

[RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT]

Stimulus Funds Drive Changes to written Community Plans

The City, County and State are amending their respective Consolidated Plans to include all anticipated uses of the new HPRP (Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program) stimulus funds. The plans propose that 100% of HPRP funds be awarded to CSB to administer via Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative approval. The City and County will pass on the full 5% administrative structure fee; the State will pass on 2.5%. Their proposed amendments were published for public review and comment. The State will use a formula allocation to distribute its stimulus funds to the community. CSB will receive \$1 million in State HPRP on behalf of the Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative.

The City held a public meeting on May 6, conducted by the Health, Housing and Human Services Committee of the City Council. The City accepted public comment on their proposed amendment through May 11. The County held a public Commission briefing on May 7. The State accepted written public comment through May 12. The City and County approved their plans for submission to HUD on May 11 and May 12, respectively.

These plans respond to the new stimulus funds being issued under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, and will meet HUD's guidelines and requirements. The funds are to be utilized for short- or medium-term rental assistance, housing search assistance, mediation or outreach to property owners, utility payments, case management, and rapid re-housing, among other homelessness preventative programs. Several collaborative workgroups are forming within the community to plan implementation of various programs.

You can find more information and answers to frequently asked questions at www.csb.org.

[ADVOCACY]

City Officials Ask Voters to Support Revenue Plan

As part of Columbus's long-term plan to maintain the quality of life that residents have come to expect, city officials are asking voters to support a 0.5% tax increase on the August 2009 ballot. Mayor Coleman, along with all Columbus City Council members, has deemed the increase essential in providing police, fire, health and other basic neighborhood services. Passage of the 3-point plan would allow for new jobs, government reforms and new revenue. City Council voted on May 11 to place the tax increase on the August ballot.

The tax increase is extremely important to CSB since we receive over \$3 million annually from the City. Progress toward ending homelessness in Columbus will not be possible without sustainable City investment. Barbara Poppe served on the Economic Advisory Committee that recommended this tax increase as one of its suggestions on how to address a structural imbalance the City is facing.

Public Officials & Stakeholders Serve Dinner at the YWCA Family Center



Photos courtesy of YWCA.
L to R: Christie Angel, Mayor Michael B. Coleman
and Molly Rampe.

On May 13, Mayor Coleman, City Auditor Hugh Dorrian, members of the Mayor's cabinet and city staff served dinner at the YWCA Family Center. They raised more than \$500 to pay for the meal, served, and toured the facility. It truly was a magnificent day, to have our government partners engaged in our work to end homelessness. The YWCA received numerous positive comments about the facility, their work and their wonderful staff.

This is the first of three Family Center visits from government stakeholders. The next one is on July 8 with the Franklin County Commissioners and their staff.

Supportive Housing Making an Impact Across the State

The Ohio Supportive Housing for the Homeless Alliance met with the Ohio Housing Finance Agency on May 5. OSHHA members from Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, and Delaware/Morrow/Marion/Crawford Counties presented local community plans for supportive housing. The meeting also provided an opportunity for feedback on OSHHA's recent proposal to the Housing Investment Fund.

OSHHA was formed to create and implement a public policy advocacy agenda that supports the development of permanent supportive housing units across Ohio as a long-term solution for homelessness. OSHHA's membership consists of supportive housing providers for homeless people – including developers, managers, and service providers; local community leaders responsible for implementation of community plans to end homelessness; and advocates for supportive housing as a long-term solution for homelessness. COHHIO is a member and close partner in developing resources to fund this work.

President Releases FY 2010 Budget Proposal

Alliance Online News, 5/7/09, National Alliance to End Homelessness

On May 7, President Obama released his budget proposal for fiscal year (FY) 2010. The budget included funding proposals for housing and homeless programs. Highlights of the funding for homeless programs include:

- < \$1.8 billion for McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants, an increase of \$117 million over FY 2009;
- < \$46.3 billion for HUD programs, an 11 percent increase;
- < \$1 billion for a National Affordable Housing Trust Fund;
- < \$68 million for the Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) program, an \$8 million increase over the FY 2009 level;
- < \$19 million for a new DC Housing First Initiative to provide supportive housing to homeless individuals and families;
- < \$26 million for a pilot program to prevent homelessness for veterans.

HEARTH Act

On May 6, the Senate unanimously passed the Reed/Bond amendment that attached the HEARTH Act to the approved S. 896 Act. The HEARTH Act is a bill to reauthorize HUD's McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance programs. The bill would permit communities to administer funds in a more flexible manner than current statute allows.

The McKinney program is critical to ending homelessness in Ohio. McKinney funds have enabled Columbus & Franklin County to craft and implement cutting-edge responses to homelessness, but now more than ever, more resources are needed. From here, the HEARTH Act will continue on into the conference stage where we are hopeful for its inclusion in the final bill.

[REBUILDING LIVES]

Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative

Unfortunately, the Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative (RLFC) Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for May 4 had to be cancelled due to illness. This meeting will be rescheduled and announced soon. The purpose of the meeting is to hear presentations on convener plans for the Collaborative Outreach System and Affordable Housing Campaign strategies that emerged as part of the RLUS process. The City of Columbus was identified as the convener of both strategies.

The RLFC will hold its 4th quarter meeting on May 28 from 11:30 am – 1:30 pm at CSB. The FY2010 RL Funding Strategy, semi-annual financial report and progress updates on RL Plan Strategies are just some of the topics scheduled for consideration. If you would like to attend this meeting, contact Tiffany Nobles at tnobles@csb.org or 221-9195 x117.

Jeff Lyttle will be joining this group as CSB's trustee representative, as he succeeds Mary Lou Langenhop.

Unified Supportive Housing System

The Unified Supportive Housing System (USHS) has now entered the vacancy management phase for Southpoint Place. Agencies should continue to submit client files to USHS to fill vacancies as they occur. Single adults and families may be referred through their case managers for entry into Southpoint Place Apartments by having each client complete an Indication of Interest (IOI) form and additional documentation. For more information, please contact the USHS Project Manager, Anna Bianco at 614-221-9195, ext 127 or at abianco@csb.org.

USHS will also be managing the referral process for Southeast's supportive housing expansion (Rebuilding Lives Leasing). This project expansion will serve chronically homeless individuals – single adults with disabilities who have been homeless for a year or more, or have had four distinct episodes of homelessness within the last three years. Southeast, Inc. will provide services to 30 units of scattered site supportive housing as an expansion of its existing RL permanent supportive housing project.

The USHS Move Up Pilot Design Workgroup will soon complete its work in creating a framework for the Move Up Pilot. The Pilot will assist clients who would benefit from more independent housing and who have a desire to move out of supportive housing. After the conclusion of the Design Workgroup, the USHS Policy Council will select supportive housing providers to implement the pilot. The selected agencies will have representation on a second workgroup, the USHS Move Up Pilot Implementation Workgroup. This group will meet to detail policies and procedures as well as create an implementation plan. The Pilot will begin this fall.

[CONTINUUM OF CARE]

Rapid Re-Housing and CoC Scoring

On April 22 HUD released the scores to communities for the Continuum of Care (CoC) Exhibit 1 and Rapid Re-Housing program (RRH) competitions. Columbus & Franklin County received a CoC Exhibit 1 score of 87.75 out of a possible 100 points. Our score was only 4.25 points below the highest national score of 92. For the Rapid Re-Housing program competition, we received a score

of 87 out of a possible 100 points, which was the highest national score. Our combined CoC Exhibit 1 and RRH competition scores, also known as the Final RRH score, was 174.75 out of a possible 200 points. Special thanks to all those involved in the successful application submission.

The Rapid Re-Housing program, called Job2Housing, aims to reduce the incidence of homelessness by assisting homeless families to achieve permanent housing and self-sufficiency, and will serve 120 households over three years. J2H will serve homeless families with children who have insufficient income to afford an apartment and are committed to pursuing employment to achieve family self-sufficiency. J2H, through the Salvation Army, will provide housing placement, leasing assistance for up to six months, and employment focused case management. Columbus was one of 23 communities to receive this highly competitive national award from HUD.

[PROGRAM UPDATES]

Family System

The Family System is continuing to collaborate effectively and strengthen partnerships with a focus on next step housing. Both Volunteers of America and Homeless Families Foundation are beginning to move in the direction of incorporating rolling stock pilot programs in addition to Tier II shelter units. The Salvation Army is preparing to implement Job2Housing (see related story). The family system has begun identifying program characteristics and client characteristics to support families in moving into the most suitable next-step housing program for them.

As part of the HPRP Planning, the Family System has formed a collaborative planning team (Family System CPT). The Family System CPT is focused on reviewing the current flow and housing options for the family system and identifying opportunities for improvement. The CPT's planning will include Rebuilding Lives strategy implementation, State, County and City HPRP dollars, Rolling Stock Pilots, Job2Housing funding and opportunities around CHOICES.

Adult System

Staff from the adult shelter system met in late April to plan for the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing funds available through the economic stimulus program. The planning team focused on looking at strategies that would lead to improvements in the adult system.

Data from across the system was used in analysis and for recommending improvements to the system. The group approved moving forward with seeking HPRP funds from the City and County to develop a single point of contact for the adult system, a shared process for diversion/prevention and a process for rapid re-housing.

Critical Access to Housing

CAH continues to focus on persons with the most critical needs related to health and safety. Outreach staff continues to engage and offer services to these individuals on the street and in camps. With the end of winter overflow and an improvement in the weather, the outreach team has seen a slight increase in individuals on the street.

Stable Families

From January 1 through March 31, 2009, the Stable Families Program received 126 referrals, with 100 families assessed and 82 families enrolled in the program. Referral sources into the program included Project Connect of the Columbus Public Schools, community referrals made by friends or family members of the referred family, Franklin County Children Services and landlords. During this time period, 65 families exited the program, with 59 of those families maintaining permanent housing. With regard to the demographics of the families served by the program, the average number of children in each family is 2.5, with the mean family size at 3.8. Prior to their involvement with Stable Families, almost 80% of the families were living in rental housing.

Stable Families is an initiative to prevent homelessness, aimed at long-term housing stability, reduced student mobility and increased academic success in schools. This pilot project is made possible by the Siemer Family Foundation and United Way of Central Ohio, the Ohio Department of Development, Franklin County Commissioners and The Columbus Foundation.

Permanent Supportive Housing

Supportive housing projects continue to have high occupancy rates. Thirteen of the seventeen projects had occupancy rates above 95% during the month of March. The four remaining projects averaged 91% occupancy and were working on filling vacancies as soon as possible. Community Housing Network held a grand opening event for the Southpoint Place project on April 28. The event was well attended, and Dennis Guest, Executive Director of Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority was presented with a special award of achievement. The groundbreaking for National Church Residences' new project, Commons at Buckingham, is being scheduled for this summer.

[IN THE SPOTLIGHT]

Job2Housing featured at Statewide Conference

CSB staff joined The Salvation Army and other housing providers from around the state on April 21 at the COHHIO conference to present on rapid re-housing programs, including Job2Housing. Job2Housing will support stable housing, which supports family stability. In addition, successful participation in the program will reduce the likelihood of a repeated episode of homelessness. The shorter shelter stays anticipated with J2H will also reduce system shelter demand and need for overflow.

Indianapolis Officials visit Maryhaven

On April 23, private sector leaders, city, and county officials from Indianapolis toured the Engagement Center at Maryhaven and the Commons at Chantry. The tour was an effort to demonstrate what it takes to organize such responses to homelessness, as Indianapolis officials consider establishing an Engagement Center.

Presentation to Columbus Kiwanis

On April 27, upon invitation by the YMCA, Barbara Poppe presented to the Kiwanis Club of Columbus. Her presentation focused on quantifying the problem of homelessness in Columbus, the impacts of the economic down turn, what is being done locally to end homelessness.

Tours

In April, CSB provided the following tours: Southpoint Place for Karen Hooser and Dick Oman of The Reinberger Foundation; three supportive housing communities for Mark Johnston, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Special Needs, HUD; and Southpoint Place for Melissa Ingwersen, JPMorgan Chase and Sophia Corna, Corna Kokosing.

[CSB NEWS]

Streamlining Efforts Continue

1-on-1 meetings have been held with each partner agency, and agencies are submitting updated documents based on the meetings. Partner agencies, as well as members of the Citizens Advisory Council are in the process of reviewing the revised contracts and Partner Agency Standards. Comments are due back to CSB by May 22 and final versions of the contracts and standards will be completed by the end of May.

In early June, the new *Guide to CSB* will be posted on the CSB website along with the revised Partner Agency Standards. The Guide will serve as a centralized location for agencies to find contract-related supportive housing materials, Columbus ServicePoint materials, financial tools, and the Partner Agency Standards.

Agencies will receive their FY10 agreements in early June. This will allow agencies time to review the final contract, acquire necessary approval and return it to CSB by July 1.

Staffing Update

Nearly seventy resumes have been received for the position of **Grants Administrator**. Seven telephone interviews have been conducted and face-to-face interviews will be conducted in May and early June. We hope to have this position filled by June.

We have received overwhelming interest in the position of **Program Manager-Family Services**. To date, nine telephone interviews have been conducted and three face-to-face interviews have been scheduled. The position is expected to be filled with the successful applicant to begin work by late June.

Diversity Training

CSB staff participated in an afternoon training on the topic of diversity on May 6. The training and discussion focused on the benefit of mutual respect in the workplace, and understanding the importance of personal responsibility in promoting respect in the workplace. The group learned about the M.E.E.T. model to promote a “mutual respect” working environment:

- < **M**ake time to discuss
- < **E**xplore differences
- < **E**ncourage respect
- < **T**ake personal responsibility

Upcoming Meetings

- < Check out the new interactive calendar at www.csb.org under resources for our partners < meetings.