

Multnomah County Five-Year Strategies

Multnomah County's jurisdiction includes the small cities in East County—Fairview, Maywood Park, Troutdale, Wood Village and unincorporated areas.

The County does not have the grant resources to undertake large economic opportunity or housing projects. However, assessment with local community citizens and service providers helped the County determine how best to use its limited resources to fulfill the unmet needs of low and moderate-income communities, individuals, and families.

The following priorities reflect the communities' needs identified by stakeholders and the public:

Funding Priorities

Priority 1: Invest in housing programs that focus on providing decent, stable housing for those with greatest need.

Priority 2: Invest in infrastructure and public facilities improvements development that promotes stabilizing and revitalizing low-income communities.

Priority 3: Support social service operations for organizations assisting homeless families, low-income citizens and special needs populations to expand economic opportunities.

Five-Year Goals

Goal 1. Invest in Housing Programs for rehabilitating residential housing to maintain, preserve, and increase existing affordable housing stock supply.

Goal 2. Invest in programs that provide accessibility measures in homes of seniors and persons with disabilities.

Goal 3. Improve the condition of cities' infrastructure, including water/sewer/wastewater systems, and sidewalks.

Goal 4. Fund projects that improve the safety and livability of low-income neighborhoods by increasing access to quality facilities, and revitalizing deteriorating neighborhoods.

Goal 5. Fund and support social service providers assisting homeless families, special needs populations, and low-income citizens.

Objectives to Attain Goals

1.1 Continue to support programs that provide critical home repair increasing and preserving existing affordable housing stock.

2.1 Continue to fund programs that provide accessibility measures in homes of seniors and persons with disabilities.

3.1 Support projects that improve conditions of the small cities public infrastructure including water/sewer improvements, flood and drainage improvements, and sidewalks.

4.1 Support projects that improve livability of low-income neighborhoods, such as parks and recreational facilities, community centers, revitalization.

5.1 Continue to support social service providers assisting homeless families, special needs populations, and low-income citizens that include fair housing enforcement, transitional housing, energy conservation and emergency services as well as information and referral.

Housing Services

GOAL

The goal of the Housing Services Program is to increase the supply of safe, decent, and accessible housing for low- and moderate-income families and people with disabilities.

NEED

Market analysis documents the shortage of affordable accessible housing in good condition. Additionally, there is an on-going shortage of affordable, accessible housing for low-income people with disabilities, including seniors.

Elderly or low-income homeowners may be unable to afford needed repairs, which over time can make their home unsafe and/or unhealthy for the occupants. Lack of suitable housing could compel seniors and those with disabilities into institutional living that could diminish both the quality and length of their lives. People with disabilities who own or rent may be unable to afford to remove barriers to access or to make other accommodations to increase the safety and stability of their dwelling. Funding these accommodations enable people to live in dignity and independence.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Housing Services Programs improve the quality and quantity of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income people and provides appropriate housing opportunities for special needs households.

PROGRAM TOOLS

- Markets the program with appropriate social service agencies serving those in the unincorporated areas of Multnomah County and with the local media.
- Provides grants to repair homes.
- Provides grant to homeowners and renters to remove barriers to accessibility.
- Encourage owners to maintain the accessible features for future tenants.

PROGRAM SELECTION

Applications are solicited through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Selection criteria are included in the RFP materials. Applications are rated by a stakeholder advisory panel. Staff review and rate project proposals for use based on the needs and policies identified in the plan. The final decisions are made by the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

- Low- and moderate-income persons with disabilities who own or rent units with barriers to accessibility.
- Low- or moderate-income homeowners who cannot afford necessary home repairs.

POTENTIAL BARRIERS

- Lack of available funds in the proportion to those eligible for services who need services
- Social Services cutbacks

PARTNER AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- Unlimited Choices, Inc.
Mend-a-Home program: home repair and rehab for low-income homeowners
Adapt-a-Home program: accessible housing for low-income people with disabilities

COMPLEMENTARY LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL EFFORTS

Programs align with 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness by focusing on keeping people housed through improving and maintaining existing affordable housing stock. In addition, through the county-wide housing consortium, separate jurisdictions combine resources to jointly achieve mutual projects and goals.

GEOGRAPHIC SERVICES AREAS (INCLUDING AREAS OF LOW-INCOME FAMILIES AND/OR RACIAL MINORITY CONCENTRATION)

East Multnomah County

MONITORING

Site visits are carried out throughout the program year to gather information about how programs are delivered and how each project ensures people were income qualified and that all program components are in compliance with HUD requirements.

OUTCOMES

Information and program outcomes to follow.

Public Facilities Improvements & Infrastructure

GOAL

The goal of the Public Facilities and Improvements program is to increase the safety, livability, and sustainability of neighborhoods in low- to moderate-income areas in East Multnomah County

NEED

The small cities of East Multnomah County recognize the importance of continued enhancements to city centers, parks and landscapes in order to continue the stabilization and revitalization efforts of low-income neighborhoods. Additionally, addressing the conditions of the cities infrastructure needs, i.e. inflow and infiltration of storm and groundwater in the sewer system, crumbling sewer lines, need for sidewalks adjacent to elementary schools looks at the long-term economic benefits, livability and safety of residents.

In the City of Wood Village, over 65% of households live in apartments, duplexes, condominiums or mobile homes. Many of these residences do not have recreation equipment for children to play on or facilities for adults to gather and socialize. Wood Village has only one park that is used by many of the residents as well as non-residents from neighboring communities. Portions of the park are ADA accessible but the majority of areas are not. The Public Facilities and Improvements Program is able to improve access to quality public and private facilities, as well as promote health and safety for deteriorating neighborhoods.

Most of the affordable single-family housing as well as the largest public housing facilities in the City of Fairview are located in the Old Town area. The majority of low-to moderate-income households reside in this area and demographic analysis found that many families are with young children. The City is committed to maintain the affordability of housing in this neighborhood, and to increase community amenities so that it can be a livable, vital part of the entire city. Construction of new sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks near the elementary school is ongoing. A recently completed sidewalk project brought solar-powered crosswalk lights, new streetlights and improved stormwater management. The Public Facilities and Improvements program has been instrumental to the City's continuing effort to put sidewalks in key areas.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program addresses unsafe or undesirable conditions by funding street improvements, public facilities, improved public facilities, and utility improvements and extensions in predominately low-to moderate income areas.

PROGRAM TOOLS

- Coordinate efforts and increase opportunities to develop suitable living environment in communities.
- Community involvement
- Identify and acknowledge local needs and move ahead to address issues
- Give technical assistance to implement plan

PROGRAM SELECTION

Activities are rated by a stakeholder advisory panel on a competitive basis according to specific selection criteria designed to solicit local strategies. Staff review and rate project proposals for use by that panel based on the needs and policies identified in the plan.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

East Multnomah County neighborhoods with a majority of residents with incomes below 80% MFI.

POTENTIAL BARRIERS

There are insufficient local and federal funds to meet all public facility needs in eligible neighborhoods.

PARTNER AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

The cities in East Multnomah County carry out all funded projects.

COMPLEMENTARY LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL EFFORTS

The importance of developing and maintaining viable urban communities has been acknowledged on a national, regional and local area. Investment in maintaining, restoring and revitalizing local neighborhoods helps to create a sense of place and pride in community, promotes economic development, and reduces crime.

GEOGRAPHIC SERVICES AREAS (INCLUDING AREAS OF LOW-INCOME FAMILIES AND/OR RACIAL/MINORITY CONCENTRATION)

East Multnomah County

MONITORING

The County will review census tract data to ensure that areas served by public facilities are income eligible. Site visits are carried out throughout the program year to gather information about how programs are delivered and how each project ensures people are income qualified and that all program components are in compliance with HUD requirements.

Information and program outcomes to follow.

Public Services

GOAL

The goal of Public Services is to provide low- and moderate-income County residents who are not served by other sources with essential health, social, home energy conservation techniques, and fair housing services.

NEED

The Homeless Needs Assessment has information on low- and moderate-income County residents. Non-profit agencies report an increase in demand for services from families that are homeless or at immediate risk of homelessness.

The 2005 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing indicated a need for fair housing investigation, education, and tenant advocacy. However, the landmark fair housing case involving Westchester County has brought to light the jurisdiction's legal responsibilities and considerations and the decisions that are integral to ensure fair housing. See: Updated Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program supports an emergency services network designed to address basic needs of people in crisis, assisting them to stabilize and become self-sufficient. This may include job skills training, childcare, health services, housing, recreation, drug abuse recovery, education, counseling, and services related to crime prevention and energy conservation. This program also supports fair housing services.

PROGRAM TOOLS

- Assisting homeless persons to obtain stable affordable housing linked with appropriate community services.
- Assist with programs that provide education and job training and other employment-related skills
- Provide fair housing education, outreach, and enforcement
- Provide housing counseling and habitability services to low-income and special needs households to prevent homelessness
- Promote citizen training/education programs that include leadership classes, English language skills, job skills, information about doing taxes and attaining insurance, home protection, home ownership, and how to be involved in public decision process.
- Provide childcare services
- Provide support services to persons with disabilities

PROGRAM SELECTION

Applications are solicited in a competitive RFP process. Selection criteria are included in the RFP materials. Applications are rated by a stakeholder advisory panel. Staff review and rate project proposals based on the needs and policies identified in the Plan. Final decisions are made by the local governments.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Project sponsors must serve low-moderate-income families and individuals in East Multnomah County.

POTENTIAL BARRIERS

- The federal and local funds available are not adequate to meet the need for services.
- Cutbacks in the safety net at both the federal (Section 8, Medicaid) and State (organizations), and local levels place more households at risk of homelessness and in need of social services.
- Language barriers or accessibility issues may make it more difficult for some people to access social services.

PARTNER AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- Fair Housing Council of Oregon: provides fair housing services, including outreach, education, and enforcement to East Multnomah County residents. Services are offered to low-moderate-income tenants and other housing consumers, and to agencies and landlords who provide housing to this targeted group. FHCO coordinates outreach, training, and enforcements with Legal Aid Services or Oregon and other local agencies.
- Human Solutions, Inc.: provides transitional housing services for homeless families and free childcare while parents attend educational groups on topics such as money management and housing readiness; training towards self-sufficiency.
- Community Energy Projects: provides Do-It-Yourself workshops that give energy education and training in low-cost, small measure weatherization techniques. They provide free weatherization materials to low-income participants who install the materials in their own homes helping to reduce or contain energy cost and improve home comfort.
- Catholic Charities Oregon: provides information and referral, emergency services and advocacy to the low-income Latino population in East Multnomah County. A personal assessment helps them to access additional services that may include: education and leadership classes, counseling, legal guidance and tax preparation services.

COMPLEMENTARY LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND NATIONAL EFFORTS

This program complements other local, state, and federal fair housing efforts. Providing transitional housing to homeless households is consistent with the Home Again: A 10-year plan to end homeless in Portland and Multnomah County.

GEOGRAPHIC SERVICES AREAS (INCLUDING AREAS OF LOW-INCOME FAMILIES AND/OR RACIAL/MINORITY CONCENTRATION)

Primarily East Multnomah County

MONITORING

Site visits are carried out throughout the program year to gather information about how programs are delivered and to ensure that clients are income qualified, and that all program components are in compliance with HUD requirements.

Table insert to follow.