



## The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

July 26, 2007 (excerpt)

### **SEATTLE HOUSING LEVY SPURRING CREATION OF HOUSING WITH SUPPORT SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES - SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.**

1,232 units of rental housing, nearly 700 of which include support services specifically geared to help homeless families and individuals stay in permanent housing, have been created in the first four years of Seattle's latest Housing Levy, reports Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels. Additionally, 2000 families and individuals have been able to avoid eviction with rental assistance and 137 families have received first time home purchase assistance. In a press statement, Mayor Nickels said "The Housing Levy is making a real difference in the lives of thousands of people in our city. These investments are helping us break the cycle of homelessness for people living on our streets and creating new opportunities for working families in Seattle to find places they can afford."

In 2002 Seattle voters approved a 7-year Housing Levy of \$0.15 per thousand of assessed value to raise \$86 million that was thought would produce 2,044 units of affordable and low income housing when leveraged with state, federal, and private funds. This was the fourth housing levy approved by Seattle voters since 1981. The City reports that in fact the Levy is exceeding its goals by as much as 33% in some categories. For every city dollar, \$4 is being leveraged from King County, Washington State, philanthropy and the federal government.

Allocation categories include 65% of the funds for rental housing preservation and production; 8% to low income housing within mixed use, mixed income targeted neighborhoods; 8% for operating and maintenance support for housing for persons at or below 30% of median income; 9% for homeownership assistance; 3% for emergency rental assistance to prevent homelessness; and 5% for administration.

"Housing Levy investments exemplify how we're changing the model from managing homelessness to ending homelessness," said Housing Levy Oversight Committee Chair Paul Lambros. "Levy dollars are a main financial driver behind the movement toward providing housing with onsite services that stabilize the lives of homeless people and help them increase self sufficiency."

Mayor Nickels also announced project awards as part of the first funding round this year to Archdiocesan Housing Authority, Partners in Hope; Downtown Emergency Service Center, Cascade Supportive Housing; and Community House Mental Health Agency in Brierwood for a total of 196 units of housing.

Seattle and King County unveiled a 10- Year Plan to end homelessness, "A Roof over Every Bed in King County" in March 2005 and have reported a 10% reduction in street homelessness each year. In June, United Way of King County announced \$25 million will be raised to provide permanent supportive housing to 1,000 of the county's most vulnerable citizens.

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness: <http://www.usich.gov>