

Scaling What Works: Expanding Shelter Solutions

Council Briefing Presentation

March 16th, 2026

Mayor's Office: Policy & Innovation



City of Seattle

Seattle agrees



Too many people in Seattle are still sleeping outside.



Our shared responsibility to act with urgency and scale the solutions that bring people indoors.

Scaling Shelter Solutions

Expanding proven models that move people indoors and toward stability

UNSHELTERED

SHELTERED

SUPPORTED

HOUSED



Seattle's current landscape

01

4,585 unsheltered people in the Seattle metro area. (2024 Point-in-Time Count)

02

66% of the unsheltered population is chronically homeless.

03

58 shelter programs offering 2,877 beds are directly funded by the City.

04

26% total increase in homelessness from 2022 to 2024 countywide.

2026 Shelter Acceleration Action Plan

Goal: 1,000 new units of shelter and emergency housing in 2026

Seattle is entering a period of major activity—from a busy summer season to FIFA 2026.

We must accelerate shelter expansion for more people to have a safe place indoors.

Key Components of the 2026 Shelter Expansion Goals

1. Rapid expansion of proven shelter models

Scaling microshelter villages, master-leased buildings, and existing shelter programs.

2. Service-rich stabilization environments

Providing 24/7 staffing, case management, and integrated behavioral health support.

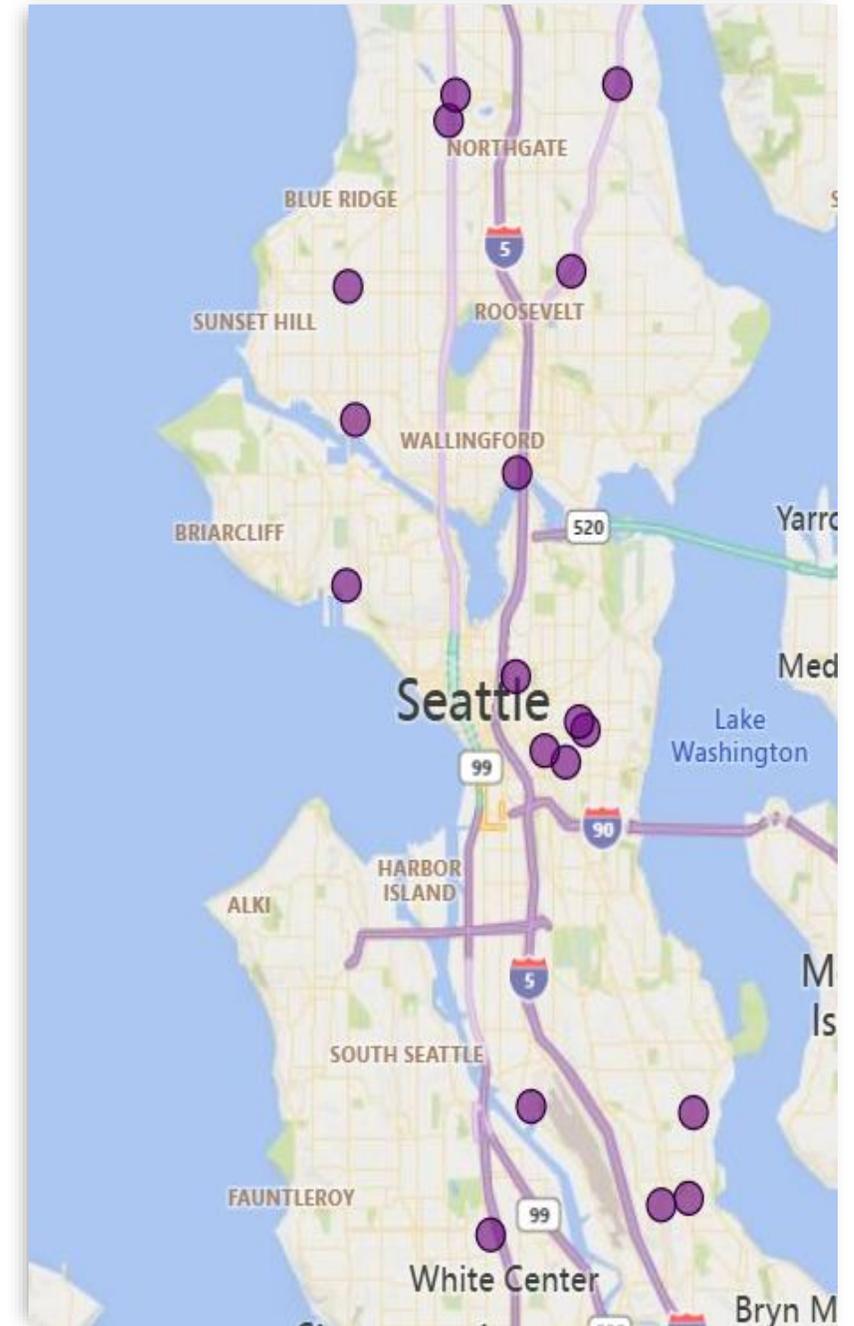
3. Stronger shelter-to-housing pathways

Connecting residents to housing navigation, treatment services, and permanent housing.

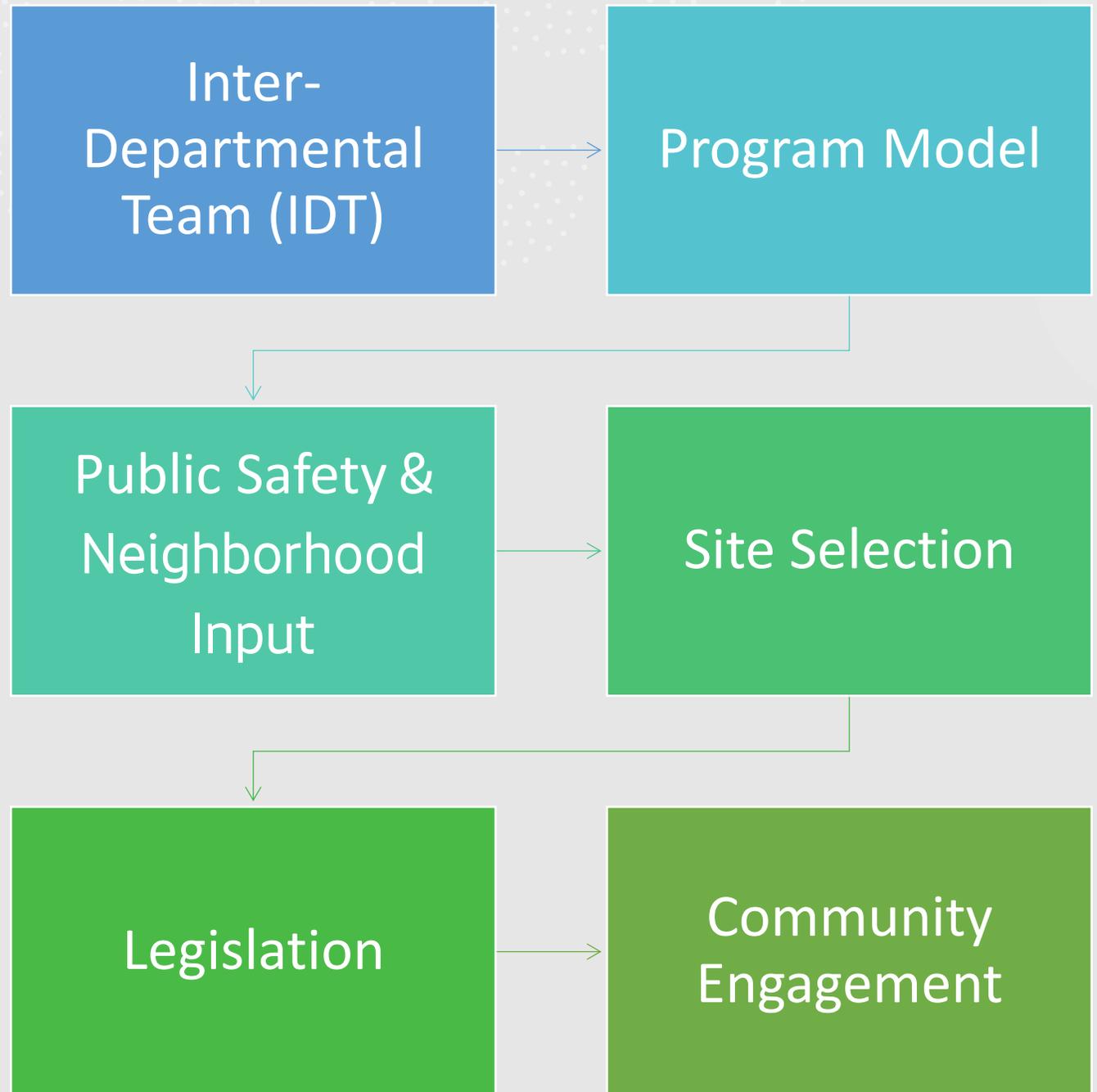
Microshelter Locations Citywide

Proven and Trusted Providers

- Catholic Community Services WW
- Low Income Housing Institute
- Chief Seattle Club
- Purpose. Dignity. Action.



Overview





Phase 1: 500 New Shelter Units

Expand capacity quickly by scaling proven shelter model

Microshelter villages (tiny house villages)

- Private units in a community setting with shared facilities and 24/7 staffing, case management, and behavioral health support.

Expansion of existing shelter programs

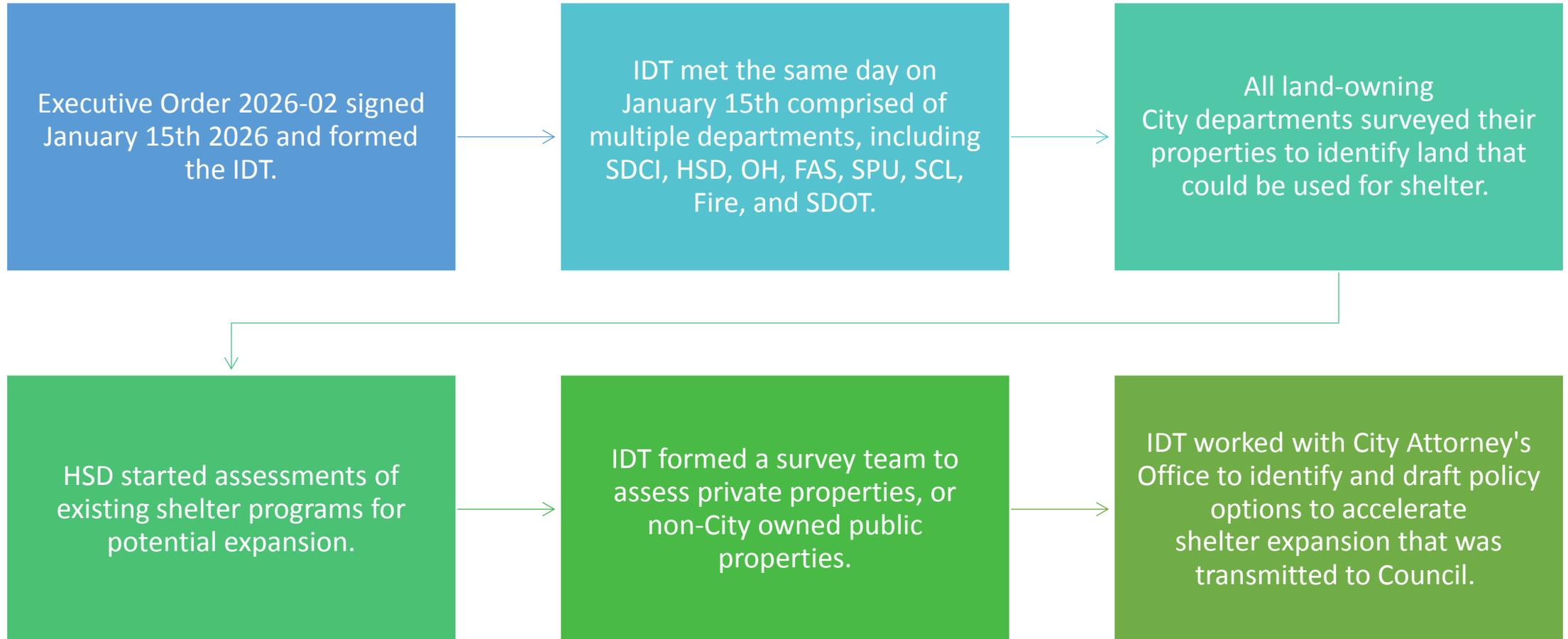
- Increasing capacity at existing shelter sites and programs that are already operating successfully.

Master-leased buildings

- Apartments leased from private owners to use as emergency housing with supportive services.



Inter-Departmental Team Overview



Service Rich Program Model

- On-site **case management and housing and benefits navigation**
- On-site **behavioral health care specialists**, including mental health and substance use disorder treatment, focused on serving individuals with high-acuity needs
- Cutting edge **Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) methods** available to break cycles of addiction and chronic homelessness
- **Daily meals and community kitchen**
- **Move-in assistance and client support funds** to help residents transition into housing
- **Tracked performance measures** like housing placements, utilization rate, MAT enrollment .

Together, these services create a safe environment where residents can address immediate needs and move forward toward permanent housing.

Public Safety is Community Partnership

Safe and welcoming neighborhoods are built through partnership, clear expectations, and shared responsibility.

Operational Safety

24/7 staffing and defined site boundaries

Community Expectations

Resident Code of Conduct
No weapons or illegal activities
Respect for all neighbors and shared spaces

Community Advisory Committee

Monthly meetings with neighbor stakeholders
Ongoing feedback and partnership with operators
Required under SMC 23.42.056

Neighborhood Coordination and Safe Sites

Good Neighbor

Each operator will have a Good Neighbor Agreement with clear policies for addressing neighborhood concerns

Ongoing coordination with neighbors and regular review of site operations

Site Safety Design

Seattle Police Department will work with operators to review site design (CPTED) for lighting, visibility, and access points

Fire Safety Review

Seattle Fire Department reviews site plans before construction

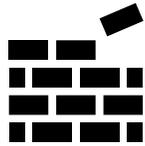
Final walkthrough before opening to ensure fire safety standards are met

Supporting a Successful Launch

The Mayor's Office is committed to a strong program launch focused on community health & safety for all involved.

To accomplish this, ahead of program launch we will convene a space for ongoing collaboration by City Departments, Council, shelter provider, and key neighborhood stakeholders to activate the space and address issues as they arise.

Key Launch Strategies



Strong Safety Planning

Advance public safety through proactive environmental and design changes and rapidly respond to concerns



Deeper Coordination

Support coordination between UCT, SPD, and Mayor's Office on public safety and area activation.

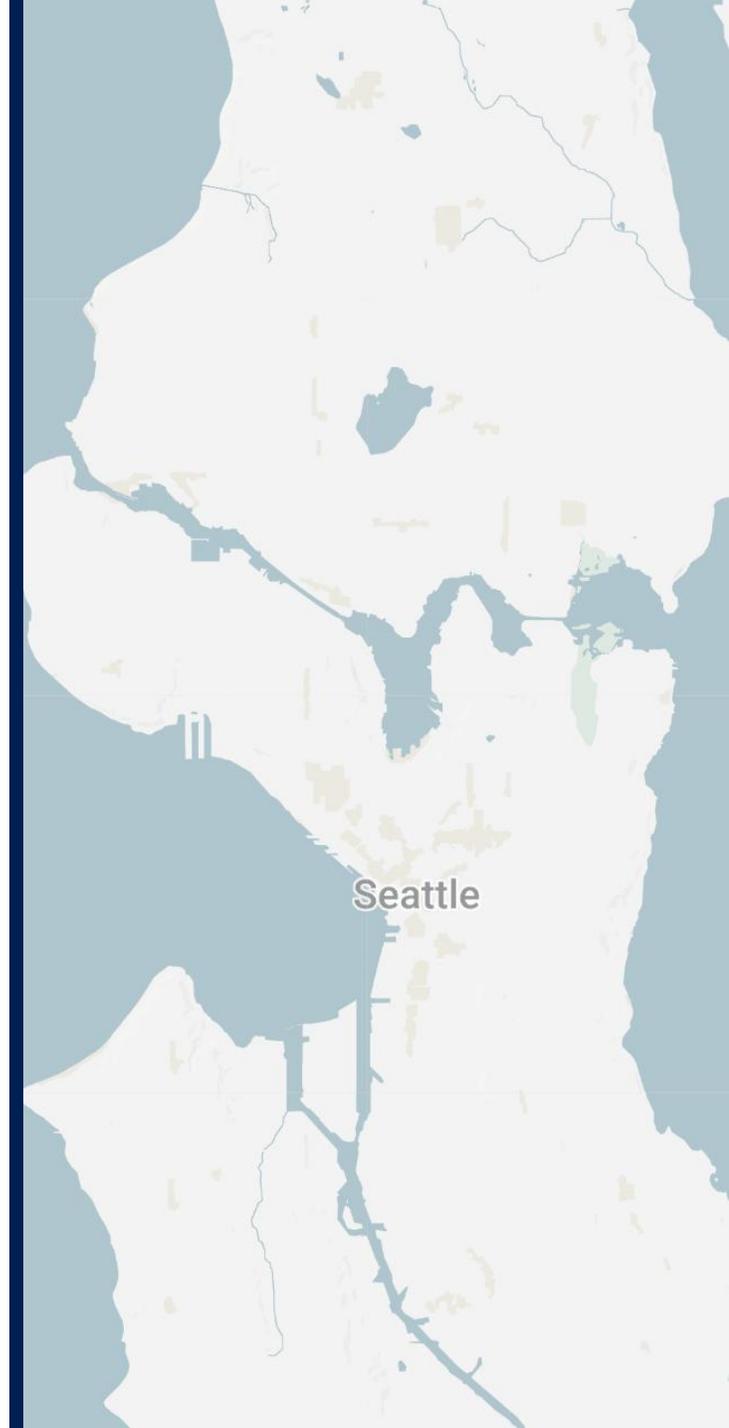


Strong Communications

Ensure neighboring businesses and local stakeholders are informed and engaged.

Community Engagement

- Community meetings to invite neighbors to provide feedback, air concerns, and make suggestions for improvement.
- Outreach to Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), Neighborhood Associations, and others.
- Notification to neighbors, nearby business, local service providers, and other interested parties.
- Invitations to join Community Advisory Committee.





“These neighbors come to us unsheltered. They need respite — a safe place to come off the streets and begin exploring the next housing options that will work for them.”

— Ann Haruki-Pinedo, Central District resident and neighbor of True Hope Village

Site Research

70+ private and public sites identified for assessment.

Non-City public lands reviewed included partners from King County, WSDOT, Sound Transit, Seattle Public Schools, and Seattle Housing Authority.

City owned land by departments funded by rate payers like SPU and SCL are required to charge market rent for their land, however land owned by FAS does not.

Site Assessment

Below selection criteria combines practical operational, infrastructural, environmental, and community considerations to support effective, safe, and equitable site selection.

Selection Criteria – Round One

- Zoning considerations, water service, electric access, sewer service, site conditions, access to public transit, and proximity to critical environmental areas.

Selection Criteria – Round Two

- Fire and life safety, public safety data like priority 911 calls in the area, good neighbor considerations like landscaping, lighting, fencing, stadiums, or business, proximity to existing shelter or PSH programs, and proximity to services and food access.

Owner Support - Confirmation if property owner supports the use.

Path to 500



Legislation – IDT Recommendations

FAS Lease Signing Authority.

By enabling the FAS Director to sign leases early, it enables the City to begin the work to prep sites and turn them over to providers on an accelerated timeline, reducing what would be a 9-12-month process down to a 3-5 month process. The legislation also removes the price cap per square foot to allow for market pricing, which will increase the pool of usable sites.

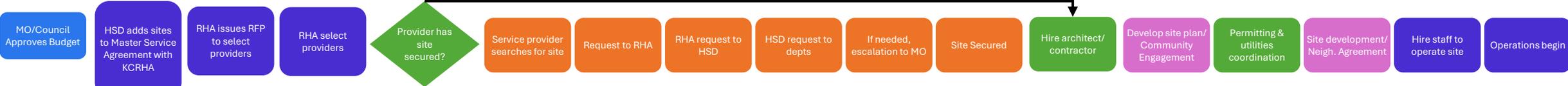
Increase Census Limits on Shelter.

Interim legislation to increase the census limit from 100 **people** per site, to 150 per site, and to allow one site per district to shelter up to 250 **people**.

\$4.8M Proposed Appropriation for Expanding Shelter.

\$3.3M is proposed to be appropriated from an underutilized revolving loan program that was sourced with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) federal funds. \$1.5M is proposed from an unused Downtown Health & Human Service fund, where sheltering people living downtown has a nexus with its intended use to benefit downtown.

Current process takes ~ 9-12 Months



Streamline provider selection

City selects service provider

Shift site preparation from provider to City

City gets sites to 'raw land'

- Site Selection
- Site Development
- Provider Selection
- Community Engagement

IDT-built process shrinks this to ~3-5 months

City Sites Secured

City gets sites to 'raw land'



Shelter legislative package is **key** to unlocking this new process

Develop site plan

Permitting & utilities coordination

Selects contractor to build site

Site development

Final inspections

HSD Selects Service Provider

Service Provider mobilizes

Operations begin

Community Engagement Site Selection

Community Engagement Design

Good Neighbor Agreement

- Site Selection
- Site Development
- Provider Selection
- Community Engagement



Scaled Microshelter Programs Across the Country



Tampa Hope – **355 people** (Tampa, FL)

Jesus Center Shelter – **230 people** (Chico, CA)

West LA Veterans Assoc – **200 people**
(Los Angeles, CA)

CityNet Shelter – **130 people** (Sacramento, CA)

Alexandria Park Village – **135 people** (Los Angeles, CA)

Arroyo Seco Village – **160 people** (Los Angeles, CA)

Sun Valley Village – **165 people** (Los Angeles, CA)

Colorado Village Collaborative – **125 people** (Denver, CO)

*Estimate based on unit counts.

Profile: Tampa Hope Village (FL)

- Serves 355 people
- In operation since 2021
- Operated by Catholic Charities Diocese of St. Petersburg
 - Executive Director Maggie Rogers
- 24/7 staffing
- Mental Health Counseling
- Daily meals, laundry, life skills, and medical care
- Onsite Case Management



Profile:

Junction Point Shelter

Catholic Community Services of W. Washington

85 microshelter units in North Seattle

2025 HMIS Performance Date:

- **69% Exits to Permanent Housing**
- **91% Utilization Rate**
- **97% Retain housing placements**



Profile:
Southend Village
Low Income Housing Institute

40 microshelter units in Southeast Seattle

2025 HMIS Performance Date:

- **57% Exits to Permanent Housing**
- **100% Utilization Rate**
- **95% Retain housing placements**



Program Costs

- City Budget Office identified \$17.5M to support shelter expansion
 - \$3.3M requires Council action from CDBG funds.
 - \$1.5M requires Council action from Downtown Health & Human Services fund.
- Average cost per shelter unit is approximately 28k/unit.
- Mayor's Office is also engaging philanthropy and major donors.



Council Questions and Discussion