



Department of Commerce

Homelessness 101

PROGRAMS/FUNDING/INTERVENTIONS

Jefferson Spring

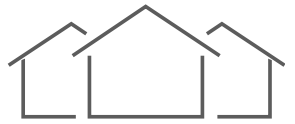
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAMS MANAGER

11/13/19

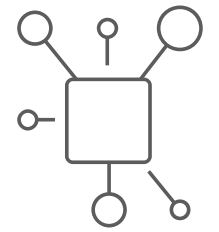




We strengthen communities



HOUSING / HOMELESSNESS



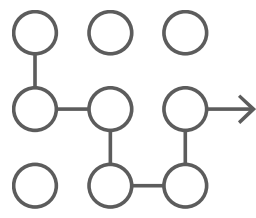
INFRASTRUCTURE



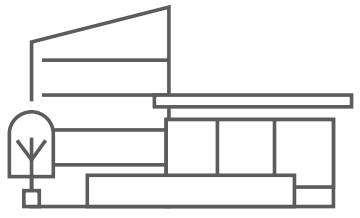
BUSINESS ASSISTANCE



ENERGY



PLANNING



COMMUNITY FACILITIES



CRIME VICTIMS / SAFETY



COMMUNITY SERVICE



State Homeless Housing Strategic Plan

- **Our Vision – No person left living outside**
- **Our Mission - Support homeless crisis response systems that efficiently reduce the number of people living outside, and that when scaled appropriately can house all unsheltered people**
- **Guiding Principles –**
 - All people deserve a safe place to live
 - Urgent and bold action is the appropriate response to people living outside
 - Interventions must be data-driven and evidence-based



What is Homelessness?

- **Two Federal Definitions**

- Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):

- People in places not meant for human habitation OR in shelters or transitional housing
 - Losing primary nighttime residence AND lack the resources to remain housed
 - Fleeing domestic violence
 - Exiting institutions after stays of less than 90 days

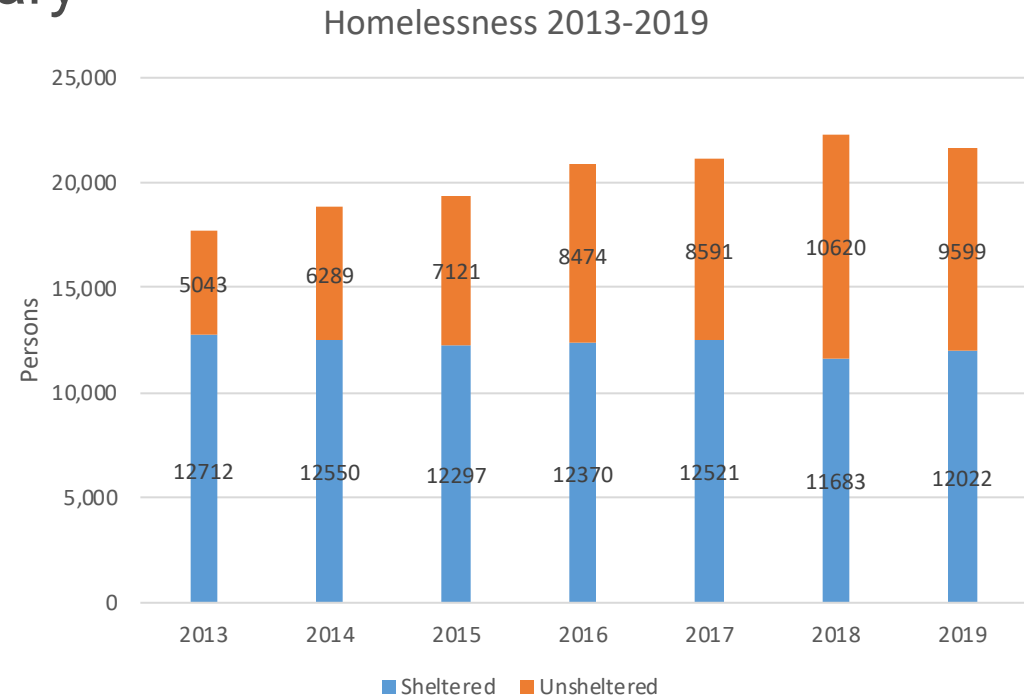
- Department of Education

- All of the above, plus those doubled up d/t loss of housing or economic hardship

How Many People are Homeless

- **Point in Time Count**

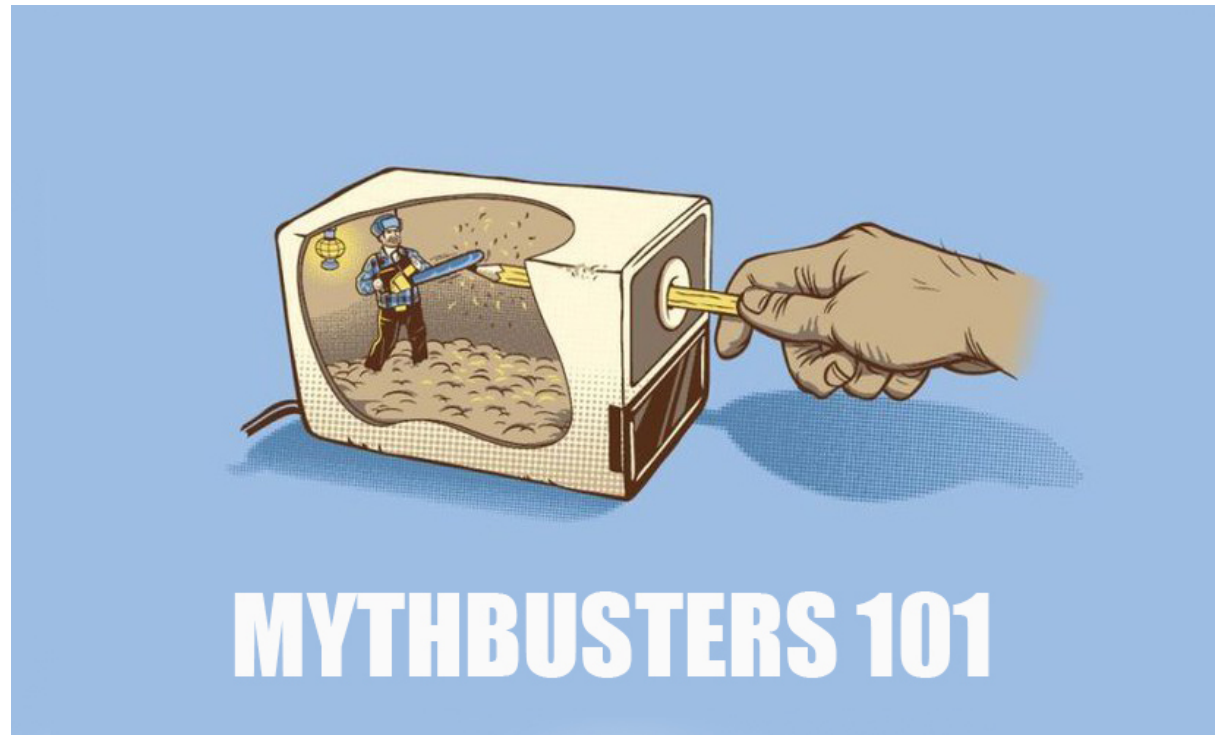
- Usually the last Thursday of January
- 2019 - 21,621 persons homeless:
 - Sheltered: 12,022 *persons*
 - Unsheltered: 9,599 *persons*



Drivers of Homelessness

- **Most often assumed drivers:**

- Criminality
- Choice
- Substance abuse
- Mental health
- Unemployed





Drivers of Homelessness

- **Most often reported:**
 - Loss of employment or income
 - Could not afford rent increase
 - Unexpected expense, often medical
 - Domestic violence
 - Health or inability to care for oneself
 - Lack of safety net or network impoverishment

“...this is my story...”



It's the Rent!

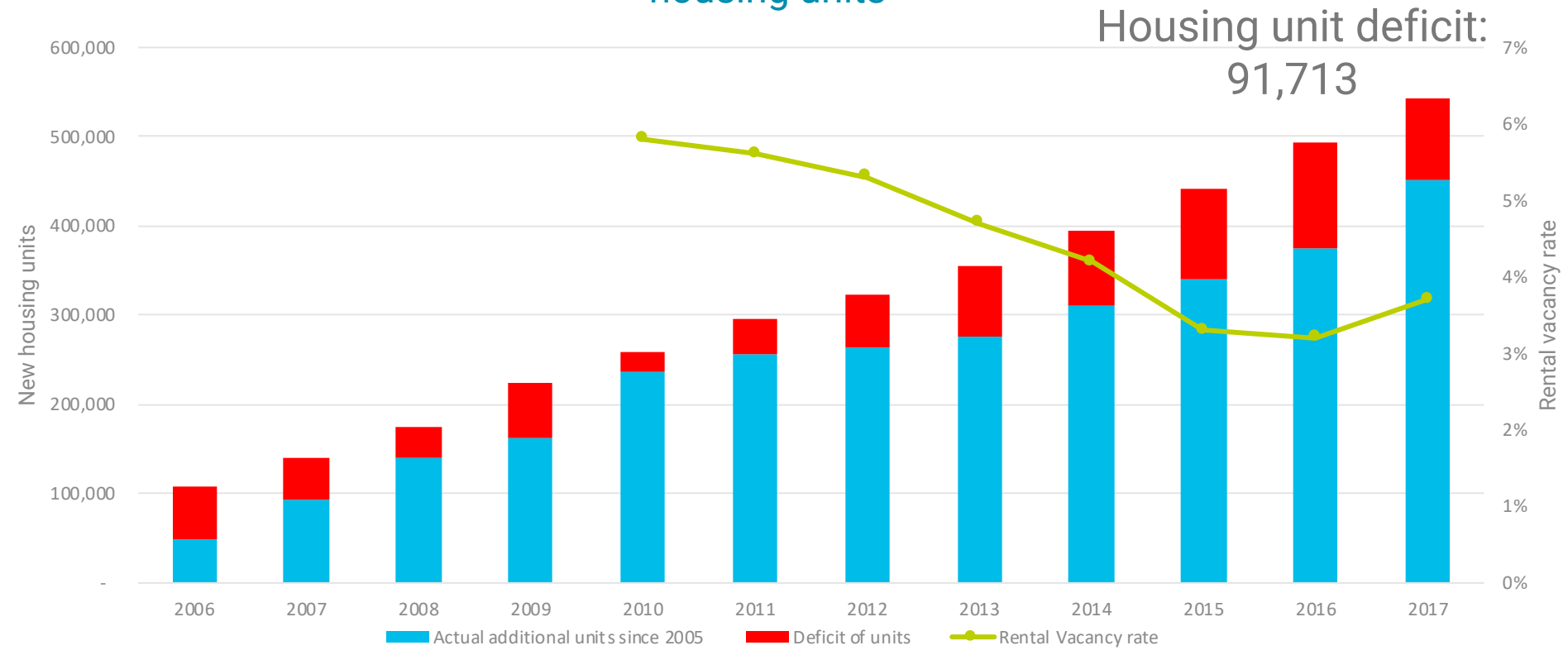
- **Homelessness has increased recently primarily because rents have increased**
 - \$100 increase in rent is associated with:
 - 6% increase in homelessness in metro areas
 - 32% increase in homelessness in non-metro areas
 - This relationship between rent and homelessness means all things being equal in Washington +\$100 in rent = 2,900 (+14%) more people experiencing homelessness at a point in time

Source: Journal of Urban Affairs, *New Perspectives on Community-Level Determinants of Homelessness*, 2012



Why Are Rents Increasing?

Deficit of new housing units necessary to maintain 2005 ratio of people to housing units





What Works?

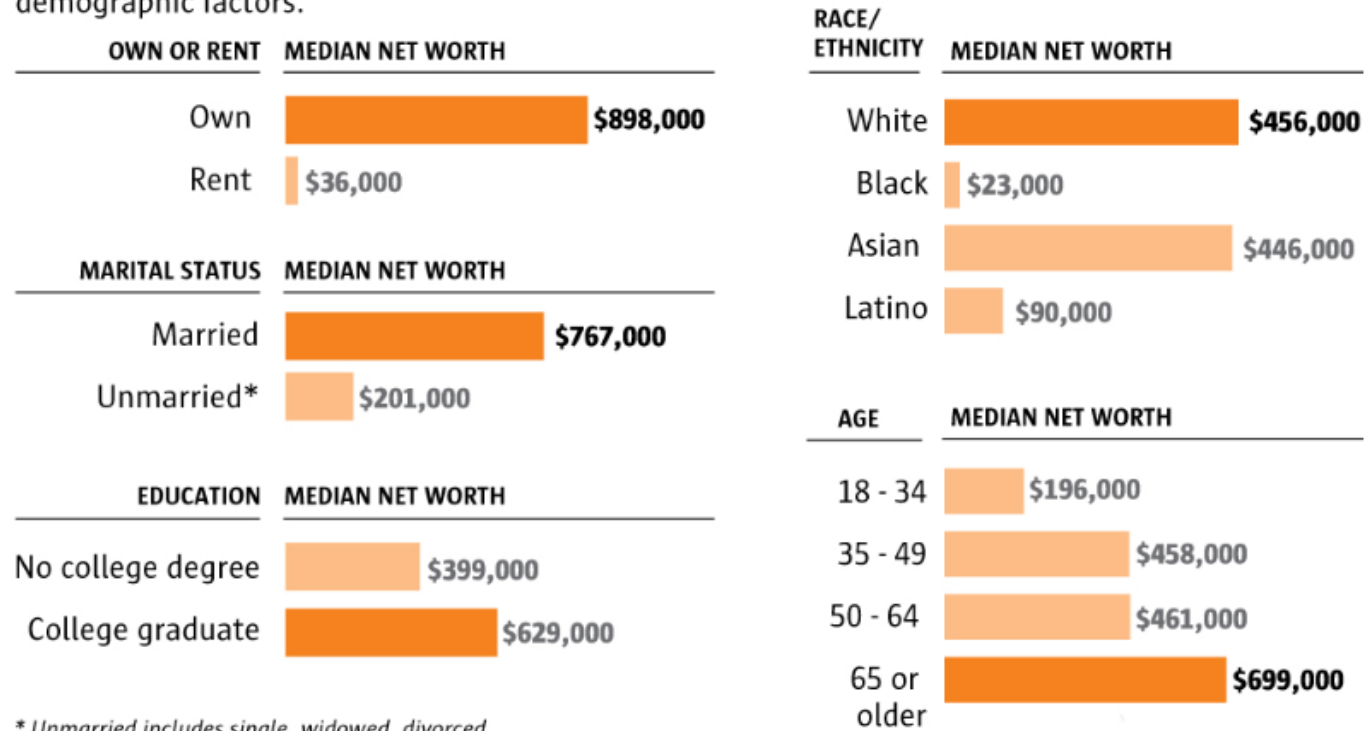
- **Housed people are not homeless! To get there, we need**
 - Homeless crisis response systems that are:
 - Trauma-informed
 - Provide rapid access to housing
 - Low barrier
 - Coordinated
 - Addressing racial and ethnic disparities



One Measure of Oppression

Seattle's net-worth gap

The median household net worth varies greatly depending on home ownership, race and other demographic factors.



* Unmarried includes single, widowed, divorced

Source: Axiom NetWorth Gold/Nielsen

MARK NOWLIN / THE SEATTLE TIMES



Funding Sources – 2019-2021

- **Local**
 - Homeless Housing Surcharge on Real Estate Transactions (aka “document recording fees”)
 - Currently - \$70.00 per transaction
 - Fee on real estate transactions
 - Collected in every county
 - 65% stays in county; 35% to Commerce (CHG)



Funding Sources – 2019-2021

- **State – through Commerce**
 - Consolidated Homeless Grant - \$32.8M
 - Housing and Essential Needs - \$69.6M
- **State – other agencies**
 - DSHS
 - Bridge housing vouchers
 - Department of Corrections
 - 3-month bridge housing vouchers
 - Healthcare Authority
 - Bridge subsidies



Funding Sources— 2019-2021

- **Federal – through Commerce**
 - Emergency Solutions Grant - \$5.4M
 - HOME Tenant-based Rental Assistance - \$11.6M
- **Federal - Other**
 - Continuum of Care - \$15M
 - HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)?
 - HUD Section 8 (aka Housing Choice Voucher)?



Where Does the Money Go?

- Funds are pooled each biennium
- Distribution by formula
 - # people in poverty
 - # people unemployed
 - # people homeless receiving DSHS Medical Assistance w/ SMI
 - Historical spending patterns
- CHG funding to every county



Interventions—What the Money Buys

- Emergency shelter—*temporary housing*
- Transitional housing—*temporary housing*
- Rapid re-housing—*permanent housing, temporary subsidy*
- Permanent housing with services—*permanent housing,...*
- Homelessness Prevention



Permanent Housing Subsidies

- **New work—and still learning and growing**
- **Permanent Supportive Housing - \$3.8M (2019-2021)**
 - Subsidies for FCS-eligible clients – 4 pilot agencies
 - Subsidies for clients assisted by HARPS – distributed to all 8 HARPS teams
- **Requires adequate funding from Legislature**
- **Coordinated entry not geared to discharges from psychiatric or other institutions**
- **Enable the connection between institutions, service providers, and subsidy providers.**



And Then...

- Questions...



Thank you!

Jefferson Spring

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Department of Commerce

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