CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE MEMORANDUM
#21-2023

DATE: May 8, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor Meredith Leighty and City Council Members

THROUGH: Heather Geyer, City Manager

FROM: Jessica Hulse, Crisis Response Unit Program Manager

SUBJECT: National League of Cities Capstone Report

PURPOSE
To provide Council with the findings from the National League of Cities (NLC) Capstone Report on Homelessness completed by Pallet, and seek Council direction on prioritizing findings.

BACKGROUND
In the spring of 2022, Northglenn was preparing to close down the temporary housing program in the old recreation center. It was acknowledged that this program was successful in meeting the needs of people experiencing homelessness and the City wanted to learn about evidence-based practices that other parts of the country were using to meet the demands for shelter. The City applied for the NLC Capstone Project to learn from experts in the field and have an assessment performed with recommendations on this complex topic. The City was selected to be a part of the NLC Capstone Project in May 2022. This is an annual project that NLC hosts. Public applicants are matched with private sector organizations to identify innovative partnerships and solutions for cities across the United States. Northglenn was matched with Pallets., a national company that builds small footprint shelters. The Crisis Response Unit (CRU) met with Pallet on a weekly basis for eight months. The culminating project was a 50-page needs assessment and solution-oriented report that focused on shelter options for people experiencing homelessness (PEH).

<u>Assessment Findings and Recommendations:</u>
Finding 1:
The City and Adams County need additional programs to support PEH, particularly individual adults. Gaps also exist countywide for mental and behavioral health services, which is an urgently growing need.

Recommendations:
1. Explore opportunities and partnerships to develop low-barrier, temporary shelter programs with wrap-around programming to meet clients' needs.
2. Pursue Federal, State and local grants and funding opportunities to bring new homelessness shelter programs and services to Northglenn and Adams County.
3. Develop a subcommittee or hold strategy and planning forums within the Adams County Intergovernmental Committee on Homelessness to brainstorm improvements to the SWAP program (Adams County hotel voucher program for PEH) that will address its current barriers and challenges.
4. Recruit and cultivate service provider organizations with expertise and training in managing interim shelter programs and mental and behavioral health programs for PEH.

Finding 2:
Improvements are needed within Adams County and by individual cities to advance a more equitable approach towards regional homelessness planning.

Recommendations:
1. Expand the regional MOU to determine explicit plans, shared goals, and specific roles and responsibilities for each city and town in Adams County. The County should facilitate this progress and lead efforts.
2. Employ a Collective Impact Model to address homelessness regionally, across government departments, nonprofits, community stakeholders and service providers.
3. Commitment from all Adams County cities to support homelessness efforts equally, providing tangible resources, i.e. both funding and programs/sites from each jurisdiction.

Finding 3:
Regional leaders and community members have varied levels of understanding about homelessness issues, including its drivers and potential solutions. More engagement and education are needed around strategies to resolve unsheltered homelessness, and a deeper understanding of the root causes of homelessness within Adams County.

Recommendations:
1. Develop a community engagement toolkit for City and County residents on homelessness issues. This toolkit can be used in public forums for community members, or be tailored into briefings for local elected officials, supporting them in how to communicate homelessness information, plans, data and best practices to their constituencies.
2. Proactively offer educational forums and listening sessions to the public prior to developing and opening new homelessness programs or emergency shelters. Forums should engage residents in learning more about proposed homelessness solutions, problem-solving, and providing feedback.
3. Improve systems tracking and data collection within current homelessness programs and offer opportunities to share these learnings with the public, through community engagement meetings and online via social media and City and County webpages.
4. Publicly share metrics and data, personal testimonies and other critical information to help dispel misconceptions and stigmas about PEH. Articulate key information about root causes, such as the number of people within Adams County who are housing unstable or at risk of becoming homeless.

Finding 4:
There is an urgent need for a non-congregate temporary shelter program(s), providing trauma-informed, wrap-around services to unsheltered residents within the City of Northglenn.

Recommendations:
Numerous recommendations and best practices are included in the report as part of the Implementation Plan for Proposed Temporary Shelter Village in Northglenn.

Conclusion:
While there are many options for temporary shelter programs, each comes with its own benefits and drawbacks. Decision makers should consider several factors, including financing/costing, feasibility, long-term sustainability, service provision and partnerships, and fit (based on data on PEH) when deciding on what program model(s) are more advantageous to pursue. While no option is perfect, providing a robust array of different program models is the best way to address all forms of homelessness, allowing PEH to opt into the programs that will best work for their unique circumstances.

Potential Pallet Shelter Solution Locations
The project team identified three potential locations for new homelessness programs. Given that two of the three potential pallet shelter solution locations are not in Northglenn, the City Manager

shared a copy of this report with the city managers of Westminster and Thornton and with the Adams County Manager. If City Council is interested in pursuing one of the potential locations or identifying a different location, additional conversation and direction would need to be given.

1. Adams County Human Services Center Parking Lot
    a. Address: 11860 N. Pecos St., Westminster, CO 80234
    b. Lot Size and Type: Approximate total village area of 17,755 square feet (SF) / 0.40 acre. 60 repurposed parking spaces
    c. Owned by: Adams County
    d. Current and Proposed Usage: Underutilized parking lot, to use for Pallet Shelter Site for about 50 individuals, with 45 sleeping cabins and village amenities (Pallet shelters are temporary housing solutions that hold two to four people.)
    e. Considerations: The Adams County Human Services Center building is currently offering social services for PEH and has indoor offices. This site is ideally located within proximity to 35 transportation and other necessary public amenities. The site is near some residential apartment buildings.

2. RTD Park N Ride Parking Lot
    a. Address: 600 W. 120th Ave., Westminster, CO 80234
    b. Lot Size and Type: Approximate total village area is 18,098 SF / 0.40 acre. 60 repurposed parking spaces
    c. Owned by: Regional Transportation District
    d. Current and proposed usage: Underutilized parking lot, to use for Pallet Shelter Site for about 50 individuals, with 45 sleeping cabins and village amenities
    e. Considerations: Utilizing this location would require additional approvals from RTD. Before deciding on this location, the City should explore the feasibility of this process and RTD's willingness to champion this project. The RTD site is already being used by some unsheltered residents who are living in RVs or other vehicles.

3. Scout Park
    a. Address: 124-132 E. 112th Place, Northglenn, CO 80233
    b. Lot Size and Type: Approximate total village area is 9,272 SF / 0.21 acre.
    c. Owned by: City of Northglenn
    d. Current and Proposed Usage: Underutilized open space, to use for Pallet Shelter Site for about 24 individuals, with 20 sleeping cabins and village amenities
    e. Considerations: This location is across the highway from the Justice Center, where Northglenn Police Department and the Crisis Response Unit (CRU) offices are located. The CRU currently does case management and provides other services out of the Justice Center. This site is also next to a planned development and several residential neighborhoods.

BUDGET/TIME IMPLICATIONS
There are no time or financial implications.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff is seeking Council input on the prioritization of findings and recommendations.

STAFF REFERENCE
If Council Members have any questions, please contact Heather Geyer, City Manager, at hgeyer@northglenn.org or 303.450.8706.

ATTACHMENTS
1. Presentation
2. Report

NLC CAPSTONE REPORT

Jessica Hulse

CRU Program Manager

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jhulse@northglenn.org

Council Meeting

May 8, 2023

CITY OF Northglenn

PURPOSE

To provide Council with the findings of the National League of Cities (NLC) Capstone Report that was completed by Pallet Inc. and seek Council direction on prioritizing findings.

CAPSTONE PROJECT

In the spring of 2022, Northglenn was preparing to close the temporary shelter and wanted to have an assessment with recommendations on how to approach shelter options in the future.

CAPSTONE PROJECT

CONT'D

The City of Northglenn applied and was selected to be a part of the NLC Capstone Project in May 2022.

- Local governments are matched with private corporations.
- Innovative projects and solutions for cities are identified.
- Northglenn was matched with Pallet Inc.
- Project concluded with a 50-page report on assessments and solutions regarding homelessness

FINDING NO. 1

The City of Northglenn and Adams County need additional programs to support people experiencing homelessness, particularly for individual adults. Gaps also exist countywide for mental and behavioral health services, which is an urgently growing need.

FINDING NO. 1 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Explore opportunities and partnerships for shelters with wrap around services.**

2. **Pursue Federal, State and local grants and funding opportunities for shelters.**

3. **Develop a subcommittee or hold strategy and planning forums within the Adams County Intergovernmental Committee on Homelessness.**

4. **Recruit and cultivate service provider organizations with expertise and training in managing interim shelter programs and mental and behavioral health programs for PEH.**

FINDING NO. 2

Improvements are needed within Adams County and by individual cities to advance a more equitable approach towards regional homelessness planning.

FINDING NO. 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **The County should expand the regional MOU to determine explicit plans, shared goals, and specific roles and responsibilities.**

2. **Employ a Collective Impact Model to address homelessness regionally, across government departments, nonprofits, community stakeholders and service providers.**

3. **Commitment from all Adams County cities to support homelessness efforts equally, providing tangible resources, i.e. both funding and programs/sites from each jurisdiction.**

FINDING NO. 3

Regional leaders and community members have varied levels of understanding about homelessness issues, including its drivers and potential solutions. More engagement and education is needed around strategies to resolve unsheltered homelessness, and a deeper understanding of the root causes of homelessness within Adams County.

FINDING NO. 3 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Develop a community engagement toolkit for City and County residents on homelessness issues.**

2. **Proactively offer educational forums and listening sessions to the public prior to developing and opening new homelessness programs or emergency shelters.**

3. **Improve systems tracking and data collection within current homelessness programs.**

4. **Publicly share metrics and data, personal testimonies and other critical information to help dispel misconceptions and stigmas about PEH.**

FINDING NO. 4

There is an urgent need for a non-congregate temporary shelter program(s), providing trauma-informed, wrap-around services to unsheltered residents within the City of Northglenn.

POTENTIAL
PALLET SHELTER SOLUTION LOCATIONS

Adams County Human Services Center

DRAFT SITE PLAN (V.1)
SITE NAME: EMERGENCY SHELTER VILLAGE IN ADAMS COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES
CENTER PARKING LOT
SLEEPING ACCOMODATIONS FOR 50 INDIVIDUALS

ADDRESS: 11860 N PECOS ST, WESTMINSTER, CO 80234

POTENTIAL UNIT COUNT WITH 6 FT SPACING:
- 40 SIXTY-FOUR SF SLEEPING CABINS
- 5 ONE-HUNDRED SF SLEEPING CABINS
- 3 ONE-HUNDRED SF UNITS FOR CASE MANAGEMENT/SECURITY OFFICES/STORAGE
- 2 STANDARD 2-STALL BATHROOM
- 1 ACCESSIBLE BATHROOM
- 1 LAUNDRY UNIT
- 1 EIGHT-HUNDRED SF COMMUNITY ROOM

PROJECT KEY

Approx. Total Village Area:
17,758 sq.ft. / 0.40 acre
60 Repurposed Parking Spaces

POTENTIAL PALLET SHELTER SOLUTION LOCATIONS

Wagon Road Park N Ride

CONT'D

POTENTIAL
# PALLET SHELTER SOLUTION LOCATIONS

Scout Park

DRAFT SITE PLAN (V.1)
SITE NAME: EMERGENCY SHELTER VILLAGE IN SCOUT PARK
SLEEPING ACCOMODATIONS FOR 24 INDIVIDUALS

ADDRESS: 124-132 E 112TH PLACE, NORTHGLENN, CO 80233

POTENTIAL UNIT COUNT WITH 6 FT SPACING:
- 16 SIXTY-FOUR SF SLEEPING CABINS
- 4 ONE-HUNDRED SF SLEEPING CABINS
- 1 ONE-HUNDRED SF UNITS FOR CASE MANAGEMENT/SECURITY
- 1 STANDARD 2-STALL BATHROOM
- 1 ACCESSIBLE BATHROOM
- 1 LAUNDRY UNIT
- 1 FOUR-HUNDRED SF COMMUNITY ROOM

APPROX TOTAL VILLAGE AREA: 9,272 SF / 0.21 ACRE
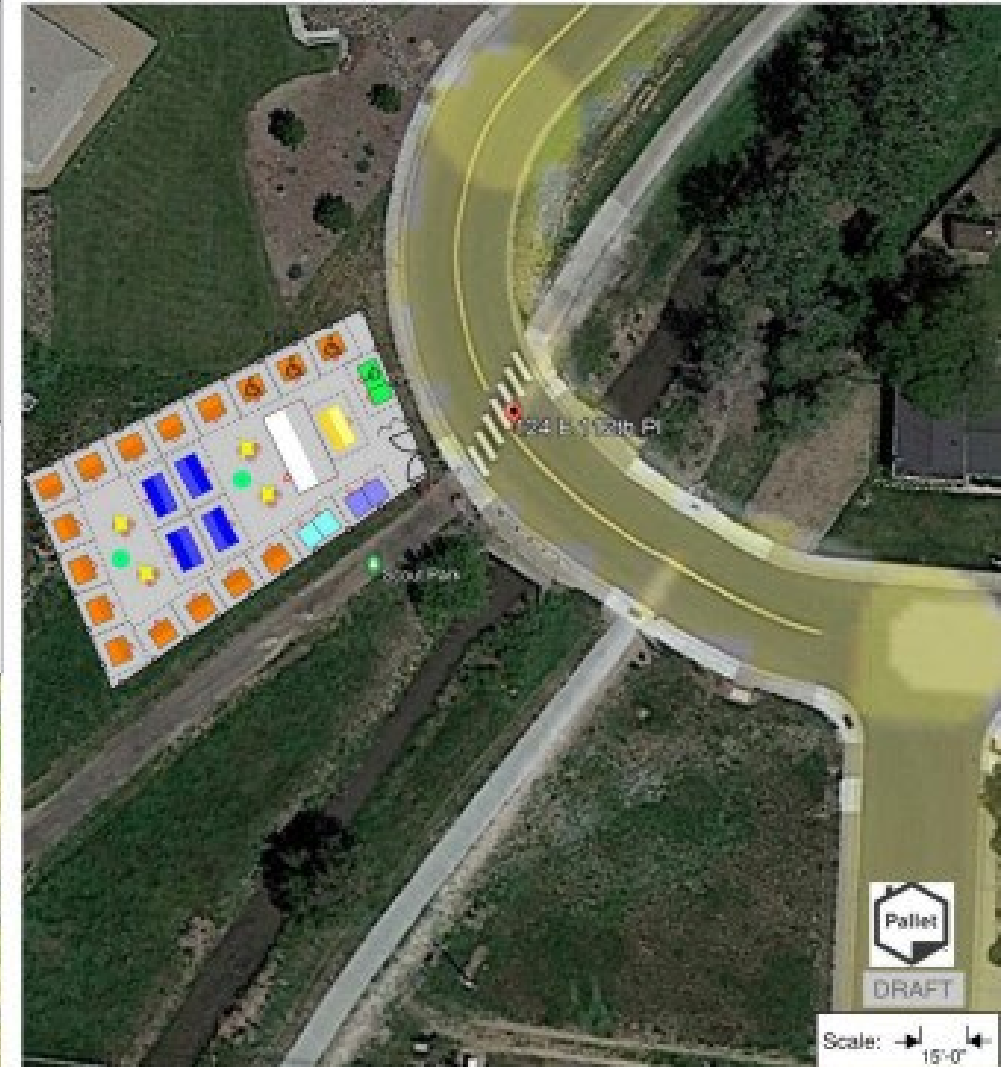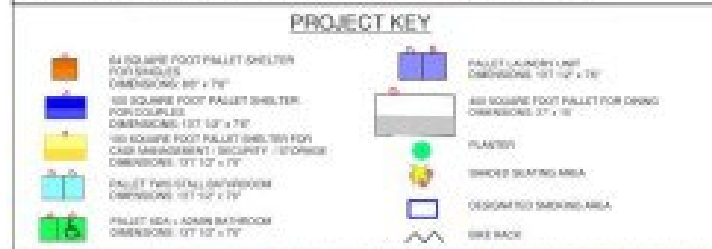
CONT'D

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff is seeking input and direction from Council on what, if any, findings to prioritize.

QUESTIONS?

Report for the National League of Cities (NLC) Capstone Challenge:

Report on Homelessness in Northglenn, Colorado: Solutions, Strategies, and Interim Shelter Bed Implementation Guide

Presented by Pallet Shelter
Lia Azul Salaverry, Senior Manager of Advisory Services
January, 2022

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Acknowledgements

A sincere thank you to the many city, county, and community leaders and partners who have supported our efforts through the NLC Capstone Challenge. Your knowledge, expertise, creative solutions, and feedback, is greatly appreciated, as is your ongoing dedication to supporting people experiencing homelessness in the City of Northglenn, Adam's County and beyond.

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Executive Summary

As part of the National League of Cities Capstone Challenge, Pallet Shelter partnered with the City of Northglenn to conduct a pro-bono assessment of the city's homelessness services, programs and policies, and provide recommendations to address homelessness locally. Pallet, a social-purpose company, is the leader in rapid-response temporary housing villages. Pallet is supporting this project through our Advisory Services team, a new offering to support government agencies and leaders in advancing homelessness solutions and strategies.

This report, developed by the Pallet team, will: 1) summarize Northglenn's current homelessness landscape, 2) report key findings and recommendations from our research and based on national best practices, 3) provide an implementation plan for developing a temporary shelter program serving people experiencing homelessness in Northglenn and, 4) compare alternative models of temporary shelter programs for consideration.

While the focus and scope of the project was within the City of Northglenn, the information and recommendations outlined in this report are intended to support a collective impact model, and often cover related or intersecting issues with nearby municipalities, including the cities of Westminster, Thornton, as well as Adams County.

This report provides critical information for decision-makers, including city and county elected officials and policymakers to help promote solutions and supportive programs for those experiencing homelessness locally. This document is also intended to inform and educate residents, community stakeholders, and other interested parties on homelessness data, trends, and best practices that can be employed by regional leaders.

Our learnings and specific recommendations are summarized in the sections below:

> Section 1) Assessment of Current Homelessness Programs and Procedures
> Section 2) Regional Collaboration in Homelessness Solutions and Strategies
> Section 3) Education and Public Engagement on Homelessness Issues
> Section 4) Interim Shelter/Emergency Shelter Bed Capacity in Northglenn

Key Findings:

1. The City of Northglenn and Adams County need additional programs to support people experiencing homelessness, particularly for individual adults. Gaps also exist countywide for mental and behavioral health services, which is an urgently growing need.
2. Improvements are needed within Adams County and by individual cities to advance a more equitable approach towards regional homelessness planning.

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3. Regional leaders and community members have varied levels of understanding about homelessness issues, including its drivers and potential solutions. More engagement and education is needed around strategies to resolve unsheltered homelessness, and a deeper understanding of the root causes of homelessness within Adams County.
4. There is an urgent need for a non-congregate temporary shelter program(s), providing trauma-informed, wrap-around services to unsheltered residents within the City of Northglenn.

NLC Capstone Challenge: Project Overview

Background & Purpose

The National League of Cities, (NLC) – an advocacy organization made up of over 2,000 leaders of cities, towns and villages across the country – is facilitating an eight (8) month public private partnership called the NLC Capstone Challenge, which the City of Northglenn and Pallet Shelter are participating in. The project timeframe ran from June 21st, 2022 to February 20th, 2023. Through this project, private enterprises partner with cities, providing pro bono services to address cities' needs. Corporate partners are matched by the NLC with cities based on the cities' expressed challenges and priorities.

Pallet is a social purpose company catalyzing human potential through access to shelter, community, and employment worldwide. The company's prefabricated shelter village products, designed and built by employees who have lived experience in homelessness, serve as safe and dignified bridges to permanent housing, built at the speed and scale needed to address the world's shelter crisis. With over 100 Pallet sites in cities across the United States, Pallet is the leader in rapid-response temporary housing villages that combine the dignity of personal space with the healing of community. To learn more about Pallet's work, visit: www.palletshelter.com.

With Pallet Shelter's perspective and expertise as a national leader in temporary shelter programs and homelessness best practices, we worked together with the City of Northglenn to advance homelessness solutions through a research and data driven approach. Our goals for the NLC Capstone Challenge project were as follows:

➢ Analyze the City's current homelessness landscape and practices in an effort to identify where resource gaps exist, both within the City as well as the County,
➢ Explore and outline models and best practices nationally which can be utilized and tailored to the city, and
➢ Develop an action plan the City of Northglenn may use to implement homelessness solutions based on proven and cost-effective methods.

The project team consisted of:

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Project Leads

- Pallet's Senior Manager, Advisory Services Lia Azul Salaverry, lia@palletshelter.com
- Northglenn's Crisis Response Unit Program Manager Jessica Hulse, jhulse@northglenn.org

Additional Working Group Members

- NLC Staff Liaison, Director of Strategic Partnerships Member & Partner Engagement Heyward Harvin, harvin@nlc.org
- Pallet's Head of Community Development, Patrick Diller, patrickd@palletshelter.com

Project Accomplishments

From July 2022 to September 2022, Pallet's Senior Manager of Advisory Services held informational interviews and meetings with key stakeholders in Northglenn and across the region to learn more about the unique challenges and opportunities the city is facing in addressing homelessness. This includes:

1. Northglenn City Manager Heather Geyer
2. Northglenn City Council Members Jay Jaramillo and Katherine Goff
3. Thornton Community Connections Manager, Jaylin Stotler
4. Adams County Community Safety and Wellbeing Homelessness Coordinator, Lindsey Earl and Community Safety and Wellbeing Homelessness Manager, Paolo Diaz
5. Northglenn Police Chief James May
6. North Metro Fire Rescue District EMS Chief Mark Daugherty
7. ACCESS Housing Homeless Prevention Specialist, Sophia Henderson
8. Delaney Coe the Executive Director of Almost Home
9. City of Westminster's Senior Management Analyst Kate Skarbek and Homeless Navigator Ash Rud

From June 20-22nd, the Pallet team visited Northglenn. During these in person site visits and meetings, Pallet coordinated with Northglenn's Crisis Response Unit (CRU) Program Manager to facilitate a city tour of encampments, current homelessness programs, local and city landmarks and facilities which serve or interface with homeless residents (including E.B. Rains Jr. Memorial Park and the Northglenn Justice Center, the home of the Police Department, CRU and Municipal Court) and to view potential sites for new, interim shelter programs. Pallet also visited the CRU's open office hours for unsheltered clients seeking supportive services in Northglenn, hosted at the Northglenn Community Center.

Starting in July, the project leads met weekly to advance the Capstone Project goals. In September, for the NLC Capstone's mid-point check in, the project leads from Northglenn and Pallet presented their progress to the other cohort members.

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The team also participated in ongoing planning meetings and conversations about homelessness and shelter programs with regional stakeholders across Adam's County, and in neighboring cities including Westminster, Thornton, and Commerce City. In August, the Pallet team (consisting of Pallet's CEO, Amy King, Head of Community Partnerships, Patrick Diller, and staff working on Government Affairs, Workforce Development, and Service Provision) held a series of brainstorming strategy meetings to discuss the NLC Capstone work and determine steps to operationalize plans, which included exploring strategies to encourage and promote regional collaboration with key stakeholders.

Addressing Northglenn's Strategic Goals

In line with Northglenn's City Council Strategic Plan (2019-2023)[1], the NLC Capstone project's efforts support with the following items and goals outlined in this recent 2022 report:

1. *Position the City to be competitive and leverage relationships through Regional Collaboration and Advocacy (1.1)*
2. *Identify new or best practices to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery (1.3)*
   a. *Review existing levels of service to ensure the city is operating at an optimal level and meeting the needs of our community, ongoing*
   b. *Promote city innovation through submission of case studies and awards, ongoing*
3. *Increase both real and perceived community safety for those who live, work, learn, and play in the City of Northglenn (3.1)*
   a. *Work with Community Resource Navigator to develop a multidisciplinary plan for community response on homelessness, 2022*
   b. *Identify ways to improve the safety and perception of E.B. Rains Jr. Memorial Park, 2022*
4. *Effectively manage homelessness by meeting the needs of people experiencing homelessness while not impeding on the quality of life of residents and businesses (5.2)*
   a. *Identify where the city can partner with Adams County to ensure access to physical and mental/behavioral health treatment and social services, 2023*
   b. *Reach out to the businesses and commercial property owners to identify areas of concerns and provide education and services, ongoing (two formal outreach business meetings annually)*
   c. *Outcome: Increase funding allocated for programs to address homelessness*

In a letter from Mayor Meredith Leighty expressing the city's interest in participating in the NLC Capstone Challenge, the Mayor writes:

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[1] https://files4.1.revize.com/northglennco/Government/City%20Council/Strategic_Plan_Update_2021_clean_FINAL.pdf

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"With the growing number of people experiencing homelessness in our region and nation, a small city like ours could really benefit from the expertise of Pallet Shelters to conduct an assessment and provide recommendations. In addition, the timing is right to start this project this summer as we are winding down our temporary Winter Housing Program, an innovative partnership with the expertise of the Denver Rescue Mission, funding from Adams County and case management from the city's Crisis Response Unit that houses up to 25 individuals at our former recreation center. The site will be turned over to a private developer at the end of August 2022. We have built a lot of positive momentum in the community for the work we have done but have not identified an alternative for this winter and beyond."

Homelessness Landscape in Northglenn

The City of Northglenn, incorporated in 1969, is a suburban community within Adam's and Weld counties[2]. The 7.5 square mile city is located just 7 miles north of Denver, and has a population of 38,131 residents. Northglenn is the fifth largest county in the State of Colorado.

Northglenn, like many cities and counties in the state and across the country, is experiencing a growing population of unsheltered and homeless residents. Northglenn currently has no overnight shelter programs within the city borders, and Adams County does not have enough emergency shelter, transitional or permanent supportive housing to meet the current demand.

According to local data sources, 67% of residents within Adams County who accessed hotel/motel vouchers listed Adams County as their last permanent residence, indicating that homelessness is a homegrown issue.[3] According to the City of Northglenn's Crisis Response Unit (CRU)[4] – a team of city staff who work with law enforcement to provide on-scene case management, mental health calls for service, homelessness, and conflict resolution to residents in need – there were 189 clients experiencing homelessness from December 1st 2021 through August 30th 2022.[5]

In November of 2019, the City of Northglenn created the Northglenn Homelessness Community Task Force (HCTF). HCTF, which is no longer operating, consisted of about 35 members,

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[2] While a portion of Northglenn is in Weld County, the majority of the city falls into Adams County. Weld County, along with Larimer County make up the fourth CoC in Colorado, referred to as the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (NOCOCoC). NOCOCoC is led by United Way of Weld County. The City of Northglenn participates through the Metro Denver Homelessness Initiative (MDHI), a separate CoC.
[3]
https://www.fedheights.org/vertical/sites/%7B30BDEC4F-3AAB-430C-A5CC-E2BE8097AC8C%7D/uploads/Res._No._22-19_-_Homelessness_MOU.pdf
[4] The CRU consists of a Program Manager, Community Resource Navigator, and 3 Co-Responders who will work alongside residents, police, code enforcement, and municipal court with on-scene response for mental health calls for service, homelessness, case management, neighbor mediations, and conflict resolution. https://www.northglenn.org/crisis_response_unit/index.php
[5]   This number represents clients worked with, not necessarily all in Northglenn currently.

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including concerned residents, nonprofit staff that work with people experiencing homelessness (PEH), and representatives of the faith community who served as an advisory group to the City Council. In an October 2020 report to the City Council[6] HCTF presented a report summarizing their efforts to the City Council. Some barriers PEH face in Northglenn (identified by the subcommittees) includes:

1. No reliable transportation to obtain resources
2. No identification to apply for benefits, as the CCH estimates that often within 72 hours of becoming homeless, physical identification, such as a state ID card, is stolen
3. No physical address to receive benefits, such as an EBT card
4. Inability to pay phone bills, making it harder to connect to resources if virtual appointments are set up, which is now common during the COVID-19 pandemic
5. Not having a day center or shelter in Adams County, because it provides a safe place to leave possessions unguarded, as bringing possessions on public transportation is difficult
6. Many PEH have untreated mental health and substance abuse issues
7. Community stigma around homelessness is often negative

According to the 2018 Balanced Housing Report in Adams County[7] housing costs outpaced income growth. "Since 2000 home values have risen 32.7% and median gross rent has risen 47.4%, but median household income has only risen 24.6%. As a result, the number of households that are cost-burdened has increased: homeowners - 29%; up 9.4% since 2000 (with a mortgage - 33%, without a mortgage - 14.4%) and renters (52%; up 35.5% since 2000) (see Figure 2.1). When families are severely cost-burdened, there is greater difficulty in affording other necessities, and they may begin to rely more heavily on public services."

[6]
https://files4.1.revize.com/northglennco/Boards%20&%20Commissions/Homelessness%20Task%20Force/Homelessness_Task_Force.pdf
[7]
https://www.adcogov.org/sites/default/files/Adams%20County%202018%20Balanced%20Housing%20Plan%20DRAFT%20022818.pdf
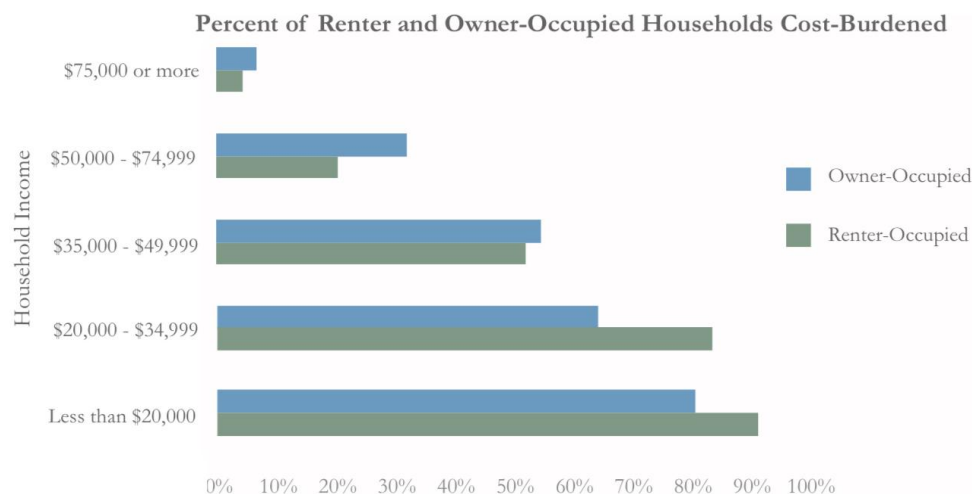
Figure 2.1: Cost-Burden for HH's and Renters
Source: Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, HUD

With rising numbers of residents who are cost burdened in Adams County – 29% of homeowners and 52% of renters in 2018 – many residents are vulnerable to losing their homes and becoming homeless. According to local stakeholders, the high cost of housing is a primary driver and leading cause of homelessness in the region.

Point in Time Count, Adam's County

The 2022 Point in Time (PIT) Count, (overseen by the Metro Denver Homelessness Initiative, MDHI) identified 462 people experiencing homelessness on a single night in Adam's County. Of this number, 274 people stayed in Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, or Safe Haven Programs, and 188 slept on the streets or were otherwise unsheltered. This year's count occurred on Monday, January 24, 2022, and was the first comprehensive count since 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The PIT Count was completed during the Severe Weather Activation Plan (SWAP) program (see more about the SWAP program in the section below), at a time when many previously unsheltered residents were offered overnight shelter beds due to the unsafe cold weather conditions in the county. As such, this estimate may not be an accurate representation of the true number of unsheltered residents in Adam's County, and especially during seasons when the SWAP program is not in effect.

Of the total 462-person count, 1 in 2 individuals were experiencing homelessness for the first time. Native Americans/Alaska Natives are overrepresented (2.9X) in homelessness relative to the general population in Adams County. The same is true for those identifying as Black/African American (3.4X), multi-Racial (3.5X), and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (3.7X).

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The PIT Count was conducted by the Metro Denver Homelessness Initiative (MDHI). Visit mdhi.org/pit to learn more.

Available Shelters and Services in the City of Northglenn

Temporary Winter Housing Program (WHP)

From December 15th 2021 to August 31st 2022 a temporary shelter was formed in the old Northglenn Recreation Center while it was waiting to be demolished. The program was a joint effort between the City of Northglenn, Adam's County and Denver Rescue Mission.
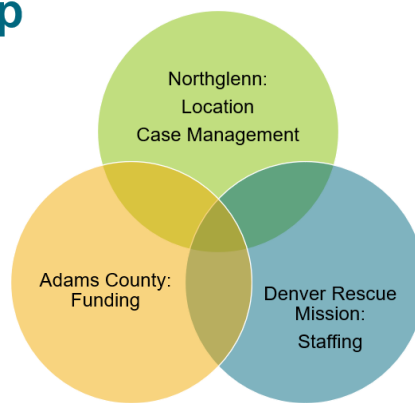
The overnight Winter Housing Program (WHP) had the capacity to serve 20 participants in a congregate shelter setting per night, operating from 6:30pm until 7am. All clients who participated had to show that they had daytime activities or somewhere they could go, for instance, to a job, a family member's house, or another suitable location.

The program also offered 5 additional beds for emergency drop offs, or individuals who did not fully participate in the housing program but who were identified by the Northglenn Police Department (NPD) as needing shelter for the night. All guests of the shelter needed to be over the age of 18, and the shelter was co-ed.

Statistics:

- Total Participants: 130
- Full Time Participants: 49
- Emergency AND Full time participants (guests who came in as an emergency and joined the program): 24
- Emergency Drop off Participants: 57

Breakdown by Gender:

- Male: 99

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- Female: 29
- Non-Binary: 2

Successful Client Outcomes:

- Entered Work Options: 9
- Obtained/Sustained Employment: 32
- Entered Housing: 19
  - Live with Family/Friend: 5
  - Independent Apartment: 6
  - Independent Apartment w/ Housing Voucher: 4
  - Transitional Housing: 2
  - Long Term Shelter: 2

Northglenn Winter Housing Program Outcomes

While this program showed successes, as a temporary offering, the program ended this year on August 31st, due to pending construction on the city's old recreation facility. Currently, there are no overnight or day shelter programs within the City of Northglenn.

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Other Resources and Services in Northglenn

Other resources and services in the City of Northglenn include:

Program Type	Description
Food Access	- Two (2) local food banks - SNAP services
Showers and Laundry	Weekly mobile laundry/showers at Crossroads Church
Transportation	- Adams County/Northglenn partnership on Lyft Rides for vital appointments - Bus Passes for needed daily commutes
Resources Office Hours	Connection to benefits and vital documents, mailing address, assistance with court obligations and housing resources
Referrals	Provided outside of Northglenn for various needs

Available Shelters in Adams County

SWAP (Severe Weather Activation Plan)

The Severe Weather Activation Plan or SWAP is a county-wide hotel voucher program operated through Almost Home that works with local, underutilized hotels and motels to temporarily shelter homeless individuals during the coldest winter months. Capacity within the program is based on the number of hotel partners that participate, and their room capacity.

The program automatically goes into effect during days when the weather is <20 degrees fahrenheit or <32 degrees fahrenheit with precipitation.

According to Adams County staff, each year, the program serves approximately 800 unique individuals experiencing homelessness and averts roughly 9,000 nights of unsheltered homelessness. Below are some other key facts and outcomes related to the program:

- In 2021, 17 SWAP clients found permanently housing placements with assistance from Almost Home staff and housing navigators
- In 2021, there were no deaths in Adams County due to cold weather exposure
- In 2022, the program will be completely paperless
- In 2022, SWAP has 19 participating hotels and at least ten (10) hotel voucher distributors working in the field

For more information, please visit https://www.almosthomeonline.org/swap.

Almost Home

Almost Home's mission "is to promote self-sufficiency and provide assistance to those individuals and families experiencing housing instability…[and to] prevent and confront homelessness in Adams and Weld County through our Emergency Assistance Programs.

In addition to overseeing the SWAP program, Almost Home offers Emergency Shelter for Families – providing 7 units of temporary housing for families with children – as well as drop-in housing navigation (on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays), Homeless Outreach, Supportive Housing Programs, and Respite Housing, which includes 2-week stay motel vouchers (or a flexible length for households fleeing domestic violence).

Access Housing

Access Housing's Family Shelter Program is one of only two year-round family shelter programs in Adams County. The program provides 8 units for families with children. Families must be receiving TANF, and the program is limited to 9 weeks.

Other Resources and Services in Adams County

Other resources and services in Adams County include:

Program Type	Description
Housing Authority	● Maiker Housing Partners
Adams County Street Outreach and connections to other social services and referrals	● Notify street outreach team here ● For more information about health and human services in Adams County, including rent and mortgage assistance, utility assistance, emergency shelters, childhood immunizations, food pantries, SNAP benefit enrollment, childcare centers, or

	COVID-19 testing, search the 2-1-1 database at 211Colorado.org, text your zip code to 898-211*, or call 2-1-1.
Housing mediation	● Brother's Redevelopment offers no-cost tenant-landlord mediation sessions to all Adams County residents. To learn more, call Colorado Housing Connects at 1.844.926.6632.
Day works program	● [Bayaud Enterprises](#)
Opiate recovery	● [Denver Recovery Group](#)

Other resources and supportive programs for people experiencing homelessness in Adams County can be found at: www.adcogov.org/poverty-reduction.

Key Findings and Recommendations

The charge of our project through the NLC was to provide findings based on homelessness data, trends and best practices in Northglenn and beyond, interviews with local leaders working on homelessness, housing, and related issues, and engagement with city and county stakeholders. The sections below summarize our four (4) key findings and recommendations.

Section 1) Assessment of Current Homelessness Programs and Procedures

Finding: The City of Northglenn and Adams County need additional programs to support people experiencing homelessness, particularly for individual adults. Gaps also exist countywide for mental and behavioral health services, which is an urgently growing need.

Challenges and Gaps in Current Homelessness Programs Regionally

According to the latest 2022 PIT Count estimates, with 188 unsheltered residents countywide during the critical winter months, (and likely higher numbers during the warmer months when SWAP is not activated) Adam's County is in need for more interim/emergency shelter beds to immediately house people experiencing homelessness. Providing more emergency shelter allows people experiencing homelessness to access safe, temporary housing in order to stabilize and eventually transition into permanent housing.

While both Access Housing and Almost Home provide temporary shelter programs, these organizations primarily offer programs addressing homelessness prevention, and those serving

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families with children (i.e. Almost Home's Emergency Shelter for Families, providing 7 units of temporary housing for families with children and Access Housing's Family Shelter Program which provides 8 units for families with children).

While cities and the county offer robust social services (such as street outreach, homelessness prevention programs, and others), without suitable locations where unsheltered residents can reside – such as a day shelter or overnight shelter – there are still serious barriers for residents striving to secure stable housing or address overlapping challenges they may be experiencing. Further, the majority of existing shelter programs locally are tailored to families experiencing homelessness, or Transitional Age Youth (TAY), creating a significant gap for single adults.

In particular, due to the sprawling landscape in Northglenn, reliable, safe public transit access that is located within a reasonable distance of shelter is also a critical need. Successful programs for those experiencing homelessness offer wrap-around services, including onsite access (or direct referrals in lieu of this) for mental and physical health, housing navigation, and other critical offerings. Services should be provided in a centralized location, where residents can obtain referrals or gain access to programs directly onsite.

In conversations with leaders in Northglenn's administration, City Council, CRU, police department as well as with regional stakeholders from the North Metro Fire Rescue District, and others, the lack of mental and behavioral health services was another consistent theme commonly expressed.

The closest resources for mental health services in the City of Northglenn are the Community Reach Center, (located in Northglenn) and the Aurora Mental Health Center.

Organization	Description of Services
Community Reach Center	"Community Reach Center is a mental health center providing treatment and counseling for children, teens, adults and seniors who are seeking to improve their mental well being. Our center offers a full spectrum of services designed to help residents of Adams County and surrounding Denver areas manage and overcome mental illness, from depression and anxiety to more severe disorders. We also offer Crisis Services for those who need help overcoming a difficult period in their lives. Our diverse services and programs can assist anyone in need of support. Discover more about services from Community Reach Center such as:

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	● Community-based Services ● Behavioral Health Urgent Care ● Housing ● Outpatient Counseling ● Peer Services ● Psychological Testing ● Therapy Groups ● Vocational Services ● Telehealth ● and more"
Aurora Mental Health Center	"Aurora Mental Health Center is a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic offering services to address a wide range of mental health conditions. Individuals and families rely on us to help them cope with a variety of challenges. Our staff of physicians, nurses, psychologists, therapists, and peers works with all age groups, from children to seniors." Aurora Mental Health Center offers treatment for alcohol and drug use/substance use disorder (SUD), as well as for a range of mental health concerns.
Klare Recovery	Klare Recovery has recently opened in Northglenn. They offer walk-in mental health services and accept all insurance carriers. "Klare Recovery is a Mental Health & Recovery Organization in Northglenn, CO. Klare Recovery is supported by licensed Mental Health Professionals and a licensed Psychiatrist trained in Trauma Informed Care. Klare Recovery was founded by a Mental Health professional that has experience working on the front lines of Crisis and Recovery Services across the United States, understanding that each person's experience with mental health and addiction is complex and requires treatment plans that are as unique as the individuals we serve. We treat a wide variety of adults and adolescents with emotional, behavioral, and substance use disorders. Klare Recovery exists to help empower individuals and provide them with the tools to overcome and heal from addiction and mental health diagnoses."

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According to testimonies, Community Reach Center is over capacity and has a waiting list/backlog of roughly 6-8 weeks. Because of this, there is an urgent need for additional and more immediate mental and behavioral health services for unsheltered residents in the city.

Challenges of the SWAP Program

While programs like SWAP provide critical services and shelter to vulnerable residents in need, these programs by themselves do not meet the current demand for shelter beds in the region, as shown by the recent PIT count (188 unsheltered residents countywide). The SWAP program requires significant, and ongoing coordination, funding, staffing, and infrastructure to sustain the current number for overnight shelter beds.

As Mayor Leighty expresses in her October 11th, 2022 letter to the Adams County Commissioners (emphasis added):

> *"**Our current approach of using hotel vouchers** through the winter months has been successful in keeping people alive; however, it i**s not a program that works to stabilize those experiencing homelessness**. The temporary winter shelter program hosted in Northglenn was able to use the facility and exit almost 30% of the participants into long term housing. **Providing physical facilities for people who are experiencing homelessness is essential in the process for a person to move off the streets and into housing.** Without a stable place to be, time is mostly spent managing transportation, personal belongings, and establishing safety protocols rather than focusing on obtaining vital documents, income, and leveraging that into housing. **Providing facilities can shift the focus of a person who is experiencing homelessness from survival to stability and progress.** We have helped individuals in the City make this transition but it has always been to facilities outside of the County."[8]*

Due to the limited number of hotel vouchers provided during the SWAP program, city staff have described challenges within the program, such as having to turn clients away with no alternative shelter options during dangerous winter nights, and seeing clients desperate to compete for a limited number of spaces. The winter of 2022, SWAP has increased capacity with more participating hotels. However, the cost to run the program and ensuring that people from Adams County are being served are barriers to success. The program has grown in such popularity and uses hotels in different counties such that more people learn about it and try to join. It is difficult to know where a PEH is currently residing so the program continues to grow, for example, at times the SWAP program has over 300 rooms occupied.

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[8] Letter from the City of Northglenn Mayor Meredith Leighty to Mrs. Lynn Baca, Chair, Adams County Commissioners on October 11th, 2022.

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Without enough spaces available for the number of clients in need, many individuals lucky enough to obtain temporary shelter in the SWAP program have invited their friends or loved ones into their hotel or motel rooms in order to escape the harsh conditions. However, this is a violation of the program's rules and has led to programmatic and other challenges. Staff described stories about the extreme measures clients have taken to secure placement in the program, such as taking a hotel room in a city miles away from their home or jobs, putting their employment or other obligations (such as healthcare, family arrangements etc.) at risk in order to maintain their temporary housing.

On the operational side, there are likewise, significant logistical hurdles due to the complexity of the SWAP program. The number of hotels and motels that participate varies from year to year, and therefore, so does the number of available beds for unsheltered residents. Hotel and motel partners have experienced staff turnover, and often, new hotel and motel staff have not been trained or informed of the SWAP program taking place or what protocols and information are required. Hotel and motel rules (which clients must follow to be eligible for placement) also vary between establishments. For instance, some facilities require an ID while others accept alternative forms of identification.

Challenges have arisen around the management and oversight of facilities in previous years. Motel and hotel rooms – which are not designed for homelessness programs or intended as long term living arrangements – have been damaged, and in other instances, safety issues and other violations have taken place. The need for increased staffing and associated costs for insurance and repairs may increase the overall program costs when compared to alternative models of interim shelter with designs that offer environmental deterrents and quality controls.

In interviews and meetings, staff described many ideas for improvement to help address these challenges. For instance, to address some of the management issues, ideas have been proposed such as designating an on site "den mom" amongst the program participants, whose role would be to serve as a resource to other clients, answering questions and reporting issues.

Despite these obstacles, SWAP has supported hundreds of clients during the most dangerous weather conditions, while also connecting clients to resources and supportive services. The program could benefit from addressing the barriers outlined above.

Conclusion

The City of Northglenn and Adams County urgently needs more temporary/emergency shelter beds to immediately stabilize and support those experiencing homelessness and living on the streets. While the city and county offer a wide range of supportive services and homelessness prevention programs, homelessness continues and has grown over recent years, despite these efforts. Significant barriers exist for those living on the streets who are seeking to end their unsheltered status. Furthermore, without adequate permanent and affordable housing options,

homelessness challenges will be exacerbated and continue despite efforts to promote supportive services and programs.

In addition, the city and county should look into new strategies and efforts to better address the growing mental health crisis many unsheltered residents are experiencing. More capacity is needed to address these gaps, which will require additional investment from the city and county.

Recommendations

1. Explore opportunities and partnerships to develop low-barrer, temporary shelter programs with wrap-around programming to meet clients' needs.
2. Pursue Federal, State and Local grants and funding opportunities to bring new homelessness shelter programs and services to the city and county.
3. Develop a subcommittee or hold strategy and planning forums within the Adams County Intergovernmental Committee on Homelessness to brainstorm improvements to the SWAP program that will address its current barriers and challenges.
4. Recruit and cultivate service provider organizations with expertise and training in managing interim shelter programs and mental and behavioral health programs for people experiencing homelessness.

Section 2) Regional Collaboration in Homelessness Solutions and Strategies

Finding: Improvements are needed within Adams County and by individual cities to advance a more equitable approach towards regional homelessness planning.

Cities within Adams County

Adams County includes ten (10) cities and towns, and each of these municipalities prioritizes and plans around homelessness differently. While Adams County plays a role facilitating efforts between cities and towns, currently, city participation in the county's efforts is voluntary.

The cities and towns in Adams County include:

1. City of Arvada
2. City of Aurora
3. Town of Bennett
4. City of Brighton
5. City of Commerce City
6. City of Federal Heights
7. Town of Lochbuie
8. City of Northglenn
9. City of Thornton
10. City of Westminster

Like Northglenn, which is within both Adams and Weld counties, many of the cities listed above share jurisdiction between multiple counties, making regional governance more complex.

For the purposes of this project, we have chosen to focus on a few key strategic partner cities (as opposed to all 10 municipalities) – Aurora, Commerce City, Thornton, Westminster and Adams County. The reasoning for this is because they border Northglenn, have a larger population of residents, and/or because they are more engaged on homelessness issues relative to the other cities and towns.

Current and Projected Homelessness Plans

City of Aurora

The City of Aurora is currently the only city in Adams County offering year round overnight shelter programs (in both the winter and summer). While the City of Aurora does accept referrals for unsheltered residents from neighboring cities into the Comitis Shelter, they do not allow outside referrals into their Pallet Shelter programs.

There are currently two Pallet Shelter programs within the City of Aurora. The first is the Peoria program with 40 shelter units (originally 30 shelters, which later expanded by 10 additional units) which is managed by Salvation Army, and the other, the Chambers Program managed by Restoration Christian Fellowship church with 56 shelter units. Beyond this, the City of Aurora also offers a host of other homelessness programs and services, such as Safe Parking programs, food pantries, and behavioral health services. For a full list of resources, please visit their [Homelessness Resources page](#).

City of Commerce City

The City of Commerce City currently does not provide emergency shelter services for those experiencing homelessness. However, the Commerce City Housing Authority (CCHA) provides

housing opportunities and resources for low-income residents, supporting them to buy, rent or improve their homes. Through the CCHA, there are several affordable housing developments in the city, opportunities for senior housing, and the CCHA facilitates the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) program. For more information about these and other programs, please visit: https://www.c3gov.com/living-in/housing-authority.

As a homelessness prevention effort in 2021, through the COVID-19 emergency response and recovery strategy, Commerce City participated in Adams County's Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program. The program was a partnership between Maiker Housing Partners, Brighton Housing Authority, and Commerce City Housing Authority to help eligible renters (household income at or below 80% of the area median income, or AMI) with past and future rent and utility payments. For more information, visit: adamscountycovid19.org/adams-county-emergency-rental-assistance-program.

Commerce City has explored conversations with Pallet Shelter about developing a temporary shelter village or Navigation Center within the city's borders. The city is pursuing grant funding from Adams County to fund the project. Commerce City was interested in purchasing Pallet's winterized (insulated) shelters for this project, which have recently been launched. While these plans are not yet finalized, there may be an opportunity for unsheltered residents from other cities, such as Northglenn, to seek placement in this program, should it open.

Currently, Commerce City has limited full-time staff working on homelessness issues. The city has funded the Community Navigator-Homeless Outreach position who works to build trusting relationships with unsheltered community members and provide supportive services and resources, such as hygiene items, benefit enrollment assistance, identification document retrieval assistance, and referrals to other needed services.The goals of this position is to:

1. "Create and build a program unique to Commerce City and people experiencing homelessness
2. Work regionally through partnerships and collaboration to address homelessness
3. Build relationships and connect with people experiencing homelessness, homeless service providers, and the community
4. Connect people experiencing homelessness to services, providing basic needs, and identifying barriers to housing and stability"[9]

City of Thornton

The City of Thornton, as the largest city within Adams County, recently launched Community Connections – a supportive services division that assists residents with public assistance, resources, and referrals. The Community Connections office serves as a neighborhood resource center, which first opened in April 2021. At the Community Connections office, or

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[9] https://recreation.c3gov.com/parks-trails/community-navigation-and-outreach

virtually (by calling or emailing) residents can access food programs, borrow electronic equipment or access WiFi, find housing resources, employment and education programs, and obtain social services for immigrants and refugees, veterans, people with disabilities and people experiencing homelessness.

Through CDBG and HUD funding received in 2021, Community Connections created the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) to engage with encampment residents and Thornton's unhoused population, providing resources and support. The HOT works Monday-Friday from 8 am to 5 pm. Below are some metrics from the program in 2021:

- HOT received a total of 674 calls and provided 642 referrals to services
- HOT completed 250 outreach connections to schools, businesses and homeowner associations
- HOT printed 500 decals promoting the hotline, which were posted in all City of Thornton parks to connect unhoused individuals to the program and services
- 25 clients were connected to various services such as haircuts, transportation, employment information and more
- HOT met with 257 in 2021
- HOT connected 22 individuals to a permanent housing voucher

To learn more about the program, visit their website here.

Through the newly created Community Connections team, the city has been making significant progress in aiding vulnerable residents. In 2021, the office provided 4,375 points of contact and saw referrals increase 171% from the previous year. This includes 1,497 referrals for homelessness assistance alone.

While there is high demand for homelessness services in the city, currently, Thornton does not provide temporary shelter within its city borders. This provides a challenge for unsheltered residents living in Thornton, and particularly for those without access to viable means of transportation outside of the city.

Thornton's city leaders are exploring options to develop a temporary shelter program specifically for Transitional Age Youth (TAY) usually defined as young people between the ages of 16-25. The city is interested in replicating the model from a housing first program managed by TGTHR in Boulder, which oversees a project at 1440 Pine for a 40-unit affordable housing apartment building with supportive services for homeless youth ages 18-24.

Thornton has also made advances in developing more affordable housing to address the housing crisis. As noted in Thornton's Community Connections 2021 Year in Review: "Thornton's HOME allocation of $213,969 was awarded to Maiker Housing Partners to assist

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with the development of Crossing Pointe South, an affordable housing development, of 142 units located near our RTD light rail station by 104th Avenue and Colorado Boulevard."[10]

While there is still a need for more temporary shelter in the city for unhoused residents, the city's recent investments in social services have been well tracked and are making progress to support the needs of many vulnerable residents in Thornton.

City of Westminster

The City of Westminster is in need of temporary shelter beds for people experiencing domestic violence as well as for homeless veterans. Currently, there is no domestic violence shelter in the city, and while 7% of the population in the city are veterans, there are no housing options for veterans within the city's borders. Westminster's city staff are in conversation with the Veterans Administration (VA) office, located in Aurora, about these unique challenges, including the need for more medical care.

Like many cities within Adams County, Westminster provides various types of homelessness prevention programs and services, (including a food bank, legal services for tenants, etc.) however, they do not currently provide emergency shelter beds for those experiencing homelessness.

However on the housing front, Westminster has made significant progress in developing more affordable housing, including bringing approximately 1,500 new, permanent affordable housing units to the city since 2014. This progress is notable, as after the recent Marshall Fire, the city lost nearly 1000 units of housing. According to city staff, a strong priority now in the city is to preserve older housing as well as focusing on homelessness prevention. For a list of affordable housing developments within the city, please visit this interactive map.

According to city staff who work on homelessness issues, the City Council is considering plans to develop emergency/temporary shelter programs such as utilizing land on faith-based properties, exploring tiny homes, as safe parking programs. Westminster – which is also within Jefferson County – is exploring a proposal led by Jefferson County to bring two emergency shelter sites that could offer up to 200 permanent supportive units. They have also had conversations with the State of Colorado about funding a campus for people experiencing homelessness, which could be a joint effort between multiple counties, which is a priority for the State. While these talks are still underway, the City Council is poised to make changes to its zoning rules later in 2022 to help pave the way for the city to develop new shelter and temporary housing programs.

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[10] https://www.thorntonco.gov/community-connections/Documents/2021-year-in-review.pdf

For a list of the city's current homelessness resources and programs, please visit: https://www.cityofwestminster.us/Residents/AssistancePrograms/HousingAssistance/HomelessnessResourcesandInformation.

Adams County

While Adams County has funding to utilize temporary shelter programs, there are challenges around their land use and zoning restrictions, and barriers in solidifying locations for programs. As a lead convener the county regularly holds stakeholder meetings with city staff and service providers through the Adams County Intergovernmental Committee on Homelessness. The county also helps facilitate joint programs, including: the Severe Weather Action Plan, Adams County Day Works, Homelessness Outreach, Mobile Showers, Mobile Laundry Service, Mobile Home initiative Housing Navigation and Mediation, Respite Housing and Next Step.[11]

Within Adams County, proposed plans have been offered to help address homelessness and the lack of affordable housing. Most notably, Adams County is pursuing the purchase of the Clarion Hotel near the Denver border, converting the 218 hotel units into housing, with 50% of the 218 rooms being designated for transitional and 50% designated toward permanent supportive housing (PSH). This project, which is a joint partnership between Adams and Denver Counties, would house residents from both jurisdictions. The proposed service provider managing the housing program is Colorado Coalition for the Homeless. This project has not yet been finalized. $3.8M for the County. 8% of units carved out for Adams County specifically.

According to Adams County staff, the units will undergo renovation which will take one year or more for the construction to complete. Because of this, the project is estimated to open in 2023.

Adams County staff have also explored options to develop temporary shelter in their unincorporated regions and to use the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 (RLUIPA), which "protect individuals, houses of worship, and other religious institutions from discrimination in zoning and landmarking laws" to develop a temporary/emergency shelter site on religious property, with a faith based service provider or partner. Adams County is in touch with some potential faith-based partners, such as Crossroads Community Center, about Safe Parking and other potential programs. The county is also facilitating conversations with Almost Home to use ARPA funding for a Safe Parking program at the Platt building.

Recently, the Board of Adam's County Commissioners approved a proposed project with Project Moxie that would be located on Salvation Army's land, in the unincorporated area of Adams County, using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

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[11]

https://www.fedheights.org/vertical/sites/%7B30BDEC4F-3AAB-430C-A5CC-E2BE8097AC8C%7D/uploads/Res._No._22-19_-_Homelessness_MOU.pdf

While Adams County and its cities have made progress in funding, prevention, and servicing people experiencing homelessness through various initiatives, "coordination of homelessness services, data sharing, and determining roles and responsibilities between the County and its municipalities has been a consistent challenge."[12]

In 2021, the City of Northglenn spearheaded a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Adams County and the cities of Aurora, Brighton, Commerce City, Federal Heights, Northglenn, Thornton, Westminster, the Town of Bennett, and the City and County of Broomfield regarding Homelessness Services. Recognizing homelessness as a shared problem, the MOU is intended to be a long-term commitment that will facilitate meaningful progress in advancing homelessness solutions regionally. The purpose of the MOU was to: "further strengthen regional coordination and improve outcomes…[and] through a shared vision…identify resource and service needs for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and potential locations and properties that can best provide those resources and services."

An abbreviated list of activities outlined in the MOU includes:

- Identify what data is readily available and can easily be shared, as well as what limitations exist in the data
- Utilize data to identify:
  - How to take the work to the next level culminating in an implementation plan for providing facilities for service provision as well as transitional and permanent supportive housing
  - Areas of opportunity to provide a comprehensive system of services and housing for PEH based on existing mapping of facilities, an inventory of current services being provided, and development of a single navigation and entry system
  - Objective criteria and ideal locations, available properties, and opportunities to provide the identified resources and services which may include:
    - Day shelter and/or housing navigation services
    - Filling in gaps in the shelter/housing continuum including, but not limited to:
      - Safe parking
      - Tiny home villages
      - Pallet shelter communities
      - Transitional housing
      - Permanent supportive housing

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https://www.fedheights.org/vertical/sites/%7B30BDEC4F-3AAB-430C-A5CC-E2BE8097AC8C%7D/uploads/Res._No._22-19_-_Homelessness_MOU.pdf

The MOU specifies that Adams County is responsible for facilitating progress on these outcomes and driving work between parties; municipalities must offer their commitment in aligning efforts, actively participate and share data and information.

The outputs of the MOU include:

- An objective, evidence-based document that outlines the need for day shelter or types of short- and long-term housing/shelter and recommendations on potential locations and properties (Report) that would be most suitable for these efforts[13]
  - Recommendations could also include measures that address root causes, systems and/or policy changes, and preventative programs, among others
  - This Report will be used to guide discussion and decisions for the Parties
- A secure, central, electronic warehouse for homelessness-related data in Adams County so that we can understand the full landscape and life cycle of homelessness, root causes of housing instability, and the best ways to reduce homelessness in Adams and Broomfield Counties.

The MOU, which acknowledges the countywide gaps in service, strives to promote enhanced regional collaboration and to align and lift up evidence-based approaches to resolving homelessness in Adams and Broomfield Counties.

Regional Homelessness Plans

During its operation, Northglenn's Homelessness Community Task Force recommended several potential solutions to addressing homelessness regionally, including:

1. Inter-Municipality coordination to combine resources and appropriately refer to resources
2. Shared office space with Adams County to provide resources at Health and Human Services building
3. Coordination of ARPA efforts across the county[14]

In a letter to the Adams County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) dated on October 11th, 2022, Mayor Meredith Leighty from the City of Northglenn requested that the Board of County Commissioners develop a multi-year strategy to address gaps, "in housing for individuals experiencing homelessness in Adams County, and to prioritize physical facilities for people experiencing homelessness."[15] She further notes:

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[13] This report seeks to fulfill this output specified in the MOU.
[14] https://files4.1.revize.com/northglennco/HCTF%20Agenda%20Packet_082621.pdf
[15] Letter from the City of Northglenn Mayor Meredith Leighty to Mrs. Lynn Baca, Chair, Adams County Commissioners on October 11th, 2022.

"Every outreach worker who wants to be successful at getting a person off the streets as soon as possible needs to look outside of Adams County for solutions. This is not sustainable and goes against the intent of the regional MOU. We need to take the work of the MOU to the next level and identify how to move forward with implementation of temporary and transitional facilities to fill gaps throughout the County."

Adams County's Poverty Reduction team facilitates stakeholder forums to address homelessness issues, including the Sheltering & Outreach group. Through these meetings, the Sheltering & Outreach Coordination team members – who consist of city staff and community partners – plan and discuss efforts around homelessness in the county.

Some recent examples of their work include the Housing Navigation Network Survey created by Adams County staff and spreading information about Adams County's Long Distance Travel funds to support residents who need support programs not offered in the immediate area.

Conclusion

Currently, the cities within Adams County lack coordination or consistency for their priorities around homelessness. While some collaboration is occurring through the county's facilitation and the regional MOU spearheaded by Northglenn, these conversations have not yet yielded concrete plans for emergency or temporary housing programs, as one of the largest, and more urgent needs in the county. Adams County, and its cities and towns, would greatly benefit from expanding on their regional MOU to clearly outline and identify their explicit priorities. These efforts should include identifying *how* the cities and county will partner together, equitably sharing resources to meaningfully address the homelessness crisis with proven solutions.

We recommend developing an equitable approach and agreements for where programs will be located and how they will be funded. To ensure equal participation from all parties, cities should commit to offer resources relative to their PIT count, as well as determining a strategy for the even distribution of resources and programs across the county, ensuring that sites are accessible for people experiencing homelessness who face challenges traveling far distances.

Providing centralized, wrap around services or resource hubs for people experiencing homelessness is important. From a regional lens, these resources should be accessible across different parts of Adams County. It is critical that Adams County has sufficient and diverse programs and services in every city for people experiencing homelessness to support individuals and families in ending their unsheltered status. Coordinating efforts regionally may also be the most practical financially and logistically, especially in the long-term, as homelessness knows no borders.

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Finally, as a convening body, it is essential that Adams County plays a central role in bringing cities together to drive forward this important work – particularly, to discuss and develop temporary housing programs in Adams County. As Northglenn's Mayor Leighty articulates:

> *"Adams County has some innovative ideas to obtain funding and address homelessness, however none of the planned ideas incorporate an emergency shelter…***Without the leadership from Adams County, it is unlikely that physical facilities will be prioritized by local municipalities in a way that will benefit our homeless populations***…We are proud of the services that have been built over the past two years...[which] bring lifesaving supports to those experiencing homelessness…[yet] despite these successes, the housing gap remains."*

Cities and towns must work together to tackle homelessness as a regional problem, and in so doing, they are best poised to find proven solutions that meet their shared goals.

Recommendations

1. Expand the regional MOU to determine explicit plans, shared goals, specific roles and responsibilities for each city and town in Adams County. The county should facilitate this progress and lead efforts.
2. Employ a Collective Impact Model to address homelessness regionally, across government departments, nonprofits, community stakeholders and service providers.[16]
3. Commitment from all cities in Adams County to support homelessness efforts equally, providing tangible resources, i.e. both funding and programs/sites from each jurisdiction.

Section 3) Education and Public Engagement on Homelessness Issues

Finding: Regional leaders and community members have varied levels of understanding about homelessness issues, including its drivers and potential solutions. More engagement and education is needed around strategies to resolve unsheltered homelessness, and a deeper understanding of the root causes of homelessness within Adams County.

Awareness and Understanding of Homelessness Issues Locally

Through our qualitative research – which includes over a dozen interviews and meetings with regional leaders, site visits and more – Pallet's Advisory Services determined that there are varying degrees of understanding about the common drivers of homelessness locally and awareness of the current programs and protocols to address homelessness regionally.

Those closest to these issues, including city and county staff who work with unsheltered populations directly or who manage government programs and policies have the deepest

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[16] See Recommendation 1 (page 17) in the Greeley Homeless and Housing Services Final Report for a model of how this can be achieved in Adams County.

understanding of the trends, data and impacts. However, as noted in the previous section, more collaboration would enhance this understanding from a broader regional perspective, and help break down silos that exist within individual cities.

With the creation of the Crisis Response Unit (CRU) in Northglenn, city officials have been able to better understand and learn about homelessness issues. City leaders take direction on policy and program development from the CRU staff's recommendations. The CRU consists of a Program Manager, Community Resource Navigator, and 3 Co-Responders who will work alongside residents, police, code enforcement, and municipal court with on-scene response.

Role of Elected Leaders in Addressing Homelessness

Due to the important role that elected officials play – enacting legislation, adopting the city's budget and determining city policies – more education for City Council Members and other elected leaders in Northglenn and nearby jurisdictions would empower local leaders to advocate for homelessness solutions based on data-supported strategies.

City Council in particular plays a vital role in liaising with residents, local businesses and the broader community. In the conversations and interviews with stakeholders, Pallet's team heard a common theme around the lack of political will to promote shelter solutions. This was often due to constituents' negative perceptions, and advocacy against, proposed solutions.

NIMBYism – which stands for "not in my backyard" – is a common obstacle in response to homelessness and affordable housing projects. In fact, this problem is so pervasive nationally that the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has ample information about NIMBYism and how to combat it in its resource library, which can be accessed here. According to HUD, "Diffusing NIMBY sentiment during the early stages of a project can not only prevent serious difficulties down the road, but may also help create allies for the project within the community."[17]

It is important that city and community leaders actively engage residents around their concerns, especially during the development stages of proposed programs or new homelessness initiatives, in order to obtain and incorporate their feedback, when possible. It is also important to note that many NIMBY attitudes and beliefs about homelessness are not supported by data.

Last year, in 2021, the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless partnered with the Urban Institute to conclude "a five-year longitudinal study evaluating the impact of the Housing First model in decreasing criminal justice system involvement of chronically homelessness individuals by providing housing and supportive services."[18] The Urban Institute, an independent public policy

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[17] https://www.coloradocoalition.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/annualreport_2021_FINAL.pdf
https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/nimbyassessment/?nimbyassessmentaction=main.dspnimbysentiment
[18]

research organization,analyzed the five-year Denver Supportive Housing Social Impact Bond (Denver SIB) Initiative, and demonstrated the effectiveness of the Housing First model in ending the homelessness-to-jail cycle. To view the full Urban Institute report, please visit this link.

The aim of the Denver SIB Initiative was to demonstrate that providing stable housing and comprehensive services would reduce the public costs of law enforcement, jail days, and courts. The Colorado Coalition for the Homeless was the central provider of this program, giving subsidized housing and wraparound supportive services to 285 individuals since the outset of the study in 2016.

Participants were selected based on long-term homelessness and frequent interactions with Denver's criminal justice system. Housing stability and interactions with law enforcement of this group were compared to that of a randomized control group of individuals who received usual care services in the community. **The results were evident, even within the first year, and continued throughout the five-year study period.**

"[The SIB Initiative] showed me that I'm worthy of being saved at a point in time when I didn't think anyone cared."

—MAURICE, SIB PARTICIPANT

SIB participants / Control Group

39% reduction in shelter stays

↓ 40% fewer arrests

↓ 34% fewer law enforcement interactions

↓ 30% fewer unique jail stays

↓ 27% fewer total jail days

↓ 65% fewer visits to a short-term or city-funded detoxification unit

"…Supportive housing, provided with a Housing First approach, can break the homelessness-to-jail cycle."

—URBAN INSTITUTE

86% of participants remained in stable housing after one year

77% of participants remained in stable housing after three years

Read the full Urban Institute report linked here.

COLORADO COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS   2021 ANNUAL REPORT   5

In a recent example, neighbors in the Denver area who opposed the city's Safe Outdoor Space programs (operated by Colorado Village Collaborative) cited fears of increased crime, drugs and general public safety for children and families. However, as shown by this in-depth report from the Colorado Sun, "Data shows the opposite happened. Police said they had no data showing an increase in crimes, and Safe Outdoor Space managers said there have been no residents charged with a crime while living onsite."[19] Below are some key findings from their analysis:

- "A Colorado Sun analysis of Denver Police Department data found that crime reports decreased in the neighborhoods where Safe Outdoor Space sites have operated, even as reported crime increased across Denver.
- The total number of crimes increased 8.2% across Denver in 2020, the first year of the pandemic. The number of reports rose even more, at 16.4%, in neighborhoods that would soon host a Safe Outdoor Space tent encampment.
- Denver's overall crime went up again by 14.3% in 2021, the first full year Safe Outdoor Space sites were open. But in the six Denver neighborhoods hosting the camps saw a decline of 2.8% in the number of reported crimes."
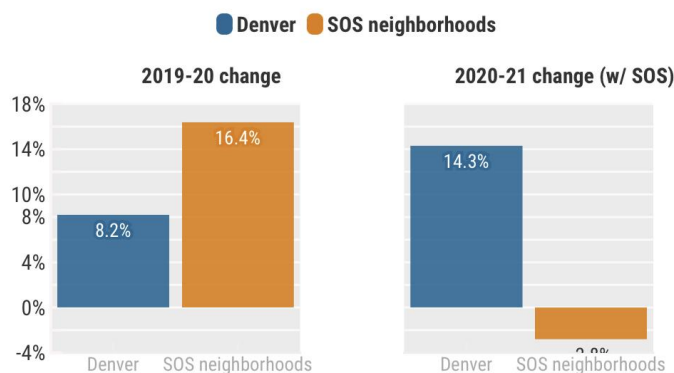
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[19] https://coloradosun.com/2022/10/24/safe-outdoor-space/

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Annual change in crimes in Denver and SOS neighborhoods

The number of crimes reported in 2021 was up in the city of Denver but not in the six neighborhoods that hosted temporary homes for the unhoused. Some neighborhoods that hosted Safe Outdoor Space camps experienced an increase in violent crimes, including robbery, sexual assault and homicides, but the numbers were small to start with so even a few more cases skewed percentages higher. For example, the SOS neighborhoods had 27 more robberies in 2021, up 21.1% from a year earlier. Denver had 98 more, an 8.1% increase. Hover on the bars to see more detail. To see how the six neighborhoods compared to the city, **Click HERE**. (**View larger chart**)

See annual rate of change by type of crime ⇒

Total ▼

● Denver ● SOS neighborhoods

2019-20 change — Denver 8.2%, SOS neighborhoods 16.4%

2020-21 change (w/ SOS) — Denver 14.3%, SOS neighborhoods

Source: Denver Police Department • *2022 data is through Oct. 17

The Colorado Sun

Local Educational Efforts On Homelessness

During its operation, Northglenn's Homelessness Community Task Force identified the need for improved community engagement and education on homelessness issues. In October, 2021 the Task Force recommended several strategies to "mitigate the stigma of homelessness through education and storytelling," including:

1. "[Develop a] partnership with Anythink Libraries, which can provide books and educational materials
2. Expand the current part-time CRN position into a full time homelessness navigator.
3. Bring the tiny home concept to the PEH community over the long-term.
4. Recognize National Youth Homelessness Awareness Month with a proclamation Nov. 9. This will bring attention to the youth and adult population experiencing homelessness."[20]

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[20] https://files4.1.revize.com/northglennco/10.21.21%20HCTF%20Agenda%20Packet.pdf

Adams County has taken the lead in providing information, reports and sharing progress on how they are responding to homelessness. Through their educational campaign, the Poverty Reduction team features six (6) YouTube videos titled "Understanding Homelessness" on their website. This information can be found at: https://adcogov.org/understanding-homelessness.

Adams County and City of Northglenn will be hosting a documentary night for elected officials and city leaders. The documentary called, "Us and Them" will be shown in Parson's Theater on January 12th, 2022.

These campaigns and events are a great start to help spread awareness about homelessness. Educational strategies could be improved by providing more specific information about projects and efforts, data and metrics (versus general statements) and testimonies from people experiencing homelessness or those who work directly with unsheltered residents.

Additionally, cities should explore their own education and awareness campaigns to supplement the county's efforts. Cities may explore developing a homelessness educational toolkit or other strategies to help promote understanding about homelessness issues or potential projects.

Conclusion

It is important that constituents and community stakeholders understand that as unsheltered homelessness continues, programs that upgrade encampment conditions by relocating people to temporary shelter or permanent housing, are an asset and a benefit to all. Providing people experiencing homelessness with the vital services they need – the dignity of living indoors, having meals, access to sanitation and supportive services – helps create stronger and safer communities for everyone. Equally important, residents should understand causes of homelessness locally, for instance that nearly half of Adams County residents' incomes do not meet the cost of living standard.[21]

Elected leaders should be aware of, and equipped with, the tools they need to be able to make informed decisions about homelessness, and to educate their constituents. Many city leaders are playing an active role in championing solutions to homelessness. However, more efforts could be taken specifically by city policymaking bodies, as well as from the Adams County Board of County Commissioners, to advance concrete plans for temporary shelter, or other gaps in services regionally, and help communicate those plans and progress to the community.

Finally, while there are some educational efforts being spearheaded by Adams County, these could be improved by meeting residents where they are at, both online and in person, as well as providing more data-driven information, metrics, and personal testimonies to further exemplify how homelessness is impacting local community members.

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[21] https://www.adcogov.org/sites/default/files/Homeward-Adams.pdf

Recommendations

1. Develop a community engagement toolkit for city and county residents on homelessness issues. This toolkit can be used in public forums for community members, or be tailored into briefings for local elected officials, supporting them in how to communicate homelessness information, plans, data and best practices to their constituencies.
2. Proactively offer educational forums and listening sessions to the public prior to developing and opening new homelessness programs or emergency shelters. Forums should engage residents in learning more about proposed homelessness solutions, problem solving, and providing feedback.
3. Improve systems tracking and data collection within current homelessness programs and offer opportunities to share these learnings with the public, through community engagement meetings and online via social media and city and county webpages.
4. Publicly share metrics and data, personal testimonies and other critical information to help dispel misconceptions and stigmas about people experiencing homelessness. Articulate key information about root causes, such as the number of people within Adams County who are housing unstable or at risk of becoming homeless.

Section 4) Interim Shelter/Emergency Shelter Bed Capacity in Northglenn

Finding: There is an urgent need for a non-congregate temporary shelter program(s), providing trauma-informed, wrap-around services to unsheltered residents within the City of Northglenn.

Overview

As it has been expressed in previous sections, while Northglenn and the broader Adams County is offering a variety of social services and prevention efforts to combat homelessness, there is a lack of adequate emergency shelter to address the immediate crisis of unsheltered homelessness locally. This is of significant concern, as many municipalities like Denver and others, are experiencing increased PIT counts in recent years.[22] If current trends continue and numbers continue to rise, the crisis of homelessness may become much more difficult for local leaders to manage and remedy.

For this next section, we will dive deeper to offer a comprehensive Implementation Plan that summarizes the critical components, considerations and decision-making factors to develop more interim shelter programs across Adams County. Embedded in this plan are numerous recommendations and best practices local leaders can use to inform their efforts.

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[22] https://coloradosun.com/2022/07/21/pit-count/

[Implementation Plan for Proposed Temporary Shelter Village in Northglenn](#)

Key Components of Temporary Shelter Programs

In developing or implementing new models for interim/temporary/emergency shelter programs, there are at least four (4) primary considerations that decision-makers will need to explore. We can call these buckets the 4 S's:

1. **Site Selection** – i.e. where will the program be located? Will the site take place on public or private land? What is the zoning, and who are the neighbors in the area?
2. **Structures** – What type of structures will be used to house participants? Will this be a vehicle program, in a building, tents, or another type of temporary structure?
3. **Service Provision** – Who will manage the program day to day? Who else is involved?
4. **Sustainability** – How will the project be financed? Does the project require any legislative approvals (such as an emergency declaration) or other policy changes to ensure the program can advance and remain sustainable to operate?

Potential Locations for Non-Congregate Interim Shelter Programs

Best Practices in Identifying Site Locations for Homeless Programs

Shelter villages, and other homelessness programs, produce the most successful outcomes when the locations are within a reasonable distance for clients to access essential services, such as food, healthcare, public benefits, and employment. Thriving neighborhoods (for both housed and unhoused communities alike) offer proximity to reliable transportation, libraries, post offices, medical offices, and places of work or worship. This is no different when developing an interim shelter program for unhoused clients.

During Pallet's research, our team, in collaboration with Mobile Crisis Unit staff from Northglenn identified the following potential locations for new homelessness programs:

1. **Adam's County Human Services Center Parking Lot**
    a. Address: 11860 N Pecos Street, Westminster, CO 80234
    b. Lot Size and Type: Approx. Total Village Area: 17,755 sq.ft. / 0.40 acre. 60 Repurposed Parking Spaces
    c. Owned by: Adams County
    d. Current and Proposed Usage: Underutilized parking lot, to use for Pallet Shelter Site for ~50 individuals, with 45 sleeping cabins + village amenities
    e. Considerations: The AC HSC building is currently offering social services for PEH and has indoor offices. This site is ideally located within proximity to

transportation, and other necessary public amenities. The site is in Westminster, and is near some residential apartment buildings.

2. **RTD Park and Ride Parking Lot**
   a. <u>Address:</u> 600 W 12th Ave, Westminster, CO 80234
   b. <u>Lot Size and Type:</u> Approx. Total Village Area: 18,098 sq.ft. / 0.40 acre. 60 Repurposed Parking Spaces
   c. <u>Owned by:</u> Regional Transportation District (RTD)
   d. <u>Current and Proposed Usage:</u> Underutilized parking lot, to use for Pallet Shelter Site for ~50 individuals, with 45 sleeping cabins + village amenities
   e. <u>Considerations:</u> Utilizing this location would require additional approvals from the Regional Transportation District. Before deciding on this location, the city should explore the feasibility of this process and assess the RTD on their willingness to champion this project. The RTD site is already being used by some unsheltered residents who are living in RVs or other vehicles.

3. **Scout Park**
   a. <u>Address:</u> 124-132 E 112th Place, Northglenn, CO 80233
   b. <u>Lot Size and Type:</u> Approx. Total Village Area: 9,272 SF / 0.21 acre.
   c. <u>Owned by:</u> City of Northglenn
   d. <u>Current and Proposed Usage:</u> Underutilized open space, to use for Pallet Shelter Site for ~24 individuals, with 20 sleeping cabins + village amenities
   e. <u>Considerations:</u> This location is across the highway to the city's Justice Center, where Northglenn Police Department and the Crisis Response Unit (CRU) offices are. The CRU currently does case management and provides other services out of the Justice Center. This site is also next to a planned development and several residential neighborhoods.

To further explore the feasibility and trade offs of these three locations, Pallet's Community Development team has provided proposed site layouts and budgets for these proposed sites. Please note that these are meant to serve as baseline examples, and are subject to changes and input from stakeholders.

DRAFT SITE PLAN (V.1)
SITE NAME: EMERGENCY SHELTER VILLAGE IN RTD
WAGON ROAD PARK-N-RIDE LOT
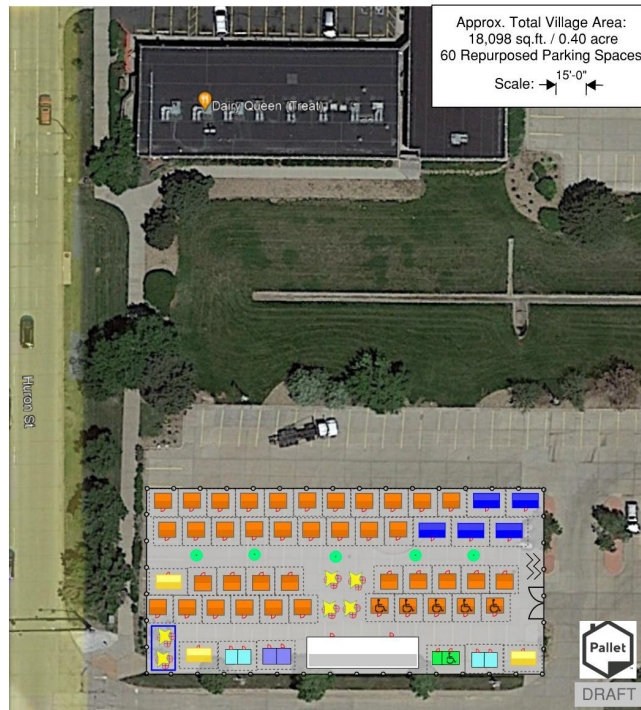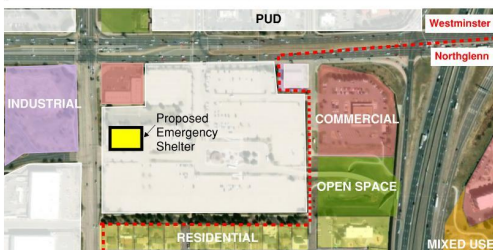SLEEPING ACCOMODATIONS FOR 50 INDIVIDUALS

ADDRESS: 600 W 12TH AVE, WESTMINSTER, CO 80234

POTENTIAL UNIT COUNT WITH 6 FT SPACING:
- 40 SIXTY-FOUR SF SLEEPING CABINS
- 5 ONE-HUNDRED SF SLEEPING CABINS
- 3 ONE-HUNDRED SF UNITS FOR CASE MANAGEMENT/SECURITY OFFICES/STORAGE
- 2 STANDARD 2-STALL BATHROOM
- 1 ACCESSIBLE BATHROOM
- 1 LAUNDRY UNIT
- 1 EIGHT-HUNDRED SF COMMUNITY ROOM

PROJECT KEY

64 SQUARE FOOT PALLET SHELTER FOR SINGLES
DIMENSIONS: 8'6" x 7'6"

100 SQUARE FOOT PALLET SHELTER FOR COUPLES
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

100 SQUARE FOOT PALLET SHELTER FOR CASE MANAGEMENT / SECURITY / STORAGE
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

PALLET TWO-STALL BATHROOM
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

PALLET ADA + ADMIN BATHROOM
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

PALLET LAUNDRY UNIT
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

800 SQUARE FOOT PALLET FOR DINING
DIMENSIONS: 54' x 15'

PLANTER

SHADED SEATING AREA

DESIGNATED SMOKING AREA

BIKE RACK

PUD

Westminster

Northglenn

INDUSTRIAL

Proposed Emergency Shelter

COMMERCIAL

OPEN SPACE

RESIDENTIAL

MIXED USE

Approx. Total Village Area:
18,098 sq.ft. / 0.40 acre
60 Repurposed Parking Spaces
Scale: 15'-0"

DRAFT

DRAFT SITE PLAN (V.1)
SITE NAME: EMERGENCY SHELTER VILLAGE IN SCOUT PARK
SLEEPING ACCOMODATIONS FOR 24 INDIVIDUALS

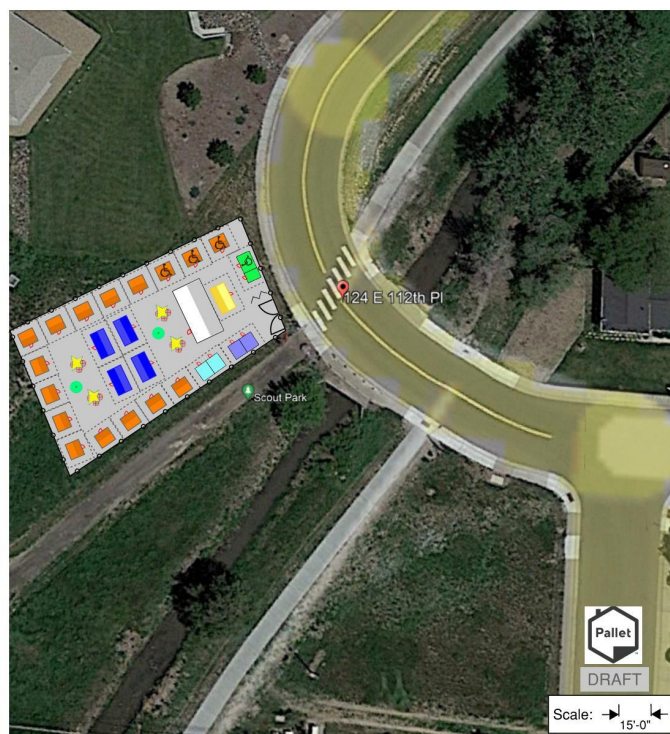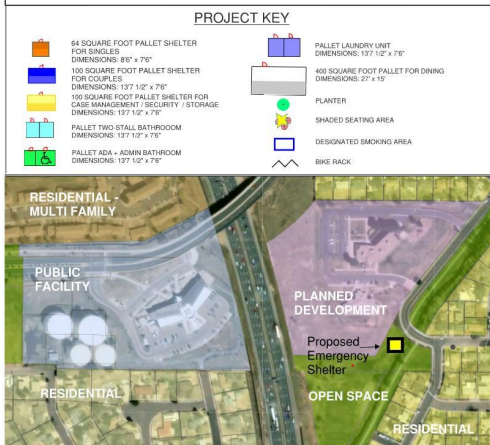ADDRESS: 124-132 E 112TH PLACE, NORTHGLENN, CO 80233

POTENTIAL UNIT COUNT WITH 6 FT SPACING:
- 16 SIXTY-FOUR SF SLEEPING CABINS
- 4 ONE-HUNDRED SF SLEEPING CABINS
- 1 ONE-HUNDRED SF UNITS FOR CASE MANAGEMENT/SECURITY
- 1 STANDARD 2-STALL BATHROOM
- 1 ACCESSIBLE BATHROOM
- 1 LAUNDRY UNIT
- 1 FOUR-HUNDRED SF COMMUNITY ROOM

APPROX TOTAL VILLAGE AREA: 9,272 SF / 0.21 ACRE

PROJECT KEY

64 SQUARE FOOT PALLET SHELTER FOR SINGLES
DIMENSIONS: 8'6" x 7'6"

100 SQUARE FOOT PALLET SHELTER FOR COUPLES
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

100 SQUARE FOOT PALLET SHELTER FOR CASE MANAGEMENT / SECURITY / STORAGE
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

PALLET TWO-STALL BATHROOM
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

PALLET ADA + ADMIN BATHROOM
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

PALLET LAUNDRY UNIT
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

400 SQUARE FOOT PALLET FOR DINING
DIMENSIONS: 27' x 15'

PLANTER

SHADED SEATING AREA

DESIGNATED SMOKING AREA

BIKE RACK

RESIDENTIAL - MULTI FAMILY

PUBLIC FACILITY

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

Proposed Emergency Shelter

RESIDENTIAL

OPEN SPACE

RESIDENTIAL

124 E 112th Pl

Scout Park

DRAFT

Scale: 15'-0"

DRAFT SITE PLAN (V.1)
SITE NAME: EMERGENCY SHELTER VILLAGE IN ADAMS COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES CENTER PARKING LOT
SLEEPING ACCOMODATIONS FOR 50 INDIVIDUALS

ADDRESS: 11860 N PECOS ST, WESTMINSTER, CO 80234

POTENTIAL UNIT COUNT WITH 6 FT SPACING:
- 40 SIXTY-FOUR SF SLEEPING CABINS
- 5 ONE-HUNDRED SF SLEEPING CABINS
- 3 ONE-HUNDRED SF UNITS FOR CASE MANAGEMENT/SECURITY OFFICES/STORAGE
- 2 STANDARD 2-STALL BATHROOM
- 1 ACCESSIBLE BATHROOM
- 1 LAUNDRY UNIT
- 1 EIGHT-HUNDRED SF COMMUNITY ROOM

PROJECT KEY

64 SQUARE FOOT PALLET SHELTER FOR SINGLES
DIMENSIONS: 8'6" x 7'6"

100 SQUARE FOOT PALLET SHELTER FOR COUPLES
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

100 SQUARE FOOT PALLET SHELTER FOR CASE MANAGEMENT / SECURITY
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

PALLET TWO-STALL BATHROOOM
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

PALLET ADA + ADMIN BATHROOM
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

PALLET LAUNDRY UNIT
DIMENSIONS: 13'7 1/2" x 7'6"

800 SQUARE FOOT PALLET FOR DINING
DIMENSIONS: 54' x 15'

PLANTER

SHADED SEATING AREA

DESIGNATED SMOKING AREA

BIKE RACK

Approx. Total Village Area:
17,755 sq.ft. / 0.40 acre
60 Repurposed Parking Spaces

Scale: 15'-0"

Number of Temporary Shelter Sites

Due to the urgency and demand for launching temporary shelter programs, the City of Northglenn and Adams County should consider opening more than one site location – whether that be of a similar model (e.g. two or more Pallet villages, for instance), or various models (e.g. a Pallet Shelter village, and a Safe Parking site, or some alternative model).

To demonstrate this, the City of Aurora began with one location, a Safe Outdoor Site (SOS) which opened in July 2021. At the SOS, individuals initially stayed in tents, until the following November when Pallet shelters replaced the tents. Below is brief overview of the impact of the site from its opening through March 2022:

- 101 people sheltered
- 54% of residents obtained employment or employment services
- 11 people moved into permanent housing
- 7 family reunifications
- 72% of residents obtained benefits such as Colorado's Old Age Pension (OAP) program, Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), and Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

- 91% of residents have obtained vital documentation such as an ID, Social Security card, or birth certificate[23]

Because of the success of the first site, local officials expanded to open a second Pallet shelter village in April of 2021 to serve more participants (which the Salvation Army runs). Regional partners should consider a similar strategy, and are encouraged to contact Salvation Army staff to learn more about their successful approach and program methodology.

Service Provision & Program Operations Policies

In this next section, we will overview best practices and approaches in service provision – one of the most critical components in the success and positive outcomes of any homelessness programs, including temporary shelter programs.

Below you can find a toolkit of:

- National best practice homelessness services guidance
- Model service provision structures
- Pallet village operations guidance
- Financial projection examples

Results and recommendations here are sourced from national best practice guidance (SAMHSA, CDC, etc.), local resource availability, and examples from current operating villages. Pallet villages lend themselves well to the model of services provided in transitional shelter settings. Tools included should be tailored to individual community needs.

Best Practice Resources
  ➢ SAMHSA Homelessness Resources: Housing and Shelter
  ➢ SAMHSA Evidence-based Practices Resource Center
  ➢ CDC Tools for Successful Community Health Improvement Navigator
  ➢ CDC A Practitioner's Guide to Advancing Health Equity – Selecting, Designing, and Implementing Strategies
  ➢ Portland State University Evaluation & Best Practices for Village Model
  ➢ University of Kansas | Center for Community Health and Development: The Community Toolbox – Database of Best Practices
  ➢ Canadian Observatory on Homelessness | Homeless Hub*

* Some content in this resource may be irrelevant re: health care. However, it includes a concise overview of service provision demands.

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[23] https://palletshelter.com/blog/breaking-the-cycle-of-homelessness-in-aurora-co/

Model Examples

Village shelters and/or Services structure
  ➢ One stop shop: San Jose and Fresno Pallet villages utilize this structure that provides access to multiple services, partners, and types of shelter at one location.
  ➢ Case Studies

National Best Practices/Care Guidelines

While there are many models of service provision in homelessness programs, Pallet has seen success from providers who specialize in trauma informed practices, peer to peer models, and providers who take steps above and beyond to cultivate trusting relationships with clients and city partners. Below are outlined procedures of best practices within service provision:

1. Trauma-informed care: SAMHSA defines any setting as "trauma-informed" if the people there realize how widespread trauma is, recognize signs and symptoms, respond by integrating knowledge into practice, and resist doing further harm.
   a. Trauma: 6 principles of a trauma-informed approach essential to "bake-in" to staff and case management policy and procedure:

Safety	Prevents violence across the lifespan and creates safe physical environments
Trustworthiness	Fosters positive relationships among residents, City Hall, police, schools, and others
Empowerment	Ensures opportunities for growth are available for all
Collaboration	Promotes involvement of residents and partnership among agencies
Peer Support	Engages residents to work together on issues of common concern
History/Gender/Culture	Values and supports history, culture, and diversity.

2. De-escalation *Linked source is a leader in crisis prevention training
3. Recovery-oriented
4. Motivational interviewing
5. Peer support
6. Client/patient centered care

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Pallet has assessed some leading regional providers who may be available to manage a new temporary shelter program within Adams County. We have met with staff from the Salvation Army who have expressed interest, and we are in contact with Colorado Village Collaborative. Other providers may be available upon consulting. Below are some considerations for review:

Organization Name	Considerations
Colorado Village Collaborative	Org has the capacity to expand into different sites. They are not interested in congregate shelter. However, they are open to other models.
Salvation Army	Org has experience running a Pallet site, and currently manages the Aurora village.
Almost Home	Almost Home does not have experience running an interim shelter site, however, they have expressed interest in models such as the COVID isolation hotels.
Denver Rescue Mission	Capacity may be an issue for this organization.
Catholic Charities	Capacity may be an issue for this organization.
Outside Providers	Pallet Shelter may be able to leverage existing partnerships with providers outside of the region who would be willing to expand into Colorado and manage a site, in the case that the City of Northglenn or Adam's County does not have a preferred provider.

Staffing Configuration Examples

Below are examples of staffing configurations by a ratio of residents to staff. These are intended to be examples based on average shelter staffing in comparable shelters in Denver. Essential positions to maintain a minimum level of shelter operations are marked with an asterisk.

Shelter Staffing 2 shifts	20 clients		30 clients		50 clients		100 clients	
Role	Day	Night	Day	Night	Day	Night	Day	Night

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Role	Day	Night	Day	Night	Day	Night	Day	Night
Program Manager*	1		1		2		2	
Case Manager*	2		2		3		5	
Navigator			1		2		3	
Resident Service Assistant*	1	2	2	2	2	3	4	4
HR/Admin	1		1		1		1	

Shelter Staffing 3 shifts	20 clients			30 clients			50 clients			100 clients		
Role	Day	Mid	Night	Day	Mid	Night	Day	Mid	Night	Day	Mid	Night
Program Manager*	1			1			2			3		
Case Manager*	2			2			3			5		
Navigator				1			2			3		
Resident Service Assistant*	1	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	5	5
HR/Admin	1			1			1			1		

Shelter Position Examples and Essential Skill Areas

Daily Operations	● Shelter Aide, Resident Service Assistant, etc.
Case Management	● Housing Navigator, Benefit Navigator, SOAR Specialist, Case Manager, Employment Navigator
Leadership	● Homelessness/Social Services Programs Director, Shelter Director, Village Program Manager

Skills	● Technical, Problem-solving, Interpersonal
Training	● Daily procedures and staff training should be tailored to best practice guidance.

Safety & Security

Shelter safety should be a team and community priority. Review trauma-informed care resources above for more information about the effects of trauma and retraumatization, specifically for people experiencing homelessness. Developing a crisis response plan prior to village opening is essential for everyone's safety. In the Denver Metro area there are diverse crisis response options that include a response model involving teams of behavioral health practitioners who can respond to a person experiencing a crisis.

Partnerships

- **Legal, medical/wellness (specifically recovery), financial, employment, and education partnerships** lend themselves well to the community design of the village.
  - Ideally there's shared space for partners from each of these social determinants of health factors to visit the village and engage with residents.
- **Crisis response network**
  - Local emergency response and dispatch professionals, shelter and city staff, and behavioral health providers would greatly benefit from being briefed on the crisis response plan laid out for the village.
- **Referral network**
  - If there are resources not provided on site and/or by the service provider, a robust and clearly defined referral network is needed to fill in the service provision, navigation, and case management gaps.

Village Provider Services

Below is a high-level list of activities essential to case management engagement. Each should be provided by well-trained and experienced staff. Peer support has shown success when planned and implemented well.

- **Case management**: A client-centered focus on determining clients' needs for housing assistance, helping them find and get housing, and securing other resources needed to sustain housing stability and recovery.
  - Employment connection and educational opportunities
  - Benefit navigation (e.g., health insurance, childcare services, medical treatment, psychological services, food, clothing, etc.)

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- ○ Housing Navigation
- ○ [Transition and Discharge Planning](#)
- ○ [SOAR Advocacy](#)
- **Hygiene**
- **Transportation**

Data and Evaluation

To promote and ensure programmatic success, it is critical that temporary shelter programs track data and evaluate their success on some key metrics.

Programs should track program exits, including exits into permanent housing, or other types of successful exits, such as family reunification or others.

Project Financing (estimated costs)

Any temporary shelter program will require startup and ongoing funding to cover costs. Costs may vary depending on the emergency shelter model employed (e.g. a Pallet village site versus a Safe RV site or Safe Sleeping/tent program) and there are various trade offs between models related to the overall costing and long-term sustainability of programs.

There are two primary categories of costs to consider:

1. **Site Preparation Costs** – this includes the cost of construction, acquiring shelters, setting up utilities such as electricity and plumbing and other start up costs.
2. **Operating Costs** – this includes staffing/service provision, and other ongoing costs.

Both categories of costs can vary widely between programs and municipalities.

**For a Pallet Shelter site, please note that our team is available to support with identifying potential funds to access at the federal, state, or local levels, or to support with other funding issues for programs.

To view an example of site preparation budgets for a Pallet Shelter village (for the three potential locations outlined in the previous section), please see the appendix.

Regarding ongoing costing, please see the below example budget from the Pallet Shelter Aurora, CO village, operated by the Salvation Army:

Example Village Budget

Village Size: 30 units

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Number/make-up of staff:
- (.25 FTE) Program Director
- (.25 FTE) HR
- (1 FTE) Program Manager
- (2 FTE) Case Managers
- (9 FTE) Resident Assistants

Operations summary: Three meals provided per day, portable toilets, and showers, 24/7 staffing – 3 shifts/day, hygiene and basic supplies provided to residents.

Activity Expenditures	Amount
Direct/Rental Assistance	15,000
Operations	96,000
Supplies	24,000
Food	184,000
All Staffing	618,000
Indirect (15%)	184,000
Benefits	288,000
Total	1,409,000

Potential Funding Revenues

There are many potential funding streams which cities and counties can access to develop temporary shelter programs. The grants resources below represent potential sources of federal funding for state, county, city, federally recognized tribal governments, and/or service providers.

These grants include homelessness services and prevention, mental health, workforce development, health care, homelessness prevention, substance misuse or others. While not all Federal homelessness grants may be specific to purchasing Pallet Shelters or operating programs, many Federal grants may support other vital services, interventions, and prevention needs related to homelessness in at-large.

Federal Agency and Department Grant Information

Available grants are published throughout the year on each agency's website and on Grants.gov through Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs). *NOFOs are published throughout the year by the federal agencies and departments. Each opportunity describes the type of funding available, eligibility, and application and spending deadlines. All NOFOs can be located on agency pages or on Grants.gov.* For more information, including a step-by-step infographic of the grant cycle, click here.

- Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and through Grants.gov
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and through Grants.gov
- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and through Grants.gov
- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and through Grants.gov
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and through Grants.gov

Many of the federal agencies listed above have regional offices with staff that can provide consultation and grant support for municipalities. For instance, HUD's regional centers are available here, and from FEMA, you can find their regional map here. We highly encourage municipalities to take advantage of these resources in determining their eligibility, and applying for federal grants.

Abbreviated List of Grant Resources

Below are some helpful resources and highly utilized grant opportunities for homelessness programs that the Pallet team has comprised:

- United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) Toolkits
- USICH Proposed Federal Budget for Homelessness 2023

Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
    - CPD COVID-19
- Community Development Block Grant Disaster Funding (CDBG-Disaster)
- HOME-American Rescue Plan Program (HOME-ARP)
    - HOME-ARP Guide to non-congregate shelter
- Recovery Housing Program (RHP)
- Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH) program

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Emergency Food and Shelter Program (ESFP)-Homeless
- Emergency Food and Shelter Program (ESFP)-Disaster Response

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In addition to the above grant funding, the federal government has made available once in a generation funding, programmatic flexibilities, and rule waivers to support homelessness prevention and intervention and emergency and non-congregate shelter to address impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding for programs came from several sources, including the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) which provides billions of dollars for ARPA Housing and Homelessness Funding, the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF), and FEMA's Emergency Food and Shelter Program.

State and Local Grant Resources

Many states, counties, and cities also offer grant opportunities for homelessness you may want to consider. For a tailored in-depth analysis of these options, or support walking through the process, please contact the Pallet team and we are happy to provide consultation.

For instance, the Housing and Community Development (HCD) Department of the State of California provides this comprehensive funding guide for Strategic Uses of New and Recent State and Federal Funds to Prevent and End Homelessness that includes resources such as the state's Homekey Program, Project Roomkey Program and the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Grant Program. Many municipalities allocate General Fund dollars or create new, ongoing funding streams to support homelessness services, such as the City of Denver's Homelessness Resolution Fund (HRF).

Other Types of Funding Support

Beyond national, state or local grants, there are several other ways municipalities and service providers seek to support programming, infrastructure or operations at Pallet village sites. Some alternative options include:

- Reimbursement: grants from state or federal programs to fund emergency shelter for people experiencing homelessness
- Faith-Based Organizations: some faith- based groups may provide funding, sites for shelter communities, and/or services
- Philanthropy Partner: family/group foundations or business partners may provide funding
- Crowdsourcing, In-Kind or Community Donations: communities come together to donate supplies, plan beautification projects, or do grassroots fundraising to support Pallet villages.

Other Considerations

Government Partnerships and Community Engagement

The State of Colorado is setting priorities to address homelessness through the Office of Homelessness Initiatives (OHI). OHI recently released their [State Homelessness Playbook](#), which outlines the proven strategies they support in addressing homelessness.

According to some local leaders the State supports and is interested in funding the development of a homelessness campus coordinated by multiple counties. We encourage leaders to explore these conversations for funding and collaboration through their CoC's or county partners.

Many municipalities also establish partnerships with the faith community to develop homelessness programs or temporary shelter sites. There have been conversations between Adams County and Crossroads Community Center about opening a Pallet shelter site, which the church has funding to support. Land use and zoning use changes would need to be addressed with community meetings, however, this option is another avenue the City of Northglenn and Adams County can explore for new interim shelter programs.

Land Use Policies, Zoning and Regulations

The City of Northglenn is currently in the process of developing and launching its new Comprehensive Plan and Process, which interested parties can learn more about here: https://northglenn.mysocialpinpoint.com/compplanupdate. Of note, the proposed plan includes new goals to combat homelessness: "Goal 4: Strive to meet the needs of those currently unhoused and prevent future homelessness.

- Understand the feasibility of various housing approaches and programs that could be utilized to provide housing or transitional options for those experiencing homelessness.
- Provide educational and programmatic resources to those at-risk for experiencing homelessness.
- Prioritize regional partnerships with surrounding jurisdictions, private entities, and non-profit groups to address the needs of the unhoused and issues of homelessness.
- Provide temporary housing at a ratio of one bed per 1,000 residents."[24]

While the City of Northglenn is not currently zoned for Pallet Shelter structures, the new Comprehensive Plan will be an opportunity to update the city's land use regulations, and beyond this, Adams County's unincorporated areas are currently zoned for emergency shelters.

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[24]

https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/mysocialpinpoint/uploads/redactor_assets/documents/b48de6aa7d7d0eabe1fb0ee5b9644f02e07ca5095216cf73a96463d2bf555239/68819/Draft_G_P.pdf

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Adams County Building and Zoning Codes

The Adams County Zoning Code was amended last year, in November 2021. The code does not address a) zoning for homeless shelters, emergency shelters, or non-congregate shelter, or b) boarding/rooming houses, sheltered care homes, group homes for the developmentally disabled, group homes for the elderly, group living facilities for one to five persons, group living facilities more than five persons, and group living facilities with more than one registered sex offender are permitted in certain residential zones by right or with a conditional use permit.[25]

Although listed under Institutional Uses under Use Definitions, tiny homes are not listed in the Use Chart and are not discussed in the document.

Temporary Uses and Structures

According to the City of Northglenn's United Development Ordinance of 2019[26], to allow for certain uses and structures of a limited duration projects can obtain a Temporary Use Permit (TUP), subject to specified conditions. The TUP allows for some temporary uses when projects comply with other design, safety, and building standards. The temporary uses or structures should not negatively impact surrounding properties and are discontinued upon the expiration of a set time-period.

Although not enumerated in the list of proposed temporary uses, the UDO has a procedure for proposing and applying for a TUP for those non-enumerated uses. Many cities and counties apply for temporary use permits for their temporary homelessness programs, which is one avenue the City of Northglenn could explore for a potential emergency shelter program.

Comparing Alternative Temporary Shelter Models

There is no silver bullet to solving homelessness. Communities across the country have found success with different emergency shelter models, or a combination of various program models.

Purchasing hotels, Single Room Occupancies (SROs) or other suitable existing buildings has been a common approach many municipalities have taken advantage of during the COVID-19 pandemic, and particularly as new federal and state funds have been made available.

Safe Parking Programs – which allow people living in vehicles to safely reside in a designated area – are another common solution that cities have undertaken in recent years, especially in

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[25] https://www.adcogov.org/sites/default/files/dsr-chapter-03.pdf

[26] https://files4.1.revize.com/northglennco/Departments/Planning%20&%20Development/Planning/UDO/Unified%20Development%20Ordinance.pdf

areas where there are a high number or concentration of unsheltered people and families living in RVs or other vehicles.

To compare the trade-offs and strengths of these alternative models, we will explore Safe Parking and Hotel programs to the Pallet Shelter model of private, rapid response shelters in a community village setting.

We do not recommend, and as such, we will not explore the use of congregate shelter or safe camping programs (sanctioned tent encampments) as a viable alternative for various reasons. These options are generally considered to be less dignified, as they do not provide the level of privacy, robust amenities, or promote the same positive outcomes as the other models mentioned. Many PEH cite common reasons for opting out of congregate shelters in particular, such as the inability to bring pets, positions or partners with them. In recent years, many experts have championed efforts to move away from congregate shelters which often exacerbate trauma for PEH, and can be unsafe by both public health and public safety standards.[27]

Hotel Programs as Emergency Shelter and Permanent Housing

The National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) is a national leader on homelessness issues. In July, 2021, the NAEH published a series of Hotels to Housing Case Studies[28] which overview four localities across the United States that successfully acquired hotels and motels to convert them into permanent housing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

By acquiring underutilized hotels and motels when many of these businesses were struggling during the pandemic, cities, counties and states have been able to support PEH bringing people off of the streets and into safer shelter and housing. As an important distinction, in many of the case studies offered by NAEH, many of these programs are intended not only as transitional housing, but also hotels and motels have been converted into "permanent supportive housing, or other forms of permanent affordable housing."

For instance, in Oregon, "Project Turnkey is a state-level program that will provide $71.7 million in grants for the acquisition of motels and hotels in Oregon for use as non-congregate shelter during the pandemic, and as cost-effective units to help build the State's long term affordable housing stock."[29] Due to the heavy investment to renovate and refurbish these buildings for long-term purposes, the cost of programs can range much higher than less permanent temporary village models, such as Pallet's.

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https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/ending-homelessness-addressing-local-challenges-in-housing-the-most-vulnerable

28 https://endhomelessness.org/resource/hotels-to-housing-case-studies/

29 https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/OR-H2H-Case-Study_7-19-21.pdf

One critical point to consider is the availability of underutilized motels and hotels in your region, and whether or not the owners are open to selling or negotiating purchase costs. Without adequate buildings and willing sellers, these types of programs are not viable. At the same time, the availability of hotels or motels for purchase have changed significantly in recent years, as the impacts of the pandemic lessen and economic factors shift.

To further explore this option, we encourage city and county leaders to work with their Real Estate Departments to identify potential buildings and plans. Pallet Shelter's Advisory Services team is available to further consult on this option as needed.

Safe Parking Programs

In their previous reports, the Northglenn Homelessness Community Task Force (HCTF) recommended that the City of Northglenn speak with other municipalities that have successfully implemented safe parking lots, such as churches in Broomfield and Longmont. More information about these programs can be found at www.colosafeparking.org. HCTF further recommended that several sites be utilized for Safe Parking and/or a Pallet Shelter Village, such as Good Shepherd Church (who was interested in this model) or others.

Safe Parking Programs are typically defined as legal parking locations for people sheltering in their vehicles where they can park without the risk of citation. In April, 2021 the University of Southern California (USC), Sol Price School of Public Policy drafted the report "Smart Practices for Safe Parking: A nationwide review of safe parking programs for people sheltering in vehicles"[30] which does a comprehensive analysis of safe parking programs across the west coast and beyond. For an abbreviated list of findings from their research, visit this webpage.

The recommendations for successful Safe Parking programs outlined in the report include themes such as: 1) intentional program design, 2) strategic location, and 3) focused social services among others, and their findings "support the concept of safe parking as a stabilizing force [and] a helpful resource for homeless services networks."[31]

While Safe Parking lots have been growing in popularity, these programs are typically tailored to PEH who own their own vehicles or who are already sheltering within an RV or vehicle. Similar to Pallet's model, Safe Parking would require similar operational components around service provision, security, access to food and others. According to the director of the Homelessness Policy Research Institute and professor at USC Gary Dean Painter, "Safe parking programs are often a natural response to high rates of people living in their vehicles. This is the key potential these programs have…It's really an opportunity to have that first intervention for a large set of

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[30]

https://priceschool.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Smart-Practices-for-Safe-Parking-USC-2021.pdf
[31]

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e40681539b77957555f10e0/t/609ef366f1f5035bc056db19/16210 29735677/Safe+Parking+Briefer+Final.pdf

folks that likely won't need a lot of services, but just a reconnection to job placement or something else that might be able to resolve [their lack of income] and move them back into permanent housing."[32]

The Homelessness Policy Research Institute published a briefing with information about various program sizes and budgets, which greatly range nationally. It states, (emphasis added):

> "The New Beginnings Program in Santa Barbara, CA operates 24 lots with 133 total spaces, with the largest lot containing 15 spaces. In contrast, Dreams for Change in San Diego, CA operates just two lots with roughly 40 parking spaces each. The Road to Housing in Seattle, WA offers a 15 spot RV-only lot in addition to other smaller lots for cars and vans. **Safe parking programs draw funding from a number of different sources including county and city program funds, private and faith-based organization funding, and HUD Homeless Prevention funds**. **Program budgets range from $55,000 to $360,000 per year.** The San Diego program with a budget of $55,000 relies heavily on volunteer support for case management, outreach and services in partnership with Jewish Family Services, a local nonprofit in the area. Seattle operates the program with the largest budget of $360,000 which covers costs for remaining open 24 hours a day. All other programs operate exclusively overnight. Every program partners with at least one non-profit organization (typically faith based) to provide some combination of funding, parking lot space, outreach, services and case management."[33]

As an important note, if your region is not currently experiencing a high level of people sheltering in their vehicles, this may not be the best program choice or solution for your area.

There can also be challenges when older or damaged vehicles break down, require repairs, or become non operational. Relocation, towing, or the cost to repair vehicles can be a burden for program staff, and is something to consider and budget for – especially if the program does not allow for overnight stays.

Conclusion

While there are many options for temporary shelter programs, each comes with their own benefits and drawbacks. Decision makers should consider several factors, including financing/costing, feasibility, long-term sustainability, service provision and partnerships, and fit (based on data on PEH) when deciding on what program model(s) are more advantageous to pursue. While no option is perfect, providing a robust array of different program models is the best way to address all forms of homelessness, allowing PEH to opt into the programs that will best work for their unique circumstances.

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[32] https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/10/11/20897485/california-homeless-safe-parking-lots-cars-rvs
[33] https://socialinnovation.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Safe-Parking-Literature-Review.pdf