

Home, Opportunity, Planning, and Engagement (HOPE) Advisory Board

Staff Report for July 8, 2026 HOPE Meeting

Overview

At the April HOPE meeting, CHRO staff provided an overview of Benton County's role as the Regional Coordinator for the HB 3644 Statewide Shelter Program (SSP). Since that time, the funding outlook for Phase 2 SSP has become significantly clearer and presents substantial challenges for maintaining Benton County's current shelter system.

The purpose of this report is to update the HOPE Advisory Board on the anticipated impacts of those funding reductions. While CHRO continues to make meaningful progress strengthening Benton County's coordinated homeless response system, those improvements depend on maintaining sufficient shelter capacity. Without additional resources, reductions in shelter capacity will affect not only people experiencing homelessness, but also healthcare, behavioral health, public safety, and other community systems.

A summary of recent CHRO accomplishments is included later in this report to illustrate how shelter capacity supports the broader work underway across our regional homelessness response system.

SSP Update and Funding Shortfalls

As the Regional Coordinator for the Statewide Shelter Program (SSP), Benton County is required to submit a Regional Assessment and Plan to Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS). The plan identifies regional shelter needs, establishes shelter priorities, and outlines how available SSP funding will be used to support local shelter operations.

The CHRO submitted a draft Regional Assessment and Plan to OHCS on June 29, 2026. Because the Board of Commissioners had not yet reviewed Benton County's proposed shelter bed goal and funding allocations, the draft intentionally omitted those sections.

On July 7, 2026, CHRO staff are presenting the Regional Assessment and Plan to the Board of Commissioners, meeting info available at [Board of Commissioners Meeting • Benton County, Oregon Public Portal • CivicClerk](#). The proposed shelter bed goal and funding recommendations reflect the level of shelter capacity that can be sustained under currently available Phase 2 SSP funding. Because available funding during our Phase 2 implementation period is substantially lower than during Phase 1, the plan reflects the shelter capacity that can be sustained under currently available resources.

Phase 2 Funding Reality

Phase 2 SSP funding is insufficient to maintain Benton County's existing shelter system. Previous shelter capacity was made possible through a combination of SSP funding and several temporary state funding sources that are no longer available. Key considerations include:

- Funding available during Phase 2 SSP implementation period is significantly lower than Phase 1 implementation period.
- Previous shelter capacity was supported through a combination of SSP, OPSS, HB 5019, and other one-time funding sources that are no longer available.
- Without additional funding or replacement resources, Benton County will experience a reduction in shelter bed capacity during FY 2026-27.
- Staff will continue pursuing local, state, federal, and philanthropic funding opportunities to reduce these impacts.

Shelter Capacity

The CHRO recommended to the BOC that a “planned shelter bed capacity” that aligns with the table below, however due to funding uncertainty, this capacity is not guaranteed beyond March 2027. Additionally, this planned shelter capacity represents a 66% reduction in shelter capacity compared to shelter capacity during Phase 1 implementation period.

Total shelter capacity will decline later in the fiscal year unless additional funding is secured.

Shelter Program	Planned Capacity	Current Funding Outlook
Emergency Hotel Shelter	13 beds (through October 2026)	Hotel Shelter will cease beyond October 2026 unless additional funding is secured.
Men's Shelter	50 beds (through March)	Funding beyond March 2027 remains uncertain
Room at the Inn	50 beds (through March)	Funding beyond March 2027 remains uncertain
Safe Place	34-38 beds	Supported through current funding until 6/30/27
Jackson Street Youth Services	10 beds	Supported through current funding until 6/30/27

Recommended Funding Approach

Staff recommended to the BOC on 7/7/26 that Benton County's Phase 2 award continues to fund the current Phase 1 shelter providers rather than conducting a competitive funding process.

This recommendation is intended to:

- preserve existing low barrier shelter capacity for as long as possible;
- minimize disruption to shelter providers and the people they serve;
- maintain continuity of operations while additional funding opportunities are pursued; and
- avoid unnecessary administrative burden during a period of declining resources.

Funding allocations continue to follow the same proportional methodology used during Phase 1 SSP.

Community Impact

The impacts of declining shelter capacity extend beyond the homelessness response system.

Reduced shelter capacity increases pressure on:

- behavioral health and crisis services;
- emergency departments and emergency medical services;
- law enforcement;
- parks, libraries, and other public spaces;
- community organizations serving vulnerable residents.

Staff will continue working with local partners, other Oregon counties, and Benton County's legislative advocates to communicate these impacts and pursue a more stable, predictable, and sustainable funding framework for local shelter systems. The Board's support will be essential to reinforce the importance of stable and predictable shelter funding for communities across Oregon.

What we need from the HOPE Board Members

The leaders on the HOPE Board represent various sectors across the spectrum of housing, human services, local government, and health systems. HOPE Members have access to forums at the leadership level where advocacy can occur beyond the scope of CHRO's reach. As a community, we need our HOPE leaders to do the following:

- Engage in advocacy at the local and state level for increased funding for emergency sheltering.
- Articulate how the reduced shelter funding will negatively impact your sectors.
- Advocate for utilizing additional state funding to keep our shelters open to avoid the costs that will be incurred in your sector due to shelter closures.

CHRO Staff Progress Update on Operational Work – Summer 2026

Since we last met, the CHRO has been working in the following areas to create a coordinated system to respond to homelessness:

- Engaging the community and draft a Regional Assessment and Plan for shelter in Benton County as the Regional Coordinator for the HB 3644 Statewide Shelter Program (SSP).
- CHRO continues to serve as the lead entity for the state's rapid rehousing initiatives, as well as running the Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool (FHSP) Program.
- The FHSP is beginning to enroll our next round of 31 households while collaboratively rolling out a new Universal Referral Form (URF) for referrals to housing with community partners.
- CHRO is working collaboratively with the Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center (CDDC), law enforcement, city parks, and county behavioral health to coordinate street outreach and encampment response with a housing focus and targeted neighborhood focus areas with funding from the Housing 360 grant.

Together, these roles position the CHRO at the center of regional planning for the breadth of someone's housing journey from unsheltered homelessness to shelter to housing transition, ensuring that Benton County has a unified approach to addressing homelessness across the entire continuum.

The CHRO continues to lead conversations and implementation of strategies to leverage other funding and cost saving strategies. We need continued leadership support and participation for CHRO's system improvements to maintain momentum. In addition, Benton County is facing a significant funding shortfall for emergency shelter that will impact both the street outreach and encampment response, as well as the transition to permanent housing. Stabilizing a household in shelter provides a critical component on the journey from unsheltered homelessness to housing. Without additional funding, we will be facing shelter closures that will impact the other parts of the housing journey.

The foundational work described in this update is designed to coordinate across the spectrum from unsheltered homelessness, shelter stays, and permanent housing so that we can have one streamlined, accountable regional system. This work includes building shared processes, supporting partner alignment, and strengthening the infrastructure needed for coordinated assessment, referrals, outreach, and data collection.

Local Planning Group process to create a Regional Assessment of gaps and needs.

The CHRO is utilizing prior local plans from HB 5019 and our Strategic Plan which aligns with the HOPE Recommendations. We engaged our Local Planning Group which includes homeless service providers, health care, behavioral health, supported housing, school district, day use and hygiene providers, etc. This

outreach and engagement included two Local Planning Group meetings, as well as various smaller group weekly meetings and 1:1 meetings with the Executive Directors of our low barrier shelters. The CHRO will present the Regional Plan to the Benton County Commissioners at their Board meeting on July 7, 2026, meeting info available at [Board of Commissioners Meeting • Benton County, Oregon Public Portal • CivicClerk](#). The CHRO is committed to meeting our state requirements and ensuring our local community partners remain involved at every step.

Informing the Statewide Sheltering Program (SSP) with ongoing feedback to the state about the structure and funding.

CHRO staff continue to attend multiple meetings with various divisions at Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) that disburses the state funding for emergency shelter and rapid rehousing. The CHRO's attendance and involvement in a variety of meetings and work groups directly informs state guidelines and program structure. CHRO staff communicate local community feedback in these state forums. We elevate issues to the county Board of Commissioners (BOC) where elected leadership is necessary for advocacy.

CHRO Updates to the Board of Commissioners (BOC).

On May 12, 2026, the CHRO presented to the BOC with information from a shelter bed survey that identified all funding sources, scope of services, and available beds to provide the state with accurate data and information. CHRO staff engaged shelter providers (Unity, COI, Jackson Street Youth Services, and Faith Hope & Charity) to ensure accurate information is being provided to our state partners. The CHRO made it clear to county leadership that we are facing a substantial shortfall in state funding for emergency shelter and we are attempting to leverage other funding sources like Medicaid but continue to not have access to HRSN reimbursement. Without additional local funding for shelter, our low barrier shelters will be facing closure before the end of the fiscal year.

CHRO staff continue to work closely with the City of Corvallis.

CHRO and City partners are working to align the scope of services supported by city and county homelessness funding with the expectations of the Statewide Shelter Program (SSP). This collaboration is focused on creating consistent, integrated service standards that strengthen our regional system and ensure local investments directly support our shared state mandated shelter and rehousing objectives. This includes ongoing coordination around funding priorities and key properties, such as Van Buren and Harrison, to ensure local infrastructure planning complements our regional obligations.

Improved Referral Pathways and Accurate Data Collection

The CHRO is working in partnership with Corvallis Housing First (CHF), shelter providers, and other housing supports to create a Universal Referral Form (URF) and coordinated process that all community partners can utilize to make referrals for supported housing. The CHRO is piloting this form in summer 2026 to continue to refine the form with community partner feedback. The FHSP is beginning to enroll our next round of 31 households while collaboratively rolling out a new Universal Referral Form (URF) for referrals to housing with community partners.

The CHRO is hosting in-person training work sessions in summer and fall with community partners across the service spectrum to ensure our community feels prepared to use this form and make referrals to housing in a collaborative way.

Improving our referral pathways and data requires updating our documentation to create a universal assessment and intake form that can be used by all providers in the coordinated homeless response system. Improvements in data and coordinated referrals also require adoption of the new coordinated entry (CE) assessment tool and consistent input of the CE data into our homelessness management information system (HMIS) so all providers can see these updates. The CHRO continues to work on capacity building, training, and consistency in using these documents and processes.

Throughout the winter and spring, the CHRO has done outreach and engagement on this topic area with all homeless service providers, as well as staff from Adult Treatment Court, Deflection, and Forensic Diversion. The CHRO has worked to communicate the importance of our mutual accountability to each other. In the past month, CHRO has taken over leadership of the twice monthly coordinated entry case conferencing formerly hosted by Community Services Consortium (CSC). As a community we have repurposed this collaborative case conferencing meeting to prioritize households for available housing, as well as pilot the Universal Referral Form (URF) with the first cohort of new enrollees in the FHSP.

The CHRO will benefit from leadership support for staff to attend in-person trainings in August and September 2026 for a coordinated roll out of this new Universal Referral Form.

Street Outreach and Encampment Response.

The CHRO is coordinating meetings with the Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center (CDDC), law enforcement, city parks, and county behavioral health to coordinate street outreach and encampment response with a housing focus and targeted neighborhood focus areas with funding from the Housing 360 grant. The CHRO has executed a contract with the CDDC to begin adding staff capacity for housing-focused street outreach.

Discussion on this topic has revolved around the following components:

- a. Increased staff capacity with funding from Housing 360 grant for the street outreach and response team (SORT) side of encampment response. (Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center)
- b. Connectivity to sheltering. CHRO working to make sure there is shelter capacity at Unity Shelter.
- c. Coordination and collaboration with Corvallis Parks & Rec and Corvallis Police Department (CPD).
- d. City working on rehabilitation of two properties for next step housing transition capacity.
- e. Neighborhood focus areas – multijurisdictional response team included discussions with Parks & Rec, CPD, CDDC, and county BH.
- f. Discussed the structure and possibilities for shared agreements between service provision and enforcement. Accountability to each other with transparent understanding that housing transition is the goal for this street outreach.

The CHRO has also hosted collaborative meetings with these partners to identify metrics to measure outcomes for improved housing-focused street outreach. The CHRO submitted our outcome metrics to OHCS in June 2026 and awaits feedback from the state.