

Introduction

The Town of Barnstable, by virtue of geographic location near the center of the Cape Cod peninsula and regional nature of its development, has become a centralized location for the providers of social services. This has led to a concentration of human service providers based in the Town of Barnstable primarily in the village of Hyannis.

Historically, the Town has provided funding to human service agencies and collaboratives to assist program implementation for housing, employment training, economic development, community development and social welfare services for town residents.

The Town of Barnstable has been designated a “Metropolitan New England City and Town Area”, and receives annual entitlement funds from the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. CDBG funding must be used to provide for development of viable communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanded economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income.

Human service needs are vast, and action-oriented strategies are necessary to answer these needs. The following priorities have been identified by the Barnstable County Department of Health and Human services as the major needs of the Town of Barnstable:

Transportation - A critical need to enable access to service and employment opportunities.

Affordable Housing - Shelter is the primary need for the homeless and low income populations.

Child Care - The need for affordable daycare services is increasingly apparent as the numbers of working women with children and single parent families increase.

Disabling and Chronic Health Concerns - Major health problems impair the ability to be self sufficient.

Youth Recreation Needs - The rapid growth of this segment of the population has increased the need for constructive alternatives.

Elder Services - The town's rapidly increasing elderly population will require more resources for care and attention.

Goals Policies and Strategies

Goal 7.1 Quality of life: Enhance the quality of life for all Barnstable residents by ensuring a full range of health and human services in an efficient, coordinated and cost effective manner.

Action 7.1.1 The Town Council or its designated agent will evaluate land use and developmental decisions in a manner consistent with health and human service needs and to determine responses necessary to maintain and enhance the delivery of those services. This decision making process should measure impacts to human services prior to final approval.

Strategies

- Develop guidelines for evaluating impacts of land use and development to populations in need of human services, including the location of development, employment opportunities provided, and specific human services that may be affected by the development.
- Include the Human Services Committee in the notification process for major land use and development applications to Site Plan Review, Board of Appeals, Planning Board and CCC Developments of Regional Impact and also major project grant applications.
- A Human Services Committee member should be appointed to the Community Preservation Committee.
- The Human Services Committee should serve in an advisory capacity to the Growth Management Department policy development and development review process.

Action 7.1.2 Town Council's Human Services Committee will develop a Health and Human Service Needs and Resource Assessment in cooperation with service providers and the community. This assessment should be conducted annually.

Strategy

- Using all available studies and reports, the assessment will identify needs, service gaps, establish priorities, impediments and opportunities. At a minimum, this assessment shall include health and human service delivery systems for all ages such as child care, elder care, youth support, substance abuse, mental health, job training and people with disabilities. The needs of visitors will be included in the assessment.

Action 7.1.3 The Town Council's Human Services Committee, utilizing the Health and Human Service Needs and Resources Assessment, will convene an annual Health and Human Services Roundtable including all health and human service providers within and/or offering services within the boundaries of the Town of Barnstable. This roundtable shall review timely issues, discuss and determine solution alternatives, and provide advice and recommendations for coordinating health and human service delivery efforts. This Roundtable shall provide a report and publish its proceedings and findings of its annual meeting.

Action 7.1.4 Town Council's Human Services Committee shall develop, in coordination with all Barnstable service providers, a Health and Human Services Action Plan. This plan shall be based on the annual Health and Human Services Needs Assessment and the annual report of the Health and Human Services Roundtable and shall develop policies and procedures to meet health and human service needs.

Strategies

- The plan will include strategies for meeting these needs with available resources and detail resource shortfalls with recommendations for closing these resource and service gaps.
- The Health and Human Plan shall include the following areas to identify and health and human service needs and focus on service delivery methods:

- Transportation
- Health/Chronic Disease
- Child Care/Welfare/Protection/Development
- Elder Affairs/Home Health Care
- Legal Services
- Recreation
- Substance Abuse
- Clergy
- Mental Health/Disabled Persons
- Job Training
- Housing/Homeless
- Adolescent Services
- Education
- Veterans Services

Action 7.1.5 Town Council's Human Services Committee will develop a public education and community awareness effort to promote the Town's health and human service environment. Education and awareness materials will be developed to provide information about health and human service eligibility, system capabilities, and service delivery contacts.

Strategies

- The materials developed for this effort will identify specific populations (e.g. the visual and hearing impaired) and provide information through a method appropriate to their needs.
- The materials developed for this effort will be readily available to the community through the Town website and other media distribution methods.