

ONE TABLE

Addressing root causes
of homelessness

Purpose, Roles, Process

CONTEXT

The annual King County point-in-time count of people experiencing homelessness reflects the growing crisis in our region, with the recent census in January 2018 identifying 12,112 people without a stable home, up four percent from the previous years. This tells only part of the story. While more than 20,000 individuals exit homelessness annually in King County, more than 30,000 people lose housing. The need is outpacing the system's ability to respond. We must adopt a different approach, and focus on upstream strategies and root causes.

Homelessness is a broad societal issue that results from the failure of many systems and disproportionately affects people of color. Many community efforts to address homelessness have been focused on helping people *after* they have become homeless. If we are truly going to address homelessness, we need to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place.

PURPOSE

On Dec. 1, 2017, King County Executive Dow Constantine, Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan and Auburn Mayor Nancy Backus announced One Table, a regional effort to bring together leaders from the business, nonprofit, philanthropic, faith, government and community sectors to identify solutions to prevent homelessness.

One Table participants were charged with addressing the root causes of homelessness through broad, scalable, multi-sectored community actions that harness community resources.

One Table's efforts to address these root causes of homelessness also strive to undo the racial disparities and disproportionality that result from these system failures. All participants share in the responsibility to identify and commit resources to implement the actions identified to address the causes of homelessness.

Systemic factors contributing to homelessness

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Rising housing costs make it difficult to find appropriate housing.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Individuals lack access to necessary mental health and substance use treatment.

CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

One-third of homeless youth in King County have been in the child welfare system.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Interaction with this expensive system inhibits individuals' ability to obtain housing and employment.

EMPLOYMENT

Inability to access employment and regional wage gaps make it difficult for some to afford housing costs.

PARTICIPANTS

A comprehensive stakeholder group convened beginning January 2018 to participate in the One Table effort. This group included community and subject matter experts, civic leaders and elected officials.

COMMUNITY ACTION WORKGROUP (CAW)

Participants	Subject matter experts from the business, nonprofit, philanthropic, faith and community sectors who have expertise in workgroup issue areas. Members participated in the following workgroups: Affordable Housing, Behavioral Health, Child Welfare, Criminal Justice, Employment
Charge	Develop scalable strategies/solutions that address each root cause of homelessness centered in addressing racial disparities

CIVIC LEADERSHIP GROUP (CLG)

Participants	Civic leaders from business and philanthropy
Charge	Participate in the CAW process; advise on the ability to leverage and execute the recommended broad scalable solutions

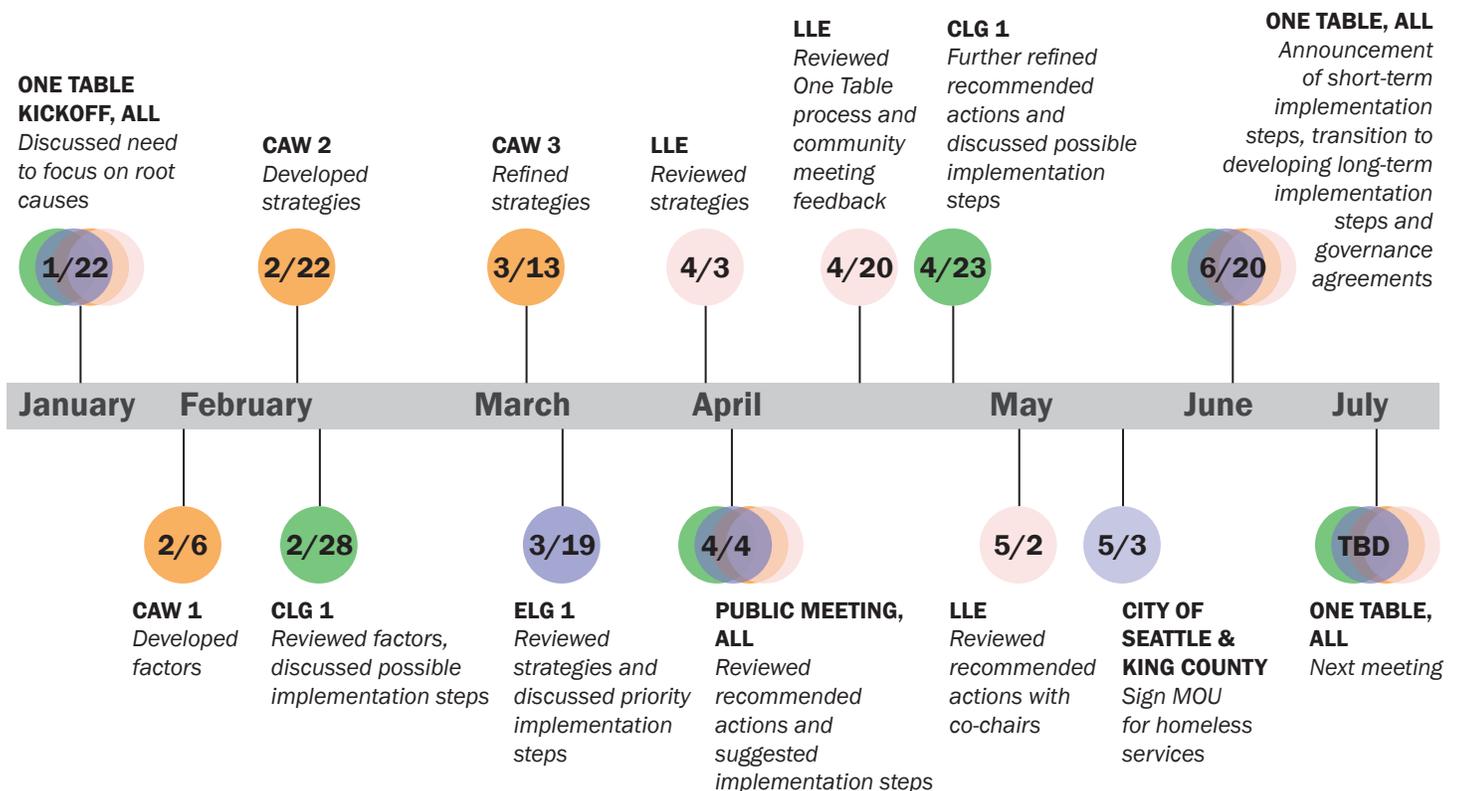
ELECTED LEADERSHIP GROUP (ELG)

Participants	Elected officials from state, county and city governments across King County.
Charge	Participate in the CAW process; provide vision and guidance for process; commit to generating political will to implement scalable solutions

LEADERS WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE (LLE)

Participants	Leaders with lived experience with homelessness and the systems being addressed
Charge	Participate in the CAW process; review strategies separately to leverage their expertise and ensure strategies are poised to make measurable impact

PROCESS



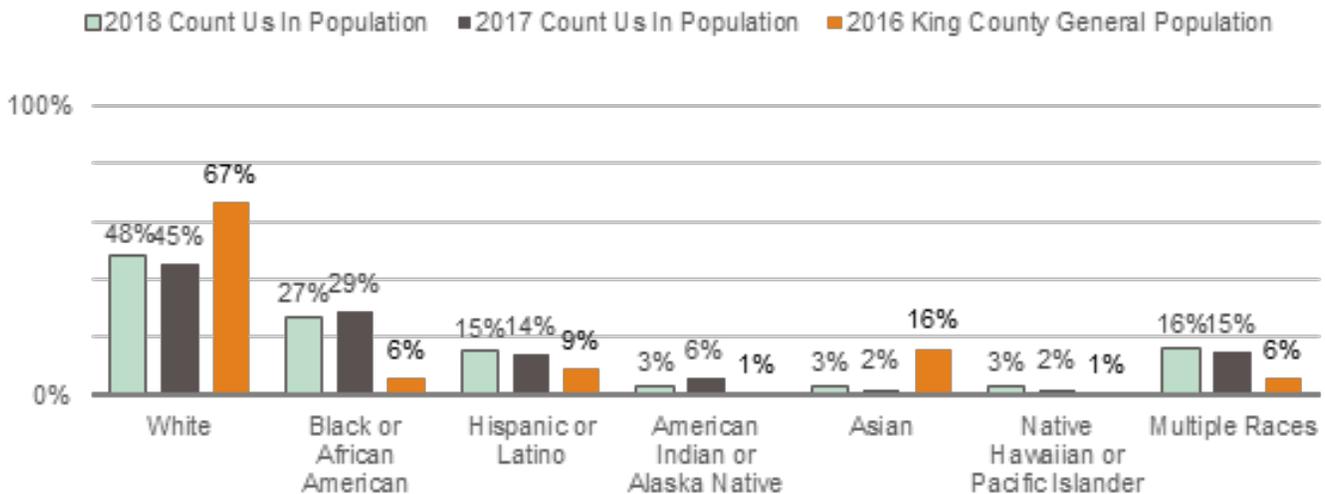
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Racial Justice & Equity Principles

Target services to populations and communities most at risk of homelessness, including:

- People of color
- Immigrants and refugees
- People with disabilities
- People exiting the criminal justice system
- People exiting behavioral health treatment
- Young people exiting foster care



2017 n= 11,643; 2018 n= 12,112

U.S. Census Bureau. (May 2016). American Community Survey 2015 1-Year Estimates, Table DP05: ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates. Retrieved from <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

Note: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) gathers data on race and ethnicity through two separate questions, similar to the U.S. Census. For the purposes of this report, race and ethnicity are presented together. Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100.

NOTE: These numbers are approximate, based on the results of the 2018 Count Us In effort. For multiple reasons, people of color are likely under-represented in the point-in-time count.

Support workforce training in:

- Institutional racism and bias
- Harm reduction models
- Trauma-informed care

Recruit and retain a workforce that represents people being served by:

- Funding programs that employ peers with homelessness and behavioral health lived experiences
- Funding programs providing culturally-relevant services
- Funding services provided by communities of color

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Action Statements



Having a current county-wide gap of approximately 90,000 housing units that are affordable to very low income households is a major risk factor for these households becoming homeless. The community **should preserve existing low income housing, utilize public land whenever possible, adopt innovative solutions to utilize existing housing supply, implement effective policy tools and incentives to better utilize the private market, reduce displacement, increase financial resources for housing solutions, and intentionally serve individuals exiting jail, foster care, and behavioral health treatment facilities with a race and equity lens.**



Create a **housing stabilization fund to achieve zero exits into homelessness** (including zero inappropriate evictions), with a focus on preventing homelessness for those with the most acute need.



Provide **on-demand behavioral health services** that are racially, ethnically and culturally appropriate, flexible, person-centered, mobile, peer-focused, and trauma-informed.



Offer a **comprehensive service package for all foster youth aging out of care** to increase stability throughout their transition.



Strive to achieve **zero bookings for charges that are a direct result of homelessness and behavioral health crises**, through diversion and compliance requirement reform done through a racial justice lens. Study cost offsets from reduced jail use and redistribute savings to fund diversion programs.



Ensuring access to employment opportunities that can cover market rate housing costs in King County reduces the risk for homelessness. The community should **scale employment programs across the county over two years to train and employ people who are disproportionately at-risk of homelessness and secure private and public sector commitments to hire program graduates.** Employment programs to be scaled will include government, community-based and social enterprise programs and will be designed to accommodate the needs of all individuals at risk of homelessness and provide them with employment and wages that support them and their families.

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ROOT CAUSE: Affordable Housing

CURRENT STATE

89,745 more affordable homes needed for households earning less than or equal to 50% Area Median Income (or \$40,460/year for a family of 4*)

* Source: U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy Data, 2014.

FACTORS

Rising rents	High and increasing housing production costs (land and construction)	Restrictive land use and zoning regulations	Lengthy permitting time	Limited housing types	Restricted access to affordable housing units	Lack of financial resources to support affordable housing
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HIGHLIGHTED STRATEGIES

IMMEDIATE	LONG-TERM
<p>IMPLEMENTATION WITHIN 3 YEARS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Actively promote transfer of public land to build more affordable homes.  Expedite permitting and reduce fees to build more affordable homes.  Endorse and enforce tenant protections.  Increase financial resources at the local, state and federal level to build more affordable housing. 	<p>IMPLEMENTATION IN 3-10 YEARS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Enact land use policies countywide that increase density and require affordable housing, especially at high capacity transit stations.  Support alternative housing types that better serve the needs of diverse cultures and people exiting behavioral health or criminal justice systems.  Expand non-traditional homeownership options that are more affordable and better address diverse cultural needs.  Fund longer-term rent supports.  Affirmatively market housing programs to communities of color and diverse cultural communities.

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ROOT CAUSE: Behavioral Health

CURRENT STATE

31% of low-income clients seeking mental health services did not receive same day intake

Source: King County Department of Community and Human Services, Behavioral Health and Recovery Division, 2018.

On average of the past few years, approximately **10%** of Western State Hospital patients are discharged into homelessness

Source: Western State Hospital data for civil detention patients.

FACTORS

Inadequate on-demand access to treatment

Lack of individualized care

Lack of a stable workforce to meet demand and care needs

Insufficient care coordination between systems

Inadequate access to housing resources

HIGHLIGHTED STRATEGIES

IMMEDIATE

IMPLEMENTATION WITHIN 3 YEARS



Develop and expand behavioral health approaches shaped to individuals' unique needs.



Create a housing stabilization fund to pay rent in order to preserve housing while people are receiving inpatient treatment.



Fund an incentive pool so that behavioral health providers bring services to people whether in housing, shelters or unsheltered.

LONG-TERM

IMPLEMENTATION IN 3-10 YEARS



Expand care options that connect individuals experiencing behavioral health crisis with peers who have similar lived experience, and create peer crisis respite houses in all communities throughout King County.



Expand and improve opportunities in the behavioral health workforce for people with lived experience, particularly for people of color.



Provide resources for inpatient treatment programs to find stable, long-term housing for people exiting treatment.

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ROOT CAUSE: Child Welfare

CURRENT STATE

34% of youth who age out of foster care in King County become homeless within one year

Source: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, *Youth at risk of homelessness: Identifying key predictive factors among youth aging out of foster care in Washington State*, 2015.

FACTORS

Key transition points compromise stability (i.e., moves, reunification, aging out, permanency placement)

Implicit bias inherent in decision-making within the child welfare system

Institutionalized racism creates and upholds barriers to stability

HIGHLIGHTED STRATEGIES



IMPLEMENTATION WITHIN 3 YEARS



Provide ongoing training in racial bias, racial disproportionality and institutional racism for everyone who influences the child welfare system.



Increase investments in family reunification.



Provide counseling, training and behavioral health services for families at risk of child welfare system engagement.



Implement a campaign to increase foster families of color and increase availability of foster placements for youth of color.



IMPLEMENTATION IN 3-10 YEARS



Recruit, incentivize and support people of color and/or people with lived experience in the child welfare system to become social workers.



Broaden the extended foster care program to provide youth up to age 25 with comprehensive, person-centered services.

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ROOT CAUSE: Criminal Justice

CURRENT STATE

King County's Department of Adult & Juvenile Detention has about

3,000 adult bookings into jail per month

Source: King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention, Detention and Alternatives Scorecard, 2017.

Compliance charges (for failure to comply with expectations of parole, bail, etc.) **represent about 40% of bookings** for those booked into a King County jail four+ times in a 12-month period

Source: King County Department of Community and Human Services, Familiar Faces Population Analysis, 2016.

FACTORS

Lack of early interventions

Shortage of diversion supports

Reentry system that sets individuals up for failure rather than success

Budgeting prioritizes criminal justice/corrections over services

Lack of housing for people with criminal justice system involvement

HIGHLIGHTED STRATEGIES

IMMEDIATE

IMPLEMENTATION WITHIN 3 YEARS



Work with the criminal justice system (judges, staff, and law enforcement) to increase understanding on homelessness and housing needs.



Pass fair housing laws in King County and local municipalities that support housing choices for individuals with criminal records.

LONG-TERM

IMPLEMENTATION IN 3-10 YEARS



Conduct an analysis of current criminal justice investments to determine if any can be redirected to early intervention, diversion and behavioral health services.



Divert low-level homelessness-related bookings to services rather than jail.



Human-centered and racially explicit review and redesign of compliance requirements so that they do not penalize homelessness and poverty.

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ROOT CAUSE: Employment

CURRENT STATE

Nearly **50%** of King County households* earn less than \$75,000 per year, the income needed to afford the typical 2-bedroom apartment in King County**

* Source: United State Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2016. <https://factfinder.census.gov/>

** Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition. Out of Reach Report. 2018. http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/00R_2018.pdf

FACTORS

Low wages

Lack of job readiness, including supportive services

Lack of social capital and networks

Implicit bias inherent in employers' hiring practices

HIGHLIGHTED STRATEGIES

IMMEDIATE

IMPLEMENTATION WITHIN 3 YEARS



Scale *King County Jobs Initiative* and increase other dedicated funds for training pathways in high wage jobs for groups most at risk of homelessness.



Change employment program policies to allow for more flexible funding to address needs of individuals and prevent homelessness.



Train housing and homeless service providers on income/employment referral options.



Create a system that encourages employers to adopt initiatives from a menu of actionable options (including training, internships, education, and hiring preferences) that address racial inequities in hiring.

LONG-TERM

IMPLEMENTATION IN 3-10 YEARS



Create Summer Academies for at-risk youth in middle school.



Place more high-quality teachers, counselors and community-based mentors in the highest poverty middle schools to support youth in need/at risk.