



Affordable Housing

Objective:

Shape a built environment that allows communities to flourish

Strategy:

Partner with the public and private sectors to ensure the availability of a wider range of affordable housing resources and supportive services

Why is this strategy important?

No one agency in King County can meet the demand for affordable housing. The King County Housing Authority, our region's largest affordable housing provider, has had to cap its Section 8 wait list at 2,500 households at a time when supply falls short of demand. In 2011, when it held a lottery to give households a chance of being selected for future openings on its Section 8 wait list, 25,000 households applied over the two-week period of the lottery.

Even for those considered the most vulnerable, such as homeless families, the housing supply falls far short of the demand. As of October 2012, over 1,000 homeless families are on King County's coordinated wait list for transitional or permanent housing.

For these reasons, it is necessary that King County partner with the public and private sectors to ensure the availability of a wider range of affordable housing resources and supportive services.

How is our performance?

Through the Committee to End Homelessness in King County (CEH), King County as a region has come together like never before to tackle the lack of affordable housing, particularly for those experiencing homelessness. CEH is made up of representatives from business, faith, social services, government, homeless and formerly homeless people and advocates. It is working to implement the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness in King County. Our plan seeks to end homelessness, not just continue to manage it by working to increase homeless prevention efforts, create new units of permanent housing, and provide the supportive services necessary to help people maintain that housing.

In 2011, 679 homeless housing units were opened in King County. This brings the total number of units opened from 2005 through 2011 to 5,046, slightly more than halfway to the overall goal for the Ten Year Plan.

To maximize and prioritize its funding for affordable housing and support services, King County coordinates closely with public and private funding partners. In 2011, it coordinated a successful Combined Notice of Funding Availability that allocated \$55.6 million from seven funders and 17 different fund sources to support housing projects across King County. For its work, the Funders Group

received national recognition by Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, naming it one of the "Top 25 Innovations in American Government."

When going through a funding allocation process, all affordable housing funders, including state funding partners, coordinate very closely to ensure support for the highest priority local projects. King County works with our funding partners to coordinate common goals, plans and policies, and to message those goals, plans and policies to stakeholder affordable housing providers and private market actors that are interested in partnering to create the range of housing options needed to accommodate the growth of our region.

What can you do?

There are many ways communities can be involved:

- Become informed and advocate for community solutions for homelessness. Persuade our elected officials that we can and must end homelessness now.
- Take up a collection to provide first month's rent and deposit for homeless individuals or families that service providers are trying to place in housing. Jewish Family Services administers a non-denominational program coordinating such donations.
- Work with your church or service organization to support a landlord who is willing to rent to formerly homeless individuals. Groups might guarantee rent or offer to fix up an available rental unit.
- Provide life coaching/mentoring in partnership with a service provider to an individual transitioning into permanent housing.
- Make "welcome kits" or volunteer to help someone move into a new home. Visit United Way of King County to find agencies who would benefit from this type of help, or other volunteer opportunities at <http://www.uwkc.org/volunteer>

Moving forward

King County will continue to refine and apply best practices and system coordination enhancements to end homelessness, create additional affordable housing opportunities and further access to housing. King County is working with numerous jurisdictions and planning partners to most efficiently meet the demand for affordable housing. Through the Growing Transit Communities Initiative and other efforts, it is planning for affordable housing to be built in areas with access to mass transit, jobs and other opportunities and amenities.

Related Links

[Committee to End Homelessness](#)

[National Alliance to End Homelessness](#)

[Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness](#)

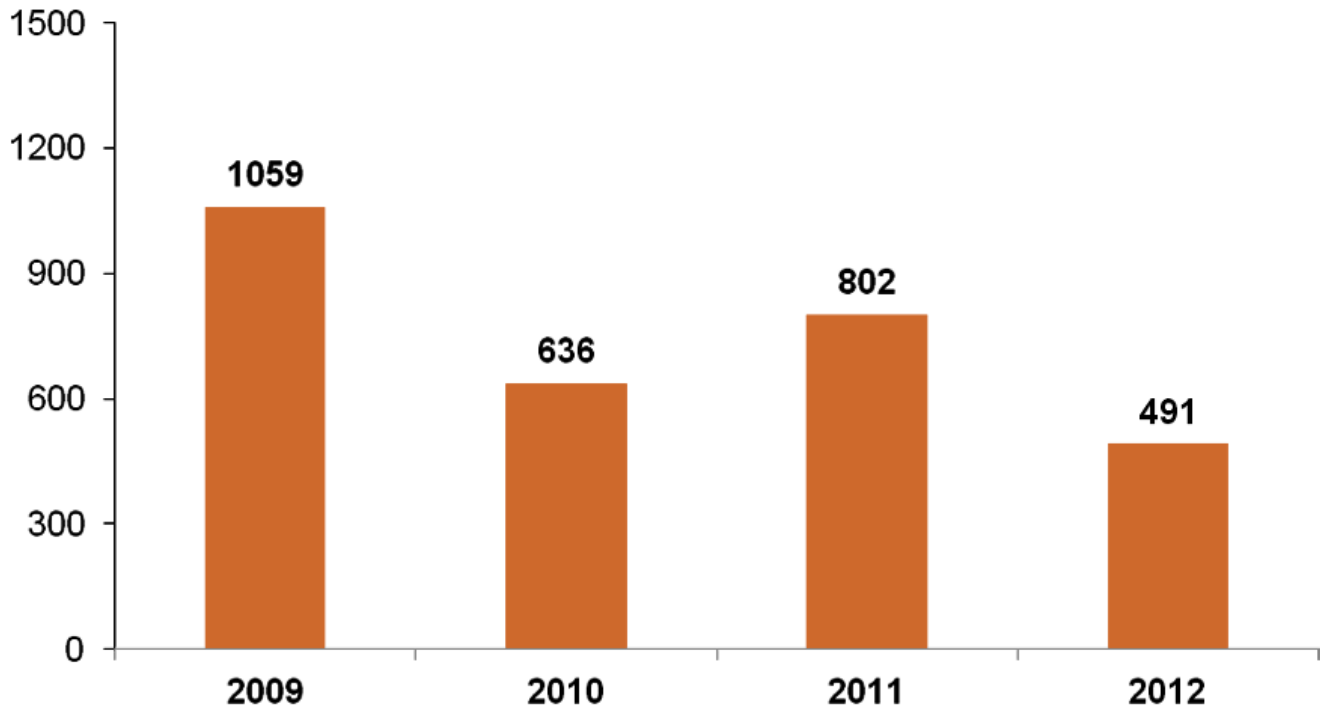
[United Way of King County -- Ending Homelessness](#)

Technical Notes

Homeless Housing Units: System-wide refers to all housing units, not just those funded or managed by King County. From CEH 2011 annual report.

Charts and Maps

Number of Dedicated Homeless Housing Units Secured System-Wide



Data Source: King County Department of Community and Human Services