2011
Thurston County
Homeless Census Report
a snapshot of who is homeless & why

October 2011
Produced by a county-wide partnership
in conjunction with the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness
2011 THURSTON COUNTY HOMELESS CENSUS REPORT

The 2011 Thurston County Homeless Census Report is the product of the annual “Point in Time Count of Homeless Persons” coordinated state-wide by the State Department of Commerce. The results of the Thurston County Homeless Census are included along with the data from all other Washington Counties on the Department of Commerce website located at: http://www.commerce.wa.gov/site/1064/default.aspx

This report is presented on behalf of the Thurston County Board of Commissioners and the Thurston County HOME Consortium, an eight jurisdiction inter-governmental body that governs the County’s allocation of federal HOME dollars along with the state funded Homeless Housing and Affordable Housing Programs.

Note on photographs:  Unless otherwise noted, this report contains many stock photographs from the internet because local homeless people did not want their photographs to be published.

Questions, comments, or to request a digital copy of this report:
Connie Rivera
Community Housing Program Manager
Thurston County Public Health and Social Services
(360) 867-2532, riverac@co.thurston.wa.us

CREDITS

Board County of Commissioners:
Karen Valenzuela, Commission Chair, District 3
Sandra Romero, Commission Vice-Chair, District 2
Cathy Wolfe, Commissioner, District 1

Thurston County HOME Consortium:
Andrea Fowler, Bucoda Councilmember
Ron Lawson, Lacey Councilmember
Stephen Buxbaum, Olympia Mayor Pro-Tem
Rick Succow, Rainier Councilmember
Dawna Kelley-Donahue, Tenino Mayor Pro-Tem
Neil McClanahan, Tumwater Councilmember and HOME Consortium Vice Chair
Mike McGowan, Yelm Councilmember and HOME Consortium Chair
Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County Commissioner

Thurston County Staff:
Sherri McDonald, Director, Public Health and Social Services
Mark Freedman, Social Service Division Director
Connie Rivera, Community Housing Program Manager
Dwight Edwards, Community Housing Program Coordinator

City of Olympia Staff:
Steve Friddle, Community Services Manager
Anna Schlecht, Olympia Housing Program Manager
Sue Lodholm, Olympia Housing Program Specialist
**Contracted Employees:**
Phil Owen, Outreach Worker  
Pat Tassoni, Outreach Worker

**Housing Program Interns:**
Maya Amichai, Evergreen State College  
Alicia Crowley, Evergreen State College  
Hana Lewis, Evergreen State College  
Yin Yu, Evergreen State College

**Agency Contacts:**
Stacey Saunders, Behavioral Health Resources  
Jill Kruger, Low Income Housing Institute  
Phil Owen, Bread & Roses  
Rosalinda Noriega, Partners in Prevention  
Dale Starkweather, Camp Quixote  
Mikey Arthrell, SafePlace  
Jennifer Collier, Capital Clubhouse  
Steve Beadle, Salvation Army  
Phil Prietto, City Gates Ministries  
Tim Langan, Olympia Gospel Mission  
Amber Salzer, Community Youth Services (CYS)  
Selena Kilmoyer, Out of the Woods Shelter  
Maureen McLemore, CYS  
Sgt. Owens, Nisqually Jail  
Nicole Ketcherside, CYS  
Rick Anderson, Olympia Jail  
Bary Hanson, Catholic Community Services  
Lisa Kurtzman, Thurston County Jail  
Drexel House  
Ann Eddington, Choice Regional Health Network  
Tammie Smith, Housing Authority of  
Donna Kelly, Thurston County Health Department  
Thurston County  
Schelli Slaughter, Family Support Center  
Katie Parker, Mercy Housing

**Team Leads for Street Census & Field Census:**
Mark Kitabayashi, Hana Lewis, Randi Miller, Brad Morrill, Rosalinda Noriega, Travis Sayers,  
Steve Friddle, Matthew Green, Tumwater Councilmember Judy Hoefling, Jacqueline Bennett-Scherer, Nicole Ketcherside, Phil Owen, Anna Schlecht, Todd Stamm, Mark Collins,  
Mindy Chambers, Sue Allen, Lacey Police Lt. Chris Ward, and Connie Rivera.

**Focus Group Participants:**
Faith community leaders of the South Sound Clergy Responding to Homelessness (SSCRH)  
Capital Clubhouse staff and members; CYS staff and street-dependent youth clients; Camp Quixote residents; Partners in Prevention staff and street-dependent youth clients; HOME Citizens Advisory Committee members; Tumwater High School; Evergreen State College *Rethinking the Suburbs* and *Changing Maps* class members.

**Census Worker Volunteers:**
The census was staffed by approximately 200 volunteers from faith-based communities, non-profit organizations, local and state government, the business community, local high schools, and many other parts of the community.

**Thurston County contracted with the City of Olympia to conduct the 2011 annual homeless count and produce the Homeless Census report.**
The report was written by Anna Schlecht, Olympia Housing Program Manager.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THURSTON COUNTY 2011 HOMELESS CENSUS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ...................... 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

  | Overview ..................................................................................................................................... 1 |
  | Homeless Census Numbers ......................................................................................................... 1 |
  | 2011 Census Results in Context of Ten-Year Plan ................................................................. 2 |

  | COUNTYWIDE ACTIONS TO REDUCE HOMELESSNESS ..................................................... 3 |

  | RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESPONDING TO HOMELESSNESS ....................................... 4 |

  | OVERVIEW OF THE HOMELESS CENSUS ................................................................. 5 |

    | Purpose of the Point in Time Count of Homeless People ............................................. 5 |
    | Definitions of Homelessness ............................................................................................... 5 |
    | Other People Without Permanent Homes ......................................................................... 6 |
    | 2011 Census Data Validity ................................................................................................. 6 |

  | SOURCE 1: EXAMINING THE NUMBERS ................................................................. 8 |

    | Scope of the Data ................................................................................................................ 8 |
    | Causes of Homelessness ..................................................................................................... 8 |
    | Where the Homeless Find Refuge ...................................................................................... 9 |
    | Other People Without Homes ......................................................................................... 10 |
    | Population Growth and Increased Homelessness ........................................................... 10 |
    | Age of the Homeless ........................................................................................................ 11 |
    | Disabilities of the Homeless ............................................................................................ 11 |
    | Sources of Income for Homeless People ......................................................................... 12 |
    | How Long Have They Been Homeless? ........................................................................... 12 |

  | WHO ARE THE HOMELESS? ............................................................................................. 13 |

    | Last Residence of the Homeless ....................................................................................... 13 |
    | Mental Illness and Homelessness ....................................................................................... 15 |
    | Victims of Domestic Violence .......................................................................................... 16 |
    | Chronically Homeless ...................................................................................................... 16 |
    | Veterans .......................................................................................................................... 17 |
    | Homeless Individuals ...................................................................................................... 17 |
    | Homeless Families .......................................................................................................... 18 |
    | Homeless Youth .............................................................................................................. 18 |
    | Trends in Thurston County Homelessness ....................................................................... 19 |
SOURCE 2: COUNTY’S PUBLIC SCHOOL CENSUS ............................................................ 21
  Homeless School Children & the McKinney Act ............................................................ 21
  Homeless School Children in Thurston County ............................................................ 21
  Correlation of School District Numbers with County Homeless Census Numbers ....... 22
SOURCE 3: EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE ............................................................... 23
  Homelessness at Evergreen State College ................................................................. 23
HOMELESSNESS STATEWIDE ...................................................................................... 24
  Examining Homelessness Across Washington State .................................................. 24
  Snapshot of Six Counties—Six Years of Census Results ............................................ 24
EXAMINING THE RESOURCES ..................................................................................... 26
  Thurston County Shelter and Homeless Housing Capacity ....................................... 26
  Emergency Shelter Capacity Increases ....................................................................... 28
  Percentage of Unsheltered People on the Rise ......................................................... 28
  The Costs of Shelter ..................................................................................................... 29
  Expansion of Shelter and Housing Continuum .......................................................... 30
  Overflow Shelters ........................................................................................................ 31
  Permanent Church-Based Shelters ............................................................................ 31
  Camp Quixote Transitions to Quixote Village – Moving to a Permanent Location ....... 32
BACKGROUND OF THE HOMELESS CENSUS ............................................................ 33
  The Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness .................................................................... 33
  Ten-Year Plan Accomplishments: 2006 - 2010 ......................................................... 34
  Ten Year Plan Revised Housing Goals: 2011 - 2015 ................................................ 34
  History of Thurston County’s Census ........................................................................ 35
  Federal Government’s Role in Census ....................................................................... 35
  Washington State’s Role in Census .......................................................................... 36
  Thurston County’s Role in Census ........................................................................... 36
  City of Olympia’s Role in Census ............................................................................. 36
COLLATERAL IMPACTS OF HOMELESSNESS .......................................................... 37
  Business Impacts ......................................................................................................... 37
  Parks & Trails Impacts ................................................................................................. 38
  Environmental Impacts ............................................................................................... 38
EMERGING MODELS TO RESPOND TO HOMELESSNESS ........................................ 39
  Coordinated Point of Entry ....................................................................................... 39
  Homeless Service System Coordination .................................................................. 39
THURSTON COUNTY 2011 HOMELESS CENSUS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview
On January 27, 2011, Thurston County participated in the statewide annual “Point in Time Count of Homeless Persons,” referred to as the “Homeless Census.” Census results are reported to the state and federal governments to ensure a proportionate level of public funding for local shelters, transitional housing, and related supportive services. Providing these numbers also helps to create the most accurate picture of homelessness throughout our state and across our nation.

Locally, census results are presented to all community stakeholders—concerned citizens, policy makers, funders, service providers, and the homeless themselves. Together, we can look at who is homeless, why they are homeless, and what resources we have to offer. Analyzing these three elements allows us to develop more effective responses to homelessness, which is essential to meeting the county’s 10-Year Plan goal to reduce homelessness by half by the year 2015.

Homeless Census Numbers
This report presents a snapshot of homelessness in Thurston County drawn from three sources of data. The primary source is the January 2011 County Homeless Census, that found 566 homeless individuals, which represents a 28% increase from the 2006 baseline number of 441 homeless people, but a 42% drop from 2010’s high of 976 homeless individuals.

The second source is a parallel census, conducted by the county’s school districts, that found the number of homeless public school students (Kindergarten – 12th grade) as 1,164, which is a 78% increase since the 2006 baseline of 654 students, but down 8% from 2010’s high of 1,269.

(Please see “Correlation of School District Numbers with County Census Numbers, page 22).
The third source is a first-time report from The Evergreen State College, that found **31%**, or **46 out of 147 respondents**, self-declared that they **had been homeless**, with **75%**, or **112 out of 149 respondents**, reporting they were aware of homeless students.

All together, these three sources reflect an increase in homelessness, not a 50% reduction as per the county’s 10-Year Plan goal. This report analyzes who is homeless and why. It also looks at available resources and presents recommendations for action drawn from community partners.

**2011 Census Results in Context of Ten-Year Plan**

This year’s census total of 566 represents a **28%** increase, or **125 more people** than identified in the 2006 census of 441 people. However, this year’s results indicate a radical **42%** drop in homelessness from the 2010 high of 976 to the 2011 figure of 566. Other counties across the state experienced changes ranging from Clark County’s **18%** decrease to Pierce County’s **15%** increase as shown on page 6, but Thurston County’s decrease appears to be unique.

The radical drop in the number of homeless people raises many questions. Did 410 people overcome homelessness or leave the area? Did changes in the methodology either correct a previous over-count or otherwise affect the total census numbers? Did recent rental subsidies reduce the census count? This report examines factors that may have affected the validity of the 2011 census results on page 6 under “2011 Census Data Validity.”

Given the census results on page one, it is essential to examine whether or not our county is truly making progress in reducing homelessness, or if there were other factors that caused a significant decrease. And if the 2011 census results were skewed by these factors, it may be necessary to “reset” the Ten-Year Plan clock and view the second half as a separate data set, making the years 2011–2015 distinct from 2006–2010. The 2006 baseline number of 441 may also need to be re-examined to reflect worsening economic conditions; for every homeless person that gets housed, they are replaced by approximately two newly homeless people.
COUNTYWIDE ACTIONS TO REDUCE HOMELESSNESS

Since 2006, Thurston County has invested over $10 million dollars to support many successful projects and programs to reduce homelessness. The primary funding source has been the Thurston County HOME Consortium, which is governed by an eight member inter-jurisdictional body that oversees the use of federal HOME funds and the two state-funded programs called the Homeless Housing Program and the Affordable Housing Program.

During program year 2010 (September 1, 2010 – August 31, 2011) the HOME Consortium invested more than $2.2 million in federal and local funds in local projects and programs intended to alleviate homelessness (Appendix G on page 61). Notable accomplishments include:

- 211 at-risk households were provided Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) and eviction prevention through several agencies
- 32 new housing units via land acquisition for the Housing Authority to construct multifamily complex in Tumwater;
- 40 new housing units via land acquisition for Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties for Salmon Run Apartments in Yelm;
- Seven units of owner-occupied housing rehabilitation (essential home repairs);
- Renovation of the Low Income Housing Institute’s “Magnolia Villa,” a 21-unit multifamily housing complex in Lacey;
- Habitat for Humanity commenced the Tumwater “Shepherd’s Grove” project that will provide five new units of first-time, very low-income single-family homes;
- Habitat for Humanity completed the final five units of housing at the 15-unit “Fairview Cottages” project in Olympia.
- 17 agencies received support for operations and maintenance costs.

Together these projects and programs provided housing and essential services that helped hundreds of households across Thurston County in 2011. Since 2006, the HOME Consortium has invested over $10 million dollars to create more affordable housing, provide rental assistance and other essential services to reduce homelessness throughout Thurston County.

The census results do show a 28% increase in homelessness since 2006. However, as shown above, a significant number of homeless and at risk people were assisted, likely preventing them from becoming homeless. But for the funding provided through the HOME Consortium, homelessness would be greatly increased.

Habitat for Humanity Fairview Cottages project, Olympia.
Tumwater High School student volunteers laying sod to support four new units of first time homebuyer homes
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESPONDING TO HOMELESSNESS

The 2011 Homeless Census results show us who is homeless and why, along with an overview of the existing shelter and housing resources. During the first six years of communitywide efforts throughout Thurston County, we have not reduced homelessness by half as per the Ten-Year Plan goal; instead, we have a 28% increase in the number of homeless people.

A series of focus groups looked at the census results and discussed how to respond to the increase in homelessness. An overview of the focus group process is included in the section on “Methodology” on page 41 and paraphrased reports from the focus groups are presented in Appendix A, page 48. Following is a summary of their recommendations:

- **Better Homeless Plan:** The Ten-Year Plan needs to be a highly functional and well-understood guide to make local efforts successful. The plan must incorporate best practices to make better use of available resources.

- **Homeless Coordination:** Create a centralized homeless service system to coordinate data, referrals, and foster a more strategic use of resources. *(The census revealed 269, or 49% of respondents were unsheltered in spite of having the capacity to shelter 96% of the homeless.)*

- **Improve Community Cooperation:** Support elected officials and service providers to work better together in order to be more effective.

- **Don’t Criminalize Homelessness:** Develop public policy to resolve conflicts between street-dependent populations, business owners, and other stakeholders.

- **Create a Day Center:** Get people off the street to reduce conflict between the business community and street-dependent populations.

- **Safe Parking Program:** Accommodate people already living in their cars; provide case management and secure parking locations for homeless people at a low cost to benefit ratio.

- **More Affordable Housing:** The best solution to homelessness is to provide more affordable housing. In addition to emergency shelters, prioritize rapid re-housing (programs that get homeless people back into housing as soon as possible) and housing first (programs that stabilize people first with housing and provide supportive services second).

- **Address Homelessness in Local Comprehensive Plans** – Ensure that community plans for housing, transportation, schools and other infrastructure also includes a social and homeless services element that describes the shelter and services infrastructure (Refer to City of Lacey Draft Comprehensive Plan as a model).
OVERVIEW OF THE HOMELESS CENSUS

Purpose of the Point in Time Count of Homeless People
Each year at the end of January, Thurston County participates in a statewide effort to conduct a census of homeless people and then produces a report examining the results. As a “Point in Time” census, this represents a finite count of people from a specific night—January 27, 2011, selected as the end of the coldest month of the year. This homeless census report serves to:

1. **Examine Who’s Homeless and Why** by obtaining the most accurate census of homeless people, the causes of their homelessness, and other demographic information;
2. **Quantify Needs** by reporting the number and demographics of homeless people, which in turn brings in federal and state dollars to provide homeless shelter, transitional housing, and other services;
3. **Assess Resources** by tracking currently available housing and service resources; and
4. **Foster Analysis and Refine Strategies** by examining needs and resources and exploring better strategies for local responses to homelessness.

Definitions of Homelessness
This census report is primarily based on the **state definition of homelessness**, which includes people living in:

1. **Emergency shelter**;
2. **Transitional housing**;
3. **Unsheltered** (in places not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, on the street); and,
4. **Substandard housing** defined as a dwelling lacking drinking water, restroom, heat, ability to cook hot food, or ability to bathe.

This definition derives from the **federal definition** of homelessness, which comes from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD defines homelessness as (1) an individual who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence; and (2) an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is:

- A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill);
- An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or
- A public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
For the purposes of this count, transitional housing refers to housing with a 2-year stay limit where being homeless is a prerequisite for eligibility. Transitional housing also typically offers case management services that are required as part of the program. Persons in transitional housing programs that allow them to continue living permanently in housing after a transition period (“transition in place”) are not considered homeless if participation in case management is not a condition of residency.

Other People Without Permanent Homes
The Homeless census also collects information on other people without permanent homes in order to capture a broader range of people who impact social and shelter services, including:

- People staying with friends and family.
- People held in jails or medical institutions who will be released to homelessness.

These numbers are useful for understanding the impact of people in jails or institutions who will be released to homelessness. It is also helpful in looking at the people who temporarily stay with friends or family, many of whom may cycle to living in their cars or homeless shelters. This standard produced the numbers referred to as the “county census” count of homeless numbers. All data presented herein will cite the standard as either “state count” or “full count.”

2011 Census Data Validity
The 2011 census results present a radical 42% drop in homelessness from the 2010 high of 976 to the 2011 figure of 566. Staff and other community stakeholders have examined the 2011 census data against previous county census data and 2011 statewide results to explore what may have caused such a radical drop in the Thurston County Census results. This drop in homelessness is not corroborated by agency reports of high demand for services or anecdotal reports from police, parks, and other government personnel regarding the increased numbers of unsheltered homeless people living on urban sidewalks or in parks. Initial analysis suggests the following causes:

1. Change in State Department of Commerce and County Methodology
The state transitioned to utilizing the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to manage the statewide homeless census data. Conversion to HMIS meant that some service agencies became “direct reporters” and others remained “paper reporters.” It appears that some agency’s data may have been submitted incomplete. A follow-up query conducted in August 2011 found that agencies reported 141 shelter occupants on 1/27/11, as opposed to the census listing of 95 shelter occupants reported in HMIS. Last, the state no longer included some categories of people placed in “Permanent Supportive Housing” (subsidized housing that allows residents to stay longer than 18 months), causing a further decrease in numbers for 2011.

2. New Housing Resources Working
The county’s Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing (HPRP) commenced in early 2010 and provided rental assistance for 94 households, many of whom might otherwise have lived in shelters, outdoors, or temporarily with friends.
3. Non-Cooperation by Some Homeless Populations
Census workers encountered resistance from a significant number of respondents who refused to provide information necessary to be counted. This resistance was encountered in the field census (i.e. camp census and evening street census) and at “Homeless Outreach” events. Reluctant respondents cited numerous reasons, including: (1) fear that participation would cause their homeless camps to be “cleared”; (2) concern that their information would be used to clear street-dependent people from the downtown; and (3) general distrust of the government. Some people participated in the census yet refused to provide their names or provided fictitious names, which eliminated them from inclusion in the census.

4. Homeless Camp Sites Better Hidden
2011 census workers found many of the traditional areas of homeless camps to be vacant and heard anecdotal reports that homeless camps have relocated to new and more remote locations. In one instance, a census team found an occupied camp with residents who refused to come out of their tents to be surveyed. Upon returning the next day, the residents had vacated the area completely to avoid further detection.

5. Correction of Previous Over-counts
The previous database may have allowed for some number of over-counts. The HMIS database assigned a numeric ID to each respondent to prevent over-counts. The 2011 methodology also required a complete name and enforced a stricter signature requirement, not allowing surveys with fictitious signatures. Many service providers indicate this signature rule decreases the number of willing respondents, some of whom may be concerned about outstanding warrants or being located by abusive family members.

6. Undercount of Rural Homeless People
In spite of increased efforts, the County Homeless Census continues to under-count people who meet the definition of homeless in rural areas. Rural officials estimate there are a significant number of people living in substandard housing (lacking in heating, cooking or sanitation facilities) that would meet the definition of homeless. Many rural homeless people tend to exist “off the grid” of homeless services, often because fewer services exist in rural areas, which makes it more difficult to find them. Methodologies used in urban areas - such as using homeless outreach events or field census teams - are less effective in areas with scattered site camp locations.
SOURCE 1: EXAMINING THE NUMBERS

Following is a series of charts presented with background information that provide a deeper look into the results of the 2011 Homeless Census, including the causes of homelessness, the ages of homeless people, disabilities they face, and other information.

Scope of the Data
The following information represents the results of the 2011 Homeless Census, primarily focusing on a count of homeless people that meets the state definition of homelessness.

Additionally, this report presents some charts and information on people living with friends or families and people in jail or medical facilities who will be released to homelessness. Although these homeless people do not meet the state definition of homelessness, they clearly present a significant impact on local services and the community at large.

Please note that due to technical constraints with the state’s database, some of the totals and subtotals are off by five (5) or less. These inconsistencies will be corrected by the final draft of this report.

Causes of Homelessness
Understanding the causes of homelessness is key to identifying the most appropriate resources. The chart below presents the self-reported causes of homelessness by respondents in the county census. Each respondent was asked to report all situations that applied, recognizing that causes of homelessness often have a multiplier effect.

On the question of cause, the single-largest reported cause of homelessness was “Primarily Economic Reasons,” as self-reported by 142 or 25% of respondents. Only 57 or 10% of the respondents cited mental illness as the cause of their homelessness. However, this statistic may be problematic given the conflicting directives of the State Department of Commerce to collect names of all respondents and the federal HIPPA law (the “Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act” of 1996) that protects the medical privacy of mentally ill people and other respondents with medical conditions covered by HIPPA. In general, service providers are prohibited from releasing medical information with the names of their clients. On a different question regarding self-reported disabilities, 248, or 45%, self-disclosed mental illness, which may have been a contributing factor in their homelessness. This matches more closely with 2010 data showing that 41% were homeless because of mental illness.
Where the Homeless Find Refuge

To be included in this homeless census, the respondent had to meet the definition for homeless (see “Definition of Homeless” on page 5) the immediate night before the January 27, 2011 census was conducted. The results present a snapshot of where the homeless take shelter, which includes a broad array of formal and informal accommodations.

The following graph represents the range of those answers. Nearly half of all local homeless households spent the night unsheltered, with 236 or 42% of the people living out of doors and 31 living in vehicles. Another 204 people, or 36% of all homeless households, were living in transitional housing, defined as housing that is designed to facilitate the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing within a reasonable amount of time, usually 24 months or less. Only 95, or 17%, of the respondents were reported as shelter residents.
Other People Without Homes
Beyond the HUD-defined number of homeless people, the census also collected information on individuals who “lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence” (HUD definition). This included 98 people in jail or medical facilities who will be released to homelessness. It also includes 74 people temporarily staying with friends or families.

While these numbers are not included in the state-defined total of 566 (page 1 chart, “6-Year Matrix of Homeless Census and School Census Results”), these homeless people typically have a significant impact on local services such as food banks, soup kitchens, and other services. Among this number of “other homeless people” are the unaccompanied minors who are not living with parents or guardians. These youth typically cycle from staying with friends, sometimes termed “couch surfing” and living on the streets. One significant challenge in providing shelter for unaccompanied minors is that many avoid going into “the system” for fear of being returned to their parents or guardians as a result of Washington State’s “Becca Laws”, which are intended to keep families together.

While these categories of homelessness do not meet the state definition, the chart above on “Causes of Homelessness” shows that 41 people, or 7%, became homeless after losing a temporary living situation; 12 people, or 2%, lost their homes because of criminal convictions; and 5, or 1%, were discharged from a medical institution. Clearly, these figures will have a direct impact on the local population of homeless people.

Population Growth and Increased Homelessness
Homelessness occurs within the context of population growth, with the potential of correlation between the population growth and the increase of homelessness. However, the table below shows that the county’s population has grown 10% since 2006, while homelessness has increased 28%. While some of the increase in homeless residents is related to population growth, clearly the doubling of homelessness in Thurston County cannot be attributed to the gradual increase of the general population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>County Population (estimated)</th>
<th>% Increase from 2006</th>
<th># of Homeless</th>
<th>% Increase from 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>231,100</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>238,000</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>245,181</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>249,800</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>252,264</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>976</td>
<td>121%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>254,100</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Age of the Homeless**
The chart below presents the age spread of homeless people, with the clear majority, 321, or 57% of respondents falling between the ages of 26- to 55-years old. This chart also shows that nearly 102, or 20%, of all homeless people are children 17-years old or younger. The school census data presented on page 21 shows that this number has nearly doubled in the past six years. The elderly account for only 1% of the local homeless population.

**Disabilities of the Homeless**
This chart presents the range of self-reported disabilities affecting local homeless people, showing that mental health impacts 249 people, or 45%, nearly half of the local homeless population that were counted. Another 65 people, or 11%, reported a permanent physical disability. Only 41, or 7%, of respondents reported a drug or alcohol dependency, a 76% decrease since 2010. This suggests either a serious undercount of homeless people with drug or alcohol dependency or a wide-spread reluctance to self-identify as having drug or alcohol dependency.

*Respondents could choose multiple categories; percentages do not add up to 100%.*
Sources of Income for Homeless People
A significant number of Thurston County’s homeless people did not want to discuss their income with strangers, and 36%, or 204 people, refused to answer questions about the source of their income. The next highest percentage, 24%, or 138 respondents, reported generic “Public Assistance.” A significant number reported no income source, 21%, or 120 people. Only 43, or 8%, rely on Social Security. The remainder reported a variety of income sources—40 people, or 7%, reported part-time work and 16, or 3%, and reported low-wage jobs. However, another fifth have no steady income at all. The chart below presents the breakdown of sources of income.

How Long Have They Been Homeless?
One of the questions included in the census asked how long people were homeless. Nearly half of the respondents, or 245 (44%), said they had been homeless for more than a year, which is one qualifier for being chronically homeless. Another 91 or 16% reported they had experienced four or more episodes of homelessness in the past three years, which is the other indicator of chronic homelessness. Less than one-third, or 161 (28%), said they had been homeless for less than a year. As shown on the chart on page 17, the number of chronically homeless people has fluctuated between 10% - 36% of the total homeless population in the past year. However, it appears that the recession may be limiting the resources for people to get back into housing quickly.
WHO ARE THE HOMELESS?

The pathways to homelessness come from many directions. This results in a broad range of sub-populations of the homeless. Because most service and shelter programs are tailored to meet the unique needs of these specific sub-populations, it is essential to understand the diverse characteristics in order to develop successful responses. Below is a chart that breaks out some of these distinct sub-populations.

![Homeless Sub-Populations Chart]

*Please note: This chart is based on County Homeless Census results and does not correlate with other data sources.*

Following is a brief overview of the primary sub-groups of the homeless people with a short description of the primary strategic response:

**Last Residence of the Homeless**

*New section added after October 22nd release of draft*

At the October 22nd Annual Homeless Forum, some participants asked for information about the last reported residence of the homeless. The issue of origins was not included in the 2010 report due to limitations of the 2010 database. The following data and narrative provides this information for 2011.

Specifically, the 2011 survey asked respondents where they last lived—in a house or apartment—in order to identify the last community they called home. The question of last residence is relevant given that many homeless people must relocate closer to an urban hub in order to access emergency shelter and services. The loss of community connections and
relationships can have a destabilizing effect on individuals, particularly children. This migration toward shelter and services located in the urban hub can create a sense of “stateless”, in which many homeless people are no longer considered part of their home communities, yet not considered members of the urban hub communities either.

This dynamic is particularly relevant in the results of the County’s Public School Census (pages 19 – 21) which show a high concentration of homeless students in the Olympia School District as a direct result of the high concentration of homeless shelters in Olympia.

The chart below identifies the last reported formal residence of the homeless, based on a total of 276 respondents. The majority of respondents, 201 or 73%, came from somewhere in Thurston County, and half, or 137, of the respondents came from the urban hub area of Lacey, Olympia or Tumwater. Another 20%, or 56 respondents came from other counties in Washington. Only 7%, or 19 respondents came from other states.

Within Thurston County, there is a spread in the statistics on which local communities that homeless respondents last called home. The chart below shows the greatest number of homeless respondents, 62, or 22%, of the County’s homeless last resided in Tumwater. A lesser number of respondents, 50 or 18%, last resided in Olympia and 41 respondents, or 15%, last resided in Lacey. Also notable was that Rochester and Yelm had 17 and 18 homeless respondents each, approximately 7% of the total homeless population.
The chart below shows the relationship of the number and percentages of homeless respondents relative to the total population of specific communities. It is notable that the percentages of total population and the percentage of homeless respondents is virtually identical in Lacey (15% - 16%) and Olympia (18%). However, the percentage of homeless respondents is double the percentage of total population in the communities of Tumwater and Tenino. The percentage of homeless respondents is quadruple the percentage of total population in Yelm.

Without more information, it is difficult to analyze the full relevance of this data. These statistics may be representative of the lack of housing and employment opportunities in those smaller communities or other factors that directly relate to homelessness. These statistics may also be the result of a lopsided sampling of the respective populations. The 2012 report will continue to monitor these trends.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Total 2010 Population</th>
<th>% of County’s Population</th>
<th># of Homeless</th>
<th>% of Homeless</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lacey</td>
<td>40,130</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olympia</td>
<td>45,500</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenino</td>
<td>1,535</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumwater</td>
<td>16,770</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yelm</td>
<td>5,900</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>252,400*</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>276**</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mental Illness and Homelessness**

Mental illness is typically the greatest single cause of homelessness in Thurston County. However, as noted previously, data from agencies working with mentally ill people was incomplete and as a result, only 10%, or 57 people, self-reported this as the cause of their homelessness compared with 2010 in which 41%, or 463, self-reported that mental illness was the cause of their homelessness. However, under disabilities, 45%, or 248, of the respondents self-reported being mentally ill, which is more in line with past years’ statistics. Given that respondents could choose several categories, some of those identified as mentally ill were also veterans, victims of domestic violence, and other categories.
Many people who are mentally ill are eligible for some form of benefits related to their mental illness. Chronically mentally ill people tend to have symptom escalation on a cyclical basis, and sometimes hospitalization may be necessary to re-establish stability. Once hospitalized, people often lose their benefits due to non-payment or abandonment. If jailed, mentally ill people may lose their housing subsidies with supportive services. Upon release from incarceration, many of those mentally ill people must re-establish their housing and service subsidies, a process that can take several weeks. During periods of hospitalization, landlords often evict them for non-payment and dispose of their belongings as abandoned. After several episodes, it can be difficult to find a new landlord to accept their rental history.

Possible Solutions: The primary strategy for chronically mentally ill homeless people is to provide Permanent Supportive Housing, or what is referred to as “service enriched” housing, typically owned and staffed by non-profit organizations.

Victims of Domestic Violence
According to the “National Law Center on Homeless and Poverty,” domestic violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness for women and children. A 2005 study commissioned by the US Conference of Cities found that domestic violence was the leading cause of homelessness for women and children in half of the cities reporting, including Seattle.

Locally, there were 70 homeless victims of domestic violence, representing 12% of the total population of homeless respondents. Victims of domestic violence often have fewer options to seek temporary shelter with friends and family because their abusers would then be able to find them. As a result, they are disproportionately dependent on shelters, typically operated in confidential locations.

Possible Solutions: Homeless victims of domestic violence are best served by domestic violence shelters, either formal or informal, or through friend networks that can ensure protection from abusers. Many domestic violence shelters seek to expand into providing service-enriched transitional housing to provide a secure stepping stone from shelter to independence. Housing first is not always the best option in that it may reveal a survivor’s whereabouts to abusers.

Chronically Homeless
Locally, 245, or 44% of the homeless population meet the definition of chronically homeless. Chronically homeless people are defined as “an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more, or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.” Typically comprising 10% of the total homeless population, people who are chronically homeless tend to be the most visible, giving rise to many negative stereotypes. They also tend to be the heaviest consumers of shelter and homeless services.
A 2006 *New Yorker* article infamously chronicled the price of ignoring the chronically homeless with a story about “Million Dollar Murray,” a homeless man in Reno who cost the state of Nevada one million dollars over ten years in emergency care.

**Possible Solutions:** The article cited above and other efforts to examine the chronically homeless from a cost-benefit analysis perspective support the “**Housing First**” model as a strategy to stabilize chronically homeless people by getting them into housing first and then providing the essential services in order to provide more cost-effective case management.

**Veterans**
In Thurston County 42, or 7%, of the homeless self-identified as veterans. Nationwide, about one-third of the adult homeless population are veterans. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), homeless veterans are predominantly male, with roughly five percent being female. The majority of homeless veterans are single, come from urban areas, and suffer from mental illness, alcohol and/or substance abuse, or co-occurring disorders. America’s homeless veterans have served in World War II, the Korean War, Cold War, Vietnam War, Grenada, Panama, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Iraq, and the military’s anti-drug cultivation efforts in South America. Nearly half of homeless veterans served during the Vietnam era. Two-thirds served our country for at least three years, and one-third were stationed in a war zone. Unfortunately, numerous studies show that veterans are the least likely among the homeless sub-populations to be willing to work with government or other institutional services.

**Possible Solutions:** The most effective response to homeless veterans is to ensure they are linked to all possible VA benefits that they may be eligible for, including housing, mental health care, drug and alcohol treatment, employment assistance, and other services. This linkage will ensure that a community makes the best use of these distinct revenue streams. Like most homeless sub-populations, veterans benefit from the “**Housing First**” model followed up with supportive services.

**Homeless Individuals**
Homeless individuals typically make up the largest sub-population of homeless people. Locally, the census revealed 387 single adults, comprising 70% of the total homeless population. People are considered homeless individuals when they do not have dependent children, are not expecting a child, or are not ‘vulnerable’ in a way that prohibits their arranging their own accommodations. Individuals who are not mentally ill, veterans, and victims of domestic violence are generally excluded from many forms of public assistance, including housing. As a result, it can be difficult to find resources to serve them.

**Possible Solutions:** Homeless individuals should be screened to identify their needs and potential eligibilities for resources. While homeless individuals benefit from the “**Housing First**” model, case managers may elect to utilize lighter forms of assistance such as temporary
emergency shelter, shallow rental subsidies, or job referrals to help stabilize them and facilitate their return to independence.

**Homeless Families**
The census found 55 total people in homeless families, making them 10% of the homeless population. However, there appears to be a much larger number of families without a home of their own who find their own shelter by living with friends or family members or their vehicles, thereby eluding the census methodology and being excluded from the census numbers. Homeless families often cite job loss or the loss of their housing related to the economy as the cause of homelessness.

Many homeless families choose to stay temporarily with other people, in motels, or in their cars. Families tend to avoid shelters in order to prevent potentially negative impacts on their children. As a result, many families, children, and youth on their own are disproportionately excluded by the current HUD definition of homelessness. Many homeless families avoid shelters or the streets because parents fear losing their children as the result of potential intervention by child welfare agencies. Families also avoid the forced separation of family members in order to fit into shelter regulations that are often restrictive about the number and gender configuration of families in their facilities.

**Strategic Response:** Strategies for homeless families include “Rapid Re-housing” (quickly dispersed rental assistance to stabilize them), or emergency shelters specifically for families and then followed with rental subsidies to allow them to secure housing. Informal friend, school-based or faith community networks are often the first options pursued by homeless families; any efforts to strengthen those networks are highly effective.

**Homeless Youth**
There were 102 homeless children under 18-years of age, or 18%, of the total population, with three of them being unaccompanied homeless youth in the census, comprising less than 1% of the total population. (Please note: this number appears to be significantly lower than the School Census numbers addressed on page 18.) The state regards youth as homeless only when they meet the state definition of “individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.” The definition includes youth who are living in shelters, transitional housing, out of doors in vehicles or abandoned buildings. However, a significant number of homeless youth do not fit this definition, but they do fit the McKinney Vento definition because they are “migratory” and live temporarily in hotels or motels or with a succession of friends or family. As a result, the School Census (see page 21) presents much higher numbers deriving from a different methodology.
Homeless youth and young adults present a significant challenge to community housing programs in that they can’t legally sign leases and don’t fit into the adult homeless housing model. Transition-aged youth, ages 18 to 24, are at high risk for victimization when placed in general population emergency shelters. Without appropriately focused interventions, they are likely to become part of the chronically homeless adult population. Adolescents and young adults have different biological, psychological, social, and developmental cognitive needs than adults, and are often more responsive and receptive to transitional housing services. They respond best when offered a program that is designed to focus on prevention/intervention strategies that are geared to a young person’s developmental stages and use multiple “best practice” interventions.

**Strategic Response:** Experience and studies show that Transitional Housing with Supportive Services is the most effective housing strategy to prevent or arrest homelessness with youth and young adults. Absent housing resources, the primary service models are street outreach and drop-in centers that offer survival goods, service referrals, and general case management.

**Trends in Thurston County Homelessness**
Six years of conducting a Thurston County census of homeless citizens offers a look into the trends of who is homeless in a given year and how that changes over time. The chart below presents six years of data on who the homeless are, where they were accommodated, and some of the issues they face. The questions that emerge in examining this data include: (1) who are the homeless; (2) are we making progress with certain demographics by concentrating services; (3) do we have information to differentiate whether these are the same people year-over-year, or are some people overcoming homelessness while new people are becoming homeless.

The first five years present demographic information that appears to trend upward and then drops off radically by year six in 2011. Some of the fairly static populations include the chronically homeless, who appear to number between 78 and 103 people, with one outlier year that revealed 210 chronically homeless in 2007. Individuals with mental illness trended sharply upwards in the first five years, and again, dropped radically in the sixth year, likely because of the lack of data from mental health service providers. The data on veterans varies radically between a low of 6 veterans in 2007 to a high of 76 veterans in 2008. These radically divergent numbers suggest the need to work more closely with veterans’ assistance organizations to gain the trust of homeless veterans in order to include them in the census.
Overall, further examination by community partners is needed to understand the meaning of these trends and to better utilize the information provided by the census to tailor more effective programs and services.

| Thurston County Census 2006 – 2011: Trends in Demographics of Homelessness |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                             | 2006   | 2007   | 2008   | 2009   | 2010   | 2011   |
| Out of Doors                 | 122    | 187    | 154-94* | 219    | 363    | 269    |
| Shelters                     | 156    | 167-132* | 118    | 123    | 181    | 141    |
| Transitional Housing         | 163    | 143    | 100    | 203    | 432    | 260    |
| Sub Totals                   | 441    | 579    | 462    | 745    | 976    | 568    |
| Jails & Medical Institutions | 55     | 38     | 17     | 109    | 146    | 98     |
| Friends                      | 104    | 103    | 150    | 159    | 162    | 74     |
| Total                        | 600    | 720    | 629    | 1,013  | 1,284  | 740    |
| Youth Total Sheltered & Unsheltered | 115 | 111 | 187 | 228 | 420 | 144 |
| Families with Children Total Sheltered & Unsheltered | 151 | 196 | 151 | 275 | 289 | 162 |
| Single Men & Women Total Sheltered & Unsheltered | 290 | 383 | 311 | 470 | 663 | 387 |
| Elderly Total Sheltered & Unsheltered | 4 | 3 | 11 | 7 | 16 | 3 |
| Veterans Total Sheltered & Unsheltered | 75 | 6 | 76 | 18 | 68 | 42 |
| Mental Illness (self-reported disability) | 156 | 292 | 288 | 356 | 407 | 249 |
| Drug and Alcohol Addicted | 122 | 149 | 125 | 164 | 168 | 41 |
| Chronically Homeless | 103 | 210 | 84 | 98 | 99 | 78 |

*Numbers vary between state report and county report for this demographic in these years.

**Please Note:** The numbers above are drawn from the State Department of Commerce “Point in Time Count” website (http://www.commerce.wa.gov/site/1064/default.aspx) and from previous Thurston County Homeless Census Reports, years 2006 – 2010. There are some inconsistencies with some of these numbers as a result of being drawn from different sources.

“Every year we are seeing more and more homeless families with children. They may not consider themselves homeless because they are staying with a series of friends or they may not want people to know that they are living in their cars, but they definitely come to us in higher numbers with greater needs.”

- Patty Gregory, Programs Director, Family Support Center
Homeless School Children & the McKinney Act
Thurston County schools are required to count homeless students, kindergarten through 12th grade, as part of the McKinney-Vento Act, which declares that homeless school children are also entitled to the protections listed under the section entitled, “Education for Homeless Children and Youths.” The act defines homeless children as “individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.” The act goes on to give examples of children who would fall under this definition:

- Children sharing housing due to economic hardship or loss of housing;
- Children living in “motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camp grounds due to lack of alternative accommodations”;
- Children living in “emergency or transitional shelters”;
- Children “awaiting foster care placement”;
- Children whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g., park benches, etc.);
- Children living in “cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations . . .”

Each year, the State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) works with local school districts throughout the state to identify children and youth attending school experiencing homelessness. The purpose is to offer appropriate services to the family, child, or youth and to report the number of homeless students to federal, state, and local governments. This count does not include school-age children who are not attending school.

Homeless School Children in Thurston County
The chart below shows the year-over-year changes of homeless school children enrolled in the eight school districts of Thurston County. These numbers are produced by the local school districts and reported to OSPI.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Year</th>
<th>North Thurston</th>
<th>Olympia</th>
<th>Tenino</th>
<th>Rainier</th>
<th>Yelm</th>
<th>Tumwater</th>
<th>Griffin</th>
<th>Rochester</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>1,269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>1,164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*Olympia School District’s high number is in part due to the fact that they serve children staying in local shelters.

**Correlation of School District Numbers with County Homeless Census Numbers**

While the two sets of homeless numbers come from different sources, they do offer a composite view of homelessness, which is particularly useful given the radical drop in the county’s 2011 census results. While the school district numbers decreased by 8%, or 105 students, since 2010 the County’s Homeless Census numbers dropped radically by 42%, or 410 individuals, since 2010. (Potential reasons for discrepancies in Homeless Census numbers are examined in “2011 Census Data Validity” on page 5.)

The School District homeless student numbers are collected over the past full school year, in this case, 2009–2010, which ended seven months before the January 2011 census. A further difference is that some of the county’s census numbers include homeless students who were counted by the school districts. Last, the school district’s numbers include students who live with friends or family, an accommodation not included in the county numbers. As a result, these figures cannot be directly added together or statistically compared.

The school numbers include only students enrolled during the school year 2009–2010, but does not include their families—particularly absent are other siblings who are not school age. On the other hand, the “Point in Time” homeless census is a one day snapshot of homelessness in Thurston County, which includes many students staying with their families in shelters, transitional housing, or out of doors.

While derived from different methodologies and timelines, these two sets of numbers clearly show that the number of homeless individuals is increasing since the baseline year of 2006.
Homelessness at Evergreen State College
New in 2011, a student-led survey on homelessness was conducted at The Evergreen State College in February of 2011. While separate from the County’s Homeless Census, this survey offers a snapshot of homelessness in higher education. College administrators, parents, and the public at large are often unaware of the number of homeless students in post-secondary schools across the United States, which appears to be increasing as the availability of financial aid and student-oriented jobs are decreasing.

Higher education offers some unique conditions to support very low income and homeless students by providing them with enough money for tuition and books, but not enough to both eat and pay rent. While they may not have a residence, homeless students can rely on school resources by spending long hours in libraries and utilizing campus recreational facilities for personal hygiene. As a result, a growing number of students pursue their degrees while living in homeless shelters, cars, tents, or staying with a succession of friends.

88% reported homelessness was caused by financial reasons.

Yin Yu and Alicia Crowley were interns working on the 2011 Homeless Census who developed a parallel homeless survey for students at The Evergreen State College. They were joined by interns Hana Lewis and Maya Amichai to promote this survey across campus by the school listserve, informational booths in the Campus Activities Building, and by presentations to classes. The actual survey instrument was made available online and on paper. Of 147 respondents, 46, or 31%, self-reported that they had been homeless while going to school. The average period of homelessness was over seven months. Of these homeless students, 88% reported their homelessness was caused by financial reasons. A staggering 112 respondents, or 75%, self-reported they were aware of homeless students.

Recommendations generated by the survey and focus group discussions included: 1) more food resources; 2) a safe parking program for students living in their vehicles (defined as a secure area on campus where students could sleep in their vehicles); 3) a designated camping area for students living in tents; and, 4) generally more awareness and sensitivity among other students, faculty and staff.
HOMELESSNESS STATEWIDE

Examining Homelessness Across Washington State
Counties across the state have been counting their homeless citizens to learn who is homeless and why since 2006. Each year, the state has combined the homeless census numbers of all the counties, starting with a total count of 21,962 homeless people in 2006 and dropping almost 8% to 20,290 homeless people counted in 2011. While each county has worked diligently to reduce homelessness, it appears that the total statewide population has remained fairly static, rising and sinking with the high number to date occurring in 2009 with 22,827 people and this year’s low of 22,290.

Statewide Homeless Count Totals: 2006-2011

Without a comprehensive analysis of all contributing factors, it is difficult to understand these population shifts. The proximity of these six urban counties does present the opportunity for migration toward areas that may offer more comprehensive services, or simply presents a more welcoming environment.

Snapshot of Six Counties—Six Years of Census Results
The following chart presents six years of homeless census data, 2006 – 2011, from the six most urban counties in Western Washington. What is striking is that two of the counties with the most comprehensive efforts underway to coordinate their homeless services do indeed show significant decreases in their homeless counts since 2006, with Clark County decreasing by 37% and Whatcom County decreasing by 16.47%. Conversely, in the same six-year timeframe, Pierce County shows a 49.14% increase and King County shows a 12.2 % increase. Pierce County has more recently undertaken a coordinated point-of-entry system and King County still does not have a centralized or singular coordinated access and entry system for shelter and housing services.

Without a comprehensive analysis of all contributing factors, it is difficult to understand these population shifts. The proximity of these six urban counties does present the opportunity for migration toward areas that may offer more comprehensive services, or simply presents a more welcoming environment.
Interns working on this census report queried the other five counties to learn what caused the decreases and learned anecdotally that camp clearances and other enforcement actions may have contributed to some of the decreases. Further examination of these trends may reveal that the effects of anti-homeless enforcement actions have as great an impact on census numbers as do effective homeless coordination programs.
EXAMINING THE RESOURCES

Thurston County Shelter and Homeless Housing Capacity
An essential key to reducing homelessness is to maximize the use of all shelter and housing resources, and to ensure the proper shelter and housing resources are matched to the needs of the individuals. In addition, shelter and housing must be supplemented with supportive services to help stabilize people and support them in becoming more independent.

Notes on capacities and occupancies data: In this year of transition to utilizing HMIS as the database, it appears that some of the reported data was incomplete. The original HMIS report shows 95 occupied shelter beds. However, an August 2011, follow-up with agencies found that 141 shelter beds were occupied on January 27, 2011, a difference of 46 people apparently not included in the official census count. This chart further shows that with the exception of the Salvation Army, all local homeless shelters are virtually full or beyond capacity. Typically, shelters run at 60-70% capacity during the summer months, given that weather is more conducive to camping. This high level of summertime occupancy indicates a high level of need for shelter in the coming cold weather months.

Please note that the chart below presents the resources grouped by type (i.e., shelters or transitional housing), the demographics served (i.e., single men vs. families with children), the bed capacities and the household capacities. This distinction is important because the number of available beds may be configured as dormitory style or as family rooms, which means that a family of four might occupy a six-bed family room and therefore fill that room to capacity even though two beds remain open. The last two columns represent the capacity reported in HMIS, the capacity reported directly by the agencies for 1/27/11, and then the occupancies reported on August 22, 2011.

The chart entitled, “Shelter & Transitional Housing Capacities" on the following page provides an overview of the current capacities and occupancy rates of our existing network of shelter and housing in Thurston County.
### Thurston County 2011
Shelter & Transitional Housing Capacities

#### Emergency Shelter Capacity (up to 90-days stay)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individuals – Men</th>
<th>Beds</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army – Men</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army – Men (Cold weather)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Michael’s/Sacred Heart (Cold Weather Shelter)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drexel House</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individuals – Women</th>
<th>Beds</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Families with Children</th>
<th>Beds</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing Authority of Thurston County</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SafePlace</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yelm Community Services</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenino – Episcopal Church – Hope House</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Shelter Network – Interfaith Works (Cold weather shelter)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Support Center - 1st Christian Church</th>
<th>Beds</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergency Shelter Network – Out of the Woods</th>
<th>Beds</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth</th>
<th>Beds</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Youth Services-Haven House</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Totals: Including cold weather capacity | 225 | 163 |
| Totals: EXCLUDING cold weather capacity | 172 | 110 |

#### Transitional Capacity (up to two years stay)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individuals – Men &amp; Women</th>
<th>Beds</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bread &amp; Roses – Duplex</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army – Men</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army – Women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olympia Union Gospel Mission – Men in Recovery</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olympia Union Gospel Mission – Women in Recovery</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health Resources – TBRA</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arbor Manor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drexel House – Single Men and Women</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Families with Children</th>
<th>Beds</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing Authority of Thurston County</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olympia Union Gospel Mission</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth</th>
<th>Beds</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Youth Services</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Totals | 372 | 181 |

#### Total Thurston County Capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beds</th>
<th>Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Shelter (Please note: over-flow shelter provides additional beds in cold weather)</td>
<td>225 – Cold Weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>172 – Warm Weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total | 597 – Cold Weather | 433 |
| | 544 – Warm Weather | |

* Salvation Army shelter typically runs 50% - 60% capacity.
**Occupancy totals exclude BHR data due to reporting capacity issues. Occupancy bed night totals do not reflect the Housing Authority's full household capacity. SafePlace at full capacity for each family room does not place single women in with other families.
***401 occupancy represents 100% capacity for all but Salvation Army. Other shelters at full “household” capacities or full “demographic” capacities, i.e., youth shelter, can’t accept adults; domestic violence shelter can’t accept non-DV; Olympia Gospel Mission can’t accept non-alcoholic/addicts.
****BHR current occupancy information not available.
Emergency Shelter Capacity Increases

In 2011, Thurston County regained some shelter and housing capacity that had been lost in 2009, with a new total of 225 shelter beds during the cold weather months and 172 shelter beds in warmer weather. However, some of this capacity is misleading in that certain shelters can only accept single men, families, or domestic violence victims. Further, some shelters are configured with family rooms that may not have all the beds occupied, but it is not possible to place single adults in with a family.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Information</th>
<th>Date Census Completed</th>
<th>Number of Homeless People</th>
<th>Countywide Capacity</th>
<th>Percentage of Capacity to Meet Needs for Shelter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006 Census</td>
<td>January 26, 2006</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>393*</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Census</td>
<td>January 25, 2007</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>351**</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 Census</td>
<td>January 24, 2008</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>445***</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 Census</td>
<td>January 29, 2009</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 Census</td>
<td>January 28, 2010</td>
<td>976</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Census</td>
<td>January 27, 2011</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Old Devoe Road Street shelter in operation  ** Old Devoe Road Shelter shut down  *** Drexel House and Tumwater Gardens opened, significant expansion of TBRA (Tenant Based Rental Assistance)

According to the chart above, Thurston County should have been able to accommodate 96% of our homeless residents. Yet, as the chart below shows, nearly half of the homeless people identified in the 2011 census reported they were unsheltered.

The high ratio of unsheltered to sheltered homeless people could be the result of under-reporting in the HMIS system during this year of transition in methodology. A phone survey of shelter providers conducted in August 2011 revealed that these agencies had record of 141 shelter residents, far more than the 85 reported through HMIS. Clearly, local shelter and housing resources are being drastically under-utilized.

Percentage of Unsheltered People on the Rise

The 2011 census results showed that 269, or 48%, of the homeless were unsheltered, seeking shelter out of doors or in vehicles. The chart below shows a six-year matrix of unsheltered people as a percentage of the total number of homeless people. Starting in 2006, the 115 unsheltered people were 26% of the total homeless population. The percentage of unsheltered to the total homeless population remained fairly static until 2009, at which time it radically increased.

This change is also revealed in the School Census Homeless Students data on page 21, which found that in spite of an 8% drop in homeless students since 2010, there was a 28% increase in unsheltered homeless students in kindergarten through 12th grade.
The number of unsheltered people has more than doubled since 2006. More people, including families, are living outside the accepted continuum of care that spans from emergency shelter to transitional and permanent housing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># People</th>
<th># Unsheltered People</th>
<th>% of Unsheltered Homeless</th>
<th>% Change of Unsheltered People From 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>976</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>216%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>134%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Costs of Shelter
Numerous focus group participants called for a “cost benefit analysis” of the current system of shelter resources to provide a means of evaluating our current system of shelter. The following chart presents a simple comparison of programs, citing the staff structure (volunteer vs. professional staff), type of facility (tent, single-family residence, or multi-story facility), along with the operational costs per year and number of clients accommodated. Included in this chart is the cost per day for housing jail inmates, of whom 98 will be released to homelessness.

“Our jails end up being a catch basin for the mentally ill and other homeless people, essentially making the jail one of our largest homeless shelters. Studies show that we can house and provide social services for at least two people given the $92 a day it costs to keep people in jail.”

- Tumwater Councilmember Neil McClanahan, former Thurston County Undersheriff
The apparent tiers of cost show the difference between programs with volunteers vs. professional staff and the cost of a converted residential structure vs. a multi-story facility. One outlier tier is the high cost of running a homeless youth shelter, which is subject to stringent operating regulations. However, the greatest difference is between all other shelters and the county jail, which is included given the high number of homeless inmates included in the expanded homeless census numbers—a total of 98 people who will be released to homelessness.

### Homeless Shelter Cost Benefit Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shelter or Service Agency</th>
<th>Program Budget</th>
<th>No. of People Served</th>
<th>Cost/Day or Service Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bread &amp; Roses (Volunteer-based, non-profit owned duplex)</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>12 people 4,380 bed nights/year</td>
<td>$13.70 per bed night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Quixote (Volunteer-based, tent accommodations)</td>
<td>$74,000</td>
<td>28-bed capacity 10,220 bed nights/year</td>
<td>$7.24 per bed night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drexel House – CCS (Professionally staffed, multi-story facility)</td>
<td>$560,000</td>
<td>51-bed capacity 18,615 bed nights/year</td>
<td>$30.08 per bed night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haven House – CYS (Professionally staffed, converted residence, secured population)</td>
<td>$741,100</td>
<td>10 bed capacity 3,650 bed nights/year</td>
<td>$203.04 per bed night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of the Woods (Volunteer-based, church-owned single family home)</td>
<td>$67,500</td>
<td>12 bed capacity 2921 bed nights/year</td>
<td>$23.11 per bed night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SafePlace (Staffed by professionals and volunteers, multi-story facility, low security)</td>
<td>$517,891</td>
<td>28 bed capacity 10,220 bed nights/year</td>
<td>$50.67 per bed night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurston County Jail (Professionally staffed, high security lock-up)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>$92 per bed night*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-market rental housing (based on HUD Fair market rents) Plus moderate social services</td>
<td>$10,776</td>
<td>Three person family in 2-bedroom unit 1,095 bed nights/year</td>
<td>$14.41 per bed night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-market rental housing (based on HUD Fair market rents) No social services</td>
<td>$10,776</td>
<td>Three person family in 2-bedroom unit, 1,095 bed nights/year</td>
<td>$9.84 per bed night</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chart presents a comparison of shelter and social service costs, the number of people served, and the cost per service unit.

*Figure quoted by Thurston County Drug Court on cost of incarceration

**Expansion of Shelter and Housing Continuum**

While the number of shelter beds and transitional housing units has increased, our homeless population continues to climb. As a creative response to the increased needs to accommodate the homeless, new forms of shelter and transitional housing have arisen in recent years. However, because these forms of shelter do not meet certain zoning and building code standards, their
operations are subject to government regulation to ensure that the occupants are safe and that the concerns of surrounding neighbors are addressed.

**Overflow Shelters**
For 20 years, there has been a succession of “Overflow Shelters” that operate during the cold weather months, between November 1 and March 31, to accommodate single men, single women, and families on nights when the temperature drops below freezing.

Presently, these overflow shelters are managed by three agencies: **families with children** are accommodated by the Family Support Center; **single women** are accommodated by Interfaith Works; and single men are accommodated by the Salvation Army. **There is no over-flow shelter for unaccompanied youth.** The family shelter and single women’s shelter rotates every two weeks to participating faith-based communities. The single men’s shelter is hosted in the cafeteria area of the Salvation Army.

**Church shelters utilize mats on floors to provide shelter**

**Permanent Church-Based Shelters**
Faith communities have become increasingly involved in providing emergency shelter. Since 2006, the Unitarian Universalist Church on the far west side of Olympia has operated the “Out of the Woods” emergency shelter for families with children. Since mid-2010, the First Christian Church in downtown Olympia has hosted the Family Support Center’s year-round homeless shelter for families with children. Other faith communities continue to explore stronger roles in providing shelter and services.

**1st Christian Church in Downtown Olympia serves as a permanent family shelter operated by the Family Support Center.**
Camp Quixote Transitions to Quixote Village – Moving to a Permanent Location

In the past 10 years, “tent cities” have emerged as an informal housing facility, sometimes sanctioned by local governments, other times created without sanction by homeless people or protestors. In 2007, Camp Quixote, the local tent city, was created as an act of protest against a local ordinance to ban sidewalk sitting. Inspired by a tent-based community in Portland, Oregon, called “Dignity Village,” Camp Quixote was created as a democratically run transitional housing camp to provide community for people who would otherwise be living in cars, abandoned buildings, or vehicles. Camp Quixote currently provides tent-based shelter for up to 28 individuals without children. As currently regulated by ordinance, the camp rotates every three months to a new location hosted by a faith-based community. The ordinances in Thurston County and the City of Olympia were recently changed to allow the camp to be hosted for up to six months in each location.

Supporters of Camp Quixote are currently working with county and City of Olympia officials to relocate the camp to a permanent location on county-owned property located inside the City of Olympia. The intent is to create a village composed of bedroom-sized cottages around a community center with a kitchen, social space, showers and bathrooms, and laundry facilities.

The City of Olympia recently amended its zoning regulations to allow a permanent encampment and a formal application has been submitted by the county and Panza, (Camp Quixote’s support organization) on behalf of Camp Quixote to create the permanent location.
BACKGROUND OF THE HOMELESS CENSUS

The Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness
The Thurston County Ten-Year Plan, first adopted in 2005 and revised in 2010, requires that we track progress toward the goal of reducing homelessness by half. Since 2006, the first year of the Ten-Year Plan, homelessness in Thurston County has instead increased by 28%.

![Ten-Year Plan Progress Chart]

The Ten-Year Plan was a product of the 2005 State Legislature’s “Homeless Housing and Assistance Act” as a way to guide statewide efforts to reduce homelessness in Washington State by fifty percent by July 1, 2015. The creation of the “Ten-Year Plan” approach marked a significant change in how Thurston County, much like other counties across the state, respond to homelessness. Historically in Thurston County, a small group of homeless housing and service providers had collaborated to manage homelessness with very limited and, in most cases, dwindling resources. The Ten-Year Plan now requires all counties in Washington State—including Thurston County—to work toward ending homelessness.

In addition to the Ten-Year Plan, the act provided funding generated by surcharge fees on recording documents in each county, with some funds retained by the state. These surcharge monies fund the Thurston County Affordable Housing and Homeless Housing Program.

Specifically, the act requires the county to:

- Develop a Ten-Year Homeless Plan to reduce homelessness by 50% by the year 2015.
- Use a local portion of document recording fees to reduce homelessness.
- Conduct an annual Point-in-Time Homeless Census.
- Implement Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- Report annually to the state legislature.
Ten-Year Plan Accomplishments: 2006 - 2010
In the first five years, Thurston County spent more than $7.5 million in federal and local funds on affordable and homeless housing, including shelter and transitional housing projects that assisted 613 homeless families and individuals and for housing support services. The target goal in 2005 was to create 300 new units of permanent housing by 2015. In the first half of the Ten-Year Homeless Plan, 180 new units were completed. In addition, 223 at-risk households were provided transitional housing under the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program and over $900,000 was provided to local housing agencies to support operations and maintenance costs.

Ten Year Plan Revised Housing Goals: 2011 - 2015
Despite significant gains made during the first five years, Thurston County’s homeless population has grown from 441 persons in 2005 to 566 in 2011—an increase of 28%. This growth in population necessitates the need for a renewed focus on the county’s homeless problem, requiring new and higher benchmark goals, housing strategies, and supportive services.

The first half of the Ten-Year Plan (2006 - 2010) called for 225 new permanent housing units and 16 new shelter beds being built. The new target goal for housing is to create **690 units** of low-income and affordable housing by **creating 150 homeless units, 200 affordable units, and providing 340 new housing rental assistance vouchers**. The plan will be updated as needed to ensure that it is consistent with the federal strategies identified in the **Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness**.

Following is a summary of the revised Ten-Year Plan goals:

1. Expand the Supply of Homeless Housing Units: 150 new units (39 new units by 2013).
2. Expand the Supply of Affordable Housing Units: 200 Affordable Housing Units (137 new units by 2013).
3. Expand the Supply of Rental Assistance: Rental assistance for 340 homeless and at-risk households.
4. Preserve Existing Subsidized and Low Income Housing.
5. Consolidate Homeless Resources and Improve Service Delivery.
6. Maximize Housing Funding Opportunities.
7. Enhance Supportive Housing Services and Prevention.
8. Establish a Coordinated System for Discharging Clients Leaving Jail and Treatment Facilities.

*Information above excerpted from the original 2005 Thurston County Ten-Year Plan and the “Thurston County Ten-Year Homeless Housing Plan Revision” dated December 2010, prepared by collaboration of the Thurston County HOME Consortium and the HOME Citizens Advisory Committee.*
**History of Thurston County’s Census**
Thurston County pioneered the concept of the “point in time” homeless census now practiced statewide. This innovation arose from over 25 years of collaborative efforts between non-profits, local governments, and faith communities.

In 2002, Selena Kilmoyer of the Thurston County Housing Task Force recognized the problem of serving an undefined population. The solution to this problem was to find out how many homeless people there were by counting them. Kilmoyer presented this idea to the Thurston County Housing Task Force, and proposed that Task Force members conduct a homeless census to determine how large the homeless population was. Theresa Slusher of the Thurston County Housing Authority further developed this idea into a viable work plan. Drawing on Housing Authority staff resources and Housing Task Force representatives from all local service and shelter providers, the Task Force launched the first comprehensive census of homeless people in the county in 2003.

This approach was recognized by Tedd Kelleher of the State Department of Community Trade & Economic Development (CTED, now known as the Department of Commerce) as a valuable way to evaluate efforts to end homelessness and apportion funding. The 2005 state “Homeless Housing and Assistance Act” codified this practice, and created a mandate for all counties that received state and federal homeless and housing funds to use the census as a way to measure performance and document needs for continued future funding.

Aside from the practical result of creating the statewide “Point in Time Count of Homeless Persons,” the process of developing the census underscored the value of collaboration between faith-based communities, non-profits, and the government. The problem of homelessness spills over/ across all parts of the community; linking these diverse elements to work together is essential to making progress. This collaboration between government, non-profits, and faith-based communities was a guiding principal in making the homeless census successful.

**Federal Government’s Role in Census**
The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reports to Congress on the number of homeless people in the United States. HUD directs federal McKinney grant recipients to perform a point-in-time count of homeless persons during the last full week of January. In order to avoid duplication of efforts, the state-mandated count is conducted on the fourth Thursday in January. This year the count occurred on January 27, 2011.

HUD uses the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to track data and locally implemented homeless counts to arrive at the number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless people and the characteristics of homeless people living in shelters. The report offers a baseline for reports that explore patterns of homelessness over time. Homeless service providers across the country, such as emergency shelters and transitional and supportive housing programs collect information about their clients to match it with information from other providers to get accurate counts of homeless clients and the services they need.
**Washington State’s Role in Census**

The 2005 State’s “Homeless Housing and Assistance Act” requires an annual count of homeless persons in Washington State. The purpose of these guidelines is to define the common elements required of all local counts, to ensure that data is comparable between counties, and to ensure that confidentiality is protected. Communities are encouraged to adapt this basic framework for the annual census to the specific conditions and infrastructure of their community.

Local government is directed to make every effort to count all homeless individuals living outdoors, in shelters, and in transitional housing, coordinated, when reasonably feasible, with already existing homeless census projects including those funded in part by HUD under the McKinney-Vento homeless assistance program. The department determines, in consultation with local governments, the data to be collected. All personal information collected in the census is confidential, and the department and each local government is to take all necessary steps to protect the identity and confidentiality of each person counted.

**Thurston County’s Role in Census**

Thurston County is the local unit of government mandated (RCW 43.185C) to count the county’s homeless population annually. The results of this count are reported to both the state and federal governments. Additionally, the county’s census report includes an expanded definition to include people living with friends or family, people in jail and mental or other health facilities that will be released to homelessness. This information helps local governments, non-profits, faith communities, and others to understand the extent of homelessness, its impact on local resources, and helps to develop strategies to reduce the number of people without permanent homes.

The County plays a crucial role in ensuring a comprehensive census that identifies all local homeless people, including rural areas surrounding Bucoda, Rainier, Tenino and Yelm. Homeless people from beyond the urban core often find refuge “off the grid” of traditional shelter and services, which can limit the usefulness of urban-oriented census methodologies.

**City of Olympia’s Role in Census**

Thurston County contracts with the City of Olympia to conduct the census, analyze the results, and to produce a final report.

Olympia has a unique role related to our county’s homeless population. While homelessness is a regional problem, its locus is concentrated in the urban core of the county. Federal, state, and local funds support a vibrant continuum of services, shelter and housing, most of which are located within Olympia. This means that homeless people from more rural areas like Bucoda or Rochester gravitate towards the urban core. As shown in this report, the number of homeless people exceeds the number of shelter beds and transitional housing units, which means that unsheltered homeless people often resort to car camping on the streets, sleeping in public parks, using libraries as warming centers, and other areas not primarily intended to serve as defacto homeless facilities. As a result, Olympia becomes a focal point in addressing many local homeless policies and strategies.
COLLATERAL IMPACTS OF HOMELESSNESS

The primary impact of homelessness affects the families and individuals who struggle to live without benefit of a permanent home of their own. However, there are collateral impacts of homelessness on the community at large resulting from the way that homeless people are forced to live their lives on the streets, in the woods, or in other areas not intended to offer shelter.

**Business Impacts**

Businesses located in the County’s urban hub often serve as de facto hosts of an unofficial sidewalk-based drop-in center for street-dependent populations. In a trend played out across the country, the homeless of Thurston County tend to gravitate from rural areas to the urban hub. This migration is generally related to the concentration of homeless and related social services in Olympia’s downtown core. It is also related to the social needs of people who are unable to access more conventional gathering places, such as community centers, restaurants, or other public accommodations. In the absence of other facilities, many homeless people will utilize the streets, under-utilized parking lots, and other areas to foster a sense of community.

When the numbers of homeless people on the streets hits a critical mass, it often generates complaints from some businesses and their patrons who feel impacted or threatened. In recent years, these complaints have resulted in the City of Olympia adopting a number of ordinances, such as the sidewalk pedestrian interference ban and the Recreational Vehicles (RV) ban in the downtown core. The first “Tent City” ordinance allowing faith-based communities to host a rotating homeless encampment was enacted in response to a homeless encampment that emerged as a protest in downtown Olympia in 2008.

In early 2011, the Olympia panhandling ordinance was expanded to prohibit panhandling within 25 feet of ATM machines and parking pay stations. Olympia is also in the process of gathering data and examining options to make its downtown core welcoming to all as part of an ongoing “Downtown Project.” Key activities are intended to bring together business owners, social service providers, homeless people and their advocates, along with all others to explore ways to balance the needs of all downtown stakeholders. In spite of these efforts, there continues to be complaints about the chilling effect that homeless people have on

![Street-dependent youth in front of storefront](image-url)

---

*We need to find a better place for these (homeless) kids than sleeping on the sidewalks downtown. It doesn’t help them and it sure doesn’t help local businesses. When you’ve got three street kids and a pit bull sitting in front of a store, nobody will be coming in to shop. If I can’t stay in business, I can’t pay taxes. If I can’t pay taxes, that means that much less money for (social) services.*

– Anonymous Business Owner
businesses and a general sense of polarization between homeless people, their advocates and the business community.

**Parks & Trails Impacts**

Parks, trails and other public lands intended for recreation and preservation of natural environments are increasingly being used as campgrounds for homeless people. While many campsites in these areas go undetected, some are discovered by park users and nearby residents who complain to the local jurisdiction about safety concerns, garbage, debris, and potential negative impacts to the environment.

In some neighborhoods, some residents monitor known camp sites and quickly report any evidence of homeless camps, sometimes mobilizing other neighbors in an organized campaign of complaints.

These complaints often result in camp clearances by local government officials. Typically, these actions involve three steps: (1) a warning to vacate; (2) a police action to displace the homeless people; and (3) a cleanup of any camp debris. Some camp clearances have required large crews to haul off significant amounts of debris.

In 2011 there were 269 homeless people who were unsheltered on the day of the count, meaning that they lived out of doors, in vehicles, and in abandoned buildings. Of those living out of doors, many sought out areas to camp that offer some combination of sheltering trees, access to water, proximity to the urban hub or other commercial areas, and relative seclusion.

**Environmental Impacts**

Homeless camps can have negative impacts on watersheds, wellheads, other critical areas, and habitats. The lack of basic sanitation facilities can allow human waste to pollute watersheds. The lack of systematic trash removal typically results in an accumulation of garbage that is a source of pollution and an eyesore. Clean up of abandoned camp sites can present biohazards for those directly involved in the clean up due to the mixture of garbage and human waste and occasional hypodermic needles.
EMERGING MODELS TO RESPOND TO HOMELESSNESS

Coordinated Point of Entry
Thurston County is launching its first “coordinated point of entry” program as facilitated by the City of Olympia’s “Homeless Prevention Program.” This program will provide a coordinated point of entry into the network of homeless shelter and services. Three separate agencies make up the “Homeless Prevention Partnership,” with each agency serving as one hub of the intake center—Interfaith Works serving single adults, Community Youth Services serving unaccompanied youth, and Family Support Center serving families with children.

Each agency will provide intake, assessment, referrals and light case management for single men and single women, and client data collection and entry into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). In addition to providing better coordination for the homeless shelter and service system, this program will help Thurston County meet the state’s December 31, 2014 deadline to provide coordinated entry. The State Department of Commerce is also developing policy to guide Consolidated Homeless Grant recipients to meet this deadline. The County’s emerging “Consolidated Homeless Grant” program as funded by State Commerce will also support a stronger adherence to utilizing a coordinated point of entry.

Homeless Service System Coordination
After years of community dialogue, the Thurston County HOME Consortium and the Thurston County Board of Commissioners are moving forward with plans to fund the “Homeless System Coordination and Improvement Project.” While this project is still under development, the general consensus among community leaders calls for a singular coordinator to ensure a coordinated, efficient support system for addressing the crisis of homelessness in Thurston County.

Initial goals presented by the HOME Citizens Advisory Committee include: (1) Data Management: Initial phase to ensure full utilization of the state Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) by all providers; (2) 10-Year Plan Update: Convening work groups to develop more effective strategies for addressing homelessness; (3) 10-Year Plan Education: Education and promotion of the 10-Year Plan directed toward the general community, service providers, and other stakeholders; and (4) Implementation of 10-Year Plan.
Plan: Coordinate community-wide implementation of 10-Year Plan strategies to prevent and reduce homelessness.

Safe Parking Options
Local service providers continue to urge the consideration of a “safe parking program” that would allow homeless people with cars to park in the parking lots of participating faith community facilities equipped with sanitation facilities and case management. In 2009, the HOME Consortium funded a pilot project to provide case management for a safe parking program. This program was created in response to a City of Olympia ordinance restricting RV camping in the downtown core, with funding for a part-time case manager to work with homeless households to seek resources and more stable housing options.

Similar programs have been underway for years in areas as diverse as Eugene, Oregon, and Los Angeles and Santa Barbara, California. These “safe parking” programs provide accommodations for a significant number of people for the nominal costs of case management.
METHODOLOGY

Census Methodology
A comprehensive census of people without a permanent address is challenging—without a home address, these people are hard to find. Many who are unsheltered strive to avoid detection by census workers and public officials alike. In 2011, significant numbers of respondents refused to participate in the census, claiming that local government would use the information to clear homeless camps or step up harassment of street-dependent people. While these clearances and police enforcement actions are typically initiated in response to complaints, the perceived linkage between the homeless census and clearance activities caused many unsheltered homeless people to conceal their camps, move their cars, and otherwise take steps to hide, making census work more challenging.

In order to meet this challenge, the 2011 census mobilized a broad range of over 200 community members to assist. The vast majority of the homeless were surveyed within the social service agencies and/or shelter and transitional housing facilities by professional staff. The field census greatly expanded with special emphasis placed on reaching homeless families, homeless veterans, and rural homeless people. This census also initiated the use of outreach events to draw in homeless people.

There were also several changes in methodology, significantly the state’s transition to utilizing the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to collect the data, the impacts of which are addressed on page 6 under “2011 Census Validity.”

Agency staff reported data on their homeless clients using the standards of eligibility for their services. The standard used by the census workers involved with the field and street census were instructed to survey those people who self-identified as homeless unless they obviously did not fit the criteria.

Following is an overview of the processes used to survey the homeless:

Field Census: Census workers were sent out in teams to survey the areas of known homeless camps and other wooded areas in and around the urban core. This methodology has been controversial among some homeless people and their advocates as being invasive and potentially leading to camp clearances. However, field surveys are the most proactive means of reaching the hidden homeless who live “off the grid” of traditional shelter and service networks.

Field Census Team in rural area outside Bucoda look for homeless camps.
• **Direct Reporters:** Approximately 50% of the homeless data was directly entered into HMIS. While not all service providers had the training and access necessary to direct reporters at the time of the census, this methodology supported the state’s goal to encourage all providers to utilize HMIS to make it a comprehensive database on all service, shelter, and housing capacities and occupancies.

• **Evening Street Census:** An evening street census was conducted in downtown Olympia specifically seeking homeless and street-dependent youth, conducted primarily by youth advocates and case workers.

• **Site-based Census:** Census workers were stationed at numerous locations likely to host homeless people, including the Salvation Army Luncheon, the Olympia Downtown Library, all eight regional food banks, Capital Clubhouse, the Olympia Community Service Office (state’s social services center), and the Evergreen State College.

• **Homeless Connect Events:** Census workers helped to staff a number of local outreach events that featured food and other goods useful to the homeless and people at risk of homelessness. These events included a luncheon at Capital Clubhouse, an evening meal at the Yelm Crossroads Covenant Church, and a Homeless Veterans outreach kiosk at Hawks Prairie.

**Focus Groups**

In addition to developing a plan for surveying the homeless, this census also provided for some community-based analysis of the census results. This process of community analysis was facilitated through a series of nine focus groups conducted as guided discussion groups charged with examining the census results and developing recommendations for reducing homelessness.

Participants drawn from subsets of the community included a faith community group, a non-profit social service providers group, a homeless adult group from Camp Quixote, a homeless youth group from Community Youth Services, a street-dependent youth group from Partners in Prevention, a Tumwater High School class, and two college classes at the Evergreen State College.

Each focus group was presented with a matrix of the census results and a set of questions tailored to solicit their unique perspectives. The outcome of these focus groups was to produce a comprehensive list of recommendations that address the broad range of responsibility for responding to homelessness. These recommendations are included in the appendix and are summarized in both the “Executive Summary” and the “Recommendations” sections.
Summary of Focus Group Recommendations
Following is a brief summary of the top recommendations to emerge from the focus groups:

- **Better Homeless Plan:** The Ten-Year Plan needs to be a highly functional and well-understood guide to make local efforts successful. The plan must incorporate best practices to make better use of available resources.
- **Homeless Coordination:** Make the system work better through coordination of centralized data, coordinated referrals, and strategic use of resources.
- **Improve Community Cooperation:** Support elected officials and service providers to work better together in order to be more effective.
- **Don’t Criminalize Homelessness:** Develop more constructive public policy to resolve conflicts between street-dependent populations, business owners, and other citizens.
- **Create a Day Center:** Get people off the street to reduce conflict between the business community and street-dependent populations.
- **Safe Parking Program:** Accommodate people already living in their cars; provide case management and secure parking locations for homeless people at a very low cost to benefit ratio.
- **More Affordable Housing:** Best solution to homelessness is to provide more affordable housing. In addition to emergency shelters, prioritize rapid re-housing (programs that get homeless people back into housing as soon as possible) and housing first (programs that stabilize people first with housing, and provide supportive services second).
- **Build Community Awareness:** Understanding multiplies our effectiveness and mobilizes more people and new ideas to resolve homelessness.
- **Better Utilization of Shelter & Transitional Housing Capacities:** Better management of resources. The census revealed 269, or 49%, of respondents were unsheltered in spite of having the capacity to shelter 96% of the homeless.

Appendix A – Focus Group Transcripts on page 48 continues the transcripts from the focus groups.
**Status Report on the 2010 Recommendations**
Recommendations were developed in the 2010 census focus groups and public forum. These recommendations and a current status report are listed here:

- **Faith Community Action**
  - **Recommendation:** Faith communities should be encouraged to become more involved in addressing homelessness.
  - **Status Report:** The forum gave rise to a new faith community group now hosted by Interfaith Works called “South Sound Religious Communities Addressing Homelessness.” They have been meeting since 2010 and have been instrumental in supporting the new Interfaith Works “Central Intake Center.”

- **Ten-Year Plan Revision**
  - **Recommendation:** Revise the Ten-Year Plan to incorporate more effective strategies to guide local efforts to end homelessness.
  - **Status Report:** The HOME Consortium’s Citizen’s Advisory body completed this revision in December 2010.

- **Paradigm Shift in Government Funding**
  - **Recommendation:** Encourage more dialogue between local governments about how funding allocation cycles are managed.
  - **Status Report:** There has been ongoing dialogue between public, charitable, and faith funders since 2010.

- **Homeless Coordinator**
  - **Recommendation:** Hire a Homeless Coordinator to provide critical guidance and leadership.
  - **Status Report:** After a year-long dialogue, the HOME Consortium and the Thurston County Commissioners have agreed to hire a Homeless Coordinator with an anticipated start date of January 2012.

- **Permanent Location for Camp Quixote**
  - **Recommendation:** Find a permanent location for Camp Quixote to stabilize their community and allow them to transition from a tent-based camp to a cottage-based village.
  - **Status Report:** County and City of Olympia officials are working closely to allow Quixote Village to relocate to county-owned land located in the City of Olympia.
Report from the Annual Homeless Forum

(New section added after October 22nd release of draft)

The 2011 Homeless Census showed a 42% drop in the number of homeless from 2010, going from 976 people to 566 people. The 2011 census also shows that homelessness is 28% greater than the benchmark year of 2006 that had 441 people. On October 22, the HOME Consortium hosted the second “Annual Homeless Forum” to invite participants to:

1. Receive and review the results of the DRAFT 2011 Thurston County Homeless Census;
2. Examine local efforts to reduce homelessness; and,
3. Explore emerging models for successful prevention and reduction of homelessness in Thurston County.

The forum had over 50 attendees, comprised of service providers, funders, the faith community, homeless people, advocates, public officials and other citizens to address how our community responds to homelessness. The forum included an OPENING PANEL PRESENTATION INCLUDING TALKS BY:

- **Mike McGowan**, HOME Consortium Chair – Provided an overview of the report along with the efforts of the HOME Consortium and others to reduce homelessness.
- **Jill Severn**, PANZA & Camp Quixote – Described one “emerging model” as Camp Quixote’s efforts as a self-governed homeless community to transform into a cottage-based community to be known as “Quixote Village”.
- **Tinamarie Swihart** – Camp Quixote Secretary – Related how the Camp is preparing for its fourth winter outdoors while looking forward to a permanent village where residents can be warm and dry.
- **Phil Owen**, Homeless Prevention Program – Presented the current state of confused service referrals and outlined the goals of the Homeless Prevention Partnership to provide a coordinated point of entry.
- **Danny Kadden**, Interfaith Works – Addressed the growing presence and value of faith community involvement in providing direct services and shelter.
- **Major Bill Lum**, Salvation Army – Provided an overview of the coming cold weather season and how the “over-flow” shelter system is managed.
- **Nancy LaMusga**, Partners in Prevention – Provided information on street dependent populations and their challenges in coping with the affects of trauma.
- **Debby Gaffney**, North Thurston School District Homeless Liaison – Provided stories about homeless K-12 students who struggle to complete their education while living in cars, tents and “couch surfing” with friends and family.
The small groups reported the following recommended action steps:

**Faith Community**
- **Culture of Compassion** – Faith communities need to continue to foster a culture of compassion that keeps homelessness a human level issue that our community connects with in a personal way.
- **Build Capacity** – Faith communities need to find ways to build up their respective capacities to support homeless services and shelters through volunteering, raising funds and other tangible means of support.
- **Less Judgment**

**Public Policy**
- **Address Homelessness in local Comprehensive Plans** – ensure that community plans for housing, transportation, schools and other infrastructure also includes a social and homeless services element that describes the shelter and services infrastructure.
- **Keep Homelessness Local** – discourage the “export” of homeless people to urban hubs from small towns and rural areas.
- **Develop Policy to Shelter the “Hard to House”** – find ways to accommodate ex-offenders, sex offenders, and people with drug and alcohol problems.
- **Better Transition Programs** – Ensure that people exiting jails, medical facilities and foster care are better supported.
- **More Public Funding** – Invest in housing, services and shelter programs.
- **Look to Regional Plan for Sustainability** – Build up the County’s capacity for housing, human services, education and other areas that directly impact the level of homelessness.
- **Encourage Consistent Homeless Policies** – Bridge the gaps between punitive policies and support for programs that provide services as well as differences in policy between local jurisdictions.

**Better Coordination of Homeless Services**
- **Develop & Use a Shared Assessment Tool** – standardize the type of information collected to allow it to be shared for better client outcomes and to track community needs.
- **Landlord Outreach** – Build stronger relationships between social service agencies and rental property owners to provide more housing resources.
- **More Volunteers** – strengthen the volunteer network through recruitment and training.
- **Develop Coordinated Outreach** – Work together to maximize the volunteer recruitment, resource listings and all other promotional activities.

**Street Dependent Populations**
- **Tap Into our Rich & Diverse Local Resources** – Broaden the range of people, agencies and other resources available to offer support for street dependent people.
- **Increase Flexibility** – Make rules and regulations fit people rather than making people fit into rules and regulations.
- **Offer Training to Service Providers on Trauma** – Build awareness of the affects of family trauma and violence on street dependent populations and how such trauma can affect an individual’s ability to cope in general and respond to services in particular.
• **Connect the Resources** – Ensure that all available resources are linked and promoted via a unified community resource listing.

• **More Volunteers** – Expand the reach of social services with volunteers, and team them with mentor volunteers.

• **Build Relationships** – Strengthen working relationships between service providers, business owners, law enforcement and other government regulators to facilitate better understanding of the issues involved.

**Camp Quixote**

• **Recognize Camp Quixote as a Model of Rapid-Re-housing** – Expand the definition of rapid re-housing to include tent cities and the emerging model of the cottage-based Quixote Village.

• **Examine Other Government Policy Models to Support Camps** – Research what other communities are doing to support tent cities as a homeless resource.

• **Share Camp Quixote’s Model of Self-Governance** – Learn from a local example of how self-governance builds community and accountability among very low and no income people.
The methodology of this census included a provision for community-based analysis of the census results. This process of community analysis was conducted through a series of nine focus groups charged with examining the census results and developing recommendations for reducing homelessness. These focus groups used participants drawn from subsets of the community, including a faith-based community group, a non-profit social service providers group, a homeless adult group from Camp Quixote, a homeless youth group from Community Youth Services and Partners in Prevention, a Tumwater High School group, and two Evergreen State College classes. Their recommendations are included in this appendix and are summarized in both the “Executive Summary” and the “Recommendations” sections.

Focus Group Discussion Themes
A number of major themes emerged within the focus group discussions, which are summarized in four general categories:

- **113 – Social Services:** Solution is to improve existing social services or create new services.
- **67 – Failure of Local Government:** Lack of leadership or coordination from local government has limited efforts to respond effectively.
- **50 – More Housing Resources:** The solution to homelessness is to provide more affordable housing resources.
- **48 – Increase Public Awareness:** Ignorance keeps people from being involved in the solution and may instigate fear of the homelessness.

Following is a summary of the recommendations that emerged from the focus group discussions, which are also summarized on page 2 of the Executive Summary:

**Faith Community Recommendations**
- Find the root causes of homelessness and resolve them—provide job training, drug and alcohol treatment, mental health services.
- Hold funders accountable for using money wisely—conduct a cost/benefit analysis of all shelters and services.
- Foster broader community awareness of homelessness.
- Pool (faith community) resources to create one large and centrally coordinated resource.
- Create a more functional Ten-Year Homeless Plan.
- Fund a “Day Center” to give homeless and street-dependent people a place to go.
- Focus on prevention—far cheaper to keep people housed than to get them back on their feet.

**Social Service Leaders Recommendations**
- We need a Homeless Coordinator to help the service and shelter system operate more efficiently.
- There needs to be a more effective balance of power between the HOME Consortium and social service leaders to support a more functional network of shelter and services.
- The HOME Consortium must find a way to function more effectively. The lack of effective leadership from the HOME Consortium limits the effectiveness of our Ten-Year Plan.
• Local governments should cooperate as well as social service agencies; that would make a big difference.
• We need to pursue the Asset Building Coalition (ABC) hub approach to integrate the full range of human needs—housing, income (jobs), food, health, money management.
• We need to use all of our plans—including the Ten-Year Homeless Plan and both the County’s and the City of Olympia’s HUD Consolidated Plan—instead of just stacking them together on shelves to get dusty.
• We need to use the demographic data revealed in the Homeless census to guide our work and funding decisions. Funders should really examine the unsheltered count, the number of homeless families with children, the number of unaccompanied youth, mentally ill, etc. to ensure we are funding the appropriate services.

College Students Recommendations
• Faculty and staff should consider hosting homeless college students, much like the hosting of foreign exchange students.
• Encourage colleges to make dorm rules about number of residents and/or guests more flexible to accommodate very low income and homeless students.
• Make use of empty office buildings and unsold subdivisions for housing homeless and low-income students (and other homeless people).
• Provide more education and awareness of homeless issues on campuses as well as in the broader community.
• Encourage volunteering among students to provide services for homeless students.
• Offer more food, medical assistance, and truly affordable housing.
• Create a student club that deals with homelessness.
• Re-examine the zoning and building codes to create more flexible neighborhoods with more creative and affordable types of housing.

Capital Clubhouse Recommendations (People with Mental Illness and Homeless Issues)
• Improve the safety and quality of local shelters—healthy airflow, fresh food and safety are all important for homeless people to be healthy.
• Ask the people who crunch numbers to come talk to us directly, to come see the faces behind the statistics.
• Churches could play a larger role, although it might be challenging to cope with strong religious doctrine.
• Don’t criminalize homelessness—jail is a very expensive solution, twice as expensive as housing with services.
• We need to explore new service models, because if we stay stuck in a system that isn’t working, we will stagnate, not innovate.
• Homeless people and mentally ill people need transitional housing; you can’t just take someone who’s been homeless for 6 months, put them in an apartment and expect them to be successful.

Camp Quixote Recommendations (Homeless Adults)
• The community needs more proven programs like Drexel House and Camp Quixote.
• We need more subsidized housing with services and more affordable housing in general.
Homeless people need jobs to overcome homelessness; we need employers willing to hire us.
We need higher wages and lower rents; otherwise, how can homeless people work their way back into stable housing?
The prejudice against homeless people makes it very hard for them to get back on their feet.
Improved bus routes help homeless people get around for jobs and appointments.
We need landlords willing to rent to us, willing to let us pay rent in different ways, i.e. bartering work for rent.

**Partners in Prevention Recommendations (Homeless and Street-Dependent Youth)**
- Give us (street dependent youth) a chance; don’t look at us like we are scum.
- Tax payers do a lot (by supporting social service programs) but they need to be more open minded about homelessness in general and homeless youth in particular.
- Homeless youth need more hygiene supplies.
- Social service organizations need to stop fighting over money and work together better.
- Stop spending money on things like a new City Hall and fund services like Rosie’s Place drop-in center hours. Without Rosie’s, we end up on the street.
- Teach self-reliance (to youth) rather than just giving handouts.
- Try to understand why we hang out together on the street. We’re family; we take care of each other and share everything. We need each other because there is safety in numbers.
- Clean up the shelters. Salvation Army is filthy; the Mission is very dirty, too.
- Everyone is going to be homeless some day, then no one will be homeless.
- Homeless youth need a safe place to sleep at night.
- Why do the cops harass us on the street all the time?
- There are very few options for homeless youth.

**High School Students Recommendations**
- Friends don’t let friends be homeless—get involved.
- Awareness makes a big difference, include local homeless issues in classes.
- We can’t just make the government responsible for everything; this is a community problem and needs a community solution.
- Homeless people need to take responsibility for their needs whenever and where ever they can, otherwise dependence can become a habit.

**Community Youth Services Clients Recommendations (Homeless and Street-Dependent Youth)**
- Look at the homeless census numbers and figure out—is it the result of a big increase (2010’s increase) or is it because the (homeless shelter & service) system is dysfunctional?
- Create school-based services to help homeless youth on their own as well as homeless families with their kids.
- We need more affordable housing.
- The public needs to see the reality of homelessness.
- Where is the leadership?
- Band aids are not enough to help youth get off the street.
- We need more effective services, and that means we need more money to fund them.
- Educate homeless youth about basic survival skills.
APPENDIX B—STATE MANDATE: 
A POINT IN TIME COUNT OF HOMELESS PEOPLE

The State Department of Commerce provides the guidelines for the “Point in Time Count of Homeless Persons,” also known as the Homeless Census. In short, the directive is to count individuals found living unsheltered (out of doors, in vehicles, or abandoned buildings) or in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and specifically defined permanent housing with supportive services. “The department shall annually conduct a Washington homeless census or count consistent with the requirements of RCW 43.63A.655. The census shall make every effort to count all homeless individuals living outdoors, in shelters, and in transitional housing…”

The Department of Commerce website posts the results of past homeless census numbers across the state for individuals, not households, as evidenced in the below-listed link.

http://www.commerce.wa.gov/site/1064/default.aspx
**APPENDIX C—REPORT TO STATE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

Thurston County Point in Time Count of Homeless Persons
Report to State Department of Commerce - March 30, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part 1: Homeless Population</th>
<th>Sheltered</th>
<th>Unsheltered</th>
<th>Temporarily Living with Family or Friends*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td>Transitional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Families with Children (Family Households):</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Households without Children:</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Households without Adults (nobody over 17 years old):</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Number of Persons in Families with Children:</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Number of Single Individuals and Persons in Households without Children:</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Number of Persons in Households without Adults (nobody over 17 years old):</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Add Lines A & B & C) Total Persons: 95 204 267 73

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part 2: Homeless Subpopulations</th>
<th>Sheltered</th>
<th>Unsheltered</th>
<th>Temporarily Living with Family or Friends*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Chronically Homeless Individuals</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Chronically Homeless Families</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Persons in Chronically Homeless Families</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Mentally Disabled</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Persons with alcohol and/or other drug problems</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Veterans</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Persons with HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Victims of Domestic Violence</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Unaccompanied Youth (Under 18)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Children (Under 18) in Families</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Physically Disabled</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Seasonal Agricultural Workers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. Persons with both substance use and mental health problems</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. Senior citizens (aged 65 or older)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please note: many charts and narratives in this report are based on a higher total number of 567 as a result of discrepancies in database queries.
## APPENDIX D—THURSTON COUNTY HOMELESS CENSUS DATA FOR JANUARY 27, 2011

### Total Count Numbers by Individual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>567</td>
<td></td>
<td>Children 17 &amp; under</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>Adults 18-20</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>Adults 21-25</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Adults 26-55</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaccompanied Minors</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
<td>Adults 56-64</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adults 65+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Disabilities as Indicated by Individual* (567 Respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical (permanent)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Health Problem</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None Apply</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Current Living Status by Individual (739 Respondents – includes full count)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Shelter/Motel Voucher Program</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Housing</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jail or Medical Facility</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends or Family</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Supportive Housing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abandoned Building</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of Doors</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Situations that Caused Homelessness for Households* (565 Respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Lost</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evicted-Non-payment</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Job Skills</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Child Care</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Costs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Illness **</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Problems</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Break-up</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convicted-Misdemeanor/Felony</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discharged Institution/Jail</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evicted-Other Reasons</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temp Living Situation</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged Out of Foster Care</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know/No Response</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### All Sources of Household Income* (565 Responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Insurance</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time Work</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Assistance</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed at Low Wage Job</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives, Partners, Friends</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L &amp; I Payments</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA Benefits</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know/No Response</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Length of Time Households Have Been Homeless (406 Responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Time</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 1 year</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 4 episodes of homelessness in 3 years</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 4 episodes of homelessness in 3 years</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*More than one answer is possible. Summation of percentages will not equal 100%.

**While 57 reported mental illness as the cause of their homelessness, 249 reported it as their disability.
APPENDIX E—THURSTON COUNTY TEN-YEAR HOMELESS HOUSING PLAN
EXCERPTS FROM 2005 PLAN AND 2010 REVISION

Introduction

Homelessness is a concern that affects virtually every community in the United States. The homeless sleep in streets, in cars, underneath bridges, or at the homes of family and friends. They include adults and children, individuals and couples, mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers. They are homeless for a variety of reasons, such as mental illness, a physical disability, substance abuse, unemployment and low wages.

Homelessness takes a heavy toll on these individuals and their local communities. Homeless people are less able to find social services and jobs when their lives are eclipsed by the need to find shelter. They are also more likely to need costly emergency services because of the ravages of weather and crime, the inability to pay for preventative care and – in many cases – their own physical and mental disabilities. Communities with high rates of homelessness are also concerned about the character of their communities and the affect on nearby businesses.

This Ten-Year Plan is designed to reduce homelessness in Thurston County even further -- by 50 percent by July 2015. The plan calls for creating 300 new permanent housing units, and guiding more people into services before they become homeless.

Ten Year Plan Revision Excerpts

In order to reduce the homeless population, we need to examine new models or approaches that allow the community to strategically allocate federal, county, and local housing resources to get people off the streets, out of the shelters, and into appropriate permanent housing linked with comprehensive supportive services. This plan recommends a variety of new initiatives and strategies that targets resources more efficiently and effectively. The major recommendations of the plan fall into four broad areas of need:

The Need to Increase and Preserve the Supply of Affordable Housing

The Thurston County Consolidated Plan identifies small and large families as having the greatest housing problems in the county because they experience the greatest housing cost burden (paying a disproportion share of their income for housing). Additionally, there is a significant affordability mismatch, with higher income persons occupying lower income housing units, which contributes to the shortage of affordable and available housing for low and very-low income persons.

The Need for a Housing First Approach and a Flexible Rental Assistance Program

While the chronically homeless make up only 10% of the county’s homeless population, they consume a disproportionate share of the county’s homeless funds and housing resources because they generally require a higher level of comprehensive support services.
Historically, the county has relied on the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program (TBRA), paired with extensive case management services and the emergency shelter system, to meet this need. TBRA has been successful in reducing the number of homeless who would otherwise have been on the streets and in providing much needed transitional housing. However, an excessively long Section 8 waiting list (up to five years) and the shrinking availability of federal funded housing vouchers makes it extremely difficult to move people off transitional housing into permanent housing.

The Housing First approach (also referred to as Rapid Re-housing) provides the missing link between the emergency shelter and transitional housing systems by quickly moving people into permanent housing first to provide housing stability and then providing them with the non-mandatory supportive housing services they need. This model is particularly effective and more appropriate for persons with long-term special needs and the chronically homeless. This plan also recommends that the county design a rental assistance program to compliment the TBRA Program that is flexible enough to meet the both short-term and long-term needs of residents.

**The Need for Better Coordination of Housing Resources and Services**

A major component of this plan is to strategically target homeless resources more effectively and improve the community’s capacity to coordinate and deliver homeless services more efficiently. The HOME Citizens’ Advisory Committee will formulate a plan to coordinate resources and placement.

**The Need to Strategically Target Funds to Meet the County’s Housing Goals**

Currently, the county distributes its federal and local housing funds through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process that targets funding primarily based on the needs of service providers, and to a lesser degree, the housing needs of the county. This plan recommends a change in funding strategy by moving towards a needs-driven process that ensures that the county’s housing funds are strategically targeted to meet the prioritized housing needs of the community.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The target goal is to create 350 new housing units and provide 340 new rental vouchers by 2015. The following is a summary of the ten objectives and short-term activities identified in the plan. Short term activities are defined as projects that are anticipated to be completed by 2013.

- **OBJECTIVE 1 – Expand the Supply of Homeless Housing Units**
  
  **Housing Strategy:** Develop 150 housing units for homeless families, individuals, and special needs populations *(39 units to be completed by 2013)*

  **Behavioral Health Resources**

  The B&B Apartments in Olympia will add 11 new units onto the existing complex of 16 units. The units will serve persons suffering from a mental illness.
**Community Youth Services**  
Maternity/Parenting Housing Program in Olympia will develop 24 beds for homeless pregnant and parenting young adults (ages 18-23) experiencing multiple barriers to independence or are fleeing domestic violence.

**SafePlace**  
Community Service Center and Permanent Housing Project in downtown Olympia will provide 4 units of permanent supportive housing and administrative offices for victims of domestic and/or sexual violence and their children.

- **OBJECTIVE 2 – Expand the Supply of Affordable Housing Units**  
  Housing strategy: Develop 200 Affordable Housing Units *(137 units to be completed by 2013)*

**Mercy Housing**  
Senior Housing Project in Olympia – 50 units  
Activity: Section 202 mix-use housing project in the downtown.

**Housing Authority of Thurston County**  
Littlerock Road Housing Project in Littlerock – 32 units  
Activity: Acquire 1.75 acres to construct a 32-unit (2 and 3 bedrooms-four buildings) rental housing complex that targets 6 units to homeless families/children, 5 to family members with disabilities, and 5 that will serve veterans. The remaining 16 are targeted toward workforce housing households.

**Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties**  
Salmon Run Apartments Project in Yelm – 40 units  
Activity: Develop 40 low and very-low income rental housing units.

**South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity**  
Shepherd’s Grove Cottage Community – 5 units  
Activity: Develop 5 units of owner-occupied housing for low income homeowners.

Affordable Housing Cottage Community in Tumwater – 10 units  
Activity: Develop 10 units of owner-occupied housing for low income homeowners.

- **OBJECTIVE 3 – Expand the Supply of Rental Assistance**  
  Housing Strategy: Provide rental assistance for 340 homeless and at-risk households (340 new vouchers issued in 2010). Provide on-going annual evaluation of community rental assistance needs to determine the amount of new vouchers needed each year.

**Community Youth Services**  
Echo Transitional Housing Project – Olympia  
Activity: 18 vouchers for young adults (ages 18-24) who are exiting the state correctional system, or are pregnant or parenting, or are adjudicated sex offenders.
**Housing Authority**  
Activity: 50 housing vouchers for families with children (Foster Care)  

**Family Support Center**  
Activity: 30 housing vouchers for families with children  

**Thurston County Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program**  
Activity: Salvation Army – 80 household vouchers for prevention  
Activity: Salvation Army – 32 household vouchers for Rapid Re-housing  
Activity: Community Action Council, Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties – 43 household vouchers for prevention  
Activity: Community Youth Services – 23 vouchers for youth for Rapid Re-housing  
Activity: Family Support Services – 49 family vouchers for prevention and 15 family vouchers for Rapid Re-Housing  

**OBJECTIVE 4 – Preserve Existing Subsidized and Low-Income Housing**  
Housing Strategy: Preservation of Section 8 Housing Units  

**Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties**  
Killion Court in Yelm - Section 8 Apartments  
Activity: Acquisition and substantial rehabilitation of 20 affordable senior housing apartments.  

**Low Income Housing Institute**  
Magnolia Villa Apartments  
Activity: Substantial rehabilitation of 21 subsidized units.  

Housing Strategy: Preservation of Affordable Housing Units  
**Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties**  
Tenino Housing Rehabilitation Project  
Activity: Rehabilitation of 10 owner-occupied single-family houses.  

**Housing Authority of Thurston County**  
Thurston County Housing Rehabilitation Project  
Activity: Rehabilitation of 8 (minimum) owner-occupied single-family houses in Bucoda, Rainier, Tenino, Yelm, and the unincorporated county.  

**OBJECTIVE 5 – Consolidate Homeless Resources and Improve Service Delivery**  
Planning Strategy: Coordinating homeless services, resources, funding, and marketing  
Activity: Expand community capacity to more effectively coordinate homeless housing resources and services with housing and service providers.  
Activity: Create a leadership and accountability structure for implementing the Ten-Year Homeless Housing Plan.  
Activity: Create organizational linkages and partnerships with service providers.  
Activity: Co-sponsor the Homeless Veterans Stand Down event.  
Activity: Develop a public awareness and media strategy.
OBJECTIVE 6 – Maximize Housing Funding Opportunities
Housing Strategy: Streamlining and strategically target housing funds
Activity: Develop policy/needs–based Request for Proposals funding system that distributes the county’s housing funds based on county housing needs.
Activity: Link projects to the most appropriate funding source.
Activity: Strategically allocate homeless funding to support the ten-year homeless goals.
Activity: Develop a policy and long-term plan for funding essential housing programs.
Activity: Develop new and flexible private funding resources.

OBJECTIVE 7 – Enhance Supportive Housing Services and Prevention
Housing Strategy: Improve access to rental assistance and other support services
Activity: Develop a comprehensive resource and service guide.
Activity: Increase employment education and training opportunities.

Housing Strategy: Integrate Health Care with Housing
Activity: Continue building successful service delivery models that evidence best practices.
Activity: Continue availability of behavioral health services.
Activity: Continue accessing child and family services.

Prevention Strategy: Provide Resources and Support to Prevent Homelessness
Activity: Create a Housing First Program.
Activity: Develop a Homeless Prevention Services Program for veterans.
Activity: Provide operational and maintenance (O&M) support for housing services.
Activity: Develop a landlord retention plan.

OBJECTIVE 8 – Establish a Coordinated System for Discharging Clients Leaving Jail and Treatment Facilities
Housing Strategy: Increase collaboration between discharging institutions and service providers.
Activity: Improve communications and coordination with institutions to identify at-risk clients who may be homeless.
Activity: Develop a housing step-up plan.

OBJECTIVE 9 – Conduct Adequate Data Collection and Planning to Efficiently Manage Limited Resources for Homelessness
Planning Strategy: Improve HMIS reporting.
Activity: Consolidate program and financial data to improve consistency and accuracy in report data.
Activity: Train new service providers
Activity: Create a standardized client assessment form.

OBJECTIVE 10 – Change Policy, Law and Legislation Where Necessary
Planning Strategy: Reduce homeless and affordable housing development costs.
Activity: Identify county intra-jurisdictional barriers.
### Location: Where did you stay last night? (choose one - applies to entire household)

- Out of Doors (street, tent, etc)
- Vehicle
- Abandoned Building
- Temp. Living w/ Family or Friends
- Homeless Transitional Housing Program
- Permanent Supportive Housing Program
- Abandoned Building
- Currently in Jail or Medical Facility

*Will be released to homelessness but not considered homeless by HUD; Optional

### City/Town: ____________________________ (Location of Census Activity)

- Have you been continuously homeless for a year or more?  
  - Yes
  - No

- How many episodes of homelessness have you had in the past three (3) years?  
  - Less than 4
  - At least 4

- Is anyone in your family a victim of domestic violence or has HIV/AIDS? (If yes, leave name columns below blank)
  - Yes
  - No

### Household Information

(Please enter each HH member below. Use additional forms if needed.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Known Permanent City</th>
<th>ZIP</th>
<th>Relation to Head of Household (if applicable)</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Birth Date (or if DOB refused; Year of Birth)</th>
<th>Veteran (served in Armed Forces)</th>
<th>Physical Disability (Permanent)</th>
<th>Developmental Disability</th>
<th>Chronic Substance Abuse</th>
<th>Mental Health (Substantial &amp; Long-Term Disability)</th>
<th>Chronic Health Condition (Permanently Disabling)</th>
<th>HIV/AIDS (don't include names)</th>
<th>NONE APPLY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Circumstances that Caused Your Homelessness (check all that apply)

- Alcoholism
- Substance Abuse
- Transient on the Road
- Family Crisis
- Out of Home Youth
- Primarily Economic Reasons
- New Arrival
- Displacement
- Eviction
- Illness
- Health Problems
- Domestic Violence
- Mental Illness
- Don't Know
- Refused

### Source(s) of Household Income and Benefits (check all that apply)

- None
- Public Assistance
- Farm/Other Migrant Agricultural Work
- Veterans Administration Benefits
- L&I/Workers’ Compensation
- Relatives, Partners or Friends
- Unemployment Insurance
- Part-time Work
- Don't Know
- Social Security
- Employed Full-time at Low-wage Job
- Refused

I agree to the inclusion of my household’s information for count purposes described in the release on the back of this form.

Signature(s) (each adult or unaccompanied youth must sign): ____________________________
INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEYORS

All information in the survey is required. Forms will not be used if location, gender or year of birth is missing. If someone refuses to answer questions for the survey, please make sure to fill in at least these three fields for them. If you do not know the exact birth year of a household member, guesses are OK.

**Important: DO NOT provide name, birth day, or birth month for households with an individual who is: (1) in a DV agency; (2) currently fleeing or in danger from a domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking situation; (3) has HIV/AIDS or 4) anyone you do not have written informed consent from (signature on first page).** However, a signature is not needed to collect other information. All homeless households and individuals should have a form filled out.

The purpose of this survey is to help with the planning of providing services and housing to homeless individuals and to identify the types of assistance needed. It is also a requirement to receive funding from HUD and the WA State Dept. of Commerce.

Disabilities: Please make sure to record applicable disabilities for each household member. If a household member has no disabilities please select NONE APPLY. If the disability section is blank we will assume the question wasn’t asked or the client refused to answer.

Shelter Programs: If surveys are being collected at a shelter program (emergency, transitional or permanent supportive) please make sure to write somewhere on the form the name of the shelter program and batch them together when submitting to lead PIT agency.

All homeless persons should complete this survey. "Homeless" means persons who, on one particular day or night, do not have a decent and safe shelter or sufficient funds to purchase a place to stay. People living in a dwelling lacking any of the following should be considered homeless (check "living out of doors"): ability to cook hot food, drinking water, restroom, heat, or ability to bathe (this includes “Tent Cities”). People living in emergency shelters (including motel vouchers) and transitional housing are considered homeless. (For purposes of this survey, transitional housing refers to housing with a 2 year stay limit where being homeless is a prerequisite for eligibility and case management services are required as part of the program.) People living temporarily with family or friends due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (often referred to as “doubled-up” or “couch surfing”) should complete the survey, although it is not required. Individuals in Jail will not be counted as homeless; therefore counties are not expected to count this population.

Each member of a household should be listed in the Household Information section. A single person is considered a household (i.e., “a household consisting of one person”), so single individuals should complete the Household Information section.

If you have any questions about how to fill out this survey or how this data will be used, please don’t hesitate to call Commerce at (360) 725-3028.
The HOME Consortium, comprised of elected officials from the participating jurisdictions of Olympia; Lacey; Tumwater; Yelm; Tenino; Bucoda; Rainier and Thurston County, is responsible for making recommendations to the Thurston County Board of Commissioners, the lead agency for housing funds. Recommendations are regarding the HOME federal program and the Affordable Housing and Homeless Housing Programs for low to moderate income and homeless households.

Under these programs, more than $2.2 million in federal and local funds was expended in 2010. Several notable accomplishments include the renovation of 4 homeowner homes, land acquisition for Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties and the Housing Authority to construct multifamily complexes in Yelm and Tumwater, renovate the Magnolia Villa multifamily complex in Lacey, and Habitat for Humanity Shepherd’s Grove project has started constructing 5-homeownership single family homes for a total of $1,354,044. In addition, 120 at-risk households were provided Tenant-Based Rental Assistance for $482,829 and over $420,439 was provided to local housing agencies to support operations and maintenance costs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME) was created by the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 in response to pressing affordable housing concerns. The HOME objectives:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Serve populations below 80% of median income (In 2010, the median income was $59,200 for a family of four);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create partnerships between non-profits, lenders, local government and the private sector to expand the supply of decent, affordable housing for low-income people;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strengthen the abilities of states and local governments to implement housing strategies;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Leverage HOME funds with other matching funds;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assist very low-income families to obtain skills to become self-sufficient;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Providers: Owners, Developers, Private For-Profits, Private/Public Non-Profits, CHDO’s;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Beneficiaries: Low-Income Owners, Buyers and Tenants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deliverables:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Formation of the HOME Consortium;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Comprised of elected public officials from participating jurisdictions (Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, Yelm, Tenino, Bucoda, Rainier, and Thurston County);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Requires inter-local agreement;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advisory board to the Board of County Commissioners;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Oversees the Citizen Advisory Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2010 Outcomes:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provided Tenant Based Rental Assistance to twenty-three (23) households: $77,753;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Housing Authority of Thurston County (HATC) renovated four (4) single family homes in scatter sites: $86,416;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Low Income Housing Institute has started the renovation of the Magnolia Villa twenty-one (21) unit complex: $133,724;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community Action Council (CAC) acquired the land to construct the Salmon Run Apartments in Yelm: $475,000;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Habitat for Humanity has started to build the Shepherd’s Grove project five (5) homes in Tumwater: $221,276.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2011 Goals &amp; Objectives:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Habitat for Humanity to provide homeownership for five (5) families in Tumwater to be completed in 2012: $150,974;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community Action Council (CAC) to construct Salmon Run Apartments forty (40) in Yelm: $25,000 (retainage) leveraging $7M project;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Low Income Housing Institute to complete the renovation of the Magnolia Villa, twenty-one (21) units for $417,692;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CAC to provide Tenant Based Rental Assistance to thirty-two (32) households for $274,679;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CAC to renovate approximately ten (10) homes in the Tenino area for $300,000;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• HATC to renovate approximately seven (7) homes in scatter sites for $143,283.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Affordable Housing (HB2060)

Background:
Provides funding to assist in the development and preservation of affordable low-income housing (households at or below 50% of the area median income) to address critical local housing need.

Eligibility: Non-profit organizations, towns, and cities within the county and for-profit developers who provide affordable housing in accordance with RCW 36.22.178 and RCW 36.22.179. All projects must serve very low-income persons or households, which are households at or below 50% of the median income (median income for a family of four was $37,000).

Deliverables:
- The RCW required an inter-local agreement (signed in 2002) among Consortium members (Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, Yelm, Tenino, Rainier, Bucoda, and Thurston County) that funds would be allocated to very-low-income housing projects and would provide matching funds for the HOME program.

2010 Outcomes:
- Habitat for Humanity constructed 5 single-family homes at Fairview Cottages: $28,959;
- Provided program support for the Housing Authority Rehabilitation program: $5,943;
- Provided matching funds for homeownership for five (5) families through Habitat for Humanity’s Shepherd’s Grove project: $2,726;
- Salvation Army provided Prevention of Eviction rental assistance program for approximately twenty-one (21) households: $8,500;
- Family Support Center provided emergency funding for capital improvements to the family homeless shelter: $32,243.

2011 Goals & Objectives:
- Provide matching funds for homeownership for five (5) families through Habitat for Humanity’s Shepherd’s Grove project: $47,274;
- Housing Authority of Thurston County (HATC) to renovate approximately three (3) homes in scatter sites: $82,557;
- Salvation Army to provide Prevention of Eviction rental assistance program for approximately fifty-nine (59) households: $23,500;
- CAC to provide Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) and Homeless Prevention rental assistance to twenty-one (21) households: $166,698;
- Family Support Center to provide TBRA to two (2) households: $17,647;
- Community Youth Services to provide ECHO Transitional Housing Project rental assistance to eleven (11) households: $31,000;
- SafePlace to develop a new community service center with four (4) affordable housing units for households that are victims of domestic and sexual violence: $180,000 (out of a $5.5M project).

Homeless Housing (HB2163)

Background:
Directs local governments to develop a Ten-Year Homeless Plan aimed at ending homelessness. Mandates both state and local plans to reduce homelessness by 50% by 2015.

Eligibility: Non-profit organizations, towns, and cities within the county and for-profit developers who provide affordable housing in accordance with RCW 36.22.178 and RCW 36.22.179. All projects must serve very low-income persons or households, which are households at or below 50% of the median income (median income for a family of four was $37,000).

Deliverables:
Thurston County Board of Commissioners opted to have the Consortium representatives also act as the “local homeless housing task force,” whose existence is required by RCW. The Consortium appointed the Citizens’ Advisory Committee, which has representation from the Housing Authority, realtors, service providers, faith-based communities, and the homeless population. These groups advise the local government on the creation of the local homeless housing plan and participate in a local homeless housing program.

2010 Outcomes:
- Provided Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) to seventy-six (76) households (includes fifteen (15) households in the rural community) through the CAC, FSC, HATC and the Salvation Army: $366,599;
- Conducted the annual Homeless Point In Time Count: $25,000;
- Provided matching funds to Community Youth Services (CYS) for the Homeless Grant Assistance Program’s ECHO Transitional Housing Project for at-risk youth (ages 15-23): $29,977;
- County staff cost to update the Ten-Year Homeless Housing Plan and work with the Citizen Advisory Committee: $12,934;
- Provided Operation and Maintenance support to seventeen programs: $350,262;
- HATC acquired the property $400,000 to construct a thirty-two (32) unit rental housing complex on Littlerock Road for low-median income households with six (6) units reserved for homeless households project to be completed in 2012.

2011 Goals & Objectives:
- Provide Operation and Maintenance support to twelve programs: $489,307;
- Provide Rental Assistance to eighteen (18) households and Case Management to thirty-two (32) households through CAC, FSC, and CYS: $397,788.

For more information, please contact: Connie Rivera
Thurston County Public Health and Social Services
Community Housing Program Manager
Phone: 360-867-2532 or E-mail: riverac@co.thurston.wa.us
APPENDIX H—GLOSSARY OF HOUSING & HOMELESS PROGRAM TERMS
[Adapted from Pierce County Affordable Housing Consortium website (affordablehousingconsortium.org), which was adapted from HDC, Seattle]

Affordable Housing
Housing should cost no more than 30% of your total income, including utilities. Affordable rental housing usually has a maximum income limit of 60% of median income. In Thurston County, this equates to an annual income of $29,580 for one person or $38,040 for three persons. Homeownership programs generally allow up to 80% of median or $39,400 for one person or $50,700 for a three-person household.

Chronically Homeless
Chronically homeless people are defined as "an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more, or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years."

HUD
Abbreviation for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

HOME Consortium
The HOME Consortium is the Thurston County inter-jurisdictional body that governs the use of federal HOME funds and the two state funded programs called the Homeless Housing Program and the Affordable Housing Program. This eight member body is composed of one appointed representative from each jurisdiction in Thurston County, including Bucoda, Lacey, Olympia, Rainier, Tenino, Tumwater, Yelm and Thurston County.

HOME Citizens Advisory Committee
The HOME Citizens Advisory Committee is a committee established by the HOME Consortium composed of appointed members who represent service providers, non-profit housing developers, private sector housing industry, faith-based communities, homeless people and other stakeholders in local homeless and affordable housing policy and funding issues.

Homeless
The federal definition of homelessness, which comes from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD defines homelessness as (1) an individual who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence; and (2) an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is:

- A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill).
- An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Housing Authority</strong></th>
<th>Housing authorities are public corporations with boards appointed by the local government. Their mission is to provide affordable housing to low- and moderate-income people. In addition to public housing, housing authorities also provide other types of subsidized housing such as the federal HUD-subsidized Section 8 program.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing First</strong></td>
<td>Housing First is a recent innovation in human service programs and social policy in responding to homelessness. It is an alternative to the a system of emergency shelter/transitional housing progressions known as the Continuum of Care, whereby each level moves them closer to &quot;independent housing&quot; (for example: from the streets to a public shelter, and from a public shelter to a transitional housing program, and from there to their own apartment in the community). Housing First moves the homeless individual or household immediately from the streets or homeless shelters into their own apartments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing Task Force</strong></td>
<td>The Housing Task Force is an ad hoc association formed in 1988 to address issues of affordable housing and homelessness in Thurston County. It was originally composed of service providers, advocates, government housing program staff and elected officials and served as a networking and advocacy group to promote local housing policy. In recent years it has become a coalition of homeless shelter, housing and service providers who meet monthly to network homeless services and address current issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income Limits</strong></td>
<td>Income limits for households to qualify for subsidized housing opportunities are based on the Area Median Income (AMI) for a family of four. In Thurston County, the 2010 AMI is $68,100. Specific household sizes are used to determine eligibility for each household. Low-income: 80% or less of AMI = $56,300 for household of 4 Very-low-income: 50% or less of AMI = $35,200 for household of 4 Extremely-low-income: 30% or less of AMI = $21,100 for household of 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low Income Housing Tax Credit</strong></td>
<td>Government authorized tax credits issued to both for-profit and nonprofit-developed rental properties to develop affordable housing. The Washington State Housing Finance Commission allocates these credits to developers to build or fix up low-income housing. Large corporations, institutions, pension funds, and insurance companies invest in the housing as a method to gain the tax credits and reduce their income tax obligations. These apartments must serve residents below 60% of median income and must accept Section 8 vouchers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Market Rate Rent</strong></td>
<td>The prevailing monthly cost for rental housing, also called “street rents”. It is set by the landlord without restrictions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Median Income: This is a statistical number set at the level where half of all households have income above it and half below it. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Regional Economist calculates and publishes this median income data annually in the Federal Register. See the Washington State Median Income and Income Limit figures for 2009-2010, at http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il/il2009/st.odb.

Mixed-Income Housing: A multi-family housing property that contains both market-rate units and subsidized units for low income residents.

Nonprofit Housing: Nonprofit housing is developed by nonprofit corporations with a community board of directors and mission. Most housing developed by nonprofit developers is affordable with rents or prices below market-rate. Income generated from the housing is put back into the mission of the organization, rather than being distributed to stockholders or individual investors.

Nonprofit Housing Developer: A nonprofit organization with a mission that involves the creation, preservation, renovation, operation or maintenance of affordable housing.

Overflow Shelters: Overflow shelters are informal emergency shelters operated by nonprofit organizations or faith communities inside their facilities to accommodate the “overflow” of homeless people who are turned away from traditional emergency shelters. Typically, overflow shelters rotate on a cyclical basis in order to be compliant with local zoning and building codes. Staffing is typically offered by trained volunteers.

Permanent Housing: Rental apartments or ownership homes that provide individuals and families with a fixed street address and residence.

Privately Developed or For-Profit Housing: This housing rents or sells at market-rate and is developed and owned by for-profit individuals, partnerships, or corporations. Most housing in Thurston County is privately developed.

Project-Based Section 8 Housing: A federal HUD program initially based on 20-year commitments of rent subsidy to developers of privately owned rental housing stock in the community to encourage them to build affordable housing.

Many Section 8 contracts have expired or will expire soon, and the property owners must now decide whether to renew their contract or leave the program ("opt out"). Most of these contracts are now renewed on a one-year basis. Projects with high risk of opting out typically have rents set by the Section 8 contract below the prevailing market rents for comparable units. Owners thus have an incentive to leave the program and convert their property to private market rentals.

Public Housing: Public housing is housing owned and run by a local housing authority under the oldest federal housing program—the Housing Act of 1937. To be eligible to live in public housing, you must be low income and meet certain other requirements. In most cases, rent including utilities can comprise no more than 30% of your income.
| **Rapid Re-housing** | Rapid Re-housing is a new housing program model based on the “housing first” approach. Rapid Re-housing differs from other housing models by having an immediate and primary focus on helping families access and sustain permanent housing as quickly as possible. Rapid Re-housing is funded by a new HUD initiative called “Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP)”.

| **Section 8 Vouchers** | The federal HUD program that is administered by the local Housing Authority of Thurston County. Eligible tenants receive vouchers they can use to help them pay for apartments in the private market. Vouchers pay that portion of the low income tenants rent that is above 30% of their monthly income.

| **Shelters** | Also called emergency shelters, provides temporary overnight living accommodations for homeless people. Shelters are typically dedicated to specific populations, i.e. single males, families or domestic violence victims. Shelters are operated by both non-profit organizations and faith communities, with each shelter being administered under a unique set of rules. Generally, shelter guests must leave the facility during the day.

| **SRO** | Single room occupancy units. The traditional SRO unit is a single room, usually less than 100 square feet, designed to accommodate one person. Amenities such as a bathroom, kitchen or common areas are located outside the unit and are shared with other residents. Many SROs can be found in renovated hotels. SRO housing serves a variety of people by providing three types of settings: 1) Emergency housing for homeless people, including the elderly. Occupancy is usually on a nightly or weekly basis. 2) Transitional housing for previously homeless or marginally housed persons, including older people, who are progressing to permanent housing. 3) Permanent housing for older people who will move to this setting and often live here until their death or until their increasing frailty forces them to move to a more supportive setting.

| **Subsidized Housing** | A generic term covering all federal, state or local government programs that reduce the cost of housing for low- and moderate-income residents. Housing can be subsidized in numerous ways—giving tenants a rent voucher, helping homebuyers with down payment assistance, reducing the interest on a mortgage, providing deferred loans to help developers acquire and develop property, giving tax credits to encourage investment in low- and moderate-income housing, authorizing tax-exempt bond authority to finance the housing, providing ongoing assistance to reduce the operating costs of housing, and others. |
Supportive Housing

Combines affordable housing with individualized health, counseling and employment services for persons with mental illness, chemical dependency, chronic health problems, or other challenges. Generally it is transitional housing, but it can be permanent housing in cases such as a group home for persons with mental illness or developmental disabilities. Supportive housing is a solution to homelessness because it addresses its root causes by providing a proven, effective means of re-integrating families and individuals into the community by addressing their basic needs for housing and on-going support.

Transitional Housing

This housing provides stability for residents for a limited time period, usually two weeks to 24 months, to allow them to recover from a crisis such as homelessness or domestic violence before transitioning into permanent housing. Transitional housing often offers supportive services, which enable a person to transition to an independent living situation.

Tent City

“Tent City” is a newly minted term for a long standing practice where homeless people develop informal communities composed of tents and other temporary structures. During the Great Depression, these communities where derisively termed, “Hoovervilles” after then President Hoover in a negative reference to the failed federal efforts to revive the economy.

Present day tent cities are often created by homeless people for needed shelter on public or under-utilized lands. Sometimes tent cities are created by homeless advocates as a form of protest. In recent years, local governments have struggled to find ways to balance regulatory compliance with the need for shelter and community provided by tent cities.

Questions, comments, or to request a digital copy of the FINAL report that will include material from the 2011 Annual Homeless Forum please contact:

Connie Rivera
Community Housing Program Manager
Thurston County Public Health and Social Services – Housing
(360) 867-2532, riverac@co.thurston.wa.us

Anna Schlecht
Housing Program Manager
City of Olympia
(360) 753-8183, aschlech@ci.olympia.wa.us