

What should cities be responsible for in response to homelessness?

Group Discussion Summary • Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness • 3.15.24

Crawl Spaces

Crawl spaces

Where ants arm

Themselves with

Fumes designed and

Cooked and concocted

To kill them

And emperors dressed

In glorified rags and

The shredded skin of

The moon say in the

Tone of an entombed God

“I go and prepare a crawl

Space for you

— Tony Robles

"I am filled with a sense of urgency and dread: dread at the apparently random waves of assaults against people and institutions closest to me; urgency to unearth the connections between these assaults" . . .

I sit before the typewriter for days and nothing comes. It feels as if underlining these assaults, lining them up one after the other and looking at them squarely might give them an unbearable power. Yet I know exactly the opposite is true—no matter how difficult it may be to look at the realities of our lives, it is there that we will find the strength to change them. And to suppress any truth is to give it power beyond endurance.”

— Audre Lorde, *A Burst of Light and Other Essays* 2017

Notes to City Government ...

- Electeds might feel helpless and overwhelmed.
- It doesn't look good to the city to see families on the street.
- When designing policies, cities have responsibility to not treat shelter as a commodity and to see unhoused people as human beings, worthy of dignity and respect.
- City has responsibility to not create gratuitous harm and for knowing the cause of problems and to at least plan to address them.
- We as a city are responsible to ensure that people don't die of poverty. This means a minimum level of shelter, nourishment and capacity to deal with toileting, sleeping and sitting down.
- Perhaps if we set a standard that people have the same rights given to cats and dogs, we could see improvement of prospects for our most vulnerable citizens.
- City seems to be approaching this in an adversarial way in terms of relationship to Coalition.
- Until attitudes and mindsets change, we'll continue in this dysfunctional cycle.
- The city doesn't seem to acknowledge that we're all in a dialog to improve the situation and build solutions. Too often hostile or even dismissive.
- “The dismissiveness is like fighting with Jello.”
- Change probably needs to come through the Coalition. We could go further if we could work together.

- The government seems to focus on Safety and Security Needs (Maslow's 2nd tier) , but is denying access to the prerequisite Physiological Needs.

If: We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America

Then: We have a responsibility care for, protect, and provide opportunity for ALL people, not just those able to 'bootstrap' and pay for their own care.

Notes and Resources List

New and Notable

League of Women Voters resource list/power point. <https://lwvtpc.org/docs.ashx?id=1322460>

Critical Time Intervention Pierce County AKA: CTI.PC (Lisa Kleiner and Christina Turner) 253-348-3742 (referrals) and Business 253-880-6813. We are located in the Wells Fargo Building downtown Tacoma 1201 Pacific Ave #600, Tacoma 98402 and emails are Lisa.Kleiner@CTIpercecounty.org or Christina.Turner@CTIpercecounty.org. Our website is <https://WWW.CTIPiercecounty.org>.

Save the Date for District 2 Participatory Budget kickoff event -March 21 evening.

Community Spotlight Opportunity: Please send suggestions for all partner spotlights to Theresa at tpdrutis@nctacoma.org

Common Good Supply Station @ FUMCOT, First United Methodist Church of Tacoma. Open Tuesday's Noon to 2PM, 621 Tacoma Ave S, Tacoma, WA 98402. Go to the back alley and come to the door between the 2 garages. Call Theresa at 253.617.1405 when you are at the door. The number above is a Line2 number; those who have my personal cell # are welcome to use that instead. Both numbers will ring through

Recent press

Write the Way You Feel: Homeless Poets Find an Outlet in Street Newspapers

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/147941/write-the-way-you-feel>

New Report on Low-Income Housing Availability from WLIHC

<https://www.wliha.org/blog/low-income-renters-washington-face-staggering-shortage-affordable-homes-contributing-housing>

Ongoing Resources and Needs

Sign up to receive Action Alerts: <https://secure.everyaction.com/-gZPY8k0qkaHQyrUqmpC5g2>

One pager on Housing Alliance priorities: <https://www.wliha.org/advocacy/2024-public-policy-priorities>

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

To be added to the monthly Public Health email newsletter, please share your email here OR email me at: jschoeppe@tpchd.org

Outreach and Supply Need/Share Form:

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

TPCHD has a webpage for homeless service providers and advocates

<https://tpchd.org/healthy-people/provider-resources/homelessness-providers-toolkit/>

If you are an agency or org that needs COVID test kit support, we still have kits to distribute. Please reach out directly to our testing team at: epitesting@tpchd.org

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>

Narcan Resources:

<https://www.tacomaneedleexchange.org/naloxoneWA> DOH Free Mail Order Naloxone

Free Narcan Vending Machines: Tacoma Public Library Moore Branch (regular library hours), First United Methodist Church of Tacoma, Recovery Café Orting Valley

WA DOH Free Mail Order Narcan/Naloxone:<https://phra.org/naloxone>

Link to free Narcan resources (and other need and share outreach items):

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

Tacoma Needle Exchange, 3716 S. Pacific Ave. Ste. F, Tacoma, WA 98418

Tue. 11:AM – 3:PM, Thu. 11:AM – 3:PM, Fri 1:PM – 6:PM

Central Tacoma, S. 14th 7 S. G Street, Wed. 11:AM – 4:PM

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

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