

Neglected Opportunities to Create Low-Cost, Secure, Temporary Alternatives for unhoused persons.

Kay Funk, MD

In the four years that I have been on Council, I have been distressed by our lack of progress in providing alternatives for unhoused persons on our streets. Specifically, we have no answer to this dilemma: *“there has got to be something between a tent and a \$300,000 apartment”*. The most basic need is safety and a defensible space for person and property. The cost escalates tremendously when providing plumbing and supervision.

There are alternatives, and we have passed on multiple proposals:

- In 2018, Transform Yakima had a plan to provide tiny homes (no plumbing) on church parking lots for approximately \$2,000/unit. The planning department required sewer hookups, which increased the cost to \$50,000/unit. Only 2 were built. **Staff decision.**
- The city spent \$238,000 of City’s homeless funds to extend plumbing and electricity out to city-owned land just east of the old Kmart building. We then signed an agreement with the Greenway, which made that land unavailable for any housing other than bricks-and-mortar. **Council decision promoted by staff.**
- The Justice Housing project, proposed tiny homes without plumbing. That was discouraged by staff; now they are planning tiny homes with plumbing, electricity, and air conditioning. The cost is probably in the \$200,000+ range. **Staff decision.**
- The Yakima County Commissioners proposed to create a low barrier shelter on the YCCC (Pacific Avenue Jail) property which, I believe, we had a tentative plan to rezone. Our own planning department told them that low-barrier shelters were not wanted by the neighbors. To my knowledge, no hearings of any kind were held. **Staff decision.**
- The current YBOCC plan for the Pacific Ave Jail is office space for non-profit service providers. There will be no space for unhoused persons to sleep safely. There is no shortage of vacant office space in Yakima. **YBOCC decision.**
- Another tiny homes project in Terrace Heights recently tanked because of resistance from neighbors. (“NIMBY”)

We can all dream of delux housing for ourselves an our vulnerable neighbors, but *“if wishes were horses then beggars would ride.”* We need to deal with economic reality, and we have not been doing that.

As long as we confine our planning to bricks-and-mortar units costing ~\$300,000/unit will not be able to provide an adequate number of units where unhoused people want to go. This is sad and wasteful.

Conestoga Huts in Eugene and Walla Walla - presented at 2018 Association of WA Cities annual meeting

\$2500 for materials - 64 sqft interior space

<https://communitysupportedshelters.org/conestoga-huts>

<http://www.communitysupportedshelters.org/>

Community Supported Shelters 1160 Grant St., Eugene, OR 97402 541-683-0836
www.communitysupportedshelters.org Erik & Fay de Buhr, Co-Exec Directors/Founders

Lowe's Garden Storage Shed

\$2652 - 96 sqft - 2 windows

<https://www.lowes.com/pd/Heartland-Common-8-ft-x-12-ft-Interior-Dimensions-8-ft-x-12-ft-Hillsdale-Gable-Engineered-Storage-Shed-Installation-Not-Included/999961887>

\$3174 - 120 sqft - 2 windows

<https://www.lowes.com/pd/Heartland-Common-10-ft-x-12-ft-Interior-Dimensions-10-ft-x-12-ft-Hillsdale-Gable-Engineered-Storage-Shed-Installation-Not-Included/999961917>

Pallet Shelters

This is an article regarding tiny homes for less than \$6K (no plumbing) that unhoused persons actually want to live in. They are manufactured in WA state.

Video tour:

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/palletshelter/CqMvqmWVQwrzQkphLRjVxRnmtgCbctGVtcVsFWVtXRjBPhCZjHXpPkgDmNBsmXzJqdBxWMDXtlq?projector=1>

Oakland unveils new, upgraded tiny homes for homeless Lake Merritt residents

https://www.mercurynews.com/2021/11/01/oakland-unveils-new-upgraded-tiny-homes-for-homeless-lake-merritt-residents/?utm_email=65EA24FDF4E9948B0415442314&q2i_eui=%2bBSpzNwFzQkHD7vekfyLajP5C9etR%2f08&q2i_source=newsletter&lctg=65EA24FDF4E9948B041544

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<https://palletshelter.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YAzn0x2m7pE&t=122s>