

APPENDIX E: MEETING MATERIALS – WORKSHOPS

In August 2023, the Ruckelshaus Center held a series of workshops that focused on the emerging options in different thematic areas, which are listed below. The materials used in these workshops are included on the pages that follow.

Meeting Needs Along the Housing Continuum

Connecting Housing Security and Economic Security

Responding to Holistic Needs

Navigating Flexibility and Consistency

Defining Success and Managing Performance

Shifting Views of Homelessness and Housing Instability

In September and October 2023, the Ruckelshaus Center held a series of virtual and in-person workshops that invited participants to respond to draft principles and recommendations. The materials used in these workshops are also included on the pages that follow.

Virtual Workshop

Puyallup, WA

Virtual Workshop

Spokane, WA

Tri-Cities, WA

Everett, WA

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Pathways to Housing Security in Washington State

FACILITATED DISCUSSION: Meeting Needs Along the Housing Continuum

August 9, 2023

12:30PM-4:30PM (online)

The Washington State Legislature has tasked the Ruckelshaus Center to facilitate discussions to inform principles, options, and recommendations for a long-term statewide strategy for housing security. This is part of a project described in Section 6 of [House Bill 1277](#) and on the [project page](#).

In August 2023, the Center is bringing together a broad range of participants in guided discussions about options that have emerged from previous interviews and small group discussions. The purpose of these workshops is to react to and refine **options for how state policies, resources, and other supports can best contribute to sustained progress toward housing security**. Each workshop is focused on a theme, while holding the whole picture of housing security in mind. For a list of themes and to register for other workshops, go to [this link](#).¹

After these discussions, draft guiding principles and recommendations will be developed. Feedback will then be gathered through virtual and in-person workshops in September.

A final report is due on December 1, 2023.

UNDERLYING PREMISE FOR THE HOUSING CONTINUUM

Housing security is advanced when there is availability and affordability of housing for low and middle income households, housing is stabilized when it becomes precarious, homelessness is prevented when possible, and experiences of homelessness are mitigated as quickly as possible.

Effective programs or policies anywhere on this continuum ultimately depend on the state of the rest of the continuum. The level of complexity everywhere on the continuum necessitates investment in multiple coordinated and cooperative approaches, some with short term and some with long term returns.

EMERGENT OPTIONS FOR MEETING NEEDS ALONG THE HOUSING CONTINUUM

MITIGATE ACUTE HOMELESSNESS

Option 1-1 (Temporary Shelter): Expand the quality, variety, and volume of supported options for immediate, temporary shelter in response to the acute homelessness crisis while linking those options as directly as possible to longer term housing options.

The scale and urgency of the homelessness crisis necessitates difficult choices across equally important factors that can sometimes be in conflict, especially scale, speed, and quality. Perspectives differ widely about what achieves sufficient quality, and careful and transparent consideration is needed for choices that will inevitably be necessary but not adequate. Variety and flexibility in what can be funded helps better match local investments to individual and community perspectives on quality and helps expand the possibilities in navigating tradeoffs between quality on the one hand and speed and scale on the other.

¹ <https://ruckelshauscenter.wsu.edu/projects/current-projects/pathways-to-housing-security/2023-housing-security-workshops/>

Examples of the variety desired to temporarily shelter those experiencing homelessness include 24/7 and continuous stay facilities in various configurations; day shelters; overnight shelters; safer encampments with more services; coordinated placements for families and other socially linked people; and support to mitigate the burden on friends and family who temporarily house people.

Supporting explicit and transparent cooperation between the acute response and progress on longer term options will help ensure that acute solutions are not being developed in lieu of long-term ones and also that long term aspirations do not inadvertently get in the way of acute needs.

Option 1-2 (Housing Placement): Support and encourage varied housing placement options and pathways for those who are experiencing homelessness, and better match residents to their types and level of need and to their preferences.

A variety of facilities, structures, and types of requirements and supports are necessary to make it possible to stabilize people based on their circumstances, needs, and preferences — therefore facilitating their pathway to housing security. Examples of desired variety include having both low barrier and conditional models; both permanent supportive housing and temporary transitional support into stable housing; both individual placements and joint placements for those who are socially connected; both individual housing and shared living alternatives; and both renting and home ownership.

An effective housing response necessitates that well-implemented low barrier options be available as entry points for those who, in their current circumstances, would otherwise have no option.

STABILIZE CURRENT HOUSING

Option 1-3 (At-Risk Households): Support individuals or households in meeting unanticipated or excessive expenses that destabilize their housing and contribute to risk of entering or returning to homelessness.

Reducing acute homelessness garners a lot of warranted attention in the response to housing needs, yet for the comprehensive goal of advancing housing security, there is also a need to expand investments that stabilize people whose current housing is at risk. This stabilization is its own key outcome for housing security; it has a mutual benefit as an intervention to prevent homelessness in some cases.

One desired approach to stabilize current housing is to create or expand bridging grants or loans for circumstances that temporarily make it difficult for individuals or households to make rent or mortgage payments on time, such as unexpected home or auto repairs, medical expenses, job loss or reduction, parking and other fines and fees, and pending utility disconnection. Another approach is to provide education and coaching on financial planning skills, home maintenance, and navigating access to available supports and resources.

Option 1-4 (Eviction and Defaults): Shift from policies that merely prohibit eviction to add comprehensive eviction prevention strategies that mitigate the reasons for and impacts of impending eviction for tenants, neighbors, and landlords.

Stabilizing current housing requires access, stability, and safety for renters and homeowners; safety for neighboring tenants or owners; and stability for landlords and lenders of subsidized and affordable housing.

A desired strategy for housing security is to increase the availability of a first line response that does not treat these multiple needs as inherently in conflict. This strategy could include for example, ensuring access to educational and support services that promote both responsible tenants and responsible landlords, relationship building between tenants and landlords, mediation services, subsidizing lost rent and damage costs that can occur during mediation or eviction proceedings, and providing bridge loans or grants that help prevent evictions due to lack of payment (see option 1-3).

This shift does not preclude the ongoing need for formal eviction processes for landlords nor for legal protections for tenants, to be used in cases that cannot be resolved through prevention strategies or in which power imbalances are leveraged to exploit people who are vulnerable.

Option 1-5 (Preserve Housing Stock): Allocate more funds to be used for operations and maintenance to preserve the current stock of subsidized and affordable housing.

Option 1-6 (Local Landlords): Support local landlords with risk mitigation and tailored incentives to participate in sustaining a robust stock of high-quality local affordable housing.

INCREASE SUPPLY OF AND ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Option 1-7 (Alignment with AHAB Advisory Plan): Adopt cooperative strategies that align housing assistance with increasing the supply of affordable housing for renting and ownership.

For options related to affordable housing, the report of this work will cross-reference the Affordable Housing Advisory Board's forthcoming updated plan and encourage alignment and coordination between the approach to affordable housing and the other parts of the housing continuum. It is anticipated that the AHAB plan will include policy recommendations related to identified housing barriers, developed through an extensive information gathering and deliberative process. The issue areas covered include, for example, funding, land, local approvals, regulation, infrastructure, construction cost, expiring affordability, lack of affordable homeownership, financing options, and manufactured home community vulnerability.

Additional desired areas of emphasis that would complement the advisory plan include:

Option 1-7a: In addition to alternatives to traditional housing such as accessory dwelling units, manufactured, and modular homes, support infrastructure and policies to add and improve spaces and services for those who reside permanently in recreational vehicles.

Option 1-7b: Increase diversity and cooperation among builders and developers in the public, nonprofit and private sector with the potential to contribute to growth in affordable housing.

The scale of the need for affordable housing necessitates an all-hands-on-deck approach, which will be more readily achieved by shifting from restrictive funding competitions to approaches that leverage all available capacity and capital in recruiting builders, developers, and housing providers.

This does not preclude the important goal of diversity and rebalancing historic disparities in the recipients of funding. It encourages a shift to achieve this through additive rather than exclusionary strategies such as expanding funding opportunities, explicitly facilitating inclusion, building technical capacity, and matching partners with complementary capacities.

Option 1-8 (Equitable Access): Ensure equitable access to affordable housing for those transitioning from homelessness and most at risk of housing instability.

Increasing the supply of affordable housing is its own key outcome for housing security, and there is widespread agreement that it is also critical to mitigating homelessness – yet there is concern that it is not sufficient. Increasing affordable housing supply needs to be paired with explicit strategies for equitable access. Examples of desired approaches to facilitate access include providing navigators who work across the housing continuum (see option 1-10); covering up-front housing application and deposit expenses; credit repair services; financial planning and education; subsidizing, insuring or providing no or low-interest loans; supporting alternatives to traditional lending, and reducing barriers—such as criminal history—to access.

Strategies to facilitate access designed for those currently and historically least well served, most marginalized, and most excluded from current housing options is often likely to ultimately facilitate access universally for those in need of housing assistance. Conversely, designing access mostly around the

circumstances of the majority of cases of housing insecurity can perpetuate current inequities and exclusion.² While many hold the perspective that some exclusionary policies are warranted for some circumstances, in practice these policies — without alternate strategies for housing options that include those circumstances — are directly counterproductive to the goal of advancing housing security.

CONNECTIONS ALONG THE CONTINUUM

Option 1-9 (Coordinated Entry): Clarify policies, practices, and criteria for the coordinated entry system, with improved communication and engagement from the state and increased support for facilitated cooperation among participating organizations.

Option 1-10 (Coordinated Pathway): Create a coordinated pathway system that follows individuals and households from entry through placement and stability in long term housing.

Advancing housing security requires not only housing options along the continuum but also support for people to successfully move along that continuum. Currently people experience a great deal of difficulty getting from step to step across different providers and disparate systems. Desired features of such a pathway system include, for example, extending the allowable duration of transitional housing and supports, sliding scale eligibility to enable gradual transitions, assigning long term culturally sensitive and trauma-informed navigators who work across systems and services, avoiding repeated enrollment processes, including peer support, increased flexibility around logistical barriers people face in getting assistance, and completing referrals with direct handoffs between providers.

In addition to improving navigation for people experiencing homelessness and housing instability, a coordinated pathway system would foster connections across different aspects of the housing response. Support from the state could come as investments in relationship building among local implementing organizations and increasing engagement across the state and local levels. For example, dedicated “housing security field officers” could work as liaisons to help with alignment across state agencies whose work relates to housing security, with a focus on engaging and exchanging information with local service providers and with people experiencing homelessness and housing instability.

Option 1-11 (Cooperation Across Jurisdictions): Incentivize greater cooperation across geographic and political jurisdictions.

A widely recognized barrier to statewide progress is the potential for a local response to displace rather than resolve local housing challenges. That pattern could be interrupted by requiring cooperation across jurisdictions, which could take various forms from improved communication to coordination to collaboration.

Option 1-12 (Geographic Equity): Support the response in diverse geographies equitably.

Localities with widely variable population sizes, densities and housing markets all currently struggle with housing challenges. Equitably supporting them does not necessarily mean support that is proportionate to the number or percentage of population experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

For example, some issues manifest differently in different places and therefore require different strategies that may be more or less costly. Some comparable strategies cost more on a smaller scale or in different contexts. Some places experience overflow effects from rising housing costs and increasing rates of housing insecurity in other localities.

To be effective statewide, the housing response needs to transparently assess, track and accommodate these variations and avoid moving housing challenges from place to place.

² This aligns with the most recent federal strategic plan’s adoption of a “[targeted universalism](https://belonging.berkeley.edu/targeted-universalism)”² framework (<https://belonging.berkeley.edu/targeted-universalism>).

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Pathways to Housing Security in Washington State

FACILITATED DISCUSSION 2: Connecting Housing Security and Economic Security

August 10, 2023

12:30PM-4:30PM (online)

The Washington State Legislature has tasked the Ruckelshaus Center to facilitate discussions to inform principles, options, and recommendations for a long-term statewide strategy for housing security. This is part of a project described in Section 6 of [House Bill 1277](#) and on the [project page](#).

In August 2023, the Center is bringing together a broad range of participants in guided discussions about options that have emerged from previous interviews and small group discussions. The purpose of these workshops is to react to and refine **options for how state policies, resources, and other supports can best contribute to sustained progress toward housing security**. Each workshop is focused on a theme, while holding the whole picture of housing security in mind. For a list of themes and to register for other workshops, go to [this link](#).¹

After these discussions, a draft of guiding principles and recommendations will be developed. Feedback will then be gathered through virtual and in-person workshops in September.

A final report is due on December 1, 2023.

UNDERLYING PREMISE FOR CONNECTING HOUSING AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

Housing security is advanced when there is availability and affordability of housing for low- and middle-income individuals and households, housing is stabilized when it becomes precarious, homelessness is prevented when possible, and experiences of homelessness are mitigated as quickly as possible.

For people to be stable in housing, their economic status needs to be stable – and for people to maintain economic stability they need to be housed. The housing security of a community is similarly connected to its economy. Actions related to housing security and actions related to income, employment, workforce development, and other forms of economic security need to be mutually reinforcing or at least not inadvertently work at cross purposes.

EMERGENT OPTIONS FOR CONNECTING HOUSING SECURITY AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

SUPPORT HOUSING SECURITY FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING ECONOMIC INSECURITY

Option 2-1 (Income Eligibility Gap): Supplement housing assistance eligibility beyond federal income limits to compensate for the locally disproportionate mismatch between household income and housing costs.

Option 2-2 (Income Eligibility Cliff): Extend housing assistance eligibility to replace binary thresholds with a sliding scale to help people gradually transition to housing stability as their socioeconomic stability also gradually improves.

¹ <https://ruckelshauscenter.wsu.edu/projects/current-projects/pathways-to-housing-security/2023-housing-security-workshops/>

Option 2-3 (At-Risk Households): Support individuals or households in meeting unanticipated or excessive expenses that destabilize their housing and contribute to risk of entering or returning to homelessness.²

Reducing acute homelessness garners a lot of warranted attention in the response to housing needs, yet for the comprehensive goal of advancing housing security, there is also a need to expand investments that stabilize people whose current housing is at risk. This stabilization is its own key outcome for housing security; it has a mutual benefit as an intervention to prevent homelessness in some cases.

One desired approach to stabilize current housing is to create or expand bridging grants or loans for circumstances that temporarily make it difficult for individuals or households to make rent or mortgage payments on time, such as unexpected home or auto repairs, medical expenses, job loss or reduction, parking and other fines and fees, and pending utility disconnection. Another approach is to provide education and coaching on financial planning skills, home maintenance, and navigating access to available supports and resources.

Option 2-4 (Access to Affordable Housing): Ensure equitable access to affordable housing for those transitioning from homelessness and most at risk of housing instability.³

Increasing the supply of affordable housing is its own key outcome for housing security, and there is widespread agreement that it is critical to mitigating homelessness – yet there is concern that it is not sufficient. Increasing affordable housing supply needs to be paired with explicit strategies for equitable access. Examples of desired approaches to facilitate access include providing navigators who work across the housing continuum; bundling services; covering up-front housing application and deposit expenses; credit repair services; financial planning and education; subsidizing, insuring or providing no or low-interest loans; supporting alternatives to traditional lending, and reducing barriers to access such as exclusions due to criminal history.

Strategies designed to facilitate access for those currently and historically most marginalized and least well served by current housing options due to racism, other systemic disadvantages, and exclusionary practices are likely to facilitate access universally for those in need of housing assistance. Conversely, designing mostly around the circumstances of the majority can perpetuate current inequities and exclusion.⁴ While many hold the perspective that some exclusionary policies are warranted for some circumstances, in practice these policies — without alternate strategies for those circumstances — are counterproductive to the goal of advancing housing security.

Option 2-5 (Hire for Experiential Expertise): Employ people in the housing response who have experienced homelessness or housing instability.

People who have experienced homelessness and housing instability have significant relevant experience and expertise to contribute to implementing the response to housing insecurity, and they are also more likely to be able to connect with people currently experiencing homelessness or housing instability. That shared connection and empathy is important to effectively reach and engage people authentically and to build the trust needed to foster stability.

There are particular challenges in implementing this option. One example is wages that are not adequate to afford their housing but may put their eligibility for services at risk. Another is when a history with the criminal justice system excludes people from employment. A process for facilitating

² This is the same as Option 1-3 discussed on August 9 under the theme of *Meeting Needs Along the Housing Continuum*.

³ This is the same as Option 1-8 discussed on August 9 under the theme of *Meeting Needs Along the Housing Continuum*.

⁴ This aligns with the most recent federal strategic plan's adoption of a "[targeted universalism](https://belonging.berkeley.edu/targeted-universalism)"⁴ framework (<https://belonging.berkeley.edu/targeted-universalism>).

exemptions to hiring restrictions on jobs in housing assistance would help to advance housing security by being able to consider an untapped pool of job candidates with valuable experiential and peer support expertise.

Option 2-6 (Coordination with Employment and Income Assistance): Support closer coordination at all levels of the response between housing assistance and programs and services that provide income and employment assistance.

At the level of state and local governments, closer coordination could help ensure mutually beneficial strategy, policy and funding allocations. Examples of desired approaches at the level of service provision include bolstering support for navigators who work across sectors and over time and reducing duplicative eligibility determination processes.

Option 2-7 (Alignment with Poverty Reduction): Cooperate to implement strategies that mutually reduce poverty and housing insecurity.

For alignment with strategies for poverty reduction, the report of this work will cross-reference the recent [10-Year Plan to Dismantle Poverty in Washington](#) and lessons from subsequent efforts implemented in response to that plan, such as the [Economic Security for All](#) poverty reduction model.

FOSTER ECONOMIC STABILITY OF THE HOUSING RESPONSE

Option 2-8 (Financial Stability of Grantees and Partners): Support the financial stability of those implementing the response to housing insecurity by offering diverse funding models to diverse grantees and partners.

The scale of need for homelessness services, housing assistance, and affordable housing necessitates an all-hands-on-deck approach, which will be more readily achieved through implementing organizations with long term stability and enough variety of operational models to meet the diverse needs of the response to housing insecurity. Desired approaches for diverse funding models to support this breadth and depth include leveraging the capital of private sector partners, offering up-front funding alternatives to reimbursement models for smaller organizations, flexibility in covering operational costs, explicitly facilitating diversity in awarding funding, and building technical capacity for financial management.

Option 2-9 (Diversified Revenue): Diversify state revenue sources for housing assistance to decouple it from fluctuations in the real estate market.

Being able to rely on sources in addition to document recording fees for homeless housing services will reduce the inverse relationship to the robustness of the real estate market and create greater alignment across all aspects of housing security.

Option 2-10 (Total Investment and Benefit): Analyze and communicate the comprehensive investments that advance housing security, the benefits they yield, and for whom.

The complexity of housing security as a goal necessitates that investments be assessed using a broad, cross-sector view of the resources being allocated and the benefits that they yield. While taking this holistic view may be more than is feasible with a traditional 'return on investment' analysis, a descriptive mapping, with financial estimates where possible, could be established and updated periodically.

A more comprehensive sense of the scope and scale of all resources that support housing security – and the explicit and implicit priorities that reflects – would include government spending, foregone

government revenue from housing-related benefits such as mortgage tax credits, contributions from nongovernmental sources, and the value of temporary housing provided by friends and family who to those who would otherwise be eligible for public homelessness services and housing assistance.

A similarly comprehensive picture of the benefits and to whom they accrue would include direct recipients of assistance and services; those who receive funding or incentives to provide housing services, develop housing, or rent property they own; homeowners who receive tax credits; employers whose employees' low incomes are supplemented with housing assistance or who benefit from workforce housing investments; and other parts of the government who experience averted costs. Estimations of broader benefits than are typically perceived, such as the relative public costs of permanent supportive housing compared to likely alternate outcomes such as incarceration or hospitalization, can also help clarify the value of the response to housing insecurity.

RESPOND TO THE REALITIES OF THE HOUSING MARKET

Option 2-11 (Local Affordability): Allow local communities to determine what is considered affordable housing and fair market pricing based on their local economic conditions.

Option 2-12 (Housing Market): Compensate for the inability of the housing market to meet housing needs.

For options related to affordable housing, the report of this work will cross-reference the Affordable Housing Advisory Board's forthcoming updated plan. This plan will include policy recommendations related to identified housing barriers such as funding, land, local approvals, regulation, infrastructure, construction cost, expiring affordability, lack of affordable homeownership, and financing options.

These policy approaches and recent increases in the state's investments to expand affordable housing are generally seen as progress. However, there is persistent concern that added housing units will not be consistent with housing needs assessments, that added housing units will not remain affordable in the realities of the current housing market in Washington State, and that there are not adequate mechanisms to incentivize or enforce affordable housing goals.

Further exploration is needed to identify how the state could intervene to respond to the reality that the housing market is not functioning to meet housing needs, and that this is undermining the economic security of the state.

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Pathways to Housing Security in Washington State FACILITATED DISCUSSION 3: Responding to Holistic Needs

August 15, 2023

9:00AM-1:00PM (online)

The Washington State Legislature has tasked the Ruckelshaus Center to facilitate discussions to inform principles, options, and recommendations for a long-term statewide strategy for housing security. This is part of a project described in Section 6 of [House Bill 1277](#) and on the [project page](#).

In August 2023, the Center is bringing together a broad range of participants in guided discussions about options that have emerged from previous interviews and small group discussions. The purpose of these workshops is to react to and refine **options for how state policies, resources, and other supports can best contribute to sustained progress toward housing security**. Each workshop is focused on a theme, while holding the whole picture of housing security in mind. For a list of themes and to register for other workshops, go to [this link](#).¹

After these discussions, a draft of guiding principles and recommendations will be developed. Feedback will then be gathered through virtual and in-person workshops in September. A final report is due on December 1, 2023.

UNDERLYING PREMISE FOR RESPONDING HOLISTICALLY TO PEOPLE'S NEEDS

Housing security is advanced when there is availability and affordability of housing for low- and middle-income individuals and households, housing is stabilized when it becomes precarious, homelessness is prevented when possible, and experiences of homelessness are mitigated as quickly as possible.

A holistic view of homelessness and housing instability recognizes that multiple interacting factors contribute to produce both statewide patterns and individual experiences of housing insecurity. Strategies to change structural, economic, and social factors will be key to a long-term response to housing insecurity. These include the shortage of affordable housing; local land use and planning policies; income and wealth inequality; overreliance on the criminal justice system to address homelessness; and structural racism and other forms of historic and current systemic disadvantage.

The narrative that individual failings are a cause of housing instability and homelessness is outdated and unsubstantiated. It is structural, economic, and social factors that create and exacerbate individual circumstances to make some people more susceptible to housing insecurity than others. Thus, in parallel with structural change it remains necessary to directly address and mitigate those individual circumstances, such as lack of access to adequate wage jobs; lack of access to care for those experiencing behavioral health needs, substance use disorders, chronic illness, or disability; experiences of domestic instability, conflict or violence; or transitions between systems such as foster care, hospitalization, or incarceration.

A person's ability to access and sustain housing necessitates attention to the availability of and their access to the support called for based on their specific circumstances. Therefore, a strategy needs to connect actions and resources related to multiple factors beyond housing in mutually beneficial ways.

¹ <https://ruckelshauscenter.wsu.edu/projects/current-projects/pathways-to-housing-security/2023-housing-security-workshops/>

EMERGING OPTIONS FOR RESPONDING HOLISTICALLY TO PEOPLE'S NEEDS

SUPPORT A PERSON-CENTERED RESPONSE TO HOUSING INSECURITY

Option 3-1 (Matching Housing to People): Support and encourage varied housing placement options and pathways for those who are experiencing homelessness, and better match residents to their types and level of need and their preferences.²

A variety of facilities, structures, and types of requirements and supports are necessary to make it possible to stabilize people based on their circumstances, needs, and preferences — therefore facilitating their pathway to housing security.

Examples of desired variety include having both low barrier and conditional models; both permanent supportive housing for those with complex needs and temporary transitional housing for those awaiting longer term housing options; both individual placements and joint placements for those who are socially connected; both individual housing and shared living alternatives; and both renting and home ownership. Other examples of identified needs for housing options include recovery housing; medical respite and recuperative care facilities; housing responsive to specific needs such as those who are pregnant or caring for infants, youth, older adults, people living with disabilities, or people affected by domestic violence; and residential care facilities for those whose complexity of need is more than can be met in permanent supportive housing.

Option 3-2 (Person-Centered Coordination): Evolve current case management and care navigation efforts into a cross-sector navigation system that responds to the specific needs of individuals and households and follows them longitudinally as those needs evolve.

Currently people and providers experience a great deal of difficulty connecting across different services and disparate systems for health, behavioral health, social, economic, and other kinds of support. A more person-centered approach would strive to align the system to people's lived experiences rather than expecting people to organize their engagement according to the way the system is structured.

Desired features of coordination include, for example, assigning long term culturally sensitive and trauma-informed navigators, avoiding repeated eligibility and enrollment paperwork, redesigning administrative processes to minimize burden and maximize relationship building, funding organizations for the time it takes to build relationships across different parts of the system, providing some funds that follow a person across systems and services, expanding peer support programs, increasing flexibility around logistical and other systems barriers people face in getting assistance, and completing referrals with direct handoffs between providers.

A potential approach is to create a navigator role whose funding, infrastructure, and entry point are not tied to any one service, program, or government agency. The scope and relationships of such navigators would facilitate understanding of and access to eligible services, referrals; integrate support for multiple needs over time; help coordinate teams of providers; and provide continuous follow-up that is inclusive of and tailored to what each client on their roster specifically needs.

Option 3-3 (Holistic Eligibility): Reconfigure eligibility criteria using a cross-sector, multifactorial, periodic assessment designed to help people access the supports they need over time to synergistically stabilize their housing, health, behavioral health, and socioeconomic circumstances.

² This is the same as Option 1-2 discussed on August 9 under the theme of *Meeting Needs Along the Housing Continuum*.

Option 3-4 (Stabilize Precarious Housing): Support individuals or households when circumstances destabilize their current housing and contribute to risk of entering or returning to homelessness.³

To achieve the comprehensive goal of advancing housing security, there needs to be expanded investments that stabilize people who currently have housing. This stabilization is its own key outcome for housing security; it has a mutual benefit as an intervention to prevent homelessness in some cases, whether for those whose acute experience of homelessness has been mitigated with a transition into longer term housing or for those whose housing is precarious and insecure.

One desired approach to stabilize precarious housing is to support people in accessing available services and resources related to the specific ongoing factors that make it difficult for them to sustain stable housing in the context of their circumstances. Suggested examples of this include employment support; income assistance; child care; education opportunities; life skills coaching; health insurance and access to health and behavioral health care; financial services; and legal representation. Another desired approach is to provide bridging grants or loans for unanticipated expenses that may supersede making rent or mortgage payments on time, such as unexpected home maintenance or auto repairs, medical expenses, job loss or reduction, parking and other fines and fees, and pending utility disconnection.

Option 3-5 (Availability of Services): Expand the availability and accessibility of appropriate services to match people’s needs.

Better navigation, holistic eligibility, and stabilization of precarious housing can only contribute to housing security if resources, services and supports are available in proportion to the need.

FOSTER A HOLISTICALLY CAPABLE WORKFORCE

Option 3-6 (Working Conditions): Improve working conditions and supports for the workforce who directly provide homeless services and housing assistance.

Addressing concerns about the wellbeing of the workforce who implement the response to homelessness and housing instability is critical to achieving the goal of advancing housing security.

For strategies to support the workforce, the report of this work will cross-reference the recent report [“Supporting homeless service provider workers experiencing workplace trauma in Washington state”](#). Focused on direct service staff who work in homeless shelters, homeless outreach, and permanent supportive housing, the report offers recommendations to help ensure that the people who provide assistance to some of the most vulnerable residents in Washington can do so in an environment that supports their wellbeing.

Option 3-7 (Core Competencies): Establish universal core competencies in culturally responsive, anti-racism, and trauma-informed principles for providers, administrators, and leaders across sectors, and regularly provide the training needed to put those competencies into practice.

³ This is a version of Option 1-3 discussed on August 9 under the theme of *Meeting Needs Along the Housing Continuum* and Option 2-3 discussed on August 10 under the theme of *Connecting Housing Security and Economic Security*.

Option 3-8 (Hire for Experiential Expertise): Employ people in the housing response who have experienced homelessness or housing instability.⁴

People who have experienced homelessness and housing instability have significant relevant experience and expertise to contribute to implementing the response to housing insecurity, and they are also more likely to be able to connect with people currently experiencing homelessness or housing instability. That shared connection and empathy is important to effectively reach and engage people authentically and to build the trust needed to foster stability.

There are particular challenges in implementing this option. One is wages that are not adequate to afford their housing but may put their eligibility for services at risk. Another is when a history with the criminal justice system excludes people from employment. A process for facilitating exemptions to hiring restrictions on jobs in housing assistance would help to advance housing security by being able to consider an untapped pool of job candidates with valuable experiential and peer support expertise.

CULTIVATE COOPERATION AMONG SYSTEMS

Option 3-9 (Cooperation among Services and Sectors): Support closer cooperation at all levels of the response among agencies, programs, and services that provide interdependent forms of assistance.⁵

At the level of state and local governments, closer coordination could help ensure mutually beneficial strategy, planning, policy, and funding allocations. It would also improve clarity and consistency about terminology, rules, regulations, implementation of new initiatives, and systems for performance management and accountability. At the level of service provision, examples of desired approaches include bolstering support for navigators who work across sectors and over time and reducing duplicative eligibility determination processes.

Other forms of support from the state could come as investments in relationship building among local implementing organizations, including in neighboring jurisdictions when needed, and increasing engagement across the state and local levels. For example, dedicated “field officers” could work as liaisons to help with alignment across state agencies whose work relates to housing security, with a focus on engaging and exchanging information with local service providers and with people experiencing homelessness and housing instability.

Option 3-10 (Align Policymaking): Assess laws and policies in all areas of government for the potential to affect housing security, and assess housing laws and policies for their potential to affect interrelated goals in other areas.

The interdependencies between housing security and many other policy goals, such as economic security, health and wellbeing, and safety, means that policies in these areas do not operate in isolation from each other. A strategy for housing security will rely on cooperative assessments in other policy areas, and those who make housing policy need to be as willing to assess for alignment with the needs of other domains.

Assessing laws and policies for their potential to leverage mutual benefits would include, for example, identifying, tracking, and mitigating potential unintended or counterproductive consequences and estimating how investments in one sector or domain contribute to cost savings in other sectors or domains.

⁴ This is the same as Option 2-5 discussed on August 10 under the theme of *Connecting Housing Security and Economic Security*.

⁵ This is a version of Option 2-6 discussed on August 10 under the theme of *Connecting Housing Security and Economic Security*.

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Pathways to Housing Security in Washington State FACILITATED DISCUSSION 4: Navigating Flexibility and Consistency

August 18, 2023

9:00AM-1:00PM (online)

The Washington State Legislature has tasked the Ruckelshaus Center to facilitate discussions to inform principles, options, and recommendations for a long-term statewide strategy for housing security. This is part of a project described in Section 6 of [House Bill 1277](#) and on the [project page](#).

In August 2023, the Center is bringing together a broad range of participants in guided discussions about options that have emerged from previous interviews and small group discussions. The purpose of these workshops is to react to and refine **options for how state policies, resources, and other supports can best contribute to sustained progress toward housing security**. Each workshop is focused on a theme, while holding the whole picture of housing security in mind. For a list of themes and to register for other workshops, go to [this link](#).¹

After these discussions, a draft of guiding principles and recommendations will be developed. Feedback will then be gathered through virtual and in-person workshops in September.

A final report is due on December 1, 2023.

UNDERLYING PREMISE FOR NAVIGATING FLEXIBILITY AND CONSISTENCY

Housing security is advanced when there is availability and affordability of housing for low- and middle-income individuals and households, housing is stabilized when it becomes precarious, homelessness is prevented when possible, and experiences of homelessness are mitigated as quickly as possible.

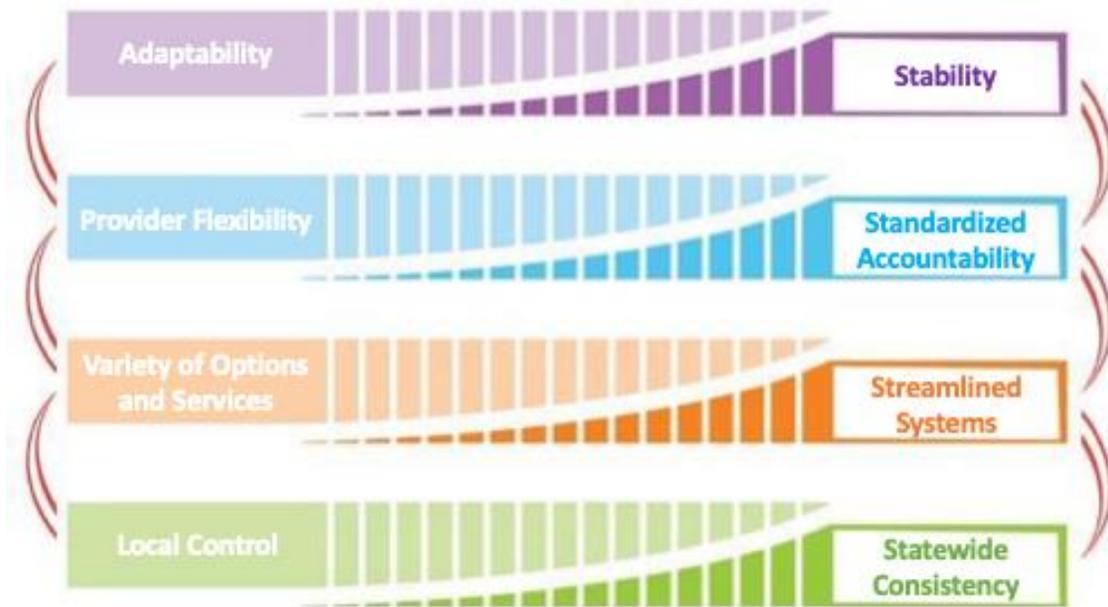
Part of the complexity of housing is that many potentially useful options can sometimes seem to be in conflict. Few aspects of housing have a single right answer that can simply be prescribed and followed; instead, success will come from the additive effect of aligning as many choices as possible in the direction of advancing housing security. Given how readily the landscape can change because of factors outside the control of the response to housing insecurity, success is more likely if a long-term strategy makes the shift from trying to decide between seemingly conflicting choices to discerning how to balance them – which is needed, to what extent, when?

Discerning this is particularly challenging when it comes to how much flexibility is needed in implementing a response to housing insecurity and how much consistency is needed to help ensure that statewide progress is being made. Flexibility and consistency are not all-or-nothing. One is not always going to be right while the other is always wrong. There is a continuum on which the two can be strategically balanced, and then adjusted in response to changing circumstances and considerations.

Multiple dimensions of flexibility and consistency are relevant to the response to housing insecurity, and these dimensions are also interdependent with each other. A decision about where to be on the continuum to resolve a challenge in one dimension can cause a change to another, which may be mutually beneficial or may create new, unintended challenges.

¹ <https://ruckelshauscenter.wsu.edu/projects/current-projects/pathways-to-housing-security/2023-housing-security-workshops/>

INTERDEPENDENT DIMENSIONS OF FLEXIBILITY AND CONSISTENCY



Framework and graphic adapted with permission from [Human Systems Dynamics Institute](https://www.human-systems-dynamics.com/).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR WORKSHOP 4

- 1.1 *What is good about adaptability? What happens if there is too much adaptability? What is good about stability? What happens when there is too much stability?*
- 1.2 *What is good about flexibility in providing housing and services? What happens if there is too much flexibility? What is good about standardized accountability? What happens when there is too much standardization?*
- 1.3 *What is good about having a variety of options and services? What happens if there is too much variety? What is good about streamlined systems? What happens when systems are too streamlined?*
- 1.4 *What is good about local control? What happens if there is too much local control? What is good about statewide consistency? What happens when there is too much statewide consistency?*
2. *What principles should guide decisions about how much flexibility or consistency is needed and in what circumstances?*
3. *What could the state do to help put those guiding principles into practice in the response to housing insecurity?*

EXAMPLES OF DESIRED ASPECTS OF FLEXIBILITY AND CONSISTENCY

FLEXIBILITY	CONSISTENCY
<p><i>Adaptability</i></p> <p>Funding priorities, programs, and service provision need to change as circumstances change.</p> <p>There is a need for public investment in innovation and experimentation to better address housing insecurity.</p>	<p><i>Stability</i></p> <p>Time frames for funding programs and services and for assessing performance need to be longer.</p> <p>Implementers need predictable, stable support for operations and capital expenses.</p> <p>Public funds for housing security need to be used for things with a proven track record of success.</p>
<p><i>Flexibility in Providing Housing and Services</i></p> <p>Providers need to be able to match people to the supports and housing needed for their specific circumstances.</p> <p>Services and housing need to be adaptable in response to different cultural norms and needs.</p> <p>Organizations need flexibility to build relationships and coordinate according to the local context.</p> <p>There is a need to track what matters most in the context of each provider or local context.</p>	<p><i>Standardized Accountability</i></p> <p>Central oversight and guidance are needed to ensure quality and alignment in the response to housing insecurity.</p> <p>Funders need systems of accountability to ensure that funds are being used as intended.</p> <p>There is a need to comparably assess and track what the needs are and how well they are met across different levels and contexts.</p>
<p><i>Variety of Options and Services</i></p> <p>Support for a variety of options for temporary shelter and housing placement is needed to be able to match the patterns of housing insecurity in different geographic locations and specific populations.</p> <p>The variety and accessibility of available services beyond housing needs to be expanded to appropriately match people’s needs.</p> <p>Diversity in funding sources and financing models is needed to support diverse providers and flexible implementation.</p>	<p><i>Streamlined Systems</i></p> <p>Administrative processes, such as eligibility assessments, funding applications, and reporting need to be less variable and less duplicative.</p> <p>People accessing services need the system to be easier to understand and more consistent across providers and agencies.</p> <p>Less variability in services and programs facilitates smooth handoffs and follow up between providers.</p> <p>Services and programs needs to be comparable enough to be able to capture and assess the performance of the whole response.</p>
<p><i>Local Control</i></p> <p>Local policies, regulations, and strategies need to match local possibilities on aspects such as scale and type of housing, land use, available infrastructure, and community acceptability and cultural norms.</p> <p>Local jurisdictions need to be able to adjust what is considered affordable housing, fair market pricing, and eligibility for housing assistance based on their local economic conditions.</p> <p>Strategies developed by local jurisdictions need tailored technical support from the state.</p>	<p><i>Statewide Consistency</i></p> <p>State policies need to override local resistance to best practices in housing security.</p> <p>More consistent statewide policies such as land use, zoning, and permitting policies are needed.</p> <p>Statewide income eligibility standards would facilitate more equitable assistance across localities.</p> <p>Consistent communication and engagement is needed for policy updates and rollout of new initiatives.</p>

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Pathways to Housing Security in Washington State

FACILITATED DISCUSSION 5: Defining Success and Managing Performance

August 22, 2023

12:30 PM-4:30PM (online)

The Washington State Legislature has tasked the Ruckelshaus Center to facilitate discussions to inform principles, options, and recommendations for a long-term statewide strategy for housing security. This is part of a project described in Section 6 of [House Bill 1277](#) and on the [project page](#).

In August 2023, the Center is bringing together a broad range of participants in guided discussions about options that have emerged from previous interviews and small group discussions. The purpose of these workshops is to react to and refine **options for how state policies, resources, and other supports can best contribute to sustained progress toward housing security**. Each workshop is focused on a theme, while holding the whole picture of housing security in mind. For a list of themes and to register for other workshops, go to [this link](#).¹

After these discussions, a draft of guiding principles and recommendations will be developed. Feedback will then be gathered through virtual and in-person workshops in September, with a final report due on December 1, 2023.

UNDERLYING PREMISE FOR DEFINING SUCCESS AND MANAGING PERFORMANCE

Housing security is advanced when there is availability and affordability of housing for low- and middle-income individuals and households, housing is stabilized when it becomes precarious, homelessness is prevented when possible, and experiences of homelessness are mitigated as quickly as possible.

Housing security is complex and the needs are both urgent and long-term. To succeed, a statewide strategy will need to comprise multiple approaches and incorporate mechanisms to assess and adapt as circumstances change. Such a complex response needs a robust framework for gathering and managing information. Policymakers, service providers, and communities need to be able to use that information to sustain progress, adapt to changing patterns, and anticipate potential consequences of those adaptations.

EMERGING OPTIONS FOR DEFINING SUCCESS AND MANAGING PERFORMANCE

Option 5-1 (Multiple Successes): Recognize multiple, co-existing ways of understanding success.

Given the breadth of factors needed to create housing security in thriving communities, a wide range of goals and outcomes are needed to fully reflect progress. Advancing housing security will require the additive effects of successes across multiple domains and across the multiple perspectives of those involved and affected. A long-term strategy will be most effective if it helps the state align and track successes across these domains and perspectives.

For example, for the purpose of reducing the per capita rate of homelessness, a 50% decline can be viewed as a success. However, for those who continue to experience homelessness or housing instability, that overall decline means very little. For them and for the providers who engage with them, the extent

¹ <https://ruckelshauscenter.wsu.edu/projects/current-projects/pathways-to-housing-security/2023-housing-security-workshops/>

to which varied and sometimes complex individual needs are being met is more meaningful. Each of these views of success might need different actions, investments, and timeframes. Rather than resolving a debate about which matters more, the strategic obligation is to discern what combination of investments will contribute to progress on both.

Similarly, given the scale and urgency of the need to mitigate homelessness, increasing the availability of any form of shelter can be seen as a success. However, the quality, accessibility, and acceptability of that shelter also matters, as well as the extent to which there is facilitated access to needed services and more permanent housing options. Success in reaching housing security will also vary depending on a person's specific circumstances. For some, 'self-sufficiency' is looked to as a marker of success. However, expecting self-sufficiency for everyone is unrealistic in the context of an economy in which wages do not keep up with housing costs. Further, for people living with complex behavioral, social, and health needs, high quality permanent supportive housing or residential care may be the benchmark of success.

For every aspect of housing insecurity, specific attention is needed to advancing equity as a parallel dimension of success; otherwise, the gap in getting to housing security will be greatest and longest for those who are most affected and who are historically and currently most marginalized. Defining success using numerical targets alone can result in approaches that default to reaching those who are relatively easy to serve. In parallel to overall targets, reaching those most on the margins can be seen as its own dimension of success, even if it requires a different type and level of investment. Similarly, goals such as building the capacity of more diverse providers can be considered as complementary to meeting short-term targets.

Option 5-2 (Knowledge Management Framework): Develop a comprehensive framework for the role of knowledge and learning in the state's efforts to advance housing security, including performance monitoring, focused evaluation, a prioritized research agenda, and avenues for knowledge sharing.

The success of a complex response to housing security will rely on systematically creating or collecting information, and on using and sharing that knowledge to learn and to enhance performance. A comprehensive framework for managing knowledge in this way would articulate the following:

- *the purposes of gathering information;*
- *how information will be created or collected and used to achieve those purposes;*
- *the complementary roles of monitoring, evaluation, and research; and*
- *the intended users and audiences and how information will be disseminated to them.*

This framework should align across the breadth of state efforts related to housing security, contribute to sustainable management of the response, and adapt to emerging needs. By strategically combining different types of information-gathering, at different scales, and using different timeframes, such a framework can help the state track what matters most, including outcomes, context, processes and experiences, without being limited to what is most measurable as a performance metric.

This would not pre-empt existing monitoring systems and measures for different aspects of housing security. Rather, the purpose would be to use them together to capture and regularly update a picture of housing security as a whole. One desired aspect of this would be to link monitoring data and target setting more closely with financial data, allowing better estimation of what available resources can cover given current costs and capacity in the system.

A strategically coordinated, complementary portfolio of evaluation activities would serve to assess outcomes, context, and experiences that are not captured well by monitoring indicators. A complementary research portfolio could focus on questions that will enhance and advance the effectiveness, scale, quality, and acceptability of supported activities.

Part of a knowledge management framework is to develop systems and processes that institutionalize the most needed exchanges of knowledge. One desired aspect of this is avenues to share timely, secure

data across partner agencies and organizations as needed to effectively support housing goals at individual, community, and state levels while also providing assurances of privacy.

Option 5-3: (Diversity of Knowledge): Use knowledge of various types and from various sources to design, implement and monitor policies, programs, and services.

There is much existing research, evidence, and data about housing and homelessness, yet current practices for collecting and using knowledge have not fully yielded a meaningful and equitable reduction in housing insecurity. Success will be more likely through integrating a broader scope of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, disciplines, and forms of expertise, including the expertise of those most affected by housing insecurity and most directly involved in the response (see option 5-4). Using various forms of knowledge sets aside hierarchical standards based solely on the type of evidence and instead relies on a quality of evidence standard based on making the best possible match between the purpose or question and the type of information and methodology.

Option 5-4 (Experiential Expertise): Amplify the insights and expertise of communities and individuals affected by homelessness and housing instability by including them in making decisions about and assessing the performance of laws, policies, programs, and services related to housing security.

The pathway to housing security will be more robust and effective if there is space for the power and influence of people and communities disproportionately affected by housing insecurity and by inequality in decision-making. Individuals who experience homelessness and housing instability, like all people, are capable, adaptable, and knowledgeable. They are highly qualified to inform services and models of care and should have opportunities to contribute to every level of planning, implementing, and assessing the performance of the response to housing insecurity.

Option 5-5 (Connect Research and Practice): Create platforms for dialogue and cooperation among the research and evaluation communities and the policy and practice communities.

A comprehensive approach to research and evaluation would support several different kinds of desired connections. One is to foster exchange and collaborative relationships across the multiple disciplines that study aspects of housing. This could be done, for example, through platforms for convening and incentives for collaborative multidisciplinary work, especially with disciplines skilled in incorporating the experiential expertise of those who are most directly affected by housing insecurity and most directly involved in the response.

Another desired connection is to structured spaces to bring together those who conduct research and evaluation and those from the many policy arenas and fields of practice who have applied knowledge as well as insights into what aspects might benefit from structured research and evaluation. This will help those who study housing respond to pressing and practical questions, and also make it possible for the research community to proactively identify useful crosscutting or longer-term research questions that might otherwise be missed. Another tactic to achieve this is to collect and communicate research and evaluation questions, even in the absence of research funding; the research community may be able to be responsive using other resources available to them.

Option 5-6 (Total Investment and Benefit): Analyze and communicate the comprehensive investments that advance housing security, the benefits they yield, and for whom.²

The complexity of housing security as a goal necessitates that investments be assessed using a broad, cross-sector view of the resources being allocated and the benefits they yield. While this holistic view may be more than is feasible with a traditional 'return on investment' analysis, a descriptive mapping, with financial estimates where possible, could be established and updated periodically.

² This is the same as Option 2-10 discussed on August 10 under the theme of *Connecting Housing Security and Economic Security*.

A more comprehensive sense of the scope and scale of all resources that support housing security – and the explicit and implicit priorities that reflects – would include government spending, foregone government revenue from housing-related benefits such as mortgage tax credits, contributions from nongovernmental sources, and the value of temporary housing provided by friends and family to those who would otherwise be eligible for public homelessness services and housing assistance.

A similarly comprehensive picture of the benefits and to whom they accrue would not be limited to financial returns and would include benefits for direct recipients of assistance and services; those who receive funding or incentives to provide housing services, develop housing, or rent property they own; homeowners who receive tax credits; employers whose employees' low wages are supplemented with housing assistance or who benefit from workforce housing investments; public scholarship on housing; and other parts of the government that experience averted costs.

QUESTIONS TO SHAPE HOW PROGRESS ON HOUSING SECURITY IS TRACKED

A strategic approach to gathering the knowledge needed to assess the success and manage the performance of the response to housing insecurity will start by identifying the questions that need to be tracked over time. These questions can then be matched to appropriate quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches and data sources. The questions below reflect desired options for a long-term strategy that have emerged during this project's facilitated discussions.

DISCUSSION PROMPTS: For the questions below,

- *What encourages you or concerns about this question?*
- *How would you know whether progress is being made?*
- *What other questions would you add?*

EMERGING QUESTIONS TO TRACK PROGRESS

1. To what extent is the state supporting housing and services that can be tailored to the circumstances, sociocultural context, and preferences of individuals, families, and households?
2. To what extent are laws, policies, and practices reducing disproportionate vulnerabilities to housing insecurity due to structural racism and other forms of systemic disadvantage? In what areas is the state's response exacerbating disproportionate vulnerabilities?
3. To what extent is the state's response to housing insecurity being implemented in accordance with trauma-informed, culturally sensitive, and antiracist practices?
4. To what extent is the state advancing compassion and mutual accountability? To what extent is the state guarding against shame and punishment?
5. To what extent is the expertise of providers and those with lived experience of homelessness and housing instability influencing decisions about laws, policies, programs, and services?
6. What is the distribution of types of providers, organizations, funders, and other actors who participate in implementing the response to housing insecurity?
7. How well is the state incentivizing and facilitating cooperation across jurisdictions and among agencies and services that provide interdependent forms of assistance?
8. To what extent is the state's response to housing insecurity mutually supporting the state's responses to other related challenges?
9. To what extent are the available financial and other resources adequate to advance housing security?

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Pathways to Housing Security in Washington State

FACILITATED DISCUSSION 6: Shifting Views of Homelessness and Housing Instability

August 23, 2023

9:00 AM-1:00 PM (online)

The Washington State Legislature has tasked the Ruckelshaus Center to facilitate discussions to inform principles, options, and recommendations for a long-term statewide strategy for housing security. This is part of a project described in Section 6 of [House Bill 1277](#) and on the [project page](#).

In August 2023, the Center is bringing together a broad range of participants in guided discussions about options that have emerged from previous interviews and small group discussions. The purpose of these workshops is to react to and refine **options for how state policies, resources, and other supports can best contribute to sustained progress toward housing security**. Each workshop is focused on a theme, while holding the whole picture of housing security in mind. For a list of themes and to register for other workshops, go to [this link](#).¹

After these discussions, a draft of guiding principles and recommendations will be developed. Feedback will then be gathered through virtual and in-person workshops in September.

A final report is due on December 1, 2023.

UNDERLYING PREMISE FOR VIEWS OF HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING INSTABILITY

Housing security is advanced when there is availability and affordability of housing for low- and middle-income individuals and households, housing is stabilized when it becomes precarious, homelessness is prevented when possible, and experiences of homelessness are mitigated as quickly as possible.

The ways in which a challenge like housing insecurity is viewed and understood deeply affects the possibilities for how it can be addressed.

People in a range of roles and with varied forms of relevant experience and knowledge have highlighted an array of current views or narratives they describe as being counterproductive to the goal of sustained progress toward housing security. Participants expressed that it will be necessary to proactively shift those views in order to make meaningful progress.

These were not necessarily the views of participants, rather they are views participants perceive as persistent among some in the state.

Examples of Views Described as Counterproductive that Need to Be Shifted

1. "Homelessness is primarily people living on the streets or in the woods."
2. "People are homeless or don't have stable housing because they made bad choices or aren't working hard enough"
3. "People are homeless because they have a mental illness or are on drugs"

¹ <https://ruckelshauscenter.wsu.edu/projects/current-projects/pathways-to-housing-security/2023-housing-security-workshops/>

4. “Evictions cause homelessness”
5. “Living on the streets or in the woods is a crime”
6. “We have to protect the safety of our neighborhoods and houses”
7. “We need to do something about homelessness, but we don’t want those solutions to be here”
8. “We have no choice but to use exclusionary policies and practices that focus on who is not eligible or deserving of help”
9. “We need restrictions on who is allowed to be involved in implementing the response”
10. “Rental property owners/managers are villains and tenants are victims”; “Tenants cause problems and property owners/managers are victims”
11. “We have to decide whether it’s more important to invest in providing homelessness services or in increasing affordable housing”
12. “We have to be able to quantify successes and see a return on investment in financial terms
13. “Everyone has to coalesce around one message”

DISCUSSION PROMPTS ABOUT VIEWS OF HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING INSTABILITY

- *What surprised you or was new to you in the examples of counterproductive narratives?*
- *What narratives are desired?*
- *What are you already doing to amplify those desired narratives?*
- *What are you observing that amplifies desired narratives or reinforces counterproductive narratives?*
- *In what ways might your actions inadvertently be reinforcing counterproductive narratives?*
- *What would help you do more to shift views of homelessness and housing instability?*
- *What actions could the state take to help shift how homelessness and housing instability are viewed?*

EMERGING OPTIONS RELATED TO VIEWS OF HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING INSTABILITY

Prior workshops in August facilitated discussions in response to emerging options in other thematic areas such as *Meeting Needs Along the Housing Continuum*, *Responding Holistically to People’s Needs*, *Connecting Housing Security and Economic Security*, and *Defining Success and Managing Performance*.

Some of those emerging options, repeated below, propose actions that could also contribute to changing how homelessness and housing instability are viewed.

Discussion Prompts

- *How would these options shift views of homelessness and housing instability?*
- *How could you reinforce that shift in your work?*
- *What other actions could the state take to shift views of homelessness and housing instability?*

Emerging Options

Option 6-1 (Multiple Successes): Recognize multiple, co-existing ways of understanding success.

Option 6-2 (Holistic Eligibility): Reconfigure eligibility criteria using a cross-sector, multifactorial, periodic assessment designed to help people access the supports they need over time to synergistically stabilize their housing, health, behavioral health, and socioeconomic circumstances.

Option 6-3 (Variety of Options): Expand the quality, variety, and volume of supported options for temporary shelter and longer-term housing, and better match people to their types and level of need and to their preferences.

Option 6-4 (Diversity in Implementation): Increase the diversity of and cooperation among the organizations and entities who implement the response to housing insecurity.

Option 6-5 (Experiential Expertise): Amplify the insights and expertise of communities and individuals affected by homelessness and housing instability by supporting them to participate in making decisions about, implementing, and assessing the performance of the response to housing insecurity.

Option 6-6 (Core Competencies): Establish universal core competencies in culturally responsive, anti-racism, and trauma-informed principles for providers, administrators, and leaders across sectors, and regularly provide the training needed to put those competencies into practice.

Option 6-7 (Close Cooperation): Support closer cooperation at all levels of the response among agencies, programs, and services that provide interdependent forms of assistance.

Option 6-8 (Total Investment and Benefit): Analyze and communicate the comprehensive investments that advance housing security, the benefits they yield, and for whom.

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Pathways to Housing Security in Washington State

FACILITATED DISCUSSION 1: Strategic Framework

September 8, 2023

9:00 AM-1:00 PM (online)

The Washington State Legislature has tasked the Ruckelshaus Center to facilitate discussions to inform principles, options, and recommendations for how state policies, resources, and other supports can best contribute to sustained progress toward housing security. This is part of a project described in Section 6 of [House Bill 1277](#) and on the [project page](#).

In September 2023, the Center is bringing together a broad range of participants in online and in-person workshops for a guided discussion about the strategic framing of options that have emerged from previous interviews, small group discussions, and online workshops. For a list of dates and venues and to register for other workshops, go to [this link](#).¹

A final report is due on December 1, 2023.

UNDERLYING PURPOSE OF ADVANCING HOUSING SECURITY

Housing security is advanced when housing for low- and middle-income individuals and households is available and affordable, when circumstances of precarious housing are stabilized, when homelessness is prevented as much as possible, and when experiences of homelessness are mitigated as quickly as possible.

Housing security is a cornerstone of a flourishing society and a functional economy because it intersects with so many other factors that contribute to whether individuals, families, communities and the state as a whole can thrive, such as economic security, health, and safety.

STRATEGIC SHIFT TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

In facilitated discussions to date there has been widespread convergence that progress toward housing security will require an increase in the supply of affordable housing, greater availability of and access to a wide range of support services, and more capacity in workforce and infrastructure. Even when imagining a future with more abundant resources and more successful systems, the reality of needing to agree across varied perspectives on resource allocation and implementation models will remain. In developing a long-term strategy, there is interest in shifting the framework for seeking that agreement.

Across a wide range of roles, perspectives, and experiences, people –using different language, contexts, and lenses – have observed a common pattern in the current systems of responding to housing insecurity: policies and practices often foster exclusion in ways that are counterproductive to the goal of advancing housing security. This pattern was described in many aspects of this complex

¹ <https://ruckelshauscenter.wsu.edu/projects/current-projects/pathways-to-housing-security/2023-housing-security-workshops/>

issue, sometimes as an unintended consequence of something else, such as resource scarcity, a desire for accountability, or a need for growth management. For example:

- eligibility criteria that exclude many who are in need of support
- housing placements that separate people from their communities of support
- competitive or restricted funding processes and policies that exclude actors who could contribute to the response
- performance measurement that incentivizes exclusive attribution of services provided rather than a collective contribution to desired outcomes
- processes to develop housing solutions that sow debate and division within and between neighborhoods, municipalities, and counties
- a real estate market that does not function to meet a diversity of housing needs
- land use and zoning policies oriented to what cannot be built
- the ramifications of historic and ongoing systemic racism and other forms of societal exclusion

People also converged on the desired alternative to this pattern of exclusion -- again, not everyone was referring to the same context nor did they all use the same words, but the shared concept of the desired alternative can be summarized as a response that builds a networked system of supports and resources focused on helping communities—at all scales—thrive.

Reflecting how housing insecurity has community and societal, in addition to individual, effects, ‘thriving communities’ emerged as a multidimensional concept that can inform how to design solutions to better meet a range of needs. For example:

- communities of support for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- cooperative relationships among communities of providers
- geographic localities with the infrastructure and capacity to support housing for the socioeconomic diversity needed for a functioning community
- policies that enable a community to grow, diversify, and foster equitable access in its housing supply

DISCUSSION PROMPTS ABOUT SHIFTING TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

- ***How have you been able to contribute to building a thriving community?***
- ***What appeals to you about the idea of a strategy for housing security focused on building thriving communities?***
 - ***What would this look like where you work or live?***
 - ***How would you talk about this idea to those who make decisions about housing policies and services where you work or live?***
- ***Where in the current response to housing insecurity do you see exclusionary practices?***
- ***What concerns you about the idea of a strategy for housing security focused on building thriving communities?***
- ***What would you need to be able to work in ways that use networks to build thriving communities?***

- ***What could the state do differently to make it easier for you to work in community-centered ways?***
 - ***In what ways do you see laws, policies, guidance, and other support provided by the state helping or hindering your ability to work in a community-centered way?***

EMERGING OPTIONS RELATED TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

Prior workshops in August discussed emerging options for actions the state could take to advance housing security in the following thematic areas: *Meeting Needs Along the Housing Continuum*, *Responding Holistically to People's Needs*, *Connecting Housing Security and Economic Security*, *Navigating Flexibility and Consistency*, *Defining Success and Managing Performance*, and *Shifting Views of Homelessness and Housing Instability*.

The Center's project team is continuing to synthesize and incorporate the input received about these options in the August workshop.

In parallel, further discussion is warranted on the extent to which some of those emerging options, listed below, could contribute to developing a long-term, statewide strategy for housing security that is less exclusionary and oriented more towards inclusively advancing social and economic wellbeing across the state.

Discussion Prompts

- ***Which of these options stand out as a way to help foster a less exclusionary, more community-building approach to housing security?***
 - ***What about them makes you think so?***
 - ***How might any of these options inadvertently reinforce an exclusionary system?***
 - ***What would help prevent that from happening?***
- ***What is missing that would help you work on housing security in ways that help to inclusively build thriving communities?***

Emerging Options

Option 1 (Multiple Successes): Recognize multiple, co-existing ways of understanding success.

Option 2 (Diversity of Knowledge): Use knowledge of various types and from various sources to design, implement and monitor policies, programs, and services.

Option 3 (Experiential Expertise): Amplify the insights and expertise of communities and individuals affected by homelessness and housing instability by supporting them to participate in making decisions about, implementing, and assessing the performance of laws, policies, programs, and services related to housing insecurity.

Option 4 (Core Competencies): Establish universal core competencies in culturally responsive, anti-racist, and trauma-informed principles for providers, administrators, and leaders across sectors, and regularly provide the training needed to put those competencies into practice.

Option 5 (Variety of Housing Options): Expand the supply, variety, location, and quality of supported options and pathways for temporary and longer-term housing, to be able to better match people to their types and level of need and to their preferences.

Option 6 (Respond to Geographic Variability): Support the response in diverse geographies equitably, to accommodate the ways in which housing challenges manifest differently in different places and therefore require different strategies.

Option 7 (Cooperation Across Jurisdictions): Incentivize greater cooperation across geographic and political jurisdictions.

Option 8 (Equitable Access to Housing): As policies are implemented to increase the supply of affordable housing, ensure equitable access for those transitioning from homelessness and most at risk of housing instability.

Option 9 (Holistic Eligibility): Reconfigure eligibility criteria using a cross-sector, multifactorial, periodic assessment designed to help people access the supports they need over time to synergistically stabilize their housing, health, behavioral health, and socioeconomic circumstances.

Option 10 (Income Eligibility Cliff): Extend housing assistance eligibility to replace binary thresholds with a sliding scale to help people gradually transition to housing stability as their socioeconomic stability also gradually improves.

Option 11 (Person-Centered Navigation): Evolve current case management and care navigation efforts into a cross-sector navigation system that responds to the specific needs of individuals and households and follows them longitudinally as those needs evolve.

Option 12 (Mitigate Eviction): Shift from policies that merely prohibit eviction to add comprehensive eviction prevention strategies that mitigate the reasons for and impacts of impending eviction for tenants, neighbors, and property owners/managers.

Option 13 (Financial Stability of Implementers): Support the financial stability of those implementing the response to housing insecurity by offering diverse funding models to diverse grantees and partners.

Option 14 (Close Cooperation among Services and Sectors): Support closer cooperation at all levels of the response among agencies, programs, and services that provide interdependent forms of assistance.

Option 15 (Align Policymaking): Assess laws and policies in all areas of government for the potential to affect housing security, and assess housing laws and policies for their potential to affect interrelated goals in other areas.

Option 16 (Total Investment and Benefit): Analyze and communicate the comprehensive investments that advance housing security, the benefits they yield, and for whom.

THE WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Pathways to Housing Security in Washington State

FACILITATED DISCUSSION 2: Strategic Framework

Tuesday, September 12, 2023

10:30 AM-2:30 PM

Puyallup

The Washington State Legislature has tasked the Ruckelshaus Center to facilitate discussions to inform principles, options, and recommendations for how state policies, resources, and other supports can best contribute to sustained progress toward housing security. This is part of a project described in Section 6 of [House Bill 1277](#) and on the [project page](#).

In the fall of 2023, the Center is bringing together a broad range of participants in online and in-person workshops for a guided discussion about the strategic framing of options that emerged from previous interviews, small group discussions, and online workshops. For a list of dates and venues and to register for other workshops, go to [this link](#).¹ A final report is due on December 1, 2023.

UNDERLYING PURPOSE OF ADVANCING HOUSING SECURITY

Housing security is advanced when housing for low- and middle-income individuals and households is available and affordable, when circumstances of precarious housing are stabilized, when homelessness is prevented as much as possible, and when experiences of homelessness are mitigated as quickly as possible.

Housing security is a cornerstone of a flourishing society and a functional economy because it intersects with so many other factors that contribute to whether individuals, families, communities, and the state as a whole can thrive, such as economic security, health, and safety.

STRATEGIC SHIFT TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

In facilitated discussions to date there has been widespread convergence that progress toward housing security will require an increase in the supply of affordable housing, greater availability of and access to a wide range of support services, and more capacity in workforce and infrastructure. Even when imagining a future with more abundant resources and more successful systems, the reality of needing to agree across varied perspectives on resource allocation and implementation models will remain. In developing a long-term strategy, there is interest in shifting the framework for seeking that agreement.

Across a wide range of roles, perspectives, and experiences, people –using different language, contexts, and lenses – have observed a common pattern in the current systems of responding to housing insecurity: policies and practices often foster exclusion in ways that are counterproductive to the goal of advancing housing security. This pattern was described in many aspects of this complex issue, sometimes as an unintended consequence of something else, such as resource scarcity, a desire for accountability, or a need for growth management. For example:

¹ <https://ruckelshauscenter.wsu.edu/projects/current-projects/pathways-to-housing-security/2023-housing-security-workshops/>

- eligibility criteria that exclude many who are in need of support
- housing placements that separate people from their communities of support
- competitive or restricted funding processes and policies that exclude actors who could contribute to the response
- performance measurement that incentivizes exclusive attribution of services provided rather than a collective contribution to desired outcomes
- processes to develop housing solutions that sow debate and division within and between neighborhoods, municipalities, and counties
- a real estate market that does not function to meet a diversity of housing needs
- land use and zoning policies oriented to what cannot be built
- the ramifications of historic and ongoing systemic racism and other forms of societal exclusion

People also converged on the desired alternative to this pattern of exclusion -- again, not everyone was referring to the same context nor did they all use the same words, but the shared concept of the desired alternative can be summarized as a response that builds a networked system of supports and resources focused on helping communities—at all scales—thrive.

Reflecting how housing insecurity has community and societal, in addition to individual, effects, ‘thriving communities’ emerged as a multidimensional concept that can inform how to design solutions to better meet a range of needs. For example:

- communities of support for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- cooperative relationships among communities of providers
- geographic localities with the infrastructure and capacity to support housing for the socioeconomic diversity needed for a functioning community
- policies that enable a community to grow, diversify, and foster equitable access to housing

DISCUSSION PROMPTS ABOUT SHIFTING TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

- ***How have you been able to contribute to building a thriving community?***
- ***Where in the current response to housing insecurity do you see exclusionary practices?***
- ***What appeals to you about the idea of a strategy for housing security focused on building thriving communities?***
 - ***What would this look like where you work or live?***
 - ***How would you talk about this idea to those who make decisions about housing policies and services where you work or live?***
- ***What concerns you about the idea of a strategy for housing security focused on building thriving communities?***
- ***What would you need to be able to work in ways that use networks to build thriving communities?***
- ***What could the state do differently to make it easier for you to work in community-centered ways?***
 - ***In what ways do you see laws, policies, guidance, and other support provided by the state helping or hindering your ability to work in a community-centered way?***

EMERGING OPTIONS RELATED TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

Prior workshops in August discussed emerging options for actions the state could take to advance housing security in the following thematic areas: *Meeting Needs Along the Housing Continuum*, *Responding Holistically to People's Needs*, *Connecting Housing Security and Economic Security*, *Navigating Flexibility and Consistency*, *Defining Success and Managing Performance*, and *Shifting Views of Homelessness and Housing Instability*.

The Center's project team is continuing to synthesize and incorporate the input received about these options in the August workshop.

In parallel, further discussion is warranted on the extent to which some of those emerging options, listed below, could contribute to developing a long-term, statewide strategy for housing security that is less exclusionary and oriented more towards inclusively advancing social and economic wellbeing across the state.

Discussion Prompts

- ***Which of these options stand out as a way to help foster a less exclusionary, more community-building approach to housing security?***
 - *What about them makes you think so?*
- ***How might any of these options inadvertently reinforce an exclusionary system?***
 - *What would help prevent that from happening?*
- ***What is missing that would help you work on housing security in ways that help to inclusively build thriving communities?***

Emerging Options

Option 1 (Multiple Successes): Recognize multiple, co-existing ways of understanding success.

Option 2 (Diversity of Knowledge): Use knowledge of various types and from various sources to design, implement and monitor policies, programs, and services.

Option 3 (Experiential Expertise): Amplify the insights and expertise of communities and individuals affected by homelessness and housing instability by supporting them to participate in making decisions about, implementing, and assessing the performance of laws, policies, programs, and services related to housing insecurity.

Option 4 (Core Competencies): Establish universal core competencies in culturally responsive, anti-racist, and trauma-informed principles for providers, administrators, and leaders across sectors, and regularly provide the training needed to put those competencies into practice.

Option 5 (Variety of Housing Options): Expand the supply, variety, location, and quality of supported options and pathways for temporary and longer-term housing, to be able to better match people to their types and level of need and to their preferences.

Option 6 (Respond to Geographic Variability): Support the response in diverse geographies equitably, to accommodate the ways in which housing challenges manifest differently in different places and therefore require different strategies.

Option 7 (Cooperation Across Jurisdictions): Incentivize greater cooperation across geographic and political jurisdictions.

Option 8 (Equitable Access to Housing): As policies are implemented to increase the supply of affordable housing, ensure equitable access for those transitioning from homelessness and most at risk of housing instability.

Option 9 (Holistic Eligibility): Reconfigure eligibility criteria using a cross-sector, multifactorial, periodic assessment designed to help people access the supports they need over time to synergistically stabilize their housing, health, behavioral health, and socioeconomic circumstances.

Option 10 (Income Eligibility Cliff): Extend housing assistance eligibility to replace binary thresholds with a sliding scale to help people gradually transition to housing stability as their socioeconomic stability also gradually improves.

Option 11 (Person-Centered Navigation): Evolve current case management and care navigation efforts into a cross-sector navigation system that responds to the specific needs of individuals and households and follows them longitudinally as those needs evolve.

Option 12 (Mitigate Eviction): Shift from policies that merely prohibit eviction to add comprehensive eviction prevention strategies that mitigate the reasons for and impacts of impending eviction for tenants, neighbors, and property owners/managers.

Option 13 (Financial Stability of Implementers): Support the financial stability of those implementing the response to housing insecurity by offering diverse funding models to diverse grantees and partners.

Option 14 (Close Cooperation among Services and Sectors): Support closer cooperation at all levels of the response among agencies, programs, and services that provide interdependent forms of assistance.

Option 15 (Align Policymaking): Assess laws and policies in all areas of government for the potential to affect housing security, and assess housing laws and policies for their potential to affect interrelated goals in other areas.

Option 16 (Total Investment and Benefit): Analyze and communicate the comprehensive investments that advance housing security, the benefits they yield, and for whom.

THE WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Pathways to Housing Security in Washington State

FACILITATED DISCUSSION 3: Strategic Framework

Wednesday, September 13, 2023

12:30 PM-4:30 PM

Online

The Washington State Legislature has tasked the Ruckelshaus Center to facilitate discussions to inform principles, options, and recommendations for how state policies, resources, and other supports can best contribute to sustained progress toward housing security. This is part of a project described in Section 6 of [House Bill 1277](#) and on the [project page](#).

In the fall of 2023, the Center is bringing together a broad range of participants in online and in-person workshops for a guided discussion about the strategic framing of options that emerged from previous interviews, small group discussions, and online workshops. For a list of dates and venues and to register for other workshops, go to [this link](#).¹ A final report is due on December 1, 2023.

UNDERLYING PURPOSE OF ADVANCING HOUSING SECURITY

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Housing security is a cornerstone of a flourishing society and a functional economy because it intersects with so many other factors that contribute to whether individuals, families, communities, and the state as a whole can thrive, such as economic security, health, and safety.

STRATEGIC SHIFT TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

In facilitated discussions to date there has been widespread convergence that progress toward housing security will require an increase in the supply of affordable housing, greater availability of and access to a wide range of support services, and more capacity in workforce and infrastructure. Even when imagining a future with more abundant resources and more successful systems, the reality of needing to agree across varied perspectives on resource allocation and implementation models will remain. In developing a long-term strategy, there is interest in shifting the framework for seeking that agreement.

Across a wide range of roles, perspectives, and experiences, people –using different language, contexts, and lenses – have observed a common pattern in the current systems of responding to housing insecurity: policies and practices often foster exclusion in ways that are counterproductive to the goal of advancing housing security. This pattern was described in many aspects of this complex issue, sometimes as an unintended consequence of something else, such as resource scarcity, a desire for accountability, or a need for growth management. For example:

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- eligibility criteria that exclude many who are in need of support
- housing placements that separate people from their communities of support
- competitive or restricted funding processes and policies that exclude actors who could contribute to the response
- performance measurement that incentivizes exclusive attribution of services provided rather than a collective contribution to desired outcomes
- processes to develop housing solutions that sow debate and division within and between neighborhoods, municipalities, and counties
- a real estate market that does not function to meet a diversity of housing needs
- land use and zoning policies oriented to what cannot be built
- the ramifications of historic and ongoing systemic racism and other forms of societal exclusion

People also converged on the desired alternative to this pattern of exclusion -- again, not everyone was referring to the same context nor did they all use the same words, but the shared concept of the desired alternative can be summarized as a response that builds a networked system of supports and resources focused on helping communities—at all scales—thrive.

Reflecting how housing insecurity has community and societal, in addition to individual, effects, ‘thriving communities’ emerged as a multidimensional concept that can inform how to design solutions to better meet a range of needs. For example:

- communities of support for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- cooperative relationships among communities of providers
- geographic localities with the infrastructure and capacity to support housing for the socioeconomic diversity needed for a functioning community
- policies that enable a community to grow, diversify, and foster equitable access to housing

DISCUSSION PROMPTS ABOUT SHIFTING TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

- ***How have you been able to contribute to building a thriving community?***
- ***Where in the current response to housing insecurity do you see exclusionary practices?***
- ***What appeals to you about the idea of a strategy for housing security focused on building thriving communities?***
 - ***What would this look like where you work or live?***
 - ***How would you talk about this idea to those who make decisions about housing policies and services where you work or live?***
- ***What concerns you about the idea of a strategy for housing security focused on building thriving communities?***
- ***What would you need to be able to work in ways that use networks to build thriving communities?***
- ***What could the state do differently to make it easier for you to work in community-centered ways?***
 - ***In what ways do you see laws, policies, guidance, and other support provided by the state helping or hindering your ability to work in a community-centered way?***

EMERGING OPTIONS RELATED TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

Prior workshops in August discussed emerging options for actions the state could take to advance housing security in the following thematic areas: *Meeting Needs Along the Housing Continuum*, *Responding Holistically to People's Needs*, *Connecting Housing Security and Economic Security*, *Navigating Flexibility and Consistency*, *Defining Success and Managing Performance*, and *Shifting Views of Homelessness and Housing Instability*.

The Center's project team is continuing to synthesize and incorporate the input received about these options in the August workshop.

In parallel, further discussion is warranted on the extent to which some of those emerging options, listed below, could contribute to developing a long-term, statewide strategy for housing security that is less exclusionary and oriented more towards inclusively advancing social and economic wellbeing across the state.

Discussion Prompts

- ***Which of these options stand out as a way to help foster a less exclusionary, more community-building approach to housing security?***
 - ***What about them makes you think so?***
- ***How might any of these options inadvertently reinforce an exclusionary system?***
 - ***What would help prevent that from happening?***
- ***What is missing that would help you work on housing security in ways that help to inclusively build thriving communities?***

Emerging Options

Option 1 (Multiple Successes): Recognize multiple, co-existing ways of understanding success.

Option 2 (Diversity of Knowledge): Use knowledge of various types and from various sources to design, implement and monitor policies, programs, and services.

Option 3 (Experiential Expertise): Amplify the insights and expertise of communities and individuals affected by homelessness and housing instability by supporting them to participate in making decisions about, implementing, and assessing the performance of laws, policies, programs, and services related to housing insecurity.

Option 4 (Core Competencies): Establish universal core competencies in culturally responsive, anti-racist, and trauma-informed principles for providers, administrators, and leaders across sectors, and regularly provide the training needed to put those competencies into practice.

Option 5 (Variety of Housing Options): Expand the supply, variety, location, and quality of supported options and pathways for temporary and longer-term housing, to be able to better match people to their types and level of need and to their preferences.

Option 6 (Respond to Geographic Variability): Support the response in diverse geographies equitably, to accommodate the ways in which housing challenges manifest differently in different places and therefore require different strategies.

Option 7 (Cooperation Across Jurisdictions): Incentivize greater cooperation across geographic and political jurisdictions.

Option 8 (Equitable Access to Housing): As policies are implemented to increase the supply of affordable housing, ensure equitable access for those transitioning from homelessness and most at risk of housing instability.

Option 9 (Holistic Eligibility): Reconfigure eligibility criteria using a cross-sector, multifactorial, periodic assessment designed to help people access the supports they need over time to synergistically stabilize their housing, health, behavioral health, and socioeconomic circumstances.

Option 10 (Income Eligibility Cliff): Extend housing assistance eligibility to replace binary thresholds with a sliding scale to help people gradually transition to housing stability as their socioeconomic stability also gradually improves.

Option 11 (Person-Centered Navigation): Evolve current case management and care navigation efforts into a cross-sector navigation system that responds to the specific needs of individuals and households and follows them longitudinally as those needs evolve.

Option 12 (Mitigate Eviction): Shift from policies that merely prohibit eviction to add comprehensive eviction prevention strategies that mitigate the reasons for and impacts of impending eviction for tenants, neighbors, and property owners/managers.

Option 13 (Financial Stability of Implementers): Support the financial stability of those implementing the response to housing insecurity by offering diverse funding models to diverse grantees and partners.

Option 14 (Close Cooperation among Services and Sectors): Support closer cooperation at all levels of the response among agencies, programs, and services that provide interdependent forms of assistance.

Option 15 (Align Policymaking): Assess laws and policies in all areas of government for the potential to affect housing security, and assess housing laws and policies for their potential to affect interrelated goals in other areas.

Option 16 (Total Investment and Benefit): Analyze and communicate the comprehensive investments that advance housing security, the benefits they yield, and for whom.

THE WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Pathways to Housing Security in Washington State

FACILITATED DISCUSSIONS 4 & 5: Strategic Framework

Tuesday, September 19, 2023

10:30 AM-2:30 PM

Spokane

Thursday, September 21, 2023

10:30 AM-2:30 PM

Tri-Cities

The Washington State Legislature has tasked the Ruckelshaus Center to facilitate discussions to inform principles, options, and recommendations for how state policies, resources, and other supports can best contribute to sustained progress toward housing security. This is part of a project described in Section 6 of [House Bill 1277](#) and on the [project page](#).

In the fall of 2023, the Center is bringing together a broad range of participants in online and in-person workshops for a guided discussion about the strategic framing of options that emerged from previous interviews, small group discussions, and online workshops. For a list of dates and venues and to register for other workshops, go to [this link](#).¹ A final report is due on December 1, 2023.

UNDERLYING PURPOSE OF ADVANCING HOUSING SECURITY

Housing security is advanced when housing for low- and middle-income individuals and households is available and affordable, when circumstances of precarious housing are stabilized, when homelessness is prevented as much as possible, and when experiences of homelessness are mitigated as quickly as possible.

Housing security is a cornerstone of a flourishing society and a functional economy because it intersects with so many other factors that contribute to whether individuals, families, communities, and the state as a whole can thrive, such as economic security, health, and safety.

STRATEGIC SHIFT TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

In facilitated discussions to date there has been widespread convergence that progress toward housing security will require an increase in the supply of affordable housing, greater availability of and access to a wide range of support services, and more capacity in workforce and infrastructure. Even when imagining a future with more abundant resources and more successful systems, the reality of needing to agree across varied perspectives on resource allocation and implementation models will remain. In developing a long-term strategy, there is interest in shifting the framework for seeking that agreement.

Across a wide range of roles, perspectives, and experiences, people –using different language, contexts, and lenses – have observed a common pattern in the current systems of responding to housing insecurity: policies and practices often foster exclusion in ways that are counterproductive to the goal of advancing housing security. This pattern was described in many aspects of this complex issue, sometimes as an unintended consequence of something else, such as resource scarcity, a desire for accountability, or a need for growth management. For example:

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- eligibility criteria that exclude many who are in need of support
- housing placements that separate people from their communities of support
- competitive or restricted funding processes and policies that exclude actors who could contribute to the response
- performance measurement that incentivizes exclusive attribution of services provided rather than a collective contribution to desired outcomes
- processes to develop housing solutions that sow debate and division within and between neighborhoods, municipalities, and counties
- a real estate market that does not function to meet a diversity of housing needs
- land use and zoning policies oriented to what cannot be built
- the ramifications of historic and ongoing systemic racism and other forms of societal exclusion

People also converged on the desired alternative to this pattern of exclusion -- again, not everyone was referring to the same context nor did they all use the same words, but the shared concept of the desired alternative can be summarized as a response that builds a networked system of supports and resources focused on helping communities—at all scales—thrive.

Reflecting how housing insecurity has community and societal, in addition to individual, effects, ‘thriving communities’ emerged as a multidimensional concept that can inform how to design solutions to better meet a range of needs. For example:

- communities of support for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- cooperative relationships among communities of providers
- geographic localities with the infrastructure and capacity to support housing for the socioeconomic diversity needed for a functioning community
- policies that enable a community to grow, diversify, and foster equitable access to housing

DISCUSSION PROMPTS ABOUT SHIFTING TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

- ***How have you been able to contribute to building a thriving community?***
- ***Where in the current response to housing insecurity do you see exclusionary practices?***
- ***What appeals to you about the idea of a strategy for housing security focused on building thriving communities?***
 - ***What would this look like where you work or live?***
 - ***How would you talk about this idea to those who make decisions about housing policies and services where you work or live?***
- ***What concerns you about the idea of a strategy for housing security focused on building thriving communities?***
- ***What would you need to be able to work in ways that use networks to build thriving communities?***
- ***What could the state do differently to make it easier for you to work in community-centered ways?***
 - ***In what ways do you see laws, policies, guidance, and other support provided by the state helping or hindering your ability to work in a community-centered way?***

EMERGING OPTIONS RELATED TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

Prior workshops in August discussed emerging options for actions the state could take to advance housing security in the following thematic areas: *Meeting Needs Along the Housing Continuum*, *Responding Holistically to People's Needs*, *Connecting Housing Security and Economic Security*, *Navigating Flexibility and Consistency*, *Defining Success and Managing Performance*, and *Shifting Views of Homelessness and Housing Instability*.

The Center's project team is continuing to synthesize and incorporate the input received about these options in the August workshop.

In parallel, further discussion is warranted on the extent to which some of those emerging options, listed below, could contribute to developing a long-term, statewide strategy for housing security that is less exclusionary and oriented more towards inclusively advancing social and economic wellbeing across the state.

Discussion Prompts

- ***Which of these options stand out as a way to help foster a less exclusionary, more community-building approach to housing security?***
 - *What about them makes you think so?*
- ***How might any of these options inadvertently reinforce an exclusionary system?***
 - *What would help prevent that from happening?*
- ***What is missing that would help you work on housing security in ways that help to inclusively build thriving communities?***

Emerging Options

Option 1 (Multiple Successes): Recognize multiple, co-existing ways of understanding success.

Option 2 (Diversity of Knowledge): Use knowledge of various types and from various sources to design, implement and monitor policies, programs, and services.

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Option 15 (Align Policymaking): Assess laws and policies in all areas of government for the potential to affect housing security, and assess housing laws and policies for their potential to affect interrelated goals in other areas.

Option 16 (Total Investment and Benefit): Analyze and communicate the comprehensive investments that advance housing security, the benefits they yield, and for whom.

THE WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Pathways to Housing Security in Washington State

FACILITATED DISCUSSION 6: Strategic Framework

Wednesday, October 4, 2023

10:30 AM-2:30 PM

Everett

The Washington State Legislature has tasked the Ruckelshaus Center to facilitate discussions to inform principles, options, and recommendations for how state policies, resources, and other supports can best contribute to sustained progress toward housing security. This is part of a project described in Section 6 of [House Bill 1277](#) and on the [project page](#).

In the fall of 2023, the Center is bringing together a broad range of participants in online and in-person workshops for a guided discussion about the strategic framing of options that emerged from previous interviews, small group discussions, and online workshops. For a list of dates and venues and to register for other workshops, go to [this link](#).¹ A final report is due on December 1, 2023.

UNDERLYING PURPOSE OF ADVANCING HOUSING SECURITY

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Housing security is a cornerstone of a flourishing society and a functional economy because it intersects with so many other factors that contribute to whether individuals, families, communities, and the state as a whole can thrive, such as economic security, health, and safety.

STRATEGIC SHIFT TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

In facilitated discussions to date there has been widespread convergence that progress toward housing security will require an increase in the supply of affordable housing, greater availability of and access to a wide range of support services, and more capacity in workforce and infrastructure. Even when imagining a future with more abundant resources and more successful systems, the reality of needing to agree across varied perspectives on resource allocation and implementation models will remain. In developing a long-term strategy, there is interest in shifting the framework for seeking that agreement.

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- housing placements that separate people from their communities of support
- competitive or restricted funding processes and policies that exclude actors who could contribute to the response
- performance measurement that incentivizes exclusive attribution of services provided rather than a collective contribution to desired outcomes
- processes to develop housing solutions that sow debate and division within and between neighborhoods, municipalities, and counties
- a real estate market that does not function to meet a diversity of housing needs
- land use and zoning policies oriented to what cannot be built
- the ramifications of historic and ongoing systemic racism and other forms of societal exclusion

People also converged on the desired alternative to this pattern of exclusion -- again, not everyone was referring to the same context nor did they all use the same words, but the shared concept of the desired alternative can be summarized as a response that builds a networked system of supports and resources focused on helping communities—at all scales—thrive.

Reflecting how housing insecurity has community and societal, in addition to individual, effects, ‘thriving communities’ emerged as a multidimensional concept that can inform how to design solutions to better meet a range of needs. For example:

- communities of support for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- cooperative relationships among communities of providers
- geographic localities with the infrastructure and capacity to support housing for the socioeconomic diversity needed for a functioning community
- policies that enable a community to grow, diversify, and foster equitable access to housing

DISCUSSION PROMPTS ABOUT SHIFTING TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

- ***How have you been able to contribute to building a thriving community?***
- ***Where in the current response to housing insecurity do you see exclusionary practices?***
- ***What appeals to you about the idea of a strategy for housing security focused on building thriving communities?***
 - ***What would this look like where you work or live?***
 - ***How would you talk about this idea to those who make decisions about housing policies and services where you work or live?***
- ***What concerns you about the idea of a strategy for housing security focused on building thriving communities?***
- ***What would you need to be able to work in ways that use networks to build thriving communities?***
- ***What could the state do differently to make it easier for you to work in community-centered ways?***
 - ***In what ways do you see laws, policies, guidance, and other support provided by the state helping or hindering your ability to work in a community-centered way?***

EMERGING OPTIONS RELATED TO A NETWORKED STRATEGY FOR HOUSING SECURITY

Prior workshops in August discussed emerging options for actions the state could take to advance housing security in the following thematic areas: *Meeting Needs Along the Housing Continuum*, *Responding Holistically to People's Needs*, *Connecting Housing Security and Economic Security*, *Navigating Flexibility and Consistency*, *Defining Success and Managing Performance*, and *Shifting Views of Homelessness and Housing Instability*.

The Center's project team is continuing to synthesize and incorporate the input received about these options in the August workshop.

In parallel, further discussion is warranted on the extent to which some of those emerging options, listed below, could contribute to developing a long-term, statewide strategy for housing security that is less exclusionary and oriented more towards inclusively advancing social and economic wellbeing across the state.

Discussion Prompts

- ***Which of these options stand out as a way to help foster a less exclusionary, more community-building approach to housing security?***
 - *What about them makes you think so?*
- ***How might any of these options inadvertently reinforce an exclusionary system?***
 - *What would help prevent that from happening?*
- ***What is missing that would help you work on housing security in ways that help to inclusively build thriving communities?***

Emerging Options

Option 1 (Multiple Successes): Recognize multiple, co-existing ways of understanding success.

Option 2 (Diversity of Knowledge): Use knowledge of various types and from various sources to design, implement and monitor policies, programs, and services.

Option 3 (Experiential Expertise): Amplify the insights and expertise of communities and individuals affected by homelessness and housing instability by supporting them to participate in making decisions about, implementing, and assessing the performance of laws, policies, programs, and services related to housing insecurity.

Option 4 (Core Competencies): Establish universal core competencies in culturally responsive, anti-racist, and trauma-informed principles for providers, administrators, and leaders across sectors, and regularly provide the training needed to put those competencies into practice.

Option 5 (Variety of Housing Options): Expand the supply, variety, location, and quality of supported options and pathways for temporary and longer-term housing, to be able to better match people to their types and level of need and to their preferences.

Option 6 (Respond to Geographic Variability): Support the response in diverse geographies equitably, to accommodate the ways in which housing challenges manifest differently in different places and therefore require different strategies.

Option 7 (Cooperation Across Jurisdictions): Incentivize greater cooperation across geographic and political jurisdictions.

Option 8 (Equitable Access to Housing): As policies are implemented to increase the supply of affordable housing, ensure equitable access for those transitioning from homelessness and most at risk of housing instability.

Option 9 (Holistic Eligibility): Reconfigure eligibility criteria using a cross-sector, multifactorial, periodic assessment designed to help people access the supports they need over time to synergistically stabilize their housing, health, behavioral health, and socioeconomic circumstances.

Option 10 (Income Eligibility Cliff): Extend housing assistance eligibility to replace binary thresholds with a sliding scale to help people gradually transition to housing stability as their socioeconomic stability also gradually improves.

Option 11 (Person-Centered Navigation): Evolve current case management and care navigation efforts into a cross-sector navigation system that responds to the specific needs of individuals and households and follows them longitudinally as those needs evolve.

Option 12 (Mitigate Eviction): Shift from policies that merely prohibit eviction to add comprehensive eviction prevention strategies that mitigate the reasons for and impacts of impending eviction for tenants, neighbors, and property owners/managers.

Option 13 (Financial Stability of Implementers): Support the financial stability of those implementing the response to housing insecurity by offering diverse funding models to diverse grantees and partners.

Option 14 (Close Cooperation among Services and Sectors): Support closer cooperation at all levels of the response among agencies, programs, and services that provide interdependent forms of assistance.

Option 15 (Align Policymaking): Assess laws and policies in all areas of government for the potential to affect housing security, and assess housing laws and policies for their potential to affect interrelated goals in other areas.

Option 16 (Total Investment and Benefit): Analyze and communicate the comprehensive investments that advance housing security, the benefits they yield, and for whom.