January 2008 Status Report on 10 Year Plans to End Homelessness in Washington

King County has opened 1,175 new units of homeless housing. Another 1,000 are in the pipeline. A new King County Violence and Human Services levy will generate $13 million each year. King County Council adopted a 2% sales tax for mental health and chemical dependency treatment to provide $10 million per year in new service dollars. United Way of King County is also making $25 million to go towards housing and supportive services for chronically homeless single adults.

Clallam County has decreased 24% and street homelessness is down by 50%. Through the 10 Year Plan there is increased emphasis on prevention & discharge planning and coordinated offender re-entry. There are now an additional 108 supportive housing units for veterans and chronically homeless persons, as well as safe housing options for youth.

Trust County’s 10 year plan, Everyone@Home NOW, has developed 250 housing units in 2007, 114 of those for chronically homeless, and the successful implementation of the Community Case Management system, a single point of entry into the housing continuum.

Skagit County Commissioners have endorsed the development of a Skagit County Ten Year Plan. The plan is being developed through the Skagit County Community Action Agency and will seek full endorsement from the intergovernmental Skagit County Council of Governments.

Whatcom County will open its Homeless Service Center in spring 2008. The Center will consolidate homeless resources, implement evidence-based models of prevention, and standardize homeless housing assessment. The goal of this comprehensive Housing First Model is to house 5,300 homeless households. In 2008 a $1.3 million offender re-entry program will start up that will provide transitional and master leased housing.

Okanogan County is developing housing for homeless families, individuals, and youth. Housing for families will include on-site services and workforce training. A migrant worker camp is being created as an emergency homeless shelter during winter months.

Chelan & Douglas Counties’ 10 Year Plan institute new systems to address homelessness that appear to be working. Numbers in emergency shelters are down 30%; number in transitional housing up 97%; number of homeless individuals down 33%; $15 million added to new housing units and a new emergency shelter: $2.1 million went to services to reduce homelessness.

Spokane County is working on a regional plan. The plan focuses on the downtown street homeless population, and also has a defined strategy to house homeless families and youth.

Walla Walla County hired a new 10 Year Plan Coordinator as well as a Housing Coordinator. New resources include an 11 bed Oxford House, six transitional housing units for families, housing and services for co-offenders, and a "Renters with Mentors" Program.

Peninsula County has just developed new emergency shelter units for individuals and families that will commence operation in early 2008.

Renton and Franklin County’s Home Base Program reduced homelessness by 1.6%. This 10 Year Plan strategy connects 49 case managers from 16 agencies via the Internet. 1,424 households were served in the first 8 months of 2007. 138 new housing units were created and 452 housing vouchers household were supported.

Yakima County coordinated all local efforts through the 10 Year Plan and produced a 15.5% reduction in homelessness. 177 long term housing units were created along with 38 transitional units, 10 low barrier units and 2 homeless youth transitional beds. The plan included the provision of 87 housing vouchers, 2 seasonal overnight shelters, a remodeled homeless youth drop-in center, and the creation of a one-stop resource center.

The State of Washington legislature in 2005 passed the landmark Housing and Homeless Assistance Act that will now provide over $23 million per year targeted to the efforts of the local 10 Year Plans. The State Intergovernment Council on Homelessness meets regularly to coordinate state agency efforts in support of the county homelessness plans. In 2008 Governor Gregoire has proposed an increase in the State Housing Trust Fund of $50 million and an additional increase of $5 million for funds targeted to permanent supportive housing for homeless families.