

# Regional Housing Council

**Agenda:** Wednesday June 22nd, 2022 (4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.) (via Zoom)

**Carolyn Cox: Chair, Carolina Mejia: Vice-Chair**

#	TIME	AGENDA ITEM	LEAD	ACTION
1	4:00 – 4:05	Welcome and Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check-in</li><li>• Review Agenda/Meeting Purpose</li></ul>	Carolyn	
2	4:05 – 4:15	Public Comment For public comment, please keep your comments to 3 minutes.	Carolyn	Information
3	4:15 – 4:20	Approval of June 8 <sup>th</sup> minutes (Agenda packet page 2)	Carolyn	Action
4	4:20 – 5:00	OlyMAP Scattered Site presentation (Agenda packet page 5)	Tye Gundel	Information
5	5:00 – 5:15	RHC and HAT Retreat Next Steps (Agenda packet page 4)	Tom and Keylee	Discussion
6	5:15 – 5:30	ROW update	Keylee and Tom	Information
7	5:30 – 5:50	Technical Team working group updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Built for Zero/ACI</li><li>• Funding: CHG and 1277</li></ul>	Keylee and Tom	Information
8	5:50 – 6:00	Good of the Order	Carolyn	Information
9	6:00	Upcoming Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Next RHC Meeting Wednesday July 13th 2022, 4pm Location: Zoom meeting</li></ul>		

# REGIONAL HOUSING COUNCIL

Wednesday June 8th, 2022 Meeting Minutes

## ATTENDEES:

Lacey: Carolyn Cox, Kelly Adams, Rick Walk, Andy Ryder

Tumwater: Michael Althaus, Joan Cathey, Brad Medrud

Olympia: Jim Cooper, Dani Madrone

Thurston County: Carolina Mejia, Ramiro Chavez, Tom Webster, Keylee Marineau, Jacinda Steltjes

South County: Brian Hess

Public: NA

Meeting began at 4:00 pm.

**Agenda Item 1:** Agenda approved, motion and second

**Agenda Item 2:** Minutes from May 25th meeting, motion and second, approved. Councilmember Althaus abstained.

### **Agenda Item 3: Retreat Review**

Keylee discussed the Letter and Artifacts from the retreat consultants, the Athena Group. The letter summarizes the original purpose, thoughts, and recommendations, including the 3 key decisions identified at the end of the retreat. One big takeaway was regardless of the governing structure, more staff is needed to keep moving tasks forward. Keylee gave an overview of the North Star discussion and artifacts from retreat day 2, and a brief overview of other retreat topics and related artifacts. The letter gives a good outline of what the RHC has to work from, and the RHC Tech Team has a mini-retreat planned for Friday to identify and discuss next steps.

Discussion followed regarding moving forward with an independent entity, importance of helping the unstably housed, what are the next steps and decisions to move forward. Councilmember Cooper added that the letter and artifacts are very helpful, especially the decisions identified at the end of the letter. It is crucial to get out of crisis intervention and get to long term solutions to increase housing stock.

Request to discuss the process the Technical Team is starting to address the next steps. They have received feedback from HAT members who attended the retreat, and there is some concern that the jurisdictions would return to business as usual. Governance needs to be discussed and worked on, and they need to develop a model on how to ensure meaningful participation, including subject matter experts and people with lived experience. The focus for the Tech Team on Friday is to develop the next steps for the governance model and priorities.

Councilmember Madrone asked about capacity and timing in regards to new funding coming in. What is the support system needed for the RHC to increase capacity? There is need for additional capacity in the long term as well as short term, there is a lot going on including the ROW, DEI, Built for Zero, plus the RHC governance. Consensus regarding need for more staff, they are currently limited by each

jurisdiction's ability to provide staff time. Discussion follows regarding staffing and hiring, funding, timing for hiring. County Manager Chavez adds that they need to resolve the Interlocal Agreement, to outline the funding for additional staff, prior to staffing plan being brought to the BoCC. City/County Home interlocal agreement timeline is completion within the next few weeks, it is about 90% complete. Then the RFP interlocal needs to be revised to address the Home dollars and administrative structure, which should be the focus of the RHC in the short term. Discussion follows regarding new staff helping to guide the RHC through this process, Tech Team retreat objectives, inclusion of other County jurisdictions in the agreement, and if other jurisdictions would want to participate. Idea of hiring a consultant during this development phase may be helpful. Athena group also recommended that members of the RHC attend HCRP related meetings.

#### **Agenda Item 4: WA State Right of Way Update**

Keylee gave some background: Staff just met with Commerce, the State plans to clear the DOT Right of Ways. There are some interagency agreements out to jurisdictions from the State. The County agreement includes a pass through for Interfaith Works to set aside some beds (24) for the next 3 years, and outreach for the next 3 years. 24 beds are not enough, and those beds becoming available without displacing anyone will take longer than the state would like. They are in discussion about how many beds to have available and by when. Intent is to have beds available by fall. The County will need to submit a plan to the State, if the plan is not approved the State has indicated they will contract directly with provider. Olympia intends to have their agreement by end of July, outlining their plan to build a tiny home village on the Franz Anderson property. There is ongoing operating funds over 3 years and one time Capital fund available from the State for this.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Good of the Order**

Councilmember Cooper acknowledged the hard work of the Tech Team.

The Rent Assistance portal will close on June 15<sup>th</sup> because they believe they will expend all the funds with current applications.

Meeting Adjourned: 4:55 pm

Next Meeting: June 22nd, 4:00 pm

## **Next Steps for RHC Short-Term Governance Structure**

### **1.Short Term**

- A. Develop draft RHC Governance Org Chart *(June 2022)*
- B. Meet with Pierce County and other nearby jurisdictions to understand approaches/models they have recently adopted that may inform how to proceed with an RHC interim governance structure. *(June 2022)*
- C. Engage with HCRP Workgroup *(June 2022)*. What is reasonable time commitment for participation on a board?
- D. Share RHC Governance Structure with County Manager, City Managers/Administrators *(June 2022)*
- E. Share RHC Governance Structure with RHC and obtain approval to move forward with: *(July 2022)*
  - i. Amending ILA
  - ii. Building staffing capacity
- F. Revise ILA. Elements of immediate ILA revisions *(July-August 2022. Draft to RHC in September 2022)*
- G. Establish sub teams to develop advisory boards. HAT/SMEs to be included on sub teams *(July-September 2022)*
  - 1. Scope/purpose of board
  - ii. Membership
  - iii. Conflict of interest/operating procedures
- H. Present advisory board details to RHC *(October 2022)*

### **2.Long Term – Steps to get to independent agency**

- A. Complete short-terms steps to inform longer-term process to create independent agency (September 2022 – early 2023)

## Report Summary

In the spring of 2021, as a part of the regional effort to develop and implement more effective responses to unsheltered homelessness and camp communities, the Regional Housing Council (RHC) supported Thurston County in piloting a program called the Scattered-Site Pilot Project (SSPP). The goal of the SSPP was to pilot an alternative approach to unsheltered homelessness which would provide intensive, on-site case management and site support services to specific camp communities in Olympia, focused on two outcomes:

1. *In the absence of alternative shelter/housing options*, reduce the broad impacts of unsheltered homelessness and camp communities through improving site safety, health and stability in the places where people are sheltering themselves– this is also referred to as “Shelter-in-Place”
2. Connect people experiencing unsheltered homelessness with alternative and more appropriate housing and shelter options

In June of 2021, OlyMAP was awarded funding through Thurston County to work towards these outcomes and provide case management and site support services to four specific camp communities, **Ensign Road, Nickerson, WSDOT Wheeler, and Deschutes Parkway**. Thurston County also contracted with the City of Olympia to provide site maintenance services through the SSPP.

### 2021-2022 Program Outcomes

Key Outcomes from the 2021-2022 Scattered-Site Pilot Project	
Number of camps served:	<b>15</b>
Number of residents served:	<b>250</b>
Percent of residents who participated in some form of case management:	<b>60%</b>
Number of referrals made:	<b>470</b>
Number of service applications completed:	<b>280</b>
Number of residents who moved into improved housing/ shelter:	<b>31</b>

Over the course of the pilot, OlyMAP provided case management and site support services to 15 camp communities and engaged with 250 individuals between these sites. Fifty-five (22%) of these individuals enrolled in OlyMAP’s intensive case management program and 60% of all currently active participants (174) have enrolled in one of OlyMAP’s case management programs (intensive, low-intensity and basic connections).

*60% of participants enrolled in case management services have completed coordinated entry during their time with OlyMAP.*

Referrals related to housing, medical and hygiene/basic needs were the most frequently requested from OlyMAP participants. OlyMAP also assisted participants in completing over 280 service applications, including applications related to income/employment, housing, phones and identification documents.

*Furthermore, OlyMAP supported 31 people (15%) in connecting to improved shelter and/or permanent housing. Of the 55 people enrolled in intensive case management, 26 (47%) were connected to improved shelter and/or permanent housing.*

## Challenges and Changes

During the SSPP, the project faced several challenges that impacted fidelity, efficacy and outcomes , including:

- 1.The absence of site control for OlyMAP and residents
- 2.A lack of alignment or clear goals among stakeholders
- 3.Crisis-based, reactionary responses to situations that arose at the scattered sites during the year, including sweeps.
- 4.Less than six months into the pilot, about 50% of the residents OlyMAP was contracted to serve were displaced through the sweeps of the Deschutes Parkway and Upper Ensign camp communities.

Though challenges faced did impact the efficacy of our case management programs, they had a greater impact on the Site Support aspects of the SSPP. Of course, participants and residents of the camps served were the most impacted.

## What did Participants Have to Say About OlyMAP Services?

As a part of evaluating our programs and services, OlyMAP completed an end of year survey with 32 residents of Ensign Road and 31 residents of Nickerson/Wheeler. Below is a synopsis of some of the key findings:

Encampment Respondents		Survey Question
Wheeler	Ensign	Case Management
60%	71%	Percent of survey respondents said OlyMAP case management services had a substantial positive impact on their life and situation
25%	6%	Percent of survey respondents said OlyMAP case management services did made a positive difference, though minimal
		<b>Safety and Resource Connection:</b> Despite not having any formal authority to enforce expectations, site control, or the capacity to have workers on site for 24/7 support...
55%	55%	Percent of survey respondents said they felt OlyMAP improved safety at their camp
82%	65%	Percent of survey respondents said they felt OlyMAP improved their camp's connection to services and resources
		Working with OlyMAP in the Future
81%	93%	Percent of survey respondent said they want OlyMAP to continue working with them and their camp in the future

## *New Programs and Additions*

1. OlyMAP expanded and added two new programs to the SSPP during the first year of operations. In March of 2022, OlyMAP expanded outreach capacity by creating a **“Roving Team”** to travel to various camps throughout Thurston County, both looking to establish new connections and to try and reconnect with former Deschutes residents, who have been displaced.
2. Additionally, OlyMAP added 5 new staff since the beginning of the pilot program and quickly outgrew the available office space. In March 2022, OlyMAP not only relocated to the First Christian Church (FCC) basement (previously Interfaith’s overnight shelter), but OlyMAP also took over providing case management and site-support for the already existing micro-home community located at FCC : **New Hope**. OlyMAP is very excited to both have a larger space to work from and to work with a community like New Hope where we can utilize our service model to its full potential!

## *Discussion and Next Steps*

**\*\* OlyMAP does not currently have the funding available to continue providing services through the Scattered Site Project after June 30<sup>th</sup>. If no funding is identified, OlyMAP will be temporarily closing down all SSPP operations on July 1, 2022. \*\***

The outcomes of OlyMAP’s SSPP programs demonstrate both the need for and effectiveness of providing on-site, intensive case management and site support for people living in unsanctioned camp communities. Program outcomes also illustrate how sweeps/displacement impact the efficacy of these services. Lastly, experience and insights gained throughout the course of the pilot highlight the importance of and need for alternative, sanctioned places for people to find long-term shelter or housing that are tailored to the unique needs, strengths and challenges of those living within camp communities.

As we near the end of the pilot, three of the camp communities we are working with are facing the imminent closure of their camps: WSDOT Wheeler, Ensign Road, and Percival Creek. Multiple other camps located along WSDOT right of ways are also facing imminent closure. Though there are potential new shelter and housing options on the horizon that may provide alternatives for people living at these sites, there will most likely not be enough spaces available for everyone facing displacement. Even more, there are concerns among impacted communities and providers about how compatible these options will be with the unique needs and barriers of the populations they are meant to serve.

If able to identify funding to continue providing Scattered Site services post June 30<sup>th</sup>, OlyMAP will continue providing outreach-based case management and site support services to unsanctioned sites, while simultaneously prioritizing efforts to identify, create and operate alternative sanctioned places for people to live. With OlyMAP’s strong connections to faith communities and experience providing services in hotel settings, OlyMAP sees tiny home, microshelter, and safe parking communities located on church properties, and long-term hotel shelter/housing options as the most likely outcomes of these efforts. OlyMAP is actively pursuing and building partnerships with faith communities interested in hosting smaller safe parking/camping sites and is also pursuing a lease agreement with a local hotel, with the intention of providing long-term shelter and eventual supportive housing to those living in camp communities along Wheeler Avenue.

OlyMAP will prioritize identifying and supporting locations that offer site control and which support the provision of shelter/housing appropriate for and compatible with the specific needs of people living in unsanctioned camp communities. Additionally, OlyMAP will be working to increase and improve data collection and community education efforts, as well as pursuing partnerships with entities and stakeholders who share alignment with our service model and a commitment to Best Practices.

# Olympia Mutual Aid Partners (OlyMAP)



## Scattered-Site Pilot Project (SSPP)

End of Year Report

July 2021-June 2022

Created, Compiled, and Edited by  
Tyler Gundel and Jennifer Milchenko

Program Contact: Tyler (Tye) Gundel  
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*This packet is intended to serve as OlyMAP's Scattered Site Pilot Project (SSPP) End of Year Report (EoY ) Report*

*Among other items noted in the contents table, this EoY Report includes an updated description and summary of services provided through OlyMAP's Scattered Site programs, data pertaining to program outcomes, participant evaluations of services and summaries of program successes, challenges faced, and insights gained. This EoY Report also includes summary proposals for the operations of OlyMAP's programs and services for this upcoming fiscal year (July of 2022-June of 2023), including proposed program changes and shifts in priorities, informed by the aforementioned.*



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As we near the end of the pilot, three of the camp communities we are working with are facing the imminent closure of their camps: WSDOT Wheeler, Ensign Road, and Percival Creek. Multiple other camps located along WSDOT right of ways are also facing imminent closure. Though there are potential new shelter and housing options on the horizon that may provide alternatives for people living at these sites, there will most likely not be enough spaces available for everyone facing displacement. Even more, there are concerns among impacted communities and providers about how compatible these options will be with the unique needs and barriers of the populations they are meant to serve.

If able to identify funding to continue providing Scattered Site services post June 30<sup>th</sup>, OlyMAP will continue providing outreach-based case management and site support services to unsanctioned sites, while simultaneously prioritizing efforts to identify, create and operate alternative sanctioned places for people to live. With OlyMAP’s strong connections to faith communities and experience providing services in hotel settings, OlyMAP sees tiny home, microshelter, and safe parking communities located on church properties, and long-term hotel shelter/housing options as the most likely outcomes of these efforts. OlyMAP is actively pursuing and building partnerships with faith communities interested in hosting smaller safe parking/camping sites and is also pursuing a lease agreement with a local hotel, with the intention of providing long-term shelter and eventual supportive housing to those living in camp communities along Wheeler Avenue.

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## ***PART 1:***

### ***BACKGROUND CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION OF OLYMAP PROGRAMS***

#### **I.SSP: Background and Context**

##### *Homelessness nationally and locally*

The crisis of homelessness, particularly unsheltered homelessness, is an issue significantly impacting communities across the United States. According to the nationwide Point in Time (PIT) Count, there were 580,466 people experiencing homelessness in the United States in January of 2020 (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2021). While data shows the number of people experiencing homelessness nationwide increasing incrementally between 2015-2020, the number of people experiencing unsheltered and chronic homelessness grew at a much faster rate. Unsheltered homelessness increased by 30% and chronic homelessness by 43% (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2021).

Thurston County is no exception to this national trend. Shockingly, local PIT Count data shows that the number of people experiencing homelessness in Thurston County increased by 95% between 2016-2021, well above the national rate. However, similar to national trends, unsheltered homelessness in Thurston County increased by 22% between 2016-2021 (Thurston County Public Health and Social Services, 2016, 2021).

Reports and data collected in relation to homelessness in the United States show that the main cause of increased homelessness is a severe shortage of shelter and affordable housing options while the cost of living continues to rise (National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, 2014). Despite significant steps taken to increase shelter and housing options in our community, such as the opening of InterFaith Works' Unity Commons shelter and apartments, our community continues to suffer from a severe shortage of available beds and homes. Using the most conservative of estimates, even if every single shelter bed in Thurston County was filled every night, we would still have a shortage of at least 200 shelter beds.

The majority of those involved in our local homeless response system agree that increasing available shelters and other affordable housing options is the most effective way to respond to homelessness. However, there is also recognition that such solutions take time and that we will likely continue to see high numbers of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness until this gap is addressed. Therefore, OlyMAP and others involved in the local homeless response system believe it is important to simultaneously prioritize effective approaches aimed at mitigating the impacts of unsheltered homelessness while our community works towards the longer-term solution of increasing shelter and housing capacity.

Historically, local and national jurisdictions have responded to camp communities in ways that are not effective or based in best-practice approaches, including forced removal/displacement, otherwise known as 'sweeping'. Without the provision of alternative and appropriate locations for people to relocate to after being forcibly removed, houseless individuals continue to stay homeless, are disconnected from services and support and are harmed and retraumatized. Unlike creating additional shelter and housing capacity, approaches such as these have not proven to be effective strategies for ending homelessness or reducing the harms associated with homelessness (Junejo et al., 2016). While Thurston County has come a long way in terms of recognizing the ineffectiveness of such approaches, the ongoing challenge has been developing and gaining regional and community support for alternative responses.

### *Thurston County Response: The Scattered-Site Pilot Program*

As a part of the regional effort to develop and implement more effective responses to unsheltered homelessness and camp communities, the Regional Housing Council (RHC) supported Thurston County in piloting a program called the Scattered-Site Pilot Project (SSPP), aiming to provide intensive, on-site case management services and site support services to specific camp communities in Olympia. In June of 2021, Thurston County entered a one-year contract with OlyMAP to provide these services to four specific camp communities, including Ensign Road, Nickerson, WSDOT Wheeler, and Deschutes Parkway. Thurston County also contracted with the City of Olympia to provide site maintenance services through the SSPP.

The goal of the SSPP was to pilot an alternative approach to addressing unsheltered homelessness, focused on two specific outcomes:

1. *In the absence of alternative shelter/housing options*, reduce the broad impacts of unsheltered homelessness and camp communities through improving site safety, health and stability in the places where people are sheltering themselves– this is also referred to as “Shelter-in-Place”
1. Connect people experiencing unsheltered homelessness with alternative and more appropriate housing and shelter options

## **I.SSPP: Olympia Mutual Aid Partners– Who We Are**

Olympia Mutual Aid Partners (OlyMAP) is a relatively new, local non-profit organization dedicated to working with and providing support to people experiencing homelessness in Thurston County, with a primary focus on adults and families living in camp communities. Additionally, OlyMAP provides support to unhoused individuals living at tiny home villages or utilizing temporary/long-term hotel stays, as well as some continual support to individuals who have transitioned to improved shelter/housing.

Before becoming involved in the SSPP, OlyMAP was an all-volunteer organization that was already deeply immersed in the local outreach network and heavily involved in providing support to multiple camp communities throughout Thurston County. OlyMAP workers were among the first to begin providing on-site case management, advocacy, and site support services on a regular basis to Thurston County camp communities. OlyMAP also played a key role in increasing other outreach services to camps by working with the Greater Regional Outreach Workers League (GROWL) and partnering with other social service providers, local faith communities/churches, legal service organizations, and grassroots mutual aid groups.

Since July of 2021, OlyMAP has grown from an 11-person staff team to a 16-person staff team, rapidly expanding within the first year of operations to meet the service needs of the camp communities we work with.

**OlyMAP sought to address the goals and outcomes of the SSPP by supporting and working with specific camp communities to:**

1. Improve camp and individual stability, health and safety through connection to critical resources and support,
2. Provide intensive, outreach-based on-site case management and support to camp residents, and
3. Assist residents in development and implementation of camp-wide rules, regulations, and guidelines through a process called “collective management” a concept unique to OlyMAP. A more detailed description of collective management will be addressed later in this report.

OlyMAP utilized two main positions to achieve the outcomes of the SSPP: Mobile Case Workers (MCWs) and Site Support Workers (SSWs). MCWs provided both high- and low-intensity case management services to



residents on-site, assisting them with connection to vital services such as job applications, medical treatment, mental health resources, substance use treatment, housing searches and applications, income/vocational services, etc. SSWs focused on supporting camp communities through general outreach, information sharing, site advocacy and connection with improved resources and stabilizing services, such as structure weatherization, conflict mediation, connection to safer heating resources, laundry, potable water and other services that improve safety, stability, and quality of life.

## I.SSP: Sites and Camps Served During the Project

Below is a brief description and overview of sites OlyMAP has worked with between July 2021-June 2022 of the Scattered-Site Pilot Program:

### *Site 1: Nickerson Camp*

**Length of time working with OlyMAP:** 4+ years

**Number of residents:** 25

**Status:** Current and not under threat of sweep

Nickerson is a semi-sanctioned camp community located on City of Olympia property along Wheeler Avenue. This site has running water, bathroom facilities, and several micro-homes installed. Nickerson operates using a self-governance/collective management system supported by OlyMAP. A local faith community named UNITED also provides basic survival supply and community support for this camp. OlyMAP currently has one SSW and two MCWs assigned to support this camp community. These staff are also assigned to the other camp communities located along Wheeler Avenue.

### *Site 2: Wheeler Avenue Camps*

**Length of time working with OlyMAP:** 3+ years

**Number of Residents:** 20

**Status:** Under threat of imminent sweep

The Wheeler camps consist of four smaller, unsanctioned camp communities located on property owned by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) on the highway side of Wheeler and consists of about 16 separate households. These sites utilize self-governance/collective management, though less formally at this time than the Nickerson Community. OlyMAP currently has one SSW and two Mobile Case Workers assigned to supporting this camp community.

### *Site 3: Lower Ensign Road Vehicle Camp*

**Length of time working with OlyMAP:** 2+ years

**Number of Residents:** 50

**Status:** Under threat of imminent sweep

The now permitted Ensign Road vehicle camp community is located near Providence Hospital on a right-of-way, managed by the City of Olympia and currently consists of about 32 households/ vehicles. OlyMAP currently has one SSW and two MCWs assigned to supporting this camp community. Our SSW for this community is also a mobile mechanic and provides vehicle repair services to those living along Ensign Road, as well as those living at other Scattered Sites.

### *Site 4: Upper Ensign Road Vehicle Camp*

**Length of time working with OlyMAP:** 1+ year

**Number of Residents:** 50

**Status:** Swept and residents Scattered

Between July of 2021- January of 2022, OlyMAP provided case management and site support services to the residents of the Upper Ensign camp community. This camp community included 20 households and

was closed between December of 2021 and January of 2022. OlyMAP lost contact with 17 of the 20 residents shortly after the camp was closed.

#### ***Site 5: (Former) Deschutes Parkway Camp***

**Length of time working with OlyMAP:** 6 months

**Number of Residents:** 80-100+

**Status:** Swept and residents scattered

Between July of 2021- December of 2021, OlyMAP provided case management and site support services to the residents of the Deschutes camp community. The camp was swept in December. Between December of 2021 and March of 2022, OlyMAP continued to provide case management and site support services to those who were displaced and temporarily sheltered in hotels by Thurston County and The City of Olympia. After the hotel stays ended, OlyMAP lost contact with most former residents of Deschutes.

#### ***Site 6: Percival Creek & Decatur Woods***

**Length of time working with OlyMAP:** 3 months

**Status:** Under threat of imminent sweep

**Number of Residents:** 40 residents; 30 households

These unsanctioned camp communities are located along Percival Creek and in the Decatur woods near the auto-mall on the westside of Olympia. OlyMAP formally began working with these communities in March of 2022 via a new OlyMAP outreach program called the 'Roving Team,' which was created after the sweep and hotel stay of the former Deschutes camp. Though OlyMAP does not have an SSW or MCW assigned solely to these sites, our Roving Team – which consists of one SSW and one MCW – provides regular, weekly outreach and support services to these communities.

#### ***Site 7: New Hope Community***

**Length of time working with OlyMAP:** 3 months

**Status:** Current with no threat of sweep

**Number of Residents:** 7 residents, 6 households

New Hope is a permitted and sanctioned tiny home village hosted in the parking lot of First Christian Church (FCC) in Olympia. OlyMAP partnered with FCC to begin providing case management and site support services to this community in March of 2022. OlyMAP has one Site Support Coordinator assigned to this site, able to provide both site support and intensive case management services.

#### ***Site 8: Stability Stays Hotel Program (separate from, but supplemental to SSPP)***

**Length of time working with OlyMAP:** 3 months

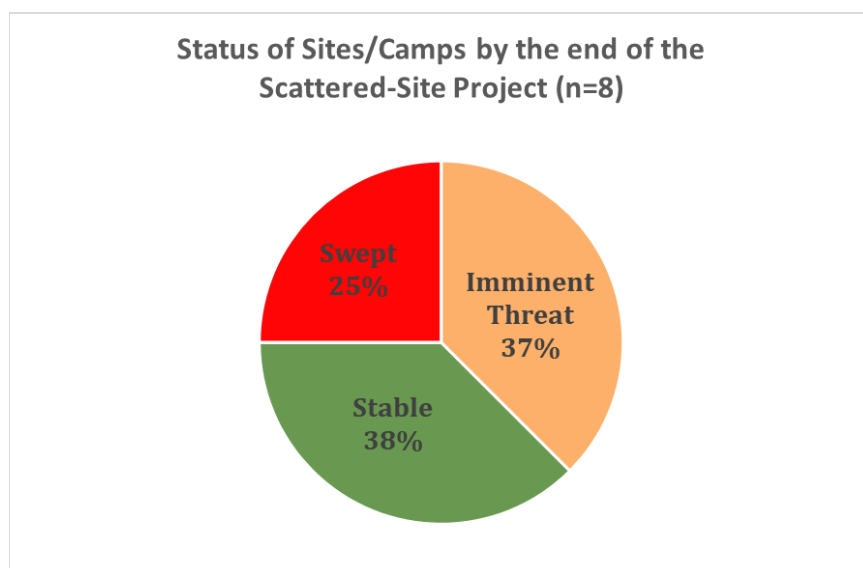
**Status:** Current with no threat of sweep

**Number of Current Guests:** 7 residents, 6 households

In March of 2022, OlyMAP received a grant to open a hotel program, called the 'Stability Stays' program. The purpose of the program is to provide emergency lodging for residents who work with OlyMAP, a supportive place to stay during transitions, and for post-sweep lodging support. The program can accommodate 6-7 residents at a time, with the average stay being two weeks.

***Unfortunately, two of OlyMAP's project sites were swept before the completion of the pilot and three additional sites are facing the imminent threat of closure. Only 3 of the eight sites listed are considered 'stable', in terms of minimal risk of closure.***





**Graph 1:** percent distribution of the current status of camps that have been involved in the SSPP between July 2021- June 2022. 62% of camps involved in the scattered-site project have either already been swept or are facing the imminent threat of a sweep.

## **I.SSPP: OlyMAP'S Case Management Program**

### **Case Management Program**

#### *Overview*

The goal of OlyMAP's case management program is to provide quality and accessible service connection support to residents of camp communities, aimed at improving their quality of life, assisting with reaching self-identified goals, and improving access to housing, health, stability, safety, and social services. We work to support residents using best practices by providing strengths-based, participant-led service navigation and advocacy.

OlyMAP's case management services are designed to be accessible, meet people where they are, and to serve a diverse set of needs within the context of an environment that is constantly shifting. As such, OlyMAP's case management services are outreach-based, providing support directly at the camp communities or sites where people are living. Once enrolled in or otherwise accessing services through OlyMAP, support may continue to be provided in settings as diverse as a tent camp, park, tiny home village, shelter, housing setting, hotel or even the hood of a car along a right of way.

All OlyMAP staff are trained in and able to assist individuals in completing Coordinated Entry and VI-SPDAT assessments. All workers will soon be trained in completing HEAT assessments.

#### *Structure of Case Management Program*

The majority of OlyMAP MCWs (also referred to as case workers throughout this report) are assigned to work with a specific, primary site. For instance, OlyMAP currently has two caseworkers assigned to Ensign Road and two assigned to Wheeler Avenue/Nickerson. The number of caseworkers assigned to each site is determined by a combination of factors, including; the number of residents on site, the type of site or community (i.e. sanctioned or unsanctioned, tiny home village or tent city, etc) and the number of case workers available on staff.

OlyMAP caseworkers are typically limited to a caseload of five 'high intensity' cases and five 'lower intensity' cases. Higher intensity cases include those where the participant has a goal that requires navigation of complex, challenging, and time-intensive processes, while lower intensity cases include those with goals or tasks that can be completed within a few sessions or that do not require complex navigation or processes. Caseload

capacity may be increased, with approval from direct supervisors. Limiting caseloads is a critical aspect of providing quality, effective and sustainable services for our participants and for preventing staff burnout.

## **Types of Available Case Management Services**

### *Intensive Case Management*

Case workers may assist people in navigating complex processes and connecting to services and goals such as, but not limited to:

- Improved shelter and housing
- Coordinated Entry/VI-SPDAT assessments
- Obtaining identifying documents, such as IDs, Birth Certificates, Social Security Cards, etc.
- Cell phones and other basic survival supplies
- Mental health, medical, substance use and harm reduction services
- Vehicle repairs
- Obtaining income through ABD/SSI/SSDI/TANF/WIC/EBT and/or employment
- Legal support or advocacy
- Relocation and family reconnection
- Temporary hotel stays

### *Basic Connections*

In honor of our commitment to ensuring accessible and individualized services that meet people where they are, OlyMAP may also assist participants with connecting to services and limited case management support through our “Basic Connections” program. Participants may access support through this program without enrolling in our intensive case management program. Though OlyMAP workers are not able to offer more intensive, ongoing support and advocacy through Basic Connections, this program ensures that any resident of a site we are working with, regardless of their case management enrollment status, may get connected with Coordinated Entry, an ID, phone, transportation, essential survival supplies, basic advocacy support or a referral to other services. Basic connection enrollments can be completed by both MCWs and SSWs.

### *Roving Case Management*

After the closure of the Deschutes camp community in December 2021 and Upper Ensign in early 2022, OlyMAP created a “roving” outreach team by reassigning two caseworkers originally assigned to Deschutes to “roving” outreach positions. Rather than being assigned to one specific site, these workers are able to work with multiple communities throughout Thurston County. Though these workers are able to provide Basic Connections and some intensive case management support to the individuals living at the communities where outreach is conducted, the level of support that can be provided is more limited. For instance, those on the roving team have more restricted caseloads. This limitation is based on the contextual reality that providing quality services to people living at multiple sites, as opposed to one stable site, is more complex and stretches capacity.

## **I.SSP: Site Support and Collective Management/Self-Governance Program**

### **General Site Support**

#### *Overview*

The Site Support and Collective Management/Self-Governance programs are unique to and created by OlyMAP, informed by years of experience working with existing camp communities in Thurston County. The focus of OlyMAP’s Site Support Program is to work with camp communities as a whole to improve overall health, stability, safety, and general well-being of camp residents. This focus includes general outreach and information sharing, assisting with the reduction of impacts associated with camp communities, and site advocacy support.

Another critical aspect of our Site Support Program is working to connect participants and residents of camp communities with resources and services that benefit both individuals and impact the camp as a whole.

SSWs assist residents of the camp communities with:

- Information and resource sharing
- Connection to social and health services
- Connection to safer heating and warming supplies
- Connection to laundry services
- Communication of concerns and problem-solving with neighbors and stakeholders
- Facilitating camp community meetings
- Completing Coordinated Entry and VI-SPDAT assessments
- Connection to essential safety, health and survival supplies like food, water and sheltering/weatherization supplies
- De-escalation and conflict mediation
- Providing collective management/self-governance support (when appropriate)

### *Structure of Site Support Program*

OlyMAP currently has one Site Support Worker (SSW) assigned to Ensign Road, one to Nickerson/Wheeler, one to New Hope, and one who is serving as a roving SSW. Though most SSWs have a primary site they work with, our SSWs also work as a team, both on outreach and outside of outreach, to support each other and caseworkers assigned to each site. We have found this structure important for providing quality, effective and sustainable services and that SSWs feel more supported when they are able to work as a team.

## **Collective Management and Self-Governance**

### *Overview*

**Collective Management, a model unique to OlyMAP, aims to develop safe and sustainable communities through collaboration and partnership, and by centering the voices, talents, and leadership skills of those who live in a given camp community.** While the overall goal of working with camp communities is to assist individuals with connecting to improved and supportive housing, Collective Management aims to stabilize, increase the quality of life at the camp, and minimize community impacts of existing camp communities in the absence of alternative sheltering and housing options.

*OlyMAP has found that providing stabilizing support to camps does not equate to individuals at camps being less likely to pursue improved housing options, which is a common community perception. On the contrary, when participants feel and experience more stability, they are more likely to have the capacity to work on long term goals and pursue improved housing, since their basic needs have been met.*

Under a collective management model, camp community residents democratically develop and implement a camp vision, camp values, community agreements, and community processes that address the challenges and opportunities that camps experience. Non-resident staff, like OlyMAP workers, assist with facilitating this process and supporting operations, but decisions and timelines for the collective management process are participant-led.

**Self-governance, in terms of camp communities, refers to the organization and processes within a camp that residents use to “govern” and manage themselves and their respective communities.** While self-governance is a critical aspect of Collective Management, a successful Collective Management model also requires facilitation support from an external organization or individuals, as well as the cooperation, and/or participation of neighbors, landowners, and other impacted stakeholders.

Therefore, the success and efficacy of a camp's ability to create and maintain a self-governance process is highly dependent on the external relationships and context surrounding the camp. OlyMAP may support a camp community with developing, implementing, and facilitating a Collective Management process when the following expectations are met:

1. there is interest on behalf of residents,
2. residents are willing to agree to OlyMAP's basic requirements (ex. no violence),
3. there is reasonable assurance that the community will not be forcibly relocated for at least 9-12 months without an appropriate place for people to go and,
4. landowners/other significant stakeholders are cooperative or at least not taking actions that disrupt or inhibit the process.

### *Phases of Site Support and Collective Management Implementation*

In OlyMAP's experience, it takes at least 6 months for a Collective Management and Self-Governance structure to be developed, which can be broken down into several phases. The following timeline is not meant as a 'one size fits all' for all camp communities, but is meant to serve as a general guideline based on what OlyMAP has observed and experienced during operations and may be extrapolated to other camp communities.

#### **Phase One: Relationship and Trust Building (first 1-2 Months)**

The first step of the Collective Management model involves building trust, relationships and rapport with camp residents. What sets collective management apart from other models is that the effectiveness of the model is built upon trust and resident investment in the process. This step should not be rushed, as it is arguably the most important and foundational aspect of this model.

#### **Phase Two: Basic Camp Needs Assessment and Vision Building (Months 3-4)**

The entity providing Collective Management support works with residents to conduct a camp needs assessment to determine perceived gaps in services, top priorities of the camp, most common concerns, etc. This initial needs assessment helps to determine a baseline of the camp in order to accurately track any changes in the camp down the road due to program impacts. Based on the identified needs, safety concerns, and resident priorities, the camp begins to brainstorm ideas for community values and a vision for the community they want to build; this is the stage when camp meetings typically begin.

#### **Phase Three: Development of Agreements and Processes (Months 5-6)**

Residents come together during an agreed upon weekly meeting time to discuss and determine what agreements and processes their camp would like to abide by. This can include behavioral guidelines, codes of conduct, accountability measures, processes for voting a new resident in/out of the camp, etc. Other stakeholders (landowners, community partners, etc.) may also be involved in this process as participants or negotiators.

#### **Phase Four: Implementation and Maintenance of Collective Management Process (6+ Months)**

Residents finalize agreements and processes and begin to implement them in daily life. OlyMAP continues to provide support facilitating agreements and processes, as needed by residents. Any processes or agreements may be changed/assessed overtime to ensure they are meeting the needs of the camp and surrounding community.

### *Expected Outcomes of the Collective Management/ Self-Governance Process*

The collective management process will produce several outcomes, including documents, agreements, community changes, and organizational structures, some of which include:

1. Camp Community Agreements/ Guidelines

2. Codes of Conduct
3. Camp Admissions and Expulsion Processes
4. Accountability Processes
5. Community meetings and Meeting Notes
6. Decision-Making processes
7. Designation of roles (residents & partners)
8. More stable relationships and interactions between residents and community members

## Tiered Site Support System

### Overview

One of the crucial lessons learned from the Scattered Site Project is that the level of Site Support services that can be provided to a specific site is heavily dependent upon several important internal and external factors. OlyMAP has developed a tier system to help determine and classify the factors present that will likely impact a camp's success with collective management, with "Tier 1" being camps that have minimal to no current Collective Management structure, and "Tier 4" camps having robust and sustainable Collective Management structures. Where a camp falls in the tier system is also heavily impacted by how much autonomy a camp or site has to develop their own system of self-governance and collective management.

Factors that impact a camp's tier level include:

1. How at risk a camp is for a sweep/displacement,
2. Site control: the level of how much control/autonomy the site has to make their own decisions and that OlyMAP has to assist with supporting and enforcing expectations, including factors such as:
  - Level of involvement of other stakeholders and property owners, whether or not they are supportive of the site support services
  - Frequency of interference in site support processes from outside entities or circumstances, particularly related to self-governance/collective management
  - General level of support from other stakeholders related to site support and collective management/self-governance
3. Amount of time and capacity for OlyMAP workers to be present at the site
4. Existing trust & relationships between OlyMAP staff and camp communities,
5. The sense of community within the camp
6. The general stability of the camp community
7. The camp community's level of connection & access to resources
8. Many other factors such as camp leadership, community pressure, camp size and location, neighbors etc.

Taking these lessons learned into consideration, OlyMAP has adjusted the Site Support Program so that the level and types of services provided correlates with the unique circumstances surrounding that site.

### Description of Site Support Tiers

#### Tier One

Communities that fall under this category are unsanctioned camps that OlyMAP provides regular and basic outreach services to, but which do not have a Site Support Worker or Mobile Caseworkers dedicated to their site. This includes camp communities like Percival Creek, Decatur and the Jungle. Communities considered to be "Tier 1" sites receive basic site support services through our roving outreach team, including information sharing, basic resource/supply and service connection and referrals to other services. These communities are not able to receive Collective Management/Self-Governance support.

#### Tier Two

Communities that fall under this category are unsanctioned camps that OlyMAP provides regular outreach/support to and which do have an SSW and/or MCWs dedicated to their site. However, these communities are also typically considered more unstable because they are at risk of being swept, have other stakeholders involved that may not be supportive of or who may be interfering with some aspects of the site support program, and/or have other extremely destabilizing factors. This includes camp communities like Ensign Road, the former Deschutes encampment, and the WSDOT Wheeler camps, as they are considered unsanctioned and at risk of closure.

Communities considered “Tier 2” sites are able to access most services offered through our site support program, aside from more formalized Collective Management/Self-Governance support.

### *Tier Three*

Communities that fall under this category are semi-sanctioned camps that OlyMAP provides regular outreach and support to, and which have an SSW and/or Mobile Caseworkers dedicated to their site. These communities are also typically more stable due to a lesser risk of being swept, and do not have other involved stakeholders who have conflicting priorities related to how a camp develops and maintains site support and management. However, communities within this category are still not fully sanctioned and therefore always at some risk of displacement. There is also still an element of limited site control and limited capacity to be at the site more than a couple of days per week. An example of a Tier three camp includes Nickerson.

Communities considered “Tier 3” sites are able to access all services offered through our site support program, including formalized Collective Management/Self-Governance support.

### *Tier Four*

Communities that fall under this category are sanctioned camps and/or tiny home villages that OlyMAP provides regular (if not daily) outreach/support to and which do have a SSW and/or MCWs dedicated to their site. These communities are also typically the most stable because they have minimal to no risk of being swept, do not have multiple stakeholders with conflicting approaches involved and because the residents and OlyMAP have formal site control. An example of a Tier four camp community includes the New Hope tiny home village.

Communities considered “Tier 4” sites are able to access all services offered through our site support program, including the highest and most effective level of Collective Management/Self-Governance support.



## **SECTION 2:**

### **OLYMAP PROGRAM OUTCOMES OF THE 2021-2022 SCATTERED SITE PILOT PROJECT**

#### **I.SSPP: Program Outcomes**

Since July of 2021, over **250 houseless residents** in Olympia have engaged in OlyMAP services. OlyMAP has worked with at least **15 camp communities**, including but not limited to:

- Ensign Road: 67 residents
- Nickerson and other smaller Wheeler encampments: encampment: 58 residents
- Previous Deschutes Encampment: ~76
  - Assisted residents swept from Deschutes at hotel stays, including at La Quinta, Super 8, Red Lion, and the Olympia Inn
- Roving/ unsheltered/other small camps, including Percival creek and Decatur camps: 53
- Stability Stays hotel program: 35
- New Hope Camp at First Christian Church: 7

#### **Basic Connections and Case Management Program Statistics and Notable Successes**

**118 of the 250 (47%) participants** OlyMAP interacted with over the first operational year of the SSPP have **accessed some level of case management** services through OlyMAP, either through our intensive case management or Basic Connections programs. **60% of all currently active participants (174)**, defined as having contact with OlyMAP in the last 6 months, have **enrolled in either case management or basic connections**.

*This data demonstrates that OlyMAP was able to exceed the goals outlined in our Scattered Site proposal related to provision of case management services. OlyMAP's goal was to have provided case management services to 40% of those living at each site 9-months into the project.*

OlyMAP provided **55 participants** with intensive case management services during this year. This means that out of the approximately 250 participants who interacted with OlyMAP over the first operational year, **22% have engaged in intensive case management services**. Prior to the sweep of the Deschutes camp community, 37% of residents were enrolled in OlyMAP's intensive case management program, and the vast majority – over 70 people—had accessed some type of case management or service connection support through OlyMAP's programs.

- As of June 15, 2022, **39 participants** are actively enrolled in case management.
- **60% of participants** who have been enrolled in intensive case management have **completed coordinated entry** during their time with OlyMAP.
- **31 participants (15% of the people we were contracted to serve)** were able to transition to improved shelter or housing options.
- OlyMAP provided over **470 program referrals** for participants working with OlyMAP programs.
- OlyMAP staff assisted participants with **over 280 service applications**, with the majority consisting of phone applications/replacements, identification documents, and housing-related applications.
- OlyMAP has assisted participants with **over 100 Basic Connections**.

- Additionally, in March of 2022, OlyMAP transitioned staff that had been working with residents of Deschutes to the **New Hope tiny home village** located at First Christian Church. OlyMAP is now supporting the community with case management and site support services, including self-governance/ collective management support.

## Program Referrals

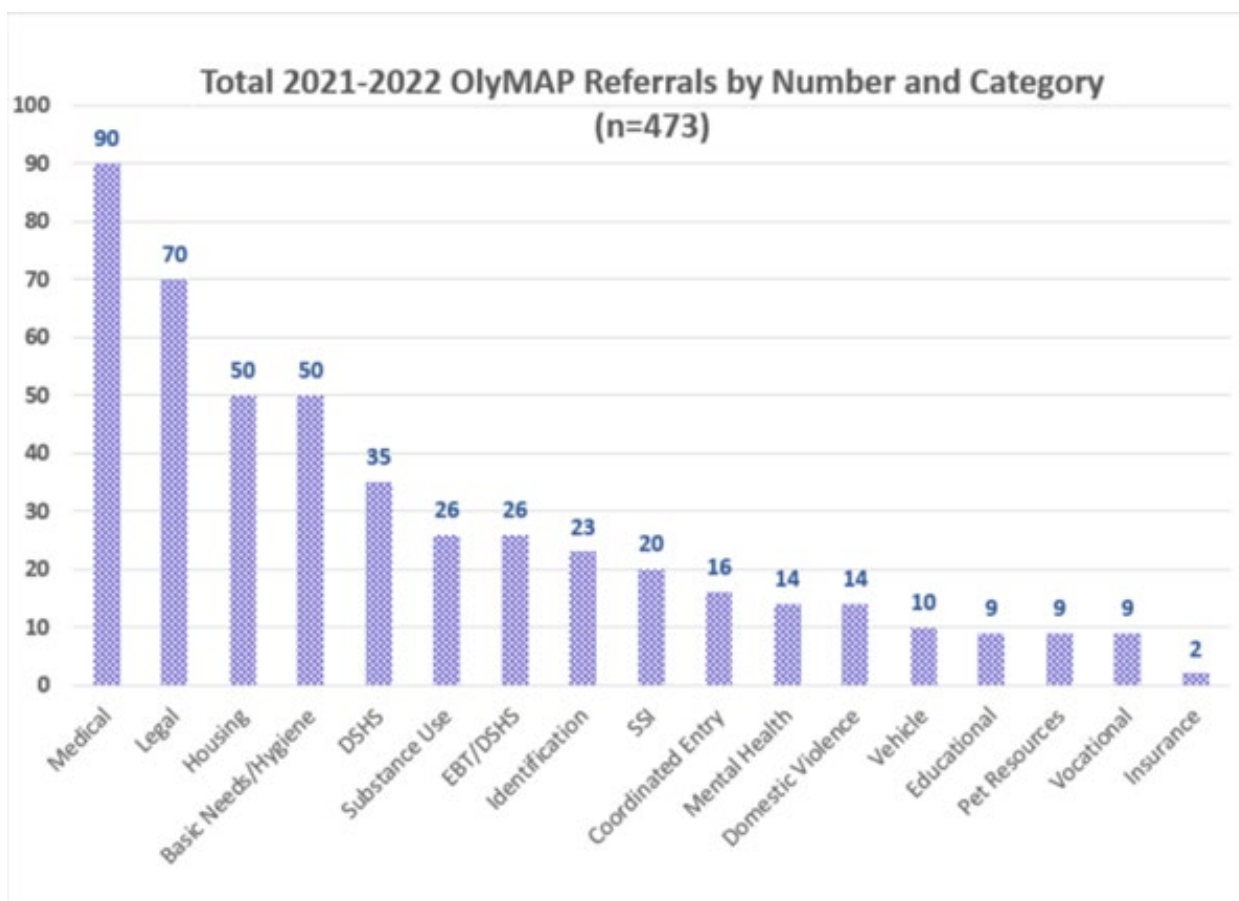
REFERRAL CATEGORY	COUNT	PERCENT
Medical	90	19%
Legal	70	15%
Housing	50	11%
Basic Needs/Hygiene	50	11%
DSHS	35	7%
Substance Use	26	5%
EBT/DSHS	26	5%
Identification	23	5%
SSI	20	4%
Coordinated Entry	16	3%
Mental Health	14	3%
Domestic Violence	14	3%
Vehicle	10	2%
Educational	9	2%
Pet Resources	9	2%
Vocational	9	2%
Insurance	2	0%
<b>total</b>	<b>473</b>	

Between July 2021 and June 2022, OlyMAP workers completed over **470 referrals** for participants involved in OlyMAP programs. **Table 1 (above)** shows the frequency and percentage of what type of referrals were completed. The most common kinds of referrals completed include medical, legal, housing, and basic needs/hygiene referrals.

Referrals specific to the second half of the year (Jan-May) reflect a higher number of legal referrals in comparison to the first 6 months of the program. This falls in line with what could be expected post sweeps; Additionally, legal referrals drastically rose due to the challenges associated with new and abrupt changes to code, parking and general enforcement actions along Ensign Road.

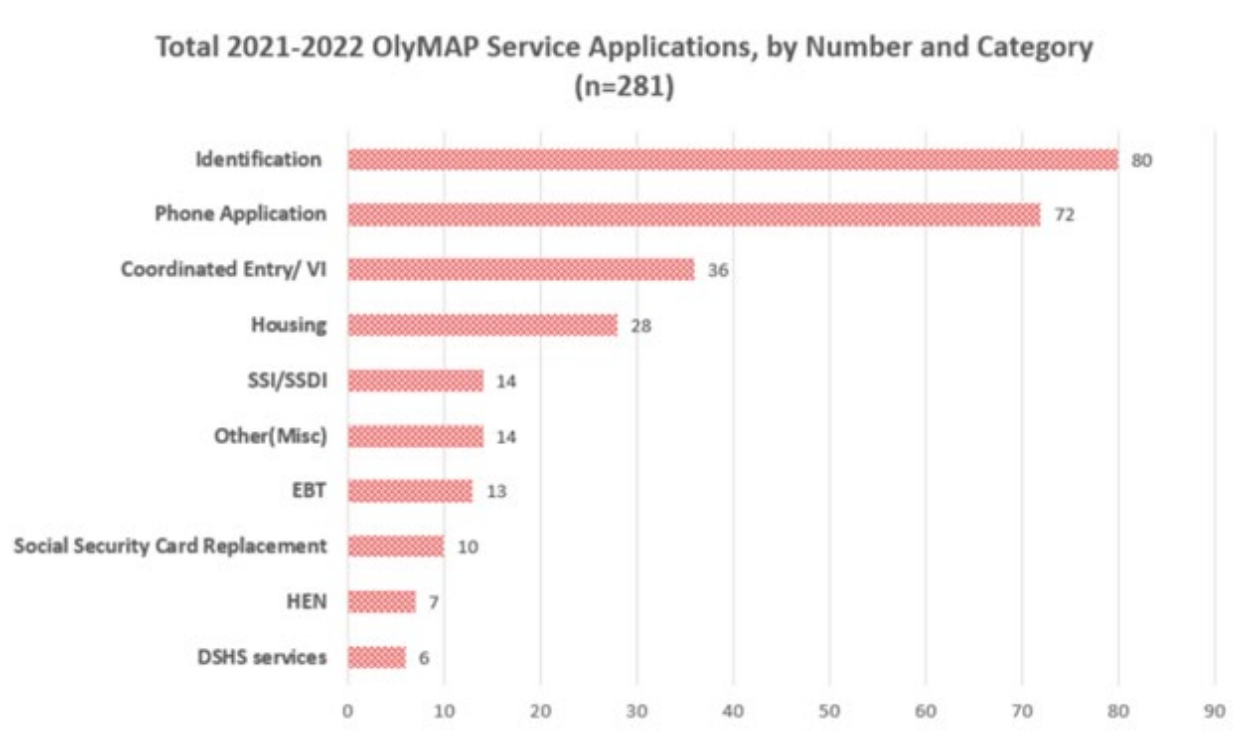
**Graph 3 (below):** a graphical depiction of the quantity and category of referrals completed via OlyMAP services.





### Program Applications

Between July 2021 and June 2022, OlyMAP staff helped participants in the scattered-site program complete over **280 service applications**. **Graph 4 (Below)** shows the frequency and amount of each kind of application completed. The most common applications completed were related to basic needs and shelter, such as replacing or obtaining an ID, replacing or obtaining a working phone, and applications related to housing, including but not limited to, coordinated entry, apartment applications, housing vouchers, section 8 housing, etc.



Overall, OlyMAP believes that the types of applications completed reflect the very real reality that individuals need to have basic needs met before they can work on higher or more complex needs, such as accessing mental health or substance use related programs. Having an ID and a phone is the bare minimum for most participants being able to meet their other needs, as a vast majority of services, available resources, and programs require identification. Without a phone, it is nearly impossible for participants to continue important communication processes and next steps required for most applications/processes.

### Improved Housing Statistics and Outcomes

Over the course of the entire year, **OlyMAP was able to support 15% (31 individuals) of those living at the sites we were contracted to work with in transitioning to improved shelter/housing situations.** This percentage is based on the total population of the three sites we were originally contracted to work with at the time the program began (roughly 200). **10 of the individuals that transitioned into housing were individuals displaced from the Deschutes camp community,** who we were able to continue supporting during their hotel stay post the camp closure.

Of those who were able to transition into improved housing, 100% of participants were either enrolled in case management or basic connections. Of those individuals, 83% were specifically enrolled and involved in intensive case management services. Additionally, **of the 55 total individuals who accessed case management services between July 2021 and June 2022, 47% (26 individuals) were able to move into improved housing,** showing the importance of having access to case management and how that impacts the likelihood of a participant successfully finding and transitioning to improved shelter.

## End of Year Survey Evaluations: What did Participants have to Say?

### Case Management Services

Collecting participant feedback related to the programs they are involved in is of utmost importance to OlyMAP. As a part of evaluating our programs this year, OlyMAP completed an end of year survey with 32 residents of Ensign Road and 31 residents of Nickerson/Wheeler. The primary purpose of this survey was to collect participant feedback related to services provided through OlyMAP during the SSPP.

- **60% of those surveyed at Wheeler** who had accessed case management services stated that **OlyMAP case management services positively influenced their life and situation** in a substantial way, with an additional **25% reporting** that OlyMAP case management services did **make some positive difference in their life**, even if it changed their situation minimally.
- **71% of those surveyed at Ensign** who had accessed case management services also reported that these services **improved their situation and life**.
- The most common feedback we received related to improving case management services was tied to increasing the amount of one-on-one time for case managers and their participants and the need for identifying more housing options for people.

### Participant Perceptions of OlyMAP's Impact on Camp Safety

Though the self-governance/Collective Management aspect of the SSPP was not possible to carry out at all Scattered Sites, including the Ensign Road and Deschutes communities, survey results and data collected demonstrates that the program was still able to have a significant impact at the sites served. Despite not having any formal authority, site control, or the capacity to have workers on site for 24/7 support, **55% of Ensign Road residents and 50% of Nickerson/Wheeler residents reported that they felt OlyMAP improved the safety of their camp**. No residents reported feeling that OlyMAP had a negative impact on the safety of their camp. Below are some quotes from residents taken from the end of year survey:

*"I think without them we wouldn't have a camp. Their presence I feel stops a lot of nonsense."* - Resident from Wheeler

Other residents from Ensign shared similar comments, such as;

*"They have made it a much better situation and have been nothing but helpful and friendly."*

*"They have brought a presence to Ensign Road that lets the bad doers know that people living here have someone to talk to and get help."*

*"[They] help make a presence of some kind of authority at camp and help supply many things needed."*

### Participant Perceptions of OlyMAP's Impact on Connection to Services/Resources

Overall, **65% of Ensign Road residents surveyed and 85% of Nickerson/Wheeler residents reported that they felt OlyMAP increased their camp's connection to services**. Below are a few quotes from residents:

*"I think if it wasn't for OlyMAP, a lot of services would not be used due to the lack of communication abilities."* - Resident of Ensign Road

*"If it wasn't for OlyMAP, being out here on the streets would be extremely rough. OlyMAP has made it to where we can survive by helping us stay warm and helping us get food." -Another resident from Ensign*

*"If it wasn't for OlyMAP, I may have never gotten supplies for myself like clothes, propane, stove, etc....I may have never gone to the doctor like I needed either..." - Resident from Wheeler*

### *Community and Self Governance Meetings*

Aside from connection to resources and services, OlyMAP's Site Support Program supported Scattered Site communities through regular outreach, information sharing, and hosting community meetings. **Over the course of the year, OlyMAP hosted and facilitated over 60 community meetings at Scattered Sites.**

**71% of residents surveyed along Wheeler and 50% of those surveyed along Ensign reported that they attended community meetings throughout the year.** The most common reasons cited for attending the meetings included being able to hear updates about resources and about the camp, time to connect with others in the community, and having a space to share concerns and worries. For residents who reported not attending the meetings, the primary reason given was that they had too many other things going on in their life and did not have the time/capacity to attend.

***Overall, 93% of Ensign Road residents and 81% of Nickerson/Wheeler residents reported that they would like for OlyMAP to continue working with their camp in the future. Only one resident of the 63 surveyed stated that they do not wish for OlyMAP to work with their camp in the future.***

## ***PART 3: PROGRAM CHALLENGES, LESSONS LEARNED, NEXT STEPS***

### **I.SPP: Program Challenges**

#### **Overview: A Hard Hill to Climb**

The SSPP represented a courageous and innovative attempt to respond to a seemingly insurmountable and growing challenge that our community has been struggling to respond effectively to for over a decade. To an extent, the enormous undertaking of the SSPP was understood by OlyMAP and other project stakeholders. The four camp communities identified as priorities within the SSPP – Ensign Road, Nickerson, Wheeler, and Deschutes—had already been providing shelter to at least 200 people for over two years at the time that the SSPP began. Concerns related to safety, stability, conflict and inadequate health and hygiene were already high, particularly those related to the Ensign and Deschutes communities. Broad community pressure to respond to these camps with approaches antithetical to OlyMAP's, such as ineffective enforcement practices and camp clearances, had already surpassed boiling points.

Additionally, it is our community's experience that any response to homelessness – particularly responses to unsanctioned camp communities– is inherently controversial and divisive. This is oftentimes true, regardless of how the approach utilizes evidence-based Best Practices for responding to homelessness, such as harm reduction, Housing First, outreach-based services, and trauma informed care. Even the Center for Disease Control's identification of Shelter-in-Place as a Best Practice for responding to unsheltered homelessness during the pandemic did little to decrease the controversial use of this approach to camp communities during the pandemic or in the SSPP (*Center for Disease Control, 2022*).

Despite understanding the controversial, complex and already escalating situation surrounding the camp communities intended to be served through the SSPP, the first year of the project was far more challenging than anticipated. **Though positive impacts were made through the SSPP – such as the 31 people connected to shelter and/or permanent housing through OlyMAP's case management program – the fidelity, efficacy and outcomes of the project were consistently and significantly impacted by a number of challenges and barriers.**

#### **Identified Barriers to Programmatic Success**

##### ***Barrier 1: Crisis-centered and reactionary approaches***

As noted in our 6-month review, crisis-centered and reactionary approaches to addressing concerns related to the Scattered Sites have been a consistent barrier to promoting ideal program outcomes and operating from a unified and coherent vision towards clear and identified goals and outcomes. In addition to the high levels of individual crisis SSPP workers navigate at the camps, OlyMAP needed to constantly respond to external entities and situations which drastically impacted our programs, services, and project outcomes.

When planning program strategies and expectations, it is necessary to plan for and expect unexpected challenges—particularly in this field. However, the level of unplanned and potentially avoidable crises/shifts throughout this year impacted program development and intended outcomes. Even though clear intentions, strategies, and expectations were proposed and outlined prior to the start of the Scattered Site Pilot Project, the need to constantly react to changing and destabilizing situations diverted limited time, resources, and energy away from focusing on services for participants, program development, and improvements necessary to ensure ideal efficacy of this project. The program most heavily impacted by these challenges was the Site Support Program, as it is difficult to help provide stability and safety support to camps when camps are living in the context of an unstable and unpredictable environment.

*Steps taken to address this challenge since the 6-month review:*

As OlyMAP is only one of the organizations/entities involved in the SSPP and the entity/organization with the least amount of site control or decision-making power related to how the camp communities within the SSPP are responded to, our ability to influence or prevent reactionary and crisis-based responses to addressing camp concerns is limited. The crisis situations that have occurred throughout the year and which have led to further reactionary responses have largely been outside of OlyMAP's control. Examples of these situations have included:

- Crises created by conflicts between the property owner of the former Deschutes camp community and related efforts to put in place unrealistic and crisis-creating enforcement plans at the site, in direct conflict with OlyMAP's Collective Management processes
- Sweeps/displacements (Deschutes, Upper Ensign, Pattison & Devoe)
- The hotel situation post the sweep of the Deschutes camp community
- The implementation of rushed, crisis-creating enforcement plans along Ensign Road

Despite limited ability to influence approaches and actions outside of our direct control, OlyMAP has taken steps to address our own crisis-centered and reactionary responses to situations like these. These steps have included:

- Setting more sustainable boundaries around our scheduling and ability to respond to crises that arise— particularly those that we are not given adequate time to prepare for.
- Structuring our responses to crises in a way that limits disruption of our services and impact on our staff. For example, keeping those involved in responses to crisis limited to practiced administrative staff and the workers assigned to the specific site impacted.
- Increasing communication efforts to keep all workers up to date about ongoing situations/crises.
- Creating as many spaces as possible for those involved in responding to crisis to plan together and debrief and discuss how we can respond better in the future
- Educating ourselves and talking with others about the impacts of urgency and rushed, reactionary responses and how these types of responses conflict with harm reduction, trauma informed care, and our ability to provide effective and sustainable support

### *Barrier 2: Sweeps/Displacement*

Sweeps and displacements of those living at Scattered Sites have impacted the outcomes of the SSPP dramatically. Between December of 2021 and January of 2022, about 50% of the residents we were originally contracted to serve were displaced through the sweeps of Deschutes and Upper Ensign. As a result of these displacements, these residents are now scattered throughout the county, severely limiting our ability to maintain critical connections with those we were working with. **Since hotel stays ended for the former residents of Deschutes, OlyMAP has lost contact with 60+ of these individuals – many of whom had been accessing case management and service connection support through OlyMAP. Likewise, OlyMAP has lost contact with 17 of the 20 people displaced from Upper Ensign, many of whom were enrolled in case management or accessing other services through OlyMAP.**

In addition to losing contact with a significant number of the people we were serving, these actions led to other impacts that have negatively affected our programs and the broader SSPP, including:



- Increasing crisis at other Scattered Sites. Ex. Since the hotel stays for the former Deschutes residents ended, Ensign has experienced influxes of new residents and the amount of crisis – particularly crises related to acts of violence– has drastically increased.
- Exposure to this extreme form of crisis and trauma impacts our participants and our staff. Sweeps/displacement have played a significant role in resident crisis, staff burnout and sustainability.

*Steps taken to address this challenge since the 6-month review:*

OlyMAP does not have any control over whether or not sweeps/displacements take place. However, we have continued to do what we can to advocate for alternative responses and educate others about the impacts/harms of sweeps and to mitigate the impacts of sweeps when they do happen. OlyMAP has also stepped up efforts to collect/track data related to the impacts of sweeps, to support education and provider advocacy efforts.

Additionally, OlyMAP is actively working to identify alternative sites for people to relocate to who are living at sites at risk of displacement, with the direct intention of improving stability and decreasing the risk of displacements/sweeps for those experiencing unsheltered homelessness in our community.

*Barrier 3: Lack of alignment in approaches, goals, expectations, and roles among stakeholders*

It is OlyMAP's perspective that a primary circumstance exacerbating crises-centered, reactionary operations of this pilot is lack of alignment in approach, goals and expectations among project stakeholders, in addition to lack of shared clarity about the roles of project partners and decision-making processes related to the SSPP. For example, there are still no clearly defined or agreed upon expectations for how partners or entities involved in working with Scattered Sites should be making decisions together and with residents related to site management.

One of the most important things we have learned this year is that the level of basic alignment in approach and service provision philosophies among those involved in supporting unsanctioned communities directly impacts the sustainability and effectiveness of services provided through the SSPP. OlyMAP's approach and service provision philosophies are grounded in evidence-based Best Practices for responding to homelessness, such as harm reduction, trauma informed care, Housing First and meeting people where they are. OlyMAP's work, specifically in the SSPP, is also grounded in the concept of sheltering-in-place.

Without basic alignment in approach and service provision philosophies among organizations or entities significantly involved in supporting unsanctioned camps, it is OlyMAP's view – based on our experience this year—that unsanctioned camp communities will likely remain unstable.

*Steps taken to address this challenge since the 6-month review:*

Despite OlyMAP's efforts to advocate for the prioritization of clarifying roles and developing shared approaches, goals and expectations, this issue has not been resolved. However, OlyMAP has done a lot of work internally to define our role and boundaries within the SSPP. While lack of alignment among stakeholders remains a concern, our internal steps forward in this regard have mitigated at least some of the impacts of this concern for our participants, programs and workers.

*Barrier 4: Lack of alignment in regional approach and broader community support*

Similar to the need for alignment among those significantly involved in supporting unsanctioned sites, it is of great importance that there is regional alignment in approach, and community support or “buy in,” for site support and collective management to effectively work. In the absence of regional alignment or community support for Best Practices or these philosophies/approaches, significant pressure is placed upon government entities and people who own land where people are currently sheltering to respond to those camp communities in ways that are antithetical to Best Practices or the concept of sheltering in place. This pressure

can create misalignment and conflict in approaches to supporting unsanctioned sites among involved organizations and entities, even when starting from a common place or approach. This is a challenge that arose various times throughout the course of the SSPP this year.

Based on the events of the last year, it seems regional alignment and community support for shelter-in-place and evidenced-based approaches to unsanctioned camp communities is not at a level that allows for many aspects of site support and collective management to be successful in the way OlyMAP had intended.

At the same time, the need for outreach, mobile case management services and site-based support directed at improving connection to services, safety, and stability for people surviving unsheltered, while reducing community impacts, remains high and continues to be seen by local experts as a critical piece of our community's response to unsheltered homelessness.

*Steps taken to address this challenge since the 6-month review:*

In recent months, OlyMAP has stepped up data collection and research relevant to Best Practices for responding to unsanctioned camp communities, with the intention of increasing regional and community education, understanding and awareness related to Best/Promising Practices, as well as practices that have proven to be ineffective and that exacerbate rather than reduce harm.

*Barrier 5: Lack of site control*

Though OlyMAP is contracted to provide Site Support and Collective Management support at the Scattered Sites, OlyMAP has no formal site control or authority to make or enforce decisions related to site operations or management, with New Hope being the exception. While not having site control makes Site Support and Collective Management more challenging, OlyMAP has still seen positive outcomes in situations that were not ideal. For example, even without formal site control, OlyMAP has effectively supported the Nickerson camp community using our Site Support/Collective Management model. However, efforts to support self-governance processes at other sites without formal site control have been significantly impacted when other stakeholders, such as property owners, jurisdictional entities, or others who do have formal authority, make or enforce decisions that are not in alignment with OlyMAP's service model or the desires of the camp residents. Challenges related to this greatly impacted our site support work with the former Deschutes community and have also impacted our ability to provide this support for the Ensign Road camp community.

*Steps taken to address this challenge since the 6-month review:*

Though there are limited ways for OlyMAP to increase our ability to have site control at the existing scattered sites, we are prioritizing efforts to identify, create and support alternative sites for people living at scattered sites to relocate to, where OlyMAP and camp residents would have formal site control. As an example, OlyMAP partnered with the New Hope tiny home village at FCC in March of 2022. This is a site where OlyMAP does have formal site control, eliminating a significant amount of the challenges we face at other sites. OlyMAP is working with FCC and residents to expand New Hope over the summer of 2022 to provide additional shelter space for people living in unsanctioned sites who are at risk of being swept.

*Barrier 6: Staff sustainability and burnout*

OlyMAP recognizes that our own efforts to quickly restructure, expand or otherwise respond to crises and external shifts have impacted our program development and improvement processes, as well as our ability to create a work environment that is sustainable and supportive for our staff.

Having worked closely for years with local camp communities, OlyMAP expected that our workers would be facing and responding to individual and camp community crises on a regular basis. However, the level of day-to-day crises that staff are navigating is significantly higher than anticipated. For the first few months of operations, the most common sources of day-to-day crises were intense individual emergencies related to mental health, suicidal ideations, medical needs and conflicts. On top of these sorts of crises, beginning in



December, day-to-day crises related to sweeps and enforcement actions drastically increased. The sweeps of Deschutes and Upper Ensign increased the level of stress for our staff and exacerbated the already frequent and complex mental and emotional health challenges of our participants. There have also been several deaths among the street community over this last year that have deeply impacted our participants and our staff.

*Steps taken to address this challenge since the 6-month review:*

OlyMAP has taken the following steps over the last 6-months to better support our staff, reduce burnout, and improve the sustainability of this work for our workers:

- Restructured our outreach approach to increase the amount of staff and support on-site whenever OlyMAP staff are at a camp for outreach and appointments,
- Improved policies, and procedures, and program development related to support and burnout, based on staff feedback,
- Increased regular and ongoing trainings, including access to trainings like vicarious trauma and navigating burnout,
- Increased administrative capacity to provide more in-depth, consistent and quality day-to-day support and on-site supervision for our workers
- Limited and set boundaries around our workers involvement in responding to crisis situations
- Created space for regular debriefing and processing, including a weekly optional debrief for all-workers
- Implemented an organization-wide “retreat/reflection week,” intended to provide space for reflecting on practices, improving policies and procedures, and performing organizational restructuring where needed; OlyMAP now takes a week of reflection every 4 months.
- Increased the wages/salary of our workers to more adequately compensate them for the work they are doing
- Provided healthcare for all workers

## I.SSPP: Lessons Learned for Future Success

### Lesson 1: The importance of a stable place to stay

From OlyMAP’s perspective, in addition to improving health, safety, stability, and access to services, the SSPP also demonstrated how a stable place to stay increases the long-term, meaningful impact of services and support provided. For instance, most of the former residents of camps that have already been swept (100+ people), who all previously had regular access to restrooms, dumpsters and social or community services, are now without a stable place to stay, without access to those basic hygiene facilities, and many have lost connection to their support networks, including service providers.

Additionally, after the Deschutes sweep, OlyMAP lost connection with over 60 of the residents previously living at the camp, **the majority of which had accessed some level of support or services through OlyMAP**, including case management, vehicle repair support and site support services like laundry, survival supply connection, or basic advocacy support.

While there continues to be community disagreement around the general approaches that should be taken to respond to camps and unsheltered homelessness, there is widespread agreement around the importance of improving and increasing access to basic health, hygiene and social services for those experiencing unsheltered homelessness. More importantly, there is extensive understanding of how access to services like these is essential for ending the crisis of homelessness and how limiting or disrupting access to these services can prolong someone's experience with homelessness.

Program participants have reported that when they lose connection with needed services and service providers, they experience:

- Re-traumatization
- Missing important reminders/deadlines related to processes or applications they are working on
- Inability to be notified or located when their name comes up on a shelter or housing list,
- A higher likelihood that IDs and other important paperwork are lost.
- Loss of an important or supportive connection that took time to develop.

This can easily lead to the stalling of progress related to goals like housing, income, employment, treatment or even the complete loss of progress made.

## Lesson 2: The Continued Need for More Places for People to Go

Our community has taken some incredible steps towards providing housing and shelter options essential for ending our community's homeless crisis, such as the opening of Unity Commons. Promising projects like Franz-Anderson and the opening of Quince St. Village are also on the horizon. However, as the preliminary data from Thurston County's 2021 PIT Count demonstrates, there are over 600 people living unsheltered in our community.

Currently, at least four larger camp communities in Thurston County, totaling roughly 140 individuals, are facing the imminent closure of their camp before the end of summer 2022. Even if every one of these individuals were to try and transition to improved shelter or housing options through projects on the horizon, there simply would not be enough space for everyone. Coupled with the reality that the number of unsanctioned places where people are allowed to shelter-in-place is also rapidly decreasing, it is urgent for our County and community to identify alternative places for people to go to avoid further displacing hundreds of individuals. Unfortunately, though our local outreach system has grown and strengthened drastically over recent years, capacity remains limited and will be further limited as people become more and more scattered.

## Lesson 3: The Need for a Wider Variety of Shelter/Housing Options that Meet the Diverse Needs of our Houseless Community

Ending our region's crisis of unsheltered homelessness will not only require a continued prioritization of outreach services and the creation of alternative places for people to go, but the creation of options that are appropriate for and designed to meet the diverse needs of those sheltering within camp communities. Creating new shelter and housing capacity is important, but even more important is that newly created shelter/housing options include those that are tailored specifically to meeting the needs of unhoused residents who may not excel or succeed in more traditional/mainstream sheltering options. **National research and studies focused on responding to camp communities have consistently found that the conditions and expectations of shelter options available are often incompatible with the needs of people living in unsanctioned camp communities** (Cohen, R. et al. 2018).

There is a common perception that sweeps can be an 'effective tool' for pushing people into accessing housing/shelter, regardless of whether the options available are suitable for or meet a participant's individual needs. Research completed in other cities demonstrates that this is a misconception. For instance, in a survey of encampment residents in Honolulu, Hawaii, 68% percent of respondents said that the sweeps had no effect on whether or not they sought shelter. Even after being swept, many respondents reported that they continued

to not access shelters due to the many ways in which the available shelter/housing was incompatible with their needs (Junejo, S. et al. 2016).

A literature review published by the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) found that “the availability of and type of shelter available seem to be key drivers of encampments, as people weigh the disadvantages of staying in a shelter against their tolerance for the difficulties of staying in an unsheltered location.” The HUD literature review also emphasized the currently inadequate understanding of the demographics and unique needs of people who live in camp communities, which serves as a barrier to addressing the crisis of unsheltered homelessness:

*“... understanding the needs and demographics of people in encampment settings is challenging, as no standards or requirements exist for reporting on this subset of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness..” (Cohen, R. 2018).*

**Implementing recommendations and suggestions from studies such as these should be considered a critical and non-negotiable part of our community’s homeless response planning if we want to create programs and housing options that can effectively meet individuals where they are.** According to two studies conducted by Junejo et al. (2016) and Cohen et al. (2018), common reasons why many traditional housing/shelter options are incompatible for many unhoused individuals include, but are not limited to:

- Separation from family, whether biological or chosen/street family
- Separation from friends and pets
- Shelter entry or exit times that are incompatible with schedules or in conflict with employment schedules
- Concerns about personal health and safety
- Theft
- Experiencing violence, bullying, or exploitation
- Sobriety requirements
- ‘Paternalistic’ rules and culture
- Exposure to infections and pests
- Lack of privacy
- Lack of autonomy or control over one’s circumstances

Additionally, a coalition of regional subject matter experts, in conjunction with the Seattle University of Law, Homeless Rights Advocacy Project (HRPA), conducted a study that found the most commonly identified reasons encampment residents would prefer sheltering in encampments vs. other sheltering options included 1) greater safety in numbers and visibility living in an encampment, 2) the ability to keep families, friends and pets together, 3) a sense of community, privacy, autonomy and even just the ability to feel ‘normal.’ One homeless encampment resident, surveyed as a part of this study explained why she lived in an encampment instead of a shelter:

*“I think it’s... feeling normal. In the shelter you don’t feel normal. I mean, I’m 52 years old. And I have to be told what time to go to bed, what I can watch on TV, when I can eat, what time to go to the bathroom. Are you kidding me? I’d rather feel normal. And if that means sleeping in a tent, that’s my tent and I can go to bed when I want and do whatever I want ... just like regular people.”*

OlyMAP’s understanding of barriers to addressing unsheltered homelessness, based on our own years of experience providing support to and working with people living within camp communities in Thurston County, is aligned with the identified barriers described in studies cited. The importance of maintaining the sense of community found within camp settings, as well as preserving and supporting individual autonomy and agency, is something that OlyMAP has observed as a priority for many people living in camp communities in our area. Loss of connection to that community or sense of agency/autonomy are common

reasons we see people turning down open shelter beds and/or returning to the streets after being placed in housing/shelter.

The bottom line is that if it is important to our community to see more people accepting and retaining shelter/housing placements when they are available, it is critical that we seriously consider the barriers that make available shelters/housing incompatible with the needs of this population and that we make an intentional effort to center these needs and reduce these barriers when creating new shelter/housing options — especially when those options are intended to specifically serve those who are living within camp communities.

## I.SSP: Next Steps Forward

Going forward, OlyMAP intends to operate in a way that reflects the following priorities and strategies:

1. When possible, continue to mitigate harm and improve the quality of life that participants experience while living unsheltered;
2. Improve connections to services, stability and safety at unsanctioned camp communities that are currently sheltering-in-place through case management services, site support, and collective management when feasible;
3. Further improve and increase data collection and analysis capacities;
4. Increase community education outreach and workshops to broaden the understanding of homelessness for the larger community, including a deeper understanding of encampment communities and effective approaches to addressing unsheltered homelessness;
5. Continue to expand and strengthen community partnerships, particularly with community groups, organizations and faith communities/churches in alignment with our values and service provision philosophies:
  - a. OlyMAP has always had strong community connections, particularly with community-based support groups and faith communities. OlyMAP intends to lean into these connections to identify alternative, sanctioned places for people to shelter-in-place. Supporting people in relocating to places with less threat of displacement would enable OlyMAP to provide more comprehensive and effective support. Successful implementation of such an approach would also likely mitigate broader community impacts, as sanctioned camp communities have consistently done in our community.
  - b. Though issues like access to land and fear or uncertainty of hosting unhoused individuals are barriers to this approach, another significant barrier is the lack of available operational and social service support with the relationships and experience necessary for supporting the unique needs of this population. All too often the burden of operational support falls to the hosts, which can deter interest in hosting camp communities. OlyMAP's ability to provide on-site case management and site support may lessen this barrier and generate interest for future partnerships.
6. Proactively pursue legal, safe, and appropriate locations for people to live who are currently living in unsanctioned camp communities that are tailored to the needs, strengths and barriers of that population. We see tiny home and micro-shelter villages on faith community properties and the leasing of hotels for long-term shelter and housing as the most likely outcomes of these efforts.
  - a. As an organization that has always worked primarily with people living in camp communities, OlyMAP's services and programs are built around the unique needs of people living in this population. OlyMAP's programs are designed to provide a

variety of intensive and quality services to diverse individuals and camp communities. The frequency of change and crisis surrounding camp communities has also required us to build flexibility and adaptability into our programs and services (see more details below). Building our programs around the unique needs, strengths and circumstances of those we serve has enabled us to continue providing support and services in an impactful way, despite challenges faced this year. Even more, it has allowed for us to build strong and genuine trust and relationships with those we work with. The compatibility of our service provision model for this population is supported by the fact that 93% of Ensign Rd residents and 81% of Nickerson/Wheeler residents surveyed reported that they wanted OlyMAP to continue working with their camp.

7. Promote improved continuity of care and minimizing disruption of services, despite ever-changing circumstances and service provision settings.
  - a. Outreach workers assigned to specific sites, including Mobile Case Workers and Site Support Workers, will be prepared to adjust their roles and the settings in which they provide services to better promote continuity of care and to minimize disruption of services when circumstances surrounding specific sites change. The role that these workers shift into will be dependent on the specific change of circumstances for each site:

*Transitioning dedicated SSW and MCW support to new sites, operated by OlyMAP*

If residents are transitioned to an alternative place to stay that is supported by OlyMAP, OlyMAP workers originally assigned to that site will move with residents to the alternative site(s). Though the setting of service provision may change, the services provided will most often remain the same. If anything, the quality and level of services provided may be increased. For example, increasing the amount of hours staff is on site to provide support.

*Reassignment to a new site OR transitioning dedicated SSWs and MCWs to the role of Stability Advocates*

If residents are transitioned to an alternative place(s) to stay that are not managed or operated by OlyMAP, OlyMAP workers originally assigned to that site may transition to providing the same services at another site OR shift into the role of Stability Advocates. As Stability Advocates, workers would provide ongoing navigation and case management support for those who have transitioned into shelter and housing to support reducing the risk of people returning to the streets.

*Reassignment to a new site OR transitioning dedicated SSWs and MCWs to the Roving Team*

If residents are not transitioned to an alternative place(s) to stay and are rather swept with nowhere to go, OlyMAP workers originally assigned to that site may transition to providing the same services at another site (if a significant number of the residents transition to the same unsanctioned site) OR shift into providing case management and site support services as a part of the Roving Team, to minimize loss of connection to services.

## I. Site-Specific Proposals for 2022-2023 fiscal year

### Nickerson Camp

OlyMAP's goal over the next year is to further improve the quality of life, safety and stability for the Nickerson camp community by working to support the community in moving from a "Tier 3" semi-sanctioned site to a "Tier 4" fully sanctioned, more adequately supported community. OlyMAP is early in conversations with residents, UNITED, and the City of Olympia about what this process/transition may look like, including the improvement of existing infrastructure on the site and increasing support related to the camp's current governance/management structure.

Current priorities include exploring the possibility of:

- Improving shelter structures (tiny homes or micro houses, rather than microshelters)
- Constructing brick and mortar restrooms/shower/handwashing facilities
- Providing improved access to laundry facilities
- Increasing staffing capacity/support for the site
- Improving site security (fencing, ways to prevent unwelcome visitors and vehicles)
- Further improving waste management efforts/effectiveness
- Further increasing access to case management support

### New Hope Community

Over the next year, OlyMAP intends to continue working with the residents of New Hope and FCC to improve site operations, existing self-governance/collective management structure, and access to case management services. OlyMAP also hopes to work with New Hope residents and FCC to expand the New Hope community by 4-6 households. FCC will consider approving an expansion of the tiny home village in August of 2022.

### Ensign Road

It is very likely that the camp community located along Ensign Road will be closed at some point during the summer of 2022. Though OlyMAP is hopeful that some residents will be able to access alternative and upcoming shelter/housing options, the options currently on the table may not be accessible or appropriate for all residents who will be displaced from Ensign Road.

OlyMAP hopes to support at least part of the existing community in transitioning from a single "Tier 2" unsanctioned site to two small "Tier 4", fully sanctioned sites. Our hope is to accomplish this by identifying faith communities and/or private property owners willing to host a small number, up to five households, at each site. To increase interest in and the likelihood of establishing these smaller safe parking/tiny home sites, OlyMAP would transition the current Ensign team workers to supporting these smaller sites with case management and site support. Furthermore, OlyMAP would strive to increase the likelihood of the smaller camps being successful by supporting individuals in moving together who already have established community, friendship, trust and rapport with one another.

If no new sites are identified for Ensign Road residents, OlyMAP will transition Ensign workers to other sites and/or roles. Dependent on the need, workers may transition to other specific sites (like Nickerson or Percival), become members of the roving team, or transition into the role of "Stability Advocates."

### Percival Creek/Decatur

OlyMAP would be excited to support this camp community in transitioning from a "Tier 1" unsanctioned and minimally supported site to a higher support tier, particularly since this community has consistently expressed interest in working with OlyMAP to develop and implement a collective management/self-governance structure.

Unfortunately, it is likely that the camp along Percival Creek will be removed during the summer, due to a construction project planned by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railway company. OlyMAP is not aware of any alternative shelter/ housing options that would be available to these individuals if this camp is



forcibly relocated and OlyMAP would need to hire additional staff to facilitate the creation and support of alternative sites, similar to those we are working to establish for people along Ensign Road.

In the absence of additional staffing capacity and alternative locations for people to relocate to, OlyMAP will work with residents to advocate around clearance actions and alternative locations, mitigate harm in the case a sweep does occur, and maintain connection with residents to continue providing services through the efforts of our roving outreach team.

### **WSDOT Wheeler Ave.**

OlyMAP is proposing and exploring the possibility of leasing the Olympia Inn for the purpose of providing long-term shelter and eventual permanent supportive housing for the people living in camp communities located along the highway/WSDOT side of Wheeler Avenue. Below is a summary of the proposal and description of the need. **A copy of the complete proposal, which includes OlyMAP's staffing, safety/security and operational plans, may be requested from OlyMAP.**

## **I. Olympia Inn Leasing Proposal**

### *Proposed Action*

OlyMAP is proposing the utilization of funds to lease the entirety of the Olympia Inn, with the express purpose of providing long-term shelter and eventual housing for the current residents of WSDOT Wheeler. The project would be maintained with 24/7 oversight and support from trained OlyMAP staff.

### *Context*

The small camps located along the WSDOT side of Wheeler Avenue, totaling 16-20 households, are camp communities that Governor Inslee has prioritized for closure during the summer of 2022. However, the Governor's office has also allocated a significant amount of funding to go towards re-sheltering/housing those who may be displaced from camp communities along right of ways. As a result of this funding, there are potential new shelter and housing options on the horizon that may become available to the population of people living along WSDOT right of ways. Additionally, the Governor's Office has requested that dozens of additional shelter beds/housing units be made available over the next six months.

There are currently three other camp communities in Thurston County expected to be closed this summer under the same order (Pacific Ave, Lilly Road, Sleater-Kinney), totaling roughly 35 people who are at risk of being displaced. Additionally, two other larger camp communities are facing closures this summer (Ensign Road and Percival Creek), totaling roughly 90 people, separate from the Governor's effort to relocate people living along the I-5 corridor.

According to the Governor's order and the hopes of our community, alternative long-term shelter/housing should be made available and offered to residents prior to the closure of the camp to prevent a sweep and widespread displacement. Even if 60 shelter beds were created prior to the closure of WSDOT camps this summer, there will not be enough new shelter/housing space to accommodate everyone who is currently at-risk of displacement, particularly those not living along state right of ways.

It is critical that every effort is made to not only ensure that shelter/housing is available for these individuals, but that the shelter/housing options available are appropriate and accessible to those intended to access them. It is important for participants to be interested in and agree with the guidelines of a housing opportunity, as this will impact both initial interest and openness to the opportunity, and how well residents are able to maintain their housing status in the long run.

### *Rationale: Why Wheeler Ave?*

Every camp community in Thurston County is unique and made up of a diverse group of individuals with unique needs, strengths and personal barriers to improved shelter/housing. The camp communities located along the WSDOT side of Wheeler are no different.

OlyMAP has worked with those living along WSDOT Wheeler for years, providing outreach-based community support, resource connection and case management services. After years of building relationships and working with those who call Wheeler Avenue home, OlyMAP has established strong rapport and trust with residents. More importantly, OlyMAP has an in-depth understanding of and respect for the unique needs, strengths and challenges of this community, and believes residents along WSDOT Wheeler would be ideal candidates to successfully transition into and thrive in a new supportive long-term shelter/permanent housing project.

The camp communities located along WSDOT are small with a strong sense of community. The population of those who live in these camp communities rarely changes and is very stable. The majority of the people living in these camp communities feel that they experience more safety and stability in these small, close-knit communities than they experience sleeping alone out of doors or within congregate shelter settings.

Many living in these communities, though very interested in long-term and/or improved housing options, feel that living in close proximity to dozens of other people with whom they have little or no connection to– as is the case within most congregate shelter options– is not compatible with their safety, stability and health needs. Furthermore, the ability to maintain some genuine sense of individual agency and to participate in decisions made about the place where they live is a commonly expressed need among those living in these communities.

When OlyMAP asked residents of WSDOT Wheeler if a plan like this would be something they would be interested in, a vast majority of residents said they were interested in OlyMAP pursuing this project. We believe that due to the residents of Wheeler having rapport with OlyMAP, they are more open to alternative shelter options, and therefore it is more likely that housing placements in a program like this will be successful and supportive.



## I.Citations

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