

# Office of Community Services & Boone County Community Services Advisory Commission

Presentation to  
Columbia City Council  
March 3, 2008

## Overview

Current Social Services Funding System

Ideas to Consider for Improvement

- Short-term
- Intermediate-term
- Long-term/"Big Picture"

## Current Social Services Funding System

We will review the current social services funding system as a whole and then look more closely at each of its four components:

- Funding process
- Contracting process
- Reporting process
- Training/Evaluation process

For each we will provide the following information:

- Overview
- Recent Improvements
- Strengths
- Challenges

## Current Social Services Funding System

### Overview

- Funding system carried out by the Boone County Community Services Advisory Commission (BCCSAC)
- Staffed by the Office of Community Services
- Create an annual social services plan which contains recommendations to the City Council and County Commission regarding contracts for social services
- Commission uses a well developed RFP process in making these recommendations

## Current Social Services Funding System

### Overview (cont'd.)

- For FY2008, received and reviewed proposals for 50 programs from 34 agencies.
- Recommended to council \$886,023 in City funding for 29 agencies and 44 programs.

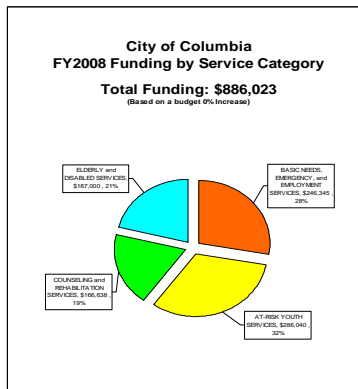
## Current Social Services Funding System

### Overview (cont'd.)

Currently, the City and County social services funding is allocated in four service categories:

- Basic Needs, Emergency, and Employment Services
- At-risk Youth Services
- Counseling and Rehabilitation Services
- Elderly and Disabled Services

## Current Social Services Funding System



## Current Social Services Funding System

### Overview (cont'd.)

Many services which do not fall in the four social service categories are considered important but are more appropriately supported by other sources within city and county budgets or are the responsibility of state and federal agencies.

For example, other services which receive City and County support include:

- Housing and community facilities funded through Community Development Block Grant funds;
- Community recreation provided through the City Parks and Recreation Department;
- Criminal justice services provided by the Police and Sheriff's Departments and the 13th District Circuit Court;
- Health services provided by the City/County Health Department.

## Current Social Services Funding System

### Recent Improvements

- Emphasis on performance measures, including requirement to submit and report on outcomes
- Greatly improved evaluation system
- Streamlined RFP application

## Current Social Services Funding System

### Streamlined...



## Current Social Services Funding System

### Strengths

- Longstanding system (20+ years)
- Well-developed policies & procedures
- Transparent process
- Joint process between the City of Columbia, Boone County, and the Columbia Area United Way
- Community volunteers make decisions

### Challenges

- Resources are not keeping pace with needs
- Seeing requests for large areas of need outside of traditional social service parameters (i.e. health, early childhood education, recreation, housing)
- Lack of comprehensive plan for human services
- Lack of technology resources to develop, assess, and update plan

## Current Social Services Funding System ***Funding Process***

### Overview

- Joint RFP (City/County/United Way) issued each year in January
- Applications due at the end of March
- Proposals are for program services not agencies
- Staff and commission review proposals in April and May
- Staff provides a comprehensive summary of each program proposal
- Public comment sought in May

## Current Social Services Funding System *Funding Process*

### Overview (cont'd.)

- Commission work session in May (new for FY2009)
- Agency hearings in June (3 evenings)
- Commission work session in June to formulate preliminary recommendations
- Public comment sought on preliminary recommendations
- Final recommendations made at July commission meeting
- Recommendations presented to Council in August as part of a public hearing and to County Commission in December
- Council and Commission make final allocations as part of budget

## Current Social Services Funding System *Funding Process*

### Recent improvements:

- RFP was modified for FY2008 in order to implement a performance measurement component
  - Agencies now required to report outcomes in addition to outputs
  - A standardized performance measures matrix template was created by staff in order to facilitate the tracking of measures over time

## Current Social Services Funding System ***Funding Process***

### Recent improvements (cont'd.):

- RFP was simplified and redundancies were removed.
- A pre-application process was implemented as part of the FY2008 RFP
  - Agencies applying for programs not currently funded by the City/County are required to submit a *New Program Status Request* in order to gain commission approval to submit a full proposal
  - Opportunity to screen out programs that are not within the parameters of the social services funding policy.

## Current Social Services Funding System ***Funding Process***

### Recent improvements (cont'd.):

- As part of the FY2009 funding process, the May commission meeting will be held as a work session
  - Concerns/questions about proposals will then be sent to agencies and responses will be required prior to agency hearings.
  - This will allow for a significant improvement in the quality of clarifying information sought and received.



## Current Social Services Funding System *Funding Process*

### Strengths

Partnership between City/County and United Way:

- Single RFP for agencies
- Allows for limited sharing of resources and expenses

## Current Social Services Funding System *Funding Process*

### Challenges

- Single RFP for all service categories does not allow for targeted funding by issue
- Annual RFP process is cumbersome and does not facilitate long-term, strategic approach to issues
- Agencies identify needs rather than funders
- Partnership with United Way requires City/County RFP to be issued on UW schedule (January)
- Tremendous amount of work for 10 member commission (United Way uses 100+ volunteers)

## Current Social Services Funding System ***Contracting Process***

### Overview

- Contracted period is January- December
- City contracts are issued in December and County contracts are issued in January
- City/County contracts are for units of service (outputs) as outlined in proposal
- Payments are tied to execution of contract and quarterly reports

## Current Social Services Funding System ***Contracting Process***

### Recent Improvements

- Added participation in training as well as evaluation as requirement of FY2008 contracts.

### Strengths

- Accountability...City/County contract for actual units of service (not a grant). Expectations are clear and in writing.

### Challenges

- Issuing contracts for the same programs each year is inefficient

## Current Social Services Funding System *Reporting Process*

### Overview

- Agencies submit quarterly reports which contain information about outputs, income & expenses, and program/agency updates
- Staff reviews reports and authorizes payment contingent upon receipt and approval

### Recent Improvements:

- Agencies now required to submit reports electronically (reduce paper use, e-record of receipt, more easily shared with commission)

## Current Social Services Funding System *Reporting Process*

### Strengths

- Reporting on outputs and financial status is regularly checked against contracted services

### Challenges

- Lack of electronic database to dynamically input and track outputs/outcomes over time

## Current Social Services Funding System *Training/Evaluation Process*

### Overview

- All agencies funded by City/County agree to be evaluated for performance and administration.
- Previous evaluation process:
  - 5 year cycle of evaluation (8-10 agencies evaluated each year)
  - No training offered prior to FY2006. Group training offered with FY2006 funding.
  - Cost was approximately \$1,800/agency

## Current Social Services Funding System *Training/Evaluation Process*

### Recent Improvements:

- Brought in United Way as a partner (contributed \$9,000)
- Re-Designed the entire process
  - All agencies funded by City/County/United Way are now trained and evaluated each year
  - Developed three (3) distinct phases: assessment, training, and evaluation
- Contract re-negotiated with MU Truman School and OSEDA
  - Payment tied to the completion of and reporting on each phase
  - Individual training with each agency offered on-site
  - Evaluation will provide an individual report on each contracted program
  - Cost is now only \$675/agency (5x increase in service at 1/3 cost)

## Current Social Services Funding System *Training/Evaluation Process*

### Strengths

- All agencies/programs trained, evaluated, and reported on individually, each year
- Strong partnership between City/County, United Way, and University of Missouri
- Very low cost

### Challenges

- Lack of resources to meet individual training needs of each agency

## Ideas to Consider for Improvement *Short Term*

Reorganize service categories:

Currently:

- Basic Needs, Emergency, and Employment Services
- At-risk Youth Services
- Counseling and Rehabilitation Services
- Elderly and Disabled Services

Change to:

- Basic Needs and Emergency Services
- Economic Stability (Self Sufficiency) Services
- Children and Youth Services
- Mental Health Services
- Senior and Disability Services

## **Ideas to Consider for Improvement *Short Term***

List and define “service codes” allowable by City/County

Pros:

- Would allow for comparison of unit of service costs across agencies/programs and over time

Cons:

- May face some resistance from agencies

## **Ideas to Consider for Improvement *Short Term***

Increased input from council regarding funding priorities:

- Council designates funding levels by service category
- Council designates additional (new) funding for priority areas

## Ideas to Consider for Improvement *Intermediate Term*

Split the funding process into “small dollar” and “large dollar” RFPs

- Could be based on:
  - Amount of funding requested
  - Size of agency (revenues)
  - Percentage of agency revenues
- Issue longer term contracts (1+2 or 1+4) for large dollar recipients

Pros:

- Multi-year grants would reduce demand on agencies, commission, and staff in preparing and reviewing proposals for the same program every year
- Would allow better tracking of outcomes over time
- Helps to avoid exclusion of small agencies/programs

Cons:

- More labor intensive to run two parallel RFP processes

## Ideas to Consider for Improvement *Intermediate Term*

Move the funding process from the first half of the calendar year to the 2<sup>nd</sup> half

Pros:

- Agencies would more accurately be able to project budgets
- Amount of social services funding available would be known by staff and commission

Cons:

- Difficult for staff due to Diversity Celebration planning
- Would require a split from issuing RFP with the United Way (2 applications for some agencies)

## Ideas to Consider for Improvement *Intermediate Term*

Issue more targeted RFPs by:

- Geographic areas
- Income/poverty level
- Issues (i.e. aging population)
- Population (age, race, ability, etc.)

Pros:

- Very strategic approach in which outcomes could be followed closely

Cons:

- May not be politically feasible
- Labor intensive for commission and staff
- Would require additional technology resources

## Long-Term Challenges

- Limited funding (1% of City GR budget)
- Limited staff and technology resources
- State and federal resources are dwindling
- Need to bring United Way along in order to maintain collaboration
- Currently we are treating the symptoms of poverty rather than working to eliminate poverty.



## Ideas to Consider for Improvement *Long Term*

Approach social services delivery as an integral part of economic development

- Providing social services is not a “charitable” activity. It is an investment in the economic well-being of our community.
- Working to eliminate poverty is sound economic policy... Poverty is very expensive!
- Among agencies funded for FY2008, City social services funding represents an average of only 11.9% of the agencies’ budgets (e.g. every dollar the City invests in social services, 9 additional dollars from external resources are generated)
- Human Service agencies are a significant employment sector in our community

## Ideas to Consider for Improvement *Long Term*

Develop a comprehensive human services plan:

- Community Issues Management System
  - Use data to identify community needs, set priorities, develop community-wide indicators, and track outcomes
- Funders work from the same plan (City, County, state, federal United Way, public schools, university)
- Potentially pool resources around the plan

## Models in Other Communities

Ames, Iowa

- ASSET (Analysis of Social Services Evaluation Team)

Boulder, Colorado

- Department of Housing and Human Services
  - Freestanding department with four divisions:
    - Division of Children, Youth, and
    - Division of Community Services (includes external social services funding and human rights services)
    - Division of Housing
    - Division of Senior Services
- \$2.5 million in GR for external social services alone

## Questions

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