



## Information report on the Mid Valley Homeless Initiative

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Information only.

### **SUMMARY:**

An update to Council on key activities and accomplishments from the Homeless Initiative Program Coordinator's Year One Work Plan

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Mid-Willamette Homeless Initiative (MWHI) Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) was adopted in February of 2017. The City of Salem has partially-funded a Program Coordinator position housed with the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments to implement the Strategic Plan. In March 2018, the Program Coordinator presented a Year One Work Plan (Work Plan) (Attachment 1). In December 2018, the Program Coordinator accepted a position elsewhere, and work in 2019 has been advance through the efforts of an intern and contracted services.

This report will provide an update on key activities and accomplishments from the Work Plan from March 2018 through March 2019. While the Work Plan includes a large number of smaller tasks, outreach, and research activities, this report focuses solely on four high-priority key deliverables:

- 1) Service and Resource Inventory Map and Initial Findings
- 2) 2017-2018 Money Map
- 3) Panhandling Research
- 4) Continuum of Care Analysis

### **Service and Resource Inventory Map and Initial Findings:**

The Service and Resource Inventory Map (Attachment 2) outlines services and resources available in Marion and Polk Counties for those who are experiencing homelessness. The project included health, housing, criminal justice, public school, and family/children resources. This map aims to identify components of the housing and homelessness sector in an effort to better understand the programs, services, and structures currently in place. The goal of this process was to accumulate information that could be used to inform resource alignment, policy, and funding as needed, ultimately creating a better understanding of the service delivery landscape.

### **2017-2018 Money Map:**

The Money Map (Attachment 3) is based on a collective impact analysis of homelessness funding modeled in Salt Lake County, UT. The purpose of the Money Map is to identify the major public funding sources and recipients being leveraged to address homelessness throughout the

communities participating in the Mid-Willamette Homeless Initiative, with the goal of developing a deeper understanding of the resources within our continuum. The Money Map may be useful in identifying areas of resource richness as well as gaps and may help to guide future planning efforts. The Money Map intentionally focuses on public funding only and should not be considered an exhaustive list of all resources for homeless services within the region.

The Money Map includes public funds from Marion County (Health Department, Sheriff's Office, Housing Authority, and MWHI staffing), Salem (Housing Authority, Urban Development, Homeless Rental Assistance Program, and MWHI staffing), Salem-Keizer School District (STEP- Program), Keizer, and Monmouth, Independence (MWHI staffing), Central School District (Homeless Liaison), and Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency as well as a working-estimate for the Behavioral Care Network, both of which serve Marion and Polk counties. Public funding is broken down in the Money Map by jurisdiction, service type, and source.

The total public funding spent towards addressing homelessness was \$98,475,232 with the majority of funding allocated towards supportive services (49.7%) and permanent housing (39.7%).

### **Panhandling Research:**

The scope of this project was to research ways to reduce panhandling and identify alternatives for implementation. Approaches range from program-based alternatives (jobs programs), to alternative giving programs and public education campaigns, to regulation. Community solutions explored included: Portland's (ME) Opportunity Crew, Salem's (MA) "Change It", Albuquerque's "There's A Better Way", Atlanta's "Stop Panhandling", Lowell's "Change for Change", Palo Alto's Downtown Streets Team, New Haven's "Give Change to Make Change", Montgomery County's "Give a Hand-Up, Not a Hand Out", and Cincinnati's Generocity 513. Additionally, various ordinances relating to panhandling across Oregon including those of Roseburg, OR were explored. Recommendations and options are outlined in Attachment 4.

### **Continuum of Care Analysis:**

The Continuum of Care (CoC) is a requirement of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Until 2011, Marion and Polk counties comprised a regional Continuum of Care administered by the Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency. In July 2011, members of the Mid-Valley Housing and Services Collaborative, the steering committee for the Salem/Marion/Polk CoC, voted unanimously to join the Rural Oregon Continuum of Care (ROCC), a "balance of state" CoC model, now comprised of 28 counties including Marion and Polk. The ROCC is administered by Community Action Partners of Oregon and has two designated staff.

The rationale for joining the ROCC included concerns about increasing federal expectations for data collection and reporting, a hope that the Marion-Polk region would become more successful to compete for "bonus" dollars, and assurances from the ROCC that the Marion-Polk region's projects would be held harmless in the first year and would be supported to be successful in future years. Since 2011, homelessness has become a more prominent community issue, with increasing numbers of visible homeless people and expectations from constituents that cities and counties invest in strategies that "fix the problem."

An issue brief (Attachment 5) was prepared to examine policy questions relating to whether or not the region should withdraw from the ROCC and re-establish its own CoC. The results of this research and recommendations will be presented to the City Council at a work session scheduled for April 22, 2019.

Next steps in implementing the Mid-Valley Homeless Initiative's Strategic Plan and updating the Work Plan will be contingent on decisions relating to the CoC.

Kristin Retherford  
Urban Development Director

**Attachments:**

1. Work Plan
2. Service Inventory Map
3. 2017-2018 Money Map
4. Issue Brief on Panhandling
5. Issue Brief on Continuum of Care