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City Council

Briefing on the Homeless Response Plan Process

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Title

Briefing on the Homeless Response Plan Process

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not Referred to a Committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive a briefing on the Homeless Response Plan Process. Briefing only; No action requested.

Report

Issue:

Whether to receive a briefing on the Homeless Response Plan Process, including timeline, milestones, the various roles, and how stakeholders will be engaged to provide input and develop long-term strategies and actions.

Staff Contact:

Amy Buckler, Downtown Programs Manager, Community Planning & Development, 360.570.5847

Presenter(s):

Stacey Ray, Senior Planner, Office of Performance and Innovation

Amy Buckler, Downtown Programs Manager, Community Planning & Development

Background and Analysis:

Rising homelessness is the most significant and urgent public concern facing our city. In July 2018, the Olympia City Council declared a state of public health emergency related to homelessness; the Thurston County Commissioners also declared a state of emergency last year. Although homelessness is most visible within the urban hub of downtown Olympia, this issue affects all of Thurston County.

During 2019, the Olympia City Council is convening a broad, community-driven process to identify strategies and actions to respond to homelessness and its impacts on the city. The approach is based on a framework and methodologies called Participatory Leadership: a community-based approach to addressing complex issues that emphasizes learning, dialogue, equity, and

inclusiveness.

Purpose, People and Roles

See attached Overview.

A community work group made up of 8-10 members with a diverse set of perspectives and experiences will help host the process, inviting a broad cross-section of the regional community to identify and carry out long-term strategies and actions. This work will be informed by and build upon the County's Five-Year Homeless and Housing Plan and Olympia's Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Strategy.

The City of Olympia cannot effectively address this issue on its own. We need citizens, the State, other governmental entities in the region, and other public and private partners to help develop and implement the response. Thus, one aspect of this process is to engage and develop those partnerships.

Another aspect is to involve community members in learning about this complex issue and the plans and actions currently underway, while also providing well-designed opportunities for the community to participate in dialogue and inform the developing strategies, actions and partnerships.

Timeline & Milestones

The homeless response plan process kicks off in January 2019 and is expected to wrap-up in the fall of 2019.

See the attached graphic, which is a framework for an adaptive process that the Community Work Group will further shape.

Milestones in the process include:

- The Community Work Group is formed and starts meeting (February)
- Following a few months of community and partner engagement, the Work Group shares what's been heard and learned (June)
- The Work Group hosts community conversations to further develop draft strategies (August)
- Strategies, actions and partnerships have been identified and there is a Call to Action (October)

Staff will provide an oral update about the convening of the Work Group, current efforts to reach out to Key Implementation Partners and Community Resource Partners, how stakeholders will continue to be engaged throughout the process, and more detail about the type of public engagement that will occur through March.

Emergency Response will Continue

During this process of developing a long-term response, the City of Olympia will continue responding to the immediate emergency. Immediate actions include Mitigation Site(s), the Plum Street Tiny House Village, a City & Faith Community Pilot Partnership, helping to fund a 24/7 shelter system and more. See the City's website for more information.

These emergency actions are not the same as our long-term response, but they are connected. Not only do these actions provide safer shelter options for people currently experiencing homelessness, these also provide examples our community can learn from when developing the longer-term response.

Neighborhood/Community Interests:

The community has a strong interest in addressing homelessness in the community.

Options:

Receive a briefing on the Homeless Response Plan Process

Financial Impact:

Included in base department budget.

Attachments:

[Project Overview](#)

[Planning Timeline and Milestones](#)

[Link to City's Homeless Response Webpage](#)