

## **Media Advisory – July 15, 2008**

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### **County awarded eviction prevention, assistance grant**

Snohomish County will combat homelessness through a pilot eviction prevention and assistance program made possible by more than \$1.6 million in state funding.

The program – Assisting Needy Clients Housing & Other Resources or Project ANCHOR – provides help to individuals and families who are having trouble paying rent or are losing their housing. Services include short- and long-term rent assistance to low-income working individuals and families.

Funding comes from the state’s new Homeless Grant Assistance Program through the State Department of Community, Trade & Economic Development. Snohomish County is one of three selected for funding out of nearly 40 applicants.

“We have an excellent opportunity here to decrease the number of families living on the fringe of homelessness,” County Executive Aaron Reardon said. “Fighting homelessness starts by reducing the number of working families close to losing their homes.”

Project ANCHOR was developed by the county’s Office of Housing, Homelessness and Community Development, part of the county’s Human Services Department. Services are tiered based on need, ranging from three months of assistance with minimal case management support to three years of housing assistance. Specialized case management will also be a central part of this program.

These efforts follow the county’s recent awarding of more than \$2 million in grants to countywide agencies and nonprofits fighting homelessness in Snohomish County.

More than \$1.54 million was awarded to 20 projects specifically serving homeless individuals and families through a variety of housing and assistance programs. Another \$500,000 is being used to support a housing voucher program tied to local human services.

Among those receiving funds are Volunteers of America, Cocoon House, the Salvation Army, Snohomish County Legal Services, the YWCA and Domestic Violence Services of Snohomish County.

“These groups are finding creative ways of administering projects with fewer available dollars,” Reardon said. “When we have the chance, we should reward them with more funding so as to make those programs go even further.”

In January, Reardon began a timely initiative geared toward ending homelessness and increasing affordable housing by convening the Housing & Homelessness Policy Oversight Committee.

Represented are leaders from local and state government, the housing and real-estate industry, educators, nonprofit executives, business leaders and members of the faith community with the charge of suggesting how best to establish benchmarks for forthcoming homeless and housing initiatives as well as guide long-term strategies.

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