

## **Art + Conversation = Transformational Solutions for Housing our Community**

### **Prayer Flags Project: Love Wins Love Collective**

Since February 2016, *Love Wins Love\** has been bringing diverse people together to make prayer flags to honor the 4,505 people who were counted during January 2016's "One night count" of people with no shelter.



#### **These prayer flags have many purposes...**

- When they are hung in shelters and tent encampments they communicate "love lives here " to everyone who sees them.
- When we paint them, we make an effort to bring together people who are housed and unhoused to (literally) sit at the table together. We encourage meaningful conversations to build empathy and dispel some of the prevailing myths about "homeless people." 9 out of 10 people in the US are one missed paycheck from the edge of homelessness; some of these people have a personal safety net, many do not.
- We've discovered that these gatherings are powerful informal focus groups that engage people who wouldn't normally participate in focus groups. We talk about housing issues and community-sourced solutions are presented, shared and discussed.

Here is a list of some of the community-sourced ideas that have been generated around the painting table thus far:

- **Transitional Villages:** Create "Urban KOAs" that provide a range of housing options: tent sites, RV sites, tiny houses/ cabins with a central kitchen, laundry, and bathing/toilet facilities. Built on city/county surplus land, ownership is transferred to a land trust so this resource will provide (very) low-income housing in perpetuity. Install permaculture, edible landscaping, water catchment systems, and solar collectors. Include airbnb cabins (with private bath) that residents share the responsibility for to generate funding for basic water, sewer, and garbage. If/when we eradicate homelessness, these sites will be lovely parks.

- Encourage owners of single-family homes to build (1 or more) tiny homes/livable “sheds” in their backyards to increase low-income housing stock.
- Allow self-governance; encourage the creation of worker-owned cooperatives.
- Integrate edible landscaping on all public property (ie Beacon Hill Food Forest.)

Providing temporary solutions, year after year, to address an ongoing issue is expensive. If we invest in sustainable housing infrastructure that promotes food sovereignty, costs over time will be greatly reduced and we simultaneously build pockets of resiliency throughout our region.

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

- We just received a grant of \$1000 from the City of Seattle’s Department of Neighborhoods to host five more prayer-flag making/ community focus group gatherings before the end of the summer.
- Milenko Matanovic, Executive Director of the Pomegranate Center has offered to facilitate a meeting in late summer where the best of these housing solutions will be presented to community leaders to see if we have the people, the skills, and the funding to move them into action. **We invite you to join this meeting. We need your help to provide housing for all.**

For more information and/or to get involved in our work, please contact us:

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#### **\*Love Wins Love**

Love Wins Love is an art collective that believes that housing is a human right. We host art-making events to build community and tap into the creativity and wisdom of people who are unhoused and housed. The purpose of these gatherings is to generate ideas for creating low-cost housing solutions while making prayer flags that beautify existing tent encampments and shelters. Our intention is to hone community-sourced ideas into a blueprint for generating housing solutions for real people that emphasize community and sustainability.

It's time to create a more beautiful world together.  
Visit us on Facebook at [Love Wins Love](#).