

Camp Hope news update Feb. 8

Fencing around Camp Hope moved in effort to shrink footprint

As part of the work to close the encampment, staff onsite at Camp Hope began the process of moving the fence that surrounds the site on Tuesday, Feb. 7. Preparations had been underway for weeks in order to move residents living near the southern fence line near Second Avenue. Moving the fence signifies a new milestone in closing Camp Hope by continuing to reduce the footprint of the site.

The fence itself was moved nearly 40 feet inward away from Second Avenue at the southern edge. Not only does this visually show the progress being made, but those traveling near Second Avenue will now have increased visibility while driving through the area.

Debris and RV removals continue

Downsizing of Camp Hope continues as residents transition into permanent and supportive housing. An additional two RVs are scheduled to be towed from the north lot this week.

Along with the removal of additional RVs, a private contractor has been hired finalized to remove additional trash/debris from the site. Maintenance crews from WSDOT had removed more than 48,000 pounds last month from the site but the private contractor will now continue the efforts. The new contractor will be on site once a week to remove trash/debris from within Camp Hope.

More Camp Hope residents transition to Catalyst program

By the end of the day on Feb. 7, there were 56 participants enrolled at Catalyst reflecting individuals that have moved from Camp Hope into the new Catalyst emergency supportive housing program. An additional six people have intake appointments to move in this week.

People from Camp Hope who have been referred to Catalyst are being gradually moved into the building to allow for smooth transitions; the project can house at least 100 people at full capacity. Participant move-ins were slowed slightly due to construction on the first two floors; one floor remains under construction while the other has been completed and is beginning intakes.

In addition to emergency housing, Catalyst participants receive meal and laundry services, case management, employment and behavioral health services, all aimed at creating pathways to stable housing after their stay at Catalyst. Medical providers are on-site weekly helping participants address emergent health needs, and project staff are working with participants to plan for longer range wellness. Recovery groups and addiction education sessions are also being facilitated on-site each week, in addition to provision of outpatient substance use disorder treatment services.

Catalyst is run by Catholic Charities Eastern Washington and was funded with \$15 million in state Right of Way Safety Initiative dollars as part of efforts to close the

encampment site, which funded site acquisition, building rehab, and year 1 program operations.

Many types of housing options still a key need

While work continues to develop housing options, information about all shelter/housing options – and transportation to these sites – is shared daily with Camp Hope residents. The Right of Way Safety Initiative funding requires an offer of shelter/housing that is “meaningfully better” than their current situation be made to everyone at the encampment as part of the work to close the site. The most successful housing and homelessness efforts – nationally and elsewhere in Washington – include the availability of different housing options. A variety of available housing options is ideal for moving a large encampment because of mental health, domestic violence security, privacy and other concerns that prevent some residents from functioning in a congregate shelter.

The housing need also exceeds just the Camp Hope encampment making the housing need even more critical. The most recent point-in-time count by the city of Spokane counted 1,757 people experiencing homelessness throughout Spokane County on a single night in February, with 823 individuals living outside. A nationally recognized supplemental state system that cross matches homeless data from multiple assistance programs finds a comprehensive count of more than 5,200 people experiencing homelessness (living in a shelter or unsheltered) in Spokane County.

Sign-up for future email updates

If you would like to receive regular communication about what’s happening at Camp Hope, please sign up for our email listserv:

https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WADOT/subscriber/new?topic_id=WADOT_706

Camp Hope and the State Right of Way Safety Initiative

As part of continued work to close the Camp Hope encampment, WSDOT and its state, local and nonprofit partners continue to make visible progress stabilizing Camp Hope as part of the state [Right of Way Safety Initiative](#). This joint effort includes work from WSDOT, the state Department of Commerce, the Washington State Patrol and on-the-ground resource provider Empire Health Foundation (working under a contract with Commerce) and other partners, who are all working toward the shared community goal of closing the encampment.