



Continuing the Conversation on Homelessness

**SAFE OUTDOOR SPACE
COMMUNITY FORUM**

Session Speakers



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Agenda

- Welcome
- Thank you to leaders
- Review of last meeting
- Overview of homelessness and driving factors
- Quick overview of different types of solutions
- What's working across the nation while we build housing?
- Managed Communities for the Unhoused: Overview
- Research, results
- Common misconceptions and neighbor concerns
- Open Q and A



Participant Expectations

- Treat everyone with respect, even if you have a difference of opinion.
- Be curious
- No interrupting, name calling, bad language, or disrespectful rhetoric.
- Be open to others experiences and thoughts
- Any behavior that is not respectful or beneficial in moving the conversation forward may result in your removal from the meeting.



Overview of last Community Meeting

- Introduction to S3 Santa Fe Housing Initiative (Safe, Stable, and Supportive)
- Discussion on the need for collaboration
- High level discussion on solutions
- August 2022, the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness recorded 363 individuals, 49 families, and 18 homeless youth. (This is not a count of all unhoused)
 - Need better data and surveying
- Santa Fe has inadequate affordable housing units and supportive services
- Breakout groups
 - Community frustrated with growth of population
 - Concerns ranging from needles to having unhoused neighbors without water and basic human needs
 - Interest in solutions- including a managed community
 - Desire for more information, discussion, and education

Situational homelessness

Common causes include job loss, a healthcare emergency (which may lead to job loss or overwhelming medical bills), divorce, domestic abuse, fire, and natural disasters.

These individuals are referred to as "situationally" or "temporarily" homeless which generally means that they have lived in stable housing without supports in the past and can do so again once a specific situation in their life is addressed.



Episodic homelessness



Episodically homeless refers to individuals, often with disabling conditions, who are currently homeless and have experienced three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year.

Among individuals in this group, jobs are less stable, housing costs consume a higher percentage of the household budget, and they have little or no financial buffers against emergencies.

Chronic homelessness

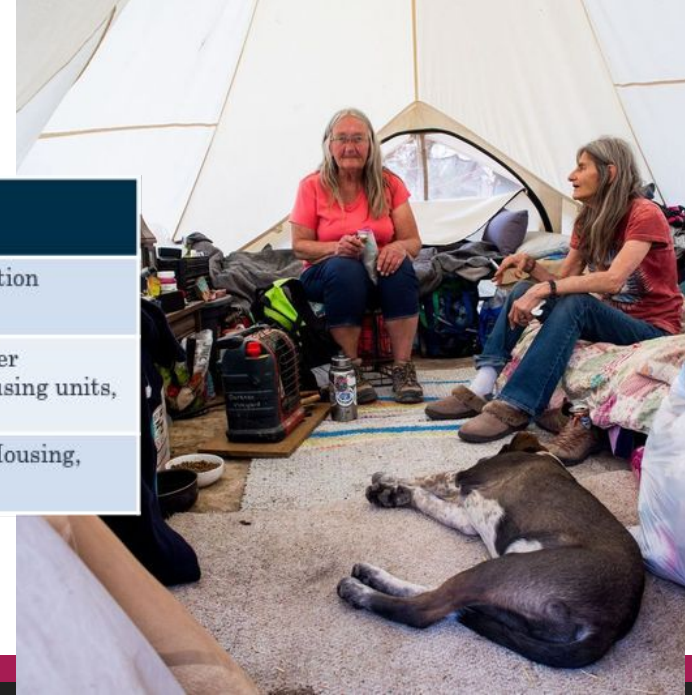


An individual experiencing chronic homelessness is someone who has experienced homelessness for a year or longer, or who has experienced at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years (must be a cumulative of 12 months), and has a disability.

Psychiatric diagnosis, substance use disorders, and medical co-morbidities are more prevalent within chronically homeless populations.

Homeless categories and types of interventions

Homeless Category	Level of Need	Interventions
Situational	Low-med	Rapid rehousing, prevention assistance
Episodic	Low-Med	Rapid Rehousing, Voucher programs, affordable housing units, some services
Chronic	High	Permanent Supportive Housing,



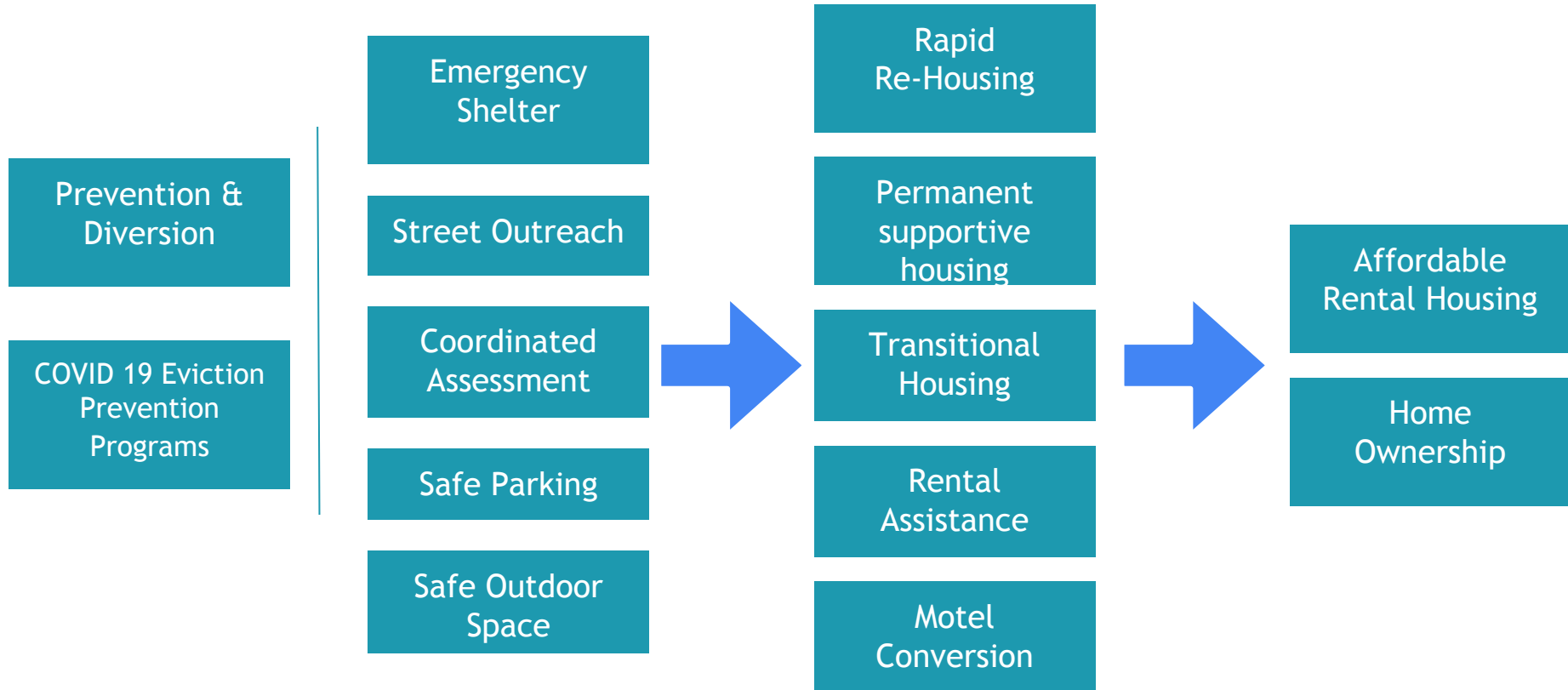


Managing
Homelessness



Ending Homelessness:
rare, brief, and
non-recurring

Creating a broad continuum of housing that meets the diverse needs of the community is critical to ensuring everyone has a safe place to call home.



Best practices

- Prevention
- Diversion
- Non-congregate shelter
- Housing
 - Attainable/Affordable Housing
 - Permanent Supportive Housing
 - Senior Housing
- Supportive Services
- Collaboration and coordination



PREVENTION

Prevention strategies keep at-risk people from becoming homeless.

Diversion as a form of prevention helps those about to enter emergency shelter identify better options.

Includes: Rental subsidies, emergency cash assistance for rent and utilities, help with locating housing and negotiating with landlords, short-term case management, and connections to mainstream social services.

Critical legal and rental assistance programs are available as a result of COVID-19



Diversion

Core components

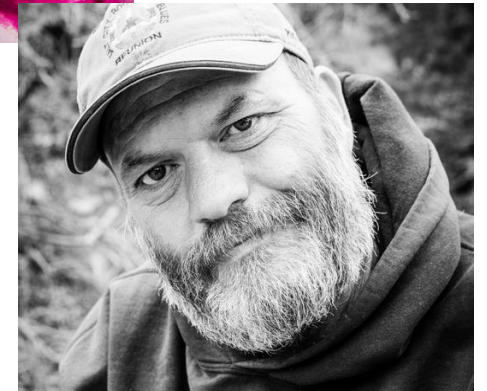
- Prevention from entering emergency/homeless response system
- Rent assistance
- Case management and service connection
- Housing identification

This model is supported by:

- National Alliance to End Homelessness
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)

Diversion: Keys to success

- Individualized and flexible assistance
- Progressive engagement
- The ability to make program modifications when needed
- Trauma-informed design
- Designed by homelessness services experts



Housing & Shelter



Impact of housing costs



- Housing challenges in Santa Fe Are Measured by:
- Median house price: \$527,000 (condos/triplex), \$590,000 single family
- Those paying too much for housing -one-third or over 20,000 households are paying too much for housing currently.
- Specifically Santa Fe County Needs:
 - 17,216 below market housing opportunities and specifically:
 - 6,232 additional rental units (for incomes 30k-58k)
 - 2,290 subsidized senior housing units
 - A need for several hundred housing opportunities for persons experiencing homelessness

PERMANENT HOUSING

- Rapid Rehousing (hybrid)
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Housing Voucher Programs
 - (Section 8, VASH, 811, FUP)
- Motel conversions for permanent housing

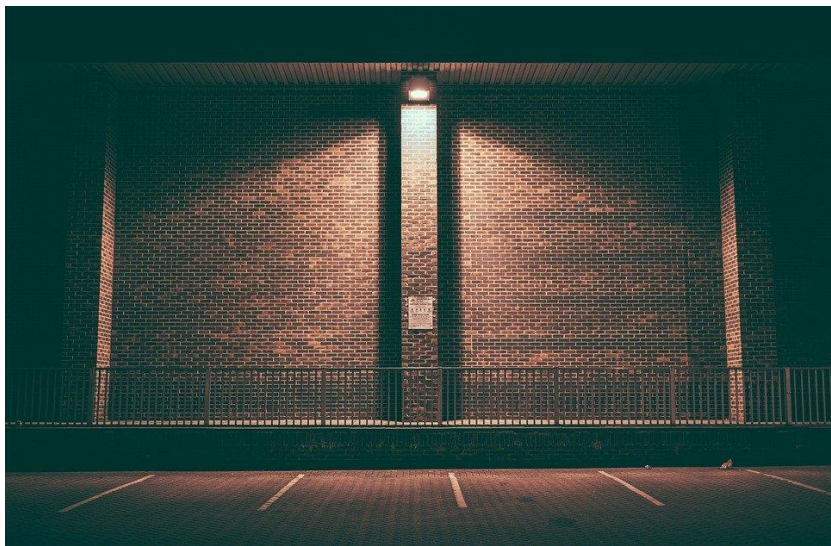


Housing and Shelter: Short-Term Options

- Homeless shelters - both low and high barrier, congregate and non congregate
- Motel vouchers
- Managed camping programs/SOS
- Tiny home villages
- Legal car camping



SAFE PARKING



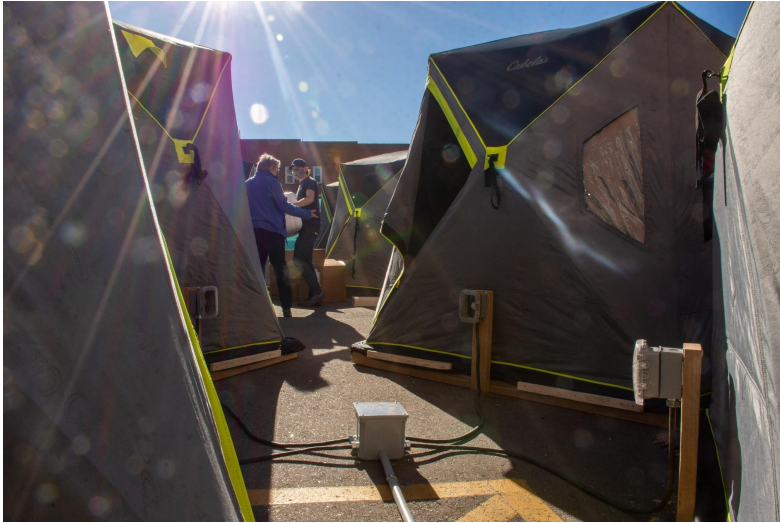
- These models are rising in popularity, unfortunately due to the significant increase in economic fallout for households as a result of the pandemic.
- They are similar to the SOS model but allow for cars/RVs to be parked in a designated area.
- Security and access to restrooms are key and costs are less than a traditional shelter stay typically.

Short-Term Housing Example: Camp Hope in Las Cruces

- **Camp Hope** is a tent city for the homeless located on the Community of Hope campus which provides a safe place for homeless residents to stay while they transition to housing. Campground amenities include full-service bathroom, kitchen and 3-sided structures on 50 tent pad sites.
- One FTE case manager and resident camp managers
- Camp rules keep it safe and clean
- Campers are more ready to transition into housing when it becomes available
- For more information, follow these links:
- <http://www.mvcommunityofhope.org/what-we-do/programs/>



SAFE OUTDOOR SPACES



Safe Outdoor Space

- Housing first, resource rich model
- Built on input from those with lived experience
- Trauma informed
- Individualized shelters
- Electricity
- 24-hour staffing, with at least two staff members or trained volunteers on site at all times
- Bathrooms and hand-washing stations
- Laundry
- Meals
- Security through a locked fence with coded entry
- Connection to services, including case managers and services coming to site and staff members providing referrals to residents



Air Conditioning

Fire Extinguisher

Folding Bed



Shelving

Power Outlets

Heater

Underbed Storage



Discussion on the First Safe Space in Denver



2746 W 13th Avenue
Denver, CO 80204



EarthLinks cultivates transformation and self-worth with people experiencing homelessness and poverty. By creating opportunities through Earth-centered programs, individuals step out of isolation and into community—restoring each other and the planet.

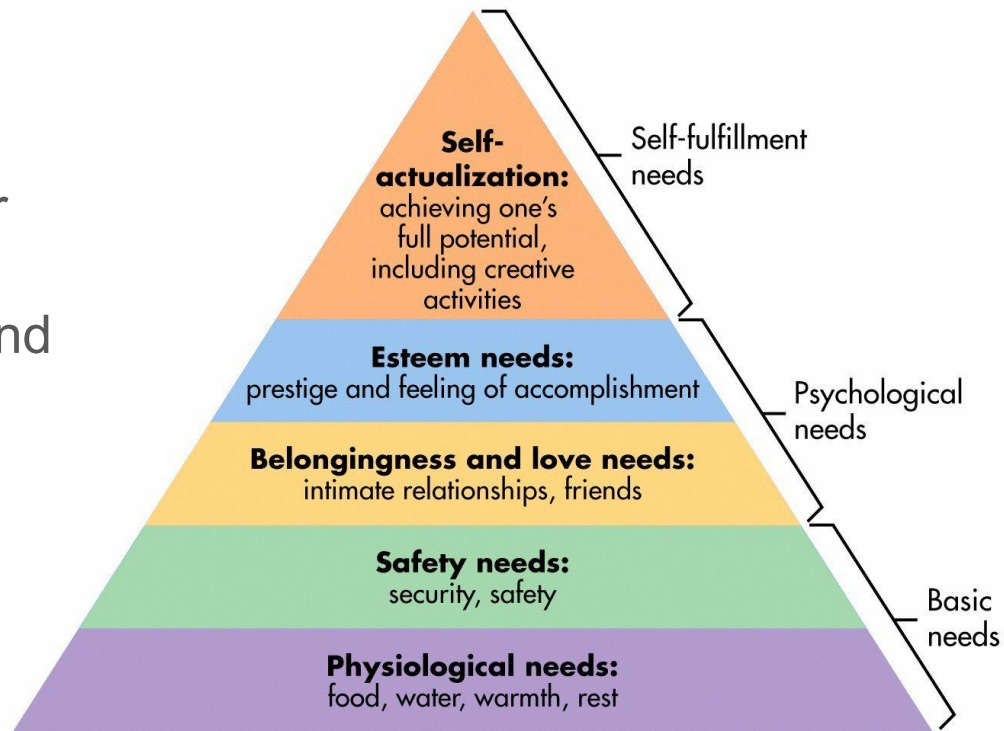


EarthLinks works to form connections among people and with Earth for their mutual benefit.



Meeting Basic Human Needs

- Residents emphasized importance of having shelter and storage
- Consistent access to food and hydration
- Greater sense of physical safety



Meeting People Where They Are

- The trauma-informed approach the SOS sites were modeled on allowed residents the space to be where they were in their journey with homelessness and trauma
- Residents described how the SOS site allowed them to work on their own time frame without judgement.
- Residents appreciated that the SOS would allow them to just be and heal.
- Residents appreciated trained staff who respected individual trauma, and the physical results it can produce.

Stability is Key

- Not having to constantly move due to sweeps or a general need to change locations
- Having a regular place to come back to that they knew was there and knew their belongings would still be there
- Providing a stable place to store belongings so that residents could leave and not have to take everything with them
- Being able to save money
- Autonomy and ownership over their space
- Stability was linked to safety
- Outreach workers could continually find and assist individuals

Cost-effective

Managed Communities can be built at a fraction of the cost of traditional homeless shelters and are proven to help people transition into permanent housing.



*This is a pallet village

Benefits for Site Residents

- Safe place for residents
- Dignity of private space
- Stabilization
- Reduction of stress and anxiety
- Stepping stones to stability
 - Focus on individualized next steps

“There were a lot of people that once they were able to get a good night’s sleep, they’re off [the streets] for a few days, they were open and willing to go into drug and alcohol treatment, to work with a case worker. They felt safe, in a safe enough space to clear their mind a little bit. And they definitely moved forward with their process of trying to transition off the streets.”

SOS Site Manager

Community Impact

- Community pushed back when the SOS site was announced.
- Common Concerns
 - Safety
 - Increased crime/drugs
 - Increased trash
 - “If you build it, more will come.”

“Wow, I didn’t know what this was going to be. This is so much better than it was before.”

Pearl Street Site Neighbor

“[The SOS site] has changed people’s minds about our community. We have had people come by and say, ‘You’re doing great work, keep it up. This is so much cleaner than we thought it would be. You’ve changed my opinion on what this can look like.’”

Site Staff

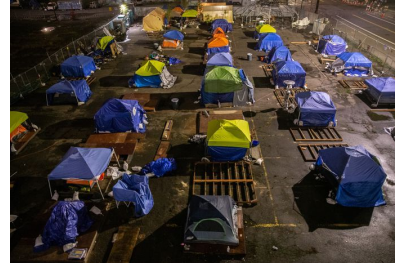
Common Questions

Who is doing this outside of Denver?

It is occurring across the nation- resources, staffing, and individualized units vary by community.

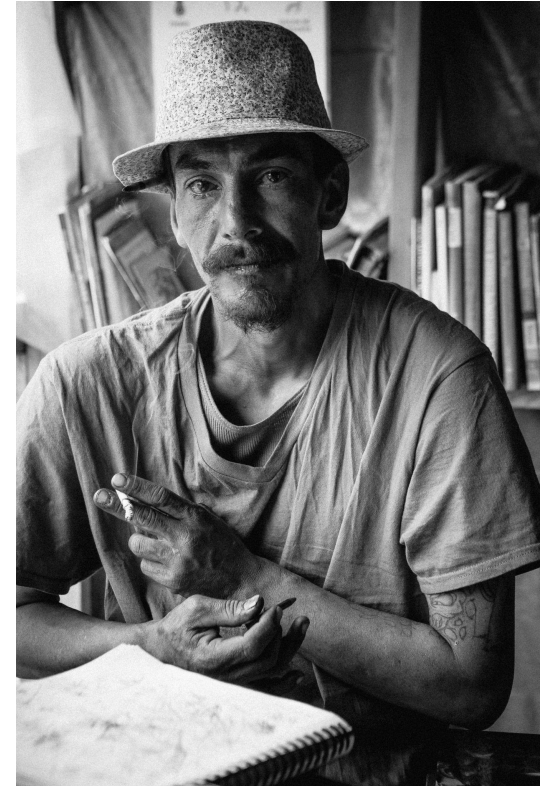
Bend, OR
Aurora, CO
Aspen, CO
Salem, OR

Placerville, CA
Hillsboro, OR
Moses Lake, WA



Is this low-barrier, and how does this work in the continuum without an emergency shelter option?

- Emergency sheltering options are in place to offer temporary stays.
- A managed camp focuses on a housing first, resource rich model, with the goal of permanent sustainability.
- This is a low barrier model, and many who would utilize an emergency shelter would also utilize this program.
- This program also reaches individuals who are unlikely to utilize an indoor, emergency sheltering option.
- It is also more cost effective to offer a service rich environment to assist in finding long-term stability.



What is the best practice model for staffing?

24-hour staffing is the best model. This provides security and streamlines connection for housed and unhoused neighbors alike

How many residents can reside in a managed camp?

Best practice is to not go over 50 residents.



Denverites worried crime would accompany safe outdoor spaces. Data shows the opposite happened.

Data Analysis: Colorado Sun

“An 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.”

“While crime in Denver overall rose over 14.3%, crime around the Safe Space neighborhoods **decreased by 2.8%**”

“The number of drug and alcohol citations dropped in five of six neighborhoods while SOS sites operated there.”

Good Neighbor Agreement

- **Good Neighbor Agreements (GNA):** GNAs were co-created with the surrounding community. These were not binding contracts, but a list of expectations for those who were housed and those providing the program. These included expectations such as trash walks, ensuring people maintained a clean environment, quiet hours, and 24-hour staffing.
- **Good Neighbor Meetings:** After the sites opened, the sites hosted monthly Good Neighbor Meetings to provide updates from the sites and hear housed neighbor's experiences, concerns, and feedback.

Question, Comments, Discussions

- Treat everyone with respect, even if you have a difference of opinion.
- Be curious
- No interrupting, name calling, bad language, or disrespectful rhetoric.
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