

HUMAN SERVICES ELEMENT

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HUMAN SERVICES ELEMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Putting a “human face” on the Comprehensive Plan is the foundation for the Human Services Element. As a community, we plan for growth in terms of land use, roads, natural resources, and infrastructure. It is important not to forget the very essence of our community – the people. The Human Services Element focuses on the needs of the individuals who comprise our community. The availability of, and access to, human services is important to all people, regardless of income, family structure, age or cultural background.

The overriding principle is found in the Element’s framework statement: Bainbridge Island will function as a caring community that strives to maintain the well-being of all its members, a community where all members feel connected to the community, and where each individual has opportunities to contribute to the community.

The purpose of the Human Services Element is to create a human services delivery system that will be comprehensive and flexible enough to meet the human services needs of the citizenry, now and in the future. The element has seven goals:

- Implementation of the Element.
- Services to the Agencies.
- Financial Resources.
- Continuum of Services.
- Coordination and Co-location of Facilities.
- Housing and Human Services.
- Economic Health and Human Services.

The Human Services Element recognizes the City’s role in providing the conditions that sustain the delivery of human services, a role the City assumed with Ordinance 93-44. Through the Ordinance and Municipal Codes 2.50 and 3.86, the City established the Health, Housing and Human Services Council (HHHS) to be the City’s official body for human services issues and to provide a funding mechanism whereby the City may disburse general fund money to human services agencies. (See Appendix F for complete text of ordinance and BIMC sections.)

The Human Services Element is the full realization of what was envisioned with the ordinance and codes, and reinforces the two roles of HHHS stated in those documents:

- HHHS shall serve as the primary voice for human services to the City and be an advisory board for human services matters to the Mayor and City Council.
- HHHS shall serve as the coordinating agency for the independent human services agencies.

In its first capacity, HHHS will be responsible for monitoring the implementation and progress of the Human Services Element; the integration of the Human Services Element with all other Comprehensive Plan elements; setting criteria for and allocating City money; and working with Island taxing jurisdictions and regional planners in the delivery of human services.

In its second capacity, HHHS will be the “agency of agencies.” By centralizing many of the activities common to all providers, the human services agencies will be able to more effectively provide direct services, and the community can expect an efficient response to changing human services needs within the community.

In the final analysis, the Human Services Element exists to ensure that the human services needs of the people of Bainbridge Island are met and that they continue to be met even as changes occur with the anticipated population growth.

Population growth results in more complex demands for human services, which, in turn, results in the need for a more structured way to deliver those services.

Bainbridge Island has a long history of people taking care of each other – of providing for the human services needs within the community.

A majority of Bainbridge Islanders has affirmed the value of diversity – a range of age, occupation, ethnicity, and income – in our community¹. A strong human services delivery system helps maintain that diversity.

Although Bainbridge Island often is characterized as an affluent community, there is poverty here; there is homelessness; there are people who don’t always have enough to eat; and there are people who work hard yet have little money left after paying rent.

At the same time, it should be understood that many needs associated with human services are unrelated to income. The availability of, and access to, human services is important to all people, regardless of income, family structure, age or cultural background.

This element offers a framework for action that will play a key role in protecting the community’s most precious resource – its people.

¹ Bainbridge Island Community Values Survey, June 12, 1992, “Focus Group Project Summary of Findings,” p. 6: “As discovered in workshops and the random sample survey, diversity is important to Bainbridge Island residents. ...Participants indicated that they desire diversity in terms of age, ethnic background, and socioeconomics. Concern was frequently expressed for taxing people – especially senior citizens off their property.”

HUMAN SERVICES ELEMENT

“Putting a human face on the Comprehensive Plan ...”

The purpose of the Human Services Element is to provide policy direction for community actions relating to the human services needs of the residents of the City of Bainbridge Island.

DEFINITION

Human services are defined as those services which assist people in meeting the essential life needs of food, clothing, shelter and access to health care. Further, human services:

- Provide people with the tools to achieve economic, social and emotional stability to the best of their ability.
- Offer activities and services that promote healthy development of the individual, prevent problems, and support positive outcomes.
- Support quality of life programs that enhance the health and well-being of the individual and the community.

These services may be provided on an emergency, temporary, or ongoing basis, depending on the circumstances.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT

The City of Bainbridge Island established the Health, Housing and Human Services Council (HHHS) per Ordinance 93-44 on December 16, 1993, to promote and facilitate the development and delivery of health, housing and human services within the City. The Health, Housing, and Human Services Council obtained its non-profit 501(c)(3) status in 1994.

HHHS is designated as the official body of the City empowered to act as the principal advisory board to the Mayor and City Council on matters pertaining to the development and delivery of Island health, housing and human services. The Council is governed by a 12-member board of volunteers representing the community. It is staffed by an Executive Director, and receives financial support from the City and private donations. The City recognizes that the Island's human services community is a complex network of very capable non-profit service agencies. HHHS is needed to maintain the big picture and coordinate the efforts of direct service providers.

The purpose of HHHS is to:

- Support services.
- Foster improvements in the range, delivery and quality of health, housing and human service programs on the Island.
- Ensure access to all in need.
- Facilitate service delivery sensitive to the cultural perspectives of those in need.

The HHHS role is to:

- Implement the Human Services Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- Provide a public forum for issues.
- Promote long-range planning.
- Make recommendations for City allocation of health, housing, and human service funds.
- Make recommendations for allocations from the City's Housing Trust Fund.
- Improve coordination of services for non-profit organizations engaged in the delivery of health, housing, and human services for the Bainbridge Island community.

In conjunction with its role to implement the Human Services Element, HHHS developed the Community Connections for Youth (CCFY) Project (see Appendix A for more information). The CCFY project supported significant progress toward implementing several of the goals of this Element, specifically:

- The Director's Forum brings human service agency directors together at least once a month, providing a high level of coordination and providing a platform for collaborative projects. Directors discuss problems they see in the community and work toward effective solutions. The Directors' Forum includes representatives from the School District and Park District. (Policy 2.1)

- The Human Service Needs Assessment, completed early in 2003, is the first systematic analysis of the needs in our community. This allows HHHS and the human service providers to design programs to address unmet needs. It also provides an opportunity to inform the community of the often poorly understood needs that exist in our otherwise affluent community. (Policy 2.2)
- The Human Services Database, implemented with CCFY grant funding, provides individual agencies with needed computer support of their internal operations. In addition, the collection of core data by all agencies is used to create an aggregate database that gives the human services community a much more complete picture of service trends. Data export is designed so that numbers of common clients can be reported while protecting client anonymity. (Policies 2.3 and 2.4)
- Community Awareness: The Community Connections for Youth project's newsletters and web site keep the community informed of needs and services available in the community. HHHS has an ongoing responsibility to inform the community about needs and to advocate for support of human service providers. (Policies 1.2, 2.3, and 2.8)
- Agencies have established the value of their partnership with the School District. Through the Directors' Forum, the agencies housed on School District property speak with a unified voice on facilities issues. (Policies 5.2 and 5.3)
- Agency training on the youth developmental assets model. (Policy 4.4)

Further implementation of the goals of the Element will be addressed by a steering committee of HHHS, charged with a strategic plan for full implementation of the Element. (Goal 1)

The City provides financial support for non-profit human service providers on an annual basis (Policy 1.4). The Health, Housing and Human Services Council processes applications for funding, interviews applicants, and evaluates project proposals according to its policies. HHHS then presents a proposed Human Services budget to the Mayor and City Council for consideration as part of the City's budget process. Once the budget is approved, HHHS allocates the available funds among the service providers and administers contracts with funded agencies on behalf of the City. In evaluating funding proposals, HHHS works to ensure that recognized needs are met as efficiently as possible. As a fiduciary for the City and its taxpayers, HHHS funds only projects with a very high likelihood of success in meeting community needs, based on the experience and capacity of the direct service agency. HHHS also acts as an advocate for human services providers at budget time. For 2003, the City's funding of human service agencies through HHHS totaled \$240,100.

HHHS has a Contingency Fund, a portion of the City's general fund set aside for meeting human services needs not anticipated in the annual budget. HHHS has a policy for evaluating requests for contingency funds, and forwards approved requests to the City Council for funding.

HHHS pursues private funding (including foundation grants and the Bainbridge Foundation) where possible, but basic administrative and program costs are supported by the City

(Policies 1.4, 3.1 and 3.2). For 2003, the City's contribution to HHHS operations was \$136,640.

HHHS convenes and supports a Citizens' Advisory Board of the Housing Trust Fund to consider proposals for funding through the Trust Fund. The advisory board is composed of members of the HHHS board and representative community members. Its recommendations are forwarded to the Housing Trust Fund Executive Committee and then on to the City Council for action. (Policy 6.2)

COMMUNITY PROFILE

In November and December 2002, the Health, Housing and Human Services Council (HHHS) contracted with PRR, Inc. to conduct a needs assessment with a special focus on identifying the unmet needs, or gaps, in human services. This assessment is an important first step to begin addressing unmet needs and to align the City's human services funding with our community's needs.

To create an up-to-date picture of the Island's population, census data and other information such as Bainbridge Island and Kitsap County agency reports, City of Bainbridge Island data and Bainbridge Island resident surveys were utilized.

In addition, PRR surveyed 82 Bainbridge Island human service providers and other persons knowledgeable about Island human services and needs to determine which needs are being met, and where there are gaps in services.

To conclude the needs assessment, PRR conducted focus groups with consumers of human services (seniors, youths, and single parents) as well as with community opinion leaders to further understand the Island's human service needs.

There was an excellent response to the assessment and we received consistent feedback and information from survey respondents and focus group participants.

Our Changing Population²

Bainbridge Island's population is growing and changing. Compared with both Kitsap County and the state as a whole, our population has grown significantly in the past decade, increasing by almost 30% between 1990 and 2000. However, the growth rate is expected to slow in the next five years to only about 3% between 2002 and 2007.

Perhaps even more significant than the sheer increase in numbers is how our community is changing. Only about a third of households have school-aged children while the percentage of female-headed households with school-aged children continues to rise. Based on current figures and projections to 2007, we can expect fewer young children (0-9 year-olds) and a decrease in the percentage of adults in the main childbearing years (24-44 year-olds).

On the other hand, we can expect many more middle-aged persons and pre-retirees (45-64 year-olds) with the percentage of residents 85 and older also expected to increase. Thus, Bainbridge Island is both growing and graying. This will result in increased demand for human services, especially for services designed to meet the needs of an older population.

² The information contained in this section was produced by Pacific Rim Resources as part of the 2002 Needs Assessment using the data available at the time. The City is in the process of updating population projections for 2025 and projected growth rates are expected to increase.

Needs Amidst Affluence

Compared to Kitsap County and Washington State, Bainbridge Island is characterized by higher education levels, lower unemployment, higher median incomes, fewer female-headed households, higher rates of homeownership and less crime. However, real human service needs exist and there is less affluence on Bainbridge Island than commonly assumed. 7.5% of Bainbridge Island children live in poverty and nearly one out of four households (23.7%) has an annual income of less than \$35,000.

It's not surprising that fully 70% of survey respondents feel that increasing housing costs have made a major impact on the human services system, and that the ability of people to afford to live on Bainbridge Island is perceived to have decreased. The reality of human service needs within a relatively affluent community has created a special human services dilemma: Since Bainbridge Island's needs are less visible, there is a perception that most people's needs are met, and consequently it's hard for people to ask for services.

SURVEY RESULTS

Our community's strong commitment to our human services system is demonstrated by City funding, private donations, volunteer activity and support from local non-profits, the school district, the park district, the fire district and City government. Survey respondents report that many human service needs are well met through an extensive human services system of skilled service providers.

While the majority of human service needs are being met, there are some needs that are perceived as not being met well. These are areas of need where there is a significant gap between the perception of how big a need is and the ability of providers to meet the need.

The largest perceived gaps are in:

- Affordable assisted living for seniors.
- Affordable medical and dental care.
- Affordable housing options.
- Alcohol abuse among youth.
- Drug abuse among youth.
- Child care for special needs children.
- Adult day care.

These areas were also identified as growing needs in the last 12 months.

Focus Group Findings

Focus group participants identified their top human service concerns. Seniors noted a lack of medical and dental services, affordable prescriptions, adult day care, companionship opportunities and mental health services on the Island.

Youth noted a lack of family planning, rape, assault and suicide prevention services, as well as the need for a stronger vocational track in the school system.

Single parents noted the need for domestic violence services, child care for parents who work off the Island and services for special-needs children. They echoed the sentiments of youth through their desire for a stronger emphasis on vocational training in the school system.

Challenges

In the big picture of human service needs, several challenges remain.

Awareness of Needs and Service System

Providers, consumers and public opinion leaders believe there is a general lack of awareness of both Bainbridge Island's human service needs and the existing human services system.

Access to Existing Services

In addition to the lack of awareness, about two-thirds of those surveyed believe there are reasons people can't access the existing human services system. These reasons, also noted by focus group participants, include:

- Perceived stigma associated with using services. Prosperity and affluence have set a high standard, making it harder for those in need.
- Concerns about confidentiality. Going to a human service provider is believed to be noticed in such a small community.
- Transportation problems. Public transportation options are perceived to be oriented toward the needs of commuters and less toward the needs of those traveling on the Island during non-commute hours.

Moving Forward

With the information gained, the Health Housing and Human Services Council plans to:

- Share the information as broadly as possible.
- Create a steering committee and action teams to work on developing action plans to address the unmet human service needs.
- Continue to work with the City and human service agencies to develop policies and funding that support needed improvements in our human services system.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Framework Statement

Bainbridge Island will function as a caring community that strives to maintain the well-being of all its members, a community where all members feel connected to the community, and where each individual has opportunities to contribute to the community.

The following goals and policies are written to ensure that people receive the human services they need.

Framework Values

1. Dignity is the hallmark of human services delivery on Bainbridge Island.
2. Respect for the individual is an integral part of human services delivery on Bainbridge Island.
3. Neighborliness and a sense of community form the foundation of human services.
4. Diversity within the population is important to the community.
5. Cooperation and coordination among human services providers, including the taxing districts, strengthens the human services delivery system, which results in better service for people.

Discussion: These values are interwoven throughout the goals and policies and are the standard against which the goals and policies must be measured.

GOAL 1

IMPLEMENT THE HUMAN SERVICES ELEMENT

Designate the Health, Housing and Human Services Council (HHHS), a non-profit Washington Corporation, as the official body of the City empowered to act on all matters pertaining to the implementation (including coordination and delegation) of the goals and policies of the Human Services Element of the Comprehensive Plan consistent with the provisions of the Bainbridge Island Municipal Code and the Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion: In 1993, the City recognized its role in human services and the City Council passed Ordinance 93-44 (see Appendix F) designating the Bainbridge Island Health, Housing and Human Services Council as the “legally constituted non-profit corporation of the State of Washington whose principal purpose will be to provide coordinated services, financial support, and long-range planning for non-profit organizations engaged in the delivery of health, housing, and human services in the City.”

The Human Services Element is the City's work plan to implement this ordinance and sections of the City's Municipal Code.

HSE 1.1

HHHS shall be responsible for monitoring the implementation and progress of the Human Services Element, and reporting on same to the City and community on a regular basis.

HSE 1.2

HHHS shall serve as the primary voice of the human services community to the City.

Discussion: This role is legislated in Ordinance 93-44 and Bainbridge Island Municipal Code 2.50.020A: "Serve as the primary voice for health, housing and human services within the City and as the principal advisory board to the mayor and City Council."

HSE 1.3

HHHS, as the official body of the City, shall have appropriate staffing, funding for which shall be included in the allocation to HHHS for administrative costs.

Discussion: It is crucial that the human services sector be involved in the dialog and decisions made at city level.

HSE 1.4

HHHS shall be responsible for setting criteria for and allocating City of Bainbridge Island general fund money to non-profit human service agencies located on Bainbridge Island that provide direct services to assist in meeting the human services needs of Bainbridge Island residents.

Discussion: This policy forms the basis for future discussions on an appropriate level of public support. HHHS may recommend a funding formula for City support, recognizing that there may be limitations to the level of support available in any given year. It is the intent for HHHS to allocate City funds and assure accountability for contracted services while recognizing the autonomy of each agency in the management of its agency.

HSE 1.5

HHHS shall be responsible for the integration of the Human Services Element with other Comprehensive Plan elements.

Discussion: It is vital that all decisions, policies and regulations made by the City consider the impact and implications on human services. When land use, transportation, capital facilities, and economic decisions are made, there should be an attempt to understand the ramifications those decisions may have on human services. HHHS will work to establish open lines of communication with the City's executive department, legislative committees and staff in order to identify opportunities and barriers to the integration of the HSE in all City decisions, policies and regulations.

HSE 1.6

HHHS shall collaborate with the Island taxing jurisdictions to build a comprehensive and affordable safety net of human services.

HSE 1.7

HHHS should work with regional planners for the delivery of human services.

GOAL 2

SERVICES TO HUMAN SERVICES PROVIDERS

Support and create opportunities that facilitate coordination, collaboration, communication, and cooperation among Human Services organizations.

Intent: Public and private human services providers will benefit from an agreed-upon structure that consolidates, centralizes and manages some of the activities common to all within the human services community.

Discussion: HHHS will provide the “scaffolding” that supports the delivery system. The better the system functions, the better the people who use human services will be served. The key to this goal is the “agreed-upon structure.”

HSE 2.1

HHHS shall regularly convene agency administrators and/or representatives from the Bainbridge Island human services organizations and taxing districts to serve as a forum for discussion and planning regarding issues confronting human services.

HSE 2.2

HHHS shall develop a comprehensive needs assessment and resultant planning effort.

Discussion: The needs assessment, updated periodically, will help identify emerging problems in the community and assist in coordinating planning efforts to respond to the needs and assess appropriate levels of City funding.

HSE 2.3

HHHS shall be responsible for consistent collecting and reporting of data for the city, other agencies, and the community.

HSE 2.4

HHHS shall ensure the existence and maintenance of a comprehensive database of information on agency activity for use by the human services community, the City and other taxing districts, and the general public.

Discussion: The data on human services usage and financial activity will establish an authoritative database of statistics that will be of use in a variety of ways, including but not limited to evaluating requests for funding from the City and assisting agencies in their grant applications. The database will provide a clear picture of the demographics of services over time and serve as a program and services planning tool. The process of creating such a

database should incorporate appropriate existing databases from agencies wherever possible and appropriate. The confidentiality of people using human services must be protected.

HSE 2.5

HHHS should ensure the existence of a central directory of local, regional, state, and federal human services organizations.

HSE 2.6

HHHS should ensure efficient use of public resources by avoiding unnecessary duplication of services and encouraging cooperation among agencies that serve similar populations.

Discussion: This is intended to provide constructive guidance, not to prohibit healthy competition.

HSE 2.7

HHHS should promote volunteerism for the human services sector.

HSE 2.8

HHHS should initiate, sponsor or conduct, alone or in cooperation with other public or private agencies, programs or activities to promote public awareness of human services.

GOAL 3

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Develop fiscal stability of Bainbridge Island's human services organizations.

HSE 3.1

HHHS, as the official body of the City, shall endeavor to fund the implementation of the Human Services Element based on annual prioritized need through public and private sources.

HSE 3.2

HHHS should develop public/private partnerships to broaden the funding base for human services organizations.

HSE 3.3

HHHS should identify new funding sources for human services organizations.

HSE 3.4

HHHS should assist non-profit human services organizations in developing good financial practices.

GOAL 4

CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

Ensure a range of services is available to people who need them by promoting and supporting³ a variety of affordable and physically accessible human services programs.

Intent: It is important to recognize that there are priorities along the continuum of needs, with basic survival being the highest priority. The City's role is to support the local agencies that provide the delivery of human services, thereby ensuring that essential services are available.

HSE 4.1

The City, through HHHS and other appropriate agencies, shall support programs that meet the basic needs of survival such as food, clothing, shelter and access to emergency health care.

HSE 4.2

The City, through HHHS and other appropriate agencies, shall support programs that meet the crisis needs of vulnerable populations.

Discussion: This includes programs that provide public health services and emergency shelter for victims of domestic violence and youth in crisis situations.

HSE 4.3

The City, through HHHS and other appropriate agencies, should support preventative and early intervention programs, emphasizing programs (e.g., job training and parenting classes) that work to prevent social problems that negatively affect the health, safety, and well-being of the community.

HSE 4.4

The City, through HHHS and other appropriate agencies, should support programs and activities that maintain and enhance the health and quality of life of target populations.

HSE 4.5

The City, through HHHS and other appropriate agencies, should support programs that provide needed services for families, e.g., child or adult day care and respite care for caregivers.

HSE 4.6

The City, through HHHS and other appropriate agencies, should promote and support programs designed to allow people who need assistance to remain in their homes as long as possible.

³ Throughout the goals and policies, we use the term "support" to allow for a variety of options, including but not limited to financial support, commendations, awards, staffing and materials.

HSE 4.7

The City, through HHHS and other appropriate agencies, should promote partnerships between private and public sectors to expand the options for a wide variety of programs.

HSE 4.8

The City, through HHHS and other appropriate agencies, should promote development of a transportation system that addresses the physical accessibility to human services both on and off the Island.

Discussion: Refer to back sections on Gaps and Problems Facing Agencies on page 9.

GOAL 5

FACILITY DEVELOPMENT

Support coordination and co-location of facilities.

Discussion: Program and administrative space is expensive. The cost can take money away from direct client services and be prohibitive to expansion to meet growing needs. It is in the best interests of the human services sector and the community at large to share space and seek cooperative funding for capital projects.

HSE 5.1

HHHS shall undertake a feasibility study of facility needs of the human services sector.

HSE 5.2

HHHS should coordinate with the public and private sectors to develop methods to address the facility and utilities needs of the human services community.

Discussion: This includes encouraging compatible mixed use of facilities wherever possible to meet administrative and program needs of human services providers.

HSE 5.3

HHHS should encourage the compatible and efficient use and sharing of existing, as well as future, facilities by human services providers.

GOAL 6

HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES

Recognize the interrelationship between housing and human services.

Intent: Human Services Element complements the Housing Element, which deals primarily with the development, retention and construction of affordable housing.

Discussion: The human services sector not only provides support services for those living in affordable housing, but also enables people at risk or in crisis situations to remain in their existing housing.

HSE 6.1

The City, through HHHS and other appropriate agencies, should support emergency rental assistance subsidies.

HSE 6.2

HHHS shall provide a Community Advisory Board of the Housing Trust Fund per Ordinance 99-45.

HSE 6.3

HHHS, working with other appropriate agencies, shall monitor the impact of the cost and supply of housing on human services.

HSE 6.4

HHHS, working with other appropriate agencies, shall monitor the housing needs of people served by the human services sector.

HSE 6.5

HHHS should advocate for affordable housing.

GOAL 7

ECONOMIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Recognize the interrelationship between economic health of the community and human services.

Intent: One intention of this goal is to monitor, and if necessary advocate for, employment opportunities that provide a living wage and basic benefits to reduce the dependence on certain human services. A second intention is to recognize the contribution of human services to the community's economic well-being by supporting individuals' efforts to be productive members of the community. This support has many forms, including but not limited to, child care, job skills training, and transportation vouchers.

HSE 7.1

The City shall serve as a model employer and an example to the larger community in addressing their employees' human services needs.

HSE 7.2

HHHS should work with local business organizations to encourage the creation of jobs that reflect good business practices, e.g., job training, employee benefits, family wages.

HSE 7.3

The City, through HHHS and other appropriate agencies, should encourage businesses that actively support human services for workers and their families, e.g., provide on-site child care, transportation subsidies, flexible work hours.

Discussion: Incentives may include, but are not limited to, tax benefits and annual awards.

HSE 7.4

The City should stress access to jobs, especially for lower-income people, youth workers, and people with disabilities, when involved with planning local and regional transportation systems.