



SKAMANIA COUNTY 5-YEAR HOMELESS HOUSING PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS

**GOALS, OBJECTIVES
AND STRATEGIES
FOR 2019-2024**

Our mission:

Prevent, and eventually eliminate, chronic homelessness by providing resources to achieve maximum self-sufficiency.

Guiding Principles of Skamania County's 5-Year Plan

Using a long-term view we will work to develop strategies and solutions to end homelessness.

Develop and strengthen partnerships through an interagency culture of communication, cooperation, and collaboration.

Deploy resources in an effective and efficient manner to create a seamless service delivery system that will improve the infrastructure serving the very low-income.

Provide rapid re-housing and stabilization of homeless families and individuals with an adequate inventory of housing types, combined with flexible access to an array of services to reduce the chances of a return to homelessness.

Cultivate individual and family self-sufficiency with flexible services customized to their needs and developed with consumer input.

Address the needs of chronic homeless, youth and other special populations who need a broader service support system.

Cultivate a “community of care” by involving and mobilizing citizens, businesses and local organizations in developing long-term solutions to end homelessness in Skamania County.²



Executive Summary:

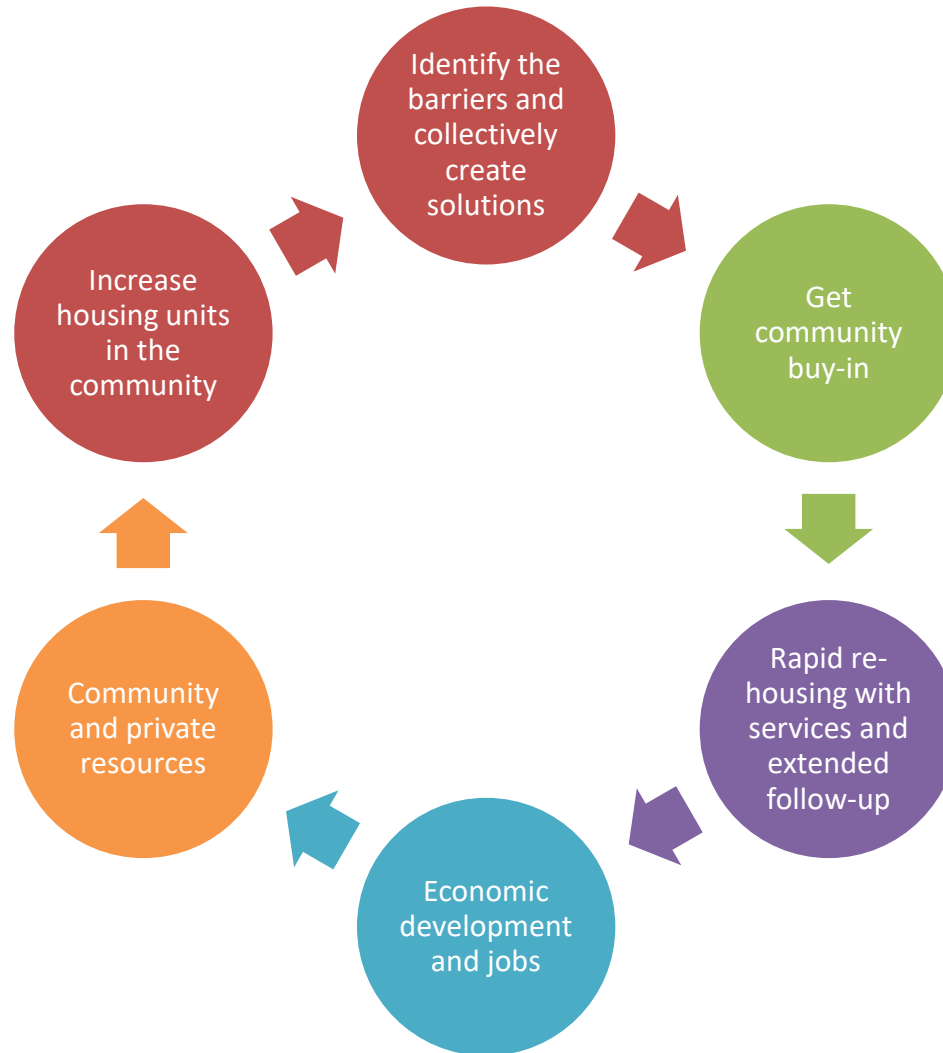
The Skamania County Homeless Housing Taskforce has an ambitious goal: our plan is not to “manage” homelessness, but to end homelessness. Our plan is to see homelessness disappear and ensure that every citizen has a decent, safe and affordable place to call home. The 5-year housing plan for Skamania County focuses on chronic homelessness and provides perspectives on what is going on nationally and in Washington State. The need for affordable housing and the growing rates of homelessness in Skamania County are issues of importance. There is an overall lack of affordable housing available to local residents with commuters coming in from outlying areas increasing the demand for higher-end homes. New developments are putting upward pressure on land costs and making issues of housing affordability more pronounced. Skamania County has placed an economic focus on the service industry and tourism. This combination of factors produces high housing costs and low average wages.

In 2019 in Skamania County, the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1441. In order to afford this level of rent and utilities, without paying more than 30% of income on housing, a household must earn \$4800 monthly or \$57,600 annually. Assuming a 40-hour workweek, 52 weeks per year, this level of income translates into a Housing Wage of \$27.69. In Washington State, a minimum wage worker earns an hourly wage of \$12.00. In order to afford the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment, a minimum wage earner must work 92 hours per week, 52 weeks per year. Or, a household must include 2.0 minimum wage earners working 40 hours per week year-round in order to make the two-bedroom FMR affordable. For those receiving Monthly Supplement Security Income (SSI) payments, the outlook is even more bleak. Monthly Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments for an individual are \$750 in Skamania County. If SSI represents an individual’s sole source of income, \$225 in monthly rent is affordable, while the FMR for a one-bedroom is \$1132.



Homelessness in Skamania County comes in many forms. Based on the data from the Point In Time Count that was conducted on January 25th, 2018, 12 Households with a combined total of 17 persons (does not include those not involved with a shelter or social services on that day) were counted as being homeless on that particular night. Of this number, approximately 58 percent are considered chronically homeless and have been without a home for a year or more or have had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past four years. The January 2019 Point In Time Count that included a full countywide count effort resulted in a total of 18 families with a combined total of 25 persons (does not include all school aged children). Children show up as a predominate category among the homeless. For the school year 2016-17, the McKinney-Vento count through OSPI identified 65 homeless children and youth in the Stevenson-Carson School District. Another large subpopulation are those who have been incarcerated and have been paroled or are on probation. These hard to serve individuals are often discharged into the local communities without any plan as to where they will sleep that night. Others experience homelessness because they have mental illnesses, alcohol and drug problems, are being emancipated from foster care or are victims of domestic violence. Others who live from month to month are very susceptible to becoming homeless. One medical emergency, job loss, eviction notice, or other calamity and they too, are one paycheck away from becoming homeless.

For the Skamania County Homeless Housing Council Ending Homelessness means:



The first year of Skamania County's 5 Year Homelessness Housing Plan is filled with a great variety of activities requiring strong communication and coordination among our community partners to accomplish desired outcomes. In the first year of the plan, some of the tasks that are planned include:

- Completion of a full countywide homeless count – January 25, 2019
- Compilation of data from the count
- Updating the 5-Year Plan with the data from the count
- Creation of a permanent advisory committee to monitor progress of the 5-Year Plan on an ongoing basis
- Creation of subcommittees to implement the Action Steps of the 5-Year Plan
- Project Homeless Connect Event – August 14-18, 2020



The plan also includes coordination with current housing providers to expand current ability to provide additional services and increase bed capacity, as well as the supply of affordable housing stock.

1. Goal: Identify and Engage All People Experiencing Homelessness as Quickly as Possible

Objective: Improve accessibility to people that are homeless

Strategy 1: develop access to one stop resources

	TASKS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED/NOTES
A)	Create a guide on what the one stop resources would look like	WAGAP, Skamania County Homeless council	3 Mo.	Council has continued conversations on this but no progress has been made as of 7/11/2022
B)	Gather all resources throughout the community and catalog them on the Skamania County web site, on its own page	Skamania County Homeless council, Community Health	1 yr.	Printed Gorge wide Resource Guide completed October 2020 (WAGAP)
C)	Once resource page is completed then notify the public of its existence and accessibility. As well as post notices where people experiencing homelessness are likely to be.	Skamania County Homeless council, WAGAP	1 mo.	
D)	Designate a community person or phone # and identify a 24 hrs. public access point	Skamania County Homeless council, WAGAP, 211	2 yrs.	

Strategy 2: Put together an outreach plan that engages with people that are homeless as quickly as possible

TASKS		RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED/ NOTES
A)	Contract or hire local homeless or past homeless experience individuals to perform outreach	WAGAP	6 mo.	8/1/2020
B)	Write a plan on how outreach will be carried out; how often, how resources will be given out, how to work with individuals at their location, and safety measures	WAGAP	On-going	Homeless Youth Program Hires are working on outreach to Youth and to in-lieu sites
C)	Coordinate with sheriff/police, hospital staff, other housing providers, and mental health professionals on a monthly basis to ensure that we reach out to all the known homeless camps/locations.	Toni Farris- Law Enforcement, WAGAP	On-going	
D)	Build a connection with institutions to coordinate with individuals getting released into homelessness prior to their release.	WAGAP, Skamania County Public Health	On-going	

Strategy 3: Improve access to coordinated entry system to better reach everyone experiencing homelessness

TASKS		RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED/ NOTES
A)	Update coordinated entry process on an annual basis to ensure that people experiencing homelessness are identified as quickly as possible and offered appropriate resources	WAGAP	On-going	
B)	Change the vulnerability assessment to be more trauma informed	WAGAP	3 mo.	6/2020
C)	Have the Youth Homeless Board review and update the youth vulnerability assessment tool	WAGAP	3 mo.	7/2020
D)	Make the assessment available on-line, through Facebook, or mobile phone so individuals can gain quicker access to resources through more avenues.	WAGAP	1 yr.	Assessment is not available online but the WAGAP intake form is which has greatly increased the response time

2. Goal: Prioritization of homeless housing for people with the highest needs.

Objective : Be in compliance with state and federal coordinated entry requirements for all projects

Strategy 1: Identify and prioritize chronic homelessness using the vulnerability assessment tool

TASKS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED /NOTES
A) Targeting persons with the highest needs and longest histories of homelessness for existing and new permanent supportive housing using the Vulnerability Assessment Tool	WAGAP	On-going	
B) Continue to improve outreach to this population	WAGAP	On-going	
C) Contract with individual that has lived experience to do out reach 5 hours a week	WAGAP	Annual	Done annually during PIT count. Last done January 2023

Strategy 2: Needs assessment tool

TASKS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED
Continue to update tool	WAGAP	On-going	
Have tool available to all community providers	WAGAP	1 yr.	

Strategy 3: Increasing the number of dedicated permanent supportive housing units

TASKS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED/ NOTES
Use the housing first approach in as much of the available A) permanent housing as possible	WAGAP	On-going	
		On-going	MCHA continues to apply for any additional vouchers that become available from HUD. In the last 2 years we have ¹² received 37 additional Mainstream Vouchers

Strategy 4: Use diversion for at risk and lower scoring assessments

TASKS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED/ NOTES
A) Train a person specifically to work on diversion	WAGAP	On-going	
B) Pull in mainstream service providers to help families stabilize once they have been diverted	WAGAP, Skamania County Homeless council, community Partners	On-going	
C) Find sources for flexible funding	Homeless Housing Council	On-going	WAGAP Secured Funding through SW WA Comm. Foundation for Warming Shelter 11/13/20

Strategy 5: Verify and prioritize residency in the service area except for victims of Domestic Violence

TASKS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED/ NOTES
A) Verify through the Benefit verification system	WAGAP, Housing Authority	On-going	Completed as needed.
B)			

3. Goal: Effective and efficient homeless crisis response housing and services.

Objective : Assist members and County to identify approaches to reduce barriers to housing, increase exits to permanent housing, and promote housing retention for our population.

Strategy 1: Identify approaches and resources to increase housing units.

TASKS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED /NOTES
A) Increase more affordable apartments	Housing Authority	5 yrs.	MCHA has property in Carson and are continually looking for ways to develop the site. 9/16/21
		3 yrs.	We currently

Strategy 2: Provide training and information necessary to ensure the homeless crisis response system responds appropriately to all people experiencing homelessness, and delivers resources equitably.

TASKS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED/ NOTES
A) Staff will be trained in: trauma informed care, mental health first aid, fair housing, anti-oppression, and cultural competency theory and practice.	WAGAP, Community Partners	On-going	WAGAP staff last trained 11/18/20
B)			

Strategy 3: Ensure linkages to supportive services.

TASKS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED/NOTES
A) Build effective working relationships across systems	Skamania County Homeless council	On-going	
B) Improve outreach/program coordination	WAGAP, Skamania County Homeless council	On-going	
C) Identify barriers to services such as transportation, untreated behavioral health & criminal histories using the needs assessment tool, then provide referrals to appropriate services	Skamania County Homeless council	3 yrs.	WAGAP finished 2020 Community Needs Assessment.

Strategy 4: Conduct advocacy for adequate funding for homeless housing assistance and awareness of needs of this population.

TASKS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED/NOTES
A) Educate local lawmakers on housing crises	Skamania County Homeless council	On-going	WAGAP ED last spoke with Congresswoman Herrera-Beutler 11/19/20. WAGAP provides updates to County Commissioners and City Council as needed. 15
		On-going	

Strategy 5: Facilitate access to the Foundational Community Supports supportive housing and supportive employment to all people experiencing homelessness who want access to these services by 2020.

TASKS		RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED/NOTES
A)	Build connection with Work source and People for People	WAGAP	3 mo.	Worksource representative joining Council July 2022
B)	Provide showers for homeless individuals so they can prepare for employment	Skamania County Homeless council, WAGAP	2 yrs.	WAGAP received funding for this purpose in 2021. Showers are now available.
D)	Make connections with local Accountable Community of Health (ACH)	WAGAP, Skamania County Public Health	On-going	Both entities communicate regularly with SWACH

TASKS		RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED/NOTES
A)	Examination of access to emergency assistance, housing, and supports for historically underserved and overrepresented groups	WAGAP, Skamania County Homeless Council	On-going	
B)	Education and trainings	WAGAP, Skamania County Homeless Council	On-going	
D)			1 yr.	WAGAP staff carry after hours phone so people in Shelter can contact in case of

4. Goal: A projection of the impact of the fully implemented local plans on the number of households housed and the number of households left unsheltered, assuming existing resources and state policies are maintained.

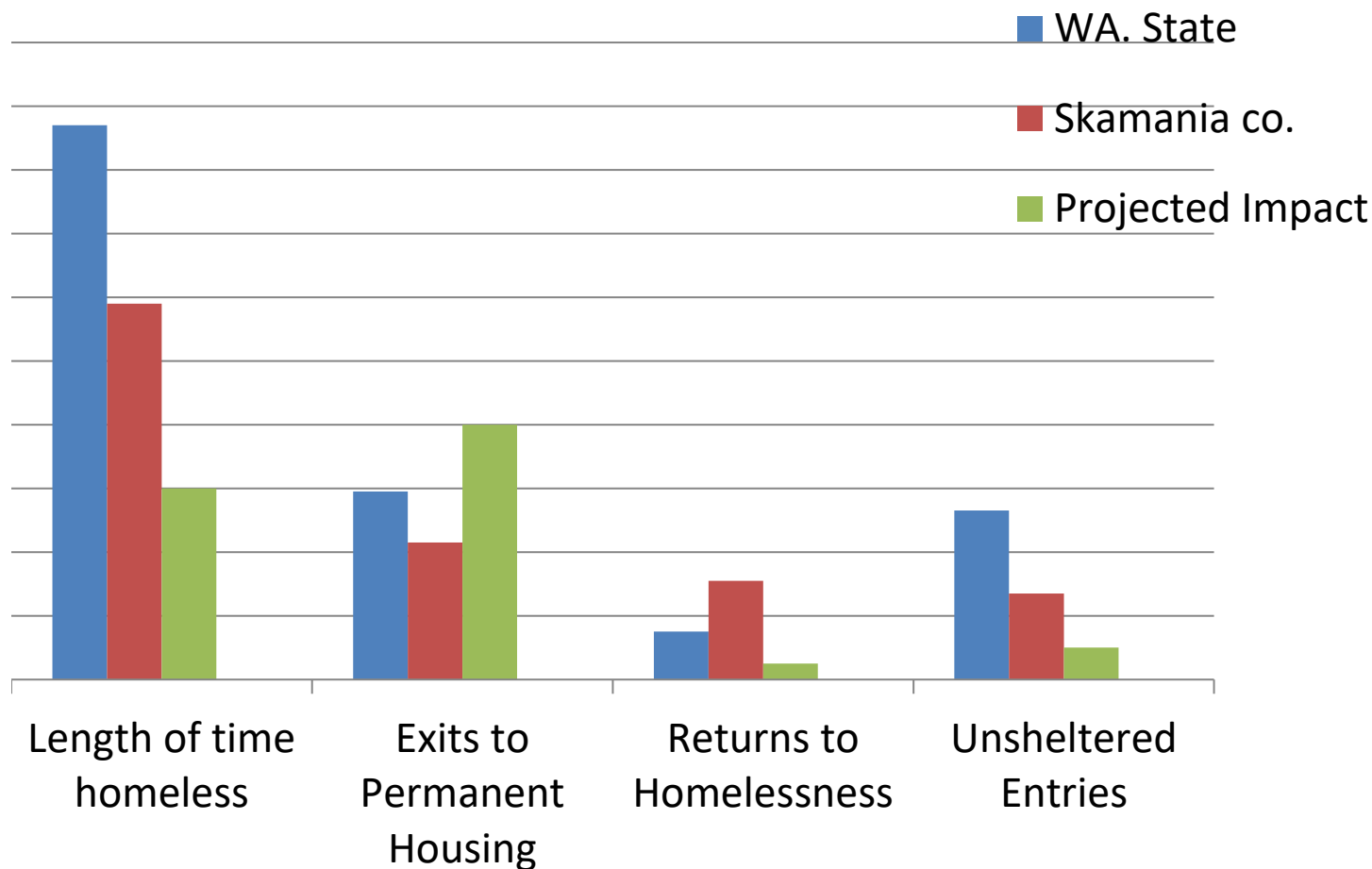
Objective A: System wide performance

The overall purpose of this Plan is to work together as a community to make homelessness a brief and rare occurrence through an efficient and effective homelessness response system that prioritizes and focuses on putting people into stable housing first and by providing:

- **Human Dignity** to all people experiencing homelessness with the belief that all people have the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to education, the right to liberty and security of the person, the right to privacy, the right to social security, the right to freedom from discrimination.
- **Recognize that Resiliency** is a quality that people experiencing homelessness have, and they are capable and adaptable and should be given opportunities to be involved in every level of advocacy, outreach, and planning.
- **Nonjudgmental, Respectful & Responsive** to the needs of the homeless community by ensuring all staff are trained in trauma informed care, racial equity and LGBTQ+ equality

The Homeless Housing Council analyzes the needs of homeless people by reviewing:

- Homeless Point-In-Time (PIT) data
- Annual report distributed by the Department of Commerce
- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data



Current State

Interventions

	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Rapid Rehousing	Permanent Supportive Housing	Permanent Housing dedicated to homeless persons	Total
Households served at a point in time (occupied units)	5	-	4	4	-	13
Annual Spending	\$ 28,770	\$ -	\$ 19,109	\$ 47,721	\$ -	\$ 95,600
Households served in housing type annually	29	-	12	4	-	45
Cost per household served in year	\$ 992	\$ -	\$ 1,592	\$ 11,930	\$ -	
Exited households	22	-	4	-	-	26
% of households who exit	76%	0%	33%	0%	0%	
Cost per exit	\$ 1,308	\$ -	\$ 4,777	\$ -	\$ -	
Successful exits	10	-	2	-	-	12
% Successful exits	45%	0%	50%	0%	0%	
Cost per successful exit	\$ 2,877	\$ -	\$ 9,555	\$ -	\$ -	
Cost per unit/slot	\$ 5,754	\$ -	\$ 4,777	\$ 11,930	\$ -	
Average length of stay for households served during year	63	0	122	365	0	
Failed/unknown exits	12	-	2	-	-	14
Returned to homelessness after successful exit	2	-	-	-	-	2
Returned to homelessness after successful exit %	20%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Net successful interventions	15	-	10	4	-	29

Supply vs. Demand

TOTAL interventions	45
Successful interventions	29
Unsuccessful interventions	16
Unsheltered not served annually (PIT x3)	6
TOTAL demand for successful interventions	51
Deficit of successful interventions	22

Current Point in time count of unsheltered households 2

Future State

Demand change - change in households facing unsheltered homelessness annually:

-

(Negative values are fewer households needing homeless housing interventions due to reasons such as income increases)

Interventions

	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Rapid Rehousing	Permanent Supportive Housing	Housing dedicated to homeless persons	TOTAL
Households served at a point in time (occupied units)	11	-	8	7	-	26
Annual Spending	\$ 63,294	\$ -	\$ 38,218	\$ 83,511	\$ -	185,023
Households served in housing type annually	64	-	24	7	-	95
Cost per household served in year	\$ 992	\$ -	\$ 1,592	\$ 11,930	\$ -	
Exited households	48	-	8	-	-	
% of households who exit	76%	59%	33%	0%	0%	
Cost per exit	\$ 1,308	\$ -	\$ 4,777	\$ -	\$ -	
Successful exits	24	-	6	-	-	
% Successful exits	50%	80%	80%	0%	0%	54%
Cost per successful exit	\$ 2,615	\$ -	\$ 5,972	n/a	n/a	
Cost per unit/slot	\$ 5,754	\$ -	\$ 4,777	\$ 11,930	\$ -	
Average length of stay for households served during year	63	-	122	365	-	71
Failed exits	24	-	2	-	-	26
Returned to homelessness after successful exit	2	-	0	-	-	3
Returned to homelessness after successful exit %	10%	5%	5%	0%	0%	
Net successful interventions	37	-	22	7	-	66

Supply vs. Demand

TOTAL interventions	95	
Successful interventions	66	
Unsuccessful interventions	29	
Change in successful interventions	37	
TOTAL demand for successful interventions	51	20
Deficit of successful interventions	(15)	

No inflation

Forecast point in time count of unsheltered households	(1)
Forecast change in point in time count of unsheltered households	(3)
% Forecast change in point in time count of unsheltered households	-169%

2024 after population growth and rent-driven increase in need

TOTAL demand for successful interventions	56
Households housed annually	95
Successful interventions	66
Deficit of successful interventions	(10)
Forecast point in time count of unsheltered households	(1)
Forecast change in point in time count of unsheltered households	(3)
% Forecast change in point in time count of unsheltered households	-146%

Change Current State vs. Future State

	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Rapid Rehousing	Permanent Supportive Housing	Permanent Housing dedicated to homeless persons	TOTAL
Households served at a point in time (occupied units)	6	-	4	3	-	13
Annual Spending	\$ 34,524	\$ -	\$ 19,109	\$ 35,791	\$ -	\$ 89,424

Annual increase in funding and beds needed to keep pace with population growth, rent-driven increase in need, rent inflation, and general inflation

	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Rapid Rehousing	Permanent Supportive Housing	Permanent Housing dedicated to homeless persons	TOTAL
Households served at a point in time (occupied units)	11	-	8	7	-	27
Cost per unit/slot each year	\$ 5,869	\$ -	\$ 4,830	\$ 12,169	\$ -	\$ 22,868
Annual Spending	\$ 65,845	\$ -	\$ 39,407	\$ 86,877	\$ -	\$ 192,128
Annual increase in households served at a point in time (units) needed to keep pace with need and cost inflation	0	-	0	0	-	1
Net annual cost increase per unit/slot each year	\$ 115	\$ -	\$ 53	\$ 239	\$ -	\$ 7,105
Net increase in annual spending necessary to keep pace with need and cost inflation	\$ 2,551	\$ -	\$ 1,189	\$ 3,365	\$ -	\$ 7,105
% Net annual increase in households served at a point in time (occupied units)	2%	0%	2%	2%	0%	2%
% Net additional cost per unit/slot each year	2%	0%	1%	2%	0%	
% Net increase in annual spending	4%	0%	3%	4%	0%	4%

Five year increase in funding and beds needed to keep pace with population growth, rent-driven increase in need, rent inflation, and general inflation

	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Rapid Rehousing	Permanent Supportive Housing	Permanent Housing dedicated to homeless persons	TOTAL
Households served at a point in time (occupied units)	12	-	9	8	-	29
Cost per unit/slot each year	\$ 6,353	\$ -	\$ 5,046	\$ 13,172	\$ -	\$ 24,571
Annual Spending	\$ 76,988	\$ -	\$ 44,476	\$ 101,579	\$ -	\$ 223,043
Five year increase in households served at a point in time (units) needed to keep pace with need and cost inflation	1	-	1	1	-	3
Net annual cost increase per unit/slot each year	\$ 599	\$ -	\$ 269	\$ 1,242	\$ -	\$ 38,020
Net increase in annual spending necessary to keep pace with need and cost inflation	\$ 13,694	\$ -	\$ 6,258	\$ 18,068	\$ -	\$ 38,020
% Net annual increase in households served at a point in time (occupied units)	3%	0%	4%	10%	0%	4%
% Net additional cost per unit/slot	10%	0%	6%	10%	0%	
% Net increase in spending	22%	0%	16%	22%	0%	22%

5. Goal: Address Racial disparities

Objective A: analyzing racial disparities within our system

Strategy 1: Eliminate gender and racial disparities

TASKS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	TIME FRAME	DATE COMPLETED/VERIFIED /NOTES
A) Coordinated Entry and agencies evaluate data and develop plans to minimize any disparities that exist	WAGAP	On-going	
B) Use racial equity tool provided by the Department of Commerce	WAGAP	1 mo.	
C) Continue to provide staff and community with Trauma Informed Care and equality trainings	WAGAP	On-going	

- **2010 census**

- As of the [2010 United States Census](#), there were 11,066 people consisting of **4,522 households**, and **3,072 families** residing in the county. The population density was 6.7 inhabitants per square mile (2.6/km²). There were 5,628 housing units at an average density of 3.4 per square mile (1.3/km²). The racial makeup of the county was 92.8% white, 1.6% American Indian, 0.9% Asian, 0.4% black or African-American, 0.1% Pacific islander, 1.3% from other races, and 3.0% from two or more races. Those of Hispanic or Latino origin made up 5.0% of the population. Of the 4,522 households, 28.4% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 54.3% were married couples living together, 8.9% had a female head of household with no partner present, 32.1% were non-families, and 25.6% of all households were made up of individuals. The average household size was 2.44 and the average family size was 2.92. The median age was 44.0 years.

