

Human Services Master Plan



2012 – 2018

CITY OF COVINGTON VISION
Covington: Unmatched quality of life

MISSION

Covington is a destination community where citizens, business, and civic leaders collaborate to preserve and foster a strong sense of unity.

HUMAN SERVICES MISSION

The Human Services Commission assesses the needs of youth and families and develops policies and programs to assist with those needs.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Covington Human Services Master Plan represents two years of discussion, debate, research, planning, and reviewing. The mission, vision, values, goals, and desired outcomes detailed in this plan are the result of collaboration between the community, the commission, city staff, and council. The Human Services Master Plan is the first comprehensive human services plan to be written in Covington.

Though the process has been multi-faceted, the goal of the plan has always been clear. The plan was developed to provide a blueprint for an effective and efficient human service delivery system. The blueprint includes data required to identify the major unmet and future challenges facing the City of Covington and proposing recommendations to address these needs through 2018 and beyond. The Human Services Master Plan will help to ensure we are leveraging service opportunities and scarce resources in meeting the needs of our residents today and in the future. It also ensures we are taking a proactive and preventative approach to addressing the needs of our community.

In order to begin this process, a community human service needs assessment was conducted in 2004 by Northwest Institute for Children and Families from the University of Washington. The results of the assessment were compiled in the *Covington Assessment of Resources for Everyone* or C.A.R.E. report. The assessment included survey to residents, focus groups held with adults and youth who live in Covington, on-line surveys to middle and high school students, and interviews with directors of human service agencies serving Covington residents. Collecting up-to-date statistics and demographics from the 2010 census data was also very critical in identifying diverse populations and their needs. In addition, data was collected from Public Health Communities Count and the Kent School District.

The Commission identified four issues that cut across populations: 1) access to services for basic needs and safety; 2) affordable housing/homelessness; 3) access to affordable health, dental, and mental health care; and 4) employment and transportation. These four needs are incorporated into the human service funding priorities that become the basis for determining grant funding to agencies that provide services to Covington residents.

The families we serve often face challenges that create stress, confusion, frustration, and anxiety. Our goal, as servants to our citizens, is to continue funding agency programs that align with our priorities and assist our families through a process of obtaining the services they need to improve their lives. Some members of our community find it overwhelming to navigate their way through a sometimes complex support system. Therefore, we strive to create an environment of approachability for our citizens.

SYSTEM VALUES

The Covington human services community seeks to foster an environment that is:

- People-focused
- Sustainable and Accessible
- Comprehensive and Integrative
- Collaborative
- Transparent and Maintains Integrity
- Respectful and Equitable
- Accountable

OVERVIEW

History of City Support for Human Services

Since its incorporation in 1997, the City of Covington has supported a wide-range of human services through partnerships with human services agencies, neighboring South King County cities and other service providers such as the Kent School District and the King County/Seattle Public Health Department. In 1998, the City Council established the Human Services Commission (known as Youth & Family Services Commission until 2010) to oversee the development of the city’s human services program. The Human Services Commission is made up of seven members (two of whom are dedicated for students ages 14-18) who provide recommendations on funding levels and related human services issues.

Since establishing the Human Services Grant Program, the city has provided \$948,414.00 (an average of \$75,955.00 annually) in human services grants from city general funds through contracts with local service providers. In addition, the city funds human services through the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. CDBG funds are used for capital projects, public services, and the Housing Repair Programs, providing no-interest loans or grants for low to moderate-income families. Capital funds were awarded to Maple Valley Food Bank to rehabilitate their facility and service space and the city has received an annual grant to conduct the Covington Minor Home Repair Program for the past three years.

Human Services Funding History

		CDBG Consortium		CDBG Grant
		King County	Minor	

Year	General Funds	Admin	Public Service	Housing Repair Spent	Home Repair Program
1998	\$ 10,000				
1999	\$ 61,304	0	\$11,304	\$60,696	
2000	\$ 50,000	\$11,265	\$12,235	\$44,349	
2001	\$ 50,000	\$ 9,556	\$11,197	\$55,850	
2002	\$ 59,100	\$ 9,849	\$12,268	\$56,969	
2003	\$ 75,000	\$ 8,610	\$12,714	\$65,254	
2004	\$ 75,000	\$10,136	\$13,320	\$71,165	
2005	\$ 87,705	\$ 8,381	\$12,712	\$97,933	
2006	\$ 87,705	0	0	\$50,483	
2007	\$ 90,000	0	0	\$74,474	
2008	\$ 92,600	0	0	\$54,339	
2009	\$105,000	0	0	\$10,300	
2010	\$105,000	0	0	\$ 407	\$24,000
2011	\$105,000	0	0	\$22,612	\$30,236
2012	\$105,000	0	0	\$ 3,558	\$26,858
2013	\$105,000	0	0	\$36,712	\$28,000
2014	\$105,000	0	0	\$25,418	\$28,750

The chart above outlines the city’s funding of human services for 1998-2014. This support demonstrates the city’s commitment to providing quality human services to city residents in need.

Purpose of the Human Services Plan

This document is prepared as a guidepost for the establishment of human services policies and funding decisions by the City of Covington. Along with our adoption of a human services biennial funding cycle, the city will provide more clarity to community-based human services providers regarding the city’s role and level of city funding provided for human services with general fund revenues. Additionally, the plan will outline further policy development for the coming years to increase effectiveness of the city’s partnership with funders and service providers.

Community Partnerships are Key in Providing a Continuum of Human Services

The city cannot meet all of the human services needs in our community alone. Partnerships with service providers, churches, schools, and other funders at federal, state, county and local levels are critical in developing and maintaining a comprehensive system of services to the community. No one entity can meet all the human services needs in the community. The city has three primary functions in human services:

Funder: The city’s role as funder is to supplement federal, state, and county dollars in service areas that are of highest priority for city residents and to provide an incentive for effective service delivery within the city for Covington citizens in need. In addition to general funds, the city’s allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for King County Housing Repair and Minor Home Repair programs are a significant resource that benefit low to moderate-income residents of the city.

Policy Maker and Facilitator: The city also plays an important role in setting policies and establishing partnerships with regional and local institutions such as the school district, King County, the public health department, the business community, church and civic organizations to create an infrastructure that supports its citizenry with opportunities for participation in economic and community life.

Communicator and Educator: The city has a responsibility to bring to the forefront an awareness of social needs of the community to its citizens through a variety of means, including but not limited to: community forums, the City of Covington website, newspapers, and social networks.

City of Covington Comprehensive Plan

The City of Covington’s Comprehensive Plan establishes policy directives that impact human services. The directives provide focus areas to set and review human services policies. These relevant policies assist in successful impact and mutually supportive implementation of related city goals. The following directives are taken from the Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 6, Parks and Community Services section:

6.4.4 Human Services

PRG 10.0 Maintain and enhance the quality of life for all citizens through the provision and support of affordable and accessible human services.

PRG 10.1 Consider the social and human development needs of the city’s residents in all areas of planning and development.

PRG 10.2 Continue and enhance the city’s support of the Human Services Commission and the Human Services staff by establishing a desired target of at least a 2% allocation of the general fund budget to address human services needs of the community.

PRG 10.3 Promote the effective use of the city’s human services resources, consistent with adopted priorities and criteria.

PRG10.4 Gather and maintain current information and educate the community regarding human services needs and available resources.

PRG 10.5 Support the long-term stability and viability of a human services system serving the community.

PRG 10.6 Take an active role in regional and sub-regional human services issues and form partnerships to effectively address human services needs.

PRG 10.7 Provide for the full spectrum of human services needs through the support of programs that address emergency needs, preventive services, and quality of life services.

PRG 10.8 Promote and support human services which are culturally relevant and physically accessible.

SCOPE OF THE HUMAN SERVICES PLAN

Target goals to maximize benefit of allocated city dollars.

In this plan, the city will establish clear priorities as well as specific goals or outcomes desired. For example, in addition to prioritizing a category of services, the city may specify target populations or specific models of service delivery that are deemed most appropriate for city support, or represent a gap in service that fits city goals. These targeted goals will:

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

Integrate policies that result in support of city goals by relevant city departments and major city partners.

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

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

Target strategies that integrate various elements of effective intervention to achieve positive results.

The issues of concern addressed in this plan are complex. Many factors empower the ability of low income persons with the ability to improve their standard of living and overcome obstacles that may impede their success and that of their children. The greater the extent of collaborative actions among these many factors, the greater the potential for positive impact. This plan will begin a process of improving linkages and strengthening community-based support systems.

- ◆ Encourage and support strategies that affect multiple problems and/or their causes simultaneously.
- ◆ Review specific strategies that utilize local community strengths and support long-term stability.
- ◆ Foster relationships with providers and community groups to promote positive outcomes for services and methods of evaluation.

Organization of the Master Plan

This plan has three main sections:

- 1) Community Assessments
- 2) Community Profile
- 3) Human Services Delivery System

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENTS

In 2004 the Human Services Commission initiated a community needs assessment as a source of input to develop funding priorities for future services. The assessment process involved collecting information through interviews, group discussions, focus groups, and surveys. Based on the results of the needs assessment, the Human Services Commission established five assessments in order to develop community goals that achieve the desired outcomes. These goals and outcomes were incorporated as a directive for the Human Services Master Plan as they guide strategies and funding recommendations.

Assessment #1 Basic Needs - Food, Clothing, and Housing

Community Goal 1: Individuals and families have affordable housing options and resources.

Desired Outcomes:

1. Homeless individuals and families will have access to transitional housing and emergency shelter.
2. Provider agencies are financially supported as resources for emergency assistance to pay rent, mortgage, or utility bills.
3. Families or individuals have access to **affordable housing including low-and moderate income.**
4. Life skills guidance and education are provided for long-term sustainability.
5. Provider agencies are financially supported as resources to the elderly and the disabled to sustain independent living.

Community Goal 2: Covington citizens will have access to food

Desired Outcomes:

1. Families or individuals have access to food and clothing banks.
2. Local food banks are financially supported as a resource for those in need.

Assessment #2 Personal Safety

Community Goal 1: **Family and individual safety is a right for all children and adults within the community**

Desired Outcomes:

1. Families have access to domestic violence services and safe housing options.
2. Domestic violence agencies are financially supported as resources to victims, survivors, and their families.
3. A consistent collaboration between the city, **the police**, and the Covington Domestic Violence Task Force is maintained to provide support and safe housing for victims and **survivors** of domestic violence.
4. The youth, students, and the community have a greater awareness of dating violence and domestic violence issues.

Community Goal 2: Reduction of Crime in Covington

Desired Outcomes:

1. Increased presence of community service officers in our neighborhoods.
2. Increased public awareness of city support for community crime prevention programs.

Assessment #3 Health Care

Community Goal 1: Healthy Children and Adults

Desired Outcomes:

1. Residents have access to affordable health care including mental health services.
2. Residents have access to affordable dental care services.
3. Residents have access to substance abuse treatment services for all income levels resulting in a decline in substance abuse.
4. Health care agencies are financially supported as resources for those in need.
5. Residents have accessible suicide prevention support.

Assessment #4 Services for Youth

Community Goal 1: Youth sports and recreational activities will be available to all

Desired Outcomes:

1. Family-focused youth activities are available in the community.
2. Recreational sports activities are available for all youth and will accommodate those with disabilities and low-income.
3. Support the development of a youth center.
4. Provider agencies are financially supported as resources for at-risk teen programs.

Assessment #5 Employment, Transportation, and Housing Development

Community Goal 1: Greater Employment Opportunities for Adults and Teens within the City

Desired Outcomes:

1. An increase in manufacturing and technology opportunities.
2. An increase in the professional job market.
3. Increased support of home-based and small business community.
4. Increased opportunities for employment for teens.

Community Goal 2: Additional Transportation Services to Covington

Desired Outcomes:

1. Increased public transit opportunities to each high school.
2. Increased direct transportation to mass transit stations.
3. Increased direct transportation to Seattle and SeaTac Airport.
4. Encourage flexibility in transit schedules.

Community Goal 3: Affordable Housing Will Be Available

Desired Outcomes:

1. Development of planned communities with access to services.
2. Development of mixed use housing.
3. Promote energy efficient housing.
4. Encourage development of additional rental units for low-income households.

Assessment #6 Services for Veterans

Community Goal 1: Support all services for veterans and their families

Desired Outcomes:

1. Veterans have access to housing assistance services.
2. Veterans have access to affordable health care including mental health care.
3. Children of military personnel are supported in school through development of curriculum and resources.

4. Provide support for the King County Human Services Levy

COMMUNITY PROFILE

This section examines human service needs in Covington, focusing on factors related to city funding priorities. Much of the data for the community profile is taken from the Covington Assessment of Resources for Everyone (C.A.R.E.) report conducted by the Northwest Institute for Children & Families. Current data was taken from either the 2010 Census or the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates report.

REPORT I – Living Here

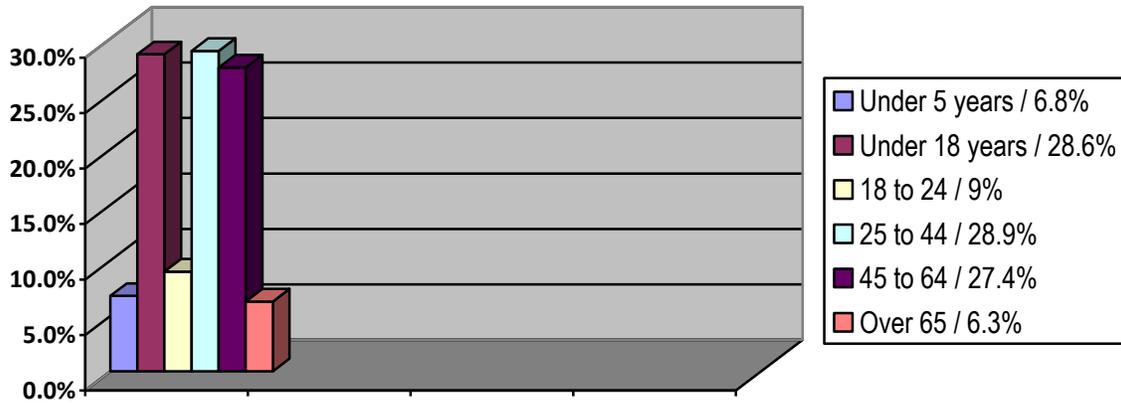
Living Here is a profile of local residents. Due to the rapid development of single-family homes in 2003 and 2004, the population had a significant increase since 2000 as reflected in Table 1.

Table 1. Covington Population	
2000	13,783
2003	14,850
2006	17,240
2010	17,575

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

Covington is similar to other King County municipalities with one significant difference; Covington has 29% of the population under 18 years of age, which compares to only 22% in King County. The median age of people living in Covington is 34.7 years while the proportion of Covington residents 65 years or older has risen slightly from 4% in 2004 to 6.3%.

Age Distribution of People in Covington 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

The ethnicity of Covington residents is shown in Table 2. The population is predominantly white and less diverse than in other parts of South King County, however, there has been a significant change in the diversity as compared to the 2005 American Community Survey 5-year estimates report.

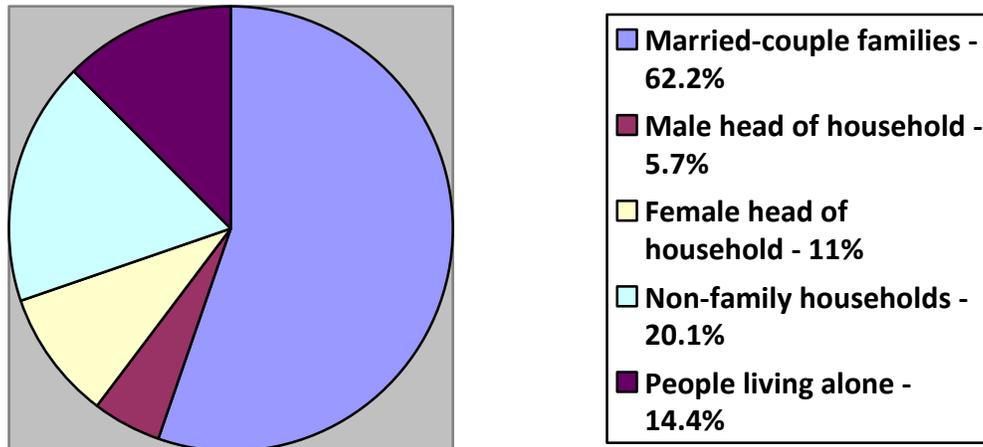
Table 2. Ethnicity of Covington Residents			
Ethnicity	Covington 2005	Covington 2010	Washington State
White alone	82.8	76.1	77.3
Black or African American	4.3	4.2	3.6
American or Alaskan Indian	0.3	0.8	1.5
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Is.	0.2	0.6	0.6
Asian	6.7	8.5	7.2
Other race alone	1.2	3.9	5.2
Two or more races	4.5	5.8	4.7
Hispanic or Latino*	7.7	9.3	11.2

*Individuals may be of Hispanic origin and of any race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES: In 2010 there were 5,817 occupied housing units in Covington. The average family size was 3.3 people. Owner-occupied housing units accounted for 82.6 percent of the households, with 17.4% for renter-occupied housing units. The pie-chart below includes both married-couple families and other types of families. Most of the non-family households were people living alone but composed of people in which no one was related to the householder.

The Types of Households in Covington in 2010



Source: 2010 U.S. Census Bureau

Conclusions:

Covington has an educated population with many families with children. Covington has not experienced the rapid, large influx of immigrants and refugees that other King County cities have experienced; however, the 2010 census indicates an increase of immigrants, refugees, and minorities over the past ten years. These residents have increased the need for basic services such as food and financial assistance, while placing new demands on the human service system for resources appropriate in culture and language. These demands are recognized in the C.A.R.E. Assessment survey for community concerns, which resulted in 32.7% of the respondents indicating translation and multilingual services were not met.

Recommendations:

The higher proportion of youth under age 18 means that additional services and resources will be needed to meet the needs and demands of this younger population. A younger population also requires that priorities be set for preventive services that are age-specific and focused in health and recreation programs.

REPORT II – Housing & Basic Needs

In 2004, a needs assessment survey was mailed to Covington households that included questions about housing and basic needs. The results indicate:

- 46% Need for affordable housing is not met
- 35% Need for food banks and emergency feeding programs is not met
- 46% Need for emergency assistance to pay utility bills and rent is not met

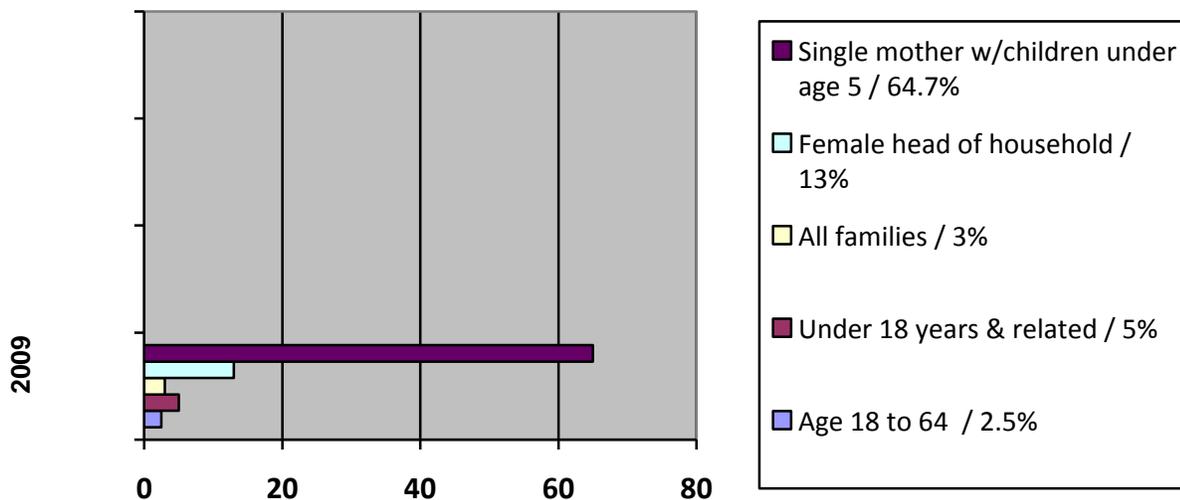
The economic characteristics of Covington, according to the American Community Survey 5-year

estimates from 2006-2010, provides valuable employment and income data. This data is important in order to assess affordable housing, transportation, and basic needs of Covington residents.

Table 3. Income (in 2010 inflation-adjusted dollars)	
Total Households	5,396
Less than \$ 10,000	1.2%
\$ 10,000 to \$ 14,999	1.1%
\$ 15,000 to \$ 24,999	2.7%
\$ 25,000 to \$ 34,999	4.7%
\$ 35,000 to \$ 49,999	11.7%
\$ 50,000 to \$ 74,999	21.7%
\$ 75,000 to \$ 99,999	19.8%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	22.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	9.9%
\$200,000 or more	4.8%
Median household income	\$84,323

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Poverty Rates in Covington in 2009



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Meeting the Need for Food

Many families in Covington, similar to families in other areas of King County, have experienced that unemployment or a reduction in work hours has made it more difficult to make a mortgage payment or pay rent, as well as pay utilities and buy food. The food banks serving Covington are The Storehouse Food Bank and Maple Valley Food Bank & Emergency Services. Both report an increase in the number of clients seeking financial assistance to pay utilities in addition to using the food bank more frequently, as shown in the chart below. Food banks have become a primary source of food for some families, rather than a supplemental source. The following table indicates the increased need for food banks as a supplement to households over a span of eight years.

Table 4. Covington Residents Served by Food Banks					
MAPLE VALLEY FOOD BANK	2004	2006	2008	2010	2011
Unduplicated individuals served	1,338	992	1,849	1,915	2,045
Clients receiving financial asst.	551	644	740	851	832
THE STOREHOUSE					
Unduplicated households served	101	53	121	150	90

Source: Annual Reports to the City of Covington Human Services Commission

In addition to our local food banks, there are other programs that provide food to Covington residents with specific needs. Meals on Wheels and BAS Foundation provide cooked meals delivered to one’s home for seniors and disabled. Black Diamond Community Center and Kent Lutheran Church both offer low cost community lunches and suppers for seniors and homeless.

Although food banks serve a vital role in providing food to families, it is often not enough food to support children’s needs during school, on weekends, or during the summer. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) are designed to promote the health and well-being of children by providing nutritious meals to children in public and private schools.

The USDA Income eligibility guidelines for school meals are intended to direct benefits to those children most in need. These guidelines are based on the federal income poverty guidelines and are revised annually. The eligibility guideline is 130% of the income poverty guidelines for free meals and 185% for reduced-price meals.

The Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) is a federally assisted snack program operating in public and non-profit private schools. The ASP is administered at the Federal level by the Food and Nutrition Service. At the state level, the program is usually administered by state education agencies, which operate the program through agreements with local school food authorities. Schools that choose to take part in the snack program receive cash subsidies from the US

Department of Agriculture for each snack they serve. In return, they must serve snacks that

meet Federal requirements and they must offer free or reduced price snacks to eligible children.

In order for a site to participate, the district must operate the afterschool care program. This program must provide children with regularly scheduled educational or enrichment activities in a supervised environment.

Table 5 contains data for the free and reduced lunch program in the Kent School District, which includes Covington schools. The data indicates the percentage of free or reduced meals served per school year from the total number of meals served. Although the data shows a fairly steady percentage in several categories, the number of reduced breakfasts, free lunches, and number of after-school snacks served rose significantly.

Table 5. Free and Reduced Lunch Program for Kent School District (Covington schools)							
School Year	Severe Need Breakfast		Breakfast		Lunch		Eligible After School Snack
	Free %	Reduced %	Free %	Reduced %	Free %	Reduced %	# meals served
2003	78.4	10.4	64.2	9.5	36.8	12.1	27,756
2004	79.5	9.9	63.0	10.5	39.2	11.8	14,089
2005	80.7	10.3	61.4	10.3	40.2	12.3	23,078
2006	79.0	9.9	63.3	10.9	40.9	11.8	36,743
2007	72.6	13.9	53.6	17.6	41.0	11.5	1,512
2008	70.8	15.3	51.8	17.4	41.6	12.3	44,076
2009	74.3	15.6	56.4	20.1	44.9	13.4	50,336
2010	79.8	12.4	65.4	14.5	51.4	11.8	48,241
2011	78.3	12.7	64.6	17.7	54.6	11.5	55,777

To address the need for additional food for children on weekends and summer months, the Storehouse and Maple Valley Food Bank participate in a Backpack Buddy program sponsored in part by the Covington Rotary. The food banks pack weekly backpacks each Friday with breakfast, lunch, and snack items for low-income students at Covington Elementary and Cedar Valley Elementary schools. These additional food items help supplement the needs for children over the weekend until they return the backpack to school each Monday.

Keeping a Roof Over One’s Head

There are several housing programs that assist renters and homeowners with no-interest loans or grants for financial assistance or qualified home repairs. The purpose of these programs is to help renters and homeowners remain in housing while maintaining the housing stock of older developments.

- *The Housing Stability Program*, administered country-wide through Solid Ground, makes

no-interest loans and grants to low-income residents who are in danger of losing their homes either through foreclosure or eviction. The program also offers loans and grants to homeless families to help them obtain permanent housing or move-in rental costs.

- The *King County Housing Repair Program* provides no-interest deferred loans to low to moderate-income homeowners to make necessary health and safety repairs to their homes. The program also makes loans to landlords for repair of rental housing in exchange for a rent ceiling for up to five years and a requirement that property be rented to low income tenants.
- The City of Covington has been awarded Community Development Block Grant funds in a joint effort with the cities of Des Moines, SeaTac, and Tukwila to manage the *Minor Home Repair Program* since 2010. This program provides free grant money for the total cost of eligible and necessary minor home repairs. This is a valuable program for low to moderate-income Covington residents who would not have the ability to afford necessary home repairs. The following chart indicates the number of households served.

TABLE 6. COVINGTON MINOR HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

Year	Covington Households Served	CDBG Grant Dollars Spent
2010	12	\$18,979.95
2011	17	\$30,236.00
2012	Projected 18	\$26,858

Homelessness

The City of Covington is not immune to the homelessness issue facing the county. According to recent data from the Police Chief, the number of homeless encampments has decreased since 2009. This decrease is due in part to increased policing of areas known to house homeless, stricter pan-handling regulations passed by the City Council, and commercial development that has eliminated the dense woods behind Fred Meyer and Safeway. The police work with the Human Services Specialist to provide these folks with a list of resources that are available for them. We also know that the Storehouse Food Bank provides food boxes to several chronically homeless individuals at designated drop-off locations.

Homeless Street Outreach Services

In 2010 the Auburn Youth Resources (AYR) Street Outreach Team began to provide mobile street outreach services to Covington and Maple Valley. The mobile street outreach is designed to locate and make contact with homeless youth and young adults (ages 14-24) in South King County. The goal of the program is to provide assistance and referrals in an attempt to transition



runaway and homeless young people off the streets and into safe and stable housing. The most basic services are focused toward meeting the emergent needs of the homeless with the distribution of emergency survival food packs, hygiene packs and winter clothing. The outreach team also provides referral services and transportation for homeless young people seeking food, medical services, mental health services, educational and vocational needs, substance abuse services as well as shelter and permanent housing.

Conclusions:

The recent recession hit Covington without exception, as seen by the growing number of residents using the food bank and financial assistance for the first time. In addition, there have been a growing number of children who are income-eligible for the free or reduced lunch program. One in five students will qualify for the program based on their family income level.

The fact that several human service agencies are maxing out their capacity to meet the basic needs of residents and far exceeded their expected service delivery goals is evidence that agencies need continued financial support as well as to explore additional revenue sources. Both Maple Valley Food Bank and the Storehouse have fostered community development with local business. These new partnerships are able to provide valuable in-kind resources. In addition, Maple Valley Food Bank is part of the South King County Food Bank Coalition, a multi-agency organization that enables them to receive other grant funds.

Recommendations:

- Continue to monitor and assess the economic situation through the recession and evaluate the effect on Covington citizens.
- Assess the adequacy of the food banks to serve the largest number of people/families needing subsistence help.

REPORT III - Safety

Personal safety is a right for all children and adults within the community. In order to achieve the community goals to reduce crime and support domestic violence services, it is important to review the statistics on crime in Covington that reflect the current trend. Refer to Table 7 below.

Table 7. Comparison of Covington Crime Statistics						
Offense	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Forcible rape (including attempts)	10	9	9	6	2	11
Robbery	16	15	9	23	15	21
Aggravated Assault	18	11	7	10	17	13
Burglary, residential	67	93	59	86	103	90
Vehicle theft	104	74	73	70	41	56
Adult charges/arrests	356	368	408	403	562	602
Juvenile charges	141	122	86	117	148	114
Domestic Violence Issue	133	91	85	122	126	119
TOTAL DISPATCHED CALLS	4,122	4,098	3,837	4,026	4,135	4,196

Covington became incorporated in August of 1997 and immediately began contracting with the King County Sheriff’s Office for their police services. These officers are employees of the King County Sheriff’s Office East Precinct South. Covington has 10 patrol officers, one motorcycle officer, one detective, and a police chief assigned full time to the city.

The Covington officers wear Covington uniforms and drive Covington marked patrol cars. The officers have office space in city hall for completing reports and making phone calls but spend the majority of their time in their cars patrolling the city. All calls are dispatched through the King County Sheriff’s Office Communications Center. The Covington officers are supported by the services and staff of the King County Sheriff’s Office Precinct Three, the King County Sheriff’s Office Communications Center, (Dispatch Center) and the services of the King County Sheriff’s Office Major Crimes Unit, Special Assault detectives, Major Accident Reconstruction and Response Unit, SWAT, K-9, Air Support, Bomb Disposal Unit and other units within in the Special Operations Division.



The Covington Police Department’s mission is to provide quality, professional law enforcement services to improve public safety, to reduce crime and the fear of crime, and provide high quality, cost-effective, and accountable services to the City of Covington. Covington officers proactively partner with residents, citizens and business owners to solve problems and prevent crimes. This philosophy of community policing has proven to be very successful in bringing the police officers and citizens’ closer together creating an effective partnership.

Addressing the needs of the community for more police protection, two additional officers were added; one during the graveyard shift and one for the power shift - 6:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.

The increase in public awareness for community crime prevention programs has increased in part due to the city hiring a Community Relations Coordinator. The Coordinator has developed a *Graffiti Removal Program* which has been successful in getting the community involved by providing 100 free graffiti removal kits for residents. The city also hosts a Clean Covington Day in September where neighbors can check out the kits and clean up the graffiti in their neighborhood.

Each year the city participates in the “*National Night Out – A Night Against Crime*” held every August. This program fights crime by promoting neighborhood block parties where neighbors can get to know each other. Using similar material as a Block Watch, neighbors have the option to start a phone tree and appoint a block captain. The Covington Police, Fire, and City Council support this event by attending each neighborhood event. This promotes positive relationships between families, police, and firefighters.

Block Watch packets are available to all residents interested in developing a Block Watch program in their neighborhood. The Police Chief has received numerous requests for Block Watch packets from various HOA’s interested in starting a neighborhood block watch program. Block Watch programs are one way to reduce the number of crimes in Covington.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Covington Domestic Violence Task Force (CDVTF) was formed independently of the city but fully endorsed by the City Council in 2003. In 2008 the task force became a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and serves Covington, Maple Valley, and Black Diamond.

The CDVTF Mission is to promote a strong message that “*Domestic Violence Has No Place in Our Community*” through collaborative leadership, communication, education to promote healthy relationships, and victim support. The goals are:

- Provide education to promote healthy relationships for youth and adults.
- Raise awareness of domestic violence and how it affects the community as a whole.
- Provide assistance and service referrals to victims and their families.
- Work to support policies that meet victim needs and hold perpetrators accountable.

The task force has formed a strong collaboration with the city and police who have supported community awareness events such as the “Purple Light Nights® campaign” (PLN), Covington Days Festival and Parade, and the Purple Light Nights® Bite, by providing valuable staff support. The purpose of the Purple Light Nights® campaign is to shine a purple light in every porch light and business to remember the victims who lost their lives to domestic violence, support the survivors, and give hope to those still living with abuse. The Purple Light Nights® campaign was launched in 2007. Currently, PLN campaigns are held in 23 states, as well as Canada and Guam. PLN has received numerous awards for its community involvement that include:

- 2010 National Communitas Award for excellence in community partnership
- 2009 Washington State Governor’s Proclamation
- 2008 and 2009 Association of Washington Cities Certificate of Distinction for the Municipal Excellence Award Program

Funds raised by the sale of purple lights and street tree sponsorships are used to provide direct services to victims and their families. Domestic violence shelters have a turn-away rate of 29 women for every one they receive. In order to bridge the gap for safe shelter, the CDVTF developed a Safe Nights program with local motels to provide up to a one-week stay. This time provides the victim and their children a safe place to live while working with a domestic violence advocate to find shelter or transitioning housing. The task force has also provided move-in assistance for victims who have obtained housing through DAWN or the YWCA. To date, the CDVTF has provided \$3,324.66 in services as itemized in the Table 8 below.

Table 8. Domestic Violence Services					
Year	Safe Nights Clients	Safe Nights Cost	Gas Cards	Financial Aid	Used For
2006	10	\$135.08		\$ 45.00	Rental deposit
2008	12	\$563.53	1	\$ 30.00	Phone card
2009	30	\$750.00		\$ 60.00	Taxi to shelter
2010	26	\$536.00		\$300.00	Move-in asst.
2011	11	\$415.54	3	\$489.51	Rental asst.
TOTAL	89	\$2,400.15	4	\$924.51	

The Covington Police Chief and Detective consistently communicate with the Human Services Specialist and CDVTF Director on domestic violence calls that may require follow-up support services such as housing or advocacy to the victims and their families. The CDVTF has become a leader in the South King County domestic violence community for their innovative programs and support services to victims.

Four of the agencies funded by general fund dollars serve as resources for domestic violence or sexual assault victims. Agencies serving domestic violence and sexual assault victims are:

- YWCA provides domestic violence advocacy and victims’ services including a women’s support group for Covington and Kent residents.
- DAWN (Domestic Awareness Women’s Network) provides the only 24-hour domestic violence crisis line for the county as well as the only confidential DV shelter.

- King County Sexual Assault Resource Center is the only provider serving child, teen, and adult survivors of a sexual assault.
- Safe & Sound Visitation Center is the only visitation center for domestic violence victims that provide court-ordered supervised parental visitations.

The city has developed a strong partnership with many agencies to increase the resources available to our residents. The YWCA of Seattle and King County has developed a woman's support group that meets in Covington twice a month and is facilitated by the YWCA Domestic Violence Advocate. In addition, the city provides an in-kind office space for the YWCA domestic violence advocate to meet privately with clients. The Jennifer Beach Foundation continues to partner with the CDVTF on many educational and community awareness projects. They also provide free Financial Literacy classes and a Kids Club, which provides healing for children who have witnessed domestic violence in their homes.

All of these organizations are essential to provide Covington residents with access to services such as community advocacy, legal advocacy, support groups, and safe housing.

Conclusions:

The data from the Police Department indicate that overall crime in Covington remains fairly stable with some crimes decreasing while others had a slight increase. The crimes involving juveniles has been decreasing over the past three years but still warrants a proactive response to develop activities and a safe atmosphere where youth can congregate. The Commission's assessment #4 supports the development of a youth center.

Regarding domestic violence, there is a documented need among young women for education and advocacy skills. Women who have fled violent situations are in need of emergency shelter and transitional housing. The shelter turn-away rate has increased to 29 to 1, which makes it very difficult for victims to leave their abuser. The Covington Domestic Violence Task Force has been able to bridge this gap by providing critical motel vouchers to the victims when the shelter is full. They have also provided education to the business and residential community, and currently partnering with Project U(th) to provide teen dating violence prevention in the Covington and Kent junior and senior high schools.

Recommendations:

- Continue to monitor and assess the need for domestic violence services and evaluate the most effective program models to support survivors and their families.
- Continue to promote city-wide support of the Purple Light Nights® Campaign.
- Continue a partnership with the Covington Domestic Violence Task Force as a valuable educational and awareness program to teens and families in the community.
- Support efforts for the development of a Youth Center.

REPORT IV – Access to Health Care

Healthy children and adults is one of the community goals set by the Human Services Commission. Covington residents who participated in the Covington Assessment for Resources for Everyone (C.A.R.E.) survey indicated that being able to find accessible and affordable health and dental care were two key needs for 46% of the respondents. Language and financial barriers were two obstacles faced by low and moderate-income families. The City of Covington human services funding has supported a number of agencies to provide health and dental care for our low to moderate-income residents. The list of agencies with current funding level is listed in the following table.

Table 9. Covington Funding for Health Care (medical, dental, mental)			
AGENCY	PROGRAM	2011-12 FUNDING	# CLIENTS PER YEAR
Dynamic Family Services	Children’s Therapy – early intervention and treatment	\$ 9,000	80
Health Point	Dental services	\$ 3,282	54
Health Point	Medical Services	\$ 4,000	169
Kent Youth & Family Services	Family Counseling & Substance Abuse Programs	\$10,000	25
Pediatric Interim Care Center	Drug-exposed infants	\$ 1,000	1
Crisis Clinic – Teen Link	Suicide Prevention - students trained	\$ 2,671	474
	Crisis Line Calls		11

These health care providers continue to exceed their projected annual goals and require additional funding to meet the demand for services. This need for continued funding for health, mental health, substance abuse services, and dental services remains high as the level of need will most likely increase with the current economic climate.

In an effort to provide better access to services for our residents, the City Council approved the use of an office within City Hall to provide in-kind space to non-profits. In 2003, the Kent Youth & Family Services extended their Family Counseling program one day a week at City Hall. Having local access to counseling services has been very successful in keeping youth in the program while helping parents access local services. Other programs that utilize the space are the YWCA Domestic Violence Advocate who facilitates a women’s support group for domestic violence survivors; and the Housing Stability Program, which provides move-in rental assistance.

Conclusions:

Based on evidence from the agency performance measures, the demand for medical, mental health, dental services, and substance abuse services remains high. In addition, the youth continue to benefit from the services aimed at meeting their mental health needs including counseling and substance abuse prevention and treatment. The counseling program benefits families by utilizing the Covington human services in-kind office space at city hall giving families better access to local services.

There are several access issues relevant to Covington residents. One barrier is transportation to access health care services which are limited in South King County. HealthPoint is the primary provider working to meet the dental and medical health needs of clients but is located in Kent, which is difficult for many low-income or elderly residents to get to.

Recommendations:

- A number of youth in the community suggested exploring a school-linked source of health care in cooperation with the Public Health Seattle-King County as a preventive approach for their well-being.
- Support the state and local transportation agencies plan to increase bus and rail service to South King County and Covington.
- Utilize volunteer transportation services for seniors and disabled.
- Support agencies that provide transportation services for Covington residents.

REPORT V – Services for Children & Youth

One of the major concerns that emerged from the C.A.R.E. assessment youth survey was lack of activities for teens. This mirrored the adult survey where recreational activities and youth programming is a significant unmet need in Covington. The youth requested activities such as basketball courts, an arcade, paint ball field, or a bowling alley. Families with young children desired more low-income social and recreational programs.

In 2004, the city merged the Covington Community Center and Tahoma Pool (now the Covington Aquatic Center) under the Parks and Recreation Department to provide aquatics and recreational programs for children and youth. Unfortunately due to financial cut backs in 2005, the city downsized the Parks & Recreation Department, leaving only the Aquatic Center open while recreational and sports programs ended. As a result of losing the sports programs, citizens formed Covington Community Sports Inc. as a non-profit organization to continue providing year-round sports for children and youth. The city re-established a Parks & Recreation Department in 2008 when it hired a new Parks & Recreation Director. Although the recreational program services that were discontinued in 2005 were not immediately re-established, one of the goals for the current Parks & Recreation Department is to develop a recreational program in the near future.

Other sports programs and facilities that are available to Covington residents are the Kent Little League, Kent Youth Sports, the Greater Maple Valley Community Center, and of course the Covington Aquatic Center.

The only at-risk teen program in Covington is Kent Youth & Family Services Lighthouse after-school program. Lighthouse is housed at Cedar Heights Jr. High School on Monday and Friday evenings for ages 14-18. Students may play basketball, receive help with homework, or attend a weekly violence prevention program taught by staff from Kent Youth & Family Services.

Funding for youth services, as shown in Table 10, are primarily preventive services for at-risk youth; elementary school mentoring program, Head Start preschool, and teen link. With the high cost of childcare, many working families rely on unlicensed childcare with family, friend, or neighbor. These children are often less prepared for school than children in licensed childcare. Childcare Resources assists parents in finding the best child-care provider for their children.

Table 10. Funding for Youth Services			
AGENCY	PROGRAM	2011 FUNDING	# CLIENTS PER YEAR
Child Care Resources	Resource and referrals	\$3,528	21
Community in Schools	Elementary school mentoring	\$4,500	7
Kent Youth & Family Services	Head Start & ECEAP Pre-school	\$2,500	26
Crisis Clinic – Teen Link	Suicide Prevention - # of students trained	\$2,671	474

Conclusions:

Those who participated in the surveys and focus groups agreed that youth programming is a significant unmet need in Covington. Families with young children are requesting to have more local programming available. Currently families looking for youth activities are going to Maple Valley Community Center or participating in Covington Community Sports and Kent sport programs.

Recommendations:

- All the youth programs funded by the city (as shown in Table 10), are successfully meeting their performance measures each year, indicating the ongoing need for the critical services these programs provide to Covington residents.

- The city has proposed a new Recreation Assistant position under the Recreation and Aquatics Manager, to begin developing youth programs in Covington to address this unmet need.

REPORT VI – Services for Adults

Covington resident’s shared their view on community concerns through the C.A.R.E. assessment survey. The survey ranked some of the highest unmet needs for adult services, which are shown in Table 11.

Table 11. Results for All Respondents in Order of Highest Unmet Need			
Need	Need is Not Met	Need is Met	Not a Need
Affordable Housing	46.4%	25.0%	28.6%
Public Transportation	42.4%	23.0%	33.6%
Parent Support Programs	34.7%	29.6%	35.7%

In another client survey aimed at gathering input from low-income residents regarding human service needs, the top four concerns among respondents were:

- 1) 69% - assistance to pay rent and other monthly living expenses;
- 2) 48% - support for medical and dental care;
- 3) 42% - employment services; and
- 4) 33% - improved bus service.

A relatively new injury and illness prevention program available to Covington residents was developed by the Kent Fire District. Known as the FDCARES program, it is a community assistance program that is based on solving issues faced by the aging and disabled before an emergency takes place. This direct interaction will also aid in preventing the need for future emergency services for these individuals as well. Emergency service prevention will assist in preventing ambulance transportations, emergency room visits, and associated costs to both the individuals as well as insurance providers. The FDCARES program will connect members of our community to the appropriate social service to meet their needs.

The FDCARES specialist partners with the city’s Human Services Specialist to identify and coordinate services for Covington seniors that need minor home repairs in order to prevent falls and injuries. The fire district CARES specialist conducts a home visit to determine the needs of the individual. She contacts the city’s Human Services Specialist to provide a recommendation and materials such as grab bars. The installation and repairs requested are provided through the Minor Home Repair program.

Conclusion:

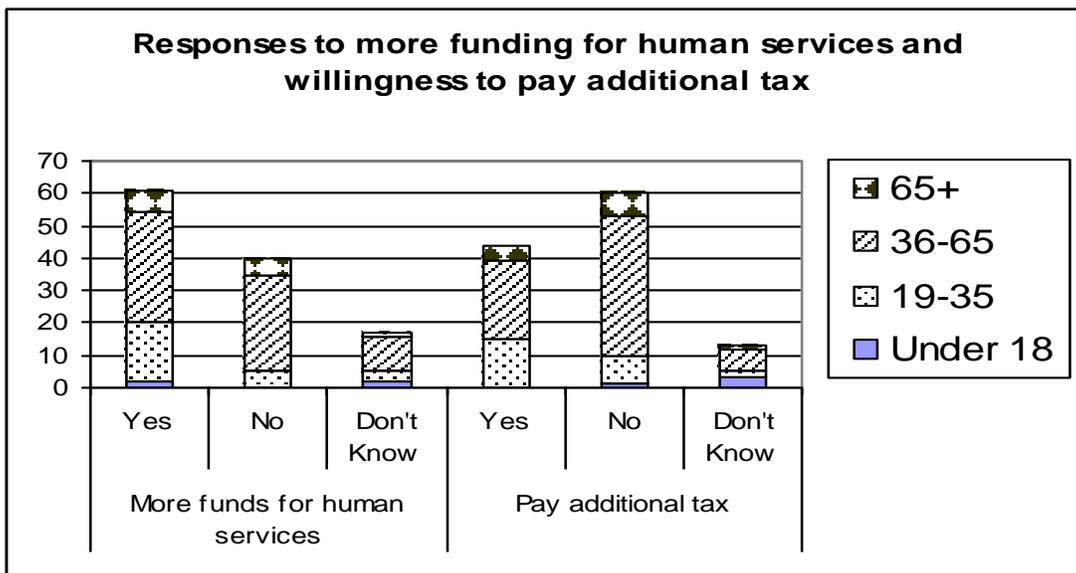
Covington lacks a senior center for our elderly residents. To fill this gap, many of our seniors attend Kent Senior Center, Black Diamond Community Center, and Wilderness Lake to receive community services.

Recommendations:

- Support the state and local transportation agencies plan to increase bus and rail service to South King County and Covington.
- Continue to monitor and assess the need for senior services and evaluate the most effective program models to support them.

Perspectives on Funding for Human Services

Half of the residents who responded to the C.A.R.E. survey agreed with the statement that the City of Covington should put more of its funds toward human services. Some indicated that the city should support in-home services and new agencies. However, when asked if they would be willing to pay a small additional tax to support human services 51.3% said no, (refer to the chart below).



Agency Perspectives on Need and Opportunities

Local service providers held common perceptions that low-income neighborhoods such as Timberlane and the apartment complex behind Kohl's are areas with high needs. There is increasing economic stress just to keep a roof overhead and food on the table.

Many agencies are facing challenges in serving refugee and immigrant families due to lack of interpretation and translation services, along with federal cuts in Medicaid health care. The demographics indicate that Covington's population has become more diverse, followed by a need for more services.

One provider expressed concern that Covington needs to plan for more senior services in Covington. With the addition of a new senior living apartment in Covington, the need for chore services increased as well. In response to that need, the Human Services Commission recommended funding the Catholic Community Volunteer Chore Services in 2011. As a result more senior residents have received a variety of chore services to meet their needs.

Since Covington does not have a senior center, many of our seniors attend the Greater Maple Valley Community Center, Kent Senior Center, or Black Diamond Community Center. Seniors from Covington made 647 visits per year to the popular lunchtime programs and activities, further validating the need for a senior center in Covington.

Conclusions:

The opinions expressed by the adults in focus groups and on the surveys expressed views that Covington needed a range of services from a community center that has a gym, pool, and other rooms for community activities and a place for kids to hang out and do things. Respondents also held the view that the city needs to find creative ways of hooking people up with the services that already exist rather than providing additional services.

The Commission included goals for greater employment opportunities within the city under *Assessment #5 Services for Adults*. These goals align with the economic development's goals of the city as seen by the increase of medical facilities being built in the downtown area. This growth will provide employment opportunities that sustain a living wage job. The Human Services Master Plan also includes *assessment #4 Services for Youth* where the goal is to support the development of a youth center.

HUMAN SERVICES DELIVERY SYSTEM

This section will provide a description of various types of organizations that provide services as well as an overview of the service delivery system available to Covington residents.

Private Non-Profits

The predominant resource available to meet the needs of low to moderate-income residents is through private non-profit social and health service providers. There are very few local non-profits located in the City of Covington and those that exist serve a small number of people. City residents rely on south county regional agencies, which results in traveling to other cities to get assistance. Over the past six years, more service providers have responded to the needs of Covington through a satellite office at Covington City Hall, providing agencies with an in-kind office space to better serve their Covington clients. Residents have expressed great appreciation to those agencies that have utilized the satellite office which has improved their access to services. Agencies using the in-kind office both short-term and long-term have included:

- ◆ YWCA – domestic violence advocacy and support groups
- ◆ King County Housing Stability Program
- ◆ Kent Youth & Family Services counseling
- ◆ Angel Food Ministry
- ◆ Catholic Community – Volunteer Chores Services
- ◆ Catholic Community – Emergency Assistance
- ◆ Jennifer Beach Foundation
- ◆ Communities in Schools
- ◆ Free tax preparation
- ◆ Valley Cities Counseling
- ◆ Children’s Home Society
- ◆ Project U(th)
- ◆ King County Work Training Program

The City of Covington currently provides grant funding to sixteen agencies for twenty-one different programs. Services provided include emergency assistance for food, shelter, utility bills, health care, victim assistance, counseling and transportation. Table 12, on the following page, contains a list of currently funded programs with city general-fund dollars.

TABLE 12. HUMAN SERVICE PROVIDERS	FUNDING LEVEL
Auburn Youth Resources – Street Outreach	\$1,500
Catholic Community Services – Emergency Asst.	\$8,500
Catholic Community Services – Volunteer Chore Services	\$3,000
Childcare Resources & Referral	\$3,585
Communities in Schools/Kent – Mentoring Program	\$3,000
Crisis Clinic – Telephone Services	\$2,400
Crisis Clinic – 2.1.1 Service	\$ 2,000
Crisis Clinic – Teen Link	\$ 2,671
DAWN – Continuum of Housing Program	\$ 8,000
Dynamic Family Services	\$ 10,000
Greater Maple Valley SE Regional Shuttle	\$4,000
Health Point – Dental	\$ 3,181
Health Point – Medical Services	\$ 4,000
Kent Youth and Family Services - Clinical Services	\$10,000
Kent Youth and Family Services – Head Start & ECEAP	\$ 2,500
KC Sexual Assault Center	\$ 4,864
Maple Valley Food Bank & Emergency Services	\$15,000
Pediatric Interim Care Center	\$ 1,500
The Storehouse	\$7,143
South King Council of HS – Capacity Building	\$1,500
YWCA – DV Victim Services	\$6,656
TOTAL	\$105,000

Government Services

The primary role of government regarding social and health services pertains to setting policies and legislation that mandate certain services as well as funding of non-profits to provide such services for their residents. However, there are specific areas where government does provide direct services as described below.

Department of Social & Health Services (DSHS)

There are ten Community Service Offices, (CSO) in King County. Eligible Covington residents are served in the Kent office. Each CSO offers various programs that include:

- Financial Assistance for unemployed
- Medical Coverage
- Washington Basic Food Program
- Working Connections Child Care
- Family Reconciliation Services

King County Dept. of Housing and Community Development (HCD)

HCD's mission is threefold: (1) to create and preserve decent affordable housing; (2) to end homelessness; and (3) to make capital investments which improve the viability, livability, and economic stability of King County's communities, particularly low- and moderate-income communities outside the city of Seattle. Much of HCD's work is accomplished through valuable partnerships with non-profit organizations, public housing authorities, and suburban cities.

Within HCD, there are five sections that have specific roles in helping to accomplish the mission:

1. The *King County Home Repair Program* provides interest-free loan and emergency grant services directly to low- and moderate-income home owners in King County, outside the city of Seattle, to repair their homes and help preserve our region's stock of affordable housing. This program also provides grants to individual low-income renters with a disability to help make their housing more accessible.
2. The *Housing Finance Program* funds the development of housing that is affordable to low-income and special needs households. Funds are provided to non-profit housing development organizations and public housing authorities in King County. If funds are available, the Housing Finance Program may also provide rental rehabilitation funds to private investor owners of rental housing, provided that they already own the housing units and agree to keep the housing affordable and in good condition in the future.
3. The *Homeless Housing Program* funds organizations that provide homeless prevention services, emergency and transitional housing services, and permanent supportive housing for previously homeless households.

4. The *Affordable Housing Planning and Development Section* prepares a variety of housing plans or strategies, including all federally-required housing plans as well as specific housing plans for special populations, such as people with developmental disabilities. This section also implements the County's development incentives programs, which are designed to encourage private developers to include affordable housing in their developments.
5. The *Community Development Program* makes investments in our communities, such as improvements in community facilities that provide services, and public infrastructure projects, such as sewer and water quality improvement projects. This section also provides limited funding for selected human services programs. The goal of this section is to improve the quality of life for very low- to moderate-income residents of King County, outside the city of Seattle.

King County Housing Authority

The Housing Authority is an independent municipal corporation established under Washington state law. The Authority receives no operating funds from Washington State, King County or the region's suburban jurisdictions. Operating costs are covered by rents charged to tenants and direct support from the federal government. KCHA supports more than 18,000 households in housing dispersed among 23 suburban cities and the unincorporated areas of the county.

Housing is offered in designated apartments such as the Adagio apartments, among other single-family and manufactured homes in Covington. In addition, the Housing Authority operates a Weatherization Program providing grants and loans to eligible households.

Since its establishment in 1939, the King County Housing Authority has played a key role in providing affordable housing options for the residents of King County, Washington. Through partnerships with local communities and nonprofit organizations, KCHA delivers affordable housing and related supportive services such as education, job training and social services to more than 43,000 local residents who earn less than the county median income. This approach puts independence and self-sufficiency well within the reach of most families, usually within six years.

Department of Public Health - Seattle-King County

Public Health provides health care services to low-income residents through Public Health Clinics located in King County. Covington residents are served in the Kent clinic and serves pregnant women, infants and children up to age 5 for immunizations, family planning, parenting services, maternity support services and preventative care.

Volunteer and Faith Based Programs

The local faith-based community continues to play an important role in providing limited emergency assistance and referrals to residents in need. Lake Sawyer Christian Church, Solid Rock, St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, Covington Christian Fellowship, Mt. Vineyard, Christian Fellowship, and Peace Lutheran Church have all developed a partnership with the city human services staff to coordinate emergency services for individuals and families with the greatest need. This coordination has proved beneficial in providing the clients with additional resources and support as well as creating a more efficient system.

CONCLUSION

The City of Covington has a wide range of social and health services available to its residents. These services include non-profit organizations, the local faith-based community, and governmental systems that offer a variety of services for low- to moderate-income individuals and families. In addition, there are several regional networks that provide services for emergency and transitional housing, such as domestic violence and sexual assault services.

Covington continues to experience demographic and economic changes, including increases in the population and in the number of individuals and families living in poverty or below self-sufficiency standards. These conditions are reflected in the rising number of citizens requesting services to the agencies funded by the city. The city remains committed to addressing these needs through a plan to coordinate and monitor each service, as well as advocating for those in need and connecting individuals and families to available services.

The recent recession and economic crisis resulted in many changes in funding and system priorities that have impacted human services in the county and state. With severe budget cuts to welfare programs such as TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families), Washington State Basic Health, food stamps, and housing assistance, our most vulnerable citizens have been adversely affected. With the high unemployment rate, more families have sought financial assistance and food bank services than ever before. Municipalities and private foundations have either cut or reduced funding to non-profits, resulting in a reduction in services as well as a very competitive funding market.

To accommodate these changes, many non-profit organizations have been creative in developing a stronger volunteer base to continue their work. This requires more thorough training and a reorganization to utilize paid staff more efficiently. Another trend that has emerged from the recession is greater collaboration to benefit both the non-profits and their clients. Many successful partnerships have been formed to create a more integrated system. Ultimately, our vision is to develop a unified, efficient system for delivering human services that meet the needs of our most vulnerable community members.

This plan is meant to serve as a guide to action for all involved in the delivery of human services to those who are most in need. It is not the end state, but rather, the process, which is dynamic and designed to be updated with changing community needs. The structure of the plan requires annual evaluations; including accomplishments, what remains to be done, what needs reevaluation, and what needs to change. Ultimately, the planning process is intended to serve the Commission's mission to meet the diverse human services needs of our community in the most efficient and effective way through an integrated approach to comprehensive services.