



# **Island County**

# **Homeless Housing Plan**

*Updated June 2016*

"There is a lot that happens around the world we cannot control. We cannot stop earthquakes, we cannot prevent droughts, and we cannot prevent all conflict, but when we know where the hungry, the homeless and the sick exist, then we can help."

- Jan Schakowsky

"People who are homeless are not social inadequates. They are people without homes."

- Sheila McKechnie

"Don't try to drive the homeless into places we find suitable. Help them survive in places they find suitable."

- Daniel Quinn

## **INTRODUCTION**

State legislation requires a periodic update to the Island County Homeless Housing Plan. Prior to 2009, the McKinney-Vento Act guided Federal priorities, programs and funding in addressing homelessness. The McKinney-Vento Act was reauthorized in 2009 as the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing ("HEARTH") Act which proposed a different framework for homeless programs. Through the HEARTH Act, Federal agencies changed the focus to performance, outcomes and accountability in homeless assistance programs. The shift in focus results from an evaluation of program outcomes across the country and data compiled over the past two decades.

Funding decisions will be based more on programs that are responsive to the needs in each community across the nation, as determined by collected data. One of the first identified programs was the initiative to End Chronic Homelessness. Data has shown that the Housing First approach is one of the most successful means of reducing homelessness and recidivism. As a result, counties and agencies receiving Federal funds are encouraged to employ the Housing First model where appropriate. Another strategy implemented because of the success shown through data collection is the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP) which was initially funded through the 2009 Economic Stimulus. Due to the evidence-based successes using HPRP, the HEARTH Act places greater emphasis on prevention and rapid rehousing than Federal agencies previously did. In order to accomplish the goals of prevention and rapid rehousing at the local level, the HEARTH Act doubled funding for the former "Emergency Shelter Grant" program.

The strategic plan to end homelessness is not simply left to states and counties. The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) developed and published the first Federal strategic plan to end homelessness in 2010. The plan focuses on interagency collaboration that aligns mainstream housing, health, education and human services to prevent homelessness. Key features include strengthening existing partnerships and forging new alliances within the Federal government. The plan includes key goals and core approaches or themes. USICH publishes an annual report card showing progress on goals, targets and implementing

strategies. The annual report card enables USICH to reassess the initiatives in order to improve service to those at risk of or who are experiencing homelessness.

The State administers Federal funding for shelters, homeless prevention and rapid rehousing through the Balance of State Continuum of Care. Washington State provides additional funding from local document fees that are transmitted to the State from local jurisdictions. Since 2012, Washington State Department of Commerce provides funding through the Consolidated Homeless Grant Program. The Department of Commerce manages the State funding by awarding amounts to Island County, which is then responsible for administering the funds locally. This change has provided greater transparency and accountability for the County and the agencies providing services to demonstrate that the strategies are working and performance benchmarks are being met.

## **HISTORY**

The 2005 Washington State Legislature passed Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 2163, an act relating to preventing and reducing homelessness in the State of Washington. This bill, referred to as the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act, and subsequent legislation requires county auditors to include a surcharge on certain recorded documents. The intent of the legislation is to provide funding for local communities to prevent and reduce homelessness. The fund created by this surcharge is known as the Homeless Housing Fund. In addition to the funding, the Act requires counties to have Homeless Housing Plans, formerly designated as Ten-Year Plans. 2014 legislation requires that a certain percentage of State funding from document recording fees be used for rental assistance in the for-profit rental market. Island County complies with this mandate as the majority of its rental assistance is already paid into the for-profit market. In 2016, the Governor's office mandated a more focused approach to serving unsheltered households.

In 2006, in compliance with the Washington State Legislature's mandate, a committee serving under the Budget Office for Island County developed a broad Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness. The Island County Ten-Year Plan was updated in 2008 and 2010 with few changes. Since 2011, Island County Department of Human Services has overseen all activities related to the Homeless Housing Fund. The original committee that developed the Ten-Year Plan has been merged into the Housing Advisory Board. The Housing Advisory Board reviews all funding applications and makes recommendations to the Island County Board of County Commissioners. The County Commissioners make the final determinations regarding funding.

The Housing Advisory Board reviews and revises Island County's Homeless Housing Plan. A committee now named the Housing Provider Network, consisting of representatives from the community and from all agencies receiving County funding, met over the course of 9 months, in 2013 and 2014, to develop a plan for implementing Coordinated Entry and identifying goals and objectives to be used in preventing and reducing homelessness in Island County. The work of that committee has been incorporated into this updated Island County Homeless Housing Plan.

The goals and strategies in this plan relate to all state and local document recording fees, federal Continuum of Care (CoC) funds and other federal and state funds and conforms with new State guidelines. Data from the Annual Point In Time Count and Homeless Housing Inventory that reflects our county's current homeless housing capacity, along with known gaps in our continuum, informed this local planning.

### **CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS**

Specific core values and beliefs were identified and inform the priorities established for preventing and reducing homelessness. Those values and beliefs are:

- 1) Solving homelessness is a community responsibility.
- 2) Homelessness is unacceptable.
- 3) Everyone deserves a safe place to live.
- 4) Homelessness is solvable, we have learned a lot about what works.
- 5) Housing is a human right.
- 6) Homelessness is expensive. It is more cost effective fiscally and socially to invest in solutions.
- 7) Homelessness can happen to anyone.
- 8) Ending homelessness is possible with a continuum of housing to meet the needs of community.

### **TARGET POPULATIONS**

Island County seeks to prevent and reduce homelessness in several impacted populations based on the Point In Time count and known gaps in the County's housing continuum:

- 1) Chronically homeless individuals.
- 2) Homeless individuals and adult couples.
- 3) Persons exiting institutions into homelessness.
- 4) Homeless veterans.
- 5) Homeless families with children.
- 6) Homeless Youth.

2015 Housing Data and Funding

<b>Housing Type</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Capacity to house on a single night</b>	<b>Actual number housed in 2015</b>	<b>Cost of Housing Program</b>	<b>Fund Source</b>
<b>Shelter/Short term stay</b>	Opportunity Council	18	58	\$42,751	Document Recording Fees
<b>Shelter/Short term stay</b>	CADA	12	43	\$42,766	Document Recording Fees
<b>Shelter/Short term stay</b>	South Whidbey Homeless Coalition	15	66	\$40,000	Document Recording Fees
<b>Transitional</b>	Compass Health	6	12	\$93,687	Document Recording Fees
<b>Transitional</b>	Sunrise Services	10	48	\$140,812	Document Recording Fees and Mental Health Block Grant
<b>Transitional</b>	CADA and Opportunity Council	8	54	\$11,485 \$14,075	Document Recording Fees and WA Families Fund
<b>Permanent Supportive Housing</b>	Compass Health	17	20	\$60,431	McKinney-Vento
<b>Rapid Rehousing</b>	Opportunity Council		619	\$169,480	CHG, HEN and TBRA
<b>Prevention</b>	Opportunity Council		363	\$198,394	Document Recording Fees and CHG
<b>Prevention</b>	CADA		15	\$1,570	Document Recording Fees
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>1298</b>	<b>\$815,451.00</b>	

## **2016 Short Term Housing Inventory Goals**

These are goals that Island County plans on accomplishing in the next three (3) years.

**GOAL # 1 - Continue to develop housing, filling gaps in our overall continuum, for those in crisis experiencing homelessness for the first time and for others living in extended homelessness because of barriers to housing. The goal is to develop a complete continuum making homelessness a brief experience with rapid reentry into more permanent housing.**

### **Strategy 1 - Overnight Emergency Shelter**

Island County has no overnight emergency shelter beds. Emergency shelters are the front door for homeless housing continuums allowing a place for people in crisis to sleep overnight while receiving basic services and care needed to determine needs and next steps for moving beyond homelessness and into more permanent housing when no other appropriate housing is available.

Island County Department of Human Services, Oak Harbor Police Department, City of Oak Harbor, Oak Harbor School District Homeless Liaison, South Whidbey Homeless Coalition, members of the faith community of Oak Harbor and other community leaders have developed a task force with the goal of developing strategies and programming for an emergency overnight shelter to be in service by the end of 2016. The group will explore various best practice models while considering the local need to determine the best model.

The establishment of an emergency overnight shelter will provide a place for all homeless persons but especially for those most vulnerable with barriers to accessing housing. Much needed data on this population will be gathered, driving future housing programming decisions. Through the coordinated entry system, quality referrals are made for those interested in more permanent housing when available. Without this type of housing, many individuals use businesses, churches and agency resources and time that do not get them housed. In many cases, these persons are high utilizers of hospital emergency rooms, jails and/or other expensive interventions.

**GOAL #2 - Increase the amount of affordable permanent housing and permanent supportive housing available to target populations earning less than 50% of area median income including seniors. Continue to research emerging practices and opportunities for acquiring or constructing very affordable multi-family housing in all parts of the county, with special focus on incorporated areas.**

### **Strategy 1 – Work with Affordable Housing Developers**

Island County Department of Human Services and City of Oak Harbor are assisting a regional affordable housing developer in the predevelopment phase of a new construction project that will add 40-50 new units with possible set asides for homeless households. The goal is to secure funding in 2017 for construction to begin in 2018.

The 2015 completion of Sunny View Village added 25 total units of affordable housing, with 7 units set aside for formerly homeless households through the use of project-based Housing Choice Vouchers from Housing Authority of Island County. The addition of these affordable housing units to Island County inventory will help decrease the amount of money spent on prevention as low and extremely low income households will have access to affordable units. The new units will house those most at risk of becoming homeless due to rent burden as the top priority.

### **Strategy 2 – Community Member Involvement**

Discussions have begun with community members interested in renting investment properties to homeless housing programs. This would add short term stay shelter or additional units for the expansion of current housing programs serving people exiting institutions to homelessness. The target for this housing to be in service is fall of 2016. Continued work will be done to convert existing properties to affordable housing.

### **Strategy 3 – Increase Permanent Supportive Housing Units**

Island County recognizes the need for more Permanent Supportive Housing units for our most vulnerable homeless and aging populations struggling with physical and behavioral health conditions. Continued research and collaborations will be undertaken to identify funding sources for development of additional PSH units and necessary supportive services.

## **2016 Non-Housing Inventory Goals**

**GOAL #1. Prevent people from becoming homeless and or minimize their time spent in homelessness through prevention, diversion, rapid rehousing and other reentry strategies.**

### **Strategy 1 - Expand the County-wide, Centralized Coordinated Entry System**

Implement a community wide coordinated intake and assessment program to ensure rapid placement into permanent housing where available or maintenance of current housing if appropriate for income qualifying households. This system provides households that fall into a housing crisis access to screening and receiving short term financial assistance to maintain their housing by referring clients to agencies offering prevention assistance. For those already experiencing homelessness, screening/assessments and referrals are made to the most

appropriate agency offering housing and or supportive services in the shortest amount of time through Rapid Rehousing, short term rental and/or utility assistance and other supports.

All agencies providing housing programs share information about the availability of housing which helps increase the amount of housing inventory available to house target populations. For households or individuals needing more intensive support, when openings are available, referrals are made into short term stay shelter, transitional housing or permanent supportive housing. When no housing options are available, the coordinated entry system offer diversion along with minimal case management to connect homeless households to appropriate services.

Expanded Coordinated Entry operations began August 2016 and Island County Department of Human Services is responsible for implementing the expansion. The single point of entry with satellite coverage enables Coordinated Entry personnel to interact with most homeless households, which will improve overall data on those experiencing homelessness gathered throughout the county and during the Point In Time count, improving and providing the best delivery of services and funding.

### **Strategy 2 – Develop Landlord Liaison program**

Island County will implement a program with landlords and property managers to educate them on community need for affordable housing, what support the Coordinated Entry system can offer and how they can collaborate and contribute. The development of this program will begin Fall 2016.

**GOAL #2. Use a “Housing First” model to insure an adequate supply of accessible, affordable and safe housing for homeless, formerly homeless and very low income households with more complex barriers to accessing housing. Planning for developing this model is ongoing in 2016.**

### **GOAL #3 – Ensure access to appropriate services and remove barriers**

Maintain and expand sufficient and coordinated supportive services to support long term housing stability and household safety and independence. Encourage strong collaboration among agencies. Encourage collaboration with existing employment services and develop additional services that fill any gaps. Provide Vocational training program for adults, youth, young adults, veterans and parents with minors. Begin to focus on integrating housing stability and related services to community integrated behavioral health care systems and in future health care systems.

### **Strategy #1 – Basic Life Skills Training**

**Strategy #2 – Employment Services – Vocational Assessments, Job training, basic employability skills.**



**Strategy #3 – Ensure access to Affordable Health Care programs**

**Strategy #4 – Using developed models, assist people into SSI track.**

**Strategy #5 - Ensure community capacity for delivery of behavioral health services.**

### **Additional Data that Informs Plan**

**Current Temporary Housing Units in Island County**

<b>TEMPORARY SHELTER</b>											
Provider Name	Facility Name	HMIS			Geo Code	Target Pop.		2015 Year-Round Units/Beds			
		Part. Code	Number of Year-Round Beds			A	B	Family Units	Family Beds	Individual Beds	Total Year-Round
<b>Current Inventory</b>			Ind.	Fam.							
CADA	Marjie's House	N		13	539029	M	DV	4	13		13
Opportunity Council	Whidbey Ave House	N		3	539029	FC		1	3		3
Opportunity Council	Ireland St. House	N		6	539029	FC		1	6		6
Opportunity Council	Marjie's House	N		9	539029	M		3	9		9
South Whidbey Homeless Coalition	House of Hope	N		8	539029	F		3	8		8
<b>TOTALS</b>				39		<b>TOTALS</b>		12	39		39

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Provider Name	Facility Name	HMIS			Geo Code	Target Pop.		2015 Year-Round Units/Beds			
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<b>Current Inventory</b>			Ind.	Fam.							
CADA	Marjie's House	N		13	539029	M	DV	4	13		13
Opportunity Council	Whidbey Ave House	N		3	539029	FC		1	3		3
Opportunity Council	Ireland St. House	N		6	539029	FC		1	6		6
Opportunity Council	Marjie's House	N		9	539029	M		3	9		9
South Whidbey Homeless Coalition	House of Hope	N		8	539029	F		3	8		8
<b>TOTALS</b>				39		<b>TOTALS</b>		12	39		39

Current Affordable Rental Units in Island County

**Seniors & People with Disabilities**

City	# properties	total units	# units subsidized
Oak Harbor	2	76	67
Coupeville	1	50	50
Langley	1	12	9
Camano	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>126</b>

**Singles & Families**

Oak Harbor	8	293	193
Coupeville	1	24	10
Langley	1	22	16
Freeland	1	25	7
Camano	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>226</b>
<b>Grand Totals</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>352</b>

2016 Point In Time Count for Island County

<b>2016 Homeless Count Totals</b>	
<b>Sheltered</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Unsheltered</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>
<b>Chronic Homeless</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Doubled-Up</b>	<b>158*</b>

\*Do not have all school data on doubled-up.

<b>Three Year Comparison</b>	<b>2014</b>		<b>2015</b>		<b>2016</b>	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
<b>Sheltered</b>	34	29%	38	26%	69	30%
<b>Unsheltered</b>	85	71%	109	74%	153	70%
<b>Total</b>	119		147		222	
<b>1 year increase</b>			+28 (19%)		+75 (34%)	
<b>3 year increase</b>					+103 (46%)	

<b>Household Status</b>	<b>Unsheltered</b>	<b>Sheltered</b>	<b>Doubled Up</b>
<b>Families with children</b>	13	17	34
<b>Number of children</b>	25	25	67

<b>HH without children</b>	26	3	12
<b>Single</b>	49	23	20
<b>Male</b>	94	27	68
<b>Female</b>	59	42	90
<b>Total</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>158</b>

### Unsheltered Homeless

Age	Men	Women	Total	Children		<b>Total Unsheltered</b>
<b>18-24</b>	8	7	15	0-2 years	3	
<b>25-35</b>	28	13	41	3-5 years	1	
<b>36-45</b>	22	8	30	6-9 years	2	
<b>46-55</b>	15	5	20	10-12 years	5	
<b>56-65</b>	5	3	8	13-15 years	6	
<b>66-75</b>	3	2	5	16-17 years	6	
<b>Unknown</b>	4	5	9	Unknown	2	
	<b>85</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>128</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>153</b>

### Contact Information

Jurisdiction:	Island County
Other Jurisdictions Represented in this Plan:	
Date of Original Plan Adoption	December 19, 2005

Jurisdiction Contact Person		Plan Contact Person	
Name:	Jackie Henderson	Name:	Catherine Reid
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**Planning Group Name: Housing Provider Network**

Committee Members:

Name	Agency	Representing
Margie Porter	Citizen's Against Domestic and Sexual Abuse	Domestic Violence Victims
Lisa Clark	Opportunity Council	Community Action Agency
Michael McIntyre	City of Oak Harbor	Largest City in Jurisdiction
Bri Hardcastle and Cathy Kerr	Compass Health	Compass Health (mental health agency)
Lori Cavender	Ryan's House for Youth	Unaccompanied Youth
Amy Towner	Quantum Management Co.	Housing Management
Joanne Pelant	Island County Human Services	Island County
Lynda Richards	Island County Human Services	Island County
Linda Krueger	Whidbey General Hospital	Community Hospital
Cheryl Coop	Sunrise Services	Mental Health Agency
Mary Mitchell	Readiness to Learn	Homeless Youth
Gail LaVassar	Readiness to Learn	Homeless Youth
Ann Johnson	Readiness to Learn	Homeless Youth
Jennifer Yzaguirre	OHPD	Law Enforcement