



1 INTRODUCTION

There is a pressing need for housing and services for individuals in East King County experiencing homelessness. Homelessness in Bellevue has long been an issue, but has become increasingly visible over the past several years. In response, the city has made increasing investments in the network of response to homelessness, including investments in facilities, services, and enforcement. Many of these efforts are coordinated with other cities on the Eastside, including City Council policy direction making it a City Council Priority to work with regional partners to establish an eastside permanent winter homeless shelter.

Since the winter of 2008, Bellevue has hosted a low barrier men's shelter, located at interim sites in four different neighborhoods, Crossroads, Northeast Bellevue, Bel Red and Wilburton. A day services center has also operated in Downtown Bellevue. Recognizing the inefficiencies of moving the shelter every year or two the City Council set a goal to establish the shelter at a long-term location. This focus on a men's shelter is part of a regional Eastside approach to increasing shelter capacity. The city worked through ARCH (A Regional Coalition for Housing) to identify a potential site for the men's shelter. At the same time, Redmond continues to host a shelter for youth and young adults, while Kirkland is working to establishing a new shelter for women and families.

In Bellevue, work began to identify a publicly owned site in a predominantly commercial area, close to transit and supportive services. The shelter would be operated by Congregations for the Homeless (CFH). They have operated the existing low barrier men's winter shelter with success in addition to their year-round rotating shelter, which has served men experiencing homelessness since 1993. CFH is a local agency that began as an arm of the Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council. CFH has extensive wrap-around services for men including case management and life coaching, access to subsidized housing, and until mid-2016 operated a day services center in Downtown Bellevue. When it was determined that housing could also be part of the Eastside Men's Shelter and Supportive Housing Project, CFH turned to an existing local partner in the non-profit housing development community, Imagine Housing. Imagine Housing (formerly St. Andrew's Housing Group) owns and operates almost 500 affordable apartment units across the Eastside.

On August 1, 2016, City Council approved moving forward with additional investigation of a potential site for a shelter and day services center for single adult men. The City Manager was directed to enter into a letter of agreement with King County to evaluate the county-owned property adjacent to the Eastgate Transit Center and Park & Ride and the Eastgate Public Health Center, at 14350 SE Eastgate Way. The property location could support a structure of sufficient size to accommodate an overnight shelter, a day services center as well as affordable housing units. The Joint Letter of Agreement is available here:

www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Parks/letter-of-agreement-bellevue-public-health-site-8-2-16.pdf

The investigation phase approved by the City Council last August included direction to:

- Process Land Use Code amendments and rezone property consistent with the Eastgate I-90 Comprehensive Plan
- Assure that the Eastside Men's Shelter and Supportive Housing Project would be developed consistent with the Eastgate I-90 Vision
- Negotiate an agreement for use of the property with King County and the development partners
- Develop a detailed program and funding strategy for the project and assist in seeking funding to support the project
- Lead community outreach to collect feedback from the immediate and broader community.

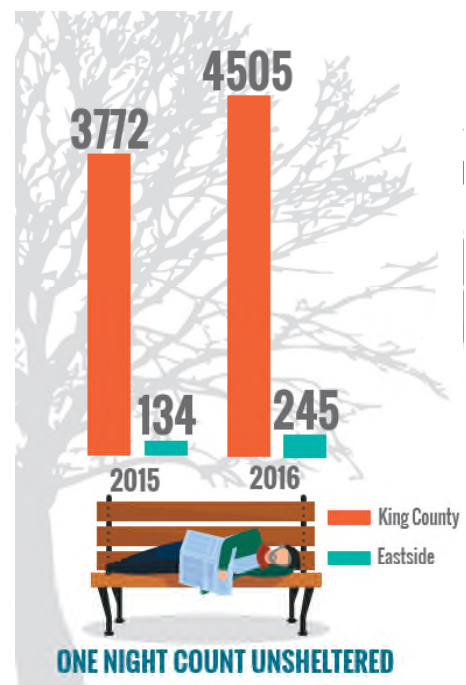
Consistent with the commitments made above, city staff and project partners, Congregations for the Homeless and Imagine Housing, have been researching best practice examples and presenting the concept of this project to public groups and individuals for the past nine months. In November 2016, an update was provided to the City Council. At that update, the Council was presented with a summary of the key themes of public comment around the proposal, as well as a report relating to crime data in Bellevue around the existing interim shelter. In order to address public feedback, a series of reports were promised to provide the council and community with additional information about the proposed project, along with best practices in shelter design and operation, identification of potential secondary impacts, and approaches toward mitigation if the project were to proceed at the proposed site. Those reports are contained in this document.

Taking Action in Bellevue

The City and the broader Bellevue community have been taking actions to address homelessness for many years, with approaches designed to be both compassionate and pragmatic. This includes efforts to keep people from falling into homelessness, to provide subsidized housing, to work with community partnerships on rotating shelters, and other efforts. The goal is to prevent homelessness if possible, and when it does occur, to transition individuals back into stable housing as soon as possible.

Nonetheless, personal crises will occur and there has been a steady demand for emergency shelter beds in Bellevue and on the Eastside resulting in the current interim shelter averaging 85 individuals per night. This experience informs the scope and the scale of the proposed Eastside Men's Shelter and Supportive Housing Project. The proposed emergency shelter would have the same capacity as the shelter currently operating at an interim location.

The city has responded to homelessness not only through supporting funding for the men's winter shelter, but also through policies and funding through A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) for affordable housing projects in Bellevue and throughout the Eastside. Some of these projects include



support services for residents to increase housing stability. The city continues to invest housing funds in ARCH to maintain and build new affordable housing throughout Bellevue and the eastside.

Including affordable housing in the men's shelter project represents an opportunity to continue steps toward providing a diversity of housing types and affordability ranges within Bellevue. Affordable housing has been the top community concern in Bellevue resident surveys on human services needs for decades. A housing component can also be part of a larger system of offering pathways out of homelessness, which is the ultimate goal.

The proposed Eastside Men's Shelter and Supportive Housing Project brings together multiple program elements (overnight shelter, day center and affordable housing, all with supportive services) that have existed in Bellevue individually into one building in order to provide more comprehensive support services to those experiencing homelessness. To discover what has worked (or not worked) in other communities, research into best practice examples and case studies has taken place and is presented in more detail in this report. Some key findings from that research include:

- The importance of designing the building in a way that promotes dignity and respect for both the people making use of the programs and those in the surrounding neighborhood.
- The need to consider impacts on a broad area around the proposed facility, with a plan to monitor and address any undesirable activity.
- The necessity of building ongoing relationships with neighbors and the community through a Good Neighbor plan.
- The advantages of creating sufficient space within the building to accommodate a wide variety of services partnerships to assist people working their way back to housing stability.
- The value of creating a pathway to housing stability that anyone engaging in services can access through a combination of support services targeted to their specific needs and personal accountability.

Development Team

The interests of the City of Bellevue and King County are defined in the Joint Letter of Agreement referenced above. Both agencies have identified the need for shelter, homeless services and affordable housing and have committed to take action to expand the availability of these resources in East King County. However, the Eastside Men's Shelter and Supportive Housing Project will not be a city- or county-owned or managed facility. If the project moves forward, the city's role would be one of funder (through ARCH) of operations and capital costs, and of permitting and regulating the development. King County's role is as property owner, provider of services through Public Health, and funder of services and capital costs. In partnership with ARCH, the city established relationships with two non-profit service providers to investigate the feasibility of the project at the Eastgate location. If the project goes forward, these entities would take the lead in constructing, operating and maintaining the proposed building. These two local agencies, both founded in Bellevue with missions to serve the Eastside, know the community well and understand the community culture.

Congregations for the Homeless

Mission: The Congregations for the Homeless mission is to end homelessness on the Eastside by helping men make the transition from life on the street to stable, independent living.

History: Created as an agency of the Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council, the Congregations for the Homeless (CFH) men's shelter first opened its doors in 1993. Founded and operated by volunteers, the year-round shelter program was created with the mission to provide a warm, safe, hospitable place for single men to sleep and be nourished with three healthy meals each day. Over the years, the shelter program has added access to showers, laundry, computers, medical assistance, and dental services. A housing program was added in 2006 to assist shelter users in obtaining and maintaining stable housing. In 2008, CFH began operating a winter shelter in Bellevue and opened a day center (also in Bellevue) in 2012. A street outreach staff person was added in 2014.

Imagine Housing

Mission: Imagine Housing develops affordable housing, builds welcoming communities and fosters vibrant futures.

Vision: "Our vision is an Eastside with interconnected and welcoming communities where all people can live, learn, work and play."

History: St. Andrew's Housing Group (SAHG) – later to become Imagine Housing – was founded in 1987 by members of Saint Andrew's Lutheran Church in Bellevue. In 1992, SAHG opened its first housing development, Andrew's Arms, providing 14 units of affordable housing in Issaquah. Since that time, Imagine Housing has worked diligently to develop and operate affordable housing communities throughout East King County. Today, Imagine Housing's 485 affordable living apartments are home to nearly 1,100 individuals in Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Mercer Island, and Redmond.

Research & Due Diligence

Working from City Council direction, and in response to feedback from the community, four reports are prepared and included in this document. The following chapters explore:

- Proposed project and program design
- Community feedback synopsis from city-led outreach efforts
- Best practice research and case studies
- Surrounding area impact assessment with preliminary mitigation options

Each chapter can be read and understood as a stand-alone document. However, there is value in reading each chapter in the order presented. The project design chapter conveys what is known about the "who, what, when and where" of the proposed project. The following chapters convey the "why." Information from these chapters should track back to the project and program design, as community feedback, best practice research and assessment of surrounding area impact are critical components of the project design.

Links for more information On Homelessness in Bellevue and King County

Homelessness on the Eastside: Statistics

http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Parks/mens_homeless_shelter_infographic.pdf

Bellevue Human Services Needs Update 2015-16

http://www.bellevuewa.gov/humanservices_needs_update.htm

Bellevue Affordable Housing Strategy

<http://www.bellevuewa.gov/affordable-housing.htm>

Communities Count: Social and Health Indicators across King County

<http://www.communitiescount.org/>

All Home: Homelessness in King County, Demographics and System Performance

<http://allhomekc.org/the-problem/>