

NEWS RELEASE

May 5, 2009

**MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
411 NORTH 5TH ST
SHELTON, WA 98584**

TO: KMAS, KRXY, SHELTON-MASON COUNTY JOURNAL, THE OLYMPIAN, SHELTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, NORTH MASON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CITY OF SHELTON, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, THE SUN

RE: Mason Community Service Needs Prioritization Project

On April 16, 2009, United Way of Mason County convened a community meeting where local non-profit service providers had an opportunity to inform their partners about the impacts of the current economic climate on the health of their organization. Non-profit Board members, business leaders and elected officials also participated in the event.

The challenge set before the community is to ensure that the current economic situation does not impart random damage on our community. At the meeting, the community learned more about which service programs are 'at-risk' because of economic restraints. There was agreement that our community can, and should, develop a proactive plan to protect the critical elements of our community's social and education systems.

The next step in this process is to identify priority elements, and then develop and implement strategies to protect these critical pieces of our service delivery system. A quick and simple electronic survey will be distributed throughout the county next week. The results will be used to identify priority elements. All community members are encouraged to share their thoughts through the survey. United Way of Mason County will be leading this effort. For more information, contact Jeannie Gruber at 426-4999.

This survey will be followed up with a series of informational forums during the month of June. Four forums are being organized, providing an opportunity for the larger community to learn more about what's happening in our community. Each forum will focus on one of four topics: Education (preschool to college); Housing; Health and Human Services; and Children, Youth and Families. Forums are scheduled for Thursdays afternoons, June 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th, from 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. in the new Public Works Meeting Room, 100 W Public Works Drive, off Hwy 102 – Dayton Airport Road.

For more information on these forums, contact Kim Klint at 427-9670, 275-4467 or 482-5269 ext. 543.

Tim Sheldon
Chair

Lynda Ring Erickson
Commissioner

Ross Gallagher
Commissioner