



CITY OF BEND

To: Council Stewardship Subcommittee

From: Eric King and Shelly Smith

Date: November 20, 2019

Re: Updates on Homelessness and Mental Health Partnerships and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

This memo serves as an update to two of the City Council biennium goals and provide guiding principles for the development of these two projects:

- Seeking opportunities to connect residents and businesses to resources for mental health issues and homelessness by providing \$450k in funding for staff and community partnership (Public Safety & Health, Strategy 1);
- Embed a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within the City of Bend and publish DEI statistics to the public by 6/30/2020 (Effective & Efficient City Operation, Strategy 4).

Homelessness and Mental Health Partnerships action and status updates include:

1. Develop a plan for deploying \$450k in partnerships that connect individuals to housing and needed services, focusing on frequent users. ➡ *Supporting increased staffing of a Community Service Officer dedicated to providing mental health and supports to community members facing homelessness, mental health challenges, and referrals to existing resources. Evaluating opportunities to support immediate needs of community members (warming shelter) without a warm, safe place to stay.*
2. Partner with Deschutes County in the operation of a Stabilization Center. ➡ *Reviewed planning process with Deschutes County staff and leveraging potential option for 24/7 access to services.*
3. Advocate for a Housing First approach. ➡ *COB participating on the State's Permanent Supportive Housing Institute's application process.*

Over the past month, City of Bend staff and Councilors have been part of the effort to identify and launch a local warming shelter. Several staff and City Councilors attended a meeting in October to try and address this critical need. To date, a warming shelter for Bend has yet to be secured and work continues in this area. With preconstruction



work starting at a portion of the City-owned section of Juniper Ridge, an informational piece has been created and circulated for those in and around the area as well as interested parties. Part of the written communication includes a list of social service agencies who can provide resources and will be distributed to anyone within Juniper Ridge.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion action and status updates include:

1. Hire a consultant to conduct an organizational assessment. ➡ *Allyship has been hired as a consultant to provide guidance and expertise on the organizational assessment, training programs, and establishing a short-term committee/task force to assist with #3 below.*
2. Implement a DEI training program for City Council, City Staff, and volunteers.
➡ *Erin Rook from Allyship has met with and interviewed City Councilors and will be sharing general themes to assist in the creation of further resources (trainings and tools). Training with a portion of City staff will begin in December.*
3. Establish a short-term steering committee/task force to assist in identifying the needs and priorities of underrepresented communities in Bend to advise Council.
➡ *Allyship and COB staff have begun to develop a potential list of short-term task force members and are in process of meeting to review goals and assessing interest.*
4. Establish a permanent commission/committee to develop diversity, equity, and inclusion action plan and seek opportunities to leverage community efforts through funding and staff support. ➡ *In process with input and guidance from Allyship with a goal of convening the group by the beginning of the 2020 fiscal year (July).*

Guiding Principles for allocations of dedicated funding could include as a starting point:

1. Funding opportunities over the next two years should be dedicated to leveraging proven projects, programs, and services that are strategically aligned and have a long-term or sustainable impact.
2. Investments in such programs, services, and projects assist in incubating innovative responses to homelessness, housing, and mental health supports to our community.
3. The Stewardship Subcommittee members will provide input and guidance in assessing investments and allocations for the funding.

Questions for the Subcommittee:

1. Do you have questions about the progress noted on any of the updates highlighted within each section above?
2. In reviewing the Guiding Principles, are there changes or additions that you would recommend to any of those listed?