



Human Services

Community Participation Plan



2025-
2027

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Human Services Community Participation Plan



INTRODUCTION

In order to assess future human services needs in the community, it is important to highlight existing and potential stakeholders and survey their experiences, opinions and recommendations for setting human services priorities. Through this engagement, the City can identify gaps, learn what is working well, improve quality and increase access to services.

It is important to approach this work with an equity lens and continue to merge the City's existing work on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) with human services. This process begins by creating an equitable engagement framework. The City's recommends encouraging participation and the involvement of all community members by:

- Connecting with them in meaningful, non-performative, ways.
- Finding and engaging with community members in ways they feel comfortable.
- Reducing barriers to access and participation.

The goal of this Community Participation Plan is to engage with a broad perspective of community stakeholders, and by doing so, increase community engagement, and increase awareness. This includes people whose voices have not traditionally been recognized or heard. This approach uses a wide variety of methods such as surveys, one-on-one meetings, and focus groups. Importantly, this work is done through meeting people where they are to ensure that their voices are heard and included as part of future City decisions about funding and policies.

EXISTING HUMAN SERVICES STRATEGIES

The City provides and supports a broad range of local human services to community members. The services are targeted to alleviate hardships and help individuals in need to access community resources. The City engages in this work in four (4) distinct ways:

1. Direct social service outreach and clean-up response
2. Coordinated efforts with regional and community partners
3. Providing funding to support the work of non-profit and other governmental entities

4. Advocacy for more comprehensive solutions to homelessness at the state and federal level.

In 2024, the City invested around \$1.2 million into a variety of Human Services. Through this work, the goal of the City is to provide and support services in the community built on compassion, public safety, and enhancing the wellbeing of all. Programs and services supported prior to the needs assessment are:

- Affordable Housing and Houseless Services
- Early Learning and At-Risk Youth Services
- Senior Services
- Veterans Services
- Food Insecurity and Nutrition Services
- Hazardous Weather Sheltering Services
- Substance and Alcohol Abuse Treatment Services
- Crime Victim Advocate Services
- Dispute Resolution Services

The City continues to invest in human services by establishing a local Human Services Grant Program (HSGP). With initial funding of \$300,000, the program will provide resources to those in need in our community through an annual comprehensive, transparent and competitive application and award program (pending City Council budget approval).

As part of establishing the new HSGP, the City created an ad hoc Human Services Work Group to evaluate 2024 Grant Applications, assist with a Human Services Needs Assessment, make recommendations on future funding priorities and a future, permanent advisory board.

For the initial program year 2024, the City Council established the following priority areas:

Housing: Expanding and Upgrading Affordable Housing Programs, Emergency Rental Assistance, Housing Education, Creating and Maintaining Supportive Housing Services

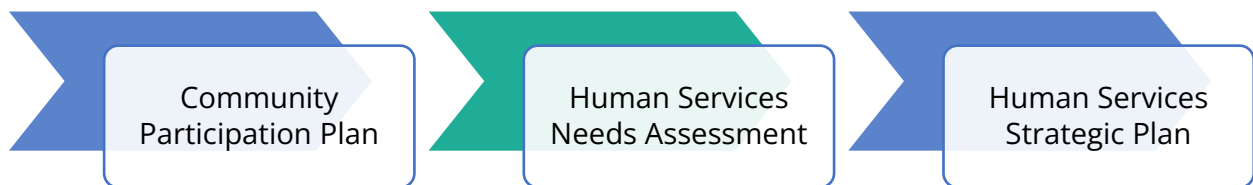
Survival: Access to Food, Water, Shelter, Sleep, Clothing

Security: Job training and placement, mental and physical health care, drug and alcohol recovery services, support in times of personal or family crisis, and transportation.

INTENDED OUTCOMES OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PLAN

The City aspires to include all community members in conversations, decisions, and planning that affects them. While the City has long invested in human services in many ways, a comprehensive human services strategic plan has not been completed. The first step in designing a strategic plan is to do an analysis of stakeholders and existing resources in the community.

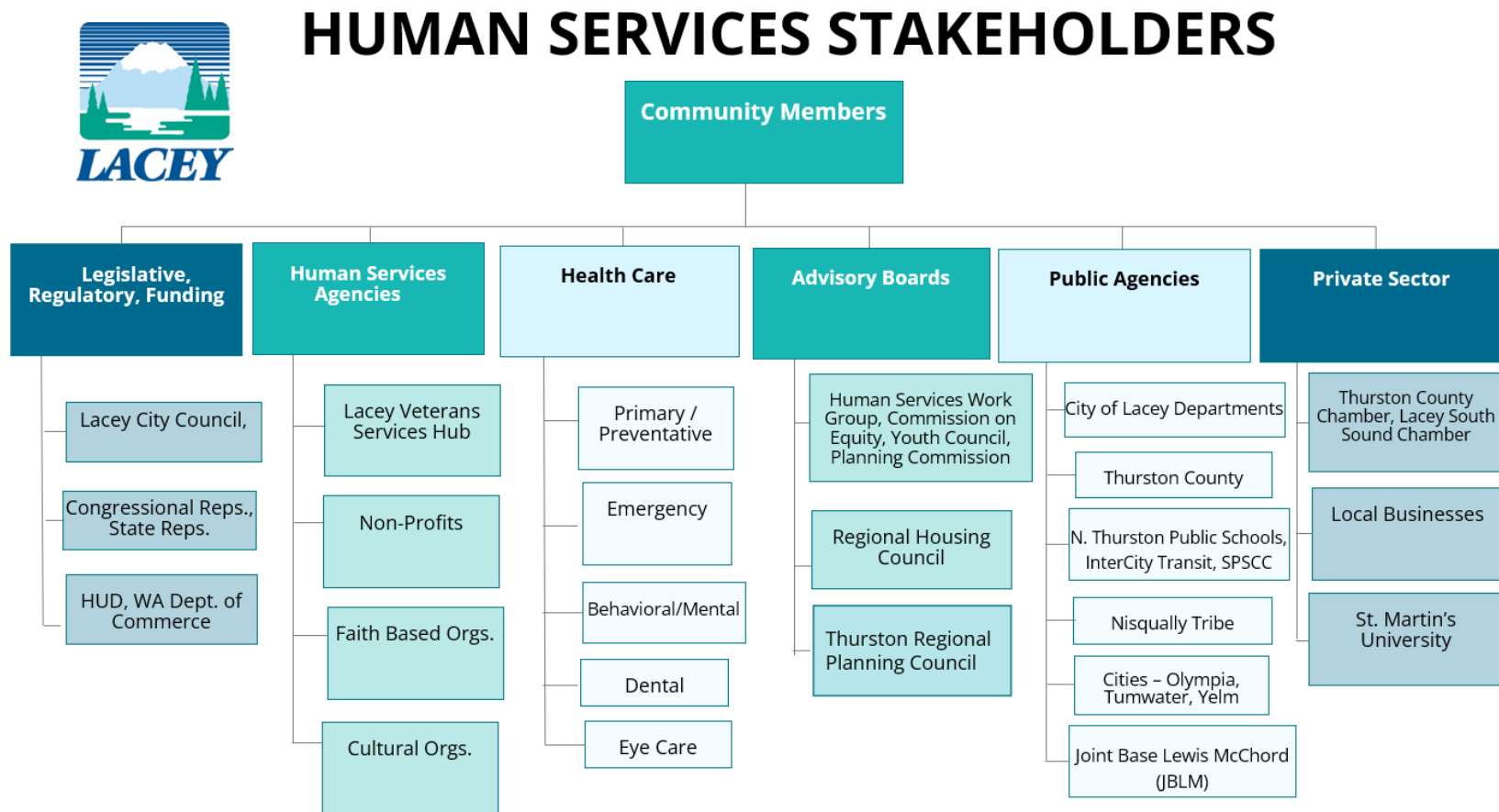
The **Community Participation Plan** will help the City gather feedback from community members and stakeholders, including the Human Services Workgroup. The feedback will inform the **Human Services Needs Assessment** which will result in a **Human Services Strategic Plan**.



IDENTIFYING AND ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

City staff created a list of stakeholders and resources that exist in in the Lacey community. Resources were added to this list based on existing City contracts and relationships, internet research, and information from Thurston County Community Connections, Thurston County Resource Hub, Lacey Veterans Services Hub, Family Resource Guide of Thurston County, and The Crisis Clinic of Thurston and Mason Counties.

Figure 2. Lacey Human Services Stakeholders



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION STRATEGIES

Survey

The City developed a survey of human service needs to be open to the public online for several weeks. This survey will focus on community needs and household needs. A copy of the survey is included in **Appendix A**.

Focus groups

City staff will hold focus groups with a variety of stakeholders, such as those identified in **Figure 2** and the potential participants listed in **Table 1**.

Table 1. List of Potential Focus Group Participants

	Focus Group	Potential Participants (not exclusive and subject to change)
1	Human Services Agencies	Family Support Center, United Way, CYC, Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, CAC of Lewis, Mason, Thurston County, Homes First, Family Education Support Services (FESS), PIPE, Goodwill
2	Public Safety Agencies	Lacey Police, Lacey Fire District #3, Thurston County Sheriff, Joint Animal Services, TCOMM/911
3	Cultural Orgs. / Immigrant Orgs. / Faith Based Groups	CIELO (Centro Integral Educativo Latino de Olympia), COE (Commission on Equity), KWA (Korean Women's Association), Polynesian Association of Thurston County, Fred U. Harris Lodge #70., Phillipino American Community of South Puget Sound, Nisqually Tribe, Islamic Center of Olympia, Michiantla, The Pear Foundation of South Sound, New Life Baptist Church, ASHHO, Divine 9, Jewish and Buddhist Orgs.
4	Veterans Groups	LVSH (Lacey Veterans Services Hub), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Thurston County Veterans Services
5	Transportation Orgs.	LVSH, Intercity Transit (including Dial-a-Lift), Thurston Regional Planning Council
6	Schools	North Thurston Public Schools (Elementary, High School, Middle School), Pope John Paul, Homeschool
7	Seniors	Senior Services of South Sound, Senior Area on Aging, A Home for Mom, Retirement Facilities – Panorama, Jubilee, Bonaventure, Senior Assoc. of LGBTQ, Rebel and Reserve Communities
8	Youth	Lacey Youth Council, Boys and Girls Club, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, TCYFC, BHB Youth Sports Clubs, YMCA, CYS, Daycares, Pizza Clatch (LGBTQ Youth Org.)
9	Physical / Behavioral Health Care	KP, Delta, Providence, Olympic Health and Recovery Services, NAMI, Capital Recovery Services,
10	Private Sector Employers	Lacey Chamber, South Sound Chamber, Economic Development Center, BIPOC group at the Chamber
11	City Departments	Parks, Planning, Public Works, Joint Animal Services
12	Government Agencies	Timberland Regional Library, Thurston County, Olympia and Tumwater
13	Post Secondary Education	SPSCC, St. Martins, Makers Space, ANEW, On-Line Training, Technical Training Schools, Evergreen, New Market Skills Center

Human Services Focus Group Questions

Human Services for the purpose of these conversations are centered around the following core areas: Preventative Health Care, Emergency Health Care, Behavioral Health Care, Dental Care, Eye Care, Housing, Food, Clothing, Employment and Training, Emergency Financial Assistance, Pet Care, Transportation, Child Care, Domestic Violence Services, Low or No Cost Legal Services, Senior Focused Programs, Youth Focused Programs and other services unknown.

1. Tell me about your experience with human services in Lacey?
2. Do you feel that there are gaps in human services in Lacey? If yes, explain where you see the gaps.
3. Where do you feel Lacey is doing well in terms of human services? What are the strengths in government, non-profit, and other community services?
4. Think back to a time when you were searching for services for a Lacey community member or yourself. Were the services readily available? Were you able to successfully refer the community member and get them the help they needed?
5. Thinking through this conversation, what do you feel are the highest priority human service needs in Lacey?

One-on-one questions

The City will try to interview community members who are receiving human services directly to learn more about needs, gaps and strengths within the community. One-on-one interview questions include:

1. Tell me about your experience obtaining human services in Lacey?
2. Where do you think there are gaps in human services in Lacey?
3. What do you think the highest need for human services are in Lacey?

NEXT STEPS

The next steps are direct outreach and engagement as outlined above. The City will then analyze the findings, plan implementation strategies, and determine ways to evaluate

progress. Analysis of findings will be shared with the Lacey Human Services Workgroup and the Lacey City Council.