SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

Homeless Investment Policy Framework

Seattle City Council
Human Services & Public Health Committee

Wednesday, February 24, 2016 | **Seattle Human Services Department** | **Catherine Lester, Director**

Mayor Ed Murray
Deputy Mayor Kate Joncas
Deputy Mayor Hyeok Kim

Briefing Objectives

1. Background Context

2. Executive's 3-Prong Strategy

3. National & Regional Alignment

4. Homelessness Investment Analysis
   a) Evaluate & Scale New Investments
   b) Progressive Engagement, Portfolio Model
   c) Homeless Investment Policy (HIP) Framework

5. Next Steps & Timelines

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

Background Context

Community Determinants of Homelessness

2016 One Night Count

2015 Homeless Service Data

Income Change in Seattle Households

Community Determinants of Homelessness

Research of 300+ cities and states found statistical correlation between these factors and rising homelessness:

Housing market	Increase in rent of $100 associated with 15% increase in homelessness in metro and 39% in rural/suburban areas
Economic conditions	Areas with high poverty and unemployment rates associated with higher rates of homelessness
Demographic composition	Areas with more Hispanic, baby boomer, and single person households associated with higher rates of homelessness
Safety net	States with lower mental health expenditures associated with higher rates of homelessness
Transience	Areas with more recently moved people associated with higher rates of homelessness

Source: Byrne, T., Culhane, D., et. al., "New Perspectives on Community-level Determinants of Homelessness" (2013): Article and Summary

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

2016 One Night Count (Seattle/King County)

SEATTLE HUMAN SERVICES
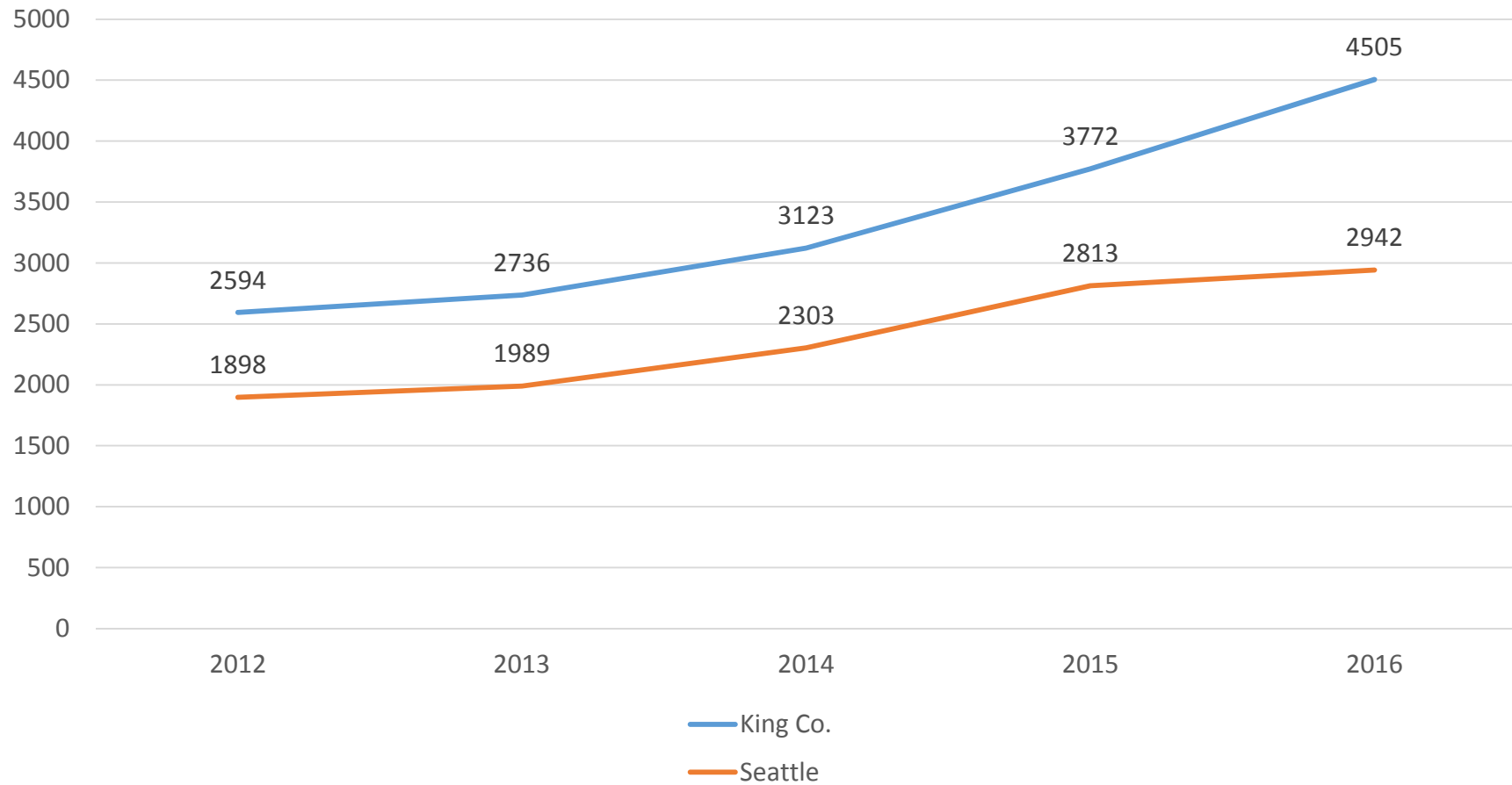
2015 Homeless Service Data

Characteristics	Emergency Shelter (families)	Transitional Housing (families)	Emergency Shelters (individuals)	Transitional Housing (individuals)	Permanent Supportive Housing (individuals)
Number of Sheltered Homeless Persons	1,650	905	8,526	1,285	2,671
Number of Sheltered Adults	704	390	8,401	1,244	2,655
Number of Sheltered Children	944	515	66	24	0

Source: HUD Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR)

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

Racial Disproportionality

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders:

3x more likely

African Americans:

5x more likely

Native American/Alaska Native:

7x more likely

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES
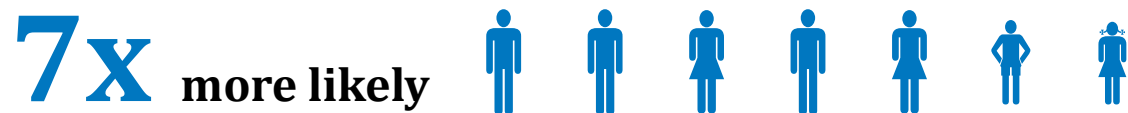
Income Change in Seattle households (2000-2013)

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES
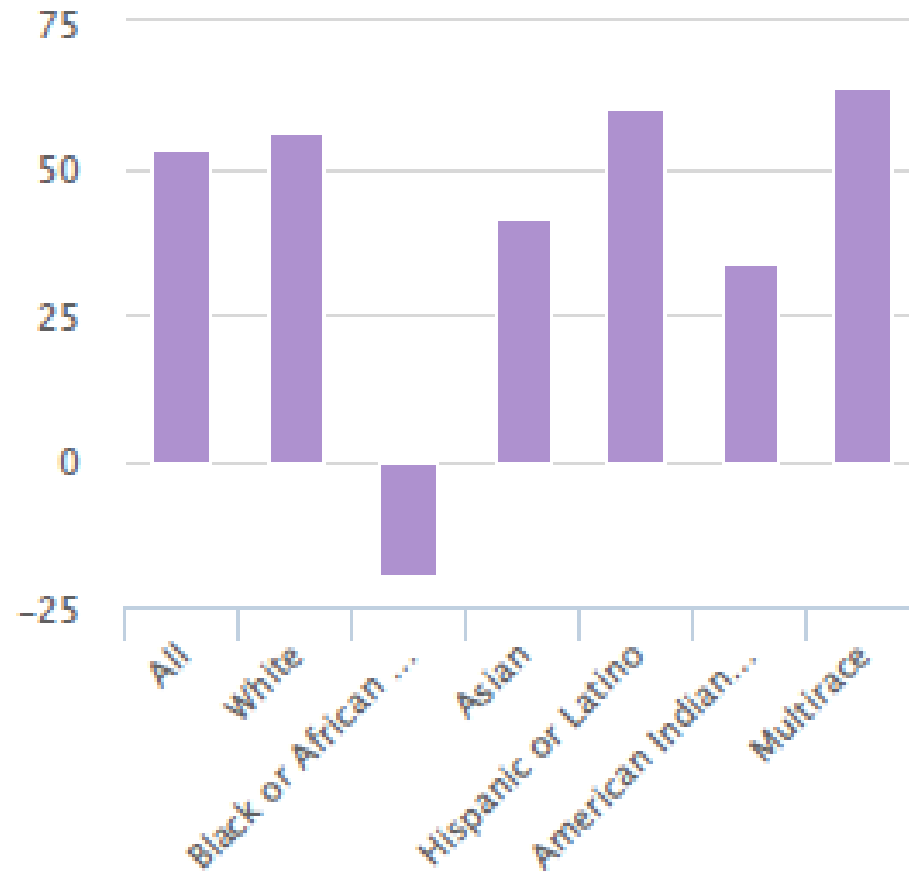
Comparing HUD Funding, Direct Housing Assistance, and Housing-Related Tax Expenditures

GRAPH 1. HUD, HOUSING ASSISTANCE, AND HOUSING-RELATED TAX EXPENDITURES
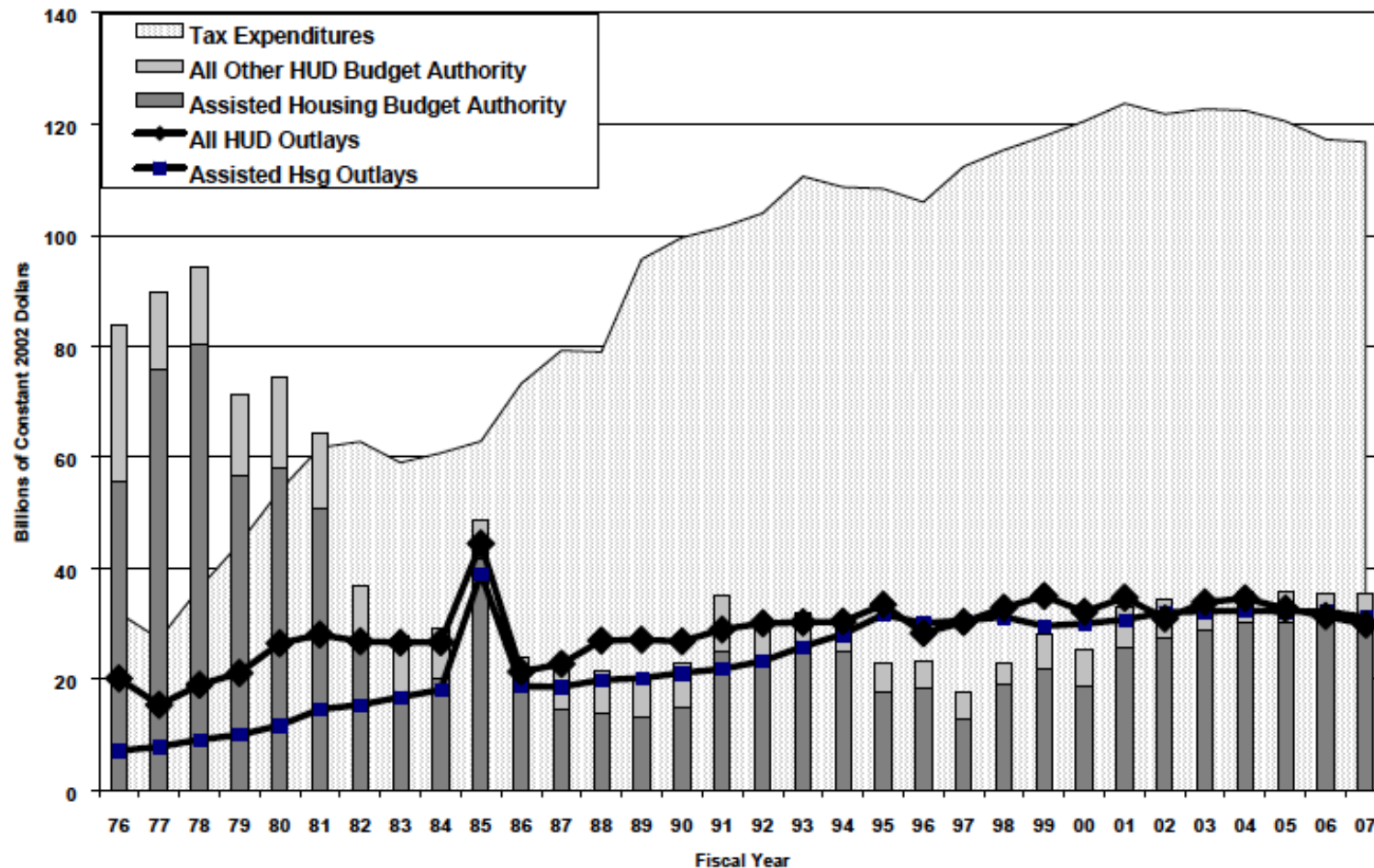
Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition, Changing Priorities, Federal Budget and Housing Assistance, 1976-2007

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

9

Executive's 3-Pronged Strategy

Address immediate needs of the unsheltered

Address long-term, systemic issues

Address affordable housing

Executive's 3-Pronged Strategy

1. **Address immediate needs of the unsheltered**
   - Unsheltered Task Force Recommendations
   - State of Emergency Declaration

2. **Address long-term, systemic issues**
   - Develop homeless investment policy framework
   - Evaluate and scale new investments in promising best practices
   - Design and implement a portfolio contract model

3. **Address affordable housing**
   - Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda
   - Affordable housing development through the Seattle Housing Levy

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

National & Regional Alignment

All Home King County

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness
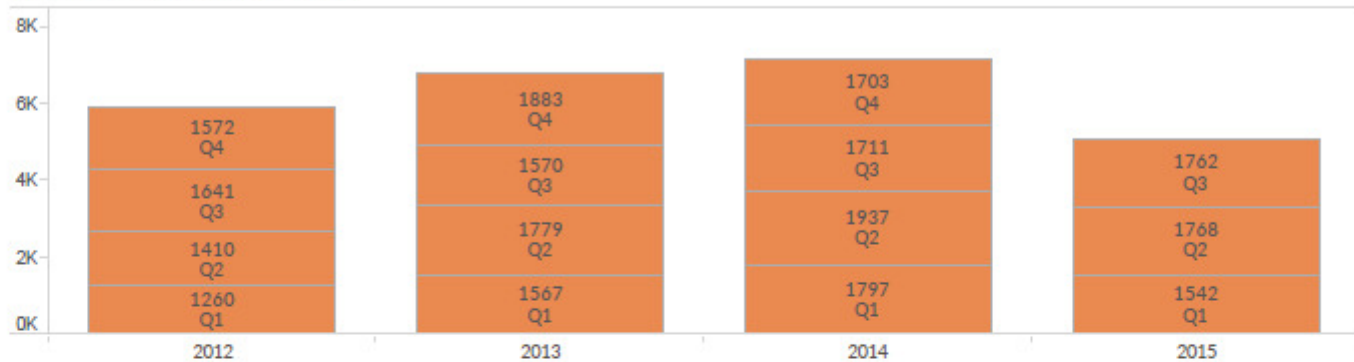
National and Regional Alignment

- West Coast Alliance of Mayors

- U.S Conference of Mayors

- All Home Regional Strategic Plan

  - Continue to make needed shifts in local and federal resources to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and one-time

- Continuum of Care

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

KING COUNTY QUARTERLY SYSTEMS PERFORMANCE - Q3 2015

RARE

Number of Households Housed

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Q4	1572	1883	1703	
Q3	1641	1570	1711	1762
Q2	1410	1779	1937	1768
Q1	1260	1567	1797	1542

(y-axis: 0K, 2K, 4K, 6K, 8K)

BRIEF

Length of Time in Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing (Days)

	Days
2012	131
2013	151
2014	127
2015 Q1	135
2015 Q2	125
2015 Q3	130

2015 Goal: 100 days

ONE TIME

Percent Returning after Exiting to Permanent Housing

	Percent
2012	9%
2013	15%
2014	12%
2015 Q1	11%
2015 Q2	12%
2015 Q3	12%

2015 Goal 14%
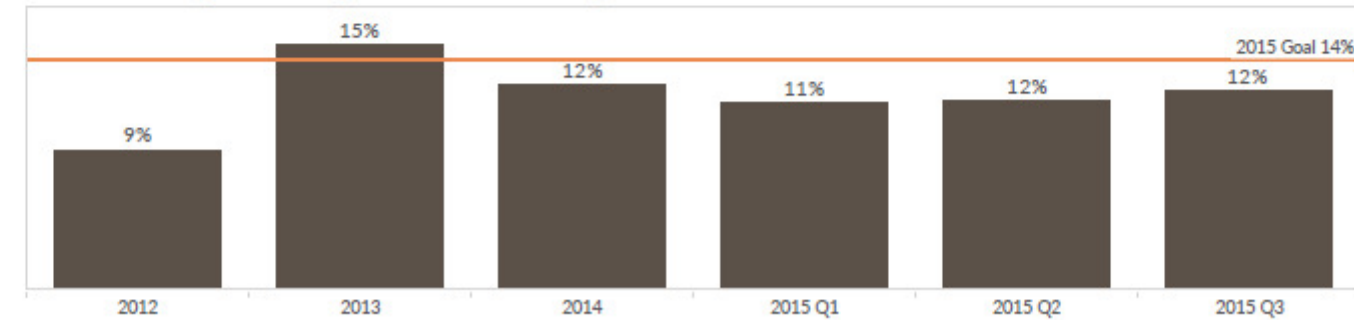
Data Note: Due to ongoing technical challenges, data from one of our largest providers, Downtown Emergency Services Center, is not included in our 2015 numbers. 2015 numbers will be revised when these technical challenges are resolved. All data is from Safe Harbors HMIS.

Regional and National Alignment

- US Interagency Council on Homelessness Opening Doors Plan

  – Increased leadership, collaboration, and civic engagement

  – Increased economic security

  – Increased health and stability

  – Increased access to affordable and stable housing

  – Retool the homeless crisis response system

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

Homeless Investment Analysis

Evaluate and determine scalability of recent investments in homelessness

Develop and pilot a progress engagement, portfolio contract model

Create a Homelessness Investment Policy (HIP) Framework

Focus Strategies SWAP analysis

Community Engagement

2015 Homeless Investment Analysis

- Assessed the City's investments in homeless services

- Compared current City investments with nationally recognized best practices

- Highlighted ways to better meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness in our communities

- Laid out path for the City's focus on long-term, system change

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

2015 Homeless Investment Analysis (cont.)

2015 Homeless Investment Analysis identified a three strategies to achieving long-term, system change:

1. Evaluate and determine scalability of **new investments** in strategies to address unsheltered homelessness

2. Develop and pilot a **progressive engagement portfolio contract** model with a cohort of service providers to shift investments and services

3. Create a **Homeless Investment Policy (HIP) Framework** to guide the City's future investments in homeless services

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

New Strategies to Address Unsheltered Homelessness

1. Regional Shelter

2. Diversion

3. Single Adult Rapid Re-Housing

4. Families Rapid Re-Housing

5. Veterans Homelessness

6. Coordinated Entry for All Populations

7. Long-Term Stayers

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

Building on Success of New Strategies

- Pilot projects integrated into ongoing investments and contracts

  – *Example*: Diversion Services contracts, Rapid Re-Housing for families

- Additional funding Rapid Re-Housing for Single Adults released in 2015

- Rapid Re-Housing for Young Adults proposed as McKinney bonus project

- Raikes Foundation funding Diversion pilot for youth/young adults

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

Progressive Engagement, Portfolio Model

- The Portfolio Pilot offers an opportunity for HSD and partners to design and test a new approach to contracting

- Pilot agencies were selected for their range of services, multiple contracts, and/or ability to serve diverse populations

- Pilot will begin July 1, 2016 through December 2017

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT	FAMILIES	SINGE ADULTS	SYSTEM PARTNERS
YouthCare YMCA	YWCA Mary's Place	DESC	AHKC King County United Way

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

Progressive Engagement, Portfolio Model

- The goals of the progressive engagement, portfolio model are to:

  1. Shift investments/services to be more client-focused and use best practices

  2. Decrease administrative budget of agencies with multiple contracts

  3. Improve results and use data to inform program, policy and funding changes

- The current work involves developing:
  – Prescribed outcomes and indicators
  – New contract model
  – Monitoring practice that makes program evaluation a priority
  – Process for sharing real-time data, and then using data to inform practice, investments, policy decisions

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

What Works Cities Initiatives

- Government Performance Lab Fellow from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government placed with HSD for one year

- Fellow's focus is to support efforts to increase performance focusing on the homeless service contracts

- Core recommendations include:

  1. Establish a set of prescribed outcomes and indicators

  2. Improve data/performance measurement

  3. Initiate performance-based contracting

  4. Increase capacity of HSD in the areas of data, evaluation and monitoring

  5. Increase capacity of external stakeholders

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

Homeless Investment Policy (HIP) Priorities

1. Create a **person-centered** system that responds to the unique needs of each family and individual

2. Make **investments based on system analysis and performance**

3. Identify focused solutions to **increase access to housing**

4. Facilitate routine, competitive funding processes that focus on the development of **outcome-driven and performance-based contracts**

5. Invest in the **data and evaluation capacity** that is necessary to support systemic transformation and sound policy decisions

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

HIP Goals in Action

- Implement regional Coordinated Entry to **expedite the transition** from homelessness to stable housing

- Aggressively create **exit pathways** from homelessness through more strategic targeting of permanent supportive housing and access to affordable housing units

- With leadership from All Home, advocate for improved **funder coordination and alignment** regionally

- Partner with All Home King County to utilize the Focus Strategies SWAP tool to **inform** funding decisions and **allocation of resources**

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

Focus Strategies SWAP Analysis

- Focus Strategies conducting a System Wide Analysis and Projection (SWAP) process – led by All Home King County with joint funding from the City, King County and United Way

- Goal of the SWAP is to analyze local data which can inform where performance can be optimized

- Methodology includes analyzing budget and outcome data to understand the current system accomplishments

- Desired SWAP outcomes are to:
  1. Predict the impact of shifting investments
  2. Determine investment strategy
  3. Prioritize changes that will reduce homelessness, achieve outcomes

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

HIP informed by Community Engagement

- HIP Framework aligns with HSD's Outcomes Framework for results-based accountability

- Community engagement has included:

  – People experiencing homelessness

  – All Home King County engagement work for new strategic plan
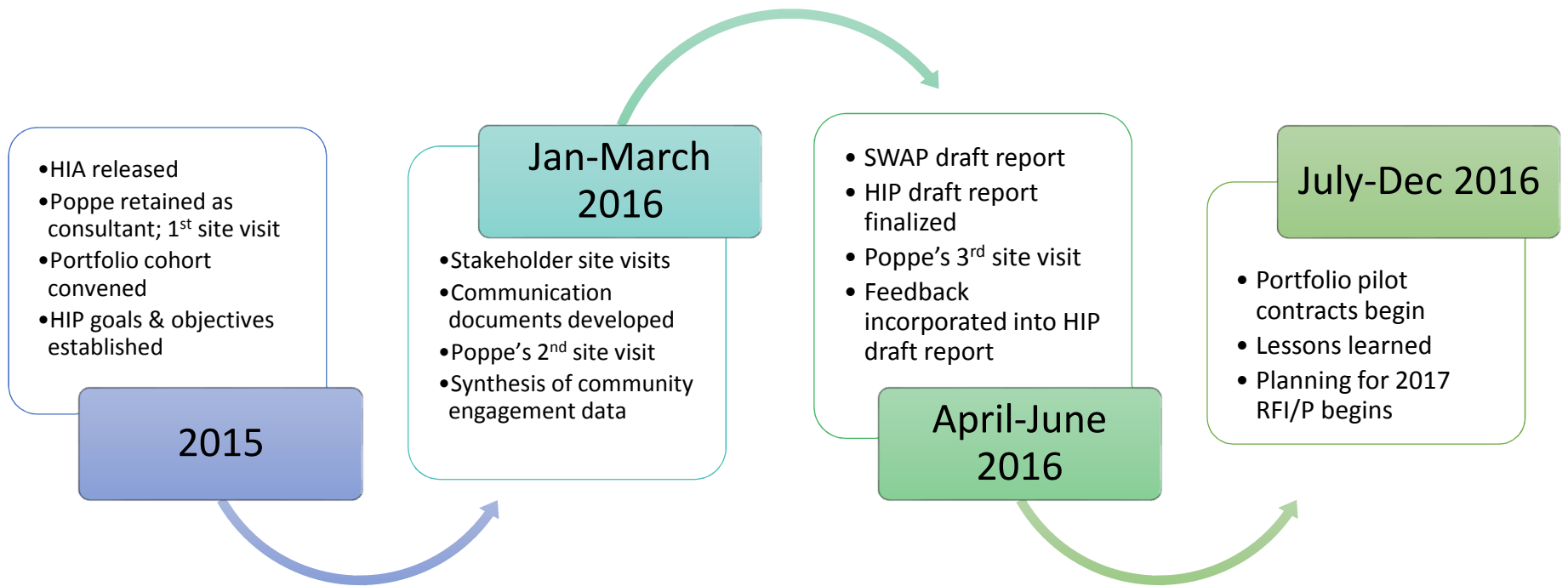
  – Meetings with community providers

  – Neighborhood meetings

  – Discussions with elected officials

  – Equity Toolkit review to ensure alignment with RSJI values and principles

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

Next Steps & Timeline

Timeline

2015
- HIA released
- Poppe retained as consultant; 1st site visit
- Portfolio cohort convened
- HIP goals & objectives established

Jan-March 2016
- Stakeholder site visits
- Communication documents developed
- Poppe's 2nd site visit
- Synthesis of community engagement data

April-June 2016
- SWAP draft report
- HIP draft report finalized
- Poppe's 3rd site visit
- Feedback incorporated into HIP draft report

July-Dec 2016
- Portfolio pilot contracts begin
- Lessons learned
- Planning for 2017 RFI/P begins

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

Next Steps

1. **Implement new portfolio contract model – by July 1, 2016**

2. **Shift system to include more focus on diversion**

3. **Increase support and funding for permanency options & housing**

4. **Ensure Alignment**
   - Portfolio contract and HIP framework with All Home King County
   - SWAP recommendations
   - Coordinated Entry for All Populations

5. **Strengthen Infrastructure & Capacity – HSD and providers**
   - New monitoring practice with a focus on data & evaluation
   - Performance-based contracting practice
   - Individualized service planning
   - Data quality and use of data to inform practice & investments

SEATTLE
HUMAN
SERVICES

Questions & Discussion

Homeless Investment Policy Development

Briefing to the Seattle City Council's Human Services & Public Health Committee

February 24, 2016

City of Seattle
Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Human Services Department
Catherine Lester, Director

HOMELESS INVESTMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK

The vision of the City of Seattle

is that all members of our community are able to benefit from the advantages of our thriving economy. Seattle is experiencing record prosperity and growth which has resulted in increased inequality where our most vulnerable residents are not able to access safe, decent and affordable housing. Homelessness is a complex problem impacted by institutions, such as the criminal justice and mental health systems, as well as broader policies, such as livable wages and affordable housing. Our region's current needs outweigh shelter capacity, leaving too many seniors, families and individuals sleeping on the street and in vehicles.

HIP Goals and Intended Outcomes

- Create a person centered system that responds to the unique needs of each family and individual. This system will strive to *make homelessness rare, brief, and one time* through rapid connection to the appropriate intervention. Providers will be expected utilize flexible progressive engagement strategies to respond to the needs of the client and center interventions in culturally competent practices.

- Outline an investment strategy based on an analysis of system and program performance for each sub-population of people experiencing homelessness. This will include system and program benchmarks, as well as incorporate best practices, and lessons learned from recent pilot projects.

- Identify housing focused solutions to create a positive impact on access to housing.

- Improve investment alignment within the City of Seattle funding areas, as well as with other funders that support our shared goals in addressing homelessness.

- Identify opportunities to improve HSD procedures resulting in routine, competitive funding processes that focus on the development of outcomes-driven and performance-based contracts, as well as decreasing the administrative burden on HSD and agency staff by maximizing contract efficiencies for agencies with multiple funded services.

- Invest in the data and evaluation capacity that is necessary to support systemic transformation, including more efficiently utilizing data available through HMIS to support sound policy decisions without threatening individual privacy or service provider funding.

The 2016 One Night Count held on January 29th found 4,505 individuals were living outside of shelters in King County, a 19% increase from 2015 (after a 21% increase from 2014).

"The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness has looked at how Seattle spends its money. For years, they have urged us to adopt an approach that is person-centered, uses data to invest in what works, and is aligned with our federal partners. But our City has been unable for decades to gather the political courage to make this shift."

"I will propose that we shift more resources toward diverting families and individuals from ever becoming homeless. We must shift from simply putting mats on the floor in shelters to funding services that move people out of shelters and into permanent housing. I will propose that we invest in providers that succeed in doing this."

- Mayor Murray

Homelessness disproportionately impacts people of color

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders:

3x more likely

African Americans:

5x more likely

Native American/Alaska Native:

7x more likely

WWW.SEATTLE.GOV/**HUMANSERVICES**

Frequently Asked Questions
(Updated 2.5.16)

Q: How does this relate to the State of Emergency on Homelessness?
A: The state of emergency declared on November 2nd, resulted in $7.3 million in single-time funding to support services designed to address the immediate needs of unsheltered individuals in our community. Mayor Murray has been clear that while this emergency declaration and funding was necessary to be able to act quickly to attempt to address the crisis of homelessness, that system improvements must be made in order to more adequately respond to homelessness long-term. The primarily short-term measures implemented as a function of the state of emergency will not lead to longer term outcomes to reduce homelessness. The City must change the way in which it currently invests the additional $40 million dollars of on-going funding dedicated to homeless services. These changes are the goal of the Homeless Investment Policy Framework.

Q: Will additional funding get directed to solving homelessness in Seattle?
A: The primary purpose in developing the Homeless Investment Policy framework is utilizing the current funding more efficiently and effectively to ensure increased successful outcomes. The process may also identify areas where additional funding would be beneficial.

Q: How is the HIP different than Communities Supporting Safe and Stable Housing?
A: HSD and the City of Seattle made a concerted attempt in 2012 to change our investment strategies through the Communities Supporting Safe and Stable Housing (CSSSH) investment plan. The HIP Framework builds upon the work done to develop the CSSSH investment plan, and incorporates many components of that plan as they were then and are still now considered to be best practice and are consistent with the Federal plan to end homelessness developed by the USICH. Many elements of the CSSSH investment plan were never successfully implemented because the community wasn't ready to make substantial changes at that time without demonstrated success.

In the years since CSSSH was released, HSD and other funders have partnered together to fund pilot projects with many community providers demonstrating the efficacy of housing-focused solutions to homelessness. The value of this approach has been demonstrated to work in our community. Also during that same time, our City unfortunately has seen a significant increase in numbers of individuals who experience homelessness, particularly those living unsheltered on our streets. Our current system is overwhelmed and fragmented, being developed program by program, rather than as a strategically developed comprehensive system of services that ensure individuals the ability to exit homelessness. It is easy to see that we cannot continue under the current structure and effectively meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our community. This time of crisis provides us with an opportunity to effect changes that were unsuccessfully attempted in the past.

Q: How does this plan fit with the work of All Home?

A: The King County All Home Strategic Plan's goal is *to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and one-time*. To make homelessness brief and one-time, we need to provide people with what they need to gain housing stability quickly. Investments in housing-focused solutions help to ensure that immediate housing options are available when a person experiences homelessness. This is the responsibility of the City of Seattle as a funder of non-profits providing homeless services. Emergency shelter addresses a homeless crisis and prevents someone from being on the streets, but it does not end homelessness. Individuals in shelter are still homeless. Implementing more effective, efficient program models that focus on housing placement will allow us to move more people out of homelessness permanently. To learn more about All Home, please visit http://allhomekc.org/.

Q: How does this relate to Coordinated Entry for All?
A: Coordinated Entry for All (CEA) is intended to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair, equal and timely access to housing and homeless assistance based on their strengths and needs. By utilizing standardized tools and practices, incorporating a system-wide housing first approach, and coordinating assistance those with the most severe service needs are prioritized. In order for CEA to be successful a comprehensive continuum of homeless services must be present in the community to refer individuals to and a significant portion of this continuum must be permanent housing options in order to assist individuals with exiting homelessness.

Q: How does this relate to the work of the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) Committee?
A: In addition to emergency response and investment efficiency, the limited supply of affordable housing must also be addressed in order to ensure long-term impact on the rates of homelessness. In 2015, Mayor Murray and the City Council convened the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda advisory committee which was tasked with developing a plan that would generate a net increase of 50,000 housing units, including 20,000 affordable units. The HALA committee work resulted in a comprehensive package of 65 recommendations. A key recommendation is to increase the Seattle Housing levy in 2016.

Through the previous housing levies the City has constructed or preserved over 12,000 rental units designated as affordable housing. Many of these units must serve extremely low income households and many units are paired with project-based rental assistance so that formerly homeless individuals can pay what they can afford. In addition to recommending a larger housing levy, the HALA recommendations also include additional strategies for ensuring the availability of affordable housing such as developer requirements to include affordable units, a Real Estate Excise tax and recommendations for zoning changes to allow increased density and non-traditional housing models. HALA recommendations consistently indicate that innovation is essential to addressing the shortage of affordable housing in our community. To learn more about HALA, please visit http://murray.seattle.gov/housing/.

Q: What does it mean to create a person-centered system?
A: A person-centered system responds to the unique needs of each family and individual based on a thorough assessment of their strengths and vulnerabilities. Once assessed, people are matched to the appropriate interventions. Interventions should also be culturally appropriate, as homelessness often looks very different in

diverse cultures. In a person-centered system, providers are encouraged to customize services to the individual needs rather than following strict funder guidelines, and decisions are made in the best interest of the individual rather than the program or agency. Utilizing a progressive engagement model is a national best practice in addressing homelessness and is consistent with both the ideals of a person-centered system and efficient use of resources. Progressive engagement provides customized levels of assistance to families and preserves the most expensive interventions for households with the most severe barriers to housing success, which enables service delivery systems to effectively target resources. This approach is supported by research that household characteristics such as income, employment, substance use, etc., cannot predict what level of assistance a household will ultimately need to exit homelessness.

Q: How will homeless service providers be engaged in the development of this new policy?
A: The Homeless Investment Policy (HIP) Framework builds upon ongoing work by the City of Seattle and regional partners, including HSD's 2012 Communities Supporting Safe and Stable Housing initiative, and All Home's 2015 Strategic Plan and current SWAP analysis. There has been extensive community engagement that has gone into each of these reports. Community engagement is also a component of the single adult system redesign and the development of population specific strategic plans through All Home. These opportunities will also be utilized to obtain provider perspective to be integrated into the HIP. In addition to utilizing this feedback, HSD will engage in additional dialogue with providers, funders, policy makers and individuals experiencing homelessness to further inform the framework.

Q: When will the changes proposed in the new homeless strategy be implemented?
A: Changes will be implemented following a phased in approach beginning with the Portfolio Model Cohort agencies in 2016 and competitive funding processes conducted in 2017 for 2018 contracts.

Q: What is the Portfolio Model?
A: The purpose of this portfolio pilot project is to work in partnership with five community agencies to explore opportunities to:

1) Shift investments and services provision to a progressive engagement model and support opportunities to streamline services. The service delivery model should be client-focused and utilize the best practice of progressive engagement to provide housing-focused, strength-based interventions at the front door of service access at key points in the system.

2) Decrease the administrative burden of agencies with multiple service contracts, by creating contract efficiencies that support service delivery, including combining contracts.

3) Improve the results achieved through contracts by using data to inform programmatic, policy, and funding changes.

The pilot will focus on opportunities to align/integrate current services, supported by alignment of contracts. The pilot will also explore the technical assistance and/or capacity needs of agencies to implement the portfolio model.

Q: Will current HSD grantees see changes in their City funding?
A: The goal of the HIP Framework is to determine the best possible ways to utilize the considerable current investments to more effectively address the issue of homelessness in our community. This will be done through use of predictive modeling and data evaluation, and in alignment with regional planning efforts such as the All Home strategic plan. Future changes to funding will be done through competitive funding processes which reflect these analyses. Current contracts will not experience changes as a result of the homeless investment plan.

Q: Who is developing the HIP Framework?
A: The HIP Framework is being developed by a core team of staff from HSD's Community Support & Assistance (CSA) Division and the Office of Housing, and guided by a larger Planning team made up of HSD leadership and staff from other divisions. Barbara Poppe has been contracted to provide expert consultation on the process. Ms. Poppe is a nationally recognized leader in addressing homelessness through data driven solutions and community collaboration. A Race and Social Justice analysis is also being conducted throughout the HIP development process with support from staff experienced with the intersections of race and social justice with homelessness, including members of HSD's RSJI Change Team. People of color continue to be overrepresented in the homeless service system, and the City and HSD continue to work to eliminate institutional policies and practices that perpetuate these disproportional numbers.

Q: How are decisions being made about the HIP Framework priorities and recommendations?
A: The HIP Framework is building on several years of both City of Seattle and King County work focused on changes to the homeless service delivery system. In addition to the process to produce the Communities Supporting Safe and Stable Housing initiative and the All Home Strategic Plan, there have been a number of innovative pilot projects that have demonstrated successful outcomes towards exiting people from homelessness, such as the Rapid Rehousing Pilot and the Bridges to Housing project. Lessons learned from these pilots and other best practices work around the country will be taken to scale as a component of the HIP Framework.

The HIP will also be informed by the work of Focus Strategies' System Wide Analytics and Projection (SWAP) tools that model program and population changes to inform funding decisions and allocation of resources. The SWAP will allow us to predict the impact of shifting investments on homeless outcomes. There are also concurrent planning efforts to develop population specific plans through All Home. This includes a focus on redesigning the single adult system. All of these processes will inform each other. To learn more about SWAP, please visit http://focusstrategies.net/swap/.

Increasing Supply of Affordable Housing and Permanent Supportive Housing

Background

With the economic recovery of recent years, Seattle is experiencing rapidly rising rents in spite of record apartment development. The impact is seen in both the crisis of homelessness and the growing concerns of lower wage working people who are moving out of the city due to housing costs. Last year, Mayor Murray and City Council convened the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda advisory committee, which developed a comprehensive package of 65 recommendations. These strategies are now advancing. Tax incentives and mandatory provisions for privately produced affordable housing are moving through City Council, new funding sources and housing preservation strategies will be introduced in the State legislature, and actions to protect and increase access for lower income tenants will be proposed next year. A key recommendation is to increase the Seattle Housing levy, which will be on the ballot in 2016.

Seattle's local funding for housing began with a senior housing bond in 1981, which produced 1,000 affordable senior apartments operated by the Seattle Housing Authority, (SHA). Since then Seattle voters have approved four housing levies, providing housing for seniors and people with disabilities, people working for modest wages and their families, and adults, families and youth experiencing homelessness. With the housing levy, and other resources, the City has now constructed or preserved over 12,000 rental units which are maintained as affordable for a minimum of 50 years.

Seattle's housing funds are prioritized for those in greatest need. About half the rental units must serve extremely low income households, (at or below 30% of area median income (AMI)). These units are generally paired with project-based rental assistance so that extremely low-income and formerly homeless residents can pay what they can afford. The balance of housing is affordable at 50% AMO or 60% AMI, below Seattle market rents.

Over the past decade, Seattle has prioritized housing for families and individuals who experience homelessness, in particular permanent supportive housing (PSH) for chronically homeless adults. From 2005 to 2014, Seattle produced 1,544 units for chronically homeless individuals, and another 848 units for homeless families, youth and young adults, and individuals. This focus on supportive housing is yielding results: chronic homelessness was down 21% las year, even while overall homelessness increased.

Seattle will invest a record amount in 2015: $44 million to eight rental housing developments that will create or preserve 809 affordable units. This includes 91 unit of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless adults, and housing with on-site employment services for homeless young adults.

Program Spotlight

Downtown Emergency Service Center (DESC) has been providing permanent supportive housing in the Seattle community since 1994. DESC currently owns and manages over 1,000 units of PSH. Permanent supportive housing allows individuals dealing with conditions such as mental illness, drug and alcohol addictions, HIV, physical or developmental disabilities, and extreme poverty to be able to experience housing stability. Residents at each site have access to 24-hours a day, 7 days a week supportive services including case-management, mental health and chemical dependency treatment, health care, and daily meals.

The Journal of American Medicine has published research demonstrating the cost effectiveness of DESC's permanent supportive housing model. A single DESC PSH program saved taxpayers more than $4 million dollars over the first year of the program operation. Prior to entering permanent supportive housing, the average publicly funded costs per resident were $86,062 annually. Compared to $13,440 per person per year to administer the housing program. Residents of this program were individuals that many would consider some of the most challenging to house and serve. Median costs for the research participants in the year prior to being housed were $4,066 per person per month in publicly-funded services such as jail, detox center use, hospital-based medical services, alcohol and drug programs and emergency medical services. The monthly median costs dropped to $1,492 and $958 after six and 12 months in housing, respectively. The cost savings clearly demonstrate providing low-barrier permanent supportive housing and on-site services is substantially more cost-effective than allowing participants to remain homeless.

DESC was a pioneer in establishing a housing first philosophy. Housing first's foundation is that living on the street is a barrier to successfully accessing services and that vulnerable clients are more successfully engaged in clinical services once that barrier has been removed. By providing chronically homeless adults with a safe and permanent apartment of their own as a first step, they are then able to more successfully engage in necessary additional services. The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) identifies housing first as a proven method of ending chronic homelessness. Housing first has also been shown to demonstrate higher housing retention rates, lower returns to homelessness, and significant reductions in the use of crisis service and institutions.   The City of Seattle, along with other local funders, such as King County, the United Way and the Gates Foundation all recognize the importance of utilizing a housing first philosophy as a means to address chronic homelessness.

City of Seattle
Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Human Services Department
Catherine Lester, Director

HOMELESS INVESTMENT
POLICY FRAMEWORK

Diversion & Rapid-Rehousing Pilot Projects

Background

Diversion is a strategy that offers families living on the street or staying in a shelter a flexible combination of financial assistance, housing search, mediation and creative problem solving with the goal of quickly moving into stable housing. By engaging with families early in their housing crisis they are more quickly able to move into housing at a lesser cost and this increases the availability of shelter for those individuals who have no other option.

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) is considered a promising practice both locally and nationally for successfully placing people into stable housing. RRH has been shown to be a cost-effective strategy to help many families successfully exit homelessness and obtain permanent housing. Rapid Re-Housing pairs financial assistance with case management and employment navigation to quickly move individuals and families into housing while working to reduce additional barriers and promote housing stabilization through financial empowerment training, job training, and other services. RRH can provide up to six months of rental assistance, with monthly subsidies reduced over time until the household is paying the full rental amount.

Progressive Engagement is a key tenet to the rapid-rehousing model. Progressive engagement provides customized levels of assistance to families and preserves the most expensive interventions for households with the most severe barriers to housing success, which enables service delivery systems to effectively target resources. This approach is supported by research that household characteristics such as income, employment, substance use, etc., cannot predict what level of assistance a household will ultimately need to exit homelessness. Initially a family receives a short-term rental subsidy, usually lasting from three to six months. The amount of housing subsidy varies, beginning with the small amount of assistance determined helpful and increased if needed. The family and the case manager work together to determine the amount the family is able to reasonably afford and determines the subsidy from there.

Program Spotlight

The Diversion Pilot offered one-time assistance to families, with housing specialists working with families to explore creative solutions to their homelessness. Any family who is experiencing homeless or at imminent risk of homeless is eligible to participate in diversion; the intent of the pilot was to offer all interested homeless families the opportunity to discuss diversion options with a housing specialist. The housing specialist conducts an assessment with the family to determine the extent of their needs and explore housing opportunities. Financial assistance can be provided to help families obtain housing, such as first and last month's rent, and moving costs if that will eliminate the family's housing barrier. While the goal is always to obtain permanent housing, creative housing solutions such as financial assistance to facilitate staying with family or friends are explored as an alternative to shelter if necessary. Any family unable to come up with a solution is still eligible for other housing options through Family Housing Connection or direct referrals to rapid re-housing from the pilot providers. During the pilot project, 62% of participants were successfully diverted from shelter.

The Rapid Re-Housing for Families (RRHF) Pilot launched in November 2013 with the goals of reducing the length of time families are homeless and to evaluate the implementation of rapid re-housing programs for homeless families in our community. The RRHF pilot has been jointly funded by the City of Seattle, King County, the Seattle Housing Authority, and the United Way of King County. Project partners include Solid Ground, YWCA of Seattle, Catholic Community Services, DAWN, Wellspring Family Services, Neighborhood House, and King County Career Connections.

Families in the RRHF pilot are provided with both a housing provider and an employment navigator. This team works together with families to help them determine and work towards housing and employment goals. Navigators can provide flexible financial assistance to families in order to reduce their barriers to employment and housing. Money can be provided to assist with expenses such as back rent, moving costs, utilities, job training, and professional licensing or certification fees. Rental assistance is graduated and generally lasts for between 3 to 6 months.

In the first 18 months of the program, nearly 150 families obtained permanent housing and 46% of those were able to locate housing within two months of enrolling in the program compared to the average length of stay in traditional transitional housing of 15 months. 87% percent of families remained stably housed when they exited the program.

A key component of the Rapid Re-Housing for Families Pilot is the implementation of learning circles. By bringing together all the project partners on a routine basis to discuss successes and challenges, as well as learn from each other and regional and national housing experts, programs were able to engage in program modification and course correction throughout the pilot process.

Transition in Place Benefits Victims of Domestic Violence

Background

Transition in Place (TIP) is a permanent housing program model in which homeless families obtain housing in the community through a market rate lease in their own name while receiving supportive services and rental assistance for a specified duration of time. TIP families have barriers to housing stability, but do not need the more intensive setting of group living or facility-based transitional housing. Unlike the traditional transitional housing model which requires individuals to move after two years, TIP has been shown to be a better, more cost effective approach for some families to achieve housing stability.

Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness for women. In the City of Seattle approximately 17% of people accessing shelter and transitional housing programs reported experiencing violence and abuse within the past year. Dynamics of domestic violence such as isolation from support networks, restriction of financial resources and destruction of property puts survivors at increased risk of becoming homeless. In addition, domestic violence survivors often lack employment history, credit history, and landlord references. These barriers may be exacerbated by mental health conditions, as survivors may suffer from anxiety, panic disorder, major depression, and substance abuse as a result of their trauma.

Transition in Place is a model that is particularly effective with survivors of domestic violence because it helps to remove some of the barriers to permanent housing that domestic violence survivors experience in a way that traditional permanent housing does not. By utilizing relationships with private landlords, programs are able to assist survivors in the identification of market rate housing that can be leased by the survivor with the support of a rental subsidy. By leasing the unit, the survivor is able to establish rental and credit history that is not established while residing in a facility-based transitional housing program. An additional benefit of this model for survivors is the increased permanency. They are able to select a unit in a location that works for them and their families, without the prospect of having to move in 18 to 24 months. This permanency decreases the impact of the trauma and facilitates healing for survivors and their children.

Program Spotlight

Bridges to Housing began in 2007 as a scattered site 2-year transitional housing model funded by the Office on Violence Against Women. The program began as facility-leased scattered site rental units that could be provided to survivors of domestic violence with the support of rental subsidies for a 24-month period at which time the lease may transfer to the survivor. Interim Community Development Association (CDA) was identified as one of the community agencies to implement the program. Interim CDA was specifically selected for their successful experience in providing housing stabilization and case management services to immigrant/refugee domestic violence survivors.

Over the years *Bridges to Housing* and Interim CDA have adapted the program to incorporate learnings and best practices from rapid re-housing models to provide a hybrid of the original transition in place model and rapid re-housing that has been optimized for survivors of domestic violence. In its current formulation, rather than the agency leasing the units and eventually transitioning the unit to the survivor after two years, leases are executed by the survivor initially and supported by the agency's rental subsidy. Interim CDA has worked extensively in their

community to establish relationships with landlords to ensure that rental units are available to their clients regardless of rental history, credit history and employment status. Leasing their own units benefits the survivors by establishing their own positive history the entire time they are in the program. Rental subsidies remain available to the client for up to 24 months; however a modified progressive engagement strategy is utilized and service plans are initially designed with much shorter levels of rental assistance.

The result of these changes is that many survivors receive rental subsidy for a considerably shorter period of time than they were at the program's inception. When Bridges to Housing first started, most Interim CDA clients received rental subsidy for the full 24 months. In 2014, by incorporating best practices of rapid re-housing and progressive engagement, the average length of rental subsidy for program participants was 16 months. These significantly decreased costs allowed the program to increase the number of participants substantially with no additional funding.

Intensive case-management was also necessary to support these changes. Interim CDA staff learned a new way of engaging their clients to facilitate faster reduction and elimination of rental assistance. As immigrant and refugee survivors, their clients often faced additional barriers, such as English competency, legal status and cultural factors and all of these must be addressed simultaneously in order to expedite the client's exit from the program. Case managers learned to focus on multiple issues at once rather than working on a single barrier at a time. Case managers became skilled not only at housing placement, but also employment navigation and financial empowerment education. By combining all these services into case management, the survivors they are working with have seen remarkable improvement in establishing self-sufficiency.

Funders Alignment

Background

In 2005, our community formed All Home (formerly the Committee to End Homelessness in King County), creating a broad coalition of stakeholders to focus on addressing and eliminating homelessness in King County. The Funder's Alignment Committee, formerly the Funders Group, operationalizes the funding priorities of the All Home strategic plan, by supporting the prioritized strategies, allocating and monitoring resources and leveraging funding decisions to ensure accountability to identified policies, priorities, and best practices.

Like many jurisdictions, Seattle/King County has collaborated for many years around specific fund sources, such as creating a joint regional application for McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act funding and establishing inter-local agreements among the county and local cities on expenditure of federal Community Development Block Grant funds. Those are, however, discrete funds that do not have the complexity of issues created around multiple funds with differing requirements, conditions and goals. The formal Funders Group was established in 2008 because all of the prior informal cooperation on specific projects, however useful, simply did not create transparent and accountable system-wide goals and actions. Since that time, the Funders Alignment Committee has had multiple changes of administrations, governance, and leadership at all levels.

Without coordination between funders, the homeless service delivery system cannot possibly expect to become a fully integrated cohesive system. Funding decisions are often influenced by intense political pressures when funders attempt to set goals and priorities individually. System change, which can be expected by its very nature to incur resistance, can be defeated by individual funders not supporting change or "backfilling" with dollars to support the status quo when others try to redirect investments. By embracing shared priorities and work plans, the Funders Alignment Committee creates a much more successful force for change. Having funders aligned also encourages the other partners within the system, such as providers and advocates, to be more accepting and willing to work in new ways.

In addition to agreed investment priorities and best practices, the Funders Alignment Committee also works to ensure continuity between funding and contracting processes.   A number of innovative pilot projects have been jointly funded by regional funding partners, such as the Diversion and Rapid-Rehousing for Family's pilot projects. By bringing together multiple fund sources and coordinating contracting and reporting processes, staff and overhead costs are reduced for both the funders and the agencies, which allows pilots to spend more time and resources on implementation of projects.

On those projects that aren't funded jointly there are still concerted efforts to align processes. Funders communicate on the timing and release of funding to ensure that there is not a significant application burden placed on agencies for completing multiple funding applications in close proximity. Representatives from other funders participate in each other's rating and review panels to make funding recommendations. Alignment in contracting is achieved by inclusion of consistent language for areas that impact all funders, such as the use of the Homeless Management Information System. While not yet implemented, there are discussions regarding the possibility of aligning contract outcomes in future processes.

Youth &Young Adult Homeless Service System

Background

Youth and Young Adults (YYA) are one of the fastest growing homeless populations. . In 2015 "Count Us In", Seattle/King County's point in time count for homeless youth and young adults, reported there were 824 homeless or unstably housed youth and young adults on any given night. Youth and young adults require unique housing and services because they are still developing as young adults and need additional support until they are able to fully care for themselves, gain life experience, and transition to adulthood. Youth may become homeless as a result of fleeing conflict, abuse or poverty stricken homes. The homes youth flee from often have high rates of chemical dependency and/or mental health issues. Some youth are evicted from their homes due to behavioral issues, teen pregnancy or sexual orientation. In some cases, homelessness is temporarily postponed by "couch surfing" at friends or extended family's homes. Typically youth experiencing homelessness have become disconnected from educational systems, lack work history, and do not have the life skills or financial resources to live on their own. Youth experiencing homeless often have significant compounding factors such as a history of abuse, including commercial sexual exploitation or juvenile justice system involvement.

Due to their unique characteristics and challenges, youth experiencing homelessness must be both integrated into the homelessness service continuum and yet receive distinctive responses specific to the population. Our response to the youth and young adult housing crisis has been to fund 109 beds regionally for 18-24 month transitional and permanent housing and 85 young adult and 8 youth emergency shelter beds.   In spite of these investments, hundreds of young adults are on the waitlist for stable housing through Youth Housing Connection, our region's coordinated entry program, and on many nights young adults are turned away from shelter due to a lack of capacity.

In recent years the YYA homelessness system has been focused on bringing together providers and funders to ensure systemic cohesiveness and is now working towards implementing adaptations of many of the programs that have demonstrated success in either the family or single-adult populations. It is challenging for programs to be directly translated into successfully housing youth, due to age limitations and a lack of rental and employment history. For these reasons, innovative programs must be developed either by adapting models utilized in other populations, or by developing youth specific interventions. Both of these approaches are currently happening in our community with multiple innovative projects currently in their planning and implementation phases.

Project Spotlight

The Rapid Re-Housing for Young Adults (RRH for YA) project was submitted for funding to the McKinney Homeless Assistance Continuum of Care Competition in 2015. The RRH for YA model is a collaborative effort between HSD, All Home, and community-based agencies that builds on existing rental assistance programs administered by partner agencies, best practices in young adult RRH in other jurisdictions, lessons learned from RRH for families in King County, and input from young people involved in The Mockingbird Society's Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness program.

Consistent with the All Home Youth and Young Adult Comprehensive Plan Refresh, this regional RRH for YA program will serve homeless young adults ages 18 to 24 with stepped down rental assistance. Stepped down

rental assistance will provide funding for a period of 12-18 months, with the option of extended support for up to 24 months. The extended length of rental assistance compared to traditional rapid rehousing programs is due to the specific needs of young adults without rental and work history. This extended length of time will allow for increased time for young adults to increase their capacity for self-sufficiency. Focus will be placed on serving young adults with the longest stays in young adult shelter and young people in South Seattle and South King County, many of whom are young people of color.

Referrals to the regional RRH for YA program will occur through Youth Housing Connection, our community's system of coordinated entry. Youth Housing Connection prioritizes the most vulnerable young people for referral to housing programs. RRH for YA will not impose restrictions on eligibility based on sobriety or criminal background. This is consistent with our community's emphasis on a Housing First approach. Although young people will have to meet requirements imposed by private landlords, housing identification staff will work to identify landlords with low barriers to entry.

Housing identification services will be centralized with the YMCA, allowing one agency to further develop expertise in recruiting landlords and assisting young people with finding rental housing. The YMCA will work closely with the YWCA's Landlord Liaison Project, All Home's OneHome project in addition to their own search for alternative and creative options to secure housing. Furthermore, the YMCA will work to support young people's permanent connections and develop more affordable living arrangements, by exploring options for young people to lease rooms with or from friends or family members.

The RRH for YA project will integrate the provision of financial assistance with case management. To ensure geographic coverage throughout King County and linkage to shelters, drop-in centers, and other services accessed by homeless young people, case management will be provided by four sub-recipients: Friends of Youth, Therapeutic Health Services, the YMCA of Greater Seattle, and YouthCare. Case managers will provide individualized service plans which will focus on the following service goals: assistance with housing identification; maintaining permanent housing; enrollment in mainstream benefits; budgeting; maintaining a relationship with their landlord; payment of bills; education re-engagement; transportation support; mental health and chemical dependency services as needed; building community supports; and a strong emphasis on increasing income and where appropriate gaining employment.