

**To:** Members of the Homelessness Oversight Commission

**From:** Commissioner Guerrero, Data Officer

**Date:** March 3, 2026

**Subject:** Proposed High-Level Data Oversight Priorities

Under San Francisco City Charter § 4.133, the Data Officer role supports the Commission by identifying what should be measured, why it matters, and how data can inform strategic oversight. My goal is to ensure that major policy directions produce measurable and lasting progress in reducing homelessness. Today, I will introduce several potential topics for discussion to gather input from the Commission on which areas we might prioritize for deeper review.

## **1. Measuring Breaking the Cycle's Ability to Reduce Homelessness**

The first focus is evaluating the City's current theory of change under *Breaking the Cycle* to determine whether it is effectively reducing homelessness over time. This includes tracking how individuals move through the homelessness system — from outreach, diversion, or incarceration-related contact into services, shelters, treatment, and permanent housing — and whether system capacity, including housing slots and case management, scales to meet increased demand. Distinguishing between pre-existing and newly introduced programs will allow the Commission to assess the effectiveness of the current strategy and its alignment with *Home by the Bay*. Measuring outcomes over one- and two-year intervals ensures we capture both immediate placements and sustained housing stability, supporting oversight grounded in evidence rather than narrative.

## **2. Downstream Fiscal Impact and Evidence-Based Investment**

A second area for consideration is reviewing research on the downstream fiscal impact of homelessness interventions. A 2017 study by the RAND Corporation found that individuals placed into Permanent Supportive Housing in Los Angeles County experienced significant reductions in jail stays, emergency department visits, and inpatient hospitalizations. Applying similar methodologies locally would help the Commission assess whether San Francisco's investments in shelter, housing, diversion, and treatment programs are producing measurable cross-system impact. This is directly relevant to the Commission's charter oversight

responsibilities, as it enables evaluation of program effectiveness and the responsible use of public funds.

### **3. Nonprofit Sustainability and Contract Structure**

A third area is the fiscal sustainability of nonprofit partners delivering homelessness services. The Nonprofit Finance Fund has documented the “Nonprofit Starvation Cycle,” in which underfunded administrative costs weaken capacity. The Commission should explore whether applying a full cost recovery model, along with attention to indirect cost rates and workforce support, would enable nonprofits to deliver measurable outcomes and maintain operational stability. Oversight here ensures public dollars are structured to support effective, sustainable service delivery without overstepping operational management.

### **4. Lessons from the Vienna Social Housing Model**

Finally, the Commission may explore elements of Vienna’s social housing model, known for promoting long-term housing stability. While full replication is not feasible, aspects such as income flexibility, long-term affordability, and integrated services could inform local policy and identify structural barriers to long-term housing stability in San Francisco. This aligns with the Commission’s role in promoting effective, evidence-informed strategies and continuous improvement.

## **Closing**

Each of these proposed subjects centers on the guiding question: are the City’s homelessness strategies reducing homelessness in a measurable, sustainable, and fiscally responsible way?

By approaching these topics at a high level and grounding the discussion in data and established research, the Commission can fulfill its charter responsibilities with clarity. The intention is to support learning and transparency, ensuring that as the City refines its approach, we are measuring progress thoughtfully and responsibly.

I welcome the Commission’s guidance on which of these areas would be most useful to prioritize for initial review.