



March 27, 2023

Master planned community for the homeless gets go-ahead in Spanaway

By [JOURNAL STAFF](#)

Following a seven-hour meeting last Tuesday, the Pierce County Council has given the go-ahead for a new planned community of micro homes to house the formerly homeless in Spanaway. The council voted 6-1 in support of the project.

The village will be located on approximately 27 acres of a 85.7 acre site located off Spanaway Loop Road with access from 176th Street.

The community is modeled off the CommunityFirst! Village which opened in Austin, Texas, in 2015 with a vision to “provide permanent housing designed to provide hope, dignity, and purpose to the chronically homeless through purposeful work, restorative relationships, and vibrant community.”



Image from Pierce County [\[enlarge\]](#)

This conceptual rendering gives an indication of what the village might look like.

Pierce County's version will have around 300 micro homes (of approximately 400 square feet), support buildings that include onsite physical and mental support, community gathering spaces, microenterprises, work opportunities, and necessary healthcare and case management services. The county has selected Tacoma Rescue Mission to develop, own and operate the community.

To live in the village residents will need to pay rent, be a good neighbor, and obey the law. Work opportunities will be offered on site to help with the cost of rent. Approximately 28 volunteers and staff are expected to live on site alongside residents to help build community.

Pierce County has set aside \$22 million for the project which will be used to help cover the costs of land acquisition, infrastructure, and pre-design. This funding was approved at last weeks meeting as well as the rezoning required for the project to move forward. Permitting and construction should start later this year, and the first homes are slated to be complete and filled by next summer.

The village will be bordered by approximately 15 residences and several wetlands along its northern edge. To the east is a vacant lot and Spanaway Loop Road, and along the southern and western boundaries is Joint Base Lewis-McChord. The entrance to the village will be controlled and the entire community will be fenced. Security staff will also monitor the grounds 24/7.

Pierce County expects the entire build out and full capacity to take around six years. The project team also includes TCF Architecture, AHBL, Ash Development and Soundview Consultants.

