



King County

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King County Executive

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June 12, 2025

The Honorable Girmay Zahilay
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Zahilay:

This letter transmits the 2024 Health Through Housing Annual Report, as required by King County Code 2A.300.200, and a proposed Motion that would, if enacted, acknowledge receipt of the report.

This annual report summarizes the activities of the Health Through Housing (HTH) initiative through the end of 2024 and fulfills the initiative's annual reporting requirements. Specifically, it includes summaries of the accomplishments and effectiveness of the expenditure of HTH sales tax proceeds in 2024, as well as financial information including, but not limited to, the allocation of proceeds by jurisdiction. On May 29, 2025, the HTH Advisory Committee reviewed and certified this report and the HTH Dashboard, including certifying that the dashboard is updated with 2024 calendar year data.

This report also summarizes the significant additional annual data reporting provided in HTH's online dashboard, as called for by the Initial Health Through Housing Implementation Plan 2022-2028 adopted by Ordinance 19366. This tool, which also adds context about HTH's process, outcomes, and community-wide impact, enables community members and policymakers alike to learn more about HTH locations that are open and the other properties that are at various stages of preparation for operations. I encourage County staff and residents to visit the online HTH dashboard at www.kingcounty.gov/hthdashboard for additional, in-depth, and updated information about the HTH initiative.

HTH increases housing capacity for residents with the highest needs, who are experiencing or at risk of chronic homelessness, by repurposing hotels and apartments and expediting financing

of other newly constructed buildings throughout the County. To date, 1,434 housing units have been secured, with 954 homes open across 11 sites, compared to 724 homes across eight sites at the end of 2023. In 2024, HTH worked through the pre-occupancy process to design, permit, and conduct major construction work at three additional properties in Federal Way, Seattle, and Kirkland that are planned to open in 2025. Further, HTH invested in an additional 84 operations-only units at Sweetgrass Flats in the Central District of Seattle, which are also planned to open in 2025. Further progress depends on collaboration with host jurisdictions, neighboring communities, and community-based supportive housing operators.

In 2024, HTH focused on rehabilitating and opening buildings, moving people inside, and providing housing for 1,281 people who would otherwise be at high risk of sleeping outside or in shelters, compared to 911 people served in 2023. HTH sites maintained high occupancy rates in 2024, with the majority of buildings ending the year with an occupancy rate above 90 percent. HTH also expanded the scope of services provided at its open sites, including by expanding the Mobile Response Teams (MRT), King County Metro Transit transportation services, and DCHS' Employment Resource Program (ERP) to all open HTH sites.

In its third year of operation, HTH is having positive impact on residents housed through the initiative. In 2024:

- HTH achieved positive health outcomes. For example, after one year, HTH residents' total number of days in inpatient hospital care decreased by 33 percent, and their total number of emergency department visits dropped by 17 percent.
- HTH achieved positive housing stability outcomes among its permanent supportive housing (PSH) residents, with 95 percent of PSH residents maintaining their housing or moving to another permanent housing destination.

At the same time, HTH has faced significant challenges that have impacted the pace at which the initiative is achieving its paramount goal. In some cases, navigating jurisdictional approval processes, construction timelines, and County and provider staffing limitations extended the time necessary to open HTH buildings beyond initial forecasts. Inflation and historically low wages in the human services sector drive the need to increase expenditures for both King County and HTH operators – which has meant that the revenue generated by the one tenth of one cent sales tax has not grown as quickly as the costs of operating and maintaining HTH buildings.

In response to these challenges, HTH intends, as funding allows, to continue expanding the HTH portfolio by funding operations-only units moving forward, rather than making future building acquisitions. Operations-only units enable HTH to continue growing the portfolio cost-effectively and expediently, while reducing King County's overall financial exposure as the acquisition and construction are not paid for with HTH funds. Pursuing this strategy will ensure that the HTH initiative is able to better provide long term, dependable financial support for the full operations of all HTH units, consistent with the HTH Implementation Plan. In 2025 and beyond, DCHS plans to use this strategy for continued expansion of HTH's portfolio as the HTH initiative closes in on its paramount goal of opening 1,600 homes.

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The HTH initiative is the fastest and most regional expansion of supportive housing that King County has ever implemented, with hundreds of people already housed and enhanced health and wellness services launched. I remain confident that HTH is a powerful component of our regional strategy to address the crises of affordable housing and chronic homelessness. I look forward to continuing to report on the initiative's progress, and my staff will keep working to overcome these challenges as they bring more people inside.

I am grateful to the cities, providers, neighbors, and other community partners that have worked alongside King County and the HTH initiative to welcome these new homes for people experiencing chronic homelessness. We can turn the tide on this regional crisis by taking unified action across the county through smart, sustainable, evidence-based strategies that will serve thousands of people over decades.

If your staff have any questions, please contact Kelly Rider, Director, Department of Community and Human Services, at 206-263-5780.

Sincerely,



for

Shannon Braddock
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, King County Council
Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

Karan Gill, Deputy Executive, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Stephanie Pure, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive

Kelly Rider, Director, Department of Community and Human Services