



Office of Community Involvement



Non-Departmental CBAC

TO: Chair Deborah Kafoury and Board of County Commissioners 4 pages

FROM: Non-Departmental Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC)

DATE: April 29, 2022

SUBJECT: Non-D Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our role as a committee is to review Non-Departmental program offers and provide input to influence budgetary decisions according to the diverse perspectives and needs of communities within Multnomah County. We envision a County that is accountable, collaborates with other jurisdictions, protects our environment, provides for the safety of the public and advances equity – especially for Black, Indigenous and other communities of color, as we know these communities are disproportionately impacted by County budget decisions.

Between July 2021 and April 2022, the Non-D CBAC met with Chair Kafoury, County Commissioners and their staff, and staff from the Offices of Sustainability, Government Relations, the Joint Office of Homeless Services, Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission, Diversity & Equity, Emergency Management, and the Auditor's Office. After numerous hours of discussion between the members of our Committee, we are pleased to communicate our:

- **Budget Feedback** - high level recommendations on the Non-Departmental budget and the County budget overall
- **Program recommendations** - FY23 priority funding requests for Non-D offices

In order to evaluate the program offers and prevailing policies of each Non-D office, our CBAC established the following **thematic priorities for FY23**:

- Advance equity
- Address houselessness and the housing crisis
- Promote emergency preparedness
- Serve mental health, addiction and behavioral needs
- Reduce contribution to climate change and build climate resilience

Our program **implementation priorities** are first, ensuring accountability (monitoring program efficacy, efficiency, and inclusivity), and second, promoting collaboration across jurisdictions and with external County service partners. We suggest all County offices continue to engage with Reimagine Oregon.

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Following our thematic priorities, our top three Program Offers are:

1. 10005B - Auditor Software
2. 10009C - Transforming Justice Implementation
3. 10018B - Climate Justice by Design

PROCESS

To better educate and prepare ourselves, the Non-Department CBAC has meetings scheduled for the entire year. We met ten times (9/13, 10/4, 11/1, 12/6, 1/3, 2/7, 3/14, 3/21, 4/4, and 4/18) to hear presentations from the Chair, Commissioners, and Non-D offices to discuss office priorities for the FY23 budget. We reviewed fifteen program offers and met with:

- Chair Kafoury and staff
- County Commissioners and their staff
 - Sharon Meieran, D1
 - Susheela Jayapal, D2
 - Jessica Vega Pederson, D3
- Auditor Jennifer McGuirk
- John Wasiutynski, Office of Sustainability
- Jeston Black, Government Relations
- Marc Jolin and Adam Brown, Joint Office of Homeless Services
- Allegra Willhite and Tunie Betschart, Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission
- Neisha Saxena and Alejandro Juárez, Office of Diversity & Equity
- Chris Voss, Office of Emergency Management

EMERGING ISSUES & CHANGES

In our opinion, the most critical and escalating challenges are related to increasing crises in gun violence, the effects of climate change, homelessness and housing security. Multnomah County's vulnerable populations are most directly impacted by these crises, in addition to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The challenges of the unhoused continue to multiply in these times and must continue to be recognized as a state of emergency.

BUDGET FEEDBACK

What would your CBAC like to see the Board of Commissioners and department leadership prioritize in the FY23 Budget?

- We continue to advocate for active participation in Reimagine Oregon, improvement of police-public relations, and reduction in police violence.
- Equitable service delivery, especially for Black, Indigenous and communities of color, remains one of our CBAC's highest priorities.
- We are very concerned about the prevalence of gun violence in the County.
- Emergency preparedness remains critical. Wildfires have become a sustained threat in our region. Extreme winter and summer weather events are becoming more prevalent, and these have the largest adverse affects on our most

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vulnerable populations. The pandemic laid bare the need to prepare for a variety of emergencies. A well prepared Office of Emergency Management is one step towards more equitable disaster as well as climate resilience.

- If there are opportunities to make stronger investments in a particular area of your department's work, what areas would you recommend prioritizing?
 - If there are opportunities to make stronger investments, housing retention, homelessness, and domestic violence response and prevention continue to be paramount.
 - Climate and emergency resilience.
 - Upgrades in software and technology will increase efficiency and savings in the long term.

A NOTE REGARDING JOHS PROGRAM OFFERS

Since the JOHS has access to significant additional funding sources in FY23 through the American Rescue Plan and Metro Supportive Housing Services Measure, we did not prioritize JOHS program offers among our recommendations despite the critical need for these services. We are hopeful that the Joint Office of Homeless Services will be able to make significant strides with the help of the Metro Housing Measure.

PROGRAM OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS

Our recommendations are as follows:

1. 10005B - Auditor Software \$100,000

This program offer would support compliance in the Auditor's Office. An audit management system would be a long term investment to help the office be more efficient and effective, with the potential to allow the team to produce more audits. We anticipate this would be a great help for an office that is tasked with a heavy workload for its size.

2. 10009C - Transforming Justice Implementation \$250,000

This program offer aims at transforming the future of local justice policy by creating a vision of change, and the ambition is to embark on a large-scale planning and implementation process with key leaders, health system administrators, behavioral health experts, and advocates for victims of crime. This offer is well-aligned with our CBAC's priority to advance equity.

3. 10018B - Climate Justice by Design \$50,000

Investing in climate change mitigation - specifically with an equity lens - is past due. This program offer has great potential for leveraging additional private funding. This investment seems critical and overdue.

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(this report includes one further recommendation in addition to the initial three prioritized above)

4. 10005C - Audit Capacity Expansion (Recommendation of partial funding)

We recognize and support the need to increase the overall FTE capacity of the Auditor's Office, which has remained the same for a very long time. According to the Auditor, the audit staffing hasn't changed since the 1990's, while Multnomah County's FTEs have increased by about 15%. However, the Auditor is seeking to add 4 staff to the current team of 7 staff (an increase of about 57%). We believe that it would be more reasonable to support an increase similar to the overall County's workforce increase during the same period (about 15%). We therefore recommend to partially fund this program offer to cover an additional 1 or 2 staff.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Committee would like to give special thanks to each of the dedicated Commissioners and County employees who presented to us, making time at the end of a busy work day and taking time away from their families. We also offer thanks for the invaluable services of both Dani Bernstein, Director of the Office of Community Involvement, and Olivia Kilgore, OCI Community Involvement Coordinator, for keeping us organized, providing guidance and coordinating our many meetings.

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