



Human Services Commission Regular Meeting

Date: July 22, 2025

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: Rose Hill Room, Kirkland City Hall, 123 5th Ave Kirkland, WA 98033

The commission is directed by the City Council to advise the Parks and Community Services Department, City Manager, and City Council in leading the City's efforts to support a socially sustainable community through health and human services and programs that fulfill the basic needs of all people and enhance the quality of life in our city now and into the future.

AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **ROLL CALL**
3. **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. June 24, 2025
5. **ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE**
6. **BUSINESS**
 - a. 2026 Community Development Block Grant Allocation
7. **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**
 - a. Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan Update
 - b. Health Through Housing Update
8. **COMMUNICATIONS**
 - a. Commissioner Reports
 - b. Staff Reports and Announcements
9. **ADJOURNMENT**

Upcoming Commission Activities:

Regular Meeting – August 26, 2025

Alternate Formats: Persons with disabilities may request materials in alternative formats. Persons with hearing impairments may access the Washington State Telecommunications Relay Service at 711.

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HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
Minutes Commission Regular Meeting
June 24, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gabriela Lopez Vazquez called the meeting to order at 6:33pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Chair Gabriela Lopez Vazquez, Vice Chair Sriram Rajagopalan, Commissioners Kobey Sage Chew, Jory Hamilton, Cristian Liu, Shannon Quinn, Youth Commissioner Eric Dodd.

Commissioner Tasnim Rehamani joined at 6:35pm.

Staff Present: Human Services Manager Jen Boone, Human Services Coordinator Anny Smith, Human Services Office Specialist Kerry Lam.

Meeting Recorder: Human Services Office Specialist Kerry Lam.

3. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Commissioner Jory Hamilton read the land acknowledgment. Commissioner Eric Dodd will read the land acknowledgement for the July meeting.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Gabriela Lopez Vazquez requested a motion to approve the May 27, 2025 minutes. Commissioner Tasnim Rehamani motioned for approval. Vice Chair Sriram Rajagopalan seconded. Motion carried (Yes: 8, No: 0, Abstention:0).

5. ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Lalita Uppala, with Indian American Community Services, provided public comment.

6. BUSINESS

a. Update on Human Services Commission Response to April Panel Discussion

Vice Chair Sriram Rajagopalan presented a draft of a letter to City Council summarizing key concerns raised during the April Panel Discussion and included recommendations related to fear, community needs, and increased support. Commissioners provided comments and suggested revisions. Commissioners will provide additional feedback directly to Vice Chair Sriram Rajagopalan by Friday due date. The Commission discussed a plan to finalize the letter by next Monday to submit to City Council for consideration.

7. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

a. Pride Across the Bridge

Axton Burton, representing Pride Across the Bridge, provided a presentation outlining their mission to provide resources, offer advocacy opportunities, and curate events that are aligned with the needs of the diverse Eastside queer community, to build connection and foster safety so the 2SLGPTQIA+ people are empowered, included, and represented close to home. Axton highlighted “The Big Book of All Things Queer”, an educational resource and provider referral guide for the Eastside and related the grant application experience with from the point of view of his organization.

b. Renewal Food Bank

Philip Peters, Executive Director, and Ragini Gupta, Development and Public Relations Manager, representing Renewal Food Bank, presented an overview of the low-barrier food assistance program, serving approximately 500 families weekly. They discussed funding and budgeting challenges, safety concerns of their populations, and application concerns.

c. Behind the Scenes Series: The Reporting and Payment Process

The scheduled presentation was postponed due to time constraints.

8. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Cristian Liu reported on attending the March on No Kings Day at Marina Park, describing it as a purposeful and safe event. Vice Chair Sriram Rajagopalan also noted his attendance.

Vice Chair Sriram Rajagopalan attended the King County Disabilities Fair, which included workshops and resource tables. He suggested the possibility of tours of Kindering and the Lake Washington School District Special Education Department. He also reported attending the Kirkland Pride Celebration.

Chair Gabriela Lopez Vazquez shared a well-being resource called “Check-In With Yourself”, a multilingual digital tool developed by the University of Washington. The app supports young adults in reflecting on emotions, learning coping strategies, and accessing 24/7 connection with support.

Commissioner Jory Hamilton noted that a recent online search of homelessness in Kirkland revealed a large volume of negative speech, raising concerns about community safety perceptions, drug use, and criminal stigma at the former La Quinta hotel that is slated to open a permanent, supportive housing project later this year.

Commissioner Tasnim Rehamani reported on her new role as Regional Outreach Manager for Lighthouse Mental Health. The organization provides services for individuals from age 5 through end-of-life care and supports clients in 9 languages. She inquired about adding Lighthouse to the HSC resource website.

Commissioner Kobey Sage Chew reported attending a presentation at Evergreen Health describing what levy funded services they provide, along with mental and behavioral health support.

Commissioner Shannon Quinn reported about the Job Corps and possible closures, which may leave many in King and Pierce County with nowhere to return home to.

b. Staff Reports & Announcements

Human Services Coordinator, Anny Smith, shared two upcoming events, the Kirkland Health Fair scheduled for September 20, 2025, and City Hall for All, scheduled for September 13. Commissioners will have an opportunity to staff a table at City Hall for All to share information about human services and engage with the community.

Human Services Manager, Jen Boone, noted that the updated manual has been distributed, staff are working to upload it to SharePoint for ongoing access.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Gabriela Lopez Vazquez asked for a motion to adjourn meeting. Commissioner Jory Hamilton motioned to adjourn and was seconded by Commissioner Cristian Liu. Meeting was adjourned at 8:39 pm.



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Parks and Community Services
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033
425-587-3000

MEMORANDUM

To: Human Services Commission

From: Jen Boone, Human Services Manager

Date: July 10, 2025

Subject: Review 2026 Community Development Block Grant Allocation

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Human Services Commission receive a presentation providing an overview of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and review the estimated allocation of CDBG funds for 2026.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Kirkland receives federal Community Block Grant (CDBG) funds through King County to support low- and moderate-income residents.
- As part of a 34-city consortium, Kirkland is responsible to plan and direct its own share of funds for public services, planning and administration, and capital projects each year.
- Staff will brief the Commission with the estimated 2026 allocation of funds before the public hearing scheduled for the August 26 meeting.
- After the August 26 public hearing, the recommendation distribution of funds for 2026 will be presented to City Council at its September 16 meeting.

BACKGROUND:

The primary objective of the federal Community Development Block Grant program is to support the development of viable urban communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment via community facilities and public infrastructure, and expanded economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income. Funds are distributed to communities nationwide on a formula basis. The three areas where CDBG funds can be used are:

- **Capital projects** serving low and moderate income residents;
- **Public service programs** serving low- and moderate-income residents; and
- **Planning and administration** in support of these activities.

The City currently receives its CDBG funds through an agreement with King County as part of a CDBG Consortium of 34 cities and towns. The Joint Recommendations Committee (JRC) comprised of officials representing the participating cities, the Sound Cities Association, and King County, advises the County on CDBG funding and program decisions.

Since 2015 the City of Kirkland has chosen the option of participating within the King County Consortium as a Joint Agreement City. With this option the King County Consortium "passes through" a portion of the CDBG funds to larger member cities known as Joint Agreement cities. These cities allocate their portion of the funds to meet locally identified needs through their own allocation process. Efforts are made by the Consortium to coordinate multi-jurisdictional projects with the Joint Agreement cities. In addition to Kirkland, the cities of Burien, Redmond, Renton, and Shoreline are currently Joint Agreement cities within the County Consortium.

As a participating "Joint Agreement City" Kirkland and King County each receive some of the CDBG funds attributable to the City, with each having different responsibilities for program administration. The County retains half of available planning/administration funds to provide contract oversight and satisfy Federal administrative requirements. The City retains the other half of the planning and administration allocation, which helps to pay for City staff to provide the necessary program support. The City also receives a portion of the capital projects and public service programs CDBG funds to allocate towards eligible projects that are selected by the City.

As part of the interlocal agreement with King County, Kirkland must develop a plan for allocating the City's portion of CDBG funds every year. Funds for public services and capital projects must be utilized to benefit those with low to moderate income and be consistent with the King County Consortium Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan.

At the City of Kirkland, the recipient of the public services dollars is determined within the biennial human services grant process. For that reason, if the service provider is in good standing, the Commission recommends a continued commitment to the same programs in the second year of the biennial budget. To ensure the activities of the provider chosen qualify under federal guidelines, a provider of services to those experiencing homelessness has always been the recipient. The recommended recipient is not favored over other providers. The Human Services Commission determines the total amount of investment in programs which support people experiencing homelessness. Recommendations are prepared for the City Council by the Commission, with staff providing a recommendation of which providers receive City general funds, and which agencies receive CDBG dollars.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

Distribution of Kirkland's portion of CDBG funds is determined by the City Council through a Council resolution. The timeline for City Council authorization the funds this year is as follows:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 07/22/25 | Presentation to the Human Services Commission: Overview of the CDBG program and staff recommendations. |
| 08/01/25 | Submit the public notice publicizing the public hearing in the City's newspaper of record, <i>The Seattle Times</i> |
| 08/26/25 | Human Services Commission Public Hearing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People in attendance will be given the opportunity to speak to proposed recommendations• Any comments received in advance in writing will be shared with the Commission |
| 09/16/25 | Resolution authorizing the recommended distribution of CDBG funds presented to City Council |
| 10/01/25 | The signed resolution, the Affidavit of Publication from <i>the Seattle Times</i> and other required documents submitted to King County for approval |

NEXT STEPS:

Staff will provide an overview of the CDBG program, 2025 funding, and estimated allocation for 2026 at the meeting to prepare for the public hearing scheduled for the August 26 Human Services Commission meeting.



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Department of PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
123 5th Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3300
www.kirklandwa.gov

MEMORANDUM

To: Human Services Commission

From: Jen Boone, Human Services Manager
Amanda Judd, Human Services Coordinator – Community Wellbeing
Juliana da Cruz, Management Analyst

Date: July 22, 2025

Subject: **Draft Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan**

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission reviews and provides feedback on the first draft of the Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- A first draft Action Plan is presented for Commission feedback, proposing 70 actions and investments to provide a continuum of care to people experiencing homelessness under the policy goal areas of Prevention, Outreach, Emergency Shelter Services, Temporary Shelter & Housing, and Subsidized Permanent Housing.
- Following Commission review, staff will continue the community engagement process to present the draft Action Plan to relevant boards and commissions, the broader community, and initial stakeholders from Phase 1.
- Staff will return to Council to present the final draft Action Plan for Council consideration later this year.

BACKGROUND:

Homelessness has increased in Kirkland and the greater Seattle metropolitan region. In the recently released 2024 Point In Time¹ report released by the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA), East King County had an estimated 1,910 people experiencing homelessness, an 85% increase from 2020.² This rapid and consistent increase in homelessness regionally requires City action and coordination. Over the past five years, the community submitted more than 300 reports of individuals experiencing homelessness in Kirkland, and the City's Homeless Outreach Coordinator has engaged 214 unduplicated residents experiencing homelessness since

¹ https://kcrha.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Point-in-Time-Count-2024_King-County_final.pdf

² https://kcrha.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Count-Us-In-2020-Final_7.29.2020-1.pdf

April 2023. Because homelessness is often underreported and regional rates continue to rise, these trends suggest that homelessness is not only present in Kirkland but also growing and at risk of reaching a tipping point under existing services provided on the Eastside.

In recent years, staff and the community have observed tangible examples of a system that is stressed, while also seeing some important successes.

- In the Totem Lake neighborhood at NE 126th Place and 128th Lane NE, recreational vehicles (RVs) used as housing were illegally parked for several years. Prior to a Supreme Court decision in June of 2024, cities were prohibited by court rulings from requiring the RVs to move unless there was a specific place for the RVs to go. By the time the Supreme Court decision removed this requirement, the number of RVs had grown to 12 and surrounding businesses and private schools expressed concerns. In December 2024, the City informed RV residents that it would begin enforcing unlawful parking in red zones and violations of parking time limits. Because of shelter and housing constraints, when the RVs dispersed, the City moved six of the RV households who agreed to actively continue seeking permanent housing to two temporary sites: (1) a City-owned parking lot at 128th Lane NE along the Cross Kirkland Corridor trail, and (2) the Kirkland Congregational United Church of Christ in Norkirk, which partnered with the City to offer its parking lot for this temporary use. This has recently been replaced by a location near Kirkland's South Reservoir on NE 65th Street. The City does not know where the other 6 RVs went.
- During last winter's extended cold snap, 64 households, comprising 77 adults and 13 children, received severe weather hotel vouchers over 29 nights when local emergency shelters reached capacity. Activation of hotel vouchers helps ensure unhoused residents are safe from life-threatening exposure to extreme cold temperatures when other shelter options are not available. The City has a \$10,000 budget for severe weather response annually. The total cost to provide temporary shelter during this severe weather period was \$81,000.
- The Eastside supports over 700 shelter beds that serve families, men, women, youth and young adults, and survivors of domestic violence. On any given night, a majority of shelters are at capacity (~average: 96% in 2024). For the men's shelter, 70 of the 100 beds have hosted the same client for over a year, creating a bottleneck in the system for shelter availability for someone living outside, limiting the options to connect people with a needed resource to help transition them back into stable housing.

In 2023, the City Manager launched an interdepartmental Coordinated Response to Homelessness Initiative. The initiative aims to support the City more efficiently and effectively coordinating the growing regional focus on issues of homelessness and housing, support the Health Through Housing project coming to Kirkland, and respond to gaps in the system identified by the City's first Homeless Outreach Coordinator position. Since 2023, this initiative has identified that the City is challenged in addressing issues of homelessness in Kirkland, even with the dedicated resources currently provided by Council. This challenge is due to a combination of the scarcity of affordable housing and support services, limited shelter space, and federal court decisions changing the local landscape, among other things. The City's homelessness webpage³ and 2025-2026 budget issue papers summarize the problem statement and current City efforts.⁴

³ <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Government/City-Managers-Office/Homelessness-in-Kirkland>

⁴ <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Government/Departments/Finance-and-Administration/Budget-Information/Budget-Documents>

Over a series of Council meetings in April,⁵ May,⁶ and June⁷ 2024, the Council deliberated on and ultimately adopted Resolution R-5631,⁸ declaring the City's commitment to addressing homelessness and authorizing the City Manager to develop a Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan ("Action Plan") to be presented to the Council by December 31, 2024. The Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan would establish a comprehensive strategy to support Kirkland's current unhoused population and prepare the organization to respond to a steady increase or sudden influx of those experiencing homelessness using a lens of compassion and accountability. Ultimately, the goal is for homelessness to be rare, brief, and non-recurring in Kirkland.

Staff began the community engagement process but then determined that more time and resources than originally planned were needed to ensure ample community involvement. As a result, at staff's recommendation, Council adopted Resolution R-5641⁹ at its September 17, 2024 meeting, deferring the community outreach and transmittal of the Action Plan until April 30, 2025. The Council later approved Resolution R-5680¹⁰ on April 15, 2025, extending the April 30, 2025 deadline for transmitting the draft Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan with a more flexible timeline to allow continued community engagement and staff analysis with a transmittal date by the end of 2025. At that time, staff also shared initial community feedback themes from the organizing events (community forums and general focus groups) and a preview of the Action Plan framework.¹¹

Since the April 15, 2025 update, staff continued a robust community engagement process to inform the development of the draft Action Plan. **Attachment 1** summarizes the list of targeted stakeholders staff have engaged or plan to engage that Council previously identified to inform the Action Plan. Continuing engagement methods include surveys, targeted focus groups, and individual meetings with stakeholders. In parallel, Communications and Human Services staff continue to update core informational resources on the City's homelessness website to support ongoing awareness and engagement efforts.¹²

Feedback from these audiences has been aggregated to shape the initial draft Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan for Council and stakeholder review and input. The draft will continue to evolve with continued community engagement efforts.

⁵ https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-council/agenda-documents/2024/april-16-2024/3a_study-session.pdf

⁶ https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-council/agenda-documents/2024/may-7-2024/3b_study-session.pdf

⁷ https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-council/agenda-documents/2024/june-4-2024/10a_business.pdf

⁸ https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-council/agenda-documents/2024/june-4-2024/10a1_business.pdf

⁹ <https://docs.cityofkirkland.net/CMWebDrawer/Recordhtml/586281>

¹⁰ https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/2/city-council/agenda-documents/2025/april-15-2025/9d1_business.pdf

¹¹ https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-council/agenda-documents/2025/april-15-2025/9d_business.pdf

¹² <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Government/City-Managers-Office/Homelessness-in-Kirkland>

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

Community Engagement Summary

Kirkland is a largely engaged, compassionate, and supportive community when it comes to homelessness. Homelessness is recognized as a complex problem and a growing concern in Kirkland. Residents generally want the City to act, and many were surprised to learn how much is already being done. Many respondents recognized that Kirkland's relatively low visibility of homelessness likely reflects the City's coordinated, quiet, and effective response. Simultaneously, they acknowledged that federal policy changes and economic and regional trends are likely to continue straining resources at all levels.

Many residents do not want Kirkland to become "like Seattle," which has a large, highly visible unhoused population and was perceived by respondents to be unsafe. A majority of community members understood that continued action and investment are required to prevent homelessness from expanding. However, community members want a balanced, localized, and non-duplicative approach that combines compassion with accountability, safety, and visible results.

Service providers expressed an urgency to invest in big picture solutions, like affordable housing, and expanding capacity in key areas along the continuum of care that are currently oversubscribed. Shelters are full and there is a gap in transitional, temporary housing, and affordable housing supply. This bottleneck prevents individuals from exiting homelessness into housing stability, which further constrains shelter capacity. A lack of affordable housing has also strained the prevention response, most notably rental assistance funds. The lack of capacity across the continuum of care severely limits the options for the Homeless Outreach Coordinator to refer unhoused clients.

Staff's extensive community outreach to more than 50 stakeholder organizations, including the general public and individuals with lived experience, revealed that the community appreciates and supports the City's comprehensive and proactive response to homelessness. This overarching sentiment is why the draft action plan is so detailed and practical; 50% of the plan inventories ongoing work that the community says the City should continue, with improvements. However, the community also identified gaps in the system that will require additional investment to expand City efforts. The community cautioned that City efforts should remain highly localized and should balance compassion with accountability. A comprehensive summary of community engagement themes is captured in **Attachment 2**.

More broadly, outreach efforts enabled staff to:

- Educate the community about homelessness in Kirkland, its complexities, and the City's comprehensive Continuum of Care systems approach;
- Build relationships and trust in the community by inviting them to inform a balanced response that reflects community values and priorities;
- Refine parts of the continuum that the community said should be prioritized to improve and expand, namely 'Prevention and Outreach,' as well as ensuring overall system capacity and readiness if there is an acute increase in demand;
- Understand that data are critical to program delivery and the credibility of ongoing community engagement; and
- Identify that an ongoing communications and engagement campaign is needed to correct misperceptions about homelessness and transparently share the successes and challenges of key program elements.

Action Plan Overview

As Council reviews the draft Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan, the goal is to ensure alignment on most immediate priorities, clarify resource needs, and support informed Council direction. **Attachment 3** introduces the Action Plan and **Attachment 4** includes the full draft of the plan.

The draft Action Plan focuses on strengthening the functionality of Kirkland's local homelessness response system, improving prevention, outreach, shelter, and temporary and subsidized housing navigation, all with the goal of residents achieving attainable housing.

The Homeless Continuum of Care Action Plan proposes **70 actions** for City Council to consider and act on to help reduce homelessness in Kirkland. The plan identifies actions across the six policy goal areas listed below in alignment with the continuum of care:

1. **Prevention:** 8 actions
2. **Outreach:** 21 actions
3. **Emergency Shelter Services:** 5 actions
4. **Temporary Shelter & Housing:** 6 actions
5. **Subsidized Permanent Housing:** 3 actions
6. **Program Delivery & System Support:** 27 actions

Actions are categorized by policy goal area and include five columns:

- status
- strategy
- responsible department
- timeline
- level of investment.

The 70 actions are also summarized separately from the narrative in the Action Plan as **Attachment 5**. Each column is explained in more detail on the following pages.

The **status column** indicates both *ongoing actions* to maintain existing programs and service levels and *new proposals* to expand services and eliminate service gaps.

- **Ongoing Actions:** 35 Actions
The ongoing actions would require direction from Council to continue new and existing services at currently funded levels. There are 13 actions currently receiving one-time funding that would require sustainable funding beginning in 2027-2028. One-time funded actions are marked with an asterisk.
- **Proposed:** 35 Actions
The proposed actions would require direction from Council to move forward with implementation, and most would require staff coordination and funding.

The **primary strategy column** refers to the five strategies identified in Resolution-5631, including: *a person-centered approach, timely communication and collaboration, proactive policy development and legislative action, prioritize safety, and strategic spending.*

The **primary lead column** denotes which City department is responsible for implementation of the action. Staff note that many departments will provide support to the leading department with most of these actions given the overlap and expertise required to ensure a coordinated response.

Timeline is categorized by short-term, medium-term, and long-term investment required. Short-term indicates the action would be prioritized during the current biennium, medium-term prioritizes actions during 2027-2028, and long-term is future biennium.

While not comprehensive, the **level of investment** label is intended to provide an estimated range of the cost of each action. The cost is noted per biennium.

\$ Investment is estimated to cost < \$20,000 per biennium: 32 Actions
 \$\$ Investment is estimated to cost < \$200,000 per biennium: 17 Actions
 \$\$\$ Investment is estimated to cost < \$1,000,000 per biennium: 9 Actions
 \$\$\$\$ Investment is estimated to cost > \$1,000,000 per biennium: 4 Actions
 N/A Action does not require new funding: 8 Actions

Figure 1 below shows an example of an existing service level that is ongoing and receiving one-time funding. **Attachment 5** shows a comprehensive list of the 70 actions in the Plan. **Attachment 6** summarizes the 35 *ongoing actions* of the 70 actions total. **Attachment 7** summarizes the 35 *proposed actions* of the 70 actions total.

Figure 1. Homelessness Action Plan Task List

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Prevention	1	Continue prioritizing human services grant funding that supports rent assistance and other prevention response.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$\$\$	Short-Term

Priority Themes and Investments for Consideration

Informed by community feedback and guided by staff expertise, several key priority themes emerged. The four themes are outlined below, including specific actions in response to each theme that are recommended as immediate priorities to address identified system gaps and support the Action Plan's strategic direction:

1. **Prevention must continue to be a priority. It is cost-effective, reduces the impact of trauma on households, and supports keeping people out of an already overburdened system.** Community members want services that help people stay housed sustainably, including rent assistance, legal aid, and case management. Providers highlighted the need for additional consideration of how prevention dollars should work for households struggling with chronic affordability issues. It was also noted that information-sharing and accessing updated resources can be challenging, creating additional barriers and frustration for those seeking assistance or trying to provide it.
 - *Ongoing: Continue investing in prevention response through human services grants.*

- *Proposed: Fund a 1.0 FTE Housing Case Manager position to support homeless outreach clients with housing navigation and case management support plus direct assistance to residents who have been priced out of market rate housing (fixed income, disability, loss of spouse, etc.) and do not know how to navigate the complex multiple steps required to locate and apply to affordable housing.*

2. **The Coordinated outreach response to homelessness, notably the Homeless Outreach Coordinator and HART, are vital to the continuum of care but are beyond sustainable capacity.** The community and providers see the City's Homeless Outreach Coordinator (HOC) as highly effective but operating beyond sustainable capacity. Outreach and case management/follow up are two difficult bodies of work necessary to effectively house someone. Currently, both are provided by the HOC which significantly reduces the number of people who are helped and risks burnout of this essential position. The HOC position is also the key link to the timely service and correspondence around homelessness that the community expects 24/7. Additionally, streamlined communication between HART members and the community is challenging with disjointed data sharing and communication systems. A person experiencing homelessness can generate dozens of calls and emails across multiple departments. Without the additional support and staffing required for a successful coordinated response, this essential frontline work is not as effective and not likely sustainable.

- *Ongoing: Continue funding a 1.0 FTE Homeless Outreach Coordinator.*
- *Proposed: Hire a human services supervisor to support the Homeless Outreach Coordinator, lead the expanded homeless outreach program, serve as liaison of the HART team, and support implementation of the action plan.*
- *Proposed: Fund a 1.0 FTE Housing Case Manager position to support homeless outreach clients with housing navigation and case management support plus direct assistance to residents who have been priced out of market rate housing (fixed income, disability, loss of spouse, etc.) and do not know how to navigate the complex multiple steps required to locate and apply to affordable housing. (Same position as in 1. above, not additive.)*
- *Proposed: Explore centralized data tracking tool to synthesize information on shared clients, resources, and locations for HART team members.*
- *Proposed: Establish dedicated space for Human Services staff to conduct outreach and provide services confidentially. This includes the Homeless Outreach Coordinator, KCSARC Pilot Position, and any future human services positions focused on direct service.*

3. **Shelter capacity is inadequate, and barriers exist for many populations accessing shelter.** Emergency shelters are full, and congregate models do not work for everyone, including people living in vehicles/RVs, households with pets, LGBTQIA+ community members, and couples. This issue is exacerbated in severe weather. Non-congregate options, like hotel vouchers, safe parking programs, or tiny homes are essential to prevent people from sleeping in public spaces if shelter is not available or not appropriate. Residents staying in shelter for 1+ year create bottlenecks in the system, leaving more people outside with nowhere to go.

- *Ongoing: Continue Hotel Set Asides Pilot Program for clients working with Homeless Outreach Coordinator who require interim shelter but are on track to secure housing.*
- *Ongoing: Continue to fund severe weather response. Partner with faith-based organizations and private sector philanthropy to increase funding.*

- *Proposed: Explore interest in development of tiny home villages on the Eastside, particularly at faith-based properties.*
- 4. The City must help ensure the success of regional subsidized permanent housing and connect Kirkland residents experiencing homelessness to those housing resources. Subsidized permanent housing prevents homelessness and facilitates housing stability, while also reducing strain on the homelessness continuum of care.**
- *Ongoing: Support and implement the local referral network for King County's Health through Housing, relieving pressure across the continuum, in particular on emergency shelters.*
 - *Proposed: Explore voucher program with Lake Washington School District (LSWD) to address housing gaps for families at risk of homelessness.*

Staff also heard and recognize that specialized approaches may be needed for high-acuity populations, particularly individuals with complex behavioral health needs who may put other residents' success and well-being at risk. These are noted in the plan, but exploration of longer-term solutions will require further partnership with the County and state.

Together, these priority themes preserve what works in Kirkland's response while addressing urgent gaps. This approach will help the City stay ahead of the rising need and avoid the crisis dynamics seen elsewhere.

Funding and Resource Considerations

Kirkland's 2025–26 Budget includes meaningful investments in human services, but additional capacity will be needed to fully implement the Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan. Additional ongoing funding is needed to fund existing, ongoing actions noted in the plan. As the Homeless Outreach Coordinator's workload expands and demand for resources increases across the region, additional staffing and resources are required to maintain existing service levels. As the demand for services increases and the economic and political environment changes, community sentiment is that homelessness will get worse. To prevent a proliferation of homelessness, the City should consider investing in additional expansion of service and staffing capacity.

Staff may pursue multiple funding sources:

- Pass-through federal and state funds
 - *Proposed: Advocate for more pass-through dollars of King County human services levies to support local homelessness response. Encourage Best Starts for Kids (BSK), Veterans, Seniors, Human Services Levy (VSHSL), and Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Behavioral Health Sales Tax Fund (MIDD) to align their funding models similar to the Medic 1 and King County Parks Levy.*
- Targeted County investments on the Eastside
 - *Proposed: Advocate for King County to implement a regional housing levy to increase funding for low-income housing in Kirkland*
 - *Proposed: Assess current human services grant funding levels across goal areas, and determine prioritization based on highest level of need across the continuum of care. Consider conducting a needs assessment to strategically align Human Services Division work.*
- Potential future local and regional levy options
 - *Proposed: Explore a voter-approved levy to create sustainable local funding for human services and homelessness programs*

- *Proposed: Advocate for King County to implement a regional housing levy to increase funding for low-income housing in Kirkland*
- Non-profit and private sector funding
 - *Proposed: Explore activating partnerships with the private sector to address funding gaps in Eastside homeless services*
 - *Proposed: Partner with faith-based organizations and private sector philanthropy to increase funding.*

A cost framework is included in the Action Plan in **Attachment 4**, outlining short, medium, and long-term funding needs, including administrative and coordination capacity.

NEXT STEPS:

The Human Services Commission will review the priority areas for investment, funding options, and proposed actions in the Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan at its July 22 meeting.

Staff seek Commission input on the following areas of the Continuum of Care Action Plan:

- Are there other actions on this list you feel should be prioritized above others?
- If you could only choose 5 actions for the City to prioritize, what would they be?
- Are there actions you feel are not ready for incorporation into Kirkland's response to homelessness?
- Are there actions you feel are missing from the draft Action Plan?
- Should Kirkland fund new, proposed actions? If so, how?

Following the Commission meeting, staff will update the plan and continue community engagement to meet the goal of delivering a final version of the Action Plan for Council consideration by the end of the year.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – Stakeholder Engagement List
 Attachment 2 – Engagement Themes
 Attachment 3 – Introducing the Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan
 Attachment 4 – Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan Draft
 Attachment 5 – Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan Task List
 Attachment 6 – Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan Task List – Ongoing
 Attachment 7 – Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan Task List – Proposed

Stakeholder Engagement List

- General Public
 - Via widely publicized Community Forums (x2) and Focus Groups (x3)
 - Participants self-identified as Kirkland residents, business owners, service providers and faith leaders.
- Lived Experiences of Homelessness
 - Lake Washington United Methodist Church (LWUMC) Safe Parking Participants
- Direct Responders, Regional Partners, and Non-Profit Service Providers
 - City of Kirkland's Homelessness Assistance and Response Team (HART)
 - Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee
 - Neighboring Cities Human Services and Outreach Staff
 - IKRON
 - Kindering
 - Friends of Youth
 - Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI)
 - New Bethlehem
 - PorchLight
 - Eastside Legal Assistance Program (ELAP)
 - The Sophia Way
- Public Health Organizations
 - Connections Health Solutions
 - Evergreen Health
- Commercial and Economic Stakeholders
 - Business Community (Park Lane, Kingsgate)
 - Kirkland Chamber of Commerce
 - Kirkland Downtown Association
 - Landlords
- Civic Organizations
 - Human Services Commission
 - Kirkland Community Foundation
 - Kiwanis
 - Moss Bay Neighborhood Association
 - Senior Council
- Educational Providers
 - King County Library System
 - Lake Washington Institute of Technology
 - Lake Washington School District
 - Northwest University
- Faith-Based Organizations
 - Bellevue Presbyterian Church
 - Chabad of Kirkland - Center for Jewish Life
 - Evergreen Mennonite Church
 - Holy Family Catholic Church
 - Holy Spirit Lutheran Church – Kirkland
 - IMAN Center of Kirkland
 - Kirkland Church of Christ

- o Kirkland Congregational United Church of Christ
- o Kirkland Family Church
- o Kol Ami: A Center for Jewish Life
- o Lake Washington Christian Church
- o Lake Washington United Methodist Church
- o Life Community Church
- o Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church
- o Northshore Church
- o Salt House Church
- o St John's Episcopal Church
- o St. John Vianney Catholic Church
- o The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Sammamish Valley Stake)
- o Woodmark Church

Themes from Stakeholder Engagement

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Introduction

This supporting document summarizes key themes that emerged through Phase 1 community engagement efforts on the Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan. The themes reflect a wide range of relevant perspectives shared by Kirkland residents, service providers, faith-based communities, businesses, landlords, the school district, library system, health care providers, and residents with lived experience, among other community partners. The themes are in no particular order and capture both urgent concerns facing the City today and recommendations to improve the City's coordinated response into the future.

This document is a working draft that will continue to be updated and further consolidated following completion of Phase 2 community engagement efforts.

The completed version of this document will be included in the final transmittal of the Action Plan to City Council.

Kirkland's "Fair Share"

- Homelessness is a national problem – largely a result of policy failure from generations ago. Many respondents specifically acknowledged the Reagan administration cuts and the impacts we are seeing today because of it. Federal support resources have decreased over time and are anticipated to decrease further.
- The City should continue to evaluate the benefits, challenges, and community impacts of a more geographically balanced distribution of homelessness response resources such as shelters, permanent supportive housing, tent cities and consider future options based on that analysis.
- The City should seek more support from the federal government and state, though many respondents are concerned this will become more challenging given the current macro environment.
- Kirkland residents are sympathetic to this issue but feel uncertain or unwilling to support more resources financially with more taxes.
- Residents feel concerned that Kirkland expanding services may become a magnet for more folks seeking resources if they are not served elsewhere.
- A regional approach is valuable to ensure that Eastside cities are sharing resources and responsibilities. Respondents called for transparency to ensure that Kirkland's resources are focused on our own unhoused residents.

Prevention as Priority

- An overwhelming theme expressed by most groups was that the City should invest in keeping people housed because it is more expensive to get people back into housing rather than keep them housed. There is greater return on investment to support programs that keep people from entering the already overburdened system.
- Many expressed that the City should proactively assist the people who are one paycheck away from being unhoused. However, respondents cited the growing challenge of households experiencing chronic instability due to affordability issues. It is no longer one paycheck, but rather each paycheck if a household is cost burdened.
- Service providers including Porchlight, Communities in Schools, and IKRON shared that prevention should be a top priority right now as more people may face homelessness because of changes at the federal level. The City should stay involved in legislative

advocacy with King County, King County Regional Homelessness Authority, Department of Commerce and the State Legislature, as well as at the Federal Level with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and our Congressional representatives. Advocacy should focus on saving existing programs that provide funding to the current safety net and ensuring more households don't get pushed into homelessness.

- Many respondents were not familiar with existing resources to support households if someone: loses a job; loses a partner; or experiences a medical event that puts them at risk of losing housing. The currently available resources are not clear to many.
- A multitude of factors contribute to housing stability - it is more than just affordable housing. One example that regularly arose was if an individual cannot find affordable childcare, they are unable to go to work.
- A wide variety of preventative resources are available in the community and should be aggregated and shared more broadly. For example, Lake Washington Tech shared the work they're doing with preventative programming, including its early learning center, affordable childcare, re-training programs after job loss, SNAP assistance, learning English, and obtaining a GED.

Affordable Housing

- Housing is too expensive.
- A lot of people fall into homelessness because they simply cannot afford rent – it is important to provide rental assistance, diverting them from the homelessness response system before needs for services increase and they experience more trauma from experiencing housing instability/homelessness.
- There are unhoused people who are gainfully employed and who want to exit the system but simply cannot afford rent in an area close to their work or school.
- Neighborhoods that have good access to transit and can be live/work communities have very expensive rents. Even designated “affordable housing” can still be extremely expensive and inaccessible to many. Many respondents were unclear about how affordable housing is defined.
 - As the cost-of-living increases, the cost threshold of “affordability” also increases. For example, 80% of AMI may go from \$84,850 to \$89,092 from one year to the next. More individuals may be eligible for housing at the updated 80% AMI cost, but for individuals on a fixed or low income that do not see a proportionate increase in their income, they are less eligible for this income level. Rent in affordable housing units can continue to increase beyond an individual's income leading to cost burden and increased housing instability.
- Individual congregations in the faith community receive calls weekly about someone who is about to be evicted or already fallen into homelessness. They struggle to connect them with the greater network of support, and the congregations do not have many resources to assist. They in turn call the same resources, creating more burden on the system. Often these households are 3-6 months behind on their rent, but the churches do not have the funds to subsidize the rent indefinitely. Fundamentally, the problem is that rent is too high and not sustainable for many in the community.
- Most frequently, City-funded community resource partners are witnessing residents already at the point of eviction with an extensive amount in arrears. The need is greater

than service provider staffing levels and funding levels can keep up with to be a quick stopgap in a single missed paycheck. Further, service providers are seeing a pattern of lack of ongoing affordability of rent rather than a one-time need for assistance.

- Additionally, the cost of living (costs other than housing) is high in Kirkland.
- Housing is too expensive for staff and students who work/study in Kirkland – this is a workforce problem, including recruiting and retention of staff. Employers pay staff the best they can, but staff are still commuting 1.5 hours each way to get to work because that's the closest they can afford to live. The commutes are not sustainable. Workforce and student housing should be considered.
- Tenant/Landlord support
 - Tenant protections are important, but they can allow an entrenched resident who is causing problems for the landlord to remain. Eviction rules can be a challenge to building up or sustaining the housing inventory supply. Residents cited that City ordinances should be reviewed to ensure landlords can evict if needed.
 - A lack of rental history may be a barrier for immigrants, refugees, and those without citizenship status or pending status in attaining housing. There is no system connecting willing landlords with tenants. There is also uncertainty under the current climate if households, who may be undocumented, are eligible for and can safely access resources. Even if a family is authorized to be in the country, the lack of credit history, downpayment, or security deposit is a barrier.
 - Application fees, security deposits and moving costs are also a barrier to entry and is an area where the City could provide funding support.
 - The City should consider options to reduce risk for single-unit landlords who take a chance on a low-income tenant – perhaps through rent voucher programs, workforce housing, etc.
 - The City should develop incentives for landlords to support tenants, such as helping them accept partial payment, or understand options so they are more likely to accept a low-income tenant.
- Affordable housing has a compounding effect on the limited housing supply. Some respondents expressed that there are a lot of empty bedrooms in Kirkland – people who have raised their children and are now two people living in a large home. But because there are limited options to downsize and stay in the community, they remain in their oversized housing.
- It was suggested the City could help incentivize alternative housing models, such as working with homeowner's associations to connect housing seekers with available ADU inventory, room rentals and roommate matching—as well as increasing supply of cottage units for seniors.

Support for Subpopulations

- Unhoused people have different levels of needs, which requires different approaches for success.
 - Emergency assistance for temporary one-time setbacks
 - Low to moderate income
 - These households most likely need affordable housing but given the limited supply are trying to manage market rate, thus becoming housing unstable due to high rent burden or on fixed income leading to chronic reliance on rent assistance and long-term housing insecurity.

- Low-Income Families
 - Lake Washington School District noted that there are families in the district that are doubling or tripling up on families within a single housing unit due to lack of financial resources and high rent. These populations are predominantly immigrant populations and are fearful of providing information to government entities. This mistrust is a barrier to resources for these families. The faith community can be a strong partner in collaborating with these families, building trust, and connecting families with resources.
 - Family shelters in King County are regularly full and most families often must wait several months for a bed to open somewhere in the County via the Family Coordinated Access Intake Line. They are required to call daily to check availability, which creates additional burden in trying to support stability for kids in school, maintain employment, and fulfill basic needs for their family. Emergency housing for parents and children, educational support, and case management would help reduce the long-term impact of homelessness on children and improve family stability.
 - About 75% of kids who are homeless will have developmental delays by the age of 5 because of the stress of being unhoused. This is why Kinderling is interested in this space, and this is where the City supports Kinderling's work. Programs focus on preventing expulsions, trying to do early intervention to keep kids in childcare, while also working on parent education.
 - Affordable childcare is essential. If a family cannot afford childcare, a parent must stay home with the child. The loss of income could lead to eviction.
 - We need more options for shelter that keep families together. LWSD shared a recent example of a mother/daughter that were evicted and had to split up; the student was looking for a youth shelter and mom was looking for an adult shelter option. Ultimately, they had to access services outside of King County.
 - It was suggested there may be an opportunity to tap into the Kirkland Teen Union Building's onsite counselor to refer cases of potential housing insecurity to the Homeless Outreach Coordinator.
- There is a significant portion of people who are "invisibly" homeless.
 - They are people who live in Kirkland and suddenly lose housing (i.e. due to a job loss, health concern, loss of childcare, etc.) They have strong ties to Kirkland and the Eastside and access services in our community; they are not highly visible in public spaces and often have jobs and live in vehicles or shelters. But because of the lack of capacity from service providers and resources, this group does not exit homelessness. For example, an individual may utilize a program like Safe Parking or shelters for the long-term because there are no "next step" options for them to access long-term housing stability. These households end up creating stagnation in programs intended to be emergency and temporary but are often treated more like transitional programs given the length of time they are enrolled (more than 90 days and less than 2 years).

- High need, chronic populations (i.e. no income, behavioral/mental health, criminal background, substance use, long periods of homelessness) require additional considerations:
 - These folks are harder to move out of homelessness because of the compounding traumatic impact of homelessness.
 - These folks are typically the most visible in our community and can cause distress and calls for immediate response from others to the City.
 - There needs to be a system to deal with high acuity cases – the extremes. This idea was discussed multiple times – a separate system is needed to respond to people who have complex needs and who are not successful in the current system. There was acknowledgement that particularly in a shelter setting that integrating high acuity individuals can threaten the overall success of much-needed programs and the other participants who need the resource.
 - Some respondents suggested that high-acuity cases are not suitable to remain in Kirkland. Some mentioned sending high acuity cases to where there are more specialized services.
 - There are individuals who have complicated histories of trauma and who will not be successful under existing systems of care (including the legal, court system, behavioral, mental, and physical health care systems). These are complex cases that generate outsized community distress and drain an outsized proportion staff time and resources. While being mindful of a person's autonomy, complex behavioral health challenges, the City must enforce its existing laws. The City should explore what options exist internationally to respond to these complex cases. This may involve a research study to explore best practices. The City may consider contracting with a researcher or utilizing graduate students to conduct this research. This could be looked at regionally with other jurisdictions.
 - There are instances in which jail is an appropriate solution, though people favor exhausting more compassionate responses that are likely to yield better long-term outcomes for the investment.
- Seniors are vulnerable to homelessness
 - Online pay portals can include additional fees that make affording services even more challenging. Technological barriers are also a factor.
 - Respondents emphasized we must identify struggling seniors before they lose housing. Auburn Senior Center has in-person help for rental assistance, finding new housing. Residents were not familiar with existing services in Kirkland that provide this type of support.
 - Elderly population is at-risk of homelessness and there are challenges associated with downsizing—they cannot afford to buy a smaller home but managing their entire space is also a challenge. Thus, they are living in too-large homes. This stresses the housing supply and leaves them at risk. They are also vulnerable to increased taxes if they are on a fixed income, leading to a greater risk of housing instability.
 - Evergreen sees people at risk of homelessness – primarily older people who do not have supportive options to help them with life navigation.

- They may have access to medication but no plan to obtain it and lack the tools or skills to navigate the options (how do you get your prescriptions delivered, how to sign up, etc.)
- Similarly, seniors may not have viable options to go back to when exiting medical care – their homes may not be outfitted for accessibility, but they cannot afford alternatives.
- Subpopulations often need case management: someone who can check in with them regularly to be sure that they are taking meds, hear that they are well and accessing care.
- Almost every outreach group mentioned this.
- More support is needed for at-risk youth:
 - Support medically vulnerable and special needs kids
 - Youth and individuals exiting foster care
 - Youth aged 18-24

Importance of Community Safety

- Kirkland residents want reassurance that their neighborhoods will be safe, quiet, and peaceful
- The City must enforce the laws while being compassionate.
- There is a preference that temporary shelter such as sanctioned encampments not be sited in Kirkland's denser neighborhoods.
- Kirkland residents want reassurance that if someone is violating a code or breaking a law, they will be punished and possibly removed. Respondents emphasized the importance of checks and balances in situations like this. Kirkland residents are supportive of human rights and want the City to employ accountability, when necessary, by enforcing laws and codes consistently.
- Respondents often expressed that the City should be proactive and reasonable to ensure that Kirkland “doesn’t become Seattle” which is widely viewed as not enforcing laws or addressing criminal activity and therefore sacrificing public safety.
- Generally there is not widespread concern among business owners around homelessness despite spot concerns in some areas as it relates to customer safety and experience.
 - Some feedback indicated marked improvement in visible homelessness in the last year, consistent with increased coordinated response efforts.
 - Efforts in reducing loitering, trash, and substance abuse behaviors and implementing environmental controls/improvements such as lighting, increased police patrolling, trimming of vegetation have helped businesses.

Sense of Foreboding

- There was a repeated concern and theme across focus groups that homelessness is going to get worse sooner than later.
- This is partly driven by regional cost of living, federal funding cuts, and overall economic uncertainty.
- Overall, participants felt that the City should do something in advance of this problem getting worse.

- Equally, participants felt that the City "doing something" could attract more unhoused people to Kirkland or encourage other municipalities to rely on Kirkland rather than making their own investments - and that the City wouldn't have the resources to maintain support or will overburden taxpayers.
- Some concerns were raised that new regional transit networks could bring more unhoused individuals to Kirkland.

Health Through Housing (HTH)

- Many respondents and participants of community focus groups came to the conversation to specifically discuss King County's Health Through Housing Initiative. Many community members did not realize it was a King County project and that it is a distinct initiative from the Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan.
- Respondents generally seemed favorable of permanent supportive housing and see it as essential (especially wrap-around services) but are skeptical of the King County Health Through Housing project at the former La Quinta location. Participants cited issues they have read about at other Plymouth-run projects and proximity to schools, daycares and businesses and assert that violence and crime exponentially increases around such facilities.
 - This was echoed by multiple groups: there is a lot of concern/anticipation in the community that we will see more unhoused folks in the community because of HTH. There is a lot of misinformation to combat, including that it will be a "homeless hotel" with no services, rules or accountability, specifically with substance use and recovery requirements.
 - Many respondents expressed a concern that a small percentage of the building occupants will cause problems for the remaining community and surrounding neighborhood. They are concerned that Plymouth, King County, and Kirkland will have no authority to remove these individuals.
 - Area schools/universities and businesses are concerned that the general area - but especially local park and ride/transit and the Cross Kirkland Corridor - will become less safe for those who use it regularly.
 - Generally, respondents are more receptive to housing women, families and seniors. Designating floors by tenant demographic/need – with corresponding and tailored levels of support or security – were also suggested.
- Generally, there was positive feedback about the agreement in place between King County and the City.
 - The people who will be housed in HTH will be local referrals from places like the Sophia Way, Porchlight, Friends of Youth, and LWUMC Safe Parking.
 - When people learned more about the larger continuum of care action plan, they better understood the role HTH plays in the continuum.
 - Public safety, specifically the Code of Conduct and Neighborhood Safety Plan are critical to reinforce, but the success of the plans depends on the implementation. Transparency in our actions and reporting will determine public perception and the credibility of City messaging to date.

Interest in Data¹

- Many residents, businesses, and members of the public expressed that there is not a lot of visible homelessness in Kirkland. They were interested in seeing data that demonstrates that homelessness is an urgent crisis in Kirkland but also expressed that they wanted the City to act before the problem balloons (“don’t be like Seattle”).
- There was some discussion of a need to “prove” that this is a Kirkland problem (rather than a problem originating in another community).
- Some community members wanted more data to understand the causes of homelessness in Kirkland.
- Some community members wanted to know how many people the City served were from Kirkland or coming in from other parts of the state or country.
- Some residents expressed interest in seeing emergency service call data related to homelessness, establishing clear accountability measures for shelters and housing providers. Some called for better data tracking to inform policies and reduce public misconceptions.
- LWSD shared that in one school year, they saw an increase from 300 families to 700 families at risk of homelessness. The challenge in Kirkland is that the need is great, but that homelessness is much less visible than it is in places like Seattle. LWSD is regularly talking with families that have doubled or tripled up in an apartment.
- Shelters, safe parking, and other homeless providers shared they are regularly at capacity for extended periods of time.
- It is generally acknowledged that accurate and aggregated real-time data, including the availability of shelter beds, is a regional systems gap that has not been solved.

Lack of Clarity Around Existing Resources

- Staff, the community, and some service providers expressed uncertainty around which resources are current and which are outdated.
- There was universal consensus that King County 211 is not up to date and is unhelpful. 211 is not updated often enough because it requires the nonprofits to do the updates. There is a high demand for resource navigation, which regularly falls on City staff to support residents.
- Unhoused folks are often referred to programs that they do not qualify for and are bounced around between programs. This can be frustrating, confusing, and unnecessarily slow down the process of connecting an individual with resources.
- Kirkland Police and the Municipal Court try and keep their own individual pamphlets of resources that they try and update quarterly by cold calling and inquiring if the resource still exists. It is hard to get clear information about the availability of resources, where to know to get the most up to date information, etc.

¹ On May 16, 2025 King County Regional Housing Authority released their 2024 Point in Time Count data, which provided new subregional data on homelessness in East King County. This data was not available at the time of Phase 1 community engagement. This data will be incorporated into future engagement efforts and may answer some of the questions that community members raised about local data on homelessness.

- Multiple service providers and faith-based organizations expressed that it is difficult to keep track of which resources are available and if funds are available (e.g. rent assistance programs).

Concern for the Workload and Wellbeing of the Homeless Outreach Coordinator

- Stronger support network needed for Homeless Outreach Coordinator.
- The City only has one Homeless Outreach Coordinator (HOC). Providers that work with HOC and HART expressed concern around the following:
 - Huge workload
 - Gap if HOC is out of office or leaves the organization
 - Can cause a bottleneck in a response
 - HOC is the only person who provides long-term support and has access to a broader array of resources. There is currently no redundancy, but rather huge demand for their support from City staff, HART, providers, faith-based community, and the general community.
- A continued emphasis from HART team members was that the Homeless Outreach Coordinator's scope of work is untenable.
- Existing service level does not provide 7 day a week or 24-hour response, which creates delays between the referral and response, creating a tension on the higher level of service the City wants to provide to those unhoused and to those reporting it from the community.
- It is not realistic for the HOC to be providing outreach in the field under the current response time while also searching for housing, doing the admin support work.
 - Many staff and service providers suggested having a housing navigation coordinator that could help the Homeless Outreach Coordinator.
 - It's challenging to balance time on outreach and helping people apply/get nominated for housing—a lot of desk time is required.
- Having increased training budget for HART team would also help the team keep up with best available research and practice.
- Broad support from the community generally for compassionate and coordinated outreach suggests this would be a favorably viewed investment.

Intersectionality: Mental/Behavioral Health

- To help an individual exit homelessness, they must be stable mentally and behaviorally. Their mental/behavioral health issues must be addressed before connecting them with housing. The Homeless Outreach Coordinator is not a trained mental health professional. RCR can't co-respond unless they're in active crisis, and MIH can't co-respond unless it is connected to a 911 call. The problem is when people are stable ("at baseline") but their reality is still so skewed that they cannot access resources and are unable to move forward with a housing plan.
- Clients cannot access behavioral/mental health resources without insurance for the most part. Medicaid-funded resources, especially more long-term support, is difficult to refer due to it being overprescribed.

- It would be helpful to have a mental health professional that can partner with outreach in real-time. Most people living outside are dealing with mental or behavioral health challenges to some degree.
- Mental health is a barrier to folks finding housing or remaining housed. There is a need to increase mental health support to folks, especially if they don't have insurance or Medicaid.
- Connections Kirkland
 - Connections is a tremendous resource in our community; but because they act as an emergency room, individuals can get caught in a vicious cycle of housing insecurity/homelessness upon discharge.
 - Connections has a “no wrong door” policy where they don't turn people away, even if they are using Connections like an emergency shelter. Connections usually ends up serving these individuals because homelessness is an issue with deep psychiatric impact.
 - There is an overlap between mental health and homelessness. The Connections model of care discharges patients without a long-term plan for housing stability—they are not equipped to handle anything longer than emergency care. They may provide a list of local shelters, but they do not do any case management. There is a gap in long-term mental and behavioral health care.
 - Connections are interested in partnering with coordinated entry assessors to jump-start people into housing. However, the challenge is the timeline. Connections does not do long-term stays—since their average stay is 5 days, it is not enough time to connect the client to longer-term housing stability resources and shelters are often at capacity. If there was more shelter availability, Connections could refer individuals to shelters, where they would receive long-term case management.
 - Unhoused people generally want to be in the community where they have supportive networks (family, friends, jobs, healthcare). If an individual is exiting Connections but is from another community, it is challenging for the individual to get back to their community of origin. Transportation may be a gap that City funds could help support. King County provides transportation vouchers for services like Connections, so this may be an opportunity to connect providers and existing resources.
 - There may be an opportunity for the Homeless Outreach Coordinator to connect with Kirkland-based folks (those who are already known within local systems) once discharged from Connections. However, it is unclear the best way to flag these folks per HIPPA restrictions.
 - Connections is still a new resource in our community. There may be opportunities to incorporate Connections into regional and City meetings to improve collaboration.
 - More research and collaboration are needed on Connection's post-discharge protocol to minimize gaps such as case management, transportation, and connection to shelter.
- There is a scarcity of addiction resources
 - When someone is amenable to treatment services, but there are not resources available, it breaks the trust and the rapport with the client and limits viable programs/services to which they can successfully be referred. There needs to be

more resources available to enable successful housing outcomes while managing addiction.

- Even folks who are otherwise housing stable are struggling with mental health issues, and there is a growing need for mental health services coming out of the pandemic that is straining the overall system. This issue was raised with regards to Kirkland's students and youth (at every level).

Lack of Shelter Availability

- People are willing to go inside but shelters are full. The Homeless Outreach Coordinator calls shelters four times a week to determine if they have capacity.
- This is especially relevant on the Eastside. Many unhoused folks are part of the Kirkland and Eastside community and are unwilling to go elsewhere to access services.
 - Kiwanis noted that we should not send people out of Kirkland. Some respondents were in favor of sending unhoused people out of Kirkland to access services. The Homeless Outreach Coordinator does look at resources beyond Kirkland and the Eastside, but clients may want to stay locally if they are connected with other resources or are employed.
 - Local shelter and housing availability are essential. People do not want to leave the community they're connected to—must restart with all their medical and care services.
- In probation appointments, probation officers often spend time helping clients find a shelter place for that night. This is an important service, but it does take away from the time in the appointment to work towards other assessments that have time-sensitive consequences at the court.
- Low-barrier shelter services are important and severely lacking.
 - Often relapse is part of recovery, but it can cause people to lose their housing and their sense of community.
 - People with substance use disorder or people who are actively using do not have options for housing or shelter options.
- Lake Washington United Methodist Church Safe Parking is very successful and appreciated.
- Sophia's Way Day Center is working very well and is appreciated. Community is more inclined to support services focused on women and children. This was stated repeatedly.
- Once an individual exits transitional housing or emergency shelter, there is no place to go, and there are others waiting to enter. This is a leak in the system that can send people back to being unhoused.
- Due to the lack of emergency shelters, the library system is often utilized as a day shelter, especially during extreme weather. The library does not allow overnight camping or sleeping overnight, but they do allow people to nap indoors during the day, like a makeshift day shelter. Unhoused people also often use library grounds as sleeping places. KCLS would like to see serious resources put toward more proximate and available shelter/beds for extreme weather events which are likely to become more frequent. A major challenge to getting people into emergency shelter, especially during severe weather is responsive and reliable transportation.
- The emergency shelter length of stay is too short to meaningfully connect with shelter – we need more funding for more capacity in emergency housing.

- We provide overnight shelter space during severe weather but during the day folks have nowhere to stay warm. A City facility could transform into a day shelter during limited daytime hours during severe weather events.
- Sometimes clients have complex behavioral health challenges that would not be compatible in a hotel or in a congregate shelter environment. Responders need somewhere to place these individuals for 1-2 days (usually over the weekend) until Monday when more resources will be available.
- There are inadequate options for when the shelters are full, and it is a weekend.
- Temporary housing resources are scarce but important. Permanent supportive housing is also important, but it doesn't satisfy the needs addressed by temporary housing. Temporary housing (2 years) has an end date that can teach people the skills of being autonomous and moving to the next housing option. We heard from faith leaders that when transitional housing in the region was deprioritized in favor of permanent supportive housing, it created a critical gap in the system that needs to be addressed. Eastside outreach staff also emphasized the gap in temporary and transitional housing and need for investment in more capacity - especially when shelters are not an option or permanent housing is not available.

Barriers to Services and Housing

- Wound Care
 - Wound care can only occur if the request for care comes through 911.
 - Limited ability for the Homeless Outreach Coordinator to refer people to wound care.
 - Ideally, we would like to provide preventative care. It would be helpful to have a nurse as part of the MIH team.
- Prescriptions and Medical Care
 - It is difficult to transfer prescriptions if you must move to access resources
 - This is a major reason why individuals do not want to leave their communities to access open shelters elsewhere.
- Pets
 - Unhoused people are unable to access medical care, shelters, hotel set-aside options or other programs if they cannot bring a pet with them. Generally, people will choose to stay outside to stay with their pet.
 - Access to veterinary care is often needed.
 - Shelters should accept emotional support animals, not just service animals.
- Language & Cultural Barriers
 - Language barriers can prevent unhoused individuals from understanding available services and feeling comfortable accessing services. There is a need to integrate language access resources (both interpretation and translation) into street outreach and other direct service.
 - Shelter services are often segregated by gender, and this can be a barrier for LGBTQIA+ individuals to access services.
- Transportation
 - A key limitation is moving people between services and jurisdictions. Need access to bus vouchers, ORCA cards, etc.
 - It is difficult for unhoused people to access basic resources, run errands like grocery shopping and making appointments without reliable transportation.

- Getting people to emergency severe weather shelters during times of extreme weather is challenging. In one instance of extreme weather, the only available space was in Seattle...people didn't want to go that far with no guarantee of a bed because then they get stuck somewhere more precarious/dangerous.

Jurisdictional Barriers and Challenges for Case Managers / Workers

- Most resources require that unhoused folks work with a case manager. When the case manager has limited capacity, it is a barrier to accessing resources.
- It is common to be referred to multiple case managers without getting clear information.
- Consistency was raised as being among the most important success factors for a person to access resources and exit homelessness (continuity of same person checking in).
- When unhoused folks move between jurisdictions, they move outside the reach of programs, and must start over with new supportive agencies, case managers, etc.
- Some asked questions about how Kirkland can help catalyze nearby jurisdictions - who do not invest/offer many resources - to do so and help relieve the burden on Kirkland.
- Case workers are working over capacity.
- If funding for a nonprofit comes from a specific jurisdiction, the resource is constrained by jurisdiction. This makes sense, except that unhoused folks do and must travel between jurisdictions to access services, so they leave and enter the scope of these resources, which can make things confusing and force them to restart the process to access resources.
 - Case management services are often limited by jurisdiction, yet unhoused folks often must travel between locations to access services, which can be disruptive to care.
- As a crisis responder, RCR (and sometimes MIH and the HOC) have limited capacity to case manage a situation and walk an individual through the process. Especially for complex behavioral health cases, these individuals require more "handholding" through the process, but the current responders do not have the tools and capacity to provide this service.
- Software and information sharing
 - Often, multiple service providers are engaging with an individual and duplicating efforts unknowingly. Different service providers have different databases tracking the same folks, and there is no singular system for integration. For example, it would be helpful for RCR to know if the HOC is already working with someone.
 - Respondents expressed the need to develop a real-time regional referral system to better track and serve individuals across jurisdictions.
 - KPD suggested that it would be helpful to have a co-documentation system between PD and Human Services so that all parts of the City team can see the status and most recent contact points of that individual. This would be an internal system for HART's use.
 - Some community members suggested that the City should know everyone who is homeless in Kirkland by name to personalize the process while also acknowledging there may be privacy concerns.
- It was suggested to pay case managers a stipend to continue work with unhoused clients for up to 6 months after they exit homelessness/the region.

Opportunities for Additional Community Education and Engagement

- The public is not aware of the complexity involved in responding to unhoused folks and evolving law and system constraints – the City does not and cannot require immediate removal. There are specific laws and guidelines that govern this response.
 - The public often wants to see a removal or a response happen immediately, but this cannot happen if individuals decline resources or services nor does it align with City philosophy to take the time for the HOC to connect with the person and understand what their housing barriers are. The pressure from the community is difficult for staff and service providers to navigate.
- Respondents want the City to speak to (and hear stories from) community members with lived experience.
- PD struggles to give clear answers to public about what will happen with an unhoused resident in public or private spaces, because what will happen is unknown; it varies depending on the situation, the unhoused person's willingness to collaborate with the Homeless Outreach Coordinator, and the specifics of their case and needs.
 - Residents can get increasingly frustrated and continue to call 911 lines which can bog down emergency response.
 - If customers do not get a response or do not get a satisfying response, they can keep calling – calling the Homeless Outreach Coordinator directly, calling non-emergency, and calling 911 which can duplicate referrals. Some will go further and escalate it to City Council, claiming there is no response from the City to their reports, creating additional work for staff.
 - Faith leaders are on the front lines and are often the go-to for most vulnerable communities, including immigrants, who are reticent to interact with government. These leaders want more clarity about how best to connect people to services, especially after hours when the Homeless Outreach Coordinator is not working.
- The expectation of providing a response to the community within 24 hours creates a lot of pressure for staff. This current model is not sustainable.
- Responding to community members can be very upsetting and stressful, especially if residents don't understand the constraints in what the City can realistically do.
- Service providers and faith-based community members expressed a need to have a better understanding of the City's available resources and tools regarding homelessness. A public information campaign could help spread the word about the work that the City is already doing.
- The Kirkland Faith Community, though its ongoing collaboration with the City, have articulated interest in:
 - Contributing to a fund (potential for matching dollars from employers) to help support homelessness work in the form of a "flex fund"
 - Assisting with communicating to the community around this topic
 - Hosting regular meetings and community meals to facilitate continued collaboration and education on this topic.
 - Hosting shelter such as Safe Parking and Camp United We Stand. Several faith leaders sent a joint letter to the City suggesting exploration of tiny homes as a housing solution in Kirkland.
 - Pooling funds and other emergency resources (i.e. emergency kits, food rations, coats, phones, diapers, survival clothing, etc.)

- Awareness of Kirkland's response to homelessness
 - Members of the public and stakeholder groups noted that they were not aware of Kirkland's plan to address homelessness. They were pleased with the continuum of care model and felt that it should be more broadly communicated to the public to help their understanding of this complicated issue.
 - The City should consider proactively presenting to neighborhood associations or Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods to share more information to the public about what the City is doing in the next phase of outreach.
 - People indicated they want to hear stories, especially from people with lived experience.
 - Residents are asking for success metrics and regular reporting to know how the City is doing against its goals.
 - It was suggested that the City can play a role helping in helping to aggregate available resources and promote them in public spaces around Kirkland.
 - People want to know how to help, through volunteering, advocacy, etc.
 - City partners like LW Tech are willing to help host City-led resource fairs and forums.
- Some groups like King County Library System would like an alternative tactic to respond to unhoused individuals without having to refer to police. They feel morally conflicted about referring them into the criminal system but do not have alternative options when other resources are at capacity.

#####

Introducing the Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan

This Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan (“Action Plan”) is a draft. Staff will continue to revise this draft in response to community engagement and feedback.

Guiding Principles

Kirkland is a belonging community enjoyed by all and a place where community members experiencing housing instability have access to resources needed to thrive, with the goal that homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The City of Kirkland has been at work responding in real time to homelessness and emergent needs as they arise. Throughout this response and in developing the Action Plan, the City has committed to the following principles:

- Ensuring Kirkland remains safe, welcoming, and economically vibrant
- Making homelessness in Kirkland rare, brief, and non-recurring by providing paths to stable housing
- Fostering a balanced, person-centered approach that considers the varied interests of everyone in Kirkland—housed and unhoused—with compassion
- Upholding the evolving laws and codes to which everyone in Kirkland is bound while not imposing additional restrictions on unhoused residents due to their circumstances
- Partnering with rather than duplicating the work of non-profit, faith-based, county, state, and federal programs
- Not opening our parks, roadways, alleys, underpasses to unauthorized sleeping, parking, or camping
- Not taking on disproportionate resource burdens or becoming a regional attractant for unhoused residents

Kirkland’s Local Role

The City acknowledges that partnerships are essential and that work is occurring regionally on homelessness and housing. The City is committed to being an active partner in this work and values collaboration over duplication. The City of Kirkland is part of the regional ecosystem as a funder of direct service providers (shelters, nonprofits, etc) and supports regional initiatives and programs (coordinated entry, affordable housing programs, etc). In addition, the City of Kirkland has identified gaps in the existing system and provides direct service to meet this need in the form of direct outreach to unhoused individuals in Kirkland. In addition, the City is responsible for enforcement of the City’s laws and encampment clean ups when they occur on City property. A summary of the City’s role compared to regional entities is represented visually below:

Services: Who Does What

Infrastructure				
Housing Capital and Development				
CoC Funded Services				
Shelters				
Key Kirkland is a Funder Provides Service/Program Out of Scope				
Programs				
Diversion				
Rapid Re-housing				
Coordinated Entry				
HMIS				
Other Services				
Outreach				
Encampment Cleans				
Behavioral Health and Crisis Response				
Enforcement				
Guiding Principles Keeping Kirkland safe, welcoming, and economically vibrant Making homelessness in Kirkland rare, brief, and non-recurring Fostering a balanced, person-centered approach Keeping Kirkland resources focused on our own un-housed residents Partnering rather than duplicating programs Maintaining parks, roadways, alleys, underpasses etc. for their intended uses Upholding evolving laws and codes without imposing additional restrictions				

The Action Plan Overview

The draft Action Plan focuses on strengthening the functionality of Kirkland's local homelessness response system, improving prevention, outreach, shelter, temporary and subsidized housing navigation, all with the goal of residents achieving attainable housing.

The Homeless Continuum of Care Action Plan proposes **70 actions** for City Council to consider and act on homelessness in Kirkland. The plan identifies actions across the 6 policy goal areas in alignment with the continuum of care:

- **Prevention:** 8 actions
- **Outreach:** 21 actions
- **Emergency Shelter Services:** 5 actions
- **Temporary Shelter & Housing:** 6 actions
- **Permanent Supportive Housing:** 3 actions
- **Program Delivery & System Support:** 27 actions

Actions are categorized by policy goal area and include five columns:

- Status
- Strategy
- Lead department
- Timeline
- Level of investment.

The 70 actions are also summarized separately from the narrative in the Action Plan as **Attachment 6**. Each column is explained in more detail on the following pages.

The **status column** indicates both ongoing actions to maintain existing programs and service levels and *new proposals* to expand services and eliminate service gaps.

- **Ongoing:** 35 Actions
 - The ongoing actions would require direction from Council to continue new and existing services at currently funded levels. There are 13 actions currently receiving one-time funding that would require additional funding beginning in 2027-2028. One-time funded actions are marked with an asterisk.
- **Proposed:** 35 Actions
 - The proposed actions would require direction from Council to move forward with implementation, and most would require staff coordination and funding.

The **primary strategy column** refers to the strategies identified in Resolution-5631, including: *person-centered approach, timely communication and collaboration, proactive policy development and legislative action, prioritize safety, and strategic spending.*

The **primary lead column** denotes which City department is responsible for implementation of the action. Staff note that many departments will provide support to the leading department with most of these actions given the overlap and expertise required to ensure a coordinated response.

Timeline is categorized by short-term, medium-term, and long-term investment required. Short-term indicates the action would be prioritized during the current biennium, medium-term prioritizes actions during 2027-2028, and long-term is future biennium.

While not comprehensive, the **level of investment** label is intended to provide an estimated range of the cost of each item. The cost is noted per biennium.

\$	Investment is estimated to cost < \$20,000 per biennium: 32 Actions
\$	Investment is estimated to cost < \$200,000 per biennium: 17 Actions
\$	Investment is estimated to cost < \$1,000,000 per biennium: 9 Actions
\$	Investment is estimated to cost > \$1,000,000 per biennium: 4 Actions
N/A	Action does not require new funding: 8 Actions

DRAFT Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan

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The City of Kirkland would like to thank the following individuals and groups for their contributions to the Draft Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan:

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Jay Arnold, Deputy Mayor

Penny Sweet, Councilmember

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Jon Pascal, Councilmember

John Tymczyszyn, Councilmember

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Carly Joerger

Hillary de La Cruz

Policy Work Group

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Troy Knafla

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Homelessness Assistance & Response Team

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Jose Fuentes

Robert Rebecca

Sophia Evans

The City of Kirkland would also like to thank and recognize the efforts of all community groups and members who gave their time and feedback to build this plan, which are detailed in the community engagement section. In particular, we recognize those who have lived experience of homelessness who advocated for themselves and their neighbors. Thank you.

Please note that this plan is an accumulation and amalgamation of a variety of feedback from a diverse group of community members. The final document is not necessarily the official position of the consulted groups.

For more information, please visit kirklandwa.gov/homelessness

Executive Summary

- This document is a draft. Staff will continue to revise this draft plan and executive summary in response to ongoing community engagement and feedback, which will inform how staff characterize the complete body of work.
- Homelessness is increasing in King County. Homelessness is prevalent in Kirkland, even when it is not visible in Kirkland's public spaces.
- Community engagement demonstrates that homelessness is an issue in Kirkland, and that community members are concerned about the issue worsening in the near future.
- Staff recommend a combination of ongoing and proposed actions using Kirkland's Continuum of Care to prevent homelessness from growing and becoming more visible in Kirkland.
- To make the biggest and most immediate impact, staff recommend prioritizing actions that increase temporary shelter capacity and outreach staff capacity.

Purpose

The City of Kirkland's goals include both 'Attainable Housing', to provide access to housing and encourage the construction and preservation of housing stock that meet a diverse range of incomes and needs, and 'Supportive Human Services,' to meet basic human needs, help people through economic and personal crises, help individuals thrive, and strive to remove barriers to allow all equal opportunities to succeed.

Over the past five years, the community submitted more than 300 reports of individuals experiencing homelessness in Kirkland. While some of these reports involved the same individuals or situations, each one required a coordinated City response. Additionally, the City's Homeless Outreach Coordinator has engaged 214 unduplicated residents experiencing homelessness since April 2023. Because homelessness is often underreported and [regional rates](#) continue to rise, these trends suggest that homelessness is not only present in Kirkland but also growing and at risk of reaching a tipping point.

With rising economic uncertainty and increasing costs of living in King County, acting on homelessness is both humane and essential for the long-term vibrancy of our community. The City of Kirkland remains committed to ensuring the safety of unhoused persons, housed neighbors, businesses, visitors, and responding staff. As such, the Kirkland City Council Approved [Resolution 5631](#), Directing the City Manager to create a Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan to prevent homelessness where possible, support unhoused individuals in their transition to stable housing, and provide a compassionate and dynamic response to situations involving unhoused residents on a case-by-case basis.

Vision

Kirkland is a belonging community enjoyed by all and a place where community members experiencing housing instability have access to resources needed to thrive, with the goal that homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The City's Comprehensive Plan includes a Vision Statement that articulates Kirkland in the year 2044 and summarizes the desired character and characteristics of our community. The Homelessness Action Plan is intended to be the City's way of achieving the adopted Vision as it relates to the Housing and Human Services Elements.

Kirkland is a place where all people are valued. The city is dedicated to celebrating diversity and inclusion while combating racism and discrimination.

Kirkland is accessible for people of all abilities to walk, bike, roll, utilize transit services, and new innovative modes of travel. Diverse housing accommodates residents in every stage of life and is accessible to shops, services, and job opportunities citywide.

Kirkland is innovative and economically resilient, providing public services and capital infrastructure that accommodates growth.

Kirkland is a sustainable city that preserves and enhances our natural and built environment for current and future generations. Kirkland is resilient and livable in the face of climate change.

Background on Homelessness in Kirkland

Homelessness has increased in Kirkland and the greater Seattle metropolitan region. In the recently released 2024 Point In Time report released by the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA), East King County had an estimated 1,910 people experiencing homelessness, an 85% increase from 2020.

In 2023, the City Manager launched an interdepartmental Coordinated Response to Homelessness Initiative. The initiative helped the City more efficiently and effectively coordinate the growing regional focus on issues of homelessness and housing, support the Health Through Housing project coming to Kirkland, and respond to gaps in the system identified by the City's first Homeless Outreach Coordinator position. Since 2023, this initiative has identified that the City is challenged to address issues of the homeless population in Kirkland, even with the dedicated resources currently provided by the Council. This challenge is due to a combination of the scarcity of affordable housing and support services, limited shelter space, and federal court decisions. As a result, staff recommended that the Council adopt a Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan that would establish a comprehensive strategy to humanely and compassionately support Kirkland's current unhoused population and prepare the organization to respond to a steady increase or sudden influx of those experiencing homelessness. To ensure Kirkland is prepared, City Council adopted [Resolution R-5631](#) in June 2024, declaring the City's commitment to address homelessness and engage the community to develop a unified homelessness continuum of care action plan.

Read more about the regional response to homelessness, current state of homelessness, [Kirkland's Continuum of Care](#), and the City's recent work in the [2025-6 Budget Issue Paper](#).



























































The City has been at work responding in real time to homelessness and emergent needs as they arise. Throughout this response and in developing the Action Plan, the City has committed to the following principles:

- Ensuring Kirkland remains safe, welcoming, and economically vibrant

- Making homelessness in Kirkland rare, brief, and non-recurring by providing paths to stable housing
- Fostering a balanced, person-centered approach that considers the varied interests of everyone in Kirkland—housed and unhoused—with compassion
- Upholding the evolving laws and codes to which everyone in Kirkland is bound while not imposing additional restrictions on unhoused residents due to their circumstances
- Partnering with rather than duplicating the work of non-profit, faith-based, county, state, and federal programs
- Not opening our parks, roadways, alleys, underpasses to unauthorized sleeping, parking, or camping
- Not taking on disproportionate resource burdens or becoming a regional attractant for unhoused residents

The City acknowledges that partnerships are essential and that work is occurring regionally on homelessness and housing. The City is committed to being an active partner in this work and values collaboration over duplication. The City of Kirkland is part of the regional ecosystem as a funder of direct service providers (shelters, nonprofits, etc.) and supports regional initiatives and programs (coordinated entry, affordable housing programs, etc.). In addition, the City of Kirkland has identified gaps in the existing system and provides direct service to meet this need in the form of direct outreach to unhoused individuals in Kirkland. In addition, the City is responsible for enforcement of the City's laws and encampment clean ups when they occur on City property. A summary of the City's role compared to regional entities is represented visually below:

Services: Who Does What

<div>     </div>						
Infrastructure					Key	
Housing Capital and Development					 Kirkland is a Funder	
CoC Funded Services					 Provides Service/Program	
Shelters					 Out of Scope	
Programs					Guiding Principles	
Diversion					 Keeping Kirkland safe, welcoming, and economically vibrant	
Rapid Re-housing					 Making homelessness in Kirkland rare, brief, and non-recurring	
Coordinated Entry					 Fostering a balanced, person-centered approach	
HMIS					 Keeping Kirkland resources focused on our own un-housed residents	
Other Services					 Partnering rather than duplicating programs	
Outreach					 Maintaining parks, roadways, alleys, underpasses etc. for their intended uses	
Encampment Cleans					 Upholding evolving laws and codes without imposing additional restrictions	
Behavioral Health and Crisis Response						
Enforcement						

Methodology & Community Engagement

The City values the perspective of Kirkland's diverse community, service providers, and partners. The Action Plan incorporates feedback from a variety of sources.

Staff Expertise

The City of Kirkland operates a Human Services division comprised five full time staff and one part-time staff. The Human Services Division serves as coordinator, collaborator, facilitator, and funder for support systems that help people through economic and personal crises and provide low-and moderate-income persons with opportunities to succeed. The Human Services Division is well connected with providers and other jurisdictions across the region. This team lent their expertise of social work, youth services, grant management, and policy to respond comprehensively and compassionately to homelessness. In particular, the Homeless Outreach Coordinator engages directly with unhoused individuals. The Homeless Outreach Coordinator has identified gaps in service in the broader service ecosystem and offered proposed solutions for City pilot programs and for the Action Plan.

In 2023, the City Manager launched an interdepartmental Coordinated Response to Homelessness Initiative. The initiative developed several City pilot programs to respond to the emergent needs of unhoused individuals. The pilot programs and other policy recommendations from this team are incorporated in the Action Plan.

In addition, the City consulted with each branch of the Homelessness Assistance & Response Team (HART) on the development of this plan and of the pilot programs that the City implemented over the past two years.

Community Engagement

Over a series of [Council meetings in April](#), [May](#), and June 2024, the Council deliberated on and ultimately adopted Resolution R-5631, declaring the City's commitment to addressing homelessness and authorizing the City Manager to develop a Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan ("Action Plan") to be presented to the Council by December 31, 2024. Thereafter, staff began implementing the authorized community engagement process, but staff determined that more time and resources than originally planned were needed to ensure ample community focus. As a result, at staff's recommendation, City Council adopted Resolution R-5641, deferring the community outreach and transmittal of the Action Plan until April 30, 2025. The Council later approved [Resolution R-5680](#) extending the April 30, 2025 deadline for transmitting the draft Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan with a more flexible timeline to allow continued community engagement and staff analysis. At that time, staff shared initial community feedback themes and next steps for engagement and what to expect with the plan.

Staff executed a robust community engagement process to inform the development of the Draft Action Plan. Staff met with—or will meet with—targeted stakeholders previously identified by Council as essential to ongoing conversations about homelessness prior to the plan's finalization. In parallel, Communications and Human Services staff continue to update core informational resources—such as the homelessness website.

Targeted Stakeholder Engagement*:

- General Public
 - Via widely publicized Community Forums (x2) and Focus Groups (x3)
 - Participants self-identified as Kirkland residents, business owners, service providers and faith leaders.
- Lived Experiences of Homelessness
 - Lake Washington United Methodist Church (LWUMC) Safe Parking Participants
- Direct Responders, Regional Partners, and Non-Profit Service Providers
 - City of Kirkland's Homelessness Assistance and Response Team (HART)
 - Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee
 - Neighboring Cities Human Services and Outreach Staff
 - IKRON
 - Kinderling
 - Friends of Youth
 - Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI)
 - New Bethlehem
 - PorchLight
 - Eastside Legal Assistance Program (ELAP)
 - The Sophia Way
- Public Health Organizations
 - Connections Health Solutions
 - Evergreen Health
- Commercial and Economic Stakeholders
 - Business Community (Park Lane, Kingsgate)
 - Kirkland Chamber of Commerce
 - Kirkland Downtown Association
 - Landlords
- Civic Organizations
 - Human Services Commission
 - Kirkland Community Foundation
 - Kiwanis
 - Neighborhood and Community Groups
 - Senior Council
- Educational Providers
 - King County Library System
 - Lake Washington Institute of Technology
 - Lake Washington School District
 - Northwest University
- Faith-Based Organizations
 - Bellevue Presbyterian Church
 - Chabad of Kirkland - Center for Jewish Life
 - Evergreen Mennonite Church
 - Holy Family Catholic Church
 - Holy Spirit Lutheran Church – Kirkland

- o IMAN Center of Kirkland
- o Kirkland Church of Christ
- o Kirkland Congregational United Church of Christ
- o Kirkland Family Church
- o Kol Ami: A Center for Jewish Life
- o Lake Washington Christian Church
- o Lake Washington United Methodist Church
- o Life Community Church
- o Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church
- o Northshore Church
- o Salt House Church
- o St John's Episcopal Church
- o St. John Vianney Catholic Church
- o The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Sammamish Valley Stake)
- o Woodmark Church

*This is a DRAFT stakeholder list reflecting the audiences staff has already—or intends to—meet with to continue shaping the action plan. It may expand in response to additional opportunities and needs uncovered by the ongoing engagement process.

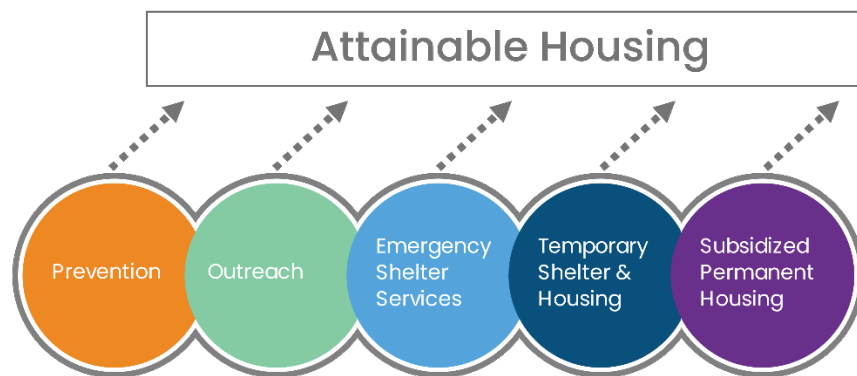
Introducing the Action Plan Framework

Framework

Meaningful progress on homelessness will require consistent action and investment over time. The actions proposed in this plan are categorized by policy goal area, status, strategy, responsible department, and level of investment for convenient sorting and phasing.

Continuum of Care Policy Goal Area

The City's goal is to prevent homelessness and, when it does occur, to transition individuals back into stable and attainable housing as quickly as possible. The Homeless Continuum of Care Action Plan identifies actions in 6 policy goal areas in alignment with the continuum of care: Prevention, Outreach, Emergency Shelter Services, Temporary Shelter & Housing, Subsidized Permanent Housing, and Program Delivery & System Support. The actions proposed in this plan are categorized by policy goal area.



Prevention

Homelessness prevention provides resources to keep individuals and families housed when experiencing an unexpected financial event or crisis that can otherwise lead to housing instability. The most common services include financial assistance or legal support that can help with eviction prevention, rent support, utilities, medical bills, car repairs, and childcare.

Outreach

Outreach focuses on building relationships with people experiencing homelessness by getting to know individuals and connecting them with immediate resources and services to foster trust. Outreach work includes basic needs distribution, food, water, and referrals to services like shelter, housing, treatment, and healthcare.

Emergency Shelter Services

Emergency shelter programs vary in service model but are often time-limited, providing an interim step toward securing permanent housing.

Emergency shelter services are programs that offer 24/7/365 shelter with wraparound support to households who have lost housing, including case management, employment, and behavioral health support. Several shelters also offer day center services. Day centers offer hot meals, showers, laundry, mail services, case management, and other resources.

Temporary Shelter and Housing

Temporary Shelter and Emergency Housing programs vary in service model but are often time-limited, providing an interim step toward securing permanent housing. These services are the most difficult and most urgent services the City provides. Common models of temporary shelter and housing include sanctioned encampments, safe parking programs or mobile vehicle residency, transitional housing, and non-congregate temporary housing.

Subsidized Permanent Housing

Subsidized Permanent Housing is generally categorized as housing units available for those who are qualified by income and/or other criteria to live in homes that receive public subsidy. Typically, the goal for subsidized permanent housing is that households pay no more than 30% of their monthly income on rent and utilities. These types of units provide stable, rent restricted housing for low- and moderate-income households. Permanent affordable housing units are often created through local housing incentive and inclusionary programs, including mandatory inclusionary zoning, voluntary density bonus, and multifamily tax exemptions. Another model within permanent affordable housing is permanent supportive housing, which offers wraparound services that can include employment navigation, transportation access, food access, and behavioral, mental, and medical services.

Program Delivery & System Support

The City of Kirkland is committed to the provision of responsive, person-centered, and accountable human services. Program Delivery & System Support refers to the oversight, management, funding, and reporting of this work.

Status

Actions in this plan are labeled by their status:

- **On-going:** Work on these actions has commenced and is underway; the City anticipates continuing these activities indefinitely
 - *Some actions are listed as ongoing because they are currently underway. However, some of these items are funded by one-time dollars. To maintain ongoing service on these actions beyond 2026, the Council would need to identify additional funding. These items are marked with an asterisk.
- **Proposed:** These actions are new recommendations emerging from community, staff, expert engagement, and regional best practices. As of the consideration of this plan, City staff have not initiated these actions but recommends them for Council consideration. New funding would be required to support these proposed actions.

Strategy

Homelessness is a complex issue that warrants a diversity of strategies to ensure a comprehensive and humane response. While many actions incorporate elements from multiple strategies, actions in this plan are categorized by their primary approach.

Person-centered Approach

This strategy upholds unhoused persons as individuals worthy of respect, human dignity, and autonomy. Approaches utilizing this value focus on reducing the harm of homelessness, eliminating barriers to care, meeting basic human needs with respect and autonomy, and building relationships with individuals. A Person-Centered Approach provides a compassionate

and dynamic response, acting on a case-by-case basis to meet needs with dignity and respect. Wherever possible, programs should incorporate both choice and accountability for unhoused residents.

Timely Communication & Collaboration

This strategy recognizes that the City of Kirkland is not alone in its work to response to homelessness. It acknowledges that partnerships are essential to the success of this work. The City is committed to continued collaboration with and between departments, regional entities, organizations, and community members. Timely communication allows for transparency and efficiency of services. Some policies and programs proposed in this plan will require additional community engagement and collaboration.

Proactive Policy Development

Considering the regional landscape, the City seeks to be responsive to the needs of the housed and unhoused community. Simultaneously, the City proposes proactively policy and programs to mitigate and address issues before they arise or worsen. The City seeks to incorporate best practices from other programs and jurisdictions to respond to this crisis.

Prioritize Safety

The City of Kirkland acknowledges that it is inherently unsafe to live outdoors. This strategy prioritizes the safety and wellbeing of unhoused individuals, staff, housed neighbors, businesses, and the environment. This value may incorporate enforcement action if other strategies or options are not available or effective

Strategic Spending

Additional resources are required to maintain or expand capacity in response to homelessness. The City will prioritize targeted investments that maximize benefit and are cost-efficient.

Responsible Party

Multiple City departments, regional agencies, and nonprofit partners are involved in the response to homelessness. While many partners may be involved in each of the actions proposed in this plan, the plan notes a responsible department for each action. This party is the lead entity on the action and is responsible for the initiation, collaboration, and success of this item.

Level of Investment

Many of the actions proposed in this plan will require additional resources. While not comprehensive, the level of investment label is intended to provide an estimated range of the cost of each item. The cost is noted **per biennium**.

- \$** Investment is estimated to cost < \$20,000 per biennium
- \$\$** Investment is estimated to cost < \$200,000 per biennium
- \$\$\$** Investment is estimated to cost < \$1,000,000 per biennium
- \$\$\$\$** Investment is estimated to cost > \$1,000,000 per biennium
- N/A** Action does not require funding

Implementation

The time horizon of the Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan is for the biennium budget of 2025-2026. Future iterations of this plan will be considered in tandem with biennium budget discussions. However, given the complex nature of homelessness, this Action Plan is intended to be used as a living document with ongoing revisions, and prioritizations based on evolving needs and community input.

Given the complexity of homelessness data, the City will explore potential approaches to data reporting to Council, including format, content, and appropriate frequency. The City will engage regularly with the community about the successes and challenges of this action plan.

Priority Investments

The City of Kirkland has invested in the continuum of care to ensure a comprehensive and humane response to homelessness. Community engagement with housed and unhoused residents, service providers, and stakeholders suggest that Kirkland's investments have been effective at preventing homelessness and connecting unhoused individuals with resources. However, the existing system of resources is capacity constrained. The City must increase its investment in staffing to maintain existing homelessness response service levels. As the demand for services increases and the economic and political environment changes, community sentiment is that homelessness will get worse. To prevent ballooning of this issue, the City should invest in additional expansion of service and staffing capacity.

For example, the City's Homelessness Assistance and Response Team (HART) effectively builds rapport with individuals and connects them with resources. However, the resources available to the HART team are increasingly limited. The HART team reports that they often have unhoused clients willing to come indoors, but there are no shelter beds available. This undermines the trust in the relationship and inhibits staff's ability to help an individual exit homelessness.

The City recognizes that homelessness is a complex issue requiring regional and national partners. The City's role within this ecosystem is to identify Kirkland-specific gaps. The City has identified bottlenecks and capacity as key restraints that inhibit Kirkland's progress on homelessness. As such, staff recommend that Council consider two key areas to prioritize investment:

Shelter Capacity

The HART team needs more non-congregate shelter options to house clients while working on long-term housing stability goals. Congregate shelters on the Eastside are full or near capacity most nights. Additionally, congregate shelters are not suitable for all clients. Increasing investment in diverse, short-term solutions that are non-congregate is essential to providing life-saving shelter and connection to services.

A potential action to expand temporary housing and shelter capacity is to develop a Tiny Home village program. The City has researched Tiny Home villages, concluding that, in order to be successful, they must be done in partnership with a private property owner and sited with community collaboration. Staff recommends the continued evaluation of private property partnerships and community engagement to site and implement a Tiny Home Village on the Eastside.

The City may also consider developing a funding model with regional shelters to provide set-aside beds that are reserved for Kirkland's referrals. This potential solution may be complicated by the regional service model.

The City's hotel set-aside program allows the Homeless Outreach Coordinator to provide short-term shelter in a hotel for unhoused clients while they await placement with a longer-term facility. This program is time-restricted, as hotel placements can be costly and the resources are limited. Additionally, not all clients are suitable for housing in a hotel environment. The City may consider expanding this program with additional funding.

In addition to shelter shortages during normal conditions, severe weather is life threatening for unhoused individuals, and existing resources are at capacity. The City overspent its 2025-2026 budget for the severe weather emergency hotel set-aside program. With additional severe weather incidents anticipated, additional funding is needed to continue this program. The City may also consider alternative models using shelter beds or tiny houses.

Staffing Capacity

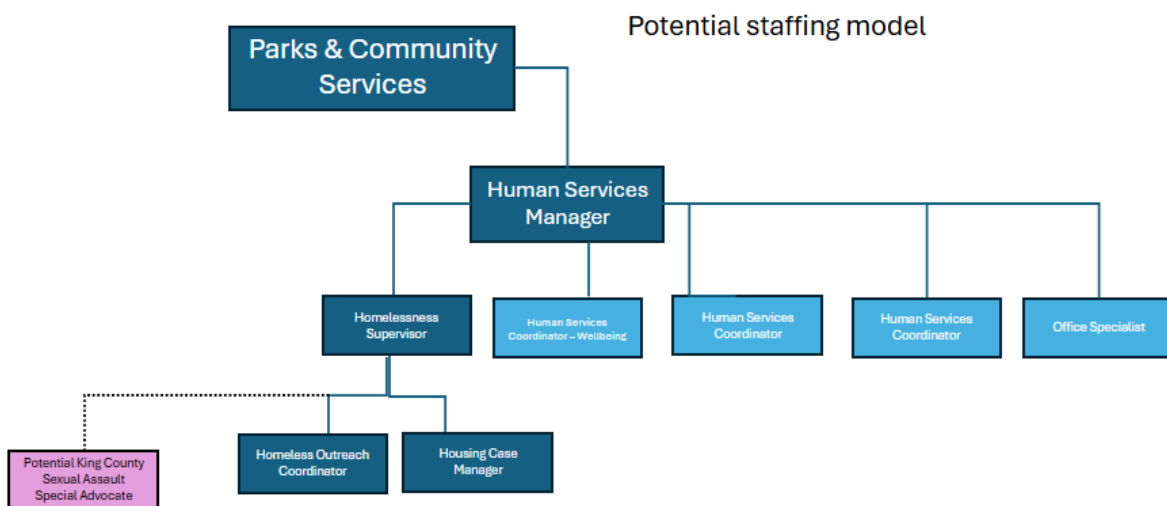
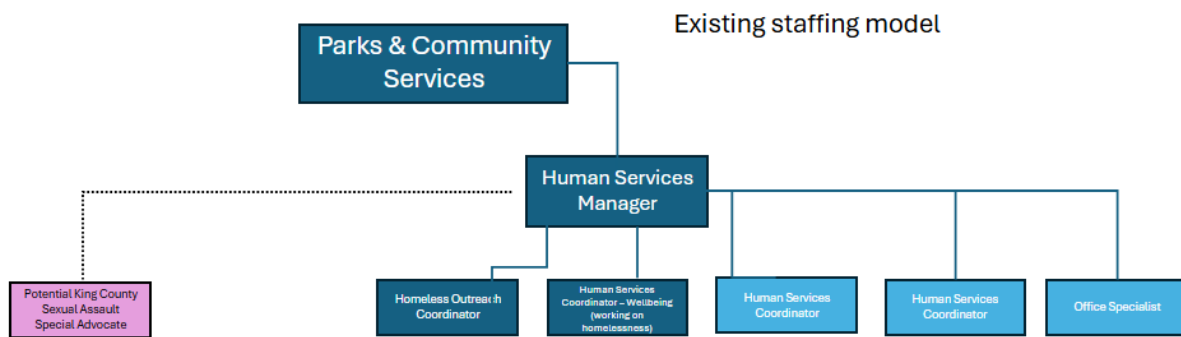
In stakeholder engagement, the community expressed universal support for the City's existing outreach and coordination efforts. The most recommended action by staff and experts was to maintain existing service levels by increasing the support for the Homeless Outreach Coordinator with additional staff. The City has options to consider to expand staffing capacity.

Connecting clients to long-term and short-term stable housing is time intensive, and this process creates a bottleneck in the system of connecting clients to resources. Hiring a Housing Case Manager would reduce the administrative burden on the Homeless Outreach Coordinator, enabling her to provide more direct outreach in the field and more efficiently move clients out of homelessness.

The City may also consider hiring additional Homeless Outreach Coordinators to provide more complete coverage throughout the week. The City currently has one Homeless Outreach Coordinator, who provides 5 day a week coverage. There is no backup coverage when the Homeless Outreach Coordinator is out on vacation or sick leave, or succession plan if she departs the organization. This position is a role with high potential for burnout, yet the community repeatedly noted that it is essential. Hiring additional Homeless Outreach Coordinators will create capacity for the City to connect unhoused clients with housing and resources and help them exit homelessness.

However, expanding the Homeless Outreach team would also require expanding supervisory staff to meet the administrative and safety demands of these positions. A potential Homelessness Services Supervisor could also serve as the liaison and project manager for several of the collaboration projects outlined by the action plan.

Several staffing model options are presented to expand staffing capacity.



Behavioral health challenges are barriers to unhoused individuals working with the Homeless Outreach Coordinator. If an individual has behavioral needs but is stable, they may not agree to work with the Homeless Outreach Coordinator or qualify for existing services. Because homelessness is traumatizing, there is a higher likelihood that people experiencing housing instability are also experiencing behavioral health challenges. Existing service levels provide behavioral health assistance only if the individual is in active crisis or if the response is associated with a 911 call. This gap in services is a barrier to connecting unhoused clients with shelter and bringing them indoors. Adding a mental health professional to City staff or contracting with a service like Mobile Integrated Health to expand services would increase staff capacity to connect individuals with shelter and housing.

The Action Plan

Continuum of Care Goal Area:

Prevention

Overview

Homelessness prevention provides resources to keep individuals and families housed when experiencing an unexpected financial event or crisis that can otherwise lead to housing instability. The most common services include financial assistance or legal support that can help with eviction prevention, rent support, utilities, medical bills, car repairs, and childcare.

Community Note

In community engagement for this Action Plan, the City heard overwhelmingly from residents and stakeholders that the City should invest most strongly in prevention and examine the upstream causes of homelessness. From an emotional, physical, and financial perspective, both short- and long-term, it is less strenuous and more cost effective to prevent a household from becoming homeless than it is to coordinate efforts to exit a household from homelessness and re-establish stability.

Community engagement conversations regarding prevention converged around the following themes:

- Access to Resources
 - Many respondents expressed that individuals who go through a financial hardship should have a centralized point to access resources
 - Even service providers struggle to understand which resources are active and accepting clients and which are expired.
- Affordable Housing
 - Many community members noted that increasing affordable housing supply is key to preventing people from becoming homeless.
 - Some business respondents noted that housing instability is a workforce issue. Many employees in Kirkland cannot afford to live here and are commuting hours to work. The housing instability that these individuals face is also a workforce retention issue for local businesses and institutions.
 - Some expressed that concern about squatters may prevent landlords from leasing to “riskier” low-income tenants or tenants with limited or no rental history. Many landlords do not have the funds to support a rental property should the renter fail to pay.
- Behavioral Health Challenges
 - Even individuals who are housed can struggle with behavioral health challenges that threaten their housing security.
 - Increasing behavioral health resources for both the housed and unhoused communities can contribute to the wellbeing of the community and its housing security.
- Proactive Outreach to Prevent Homelessness

- Many community members expressed concern about populations at risk of homelessness, particularly seniors. The City should conduct proactive outreach to specific subpopulations who are most at risk of losing housing.
- Seniors and individuals with special needs are acutely at risk because they are generally on a fixed-income, experience accessibility and technology barriers, and are highly dependent on others for support.

Expert Note

In the development of the Action Plan, staff heard from the City's HART team, service providers, nonprofits, and shelters that prevention is a valuable component of any response to homelessness.

Expert conversations regarding prevention converged around the following themes:

- **Resource Constraints & Navigation Challenges**
 - Service providers often encounter individuals at the brink of homelessness but existing resources are insufficient or out of date
 - It can be hard for service providers to understand which programs are still active and accepting clients, making referrals difficult
 - Existing databases like 2-1-1 are out of date because they rely on capacity-constrained nonprofits to update information
 - Replicating regional resource hubs bears the same risk of redundancy and becoming out of date. Data is only as good as the quality and relevance of its inputs.
 - Unless an individual is actively unhoused, there is no case management support available to help navigate the different affordable housing options and assistance programs. This creates a gap that prevents housing insecure residents of Kirkland from accessing services.
- **Affordable Housing**
 - The City should invest in rental assistance programs; many people facing housing instability have jobs but simply cannot afford rent.
 - Families in the Lake Washington School District are doubling or tripling up inside 2-bedroom apartments because they cannot afford rent.
 - The City is committed to increasing the supply of affordable housing and should continue to support its Affordable Housing Goal in the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Proactive Outreach to Prevent Homelessness**
 - Youth who experience homelessness in childhood are at risk of experiencing homelessness as adults.
 - Adults with disabilities and youth exiting foster care are also uniquely at risk of housing instability
 - Proactive case management is missing for high acuity individuals. Seniors and individuals with behavioral health challenges need someone to check in on them to ensure that they are taking their medications, keeping track of payments, and caring for their wellbeing. Many individuals lack family or other social connections that provide this care and can quietly slide into homelessness without additional support.

- In particular, seniors may have technology and accessibility challenges that make it especially difficult to access services. Language barriers also pose challenges to accessing resources.
- Prevent Evictions & Keep People Housed
 - Property tax deferrals, rental assistance, caps on late fees, and support for landlords to incentivize acceptance of partial payment and understand options can keep people housed.
 - Recent state legislation (HB 1217) enacted rent and housing stability measures including rent increase caps, rent increase notice requirements, caps on move-in fees and security deposits, and avenues for enforcement. These laws are new and not well understood by tenants or landlords.
 - Landlords may be the first to identify signs of crisis in their tenants but lack awareness of resources that could help tenants to remain housed.

Goal

Prevent an individual or family from losing housing by providing direct assistance or connections to resources.

Actions

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Prevention	1	Continue prioritizing human services grant funding that supports rent assistance and other prevention response.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$\$\$	Short-Term
Prevention	2	Continue to fund a full-time attorney dedicated to eviction prevention and housing support for low-income Kirkland residents in partnership with Eastside Legal Assistance Program (ELAP).	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$	Short-Term
Prevention	3	Continue funding a 1.0 FTE Human Services Coordinator position focused on Community Wellbeing, which includes connecting residents to resources.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$	Short-Term
Prevention	4	Continue the Kirkland Cares Low-Income Support Program to support households with	Strategic Spending	FA	Ongoing*	\$\$\$	Short-Term

		discounts on utility rates and other City services and charges.					
Prevention	5	Explore funding partnership to create a dedicated homelessness action fund to act as a centralized donation hub for community members, including the faith community to support outreach flex funds and severe weather response.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	N/A	Short-Term
Prevention	6	Educate landlords and tenants on HB 1217 that put rent and housing stability measures into place including rent increase caps, rent increase notice requirements, caps on move-in fees and security deposits, and avenues for enforcement.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PB	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Prevention	7	Provide educational resources, incentives, and protections to support single-unit landlords leasing to low-income tenants or tenants without rental histories; as well as working with HOAs to promote ADU availability and room rental flexibility.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	CAO	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Prevention	8	Explore voucher program with Lake Washington School District (LSWD) to address housing gaps for families at risk of homelessness.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term

Continuum of Care Goal Area:

Outreach

Overview

Outreach focuses on building relationships with people experiencing homelessness by getting to know individuals and connecting them with immediate resources and services to foster trust. Outreach work includes basic needs distribution, food, water, and referrals to services like shelter, housing, treatment, and healthcare.

Community Note

In community engagement for this Action Plan, community members noted that they were generally supportive of the City's efforts to provide humane care and outreach to unhoused individuals in our community. Homelessness can be invisible in the Kirkland community, and the data provided by the Homeless Outreach Coordinator's outreach validated the problem statement for many outreach participants.

Community engagement conversations regarding outreach converged around the following themes:

- Community Engagement & Education
 - Respondents noted that they were surprised and impressed by the level of response that the City is already providing on homelessness and commented that the City should do more to publicize its existing effort on this issue. Some even connected the lack of visible homelessness to these efforts.
 - Some community members expressed eagerness to contribute to helping unhoused individuals access resources.
 - The community urged the City to proactively engage and share resources with neighborhood associations, community groups, and the broader Kirkland population to educate them on the City's Action Plan and HART Team.
 - A more compassionate "coordinated" vs. police-only response is viewed favorably as long as it is balanced with accountability.
- Existing Service Levels/ Responsiveness
 - Prior to engagement, most respondents were unaware of the work that the Homeless Outreach Coordinator and Homeless Assistance & Response Team (HART) are already doing in Kirkland.
 - The Homeless Outreach Coordinator's work, approach, and responsiveness was broadly praised, signaling community support for ongoing investment.
 - Many respondents noted that the HART team was an efficient use of City resources and should be continued.

Expert Note

Service providers and Kirkland's HART Team expressed near-universal concern for the sustainability of existing outreach efforts. The City currently has one Homeless Outreach Coordinator, whose caseload is growing and is unsustainable. Engagement from service

providers expressed that to continue the excellent provision of services and outreach to unhoused individuals, additional staff and resources are required.

Expert conversations regarding outreach converged around the following themes:

- Community Engagement & Education
 - Internally, the City strives to provide a response to the community within 24 hours of receiving a ticket or complaint about an unhoused individual in the community. Given the Homeless Outreach Coordinator's working hours and the complexity of responding to individuals in crisis, it is not always possible to have a resolution within 24 hours. This contradiction creates tension for staff and for community members. This expectation is not sustainable at the existing service level.
 - The City is eager to communicate with the public regarding the complexities of homelessness. However, given the sensitive nature of working with individuals experiencing trauma and the City's own capacity constraints, this proactive outreach is not feasible at the existing service level.
 - The Kirkland community is compassionate, and for many, seeing homelessness in our community is upsetting. Simultaneously, it is not illegal to be unhoused in the City of Kirkland. Responding to community complaints about unhoused individuals strains staff capacity to connect unhoused individuals to services. Additionally, there are limits to the City's power to remove an unhoused individual if they are not breaking the law—and case law continues to evolve on this issue.
- Existing Service Levels, Responsiveness, Vulnerabilities & Gaps
 - The existing service model is for one Homeless Outreach Coordinator to provide 5 day a week coverage. The Homeless Outreach Coordinator is not an emergency responder and does not work evenings and weekends. While the Homeless Outreach Coordinator regularly flexes her hours to include early mornings and weekends, one Coordinator cannot provide 24/7 service. On evenings and weekends, there is a lag between when first responders make a referral to the Homeless Outreach Coordinator and when she is available to respond. This was raised as a problem not only by residents but also by businesses and organizations such as the library who do not necessarily want to call the police. Due to the transience of the unhoused population, this can result in an incomplete referral. In addition, there is no backup coverage when the Homeless Outreach Coordinator is out on vacation or sick leave, nor redundancy or succession plan if she departs the organization.
 - The work of the Homelessness Outreach Coordinator is to both meet with unhoused people in the community and also make referrals to resources and housing. The housing referral and navigation system in the region requires extensive administrative time to manage, screen, and nominate clients for housing and resources. This competing responsibility is a challenge to manage while simultaneously providing responsive service in the field.
 - The Homelessness Outreach Coordinator regularly works extensive overtime hours.
 - The work of outreach to vulnerable groups is both essential and emotionally draining. Without further support, the Homeless Outreach Coordinator is at risk of burnout.
- Shared Information Systems

- Service providers use different software to share and track information. There is no system integration across these platforms. The lack of communication across service providers can result in duplication of work. For example, if first responders encounter an unhoused individual, they do not have a way to quickly look up the individual's prior contacts to know if the individual is actively working with the Homeless Outreach Coordinator or real-time visibility into available beds. The lack of information sharing can lead to gaps in communication, duplication of effort, and gaps in service.
- The lack of software integration makes it challenging to communicate with the public about the status of an individual. As a result, the public may submit multiple inquiries about an unhoused individual, multiplying staff workload. The public may also be frustrated by the City's seeming lack of response.
- Service Gap: Behavioral Health
 - Behavioral health challenges are barriers to unhoused individuals working with the Homeless Outreach Coordinator. If an individual has behavioral health needs but is stable, they may not agree to work with the Homeless Outreach Coordinator or qualify for existing services. Because homelessness is traumatizing, most unhoused people are dealing with behavioral health challenges.
 - Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) can only assist in behavioral health cases when the case is tied to a 911 call. Regional Crisis Response(RCR) can only assist when unhoused individuals are in active crisis. The Homeless Outreach Coordinator is not a mental health professional and is not equipped to respond to individuals with complex behavioral health needs. This is a gap in services that leaves individuals cyclically unhoused and without access to resources.
- Lack of Available Emergency Resources
 - Establishing trust by following through on promised resources is essential to the work of outreach. Often, unhoused clients will agree to accept resources or housing support, but the resources do not exist or are at capacity. This can undermine the new relationship and trust of the resources offered.

Goal

Establish relationships with unhoused individuals and offer connections to immediate resources and services. Outreach provides person-centered care to prioritize life-safety and human dignity while maintaining public safety.

Actions

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
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Outreach	9	Continue HART coordination and response with regular evaluation of its role, mission, and function at the City. Continue educating City staff and the community on the purpose and how to activate HART. Consider branding a Kirkland Coordinated Response Protocol.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	10	Continue funding a 1.0 FTE Homeless Outreach Coordinator position focused on building rapport and connecting residents with resources to help address barriers to work towards housing stability.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	11	Formalize pilot programs to reduce barriers for people working with the Homeless Outreach Coordinator, including mail services, showers, laundry, and property storage at LWUMC.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	12	Continue to invest in the Flex Fund the HART team uses to purchase basic human needs items or other resources that otherwise pose barriers to housing.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	13	Continue vehicle and RV repair program.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	14	Continue property safekeeping program for unhoused residents who require temporary storage of belongings.	Person-centered Approach	KPD	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	15	Continue 24/7 open restroom at Marina Park.	Prioritize Safety	PCS	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	16	Evaluate current wound care service through MIH. Consider expansion to provide services outside of 911 response.	Person-centered Approach	KFD	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	17	Ensure all Kirkland police officers are trained on homelessness standard operating procedures for	Prioritize Safety	KPD	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term

		both engagement and enforcement.					
Outreach	18	Continue to work with the Kirkland Senior Council and support the Senior Center to provide resources to seniors experiencing housing instability.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	19	Evaluate current members of the HART team and consider expansion to include Probation and other staff that interact with people experiencing homelessness.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	20	Fund a 1.0 FTE Housing Case Manager position to support homeless outreach clients with housing navigation and case management support plus direct assistance to residents who have been priced out of market rate housing (fixed income, disability, loss of spouse, etc) and do not know how to navigate the complex multiple steps required to locate and apply to affordable housing.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	21	Consider flex fund expansion to include all first responders to offer basic needs to people who are unhoused as part of their response.	Strategic Spending	FA	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	22	Expand access to training, culturally-relevant resources, and linguistic services (interpretation and translation services) for the HART Team to assist the growing, diverse population of unhoused residents.	Strategic Spending	CMO	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	23	Create Homeless Outreach Program Manual to educate internal staff on policies and procedures in responding to homelessness across the City.	Timely Communication and	PCS	Proposed	\$	Short-Term

			Collaboration				
Outreach	24	Continue to fund severe weather response. Partner with faith-based organizations and private sector philanthropy to increase funding.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	25	Consider increasing homeless outreach staffing over time to provide 7-day a week response capability, ensure staff wellbeing, retention, coordination with HART, and sustained impact.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Outreach	26	Explore centralized data tracking tool to synthesize information on shared clients and locations for HART team members. Develop a scope of work for technological solutions to allow HART to collectively track the last point of contact with a client.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Outreach	27	Explore options to deploy a mental health professional to correspond with the Homeless Outreach Coordinator. This may include partnerships with MIH who have been trained in SOAR to support people experiencing homelessness apply for SSA, SSI, and SSDI, or additional City staff.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Outreach	28	Expand transportation options for HART members to support unhoused clients accessing medical appts, DMV, court dates, and other appointments. Consider formalizing bus ticket program through Human Services to other HART members unable to transport clients.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Outreach	29	Explore co-hosting a regional clinic in the OneHealth Clinic model - providing veterinary and human medical services, co-located. Consider piloting at	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Proposed	\$	Long-Term

		annual Kirkland Health and Wellness Fair.					
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Continuum of Care Goal Area:

Emergency Shelter Services

Overview

Emergency shelter programs vary in service model but are often time-limited, providing an interim step toward securing permanent housing.

Emergency shelter services are programs that offer 24/7/365 shelter with wraparound support to households who have lost housing, including case management, employment, and behavioral health support. Several shelters also offer day center services. Day centers offer hot meals, showers, laundry, mail services, case management, and other resources.

On the Eastside, there are 8 year-round shelters serving men, women, youth, families and domestic violence survivors, totaling over 700 beds. The majority are near or at capacity on any given night and people stay longer than is intended for such facilities, creating bottlenecks for newly unhoused people.

Community Note

In engagement forums, the community broadly agreed that temporary and emergency housing programs were a necessary part of the continuum of care. Respondents supported preventing unhoused individuals from sleeping in public spaces.

Community engagement conversations regarding emergency shelter services converged around the following themes:

- Shelter Constraints
 - The community had a general sense that shelters were at or near capacity but was interested in seeing data to demonstrate that this is a problem.
 - Unhoused individuals say that the emergency shelter length of stay is too short to identify a “next step” of a temporary housing option – which means that an individual can exit shelters and remain unhoused.
- Severe Weather
 - The faith-based community expressed interest in collaborating and providing financial support for the City’s emergency activations caused by severe weather. Faith based organizations are often contacted by residents in need when severe weather conditions occur.
- Serving Kirkland Community Members
 - Some community members noted that unhoused Kirkland community members should not be sent away to other communities—except for high acuity cases that may require very specific assistance not available here or in the region.

- Simultaneously, community members did not want to attract unhoused individuals from other communities into Kirkland by providing a regional shelter service here.

Expert Note

Service providers and experts agree that emergency shelter services are essential to providing immediate life-saving support for unhoused individuals. Yet the existing systems are severely capacity constrained. Emergency housing programs are intended to be short-term emergency housing options. However, due to the lack of subsidized permanent housing in the pipeline, individuals may utilize emergency housing programs for long-term housing. Emergency housing options lack capacity and have a low rate of turnover.

Expert conversations regarding emergency shelter services converged around the following themes:

- **Shelter Constraints**
 - Unhoused individuals are often willing to go inside but shelters are full
 - When an individual is exiting transitional housing or emergency shelter, there is no subsidized permanent housing option to move to. Simultaneously, there are others waiting for their place in transitional housing or emergency shelters. This creates a leak in the system that can send people back to being unhoused and unsheltered.
 - Gaining a real-time understanding of which shelters have capacity and which are full is an administrative burden. The Homeless Outreach Coordinator must call shelters four times a week to see if they have capacity.
 - The urgency of seeking emergency shelter for an individual can complicate other goals for stability. For example, in probation appointments, probation officers often spend time helping clients find a shelter for that night. This is meeting an important and immediate need, but it does take away from the time in the probation appointment to work towards other assessments that have time-sensitive consequences at the court.
 - Access to low-barrier shelters is essential and severely lacking. There are no options for unhoused individuals who have substance use disorder and who are actively using.
- **Family shelters are limited.** Lake Washington School District reported a recent anecdote of a mother and daughter that were evicted and had to split up due to lack of family shelter space; the student was looking for a youth shelter option and the mother sought emergency shelter from an adult congregant shelter. Even when split up, local shelters were full and the individuals had to look at options outside of King County.
- **Severe Weather**
 - Kirkland City Council allocated \$20,000 for 2025-26 to provide emergency shelter for unhoused individuals in severe weather conditions. In January 2025, an extended season of severe weather activation cost the City \$81,000. With more frequent and severe weather anticipated in 2025-26 and beyond due to changing climate patterns, this program is unsustainable with current funding models.

- Unhoused individuals who participated in community engagement stated that the severe weather threshold is not compatible with the lived experience of being outside.
- Barriers to Accessing Shelter Resources
 - For many unhoused individuals, a pet is a beloved family member. Many medical care services, shelters, and programs do not allow pets or emotional support animals in their programs. This is a meaningful barrier to care. Veterinary care is also needed.
 - Shelters have limited storage capacity and may not be able to accept an unhoused individual's personal items. Concern about the safety of their personal items may prevent an individual from seeking resources.
 - Because many shelters serve specified, binary populations, LGBTQIA individuals may not feel as safe or welcome using these services.
 - Individuals who have experienced assault and/or trauma during previous shelter stays may not feel safe or utilizing shelter services.
- Kirkland's Unhoused Residents
 - Many unhoused Kirkland residents are local to East King County and are unwilling to go elsewhere to access services or shelter. The Eastside is their community and where they have established medical care and access to other resources. In addition to these real barriers, there is a general perception that Seattle is unsafe.

Goal

Save lives by bringing people indoors. Provide shelter and resources that promote basic human dignity and welfare while working towards permanent housing.

Actions

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Emergency Shelter Services	30	Continue Hotel Set Asides Pilot Program for clients working with Homeless Outreach Coordinator who require interim shelter but on track to secure housing. Consider expanding budget due to shelter capacity issues on Eastside.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Emergency Shelter Services	31	Continue funding to build capacity at Eastside shelters and day centers for all population types; but prioritizing women and family shelters.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$\$\$	Medium-Term

Emergency Shelter Services	32	Improve the threshold for activating extreme weather shelter programs, in accordance with input from individuals with lived experience.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$	Medium-Term
Emergency Shelter Services	33	Explore opportunities to advance programs that support populations not served under the current shelter model or experience barriers, including but not limited to: couples, people with pets, LGBTQIA+, immigrants, and refugees.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Emergency Shelter Services	34	Advocate for and enlist other interested entities such as faith organizations and LWSD to increase emergency shelters and other resources for families with children to reduce the long-term, generational impact of homelessness.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Proposed	\$	Long-Term

Continuum of Care Goal Area:

Temporary Shelter & Housing

Overview

Temporary Shelter and Emergency Housing programs vary in service model but are often time-limited, providing an interim step toward securing permanent housing. These services are the most difficult and most urgent services the City provides. Common models of temporary shelter and housing include sanctioned encampments, safe parking programs or mobile vehicle residency, transitional housing, and non-congregate temporary housing.

Community Note

In community discussions, residents and stakeholders were less familiar with the concept of temporary shelter and housing programs. They commonly confused temporary shelter & housing services with emergency shelters or with subsidized permanent housing. Community forums reached a general understanding that more shelter and housing resources are necessary, but did not provide specific feedback about the City's role in these services.

Community engagement conversations regarding temporary shelter & housing services converged around the following themes:

- Tiny Home Villages
 - Faith leaders in Kirkland expressed support for siting a Tiny Home village on the Eastside. Residents understand and are fairly neutral to the concept. The siting of such a village is more controversial.
- Fair Distribution around Kirkland
 - There's a tension between community members seeking a broader geographic distribution of temporary encampments versus others who do not feel like the program should be expanded at all.

Expert Note

Policy regarding temporary shelter & housing services has evolved in recent years. In the past decade, many temporary housing services have closed or been adopted into permanent subsidized housing models. The goal of this policy shift was to minimize the number of transitions an individual must make between homelessness and housing security. However, recent best practice has seen a revival of the temporary housing model, which builds the skills, stability, and preparedness for stable housing as a person exits homelessness. As a result of this fluctuating trend in services, few temporary housing services exist, including in Kirkland. And the resources that do exist are at capacity.

Expert conversations regarding temporary shelter & housing services converged around the following themes:

- **Tiny Home Villages**
 - The City has extensively studied the possibility of Tiny Home Villages. Service providers and staff see Tiny Home Villages as a potentially viable model to provide transitory housing stability. However, barriers remain for implementation. On average, Tiny Home Villages can cost approximately \$1 million per year in operating costs. This investment is currently not funded under existing service levels. Siting a Tiny Home Village location is challenging, particularly on public property due to City code. To be successful, a Tiny Home Village would require private partnership, space, funding, and community support—including targeted outreach to neighborhoods proximate to siting.
- **Safe Parking**
 - The Safe Parking program was praised by unhoused participants.
 - Safe Parking is not a true shelter or housing service; an individual living in their car is not considered sheltered. Severe weather conditions threaten the safety of participants of safe parking programs. These programs and related services are also regularly at capacity.

Goal

Provide a safe place for individuals to live temporarily, stabilize, gain skills for long term housing success, and support their transition to permanent housing.

Actions

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Temporary Shelter and Housing	35	Continue providing sanitation services, fencing, and case management at City designated temporary housing sites.	Person-centered Approach	PW	Ongoing*	\$	Short-Term
Temporary Shelter and Housing	36	Support Comprehensive Plan policies to reduce regulatory and zoning code barriers to transitional housing programs and to avoid displacement.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PB	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term

Temporary Shelter and Housing	37	Analyze current code that supports sanctioned encampments to assess the following: - Consider allowing the City or other organizations that are not "community-based organizations" to function as a sponsor or managing agency for authorized encampments - Consider extending the initial authorized operation period of 92 days - Consider allowing authorized encampments to be established on a recurring basis over a period of several years in the same location, similar to City of Redmond's regulations	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PB	Proposed	N/A	Medium -Term
Temporary Shelter and Housing	38	Explore interest in development of tiny home villages on the Eastside, particularly at faith community properties.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	CMO	Proposed	\$\$\$	Medium -Term
Temporary Shelter and Housing	39	Explore diverse, short term sheltering solutions that are non-congregate (e.g. pallet shelter, tiny home, safe parking) on the Eastside, particularly at faith-based community properties.	Strategic Spending	CMO	Proposed	\$\$\$	Medium -Term
Temporary Shelter and Housing	40	Evaluate current investment in congregate shelter solutions by population type and identify alternative strategies.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Proposed	\$	Long-Term

Continuum of Care Goal Area:

Subsidized Permanent Housing

Overview

Subsidized Permanent Housing is generally categorized as housing units available for those who are qualified by income and/or other criteria to live in homes that receive public subsidy. Typically, the goal for subsidized permanent housing is that households pay no more than 30% of their monthly income on rent and utilities. These types of units provide stable, rent restricted housing for low- and moderate-income households. Permanent affordable housing units are often created through local housing incentive and inclusionary programs, including mandatory inclusionary zoning, voluntary density bonus, and multifamily tax exemptions. Another model is permanent supportive housing, which offers wraparound services that can include employment navigation, transportation access, food access, and behavioral, mental, and medical services.

Community Note

Participants in community engagement efforts were generally familiar with the permanent supportive housing model due to King County's upcoming permanent supportive housing project in Kirkland, Health Through Housing at the former LaQuinta property. Community members were generally supportive of the *concept* of permanent supportive housing (especially wraparound services) but expressed concerns about the implementation of these projects.

Community engagement conversations regarding subsidized permanent housing converged around the following themes:

- King County's Health Through Housing Project in Kirkland
 - Many of the community members who participated in Kirkland's community engagement forums and focus groups came prepared to discuss King County's permanent supportive housing initiative, Health Through Housing. Community members were generally familiar with the project but expressed surprise at the City's presentation about the details of permanent supportive housing.
 - Community commentary revealed much misinformation and misunderstanding of what Health Through Housing is and is not.
 - In particular, some respondents were surprised that the Health Through Housing program provides wraparound supportive services and dedicated apartments. They also expressed relief that the local referral network is responsible for referring many of the individuals being placed in the Health Through Housing program.
 - Some respondents had questions about the implementation of this plan and how evictions would occur, if necessary.

- High Acuity Individuals
 - Multiple sessions of community engagement discussed the need for a separate system of care for individuals with high-acuity needs. These individuals' complex mental, behavioral, and medical health needs may make them incompatible with programs such as permanent supportive housing. There is no alternative long-term program for these individuals.
- Support for Alternative Affordable Housing models
 - The community response was broadly supportive of a broad array of housing models, including ADUs, room rentals inside single family homes, cottage units suitable for seniors, and other programs.
 - Many questioned the definition of affordable and also noted that cost of living is high in Kirkland.

Expert Note

Subsidized permanent housing is needed to reduce the backlog of individuals exiting homelessness.

Expert conversations regarding subsidized permanent housing converged around the following themes:

- King County's Health Through Housing Program
 - King County's Health Through Housing program is an important opportunity for Kirkland residents to exit homelessness and receive wraparound care. The City should continue to provide support and oversight—including its ongoing community engagement with King County and Plymouth and enforcement of the code of conduct, good neighbor agreement, and safety and security plan.
 - Overwhelmingly, experts and service providers said that the City needs more affordable housing, including subsidized permanent housing, which reaches capacity very quickly.

Goal

Provide a safe place for individuals to live stably and long-term, which in some cases includes access to wraparound services.

Actions

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Permanent Subsidized Housing	41	Support current Comp Plan policies to incentivize increased supply of affordable housing units for households between 0-60% AMI and promote progress on number of affordable housing units/developments in Kirkland,	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PB	Ongoing	\$\$\$	Long-Term

		including workforce and student-focused housing opportunities.					
Permanent Subsidized Housing	42	Provide oversight and support success of first permanent supportive housing project in Kirkland through coordination and collaboration with the operator, King County, and City. Bring transparency to the community through support of regular reporting to Council and regular engagement with the community after project opening.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Ongoing	\$\$\$	Short-Term
Permanent Subsidized Housing	43	Implement the local referral network and ensure accountability relating to the City approved code of conduct, community relations plan, safety and security plan, and good neighbor agreement.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term

Continuum of Care Goal Area:

Program Delivery & System Support

Overview

The City of Kirkland is committed to the provision of responsive, person-centered, and accountable human services. Program Delivery & System Support refers to the oversight, management, funding, and reporting of this work.

Community Note

- Safety of Kirkland Neighborhoods and Community Spaces
 - A majority of respondents expressed that they want neighborhoods that will be safe, quiet, and peaceful.
 - While understanding the need for compassion and the complexity of recovery, many expressed the need for accountability. Respondents expressed that the City must enforce the laws.
 - Community members sought assurance that should an individual be disruptive to the community and break the rules, that individual would be removed.
- Economic Uncertainty
 - Many respondents expressed their own economic concerns for their family and local economy. They worried that changes at the federal level would lead to an increasing demand on City resources to respond to homelessness.
 - Most respondents anticipated that homelessness would get worse in our region before it improves. Most expressed that the City should be proactive about addressing homelessness before the situation worsens.
 - Individual respondents expressed personal economic uncertainty and a strong resistance to increasing taxes to fund local response to homelessness in addition to other City priorities and taxes.
 - Many respondents expressed that the City should be proactive about advocating for increased state and federal funding to support the response to homelessness.
- Kirkland's Fair Share
 - Kirkland residents and stakeholders were broadly supportive of increased efforts to respond to homelessness. They expressed sympathy for unhoused community members and felt that the City should do more to support these individuals but in a balanced way. They expressed a pervasive fear that Kirkland will become like Seattle if the City does not do this well.
 - However, multiple respondents noted that today's homelessness is the result of decades of policy failures stemming from the federal and state levels.
 - Many noted that homelessness is not an issue exclusive to Kirkland; a regional approach is necessary, and neighboring jurisdictions must also take responsibility for their residents.

- Many respondents expressed that Kirkland should serve Kirkland residents (housed and unhoused) but should not become a magnet for unhoused people from other communities. Kirkland cannot sustain services for a regional response by itself.
- Data
 - Nearly every community focus group discussed the importance of reviewing the data on homelessness, both to confirm the problem and to evaluate the effectiveness of the solution. Clear metrics and accountability were voiced as being particularly important in matters of public safety and enforcement.
 - Some participants wanted to understand exactly how many unhoused people were “from” Kirkland to understand the scope of the issue and validate that Kirkland is not addressing another jurisdiction’s problem.
 - Many respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the existing data on homelessness—mostly because there is not agreement on root causes or solutions. However, the data provided by the Homeless Outreach Coordinator’s contacts in 18 months validated the problem statement for many engagement participants.

Expert Note

- Funding
 - Maintaining existing service levels is not feasible without additional funding sources, including for additional staff.
 - The essential goal of human services is to make systemic changes to reduce the need for human services. Yet the regional and national context of homelessness means that demand for human services funding continues to increase. Despite a record level of investment in the City’s 2025-26 budget through human services grants, the demand for these resources continues to grow.
 - The City’s response to homelessness has been as lean as possible. The existing Homeless Outreach Coordinator has been supervised by the Human Services Manager, who also oversees the entire Human Services division, a body of work that includes 5 direct reports, oversight of \$6M in grant funding to 75 community programs, regional policy and funding collaborations, Health Through Housing development coordination, Human Services Commission, and Youth Council. Due to the growth of the division to meet the community’s needs, along with the increase and complexity of the Homeless Outreach Coordinator’s case load, the needed staffing levels are not sustainable without additional investment. As the Homelessness team grows, the administrative and managerial burden of these roles also grow.
- Data
 - Given the inherent transience of homelessness, it is difficult for unhoused individuals to maintain paperwork necessary to apply for housing or other resources. Requiring paperwork for service is a barrier to care. Unhoused individuals are repeatedly asked for verification and information to access services. The City values the basic human rights, dignity, and privacy of unhoused individuals in our community. Wherever possible, the City prioritizes the provision of services and respect for individual privacy over verification and data keeping. As individuals transition between resources, services, and

jurisdictions, it becomes difficult to track what information and resources have already been offered and accepted.

- Lake Washington School District shared that while homelessness is less visible in Kirkland, it is wide reaching among families with school-aged children. In the last school year, Lake Washington School District saw an increase from 300 families to 700 families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Lake Washington School District reported that it is common to have 2-3 families in a single apartment. This “doubling up” and “tripling up” is not reflected in the City’s data on homelessness, contributing to the sense that the problem is not fully visible in Kirkland.

Goal

Develop sustainable and actionable workplans that meaningfully reduce homelessness. Provide clear reporting about the effectiveness of services and efficiency of funding and build awareness City actions, services and progress.

Actions

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Program Delivery & System Support	44	Ensure that response to homelessness coordinates with other Citywide plans and work including: - Human Services Element of the Comprehensive Plan - Homelessness Element in the Comprehensive Plan - Health through Housing Agreement	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PB	Ongoing	N/A	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	45	Continue Eastside City homeless response coordination, including: - pooled contract interlocal agreement with shelter providers - monthly meetings with street outreach teams, human services staff, and the Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee - monthly meetings with KCRHA	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$\$	Short-Term

Program Delivery & System Support	46	Advocate on the county, state, and federal level for funding to support Kirkland's homelessness action plan.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Ongoing	N/A	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	47	Continue to allocate Community Development Block Grant public service funds to emergency shelter programs.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	48	Continue comprehensive campaign to engage with and educate the community on Kirkland's successes and challenges to address homelessness through online and printed materials and events, partnering with faith community and other advocate partners when appropriate.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	49	Continue participation in case management and data tracking system with the Cities of Redmond and Bellevue.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing*	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	50	Support KCRHA to collect annual Eastside data on number of sheltered and unsheltered individuals through the Point in Time Count.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	51	Continue to participate and support the Regional Crisis Response Agency.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Ongoing*	\$\$\$\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	52	Coordinate with KTUB staff and nonprofit organizations to support youth and young adults experiencing housing insecurity.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	53	Coordinate with community centers and other city spaces to make referrals and provide resources for participants accessing the	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term

		space, including but not limited to, North Kirkland Community Center and Peter Kirk Community Center.					
Program Delivery & System Support	54	Continue to develop standard operating procedures and policies that prioritize a person-centered approach with compassion, accountability, and safety as a focus. Establish a regular review schedule of existing procedure and policies on an annual basis.	Prioritize Safety	CMO	Ongoing	N/A	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	55	Continue to advocate for state funding for affordable housing in the Housing Trust Fund.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Ongoing	N/A	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	56	Hire a human services supervisor to staff and support the expanded homeless outreach program, serve as liaison of the HART team, and support implementation of the action plan.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	57	Establish dedicated space for Human Services staff to conduct outreach and provide services confidentiality. This includes the Homeless Outreach Coordinator, KCSARC Pilot Position, and any future human services positions focused on direct service.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Proposed	\$\$\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	58	Explore potential approaches to data reporting and measures of success to Council, including format, content, and appropriate frequency.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Proposed	\$	Short-Term

Program Delivery & System Support	59	Centralize volunteer opportunities by and among faith communities related to homelessness within the Volunteer Services Program.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	60	Research regional funding and facility options for individuals with high acuity needs, aiming to provide specialized interventions beyond transitional shelters and supportive housing programs.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	61	Explore local funding to sustain MIH with staffing levels that specifically support homelessness response in Kirkland.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	KFD	Proposed	\$\$\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	62	Coordinate regular meetings to ensure system coordination with key stakeholders, including LWSD, King County Library System, Connections, Evergreen, Fairfax, etc.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	63	Explore activating partnerships with the private sector to address funding gaps in Eastside homeless services.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	64	Advocate for KCRHA to expand data-sharing software connecting service providers, shelters, and jurisdictions with real-time data on resource availability and client case management.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	65	Advocate for King County to implement a regional housing levy to increase funding for low-income housing in Kirkland.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	N/A	Medium-Term

Program Delivery & System Support	66	Advocate for more pass through dollars of King County human services levies to support local homelessness response. Encourage Best Starts for Kids (BSK), Veterans, Seniors, Human Services Levy (VSHSL), and Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Behavioral Health Sales Tax Fund (MIDD) to align funding model similar to the Medic 1 and King County Parks Levy.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	N/A	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	67	Explore and develop a referral process between the Homeless Outreach Coordinator and residents exiting an institution, including but not limited to, hospitals, behavioral health clinics, and jails.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	68	Explore a workforce development partnership with Evergreen Health and LWTech on workforce development programs that could provide assistance to the service provision network. Example: Automotive Tech programs assisting in vehicle repairs at safe parking programs, culinary programs supplying community meals, healthcare technician graduates assisting at a healthcare clinic.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	69	Assess current human services grant funding levels across goal areas, and determine prioritization based on highest level of need across the continuum	Strategic Spending	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Long-Term

		of care. Consider conducting a needs assessment to strategically align Human Services Division work.					
Program Delivery & System Support	70	Explore levy to create sustainable local funding for human services and homelessness programs.	Strategic Spending	CMO	Proposed	\$\$\$\$	Long-Term

Contact Information

Questions, concerns, or comments for City staff? Please contact Human Services or the City Manager's Office.

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Learn more online: <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Homelessness>

Appendices

- [King County Regional Homelessness Authority 5-Year Plan](#)
- [King County Regional Homelessness Authority 2024 Point In Time Count](#)
- [All Home King County Point 2020 In Time Count](#)
- [King County Reports on Housing Policy & Data](#)
- [Resolution 5631](#)

Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan Draft Action List

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Prevention	1	Continue prioritizing human services grant funding that supports rent assistance and other prevention response.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$\$\$	Short-Term
Prevention	2	Continue to fund a full-time attorney dedicated to eviction prevention and housing support for low-income Kirkland residents in partnership with Eastside Legal Assistance Program (ELAP).	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$	Short-Term
Prevention	3	Continue funding a 1.0 FTE Human Services Coordinator position focused on Community Wellbeing, which includes connecting residents to resources.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$	Short-Term
Prevention	4	Continue the Kirkland Cares Low-Income Support Program to support households with discounts on utility rates and other City services and charges.	Strategic Spending	FA	Ongoing*	\$\$\$	Short-Term
Prevention	5	Explore funding partnership to create a dedicated homelessness action fund to act as a centralized donation hub for community members, including the faith community to support outreach flex funds and severe weather response.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	N/A	Short-Term
Prevention	6	Educate landlords and tenants on HB 1217 that put rent and housing stability measures into place including rent increase caps, rent increase notice requirements, caps on move-in fees and security deposits, and avenues for enforcement.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PB	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Prevention	7	Provide educational resources, incentives, and protections to support single-unit landlords leasing to low-income tenants or tenants without rental histories; as well as working with HOAs to promote ADU availability and room rental flexibility.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	CAO	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Prevention	8	Explore voucher program with Lake Washington School District (LSWD) to address housing gaps for families at risk of homelessness.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Outreach	9	Continue HART coordination and response with regular evaluation of its role, mission, and function at the City. Continue educating City staff and the community on the purpose and how to activate HART. Consider branding a Kirkland Coordinated Response Protocol.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	10	Continue funding a 1.0 FTE Homeless Outreach Coordinator position focused on building rapport and connecting residents with resources to help address barriers to work towards housing stability.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	11	Formalize pilot programs to reduce barriers for people working with the Homeless Outreach Coordinator, including mail services, showers, laundry, and property storage at LWUMC.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	12	Continue to invest in the Flex Fund the HART team uses to purchase basic human needs items or other resources that otherwise pose barriers to housing.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	13	Continue vehicle and RV repair program.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$	Short-Term

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Outreach	14	Continue property safekeeping program for unhoused residents who require temporary storage of belongings.	Person-centered Approach	KPD	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	15	Continue 24/7 open restroom at Marina Park.	Prioritize Safety	PCS	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	16	Evaluate current wound care service through MIH. Consider expansion to provide services outside of 911 response.	Person-centered Approach	KFD	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	17	Ensure all Kirkland police officers are trained on homelessness standard operating procedures for both engagement and enforcement.	Prioritize Safety	KPD	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	18	Continue to work with the Kirkland Senior Council and support the Senior Center to provide resources to seniors experiencing housing instability.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	19	Evaluate current members of the HART team and consider expansion to include Probation and other staff that interact with people experiencing homelessness.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	20	Fund a 1.0 FTE Housing Case Manager position to support homeless outreach clients with housing navigation and case management support plus direct assistance to residents who have been priced out of market rate housing (fixed income, disability, loss of spouse, etc) and don't know how to navigate the complex multiple steps required to locate and apply to affordable housing.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	21	Consider flex fund expansion to include all first responders to offer basic needs to people who are unhoused as part of their response.	Strategic Spending	FA	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	22	Expand access to training, culturally-relevant resources, and linguistic services (interpretation and translation services) for the HART Team to assist the growing, diverse population of unhoused residents.	Strategic Spending	CMO	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	23	Create Homeless Outreach Program Manual to educate internal staff on policies and procedures in responding to homelessness across the City.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	24	Continue to fund severe weather response. Partner with faith-based organizations and private sector philanthropy to increase funding.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	25	Consider increasing homeless outreach staffing over time to provide 7-day a week response capability, ensure staff wellbeing, retention, coordination with HART, and sustained impact.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Outreach	26	Explore centralized data tracking tool to synthesize information on shared clients and locations for HART team members. Develop a scope of work for technological solutions to allow HART to collectively track the last point of contact with a client.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Outreach	27	Explore options to deploy a mental health professional to co-respond with the Homeless Outreach Coordinator. This may include partnerships with MIH who have been trained in SOAR to support people experiencing homelessness apply for SSA, SSI, and SSDI, or additional City staff.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Outreach	28	Expand transportation options for HART members to support unhoused clients accessing medical appts, DMV, court dates, and other appointments. Consider formalizing bus ticket program through Human Services to other HART members unable to transport clients.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Outreach	29	Explore co-hosting a regional clinic in the OneHealth Clinic model - providing veterinary and human medical services, co-located. Consider piloting at annual Kirkland Health and Wellness Fair.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Proposed	\$	Long-Term
Emergency Shelter Services	30	Continue Hotel Set Asides Pilot Program for clients working with Homeless Outreach Coordinator who require interim shelter but on track to secure housing. Consider expanding budget due to shelter capacity issues on Eastside.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Emergency Shelter Services	31	Continue funding to build capacity at Eastside shelters and day centers for all population types; but prioritizing women and family shelters.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$\$\$	Medium-Term
Emergency Shelter Services	32	Improve the threshold for activating extreme weather shelter programs, in accordance with input from individuals with lived experience.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$	Medium-Term
Emergency Shelter Services	33	Explore opportunities to advance programs that support populations not served under the current shelter model or experience barriers, including but not limited to: couples, people with pets, LGBTQIA+, immigrants, and refugees.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Emergency Shelter Services	34	Advocate for and enlist other interested entities such as faith organizations and LWSD to increase emergency shelters and other resources for families with children to reduce the long-term, generational impact of homelessness.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Proposed	\$	Long-Term
Temporary Shelter and Housing	35	Continue providing sanitation services, fencing, and case management at City designated temporary housing sites.	Person-centered Approach	PW	Ongoing*	\$	Short-Term
Temporary Shelter and Housing	36	Support Comprehensive Plan policies to reduce regulatory and zoning code barriers to transitional housing programs and to avoid displacement.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PB	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Temporary Shelter and Housing	37	Analyze current code that supports sanctioned encampments to assess the following: - Consider allowing the City or other organizations that are not "community-based organizations" to function as a sponsor or managing agency for authorized encampments - Consider extending the initial authorized operation period of 92 days - Consider allowing authorized encampments to be established on a recurring basis over a period of several years in the same location, similar to City of Redmond's regulations	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PB	Proposed	N/A	Medium-Term
Temporary Shelter and Housing	38	Explore interest in development of tiny home villages on the Eastside, particularly at faith community properties.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	CMO	Proposed	\$\$\$	Medium-Term
Temporary Shelter and Housing	39	Explore diverse, short term sheltering solutions that are non-congregate (e.g. pallet shelter, tiny home, safe parking) on the Eastside, particularly at faith-based community properties.	Strategic Spending	CMO	Proposed	\$\$\$	Medium-Term
Temporary Shelter and Housing	40	Evaluate current investment in congregate shelter solutions by population type and identify alternative strategies.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Proposed	\$	Long-Term
Permanent Subsidized Housing	41	Support current Comp Plan policies to incentivize increased supply of affordable housing units for households between 0-60% AMI and promote progress on number of affordable housing units/developments in Kirkland, including workforce and student-focused housing opportunities.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PB	Ongoing	\$\$\$	Long-Term
Permanent Subsidized Housing	42	Provide oversight and support success of first permanent supportive housing project in Kirkland through coordination and collaboration with the operator, King County, and City. Bring transparency to the community through support of regular reporting to Council and regular engagement with the community after project opening.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Ongoing	\$\$\$	Short-Term
Permanent Subsidized Housing	43	Implement the local referral network and ensure accountability relating to the City approved code of conduct, community relations plan, safety and security plan, and good neighbor agreement.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	44	Ensure that response to homelessness coordinates with other Citywide plans and work including: - Human Services Element of the Comprehensive Plan - Homelessness Element in the Comprehensive Plan - Health through Housing Agreement	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PB	Ongoing	N/A	Short-Term

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Program Delivery & System Support	45	Continue Eastside City homeless response coordination, including: - pooled contract interlocal agreement with shelter providers - monthly meetings with street outreach teams, human services staff, and the Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee - monthly meetings with KCRHA	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	46	Advocate on the county, state, and federal level for funding to support Kirkland's homelessness action plan.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Ongoing	N/A	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	47	Continue to allocate Community Development Block Grant public service funds to emergency shelter programs.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	48	Continue comprehensive campaign to engage with and educate the community on Kirkland's successes and challenges to address homelessness through online and printed materials and events, partnering with faith community and other advocate partners when appropriate.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	49	Continue participation in case management and data tracking system with the Cities of Redmond and Bellevue.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing*	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	50	Support KCRHA to collect annual Eastside data on number of sheltered and unsheltered individuals through the Point in Time Count.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	51	Continue to participate and support the Regional Crisis Response Agency.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Ongoing*	\$\$\$\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	52	Coordinate with KTUB staff and nonprofit organizations to support youth and young adults experiencing housing insecurity.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	53	Coordinate with community centers and other city spaces to make referrals and provide resources for participants accessing the space, including but not limited to, North Kirkland Community Center and Peter Kirk Community Center.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	54	Continue to develop standard operating procedures and policies that prioritize a person-centered approach with compassion, accountability, and safety as a focus. Establish a regular review schedule of existing procedure and policies on an annual basis.	Prioritize Safety	CMO	Ongoing	N/A	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	55	Continue to advocate for state funding for affordable housing in the Housing Trust Fund.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Ongoing	N/A	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	56	Hire a human services supervisor to staff and support the expanded homeless outreach program, serve as liaison of the HART team, and support implementation of the action plan.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	57	Establish dedicated space for Human Services staff to conduct outreach and provide services confidentially. This includes the Homeless Outreach Coordinator, KCSARC Pilot Position, and any future human services positions focused on direct service.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Proposed	\$\$\$	Short-Term

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Program Delivery & System Support	58	Explore potential approaches to data reporting and measures of success to Council, including format, content, and appropriate frequency.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	59	Centralize volunteer opportunities by and among faith communities related to homelessness within the Volunteer Services Program.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	60	Research regional funding and facility options for individuals with high acuity needs, aiming to provide specialized interventions beyond transitional shelters and supportive housing programs.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	61	Explore local funding to sustain MIH with staffing levels that specifically support homelessness response in Kirkland.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	KFD	Proposed	\$\$\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	62	Coordinate regular meetings to ensure system coordination with key stakeholders, including LWSD, King County Library System, Connections, Evergreen, Fairfax, etc.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	63	Explore activating partnerships with the private sector to address funding gaps in Eastside homeless services.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	64	Advocate for KCRHA to expand data-sharing software connecting service providers, shelters, and jurisdictions with real-time data on resource availability and client case management.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	65	Advocate for King County to implement a regional housing levy to increase funding for low-income housing in Kirkland.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	N/A	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	66	Advocate for more pass through dollars of King County human services levies to support local homelessness response. Encourage Best Starts for Kids (BSK), Veterans, Seniors, Human Services Levy (VSHSL), and Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Behavioral Health Sales Tax Fund (MIDD) to align funding model similar to the Medic 1 and King County Parks Levy.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	N/A	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	67	Explore and develop a referral process between the Homeless Outreach Coordinator and residents exiting an institution, including but not limited to, hospitals, behavioral health clinics, and jails.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	68	Explore a workforce development partnership with Evergreen Health and LWTech on workforce development programs that could provide assistance to the service provision network. Example: Automotive Tech programs assisting in vehicle repairs at safe parking programs, culinary programs supplying community meals, healthcare technician graduates assisting at a healthcare clinic.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Program Delivery & System Support	69	Assess current human services grant funding levels across goal areas, and determine prioritization based on highest level of need across the the continuum of care. Consider conducting a needs assessment to strategically align Human Services Division work.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Proposed	\$	Long-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	70	Explore a voter-approved levy to create sustainable local funding for human services and homelessness programs.	Strategic Spending	CMO	Proposed	\$\$\$\$	Long-Term

Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan - Ongoing Actions

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Prevention	1	Continue prioritizing human services grant funding that supports rent assistance and other prevention response.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$\$\$	Short-Term
Prevention	4	Continue the Kirkland Cares Low-Income Support Program to support households with discounts on utility rates and other City services and charges.	Strategic Spending	FA	Ongoing*	\$\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	11	Formalize pilot programs to reduce barriers for people working with the Homeless Outreach Coordinator, including mail services, showers, laundry, and property storage at LWUMC.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	12	Continue to invest in the Flex Fund the HART team uses to purchase basic human needs items or other resources that otherwise pose barriers to housing.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	13	Continue vehicle and RV repair program.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	24	Continue to fund severe weather response. Partner with faith-based organizations and private sector philanthropy to increase funding.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Emergency Shelter Services	30	Continue Hotel Set Asides Pilot Program for clients working with Homeless Outreach Coordinator who require interim shelter but on track to secure housing. Consider expanding budget due to shelter capacity issues on Eastside.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Emergency Shelter Services	31	Continue funding to build capacity at Eastside shelters and day centers for all population types; but prioritizing women and family shelters.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$\$\$	Medium-Term
Emergency Shelter Services	32	Improve the threshold for activating extreme weather shelter programs, in accordance with input from individuals with lived experience.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing*	\$	Medium-Term
Temporary Shelter and Housing	35	Continue providing sanitation services, fencing, and case management at City designated temporary housing sites.	Person-centered Approach	PW	Ongoing*	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	47	Continue to allocate Community Development Block Grant public service funds to emergency shelter programs.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing*	\$\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	49	Continue participation in case management and data tracking system with the Cities of Redmond and Bellevue.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing*	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	51	Continue to participate and support the Regional Crisis Response Agency.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Ongoing*	\$\$\$\$	Short-Term
Prevention	2	Continue to fund a full-time attorney dedicated to eviction prevention and housing support for low-income Kirkland residents in partnership with Eastside Legal Assistance Program (ELAP).	Strategic Spending	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$	Short-Term
Prevention	3	Continue funding a 1.0 FTE Human Services Coordinator position focused on Community Wellbeing, which includes connecting residents to resources.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$	Short-Term

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Outreach	9	Continue HART coordination and response with regular evaluation of its role, mission, and function at the City. Continue educating City staff and the community on the purpose and how to activate HART. Consider branding a Kirkland Coordinated Response Protocol.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	10	Continue funding a 1.0 FTE Homeless Outreach Coordinator position focused on building rapport and connecting residents with resources to help address barriers to work towards housing stability.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	14	Continue property safekeeping program for unhoused residents who require temporary storage of belongings.	Person-centered Approach	KPD	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	15	Continue 24/7 open restroom at Marina Park.	Prioritize Safety	PCS	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	16	Evaluate current wound care service through MIH. Consider expansion to provide services outside of 911 response.	Person-centered Approach	KFD	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	17	Ensure all Kirkland police officers are trained on homelessness standard operating procedures for both engagement and enforcement.	Prioritize Safety	KPD	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	18	Continue to work with the Kirkland Senior Council and support the Senior Center to provide resources to seniors experiencing housing instability.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Temporary Shelter and Housing	36	Support Comprehensive Plan policies to reduce regulatory and zoning code barriers to transitional housing programs and to avoid displacement.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PB	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Permanent Subsidized Housing	41	Support current Comp Plan policies to incentivize increased supply of affordable housing units for households between 0-60% AMI and promote progress on number of affordable housing units/developments in Kirkland, including workforce and student-focused housing opportunities.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PB	Ongoing	\$\$\$	Long-Term
Permanent Subsidized Housing	42	Provide oversight and support success of first permanent supportive housing project in Kirkland through coordination and collaboration with the operator, King County, and City. Bring transparency to the community through support of regular reporting to Council and regular engagement with the community after project opening.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Ongoing	\$\$\$	Short-Term
Permanent Subsidized Housing	43	Implement the local referral network and ensure accountability relating to the City approved code of conduct, community relations plan, safety and security plan, and good neighbor agreement.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	44	Ensure that response to homelessness coordinates with other Citywide plans and work including: - Human Services Element of the Comprehensive Plan - Homelessness Element in the Comprehensive Plan - Health through Housing Agreement	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PB	Ongoing	N/A	Short-Term

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Program Delivery & System Support	45	Continue Eastside City homeless response coordination, including: - pooled contract interlocal agreement with shelter providers -monthly meetings with street outreach teams, human services staff, and the Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee -monthly meetings with KCRHA	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	46	Advocate on the county, state, and federal level for funding to support Kirkland's homelessness action plan.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Ongoing	N/A	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	48	Continue comprehensive campaign to engage with and educate the community on Kirkland's successes and challenges to address homelessness through online and printed materials and events, partnering with faith community and other advocate partners when appropriate.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	50	Support KCRHA to collect annual Eastside data on number of sheltered and unsheltered individuals through the Point in Time Count	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	52	Coordinate with KTUB staff and nonprofit organizations to support youth and young adults experiencing housing insecurity.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Ongoing	\$\$\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	53	Coordinate with community centers and other city spaces to make referrals and provide resources for participants accessing the space, including but not limited to, North Kirkland Community Center and Peter Kirk Community Center.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Ongoing	\$	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	54	Continue to develop standard operating procedures and policies that prioritize a person-centered approach with compassion, accountability, and safety as a focus. Establish a regular review schedule of existing procedure and policies on an annual basis.	Prioritize Safety	CMO	Ongoing	N/A	Short-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	55	Continue to advocate for state funding for affordable housing in the Housing Trust Fund.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Ongoing	N/A	Short-Term

Homelessness Continuum of Care Action Plan - Proposed Actions

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Prevention	5	Explore funding partnership to create a dedicated homelessness action fund to act as a centralized donation hub for community members, including the faith community to support outreach flex funds and severe weather response.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	N/A	Short-Term
Prevention	6	Educate landlords and tenants on HB 1217 that put rent and housing stability measures into place including rent increase caps, rent increase notice requirements, caps on move-in fees and security deposits, and avenues for enforcement.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PB	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Prevention	7	Provide educational resources, incentives, and protections to support single-unit landlords leasing to low-income tenants or tenants without rental histories; as well as working with HOAs to promote ADU availability and room rental flexibility.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	CAO	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Prevention	8	Explore voucher program with Lake Washington School District (LSWD) to address housing gaps for families at risk of homelessness.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Outreach	19	Evaluate current members of the HART team and consider expansion to include Probation and other staff that interact with people experiencing homelessness.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	20	Fund a 1.0 FTE Housing Case Manager position to support homeless outreach clients with housing navigation and case management support plus direct assistance to residents who have been priced out of market rate housing (fixed income, disability, loss of spouse, etc) and don't know how to navigate the complex multiple steps required to locate and apply to affordable housing.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Short-Term
Outreach	21	Consider flex fund expansion to include all first responders to offer basic needs to people who are unhoused as part of their response.	Strategic Spending	FA	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	22	Expand access to training, culturally-relevant resources, and linguistic services (interpretation and translation services) for the HART Team to assist the growing, diverse population of unhoused residents.	Strategic Spending	CMO	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	23	Create Homeless Outreach Program Manual to educate internal staff on policies and procedures in responding to homelessness across the City.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Proposed	\$	Short-Term
Outreach	25	Consider increasing homeless outreach staffing over time to provide 7-day a week response capability, ensure staff wellbeing, retention, coordination with HART, and sustained impact.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Outreach	26	Explore centralized data tracking tool to synthesize information on shared clients and locations for HART team members. Develop a scope of work for technological solutions to allow HART to collectively track the last point of contact with a client.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Outreach	27	Explore options to deploy a mental health professional to co-respond with the Homeless Outreach Coordinator. This may include partnerships with MIH who have been trained in SOAR to support people experiencing homelessness apply for SSA, SSI, and SSDI, or additional City staff.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Outreach	28	Expand transportation options for HART members to support unhoused clients accessing medical appts, DMV, court dates, and other appointments. Consider formalizing bus ticket program through Human Services to other HART members unable to transport clients.	Person-centered Approach	PCS	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Outreach	29	Explore co-hosting a regional clinic in the OneHealth Clinic model - providing veterinary and human medical services, co-located. Consider piloting at annual Kirkland Health and Wellness Fair.	Person-centered Approach	CMO	Proposed	\$	Long-Term
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Program Delivery & System Support	56	Hire a human services supervisor to staff and support the expanded homeless outreach program, serve as liaison of the HART team, and support implementation of the action plan.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Short-Term

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
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Program Delivery & System Support	61	Explore local funding to sustain MIH with staffing levels that specifically support homelessness response in Kirkland.	Proactive Policy Development & Legislative Action	KFD	Proposed	\$\$\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	62	Coordinate regular meetings to ensure system coordination with key stakeholders, including LWSD, King County Library System, Connections, Evergreen, Fairfax, etc.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	63	Explore activating partnerships with the private sector to address funding gaps in Eastside homeless services.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	64	Advocate for KCRHA to expand data-sharing software connecting service providers, shelters, and jurisdictions with real-time data on resource availability and client case management.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	65	Advocate for King County to implement a regional housing levy to increase funding for low-income housing in Kirkland.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	N/A	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	66	Advocate for more pass through dollars of King County human services levies to support local homelessness response. Encourage Best Starts for Kids (BSK), Veterans, Seniors, Human Services Levy (VSHSL), and Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Behavioral Health Sales Tax Fund (MIDD) to align funding model similar to the Medic 1 and King County Parks Levy.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	N/A	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	67	Explore and develop a referral process between the Homeless Outreach Coordinator and residents exiting an institution, including but not limited to, hospitals, behavioral health clinics, and jails.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	PCS	Proposed	\$	Medium-Term

Policy Goal Area	No.	Action	Primary Strategy	Primary Lead	Status	Investment	Timeline
Program Delivery & System Support	68	Explore a workforce development partnership with Evergreen Health and LWTech on workforce development programs that could provide assistance to the service provision network. Example: Automotive Tech programs assisting in vehicle repairs at safe parking programs, culinary programs supplying community meals, healthcare technician graduates assisting at a healthcare clinic.	Timely Communication and Collaboration	CMO	Proposed	\$\$	Medium-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	69	Assess current human services grant funding levels across goal areas, and determine prioritization based on highest level of need across the the continuum of care. Consider conducting a needs assessment to strategically align Human Services Division work.	Strategic Spending	PCS	Proposed	\$\$	Long-Term
Program Delivery & System Support	70	Explore a voter-approved levy to create sustainable local funding for human services and homelessness programs.	Strategic Spending	CMO	Proposed	\$\$\$\$	Long-Term



CITY OF KIRKLAND
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
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MEMORANDUM

To: Human Services Commission

From: Jen Boone, Human Services Manager
Amanda Judd, Human Services Coordinator – Community Wellbeing

Date: July 22, 2025

Subject: Health Through Housing Project Update

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Human Services Commission receive an update on the King County Health Through Housing Project in Kirkland.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- King County's Health Through Housing Initiative was established in 2020 to create up to 1,600 units of permanent supportive housing in the region.
- City Council adopted Resolution R-5583 in March 2023 authorizing the City Manager to sign an agreement with King County to collaborate on the Health Through Housing project that will create permanent supportive housing in Kirkland.
- Permanent Supportive Housing is a long-term, programmatic housing model used to exit those experiencing or at-risk of experiencing chronic homelessness into permanent housing.
- Plymouth Housing was announced as the operator of the Health Through Housing site in Kirkland in August 2024.
- No action is needed. Staff seeks to present the Commission with updates to the Health Through Housing site located in Kirkland and provide an updated timeline for the project.

BACKGROUND:

As part of its Health Through Housing (HTH) Initiative to create up to 1,600 units of affordable housing, King County purchased the former La Quinta Inn located in Kirkland as one of eleven existing buildings in the County to convert to supportive housing for individuals with disabilities experiencing or at-risk of experiencing chronic homelessness in the region. In March 2023, City Council adopted Resolution R-5583¹ authorizing the City Manager to sign an agreement with King County to collaborate on the Kirkland-located HTH project to create approximately 100 units of permanent supportive housing.

Permanent Supportive Housing

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is long-term, permanent housing for individuals living with a disability and experiencing chronic homelessness. As an evidence-based practice, PSH is a

¹ https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/city-managers-office/pdfs/hth/2023_resolution-5583-psha.pdf

program model validated by rigorous research and includes guidelines on critical components of supportive housing:

- Housing is not time-limited. Each individual moving into a PSH unit signs a lease as a tenant. Similar to market-rate housing, leases are renewable at the tenant's or landlord's option in accordance with compliance of the lease agreement.
- Housing is affordable. Tenants in PSH will pay no more than 30% of their household income toward rent and basic utilities.
- Tenant preference for best fit. Prior to moving into PSH, tenants are asked about their housing preferences and can opt out of units in locations that don't meet their physical, social, or cultural needs. This supports ensuring individuals are matched with a site and community where they can make their home and be successful in permanently exiting homelessness. For example, if a resident is offered a PSH unit in Seattle but has ties to the Eastside and wants to stay in their community, they may opt out of the Seattle PSH site until an Eastside unit is available.
- Flexible, individualized services for wraparound support. Case management, behavioral health services, job assistance, transportation coordination, and physical health care coordination are examples of services available to PSH tenants to support ongoing health and housing stability. Staff are onsite 24/7 to ensure the needs and safety of tenants are being met.
- Housing First model. Unlike traditional programs that require sobriety or treatment first, PSH provides housing immediately, recognizing stable housing as the foundation for recovery.

Staff will provide the Commission with updates on the City's collaboration with King County and Plymouth Housing, progress completed toward project milestones, and an updated timeline. For more information on the initiative and other HTH sites in King County, explore the County's HTH Dashboard.²

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

Collaboration Between King County, City of Kirkland, and Plymouth Housing

Since the adoption of Resolution R-5583, City staff have met regularly with the King County HTH team to receive updates on the projected opening timeline and collaborate on the advancement of the permanent supportive project in Kirkland in the following areas.

Operator Selection and Plan Development

The operator selection and contract development process took place between December 2023 and August 2024. King County began the operator procurement process with the posting of the RFB in December 2023. City of Kirkland staff participated in the process through collaboration on the FAQs, answering questions regarding the Kirkland-specific service agreements, and having two City staff on the RFB review panel that assessed and scored the operator applications. On August 15, 2024, King County announced Plymouth Housing as the operator for the Health Through Housing site located in Kirkland.³ In September 2024, representatives from Plymouth Housing joined the bi-monthly meetings between King County and City of Kirkland to collaborate on achieving milestones in the project timeline, namely the Code of Conduct, Safety and Security Plan, and Community Relations Plan/Good Neighbor Agreement. See Attachment 1 for a

² <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/community-human-services/initiatives/health-through-housing/dashboard.aspx>

³ <https://dchsblog.com/2024/08/15/plymouth-housing-named-new-health-through-housing-operator-in-kirkland/>

summary overview of the Kirkland-specific HTH plans and development process. The current draft of the Code of Conduct can be viewed on the City's HTH website.⁴

Community Engagement

Since November 2023, staff from King County and the City of Kirkland have met regularly with members and representatives of the community that are located in proximity to the Kirkland HTH site. Once selected as the site operator, Plymouth Housing staff joined the engagement meetings. These meetings provided opportunities to communicate updates, answer questions, engage in conversation, and receive feedback on drafts of the plans outlined in Attachment 1. In attendance were local business owners, school officials, and a representative for the neighborhood.

Local Referral Planning

As part of the agreement between the City of Kirkland and King County, up to 65% of the housing units at the Kirkland HTH site will be prioritized for local eligible applicants. City of Kirkland staff, in collaboration with King County, developed a local referral network of homeless service providers in Kirkland and on the Eastside to establish a pathway by which local referrals will be made to King County to fill those set-aside housing units dedicated to local experiences of homelessness.

Several engagement meetings have taken place with members of the local referral network to provide updates, answer questions, engage in conversation, and receive feedback on their experiences making referrals to other permanent supportive housing projects in the region. The following homeless service providers were invited to participate in the local referral network:

- City of Kirkland Homeless Outreach
- City of Bellevue Homeless Outreach
- City of Redmond Homeless Outreach
- City of Issaquah Homeless Outreach
- 4 Tomorrow
- Friends of Youth
- Hero House NW
- Hopelink
- IKRON
- Lake Washington United Methodist Safe Parking Program
- LifeWire
- Overlake Safe Parking Park
- Porchlight
- Reclaim Shelter
- The Sophia Way

Updates on Site Construction

Construction Scoping, Permitting, and General Contractor Procurement

Once Plymouth Housing was in place as the operator, input was provided on site design requirements for staffing and operational needs. King County was then able to finalize the construction plan to create staff offices and convert rooms to permanent supporting housing units by adding kitchenettes to each unit intended for tenant occupancy. King County facilitated a general contractor procurement between November 2024 and March 2025. The general contractor was selected in March 2025 and phase 1 of construction began onsite in April 2025

⁴ <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Government/City-Managers-Office/King-Countys-Health-Through-Housing-Initiative-in-Kirkland>

with a duration planned through Q4 2025. Phase 2 of construction is anticipated to occur between Q4 2025 and Q2 2026. King County submitted building permits at the end of August 2024 and staff from the County's Facilities Management Division (FMD) have met and collaborated with City permitting staff from the Planning and Building Department.

On-site Facilities Work

During Summer 2024 King County began onsite work on asbestos abatement and expanding the sprinkler system as well as items associated with state code requirements, including Washington State Energy Code (WESC) compliance codes that went into effect March 2024 and regulates energy use of all new and renovated buildings in the state of Washington.⁵ The Kirkland site will be the first HTH project completed under the new WESC requirements. Fresh air ventilation and improved lighting are examples of the new WESC mandates. King County FMD staff and City permitting staff worked collaboratively to understand the new requirements and identify what was applicable to the HTH site.

Updated Timeline for Opening and Welcoming Residents

The current construction plan indicates the site will contain 103 units of permanent supportive housing. King County anticipates a soft opening of 10 to 15 units in Q4 2025 and a phased move-in approach through Q2 2026. Eight to ten weeks prior to units opening, the local referral network will be activated to begin the process of identifying eligible local utilizers of homeless services and providing support in completing the application process.

Recently Published Outcomes of the Health Through Housing Initiative

Recently, the Department of Health and Human Services released data⁶ on King County's Health Through Housing Initiative's impact on housing stability and health outcomes for residents. Highlights include:

- 1,281 people served in 2024 across all HTH sites open to residents
- 1,434 housing units secured since start of initiative
- 95% of PSH residents maintained permanent housing
- 22% decrease in hospital stays
- 17% reduction in total emergency department visits

For more information on HTH outcomes, visit the website.⁷

NEXT STEPS

Staff will continue to keep the Commission informed of the project's progress.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Health Through Housing Plan Development Overview

⁵ <https://waenergycodes.com/>

⁶ <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dchs/human-social-services/community-funded-initiatives/health-through-housing/health-through-housing-dashboard>

⁷ <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dchs/human-social-services/community-funded-initiatives/health-through-housing/health-through-housing-dashboard>.

Kirkland HTH Plan Development Overview¹

Plan	Developed by:	In coordination with:	In consultation with:	Approved by:	Purpose
Community Relations Plan	Plymouth Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> King County City of Kirkland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jurisdictional partners Community members or adjacent neighbors identified by City and County 	Kirkland City Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts on nearby schools, businesses, residences, and processes for resolution Expectations between all parties Identify Neighborhood Liaison Establish schedule for regular community meetings once site opens
Good Neighbor Agreement (can be included in Community Relations)	Plymouth Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> King County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> King County City of Kirkland Local community 	Kirkland City Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create agreement on how parties will communicate and resolve concerns when they arise
Code of Conduct	Plymouth Housing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Kirkland Service providers Jurisdictional partners identified by City and County Community members or adjacent neighbors identified by City and County Those with lived experience of homelessness 	Kirkland City Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set expectations for residents' conduct Consequences for non-compliance
Safety and Security Plan	Plymouth Housing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Kirkland Police Dept 	Kirkland Chief of Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weapons policy Plans for disruptive behavior Behavioral health crisis management protocols Coordination between parties and public safety staff including any private security employed by Plymouth

¹ Information in this table is sourced from the Kirkland Permanent Supportive Housing Health Through Housing Services Agreement, Exhibit I, that was reviewed and approved as part of City Council's passing of Resolution R-5583 on March 21, 2023; https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-managers-office/pdfs/ht/2023_resolution-5583-psha.pdf.