

South King County
Response to
Homelessness:

A Call for Action

January 2008

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INTRODUCTION

In 2005, responding to a growing need to focus resources on solving homelessness in King County, county and local governments, non-profit housing and service providers, funders and state agency staff met and resolved to end homelessness. Their efforts resulted in the creation of the King County Plan to End Homelessness, *A Roof Over Every Bed in King County*, providing a framework for countywide community action directed at preventing and ending homelessness.

Using the County Plan as a guide for action, representatives of local governments, housing and service providers and funders operating in South King County began meeting in 2007 to develop strategies designed to respond to the unique issues creating homelessness in the southern part of the county. After gaining broader input from community leaders and providers through a series of meetings exploring possible solutions, nine specific strategies were developed to serve as a roadmap to action.

This plan and the strategies are designed to serve the two-fold purpose of providing housing and service providers, planners, government officials and funders with key information on the state of homelessness in South King County and a guide to strategies and actions that can be employed in a coordinated response to homelessness in our communities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Homelessness in South King County

Each night in the cities and unincorporated areas of South King County, people who lack adequate resources or have disabling conditions, are found on the streets, in parks or in vehicles. Other, more fortunate persons find their way to one of the few beds that are available for homeless persons in shelters or transitional housing facilities in the area. For every homeless household on the streets or in shelters, there are several more residents of South King County communities and rural areas who are on the verge of falling into homelessness as a result of unaffordable housing, illness, disabilities, domestic violence or family dysfunction.

The 2007 count of homeless people in King County (which under-reports the actual number) found more than 2,100 unsheltered homeless persons during a 3-hour period on a January night. A much more limited count in South King County during that same period found more than 250 unsheltered homeless persons in the area – considerably under-counting actual numbers. Almost 50% were found in cars or trucks. Families made up approximately one-half of the unsheltered homeless counted. Single men numbered three times single women; many single individuals were chronically homeless. While only a few unaccompanied youth were found, they represent one of the more difficult populations to stabilize.

48% of those experiencing homelessness are families with children and these families are often the “working poor.” For low income families any number of issues may precipitate their becoming homeless – from domestic violence to a health emergency, a job loss to an emergency car repair. In 2005, 1700 students in SKC School Districts were identified as being homeless. Moreover, it is likely that over the course of the next 12 months, at least 650 South King County families with children will likely become homeless. Housing costs are a major factor in creating the risk of falling into homelessness and represent a major barrier to returning to self-sufficiency. Unprecedented rises in rents, coupled with lagging wage increases, trigger homelessness for many. Other, major underlying causes are mental illness, substance abuse, and domestic violence.

Many homeless persons simply need a chance to succeed. Housing assistance with an array of supportive services has been found to be effective in returning people to stable living conditions again. Unfortunately, in South King County, housing for homeless individuals is extremely limited and needed services are inadequate. Fewer than 900 beds are available of which 208 are emergency shelter beds and 684 are transitional facilities. Facilities are frequently full resulting in constant turnaways and hopelessness.

A Vision for Change – Guiding Principles

To respond to these needs, the following principles guide actions to end homelessness in South King County:

1. Communication with key South King County and regional stakeholders is essential for obtaining input, identifying and building on a system of strengths, and developing the most cost-effective and efficient actions.
2. A critical element to success is effectively engaging and communicating with policy makers who can impact the net availability of both capital and operational resources.
3. There must be recognition of the fact that ending homelessness requires work across multiple systems and agencies; demands that new relationships be created to effect change; and necessitates ownership and implementation on a regional and countywide basis.
4. Homelessness can best be ended by engaging homeless populations in solutions for ending their homelessness while providing housing and services that are tailored to their specific needs.
5. The system of housing and services to prevent homelessness must reach out to those populations who are traditionally underserved.

Strategies to End Homelessness in South King County

Eight primary strategies will be pursued to end homelessness in South King County consistent with the King County Plan to End Homelessness:

1. Develop the political and community will to prevent and end homelessness.
2. Prevent homelessness by supporting local and regional plans to provide and maintain subsidized and private sector housing affordable to households with incomes below 30% of Area Median Income (AMI).
3. Build on existing promising programs in South King County, both geographically and quantitatively, to provide appropriate solutions for the unique needs of all cities in South County.
4. Provide services and support to prevent homelessness, rapidly re-house those who have lost their housing and increase permanent supportive housing resources to prevent and end chronic homelessness.
5. Create and maintain sufficient shelter and transitional capacity to meet the short-term needs of homeless individuals and families.

6. Prevent homelessness by supporting local and regional plans to provide and maintain a diversity of non-subsidized market housing affordable to households with incomes at 120% of Area Median Income (AMI) and below.
7. Support and identify ways to partner with local and regional initiatives to prevent and end homelessness.
8. Prevent homelessness by supporting local and regional plans to create and expand job training, job supports, and living wage jobs so that South King County employees are able to maintain their housing.

Housing – A Goal for Ending Homelessness

A key component of the solution to homelessness is maintaining persons at risk in their existing standard housing while effectively using resources to stabilize those who have become homeless and are in need of re-housing. This plan sets the framework for strategies that will rehab the aging stock of housing available to low income families and work with partners to stabilize those in the workforce so they are less likely to become homeless. Other strategies support the research that has shown that permanent supportive housing significantly reduces costs in other systems while creating stable housing for those with higher needs. Supportive housing is designed to serve those that would not be able to stay housed without a wide range of support services. Permanent supportive housing provides housing with significant case management service tailored to meet each participant's individual needs

The King County Plan to End Homelessness establishes a goal of securing 9,500 units of housing for homeless persons throughout the county over a 10 year period. South King County, with about 35% of the King County's population, sets a goal of securing 3,325 units to meet the needs of those who are homeless and those most at risk of becoming homeless in the community. The number of units includes those in need of rehab, creating supportive services to the existing mix of housing for low income and homeless individuals and the creation of new housing. This plan has not identified the specific mix (rehab, supportive and new) of housing units needed.

STRATEGIC PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS

Building on resources already in place and supported by the countywide Plan to End Homelessness, a series of strategies have been developed to directly address the most pressing needs of South King County communities and guide governments and agencies in working toward ending homelessness. These recognize the importance of working across jurisdictions in South King County, each of which has unique needs and capabilities, and each of which has a limited set of services and resources. The strategies in this plan are designed to develop momentum to achieve the goal of securing 3,325 housing units needed to end homelessness, while expanding services that enable homeless persons and persons at risk of homelessness to stabilize their lives. Central within the strategies is the concept of “housing first” – providing permanent housing resources for people who are homeless, or about to be homeless, coupled with case-managed wraparound services to eliminate the need for temporary or transitional housing.

The strategies were developed through a process of considering the existing, limited framework of housing and services in place and adapting proven, national best practices to the unique conditions of South King County. They require engaging the full community in working across jurisdictional lines to develop new systems and relationships to effect change.

A Call for Action

1. Develop the political and community will to prevent and end homelessness.

Actively engaging political and community leaders in understanding the issues of homelessness and in seeking solutions is a critical first step toward obtaining the community will to end it. It is essential that all major sectors of the community cooperate in planning and developing programs and activities to prevent homelessness. Information on homeless needs, best practices, as well as effective program models and approaches, needs to be developed and distributed as part of the community education process. This will require an increased capacity to coordinate actions across the whole of South King County.

2. Prevent homelessness by supporting local and regional plans to provide and maintain subsidized and private sector housing affordable to households with incomes below 30% of area median.

A key component in assuring housing stability in South King County communities is to support regional and local efforts to provide and maintain in livable condition housing resources affordable to residents with incomes at the very lowest levels. Homeless families and individuals and those “at risk” are the most vulnerable of south county residents. Housing resources need to be created to implement a “housing first” model, a nationally-proven best practice which places homeless persons into housing with supportive services rather than continue to unnecessarily disrupt their lives by moving them in and out of shelters and transitional housing. A combination of subsidized housing and partnerships with

the private sector offer the best solution for preserving housing and making it available to those most in need.

3. Build on existing promising programs in South King County, both geographically and quantitatively, to provide appropriate solutions for the unique needs of all cities in South County.

Within the communities of South King County there are a number of existing programs that are achieving strong results in either preventing or ending homelessness. One of the quickest and most efficient methods of increasing the number of persons who are stabilized or moved to self-sufficiency is to expand existing programs and activities that are effective. These programs need to be publicized and expanded appropriate to the need. In addition, there are a number of national best practices that can serve as models for developing improved solutions locally. All housing and services providers and homeless planners must be prepared and aggressively take advantage of potential financial resources for homeless and homeless prevention programs.

4. Provide services and support to prevent homelessness, rapidly re-house those who have lost their housing and increase permanent supportive housing resources to prevent and end chronic homelessness.

While housing stability is a key component to ending homelessness, the vulnerability of many at risk populations requires the provision of a strong set of wrap-around services in order for the families to remain in housing. An array of services is needed to match the individual needs of homeless people, including the availability of flexible funding resources and case management. Support of coordinated regional approaches to service delivery will have a direct benefit to local programs. Research has shown the effectiveness of providing a strong coordinated outreach and intake system to assure immediate placement in housing and services appropriate to their current needs. In addition, there is a need to improve exit planning for at risk persons leaving jails, prisons, treatment facilities and foster care to prevent homelessness.

Among the most vulnerable homeless populations are those who suffer from mental illness, are chronic substance abusers or have multiple issues causing a disability. There is a need for expanding permanent housing with supportive services for this population, many of whom are chronically homeless, so that they can receive treatment and services to stabilize their lives.

5. Create and maintain sufficient shelter and transitional capacity to meet the short-term needs of homeless individuals and families.

The strategies of this plan are designed to end homelessness in South King County and rely on the ultimate creation of sufficient permanent housing resources in the community. In the interim, there is a limited-term need for the development of additional emergency and transitional housing to meet the current and expected needs of homeless persons. However, since this plan is based on building capacity for a “housing first” model where a minimum of temporary housing will be necessary, housing planning and development will need to consider in the design the potential re-use of any temporary housing

resources. Once permanent housing resources are sufficient to place people in need into permanent affordable housing these structures could then be converted to permanent housing resources. In particular, there currently is a need to improve outreach to chronic homeless persons to bring them in to new permanent supportive housing and for housing with services for youth 17-24 years of age.

6. Prevent homelessness by supporting local and regional plans to provide and maintain a diversity of non-subsidized market housing affordable to households with incomes at 120% of AMI and below.

The most cost-effective method of ending homelessness is to prevent its occurrence in the first place. Given the rapid rise in housing costs and lagging increases in wages faced by South King County residents over the past few years, persons living at even moderate income levels have faced significant problems in staying in housing they can afford. Public-private partnerships involving local government and developers, landlords, and employers are needed to pursue the goal of providing affordable housing for a diverse population – housing near employment, services and public transportation.

7. Support and identify ways to partner with local and regional initiatives to prevent and end homelessness.

Homelessness is both a regional and a local issue. South King County planners and leaders need to work with other groups and organizations regionally to work on common issues. Natural partnerships need to be strengthened within South County and with regional organizations such as the King County Committee to End Homelessness, including coordination of subregional and local plans with the strategies and action steps of the countywide Plan to End Homelessness. Expansion of the areas covered in South County by the homeless census will improve information on the needs and characteristics of homeless persons in the area.

8. Prevent homelessness by supporting local and regional plans to create and expand job training, job supports, and living wage jobs so that South King County employees are able to maintain their housing.

Given the recent increases in rental and homeownership costs, individual and family incomes have been further stressed. As an added measure to make housing more affordable to a larger population, South King County supports other planning initiatives to increase the wages of persons at risk.

A Call for Action – 2008 Action Plan

The first twelve months of implementing the plan are essential for establishing success in ending homelessness and setting the stage for long-term change. Seventeen specific actions are proposed below as the initial steps toward preventing and ending homelessness in South King County. They focus primarily on three key elements: 1) developing a community understanding and will, including increasing community awareness and understanding of the needs and issues of homeless persons; 2) planning for increased housing and services resources for homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless; and 3) improving local capacity and coordination. (References in parentheses are to the implementing strategy number shown in the matrix at the end of this section.)

Developing Community Understanding and Will

1. Obtain community endorsement of South King County strategies (including housing and service providers, local and county government, regional organizations and funders, the faith-based community, the business community and other key organizations). (1c2)
2. Develop “quick read” briefing papers describing stories of individual homeless people and indicating what can be done to prevent homelessness and/or assist specific homeless populations. (1a3)
3. Develop roll out materials customized to the perspectives of specific sectors of the South King County community. (1a1)
4. Develop roll out materials customized for cities in South King County outlining the specific needs, program and housing resources, recent investments and priorities of each local community and describing how they can respond to those needs through specific actions within the South King County strategies. (1a2)
5. Develop a set of best practices of programs and activities currently operating in South King County. (3a1)
6. Host a South King County Homeless Summit introducing the new plan and strategies while highlighting promising local programs, practices and policies. (1c1)
7. Initiate steps to identify and seek modifications of local city codes and policies that serve as barriers to the implementation of local and subregional strategies on homelessness. (7c1)
8. Expand the areas of the county that are covered by the homeless count to provide a more accurate picture of the extent of homelessness in South King County. (7d1)

Planning for Increased Resources for Homeless People and those at Risk of Becoming Homeless

9. Establish work groups to develop specific steps to: a) maintain the current housing stock occupied or available to low and moderate income persons; b) expand housing resources available to house homeless persons; and c) create additional permanent long-term, supportive housing resources. (2d1)
10. Establish work groups to develop steps strategically creating temporary emergency shelter and transitional housing to fill specific gaps until long-term housing is available. (5a1)
11. Seek methods to expand supportive services to assist low and moderate income residents to remain in suitable housing. (4d1)
12. Initiate a work group to plan for day center and hygiene services (including showers and laundry) in South King County (5b1)

Improving Local Capacity and Coordination

13. Seek funding from local jurisdictions and regional organizations for a South King County Homeless Coordinator position. (1d1)
14. Prepare to respond to funding opportunities, as they emerge, that are consistent with the strategies, such as the Vets and Human Services Levy and the United Way of King County Impact funding. (3d1)
15. Increase local involvement in developing community solutions to prevent and end homelessness, by focusing on groups currently having limited involvement such as school districts, hospitals, chambers of commerce and city police departments. (3b1)
16. Improve coordination between providers and police departments on outreach to homeless persons in areas of concentration as well as in municipal jails. (4e1)
17. Utilize available data to report out successes to funders and communities on progress in implementing the South King County strategies and the Regional 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. (3c1)

Linkages in Implementing Strategies

The details of community's plan to end homelessness are more fully described in the following chart outlining the overarching strategies that will be pursued, the specific strategic actions the community will take over the course of the 10-Year Plan and the first year steps which will establish a platform from which to launch additional actions in future years.

South King County Action Steps

Strategies	Implementing Actions	2008 Action Steps
<p>1. Develop the political and community will to prevent and end homelessness.</p>	<p>1a. Support a South King County coordinator position to work across jurisdictions to continue planning and implementation of strategies.</p>	<p>1a1. Seek funding from local jurisdictions & regional organizations for a SKC homeless coordinator position.</p>
	<p>1b. Develop a community blueprint for partnerships with local businesses and landlords to use in crafting community-based solutions.</p>	
	<p>1c. Increase community awareness and understanding of homeless needs and solutions.</p>	<p>1c1. Host a SKC Homeless Summit introducing the new plan and strategies while highlighting promising local programs, practices and policies. 1c2. Obtain community endorsement of SKC strategies (including housing and service providers, local and county government, regional organizations and funders, the faith-based community, the business community and other key organizations).</p>
	<p>1d. Provide targeted information and models for leaders to use to present needs and potential solutions for their communities.</p>	<p>1a1. Develop roll out materials customized to the perspectives of specific sectors of the SKC community. 1a2. Develop roll out materials customized for cities in SKC outlining the specific needs, program and housing resources, recent investments and priorities of each local community and describing how they can respond to those needs through specific actions within the SKC strategies. 1a3. Develop “quick read” briefing papers describing stories of individual homeless people and indicating what can be done to prevent homelessness and/or assist specific homeless populations.</p>
	<p>1e. Coordinate with other county planning groups to support the County Ten Year Plan objectives.</p>	
	<p>1f. Bring key teams together to address strategies for unique needs of South King County and continue to meet and develop those working relationships.</p>	

Strategies	Implementing Actions	2008 Action Steps
<p>2. Prevent homelessness by supporting local and regional plans to provide and maintain subsidized and private sector housing affordable to households with incomes below 30% of area median (\$24,400 or less for a household of 4).</p>	2a. Support on-going plans to preserve existing affordable housing.	
	2b. Participate in regional efforts to assure that sufficient housing with services, for formerly homeless persons and people at-risk of homelessness, is available throughout King County.	
	2c. Build capacity of the affordable housing system in South King County and develop plan to evolve into a housing first model as a housing continuum is available.	
	2d. Support efforts to rehabilitate sub-standard multi-family housing in South King County into decent, well-run housing with appropriate services for the population housed.	2d1. Establish work groups to develop specific steps to: a) maintain the current housing stock occupied or available to low and moderate income persons; b) expand housing resources available to house homeless persons; and c) create additional permanent long-term, supportive housing resources.
<p>3. Build on existing promising programs in South King County, both geographically and quantitatively, to provide appropriate solutions for the unique needs of all cities in South County.</p>	3a. Publicize and share promising practices to build and expand on models already in place in South King County.	3a1. Develop a set of best practices of programs and activities currently operating in SKC.
	3b. Support and increase capacity of non-profits, faith groups, community organizations, businesses, and grassroots to contribute to the success of these models.	3b1. Increase local involvement in developing community solutions to prevent & end homelessness, by focusing on groups currently having limited involvement such as school districts, hospitals, chambers of commerce and city police departments.
	3c. Integrate proven national model approaches appropriate to the area.	3c1. Utilize available data to report out successes to funders and communities on progress in implementing the SKC strategies and the Regional 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness.
	3d. Maximize the use of available and emerging financial resources to end homelessness.	3d1. Prepare to respond to funding opportunities, as they emerge, that are consistent with the strategies, such as the Vets & Human Services Levy and the United Way of King County Impact funding.

Strategies	Implementing Actions	2008 Action Steps
4. Provide services and support to prevent homelessness, rapidly re-house those who have lost their housing and increase permanent supportive housing resources end chronic homelessness.	4a. Promote a coordinated entry system of assessment and referral focusing on the individual needs of homeless persons through a system of triage and referral.	
	4b. Provide an array of services that recognizes different homeless populations have unique needs that will require different levels of service supports.	
	4c. Expand and coordinate existing service networks to increase capacity and efficiency and avoid duplication.	
	4d. Develop programs which can be tailored to the needs and resources of individual communities.	4d1. Seek methods to expand supportive services to assist low and moderate income residents to remain in suitable housing.
	4e. Support regional initiatives to increase outreach and service delivery.	4e1. Improve coordination between providers and police departments on outreach to homeless persons in areas of concentration as well as in municipal jails.
		4e2. Increase outreach to chronically homeless persons.
	4f. Develop flexible funding resources to meet immediate needs of those at risk of homelessness.	
	4g. Provide case management and services to raise the capacity of tenants for self-support.	
	4h. Improve exit planning for targeted individuals leaving jails, prisons, treatment facilities and foster care.	
	4i. Provide permanent supportive housing for persons with reduced capacity due to mental illness, substance abuse and other disabilities to prevent homelessness.	4i1. Establish work group to develop specific steps to create additional permanent long-term, supportive housing resources.
	4j. Ensure appropriate level of support and services, including intensive services, to maintain long-term stability in housing.	

Strategies	Implementing Actions	2008 Action Steps
<p>5. Prevent homelessness by creating & maintaining sufficient shelter and transitional capacity to meet the short-term needs of homeless individuals and families.</p>	<p>5a. Provide necessary shelter and transitional housing as an interim measure while additional permanent housing resources are created.</p>	<p>5a1. Establish work groups to develop steps strategically creating temporary emergency shelter & transitional housing to fill specific gaps until long-term housing is available.</p>
	<p>5b. Provide sufficient emergency shelter and services throughout South King County to relieve immediate suffering and allow triage into appropriate transitional or permanent housing.</p>	<p>5b1. Initiate work group to plan for day center and hygiene services (showers & laundry) in South King County.</p>
	<p>5c. Support King County initiatives to provide housing and services for homeless youth 17-24 in South King County where there is not current capacity.</p>	
<p>6. Prevent homelessness by supporting local and regional plans to provide and maintain a diversity of non-subsidized market housing affordable to households with incomes at 120% of AMI and below (\$97,680 or less for a household of 4)</p>	<p>6a. Explore partnerships with major South King County employers to develop affordable housing and reduce transportation/energy costs for employees.</p>	
	<p>6b. Coordinate with local planning departments, economic development staff and the Chambers of Commerce to develop methods of integrating housing and economic development in preventing and solving homelessness.</p>	
<p>7. Support and identify ways to partner with local and regional initiatives to prevent and end homelessness.</p>	<p>7a. Support and participate in regional initiatives.</p>	
	<p>7b. Support and participate in local initiatives.</p>	
	<p>7c. Support local and regional policy approaches with positive outcomes.</p>	<p>7c1. Initiate steps to identify and seek modifications of local city codes and policies that serve as barriers to the implementation of local and sub regional strategies on homelessness.</p>
	<p>7d. Extend the geographic area covered by the annual homeless census throughout the county and seek methods of increasing the capacity of smaller cities to participate.</p>	<p>7d1. Expand the areas of the county that are covered by the homeless count to provide a more accurate picture of the extent of homelessness in SKC.</p>

Strategies	Implementing Actions	2008 Action Steps
<p>8. Prevent homelessness by supporting local and regional plans to create and expand job training, job supports, and living wage jobs so that South King County employees are able to maintain their housing.</p>	<p>8a. Support other planning efforts aimed at increasing wages for persons at risk.</p>	

HOMELESSNESS IN SOUTH KING COUNTY

The root causes of homelessness and the factors faced by those South King County residents who are at risk of becoming homeless, provide insight into potential steps to solve homelessness.

National Research on Homelessness

Homelessness stems from desperate poverty combined with unaffordable housing in communities too strapped to support their most troubled members. These circumstances explain why between 5 and 10 percent of poor people experience homelessness in a period as short as a year. (Burt 2001)

National studies (summarized in Burt 2001) estimate that as many as 4 to 5 times as many people will be homeless in any year as are homeless on a given night. More families with children enter and leave homelessness in a year than unpartnered single people, so they are a larger share of the annual homeless population. The studies found that:

- ¼ of people who are homeless have been so continuously for 5 years.
- ¼ have been in and out of homelessness numerous times.
- ½ are in the first or second episode, usually less than a year (sometimes a few weeks or months).

Reasons for homeless fall into three categories:

Structural	Personal	Public/Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing housing markets pricing people below poverty out of the market. • Dwindling employment opportunities for people with minimal education. • Removal of institutional supports. • Discrimination in housing, along with local zoning restrictions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited education or skills training. • Mental illness. • Disability. • Lack of family support. • Alcohol or drug abuse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of housing guarantees. • Lack of health care.

Source: Burt, M.R. *What Will it Take to End Homelessness?* 2001. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute.

Predictors of homelessness include:

- Severe poverty (incomes less than half of the federal poverty level), most important.
- Adverse childhood experiences (physical and/or sexual abuse by family members; removal from home to be placed in foster care or other institution).
- Alcohol or drug abuse as a teenager; current substance abuse.
- Mental health problems.
- Chronic physical problems.
- Incarceration (males).

Homelessness in King County

2007 One Night Count

The One Night Count was conducted from 2:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. in January 2007. During this 3-hour period, a total of 2,159 unsheltered people were counted in all of King County. This included 252 people in Kent, Federal Way and portions of Renton that participated in the count.

This count underreports the actual number of people who might have been without shelter in South King County both because of the few locations surveyed and because of the tendency of those without shelter to try to avoid detection or harm. Not surprisingly, nearly half (47%) of unsheltered homeless persons counted that night in South King County were sleeping in vehicles. Given the size and rural nature of many locations in South King County, it is easier for homeless individuals and families to avoid notice there compared to more urban settings.

2007 One Night Count of Unsheltered Homeless Persons in Selected South King County Locations*

Every tick mark on every tally sheet that volunteers return with on the night of the count represents a person with the same hopes and aspirations we all share: for safety and health, and for an opportunity to make tomorrow better than today. When people volunteer for the Street Count they are often sobered and outraged by the sight of fellow human beings attempting to shelter themselves clumsily or ingeniously from cold, rain, wind, desperation, and hopelessness.
Alison Eisinger, Executive Director, Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness.

Location Counted	Kent	Federal Way	Renton	Percent
Cars/Trucks	42	48	29	47%
Structures	18	28	6	21%
Under Roadways	16	6	7	12%
Walking Around	5	13	2	8%
Other	9	11	12	13%
Total Counted	90	106	56	100%

*19 individuals were also counted in White Center, and 124 people were found riding metro ("night owl") buses in King County and were presumed to be homeless.

Source: 2007 One Night Count.

In addition to unsheltered homeless individuals and families, the 2007 One Night Count in King County identified 2,368 people in emergency shelters and 3,312 people in transitional housing programs (5,680 sheltered persons) for a total official count of 7,839 people homeless on that January night.

Among those counted in shelters and transitional housing:

- Families with children more likely to be in transitional housing: 78% were
- Single individuals were more likely to be in emergency shelters: 60% were
- 1% unaccompanied minors (42 out of 5,680)
- 48% were families with children
- 38% single men (2,154 out of 5680)
- 13% single women (751 out of 5680)

Survey of People at Food Banks in South and East King County

In February 2007, a survey was conducted of people at food banks in 7 locations in south and east King County. Of the 140 people screened, 40% were either currently homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Interviewers felt that almost all would meet the federal definition of chronically homeless adults by virtue of current or recent periods of homelessness and/or having a disabling condition.

HUD definition of a person who is chronically homeless:

“...an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more, or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.”

Interview findings:

- Lack of affordable housing and nearly complete lack of shelters and services in their communities were the most urgent problems.
- Many were doubled up with friends or families and experienced episodic homelessness, using threads of safety nets in their communities.
- 22% had received treatment for mental health problems in past 3 years.
- 20%+ had been in jail, prison, or work release program in the last year.
- 21% had been in foster care as children.
- Many reported trauma and recent ill health; medical problems (heart attack, cancer, surgeries); asthma, diabetes; trauma from violence on the street; dental problems, migraines, skin problems, depression; loss of parent or spouse.

Source: 2007 One Night Count

Virtually all federal programs related to homelessness focus on serving people who are already homeless. When assistance is restricted to those who are homeless tonight, not much can be done to prevent homelessness tomorrow.
(Burt 2007)

Hunger

The 1996 national survey of homeless programs and people they serve (Burt 1999) found that all homeless clients interviewed experienced hunger.

Forty percent went one or more days in the last 30 days without anything to eat because they could not afford food, compared with 3 percent of poor Americans.

Families

National estimates put 1 in 10 poor adults and children as having a chance of being homeless. Families living in extreme poverty experience many hardships; homelessness makes these hardships much worse.

Findings from 1996 National Survey	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15% of homeless households interviewed in the 1996 national survey were family households (clients having one or more of their own children under 18 with them). • Each homeless family included 2.2 minor children of the client; 60% of homeless women had children ages 0 to 17; 65% of these women lived with at least one of their minor children. 	<p>Most of the children were young:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% 0 to 2 years old • 22% 3 to 5 years old • 20% 6 to 8 years old • 33% 9 to 17 years old • 5% no answer <p>45% of children 3 to 5 attended preschool; 95% children 6 to 17 attended school.</p>

Source: Burt, M.R., L. Aron, T. Douglas, J. Valente, E. Lee, and B. Iwen. 1999. *Homelessness: Programs and the People They Serve, Summary Report*. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute

Extreme poverty puts families at risk of homelessness. A national study of women with children compared homeless and housed, very-low income, welfare recipients (National Center on Family Homelessness). Both experienced extreme financial deprivation; substandard living conditions; inadequate education, training, and employment opportunities; social isolation; and, poor health. Mothers were an average age of 27. Homeless children were an average of 4 years old and housed children in the study an average of 6 years old.

- 92% of homeless and 82% of housed mothers experienced severe physical and/or sexual assaults in their lives.
- Nearly 1/3 of both reported a current chronic health condition – high rates of asthma, anemia, and ulcers.

Homeless Families in South King County

Savings in housing a family vs. placing children in foster care:

Nationally, the average annual cost of placing the children of a homeless family in foster care is \$47,608, while the average annual cost for a permanent housing subsidy and supportive services for a family of equal size is about \$9,000. Without access to a housing subsidy, some families remain homeless for a longer period of time. Ironically, the cost of a voucher that would prevent homelessness or reduce the length of time families remain homeless is often less than the cost of providing shelter assistance. (GAO 1998)

National research suggests that as many as 10% of families in poverty might end up homeless in a given year. Applying this estimate to 1999 census data in King County, as many as 1,736 families with children under the age of 18 were likely to have been homeless in King County that year. Looking just at incorporated cities and census designated places in South King County, 659 families with children were at risk of homelessness.

Families with Children at Risk of Homelessness*
10% of Families with Children under Age 18 Living in Poverty in
Selected South King County Cities and Census Designated Places 1999

Location	Family Type			Total
	Married Couple	Single Male	Single Female	
Algona	1	1	1	3
Auburn	25	5	49	79
Black Diamond	0	0	1	1
BrynMawr-Skyway	2	2	14	18
Burien	12	4	28	44
Covington	4	0	3	7
Des Moines	10	5	20	35
Enumclaw	4	0	7	11
Federal Way	46	13	68	127
Kent	60	11	78	149
Maple Valley	5	0	2	7
Milton	1	1	4	6
Normandy Park	2	0	2	4
Pacific	2	0	8	10
Renton	27	7	31	65
SeaTac	17	7	25	49
Tukwila	17	4	12	33
Vashon	1	1	9	11
King County	616	143	977	1,736

*10% estimate based on Burt 2001.
Source: US Census.

Families with children are more likely to enter and leave homelessness than single people, so they represent a larger share of the annual homeless population, a fact missed in the one night counts. National data suggests that most homeless children to age 17 are in school (beginning with the elementary grades.)

Children experiencing homelessness are more at risk for problem behaviors in the future (including homelessness as adults) than housed children living in poverty. They also are more at risk for health problems, low school attachment, developmental delays, and emotional or behavioral difficulties. Homeless children are also more likely to have lived in households with no parent present, living with other adults or in foster care, than are housed children in poverty. (Burt 2001)

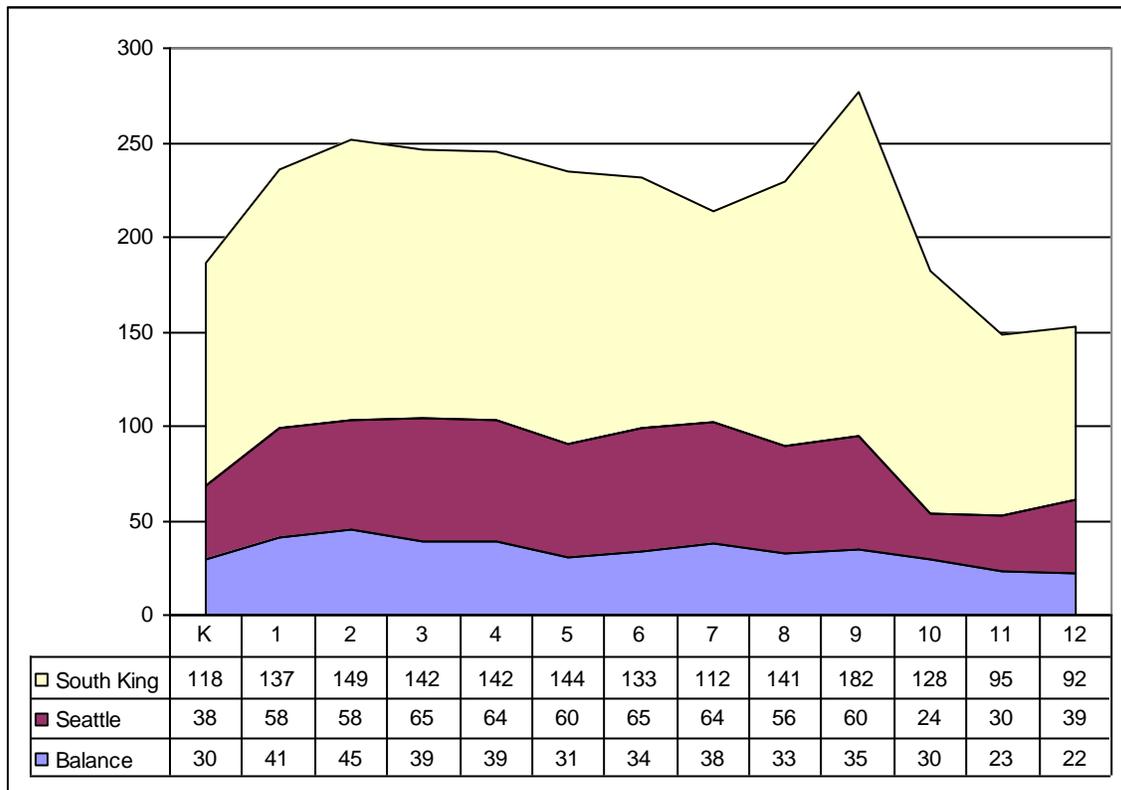
Adverse Childhood Experiences Reported by Homeless Clients

- 27% lived in foster care, a group home, or other institutional setting for part of their childhood.
- 25% report childhood physical or sexual abuse.
- 21% report childhood experiences of homelessness.
- 33% report running away from home and 22% report being forced to leave home. (Burt 2001)

Homeless liaisons in schools, consistent with McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act requirements, identify students who are without “a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence” including those sharing housing (couch-surfing) with uncertain ability to remain in that location. These children and youth may be accompanied by families or alone (unaccompanied homeless youth).

Just over 1,700 students in South King County districts were identified as being homeless during the 2005-2006 school year. Like all attempts to identify the number of people who are homeless, these numbers are likely on the low side.

**Homeless Students by Grade in King County School Districts
2005-2006 School Year**



Source: OSPI

**Homeless Students in South King County School Districts
2005-2006 School Year**

District	Grades				Total
	K	1-6	7-8	9-12	
Auburn	19	127	34	45	225
Enumclaw	0	3	1	1	5
Federal Way	25	127	27	78	257
Highline	18	161	76	146	401
Kent	35	236	67	120	458
Renton	16	163	41	94	314
Tahoma	5	24	3	9	41
Tukwila	0	6	4	4	14
Vashon Island	0	0	0	0	0
South King Districts	118	847	253	497	1,715

Source: OSPI

Homelessness places youth at risk for poor performance in school and for problems in other areas. Youth who are failing in school may also experience or be at increased risk of having mental health problems, abuse drugs and/or alcohol, and involvement with the juvenile justice system.

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and Young Adults (Ages 12 to 24)

Whether on a national or local level, estimating the number of homeless youth is complicated. The difficulty has to do with varying definitions of homelessness (e.g., length of absence from home, ability to return home) and the illusiveness of homeless youth, who are often able to find temporary housing with friends, family or (unfortunately) inappropriate peers or adults.

The same factors that contribute to adult homelessness contribute to homelessness in youth and young adults. Family conflict, however, is the most frequent reason given by youth questioned about homelessness (Fernandes 2007). This conflict commonly extends to physical or sexual abuse, abandonment and family dysfunction, including unresolved mental health and substance abuse problems. Of homeless clients under the age of 20 interviewed in a national survey (Burt 2001), 49% had been placed in foster care, a group home or an institution before age 18.

A surprisingly large proportion of youth age 16 to 24 will experience at least one night of homelessness. A much smaller proportion will spend a lot of time homeless, as youth and later as adults. The factors that propel youth toward homelessness are often the same ones that keep them there or that create the conditions for repeat episodes. We do not have much research evidence capable of guiding us toward the most effective interventions to prevent or end youth homelessness. What we do have suggests that we should pick points of maximum leverage, such as when youth are leaving institutional care, and provide "whatever it takes" to ensure that they can avoid homelessness and ultimately transition to lives of self-sufficiency. (Burt 2007)

Homeless Youth in South King County

Even though imperfect and widely divergent, two national estimates of homelessness might be applied to younger (age 12 to 17) accompanied youth in South King County.

- 10% of people in poverty might be homeless at some point during the year. (Burt 2001)
- 5% of all youth between the ages of 12 and 17 reported that they spent a night in a shelter, a place not intended to be a dwelling, or a stranger’s home during the preceding year. (Ringwalt 1998)

The results of applying these estimates to 2000 population data for several selected South King County locations are displayed below.

Estimates of Unaccompanied Children Ages 12-17 at Risk of Homelessness in Selected South King County Cities 1999

Location	10% of Youth in Poverty*	5% all Youth 12-17**
Algona	0	14
Auburn	42	155
Black Diamond	1	18
BrynMawr-Skyway	2	44
Burien	24	118
Covington	10	85
Des Moines	28	114
Enumclaw	9	55
Federal Way	86	353
Kent	88	323
Maple Valley	3	77
Milton	3	29
Normandy Park	2	31
Pacific	6	27
Renton	47	153
SeaTac	28	104
Tukwila	21	59
Vashon	8	46
King County	1,184	6,386

*Burt 2001.

**Ringwalt 1998.

Source (of data): US Census.

There is evidence that youth reporting to shelters are likely in their first incidence of homelessness and have not been homeless long. “Street youth are the opposite—[they are] unattached to shelters and on their own without adult supervision for periods that can exceed several years.” (Burt 2007)

More difficult to quantify is the number of older youth who might be homeless. The 1996 national survey of clients found that 10% of people who were homeless were youth aged 17 to 24. Older youth are at greater risk of longer stays of homelessness than younger youth.

While older youth may have access to adult systems of care, including shelters, older homeless youth (from 18 to age 24 or 25) are not appropriately served by those systems. They continue to have developmental needs, require support in education and skill development, and require varying levels of supported living to transition to independent adulthood.

Youth aging out of foster care are at an increased risk of homelessness. In FY ending 2006, 90 youth aged out of foster care in King County (Children’s Administration).

Prevention efforts also appropriately target youth and young adults not prepared financially or emotionally to be parents. The Washington State Department of Health Birth Certificate Data for 2004 (as reported in Veterans and Human Services Levy Procurement Plan) show 575 Medicaid-paid, first-time births to mothers 19 years of age and younger in King County.

**First-Time Births to Mothers 19 and Younger Paid by Medicaid
King County, 2004**

Health Planning Area	Births
Burien & Des Moines/Normandy Park, Tukwila/SeaTac & White Center/Boulevard Park	133
Kent & Covington/Maple Valley	110
Auburn & SE King County	83
Renton & Cascade/Fairwood	65
Federal Way	45
Total King County	575

Source: Washington State Department of Health Birth Certificate Data, 2004 (as reported in *Veterans and Human Services Levy Procurement Plan*).

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a key contributor to homelessness, particularly among women and women with children.

The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs reported 11,692 domestic violence-related offenses in King County during 2006.

- Almost 60% of these offenses were for simple assault.
- 25% were for violation of protection orders.
- 9% were for aggravated assault.

Of the domestic violence offenses in King County, 38% were from South King County departments. This excludes offenses reported by the King County Sheriff's Office that may have occurred in South King County.

Rural Homelessness

People in rural areas are not immune to conditions that result in homelessness. The isolation often associated with domestic violence and child abuse, both of which contribute to homelessness, are compounded in rural areas. Persons who are homeless are more difficult to identify in rural areas and, once homeless, they may find it easier to camp or live otherwise unobserved than is true in urban areas. Services are not as available in rural areas as in urban locations. People seeking assistance in rural areas to prevent or end their own homelessness face a challenge in finding and accessing services.

In South King County, a significant portion of the population (2000) lives in small communities and rural areas:

- 57% lived in cities with a population of 25,000 or more.
- 13% lived in cities with a population of from 10,000 to 24,000.
- 3% lived in cities with a population under 10,000.
- 27% lived in unincorporated areas.

Singles

National data from the 1996 survey of clients and providers show that 85% of homeless clients were single persons with no children with them. (Burt 2001)

Single homeless clients:

- 10% age 17 to 24
- 81% age 25 to 54
- 9% age 55 and older

Slightly more than one-half (51%) of the homeless sheltered persons counted in the 2007 One Night Count in King County were single individuals:

- 38% single men (2,154 out of 5680)
- 13% single women (751 out of 5680)

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (*Chronic Homelessness Fact Checker, March 2007*) most single homeless people enter and leave homelessness fairly quickly.

- *An overwhelming majority (80 percent) of single adult shelter users enter the shelter system only once or twice, stay just over a month, and do not return.*
- *Approximately 9 percent enter nearly five times a year and stay nearly two months each time. This group utilizes 18 percent of the system's resources.*
- *The remaining 10 percent enter the system just over twice a year and spend an average of 280 days per stay—virtually living in the system and utilizing nearly half its resources.*

Persons with Mental Illness, Substance Abuse or Both

National data suggest that mental illness, substance abuse, or both play a key role in causing and maintaining homelessness. Among clients interviewed in the 1996 national study (Burt 2001):

- 38% had indicators of alcohol abuse.
- 26% had indicators of drug use.
- 39% had mental health problems.
- 66% had both substance use/abuse indicators and mental health problems.

People leaving psychiatric facilities and correctional institutions have a heightened probability of homelessness if they do not receive assistance. Yet, assistance is cost effective. Studies are showing cost-neutrality at a minimum in the short-term and savings over the long term.

Key findings comparing homeless mentally ill in supportive housing with those not so placed:

- Homeless mentally ill person in New York City uses an average of \$40,449 of publicly funded services over the course of a year (1999 dollars).
- Placed into service enriched housing, reduced use of publicly funded services by an average of \$12,145 per year. (Metraux and Culhane 2001)

Benefits of Housing and Treatment

A recent pilot program in Multnomah County in Oregon found the pre-enrollment annual cost for health care and incarcerations averaged \$42,075 per client. In the first year following enrollment in the Community Engagement Program (CEP), the annual average cost was reduced to \$17,199 (cost of health care and incarcerations) plus services and housing during the first year at an average of \$9,870 for a total of \$27,069 (savings of \$15,006 or 36% compared to the \$42,975). Researchers anticipate greater savings in second and subsequent years with added client stability.

Costs and savings reported measure only cost of services, incarceration and housing. There are added social benefits (employment, taxes, other contributions) and avoidance of other costs (such as those associated with families and children). (Moore 2006)

In Seattle it costs \$26/day to house a person in supportive housing, compared to \$88/day in jail, \$555 in a mental facility, and \$2,184 in a hospital. (Housing Development Consortium. King County Housing Facts)

Prisoner Reentry

More people are incarcerated now than ever before, and have been in jails and prisons longer than every before. At the same time, fewer people have participated in education or drug treatment programs while incarcerated.

The likelihood of recidivism is high – as many as 2/3 will be rearrested within 3 years, and most of those within the first year. Persons who were homeless prior to imprisonment are more likely to be homeless upon release. Persons who are released into homelessness are more likely to recidivate.

Many released prisoners have substantial health problems, including HIV/AIDS, substance abuse disorders, and/or mental illness. Securing housing is difficult with little or no income or savings and with policies precluding renting to persons with a criminal history. Women released from correctional institutions must find housing for themselves and their children. The barriers to successful reintegration into the community are substantial.

In short, about a tenth of the population coming into prisons has recently been homeless, and at least the same percent of those who leave prisons end up homeless, for at least a while. And those with histories of mental illness and drug abuse are even more likely to be homeless. (Roman 2004)

Homelessness is the norm in King County's jails; 50% of all inmates using Jail Health Services reported they were homeless; 25% living in shelters or on the street. (King County Veterans' and Human Services Levy, Procurement Plan: King County Criminal Justice Initiatives)

Veterans

The national survey of homeless clients (Burt 2001) found that 23% overall were veterans and that 33% of male clients were veterans. Of the male veterans, 1/3 had been stationed in a war zone and 28% had been exposed to combat.

Nearly one-quarter (23%) of men and 2% of women 18 and older in King County are in the armed services or are veterans. Outreach to homeless single persons in South King County is beginning through services funded by the Veterans' and Human Services Levy and will yield much better data than currently available on the extent of homelessness among veterans and other populations of interest. The Procurement Plan for Outreach and Engagement of Long-Term Homeless People in South King County indicate that:

- 10% of 80 clients served by the Catholic Community Services HOME and ARISE shelter programs were veterans.
- 6 of the 25 residents of the Housing First Pilot in South King County were veterans.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Homelessness is the outcome of many factors: poverty, low job skills, lack of living wage jobs, dwindling services, insufficient social supports, disabling conditions. Escalating housing costs that price people out of the market must be considered a prime cause.

Housing Costs in Relation to Household Income

Five years of stagnating or declining incomes have added to housing affordability problems. (Burt 2007)

Census data for the past 30 years show that income has not kept pace with housing costs, both for renters and housing for purchase. South King County has been a refuge for households looking for housing more affordable than in more costly urban areas. Still, as development continues, housing prices in previously “affordable” areas will increase. Even as the trend toward more suburban living may offer lower housing costs in the short run, the price of commuting to employment counters perceived savings.

Change in Median Household Income, Gross Rent and Owner’s Value 1970-2000 (2005 Dollars)

Location	Median Household Income	Median Household Gross Rent	Median Household Owner’s Value
Auburn	-9%	13%	74%
Des Moines	-6%	10%	51%
Enumclaw	8%	33%	127%
Kent	0%	15%	77%
Renton	4%	29%	112%
Tukwila	1%	8%	80%
Seattle	36%	38%	198%
Tacoma	14%	30%	85%
MSA*	28%	31%	121%
Suburbs**	24%	22%	102%

Note: Only cities and places with data for the full period (1970-2000) were included in this table.

*Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue Metropolitan Statistical Area

**SMSA minus Bellevue, Everett, Renton, Seattle, Kent and Tacoma

Source: SOCDS (State of the Cities Data System) US census data (socds.huduser.org)

The disparity or gap between income and housing continues to grow. Costs continue to increase relative to income – housing, utilities, health care and other essentials.

- The median price of condominiums sold in King County in September 2007 was \$299,900, up 14.8% from a year earlier; in Southeast King County (Auburn, Des Moines, Enumclaw, Federal Way, Kent and Renton) the

median price of condominiums sold in September 2007 was \$224,900, up 4.7% from a year earlier. (Northwest Multiple Listing Service)

- The median price of single family homes sold in King County in September 2007 was \$450,000, up 5.9% from a year earlier; in Southeast King County the median price of single family homes sold in September 2007 was \$366,098, up 3.1% from a year earlier. (Northwest Multiple Listing Service)
- The median rent in Southeast King County was \$809 as of March 2007 compared to \$764 a year earlier. (Dupre+Scott)
- The conversion of rental housing to condominiums, while increasing the opportunity for homeownership, is another loss of affordable rental housing. In excess of 1,700 units have been converted in South King County since 2000.

Living Wage

The failure of wages to keep up with costs is illustrated in the analysis of a living wage completed by the Northwest Federation of Community Organizations. Most job openings pay less than a living wage, especially for larger families, and there are many more applicants than positions.

- Washington's median wage rose 9.8% between 2002 and 2006.
- Health care costs for a single adult with no children rose 47.7%; for 2 working adults with 2 children, health care costs rose 69.8%.
- The cost of living for a single adult with no children rose 14.3%; for 2 working adults with 2 children, the cost of living rose 16.5%.

The following illustrates the calculation of a living wage for a single adult with no children and a single adult with a toddler and a school age child in King County (2006).

Budget Item	Single Adult	Single Adult Toddler & School-Age Child
Food	\$166	\$409
Housing & Utilities	\$711	\$853
Transportation	\$372	\$575
Healthcare	\$92	\$331
Household, clothing, personal	\$335	\$542
Savings	\$186	\$301
Childcare	\$0	\$1,306
State & federal taxes (annual)	\$3,340	\$6,501
Gross annual income needed	\$25,685	\$58,293
Living wage (hourly)	\$12.35	\$28.03

Source: 2007 Washington Job Gap Study.

Households with Severe Housing Cost-Burdens

One in seven or 14% of US households is severely cost-burdened (paying half or more of their income toward housing). Among renter households in King County in 2000, 16% were paying 50% or more of the total household income for housing; 12% of all households occupying a unit they owned were paying half or more of their income toward housing costs.

Extremely low-income households are very like to be paying more than half of their incomes for housing costs (housing plus utilities). The loss of a job or a medical emergency could put these vulnerable households at risk of homelessness.

The majority of extremely low-income households living in housing they own or are buying are also paying more for housing than is affordable to them. Prevention programs, such as grants for utilities or for home maintenance often make the difference in retention of housing.

Extremely Low-Income Households (<30% Area Median Income) and Percent Paying 50% or More of Income for Housing, 1999 Renter Households

Location	Renter-Occupied	
	HH Income <30% AMI	50% Cost Burden
Algona	22	55%
Auburn	2,000	62%
Black Diamond	0	n/a
BrynMawr-Skyway	359	78%
Burien	1,356	60%
Covington	45	67%
Des Moines	715	73%
Enumclaw	443	60%
Federal Way	2,480	70%
Kent	3,379	56%
Maple Valley	65	77%
Milton	91	80%
Normandy Park	189	63%
Pacific	203	81%
Renton	2,137	59%
SeaTac	880	61%
Tukwila	656	72%
Vashon	223	44%
King County	56,545	57%

Source: SOCDs CHAS Data
(<http://socds.huduser.org/chas/reports>)

**Extremely Low-Income Households (<30% Area Median Income) and
Percent Paying 50% or More of Income for Housing, 1999
Owner Households**

Location	Owner-Occupied	
	HH Income <30% AMI	50% Cost Burden
Algona	79	57%
Auburn	2,712	57%
Black Diamond	99	55%
BrynMawr-Skyway	664	72%
Burien	1,792	60%
Covington	137	69%
Des Moines	1,059	69%
Enumclaw	640	57%
Federal Way	3,356	66%
Kent	4,127	56%
Maple Valley	169	85%
Milton	179	68%
Normandy Park	223	59%
Pacific	237	80%
Renton	2,760	58%
SeaTac	1,238	57%
Tukwila	887	66%
Vashon	422	48%
King County	76,751	58%

Source: SOCDs CHAS Data
(<http://socds.huduser.org/chas/reports>)

RESOURCES IN SOUTH KING COUNTY

Housing in South King County has historically been more affordable than in neighboring Seattle and East King County. South King County has a higher ratio of housing to jobs than other regions of King County, notably Seattle, which is indicative of the attractiveness of housing costs and the ability of people to live and commute to work throughout King County and, in fact, in the entire tri-county region of King, Pierce and Snohomish counties.

Assisted Housing in South King County

Housing is relatively more affordable in South King County. According to Dupree and Scott the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in South King County is \$703, compared to East King County at \$1031.ⁱ In response to higher rents the King County Housing Authority has implemented a higher subsidy level for parts of North and East King County. This enables households with Section 8 vouchers to live closer to family, schools or work. Despite this, a large percentage of Section 8 vouchers are leased in South King County. This in part may be explained by lower rents, but also the area's greater need. An analysis of the King County Housing Authority's Section 8 waitlist shows that four out of the five most populous zip codes that applicants listed as their primary address are in South King County.

South King County contains a substantial amount of subsidized housing in fixed locations. The King County Consolidated Plan identified 33 projects (3,532 units) of Washington State Housing Finance Commission Tax Credit Projects and 94 projects funded in part using the King County Housing Finance Program. The Renton Housing Authority owned and managed 467 units of public housing, and the King County Housing Authority had 2,238 units of public housing in the South Urban Area. The share of these developments in South King County is several times greater than in East and North King County (outside of Seattle).

On the other hand, the number of emergency shelters and transitional housing units in South King County is modest in comparison with King County as a whole.

- South King County contained 6% of King County emergency shelter units (112 units) and 16% of emergency beds (208 beds) in 2007 (Committee to End Homelessness King County, *Inventory of Homeless Units and Beds, Seattle/King County, Spring 2007*).
- South King County contained 13% of King County's transitional housing units in 2007 (286 units) and 16% of the county's transitional housing beds (684 beds) (Committee to End Homelessness King County, *Inventory of Homeless Units and Beds, Seattle/King County, Spring 2007*).

Emergency and Transitional Housing South King County 2007

Population Served	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing
Youth/young adults	5 units/beds	13 units/beds
Single women	11 units/beds	
Single men	60 units/beds	
Single adults		108 units/beds
Young parents		12 units/26 beds
Women w/children	7 units/23 beds	
Families w/children	29 units/109 beds	153 units/537 beds
Total SKC	112 units/208 beds	286 units/684 beds
% of King County total	6% of units/16% of beds	13% of units/16% of beds
King County	1,939 units/2,513 beds	2,171 units/4,184 beds

Source: Committee to End Homelessness King County, *Inventory of Homeless Units and Beds, Seattle/King County, Spring 2007*.

While emergency and transitional units are vital in getting people off the streets (e.g., HOME and ARISE beds for the chronically homeless) and assisting them to avoid homelessness or prepare for housing on their own (e.g., YWCA transitional housing units for victims of domestic violence), there is a recognized need for permanent housing and permanent supported housing if homelessness is to be eliminated.

The 2007 inventory identified 58 units (173 beds) of permanent supportive housing outside of Seattle. In addition to these beds, there are a number of other permanent housing units operated by nonprofit organizations that provide housing for formerly homeless clients.

King County Committee to End Homelessness plans for 9,500 units of additional housing for people who have been homeless (4,500 newly dedicated units of housing and 5,000 existing units secured). Those units would have three levels of support (intensive, moderate, and none) and serve 3 populations: single adults (chronically homeless and others), families, and youth/young adults.

King County Housing for Homeless

Subpopulation	Total Units Needed	Units by Level of Supportive Services		
		Intensive	Moderate	None
Single adults	7,300	2,900	2,800	1,600
(Chronic)	(2,500)	(1,800)	(700)	(0)
(Other)	(4,800)	(1,100)	(2,100)	(1,600)
Families	1,900	475	475	950
Youth/Young adults	300	250	0	50
Total	9,500	3,625	3,275	2,600

One option for South King County is to assume a share of that projection based on share of the population:

South King County Housing for Homeless (based on 35% share of new housing)

Subpopulation	Total Units Needed	Units by Level of Supportive Services		
		Intensive	Moderate	None
Single adults	2,555	1,015	980	560
(Chronic)	(875)	(630)	(245)	(0)
(Other)	(1,680)	(385)	(735)	(560)
Families	665	166	166	333
Youth/Young adults	105	88	0	17
Total	3,325	1,269	1,146	910

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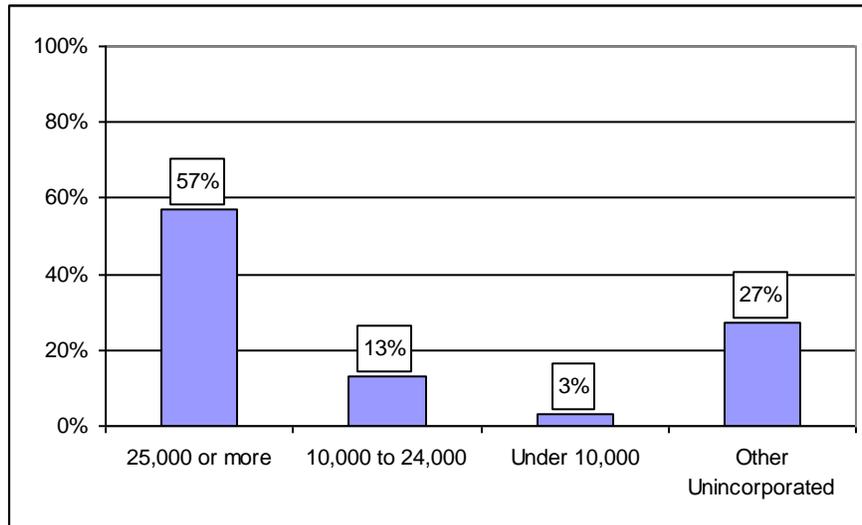
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APPENDIX

South King County Population

Population in South King County Cities and Census Designated Places by Size of Community, 2000



Cities with population in 2000 of 25,000 include:

- SeaTac (25,496)
- Des Moines (29,267)
- Burien (31,881)
- Auburn (40,314)*
- Renton (50,052)
- Kent (79,524)
- Federal Way (83,259)

Cities and Census Designated Places with 2000 population of 10,000 to 24,000 include:

- Vashon (10,123)
- Enumclaw (11,116)
- Covington (13,783)
- BrynMawr-Skyway (13,977)
- Maple Valley (14,209)
- Tukwila (17,181)

Cities and Census Designated Places with 2000 population of under 10,000 include:

- Milton (5,795)*
- Algona (2,460)
- Black Diamond (3,970)
- Pacific (5,527)
- Normandy Park (6,392)

Other unincorporated areas of South King County, excluding White Center, included an estimated population of 162,122 in 2000.

*Cities and Census Designated Places were both in King County and Pierce County. The population shown is based on the 2000 census for the entire place.

Source: US Census and 2006 King County Benchmarks Report (www.metrokc.gov/budget/benchmark).

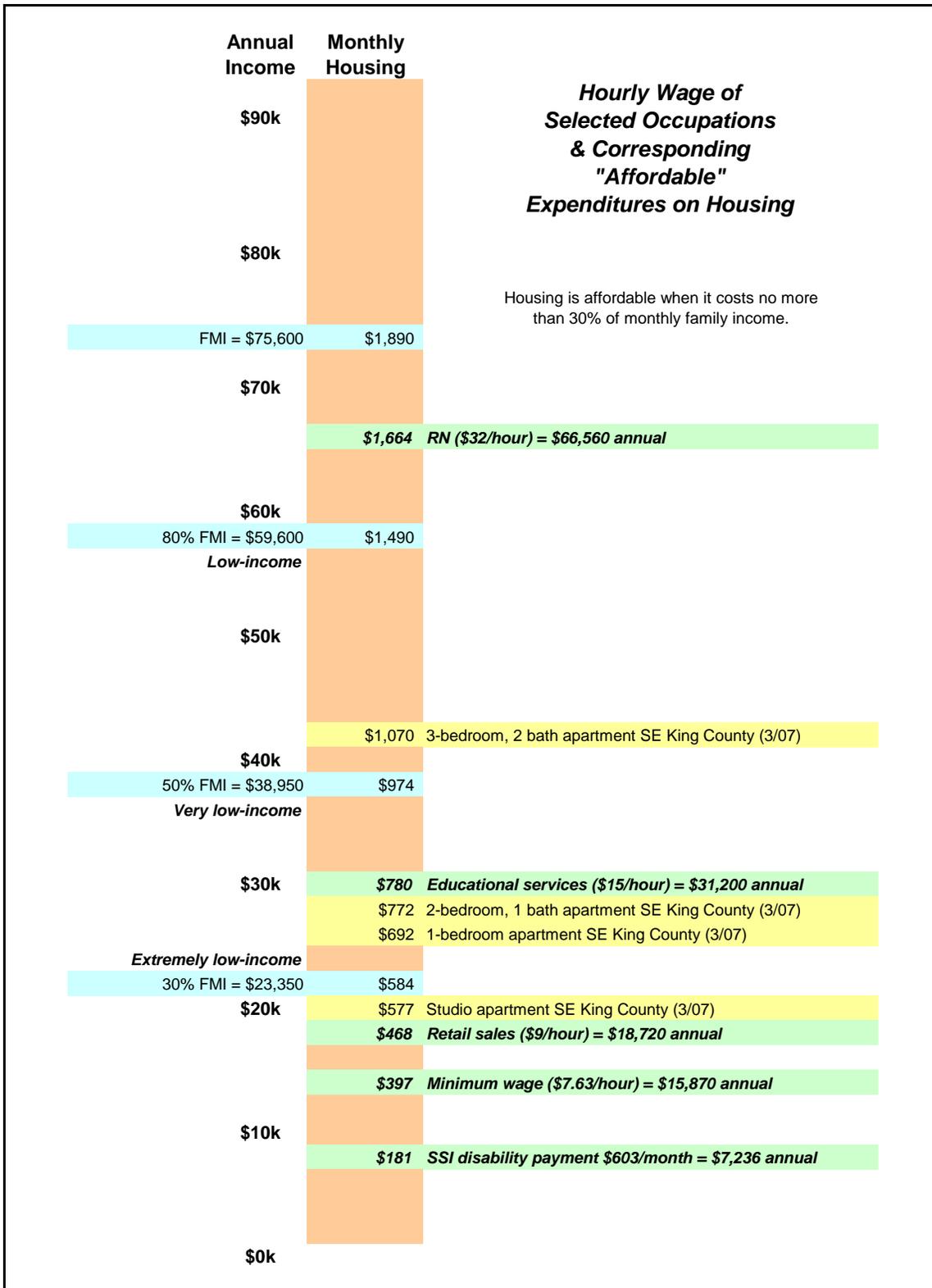
**Poverty Rate (Percent) in 1999
South King County and Nearby Locations**

Location	1969	1979	1989	1999
Auburn	9.3%	9.9%	10.8%	12.8%
Burien	n/a	7.5%	8.5%	9.4%
Covington	n/a	n/a	n/a	3.6%
Des Moines	4.9%	8.6%	7.4%	7.6%
Enumclaw	8.3%	8.3%	9.6%	8.2%
Federal Way	n/a	n/a	5.9%	9.3%
Maple Valley	n/a	n/a	1.6%	2.6%
Kent	6.4%	7.3%	8.8%	11.6%
Renton	6.5%	8.3%	7.0%	9.7%
SeaTac	n/a	n/a	7.6%	11.5%
Tukwila	6.7%	5.6%	9.3%	12.7%
Seattle	10.0%	11.2%	12.4%	11.8%
Tacoma	12.3%	14.1%	16.8%	15.9%
MSA*	7.8%	8.3%	8.5%	8.5%
Suburbs**	6.1%	6.6%	6.4%	6.7%

*Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue Metropolitan Statistical Area

**SMSA minus Bellevue, Everett, Renton, Seattle, Kent and Tacoma

Source: SOCDS (State of the Cities Data System) US census data (scods.huduser.org)



Emergency and Transitional Housing in South King County

(from *Inventory of Homeless Units and Beds, Seattle/South King County, Spring 2007*)

Name	Description	Location	Emergency	Transitional	Chronic Homeless	Families	Youth
Anita Vista	YWCA, SKC, 14 units/39 beds single women with children (domestic violence victims)	SKC		x		x	
Arise	30 units (30 beds), Catholic Community Services	Renton	x		x		
Auburn Square	YWCA South King County, 3 units/12 beds for families	Auburn		x		x	
Auburn Transitional Housing	YWCA South King County, 8 units/28 beds for families	Auburn		x		x	
Benson Heights	Community Psychiatric Clinic, 49 beds/units for single adults with mental illness	Kent		x	x		
Carpenter House	Multi-Service Center, 6 units/beds for single men in recovery	Federal Way		x	x		
City Park Townhouses	St. Stephen Housing Association, 8 units/28 beds for families	Auburn		x		x	
City Park Townhouses	St. Stephen Housing Association, FPA Solid Ground, 4 units/16 beds for families	Auburn		x		x	
Compass Center, Transitional House #2	Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program, 6 units/beds for single men/veterans Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program, 6 units/beds for single men/veterans	Burien		x	x		
DAWN	DV victims, single women, 2 units	SKC	x		x		
DAWN	7 units/23 beds, confidential emergency shelters for women with children	SKC	x			x	
DAWN Extended Stay Units	7 units/28 beds confidential housing for single women with children (domestic violence victims)	SKC		x		x	
Elizabeth House	Catholic Community Service, 4 units/8beds for young females with children	Auburn		x		x	
Exodus Housing	5 units/22 beds for families (domestic violence victims)	Auburn, Enumclaw, Federal Way, Kent (sites vary)		x		x	
Family Transitional Program	Multi-Service Center, 6 units/30 beds for families	SKC		x		x	
FUSION	(Friends United to Shelter the Indigent Oppressed and Needy), 9 units for homeless women with children	Federal Way		x		x	
HOME	30 units (30 beds), Catholic Community Services	Kent	x				
Horizon House	Multi-Service Center, 5 units/beds for single men in recovery	Federal Way		x	x		
Hospitality House	Single women, 9 units	Burien	x		x		

Name	Description	Location	Emergency	Transitional	Chronic Homeless	Families	Youth
Katherine's House	Catholic Community Services, 6 units/beds for single women with substance abuse released from RJC (Kent); provides structured family-style living with intensive case management to homeless, chemically dependent women.	Kent		x	x		
Mi Casa	Consejo Counseling and Referral, 4 units/12 beds confidential housing for single women with children (domestic violence victims)	SKC		x		x	
Nike Family Shelter	15 units/64 beds for families with children	Kent	x			x	
Nike Manor	St. Stephen Housing Association, 8 units/64 beds for families	Kent		x		x	
Oxford House	Women in recovery				x		
Project Permanency	Family Services, Foster Commons (Skyway), 7 units/28 beds for families	Skyway		x		x	
Severson House	Auburn Youth Resources, 8 beds/units for young males 15-18	Auburn		x			x
South County Youth Shelter	Auburn Youth Resources, 5 units, youth 10-17	Auburn	x				x
The Homelessness Project	Church Council of Greater Seattle, 1 unit/3 beds for families	Tukwila		x		x	
Titusville Station	Multi-Service Center, 19 units/beds for single women in recovery	Kent		x	x		
Trinity House, Fresh Start Transitional	5 units/beds for single men in recovery	SeaTac		x	x		
VIEW House	Veterans Independent Enterprises of Washington), 4 units/beds for single men/veterans	Auburn		x	x		
Villa Capri	Multi-Service Center, 4 units/20 beds for families	Federal Way		x		x	
Villa Esperanza	Consejo, 23 units/84 beds for families with children (domestic violence victims)	SKC		x		x	
Vine Maple Place	7 units/21 beds for single women in recovery with children	Maple Valley		x		x	
Vision House, Carr Road House	Men's Program, 3 units/beds for single men in recovery	Renton		x	x		
Vision House, Children's Village Phase I	4 units/16 beds for single women with children	Renton		x		x	
Vision House, Children's Village Phase II (June 2008)	8units/44 beds for single women with children	Renton		x		x	
Vision House, Family Program	11 units/31 for single women with children	Renton		x		x	
Vision House, Men's Program	5 units/beds for single men in recovery	Boulevard Park		x	x		
Watson Manor	Kent Youth & Family Services, 8 units/18 beds for single mothers	Kent		x			x

Name	Description	Location	Emergency	Transitional	Chronic Homeless	Families	Youth
Way Back Inn	11 units for families	Kent, Tukwila, Renton		x		x	
YWCA South County	14 units/45 beds for families with children	Auburn, Kent, Renton	x			x	
YWCA, Southminster Housing Association	2 units/8 beds for families	Des Moines		x		x	

A REVIEW OF NATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

Preventing and Ending Homelessness among Families

Key Elements (from *Strategies for Preventing Homelessness*)

- Information sharing across agencies and systems
- Housing barrier screening and triage
- Public jurisdiction recognizes a legal and moral obligation to shelter
- Significant state and local mainstream resources are invested
- Collaboration among public and private agencies
- Non-housing mainstream agencies accepting housing their clients as one of their responsibilities
- Leadership
- Clear goal of preventing homelessness among target populations
- Clear strategy with ways to track success and progress
- Lead agency has control of funding and contracting for all or most of the system
- Uses outcomes-based contracting with adjustments on performance

1. Prevention & rapid re-housing of families who have become homeless

Hennepin County, MN Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) & Rapid Exit Program

FHPAP: Prevention assistance is focused on “whatever it takes” to prevent keep families at risk from becoming homeless. Assistance is designed in concert with the client in crisis focusing on how to extricate the client from the situation and then stabilizing the family. Both cash and non-cash assistance is available including legal services, case management, advocacy, furniture, car repairs and clothing. A strong element of success is the approach to working with landlords and seeking accommodations in rent or terms while assuring the landlord that the assigned prevention provider will be immediately available to assist if a problem with the client occurs. Both grants and loans are given to tenants to assist them. Outcome-based contracting is required of agencies providing prevention assistance. Of the 1,170 families served by FHPAP in a year for a cost of \$472/family, 95% did not use shelter within 12 months of entering the program.

Rapid Exit: Families in the homeless system which have significant housing barriers but who wish to work toward their independence. About 1,100 families are comprehensively screened and referred each year by a single staff person. Most are in shelter. Families are assigned one of the cooperating Rapid Exit agencies where a case worker is assigned to develop an action plan with the family. The action steps must be followed or they are discharged from the program (only about 1% is discharged). Families are placed in housing and provided case management until 6 months after they are placed in permanent housing. Agencies have an array of types of housing assistance available including co-sign leases, provide deposits, guarantee for damage and eviction and provide case management. Of the 1,024 families served at an average cost

of \$800, 88% did not return to housing within 12 months. Overall in Hennepin County homelessness is down 43% over a four year period.

2. Provide flexible funds to stabilize families leaving shelter

Boston, MS Family to Family Project

Since 1998, Family to Family has provided \$4 million for almost 7,500 families and provides a flexible fund for immediate critical needs of families to maintain their stability. Provides immediate assistance based on current family needs including rent, security deposits, utilities, child care, transportation and other assistance that helps obtain and sustain permanent housing. Current average grants are \$1,000 per family delivered through 25 Boston area agencies that have joined to assist persons leaving shelter. Persons assisted are working full or part time but who have exhausted their resources and require assistance during a crisis period. A year after receiving assistance, 95% report they have successfully maintained permanent housing.

3. Combine rental subsidies with mainstream services in combination with landlord incentives to move homeless to permanent housing

New York City Housing Stability Plus Program

The program assists with families and singles who are long-term clients in the City's homeless care system. Housing is leased exclusively from the private market; and no Section 8 or Public Housing resources are used. Housing costs are paid for by public assistance shelter allowances, tenant rents, SSI payments (if applicable) and SHP rental resources. Rental assistance is provided over a 5 year term with subsidization reducing 20% per year so that tenant dependency is phased out as the family's resources increase. Incentives to landlords include up-front payments of up to 3 month's advance rent, security deposits, a landlord hotline, finders fees for Real Estate agents finding apartments to lease. Case management and services are provided through on-going community programs. Over an 18 month period, only 100 of the 6,400 families with children and 1,200 households without children had dropped out of the program and returned to shelter.

Preventing and Ending Homelessness among Single Adults

Key Elements of Success (from *Strategies for Reducing Chronic Street Homelessness*)

Essential

- Paradigm shift in the goal and approaches of the homeless assistance network – want to end chronic street homelessness.
- Set a clear goal of reducing chronic street homelessness.
- Commit to a community-wide level of organization.
- Leadership and effective organizational structure.
- Significant resources from mainstream public agencies.

Helpful to Start and Sustain

- Catalyst – triggering event
- Private sector involvement
- Local elected official commitment
- Progress-tracking system
- New approaches to services
- Strategy to combat NIMBY

1. *Intensive outreach and services for the mentally ill*

State of Washington PATH Program

The PATH Program of Washington State establishes interdisciplinary teams of specialists to assist mentally ill individuals to enter the homeless care system with the goal of stabilizing their health and housing. Team roles include team leader, and may include a substance abuse specialist, nurse practitioner, psychiatrist, family systems specialist, peer counselor, wellness specialist, and employment specialist. Teams are highly responsive to the individual needs of the clients and prepare client-centered service and housing plans to achieve stability.

2. *Housing for severely mentally ill*

New York City Pathways to Housing

Pathways for housing serves severely mentally ill individuals referred to the program by jails, hospitals and shelters. The program provides immediate access to scattered site housing for 450 adult single persons, most of whom meet the HUD definition of Chronic Homeless. Through the housing first model, the cases are referred to housing without regard for treatment or sobriety and the program operates under a “low demand” philosophy. An individualized client-driven service plan is developed for each participant. A team of specialists serving 60-70 clients is available on a 24-hour, seven day a week basis to intervene and assist participants in cases of need or crisis. Pathways co-signs leases to secure the units and maintain close communication. If the participant requires treatment, Pathways continues to hold the unit available for 90 days for their return. Persons

enrolling in the program had an average of 6.8 months in psychiatric hospitals prior to enrollment.

3. Reducing landlord risk to encourage permanent housing availability

Portland, OR Risk Mitigation Pool

Beginning in the 1990's, the City of Portland switched its focus from shelters and transitional housing to providing permanent housing for the difficult to serve. One of the barriers to serving this population is the fear of landlords related to rent loss and tenant damage. One component of the City's current program to expand permanent supportive housing resources by 300 units in seven years is to provide landlord incentives for high risk tenants. A public fund has been established to provide risk mitigation to private housing developers and landlords to protect them from loss as a result of tenants (Risk Mitigation Pool).

Preventing and Ending Homelessness among Youth (17-24)

Essentials to End Youth Homelessness (based on Summary from National Partnership to End Youth Homelessness)

- Long-term comprehensive plan in place, with adequate funding commitment
- Using data for decision making and to report out
- Emergency prevention in place and readily accessible
- Systems prevention – exit planning and service needs assessment
- Outreach – system in place to identify and engage youth
- Adequate and appropriate youth housing continuum
- Services available
- Focus on youth development
- Permanent housing available
- Develop income capacity – skills, living wage jobs

1. Systematic approach to primary and secondary prevention

Denver, CO Urban Peak Program

Outreach services begin connections with youth ages 15-24 toward the end of providing them a set of prevention services provided through a drop-center, shelter, employment and education services and housing. An outreach team works to build relationships with street youth, gaining their trust so that barriers can be addressed. The team focuses on visiting places where youth are found and is in close contact with law enforcement officers and schools. The program offers a continuum of services to meet the individual needs of the youth. 65% of over 760 youth served in a year achieved a successful housing outcome (moved into their own apartment, obtained permanent housing or returned to their families).

2. Comprehensive housing and services for youth

Everett, WA Cocoon House

Serves homeless and runaway youth aged 13 to 17; provides housing and community-based services to youth, caregivers and families. Housing includes both emergency shelter and long-term transitional housing. Teen Advocates provide outreach on the streets, school, homes, and other locations where homeless or at-risk youth may be found. Project SAFE is a prevention component geared to helping parents and youth work out their problems before circumstances escalate to homelessness.

Building and Sustaining Community Will

National Best Practices

1. Building community resources through multi-jurisdictional cooperation

Bridges to Housing Portland, OR Metro area

Four metropolitan counties came together in 2006 with the common objective of working cooperatively with the private sector to impact homelessness among families in the region. The met for a year with consultants to carefully develop funding strategies and program design to implement a housing first model for the area. Key in the process has been to develop a common design and sales pitch with a goal of obtaining \$30-\$40 million in private partner contributions from area foundations and businesses. Local government and non-profit providers would make additional contributions to support the program. The goal is to create 300 units of permanent affordable housing and provide essential for homeless families over the next ten years. The three elements of the Bridges to Housing Program are permanent affordable housing; intensive case management services; and services for children. A housing first approach is at the core of the effort. An average of \$4,500 will be available for families to obtain services and housing move-in supports. Pilots creating 52 units in Multnomah County and 20 units in Clark County were initiated in 2007.

ⁱ Apartment Vacancy Report, October 2007