



## City Council

### Update on Homeless Response Plan

**Agenda Date:** 6/4/2019  
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#### **Title**

Update on Homeless Response Plan

#### **Recommended Action**

##### **Committee Recommendation:**

Not referred to a committee.

##### **City Manager Recommendation:**

Receive a status report on the Homeless Response Plan. Briefing only; No action requested.

#### **Report**

##### **Issue:**

Whether to receive an update on what staff have heard and learned during a public process to form a homeless response plan to include long-term strategies, actions and partnerships.

##### **Staff Contact:**

Amy Buckler, Downtown Programs Manager, Community Planning & Development, 360.570.5847  
Stacey Ray, Senior Planner, Office of Performance and Innovation, Administrative Services,  
360.753.8046

##### **Presenter(s):**

Amy Buckler, Downtown Programs Manager  
Stacey Ray, Senior Planner  
Selena Rodocker, member of the Community Work Group

##### **Background and Analysis:**

In March, the City launched a public process to form long-term strategies, actions and partnerships for responding to homelessness. In 2018, both Thurston County and the City of Olympia declared a state of public health emergency regarding rising homelessness in the community.

The Olympia City Council is convening a broad, community-driven process to identify long-term strategies and actions to respond to homelessness and its impacts on the city. The approach is based on a framework and methodologies called Participatory Leadership: a community-based approach to addressing complex issues that emphasizes learning, dialogue, equity, and

inclusiveness.

At the briefing, staff will reflect upon what has been heard and learned so far, and review what's up and coming including continued coordination with the County and outreach to partner organizations.

### What Has Occurred?

Since March, the following has been accomplished:

- The Community Work Group (CWG) has met eight times. In addition to learning about each other and the participatory leadership method, the CWG invited in speakers to learn more about the County's Five-Year Plan, the Olympia police department and the Downtown Strategy. They have also shared and discussed numerous articles and reports about homelessness, as well as what they are hearing thus far from the different listening sessions and workshops.
- Four listening sessions/workshops were held in April and May, where participants were asked to define what it looks like to successfully address homelessness in our community and what they believe are the barriers to success. Attendance at all four workshops totals about 360 people.
- The online portal "Engage Olympia" launched on March 26. An online survey about people's experiences opened in April and closed on May 30. At the time of this staff report, about 270 people had filled out the survey. Citizens are also using platform's Q&A tool and 19 ideas have been posted to the Idea Bank.
- City and County staff are meeting weekly to coordinate engagement efforts and identify connections between Olympia's plan and the County's Five-Year Plan.
- City staff has briefed more than 20 partner and community organizations about the process.

Summaries of the listening sessions and workshops are **attached**. Staff will highlight key findings during the briefing.

### What's Next?

Over the next month we will be transitioning from the learning to the dialogue phase (though learning will be ongoing throughout the process.) The following engagement is planned for the summer:

- Two listening sessions for individuals experiencing homelessness will be held in partnership with the Community Care Center and Plum Street Village.
- Two focus groups for downtown business and property owners.
- A series of community conversations, which are facilitated conversations with 30-40 invited individuals, including various stakeholder groups and perspectives. We will be using what we have heard so far to structure conversations to help further develop opportunities for alignment and unpack identified tensions, challenges and disagreements.
- A new online public engagement tool (e.g., a survey) will be broadly advertised, along with other public communications to share what we are learning.
- Meeting with various groups and organizations to share and discuss what we are hearing, next steps and potential partnership opportunities.
- Continued coordination with Thurston County and exploring opportunities for a joint meeting of jurisdictions.

- The Community Work Group will continue to meet twice a month to discuss what they are hearing and begin to form principles and draft strategies for a homeless response plan.

**Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):**

There is significant public interest in the City's response to homelessness. See attached summaries from four recent listening sessions and workshops. All meeting summaries will be posted to the Engage Olympia website.

**Options:**

Briefing only; no action requested

**Financial Impact:**

\$30,000 has been allocated for public meeting support.

**Attachments:**

Meeting Summaries

[Link to Engage Olympia](#)