



## Staff Report

**File #:** 17-106

**Version:** 1

**Date:** 3/13/2017

**Item #:** 3.4b.

**TO:** Chair and Housing Authority Commissioners

**THROUGH:** Steve Powers, Executive Director

**FROM:** Andrew Wilch, Administrator

**SUBJECT:**

Homeless Rental Assistance Program

Ward(s): All Wards

Commissioners(s): All Commissioners

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

### **ISSUE:**

Overview of Homeless Rental Assistance Program

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Information Only

### **SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND:**

Salem is challenged with homelessness. An estimate 1,500 - 2,000 individuals are currently homeless in the Salem area, with approximately 500 of those falling into the most vulnerable and hardest to house category.

The Salem Housing Authority (SHA) convened a group of community service providers and housing advocates to explore collective resources, infrastructure, and capacity to serve and house chronically homeless individuals. This effort was requested by Mayor Bennett and City Manager Powers to identify actions that could be taken to address homelessness in Salem in the short-term.

Gaps in community resources and services were identified, and, as a result, SHA developed a comprehensive transitional housing rental assistance and supportive services programs called the Homeless Rental Assistance Program (HRAP). HRAP would also be the first Coordinated Entry program in Marion County, which is a requirement by Housing and Urban Development and an example of national best practices.

### **FACTS AND FINDINGS:**

HRAP would serve the most vulnerable and highest-risk 100 homeless individuals through placement into appropriate transitional housing for up to one year with a self-sufficiency model of case management support and wraparound services needed for successful tenancy. Priority would be given to those most at-risk individuals as identified and scored through the data-driven vulnerability index known as the VI-SPDAT, administered by Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency.

HRAP would allow SHA to provide rental assistance payments, barrier removal funding, and intensive case management to the most at-risk 100 homeless individuals. SHA would also work with community partners to ensure HRAP clients receive services and access to the in-kind resources available. The barrier removal funds do not supplement the community partner in-kind resources. Instead, these funds would be used to address needs not otherwise provided by community partners. For example, barrier removal funds would pay for tangible items such as furnishings, bus passes, clothing, haircuts, resume preparation, hygiene items, and documents such as driver's licenses, birth certificates, social security cards, and home maintenance items. These are all critical programming elements for obtaining and maintaining housing and life stability for this vulnerable population.

Community partners would provide supportive services such as mental health, medical care, addiction treatment and other behavioral supports that are necessary to address the complicated physical, mental, and emotional problems faced by the hardest to house population.

While some of the 100 may have received or are receiving services through some community partners, we currently do not have the resources for rental assistance and barrier removal to service this high-use, vulnerable population. Moreover, many of the 100 will need SHA's assistance as articulated in the HRAP, both barrier funds and supportive services are critically important for this program to be successful.

The HRAP would require coordination and administration. The program budget includes one SHA employee. SHA would staff and administer the barrier removal component, assist with finding housing options, and provide the intensive case management necessary to ensure each client receives the services they need to be self-sufficient.

Recognizing there are far more chronically homeless individuals in the Salem area than the HRAP rental assistance funding can assist, SHA would commit an additional 100 housing vouchers to the homeless population. SHA vouchers will also be used to provide long-term housing assistance once HRAP clients are ready to transition from transitional housing to permanent housing.

The tentative budget (attached) for HRAP is \$2.9 million, with \$1.4 million requiring new funding. As the City's 2017-18 budget is finalized, consideration will be given to meeting the new funding need, or a portion of the need.

Andrew Wilch  
Administrator

Attachments:

1. Tentative Budget