

SOCIAL HOUSING TASK FORCE

Wednesday, June 10, 2026 at 6:00 PM
City Hall Basement Room 24 Kippy
Richardson Room



MEMBERS

City Councilor Kate Sykes, Co-Chair
City Councilor Sarah Michniewicz
Paul Styslinger
Bill Stauffer
Jason Spector
Catherine Buxton
Wendy Cherubini
Cullen Ryan
Matthew Peters
Kristin Leffler
Jon Fetherston, Co-Chair
Jonathan Culley
Tim Wells

The Social Housing Task Force will conduct this meeting in person. If you are not able to attend in person, a recording will be available in the [Agenda Center](#) following the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT INFORMATION:

To submit written public comment on an agenda item, email SocialHousingTaskForce@portlandmaine.gov. Submissions must be received by 12:00 pm the day before the Social Housing Task Force meeting to guarantee their inclusion in the agenda packet. All submissions must include the commenter's name and legal address. To help ensure your comment is submitted for the correct item, please include the name of the agenda item (see below).

AGENDA:

- 1. Review and Approve Minutes from the May 13, 2026 Meeting**
 - i. SHTF Draft Minutes of Meeting 05.13.2026
- 2. Administrative Updates, Announcements, etc., as needed**
- 3. Review of Interim Report Presented to the Housing and Economic Development Committee on June 2, 2026**
 - i. Social Housing Task Force *Interim Report*
- 4. Discussion of Next Steps**

Social Housing Task Force Minutes of Business Meeting held May 13, 2026 at 6:00 pm.

A recording of the meeting is posted [here](#). These minutes provide a record of those in attendance, the general discussion taking place, and motions made. Please refer to the recording for discussion details.

In attendance:

Jon Fetherston – Co-Chair

Bill Stauffer

Wendy Cherubini

Jonathan Culley

Jason Spector

City Councilor Sarah Michniewicz

Paul Styslinger

Cullen Ryan

Tim Wells

Matt Peters

Mary Davis, Division Director, City's Housing and Community Development Division

Christian Roadman, GPCOG, Senior Planner

The meeting started at approximately 6:07 PM.

The meeting began with administrative updates, wherein Christian Roadman made a last call for task force members to provide W-9s if they would like a stipend for their participation.

The meeting continued with approval of the minutes from April 22, 2026 (moved by Cullen Ryan, seconded by Bill Stauffer, with unanimous approval).

Matt Peters led the group through a review of the Portland Housing Authority's (PHA) pro forma for a project on Congress Street, which they had prepared and presented at the last meeting. This was followed by questions, answers, and discussion. Discussion included an emphasis on "additive" impact from social housing, political palatability of concepts and projects, and simplicity of explanations to taxpayers regarding pros and cons of a more simple project.

Jonathan Culley and Matt Peters spoke further about the 0 Cornell Street site, presenting a potential typology (four three-story buildings, each with a single stair and 10 units apiece as well as a draft pro forma. They posited that such an approach is the lowest-cost way to provide housing at a variety of bedroom mixes. While there could be a mix of units, all of them would be relatively small (i.e., 800 square feet for a two-bedroom apartment).

Jonathan Culley raised the potential for additional costs, like bond counsel, requirements of Portland's Green New Deal, and wage rates. Mary Davis clarified that who owns the project and who is party to the contract dictates whether the wage and benefit rate requirement are applicable. For instance, a loan from the Jill Duson Housing Trust Fund may not trigger prevailing wage compliance but the receipt of a credit enhancement agreement through tax increment financing would trigger compliance because the City's local TIF policy requires compliance. .

Discussion regarding financial assumptions, such as debt coverage, area mean income, and cash flow occurred. The model developed by Jonathan Culley and Matt Peters assumed a debt coverage of 1.1 – which they noted as low, but perhaps sensible in this context. The model also assumed 80% and 100% AMI-targeted units (or 90% AMI units). By year 10, cash flow from the hypothetical project is \$200,000 year (in year one it is about \$66,000).

Discussion followed regarding political feasibility, paths forward, and alternative options (i.e., a project on the peninsula, rehabilitation of existing building, working with PHA, etc.). The group also discussed the potential for and importance of replicability for any project.

The meeting ended at approximately 7:50pm (moved by Paul Syslinger, seconded by Jonathan Culley, with unanimous approval).

DRAFT

City of Portland, Maine

Social Housing Task Force

Interim Report

*Presented to the Housing and Economic Development
Committee*

May 19th, 2026

1. Executive Summary

Over the first several months of its charge, the Portland Social Housing Task Force conducted technical modeling, comparative research, and expert interviews to determine how the public sector can most effectively intervene in the local housing market. The Task Force also converged on a definition of social housing: a model where the *public sector maintains an active financial and ownership stake*, ensuring that investments are preserved and reinvested over time rather than serving as one-time subsidies.

Financial research has confirmed that the economics of production, specifically the rising costs of financing and construction, represent the primary barriers to new development in Portland. While the use of public land is a valuable tool, modeling demonstrates that land alone is insufficient to drive production without significant financial intervention. This finding establishes the cost of capital as a key domain where the City possesses the capacity to yield a meaningful impact on social housing production.

The emerging strategic direction positions the City as a financing partner rather than a direct developer, allowing the municipality to provide favorable capital terms while leveraging the expertise of existing organizations. Bond financing is currently under evaluation as the primary mechanism to scale this effort and support the recapitalization of public funds. A central component of this strategy is a partnership with the Portland Housing Authority, which offers a unique opportunity to combine municipal investment with established development and management capacity.

In the final phase of its work, the Task Force will focus on defining specific bond structures, establishing governance protocols for institutional partnerships, and identifying sites for initial pilot projects. These efforts aim to create a durable system that addresses critical housing gaps for workforce and middle-income households. The ultimate goal is an implementable roadmap and detailed pilot project proposal that balances programmatic ambition with technical and fiscal responsibility.

2. Charge of the Task Force

The Portland Social Housing Task Force was established by order of the City Council in March 2025 to study and develop a framework for government-led social housing in Portland.

The Council’s intent in forming the Task Force was to respond to a widening gap between housing demand and housing production, and to explore the role that public entities might play in directly shaping the housing market to achieve long-term affordability and stability. As articulated in the resolution, the Task Force was charged with developing “a strategic framework for a social housing program... prioritizing permanent affordability, environmental sustainability, and inclusivity.”

At its core, the Task Force’s work is guided by three interrelated goals:

- **Affordability:** advancing models that ensure housing remains accessible to a broad range of Portland residents over the long term;
- **Sustainability:** designing systems that are financially and operationally durable over time;
- **Mixed-Income Communities:** promoting development patterns that integrate a range of income levels and avoid concentrations of poverty.

The Council further directed the Task Force to undertake a comprehensive scope of work, including identifying key leverage points in housing production, evaluating public financing strategies such as bonding, coordinating existing funding programs, assessing local barriers such as land and permitting constraints, and exploring models of public development and ownership, including partnerships with entities such as the Portland Housing Authority.

The Task Force was convened for a one-year period, beginning in August 2025, with a final report and recommendations due to the City Council within that timeframe.

Structurally, the Task Force consists of appointed members representing municipal leadership, housing practitioners, finance and development professionals, nonprofit leaders, and community members with lived experience navigating Portland’s housing system. The group elected two co-chairs to guide its work and coordinate agendas. City staff from the Housing and Economic Development Department and the Housing and Community Development Division provide ongoing support, alongside facilitation and technical assistance from the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG).

To carry out its charge, the Task Force adopted a dual-track meeting structure. Regular business meetings are held to deliberate and advance the work plan, while separate educational sessions

are used to deepen the group's understanding of housing finance, development models, and policy tools.

Task Force Members

The Task Force brings together a multidisciplinary group with expertise spanning housing development, municipal finance, public policy, nonprofit management, and lived experience in Portland's housing market. Members include:

- **Catherine Buxton:** Policy professional and housing advocate with experience in cooperative development and legislative engagement.
- **Wendy Cherubini:** Affordable housing policy and program management professional with extensive experience in community development and evaluation.
- **Jonathan Culley:** Local developer with experience in housing production, including mixed-use and multifamily development in Portland.
- **Jon Fetherston (Co-Chair):** Veterans Housing Services Liaison at Preble Street, with extensive experience in public sector leadership and housing systems.
- **Kristin Leffler:** Public school educator and Portland resident bringing lived experience navigating housing affordability challenges.
- **Councilor Sarah Michniewicz:** Portland City Councilor with experience in municipal governance and housing policy.
- **Matt Peters:** Housing development and finance professional with experience in real estate investment and project feasibility analysis.
- **Cullen Ryan:** Executive Director of Community Housing of Maine, with deep experience in supportive housing development and operations.
- **Jason Spector:** Strategic planning and public sector consultant with experience in program evaluation and cross-sector systems design.
- **Bill Stauffer:** Property owner and business operator with experience in real estate management and local economic conditions.
- **Paul Styslinger:** Natural Hazards Planner at the State of Maine with experience in infrastructure design, residential codes, and public program sustainability.
- **Councilor Kate Sykes (Co-Chair):** Portland City Councilor with a focus on housing policy and public investment strategies.
- **Tim Wells:** Real estate and development professional with experience in construction, finance, and land use.

As reflected in the membership, the Task Force was intentionally constituted to combine technical expertise with on-the-ground experience, ensuring that its recommendations are both analytically rigorous and grounded in the lived realities of Portland residents.

3. Approach and Methodology

The Task Force structured its work to move from broad exploration to focused analysis, pairing foundational learning with applied evaluation of how social housing could function within Portland’s specific economic and institutional context.

From the outset, the group recognized that social housing is not a single model, but a set of tools and strategies that must be adapted to local conditions. As a result, the Task Force adopted an approach that combined comparative research, technical analysis, and iterative discussion with an emphasis on testing ideas against real-world constraints.

3.1 Meeting Structure and Work Plan

To support this approach, the Task Force established a dual-track meeting structure consisting of regular business meetings and supplemental educational sessions. Business meetings were used to deliberate on findings, review materials, and identify priorities and next steps. Educational sessions were designed to build a shared understanding of complex topics, such as housing finance, development economics, and public policy tools.

To date, the Task Force:

- Engaged external expertise and case studies from other jurisdictions, including mixed-income public production models in localities such as Chattanooga, Atlanta, Seattle, and Montgomery County, MD to understand how social housing models have been implemented elsewhere.
- Developed and tested financial models. Leveraging technical modeling from GPCOG to evaluate how variables such as financing costs, income mix, land value, and subsidy levels affect project feasibility.
- Reviewed local data and project conditions, including city-owned land inventories and the status of approved but unbuilt or stalled housing developments.
- Refined areas of focus, moving from a broad survey of possible approaches toward a more targeted examination of the most viable pathways for Portland.

As the work has progressed, the Task Force has begun to organize itself into more defined areas of inquiry with the intention of forming working groups to deepen analysis during the second half of its charge.

3.2 Areas of Study

The Task Force’s work to date has focused on several core areas of study, each of which corresponds to a key dimension of the Council’s charge.

- **Social Housing Models (Comparative):** The Task Force reviewed a range of national and international social housing approaches from other municipalities, including publicly owned, mixed-income developments, as well as hybrid models involving public financing and private or nonprofit delivery. Early discussions focused on defining what “social housing” should mean in Portland’s context and how it could complement, rather than compete with, existing programs.
- **Financial Modeling and Feasibility:** A central component of the work has been the analysis of financial models to understand the feasibility of different housing scenarios. These models tested the impact of variables including interest rates, hard and soft construction costs, and income targeting. This revealed the significant challenges associated with bringing new projects to viability under current market conditions, specifically where construction and financing cost escalation has outpaced traditional subsidy models.
- **Public Land Analysis:** The Task Force reviewed inventories of City-owned land to assess potential development opportunities, while also examining site-specific constraints such as environmental limitations, existing uses, and regulatory considerations. This analysis helped clarify both the opportunities and limitations of relying on public land as a primary strategy for housing production.
- **Existing Project Pipeline (Stalled Projects):** Recognizing that a number of approved developments have not moved forward, the Task Force examined the local project pipeline. Particular attention was paid to projects that may be delayed or infeasible under current financing conditions, raising the possibility that targeted public intervention acting as gap financing could unlock projects otherwise stalled by recent shifts in the private lending market.
- **Partnership Pathways (Including Portland Housing Authority):** The Task Force explored potential partnerships with existing housing institutions, most notably the Portland Housing Authority (PHA). Discussions focused on how the City might leverage PHA’s development experience, operational capacity, and existing project pipeline while contributing financing to enable mixed-income, publicly influenced housing development.

Taken together, these areas of study reflect an approach that is exploratory but also grounded in Portland’s financial, regulatory, and institutional landscape.

4. Defining Social Housing

One of the earliest and most important areas of discussion for the Task Force was the question of definition: *what should “social housing” look like in the context of Portland?*

While the Council’s resolution provides a general framework, describing social housing as a model in which public entities take an active role in the development and ownership of housing, it does not prescribe a single structure or implementation strategy.

As a result, Task Force members began their work with differing perspectives on what social housing should entail in practice. These differences were surfaced and explored through early discussions and a structured survey of members, which sought to clarify assumptions about public ownership, financial participation, and the role of the City.

4.1 Areas of Convergence and Clarification

Early in its work, the Task Force sought to clarify how members understood the concept of social housing, including the role of public ownership, financing, and long-term stewardship. This was explored through group discussion and a structured survey designed to test assumptions and surface areas of agreement.

While there were differences in emphasis, the survey results indicated a strong underlying alignment among members on several core principles. Across the Task Force, there was broad agreement that social housing should:

- Involve a meaningful public role in shaping housing outcomes, rather than relying solely on private market delivery
- Prioritize long-term and perpetual affordability, rather than time-limited restrictions
- Support mixed-income communities, rather than narrowly targeted or isolated developments; and
- Be structured in a way that is financially sustainable over time, rather than dependent on one-time interventions.

Where differences emerged, they were less about whether the public should play a role, and more about how that role should be structured and operationalized. In particular, members explored the extent to which the City should:

- Retain an ongoing ownership or equity stake in projects
- Act as a financial partner versus a direct developer
- Intervene in existing projects versus initiate new development

These discussions helped clarify that the Task Force was not divided on purpose or direction, but interested in working through the practical design of a model that could balance ambition with feasibility.

4.2 Public Investment as a Lasting Public Asset

As the Task Force worked through these questions, a key point of alignment emerged around the nature of public investment in housing: if the City is to deploy public resources at scale, those investments should be structured to create lasting public value, rather than functioning solely as one-time subsidies.

This principle distinguishes social housing, as understood by the Task Force, from more traditional approaches in which public funds are used to close financing gaps without retaining an ongoing public stake in the resulting asset.

Instead, the Task Force has increasingly coalesced around a model in which public investment is designed to:

- Retain an ownership or equity position, even if partial;
- Support repayment and recapitalization, particularly in the context of bond financing; and
- Enable reinvestment into future housing production, creating a cycle of sustained public impact.

In this framework, the City's role is not to fully assume the responsibilities of a developer or property manager, but to act as a long-term financial and strategic partner, ensuring that public contributions continue to generate public benefit over time.

This approach reflects a practical synthesis of the Task Force's discussions: it avoids both the limitations of one-time subsidy models and the complexity of building a fully municipal development apparatus, while preserving the central principle that public investment should result in ongoing public ownership, influence, and return.

4.3 Emerging Definition

Based on these discussions, the Task Force has begun to converge around a working definition of social housing for Portland:

Social housing is housing in which the public sector plays an active financial and ownership role, ensuring long-term affordability and allowing public investment to be preserved and reinvested over time.

This definition reflects several key principles:

- **Public Investment with Retained Value:**
Public dollars are not treated solely as subsidy, but as investment structured in a way that allows the City to retain equity, repay capital (such as through bond financing), and redeploy resources into future projects.
- **Shared Ownership, Not Full Municipalization:**
Social housing does not require the City to fully stand up and operate a comprehensive development and property management entity. Instead, it may involve partial ownership or equity stakes, often in partnership with experienced developers or public housing authorities.
- **Flexibility in Delivery:**
The model allows for multiple pathways, including new construction, acquisition and rehabilitation, or participation in existing projects, so long as the core principle of ongoing public benefit and ownership is maintained.
- **Distinction from Traditional Subsidy Models:**
Unlike conventional approaches that rely on one-time subsidies or tax incentives without long-term public return, this model emphasizes recapture, recapitalization, and continuity.

4.4 Implications for the Task Force’s Work

This emerging definition has shaped the Task Force’s subsequent analysis in several important ways:

- It has focused attention on financing structures, particularly those that allow the City to act as an investor rather than a grant-maker;
- It has elevated the importance of equity participation and long-term stewardship in project design; and
- It has informed ongoing discussions about partnership models, especially with institutions such as the Portland Housing Authority, where ownership and operational responsibilities can be shared.

At the same time, the Task Force recognizes that this definition is still being refined. The second phase of its work will further test how these principles can be translated into specific, implementable models within Portland’s legal, financial, and institutional constraints.

5. What We Have Learned So Far

Through its first several months of work, the Task Force has moved from broad exploration to a more grounded understanding of how housing is produced in Portland, and where meaningful intervention may be possible. The findings below reflect recurring themes across financial modeling, case study review, and local analysis.

5.1 The Economics of Housing Production Are the Primary Constraint

The most consistent and consequential finding of the Task Force’s work to date is that the economics of housing production, in particular the costs of financing and construction, represent the central barriers to new development.

Through financial modeling exercises, the Task Force examined how variables such as construction costs, income targeting, land value, and financing terms interact to determine project feasibility. These exercises demonstrated that even under highly favorable conditions, including scenarios with reduced or no land cost, limited or no property tax burden, and additional subsidy, projects often fail to “pencil out.”

5.2 Public Land Alone Is Not Sufficient to Drive Housing Production

The Task Force examined the potential role of City-owned land as a catalyst for housing development. While public land can reduce project costs and create opportunities for strategic intervention, the analysis made clear that land is only one component of a much larger financial equation.

In many modeled scenarios, even the provision of free land was not sufficient to make a project viable without additional financial intervention. Furthermore, site-specific constraints, including environmental limitations, existing uses, and regulatory considerations, reduce the number of parcels that are realistically available for development.

As a result, while public land remains an important tool, the Task Force finds that it cannot, on its own, address the scale of Portland’s housing challenges.

5.3 Financing Represents the Most Effective Municipal Lever

Given the constraints identified above, the Task Force has increasingly focused on financing as the most powerful and scalable lever available to the City. Unlike land use alone, financing tools have the potential to directly influence project feasibility by lowering the cost of capital, reducing risk, or enabling projects that would otherwise not proceed. Mechanisms such as bond

financing, low-interest loans, or other forms of public investment can materially shift the financial structure of a project.

This insight has shaped the Task Force’s emerging direction: that the City’s most effective role may be as a financial partner, rather than solely as a regulator or land provider. In this framing, the City is positioned to unlock housing production at scale, while structuring its participation in a way that preserves long-term public value.

5.4 The Current Housing System Leaves Critical Gaps

The Task Force’s work has also reinforced that Portland’s existing housing development system, while producing important outcomes, does not fully meet the needs of the community.

In particular, there is a persistent gap in housing options for middle-income and workforce households, who often earn too much to qualify for traditional affordable housing programs, but not enough to access market-rate housing comfortably.

Existing financing tools, including federal and state programs, tend to be structured around specific income thresholds, leaving limited flexibility to address this “missing middle.” As a result, the Task Force finds that new models are needed to complement, rather than compete with, existing programs.

5.5 Mixed-Income Development Is Preferred for Long-Term Sustainability

Across its discussions, the Task Force has consistently expressed a preference for mixed-income housing models. From both a social and financial perspective, mixed-income developments offer several advantages:

- They avoid the concentration of poverty associated with single-income developments;
- They create more stable and resilient communities; and
- They can support more sustainable financial structures by balancing different rent levels within a single project.

While deeper affordability remains an important long-term goal, the Task Force has recognized that mixed-income models may represent the most viable and scalable approach for initial implementation, particularly in a high-cost environment.

5.6 Multiple Intervention Pathways Are Viable

Finally, the Task Force has identified that there is no single pathway for public involvement in housing development. Instead, several potential entry points exist, each with distinct opportunities and challenges. These include:

- **Ground-up development**, where the City participates in the creation of new housing on vacant or underutilized land;
- **Acquisition and rehabilitation**, including the purchase and improvement of existing buildings;
- **Intervention in stalled or delayed projects**, where targeted financial support could enable projects that are otherwise unlikely to proceed; and
- **Acquisition of existing housing assets**, potentially removing units from speculative markets and stabilizing them over time.

This range of options suggests that a successful social housing strategy will likely require flexibility in approach, allowing the City to respond to different opportunities as they arise.

Taken together, these findings point toward a consistent conclusion: the City's most effective role in addressing the housing crisis may lie in strategically deployed financial intervention, structured to produce both immediate housing outcomes and long-term public value.

6. Emerging Strategic Direction

Building on the findings outlined above, the Task Force has begun to coalesce around a strategic direction for how the City of Portland might most effectively participate in the development of social housing.

This direction is not yet a final recommendation. Rather, it reflects a set of interrelated concepts that have emerged consistently through the Task Force's analysis and discussions, and which will be further tested and refined during its remaining work.

6.1 Role of the City: Financer vs. Developer

A central question for the Task Force has been the appropriate role of the City in housing development and operations. While some models of social housing involve the creation of a fully public development entity (responsible for land acquisition, construction, and long-term property management), the Task Force has recognized that establishing such an apparatus in Portland would present significant challenges in terms of capacity, cost, and time.

At the same time, the Task Force's analysis suggests that the City already possesses a powerful, and currently underutilized, tool: its ability to finance and structure capital for housing projects. As a result, the Task Force is increasingly exploring a model in which the City acts primarily as a financial partner, rather than a direct developer. In this role, the City could:

- Provide capital at more favorable terms than private markets;
- Influence project design, including income mix and long-term affordability; and
- Retain an ownership or equity position that preserves public value over time.

This approach allows the City to intervene at the point of greatest constraint - project financing - while leveraging the expertise of existing development and management entities.

6.2 Bonding as a Primary Tool (Under Evaluation)

Within this emerging framework, bond financing has surfaced as a potentially central mechanism for enabling City participation at scale.

Bonding offers several potential advantages:

- It allows the City to raise significant capital upfront, enabling multiple projects to move forward within a relatively short timeframe;
- It can provide lower-cost financing than is typically available through private lending markets; and
- It aligns with a model in which public investment is repaid over time, supporting recapitalization and reinvestment.

At the same time, the use of bonds introduces important questions related to risk, repayment structures, and long-term fiscal impact. The Task Force has begun exploring these issues, but additional analysis will be required to determine:

- Appropriate bond structures and terms;
- Risk mitigation strategies; and
- The relationship between bond financing and existing City funding mechanisms.

As such, bonding should be understood at this stage as a promising but still evolving tool, central to the Task Force's inquiry but not yet fully defined.

6.3 Partnership with the Portland Housing Authority (PHA)

The Task Force has identified a significant opportunity to advance social housing through partnership with the Portland Housing Authority (PHA).

Unlike many housing authorities nationally, PHA has demonstrated a willingness to explore collaborative models with the City. This presents a unique opportunity to combine PHA's strengths (including development experience, access to federal programs, and long-term property management capacity) and the City's potential role as a source of flexible capital, strategic direction, and public investment.

Through this partnership, it may be possible to:

- Expand or adapt existing PHA projects to include mixed-income components;
- Accelerate redevelopment efforts, including those associated with RAD conversions and other capital improvements; and
- Pilot new models of shared ownership and financing that align with the Task Force's emerging definition of social housing.

The Task Force also recognizes that such a partnership will require careful attention to governance and accountability, particularly where City capital is involved. As a result, further work will be needed to define appropriate structures that ensure alignment between the City and PHA while respecting their distinct roles and authorities.

6.4 Pilot Project Approach

Consistent with guidance from peer jurisdictions and practitioners, the Task Force is increasingly oriented toward a pilot project approach that would:

- Focus on a limited number of initial projects;
- Test key elements of the model, including financing, partnership structures, and income mix; and
- Generate practical experience that can inform future expansion.

This strategy reflects an understanding that social housing is not a single policy decision, but a system that must be built iteratively. Early projects can demonstrate feasibility, build institutional knowledge, and establish public confidence.

At the same time, the Task Force recognizes that even pilot projects must be designed with long-term scalability in mind, ensuring that lessons learned can be translated into a broader, sustainable program.

Taken together, these elements point toward a strategic direction in which the City leverages its financial capacity, partners with existing institutions, and proceeds through targeted implementation, building a model of social housing that is both ambitious and grounded in Portland's realities.

7. Work Remaining

While the Task Force has developed a clearer understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with social housing in Portland, significant work remains to translate these insights into a fully defined and implementable framework.

The second part of the Task Force's work will focus on deepening analysis in several key areas, with the goal of producing actionable recommendations that are financially sound, legally viable, and operationally feasible.

7.1 Financing and Capital Strategy

Further work is needed to define the structure and implications of potential financing tools, particularly bond financing.

This will include:

- Evaluating different bond structures, including general obligation and revenue bonds;
- Assessing risk exposure and mitigation strategies, including how projects perform under varying market conditions;
- Exploring mechanisms for repayment and recapitalization, ensuring that public investment can be sustained and redeployed over time; and
- Clarifying how new financing tools would interact with existing resources, including the Jill C. Duson Housing Trust Fund and other local or federal programs.

This analysis will be central to determining the scale at which the City can responsibly participate in housing development.

7.2 Development Pathways

The Task Force has identified multiple potential pathways for public involvement in housing production. The next phase of work will further evaluate these options to determine where intervention is most effective. This will include:

- Comparing the feasibility and impact of new construction, acquisition and rehabilitation, and intervention in stalled projects;
- Identifying the conditions under which each pathway is most appropriate; and
- Developing criteria for prioritizing opportunities as they arise.

The goal is to establish a flexible but disciplined framework for how the City engages with different types of projects.

7.3 Partnership Models

Building on early discussions, the Task Force will further define how partnerships - particularly with the Portland Housing Authority - can be structured to support social housing.

This work will include:

- Clarifying roles and responsibilities across partner organizations;
- Identifying opportunities for regional collaboration with other public or quasi-public entities; and
- Developing models for shared ownership and financial participation that align with the Task Force’s principles.

Particular attention will be given to ensuring that partnership structures preserve both operational effectiveness and long-term public value.

7.4 Land and Site Strategy

Although land alone is not sufficient to drive housing production, it remains an important component of a broader strategy. The Task Force will:

- Refine the list of viable City-owned parcels, taking into account physical, regulatory, and financial constraints;
- Develop criteria for site selection, including alignment with transit, services, and neighborhood context; and
- Evaluate opportunities for strategic acquisition or repurposing of additional sites, where appropriate.

This work will help ensure that land resources are deployed strategically in support of broader financing and development goals.

7.5 Legal and Institutional Capacity

The implementation of a social housing strategy will require careful evaluation of the City’s legal authority and institutional structure.

Key areas of focus include:

- Confirming the City’s authority to finance and participate in development, including any constraints under state law or municipal charter;
- Clarifying the role of existing entities, such as the Portland Housing Authority and other quasi-public organizations; and
- Developing a governance and partnership structure (“bridge”) to support joint City–PHA projects.

In particular, the Task Force will examine how to establish a formal mechanism—such as board representation, intergovernmental agreements, or other governance tools—that ensures:

- Appropriate oversight of public investment;
- Alignment of project goals and outcomes; and
- Clear decision-making authority and accountability across institutions.

This work is essential to ensuring that any future program is both effective and publicly accountable.

7.6 Community Engagement

Finally, the Task Force will continue to engage with the community to better understand housing needs, priorities, and concerns. This will include:

- Communicating clearly about the concept of social housing and how it differs from existing models;
- Gathering input from residents, stakeholders, and community organizations; and
- Assessing the political and social viability of proposed approaches.

A successful social housing strategy will require not only technical feasibility, but also broad public understanding and support.