

Advisory Board Project PATH  
Minutes  
January 26, 2023

A. Roll Call-

Present - Commissioner Dorran, City Managers; Stockdale, Smith, Slaght and Benberger.

Others: Stepping Stones Alliance Members; Kris Barnum and Chuck Barnes. City of Umatilla Community Development Manager, Esmeralda Perches and Carla McLane.

B. Vote for Chair-

Commissioner Dorran motioned to vote City Manager Stockdale as Chair of the advisory board. Motioned seconded by City Manager Slaght. Motion carried.

C. Quarterly Report -

City Manager Stockdale reviewed quarterly report with board.

*Transportation* - City Manager Stockdale mentioned meeting with Kayak to discuss transportation needs for Project PATH site. Discussion to provide own shuttle if Kayak says no or as a temporary solution.

*Strategic Plan* - Discussion of Strategic Plan underway, City Manager Stockdale notified group Carla McLane has been hired to assist with the Strategic Plan. City Manager Stockdale notified group that other pilot programs are also having a difficult time meeting the deadline for the Strategic Plan and will see what needs to be done to request an extension.

*Budget* – City Manager Slaght asked the status of longevity funds for continued operations. City Manager Stockdale notified the group that Ducote Consultants have been hired to assist in searching for grant funding for continued operations. City Manager Stockdale presented Project PATHs annual budget and requested a motion to confirm budget. Commissioner Dorran motioned to confirm budget. City Manager Benberger seconded the motion. Motion carried.

*Partnerships* – City Manager Stockdale asked Commissioner Dorran if we can use the County's agreement with CCS or does Project PATH need to develop its own. Commissioner Dorran stated it would be best to use the County's agreement, but will follow up with Kim and get back to the group.

*Sleep Center*- City Manager Stockdale asked Stepping Stones Alliance representatives if it would be possible to add a couple questions to the guest intake form such as: How did you hear about the Sleep Center and How did you arrive to the community? Kris Barnum noted the questions for follow up.

*Format*- City Manager Stockdale asked the group if they were okay with the information on the quarterly report and if there is other information they would like included. The board unanimously agreed on the quarterly report format and information as presented.

D. Other items –

Commissioner Dorran requested some sort of acknowledgment be made to Mike Atkinson for the temporary use of his building. The board agreed.

E. Adjourn-

City Manager Smith motioned to adjourn meeting at 9:57am. Motioned seconded by City Manager Slaght. Motion carried.

**Carla McLane Consulting, LLC**  
**170 Van Buren Drive**  
**Umatilla, Oregon 97882**  
**541-314-3139**  
[mclane@eoni.com](mailto:mclane@eoni.com)

---

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Project PATH Advisory Board  
From: Carla McLane  
Date: February 20, 2023  
RE: Strategic Plan

---

Enclosed for your review and comment is a first draft of the Strategic Plan for Project PATH. The Table of Contents includes:

- Introduction
- Vision, Mission, and Values
- Project Description
- Advisory Committee, Contractor, and Partners
- Funding
- Words and Phrases to Know
- Strategic Plan
- Implementation

At a current page count of 13 and some meat still needed the final document I would think will be about 20 pages in length. As you look through the document you will find some **red type** which means I have a question (or two or three). I have not yet met with the project contractor and am working to schedule that in mid-March which should provide significant clarity on a lot of fronts. But some direction I believe needs to come from the Advisory Board concerning the goals and outcomes desired for Project PATH.

At the meeting on Thursday, if time allows, I would like a few minutes to touch base at the 30,000-foot level on the following:

1. Vision, Mission, and Values – is this for the Board to set? Or is this where The Stepping Stones Alliance can make their statement.
2. Funding – how much input into the funding and budget, other than annual approval, does the Board want?
3. Words and Phrases to Know – homelessness versus houselessness? And equity or equal opportunity? Thoughts and direction please.
4. Strategic Plan – do you want to provide your input now? Or let the contractor take the first cut at this?
5. Implementation – do you want to provide your input now? Or let the contractor take the first cut at this?
6. Not on the Table of Contents but I would like to talk about timing and adoption.

Looking forward to the ongoing conversation. See you all on Thursday morning.

# Project PATH

---

Practical Assistance through  
Transitional Housing

5-Year Strategic Plan

## Table of Contents

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Introduction   | Page 3  |
| Vision, Mission, and Values  | Page 4  |
| Project Description  | Page 5  |
| Advisory Committee, Contractor, and Partners   | Page 6  |
| Funding  | Page 8  |
| Word and Phrases to Know/Acronyms  | Page 9  |
| Strategic Plan   | Page 12 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Goal Area #1</li><li>• Goal Area #2</li><li>• Goal Area #3</li><li>• Goal Area #4</li><li>• Goal Area #5</li></ul>   |         |
| Implementation   | Page 13 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify funding to support the ongoing operations.</li><li>• Increasing or streamlining resources and services to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness within the participating cities and counties.</li><li>• Incorporating national best practices for ending homelessness.</li><li>• Eliminating racial disparities within homeless services within the service area.</li><li>• Creating pathways to permanent and supportive housing that is affordable to local populations experiencing or at risk of homelessness.</li></ul> |         |

## Introduction

In the summer of 2018 then Governor Kate Brown and Housing Policy Advisor James LaBar released a Housing Policy Agenda for Oregon addressing Housing Stability for Children, Veterans, and the Chronically Homeless. The Policy Agenda provides background information on families experiencing homelessness, the concern for growing homelessness in the Veterans community, the number of chronically homeless individuals, and a realization that homelessness is not just a problem in Oregon's big cities. It is here in rural eastern Oregon as well.

The Policy Agenda says the following about Rural Communities in Oregon:

Urban Oregonians are not the only people facing housing challenges. An analysis done by Oregon's Office of Economic Analysis (OEA) shows that rural housing affordability is a significant issue in Oregon. OEA found that the median household income in rural Oregon at \$41,098 is very similar to the median household income in the rural United States at \$42,174. However, while median household incomes are similar, the housing prices in rural Oregon are much higher than in the rural U.S. The median home value in rural Oregon is 30 percent higher than in the rural U.S. at \$151,500 compared to \$95,700, and median rents are 16 percent higher in rural Oregon than in the rural U.S. at \$580 compared to \$500.

Other themes heard throughout OHCS's outreach efforts for the Statewide Housing Plan were that the challenges related to housing stability and housing quality are present all across the state, not just in metropolitan areas, and that rural areas often face unique barriers to accessing resources due to limited capacity and infrastructure. The lack of building in rural communities has many causes, including but not limited to: lack of capacity of local governments to plan for and facilitate housing development; identifying buildable lands; local policies that disincentivize residential development; limited capacity or presence of local developers willing to work in rural communities; lack of construction labor/capacity to deliver the housing; and financial dynamics that make it difficult for rural housing developments to be viable.

Emerging law and case law (Martin v City of Boise) prompted the Oregon Legislature in 2021 to pass [House Bill 3115](#) which provides that local law regulating sitting, lying, sleeping, or keeping warm and dry outdoors on public property that is open to the public must be objectively reasonable as to time, place, and manner with regards to persons experiencing homelessness. In western Umatilla County a partnership has emerged bringing the cities of Hermiston, Umatilla, Echo, and Stanfield (HUES) together with Umatilla County to address these issues through Project PATH, a program designed to provide Practical Assistance through Transitional Housing (PATH). The intent is to bring together services to assist individuals and families facing homelessness with the objective to move them into and through transitional housing to permanent housing.

## Vision, Mission, and Values

Thanks to the Mid-Columbia Houseless Collaborative for the inspiration.

### **Vision:**

Project PATH envisions a region with equal opportunities and support, where everyone who needs stable housing can find and afford it – especially communities who have faced disproportionate barriers to housing – so everyone can achieve the best quality of life possible.

### **Mission:**

Through collaboration and advocacy, we work to reduce homelessness in western Umatilla County by expanding housing capacity and ensuring supportive services are provided in culturally affirming ways that uphold human dignity.

### **Values:**

*Compassion and humanity* are at the core of our work. As a collaborative, we recognize the hardships that homeless community members experience and the common humanity we all share, regardless of our housing status.

We value *collaboration and partnership*; working together helps us provide greater support to homeless and unstably housed community members.

*Advocacy* allows us to do more to support the vulnerable populations we serve when we champion strategic investments, projects, and policy changes.

We elevate *lived experience*. We cannot do this work without acknowledging the disproportionate barriers the housing crisis has created for communities of color and other traditionally marginalized populations. We cannot effectively advocate for solutions without lifting the voices of those who are or have been homeless.

We value *tenacity and perseverance*. Homelessness is a complex issue that cannot be solved overnight; we acknowledge that this work requires visionary leadership and resilience.

## Project Description

Project PATH will provide a suite of services that will be available to participants within the HUES area. A major component of Project PATH is a facility on property owned by Umatilla County within the City of Umatilla to create a safe space for overnight or longer stays with support services available onsite. The Stepping Stones Alliance is the designated entity responsible for planning and delivering services for transitional housing and related support services to move an individual or family from homelessness to permanent housing. They are responsible for management of the Project PATH facility that includes a general building with offices, indoor common area(s), showers, and meal facilities; sleeping huts that can accommodate one to two people; and outdoor common areas in a secured fenced area.

A continuum of services to support entry into transitional housing will be used to assist residents use various onsite and community services to move into permanent housing. These types of services shall include the following:

- Provide 24 hour, 7-day a week, onsite staffing to support the project building that includes offices, **residents' showers**, a food pantry, and the community kitchen. This includes managing the housing units that will sleep at least one resident with some units able to sleep two.
- Educational Services including, but not limited to, coordination with residents to receive their high school diploma or GED, counseling services to connect residents with local or other traditional educational service providers (BMCC, EOU, and others), and connecting residents with employer education services (such as CDL training, unemployment counselors, or workforce partnerships).
- Basic level medical, dental, and vision services.
- Transportation to work, educational programs, or other support services associated with Project PATH or deemed necessary for the resident's transition. Assistance is already identified through KAYAK and Umatilla Cab.
- Provision of, or connection to, services for persons with behavioral health conditions and/or substance use disorders.
- Care coordination and/or case management to support access to other needed services that may include education, training, and onsite or offsite work.

Project PATH will also provide Sleep Center Services for identified homeless individuals. A primary purpose of this program offering is to replace the Hermiston Warming Station through use of a dedicated area for these temporary facility users. They will have physically separate sleeping quarters but will have access to selected common and community areas (food pantry and showers as examples). **This area of the facility is intended to be used as day-to-day or perhaps week-to-week when known temperatures will drop below 40 degrees at night between November 1<sup>st</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup> each year.** Users of these services will need to comply with the entire facilities operational rules but will also have a subset of rules especially for them. This will also be the section of the facility used by law enforcement to house individuals who may be illegally camping in right-of-way, along designated trails, or in parks.

## Project PATH Advisory Committee, Primary Contractor, and Partners

A representative from Umatilla County along with the cities of Hermiston, Umatilla, Echo, and Stanfield comprise the Project PATH Advisory Committee. Working with the primary contractor, the Stepping Stones Alliance, the success of Project PATH will be achieved through partnerships and collaborative situations with other service providers to achieve multiple outcomes in moving clients through the program offerings with success achieved when the client finds permanent housing.

### **Advisory Committee Members:**

|                   |                             |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Umatilla County   | Dan Dorran, Commissioner    |
| City of Hermiston | Byron Smith, Manager        |
| City of Umatilla  | Dave Stockdale, Manager     |
| City of Echo      | David Slaght, Administrator |
| City of Stanfield | Benjamin Burgener, Manager  |

### **Primary Contractor: Stepping Stones Alliance**

Jesalyn Cole, Executive Director

#### Board Members

Cathy Lloyd, Board Chair and President

Michael Atkinson, Board Treasurer

Chuck Barnes, Board Vice Chair

Sandy Francis

Brandy Medrano, Board Secretary

Steve Eldridge

Roger Condie

#### Primary Staff

Carolina Delgado, Navigation Center Director

Cindi Jorgensen, Sleep Center Coordinator

Kris Barnum, Project Planner

### **Project PATH Partners:**

| Provided Service                  | Service Provider  |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Education                         | Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC)<br>Hermiston High School (HHS)   |
| Basic Medical, Dental, and Vision |   |
| Transportation                    | Kayak (Service of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR))<br>Umatilla Cab<br>Morrow County LOOP |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | Umatilla County <b>Transit</b>   |
| Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse Disorders | Community Counseling Solutions (CCS)   |
| Care Coordination/Case Management           | Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS)<br>WorkSource<br><b>COPEs</b>                            |
| <b>Value Added Services</b>                 | <b>Service Providers</b>   |
| Services to Veteran's                       | Veteran's Service Office (VSO) Umatilla and Morrow Counties<br><b>SSVF within BMAC</b>             |
| Transitional Housing for Parents            | Marth's House  |
| Fair Housing information and enforcement    | Fair Housing Council of Oregon   |
| Transitional Housing Support Resources      | Community Action Program of East Central Oregon (CAPECO)   |
| Outreach and Referrals                      | Desert Rose Ministries   |
| Domestic Violence Services                  | Domestic Violence Services (Hermiston)   |
| Subsidized Permanent Housing                | Umatilla Housing Authority   |
| <b>Community Partner Services</b>           | <b>Service Providers</b>   |
| Law Enforcement support and response        | Umatilla Police Department<br>Hermiston Police Department  |
| Faith Based Support                         | Hermiston Faith-Based Advisory Committee   |
| Hispanic Community Support                  | Hermiston Hispanic Advisory Committee  |
| Civic Outreach                              | Rotary<br>Kiwanis<br>Altrusa   |
| Community and Business Sponsorship          | Amazon Web Services<br>Fair Housing Council of Oregon<br>Good Shepherd Community Health Foundation |

## FUNDING

Project PATH will be initially funded primarily through the Oregon Department of Administrative Services with funds from [House Bill 4123](#) (2022). Future funding is anticipated to come from a variety of sources including funding from the Contractor, funds obtained through various granting opportunities, general fund sources of the partner agencies, and other funding sources identified to support the variety of services that will be offered.

The Stepping Stones Alliance brought to the project additional funds secured through the Good Shepherd Community Foundation Grant, a Fair Housing Grant, a donation from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and individual donations.

**This needs more... role of funding of the partners and their services, etc. How deep a dive into the budget should the Strategic Plan go?**

Continued work will be accomplished to assure that Project PATH can be sustained after the initial pilot project grant is consumed.

## Works and Phrases to Know

Thanks to the Mid-Columbia Houseless Collaborative for the inspiration.

**Affordable and Accessible Housing:** Housing that includes features that make it usable for people with disabilities or limited mobility and allows residents to spend no more than 30% of their income to live there.

**Area Median Income (AMI):** The household income for the “middle” household in a geographic region. Half of the families in a region earn more than the AMI, and half earn less. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development calculates and defines the AMI for specific geographic areas across the county every year. Housing providers then use this number as a reference point when setting local income and affordability requirements for available housing units.

**Acquisition and Rehabilitation/Rehab:** The process of gaining ownership and management rights over a real estate property and renovating existing units rather than developing new units. Acquisition and rehab are valuable tools used by proponents of affordable housing and preservation.

**BIPOC:** An acronym that stands for “Black, Indigenous, and people of color.” This is a term used to describe communities of color, while centering the experience of Black and Indigenous people, who experience disproportionately high institutional barriers.

**Chronically Homeless:** Experiencing homelessness for at least a year, or repeatedly over time, while struggling with a disabling condition like a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, or physical disability.

**Construction Excise Taxes:** A charge placed on new construction (except for affordable and accessible housing projects) or additions to existing structures, the revenue from which can be used to fund incentives for building affordable housing and other housing-related programs.

**Coordinated Entry:** A process developed to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access to resources and are quickly assessed for, referred, and connected to housing and other assistance based on their vulnerabilities and strengths.

**Culturally Responsive/Culturally Specific Services:** Being able to understand and consider the different cultural backgrounds of clients, and respecting clients’ customs, experiences, perspectives, and language when assisting them to access resources.

**Equity/Equitable:** While an Equal approach means giving everyone the same resources, an equitable approach acknowledges that each person has different circumstances, needs, and institutional barriers they have faced. Equity means allocating resources and opportunities in a way that creates equal outcomes.

**Equal Opportunity:** While equity creates equal outcomes equal opportunity requires treating people without discrimination particularly on the basis of race, sex, age, or disability. It provides an equal playing field.

**General Obligation Bonds:** Municipal bonds that provide a way for state and local governments to raise money for public projects that may not yield revenue. General obligation bonds are backed by the state or local government's ability to use taxes to pay bondholders.

**Homeless/Homelessness:** Lacking a place to live.

**Houselessness:** An alternative to homelessness is houselessness because many people who are or have been unhoused prefer it. This is because "home" is more than a building where a person lives; it represents community, social connections, memories, friends, family, or more. People who lack a physical house often still identify strongly with a place they call home.

**Housing Stabilization:** The process of connecting to a wide range of individualized services – not just those that are directly related to housing – that help facilitate a person's ability to find and/or stay in housing.

**Impact Fees:** Fees charged to property developers by local governments for the new infrastructure that must be built to accommodate new development.

**Jail Diversion:** Community-based services that are designed to keep individuals, especially those with behavioral health issues, from becoming incarcerated by connecting them to other community-based resources like mental health support, substance abuse services, employment services, and housing. Jail diversion aims to minimize the contact individuals have with law enforcement and help them avoid or reduce jail time.

**LGBTQ+:** An abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, and more. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

**Lived Experience (with homelessness):** Personal knowledge about homelessness that has been gained because of going through homelessness first-hand rather than through representations constructed by others.

**Medical Respite:** Medical respite care is short-term residential care for people experiencing homelessness who are too ill or frail to recover from an illness or injury on the streets, but not ill enough to be in a hospital. Medical respite care helps people rest and recover in a safe environment while accessing medical care and other supportive services.

**Point in Time Count:** Also known as the PIT Count, this is the annual count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness across the United States during the last ten days of January.

**Preservation:** The process of retaining existing affordable housing, whether at subsidized or fair market costs, and protecting its affordability for current and future tenants.

**Rapid Re-Housing:** A type of housing assistance that quickly helps people experiencing homelessness to get into housing with the help of application fees, security deposit funding, time-limited rent assistance, incentives to encourage landlords to place clients in their units, and case management services.

**Reintegration After Incarceration:** The process a person goes through to re-enter society and become a productive member of the community after serving time in jail or prison.

**Services/Supportive Services:** Aid that makes it easier for someone to get into and stay in housing long-term by enhancing their overall way of living. Examples include help directly related to housing – such as rent assistance – or other resources, such as reliable transportation, affordable childcare, food assistance, training in budgeting and money management, health care, job training, mental health services, or substance abuse treatment.

**Supportive Housing:** The combination of ongoing affordable housing assistance, such as rent subsidies, with flexible and supportive services for people experiencing homelessness. The goal of supportive housing is to help people stay housed and live a more productive life in the community. There are multiple models of supportive housing: it could include the construction or renovation of new housing, setting aside units in privately-owned buildings, or leasing individual apartments throughout a specific geographic area where clients can receive services from supportive case managers.

**System Development Charges:** Fees charged on new development, and in some cases on redevelopment. Revenue raised by these fees can help fund new infrastructure or upgrades to existing infrastructure.

**Traditional Health Workers:** Frontline public health workers who work in a health care clinic or community to assist individuals to achieve positive, health-related outcomes. Examples of traditional health workers include community health workers, personal health navigators, peer support specialists, and peer wellness specialists. Traditional health workers may have a particular specialty area or background, such as being a peer support specialist who uses their personal experience recovering from addiction to help a client struggling with a substance use disorder. Or they may promote health on a more holistic level by helping clients navigate multiple supportive services, including those that are not related to health care but contribute to overall well-being and stability.

**Urban Renewal:** A set of plans and activities, often attached to public financing mechanisms, to upgrade neighborhoods that are in a state of disrepair or decay.

## Strategic Plan

To meet the Mission, Vision, and Values identified in this planning document the Project PATH Advisory Board, in collaboration with the Stepping Stones Alliance, has identified the following **Goal Areas, Objectives, and Strategic Priorities** with implementing strategies to be accomplished. Simply listed the Goals are... **to be developed. Examples are shown below.**

From Destination: Home (Mid-Columbia): **Shelter, Services, Housing, and Advocacy.**

From Walla Walla Alliance for the Homeless: **Governance, Talent Development, Service Model Refinement, Fundraising and Sustainability, Sleep Center Facilities and Function, Pathways to Permanent Housing.**

From HOPE (Benton County): **Two levels... Foundational Recommendations: Organizational Capacity, Funding Recommendations, and Legislative advocacy followed by 12 Policy Recommendations.**

1. Facilitate and coordinate data improvement efforts with community partners.
2. Work with providers to create metrics for successful program goals.
3. Prioritize collaboration and coordination of providers and partners with routine meetings for improved care coordination facilitated by a full-time staff member.
4. Collaborate with social service and health care partners to increase the number of paid full-time case managers to support people transitioning out of homelessness.
5. Pursue implementation of a crisis response team and collect data on the scope and scale of need for crisis response.
6. Provide organizational capacity to facilitate and coordinate providers in establishing a 24/7/365 sheltering system for all populations with onsite resources at shelter locations to transition people out of homelessness.
7. Facilitate and support the creation of a Resource Center.
8. Explore and investigate the need and the barriers to accessing housing for individuals and their families in our community whose history has impacted their ability to secure housing.
9. Provide routine communication, notice, and opportunities for community involvement on the topic of homelessness services.
10. Increase development or acquisition of affordable housing units for permanent supportive housing (PSH) by 20 new units per year for the next eight years to add at a minimum 160 new units of PSH in Umatilla County.
11. Increase available rental/income assistance options.
12. Increase supportive services and stable funding streams to provide services to residents at more affordable housing locations.

Let's get specific...

## Implementation

To meet the guidelines of the HB 4123 funding the following implementation requirements are to be included in this Strategic Plan. They are as follows:

1. Identify funding to support the ongoing operations.  
This is addressed earlier in the Strategic Plan under the heading funding.
2. Increasing or streamlining resources and services to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness within the participating cities and counties.  
Project PATH is designed to allow for an increase and streamlined delivery of resources and services. The Stepping Stones Alliance, the selected contractor to implement the program and coordinate delivery of the services, has three components to the program that includes the sleep center, navigation center, and housing center. Clients generally and most often would enter the program through the sleep center which provides night to night shelter. Once established in the program engagement would occur in the navigation center where needed services and access to resources are available to active participants and delivered during all operational hours by staff, community partners, and volunteers. The housing center will initially offer 25 transitional housing units for participants engaged with navigation center resources.
3. Incorporating national best practices for ending homelessness.  
What are those national best practices...
4. Eliminating racial disparities within homeless services within the service area.  
Need direction but I am thinking a big part will be the Hermiston Hispanic Advisory Board?! Also having multi-lingual staff on board?
5. Creating pathways to permanent and supportive housing that is affordable to local populations experiencing or at risk of homelessness.  
Thoughts? I read this to be like #2 above.