

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**OF CLACKAMAS COUNTY, STATE OF OREGON**

In the Matter of Supporting a Recovery-Oriented System of Care in Responding to the Addictions, Mental Health and Homelessness Crisis



Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_

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**WHEREAS**, Clackamas County has identified drugs, crime, and untreated mental illness, of which homeless encampments are a symptom, as top threats to the health, safety and flourishing of all of its residents; and

**WHEREAS**, Clackamas County believes in the dignity and worth of its residents, and the communal good that is achieved when residents are on a path toward the realization of their full potential; and

**WHEREAS**, Clackamas County acknowledges that a significant and consequential portion of both those struggling with homelessness in the greater Portland area and throughout North America also contend with the complex diseases of mental illness and or addiction, whether a precursor to or a result of homelessness; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Surgeon General specifically describes addiction as a brain disorder disease that results in reduced brain function, that inhibits an individual's ability to make decisions and regulate his or her actions, emotions, and impulses, and furthermore, that changes in the brain persist long after substance use stops and recognizes that addiction to alcohol or drugs is a chronic brain disease that has the potential for recurrence and recovery; and

**WHEREAS**, Clackamas County recognizes that housing alone cannot cure mental illness or addiction, and the nature of addiction and serious mental illness can make sufferers unable to recognize their own illnesses or seek help willingly and benefit from a well-coordinated continuum of care to help them get the supports they need; and

**WHEREAS**, Clackamas County agrees that open air drug scenes create violence that is incompatible with clean and vibrant public spaces, and make recovery from addiction more difficult; and

**WHEREAS**, Clackamas County believes that harm reduction services, when not antithetical to a recovery-oriented system of care, can be effective in saving lives. Moreover, they must exist within a full continuum of compassionate care that includes prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery for those suffering from addiction; and

**WHEREAS**, Clackamas County identifies other contributing factors to homelessness, including domestic violence, experience in the child welfare system, economic and health crises, and physical and mental health conditions and is identifying strategies to address these factors; and

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**WHEREAS**, Clackamas County believes that all people have a right to clean and vibrant public spaces, as well as safe emergency and transitional shelter when needed;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF CLACKAMAS COUNTY** that all efforts to address homelessness in which the County and its employees engage must be concentrated on helping all residents participate in realizing their full human potential, by ensuring shelter, psychiatric, behavioral health and addiction care for all who need it, and by protecting public spaces for the use of the entire community.

**DATED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

\_\_\_\_\_

Chair

\_\_\_\_\_

Recording Secretary