

*DRAFT*

# Human Services Strategic Plan 2019

**ANACORTES**



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## Executive Summary

This Strategic Plan suggests a number of changes to current policies and funding decisions for human services made by the City of Anacortes, including:

- Delineating the City's primary functions in providing human services:
  - Policy maker & facilitator,
  - Communicator & educator, and
  - Funder [p. 4]
- Writing an amendment to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update to include a Human Services Element. This would include [p.8]:
  - Policy HS-1.2 Establishing an Anacortes Human Services Commission [see also p. 9], which will work with the Planning and Economic Development Directorate in making recommendations for
    - Allocating CDBG funds
    - Allocating monies from the General Fund, for which the Mayor and City Council will establish a desired target between 1% to 2% of the general fund budget to address human services needs of the community.
- Initiating a Community Needs Assessment [p. 9]
- Establishing priorities as well as specific desired outcomes for services supported by city funds. [p. 9]
- Inaugurating policies that are integrated with the goals of City departments and major city partners
  - To include a suggestion that the city should decriminalize homelessness. [p. 10]
- Establishing four strategic priorities in implementing this plan: [p. 10]
  - Oversight of community investment
  - Convene and collaborate
  - Advocate and influence policy
  - Community engagement and education

## BACKGROUND

### PURPOSE OF THE HUMAN SERVICES PLAN

The Anacortes Human Services strategic plan will serve as a guide for establishing and sustaining human services policies and funding decisions by the City of Anacortes. As the plan is incorporated into the biennial budget cycle, the City will provide more clarity to community-based human services providers regarding the city's role and level of city funding provided for human services with general fund revenues. Additionally, the plan outlines further policy development for the coming years to increase effectiveness of the City's partnership with funders and service providers

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2016

The City of Anacortes' vision as it relates to human services is described in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update. This vision is stated in terms of the City's provision of those services as part of a larger regional effort:

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[The City will] work with other jurisdictions and agencies, educational and other organizations, and the business community to develop and carry out a coordinated, regional approach for meeting the various needs of Skagit County communities, including housing, human services, economic vitality, public safety, utilities, infrastructure, parks and recreation, transportation, and environmental protection<sup>1</sup>.

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With that being said, the Comprehensive Plan does not have a specific set of goals and policies regarding the provision of human services. Instead, these goals are obliquely referred to in policy statements regarding support for public and private housing for homeless persons,<sup>2</sup> attracting employers who pay living wages,<sup>3</sup> and homebound delivery for library services to the aged.<sup>4</sup>

When people think about the kinds of services their city offers, they often think of roads, water, and police and fire protection, but probably not community services—those services provided directly to persons struggling to meet their basic needs for food, clothing and shelter, as well as assistance related to employment, health, safety and social support. However, building, maintaining and improving an infrastructure for addressing the continuum of human needs is as important as maintaining and improving the physical infrastructure of roads and bridges. A city's vitality depends on the degree to which its residents and families are able to thrive. An effective human services delivery system is a crucial component of any healthy, sustainable community.

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<sup>1</sup> Policy LU-11.4.

<sup>2</sup> Policy H-4.6

<sup>3</sup> Policy ED-1.4

<sup>4</sup> Library future needs, p, II-73

For this reason, then, the HACS committee recommends that a future amendment to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update include the City's strategic plan related to human services as defined in this document.

### THE ROLE OF THE CITY

The City cannot meet the human services needs of the community on its own. Rather, the City maintains partnerships with service providers, faith communities, schools, nonprofit agencies, and other funders (state, county, local and individuals) in developing a system of services for the community.

The city has three primary function in human services:

1. **Policy Maker and Facilitator:** The city plays an important role in setting policies and establishing partnerships with regional and local institutions to create an infrastructure that supports its citizenry with opportunities for participation in economic and community life.
2. **Communicator and Educator:** The city has a responsibility to bring to the forefront an awareness of social needs of the community to its citizens through a variety of means, including community forums, the City of Anacortes website, newspapers, and social networks, and the work of the city council's Housing Affordability and Community Services committee.
3. **Funder:** The city's role as funder is to supplement federal, state, and county dollars in service areas that are of highest priority for city residents and to provide an incentive for effective service delivery within the city for Anacortes citizens. In addition to general funds, the city's allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds in the Anacortes Entitlement District are a significant resource that benefit low to moderate-income residents of the city.

### HOUSING AFFORDABILITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

The City Council established the Housing Affordability & Community Services (HACS) Committee in January 2016 with the goal to develop a strategic plan to improve housing affordability and make recommendations on budget allocations for social services. The HACS Committee invited citizens and community leaders to join in an ongoing discussion to develop strategies to address housing affordability and the provision of human services to all Anacortes residents. This Strategic Plan draws upon those discussions and sets forth the goals, strategies and action items to guide the City in implementing its policy regarding human services.

## Current Efforts

Anacortes' attempts in providing human services has been a six-fold effort:

1. Rely on nonprofit agencies and faith communities to provide a wide array of services to the community. These include:
  - a. Maintaining foodbanks at the Salvation Army and Anacortes 100, as well as the additional provision of food via A Simple Gesture – Anacortes, St. Vincent de Paul at St Mary Church and meals served at community dinners at the Anacortes Methodist, Westminster Presbyterian, and the Anacortes First Baptist churches.
  - b. Providing housing for those transitioning out of homelessness at the Anacortes Family Center and arranging for long-term housing assistance at the Anacortes Housing Authority.

- c. Offering opportunities for children to learn, live and lead at the Boys & Girls Club of Anacortes.
2. Managing and funding the Anacortes Senior Activity Center to meet the growing needs of its retirees and elders, with additional funding from the ASAC Foundation)
3. Acting as a clearinghouse and forum to address specific social service concerns, i.e., Mayor Gere’s Taskforce on Substance Abuse
4. Providing funding for a variety of projects via the Community Development Block Grant program.
5. Coordinating and private donors to construct a new Community Resource Center
6. Partnering with Anacortes School District 103 to provide a School Resource Officer at Anacortes High School

### HOW ANACORTES COMPARES WITH OTHER CITIES

Figure 1 lists those agencies the City of Anacortes supports with funding from the General Funds account. Additionally, the total community support funding is also shown, which includes funds allocated to Anacortes through the Community Development Block Grant entitlement, the funding provided to the Anacortes Senior Center.

Figure 2 provides our comparison with other cities.<sup>5</sup>

However, these comparisons often mix apples and oranges.

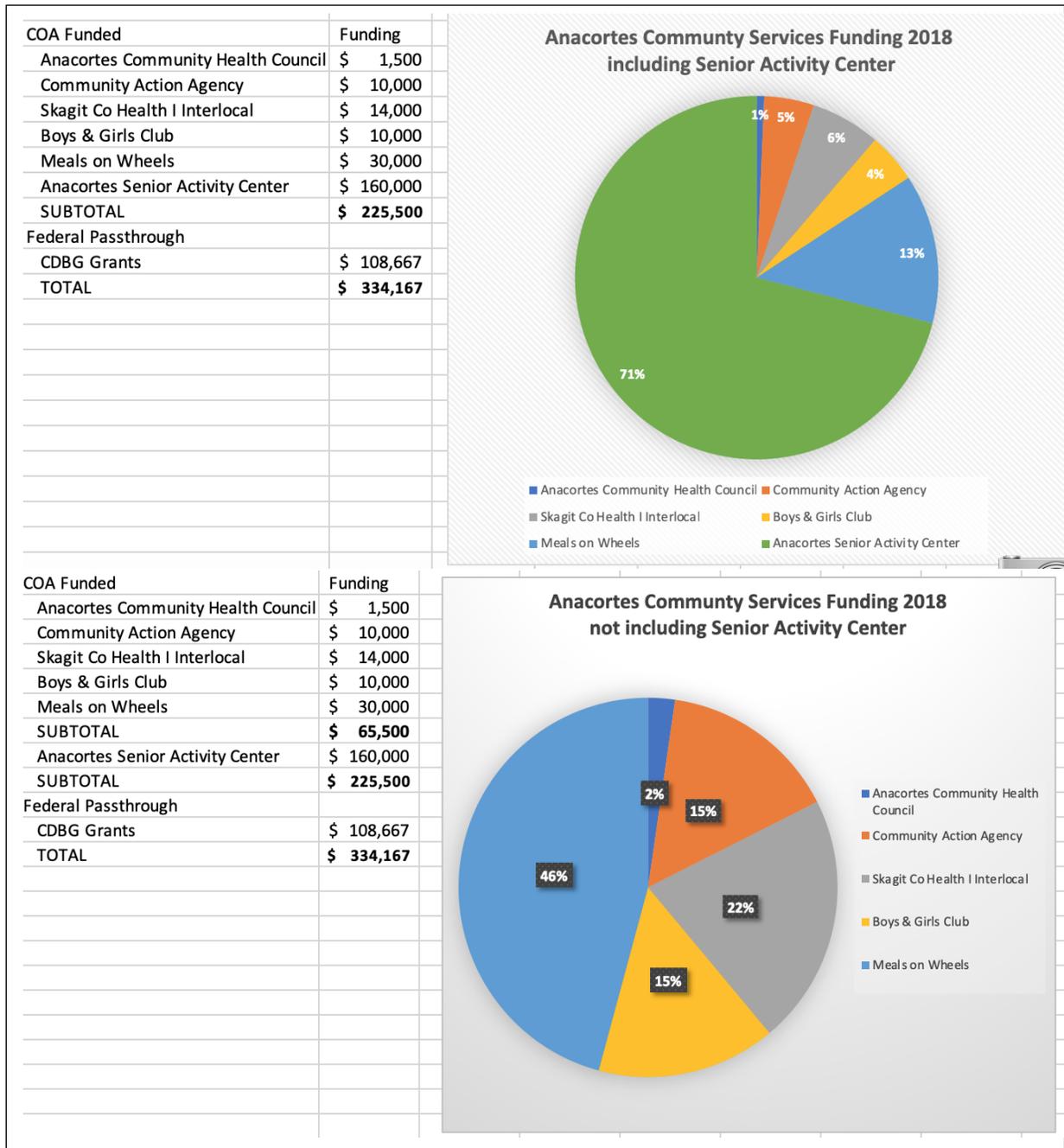
- For example, the City of Redmond has levied a \$13.35 per capita (increasing to \$16.90 in the past five years), averaging \$830,000 per year for human services. Redmond does not count their support of the Senior Center in their calculations of human services support; rather, they placed the Senior Center as part of the Parks and Recreation mission and budget.
- The City of Snoqualmie, which is comparable in population and budget to Anacortes, allocates 1.12% of budgeted general fund revenues in 2018 and every subsequent year to human services funding. Snoqualmie does not have a senior center; however, it provides \$16,000 in program funding to the Mount Si Senior Center.
- In order to make a more equitable comparison by discounting Anacortes’ funding of the Senior Activity Center, the Anacortes per capita for human services = \$4.09; Anacortes spends 0.38% of its general fund budget on human services (\$65,500). An allocation of 1.12% by Anacortes for supporting human services programs would equal \$190,757.
  - Even a 1% allocation to human services would equal approximately \$170,000.
- Other cities close in population to Anacortes—Woodinville, Tukwila—provide 0.56% and 0.53%. Covington, on the other hand, provides 1.17% of its general fund budget<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> From the City of Snoqualmie Human Services Advisory Committee Strategic Plan 2018

<sup>6</sup> Apparently, then, more research is needed to compare the funding levels provided by these cities.

**Fig 1. Anacortes Human Services Funding 2018**



**Fig 2. FUNDING COMPARISON WITH OTHER CITIES (2018)**  
Sorted by Percentage of General Fund Revenues<sup>7</sup>

Rank	City	Pop.(2017)	GF Rev.	CS Budget	% of GF Rev.	Per Capita	Methodology
1	Bellevue	140700	\$199,948,000	\$3,543,990	1.77%	\$25.19	Per Capita Rate
2	SeaTac	28,850	\$36,912,792	\$545,500	1.48%	\$18.91	Percentage of General Fund
3	Kenmore	22,580	\$11,729,704	\$168,070	1.43%	\$7.44	Per Capita Rate
4	Redmond	62,110	\$88,281,308	\$1,121,140	1.27%	\$18.05	Per Capita Rate
5	Burien	50,680	\$26,195,000	\$320,000	1.22%	\$6.31	Per Capita Rate
6	Covington	19,850	\$11,716,000	\$136,500	1.17%	\$6.88	Percentage of General Fund
7	North Bend	6,739	\$7,707,294	\$92,000	1.19%	\$13.65	Base Amount/No Formula
8	Snoqualmie	13,210	\$15,061,903	\$169,000	1.12%	\$12.79	Percentage of General Fund
9	Federal Way	96,350	\$49,123,986	\$545,000	1.11%	\$5.66	Base Amount/No Formula
10	Kirkland	86,080	\$100,584,604	\$786,623	0.78%	\$9.14	Base Amount/No Formula
11	Auburn	78,960	\$66,091,810	\$490,000	0.74%	\$6.21	Percentage of General Fund
12	Sammamish	62,240	\$42,134,690	\$249,670	0.59%	\$4.01	Base Amount/No Formula
13	Bothell	44,370	\$49,484,333	\$290,500	0.59%	\$6.55	Per Capita Rate
14	Renton	102,700	\$98,009,311	\$567,038	0.56%	\$5.52	Per Capita Rate
15	Woodinville	11,660	\$11,532,374	\$65,000	0.56%	\$5.57	Base Amount/No Formula
16	Tukwila	19,660	\$68,333,887	\$365,170	0.53%	\$18.57	Base Amount/No Formula
17	Kent	127,100	\$94,566,060	\$500,000	0.53%	\$3.93	Per Capita Rate
18	Des Moines	30,860	\$20,046,941	\$80,000	0.41%	\$2.59	Base Amount/No Formula
	Anacortes	16,425	\$17,031,876	\$65,500	0.38%	\$3.99	Base Amount/No Formula

### CURRENT PLANNING FOR HUMAN SERVICES

Anacortes has not used formal criteria in determining which agencies should be supported. The greatest needs have typically been determined by community conversations with the mayor, who fixed the funding levels for various agencies. More recently, Mayor Gere has made the process more transparent and broadened the discussion, at least at the city council level, on the priorities of various social service needs in the city.

For years the City has supported various agencies as immediate needs arose, particularly for individuals and families who live and work in Anacortes.

At the same time, the mayor and city staff have established connections with human services providers to address specific concerns. Additionally, social service agencies and the faith communities have created partnerships to address human services concerns. These partnerships include:

- The Mayor’s Task Force on Substance Abuse in the Schools
- The City’s Planning Directorate’s efforts in allocating CDBG funding to meet social service needs in the community.
- The Anacortes Community Health Council’s provision of a forum for City staff, regional social service agencies and the faith community to coordinate their efforts in reducing homelessness and hunger.
- The City Council’s Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee held a series of workshops, starting in April 2016, with community members with the aim of identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the provision of human services to the community.

<sup>7</sup> Source: City of Snoqualmie Human Services Advisory Committee Strategic Plan, 2018

- The city's six service clubs (two Soroptimist International, two Rotary and two Kiwanis clubs) and the Red Door Thrift Shop currently are attempting to develop better synergy in their support of community needs. They have determined that the most acute need was for early learning and day care for infants from birth to 29 weeks old, and the clubs are forming a partnership with the City and potentially with the Samish Nation to expand the Head Start program in the city.

## A Strategic Plan for Human Services

### I. WRITE A HUMAN SERVICES ELEMENT AMENDMENT TO THE 2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

In order to carry out a strategic plan for human services, the City needs to establish policy directives in its Comprehensive Plan. These directives will provide focus areas to set and review human services policies as well as ensure the mutually supportive implementation of related city goals.

The Human Services Element of the Comprehensive Plan should include the following goals and policies:

- Goal HS-1. Maintain and enhance the quality of life for all citizens through the provision and support of affordable and accessible human services.
- Policy HS-1.1 Consider the social and human development needs of the city's residents in all areas of planning and development.
- Policy HS-1.2 Inaugurate an Anacortes Human Services Commission, which will work with the Planning and Economic Development Directorate in making recommendations for
  - Allocating CDBG funds
  - Allocating monies from the General Fund, for which the Mayor and City Council will establish a desired target of between 1% to 2% of the general fund budget to address human services needs of the community.
- POLICY HS-1.3 Promote the effective use of the city's human services resources, consistent with adopted priorities and criteria.
- POLICY HS-1.4 Gather and maintain current information and educate the community regarding human services needs and available resources.
- POLICY HS-1.5 Support the long-term stability and viability of a human services system serving the community.
- POLICY HS-1.6 Take an active role in regional and sub-regional human services issues and form partnerships to effectively address human services needs.
- POLICY HS-1.7 Provide for the full spectrum of human services needs through the support of programs that address emergency needs, preventive services, and quality of life services.

## II. ESTABLISH A HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

In order to better meet its function in human services as Policy Maker and Facilitator, and to increase the level of knowledge and elevate the engagement by the community in addressing human service needs, the City should establish a Human Services Commission to oversee the development of the City's human services program. The Human Services Commission shall be made up of seven members—two of whom should be dedicated for children and youth—birth to age 18—and two of whom should be dedicated to senior citizens.

The Human Services Commission will provide recommendations on funding levels and related human services issues.

## II. INITIATE A COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In order to develop a source of funding priorities for future service needs, the Human Services Commission will initiate a community needs assessment. The assessment process should collect information through interviews, group discussions, focus groups, and surveys. Based on the results of the needs assessment, the Human Services Commission will develop community goals that achieve the desired outcomes. These goals and outcomes will be incorporated as a directive for biannual Human Services Master Plans as they guide strategies and funding recommendations.

## III. ESTABLISH GOALS THAT WILL MAXIMIZE THE BENEFIT OF ALLOCATED CITY DOLLARS

The City will establish clear priorities as well as specific goals or outcomes. The city may establish a priority for categories of services, and at the same time, it could specify target populations that are deemed most appropriate for city support or to fill a gap in service.

These targeted goals will:

- Delineate clear funding guidelines for community-based agencies that request city funding.
- Enable city funding to have greater impact in establishment of specific program models that fit local community needs.
- Ensure that city-funded resources fill specific identified gaps.
- Establish a foundation for evaluation of the effectiveness of city-funded services to meet its residents' needs in collaboration with city goals.

## IV. ESTABLISH POLICIES THAT SUPPORT CITY GOALS AND ARE INTEGRATED WITH THE GOALS OF CITY DEPARTMENTS AND MAJOR CITY PARTNERS

This plan will begin a process of integrating relevant city responsibilities that affect human services issues, as well as human services endeavors that impact other city roles. Identifying mutually supported policies among city departments will increase the overall success of the city's leadership. These elements can outline further collaborative negotiations among city departments and initiatives in the coming years.

These collaborative policies could include:

- Human services designed to support individual and community success.

- Parks and recreation programs that effectively utilize and support human services goals in their programming.
- Human services models that acknowledge diversity, strengthen a sense of an inclusive community, and encourage leadership among all its citizenry.
- Community development that is inclusive of lower income residents and their children.
- Effective domestic violence prosecution that supports the safety of victims and increases accountability of perpetrators.
- Provision of domestic violence services to the victims and their children for a safe place to live.
- Affordable housing policies that increase stability of neighborhoods and retain community character while increasing stock of housing affordable to lower income residents.
- Decriminalizing homelessness

## V. IMPLEMENTATION & STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In implementing the Strategic Plan, the City should keep in mind four strategic priorities:

1. **Strategic Priority: Oversight of Community Investment.** The Human Services Commission and Planning & Economic Development Staff will oversee the allocation of the City's General Fund and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars to agency partners that provide critical services. In addition, staff and the Human Services Commission will propose potential funding level alternatives for consideration by the City Council. In doing so, the City will ensure that investments in the human services network are flexible and are able to respond to current community needs, balance local needs with regional infrastructure, and strive for long term community impact.
2. **Strategic Priority: Convene and Collaborate.** City staff will partner internally with Parks, Police, Fire and other city departments to address the broad continuum of human services, from prevention to intervention to crisis response. The City will also partner at the local level with service providers, faith communities and other local governments on county-wide initiatives that serve the interests of our residents.
3. **Strategic Priority: Advocate and Influence Policy.** The City will take advantage of opportunities to influence state and federal policies and programs that directly affect the residents of Anacortes. This may happen directly via legislative advocacy or by supporting legislative agendas of groups such as the Faith Advocacy Network. Additionally, the Human Services Commission will advise the Mayor and Council on broad policy issues.
4. **Strategic Priority: Community Engagement and Education.** The City will work through the Human Services Commission and other groups to engage the broader community in dialogue and strategies to address Anacortes' human service needs. Whether through community forums, issue specific task forces, public education campaigns, or volunteer recruitment, the City should engage the community to address Anacortes' community-wide human service needs and solutions.

## Conclusion

Anacortes has always supported the network of organizations and programs that provide services to meet the basic human needs of our residents. Although the City provides general support for a broad network of comprehensive services, we should be more proactive in securing the sufficient resources to

mend the holes that currently exist in the safety net so that our residents can not only survive but thrive in Anacortes.