



STRUCTURAL CHANGE OBJECTIVES SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS FOR ANTI-RACIST COMMUNITIES (SPARC) PROJECT

Leaders from across service agencies in Portland's homelessness response system came together during SPARC week to commit to **three structural change objectives**, tangible goals for structural and systemic change, to prevent and end homelessness for people of color in Multnomah County. These objectives reflect recommendations that the AHFE Equity Lens Task Force and champions of racial equity work in our community have been calling for all along.

The objectives below aim to transform Portland's homelessness response system into one that is **equitable and anti-racist**:

1. REORGANIZING COC GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES WITH EQUITY AT THE CENTER.¹
 - **Screening processes and eligibility criteria are often barriers to housing** and lack transparency regarding who gets denied housing.
 - **Increasing the visibility of underserved populations** who don't show up in current PIT Counts.
 - **Eligibility criteria for homelessness** for the youth system because currently, they don't line up with the way folks identify, sometimes resulting in system AVOIDANCE OR DISENGAGEMENT.
 - **Workforce diversification needs to be a top priority** and must include incorporating people with lived experience into the shaping of policy and strategy.
 - **Building capacity for culturally-specific organizations**, including scaling the progress already in motion and increasing funding for diversifying staff.
 - **Improving staff retention, reform working conditions** at service organizations to provide clinical supervision to all staff (including support staff), increase salaries, and build anti-racist organizational cultures.
2. REDISTRIBUTION AND RESTRUCTURING OF FUNDING STRUCTURES (E.G., EXPAND BRAIDED FUNDING OPTIONS, CHANGING THE BUDGET CYCLE, AND CHANGING DATA-RELATED CRITERIA).¹
 - **Restructuring funding streams** to think about funding/budget allocation cycles and how to make shifts that will enable agencies to shift beyond exclusionary federal dollars, to effectively use county and city dollars.
 - **Increasing capacity building** to ensure that organizations have the capability to use funding.
 - **Rewriting eligibility and reporting criteria** to be both standardized and representative of the different needs of historically marginalized populations—particularly people of color
3. INCORPORATING HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN (HCD) METHODOLOGIES FOR ASSESSMENTS OF CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT.¹
 - **Rewriting current data collection protocols** in order to accurately assess service outcomes.
 - **Including those most invisible in the data (e.g. recently resettled refugees, Latinx, LGBTQ+, undocumented, folks) in research protocol design**, so that data is accurately reflective of peoples' experiences and needs.
 - **Using qualitative and quantitative input data** in continuous quality improvement frameworks.

This work is ambitious and requires **individual and organizational responsibility and accountability**. The SPARC team provides technical assistance and collaborative support for achieving these structural change objectives.

¹ This objective was a synthesis of several topics raised throughout the session.