

What should the Coalition focus on accomplishing in 2024?

Group Discussion Summary • Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness • 12.22.23

What can I say that has yet to be said? When will enough be enough?

When will our nation live up to our stated values of equality and opportunity for all? When will we cure ourselves of the greed, racism, bigotry, and discrimination that impact so many people without homes, so many people with disabilities, so many people of color, so many LGBTQ+ people? ...

We stand at the quarter mark of the 21st century. Age-old challenges have only gotten fiercer. Death stalks the streets. Deadlier drugs, more extreme weather, and treatable illnesses steal friends, siblings, and parents before their time.

Then there is the violence. It defines life for many people experiencing homelessness. And make no mistake: People without homes are much more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators.

As we remember those who have died without homes here in the nation's capital over the past year, let us also remember those who have died in communities across the country.

The longest night—the winter solstice—may be inescapable, but these deaths are not inevitable. Despite the feelings of exhaustion, trauma, and uncertainty so many of our friends and neighbors may feel tonight, a different future is possible. A better future awaits us. We have only to seize it.”

—USICH Executive Director Jeff Olivet.

What Is working and what should we do now?

- 295 buttons!
- More communication and collaboration.
- Embrace the escalation of policy work in approach to the issues.
- Focus on pushing for housing options for people under 30% AMI –no market solution for that.
- Rent stabilization and housing trust fund permanence at state level.
- The system is too complicated still for people to navigate and people keep getting passed over for help.
- Hold city and county accountable for the deaths in past year.
- We need to focus next year on the addressing the damage being done by sweeps and calling for change in a way that attracts rather than repels allies. This will take strategic analysis and message discipline.
- We need policy work to push where those who are funded by govt may not be as free to talk.

- We need to talk about systemic failures to counter the narrative of individual failure and culpability.
- We need to use our website to put the stories out there that will help change narrative ... people who have lived experience, people who work but don't make enough to rent a space. We have the voices that we need.
- Address the stuff issue: People won't go inside because they worry about losing their stuff.
- How do we create more opportunities to bring homeless people into supportive community rather than driving them further away?
- One big ongoing success is how the volunteers self-organize to address emerging needs, or changes in circumstances.
- The sweeps make it hard to provide hot food - I miss the soup outreach and the company of all of you who were part of this effort.
- I have learned a ton from Jay Worley about sensory challenges that impact peoples' ability to function in large noisy spaces, and how to talk about these challenges. Huge help! Jay rocks.
- Acknowledging the support system of like-minded, knowing there is a virtual gathering space to come to every week, and the mutual learning from each other. Agreed more centering is needed ❤️
- There have been others who have left this space because it is "too radical" or because they felt attacked. Collaboration is not for the faint of heart. We keep aiming for balance and sometimes actually achieve it

Notes and Resources List

New and Notable

FOB Hope fundraiser is January 20th, 5pm-9:30 pm at the Puyallup Elks Lodge. Theresa Power-Drutis is coordinating a coalition table. tpdrutis@nctacoma.org

Important new study on epidemiology of homeless sweeps.

<https://nhchc.org/media/press-releases/study-shows-involuntary-displacement-of-people-experiencing-homelessness-may-cause-significant-spikes-in-mortality-overdoses-and-hospitalizations/>

WLIHI's Housing Roadmap to Justice

<https://www.wliha.org/roadmaptohousingjustice>

HUD Homeownership Assistance

<https://www.hud.gov/states/washington/homeownership/buyingprgms>

What is "Social Housing?"

<https://www.ahuri.edu.au/analysis/brief/what-difference-between-social-housing-and-affordable-housing-and-why-do-they-matter#:~:text=Social%20housing%20is%20made%20up,not%2Dfor%2Dprofit%20organisations.>

Sign up for Housing and Homeless Adocacy Day January 30th.

<https://secure.everyaction.com/RwWmyBVnCEm4vThBztxSg2>

Link to the eProcurement Portal. Register to bid and receive notifications of future opportunities by selecting subscribe to create an account.

<https://procurement.opengov.com/signup>

Link for public comment on the Affordable Housing Tax Plan.

<https://www.cognitofirms.com/PierceCounty2/PublicCommentOnTheDraftAffordableHousingTaxPlan>

Interested in spearheading a local Laundry Love?

Contact Theresa Power-Drutis. <https://laundrylove.org>

If anyone has need or share items to add to the outreach supply list, please drop them in the chat, or in this form:

<https://forms.gle/2zfK8Y5JvC1K5eXLA>

Community Spotlight Opportunity: Tell the coalition about your organization's good work. Contact tpdrutis@nctacoma.org to schedule a brief presentation. 😊

Recent press

Tacoma Housing Provider loses grant for subsidies.

<https://www.thenewstribune.com/news/local/article282937003.html>

Two sources for the “performative moralism” article on Tim Harris. The original TNT link to Mark Driscoll's column is best because it retains the links. The one from the MSN site lacks those but is available to TNT nonsubscribers

<https://amp.thenewstribune.com/opinion/article283285703.html?>

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/opinion/a-seattle-advocate-tired-of-our-homeless-debate-he-blames-performative-moralism-opinion/ar-AA1SesX>

Ongoing Resources and Needs

SVdP is willing to store any items for sharing- including massive amounts of socks. We have systems in place so outreach workers can pick up supplies every day between 10am-5pm. Just text Dionne. 253-355-5868

Link for the Coalition's cold weather resources page: www.craft.me/s/f0GVFmAubX8YUg

Outreach and Supply Need/Share Form:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Kh2OBOLT-SXN8cq7L7Z1Bb04iXxCf6Nfv_RBP-F0SZk/edit?usp=sharing

Free wound care clinic every Friday afternoon, TNE clinic at the STD room at T-PCHD on S 37th & Pacific. Spread the word.

Safe Sites

<https://ss4a.pchomeless.org>

Outreach Supply Need and Share form: <https://forms.gle/2zfK8Y5JvC1K5eXLA>

Please sign up to the inclement weather listserv at

<https://www.pchomeless.org/Home/Listserv>

Pierce County Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness can be found here:

<https://www.piercecountywa.gov/7309/Comprehensive-Plan-to-End-Homelessness>