



**CORVALLIS CITY COUNCIL
BENTON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JOINT WORK SESSION**



**May 20, 2021
4:00 pm - 6:00 pm**

Pursuant to Governor Brown's Executive Order issued in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this City Council work session is online only.

The public may watch the meeting live on the internet via this link:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3535561417709896207>

A video of the work session will be available on the City's website.

-
- I. Call to Order
 - II. Introductions
 - III. Home, Opportunity, Planning, and Equity (HOPE) Recommendations and Houselessness Policies
 - IV. Confirm next joint work session: June 30 or July 1
 - V. Community Comments (written only) (Community members wishing to offer advance written comments are encouraged to use the public input form at www.corvallisoregon.gov/publicinput.)
 - VI. Adjournment

If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Recorder at (541) 766-6901 (for TTY services, dial 7-1-1). Notification at least two business days prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting. (In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, 28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I and ORS 192.630(5)).

A Community That Honors Diversity

From: ARENA, Julie <Julie.Arena@co.benton.or.us>
Sent: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 9:19 AM
To: Shepard, Mark <Mark.Shepard@corvallisoregon.gov>
Cc: Holzworth, Carla <Carla.Holzworth@corvallisoregon.gov>; KERBY, Joseph <Joseph.Kerby@co.benton.or.us>; HOFFMAN Suzanne <suzanne.hoffman@Co.Benton.OR.US>; KERST Stephanie <stephanie.kerst@Co.Benton.OR.US>
Subject: HOPE documentation for council

Hi Mark,

Attached are the final recommendations adopted by the HOPE Advisory Board on 4/28/2021. All recommendations passed unanimously except one portion of Policy Recommendation #6 (Sheltering System components) that passed with a vote of 14 to 4.

The four "no" votes concerned *only* the inclusion of managed tent camping in our sheltering system options (Joel, Jan, Reece, and Christina). Three explanations for those dissenting votes are included with the approved recommendations.

Thanks!



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HOPE Advisory Board Policy Recommendations from Spring 2021

Vision: everyone in Benton County should have the opportunity to live in decent, safe, and affordable housing.

Values: all of these policy recommendations to the City of Corvallis and Benton County support the HOPE Board's overarching goal to transition people out of homelessness. These recommendations are grounded in a data-driven approach, are supported by research on successful systems, reflect gaps in our system of housing and services, are informed by community feedback that includes clients experiencing homelessness, and prioritize our vulnerable populations, community safety for all, and racial and ethnic justice.

Background: In summer of 2020, the HOPE Board conducted a [gap analysis](#) of all available services in Corvallis and greater Benton County. The Board collected all available [data](#) from homeless service providers and social service providers working to prevent homelessness to understand where we have safety concerns, racial and ethnic inequalities, and vulnerable populations. Finally, the Board researched successful [systems](#) of housing and supportive services to transition people out of homelessness. In Fall 2020, the Board prioritized [four main topic areas](#) based on this data-driven, systems-level approach with a focus on equity:

- 1) Align and coordinate existing services with a focus on improving data collection and collaboration for individuals experiencing homelessness or in behavioral health crisis;
- 2) Establish a sheltering system for all populations that is accessible 24/7/365 days per year, as well as a Resource Center to support coordinated entry into publicly funded assistance programs;
- 3) Expand transitional options for housing with a focus on notice, communication, and engagement with neighborhoods and the larger community; and
- 4) Increase permanent supportive housing to provide stable housing for our chronically homeless community members.

Community Engagement: in November and December 2020, the Board engaged the community throughout Benton County to receive feedback on these four priority topics. The [public feedback](#) directly shaped these draft policy recommendations to incorporate community sentiments on these topics. Public engagement included online surveys, multiple virtual meetings specifically dedicated to HOPE feedback, Board attendance at various community meetings to include different sectors and perspectives, and in-person client surveying conducted by nine service providers in Benton County serving individuals in need or experiencing homelessness.

In April 2021, the Board received community feedback on the final draft of policy recommendations. Community feedback was provided via survey on the HOPE community engagement [website](#) in April 2021 and at a virtual public forum on Tuesday April 13th from 4-6pm. Homeless service providers at four different locations supported in-person focus groups with clients experiencing homelessness to provide their perspective on these draft recommendations.

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Overview of Public Feedback and Edits to Draft Recommendations in Spring 2021

The Board did not conduct community engagement in April 2021 on the first three recommendations focused on capacity to implement the twelve policy recommendations. We have reorganized to highlight these three organizational, funding, and state-level components at the beginning.

- A. Organizational capacity is essential to facilitate and further develop these recommendations in partnership with community-based organizations. Organizational capacity also needs to be built within social service organizations to manage and provide the services over the long term.
- B. Funding recommendations
- C. Legislative Advocacy for statewide leadership and funding

Messaging on these first three critical components for implementation (A, B, C) is key based on the public feedback.

Original Policy Recommendations – summary of public feedback and April 2021 edits

1. Facilitate and coordinate data improvement efforts with community partners.
 - a. Public feedback: the most supported recommendation.
 - b. Changes made: none.
2. Work with providers to create metrics to measure program success.
 - a. Public feedback: well-supported, no changes needed.
 - b. Changes made: none.
3. Adopt the Hub Model of care coordination as a framework for doing business that coordinates existing partners to provide the best possible service to individuals.
 - a. Public feedback: the term “Hub Model” is not well understood, more explanation is needed of this model. Clients and service providers would like the flexibility for individuals to be able to attend a meeting like this if they want to and can. A pre-meeting between clients and their case manager before the main meeting can gauge the person’s desired outcomes and needs.
 - b. Changes made: describing the meeting and its purpose instead of using the term “hub” since it has confused clients and the general community. Adding flexibility to allow for the client to attend if they would like to be present.
4. Paid, full-time staff are needed as case managers to support people transitioning out of homelessness. Case managers should have commensurate experience and background that reflects the people they are serving from a cultural perspective and based on lived-experience.
 - a. Public feedback: clarify the city/county role and the need for case managers all over the county.
 - b. Changes made: wording edited to clarify the city/county role and the need for more case managers in Corvallis and throughout the county.
5. Pursue the feasibility and implementation of a crisis response team.

- a. Public feedback: resounding support for the concept. Lots of support for a non-law enforcement response and lots of support for a co-response with mental health and law enforcement together. Lots of questions about the data on this need.
 - b. Changes made: add a data collection recommendation to understand the magnitude of the need for crisis response and potential cost savings from this model. Add a co-response recommendation based on public feedback.
- 6. Benton County needs a 24/7/365 Emergency Sheltering System for all populations with onsite resources at any shelter location to transition people out of homelessness.
 - a. Public feedback: many worries about attracting people here/being a magnet for services, location(s) that don't negatively impact businesses, neighborhoods, and parks, having a requirement to work on transitioning/self-sufficiency/responsibility once stabilized. The urgency of a place for tent and car campers to go – from the client and community-wide perspectives. If folks can stay here 24/7 while they work on transitioning, let's call this a shelter system instead of an emergency shelter.
 - b. Changes made: terminology updated to remove "emergency" from the Sheltering System title since individuals will be assigned that bed space for a period of time while they work with a case manager (they do not have to leave during the day like the historical emergency shelter locations). Major addition: a recommendation about the most urgent need being a place to move tent and vehicle campers where it is not illegal so they can stabilize and work on transitioning out of homelessness.
- 7. Facilitate and support the creation of a Resource Center.
 - a. Public feedback: lots of confusion about whether or not this already exists. Lots of fear about tax increases to fund it. Sentiment about attracting people here and only wanting to help people "from here." Need to stress the statewide advocacy for funding for all counties to provide services.
 - b. Changes made: updated description to address transit needs and working toward self-sufficiency.
- 8. Establish referral pathways to transitional and permanent housing resources for serious criminal offenders (sex offenders, felony convictions, etc.).
 - a. Public feedback: people misinterpreted this wording to think that the Board wanted a pipeline of ex-convicts to find housing here.
 - b. Changes made: edited wording to mention criminal history AND other history that makes it difficult to secure housing. More investigation needed to understand the magnitude of the need and explore solutions.
- 9. Routine communication, notice, and community involvement need to happen on the topic of homelessness services.
 - a. Public feedback: community would like a way to give feedback directly to city and county instead of only to service providers. They would like accountability in funding decisions based on community feedback.
 - b. Changes made: added in a recommendation to create a mechanism for public feedback directly to city and county about funding for social service providers.
- 10. Increase development or acquisition of affordable housing units for permanent supportive housing (PSH) by 20 new units per year for the next eight years to add at a minimum 160 new units of PSH in Benton County. "New" can be new construction or conversion of existing units to

- PSH units. PSH is necessary for a small portion of our unhoused community who need permanent support to remain stably housed.
- a. Public feedback: worries about increased utility, water, and property tax bills.
 - b. Changes made: updated terminology to indicate new funding sources from grant opportunities that already exist but that the county has not had the staffing capacity to apply for, disburse, oversee, and manage.
11. Increase available rental/income assistance options.
- a. Public feedback: lots of general support. Some worries about increased utility, water, and property tax bills. The need for overall messaging about how rental support/vouchers are funded is important.
 - b. Changes made: none.
12. Increase supportive services and stable funding streams to provide services to residents at more affordable housing locations.
- a. Public feedback: some worries about increased utility, water, and property tax bills. The need for overall messaging about how these services are funded is important.
 - b. Changes made: none.

Recommendations to Implement Policies

The following three recommendations (A, B, C) apply to recommendations 1-12. The Board did not do community engagement on the first three recommendations to implement the policy recommendations.

- A. Organizational capacity is needed to work on and implement these recommendations, and organizational capacity needs to be built within social service organizations to manage and provide the services.
1. **Organizational capacity to implement these recommendations means prioritizing homelessness and pro-active housing solutions within existing city and county departments and increasing capacity with additional staff to work on, coordinate, and implement these recommendations on homelessness** (whether that capacity is built internally or contracted out). No new solutions can be successfully implemented without new staff whose job it is to work on the topic of homelessness. The following functions are needed to implement these recommendations: project management, coordination and outreach, land use planning, and grants management (grant writing, contracting, grant administration, oversight, reporting).
 - i. Specifically, a team is needed to research and pursue sites for sheltering, permanent supportive housing, and service locations. The type of work that DLR has done for the Criminal Justice Systems Improvement Project is needed to research sites, zoning, and other parameters to provide site-specific options for city/county leadership and service providers to make informed choices about where to locate the different components of a sheltering system, resource center, transitional living options, and permanent supportive housing.
 - ii. Coordination capacity is needed to routinely convene city and county staff (and community based organizations) who all interact with individuals who are experiencing homelessness: parks, public works, health department, community development department, fire, and police. For example, health department staff give out tents and supplies that are being thrown away by parks staff.
 - iii. This increased capacity to manage homeless issues by the City and County also includes directing departments to prioritize coordination internally on the topic of homelessness by making homeless response part of their annual work plan.
 - iv. Regional outreach and coordination with adjacent cities and counties is needed to provide communication, collaboration, and regional approaches to addressing homelessness.
 2. **Invest in building organizational capacity at organizations that can manage all components of these recommendations** and work to support and successfully transition people out of homelessness. Invest in building organizational capacity by supporting and collaborating with groups that have demonstrated efforts to provide services in Benton County. If no local organizations wish to build and grow organizational capacity, recruit an organization to Benton County who can provide these services.
 - i. Other suggestions: expand the capacity of organizations that successfully are stabilizing people by adding microshelters at their locations. For example, Community Outreach Inc.

(COI), Corvallis Housing First (CHF), and Unity Shelter have successful models of housing case management to transition people out of homelessness. Increase their capacity with funding for positions and microshelters at available locations.

- ii. Capacity must be built for organizations to serve Benton County residents outside of Corvallis.

B. Funding recommendations

Explore state, federal, and private funding to expand organizational capacity to work on these topics and to fund the implementation and permanent provision of all these recommended services. In partnership with providers, assess current funding streams to ensure funding is not being taken away from existing services but that additional funding is pursued. Allocate resources to organizations that work toward implementing these policy recommendations. Prioritize resource allocation based on community feedback.

1. Grant writing capacity at the city/county is needed to access additional funds that are available but are not being applied for.
2. County pursue additional funds from Community Development Block Grant in county areas and in partnership with municipalities who have not explored this funding option.
3. County explore SAMHSA funding for transitional housing for individuals with a behavioral health diagnosis who do not fall into the SPMI population, new Transient Lodging Tax funding, and private foundations such as Meyer Memorial Trust, Oregon Community Foundation, McKenzie River Gathering, and Benton Community Foundation. If the state-controlled Medicaid 1115 waiver allows funding for housing case managers, county pursue additional capacity for housing case managers.
4. County explore cost/benefit of adopting a Construction Excise Tax. Local jurisdictions can levy a tax of up to 1 percent of the permit value on residential construction, and levy a tax with no cap on the permit value of commercial and industrial construction. For instance, the City of Corvallis levies a tax of 1% on residential construction and 1.5% on commercial and industrial construction. State law governs how the revenue can be used. Some is restricted for uses such as developing affordable housing and providing down payment assistance, and some is unrestricted.
5. Allocate local and state resources to programs that work to implement these recommendations.
6. Prioritize investment based on public feedback and cost effective allocations of limited public resources. The community supports the following options (beyond just normal brick-and-mortar housing) in the following descending order:
 - i. Microshelters
 - ii. Emergency shelter
 - iii. RV/car camping
 - iv. Tent camping.

C. Legislative Advocacy

1. County and City elected officials must continue to advocate for statewide leadership on local requirements for shelter beds in each county with accompanying state funding to support those required beds. This state requirement and funding is needed to address worries about migration of people to areas with services from other areas.
2. State and federal funding for all of these topics must continue to be advocated for by city and county elected officials and by the League of Cities and Association of Counties once these recommendations are adopted.
3. City and County explore partnership with OSU and counterparts in Lane County (Lane, Eugene, Springfield, and University of Oregon) to lobby for a state law allowing local tax revenue from Pac-12 events and on-campus sales to address the affordable housing impacts from the university population. The tax revenue would be split between the universities and the local municipalities to fund subsidized housing for low-income students and affordable housing for the surrounding community.

Policy Recommendations to the City of Corvallis and Benton County Spring 2021

1. Facilitate and coordinate data improvement efforts with community partners.

Description: Work with providers to improve data collection/tracking and to reduce duplicative data entry and data management. Data collection efforts will include a human services coalition model that is a statewide model: service providers come together to say what their priorities are and how they would implement them. Implementation is recommended immediately and could be accomplished with an existing staff person.

Background: coordinated data collection and analysis of community-wide data support communities' efforts to end homelessness by understanding which individuals continue to cycle into homelessness and which providers and partners continue to interact with them. Best practices from a trauma-informed care perspective are to reduce the number of times an individual must recount their history and circumstances to access assistance.

2. Work with providers to create metrics for successful program goals.

Description: successful program metrics assist with tracking which services deploy successful interventions in transitioning people out of homelessness. Implementation can be immediate with existing staff person.

Background: success metrics will help funders understand the value of their funding decisions, help us communicate with the community, and allow us to continually adapt and refine services to achieve the desired transition from homelessness for as many people as possible.

3. Prioritize collaboration and coordination of providers and partners with routine meetings for improved care coordination facilitated by a full-time staff member.

More research is needed to explore which model(s) to recommend for convening community partners. The HOPE Board is forming a work group to research care coordination models to recommend.

Description: The HOPE Board recommends convening providers and partners at routine meetings to coordinate care for individuals with high and complex needs on a case-by-case basis. The purpose of this coordination is to bring together partners to improve the lives of individuals who are interacting with multiple systems. This model of care coordination has been referred to as “case conferencing,” Frequent Users Systems Engagement (FUSE), and also the “Hub model” of care coordination. The Board will research these models to make an informed recommendation on which one to adopt.

Implementation: can be done immediately if an existing staff person is available, until an FTE can be budgeted for this role. The staff position to coordinate these meetings should be full-time and could be a health navigator, case manager, community health worker, or program coordinator. This same staff position is needed to do an assessment of funding streams: with input from city/county and providers, to assess all available funding streams coming into Benton County (including Corvallis) that fund this work to blend funding streams.

Geographic service area suggestion: the details and frequency can be decided by the participants, but based on public feedback we recommend having routine meetings for Corvallis-centric clients, South Benton clients, and Philomath/West Benton clients (and other geographic regions as needed).

Background: Hub spokes needed at the table should be diverse and culturally-versed: Benton County Health Department (BCHD), Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center (CDDC), Unity Shelter, Community Outreach Inc. (COI), Unity Shelter, Corvallis Housing First (CHF), the Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence (CARDV), Samaritan, Inter-community Health Network-Coordinated Care Organization (IHN-CCO), Jackson Street Youth Services (JSYS) when needed, the state Department of Health Service (DHS), Tribal liaisons, case managers, Casa Latinos Unidos (CLU), Philomath Community Services (PCS), South Benton Food Pantry (SBFP), Job training/vocational rehab, law enforcement/first responders, crisis response team members, Street Outreach Response Team (SORT) members, social security/disability advocacy, faith-based community volunteers, Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative to do system-level coordination, Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG). Any other provider who can provide access to services for a person in need.

4. Collaborate with social service and health care partners to increase the number of paid, full-time case managers to support people transitioning out of homelessness.

Description: there is a need for more case managers with experience and backgrounds that reflects the people they are serving from a cultural perspective and based on lived-experience.

- a. County: work with IHN-CCO and Samaritan on workforce capacity for housing case managers, peer support specialists, and social service providers to utilize funding from Medicaid and SAMHSA block grant resources.
- b. County: in addition to increased case managers in Corvallis, rural areas outside of Corvallis also need additional mobile/regional staff to support people's housing needs and transition out of homelessness.
- c. City and county work with OSU, LBCC, and any other local educational institutions on expanding internship workforce capacity from student populations.

Background: case management is vital to support the transition out of homelessness. Not enough case managers are available in our community to support the need.

5. Pursue implementation of a crisis response team and collect data on the scope and scale of need for crisis response.

Description: HOPE recommends a non-police intervention for crisis situations due to homelessness and behavioral health issues. A co-response with behavioral health professionals and law enforcement is also needed depending on the situation. Coordination with street outreach and harm reduction is vital to ensure collaboration with overlapping populations.

Background: HOPE's research, data, and community feedback fully support ongoing efforts to implement a Crisis Response Team to redirect calls from law enforcement and provide team partnerships with law enforcement when an officer is necessary. We recognize that ongoing efforts are occurring with the Criminal Justice Systems Improvement project and the Willamette Criminal Justice Council. We recommend continuing to pursue implementation in those existing forums with experts on the topic of crisis response.

6. Provide organizational capacity to facilitate and coordinate providers in establishing a 24/7/365 Sheltering System for all populations with onsite resources at shelter locations to transition people out of homelessness.

This organizational capacity is needed to determine possible sites for sheltering, the logistics of implementation, and the ongoing funding from sources that minimize the use of general fund dollars. (See the first recommendation A for details on the organizational capacity needed in the form of project coordination, project management, land use planning, and grant writing.)

Description: any shelter needs space for warming/cooling from the elements during the day. Individuals are assigned a bed space that is theirs 24/7 while they work with a case manager on transition. Emergency sheltering 24/7/365 with onsite resources is referred to as a "navigation center" in pending legislation (HB 2004 and HB 2006, 2021 Session).

- a. **We recommend the following six components of a sheltering system to address safety concerns for different populations:** congregate male, congregate female, non-congregate sheltering (like motel rooms or microshelters), managed tent camping, managed car/RV/trailer camping, and mobile service delivery to alternate locations. The team working to implement this

sheltering system should look at available current and historic data to fine-tune the recommended estimates.

b. Initial Estimates of Need for Sheltering are as follows:

1. **Women:** 40 congregate beds based on historical data from the women's shelter. This estimate includes the existing 20-25 beds at the women's shelter which may not be able to remain in its existing location and cannot operate 365 days/per year at that location given youth programming.
2. **Men:** 60 congregate beds based on historical data from the men's shelter. This estimate includes the capacity at the men's location which may not be able to remain in its existing location given flood plain concerns and space constraints.
3. **Non-congregate sheltering units** for people who cannot be in men/women dorms (non-binary and trans individuals, couples, people who cannot be in congregate settings due to medical fragility or behavioral health disorders, people with pets, and family units): 40 units based on HOPE survey data on trans and non-binary needs and feedback from providers regarding couples and individuals with a child. We recommend single-unit sheltering options, such as motel room style units and/or microshelters, to provide this non-congregate capacity. The microshelter design needs to be expanded to accommodate a double bed or bunk beds for couples and family units.
4. **RV/Trailer and car camping:** we do not have a good estimate of this need based on our current data system. At Pioneer Park, 30 applications (representing about 60 people) were submitted. At Pioneer Park, 15 RV spaces and 9 car spaces were occupied. All 11 spots at the Fairgrounds were full with 21 individuals camping in cars and RVs. Based on these locations alone, at least 40 RV and car camping spaces are needed.
5. **Managed Camping:** between 80-120 individuals are camping in close proximity to the hygiene center, on ODOT property, and in the skate park. These estimates may decrease with more available shelter beds. A site for managed tent and vehicle camping is the most urgent need based on feedback from folks experiencing homelessness, providers, and the broader community of business owners and other citizens.

Recommended components of a Sheltering System:

1. **Shelter Accessibility:**
 - a. Shelter is accessible 24/7/365.
 - b. Shelter is low barrier upon arrival to get individuals off the street. Options are available, but not required, for individual involvement to support the location while they work on transitioning, such as doing laundry, cleaning, or helping to provide food.
 - c. Necessary components at any emergency sheltering location: walking and biking access, public transportation access, and safety. Safety concerns for everyone involved need to be addressed. Security, lighting, fire code, and immediate access for emergency personnel must be considered.
2. **Shelter facilities and onsite services:** necessary services at any shelter location include showers, bathrooms, drinking water, food provided on-site (to minimize need to travel to multiple locations for food), laundry, wifi, lockers for items for those in congregate shelter,

- mail service, and office space for meeting with providers like a case manager, mental health and addiction support person, and someone who can help enroll people in assistance programs.
3. **Shelter is temporary** and is not a permanent housing solution. The duration of a person's stay will vary based on their needs, their progress with a case a manager, and availability of an appropriate transitional or permanent option.
 4. **A limited overflow area is needed** at any sheltering location for people who show up with a tent or car/RV. Tent and car/RV camping is time limited, and the individual must engage to transition to another option. RV sites must have gray and black water dump hookups for appropriate hygiene. The overflow area is under the supervision of the host organization.
 5. **Hygiene and basic needs services accessible to any individuals**, even those not staying in the shelter system: an area for warming/cooling from the elements where someone can be 365 days/year who is experiencing homelessness to minimize the need to go to multiple locations throughout the day to stay warm or get cool. There must be hygiene facilities, wifi, lockers, and food services that are accessible to individuals to balance the negative impacts on our natural areas and waterways for those without access to basic hygiene.
 6. **Definitions:**
 - a. **Managed Emergency Tent Camping:** a specific, designated area where emergency camping in tents is under the direct control of an organization with boundaries, amenities, and direct supervision. The organization provides tents and pallets to elevate the tents and is responsible for the condition of tents. The organization designates tent placement with consideration for emergency service accessibility. Campers have access to hygiene, water, trash, and resources. To transition people out of tent camping, emergency tent camping has time limits for every individual camper with evaluation of that person's progress towards securing transitional or permanent housing on a case-by-case basis. Case management to work on transitioning to stable housing must be provided for all persons. The tent camping is limited in number based on staffing capacity to provide case management. Allowing an area for managed emergency tent camping will address the safety and environmental health concerns of unmanaged camping and allow for enforcement of illegal tent camping elsewhere.
 1. Unmanaged tent camping is not supported by the public feedback due to concerns of fire, individual safety, community safety, litter, noise, and visibility. Having a designated area for managed and supported camping addresses these community concerns.
 2. We recognize there are individuals who will not engage in case management to transition out of homelessness. Appropriate interventions need to be available for those who cannot engage due to behavioral health conditions, such as crisis response and respite. Pretrial justice services and additional jail capacity are

needed for those who break the law. (We recognize there are current efforts to improve crisis response, respite, and additional criminal justice services.)

- b. **Managed emergency RV, trailer, and car camping area:** a specific, designated area where emergency camping in vehicles is under the direct control of an organization. The organization designates vehicle placement with consideration for emergency service accessibility. Vehicle campers have access to hygiene, water, trash, and resources. RV sites must have gray and black water dump hookups for appropriate hygiene. Mobile service delivery capacity can make it possible to support distributed sites at multiple smaller locations throughout the county.

Background:

- a. **Challenges:** implementing this recommended emergency sheltering system will take time, resources, and political will. There are challenges with site identification, concentration of populations living in poverty, and the need for separation of some populations for safety.
- b. **Leadership:** there needs to be collaboration of leadership with providers and with the city and county supporting project management for project design and site planning to insure the following issues are addressed:
 1. Geographic locations and siting options.
 2. Adequate public transportation schedule to support client needs.
 3. Service providers must be included as leaders to determine adequate spacing between populations. Suggestions from providers include separate floors, separate buildings, and/or microshelter rows for different populations.
 4. Capacity is needed to research and explore available geographic areas in Corvallis, the urban growth boundary around Corvallis, and the county areas surrounding the urban growth boundary to find all possible locations for the different components for a sheltering system.

Phased Implementation to bolster Emergency Sheltering System: all of the components outlined for an emergency sheltering system will take staff capacity and time to be implemented. While the city and county work to build the organizational capacity and sustainable funding to support the long-term vision of implementing these components, the city and county must facilitate and support the enhancement of service capacity for these most urgent needs:

1. The men's shelter must be open 24/7/365 with additional service providers meeting with men onsite to transition them to transitional or permanent supportive housing.
2. The City of Corvallis and County, in partnership with IHN, Samaritan, and other service providers, should facilitate building the capacity for mobile service delivery to distributed microshelters, RV/trailer/car camping, and managed tent camping locations. This mobile service delivery can serve populations both within Corvallis urban growth boundary and the greater Benton County areas that have expressed the need for access to services.
3. The most urgent need voiced by clients and providers is a safe place to locate their tent or vehicle so they can stabilize, access services, secure a job, and transition out of homelessness. Basic needs of safety, sleep, food, and hygiene need to be met first before people can work on transitioning out of camping. This is also the most urgent need voiced by community members

who are housed – addressing the unmanaged tent and vehicle camping throughout the community by having a place for managed camping in tents and vehicles so they do not continue to disperse and move from one street or natural area to another.

[End of Emergency Sheltering recommendation]

7. Facilitate and support the creation of a Resource Center.

Description: the Resource Center should have office space for providers from different organizations to meet with people, enroll them in programs, and work on improving their economic stability with sufficient means to meet their needs. The city and county should facilitate and support the collaboration between the providers to choose the best location options and determine who will occupy and manage this Resource Center. Must have public transit, walking, and biking access. A dedicated shuttle service from shelter locations around the community will support access beyond just public transit.

- i. Ideal location: capacity is needed to research and explore available geographic areas in Corvallis, the urban growth boundary around Corvallis, and the county areas surrounding the urban growth boundary (similar to the work DLR has done for criminal justice components sites). Best options would be co-located adjacent to or very near some sheltering. Second best is very short walking distance. Also possible would be a shuttle system from shelter locations to the resource center.

Background: supporting co-location of service providers from multiple organizations decreases the travel and number of different locations people must go to meet their needs. Having some shared space at one location does not mean that an organization entirely relocates their operation. It means that representatives from different organizations are co-located to coordinate care in one location. Most clients have to travel to multiple places (between 5-10 different geographic locations) to enroll in the numerous programs available to them. The Resource Center can have office space for service providers like Community Services Consortium (CSC), Council of Governments (COG), United Way, county health navigators to enroll people in OHP, housing case managers to work on transitioning people out of homelessness, assistance with vital records (drivers license, social security card, etc.), assistance with applying for and accessing disability and social security income, job assistance, veterans programs, space for representatives from the Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence (CARDV), Jackson Street Youth Services (JSYS), Community Outreach Inc. (COI), Casa Latinos Unidos, Tribal liaison, NAACP representative, Unity Shelter, Corvallis Housing First, Linn Benton Housing Authority, other housing entities, state entities like DHS, etc.

8. Explore and investigate the need and the barriers to accessing housing for individuals and their families in our community whose past history has impacted their ability to secure housing.

Description: people with past criminal histories, bad credit scores, and previous evictions continue to be disqualified from housing and remain unhoused. Housing assistance for people with conviction histories is lacking once they do not qualify for support from county Parole and Probation.

Background: individuals with difficult histories end up living in their cars or RVs throughout the community. These individuals and their families are already a part of our community. There is a lack of data on the need for referrals for this population, although it is a known need based on provider feedback. Explore and investigate this issue further.

9. Provide routine communication, notice, and opportunities for community involvement on the topic of homelessness services.

Description: this recommendation has three components for two-way communication and community involvement:

- a. Routine monthly email updates that people can sign up to receive. These updates should include news and reports about services, community-based organizations, decisions made on the topic of homelessness, how to get involved, etc. Regional updates are needed that include all of Benton County. Corresponding updates can be posted and archived on the HOPE website. Implementation should be immediate.
- b. Quarterly public forum to provide verbal updates, answer community questions about recent updates, provide dialogue, and have a community conversation beyond the 10 minute comment period at each HOPE meeting. Recommend a minimum two hours. Implementation should be immediate.
- c. A notice requirement to neighborhoods and businesses with opportunities for involvement for any new services or new transitional locations approved or funded by the city or county. The intent of this notice and involvement requirement is to provide ample time and opportunity for community engagement.
 1. Organizations funded by the city or county or approved to provide social services or transitional housing must provide routine opportunities for two-way communication and a mechanism to provide feedback for neighbors and nearby businesses. City/county establish a mechanism for community members to provide feedback on services and organizations directly to the city and county provider (via email, website, and postal option) instead of only to the service provider. City/county track community feedback for improved accountability and to make informed decisions about future funding allocations. Organizations will forward any neighborhood feedback to city and county funders to evaluate future funding decisions and encourage resolving issues with neighbors.
 2. Community-wide notice should also be provided in the routine monthly community-wide communication.

10. Increase development or acquisition of affordable housing units for permanent supportive housing (PSH) by 20 new units per year for the next eight years to add at a minimum 160 new units of PSH in Benton County.

Description: permanent supportive housing (PSH) is necessary for a small portion of our unhoused community who need permanent support to remain stably housed. "New" units can be new

construction or conversion of existing units to PSH units. Increasing PSH will decrease the number of chronically homeless individuals in the community and result in cost savings.

(<https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Cost-Savings-from-PSH.pdf>)

- a. Develop a framework for awarding currently available grant funds that encourages, incentivizes, or requires, when possible, a certain percentage of PSH units in housing projects seeking affordable housing funding from the City of Corvallis.
 1. County pursue additional grant funding streams to increase PSH units in greater Benton County to implement this recommendation.
- b. Coordination with City and County Community Development (CD) Departments is necessary to support this work. CD Departments should actively facilitate and encourage local organizations' applications for grant funding and technical assistance from evidence-based approaches (for instance, state-level OHCS funding and technical assistance from The Corporation for Supportive Housing).
 1. County collaborate with other cities in the county to increase PSH units outside of Corvallis.
- c. City/county evaluate non-traditional zoning and code solutions to respond to the need for more permanent living options:
 1. Permanent tiny home villages.
 - a. Emerald Village in Eugene has 22 permanent tiny homes on 1.1 acres:
<https://www.squareonevillages.org/emerald>
 - b. Peace village in development with 36 units on 1.7 acres:
<https://www.squareonevillages.org/peace>
 2. Accessory dwelling units (ADU) should be made allowable and more easily achievable. (Corvallis already allows ADUs; county code changes are needed.)
 3. Motels converted to permanent living.

11. Increase available rental/income assistance options.

Description:

- a. Increasing the number of place-based section 8 assistance in Benton County is a priority. Linn Benton Housing Authority (LBHA) needs to include place-based assistance in their annual plan to accomplish this goal. Work with LBHA to increase projects in rural parts of Benton County in support of more affordable PSH projects like the newest one in Lebanon.
- b. City/county proactively pursue all sources of rent subsidies with community partners, including opportunities with the Veterans Administration, the state of Oregon, and rent subsidies. For example: establish a consistent resource to help people navigate the process to access social security and disability financial assistance. People with disabilities and elderly individuals are disproportionately represented in the homeless data. Programs like ASSIST and SOAR can be contracted with to expand the resources here to help people access disability and social security benefits.
- c. Engage with culturally specific and culturally responsive organizations to help connect communities of color to rental/income programs and ensure that program parameters are

aligned with the needs of communities of color. Establish a consistent resource to coordinate with Tribal Housing Authorities to provide referrals and connect Native American individuals with Tribal resources, such as housing vouchers, assistance, and support services.

Background: place-based Section 8 assistance definition: the Section 8 program provides rent assistance to eligible households. The amount of the assistance varies with household income and is capped by HUD rules that define an area's "Fair Market Rent." The Section 8 Program can be delivered in two ways: as a voucher the recipient household uses to pay a portion of their rent, or as "placed-based" assistance in which the assistance is attached to a specific housing unit. The Section 8 voucher program involves being on a waiting list for years. Having to wait years for help doesn't work very well for people who are without housing now and have a disability that puts their health and well-being at risk. Place-based assistance works better than a voucher because an eligible person can move in as soon as there's a vacancy. For this reason, place-based Section 8 assistance is critically important to the development and provision of PSH.

12. Increase supportive services and stable funding streams to provide services to residents at more affordable housing locations.

Description:

- a. City and County facilitate and coordinate collaboration among community partner organizations to expand PSH units as part of their behavioral health responsibility. (Existing providers: DevNW, Commonwealth, Corvallis Housing First, county health staff.)
- b. County continue to facilitate increasing supportive services however possible by leveraging Medicaid funding for non-county staff to provide behavioral health support, case management, peer support, and counseling/medication assistance. Case management is the most critical component to prioritize.
 - i. County Alcohol and Drug resources can increase their in-the-field work to do diagnoses that will allow for more resources for case management following the 1115 waiver.
- c. County facilitate collaboration with Medicaid insurance (IHN-CCO) and Samaritan to support more behavioral health services onsite at more permanent supportive housing units.

From: [Napack, Jan](#)
To: [ARENA Julie](#)
Subject: Recommendation #6
Date: Thursday, April 29, 2021 7:08:05 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning, Julie.

Great session yesterday!

Here is my reason for my "no" vote on #6.

For good or bad, the approach to community solutions must clearly include community input.

I do not feel that managed camping received enough support in the stakeholder survey that went out in late 2020 for it to be included as part of a policy recommendation.

Instead, the latter arguments in support of managed camping seem tied to provider and committee responses to the City Council's vote to post and clear camps from parks.

As an aside, I'd rather we make bold efforts at finding more efficient solutions than a managed camping stopgap. In that respect, I strongly support Reece's view, or one with similar outcomes.

Thanks again,



Jan Napack
Ward 1 Corvallis City Council
541-745-5335 (mobile / text)

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From: [Goodwin, Joel](#)
To: [ARENA Julie](#)
Subject: RE: HOPE Approved Recommendations
Date: Thursday, April 29, 2021 3:10:21 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

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Good afternoon Julie-

I think my previous feedback regarding managed camping articulates the reasoning behind my dissenting vote:

RECOMMENDATION #6

As a member of Group #3 (Transitional Options), we had crafted a recommendation regarding transitional options to include shelters, microshelters, managed RV camping, and managed tent camping. Taking careful consideration of the data available as well as community input, the recommendation prioritized microshelters and offered guidelines for managed camping **if** it was pursued as an option. The recommendation from our group seems to have been fully absorbed into the recommendation regarding 'Emergency Shelter', which now indicates managed camping is "our most urgent need". I find this troubling, as it is not consistent with the data we have received or community input we have solicited.

- DATA
 - In our December survey, only 42% of clients reported they would like to stay in a managed tent campsite; 68% reported they would like to stay in a microshelter.
 - In our December survey, community members were asked about their level of concern for community safety, individual safety, noise, litter, visibility, and fire for the different shelter options. **Managed camping generated the highest level of concern in each of those categories.** Microshelters, by contrast, had the highest level of overall support.
 - In our April survey, recommendation #6 had among the highest rates of "do not support" responses at 27.79% (behind pathways for sex offenders at 27.94% and permanent supportive housing at 31.96%).
 - It should be noted that this survey referred to managed camping as an overflow option in the bold portion of the recommendation, but as its own separate (non-overflow) option in the body of the text which made the proposal unclear.
 - In the comments from the April survey on recommendation #6, I located 20 comments that specifically referenced "tent" or "camp". Fourteen of those comments were clearly against managed camping, four were unclear, and two were in support (one of which proposed this would mitigate illegal camping).
 - It is worth mentioning that microshelters are only mentioned one time in the *entire* survey result document – and then only in describing sheltering options, not in the comments. This seems to demonstrate a lack of opposition from the community for microshelters.

- Early in our process I was asked to present to the group about the nexus between public safety and homelessness. This presentation, which has been rescheduled several times, would have included data related to each sheltering option that could prove relevant to this process.
- COMMUNITY FEEDBACK
 - Focus groups were held at COI, CHF, CDDC, and SafeCamp. Two of the four focus groups indicated managed camping was “our most urgent need”. In looking through multiple other documents we have received, this is the only mention I can find of managed camping being “our most urgent need”.
 - The first the Board heard of a focus group was when we were told this was happening to solicit feedback on our recommendations from homeless community members. I do not recall any discussion on the format of the focus groups, the selection process, what questions were being asked, etc. Based on the notes provided, I have concerns about how this feedback was obtained:
 - If we were looking for feedback from homeless community members, why were service providers participating in the focus groups?
 - What was the selection process for participants?
 - If we were looking for feedback about our recommendations, why were the questions asked not specifically related to the recommendations?
 - Are we willing to allow this specific feedback to shape our recommendations, even though it contradicts the data and other feedback we have received?
 - There has been some limited feedback indicating a belief we *must* have a managed camp in order to enforce illegal camping elsewhere in the City. This is understandably confusing, but is not factually correct. In my presentation regarding the public safety nexus to homelessness, I would have also covered the 9th Circuit Court ruling which clarifies someone cannot be fined for sleeping in a public place, and the very minor change that was made to our Illegal Camping ordinance which is still completely valid.
 - The Benton County Development Department provided community-based feedback: “This recommendation appears to be focused on building organizational capacity of organizations such as SafePlace but it’s important to be very clear to keep that distinct from increasing housing capacity at SafeCamp. The latter will likely face significant neighborhood concern and a land use hearing...”
 - The Southtown Solutions letter we received documented the results of 125 survey respondents and a virtual meeting. Some highlights from their letter include:
 - “South Corvallis has dealt with ongoing and increasing crime, safety risks, commuter conflicts, trash and blight from both unmanaged and managed camps...”
 - “The City-authorized ‘managed camp’ in the BMX Park and Unity Shelter exacerbated these already overwhelming problems.”
 - “Semi-permanent housing/shelter options like microshelters/ADU/RV/Car

camping are more effective and less impactful than managed or unmanaged camping situations...”

SUGGESTION: I propose we return to the previous language from the topic 3 group which clarifies the level of support for each type of transitional sheltering option, including guidelines for a managed camp *if* it is pursued as an option. This more accurately reflects the data and community feedback we have received throughout our process.

Thanks,

Joel

From: ARENA, Julie <Julie.Arena@co.benton.or.us>

Sent: Thursday, April 29, 2021 3:00 PM

To: 'aleita@cmug.com'; Anita Earl <aearl@samhealth.org>; AUGEROT, Xanthippe <Xanthippe.Augerot@Co.Benton.OR.US>; Barbara Hanley <barbara.hanley01@gmail.com>; 'bbutler@samhealth.org'; 'bryancotter64@gmail.com'; 'catherinerae17@yahoo.com'; 'Christina Jancila' <christinajan@hotmail.com>; 'director@corvallisousingfirst.org'; Goodwin, Joel <Joel.Goodwin@corvallisoregon.gov>; 'jimmoorefield@mac.com'; 'karyleb@gmail.com'; 'kingsvalleygeorge@yahoo.com'; Linda Tucker <revlinda@corvallisfumc.org>; Maughan, Charles <charles.maughan@corvallisoregon.gov>; Napack, Jan <jan.napack@corvallisoregon.gov>; 'Nicolehobbs@mac.com'; ogilvia@gmail.com; 'Pegge McGuire' <pmcguire@communityservices.us>; 'reecest@hotmail.com'; vicepres2.naacpcorvallisalbany@gmail.com

Cc: HOFFMAN Suzanne <suzanne.hoffman@Co.Benton.OR.US>; KERBY, Joseph <Joseph.Kerby@co.benton.or.us>; Shepard, Mark <Mark.Shepard@corvallisoregon.gov>

Subject: HOPE Approved Recommendations

HOPE Board,

Attached are the final recommendations for the city and county. I will be meeting with city and county leadership in early May to discuss presenting them at the Joint Electeds meeting on May 20th. The HOPE Executive Committee will also discuss communication strategies to the elected officials.

Note your amended language under #3 (“Prioritizing collaboration and coordination” – a work group has formed to research models of collaboration to make an informed recommendation on what model to adopt) and under # 5 (crisis response and data collection on the scope of need).

I will be sure to include the vote tally and the reasoning behind the four dissenting votes solely on the topic of recommending managed camping.

Also, Jan asked for a direct link to the [Public Forum notes](#) in the google folder.

Thanks!



Julie Arena
H.O.P.E. Coordinator
Benton County Health Department
4077 SW Research Way, Corvallis, Oregon 97339
Mail: P.O. Box 3020, 97339
(Tel) 541-766-0252 / (Cell) 541-243-3269
[HOPE Website](#)
<https://www.co.benton.or.us/coronavirus>

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From: Receest@hotmail.com
To: [ARENA Julie](#)
Subject: Reasoning behind voting no on the managed camping
Date: Thursday, April 29, 2021 12:49:54 PM

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I am very happy and impressed with all the work that has gone into the recommendations. Overall what a great success!

The reasons I don't support the described 'managed camping' in our community.

- I do not support utilizing tax payer funds, at anywhere near the proposed \$ amounts, when tents are the housing style offered.

-The data clearly shows that our community wants micro shelters, not managed camping.

-Providing a lockable micro-shelter for people is overwhelmingly more effective and desired, when compared to tents. Spending hundreds of thousands of dollars for intensive management and overhead expenses, without providing a basic lockable space. Is a poor way to spend limited funds.

-Because of the size of the population. There would need to be multiple locations to accommodate a majority. Developing these locations, would have much more community, and camper support, if they were micro shelter villages. Operating costs are often much less for the micro shelter villages. As the lockable space for isolating oneself or protecting belongings, greatly reduces conflicts. (requires less staff supervision, conflict resolution)

-The City/ County/service providers can't afford the risk/responsibility of providing safety in the proposed managed camp setting. Staff are responsible for keeping people and their belongings safe. (Which is very difficult with large numbers of tents.) Are the service providers going to be able to obtain insurance anyway?

-We don't yet have data to know how many campers applied and were accepted at the proposed managed camp, or car camping area. (What if they didn't have enough applicants to fill it, yet were proposing spending more \$ on this)

-A large demographic of people (likely the majority) who do not want to, are not permitted, are waiting for a space, or have reached there time limit in the managed camp; will still be camping illegally. With no guidance as to where is appropriate to set up camp. We must have a plan that accommodates everyone. Our plan doesn't address illegal campers. They need somewhere to be as well.

-I recommend as an immediate first step. We designate a few areas,(some near where people already are camping)as 'temporary legal camping zones'. These strategic locations will work to balance the community and environmental concerns in the short term. This would offer much of the benefits proposed by the managed camp. (stability from having to move regularly, and a stable location for service providers to help). But will allow much of the available funds to be directed towards the micro shelters right away.

I noticed Eugene is going the route of providing designated safe camping and safe parking, designated locations.

<https://www.kezi.com/content/news/Eugene-city-council-unanimously-votes-to-ban-urban-camping-574306801.html>

Sent from my iPad

TO: City Council for May 6, 2021, Council Work Session
 FROM: Mark W. Shepard, P.E., City Manager *MWS*
 DATE: April 28, 2021
 SUBJECT: Council Policies on Houselessness



STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PLAN PRIORITY: E-9B, Refine the City Council's policies for houseless support services.

Action Requested:

Staff recommends Council continue the discussion of the Strategic Operational Plan Council action item to clarify policy direction regarding houseless support services in preparation for the joint meeting with the Benton County Commissioners on May 20, 2021.

Discussion:

The Council held their second work session regarding polices concerning the unhoused on April 22nd. At the April 22 Council Work Session, the Council:

- Received the survey results from other cities regarding funding and policies.
- Received information on the typical roles of cities, counties, states and the federal government regarding social services and addressing unhoused individuals.
- Discussed and narrowed the Council's policy direction, to focus City efforts on "roofs" for the houseless.

The Council's direction from the April 22 work session has provided greater clarity regarding the Council's policy priorities and desired role for the City when working with Benton County and other service providers to address the needs of the unhoused. During the April 22nd work session the Council identified the City's primary role in addressing the needs of the unhoused as providing 'roofs'. This direction helps the City take the next step of defining where to focus our efforts and resources.

HOPE Recommendations

The HOPE recommendations cover data, facility, and service needs. The Council's direction from the April 22 work session clarified that the City should be focusing on a broad range of housing. The staff report for the April 22 work session included information about potential roles for the City regarding supporting/providing housing. This information is provided again here:

- Construction of affordable housing
- Providing regulations that allow a broad range of housing
- Providing regulations that allow the siting of social services
- CDBG capital support for social services

Specifically this work can include assisting in siting and funding construction of a shelter, supporting transitional housing, incentivizing and funding low income housing, and pursuing land use policies that support more affordable housing across the entire housing spectrum in the City.

The Council's direction to focus on a broad definition of housing provides a solid foundation to review the current draft HOPE recommendations and prepare for the meeting with the Benton County Commissioners on May 20th. The Council direction facilitates viewing the HOPE recommendations from four perspectives:

1. Those that cities should **lead**.
2. Those that cities should work on **jointly** with the County.
3. Those that cities provide a **supporting role** to the County.
4. Those that cities **do not have a significant role in providing**.

Clarifying and communicating the role of cities in Benton County will allow cities, the County, and service providers to focus on each of their core functions and tap into the appropriate resources to address the HOPE recommendations in a strategic manner.

Benton County is a small county with approximately 94,665 population (2020). There are five cities in the County and Corvallis is the largest city at 59,730 population or about 63% of the County's population. 19,300 people or about 20% of the population lives in unincorporated areas, often in close proximity of the 5 cities. Although the items listed as "City Leads" often apply to all of the cities in Benton County, the relative size of Corvallis in relation to other cities means that certain larger facilities would likely to be located within or near the Corvallis Urban Growth Boundary, either inside or in close proximity to the City limits.

Following are the draft HOPE recommendations identified by the lead role¹:

Cities Lead:

- 10. Increase development or acquisition of affordable housing units for permanent supportive housing (PSH) by 20 new units per year for the next eight years to add at a minimum 160 new units of PSH in Benton County. "New" can be new construction or conversion of existing units to Draft updated 4/26/2021 5 PSH units. PSH is necessary for a small portion of our unhoused community who need permanent support to remain stably housed.*

Permanent Supportive Housing is a critical need throughout the County. Traditionally, most of the permanent supportive housing in the County has been provided within the City of Corvallis, but the need for PSH occurs everywhere. PSH can occur in many different forms and locations to meet the variety of needs that create houselessness.

The specificity of the amount and timeline should not just be an arbitrary or aspirational number. Although it is possible that there could be a Budget Inn or Van Buren House sized project created every year, that would be unlikely. Instead there may be years when there is a large project that produces a larger number of units and other years when the PSH total count may be smaller, but divided up amongst smaller group homes throughout the County.

¹ Role includes the work of agencies and partners and not just direct expenditures or actions by the lead government. For instance, the County created Community Services Consortium and the Linn-Benton Housing Authority and therefore the activities of these two entities would be considered as supporting the County role. On the other hand, the City helped create the entity that is now DevNW to develop affordable housing in the community and region and therefore the activities of DevNW and other affordable housing developers will often be considered part of the city role in the community they are developing within. For small cities or unincorporated areas, the County also takes on the roles normally associated with cities.

The goal also lacks detail like understanding whether the intent is that the City of Corvallis would be expected to produce all 20 units every year or its proportionate share of 13 units with the 7 others occurring throughout the rest of the County.

PSH of this scale will not be able to funded completely by the City or County and therefore there will need to be understanding of financial resources, competitive nature of the outside funding sources, available land or prospective projects and coordination between the lead governments and the entities that will actually be constructing the units before numbers and timelines are agreed to. One key to success for this goal is to have community partners with enough organizational capacity to acquire sites, assemble complex financing packages and be successful in competing against projects in other parts of the state.

It may be better to indicate that PSH should be made a priority for funding until 160 new units are created across the County. This would allow funding to be redirected from other existing programs towards PSH and signal to the development community that PSH projects will be at the front of the line for funding without creating arbitrary goals and timelines that have not been feasibility tested.

Due to the small size of the cities in the rest of the County and the large amount of County residents in the unincorporated areas around Corvallis, it may make sense to enter into a cooperative agreement with the County, similar to the Economic Development Office model, where the City could provide the housing development technical expertise to projects throughout the county. This would also provide a much broader array of lots and price points for PSH, providing an increased chance that PSH sites will be able to be acquired on a regular basis and PSH residents have an array of PSH choices so that case workers are able to better match the PSH context to the resident's unique needs.

Joint Effort:

2. *Work with providers to create metrics to measure program success.*

The City should work with providers to develop and track targets and metrics specific for the development of the items that are related to cities' roles and funding priorities. The County should undertake a similar effort for areas under its responsibility.

5. *Pursue the feasibility and implementation of a crisis response team.*

The Corvallis Police Department has been working with the Benton County Health Department to develop a pilot crisis response program that will provide support for individuals experiencing mental health issues. The pilot plan refocuses existing resources in the Police Department and Benton County Health Department. The pilot program will be launched in the summer of 2021. The program will be evaluated and modified as appropriate and as resources remain available.

8. *Routine communication, notice, and community involvement need to happen on the topic of homelessness services.*

The City can participate with the County and service providers to provide regular and appropriate communications on the topic of houseless services. It would be appropriate to apply IAP2 principles to the communication plan.

11. Increase available rental/income assistance options

Rental assistance is a role that is generally a County role that is administered through CSC and the LBHA. Cities' roles in the partnership is to develop sufficient affordable housing options that rental assistance can be used. The City of Corvallis also works through its tenant information hub to direct tenants with financial challenges to agencies that can potentially provide rental assistance. On a related note, the City of Corvallis also has a low income assistance program for the City services bill that can reduce the housing costs for low income individuals.

Cities Support the County:

3. *Adopt the Hub Model of care coordination as a framework for doing business that coordinates existing partners to provide the best possible service to individuals.*

Although this concept falls under the County's traditional areas of responsibility, the cities need to support this by providing regulations that allow the siting of social services necessary to support the Hub Model of care coordination.

6. *Benton County needs a 24/7/365 Emergency Sheltering System for all populations with onsite resources at any shelter location to transition people out of homelessness*

The cities can support this by providing regulations that allow a broad range of housing and by providing regulations that allow the siting of social services. The cities could also participate in capital funding to support construction of a shelter. Larger shelter facilities would be anticipated to be located within the City of Corvallis or in the nearby Urban Fringe due to the population size of Corvallis. However, other sheltering concepts such as microshelters, managed camping, RV camping, etc. could be appropriate to locate throughout the County since they can be scaled appropriately for smaller communities or unincorporated areas.

7. *Facilitate and support the creation of a Resource Center.*

A Resource Center is part of Benton County's Criminal Justice Improvements project that will be presented to the voters in May of 2022. The City of Corvallis can support this effort by providing regulations that allow this use to occur at whatever site is selected by Benton County.

9. *Establish referral pathways to transitional and permanent housing resources for serious criminal offenders (sex offenders, felony convictions, etc.).*

Cities traditionally have the role of providing regulations that allow for a variety of group homes and other types of facilities that serve as resources for these challenging populations. The County would likely have a more direct role both in terms of its case management role but also its corrections role. City law enforcement would also be a partner for referring individuals who need assistance.

12. *Increase supportive services and stable funding streams to provide services to residents at more affordable housing locations.*

Providing and funding ongoing supportive services is a role for the County and other service providers. This is not a typical role for cities. However, cities can assist the effort by creating

more affordable housing locations where services can be provided. The City of Corvallis can provide technical assistance to other cities and the unincorporated area to establish more stable affordable housing funding streams through additional Construction Excise Tax participation throughout the County.

Not a City activity:

3. *Facilitate and coordinate data improvement efforts with community partners.*

Data regarding the houseless and the services they employ would come from those providing the services and case management. However, the City and County would both welcome more transparency into the community partner data in order to better evaluate the effectiveness of government activities and funding.

4. *Paid, full-time staff are needed as case managers to support people transitioning out of homelessness. Case managers should have commensurate experience and background that reflects the people they are serving from a cultural perspective and based on lived-experience*

This is not a city activity, but Corvallis staff does support more case manager capacity being built at the County and community partners. Lack of case management reduces the effectiveness of all programs, including the roles that are typically the responsibility of cities.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Council discuss the above grouping of the HOPE draft recommendations and come to a consensus regarding the Council's identified role for the City as we head into the discussion regarding the HOPE recommendations with Benton County on May 20, 2021.

Budget Impact:

Further discussion will be required regarding funding options and priorities. The City, County, and service providers clarifying roles and responsibilities will enable the City Council to discuss which City roles are priorities. Resource limitations will require the Council to prioritize which actions to move forward. The clarifying of roles and identification of priorities will provide a foundation for discussing funding options for moving the City's work forward.

Attachments:

Attachment CC-A: HOPE Draft Recommendations

HOPE Advisory Board Policy Recommendations from Spring 2021

Vision: everyone in Benton County should have the opportunity to live in decent, safe, and affordable housing.

Values: all of these policy recommendations to the City of Corvallis and Benton County support the HOPE Board's overarching goal to transition people out of homelessness. These recommendations are grounded in a data-driven approach, are supported by research on successful systems, reflect gaps in our system of housing and services, are informed by community feedback that includes clients experiencing homelessness, and prioritize our vulnerable populations, community safety for all, and racial and ethnic justice.

Background: In summer of 2020, the HOPE Board conducted a [gap analysis](#) of all available services in Corvallis and greater Benton County. The Board collected all available [data](#) from homeless service providers and social service providers working to prevent homelessness to understand where we have safety concerns, racial and ethnic inequalities, and vulnerable populations. Finally, the Board researched successful [systems](#) of housing and supportive services to transition people out of homelessness. In Fall 2020, the Board prioritized [four main topic areas](#) based on this data-driven, systems-level approach with a focus on equity:

- 1) Align and coordinate existing services with a focus on improving data collection and collaboration for individuals experiencing homelessness or in behavioral health crisis;
- 2) Establish a sheltering system for all populations that is accessible 24/7/365 days per year, as well as a Resource Center to support coordinated entry into publicly funded assistance programs;
- 3) Expand transitional options for housing with a focus on notice, communication, and engagement with neighborhoods and the larger community; and
- 4) Increase permanent supportive housing to provide stable housing for our chronically homeless community members.

Community Engagement: in November and December 2020, the Board engaged the community throughout Benton County to receive feedback on these four priority topics. The [public feedback](#) directly shaped these draft policy recommendations to incorporate community sentiments on these topics. Public engagement included online surveys, multiple virtual meetings specifically dedicated to HOPE feedback, Board attendance at various community meetings to include different sectors and perspectives, and in-person client surveying conducted by nine service providers in Benton County serving individuals in need or experiencing homelessness.

In April 2021, the Board received community feedback on the final draft of policy recommendations. Community feedback was provided via survey on the HOPE community engagement [website](#) in April 2021 and at a virtual public forum on Tuesday April 13th from 4-6pm. Homeless service providers at four different locations supported in-person focus groups with clients experiencing homelessness to provide their perspective on these draft recommendations.

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Overview of Public Feedback and Edits to Draft Recommendations in Spring 2021

The Board did not conduct community engagement in April 2021 on the first three recommendations focused on capacity to implement the twelve policy recommendations. We have reorganized to highlight these three organizational, funding, and state-level components at the beginning.

- A. Organizational capacity is essential to facilitate and further develop these recommendations in partnership with community-based organizations. Organizational capacity also needs to be built within social service organizations to manage and provide the services over the long term.
- B. Funding recommendations
- C. Legislative Advocacy for statewide leadership and funding

Messaging on these first three critical components for implementation (A, B, C) is key based on the public feedback.

Original Policy Recommendations – summary of public feedback and April 2021 edits

1. Facilitate and coordinate data improvement efforts with community partners.
 - a. Public feedback: the most supported recommendation.
 - b. Changes made: none.
2. Work with providers to create metrics to measure program success.
 - a. Public feedback: well-supported, no changes needed.
 - b. Changes made: none.
3. Adopt the Hub Model of care coordination as a framework for doing business that coordinates existing partners to provide the best possible service to individuals.
 - a. Public feedback: the term “Hub Model” is not well understood, more explanation is needed of this model. Clients and service providers would like the flexibility for individuals to be able to attend a meeting like this if they want to and can. A pre-meeting between clients and their case manager before the main meeting can gauge the person’s desired outcomes and needs.
 - b. Changes made: describing the meeting and its purpose instead of using the term “hub” since it has confused clients and the general community. Adding flexibility to allow for the client to attend if they would like to be present.
4. Paid, full-time staff are needed as case managers to support people transitioning out of homelessness. Case managers should have commensurate experience and background that reflects the people they are serving from a cultural perspective and based on lived-experience.
 - a. Public feedback: clarify the city/county role and the need for case managers all over the county.
 - b. Changes made: wording edited to clarify the city/county role and the need for more case managers in Corvallis and throughout the county.
5. Pursue the feasibility and implementation of a crisis response team.

- a. Public feedback: resounding support for the concept. Lots of support for a non-law enforcement response and lots of support for a co-response with mental health and law enforcement together. Lots of questions about the data on this need.
 - b. Changes made: add a data collection recommendation to understand the magnitude of the need for crisis response and potential cost savings from this model. Add a co-response recommendation based on public feedback.
6. Benton County needs a 24/7/365 Emergency Sheltering System for all populations with onsite resources at any shelter location to transition people out of homelessness.
 - a. Public feedback: many worries about attracting people here/being a magnet for services, location(s) that don't negatively impact businesses, neighborhoods, and parks, having a requirement to work on transitioning/self-sufficiency/responsibility once stabilized. The urgency of a place for tent and car campers to go – from the client and community-wide perspectives. If folks can stay here 24/7 while they work on transitioning, let's call this a shelter system instead of an emergency shelter.
 - b. Changes made: terminology updated to remove "emergency" from the Sheltering System title since individuals will be assigned that bed space for a period of time while they work with a case manager (they do not have to leave during the day like the historical emergency shelter locations). Major addition: a recommendation about the most urgent need being a place to move tent and vehicle campers where it is not illegal so they can stabilize and work on transitioning out of homelessness.
7. Facilitate and support the creation of a Resource Center.
 - a. Public feedback: lots of confusion about whether or not this already exists. Lots of fear about tax increases to fund it. Sentiment about attracting people here and only wanting to help people "from here." Need to stress the statewide advocacy for funding for all counties to provide services.
 - b. Changes made: updated description to address transit needs and working toward self-sufficiency.
8. Establish referral pathways to transitional and permanent housing resources for serious criminal offenders (sex offenders, felony convictions, etc.).
 - a. Public feedback: people misinterpreted this wording to think that the Board wanted a pipeline of ex-convicts to find housing here.
 - b. Changes made: edited wording to mention criminal history AND other history that makes it difficult to secure housing. More investigation needed to understand the magnitude of the need and explore solutions.
9. Routine communication, notice, and community involvement need to happen on the topic of homelessness services.
 - a. Public feedback: community would like a way to give feedback directly to city and county instead of only to service providers. They would like accountability in funding decisions based on community feedback.
 - b. Changes made: added in a recommendation to create a mechanism for public feedback directly to city and county about funding for social service providers.
10. Increase development or acquisition of affordable housing units for permanent supportive housing (PSH) by 20 new units per year for the next eight years to add at a minimum 160 new units of PSH in Benton County. "New" can be new construction or conversion of existing units to

- PSH units. PSH is necessary for a small portion of our unhoused community who need permanent support to remain stably housed.
- a. Public feedback: worries about increased utility, water, and property tax bills.
 - b. Changes made: updated terminology to indicate new funding sources from grant opportunities that already exist but that the county has not had the staffing capacity to apply for, disburse, oversee, and manage.
11. Increase available rental/income assistance options.
- a. Public feedback: lots of general support. Some worries about increased utility, water, and property tax bills. The need for overall messaging about how rental support/vouchers are funded is important.
 - b. Changes made: none.
12. Increase supportive services and stable funding streams to provide services to residents at more affordable housing locations.
- a. Public feedback: some worries about increased utility, water, and property tax bills. The need for overall messaging about how these services are funded is important.
 - b. Changes made: none.

Recommendations to Implement Policies

The following three recommendations (A, B, C) apply to recommendations 1-12. The Board did not do community engagement on the first three recommendations to implement the policy recommendations.

- A. Organizational capacity is needed to work on and implement these recommendations, and organizational capacity needs to be built within social service organizations to manage and provide the services.
1. **Organizational capacity to implement these recommendations means prioritizing homelessness and pro-active housing solutions within existing city and county departments and increasing capacity with additional staff to work on, coordinate, and implement these recommendations on homelessness** (whether that capacity is built internally or contracted out). No new solutions can be successfully implemented without new staff whose job it is to work on the topic of homelessness. The following functions are needed to implement these recommendations: project management, coordination and outreach, land use planning, and grants management (grant writing, contracting, grant administration, oversight, reporting).
 - i. Specifically, a team is needed to research and pursue sites for sheltering, permanent supportive housing, and service locations. The type of work that DLR has done for the Criminal Justice Systems Improvement Project is needed to research sites, zoning, and other parameters to provide site-specific options for city/county leadership and service providers to make informed choices about where to locate the different components of a sheltering system, resource center, transitional living options, and permanent supportive housing.
 - ii. Coordination capacity is needed to routinely convene city and county staff (and community based organizations) who all interact with individuals who are experiencing homelessness: parks, public works, health department, community development department, fire, and police. For example, health department staff give out tents and supplies that are being thrown away by parks staff.
 - iii. This increased capacity to manage homeless issues by the City and County also includes directing departments to prioritize coordination internally on the topic of homelessness by making homeless response part of their annual work plan.
 - iv. Regional outreach and coordination with adjacent cities and counties is needed to provide communication, collaboration, and regional approaches to addressing homelessness.
 2. **Invest in building organizational capacity at organizations that can manage all components of these recommendations** and work to support and successfully transition people out of homelessness. Invest in building organizational capacity by supporting and collaborating with groups that have demonstrated efforts to provide services in Benton County. If no local organizations wish to build and grow organizational capacity, recruit an organization to Benton County who can provide these services.
 - i. Other suggestions: expand the capacity of organizations that successfully are stabilizing people by adding microshelters at their locations. For example, Community Outreach Inc.

(COI), Corvallis Housing First (CHF), and Unity Shelter have successful models of housing case management to transition people out of homelessness. Increase their capacity with funding for positions and microshelters at available locations.

- ii. Capacity must be built for organizations to serve Benton County residents outside of Corvallis.

B. Funding recommendations

Explore state, federal, and private funding to expand organizational capacity to work on these topics and to fund the implementation and permanent provision of all these recommended services. In partnership with providers, assess current funding streams to ensure funding is not being taken away from existing services but that additional funding is pursued. Allocate resources to organizations that work toward implementing these policy recommendations. Prioritize resource allocation based on community feedback.

1. Grant writing capacity at the city/county is needed to access additional funds that are available but are not being applied for.
2. County pursue additional funds from Community Development Block Grant in county areas and in partnership with municipalities who have not explored this funding option.
3. County explore SAMHSA funding for transitional housing for individuals with a behavioral health diagnosis who do not fall into the SPMI population, new Transient Lodging Tax funding, and private foundations such as Meyer Memorial Trust, Oregon Community Foundation, McKenzie River Gathering, and Benton Community Foundation. If the state-controlled Medicaid 1115 waiver allows funding for housing case managers, county pursue additional capacity for housing case managers.
4. County explore cost/benefit of adopting a Construction Excise Tax. Local jurisdictions can levy a tax of up to 1 percent of the permit value on residential construction, and levy a tax with no cap on the permit value of commercial and industrial construction. For instance, the City of Corvallis levies a tax of 1% on residential construction and 1.5% on commercial and industrial construction. State law governs how the revenue can be used. Some is restricted for uses such as developing affordable housing and providing down payment assistance, and some is unrestricted.
5. Allocate local and state resources to programs that work to implement these recommendations.
6. Prioritize investment based on public feedback and cost effective allocations of limited public resources. The community supports the following options (beyond just normal brick-and-mortar housing) in the following descending order:
 - i. Microshelters
 - ii. Emergency shelter
 - iii. RV/car camping
 - iv. Tent camping.

C. Legislative Advocacy

1. County and City elected officials must continue to advocate for statewide leadership on local requirements for shelter beds in each county with accompanying state funding to support those required beds. This state requirement and funding is needed to address worries about migration of people to areas with services from other areas.
2. State and federal funding for all of these topics must continue to be advocated for by city and county elected officials and by the League of Cities and Association of Counties once these recommendations are adopted.
3. City and County explore partnership with OSU and counterparts in Lane County (Lane, Eugene, Springfield, and University of Oregon) to lobby for a state law allowing local tax revenue from Pac-12 events and on-campus sales to address the affordable housing impacts from the university population. The tax revenue would be split between the universities and the local municipalities to fund subsidized housing for low-income students and affordable housing for the surrounding community.

Policy Recommendations to the City of Corvallis and Benton County Spring 2021

1. Facilitate and coordinate data improvement efforts with community partners.

Description: Work with providers to improve data collection/tracking and to reduce duplicative data entry and data management. Data collection efforts will include a human services coalition model that is a statewide model: service providers come together to say what their priorities are and how they would implement them. Implementation is recommended immediately and could be accomplished with an existing staff person.

Background: coordinated data collection and analysis of community-wide data support communities' efforts to end homelessness by understanding which individuals continue to cycle into homelessness and which providers and partners continue to interact with them. Best practices from a trauma-informed care perspective are to reduce the number of times an individual must recount their history and circumstances to access assistance.

2. Work with providers to create metrics for successful program goals.

Description: successful program metrics assist with tracking which services deploy successful interventions in transitioning people out of homelessness. Implementation can be immediate with existing staff person.

Background: success metrics will help funders understand the value of their funding decisions, help us communicate with the community, and allow us to continually adapt and refine services to achieve the desired transition from homelessness for as many people as possible.

3. Convene providers at routine meetings for improved care coordination facilitated by a full-time staff member.

Description: This model brings together different providers and partners at routine meetings to coordinate care for individuals with high and complex needs on a case-by-case basis. The purpose of this model is to bring together partners to improve the lives of individuals who are interacting with multiple systems. This model of care coordination has been referred to as “case conferencing,” Frequent Users Systems Engagement (FUSE), and also the “Hub model” of care coordination. This model should allow for flexibility for the client to be able to attend if they would like to or not attend if they do not wish to or are unable to do so. A pre-meeting with a case manager and the client is needed prior to the all-provider meeting to assess the client’s ability and interest in attending and their goals for progress to inform the coordination.

The staff position to coordinate these meetings should be full-time and could be a health navigator, case manager, community health worker, or program coordinator. This same staff position is needed to do an assessment of funding streams: with input from city/county and providers, to assess all available funding streams coming into Benton County (including Corvallis) that fund this work to blend funding streams.

Implementation: can be done immediately if an existing staff person is available, until an FTE can be budgeted for this role.

Hub spokes needed at the table should be diverse and culturally-versed: Benton County Health Department (BCHD), Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center (CDDC), Unity Shelter, Community Outreach Inc. (COI), Unity Shelter, Corvallis Housing First (CHF), the Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence (CARDV), Samaritan, Inter-community Health Network-Coordinated Care Organization (IHN-CCO), Jackson Street Youth Services (JSYS) when needed, the state Department of Health Service (DHS), Tribal liaisons, case managers, Casa Latinos Unidos (CLU), Philomath Community Services (PCS), South Benton Food Pantry (SBFP), Job training/vocational rehab, law enforcement/first responders, crisis response team members, Street Outreach Response Team (SORT) members, social security/disability advocacy, faith-based community volunteers, Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative to do system-level coordination, Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG). Any other provider who can provide access to services for a person in need.

Geographic service area suggestion: the details and frequency can be decided by the Hub participants, but based on public feedback we recommend having routine monthly Hub meetings for Corvallis-centric clients, South Benton clients, and Philomath/West Benton clients (and other geographic regions as needed).

Background: This model is similar to the former Benton County Adult Services Team and the current Homeless and Vulnerable Patients Workgroup convened by Samaritan.

4. Collaborate with social service and health care partners to increase the number of paid, full-time case managers to support people transitioning out of homelessness.

Description: there is a need for more case managers with experience and backgrounds that reflects the people they are serving from a cultural perspective and based on lived-experience.

- a. County: work with IHN-CCO and Samaritan on workforce capacity for housing case managers, peer support specialists, and social service providers to utilize funding from Medicaid and SAMHSA block grant resources.
- b. County: in addition to increased case managers in Corvallis, rural areas outside of Corvallis also need additional mobile/regional staff to support people’s housing needs and transition out of homelessness.
- c. City and county work with OSU, LBCC, and any other local educational institutions on expanding internship workforce capacity from student populations.

Background: case management is vital to support the transition out of homelessness. Not enough case managers are available in our community to support the need.

5. Pursue implementation of a crisis response team and collect data on law enforcement response to unhoused individuals to understand the magnitude of responses and cost savings from a crisis response team..

Description: HOPE recommends a non-police intervention for crisis situations due to homelessness and behavioral health issues. A co-response with behavioral health professionals and law enforcement is also needed depending on the situation. Coordination with street outreach and harm reduction is vital to ensure collaboration with overlapping populations.

Background: HOPE’s research, data, and community feedback fully support ongoing efforts to implement a Crisis Response Team to redirect calls from law enforcement and provide team partnerships with law enforcement when an officer is necessary. We recognize that ongoing efforts are occurring with the Criminal Justice Systems Improvement project and the Willamette Criminal Justice Council. We recommend continuing to pursue implementation in those existing forums with experts on the topic of crisis response.

6. Provide organizational capacity to facilitate and coordinate providers in establishing a 24/7/365 Sheltering System for all populations with onsite resources at shelter locations to transition people out of homelessness.

This organizational capacity is needed to determine possible sites for sheltering, the logistics of implementation, and the ongoing funding from sources that minimize the use of general fund dollars. (See the first recommendation A for details on the organizational capacity needed in the form of project coordination, project management, land use planning, and grant writing.)

Description: any shelter needs space for warming/cooling from the elements during the day. Individuals are assigned a bed space that is theirs 24/7 while they work with a case manager on transition. Emergency sheltering 24/7/365 with onsite resources is referred to as a “navigation center” in pending legislation (HB 2004 and HB 2006, 2021 Session).

- a. **We recommend the following six components of a sheltering system to address safety concerns for different populations:** congregate male, congregate female, non-congregate sheltering (like motel rooms or microshelters), managed tent camping, managed car/RV/trailer camping, and mobile service delivery to alternate locations. The team working to implement this sheltering system should look at available current and historic data to fine-tune the recommended estimates.
- b. **Initial Estimates of Need for Sheltering are as follows:**
 1. **Women:** 40 congregate beds based on historical data from the women's shelter. This estimate includes the existing 20-25 beds at the women's shelter which may not be able to remain in its existing location and cannot operate 365 days/per year at that location given youth programming.
 2. **Men:** 60 congregate beds based on historical data from the men's shelter. This estimate includes the capacity at the men's location which may not be able to remain in its existing location given flood plain concerns and space constraints.
 3. **Non-congregate sheltering units** for people who cannot be in men/women dorms (non-binary and trans individuals, couples, people who cannot be in congregate settings due to medical fragility or behavioral health disorders, people with pets, and family units): 40 units based on HOPE survey data on trans and non-binary needs and feedback from providers regarding couples and individuals with a child. We recommend single-unit sheltering options, such as motel room style units and/or microshelters, to provide this non-congregate capacity. The microshelter design needs to be expanded to accommodate a double bed or bunk beds for couples and family units.
 4. **RV/Trailer and car camping:** we do not have a good estimate of this need based on our current data system. At Pioneer Park, 30 applications (representing about 60 people) were submitted. At Pioneer Park, 15 RV spaces and 9 car spaces were occupied. All 11 spots at the Fairgrounds were full with 21 individuals camping in cars and RVs. Based on these locations alone, at least 40 RV and car camping spaces are needed.
 5. **Managed Camping:** between 80-120 individuals are camping in close proximity to the hygiene center, on ODOT property, and in the skate park. These estimates may decrease with more available shelter beds. A site for managed tent and vehicle camping is the most urgent need based on feedback from folks experiencing homelessness, providers, and the broader community of business owners and other citizens.

Recommended components of a Sheltering System:

1. **Shelter Accessibility:**
 - a. Shelter is accessible 24/7/365.
 - b. Shelter is low barrier upon arrival to get individuals off the street. Options are available, but not required, for individual involvement to support the location while they work on transitioning, such as doing laundry, cleaning, or helping to provide food.
 - c. Necessary components at any emergency sheltering location: walking and biking access, public transportation access, and safety. Safety concerns for everyone involved need to be addressed. Security, lighting, fire code, and immediate access for emergency personnel must be considered.

2. **Shelter facilities and onsite services:** necessary services at any shelter location include showers, bathrooms, drinking water, food provided on-site (to minimize need to travel to multiple locations for food), laundry, wifi, lockers for items for those in congregate shelter, mail service, and office space for meeting with providers like a case manager, mental health and addiction support person, and someone who can help enroll people in assistance programs.
3. **Shelter is temporary** and is not a permanent housing solution. The duration of a person's stay will vary based on their needs, their progress with a case manager, and availability of an appropriate transitional or permanent option.
4. **A limited overflow area is needed** at any sheltering location for people who show up with a tent or car/RV. Tent and car/RV camping is time limited, and the individual must engage to transition to another option. RV sites must have gray and black water dump hookups for appropriate hygiene. The overflow area is under the supervision of the host organization.
5. **Hygiene and basic needs services accessible to any individuals**, even those not staying in the shelter system: an area for warming/cooling from the elements where someone can be 365 days/year who is experiencing homelessness to minimize the need to go to multiple locations throughout the day to stay warm or get cool. There must be hygiene facilities, wifi, lockers, and food services that are accessible to individuals to balance the negative impacts on our natural areas and waterways for those without access to basic hygiene.
6. **Definitions:**
 - a. **Managed Emergency Tent Camping:** a specific, designated area where emergency camping in tents is under the direct control of an organization with boundaries, amenities, and direct supervision. The organization provides tents and pallets to elevate the tents and is responsible for the condition of tents. The organization designates tent placement with consideration for emergency service accessibility. Campers have access to hygiene, water, trash, and resources. To transition people out of tent camping, emergency tent camping has time limits for every individual camper with evaluation of that person's progress towards securing transitional or permanent housing on a case-by-case basis. Case management to work on transitioning to stable housing must be provided for all persons. The tent camping is limited in number based on staffing capacity to provide case management. Allowing an area for managed emergency tent camping will address the safety and environmental health concerns of unmanaged camping and allow for enforcement of illegal tent camping elsewhere.
 1. Unmanaged tent camping is not supported by the public feedback due to concerns of fire, individual safety, community safety, litter, noise, and visibility. Having a designated area for managed and supported camping addresses these community concerns.

2. We recognize there are individuals who will not engage in case management to transition out of homelessness. Appropriate interventions need to be available for those who cannot engage due to behavioral health conditions, such as crisis response and respite. Pretrial justice services and additional jail capacity are needed for those who break the law. (We recognize there are current efforts to improve crisis response, respite, and additional criminal justice services.)
 - b. **Managed emergency RV, trailer, and car camping area:** a specific, designated area where emergency camping in vehicles is under the direct control of an organization. The organization designates vehicle placement with consideration for emergency service accessibility. Vehicle campers have access to hygiene, water, trash, and resources. RV sites must have gray and black water dump hookups for appropriate hygiene. Mobile service delivery capacity can make it possible to support distributed sites at multiple smaller locations throughout the county.

Background:

- a. **Challenges:** implementing this recommended emergency sheltering system will take time, resources, and political will. There are challenges with site identification, concentration of populations living in poverty, and the need for separation of some populations for safety.
- b. **Leadership:** there needs to be collaboration of leadership with providers and with the city and county supporting project management for project design and site planning to insure the following issues are addressed:
 1. Geographic locations and siting options.
 2. Adequate public transportation schedule to support client needs.
 3. Service providers must be included as leaders to determine adequate spacing between populations. Suggestions from providers include separate floors, separate buildings, and/or microshelter rows for different populations.
 4. Capacity is needed to research and explore available geographic areas in Corvallis, the urban growth boundary around Corvallis, and the county areas surrounding the urban growth boundary to find all possible locations for the different components for a sheltering system.

Phased Implementation to bolster Emergency Sheltering System: all of the components outlined for an emergency sheltering system will take staff capacity and time to be implemented. While the city and county work to build the organizational capacity and sustainable funding to support the long-term vision of implementing these components, the city and county must facilitate and support the enhancement of service capacity for these most urgent needs:

1. The men's shelter must be open 24/7/365 with additional service providers meeting with men onsite to transition them to transitional or permanent supportive housing.
2. The City of Corvallis and County, in partnership with IHN, Samaritan, and other service providers, should facilitate building the capacity for mobile service delivery to distributed microshelters, RV/trailer/car camping, and managed tent camping locations. This mobile service delivery can serve populations both within Corvallis urban growth boundary and the greater Benton County areas that have expressed the need for access to services.

3. The most urgent need voiced by clients and providers is a safe place to locate their tent or vehicle so they can stabilize, access services, secure a job, and transition out of homelessness. Basic needs of safety, sleep, food, and hygiene need to be met first before people can work on transitioning out of camping. This is also the most urgent need voiced by community members who are housed – addressing the unmanaged tent and vehicle camping throughout the community by having a place for managed camping in tents and vehicles so they do not continue to disperse and move from one street or natural area to another.

[End of Emergency Sheltering recommendation]

7. Facilitate and support the creation of a Resource Center.

Description: the Resource Center should have office space for providers from different organizations to meet with people, enroll them in programs, and work on improving their economic stability with sufficient means to meet their needs. The city and county should facilitate and support the collaboration between the providers to choose the best location options and determine who will occupy and manage this Resource Center. Must have public transit, walking, and biking access. A dedicated shuttle service from shelter locations around the community will support access beyond just public transit.

- i. Ideal location: capacity is needed to research and explore available geographic areas in Corvallis, the urban growth boundary around Corvallis, and the county areas surrounding the urban growth boundary (similar to the work DLR has done for criminal justice components sites). Best options would be co-located adjacent to or very near some sheltering. Second best is very short walking distance. Also possible would be a shuttle system from shelter locations to the resource center.

Background: supporting co-location of service providers from multiple organizations decreases the travel and number of different locations people must go to meet their needs. Having some shared space at one location does not mean that an organization entirely relocates their operation. It means that representatives from different organizations are co-located to coordinate care in one location. Most clients have to travel to multiple places (between 5-10 different geographic locations) to enroll in the numerous programs available to them. The Resource Center can have office space for service providers like Community Services Consortium (CSC), Council of Governments (COG), United Way, county health navigators to enroll people in OHP, housing case managers to work on transitioning people out of homelessness, assistance with vital records (drivers license, social security card, etc.), assistance with applying for and accessing disability and social security income, job assistance, veterans programs, space for representatives from the Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence (CARDV), Jackson Street Youth Services (JSYS), Community Outreach Inc. (COI), Casa Latinos Unidos, Tribal liaison, NAACP representative, Unity Shelter, Corvallis Housing First, Linn Benton Housing Authority, other housing entities, etc.

8. Explore and investigate the need and the barriers to accessing housing for individuals and their families in our community whose past history has impacted their ability to secure housing.

Description: people with past criminal histories, bad credit scores, and previous evictions continue to be disqualified from housing and remain unhoused. Housing assistance for people with conviction histories is lacking once they do not qualify for support from county Parole and Probation.

Background: individuals with difficult histories end up living in their cars or RVs throughout the community. These individuals and their families are already a part of our community. There is a lack of data on the need for referrals for this population, although it is a known need based on provider feedback. Explore and investigate this issue further.

9. Provide routine communication, notice, and opportunities for community involvement on the topic of homelessness services.

Description: this recommendation has three components for two-way communication and community involvement:

- a. Routine monthly email updates that people can sign up to receive. These updates should include news and reports about services, community-based organizations, decisions made on the topic of homelessness, how to get involved, etc. Regional updates are needed that include all of Benton County. Corresponding updates can be posted and archived on the HOPE website. Implementation should be immediate.
- b. Quarterly public forum to provide verbal updates, answer community questions about recent updates, provide dialogue, and have a community conversation beyond the 10 minute comment period at each HOPE meeting. Recommend a minimum two hours. Implementation should be immediate.
- c. A notice requirement to neighborhoods and businesses with opportunities for involvement for any new services or new transitional locations approved or funded by the city or county. The intent of this notice and involvement requirement is to provide ample time and opportunity for community engagement.
 1. Organizations funded by the city or county or approved to provide social services or transitional housing must provide routine opportunities for two-way communication and a mechanism to provide feedback for neighbors and nearby businesses. City/county establish a mechanism for community members to provide feedback on services and organizations directly to the city and county provider (via email, website, and postal option) instead of only to the service provider. City/county track community feedback for improved accountability and to make informed decisions about future funding allocations. Organizations will forward any neighborhood feedback to city and county funders to evaluate future funding decisions and encourage resolving issues with neighbors.
 2. Community-wide notice should also be provided in the routine monthly community-wide communication.

10. Increase development or acquisition of affordable housing units for permanent supportive housing (PSH) by 20 new units per year for the next eight years to add at a minimum 160 new units of PSH in Benton County.

Description: permanent supportive housing (PSH) is necessary for a small portion of our unhoused community who need permanent support to remain stably housed. “New” units can be new construction or conversion of existing units to PSH units. Increasing PSH will decrease the number of chronically homeless individuals in the community and result in cost savings.

(<https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Cost-Savings-from-PSH.pdf>)

- a. Develop a framework for awarding currently available grant funds that encourages, incentivizes, or requires, when possible, a certain percentage of PSH units in housing projects seeking affordable housing funding from the City of Corvallis.
 1. County pursue additional grant funding streams to increase PSH units in greater Benton County to implement this recommendation.
- b. Coordination with City and County Community Development (CD) Departments is necessary to support this work. CD Departments should actively facilitate and encourage local organizations’ applications for grant funding and technical assistance from evidence-based approaches (for instance, state-level OHCS funding and technical assistance from The Corporation for Supportive Housing).
 1. County collaborate with other cities in the county to increase PSH units outside of Corvallis.
- c. City/county evaluate non-traditional zoning and code solutions to respond to the need for more permanent living options:
 1. Permanent tiny home villages.
 - a. Emerald Village in Eugene has 22 permanent tiny homes on 1.1 acres: <https://www.squareonevillages.org/emerald>
 - b. Peace village in development with 36 units on 1.7 acres: <https://www.squareonevillages.org/peace>
 2. Accessory dwelling units (ADU) should be made allowable and more easily achievable. (Corvallis already allows ADUs; county code changes are needed.)
 3. Motels converted to permanent living.

11. Increase available rental/income assistance options.

Description:

- a. Increasing the number of place-based section 8 assistance in Benton County is a priority. Linn Benton Housing Authority (LBHA) needs to include place-based assistance in their annual plan to accomplish this goal. Work with LBHA to increase projects in rural parts of Benton County in support of more affordable PSH projects like the newest one in Lebanon.
- b. City/county proactively pursue all sources of rent subsidies with community partners, including opportunities with the Veterans Administration, the state of Oregon, and rent

- subsidies. For example: establish a consistent resource to help people navigate the process to access social security and disability financial assistance. People with disabilities and elderly individuals are disproportionately represented in the homeless data. Programs like ASSIST and SOAR can be contracted with to expand the resources here to help people access disability and social security benefits.
- c. Engage with culturally specific and culturally responsive organizations to help connect communities of color to rental/income programs and ensure that program parameters are aligned with the needs of communities of color. Establish a consistent resource to coordinate with Tribal Housing Authorities to provide referrals and connect Native American individuals with Tribal resources, such as housing vouchers, assistance, and support services.

Background: place-based Section 8 assistance definition: the Section 8 program provides rent assistance to eligible households. The amount of the assistance varies with household income and is capped by HUD rules that define an area's "Fair Market Rent." The Section 8 Program can be delivered in two ways: as a voucher the recipient household uses to pay a portion of their rent, or as "placed-based" assistance in which the assistance is attached to a specific housing unit. The Section 8 voucher program involves being on a waiting list for years. Having to wait years for help doesn't work very well for people who are without housing now and have a disability that puts their health and well-being at risk. Place-based assistance works better than a voucher because an eligible person can move in as soon as there's a vacancy. For this reason, place-based Section 8 assistance is critically important to the development and provision of PSH.

12. Increase supportive services and stable funding streams to provide services to residents at more affordable housing locations.

Description:

- a. City and County facilitate and coordinate collaboration among community partner organizations to expand PSH units as part of their behavioral health responsibility. (Existing providers: DevNW, Commonwealth, Corvallis Housing First, county health staff.)
- b. County continue to facilitate increasing supportive services however possible by leveraging Medicaid funding for non-county staff to provide behavioral health support, case management, peer support, and counseling/medication assistance. Case management is the most critical component to prioritize.
 - i. County Alcohol and Drug resources can increase their in-the-field work to do diagnoses that will allow for more resources for case management following the 1115 waiver.
- c. County facilitate collaboration with Medicaid insurance (IHN-CCO) and Samaritan to support more behavioral health services onsite at more permanent supportive housing units.

TO: City Council for May 6, 2021, Council Meeting

DATE: May 6, 2021

THROUGH: Mark W. Shepard, P.E., City Manager *MWS*

SUBJECT: Unity Shelter letter dated May 4, 2021

STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PLAN PRIORITY: E-9B: Refine Council policies for houseless services



Action Requested:

For information only.

Discussion:

We appreciate the creation of the Unity Shelter system and its ongoing role as an important partner of the City as we work with the County and State to address the complex and tragic situations that lead to houselessness. The City has continually operated in good faith with Unity Shelter and that good faith was demonstrated dramatically throughout the pandemic as Unity Shelter was the service provider that received the largest allocations of additional City funding by far. City staff continue to meet with Unity Shelter staff once or twice a week to ensure coordination is occurring between the City and its grant recipients.

It is disappointing that with all the increased coordination and joint projects the City and Unity Shelter have worked on over the past year, that the board of directors would send this letter that falls back on misleading statements that will be understood by the community to place blame and demonize the work of the City. We thought our relationship and partnership was stronger than that.

It is important that partners deal with each other honestly, particularly when trying to work together to address an issue as important and complex as houselessness.

The following is a response to some of the points made in the Unity Shelter letter:

“The city and county can take the lead in developing a regional approach to houselessness.”

The City and County have already expressed a desire to work towards developing a regional approach to houselessness, but they are not going to be able to do this work alone. The service provider network is also going to need to change and adapt to a regional approach to houselessness.

The effectiveness of the local response to houselessness has traditionally struggled due to the system being fragmented among many small, local service providers. The City bears some responsibility for the fragmented structure of the system due to the design of its social service funding program that staff is hopeful will be addressed later this year. Fragmented systems have built in inefficiencies, are difficult to coordinate and frequently leave critical gaps in the service system.

As staff has mentioned many times throughout the year, the community was very fortunate that Unity Shelter had started to form before the pandemic hit because it provided an organization that was large enough to be able to respond to some of the sudden, large needs and absorb increased funding. It would have been very challenging and in some cases, potentially impossible to respond in the same ways if the providers who combined to form Unity Shelter were continuing to operate as individual, small service providers.

However, even with the additional scale of Unity Shelter, it is an organization in its early growth stages and has not reached the point where it is able to operate very far from the Corvallis city limits and does not have the operational capabilities necessary to take advantage of some of the federal and state funding sources without assistance. This potentially leaves important additional financial sources off the table for addressing houselessness.

It will be critical that as approaches to houselessness become more regional, the service provider network also grows to have a regional footprint and greater organizational depth. Any regional strategy that attempted to expand geographic footprints by creating duplicates of the fragmented Corvallis model in other areas would be likely to collapse from its own complexity and lack of ability to coordinate between areas.

So although we agree with Unity Shelter's statement about the need for a regional approach to houselessness, we think it leaves out the key role in the partnership that service providers have. We all need to be in this together and we are all going to have to change. We would suggest a more effective statement could be **“The City, County and Service Providers should develop a regional approach to houselessness.”**

The City, County and Service Providers will all have different roles in moving to that regional approach, but it will take all three of those critical entities to work together in partnership to achieve success. If any leg of the 3 legged stool fails, it will all collapse.

“Although Unity Shelter and its affiliated organizations have had success with microshelters, we believe that managed, supervised camping is an important piece of the services necessary to deal with houselessness throughout Corvallis and the region – and planning for managed camping in 2021-22 needs to begin now.”

Unity Shelter's misleading statement about the failure being in part due to not receiving permits until December is very disappointing. This statement provides the false impression that the failure of the BMX Park managed camp is in some way due to City permitting delays. Unity Shelter didn't provide a complete application until late December. City management cancelled staff vacations to pull key staff back to the office on Christmas Eve in order to issue the permit within 24 hours. Although we understand that the failure of the BMX Park may be embarrassing, partners need to accept responsibility honestly and should not look to blame others. The City went above and beyond to fulfill its part of the partnership fully and \$77,193.12 was lost due to the failure of Unity Shelter to perform under the contract, not City actions. Unity Shelter staff have noted at previous City Council meetings that this is what they understand as well, so this could be a situation where the Unity Shelter board of directors is not fully aware of all the details around the BMX Park camp initiative or is responding to community rumors rather than the facts of the situation.

We do agree that the timeline for implementation of the BMX managed camp was a problem, but again, this was a problem created by Unity Shelter's approach, not the City. City and County staff have pushed aside their normal workload for the better part of a year, both within and outside of the Emergency Operations Center to address houselessness issues. However, instead of operating within the partnership framework that had served the community well throughout the year, Unity Shelter surprised the community by introducing the concept of a managed camp at BMX Park via the community comments of the November 16, 2020 meeting. Introducing a concept of that nature at that late date without any preparation beforehand created the timeline, but the City still took extraordinary measures, responded and fulfilled its end of the contract.

The City acknowledges the success that Unity Shelter has had in the microshelter programs around the community and at Safe Camp. In fact, the majority of microshelters in place both inside and outside the city limits were funded by the City of Corvallis. We also recognize the importance of case management

which is why we worked with the County to provide funding for case management of the microshelters. Unity Shelter and City staff are in agreement on this program.

Unity Shelter is providing misleading, but frequently repeated statements about the Martin v. Boise decision and the legislation that has occurred or is proposed at the legislature. The City's camping enforcement program is in full compliance with Martin v. Boise and Unity Shelter knows this. Martin v. Boise and state legislative efforts indicate that if there are more unhoused individuals in a community than there are open shelter beds, that the public agency can't criminalize individuals for carrying out the basic bodily function of sleeping. The City does not criminalize sleeping on public property.

However, it is important to recognize that Martin v. Boise does not indicate what Unity Shelter is implying which is that it means that governments must release control of any of the property owned to any private individual who wants to make it their long-term camp site. Camping and sleeping are not the same concept. Sleeping is a protected bodily function. Camping is privatizing public property.

When the City enforces illegal camping it is only doing so against campsites that have stayed in place for so long that they have move beyond the legally protected purpose of sleeping and into the area of privatizing public land.

When the City does post campsites, it generally provides more than the minimum notice period and it coordinates those postings with social service providers so that outreach teams can interact with the campers and hopefully assist them with locating a better form of shelter or other needed assistance.

“The City should reassess policies that allow certain locations to place microshelters on their properties but limit each site to four.”

This is another misplaced statement. The four microshelter distributed program has a limit of four because the goal of this program is to provide a low impact number that would open up a very large number of potential sites for potential hosts. Larger installations are more complex and generally need a more detailed regulatory framework than the small distributed program provides. If the distributed program were opened up to larger installations, then it might greatly reduce the number of available locations that would be available for distributed installations.

City staff and the Council have noted in the past that if an entity wanted to do a larger installation, we would work with them to develop an appropriate process and standards for their site. We have worked with several groups in the past and they have not been able to identify a potential location yet, but we are hopeful that one will come forward at some point.

We do expect that if the Marys Annexation moves forward in the coming months that we will be working with Safe Camp on developing standards for when it is in the city that could be the pilot to base the new large installation program on, but there are a couple of other groups that might come forward to be the pilot as well. Staff has in the past and continues to be available to work with anyone seeking to install a larger microshelter village just as we have with the earlier program.

Staff is fully aware of HB 2916 and that bill doesn't really add anything to or detract from the efforts the City was already working on in this area.

“Local officials should resist attempts to create a “tiered system” of services for people who are unsheltered.”

Unity Shelter may be responding more to community comments than actual City positions with this. There is also a logical inconsistency in some of its discussion about whether services do or do not create a “magnet effect”.

As staff mentioned in one of the previous Council meetings, we would encourage the Council and community to reject the concept of “magnet effect” when discussing the broad topic of houseless services because it eventually leads to a dark place, which is that the way to “solve” houselessness is to reduce services. As staff noted in the meeting, the more appropriate way to look at the issue is not to be looking at the broad range of services as a “magnet” but instead to be looking at the unequal distribution of services across a region. With that slight change in perspective, then it becomes clear that the problem is not an excess of services in one community, but the lack of services in other areas repelling their people who are struggling. This is an unfortunate symptom of our state system failure and part of the reason why staff supports regional service provision both across the rest of Benton County but all in the multi-county region.

Getting away from talking about magnet effects with broad based services will also allow the term to be used in its more typical and useful way, which is discussing individual program design. Operational decisions around individual services need to take that impact into account for basic operational control and minimization of unintended externalities. For instance, Safe Camp, Men’s Shelter, Daytime Drop In Center, etc. all have plans in place to try to maximize the amount of service benefit that could be provided while minimizing any negative impacts that may be attracted to the service.

For an example, when the Men’s Shelter located on Chapman, it took a number of steps to minimize impacts on the neighborhood that were generally successful. However, when the hygiene center was added to the location, we were operating in a life and death environment where speed was prioritized over detailed planning, so it did not have the same sort of careful consideration of operational controls as the Men’s Shelter and did result in relocation of illegal camping from across the community and concentration around that site. Over time, we expect that if this is a service that Unity Shelter intends to maintain, there will likely need to be some operational adjustments necessary to avoid unplanned impacts, such as concentration of illegal camping.

The Unity Shelter letter’s discussion of “tiered system” seems to be a bit of a “straw man” argument. The City has always had a position that every human being deserves basic services. What we believe they may be misinterpreting are statements that recognize the needs of the houseless population vary widely and therefore the range of services also need to vary accordingly. For instance, when the City and County developed their car/RV parks, they put in screening conditions that would not allow violent felons and Level 3 sex offenders to utilize those facilities. This is not because the City and County believe that anyone is “undeserving” as Unity Shelter alleges, which is a horrible characterization to place on a partner..

The reason that the City and County placed these restrictions on those facilities is to acknowledge that placing violent felons and Level 3 sex offenders in lightly to unmanaged situations adjacent to the City park or the County RV park is not the appropriate context for folks to receive services. That doesn’t mean that folks shouldn’t receive services, but their background indicates that they might be better off in a more supervised location. As was noted in a previous Council meeting, “it isn’t that Level 3 sex offenders shouldn’t receive shelter or services, but can’t we come up with a better location that adjacent to the children’s playground in the park?”.

“In the long run, you can’t solve houselessness without additional affordable housing.”

The City of Corvallis is aware of this fact and Unity Shelter’s board of directors does not appear to be aware of all the efforts the community has and continues to take on this effort. As the Council understands, there is far more going on across the entire city than just the urban renewal district.

As the only government in Benton County actively working on affordable housing issues, City staff have suggested to County staff that as the City/County roles get worked out over the next few months, that it may be appropriate to look at forming an intergovernmental agreement related to affordable housing that is similar to the one we have for economic development. This would allow city staff to share technical expertise with the rest of the county on affordable housing, shelter and permanent supportive housing topics and expand the amount of funding available for affordable housing as well as the potential sites where it can occur. This would also provide a greater range of community contexts for the affordable housing that may not be available in Corvallis alone.

It is important to recognize that this is a letter from Unity Shelter's board of directors and City staff continue to have a positive working relationship with Unity Shelter staff that has grown significantly over the past year. We appreciate the Unity Shelter board of directors' input into the process but felt we needed to correct some of the misleading and biased statements that the letter contained. We value the ongoing partnership with Unity Shelter and don't view this letter as having any impact on maintaining that positive relationship. We hope it leads to more transparent and informed discussions with Unity Shelter in the future.



May 4, 2021

To: Corvallis City Councilors, Mayor Biff Traber, City of Corvallis Officials, Benton County Commissioners

From: Rev. Jill McAllister, president, Unity Shelter board of directors, on behalf of the board

Dear councilors, Mayor Traber, city and county officials:

The board of directors of Unity Shelter is gratified that you continue to discuss issues surrounding houselessness in the mid-valley. We also have been pleased to hear Councilor Lytle, in particular, emphasize the importance of pursuing regional strategies to identify and implement services for people who are unsheltered.

As you know, the leaders and volunteers of Unity Shelter and the programs under its umbrella (the Men's Shelter, SafePlace and Room at the Inn) have been working for many years with people who are unsheltered in Corvallis. It's our hope that some of the things we've learned may be useful to local officials and community members as we continue discussions about houselessness in Corvallis and Benton County. In addition, of course, we are available to respond to questions you might have and stand ready to assist you as you work on this challenging issue.

Here, in our view, are some of the key points local officials should keep in mind:

1. The city and county can take the lead in developing a regional approach to houselessness.

If we are to see changes in conditions locally, we must demand changes regionally. The city and county must work together to lead the charge, engage our neighboring cities and counties, and develop a more effective regional approach to housing and houselessness. A "system of shelter" is needed – with coordinated services, staff support to connect people with the assistance they need to return to safe housing conditions, and the capacity to meet diverse needs and move people from emergency shelter to long-term housing stability. City and county officials, working through organizations such as the Oregon West Cascades Council of Governments, the Oregon League of Cities, the Association of Oregon Counties, and Oregon Housing and Community Services, should advocate for equitable resources in all counties and communities to support those without housing.

2. Although Unity Shelter and its affiliated organizations have had success with microshelters, we believe that managed, supervised camping is an important piece of the services necessary to deal with houselessness throughout Corvallis and the region – and planning for managed camping in 2021-22 needs to begin now.

We share your disappointment that an inability to get timely and affordable insurance sidelined our plans to develop a managed camp near the city's BMX Park. We believe a managed camp – which offers shelter, services and supervision to people staying there – offers an alternative to situations in which people who are unsheltered pitch camps wherever they feel they can, often in city and county parks. If we've learned anything over the last few years in dealing with people who are unsheltered in Corvallis, it's that our approach to posting camps – which only scatters campers to other locations within the city – doesn't work.

A managed camp features staff who work to clean the sites and provide services to residents, including case management. The case-management work in particular is essential to putting people who are unsheltered on the road to transitional housing. A case manager can connect clients with vital services ranging from medical and mental-health treatment to such seemingly mundane but important tasks such as acquiring identification. A managed-camp setting allows residents the opportunity to begin to focus on tasks other than just finding food and a safe place to stay the night. But any effective managed-camp operation must be able to pay for the work of professional case managers. (As an aside, it's worth remembering that stays in managed camps can last many months, even stretching into years. Our experience thus far at Safe Camp, a program of SafePlace, is that residents on average stay three to four months, but it's important to realize that we expect that average to lengthen for a variety of reasons, including the lack of affordable housing in Corvallis.)

The complexities of setting up a managed camp – finding a location, ensuring that it offers sufficient services and, yes, acquiring insurance – are such that planning work needs to start now. The city permits which cleared the way for work to begin at the BMX site weren't issued until late December. That, plus the CARES Act funding requirement to expend money before the end of 2020, forced a rushed timetable that eventually ground to a halt on the insurance issue. Although the need for such a facility is urgent, the planning for a successful managed camp cannot be rushed.

The council and other city officials also need to keep an eye on case law and pending legislation regarding camping.

The renewed attempt to post campsites in the Corvallis area beginning this week will need to pay heed to the Martin vs. City of Boise decision from the Ninth Circuit, which ruled that enforcement of ordinances that prohibit sleeping or camping on public property against unsheltered individuals is unconstitutional when those individuals do not have a meaningful alternative, such as shelter space or a legal place to camp.

In addition, councilors and city officials should be watching legislation such as House Bill 3115, from Speaker of the House Rep. Tina Kotek, which would provide that local law regulating "sitting, lying, sleeping or keeping warm and dry outdoors on public property that is open to (the) public must be objectively reasonable as to time, place and manner with regards to persons experiencing homelessness."

3. The city should reassess policies that allow certain locations to place microshelters on their properties but limit each site to four.

A survey by the city-county Home, Opportunity, Planning and Equity (HOPE) Advisory Board showed a public preference for the use of microshelters. We agree that microshelters, although just one tool in the effort against houselessness, have shown great promise in Corvallis, at locations in the city and at Safe Camp (which is in the county).

The city has authorized, via an emergency ordinance, the placement of up to four microshelters at certain sites and has allowed microshelters at locations like the Corvallis Evangelical Church. The ordinance also helps support the council's stated vision that services for people who are unsheltered not be concentrated in one part of the city. However, some locations, such as the Budget Inn site in South Corvallis that's being revamped to provide shelter, could be well-suited over the long run for more than four microshelters. The council should examine ways to allow more than four microshelters in certain locations.

One possible way to accomplish this would be to ask city staff for recommendations on how to fully implement House Bill 2916. HB 2916 was passed in the 2019 legislative session; it amends ORS 446.265 and expressly allows local governments to authorize transitional housing accommodations for people who lack permanent or safe shelter. Despite approving an emergency measure that allowed for temporary vehicle camping options (including microshelters), officials with Benton County have not followed through with their previous promises to fully implement HB 2916. Neither do the current draft recommendations from the HOPE Advisory Board address this issue, choosing instead to focus on long-term solutions. The city should examine ways to fully implement HB 2916 in the near term.

4. Local officials should resist attempts to create a "tiered system" of services for people who are unsheltered.

In online forums, public meetings, and letters to the editor, we frequently see comments that the community's quality of life is threatened due to a rising tide of people who are unsheltered in our community. Such comments often suggest that resources are being used inappropriately to support people who are undeserving due to criminal or dangerous behavior, or for being "not from around here." We often hear that services to people who are unsheltered are creating a magnet, drawing undesirables to our community, and unfairly straining our local resources and responses.

In the recent pre-COVID past, statistics from local shelter and housing providers did not support the "magnet theory," as the overwhelming majority of those served by providers came from the mid-Willamette Valley. We had been largely taking care of our own. However, there have been shifts in this pattern over the past year for a couple of reasons.

First, COVID-19 has had an enormous impact, driving more marginally employed and low-income people from housing into cars, RVs and tents, and many of those have arrived here. Wildfires across the West have driven additional waves of displaced persons, and some who arrive as refugees end up staying.

Second, services, policies and practices between counties and municipalities vary widely, creating additional pressure for people to do what humans have done for millennia – migrate for better resources and opportunities.

Seeking to alleviate suffering, providers of services to people who are unsheltered offer an island of hope in a sea of misery and closed doors, and, in return for their efforts, sit squarely in the sights of those looking for somewhere to pin the blame for “those people” coming here. This often leads to the suggestion that services to “those people” should be doled out based on their behavior, with some agency (the police, for example) deciding who should be eligible for which level of service.

We believe that such a tiered level of service is both unworkable and inhumane.

As a community, and as Oregonians, we must demand a more coherent and effective system of shelter; diversity of housing opportunity and supportive programs; and a shared recognition of and commitment to meet the basic needs we all share – to live in safety, with adequate resources to meet our basic needs for health and well-being, opportunities to improve the conditions of life, and the security that comes from knowing we live in a community that cares.

5. In the long run, you can't solve houselessness without additional affordable housing.

It isn't news that the mid-valley in general, and Corvallis in particular, has a drastic shortage of affordable housing. The urban renewal district in South Corvallis offers a real opportunity to develop additional affordable housing, but efforts shouldn't stop there – or be limited to South Corvallis. Local officials need to explore ways to help drive the creation of affordable housing units throughout Corvallis and Benton County.

From: Notification.Services@corvallisoregon.gov <Notification.Services@corvallisoregon.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, May 5, 2021 8:32 AM
To: Holzworth, Carla <Carla.Holzworth@corvallisoregon.gov>
Cc: Shepard, Mark <Mark.Shepard@corvallisoregon.gov>; Rollens, Patrick <Patrick.Rollens@corvallisoregon.gov>
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT - Managed tent and RV camping in HOPE recommendations
RECEIVED: 5/5/2021 8:31:34 AM
NAME/ADDRESS: Eileen Marma, 455 SE Viewmont Avenue, Corvallis
CONTACT (if any): eileen.marma@gmail.com
TOPIC: Managed tent and RV camping in HOPE recommendations
MEETING DATE: 5/6/2021

Dear City Councilors,

Recommendation #6 of the HOPE recommendations includes one of the components for a sheltering system that is managed tent and managed RV camping. This may be needed to address overflow of unhoused people waiting to receive assistance in transitioning into permanent housing. Managed camping allows the person to be in a safe place without daily worries of "Where am I sleeping tonight?; Where can I safely keep my possessions?" The person can concentrate on services offered by a case manager to complete necessary steps in finding long-term housing.

I am a member of First Congregational Church which started Safe Camp in 2019. Several residents of Safe Camp did move into permanent housing. This success can be repeated in managed camping. Please include managed camping in the Housing policies that you are establishing.

Thank you.

CITY COUNCIL THREE-MONTH SCHEDULE

5/12/21

Agenda items and dates are only proposed and likely to change

Yellow = regular meeting

Red = work session

Blue = Other

- ❖ Budget Commission, May 12, 13 (if needed), 6:00 pm
 ➤ Budget Public Hearing, Deliberations, Budget Approval
- ❖ Executive Session, Monday, May 17, 5:00 pm
 * Executive Session Under ORS 192.660(2)(h)(status of pending litigation or litigation likely to be filed)
- ❖ Regular Meeting, Monday, May 17, 6:00 pm
 * Presentation: Welcome new Public Works Director Jeff Blaine
 * Presentation: Oregon Highway 99W Corvallis Facility Plan Update
 * Presentation: Corvallis Sustainability Coalition Annual Report
 * Approval of Dr. Martin Luther, King, Jr. Park Interpretive Design Plan (Parks and Rec)
 * Adjustment to resolution to follow OHA guidance related to acceptable social gathering sizes
 * Possible action from Executive Session
 * Transportation System Development Charge Update (Public Works)
 * Quarterly Financial Report (Finance)
 * Executive Session Under ORS 192.660(2)(d)(status of labor negotiations) [*immediately follows regular meeting*]
- ❖ Joint City/County Joint Work Session, Thursday, May 20, 4:00 pm
 ➤ Home, Opportunity, Planning, and Equity (HOPE) Recommendations and Houselessness Policies

May 2021						
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* May 31 = Memorial Day holiday

- ❖ Urban Renewal Agency Monday, June 7, 5:00 pm
 * PUBLIC HEARING: 2021-2022 Urban Renewal Agency Budget and Budget Adoption
 * Review and approval of a development agreement and participation in a workforce housing project
- ❖ Regular Meeting, Monday, June 7, 6:00 pm (immediately follows Urban Renewal Agency meeting)
 * PUBLIC HEARING: 2021-2022 City Budget and Budget Adoption
 * Council Policy Review (City Manager)
 * Advisory Body Reappointments
 * Ordinance: Updated Parks System Development Charges Methodology, including OSU Methodology
 * Executive Session Under ORS 192.660(2)(e)(status of real property transaction) [*immediately follows regular meeting*]
- ❖ Work Session, Thursday, June 10, 4:00 pm
 ➤ Planning Commissioner and Historic Resources Commissioner Interviews
- ❖ Regular Meeting, Monday, June 21, 6:00 pm
 * PUBLIC HEARING: Marys Annexation Development Agreement (Comm Dev)
 * Planning Commissioner and Historic Resources Commissioner Appointments
- ❖ Work Session, Thursday, June 24, 4:00 pm
 ➤ South Corvallis Plan Update
 ➤ Preliminary discussion about next steps for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice Task Force and Vision Zero Task Force

June 2021						
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At this time, all Council meetings are held online only

- ❖ **Regular Meeting, Tuesday, July 6, 6:00 pm**
 - * Presentation: Parks and Recreation Month
 - * Presentation: Oregon Main Street presentation (Econ Dev)
 - * Presentation: Visit Corvallis Branding
 - * Council Policy Review (City Manager)

- ❖ **Work Session, Thursday, July 8, 4:00 pm**
 - *

- ❖ **Regular Meeting, Monday, July 19, 6:00 pm**
 - *

- ❖ **Work Session, Thursday, July 22, 4:00 pm**
 - Parks SDC Rate Setting

July 2021						
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

* July 5 = Independence Day holiday (observed)

PENDING ITEMS:

- * Budget Commission discussion about Councilor stipends (tentative for summer)
- * Parks System Development Charge Related to Credits
- * Downtown Updates: Exploring tools for Downtown (September), Next Steps and Strengthening Downtown Corvallis (December)
- * Municipal Judge Update