

How does the Advisory Board recommendation help or hurt the effort to end homelessness?

Group Discussion Summary • Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness • 2.3.23

Advisory Board recommended Unified Regional Authority options:

- 1 - invest in building additional capacity in existing structures
- 2 - Establish an MOU with specific, time-limited objectives and commitments
- 3 - Establish a new inter local agreement

Find the Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness and the Unified Regional Approach presentation here: <https://www.piercecountywa.gov/7309/Comprehensive-Plan-to-End-Homelessness>

Contact Rosemary Powers at rpowers@eou.edu for interest in the coalition developing a position in response to the ideas about unified regional approach to managing the Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness.

Some favor building upon existing Continuum of Care (CoC) structure (Option 1)

- We interpreted Option 1 as: invest in organizational structures that could handle being in the role of a coordinating body; governmental structures, e.g. the Continuum of Care.
- We have existing organizational structures in the government, let's build on those. (CoC, PCHS).
- Let's make the CoC more functional, organized. Let's "fix" what doesn't work and make it better, rather than re-create the wheel. Let's be creative. There are a lot of questions about the CoC.
- Everyone is helped if we have a good system, but folks have a lot of questions about the CoC.
- Feel that #1 is already being done and not fast enough to meet needs. Whatever happens, funding is needed for the COC.
- Good to note that many good people are donating their time and energy on the Continuum of Care - recommend we help make that organization stronger and more functional rather than focusing on criticism. If the County loosens its grip on resources and actually empowers whatever agency this land on - we might see real progress.

Much Group Feedback Favors Option 3

- "Don't give the money to Pierce County human services; it will only hurt the people we want to help" - is takeaway from my breakout group.
- Don't put unified approach with Human Services. They are not effective or efficient.

- We agreed that the money needs to get to the organizations sooner, and more of it. Money seems to sit with the county or other gov organizations.
- Felt that #3 is best because of focus on Networking, communication and standardization. A lack of standardization is the current problem.
- Lots of discussion about how option one equals a default concession that plan authority is located in the county executive, whose performance in this area has been poor and lacks credibility with providers.
- The option of building an RHA-like alternative to county-based administration will make us much more competitive for resources. We are in an underfunded space and need to focus on the option that changes that.

Additional Thoughts

- Put the voices of lived experience first. Do not re-traumatize. Support a unified regional approach, cross jurisdictions. We need more understanding of the recommendations.
- The consult's message didn't match group discussion but one individual's thoughts.
- The consultants' recommendations do not reflect the principles and values expressed in the comp plan. Where are the commitments to a flexible, responsive, transparent, adaptable response?
- Struggling with the politics of the board and vote of 7th because pushing for #1 – might have personal motivation
- Great chat session about an organization that would work as a dispatch type for outreach. also a few organizations coming together to grow together.
- Whatever else we do, let's not create a "bogus empowerment" loop that wastes the few people and resources available for this effort in Pierce County.

Notes and Resources List

If you haven't visited the Coalition website, you can take a look here:

<http://pchomeless.org>

Cricket phone company is at CLR every Wednesday & Thursday from 1-3pm to give out phones if individuals qualify.

Narcans vending machines coming to The Recovery Café in Orting, The Moore Library in South Tacoma, and the First United Methodist Church in downtown Tacoma.

<https://komonews.com/news/local/narcans-vending-machines-set-to-open-in-pierce-county-opiod-drugs-pierce-county-washington-vendy-machine-tacoma-moore-library>

Tacoma City Council Supports Drug Possession Reform

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/other/tacoma-city-council-votes-to-support-drug-possession-legislation-reform/ar-AA1719xv>

The waitlist for the Arlington Apartments is back open. If you are unaware, Arlington Apartments is an apartment building here in Tacoma for young adults 18-24 who are experiencing homelessness. Here is our website. If you have any questions please send me an email. <https://arlingtonapartments.org/> bobbyocasio@seattlemca.org

Here are the State and Fed links to get free at home test kits:

<https://www.covid.gov/tests> <https://sayyescovidhometest.org/>

You can get 5 free at-home tests delivered to your home through WA State DOH: Home - Say Yes! To Covid Test (sayyescovidhometest.org)

If you are part of an organization that would like test kits you can still email our testing team at: epitesting@tpchd.org