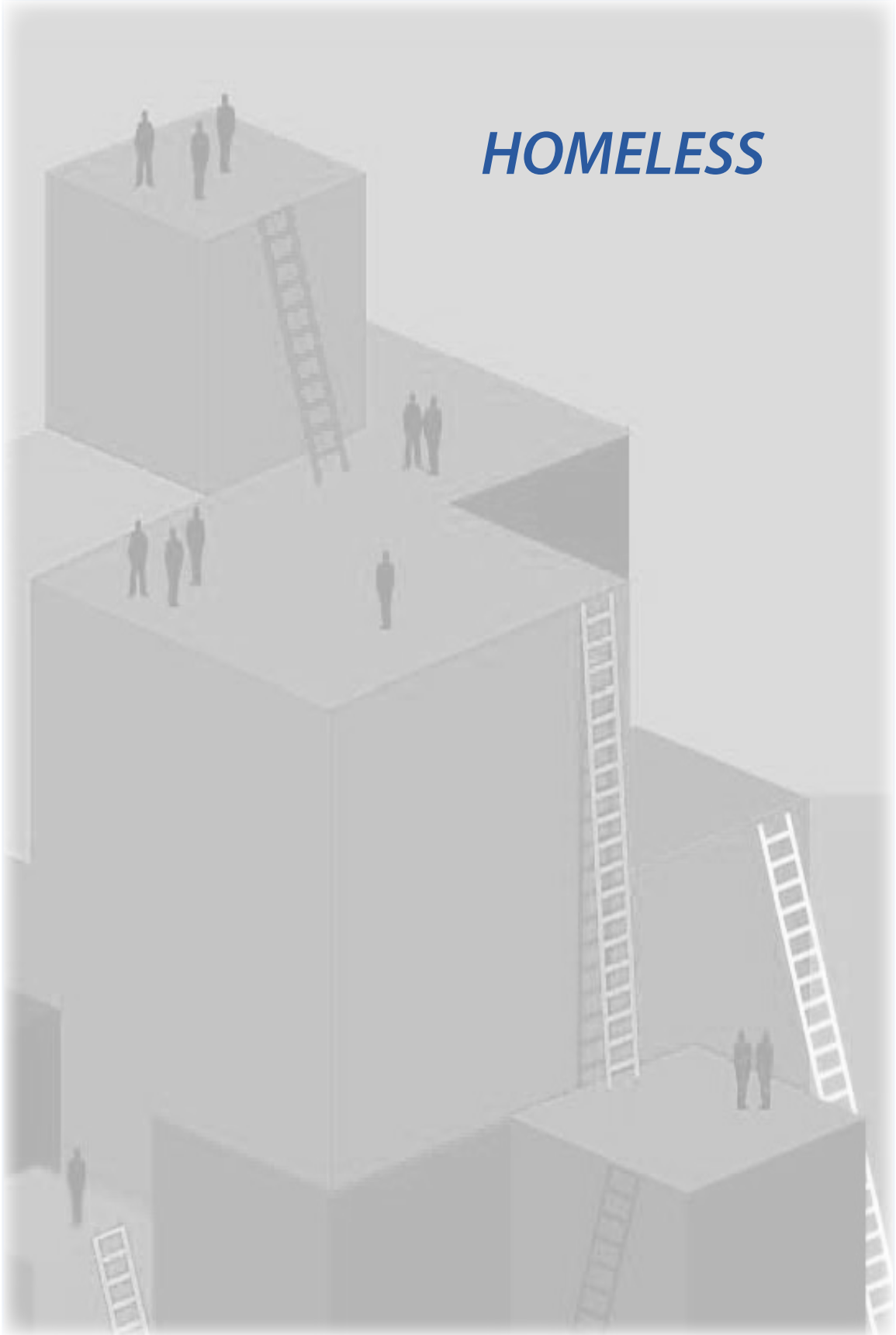


HOMELESS



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SPECIAL HOMELESS PREVENTION

*Please also refer to the Homeless Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. **Sources of Funds**—Identify the private and public resources that the jurisdiction expects to receive during the next year to address homeless needs and to prevent homelessness. These include the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act programs, other special federal, state and local and private funds targeted to homeless individuals and families with children, especially the chronically homeless, the HUD formula programs, and any publicly-owned land or property. Please describe, briefly, the jurisdiction's plan for the investment and use of funds directed toward homelessness.
2. **Homelessness**—In a narrative, describe how the action plan will address the specific objectives of the Strategic Plan and, ultimately, the priority needs identified. Please also identify potential obstacles to completing these action steps.
3. **Chronic homelessness**—The jurisdiction must describe the specific planned action steps it will take over the next year aimed at eliminating chronic homelessness by 2012. Again, please identify barriers to achieving this.
4. **Homelessness Prevention**—The jurisdiction must describe its planned action steps over the next year to address the individual and families with children at imminent risk of becoming homeless.
5. **Discharge Coordination Policy**—Explain planned activities to implement a cohesive, community-wide Discharge Coordination Policy, and how, in the coming year, the community will move toward such a policy.

Response to questions:

The resources that can reasonably be expected to be available to address the actions covered by this *Action Plan* include Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources. Estimated resources available to the City of Bellingham to implement the *Action Plan* during the 2010 timeframe are limited to those identified below (excludes prior year letter of credit):

CDBG	\$ 900,000
HOME	\$ 686,000
CDBG Program Income/Carryover	\$ 362,234
HOME Program Income/Carryover	\$ 118,967
General Fund	\$ 318,375

The City of Bellingham, the Bellingham Housing Authority (BHA), and a variety of human service and housing agencies pursue a diverse list of private, local, state, and federal resources to fund their delivery of services for homeless and for low-income households at risk of becoming homeless. Among others, the City of

Bellingham is particularly supportive of applications to these programs:

- Public Housing Comprehensive Grant
- HUD Grants for Public Housing
- Tax Exempt Bonds
- Taxable Bonds
- Low-Income Housing Tax Credits
- FHLB Affordable Housing Program
- WA State Housing Finance Commission Programs
- WA State Housing Trust Fund Programs
- WA State Housing Assistance Program
- Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs/Supportive Housing Program
- Washington Comm. Reinvestment Assoc.
- Washington Community Dev. Fund
- St. Luke's Foundation
- United Way
- Whatcom Community Foundation
- Emergency Shelter Grant
- Public Housing Comprehensive Grant
- HOPWA
- Funding provided under SHB 2060/2163/1359
- Safe Havens
- Section 202 Elderly
- Section 811 Handicapped
- Historic Preservation Tax Credits
- Moderate Rehabilitation SRO
- Rental Vouchers
- Rental Certificates
- Public Housing MROP
- Public Housing CIAP
- New Markets Tax Credits Program
- 2008 Housing Act funds
- Neighborhood Stabilization Program

The Bellingham Housing Authority will have approximately \$9.751 million in Section 8 Assistance available in 2010 to serve low-income households. Providing assistance to homeless households is a priority for Bellingham Housing Authority. Developers of housing projects, such as the Bellingham Housing Authority and Catholic Community Services, will also apply for Low-Income Housing Tax Credits for projects serving low-income households with set-asides for transitional units for homeless. Agencies serving homeless individuals and families will apply for approximately \$1,011,276 million in funding assistance under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Programs. Discretionary grants from the federal and state governments for housing, community development, and social services are pursued when and if they become available. Public/private partnerships, where additional funding resources are brought to bear, are sought out and encouraged. These relationships and funding arrangements are difficult, if not impossible, to predict in advance.

The institutional structure for delivery of homeless services including housing that is currently being implemented is the Whatcom County Homeless Services Center which adapts evidenced-based models of homeless prevention, rapid re-housing,

jail diversion, and focused re-entry planning. The key components establish new commitments to increase access to supportive and mainstream services that are vital to retaining permanent housing. As called for in the State's 10 year plan, the system will shift the focus from emergency response strategies to prevention and long term housing. The approach, affecting all homeless subpopulations, increases efficiencies of the existing homeless housing infrastructure which consists of low-rent housing, transitional housing and emergency shelter. It saves money by diverting some individuals away from high-cost institutional facilities. The new institutional structure commits the community to homeless prevention, rapid re-housing, institutional discharge planning and supportive services. The system centers allow those in need (at risk, homeless, institutional re-entering) to enter the system through many different agencies which provide information to the Whatcom County Homeless Service Center. The Center conducts a standardized housing assessment resulting in referral to contracted Agency Partners who provide permanent housing and services. The City and Whatcom County will support this new system for delivery of homeless services and housing by providing funds (general funds) to staff the Whatcom County Homeless Service Center. In addressing chronic homelessness, the City will undertake actions that are consistent with this new system for homeless services delivery. In addition, CDBG funds allocated for homeless activity support by the Community Development Advisory Board will be consistent with the Continuum of Care/Whatcom County Coalition for the Homeless and the Whatcom County Homeless Service Center.

Actions that the City will take over the next year aimed at eliminating chronic homelessness include the following:

HOUSING FOR HOMELESS (HH)

GOAL 1 - Assist in the creation of five housing projects that serve the homeless.

Strategy 1 - *Where appropriate, provide direct funding for projects that serve priority homeless populations.*

HH Action 1 - Provide Grants to Agencies Assisting the Homeless - \$170,000

Support agencies that assist the homeless by making grants to support their operations. *cf*



Interfaith Community Housing

The Interfaith Housing Coalition developed this project and leases it to the Opportunity Council for transitional housing for the homeless.



Description and Timeframe:

Support existing homeless resources in the community by making grants for housing and service provision during calendar year 2010 (shared with Strategy 2, Action 1 below).

Performance Measures:

Objectives(s): Suitable Living Environments

Outcome(s): Availability or Accessibility

Indicator:

- Number: 10,000
- Income levels of persons or households: Very Low
- Amount of money leveraged: \$2,000,000

Responsible Agency: City of Bellingham

Location: Within Bellingham city limits

Funding: Approximately \$170,000 CDBG and/or City of Bellingham General Fund. (Shared with Community Development section, Human Services Goal 1, Strategy 1, Action 1)

Strategy 2 - Provide technical assistance to facilitate the development of projects and programs that utilize the housing first and prevention based strategies to provide housing to priority homeless populations. Examples of assistance include support for coordinating agencies, identification of funding sources, assistance with grant and loan applications, financial analysis, project management, and fostering collaborations among housing and service providers.

HH Action 1 – Fund Technical Assistance for Groups Seeking Funding for Homeless Services - \$4,000

Fund consultant services to provide technical assistance to homeless housing and service agencies and organizations seeking funding for emergency, transitional, and/or permanent homeless housing. *kf*

Description and Timeframe:

Complete the Continuum of Care portion of the 2010 McKinney Funds/Supportive Housing Program and Shelter Plus Care grant applications to renew six homeless housing and services programs.

Performance Measures:

Objectives(s): Providing Decent Affordable Housing

Outcome(s): Availability/Accessibility

Indicator:

- Number: Six homeless housing and services programs will be renewed in 2010 through the federal SHP and S+C grant

- Income levels of persons or households: 30% AMI
- Amount of money leveraged: \$4,000 CDBG (approximately \$1,011,276 in S+C funds to be received)

Responsible Agency: City of Bellingham

Location: Within Bellingham city limits

Funding: \$4,000 CDBG

Strategy 3 - *Prioritize local CDBG and HOME funds for projects and programs that provide coordinated case management for homeless special needs populations.*

(No specific planned activities in 2010)

GOAL 2 - Over a five year period, develop baseline data on local homelessness and formulate coordinated plans to address the causes of chronic homelessness.

Strategy 1 - *In collaboration with homeless housing providers, identify the needs and resources to address homelessness.*

The City will provide \$45,835 in general funds for operation of the Whatcom County Homeless Services Center. Part of the program of the Homeless Service Center is to identify needs and resources to address homelessness.

The City recognizes homelessness as the most severe housing problem. In March of 1993, the human service community began the process of creating a *Continuum of Care Plan*, a community-wide plan to prevent and end homelessness and to make self-determination possible for homeless individuals and families.

During 1996, the Bellingham/Whatcom County Continuum of Care Strategic Planning Committee (representing approximately 50 non-profit and government agencies, housing developers, school districts, businesses, and neighborhoods) met, analyzed data, and identified gaps and strategies in the process of completing a three to five year *Continuum of Care Plan*.

A functioning "Continuum of Care" system coordinates community resources in order to address specific needs of the homeless population. The *1997 Bellingham/Whatcom County Continuum of Care Plan* (adopted by the City Council in 1998, and updated and adopted by the Bellingham/Whatcom County Coalition for the Homeless (BWCCCH) in May, 2003), is available at the Community Development Division (CD). An updated gaps analysis was completed in April 2003 by the BWCCCH and was used in support of one new project and four renewals through the Supportive Housing Program (McKinney Act Fund) grants. The City of

Bellingham continues to support and cooperate with the Bellingham/Whatcom County Coalition for the Homeless. In 2003, the BWCCH developed a *Ten Year Plan to End Homeless*. The BWCCH and Whatcom County, in conjunction with the 2060/2163/1359 funding, are instituting the new homeless services delivery system that will emphasize prevention, rapid re-housing, supportive services and specialized re-entry programs. The Whatcom County Homeless Services Center is key to this new delivery system. The goal and strategies in the *Consolidated Plan* support the Continuum of Care system.

The City has adopted the *Bellingham/Whatcom County Continuum of Care Plan* as City policy. This plan outlines the continuum of programs and services required to move a family or individual from homelessness to independent living and self-sufficiency.

The *Continuum of Care Plan* guides the City's use of resources to reduce the number of homeless households. The *Continuum of Care* does this by designating priority levels to homeless projects and programs and by assessing whether proposed projects duplicate existing services.

The first priority of the *Continuum of Care* is to maintain existing resources that serve the needs of the homeless within the community. The plan identifies new projects and services that fill critical gaps in prevention services, outreach, emergency and transitional housing, support services, and long-term affordable housing.

Support of transitional housing facilities helps homeless families and individuals transition into independence, and in doing so, helps carry out the City's Anti-Poverty Strategy. The City is leveraging its staff resources for implementing the Anti-Poverty Strategy by providing technical assistance to homeless housing and service providers.

The new system for delivery of homeless services including housing that is currently being implemented is the Whatcom County Homeless Services Center. It has homeless prevention as one of its core strategies. One of the actions the City will take over the next year to address the individual and families with children at imminent risk of becoming homeless is to provide support in the form of general funds for staffing for the new Homeless Services Center. The system allows those in need (at risk, homeless, institutional re-entering) to enter the system through many different agencies which provide information to the Whatcom County Homeless Service Center. The Center conducts a standardized housing assessment resulting in referral to contracted Agency Partners who provide permanent housing and services.

Discharge coordination in Bellingham and Whatcom County is handled through the CORE (Community-Oriented Re-Entry) program. CORE is a team approach to re-entry and discharge planning with access to tenant-based housing assistance and

mainstream services through the Whatcom County Homeless Services Center. Whatcom County criminal justice, substance abuse and mental health systems have opened a Crisis Triage Center to coordinate services for people with mental health and/or substance abuse disorders who tend to cycle through the jail and the hospital emergency department. The Crisis Triage Center is staffed 24/7 to provide expedited assessment, stabilizing interventions, and access to services. CORE team members will collaborate with Whatcom County Homeless Services Center's rapid exit coordinator and housing specialist to provide housing solutions.

EMERGENCY SHELTER GRANTS (ESG)

(States only) Describe the process for awarding grants to State recipients, and a description of how the allocation will be made available to units of local government.

This section is not applicable to the City of Bellingham.

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