

North Star Overview

Planning Commission, January 14, 2025

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Tonight's Goal:

Provide an overview of the North Star Collaborative with focus on North Star's efforts in addressing housing affordability.

Proposed Agenda:

- North Star - Overview & Background
- Structure and Priority Population
- Vision
- Strategic Pillars
- Accomplishments
- Housing Task Force
- Future Workplan
- Questions & Answers



What is North Star and Why?

- Inter-jurisdictional and cross-sector partnership
- It enables us to move from managing community problems to solving them.

Who's Involved?



- Led by Leadership Team composed of four City Mayors and three Skagit County Commissioners.
- Multi-sector Advisory Group and several taskforces provide guidance to the Leadership Team
- City Council collaboration

How is North Star Unique?



North Star Vision

No one in our communities has to live in their car or on the street.

Everyone can get the services they need when they need them.

Our key partners know what North Star is and want to be a part of it.

The Most Vulnerable - Our First Priority



What has North Star accomplished?

North Star Strategic Pillars

Durable Governance, Staffing, and Funding

Effective Community-Based System of Care

Stable, Safe Housing for Everyone

PILLARS

Durable Governance,
Staffing and Funding

Effective Community-
Based System of Care

Stable, Safe Housing for
Everyone

GOALS

Develop enduring and
enabling governance and
operational structures

Further strengthen public-
private partnership

Improve integration of
community voice

Increase capacity and
coordination of behavioral
health services

Improve crisis outreach and
co-response management
system

Expand and strengthen
recovery support services

Build a pipeline of
affordable housing

Ensure pathways to housing
are faster and predictable

Durable Governance,
Staffing and Funding

Created Leadership Team, Advisory Group, Council Convenings. Advisory Group has City Council representatives.

Implemented 3 Task Force Groups: Housing, Recovery and Co-Response.

Selected Vital Conditions for Framework.

Hired staff dedicated to this initiative.

Effective Community-
Based System of Care

Secured over \$40M in new funding.

Broke Grounds on the Skagit STAR Center.

Revamped the Coordinated Entry system.

Implemented Julota, care coordination software.

Stable, Safe Housing for
Everyone

Proposed Aligned Housing/Development Policies – Call To Action!

Secured funds for temporary shelter and permanent supportive housing.

Created funding criteria for workforce housing using county allocated funds.

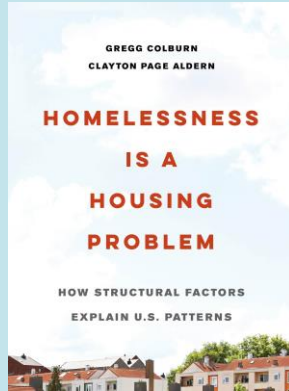
North Star's Housing Vision

Safe, stable housing for everyone.

- 2033 Goal: Communities throughout Skagit County benefit from access to more supply and a diversity of housing sizes, types, and styles.
- Rental vacancy rates are 5%, and residents at all income levels enjoy greater choice.
- Skagit's agricultural land, natural areas, and open spaces are preserved and at least 80% of new construction is within cities and urban growth areas, consistent with Countywide Planning Policies.

Current State of Homelessness

- What are the main drivers of homelessness?



Housing in Skagit County.



\$1,407

average rent

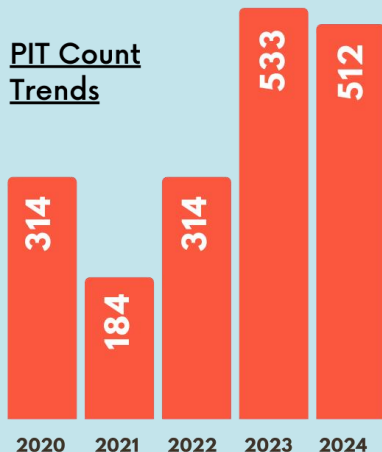


5.9%

highest increase in rent across the state (2-bed apartment)

Homelessness in Skagit County

Point in Time Count



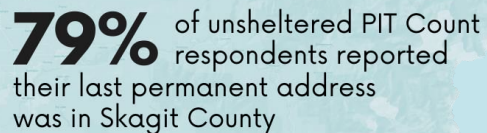
Sheltered vs. Unsheltered



**unsheltered does not include individuals temporarily living with friends or family, those currently in the hospital or at a behavioral health facility, or individuals who are incarcerated*

Race and Ethnicity

Homelessness continues to disproportionately impact communities of color.



79% of unsheltered PIT Count respondents reported their last permanent address was in Skagit County

28%
non-white population in Skagit County

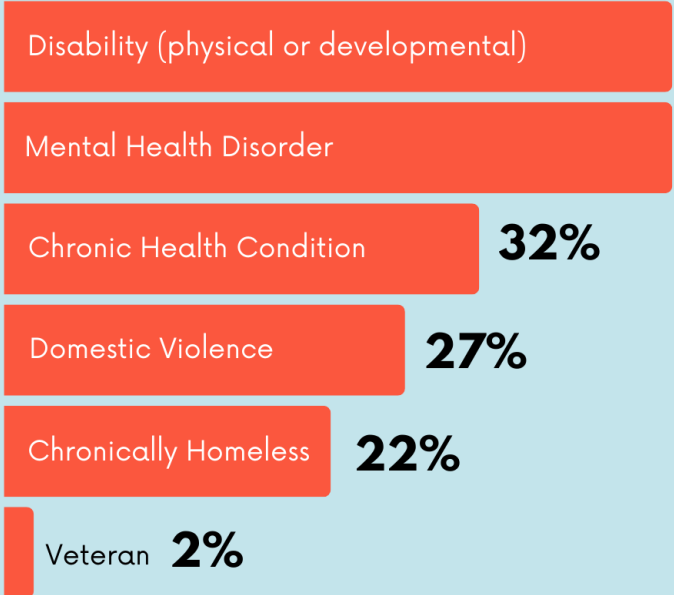
40%
non-white population experiencing homelessness seeking assistance through the Coordinated Entry system

Homelessness in Skagit County

Point in Time Count

Vulnerabilities

Individuals may be represented in more than one group.



32%
children and youth
(age 17 and younger)



20%
55 years
and older



33%
households with at
least one child

North Star's Housing Call to Action

- Allow mixed-use development outright in commercially zoned, transit-served corridors. Relax or eliminate density limits in such areas.
- Adopt "By Right" permitting in residential zones by eliminating discretionary review processes for submitted projects that meet zoning code.
- Reduce parking requirements for affordable housing projects and housing located in transit accessible areas.
- Reduce fees for affordable housing, especially for smaller housing types and centrally located housing with good access to transit, services, and employment.

What's next?

Stable, Safe Housing for Everyone

- Continue to support regulatory changes across jurisdictions to promote faster housing production.
- Increase the supply and diversity of housing sizes, types, and styles:
 - Affordable housing pipeline, including collaborative funding and public land
 - Identify and secure new funding resources
 - Developing plans for a pilot housing model with integrated behavioral health services
 - Develop plans to repurpose an existing facility into transitional housing

Seeking Commission's Input:

- What opportunities and challenges do you see in possible future collaborations between the Planning Commission and North Star?
- How can North Star support your work?

Thank You! Q&A

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