DOING BUSINESS IN A DIFFERENT WAY

2009 ANNUAL REPORT

TEN-YEAR PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS IN KING COUNTY
When we began implementation of the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness in King County in 2005, we promised to look for innovative ways to help people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness. We vowed to work together as never before: to create new housing, prevent homelessness where possible, create new partnerships and collaborations, break down barriers to housing for those most fragile, embrace best practices, and coordinate our resources in ways that yield the strongest results for our entire region.

In our 2009 Annual Report, we are proud to say that we are delivering on our promise. We have changed the way we tackle homelessness, and we are making a difference. In 2009, the Ten-Year Plan:

- Added 1,065 new housing units, our highest production year ever.
- Expanded our innovative Funders Group, bringing together the major funders of housing and services to set regional goals and priorities and jointly fund those priorities.
- Refined our approaches to housing through “housing first” efforts and improved coordination for entry into housing and services.
- Launched new prevention programs.
- Celebrated the one-year anniversary of our Landlord Liaison Project, breaking down barriers to housing.
- Expanded our programs to help people who are severely disabled.

Our efforts are all the more significant given that they have been achieved in the shadow of a severe recession. Sharp increases in homelessness have been reported across the country, but that is not happening here. In our recent One Night Count, we found a decrease of four percent of those counted in like areas compared to last year.

While that is good news, we must not forget that thousands are still homeless and the unstable economy leaves many more at risk. Our work is far from done.

We are nearing the half-way point in our Ten-Year Plan. Our goal remains a roof over every bed. With energy and commitment, we pledge to continue that work. We sincerely hope you will join us in that effort.

Co-chairs, Governing Board, Committee to End Homelessness in King County

The Committee to End Homelessness in King County guides a community-wide campaign to provide housing and supportive services to thousands of individuals and families without a permanent roof over their heads or those at risk of losing their homes. Launched in 2005 by partners across the community, the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness will create lasting solutions to homelessness in our region.
2009 PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS

PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS

- Local prevention programs helped over 5,000 people with emergency assistance, providing the average household about $2,200, a modest investment to sustain housing.
- New prevention programs launched in 2009 are carefully targeted to help those households most at risk of homelessness.

MOVING PEOPLE RAPIDLY FROM HOMELESSNESS TO HOUSING

- More than 4,700 individuals in over 3,350 households were able to leave homelessness thanks to the combined efforts of providers, housing authorities, funders and landlords.
- The Landlord Liaison Project grew, paving the way for 271 households to enter into lease agreements with private landlords.
- A total of 1,065 new units or dedicated subsidies opened in 2009, our greatest production year ever, with another 988 in the pipeline. Our cumulative total of 4,111 units opened or in development exceeds the entire ten-year plan goals of most major cities.
- Local partners launched the Rapid Re-Housing pilot funded through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act that will help greatly reduce the time households spend in emergency or transitional housing.
- Our point-in-time count of people on the streets and in emergency shelter decreased four percent on a “comparable area” basis.

INCREASING THE EFFICIENCY OF EXISTING SYSTEMS

- The Funders Group oversaw the distribution of $41 million from seven different funders and 16 separate fund sources to help create 17 new projects and programs.
- We created system-wide coordinated entry into programs for chronically homeless individuals; similar efforts are underway to facilitate entry for families.
- The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Homeless Families Initiative began the steps toward transforming our family homelessness system in King County.

On the cover: Children’s computer lab at Hopelink, an agency serving homeless and other families in need in north and east King County.

Celebration of the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement for the Bill & Melinda Gates Family Initiative in partnership with cities, counties and the Washington Families Fund.

From left, Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels, Governor Christine Gregoire, King County Executive Ron Sims, Pierce County Executive Pat McCarthy and Tacoma Mayor Bill Baarsma.
From the start, we invested in solid prevention programs and created housing with services. Now we are making those investments even more effective by bringing together all of the major regional funders of homeless housing and support services. Our 2009 joint Notice of Funding Availability brought together $41 million from seven funders and 16 funding sources that targeted resources on common priorities.

As in many jurisdictions, our homelessness programs are funded by a broad array of governmental and philanthropic entities. Previously, each had its own application process and constraints. Providers needed years to assemble funding and often had to juggle conflicting priorities or requirements, resulting in a process that was cumbersome and inefficient.

In 2008, the Governing Board called for creation of a formal “Funders Group” of the major homelessness funders. That group consists of department directors and executive directors from King County, City of Seattle, King County Housing Authority, Seattle Housing Authority, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Building Changes, United Way of King County and suburban cities representatives.

The Funders Group establishes regional priorities, deliverables and time lines. The current priorities include creating new housing, reducing barriers to housing, creating coordinated entry for single adults and families, improving our data system, and increasing linkages to mainstream systems. With so many partners involved – capital, operating, treatment, and others – we are able to define what we want to invest in, and do it.

Our level of coordination is unique among homelessness systems in the United States, and a model for others. However, we continue to look for ways to improve. In 2010, we will increase collaboration with mainstream systems like K-12 education, Washington Department of Social and Health Services, Veterans Administration and others.

It is not easy to bring together multiple entities and funding streams, but our efforts demonstrate the extraordinary benefits possible when the key players commit to working together.
LANDLORD LIAISON PROJECT - ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

When we launched the Ten-Year Plan our Consumer Advisory Council, all of whom had experience with homelessness, spoke movingly about the barriers they faced securing private market rentals as a result of poor credit, prior evictions and criminal justice involvement. They urged us to partner with private landlords to open those doors. From this recommendation was born the Landlord Liaison Project (LLP).

We met with landlords and asked what it would take for them to accept tenants who, on paper, do not meet traditional screening criteria. The landlords helped us develop a toolkit that includes housing search, case management supports, emergency assistance and a risk reduction fund. In 2007, local funders (King County, Seattle, and United Way of King County) pooled resources to fund a risk reduction fund and a start-up project. In 2008, Congregations for the Homeless served as the pilot and the YWCA was awarded the contract to take it to scale.

Today, the Landlord Liaison Project has the enthusiastic support of landlords, funders, providers and residents and the program regularly fields inquiries from communities across the nation with requests to share our toolkit.

In 2009, the project hit some important milestones:

- 74 landlords signed on to accept tenants.
- 35 agencies signed on as referral partners.
- 271 hard-to-place individuals signed leases.
- In March 2010, the first resident housed by the YWCA celebrated her one-year anniversary. She had been homeless and turned down for tenancy many times but now lives safely and securely in her own apartment a year later.

“I was working with one woman who, before, had been sleeping under bridges and in tents for 14 years. She needed a wheelchair accessible unit, and her lack of rental history created another barrier to housing. We were having a very hard time finding an apartment that worked for her needs and a landlord willing to accept her. Steve with the LLP found the perfect unit, and the LLP contributed move-in funds and other help. My client is doing well and thrilled with her place!” — Dawn Klebich, Evergreen REACH Program
Our region is a national leader in “housing first” for single adults - the concept that the first step in creating stability is getting people housed as quickly as possible. The services that help people maintain sustain stability work best if the person is housed. Our low-barrier housing for chronically homeless single adults has received national study and acclaim. We are reducing costs and more important, saving lives.

In 2009, we moved forward with other significant changes in how we approach housing. First, we moved to apply the housing first approach to the family system, including a rapid re-housing approach described more on the following page.

Second, we created a system of coordinated entry for chronically homeless single adults. Previously, when an agency opened a new facility, it would fill vacancies from its individual wait list. In 2009, we began a Client Care Coordination Program, which created a list of homeless individuals who are extremely vulnerable or repeatedly cycle in and out of hospitals, jails or mental health institutions. We are using this information to coordinate care and referrals to supportive housing. When agencies open new facilities, they place people directly into housing using this list. In this way, the housing we are creating is targeted precisely to the people for whom it is designed.

Planning is underway for a similar procedure for families, where we will create entry through a single point, uniform evaluations at regional hubs, and a “placement list” that will link a family to the first unit in a housing project that meets their needs. This will be a dramatic improvement from the current system, where families go from agency to agency looking for the first open bed.

We are changing how we house people, and we continue to look for improvements. We must refine and increase our rapid re-housing services to minimize the time families are homeless. For those in need of long-term support, we must create a system that helps residents to achieve stability to steadily reduce the supports needed, so that those resources can be freed up for others in need.
RAPID RE-HOUSING STABILIZES FAMILIES

Rapid Re-Housing for families, an expansion of our “housing first” approach, is one of our strongest innovations for 2009 and a major emphasis in our strategy to end homelessness.

This represents a turn-around from the traditional approach that viewed families who were homeless as people in need of ‘fixing’ and responded with a continuum of housing and services that moved them along, like a conveyor belt, from emergency shelter to transitional housing to permanent housing.

In 2009, local partners launched the Rapid Re-Housing Pilot Project, funded in part by $1.9 million through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act. In 2010, a portion of these funds will be used to help 150 households quickly return to housing stability.

Rapid re-housing recognizes that many households become homeless simply as a result of a financial crisis or following a domestic conflict. They can usually remain housed with limited assistance. By helping them return to permanent housing as soon as possible with only those services that are absolutely necessary (instead of a lengthy process of creating “housing readiness”), they avoid all the negative outcomes associated with prolonged homelessness. This opens beds for others who need them, and reduces the public and personal costs of homelessness.

PAMELA'S STORY

Pamela was one of the first clients referred to Wellspring Family Services’ Rapid Re-Housing project. Over the last year, Pamela and her daughter had moved many times, staying with friends, living in shelters, and trying to get back on their feet after a divorce split up their family. Pamela was discouraged and lacking confidence in her ability to shift her life again, but she has a creative nature and a strong desire to make life better for her and her daughter, so she decided to give the program a try.

With Wellspring’s help, she got an apartment, enrolled her daughter in school and found a job. She even educated her landlord about the Rapid Re-Housing project — opening up housing opportunities for other clients.

Now settled, the program is helping Pamela create a monthly budget and start a savings plan. She plans to go back to school and work in social services so she can help other families.
Rhonda is looking forward to getting back on her feet. She is grateful to the prevention programs that helped her to remain in her apartment while she recovers.

Rhonda’s Story

We have all heard the phrase, “I just need a little help until I can get back on my feet.” For Rhonda, this phrase took on literal meaning.

Rhonda lost her job as a shipping agent. Knowing it would be hard to find work in this economy, she polished her resume, began looking for jobs, and applied for unemployment benefits in case the search took longer than she hoped.

In the middle of the application process, Rhonda broke her foot. Unable to seek or accept employment during a difficult recovery, she became ineligible for unemployment benefits. Afraid of being evicted from her apartment, she applied to the Prevention Project and met Veronica, a case manager with the Multi-Service Center (MSC). Rhonda is receiving rental assistance until the doctor gives her the go-ahead to walk. She says, “I’ve always supported myself, but I was at the end of my rope when I thought I was going to lose my home. Veronica was an angel and I can’t thank her enough. I can’t wait to get a job so I can donate to MSC and help other people in my situation.”
REACHING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

From the beginning, the Ten-Year Plan has sought to help homeless people with serious disabilities, aided by significant support from United Way of King County’s Campaign to End Chronic Homelessness. The Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) and the Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (FACT) Program are helping people with mental illness stop cycling through psychiatric hospitals and jails. Studies have proven their effectiveness in stabilizing lives and greatly reducing public costs.

In 2009, we reached out to help an even more difficult-to-serve group – those non-violent offenders with mental illness too serious to be held accountable to the criminal justice system, yet not serious enough to warrant involuntary treatment. The Forensic Intensive Services and Housing Program (FISH) uses a team-based approach to help these individuals move quickly into stable supportive housing and end the revolving door between jail and homelessness. In its first year, FISH helped 36 people with complex needs.

MR. W’S STORY

Mr. W is a veteran in his late forties, well known to the courts and police officers for a range of frequent petty crimes. Diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder-depressive type, methamphetamine dependence, and cannabis abuse with occasional anxiety attacks, he would usually be found not legally competent to participate in his defense. As his mental health symptoms didn’t pose a threat to the community, he didn’t meet criteria for involuntary hospitalization. So he would be picked up, found incompetent and released.

Through the FISH project, Mr. W is receiving veterans services, housing, and mental health treatment. Focused on maintaining sobriety and complying with court supervision requirements, he meets regularly with his case manager, is learning how to avoid alcohol or drug relapses and is building relationships. Mr. W has not been picked up once since entering the program. He plans to return to school and look for work.
We are almost half way through our Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness in King County. We have made wonderful strides in creating new housing. We have dramatically changed how our homeless system works – in funding coordination, prevention and linking housing with supportive services. More important, we have helped thousands of moms and children, veterans and seniors to achieve stability. We are one of a handful of regions nationwide that other communities come to visit to see “how it is done right.”

As we take pride in what we have accomplished, we must acknowledge frustration that so many people remain homeless. The last two years have been devastating, as many have struggled to weather the greatest economic recession since the Great Depression.

To achieve our goal to end homelessness, we must at a minimum maintain our current resource level even in tough budget times. Second, we must challenge ourselves as a region to do more with what we have. Third, we must continue to build our community’s commitment that we can and must end homelessness.

It is this last point that gives me the most hope. We have shown that homelessness is not a given. People who are severely disabled and have been on the streets for years can return to stability. With the help of United Way and the Gates Foundation, we are working to help families overcome obstacles and achieve safe and secure homes for their children. At all levels of government, in nonprofits, faith communities, business communities and among homeless and formerly homeless people, we are sustaining vital partnerships to keep us moving forward.

In the fifth year of a Ten-Year Plan, I would expect public attention and support to begin flagging. It is not. I firmly believe that it is precisely because we have shown how effective we can be, and how willing we are to change our systems for the better, that our public, private and governmental support remains strong.

If we keep that commitment, we can end homelessness in King County.

Bill Block, Project Director, Committee to End Homelessness
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2009 Governing Board

Dan Brettler, Co-Chair — Chairman/CEO/President, CAR TOYS Inc.
Ron Sims, Co-Chair — County Executive, King County
Shahla Aly — General Manager/Solutions Delivery, Microsoft Corporation
David Bley — Director/Pacific Northwest Initiatives, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Patsy Bonincontri — Councilmember, City of Bellevue
Monte Bridges — Superintendent, Puget Sound Educational Service District
Tim Burgess — Councilmember, City of Seattle
Tara Connor — Steering Committee Member, Seattle King County Coalition on Homelessness
Jon Fine — President/CEO, United Way of King County
John Fletcher — Vice President/CEO WA/MT Region, Providence Health System
David Freiboth — Executive Secretary/Treasurer, King County Labor Council
Kathy Lambert — Councilmember, King County Council
Daniel Lessler, MD — Medical Director, Harborview Medical Center
Mike Lowry — Former Governor, Washington State
Keith McGlashan — Councilmember, City of Shoreline
Jaclyn Mellon — Consumer Advocate
Greg Nickels — Mayor, City of Seattle
Blake W. Nordstrom — President, Nordstrom, Inc.
Sue L. Rahr — Sheriff, King County
Norman B. Rice — Former Mayor, City of Seattle
Sheila Sebron — Consumer Advocate
Father Stephen V. Sundborg, S.J. — President, Seattle University
Rev. Robert V. Taylor — Community Leader
John Wise — Mayor, City of Enumclaw

2009 Interagency Council

Sue Sherbrooke, Co-Chair — CEO, YWCA of Seattle-King County-Snohomish County
Stephen Norman, Co-Chair — Executive Director, King County Housing Authority
Humberto Alvarez — Steering Committee Member, Seattle King County Coalition on Homelessness
Karen Bergsvik — Manager, Human Services, City of Renton
Rhonda Berry — Administrator, City of Tukwila
Dennis Brown — Reintegration Program Manager, Washington Department of Veterans Affairs
Michael Brown — Director, Community Projects, Seattle Foundation
Tom Carr — City Attorney, City of Seattle
Doreen Cato — Executive Director, First Place
Mark Dalton — Administrator, WA State Social & Human Services, Belltown CSO
Lynn Davison — Executive Director, Common Ground
Dr. Charissa Fotinos — Medical Director, Public Health-Seattle & King County
Bill Hallerman — Vice President, Catholic Housing Services
Mike Heinisch — Executive Director, Kent Youth and Family Services
Bill Hobson — Executive Director, Downtown Emergency Service Center
Lynette Hynden — Manager, Human Services, City of Federal Way
Kate Joncas — President, Downtown Seattle Association
Clark Kimeer — Deputy Chief, Seattle Police Department
Paul Lambros — Executive Director, Plymouth Housing Group
Barbara Langdon — Executive Director, Eastside Domestic Violence Program
Emily Leslie — Manager, Human Services, City of Bellevue
Jackie MacLean — Director, King County Community and Human Services
Marilyn Mason-Plunkett — Executive Director, Hopelink
Mark Okazaki — Executive Director, Neighborhood House
David Okimoto — Vice President, Community Services, United Way of King County
Alan Painter — Director, Human Services, City of Seattle
Adrienne Quinn — Director, Office of Housing, City of Seattle
Michael Ramos — Executive Director, Church Council of Greater Seattle
David Ramsay — City Manager, City of Kirkland
Faith Richie — CEO, Valley Cities Counseling & Consulting
Marlèna Sessions — Executive Director, Workforce Development Council of Seattle - King County
Nancy S. — Representative, Consumer Advisory Council
Kathleen Southwick — Executive Director, Crisis Clinic
Jim Theofelis — Executive Director, Mockingbird Society
Tom Tierney — Executive Director, Seattle Housing Authority
Kathy Van Olst — Director, King County Adult and Juvenile Detention
Christine V. — Representative, Consumer Advisory Council

Consumer Advisory Council

Blue M.
Jaclyn M.
Christine V.
Latrice W.
Anthony C.
Daniel F.
Paul G.
Ariyetta N.
Margaret K.
Sheila S.
Nancy S.

For confidentiality reasons, members have elected to use just their last initial.
TEN-YEAR PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS IN KING COUNTY

Municipal Endorsers
City of Auburn
City of Bellevue
City of Burien
City of Covington
City of Enumclaw
City of Federal Way
City of Issaquah
City of Kenmore
City of Kirkland
City of Pacific
City of Redmond
City of Renton
City of Sammamish
City of SeaTac
City of Seattle
City of Shoreline
City of Tukwila
City of Woodinville
King County
Suburban Cities Association

Other Endorsers and Participants
24-Seven Ministry Center
A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH)
Abu Bakr Mosque
All Saints Episcopal Church
Alliance of Eastside Agencies
American Jewish Committee
Archdiocesan Housing Authority
Assumption Catholic Church
Bethany United Church of Christ
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Blessed Sacrament Roman Catholic Parish
Bothell United Methodist Church
Building Changes (formerly AIDS Housing of Washington)
Calvary Lutheran Church
Capitol Hill Housing
Catholic Community Services King County
Central Lutheran Church
Child Care Resources
Christ the King Catholic Church
Church Council of Greater Seattle
Cobweb Specialties LLC
Common Ground
Community Psychiatric Clinic
Compass Center
Congregation Beth Shalom
Congregation Eitz Or
Congregations for the Homeless Council on American-Islamic Relations /CAIR-Seattle Organization
Crisis Clinic
Des Moines United Methodist Church
Downtown Action to Save Housing (DASH)
Downtown Emergency Service Center (DESC)
Downtown Seattle Association
Eastside Domestic Violence Program
Eastside Friends Meeting
Eastside Human Service Providers
Episcopal Church of the Resurrection
Evergreen Treatment Services
Family & Adult Service Center
Fauntleroy United Church of Christ
First African Methodist Episcopal Church
First Congregational Church of Bellevue
First Evangelical Lutheran Church
First Place
First Presbyterian Church of Bellevue
First United Methodist Church
Friends of Youth
Gethsemane Lutheran Church
Good Shepherd Baptist Church
Habitat for Humanity Seattle/South King County
Harborview Medical Center
Holy Cross Lutheran Church
Holy Spirit Lutheran Church
Hopelink
Housing Resources Group
International District Housing Alliance
IMAN Organization
Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center
Interfaith Community Church
Islamic Center of Eastside
Islamic Center of Shoreline
Jamii Muslimin Cham Mosque
King County Housing Authority
Kirkland Interfaith Transitions in Housing
Lake Washington United Methodist Church
Lake Ridge Lutheran Church
League of Women Voters
Microsoft Corporation
Minority Executive Directors Coalition
Mockingbird Society
Mount Zion Baptist Church Multi-Service Center
Neighborhood House
Newport Presbyterian Church
North Urban Human Services Alliance
Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church
Northshore United Church of Christ
Ohana Youth Project
Overlake Presbyterian Church
Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Methodist Church
Path With Art
Plymouth Congregational Church
Plymouth Housing Group
Public Health – Seattle & King County
Rainier Beach United Methodist Church
Renton First United Methodist Church
Sand Point Community United Methodist Church
Seattle Community Law Center
Seattle First Baptist Church
Seattle First United Methodist Church
Seattle Foundation
Seattle Housing Authority
Seattle MennoHite Church
Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness (SKCCH)
Seattle’s Union Gospel Mission
SHARE/WHEEL
Sisters of Providence
Sojourner Truth Ministries
Solid Ground
South King County Forum on Homelessness
South King County Human Services Forum
St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church
St. Andrew’s Housing Group
St. James Cathedral
St. John United Lutheran Church
St. John Vianney Parish
St. Joseph Parish
St. Louise Church
St. Luke’s Lutheran Church
St. Mark’s Episcopal Cathedral
St. Mary’s Catholic Church
St. Patrick’s Catholic Church of Seattle
St. Therese Parish
Temple Beth Am
Temple B’nai Torah
Unitarian Housing Group
United Way of King County
University Baptist Church
University Christian Church
University Congregational United Church of Christ
University District Chamber of Commerce
University Friends Meeting
University Lutheran Church
University Temple United Methodist Church
University Urban Coalition
University Unitarian Church
Valley Cities Counseling & Consultation
Vets Edge
Wallinford United Methodist Church
Washington Low Income Housing Alliance
Washington State Department of Corrections
Washington State Department of Social and Health Services
Wedgewood Community Church
Wellspring Family Services
Woodinville Unitarian Universalist Church
Woodland Park United Methodist Church
YouthCare
YWCA of Seattle • King County
YWCA of Snohomish County