

Mid-Willamette Homeless Initiative

2016-2017

Created by City of Salem, City of Keizer, Marion County, and Polk County

The Homeless Crisis

- ▶ While the US homeless population has decreased over the last year, Oregon has seen an increase
- ▶ People are camping on city streets, in vacant buildings, and in parks throughout the area
- ▶ Those that we can't see are staying in vehicles, shelters, or are couch surfing
- ▶ The Salem Housing Authority's waiting list for Section 8 vouchers currently has 10,000 families that will wait 2-3 years for a home



Who are the homeless?

People experiencing homelessness are part of our community. They're:

- ▶ Runaway and homeless youth
- ▶ Families
- ▶ Veterans
- ▶ Seniors
- ▶ Women and children
- ▶ Mentally ill and chronically homeless



How many people are homeless in our community?



- ▶ This is a difficult question to answer since people experiencing homelessness are vastly undercounted.
- ▶ Why?
 - Multiple databases for tracking or no tracking of homeless services
 - Duplicated numbers
 - Point-in-Time Count is just a one-day snapshot of homelessness, it does not include those doubled up or unwilling to participate
 - Homeless children are only counted when they are enrolled in school or served by a program
 - Youth (18-24) are difficult to count due to couch-surfing, being doubled up, or not knowing where they congregate
 - Many do not receive services

How many people are homeless in our community? Here is a sampling:

*Source: A combination 2015 Point in Time Count and agency information
(Subsets are portions of the total count)*

Homeless people in Marion and Polk counties

1,660 on any given day

Salem-Keizer School District

1,397 (2015-16)

Prison Reentry

300 each year

Victims of domestic violence (all ages)

200-500 each year

Homeless veterans in Marion and Polk counties

116 on any given day

Lack of Housing Capacity?

Housing Waiting Lists

- ▶ Salem Housing Authority
 - ▶ Section 9 vouchers - 2-3 years
 - ▶ Public Housing - 1+ years
- ▶ Marion County Housing Authority
 - ▶ Section 8 vouchers - 1-2 years

Housing deficit in Salem area for
people making less than
\$25,000/year
= 6,400 units



Call to Action:

The Mid-Willamette Homeless Initiative

Purpose: to identify and launch proven strategies to reduce homelessness across the region

- ▶ Chartered in February 2016
- ▶ Community Leaders
 - Social services
 - Housing
 - Public safety
 - Education
 - Business
 - Elected Officials
- ▶ Eight subcommittees
 - Affordable Housing
 - Financial
 - Focus Groups/Coalition Coordination
 - Health and Housing
 - Public Safety
 - Support Services/Education
 - Transitional Housing/Shelters
 - Veterans

What did we learn?

- ▶ Homelessness is a complex issue
- ▶ Individuals have different needs
(No “one size fits all solution”)
- ▶ What works for one target population may not work for another
(e.g., chronically homeless vs. youth)
- ▶ Multiple strategies are needed to impact the diversity of problems



Strategic Plan - Housing Capacity

- ▶ AFFORDABLE RESIDENCES

- Increase housing capacity through developing affordable multi-family and non-traditional residences

- ▶ COUNTY/CITY REGULATIONS

- Examine county and city codes to incentivize low-income housing development, such as allowing Accessory Dwelling Units and waiving System Development Charges

- ▶ TRANSITIONAL HOUSING/SHELTER

- Support and add capacity to transitional housing and shelters



Strategic Plan - Public Safety



► HARM REDUCTION

- Implement evidence-based harm reduction models, such as Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) to divert people with mental illness and addiction from jails and hospital emergency rooms

► PANHANDLING

- Promote contributions to local nonprofits rather than handing cash to panhandlers

Strategic Plan - Special Populations

RUNAWAY/HOMELESS YOUTH

- Prioritize runaway and homeless youth is a major focus

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS

- Support population-specific projects for victims of domestic violence

VETERANS

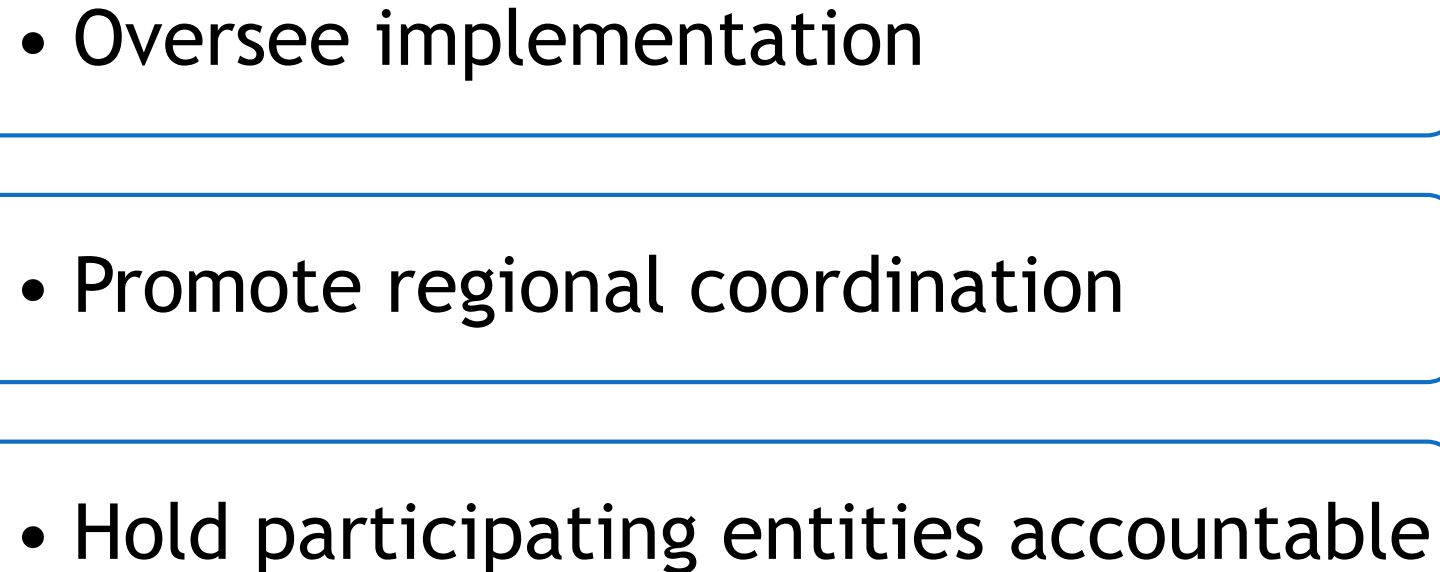
- Create an affordable housing development with residential-based support services for homeless veterans

SENIORS

- Develop housing with services for seniors, such as cleaning and maintenance

Pivoting to Implementation

The Task Force proposes a new collaborative structure that will:

- 
- Oversee implementation
 - Promote regional coordination
 - Hold participating entities accountable

Implementation Structure

Shared ownership
through a
Memorandum of
Collaboration

Prioritization
of strategies

A project manager
to oversee the
work and support
the commission

Commitment to
the Common
Structure

Periodic reports to the county
commissions, city councils, and
nonprofit boards of participating
organizations

An Advisory
Committee to
oversee the work

Community engagement in the
ongoing work to reduce
homelessness in our communities

Questions? Contact our Co-Chairs:



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