

Alternative Transitional Housing

Portland, OR

Seattle, WA

Fresno & Ontario, CA



Open Table Nashville

“Tent Cities are American’s de facto waiting room for affordable and accessible housing. The idea of someone living in a tent (or other encampment) in this country says little about the decisions made by those who dwell within and so much more about our nation’s inability to adequately respond to those in need.”

-Neil Donovan, Exec. Dir. National Coalition for the Homeless

Why not shelters?

- Shelter beds are not equipped to handle people who are disabled. No handicapped / wheelchair access.
- No freedom
- No privacy, uncomfortable, similar to jail with strict rules
- No pets allowed
- Too many rules
- Couples can't stay together
- Wake up too early
- Transportation is a problem
- Too many people around
- Can't make 3pm deadline
- No private shower
- Asthma
- Don't like shelters, like freedom of the open field
- Pets can't be kenneled



Dignity Village: Portland, OR

- Started in 2000 by un-housed individuals under the Fremont bridge as an act of civil disobedience
- Began as a tent city and moved to a village model when they relocated by the airport
- Requirements for entering the community is one agrees to the 5 basic rules & has been living on the streets or in shelters for some time. People under 18 are not allowed, because the community refuses to run background checks on its residents on the grounds of its code of tolerance.
- Couples and pets are allowed and pregnant women are permitted to stay up until their eighth month.
- After 90 consistent days, residents become voting members of the community
- Approved by the city of Portland
- 60 members, weekly meetings
- Self-governed by a 9-15 council members (elected annually), bi-monthly meetings
- 501(c)(3) nonprofit
- Security desk staffed 24/7 by members
- Basic first aid available
- Veterinary visits for pets
- Counselors and social workers come to the site
- Each member pays \$35 a month for their spot
- Community Center, Shower house, Gardens



Tent Cities: Seattle, WA

- 3 established large camps. Adding 3 more camps, after 16 years experience (city recognized, but run by non-profits).
- Each camp serves 100 people. Encampments are located on vacant parcels in non-residential areas. Both private and City lands are eligible for permits; excludes parks.
- Must be located within a half-mile of a transit stop
- Required to provide social services to help manage challenges and transition from homelessness to permanent housing.
- Same data collection tools as the City's current homeless shelters.
- Self-governed communities with support and sponsorship by local non-profits
- The communities are hosted by a different congregation about every 90 days.
- Accept new residents on a first-come first-serve basis. Someone showing up late at night looking for a place to stay is offered a bed for the night, after passing an initial screening.
- All residents must pass background checks & must agree to follow community standards of behavior: basic rules of respect, non-violence, and tolerance
- Responsibilities include: 2 security shifts, weekly meeting, & community credit every 14 days
- Varying lengths of bans for violating rules.
- No time-limit to stay as long as community standards of behavior are followed
- The community has its own 24 hour a day security run by community members.

Village of Hope: Fresno, CA

- Est. 2004
- Population: 126
- Private Land / Urban Center / Permanent Site
- Zoned as Campground
- Funding Source: Poverello House: 501(c)3
- Self-governed and largely self-supporting with oversight provided by Poverello House staff
- No admissions requirement and everyone is accepted on a first-come first-serve basis when there is space available
- There are no bans on legal substances, but a resident cannot be a danger to oneself or others.
- All residents must leave the camp in the morning. This is designed to relieve staff work during those hours and motivate residents. Curfew: 10pm during the week & midnight on weekends



THSA: Ontario, CA

- Est. 2007
- Population: 70
- Public Land / Urban Periphery / Permanent Site
- A two and a half acre plot of city-owned land
- 20 people are in recreational vehicles and cars and 50 are in tents
- City Council Approved
- Funded by City and County Governments
- The city issues photo identification cards, 90 permits, and provides residents with tents. Permits are re-issued every 90 days
- The community has no aspect of self-government or community service requirements.
- Many of the non-profit sponsors expressed frustration with local government initiative and the high cost of funding. Among the causes for this high cost include the privately contracted security force (\$11,000/month), which is usually covered by the homeless themselves or local volunteers at other camps.
- Bathrooms, showers, food distribution, tents and 24/7 security.

Main Questions Seem To Be . . .

- Governance
- Funding
- Location
- Amenities
- Capacity
- Requirements

