



One Stop Housing Shop – Public Comments

Neighborhood & Housing Services Department | January 5, 2022

Background

In November and December 2022, the Renters' Solutions Subcommittee of the Housing Commission requested public comment on what resources the community would like to see related to SHIP strategy - Develop a "One Stop Shop" Housing Center.

The public comments are posted on the Renters' Solutions Subcommittee page of the Housing Commission website. More opportunities for public comment on this topic will be available.

To learn more about this Strategic Housing Implementation Plan (SHIP) strategy, visit sanantonio.gov/ship.

Public Comments Received

Received on SA Speak Up November 17th, 2022

According to the portion of the SHIP linked to the email I received Nov. 6, the Financial Housing and Recovery Center was to be the first step towards the implementation of the "One Stop Shop" – I am unclear as to why CoSA is starting over with this request for input on a "One Stop Shop".

My first suggestion in the way of a location would be in or near the new VIA offices which would be both accessible to bus lines and centrally located. This would also be close to the Haven for Hope campus, UTSA downtown campus (to better assist students and staff) and within a reasonable distance to other nonprofit temporary housing in the downtown area. A location in or near CoSA offices would also be convenient for the same reasons. I am aware that DSD offices will undergo a renovation soon, and that too would be a good central location with free parking. Wherever the location, at least one law enforcement officer should be on duty during operational hours in addition to staffing it with folks I have suggested below.

Different nonprofits that the City contracts with on both affordable housing and human services should rotate out one staff member from each as well (ex. Habitat for Humanity, My City My Home, Alamo Housing Group, Merced, Franklin, SAMM, Christian Ministries, Salvation Army, Family Violence Prevention, etc.). A large mass communication of where it is located and exactly what services will be offered is needed as well. Many residents are unable find out where they are on the Section 8 waiting list and whether they even qualify for it and/ or public housing due to inadequate communication with SAHA (now Opportunity Home). Not all city residents are even aware of the organizational name change so let's start with notifying all San Antonio residents about the name change and where their offices are located, hours of operation, and working phone numbers. At minimum one staff member from Opportunity Home who can help residents understand the qualifying process and the follow-up process (including a timeline) definitely needs to be at this "One Stop Shop", as well as someone who can help voucher-recipients locate housing providers who accept them.

Additionally, an NHSD staff member who knows about and can help residents with ALL services listed on the CoSA's NHSD website is needed. Some of the resources available through links and phone numbers on CoSA's website via the NHSD page are not operational and the CoSA site itself fluctuates in appearance making it extremely difficult to instruct users how to access different programs over the phone step-by-step (AND in person), so maybe two staff members from NHSD are needed at a "One Stop Shop". LISC has a decades-long relationship providing assistance to NHSD in



One Stop Housing Shop – Public Comments

Neighborhood & Housing Services Department | January 5, 2022

linking with non-profits and historic preservation, so one of their staff members could also be tapped to assist at the “One Stop Shop”. I also believe there was to be an “affordable housing” website/ dashboard (similar to what Austin has with a map). I recall seeing a presentation about this during a Housing Commission meeting this past year and wonder if it was ever rolled out. If so, helping citizens to access technology to view said website and explaining what each layer/ component should also be a part of the “One Stop Shop”. Perhaps someone from San Antonio Apartment Association would be good to have on hand for that purpose. Finally, it’s fairly easy to get this “one Stop Shop” designation confused with DSD’s “One Stop Map”. As always, thank you for providing the opportunity for comment and I hope these are helpful. Looking forward to hearing and seeing more!

Received on SA Speak Up December 1st, 2022

To whom it may concern, Texas Housers is responding to request for comments on a Coordinated Housing System that will serve as a local housing hub for the City of San Antonio. There are a total of nine SHIP strategies that serve this purpose through FY 2031, and we're looking forward to continuing conversations to improve this system along the years.

The number one priority for the One-Stop Shop (OSS) should be accessibility for those in need of housing services. This being said, we offer the following recommendations: The OSS should include the following resources and services: Legal aid services - eviction, transferring deeds, clearing title/clouded title assistance, fair housing complaints/discrimination, and property tax protests Social Security Services Ready to Work and workforce training resources Relocation assistance - including funds available and maps that list affordable housing projects throughout the city Rehabilitation assistance - distinguishing the different rehab programs available to applicant Bexar County Housing Authority and Opportunity Home liaisons present to assist with public housing/section 8/subsidized housing residents Domestic Violence resources and/or classes on prevention and awareness. Child care to ensure that parents have the space to understand all the information they're receiving Food pantries and the Foodbank Reentry services for those who've been recently incarcerated Veteran services Financial Education services, specifically around credit and loans Homebuyers Education, including down payment assistance programs Life Skills classes Mold Complaints (<https://www.mold-help.org/>) and explanations for why it does not fall under code enforcement Utility Assistance Programs Tools to aid residents' search for housing through partnerships with organizations such as HousingBase and My City is My Home Know Your Rights material for renters, homeowners, and mobile park tenants Houseless supportive services such as ID recovery and access to shelter.

Some agencies and organizations that come to mind to ensure that the OSS is successful include, but are not limited to: My City is My Home SACRD TDHCA's Section 811 Project Rental Assistance Team Faith-based organizations Coalition for Tenant Justice Texas Organizing Project Tenant Union of San Antonio Neighborhood Housing Services of San Antonio Texas Riogrande Legal Aid MetroHealth.

Ideally, the OSS would live in an area that is historically underserved, but also within 4-10 such example include Denver Heights, Highland Park, Riverside, Los Angeles Heights, or Las Palmas. While we understand that the OSS must live somewhere permanent to provide all services necessary, we would like COSA and NHSD to explore the option of creating a mobile "pop-up" unit. This would allow for housing services to meet the residents where they are.



One Stop Housing Shop – Public Comments

Neighborhood & Housing Services Department | January 5, 2022

The OSS should include both online and in-person services. The in-person events would be more helpful to the elderly or instances where sensitive documents must be exchanged. The in-person services should be available at least one day out of the weekend, and include flexible scheduling before and after the typical work day (9am-5pm). It would be good practice to include an appointment scheduling system for more sensitive meetings and to create a better structure for staff, but allow for walk-ins for general inquiries. This would ensure folks have no issues getting to the office for assistance. The virtual events would be more convenient for presentations, tutorials, and updates on local efforts regarding housing. To ensure the highest possibility of success the OSS should also have a hotline or voicemail inbox where residents can leave messages after hours. Everything provided by the OSS should be available in English and Spanish, and ensure there are translators on call for other languages necessary. The OSS should have staff members that are available to assist residents throughout application processes.

We understand this may not cover everything that must be taken into consideration when creating an OSS, but we hope this spurs a conversation within the City of San Antonio to truly evaluate what residents need to be successful in their housing ventures.

Received on SA Speak Up December 1st, 2022

We are writing to share our questions and concerns related to the creation of the “One Stop Shop” that will serve as a singular access point for housing related services in our city. We believe this is one of many steps that should be taken to develop a coordinated housing system, as outlined in the Strategic Housing Implementation Plan (SHIP). The section in the SHIP report on the “One Stop Shop” is a concept that is not well defined. NHSD sent out a request merely one week ago asking the community to provide input. This turnaround was too quick and furthermore, the expectation was for COSA to have provided further details that would enable the community to respond to.

In light of the quick turnaround, we wish to offer the following overarching recommendations that we believe are essential to the development of this important program: 1. The “One Stop Shop” should include a physical location that offers direct access to services (not just referrals) with staff who have experience in working with clients experiencing housing insecurity. This includes staff trained on the array of housing support services as well as staff trained in trauma informed care. 2. In addition to developing a physical location of the housing “One Stop Shop” that is easily accessible to the public, COSA should also explore the options to create a mobile unit, “pop-up” locations, or occasionally co-locate at the offices of council members to further expand geographic accessibility throughout the city. 3. Ensure that the “One Stop Shop” will not only house COSA staff but also nonprofit and philanthropic communities working on housing instability, as outlined in the SHIP.

Furthermore, we recommend for COSA to engage the community on the selection of the partners who will be housed at the “One Stop Shop.” We hope NHSD will provide ample opportunities and authentically engage with community stakeholders on the development of the One Stop Shop in the coming months. Thank you.