

Make Homelessness Rare, Brief, and One-Time by Making Housing More Accessible

Notes Summary 8/26/20

Due to time constraints, groups were not able to answer every question.

Here is a summary of the main takeaways.

In looking at the survey results, what got missed?

- Expiration of Medicaid Foundational Community Support waiver which has housed and provided support for chronic/long-term people experiencing homelessness in Washington State, especially in King County. (5-year demonstration project expiring. If not renewed people will lose housing. Contact Washington State Health Care Authority -Melody Pazolt for details. See <https://hca.wa.gov/assets/program/foundation-community-supports-faq.pdf>
- Need community advocacy to shift narrative on “success & comfort” and make it equitably available for ALL people and need progressive revenue and new sources of revenue!
- Avoid a repeat of 2008 - create a Rapid Response Acquisition Fund as part of the Housing Trust Fund to allow the purchase of residential properties that will be sold during/post- pandemic. We need resources to support and maintain low-income affordable acquisitions (tenants/Co-Ops, Non-Profits, Housing Authorities; good example is King County Housing Authority purchase of Highland Village in Bellevue)
- Use available FEMA and CARES Act COVID-19 funding to purchase motels and hotels to replace congregant shelters and transition to permanent supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness (Currently WA and King County are spending CARES funding on leasing rather than purchasing. Other states are using these funding source and purchasing properties. California Project Room Key has purchased motels and hotels and moved 15,000 people experiencing homelessness into housing this way - <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/cdss-programs/housing-programs/project-roomkey>

It's challenging to separate ongoing needs from COVID impacts. But overall, what are you seeing in terms of changes in demand for services and emerging needs?

- Rental Assistance and Basic Needs- immigration status and documentation excluded many from all COVID-19 stimulus packages – basic needs unmet (housing, food, access to healthcare, transportation and day care) due to unemployment and/or because classified as essential workers without benefits (sick leave or health care or transportation allowance) – and fear of local police interacting with ICE
- Black Lives Matter protesting to get School Resource Officers out of schools and Right to Breathe Campaigns