Pierce County Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness

December 2021

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# Executive Summary

This plan designs a Homeless System. Success is measured by the success of that system. The single most important metric is whether the number of people experiencing homelessness is shrinking. It is a departure from prior plans by focusing on building a system scaled to the need. The first goal in this plan is the creation of a unified system. The last goal is to size the permanent housing system to the size of the need. Throughout the goals and strategies is the mandate to use data to understand and design programs around the unique needs of different populations. Accountability to the communities we serve is also a focus. To meet the need, the system requires an additional $100M per year to operate, in addition to the current $40M per year used to address homelessness. Homelessness is costly for the community across many other systems, and around $14M per year can be saved by preventing homelessness. Significant capital is needed for construction of both shelter and permanent housing. However, developing a funding strategy and orchestrating a collective community effort to implement it will provide a pathway to securing the funding needed to end homelessness in Pierce County.

# Charge from Pierce County Council

On March 23, 2021, the Pierce County Council adopted resolution [R2021-30s](https://online.co.pierce.wa.us/cfapps/council/model/otDocDownload.cfm?id=14416723&fileName=R2021-30s%20Signed%20Final%20Res.pdf). This resolution created the Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness Ad Hoc Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee’s work concluded on April 24th with the presentation and acceptance of the [Action Plan](https://www.piercecountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/105165/Ad-Hoc-Committee-to-End-Homelessness-Action-Plan?bidId=). The Action Plan created a Steering Committee to oversee creation of a Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness, and a Shelter Plan Work Group to create and implement a plan to create adequate shelter for all by November 1, 2021. This Comprehensive Plan is the product of the Steering Committee and includes the shelter plan as Appendix X.

# Vision

Everyone in Pierce County should have a home. This Comprehensive Plan envisions a system that prevents homelessness by stabilizing households at risk, and immediately responds to homelessness with appropriate shelter and a permanent housing intervention. While eliminating homelessness is nearly impossible, functional zero – a state where people have access to immediate shelter and an effective permanent housing program – is not just possible, but also necessary for nearly every other civic interest or value. For example, success in schools requires that students and their families have adequate housing. Housing is also necessary for child welfare, physical health, mental health, and public health, for economic development and wage progression, for appropriate use of emergency services, public safety and order, environmental protection, justice, and racial justice.

The vision is an integrated, adaptable, and responsive network of services that supports stability and self-determination for everyone—regardless of economic or social circumstances, and regardless of where in our community they live.

Collaboration across jurisdictions, across business sectors, with faith-based and nonprofit organizations, philanthropic organizations, and with neighbors housed and experiencing homelessness is key. Only working in unison, with a clear plan, can we create of shelter and affordable housing to meet the existing and future need so that everyone has a home.

Using the Target Universalism framework – setting universal goals and using targeted processed to achieve those goals, equity is built into every aspect of this plan. The human consequences of inequity affect us all. This work must identify the systemic barriers that keep people from securing and maintaining affordable housing, and work must be focused to undo them.

# Steering Committee

The Steering Committee was responsible for the development of this plan. The full committee met monthly.

## Steering Committee Membership

* Service Provider Representative - Faatima Lawrence, Catholic Community Services
* Service Provider Representative - Sherri Jensen, Valeo
* Service Provider Representative - Courtney Chandler, Associated Ministries
* Continuum of Care Representative - Dr. LaMont Green, Technical Assistance Collaborative
* Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to end Homelessness Representative - Maureen Howard, Tacoma-Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness
* Faith Community Representative - Rich Berghammer, Tacoma-Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness
* Business Community Representative - Greg Helle[[1]](#footnote-2), Absher Construction
* Philanthropic Community Representative - Erika Tucci, Cheney Foundation
* Tribal Community Representative - Ashley Howard
* Affordable Housing Committee Representative - Michael Mirra
* Pierce County Human Services Representative - John Barbee, Pierce County Human Services
* County Executive Representative - Steve O'Ban, Pierce County Executive's Office
* Representing the City of Puyallup - Ned Witting, Puyallup City Council
* Representing the City of Tacoma - Allyson Griffith, City of Tacoma
* Representing the City of Lakewood - Tiffany Speir, City of Lakewood
* Representing the community - Gina Cabiddu, from Gig Harbor/Key Peninsula Area
* Representing the community - Fred Palmiero, from East Pierce County
* Representing Individuals with Lived Experience - Mingo Morales1

## Subcommitees

Seven subcommittees were created to advance the work, with subcommittees meeting as frequently as weekly.

* Targeted Universalism and Accountability - Support other committees to integrate targeted universalism into the plan. Identify mechanisms to monitor performance and hold the homeless system accountable to the community, especially around groups identified for targeted interventions.
* Homeless Prevention - Identify the role of homeless prevention programs in ending homelessness and set the boundaries to what portions of homeless prevention should reside in the homeless response system – especially for targeted populations.
* Permanent Housing interventions - Determine how Rapid Rehousing, Permanent Supportive Housing and the Landlord Liaison project need to be expanded and improved to meet demand – especially for targeted populations.
* Temporary Housing and Navigation interventions - Temporary Housing and Navigation interventions.
* Medical and Behavioral Health Connections - Create plans to modify or expand existing medical and behavioral health systems to better meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness.
* Funding Source Development - Identify existing and potential funding sources to pursue in order grow the homeless system to meet need.
* Prioritization Approach - Determine a methodology to prioritize what project to next fund when additional resources become available. Methodologies could prioritize targeted groups, geographic areas, or interventions types.

# Ad Hoc Committee Objectives

The Ad Hoc Committee identified the following objectives for the Comprehensive Plan to accomplish:

1. Prioritize capital and operating funds so that as additional resources are acquired the next project for that funding is clear.
2. Identify what additional resources our community needs and where to advocate and lobby for them.
3. Make sure our goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely (SMART).
4. Focus on long-term, high-level policy goals that regional elected officials and staff can support, and that local plans can feed into and/or support.
5. Focus not just on what has historically been possible but develop a plan that meets actual need; be innovative, yet practical.
6. Use the Built for Zero methodology to achieve “functional zero:” acceptable shelter and an appropriate permanent housing intervention immediately available.
7. Develop more than just a plan; focus on specific steps for action and implementation.

# Principles

The Ad Hoc Committee identified these principles to guide development of the Comprehensive Plan:

1. Focus on diversity, racial equity, and inclusion.
2. Build plans based on the concept of “targeted universalism” and the 5 steps framework; develop a common goal to address all homeless, with programs designed to meet the unique needs for specific populations (e.g., Veterans, families, youth, DV, etc.).
3. Include experts who’ve lived unsheltered and other marginalized populations in the planning/design process.
4. Start with a value statement about overall intent of plan (such as “Ensure a place where all people belong”).
5. Shelter plan should ensure immediate access to shelter for all populations and should include a wide variety of shelter types so that shelter is accessible to all.
6. Create a regional approach that locates shelters and programs near prior permanent residences and support structures; downtown Tacoma cannot continue to be the only answer.
7. Utilize best practices, published research, and local research and analysis such as past reports and surveys.
8. Ensure the racial composition of the Steering Committee reflects the diversity of the population served.

# Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness

The gap between the system articulated in the Vision statement and the current homeless crisis response system is substantial. Expanding the homeless crisis response system to meet the needs of all people currently experiencing homelessness is an opportunity to build a system that better meets the unique needs of each household experiencing homelessness. Community engagement, a broad set of experiences on the Steering Committee, engaging people with lived experience, and leveraging the targeted universalism framework – described later in this document – are key tools to develop the homeless crisis response the community needs. Most goals in this plan work to develop a more comprehensive homeless crisis response system. However, the community is best served by stabilizing households before they become homeless. Several goals include efforts to advance work on homeless prevention and affordable housing.

# Community Engagement

Ensuring the widest possible input on this Comprehensive Plan will allow the plan to best reflect the needs in the community as well as the resources and approaches needed to meet those needs. Community engagement has spanned a variety of approaches, including presentations to community groups, an on-line open house, a survey of people experiencing homelessness, and bringing individuals and community groups into the Steering Committee and its subcommittees.

Additional community engagement is always desirable. This Comprehensive Plan will evolve as new information is learned and as the needs of people experiencing homelessness and the communities they live in are better understood.

## Lived Experience

Development and expansion of programs will be most successful when these individuals and groups with lived experience are part of the decision-making and implementation processes. All strategies in this plan leverage the expertise of people with lived experiences and organizations that work to advance the needs of target populations.

# Targeted UNiversalism

Targeted Universalism is a framework to pursue a shared goal with strategies designed for the unique needs of different groups. Within the homeless system, that goal is permanent housing. Reaching that goal may require different approaches for different groups. Some groups may benefit from simple technical fixes, such as ensuring ADA accessibility of shelter spaces. Other groups may see improved outcomes only with deeper structural reforms. These reforms may include new service providers run by the populations currently experiencing poor outcomes.

Using targeted universalism means reviewing enrollment data and outcome data to identify programs with low enrollments or poor outcomes for certain populations. Once the need for a targeted approach is identified, programs are designed or modified around the unique needs of the affected population.

## Targeted Populations

Populations with known unique needs, those who are shown locally or nationally to have poor outcomes in homeless systems and those disproportionately experiencing homelessness benefit from targeted strategies to exit homelessness. Monitoring of enrollments and program outcomes, as well as identifying specific strategies to improve enrollments and outcomes, is necessary for the following populations:

* Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC)
* People with disabilities – those with disabilities according to the American with Disabilities Act
* Seniors – individuals over the age of 65
* Families with children
* Members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, two-spirit (LGBTQ+) community
* youth aged 12 to 18 and young adults between 18 and 24 unaccompanied by family
* Households currently fleeing domestic violence – including intimate partner violence and other unsafe situations
* Veterans – those who have served in the United States armed forces

## Strategy and accountability Expectations

The development of each goal and strategy in this plan requires customization for these targeted populations. In addition, Pierce County must create reporting tools and dashboards to ensure accountability that can be disaggregated by enrollments and exit outcomes for each targeted population.

# Research Expectations

To remain relevant over time, many strategies in this plan have been developed based on regular review of published studies, research, conference presentations and other sources of information detailing evidence-based best practices. It is important to our success that Pierce County continue to use best practices research in program development and expansion, and that we enable rigorous evaluation of our own efforts to assess performance.

# Built for Zero Methodology

Built for Zero is an initiative started by Community Solutions in 2015. It is in use in nearly 100 communities across the United States, including six of the largest twenty cities as well as a mix of suburban, urban, and rural communities. It has resulted in 14 communities ending homelessness for target populations, and 44 communities with measurable reductions.

The main tenets of the Built for Zero methodology are integrated into the goals, strategies, and accountability measures in this plan. At the core is the goal to develop Unified Regional Office to assume accountability to end homelessness in Pierce County.

Success of this plan will be measured by the reduction of the total number of people experiencing homelessness and how quickly they exit homelessness to permanent housing. Individual programs will still need to be accountable for client outcomes, but the focus will be on the community-wide goal of ending homelessness.

To achieve the goal of ending homelessness by reaching functional zero, real time data is needed to tailor interventions to each individual, pivot to address needs common to target populations, and have a clear picture of the homeless crisis response system.

In addition to data, Built for Zero requires a focus on racial equity. Targeted Universalism will allow that focus to permeate program design and accountability tools.

Lastly, Built for Zero requires not just quick responses to households experiencing homelessness, but also creating supports necessary to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place.

Each aspect of the Built for Zero methodology can be found in the Comprehensive Plan goals below. Those aspects are:

* By-name list - a list of every person in the community experiencing homelessness, continuously updated
* Integrated Command Center Team – implemented as the Unified Regional Office to End Homelessness, brings key agencies together to work towards functional zero
* Community-level measurement – measure success by the number of people experiencing homelessness.
* Data-driven housing investments – securing the housing resources needed to house people experiencing homelessness

Further details about Build for Zero are available at <https://community.solutions/built-for-zero/>

# Prevention

While prevention has not historically been considered within Pierce County’s homelessness response system, no comprehensive plan to end homelessness can ignore the value in preventing homelessness altogether as the best way to end it. This plan includes a discussion of the need to establish strong partnerships with other “systems” (e.g., criminal justice, foster care, education, behavioral health, and other systems) that interact with and affect people at risk of homelessness. Only by doing so can we create a supportive network that will work to keep people housed, ultimately resulting in our population never having to experience homelessness at all. Funding and a “systems ombudsperson” program are also crucial for the success of this idea.

# Affordable Housing

The causes of homelessness are complex and require a systematic response that accounts for that complexity. Yet, the complexity should not conceal a basic cause: Pierce County does not have enough housing for its residents. And much of its housing is not affordable to them, especially for households earning 0-30% of Area Median Income (AMI) and 30-50% of Area Median Income. Area Median Income is an indicator of income relative to other households and is adjusted for household size. With high rents, households under 50% AMI will be rent burdened, and without subsidies, housing is nearly inaccessible to households under 30% AMI. While increasing the supply of housing available to people experiencing homelessness is ultimately the most important factor affecting the success of ending homelessness, that affordable housing work cannot be addressed through this plan alone. The homeless crisis response system needs to coordinate with private and public housing developers, the South Sound Housing Affordability Partners (SSHA3P), and various municipal affordable housing action strategies. The current capacity, current and future demand, and the unique needs of people experiencing homelessness must be included in area affordable housing work plans.

The need for very low-cost housing requires particular attention be paid to retaining and developing a wide variety of housing types, including shared housing, mobile home and RV parks, community land trusts, clean and sober transitional housing, single room occupancy projects, and permanent tiny house villages.

Without access to permanent affordable housing that low-income households can sustain, the homeless crisis response system cannot successfully exit households from homelessness.

# System Data

Data is a key tool to accomplish the goal of permanent housing for all. The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is used to store and manage that data. The Homeless Management Information System is available to all providers in the community and allows monitoring of individual outcomes, program and provider performance, and monitoring the overall progress towards ending homelessness across the entire homeless crisis response system. It also allows for the creation and management of by-name lists.

While the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count will continue to be a superb tool to learn general trends about people experiencing homelessness, using the Homeless Management Information System to manage the by-name list will provide the timely, accurate and information rich data needed to monitor progress to ending homelessness and to design programs to close the gap between system capacity and need. More information about the Point-in-Time count is available in Appendix I.

## By-Name List

A by-name list is a list of all people currently experiencing homelessness. That list is shared and managed by all providers in the homeless system. It is continually maintained to ensure that every person encountered during street outreach, staying at a shelter, or engaging any part of the homeless crisis response system is known and listed. Currently, by-name lists are managed in the Homeless Management Information System for veterans and for youth and young adults. In the goals below, those lists are expanded to include all people experiencing homelessness. Implementing a global by-name-list will require all providers to utilize the Homeless Management Information System. Most providers in the community providing homeless services already do so. To fully implement a by-name list for all people experiencing homelessness, several challenges need to be overcome. Often data input by service providers has inaccuracies and can be prone to delay in data entry. For data to be leveraged accurately and efficiently, data must be correct and up to date; expanded technical assistance is a useful tool to achieve this. This effort will also only be successful by improving HMIS utilization to 100%.

With this move to universal high quality data entry, system level use of this data will allow monitoring of progress towards ending homelessness. Analysis will also allow the comparison of needs and outcomes for all eight target populations identified in the targeted universalism section. Understanding those unique needs will drive program design. Finally, this data will provide transparency to allow for a greater level of accountability of individual providers and the entire system to people experiencing homelessness, funders, service providers, elected decision makers, and the general population.

While a by-name list is designed to list people experiencing literal homelessness – living in a shelter, outside, in a car, in an encampment, or fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence – it can also be expanded to include those experiencing housing instability that are at risk of experiencing homelessness.

## Merging Outside System Data

In addition to maintaining high quality comprehensive data in the Homeless Management Information System, it is necessary to merge that data with other data sources to understand the needs of people experiencing homelessness. For instance, tracking exits from incarceration to homelessness is only possible through joining data from both the Homeless Management Information System and jail and prison systems. Any effort to end the cycle of homelessness and incarceration requires monitoring that joins data in real time. This data integration need is described in several goal strategies outlined below.

Quantitative data is valuable but can often miss important information. Qualitative data can provide additional information for use in decision making. In addition to expanding the use of quantitative data collection and analysis, expanded qualitative data collection is also needed and included in some goal strategies.

# Existing Plans

Major efforts are underway to improve the homeless crisis response system, including the Continuum of Care 5-year Plan to Address Homelessness (and its nearly identical companion Pierce County 5-year Plan to Address Homelessness) and the City of Tacoma Homeless Strategy. These are important projects that need to be considered and supported when executing this Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness. Pierce County has also launched the development of a Housing Action Strategy.

In addition, many other plans touch on the homeless system, such as County and municipality affordable housing strategies and behavioral health plans. These plans should be regularly reviewed and areas for collaboration identified. This Comprehensives Plan must be viewed in light of other existing plans and programs focused on the same topics. When work is underway to expand or alter a program, all plans must be consulted to ensure changes align. In addition, dashboard monitoring of Comprehensive Plan goals must be merged with dashboard used to monitor the Continuum of Care 5-year plan to address homelessness and the City of Tacoma Homeless Strategy.

Existing plans work to make incremental improvements to the homeless crisis response system, largely focusing on program outcomes, not system level outcomes. This Comprehensive Plan differs in that it recommends a system large enough to meet the current and future need in the community and looks at system level measures – such as the number of people experiencing homelessness – to monitor success. It also looks to address many of the drivers of homelessness, as well as necessary connections to systems of support and services necessary to sustain housing, such as employment, mental health, and housing affordable to people under 50% area median income.

The Adequate Shelter for All Plan, developed concurrently with this Plan and attached, is key to addressing homelessness. Fully implementing the shelter plan is included as a strategy.

Many other plans touch on the homeless system, such as County and municipality affordable housing strategies and behavioral health plans. These plans should be regularly reviewed and areas for collaboration identified.

# Funding

Pierce County has made strides in providing the right type of interventions to homeless individuals in recent years, moving hundreds into permanent housing. However, increased and sustained funding is required to successfully implement the goals in this plan. While many improvements are recommended across the homeless crisis response system and beyond, the core requirement to adequately address homelessness is to significantly expand the capacity of the response system all along the continuum. This will require more funding. Several goals in this plan develop strategies around funding. Potential funding sources are detailed in Appendix B. Appendix A contains a list of existing funding sources. Funding for homelessness prevention should also be identified (e.g., emergency gap funding, affordable housing unit construction funding, financial counseling, etc.)

Addressing homelessness can also save money. Appendix C details a whole spectrum of costs related to homelessness, such as those incurred while serving people experiencing homelessness in the formal homeless system, in other external yet connected systems such as schools and the medical system, and lost opportunity costs related to the impacts of homelessness on tourism and business. The costs of homelessness are spread across many different systems, but taken together, they exceed $26,000 per household per year. That eclipses the $17,000 annual cost per household to provide housing. That cost different would result in over $14M per year savings if funding were allocated to homeless services instead of to the various systems working to mitigate the impacts of people experiencing homelessness.

## Funding Gap

A gap currently exists between the funding needed to operate the homeless crisis response system to achieve functional zero over a 5-year time span and the currently funding available. The graph below shows the amount of funding (in blue) versus the amount unfunded (in orange) for each intervention.



The total system cost is currently around $40M, with $100M of unmet annual funding need to operate the necessary programs.

Capital costs for the shelter increase could reach $15M, and for permanent Supportive Housing, depending on the unit cost and the split between tenant-based and project-based, around $800M.

Assumptions and details around these calculations are listed in appendix K.

# Tacoma-Pierce Unified Regional Office of Homelessness

An effective comprehensive plan requires coordination among all its parts. This coordination will allow a successful county-wide response to homelessness and must include effective leadership, a shared vision, a plan, a governing structure, application of data, and a structure for ongoing effectiveness. The Unified Regional Office must provide the following:

* **Shared Vision, Accountability, and Transparency** -- The Unified Regional Office will develop and broadly communicate a shared vision for the plan as well as principles for implementation and accountability to build and maintain cooperation and coordination among the many partners and constituents of the plan. The Unified Regional Office can marshal this measure of cooperation with a close attention to transparency and communication, especially communication with the public.
* **Cost Effective Performance and Accountability** - the Unified Regional Office should imbed into the funding and implementation of each element an expectation and enforcement of best practices, accountability, and cost effectiveness.
* **Coordination Among Plan Elements and Partners** -- The Comprehensive Plan needs coordination of at least two types among its elements and partners, especially for prioritization purposes:
	+ Coordination of Investment and Operation Among Elements of the Plan -- The plan will need coordination among its necessary elements. These elements constitute a related continuum. Each part relies on the other parts. For example, sheltering persons living on the street require outreach workers to elicit their interest in receiving services and then to direct them to shelter and services. For outreach workers to do that, they need a ready supply of appropriate services and shelter to offer. Without this coordination, an unavailable part of the continuum will become a log jam for other parts.

To avoid this logjam the County should coordinate its investment in each part of the continuum so the related parts grow together at a similar pace.

* + Consultation and Coordination Among the Partners --The plan will need adequate consultation and coordination among the many partners, including:
		- persons experiencing homelessness.
		- the cities and towns of Pierce County.
		- police and emergency services.
		- private and nonprofit service providers.
		- private, nonprofit and public housing organizations.
		- business community.
		- faith organizations.
		- advocacy and grass roots groups.
		- volunteers.
		- veteran service providers
		- the general public
* **Coordination of the Collection and Analysis of Data** – discussed in detail throughout this plan is the importance of data. The plan will require the continual collection, analysis, and publication of robust data, including:
	+ the extent and nature of the County’s homelessness, including how many people, location, family composition, race, gender, age, veteran status, and service needs, and the goals of the people experiencing homelessness.
	+ Data showing how to judge a person’s risk of homelessness.
	+ the effectiveness or lack of effectiveness of each part of the crisis response system.
	+ the relative cost effectiveness of each part of the plan.

# Accountability

The homeless crisis response system must be accountable to many constituents. The primary accountability is to people experiencing homelessness. In addition, the system must be accountable to funders, community partners, and the community.

It is easy to make assumptions about the success or failure of the homeless crisis response system by observing urban street homelessness. Visible unsheltered homelessness is important to address but using only that metric as a measure of success hides much of both the need and the services provided.

To be accountable, information must be readily available on the current and historical demand for homeless services, the services provided, and the capacity to provide additional services. Only by providing transparency can constituents understand how well the system and providers are performing.

Weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual dashboards and reports are key to assessing and meeting accountability requirements. Monitoring outcomes allows changes in particular programs or the entire system. Data, however, does not always tell the entire story, so it is vital that context be included. Each goal in the plan has accountability built into that work so that it is possible to monitor efforts for impact.

# Priorities

This plan will provide the full continuum of needed services. This means it will have the many elements necessary to address the different aspects of the need, including the following:[[2]](#footnote-3)

* **Coordination** among all levels of government and providers in Pierce County to coordinate among the different elements of the plan, to better ensure programs reflect effective practices, and to collect data for program adjustment, evaluation, and accountability.
* **Prevention services** that accurately identify households that, without intervention, will become homeless, and that offer them effective services or resources to keep them housed.
* **Outreach teams** to actively engage with homeless persons, especially those who are chronically unsheltered and who are resistant to services. The teams must have the services listed below to offer.
* **Drop-in and service centers** to offer daytime respite space, storage facilities, introduction to services, and the building of relationships with outreach workers.
* **Safe shelter options** ranging from those with less structure and fewer services, such as safe parking spots and sanctioned encampments, to shelter with more structure and more services, such as congregate shelter and tiny house shelters.
* **Housing programs** to provide permanent housing or to help people find permanent housing, such as Rapid Re-Housing, rental assistance, and permanent supportive housing.

The implementation of the plan will likely require more time and more resources than what will be available. This means that Pierce County will need to prioritize its efforts. The County should first serve unsheltered people, for three reasons. These reasons correspond with the three main public impulses that the County needs to enlist to support the plan:

* **Concern for Persons Living on the Street, in Cars, or in Parks or Woods:** Living outside is dangerous to persons who must do it. It impairs their health. It limits their prospects. It is degrading. The County’s efforts should prioritize serving them. This priority would value the lives at stake. It would recognize the individual health and public health risks of unaddressed and unsheltered homelessness.
* **Street Homelessness is Expensive and Damaging to Other Civic Systems and values.** Civic systems include police, courts and jails, mental health services, hospital emergency room care, and inpatient hospital care. Solving street homelessness will save money in these other systems. Street homelessness also shows most clearly the inequitable disparities present among the population experiencing homelessness: disproportionate representation among the street population of BIPOC, disabled seniors, and LGBTQ youth. Solving street homelessness will also address the inequitable geographic distribution that burdens communities with large communities of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness
* **Solving Street Homelessness Will Elicit Support from a Public That Wants its Public Spaces Back for Public Use.** Street homelessness is a serious imposition on the public use and enjoyment of important public spaces, such as sidewalks, parks, and store fronts. Restoring the public use of these spaces will help elicit the public support this plan will require.

## Flexibility

The County’s priorities should remain flexible for at least two reasons. First, the extent or nature of the County’s homelessness will change. The present COVID pandemic is an example. It required significant changes in operations to control the contagion. Second, luck or contingency will determine what is or is not possible to do. For example, parts of the plan will require the purchase or use of land, hotels, or housing. Real estate opportunities are hard to predict. The homeless response system should be ready to grab them when they arise even if doing so might be out of priority order. Developing flexible cash resources that are ready to take advantage of funding or other opportunities will have substantial benefits.

# Goals and Strategies

## Goal 1: Create a Unified Homeless System

Three factors are necessary to end homelessness: effective management, sufficient resources, and skilled leadership. A unified approach will enable an understanding of the entire need in the community and allow the leadership, management and resource acquisition necessary to meet that need.

### Strategies

1.1 Commit to a Tacoma-Pierce Unified Regional Office of Homelessness, consisting of the right stakeholders with central decision-making authority of funding and services.

1.2 Initiate a consultant-led process to design the Unified Regional Office organizational leadership structure to prevent and end homelessness, including leading community engagement and communication efforts.

1.3 Create and maintain a model to estimate funding needed to close the gap between homeless crisis response system need and capacity. This model must include rent assistance funding need and capacity as well. For current gap analysis, see Appendix K.

1.4 Maintain homeless crisis response system funding master list (see appendix A), including current, expected, and potential future federal, state, local jurisdiction, philanthropic and other system funding.

1.5 Develop and maintain a strategic funding plan to retain existing funding and close the funding gap using identified potential funding sources and pursue that funding with a coordinated, County-wide, cross-industry effort.

1.6 Support agencies with regular stress test to ensure financial resiliency.

### Accountability

1.7 Publish an analysis of the current homeless crisis response system decision making structure and leadership structure.

1.8 Publish the plan to develop a responsive leadership and management structure capable of coordinating the scale of resources needed to end homelessness.

1.9 Regularly provide updates on progress towards implementing the Unified Regional Office

1.10 Publish monthly dashboard showing current funding sources and the uses of that funding

1.11 Publish monthly dashboard showing the current and historical funding gap between need and capacity for each aspect of the homeless crisis response system

#### Roles, Effort and Cost

* Implementation Responsibility – Pierce County Executive and Pierce County Human Services
* Level of Coordination Effort – High
* Program Costs – N/A

## Goal 2: Ensure interventions are effective for All populations

### Targeted Universalism requires considering the unique needs of target populations in each service. The first step in developing targeted strategies requires engagement with members of the target populations. Continued engagement with targeted populations is vital, using community outreach as well as surveys and other tools to identify areas to improve.

### Strategies

2.1 Create a Race and Equity Strategy Team to research, develop and assist organizations to implement program changes to align with the needs of target populations.

2.2 Annually engage with individuals and organizations from target populations to identify concerns with the existing homeless crisis response system to identify needed program alterations or additional providers.

2.3 Annually review interventions and services to ensure enrollments and outcomes are being monitored for each target population.

2.4 Annually conduct a quantitative and qualitative service quality survey, including a hope scale type survey, of people experiencing homelessness. Ensure the survey is part of a trauma informed process accessible to the widest possible audience, preferably administered by people experiencing homelessness themselves.

### Accountability

2.5 Publish annual reports documenting identified concerns with interventions, strategies to remedy those concerns, and status updates on past strategies. The annual report must also document any interventions or services with low performance or low enrollments for specific populations along with strategies to remedy those deficiencies.

2.6 Publish monthly dashboard showing program referrals, program enrollments, and program outcomes for each permanent housing intervention, broken out by sub-populations.

2.7 Publish annual report on changes in the service quality survey results.

#### Roles, Effort and Cost

* Implementation Responsibility – Pierce County Human Services
* Level of Coordination Effort – Medium
* Program Costs - Low

## Goal 3: Prevent Homelessness

Preventing housing instability and stabilizing households at risk of homelessness is a key strategy to ending homelessness. Available funding must be targeted where it will prevent homelessness for the greatest number of households. Funding must increase to reduce the number of at-risk households.

### Strategies

3.1 Revise rent assistance eligibility based on best practices, with eligibility adjustments to accommodate varying levels of resources available for rent assistance to target the assistance where it will prevent homelessness for the greatest number of households.

3.2 Provide mortgage assistance for at-risk homeowners.

* 1. Develop and support shared housing units for those unable to afford living alone.

3.4 Provide financial counseling and life skills training to assist at risk households with financial stability.

3.5 Expand Diversion to households at risk of homelessness.

### Accountability

3.6 Publish rent and mortgage assistance eligibility requirements, policies, and procedures.

3.7 Publish monthly dashboards showing rental and mortgage assistance system performance.

3.8 Expand Coordinated Entry eligibility to households at risk of homelessness.

#### Roles, Effort and Cost

* Implementation Responsibility – Pierce County Human Services
* Level of Coordination Effort – High
* Program Costs – High

## Goal 4: Ensure mainstream systems Address needs of people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness

Mainstream Systems – those that serve people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness but are not part of the formal homeless crisis response systems - are seldom designed with the unique needs of people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. Making changes to these mainstream systems, including locating mainstream system services at homeless program sites, can improve outcomes for people experiencing homelessness. For a partial list of mainstream systems, see appendix j

### Strategies

4.1 Create a “Systems Ombudsperson” to coordinate communications among mainstream systems

4.2 Develop a coordinated communication among mainstream systems.

4.3 Create or join existing workgroups to identify and implement best practices to assist individuals to access services more easily in mainstream systems.

4.4 Work with organizations in mainstream systems to develop and implement policies and procedures based on identified best practices.

4.5 Create or join existing workgroups to identify and implement best practices, including data sharing agreements, to assist and track individuals leaving institutional settings. For a partial list of institutional settings, see appendix j.

#### 4.6 Partner with Pierce County Behavioral Health Division to ensure the Behavioral Health Improvement Plan updates continue to identify gaps in capacity and effectiveness for people experiencing homelessness and create implementation plans to close gaps.

### Accountability

4.7 Establish quarterly workgroup meetings with each mainstream system to identify unmet need and update policies and procedures.

4.8 Publish monthly dashboard listing count of individuals recently exiting institutional settings who are accessing the homeless crisis response system

4.9 Partner with the Pierce County Behavioral Health Division to add housing and homeless specific metrics to their existing reports.

#### Roles, Effort and Cost

* Implementation Responsibility – Pierce County Human Services
* Level of Coordination Effort – Medium
* Program Costs - High

## Goal 5: Meet immediate needs of people experiencing Homelessness

Meeting immediate needs for shelter, food, and pathways out of homelessness is vital. Knowing who is homeless and actively engaging them to assist entering shelter and establishing permanent housing will reduce the duration of homeless episodes.

## Strategies

5.1 Create and manage a by-name list for the entire homeless population

5.2 Ensure every household experiencing homelessness has access to navigation services such as street outreach and critical time intervention.

5.3 Expand use of Homeless Management Information System so all formal and informal interactions with people experiencing homelessness are recorded.

5.4 Implement the Adequate for All plan, attached.

5.5 Expand Coordinated Entry to ensure appointments are available the same day or the next day in shelters, day centers and other access points across Pierce County

5.6 Offer Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive housing interventions during the Coordinated Entry conversation.

### Accountability

5.7 Publish monthly dashboard displaying portion of individuals connecting with the homeless crisis response system that are on the by-name list

5.8 Publish monthly dashboard displaying portion of individuals on the by-name list receiving navigation services

5.9 Publish list of agencies participating in the Homeless Management Information System and those not participating

5.10 Publish monthly dashboard showing Coordinated Entry System Capacity and utilization, as well as wait times for Coordinated Entry Conversations and time between coordinated entry conversation and program referral and housed outcomes.

5.11 Publish monthly dashboards showing the portion of people known to be experiencing homelessness who are staying in shelter.

5.12 Publish up-to-date bed capacity and availability at all emergency shelters

#### Roles, Effort and Cost

* Implementation Responsibility – Pierce County Human Services
* Level of Coordination Effort – High
* Program Costs - High

## Goal 6: Size the Permanent Housing System to meet the need

Permanent housing is the goal for all people experiencing homelessness. Because of the very limited supply of tenant-based housing, a wide variety of interventions and approaches will be necessary.

### Strategies

6.1 Size the Diversion Intervention to meet need.

6.2 Size the Rapid Rehousing Intervention to meet need.

6.3 Create a dedicated housing voucher intervention for households experiencing homelessness.

6.4 Size the capacity of the Permanent Supportive Housing system to meet demand, using tenant-based and project-based programs, with a particular focus on projects that add new permanent housing at very low capital costs, such as hotel conversations and Community First! style housing development projects.

6.5 Expand shared housing to include all possible shared housing models.

6.6 Coordinate with affordable housing efforts to develop 0-30% AMI and 30-50% AMI housing dedicated to households exiting homelessness.

6.7 Size the Landlord Liaison project to maximize access to rental market, including using master leasing.

6.8 Facilitate movement from one housing intervention type to another to best serve the changing needs of clients as required supports increase or decrease, including sites with enhanced medical and behavioral health supports.

### Accountability

6.9 Add data element to track program exits to shared housing.

6.10 Publish monthly dashboard showing program exits to shared housing

6.11 Publish monthly dashboards estimating the need, capacity, current enrollments, new enrollments and exits for each permanent housing intervention type.

6.13 Publish quarterly dashboards estimating the need and capacity for 0-30% AMI housing and 30-50% AMI housing

6.14 Publish monthly dashboard showing permanent housing pipeline.

6.15 Publish monthly dashboards to monitor units made available through Landlord Liaison programs.

#### Roles, Effort and Cost

* Implementation Responsibility – Pierce County Human Services
* Level of Coordination Effort – Medium
* Program Costs - High

# Appendix A – homeless crisis response system funding master list

A list of all current, expected and potential federal, state, local jurisdiction, philanthropic and other funding.

|  |
| --- |
| **Current Homeless Funding** |
|   |   | **Funder** | **Program** |  **Recurring Amount**  |  **One Time Amounts**  | **Period** | **Use of Funds** |
|   | Federal | HUD | Continuum of Care |  $ 4,106,180  |   |  1/1/21-12/31/21  | Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Re-Housing, Transitional Housing, Data Collection (HMIS, Administration  |
|   | Federal | HUD | Emergency Solutions Grant |  $ 271,290  |   |  7/1/21-6/30/22  | Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Prevention, Rental Assistance, Data Collection (HMIS), Administration  |
|   | Federal | THA | Rental Assistance |  $ 1,300,000  |   | 1/1/21-12/31/21 | Utility Assistance, Rent Assistance, Internet, Operations, Administration  |
|   | Federal | THA | Tacoma Schools Housing Assistance Program (TSHAP) |  $ 596,050  |   | 3/1/20-12/31/21 | Diversion, Rental Assistance  |
|   | Federal | THA | Emergency Housing Voucher Program  |  $ 486,750  |   | 7/1/21-12/31/23 | Housing Search and Location  |
|   | Federal | HUD | Emergency Solutions Grant-Coronavirus |   |  $ 4,236,630  | 8/1/20-8/31/22 | Street Outreach, Temporary Shelter, Emergency Shelter, Rapid Re-Housing, Hazard Pay, Volunteer Incentives  |
|   | Federal | Treasury | Pierce County American Rescue Plan  |   |  $ 2,300,000  | 4/1/21-03/31/22 | Emergency Shelter, Sanitation & Hygiene  |
|   | Federal | Treasury | City of Tacoma American Rescue Plan Traunch 1 |   |  $ 7,000,000  |   |   |
|   | Federal | Treasury | Lakewood American Rescue Plan |   |  $ 1,000,000  |   | Hotel Acquisition  |
|   | **Curent Federal Homeless Funding Subtotal** |  **$ 6,760,270**  |  **$ 14,536,630**  |  |  |
|   | State | Commerce | Anchor Communities Initiative |  $ 470,000  |   | 7/1/21-6/30/22 | Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter  |
|   | State | Commerce | Consolidated Homeless Grant (including HEN) |  $ 5,283,847  |   | 7/1/21-6/30/22 | Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Targeted Prevention, Rapid Re-Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Services Only, Housing and Essential Needs  |
|   | State | Commerce | Emergency Solutions Grant |  $ 714,349  |   | 7/1/21-6/30/22 | Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Prevention, Rental Assistance, Data Collection (HMIS), Administration  |
|   | State | Commerce | Shelter Program Grant |   |  $ 1,883,390  | 7/1/20 - 6/30/23 |  Facility Support, Operations, Financial Assistance, Flexible Funding, Administration  |
|   | State | Commerce | Emergency Solutions Grant-Coronavirus |   |  $ 4,371,305  | 7/1/20-8/31/22 | Street Outreach, Temporary Shelter, Emergency Shelter, Rapid Re-Housing, Hazard Pay, Volunteer Incentives  |
|   | State | Commerce | Hotel Sheltering Funding |   |  $ 5,100,000  | 7/1/21-6/30/23 |  Hotel Vouchers, Rapid Re-Housing,  |
|   | **Current State Homeless Funding Subtotal** |  **$ 6,468,196**  |  **$ 11,354,695**  |  |  |
|   | Local | Pierce County | Homeless - Document Recording Fee  |  $ 17,415,000  |   | 7/1/21-6/30/22 | Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Rapid Re-Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing  |
|   | Local | Tacoma | Mental Health Substance Use Disorder Tax |  $ 785,000  |   | 1/1/21-12/31/22 |   |
|   | Local | Tacoma | HB 1406 retain portion of state sales tax |  ???  |  [mention bonding option and what it would raise]  | ??? | ???  |
|   | Local | Pierce County | HB 1406 retain portion og state sales tax |  ???  |  [mention bonding option and what it would raise]  | ??? | ??? |
|   | Local | Pierce County | Mental Health Substance Abuse Disorder Tax (only for use for behavioral health services) |  12M -15 M  |   |   |   |
|   | Local | Tacoma | 1590 Funds/ 1/10 of 1% sales tax |  **???**  |  [mention bonding option and what it would raise]  |   |   |
|   | Local | Tacoma | Community Development Block Grant |  $ 30,332  |   |   |   |
|   | Local | Tacoma | General Fund  |  $ 4,756,342  |   | 1/1/21 - 12/31/22 |   |
|   | **Current Local Homeless Funding Subtotal** |  **$ 22,986,674**  |  **$ -**  |  |  |
| **Current Homeless funding Total** |  **$ 36,215,140**  |  **$ 25,891,325**  |   |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Current Affordable Housing Funding** |
|   | Local | Pierce County | Affordable Housing Document Recording Fee |  $ 150,000  |   | 1/1/22-12/31/23 | Capital development for 50% or below, operating and maintenance, emergency shelter operations and rental housing vouchers  |
|   | **Current Local Affordable Housing Subtotal** |  **$ 150,000**  |  |  |  |
|   | Local | Pierce County | Pierce County 1406 Capital and Service Funding Low Income |  $ 1,400,000  |  [mention bonding option and what it would raise]  |  1/1/21-12/31/21  | Capital Development - Affordable housing for households at or below 60% of AMI or operating and maintenance of new project  |
|   | Local | Tacoma | City of Tacoma 1406 Capital and Service Funding Low Income  |   |  [mention bonding option and what it would raise]  |   | Capital Development - Affordable housing for households at or below 60% of AMI or operating and maintenance of new project  |
|   | State | Commerce | Housing Trust Fund  |  |   |  | Capital Development - Affordable housing for households at or below 50% of AMI. Homeownership for households at or below 80% AMI  |
|   | State  | WA State Housing Finance Commission | Low Income Housing Tax Credits |  |   |  | Allocation of credits to developers that develop affordable housing who can attract private equity in return for tax credits.  |
|   | **Current STate Affordable Housing Subtotal** |  **$ 1,400,000**  |  **$ -**  |  |  |
|  | **Current Affordable Housing Funding Total** |  **$ 1,550,000**  |  **$ -**  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Potential New or Increased Funding** | **Relationship of Money and Homelessness** |
|   | Federal | Treasury | Pierce County American Rescue Plan |   |  $ 67,000,000  |   |   |
|   | Federal | Treasury | City of Tacoma American Rescue Plan Tranche 2 |   |  $ 31,000,000  |   |   |
|   | Local | Pierce County | HB 1590 1/10 of 1 % sales tax |  **???**  |   |   |   |
|   | State | State Dept. of Transportation | Encampment Abatement |   |   |   |   |
|   | Local |   | Sound Transit |   |   |   |   |
|   | Local | Pierce County | Available Land (All government entities) (Parks, Schools, Cities, Towns, Community Colleges, County, Churches, Utilities |   |   |   |   |
|   | Local |   | Hospitals (MultiCare, Franciscan, Kaiser Permanente) |   |   |   |   |
|   | State | State | Washington Department of Veterans Affairs |   |   |   |   |
|   | Federal |   | Supportive Services for Veteran Families  |   |   |   |   |
|   | State | State  | Project for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)  |   |   |   |   |
|   | Federal | Federal  | Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing |   |   |   |   |
|   | Federal | PCHA and THA | Adjacent, VASH/NED Vouchers  |   |   |   |   |
|   | Local |   | Service Clubs (Kiwanis, Rotary, etc.) |   |   |   |   |
|   | Local |   | Greater Tacoma Community Foundation |   |   |   |   |
|   | Local |   | United Way |   |   |   |   |
|   | Federal |   | Federal Recovery and Annual Budget allocations |   |   |   |   |
| **Total Potential Funding** |  **$ -**  |  **$ 98,000,000**  |  |  |

# Appendix B – Funding and Resources

### Inventory of money and land that the County and its cities presently use for homelessness initiatives

Appendix C lists sources of funding and land that Pierce County and its cities presently use for homelessness initiatives. These resources come from local governments, the state and the federal government.

### Untapped sources of funding available to the County and its cities for homeless initiatives

Table 2 lists untapped sources of funding that are available to the County and its cities for homelessness initiatives. These include:

### House Bill 1406 (Chap. 82.14 RCW)(Retainage of State Sales Tax):

The state legislature enacted HB 1406 in 2019. It allows local taxing jurisdictions to retain a portion of the state’s share of the sales tax generated in those jurisdictions and use that share for affordable housing purposes. These purposes include acquiring, rehabilitating, or constructing affordable housing; operations and maintenance of new affordable or supportive housing facilities; and, for smaller cities, rental assistance. The funding must be spent on projects that serve persons whose income is at or below sixty percent of the median income of the city imposing the tax. Cities can also use the anticipated income from their share of this tax to issue bonds to finance the authorized projects. The authority for counties and cities to do this expire in 2039. Other requirements of the bill include:

* Projects must serve those at or below 60% of the area median income of the city imposing the tax.
* Acquiring, rehabilitating, or constructing affordable housing, which may include new units of affordable housing within an existing structure or facilities providing supportive housing services. In addition to investing in traditional subsidized housing projects, this authority could potentially be used to provide for land acquisition, down payment assistance, and home repair so long as recipients meet the income guidelines.
* Funding the operations and maintenance costs of new units of affordable or supportive housing.
	+ For cities with a population at or under 100,000, the funds can also be used for rental assistance to tenants.

### HB 1590 (1/10th of 1% Sales Tax)

This bill allows counties and cities to impose a 1/10th of 1% sales tax for affordable housing purposes. Tacoma has done this. Pierce County has not.

### Behavioral Health Tax (RCW 82.14.460)

This state law allows local taking jurisdictions to impose a 1/10th of 1% sales tax to fund behavioral health services. This tax has a direct pertinence to homelessness services because of the prevalence of behavioral health problems among persons experiencing homelessness.

Pierce County and the City of Tacoma have exercised this authority:

Pierce County intends to use the income from this tax to fund a full range of innovative, effective, and culturally competent services, including:

* Community education
* Prevention and early intervention
* Outpatient and community-based services
* Crisis and inpatient services
* Services for justice-involved populations
* Housing supports for those with behavioral health needs

Funds will be allocated through an RFP process and will address the priority areas identified in the Behavioral Health Improvement Plan.

The City of Tacoma intends to use the income from this tax to fund services that include the following:

### LEVERAGING

Below are some possible ways to use available funding to leverage still other funding and resources from other sources:

### Pay for Success

This model of financing is sometimes called Social Impact Bonds. This model “shifts financial risk from a traditional funder—usually government—to a new investor, who provides up-front capital to scale an evidence-based social program to improve outcomes for a vulnerable population. If an independent evaluation shows that the program achieved agreed-upon outcomes, then the investment is repaid by the traditional funder. If not, the investor takes the loss.” (Urban Institute).

Value Based Reimbursement (VBR).

Value Based Reimbursement contracts have the governmental entity pay only for services that meet the contract’s standard of quality or its designated outcomes. Rather than providing payment for each procedure, value-based services incentivize the quality of service over quantity. Outcome-based reimbursement is the goal, benefiting both the client and the provider. (This is not a fee for service model).

### Private and philanthropic funding.

Identify and partner with local entities and foundations to determine if any funding is going toward or prioritized for homelessness.

### PARTNERSHIPS TO PURSUE

The County should identify partnerships that are worth pursuing – and what can be expected from each of them. Such partnerships might be available from entities whose mission would be strengthened by the alleviation of homelessness, especially among persons these organizations may already be serving but in ways that are not effective because of unaddressed homelessness. Such partnerships might provide not just funding but also provide land, use of land, or services. Possible partnerships include landowners, the Puyallup Tribe, churches, or social services. Include language needed for elected officials to initiate these partnerships.

* Inventory of faith-based organizations that may have space free.
* Churches willing to transfer property or commit use to homeless or housing.
* Tribal partnerships and collaboration.
* Partner with investors / sellers – what property might be available for sale.
* Businesses and other private owners that have land or use of land by donation or sale.
* Partnerships and resource sharing within local towns, parks, Public Schools, State Schools Community Colleges
* County – inquire, investigate potential land inventory throughout PC for utilization
* Cities - set parameters around what the identified need is:
	+ Properties inventoried - need certain usability and size and such.
	+ City of Tacoma has already established list.

# Appendix C – Net Public Savings resulting from addressing homelessness

Solving homelessness in Pierce County will require the investment of millions of dollars. Studies in other communities, including one in Seattle, show that money will be saved by offsetting the costs that homelessness inflicts in the direct services of shelter and on other civic systems.

These other civic systems include:

emergency services

medical services

behavioral health services

child welfare services

courts and jails

school systems

lost tourism and local business revenue

The following table indicates estimated costs per household based on a model created in Santa Clara and adapted with King County data. (Dilip Wagle, Senior Partner at McKinsey & Company provided chart numbers). Pierce County has contracted with EcoNorthwest to complete a similar analysis in January of 2022, so this data should be considered a placeholder until local data is available.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Direct Cost of addressing homelessness per household** | **Indirect Costs Per Household of Not Addressing Homelessness** |
| **Cost to Other Systems** | **Opportunity Cost**   |
| Shelter  |  $ 1,720  | Healthcare  |  $ 8,191  | Tourism |  $ 1,756  |
| Emergency |  $ 1,458  | Law Enforcement & Criminal Justice |  $ 5,146  | Local Business |  $ 2,539  |
| Transitional |  $ 262  | Social Services |  $ 1,123  | Education  |  $ 207  |
| Other Services |  $ 964  | Public Service |  $ 142  | Poverty Trap |  $ 2,534  |
| **Subtotal** |  **$ 4,404**  | **Subtotal** |  **$ 14,602**  | **Subtotal** |  **$ 7,036**  |
| **Total Cost of Not Addressing Homelessness: $26,042** |
| **Annual Cost to House a Household: $17,000** |
| **Annual Net Savings per Household when Housed instead of living Homeless: $9,042** |

# Appendix D – Glossary of Terms

### Affordable Housing

Housing that a household can obtain for 30 percent or less of its income.

### Mainstream Systems

Mainstream systems are those that serve people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness but are not part of the formal homeless system.

Area Median Income

The area median income is the midpoint of a region's income distribution, meaning that half of households in a region earn more than the median and half earn less than the median. A household's income is calculated by its gross income, which is the total income received before taxes and other payroll deductions.

### At risk of Homelessness

A formal Housing and Urban Development definition. It is a household that is below 30 percent of the median area income, has insufficient resources to maintain housing, and meets one of 7 criteria for housing instability.

### Behavioral Health

A grouping together of mental health services and substance use services.

### Built for Zero

A methodology to end homelessness that relies heavily on data to monitor efforts and inform efforts to reach end homelessness by reaching functional zero.

### By-name list

A by-name list is a real time, up-to-date list of all people experiencing homelessness in your community that can be filtered by categories and shared across appropriate agencies. This list is generated with data from outreach, HMIS, federal partners, and any other community shelter and providers working within the homeless population.

### Chronically Homeless

Chronic homelessness is used to describe people who have experienced homelessness for at least a year — or repeatedly — while struggling with a disabling condition such as a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, or physical disability.

### Clean and Sober Housing

A model of housing that typically does not permit substance use on or off site. Urine analysis can be employed to monitor compliance. This model is often necessary for individuals exiting residential substance use treatment facilities to maintain sobriety. Also referred to as drug and alcohol free housing - [RCW 59.18.550](https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=59.18.550).

### Coordinated Entry System

A coordinated entry system standardizes and coordinates the way households experiencing homelessness across the community are assessed for and referred to the housing and services that they need for housing stability.

### Critical Time Intervention

A program providing case managers to assist clients to navigate both the homeless system and other systems, such as employment child care, transportation, and behavioral health.

### Diversion

Diversion is a strategy intending to divert households from the Homeless Crisis Response System. It does so by helping them, through a Housing Solutions Conversation (see below), identify immediate alternate housing arrangements, and if necessary, connect with services and financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing. Diversion is implemented within the coordinated entry system

### Functional Zero

A state where any person starting a new homeless episode has immediate access to shelter and a permanent housing intervention

### Harm Reduction

A model of housing that does not set rules for substance use on or off site, as long as usage does not endanger others. The model offers opportunities for residents to enter treatment.

### Homeless Crisis Response System

The programs that support household from the start of a homeless episode through entering permanent housing. It includes navigation services, shelter and permanent housing programs.

### Homeless Management Information System

An information system designated by the Continuum of Care Committee to comply with requirements prescribed by HUD. This system stores client information about persons who access homeless services in a Continuum of Care and is a core source of data on the population of people experiencing homelessness who engage with Coordinated Entry.

### Hope Scale Survey

Hope is defined as the perceived capability to derive pathways to desired goals and motivate oneself via agency thinking to use those pathways. Higher hope consistently is related to better outcomes. The hope scale measures that hope to better understand how able people are to meet their goals. Hope can rise, and better outcomes are possible in programs that are able to create more hope in enrollees.

### Household

Household means all persons occupying or intending to occupy a housing unit. The occupants may be a family, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements, regardless of actual or perceived, sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

### Housing Solutions Conversation

This short-term problem-solving technique, the core tactic for Diversion (see above), meets a housing crisis head on with the creativity and resources of the person experiencing the crisis. By helping them to leverage their natural resources—such as their family, friends, or faith communities—people can find no-cost or low-cost housing solutions at a critical moment. Once the issues are identified, their own solution can sometimes be paired with short-term rental assistance, a one-time bill payment, or help finding a job or addressing health and safety needs, providing support to help them maintain their current housing.

### Intervention

Intervention is a general term to describe any type of program that works to meet the needs of households experiencing housing instability or living homelessness. Interventions can range from rent assistance to temporary shelter programs to long-term permanent supportive housing.

### Literally Homeless

A person who is literally homeless does not have a fixed nighttime residence and instead might sleep overnight in a temporary shelter or place not meant for human habitation.

### McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

The federal McKinney-Vento Act more broadly defines homelessness in an effort to provide protections and supports for students living in a variety of unstable housing situations: Homeless students are defined as those who lack “a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence,” and includes those that who are living in doubled up situations.

### Medical Respite

A shelter model providing additional medical support to medically fragile clients.

### Other Permanent Housing

An intervention similar to Permanent Supportive Housing, Other Permanent Housing provides priority housing to people experiencing homelessness, and may or may not include case management.

### Permanent Supportive Housing

Permanent Supportive Housing is long-term housing that provides supportive services for low income or homeless people with disabling conditions. This type of supportive housing enables special needs populations to live as independently as possible in a permanent setting. Supportive services may be provided by the organization managing the housing or coordinated by the housing provider and provided by other public or private service agencies.

### Point in Time Count

The annual count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night, which is conducted in Pierce County in January. For additional details, see Appendix I.

### Rapid Rehousing

Services and supports designed to help persons experiencing homelessness move as quickly as possible into permanent housing with time-limited financial assistance.

### Safe Encampment

A shelter model where clients stay in tents in an encampment setting with hygiene facilities. Staffing can range from self-management models to 24x7 staffing with security and case management.

### Safe Parking

A shelter model where clients stay in their cars in a parking lot setting with hygiene facilities. Clients typically only stay during the night, but some sites run 24x7. Sites are typically self-managed with some case management.

### Shelter

Shelter includes any facility with the primary purpose of providing temporary shelter for all people experiencing homelessness or specific populations.

### Shelter Generalist

A staffing role providing a variety of operational supports at a site, often including security, site cleanup, client interactions, and coordinating meals.

### Step Down Services

A model of support to assist clients as they exit institutional settings.

### Targeted Universalism

A framework to pursue a shared goal with strategies designed for the unique needs of different groups.

### Transitional housing

Temporary housing and supportive services for up to 24 months that serves households before transitioning into permanent housing.

# Appendix E – Intervention types

There are a variety of interventions available to address the needs of people experiencing homelessness. These include

* Rapid Rehousing
* Diversion
* Coordinated Entry
* Permanent Supportive Housing
* Other Permanent Housing
* Navigation, including Critical Time Intervention
* Street Outreach
* Emergency Shelter
	+ Safe parking
	+ Safe encampments
	+ Tiny house and pallet shelter-based shelter
	+ Owned or leased hotel-based shelter
	+ Congregate shelter
	+ Domestic Violence Shelter
* Housing Vouchers
* Shared Housing

# Appendix F – Bibliography

**Permanent Housing Intervention Reading Materials**

*Insights Into Housing and Community Development Policy* (June, 2021)

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development | Office of Policy Development and Research

<https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/homelessness-preventionguide-and-companion.pdf>

<http://www.evidenceonhomelessness.com/wpcontent/uploads/2019/02/Homelessness_Prevention_Literature_Synthesis.pdf>

Targeted Universalism Policy & Practice by john a. Powell, Stephen Menendian, Wendy Ake (Primer May, 2019, Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society)

Hope Scale - <https://www.toolshero.com/personal-development/snyders-hope-theory/>

Video from McKinsey Group - <https://youtu.be/FaoouDYWKe8>

Gibbs, Bainbridge, Rosenblatt, and Mammo, How Ten Global Cities Take on Homelessness: Innovations That Work (University of California Press 2021)

# Appendix G – Groups active in Affordable Housing

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group Name | Description | Current Plans | Status |
| [Tacoma-Pierce County Affordable Housing Consortium](https://www.affordablehousingconsortium.org/) | Nonprofit serving members by providing capacity development, education and advocacy for affordable housing. | Advocacy agendas are created annually – an example is the [2021 State Budget Advocacy guide](https://www.affordablehousingconsortium.org/post/2021-state-budget-advocacy-5) | Active |
| [City of Tacoma Affordable Housing Action Strategy](https://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city_departments/community_and_economic_development/housing_division/affordable_housing_action_strategy) | A plan with 4 strategic objectives to direct housing investment to increase housing affordability. | Implementing the [Affordable Housing Action Strategy](http://cms.cityoftacoma.org/cro/ahas/affordablehousingactionstrategy.pdf) created in September of 2018. The [Home in Tacoma](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/homeintacoma) effort is a product of this work. | Active |
| [South Sound Housing Affordability Partners](https://www.piercecountywa.gov/7052/South-Sound-Housing-Affordability-Partne)  | Local government collaboration to develop additional housing units, including affordable housing units | No documented plans, but useful research, such as the [List of Affordable Housing funding sources](https://www.piercecountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/95879/Local-Affordable-Housing-Funding-Sources-43020) and the [Inventory of Public Land](https://www.piercecountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/95878/Pierce-County-Surplus-Land-Inventory-FINAL) | Established governance, working on adoption by partners and hiring staff. |
| [Tacoma Pierce County Homeless Coalition – Housing Committee](http://pchomeless.org/Committees) | Group within the Coalition working on the housing options for 0-30% AMI.  | - | Active |
| Tacoma Pierce County Chamber – Housing Committee | Joint group with the Tacoma Pierce County Homeless Coalition to increase shelter and housing | - | Nearly launched |
| [Puget Sound Regional Council: Puget Sound regional housing needs assessment and strategies](https://www.psrc.org/regional-housing-strategy) | A “playbook” of local actions to preserve, improve and expand housing stock in the region. | [Draft Regional Housing Strategy](http://www.psrc.org/sites/default/files/regional-housing-strategy.pdf) | Strategy is being finalized |
| [Pierce County Affordable Housing Workgroup](https://www.piercecountywa.gov/2704/Housing-Affordability) | local housing providers, lenders, builders, realtors, advocates, designers, academics, and transit agencies advising County Departments and the County Council on housing affordability strategies. | Draft in development – available soon. | Active – draft going to County Council on 8/31/2021. |
| Pierce County Affordable Housing Action Strategy | Countywide action strategy for affordable housing | - | Hiring consultant – work will begin in Fall 2021. |
| [Bonney Lake-Sumner Housing Action Plan](https://connects.sumnerwa.gov/sumner-bonney-lake-housing-action-plan)  | Create plan with clear, actionable strategies to meet current and future housing needs. | [Housing Action Plan](https://connects.sumnerwa.gov/7313/widgets/22044/documents/20320) | Plan adopted |
| [City of Puyallup Housing Action Plan](https://www.cityofpuyallup.org/1808/Housing-Action-Plan) | Plan to support affordable housing options for all community members | [Draft Housing Puyallup – A Citywide Action Plan](https://www.cityofpuyallup.org/DocumentCenter/View/14132/Draft-Housing-Plan-Public-Review-Draft) | Plan forwarded on June 30th 2021 to Council for approval.  |
| [University Place Housing Action Plan](http://www.cityofup.com/housing-action-toolkit) | A toolkit to encourage construction of additional affordable and market rate housing. | [Housing Action Toolkit](http://www.cityofup.com/sites/default/files/20210621%20Final%20Housing%20Action%20Plan%20with%20Resolution%20Reduced.pdf) | Adopted on June 21st, 2021 |
| Revenue for Housing | Network of the faith community, groups and individuals encouraging Pierce County to take a regional approach to homelessness, with a focus on adoption of the 0.1% sales tax for affordable housing. | - | Active |
| University of Washington Tacoma – School of Urban Studies | Providing research and analytics around housing | [The State of Affordable Housing in Pierce County](https://digitalcommons.tacoma.uw.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=community_professional_reports) | Completed in June of 2020 |

# Appendix H – Homelessness Plans and Workgroups

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Plan Title | Description | Organization Creating | Status |
| [2021 Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness](https://www.piercecountywa.gov/7309/2021-Comprehensive-Plan-to-End-Homelessn), including the sub plan to address Street Homelessness | This plan will outline steps, participants, timelines, process and resource needs to end homelessness in Pierce County | Pierce County Human Services was charged by the County Council to create the plan per Resolution 2021-82 | In development – final Comprehensive plan due to Council on December 7th, but the shelter plan will be completed earlier. |
| [Five-Year Plan To Address Homelessness](https://www.piercecountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/87146/Pierce-County-5-Year-Plan-to-Address-Homeless-2020-2025?bidId=) | A five-year goals and strategies plan to address homelessness across the county, including goals targeting specific populations and looking to improve system effectiveness | Tacoma/Lakewood/Pierce County Continuum of Care Oversight Committee. | Adopted in December of 2019, the plan is being implemented by Subcommittees of the Continuum of Care. |
| [Pierce County Five-Year Plan to Address Homelessness](https://www.piercecountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/104709/Pierce-County-5-Year-Strategic-Plan-Final) | A State required plan that focuses on housing and the supports to maintain housing with priority areas focused on improving the operation of the homeless system | Pierce County Human Services | Adopted in December of 2019 |
| City of Tacoma Five-Year Homeless Strategy | A City of Tacoma focused plan to align homeless programming with a set of values, especially around equity | City of Tacoma Neighborhood and Community Services | In development |
| [Ending Veteran Homelessness Exploratory Task Force](https://www.piercecountywa.gov/6608/Ending-Veteran-Homelessness-Task-Force) | Create a plan to end veteran homelessness using the functional zero model. | Pierce County Council | On hold since February 2020. |

# Appendix I – Point in Time Count

The Point in Time Count is an annual assessment of how many people are currently experiencing homelessness in Pierce County. In communities with large numbers of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, such as Pierce County, the Point in Time count is always a dramatic undercount.

In January of each year, homeless providers and volunteers canvas known encampments and site where people experiencing homelessness frequent to count and collect information on each person experiencing homelessness. A count of individuals living in shelters is also conducted. The challenges to an accurate count include the following:

* Unknown encampments
* Encampments too dangerous to safely enter
* People not wishing to be counted
* People living in cars are very challenging to identify
* Differing numbers of volunteers from year to year
* Weather impacts both the activities of people experiencing homelessness and the people conducting the count

Useful data is collected during the Point in Time count and provides an additional data source for understanding the characteristics of who is homeless. However, the count should always be understood as an undercount and homeless population estimates from the Homeless Management Information System should be considered the count of record.

# Appendix J – Mainstream Systems

Mainstream systems are those that serve people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness but are not part of the formal homeless system. Those mainstream systems include:

* Education System
* Non-institutional elements of the criminal and juvenile justice systems
* Civil Legal Aid
* Social Services System
* Military/Veterans System
* Domestic Violence Supports
* Child Care systems
* Faith-based (localized) resources
* Workforce Development

#### Clean and Sober and Harm Reduction housing, including shelter, transitional housing, and permanent housing

#### Transportation to and from inpatient and outpatient services

#### Voluntary and Involuntary Inpatient Mental Health Treatment

#### Withdrawal Management (Detox) and Residential Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment.

#### Navigators to assist clients to connect with behavioral health services

#### Outpatient mental health treatment

#### Step down services – supports for clients as they exit institutional settings

* The foster care system
* Incarceration in the jail or prison systems
* Medical services
* Eye care services
* Denture services

# Appendix K – Current Homeless System Costs and Unmet Need

Placeholder for coming content.

1. Mingo Morales and Greg Helle both resigned from the Steering Committee Prior to completing of the Comprehensive Plan. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. *See* Gibbs, Bainbridge, Rosenblatt and Mammo, *How Ten Global Cities Take on Homelessness: Innovations That Work, page 22 – 23 (University of California Press 2021)* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)