



# MANAGEMENT BRIEF

DATE: June 2, 2014

TO: Mayor Balducci and Councilmembers

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SUBJECT: Long Term Provision of Winter Shelter in East King County

Attached is a document that describes experiences to date, and potential steps that could be taken that would create a more stable and comprehensive approach to providing low barrier winter shelter and related services in East King County. It was prepared by local planners and service providers who have been working with the Eastside winter shelters over the past five years. It has been reviewed by the ARCH Executive Board, and at a meeting of the Eastside Human Services Forum, shared with mayors and council members of a number of ARCH members. The primary recommendation of this report is for Eastside cities to explore assisting partnering agencies to create dedicated location shelters for men, and women and children in East King County.

## Background/ Lessons Learned

The Eastside has experienced the reality of homelessness. Nearly 1,000 men, women, youth and children from the Eastside were served in local shelter or transitional housing programs last year. In each of the past two years, during the One Night Count, almost 200 persons have been counted in East King county sleeping outside, in cars or encampments. This does not include the existing winter shelters which since 2009 have been at or near capacity each year and over the past winter have served 80 to over 100 persons per night. Often, people from the Eastside when they become homeless have to go to other parts of the County for assistance.

Since 2009, a core group of Eastside cities and agencies have worked together to ensure that individuals and families experiencing homelessness have a safe place to sleep in the winter. It has evolved from a weather-activated shelter with limited operations to a broader program with shelter throughout the winter, and day services on a part time basis throughout the year. The report includes a number of lessons learned (page 8) with highlights including:

- Shelters have been places for engagement and access to services and provided pathways to housing.
- The group has spent considerable time and effort trying to find a host site each winter.
- Shelters need to be in central locations with full transit service and access to daytime services. More ideal locations would be in non-residential

areas. For several reasons, including regulatory constraints, this has not always been achieved.

- The shelters serve as a safety net to other homeless programs when they are at full capacity.

It is these lessons learned that led to the work group last year evaluating potential modifications to the current approach that would address these issues and result in a more effective approach to providing shelter.

This report was shared and discussed with elected officials and City Managers from a number of ARCH members. Their overall response is that this report is a thorough review of local experiences, responds to the needs and challenges that have been experienced over the past five years, and outlines appropriate principles for exploring a future local comprehensive approach to emergency shelter. They agreed that councils should be made aware of this work, and the working group prepare a more refined and detailed proposal.

There are several reasons this effort is timely:

- Local Experience

As stated earlier, the existing revolving shelters have demonstrated a need for this type of shelter, but there have been some challenges with the revolving shelter approach.

- Complements other affordable housing and homeless efforts

The low barrier shelter is one component of local and countywide efforts to address a full range of approaches to addressing homelessness. Page 7 of the report illustrates the range of housing and programs for the homeless and including [low barrier or] emergency shelter.

- CEH Priorities

The proposal is responsive to a new priority of the countywide Committee to End Homelessness (CEH) which is to increase shelter capacity, especially outside of Seattle. One significant impact of this is the potential to apply for capital funding from the County Housing Finance Program, and State Housing Trust fund.

### Principles for Moving Forward

In developing a more detailed proposal, the report (page 1) summarizes a number of principles that reflect lessons learned to date and should guide any effort. These were echoed by local officials during the discussion with elected officials and City Managers, especially the value of daytime services, and providing a pathway to housing. These include:

- East King County needs a local shelter system that avoids ongoing siting issues.
- Shelters need to be in central locations with full transit service and access to daytime services.
- Shelters are places for engagement and access to services and provide pathways to housing.
- Providing shelter is a shared responsibility of jurisdictions and community organizations throughout the Eastside.
- To be successful, the shelter siting process must engage and be sensitive to the concerns of the surrounding community.

- A complete shelter strategy needs to include some level of outreach and daytime services to assist persons with accessing services and resources.
- While shelter needs are more pronounced during winter months, 'low barrier' shelter is needed year-round.

### Building Upon Existing Efforts

This proposal builds upon existing efforts that have been receiving support from cities and the broader community. For capital support, Eastside cities have created a housing capital program through the ARCH Trust Fund that could be potentially used and help leverage other public and private funding. On the operating side, there has been ongoing support from cities and the broader community, especially the faith community (see pages 10 and 11). This history creates a starting point for achieving a minimal level of service, with the opportunity to efficiently increase operation incrementally based on the extent of support from the general community and cities. The proposal purposely provides flexibility that allows a progression of level of service.

### Next Steps

As the work group continues its work to develop a more detailed proposal, several issues were reinforced during the conversation with elected officials that will shape this effort:

- Ensure it is designed to complement overall countywide and local efforts to address homeless needs.
- Tailor it to the needs and priorities of East King County, for example, designing an overall system to help move people out of homelessness.
- Engage the broader community.
- Work with individual cities regarding potential siting issues, and potential opportunities on specific private or public properties. In general, intended locations are in centers with a mix of uses and good/reliable public transportation and not residential only neighborhoods.
- Assess potential budget implications to communities. The report provides a general description of the shelter program and existing operating sources and potential capital sources (page 10). The proposal will need to provide a more detailed analysis of the range of support needed for both up-front and ongoing support.

Additional questions and/or comments from council members and others are appreciated.

ATTACHMENT: Winter Shelter in East King County



## WINTER SHELTER IN EAST KING COUNTY

### Vision Statement

Every person in East King County has the opportunity to live in a safe, affordable, healthy home.

### Value Statement

Homelessness is an experience that individuals and families may face for a variety of reasons. The reality of homelessness is extremely challenging for those experiencing it, and it can also present challenges for the community at large. Therefore, we must work together as a whole community-- across sectors and geographic boundaries-- to find solutions that are effective for those experiencing homelessness and that allow our communities to continue to thrive.

### Specific Goal for Winter Shelter

As long as the capacity to shelter/house all who seek it is insufficient, the goal of providing additional shelter beds during the winter months is to ensure the health and safety of those who may otherwise have no option but to sleep outdoors. In addition, emergency shelter has been recognized as one point of entry on the path to housing.

### Principles for Winter Shelter

Providing shelter is a shared responsibility of jurisdictions and community organizations throughout the Eastside.

Shelters are places for engagement and access to services and provide pathways to housing.

East King County needs a local shelter system that avoids ongoing siting.

Shelters need to be in central locations with full transit service and access to daytime services.

To be successful, the shelter siting process must engage and be sensitive to the concerns of the surrounding community.

A complete shelter strategy needs to include some level of outreach and daytime services to assist persons with accessing services and resources.

While shelter needs are more pronounced during winter months, 'low barrier' shelter is needed year round.

# WINTER SHELTER IN EAST KING COUNTY

## LONG-TERM SOLUTION

The purpose of this overview is to provide Councils with the necessary background information related to finding a long-term solution for winter shelter in East King County, including challenges and opportunities in moving forward to find a permanent winter shelter solution.

### FEEDBACK QUESTIONS to keep in mind:

1. Assuming you are supportive of proceeding with more work on this, how do we advance this discussion with your respective Councils?
2. The memo describes several potential next steps for cities to consider. Do these seem appropriate?
3. Is additional information needed?

### Background

Since 2009, a core workgroup of Eastside cities and partners has been instrumental in ensuring that homeless individuals have a safe place to sleep in the winter. The Eastside winter shelter has evolved from a weather-activated shelter with limited operations to an established Eastside program, serving more than 200 unduplicated clients each year. Recognizing the need to keep this critical service available to all members of the community, the workgroup has spent considerable time and effort trying to find a host site each year. Previous host sites have included churches located in residential neighborhoods, community centers, and most recently a vacant building in a semi-industrial part of Bellevue.

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## Need and Capacity

The Eastside is not immune to the reality of homelessness. In fact, nearly 1000 men, women, youth and children from the Eastside were served in local shelter or transitional housing programs last year. The 2013 One Night Count of unsheltered individuals sleeping outside on the Eastside was 197 and the 2014 One Night Count was 178.

The winter shelters have been a key part of the Eastside safety net<sup>1</sup>, serving residents from Bellevue (34%), Redmond (11%), Issaquah and Kirkland (6% each) as well as other areas. Individuals who are turned away or remain on a waitlist for other programmatic shelter programs provided by Friends of Youth, Hopelink, and Lifewire are able to access the winter shelter. Winter shelters have been at or near capacity each year. During the current winter season, the men’s shelter has ranged from 50 – 75 men per night, and the women’s shelter has ranged from 30 – 40 persons per night.

<b>Men</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014 (through Feb)</b>
Nightly capacity	50	50	75
Total unduplicated individuals	249	210	249
Total bednights	4540	4425	5718
Average number served/night	39	36	58

<b>Women and Children</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014 (through Feb)</b>
Nightly capacity	15	40-50	40-50
Total unduplicated individuals	111	123	161
	<i>93 women</i>	<i>106 women</i>	<i>119 women</i>
	<i>18 children</i>	<i>17 children</i>	<i>42 children</i>
Total bednights	1384	2207	2287
Average number served/night	12	16	19 (avg is 25 for Jan. and Feb.)

## Lessons Learned

Efforts toward a sustainable and effective long-term shelter solution can be informed by our experiences operating shelters over the past 5 years. These are detailed in the attached report<sup>2</sup>. Some key lessons include:

- Shelters need to be in central locations with full transit service and access to daytime services. More ideal locations would be in non-residential areas.
- While shelter needs are more pronounced during winter months, ‘low barrier’ shelter is needed throughout the year.
- Clients are served best in a dedicated, non-shared space.
- Regulatory requirements - (fire and life safety, zoning, e.g.) leave limited siting options. Cities may need to consider appropriate changes.

<sup>1</sup> Appendix A: Systems Map

<sup>2</sup> Appendix B: Lessons Learned

## Leveraging Key Partners

The long-term solution workgroup recognizes that this work requires strategic and systematic approaches. We need to continue to engage with our regional partners and funders – The Committee to End Homelessness (CEH), King County, United Way of King County (UWKC), and the faith community.

- **CEH / King County** - Winter shelter has been recognized as one component of an overall system to address various needs of homeless single adult, young adults, and families. And more recently, the Governing Board of CEH acknowledged the need to include shelter strategies as part of the effort to end homelessness in the County, including increasing shelter capacity outside of Seattle and increase nightly winter weather shelter.
- **Faith Communities** - Faith communities have supported shelters on the Eastside in a number of crucial ways. The Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council (EISCC) founded both Congregations for the Homeless (CFH) and The Sophia Way. Faith communities have stepped up to host shelters, provide financial resources, and to offer volunteers.
- **United Way** – United Way is an active partner in CEH and allocates a significant amount of resources related to chronic homelessness and emergency shelter across the county. It will be important to engage key staff as we work to establish a long term solution to winter shelter in East King County.

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### Staff Recommendation: Create Dedicated Winter Shelters on the Eastside<sup>3</sup>

Based on the lessons learned over the past several years and the Winter Shelter Vision Statement and Principles, the staff work group recommends creating two dedicated location shelters, with a combined capacity up to 100 persons. Ideally, there would be one location for men and one for women/children, and an ability to accommodate daytime services. An initial plan could be for shelters to be open a minimum of four months per year, and we can explore opportunities to expand operation based on level of community wide support and available funding. Dedicated shelters with day time services would contribute to a more comprehensive approach to addressing homelessness in East King County by providing:

- Outreach
- Shelter
- Drop in access
- Case Management focused on permanent housing solutions

(See Appendix D for the role shelter plays in ending homelessness and a graphic that outlines shelter operating models.)

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<sup>3</sup> Appendix C: Proposal Details

## Next Steps

Cities to explore several issues:

- Affirmation of the proposal and local roles (including ARCH –see below)
- Determine what type of outreach to the broader community is appropriate.
- Potential modifications to land use regulations that limit location of shelters in potentially appropriate locations.
- Potential of any existing publicly owned properties that could be used to site a facility.
- Input on determining the long term ownership and operating structure.
- Level of support –
  - ongoing operating support through city human service funding
  - Capital support through ARCH.

**Potential ARCH Role.** One role ARCH has played in the past is to assist cities to be a catalyst for specific affordable projects, typically located on surplus public properties. ARCH has assisted by helping to coordinate local discussions to formulate a plan, bringing together partners to implement the plan, and initial development activity including addressing land use regulatory requirements and capital funding. For this particular project potential roles ARCH could assist with include:

- Help identify key players for the different steps of the program, including long term ownership structure.
- Assist member cities with evaluating and defining their role in the program.
- Assist with evaluating a capital funding strategy for the project, and possibly assisting with public funding applications.
- Monitor progress and provide progress reports back to cities throughout the development process.

## Discussion Questions

1. Assuming you are supportive of proceeding with next more work on this, how do we advance this discussion with your respective Councils?
2. The memo describes several potential next steps for cities to consider. Do these seem appropriate?
3. Is additional information needed?

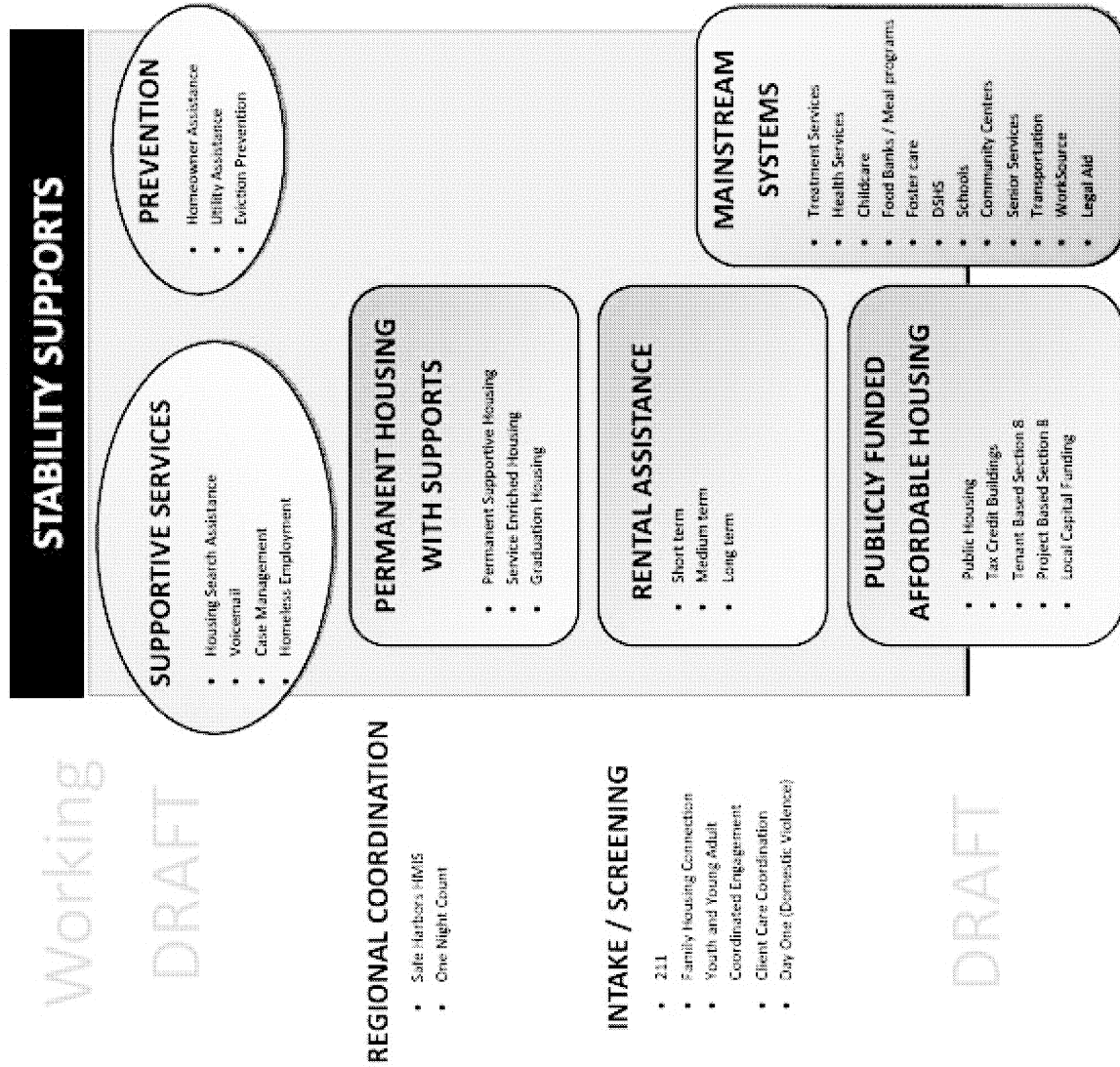
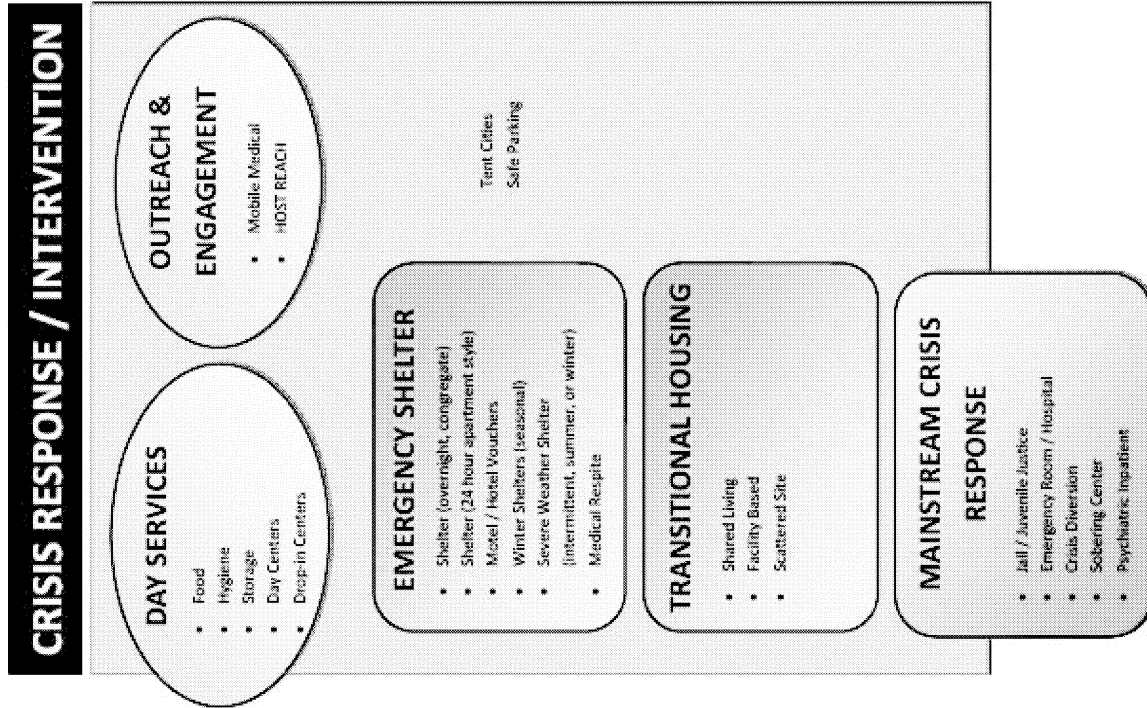


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WINTER SHELTER IN EAST KING COUNTY

# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A: SYSTEMS MAP - Winter Shelter Within a Larger System



## APPENDIX B: Winter Shelter - What We've Learned

The evolution in the shelter model, moving from weather activated to nightly operated, has created many challenges, as well as opportunities.

- **Siting:** Since shifting to the winter model, there have been more challenges than expected with finding siting.
  - **Dedicated space:** Clients are served best in a devoted space. Dual use locations (i.e. community center activities during day, shelter at night) have challenges.
    - Community Centers experienced large loss of revenue due to lack of space rentals.
    - Minimal screening criteria make it hard to find facilities, even churches, willing to host the shelter.
    - Utilizing dual use space requires additional storage requirements.
  - **Regulatory requirements:** Finding a space that meets various regulatory requirements (fire life and safety code, zoning requirements) has limited options.
  - **Non-residential area:** More ideal locations would be in a non-residential area.
- **Winter shelter model (open nightly):** Opening on consecutive nights rather than based on weather criteria brought many benefits:
  - **Engage Homeless Individuals:** Winter shelter can be used as a point of engagement to move into year-round shelter programs and as a pathway to permanent housing.
  - **Other weather conditions:** Participants were spared severe weather conditions that rain and wind bring.
  - **Manage daily activities:** Ability for clients to navigate transportation and daytime care, work schedules, etc.
  - **Positive Outcomes:** About 60 men and 25 women have transitioned from the winter shelter to the year-round program shelter. Of the 40+ men who have completed the shelter program, over 30 of them have moved into stable, on-going housing.
  - **Outreach:** Having effective outreach services in place helps engage homeless individuals who wouldn't otherwise seek out shelter.

*“We have had many police over the years express that they are grateful to have a place to bring the homeless that are wandering the streets while it is so cold and the weather causes significant risk to life safety.”*

*David Johns-Bowling, CFH Director of Shelter Services*

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- **Community Engagement:**

- Broad community engagement and new partnerships: Providers were able to effectively engage and partner with neighborhoods, businesses, churches, libraries, police, and other community stakeholders.
- Resource for public facilities: Shelter providers receive many calls from community centers, libraries, churches, social services agencies, mini-city hall, and individual community members who have encountered the homeless and are trying to assist with finding safe shelter.
- Responsive shelter providers: Providers have found that many people, businesses, organizations, and departments feel the impact of trying to help the homeless or the impact of them using community places. By setting up on-going communication with community stakeholders, issues can usually be mitigated.
- Engaged clients: Many of the homeless care about their community, and they want to be good community members. For example, clients have initiated and organized a community trash pickup day as well as a cleanup day for St. Peter's United Methodist Church, the host of the men's shelter for the last two years
- Role of Faith Community: Faith communities have supported shelters on the Eastside in a number of crucial ways. The Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council (EISCC), created both Congregations for the Homeless (CFH) (1994) and The Sophia Way (2008). EISCC supported hosting the shelters, supplying meals for the clients, and contributing other supportive services. Congregations are major financial contributors to CFH and Sophia Way and many sponsor their annual fund raising events. CFH's year round shelter has been housed in congregations for 20 years. The Sophia Way's year round shelter is housed at St Luke's Lutheran Church.

*"A couple months ago I received a call from a Bellevue detective who had just heard about our Day Center program. I told him about the services that were offered and also about the EWS. He was so happy to hear of a place men could go during the evenings and also a place during the day they could rest and receive services. About a month later he called again and said some of the issues of loitering at the bus stops had completely gone away. He said he believed this was solely because there is now a place the men can go during the day time and the evening."*

*David Johns-Bowling, CFH Director of Shelter Services*

## APPENDIX C: DEDICATED WINTER SHELTER PROPOSAL

### Description

Two separate shelters (one for men, second for women and children) at a dedicated location that operate for 4 months per year. The day center could be incorporated into a shelter without needing any substantial additional space other than potentially some separate office space.

**TABLE 1: Winter Shelter Program Features: Per 50 Bed Shelter / Day Center**

Program Features		Area
Dining/Tables	Optional (could be done within sleeping area)	1,500 sq ft
Kitchen		500 sq ft
Bath/Laundry		400 sq ft
Sleeping		4,000 sq ft
Office	Office minimum plus extra space such as case management, computer lab. One office dedicated for day services	200 - 400 sq ft
Storage		500 sq ft
<b>Total</b>		5,600 - 7,300 sq ft

### Development Cost

There are two primary costs associated with creating each shelter facility. First is the cost associated with securing real estate, and second is the cost of making necessary improvements and associated costs. Securing control of property could be a significant component of overall facility costs. Therefore if a suitable public site can be identified for one or both shelters it would have a significant impact on the amount of other funding that would be required. There are a variety of public and private funding sources that could be used for the acquisition and development of a shelter facility. The following table summarizes potential funding sources.

**TABLE 2: Potential Facility Funding Sources**

Source	Comment
ARCH	ARCH includes homeless housing as one of goal areas and uses CEH priorities for funding guidance. In 2013 CEH added homeless shelters outside Seattle as a priority for funding.
King County Housing Program	Also uses CEH priorities to guide investment for homeless housing. Often match or exceed ARCH contribution.
State Housing Trust Fund	Includes homeless housing on list of eligible uses. Often match or exceed ARCH contribution.
Private	Could include funds raised through various private sources such as foundations, churches and individuals.
In-Kind	Examples could be furniture donations, reduced labor costs. Could also include site donation / fee relief from a City.

## Operations Description

The winter shelters are open to those in need from 8:30 pm to 7:30 am, seven days a week. Because the shelters serve as life-saving shelters they are low barrier shelters which means only those who are sexual offenders are screened out initially. To ensure the health and safety of the shelter community, guests are required to follow procedures. The seasons run from November through March or longer as funding allows. The shelters are run by paid staff who stay alert at all times. At least two staff are on duty at all times. Guests sleep on mats on the floor and are provided blankets. Volunteers from congregations, local businesses and individuals bring meals and sometimes stay to serve them. Guests are provided bus tickets every day. The shelters partner with local agencies to provide access to addiction and mental health treatment, dental and medical services.

## Operation Financing

Currently two winter shelters, one for men and one for women and children, are operated by Congregations for the Homeless (CFH) and The Sophia Way respectively. In addition CFH in the past year has been operating a day center for men. The Sophia Way will begin operating the day center for women on April 1<sup>st</sup>. There has been a history of public and private support to operate two shelters for approximately four months and a part time day center (see table). If a dedicated space were able to be created with no lease or mortgage payments, there would not be a significant increase in operating costs over the current program. Expansion of the shelters to twelve months and increasing hours for the day center significantly increase annual operating expenses. Expansion of these programs could be achieved a variety of ways including:

- Fundraising from the local broader community.
- Increased funding from local governments – either through increases from existing city contributions, and/or broadening support from more East King County jurisdictions.
- Securing funds from a regional source
- Using incremental increases in funding support to increase period of operation (e.g. expanding shelter to 6 months per year, day center 10 hours per day).

**TABLE 3: Existing Operating Support**

Source	Description	CFH	Sophia Way	SW	CFH	Outreach
		50 Bed	50 Bed	Day Center	Day Center	2014 Pilot
		4 Month	4 Month	12 month	12 month	(Annualized)
Bellevue		\$33,000	\$38,800	\$24,900	\$15,500	\$13,500
Redmond	Includes CDBG	\$10,200	\$13,400	\$10,500	\$6,500	\$25,500
Issaquah		\$10,000	\$3,000	\$ 2,800	\$5,500	
Kirkland		\$11,333	\$9,750	\$13,150	\$9,500	\$3,750
Sammamish			\$1,000			
King County		\$7,500	\$15,000			
Union Gospel		\$16,000				
United Way		\$18,000	\$3,500			
Private	Faith / civic / ind.		\$4,000		\$60,000	
Sub-Total		\$106,033	\$78,450	\$51,350	\$97,000	\$42,750
In-Kind	Meals	\$30,000	\$30,000		\$2,000	
TOTAL		\$136,033	\$108,450	\$51,350	\$99,000	

# APPENDIX D

## Eastside Winter Shelter

*Roles of shelters in effort to end homelessness*



*Shelter Operating Models*

