



COMMUNITY UPDATE

**PUBLISHED
JANUARY 2019**

Thurston Thrives

Thurston County's Community Initiative to Improve Health and Safety for All

Thurston Thrives is a community initiative to improve the health and safety of all people in Thurston County. We believe that health is more than healthcare. Our community's complex problems – poverty, homelessness and making sure all children are ready for kindergarten – cannot be solved by one organization alone.

Using a collective impact framework, Thurston Thrives brings together local jurisdictions, businesses and nonprofits

to find new ways of working together to address our region's most pressing needs.

The core of our work takes place from within our eight Action Teams. The unique strength of this approach is the result of combining the expertise of professionals from a variety of sectors to identify strategies and goals through a collaborative approach.

Thurston Thrives' Coordinating Council serves as the leadership of the Action

Team network and as a platform to advance the innovative actions of the teams and help inform regional policies.

The Coordinating Council has identified three areas of emphasis to guide Thurston Thrives' collective efforts over the coming year to improve the health and safety of our community – housing stability, thriving children and economic opportunity for all.



**Community
Action Teams**

**Education &
Resilience**

Economy

Food

**Public Safety
& Justice**

Environment

Community Design

**Housing &
Homelessness**

Clinical Care

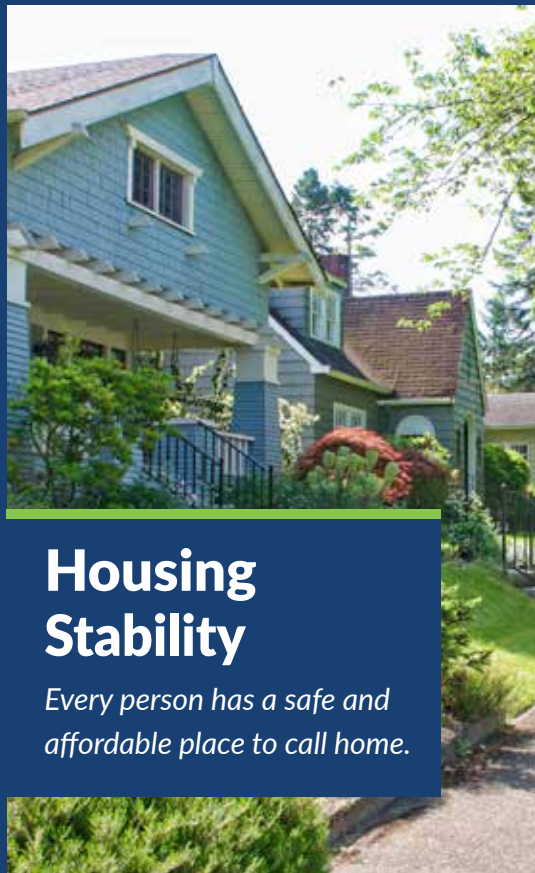


Strategic Priorities for a Healthy & Thriving Community

The Thurston Thrives Coordinating Council has identified three areas of emphasis to guide our work over the next few years. These priority areas impact our overall health and safety – from access to local foods to kindergarten readiness, and the walkability of our neighborhoods. These three priorities provide an organizing framework for Thurston Thrives, and will help guide our collective efforts in improving the health and well-being of our community.

Thriving Children

All children & youth are safe and successful, in and out of school.



Housing Stability

Every person has a safe and affordable place to call home.

Economic Opportunity

A thriving economy where every person can afford to live and work.



Housing & Homelessness

Housing stability is a regional issue. Leveraging the strengths of nonprofits, business, and government representatives, the Housing Action Team develops strategies and recommendations to ensure affordable, adequate and safe housing for all in our community, especially for those who are homeless and severely cost-burdened (spending 50% or more of their income on housing).



Impact

- The Homeless Housing Hub (HHH) serves as our regional Continuum of Care.
- Completed a state-mandated 5-year plan to end homelessness.
- Ongoing work to build & expand an efficient Coordinated Entry System.
- Formation of Hazardous Weather Task Force to address our community's most vulnerable during the winter months.
- Hosted Regional Housing Summit. The purpose was to explore ways to strengthen government and private sector partnerships to increase housing supply.

Other Highlights The Incentivize Housing Team is a subgroup of the Housing Action Team, and focuses on ways to involve the private sector in providing affordable housing, which in turn can help ease the homelessness crisis. Experts agree that we need between 1,500 and 2,000 units of affordable housing to ease our housing crisis, and nonprofits and governments can't do this without help from the private sector.

This team has created a "Housing Affordability Model". This software-based tool allows municipalities and developers to work collaboratively to identify ways to incentivize, design and construct affordable housing. The model also comes with a package of policy tools that jurisdictions can use to help ease the costs associated with developing affordable housing.

Education & Resilience

The Mission of the Education and Resilience action team is to nurture children and youth from cradle to career, by strengthening families, schools and communities. Educational attainment is a critical factor in an individual's long-term health. One of the main goals of this team is to ensure that every child enters kindergarten ready to learn, completes high school, earns a postsecondary credential, and has skills to find living wage employment.



Impact Leveraging the collective impact framework of Thurston Thrives and the Education & Resilience team, the Community Schools initiative was started by TOGETHER! and the Tumwater School District. Community Schools leverages the strengths of schools to serve as 'hubs', and provides families and youth with access to healthcare, clothing, food, and other services, right on school grounds. This ensures convenient access and encourages students to continue attending school despite the odds.

Other Highlights

- Collaborated with state-wide efforts to bring state and federal STEM dollars to our region. Working to write the regional STEM plan.
- Partnered with multiple action teams to help bring the HOPE initiative to Thurston County.
- Helped expand TOGETHER!'s collective impact Community Schools initiative to include Tumwater, Yelm and Rochester.

What's Next

Educational success is just one of the many goals we have for our children. We want all children to be safe and raised in nurturing, healthy environments. We want children to learn to be kind, honest, responsible and contributing members of our community.

In the coming year, this team will re-evaluate their strategy map, and identify gaps and opportunities for further collaboration and action. Our goal is to explore areas such as career connected learning opportunities, early childhood education initiatives, mental

health support systems, and strengthen strategic partnerships to ensure all youth are successful, in and out of school.



Food

The South Sound Food System Network (SSFSN) serves as the Food Action Team for Thurston Thrives. Our mission is to grow a vibrant local food economy, ensure broad access to healthy foods, and steward the environment in the South Sound. Access to safe and healthy foods — and an environment in which the healthy food choice is the easy choice — improves the potential for a healthful diet, which in turn leads to improved health.

Other Highlights

- Raised over \$28k in cash revenues, plus at least \$10k more in-kind.
- More than 250 attendees at the 2018 Food Summit, more than 40% were low & reduced income.
- Established a committed group of South Sound Food System Network (SSFSN) participants, who come from many facets of the food system.
- Assessing the feasibility of a food processing facility in our region.

Impact

Hosted the bi-annual Food Summit, held in 2017. This summit is a unique, day-long community food event designed to celebrate, educate and engage our community using a hands-on, interactive, family-friendly approach to gain a better understanding of our local food system.

What's Next

- *Continue the exploration & planning of a processing facility.*
- *Community garden initiatives in multiple Thurston County municipalities.*

Environment

This team's strategy draws on the expertise and participation of community members and local staff to improve air quality, water quality, waste reduction, vector and zoonotic disease prevention, and emergency preparedness. The physical environment of Thurston County – its air, water, animals and other aspects of our surroundings and the systems we live in – contributes to the health of all residents.

Impact

The team has played an integral role in shaping local governments' regional climate mitigation, as members formed a shared work team and encouraged Thurston County to join Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater's city governments to set and work towards revised targets for greenhouse gas emissions within Thurston County.

2019 will mark the start of the plan to meet the targets of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the Thurston region 45% below 2015 levels by 2030, and 85% below 2015 levels by 2050.

Other Highlights

- Informed the update to the Thurston County Comprehensive Plan and the development of the region's Climate Adaptation Plan. The latter acknowledges the expected economic, environmental, health and social impacts of climate change in our region and works to reduce the risks.

What's Next

We will inform the regional climate mitigation plan and publish our local emissions data spanning 2010 to 2016.



Economy

The Thurston Economic Alliance (TEA) serves as the Economic Action Team for Thurston Thrives. TEA is a voluntary partnership of local governments, businesses, non-profits, educational institutions and economic development practitioners that collaborate on the development, implementation and review of efforts to build and maintain a dynamic economy.

Impact

The Thurston Economic Development Council, working with over a hundred community partners, implemented the first ever Thurston economic development strategic plan. This plan provides a community-led, community-wide framework for creating economic prosperity in Thurston County. Five task forces are engaged in coordinating economic development activities, identifying goals to attract investment and developing a long term strategy to support and diversify the regional economy.

Other Highlights

- New training series created to help military spouses start their own businesses
- Recruitment and marketing efforts launched in support of natural based products manufacturing
- New position created to provide business coaching to the rural communities of Thurston County
- Thurston County partners strengthen a Shared Legislative Agenda approach towards state policy and infrastructure funding

What's Next

Infrastructure construction at the Tenino Agriculture Innovation and Business Park.

Aligning brands and coordinating marketing efforts that promote Thurston County as a destination to attract new talent and investment, both domestic and international.

Community Design

This team develops strategies and recommendations to create community environments that promote good health. Bike paths, trail systems and walkable neighborhoods are all examples of good community design. Our built environment shapes health when it provides opportunities for regular, moderate physical activity and healthy eating. Community design can also impact air pollution and public safety.



Impact

The team entered a national competition with the project “Active Design for a Healthier Thurston County” in which we sought support for a trail analysis and improvements to make it easier for residents to use the regional trail system. In 2016, the team was a finalist and received seed money to begin this work.

Other Highlights

- Developed new resources for the Safe Routes to School project to encourage kids to walk or bike safely to school.
- Helped with a project to put new benches in nine locations on the regional trails system.
- Hosted an Active Community Design Forum – helping explain how good community design can encourage people to be more active.
- Improved access to the Woodland Trail for the Lacey Boys & Girls Club and surrounding neighborhood.
- Informed long-term plans and policies to shape our community so that more people can be active in their daily lives.

What's Next

The Community Design Action Team is working toward further Active Community Design Forum events. Additionally, in the coming year we anticipate installation of new trail wayfinding signage to help people have a better trail experience. We will continue to inform local plans concerning the built environment and active design,

such as City of Lacey’s Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan and the Regional Trails Plan.

Trail access to the Chehalis Western Trail from Ensign Road by the City of Olympia is nearly complete as of the end of 2018. This access was identified as a priority by Community Design team partners, as it’s

an area that serves local seniors and low-income residents, as well as commuters using alternative transportation to work (such as bicycling). Our walkshed analysis indicated this as a location with some of the highest benefits in the whole regional trails system for nearby residents and employees to have an access improvement.

Public Safety & Justice

The Thurston County Law and Justice Council, acting as the action team for public safety as a major factor in the health of the community, developed a strategy and recommendations for how our community can ensure people are safe where they live, work, and play and that people are held accountable for criminal conduct; and legal rights and due process for all people are respected and honored.



What's Next

We're creating a program to reduce recidivism.

In 2017, the Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney's office, part of the Public Safety & Justice Action Team, implemented 'First Look, Differential Case Management'.

First Look triages court cases to find the best path for a case as early as possible in order for the court to operate more efficiently. Some cases go into a diversion program, other cases go into

a drug court while others are criminal cases. First Look reduces case time and resources and reduces recidivism. First Look is especially effective when applied to lower-level offenses and offenders with low-level mental illness.

In addition, Thurston County launched a pretrial services unit as a separate county unit department.

Pretrial Services:

- Supervises people who are pending trial.
- Keeps jail resources dedicated to higher risk offenders.
- Identifies potential inter-departmental efficiencies.
- Improves processes to resolve cases on time and reduce the number of delays.

Coordinating Council



Director **Krosbie Carter**

David Schaffert, Chair
Thurston County Chamber

Schelli Slaughter, Public Health Representative
Thurston County Public Health and Social Services

Doug DeForest, Business Representative
Thurston Transit Oriented Development

Tammie Jensen-Tabor, Education Representative
Tumwater School District

Tanya Mote, Education Representative
South Puget Sound Community College Foundation

Tye Menser, Government Representative
Thurston County Commissioner

Rachel Young, Government Representative
City of Lacey Councilmember

Nathaniel Jones, Government Representative
City of Olympia Mayor Pro Tem

Jonathan Stephenson, Government Representative
City of Rainier Councilmember

Michael Althaus, Government Representative
City of Tumwater Councilmember

Terry Kaminski, Government Representative
City of Yelm Councilmember

Peter Brennan, Philanthropy Representative
Providence St. Peter Foundation

Norma Schuiteman, Philanthropy Representative
The Community Foundation of South Puget Sound

Chris Wells, Philanthropy Representative
United Way of Thurston County

Christina Daniels, Thurston Asset Building Coalition
Bay Equity Home Loans

Derek Harris, Housing Action Team
Community Youth Services

Karen Messmer, Community Design Action Team
Olympia Safe Streets

Celeste Wade, Food Action Team
South Sound Food System Network

Chris Hawkins, Environment Action Team
Public Health and Social Services

Meghan Goldenberger, Education & Resilience Action Team
TOGETHER!

Jon Tunheim, Public Safety & Justice Action Team
Prosecuting Attorney's Office

Michael Cade, Economy Action Team
The Economic Development Council

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