

The Pathways study: An interactive session on emerging insights

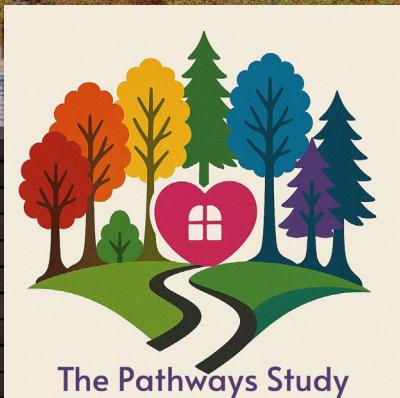


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HSD Provider Conference
October 22, 2025



SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC HEALTH



Portland State
Homelessness Research
& Action Collaborative



Presenting Today

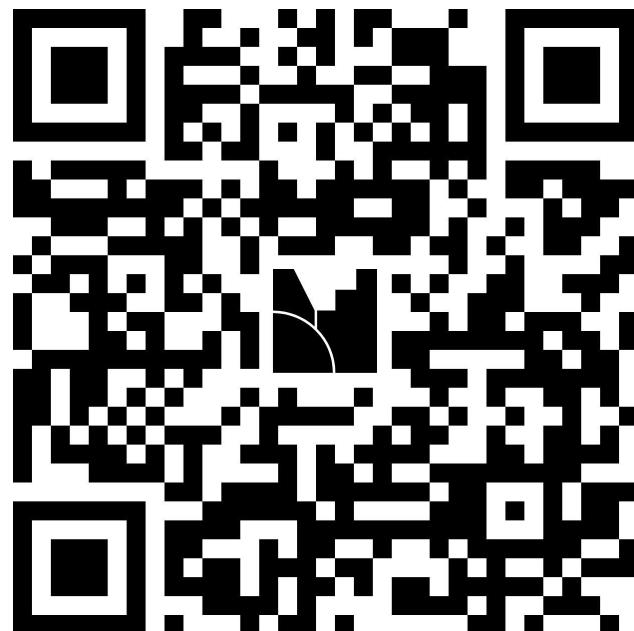
Crystal Magana - LEC

Fawn Hakert - LEC

Hollie Spriggs-LEC

Desiree' J. DuBoise - PSU

Mentimeter: Who is here today?





About Us - PSU Team:



Kathleen Conte



Marisa Zapata



Desiree' J. DuBoise

- Other Team Members:
- Tania Hoode - all things admin

- Molly Liang - MPH Intern
- Susan Avila- MPH Intern



Lived Experience Committee

LIVED EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE



KORI HAMILTON
LIVED EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE MEMBER



JESSICA AHEARN
LIVED EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE MEMBER



ERIC GIBSON
LIVED EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE MEMBER



CRYSTAL MAGANA
LIVED EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE MEMBER



ARTANIA BRYANT
LIVED EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE MEMBER



CASSIE MARUSA
LIVED EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE MEMBER



THEODORE/FLEX
LIVED EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE MEMBER



7 of our 17 members!





Where did this project come from:

HSD interest :

- Funded by Joint Office of Homeless Services/Homeless Services Department
 - Focus on Multnomah County
- Interest: what services help people move from “pathways through shelter to housing”

PSU interest “Pathways through homelessness”:

- “Pathways” are different for everyone
- Sometimes we don’t know the “path” or the “goal” until we look back at where we’ve been
 - What are people’s goals when they are navigating homelessness? (not just what OUR goals are)
 - What actually helps people?
 - What do we need to understand better about people’s journeys?

❖ *Pathways research questions:*

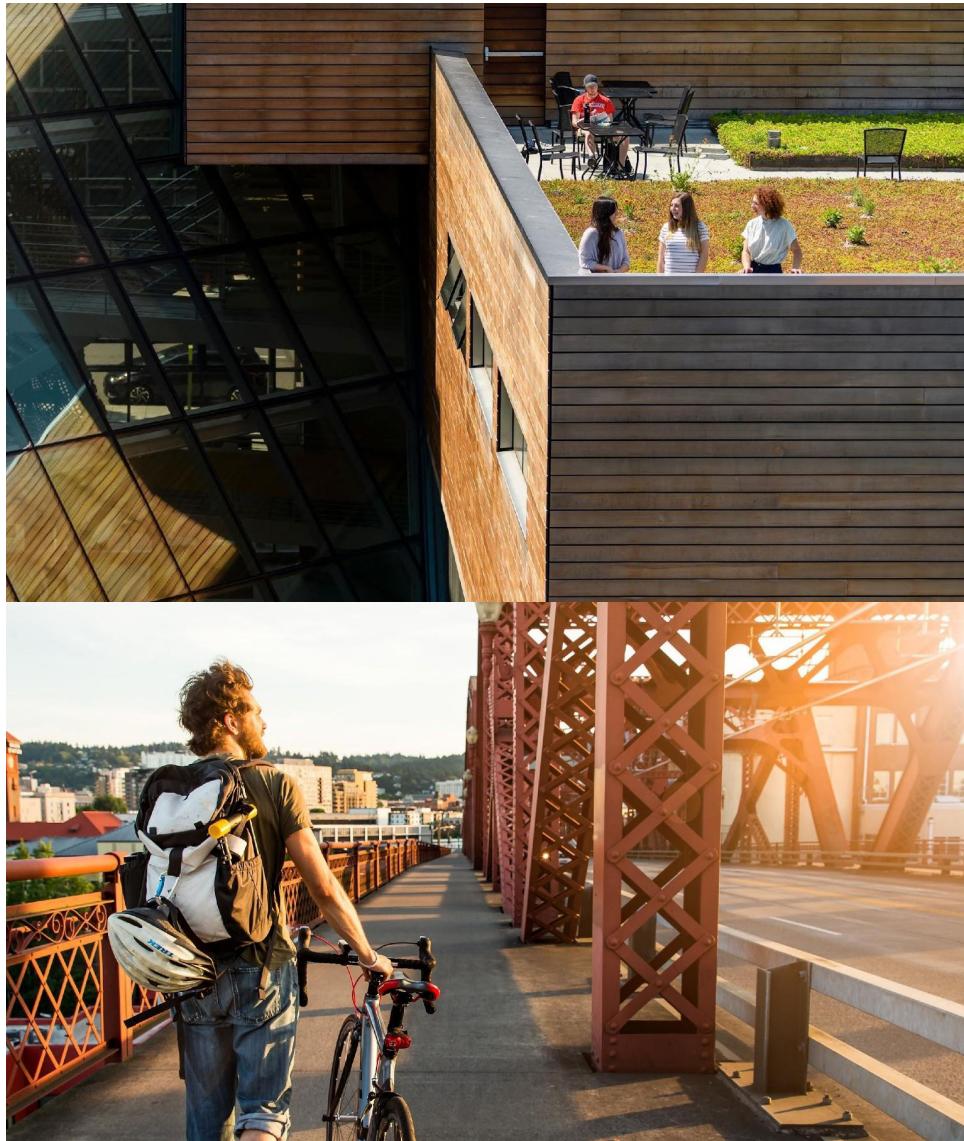
Research Question 1: What supports people while they're living on the street?

Research Question 2: What goals do people have relating to shelter and housing?

Research Question 3: What supports/impedes people in working towards those housing and shelter goals ?

Research Question 4: How do socio-demographic factors influence or change people's' needs, priorities, goals (i.e. responses to previous questions)

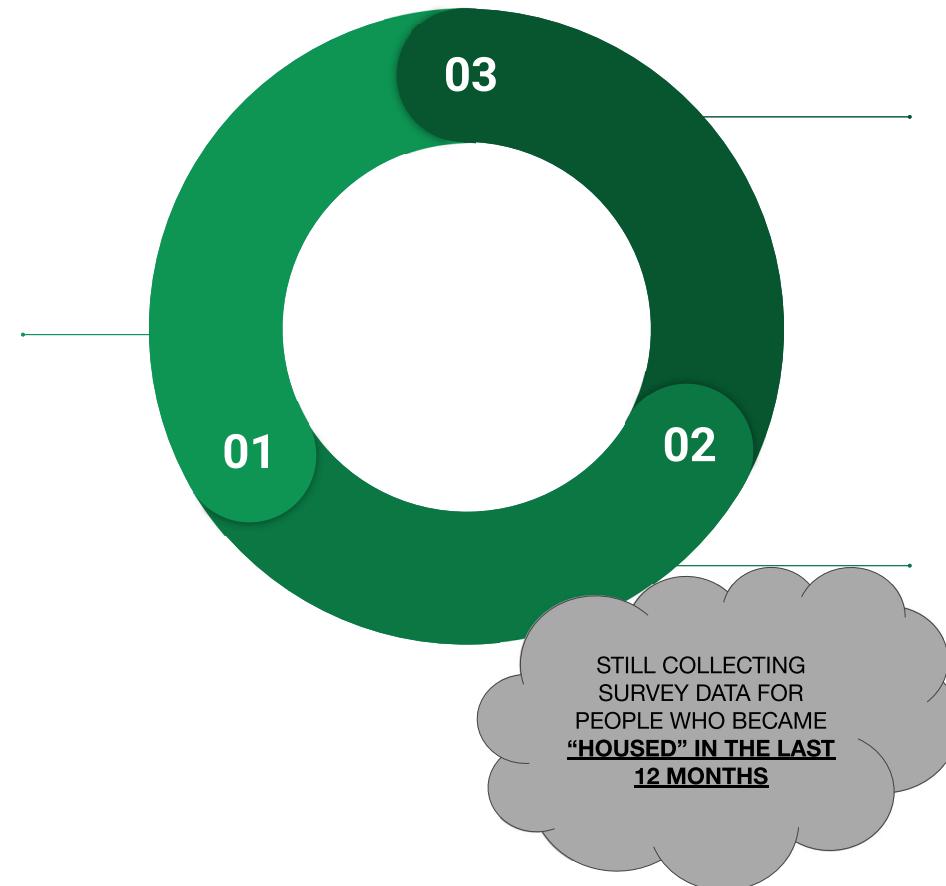
Research Question 5: What do "pathways" through homelessness look like?



“Pathways” Study Overview

Transformational Research for Equity and Experience in Shelter(T.R.E.E.S.) committee (2024- 2026)

Committee created to collaborate to create the research



Interviews and Mapping (Summer/Fall 2025)

Explore “what pathways through homelessness” look like to improve services, offer hope, share experience.

Develop individual maps, and possibly, “community-level” maps

About 40 in-depth maps and

Possible community workshop/mapping

Survey (Spring/Fall 2025)

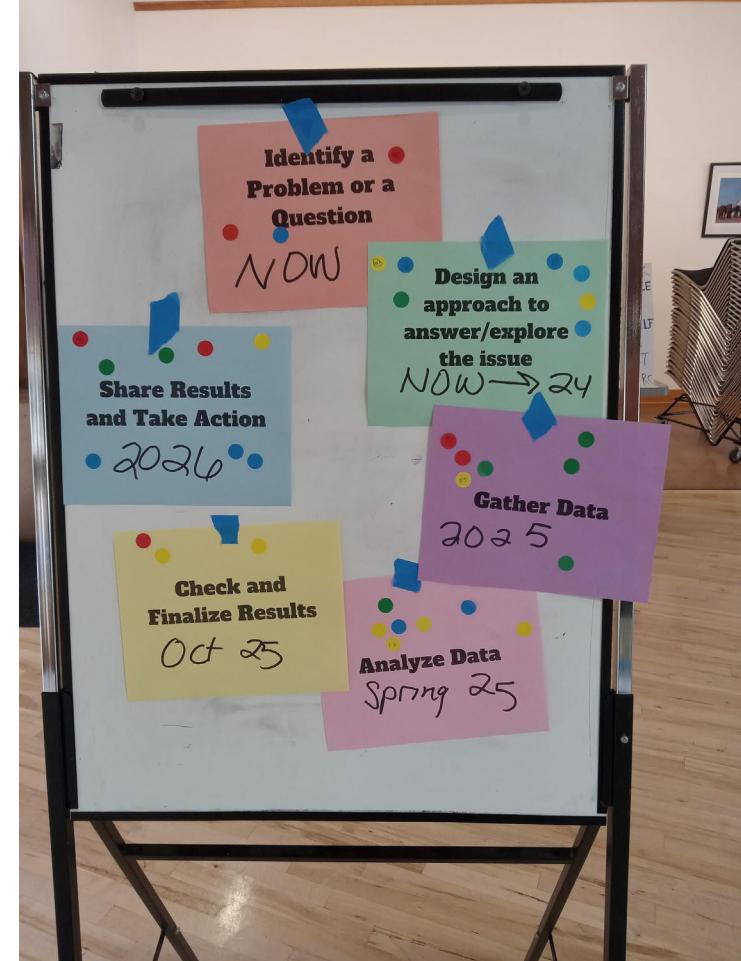
- 400 people with experience with current homeless system in Multnomah County

- Includes - people who are unsheltered, sheltered, and recently housed

-Questions: What is current experience of homelessness (including impact of sweeps)? What services do/don’t support people? What do people want in terms of qualities of housing, what services etc.



Role of the Lived Experience Committee





Activities the committee has done so far

- Co-Researchers - Develop research questions
 - Identify research priorities
 - Review, edit, suggest survey questions
 - Trial survey and give feedback
 - Collect survey data
- Suggest outreach methods and locations to ensure representation
 - Review data
 - Trial qualitative methods - mapping
 - Participate in interviews

Activities we hope the committee will do in the future

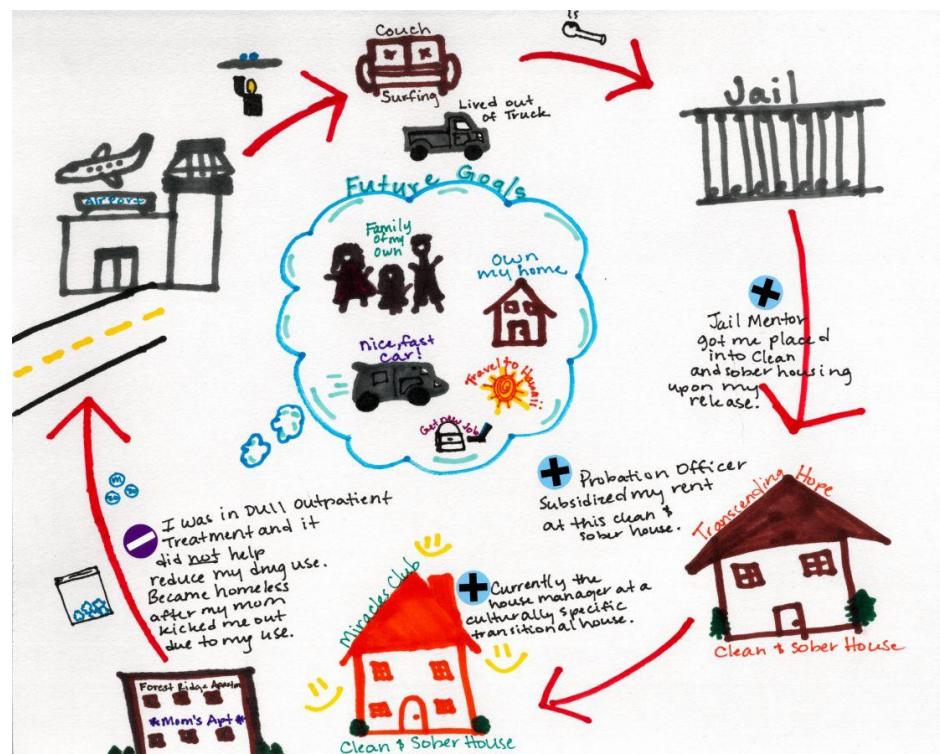
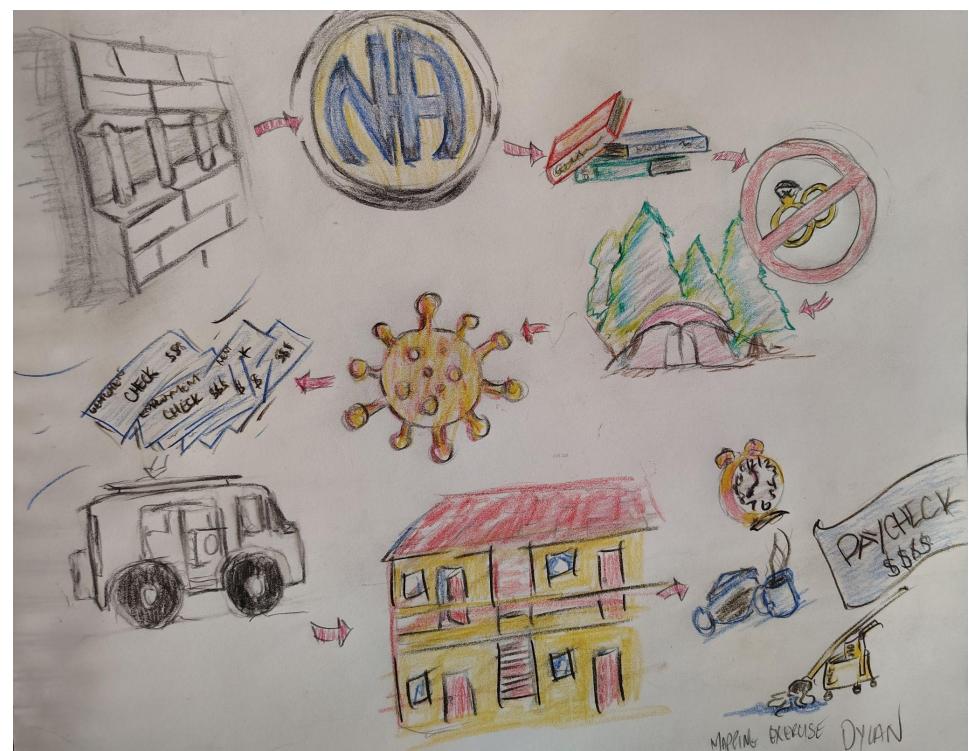
- Conduct interview
- Analyze data
- Develop messages to share with various stakeholders
 - Take learnings back to community groups
 - Identify priorities for action
 - Advocate
 - New projects?



Mapping and Interviews

- Piloted the mapping activity with the Pathways LEC
- Asked participants to create visual maps that illustrated their journeys through houselessness
- Followed up the mapping activity with an in-depth interview
- Explored services, relationships, what was helpful and what was not

Mapping examples





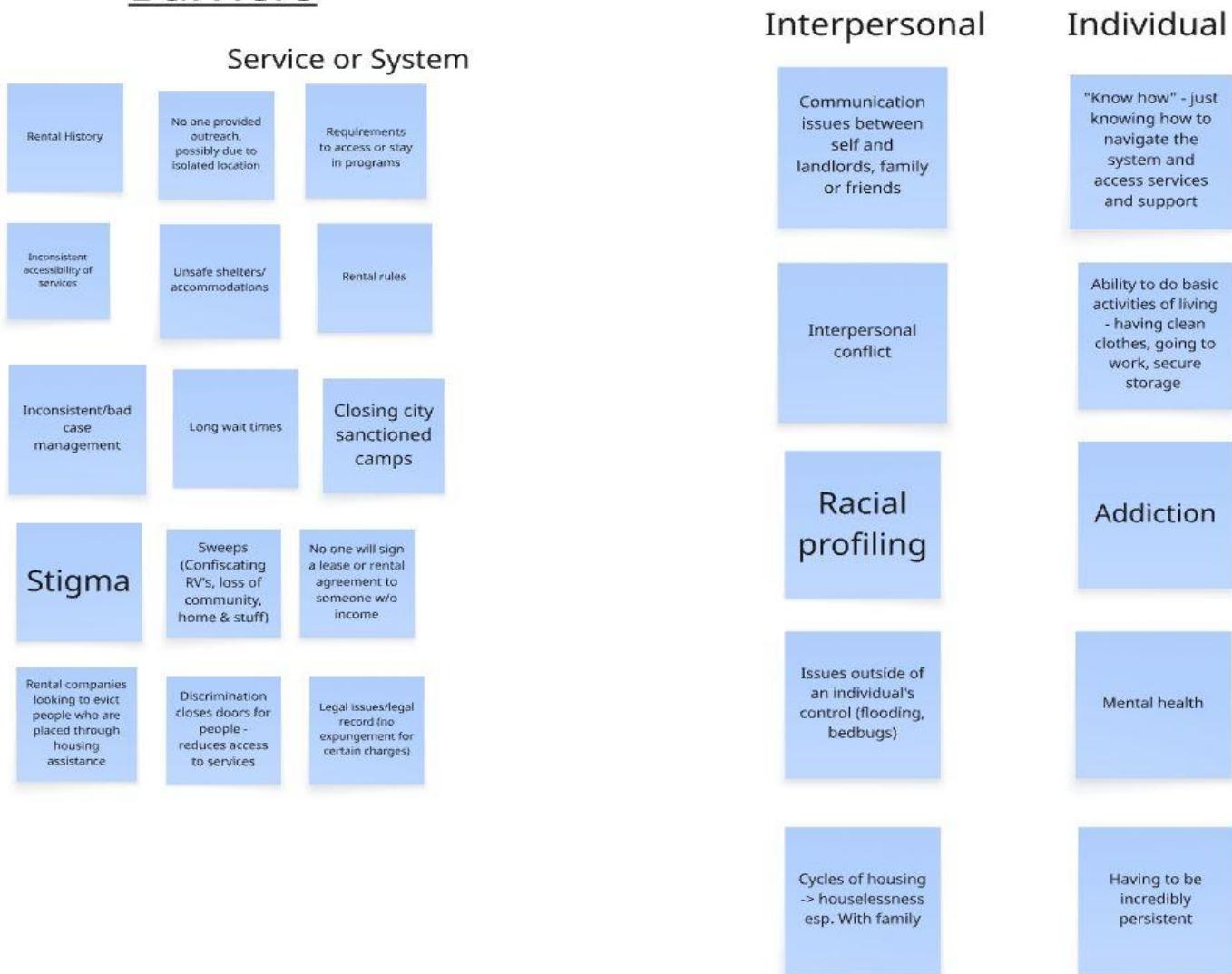
Interview findings so far

- Causes
- Barriers
- Bright spots
- Turning points
- Hopes for the future

- What are some other causes of homelessness?



Barriers



Bright Spots



Turning Points





Barriers to resolving houselessness

I applied for every possible thing that I could apply for, and it's at a point where I don't even care about applying for things anymore and I'm just kind of flying by the seat of my pants because unless something actually seems feasible, it just doesn't even feel like there's a point in applying because you just get put on a waitlist to be forgotten about or to never hear your name come up (P10).



Supports while houseless

The groups, the community that I found within being ho seless and being in those shelters or transitional spaces.

I will say the staff that were compassionate. The ones who would push you and make you feel like you got this or don't give up. Those things really matter when you're alone and fighting for survival (P14).



Hopes for the future

And hopefully in two years I'll have my bachelor's. I want to go to grad school hopefully right after, so I don't have to pause and then restart and have it be difficult. But I want to hopefully stay where I'm at now until I'm done with school. I feel like it's very affordable and I found a good spot where I'm able to be, and I feel like continuing to access the services I have (P09).



The activity

1. Examine each poster
2. What stories do you see here? What stories are missing?
3. Pulling on your experience, use sticky notes to add to each poster
4. If there are points that you agree with, place a check mark or a sticker next to it - we will count up the check marks to help us understand what is most important

Next steps:

- Interviews with people who have had a really LONG and DIFFICULT journey to find “housing”, people who have experienced many system failures
- Interviews with people who had a relatively SHORT and EFFICIENT experience with the system, people who experienced homelessness for the first time and had it resolved quickly

Get in touch if you or someone you know fits this description and would be interested in speaking to us!





Thank you!

Get in Touch

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