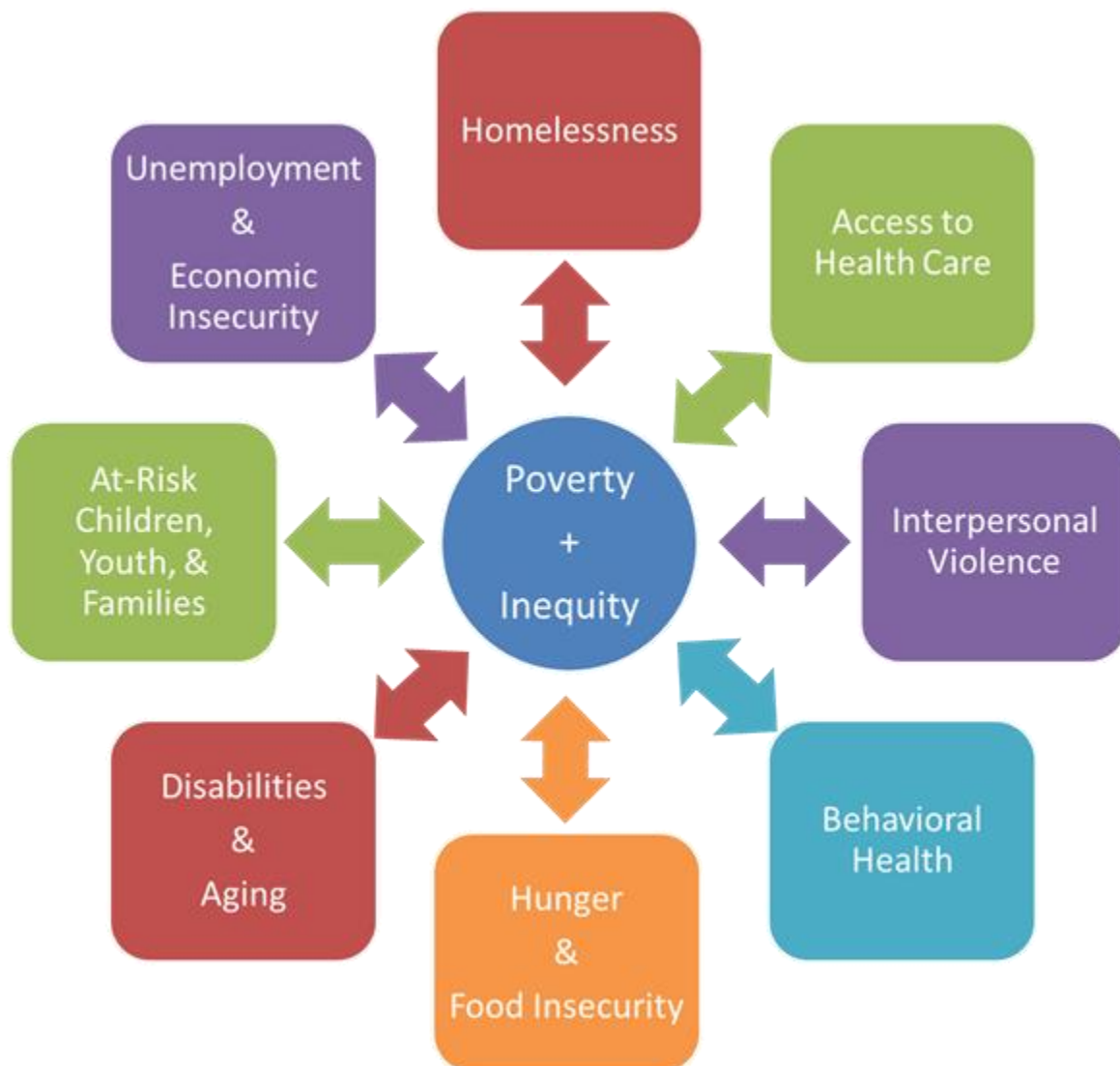


City of Columbia FY2022 Budget: Social Services Funding

For over 50 years, the City of Columbia has recognized that in addition to physical infrastructure and public safety, it must also make an investment in our community's social infrastructure. To this end, the City has both provided and purchased social services to ensure that adequate levels of these services are available to low-income residents of the City.

The social services provided and purchased by the City address some of our community's most challenging issues, many of which are rooted in poverty and inequity.



This report, from the Human Services commission, is intended to outline these issues and the critical role the City's social services funding plays in addressing their causes and effects.

For detailed information about the City's social services funding, please visit the [City of Columbia Social Services Funding web page \(https://www.como.gov/health/social-services-funding/\)](https://www.como.gov/health/social-services-funding/).



For detailed socio-economic information, please visit our [Boone Indicators Dashboard](http://www.booneindicators.org) (www.booneindicators.org).

A Strategic Investment

Because the City does not have the capacity to provide all of the social services needed to address the causes and effects of poverty and inequity in our community, the Human Services Commission and the Department of Public Health and Human Services are charged by the Columbia City Council to make annual recommendations for the purchase of social services, through professional services agreements with community-based providers, utilizing the City’s social services funding.

In order to target limited resources, the City’s social services funding is allocated to address two issue areas reflecting the funding priorities identified by the HSC and approved by the City Council:

- **Basic Needs**
- **Opportunity**

Goal	Ensure our basic needs are met and we all have the opportunity to achieve our full potential.
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Requests for proposals and the resulting purchase of service contracts are issued in a staggered, two year cycle:

Issue	Funding Cycle	%		Amount	
		Range	Mean	Range	Mean
Basic Needs	2022 - 2023	50 – 75%	62.5%	\$446,778 - \$670,167	\$558,472.50
Opportunity	2021 – 2022	25 – 50%	37.5%	\$223,389 - \$446,778	\$338,083.50

The social services contracted by the City are identified and prioritized through a data driven process, which also incorporates an ongoing assessment of community needs and resources. While the City’s investment in social services is not adequate to fully address the causes and effects of poverty and inequality, it does substantially increase the availability of services in Columbia. Examples of services the City purchases include:

- Employment readiness and support from Job Point
- Personal finance education from the Columbia Housing Authority
- Homelessness and shelter services from Phoenix Programs, Salvation Army, Room at the Inn, and Turning Point
- Positive youth development from Big Brothers Big Sisters, Columbia Housing Authority, Fun City, and Grade A Plus
- Domestic violence services from True North
- Senior and disability services from Services for Independent Living, Meals on Wheels, and Columbia Housing Authority
- Nutritious supplemental foods from the Food Bank and the Community Garden Coalition
- Mental health services from Compass Health and Phoenix Programs

Without funding from the City, many of these services would simply be unavailable to our community’s most vulnerable residents.

A Return on Investment

\$11:1

The City’s investment also allows our contracted partners to leverage additional, external resources which further increase the community’s capacity to deliver social services. Based on an analysis of our current social services contracts, we found that for every \$1 the City of Columbia invests in local social services, our contracted providers generate \$11 additional dollars... a \$11/\$1 **return on investment**. In addition, a significant portion of these revenues is obtained from sources outside our community. Our relatively small investment makes Columbia very competitive in obtaining shrinking resources from external funders which are increasingly requiring local matching funds.

A Collective Investment

The investment in social services also empowers the City to be a leader in convening diverse stakeholders to address our community’s complex social issues. Because we are operating in a resource-scarce environment, we have embraced and led a collective impact approach, in the spirit of moving the needles together rather than in silos.

Through our [Boone Impact Group](#), the City, County, and United Way, Veterans United Foundation, and Community Foundation continue to successfully align plans, policies, and practices in order to further develop our capacity to effect positive change at the community level.

Poverty							
Indicator	Region	Category	Baseline	Most Recent	Trend	Target	On Track To Target?
Child Poverty Rate	City of Columbia	Total	18.5% in 2010-2014	15.1% in 2015-2019		To be determined	To be determined
	Boone County	Total	16.9% in 2010-2014	14.5% in 2015-2019		To be determined	To be determined
	State of Missouri	Total	21.5% in 2010-2014	18.7% in 2015-2019		--	--
Equity Statement: In the City of Columbia, black children have a poverty rate almost six times higher than white children. In Boone County, black children have a poverty rate more than four times higher than white children. [View more]							

This partnership also allows us to mobilize and respond quickly to community needs. For example, in response to the pandemic, the Boone Impact Group partners formed [CoMoHelps](#) to serve as the lead for our community’s disaster

donations management. In doing so, we are able strategically braid local funding with grants and donations to rapidly prioritize and meet needs.

The State of Social Services

State and federal resources for social services have been steadily declining since the 1980s. Also, more recently, private donations to community providers and support organizations (e.g. Heart of Missouri United Way) have sharply fallen due several factors, including:

- Rising income inequality
- Changes in the standard federal income tax deduction
- Instability in Missouri tax credit policies

Due to the economic fallout of the pandemic, we are seeing unprecedented demand for social services. However, as the need for social services rises, federal COVID-19 social relief programs, such as additional unemployment and SNAP (food stamps) benefits, are ending.

At the same time, our nonprofit partners indicate that their expenses are rising while revenues are declining, the primary driver of which is decreasing revenue from fundraising. While this trend began with the change in the standard federal income tax deduction, it has been accelerated at an alarming rate by the pandemic.

For a detailed analysis of the results from the most recent survey of local nonprofits, please see the [CoMoHelps Nonprofit Partners Survey Report](#).

FY2022 Request for Proposals for Social Services

On July 19, 2021, City staff issued a request for proposals (RFP) for social services to address the issue area of basic needs. The RFP also seeks services to expand our community's winter emergency shelter capacity to meet the need for isolation/quarantine facilities for our homeless population during the pandemic.

Conclusion

The issues of poverty and inequity have conspired to keep too many of our community members from realizing their true potential. This is why the City's investment in social services, which not only assist people in meeting their basic needs, but also build the skills and assets people need to move up and out of poverty, is so critical. And now, due to the ongoing pandemic, the need for social services has never been greater. At the same time, the pandemic further shifted the burden of providing and funding social services to local communities. Therefore, the City's social services funding is needed now more than ever.

While the Human Services Commission would have liked to have seen an increase in social services funding in the FY2022 budget, we understand resources are limited. We do applaud the City Council's allocation of \$1.3 million in FY2021 reserves funding for public assistance programs. We are also very pleased to see the discussion about spending the American Rescue Plan funding on greatly needed projects such as a comprehensive homeless services center. The commission would encourage the City Council to utilize the City's existing, robust process for administering social services for any American Rescue Plan funds earmarked for social services, as you did with the FY2021 reserves funding.

The members of the Human Services Commission would like to thank the City Council for its longstanding support of the City's investment in the social infrastructure of our community. The Human Services Commission looks forward to the opportunity to present the FY2022 social services contract recommendations to the City Council on December 20, 2021.