

Siting Permanent Supportive Housing: Recommendations for Social, Economic, and Political Engagement

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Executive Summary

Massachusetts is facing a housing crisis. High rental costs and low vacancy rates are making the search for housing incredibly difficult for lower-income people, which is contributing to a growing homeless population. One of the solutions to ending homelessness, permanent supportive housing (PSH), has been a point of investment over the past years in the Commonwealth. However, the model is facing structural hurdles, impacting the speed at which it is able to be produced. Addressing these hurdles is essential to meeting the needs of people experiencing homelessness, which this report aims to do.

To better understand how PSH development can best be supported, there were two identified goals of this project:

1. Identify successes and challenges associated with the siting process as told by stakeholders;
2. Provide recommendations on strategies for successfully siting PSH.

The methodology included in-person or virtual interviews with 14 participants from three distinct groups: people with lived experience of homelessness, homeless service providers/PSH developers, and community development departments. Interviews with these three groups were recorded and categorized under the titles of social, economic, and political responses. From there, a thematic analysis was conducted to identify common themes within each group. In total, there were 16 identified themes and 36 subthemes. Using these results, four recommendations were created.

The four identified recommendations for successfully siting PSH were:

1. Include People with Lived Experience in the Siting Process,
2. Build and Maintain Relationships with the Community,
3. Increase Collaboration Between Groups, and
4. Provide Regulatory Opportunity.

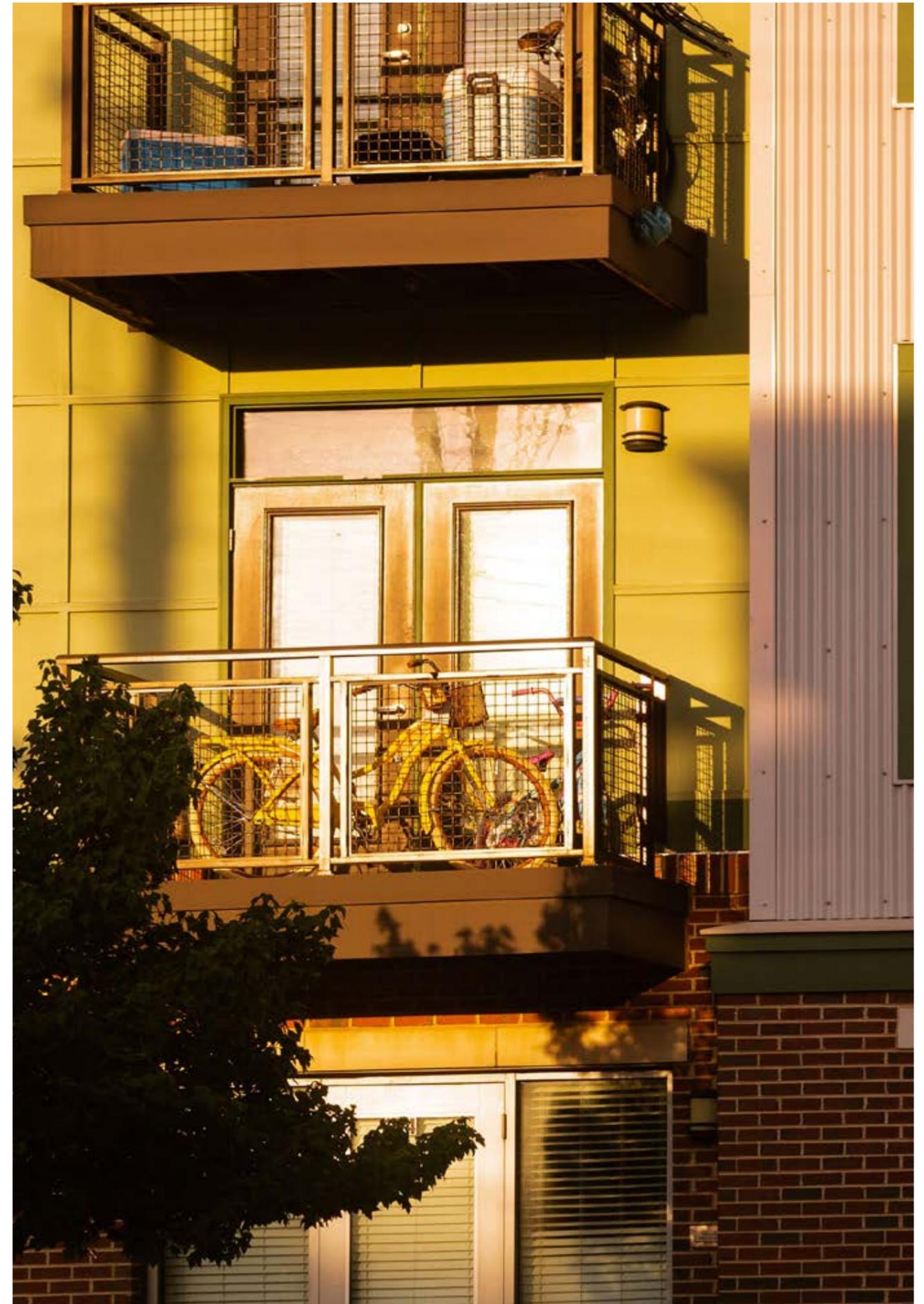
Using the four recommendations, service providers/PSH developers and community development departments can better address the structural hurdles to PSH development that increase the time and cost spent on a single project. The implementation of these recommendations will build the capacity of communities and their partners to address the housing crisis and successfully house people experiencing homelessness.

Introduction

People experiencing homelessness are facing incredibly difficult situations; sleeping on the street, living out of cars, or not knowing where their next meal is going to come from are just some of these challenges.

Homelessness is the epitome of social insecurity; it is a social, economic, and political plight that plagues thousands of people across the United States. This is certainly true for Massachusetts, which has approximately 18,000 people experiencing homelessness on a single day (United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2020). People experiencing homelessness are facing incredibly difficult situations; sleeping on the street, living out of cars, or not knowing where their next meal is going to come from are just some of these challenges. To address this crisis, Massachusetts, like much of the country, has seen the implementation of a Housing First approach, which “centers around providing permanent housing as the solution to homelessness and the foundation for people experiencing homelessness to pursue their goals” (Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance [MHSA], 2022). The Housing First model has been proven to alleviate homelessness by providing the stable housing and wraparound supportive

services needed to address individual struggles. This typically comes in the form of permanent supportive housing. Permanent supportive housing (PSH) is “housing assistance (e.g., long-term leasing or rental assistance) and supportive services provided to assist households with at least one member (adult or child) with a disability in achieving housing stability” (United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2022). Supportive services in PSH developments are intended to address the needs of tenants facing chronic illnesses, physical disabilities, mental health challenges, or substance use disorders (MHSA, 2022). The PSH model is intended as permanent, affordable housing, where residents can continue to utilize services until they feel independently secure. Given that PSH is a key solution to homelessness, it is important to consider the different approaches to developing PSH for those experiencing homelessness.



Siting Permanent Supportive Housing

Permanent Supportive Housing Development

The PSH model typically relies on three different approaches to housing people experiencing homelessness: subsidizing private market units, acquiring and renovating existing property, or acquiring and developing new property.

Leasing units for PSH, which are subsidized, is a common practice; when these units are spread out in various locations, they can be described as scattered-site housing. Scattered-site housing places individuals experiencing homelessness in private market apartments. Rents are paid through government-subsidized payments and supportive services are offered either in-house at the residence or at an agency. Service providers may choose this model because of its relative ease compared to developing new units, and it may be a better fit for some people experiencing homelessness. While this type of PSH can provide stable, affordable housing, it can face challenges of market availability/affordability of units, accommodations for individuals with disabilities (e.g., public transportation, interior design, etc.), or landlord-tenant relationships. Because of these challenges, some service providers have opted into a PSH model called master leasing, which is when a service provider engages in a “long-term lease with a property owner for control of a block of rental units” (Jakabovics & Charette, 2017). Service providers will engage in this model because they have more oversight in the way of property management, landlord-tenant relationships, and access to providing services. However, the master leasing

model also faces the challenge of housing availability in that it needs to have a cluster of empty apartments within a tight market. Even with this challenge, service providers do not have to engage in as significant of a siting process as the other two models.

Siting refers to the social, economic, and political considerations developers must make to build housing. These considerations include having community buy-in, securing funding sources, and meeting local zoning and land use regulations (Sally & Tighe, 2015). When engaging in the other two typical models of developing PSH, there is significant work around siting. The first model, acquisition of existing property, requires a PSH developer to purchase an underutilized property and renovate it to accommodate PSH units. The second model, developing new property, requires a developer to purchase land and build units from the ground up. For both models, a PSH developer must purchase the land/building (typically through a bidding process with other nonprofits); identify, navigate, and secure public and private funding sources; and finance the construction costs needed for renovation/building (Soo Kim & Li, 2020). The process of securing these funding sources can take years in and of itself, but there also exists a political process of meeting regulatory land use standards, designing the project and getting it approved by the municipality, and starting to renovate/build the units (Soo Kim & Li, 2020). These political processes add on time to a project as they cannot always happen simultaneously with securing

funding. Developers usually need to secure funding sources to determine what sort of project design they will be able to finance, so the process gets stalled. From a social perspective, if there is community opposition to the proposed PSH development, then more time and cost can be added for the developer. They will have to spend time convincing the community that the development will not negatively impact them, go through formal public hearing processes, or engage in a legal battle if the community decides to sue the developer.

The social, economic, and political considerations summarized here can significantly impact the time and cost associated with a project, put political and financial strain on the PSH developer as an organization, and ultimately affect the viability of a project. Thus, understanding how these processes impact PSH development is necessary for organizations and state entities to engage in targeted, systemic change that better supports the development of PSH for people experiencing homelessness.



Siting Permanent Supportive Housing

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to identify successes and challenges associated with the siting process and provide recommendations on siting models for the development of PSH. These recommendations are based on the experiences of stakeholders and decision makers in the siting process of PSH development (see the Methodology section for more on this).

Methodology

The siting models outlined in this paper are informed by the experiences of three distinct groups: homeless service providers/PSH developers, community development departments, and tenants of a PSH development itself. Each group can be identified as a decision maker or a stakeholder, with decision makers having the power to influence the processes associated with siting PSH and stakeholders being affected by these processes. The first group, homeless service providers/PSH developers, are considered as one group because some homeless service providers in Massachusetts also serve as PSH developers. However, this group serves a dual role as both a stakeholder and a decision maker. As a stakeholder, homeless service providers can serve as liaisons between developers and the community to ease tensions and build trust. The siting process impacts service providers' stable housing and wraparound support services. As a decision maker, PSH developers have control over where and how they propose a development. They can negotiate financing, building design (interior and exterior), construction, and service delivery. The other decision-making group, community

development planning departments, have control over the approval process for a proposed development. They can negotiate land use policies, timing, financing, and political will. The stakeholder group, tenants of the PSH development, are people who have experienced homelessness. They often require supportive services, and the impact of PSH on them is an opportunity to be housed, receive necessary services, live somewhere affordable, build community, and regain dignity.

To record the experiences of the three interview groups, an interview guide was made to highlight the social, economic, and political successes, challenges, and solutions around the siting process of PSH. Some notable guiding principles of both the questions listed in the interview guide as well as interviews themselves include:

1. Attention to the knowledge of the issue of homelessness, attitude about homelessness, and community behaviors as a response to homelessness;
2. Letting interviewees be the experts of their own experiences through open-ended questions and active listening.

Interviews of the groups were conducted over a three-week period and encompass a wide range of demographic groups. In an effort to incorporate geographic diversity, the study includes interviewees representing a total of eight counties: Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, Worcester, Hampshire, Franklin, and Essex. Geographic location can often indicate access to resources, so having the perspectives of many different areas was particularly valuable to this study.

There was a total of 14 interviews conducted, five of them from community development departments, five from people

with lived experience, and four from service providers/PSH developers. Each interview lasted between 30 and 60 minutes and was conducted either in-person or over the video platform Zoom. All the interviews were recorded for the purpose of analyzing results, which participants were informed of before being interviewed. In addition, people with lived experience were compensated for their participation to recognize the value of their contribution. After recording the results, a thematic analysis was conducted to identify the common themes across participants relevant to their experience with PSH and the siting process.



Results

In total, there were 16 themes and 36 subthemes identified. Some of the themes are relevant to the purpose of this project, like successful strategies for financing PSH, while others may be more relevant to other projects and/or organizations, like the emotions felt by people going through the process of obtaining PSH. Regardless, all the subthemes have merit and were the result of several, if not all, participants having a similar response.

In an effort to be concise, some results that directly inform the recommendations in this report are listed in this section. Not all of the results that inform the recommendations are discussed in this report, although a list of all the results can be found in the appendices provided at the end of this report.

Informative Results from People with Lived Experience

One thematic result from people with lived experience (PLE) that informs the recommendations in this report is How the External Environment Influences the Experience of Living in PSH (PLE Aby). Here, participants noted that being in a location that has good public transportation, access to businesses and/or public amenities (e.g., school, hospital), and a strong sense of community were conditions for an ideal PSH development. Another result from this group is What Being Supported in PSH Looks Like (PLE Bax). This result is described

by participants as having case managers who were responsive and attentive to their needs, providing important support. Specifically, they described the need to have someone who is working alongside them while still promoting self-determination. In addition, the need to have staff members of PSH (e.g., landlords) be just as responsive and attentive was expressed as not always existing but still a need, particularly the need to have landlords enforce the rules of their handbooks/leases.

Informative Results from Service Providers/PSH Developers

A result from service providers/PSH developers (SP) that informs the recommendations is Community Engagement Around Relationship Building (SP Aax). In this result, participants emphasized the importance of having strong relationships with the community to build trust. This often means being active in the community through attendance of neighborhood meetings, events, or going from door to door to provide information. In addition, participants expressed having preestablished relationships with decision makers in the community as being beneficial to garnering support for PSH development when the time came. Participants also needed to incorporate community concerns as a way of building trust and respect.

Another result that informs the recommendations is Variability in Requirements from Funding Sources (SP Bax), in which participants expressed the various bureaucratic challenges associated with obtaining funding for PSH development. This can be described by having to rely on multiple funding sources that all have different requirements for receiving funds. One challenge is the prerequisite of having community buy-in, either through engagement or commitment of funds from the municipality. Participants described this as a challenge because of

the long, complex process that is often associated with securing community support of a PSH development. Participants also described a challenge of funding sources having different timelines for the distribution of funds, which, if they don't align, can prolong the cost and time of a project.

The final thematic result that is noted here is Going through the Approval Process to Comply with Zoning/Regulatory Standards (SP Cay). In this result, participants described engaging in the zoning process (whether through changes in project design, repurposing existing property, or applying for a permit) as being tedious. Participants expressed the complexity of engaging in this process and the subsequent time it adds to development. Some participants expressed their reliance on the Dover Amendment¹ for receiving zoning exceptions without having to go through the tedious process. In addition, participants who used the Dover Amendment to get approval of a PSH project described needing to work more collaboratively with the community on design/services of the PSH development, which allowed the project to move through the approval process quicker.

¹ The Dover Amendment is a Massachusetts law that prevents municipalities from prohibiting real estate in residential zones if that real estate is for the purpose of education or religious services (Batchelder, 2018).

Informative Results from Community Development Departments

The first notable thematic result from community development department (CDD) participants is Community Perception: Specific Comments Around Homelessness and PSH (CDD Aaz). Here, participants described community comments towards people experiencing homelessness and PSH development relative to how they are perceived to impact the community. In this way, community comments fell into two groups: economic and political. Economically, common concerns included PSH development as impacting property values of nearby neighborhoods and that there would be an increase in school-aged children which would mean more taxes. Politically, common comments included communities being a “dumping ground” for transient people experiencing homelessness, regulatory concerns like an increase in density or traffic/parking, and that the municipality has provided its “fair share” of affordable housing.

Another notable result is Successful Strategies for Financing PSH, Collaboration with the Municipality (CDD Bay). In this result, participants described a successful strategy for reducing development costs as engaging in peer review/design review with a municipality's planning department.

This process was described as particularly helpful because the municipality can point out areas that need improvement before a development application is submitted. The goal of this process is to reduce the time an applicant needs to spend in the approval process. In addition, participants noted that developers should always include a traffic study in their application as it may be a requirement of the municipality or a concern during the public hearing process.

A final result from CDDs that informs the recommendations is Regulations around Multifamily Housing Development (CDD Cay), where participants described multifamily housing development as being limited by zoning regulations. Participants described municipalities having few zoning districts that allow for multifamily housing, and for the ones that do, there are density and other land use requirements that can limit the type/design of multifamily housing in that area. Participants also described multifamily zoning districts as being close to public transportation hubs, but there not being significant land availability in existing multifamily zoning districts because of their small size and/or existing development.

Recommendations

The recommendations outlined in this report are geared toward homeless service providers/ PSH developers and community development departments. Some recommendations may be relevant to one or both groups, but they all incorporate the thematic results outlined in the appendices. In addition, the recommendations reflect the purpose of this research in identifying successful strategies for siting PSH.

Recommendation #1: Include People with Lived Experience in the Siting Process

People with lived experience of homelessness are the experts of their own lives. In addition to understanding what it is like to be without housing, they have unique insight into the effectiveness of PSH – what works and what does not. Thus, they should be included in the siting process. The first way people with lived experience can be included is in the project design phase of siting. This phase encompasses factors such as location, services, and amenities, which people with lived experience have significant insight. Including their voices either through a formal outreach process or on an organization's advisory board will strengthen the ability of PSH to meet their unique needs. The second way people with lived experience can be incorporated is within the public hearing process, which is triggered by any application to a municipality. A common problem with the public hearing process for lower-income housing development is that it is dominated by the voices of the opposition. Opposition can come in the form of land use concerns, but there also exists a degree of fear and

concern over the population itself. Including people with lived experience in this process can humanize the issue of PSH production and may dissuade fears.

For people with lived experience to be successfully incorporated into the public hearing process, they should be given an opportunity to provide a testimonial on their experience with homelessness, with the goal to humanize it. However, participants in this process should be informed about the risks of giving a testimony. Hurtful comments towards people experiencing homelessness are not foreign to public hearings, with those opposing a development often referencing some lack of moral worthiness and/or negative community impact because of project approval. While the comments are often made without the known presence of someone with lived experience, it is difficult to say whether the same comments would be made in the presence of someone sharing their experience. Thus, participants in a public hearing process would need to be prepared for the worst. In addition,

sharing the experience of homelessness requires someone to recall a traumatic experience, which can be difficult in and of itself but could be compounded by the negative comments of other people. This recommendation recognizes these two potential negative impacts and highlights

Recommendation #2: Build and Maintain Relationships with the Community

The ability of service providers to build relationships with the community is a crucial step towards successfully siting PSH. Having community buy-in and political will are two important components to begin the siting process. This means that community engagement cannot be limited to when a project is being proposed; rather, engagement must rely on strong, established relationships with the broader community. To build these relationships, an organization needs to be present. They need to attend volunteer opportunities and community events; dedicate time to help clean up the park or contribute to the food drive. This kind of relationship building is proactive and genuine, which an organization can rely on when the time

Recommendation #3: Increase Collaboration Between Groups

The production of PSH is going to take a great deal of collaboration. At the community level, this may look like the creation of a local task force on homelessness, a housing partnership, or a collection of community members seeking to address homelessness. Such a group should include stakeholders like homeless

them as considerations for service providers seeking direct testimony in a public hearing process. A solution to these potential impacts may be to have a person with lived experience provide written testimony to someone who can speak on their behalf.

comes to propose a PSH development. Instead of combating the organization through a long, costly public hearing process, the broader community will already know that they are a good-willed entity and that they are not looking to hurt the community. In addition, organizations need to have relationships with local politicians. This means sitting down and listening to their concerns about homelessness and collaborating around solutions. Just like with the broader community, having these well-intentioned relationships can reduce the time spent in a permit approval and public hearing process. Organizations should also be willing to address community concerns around a project in an effort to maintain and strengthen their relationship.

service providers, government officials, community development department employees, business associations, neighborhood groups, and people with lived experience. The formulation of these groups can bring about a community-wide effort to address homelessness that incorporates multiple perspectives. In addition, there

should be collaboration between groups – specifically, between service providers and community development departments in the permit application process. To reduce the time a project takes to move through the approval process, community development departments need to have a design review process. This process, which allows the service provider and department to get together and make sure a proposed plan complies with the community’s zoning regulations and vision, can reduce the amount of time a service provider has to spend in a formal

Recommendation #4: Provide Regulatory Opportunity

If the political will in a community exists to build affordable housing and PSH, then zoning ordinances need to reflect this will. Having the structural opportunity for PSH production means amending zoning regulations. Developers of PSH can get caught up in the permit approval process because of regulations that limit the opportunity for housing production, and these regulations can be time-consuming if challenged. Some specific regulations, like having inclusionary zoning ordinances, can greatly increase the supply of affordable housing in a community. Inclusionary zoning mandates that a certain percentage of units be affordable to low- to moderate-income people and families. However, for such ordinances to meet the needs of extremely low-income people at risk of homelessness or those experiencing homelessness, they need to be written to accommodate people

application process and the cost otherwise added by third-party consultation. In addition, service providers should talk to various local government organizations to see what funding opportunities they are able to access. Utilizing municipal funding sources for housing production can help alleviate some of the cost associated with PSH developments. Community development departments and service providers need to work together to streamline the permit application process and community groups need to include a variety of perspectives to ensure the response to homelessness addresses their needs.

making <30% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Many inclusionary zoning ordinances are meeting the needs of people making 60-80% AMI; while these ordinances contribute to the production of affordable housing, they largely miss those most at risk of becoming homeless. Affordability components within inclusionary zoning ordinances need to reflect the needs of this population and have a percentage of new units allocated to those making less than 30% AMI. Apart from this specific regulation, reducing density requirements within certain districts, setting up parcels of land for multifamily housing through infrastructure development, and being lenient over some regulations (e.g., parking) can all provide the opportunity for quicker, and less costly, PSH development.

Conclusion

Siting PSH is a combination of social, economic, and political processes that, within their current forms, are inevitably costly, time consuming, and all-around arduous; however, they don't have to be.

Siting PSH is a combination of social, economic, and political processes that, within their current forms, are inevitably costly, time consuming, and all-around arduous; however, they don't have to be. Identifying and changing the structural challenges that prolong PSH development is a necessary step towards its construction. While the outcome is more PSH units, the impact is on people trying to transition out of homelessness. Providing opportunities for people to be housed after experiencing homelessness means creating structural

opportunities for solutions, like PSH, to be realized. The recommendations in this report outline steps that service providers and community development departments can take to secure community buy-in, navigate funding sources, and create regulatory opportunity for PSH development. These steps are non-exhaustive, but they highlight some of the proactive strategies these two groups can take to create systemic improvements for PSH development and reduce the time and cost associated with the siting process.

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Category	Description	Theme	Description	Subthemes	Description
Social (A)	Experiences of people in their housing	Process (a)	What happened in the process to be rehoused	Emotional Response (x)	Lots of expressed frustration and discouragement with the process to obtain housing. Characterized by long waitlist times, extensive paperwork, and voucher conditions.
				Support (y)	The support needed to be rehoused was expressed as being the result of case workers who were encouraging, compassionate, and helpful with the application process. Case workers also acted as direct advocates in referring participants to their current housing.
		External Factors (b)	Factors that influence the experience in housing	Relationships (x)	The relationships participants have with case workers, PSH staff, and other tenants greatly influence the experience of living in PSH. Participants expressed needing supportive case workers, responsive and supportive staff, and respectful neighbors.
				External Environment (y)	Being in a location that has good public transportation, access to businesses and/or public amenities (e.g., school, hospital), and a strong sense of community was expressed as being the conditions for an ideal PSH development.
				Internal Environment (z)	Participants expressed wanting their own apartment with amenities and the right to privacy. They also expressed wanting to have rooms that reflect their own individual needs and lifestyles, which can sometimes be constrained.
Economic (B)	The needs of tenants financially and within their own housing	Services (a)	The kind of services offered in PSH	Support (x)	Participants expressed having case managers who were responsive and attentive to their needs as being a great point of support. Specifically, the need to have someone who is working alongside them while still promoting self-determination. In addition, the need to have staff members of PSH (e.g., landlords) be just as responsive and attentive was expressed as not always existing, but is still a need. Specifically, the need to have landlords enforce the rules of their handbooks/leases.
				Specific Services (y)	Participants expressed the need to have case managers that were helping with access to mental health services, life planning, and interpersonal skills that enhance relationships with other tenants.
		Means-Based Rent (b)	Participants expressed having the 30% of income going towards rents as being very helpful		
Political (C)	The influence of tenants on PSH living and development	Programs (a)	The degree to which participants feel that they have a voice in shaping how programs are run where they live	Site-based (x)	Participants expressed not feeling heard by landlords around their needs, whether it be basic maintenance, tenant relationships, or rule enforcement.
				Group-based (y)	Participants largely expressed feeling listened to and involved in the various lived experience advisory boards that they sit on. *Note: All interviewees sit on some sort of advisory board, whether to a city or organization, to relay their experiences or vote on the board's procedural tasks.
		Engagement (b)	How participants feel their voices can influence services within PSH and its development	Service Providers (x)	All participants expressed the importance of service providers engaging with and listening to people with lived experience when designing programs/services because they understand the needs of people experiencing homelessness. They have valuable insight into what services work and don't and should be involved with the implementation of such services.
				Community (y)	Participants who were asked about community engagement expressed interest in engaging with other community members around the issues people experiencing homelessness face. Participants specifically indicated the importance of humanizing the issue of homelessness as well generating empathy in the context of PSH development

Category	Description	Theme	Description	Subthemes	Description
Social (A)	The experiences of service providers in engaging with the community and prospective tenants	Community Engagement (a)	Securing the buy-in of community members to allow a proposed PSH development	Relationship Building (x)	Participants emphasized the importance of having strong relationships with the community in order to build trust. This often means being active in the community through attendance of neighborhood meetings, events, or going from door to door. In addition, participants expressed having pre-established relationships with decision makers in the community as being beneficial to garnering support for PSH development when the time came. Participants also needed to incorporate community concerns as a way of building trust and respect.
				Relying on Reputation (y)	Participants expressed how, when engaging with communities, they are able to point to past projects as a way of dissuading fears. Past projects can indicate the responsibility of the organization in managing the exterior of the building as well as effective services for tenants living inside. In addition, to uphold their reputation, participants expressed needing to commit to the continued upkeep of the property and the surrounding area.
				Education Efforts (z)	Participants expressed how part of the community engagement effort for PSH development is to educate the community. Education was described as composing both teaching people about the needs of the client population and explaining how the proposed development can benefit the community. These efforts were expressed as being a direct response to misperceptions/fears of a client population moving into their community. In addition, some participants shared the importance of including people with lived experience into an education effort while others advised against it (due to the potential negative impact on the client).
Economic (B)	The financial costs associated with engaging in PSH development	Tenant Engagement (b)	How tenants are included in the siting process of PSH	Modality (x)	Some participants expressed the direct use of surveys to people living in PSH or the use of advisory boards composed of people with lived experience to inform certain aspects around a proposed PSH development.
				Content (y)	Participants expressed how, when they engage with people with lived experience to inform PSH development, it is often through project design. Project design encompasses physical amenities, location, and services provided within the development.
				Variability in Requirements from Funding Sources (x)	Participants expressed the various bureaucratic challenges associated with obtaining funding for PSH development. This can be described by having to rely on multiple funding sources that all have different requirements for receiving funds. One particular challenge is the prerequisite of having community buy-in, either through engagement or commitment of funds from the municipality. Participants described this as a challenge because of the long, complex process that is often associated with securing community support of a PSH development. Participants also described the challenge of funding sources having different timelines for the distribution of funds, which, if they don't align, can prolong the cost and time of a project.
Political (C)	The experience of service providers in political processes around the siting of permanent supportive housing	Type of Housing (b)	The kind of housing development service providers engage in	Compliance for Requirements (y)	Participants expressed how changes in funding requirements of a project can impact the cost and time for a developer because of the costs associated with meeting said requirements. This was described as impacting construction and/or project estimates.
				Services (z)	Participants expressed the relative ease of securing funding for services within PSH because it was described as being inexpensive. It was noted that 24/7 staffing was expensive, but not all PSH projects require this degree of staffing.
				Acquisition/Rehabilitation or Development (x)	Participants largely expressed investing in acquisition/rehabilitation or development of PSH sites because of their ability to easily provide services on-site and build community. In addition, they are able to avoid some of the challenges associated with the housing market, like affordability and availability.
Political (C)	The experience of service providers in political processes around the siting of permanent supportive housing	Approval Process (a)	The process for having a proposed PSH project be approved	Master Leasing/Scattered-Site Housing (y)	Some of the challenges with master leasing and/or scattered-site housing were described by participants as difficulty in providing on-site services, negotiating with landlords around the client population's needs, supply of vouchers for tenants, and the availability of units. However, master leasing was described by one participant as being more affordable for them compared to acquisition/rehabilitation of a property.
				Public Hearings (x)	Participants described how public hearings, which are formal community meetings that allow community members to voice their support or opposition to a project, can prolong the typical approval process. Participants described having community buy-in before engaging in public hearings was more beneficial as it reduced the amount of time they would need to spend convincing the community that the project is a benefit.
				Zoning/Regulatory Compliance (y)	Participants described the process of engaging in the zoning process (whether through changes in project design, repurposing existing property, or applying for a permit) as being tedious. Participants expressed the complexity of engaging in this process and the subsequent time it adds to development. Some participants expressed their reliance on the Dover Amendment for receiving zoning exceptions without having to go through the tedious process. In addition, participants who used the Dover Amendment to get approval of PSH project described needing to work more collaboratively with the community on design/services of the PSH development, which allowed the project to move through the approval process quicker.
				Timeline (z)	Participants described the process of PSH development, or going from project conception/planning to the end of construction as taking anywhere from 1.5 to 4 years. Participants cited the permit approval process and its ensuing steps and securing funding sources as contributing to this time table. However, some participants described having collaboration, especially with land use boards around compliance work, as reducing the time it takes for a project to move from conception to being built.

Category	Description	Theme	Description	Subthemes	Description
Social (A)	How the community approaches homelessness	Perception (a)	The thoughts and attitudes of community members	Housing Development (x)	Participants described their communities as either being apathetic towards affordable housing development or against it. Only one participant expressed their community as being pro-multifamily housing development. Participants described their communities as being much more against PSH development, especially if it is geographically close to them.
				Homelessness (y)	Participants described their communities as being largely apathetic towards people experiencing homelessness. Specifically, community members don't pay attention to where people go as long as it doesn't impact them in some way.
				Specific Comments around PSH and Homelessness (z)	Participants described community comments towards people experiencing homelessness and PSH development relative to how they are perceived to impact the community. In this way, community comments fell into two groups: economic and political. Economically, common comments included PSH development as impacting property values of nearby neighborhoods and that there would be an increase in school-aged children which would mean more taxes. Politically, common comments included communities being a "dumping ground" for transient people experiencing homelessness, regulatory concerns like an increase in density or traffic/parking, and that the municipality has provided its "fair share" of affordable housing.
		Action (b)	Community engagement around supporting people transitioning out of homelessness or specifically through PSH development	Creation of Groups (x)	Participants described the creation of a community group that works to develop solutions to meeting the need of people experiencing homelessness. These groups were described as being either entirely community-based, a municipal task force on homelessness, or a formal Housing Partnership. The different group types included stakeholders with various backgrounds from the municipality.
				Formal Processes (y)	Participants described doing some form of community engagement via their office. These efforts were aimed at garnering input into housing development and/or addressing homelessness. Some type of processes participants cited were community-wide surveys, notifying abutters of a public hearing, attending neighborhood meetings, or publishing articles. However, participants shared that some of these processes are not as effective as others, especially in reaching lower income community members or those who would be in support of a proposed project.
Economic (B)	The costs associated with PSH development as described by community development departments	Successful Strategies for Financing a PSH Development (a)	The ways a community can financially assist in the production of PSH development	Accessing Funding Sources (x)	Participants identified funding sources that municipalities manage that PSH and affordable housing developers have accessed in the past. This includes Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds, HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds, and Housing Choice funds. Participants noted that they are only able to provide a certain amount of funding under each program.
				Collaboration with the Municipality (y)	Participants described a successful strategy for reducing development costs as engaging in peer review/design review with a municipality's planning department. This process was described as being particularly helpful because the municipality can point out areas that need improvement before a development application is submitted. The goal of this process is to reduce the time an applicant has to spend in the approval process. In addition, participants noted that developers should always include a traffic study in their application as it may be a requirement of the municipality or a particular concern during the public hearing process.
Political (C)	How the PSH development is impacted by a municipality's land use ordinances and processes	Regulations (a)	Specific zoning/land use ordinances that impact the opportunity for PSH development	Affordability Supportive Regulations (x)	Participants reported areas where land use regulations can support affordable housing production as well as some that can hinder it. One regulation, inclusionary zoning, is a local ordinance that mandates a zoning district to have a certain percentage of new units be affordable. Participants who noted their municipalities having this ordinance defined affordability as being 60%-80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Another ordinance that supports affordable housing production is Chapter 40B, which mandates that 20-25% of a municipality's affordable housing stock have long-term affordability restrictions. However, a municipality is exempt from this mandate if over 10% of its housing stock is already considered affordable. All of the participants noted that they met this 10% requirement. Some participants mentioned being receptive to a "friendly 40B proposal", where a municipality would negotiate leniency for density in exchange of a certain percentage of new units being affordable.
				Multifamily Housing Development (y)	Participants described multifamily housing development as being limited by zoning regulations. Participants described municipalities having few zoning districts that allow for multifamily housing and for the ones that do, there are density and other land use requirements that can limit the type/design of multifamily housing in that area. Participants also described multifamily zoning districts as being close to public transportation hubs and there not being significant land availability in existing multifamily zoning districts because of their small size and/or existing development.
		Processes (b)		Political Will (x)	Participants expressed some degree of apathy amongst political officials in their municipalities to push for zoning amendment changes that would support multifamily housing and PSH development.
				Public Hearings (y)	Participants described the public hearing process, as a component of the approval process, as being dominated by community members who oppose a proposed housing development. In addition, participants mentioned how the process for engaging with community members to attend public hearings for a housing project is limited to abutters of the proposed development. Participants were split on whether hearing the opinions of abutters was helpful in the public hearing process. Some noted that abutters know how their neighborhood functions better than anyone while other participants found that abutters who oppose a project can be stuck in their ways and not willing to listen.
				Supportive Services (z)	Participants expressed their capacity to assist a developer with project application process prior to submission of their application can reduce the time and cost associated with the approval process.