

Housing Week 2024
Creatively Housing College Students in Whatcom County
October 15, 2024

What is working well that we can build upon?

- Emergency grants are a big help

What challenges have you seen about college student housing?

- Dorm closure during breaks and summer. For colleges that close dorms over breaks or have limited summer housing, it's very difficult for students without families to go to or places to call home.
- One time costs for students getting
- Off campus housing are a big barrier
- Life skills in students can be lacking
- Access to groceries, cafeteria, other healthy food; a lack of that pushes kids to fast food, etc.

If the sky's the limit, what student housing ideas do you have addressing access and affordability to housing?

- Non profit/ philanthropic housing development to turn motels/hotels into housing
- Create hostels in our county to offer cheaper housing
- Help for students who need support learning to cook, eat at home, etc.
- More Pell and federal funding
- More housing period
- Community mentorship for unaccompanied students
- Mobile grocery store on campus
- Used space like retreats. facilities, camps(lions), old hotels,(rehab), [macs]
 - Unused hotel rooms? Use for short term housing for unhoused students
 - Old hospital building (Peacehealth)

- Old Sehome movie theater
- Faith community buildings
- Need financial literacy city/county/colleges
- Invite more food trucks to campus and don't charge them to be there so they offer a better rate for students
- Homeshare program; have a program to allow anyone with an extra bedroom to share their home to a student who needs housing

What partnerships could you see working together create affordable student housing in Whatcom County?

- Nonprofit property management
- Co-op
- Faith community
- Restaurants
- Homelessness prevention diversion fund (state fund) 18-24 yo housing
- Cob public development authority (revive) (mixed development: some affordable + market rate)
- Nonprofit to coordinate co-housing (student/seniors/families)

What brought you to this session?

I work with landlords and tenants in our community as well as clients and case managers. I often hear feedback from student renters about the challenges they face both getting into housing as well as once they are in housing and are trying to navigate issues with their landlords

I'm an urban planning student at Western and found this event to be interesting as I'm facing the student housing crisis first hand

I teach urban planning at WWU and am very interested in creative and affordable housing options for students and others in our community

I work in the basic needs hub at WWU

I'm a landscaper full time in town. I'm hoping to go back to school for architecture soon which sparks my interest in housing week. I know how difficult it is to find housing in our community and want to be a fly on the wall.

I wanted to learn more about the student housing situation in Whatcom County as a possible senior project

I work for Opportunity Council and have a personal interest in increasing affordability and accessibility for students. Professionally, my team develops affordable housing in this area, and we are trying to find creative ways to utilize state and federal dollars to fund permanently affordable housing for students and young people.

I work for the City and want to learn more about how to enhance and expand housing opportunities for students since they make up such a large part of the community

As a student, I am interested in different housing options since housing can be expensive and since students are struggling financially