

# **Thurston County Office of Housing & Homeless Prevention Program Year 2022-2023 Annual Report**



Thurston County Public Health & Social Services  
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Thurston County Public Health & Social Services  
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## Year at a Glance

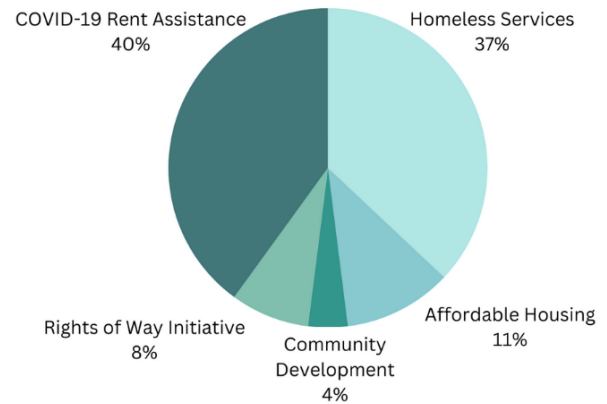
### DATA SNAPSHOT: AFFORDABLE HOUSING & HOMELESS SERVICES Program Year 2022-2023 (July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023)

#### FUNDING AWARDS 2022-2023

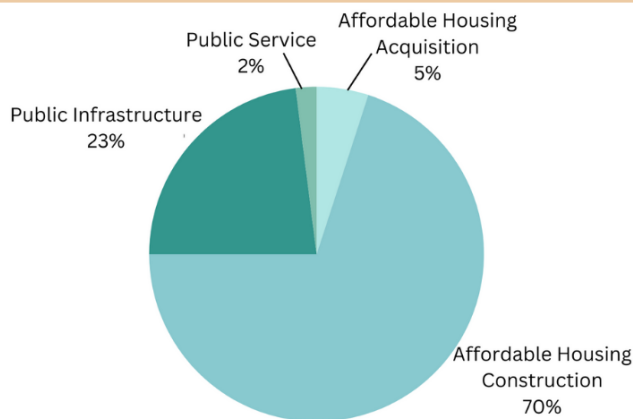
Homeless services, affordable housing and community development funding are awarded at the beginning of each program year.

This funding is a mix of federal, state and local dollars. Homeless services and affordable housing funds are awarded by recommendation of the Thurston Regional Housing Council.

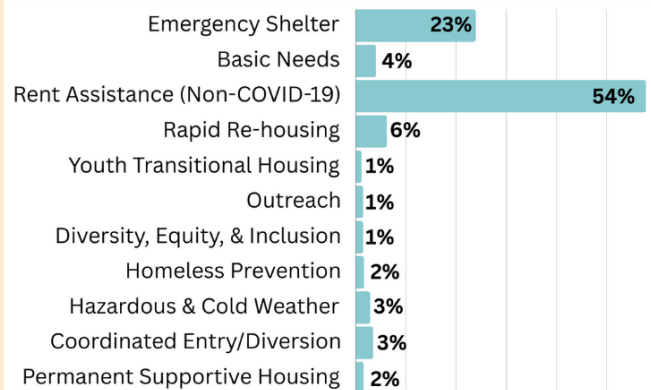
**OVERALL FUNDING: \$28,764,116**



#### AFFORDABLE HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPEMENT: \$4,206,941



#### HOMELESS SERVICES: \$10,582,970



#### INCREASING AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND SHELTER UNITS

Thurston County affordable and shelter housing projects can take several years to complete and may use funding from previous program years. By the end of the Program Year 2022-2023 (June 30, 2023), the following work was underway:

##### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

###### PLANNING



28 homes for low-income home ownership  
166 units of low-income rental housing

###### CONSTRUCTION



126 units of permanent supportive housing

###### COMPLETE



3 homes for low-income rental housing

##### SHELTER HOUSING

###### ACQUISITION & RENOVATION



118 units of enhanced shelter

###### CONSTRUCTION



50 tiny homes for enhanced shelter

## DATA SNAPSHOT: HOMELESS CRISIS RESPONSE SYSTEM

### Program Year 2022-2023 (July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023)

#### COORDINATED ENTRY

Coordinated Entry is an intake program that serves Thurston County residents experiencing homelessness.

This program is not designed for immediate shelter or housing placements.



**1,286 HOUSEHOLDS  
PARTICIPATED IN  
COORDINATED ENTRY**

**83% SINGLE ADULTS**

**16% FAMILIES**

**1% UNACCOMPANIED  
CHILDREN**

#### HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (HMIS)

HMIS is a technology system used by homeless service providers to collect and manage data gathered while providing housing assistance to people experiencing homelessness and households at risk of losing their housing.



**2,081 HOUSEHOLDS  
ENTERED HOUSING  
PROGRAMS**

Housing Programs include Emergency Shelter, Rapid Re-housing, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Permanent Housing.

A "household" is an individual, couple or family unit - however they identify themselves.

**65%**

**WERE UNSHELTERED WHEN THEY  
ENTERED A HOUSING PROGRAM**

**151  
DAYS**

**THE AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY  
IN A HOUSING PROGRAM**

**28%**

**OF EXITING HOUSEHOLDS EXITED  
TO PERMANENT HOUSING**



**12%**

**Reported to be  
fleeing domestic  
violence.**



**6%**

**Reported to be  
Veterans.**



**60%**

**Reported to have a  
disability.**



**14%**

**Reported to be age  
55 or older.**



**22%**

**Reported to receive  
some income from  
benefits.**

## Thurston Regional Housing Council

Thurston County and the cities of Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and Yelm formalized the [Regional Housing Council \(RHC\)](#) in 2021 to leverage resources and partnerships through policies and projects promoting access to safe and affordable housing in Thurston County.



### ***Advisory Boards***

The RHC has two new advisory boards that began meeting in early 2023. The Thurston [Affordable Housing Advisory Board](#) and the [Homeless Services Advisory Board](#). Members of each advisory board are subject matter experts from the community, including those with lived experience of homelessness or living in subsidized housing. The Chair of each board serves as a non-voting member of the Regional Housing Council. The two new advisory boards quickly came together to review and score the 2023 funding applications.

### ***Funding***

In February 2023, [Thurston County Office of Housing & Homeless Prevention](#) invited community service providers to apply for the homeless services and affordable housing grants. Applications were reviewed and scored by the Homeless Services Advisory Board and the Thurston Affordable Housing Advisory Board. Each board presented their recommendations to the RHC for approval. Once the RHC approved the recommended funding choices, they were presented to the Thurston County [Board of County Commissioners](#) for final approval. In total, the RHC made recommendations to fund 44 projects at a total value of just over \$13 million.

## Thurston County Local Home Fund

In 2018, City of Olympia voters approved a one-tenth of one percent sales and use tax to fund affordable housing construction, housing related services and mental and behavioral health-related facilities. This became known as the Home Fund. In January 2022, the Thurston County Board of County Commissioners passed a similar ordinance authorizing the same sales and use tax for the remainder of the County, except within the City of Tenino.

In December 2022, City of Olympia and Thurston County signed an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) to combine these two funds, commonly referred to as the Olympia Local Home Fund and the County Local Home Fund. Under the ILA, Olympia retains 35% of this revenue to support existing services and staffing and then transfers the remaining funds to the County, which are allocated under the Regional Housing Council.

In 2023, Thurston County collected \$5,175,125. City of Olympia contributed \$1,700,000 from its Local Home Fund to support projects identified by the RHC.

### PROJECTS SELECTED BY THURSTON REGIONAL HOUSING COUNCIL IN PROGRAM YEAR 2022-2023 TO BE SUPPORTED BY LOCAL HOME FUND REVENUE.

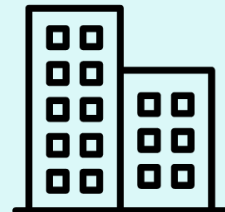
**30%**



Of the County Local Home Fund was awarded to homeless response activities.

The funds were split among five agencies to support the Homeless Crisis Response System.

**\$1,325,000**



Awarded to Southport Financial to construct 162 units of affordable rental housing.

Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2024.

## Lived Experience Housing Steering Committee

The Lived Experience Housing Steering Committee (LEHSC) was established to create a meaningful opportunity for people with lived experience of homelessness, and who have racial and ethnic identities overrepresented in the local population of people experiencing homelessness to provide subject matter expertise in vetting strategies in Thurston County's Homeless Crisis Response Plan.

In 2023, the LEHSC shifted from consultant-based facilitation and support to be facilitated by a local homeless service provider. This change marked the end of the first year of the new LEHSC. During 2023, the LEHSC provided feedback on the racial equity strategies in the Homeless Crisis Response Plan and the City of Olympia encampment communication processes. The LEHSC also received extra facilitation support from the Thurston County Built for Zero Coordinator. All members of the LEHSC receive monthly stipends to compensate them for their work on the committee.

## Rent Assistance

### ***COVID-19 Funded Rent Assistance***

Thurston County's COVID-19 funded rent assistance program ended in the summer of 2023. From 2020 - 2023, COVID-19 rent assistance programs were administered through various sub-grantee and partner organizations from local, state and federal funding sources. Almost all of the funding came from federal allotments under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act and American Rescue Plan Act, administered by the U.S. Treasury Department, and issued either directly to Thurston County or through the Washington State Department of Commerce. These funds were supplemented by State and local funds.

COVID-19 RENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM 2021-2023	
\$53,621,479	TOTAL RENT & UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROVIDED
\$7,250	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD PAYMENT AMOUNT
7,376	HOUSEHOLD PAYMENTS

[Thurston County COVID-19 Rent Assistance Infographic](#)

### ***Eviction Prevention Rent Assistance***

In 2021, the Washington State Legislature designated a permanent funding source for homeless services which included a new program called [Eviction Prevention Rent Assistance \(EPRA\)](#). This program is funded through the provision of a document recording fee on the sale or refinance of a home in Washington State. Eligibility for EPRA is determined through a screening process to serve the tenants most at risk for eviction and homelessness.

Three local agencies were awarded contracts to provide Eviction Prevention Rent Assistance (EPRA). Community Youth Services is contracted to provide EPRA for ages 24 and under. Family Support Center of South Sound is contracted to provide EPRA for families with children under age 18 and survivors of domestic violence. Partners in Prevention Education (PiPE) is contracted to provide EPRA for adults without children. These agencies and staff from Thurston County Office of Housing & Homeless Prevention meet weekly to ensure the program policies are all in alignment and to discuss any questions or concerns that arise.

## Rights of Way Initiative

Thurston County is one of five counties identified to receive funding from the State to address unsheltered encampments along the Department of Transportation's state rights of way. The Rights of Way Initiative (ROW) provides funding to these counties with the goal to move people living on ROW sites into better living situations and permanently clear these encampments.

In June 2022, Thurston County, the City of Lacey, the City of Olympia and the City of Tumwater worked together under the leadership of Thurston Regional Housing Council to propose an approach of conducting outreach, prioritizing shelter beds, developing a new tiny home village, purchasing a hotel for use as an enhanced shelter, and hotel stays for families and those fleeing domestic violence. The proposal was accepted. The funding runs from 2022-2025 and is managed by the Washington State Department of Commerce by direction of the Governor's Office.

The Thurston County partner jurisdictions and homeless response organizations have been working together to implement the ROW Initiative. This process takes time as camp residents gradually move.

### OUTREACH AT ENCAMPMENTS

Outreach specialists work together with camp residents to:

- build rapport
- create complete list of residents
- describe available housing & shelter options
- help residents prepare to transition to shelter or housing



### SHELTER BEDS

Up to 24 shelter beds are held at existing shelters for the ROW Initiative.



### HOTEL PROGRAMS

Hotel programs are available for families with children and people fleeing domestic violence.



### ADDING NEW ENHANCED SHELTER UNITS

Low Income Housing Institute purchased & renovated a hotel in Lacey.



**118 units at Maple Court  
opening July 2023**

City of Olympia constructed a new tiny home village.



**50 tiny homes at  
Franz Anderson Village  
opening September 2023**

### ENCAMPMENTS CLEARED

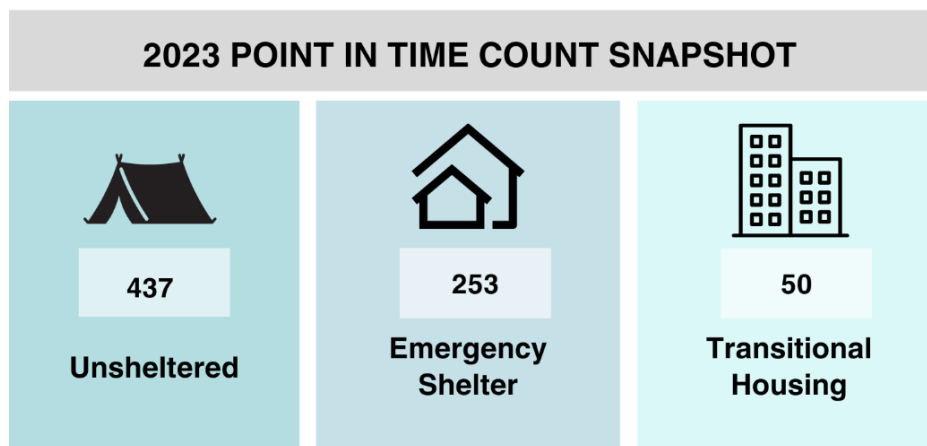
As of June 30, 2023, one of the five identified encampments was successfully cleared using this process.





## 2023 Point in Time Count

The Point in Time Count (PIT) is a window into understanding who, how, and why people are experiencing homelessness in our community. By conducting the count as comprehensively as possible, we get a snapshot into a single night in our county. This data illustrates gaps between available housing and shelter options compared to the number of the unsheltered people experiencing homelessness. The PIT survey was expanded in 2023 to include information about where individuals were last housed, how long they have been in Thurston County, what types of experiences they've had while accessing local resources over the past year, as well as what led to their homelessness, and what they believe they need to become permanently housed again.



View the [2023 Point in Time Count Report](#) for details and additional information.

## Homeless Crisis Response Five Year Plan

The Thurston County Homeless Crisis Response Five Year Plan was adopted in late November 2019 by Thurston County's Board of County Commissioners. In the past year, hard work and coordination of HCRS stakeholders and providers increased system-wide data quality, increased emergency housing options through the Rights of Way Initiative and made steps towards addressing racial disparity in the HCRS.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF STRATEGIES FROM THE HOMELESS CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN PROGRAM YEAR 2022-2023

Created a county-wide quality By-Name-List of all people experiencing homelessness in Thurston County.



HCRP Strategy 1.2

Increased data quality across the Homeless Crisis Response System.



HCRP Strategy 1.18

Developed & implemented the Housing Equity Assessment Tool (HEAT) for a more equitable Coordinated Entry assessment.



HCRP Strategy 2.2

New affordable housing and shelter housing units in development.

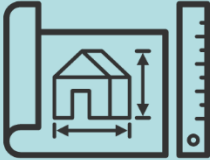


- 125 units of Permanent Supportive Housing
- 168 units of Enhanced Shelter



HCRP Strategy 3.28

## Affordable Housing

In Program Year 2022-2023, Thurston County awarded \$3,125,429 in federal and local funds to agencies conducting affordable housing projects. Affordable housing projects take multiple years to complete. There are projects in process that received funding in previous years.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECTS IN PROCESS PROGRAM YEAR 2022-2023		
PLANNING	CONSTRUCTION	COMPLETE
 <p><b>South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity</b> 28 homes (Talcott Townhomes and Longmire Townhomes) for low-income home ownership.</p> <p><b>Thurston Housing Land Trust</b> 6 units for low-income home ownership.</p> <p><b>Southport Financial</b> 162 units (Lansdale Point) for low-income rental housing.</p> <p><b>Homes First</b> 4 units for low-income rental housing.</p>	 <p><b>Low Income Housing Institute</b> 64 units of permanent supportive housing at Unity Commons (Phase II).</p> <p><b>Family Support Center of South Sound</b> 63 units of permanent supportive housing called The Landing. Funding for this project was awarded in previous years.</p>	 <p><b>Homes First</b> 3 homes for low-income rental housing. Funding for this project was awarded in previous years.</p>

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines low-income and very low-income limits in Section 3(b)(2) of the Housing Act of 1937 and are determined annually by HUD. These limits are typically established at 50-80% percent of the area median income. View [HUD income limits](#).

## Community Development

In Program Year 2022-2023, Thurston County awarded \$1,081,512.42 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. CDBG funds rotate among City of Lacey, City of Tumwater, South Thurston County (the cities, town, and unincorporated Thurston County). The City of Olympia receives CDBG funding directly from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development every year and is not included in this report. Program Year 2022-2023 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds were awarded to projects within South Thurston County.

Public service, public infrastructure and some housing projects and programs are eligible for CDBG funding. Some projects report beneficiaries in years after the funds were awarded based on the nature of the project.

