



**OREGON HOUSING *and*
COMMUNITY SERVICES**

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Sept. 28, 2023

Representative David Gomberg, Co-Chair
Senator Aaron Woods, Co-Chair
Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee On Transportation and Economic Development
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301-4048

Re: Oregon's Emergency Homelessness Response

Co-Chairs Gomberg and Woods, and Members of the Joint Interim Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Transportation and Economic Development:

We at Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) are grateful for our continued partnership with the Oregon Legislature. Thank you for your time and thoughtful questions during yesterday's committee meeting. While we were able to respond to your questions during the hearing, we wanted to provide additional information via written responses:

Balance of State Allocations for Coastal Communities

The Oregon Legislature allocated \$26,135,000 for shelter bed creation and rehousing efforts in the Balance of State through House Bill 5019.

OHCS allocated rehousing funds using a formula that considered available data, including rates of unsheltered homelessness, poverty, and severe rent burden of low-income households.

As part of the competitive allocation process for shelter funds, OHCS received 29 shelter proposals submitted with a total funding request amount of \$37,185,598. The complete list of shelter applications has been provided to Co-Chair Gomberg and LFO. Because of this, OHCS had to make some hard decisions about what projects were most ready and how to ensure geographic diversity in the chosen shelter projects. Of the 11 shelter projects OHCS was able to fund, five were located in coastal counties (Clatsop, Coos, Tillamook, and Lincoln Counties) for a total of \$3,602,157, or over 45% of all shelter funds allocated.

We acknowledge there were even more projects that could not be funded. However, this response effort has even further clarified the need and readiness to increase shelter capacity across the Balance of State, including in coastal communities.

Shelter Project Funding Amounts

Shelter funding through this effort was allocated to create new shelter capacity. However, different communities across the state are getting to that goal in different ways. For some communities, that looks like a new shelter project, but for others a smaller investment from the state would close a gap,



allowing them to add new shelter capacity. In these situations, including in Lincoln County, OHCS was able to utilize limited state funding to maximize impact. Similarly, the Hood River, Wasco, Sherman Counties Local Planning Group brought forward a proposal for a Navigation Center that was previously allocated funding through the Legislature in 2021 but had a funding gap that House Bill 5019 funds were able to fill, thus allowing the project to be completed.

Milestones to Achieving Goals

OHCS’ mandate from the Legislature was very clear for this effort: invest in communities to reach specific measurable outcomes and ensure accountability is present throughout Oregon’s Emergency Homelessness Response effort.

As part of their contracting process with OHCS, local communities were required to list when they anticipated reaching certain milestones in working toward the total shelter bed creation and rehousing goals they committed to. MAC groups were required to outline monthly milestones, and Local Planning Groups will be required to provide quarterly milestones as their contracted period to reach their goals is through June 30, 2025.

All groups participating in this effort will report monthly on outcomes, and OHCS regularly monitors and tracks that information.

We are committed to working with and supporting our partners in finding solutions to produce outcomes wherever possible. Actions to ensure accountability will be tailored to meet local needs but could range anywhere from providing additional technical assistance to overcome specific challenges to deallocating funds from a community if OHCS believes they are not on track to meet their goals.

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I look forward to continuing conversations on our ongoing partnership to address homelessness across the state. On behalf of OHCS and our local partners, thank you for your leadership.

Mike Savara
Special Initiatives Director
Oregon Housing and Community Services

