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Agenda Date: 09/21/2021

Subject:
Resolution 40-2021: Approving the Tri-Cities Homeless Action Plan

Prepared by: Samma Fox, Assistant to the City Manager

PURPOSE:
To adopt the Tri-Cities Homeless Action Plan.

PRESENTATIONS:
Staff Presenter(s): Samma Fox, Assistant to the City Manager
Additional Presenter(s): N/A

SUMMARY:
Three years ago, the Cities of Littleton, Englewood, and Sheridan launched the Tri-Cities Homelessness Policy Committee ("Tri-Cities Committee") to identify challenges and discuss solutions for homelessness in the region. Over the past year, the Tri-Cities Committee worked with stakeholders to study the causes of homelessness and associated challenges in the region. On July 6, 2021 the Draft Tri-Cities Homelessness Plan of Action ("plan of action") was shared with Council for review and comment. Staff from the three cities took the council feedback and made modifications and now the plan of action is before council for approval.

The plan of action includes strategies designed to address specific root causes of homelessness that were identified in the studies. It is organized into four recommendation areas, each with specific projects:

1. Build a strong foundation;
2. Meet the needs of single adults;
3. Identify and encourage workforce opportunities; and
4. Address the needs of families at imminent risk and experiencing homelessness.

The plan of action was adopted by the City of Englewood on September 7th and by the City of Sheridan on September 13th.

PRIOR ACTIONS OR DISCUSSIONS:

- 1/28/2021 - Joint Tri-Council Study Session
- 6/8/2021 - Study Session on Council Goal 6: Housing & Livability
- 7/6/2021 - Study Session on draft Tri-Cities Homeless Plan of Action

ANALYSIS:

Staff Analysis

Background

On January 28th, 2021, the City Councils of the Littleton, Englewood, and Sheridan met with the Tri-Cities Committee. At this meeting, the City Councils heard a report out of the creation of a Political, Economic, Social Technological, Environmental, and Legal (PESTEL) analysis as well as studies conducted by the University of Denver (DU) which were designed to understand the root causes of as well as challenges associated with family and chronic homelessness. The City Councils heard these reports and provided support for the Tri-Cities Committee to work with a consultant to develop a plan of action with concrete action steps and strategies designed to work on the challenges identified in the PESTEL and DU Studies. In June and July, the consultant presented a draft plan of action to the three City Councils in individual study sessions.

Council Feedback

Based on feedback from the Council study sessions, staff added a section to the plan of action which focuses on the development of performance metrics, as well as the collection of data and reporting back to the three Councils and other stakeholders.

Council also asked a few specific questions, which staff has responded to below:

- What about organizations already doing this work? Is this duplicating? - The Tri-Cities Homelessness Policy Group engaged with community partners from the start. While there are a number of service providers on the Tri-Cities Committee, Change the Trend and Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) have been particularly engaged in the studies and development of the action plan in order to ensure it is developed in a manner that best ties into current resources and leverages partnership opportunities.
 - Colorado Coalition for the Homeless - Is a member of Metro Denver's Continuum of Care, under MDHI, who supported the Tri-Cities Homelessness Policy Group with their knowledge of current service providers and programs to ensure complimentary activity and not overlap.
 - Step Denver (a.k.a. Denver13) - Is a residential recovery program focused on men experiencing addiction and is an identified resource.
 - Hospitals - The Tri-Cities Committee worked to engage the hospitals at each phase of their work, including securing funding for the DU Studies, and will continue to work with the hospitals to develop partnership opportunities.
 - Mile High Flood District - Will make sure the coordinator works with the district and others on implementation of the plan.
 - School Districts - The Tri-Cities Committee worked to engage the school districts at each phase of their work and will continue to work with the school districts to develop partnership opportunities, etc.
- Was Bridge House in Littleton in the past? - No. There is an AllHealth facility called Bridge House, which used to be in downtown Littleton and is now off of Santa Fe. This is an Acute Treatment Unit with 16 beds for adults in need of an inpatient stay due to psychiatric or mental health crisis.

Next Steps

Staff believes that the first priority should be to hire a coordinator to begin to implement the action plan. Working as a bridge with the County and other stakeholders, such as Change the Trend, the plan calls for a coordinator who will be responsible for working with the cities and County to implement the plan, as well as to track and report on progress of items included in the plan. Initial priorities for the coordinator include:

- Developing an understanding of financing needed to implement the plan, as well as long-range financing and fiscal sustainability. The Tri-Cities Committee will work with the County, staff members in the three cities, and others to develop an approach to stakeholder engagement and ensuring continued collaboration and an approach to reporting on plan progress.
- Engaging with organizations that provide services to people experiencing homelessness in the Tri-Cities region.
- Development of metrics and establishing processes to collect, analyze, and report on data.

If approved by all three city councils, the Tri-Cities Committee will progress work with the County on the launch of the plan, including the hiring of a coordinator.

Council Goal, Objective, and/or Guiding Principle

The Tri-Cities Homeless Action plan is an action step of Objective 2: Housing Affordability under Goal 6: Housing and Livability.

Fiscal Impacts

Staff proposes placing a “proviso” on funding for implementation of this Action Plan while continuing to develop the coordinator position in partnership with the county and others. The coordinator will then identify resources and partnership opportunities to maximize fiscal sustainability.

Implementation of the recommendations and action steps are estimated at a total of \$750,000, split between the three cities. This estimate does not include funding for the Bridge House Ready to Work program (approximately \$6 million) or a resource navigation center. It is important to note, the three cities are looking to Arapahoe County and other local organizations to reduce the cities’ direct cost.

Alternatives

Not approving this plan may adversely impact partnerships with the Tri-Cities Committee, community service providers, and Arapahoe County, who is actively working to support the Tri-Cities Committee work.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends council approve the Tri-Cities Homeless Action Plan.

PROPOSED MOTION:

I move to approve Resolution 40-2021 approving the Tri-Cities Homeless Action Plan.