

Whitman County  
10-Year Homeless Housing Plans



---

### Section 1 – Contact Information

<b>Jurisdiction:</b>	Whitman County
<b>Other Jurisdictions Represented in this Plan:</b>	None
<b>Date of Plan Adoption</b>	December 12, 2005

Jurisdiction Contact Person		Plan Contact Person	
Name:	Greg Partch	Name:	Karl Cozad
Title:	Whitman County Commissioner	Organization:	Community Action Center
Address:	North 400 Main Street Colfax, WA 99111	Address:	350 SE Fairmont Rd Pullman, WA 99163
Phone:	(509) 397-6200	Phone:	(509) 334-9147
Email:	<u>maribethb@co.whitman.wa.us</u>	Email:	karlc@cacwhitman.com
Fax:	(509) 397-6355	Fax:	(509) 334-9105

<b>Planning Group Name:</b>	Whitman County Continuum of Care
-----------------------------	----------------------------------

<b>Planning Body Members</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Greg Partch	Whitman County Commissioners	Whitman County
Melissa Scamerhorn	Alternatives to Violence of the Palouse	Domestic Violence
Karl Cozad	Community Action Center	Low-income and homeless
Amy Marie Robbins	Community Action Center	Low-income and homeless
Gail Webster	Community Action Center	Low-income and homeless
Mary Tathum	Community Child Care Center	Low-income and child care
Erik Bengston	YMCA of WSU	Youth programs
Mike Berney	Palouse River Counseling	Mental Health and Substance Abuse
Myrna Haring	Employment Security	Employment
	Rural Resources	Employment, Education and training
Scott Hallett	Council on Aging	Seniors, Food and Nutrition
Terry Candler	Emmanuel Baptist Church	Faith-based
Francy Bose	Sacred Heart Parish	Faith-based

## Section 2 - Homeless Population and Subpopulations

Table already completed for most counties as part of HUD McKinney Process

Part 1: Homeless Population	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional		
1. Homeless Individuals	4 (E)	12 (A)	6 (E)	22
2. Homeless Families with Children	3 (E)	25 (A)	8 (E)	53
2a. Persons in Homeless Families with Children	10 (E)	166 (A)	27 (E)	203
Total (lines 1 + 2a only)	17	203	41	278
Part 2: Homeless Subpopulations	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
1. Chronically Homeless	6 (N)		2 (A)	8
2. Severely Mentally Ill	5 (N)			5
3. Chronic Substance Abuse	2 (N)			2
4. Veterans				
5. Persons with HIV/AIDS				
6. Victims of Domestic Violence	22 (A)			22
7. Unaccompanied Youth (Under 18 years of age)				
8. Single Adult Men*				
9. Single Adult Women*				
10. Chronically Physically Disabled*				

\*Optional

*First three tables already completed for most counties as part of the HUD McKinney process*

[illegible]

**Transitional Housing**

Provider Name	Facility Name	HMIS		Geo Code	Target Pop		2005 Year-Round Units/Beds			
		Part. Code	#Yr. Round		A	B	Family Units	Family Beds	Individual Beds	Total Year-Round Beds
<b>Current Inventory</b>										
Community Action Center	THOR	N		539075	FC		4 vouchers		2 vouchers	
<b>TOTALS</b>					<b>TOTALS</b>		4 vouchers		2 vouchers	
<b>Under Development</b>										
<b>TOTALS</b>					<b>TOTALS</b>					
<b>Unmet Need</b> (Optional for December 2005)					<b>TOTALS</b>					

### Permanent Supportive Housing

[illegible]

### Tenant Based Rental Assistance Targeted to Homeless Persons

Provider Name	Geo Code	Target Pop		Family Units	Family Beds	Chronic Individual Beds	Individual Beds	Total Year-Round Bed Equivalents
		A	B					
Community Action Center	539705	M	DV	40 Vouchers		10 Vouchers		50 Vouchers
			TOTALS	40 Vouchers		10 Vouchers		50 Vouchers

### Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) Targeted to Homeless Persons

Provider Name	Geo Code	Target Pop		Family Units	Family Beds	Chronic Individual Beds	Individual Beds	Total Year-Round Bed Equivalents
		A	B					
			TOTALS					



---

## Section 4 - Homeless Services Needs

*In a narrative format, describe **the most important gaps** in services necessary to help homeless persons obtain and maintain stable housing, and prevent at-risk households from becoming homeless.*

Whitman County is one of the largest counties in the State of Washington and has remote and rural areas that make it difficult for those in need to easily access services. Recently, the local Community Action Center held a community forum and solicited suggestions and recommendations from the community on Whitman County's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness. This narrative summarizes the thoughts and concerns expressed at the community forum.

Whitman County lacks a public transportation system that would allow people in the more rural areas to access services in either Colfax, the county seat, or Pullman, where most of the population resides. The homeless population in Whitman County presents many of the same issues identified at the national level. According to comments received during our 2163 public hearing, the primary focus areas include affordable housing, regular access to mental health counseling, access to substance abuse treatment and continued support in the transition from homelessness to stabilization.

Homeless families and individuals in Whitman County often struggle with a number of serious issues and therefore require multiple and integrated services to be successful in moving from homelessness to permanent housing. . Without a full array and ready access to both affordable housing and supportive services it is difficult if not impossible for people to make a successful transition and end the cycle of homelessness.

Housing costs exceed incomes. Lack of affordable housing in Whitman County prevents people from finding safe and decent housing and forces them to live in unsafe conditions. Washington State University is located in Pullman. Because of the University, demand for housing in Pullman is high. Many units in Pullman are designed for multiple student roommates. This housing model increases the cost of housing for families and is especially hard for families that are working minimum wage jobs. Outside the Pullman area, the cost of housing is considerably lower but living in these areas creates isolation, fewer job opportunities and decreases access to necessary services

Access to consistent mental health counseling is essential to so that people living with mental health challenges are able to secure employment, maintain stable housing, obtain necessary medications and to prevent potential issues with the judicial system. Whitman County has one counseling center located in Pullman that accepts medical coupons. Unfortunately, in the last year their funding was dramatically reduced, thereby affecting their ability to provide services to those with the greatest need. Additionally, since the counseling office is located in Pullman, it is difficult for those without transportation to access mental health services consistently.

The demand for substance abuse treatment facilities is much higher than the current treatment services available. Often people are able to access intensive inpatient treatment, complete treatment and then return to their previous situation. But they are unable to access sustained support and services, which is crucial to becoming substance free for any period of time. In some instances people who struggle with mental health issues often "self-medicate" by utilizing substances. This is a cycle that is very difficult break, especially if they lack a stable housing environment.

A lack of housing and services for unaccompanied youth is also a concern in Whitman County. Most funding does not allow agencies to work with unaccompanied youth that are not emancipated. This has become a growing need and concern in Whitman County. Whitman County needs funding for services to unemancipated homeless youth. Many within this population lack the skills to obtain living wage employment. So for this population, not only is housing critical but they also need supportive services in the form of life skills classes.

Persons transitioning out of correctional facilities, treatment centers and mental health institutions are also an area of concern in Whitman County. While people are institutionalized they receive services, including necessary medication. Once released, they are often not connected to housing and are unable to access medications or supportive services. The lack of support makes re-entry back into the community a difficult process and increases the likelihood of homelessness.

Other issues that were identified at the community forum include a need for access to life skills training for those that are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Life skill classes would build upon people's current strengths and provide them with the education to prevent future incidents of homelessness. Suggestions class topics include budgeting, basic life skills, parenting, how to cook on a budget and drug prevention. These classes would work for homeless families, to increase their skills and become more stable and they should also be offered as a preventative measure for those at risk from becoming homeless.

The issues noted above are the most crucial gaps in the currently service delivery system. In a large rural county it is difficult to meet the need and to ensure that all of those that need services are aware of the services. Furthermore, when working with homeless families and individuals it is important to address the issues that caused homelessness. If homeless families and individuals are not willing to work with service providers to identify issues and create a plan to prevent future homelessness, then it is difficult to prevent the issue from occurring again. Finally, prevention of homelessness needs to be a priority for those at risk; it is more economical to prevent homelessness than to find housing after housing is lost.

Service providers in Whitman County have worked well together in the past and continue to coordinate, collaborate and streamline services for those in need. However, the system can be improved. As funding sources dwindle and resources to provide

services dry up, it becomes more difficult for agencies to attend community meetings and do conduct interagency planning. Access to services must become more user-friendly allow homeless people to address the multiple issues they are facing without becoming overwhelmed by the system and giving up. . The current 10 Year Plan process has been encouraging because of an increase in participation by the faith-based community we look forward to working with new and diverse groups in the future.

---

## **Section 5 – Summary of Homeless Strategic Plan—see attached**

---

### **Section 6 - Recommendations for State Legislative and Policy Changes Needed to Address Homelessness**

*Describe the state-level changes in policy and law necessary to achieve the goal of a 50% reduction in homelessness in your county.*

We are grateful to CTED and homeless advocates for the incredible support and tireless efforts to increase funding and reduce homelessness. Our recommendations for legislative and policy changes include a look at the funding streams that are accessed for homeless services. The issues that surround homelessness, mentioned in our narrative, are the areas that need additional funding. The areas of mental health, substance abuse and housing are typically funded through different state funds are then split into different agencies to provide the services. Collaboration, networking and sharing of funds between these three areas could lead to more success when dealing with the homeless populations.

Policy changes should allow for more program flexibility between rural and urban areas. In providing homeless programs things that work in a rural area do not always work so well in urban areas. Allowing each geographic area to work with leaders at the state level to determine what is effective in their area would allow more local flexibility and allow local leaders to address the specifics of homelessness in the area in which they are familiar.

Policy makers who work with local providers to determine the most effective course of action in their region would be ideal. The state funding agencies would continue to work with each county to ensure that they are producing outcomes and moving towards ending homelessness and have access to services and the funds they need to be able to complete that task.

## Strategy, Summary Form for Whitman County Ten Year Plan

[illegible]







