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1020 North State Street  
Bellingham, WA 98225  
(360) 734-9862  
www.NWYS.org



"Northwest Youth Services gave me hope, a home, and a way for me to live without chaos, mayhem, and the psychosis of my life. Thank you."  
- Riley, 19

**Our community needs more housing for youth in crisis.**  
The number of homeless young adults in Bellingham is growing, but affordable housing is getting harder and harder to find.  
**22 North is almost completely funded.**  
**We need YOUR HELP to get to the finish line.**  
Thanks to a generous match from The Mick Lamb Foundation, the next \$25,000 we raise for 22 North will be matched.  
Learn more about 22 North online at [www.NWYS.org/22-north](http://www.NWYS.org/22-north)

# Meet Evan.

Evan was a homeless teen striving for a better life.  
He asked us to share his story ...

At the age of 17 I left my mother's house to try to fend for myself; after years of abuse at the hands of two emotionally and physically violent alcoholics, I had endured enough. It was the winter of my senior year of high school. I stayed at a local park for a few of months, and dodged local police by camping in friends' yards or rotating a few select benches. I got by on what little money I had saved up and free meals at school. Against all odds I kept focused and finished high school - I was one of the fortunate.

Many of the boys and girls I met while I was homeless (you tend to run into others seeking shelter) were much worse off than I was. Most of them had no family to speak of, had been kicked out of school, had felonies for small possession charges, arson, or violence. On the surface, they were delinquents, outcasts, felons; that is what you might see. Below the surface each of their stories was much more complicated.

There was a boy who had a felony for aggravated assault; he had hospitalized his step-father, inexcusable, until you consider that his step-father had drunkenly beaten him for 10 years until the boy finally snapped. Another friend started a fire in a dumpster on a dare with some buddies; this resulted in a charge of second degree arson, a class B felony in the state of Washington. As I understand, today neither of them are eligible for assistance from the state. They are homeless, unemployable, and will most likely stay that way for the rest of their lives.

When your entire life is chaos and distrust, and you are only met by those around you with distrust, this becomes your norm. You do not know that there is a way out of this lifestyle of cold and hunger and immobility. I got lucky; I graduated high school and a counselor cared enough to help me apply to college at WWU.

Today, I am an operations manager of an international student's dormitory at a great school in Minnesota. My personal success was made possible by the help I received on my journey out of homelessness. When I learned about 22 North and the effort Northwest Youth Services is undertaking to house homeless youth, I was called to share my own story. The people who will be affected by 22 North are not just faceless silhouettes. They are children who have yearned for something better. Young men and women who have wished for stability and safety. The forgotten who have wished to become someone and live a normal life.

**These are the kids that I once knew. They are me.**



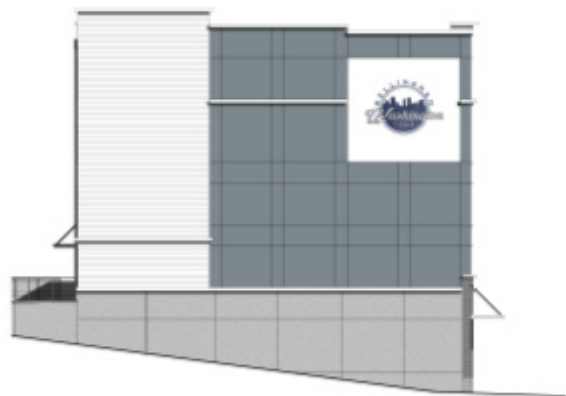


# 22 North

Supportive Housing for Young People  
Experiencing Homelessness



Front of 22 North- State Street



Side of 22 North- Heading South on State Street



Back of 22 North

## What is 22 North?

Northwest Youth Services and The Opportunity Council are collaborating on the construction of new apartments to be located at 1022 North State Street in Bellingham, referred to as '22 North'. Forty studio apartments will be available as permanent housing for single adults who have recently been homeless. Besides a physical home, *22 North* will also offer tenants a range of support services to promote individual goals, personal independence, and financial self-sufficiency.

## Why does Bellingham need 22 North?

Right now, in Whatcom County, over 100 young people age 18-24 are on Northwest Youth Services' waiting list for housing. *22 North* will create 20 new opportunities for these young people to be housed and work toward self-sufficiency.

Young people often become homeless because of family rejection or conflict, or after aging out of overloaded foster care and juvenile justice systems. Many of the young people we serve have experienced years of trauma, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse or neglect, and have wound up on the street. Often, these young people are suffering from untreated mental illness and drug or alcohol addiction, compounding the instability and victimization they face while living on the street and increasing their barriers to finding housing.

Learning to adapt from life on the street to life in stable housing can take months or even years, and often requires extensive support from service providers. At least 20% of the young people served by Northwest Youth Services are in need of long-term, supportive housing. When youth have their basic needs of shelter and safety met, they can begin to develop the skills necessary to transform their lives. This is exactly what *22 North* is designed to do.



## Our community needs more housing for youth in crisis.

The number of homeless young adults in Bellingham is growing, but affordable housing is getting harder and harder to find.

# 100

Over 100 young adults are on our waiting list for housing in Whatcom County.

SOURCE: University of Washington, Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies

# 1%

The rental vacancy rate in Bellingham is less than 1%.

SOURCE: University of Washington, Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies

# 68%

It's estimated that 68% of 18-24 year olds in Whatcom County are living in poverty.

SOURCE: DSHS 5-year American Community Survey Data

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# Join Us.