

Memorandum

To: Spokane Mayor Nadine Woodward
Council President, Breean Beggs

Councilmembers:

- Jonathan Bingle
- Michael Cathcart
- Lori Kinnear
- Karen Stratton
- Betsy Wilkerson
- Zack Zappone

County Commission Chair Mary Kuney

Commissioners:

- Al French
- Josh Kerns

Spokane Valley Mayor
Pam Haley

Councilmembers:

- Tim Hattenburg
- Rod Higgins
- Laura Padden
- Brandi Peetz
- Ben Wick
- Arne Woodard

From: Zeke Smith, President, Empire Health Foundation
Katy Bruya, Chief HR Officer, Washington Trust Bank, Hello for Good representative
Fawn Schott, President & CEO, Volunteers of America

On behalf of all work session participants

Date: June 27, 2022

Re: Recommendations for immediate priority homeless services funding

I. Introduction

We share an urgency to reduce homelessness in our region. People are dying on our streets. The imminent summer heat increases the likelihood of more deaths.

We agree we must do whatever it takes to support people off the streets, out of camps, into safe, stable places to live. We believe we can do it well and fast. We have a responsibility to do just that. We know we can be successful when everybody involved comes together around what works.

In this spirit of collaboration, we offer these recommendations for using existing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and new Department of Commerce-WSDOT Rights of Way resources to address homelessness in our communities.

We are not telling you how to do your job. We offer our collective, professional advice on taking action to use these once-in-a-generation resources to make the consequential, visible impacts on homelessness our entire region wants and deserves.

There are currently 523 people living at Camp Hope, and the population continues to grow. They are telling us through their actions they want something better, more sustainable, and safer than staying on the streets. Our recommendations are delivered with urgency for these 523 people and our best expertise about what's needed to meet their multiple needs so as many as possible can move to stable housing.

II. How we got here

These spending recommendations result from three months of collaboration with Spokane experts that know first-hand what's working and what's not. Crossing function, sector and jurisdiction – housing and health providers, representatives of *Hello for Good*, local government experts and private philanthropy – we believe these ARPA and State dollars present a unique chance to improve our systems to address homelessness quickly and effectively.

Our recommendations are a product of doing this the Spokane way: people sharing facts, generating ideas, using their professional expertise, and engaging in honest dialogue about what's necessary for tangible change. Throughout this effort we talked. We listened to one another. We didn't argue. We didn't compete. We didn't protect turf. We used a respectful process to get to consensus about using these once-in-a-generation funds most effectively. This type of earnest collaboration is necessary to make the kind of change we all want to see.

III. Recommendations

Recommendations focus on the fundamentals our homeless neighbors need to transition to safe housing. They are designed to strengthen and stabilize our existing collection of services. They are built on three essential criteria:

- Alleviating immediate danger.
- Fulfilling measurable outcomes.
- Ensuring people – unhoused and housed – can see and experience the change and improvement.

We insist that spending address multiple needs and strengthen our continuum of services. We also recognize these one-time funds are best used for one-time or catalytic investments and minimize the effect of creating a funding cliff in the future. The cities' and county's ARPA and the Dept. Of Commerce's Rights of Way funding represent a unique opportunity to make a demonstrable difference. This moment and the urgency represent a mandate for action.

We take two central lessons from others' success: San Diego's intentional, consistent integration of homeless resources and expertise from service providers, local government and business; and Houston's ability to move 25,000 off the street and into homes: "Housing people is a slow, extremely complicated, incremental process that requires all hands on deck, all the time. Everyone has to come together around the table."

We set a table of seasoned, committed housing and health providers, business people, and government experts. We offer these spending recommendations to you, the region’s elected representatives, in the spirit of building an even bigger table to make this work possible.

We are recommending an integrated comprehensive approach to using these two funding sources:

- Prioritizing the current needs of people on the street and living in Camp Hope by meeting them where they are.
- Investing in a continuum of safety, mental health, addiction, and housing services.
- Fueling both transitional and permanent housing.
- Arming outreach, case management and service professionals with timely, accurate data to connect people to the services and housing they need.

The following table contains recommendations for spending \$65 million of the more than \$208 million local governments in Spokane County have available in ARPA funding. Additional detail is contained in section V of this document (page 5).

ARPA SPENDING RECOMMENDATIONS	
Category of Urgent Need	Estimated Cost
Mitigation	\$ 4,500,000
Outreach & Direct Services	\$ 12,900,000
Behavioral Health	\$ 7,000,000
Permanent units	\$ 35,790,000
Improved Data System	\$ 4,400,000
TOTAL ARPA	\$ 64,590,000

For the Department of Commerce-WSDOT rights of way initiative funding – projected to be \$24.8 million in Spokane – the table below represents consensus recommendations to address the needs of the 523 people living in tents at Camp Hope:

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE AND TRANSPORTATION	
Property Lease & Site Prep	\$ 3,000,000
Purchase & assembly of pallet homes	\$ 4,500,000
Property management and operations	\$ 3,000,000
Health services - behavioral & primary care	\$ 6,000,000
Case management	\$ 3,000,000
Outreach	\$ 1,200,000
Day services & immediate needs	\$ 3,000,000
Total ROW Initiative	\$ 23,700,000

IV. Fueling lasting change

This unique infusion of funds will be wasted if it also doesn't improve how we do business going forward. We believe Spokane can create a new way of working together that ensures lasting impact in how this community addresses the needs of our homeless neighbors and the vitality of our region.

We suggest doing that requires:

- Ensuring mutual accountability for results with a **multi-sector independent body** providing insight, planning, and guidance on ongoing implementation to create a true system of care for the homeless community in Spokane County.
- Exploring a **coordinated inter-governmental mechanism** to implement common homelessness strategy and shared funds across Spokane County.
- Investing in **communication** to keep residents informed and share visible progress.
- Ensuring **alignment** of these one-time funds with long-term investments to address homelessness in the region – starting with revisiting the required Continuum of Care 5year plan and the *Hello for Good* report.
- Additional collaborative discussions and planning to systematically address:
 - **Behavioral health workforce and access** challenges;
 - **Investments in Black, Indigenous, and community of color-led services, supports, and organizations** given the disproportionate impact homelessness has on these communities;
 - **Public safety and law enforcement** approaches in the homeless community; and,
 - **Long-term transitional and permanent housing** policy and development.

V. Detailed ARPA spending recommendations

DETAIL OF ALL ARPA SPENDING RECOMMENDATIONS			
CATEGORIES & ELEMENTS	COSTS	ASSUMPTIONS	
Outreach and direct services to stabilize people and fuel faster placements into housing			
Add skilled outreach and case management workers	\$ 9,000,000	Cost to add 30 front-line workers for 3 years	
Recruitment, training, cross-agency coordination	\$ 250,000		
Landlord mitigation fund	\$ 3,000,000		
Ready to rent program	\$ 500,000		
Tablets and other field tools	\$ 150,000		
Subtotal outreach and direct services	\$ 12,900,000		

Accurate, timely, accountable, and useful data			
Assess current conditions; run a procurement	\$ 150,000		
Acquire new homeless data system (+improve CMIS)	\$ 2,500,000	Based on comparables from other jurisdictions	
Implementation, training, contract amendments	\$ 250,000		
Add 2 new city admin employees	\$ 750,000		
Annual maintenance	\$ 750,000		
Subtotal Data Systems Investments	\$ 4,400,000		
Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment Services			
Maximize use of existing facilities & add new capacity	\$ 7,000,000	Behavioral health experts to advise on elements	
Subtotal Behavioral Health	\$ 7,000,000		
Development of Permanent Units			
Capital investments for stalled developments	\$ 35,790,000	Gap \$ for 386 units w/in the existing 1000-u pipeline	
Subtotal Permanent Units	\$ 35,790,000		
Mitigate impacts of street homelessness			
Stainless steel toilets	\$ 3,000,000	Cost of 5 stainless steel toilet systems	
Land lease	\$ 100,000		
Garbage cans & regular pick up	\$ 150,000		
Drinking fountains and water refill stations	\$ 250,000		
Safe parking	\$ 1,000,000	Security, program admin, staffing contract	
Subtotal Mitigation	\$ 4,500,000		
ARPA TOTAL RECOMMENDED INVESTMENTS	\$ 64,590,000		

List of individuals who participated in the discussions and development of these recommendations

Name	Organization
Chrystal Alderman	Frontier Behavioral Health
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Katy Bruya	Hello for Good, Washington Trust Bank
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Brian Davenport	Eastern Washington University
Eric Finch	Housing and Human Services Division, City of Spokane
Julie Garcia	Jewels Helping Hands
Breianna Gorder	Consistent Care
Julius Hendrickson	Spokane County United Way
Tom Hormel	Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee
Adriane Leithauser	Community, Housing & Human Services Board
Robert Lippman	Spokane Homeless Coalition
Mary Logan	Spokane Municipal Court, City of Spokane
Bob Lutz	State Board of Health
Kim McCollim	HUD
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Jonathan Mallahan	Catholic Charities Eastern Washington
Melissa Morrison	Better Health Together
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David Sackman	Catholic Charities Eastern Washington
Fawn Schott	Volunteers of America
Alex Scott	WA State Department of Commerce
Ben Small	Innovia, Launch NW
Morgan Smith	Spokane County United Way
Gage Spicer	Volunteers of America
Ben Stuckart	Continuum of Care Board, SLIHC
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