

# HUMAN SERVICES ELEMENT

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## HUMAN SERVICES INTRODUCTION

Putting a “human face” on the *Comprehensive Plan* is the motivation for the Human Services Element. As a community, we plan for growth in terms of land use, roads, natural resources and infrastructure. It is important to remember the very essence of our community – the people. The Human Services Element focuses on the needs of the individuals who comprise our community. The availability of and access to human services is important to all people regardless of income, family structure, age or cultural background. The purpose of the Human Services Element is to provide policy direction for City actions supporting services relating to the human services needs of the residents of the City of Bainbridge Island.

The Human Services Element supports a delivery system that is comprehensive and flexible enough to meet the needs of the citizenry now and in the future. City support benefits from regular assessments of community needs. In 2016, a Community Needs Assessment is underway. Updated periodically, the needs assessment will help identify demographic trends, emerging problems in the community and inform coordinate appropriate levels of City funding.

Human services are defined as those services that assist people in meeting the essential life needs of food, clothing, shelter and access to health care. Further, human services:

- Provide people with the tools to achieve economic, social and emotional stability to the best of their ability.
- Offer activities and services that promote healthy development of the individual, prevent problems and support positive outcomes.
- Support quality of life programs that enhance the health and well-being of the individual and the community.

## HUMAN SERVICES VISION 2036

Bainbridge Island continues to support a variety of human service agencies, each with a distinct mission, responding to the basic needs of our diverse population. Cooperation and coordination among human services providers, including the taxing districts, has strengthened the delivery system and improved services.

Bainbridge Island remains a caring community that treats those in need with dignity and respect and has the means to maintain the wellbeing of all its members. No one is excluded and each individual has opportunities to contribute. Diversity (of income and other resources, of origin and life experience, of age and state of health) is a valued community characteristic. Neighborhood networks, providing help in ordinary and emergency circumstances, add specific value to a generally shared sense of place and sense of community; friendliness is the foundation for human services.

Most Islanders prefer to age in place, continuing to enjoy the community’s arts and cultural activities, parks and other outdoor resources. The City’s efforts to provide *affordable housing* that meet the needs of a multi-generational community have been successful.

## GOALS & POLICIES

### FINANCIAL RESOURCES

#### GOAL HS-1

**City support for human services organizations that serve Bainbridge Island residents shall be considered as part of the City's biennial budget process.**

##### **Policy HS 1.1**

Update the Bainbridge Island Community Needs Assessment periodically to help identify emerging areas of concern and assist human service organizations to respond to current needs.

##### **Policy HS 1.2**

Consider information from the Community Needs Assessment in the review process for funding requests for City human service funds.

##### **Policy HS 1.3**

Evaluate requests for City human service funding using a fair and transparent process that includes public participation.

##### **Policy HS 1.4**

Support increasing emergency preparedness among all segments of the population to help coordinate governmental response and recovery efforts that seek to minimize the adversity of a major emergency or disaster.

### CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

#### GOAL HS-2

**Support a range of human services programs.**

##### **Policy HS 2.1**

Support programs that meet the basic needs of survival such as food, clothing, shelter and access to emergency health care.

##### **Policy HS 2.2**

Support programs that meet the critical needs of vulnerable populations, particularly those most at risk of homelessness.

##### **Policy HS 2.3**

Support preventative and early intervention programs, emphasizing programs (e.g., job training and parenting classes) that address the health, safety and well-being of vulnerable community members.

**Policy HS 2.4**

Support programs that provide needed services for families, e.g., child or adult day care, respite care for caregivers and mental health services.

**Policy HS 2.5**

Support programs designed to allow people who need assistance to remain in their homes or maintain their independence as long as possible.

**Policy HS 2.6**

Work with partner agencies and nonprofits to support programs that assist veterans, low-income elderly and residents with qualifying disabilities.

**Policy HS 2.7**

Support programs that address strengthening family relationships and healthy child development to help prevent child abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence and substance abuse.

**Policy HS 2.8**

Work in partnership with state, county and community agencies to prevent violence including that associated with substance abuse, mental illness and the reckless use of firearms.

**HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES****GOAL HS-3**

**Recognize the interrelationship between housing and human services. The human services sector not only provides support services for those living in *affordable housing* but also enables people at risk or in crisis situations to remain in their existing housing.**

The Human Services Element complements the Housing Element, which deals primarily with the development, retention and construction of *affordable housing*.

**Policy HS 3.1**

Support emergency rental assistance subsidies.

**Policy HS 3.2**

Promote the creation of a mix of housing alternatives and services for people at different levels of independence.

**Policy HS 3.3**

Remove regulatory barriers to *special needs housing*.

## ECONOMIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### GOAL HS-4

**Recognize the interrelationship between economic health of the community and human services.**

The Human Services Element complements the Economic Element which promotes business retention and expansion of the City's economy in the broadest sense. Human services organizations contribute to the community's economic well-being by supporting individuals' efforts to be productive members of the community. This support has many forms including but not limited to child care, job skills training, human health and transportation vouchers.

#### Policy HS 4.1

The City shall serve as a model employer and an example to the larger community in addressing their employees' human service needs.

#### Policy HS 4.2

Encourage local business organizations to create jobs that reflect good business practices (e.g., job training, employee benefits, family wages).

#### Policy HS 4.3

Encourage businesses that actively support human services for workers and their families (e.g., provide on-site child care, transportation subsidies, flexible work hours).

#### Policy HS 4.4

Promote access to jobs, especially for lower-income people, youth workers and people with disabilities, when involved with planning local and regional transportation systems.

## PUBLIC AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE

### GOAL HS-5

**Recognize that for the majority of residents on Bainbridge Island, human services agencies exist to serve 'other' people, and they do their work without much public recognition. The range of services they provide is not well understood, nor is the general public well aware of the prevalence and gravity of the problems many people experience. A periodic *Community Needs Assessment* can provide a foundation for a better and broader understanding of the difficulties that people in our community face and the resources we have available to address them.**

#### Policy HS 5.1

Support efforts to publicize the findings of the *Community Needs Assessment* and stimulate public discussion on the basic human needs and the services that are available, or could be developed, in response to them.

# HUMAN SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION

## HIGH PRIORITY ACTIONS

### HS Action #1

**The City Council shall consider human service funding through the biennial budget process.**

### GOAL HS-1 FINANCIAL RESOURCES

City support for human services organizations that serve Bainbridge Island residents shall be considered as part of the City's biennial budget process.

### Policy HS 1.4

Support increasing emergency preparedness among all segments of the population to help coordinate governmental response and recovery efforts that seek to minimize the adversity of a major emergency or disaster.

### HS Action #2

**Periodically update the Community Needs Assessment. Use the results to inform City funding decisions and promote community discussion about human service needs to increase empathy and understanding.**

### Policy HS 1.1

Update the Bainbridge Island Community Needs Assessment periodically to help identify emerging areas of concern and assist human service organizations to respond to current needs.

### Policy HS 1.2

Consider information from the Community Needs Assessment in the review process for funding requests for City human service funds.

### Policy HS 5.1

Support efforts to publicize the findings of the *Community Needs Assessment* and stimulate public discussion on the basic human needs and the services that are available, or could be developed, in response to them.

## MEDIUM PRIORITY ACTIONS

### HS Action #3

**Amend the City's development code and create public/private partnerships to increase the diversity of housing types and supply of affordable housing.**

NOTE: Same Action in Housing Element.

**GOAL HS-3 HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Recognize the interrelationship between housing and human services. The human services sector not only provides support services for those living in affordable housing, but also enables people at risk or in crisis situations to remain in their existing housing.

**Policy HS 3.2**

Promote the creation of a mix of housing alternatives and services for people at different levels of independence.

**Policy HS 3.3**

Remove regulatory barriers to *special needs housing*.

**HS Action #4**

**Adopt and maintain and Economic Development Strategy to coordinate public and private efforts to grow and sustain a healthy economy on the Island.**

NOTE: Same Action in Economic Element.

**Policy HS 4.2**

Encourage local business organizations to create jobs that reflect good business practices (e.g., job training, employee benefits, family wages).

**Policy HS 4.4**

Promote access to jobs, especially for lower-income people, youth workers and people with disabilities, when involved with planning local and regional transportation systems.