



July 2, 2020

Dear Metro Councilors,

To end homelessness for people with mental illness, substance use disorders, and those with co-occurring disorders, a lived and culturally-responsive recovery framework must be applied to policy development and service investments.

Our recovery coalition sent a letter to the Metro Council regarding the HereTogether Bond implementation process on June 11th, 2020 and we have yet to receive a substantive response. Overall, we are very concerned about the efficacy of the HereTogether bond based on the lack of representation and inclusion of people in recovery and those who were formerly homeless - both in the bond measure itself and in the representation of committee members. According to studies of Oregon's homeless population, between 45% - 84% are identified as having a substance use issue. And, many suffer from mental illness. Yet, as far as we can tell, the Regional Supportive Housing Services Stakeholder Advisory Table lacks representation from those with lived experience of homelessness, mental illness, and substance use recovery.

We request Metro postpone the July 6th meeting of the Regional Supportive Housing Services Stakeholder Advisory Table and meet with our coalition and others to identify means of increasing the recovery membership of the stakeholder advisory committee. We believe the inclusion of our voices will bring credibility, authenticity, and efficacy to its outcomes.

If Metro is going to solve the homelessness crisis in the tri-counties, it needs the expertise of those with lived experience, those who understand recovery generating policies, and those who provide professional recovery support services. Our coalition can provide Metro with all of these.

Thank you for taking the time to ensure all voices are heard in the HereTogether campaign. We look forward to working with you.

Please direct any questions to:

Tony Vezina, 4D Recovery Executive Director

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*Our coalition represents addiction recovery subject matter experts, recovery housing organizations, the addiction treatment/recovery workforce, mental health clinicians and advocates, and recovery support services providers. Collectively, we have over 1,000 people in recovery currently working in various capacities, many of whom were formerly homeless and/or incarcerated. Additionally, we have LBGTQ+, African American, and Latinx and Spanish speaking representation.*

### **Supporting Organizations**

Eric Martin, MetroPlus Association of Addiction Peer Professionals, *a tri-county association of 1,000 recovery peers and supporters, many of whom have experienced homelessness.*

Miguel Tellez, NW Instituto Latino Adicciones

Julia Mines, The Miracles Club

Tony Vezina, 4D Recovery

Monta Knudson, Bridges to Change

Shawn Bower, Iron Tribe Network

Mike Marshall, Oregon Recovers

Jason Renaud, Mental Health & Addiction Association of Oregon

Van Burnham, Oregon Recovery Residences