



Developing a Plan For HOME ARP Resources: Interview and Survey Results

The Eugene-Springfield HOME Consortium conducted public outreach in the winter of 2022 to understand community perspectives on three key questions:

- Unmet needs and gaps
- Prioritized populations
- Preferred activities

The project conducted interviews with organizations associated with housing services and development, and an online survey of housing and social service providers. This report provides a high level summary of the results.

Background

The damaging impact of the pandemic on vulnerable members of our community is extensive and on going. Through the **American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021**, the US Congress allocated special one-time funds to help provide more affordable housing and support services for people experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, and those at greatest risk of housing instability, with attention to veterans.

The Eugene-Springfield area will receive \$4,728,637 through the new program to support and increase affordable housing opportunities and the Eugene-Springfield HOME Consortium Governing Board will decide specific funding priorities.

To access the funds, the Eugene-Springfield HOME Consortium is conducting a **needs assessment** of the qualifying populations and the current supply of housing and services. The Consortium consulted with stakeholders on three primary factors of the needs assessment; unmet needs and gaps, prioritized populations, and preferred activities. Key consultations included:

- Lane County staff and other agency staff that coordinate social service programs for people without permanent housing, victims of domestic violence, and veterans.
- Service providers for vulnerable communities, such as non-profit organizations.
- The public housing agency (Homes for Good).
- Organizations that provide affordable housing.
- Public agencies and organizations that address fair housing, civil rights and the needs of people with disabilities.

Summary of Interview Results

The project held 12 online conversations involving 28 staff of organizations and groups that provide social service programs, develop and maintain affordable housing, and address fair housing, civil rights and the needs of veterans and people with disabilities.

Conducted during January and February of 2022, the interviews were attended by one or two key staff, though in some cases several participants joined the conversation. Led by staff representing the cities of Eugene and Springfield, the one-hour discussions on zoom began with a short Powerpoint presentation of the HOME-ARP regulations followed by questions regarding unmet needs and gaps, prioritized populations, and preferred eligible activities for use of HOME-ARP funds.

Agency/Organization Consulted	Type	Method of Consultation	Feedback
1. Catholic Community Services	Homeless Services Provider	Interview	Preferred Use: Develop permanent rental housing. Not enough housing available for families, seniors, Veterans. Also interested in non-congregate shelter (NCS)/ rental housing together in one development.
2. City of Eugene Equity Panel	Civil Rights	Interview	Preferred Use: Develop non-congregate shelter. Consider the needs of victims of domestic violence and BIPOC communities. Provide operating assistance for non-profits.
3. Cornerstone Community Housing	Low-Income Housing Developer	Interview	Preferred Use: Develop permanent rental housing. Not enough housing available for families, survivors of domestic violence, seniors, people at risk of homelessness.
4. DevNW	Low-Income Housing Developer	Interview	Preferred Use: Develop non-congregate shelter. All the uses are needed but there are immediate needs for people who are houseless. NCS is faster to develop and more immediately addresses the problem than permanent rental housing. Services are also needed.
5. Homes for Good	Public Housing Agency	Interview	Preferred use: Develop permanent rental housing. Not enough housing available for people without stable housing, especially for people experiencing homelessness. Maximize number of units, leverage funds as much as possible. Supportive services could be paired with rental housing developments.

<p>6. Hope and Safety Alliance</p>	<p>Victim Services Provider</p>	<p>Interview</p>	<p>Preferred Use: Develop non-congregate shelter. Shelter needed for people with children who are fleeing domestic violence with a 30-90 average stay, hotel model. Also need rental housing that allows master leases the agency could manage, and rental housing with very low rent.</p>
<p>7. Lane Council of Governments</p>	<p>Services for People with Disabilities</p>	<p>Interview</p>	<p>Preferred Use: All the uses are needed, hard to have preference. Supportive services are needed for adults with disabilities and seniors to help find, secure, and sustain housing. Need for development of units that are accessible to people with disabilities (ADA units). There is a housing shortage overall, with more availability needed.</p>
<p>8. Lane County Human Services</p>	<p>Continuum of Care</p>	<p>Interview</p>	<p>Preferred Use: All the uses are needed but development of permanent rental housing is preferred. Maximize flexibility in RFP process to allow applicants to request support services funding if needed. Permanent supportive housing and providing opportunities beyond shelter is their focus. Non-profit capacity funding would help. Permanent shelter is also needed.</p>
<p>9. Saint Vincent De Paul</p>	<p>Low-income Housing and Homeless Services Provider, Services for Veterans</p>	<p>Interview</p>	<p>Preferred Use: Develop permanent rental housing (2/3) and supportive services (1/3). Maximize resources by providing permanent investment. Interest in model of individual units around centralized living/dining area, renting each room separately (like student housing) or a hotel model of rental housing. Services are critical to stabilization.</p>
<p>10. Sheltercare</p>	<p>Homeless Services Provider</p>	<p>Interview</p>	<p>Preferred Use: Development. Both permanent rental housing, and non-congregate shelter are needed, permanent rental housing probably more important, but not sure the split of resources, (concern about operating funding for shelter). Use funds to invest in long term solutions. Support services for people experiencing disabilities and people in transition also needed. All uses are needed, but better to focus funding to maximize impact.</p>

<p>11. Springfield-Eugene Tenant Association</p>	<p>Fair Housing Services</p>	<p>Interview</p>	<p>Preferred Use: Develop units. Both permanent rental housing and non-congregate shelter needed. Not enough units for people experiencing physical and mental disabilities (ADA units), families, and the BIPOC community. Lower cost units are needed. Services are also needed. Rent assistance is always needed, but may not be appropriate for one-time funds.</p>
<p>12. SquareOne Villages</p>	<p>Homeless Services Provider</p>	<p>Interview</p>	<p>Preferred Use: Develop non-congregate shelter. Not enough shelter for people who do not have a permanent home. Goal: shelter system of 1000+ units. Concern about where operating funds would come from, and the cost because NCS units would need to each have plumbing (tiny home model).</p>

Summary of Survey Results

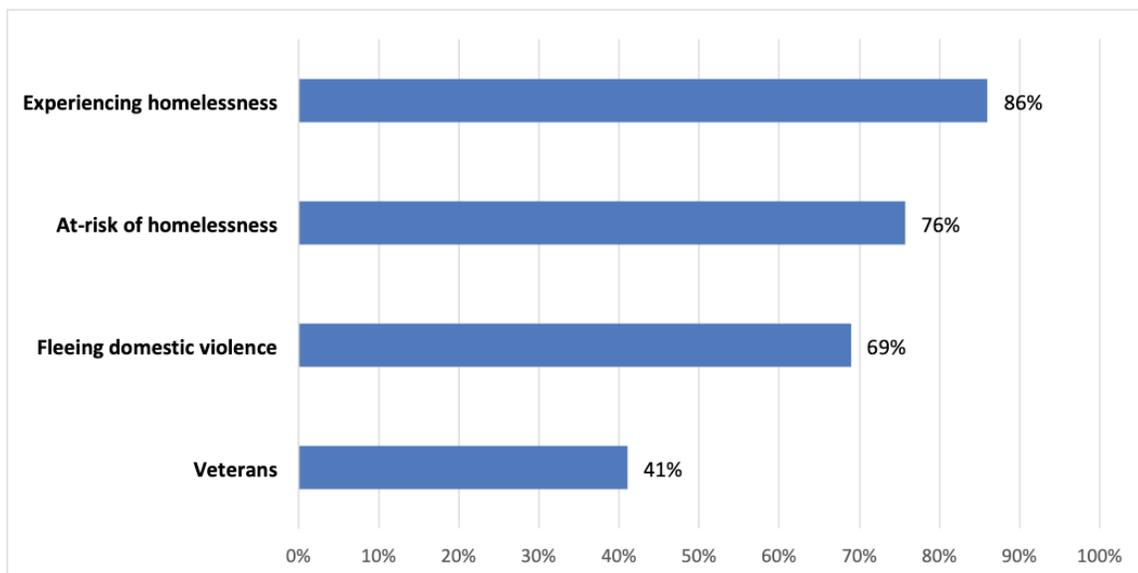
Following the interviews, the project developed an online survey to distribute to organizations and agencies involved in affordable housing and social services for very low income communities. The survey was initially distributed to 106 emails representing 72 groups, with the request to complete the survey and forward on to others. The final survey results represent the perspectives of 71 individuals affiliated with over 43 housing and social service agencies, organizations and businesses.

Most respondents worked at a non-profit organization (62%), a business relating to housing (23%), or an advocacy organization (21%). In addition, 35% were members of organizations related to social services or housing. In terms of geography, 49% of respondents were connected to Eugene, 21% were connected to Springfield, and 59% served all of Lane County. See page 9 for a full list of the 89 organizations that received and/or responded to the survey – half of these organizations are affiliated with the 71 survey respondents. 95% of participants completed the survey, and the average completion time was 5 minutes.

Question: These federal funds focus on the following very low-income “qualifying populations.” In your opinion, which population(s) should receive priority? (check all that apply)

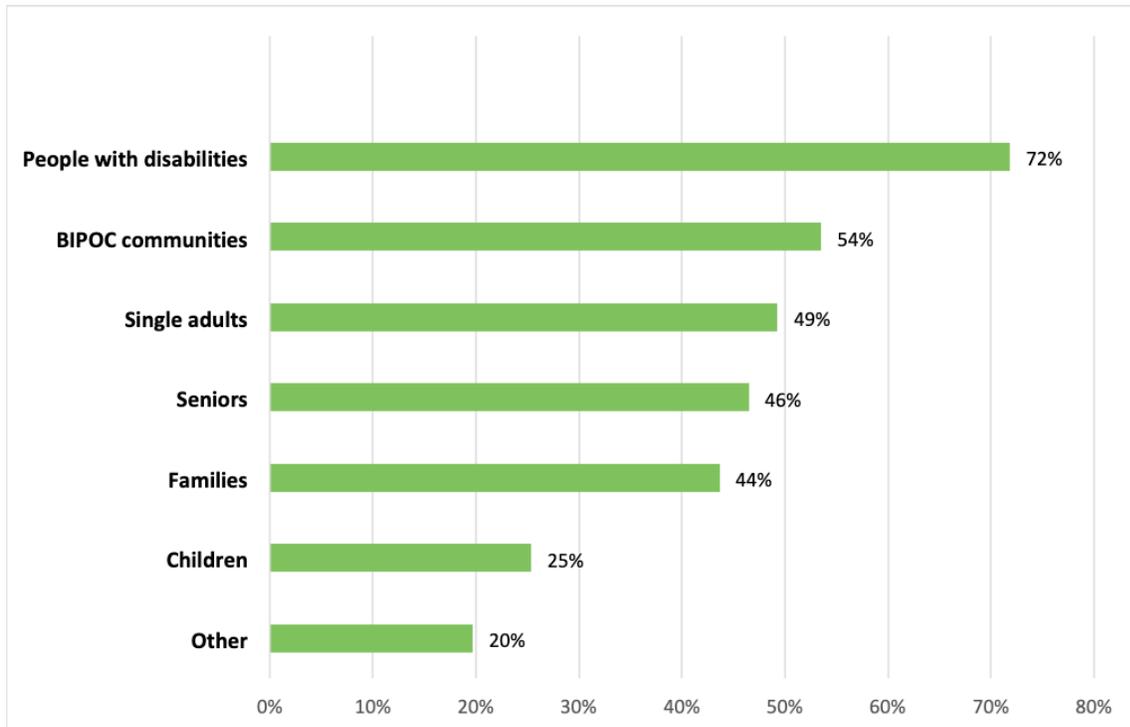
- Individuals and families experiencing homelessness
- Individuals and families at-risk of homelessness
- Individuals and families fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking
- Veterans and families with a Veteran family member

Note: The bulleted lists of survey answers were randomized in the online survey.



Question: What very low-income populations do you think have the highest need and most difficulty in accessing housing or receiving services? (check all that apply)

- Families
- Children^[SEP]
- People who identify as Black, Indigenous, or a person of color
- Seniors^[SEP]
- People experiencing disabilities^[SEP]
- Single adults^[SEP]
- Other

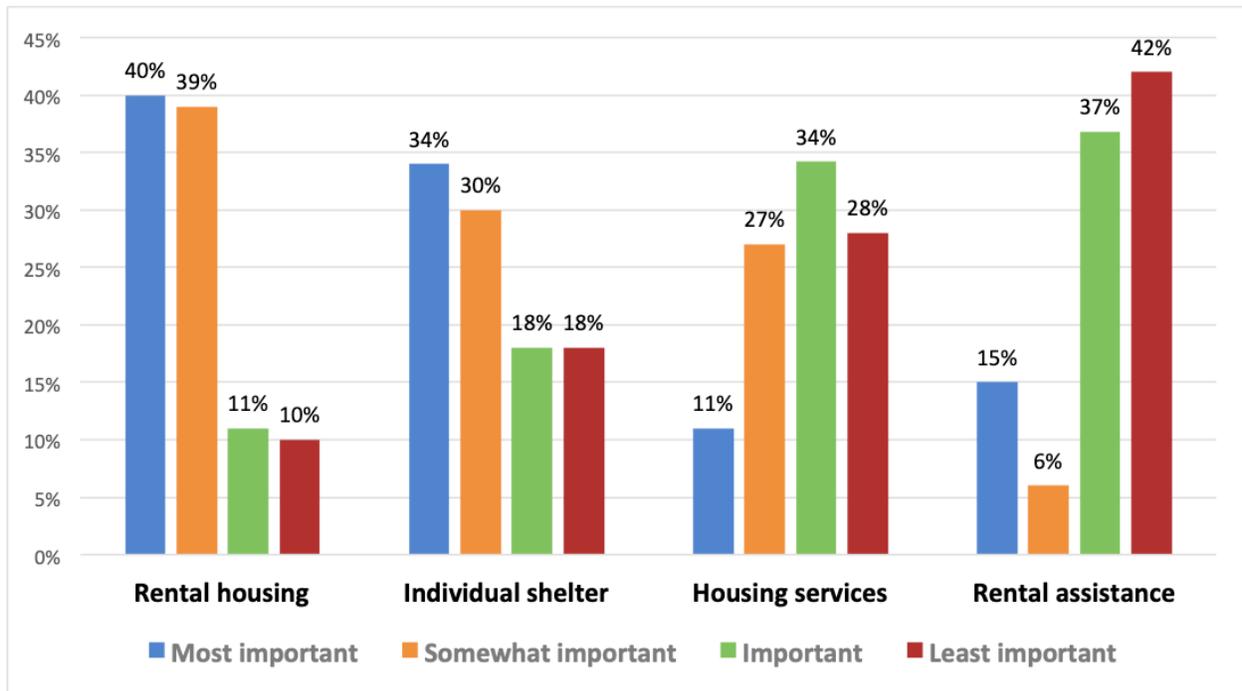


Regarding the “Other” category, here is a summary of the 14 open-ended responses:

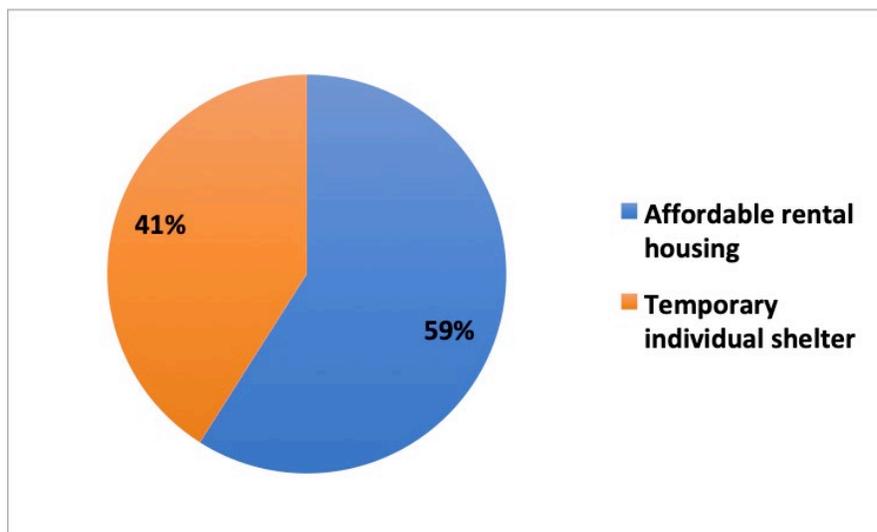
- Addiction, mental health or behavioral health issues (5 comments)
- Individuals coming out of the prison system (1 comment)
- Youth and young adults (3 comments)
- Single parents, single fathers, single women over 50 with disabilities (3 comments)
- Working class people in low-income jobs (1 comment)

Question: The eligible activities of the federal funds are listed below. Please rank the importance of each activity: (1=most important, 4=least important)

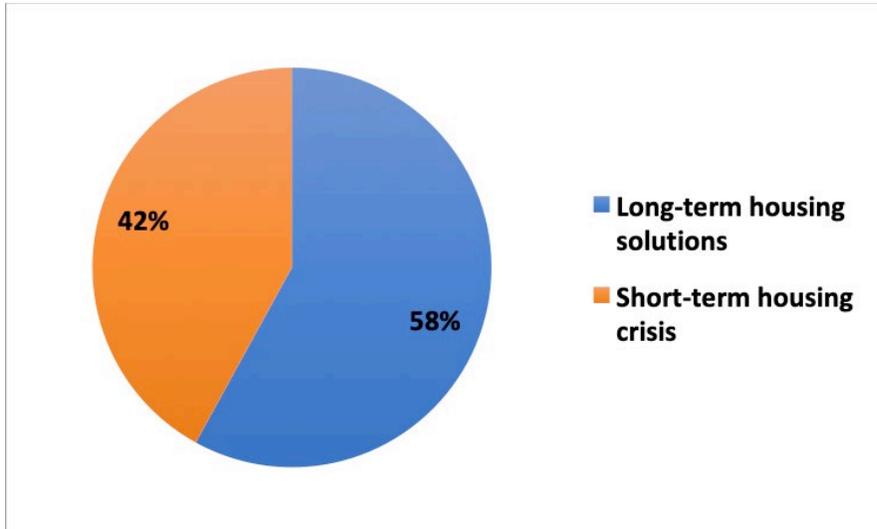
- Developing affordable permanent rental housing
- Assisting tenants with rent
- Developing individual permanent shelter for people experiencing homelessness (for example, converted motels or buildings with individual living units)
- Housing related services, such as help finding and maintaining housing



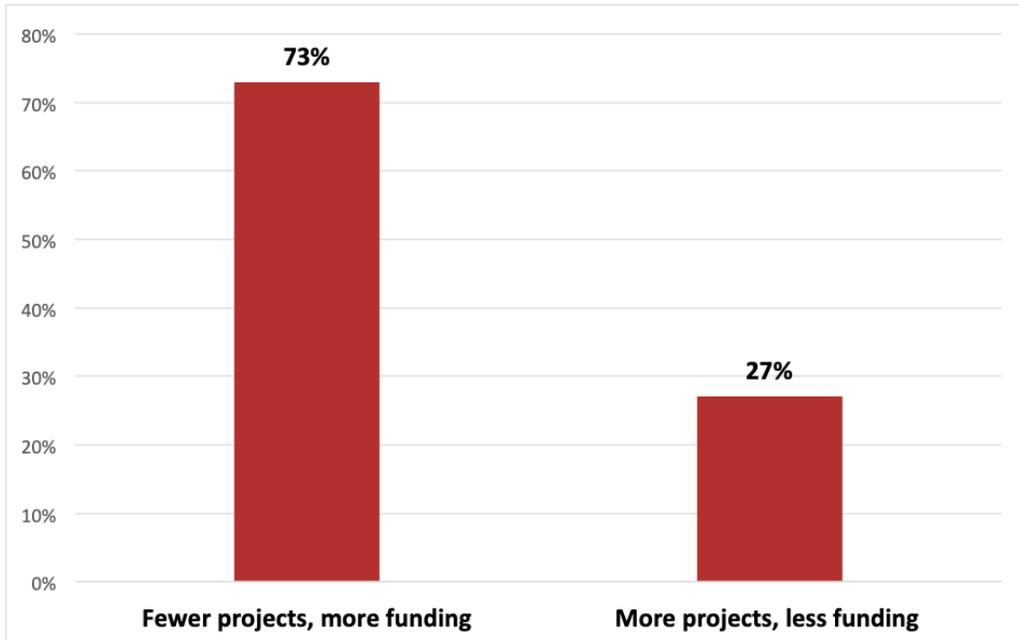
Question: How much support should go towards developing new affordable rental housing, and how much to develop new temporary individual shelter?



Question: What solution do you think is most important for the community to address with these funds?



Question: How do you think the federal funds should be distributed?



Question: If you have additional comments about this process or any of the questions above, please share! Here is a sampling of the 26 responses:

- We need help and we need help now. This crisis has been drawn out to dangerous end points for so many. The time to act has long been over due. All participants and services for question #5-#7 need to be addressed without hesitation and with significant funding.
- We really need more housing stock available. I am very excited about the proposed city zoning changes for the City of Eugene, and I hope something similar is being proposed in Springfield. As long as our vacancy rate is rock bottom, we are going to see horrible externalities because of the huge power imbalance between landlords and tenants. The root problem is supply.
- You list rental as the only affordable housing option. Housing co-ops as developed by SquareOne are a better option for multiple reasons - more financial stability, permanent affordability, more democratic with more involvement of the residents.
- Funding to agencies providing services must be reasonable--must be enough to cover the expense of hosting support services, cover construction loans longer term, etc.
- I would focus on permanent homeless shelter, with individual locking units, electricity and heat, first, until all 4,000 or so have adequate shelter. Then I would use any available money to build subsidized below market rent apartments. Eugene needs to raise the CET to one percent to pay for some of this.
- One time funds cannot sustain ongoing costs, such as rent or services. These funds should be used for capital costs.
- People of color experience more barriers to receiving this type of help because agencies do not have the appropriate personnel and many times people do not meet requirements (this needs to be more inclusive and flexible).
- Permanent solutions should be emphasized
- Please try to find ways to include temporary or transitional shelters (Conestoga Huts)
- The number of people living on the streets is embarrassing. We need better, safer options for them, with access to social services and mental health experts. Also, social service provision is spread among too many providers with little oversight or coordination. Social services in Lane Co. should be streamlined.
- This survey should be specific for each population, trying to loop everyone (children, families, single adults, seniors, veterans, BIPOC, people facing domestic violence, etc) is not effective. Asking which population is more in need is dehumanizing to the struggles/barriers of each of these populations. All of these populations face different levels of oppression, stigmatization and are marginalized. We need to stop thinking of the homeless community as one community, it is multi facet, complex and diverse.
- Various projects are in the pipeline where shelter and affordable housing are concerned. Please evaluate which areas are funded and moving towards adequate in order to strategically add these new funds to the big picture.

Survey recipients and respondents were affiliated with the following agencies, organizations, and businesses. The 71 survey respondents were affiliated with half of these groups:

15th Night Youth Partnership
4J School District
90by30 Child Abuse Prevention
ARC of Lane County
Bethel Education Foundation
Bethel School District
Better Housing Together
Burrito Brigade
Catholic Community Services of Lane County
Center for Community Counseling
Centro Latino Americano
City of Eugene Community Development Block Grant Committee
City of Eugene Equity Panel
City of Eugene Human Rights Commission
Columbia Care
Community Supported Shelters
Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
Cornerstone Community Housing
DevNW
Eugene Chamber of Commerce
Eugene Mission
Eugene Renters Protection Steering Committee
Eugene Tenant Alliance
Everyone Village
Fair Housing Council of Oregon
First Place Family Center
Florence Emergency Cold Weather Shelter
Florence Food Share, First Step Florence
Food for Lane County
Goodwill Industries of Lane and South Coast Counties
Habitat for Humanity of Central Lane
HIV Alliance
Homeless Action
Homes for Good

Hope and Safety Alliance
Hourglass Community Crisis Center
Housing Alliance
Housing Policy Board
Human Rights Commission
Intergovernmental Housing Policy Board
Lane Council of Governments Senior & Disability Services
Lane County Health and Human Services
Lane County Legal Aid
Lane County Public Health
Lane County Veterans Services
Lane Independent Living Alliance
Lane Kids
Lane Poverty and Homelessness Board
Lane Transit District: Comprehensive and Accessible Transportation Committee
Lane Workforce Partnership
Laurel Hill Center
Live Healthy Lane Steering Committee
Looking Glass
Mainstream Housing
NAACP of Eugene-Springfield
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Lane County
Nightingale Hosted Shelter
Oregon Family Support Network
Oregon Law Center
Oregon Tenants Association
Pacificsource
Parenting Now
PeaceHealth
Pearl Buck Center
Planned Parenthood
Refugee Resettlement Coalition
Relief Nursery
Rent Control Now
Safe Shelter for Siuslaw Students
Sexual Assault Support Services
Sheltercare
Sponsors, Inc.

Springfield Chamber of Commerce
Springfield-Eugene Habitat for Humanity
Springfield-Eugene Tenant Association
SquareOne Villages
St. Vincent De Paul, Egan Warming Center
The Child Center
The Eugene Mission
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
United Way of Lane County
University of Oregon: Lane Integration Network
University of Oregon: Nontraditional and
Veteran Students and Financial Aid
Veterans Administration, Employment and
HCHV Program
Whiteaker Neighbors
Whitebird Clinic
Willamette Family