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To: Pierce County Council members  
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From: **St Leo's Homelessness Working Group**

Subject: Comments on the upcoming Pierce County Plan to End Homelessness

Comments on plan requirements:

1. **Paint a clear picture of the current condition.** We need numbers we can agree on. The Point-in-Time (PIT) is not acceptable to track how we improve the situation. Develop a dashboard so we can all see the goals and measurements, and how it improves with the funding.
2. **Develop metrics with the goal of ending homelessness.** Spend time to determine what data will be used to measure success. Some suggestions might include:
  - a. How long are the current wait lists at a shelter? What is the goal in the future?
  - b. How long does it take-to find housing today? What are the goals for the future?
  - c. How many people in the system today? What are the goals for the future?
  - d. How much housing is available for the low-income clients? How do we promote more housing and shelter for the future?
  - e. See #3 below.
3. **Focus on prevention to support the most vulnerable.**
  - a. Focusing on the poorest and chronically homeless (0-30% AMI and drug/addiction/mental health chronically homeless cases). This will not only help the most vulnerable, but it will help on many fronts - the community, businesses, and the organizations trying to help them.
  - b. Three key measures for the chronically homeless might include:
    - Are we working on the most vulnerable- need a list of names
    - Are we getting them housed – need a cross-coordinated response-team
    - Are they staying housed – good follow-up and tracking
4. **Build up the inventory of housing and safe places to live-** We need more shelter space, safe lots, RV parks, campsites, supportive housing, transitional housing like tiny homes, low-income housing, shared housing, community living, etc.
5. **Develop short- and long-term strategies-** What can be done now and what will take longer to develop.
6. **Incentivize the construction of low-income sustainable housing.**
  - a. Change tax laws to accomplish the goal of construction of low-income housing. Penalize land and property speculation that hinder this goal.

- b. Build and strengthen land banks and use these to support Community Land Trusts for permanent supportive housing. Make a requirement that as part of mitigation, construction projects contribute to the land banks- similar to wetland banks.
  - c. Reward Community Benefits agreements for new developments to mitigate impacts of gentrification.
  - d. Broaden the concept of the 'missing middle.'
  - e. Utilize creative funding strategies (see below).
7. Provide **creative funding strategies** to incentivize construction of affordable housing such as the LISK program, use of land trusts, tax incentives that yield the desired result, approval of 1/10<sup>th</sup> of 1% housing tax, Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI's), and Community Development Loans (CDLs), etc.
  8. **Identify sustainable funding streams**- approve the 1/10<sup>th</sup> of 1% housing tax.
  9. **Build community good will**, the county needs to demonstrate how money is being spent and that it is being effectively utilized. It would be useful for the community to understand the costs to have people on the street vs being housed. Get this onto the public dashboard (noted above) so the public sees the benefits of money spent.
  10. **Develop a community outreach**- change the narrative about why people are not housed and the plan to solve the issue. Work with other community leaders, businesses, faith communities. Have coordinated actions available for them to consider in supporting the plan. For example, some churches may want to be in charge of building or providing space for tiny homes, sponsoring public forums, volunteering, etc.
  11. **Identify accountability**: Determine who is responsible for every action in the plan and how it will be reported out. Put the action plan into the county's performance measures for those responsible for implementation and monitoring.
  12. Get **lessons learned** from other successful programs. Avoid reinventing the wheel. What is King County doing well? Portland? Spokane? Put aside 'turf' boundaries and reach out to other counties and cities to cross-pollenate and cooperate.
  13. Create a "**process improvement**" portion of your plan. The plan should be a living document that is updated and improved over time and with experience. Build in a time when the plan will be re-evaluated, allowing input and changes with the knowledge of what worked well and what didn't.
  14. Explore **creating an overarching organization** that helps facilitate getting the plan accomplished, getting the moneys to the projects and programs that meet the established goals, and coordinating projects and requirements to get this all done.
  15. Have **decision-makers represented** in developing and implementing the plan. They can make things happen and intervene when there are roadblocks.
  16. **Go for the win and all in!** Commit to ending homelessness! Zero tolerance.

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