

# You Are Invited

to a Conversation about Homelessness

During the first & second phases, the Work Group heard from over 700 community members and stakeholders through workshops, focus groups, listening sessions, on-line surveys, and community conversations. The Work Group is now working to identify the draft strategies and needs to hear your feedback on how to address the most challenging concerns/issues that have come out of the process to date.

Be sure to bring a smart phone so you can participate in our interactive polling activity.

## Public Workshops

**Saturday, Oct 26<sup>th</sup>**

Olympia High School, Commons  
1302 North St SE

**9:00 am to 11:30 am**

or

**Saturday, Nov 2<sup>th</sup>**

Capital High School, Commons  
2707 Conger Ave NW

**9:00 am to 11:30 am**



[olympiawa.gov/homelessness](http://olympiawa.gov/homelessness)



# Developing a Long-term Approach

In March 2019, the City began a process to identify how we, as a regional community, will respond (in the long-term) to the homelessness crisis. This includes planning for the needs of residents, visitors, business owners and individuals experiencing homelessness.

This process is hosted and shepherded by a Community Work Group made up of 11 community members who bring a diverse set of perspectives and experiences to the process. Read their stories at [engageolympia.com](http://engageolympia.com)

The end result will be a community-driven Homeless Response Plan that includes a variety of strategies and actions, individual organizations or multiple partners who will take the lead on actions, and metrics to help us track our progress over time.

During the first and second phases of this process, the Community Work Group has heard from over 700 community members and key stakeholders through 17 different workshops, focus groups, on-line surveys, and community conversations. Summaries of what we heard are available at [engageolympia.com](http://engageolympia.com).

The Community Work Group is hosting a series of community conversations in October to help finalize the strategies and metrics, and identify actions. They will then turn the plan over to the City and community partners to confirm the highest priority actions, identify timelines for completion, and get started.

## Stay Connected



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[engageolympia.com](http://engageolympia.com)



[homelessness@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:homelessness@ci.olympia.wa.us)



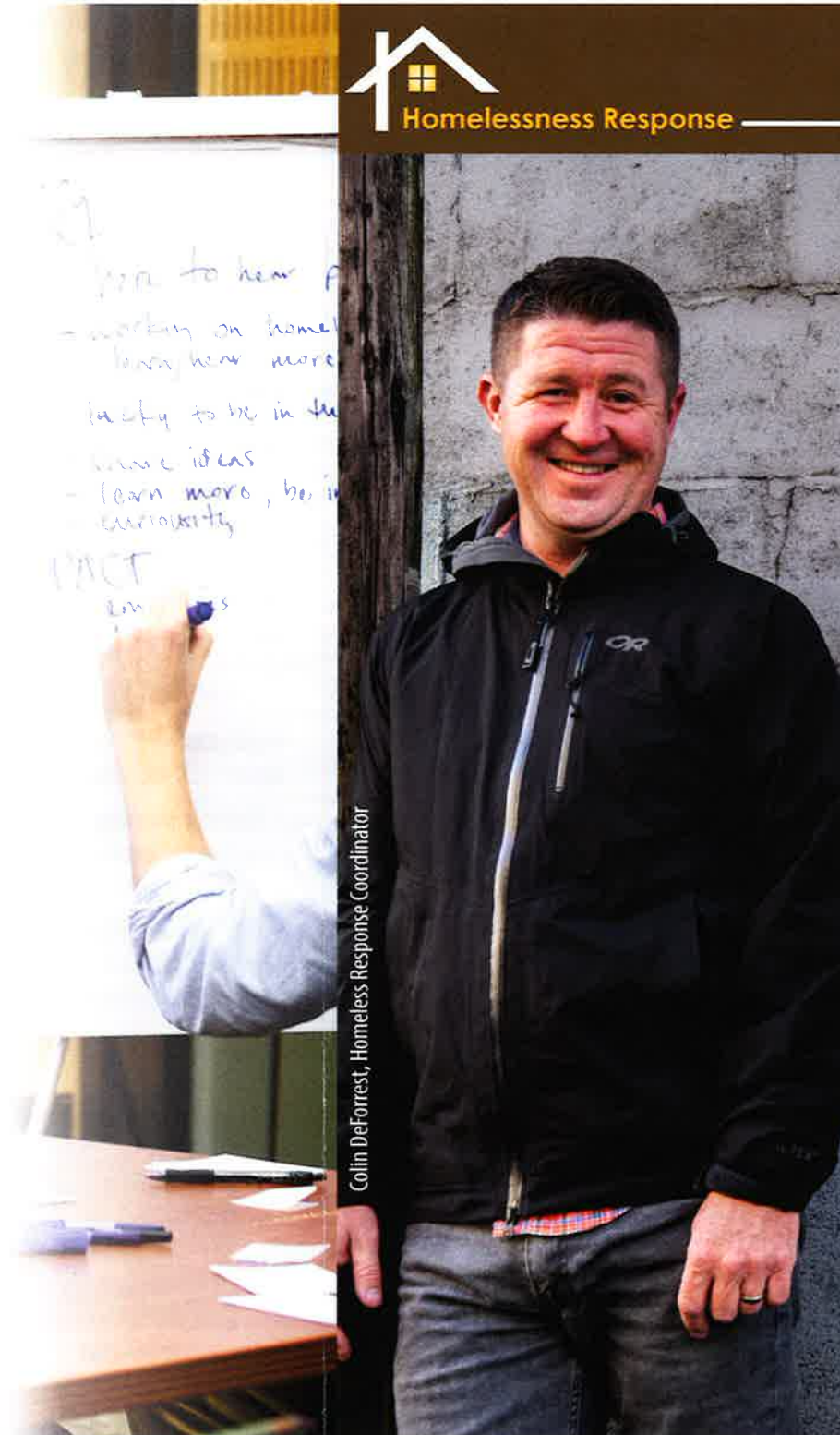
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Homelessness Response



Olympia



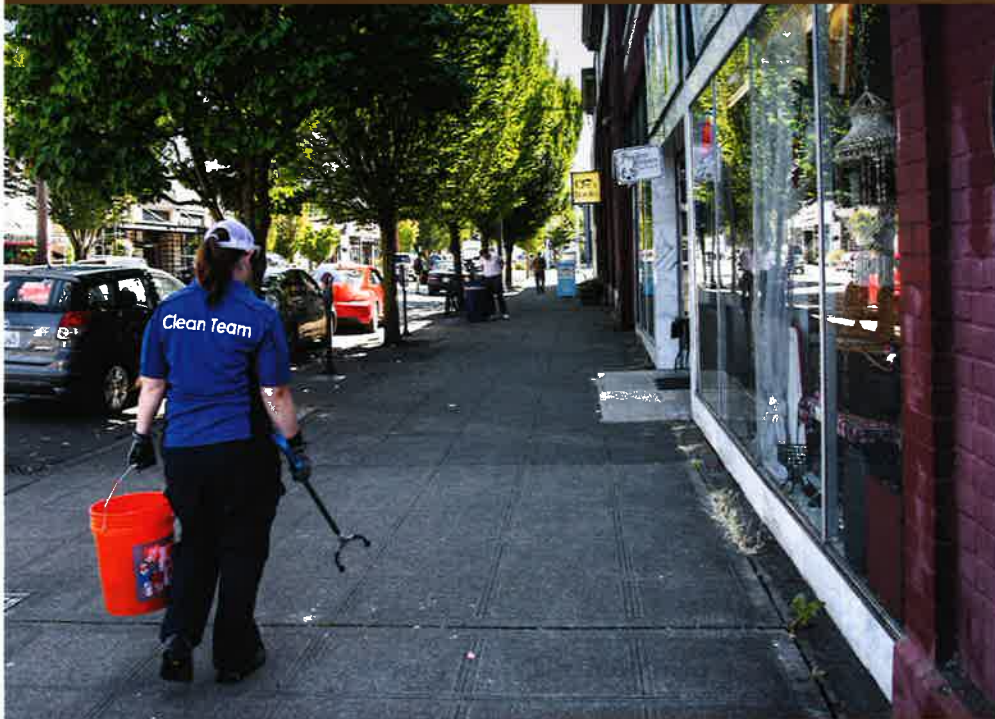
Colin DeForrest, Homeless Response Coordinator

Like many cities up and down the I-5 corridor, the City of Olympia is challenged to respond to a significant increase in individuals experiencing homelessness. In 2018, the City developed a new line of programs to address this crisis and its impacts on our community, including hiring the City's first Homeless Response Coordinator (pictured left). Additionally we recognize and continue to strengthen local and regional partnerships, which are critical to developing an effective and sustainable response.

## Home Fund

**In 2018**, voters approved a sales tax increase to fund building permanent, supportive housing for the most vulnerable members of our community. It will be several years before we see completed projects, so in the interim the City is partnering with others to take more immediate action.

**In 2019**, City Council awarded \$1.1 million for construction of 60 shelter beds and 65 units of supportive housing. The partnership is led by the Low Income Housing Institute and Interfaith Works. The Home Fund Advisory Board will oversee another funding competition for more housing in 2020.



## Supporting a Vibrant Downtown

The City of Olympia is committed to our community's vision for a vibrant Downtown that is safe and welcoming for all. Progress is being made through effective and compassionate initiatives to address the impacts of homelessness. Within the last several years, the City has established and/or enhanced the following programs:

- **Clean Team:** Responsible for general upkeep, repair, painting, trash pickup and cleaning in public spaces in Downtown.
- **Crisis Response:** A partnership initiated by the Police Department to provide free, confidential, voluntary crisis response assistance.
- **Downtown Ambassadors:** A vital front line delivery system to help promote and ensure Downtown is a vibrant and attractive urban destination.
- **Familiar Faces:** Two peer navigators who assist individuals with complex health and behavioral problems.
- **Secure Storage:** A partnership to create storage facilities to keep personal belongings safe and dry, while minimizing sidewalk debris.
- **Walking Patrol:** A highly visible and accessible 7-member team dedicated to serving, connecting with our Downtown community.

## Emergency Housing Ordinance

In July 2018, the Olympia City Council declared a public health emergency related to homelessness. Doing so enables the City to respond to the needs in the community more quickly, such as allowing the establishment of temporary emergency shelter site on faith-based, non-profit, or government property, subject to a permit.

## The Downtown Mitigation Site

To better manage a dramatic increase in unsanctioned camping in Downtown, the City established a temporary managed site. This site is located on a City-owned parking lot, and includes: basic hygiene services, delineated camp sites, safety protocols, a resident code of conduct, and on-site hosts. This site continues to serve a steady population of approximately 120 residents. The City is currently working with local and regional partners to establish a second mitigation site.

## Moving to a 24/7 Shelter System

The City is providing funding to move an existing shelter to a 24/7 operation. In addition to providing overnight shelter, Community Youth Services (CYS) Rosie's Place has opened its doors to youth during the day.

## Fostering Partnerships

Highlighted below are two examples of response initiatives that are being carried out with the support of dedicated community partners:

- **Faith Community & City Tiny House Pilot Partnership.** The City is partnering with several faith-based communities to support the establishment of additional emergency housing villages on their properties.
- **Plum Street Village.** This tiny home village has 40+ individuals on-site. The units are secure and private for individuals and couples without children. The site is equipped with a hygiene trailer and services tailored to the specific needs of the residents.



Secure Storage



Walking Patrol



Downtown Ambassadors