



Homeless Services Update

City of Tacoma | Neighborhood and Community Services

**City Council Study Session
September 27, 2022**



Overview



- Staffing Update
- Inclement Weather Response
- Private Property Encampment Abatement
- Encampment Removals & Outreach
- Strategy Update
- Next Steps

Inclement Weather Response



	Cold Weather	Hot Weather	Air Quality Advisories	Supplies	Shelter
Tier 1	32 Degrees or 35 degrees with rain/wind	85 Degrees	Above 101- Unhealthy for sensitive groups	Supplies provided or Reimbursement depending on Need and Shelter Type; Heat events – Water for distribution; Air events – masks for distribution	Existing Shelters overflow during Inclement weather
Tier 2	-	90 Degrees	Above 151- Unhealthy		90 or Higher- Use existing Day Center/Shelters, open Cooling Centers.; Above 151- Use Existing Day Center/Shelters add Air Quality Center

Private Property Encampment Abatement Pilot Program



- Council authorization for funding and program launch in December 2021
- Provides support for trespass and removal of debris
- Performed 16 private property encampment abatements since launch



Public Property Encampment Removals



- Authorization based on:
 - Emergent public health and safety impacts
 - Size of encampment or type of activity
 - Unmanageable environmental impacts
 - Planned public work needs
- City has initiated 18 removals from public property since January 2022 (City and State property)



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Shelter Update



35th Pacific

- Expected to be opened in October 2022
- 50 beds

Brotherhood RISE

- Expected to be opened in October 2022
- 35 beds

Safe Parking

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Homeless Strategy

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Homeless Strategy



This strategy is driving us to reach “Functional Zero.” A state where any person starting a new homeless episode has immediate access to shelter and a permanent housing intervention. This acknowledges that homelessness will never fully disappear from a community. Instead, it aspires to making it rare, brief and, when it happens to someone, they do not experience it again.

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Summary of Measurements



Point-in-Time Count

The Point-in-Time count continues to clarify an overall year to year trend of people who are experiencing homelessness

Homeless Management Information System

This tracking is entered by all shelter providers and needs less active management while still giving a window into the number of individuals experiencing homelessness and there is some consistency in data input.

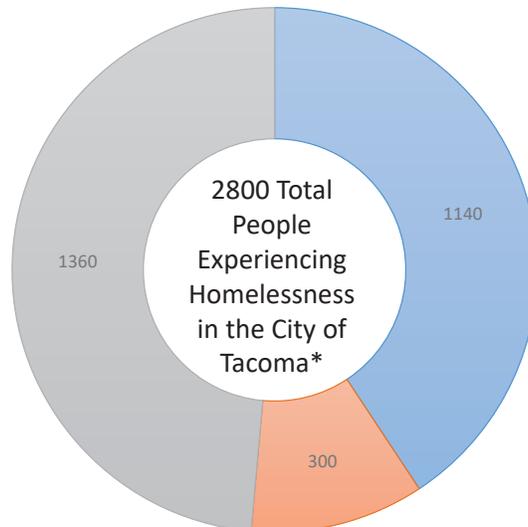
By Name List (Preferred Method)

A universal by name list has been proposed by the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness and has been discussed with jurisdictions to align in practice on how to accurately count people who are experiencing homelessness. This list would include all people who are experiencing homelessness in Pierce County who stay in a shelter, work with an outreach provider, and include anyone who is included in our response system.

Measuring Homelessness in Tacoma



- Shelters
- Encampments
- Other Individuals Experiencing Homelessness





Homeless Strategy



Vision: Sustain an equitable, dignified, and culturally responsive homeless and housing response system that quickly and effectively addresses everyone's homeless crisis while supporting the needs of local residents and businesses.

Mission: Collaborate with citywide initiatives and strategies, and regional partners and stakeholders to support long term permanent housing and provide supportive services to people experiencing homelessness in Tacoma. We provide real solutions to creating a thriving community by immediately responding to the needs of individuals in encampments, the surrounding neighborhoods, and local businesses and by providing immediate access to emergency shelter, health and wellness services and permanent, safe and stable housing to everyone experiencing homelessness in this city.

Values:

- Lead with anti-racism
- Center lived expertise
- Focus on trauma-informed care
- Make decisions using data
- Build capacity and collaborate with partners



Homeless Strategy



Goals:

- 1) Ensure affordable housing is available and accessible to Tacoma residents.
- 2) Everyone experiencing homelessness in Tacoma, or impacted by homelessness, can access services and support.
- 3) The shelter system in Tacoma offers all people a safe and dignified experience that is easy to access.
- 4) Tacoma's homeless service system provides individuals and families with access to a continuum of tailored supports to prevent and end homelessness.
- 5) Tacoma's homeless service system provides Individuals and families with access to permanent, stable housing in order to end the cycle of homelessness.

Ensure Affordable Housing



Goal 1 Objectives

- Objective 1.1: Create more housing for more people
- Objective 1.2: Preserve existing affordable housing
- Objective 1.3: Help people stay in their homes and communities
- Objective 1.4: Reduce barriers for people who often experience them

Previous

- Leveraged publicly and partner-owned land for affordable housing (AHAS 1.4)
- Increased prevention services and funding for people who are on the verge of homelessness (PCCP 3.1)
- Integrated culturally competent and trauma informed practices into new and existing programs (AHAS 2.5)

Immediate (<1 year)

- Create flexibility in contracting so providers can address various barriers

Short-Term (1-2 years)

- Increase support for Workforce Development and Financial Empowerment program (PCCP 4.6 & 3.4)
- Create a range of resources for households experiencing a housing crisis (AHAS 4.2)

Long-Term (3-5 years)

- Streamline processes for households applying for and using rental assistance (AHAS 4.1)
- Earmark a portion of new or expanded sources of local funding to provide support services in new development (AHAS 4.4)

Access Services and Support



Goal 2 Objectives

- Objective 2.1: Provide access to hygiene, outreach, and seasonal weather shelter for unhoused residents of Tacoma.
- Objective 2.2: Streamline access to services through improved tracking and coordination to support unhoused residents in Tacoma.
- Objective 2.3: Deploy targeted strategies to reduce barriers and increase access for priority populations to shelter, treatment and permanent housing.
- Objective 2.4: Collaborate with community and businesses to mitigate the impacts of homelessness.

Previous

- Hire additional Program Development Specialists for the HEAL Team.
- Eliminate known barriers to accessing shelter.

Immediate (<1 year)

- Coordinate internal and external partners before people exit facilities into homelessness.
- Establish strategic outreach schedule with HEAL Team and service providers.
- Collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data from those with lived experience.
- Develop a targeted approach for BIPOC populations from homelessness into sustainable housing
- Visual Dashboard to track fluidity of services and shelters access (PCCP 5.8)

Short-Term (1-2 years)

- Create a "By-Name List". (PCCP 5.1)
- Create and implement outreach processes and capacity that allows for on-demand services
- Directly fund expansion of detox for immediate access to treatment facilities.
- Implement protocol to strengthen the referral process to shelter and services (PCCP 2.3)
- Continue to work with local stakeholders to collaborate and develop solutions for supportive housing units in Tacoma/Pierce County.

Long-Term (3-5 years)

- Implement racial equity assessments to address disparities and support anti-racist transformation.
- Support existing providers to expand permanent supportive housing programs (PCCP 6)
- Create new permanent supportive housing units for those exiting homelessness with dedicated units for BIPOC.

Shelter system offers a safe and dignified experience



Goal 3 Objectives

- Objective 3.1: Ensure adequate shelter capacity through diversity of shelter models.
- Objective 3.2: Support Faith-based and non-profit organizations shelter capacity and ability to provide access to everyone.
- Objective 3.3: Reduce barriers to shelter for all individuals experiencing homelessness including Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC); Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual/Allies, and more (LGBTQIA+); Youth and Young Adults, and those that are differently abled.

Previous

- Contracted with new providers and implemented new shelter models that targeted priority populations and reduced barriers to accessing shelter.
- Modified existing temporary shelter regulations to allow for more Faith-based and Non-profit organizations to provide additional shelter beds.
- Supported Faith-based and Non-profit organizations with the permitting process and funding for homeless shelters.
- Published weekly reporting on shelter bed utilization, capacity, and availability (PCCP 2.6)

Immediate (<1 year)

- Coordinate shelter providers to create accessible intake services in partnership with HEAL Team (PCCP 4.2)
- Prioritize access to behavioral health services by including it in all shelter provider contracts (PCCP 5.4)
- Increase shelter staff workforce by prioritizing funding for training academy
- Published daily and month reporting on shelter bed utilization, capacity, and availability (PCCP 2.6)

Short-Term (1-2 years)

- Expand permanent shelter capacity with existing providers and shelters
- Continue to engage with targeted populations to identify needs and find alternative solutions and providers.
- Standardize training with providers in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Long-Term (3-5 years)

- Prioritize funding for existing shelters to expand day services and resources for people who are experiencing homelessness.

Continuum of tailored supports



Goal 4 Objectives

- Objective 4.1: Ensure access to services that feel welcoming and dignified and reflect the City's commitment to ensuring evidence-based models that are antiracist and trauma informed.
- Objective 4.2: Ensure the system of supports includes welcoming and culturally appropriate mental and behavioral health services, including substance-use supports.
- Objective 4.3: Ensure the system of supports includes transportation, education, financial, employment, and recreational services that empower individuals to thrive.

Previous

- Collaborated and align with Pierce County on MHSUD tax system and interventions.
- Built in training and technical assistance for funded providers and NCS Department staff.
- Established rental assistance program that targets BIPOC residents facing economic hardships (AHAS 4.1)
- Address residents who entered the therapeutic mental health court and have become homeless while incarcerated.
- Increased food access program.
- Support a Housing Navigator program (AHAS 4.1)

Immediate (<1 year)

- Prioritize funding that provide tailored interventions that reduce racial disparities (PCCP Goal 2).
- Prioritize programming to direct trauma-informed care treatment and interventions.
- Collect data and disaggregated racial demographics and collaborate with systems (PCCP 4.5)
- Invest in direct MHSUD interventions that meet best-practice standards.
- Coordinate and centralize outreach service during encampment removals.
- Increase Temporary Financial Assistance
- Enhance Housing Navigation programs

Continuum of tailored supports



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Short-Term (1-2 years)

- Address racial disparities and disproportionalities in behavioral health, mental health, and substance use disorder treatment models. (AHAS 4.1)
- Increase tenant relocation program (AHAS 3.2)
- Increase access to treatment facilities for substance use disorder—including emergency rooms, in-patient treatment supports.
- Increase access to mental health services (PCCP 5.4)
- Increase Legal Service programs

Long-Term (3-5 years)

- Create more capacity for in-patient treatment for mental health and substance use disorder that are dignified and culturally responsive.

Access to permanent, stable housing



Goal 5 Objectives

- Objective 5.1: Increase the number of permanent and stable housing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness.
- Objective 5.2: Ensure adequate supportive services for permanent and stable housing opportunities.
- Objective 5.3: Streamline access and reduce disproportionalities to permanent and stable housing placement with targeted strategies that address barriers experienced by priority populations*.

Previous

- Acquisition of Aspen Court to use for Permanent Supportive Housing long-term

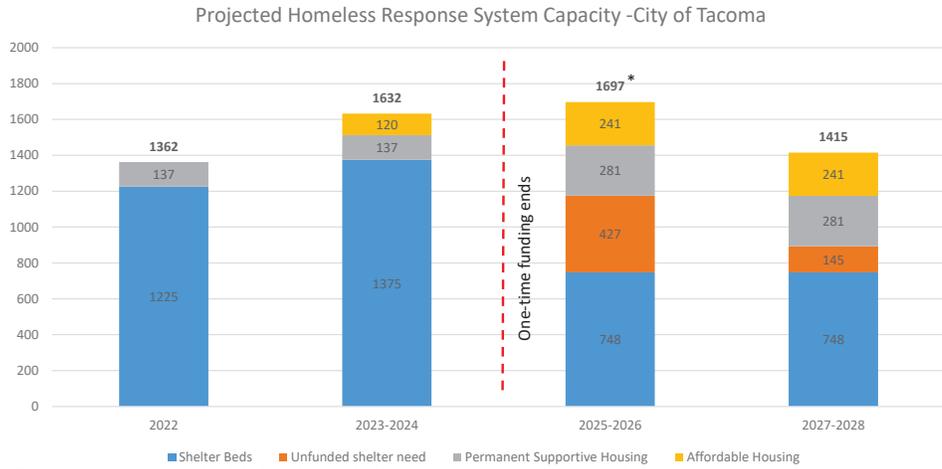
Short-Term (1-2 years)

- Rapid rehousing programs to help quickly find permanent housing through a tailored package of rental assistance (PCCP 6.2)
- Support existing service and shelters providers transition into providing housing and housing services to maintain continuum of care.
- Increase services to enhance life skills and maintain adequate housing.

Long-Term (3-5 years)

- Divert funding for Permanent Supportive Housing services to support new units
- Target funding for transitional housing programs to address the transition from to permanent housing.
- Expand and diversify housing models to help address needs and barriers for people who are homeless.

Funding Considerations



*Reflects peak capacity as the City transitions out of temporary and emergency shelter to more sustainable housing. Available capacity at the end of 2026 will reflect the capacity demonstrated in 2027-2028.



Next Steps



- Continued Collaborations with Community Stakeholders
- Finalization of Document and Publishing
- Website Design and Implementation



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