

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Study Session Worksheet

Presentation Date: February 21, 2012 **Approx Start Time:** 10:00 **Approx Length:** 30 minutes

Presentation Title: Preventing Homelessness and Reducing the Impact of Homelessness on Families and Communities

Department: Health, Housing and Human Services

Presenters: Cindy Becker and Brenda Durbin

Other Invitees: None

WHAT ACTION ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM THE BOARD?

Acceptance of the Proposal to Prevent Homelessness and Reduce Impacts on Families and Communities; and guidance from the Board on which programs and initiatives to pursue.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The newly formed Homeless Policy Committee has identified a number of policies and programs that prevent homelessness, house homeless families and unaccompanied youth, and provide a path for people recovering from homelessness to regain employment.

Preventing people from falling into homelessness, and providing assistance to those individuals and families who experience homelessness reduces costs in other sectors including hospitals, foster care and public safety. Homeless and precariously housed children do not do as well in school as do their stably housed peers, and often have lower lifetime earnings. Issues like mental illness and substance abuse are exacerbated and made more difficult to treat for people without a safe place to call home.

The Proposal describes several ongoing and newly created initiatives and programs that will help to address homelessness in Clackamas County. The Report also list several opportunities for the County to provide financial support for these programs.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (current year and ongoing):

Costs associated with not addressing homelessness include impacts on hospitals, foster care and the criminal justice system. One emergency room visit costs on average \$14,760. Housing a child in foster care costs \$1,974/month. One month in the county jail costs \$2,512. Costs associated with each component of the Preventing Homelessness Initiative are detailed in the Fiscal Impact Form.

LEGAL/POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

Initiative components with county policy implications include; Establishing rental housing standards; Eliminating discrimination against Section 8 Voucher holders; and Providing tax abatement for affordable housing development.

PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION:

The Homeless Policy Committee, which has endorsed many of the components of the proposed initiative, includes county and municipal elected officials, faith and business leaders, non-profit executive directors, and interested members of the public.

OPTIONS:

Options include funding all, some or none of the initiatives in the Preventing Homelessness Initiative which are proposal initiatives outlined in the attached document.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend the acceptance of the Proposal and guidance from the Board on which programs and initiatives to pursue.

ATTACHMENTS:

Initiative to Prevent Homelessness and Reduce the Impact of Homelessness on Families and Communities

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval _____
Department Director/Head Approval *R. Smith / J. Mc...*
County Administrator Approval _____

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact Brenda Durbin @ 503- 655-8641