We Are Columbia

1136 Washington Street, Ste. 504, Columbia, SC 29201

TO: The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin and Columbia City Council
Cc: Teresa Wilson, City Manager

FROM: Sandra Wright, Purchasing Agent
Jan Alonso, Finance Director
Missy Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director

DATE: April 17, 2014

RE: Homeless Services Request for Information (RFI) Review Panel Update

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Please find attached the Homeless Services RFI Panel Recommendations. Staff will review the recommendations during the April 22 City Council Workshop. The recommendations are based on the panel's review of the five (5) RFI responses that were received in response to the six (6) Response to Homeless Goals adopted by City Council.

We look forward to discussing the matter with you.

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Homeless Services Requests for Information (RFI) Panel Recommendations

April 22, 2014

Retain Six (6) Homeless Response Goals as adopted by City Council

- Coordinate the response to poverty with other agencies
- Bring humanity to the response to poverty
- Leverage the power of the community in responding to poverty
- Institutionalize accountability for providers
- Meet the unique needs of the individual in need
- Address downtown impacts

Approach: Best Practices' Methods, Strategies & Techniques recommended by the RFI Panel to be utilized and applied continuously in order to achieve the 6 goals established by Columbia City Council.

Coordinator's Role (Recommendations by Review Panel)

1. Own/ Identify/Seek Resolutions for any deficiencies in services.
2. Regional Coordination Needed
3. Systematic approach to the homeless issues
4. Education Component
5. Central Information (user friendly) / database & Explore Other Available Options
6. Coordinate Meal Services
7. Monitor and compare best practices from other communities
8. Organized/Synchronized Planning Process on how to reduce homelessness

1. **Service Providers' Roles**

    1. Central Triage & Service Locations
    2. User-friendly Central Information

       Reporting Module: Utilize the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and/or other HUD approved software system for data collection, management and reporting on the provision of housing and services for homeless individuals, families and persons at risk of becoming homeless.

2. **Intake & Triage**

    1. No Wrong Door when accessing services
    2. Develop Reporting Modules
    3. Coordination of Services
    4. Location and mechanism

3. **Horizontally Integrated Case Management**

    1. Data Management and dissemination of information
    2. Reporting Modules for the data needed to support the Goals
    3. Evaluate Outcomes/ Elevate Successes
    4. Rapid Rehousing

4. **Housing**

    1. Create Various Housing throughout region (i.e. inclusive of transitional, convalescent, Emergency shelter, small dormitories self-pay, boarding rooms semi-private & private self-pay, families, Single bedroom apartments self-pay, SRO, long-term / permanent, low-income)
    2. Data/ Daily Coordination

5. **Transportation**

    1. Unified System/ Coordination between Private & Public
    2. Voucher provision by providers and related agencies.

6. **Meal Services**

    1. Coordinate Meal Services (for greater cost efficiencies and effectiveness)
    2. Encourage indoor, safe and sanitary locations

Panel Recommendations related to Homelessness Issues

1. The Panel recommends that a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) be released to seek out a qualified Coordinator for Homeless Services to perform duties as outlined.

2. Panel recommends that a Request for Proposal (RFP) to be drafted incorporating the 6 additional items: Service Provider, Intake & Triage, Horizontally Integrated Case Management, Housing, Transportation and Meal Services.

3. Panel requests additional consideration from the City regarding what services will/will not be allowed within certain geographical areas of the City. (i.e.: meal provisions).

4. The Panel recommends an ongoing regionally coordinated effort throughout the process.

5. Panel respectfully requests that the City review and consider zoning regulations to help facilitate and support the creation of affordable infill housing.

6. Panel recommends the continuation and ongoing coordinated effort between Law Enforcement agencies including, but not limited to, CPD, City Center Partnership Yellow Shirts, Richland & Lexington Counties, service providers, etc.

7. Panel recommends further consideration of the Homeless Court.

8. Panel recommends ongoing efforts towards increased employment through job education & training opportunities as related to the homeless population.

9. Panel suggests further information to be disseminated regarding Panhandling within the City as well as other pertinent Public Service releases.

10. Panel seeks feedback from the City regarding long range planning for homeless services to align with the City's adopted goals.