



Jeff Cogen, Multnomah County Chair

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FROM: Multnomah County Chair Jeff Cogen

RE: Presenting the 2010–2011 Executive Budget

I chose to work in public service because I believe that government can help the people in a community realize their potential and fulfill their aspirations. That is especially important today, as we struggle to pull ourselves out of a recession and people who have never needed help find themselves looking for somewhere to turn. As I crafted my executive budget, I prioritized services for those who are struggling the most.

On April 1, 2010 (no fooling), I became County Chair and started leading a budget process that had been underway since October 2009. I knew I wanted to keep the county on the path of stability, accountability and transparency that I helped establish as a commissioner with Chair Ted Wheeler and the Board of County Commissioners. Now as County Chair, my goal for the Executive Budget is to build on that foundation by making strategic investments for the well being, safety and prosperity of the community.

For the 10th consecutive year, Multnomah County's General Fund is not adequate to maintain current service levels. Thanks to the tough choices we made in last year's budget, funding from the federal stimulus program, and the stabilizing economy, this year's reductions are less severe. I see 2011 as a bridge year between the significant cuts made in the county's 2010 budget and looming state cuts in 2012. The investments in this Executive Budget give the county time to stabilize, for new strategies to be effective, and to plan for the future.

The Executive Budget reflects my priorities:

- Protecting the health and safety of the community, especially the most vulnerable populations.
- Supporting a community where individuals have opportunities to thrive.
- Investing in making county business more efficient and customer-focused.

Executive Budget Highlights

- The general fund budget totals \$392.0 million which is \$5.4 million less than needed to maintain current service levels.
- I have used one-time-only resources to lower our debt burden and to prevent deeper cuts to public safety and human resources.
- Increases in federal resources and careful leveraging have helped bolster services, especially in the Health Department.

- I have reserved \$4 million dollars in a Business Income Tax stabilization fund to protect and secure our financial position if the economic recovery takes longer than expected. All financial reserves are fully funded in accordance with county policies.

I considered many factors in my Executive Budget decisions: the slow economic recovery, a growing need for basic services, Multnomah County's dropping crime rate and an increasing necessity for government efficiency and innovation. Based on these indicators, I invested in programs to provide for the basic needs – food and shelter – of the most vulnerable in our community. I worked with the Sheriff to contain corrections and law enforcement expenses without sacrificing public safety. Where possible, I invested in innovative approaches that place the county on a more fiscally sustainable path.

Some services are funded with one-time-only resources. Over the next year, we will need to continue to restructure program models and build community partnerships to assure ongoing stability in targeted areas.

Managing Through Difficult Times

The Executive Budget presents my plan to create positive action and outcomes in three key areas: Basic Needs, Public Safety and Prevention/Intervention. As individuals and families, we make choices to ensure we keep food on the table, a safe roof over our heads and transportation to get to school or work. Just as families across our country have been forced to tighten their household budgets, so too has Multnomah County.

A. Basic Needs

Before anything else, people in the community must have their basic needs met. The Executive Budget directly addresses this through programs like:

- Expanded access to health and dental care in East County – a new health clinic in the Rockwood neighborhood will provide primary care, dental and pharmacy services to individuals and families. This is collaboration with key community partners, CareOregon, Lifeworks NW and Homeless Outreach.
- Child and family hunger relief – SUN sites will provide an additional 100,000 healthy, weekend meals to children and parents who qualify for federal free and reduced lunch programs.
- Year-round emergency shelter for homeless families with children – Building on the existing homeless families' winter shelter system, this program will provide capacity to house 30 families and their children for the remainder of the year.
- Bridges to Housing – This effort provides longer term housing and wrap-around services for families struggling to stay out of emergency shelters and off the street.
- County CROPS – Volunteers and private partners will build on the success of last year's program which grew and donated over 13,000 pounds of organic produce to the Oregon Food Bank.

B. Public Safety

My Executive Budget proposes a slimmed down public safety system that maintains our current capacity for drug and alcohol treatment and expands access to mental health services. I've proposed funding:

- Crisis Assessment and Treatment Center – This includes 16 beds of short-term mental health treatment in a secure environment as a lower cost alternative to hospitalization or incarceration for 600-800 clients annually. The center will open late next year in partnership with the City of Portland and the state.
- Gang Prevention, Intervention and Prosecution – Funding for gang prevention and outreach services is maintained in the offices of the District Attorney and Department of Community Justice. The District Attorney's Gang Unit is fully funded.
- East County Courts – With the Board's recent authorization of funds for the next phase of the East County Courts project, the Executive Budget continues to meet our commitment to provide court services in Gresham.
- Domestic Violence – Services fully funded include Department of Community Justice, District Attorney and Sheriff's Office, plus maintaining an additional Deputy District Attorney in the Domestic Violence Unit and a Deputy Sheriff to provide security at the "one-stop" Gateway Center for Domestic Violence Services.
- Jail Capacity – Although state cuts forced the closure of one dormitory of jail beds, we have avoided any additional cuts to jail capacity. The effective management of our detention facility for youth is continued.
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment – Treatment beds for men and women with children are maintained at current service levels.

C. Prevention and Intervention

I believe in investing in proactive approaches to health and well-being that stop problems before they start and addresses unhealthy behaviors and habits early on. This means focusing on the future for children and families and reducing disparities in the communities we serve.

- SUN Services are fully funded to operate in 58 schools, serving 13,000 youth with a comprehensive array of social and support services that assist students and their families' success.
- The Health Department's Communities Putting Prevention to Work federal grant will distribute \$7.5 million to dozens of community organizations and local jurisdictions – including the cities of Portland and Gresham and seven local school districts – to make “the healthier choice an easier choice.”
- Early Childhood Services for first time parents, women with high risk pregnancies, infants and children. These programs, based on a national model, focus on good health habits right from the start, so every child has an equal opportunity to thrive.
- School-Based Health Clinics and school-based mental health services are maintained at their current service levels.

Chair's Initiatives

My values and priorities – prevention, innovation, diversity and equity, sustainability and collaboration – guided my Executive Budget decisions. In addition, I've asked my staff to focus on these areas: the Office of Diversity and Equity, the Office of Sustainability and the new "Working Smart" Initiative. These areas are vital for an effective and efficient county organization. They will report directly to the Chair's Office to ensure they provide strong direction, countywide coordination and accountability for *results*.

A. Diversity and Equity – As the community grows and changes in its richness of race, ethnicity, gender, age, and sexual orientation, the county will continue to invest in reducing disparities in health and welfare throughout the community and within our own organization.

- The Executive Budget invests in increased staffing for the Office of Diversity and Equity, including a Chief Diversity Officer and a data analyst.
- In Fiscal Year 2011, the office will clarify and refocus Multnomah County's various internal diversity and equity initiatives into a framework that is effective and accountable.

B. Sustainability – Sustainability is about using limited resources wisely, reducing waste and eliminating the pollution that impacts our health and increases health care costs.

- The Office of Sustainability will coordinate efforts across the county with a focus on the communities and populations we serve.
- A recycling coordinator will be added to the Sustainability Program to increase internal recycling rates, which in turn, will reduce waste management costs.
- Food access is a critical issue for the health and equity of our community. I have accepted the Central Citizens Budget Advisory Committee's recommendation to add two new food security positions to the Sustainability Program to work in concert with the Health Department. Their work will support the development of food policy and urban agriculture programs that bring fresh healthy food into communities that need it.

C. Working Smart Initiative – Creative solutions and attitudes help us face challenges in a decade of shrinking resources and growing demands. Whether it means one-time investments in technology to make us more efficient, innovative thinking or good old-fashioned hands-on work, I'm committed to working smarter and better than we have before. Working Smart is my challenge to everyone in the county.

- Working Smart continues the Administrative Review to examine internal support services, both centrally and within departments, and to find efficiencies in business and administrative processes. These areas have the greatest potential for improvements that will benefit the county's direct service programs, as well as allow county employees to develop innovative and smart solutions to enhance their good work.
- The Library's Radio Frequency Identification Conversion Project will allow the county to use this technology to track library materials effectively, provide for more efficient check-in and sorting of materials, and ultimately make library materials available to library patrons faster.

- I believe technology is a key to working smarter. Technologies like VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) will lower costs, streamline phone changes, and allow us to leverage other emerging technologies such as video-based training and on-line collaboration tools. Open Source solutions are being built to provide robust, lower cost alternatives for out-dated, legacy business systems.

Thanks and Acknowledgements

I have many people to thank for helping me get to this day:

Chief of Staff Marissa Madrigal and Chief Operating Officer Jana McLellan who shepherded the Executive Budget decision process. I wouldn't be presenting an Executive Budget today without them.

Budget Director Karyne Kieta and her staff for budget support.

Department directors, the Sheriff and the District Attorney for their budget proposals which gave me a good foundation to build my Executive Budget.

I continue to be greatly impressed by county employees' hard work and perseverance. I want to thank employees, from managers and supervisors to those working on the front lines, for rising to the challenge of streamlining and reorganizing service delivery. Your work allows me to invest in important programs even in times of declining resources.

I want to acknowledge and thank the citizens who gave their input at the March community budget forums in person and online. You gave me a citizen's perspective of what it takes to make a safe and healthy community.

I look forward to working with the Board of County Commissioners to discuss and finalize the FY 2011 Budget.