



## **COMMUNITY, HOUSING, AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT UPDATE – DEC. 9, 2021**

Please see this week's Community, Housing, and Human Services department update.

### **Operational.**

#### **Status:**

- With shelter surge capacity, eight more spaces at Cannon were added last week and 10 at Family Promise started on Friday. Twenty spaces of surge hotel space through the Guardians was activated on Wednesday, opening up beds at Cannon. An additional 19 beds to the shelter system to serve families will be considered by City Council on Monday. The intent is to have a resilient surge capacity where shelter space is available using dollars that expire in June 2022 to give the City time to plan the rest of the total shelter system strategy after the first of the year.
- The Way Out Center, which has a bridge housing program, is expected to open this month. It adds up to 60 bed in a referral-based, service-intensive program to move individuals who are ready to move out of homelessness. It creates an additional night-by-night drop-in space in the regional system.
- Volunteers of America last week moved its young adult shelter from downtown into a permanent location at the former Spokane County Clean Air Building at 3104 E. Augusta Ave. near Spokane Community College marking an important milestone in the City's work to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.
- Mayor Woodward proposed additional homelessness resources in her 2022 budget, which the City Council is considering. Those include: capital investments in the VOA Crosswalk Project, which creates as space for individuals under 18 near the young adult resources and Spokane Community College; ongoing operation of the Cannon Street Shelter and The Way Out Center; new low-barrier shelter outside of the downtown core; a capital contribution for a rapid rehousing project.
- Discussions with private sector partners about how to better engage them as partners in the homelessness regional effort continue.
- Spokane was the first jurisdiction in the state to deploy 100% of its ERA1 funds from the Department of Treasury in the Emergency Rental Assistance Program despite not starting as soon as some. Congratulations to all partners for this achievement! About 40% of the TRAP1 funds from the Department of Commerce were distributed as of Nov. 30. A request for proposals to administer upcoming emergency rent and utility assistance (ERA2) to those impacted by COVID-19 in Spokane was posted [online](#) on Monday and will be open through Jan. 3. The funds are intended to prevent evictions that would contribute to the spread of COVID-19 by paying past due, current due, future rent, and utilities. Questions can be sent to [chhsrfp@spokanecity.org](mailto:chhsrfp@spokanecity.org). Funding distribution updates for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program have been posted on the [City's website](#) twice a month. There will not be a gap where tenants/landlords are not able to submit for rent assistance. Here's the update on Emergency Rental Assistance distributions:

Program spending as of Nov 30:

Program	Total Rent & Utility Assistance	Funds Distributed / %
ERA 1.0 (Treasury direct)	\$6,137,440.46	\$6,137,440.46 / 100%
TRAP 1.0 (DoC)	\$7,767,274.00	\$3,183,032.00 / 40.0%
TRAP 2.0 (DoC)	\$7,644,221.00	0%
ERA 2.0 (Treasury Direct)	\$4,503,185.00	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$26,052,120.00</b>	<b>\$9,320,472.46 / 35.8%</b>

Demographics as of Nov 30:

- 35.9% Households served are BIPOC
- 85.4% Households served are 50% or below area median income (AMI)

Average payment to landlord:

\$5,833.00

Average # months assistance provided:

7.1

Top Zip Codes	Number of Households Served:
99207	278
99208	244
99205	201
99223	197

- Area cities and service providers are reviewing the coordinated entry prioritization process for permanent supportive housing (PSH) and will provide feedback to the CoC on possible ways to improve the system both short- and long-term.
- As of Monday, there was one new COVID-19 case reported (at the UGM men’s shelter) since last week. All of the other shelters have transitioned out of outbreak status. Eleven people were at the isolation facility.
- Shelter vaccine clinics are scheduled for the next six weeks, with the exception of Christmas week, at Cannon and House of Charity.
- The CMIS team is in its federal reporting season and that will include reports the System Performance Measures, PATH Annual, Runaway Youth Homeless, Longitudinal Systems Analysis, and Point-in-Time Count. For key partners, the CMIS team is in the testing phase of the new Coordinated Entry Annual Performance Report, taking the department one step closer to submitting the data for the CoC’s UFA APR.
- A virtual kickoff event for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) was held on Tuesday to announce and celebrate the \$2.6 million that the Spokane City/County CoC received for HUD to support homeless youth and young adult programs.
- Annual Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grant contracts to provide funds for basic operation and administration salaries at four community centers and to purchase parking lot surveillance cameras at Northeast Community Center are being renewed.
- Built for Zero case conferencing meetings with providers continue and are on track for Jan.-Feb. for by-name list launch for single adults. Single adults case conferencing meets every two weeks

with CMIS-participating providers to discuss clients who are in one of two priority areas, chronic unsheltered and chronic sheltered, and steps will be taken to move them toward housing. A similar meeting occurs for veterans on the opposite weeks of the month and for youth every Thursday. United Way will form in January a new lived experience advisory group similar for youth to advise Built for Zero. A similar group for veterans is also being explored.

### **Training and Team Building.**

#### Status:

- A temporary employee who will work on the HOME Program will start Monday.
- Eric Finch, who has led the CHHS Strike Team in recent months, will serve as NHHS lead until a permanent director is chosen after a national search.
- Four CHHS staff members were hired over the past two months, including most recently a new staff member to manage both SNAP programs; six total CHHS vacancies remain.
- The CMIS team has been resourced with data and project management staff.
- CHHS office improvements continue to be made to maximize workplace needs with the recent hiring of staff.
- Recent department hires continue to be onboarded.

### **Policy and Planning.**

#### Status:

- The recommendation by the Affordable Housing Committee of the CHHS Board to approve both contracts for SNAP's Single-family and Essential Repair Programs will be considered by the City Council on Monday. The recommendation for 2022 is to use the same funding and performance measures found in its 2021 contracts.
- Point-in-Time Count planning continues for the annual event in Spokane County required by HUD. The count starts Jan. 27. Volunteers will be needed and a signup portal will be established soon.
- CHHS staff, in collaboration with the County and other regional organizations, is evaluating options to identify a sustainable solution for grant funding to cover ongoing operational needs.
- Leadership is exploring ways to proactively collaborate in the future with all local groups and boards working on homelessness topics.
- The next Mayors Advisory Council on Downtown Environment meeting consisting of community partners is Friday.

### **Communication.**

#### Status:

- A City Cable5 [video](#) showcases Volunteers of America's new young adult shelter near Spokane Community College. The proximity to SCC is ideal as wrap-around case management services will be offered to help reduce homelessness.
- A new [regional stabilization center](#) to treat people in crisis and reduce jail populations was profiled in a Cable5 video.
- A [video](#) on citywide board/commission recruitment was recently completed.
- Communications team is planning housing success stories pertaining to the Community Development Block Grant, HOME and Head Start to Construction Trades programs.
- Communications is working on a package highlighting human interest stories of the Emergency Rent Assistance Program to increase awareness.
- The handy homeless resource guide is being updated by SNAP, and it's expected to be ready to distribute to partners soon.

- Continuing meetings with stakeholders to ensure communication is better, concerns are heard directly, and answers are provided to specific questions or concerns.
- These weekly CHHS updates are archived and posted on the City's [website](#).

### **Reaching out.**

To help us communicate better and more efficiently, especially with the staff transitions, we would ask you to use email distribution lists created to ensure the right individuals get the email and can respond quickly:

**Providers – PLEASE send information to the [CHHSreports@spokanecity.org](mailto:CHHSreports@spokanecity.org) email if you have been sending them to Cassi directly. They will be received and processed.**

For leadership, status, or program level questions: CHHS Leadership ([chhsleadership@spokanecity.org](mailto:chhsleadership@spokanecity.org))

For contracts or financial related questions: CHHS Accounting ([chhsaccounting@spokanecity.org](mailto:chhsaccounting@spokanecity.org))

For grant related questions: CHHS Grants ([chhsgrants@spokanecity.org](mailto:chhsgrants@spokanecity.org))

For RFP submittals or questions: CHHS RFP ([chhsrfp@spokanecity.org](mailto:chhsrfp@spokanecity.org))

For CMIS/HMIS related questions: CHHS CMIS ([cmis@spokanecity.org](mailto:cmis@spokanecity.org))

Thank you for your continued interest and investment in the body of work the CHHS department provides our community. We are always open to questions and input.

CHHS Leadership Team and Staff