

Highlights From HOAC Retreat:

I. HOAC Purpose Statement: (Draft – Working Document – will be used to create mission statement)

HOAC is represented by community non-profits, government, and housing related services to provide:

- Guidance
- Recommendations
- Advocacy
- Coordination
- Collaboration
- Solutions and opportunities
- Information
- Planning
- Leadership

which promote housing security and helps move people from homelessness to housing with supported services.

The longer-term vision is housing for all within a thriving community.

II. Strengths and Challenges – The group listed current strengths and challenges (listed below).

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant resources at the table • Extensive expertise • Commitment / Care by group of organizations that want to make a difference • Networking opportunities in working together • Opportunities to share resources • County / City participation • Staff support • Variety of agency connections • Accomplishments : SORT ; messaging • Community has an opportunity to participate • Structure – not directed by a specific agency, accommodates diverse approaches • Have by laws, a plan, assessment of needs – opportunity to expand on the Plan’s action items • Feeling of belonging to a peer group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of group and array of perspectives – difficult to make decisions – wide variance on how to approach issues & solve them • No policy / methodology for making decisions • No clear leadership or authority • Not a legal organization • Community perception is group can solve local homelessness issues • No clear buy-in from organizations – what they are agreeing to? • Mission of individual organizations may be in conflict with HOAC’ • Relationships with all the respective organizations at the table • Unsure of decision making protocols / roles • Need for communication improvements with each other, community ; education on work and success • Planning needs – with focus on continuum of needs / action steps to address them • Lack of Funding – for incentives, other needs • Discomfort with speaking up • Missing people at the table

III. Next Steps: The next typical step in planning is to address the challenges through specific action items which build on the strengths in addition to finalizing mission and vision.

It was decided to first address HOAC’s structure as that will guide how to complete the strategic planning.

GOBHI was asked to present some organizational models for HOAC to consider. The following represents those options. Please note, the pro’s and con’s are an initial list created by GOBHI in-house counsel. HOAC members will add to this list during their meeting.

IV. Organizational Models - To follow is a list of organizational model options for the Housing Opportunity Action Council (HOAC) to consider for its future structure. There is also an initial list of pros and cons associated with each model. This is not a comprehensive list of options. There are other models but given their complexity, it was decided to begin with these basic structures.

A. Continue as is:

Description: Currently, the HOAC is in informal group of dedicated individuals from various organizations within Benton County and who have a common focus of seeking to ensure that everyone in Benton County has the opportunity to live in decent, safe, and affordable housing.

Pros:

- It's familiar.
- Variety of expertise and knowledge at the table.

Cons:

- The array of representation creates a large group which makes decision making difficult
- If the group wanted to engage in fundraising, it is hard to raise money without a formal structure.
- No formal insulation from personal liability, or potential liability of your organization.

B. Have an existing nonprofit establish a fiscal sponsorship:

Description: An existing 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation with a broad enough purpose statement could simply establish a fiscal sponsorship with the current or a future version of the HOAC, and oversee its work to ensure that it's work does not jeopardize it's 501(c)(3) status.

Pros:

- This would be quick to set up.
- More opportunities to raise money through grants and potentially even government sources.
- Can indemnify through insurance to protect individuals and entities involved.

Cons:

- You have less control, since the existing 501(c)(3) maintains an oversight role.
- While there are more funding opportunities, here, there are not as many as a separate nonprofit corporation, or government entity.

C. Establishing a new nonprofit organization:

Description: Following the state and federal requirements to establish a new 501(c)(3) (we can talk about other types of nonprofits if people desire to do so, too).

Pros:

- Easier to make firm decisions in a more formal structure.
- Many more funding sources become available.

Cons:

- Time consuming to establish (minimum of 80 hours of very detail oriented work).
- Laborious to maintain with annual filings, audits, etc.

D. Have it absorbed by an existing government entity:

Description: Either one of Benton County's City Municipalities or the County of Benton (more likely the county, based on the scope of the mission) could decide, through formal processes, to begin performing the functions of the HOAC.

Pros:

- Funding sources which are available to government entities
- Insulation from legal liability based on government status.

Cons:

- Loss of control to the government entity.
- Required compliance with additional regulations.

E. Establishing a new governmental entity:

Description: Units of local government (cities, counties, and special districts) can band together to establish new governmental units called ORS 190's. They function like special districts in many ways, but provide regional services.

Pros:

- Dedicated solely to the work of the HOAC.
- Insulation from legal liability based on government status.

Cons:

- People on the governing board have to be government.
- Specialized knowledge to establish the entity.