

Three-Year Shelter Expansion Plan

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE
ENHANCEMENT AND EXPANSION OF THE HOMELESS
EMERGENCY SHELTERING SYSTEM IN THE COUNTY AND
CITY OF DENVER

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CONTENTS

Overview	3
Redefining Shelter in the Context of a Rehousing System	4
Recommended Strategies	5
<i>System-Wide Infrastructure and Operating Practices</i>	5
1.1 Clearly define vision, collective impact outcomes, and system design.....	6
1.2 Organize bold, unified leadership	6
1.3 Accelerate implementation and mandate wide-spread use of the new HMIS system	6
1.4 Retool coordinated entry to provide front door triage and transparency.	7
1.5 Mandate use of coordinated entry as the sole referral source for all homeless rehousing options and unit preferences.....	7
1.6 Supplement existing supportive housing services to serve the most complex and vulnerable individuals and ensure future units are appropriately serviced.....	8
1.7 Rapidly expand homeless rehousing options under the city's five-year housing strategy "Housing an Inclusive Denver" and the Affordable Housing Fund.....	8
1.8 Use preferences to further amplify the impact of the housing plan and bond initiative to prevent and divert families at-risk of homelessness.	8
<i>SINGLE ADULT SHELTER SYSTEM</i>	9
2.1 Convert current shelters to function as tailored, temporary residential environments for specific subpopulations.	9
2.2 Redesign case management and other services within shelter to focus on triage and diversion and income and rehousing activities.....	10
2.3 Redesign current daily shelter transportation services to support connection of residential shelter environments with critical housing navigation and health services and social connections.....	10
2.4 Add an additional 200-350 beds of permanent pay-by-night SRO, boarding home, and bunks for working individuals.	10
2.5 For emergency overflow due to a variety of extreme conditions, a separate plan should be created within the city's emergency preparedness master plan and not rely on existing shelter environments.	11
<i>FAMILY SHELTER SYSTEM</i>	11
3.1 Eliminate arbitrary limits on lengths of stay.....	11
3.2 Implement robust diversion practices that support keeping families out of shelters and motels.	11
3.3 Replace motel vouchers with a set of master-leased apartments.	11

3.4 Invest in Rapid Rehousing and other shallow subsidies and stabilization services.	12
3.5 Connect with mainstream systems (e.g. TANF, Medicaid, Child Welfare) to create enhanced stabilization services for at-risk families.	12
<i>UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS AGES 16-24</i>	12
4.1 Prioritize youth and young adults for rehousing services within the current system.	12
4.2 Create roving specialized service teams to offer a developmentally appropriate service overlay for youth and young adults served in adult rehousing interventions.	13
Recommended Next Steps	13
Exhibit 1 - Comparing Homeless Shelter Demand to Homeless Shelter Capacity: Methodology & Data Inputs	14
EXHIBIT 2 – SHELTER DEMAND ANALYSIS FOR HOMELESS SINGLE ADULTS	18
Exhibit 3 – Reconfiguration and Expansion Options for Single Adult Sheltering	28
Exhibit 4 – Shelter Demand and Configuration Options for Homeless Families	30

Mandy Chapman Semple was engaged by the City and County of Denver's Department of Human Services to conduct an analysis of the homeless shelter system and provide options and recommendations for a three-year shelter plan. During this process, Mandy conducted multiple site visits of day and night sheltering environments; interviewed service providers and consumers within the sheltering system; hosted three shelter provider work sessions; observed staging and transportation operations; analyzed a wide array of data including the 2017 point-in-time count for Denver County, CoC Housing Inventory Chart, outreach encounters, daily shelter and service counts, service provider reported outcome data, and previous CoC data analysis performed by Focus Strategies and CSH; and examined system-wide governance, infrastructure, operations, and implementation practices. The resulting recommendations represent a synthesis of data-driven indicators, informed assumptions based on national trends and local experiences, and systems thinking theory proven to produce dramatic collective impact results for large-scale social challenges. The accompanying exhibits are offered as a basis for these conclusions.

OVERVIEW

The homeless shelter system is not a stand-alone system but rather an integral component of a larger rehousing strategy aimed at ending homelessness. Shelters and temporary housing environments themselves will not end homelessness and history has demonstrated as much. In the wake of a national affordable housing crisis, communities across the country are struggling to find the balance between providing immediate and safe sheltering options and scaled, intentional rehousing choices. The conditions Denver faces are no different but recent investments to expand the number of shelter beds has positioned the city to now look more comprehensively at its design, configuration, and quality of homelessness response and rehousing services to ensure maximum efficiency and better outcomes rather than strictly at the number of available beds. Quantitative and qualitative data analysis (Exhibits 1 - 4) further supports this emphasis indicating that while there is continued demand for emergency shelter beds, the current configuration of the existing beds is not sufficient to serve all subpopulations and thus shelter expansion in its current form will have little impact in Denver and likely only exacerbate current challenges for those needing shelter.

Throughout this analysis, the design and configuration of the current shelter system for individuals was revealed as a major impediment. Hundreds of individuals can spend up to 8 hours per day waiting in staging areas and riding buses simply to access a shower, meals, and overnight accommodations. Employed individuals often find these practices in conflict with their working hours and are forced to choose between ongoing employment or sleeping inside. For those within shelters, day labor typically becomes a primary form of income but most day labor departs from downtown before transportation from the outlying shelters returns to the area, relegating individuals to simply exist hopelessly migrating between day centers, streets, staging areas, and overnight shelters to meet their basic needs. Day shelters are offering limited case management and employment referral services and while these services are having a modest impact, the disconnected service delivery model inherently limits success. This disconnect is giving way to a web of street and survival activities that further entrenches individuals and allows for longer than necessary lengths of homelessness; creates a divide and sense of frustration between law enforcement, communities, advocates, and vulnerable people in crisis; and further reiterates the

false narrative that individuals don't want to help themselves. The need for more stable residential accommodations is further reiterated by the large number of seniors, medically frail, mobility impaired, and disabled individuals attempting to navigate this complicated system day in and day out.

Likewise, families experiencing homelessness face their own set of design and configuration challenges within the current sheltering system. Namely, a lack of prevention, diversion and rehousing options are forcing homeless families into a cycle of unnecessary and disruptive shelter and motel stays throughout the region, typically to await a transitional housing unit that, according to the recent regional Focus Strategies report, after months or even years is more likely to result in a return to a doubled up or precarious housing arrangement than in genuine housing stability. Families experiencing homelessness would be better served by helping them remain in housing or immediately return to housing rather than expanding motel or sheltering options.

A collaborative, streamlined, high-quality system offered to anyone seeking shelter, putting them on a tailored pathway to housing stability.

-Shelter System Mission created by shelter providers in January 2018

The analysis also revealed an engaged and compassionate service provider community with a demonstrated commitment to work as a collective to make improvements, many already initiating changes within their purview and seeing success. The referenced design flaws are not born from a lack of recognition or evolution of the service providers but rather from a lack of connection, intentional system design, and an old founding "bootstraps" paradigm that has long since been disproven. As a network of crisis response providers, they are disconnected from each other and the larger rehousing efforts of the homeless response system and thus lack the ability to collectively redesign with a new rehousing paradigm in mind. The work of Denver's Road Home to bring these providers together and define a common mission followed by the community work sessions throughout this analysis has been a powerful first step. The shelter system mission generated represents a shared vision and agreement that shelter services should contribute to a rehousing system and not merely function as an emergency bed. This is a rare starting point for many communities and offers Denver a tremendous advantage to consider a rapid transformation of its shelter and rehousing system over the next three years. To do so, will require visionary political leadership, prioritization of city resources for redesign and rehousing activities, and robust implementation support, as well as highly coordinated efforts with the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) to simultaneously accelerate system infrastructure and operational improvements.

REDEFINING SHELTER IN THE CONTEXT OF A REHOUSING SYSTEM

The City's commitment to the creation of thousands of units of affordable housing over the next five years with special emphasis on permanent supportive housing for the chronically homeless

and deeply subsidized units for the lowest income households necessitates a homeless response system that is designed and primed to readily identify and seamlessly connect those lingering in homelessness with these vital rehousing options. Conversely, the system should also identify and be designed for those who can effectively utilize the shelter system as a springboard to return to appropriate permanent housing options without further rehousing assistance. This will ensure every new housing option is maximized to reduce homelessness. Today's shelter and homelessness response system is not designed to achieve either of these tasks. As a result, individuals are shuttled nightly from one environment to the next to meet basic needs without focus on income, rehousing, or a clear understanding of how an individual can escape this nightly cycle. System design theory suggests that every system is perfectly designed to achieve the exact results it gets. Considering the results (over half of the homeless population is and has remained homeless for a year or more according the 2017 Point-In-Time Count) Denver must rethink its interconnections between shelter and rehousing activities in order to achieve different results.

An ideal homelessness response system design would avoid the need for shelter altogether and readily make housing available to anyone in need. While that dream design is unrealistic in the near future, it does lead us directionally to redefine shelter as a temporary residential environment tailored to support the rehousing path of its users. This also suggests that different users have different paths and as a system, we can triage and route individuals to tailored shelters and services according to their needs with a consistent emphasis on rehousing activities (including income) rather than sheltering. Sheltering becomes a means to a rehousing end and not the end itself. This is a fundamental paradigm shift that creates a shared mission and responsibility for both the providers and clients to achieve rehousing not just provide a shelter bed. As this paradigm shift takes root, the behaviors of providers and clients will shift in tandem. Coupled with a shared database to identify pathways, prioritize and connect rehousing interventions, and track progress and outcomes of individuals across the entire homelessness response system *and* a massive infusion of new rehousing options from the implementation of the City's five-year housing plan and Affordable Housing Fund, this system is now designed to dramatically reduce homelessness and effectively springboard individuals back to housing stability.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

SYSTEM-WIDE INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATING PRACTICES

Systems are defined not by their components but by how these components interact to drive behavior. It is through a series of feedback loops that effective systems ensure results. Put another way, systems must have both a skeletal structure or backbone and a central nervous system to relay information. The following represent necessary enhancements to these components and interconnections to produce an effective sheltering and rehousing system in Denver.

1.1 CLEARLY DEFINE VISION, COLLECTIVE IMPACT OUTCOMES, AND SYSTEM DESIGN

All partners, providers, and consumers need to understand the intent of the system, desired and expected outcomes, and how they should interact within the system to produce the result. This vision should compel action toward that end every day and serve as a north star throughout the system transformation process. If the collective impact outcome is a rapid, successful exit from homelessness, then all activities and investments should be aligned and scaled to achieve that result. Today, investments and activities across funders and providers are disconnected and driven by individual interests rather than a clear collective outcome.

1.2 ORGANIZE BOLD, UNIFIED LEADERSHIP

With a clear vision comes an ability to create a single unified table for alignment of resources and activities. Bold political leadership can accelerate unity among the public and private sectors as well as ignite system transformation through prioritization of resources, incentives, and the removal of constraints.

- This bold, unified leadership must be underpinned by a comprehensive implementation infrastructure that supports collective alignment, action-oriented decision-making, and mutually reinforcing activities aimed at achieving common goals. This starts with city leadership. Currently city departments and other partners operate independent programs that impact homelessness without a collective vision. Denver's Road Home, OED, HOPE and DHA must create a shared vision, align investments to achieve collective impact & track standard outcomes across programs. This unified city leadership must also work closely with MDHI to further align federal resources and drive implementation on the ground in Denver.
- In most communities, the CoC would take the lead role as the backbone entity providing project management for the transformation process. MDHI is an atypical CoC spanning a vast and diverse region. As such, Denver, as the largest municipality and stakeholder in the region, should consider bolstering its implementation leadership position and dedicate time-limited policy and project management staff to work in alignment with MDHI throughout this transition period.
- Since data will become a central driver in reacting to shifting shelter dynamics and rehousing activities, it is also recommended that additional data analytics capacity be dedicated to this issue. This will be a position that synthesizes data from across city departments and external partners (primarily Denver's Road Home and HMIS) to monitor and account for collective progress and impact.

1.3 ACCELERATE IMPLEMENTATION AND MANDATE WIDE-SPREAD USE OF THE NEW HMIS SYSTEM

- HMIS is critical to an effective homelessness response system. Without wide-spread use by all homelessness response providers, there is no accountability for collective impact outcomes, no unifying element to connect components, and no feedback loops.
- While MDHI has been boldly pursuing this shift to a new HMIS vendor, precious time and energy is being consumed in negotiating the transfer of existing data.

Emphasis should be shifted to implementation and wide-spread use of the new system regardless of the status of current data migration activities. This may result in temporary inconveniences like double data entry for some, but every day that this system is without a functional HMIS, data is lost and the disconnect between sheltering and rehousing remains.

1.4 RETOOL COORDINATED ENTRY TO PROVIDE FRONT DOOR TRIAGE AND TRANSPARENCY.

- The specific shelter system recommendations below are predicated on the ability of coordinated entry (and eventually HMIS) serving as a transparent front door triage system. Individuals should enter the shelter system with a clear understanding of how they can exit. Coordinated entry should be retooled to perform a triage role in addition to housing and income assessments, matching, referral, and management of rehousing activities. Coordinated entry should serve to direct people to appropriate shelter environments and to clearly articulate a path out of shelter.
- To accomplish this, the assessment tools (adults, families, youth) must be continuously refined to assess for need in context of available rehousing options. For example, an individual scoring an 8 on the VISPDAT today would be identified as needing PSH but there is no foreseeable future in which this individual will get PSH given the hundreds with higher vulnerability scores. In addition, this individual is likely able to consider other permanent rehousing options like rapid rehousing or alternative affordable housing environments like boarding homes. This individual should not be told he will receive PSH and continue to cycle in the homelessness response system waiting for that PSH unit that will not come for years.
- The city is well positioned to enhance its One Home staffing partnership with MDHI to accomplish this task.

1.5 MANDATE USE OF COORDINATED ENTRY AS THE SOLE REFERRAL SOURCE FOR ALL HOMELESS REHOUSING OPTIONS AND UNIT PREFERENCES.

- Coordinated entry is the only way to ensure each and every rehousing option is used to its fullest potential and to achieve an actual reduction in homelessness. It is also the only way to ensure the chronically homeless, medically frail, disabled, and senior populations can exit the shelter system. It is tempting to give in to the idea that there are so many in need we should serve whomever is in front of us or who a provider believes will be successful, but that approach has not borne out over time as an effective method for reducing the numbers of individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Instead, forcing prioritization and matching of rehousing options based on need ensures those otherwise left behind get housed first and that everyone receives just enough rehousing service to be successful. Coordinated entry is far more precise in its matching than standard first come first serve waitlists or screening practices that are designed to protect assets at the expense of denying housing to vulnerable people.

- The City must mandate all existing and new homeless rehousing options (generated with the Affordable Housing Fund and under the five-year housing strategy) utilize coordinated entry as the sole referral source and work to reduce screening thresholds that often keep the most vulnerable from being housed even when the referral is accepted. This may require the City to work collaboratively with other partners like the Denver Housing Authority and State to meet this critical mandate.

1.6 SUPPLEMENT EXISTING SUPPORTIVE HOUSING SERVICES TO SERVE THE MOST COMPLEX AND VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS AND ENSURE FUTURE UNITS ARE APPROPRIATELY SERVICED.

- A noted complication in the effective implementation of coordinated entry and targeting of the most vulnerable for supportive housing in Denver is the lack of robust services attached to existing supportive housing units. One remedy is to provide supplemental funds to enhance services. Another is to create roving integrated care teams to provide the necessary enhancements for specific high-need individuals. The current SIB service model serves as a testament to the level of care needed for some individuals. That experience combined with a more thorough understanding of the number of units that need this service package will help guide which of these options is most effective. It should also serve as a guide for the level of service new PSH units are equipped to deliver.

1.7 RAPIDLY EXPAND HOMELESS REHOUSING OPTIONS UNDER THE CITY'S FIVE-YEAR HOUSING STRATEGY "HOUSING AN INCLUSIVE DENVER" AND THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUND.

- The City's housing strategy suggests that as many as 750-1100 units of supportive housing or targeted affordable housing will be created for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The addition of the Affordable Housing Fund could double this number. Prioritizing early rounds of funding to homeless rehousing options will accelerate unit creation and have a dramatic effect on the demand for long-term residential shelter from medically frail and vulnerable disabled individuals. While these new units will not be realized within this three-year shelter plan period, it does offer relief to the shelter system in the future and further reiterates the focus on supporting user populations to effectively utilize shelter as they wait for these rehousing options to materialize.
- These new commitments to rehousing creation follow existing commitments by the State, City and Denver Housing Authority and a current pipeline of new rehousing options. It is essential to connect these activities more intentionally to the shelter system and for the shelter system to have more responsibility to help individuals successfully navigate an exit from homelessness.

1.8 USE PREFERENCES TO FURTHER AMPLIFY THE IMPACT OF THE HOUSING PLAN AND BOND INITIATIVE TO PREVENT AND DIVERT FAMILIES AT-RISK OF HOMELESSNESS.

- While the housing strategy calls for a specific percentage of units to serve homeless individuals largely through PSH, the housing strategy also calls for a substantial number of units aimed at 30% AMI households. If a preference for families at-risk of homelessness is attached to the creation of these 30% AMI units, the family shelter system can accelerate its transformation and ensure at-risk and homeless families are rapidly rehoused instead of cycling through doubled up environments, motels, and shelters.

SINGLE ADULT SHELTER SYSTEM

2.1 CONVERT CURRENT SHELTERS TO FUNCTION AS TAILORED, TEMPORARY RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTS FOR SPECIFIC SUBPOPULATIONS.

- Workforce – Data suggests at least 50% of single individuals are likely to exit the shelter system in less than a year. This can be substantially accelerated if shelter environments in the downtown vicinity convert to offer temporary residential shelter beds that allow for ongoing storage of personal belongings, 24/7 in and out privileges in accordance with personal work schedules and continued low barrier non-programmatic requirements. It appears essential that these beds are located within the downtown vicinity as the outlying locations are not conducive to supporting rapid self-resolution among the workforce population.
- Seniors, Medically Frail, and Mobility Impaired – As many as 50% of the homeless single adult population may fall into this category and are best served in permanent supportive housing and other service rich housing environments. While the Housing Plan will substantially reduce the ongoing shelter needs of this population, it is recommended as an interim step that outlying shelters be outfitted to provide long-term 24/7 residential sheltering for this population. Such adjustments will allow these environments to support service partnerships that focus on rehousing and income navigation and mobile healthcare, behavioral health and substance use services with a harm reduction lens. While this reconfiguration will result in additional operating expenses, it will be slightly offset by a reduction in transportation costs. When considering the scale of this reconfiguration, it is important to remember that many of these individuals have been homeless more than a year so the faster these vulnerable individuals can be permanently housed, the fewer number of beds will need to be reconfigured for this population.
- Couples – No current sheltering options exist for couples. 48th Street shelter can easily accommodate an area for couples with the use of partitions. 48th Street can also be equipped to provide appropriate showering facilities for both men and women soon.
- Pets – 48th Street shelter is also configurable to accommodate pets within bedside crates and appropriate rules for care and management of pets within a communal environment. This final accommodation positions 48th Street shelter to function as a navigation center for encampment closures and those traditionally sleeping rough due to the lack of accommodations for couples, belongings and pets.
- While these recommendations speak to the configuration options, further feasibility analysis is necessary to identify and mitigate operational constraints. These

constraints may limit the extent of reconfiguration and may necessitate the creation of new environments to meet population specific needs. Some of this has been initiated by providers, like CCH's plan for a new facility for medically frail homeless individuals and St. Frances Center's convening.... Ideally, current shelter assets are maximized to efficiently and effectively service all populations. This is the lowest cost approach to shelter expansion and offers more resources for service enhancements, navigation, diversion, and rehousing.

- Many shelter providers are currently in the midst of planning rehabilitation of their current shelter facilities and this offers tremendous opportunities to support more tailored shelter environments and design and operational negotiations between the city and shelter operators.

2.2 REDESIGN CASE MANAGEMENT AND OTHER SERVICES WITHIN SHELTER TO FOCUS ON TRIAGE AND DIVERSION AND INCOME AND REHOUSING ACTIVITIES.

- Case management within shelter traditionally produces few results in the absence of rehousing options. Case management in the current sheltering system is often reserved for higher tiers of residential shelter but still has limited value given its lack of focus. Case management within a shelter environment in a rehousing system is highly focused on triage and diversion, assessment, and navigation. It is recommended that all case management within shelter be repurposed to perform one or more of these functions. Shelters for the workforce population should repurpose to focus on triage and diversion and navigation to income and employment. Long-term residential environments for the chronically homeless and vulnerable should focus on assessment and navigation for rehousing and connection to income. The proposed reconfiguration likely creates many natural partnership opportunities between current day and night shelter operators allowing for less migration and less crowding within the day shelter centers.

2.3 REDESIGN CURRENT DAILY SHELTER TRANSPORTATION SERVICES TO SUPPORT CONNECTION OF RESIDENTIAL SHELTER ENVIRONMENTS WITH CRITICAL HOUSING NAVIGATION AND HEALTH SERVICES AND SOCIAL CONNECTIONS.

- Daily bus transportation of hundreds of individuals to and from downtown to meet sheltering, showering, and feeding will no longer be necessary. Instead, a daily bus route that offers connection to critical downtown locations should be established to maintain connection to critical support services and healthy social environments. Additional services such as healthcare can also be brought to the outlying shelter locations.
- Once these tailored shelter environments are established and populated, the demand for daily intake will be directed by outreach teams. Equipping some or all these teams with vans will be a more effective way to transport new individuals to these outlying residential shelters.

2.4 ADD AN ADDITIONAL 200-350 BEDS OF PERMANENT PAY-BY-NIGHT SRO, BOARDING HOME, AND BUNKS FOR WORKING INDIVIDUALS.

- The affordable housing crisis is making efficiency and one-bedroom apartments inaccessible to single low-income individuals. While some may opt for shared living of traditional apartments, others desire more simple, communal accommodations. While these environments can resemble shelters in some ways, they should function as residences with all the rights and responsibilities that come with renting space in a multi-family environment. They should accommodate both men and women and operate as healthy and safe alternatives to traditional multi-family properties. This is best accomplished by partnering with a seasoned low-income multi-family operator who is accustomed to renting to individuals with very low incomes and complex social needs.

2.5 FOR EMERGENCY OVERFLOW DUE TO A VARIETY OF EXTREME CONDITIONS, A SEPARATE PLAN SHOULD BE CREATED WITHIN THE CITY'S EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MASTER PLAN AND NOT RELY ON EXISTING SHELTER ENVIRONMENTS.

FAMILY SHELTER SYSTEM

3.1 ELIMINATE ARBITRARY LIMITS ON LENGTHS OF STAY.

- Such limits typically range from 14 to 120 days and primarily serve to motivate self-resolution. While time limits themselves are not harmful, the arbitrary application of these limits on families with no systematic supports for rehousing only serves to push families back into doubled up environments. In many ways, this is serving as a de facto diversion program. It would be more transparent and healthy for families if the system focused these resources on keeping families housed and supporting appropriate rehousing efforts.

3.2 IMPLEMENT ROBUST DIVERSION PRACTICES THAT SUPPORT KEEPING FAMILIES OUT OF SHELTERS AND MOTELS.

- As referenced above, families are often better served in their own units or doubled up environments than in shelters and motels. Successful diversion practices include an assessment of safety and appropriateness, landlord and family mediation, negotiation of payment plans, payment of rental and utility arrears, payment of first month's rent and deposit, and other payments that support ongoing housing stability. Such activities can be paired with more traditional rapid rehousing or prevention practices.
- It is recommended that the City develop more robust diversion practices in partnership with current homelessness prevention funders. The city's current diversion contract with Family Promise of Greater Denver offers a great foundation to continue experimentation and expansion.

3.3 REPLACE MOTEL VOUCHERS WITH A SET OF MASTER-LEASED APARTMENTS.

- Nightly motel vouchers are very costly in comparison to paying fair market rent for an apartment. The City (and homeless families) would be better served by master leasing apartments as temporary sheltering environments. The same amount of resources could provide 1.5 to 2 times the number of temporary environments and be coupled with rapid rehousing and diversion strategies to support a transition in place model. This would ensure families have an immediate, safe and appropriate housing option, help families overcome the immediate barriers to entry traditionally experienced in the housing market, and support a successful transition using temporary or permanent subsidy.

3.4 INVEST IN RAPID REHOUSING AND OTHER SHALLOW SUBSIDIES AND STABILIZATION SERVICES.

- The Focus Strategies report specifically points to evidence that rapid rehousing is far more effective at producing housing stabilization within the Denver metro CoC than transitional housing. Given this is consistent with national data, it is recommended that the City look to expand a spectrum of rapid rehousing options for families including housing choice vouchers, short- to medium-term subsidies, and shallow latent subsidies.

3.5 CONNECT WITH MAINSTREAM SYSTEMS (E.G. TANF, MEDICAID, CHILD WELFARE) TO CREATE ENHANCED STABILIZATION SERVICES FOR AT-RISK FAMILIES.

- Families who experience homelessness rarely do so without first interfacing with a variety of other human services. These systems offer robust services that can be paired diversion and rapid rehousing options to effectively prevent homelessness among at-risk families. Engaging these systems will help to elevate and value housing stability as a primary indicator of success across multiple systems and serve the performance interests of all sectors as well as the family in need.
- It is recommended to open a dialogue with these systems, focus on data sharing and examination of mutual clients, and explore opportunities for partnership.

UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS AGES 16-24

4.1 PRIORITIZE YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS FOR REHOUSING SERVICES WITHIN THE CURRENT SYSTEM.

- Unaccompanied youth and young adults experiencing homelessness should be considered vulnerable and prioritized for appropriate housing within the adult homelessness response system when youth-specific interventions are not available. While adult services may not always provide the full range of developmental supports transition aged youth need, this is no reason to deny rehousing opportunities to youth experiencing homelessness. Some consider homelessness alone as an indicator of extreme vulnerability among transition aged youth and this should elevate youth within the rehousing matrix. The number of youth and young adults currently identified in Denver could easily be rehoused annually,

reducing unnecessary sheltering with adults and allowing the current youth shelter to serve particularly vulnerable underage youth.

4.2 CREATE ROVING SPECIALIZED SERVICE TEAMS TO OFFER A DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE SERVICE OVERLAY FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS SERVED IN ADULT REHOUSING INTERVENTIONS.

- To ensure youth and young adults are successful in adult interventions, the City could invest in the creation of a roving specialized service team that can offer developmentally appropriate services with adult rehousing environments including adult shelters.

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

To detail a three-year shelter system transformation action plan, five distinct areas of work planning are in development: Permanent Housing Expansion, Coordinated Entry, Shelter and Services Funding, Crisis Service Operations, and Real Estate and Capital Expenditures. The final action plan will serve as a roadmap for future resource allocation, procurement, contracting cycles, operations and performance requirements, and real estate pursuits and timelines.

EXHIBIT 1 - COMPARING HOMELESS SHELTER DEMAND TO HOMELESS SHELTER CAPACITY: METHODOLOGY & DATA INPUTS

Disclaimer

Typically, this analysis is performed using unduplicated annual data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and/or information provided by individual shelter providers, the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR), CoC Housing Inventory Chart (HIC), and the annual homeless point-in-time count (PIT). Due to the limited use of HMIS among homeless service providers in Denver, the lack of confidence in the HMIS data, and the inability to pull and share data specific to the Denver-based shelter system, several other sources of data and methods had to be considered including extrapolation, readily accepted national assumptions, and qualitative inputs from shelter providers and users. As a result, the analysis was performed multiple times with various data sets and compared to inform the strategy recommendations. This analysis is not intended to reflect precision given the various assumptions applied, but it is believed to be a reliable directional exercise when coupled with qualitative data from providers and consumers.

Regional enumeration data from the January 2018 Point-In-Time count was released near the conclusion of this engagement. This same analysis could be repeated with the county-specific enumeration data when released but it is recommended that the methodology for determining the number of sheltered individuals be further examined to ensure it is consistent with the 2017 methodology and as reliable as the daily counts maintained by Denver's Road Home. A quick review of the regional data suggests that similar analysis coupled with qualitative inputs continues to support the strategic recommendations and direction outlined in this strategy memo.

STEP 1 - DETERMINE THE TOTAL ANNUAL AND DAILY SHELTER DEMAND

The sheltered point-in-time (PIT) count should be an accurate and reliable reflection of the annual shelter demand on one night in late January. Often this number can be compared to the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) which provides a total annual unduplicated count of shelter users. As stated previously, this unduplicated annual shelter number is not available so other methods to annualize the population were used. The primary day shelter in any community is readily accessible to all sheltered and unsheltered individuals and typically offers a reliable proxy for the AHAR, often the number served exceeding the annual unduplicated shelter demand as it includes unsheltered individuals seeking day services. St. Frances Center reports they serve approximately 10,000 unduplicated homeless individuals annually.

A similar approach was taken to determine the annual demand for families using a combination of PIT, Denver Road Home Reports on the number of families turned away from the motel voucher program and limited annual shelter turnover rates from HMIS data as the proxy for AHAR. It is also well understood that the demand for emergency rental assistance from families is substantial in

any city and that this demand is not necessarily a reflection of the number of families who will require a shelter bed but should be used to examine the annual demand for a family rehousing system. The estimates below are substantially higher than what is reflected in current data and is meant to support a directional analysis.

Source	Singles	Families
2017 Point-In-Time Count (PIT) – Denver County	2,538 homeless individuals without children (sheltered in emergency shelter/transitional housing + unsheltered)	261 households with children (798 persons)
St. Frances Center - Annual Unduplicated Served	10,000 individuals	
Denver Road Home Reports on # turned away & Limited annual turnover rates from HMIS Data		Up to 4,800 families annually will seek rental assistance from the homeless response system

STEP 2 – SEGMENT THE SHELTER POPULATION BY USER TYPES

In the absence of aggregated shelter use by individual from the HMIS system, the following information was used to segment the shelter population into user types:

Source	Heavy Users	Moderate Users	Light Users
Singles			
PIT reported duration of homelessness	50%	28%	22%
One Home Assessments	69%	25%	5%
Provider Input	40%	45%	15%
Families			
One Home Assessments	53%	42%	5%
Provider Input	30%	50%	20%

STEP 3 – CALCULATE THE CURRENT NUMBER OF REHOUSING OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND APPLY THAT TO THE USER SEGMENTS

Using a modified CoC Housing Inventory Chart and turnover data provided by One Home, the total number of annual rehousing options are identified.

Category	Type	Annual Number Available	Target Population
Single Adults	PSH	100	Heavy Users
	RRH	309	Moderate Users
Families	PSH	258	Heavy Users
	RRH	170	Moderate Users

STEP 4 – DETERMINE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF DAILY EMERGENCY SHELTER BEDS AVAILABLE

Using the modified CoC Housing Inventory Chart, the number of daily shelter beds for single adults (men and women) and families is identified.

Single Men	1,421 Beds
Single Women	358 Beds
Families	172 Units

STEP 5 – DETERMINE HOW SHELTER BEDS ARE USED DAILY BY USER SEGMENTS BASED ON ALL DATA INPUTS

User Segment	Average Length of Stay (days)	
	Singles	Families
Heavy Users Placed In PSH	90	90
Heavy Users Remaining	Until Housed	Until Housed
Moderate Users Placed in RRH	122	120
Remaining Moderate Users	122	45-120
Light Users	30	14-30

STEP 6 – COMPARE DAILY SHELTER DEMAND BY USER SEGMENT TO THE DAILY SHELTER INVENTORY

A chart is produced to reflect how the demand will change over time as PSH and RRH is effectively targeted to users that would otherwise remain in shelter. The tool can also model how the expansion of PSH and RRH can reduce the homeless count over time. Additional exhibits detail the charts, inputs, and conclusions for each population.

STEP 7 – COMPARE RESULTS WITH QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTED FROM PROVIDERS AND CONSUMERS

Shelter providers and shelter users were interviewed, and shelter providers participated in a series of work sessions to further reveal insights about the current shelter system and ongoing needs. Additional exhibits detail the qualitative data from both qualitative data sets.

SHELTER DEMAND

The following charts compare demand and use of shelter beds against the current inventory for the purposes of determining if enough shelter beds exist to meet raw demand. Given the limitations of pulling aggregated deduplicated shelter use data, several data sources were considered and analyzed as proxies to thoroughly investigate this question.

Each section includes a table of data inputs and data sources or assumptions followed by a chart detailing shelter bed use by user types at any given time based on the specified inputs and compared to current shelter capacity. The charts also represent projected reductions of certain subpopulations over time based on targeted rehousing activities with current resources. The chart format is intended to allow for the synthesis of various data inputs and visualization of analysis results. It also allows for the comparison of results based on differing data inputs and assumptions.

ALL SINGLES (MEN AND WOMEN COMBINED)

User Group	% of Population	Data Source	Average Length of Stay (days)	Data Source
Heavy Users Placed In PSH	50%	~50% of the 2017 PIT Count reported 1+ year of homelessness	90	One Home estimate
Heavy Users Remaining			365	PIT reported duration of 1+ year homeless
Moderate Users Placed in RRH	28%	Remaining % of users	122	Avg. shelter stay reported in Focus Strategies Report
Remaining Moderate Users			122	
Light Users	22%	Denver Rescue Mission Reports 12 new clients daily	30	Based on PIT duration and St. Frances Center Data

User Group	% of Population	Data Source	Average Length of Stay (days)	Data Source
Heavy Users Placed In PSH	69%	One Home Assessments*	90	One Home estimate
Heavy Users Remaining			365	PIT reported duration of 1+ year homeless
Moderate Users Placed in RRH	25%	One Home Assessments*	122	Avg. shelter stay reported in Focus Strategies Report
Remaining Moderate Users			122	
Light Users	5%	One Home Assessments*	30	Based on PIT duration and St. Frances Center Data

**Assessed cohort reflects the heaviest users as the initial implementation of adult assessments were intended to identify those individuals needing PSH. This is not an accurate sampling of the entire user cohort and heavily underrepresents light and moderate users.*

User Group	% of Population	Data Source	Average Length of Stay (days)	Data Source
Heavy Users Placed In PSH	40%	Shelter Provider Estimates	90	One Home estimate
Heavy Users Remaining			365	PIT reported duration of 1+ year homeless
Moderate Users Placed in RRH	45%	Shelter Provider Estimates	122	Avg. shelter stay reported in Focus Strategies Report
Remaining Moderate Users			122	
Light Users	15%	Shelter Provider Estimates	60	Based on Provider input



SINGLE WOMEN

Demand analysis for single women was conducted using the same data inputs. The only data source available to reflect the percentage of women was found in the 2017 PIT. It indicated that for the entire homeless population, 30% were women. This number reflects both single individuals and adults and children in families. It is thus likely that 30% is an over estimate of the number of single women experiencing homelessness but no data is available to test this hypothesis and the analysis was conducted by applying this percentage to the total single population and to the number of rehousing options that are available for single women.

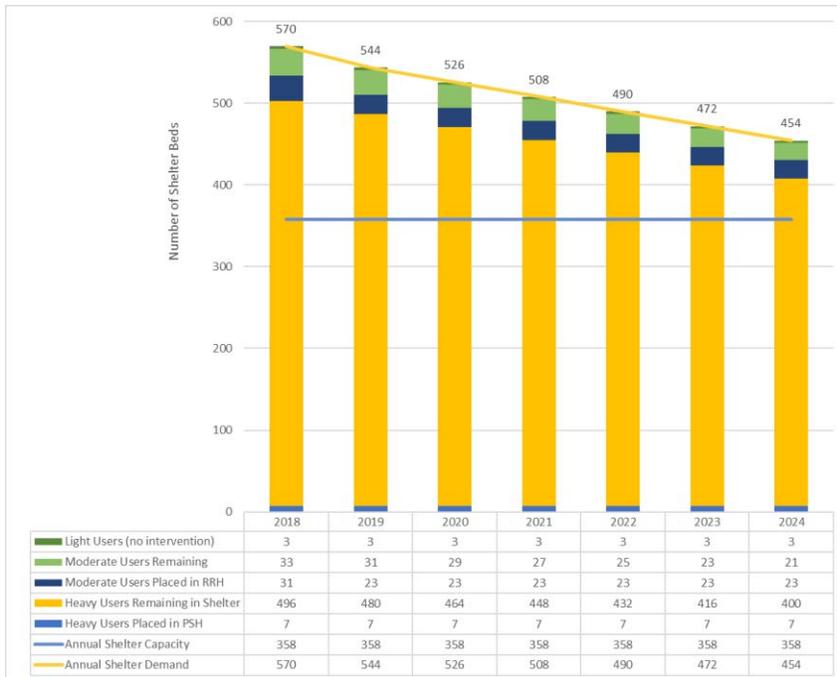
The following charts represent the same analysis in the same order for single women.

Heavy Users – 50%

Moderate Users – 28%

Light Users – 22%

Source: PIT Reported
Homeless duration



Heavy Users – 69%

Moderate Users – 25%

Light Users – 5%

Source: One Home



Heavy Users – 40%

Moderate Users – 45%

Light Users – 15%; 60 days

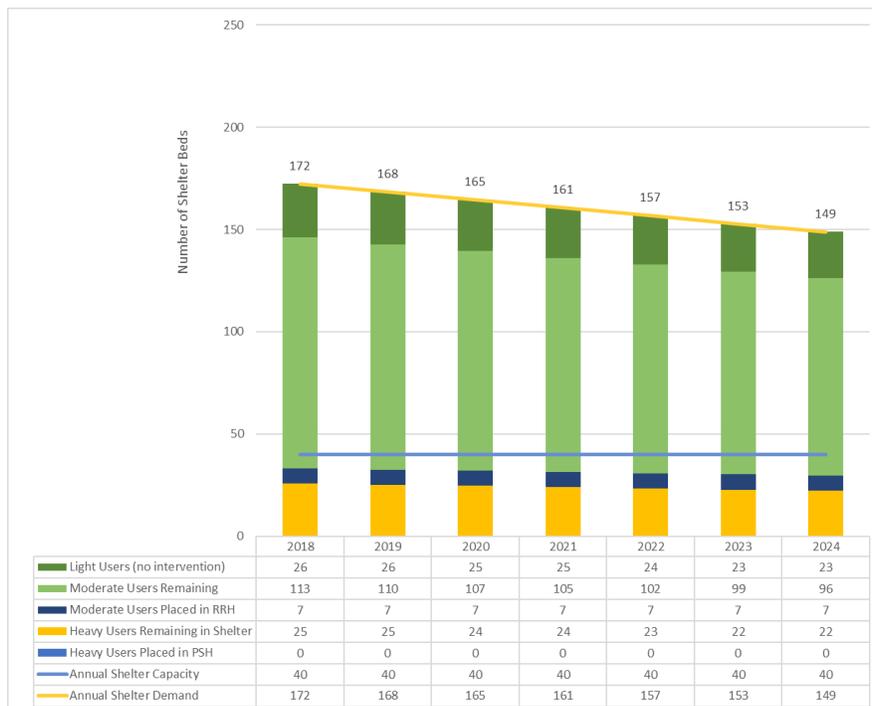
Source: Providers

UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS AGED 16-24

Given that only 40 shelter beds are dedicated to a segment of this population, it is evident that youth and young adults lack the necessary number of dedicated shelter beds. The PIT also suggests that these youth and young adults are being sheltered within the adult system. The providers offered the following assumptions to conduct the demand analysis.

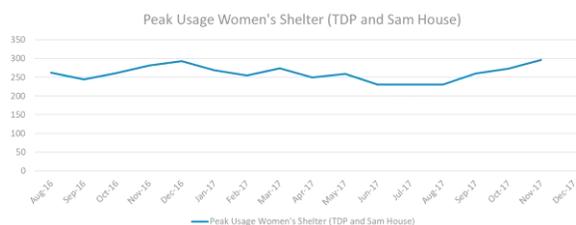
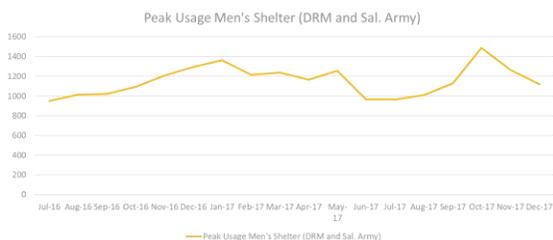
User Group	% of Population	Data Source	Average Length of Stay (days)	Data Source
Heavy Users Placed In PSH	10%	Shelter Provider Estimates	90	One Home estimate
Heavy Users Remaining			365	PIT reported duration of 1+ year homeless
Moderate Users Placed in RRH	60%	Shelter Provider Estimates	200	Avg. shelter stay reported in Focus Strategies Report
Remaining Moderate Users			200	
Light Users	30%	Shelter Provider Estimates	120	Based on PIT duration and St. Frances Center Data

Unaccompanied Youth & Young Adults Shelter Demand vs. Shelter Capacity



COMPARING DATA ANALYSIS TO 2017 PEAK SHELTER DEMAND

Denver's Road Home collects and maintains daily counts for all funded shelters. When peak shelter demand in 2017 is compared to the previous shelter demand projections, a reaffirming pattern emerges.



If you combine the highest demand days for single men (1,489 in October) and single women (293 in November) the peak shelter demand totals 1,785 and the average for the year is 1,426. This is consistent with the projected ranges in the above analysis, further affirming the that demand and capacity are likely equal today.

SHELTER PROVIDER SYSTEM MAPPING WORK SESSIONS

On May 8th and May 22nd, shelter providers were gathered to participate in a series of system mapping exercises to prepare a map of each sheltering system noting the daily client navigation experience, identify who is well-served and who is not in the current shelter configuration, define the current client experience, and identify challenges, needs, and solutions. Three system maps were produced: single men, single women, and families. Given that unaccompanied youth and young adults are overwhelming sheltered in the adult system, youth specific services were added as an overlay to each single adult map. The following summarizes the conclusions from this session.

System	Single Men	Single Women	Families
<u>Daily Client Experience</u>	<u>Men can spend between 1.5 and 8 hours daily at a staging site and on a bus to sleep, eat, and shower with no clear path to exit homelessness</u>	<u>Women cycle from overnight shelter, meals, to day shelter, to street, to meals, to overnight shelter</u>	<u>Families seek services and often end up outside of Denver and timing out of one shelter after another until they find the right opportunity</u>
<u>Well-Served</u>	<u>Youth aged 15-20; people who need quick access to shelter; people who need wet shelter; working people;</u>	<u>People with regular full-time employment; labor ready; in recovery</u>	<u>Short-term able to self-resolve; Single Moms; Denver Residents; Low Income</u>

<u>Not Well-Served</u>	<u>Seniors; medically frail; mobility impaired; severe substance use/abuse; men in recovery; working men; street youth/travelers</u>	<u>People who don't have own transportation; people whom religion has harmed them; people with too much stuff; people with persistent chronic mental illness;</u>	<u>Single Dad's with kids; Sex Offenders; Substance Abuse; Backgrounds; Higher Income; Large Families</u>
<u>Challenges</u>	<u>Capacity; Staging time; Mobility impaired; Bus</u>	<u>Not enough respite beds; Trans guests don't always feel safe or are bullied; Mental health services; storage of personal items; Not enough shelter beds for DV survivors; Pets</u>	<u>Long-term assistance to reduce shelter hopping; Transport; Day shelter; Lack of CM for fams; Walk up shelter; Family friendly food; Options outside Denver metro; Moving every 7 days</u>
<u>Needs</u>	<u>Geographic distribution of services; Active addiction youth shelter; TH/Bridge; Seniors/elderly; Day labor workers; Pets; Higher level of care; Service hubs; Housing services; Staging and set up; Affordable housing; Case management/benefits navigation</u>	<u>Respite beds; Mental Health Treatment; Youth specific housing; Detox; More non-traditional housing options, new ideas for long-term shelter; More treatment; More supportive navigators; Transportation; Serving non-literally homeless; Safety; More showers; Safe places for LGBTQ individuals; Real, comfortable beds; HOUSING; Places for individuals with fragile mental health; Lower barriers, less paperwork; More places for elderly who don't need assisted living but can't stay in shelter; Resolution for sex offenders and felons; More case management; Housing for full spectrum of needs</u>	<u>Daycare for families; Programs at day shelter for parents; Uber for families (van); Workforce training; Furniture/ bedding for kids; More inclusive definition of family; Beds for couples; Clinical services; Family promise static site shelter; Education program for kids who are homeless for school; Shelter longer than 120 days; Shelter for single dads; Shelter for larger families; Walk up shelter for families; Intensive case management; Day shelter for fams; Permanent housing; Pet friendly shelter; Family outreach; Housing navigators</u>

The shelter providers clearly identified that the current configuration of beds and services do not adequately meet the sheltering needs of many homeless subpopulations, particularly those

struggling with the most complex needs and often most vulnerable. The shelter providers expressed a deep desire to have a shelter system that can effectively service all who seek shelter. The challenges and needs reflected are a further reiteration of the limits and gaps felt within the current configuration. The providers did not fixate on or prioritize shelter expansion as a primary need but rather offered more targeted identification of the current system deficiencies as a starting place for improvement, often indicating that the system needs to find a way to better serve these subpopulations either through appropriate expansion or reconfiguration or both.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

On May 22nd and 23rd, stakeholder interviews were conducted with a sampling of homeless men and women seeking services at the Lawrence Street Center and Samaritan House. Additional interviews and observation of the unsheltered population near these shelters was also conducted. Respondents (both men and women) consistently reported no fear or concern related to availability of nightly shelter beds but repeatedly commented on how configuration challenges force users to make difficult choices between employment and shelter and on the mental strain associated with the daily routine necessary to access basic needs services. This included unnecessary interactions and association with illegal street activities within staging environments, unnecessary police encounters while waiting for services to open, and the resulting lack of dignity and societal isolation. Interviews were not conducted with unsheltered individuals camping outside of the downtown area. In Denver, it is believed that couples, those with pets, and those with substantial belongings often elect to remain unsheltered not because a shelter bed is unavailable but because the current shelter environments do not accommodate these needs.

CONCLUSION

The data analysis suggests there are an adequate number of shelter beds to provide nightly shelter services for both the sheltered and unsheltered single adult population. When this analysis is qualified with stakeholder and provider input, a clear direction emerges. The current configuration and modes of service delivery for nightly sheltering should be redesigned to maximize use and effectiveness of the shelter environments for all user types and subpopulations. This will produce better outcomes for the individuals served and reduce unnecessary capital and ongoing operational investments in additional shelter assets while still increasing the number of individuals utilizing shelter beds.

EXHIBIT 3 – RECONFIGURATION AND EXPANSION OPTIONS FOR SINGLE ADULT SHELTERING

Three possible approaches have emerged for the reconfiguration and expansion of shelter capacity for the single adult shelter system.

1. Reconfiguration of the existing shelter environments to support all user types and subpopulations.
2. Reconfiguration of the existing shelter environments to support some user types and subpopulations plus expansion of tailored shelter environments for the remaining subpopulations.
3. Maintain current shelter environments as is and add new shelter environments for select underserved subpopulations.

To determine which approach is most feasible, the following activities are underway:

Real Estate Search	See more detailed explanation in paragraph below
Provider Work Sessions	Work sessions to map current shelter systems, identify who is well-served and who is not in the current shelter configuration, define the current client experience, and identify challenges, needs, and solutions.
Action Planning across Five Verticals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Permanent Housing Expansion - Coordinated Entry - Shelter and Services Funding - Crisis Service Operations - Real Estate and Capital Expenditures 	Consider the strategic reconfiguration recommendations within each vertical and explore organizational and collective feasibility to execute over three-year period.

The City of Denver Real Estate department was asked to participate in identifying possible parcels for a variety of tailored shelter options. The following chart details the categories of shelter, parcel types, and physical structures under consideration.

Shelter Type	Definition	Parcels & Structures
Navigation Centers	Small, contained single site shelters that provide 24/7 residential sheltering with substantial storage of personal belongings and accommodations for pets and couples. Often used to target individuals sleeping outside and in encampments.	Small industrial or urban parcels that can support 3-5 temporary modular buildings (similar in size to modular classroom trailers used by schools)

Homeless Workforce Housing	Alternative type of affordable housing that offers subsidized and pay-by-night/week/month rooms or bunks.	Wide array of parcel types but structures must meet code for large-scale residential sheltering/housing.
Residential Shelter	Shelter environments that can meet all basic needs (food, shelter, showers) and remain open 24/7 to provide day and night services.	Industrial, commercial, or multi-family sites often built or converted to provide residential sheltering services.

The rapid timeline of this engagement has limited the ability to identify and explore exact parcels in time for this report, but a short list of possibilities is currently being considered and cost estimates are in process.

An action plan will be prepared and delivered in July that details the extent of reconfiguration that is possible in the next three years. The action plan, in combination with available parcels and cost estimates, will support ongoing planning and budget appropriations.

EXHIBIT 4 – SHELTER DEMAND AND CONFIGURATION OPTIONS FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES

FAMILY SHELTER DEMAND

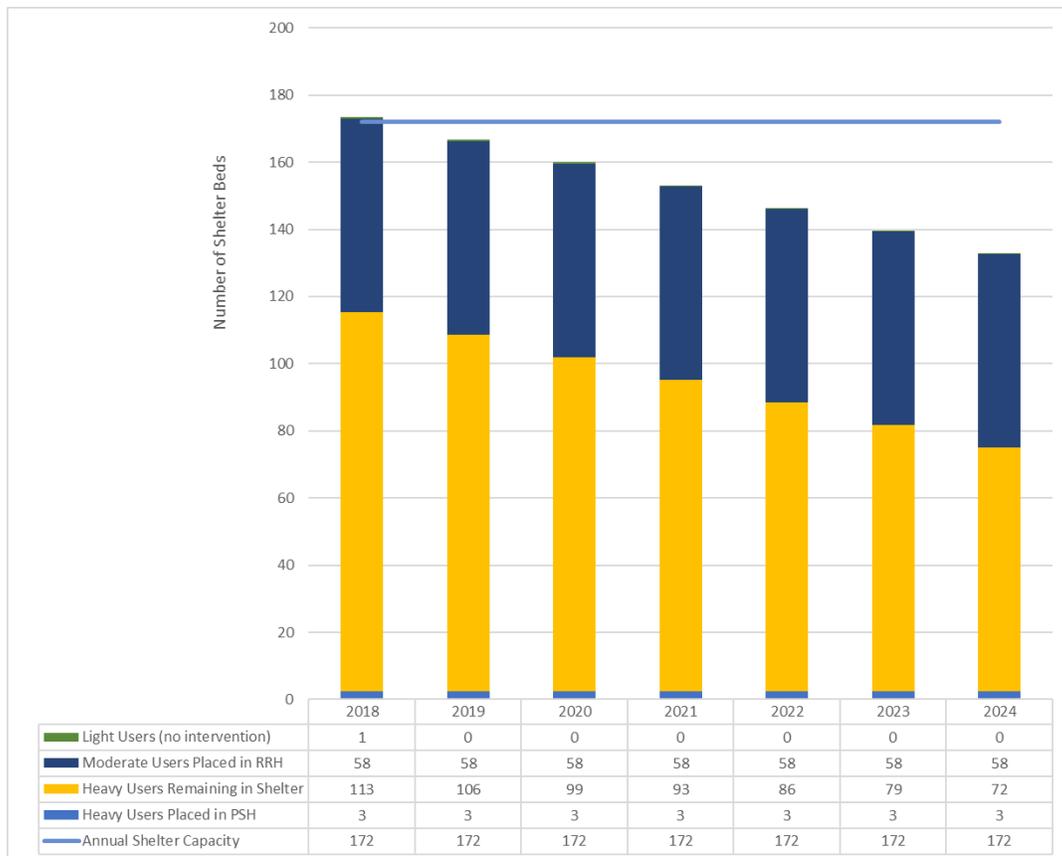
The following charts compare demand and use of shelter beds against the current inventory for the purposes of determining if enough shelter beds exist to meet raw demand. Given the limitations on pulling aggregated deduplicated shelter use data, several data sources were considered and analyzed as proxies to thoroughly investigate this question.

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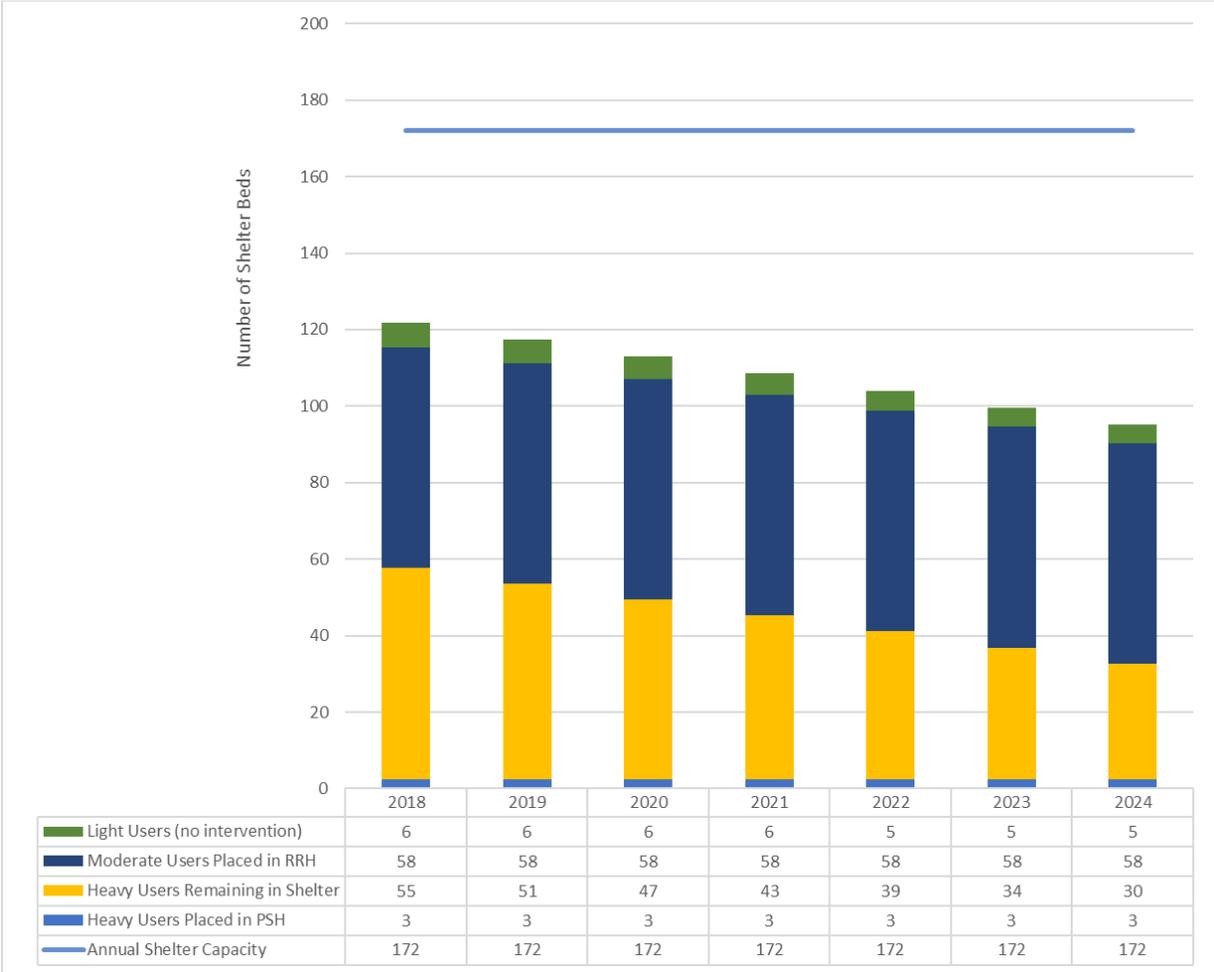
It is also well understood that the demand for emergency rental assistance from families is substantial in any city and that this demand is not necessarily a reflection of the number of families who will require a shelter bed but should be used to examine the annual demand for a family rehousing system. The estimates below are substantially higher than what is reflected in current data and will support a directional analysis.

FAMILIES WITH MINOR CHILDREN

User Group	% of Population	Data Source	Average Length of Stay (days)	Data Source
Heavy Users Placed In PSH	53%	One Home Assessments*	90	One Home estimate
Heavy Users Remaining			365	Assumption based on national data
Moderate Users Placed in RRH	42%	One Home Assessments*	90	Combined Avg program limits
Remaining Moderate Users			90	
Light Users	5%	One Home Assessments*	14	Based on duration of Motel voucher



User Group	% of Population	Data Source	Average Length of Stay (days)	Data Source
Heavy Users Placed In PSH	30%	Shelter Provider Estimates	90	One Home estimate
Heavy Users Remaining			365	Assumption based on national data
Moderate Users Placed in RRH	50%	Shelter Provider Estimates	90	Provider Input
Remaining Moderate Users			90	
Light Users	20%	Shelter Provider Estimates	45	Provider Input



SHELTER PROVIDER SYSTEM MAPPING WORK SESSIONS

On May 8th and May 22nd, shelter providers were gathered to participate in a series of system mapping exercises to prepare a map of each sheltering system noting the daily client experience, identify who is well-served and who is not in the current shelter configuration, define the current client experience, and identify challenges, needs, and solutions. These exercises yielded a strong consensus that families are best served in a housing unit and the system should work to avoid the use of emergency shelters and motels whenever possible. Several ideas emerged to rapidly return families to permanent housing environments including the use of master-leased apartments as temporary shelters instead of motel vouchers and the expansion of rapid rehousing subsidies.

SHELTER DEMAND CONCLUSIONS

While the data clearly points to a demand for family emergency shelter, it is insufficient to draw a clear conclusion that additional family shelter environments are needed. The stakeholder input suggests that any expansion effort should be focused to support immediate rehousing options rather than expansion of traditional shelter environments.

RECONFIGURATION OPTIONS

The family shelter system is largely comprised of single-site environments that offer temporary stays and hotel vouchers. Three options have emerged for family sheltering reconfiguration and expansion:

Reconfiguration Options	Cost Projections
Replace hotel vouchering with the use of master-leased apartments coupled with more direct access to rapid rehousing.	Budget Neutral to nearly double the number of available units or maintain same number of motel vouchers plus add vendor operations contract
Replace hotel vouchering and expand master-leasing options for families, eventually converting single site environments to shelter other homeless populations or become permanent housing options.	\$18,000/2-bedroom unit/year Serving 4-6 households/year
Replace motel vouchering, expand master-leasing and expand rapid rehousing to offer transition-in-place sheltering.	\$8,000/household served