



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: February 26, 2025

SUBJECT: Discussion and Possible Action on Recommendations from the Deschutes Civic Assembly on Youth Homelessness

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

TBD

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

On January 8, 2025, Central Oregon Civic Action Project Director Josh Burgess presented to the Board recommendations from the Deschutes Civic Assembly on Youth Homelessness. The Board asked staff to schedule a follow-up meeting to discuss the recommendations and the County's role.

Attached are "Key Recommendations" from the Civic Assembly. There is also a document listing the Key Recommendations along with two columns: "Proposed Deschutes County Role" (filled out by County staff) and the Civic Assembly's recommendation for the County's role.

Noted below are several recommendations from the Civic Assembly which have current/recent County involvement:

- Recommendation 2 – A central hub with a recreation center run by Bend Parks and Recreation; a safe place for at-risk teens; designated space for programs and non-governmental organizations that would allow teens to access benefits at one central location.
 - Comment: Health Services operates The Drop, a center that serves youth and young adults in Deschutes County ages 14 – 27. Located in Redmond and Bend, The Drop is meant to be a safe and supportive place where people make connections that could have a positive impact on their life.
- Recommendation 5 – Childcare support for families with young children to help break the cycle of poverty.
 - Comment: the Board has invested millions of dollars to increase regional childcare and early learning capacity. Also, in 2020, the Board amended Deschutes County Code to allow childcare uses as a permitted outright use in designated zones.

- Recommendation 16 – Prioritize funding for inpatient psychiatric care for minors.
 - Comment: this recommendation has been a long-standing goal for the Board and the Health Services Department and is a Deschutes County priority for the 2025 Legislative Session.
- Recommendation 21 – Direct Deschutes County and the Coordinated Homeless Response Office to dedicate funding to partner with J Bar J and other non-governmental organizations to educate the general public about youth homelessness and prevention.
 - Comment: CHRO oversight is transitioning to COIC. The CHRO budget remains a County fund.

Attached is a draft communication to the Citizen Assembly outlining the County's role in specific recommendations. The draft letter is intended to be a starting point for Board discussion.

BUDGET IMPACTS:

TBD

ATTENDANCE:

Erik Kropp, Deputy County Administrator

Josh Burgess, Central Oregon Civic Action Project