

**Program Name:** Tent City

**Your name and date:** Eileen Morris, Jan. 30

Program Evaluation Template - This template is to be used as an evaluation tool during our program investigation. The questions are designed to assist in determining what elements of each program we want to consider for incorporation into our programs. Feel free to add additional notes as you use the template. This template is the foundation for your presentation about the program you have researched. (Version #4)

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**Program or Concept Purpose or Mission Statement:**

The concept behind this program is to provide shelter to those homeless people in Seattle for whom there is no room in the traditional shelter system and for those who do not want to use the traditional shelter system.

**Principles or Values**

The current shelter system is inadequate both in terms of capacity and in terms of meeting the needs of couples, families, or those who simply want to have a home base they can return to during the day. Tent City provides shelter and accommodates those who cannot remain together in the traditional shelter system.

**Program Structure or Key Points:**

Tent City is a roving campground hosted by churches in the Seattle area. The homeless pitch their tents for up to six weeks in one spot and then the whole campground moves to another site. Each campground has portable toilets and running water, but does not have food preparation facilities. Tent City spokespersons say that, on average, people find housing after only six weeks at Tent City. Tent City is run in collaboration with church communities. It has strict rules of conduct—no drinking, no drugs, no verbal or physical violence—in order to ensure the safety of residents and prevent problems in the neighborhood. Residents are required to do chores every day to keep the city sanitary and tidy. They also do litter pick-ups in the surrounding neighborhood. All residents agree to do two security watches per week as well. They are also required to attend meetings, where housekeeping and conduct issues are addressed, and where participants are informed of resources they can access. Each participant can access the services of case managers. About 100 people use the campground every night.

There is one big tent for men, one for women, and the opportunity for couples and families to set up their own tents. The tents have cots, but no heat.

The program is organized by Seattle Housing and Resource Effort (SHARE), which spends about \$45,000 per year on cleaning temporary toilets and other expenses related to the campgrounds. The program relies on donations of tents, blankets, sleeping bags and other goods. Some churches allow campers to shower. Other services have developed to help serve Tent City—for example, a group of physicians formed a mobile medical clinic which visits Tent City. Many of SHARE's members have been homeless.

The city of Seattle tried to deny Tent City's right to exist, but, ultimately, after a ten-year battle, a judge ruled against the city on two grounds. First, the Boy Scouts, the Red Cross and other groups have frequently created temporary camp grounds within city limits. Second, a recent federal law gives churches huge leeway in what they do on their properties. The city of Petaluma has already had experience with this new law during the approval process for the Petaluma Valley Baptist Church expansion project. Cities are well within their rights to deny people permission to camp in public parks.

The city of Seattle does not provide any funding for Tent City.

**How does the program define or measure success?** (What evidence does the program provide to show success?)

The program measures how many people sleep safely at night.

**Describe a successful participant**

Someone who is able to sleep in safety and relative privacy in the company of family and/or partners.

**At what level would a participant enter the program?**

A participant enters the program when he or she has a need and can meet the conduct and sobriety rules.

Complete the table below.

Program Approach (Application)	Method (How it's used?)	Outcome (What would it look at COTS?)	Measurement (How do we measure success?)
<b>Human Growth &amp; Transformation</b>	The program meets basic needs for comfort and security—which makes it more likely that participants will want to make changes in their lives	This would depend on whom we were serving.	The program measures how many people sleep safely at night.
<b>Staff Interaction with Clients</b>	At Tent City, the number of paid staff is small. Volunteers accomplish most of the day-to-day chores and moving.	It might look like a combination of the Faith Based program and the Emergency Shelter.	We would be successful when we provided a clear program to churches and when we screened out potential problem clients.

<p><b>Client-to-Client Interaction</b></p>	<p>Tent City offers the opportunity for a lot of client-to-clients interaction. People are allowed to hang out there during the day, so there's a lot of social contact. Also, campers can graduate to staff positions. All campers must do chores and attend meetings.</p>	<p>It might look a lot like the Opportunity Center.</p>	<p>We would want to encourage clients to take leadership roles at the campground and to interact peaceably.</p>
<p><b>Client Self-Help</b></p>	<p>A campground would help lay the groundwork for clients to help themselves.</p>		<p>The number of clients who thrive over the winter.</p>

**Does this promote a responsible and accountable lifestyle? How?**

In theory, yes. Judging from letters to the editor about neighborhood trash and loud partying, there are some problems with keeping rules. I couldn't judge how widespread the problems were, but we could probably extrapolate from our own experiences at the emergency shelter.

**What are the client decision points in this program? (Are they clear and identifiable?)**

The client has to agree to abide by the rules of Tent City and keep abiding by them.

**What would you change to make the program or concept more useful in our setting?**

I could see something like this being very useful while the Mary Isaac Center is under construction. I remember Michelle telling me a couple of years ago that the saddest part of her job was watching how people deteriorated rapidly once the emergency shelter closed and they were once again forced to create makeshift camps or find other shelter. Just being able to sleep through the night without fear of being victimized would make a big difference for a lot of our clients. Also, they could be reassured that their stuff wouldn't get ripped off during the day.

I would think we would want to adopt similar rules of conduct/admission to those at the emergency winter shelter.

**Additional Issues:**

- **Staffing Requirements** (Any additional staff? Any staff training requirements?)

This would depend on how the program was structured, but it would definitely require more staff and many more volunteers.

- **Aftercare**

I would see a campground as being a complement to our emergency shelters.

- **Costs**

The biggest costs are related to sanitation.

**What pieces of the program or concept do you see useful for COTS?**

I like that it allows a secure home base.

**How do you see this working in our effort?**

See above.

**What makes you feel uneasy about this program or concept?**

I think we'd want to find churches which were out-of-the-way enough to reduce significant neighborhood opposition. Federal law or no Federal law, I don't think the city or the neighbors would allow a campground in the downtown or along Sonoma Mountain Parkway.

**Sources:**

[insideshare@hypermart.net](mailto:insideshare@hypermart.net)

various newspaper articles