

# WSDOT update on state Encampment Resolution Program

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# Update

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# Program summary

- In spring 2022 work began on the state's Right of Way Safety Initiative – now called the **Encampment Resolution Program** – a partnership of state and local partners to find solutions for people living homeless on state rights of way.
  - Commerce
  - Transportation
  - Washington State Patrol
  - **Partnerships:** Our agencies do this work in partnership with numerous local governments and non-profit partners.
- Centered on five counties:
  - King
  - Pierce
  - Thurston
  - Snohomish
  - Spokane

# Results to date

## STATEWIDE – ACTIVE and CLOSED SITES to DATE

**49 TOTAL SITES**

CLOSED: 47 ACTIVE: 2

Work taking place in

**5 COUNTIES**

Thurston, Pierce, King, Snohomish and Spokane



NUMBER OF  
PEOPLE AS OF  
BY-NAME DEADLINE

**1,758**

TEMP/SHELTER

**947**

PERMANENT  
SUPPORTIVE  
HOUSING

**+**

**261**

**=**

ACCEPTED  
HOUSING

**1,208**

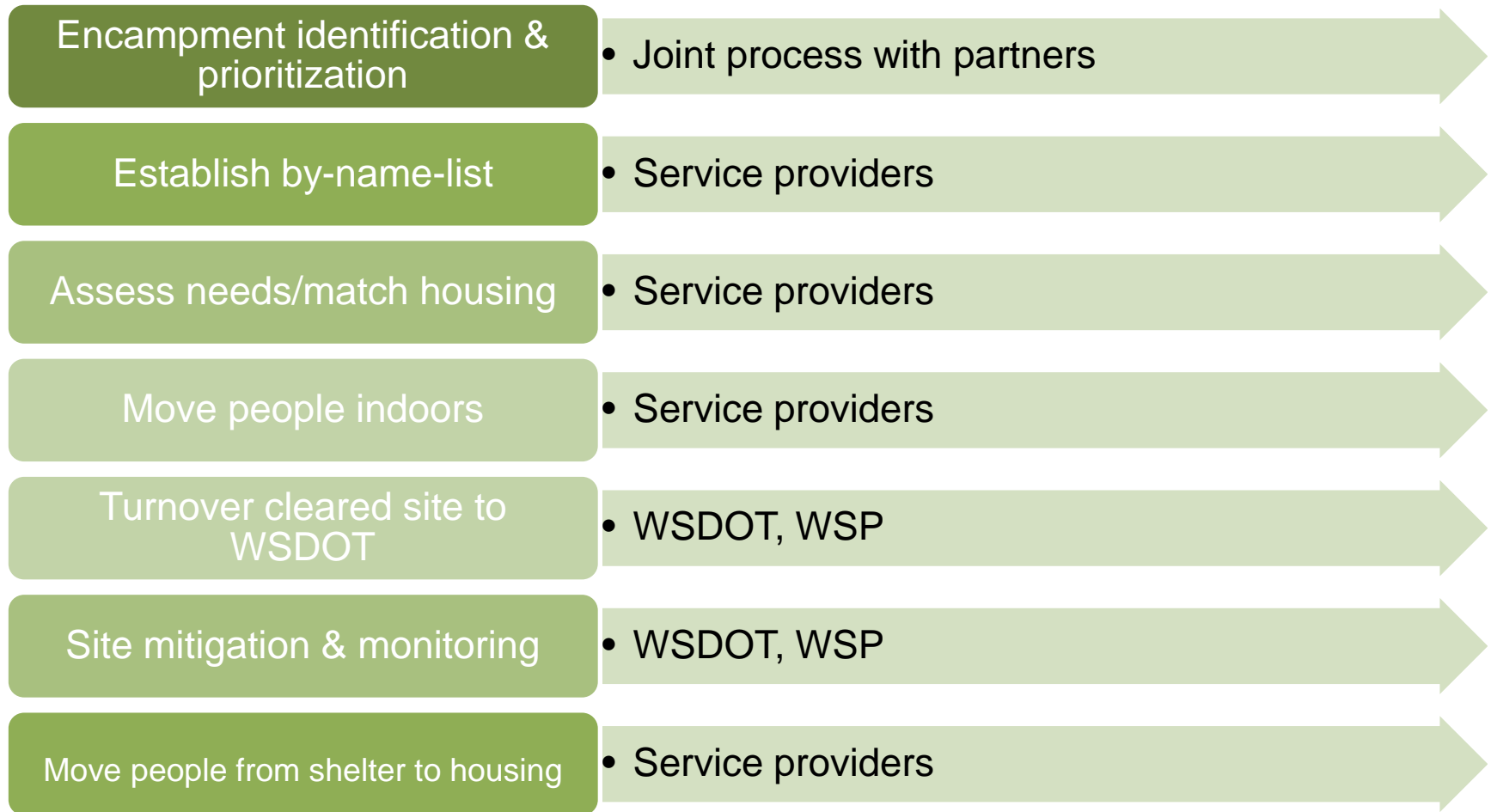
STILL IN  
HOUSING

**891**

**AS OF AUGUST 31, 2024**

23-06-0193

# How the program works



# WSDOT right of way & encampments

- WSDOT has roughly 100,000 acres\*\* of vegetated right of way statewide. That's roughly equal to:
  - *The size of 2 Seattles*
  - *The entire island of Barbados*
  - *75,000 football fields*
- The 47 sites represent just a fraction of those 100,000 acres.
- What we do on ERP sites sets precedence for other site treatments.

*\*\* Data reflects highway right of way only and not real estate parcels for things like construction staging or future highway construction. Some of these parcels have encampment challenges as well.*

# Site monitoring

## **47 sites resolved to date (as of Aug. 2024)**

- Every site has been modified to include vegetation management; some also include chain link fence repair/installation.
- Several modified further to include boulders to prevent re-encampment (many sites are not suitable for boulders due to access/terrain/etc.)

## **Monitoring is a team effort**

- A combination of staff monitor sites to include WSDOT, WSP, local jurisdictions and outreach providers.
- Can't fence our way out of monitoring. EVERY fence type is penetrable.

## **See something, say something**

- Some WSDOT ROW cannot be seen directly from our infrastructure and WSDOT crews monitor more closely for those sites where WSP doesn't have regular eyes on.

**WSDOT utilizes the least cost, least invasive approach to site modification first and re-visits if necessary.**

# Employment training

## By the numbers:

- **106 total assessments** – individuals' assessment for program readiness, potential job interests and other job-related barriers that may be present.
- **157 service connections** – connections include offers of housing, substance use disorder services, GED, behavioral health and legal services.
- **47 people graduated** – includes graduates from two pre-apprenticeships in Spokane County, one flagging course and two job readiness courses in King County.
- **80% graduation rate** (47 graduates/59 people enrolled)
- **26 graduates employed** – total people employed in apprenticeship, flagging or other fields.





# Challenges ahead

- Additional housing is needed in all counties.
- Lack of new housing options means re-setting expectations on addressing new sites moving forward.
- Inability to address large sites like we have in the recent past will be a challenge on a number of fronts.
- A small number of individuals with high acuity issues/needs who have either been banned or cannot be safely served in the shelter/housing options.
- Costs associated with cleaning and modifying sites for WSDOT.
- Ongoing patrol costs for WSP to maintain sites being clear of inhabitants.
- Ongoing overtime costs for WSP paid for by WSDOT.
- Enforcement of rest areas with legal issues surrounding RVs.
- Ability to modify sites to prevent re-encampment; costs and resources associated with site activation in lieu of hardening.

# Questions

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