would eliminate the redundancy in hearing items more than once. However, City Council members who are interested in the topic, but not members of the HHTF, would need to attend the HHTF. To avoid redundancy, Council could decide if they want to receive all housing and homelessness related reports or if they want to delegate that to the HHTF.

Community Participation

Community members and the Council provided staff with feedback suggesting that a committee could provide additional avenues for public engagement and participation. Such

input is useful for major policy proposals like the Residential Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protection Ordinance (RRSO), which required multiple in-depth review for various policies.

Diminished participation

Community participation in the HHTF has diminished relative to participation related to the RRSO. Factors that could be contributing to diminishing participation could include inconsistent meeting dates or discussion of topics of less interest or broad impact.

Potential of Increased Participation

Holding regular meetings will ensure that interested community members are aware of the HHTF meetings and will allow them to plan their schedules accordingly. Staff cannot accurately gauge which topics will be of interest to community members, but such topics likely pertain to items that have the potential to create economic impact on a broad segment of the population. The topic that garnered the most attention within the last 12 months was the rent registry. There will be more discussions regarding this topic in the future since its addition to the Strategic Roadmap.

Council feedback accurately identifies a continued need to discuss, develop policies and programs that will improve housing stability for community members. As stated by several Councilmembers, the housing crisis is not over. Given the number of items that need to be expedited and the reduction of impactful policies, the HHTF members needs to determine if the HHTF is still serving its intended purpose.

Purpose of the HHTF

The purpose of the HHTF is to facilitate a more in-depth evaluation of options to address the homeless-housing crisis. It was established on a temporary basis to evaluate the efficacy and workload related to establishing it as a permanent Council Standing Committee. While there is concern with redundancy and a need to expedited items and bypass the HHTF, if the HHTF recommends and Council authorizes the extension of the HHTF or conversion to a standing committee, the HHTF could be utilized as the body to identify future housing policies and programs to be placed on the Strategic Roadmap. Subject to Council approval, the proposed role could reduce redundancies by being solely responsible for receiving annual reports related to housing. From this perspective and in conformance with the stated purpose, the HHTF's role could include the following responsibilities:

- Review non-time sensitive impactful projects or policies to allow opportunity for community engagement and preliminary feedback from the HHTF;
- Identify and evaluate new projects/policies to determine if they should be proposed for inclusion in the Strategic Roadmap; and
- Receive an annual report related to implementation of the City's housing policies and HHTF members report the highlights to City Council.

Future Agenda Items

If the HHTF determines that it would like to extend the term of the HHTF or convert the HHTF to a standing committee, staff recommend identifying future agenda items to prepare for subsequent meetings. Staff have identified several prospective agenda items:

September 19, 2024

- Simplification of the Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance and increase funding for Emergency Relocation Assistance*
- Adoption of Universal Design Guidelines for Accessible Housing*

December 19, 2024

- Update on the City's State of Emergency for homelessness
- Analysis of factors to improve competitiveness for state housing funding
- Annual implementation update of the Residential Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protection Ordinance (RRSO) and Mobilehome Rent Stabilization Ordinance (MRSO)

March 20, 2025

- Development of a Rental Registration System to obtain better data on rent increases, evictions, and occupancy*

**Agenda items proposed in FY 2025+ Strategic Roadmap*

Staff request HHTF members provide additional topics to be evaluated, especially if they pertain to the Strategic Roadmap. Adding additional items prior to the next Strategic Roadmap discussion would require delaying items currently identified for September or December.

Questions for Discussion

- 1.) Do HHTF members recommend maintaining the task force, converting the HHTF into a standing committee, or placing a hiatus on the task force?
- 2.) If HHTF members recommend the continuation of the task force or conversion of the body into a standing committee, do HHTF members:
 - a. concur with staff's recommendations for the purpose of the HHTF moving forward?
 - b. concur with staff's identification of future agenda items?
 - c. request evaluation of other policies or projects to determine if they should be added to the Strategic Roadmap for consideration by the full Council?

ECONOMIC IMPACT

There is no immediate economic impact with the consideration of this report.

FISCAL IMPACT

This report does not propose any changes or additions that would create a fiscal impact to the City's General Fund.

STRATEGIC ROADMAP

This agenda item pertains to the Strategic Priority of Preserve, Protect & Produce Housing.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will use the feedback and recommendation by the HHTF to present to the full Council following the summer recess for a determination regarding the future of the Task Force.

Prepared by: Ayush Patel, Management Analyst I

Recommended by: Adam Kostrzak, Acting Assistant City Manager
Sara Buizer, AICP, Director of Development Services
Christina Morales, Deputy Director of Development Services

Approved by:



Dustin Claussen, Interim City Manager