



2013 THURSTON COUNTY HOMELESS POINT-IN-TIME CENSUS REPORT

Who's Homeless and Why?

**Produced by a Countywide Partnership in Conjunction
with the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness**

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A Snapshot of Who is Homeless and Why

March 2013

Produced by a Countywide Partnership in Conjunction with the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness

The 2013 Thurston County Homeless Census Report is the product of the annual “**Point in Time Count of Homeless Persons**” coordinated statewide by the Washington State Department of Commerce. The results of the Thurston County Homeless Census are included along with the data from all other Washington Counties on the Department of Commerce website located at: <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/site/1064/default.aspx>

This report is presented on behalf of the Thurston County Board of Commissioners and the Thurston County HOME Consortium, an eight jurisdiction inter-governmental body that governs the County’s allocation of federal HOME dollars along with the state funded Homeless Housing and Affordable Housing Programs.

Note on photographs: Unless otherwise noted, this report contains many stock photographs from the internet in order to protect the identity of local homeless people who did not want their photographs to be published.

Note to Readers: Due to subsequent re-examination of the 2013 PIT Homeless Census data, the total number of 686 homeless people is subject to change by as much as 5 to 10 people.

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The census was staffed by approximately 130 volunteers from faith-based communities, nonprofit organizations, local and state government, business community, local high schools, and many other parts of the community:

Danny Kadden, Mark Collins, Crispin Collins, Judy Gregorious, Karen Nye, Nicole Hill (Tumwater Council Person), Sue Poyner, Dr. Diane Yu, Heather Reed, Brian Wilson, Charles Shelan, Keith Stahley, Olympia Police Chief Ronnie Roberts, Steve Friddle, Ian Jones, Raymond Payne, Paul Knox, Dae Shogren, Chloe Ketcherside, Mark Freedman, Trudy Soucoup, Mayra Hernandez, Laura Kazsynski, Kim Briggs, Rosie Trujillo, Ed Esbeck, James Joy, Mary Ibarra, Mark Meyer, Cindy Powell, Wanda Michael, Bruce Biermann, Nicole Burgess, Brian Hovis, Becky Reavis, Danielle Wesbrook, Maria Ferris & the Olympia Barber School, Shellie Pullar & Quality Beauty School, Julie De Stefano-Solem, Cutter Taggot, Frances Johnson, Marci Price, Sue Slusher, Theresa Slusher & family, and Jon Epstein, the musician.

Thurston County contracted with the City of Olympia to conduct the 2013 Annual Homeless Count and produce the Homeless Census Report.

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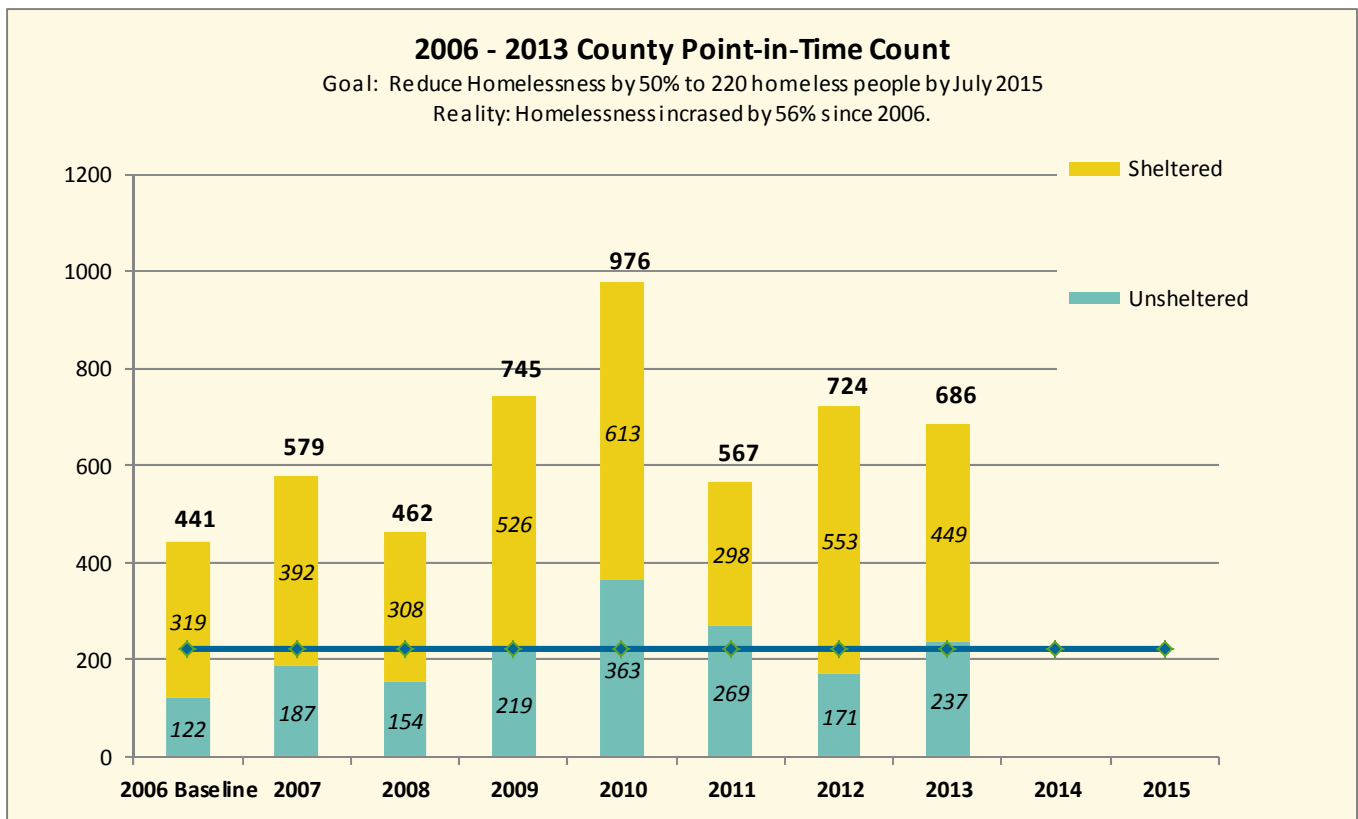
CITIZEN SUMMARY

Overview

In January 24, 2013, Thurston County participated in the statewide annual “**Point in Time Count of Homeless Persons,**” referred to as the “**Homeless Census.**” Census results are reported to the state and federal governments to ensure a proportionate level of public funding for local shelters, transitional housing, and related supportive services. These numbers also help to create the most accurate picture of homelessness throughout our state and across our nation.

Locally, census results are shared with all community stakeholders— policy makers, funders, service providers, concerned citizens and the homeless themselves. Together, we can look at who is homeless, why they are homeless, and what resources we have to offer. Analyzing these three elements allows us to develop more effective responses to homelessness, which is essential to meeting the county’s Ten-Year Plan goal to reduce homelessness by half by the year 2015.

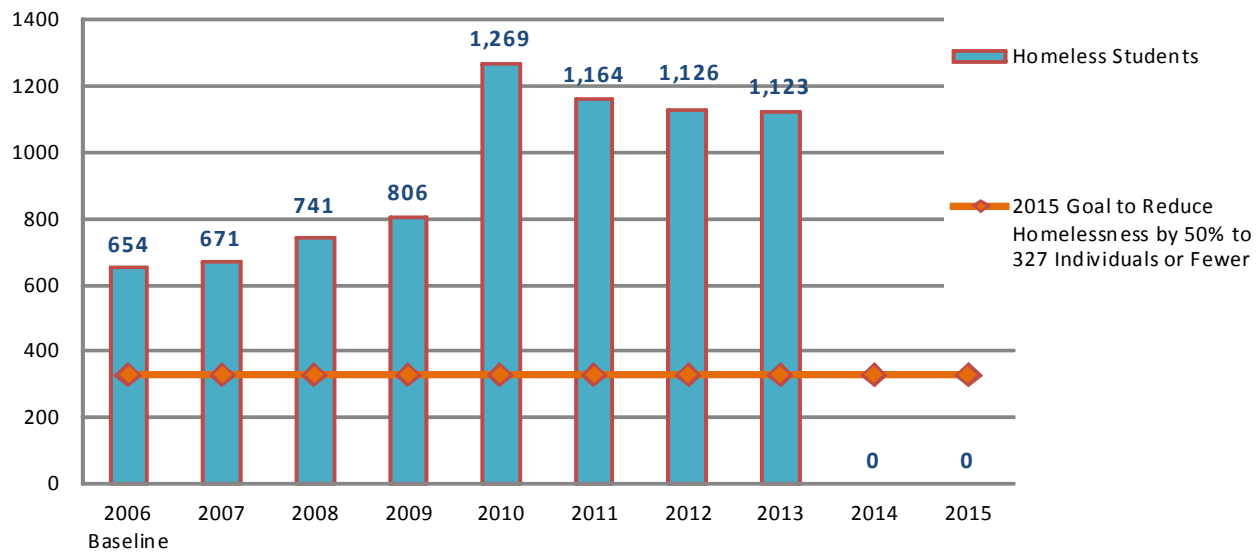
This report presents a snapshot of homelessness in Thurston County drawn from two sources of data. The primary source is the January 2013 County Homeless Census that found 686 homeless individuals. This represents a 56% increase from the 2006 baseline number of 441 homeless people, but a 30% drop from 2010’s high of 976 homeless individuals. (For a more thorough examination of who is homeless and why, please go to Chapter 2 on page 12.)



2006 - 2013 School Year Homeless Counts

Goal: Reduce homelessness in public schools by 50% to 327 students by 2015

Reality: Homeless students increased by 68% since 2006



The second source is a parallel census, conducted by the county's school districts, that found the number of homeless public school students (Kindergarten through 12th grade) as 1,123 which is a 72% increase since the 2006 baseline of 654 students, but down 12% from 2010's high of 1,269. (Please see "Correlation of School District Numbers with County Census Numbers" on page 25.)

Together these sources reflect an **increase in homelessness since 2006**, not the 50% reduction identified as the county's Ten-Year Plan goal. This report analyzes who is homeless and why. It also looks at available resources and presents priority actions from the Homeless Coordinator.

Citizen Summary: 2013 Census Results in Context of the Ten-Year Plan

This year's census total of 686 represents a 56% increase, or 245 more people than identified in the 2006 census of 441 people. However, this year's results indicate a significant 30% drop in homelessness from the 2010 all-time high of 976.

Once statewide data is released, the final version of this report will include some analysis of how other counties across the state are doing in their efforts to reduce homelessness.

Given the census results on page one, it appears that our county is making slow progress in reducing homelessness. Reasons are likely to include:

- 1) **Strong Leadership** from the new Homeless Coordinator and the HOME Citizens Advisory Committee (HCAC).
- 2) **Better Coordination of Referrals** between local non-profit service and shelter providers through the work of three coordinated points of system entry: SideWalk (single adults) Family Support Center (families) and Community Youth Services (unaccompanied youth 17 and under and transition-age youth ages 18—22).
- 3) **Continued Emphasis on "Rapid Re-housing"** through HOME Consortium's increased funding of rental assistance.
- 4) **Stronger Economy** with a local reduction in unemployment.

Together, these four elements are helping to slowly reduce homelessness in Thurston County.

Citizen Summary: Countywide Actions to Reduce Homelessness

Since 2006, Thurston County has invested nearly \$14 million dollars to support many successful projects and programs to reduce homelessness.

These funds have been invested in providing affordable housing, rental assistance and other essential services to reduce homelessness throughout the county.

The funding for these projects and programs is managed by the Thurston County HOME Consortium, an eight member interjurisdictional body composed of Thurston County, Bucoda, Lacey, Olympia, Rainier Tenino, Tumwater and Yelm. The Consortium governs the use of federal HOME funds and the two state-funded programs called the Homeless Housing Program and the Affordable Housing Program, which are funded by document recording fee dollars (collected by the County).

During program year 2012 (September 1, 2012 – August 31, 2013) the County HOME Consortium invested \$1,867,402 of federal and local funds in local projects and programs intended to alleviate homelessness (see Appendix D, page 55).

Notable accomplishments include:

- **Homeless Coordinator Hired:** Thurston County hired a locally renowned expert - Theresa Slusher - to provide strategic coordination for the network of service, shelter and housing providers.
- **Rapid Re-housing:** 187 households were quickly “re-housed” with rental housing vouchers.
- **Rental Housing Improvement:** Seven units of housing renovation by Yelm Community Services (five units), Housing Authority of Thurston County (eight units) and Community Action Council (two units).
- **Housing Rehabilitation:** Eight units of owner-occupied homes were rehabilitated (essential home repairs) in rural communities by the Housing Authority of Thurston County.
- **More Social & Supportive Services:** 11 Social service agencies received support for operations and maintenance costs, ultimately benefitting an estimated 1,464 low and moderate income people.

Together these projects and programs provided housing and essential services that helped hundreds of households across Thurston County.

The census results do show a 56% increase in homelessness since 2006. However, as shown above, a significant number of homeless and at-risk people were assisted, likely preventing them from becoming homeless. If not for the funding provided through the HOME Consortium, the rate of homelessness in Thurston County would be significantly higher.

Citizen Summary: Homelessness Coordinator's Report on Priorities

In March 2012 the HOME Consortium hired a Homeless Coordinator, fulfilling a long-term goal of local service providers. The Homeless Coordinator provides critical leadership, guidance and coordination of a multi-faceted homeless service, shelter and housing system. Over the past year, the Homeless Coordinator has been working with a broad range of stakeholders to:

- 1) **Examine the Existing Network** of housing, shelter and services;
- 2) **Analyze the Service “Gaps”** in that network; and,



Rapid Re-housing stabilizes families and single adults quickly, offering better outcomes



Youth shelters and “Youth Bridge” programs offer age-appropriate services

3) **Determine Priority Next Steps** to strengthen the network and significantly reduce homelessness.

Following is a summary of those priorities:

- **Low Barrier Shelter for Single Adults:**
Create facilities that accommodate “hard-to- house” homeless people with low or minimal entry rules while maintaining adequate safety standards.
- **Youth Shelter:** Expand shelter resources to accommodate more: 1) Unaccompanied youth, 17 and under; and, 2) Transition-age youth, ages 18 to 24.
- **Youth Bridge Program:**
A new hybrid of shelter/transitional housing bridge program that provides entry into housing and allows young people to progress from street dependence to affordable permanent housing at their own pace.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing for Adults:** Stabilize single adults quicker with permanent housing, bypassing or shortening stays in shelter or transitional housing
- Year two of the Homeless Coordinator’s work plan will focus on promoting the above listed priorities along with defining the vision, goals and objectives of a broader **Homeless Housing and Services** that lets young people progress from street reliance to affordable permanent housing at their own pace.
- **Rapid Rehousing for Families:** Build capacity of rental assistance for newly homeless people to “rapidly” get them back into housing.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing for Adults:** Stabilize single adults quicker with permanent housing, bypassing or shortening stays in shelter or transitional housing.



40%, or 277 people, of the 2013 Homeless Census were family members

Year two of the Homeless Coordinator’s work plan will focus on promoting the above listed priorities along with defining the vision, goals and objectives of a broader **Homeless Housing and Services System Plan** for Thurston County.

CH1: OVERVIEW OF THE HOMELESS CENSUS

Purpose of the Point in Time Count of Homeless People

Each year at the end of January, Thurston County participates in a statewide effort to conduct a census of homeless people and then produces a report examining the results. As a “Point in Time” census, this represents a finite count of people from a specific night—January 24, 2013, selected as the end of the coldest month of the year. The results are presented in this homeless census report which serves to:

- 1) **Examine Who’s Homeless and Why** by obtaining the most accurate census of homeless people, the causes of their homelessness, and other useful demographic information;
- 2) **Quantify Needs** by reporting the number and demographics of homeless people, which in turn brings in federal and state dollars to provide homeless shelter, transitional housing, and other services;
- 3) **Assess Resources** by tracking currently available housing and service resources; and
- 4) **Foster Analysis and Refine Strategies** by examining needs and resources and supporting the development of better strategies for local responses to homelessness.



35% of all homeless were unsheltered, taking refuge wherever they could

Definitions of Homelessness



The census found 191, or 28%, of people living out of doors, many of whom were in camps

This census report is primarily based on the state definition of homelessness, which includes people living in:

1. **Emergency Shelter** (also termed homeless shelters);
2. **Transitional Housing** (a form of temporary housing assistance lasting for less than two years);
3. **Unsheltered** (in places not meant for human habitation such as cars, tents, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, on the street); and,
4. **Substandard Housing** (defined as a dwelling lacking drinking water, restroom, heat, ability to cook hot food, or ability to bathe)

This definition derives from the federal definition of homelessness, which comes from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD defines homelessness as (1) an individual

who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence; and (2) an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is:

- A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill);
- An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or

- A public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

For the purposes of this count, transitional housing refers to housing with a 2-year stay limit where being homeless is a prerequisite for eligibility. Transitional housing also typically offers case management services that are required as part of the program. Persons in transitional housing programs that allow them to continue living permanently in housing after a transition period (“transition in place”) are not considered homeless if participation in case management is not a condition of residency.

Other People without Permanent Homes

The Homeless Census also collects information on other people without permanent homes in order to capture a more comprehensive count of people who impact social and shelter services, including:

- People staying with friends and family.
- People held in jails or medical institutions who will be released to homelessness.

These numbers are useful for understanding the impact of people in jails or institutions who will be released to homelessness. It is also helpful in looking at the people who temporarily stay with friends or family, many of whom may cycle to living in their cars or homeless shelters. This standard was used to produce the numbers referred to as the “county census” count of homeless individuals. All data presented herein will cite the standard as either “state count” or “full count.”



The Census found 145 people staying with friends & family; they often cycle through shelters and cars to living out of doors



The Census found 30 people living in their vehicles

2013 Census Data Validity

Statewide, the Homeless Census provides the single best measure of how successful we have been at reducing homelessness. However, as with all statistical studies, it is useful to acknowledge the conditions that may compromise the validity of the Homeless Census. Following is a list of issues that may have affected the accuracy of this census:

1. Change of Methodology

This year the census featured a central **Homeless Connect Event** and discontinued the practice of conducting a camp census (a volunteer-intensive canvassing of all known homeless camps). This change may have reduced the access to homeless people who, for a variety of reasons, may not come into the urban hub for services. Planners replaced the camp census with a high profile Homeless Connect Event that offered a broad array of services to attract people generally found in the camps.

2. Organizational Capacity Data Entry in State Database

Many agencies are still building their competency at entering data into the State database, called the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to manage the statewide Homeless Census data. Efforts to improve HMIS reporting accuracy has been identified as a high priority for the new County Homeless Coordinator.

3. Non-cooperation by Some Unsheltered Homeless Populations

Some unsheltered homeless people are concerned that participation in the Homeless Census might lead to camp clearances or police harassment. Some homeless people harbor a general distrust of government. Service providers and homeless advocates confirm that this perception is prevalent among unsheltered people.

These concerns stem from the fact that most unsheltered people must break either laws or rules to sleep in cars, abandoned buildings or to camp in the woods. Unsheltered parents are often reluctant to self-identify as homeless for fear of losing their children.

4. Displacement of Street Dependent Populations and Homeless Camps

5. Actions by a variety of government agencies continue to displace homeless people: 1) recent laws affecting street dependent populations restrict them from sitting, lying or camping on public sidewalks or other property; and, 2) clearance of homeless camps, caused by complaints that require enforcement of laws and regulations about camping on public lands.

5. Undercount of Rural Homeless People

6. In spite of ongoing outreach efforts, the Homeless Census continues to under-count people who meet the definition of homeless in rural areas. Rural officials estimate there are a significant number of people living in substandard housing (lacking in heating, cooking or sanitation facilities) that would meet the definition of homeless.

Many rurally-based homeless people tend to exist “off the grid” of homeless services, often because fewer services exist in rural areas, which makes it difficult to find them. Methodologies used in urban areas – such as using homeless outreach events or field census teams – are less effective in areas with scattered-site camp locations.



Homeless people in urban hubs are often more visible than those in rural areas

CH2: SOURCE 1 - EXAMINING THE NUMBERS

Following is a series of charts presented with background information that provide a deeper look into the results of the 2013 Homeless Census, including the causes of homelessness, the ages of homeless people, disabilities they face, and other information.

Scope of the Data

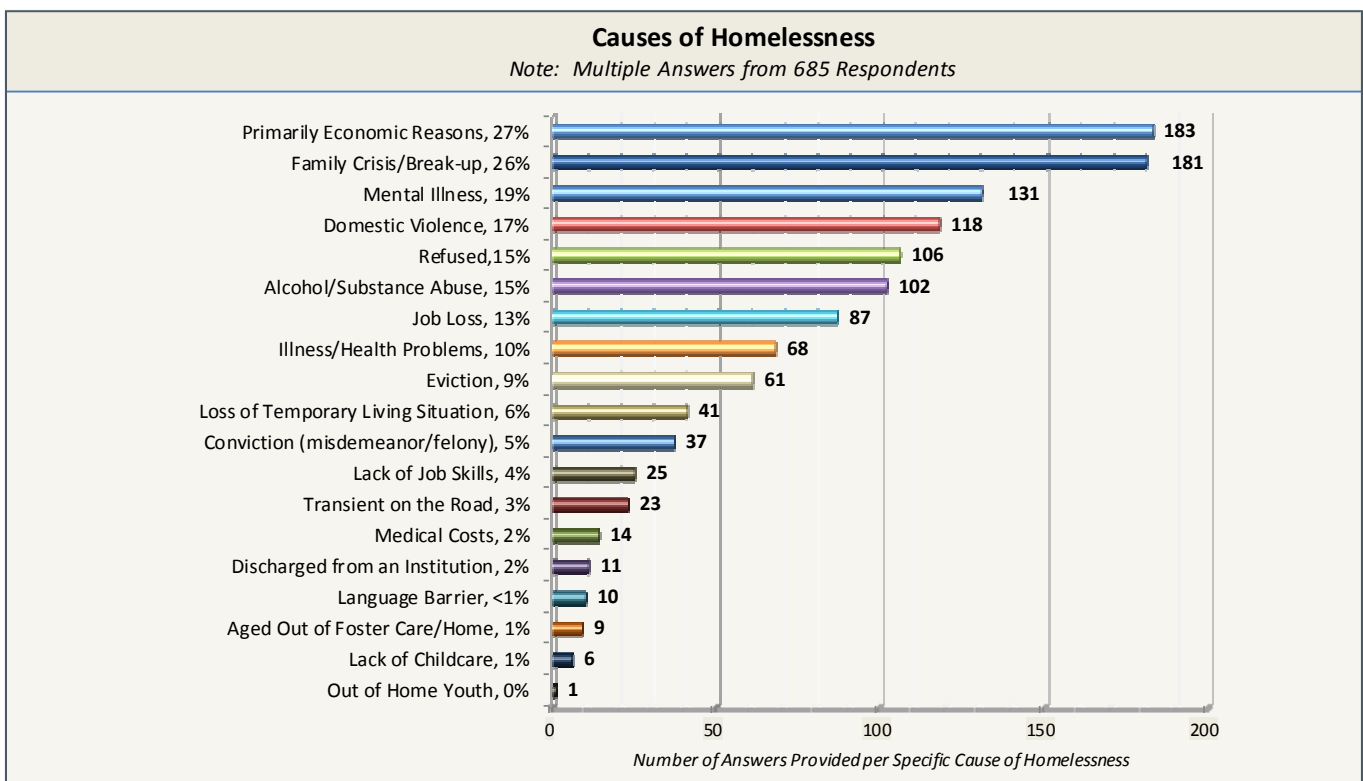
The following information represents the results of the 2013 Homeless Census, primarily focusing on a count of homeless people that meets the state definition of homelessness.

Additionally, this report presents some charts and information on people living with friends or families and people in jail or medical facilities who will be released to homelessness. Although these homeless people do not meet the state definition of homelessness, they clearly present a significant impact on local services and the community at large.

Please note that due to technical constraints with the state's database, some of the totals and subtotals are off by five (5) or less.

Causes of Homelessness

Understanding the root or precipitating causes of homelessness is key to identifying the most appropriate resources. The chart below presents the self-reported causes of homelessness by respondents in the county census. Each respondent was asked to report all situations that applied, recognizing that causes of homelessness may have a multiplier effect.



The largest reported cause of homelessness was economic hardship, as reported by 183 or 27% of the total 685 respondents. This includes those respondents reporting “Primarily Economic Reasons,” “Job Loss,” “Eviction,” and “Lack of Job Skills” (see the graph on the previous page).

The second most frequent cause of homelessness cited by 131 or 19% of the respondents cited mental illness. However, this statistic may be problematic given the conflicting directives of the WA State Department of Commerce to collect names of all respondents and the federal HIPAA law (the “Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act” of 1996) that protects the medical privacy of mentally ill people and other respondents with medical conditions covered by HIPAA. In general, service providers are prohibited from releasing medical information with the names of their clients. On a different question regarding self-reported disabilities, 222, or 27%, self-disclosed mental illness, which may have been a contributing factor in their homelessness. This change may reflect the conversion of an additional eight (8) housing units from transitional, (past of the census give the impermanence of the housing) to permanent housing with supportive services (housing with social service supports). This conversion eliminated eight households previously considered to be homeless. Domestic Violence was cited as the third most frequent cause of homelessness for 118 or 17% of respondents.

Where the Homeless Find Refuge

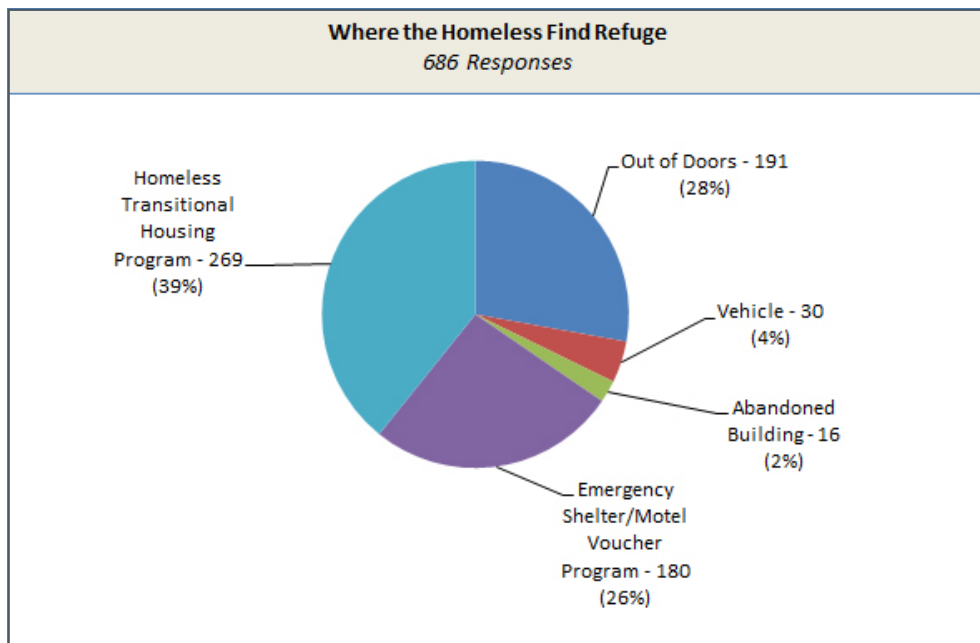
To be included in this homeless census, the respondent had to meet the definition for homelessness (see “Definition of Homeless” on page 9) on the night of January 24, 2013, when the census was conducted.

The results present a snapshot of where the homeless take shelter, which includes a broad array of formal and informal accommodations.

The graph to the right represents the range of those answers. Over one third of all homeless people reported they were unsheltered, or 237 people or 35% of 686 respondents.

Of this number, there were 191 of the people living out of doors, 30 people living in vehicles and sixteen living in abandoned buildings. Another 26% of all local homeless or 180 people spent the night in homeless shelters.

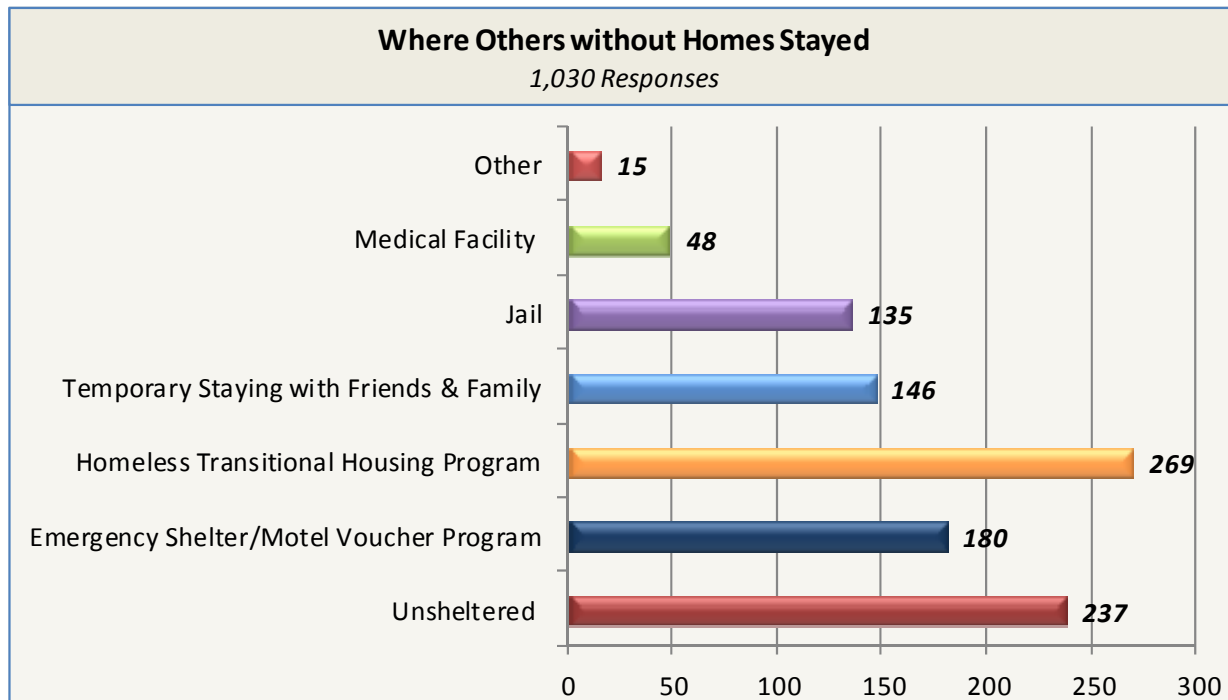
The remaining 269 people, or 39% of all homeless households, were living in transitional housing, defined as housing that is designed to facilitate the movement of homeless individuals or families to permanent housing within a reasonable amount of time, usually 24 months or less.



Other People without Homes

Beyond the HUD-defined number of homeless people, the census also collected information on individuals who “lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence” (HUD definition).

This included 127 people in jail and 48 people in medical facilities who will be released to homelessness. It also includes 146 people temporarily staying with friends or families. While these numbers are not included in the state-defined total of 686 (page 5, “10-Year Plan Progress 2006 – 2013”), these homeless people typically have a significant impact on local services such as food banks, soup kitchens and other services.



Among this number of “other homeless people” are the unaccompanied minors who are not living with parents or guardians.

These youth typically cycle from staying with friends, sometimes termed “couch surfing,” and living on the streets. One significant challenge in providing shelter for unaccompanied minors is that many avoid going into “the system” for fear of being returned to their parents or guardians as a result of Washington State’s “Becca Laws”, which are intended to keep families together.

While these categories of homelessness do not meet the state definition, the chart above on “Causes of Homelessness” shows that 41 people, or 6%, became homeless after losing a temporary living situation; 37 people, or 5%, lost their homes because of criminal convictions; and 11, or 2%, were discharged from a medical institution. Clearly, these figures will have a direct impact on the local population of homeless people.

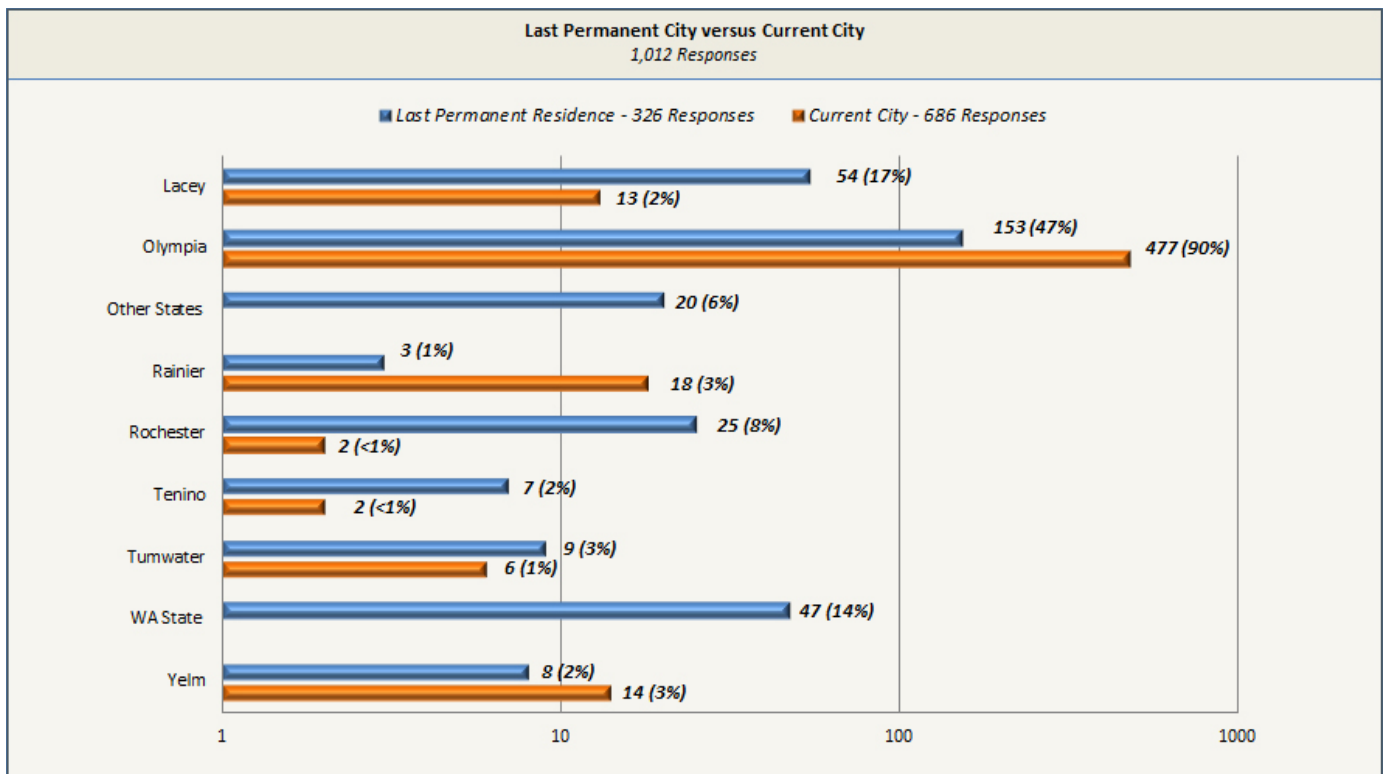
Current City

Another element of the Homeless Census provides some contrast of where the homeless spent the night on January 24th and where their last permanent address was. Of 364 total respondents, the vast majority – 477, or 90%, spent the night somewhere in Olympia. An additional 3% stayed in both Yelm (14 people) and Rainier (18 people) and 2%, or 13 people, stayed in Lacey.

Last Permanent Residence

A very different geography is presented by the answers of where the respondents had their last permanent residence, meaning a home with an address. Only 153, or 47%, of the total 326 respondents stated that Olympia was the location of their last permanent residence. Another 54, or 17%, stated that they had lived in Lacey and 9 or 3% said they lived in Tumwater. Of those respondents from rural Thurston County, Only 43, or 13%, said they were from rural Thurston County (3 from Rainier, 25 from Rochester, 7 from Tenino, and 8 from Yelm). Another 47 or 14% were from other parts of Washington while the remaining 20, or 6%, said they were from other states.

The following combined chart shows how limited choices in rural areas can drive homeless people into the urban core. In a dynamic repeated across the country, homeless people from small towns and rural areas are forced to migrate to areas with higher concentrations of services, shelter and transitional housing. Once there, homeless people can feel like displaced persons, unable to rebuild community bonds or to tap neighborhood resources.



Population Growth and Increased Homelessness

Homelessness occurs within the context of population growth, with the potential of correlation between the population growth and the increase of homelessness. However, the table below shows that the county's population has grown 13% since 2006 (population data from TRPC.org), while homelessness has increased by 56%. While some of the increase in homeless residents is related to population growth, clearly the doubling of homelessness in Thurston County cannot be attributed to the gradual increase of the general population.

Age of the Homeless

The chart below presents the age spread of homeless people, with the largest number of respondents, 375, or 55%, falling between the ages of 26 to 55 years old. The elderly account for only 1% or 7 of the local homeless population. This chart also shows that 157, or 23%, of all homeless people are children 17 years old or younger. Together with those respondents

who are between 18 to 20 years old, there were 194, or 28%, of the homeless are under 21 years of age. The school census data presented on page 24 ("2006-2013 School Year Homeless Counts") shows that this number has nearly doubled in the past eight years.

Disabilities of the Homeless

This chart presents the range of self-reported disabilities affecting local homeless people, showing that mental health impacts 222 people, or 32%, nearly one-third of the local homeless population that were counted.

Another 114 people, or 17%, reported a permanent physical disability; 80, or 12%, or respondents reported a drug or alcohol dependency.

Sources of Income for Homeless People

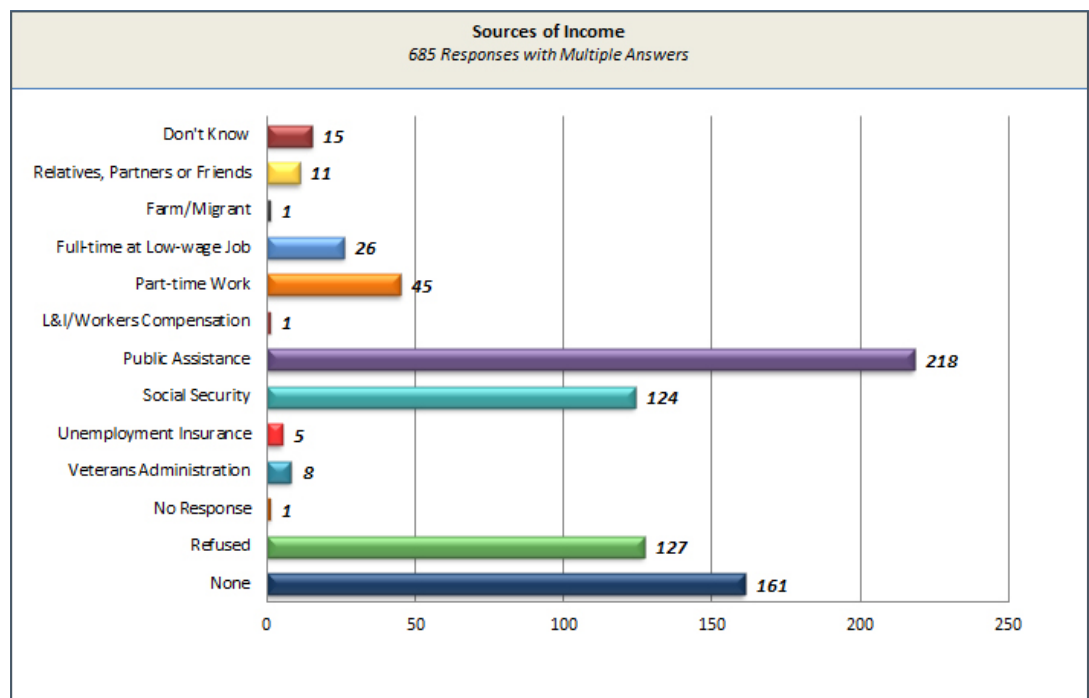
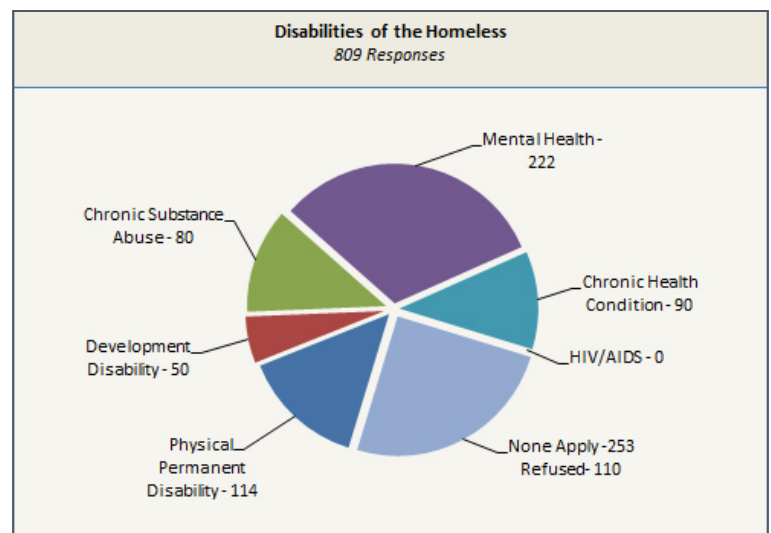
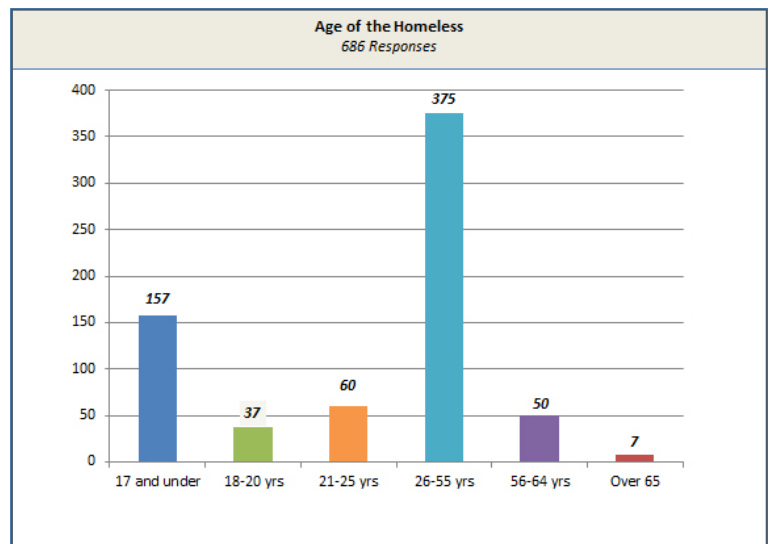
The majority of the homeless, 32%, or 218 out of 686 respondents reported generic "Public Assistance" as their source of income.

The next largest group of 161 or 23%, reported they had no income. The third largest group was 124, or 18%, who rely on Social Security.

The remainder reported a variety of income sources: 45 people, or 7%, reported part-time work and 26, or 4%, reported low-wage jobs.

A significant number of Thurston County's homeless people did not want to discuss their income with strangers; 127 people refused to answer questions about the source of their income.

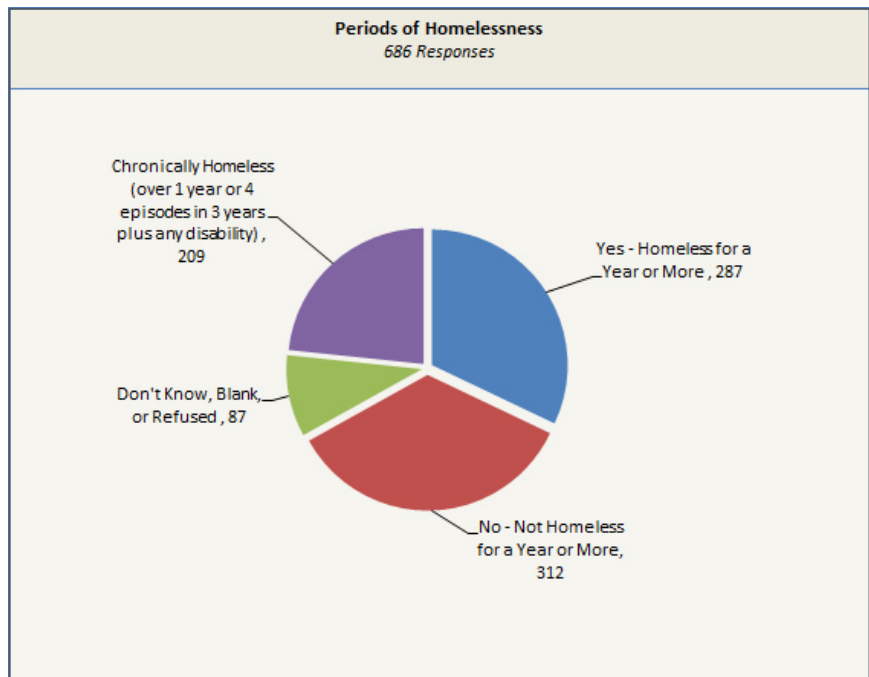
The adjacent chart presents the breakdown of sources of income.



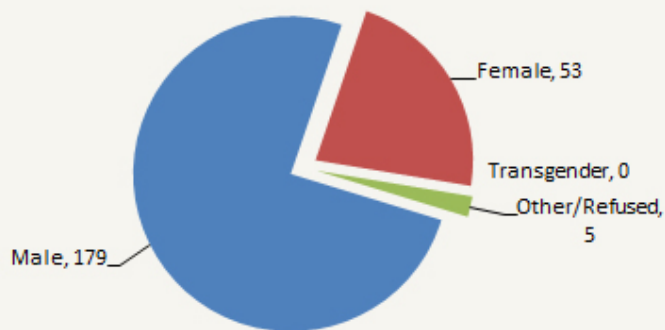
How Long Have They Been Homeless?

People are staying homeless longer. One of the questions included in the census asked how long people were homeless. Nearly half of the respondents, or 287 (48%), said they had been homeless for more than a year, which is one qualifier for being chronically homeless.

Another 151 or 25% reported they had experienced four or more episodes of homelessness in the past three years, which is the other indicator of chronic homelessness. Less than one-third, or 312 (52%), said they had been homeless for less than a year.



Who are the Unsheltered
232 Responses - by Gender



Who are the Unsheltered?

The Homeless Census found 237 people who were unsheltered, meaning that they had spent the night in a vehicle, a tent, an abandoned building or some other location that was out of doors.

Of this total, the vast majority were male - 179 or 77% of respondents, another 53 or 23% were female and 5 people refused to give their gender.

This doesn't match up with the existing shelter resources for single adults where 56% of the existing shelter beds are for men and 44% are for women.

These statistics suggest the percentages of need among the unsheltered populations,

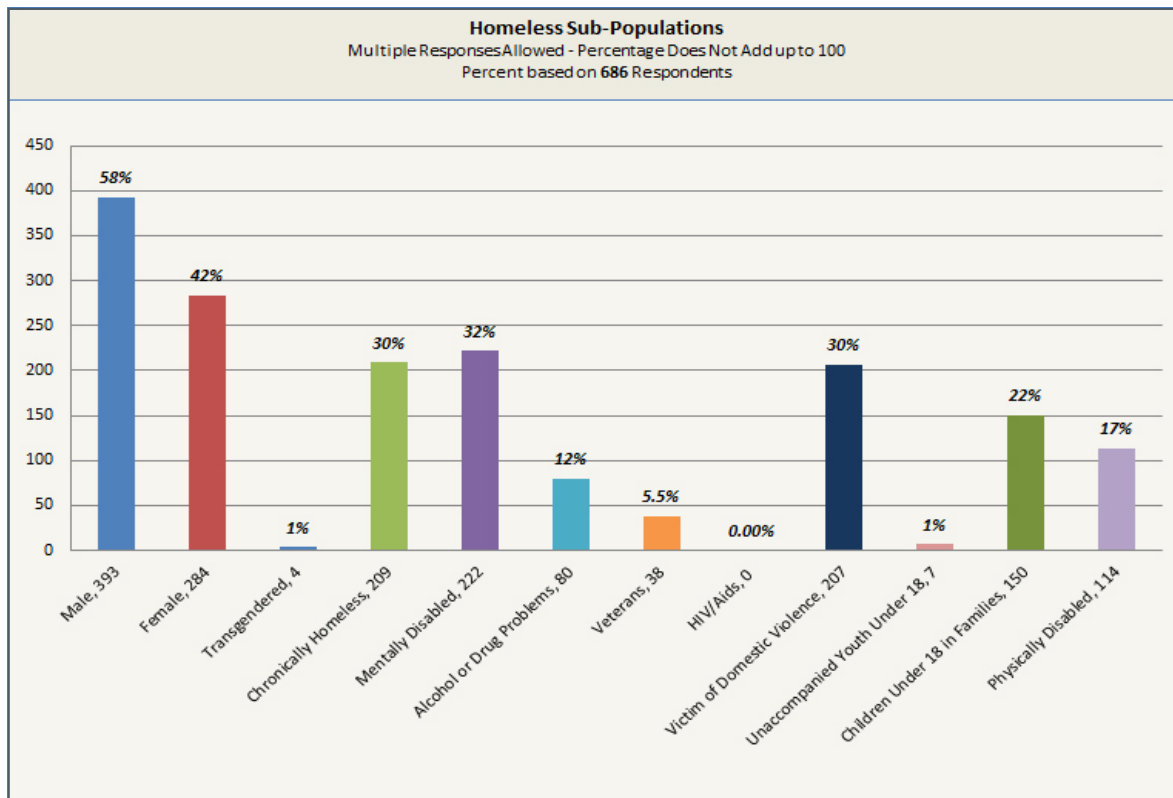
showing that we need three additional shelter beds for males to every additional shelter bed for females.

While there appears to be only four self-reported transgendered homeless people, anecdotal reports suggest there may be more, perhaps among the five people who refused to respond to the question. While transgendered people are protected by the state against discrimination in housing, the State Human Rights Commission does not have clear jurisdiction in homeless shelters.

This means that some local shelters can and do discriminate against transgendered homeless people. However, the need to maintain safety for residents is the compelling reasons stated by the Salvation Army who feel they cannot assure the safety of transgendered shelter residents in a dormitory setting.

CH3: WHO ARE THE HOMELESS?

The pathways to homelessness come from many directions. This results in a broad range of sub-populations of the homeless. Because most service and shelter programs are tailored to meet the unique needs of these specific sub-populations, it is essential to understand the diverse characteristics of homeless people as individuals in order to develop successful responses. The chart below breaks out some of these distinct sub-populations. Following is a brief overview of some of these unique characteristics of the primary sub-groups of homeless people. Included is a short description of the current best practice standards for responding to their needs.



Mental Illness and Homelessness

Mental illness is typically among the top three causes of homelessness, according to the National Coalition for the Homeless. Severe mental illness often impedes the ability to maintain employment or to manage expenses, which in turn makes it difficult to maintain stable housing. Once homeless, people with mental illnesses can find it difficult to understand or cooperate with the rules of emergency shelters. Those who are unsheltered and mentally ill may find it difficult to access services that would help them to stabilize.

In Thurston County, the numbers of the mentally disabled have decreased from a high of 407 or 42% in 2010 to the current number of 222 or 32%. This decrease may reflect the loss through conversion of an additional eight (8) units of transitional housing into permanent housing with services for people with mental illness, meaning they are no longer considered homeless.

Many people who are mentally ill are eligible for some form of benefits related to their mental illness. Chronically mentally ill people tend to have symptom escalation on a cyclical basis, and sometimes hospitalization may be necessary to re-establish stability. Once hospitalized, people may lose their benefits due to non-payment or abandonment. If jailed, mentally ill people may lose their housing subsidies with supportive services. Upon release from incarceration, many mentally ill people must re-establish their housing and service subsidies, a process that can take several weeks. During

periods of hospitalization, landlords may evict them for non-payment and dispose of their belongings as abandoned. After several episodes of homelessness, it can be difficult to find a new landlord to accept their rental history.

Strategic Response: The primary strategy for chronically mentally ill homeless people is to provide **Permanent Supportive Housing**, or what is often referred to as “service enriched” housing, typically owned and staffed by non-profit organizations. Housing alone, or “**Housing First**” may succeed in helping to establish initial stability, but without immediate and ongoing treatment and services, many mentally ill homeless people will fail to keep their housing.

Victims of Domestic Violence

According to the “National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty,” domestic violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness for women and children. A 2005 study commissioned by the US Conference of Cities found that domestic violence was the leading cause of homelessness for women and children in half of the cities reporting, including Seattle.

Locally, there were 118 homeless victims of domestic violence in 2013, representing 17% of the total population of homeless respondents. Victims of domestic violence often have fewer options to seek temporary shelter with friends and family because their abusers would then be able to find them. As a result, they are disproportionately dependent on shelters, typically operated in confidential locations.

Safeplace, the local domestic violence shelter, offers beds that are configured into family rooms rather than being offered in a dormitory style. This means smaller families may occupy rooms without using all the beds, which can appear to be an under-utilization of the capacity. Other local homeless shelters and transitional housing facilities also provide shelter for domestic violence victims. The numbers clearly indicate a significant need for increased domestic violence shelter capacity along with training for other shelter providers.



118 people were made homeless by Domestic Violence

unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for a year or more, OR (2) an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.” This represents a 103% increase over the 103 chronically homeless people who were identified in the 2006 homeless census.

The definition above derives from the recognition that when persistent homelessness is compounded by disabling conditions, it becomes exponentially difficult to overcome homelessness. Typically, people without those disabling



222 Homeless people self-reported mental illness as a disability

Strategic Response: Homeless victims of domestic violence often require a continuum of care response. Initially, they are best served by domestic violence shelters, either formal or informal, or through friend networks that can ensure protection from abusers. Many domestic violence shelters seek to expand into providing service-enriched transitional housing to provide a secure stepping-stone from shelter to independence. Housing First is not always the best option in that it may reveal a survivor’s whereabouts to abusers.

Chronically Homeless

Over one quarter of the homeless are “chronically homeless,” with 209 or 30% who meet the HUD definition as “either (1) an

conditions are more successful at getting the services, jobs or other support necessary to get back into permanent housing. However, in recent years, the face of persistent homelessness is changing, apparently as a result of the economy.

As shown on the “Trends of the Demographics of Homelessness” chart on page 23, the number of chronically homeless people has fluctuated between 10% - 47% of the total homeless population in the past eight years.

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, chronically homeless people comprise only 16% of the total homeless population but use nearly half of all available resources. They typically cycle between shelters, hospitals, jails and other facilities. The chronically homeless also tend to be the heaviest consumers of shelter and homeless services along with public services such as emergency medical response and police.

People who are chronically homeless are often the most visible, giving rise to many negative stereotypes. A 2006 New Yorker article infamously chronicled the price of ignoring the chronically homeless with a story about “Million Dollar Murray,” a homeless man in Reno who cost the state of Nevada one million dollars in emergency care and court costs over the course of ten years, averaging \$100,000 per year – costs which would have been cut by half or two-thirds using a Housing First approach.

Strategic Response: As illustrated by the “Million Dollar Murray” article and the 1811 Eastlake model, it’s cheaper to provide housing and services for chronically homeless people than it is to sustain the high cost of emergency service responses. Such a cost-benefit analysis approach supports the Housing First model as a strategy to stabilize chronically homeless people by getting them into housing first and then providing the essential services. Housing is a proven way to save other public funds from law enforcement in order to provide more cost-effective case management.

Veterans

In Thurston County, 38, or 8%, of the homeless self-identified as veterans. Nationwide, about one-third of the adult homeless population are veterans. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), homeless veterans are predominantly male, with roughly five percent being female.



8%, or 38 local homeless people self-identify as Veterans



Stereotypes of homelessness are based on who is most visible

The majority of homeless veterans are single, come from urban areas, and suffer from mental illness, alcohol and/or substance abuse, or other co-occurring disorders. America’s homeless veterans have served in World War II, the Korean War, Cold War, Vietnam War, Grenada, Panama, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Nearly half of homeless veterans served during the Vietnam era. Two-thirds served our country for at least three years, and one-third were stationed in a war zone.

Unfortunately, numerous studies show that veterans are the least likely among the homeless sub-populations to be willing to work with government or other institutional services.

Strategic Response: The most effective response to homeless veterans is to ensure they are linked to all possible VA benefits, including housing, mental health care, drug and alcohol treatment, employment assistance, and other services. This linkage will ensure that a community makes the best

use of these distinct revenue streams. Like most homeless sub-populations, veterans benefit from the Housing First model followed up with supportive services. For individuals unwilling or unable to cooperate with a government or non-profit housing program, the next best solution is to offer survival resources, such as outdoor clothing, camping gear, food and other supplies.

Homeless Individuals

Homeless individuals typically make up the largest sub-population of homeless people. Locally, the census revealed 409 single adults, comprising 60% of the total 686 respondents. People are considered homeless individuals when they do not have dependent children, are not expecting a child, or do not have other familial obligations that prohibit them from arranging their individual accommodations. Individuals who are not mentally ill, veterans or victims of domestic violence are generally excluded from many forms of public assistance, including housing. As a result, it can be difficult to find resources to serve them. Many chronically homeless individuals are typically in single-person households.

Strategic Response: Homeless individuals should be screened to identify their needs and eligibility for potential resources. While most homeless individuals benefit from the Housing First model, case managers may elect to utilize lighter forms of assistance such as temporary emergency shelter, shallow rental subsidies, or job referrals to help stabilize them and facilitate their return to independence. For individuals unable or unwilling to cooperate with a government or non-profit housing program, the next best solution is to offer survival resources, such as outdoor clothing, camping gear, food and other supplies.



409, or 60%, of the homeless were single adults



*The Census found 277 homeless family members;
40% of the total population*

Homeless Families

The census found 277 total people in 98 homeless families, accounting for 40% of the homeless population. However, there appears to be a much larger number of families without a home of their own who find shelter by living with friends or family members or in their vehicles, thereby eluding the census methodology and being excluded from the census count. Homeless families often cite job loss or the loss of their housing related to the economy as the cause of homelessness.

Many homeless families often choose to stay temporarily with other people, in motels, or in their cars in order to keep their families together. Families tend to avoid shelters in order to prevent potentially negative impacts on their children. As a result, many families with children are disproportionately excluded by the current HUD definition of homelessness.

In addition, many homeless families avoid shelters or the streets because parents fear losing their children as the result of potential intervention by child welfare agencies. Families also avoid the forced separation of family members in order to fit into shelter regulations that are often restrictive about the number and gender configuration of families in their facilities.

Strategic Response: Strategies for homeless families include “Rapid Re-housing” or quickly dispersed rental assistance to stabilize them. Other responses include emergency shelters specifically for families with separate family suites that preserve family cohesion. Shelter case management should be followed by rental subsidies to allow them to secure housing

as quickly as possible. It is also important to encourage families to access all potential school-based resources for their school age children.

Other useful resources are the informal networks of friends, school-based or faith community ties. These networks are often the first options pursued by homeless families. Efforts to strengthen informal networks through school associations, faith communities or neighborhood associations could be highly effective.



While only 7 unaccompanied youth were counted, service providers indicate there are many more who are reluctant to be counted

Homeless Youth

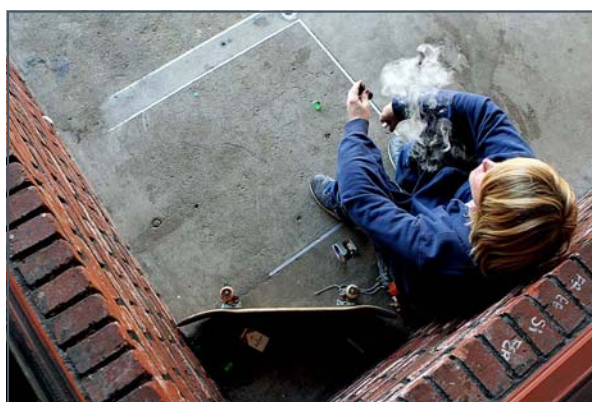
There were 157 homeless children who were 17 years of age and under, or 23% of the total 686 respondents. Seven of these children were unaccompanied homeless youth 17 or under in the census, comprising less than 1% of the total population. (Please note: this number appears to be significantly lower than the School Census numbers addressed on page 24.) The State Department of Commerce, which administers the statewide Homeless Census, considers youth homeless only when they meet the state definition of “individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.” The state definition includes youth who are living in shelters, transitional housing, out of doors in vehicles or in abandoned buildings. However, a significant number of

homeless youth do not fit this state definition but they do fit the federal McKinney Vento definition because they are “migratory” and live temporarily in hotels or motels or with a succession of friends or family. As a result, the School Census presents much higher numbers deriving from a different methodology.

An additional 37 young people ages 18 to 20, and another 60, ages 21 to 25, were part of a category of young homeless people who are termed “Transition-age Youth”, or young people aged 16 through 24. While those under 18 can’t stay in adult shelters, those who are between 18 to 24 are at high risk for victimization when placed in general population emergency shelters. Homeless youth and young adults present a significant challenge to Housing First programs in that those under 18 can’t legally sign leases and don’t fit into the adult homeless housing model.

Without appropriately focused interventions, they are likely to become part of the chronically homeless adult population. Adolescents and young adults have different biological, psychological, social, and developmental cognitive needs than adults, and may be more responsive to a structured transitional housing program. Best practice service models are designed to focus on prevention/intervention strategies that are geared to a young person’s developmental stages. These models utilize multiple “best practice” interventions within a harm reduction model, recognizing that one size will not fit all.

Strategic Response: “Youth Bridge” is an emerging service model that incorporates both shelter and transitional housing into a hybrid program that provides system entry for young people, allowing them to move from street dependence to affordable permanent housing at their own pace, assisted by supportive services. Youth Bridge and other effective shelter and housing programs recognize the need to serve both youth who are 17 and younger, as well as “transition-age youth” ages 17 to 22 who are essentially young adults. Absent shelter or housing resources, the primary service models are street outreach and drop-in centers that offer survival goods, service referrals, and general case management that emphasizes “harm reduction”.



Emerging models like “youth Bridge” offer a new, more flexible model of service

Trends in Thurston County Homelessness

Seven years of conducting a Thurston County census of homeless citizens offers a look into the trends of who is homeless in a given year and how that changes over time. The chart on the next page presents seven years of data on who the homeless are, where they were accommodated, and some of the issues they face. The questions that emerge in examining this data include: (1) Who are the homeless; (2) Are we making progress with certain demographics by concentrating services; and, (3) Do we have information to differentiate whether these are the same people year-over-year, or are some people overcoming homelessness while new people are becoming homeless?

The first five years show that the **total number of homeless people** appears to trend upward and then drops off radically by Year 6 in 2011. (This drop off is widely perceived as an anomaly caused by a change in homeless definitions by previous administrators). Some of the fairly static populations include the chronically homeless, who appear to fluctuate between 78 and 210 people.

Individuals with **mental illness** trended sharply upwards in the first five years, and again, dropped radically in the sixth year, likely due to a lack of data from mental health service providers. The data on veterans varies radically between a low of 6 veterans in 2007 to a high of 76 veterans in 2008. These radically divergent numbers suggest the need to work more closely with veteran's assistance organizations to gain the trust of homeless veterans in order to include them in the census.

The significant drop in the number of respondents who self-reported **drug and alcohol addicted** homeless people in the past three years appears incongruent with previous year's data. In 2009 and 2010, there were 164 and 168 respondents with drug and alcohol addiction, dropping to 37 by 2012. These statistics are contrary to the anecdotal reports of street outreach workers, emergency service providers and other public employees. These low numbers seem to obscure the number of people who are chronic inebriates.

Thurston County Census 2006 – 2013: Trends in Demographics of Homelessness								
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Out of Doors	122	187	154-94*	219	363	269	171	237
Shelters	156	167-132*	118	123	181	141	171	180
Transitional Housing	163	143	100	203	432	260	382	269
Subtotals**	441	579	462	745	976	568	724	686
Jails & Medical Institutions	55	38	17	109	146	98	122	175
Friends	104	103	150	159	162	74	156	145
Total	600	720	629	1,013	1,284	740	1,110	1,006
Youth - Total Sheltered & Unsheltered (17 & under)	115	111	187	228	420	144	188	157
Families with Children - Total Sheltered & Unsheltered	151	196	151	275	289	162	121	277
Single Men & Women - Total Sheltered & Unsheltered	290	383	311	470	663	387	603	409
Elderly – Total Sheltered & Unsheltered (65 & over)	4	3	11	7	16	3	10	7
Veterans – Total Sheltered & Unsheltered	75	6	76	18	68	42	63	38
Mental Illness (self-reported disability)	156	292	288	356	407	249	153	222
Drug and Alcohol Addicted	122	149	125	164	168	41	37	80
Chronically Homeless	103	210	84	98	99	78	151	209
*Numbers vary between state report and county report for this demographic in these years.								
**HUD-defined Homelessness								

Homeless School Children and the McKinney Act

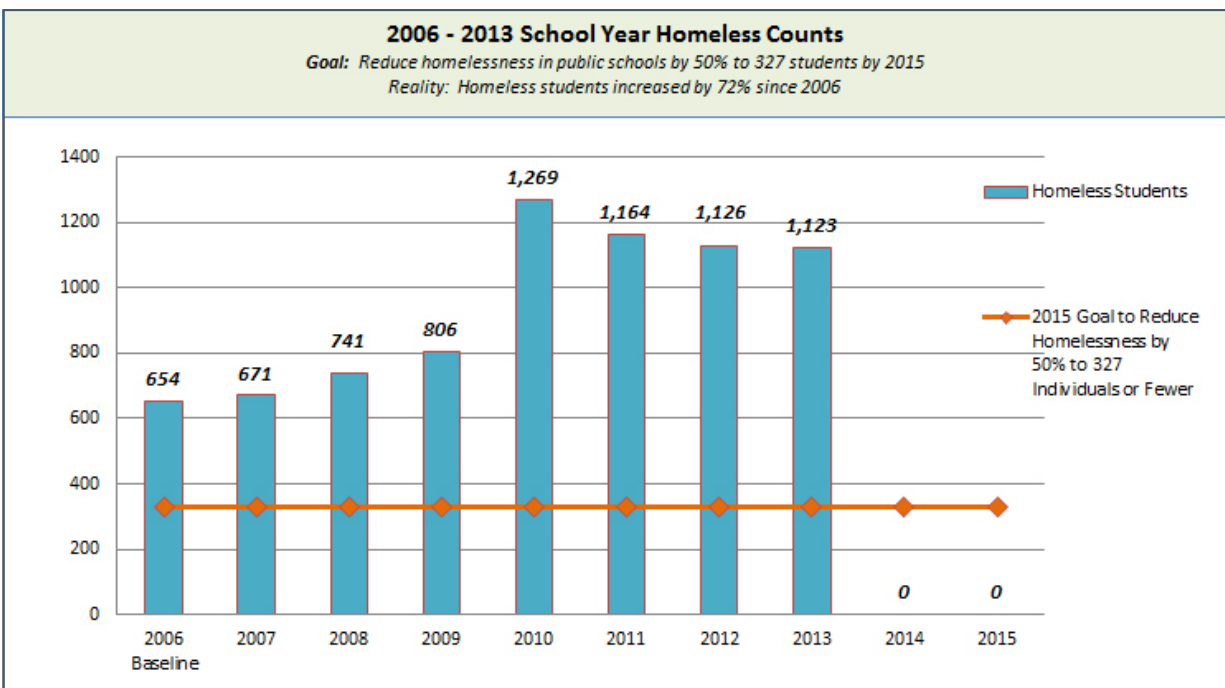
Thurston County schools are required to count homeless students, kindergarten through 12th grade, as part of the McKinney-Vento Act, which declares that homeless school children are also entitled to the protections listed under the section entitled, "Education for Homeless Children and Youths." The Act defines homeless children as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." The act goes on to give examples of children who would fall under this definition:

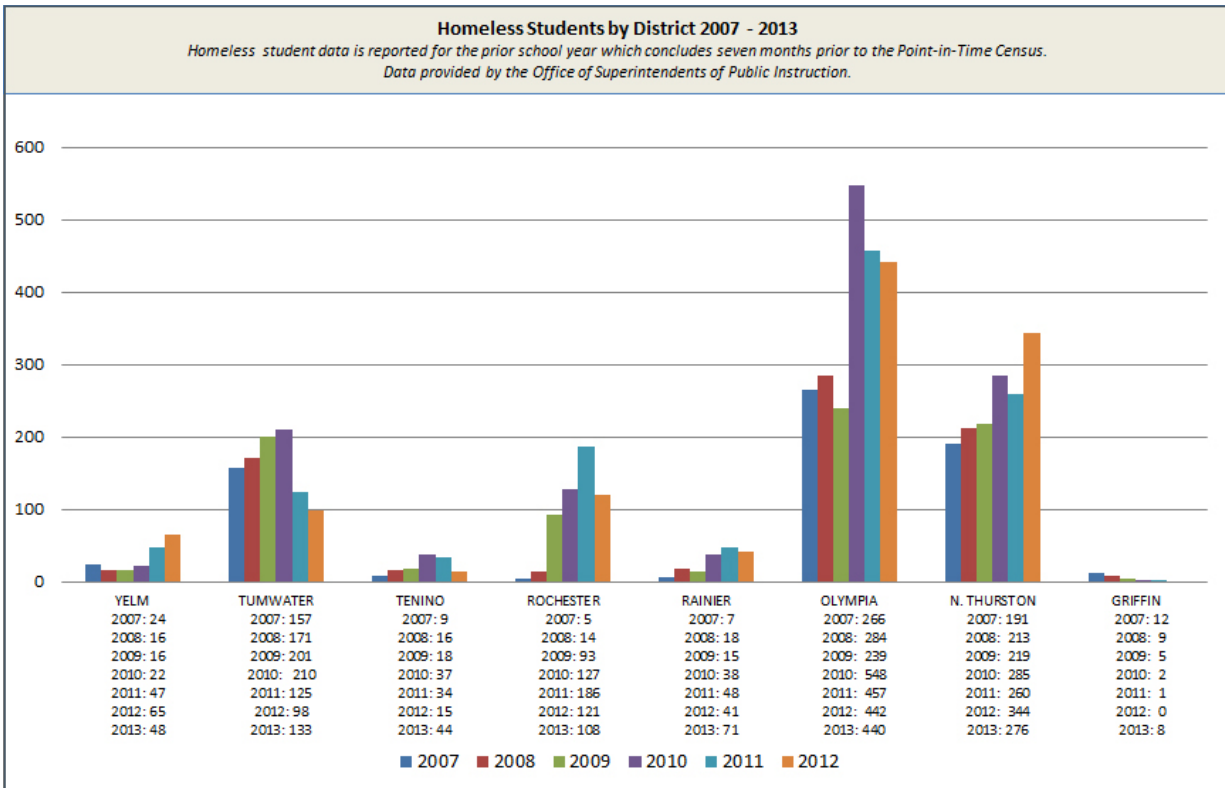
- Children sharing housing due to economic hardship or loss of housing;
- Children living in "motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camp grounds due to lack of alternative accommodations;"
- Children living in "emergency or transitional shelters;"
- Children "awaiting foster care placement;"
- Children whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g., park benches, etc.);
- Children living in "cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations . . ."

Each year, the State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) works with local school districts throughout the state to identify children and youth attending school who are experiencing homelessness. The purpose of this effort is to offer appropriate services to the family, child, or youth and to report the number of homeless students to federal, state, and local governments. This count does not include school-age children who are not attending school.

Homeless School Children in Thurston County

The chart below shows the year-over-year changes of homeless school children enrolled in the eight school districts of Thurston County. These numbers are produced by the local school districts and reported to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.





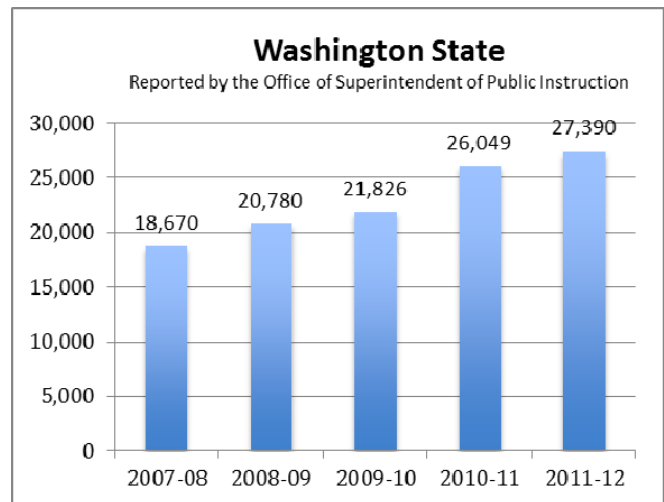
10-Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness in Public Schools

In Thurston County, the 10-year plan set the goal to reduce homelessness in public schools by 50%, to 327 students by 2015. The reality however is that student homelessness has risen 72% since 2006. At the end of the 2012 school year, Thurston County had 1,123 homeless students.

Since 2010 however, there seems to be a budding trend of decline, as the homeless student count has dropped 146 students over the past 3 years.

Comparatively, Washington State as a whole has seen student homelessness rise 47%, from 18,670 homeless students during the 2007-08 school year to 27,390 in the 2011-12 school year. While Thurston County may only hold 3.7% of the state population, it is also home to:

- 4.2% of the “doubled up” students in the state.
- 4.1% of the total student homeless in WA
- 7.7% of the states total unsheltered homeless students



Correlation of School District Numbers with County Homeless Census Numbers

While the two sets of homeless statistics come from different sources - the Homeless Census and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) - they do offer a composite view of homelessness. Together, they mirror a general trend of homelessness in Thurston County rising to an all-time high in 2010 and since then dropping. While the school district numbers decreased by 12%, or 146 students, since a 2010 high of 1,269, the County’s Homeless Census numbers dropped radically by 30%, or 290 individuals, since 2010.

The School District homeless student numbers are collected over the prior full school year, in this case, 2011-2012, which ended seven months before the January 2013 census. A further difference is that some of the county's census numbers include homeless students who were counted by the school districts.

Last, the school district's numbers include students who live with friends or family, an accommodation not included in the county numbers. This difference in methodologies means that these figures cannot be directly added together or be directly compared statistically.

The school numbers include only students enrolled during the school year 2011-2012, but do not include their families—particularly absent are other siblings who are not school age. On the other hand, the "Point in Time" homeless census is a one-day snapshot of homelessness in Thurston County, which includes many students staying with their families in shelters, transitional housing, or out of doors. While derived from different methodologies and timelines, these two sets of numbers clearly show that the number of homeless individuals is increasing since the baseline year of 2006.



1,123 youth 17 and under were identified in the school count

Poverty in Public Schools – Other Data

Another useful source of information on poverty among public school age children is the "Free and Reduced Meal" data published by the State Office of Public Instruction (OSPI) on an annual basis.

Poverty is clearly an indicator for being at risk of homeless for families with children, so this data provides a useful perspective on how Thurston County schools are doing. Unfortunately, across the board, all seven districts show a deepening of poverty in public schools.

The eligibility of students to participate in the state's free and reduced price school lunch program is determined by federal income guidelines according to family size and regionally adjusted poverty line of household income.

The Free and Reduced lunch program serves as an index of poverty for families with children in each of the districts. Nationally, it is estimated that 1 in 29 people with income at or below the federal poverty line become homeless.

In 2012, the federal poverty level annual income for a household size of three was \$19,090.

To participate in the **reduced meals program**, a household size of three's annual income cannot be more than 185% of the federal poverty annual income, or \$35,317 annually.



The "Free and Reduced Lunch" Program offers another index of family poverty county-wide

To qualify for **free meals**, a household of three cannot make more than 130% of the federal poverty annual income, or \$24,817 annually.

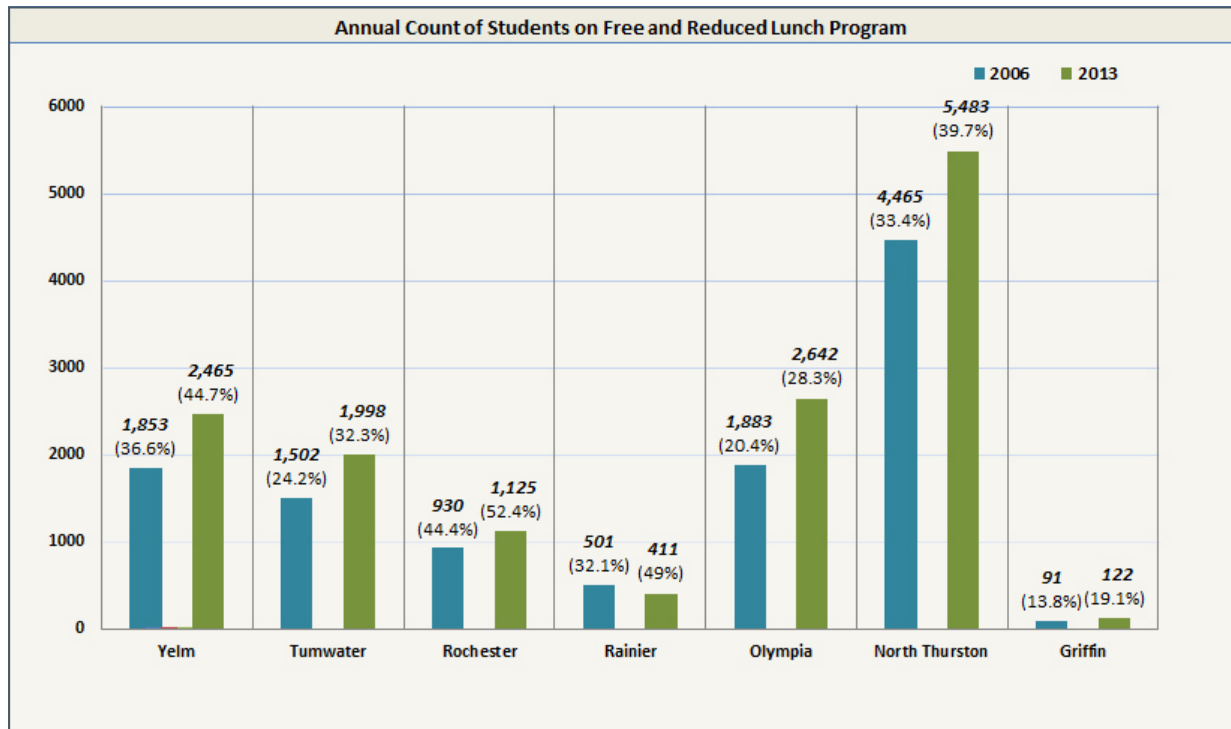
Statewide, 45.5% of the total students enrolled in Washington State public schools participated in the Free and Reduced lunch program during the 2011-12 school year.

The "Free and Reduced Meal" program is funded jointly by the federal Department of Agriculture and Washington state public school system to ensure that hunger is not a deterrent to a quality education. All households with income levels below certain amounts are encouraged to apply for any or all of the following programs:

1. National School Lunch Program
2. School Breakfast Program
3. Special Milk Program

This data is included in the OSPI “Report Card”, an online database that presents statewide and district level information on K-12 students. The OSPI website also presents other information, including the number of homeless students by district. Please note: as with the homeless student data, this information is collected for school years that straddle a biennium, which falls seven months prior to the Homeless Census.

The chart below shows the seven-year change in poverty rates by district for the seven school districts in Thurston County as compared to the Washington statewide average.



The state average went from 36.7% to 43.7% of students in poverty. Local Thurston County school districts varied widely, with Griffin starting at 13.8% and rising to 17.7%. Rochester went from 44.4% to 51.6%. The next highest percentages were in Rainier, which went from 32.1% to 45.9%.

While not all families with children who are living at or below the poverty line will become homeless, these families are all at a much higher risk for homelessness.

Note: Totals in the chart above represent the number of students per district who were on the free and reduced lunch program in 2006 and 2013. The number in parenthesis identifies the percentage that number represents in relation to the total number of students per district in 2006 and 2013.

Statewide, the percentage of students on the free and reduced lunch program increased significantly between 2006 and 2013. In 2006, 371,840 or (36.7%) of students were on the program; in 2013, 452,263 or (43.7%) of students were.

Rural Districts: Thurston County

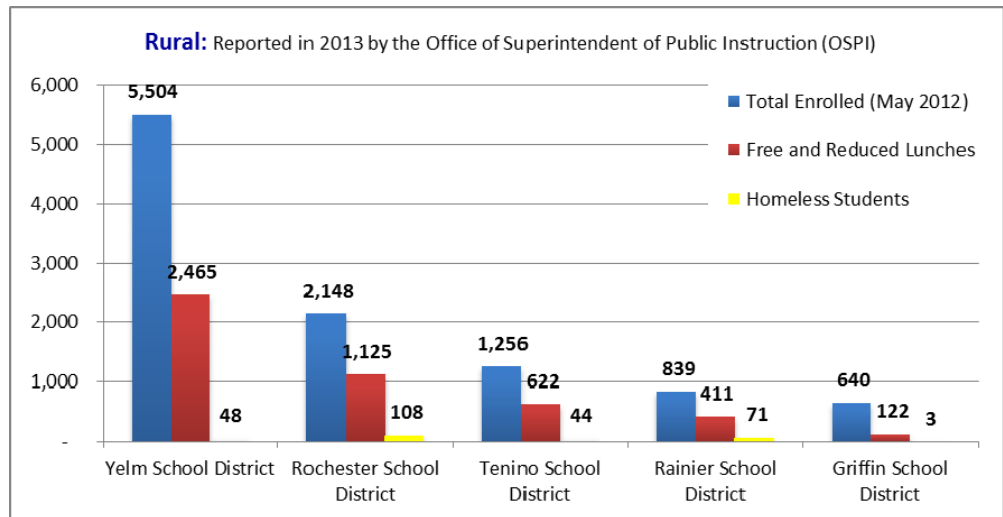
- 24.4% of Homeless Students
- 46% of Students enrolled in Free and Reduced Lunch Program

Within the rural districts, which have 24.4% of the county’s homeless students, the student enrollment in the Free and Reduced lunch program can be used to highlight an even more extreme divide between the urban and rural districts.

On average, 46% of the students enrolled in the rural districts participate in the Free and Reduced lunch program (higher than the state average) whereas the urban hub has an average of 35%.

In smaller districts, such as Rainier, 8.5% of the student body is homeless, and 49% could be considered as on the brink of poverty according to the number of students in the Free and Reduced lunch program.

The Yelm District, although it has an enrolled student total similar to those within the urban hub, still has 45% of the students participating in the Free and Reduced lunch program.



Compared to the Tumwater District, which has 6,196 students, only 32% of the students are enrolled in the Free and Reduced lunch program. Although comparable in size, this is a very telling gap between the poverty levels within the rural and urban districts.

Doubled Up - Homeless Families with Students

One of the ways that the McKinney-Vento Assistance Act defines family homelessness is the most common form of student homelessness in public schools.

Recording and analyzing the data of how many students are living doubled up in each district, is key to understanding how close these families are to becoming “homeless”, in the literal sense of the word. 1 in 12 people living doubled up become homeless, and 44% of adults in families were doubled up prior to entering the shelter system.

Given that statistic, it is relevant to note that in Thurston County, 68% of the homeless students were counted as doubled up, which mirrored the 70% counted in Washington State’s total homeless students.

In the Olympia School District, which has 40% of the county’s homeless students (440 total), 55% of the homeless students enrolled are doubled up, 32% live in shelters, and 9% are unsheltered.

In the Rochester School District, which has 39% of the homeless students in the rural districts, 91% of the homeless students are doubled up, with 6.5% living unsheltered.

Another Look at the Numbers: According to the National Center on Family Homelessness, 42% of the total homeless children are estimated to be under the age of six, and thus not counted in the public school homeless census.

Another way of looking at that number is that school age children are only 58% of the larger total number of homeless children, ages 0-18. Taking that into consideration, it could be calculated that the OSPI total for homeless students is capturing only slightly more than half the total number of homeless children.

$$\frac{\# \text{ SCHOOL AGE HOMELESS CHILDREN} \times 100}{58} = \text{TOTAL \# OF HOMELESS CHILDREN}$$

In Thurston County, that would mean that the total number of homeless children would go from 1,123 to 1,936.

In Washington State, it could be estimated that the total number of homeless children statewide is not 27,390, but actually 47,224.

CH5: HOMELESSNESS STATEWIDE

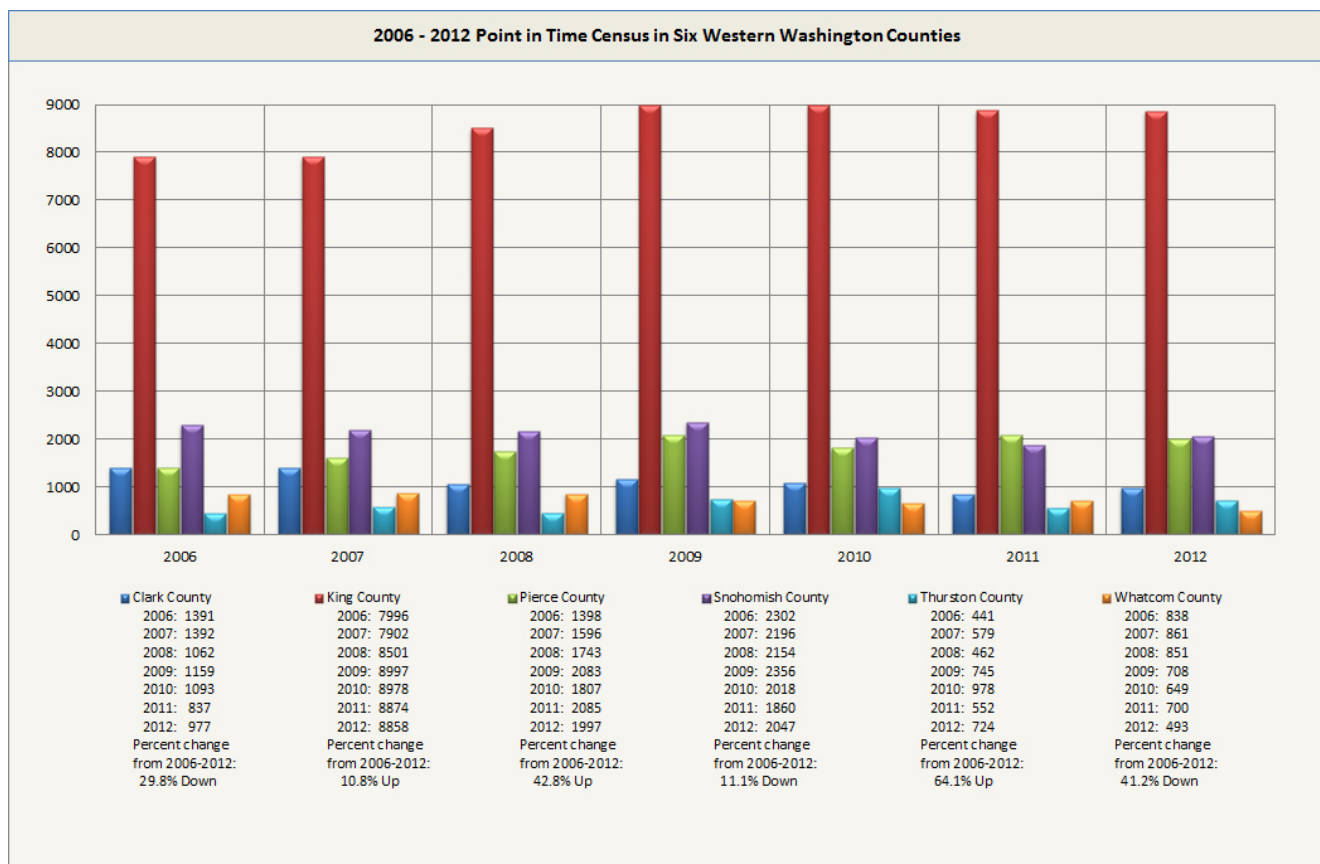
To be updated with 2013 data upon release from State Department of Commerce

Examining Homelessness across Washington State

Since 2006, homelessness statewide has decreased by 7.4% from 21,962 to 20,336. While this is an improvement, it falls far short of the Ten-Year Plan goal to reduce homelessness by 50% or 10,981 by 2015. Each year, the state has combined the homeless census numbers of all the counties, starting with a total count of 21,962 homeless people in 2006 and dropping almost 8% to 20,346 homeless people counted in 2011. While each county has worked diligently to reduce homelessness, it appears that the total statewide population has remained fairly static, rising and sinking with the high number to date occurring in 2009 with 22,827 people and the 2011 low of 20,346.

Snapshot of Six Counties - Six Years of Census Results

The following chart presents seven years of homeless census data, 2006 through 2012, from the six most urban counties in Western Washington. What is striking is that two of the counties with the most comprehensive efforts underway to coordinate their homeless services do indeed show significant decreases in their homeless counts since 2006, with Clark County decreasing by 29.8% from 1,391 to 977 and Whatcom County decreasing by 41.2% from 838 to 493.



Conversely, in the same seven-year timeframe, Pierce County shows a 42.8% increase from 1,398 to 1,997 and King County shows a 10.8 % increase from 7,996 to 8,858. Pierce County has only recently undertaken a coordinated point-of-entry system. As of this time, King County still does not have a centralized or singular coordinated access and entry system for shelter and housing services. These two counties also represent the most populous areas with arguably the most extensive service and shelter resources, which may attract some number of homeless people from regions with fewer resources.

Here in Thurston County, we have decreased from our all time high in 2010, yet we still show a 64.1% increase in homelessness since 2006 from 441 to 724. In mid-2011, Thurston County began a coordinated point of intake for single adults, a new practice that is designed to maximize the utilization of services, shelter and housing resources. In early 2012, the County hired a Homeless Coordinator to analyze and improve the entire homeless resource system. It is expected that both of these innovations will work to reduce homelessness locally.

Without a comprehensive analysis of all contributing factors, it is difficult to understand these population shifts. The proximity of these six urban counties does present the opportunity for migration toward areas that may offer more comprehensive services, or simply presents a more welcoming environment.

Interns working on this census report queried the other five counties to learn what caused the decreases and learned anecdotally that camp clearances and other enforcement actions may have contributed to some of the decreases. Further examination of these trends may reveal that the effects of anti-homeless enforcement actions have a significant impact on census numbers along with effective homeless coordination programs.

CH6: EXAMINING THE RESOURCES

Thurston County Shelter and Homeless Housing Capacity

An essential key to reducing homelessness is to maximize the use of all shelter and housing resources, and to ensure the appropriate shelter and housing resources are matched to the needs of the individuals.

In addition, shelter and housing must be supplemented with supportive services to help stabilize people and support them in becoming more independent.

The chart entitled, “**Emergency Shelter & Transitional Housing Capacities**” on the following page provides an overview of the current capacities and occupancy rates of our existing network of shelter and housing in Thurston County.

Pease note: The chart on the next page presents shelter and housing resources which are grouped by type (i.e., emergency shelters or transitional housing); the demographics served (i.e., single men vs. families with children); and, the bed capacities and the household capacities.



Homeless women represent 42% of the total number of homeless people



Faith communities now host 75% of all shelter beds

This distinction is important because the number of available beds may be configured as dormitory style or as family rooms, which means that a family of four might occupy a six-bed family room and therefore fill that room to capacity even though two beds remain open.

Thurston County 2013 - Emergency Shelter & Transitional Housing Capacities		
*Emergency Shelter Capacity (up to 90-days stay)		
SINGLE MEN	Beds	Households
Salvation Army – Men	42	42
Salvation Army – Men (Cold weather)	25	25
Saint Michael's/Sacred Heart (Cold Weather Shelter)	12	12
Drexel House	16	16
SINGLE WOMEN	Beds	Households
Bread & Roses	12	12
Salvation Army	16	16
Salvation Army – Women (Cold weather)	4	4
Emergency Shelter Network – Interfaith Works	18	18
FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN	Beds	Households
Housing Authority of Thurston County	16	4
SafePlace	28	10
Yelm Community Services	6	1
Tenino – Episcopal Church – Hope House – NO LONGER IN SERVICE	0	0
Family Support Center - 1st Christian Church	28	7
Emergency Shelter Network – Out of the Woods	12	3
YOUTH	Beds	Households
Community Youth Services-Haven House	10	10
Community Youth Services- Rosie's Shelter (NEW 2013)	10	10
Totals: EXCLUDING cold weather capacity	214	149
Totals: Including cold weather capacity	255*	190

**Transitional Capacity (up to two years stay)		
SINGLE MEN & WOMEN	Beds	Households
Olympia Union Gospel Mission – Men in Recovery	7	7
Olympia Union Gospel Mission – Women in Recovery	3	3
LIHI Arbor Manor – Women's transitional beds	5	5
Drexel House – Single Men and Women	26	26
FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN	Beds	Households
Housing Authority of Thurston County <i>(reduced by 56 from 2012)</i>	120	44
Olympia Union Gospel Mission	13	4
YOUTH	Beds	Households
Community Youth Services <i>(reduced by 6 from 2012)</i>	58	34
Totals	232**	123

Total Thurston County Capacity		
	Beds	Households
Emergency Shelter	214	149
Cold Weather Additional Emergency Shelter Beds	41	41
Transitional	232	123
TOTAL	446 – Warm Weather	272
	487 – Cold Weather	313

*Change in emergency shelter beds since 2012: +18 Beds for Single Women (Interfaith Works women's cold weather shelter became year-round) +4 beds at Family Support Center Family Shelter (previous miscount); +4 beds Salvation Army Women's Cold Weather shelter (previous omission); Gained 10 Transition-aged Youth Beds (opened new shelter at Rosie's); 12 Beds at Bread & Roses (Converted from Transitional Housing); and, lost 3 beds at Tenino Hope House (no longer in service).

** Converted 31 Transitional Housing beds since 2012: <8> from BHR (8 beds shifted to permanent supportive housing); <12> from Bread & Roses (reclassified as shelter housing), and; <11> veterans beds at Fleetwood (converted to permanent housing).

Shelter & Housing Capacity Changes

In 2013, Thurston County increased its year-round shelter capacity to a total of 214 beds. This increase was the result of converting 18 beds for single women from cold-weather to year-round and the addition of 10 new beds for transitional aged youth, ages 18 - 22. The cold weather overflow capacity reflects the conversion of those beds to a reduced total of 41 cold weather beds, bringing the cold weather capacity to a new total of 255 shelter beds.

Approximately 19 designated transitional housing beds (maintained by nonprofit agencies) were lost due to conversion (agencies converted 19 transitional beds to permanent housing with services), a change which artificially lowers the Homeless census count. Some of these transitional housing beds were also lost through budget cuts. However, these beds were replaced because of new HOME Consortium priorities that provided funding for an additional 187 individuals' assisted transitional housing vouchers.

According to the chart above, Thurston County did not have the capacity to accommodate all of our homeless residents. While the shelters were only 72% occupied on January 24th (180 occupants of the 255 existing shelter beds) there were 237 unsheltered people living out of doors.

While the available capacity could be better utilized, there are nearly two homeless people for every available shelter and transitional housing bed.

Shelter and Homeless Housing Capacity Compared to Number of Homeless Surveyed by Homeless Individuals				
Census Information	Date Census Completed	Number of Homeless People	Countywide Capacity	Percentage of Capacity to Meet Needs for Shelter
2006 Census	January 26, 2006	441	393*	89%
2007 Census	January 25, 2007	579	351**	61%
2008 Census	January 24, 2008	462	445***	96%
2009 Census	January 29, 2009	745	431	51%
2010 Census	January 28, 2010	976	544	56%
2011 Census	January 27, 2011	566	544	96%
2012 Census	January 29, 2012	724	463	64%
2013 Census	January 24, 2013	686	446	65%

**Old Devoe Road Street shelter in operation ** Old Devoe Road Shelter shut down*

****Drexel House and Tumwater Gardens opened; significant expansion of TBRA (Tenant Based Rental Assistance)*

Percentage of Unsheltered People

The 2013 census results showed that 237, or 35%, of the homeless were unsheltered, seeking shelter out of doors, in vehicles, or in abandoned or substandard buildings.

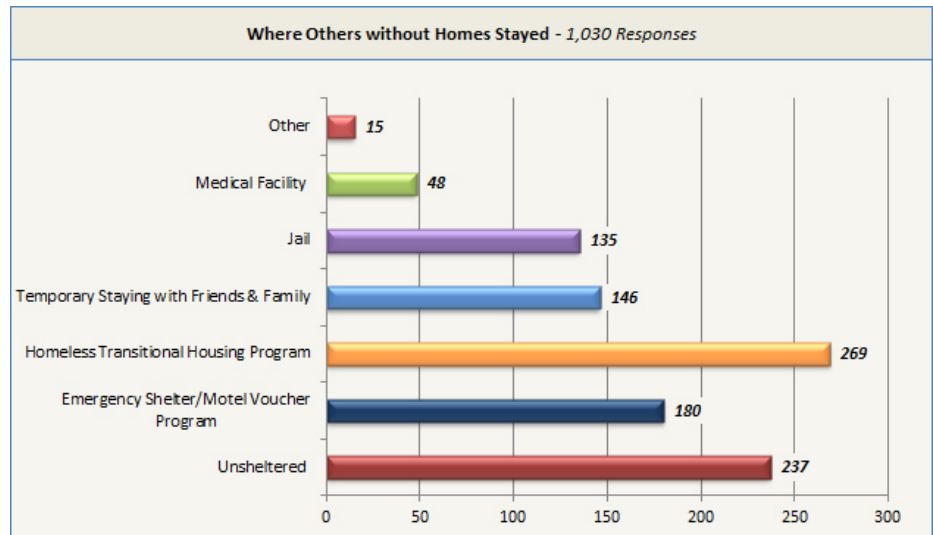
In terms of percentage of the total homeless population, this percentage has fluctuated between 24% in 2012 to a high point of 37% in 2010. The 48% unsheltered in 2011 seems to be the result of census validity issues that were addressed in the 2011 report. According to the chart on page 32, Thurston County did not have the capacity to accommodate all of our homeless residents - with 180 people in the available 255 shelter beds and another 237 unsheltered people living out of doors. Yet, as the chart on the next page shows, over one third of the homeless people identified in the 2013 census reported they were unsheltered.

In terms of raw numbers, the number of unsheltered people has trended upwards since 2006, going from 115 in 2006 to a high point of 363 in 2010 and decreasing to 237 in 2013. Yet it has remained roughly one quarter to one third of the total homeless population. We continue to have a significant percentage and number of people, including families, who are living outside the accepted continuum of care that spans from emergency shelter to transitional and permanent housing.

The Costs of Shelter

In order to evaluate the current shelter system, this report includes a “cost benefit analysis” of selected shelter resources to provide a side by side comparison of costs of shelter. The following chart presents a simple comparison of programs, citing the staff structure (volunteer vs. professional staff), type of facility (tent, single-family residence, or multi-story facility), along with the operational costs per year and number of clients accommodated. Included in this chart

is the cost per day for housing jail inmates, included in this analysis because 127 inmates will be released to homelessness. The apparent tiers of cost show the difference between programs with volunteers vs. professional staff and the cost of a converted residential structure vs. a dedicated multi-story facility. One outlier tier is the high cost of running a homeless youth shelter, which is subject to stringent operating regulations. However, the greatest difference is between all homeless shelters and the county jail, which is included given the high number of homeless inmates included in the expanded homeless census numbers—a total of 127 people who will be released to homelessness when they leave incarceration.



Shelter & Homeless Services – Cost/Benefit Matrix (2013 Data)			
Shelter or Service Agency	Annual Program Budget	Total Available Capacity	Cost per day or Service Unit
Bread & Roses (Volunteer-based, nonprofit-owned duplex)	\$65,000	12 Bed Capacity / Single Women 4,380 Bednights/Year	\$14.84 per Bednight
Camp Quixote (Volunteer-based, tent accommodations)	\$56,500	30 Bed Capacity / Single Adults 10,950 Bednights/Year	\$5.16 per Bednight
Drexel House – CCS (Professionally staffed, multi-story facility)	\$214,000	16 Bed Capacity / Single Men 5,840 Bednights/Year	\$36.64 per Bednight
Family Support Center Shelter (Professionally coordinated, volunteer staffed, housed at First Christian Church)	62,127	26 Bed Capacity 9,490 Bednights/Year	\$6.55 per Bednight
Haven House – CYS (Professionally staffed, converted residence, secured population, low security)	\$799,070	10 Bed Capacity Youth 17 & Under 3,650 Bednights/Year	\$218.92 per Bednight
Rosie's Place Shelter – CYS (Staffed by professionals, operated inside existing facility, secured access)	\$14,000* (Monthly Budget)	10 Bed Capacity Transition-age youth, 18-22 310 Bednights/Month*	\$45.16 per Bednight*
SafePlace (Staffed by professionals and volunteers, multi-story facility, medium security)	\$488,096	28 Bed Capacity Domestic Violence Victims 10,220 Bednights/Year	\$47.76 per Bednight
Salvation Army (Staffed professionally, single story facility)	\$321,539	58 Bed Capacity / Single Adults 21,170 Bednights/Year	\$15.19 per Bednight
Thurston County Jail** (Professionally staffed, high security lock-up)	\$10,465,330 (operations) \$1,499,478 (pro-rated annual facility costs) **	352 Bed Capacity	\$92 per Bednight**

This chart presents a comparison of shelter and social service costs, the number of people served and the cost per service unit.

*New shelter facility opened in March 2013; presents initial operating expenses.

**Cost of incarceration quoted by Thurston County Drug Court and corroborated by Sherry Grand, intern researcher.

Beyond Traditional Shelter and Housing Models

As shown in the chart on page 33, there continue to be more homeless people than capacity for shelter or transitional housing beds. As a creative response to the increased needs to accommodate the homeless, new forms of shelter and transitional housing have arisen in recent years. However, because these forms of shelter do not meet certain zoning and building code standards, their operations are subject to government monitoring to ensure that the occupants are safe and that the concerns of surrounding neighbors are addressed.

Cold Weather Overflow Shelters

For over 20 years, there has been a succession of “Cold Weather Overflow Shelters” that operate during the cold weather months, between November through March. These seasonal shelters accommodate single men and single women, on nights with dangerously low temperatures. There is no cold weather overflow shelter available for youth. At present, these overflow shelters offer up to 41 beds and are managed by several faith-based nonprofits. Historically, these cold weather shelters were open from November 1st through February 28th and only activated when the temperature dropped below freezing. The cold weather shelter system has been hampered by inaccurate weather forecasts and confusion caused by the lack of a consistent schedule of open nights.



Cold weather overflow shelters rotate between faith-based hosts

Recent changes have addressed these problems. The 12-bed Interfaith Works single men’s shelters have converted to being open every night during these cold weather months. The 18-bed Interfaith Works women’s shelter converted to a year-round shelter. In late 2012, the HOME Consortium altered the Salvation Army’s contract for 29 cold weather beds [25 beds for men, four (4) beds for women] to extend the cold weather period by an additional month (November 1st through March 31st) and raised the temperature of shelter activation from freezing to 38 degrees Fahrenheit.

Permanent Church-Based Shelters

Faith communities continue to be increasingly involved in providing emergency shelter and services for homeless people. In 2006, the Unitarian Universalist Church on the far west side of Olympia opened the “Out of the Woods” emergency shelter for families with children. Since mid-2010, the First Christian Church in downtown Olympia has hosted the Family Support Center’s year-round homeless shelter for up to 24 members of families with children.

Faith communities in Rochester, Tenino and Yelm continue to explore options to offer shelter. Other faith communities continue to explore stronger roles in providing shelter and services.



A growing number of faith communities now host permanent shelters that do not rotate

Camp Quixote Transitions to Quixote Village – Tents to Cottages

Camp Quixote, a “tent city” homeless camp located in the urban hub, is getting closer to becoming a permanent cottage-based village with the support of \$1.5 million dollars in state funding and land donated by Thurston County.

In the past 10 years, “tent cities” have emerged as an informal housing facility, sometimes sanctioned by local governments, other times created without sanction by homeless people or protestors. In 2007, Camp Quixote, the local tent city, was created as an act of protest against a local ordinance to ban sidewalk sitting.

Inspired by a tent-based community in Portland, Oregon, called “Dignity Village,” Camp Quixote was created as a democratically run transitional housing camp to provide community for people who would otherwise be living in cars, abandoned buildings, or vehicles. Camp Quixote currently provides tent-based shelter for up to 30 individuals without children. When first established by ordinance, the tent camp would rotate every three months to a new location hosted by a faith-based community. The ordinances in Thurston County and the City of Olympia were recently changed to allow the camp to be hosted for up to six months in each location.



“Tent cities” feature tents and make-shift dwellings



Like other tent cities, Camp Q offers stability, concentrated service delivery and other building blocks towards independence

Supporters of Camp Quixote are currently working with county and City of Olympia officials to relocate the camp to a permanent location on county-owned property located inside the City of Olympia. The intent is to create a village composed of bedroom-sized cottages around a community center with a kitchen, social space, showers and bathrooms, and laundry facilities.

In August 2012, the City of Olympia recently passed a “conditional use permit” to allow a permanent cottage based community and a formal application has been submitted by the county and Panza (Camp Quixote’s support organization) on behalf of Camp Quixote to create the permanent location.

CH7: BACKGROUND OF THE HOMELESS CENSUS

The Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness

The Thurston County Ten-Year Plan, first adopted in 2005 and revised in 2010, requires that we track progress toward the goal of reducing homelessness by half. Since 2006, the first year of the Ten-Year Plan, homelessness in Thurston County has instead increased by 56%.

The Ten-Year Plan was a product of the 2005 State Legislature’s “Homeless Housing and Assistance Act” as a way to guide statewide efforts to reduce homelessness in Washington State by fifty percent by July 1, 2015. The creation of the “Ten-Year Plan” approach marked a significant change in how Thurston County, much like other counties across the state, responds to homelessness.

Historically in Thurston County a small group of homeless housing and service providers had collaborated to manage homelessness with limited resources. The Ten-Year Plan now requires all counties in Washington State—including Thurston County—to work toward ending homelessness.

In addition to the Ten-Year Plan, the act provided funding generated by surcharge fees on recording documents in each county, with some funds retained by the state. These surcharge monies fund the Thurston County Affordable Housing and Homeless Housing Program.

Specifically, the act requires the county to:

- Develop a Ten-Year Homeless Plan to reduce homelessness by 50% by the year 2015.
- Use a portion of local document recording fees to reduce homelessness.
- Conduct an annual Point-in-Time Homeless Census.
- Implement the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- Report annually to the state legislature.

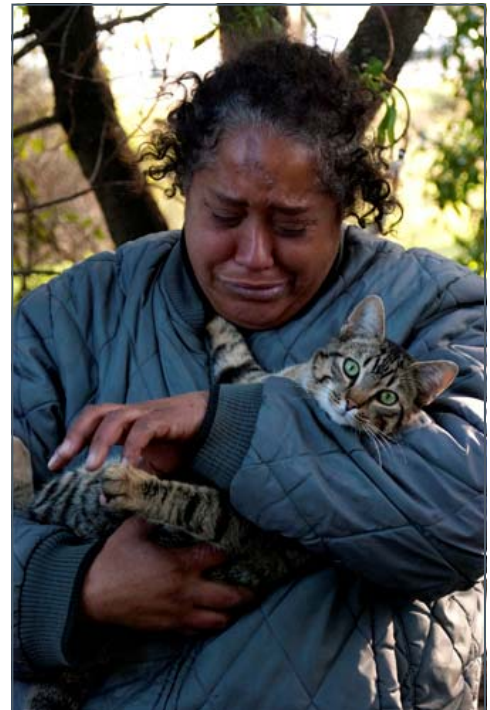
Ten-Year Plan Accomplishments: 2006 - 2013

In the first five years, Thurston County spent more than \$13 million in federal and local funds on affordable and homeless housing, including shelter and transitional housing projects that assisted 613 homeless families and individuals and for housing support services. The target goal in 2005 was to create 300 new units of permanent housing by 2015. In the first half of the Ten-Year Homeless Plan, 180 new units were completed.

In addition, 223 at-risk households were provided transitional housing under the Tenant-based Rental Assistance Program and over \$900,000 was provided to local housing agencies to support operations and maintenance costs.

Ten-Year Plan Revised Housing Goals: 2011 – 2015

Despite significant gains made during the first five years, Thurston County’s homeless population has grown from 441 persons in 2006 to 686 in 2013—an increase of 56%. This growth in population necessitates the need for a renewed focus on the county’s homeless problem, requiring new and higher benchmark goals, housing strategies, and supportive services.



The 10-Year Plan goal is to reduce homelessness by half to 220 people. Instead, it has increased by 56% to 686

The first half of the Ten-Year Plan (2006 - 2010) called for 225 new permanent housing units and 16 new shelter beds being built. The new target goal for housing is to create 690 units of low-income and affordable housing by creating 150 homeless units, 200 affordable units, and providing 340 new housing rental assistance vouchers. The plan will be updated later in 2013 to ensure that it is consistent with the federal strategies identified in the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.

Following is a summary of the 2010 revision of the Ten-Year Plan goals:

1. Expand the Supply of Homeless Housing Units: 150 new units (39 new units by 2013).
2. Expand the Supply of Affordable Housing Units: 200 Affordable Housing Units (137 new units by 2013).
3. Expand the Supply of Rental Assistance: Rental assistance for 340 homeless and at-risk households.
4. Preserve Existing Subsidized and Low-income Housing.
5. Consolidate Homeless Resources and Improve Service Delivery.
6. Maximize Housing Funding Opportunities.
7. Enhance Supportive Housing Services and Prevention.
8. Establish a Coordinated System for Discharging Clients Leaving Jail and Treatment Facilities.
9. Conduct Adequate Data Collection and Planning to Efficiently Manage Limited Resources for Homelessness.
10. Change Policy, Law and Legislation Where Necessary.

Information above excerpted from the original 2005 Thurston County Ten-Year Plan and the "Thurston County Ten-Year Homeless Housing Plan Revision" dated December 2010, prepared in collaboration of the Thurston County HOME Consortium and the HOME Citizens Advisory Committee.

History of Thurston County's Census

Thurston County pioneered the concept of the "point-in-time" homeless census now practiced statewide. This innovation arose from over 25 years of collaborative efforts between non-profits, local governments, and faith communities.



Outreach programs link homeless people to services



Enhanced supportive housing services and prevention are part of the 10-Year Plan

In the early 1990's, there were initial efforts by John Walsh of the Community Action Council and other local service providers to enumerate the number of local homeless people.

In 2002, Selena Kilmoier, of the Thurston County Housing Task Force, recognized the problem of serving an undefined population. The solution to this problem was to find out how many homeless people there were by counting them.

Kilmoier presented this idea to the Thurston County Housing Task Force, and proposed that Task Force members conduct a homeless census to determine how large the homeless population was. Theresa Slusher of the Thurston County Housing Authority, now the County Homeless Coordinator, further developed this idea into a viable work plan. Drawing on Housing Authority staff resources and Housing Task Force

representatives from all local service and shelter providers, the Task Force launched the first comprehensive census of homeless people in the county in 2003.

This approach was recognized by Tedd Kelleher of the State Department of Community Trade & Economic Development (CTED, now known as the Department of Commerce) as a valuable way to evaluate efforts to end homelessness and apportion funding. The 2005 state “Homeless Housing and Assistance Act” codified this practice, and created a mandate for all counties that received state and federal homeless and housing funds to use the census as a way to measure performance and document needs for continued future funding.

Aside from the value of the **product** of the statewide “Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons,” which produces highly valuable data, the **process** of developing the census underscored the value of collaboration between faith-based communities, non-profits and the government. The problem of homelessness spills over/across all parts of the community; linking these diverse elements to work together is essential to making progress. This collaboration between government, non-profits, and faith-based communities was a guiding principle in making the homeless census successful.



A “Point-in-Time” count of homeless persons helps us to know who’s homeless and why

Federal Government’s Role in Census

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reports to Congress on the number of homeless people in the United States. HUD directs federal McKinney grant recipients to perform a point-in-time count of homeless persons during the last full week of January.

In order to avoid duplication of efforts, the state-mandated count is conducted on the fourth Thursday in January. This year the count occurred on January 24, 2013.

HUD uses the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to track data and locally implemented homeless counts to arrive at the number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless people and the characteristics of homeless people living in shelters.

The report offers a baseline for reports that explore patterns of homelessness over time. Homeless service providers across the country, such as emergency shelters and transitional and supportive housing programs, collect information about their clients to match it with information from other providers to get accurate counts of homeless clients and the services they need.



Washington State’s Role in Census

The 2005 State’s “Homeless Housing and Assistance Act” requires an annual count of homeless persons in Washington State. The purpose of these guidelines is to define the common elements required of all local counts, to ensure that data is comparable between counties, and to ensure that confidentiality is protected. Communities are encouraged to adapt this basic framework for the annual census to the specific conditions and infrastructure of their community.

Local government is directed to make every effort to count all homeless individuals living outdoors, in shelters, and in transitional housing, coordinated, when reasonably feasible, with already existing homeless census projects including those funded in part by HUD under the McKinney-Vento homeless assistance program. The department determines, in consultation with local governments, the data to be collected. All personal information collected in the census is confidential, and the department and each local government is to take all necessary steps to protect the identity and confidentiality of each person counted.



Thurston County's Role in Census

Thurston County is the local unit of government mandated (RCW 43.185C) to count the county's homeless population annually. The County is also the lead jurisdiction in administering federal HOME Program dollars along with the state recording fee dollars intended to fund homeless and housing projects.



The results of this count are reported to both the state and federal governments. Additionally, the county's census report includes an expanded definition to include people living with friends or family, people in jail and mental or other health facilities that will be released to homelessness. This information helps local governments, non-profits, faith communities, and others to understand the extent of homelessness, its impact on local resources, and helps to develop strategies to reduce the number of people without permanent homes.

The County plays a crucial role in ensuring a comprehensive census that identifies all local homeless people, including rural areas surrounding Bucoda, Rainier, Tenino and Yelm.

Homeless people from beyond the urban core often find refuge "off the grid" of traditional shelter and services, which can limit the usefulness of urban-oriented census methodologies.



*While homelessness is a regional problem,
90% of the County's homeless come to Olympia
to find services and shelter*

City of Olympia's Role in Census

Thurston County contracts with the City of Olympia to coordinate the annual homeless census, analyze the results, and to produce a final report.



Olympia has a unique role related to Thurston County's homeless population. While homelessness is a regional problem, its locus is concentrated in Olympia because it is the urban core of the county. Federal, state, and local funds support a vibrant continuum of services, shelter and housing, most of which are located within Olympia.

This means that homeless people from more rural areas like Bucoda or Rochester gravitate towards the urban core where 90% of the shelter, housing and service resources are located. As shown in this report, the number of homeless people exceeds the number of shelter beds and transitional housing units, which means that unsheltered homeless people must resort to car camping on the streets, sleeping in public parks, using libraries as warming centers, and other areas not primarily intended to serve as de facto homeless facilities. As a result, Olympia becomes a focal point in addressing many local homeless policies and strategies.

CH8: OFF THE GRID - WHERE DO THEY GO?

Off the Grid - Where Do They Go?

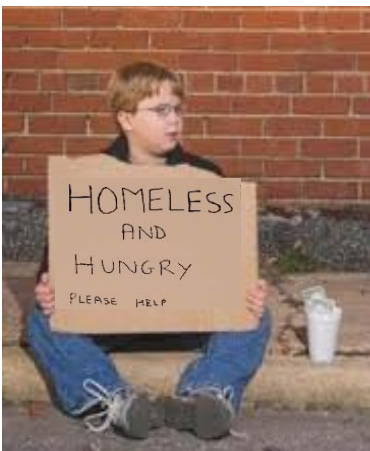
In 2013, the majority of homeless people (65%) were in either emergency homeless shelters (180 people) that offer shelter for up to 90 days, or transitional housing (269 people) that offer more secure housing for up to two years. Shelter and transitional housing represent two of the core strategies of the Ten-Year Plan to end homelessness.

Yet over one third of the people in this census, a total of 237, were unsheltered, or living “off the grid”, limiting our understanding of who they are and how best to respond to their homelessness.

The “unsheltered” find refuge by sleeping on the streets, camping in the woods, living in substandard or abandoned buildings or living in vehicles. The census was able to find some of the unsheltered, particularly those located in the urban core. But, according to anecdotal reports, many more go unseen, working diligently to avoid detection, particularly in rural areas where there are more limited services to draw them out.

Some homeless people remain unsheltered because they don’t fit into traditional shelter programs or transitional housing programs for numerous reasons:

- Dogs are not allowed in most shelters (many homeless consider dogs their family);
- Drug and alcohol addiction;
- Severe mental illness;
- Lack of age-appropriate shelter for youth (only 10 shelter beds for youth); and
- Lack of family shelter that maintains family cohesion (homeless families often choose car camping over dormitory style facilities).



Street dependence is a hallmark of homelessness in the urban core



Many unsheltered people are reluctant to go into shelter, fearing the loss of pets and possessions

Such barriers make it nearly impossible for entry into the system. Living unsheltered makes it very difficult to stabilize an addiction problem, seek medical treatment for mental health conditions or participate in case management.

Looking at how the unsheltered accommodate themselves will help to identify new strategies to strengthen the Ten-Year Plan to reduce homelessness. Following is an examination of the ways that the unsheltered homeless seek refuge.

Snapshot: Unsheltered on the Streets in the Urban Core

Mirroring the national geography of homelessness, Thurston County’s homeless population is concentrated in the urban hub of downtown Olympia. Like population centers everywhere, Olympia draws many people to its downtown core, including the homeless. According to Thurston Regional Planning, this area is home to 1,557 residents and many street-level businesses. These businesses include entertainment (restaurants, live theaters, bars with or without live music and dancing), retail (shops offering a broad range of goods), professional offices, government offices and numerous non-profit agencies. To visitors and some residents, downtown Olympia serves as the easiest-to-find, most visible “living room” for the entire county.

Characteristics of Homelessness in the Urban Hub: The most visible of all homeless people are concentrated in the urban hub of Olympia, followed secondly by homeless people holding signs at the entrances of nearby shopping centers. In particular, there are specific demographics that are predominant in the urban hub, including: homeless youth or transition-age youth; mentally ill homeless people; and homeless “travelers” who appear during the summer months. According to homeless people and their advocates, downtown is the only place they can gather for a sense of community, to access services or to seek shelter. A more limited number of people actually sleep, rest or sit on the sidewalks, presumably from a lack of other accommodations.



Urban businesses and street dependent people are often in conflict over the sidewalks

Given this range of visitors to the downtown core, there are ongoing conflicts of use of the sidewalks as a public space. According to homeless people and their advocates, the downtown core serves as a critical hub to access services. The urban hub offers one of the very few public spaces in which homeless people can gather for social purposes. Sidewalks often provide refuge from the elements under the numerous overhangs and building nooks. According to business owners and others, business suffers as a direct result of the high concentration of homeless people in the downtown core and incidents, real or perceived, of anti-social behavior by homeless people. City officials continue to explore options to create a safer, more welcoming downtown for all.

Shelter, Housing and Services Network: Olympia contains the highest concentration of homeless resources (90%) with the downtown hub containing approximately half of all shelter, transitional housing and social services in the County. The organizations that provide some level of service to homeless people and those at risk of homelessness include: Community Youth Services, Partners in Prevention and Stonewall Youth – all of which serve youth and transition-age youth; Salvation Army and the Union Gospel Mission, both of which serve predominantly single adults; Capital Clubhouse which serves people with mental illness; Family Support Center which serves families with children; and, SafePlace, which serves victims of domestic and sexual violence. Other less formal service providers include faith-based organizations like City Gates Ministries, which serves low-income and homeless people; Covenant Creatures, which provides food and supplies for the pets of low-income and homeless people; and, the First Baptist Church that provides a weekly meal for homeless and very low-income people. Additionally, there are secular service providers that include the “Emma Goldman Youth Homeless Outreach Project” (EGYHOP) which distributes supplies, and “Food not Bombs”, which provides volunteers for mobile food kitchens.

Other public or non-profit facilities also provide accommodations not found or welcoming elsewhere for the homeless and those at risk, including the YMCA (showers and restrooms); Percival Landing and the Olympia Community Center (public showers and lobby areas); Intercity Transit (transportation and a de facto community center on wheels); and, the Olympia Timberland Library (day center offering shelter from the elements).



A disproportionate number of street dependent homeless are youth - for whom there are only 20 shelter beds available

Unique Challenges: Downtown sidewalks are a public facility with competing uses. For businesses, the public sidewalks offer access to potential customers. For non-profit organizations, the public sidewalks offer centralized access to potential clients. For homeless people and those at risk, the public sidewalks offer de facto social service accommodations, functioning as a drop-in center and offering sleeping accommodations. There are no identified public areas where homeless people are accepted in the downtown core. As a result of complaints, they are often displaced from specific sidewalks or parks without clear options of where they could go.

Collateral Impacts of Urban Homelessness: The primary impact of urban homelessness is the potential severing of community ties caused by service models that target “homeless people” rather than “community members”. The most successful programs emphasize community ties and responsibilities, while less successful programs emphasize individual responsibility or simply provide shelter.

The chart on page 15 shows that while only 153 or 47% of the homeless stated the last permanent residence was in Olympia, 477 (out of 532 respondents) or 90% of them are now located in Olympia, presumably to access shelter, transitional housing and the high concentration of services. This phenomenon of population transfer supports the belief that homelessness is primarily an urban problem.

A secondary impact of urban homelessness is that the real or perceived high concentrations of homeless people who gather on sidewalks have a negative impact on local businesses.

This real or perceived negative impact has been the impetus for ongoing efforts by Olympia officials to enact laws and policies that discourage sitting and lying down on the sidewalks; aggressive panhandling; panhandling near ATM machines and parking pay stations; and, remove certain low-cost, high-alcohol content products in the urban hub.

Strategic Responses:

- Designate Homeless-friendly areas: Identify areas that are appropriate gathering places for homeless people with reasonable accommodations, i.e. benches or overhangs.
- Homeless-friendly public restrooms: Identify restrooms and/or hygiene centers that are welcoming to homeless people. Explore policies and programs that encourage positive behavior in the downtown core, and penalize only illegal behavior.
- Downtown Community Dialogue: Create more opportunities to bridge the gaps between business owners, the homeless and their advocates and service providers.
- Build partnership approaches: Foster partnerships between the business sector, homeless service providers and local government to present a more integrated approach to service referrals, litter control, and encouraging civility standards.
- Incentivize positive behaviors: Negotiate a balance of programs to incentivize desired behavior and laws that penalize anti-social behavior with safeguards to avoid abuse of penalties.

Snapshot: Unsheltered in Urban Parks and Greenbelts

The urban hub of Thurston County has numerous parks, greenbelts intended for recreational use, and greenbelts intended to serve as buffers adjacent to public right-of-ways like freeways and rail lines. These areas include 39 parks in Olympia, 24 in Lacey and 12 in Tumwater.

Additionally, there are numerous greenbelts that connect public facilities like the Washington State Department of Ecology and St. Martin’s University.

Many of these areas, intended for recreation or to serve as buffers, are increasingly being used as campgrounds for homeless people. Particularly areas that are located adjacent to major shopping areas where homeless people can hold signs asking for money or within some proximity to social services. These campgrounds were previously included in the PIT Homeless Census through a “Field



90% of all shelter and services are concentrated in the urban hub



Parks in the urban hub often serve as de facto day centers for homeless people

Census” of known camp sites. However, this practice has been discontinued for safety reasons and is now replaced by a central **“Homeless Connect Event”** intended to reach unsheltered people.

There is an outer ring of parks and green belts occupied by homeless campers who have significantly less reliance on services. In particular, the Capitol Forest contains an unknown number of campsites that were historically too remote to include in the census.

Service Network: There is no dedicated social service network for public parks and greenbelts. Instead, there is proximity to services located in the urban hub. The staffing for these natural areas is predominantly oriented toward grounds maintenance and conducting recreation programs. The current mandate for most parks and grounds staffing is to clear out homeless campers and clean up all camp sites. There are similar although less frequent efforts to patrol and clear greenbelt areas and right-of-way areas adjacent to the freeway.

Unique Challenges: While there are 251 shelter beds (210 year-round and an additional 41 cold weather beds) dedicated to specific population groups in the urban hub, there remain a persistent number of homeless people who camp in the surrounding areas. Many of these homeless campers are people who can’t find shelter or housing because of their criminal backgrounds, particularly for sex-offenders. At the time of the Homeless Census, there were 33 registered sex offenders listed as transients.

Others are unable or unwilling to cooperate with the formal rules of shelters like the Salvation Army, or the requirements of government subsidy programs like state and County veterans assistance programs. Still others simply prefer to live entirely “off the grid” and are homeless by choice, although many of these individuals qualify for mental health services they do not access. Given their disconnect from formal services, it is difficult to accurately assess their needs.

There is a significant impact on public and other resources to clear camps and then clean up the campsites. One example is in the City of Olympia where Parks staff to regularly patrol all Olympia parks to discourage homeless campers. Additionally, there are some volunteer neighborhood groups that patrol and sometimes clear camps.



Homeless camps in public parks raise concerns about garbage, untreated human waste and safety

Collateral Impacts of Homelessness in Parks and Greenbelts: While many of these areas go undetected, an increasing number are discovered by park officials, park users or neighbors who complain to the local jurisdiction about safety concerns, garbage, human waste and the cumulative negative impacts on the environment. Significant public resources are expended in camp clearances.

Strategic Responses:

- Public camping areas: Identify areas where homeless people can legally camp and provide for garbage removal and latrines.
- Park outreach: Expand upon “street outreach” programs to parks and green belts to provide intervention and referrals to community-based services.

Snapshot: Unsheltered on a College Campus

Evergreen is a small, liberal arts state college located northwest of Olympia in an unincorporated area of the County. As with other colleges, Evergreen has many buildings that are open late and have many seating areas intended to support higher education. These areas are minimally patrolled by campus police.

The school property is heavily wooded with nearly 1,000 acres of second growth forestland and trails.

The undergraduate student population is typically low-income and dependent upon low-wage jobs, loans and other subsidies to support their studies. With rising tuition costs and increased competition for low-wage jobs, some students find themselves unable to pay for both tuition and living costs.



Homelessness on college campuses is a growing trend, although under-reported

This equation results in a small and hidden percentage of students who remain enrolled but live in their cars, the woods or “couch-surf” with friends. In 2011 and 2012, student interns conducted a survey of homeless students at the Evergreen campus and presented their findings in the 2012 Homeless Census report. In 2011, the Evergreen survey found that 46 out of 147 respondents, or 31%, reported that they had been homeless at some point while attending college. In 2012 the Evergreen survey found that 11% or 35 out of 318 respondents reported that they are **currently** homeless and an additional 15% or 49 students reported they were at risk of homelessness (the 2011 and 2012 Census Reports are available online). The Evergreen survey was not conducted in 2013.

Service Network: Evergreen is served by a number of student organizations that provide traditional support to assist students with housing, eating and social networking. Evergreen does not host traditional non-profit organizations on campus, although staff will provide referrals where possible. There is an informal network of services through loosely configured organizations like “Food not Bombs” to provide food and through socially-based networks to identify temporary shared housing, parking areas to live in a car or places to camp in the woods. The latter two accommodations are euphemistically termed “Z Dorm”, as a reference to the formal dormitories labeled by the alphabet. Students also use community-based resources, such as the Olympia Food Bank.

Unique Challenges: Homelessness in higher education is a hidden phenomenon. As with many other homeless people, homeless students are keen to avoid the stigma of being identified as such. They are further disinclined to reveal their informal accommodations given that car-camping and tent-camping violate campus rules. Given the typical age of undergraduate students, many students at risk of homelessness have limited life experiences to equip them to negotiate service agencies or other resources. Older students may be returning to school due to economic hardship and unable to access sufficient employment or subsidies to maintain a home. Evergreen is somewhat geographically and socially isolated from the social service agencies based in the urban hub, although there is excellent access to public transportation.



Many homeless college students are “doubled up” with friends

Collateral Impacts of College Homelessness: The primary impact of college homelessness is upon the affected college students who face significant stress in addition to the traditional demands of academic life. College level students do not have the support of a McKinney-Vento Act-funded program to monitor their well-being, count them annually or otherwise take action to ensure that there will be no student left behind.

Strategic Responses:

- College-based housing and shelter: Evergreen possesses institutional resources to set aside blocks of housing units to serve as emergency housing for homeless students.
- Exchange program for homeless students: College housing officials could explore programs to encourage a domestic “Student Exchange” that would match low-income students from out-of-state with host families associated with the school.
- Partner with community-based service providers: Administrators could expand upon current staff practices of referrals to community-based services or faith-based communities.

Snapshot: Unsheltered in Rural Yelm

Yelm is a rural community of 6,848 (2010 US Census) based in southeast Thurston County that serves as a regional hub for homeless and other social services, including both formal and informal services. As the largest municipality among the smaller cities, it offers a useful model for understanding homelessness in a rural setting.

Characteristics of Rural Homelessness: There are very limited numbers of existing shelter beds in rural areas. As a result, homeless people more typically live in vehicles or substandard structures that do not meet housing standards. These substandard structures include abandoned houses, former barns and agricultural buildings or other substandard buildings lacking heat, lighting or the means to cook or bathe, which meets the federal definition of homelessness. Rural homeless people tend to rely on informal networks of services for food, shelter or other needs and therefore fall beyond the radar of service providers or the state's HMIS data collection system. As a result, there is less information on or understanding of homelessness in rural areas.

Service Network: The Yelm network of social services are anchored by the Yelm Community Services Center and supported by a number of faith-based efforts and civic organizations. Key faith communities include the Emanuel Lutheran Church (provides an evening meal and food bank) and the Covenant Crossroads Community Church (provides an evening meal and food bank).



People in substandard housing in rural areas are considered part of the homeless census



Homeless people in rural families are less visible due to the lack of formal shelters and services

In addition, the Yelm Rotary and the Yelm Lion's clubs each participate in food programs. There are a total of 6 formal shelter beds supplemented by additional shelter resources offered informally in faith-based facilities.

Unique Challenges: Yelm, like other rural communities, is challenged by a lack of locally based resources. Rural community leaders express concerns about not receiving a proportionate share of available public funding. Rural areas are further challenged by limited public transportation resources for rural people in need who have to travel to access services in the urban hub.

Collateral Impacts of Rural Homelessness: The primary impact of rural homelessness is that rural homeless people are often forced to migrate toward services and lose their community ties. As shown in the chart on page 15, the census reveals a lopsided distribution showing lower numbers of homeless people in the rural areas and concentrated numbers in the urban areas. This phenomenon of population transfer supports the belief that homelessness is primarily an urban problem.

Strategic Responses:

- Proportionate funding for rural areas: Rural homeless advocates call for proportionate fiscal support for rural service providers.
- Partnering with faith communities: Faith community resources may offer the single greatest opportunity to expand the service network.
- Zoning reforms: Local governments could support faith-based efforts through a reconfiguration of zoning regulations

CH9: EMERGING MODELS TO RESPOND

Across the nation, experts continue to explore new responses to homelessness, identifying “best practices” that do a better job of getting people back into housing. Locally, service providers, policy makers and other experts have considered these new trends while also examining ways to strengthen traditional models. Five of these proven models have been adopted as viable strategies to reduce homelessness, presented as follows:

- 1) **Low-Barrier Shelter:** Local service providers, public officials and homeless advocates are developing plans for a new, low-barrier shelter that will house up to 50 single men, to be operated with a service model that reduces the entry requirements low enough to allow access for the “hard-to-house” homeless, yet maintain sufficient safety standards to protect shelter guests and workers. The need for low-barrier shelter has long been identified as essential for housing people with drug and alcohol addictions; ex-offenders (people released from incarceration); people with mental illness; and, unaccompanied youth.
- 2) **Youth Shelter and “Youth Bridge Programs”:**
The Homeless Coordinator identified youth shelter and “youth bridge” programs as two of the five high priorities for action. This need is predicated on the disproportionate number of unaccompanied youth who are street dependent. Unaccompanied youth have limited shelter resources as the result of restrictive reporting laws termed the “Becca Laws” that require mandatory reporting of runaway youth within eight hours. (These laws were changed in the 2013 legislature to extend the reporting deadline to 72 hours, but these changes have yet to be implemented). Currently there are only 10 youth shelter beds available only by court or parental referral, meaning there are no “walk-in” shelter resources. This lack of shelter beds is compounded by the need for “youth bridge” programs, a new, hybrid of shelter/transitional housing bridge program that provides an entry into housing that lets young people progress from street reliance to affordable permanent housing at their own pace.
- 3) **Homeless System Coordination:** In 2012, the Thurston County HOME Consortium and the Thurston County Board of County Commissioners hired a County Homeless Coordinator, Theresa Slusher, who developed a coordinated, efficient support system for addressing the crisis of homelessness in Thurston County. Initial goals presented by the HOME Citizens Advisory Committee include:
 - a. Assessment of the Current System;
 - b. Ten-Year Plan Update;
 - c. Enhanced Data Management; and
 - d. Begin Implementation of a Revised Ten-Year Plan.
- 4) **Coordinated Point of Entry:** Coordinating homeless services and shelter and housing referrals is a “best practice” intended to maximize the use of resources. By December 31, 2013 it will become a requirement of receiving state funding.



“Low-barrier Shelter” helps those “hard-to-house” homeless get off the street

The County’s first “coordinated point of entry” program, the Homeless Prevention Partnership, has been in operation since mid-2011 providing a coordinated point of entry into the network of homeless shelter and services. Three separate agencies make up the “Homeless Prevention Partnership,” with each agency serving as one hub of the intake center – SideWalk (hosted by Interfaith Works) serving single adults; Community Youth Services serving unaccompanied youth; and, Family Support Center serving families with children.

Each agency provides intake, assessment, referrals and light case management for their specific populations – unaccompanied youth; families with children and single adults, both men and women; and, client data collection and entry into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

In a related development, the State Department of Commerce has developed policy to guide Consolidated Homeless Grant recipients to meet this deadline. The County's emerging "Consolidated Homeless Grant" program as funded by State Department of Commerce will also support a stronger adherence to utilizing a coordinated point of entry.

1) **Permanent Housing for Families and Single Adults - "Housing First":**

"Housing First" is the currently accepted best practice for getting homeless people into housing first, with social services coming second. The Thurston County HOME Consortium has been prioritizing the use of the Housing First model through the extensive use of transitional housing vouchers known as "Tenant-based Rental Vouchers" or TBRA as **evidenced** on page 7.

Many government reports and academic studies show that stabilizing people with housing first greatly improves outcomes for the residents and reduces overall costs to tax payers. The traditional model known as the "Continuum of Care" is based on moving homeless individuals and households through "levels" of housing, progressively moving them closer to "independent housing" based upon their "housing readiness". Typically, homeless people would first go from the streets to a homeless shelter, then go from a public shelter to a transitional housing program, and from there to their own apartment or house in the community. Housing First moves the homeless individual or household immediately from the streets or homeless shelters into their own apartments.



Volunteer Census workers play an important role in connecting with unsheltered populations

Wet Houses as a Subset of Housing First

Numerous studies show that it costs less to house the unsheltered, particularly high service-users like chronic inebriates, rather than shoulder the costs that pile up with police and emergency care. The Housing First approach offers stable housing for alcohol-dependent homeless individuals, who represent a large percentage of the unsheltered, without requirements of abstinence or treatment.

In a landmark Seattle study titled, "1811 Eastlake", the City found they saved over 50% per resident of a "wet" house, who cost less in stable housing than they do when they cycle through the jails, hospitals and emergency rooms. Stable housing also resulted in reduced drinking among homeless alcoholics, according to a Seattle-based study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) on March 31, 2009.



"Wet Housing" or stabilizing chronic inebriates in housing programs, saves public funding spent on emergency services

"The Housing First model was developed in response to the problem of long-term homelessness among those living with severe mental illnesses and substance abuse problems. In most US cities, people with behavioral health disabilities die on the streets far more frequently than any other subset of the homeless population. Before they die, they use large amounts of taxpayer-funded services in our healthcare and criminal justice systems. The housing program, known in Seattle as the 1811 Eastlake project, was created to stabilize people and stop them from endlessly cycling through emergency rooms, prisons and other crisis institutions, reducing the amount of taxpayer money spent on them." William G. Hobson, a co-author on the JAMA paper.

A related study by the City of San Francisco Health Department found that San Francisco spends around \$13.5 million per year caring for its top 225 chronic public inebriates.

Officials there are developing programs based on the Seattle model to see if they can replicate the cost-reductions to taxpayers and get homeless inebriates off the street.

Promoting a housing program that allows chronic inebriates to drink at the public's expense is a tough sell. However, it may be a compelling argument to save taxpayers' money by finding *cheaper* ways to manage this "*hard-to-house*" population through housing programs rather than expensive emergency services. There is a further public benefit gained from relocating this population from the urban hub areas where they tend to congregate and it offers an even greater value for local businesses and their patrons who often feel burdened as the unwilling hosts of a de facto homeless center.



12% of the 2013 Census respondents reported chronic substance abuse, although anecdotal reports suggest a much higher rate

Census Methodology

A comprehensive census of homeless people is challenging—it's hard to find people without a permanent home address. Many who are unsheltered strive to avoid detection by census workers and public officials alike. A continuing number of respondents refuse to participate in the census, claiming that local government uses the information to clear homeless camps or step up harassment of street-dependent people. While these clearances and police enforcement actions are typically initiated in response to complaints, the perceived linkage between the Homeless Census and clearance activities caused many unsheltered homeless people to conceal their camps, move their cars, and otherwise take steps to hide, making census work more challenging.

HMIS Data Entry: This was the second year of using the State's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to collect the data, with some agencies directly reporting their data online and the remainder collected via paper surveys and entered by Census workers.

Agency staff reported data on their homeless clients using the standards of eligibility for their services. The standard used by the census workers involved with the field and street census were instructed to survey those people who self-identified as homeless unless they obviously did not fit the criteria.

Following is an overview of the processes used to survey the homeless:

- **Direct Reporters:** Approximately 55% of the homeless data was directly entered into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) database by agency staff with an additional 10% entered into HMIS with the assistance of Homeless Census staff. The remaining 35% was gathered by paper surveys and directly entered by Homeless Census staff. A growing number of service providers are becoming trained and proficient as necessary to be direct reporters. Ultimately, the County's goal is to encourage all providers to utilize HMIS to make it a comprehensive database on all service, shelter, and housing capacities and occupancies.

- **Homeless Connect Events:** This year the Census featured a central "Homeless Connect Event" hosted at the First Christian Church that offered hot meals, valet storage of bicycles and back-packs, social services, hair cuts, pet care, medical services, commodities and a drop-in center environment.

Developed from the previous homeless outreach events hosted in previous years, this event drew hundreds of people. Workers helped to staff a number of local outreach events that featured food and other goods useful to the homeless and people at risk of homelessness. A rural satellite Homeless Connect Event was hosted at the Yelm Community Services Center.

- **Youth Count:** As one of six counties across Washington, Thurston County participated in a special "Youth Count" that featured an enhanced effort to reach homeless youth, including two youth drop-in centers – at Partners in Prevention Education (PiPE) and at Community Youth Services (CYS), special street outreach teams and other activities.
- **Evening Street Census:** A Sunday, January 24th evening street census was conducted in downtown Olympia specifically seeking homeless and street-dependent youth, conducted primarily by youth advocates and caseworkers.



The Homeless Connect Event featured haircuts for 77 homeless people

- **Site-based Census:** On Thursday, January 24th, census workers were stationed at numerous locations or regularly scheduled events likely to host homeless people, including the Salvation Army meal service (breakfast, lunch and dinner); the Union Gospel Mission's meal service (breakfast and lunch); the Olympia Downtown Library; all eight regional food banks; and, the Olympia Community Service Office (state's social services center).

- **Field Census of Homeless Camps Suspended:** The field survey of the known homeless camps was formally suspended this year due to safety concerns. In the months preceding the Homeless Census, there had been five homicides involving transient assailants, with two of the victims being attacked in homeless camps. Previously, census volunteers were sent out in teams to survey the areas of known homeless camps and other wooded areas in and around the urban core. This methodology has been controversial among some homeless people and their advocates as being invasive and potentially leading to camp clearances.

- **Focus Groups Suspended:** Given the intensive work facilitated by Homeless Coordinator to assess the homeless service system and to develop an analysis of the gaps in services, the focus group review of census results was suspended. In each of the past three years, census results were examined by a diverse array of stakeholders who provided community-based analysis of who's homeless and why. This process of community analysis was facilitated through a series of focus groups conducted as guided discussion groups charged with examining the census results and developing recommendations for reducing homelessness.



Evening street census outreach is an effective way to connect with street dependent youth

APPENDIX A—State Mandate: A Point in Time Count of Homeless People

The State Department of Commerce provides the guidelines for the “Point in Time Count of Homeless Persons,” also known as the Homeless Census. In short, the directive is to count individuals found living unsheltered (out of doors, in vehicles, or abandoned buildings) or in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and specifically defined permanent housing with supportive services. *“The department shall annually conduct a Washington homeless census or count consistent with the requirements of [RCW 43.63A.655](#). The census shall make every effort to count all homeless individuals living outdoors, in shelters, and in transitional housing...”*

The Department of Commerce website posts the results of past homeless census numbers across the state for individuals, not households, as evidenced in the below-listed link.

<http://www.commerce.wa.gov/site/1064/default.aspx>

APPENDIX B – Index of County Point-in-Time Data for January 24, 2013

Total Count Numbers by Individual					
Individuals	686		Children 17 & under	157	23%
Males	393	58%	Adults 18-20	37	5%
Females	284	42%	Adults 21-25	60	9%
Transgendered	4	<1%	Adults 26-55	375	55%
Unaccompanied Minors	7	<1%	Adults 56-64	50	7%
Veterans	38	8%	Adults 65+	7	<1%
Disabilities as Indicated by Individual* (576 Respondents)					
Physical (permanent)	114	17%	Developmental Disability	50	7%
Mental Health***	222	32%	HIV/AIDS	0	0%
Chronic Health Problem	90	13%	Alcohol or drug abuse	80	12%
None apply	253	37%	No Reply	110	15%
Current Living Status by Individual (686 Respondents – HUD homeless count only)					
Emergency Shelter/ Motel Voucher Program	180	26%	Permanent Supportive Housing	n/a	
Transitional Housing	269	39%	Vehicle	30	4%
Jail or Medical Facility *	n/a		Abandoned Building	16	2%
Friends or Family *	n/a		Out of Doors	191	28%
Situations that caused Homelessness for Households** (685 Respondents)					
Domestic Violence****	118	17%	Alcohol or Drug Use	102	15%
Job Lost	87	13%	Family Break-up	181	26%
Evicted-Non-payment	61	9%	Convicted-Misdemeanor/Felony	37	5%
Lack of Job Skills	25	4%	Discharged Institution/Jail	11	2%
Lack of Child Care	6	1%	Loss of Temp Living Situation	41	6%
Medical Costs	18	2%	Out of Home Youth	1	<1%
Mental Illness ***	131	19%	Aged out of Foster Care	9	1%
Medical Problems	68	10%	Don't Know/No Response	122	18%
Economic Reasons	183	27%			
All Sources of Household Income* (685 Responses)					
None	161	23%	Employed at low wage job	26	4%
Social Security	124	18%	Relatives, Partners, Friends	11	2%
Unemployment Insurance	5	1%	L & I Payments	1	<1%
Part-time Work	45	7%	VA Benefits	8	1%
Public Assistance	218	32%	Don't know/no response	143	21%
Length of Time Households Have Been Homeless (599 Responses)					
More than 1 year	287	48%	Less than 1 year	312	52%
More than 4 episodes of homelessness in 3 years	151	25%	Less than 4 episodes of homelessness in 3 years	447	75%

*HUD Defined "Homelessness" does not include staying with friends & family or being jails or medical facilities without a permanent address to be released to.

**More than one answer is possible. Summation of percentages will not equal 100%.

***While 131 reported mental illness as the cause of their homelessness, 222 reported it as their disability.

****While 118 reported domestic violence as the cause of their homelessness, 207 reported that someone in their family was a victim of domestic violence.

APPENDIX C – Index of Full Point-in-Time Count Data for January 24, 2013

Total Count Numbers by Individual					
Individuals	875		Children 17 & under	168	19%
Males	476	55%	Adults 18-20	52	6%
Females	386	45%	Adults 21-25	91	10%
Transgendered	5	<1%	Adults 26-55	478	55%
Unaccompanied Minors	9	8%	Adults 56-64	71	8%
Veterans	62	11%	Adults 65+	15	2%
Disabilities as Indicated by Individual* (743 Respondents)					
Physical (permanent)	156	18%	Developmental Disability	59	7%
Mental Health***	349	40%	HIV/AIDS	0	0%
Chronic Health Problem	124	14%	Alcohol or drug abuse	133	5%
None apply	274	31%	No Reply	132	15%
Current Living Status by Individual (1,049 Respondents – includes full count)					
Emergency Shelter/ Motel Voucher Program	180	20%	Permanent Supportive Housing	43	5%
Transitional Housing	269	31%	Vehicle	30	3%
Jail or Medical Facility *	127	15%	Abandoned Building	16	2%
Friends or Family *	145	17%	Out of Doors	191	22%
Situations that caused Homelessness for Households** (874 Respondents)					
Domestic Violence****	144	16%	Alcohol or Drug Use	153	17%
Job Lost	112	15%	Family Break-up	248	28%
Evicted-Non-payment	79	9%	Convicted-Misdemeanor/Felony	59	7%
Lack of Job Skills	34	4%	Discharged Institution/Jail	24	3%
Lack of Child Care	9	1%	Loss of Temp Living Situation	58	7%
Medical Costs	18	2%	Out of Home Youth	1	<1%
Mental Illness ***	241	28%	Aged out of Foster Care	11	1%
Medical Problems	95	28%	Don't Know/No Response	115	13%
Economic Reasons	262	30%			
All Sources of Household Income* (874 Responses)					
None	184	21%	Employed at low wage job	29	3%
Social Security	158	18%	Relatives, Partners, Friends	14	2%
Unemployment Insurance	6	1%	L & I Payments	1	<1%
Part-time Work	68	8%	VA Benefits	17	2%
Public Assistance	241	28%	Don't know/no response	217	25%
Length of Time Households Have Been Homeless (767 Responses)					
More than 1 year	380	50%	Less than 1 year	387	50%
More than 4 episodes of homelessness in 3 years	204	26%	Less than 4 episodes of homelessness in 3 years	574	78%

*HUD Defined "Homelessness" does not include staying with friends & family or being jails or medical facilities without a permanent address to be released to.

**More than one answer is possible. Summation of percentages will not equal 100%.

***While 131 reported mental illness as the cause of their homelessness, 222 reported it as their disability.

****While 144 reported domestic violence as the cause of their homelessness, 265 reported that someone in their family was a victim of domestic violence.

Introduction

Homelessness is a concern that affects virtually every community in the United States. The homeless sleep in streets, in cars, underneath bridges, or at the homes of family and friends. They include adults and children, individuals and couples, mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers. They are homeless for a variety of reasons, such as mental illness, a physical disability, substance abuse, unemployment and low wages.

Homelessness takes a heavy toll on these individuals and their local communities. Homeless people are less able to find social services and jobs when their lives are eclipsed by the need to find shelter. They are also more likely to need costly emergency services because of the ravages of weather and crime, the inability to pay for preventative care and – in many cases – their own physical and mental disabilities. Communities with high rates of homelessness are also concerned about the character of their communities and the affect on nearby businesses.

This Ten-Year Plan is designed to reduce homelessness in Thurston County even further -- by 50 percent by July 2015. The Plan calls for creating 300 new permanent housing units, and guiding more people into services before they become homeless.

Ten-Year Plan Revision Excerpts

In order to reduce the homeless population, we need to examine new models or approaches that allow the community to strategically allocate federal, county, and local housing resources to get people off the streets, out of the shelters, and into appropriate permanent housing linked with comprehensive supportive services. This Plan recommends variety of new initiatives and strategies that targets resources more efficiently and effectively. The major recommendations of the plan fall into four broad areas of need:

The Need to Increase and Preserve the Supply of Affordable Housing

The Thurston County Consolidated Plan identifies small and large families as having the greatest housing problems in the county because they experience the greatest housing cost burden (paying a disproportionate share of their income for housing). Additionally, there is a significant affordability mismatch, with higher income persons occupying lower income housing units, which contributes to the shortage of affordable and available housing for low and very-low income persons.

The Need for a Housing First Approach and a Flexible Rental Assistance Program

While the chronically homeless make up only 10% of the county's homeless population, they consume a disproportionate share of the county's homeless funds and housing resources because they generally require a higher level of comprehensive support services.

Historically, the county has relied on the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program (TBRA), paired with extensive case management services and the emergency shelter system, to meet this need. TBRA has been successful in reducing the number of homeless who would otherwise have been on the streets and in providing much needed transitional housing. However, an excessively long Section 8 waiting list (up to five years) and the shrinking availability of federal funded housing vouchers makes it extremely difficult to move people off transitional housing into permanent housing.

The Housing First approach (also referred to as Rapid Re-housing) provides the missing link between the emergency shelter and transitional housing systems by quickly moving people into permanent housing first to provide housing stability and then providing them

with the non-mandatory supportive housing services they need. This model is particularly effective and more appropriate for persons with long-term special needs and the chronically homeless. This plan also recommends that the county design a rental assistance program to compliment the TBRA Program that is flexible enough to meet the both short-term and the long-term needs of residents.

The Need for Better Coordination of Housing Resources and Services

A major component of this plan is to strategically target homeless resources more effectively and improve the community's capacity to coordinate and deliver homeless services more efficiently. The Home Citizens Advisory Committee will formulate a plan to coordinate resources and placement.

The Need to Strategically Target Funds to Meet the County's Housing Goals

Currently, the county distributes its federal and local housing funds through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process that targets funding primarily based on the needs of service providers, and to a lesser degree, the housing needs of the county. This plan recommends a change in funding strategy by moving towards a needs-driven process that ensures that the county's housing funds are strategically targeted to meet the prioritized housing needs of the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The target goal is to create 350 new housing units and provide 340 new rental vouchers by 2015. The following is a summary of the ten objectives and short-term activities identified in the plan. Short term activities are defined as projects that are anticipated to be completed by 2013.

❖ **OBJECTIVE 1 – Expand the Supply of Homeless Housing Units**

Housing Strategy: Develop 150 housing units for homeless families, individuals, and special needs Populations (39 units to be completed by 2013)

- **Behavioral Health Resources**
The B&B Apartments in Olympia will add 11 new units onto the existing complex of 16 units. The units will serve persons suffering from a mental illness.
- **Community Youth Services**
Maternity/Parenting Housing Program in Olympia will develop 24 beds for homeless pregnant and parenting young adults (ages 18-23) experiencing multiple barriers to independence or are fleeing domestic violence.
- **SafePlace**
Community Service Center and Permanent Housing Project in downtown Olympia will provide 4 units of permanent supportive housing and administrative offices for victims of domestic and/or sexual violence and their children.

❖ **OBJECTIVE 2 – Expand the Supply of Affordable Housing Units**

Housing strategy: Develop 200 Affordable Housing Units (137 units to be completed by 2013)

- **Mercy Housing**
Senior Housing Project in Olympia – 50 units
Activity: Section 202 mix-use housing project in the downtown

- **Housing Authority of Thurston County**
Littlerock Road Housing Project in Littlerock – 32 units
Activity: Acquire 1.75 acres to construct a 32-unit (2 and 3 bedrooms-four buildings) rental housing complex that targets 6 units to homeless families /children, 5 to family members w/ disabilities, and 5 that will serve veterans. The remaining 16 are targeted toward workforce housing households.
- **Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties**
Salmon Run Apartments Project in Yelm – 40 units
Activity: Develop 40 low and very-low income rental housing units.
- **South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity**
Shepherd's Grove Cottage Community – 5 units
Activity: Develop 5 units of owner-occupied housing for low income homeowners.
- **South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity**
Affordable Housing Cottage Community in Tumwater – 10 units
Activity: Develop 10 units of owner-occupied housing for low income homeowners.

❖ **OBJECTIVE 3 – Expand the Supply of Rental Assistance**

Housing Strategy: Provide rental assistance for 340 homeless and at-risk households (340 new vouchers issued in 2010). Provide on-going annual evaluation of community rental assistance needs to determine the amount of new vouchers needed each year.

- **Community Youth Services**
Echo Transitional Housing Project – Olympia
Activity: 18 vouchers for young adults (ages 18-24) who are exiting the state correctional system, or are pregnant or parenting, or are adjudicated sex offenders.
- **Housing Authority**
Activity: 50 housing vouchers for families with children (Foster Care)
- **Family Support Center**
Activity: 30 housing vouchers for families with children
- **Thurston County Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program**
Activity: Salvation Army – 80 household vouchers for prevention
Activity: Salvation Army – 32 household vouchers for Rapid Re-housing
Activity: Community Action Council, Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties – 43 household vouchers for prevention
Activity: Community Youth Services – 23 vouchers for youth for Rapid Re-housing
Activity: Family Support Services – 49 family vouchers for prevention and 15 family vouchers for Rapid Re-Housing

❖ **OBJECTIVE 4 – Preserve Existing Subsidized and Low-Income Housing**

Housing Strategy: Preservation of Section 8 Housing Units

- **Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties**
Killion Court in Yelm - Section 8 Apartments
Activity: Acquisition and substantial rehabilitation of 20 affordable senior housing apartments.
- **Low Income Housing Institute**
Magnolia Villa Apartments
Activity: Substantial rehabilitation of 21 subsidized units.

Housing Strategy: Preservation of Affordable Housing Units

- ***Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties***

Tenino Housing Rehabilitation Project

Activity: Rehabilitation of 10 owner-occupied single-family houses.

- ***Housing Authority of Thurston County***

Thurston County Housing Rehabilitation Project

Activity: Rehabilitation of 8 (minimum) owner-occupied single-family houses in Bucoda, Rainier, Tenino, Yelm, and the unincorporated county.

❖ ***OBJECTIVE 5 – Consolidate Homeless Resources and Improve Service Delivery***

Planning Strategy: Coordinating homeless services, resources, funding, and marketing

- Activity: Expand community capacity to more effectively coordinate homeless housing resources and services with housing and service providers.
- Activity: Create a leadership and accountability structure for implementing the Ten-Year Homeless Housing Plan.
- Activity: Create organizational linkages and partnerships with service providers.
- Activity: Co-sponsor the Homeless Veterans Stand Down Event.
- Activity: Develop a public awareness and media strategy.

❖ ***OBJECTIVE 6 – Maximize Housing Funding Opportunities***

Housing Strategy: Streamlining and strategically target housing funds

- Activity: Develop policy/needs-based Request for Proposals funding system that distributes the county's housing funds based on county housing needs.
- Activity: Link projects to the most appropriate funding source.
- Activity: Strategically allocate homeless funding to support the ten-year homeless goals.
- Activity: Develop a policy and long-term plan for funding essential housing programs.
- Activity: Develop new and flexible private funding resources.

❖ ***OBJECTIVE 7 – Enhance Supportive Housing Services and Prevention***

Housing Strategy: Improve access to rental assistance and other support services

- Activity: Develop a comprehensive resource and service guide.
- Activity: Increase employment education and training opportunities.

Housing Strategy: Integrate Health Care with Housing

- Activity: Continue building successful service delivery models that evidence best practices
- Activity: Continue availability of behavioral health services
- Activity: Continue accessing child and family services

Prevention Strategy: Provide Resources and Support to Prevent Homelessness

- Activity: Create a Housing First Program.
- Activity: Develop a Homeless Prevention Services Program for Veterans

- Activity: Provide operational and maintenance (O&M) support for housing services.
- Activity: Develop a landlord retention plan.

❖ **OBJECTIVE 8 – Establishing a Coordinated System for Discharging Clients Leaving Jail and Treatment Facilities**

Housing Strategy: Increase collaboration between discharging institutions and service providers

- Activity: Improve communications and coordination with institutions to identify at-risk clients who may be homeless.
- Activity: Develop a housing step-up plan.

❖ **OBJECTIVE 9 – Conduct Adequate Data Collection and Planning to Efficiently Manage Limited Resources for Homelessness**

Planning Strategy: Improve HMIS reporting

- Activity: Consolidation of program and financial data to improve consistency and accuracy in report data.
- Activity: Train new service providers
- Activity: Create a standardized client assessment form.

❖ **OBJECTIVE 10 – Change Policy, Law and Legislation Where Necessary**

Planning Strategy: Reduce homeless and affordable housing development costs

- Activity: Identify county intra-jurisdictional Barriers

UNSHELTERED/LIVING WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS

DV survivors and households with an individual with HIV/AIDS: do not provide name, birth month or birth day

ONE FORM PER HOUSEHOLD

Batch Site/Program Name _____

Location: Where did you stay last night? (choose one - applies to entire household)	
<input type="radio"/> Out of Doors (street, tent, etc)	<input type="radio"/> Temp. Living w/ Family or Friends*
<input type="radio"/> Vehicle (car, travel trailer, etc)	<input type="radio"/> (Currently in Hosp/Detox/Other facility)*
<input type="radio"/> Abandoned Building	<input type="radio"/> (Currently in Jail)*
*Indicates not considered homeless for PIT by HUD; Optional	

City/Town: _____

Have you been continuously homeless for a year or more? ☐ Yes ☐ NoHow many episodes of homelessness have you had in the past three (3) years? ☐ Less than 4 ☐ At least 4

Household Information													
(Please enter each HH member below. Use additional forms if needed.)													
How many people are in your household? Adults: _____ Children: _____							Disabilities						
Last Known Permanent City _____ ZIP _____							Check all that apply to each client or "None Apply"						
Relation to Head of Household (if applicable) Spouse/Partner/Child/Etc.	First Name	Last Name	Birth Date (or if DOB refused; Year of Birth)	Gender	Domestic Violence Survivor (check if yes)	Veteran (served in Armed Forces)	NONE APPLY	Chronic Substance Abuse	Physical Disability (Permanent)	Developmental Disability	Mental Health (Substantial & Long-Term)	Chronic Health Condition (Permanently Disabling)	HIV/AIDS (don't include names)
Self													

Circumstances that Caused Your Homelessness (check all that apply)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol/Substance Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> Primarily Economic Reasons	<input type="checkbox"/> Displacement/lost temp. living sit.	<input type="checkbox"/> Language Barrier
<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence	<input type="checkbox"/> Job Loss	<input type="checkbox"/> Aged out of Foster Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Out of Home Youth
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Illness	<input type="checkbox"/> Eviction	<input type="checkbox"/> Discharged from an Institution	<input type="checkbox"/> Transient on the Road
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Crisis/Break-up	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Childcare	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Job Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/> Illness/Health Problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Costs	<input type="checkbox"/> Conviction (misdemeanor/felony)	<input type="checkbox"/> Refused

Source(s) of Household Income and Benefits (check all that apply)		
<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Farm/Other Migrant Agricultural Work
<input type="checkbox"/> Veterans Administration Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> L&I/Workers' Compensation	<input type="checkbox"/> Relatives, Partners or Friends
<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/> Part-time Work	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Security	<input type="checkbox"/> Employed Full-time at Low-wage Job	<input type="checkbox"/> Refused

I agree to the inclusion of my household's information for count purposes described in the release on the back of this form.

Signature(s) (each adult or unaccompanied youth must sign): _____

HOUSING PROGRAMS (EMERGENCY/TRANSITIONAL/PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE/RENT ASSISTANCE)*

DV survivors and households with an individual with HIV/AIDS: do not provide name, birth month or birth day

ONE FORM PER HOUSEHOLD

*unsheltered households should instead use *Unsheltered/Living with Family or Friends* form

Program Name: _____

☐ Emergency Shelter☐ Transitional Housing Program☐ Permanent Supportive Housing*☐ Rent Assistance Program*

*Indicates not considered homeless for PIT by HUD; Optional

Have you been continuously homeless for a year or more? ☐ Yes ☐ NoHow many episodes of homelessness have you had in the past three (3) years? ☐ Less than 4 ☐ At least 4**Household Information**

(Please enter each HH member below. Use additional forms if needed.)

How many people are in your household? Adults: _____ Children: _____							Disabilities						
Last Known Permanent City _____ ZIP _____							Check all that apply to each client or "None Apply"						
Relation to Head of Household (if applicable) Spouse/Partner/Child/ Etc.	First Name	Last Name	Birth Date (or if DOB refused; Year of Birth)	Gender	Domestic Violence Survivor (check if yes)	Veteran (served in Armed Forces)	NONE APPLY	Chronic Substance Abuse	Physical Disability (Permanent)	Developmental Disability	Mental Health (Substantial & Long-Term)	Chronic Health Condition (Permanently Disabling)	HIV/AIDS (don't include names)
Self													

Circumstances that Caused Your Homelessness (check all that apply)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol/Substance Abuse | <input type="checkbox"/> Primarily Economic Reasons | <input type="checkbox"/> Displacement/lost temp. living sit. | <input type="checkbox"/> Language Barrier |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence | <input type="checkbox"/> Job Loss | <input type="checkbox"/> Aged out of Foster Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Out of Home Youth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Illness | <input type="checkbox"/> Eviction | <input type="checkbox"/> Discharged from an Institution | <input type="checkbox"/> Transient on the Road |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Crisis/Break-up | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Childcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Job Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illness/Health Problems | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Costs | <input type="checkbox"/> Conviction (misdemeanor/felony) | <input type="checkbox"/> Refused |

Source(s) of Household Income and Benefits (check all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Farm/Other Migrant Agricultural Work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans Administration Benefits | <input type="checkbox"/> L&I/Workers' Compensation | <input type="checkbox"/> Relatives, Partners or Friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment Insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security | <input type="checkbox"/> Employed Full-time at Low-wage Job | <input type="checkbox"/> Refused |

I agree to the inclusion of my household's information for count purposes described in the release on the back of this form.

Signature(s) (each adult or unaccompanied youth must sign): _____

Client Release of Information
Washington State HMIS for Annual Point in Time Count

Data for this point in time count is entered into the Washington State Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) which collects information, over time, about the characteristics and service needs of men, women, and children experiencing homelessness.

To provide the most effective services in moving people from homelessness to permanent housing, we need an accurate count of all people experiencing homelessness in Washington State. In order to make sure that clients are not counted twice if services are received by more than one agency, we need to collect some personal information. Specifically, we need: **name and birth date**. Your information will be stored in our database for 7 years.

- We will guard this information with strict security policies to protect your privacy. Our computer system is highly secure and uses up-to-date protection features such as data encryption, passwords, and identity checks required for each system user. There is a small risk of a security breach, and someone might obtain and use your information inappropriately. If you ever suspect the data in HMIS has been misused, immediately contact the HMIS System Administrator at (360) 725-3028.
- The data you provide will be combined with data from the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) for the purpose of further analysis. Your name and other identifying information will not be included in any reports or publications. Only a limited few staff members in the research division who have signed confidentiality agreements will be able to see this information.
- Your decision to participate in the HMIS will not affect the quality or quantity of services you are eligible to receive from any service provider, and will not be used to deny outreach, shelter or housing. However, if you do choose to participate, services in the region may improve if we have accurate information about homeless individuals and the services they need.

By signing the front page of this form you are consenting to the inclusion of your household information in HMIS and authorize information collected to be shared with partner agencies. Your personal information will not be made public and will only be used with strict confidentiality. You may withdraw your consent at any time.

Thank you for helping us improve services to homeless persons.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEYORS

All information in the survey is required. Forms will not be used if *location, gender or year of birth* is missing. If someone refuses to answer questions for the survey, please make sure to fill in at least these three fields for them. If you do not know the exact birth year of a household member, guesses are OK.

****Important:** DO NOT provide name, birth day, or birth month for households with an individual who is: 1) in a DV agency; 2) currently fleeing or in danger from a domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking situation; 3) has HIV/AIDS or 4) anyone you do not have written informed consent from (signature on first page). ** However, a signature is not needed to collect other information. All homeless households and individuals should have a form filled out.

The purpose of this survey is to help with the planning of providing services and housing to homeless individuals and to identify the types of assistance needed. It is also a requirement to receive funding from HUD and the WA State Dept. of Commerce.

Disabilities: Please make sure to record applicable disabilities for each household member. If a household member has no disabilities please select NONE APPLY. If the disability section is blank we will assume the question wasn't asked or the client refused to answer.

All unsheltered homeless persons should complete this survey. "Unsheltered" means individuals and families with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground (this includes "Tent Cities"). People living temporarily with family or friends due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (often referred to as "doubled-up" or "couch surfing") should complete the survey, although it is not required. Individuals in Jail will not be counted as homeless; therefore counties are not expected to count this population.

Persons staying in a homeless housing program should not complete this form. Instead, they should fill out the 2013 *HOUSING PROGRAMS* form at their housing program.

Each member of a household should be listed in the Household Information section. **A single person is considered a household** (i.e., "a household consisting of one person"), so **single individuals should complete the Household Information section.**

If you have any questions about how to fill out this survey or how this data will be used, please don't hesitate to call Commerce at (360) 725-3028.

Department of Commerce | January 2013

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOUSING PROGRAMS (EMERGENCY/TRANSITIONAL/PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE/RENT ASSISTANCE)*

*if program is not a designated domestic violence program please use regular "Housing Programs" form to receive written consent to include name

*unsheltered households should use *Unsheltered/Living with Family or Friends* form

ONE FORM PER HOUSEHOLD

Program Name: _____

- ☐ Emergency Shelter
 ☐ Transitional Housing Program
☐ Permanent Supportive Housing*
 ☐ Rent Assistance Program*

*Indicates not considered homeless for PIT by HUD; Optional

Have you been continuously homeless for a year or more? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How many episodes of homelessness have you had in the past three (3) years? ☐ Less than 4 ☐ At least 4

Household Information

(Please enter each HH member below. Use additional forms if needed.)

How many people are in your household? Adults: _____ Children: _____					Disabilities						
Last Known Permanent City _____ ZIP _____					Check all that apply to each client or "None Apply"						
Relation to Head of Household (if applicable) Spouse/Partner/Child/Etc.	Birth Year	Gender	Domestic Violence Survivor (check if yes)	Veteran (served in Armed Forces)	NONE APPLY	Chronic Substance Abuse	Physical Disability (Permanent)	Developmental Disability	Mental Health (Substantial & Long-Term)	Chronic Health Condition (Permanently Disabling)	HIV/AIDS
Self											

Circumstances that Caused Your Homelessness (check all that apply)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol/Substance Abuse | <input type="checkbox"/> Primarily Economic Reasons | <input type="checkbox"/> Displacement/lost temp. living sit. | <input type="checkbox"/> Language Barrier |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence | <input type="checkbox"/> Job Loss | <input type="checkbox"/> Aged out of Foster Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Out of Home Youth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Illness | <input type="checkbox"/> Eviction | <input type="checkbox"/> Discharged from an Institution | <input type="checkbox"/> Transient on the Road |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Crisis/Break-up | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Childcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Job Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illness/Health Problems | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Costs | <input type="checkbox"/> Conviction (misdemeanor/felony) | <input type="checkbox"/> Refused |

Source(s) of Household Income and Benefits (check all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Farm/Other Migrant Agricultural Work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans Administration Benefits | <input type="checkbox"/> L&I/Workers' Compensation | <input type="checkbox"/> Relatives, Partners or Friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment Insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security | <input type="checkbox"/> Employed Full-time at Low-wage Job | <input type="checkbox"/> Refused |

This form is only to be used at Domestic Violence agencies or other sites that do not collect personally identifying information (name and date of birth). Please use the regular 2013 PIT Survey Form (with signature line and release of information) for other locations in order to avoid duplication.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEYORS

All information in the survey is required. Forms will not be used if *location, gender or year of birth* is missing. If someone refuses to answer questions for the survey, please make sure to fill in at least these three fields for them. If you do not know the exact birth year of a household member, guesses are OK.

****Important:** DO NOT provide name, birth day, or birth month for households with an individual who is: 1) in a DV agency; 2) currently fleeing or in danger from a domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking situation; 3) has HIV/AIDS or 4) anyone you do not have written informed consent from (signature on first page). ** However, a signature is not needed to collect other information. All homeless households and individuals should have a form filled out.

The purpose of this survey is to help with the planning of providing services and housing to homeless individuals and to identify the types of assistance needed. It is also a requirement to receive funding from HUD and the WA State Dept. of Commerce.

Disabilities: Please make sure to record applicable disabilities for each household member. If a household member has no disabilities please select NONE APPLY. If the disability section is blank we will assume the question wasn't asked or the client refused to answer.

Shelter Programs: Surveys should be collected at a shelter program (emergency, transitional or permanent supportive). Please make sure to write the name of the shelter program and batch them together when submitting to lead PIT agency.

Individuals and families in **Permanent Supportive Housing** programs are not required to fill out a complete survey. However, each agency will be required to submit to Commerce the number of clients staying in their programs on the night of the count. This survey is a great tool for that tally.

Only persons staying in one of the homeless housing programs listed above should complete this form. Unsheltered persons or persons living with family or friends should complete the 2013 *UNSHELTERED/LIVING WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS* form.

Each member of a household should be listed in the Household Information section. **A single person is considered a household** (i.e., "a household consisting of one person"), so **single individuals should complete the Household Information section.**

If you have any questions about how to fill out this survey or how this data will be used, please don't hesitate to call Commerce at (360) 725-3028.

Department of Commerce | January 2013

Victims of DV and households with an individual with HIV/AIDS: do not provide name, birth month or birth day

ONE FORM PER HOUSEHOLD
 Batch Site/Program Name

The first few questions are to help us understand your housing history.

In the past three years, which of the following kinds of places have you stayed? (check all that apply)

☐ Outdoors (street, tent, etc.)

☐ Hospital/Detox/Treatment

☐ Vehicle (car, travel trailer, etc)

☐ Jail/Juvenile Detention

☐ Abandoned Building

☐ Motel/Hotel without a voucher (paid by self or someone you know)

☐ Temporarily stayed with a relative

☐ Housing/Shelter Program - name:

☐ Temporarily stayed with non-relative (includes couch-surfing)

☐ Emergency/short-term

☐ Transitional/ med-term

☐ Permanent/long-term

In the past three years, how many different times have you had to stay outdoors or in a temporary/emergency shelter?

☐ Less than 4
 ☐ At least 4

Has it been more than a year since you’ve had a regular place to stay?
☐ Yes
 ☐ No

The last time you had a permanent address, what city/town was it in?
 Zip

Where did you stay last night? (Choose type of place from list)
 City/Town:

How long have you stayed there?
 Do you think you’ll be able to stay for the next month?
 ☐ Yes
 ☐ No

Is anyone in your family a victim of domestic violence? (If yes, DO NOT ENTER NAMES IN HMIS)
☐ Yes
 ☐ No

Please provide the following information about yourself (and spouse/partner/children if applicable).												
Do you have any dependent children? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No If Yes, how many? _____						Disabilities – Check all that apply						
Relation to Head of Household (if applicable) Spouse/ Partner/Child	First Name	Last Name	Birth Date (or if DOB refused; Year of Birth)	Gender (m, f, transgender , etc.)	Veteran (y/n) (served in Armed Forces)	NONE APPLY	Chronic Substance Abuse	Physical Disability (Permanent)	Developmental Disability	Mental Health (Substantial & Long-Term)	Chronic Health Condition (Permanently Disabling)	HIV/AIDS (If yes, DO NOT ENTER NAMES IN HMIS)
Self												

What race/ethnicity do you identify with?
 ☐ American Indian/Alaska Native
 ☐ Asian
 ☐ Black/African-American
 ☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 ☐ White
 ☐ Non-Hispanic
 ☐ Hispanic
 ☐ Don't Know
 ☐ Refused

Are you pregnant? (ask all females)
☐ Yes
 ☐ No
 ☐ Don't Know
 ☐ Refused
 ☐ N/A

Are you currently in school?
☐ Yes
 ☐ No
 ☐ Refused
 What is the highest grade completed?

Do you work?
☐ Formal employment
 ☐ Informal employment/Odd jobs
 ☐ No employment
 ☐ Refused
 If employed, how many hours work in a typical week?

Which kinds of income do you (or partner or children) receive? (check all that apply – excludes non-cash benefits, e.g. food stamps)

☐ None

☐ Public Assistance (TANF, ABD)

☐ Farm/Other Migrant Agricultural Work

☐ Veterans Administration Benefits

☐ L&I/Workers' Compensation

☐ Relatives, Partners or Friends

☐ Unemployment Insurance

☐ Part-time Work

☐ Other:

☐ Social Security (SSI, SSDI)

☐ Full-time Work

☐ Refused

We want to understand more about the housing issues young people face so that we can provide better services. Have any of the following situations caused you to leave home? (check all that apply)

☐ Eviction

☐ Lack of Childcare

☐ Family Crisis/Break-up

☐ Alcohol/drug use in the home

☐ Lost temp. living sit.

☐ Language Barrier

☐ Aged out of Foster Care

☐ Violence in the home

☐ Lost a job

☐ Medical Costs

☐ Ran Away from Foster Care

☐ Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity

☐ Can't find a job

☐ Illness/Health Problems

☐ Conviction or Juvenile Justice Involvement

☐ Don't Know

☐ Can't afford rent

☐ Mental Illness

☐ Discharged from an Institution

☐ Refused

☐ Another reason (describe):

What does your family need right now?

Client Release of Information
Washington State HMIS for Annual Point in Time Count

Data for this point in time count is entered into the Washington State Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) which collects information, over time, about the characteristics and service needs of men, women, and children experiencing homelessness.

To provide the most effective services in moving people from homelessness to permanent housing, we need an accurate count of all people experiencing homelessness in Washington State. In order to make sure that clients are not counted twice if services are received by more than one agency, we need to collect some personal information. Specifically, we need: **name and birth date**. Your information will be stored in our database for 7 years.

- We will guard this information with strict security policies to protect your privacy. Our computer system is highly secure and uses up-to-date protection features such as data encryption, passwords, and identity checks required for each system user. There is a small risk of a security breach, and someone might obtain and use your information inappropriately. If you ever suspect the data in HMIS has been misused, immediately contact the HMIS System Administrator at (360) 725-3028.
- The data you provide will be combined with data from the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) for the purpose of further analysis. Your name and other identifying information will not be included in any reports or publications. Only a limited few staff members in the research division who have signed confidentiality agreements will be able to see this information.
- Your decision to participate in the HMIS will not affect the quality or quantity of services you are eligible to receive from any service provider, and will not be used to deny outreach, shelter or housing. However, if you do choose to participate, services in the region may improve if we have accurate information about homeless individuals and the services they need.

By signing the front page of this form you are consent ng to the inclusion of your household information in HMIS and authorize information collected to be shared with partner agencies. Your personal information will not be made public and will only be used with strict confidentiality. You may withdraw your consent at any time.

Thank you for helping us improve services to homeless persons.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEYORS

All information in the survey is required. Forms will not be used if *location, gender or year of birth* is missing. If someone refuses to answer questions for the survey, please make sure to fill in at least these three fields for them. If you do not know the exact birth year of a household member, guesses are OK.

****Important:** DO NOT provide name, birth day, or birth month for households with an individual who is: 1) in a DV agency; 2) currently fleeing or in danger from a domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking situation; 3) has HIV/AIDS or 4) anyone you do not have written informed consent from (signature on first page). ** However, a signature is not needed to collect other information. All homeless households and individuals should have a form filled out.

The purpose of this survey is to help with the planning of providing services and housing to homeless individuals and to identify the types of assistance needed. It is also a requirement to receive funding from HUD and the WA State Dept. of Commerce.

Disabilities: Please make sure to record applicable disabilities for each household member. If a household member has no disabilities please select NONE APPLY. If the disability section is blank we will assume the question wasn't asked or the client refused to answer.

Shelter Programs: If surveys are being collected at a shelter program (emergency, transitional or permanent supportive) please make sure to write somewhere on the form the name of the shelter program and batch them together when submitting to lead PIT agency.

Individuals and families in **Permanent Supportive Housing** programs are not required to fill out a complete survey. However, each agency will be required to submit to Commerce the number of clients staying in their programs on the night of the count. This survey is a great tool for that tally.

All homeless persons should complete this survey "Homeless" means persons who, on one particular day or night, do not have a decent and safe shelter or sufficient funds to purchase a place to stay. People living in a dwelling lacking any of the following should be considered homeless (check "living out of doors"): ability to cook hot food, drinking water, restroom, heat, or ability to bathe (this includes "Tent Cities"). People living in emergency shelters (including motel vouchers) and transitional housing are considered homeless. (For the purposes of this survey, transitional housing refers to housing with a 2 year stay limit where being homeless is a prerequisite for eligibility and case management services are required as part of the program.) People living temporarily with family or friends due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (often referred to as "doubled-up" or "couch surfing") should complete the survey, although it is not required. Individuals in Jail will not be counted as homeless; therefore counties are not expected to count this population.

Each member of a household should be listed in the Household Information section. **A single person is considered a household** (i.e., "a household consisting of one person"), so **single individuals should complete the Household Information section**.

If you have any questions about how to fill out this survey or how this data will be used, please don't hesitate to call Commerce at (360) 725-3028.

Department of Commerce | January 2013

I agree to the inclusion of my household's information for count purposes described above.

Signature(s) (each adult or unaccompanied youth must sign): _____

APPENDIX F - GLOSSARY OF HOUSING & HOMELESS PROGRAM TERMS

*[Adapted from Pierce County Affordable Housing Consortium website (affordablehousingconsortium.org),
which was adapted from HDC, Seattle]*

Affordable Housing	Housing should cost no more than 30% of your total income, including utilities. Affordable rental housing usually has a maximum income limit of 60% of median income. In Thurston County, this equates to an annual income of \$29,580 for one person or \$38,040 for three persons. Homeownership programs generally allow up to 80% of median or \$39,400 for one person or \$50,700 for a three-person household.
Chronically Homeless	Chronically homeless people are defined as "an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who have either been continuously homeless for a year or more, or have had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.
CHG	Consolidated Homeless Grant Program, state funding administered by the County to support a variety of activities , including: operation of homeless shelter and transitional housing units, rental assistance, data collection and reporting.
ESG	Emergency Shelter Grant Program, federal funding administered by the County for homeless prevention assistance to households who would otherwise become homeless and to provide assistance to rapidly re-house persons who are experiencing homelessness. The funds are intended to target individuals and families who would be homeless but for this assistance.
HEN	Housing and Essential Needs Grants Program, state funding administered by the County that are limited to providing rental assistance, utility assistance and essential needs for medical service recipients whose eligibility is determined by the State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).
HUD	Abbreviation for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
HOME Consortium	The HOME Consortium is the Thurston County inter-jurisdictional body that governs the use of federal HOME funds and the two state funded programs called the Homeless Housing Program and the Affordable Housing Program. This eight member body is composed of one appointed representative from each jurisdiction in Thurston County, including Bucoda, Lacey, Olympia, Rainier, Tenino, Tumwater, Yelm and Thurston County.
HOME Citizens Advisory Committee	The HOME Citizens Advisory Committee is a committee established by the HOME Consortium composed of appointed members who represent service providers, non-profit housing developers, private sector housing industry, faith-based communities, homeless people and other stakeholders in local homeless and affordable housing policy and funding issues.

Homeless	<p>The federal definition of homelessness, which comes from United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD defines homeless as (1) an individual who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence; and (2) an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill). • An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
Homeless Coordinator	Newly created Thurston County one-year position funded to provide strategic coordination to the countywide network of service, shelter, and housing providers. Key goals for the Homeless Coordinator include; 1) Assessment of the Current System, 2) Ten-Year Plan Update, 3) Enhanced Data Management, and, 4) Implementation of a Revised Ten-Year Plan
Housing Authority	Housing authorities are public corporations with boards appointed by the local government. Their mission is to provide affordable housing to low- and moderate-income people. In addition to public housing, housing authorities also provide other types of subsidized housing such as the federal HUD-subsidized Section 8 program.
Housing First	<p>Housing First is a recent innovation in human service programs and social policy in responding to homelessness. It is an alternative to the a system of emergency shelter/transitional housing progressions known as the Continuum of Care, whereby each level moves them closer to "independent housing" (for example: from the streets to a public shelter, and from a public shelter to a transitional housing program, and from there to their own apartment in the community)</p> <p>Housing First moves the homeless individual or household immediately from the streets or homeless shelters into their own apartments.</p>
Housing Task Force	The Thurston County Housing Task Force is an ad hoc association formed in 1988 to address issues of affordable housing and homelessness in Thurston County. For many years this body managed the "Continuum of Care" for Thurston County. It was originally composed of service providers, advocates, government housing program staff and elected officials and served as an networking and advocacy group to promote local housing policy. In recent years it has become a coalition of homeless shelter, housing and service providers who meet monthly to network homeless services and address current issues.
Income Limits	<p>Income limits for households to qualify for subsidized housing opportunities are based on the Area Median Income (AMI) for a family of four. In Thurston County the 2010 AMI is \$68,100. Specific household sizes are used to determine eligibility for each household.</p> <p>Low-income: 80% or less of AMI = \$56,300 for household of 4</p> <p>Very-low-income: 50% or less of AMI = \$35,200 for household of 4</p> <p>Extremely-low-income: 30% or less of AMI = \$21,100 for household of 4</p>
Low Income Housing Tax Credit	Government authorized tax credits issued to both for-profit and nonprofit-developed rental properties to develop affordable housing. The Washington State Housing Finance Commission allocates these credits to developers to build or fix up low-income housing. Large corporations, institutions, pension funds, and insurance companies invest in the housing as a method to gain the tax credits and reduce their income tax obligations. These apartments must serve residents below

60% of median income and must accept Section 8 vouchers.

Market Rate Rent

The prevailing monthly cost for rental housing, also called “street rents”. It is set by the landlord without restrictions.

Median Income

This is a statistical number set at the level where half of all households have income above it and half below it. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Regional Economist calculates and publishes this median income data annually in the Federal Register. See the Washington State Median Income and Income Limit figures for 2009-2010, at <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il/il2009/st.odb>

Mixed-Income Housing

A multi-family housing property that contains both market-rate units and subsidized units for low income residents.

Nonprofit Housing

Nonprofit housing is developed by nonprofit corporations with a community board of directors and mission. Most housing developed by nonprofit developers is affordable with rents or prices below market-rate. Income generated from the housing is put back into the mission of the organization, rather than being distributed to stockholders or individual investors.

Nonprofit Housing Developer

A nonprofit organization with a mission that involves the creation, preservation, renovation, operation or maintenance of affordable housing.

Overflow Shelters

Overflow shelters are informal emergency shelters operated by non-profit organizations or faith communities inside their facilities to accommodate the “overflow” of homeless people who are turned away from traditional emergency shelters. Typically, overflow shelters rotate on a cyclical basis in order to be compliant with local zoning and building codes. Staffing is typically offered by trained volunteers.

Permanent Housing

Rental apartments or ownership homes that provide individuals and families with a fixed street address and residence.

Privately Developed or For-Profit Housing

This housing rents or sells at market-rate and is developed and owned by for-profit individuals, partnerships, or corporations. Most housing in Thurston County is privately developed.

Project-Based Section 8 Housing

A federal HUD program initially based on 20-year commitments of rent subsidy to developers of privately owned rental housing stock in the community to encourage them to build affordable housing.

Many Section 8 contracts have expired or will expire soon, and the property owners must now decide whether to renew their contract or leave the program ("opt out"). Most of these contracts are now renewed on a one-year basis. Projects with high risk of opting out typically have rents set by the Section 8 contract below the prevailing market rents for comparable units. Owners thus have an incentive to leave the program and convert their property to private market rentals.

Public Housing

Public housing is housing owned and run by a local housing authority under the oldest federal housing program—the Housing Act of 1937. To be eligible to live in public housing, you must be low income and meet certain other requirements. In most cases, rent including utilities can comprise no more than 30% of your income.

Rapid Re-housing

Rapid Re-housing is a new housing program model is based on the "housing first" approach. Rapid Re-housing differs from other housing models by having an immediate and primary focus on helping families access and sustain permanent housing as quickly as possible. Rapid Re-housing is funded by

a new HUD initiative called “Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP)”.

Section 8 Vouchers

This federal HUD program that is administered by the local Housing Authority of Thurston County. Eligible tenants receive vouchers they can use to help them pay for apartments in the private market. Vouchers pay that portion of the low income tenants rent that is above 30% of their monthly income.

Shelters

Also called emergency shelters, provides temporary overnight living accommodations for homeless people. Shelters are typically dedicated to specific populations, i.e. single males, families or domestic violence victims. Shelters are operated by both non-profit organizations or faith communities, with each shelter being administered under a unique set of rules. Generally, shelter guests must leave the facility during the day.

SRO

Single room occupancy units. The traditional SRO unit is a single room, usually less than 100 square feet, designed to accommodate one person. Amenities such as a bathroom, kitchen or common areas are located outside the unit and are shared with other residents. Many SROs can be found in renovated hotels. SRO housing serves a variety of people by providing three types of settings: 1) Emergency housing for homeless people, including the elderly. Occupancy is usually on a nightly or weekly basis. 2) Transitional housing for previously homeless or marginally housed persons, including older people, who are progressing to permanent housing. 3) Permanent housing for older people who will move to this setting and often live here until their death or until their increasing frailty forces them to move to a more supportive setting.

Subsidized Housing

A generic term covering all federal, state or local government programs that reduce the cost of housing for low- and moderate-income residents. Housing can be subsidized in numerous ways—giving tenants a rent voucher, helping homebuyers with down payment assistance, reducing the interest on a mortgage, providing deferred loans to help developers acquire and develop property, giving tax credits to encourage investment in low- and moderate-income housing, authorizing tax-exempt bond authority to finance the housing, providing ongoing assistance to reduce the operating costs of housing, and others.

Supportive Housing

Combines affordable housing with individualized health, counseling and employment services for persons with mental illness, chemical dependency, chronic health problems, or other challenges. Generally it is transitional housing, but it can be permanent housing in cases such as a group home for persons with mental illness or developmental disabilities. Supportive housing is a solution to homelessness because it addresses its root causes by providing a proven, effective means of re-integrating families and individuals into the community by addressing their basic needs for housing and on-going support.

Transitional Housing

This housing provides stability for residents for a limited time period, usually two weeks to 24 months, to allow them to recover from a crisis such as homelessness or domestic violence before transitioning into permanent housing. Transitional housing often offers supportive services, which enable a person to transition to an independent living situation.

Tent City

“Tent City” is a newly minted term for a long standing practice where homeless people develop informal communities composed of tents and other temporary structures. During the Great Depression, these communities were derisively termed, “Hoovervilles” after then President Hoover in a negative reference to the failed federal efforts to revive the economy.

Present day tent cities are often created by homeless people for needed shelter on public or under-utilized lands. Sometimes tent cities are created by homeless advocates as a form of protest. In recent years, local governments have struggled to find ways to balance regulatory compliance with

the need for shelter and community provided by Tent Cities..

Questions, comments, or to request a digital copy of this report please contact:

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