

# Homeless Strategies Workgroup

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February 22, 2018 Meeting 4 Agenda

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 pm

**Location Change:** Whatcom County Courthouse Conference Room 514,  
311 Grand Avenue Bellingham

## 1. Welcome and Introductions, Chair

*NOTE: We expect several community members to speak under Agenda Item #5, Public Comment. HSW members please review public comment letters in advance of this meeting. Comments were emailed to HSW members and available on the [HSW Comments webpage](#)).*

## 2. Continue Discussion of Identified Potential Sites, Workgroup Recommendation

Facilitated by Mary Dumas

### 2.1 Site H (New), County Health Department Site at 509 Girard.

*(This site was mentioned as a possibility by County HSW members in January. Since this time, City and County staff and officials have had further discussion about the County's future plans and have determined it should be considered by the HSW )*

#### a. Site H - Pros, Cons and Hidden Impacts

Related Information:

-- See Attachment Site H: Health Department site overview.

### 2.2 Sites A-H, Discuss Initial Rankings and Provide Workgroup Recommendation

#### a. Identify Sites that should be removed from consideration in further ranking.

*(Property owners begin by identifying sites they want removed from HSW consideration.)*

#### b. Identify Sites that merit further evaluation by County and City staff and additional information to consider as part of the site review and assessment.

Related Information:

-- See Attachment: HSW Meeting 3 Summary Draft for Review.

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## 3. **Alternative Strategies for Those Sleeping Outside in Whatcom County**

- a. Tiny Homes Proposal to Whatcom County Council, HSW Chair, Barry Buchanan
- b. Review Compilation of Alternative Solutions from HSW discussions and plans

Questions, Comments and Discussion of Additional Alternatives facilitated by Mary Dumas

- c. City and County Homeless Housing Recommended Strategies, Presentation by Samya Lutz, City of Bellingham and Anne Deacon, Whatcom County
- c. Add to list of alternative strategies

Related Information:

- Page 4 of this Agenda provides a summary of Alternative Strategies identified by HSW members, attending public participants and recent strategic planning by the Community Solutions Workgroup: Continuum of Housing Options. Bring additional ideas to Meeting 3.
- See HSW Meeting Information webpage for February 22, 2018 Meeting 4: Packet and Handouts.
- See [HSW Meeting Information webpage for December 19, 2017 Meeting 2: Handout 2](#) HomesNow Letter to City of Bellingham

## 4. **Prepare for Meeting #5**

- a. Workgroup Recommendations on 1-2 additional strategies

## 5. **Public Comment**

Facilitated by Mary Dumas

Time will be divided equally among speakers with 3 minutes minimum per person;

Written input can also be submitted. Use index cards. Give to staff or tape onto the Impacts & Effort Matrix of ideas. *Thank you for helping to end homelessness in Whatcom County.*

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**Alternative Solutions** for those sleeping outside in Whatcom County will be identified as part of the HSW's work. Suggestions below were identified during HSW Meetings 1 & 2. Ideas will be added to this list at HSW meetings and discussed in Meetings 4 and 5.

- Establish a permitted camping area.
- Shower facility with 24 hour access for those who work shifts.
- Bathroom facilities with 24 hour access for those who work shifts
- Lockers for storages of valuables with 24 hour access.
- Laundry facilities.

Other strategies proposed by groups working with the Community Solutions Workgroup: Continuum of Housing Options include the ideas listed below.

**Inventory Improvements:** Acquire, preserve and improve existing affordable apartment blocks in the city (purchase units in gentrifying areas); Construction of new units; Change zoning to support more diversity of housing products in the market; Create new staff position with levy funds to leverage resources, funding and development deals more strategically and proactively; utilize innovative new funding models which are already being implemented elsewhere to build new housing; Create rental rehab program that makes funding available to landlords who rent to low-income tenants for upgrades required to pass inspections.

**Cultural:** Create an insurance or damage mitigation fund to minimize the risks to landlords renting to tenants with no/poor rental history; Housing equity audit by neighborhood; Increase programs that enable and empower tenants receiving subsidized housing to transition out and become integrated within the community.

**Collaboration:** Regular check-ins between local funders and service providers to adapt to changing needs and trends.

**Services:** Access and provide more funding for expanded case managers/ landlord liaisons; General transportation services (study options and decide if appropriate to integrate into other strategies or keep as standalone strategy; Expand mobile health services; Develop a community liaison or trained peer health worker to help keep people in housing and integrate with the broader community (with support from Opportunity Council, Whatcom Alliance for Healthcare Access, PeaceHealth & NWACH); Coordinate among services and programs to promote social inclusion and community building; Light-touch case management services available for those with lower vulnerability scores to get them housed quickly; Assess existing workforce development programs, and cultivate relationships with employers and/or develop linkages among programs to better serve homeless and formerly homeless, if necessary; Community-wide training about how to connect with and include homeless population.

**HSW members - Do you have additional strategies to add to this list? Bring ideas to Meeting 4.**