



CM 21-029 - Attachment A: COVID -19 Pandemic Response Report

2020 Year-End Report

Executive Summary

Human Services and Homeless Outreach staff have been working through 2020 and continue to work on COVID-19 response to community needs. Leveraging resources and relationships with both internal and external partners including other Eastside cities, King County, and non-profit agencies has been critical to ensuring that the City can effectively plan and respond to new and emerging needs during this unprecedented time.

City of Redmond Response

Funding and Contracting

1. The City quickly pivoted to modify contract requirements, allowing agencies to get paid and continue to shift services to address the impacts of COVID. Most programs were able to switch to virtual services.
2. The application period for 2021-22 human services grant funding opened in the early days of the pandemic. The 16 cities participating in the Human Services Funding Collaborative extended the deadline for grant applications to allow agencies extra time as they were ramping up their emergency response.
3. Proactive surveying of local agencies was undertaken. This ensured that the City was positioned and ready to allocate federal resources based on a clear understanding of local emerging needs. Rental assistance and food support were identified as critical, and support for non-profits to maintain continuity of services, such as reimbursement of technology expenses, was essential.
4. Opportunities for new regional funding sources, like the Seattle Foundation COVID response fund, were carefully tracked so that information regarding grant opportunities could be shared with local providers and the City could advocate for geographic distribution on behalf of our community partners.

CM 21-029 - ATTACHMENT A: COVID -19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE REPORT

2020 Year-End Report

5. \$214,929 in Round 1 Community Development Block Grant – Coronavirus funds were dispersed to support expansion of the Friends of Youth Landing Shelter and Day Center.
6. \$684,820 in CARES Act funds to mitigate effects of COVID-19 was dispersed. This was primarily through grants to local non-profits to provide reimbursement for technology costs to ensure continuity of services, address food insecurity, provide childcare subsidies, and keep families housed by providing rental assistance. In addition, staff launched a website to accept applications for grocery vouchers and provided over \$60,000 in direct food assistance in the form of Safeway gift cards.
7. \$5,000 in County funds was dispersed to address food insecurity by supporting the Redmond United Methodist Church Food Box program.

Homeless Outreach Program

1. A new Homeless Outreach Administrator joined the City in June and quickly worked to stand up services and provide outreach to individuals experiencing homelessness or at-risk of experiencing homelessness in our area.
2. Partnerships were quickly established with the Redmond Police Department (RPD), local agencies and businesses to bring support to homeless individuals and those at-risk of becoming homeless during the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Gaps in resources and services created by the closure of office and civic spaces during the pandemic were quickly identified and addressed. Access to day centers, public phones and computers, and basic commodities such as showers and public restrooms was established.
4. 124 individuals were served between June-December who were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, with 28% achieving permanent housing and 41% reaching their stabilization goals.
5. Flex fund expenditures totaled \$8,000 of the \$10,000 budget and were used for items such as move-in expenses, work attire, identification/driver's license replacements, and travel to reunite people with their stable support systems.

Internal and External Communications

COVID-19 information was timely shared with the community, including limited-English speaking populations (Spanish, Chinese, languages of India, Arabic) using social media, direct email to community-based organizations, web pages, and City of Redmond Communications and Economic Development staff resources.

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2020 Year-End Report

Nonprofit Partners

1. Expansion of emergency shelter and day services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness was made possible through collaboration and funding from other Eastside cities.
2. Most agencies were able to pivot and continue providing critical social services virtually, with slow return to some in-person services.

Regional Partners

1. Redmond staff maintained ongoing participation in King County Pandemic and Racism Advisory Group, advising Public Health Seattle & King County on local needs. These staff acted as the liaison for information dissemination to other North and Eastside cities and provided recommendations on distribution of funding from Seattle Foundation (\$19.375M), United Way of King County, and Public Health.
2. Staff met regularly with other Eastside human services planners to stay abreast of regional and subregional funding sources, to share grant opportunities with non-profit providers, and to advocate for geographic distribution of funds. This sub-regional collaboration helped ensure a coordinated COVID-19 response and optimal leveraging of pooled government resources.