



## **COMMUNITY, HOUSING, AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT UPDATE – OCT. 10, 2021**

All,

This is the first of weekly updates that will be sent out to City of Spokane leadership, staff, stakeholders, partners, providers, and community members.

Let us begin by acknowledging the interest and concerns you have expressed. We share your urgency in ensuring the continuity of the human services resources in our community that in large part are made possible by the funding that we seek and steward and the continued success of the City's Community, Housing, and Human Services (CHHS) team that supports that work.

This is the first of what will be regular updates on the work to deliver critical housing and human services and support the CHHS team. Mayor Woodward has asked for a City Executive Transition "strike" team of members of her Cabinet and other City leaders. Like the work done last year for COVID-19 response, in August we assembled a broad team of executives and staff from around the City to ensure continuity of services, meet deadlines, and take a deeper look at the City's CHHS Department to recommend longer-term improvements and needed areas of engagement.

### **Operational.**

The strike/transition team includes Eric Finch as lead, Marlene Feist, Kris Becker, and Sally Stopher, all of whom played leadership roles in 2020 working alongside the Spokane Regional Health District and other partners to establish the basis for the community's pandemic response and communication, in addition to Kirstin Davis, the acting deputy division director.

### **Status:**

- Mobilized staff in various departments to help in the areas of program management, grant and contract management, recruitment and staffing, technology and data support for HMIS/CMIS, and clerical support to help ensure basic services and program needs are met as we transition to new leadership and staff
- Securing additional operations and subject matter support through consulting, project employees and contracting
- Received full support from Mayor Woodward to deploy additional resources as needed
- Continued recruitment, interviews, and hiring for numerous team-level and leadership positions

- Engaged CHHS team members and rely on their expertise and experience to move us forward

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

The CHHS team continues to be an invaluable resource to our community partners and the transition team, providing an inventory of priority needs, deadlines, and new opportunities.

#### Status:

- Focused and prioritized the team and human services resources they steward for the community
- Reviewed needs and deadlines and are confident with their expertise and the resources we are empowered to add, the work will get done, deadlines will be met, and the CHHS team will be set on a long-term path for success that they will help define

### **Policy and Planning.**

The work in this area is to ensure better understanding of where we are, our next steps, and priorities and how those efforts get coordinated with partners and stakeholders.

#### Status:

- Briefed the status of this work on Tuesday afternoon, Oct. 5, to the Continuum of Care (CoC) and CHHS Board executive committees
- Prepared updates to stakeholders, the City Council, Spokane County, and other agencies (this is the first one)
- Updated the attached presentation as of October 6 to provide an overview of the executive transition team, the CHHS environment and need for unified governance, position vacancy status, initial assessment of the workload and priorities, and details on important and topical projects such as the winter plan, HUD NOFO, and YHDP

### **Communication.**

One of the immediate gaps we are closing is the disconnect between the various community boards and working groups that touch the human services work at the City.

#### Status:

- Committed to weekly update sessions with the combined group to ensure good two-way communication and prioritization on immediate program needs
- Convening a meeting of those groups with City and County leaders to further expand the conversation
- 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.
- Sending weekly written status updates to all stakeholders for consistent and predictable communication about critical projects, like the HUD NOFO application, Youth Homelessness Development Program grant, Community Development Block Grant, HOME Program and more.

**Commitment.**

This team is committed to helping the City through this difficult transition, and ask to be a resource to you if there are questions or concerns. We need good collaborative effort and leadership to help ensure the CHHS staff and community have the support and resources they need to move this important work forward. There is much work to do, and we need to activate subject-matter-expert resources to help get to better outcomes for CHHS and the important community services the department provides.

**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:

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))

We are always open to questions and input and appreciate the concern, passion, and energy this community has to move these important services forward.

Regards,

CHHS Leadership Team