

Recommendations for Consideration by the Homeless Strategies Workgroup

OVERARCHING GOALS

Clarify extent of local government support

Prioritize most vulnerable populations

Consider strategies and actions appropriate for local governments to support

Build upon current resources where possible

Invest in long-term permanent solutions over temporary crisis solutions when resources are inadequate to do both

Proposed Recommendation	Action Steps & Potential Funding Sources	<i>SHORT TERM</i>
<i>Provide motel stays for families with children</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider up to \$100,000/month to serve 50 families during the months of November through March (and possibly more during pandemic). • Research what COVID Recovery monies may be available to support these stays 	
<i>Establish Overflow Winter Shelter to offer individuals when Base Camp is full</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand time span to include November and March • Plan for 30 additional spots, and consider whether it is a possible option for an identified special population 	
<i>Establish Severe Weather Shelters to offer individuals who typically don't utilize shelters when Base Camp and Overflow Winter Shelter capacity has been reached</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize previously agreed upon guidelines for opening these temporary shelters • Recruit volunteer organizations to operate • Ask potential operators what they need from local government in order to operate a Shelter 	
<i>Establish a data collection process to assist in ongoing analysis and planning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus initially on night-by-night shelters to determine utilization trends and needs • Consider needs of most vulnerable populations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Families with children b. Needs of individuals aged 18–24-years may require an investment in separate shelter location, or designated space within current shelters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Explore actual need/potential utilization of a young adult location (previous utilization was low) ii. Determine how a young-adult shelter aligns with the current Ground Floor program c. Needs of elders, people living with serious mental illness, LGBTQ, and BIPOC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Follow YWCA efforts in process, Sun House, other options d. Continue to support the Homeless Outreach Team and review their qualitative data on needs of the people they are serving 	
<i>Support continuation of current Specialty Shelters</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference Shelter Inventory 	
<i>Support continuation of current Tiny Home Villages as well as the pending village contracted by City of Bellingham</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further investments in the number of taxpayer-supported tiny home encampment sites without in-depth research to ensure the need exists (vs. wants), and that the response is the best practice for the situation • Ensure Tiny Home encampments supported by government qualify as “Shelters” • Review other options for singles and couples that provide in-unit access to plumbing, heat, and meal preparation 	
<i>Encourage local elected officials to work with Skagit and Island counties to increase shelter capacity for their residents</i>		

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LONG TERM

<i>Interim housing units for families with children as an alternative to motel stays</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore long-term solution to replace the need for such a significant investment in motel stays and provide a better alternative for children and parents. • Develop need, scope and feasibility for an interim housing complex: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Some families may return to shared living post pandemic. • Seek and procure community partner for operations • Identify long-term operational funding • Consider whether proposed state budget for capital support for shelters should/can be used to develop this interim solution
<i>Establish shelter and services for people who are medically fragile</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Unity Care and Peace Health’s partnership to build and operate Way Station, which is in planning, design and funding stage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Way Station would serve up to 20 individuals b. Co-locate medical services c. Co-locate hygiene services d. Co-locate support services/case management
<i>Relocation of Base Camp to permanent home</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify funding sources to support construction costs, where appropriate • Encourage section(s) dedicated to vulnerable populations and encourage coordination with other partner agencies

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