

Tiny House Villages

About LIHI

The Low Income Housing Institute develops, owns and operates housing for the benefit of low-income, homeless and formerly homeless people in Washington State; advocates for just housing policies at the local and national levels; and administers a range of supportive service programs to assist those we serve in maintaining stable housing and increasing their self-sufficiency.

Founded in 1991, LIHI has grown to be one of the most productive affordable housing developers in the Northwest. LIHI owns and/or manages over 2,200 housing units at 60 sites in six counties throughout the Puget Sound region. LIHI also owns and operates three Urban Rest Stops, critical hygiene facilities for homeless individuals and families located in downtown Seattle, the U-District, and Ballard serving thousands of homeless individuals each year.

Beginning in 2015, LIHI began operating Tiny House Villages. Now the program has grown to include 12 villages in three cities across Washington State.



Background

In just Pierce County alone, there are over 10,000 people experiencing homelessness. In the state of Washington there are more than 40,000 individuals in shelters or living outside. More than 7,000 of these individuals are part of a family with children.

Our Solution

In 2015, LIHI started building Tiny House Villages as a response to the homeless crisis and as a replacement for tents. Tiny houses offer tremendous benefits over tents- they are safe, weatherproof, and lockable. The Tiny House Villages allow residents to have a safe and stable environment where they can receive supportive services that start them on a path towards permanent housing and employment.



Our Communities

There are currently ten Tiny House Villages in Seattle, one in Olympia, and one in Tacoma. Each village has hygiene facilities, utility access, and a supportive neighboring community that is actively engaged in the success of the residents. Tiny House Villages also have 24/7 security and active supportive service staff that residents are encouraged to engage with.

The Houses



The Low Income Housing Institute collaborates with volunteers, building trade organizations, and non-profits to construct the houses. Each Tiny house is approximately 8' X 12' and costs about \$2,500 in materials. Each house has electricity, an overhead light, and a heater.

Success

Through our supportive services and housing resources, hundreds of residents of the Tiny House Villages have been able to obtain permanent housing and stable employment. In 2019, residents from Tiny House Villages had a 54% transition rate into permanent housing and transitional housing, compared to a 4% transition rate into permanent housing from traditional shelters.



Attached are several stories from residents about their experience living in Tiny House Villages.

Ongoing Community Engagement

Every Village has a Community Advisory Committee (CAC). These committees are made up of neighbors and local business owners. The CACs serve to oversee the Villages and ensure that the community has a voice and stake in the Village's success.



First Christian Church of Tacoma Tiny House Village

First Christian Church of Tacoma in partnership with
The Low Income Housing Institute

602 N Orchard St, Tacoma, WA 98406

The First Christian Church of Tacoma Tiny House Village will be on property owned by the First Christian Church of Tacoma. The Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) will operate and manage the village. LIHI will be responsible for maintenance of the site, staffing, and case management.



The Village will include about 32 Tiny Houses that will serve 35-40 individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness. The site will also have a security office, case management offices, a hygiene and laundry facility and community spaces. See below.



FAQ

Who makes up the rules for each village?

The Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) will be contracted to operate and oversee the day-to-day management of the site. The community will be governed by a set of rules and a Code of Conduct, which each resident must read, sign and agree to abide by. The Village is operated in accordance with an established Management and Service Plan.

What oversight will be provided at the village?

LIHI is responsible for safety and security within the village. Residents are screened for entry and must follow the village Code of Conduct.

Residents have access to necessary services like case management and healthcare to help them transition out of homelessness.

Who pays for the Village?

LIHI will seek funding for the set up and operation of the Village from the City of Tacoma, Pierce County, and the State of Washington. First Christian Church of Tacoma will have no financial obligations for the set up or operation of the Village.

What is the relationship of First Christian Church to the Village?

The Church will be considered the “Sponsor” of the Village. This means that the Village is on land the Church owns or leases. While the Church will not be legally or financially responsible for the Village, we hope the Church community will support residents of the Village by hosting events (holiday parties, community activities, etc.), serving meals, and offering resources.

How are the Villages staffed?

The Village will have 24/ security as well as several other staff positions to support the success of the Village. Several full time Village Organizers monitor the health and wellbeing of residents and help with daily maintenance and operations.

Special Projects Managers supervise daily activities, coordinate with vendors and volunteers, and manage on site staff.

The Villages are also staffed with full time, on- site Case Managers. Case Managers engage with residents regularly to support them in obtaining permanent housing, accessing healthcare, and gaining stable employment and educational opportunities.

How is the community engaged throughout this project?

Before the Village is fully constructed, LIHI will begin outreach to the surrounding key stakeholders and community members to inform them about the Village. LIHI will also host community meetings to give the surrounding community a chance to engage with LIHI, hear from residents of Tiny House Villages, and voice their questions and concerns.

Is there ongoing community input?

The Village will establish a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) that will provide advisory input on operations. Members of the CAC will include businesses, community leaders, immediate neighbors, service providers and others. The Committee of stakeholders meet monthly with LIHI staff and onsite Village staff and Case Managers to hear updates on the Village's progress and voice any questions or concerns they might have regarding the Village. Village This is also an opportunity for community members to share resources and find ways to engage with the Village.