



GETTING KING COUNTY TO FUNCTIONAL ZERO
With 2024 Point-In-Time Numbers Included
UPDATED FOR 2025

Presented to:

KCRHA CEO Darrell Powell, June 5, 2024

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KCRHA CEO Kelly Kinnison, October 2, 2024

CC: (June 5, 2024) King County Executive Dow Constantine

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King County Council

Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell

Seattle Deputy Mayor Tiffany Washington

Seattle City Council

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this plan is to move every one of our homeless neighbors who are willing off the streets into a transitional temporary home. This will give them a roof over their head, a lock on their door, food in their stomach, and wraparound services to get them to the next part of their lives. We will show you how we can accomplish this goal in three years.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Defining Functional Zero:** According to Built for Zero, a nationwide organization of over 100 cities who are ending homelessness, Functional Zero is defined as “ **a milestone, which must be sustained, that indicates a community has measurably solved homelessness for a population.** When it’s achieved, homelessness is rare and brief for that population.” (<https://community.solutions/built-for-zero/functional-zero/>) Reaching Functional Zero requires upstream investments as well as immediate action so fewer people are falling into homelessness than are getting out. Our definition of Functional Zero pertaining to this plan is to get every one of our homeless neighbors who want to be off the street into a tiny transitional home.

In this plan, we will also

- **Show the benefits** of tiny home villages as an intermediate step in transitioning our unhoused homeless neighbors from the streets into permanent housing.
- **Define the number** of the homeless population in King County.
- **Show the costs** associated with setting up and maintaining a tiny home village.
- **Present a plan** to get to Functional Zero.

HOMELESSNESS FACTS

1. **Homeless deaths outpaced homicides in Seattle.**
 - **2023 Homicide rate: 72. Highest homicide rate ever in Seattle** (<https://komonews.com/news/local/72nd-seattle-homicide-marks-highest-rate-in-nearly-3-decades-record-number-murder-death-grim-milestone-police-department-investigation-staffing-crisis-accountability-dead-adrian-diaz-violent-crime-gun-violence-offenders-criminals-evidence>)
 - **2023 Death rate for homeless: 416. Highest ever in King County** (<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/king-county-setting-records-for-homeless-deaths-is-becoming-awfully-routine/>)
 - **Homeless death rates are NEARLY SIX TIMES THAT OF HOMICIDES.**

2. **Homelessness affects our emergency rooms and our health care system.**

Recently, former Governor Chris Gregoire, who is now the CEO of Challenge Seattle published a report entitled “Emergency Rooms at the Epicenter: Addressing the Crisis of Homelessness, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorder”.

(<https://challengeseattle.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Challenge-Seattle-Emergency-Rooms-at-the-Epicenter-Jan-2024-fnl.pdf>) The report states that opioids, especially Fentanyl, are addicting and killing our homeless neighbors. Here are just a few facts from this report:

- There have been 8390 EMS calls in King County for non-fatal overdoses and more than 1284 fatal overdoses in 2023.
- In King County, **46% of fatal overdoses were individuals experiencing homelessness or in permanent supportive housing.** The current deaths and the trajectory call for an emergency response.
- Overdose deaths have increased 152% since 2020. **2023 record high overdose deaths have surpassed the height of deaths in King County for Covid-19.**

3. Studies have shown how effective tiny home villages are:

- **Harvard Study:** https://www.harvardmagazine.com/2024/05/homelessness-public-health-crisis?utm_source=email&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_term=stewardship&utm_content=homelessness&utm_campaign=042424
- **Portland University Study:** <https://www.kgw.com/article/features/study-motels-village-shelters-homelessness/283-d5355389-c08d-4f46-908c-020fef3acdd2>

BENEFITS OF TINY HOME VILLAGES

Information obtained from The Low Income Housing Institute (www.LIHI.org) , Sound Foundations NW (www.SoundFoundationsNW.org), Seattle's Human Resources Department (<https://www.seattle.gov/searchresults?terms=homelessness>), and Built for Zero (<https://community.solutions/built-for-zero/the-movement/>)

- Seattle has the **third largest homeless population in the United States**, only behind New York and Los Angeles.
- In a conversation with Sound Foundations NW, Mayor Harrell called tiny homes **“the first, best solution to homelessness.”** Our goal is to get our homeless neighbors into a space that is warm, safe, and dry while they await permanent housing.
- In the last two years, nearly 2500 individuals in Puget Sound transitioned from homelessness to permanent housing via tiny house villages. This makes our system one of the most successful ways to get to Functional Zero.

- In 2023, there was a 63% transition rate from tiny homes to permanent housing, one of the highest rates among all shelter options.
- One of the main tenets from Built for Zero is this: Homelessness is not about a lack of a home. Homelessness is about a **lack of community**. Integrating our homeless neighbors into community while simultaneously meeting their individual needs makes the transition to permanent housing more successful. Please read <https://www.soundfoundationsnw.org/the-case-for-tiny-home-villages/>



Camp Second Chance

DEFINING THE NUMBERS

Point in Time Count Totals

Here are the Point in Time numbers for **2020** and **2022**.

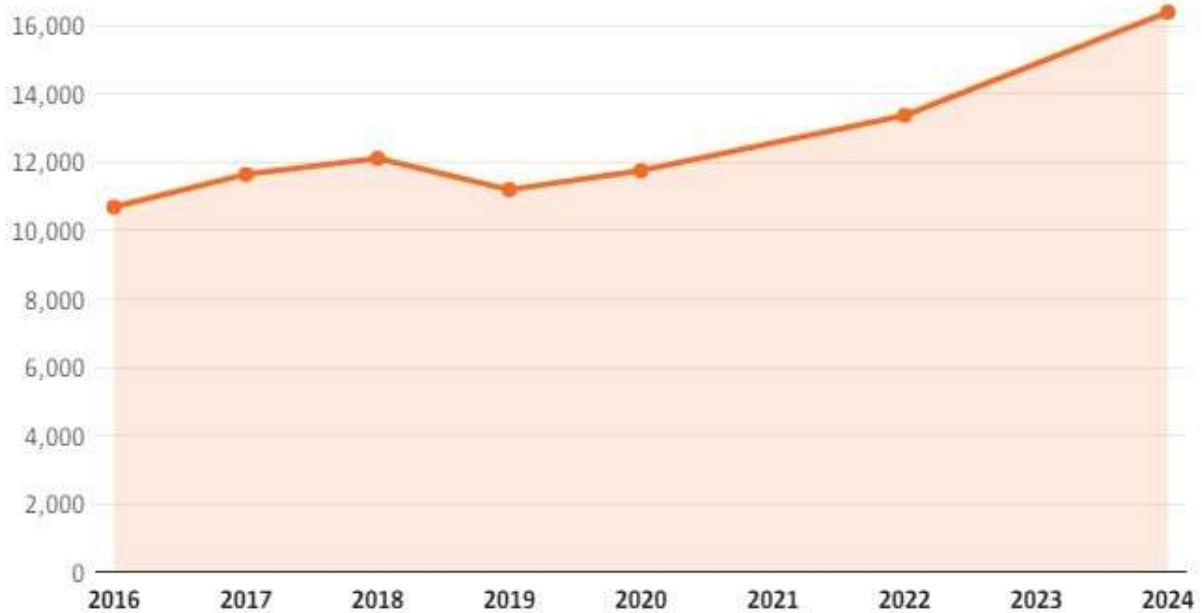
PIT Year	Individuals Experiencing Homelessness	% Unsheltered	% Sheltered
2020	11,751	47%	53%
2022	13,368	57%	43%

According to the **2024 Point in Time Count**

- 16,385: the total number of homeless persons in King County
- 9,810: the total number of UNSHELTERED homeless persons in King County.

Homelessness reported at all-time high in King County

More than 16,000 people were reported homeless during the latest Point-In-Time Count.



Data was not collected in 2021 and 2023. The method of counting unsheltered homelessness changed starting in 2022.

Chart: Fiona Martin / The Seattle Times • Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

DEFINING THE NUMBERS

Current Tiny Home Villages in King County*

VILLAGE	NO. OF HOMES
Camp Second Chance (White Ctr.)	66
Friendship Heights Village	42
Georgetown Village	46
Henderson Village	42
Interbay Village	76
Maple Leaf Village	41
Riverton Park Village (Tukwila)	34
Rosie's Village	36
Salmon Bay Village: RV's and homes	19
Southend Village	40
Skyway Village (Renton)	35
TC Spirit Village	24
True Hope Village (Tukwila)	33
Whittier Heights Village	15

There are a total of 14 tiny home villages with a total of 549 tiny homes and RV's.

The average number of tiny homes/RVs per village is 39.

**Information from LIHI on the current tiny home villages. All villages are in Seattle unless otherwise indicated.*



Henderson Village

GETTING KING COUNTY TO FUNCTIONAL ZERO: THE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Homelessness is a large problem with lots of solutions. Our part, “the first, best solution”, is to get our homeless neighbors off the streets. To us, it’s a math problem:

- **How many people are on the streets?**
- **How many homes does it take to get them off the streets?**
- **How long will it take?**
- **How much does it cost?**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- All numbers associated with this plan are based on data compiled by both the Low Income Housing Institute and Sound Foundations NW since 2018.
- Because costs may vary, especially the cost for construction materials, these plans are meant as an estimate based on the most current data from both organizations. Your future costs may vary.
- Year 2023 numbers are included as a reference and a starting point.
- The full spreadsheet is attached to this proposal so that you can see the numbers in their entirety.

GETTING TO FUNCTIONAL ZERO: THE PEOPLE

UPDATED FOR 2025

According to LIHI data, the median length of stay of a tiny home resident is 114 days. Therefore, roughly 3 people per year transition in and out of each tiny home. This is the number we use for conservative calculations.

- This plan will work when we add four villages per year with 45 homes per village for the next three years.
- The longer we wait to implement this plan, the longer it will take to get to Functional Zero.
- This plan also takes into consideration that there may be significantly more homeless by 2027. This plan has the potential to get up to 12,366 of our homeless neighbors off the streets by 2027.

Number of People Currently Unsheltered: 9810			
YEAR	NUMBER OF VILLAGES	OF TINY HOMES	NUMBER OF PEOPLE OFF THE STREETS
2024 numbers for reference only	14	549	$549 \times 3 = 1647$
	Plus 4 village $\times 45$ homes = 180 homes		
Jan. - Dec. 2025	18	729	$2187 (729 \times 3) + 1647 = 3834$
	Plus 4 village $\times 45$ homes = 180 homes		
Jan-Dec. 2026	22	909	$2727 (909 \times 3) + 3834 = 6561$
	Plus 4 village $\times 45$ homes = 180 homes		
Jan. - Dec. 2027	26	1089	
MINIMUM TOTAL			$3267 (1089 \times 3) + 6561 = 9828$
	NO MORE TINY HOME VILLAGES		
Jan. - Dec. 2028	26	1089	
MAXIMUM TOTAL			$3267 (1089 \times 3) + 9828 = 13,095$

GETTING TO FUNCTIONAL ZERO: THE COST

UPDATED FOR 2025

Construction, Infrastructure, and Operating Costs of a Tiny Home Village (RFP = Request for Proposal)

- **Sound Foundations NW Tiny Home Construction Cost:** \$4500 in materials cost for one tiny home.
- **LIHI First Year Cost:** \$800,000 in Infrastructure cost to set up a village and run it for the first year.
- **LIHI Annual Operating Cost:** \$900,000 per year to maintain a village each year thereafter. Costs include all Operation Manager costs, Case Management costs, food, supplies and misc. costs.

Costs include a 5% per year inflation rate.

COST	RFP: SFNW	RFP: LIHI	RFP: LIHI	
YEAR	COST OF TINY HOMES	INFRASTRUCTURE COST	ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS	TOTAL ANNUAL COSTS
2024	(Cost of tiny home construction materials = \$4500 per home)	(No Expense)	\$12,600,000.00	\$12,600,000.00
2025	(180 tiny homes x \$4725 = \$850,500)	(4 new villages x \$840,000 = \$3,360,000)	(18 villages x \$945,000 = \$17,010,000)	\$21,220,500.00
2026	(180 tiny homes x \$4961 = \$892,980)	(4 new villages x \$882,000 = \$3,528,000)	(22 villages x \$992,250 = \$21,835,000)	\$26,255,980.00
2027	(180 tiny homes x \$5209 = \$937,629)	(4 new villages x \$926,100 = \$3,704,400)	(26 villages x \$1,042,125 = \$27,095,250)	\$31,737,279.00
TOTAL	\$2,681,109.00	\$10,592,000.00	\$65,940,250.00	\$79,213,359.00
2028	(No expense)	(No expense)	(26 villages x \$1,094,231 = \$27,095,250)	\$27,095,250.00
	0	0	\$27,095,250.00	\$ 106,308,600.00

The cost of this plan is less than 8% of the total 5 year, \$11.8 billion plan created by KCRHA.

The costs are at 2024 pricing. Even if overages exceed \$30 million, this plan will still be under 10% of KCRHA's plan.

“MOVEMENT” VS VILLAGES

2024 Seattle budget for Movement (commonly referred to as “sweeps”) = \$38,000,000.

The annual budget for this plan is between \$16,610,000 and \$23,810,000.

This plan costs significantly less per year to put a roof over the heads of our homeless neighbors and to provide them with a lock on their door, food in their stomach and wraparound services to get them to the next place in their life than it does to move a wet tent with one of our homeless neighbors from place to place. Not to mention that tiny home VILLAGES foster the sense of community that is vital to reestablishing our homeless neighbors into permanent neighborhoods.



Riverton Park Village

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- The **original version** of this Plan to Get King County to Functional Zero was presented on October 13, 2023. The total cost of that plan was \$69,120,000. **Waiting just 8 months cost King County \$14,910,000**. We are reasonably certain that, based on six years' experience, costs will only increase over time.
- The **cost per person** jumped from \$6000 in October 2023 per person to \$8565 in the current plan.
- Based on LIHI's Operating Costs above, the **daily cost for one resident** in a tiny home village is roughly \$63 (\$900k/yr. % 365 days % 39 residents).
- The **timeframe for completion** went from ending in the original plan by December 2026 to with this proposed plan ending "sometime in 2027". The plan is a three year plan. The longer you wait to start the plan, the longer it will take to get to Functional Zero. Just a reminder: the 2026 World Cup will be held in Seattle.
- **Availability of new tiny homes:** Sound Foundations NW builds roughly 80% of the tiny homes being built for the new villages. We have the capacity to build between 185-200 tiny homes per year. With the combined output of the other tiny home builders, the maximum number of tiny homes per year would be no more than 225 homes. King County is one of our "customers", but not our only customer. Pierce County, Port Townsend, Chief Seattle Club, and the Duwamish Tribe either currently use or have indicated an interest in us providing them with tiny homes. We provide homes on a first come, first served basis from agencies that provide us with the proper RFP's. If you wish for this program to work, you must provide **and approve** the RFPs for us to build your homes and villages.



SUMMARY

Money spent to shelter our homeless neighbors, feed them, and provide the needed services before they cascade into health crises saves money, shelters our neighbors, and moves them down the path out of homelessness. We keep our streets and public spaces accessible for everyone. **The longer we wait, the more it will cost.**

Most important: 416 of our homeless neighbors died on the streets last year, more than one on the streets EVERY DAY. The longer we wait, the more people die on the streets. How many more people will die before we do something about it?



Maple Leaf Village



AFTERWORD

Have you thought about what happens AFTER we achieve Functional Zero and we need only 200-300 tiny homes instead of 1089? Well, we have. We've even talked to Governor Inslee about this.

Sound Foundations NW homes are built to last 20 years, so there will be plenty of life left in the homes after Seattle achieves Functional Zero. All tiny home villages are mobile. Governor Inslee can call up the Washington National Guard to move any tiny home village to another Washington city that needs it. The city that needs the village pays the moving expenses either to the state or to Seattle (to recoup some of your investment.) That city wins, and we are starting to end homelessness throughout the state.

HOMELESSNESS IS SOLVABLE!

CONTACT INFORMATION

For follow up questions or comments, please contact:

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