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## MEMORANDUM

To: David Ramsay, City Manager

From: Jennifer Schroder, Director  
Carrie Hite, Deputy Director

Date: August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2006

Subject: Letter to County Executive and Council Regarding Regional Veterans and Human Services Levy

RECOMMENDATION: City Council review letter, and authorize the Mayor to sign on behalf of the City Council.

### BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

In November of 2005, the King County voters approved the creation of a King County regional Veterans and Human Services Levy, which will provide roughly 13.3 million per year for six years for human services for veterans, their families and other low-income residents of King County.

On April 18, 2006, the Metropolitan King County Council approved an ordinance giving direction to how the money from the levy should be spent. They set the following goals:

- Reduce homelessness in King County
- Reduce behavior that results in court supervision or jail time
- Reduce the use of emergency medical services for primary care and mental health treatment, and
- Increase people's self-sufficiency through employment.

The County Council asked for the creation of a Service Improvement Plan, which describes how these goals will be met for veterans and other people in need, at the client, service, and system levels. The Service Improvement Plan has been drafted by a team of planning consultants and King County staff from the Department of Community and Human Services and Public Health of King County. They used existing plans and studies, researched strategies and programs that are best practices, and held focus groups across the County. This team met with representatives from the Eastside at the Eastside Human Services Forum work group.

A subcommittee of the Eastside Forum's work group met to analyze the plan in accordance with the needs on the Eastside. This subcommittee was made up of representatives from Redmond, Kirkland, and Bellevue. There were three obvious issues that the Forum had concerns about:

1) Although the levy was a county-wide ballot measure, levy investments will predominantly serve residents of Seattle and South King County;

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2) The plan has strong focus on serving the homeless (again, most programs are in Seattle and South King), even though the levy was intended to provide human services for a wider array of people in need. This needs to be balanced with other programs in the safety net; and

3) It is not clear how the proposed levy investments address the recommendation of the Healthy Families and Communities Task Force to use levy funds to fund a portion of the regional human services gap.

The Eastside Human Services Forum board is endorsing a letter urging Executive Sims and the Metropolitan King County Council to consider revisions to the Plan by broadening the use of the funds to the Eastside, and for the full array of services in need throughout the County.

Staff also felt it would be impactful for the Eastside Cities to endorse a similar letter.

# King County Veterans and Human Services Levy

## Service Implementation Plan Preliminary Draft Report

Dear Veterans and Human Services Levy Stakeholder:

As an interested stakeholder in the implementation process for this levy, we are sending you a preliminary draft of the proposed Report for your information and response. We thank you for your input thus far in our planning process and for taking the time for this review. By clicking on the download button at the left side of this page, you may download and PDF file of the preliminary draft **Service Implementation Plan** for the **Veterans and Human Services Levy**. Please note, and take seriously, the use of the words “preliminary” and “draft”. You will see that there are some sections of the report – particularly in the areas of demographic descriptions of the target populations and the levy allocation – that is still under development. (As you well know, these sections of the report provide particular challenges!)

In addition to providing a framework for discussion of levy investments, the report includes a set of tables that offer an initial “big picture” look at the specific investment strategies being recommended for levy funds.

Because this is a draft document, we are not seeking edits to the format of the report or word-smithing of its contents. We are, however, very interested in your comments on the draft investment strategies we are recommending to King County. In particular, we would encourage you to respond to these few questions - but feel free to add further comments as you choose.

1. Are there any investment strategies that don't make sense to you or are just plain bad ideas?
2. Are there any critical investment strategies that are missing and whose absence, you believe, would critically flaw the levy's outcomes?
3. Are there any other comments you have that you would like the team to consider in moving towards a final Service Implementation Plan?

Thank you very much for your time and interest. It is greatly appreciated. Please email your response no later than **Wednesday, July 19th**. Just click here or on the “email your comments” button at the left to reply. Thanks.

**David Wertheimer and Ursula Roosen-Runge  
for the Levy Planning Team**

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## Section I: About the Levy

### Why the Levy?

**Every day in King County, there are women, men and families struggling to hold their lives together in the face of very difficult problems. The following stories represent brief moments in the real lives of neighbors all around us:**

Joseph is a 40 year-old African-American living in a shelter in downtown Seattle. He is homeless and has been diagnosed with both schizophrenia and substance abuse. He regularly spends time in the jail, as well as, at the hospital emergency room. He is intelligent and articulate, despite the many challenges he faces on a daily basis. For him, being homeless has become a full-time job, just to survive. *“I am not incompetent,”* he says. *“I just need help moving the obstacles out of the way.”*

Susan is a single, European-American mother with two small children living in South King County. Without relatives, a support system or a car, juggling a full-time job in a packaging warehouse with the task of getting her children to daycare every morning leaves Susan with little time to meet anything other than the most basic needs of her family. Susan ends each day exhausted and demoralized. *“Poverty is when what you have to offer isn’t valued,”* she has said.

Tom is 24-year-old veteran of mixed European and Asian American descent living in Shoreline. He has just returned from two tours of duty in Iraq where he served as a medic. Prior to enlisting in the Army, he had wanted to be a doctor. Since returning, he has lost all interest in medicine, has bounced from job to job, and is unable to meet his monthly rent and utility costs. He is troubled by continuous flashbacks to images of the carnage and wounds he treated while overseas. *“I’m doing my best to avoid everyone and everything right now,”* he has said. *“I just wish I could feel safe, secure and comfortable, but it just isn’t happening for me.”*

**In November of 2005, the King County voters approved the creation of a King County regional Veterans and Human Services Levy, which will provide roughly \$13.3 million per year for six years for human services for veterans, their families and other low-income residents of King County.** In approving this levy, King County residents confirmed:

- The importance of ensuring a healthy life in the community for everyone, including those that have served their country in the United States military.
- The challenge of living in a fast-growing community in which the costs of living often outpace the incomes of those who are among our more fragile residents.

- The ongoing needs of individuals and families struggling with illnesses and related challenges that too often result in criminal justice system involvement and homelessness.

**Goals of the Levy**    **On April 18, 2006, the Metropolitan King County Council approved an ordinance giving direction to how the money from the levy should be spent. They set the following goals:**

- reduce homelessness in King County,
- reduce behavior that results in court supervision or jail time,
- reduce the use of emergency medical services for primary care and mental health treatment, and
- increase people's self-sufficiency through employment.

The County Council asked for the creation of a Service Improvement Plan, which will describe how these goals will be met for veterans and other people in need, at the client, service and system levels. The Service Improvement Plan has to address eight areas and strategies that the Council identified as being most important.

***Priority Investment Areas***

1. *Ensure access for veterans and their families to effective services and inter-system partnerships.*
2. *Develop seamless, user-friendly pathways to coordinated and integrated services and housing.*
3. *Expand capacity of supportive housing and "housing first" networks.*
4. *Promote timely and appropriate sharing of client information.*
5. *Provide increased access to and quality of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder treatment.*
6. *Expand impact of demonstrably effective recidivism-reduction programs by adding housing and employment components and/or increasing capacity.*
7. *Add employment-related goals and services to existing programs.*
8. *Promote healthy child development for children most at risk of future criminal behavior and/or dependency problems.*

**Levy Allocation**

The levy funds began to be collected in 2006. The ordinance calls for the first year of funding to be spent primarily on “one-time” investments in areas such as housing, information systems, or training. In years 2 - 6, levy funds are to be allocated as outlined in Table 1.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 1  
Allocation of Levy Funds by Ordinance**

<b>Levy Investment Formula: \$13.3 Million Annually (Years 2-6)</b>	
<b>Veterans</b>	<b>Other People in Need</b>
Up to \$1 Million for capital or one-time expenses (e.g., housing, infrastructure, etc.)	
At least \$2 Million per year for King County Veterans programming	\$1.5 Million per year for early childhood prevention and early intervention
County Overhead: \$332,500	County Overhead: \$332,500
<b>Funds Available for Projects with Joint Benefits</b>	
\$3,817,500	\$4,317,500

<sup>1</sup> The exact allocation will vary depending on the revenues collected each year, so these numbers are for illustration purposes only.

## Section II: Philosophy and Principles of the Plan

### Planning Approach

The Service Improvement Plan has been crafted by a team of planning consultants (Kelly Point Partners and Strategic Learning Resources) and King County experts from the Department of Community and Human Services and Public Health Seattle & King County. The planning team reviewed existing plans and studies, evaluated what is known about which strategies and programs work best, and picked the brains of more than ## experts from the City of Seattle, King County, Veterans Administration, state government and the University of Washington. Most importantly, the team also met with ## groups with more than ## stakeholders from across the County to learn from them about needs, barriers, issues, opportunities and strategies for improving the lives of people in need. The team took what it learned and created a framework for making the most effective use of the levy funds. The framework set assumptions about:

- the criteria the overall plan must meet,
- the criteria that individual initiatives and strategies must meet,
- the populations that would be served,
- the principles of evaluating the impact of the Levy, and
- the principles of assuring cultural competence.

This framework is described in the following pages.

### Criteria

The team began its work with the major assumption that it is most important to focus on a few well-defined groups of people in great need and do very well by them – rather than trying to do a little, which is not enough, for many people in need. In this way, the levy can have a real impact and it will be possible to evaluate this impact over time. With this in mind, the team set criteria for the plan as a whole, and criteria for individual strategies and initiatives within the plan. These criteria were used to filter in and filter out potential populations, strategies and overall approaches.

#### *Criteria for the Overall Plan*

Three broad criteria were set for the Service Improvement Plan as a whole. The plan must:

- 1) *Promote services and system integration by challenging existing fragmentation.*

Examples of how the Plan would meet this criterion include:

- Supporting the development of information systems.

- Expanding the capacity of organizations to coordinate, bridge disciplines, and integrate the delivery of services.
- The linking of systems and services for Veterans and other people in need.

2) *Fill existing gaps in services and continuums of care rather than creating new programs that promote systems fragmentation.*

The Plan will seek, in large part, to build on existing system strengths and programs with proven track records, rather than inventing new programs and service paradigms that duplicate the activities that the systems and services already in place currently do well.

3) *Demonstrate high impact and positive results for the selected populations and communities.*

The Plan will meet this criterion if the strategies are thorough, coherent, and their outcomes are measured.

4) *Move King County towards an effective regional management approach to housing, health and human services that addresses needs at a local level.*

A regional approach to managing the Levy could help to promote structures to ensure a consistent approach to contracting, training, standards, information systems, equipment and facility renewal, etc., as well as, ongoing collaboration and coordination across jurisdictions and agencies. At the same time, it is essential that the solutions to specific community issues come in large part from the communities being served. As a result, the Plan must balance a regional approach of managing resources with a local approach to service implementation. The use of system and service level “boundary spanners” -- staff with the capacity to promote an integrated approach to housing, health and human service activities at both the County (systems) and regional (direct services) levels -- will be a critical component of this work.

*Criteria for Strategies*

The following criteria were used to decide and confirm which of a wide array of strategies would be invested in by the Levy. Strategies did not need to specifically meet all criteria, but needed to be aligned with the overarching strategic directions of the Plan.

1. *Strategy is based on evidence-based practice and expected outcomes can be articulated and measured.*

Evidence based programs have established and tested ways of providing services, which are known

***What does “evidence-based” mean?***

*Evidence based practices have been scientifically evaluated to determine whether or not they make a positive difference and bring about the change they were designed to create.*

to provide results, and which have protocols for evaluating and refining them. Using these programs speeds the development of services and can give voters confidence that their tax money will make a difference.

2. *Strategies are data driven.*

Strategies need to be directed to the populations and communities where the greatest differences can be made, in respect to the goals for the Levy. This means making choices both in terms of who is served and how they are served.

3. *Strategy builds on existing successful programs or structures, when possible.*

King County is rich with creative and proven programs for people in need. Often, the greatest issue for them is not 'what' they should be doing - but 'how much' they can do with the resources available. Rather than developing new programs, levy funds will be used to expand the capacity of existing programs across the community. This will help to limit the fragmentation of services, save development time and strengthen the health, human services and housing systems.

4. *Strategy is likely to attract or leverage other public or private resources.*

Experience and literature shows that in many different arenas, the most effective and sustainable programs are those that come out of the braiding of public sector funding streams and/or the creation of public-private partnerships. The capacity of the Levy to trigger change will be greatly increased when levy funds are braided with other public funds or matched by private resources.

5. *Strategy makes access to services easier for the target population.*

The human service and housing systems are a maze that is difficult to find one's way through. People who are hungry, mentally ill, homeless, recently released from jail, battling drug addiction or who otherwise have barriers to their ability to cope find it even more difficult.

6. *Strategy could be replicated or expanded in the future.*

The ability to expand or repeat a program or strategy in a new part of the County will build on what works and it will be another step in reducing the fragmentation of services.

## **Who Will the Levy Serve?**

The needs of individuals across King County are great and varied. Based on local stakeholder input (which was remarkably consistent) and a review of the national literature, four primary groups of people have been selected to be the focus of the Veterans and Human Services Levy.

## **Selected Populations**

- 1. Veterans and their families who are struggling with mental illness, domestic violence, unstable housing, and/or under employment.** These will include families of soldiers who are currently deployed and who for one reason or another may not be eligible for VA services<sup>2</sup> and soldiers who have recently returned and are having difficulty creating a normal daily life.
- 2. Individuals and families who experience long-term homelessness and are very frequent users of Emergency Departments, have frequent encounters with law-enforcement, and repeated stays in the County jail.** These individuals typically suffer from serious mental illness and/or severe addiction to drugs or alcohol, have little employment history, and have either no contact with family or have a seriously dysfunctional family. About one out of four are Veterans, many of whom experienced combat in Korea, Viet Nam or the Gulf Wars.
- 3. Parents who have been recently released from prison or jail, or are under court supervision, and who are striving to maintain their family or be re-united with their children.** Most of these parents are single women and many are homeless, are attempting recovery from substance abuse and/or mental illness, and have experienced domestic violence in their past.
- 4. Young children who are at risk for future involvement with the child welfare system or juvenile court because of life circumstances.** These are often children of first-time teen age parents, children of parents who have had involvement with the criminal justice system as described above, children whose parents are immigrants or refugees and isolated due to culture and language, and children whose mother suffers from severe post-partum depression but does not have the supports or resources to cope with it.

## **Conditions in Common**

These groups of individuals and families, while called out separately for the purpose of developing coordinated sets of strategies which will help them change their lives, are not as distinct from each other as may appear on paper. These are people who have many conditions and life circumstances in common including:

- periodic or long-term homelessness,
- mental illness including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), chronic depression, severe anxiety and schizophrenia,
- abuse of or addiction to drugs and alcohol, which is often experienced at the same time as mental illness,

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<sup>2</sup> These families include National Guard, unmarried couples with children, and families who have suffered a significant drop in income due to the deployment.

- having experienced violence,
- a disrupted education,
- either no or a poor work history,
- encounters with police and the courts, and/or
- lack of connection to an extended family or community.

**Demographic Highlights**

Detailed information about the selected populations is provided in Appendix – but a picture can be painted ‘by the numbers’ which illustrates who people are and what their needs are likely to be.

*Veterans*

*[to be inserted]*

*Long-Term Homeless*

There is no single data set or source that describes the group of people who are experiencing extended periods with no permanent housing. What we know is pieced together through a variety of different sources.

The Seattle King County Coalition for the Homeless conducts an annual “One Night Count,” which includes a street count in portions of Seattle, Eastside, Shoreline, Kent, White Center, and in 2005-2006, Federal Way. The 2004 One Night Count counted 2,216 surviving outside without shelter, estimated that another 1,484 were living unsheltered in King County outside of Seattle, and counted 4,636 people living in shelters and transitional housing for a total estimated 8,336 people.<sup>3</sup> Of these, roughly 2,500 were estimated to be long-term homeless as defined by the federal government.<sup>4</sup>

For the purposes of the Levy, the definition of long-term homeless has been expanded to include individuals who may experience long-term homelessness without meeting the formal HUD definition, as well as, families who experience repeated or continuous homelessness. The 2004 One Night Count found 600 families living in shelters and transitional housing with more than 1,100 children under the age of 18.

***Chronically Homeless: HUD Definition***

"An unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more, or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years."

<sup>3</sup> This count excludes people in the King County Jail, which had an average census of 2,601 in 2005, of whom at least 15-20% are homeless. (Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention, King County)

<sup>4</sup> The Committee to End Homelessness recognizes the difficulty in correlating the “One Night Count”, which is a single point in time with the number of people who experience homelessness over a period of time, such as a year. It has chosen a multiplier of 3 to estimate the number of people who experience homelessness in a year, implying that in 2004, an estimated 25,000 people experienced homelessness in King County.

Health Care for the Homeless, which served 8,148 unduplicated individuals who were homeless in 2005, collects data which helps put a “face” on the homeless person:

- 55% of their clients were people of color, with the largest group being African-American (26%).
- 63% were single adults, but 10% were unattached youth and 23% were individuals in families.
- 62% were living either on the street or in a shelter.
- Only 35% had Medicaid coverage.
- 29% had been homeless more than three times.

The impact of people who are homeless on other services is represented in their use of emergency services in 2005:

- Of the 300 people who had the greatest number of outpatient visits and inpatient admissions to Harborview Medical Center, almost 40% were homeless<sup>5</sup>.
- The Seattle Fire Department responded to calls for emergency medical services at shelters and housing units for people who are homeless in the downtown area, more than 2,400 times<sup>6</sup>.

*Families with CJ  
Involvement*

*[to be inserted]*

*Young Children  
at Risk*

*[to be inserted]*

*Geographic  
Issues*

Although in the past, it could have been argued that the City of Seattle presented the most significant levels of poverty and need for human services, demographic changes to areas in King County outside the City of Seattle over the past decade have challenged many of these traditional assumptions. Some of these changes are visible to the public through the emergence of Tent Cities on the Eastside and the homeless encampments in rural South King County. Other changes are reflected in the growth of the number of primary languages spoken by children in schools throughout the County that points towards the need for culturally and linguistically competent services across the region.

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<sup>5</sup> Harborview Medical Center

<sup>6</sup> Emergency Medical Services Division, Public Health Seattle King County

Some of these changes and challenges become visible through a brief comparison of the different geographic areas of the County.

**Table 2  
Demographic Comparison of Different Areas of King County<sup>7</sup>**

	<b>Seattle</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>North</b>
% of all King County residents who live here	34%	35%	24%	8%
% of residents who are persons of color	33%	28%	19%	18%
% of all persons of color who live here	41%	36%	17%	5%
% of residents who are children	16%	27%	25%	25%
% of all King County children who live here	24%	41%	26%	9%
% of residents who receive state assistance	7%	8%	2%	3%
% of King County residents receiving state assistance who live here	38%	49%	8%	5%
% of the single parent homes in King County	29%	45%	19%	7%
% of all King County children on School Lunch Aid who live here	26%	57%	6%	10%

This table shows that, in some aspects, such as its total population and ethnic diversity, South King County has become more like the City of Seattle. In other aspects, which indicate a need for human services such as single parent homes and children on School Lunch Aid, the levels of need in South King County has actually outstripped Seattle. East King County reflects some of the same trends, such as having a diverse and young population, but it continues to have lower rates of poverty than other areas of the County.

The planning team did not use geography as a one of its criteria for its recommendations, but rather as a guide to where particular attention should be paid to expanding the service capacity for specific populations. As a result, many selected strategies are focused primarily (but never exclusively) on identified needs in Seattle and South King County.

<sup>7</sup> Derived from "A Matter of Need", South King Council of Human Services, 2005

**How Will we Know Whether the Strategies are Effective?**

One of the criteria for the plan, as a whole, is that it “*demonstrates high impact and positive results for the selected populations and communities.*” The evaluation of the work undertaken with Levy funds is therefore an essential activity, as well as, a basic principle that must guide levy operations. The evaluation process and structure is described in more detail in the Management Section of the Service Improvement Plan and it will have two components:

1. An ongoing process evaluation, which will provide feedback to King County and other organizations who are providing programs through the Levy about how well their processes are working. This will include evaluating contracting, collaboration and coordination, information sharing, policy development, and management of resources, as well as, identifying when there are obstacles or unintended consequences. This evaluation will enable providers and King County to make course corrections along the way.
2. An evaluation of program outcomes, which will occur at the program and the system level. This will include assessing how well the strategies individually and in aggregate have addressed the goals of the levy by contributing to the reduction of homelessness, emergency medical costs, and recidivism, and by supporting the healthy development of young children in families who are most at risk.

**Cultural Competence**

The effectiveness of the strategies supported by the Levy will depend on the ability of the systems, agencies and individual providers to deliver services in ways that are grounded in the beliefs and attitudes of their diverse communities.

There are, as the demographic highlights show, a disproportionate number of people of color who are homeless, involved in child welfare and criminal justice systems, or at risk for those events. To break this cycle, all services must be delivered within the context of cultural beliefs, behaviors and needs presented by clients and their communities.

***What is a cultural competent system?***

*A system that “acknowledges and incorporates – at all levels – the importance of culture, assessment of cross-cultural relations, vigilance toward the dynamics that result from cultural differences, expansion of cultural knowledge, and adaptation of services to meet culturally unique needs.”*

Joseph Betancourt

Furthermore, it must be recognized that the delivery of cultural competent services is not the sole answer to breaking the cycle of racism that results in people of color being disproportionately negatively involved in homelessness, child welfare and criminal justice. Cultural competent services only insure that services to **individuals** (i.e., the individual or family) are delivered in a sensitive and appropriate manner. To break the cycle of disproportionality,

interventions targeting homelessness, child welfare and the justice system require strategies that focus on the **group**. This does not simply mean services directed at a certain population only. It means looking at the larger service strategies, policies, engagement practices, assessment tools, decision-making patterns in service systems, etc.

#### *Framework for*

*Cultural Competence* Levy funds can be used, through the implementation of the core investment strategies, to support a set of principles, which will help move systems towards culturally sensitive and adapted strategies.<sup>8</sup> These principles must be:

1. *Organizational:* Systems of services are shaped by the leadership that sets the policies and the staff that implement them. The leadership and the workforce should reflect the racial or ethnic makeup of the communities they serve.
2. *Structural:* For diverse ethnic populations, there are inherent barriers to accessing services within the mainstream culture. These include: language, a dependence on written information and completion of forms, the importance of timeliness and schedule, and belief systems related to health and mental health, family, housing, work etc. Involving communities in the design of programs that serve them is a critical strategy to helping restructure programs and services in ways that remove or mitigate the barriers to access.
3. *Service-Oriented:* The point of contact between client and provider must be informed by the cultural context but also avoid the dangers of stereotyping. As communities become increasingly diverse, it is difficult for providers to have an in-depth understanding of all cultures and how they may view or interact with the provider. Service providers can be trained, however, to be aware of how culture informs their own perspectives, how to carry out 'culturally-neutral' interviews, and how to view the client as their 'teacher' about the client's culture and worldview. Training of all staff in culturally competent behaviors is an additional critical step in reducing barriers to services and increasing the effectiveness of services.

#### *Evidence Based Practices*

Another criteria for the selection of strategies is that they are evidence based. There needs to be a readiness, however, to examine whether evidence-based practices, which may have worked well in the context of one culture, will work as well in the context on another, and an ability to adapt evidence based practices to diverse communities.

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<sup>8</sup> Adapted from "Defining Cultural Competence: A Practical Framework for Addressing Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Health and Health Care", Joseph Betancourt et al., Public Health Reports, July-August, 2003, vol. 118

Increasing support is being provided to an approach called “practice-based evidence” which is “theory-driven selection of appropriate interventions based on a range of factors, including the cultural and historical belief systems of the community related to healing and wellness.”<sup>9</sup> Services, which are based on practice-based evidence, are designed with the community and delivered by volunteers, paraprofessionals and professionals from within the community whose knowledge of local cultural beliefs, traditions, and nuances are respected by the formal and/or informal leadership or consensus of the community.<sup>10</sup> This also implies that evaluation of the process and outcomes takes into account client values and culture and defines the desired outcomes in the context of the client culture.

*Recommendation* The consultants recommend that the implementation of a range of Levy funded strategies be done through the communities that will be served, and that the evaluation of process and outcomes be structured to involve communities at the program level. It is recognized that this approach could lead to further fragmentation of services and we, therefore, also recommend that contractual relationships between larger human service and housing organizations and smaller community based organizations be encouraged in the response to County RFPs and the delivery of services. Community-based organizations can offer the cultural competence and connection to community needed for success, while the larger organizations offer the supportive infrastructure and knowledge of evidence based practices needed for success.

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<sup>9</sup> “Culturally and Linguistically Competent Services & Supports: Practice-Based Evidence” Holly Echo-Hawk Georgetown National TA Teleconference Series June 15, 2006

<sup>10</sup> Drawn from “Evidence-Based Practices and Minority Families and Consumers”, Holly Echo-Hawk, Research and Training Center for Children’s Mental Health, University of South Florida, February 2006

### Section III: Input from Stakeholders

#### Process

The Levy ordinance mandated the “*specific involvement of the county veterans' program advisory board, health care for the homeless, jail health, housing and community development, mental health, chemical abuse and dependency, work training, community corrections, parent child health and the children and family commission...[consultation] with the Committee to End Homelessness in King County, the appropriate juvenile and adult justice operational master plan oversight and working groups, SOAR and regional and sub-regional human services planning groups.*” King County staff met with the groups internal to the County and consultants from Kelly Point Partners and Strategic Learning Resources met with various groups external to County government to seek their priorities and strategies for levy investment. The planning team is very grateful for the willingness of providers and clients across the County to meet at short notice and for the richness of the ideas that were raised. They greatly informed all stages of the planning effort.

#### Highlights of What We Heard

A detailed summary of the input, including specific strategies, received from stakeholders can be found in Appendix --. The Appendix also includes the presentation made to stakeholders describing the levy process and a list of the stakeholders who participated. The following provides only some of the highlights of overarching themes that were heard.

#### Coordination & Collaboration

There is a strong desire to have systems and service providers work more effectively together, to both reduce fragmentation of services and resources and to provide services that more closely fit the multiple needs of many individuals and families, as well as, the cultures of King County's diverse communities. Stakeholders encouraged the levy to support:

- The strengthening of current coordinating mechanisms.
- Small community based organizations in navigating the funding system and in partnering with larger regional organizations.
- The building of linkages and coordinating of processes among the Veteran's Administration, King County, and other providers.
- “Boundary spanners” who will help break down the barriers between the employment, health, housing, criminal justice and treatment systems and support new collaborations.
- The development of a regional governance structure for human services that would provide coordination of efforts and resources, but support implementation at a local level.

### *Ease of Access*

Many stakeholders, from their various vantage points, talked about the complexity of the housing, health and human service systems. People who are already having difficulty coping with basic survival often face additional challenges and barriers when they try to gain help. This leads to discouragement, frustration, cynicism and avoidance of services that might potentially help. There is a strong desire in all systems to make the access to services easier for clients. Strategies proposed to do this include:

- “coordinated entry” for people who are homeless,
- “navigators” who help people move within or between systems, and
- increasing case management capacity.

### *Cultural Competency*

The increased number of refugee and immigrant populations in East and South King County, and the disproportional number of people of color involved in the criminal justice system and shelters raised for many stakeholders the need to increase the cultural competency of systems, programs and staff. The pairing of smaller community based organizations - bringing an in-depth knowledge of community beliefs and traditions - to larger regional organizations with the needed infrastructure was raised as a system strategy by more than one group.

### *Planning*

A number of stakeholders saw a need for more planning and suggested that the flexibility of Levy funds provide an opportunity to do so. Areas identified that would benefit from greater planning efforts include:

- a deeper understanding of who are the high users of emergency medical services and the potential role of community health centers in diverting clients from the emergency department to primary care.
- involvement of suburban cities in regional planning for jail services.
- planning across the different employment programs to integrate services, build relationships and establish a continuum of access to services.
- developing a vision of human services for South King County.

### *Public Education*

Stakeholders see a need and an opportunity to build a public education and community relations effort that might have a number of different facets such as:

- Helping the business community, schools and other groups understand how they can be part of the solution,
- Changing the public’s understanding of the purpose of criminal justice system from incarceration to public safety and community well being, and

- Informing the public about how their tax dollar is being used and what the results are.

*Increasing the Capacity of What is Already in Place*

Public agencies, community groups, and non-profit agencies all believe that there are many programs in King County, which are doing ‘the right thing’ but which do not have the resources ‘to do enough of it’. There is a strong emphasis on increasing the capacity of existing programs and systems to carry out their current efforts, expand the number of people who can be served and their geographic spread, as well as increasing the depth of the services they offer.

It is clear from stakeholder input that housing in the form of emergency shelter beds, transitional living units and especially permanent supportive housing is a critical gap. The efforts of the Committee to End Homelessness are highly visible throughout King County. There was clear direction from stakeholders that Levy funds should be used to support that effort and be congruent with it. Some stakeholders would like Levy funds to support ‘set-asides’ in housing to support persons who are otherwise difficult to place in housing, such as offenders on release from prison and patients with histories of long-term homelessness at discharge from the medical respite settings or Harborview Medical Center. Many emphasized the great need to fund supportive services in housing, as well as, the importance of linking services to housing first programs, and urged that no new units be built that did not have on-site supportive services.

Another large gap in capacity identified by stakeholders is access to mental health treatment. Over and over again, the planning team heard of the difficulties in treating persons whose non-Medicaid status or mental health diagnosis prevented them from receiving publicly funded mental health treatment and the enormous barrier that constitutes to helping individuals make life changes.

Many stakeholders across the County noted that South King County, which has seen a great increase in the needs of its residents, has not seen a proportionate increase in resources, resulting in great unmet needs in its service infrastructure and program capacity. Many believe that Levy investment strategies should focus, at least in part, on South King County. This includes services for both Veterans and other populations in need.

*Specific Strategies*

Each group, with which members of the team met, put forth strategies for reducing recidivism in the jail system, decreasing emergency medical costs, supporting health in early childhood development, increasing self-sufficiency through employment, and reducing homelessness. These ideas are summarized in Appendix –. They make good reading.

## Section IV: Investment Strategies

### Overview

The use of levy funds has been approached from the perspective of investing money, rather than spending money. The purpose is to use the funds to create future benefit for the community. The framework for the investment of levy funds is grounded in the following principles.

### *Investment Principles*

Several core investment principles have been used to guide the development of the Service Improvement Plan and the allocation of levy funds. These include:

- Levy funds will be used most effectively when they are invested in activities that meet the criteria described in Section II.
- The County will seek to share the costs associated with mobilizing its investment strategies.
- The County will identify investment partners whose funds can be joined with levy resources.
- By sharing investment opportunities, the County will decrease the risk and increase the impact of levy investments.
- Where feasible, levy funds will be invested to enhance existing programs and initiatives with demonstrated track records with the levy's target populations. Many outstanding, evidence-based programs are already in place in King County and could benefit from opportunities to expand their capacity or geographical service areas.
- The investment of levy funds will not be spread so thinly that the impact of these resources cannot be effectively measured and are not clearly evident to the residents of King County. Although there are numerous programs and populations that would benefit from an investment of levy resources, levy funds will be invested carefully to maximize their impact in selected areas. The levy should, ideally, seek to do a limited number of things really well, as opposed to trying to do too many things not well enough.

### *Investment Framework*

The investment formula that has been provided to guide expenditures of levy resources (see Table 1), identifies the funds to be allocated according to two general categories of target populations: "Veterans" and "other people in need." The Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) has been specifically instructed to maintain two separate funds to track spending for these two groups. Within these two funds, the resources made available by the levy fall into three distinct investment categories.

**One-Time Investments:** King County began collecting levy funds in January of 2006. As this first year of funding accrues, it creates a pool of money that provides the opportunity for a significant, one-time investment. These investments must be in areas or activities that will benefit from a single, large infusion of resources without requiring ongoing, annual investments to maintain them. One-time investment areas can include such things as housing, other capital expenses (e.g., outreach vans, equipment, etc.), information sharing technologies, planning initiatives to promote collaboration and integration, activities related to the development and implementation of oversight, and evaluation and accountability structures.

**Ongoing Housing and Service Investments:** The vast majority of the levy funds available on an annual basis are dedicated to the addressing the health and human service needs of the three target populations that have been identified through the process of creating the Service Improvement Plan. These are:

- Individuals and families experiencing long-term homelessness,
- High risk children and their families, and
- At risk veterans and their families.

**Infrastructure Investments:** The levy contains a provision to permit an ongoing, annual investment of up to \$1 million for capital and one-time expenses. These funds, similar to those of the first year, can be used to increase the availability of housing for the levy's target populations, to acquire equipment or expertise needed to more effectively deliver services, to enhance the management structures needed to help King County move towards a more systematic, regional approach to human services management, service investments, and other related strategies.

The first set of tables in the following section of this report provide general information about the recommended investment of levy funds organized into these three categories.

### **Cross-Cutting Service Delivery Models**

Despite the clarity of the model in which two funding streams are dedicated to guiding levy activities for two different target groups, the levy's target populations are not always separate and distinct. In fact, many individuals in one group are struggling with a number of problems or difficulties that would qualify them for membership in a second or even all three of the target populations. For example, some veterans struggle with long-term homelessness; some high-risk children are homeless, or have a parent who is a veteran, etc.

Despite the reality that many families in need are struggling with multiple problems simultaneously, all too often, existing service

systems are designed as if an individual or family has only one problem, (e.g., mental illness, addictions, homelessness, etc.), and find it difficult to effectively address the multiple needs presented by our most vulnerable County residents.

Because levy funds are, by nature, a highly flexible resource, the levy provides a unique opportunity to address this problem of systems fragmentation. Levy resources can be used to fill in service or housing gaps created by the fragmented “silos” of funding that comes from other sources. For example, the levy funds could provide:

- Services to individuals and families that might be excluded by restrictions in other funding streams (e.g., those with a criminal history).
- Bridge funding to address gaps in eligibility for existing services (e.g., the provision of mental health treatment to individuals not yet enrolled in Medicaid).
- The “glue” that binds other fragmented funding streams together to ensure a holistic approach to a client’s multiple needs (e.g., bringing employment services and veterans services together to meet the needs of veterans who are having difficulty finding work).

Using levy resources to decrease systems fragmentation is a core principle of the Service Improvement Plan. The final table in the following section of this report illustrates one way of demonstrating the interlocking nature of many of the funding allocations that have been recommended as part of the Service Improvement Plan. This table seeks to show how levy investments that reach across target populations and service systems will help to overcome some of the existing fragmentation that prevents individuals and families from accessing the full range of services they may need.

*First Year, One-Time Investments*

The levy funds that have accrued during 2006 provide the opportunity for a single infusion of resources into critical areas related to the needs of the selected target populations. Accordingly, the Service Implementation Plan recommends expenditures of these one-time funds in the following general areas, as outlined in the tables below.

**Table 3  
Recommended Expenditures for First-Year, One-Time Levy Funds  
Target Population: Individuals and Families Experiencing Long-Term Homelessness  
DRAFT: Dollar Amounts Are Estimates Only (in Millions) - Actual Budget Detail In Development**

<b>Target Population: Individuals and Families Experiencing Long-Term Homelessness</b>	
<b>Total Allocation for this Target Population</b>	
	<b>\$5.8</b>
<b>Investment Area</b>	
<b>Housing</b>	<p><b>Develop new permanent housing units:</b> The 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness identifies a high level of need for the creation of more than 9,500 units of housing for people who are homeless. The levy will become a major investor in the 10-Year Plan, with a specific focus on housing for long-term homeless individuals and families, including veterans.</p> <p><b>Explore strategies to reduce barriers to housing for persons with criminal justice system history:</b> Some housing subsidies carry eligibility restrictions for individuals with histories of criminal justice system involvement. The flexibility of the levy funds allows the use of these funds to promote housing opportunities for this group.</p> <p><b>Develop system for limited housing inventory management:</b> King County still lacks a real-time system for identifying housing that is immediately available, especially for individuals with histories of long-term homelessness. Levy funds could seek to be an investor in developing a methodology for tracking the availability of housing units on a day-to-day basis.</p> <p><b>Landlord Risk Reduction Fund:</b> Many private sector landlords are reluctant to rent units to individuals with poor rental backgrounds or histories of homelessness. A risk reduction fund that allows landlords to recoup losses related to delinquent rents, damage to units, etc. can be an incentive for more private sector landlords to rent to a higher risk group of tenants. (A parallel fund is proposed for veterans. See below.)</p>
<b>Outreach &amp; Engagement</b>	<p><b>Outreach vans for Seattle and South King County:</b> With more than 9,000 people homeless in King County on any given night, providing outreach and engagement services to this population is a critical area of need, especially in Seattle and South King County, (where long-term homelessness is a growing phenomenon of great concern to the local community). Because transportation issues – both for outreach workers and for individuals who are homeless – are a significant barrier to service access (especially in South King County), one-time funds could help to fund the acquisition and operation of additional vans targeting this population.</p>

**Invest in Safe Harbors start up to improve sharing of client data, including consultation:** Safe Harbors remains our regions best hope at creating a functional Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). One-time levy funds can assist in both start-up costs that have been encountered by Safe Harbors providers, as well as programming enhancements to the Safe Harbors HMIS that can be used to inform ongoing activities related to coordinated outreach targeting the highest users of services who are homeless (see ongoing levy investments, below).

**Investment Subtotal**

**\$4.4**

**System Design, Training, Cross-Systems Collaboration**

**Provide support to the design and development of regional human services, which will coordinate resources at a regional level, supporting local planning and strategy implementation:**

Many different planning bodies, such as the Regional Policy Council, have called for greater coordination in the organization and management of housing, health and human services across King County. One-time levy funds provide an opportunity to invest in further exploration and planning of the feasibility and possible structure for this regionalized approach to human services management.

**Consultation and training related to protocols and policies for Release of Information (ROI) and sharing of patient information:**

Many providers in King County encounter constraints related to information sharing that are related to statutory and regulatory policies and procedures, including HIPAA and 42 CFR Part 2. Through the use of expert legal consultation, service providers in other parts of the nation have begun to improve information sharing protocols that are within the constraints established by law. The Levy has the capacity to use one-time funds to bring this expert legal consultation to King County.

**Develop or adapt basic assessment tools for adults, youth and families to be used by all human service and housing providers across the County:**

Communication, referrals and collaborative service activities among providers throughout the region remains constrained by the absence of consistent screening and assessment tools for adults, youth and families. Using one-time levy funds to help stimulate a more consistent and uniform approach to the screening and assessment process will help to reduce barriers to efficient and accurate cross-agency and cross-system communications.

**Design or adapt collaboration training to enhance cross system partnerships, ensure cultural competency and address disproportionality in the areas of homelessness, child welfare and the criminal justice system that negatively impacts people of color:**

King County does not yet make effective use of the ethnic and minority service providers who have developed effective service delivery models for the highly diverse populations of the region. Levy funds could help these providers to create training and consultation relationships across agencies to promote improved service delivery to all residents of King County. In addition, system efforts must promote addressing the larger issues of institutionalized racism and disproportionality.

**Mobilize a planning process for a coherent system of care for youth 18-21 aging out of foster care, juvenile justice and other systems serving youth:**

The gap in housing, services and supports for individuals between the ages of 18 and 21 remains a critical issue in King County. The levy can invest in a planning process to conceptualize an integrated approach to the needs of youth especially those leaving foster care but not yet able to access services and housing in the adult systems.

**Conduct a baseline analysis of data from DCHS, jail, courts, etc., that provides a detailed profile of offenders with mental illnesses and co-occurring disorders:** Systems planning efforts linked to a number of different legislative initiatives and funding streams require accurate and complete information about the treatment and service needs of people exiting the criminal justice system, especially among those who are at risk for or are experiencing homelessness.

***Investment Subtotal*** **\$1.0**

**Evaluation**

**Design evaluation process, data elements, systems for data collection, trainings etc.:** One-time levy funds will be critical to the development and mobilization of the overall evaluation of the levy itself. It will be essential to begin evaluation activities as early as possible during the life of the levy, in order to ensure collection of baseline measures that enable the evaluation to accurately track the impact of levy investments over time.

***Investment Subtotal*** **\$0.2**

**Other Activities**

**Provide Treatment for Parents involved with the King County Family Treatment Court for Child Dependency Cases:** This critical program faces a one-year funding gap as new funding streams are put in place to secure its stability over time. The levy can provide a critical one-time support for the treatment services provided under the jurisdiction of this court over this critical bridge period between ongoing funding streams.

***Investment Subtotal*** **\$0.2**

<b>Investment Subtotal: Individuals and Families Experiencing Long-Term Homelessness</b>	<b>\$5.8</b>
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**Table 4**  
**Recommended Expenditures for First-Year, One-Time Levy Funds**  
**Target Population: At-Risk Veterans and Their Families**  
**DRAFT: Dollar Amounts Are Estimates Only (in Millions) - Actual Budget Detail In Development**

<b>Target Population: At-Risk Veterans and Their Families</b>		
<b>Total Allocation for this Target Population</b>		<b>\$5.8</b>
<b>Investment Area</b>		
<b>Housing</b>	<p><b>Landlord Risk Reduction Fund for Veterans:</b> Many private sector landlords are reluctant to rent units to individuals with poor rental backgrounds or histories of homelessness. A risk reduction fund that allows landlords to recoup losses related to delinquent rents, damage to units, etc. can be an incentive for more private sector landlords to rent to a higher risk group of tenants. Dedicating levy funds to a risk reduction fund specifically dedicated to veterans will help King County to ensure that individuals with histories of military involvement, including those recently returning from active duty in the Middle East, will be able to access the safe and decent housing they deserve. (A parallel fund is proposed for long-term homeless populations. See above.)</p> <p><b>New permanent housing units:</b> See above. Because veterans represent a significant percentage of individuals who are homeless in King County, an investment of levy resources in permanent housing set-asides for veterans will be a particularly valuable use of levy funds.</p>	
	<b>Investment Subtotal</b>	<b>\$4.5</b>
<b>Outreach and Engagement</b>	<p><b>Veterans Program mobile office vans:</b> Only downtown Seattle has a full-service King County Veterans Program office. Yet veterans in need of services are located throughout the County. By locating a team of Veterans Program Staff in South King County (see ongoing investments, below), the presence and visibility of the Veterans Program in another part of the county will be greatly enhanced. By making this team mobile, its “reach” will be extended even further into South and East King County. The acquisition of vans and the outfitting of “mobile veterans offices” will increase access to veterans services to those men and women who have difficulty accessing the existing Veterans Program downtown, or the planned office in South King County.</p>	
	<b>Investment Subtotal</b>	<b>\$0.2</b>
<b>Investment Subtotal: At-Risk Veterans and Their Families</b>		<b>\$4.7</b>
<b>Available Resources for Additional Projects</b>		<b>\$1.1</b>
<b>Total Investment of All First Year, One-Time Funds</b>		<b>\$11.6</b>

Ongoing Housing and  
Service System  
Investments

In years two through six of the levy, approximately \$13.3 million in levy funds will be collected annually. Approximately \$12.3 million will be made available for ongoing investments in the housing and service systems to help meet the needs of the three levy target populations. The Service Implementation Plan recommends expenditures of these ongoing funds in the following general areas, as outlined in the tables below. It should be noted that these figures do not represent final allocation amounts, as the actual amount of the funds available will be determined by multiple factors, including the amount of levy funds actually collected, the corrections required to address the impact of inflation, cost of living adjustments, etc.

**Table 5**  
**Recommended Expenditures for Ongoing Levy Funds (Non-Infrastructure)**  
**Total for Years 2-6 (in 2006 Dollars)**  
**DRAFT: Dollar Amounts Are Estimates Only (in Millions) - Actual Budget Detail In Development**

**Population: Individuals and Families Experiencing Long-Term Homelessness**

1. **High intensity coordinated entry and outreach:** A range of outreach and engagement services is currently available to individuals experiencing homelessness, primarily in downtown Seattle. Enhanced coordination across these outreach programs, combined with a focused effort to identify and engage the 200-400 highest users of emergency services, will provide opportunities to link existing programs, increase their efficiency and effectiveness, and achieve improved outcomes in their collective efforts.
2. **Support mobile outreach vans in Seattle and South King County:** The levy can provide an investment in the staffing and support to transform existing mobile outreach activities (such as the Emergency Services Patrol), into a more effective, countywide resource. This will require expanding target populations, geographic service area, hours of operation and the configuration of services, treatment and housing linkages provided.
3. **Integrate Mental Health/Chemical Dependency treatment staff at Public Health and Community Health Clinics to promote integration of primary care and behavioral health including treatment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (see also similar strategy for Veterans):** Many individuals who are homeless, (as well as many veterans) seek primary care services at the Community Clinics and Public Health Centers located across King County. Many of these individuals have significant mental health and substance abuse treatment needs, but eligibility and capacity restrictions in the existing treatment systems make access to treatment difficult. The integration of behavioral health services in places where people already seek care will increase access and enable the clinics to become more effective at addressing the full range of health care needs presented by many of their clients. It is expected to also reduce the use of emergency and crisis response systems that are a currently a principle source of behavioral health treatment for many of the long-term homeless.
4. **Contribution to Safe Harbors training and technical assistance costs for providers:** See one-time investments, above. Participants in the Safe Harbors HMIS system require ongoing training of staff to ensure their participation in this critical activity. Creating a fund to support the training and technical assistance needs of agencies providing services to people who are homeless will increase the accuracy and completeness of the data provided to our system about homelessness that can be used to inform planning, funding and program development activities. The size of the investment in this area will decrease over time, as provider participation in Safe Harbors becomes more familiar and routine.

5. **Investment through coordinated RFP for supportive services and operating costs for current and new permanent housing:** Through the important work of the Supportive Housing Funders Group, the region has begun the process of braiding the multiple sources of funding for permanent supportive housing. This braiding process will make applying for and managing funds for housing easier to achieve at the provider/direct service level and will streamline our system's capacity to mobilize and maintain a range of housing options for individuals experiencing homelessness. The levy funds will become a major investor in this effort.
6. **Invest in 2 teams of health and behavioral health providers for regional services to supportive housing:** Many formerly homeless tenants in supportive housing are at increased risk of losing their housing when primary care and behavioral health issues emerge and/or worsen over time. Many of these tenants are unable to access needed services away from their homes. By providing these crucial health care services to individuals in their homes, housing evictions can be reduced and future episodes of homelessness can be prevented. Based on a preliminary review of EMS data, it appears that a reduction in EMS calls and use of the Harborview Emergency Department should also occur.
7. **Invest in application for state 2163 funds for operating beds for jail discharges and discharge from Harborview Medical Center or medical respite to transitional or permanent housing:** The region is currently developing applications to capture the 40% of 2163 funds that are held at the state level and will be disbursed through a competitive grants process. Providing unrestricted local dollars as a match to help leverage these funds can increase the attractiveness of King County's application for these funds.
8. **Invest in Taking Health Care Home Initiative including an ongoing boundary spanner position to support service models integrating employment, housing, and treatment:** The Taking Health Care Home initiative, under a four-year grant from the Corporation for Supportive Housing, has begun to identify the need for greater linkages and working relationships across the housing, employment and treatment systems. A major plan to be released in the summer/fall of 2006 will identify a number of key strategies to address this area. Mobilization of this plan will require multiple investors, as well as the flexible funds required to promote the "boundary spanning" activities crucial to cross-systems collaboration. Flexible levy funding can help meet the needs of this multi-system effort.
9. **Support training programs for trauma sensitive and trauma informed services at jails, hospitals, shelters etc.:** While there are numerous outstanding providers of specialty services to trauma survivors in the veterans, sexual assault and domestic violence arenas, many mainstream service providers in the mental health, addictions, primary care and criminal justice systems are not yet able to offer trauma-informed services to their clients. Training funds provided by the levy could help to promote increased activity among mainstream systems to ensure trauma-sensitive services by utilizing existing local expertise to train service providers in other settings. (See also behavioral health strategies for Veterans.)
10. **Link organizations that are good at housing search & advocacy to Criminal Justice System and increase their capacity to serve offenders:** Local providers of service to people who are homeless have developed highly effective housing placement strategies for their clients. Sharing this expertise with service providers in the criminal justice system and those working with clients exiting correctional settings, will help reduce episodes of homelessness among those recently released from these institutions.

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**Subtotal of 2007-2011 Levy Expenditures**

**\$ 20.4**

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**Population: Families with Criminal Justice Involvement**

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1. **Provide service enhancements for single parents and children exiting the criminal justice system:** King County already makes major investments in services and housing for families with young children who are exiting correctional settings and seeking to regain stability in the community. In order to ensure the viability of programs targeting this population, additional service enhancements to support parents and children being reunited after periods of incarceration are essential. Levy funds provide an ideal opportunity for additional investments in this area.
2. **Invest in Permanent housing placement supports for women with children exiting transitional housing, in partnership with Sound Families, WFF, and King County Housing Authority:** Families with children who are leaving post-incarceration transitional housing placements need assistance in securing and stabilizing their lives in permanent, community-based housing. The levy will invest in promoting the success of these families, over time, through providing funds to support housing placements and continuing supportive services.
3. **Invest in employment programs, including those linked to Taking Health Care Home strategies:** The Taking Health Care Home initiative (see above) has identified individuals exiting the criminal justice system – especially those with young children – as one of the most important groups to help secure and maintain employment. As the THCH plan is released, the levy will become a major investor in the recommendations provided.

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**Subtotal of 2007-2011 Levy Expenditures****\$ 2.6**

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**Population: High Risk Children and their Families (Early intervention and prevention services only)**

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1. **Expand Best Beginnings (nurse family partnership) into South King County and add linkages to employment opportunities:** Best Beginnings is a well-established program for single first time mothers, many of whom are teens, which has been demonstrated to have long term impact for children and families including reduction in child abuse, parental arrests, use of public assistance, use of emergency services and success of children in school. Levy funds will be used to expand the program to high-risk mothers in south King County.
2. **Pilot evidence based practices interventions for maternal depression in 5 sites in North, East, and South King County and Seattle:** (this can link to other behavioral health strategies in community health and public health clinics). Maternal depression occurs more frequently in low-income mothers and is linked to poor mother-child interactions needed for healthy child development, as well as to infant neglect and abuse. The pilot project will test interventions at the community level, and if successful, will be replicable to other clinics where mothers at risk are likely to come for care.
3. **Expand the availability of the evidence-based practices for training for childcare providers and family case managers of children 0-8:** A relatively small investment of Levy funds can greatly increase the capacity of proven programs available in King County, including the Incredible Years and Promoting First Relationships. Both of these programs train childcare providers and others in contact with young children and their families to promote healthy child development.
4. **Invest in Family Resources Navigator/Coordinator program for immigrant families in East King County:** A pilot program to use multi-lingual community members help immigrants and refugees navigate services and systems has been proposed. A moderate levy investment can help test the effectiveness of this approach to improving access and the cultural competency of services.
5. **Invest in a community based home visiting program in East King County:** Expand the capacity to serve immigrant and refugee families in culturally competent ways. This may provide an opportunity to compare different models for family support in the home by comparing intermediate outcomes to those of Best Beginnings.

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**Subtotal of 2007-2011 Levy Expenditures****\$ 6.9**

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**Population: At Risk Veterans and their Families (in addition to veterans experiencing long-term homelessness)**

1. **Integrate MH/CD staff at Public Health and Community Health Clinics to promote integration of primary care and behavioral health, including PTSD (see also Veterans):** See above. As veterans are among those populations making regular use of both Community Clinics and Public Health Centers and often present with significant behavioral health issues, enhancing the capacity of the primary care system to provide these services to veterans will increase their effectiveness and reduce use of more costly and less appropriate emergency services.
2. **Invest in co-location of veteran system navigators and eligibility specialists at HCH, Public Health and Community Health clinics:** Often, Veterans in need of more specialized care that could be provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center present at Public Health Centers and Community Clinics because they either cannot or will not make use of the highly complex and difficult-to-access VA system. By placing expert veteran system navigators and eligibility specialists at existing primary care centers, access to these federally-funded services will be increased.
3. **Train behavioral health providers across multiple systems to evidence-based practices for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, using existing expertise from KC Vets, SA Resource Centers, HMC etc.:** See discussion above. The King County Veterans Program, the Harborview Center for the Treatment of Sexual Assault and Trauma and the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center all have exceptional competency in the treatment of trauma. Increasing access to their expertise among mainstream providers in the form of training, consultation and technical assistance will promote greater competency in this area among a broad range of mainstream providers.
4. **Co-locate KC Veteran's Program staff at Renton Work Source for outreach throughout South and East County, case management and referral:** The Renton Work Source program provides a major opportunity for creating a visible Veterans Program in South King County. Co-locating this service at an existing Work Source site will also help to increase the linkages between veterans services and employment programs for veterans in need of assistance with employment.
5. **Operate 2 Mobile Veteran's Center Vans serving South, North and East King County using Veterans Program staff from Seattle and Renton locations:** With a base of operations in South King County and an outreach service offering a "mobile veterans office on wheels," the Veterans Program staff based at the Renton Work Source program can become a valuable veterans resource for veterans throughout King County who have difficulty accessing site-limited veterans services.
6. **Provide dedicated '211' phone resource for Veterans:** By building on the existing locally-based services provided by the Crisis Clinic and the new co-located "211" program, King County has the opportunity to create a specialty "Dial-a-Vet" program. This program, staffed by existing Crisis Clinic/211 operators who receive specialty training on accessing services for veterans, might offer a special phone number for veterans to call to receive assistance.
7. **Provide training for community providers on VA services and linkages:** For many agencies funded with state and local resources, (as well as some agencies funded by federal dollars), the federal Veterans Program remains a complex and impenetrable resource. Working with the VA to increase the knowledge of VA resources that are available and strategies to link to these resources, providers throughout King County will be able to increase the use of these critical resources by their clients.
8. **Provide housing stability program for Veterans (homelessness prevention):** Many veterans who are recovering from long-term homelessness or seeking to promote their housing stability require occasional assistance with meeting rent, utility and other housing obligations in order to avoid eviction. Providing access to limited funds for veterans on an as-needed basis can provide a significant service to prevent homelessness among members of this group.

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**Subtotal of 2007-2011 Levy Expenditures**

**\$21.7**

**Other Supportive Investments**

1. **Ongoing Evaluation:** Evaluation of the levy on a continuing basis will be critical to shaping investment decisions, identifying the impact of levy funding over time and informing the general public about the value of levy resources in the King County community.
2. **Implement assessment tools across systems through training and contractual requirements:** See above. Moving King County towards more standardized screening and assessment activities for the levy’s target populations is a critical systems-level need.
3. **Ongoing support of collaborative efforts through training, coaching and the use of designated service and systems level “boundary spanners”:** Promoting effective activities that reach across multiple systems requires ongoing “boundary spanning” work at both the systems and service level. These boundary-spanning roles provide the glue that helps to ensure a consistent, regionalized approach to human service management as well as expertise in promoting cross-system relationships at the direct service level. Few entities that fund the existing set of “siloes” are willing to bear the expense of these dedicated boundary spanner roles. The flexibility of levy funding allows local and regional service systems to fill this gap.
4. **Planning and seed money for pilots (funds available to be determined):** A certain portion of levy funds will be set aside for planning activities and pilot projects that are developed over time. This pool of resources will allow the levy to be nimble and quick in its response to emerging priorities and program concepts over time.

<b>Subtotal of 2007-2011 Levy Expenditures (in Millions)</b>	<b>\$ 1.7</b>
<b>Administrative Overhead (in Millions)</b>	<b>\$ 2.5</b>
<b>Total Investments for 2007 – 2011 (in Millions)</b>	<b>\$55.8</b>

Year 2-6  
Infrastructure  
Investments

In addition to the first-year funds set aside for one-time projects, during years 2-6, the levy authorizes setting aside up to \$1 million annually for additional investments in infrastructure to support the target populations. Infrastructure expenditures can include items such as permanent housing, information systems, administrative entities that enhance access to and quality of housing and services, training and technical assistance, consultation on specialized topics, etc. The table below provides a list of some of these possible investment areas. Because of the importance of ensuring flexible funds are available for projects and activities identified in future years, a significant portion of these funds may be left undesignated and available for allocation as system priorities and strategies shift over time.

**Table 6**  
**Recommended Expenditures for Infrastructure Investments in Years 2-6 (in 2006 Dollars)**  
**DRAFT: Dollar Amounts Are Estimates Only (in Millions)**  
**(Actual Budget Detail In Development)**

<b>Activity Areas</b>	
<b>Invest in permanent housing opportunities for families with children transitioning out of Passage Point:</b>	See above. Ensuring the families leaving Passage Point have access to permanent, community-based housing is critical to the success of this new endeavor. Levy funds will be joined with other investors to ensure access to housing for this group.
<b>Housing stock/bed inventory management system for whole County:</b>	See above. Creating a real-time system to identify available housing units in King County for people exiting homelessness is a key missing component of the existing supportive housing system.
<b>Invest in development of coordinated entry services, case management for highest risk families in partnership with Sound Families &amp; Washington Families Fund:</b>	Existing programs such as Sound Families and WFF are seeking additional investors to join in the task of creating a coordinated entry process linking at-risk families to housing, case management and other supportive services they need to maintain housing tenure. Such a process is particularly critical for those families that have difficulties achieving stability with the current level of supports provided in programs such as Sound Families. Enhancing the infrastructure that can create this supportive service safety net for these most challenging families would be a welcome investment of levy resources.
<b>One time planning, training &amp; service design efforts, to be determined:</b>	See above. Setting aside a small portion of levy infrastructure funds for new and emerging concepts will provide resources for emerging concepts and will ensure the levy remains a flexible and creative investor in King County.
<b>Subtotal (in millions)</b>	<b>\$ 2.1</b>
<b>Total Available for Additional Activities (in millions)</b>	<b>\$ 2.9</b>
<b>Total Investments for 2007-2011 (in millions)</b>	<b>\$ 5.0</b>

Overarching  
Strategies

The table that follows illustrates a different way of organizing the levy investments being recommended as part of the Service Implementation Plan. In this table, expenditures of levy funds are organized by overarching strategies rather than by specific target populations. Investments in a given overarching strategy have the capacity to reach individuals and families in some or all of the target groups, thereby overcoming the barriers of existing systems-level fragmentation. This method of presentation of levy investments seeks to demonstrate the way in which levy funds, because of their flexibility, can be used to help promote true systems-level integration of service activities in King County. It should be noted that the total figures for this table do not necessarily add up to the total levy resources available for investment; the dollar amounts here are limited to recommended allocations that fit into a number of identified strategies reaching across target populations and systems. It should also be noted that, because of the way in which they are organized here, these overarching strategies do not reflect the impact of these or other levy-funded activities in different geographic regions of the county.

**Table 7**  
**Recommended Expenditures Organized by Overarching Strategies (in 2006 Dollars)**  
**DRAFT: Dollar Amounts Are Estimates Only (in Millions) - Actual Budget Detail In Development**  
*See table above for more complete descriptions of these investment strategies*

<b>Overarching Strategies</b>	<b>Veterans</b>	<b>Long-Term Homeless</b>	<b>Families w/ CJ involvement</b>	<b>High Risk Children &amp; Families</b>	<b>Total</b>
Outreach and case management	\$2.7	\$6.0			<b>\$8.7</b>
Expand behavioral health services at Community Health Centers, Public Health Clinics, and health and behavioral health services in Health Care for the Homeless	4.0	3.2		4.0	<b>11.2</b>
Invest in supportive services and operating costs of permanent housing		7.5	.4		<b>7.9</b>
Invest in linkages of employment to treatment, housing and prevention	10.0	1.2	.3	.3	<b>11.8</b>
Improve assessment and treatment of PTSD	1.2	.3			<b>1.5</b>
Build client, program and system linkages across Veterans and non-Veterans services, and between housing, criminal justice, employment and treatment programs	2.0			.2	<b>2.2</b>
Assumed leverage from other public and private sources of funds	1.8	3.2	.4		<b>5.4</b>
New permanent housing units	4.0	4.0	.4		<b>8.4</b>
Invest in expansion of existing evidence based programs for supporting healthy early childhood development				2.9	<b>2.9</b>

## Section V: Management Plan

**Levy Oversight**      **King County is charged with responsibility for oversight of all activities related to the Veterans and Human Service Levy.**

*Advisory Boards*      The Levy Ordinance identifies the mechanisms that will guide the allocation and expenditure of levy funds. These include two new advisory boards, the *Veterans' Citizen Oversight Board* and the *Regional Human Services Oversight Board*. These citizen boards, nominated and appointed through a process that involves the King County Council and Executive, are charged with monitoring and reviewing levy expenditures and reporting annually to the King County Executive. Their reports can include recommendations concerning changes that may be needed to ensure the best possible use of levy funds.

Although it is essential to maintain a clear understanding of the specific services being targeted to veterans with levy funds and to have an advisory board with specialized expertise on veterans issues, it will also be important for the two boards to communicate with each other on an ongoing basis. Many of the services funded with levy resources not targeting veterans will be serving veteran populations who receive services from the mainstream system.

*Recommendation*      To support this communication and to be in line with the criteria to reduce fragmentation, the consultants recommend that a Levy Oversight Executive Committee be established and be made up of members from both the Veterans' Citizen and Regional Human Services Oversight Boards. This group should meet regularly to ensure careful coordination across the two "arms" of levy activities. In addition, the consultants recommend that the full Oversight Boards hold a joint meeting each year to promote ongoing communication and collaboration.

### **Coordination with Other Efforts**

The \$13.3 million of Veterans and Human Services Levy funds represents only a small fraction of the estimated \$350+ million of local, state, and federal resources for housing, health and human services for veterans and other people in need that flow into King County each year.<sup>11</sup> These funds support a range of activities targeting different populations throughout the county. Many of these activities have been designed and implemented to meet the specific and unique needs of county residents that vary by geographical area, age, disability, gender, and ethnicity.

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<sup>11</sup> This estimate is based on figures research being conducted under the auspices of the King County Regional Policy Committee, using 2004 financial data.

It is critical to ensure that these multiple, different funding streams are managed in the most efficient and effective possible ways to best meet the needs of King County residents. This goal presents a significant set of challenges. Many of the existing funds that flow into King County from local, state and federal funding streams arrive in separate and distinct “silos” that restrict access to specific populations and prevent the successful integration of different funding streams. This leads to a high level of fragmentation at the systems level and frustration at the client level when services are separated and configured to reflect distinct and limited categories of assistance, rather than integrated or ‘braided’ funding which can be used to address the array of human needs that clients may identify.

It is precisely because of these funding “silos” and the challenges of managing service delivery in such a large and diverse region that the three core criteria for the Service Implementation Plan were developed. (See Section II.)

Oversight of levy-funded programs and services must not be conducted in isolation from the larger arena of housing, health and human services provided in King County. On the contrary, the levy provides a unique opportunity to create and promote an improved regional vision that enhances our region’s ability to challenge existing fragmentation and move our system towards effective regional management of housing, health and human service resources.

*Recommendation*

**In order to achieve this vision, the consultant team recommends that the task of managing levy funds be used to model how King County could move forward to promote an integrated approach to a broad range of resource management activities.**

Envisioning effective regional management of housing, health and human service programs is nothing new. In fact, there are numerous, recent and current groups and efforts in King County seeking to improve the ways in which local and regional resources are managed. Many specifically target housing and human service activities. These include, for example:

- The King County Regional Policy Committee
- The Framework Policies for Human Services
- The 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness (King County Committee to End Homelessness)
- The Taking Health Care Home Initiative
- The Supportive Housing Funders Group
- The King County Criminal Justice Initiative

The levy Service Implementation Plan must seek to be carefully aligned with these and other groups and efforts.

The Plan sets aside a small amount of funding for the development of a cost-efficient, regional approach to the management of housing, health and human service funds that is easy to understand from the perspectives of:

- The government and philanthropic agencies that fund services,
- The community agencies charged with delivering services, and
- The individuals and families who may be seeking to access services.

The potential impact of this planning effort would reach far beyond the management of levy funds. The levy provides an opportunity to enhance alignment across larger systems and an infrastructure to help move King County towards more effective regional management of housing, health and human service resources. By integrating management of the levy with the larger constellation of housing, health and human services funded by King County, a new model for a regional human services authority for King County can be developed, tested, refined and put into practice.

***What is Systems Integration?***

*Systems integration occurs when, across multiple systems responsible for the delivery of housing, health and human services, there is sharing of:*

- *information*
- *planning*
- *clients*
- *resources*
- *responsibility*

Components of this new regional system could include:

- Increased consolidation or “braiding” of funding from multiple systems and funding streams.
- Single application processes for access to multiple sources of funding.
- Streamlined fiscal reporting requirements and oversight procedures.
- Integrated data reporting systems.
- Simplified outcome-based program evaluation activities rooted in simple and straightforward outcome measures agreed upon across multiple systems.
- A coordinated array of “one-stop shops” that reach across multiple systems and offer screening, assessment and intake procedures for clients regardless of their presenting complaint.
- Increased co-location of services for clients with multiple problems or needs.

## **Contracting**

Levy resources are placed within the budget of the King County Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS). Program and fiscal staff working in the office of the DCHS Community Services Division will manage the oversight of the levy budget and negotiation and management of levy-funded contracts and services.

The housing, health and service activities described in this plan and funded by levy dollars will be provided through several different mechanisms, including:

- Enhancements to existing contracts with provider agencies doing business with King County.
- Contracts with community-based organizations for new services, subsequent to a competitive process based on a Request for Proposals (RFP).
- Ongoing contract monitoring and management activities.
- Inter-fund transfers between DCHS and Public Health/Seattle & King County to fund public health services.
- Staff additions to existing DCHS activities, such as the King County Veterans Program.

For investments of levy funds that require leveraged resources from other systems, working agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) may need to be developed to address roles and responsibilities of each of the participating financial organizations.

## **Public Relations, Education & Engagement**

The passage of the Veterans and Human Services Levy reflects the commitment of King County voters to ensuring the welfare of those who have served our nation in the military, as well as individuals and families in need of the support and assistance that can help them to regain stability in our community. The levy represents the responsibility of citizenship at its finest: those who are able provide helping hands to fellow citizens who are experiencing challenging circumstances in their lives.

As approved by the voters, the levy has a six-year lifespan. Because levy funds are coming directly from the taxes paid by King County property owners, the residents of King County have every right to expect that the funds will be invested thoughtfully, efficiently and effectively. During the life of the levy, it will be essential to provide regular information and updates to the voters about how levy funds are being spent and the results of the investments that are being made with levy resources. Outcome-related information must be rooted in data collected as part of the levy evaluation process (see below). In addition, stories about how levy funds have been able to make a difference in the lives of individuals and families must be communicated in King County publications and through effective use of the print and electronic media.

The most valuable communication with the general public about levy activities will serve several critical functions:

1. Community education about the needs of King County's veterans and other people in need of housing, health and supportive services.
2. Cultivation of community support for the projects supported by the levy and other similar initiatives, including the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness.
3. Provision of information about what the levy has accomplished over time to assist the voters in making a decision in 2011 about whether or not to commit future property tax revenues to a renewal of the levy for another six years.

The overall communications plan for the levy will be developed and managed by DCHS through the levy staff working in the Director's Office. Other County resources that share responsibility for the work of communicating about the levy and its impact on the quality of life in King County include:

- Members of the Veterans' Citizen Oversight Board and the Regional Human Services Oversight Board,
- The King County Executive and members of the Executive's staff,
- The King County Council and members of Council staff,
- The King County Regional Policy Committee,
- The King County Department of Community and Human Services, and
- Public Health Seattle & King County.

Ultimately, it will be the improvements in the quality of life in King County that can be linked to the investment of levy resources and the effectiveness with which this information is communicated to the general public that will determine the future of any measure put before the voters to request continuing the levy for an additional six years.

### **Evaluation of Levy Outcomes**

The effective evaluation of the programs and services funded by the levy will be a critical part of levy operations. Not only will evaluation help to determine the effectiveness of the work undertaken with levy resources; the evaluation will also provide the information the voting public needs to determine if future levies of this type merit their support.

The consultant team recommends the county conduct two different types of evaluation activities on an ongoing basis: A *process evaluation* and an *outcomes evaluation*.

*Process Evaluation* The *process evaluation* would examine the ways in which the work of implementing the levy is undertaken and managed, including:

- Initial startup activities,
- Development and management of contracts for services,
- Strategies to leverage and blend multiple funding streams,
- Implementation of working agreements,
- Service-level changes that occur as the result of efforts that promote co-location and integration of housing, health and supportive services,
- Systems-level changes that occur as a result of the use of levy funds or the management of levy and related resources,
- The activities of the Veterans' Citizen Oversight Board and the Regional Human Services Oversight Board, and
- Work undertaken to educate the general public about the levy and to disseminate information about its benefits to the larger community.

The goal of a process evaluation is not only to capture what actually happens as the levy is implemented and the community experiences the impact of the funding it provides, but to identify the “unintended consequences” of levy activities and the things that happen that either were not anticipated or were unusual in the ways that helped or hindered levy-related work.

The process evaluation is also an excellent tool for the creation of a continuing feedback loop as levy implementation moves forward. Areas for new efforts or the enhancement of existing activities can be identified to increase collaborative relationships, leverage additional resources, and make other needed “mid-course” adjustments and corrections. Evaluation activities of this type allow for increased opportunities to learn about and practice service and system integration strategies, while receiving ongoing information about the impact of various interventions on a real-time basis.

*Outcomes Evaluation*

The *outcomes evaluation* would examine the specific impacts of levy funding on clients and service systems that can be measured through the collection and evaluation of client and service-level data. Such outcomes might include:

- Decreases in homelessness, both among long-term homeless populations and veterans.
- Increases in housing stability and tenure among formerly homeless populations, including veterans.
- Decreases in use of emergency medical services by target populations.

- Decreases in rates of arrest and incarceration among target populations.
- Increases in use of existing facilities providing a range of social and health services by target populations, including veterans.
- Increases in family health among young families with infants who receive levy-funded services.
- Increases in school readiness among children entering kindergarten who have received levy-funded services.
- Increases in level of satisfaction with existing service system among target populations, including veterans.

All of these outcomes are described in language that reflects the capacity to measure the results of the investments made with levy resources. This type of measurement and evaluation would serve at least three important purposes, including the determination of:

1. The impact of levy funds on the lives of the recipients of housing, health and human services,
2. The impact of levy funds on the health and well-being of the larger King County community, and
3. The effectiveness of the service investments made with levy funds.

*Evaluation  
Start Up*

It will be essential to mobilize both the process and outcomes evaluations before levy funds actually begin to flow into the service systems they are supporting. This will ensure the collection of baseline measures for the key indicators selected to determine the success of levy activities. Evaluation data should be used not only to evaluate the effectiveness of the levy overall, but to identify the efficiency and value of specific activities funded with levy resources. Evaluation data must be used to inform the ongoing decisions being made about the investment of levy resources. Funds should only be invested in those activities and programs that demonstrate the desired outcomes over reasonable periods of time. Programs that fail to meet their outcomes should be reviewed for either adjustment or termination. Continued investment of levy resources should not be made in programs that do not achieve their established goals.