

**SHS Advisory Committee
Meeting
May 8 , 2025
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM**



Agenda

Time	Agenda Item	Facilitator	Action
3:00	Welcome Land and Labor Acknowledgement Introductions	Mack Vohs	Inform
3:15	County Budget Process Update & Engagement Opportunities / Q&A	Sara Ryan, Chair's Office	Inform
3:45	Defining Accessibility, Part 3	Mack Vohs	Discuss
4:25	Member Updates/Advocacy Opportunities	Sandra Comstock	Discuss, Inform
4:30	Session closes	Close	

Land & Labor Acknowledgement

Multnomah County rests on the stolen lands of the Multnomah, Kathlamet, and Clackamas Bands of Chinook Indian Nation; Tualatin Kalapuya; Molalla; and many others along the Columbia River. This country is built on stolen Indigenous land and built by stolen African people. This land was not stolen and people were not enslaved by ambiguous entities and actors. The land was stolen by, and African peoples were enslaved by White settlers who had government support.

We also want to honor the members of over 400 tribal communities who live in Multnomah County. Many of these people and their cultures still survive and resist despite the intentional and ongoing attempts to destroy them. Let us please take a moment of silence to acknowledge the history of how we are here in this place and to honor the People.

Credit to: Dr. Aileen Duldulao and Heather Heater, Multnomah County

Introductions

- Name
- Pronouns (if comfortable sharing)
- Organization/community you represent

Provider Conference

JOHS is hosting another conference for providers:

- **Who:** Anyone who works with a contracted or qualified service provider organization
- **What:** An opportunity for providers to network and collaborate together and with JOHS staff on issues of common concern
- **When:** Friday, June 6, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Where:** In person at Mt. Hood Community College
- **Registration:** Open now until May 30; click [here](#)
- **Contact:** Bill Boyd, bill.boyd@multco.us
- **Cost:** Free

Community Agreements

When the SHS committee was founded, members identified the following community agreements:

- Take care of yourself.
- Make the best effort to be engaged and ready to support one another.
- Be aware of your own space and positionality.
- Practice cultural humility by respecting other perspectives, experiences and cultures.
- Share the air and give everyone a chance to speak.
- Be authentic and speak your truth.
- Respect and listen to each other, honor each other's perspectives and story.
- Respect confidentiality and don't share other's stories without their permission.
- Give feedback and be open to feedback.
- Differentiate between safety and comfort.
- Be curious and ask questions. Be patient.

Community Agreements Pt. 2

- Differentiate between opinion and informed knowledge.
- Interrupt oppression.
- Expect and accept discomfort and ambiguity.
- Be open to trying something different.
- Be open to hearing something different.
- Share gratitude for feedback.
- Be aware of time.
- Correct with care—assume good intentions.
- Respect names and pronouns (help others when they may make mistakes).
- Stay focused/stay present.
- Understand we are all collectively learning and growing.

FY 2026 Budget Process Update



Framing the Conversation: Budget Process

What are we talking about?

Each year, the Board of County Commissioners approve and adopt an annual budget. The budget is the roadmap for County spending for the fiscal year and lays out the services and programming funded for the year.

Why is it important?

Opportunity for members to learn about County budget process, communicate roles clearly and transparently, identify avenues for participation, and explore how this committee's recommendations are being taken into account.

County Budget Process

MULTNOMAH COUNTY BUDGETING TIMELINE



DEC. 6
PREPARE

General Fund Forecast;
Budget Manual; Chair's
Policy Guidance;
Internal Service Rates

ALL DEPARTMENTS



FEB. 14
REQUEST

Departments
prioritize reductions,
reallocations, and
new requests.

ALL DEPARTMENTS



APRIL 24
PROPOSE

Balanced budget
released for Board to
begin public
deliberation.

COUNTY CHAIR



MAY 8
APPROVE

Board review:
first opportunity for
amendments; 10% rule
applies after approval.

COMMISSIONERS



JUNE 12
ADOPT

Department and Board
amendments; budget
notes; resolutions;
TSCC hearing.

COMMISSIONERS

10 weeks

10 weeks

2 weeks

5 weeks

- Preliminary Work Sessions

- Department Work Sessions
- Public Hearings

FY 2026 Budget Priorities

Chair's Proposed Budget

- Direct services for people who are homeless, ill, have disabilities, or have no access to other care.
- Programs that serve children and families, and communities most impacted by disparities.
- Programs that prevent homelessness, improve health outcomes, protect public safety, and strengthen resilience.
- Administrative reductions to streamline operations, and strategic cuts to programs.

Funding Levels

You can view the Chair's Executive Budget online at:

<https://multco.us/info/fy-2026-chairs-proposed-budget>

Multnomah County FY 2026 Budget

\$4 billion (Up 1.01% from FY 2025)

General Fund

\$897.4 million (Up 1.07% from FY 2025)

Operating Budget

\$3 billion (Down 3.23% from FY 2025)

Key Changes

The total budget and general fund are up slightly, but rising costs are outpacing increases.



FTE: Down 102 positions
County-wide



Homeless services operating budget: Down 11.1% to \$304.1 million



Health department operating budget:
Down 4% to \$523.6 million



Public safety operating budget (sheriff, DA, DCJ): Up 3.5% to \$397.7 million

Preserved, Continued, New Investments

- Every shelter bed open today.
- Current jail capacity and Sheriff's Office staffing.
- Behavioral Health Resource Center, a permanent sobering and stabilization center, overdose prevention, behavioral health for adults and youth in custody.
- 24/7 crisis system, Black/African American behavioral health.
- Community health centers, STI clinic, health services for mothers and infants, health and food safety inspections, disease prevention.
- Corrections Health
- Auditor ombudsperson staff
- Specialty courts, neighborhood DA's, crime victim and violence prevention
- Preschool for All, SUN service system, mental health supports for young people, Bienestar de la Familia, supports for children and families experiencing homelessness.
- Libraries, equity and inclusion positions, data security, gender affirming shelter and day spaces, animal service staffing, spay and neuter services.

Budget Reductions

Reduced to balance \$15.5 million general fund gap:

- Countywide staff reductions including in the Chair's Office, Chief Operating Officer staff, Chief Finance Officer staff, Central Human Resources, Budget, Government Relations, Office of Diversity and Equity and Sustainability.
- Administration across the County including in Health, Homeless Services Department.
- Homeless Service Department employment programs.
- Community Justice adult parole and probation services.

Homelessness Services

- **Overall:** \$304.1 million
- **SHS funding:** \$136.5 million

Chair's Priorities:

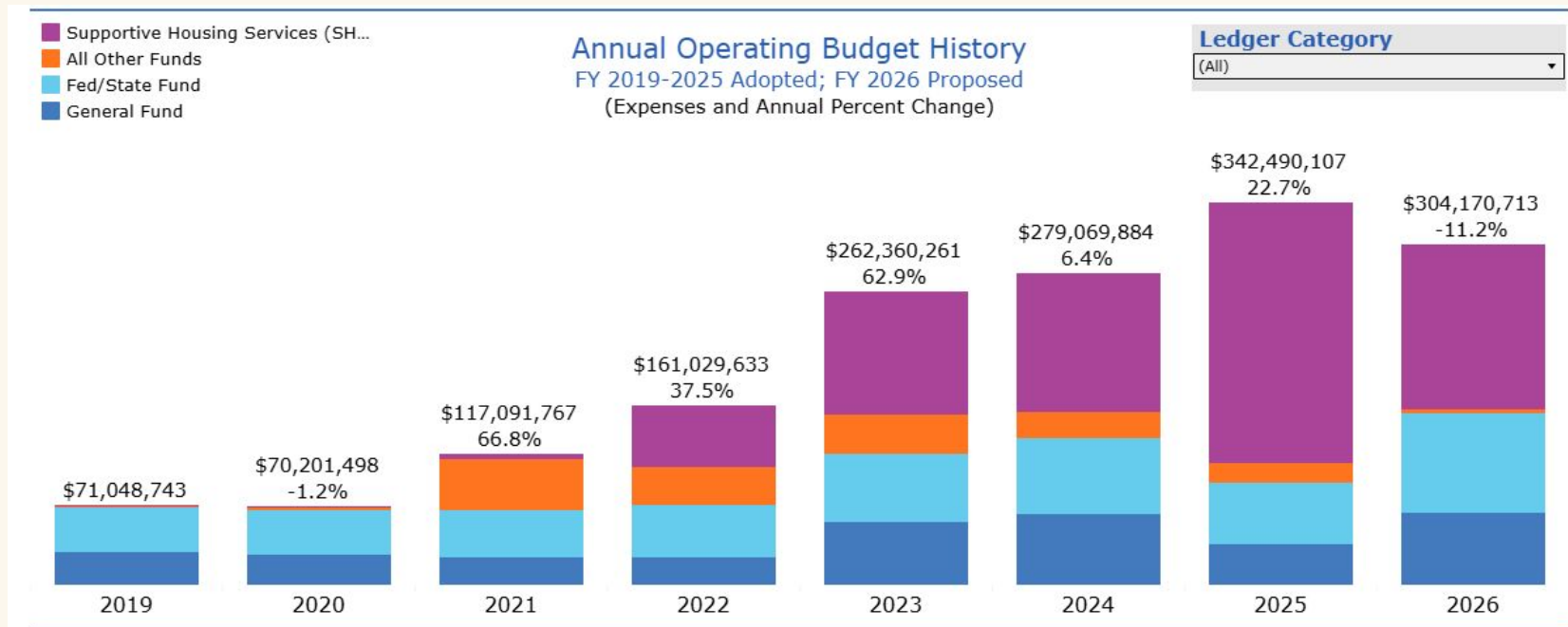
- Keeping people housed
- Sustaining shelter units
- Adding shelter units in alignment with the Community-wide shelter strategy
- Prioritizing housing placement

Proposed Outcomes

The proposed budget will allow us to support the following:

- New housing placements: **2,688**
- Households sustained and retained in housing: **5,939**
- People accessing a shelter unit: **9,794**
- Shelter units planned and funded from the Community-wide Shelter Strategy: **832** (of the 1,000 additional units planned for this period in the strategy)

Operating Budget History



From Multnomah County Proposed Budget Dashboard, [Homeless Services Department tab](#)

What Happens Next?

The publication of the Chair's proposed budget kicks off **seven weeks of public work sessions** with the Board of County Commissioners and County staff.

The Board will also host **three public hearings** for members of the community to comment on the County's operating and capital budgets.

The board will officially adopt the budget in June.

How Can I Get Involved?

View public work sessions:

- All budget work sessions will be held in-person at the Multnomah Building, 501 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Portland, OR, in the Boardroom.
- Also available to watch virtually on the [MultcoBoard YouTube channel](#).
- Public work sessions take place in addition to regular Thursday morning board meetings.

How Can I Get Involved?

Attend public hearings:

- **Wednesday, May 14, 6 to 8 p.m.**, Multnomah Building Boardroom, 501 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd., in Portland.
- **Wednesday, May 21, 6 to 8 p.m.**, East Multnomah Building, 600 N.E. 8th St., #300, in Gresham.
- **Wednesday, March 28 6 to 8 p.m.** Virtual-only.

More information about the public hearings available online:
[Multnomah County Budget Office.](#)

How Can I Get Involved?

Make your voice heard:

- Please take this opportunity to get involved and encourage family, friends and neighbors to engage with the budget process.
- Anyone can sign up to testify or leave a comment on the [Chair's Budget page](#). Public comment does not occur during the budget work sessions, but can be heard at the regular Thursday morning Board meetings.

Time for Questions

Defining Accessibility: Part Three



Accessibility

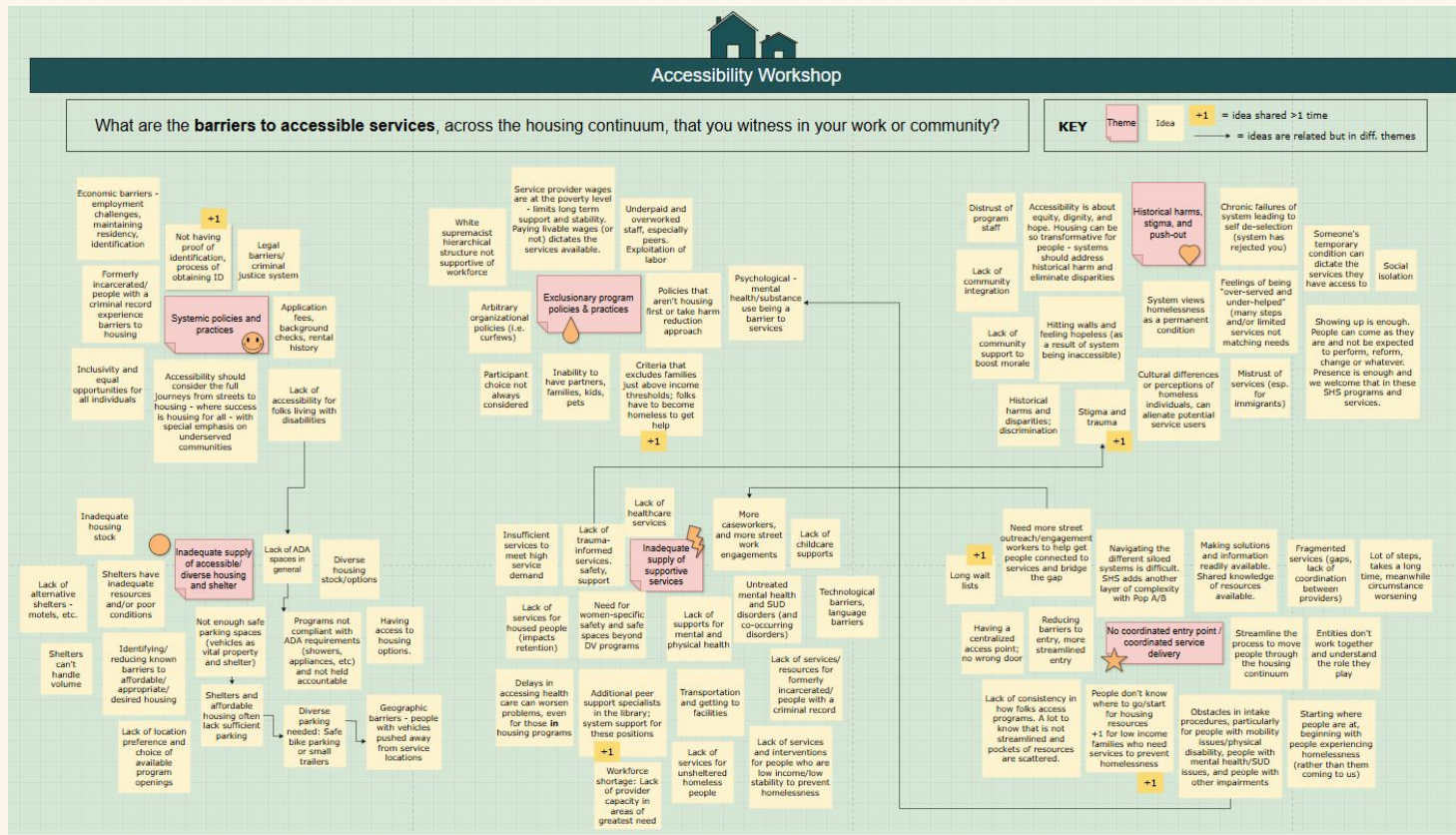
How are we defining accessibility?

Access to
services and
housing



Accessibility for
people with a
disability

Accessibility: What are the barriers to accessing services that you've witnessed?



Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

Accessibility for people with disabilities

Historical harms, stigma, and push-out

Program policies and practices

Systemic policies and practices

Lack of coordinated entry point or coordinated service delivery

Inadequate supply of accessible/diverse housing and shelter

Inadequate supply of supportive services

Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

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Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

Lack of coordinated entry point or coordinated service delivery

Examples that you shared:

- Long wait lists, meanwhile circumstance worsening
- No centralized access point to streamline entry and move people through housing continuum
- Obstacles in intake procedures; a lot of steps
- Pop A/B categories within SHS add a layer of complexity
- Siloed systems that are difficult to navigate
- Information, resources and solutions are not readily available

Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

Lack of coordinated entry point or coordinated service delivery

Recommendations you've already provided:

- Streamline the process community members use to seek services with a user-friendly online platform that allows for information sharing (System Improvement, 2024).
- Develop opportunities for providers to build relationships and share knowledge. Invest in FTE to enhance providers' ability to coordinate and increase access to services. Invest in gatherings that allow providers, especially those with lived experience, to connect (Capacity Building, 2024).
- Facilitate information sharing across organizations to reduce the time of intakes and assessments, and eliminate need for people to re-apply for services at various agencies (Capacity Building, 2024).
- Invest in 211 capacity and modernize system infrastructure (2023).

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Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

Program policies and practices

Examples that you shared:

- Program criteria that:
 - Disallows or separates partners, families, kids, and pets
 - Excludes people just above income thresholds
 - Create barriers for people with mental health or substance use disorders
 - Establishes arbitrary policies (e.g. curfews)
- Policies that don't adhere to a Housing First or Harm Reduction approach
- Unsupported workforce (very low wages, being overworked, exploited, work culture is white supremacist/hierarchical, etc.)
- Participant choice not always considered

Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

Program policies and practices

Recommendations you've already provided:

- Develop an equity evaluation tool to hold providers accountable to equity goals, includes process for training workforce, measuring workforce diversity, & fair compensation (Equity, 2024).
- Advocate for shelter processes, policies, and structures that support participant choice and autonomy in defining family and allow families to stay together (System Improvement, 2024)
- Funding for FTE to maintain communication with people who have reached out for services (System Improvement, 2024).
- Prioritize hiring & compensating peers/people with lived experience (System Improvement, 2024).

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Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

Systemic policies and practices

Examples that you shared:

- Legal barriers (e.g., background/rental history checks, requiring proof of identification)
- Barriers due to criminal justice system involvement
- Economic barriers (e.g., application fees, employment challenges, maintaining residency)
- Policies that aren't inclusive or provide equal opportunities for all
- Failure to operationalize accessibility standards for folks living with disabilities
- System isn't designed for the full journey from streets to housing
- System doesn't emphasize enough our underserved communities

Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

Systemic policies and practices

Recommendations you've already provided:

- Programs that receive braided funding often follow policies of most restrictive source (example: some program wouldn't consider people exiting incarceration as homeless) (Equity, 2024).
- Strategic and substantial provider expansion rather than quick disbursement of funds or one-time-only funds. Focus on training and education, staff wages, infrastructure development, policy development, information sharing and networking, coordination and access to services, and stipends for community engagement and advisory bodies (Capacity Building, 2024).
- Prioritize culturally specific providers for capacity building funds, especially new and small organizations (Capacity Building, 2024).
- Prioritize system improvements that decrease wait times for shelter (System Improvement, 2024).

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Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

Historical harms, stigma, and push-out

Examples that you shared:

- Distrust of program staff (esp. for immigrants); Stigma and trauma
- Discrimination and injustices; historical harms and disparities; System that doesn't promote equity, dignity, and hope, and which views homelessness as a permanent condition
- Social isolation; Lack of community integration and support
- Chronic rejection from system leading to self de-selection
- Someone's temporary condition dictates the available services
- System expects people to perform, reform or change & doesn't allow people to come as they are

Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

Historical harms, stigma, and push-out

Recommendations you've already provided:

- When making decisions, incorporate meaningful inclusion of people who experience higher barriers and inequalities in accessing services (Equity, 2024).
- Establish a grievance process to allow participants to share their experiences (Equity, 2024).
- Provider evaluations should incorporate perspectives of the people receiving services and whether their interactions have contributed positively to their sense of wellbeing and progress toward their goals (Capacity Building, 2024).

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Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

Inadequate supply of accessible/diverse housing and shelter

Examples that you shared:

- Inadequate housing stock; housing options are limited, unaffordable, not appropriate, undesirable, etc.
- Lack of alternative shelters, motels, etc.
- Shelters have inadequate resources, poor conditions, or can't handle volume
- Lack of ADA housing in general and programs not compliant with ADA requirements (i.e., showers, appliances, etc.).
- Lack of safe parking spaces and shelters/housing lack sufficient parking; lack of safe bike parking or small trailers; people with vehicles pushed away from service locations

Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

Inadequate supply of accessible/diverse housing and shelter

Recommendations you've already provided:

- Increase shelter accessibility for people with disabilities by creating accessibility standards for shelter providers (System Improvement, 2024).
- Increase supply of immediate, safe, private housing and shelter, with a focus on capital investments such as motels or other commercial properties (System Improvement, 2024).
- Increase the supply of high quality, low-barrier shelter and housing options for people with substance use disorders (System Improvement, 2024).
- Increase investment in identity-related housing and retention services (2023).

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Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

Inadequate supply of supportive services

Examples that you shared:

- Lack of trauma-informed services that emphasize safety, support
- Lack of specific services in demand:
 - Healthcare services, childcare, support for mental and physical health, transportation to get to facilities, technological support, language and translation services, peer support specialists - especially in the libraries
- Lack of population specific services for:
 - People who are unsheltered, formerly incarcerated, low income/low stability

Accessibility:

What are the **barriers to accessing services** that you've witnessed?

Inadequate supply of supportive services

Recommendations you've already provided:

- Invest in peer support services for the elderly; resources for women and gender diverse; resources for people using drugs; culturally specific services (Equity, 2024).
- Invest in programs that help drug users get housed (System Improvement, 2024).
- Prioritize SHS services and housing for people whose camps are swept (2023).
- Invest in homelessness prevention, rent and utility assistance, and cash assistance. Invest in employment services for people exiting homelessness (2023).
- Provide car repair and maintenance for those awaiting housing (2023).
- Invest in peer support programming for people experiencing housing insecurity (2023).

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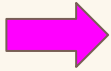
Accessibility



What's next?

- How does this influence how you'd like to define accessibility?
- Are there any specific topics you'd like to learn more about?

Next Steps



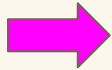
Define Priorities

Brainstorming activities and understanding existing work in the two priority areas.

Brainstorm recommendations

Using the definitions as a framework as well as committee experience/expertise and JOHS staff presentations as resources.

Vote / Approve Recommendations



Gather Information

SHS team to coordinate presentations/ Q&A with JOHS staff.

Develop, discuss & edit recommendations

Creating and refining recs in preparation to vote.

Submit Recommendations to Leadership



Member Updates

Share:

- News/updates from your organization or community
- Things happening in the SHS scene
- Advocacy opportunities
- Other opportunities

Close

