

**MEMO**

**To:** Mayor and Ames City Council

**From:** Deb Schildroth, Assistant City Manager

**Date:** June 17, 2022

**Subject:** Inclusion and Diversity in Establishing ASSET Funding Priorities

At the July 27, 2021 meeting, Council approved the ASSET funding priorities for FY 2022/23 and also took action on considering ways in which Council's vision and goals related to inclusion and creating a diverse community should or should not be used in establishing the FY 2023/24 ASSET priorities. This action stems from a discussion at the November 10, 2020 Council meeting where recommendations from the "Policing in Ames...A Path Forward" report were considered. One of the recommendations in that report was, "If City Council wishes to do so, the allocation of ASSET funds could be reprioritized in the next budget cycle and concentrated in human services that better meet City Council's social justice goals." In lieu of reprioritizing the ASSET funding allocation, Council approved including social justice into the discussion of ASSET priorities at the November 10, 2020 meeting.

One of Council's values is a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community. When applying this value to the ASSET funding priorities, a focus could be placed on things such as equity, access, and participation in services that meet the individual and/or familial needs of all residents in our community. Out of these three focus areas, the ASSET agencies currently report on income, physical/mental disabilities, and more recently, race/ethnicity. The reporting of race/ethnicity started with the submittal of FY 2021/22 agency budgets. As a result, we have a limited trend line on this information. Additionally, the two years of data

collection primarily spans the COVID-19 pandemic and a majority of the agencies reduced or temporarily closed services, therefore, it is likely not the most accurate baseline.

The current ASSET funding priorities are as follows:

## **Priorities for FY 2022-23**

*Categories 1, 2, and 3 are in priority order as are the lettered services in each category*

### **#1 Meet mental health and substance use disorder needs through**

- A. Community-based and outpatient mental health services
- B. Outpatient emergency access and crisis intervention services
- C. Awareness and education about suicide prevention and services
- D. Substance use prevention and treatment availability

### **#2 Meet basic needs, with an emphasis on low to moderate income through**

- A. Food cost offset programs to assist in providing nutritious perishables and staples
- B. Housing cost offset programs including utility assistance
- C. Sheltering
- D. Quality childcare cost offset programs including daycare and State of Iowa licensed in-home facilities
- E. Financial literacy and education programs
- F. Medical and dental services
- G. Transportation cost offset programs
- H. Legal assistance
- I. Disaster response

### **#3 Provide youth development services and activities through**

- A. Skill development and enhancement
- B. Summer enrichment/prevention of loss of learning

*This list of priorities is guided by the results of the 2020 Story County Community Needs Assessment.*

My plan is to bring the proposed ASSET funding priorities for FY 2023/24 to Council in July. The following options may be considered now and any changes will be incorporated into the priorities document for final consideration in July:

1. Add a priority reflecting inclusion and diversity.
2. Request additional reporting requirements of the agencies and provide staff with specific data to be collected.
3. Continue with the current data collection until a more accurate trend line is established.