



COMMUNITY, HOUSING, AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT UPDATE – NOV. 12, 2021

Please see this week's Community, Housing, and Human Services department update. Thank you to all our partners for your continued patience and understanding during this transition period.

Operational.

Status:

- A ribbon-cutting ceremony at The Way Out Center bridge housing project operated by The Salvation Army Spokane and featuring the partnership between the City, Spokane Valley, the County, the private sector and The Salvation Army was held on Monday. The City Council on Monday signed off on a five-year funding commitment to the center. The County will likely consider the contract Nov. 30. A good neighbor agreement will be considered separately. The center will allow up to 60 participants to have access to housing, employment, life skills and other services to transition out of homelessness.
- NOFO is on track for completion by Nov. 16. Staff is working with HUD on the final touches. Final information is being reviewed to ensure HUD compliance with dollar allocations. Thank you to the applicants, staff and contracted partners for the final push!
- A kickoff event for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) will be Dec. 7 to announce and celebrate the grant and next steps. The Spokane group is starting to prepare the Planning Grant application. Matt Davis was hired as a temporary seasonal as a bridge resource to help get YHDP program initiated and train new staff being hired.
- Mayor Woodard and Eric Finch answered questions and discussed the City's homeless policy during the recent monthly [Spokane Homeless Coalition meeting](#).
- The Annual County Expenditures Report for Department of Commerce was submitted this week.
- 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.
- Spokane was highlighted as a success story for reducing veteran homelessness at the Built for Zero national learning conference last week.
- An RFP was released seeking additional emergency shelter beds for the winter season and beyond, as funds last. The City is using our State COVID-ESG funds which expire in June 2022. The RFP is posted on the [CHHS Funding Opps](#) page and has been sent out via listservs. The process will solicit applications from organizations serving the City and

Spokane County to flexibly and temporarily expand low-barrier space, 24 hours a day, for up to 100-150 individuals experiencing homelessness to meet unanticipated emergent needs through June. Questions regarding the RFP can be send to chhsrfp@spokanecity.org.

- An update on the Emergency Rental Assistance Program was provided during the Urban Experience Committee meeting. The CHHS Board has recommended that LiveStories receive the next rounds of funding to avoid a gap in funding, and Mayor Woodward supports this recommendation. Next steps are to bring options for the Council's legislative process. Funding distribution updates for the rental assistance program are posted on the [City's website](#) twice a month.
- The new Point in Time Count Coordinator is developing a plan for that winter project and will be meeting with staff soon.
- The City and VOA have signed their contractual agreement for the Young Adult Shelter capital improvements. February/March is the projected timeline for construction, depending on if there are delays.
- The CHHS Affordable Housing Committee met on Nov. 9 to review SNAP's Single-family and Essential Repair Programs. The committee has made the recommendation that both contracts be renewed for calendar year 2022 using the same funding and performance measures found in their calendar year 2021 contracts. The CHHS Board will review and vote on the committee's recommendation on Dec. 1.
- CMIS team is working on submitting its annual performance report, a single report this year. It is setting up projects in CMIS for the new projects coming on board as part of the early winter plan ramp-up. It is also gearing up for federal reporting season and the point-in-time count. Challenges with third-party vendor regarding CMIS HUD reporting is being mitigated with the support of HUD.

Training and Team Building.

Status:

- There are ongoing discussions with candidates for CHHS Director that are expected to continue for the next week or two. Based on initial reviews and discussions, the City will be looking at a broader search for the NHHS Director position. There are ongoing interviews and discussions for senior manager and program manager roles with more information expected next week.
- Onboarding continues for Clerk III, ACI Coordinator and three new Program Professionals.
- Melora Sharts, a retired employee, was hired as a temp seasonal as bridge resource to help get HOME program staffed and train new staff being hired.
- Meeting with Civil Service regarding outstanding positions.
- Five applications were received for the three CHHS Board vacancies.
- CHHS office improvements are being made to maximize workplace needs.

Policy and Planning.

Status:

- The Way Out Center maintenance and operations contract between City of Spokane, Spokane County and The Salvation Army has been approved by the three partners. A [Ribbon Cutting event](#) was held and an official open date will be announced in the coming days.

Communication.

Status:

- Continuing one-on-one meetings with stakeholders to ensure communication is better, concerns are heard directly, and answers are provided to specific questions or concerns.
- Family Promise and a former guest were recently interviewed by the Inlander about winter shelter plans.
- [KHQ](#) on Wednesday aired stories on Sinto Commons, an affordable housing project of the nonprofit Community Frameworks that received HOME Program funding, and where to apply for Emergency Rental Assistance Program funds.
- The Spokesman-Review published a [story](#) this week on the Emergency Rental Assistance Program.
- Communication assets, including videos and photos, were produced during the [Way Out Center ribbon-cutting ceremony](#) and shared on social media.
- Communications team is strategizing to highlight ongoing work in the single-family & essential home repair programs for stakeholder and community awareness.
- Communications team is planning an outreach campaign highlighting the work of shelter workers and the job opportunities that exist with that work.
- These weekly updates are archived and can be found 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 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)

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

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

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

For CMIS/HMIS related questions: CHHS CMIS (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

