

Kittitas County Homeless and Affordable Housing Plan

2019 Update

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Executive Summary

The Kittitas County Homeless and Affordable Housing Plan is being updated in 2019 and will be approved by the Kittitas County Board of Commissioners on _____.

History

Historically there had been no statewide, integrated approaches to homelessness in Washington. House Bill 2163, passed in 2005, attempted to remedy this situation by requiring each county to develop a homeless housing plan, providing a funding source through document recording fees to directly address the goals identified in these plans, and outlining reporting requirements. Subsequent changes to the legislation have added funding and changed requirements. Most recently, legislation passed in March 2018 increased the amount of funding available, specified additional performance and reporting requirements, and changed required components for homeless housing plans.

Progress Since Last Plan

Action Steps identified in the 2017 Plan and implemented during the last two years resulted in significant shifts in the homeless and housing system to: Kittitas County achieved functional zero for Veteran Homelessness, the first County in Washington to achieve this status. Continued support for affordable housing saw the Spurling Court project awarded HOME funds and New Market Tax Credits. Further Kittitas County now hosts a 7 day a week cold weather shelter during the winter months, housing on average 12 households nightly who otherwise would have been left out on the street.

The 2019 Plan builds on these accomplishments to further improve the Kitsap Homeless Crisis Response System.

Development of this Plan

The Kittitas County Homeless and Affordable Housing Committee analyzed the needs of people experiencing homelessness in Kittitas County by reviewing the Homeless Point In Time count data, Homeless Management Information System data, results from a survey of community members and housing providers, a survey of people experiencing homelessness, and meetings with elected officials.

The included Action Plan is intended to address homelessness by promoting a continuum of housing and support services that augment individual and family stability, resiliency, and economic independence.

The Plan has been updated every 3-4 years to respond to changes in legislative and policy requirements, changing availability of homeless services, completion of identified action steps, and identification of new focus areas.

Scope of the Plan

This plan addresses issues of homelessness throughout Kittitas County, including:

- Information about progress made since the last plan was approved,
- Current demographics of homelessness in Kittitas County,
- Resources available,
- Current needs and gaps, and
- An Action Plan that outlines specific action steps that will be undertaken over the next 3-5 years.

Plan Goals

The overall goal of the Plan is to work together as a community to make homelessness a rare, brief, and one time occurrence in Kittitas County through an efficient and effective homeless and affordable housing collaborative system.

The Action Plan is comprised of five Objectives, each with supporting Core Strategies and New Action Steps, which will be used over the next five years to address homelessness. Each Goal also includes Performance Indicators of Success.

- 1) Quickly identify and engage people experiencing homelessness.
- 2) Prioritize housing for people with the greatest needs.
- 3) Operate an effective and efficient homeless crisis response system that swiftly moves people into stable permanent housing.
- 4) Project the impact of the fully implemented local plans on the number of households housed and the number of households left unsheltered, assuming existing resources and state policies.
- 5) Address racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness.

Gaps and New Action Focus Areas

Needs and gaps in the homeless crisis response system have been identified, with specific new action steps, timelines, and responsible parties identified to address them:

- Encourage development of affordable housing and alternative housing models through incentives and policy changes with a goal of 5 new homeless units annually.
- Provide additional funding for a County sponsored RRH program to help disadvantaged homeless households be more competitive in a tight housing market.
- Track the existing performance measures and data to ensure the most efficient use of public funds
- Maintain and expand trauma-informed care and evidence-based practices with all partners
- Expand leadership, accountability, and opportunities for community education and volunteering

Introduction

Homelessness Is A Community Issue

Here in Kittitas County, homelessness is not as visible as it may be on the streets of Seattle, but it affects hundreds of people directly, every day, right here in our urban and rural communities. These are our friends, neighbors, co-workers, and community members.

According to the 2018 Point In Time Homeless Count, on any given day there are estimated to be more than 10 people living on the streets, in vehicles, and in the woods of Kittitas County.

Homelessness happens to people of all ages, genders, education levels, races, income levels, and household types. It happens to good people in our community who work hard to be self-sufficient but live on the brink of economic instability. Health issues, poor credit, job loss, family break-up, domestic violence, mental illness or substance use disorders can also push people into homelessness. Whatever the underlying reason for their homelessness, they are in crisis. Visible or hidden, everyone deserves a safe and decent place to live.

History of Homelessness

Homelessness was a relatively rare phenomenon until the 1980s, when many economic and social changes converged to cause its dramatic rise. These changes included:

- Lack of growth in real earnings for those with low incomes,
- Growing scarcity of appropriate affordable housing,
- Closing of institutions (*i.e.* beds at Western State Hospital) that had long served individuals with mental illnesses.

The number of homeless families and individuals continued to rise during the 1990s. Factors included:

- On-going deinstitutionalization of persons with mental illness without the development of adequate community-based housing and appropriate support services,
- Reduction of living wage jobs due to foreign out-sourcing and modernizing technology,
- Rise of a service economy with low paying jobs, and
- Flat and/or reduced spending on social programs at the state and federal level.

More recently, the Great Recession of 2007—2009 created the highest unemployment rates in decades, resulting in fewer workers employed, a decline in earned income, fluctuating rents, an increase in home foreclosures, and a reduction in state and federal funding for need-based assistance programs. These factors pushed many low-income households, and even some middle-income families, into crisis, including homelessness.

Causes of Homelessness

Today, many of our community's low-income households are at-risk of becoming homeless – often a single paycheck away from losing their housing. Many individuals lack education and job skills to be prepared to compete for living-wage jobs, have an insufficient personal safety net to successfully weather temporary or chronic adversity, and may have limited options for improving their situation. Ultimately, they lose hope for a future that envisions economic self-sufficiency and social resiliency.

While economic problems and evictions are often the final event leading to homelessness, individuals with serious behavioral health issues are particularly vulnerable. They are often unable to maintain a job (or if they do, it is at very low pay), have difficulty managing medicines appropriately and rely on multiple services to sustain self-sufficiency. Others at risk are members of dysfunctional households who are often victims of domestic violence, runaway or abandoned youth or youth who have aged out of foster care, large families, or veterans who have been negatively impacted by the traumas of war. The combination of rising housing costs, limited income, and a severe shortage of affordable housing are other major factors leading to homelessness.

Social Impact of Homelessness: The Cost of Doing Nothing

Homelessness not only has huge impacts on the individuals experiencing it, it is also expensive for our community. Homelessness almost always escalates an already unstable family situation. Youth and adults with mental illness or drug and alcohol problems get worse when they do not have stable housing to get the behavioral and/or medical attention they need.

Homelessness costs our community in other ways, as well. Each year, Kittitas County residents' tax dollars are spent caring for homeless people through our emergency services – including 911, emergency rooms and clinics, law enforcement, fire and rescue units, jails, detoxification programs, public health system, the judiciary system and more.

Homelessness has a particularly troubling impact on children. Homeless children often are impacted by adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) resulting in impediments to growth and development and overall weak performance in school.

Homeless adults have a hard time gaining employment and holding a job. Evictions and foreclosures hurt landlords, banks, and neighborhoods. Law enforcement spends countless hours responding to complaints about illegal camping and illegal overnight parking.

History of the Plan

This plan is part of a national movement to end homelessness. As part of that national effort, Washington State passed legislation in 2005 (ESSHB 2163), and subsequent legislation in later years, mandating that each county focus on reducing homelessness. Each county is required to (1) develop and periodically update a Homeless Housing Plan, (2) collect funds to pay for its implementation through a document recording surcharge at the county Auditor level, (3) collect data about homeless households and the services they receive to evaluate progress, and (4) coordinate efforts among homeless service providers.

2019 Plan Update

The picture of homelessness and the body of research about the most effective ways to help people regain housing stability have changed rapidly. Since the first Plan in many new strategies have been implemented, the landscape of providers has changed, and we have much better data about our homeless households.

While the original 2005 legislative mandate was to “reduce homelessness by 50% by 2015”, there is now a more sophisticated understanding of the causes of homelessness. The goal in Kittitas County now is to **make homelessness rare, brief, and a one-time event**. Until the underlying social issues that lead people to become homeless are addressed, The Plan is to prevent homelessness whenever possible and help people quickly regain stable housing and overcome their barriers to sustaining that housing.

Input for The Plan was gathered from a broad range of sources:

- Point in Time Count data,
- Homeless Management Information System data,
- Coordinated Entry
- Census Data
- Community members through a survey
- Meetings with elected officials
- Service Agencies in Kittitas County
- Schools
- Emergency Services

Purpose of the Plan

The Homeless and Affordable Housing Plan Committee identified three main purposes of the plan, in addition to fulfilling the legislative mandate:

- **Blueprint for Implementation:** A clear and concise agreement about the community’s plan to reduce homelessness.
- **Tool for Advocacy:** An informational focal point to inspire local advocacy and leadership to embrace homelessness as a priority for action.
- **Reference for Funders:** An articulation of the community’s priorities for funding, ensuring that these priorities meet the Federal, State, and local requirements that the funded programs are in alignment with the community’s homelessness plan.

The plan lays out broad goals and strategies to guide government, non-profit agencies, and other partners to achieve the desired outcomes necessary to reduce homelessness and increase affordable housing options.

Housing Affordability Crisis

The past decade has been challenging for many Kittitas County citizens, as the value of their wages has diminished, the number of households living in poverty has risen, and the lack of affordable housing has affected many households, resulting in housing instability and homelessness.

Affordable Housing Shortage

The gap between incomes and the cost of available housing pushes many people into homelessness, particularly in a market like Kitsap where housing prices rise faster than incomes.

A 2017 report by the Washington State Department of Commerce shows that *increasing rents is the largest driver of homelessness* in Washington State.³ National research indicates that every \$100 increase in rent is associated with an increase in homelessness of 6% in metro areas and 32% in non-metro areas.⁴ Kittitas County includes both.

Other Causes of Homelessness

The lack of income to pay for housing is a result of the breakdown of other social factors, such as economic security, employment, education, and the health care system. The Great Recession that began in 2007 had a huge impact on economic and housing factors that affect homelessness. The effects of the Great Recession still affect many households today. The

resulting economic instability, foreclosure, unemployment, insufficient outreach to some of the most vulnerable citizens including veterans, loss of retirement and savings, and loss of health benefits forced an unprecedented number of households into homelessness. Many of these households were not previously considered to be at risk of homelessness, but were affected by prolonged unemployment, foreclosure, or rising health care costs.

With so many of our neighbors living on the edge of housing instability, small crises are often the tipping point leading to homelessness. These crises are often related to loss of employment or financial hardship, physical or mental health issues, being discharged from other systems of care (jail/prison, foster care, physical or mental health), substance use disorders, or family break-ups¹². In addition, emerging research shows the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on the physical and behavioral health of adults, increasing the likelihood of homelessness.

PROGRESS AND INNOVATION

When individuals or families are in danger of becoming homeless, or have already lost their housing, the goal is to get them into housing and provide services that best meet their needs as quickly as possible. A homeless crisis response system involves many organizations, a diverse set of programmatic tools, and multiple funding sources.

Prevention and Diversion

The most cost-effective way to decrease homelessness is to intervene before individuals and families lose their housing. Often, a household on the brink of homelessness can avert the crisis with a small amount of financial support and the necessary supportive services to regain financial stability. Contrast this minimal cost for prevention with the immense cost to the family, social service agencies, and the community when individuals or families become homeless. By focusing on diversion and prevention, we can effectively reduce homelessness.

Kittitas County Homelessness Today

Data about homelessness is collected in several ways, through the efforts of the social service and housing providers who work with people experiencing homelessness:

Point in Time Count

The Point in Time Count (PiT) is required by the Department of Commerce and HUD in order to receive homeless grant funds. The information from the count is compiled and submitted to WA State and is used locally for evaluation and planning purposes. The PiT surveys sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on the fourth Thursday in January during a specific 24-hour period in all Washington State counties. The PiT provides limited information about the full scope of homelessness, because external factors affect the results: weather, volunteers, and the social stigma of homelessness. Many communities consider the PiT to undercount homelessness by a factor of two to three times. However, the PiT provides a large sample, from which we can extrapolate general information about our homeless population, including reasons for homelessness.

Homeless Management Information System

The second tool that is used to collect information about homelessness in Kittitas is the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). This is a federally-mandated and state-managed database of information that is required to be collected by homeless housing and service providers about every client who receives homeless assistance provided by federal or state funding. Privately-funded programs are not required to participate, though in Kitsap several of these programs choose to do so.

Required HMIS data includes demographic information such as gender, age, prior living situation, length of time homeless, education level, ethnicity, and family composition. Clients must provide signed consent to have identifying information entered into the system. When a client enters a particular housing or homeless services program, information about their participation in the program is also recorded in HMIS.

Coordinated Entry

The Regional Coordinated Entry system was created five years ago to better maximize resources available in the community to quickly match households with the services they need to avert crisis, achieve stability, or to seek resources to answer real or perceived need. The Coordinated Entry System created and managed by HopeSource operates twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week and ensures easy, low-to-no barrier access to homeless individuals and families seeking housing. It can be accessed online from any computer including public computers in libraries, schools, businesses, law enforcement, and network service providers. The system can also be accessed by phone or in person, and information on how to access that resource is posted widely and visibly and shared with all public service providers. The Coordinated Entry system delivers information to the entire service provider network in one step, avoiding the need to go “door to door” for those seeking assistance. The Coordinated Entry System allows the homeless person to control how they want to make contact and engages them in the process of seeking solutions to their crisis and to receiving assistance quickly.

Individuals enter through the online housing portal using a computer or mobile device OR are entered into the portal by a participating agency working with the individual/household. Applicants are directed to an online application form and answer a series of assessment questions, including the common assessment form and care coordination survey. Households seeking emergency services are directed to the appropriate agency through the web-based portal including; emergency services (911) Comprehensive Mental Health Crisis Line, and Comprehensive Mental Health Domestic Violence hotline (ASPEN). Once submitted, all agencies

participating in CE immediately receive a notification of the individual/household’s entry via email. Within 30 minutes of receipt during normal business hours, HopeSource will email a confirmation to the

individual/household that their request has been received. All participating agencies will review and assess the application and determine the individual/household's eligibility for services. The agency best suited to serve the applicant then contacts the applicant and arranges to conduct additional assessment and intake.

In the HopeSource Coordinated Entry System, calls are checked daily and a HopeSource staff member replies to the household within 48 normal business hours to notify them that their request has been received, followed by a phone conversation to better understand each situation. If the household is not diverted, the first face-to-face interview will be conducted within 3 business days. This interview allows households to provide additional information to be considered in prioritization decisions and program eligibility. Households are prioritized based on vulnerability with emphasis on households with children. Households who do not fit a prioritization category will still receive services and referrals for appropriate intervention. The standard assessment identifies barriers to permanent housing stabilization and assesses issues that may potentially impact housing success. By conducting standardized assessments for all households, we can identify anyone who is currently unsheltered, chronically homeless with long periods of homelessness, has the most severe service needs or frequency of crisis services, has chronic health conditions, are victims of domestic violence, or have small children in the household.

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE MEASURES

To make sure that what we are doing is having the desired effect, specific system performance measures are used, based on data collected through the HMIS and other sources.

How many people experience homelessness?

The Point in Time Count provides information about homeless households who choose to participate in a survey on one particular day, regardless of whether they are seeking or receiving services and includes individuals who are sheltered and unsheltered, by federal definition. The Homeless Management Information System and Coordinated Entry provide information only about clients who seek and access services.

Conclusion

Though no single data source provides definitive information about homeless demographics, the picture that results from the data sources cited above indicate more than _____ households, with a variety of household compositions and needs, require homeless housing and services on an annual basis. Each household has unique needs that must be met in order for them to access a path to regain stable housing and self-sufficiency.

Economic factors continue to precipitate households being pushed into homelessness, particularly the dramatic increase in rents over the last several years. People with fixed incomes are particularly vulnerable to rent increases.

Overall, Kittitas County providers are doing a better job of quickly providing immediate housing and services, however the focus on prioritizing the most difficult to serve, has put a strain on shelters and

has slowed exits to permanent housing because of insufficient permanent supportive housing. While the waiting list for shelter time is relatively short for most households, there are a significant number of households that are unable to be helped because we do not have the programs and resources to do so.

Most households are able to maintain stable housing after leaving programs to a stable housing destination, which points to successful program models. However, some households cycle through the system and use a higher proportion of resources. This calls for solutions that target highly vulnerable households with many needs and barriers – they will be more expensive to serve in the short-term, but this will have the biggest long-term impact

on community resources, the quality of life for these households, and our ability to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time.

Action Plan

Current Needs and Gaps

Increased Demand: The numbers of homeless individuals and households and requests for homeless services have grown over the past decade, as evidenced by data referenced earlier. As long as the myriad underlying social causes of housing crises exist, households will continue to become homeless. National research indicates that many households who report needing assistance to prevent homelessness may actually be resilient enough to resolve the issue independently, whereas those who are most vulnerable should be prioritized for assistance.

Affordable Housing Shortage: Kittitas County, like many other cities and counties, is in the midst of a shortage of affordable housing – both subsidized and market-rate.

Core Strategies

Preventing homelessness through targeted prevention can avert eviction or foreclosure for those *most likely* to become homeless. **Diversion programs** make smaller investments of funds for non-housing items that prevent housing instability or homelessness. Prevention programs have improved efficacy if connections to existing supports (such as job training and placement, basic life skills, financial literacy, and education) are included, so that households can address the underlying reasons for their housing crisis.

Additional units of affordable housing for Homeless Households at very low- and low- income levels are required to prevent the large number of rent-burdened households being forced into homelessness.

New Action Steps

Proposed Action Steps for 2019 – 2023 focus on:

- Increase the availability of affordable housing through developing and implementing policies that incentivize development of affordable housing and allowing alternative housing models
- Increase the number of RRH vouchers issued by the HAHC

Continuously improve the homeless response system

Although Kittitas County has a robust homeless response system, it must continuously innovate to respond to changing needs and incorporate emerging successful strategies.

Current Needs and Gaps

Performance Measurement: Although many individual organizations are using performance indicators, including outputs and outcomes, currently there is not widespread use of performance measures at the countywide and agency level to help identify whether collective progress is being made to accomplish community impact. In addition, organizations could benefit from training on how to use performance measures and targets to improve their performance.

Best Practices: Over the last 10 years, significant research has demonstrated the most effective practices in delivering homeless housing and programs (*e.g.* progressive engagement).

Limited Capacity: Capacity issues exist on two levels in our community. First, the existing emergency, supportive and permanent affordable housing available is not adequate to meet the demand. Homeless services, such as emergency shelters, are being strained and usually run at capacity. Since there are not sufficient homeless housing units or beds available to meet the demand, homeless individuals and families are forced to find shelter in temporary or unsuitable conditions. Waiting lists for permanent subsidized housing, such as Public Housing, are

often years long.

Core Strategies

At a time when demand is increasing and resources are decreasing, doing more with less is imperative. Increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the homeless housing system through maximizing system coordination, provider capacity, and overall system capacity is critical.

Using performance measures and data to drive decision-making and improving coordination among different systems of care and among service providers will improve efficiency.

In addition, ensuring that **planning for homelessness and affordable housing are integrated** with other planning effort and the evolution of other services delivery will provide a more cohesive and comprehensive response.

We must **ensure the strategic investment of public funds** through incorporating evidence-based practices in new and existing programs to shift the response system. In particular, **incorporating trauma-informed care and person-centered care** principles throughout the homeless crisis response system will provide a more compassionate and effective response.

Provider capacity and outcomes can be improved through providing training on evidence-base practices, performance measurement, and implementing shelter care standards. Expanding the use of performance measurements, including providing training

- Ensuring the most efficient investments of grant funds
- Increasing the use of trauma-informed care and other evidence-based practices

Expand community engagement

Community understanding and support for addressing homelessness is essential for generating the leadership and resources to be successful.

Current Needs and Gaps

Leadership: Although leadership for homeless issues is strong within the homeless response system, it would be strengthened to incorporate a broader representation from other sectors and systems of care that interact with the issues of affordable housing and homelessness and to widen its scope beyond tiny cottages to the many other homelessness issues facing Kittitas County.

Citizens Outreach and Involvement: One of the most frequent themes for this Plan was the need for having coordinated and consistent communication about the issue of homelessness with the broader community so that compassion for those experiencing homelessness can be increased, leading to greater community support and involvement.

Insufficient Funding: While Kittitas County agencies have funding sources targeted to reducing homelessness, the demand for services and housing continues to grow. Federal funding sources that support permanent subsidized and permanent supportive housing have been reduced or stagnated over the past three to five years. More expensive operating costs mean that funding does not stretch as far as it once did. Because of this limited funding, existing funding must be invested as effectively as possible and advocacy at the state and federal level is essential.

Action Plan: Detail Matrix

Defining and Documenting Success

Defining Success

For many years success in homeless programs was defined by how many people received housing services. Over time, the idea of what constitutes success has shifted to focus on outcomes for the individuals served. It is not enough to say that services were received, but instead we must determine the efficacy of those services in

reducing homelessness. This can be a difficult process, since long-term follow-up of people who received housing or services is difficult and impractical.

Challenges

In addition, determining success in the realm of reducing overall homelessness is an elusive proposition. Several factors contribute to the challenge:

- Dynamic Population The homeless population is not static: there is a constant influx of people who are becoming homeless at any given time, while at the same time previously homeless people are being housed. While hundreds of homeless people may have been housed over a period of time, more have become homeless over the same period. Therefore, the overall number of homeless may have stayed the same or increased.
- Prevention Efforts Many of our efforts are geared at preventing homelessness and evaluating the long-term effectiveness of these programs is difficult to measure.
- Inaccurate Data & Counts There are numerous homeless people who either do not consider themselves to be homeless because they are “staying with friends” or “living in their car” or who do not want to be counted due to a variety of personal issues. Our community experiences these people and their homelessness, but they are not included in our voluntary homeless counts.

Challenges notwithstanding, it is crucial that we develop ways to assess whether the time, effort, and financial commitments to the issue of homelessness are effective.

Tools

In addition to data from community partners, two primary tools will be used to assist with evaluating success:

Annual Point in Time Count

Each January the Kitsap County Department of Human Services Housing and Homelessness Program in partnership with the Kitsap Housing and Homelessness Coalition is mandated to carry out a countywide count of homeless people, both sheltered (currently receiving subsidized emergency or transitional housing) and unsheltered (living on the streets, in cars, with friends, or identified as incarcerated transients). Participation by people experiencing homelessness is voluntary. Data collected from this effort provides the state with basic statistics about Kitsap’s progress in reducing homelessness, and provides the County and the community with information about the housing and services gaps.

Homeless Management Information System

This state- and federally-mandated database project collects detailed data about users of homeless housing and services. The collected data is used by the state to analyze the resources necessary to move individuals from homelessness to self-sufficiency. On a local level, it facilitates coordination among agencies and delivery of services to homeless individuals. It also allows excellent quality demographic and programmatic information to be collected about homeless households who are receiving services.

Coordinated Entry

All agencies receiving funds from the county’s document recording fees are required to enter households served into coordinated entry (CE) in order to remain eligible for funds. CE gives us real time and accurate information on homelessness in the county. Trends can be quickly identified allowing a shift in strategies, real number in real time can be stated with accuracy allowing for better communication within the homeless network as well as external outreach in the community.

Conclusion

Ending Homelessness Requires Commitment

Making homelessness rare, brief, and one-time must be one of our community’s top priorities. It will require us to meld specific strategies to decrease homelessness and to implement broader policy changes to achieve an overall

increase in affordable housing.

Our county's Homeless Housing Plan is an expression of a collective commitment to actively seek long-term and sustainable solutions to the issue rather than to simply manage episodes of homelessness as they occur.

We will need to examine our past assumptions about this issue and honestly and critically assess our present activities and initiatives. We need to do business differently – changing systems, redirecting existing resources, and securing additional funding commitments.

We must rely on all community stakeholders to drive policy changes that will result in reducing the number of people experiencing homelessness in Kittitas County:

- County Commissioners, Mayors, City Council Members
- Federal, State and County Agencies / Department Heads
- Business & civic leaders
- Landlords
- Kittitas County citizens
- Homeless Population
- Housing Developers & Service Providers
- Non-profit organizations
- Foundations
- Faith-based organizations

Moving Forward to Reduce Homelessness

It is evident that a new approach is needed since people continue to become homeless; those who are chronically homeless continue to lapse into homelessness using precious resources without successfully regaining housing; and too many people are turned away from assistance because of lack of capacity. This Plan proposes strategies to correct the flaws. This will require community investment. It builds on the successful programs we already have in place, expanding capacity to meet the level of need, and implementing policies and agreements to weave them together into one comprehensive and effective countywide system of care.

The Future of Homelessness

Many social and governmental factors beyond the control of Kitsap community members contribute to the epidemic of homelessness: low minimum wage, declining job market, lack of affordable housing, and high housing and rental prices. Huge efforts will be needed to meet the needs of people who become homeless.

However, with a clear plan to reduce homelessness, the community's investment of resources, and an unwavering commitment to our community members in crisis, we can be successful in making homelessness rare, brief, and one-time.

Objectives

The following pages are the strategies and methods we will use to end homelessness in Kittitas County in the coming 5 years including;

- Objective 1 we will continue to build on our street outreach and marketing of services on busses, billboards and locations homeless household tend to congregate. Further we will continue to strengthen the referral processes in Kittitas County by holding quarterly meetings with partners and stakeholders to clarify policy and procedures.

- Objective 2 we will begin the process of integrating our CE with HMIS but will maintain our platform as it provides more information in real time. Unfortunately, this may mean duplication of entry unless HMIS can receive data from our platform.
- Objective 3 improve efficiencies in our housing department should impact the homeless count by reducing returns to homelessness.
- Objective 4 includes strategies around the use of local document recording fees, as well as projecting the impact this will have on the PIT count in 2024. Not included in the projection chart from the 2018 count are the creation of 25 Homeless vouchers from the housing authority as well as a new build adding an additional 25 homeless set aside units. The County agrees to issue NOFA's for the construction of 5 new units of affordable housing with a homeless set aside as well as 13 RRH vouchers annually for homeless households. These initiatives can be found on the states spreadsheet.
- Objective 5 we have compared our HMIS data to that of the current census information available and is attached. Kittitas County has a great track record of inclusion in housing programs as the data shows. Going forward we will continue to expand marketing and awareness of services to traditionally underrepresented populations and continue to provide annual training in racial sensitivity and awareness of discriminatory practices that impact these communities.

Objective 1

Quickly identify and engage people experiencing homelessness.

| Objective | Strategy | Measure | Outcome | Responsible Agencies | Projected Completion | Metric |
|--------------------|---------------------|---|---|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Objective 1 | Street Outreach | Outreach is conducted weekly and homeless encampments are mapped | A by name list is created and shared amongst participating agencies for placement | HopeSource, A-Team | Jun-20 | CE, by name list, HMIS |
| | Referral Procedures | CE referrals are made within 1 business day of entry into the CE portal | Referrals are quickly screened in or out to speed up placement | | Jun-20 | CE |

Objective 2

Prioritize housing for people with the greatest needs.

| Objective | Strategy | Measure | Outcome | Responsible Agencies | Projected Completion | Metric |
|--------------------|--|---|--|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Objective 2 | Coordinated Entry | Meet HUD and State standards | Merge current CE with state requirements around HMIS | HopeSource, FISH Foodbank, | Jun-20 | CE, HMIS |
| | Prioritization Tool is marketed and used by all housing agencies | Continue to use adapted VISPDAT tool to prioritize households | Vulnerable Households are quickly placed into and prioritized for shelter and other bed openings | HopeSource, Comprehensive Health | Jun-21 | CE, HMIS |

Objective 3

Operate an effective and efficient homeless crisis response system that swiftly moves people into stable permanent housing.

| Objective | Strategy | Measure | Outcome | Responsible Agencies | Projected Completion | Metric |
|--------------------|---|--|--|---|----------------------|---------------------|
| Objective 3 | Case Management, Progressive Engagement | Increased percentage of exits to positive outcome destinations | Perform in the top 20% nationally, most recent information is 76% successful exits | HopeSource, Comprehensive, and ASPEN DV | Jun-21 | HMIS, Golden Report |
| | Case Management, Progressive Engagement, Trauma Informed Care | Exceed national average of positive exits | Currently Kittitas County is averaging 89% positive returns | Maintain Current positive exits | Ongoing | HMIS, Golden Report |
| | Reduce time in family shelter to less than 90 days | reduce time in program to 45 days and target a 75% positive exit | Shelter clients are quickly stabilized and placed into permanent housing | HopeSource, ASPEN DV | Jun-20 | HMIS |

Objective 4

Project the impact of the fully implemented local plans on the number of households housed and the number of households left unsheltered, assuming existing resources and state polices.

| Objective | Strategy | Measure | Outcome | Responsible Agencies | Projected Completion | Metric |
|------------------|---|--|--|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Objective 4 | Achieve Functional Zero in all household types | Track household types by entry and exit to allocate resources where needed | Exit more or an equal number of households in each households type quarterly | HopeSource, Comprehensive Health, ASPEN DV | Jan-24 | CE, HMIS |
| | Maintain Functional Zero for Veteran Households | Track Veteran entries and outcomes | Maintain current status of functional zero in veteran homelessness | HopeSource, Veterans Coalition | ongoing | CE, HMIS |
| | Create and Fund 13 new RRH vouchers | Issue NOFA Bi-Annually for \$130,000.00 to operate a RRH program for Homeless | HAHC issues NOFA earmarking document recording fees for Homeless RRH program | HAHC, BOCC | Jun-20 | Annual County expenditure Report |
| | Create an average of 5 new homeless housing units per year for the next 5 years | Issue NOFA annually or other increment until a total of 25 new affordable homeless Housing units are created in the next 5 years | HAHC seeks development partners and issues NOFA to assist in the construction of 25 AH homeless units in the next 5 years | HAHC, BOCC | Jan-24 | Annual County expenditure Report |
| | Coordination with other agencies | Preferred recipients of funds and resources are those applicants that can leverage and partner with other agencies or municipalities | The HAHC will give more weight to applications that include city, other agencies, state and federal funders in their application | HAHC, BOCC, and County Municipalities | Jan-24 | NOFA applications and awarded contracts |
| | Maintain 5 units of turnover annually in the HASS program | The HAKC will graduate 5 households annually form their Homeless program | 5 new Homeless portable Section 8 vouchers will be available each year. | HAKC | Jun-20 | |

Interventions

Instructions

Data in cells highlighted in sage green are from the HMIS and annual report, and can be adjusted if better data on the current system is available.

Unhighlighted cells are calculated and should not be modified

| | Emergency Shelter | Transitional Housing | Rapid Rehousing | Permanent Supportive Housing | Permanent Housing dedicated to homeless persons | Total |
|--|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|---|------------|
| Households served at a point in time (occupied units) | 5 | - | 28 | - | - | 33 |
| Annual Spending | \$ 25,045 | \$ - | \$ 532,535 | \$ - | \$ 39,600 | \$ 597,180 |
| Households served in housing type annually | 28 | - | 87 | - | 1 | 116 |
| Cost per household served in year | \$ 894 | \$ - | \$ 6,121 | \$ - | \$ 39,600 | |
| Exited households | 23 | - | 66 | - | 1 | 90 |
| % of households who exit | 82% | 0% | 76% | 0% | 100% | |
| Cost per exit | \$ 1,089 | \$ - | \$ 8,069 | \$ - | \$ 39,600 | |
| Successful exits | 14 | - | 59 | - | 1 | 74 |
| % Successful exits | 61% | 0% | 89% | 0% | 100% | |
| Cost per successful exit | \$ 1,789 | \$ - | \$ 9,026 | \$ - | \$ 39,600 | |
| Cost per unit/slot | \$ 5,009 | \$ - | \$ 19,019 | \$ - | \$ - | |
| Average length of stay for households served during year | 65 | 0 | 117 | 0 | 0 | |
| Failed/unknown exits | 9 | - | 7 | - | - | 16 |
| Returned to homelessness after successful exit | 9 | - | 9 | - | - | 18 |
| Returned to homelessness after successful exit % | 64% | 0% | 15% | 0% | 0% | |
| Net successful interventions | 10 | - | 71 | - | 1 | 82 |
| Supply vs. Demand | | | | | 0.0 | |
| TOTAL interventions | 116 | | | | | |
| Successful interventions | 82 | | | | | |
| Unsuccessful interventions | 34 | | | | | |
| Unsheltered not served annually (PIT x3) | 30 | | | | | |
| TOTAL demand for successful interventions | 146 | | | | | |
| Deficit of successful interventions | 64 | | | | | |

Current Point in time count of unsheltered households 10

Future State

Demand change - change in households facing unsheltered homelessness annually: 30 (Negative values are fewer households needing homeless housing interventions due to reasons such as...

Interventions

Instructions

Data in cells highlighted in slate blue default to the values in the "Current State" table above, but can be modified to see the impact of the change. Cells modified with values different than the current state are highlighted in bright blue.

Unhighlighted cells are calculated and should not be modified

| | Emergency Shelter | Transitional Housing | Rapid Rehousing | Permanent Supportive Housing | Permanent Housing dedicated to homeless persons | TOTAL |
|--|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|---|------------|
| Households served at a point in time (occupied units) | 5 | - | 28 | - | - | 33 |
| Annual Spending | \$ 25,045 | \$ - | \$ 532,535 | \$ 24,000 | \$ - | \$ 581,580 |
| Households served in housing type annually | 28 | - | 87 | - | - | 115 |
| Cost per household served in year | \$ 894 | \$ - | \$ 6,121 | \$ - | \$ - | |
| Exited households | 23 | - | 66 | - | - | 89 |
| % of households who exit | 82% | 0% | 76% | 0% | 100% | |
| Cost per exit | \$ 1,089 | \$ - | \$ 8,069 | \$ - | \$ - | |
| Successful exits | 17 | - | 59 | - | - | 76 |
| % Successful exits | 75% | 80% | 89% | 0% | 100% | |
| Cost per successful exit | \$ 1,452 | \$ - | \$ 9,066 | n/a | n/a | |
| Cost per unit/slot | \$ 5,009 | \$ - | \$ 19,019 | \$ - | \$ - | |
| Average length of stay for households served during year | 65 | - | 117 | - | - | 104 |
| Failed exits | 6 | - | 7 | - | - | 13 |
| Returned to homelessness after successful exit | 2 | - | 3 | - | - | 5 |
| Returned to homelessness after successful exit % | 10% | 5% | 5% | 0% | 0% | |
| Net successful interventions | 21 | - | 77 | - | - | 97 |
| Supply vs. Demand | | | | | | |
| TOTAL interventions | 115 | | | | | |
| Successful interventions | 97 | | | | | |
| Unsuccessful interventions | 18 | | | | | |
| Change in successful interventions | 15 | | | | | |
| TOTAL demand for successful interventions | 116 | | | | | |
| Deficit of successful interventions | 19 | | | | | |

No inflation

Forecast point in time count of unsheltered households **3**
 Forecast change in point in time count of unsheltered households **(7)**
 % Forecast change in point in time count of unsheltered households **-71%**

2024 after population growth and rent-driven increase in need

TOTAL demand for successful interventions **127**
 Households housed annually **115**
 Successful interventions **97**
 Deficit of successful interventions **(1)**
 Forecast point in time count of unsheltered households **(0)**
 Forecast change in point in time count of unsheltered households **(10)**
 % Forecast change in point in time count of unsheltered households **-101%**

| New Programs & Enrollments | |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| Program | Number Served |
| Spurling | 5 |
| HASS | 5 |
| YHDP | 2 |
| NEW units | 5 |
| RRH | 13 |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Total Added | 30 |

Objective 5

Address racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness.

| Kittitas County Racial Demographics | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------|----------------------|-----|--------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|----------------------|------|----------------------------------|------|----------------------|------|
| Race and Ethnicity | All (ACS)1 | | | | In Poverty (ACS)1 | | | | HMIS Program Data | | | | Experiencing Homelessness (PIT)2 | | | |
| | All | | Fam w/ Children | | All | | Fam w/ Children | | All | | Fam w/ Children | | All | | Fam w/ Children | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| All People | 41,203 | | 9,555 | | 9,518 | 23.1 | 870 | | 263 | | 132 | | 25 | | 2 | |
| Race | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| White | 37,093 | 90% | 8,850 | 93% | 8,123 | 85% | 752 | 86% | 230 | 86% | 113 | 86% | 24 | 96% | 2 | 100% |
| Black | 387 | 1% | 26 | 0% | 55 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 11 | 4% | 9 | 7% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Native American/Alaskan | 239 | 1% | 43 | 0% | 9 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 1% | 3 | 2% | 1 | 4% | 0% | 0% |
| Asian | 757 | 2% | 155 | 2% | 337 | 4% | 43 | 5% | 5 | 2% | 2 | 2% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Pacific Islander | 52 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 52 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 1% | 2 | 2% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Other | 1,458 | 4% | 243 | 3% | 545 | 6% | 45 | 5% | 0% | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Multi-Racial | 1,217 | 3% | 238 | 2% | 400 | 4% | 30 | 3% | 8 | 3% | 3 | 2% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Ethnicity | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hispanic | 3,381 | 8% | 706 | 7% | 943 | 10% | 98 | 11% | 36 | 14% | 29 | 22% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Non-Hispanic | 35,235 | 86% | 8,381 | 88% | 7,752 | 81% | 696 | 80% | 226 | 85% | 103 | 78% | 23 | 100% | 2 | 100% |
| Youth <25 | 17,433 | | NOT AVAILABLE | | 4,027 est. | | NOT AVAILABLE | | 98 | | NOT AVAILABLE | | 3 | | NOT AVAILABLE | |
| Race | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| White | 15,184 | 87.1% | -- | -- | 3,437 | 85% | -- | -- | 81 | 83% | -- | -- | 3 | 100% | -- | -- |
| Black | 14 | 0.1% | -- | -- | 23 | 1% | -- | -- | 7 | 7% | -- | -- | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Native American/Alaskan | 3 | 0.0% | -- | -- | 4 | 0% | -- | -- | 1 | 1% | -- | -- | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Asian | 279 | 1.6% | -- | -- | 143 | 4% | -- | -- | 3 | 3% | -- | -- | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Pacific Islander | 0 | 0.0% | -- | -- | 22 | 1% | -- | -- | 1 | 1% | -- | -- | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Other | 959 | 5.5% | -- | -- | 231 | 6% | -- | -- | 0% | 0% | -- | -- | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Multi | 837 | 4.8% | -- | -- | 169 | 4% | -- | -- | 5 | 5% | -- | -- | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Ethnicity | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hispanic | 2,789 | 16.0% | -- | -- | 399 | 10% | -- | -- | 21 | 21% | -- | -- | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Non-Hispanic | 13,389 | 76.8% | -- | -- | 3,280 | 81% | -- | -- | 77 | 79% | -- | -- | 3 | 100% | -- | -- |
| Veterans | 3,489 | | NOT AVAILABLE | | 224 est | | NOT AVAILABLE | | 32 | | 2 | | 3 | | NOT AVAILABLE | |
| Race | | | | | <i>*est based on pop rates</i> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| White | 3,294 | 94% | -- | -- | 211 | 94% | -- | -- | 31 | 97% | 2 | 100% | 3 | 100% | -- | -- |
| Black | 102 | 3% | -- | -- | 7 | 3% | -- | -- | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Native American/Alaskan | 11 | 0% | -- | -- | 1 | 0% | -- | -- | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Asian/ | 19 | 1% | -- | -- | 1 | 1% | -- | -- | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Pacific Islander | 0 | 0% | -- | -- | 0 | 0% | -- | -- | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Other/ | 0 | 0% | -- | -- | 0 | 0% | -- | -- | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Multi-Racial | 63 | 2% | -- | -- | 4 | 2% | -- | -- | 1 | 3% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Ethnicity | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hispanic | 29 | 1% | -- | -- | 2 | 1% | -- | -- | 2 | 6% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | -- | -- |
| Non-Hispanic | 3,265 | 94% | -- | -- | 211 | 94% | -- | -- | 30 | 94% | 2 | 100% | 3 | 100% | -- | -- |

List of Programs Housing Homeless Households in Kittitas County

| Program | Eligible Households | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Special Conditions |
|----------------------|---------------------|------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------|--------------|------------------|--------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | No Income | Single Men | Single Women | Women w/ Children | Men w/ Children | Couples | Large Families w/Children | Un-accompanied youth | Veterans | Pets Allowed | Criminal History | Sex-Offender | Substance Use Disorder | Behavioral Health | Internal Referral Required? | Disability required? | |
| Cold Weather Shelter | X | X | X | | | X | | | X | | X | | NC | X | | | |
| RRH/CHG | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | NC | X | | | Pets allowed with LL approval |
| RRH/McKinney | X | | | X | X | | X | | X | X | X | | NC | X | | | Pets allowed with LL approval |
| RRH/HEN | X | X | X | | | | | | X | X | X | X | NC | X | | X | Pets allowed with LL approval |
| RRH/SSAP | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | NC | X | X | | HoH Must be 65+ |
| RRH/SSVF | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | NC | X | | | Must be Eligible Veteran |
| RRH/YHDP | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | NC | X | | | HoH Must be under 24 |
| HASS | X | | | X | X | | X | | X | | Q | | NC | NC | X | | |
| ASPEN DV | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Merit House/Men | X | X | | | | | | | X | | X | | X | X | X | X | Services required, sobriety |
| HAKC | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | | | NC | X | X | X | HASS is through CE and some units are |
| Crestview | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | | | | X | X | X | | |
| HopeSource Scattered | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | NC | X | | | |
| Comprehensive | | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | X | X | X | | Services are mandatory, medical |
| Spurling Court | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |