

2024 TSCC Hearing Questions for Multnomah County FY 2024-25 Approved Budget

Wednesday, May 29th at 9:00 am
501 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Portland, Oregon (*Boardroom*)

OPENING REMARKS BY CHAIR VEGA PEDERSON

The FY 2025 Executive Budget is the first one I've had the privilege to lead from start to finish. The work on it has been taken up with a commitment to a community-oriented process, and a genuine desire to invest in policies and programs that meet the biggest needs for the most people.

When you look at the core work we do as your government, it's about caring for those in our community who are the ***most vulnerable***.

Continuing to create and resource the critical safety net that supports those who need it most directed the investments in my proposed \$3.96 billion FY 2025 Executive Budget, which also help us to be the Multnomah County we most need at this moment.

It includes hard choices and tough trade-offs: I started this budget process with a \$4.1 million dollar deficit. But I believe it represents good compromises.

This budget puts focus and clarity on programs that are foundational to the a healthy safety net and a one-county approach across all programs, especially our homelessness response system, addressing the fentanyl crisis with increased interventions and treatment options, a healthy library system and network of animal services, adjustments to our elections office to respond to our changing elections landscape and a strong Multnomah County ready to tackle tough problems.

This year, with federal support dollars no longer available, we know our challenges remain: continued social and economic recovery from the pandemic, wrestling with the complex impacts of homelessness and a systemic lack of affordable housing, community violence, complex behavioral and mental health challenges, addiction, climate change and economic vitality.

But as I believe this budget shows, we can address these challenges by living our values as a community:

- Advancing equity and justice

- Bringing all partners to the table with a shared commitment to collaboration, accountability, transparency and trust
- Prioritizing community voice in our processes
- Providing the best safety net for the people who need it most

And through this work, I know we have a way forward that capitalizes on our strengths as Oregon’s largest safety net government and truly moves us forward.

Now I’ll turn things over to the TSCC to begin today’s hearing. Thank you for being here.

1. **From our conversations with you last year, we understand that Preschool For All will take time to ramp up. Based on reported numbers, the program appears on track to meet current goals. What do you see as the biggest barriers to meeting the 2030 full-implementation timeline?**

Response - Commissioner Beason

Preschool for All continues to exceed its current goals for seat growth. Our goal for Fiscal Year 2025 is 2,000 seats. In Fiscal Year 2025, we will have 2,071 seats starting in September. We also plan to add a small number of seats in January 2025. We remain on-track to achieve universality by 2030.

During the pandemic, Multnomah County saw a significant reduction in the number of preschool and early childhood providers, and in 2024 we still have twenty percent fewer providers than we did before COVID-19. To reflect the changes our community’s child care landscape saw during the pandemic, our seat growth targets were updated in 2022. We do not plan to revise those targets again.

Two of the biggest barriers to reaching universal preschool in Multnomah County are the lack of early education facilities and the need for more early childhood educators. Child care facilities have long been overlooked by funders and rejected by banks, resulting in a lack of early learning spaces and many facilities that need renovation. This historic underinvestment, plus the increased number of children that Preschool for All seeks to serve, creates a significant need for more preschool facilities.

The Preschool for All Facilities Fund publicly launched at the end of March and has already received over 175 interest forms. BuildUp Oregon, a coalition of Community Development Financial Institutions, leads this work. BuildUp Oregon will administer the Preschool for All Facilities Fund and offer technical assistance for providers seeking to improve, expand, or build new facilities. We expect the first grants and loans to go out in early June.

In order to keep scaling up, we need to increase the number of early educators, support staff, and preschool providers across Multnomah County. Based on increased wages available through Preschool for All, our regional workforce investment board, Worksystems Inc, has added early education as a career pathway. We've contracted with Worksystems to utilize their network of career coaches to recruit, train and support new educators.

There is not a single way to become an early childhood educator, so it's important that our workforce development investments meet a wide-range of needs. We have Preschool for All funded bilingual community college navigator positions to help recruit and retain students in the early education programs at both Mt. Hood Community College and Portland Community College. We also fund scholarships for educators to pursue professional development and/or a degree in early education. Our Pathways Program works with preschool providers that would like to participate in Preschool for All, but may need additional support to get ready. This year's budget will also include dedicated funding for paid media initiatives to recruit new providers and participants in our workforce development initiatives.

Universal preschool access means that there are enough slots for all interested families in Multnomah County to participate in a publicly funded slot. Preschool for All is one piece of that puzzle. This program will continue providing strong coordination and partnership between Head Start, Preschool Promise, and Preschool for All locations. Our Head Start partners were engaged in early Preschool for All planning and two Head Start agencies are already Preschool for All providers. We have complex political, and resource challenges to work through when it comes to issues such as staff wages and coordinated enrollment across different programs. We are committed to that difficult work in partnership with our early learning hub, Early Learning Multnomah, and the creative solutions that will be needed to build a strong universal preschool system.

It's important that we remain committed to our intentional growth timeline to create a strong mixed delivery model and remain focused on racial equity. Building and keeping the trust of providers and families is essential to our success, which means being thoughtful about our investments and giving them time to work. It also means ensuring that providers are ready to offer culturally responsive and inclusive care and that they receive the supports they need to help children thrive.

And, we have to help the Preschool for All tax base and larger community understand our plan, strategies, and vision for universal preschool access. We know that having that broader public support is important to our efforts and implementation success.

2. **You are building up a sizable fund balance for anticipated gaps between revenue and expenditures in future years in the Preschool for All fund. Can you share how much the program is expected to cost annually once you reach full capacity in FY 30? And what is driving increased future expenditures - is it just the increasing number of the seats that will be needed, or are you anticipating additional and continued expenses related to capacity building, training, or other services to make the program work?**

Follow up: The original measure included planned tax increases. What is your plan for implementing those currently?

Response - Commissioner Beason

In our current financial modeling, the program is expected to cost approximately \$386 million dollars in Fiscal Year 2031 when the program reaches universality. Based on updated population estimates from Portland State University's Population Research Center, the number of Preschool for All seats needed to maintain universality will not grow after 2030. The modeling includes an assumption about the family participation rate in publicly funded preschool. This expected participation rate is currently set at 77.5 percent, which includes 70 percent of 3-year-olds and 85 percent of 4-year-olds.

After Fiscal Year 2031, the growth in costs is primarily driven by increases in staffing costs, particularly for preschool providers. The yearly projected cost growth increase for preschool seats, which includes preschool staffing, is 5 percent. The Preschool for All ballot measure includes regular wage increases for both preschool teachers and preschool assistants.

The yearly projected cost growth increase for all other costs is 3 percent. There will be continued investments in capacity building, professional development, and supports for families and children, but the vast majority of funding will be dedicated to early education programs. In Fiscal Year 2031, 93 percent of the expected expenditures will go to organizations providing preschool. Our modeling is dynamic and will continue to be updated as new data becomes available.

Chair Vega Pederson plans to bring a proposal to the Board this summer to delay the PFA tax increase scheduled for 2026 by one more year, to 2027. This is possible because current forecasts show that with a one-year delay the program will have enough savings to provide free preschool to all Multnomah County 3- and 4-year-olds by 2030, on schedule with our goals.

A Technical Advisory Group will examine financial and program data, and make recommendations for helping the program maintain fiscal stability while remaining on-track for

universal preschool by 2030. The tax increase delay will provide an additional year of information and data to guide the group's work.

3. **This budget adds a new Deflection and Addiction Recovery program in response to Measure 110's changes, which decriminalized possession of certain drugs. We know it is in the early stages, but what's your plan for ramping up quickly? Who will be involved, and do you have a target date to begin services?**

***Follow up:* Do you have a sense of what the need is in this area? How many people do you hope to serve in the first year?**

Response - Commissioner Brim-Edwards

We're developing system and policy direction in a a bi-weekly meeting with a HB 4002 Leadership Team consisting of leadership from law enforcement, the Sheriff's Office, the District Attorney, Chair Vega Pederson,, Multnomah County Circuit Court, public defense, the Multnomah County Health Department, Multnomah County Department of Community Justice, the District Attorney, Chair Vega Pederson, providers from the Behavioral Health Resource Networks and a representative from the Mayor's Office.

The primary objective of this group is to guide who will be eligible for deflection and what will count as successful deflection. In order to have a deflection system that works, it is imperative that participating partners are bought in and have some shared agreements. Our first meeting took place on Friday, May 19th. Staff have also met one on one with members, and our public safety leaders came prepared with a consensus recommendation for discussion. This group meets again this week.

In addition, there will be an operations team to put the high level guidance into place. The goal of this group is to map out operations of the policies as defined by the Leadership Team and design the paths to deflection. This includes services provided, data collection, procedural requirements from police to provider to court, language access, and other operational details. This group will continue post Sept 1 for continued implementation work, tracking, and reporting.

While broad deflection is being planned, there are also two parallel paths moving forward swiftly to open a 24/7 dropoff center. On September 1, Multnomah County will have a place for deflection dropoff, in addition to connecting the community with other programs that are currently providing similar services. We hope to give law enforcement a menu of options for deflecting individuals arrested under HB 4002 to ensure there is a simple path to providing an individual with the services they need, and not jail.

We are working closely with regional partners to forecast the need starting September 1. There are a variety of unpredictable factors we're considering, such as people who could be arrested for drug possession but not other charges and law enforcement capacity.

The County's Department of Assets (DCA) is well into the process to lease a temporary space to have a drop off center available on Sept 1 for law enforcement and first responders. While there are challenges to finding a short-term lease for this use, we are touring sites and getting creative.

In addition, to move forward on the permanent 24/7 dropoff receiving center with sobering services, programming conversations are in full swing. DCA is searching for permanent facilities to purchase and defining space needs. Multnomah County leaders met with providers to hear their updated feedback on the current proposal for a drop-off center, developed by Commissioner Brim-Edwards and team. This conversation focused on how to best phase this program in a way that is responsive to the urgency and provides the correct level of care to community members who need it. These conversations are important to ensuring the full continuum of care will be connected to best support our community.

FOLLOW UP:

We do not yet know how many people will be deflected - this will depend on many unknown factors. This will be a critical number to monitor as we work with law enforcement, behavioral health providers, and others.

4. **When we spoke last year, the County was beginning work with Metro to build a plan for spending down the supportive housing services tax dollars. Are you on track with your spending plan? And what lessons have you learned over the last year about the process for spending these dollars quickly and effectively?**

Follow up: What have been the biggest spending priorities this year?

Response - Commissioner Stegmann

Multnomah County is on track for spending as required by the Metro & Multnomah County Intergovernmental Agreement.

The total Supportive Housing Services FY 2024 budget is \$205 million. The IGA with Metro requires establishing a spend target and Multnomah County's spend target is \$127 million. Year-to-date spending through March was \$91 million, which is 71 percent of the spend target and shows we are on track to meet our target.

It is important to note that SHS Measure revenue has been volatile in its first years. In FY 2024, JOHS received a significant amount of unanticipated revenue. The large increases in available funding have required rapid growth in programs and infrastructure.

The County has integrated lessons learned from the last several years that have resulted in the following improvements, including:

- Cross-Department programming, coordination and budgeting with a one-county perspective, rather than relying solely on the Joint Office for all programming.
- Increased visibility of financial data and improved monitoring of expenditures to give County staff real-time information to make mid-year spending adjustments.
- Investments in infrastructure and staffing to right-size the capacity needed to support the administration of SHS measure funding
- Completing continuous quality improvement initiatives to improve contracting procedures and invoice payment timelines.
- The County Chair has used her executive authority to expand homeless services by ensuring that contract execution for JOHS contractors are prioritized for execution.

These improvements have helped us to better manage the SHS Measure funding and ensure that it is used effectively to address homelessness in our community.

The Supportive Housing Services tax dollars have provided the Joint Office of Homeless Services an opportunity to significantly increase services across all of its divisions of work, including Safety off and on the Streets; Housing Placement & Retention; Supportive Housing; System Support, Access, & Coordination; and Strategic Capital Investments. Our funding priorities align with our annual work plan, the local implementation plan and our Homelessness Response Action Plan.

- As part of our Safety off and on the Streets division of work, this year we will begin the implementation of our Community Sheltering Strategy, which will add 1,060 shelter beds in the next two fiscal years, as well as maintain existing shelter units and adult and youth day centers.
- With our Housing Placement & Retention, we are expanding services to improve placement out of shelter—tied to the Homelessness Response Action Plan—and fully funding Continuum of Care matches for all projects to assist provider organizations in overcoming barriers to federal resources.
- We are increasing the number of permanent supportive housing units and increasing service funding to better match the need to support clients with housing and healthcare

navigation, income acquisition, eviction prevention and other individualized tenant-driven services.

- In System Support, Access, & Coordination, we are using Regional Strategy Investment Fund dollars to: bolster our data modernization efforts; develop and launch a Shelter Availability app, which will help providers and clients identify available shelter beds in real time; and maintaining support and capacity building efforts for providers as part of a multi-year effort to stabilize the workforce across our provider network.

The Joint Office has also supported taking a county-wide approach in how we spend down Supportive Housing Services tax dollars. For Fiscal Year 2025, the Joint Office solicited proposals from departments across the County that meet SHS goals. Proposals were selected based on Multnomah County's Local Implementation Plan (LIP) goals, strengthening year over year investments to prevent homelessness, feasibility of implementation, equitable outcomes, and this year's funding priorities: eviction prevention; behavioral health services; and services to support folks impacted by the City of Portland's time, place, and manner initiative.

5. **We know you have a multi-prong approach to addressing homelessness in our community, ranging from preventive services like rent assistance to building and expanding shelter capacity. How do you select between these different interventions? How do you choose which is the best approach?**

Response - Commissioner Stegmann

Multnomah County, and the Joint Office of Homeless Services, has always been committed to providing a full continuum of services to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. This full suite of services is central to a Housing First approach, which is built on the concept of "meeting people where they are," and connecting each person to the right service for them. The balance of services funded is affected by multiple community plans.

The Supportive Housing Services Measure [Local Implementation Plan \(LIP\)](#) sets priorities and numeric goals around prevention, housing placements, and permanent supportive housing. The LIP's regional goals at the end of the 10-year Measure include: creating and maintaining 2,235 supportive housing units, exiting an additional 2,500 households experiencing homelessness for permanent housing per year, and preventing 1,000 households from becoming homeless per year. At the same time, the [Homelessness Response Action Plan \(HRAP\)](#) sets complementary numeric goals around shelter and housing placements. The HRAP set a target of sheltering or placing into housing an additional 2,699 people by December 31, 2025—the number equivalent to 50 percent of the unsheltered people on the by-name list as of January 2024—as well as ending discharges from corrections and the health

system to the streets by 2026 and ensuring 75 percent of people housing in permanent supportive housing retain their housing 24 months after placement.

Both of these goals also include a focus on reducing disparities for people who are overrepresented in homelessness, including people of color and LGBTQIA2S+ folks. Both of these plans are built around community and service expert analyses of the services needed to reduce homelessness, including prevention, case management and rental assistance, and a range of shelter options. JOHS also performs and commissions studies to help us understand the value of new approaches as they evolve, including the recent PSU study of Alternative Shelter.

JOHS staff and leadership create long-term and annual plans based upon these community goals, making decisions on the balance of funding per service area that will ensure we meet those long term goals. We then craft budgets that support these annual work plans

Follow up: We see \$30 million set aside for capital projects for the JOHS, can you please share how it will be spent and when you anticipate projects will be complete?

Capital funding in the FY 2025 JOHS budget will be used to support the Homelessness Response Action Plan's Community Sheltering Strategy. The funding will be used to maintain and/or improve existing capital assets while obtaining new capital assets that will be used as shelter facilities. The Community Shelter Strategy aims to add 505 new units of shelter over two fiscal years, on top of the 555 shelter units added in FY 2024. The FY 2025 executive budget funds the first half of the additional beds, funding 250 additional units of shelter in FY 2025.

Some of these funds will be used for capital improvements to Cook Plaza so that it can be used for year-around alternative shelter, day services, and inclement weather emergency shelter. The Joint Office is in the process of approving the design for Cook Plaza with our partners. The estimated full budget is between \$7 million and \$9.5 million. The estimated timeline for this project includes design and community engagement work through fall 2024, construction through much of the 2025 calendar year, and an estimated open date in December 2025.

FY 2025 Capital funding will also support capital improvement costs for the Montavilla and Harrison alternative shelter sites. FY 2025 capital funding will also be used to purchase buildings and/or land in support of the Community Sheltering Strategy, providing a combination of shelter types and models to fit different community needs. This will include a combination of shelter types, and potentially both purchasing and leasing properties, although leased

properties would not use capital funding. The Department of County Assets and Joint Office will be issuing a Motel/Hotel Expression of Interest in the coming weeks. In that process, the Joint Office and DCA will outline some baseline required parameters for a motel shelter, and invite proposals from local motel owners for lease and purchase options for use of motels as shelters. They will then work together /brokers to identify motels that fit the strategy, and will review the purchase vs. lease options. This will allow us to strategically add shelter sites in service of the larger community goals. We will then follow a similar process for capital needs around other motel types.

6. **Last year, the County Auditor’s Office released a report on the County’s budget process. The audit included recommendations related to community budget committee involvement, and the budget document discusses planned changes in this area. Tell us more—what was different this year? And what changes are you planning for next year?**

Response - Chair Vega Pederson

During the FY 2025 Budget Engagement Process this year, the Chair’s Office and the Office of Community Involvement increased opportunities for Community Budget Advisory Committees to engage the Budget outside of the CBAC process and provided some guidelines to bring better clarity to the CBAC process for staff and volunteers. These changes were made available for the FY 2025 Budget Engagement Process while the Chair’s Office and OCI continued to research other ways to improve the process for future engagements.

Additionally, early in the FY 2025 budget preparation process, the Chair created the new Chair’s Office Budget & Strategic Projects Director position – a role intended to lead and streamline budget initiatives and timelines – and made intentional efforts to increase opportunities for feedback and to diversify communication channels for collecting input from the public. This role worked in close partnership with the OCI Director to collaboratively plan new activities that included a Budget Town Hall event in early February, which was recorded for those unable to attend the live event. A new Chair’s Annual Budget website was launched to act as a hub for these new resources. A dedicated email address for the community to send budget questions and comments was created, as well as a budget survey that collected responses from late January through the end of March. Over 1,000 community responses helped to inform priority-setting and decision making for the Chair’s Proposed Budget.

The Office of Community Involvement also worked for much of the past fiscal year to daylight the resources and structure needed to improve the CBAC experience. During this review, County staff and CBAC volunteers expressed a need for clarification around roles and responsibilities, as well as clear guidelines to manage the process. Prior to the start of the CBAC FY 2025 Budget Engagement Process, the Chair released Program Guidelines that

provided clarity and direction for CBAC Volunteer Members and Department Staff who manage the programs.

The Chair's Office and OCI created a plan to update County Code Language to better clarify program details, research best practices of budget engagement that is in compliance with State of Oregon regulations, and create an updated process/tools for budget engagement for CBAC Members. These steps are currently in process with several elements planned to be in place for the FY 2026 budget engagement process. The planned steps for continued improvements to the CBAC program in FY 2025 include engaging in an after-action review of this year's CBAC Process for successes and growth opportunities and continued partnership and planning to create opportunities for synergy.

7. **It's a big year for Multnomah County elections, with the change to new ranked-choice voting for the Portland City Council, and continued work to ensure public confidence in the elections process. What steps are you taking (e.g. testing) to ensure ranked-choice voting will be tabulated properly?**

Response - Commissioner Meieran

On November 8th, 2022 voters in both the City of Portland and Multnomah County approved measures that require the use of ranked choice voting (also referred to as RCV). Last year, the Clear Ballot Group, the Election Divisions' voting system software vendor, began developing an updated version of its software that is capable of counting single and multi-winner ranked choice contests. The CBG software was designed to be paired with the open source RCTab to tabulate round-by-round results for RCV contests. While RCTab is new to Multnomah County Elections and to Clear Ballot software, it is not new to RCV elections. It has been used and proved successful in several RCV Elections, including for the successful ranked choice voting Elections in New York City.

The next step in the process is Election Assistance Commission testing. After developing their new software, Clear Ballot then submitted the updates to a federally accredited Voting System Test Laboratory to conduct review of the updated software, in line with Election Assistance Commission standards. The testing process has been successfully completed.

After passing EAC testing, the State of Oregon has its own certification process that voting system software must go through, which includes a functional test of the software. This functional test will be carried out at Multnomah County Elections over the course of the month of July consisting of: a load test to ensure that the software works at scale, a test election to produce results, and a mock hand recount of the test election using a recount procedure that has been drafted by the Elections Division and tested by national experts. After the functional test is complete, the software will be certified by the State of Oregon in August.

Internally, an in-house DCS data scientist continues to do logic and accuracy testing procedures that are unique to Multnomah County Elections. This will allow us to independently verify the accuracy of the tabulation performed by Clear Ballot's software in a way that is precise and specific to our needs.

***Follow up: How will ranked-choice voting be clearly explained to voters?
What communications will be provided?***

Members of Multnomah County Elections, the City of Portland Transition Team, and the Portland Auditor's Elections Office have been meeting since March 2023 to collaboratively plan and build RCV voter education strategies and tools. We aim to ensure that all Portland voters have the tools and knowledge they need to successfully vote with a ranked choice ballot.

You may wonder, why haven't I seen any of those voter education materials yet? That's by design.

Based on best practices and the advice of nationwide voter education experts, the City and County have decided to wait to kick off RCV education campaigns in early June – a time that is (a) after voters have finished filling out their Primary Election ballots and (b) at a time that's closer to when voters will actually see RCV contests on their ballots. By the time November comes, the education that they've received about RCV will still be fresh in their minds.

To ensure that voters are aware that ranked choice voting is coming to their ballots and that they understand how to vote with this new system, Multnomah County Elections is developing materials and campaigns to education voters in collaboration with the City, with a focus on reaching voters in underserved communities and locations:

- Educational Videos – The county is producing two videos that explain what ranked choice voting is and how to mark an RCV ballot.
- Comics and Coloring Books – We are working with three Multnomah County-based artists to produce an educational comic and a coloring book that will provide detailed instructions and visuals for how to mark a ranked choice ballot. These materials, and many others, will be disseminated to voters through our Library system and at summer outreach events.
- Paid Media Campaigns - In coordination with the Portland City Auditor's Office, MultCo Elections will be purchasing advertising between September and November 2024 to (a) spread the word that ranked choice voting will be used in City of Portland contests and (b) direct people to resources that explain how ranked choice voting works and how to

mark a ballot. You can expect to see and hear advertising about ranked choice voting on the radio, at the bus stop, in the newspaper, on your social feeds, and more.

- Website Content - We are developing comprehensive content for the Multnomah County Elections website that will give voters all of the information they need to successfully vote in an RCV election.

In addition to the materials that Multnomah County is producing, the City of Portland is developing several tools and materials, which the County is supporting and sharing through its channels, including

Mock Elections - The City has purchased a registration for RankedVote, an online mock voting platform that exists to teach voters how to fill out a ranked choice ballot. Both the County and City will be hosting several mock elections using the platform.

Citywide Mailer and Ballot Insert – The City is designing and sending a two-page, full color mailer to all Portland households. The mailer will offer an explanation of the changes to elections for City of Portland contests, including the introduction of district-based voting and ranked choice ballots. A variation of the mailer will also be inserted into the ballots of City of Portland voters for the November election.

In addition to the materials being produced and shared by the County and the City, we also recognize that many voters will look to news organizations for their results. For this reason, we are working to educate members of the local media about voting, tabulation, and results reporting in ranked choice voting contests.

County Elections officials will be presenting at a variety of media education events over the summer and will be hosting results reporting-specific media education forums in the late Summer to early Fall. Our north star is that regardless of where voters look for RCV results – whether it be our website or their favorite trusted news source – they will receive accurate, timely, and understandable information.

We are taking voter education and outreach efforts related to ranked choice voting seriously and we've got some great plans in place.

8. **We'd like to hear about the latest for the County's ambulance service - are response times improving?**

Response - Chair Vega Pederson

Challenges with ambulance response times have been persistent for the past two years, and the County has worked with our ambulance service provider, American Medical Response or "AMR", to bring them into contract compliance.

First, I want to provide some level setting for a shared understanding of how our ambulance system is structured. Multnomah County operates a "failsafe" franchised model where the ambulance provider, currently AMR, has a monopoly for the market of all ambulance requests, and charges the users of these ambulance transportation services. The provider is then responsible for paying for the County's actual cost for administering the EMS system, Medical Supervision, and joint training of providers.

AMR is not meeting their contractual obligations related to call response times. This is currently being addressed as the contract permits through mediation. We have also worked on system innovations to relieve pressure on the system including a Basic Life Support non-emergency ambulance pilot with two EMTs as an available dispatch option to respond to a subset of lower-acuity calls, and a new triage protocol to preserve emergency ambulance capacity for high acuity calls. And we have continued to request that AMR pursue available measures to subcontract for additional staffing support.

In addition, in February the Board allocated contingency funding to begin an early reassessment of our Ambulance Service Plan. A procurement process to select a firm to lead this work launched on May 17th. Additionally, there is \$756,768 budgeted for the assessment of the Ambulance Service plan in the FY 2025 proposed budget. FY 2025 funds will be used to continue the multi year work of the assessment. This work requires both internal Health Department staff capacity as well as an external consultant contractor with subject matter expertise in EMS systems. The assessment will involve in-depth review and recommendations by an external industry consultant, including stakeholder engagement with current jurisdictional partners, response agencies, healthcare partners, and existing ambulance service providers. This process is anticipated to result in policy recommendations that will influence maintaining, or revisions to current EMS system components. If revisions to the ASP are recommended, additional funding will be required in subsequent years to implement those changes.

An Ambulance Service Plan or "ASP" is a document which outlines a county's emergency medical services system. Counties in Oregon are required by statute to have an ASP, which addresses the coordination of ambulance services by establishing geographic ambulance service areas for the entire county and by meeting other requirements outlined in state

administrative rules. An ASP must include specific system elements including but not limited to 911 dispatch, response times, ambulance staffing, roles of fire agencies, medical direction and coordination. The ASP is the policy document on which the contract for ambulance services is based. Multnomah County's Ambulance Service Plan was last revised in 2016.

This assessment will help us understand the best way to operate ambulance services for our community. A lot has changed since 2016 when Multnomah County last revised our ASP. Questions about system design, staffing models, response times, outcomes, interagency coordination, roles for other first response agencies, etc. should all be considered as part of a structured, transparent process that solicits and allows input from all stakeholders equitably. Recommendations through this process will need to include a robust understanding of the fiscal impact to the ambulance operator, the Cities, the County and the public.

Follow up: We have read that the County's requirement for two paramedics (vs. having one paramedic and one EMT) could be a barrier to faster response times given staffing challenges. We're curious why the County is holding firm on this when the requirement is an outlier from what other communities require?

Multnomah County's ambulance staffing requirements have been part of Multnomah County's Code and its ambulance contract for many years.

Neighboring counties Clackamas County and Washington County are two paramedic systems that have been designed around one paramedic responding to everything on a "fire first" response, and one paramedic on the ambulance. We cannot compare the other counties' results without accounting for the paramedics coming from fire departments and the marked difference in demographics.

In the counties that have fire partners that respond to *all* life-threatening calls, having just one paramedic on an ambulance may make sense because a total of two paramedics show up thanks to the fire department. We are very fortunate to have dedicated city fire agency partners who arrive on scene for most critical medical emergencies. However, while Fire departments in Multnomah County respond to the majority of life-threatening calls – on average, 75% – a significant subset of calls still receive only an AMR ambulance. There are 242 different types of 9-1-1 calls that the County's EMS medical director has determined are life-threatening and time-critical — including abdominal pains, sepsis, burns, seizures, poisoning, psychiatric calls and drowning to name a few — that are currently only receiving an AMR ambulance staffed with two paramedics.

The reduction to an EMT-Paramedic system in Multnomah County would be creating a lower response than any of our neighboring Counties, not the same.

When two paramedics are evaluating and treating patients, simultaneous interventions can occur — performing an EKG at the same time an IV is started, or medications are delivered. With one paramedic and one EMT, these advanced-level treatments occur linearly instead of simultaneously since only paramedics can deliver those types of treatment per Oregon State law. EMTs are able to do non-invasive procedures such as collecting vital signs or administering an Automatic External Defibrillator, but cannot perform an EKG, start an IV, intubate, or deliver most medications. Two well-trained paramedics are always better prepared, less stressed and experience less fatigue and burn out than one paramedic working alone.

As noted previously, the Ambulance Service Plan assessment process will be an appropriate venue to consider any significant changes to ambulance staffing in Multnomah County.

9. **ONLY IF TIME** For the second year, a new animal service facility is included in the budget. How much work was done on this project in the current year? What is your planned timeline for completion?

Response - Commissioner Brim-Edwards

The Animal Services facility is in the Conceptual Design phase. The Departments of County Assets and Community Services have been working in partnership during the past two years conducting analysis and assessment of programmatic needs for a new shelter. The current shelter is approximately 14,500 square feet (13,200 main building and 1,300 modular building).

In FY 2023, the Department of Community Services completed a project to determine programmatic space requirements for the ideal new facility. The Multnomah County Animal Services hired the University of Wisconsin to provide consultation services on best practices in animal service shelter design. The outcome of the assessment resulted in a recommendation for a 50,000 square foot facility that is modern, flexible, sustainable, and responsive to MCAS's operational needs. The conceptual estimate for this size of facility is approximately \$75-90 million dollars. This is a preliminary estimate and a more accurate estimate is dependent on an approved Schematic Design.

In FY 2024, project analysis continued. County Facilities hired an architect to assess development options for Animal Services, exploring both a new facility and a major renovation of the existing facility at the current location, along with an evaluation of a reduction in square feet from a 50,000 square foot facility. This work is expected to be completed by the end of FY 2024. This assessment will define the programming and square footage differences between various development options and operational adjacencies required for the program, and the funding required for the options.

We expect the information from the assessment to inform a decision by County leadership about the scope and scale of the project. The budget for FY 2025 will allow the project team to initiate the Schematic Design phase of the new Animal Services facility based on the development options assessment. This could involve a decision about a new location or remaining at the existing property. In alignment with the County's administrative procedure, Board approval will be required to begin Schematic Design.

Once decisions are made about the scope of the project, we will be able to provide a timeline working backward from the completion of the facility. We can expect a project this size to take approximately four to five years to compete. At this point in the project, funding has not yet been identified.

- 10. ONLY IF TIME** This budget sees \$1.8 million in cuts to community justice in contracted services and personnel as providers experience decreased demand - do you expect that trend to continue? What's changed?

Response - Commissioner Meieran

The \$1.8 million reduction in FY 2024 was based on a 1.5 percent CGF constraint. In FY 2024, we saw a reduction in state revenue of \$3.1 million. The County General Fund provided contingency for FY 2024 of \$2,912,376. During the FY 2025 legislative short session the State backfilled revenue providing DCJ with an additional \$1,668,525. To supplement DCJ's budget request, the CGF backfilled with \$974,605 for FY 2025. The revenue adjustment by the state was based on a decrease in both State Community Corrections populations as well as our county share of the State allocated Community Corrections budget (17 percent to 16.04 percent). This largely is speculated to be a result of both the passing of BM 110, as well as effects within the criminal justice system from the pandemic. Additionally, the risk profile of our current populations changed from years prior, all of which contribute to a 30 year funding formula that establishes a capitation rate.

We do not expect our population profile to continue in this downward path and early trend lines actually point to a steady increase in both State and county community corrections populations. The passing of HB 4002 could also result in increases to State funded populations. These additional new cases and current trends are taken into account in April of the legislative general session year, (April 2025) and result in population adjustments for the next biennium.

In addition, the funding formula is currently under review by a Legislative mandated workgroup to examine if the current formula is outdated to keep up with the actual costs to supervise our populations.