

Erasing the Negative: 2018 Annual Report

Washington State Housing Finance Commission

Communications: Annual Reports

HFA Staff Contact

Margret Graham

margret.graham@wshfc.org

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Available online: wshfc.org/admin/WSHFCAnnualReport2018.pdf

impossible

In 2018, the Washington State Housing Finance Commission sought to sustain a theme of hope and aspiration. At a time when housing news is grim across our state, with skyrocketing rents and rising homelessness affecting communities of all sizes, we wanted to emphasize how we've brought hope to the lives of families by "erasing" the negative add-ons to words like "accomplished," "protected" and "successful."

Strategies

As in years past, our goal was to highlight our success in areas that are vastly different in geography, economy, and community size. We also wanted each story to focus on a different kind of household: a formerly homeless grandmother, a family with significant disabilities, a young man battling opiate addiction.

Working with a brand-new design team, we chose a bolder, blockier look of bright colors and large text. We also used a die cut to show photos through the word "possible" cut out on the cover. Outstanding photos of real people were again our focal points.

We also embraced the numbers that are necessary for an annual report but not always appreciated, illustrating them with infographics and grouping them by program area.

As always, our annual report is accompanied by our "[statewide impact report](#)," which shows in numbers and maps our impact over all 35 years of the Commission.

Impact

In addition to an email blast and mailout, our annual report engaged hundreds more on social media in posts that highlighted individual stories and facts.

We also have made our annual reports into workhorses for multiple materials and presentations throughout the year, using photos, infographics, and messages in slides, brochures, web pages, and branding efforts.

For example, we use the individual stories and photos on district one-pagers to show our members of Congress the faces of their constituents who benefit from federal housing programs. We've found it continually effective as we connect with and inform our community.