

5 YEAR HOMELESS HOUSING PLAN



ISLAND COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES – EMILY WILDEMAN

JANUARY 21, 2026 | BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION

PLAN COMPONENTS

- WASHINGTON STATE REQUIRES LOCAL HOMELESS TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP AND RECOMMEND A 5 YEAR HOMELESS HOUSING PLAN TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- WA STATE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE RELEASED GUIDANCE FOR THE 2025-2030 PLAN INCLUDING REPORTING ON:
 - CURRENT SERVICE LEVELS
 - FUND SOURCES
 - ESTIMATES OF PERMANENT AND EMERGENCY HOUSING NEEDS
 - PRIORITIZATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDS
- LOCAL JURISDICTIONS MUST ADOPT 5 STATE OBJECTIVES OUTLINED IN WASHINGTON STATE HOMELESS HOUSING PLAN 2024-2029 AND DEVELOP LOCAL STRATEGIES, MEASURES AND TIMELINE



OBJECTIVES AND ACTION OVERVIEW

- TASK FORCE ADVOCATED FOR ACHIEVABLE GOALS WITHIN CURRENT BUDGETS AND SYSTEMS
- DISTRIBUTED A LIVED EXPERIENCE HOMELESS HOUSING SURVEY
- PLAN ALIGNS WITH HOUSING ELEMENT OF ISLAND COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
- EMPHASIS ON NEED FOR MORE EMERGENCY SHELTER, KEEPING PEOPLE HOUSED AND ADDRESSING GAPS IN HOUSING
- MORE COLLABORATION BETWEEN CITIES AND COUNTY



OBJECTIVE 1: PROMOTE AN EQUITABLE, ACCOUNTABLE AND TRANSPARENT HOMELESS CRISIS RESPONSE SYSTEM

- RE-ENGAGE COORDINATED ENTRY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
- RUN QUARTERLY REPORTS ON EQUITABLE OUTCOMES AND SHARE
- FACILITATE ANNUAL MEETING WITH COMMERCE AND PROVIDERS
- STRENGTHEN COMMUNICATION WITH BY AND FOR ORGANIZATIONS
- PROMOTE CAPACITY BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALLER ORGANIZATIONS



OBJECTIVE 2: STRENGTHEN THE HOMELESS SERVICE PROVIDER WORKFORCE

- INCREASE CAPACITY FOR TRAININGS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS
- ESTABLISH LOCAL STANDARDS OF BEST PRACTICE IN CASE MANAGEMENT
- ADVOCATE TO COMMERCE TO INCREASE INFLATION FUNDS FOR LIVABLE WAGES
- ADVOCATE TO LEGISLATURE TO RE-EXAMINE AREA MEDIAN INCOME AND HOW ITS IMPACTING “AFFORDABLE RENTS”
- ENCOURAGE AGENCIES TO PROVIDE JOB SHARE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FULL-TIME WORK OPPORTUNITIES



OBJECTIVE 3: PREVENT EPISODES OF HOMELESSNESS WHENEVER POSSIBLE

- ADVOCATE TO COMMERCE TO INCREASE FLEXIBLE FUNDING
- INCREASE LIFE SKILLS AND CASE MANAGEMENT FOR NEWLY HOUSED
- STRENGTHEN CASE MANAGEMENT IN AREA OF DEBT CONSOLIDATION, FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO INCREASE CREDIT SCORES
- PRIORITIZE PREVENTION SERVICES FOR THOSE MOST VULNERABLE WHILE ALSO SERVING A CRISIS
- PARTNER WITH SENIOR SERVICE PROVIDERS TO ESTABLISH HOUSING NEEDS FOR THIS POPULATION
- ASSIST AGENCIES IN ACCESSING GRANT WRITING SUPPORT



OBJECTIVE 4: PRIORITIZE ASSISTANCE BASED ON GREATEST BARRIERS TO HOUSING STABILITY AND GREATEST RISK OF HARM

- COLLABORATE WITH ISLAND COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TO PROVIDE COLD WEATHER SHELTER OPTIONS
- STRENGTHEN VULNERABILITY FORM
- DEVELOP STRONGER PARTNERSHIPS WITH AGENCIES SERVING BIPOC AND LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES
- ENGAGE MORE FREQUENTLY WITH PEOPLE ACCESSING SERVICES TO UNDERSTAND CURRENT BARRIERS
- IDENTIFY HOUSING GAPS SUCH AS RESPITE CARE, GROUP HOMES, SHARED HOUSING AND COLLABORATE WITH THOSE PROVIDERS



OBJECTIVE 5: SEEK TO HOUSE EVERYONE IN A STABLE SETTING THAT MEETS THEIR NEEDS

- PARTNER WITH CITY GOVERNMENTS IN PRIORITIZING LAND AND FUNDING TO INCREASE EMERGENCY SHELTER OPTIONS
- ADVOCATE WITH CITY AND COUNTY PLANNERS FOR LESS RESTRICTIVE ZONING
- AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPECIALIST WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK OUT PROPERTIES THAT HAVE HIGH DENSITY POTENTIAL
- COLLABORATE ON POTENTIAL LAND FOR EMERGENCY SHELTER
- INCREASE COMMUNITY WITH STANWOOD HOUSING PROVIDERS TO LOOK FOR CAMANO PARTNERSHIPS
- ADVOCATE FOR FUNDING FOR AGING HOMELESS POPULATION



SCHEDULE

- JANUARY 21, 2026 DRAFT PLAN WILL BE POSTED ON ISLAND COUNTY WEBSITE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT
- COLLABORATING WITH PLANNING AT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMUNITY MEETINGS
- PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE ANNOUNCED 30 DAYS PRIOR IN NEWSPAPER, WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA



ISLANDCOUNTYWA.GOV



QUESTIONS?

Month XX, 202X