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February 1, 2019

City of Colorado Springs  
Community Development Division  
30 S. Nevada, Suite 604  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Re: 2019 (Draft) Action Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

Catholic Charities of Central Colorado has reviewed the City's 2019 Action Plan and we are grateful for the opportunity to comment:

**Page 4, Evaluation of Past Performance.**

- Hillside Community Center: With our Family Connections programming located in the Hillside community, we have a first-hand understanding of the needs in that neighborhood and are pleased with the City's investment in the community center facility modifications.
- Low-Barrier Shelter: The increase in low-barrier shelter bed capacity meets another urgent need, particularly the 50 low-barrier shelter beds for families. The lack of dedicated family sheltering in our community has meant that largely privately-funded transitional housing programs carry the responsibility for direct placement from street into housing. These new beds still only meet a portion of what's needed for an estimated family homeless population of 6,000. Additionally, the congregant configuration of these 50 family beds undermines the effectiveness of the investment. While congregant shelter can be a low-cost solution for cold weather and low barrier adult sheltering, it falls short of best practices in family sheltering. Effective family shelters are increasingly configured as low-barrier, single occupancy units where a family can shelter together, avoiding logistical and psychological stress that comes when dads and older male children are separated from mom and younger kiddos. While we agree these 50 congregant beds are needed, we encourage the City to target future investment in single-occupancy family shelter units.

**Pages 5, Summary of Public Comments and Page 18, Citizen Participation Outreach.**

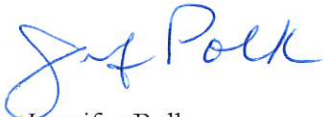
- 2018 State of Family Homelessness – The “20 – 40” Plan: Public comments include the need for “better agency collaboration”, “a more robust family homelessness plan”, and the need for “an adequate family homelessness strategy”. Catholic Charities encourages the City to include the “20 – 40” plan (enclosed) as support for the 2019 Action Plan to provide the details of what is currently the most comprehensive plan to address the needs of families experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The plan is unique in that it was created by a multi-agency task force of nonprofit providers representing more than 100 years of service to families in the Colorado Springs area. It addresses the brick and mortar gaps in single-occupancy family shelter and transitional housing as well as needs assessment, data mining, and coordination of services,

particularly with school district McKinney-Vento liaisons. Fulfillment of the plan requires a mix of public and private resources and we are pleased the City has adopted key components of the plan in their “Homelessness Response Action Plan.”

- Integration of Immigrant Community Members: Catholic Charities offers the region’s only nonprofit legal immigration services. As such, we are well-informed on immigrant needs and see the value of integrating them into the economic and social fabric of our community. Reinforcing the English as Second Language learner feedback, we encourage the City to look at ways to intentionally engage the immigrant community in increasing access to low-income support services and affordable housing. We would actively participate in a deeper dive on strategies to that end.

We appreciate the opportunity to partner and collaborate with the City of Colorado Springs on our shared interest in preventing and ending homelessness in our region. We value the goals you’ve outlined in this plan and look forward to more conversation on addressing gaps in services and facilities outlined in the “20 – 40” plan.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Polk  
Chief Operating Officer

Enclosure:

2018 State of Family Homelessness – The “20 – 40” Plan

cc:

Community Health Partnership – PPCoC  
Partners in Housing  
Family Promise of Colorado Springs

# **2018**

## **State of Family Homelessness**

Colorado Springs/El Paso County, Colorado

### **The “20 – 40” Plan**



**Prepared by:**

**Catholic Charities of Central Colorado**

**Partners in Housing**

**Family Promise of Colorado Springs/IHN**

**November 2018**

(Revised 11.14.2018)

## Introduction

The safety net system for addressing family homelessness in Colorado Springs/El Paso County is diffuse and under-resourced in a number of important areas. Significant gaps exist in emergency sheltering, homeless prevention, transitional housing, and affordable, low-income housing. This paper provides data on the scope and impact of family homelessness, the current situation in our community, and suggests immediate and longer term strategies to close resource and service gaps, collectively referred to as the “20 – 40” Plan.

## Scope and Impact of Family Homelessness

- Nearly 40 million people (1 in 8) in the U.S. live below the poverty line with 80,000 people living in poverty in El Paso County. Poverty is a leading factor in child homelessness.<sup>i</sup>
- 35% of all homeless persons nationwide are families with children. This includes 2.5 million children<sup>ii</sup> “Nearly two-thirds of families with children experiencing homelessness were counted in four states: California, Florida, Oregon and Colorado.”<sup>iii</sup>
- The reasons for family homelessness include lack of affordable housing, poverty, family violence and unemployment.
- Homeless families are often hidden—they are living in shelters, cars, campgrounds, or doubled up in overcrowded apartments. Families fear of having their children removed from their care.
- Students experiencing homelessness are up to nine times more likely than their non-homeless peers to repeat a grade.
- “Children who experience long-term homelessness are five times more likely than their peers to become homeless as adults”<sup>iv</sup>
- “Housing is essential to ending homelessness, but it is not sufficient. Families need basic supports beyond decent affordable housing to thrive: food, education, employment, child care, transportation, health and mental health care, trauma-informed care, and children’s services.”<sup>v</sup>

## Current Situation – Counts, Resources, and Gaps

### 2018 Community Point-in-Time (PIT) Count for Colorado Springs/El Paso County Results<sup>vi</sup> (Appendix 3)

- 2,209 people counted as homeless across all populations—chronic adult, youth, children, and veterans
- Number of homeless households with children rose to 122, an increase of 5 over 2017.  
*(Note: This number accounts for just a fraction of the 2,339 families entered into HMIS during the last 12 months with a last permanent address inside El Paso County)*
- The typical homeless family is a single mother with children < 5 years, many have larger family sizes with 40% of families having 3 or more members and an 11% increase in household size over 2017.
- The number of students experiencing homelessness was 1,117 with the majority living in “doubled up” circumstances with multiple families or precariously housed in motels. This number is self-reported and does not include children from infancy through preschool.
  - 10% report living in a shelter or camping. Assuming at least one adult plus the student in a household that accounts for 304 unsheltered individuals alone, far exceeding PIT counts.

## Adequacy of Family Emergency, Transitional, and Permanent Housing Resources

- Emergency shelter is a critical part of an effective homeless response system, but only a handful of shelter beds are allocated for families in our shelter system and none are low barrier
  - Salvation Army shelters families in its RJ Montgomery Center
    - 40 beds housed in the women's shelter are allocated to mothers with children
    - Single fathers are given priority for one of four single family quarters at the shelter
    - Aug-Oct family shelter beds have been full; more than 118 families turned away
  - Catholic Charities of Central Colorado provides seasonal motel vouchers to help bridge the gap for families seeking shelter with up to 5 families a night between November - April
  - Family Promise of Colorado Springs provides transitional shelter for 5 families at a time who are housed in single occupancy rooms at church facilities across El Paso County
  - TESSA is the leading domestic violence shelter/safe house in Colorado Springs with 32 beds
- Transitional housing is the backbone of our community system for sheltering and stabilizing families, housing and intensive supportive services lead to long term stability and never being homeless again
  - Partners in Housing is the largest provider of transitional housing in Colorado Springs with 60 units. In FY 2018, PIH housed 130 adults and 244 children in 121 households. Applications for an additional 938 adults and 1,818 children were received beyond capacity
  - Family Promise has 3 housing units families use as a 3-6 month bridge to permanent housing
  - Salvation Army has 9 transitional housing units for families in its Fresh Start program
  - Mary's Home currently has 12 housing units for families, increasing to 15 in 2019. Last year they had 400 inquiries over capacity.
  - Family Life Services has 9 transitional housing units for families
  - Homeward Pikes Peak's Bloom Program provides TH for 5 moms and their infant for 12 months
- Permanent housing through HUD programs: Rapid Re-housing, Transitional Housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing. Vouchers prioritized through Coordinated Entry and housing vulnerability score
  - In any given month, roughly 100 families are listed on the by-name list awaiting housing
  - 20 families were housed from Jan – Oct 2018; an average of 2 per month vs 100+ listed

### Summary Assessment of Gaps:

- Estimated 6,000 people in families with children < age 18 are homeless in our community
- Little to no shelter to keep families intact; no low barrier family shelter
- 118 families turned away from emergency shelter in last 3 months due to space
- Demand for transitional housing in 2018 dwarfed supply – 3,000+ individuals turned away
- 91 family households await permanent housing on Coordinated Entry list

### **Strategies to Address Family Shelter and Housing Gaps**

- Immediate:
  - Add family solutions as 9<sup>th</sup> Goal in Action Plan for Homelessness Response (see Appendix 1)
  - 20 single-occupancy family emergency shelter units through lease or purchase.
  - Comprehensive needs assessment and meaningful PIT strategy for family counts
  - Collaboration with McKinney-Vento and expansion of school-based case management
- Longer Term:
  - 40 new Transitional Housing units along with the intensive services to provide the needed supports for adult and children to overcome trauma, thrive, and to never be homeless again
  - Develop family shelter diversion strategies and increase homeless prevention resources

## APPENDIX 1

### Draft language: 2018-2019 Action Plan for Homelessness Response (City of Colorado Springs)

#### **9. Add emergency shelter and transitional housing units for families experiencing homelessness.**

Homeless families often hide from counts like Point in Time for fear of having their children removed from their care. The more accurate measurement is performed by school districts which are required by the McKinney-Vento Act to perform annual counts of homeless students. The most recent of these counts in Colorado Springs identified 1,117 school age students experiencing homelessness (defined as living in cars, camps and shelters as well as “doubled up” with multiple families or precariously housed in motels).

Colorado Springs has no low barrier family shelter and has limited options that allow families to stay together. 118 families were turned away from emergency shelter between August and October of this year. Similarly, transitional housing providers lack the housing inventory to meet the need. Last year, at least 938 adults and 1,818 children were waitlisted due to lack of space.

According to the Urban Institute, “...ignoring family homelessness today will make single adult homelessness worse in the future, as children who experience long-term homelessness are five times more likely than their peers to become homeless as adults.”

The City will collaborate with service providers with a goal of adding an additional 20 single-occupancy family emergency shelter units and 40 new Transitional Housing units. Alongside agencies that provide homelessness prevention and case management for families, we will work to bring relief for this vulnerable and hidden homeless population.

## APPENDIX 2

### Timeline

2018

- Create Homeless Family Solutions Collaborative
- Add Family Solutions Goal (#9) to City Action Plan
- Outreach to School Districts and McKinney-Vento Liaisons
- Community Advocacy for Homeless Family Solutions
- Goal Mapping for Family Solutions Initiatives
- Create Meaningful PIT Outreach Strategy for Families

2019

- Develop Funding Proposal for 20 Single-Occupancy Family Shelter
- Comprehensive Family Housing Needs Assessment
- Data-mining of Existing Community Data on Family Homelessness
- Map Family Triage Process and Family Housing System Resources
- **Secure 20 Single-Occupancy Family Shelter Units; Open Fall 2019**
- Feasibility Assessment for 40 New Family Transitional Housing Units
- Assessment of Low-Barrier, Housing First Transitional Housing Model

2020

- Assess 2019 Family Solutions Initiatives via Community Outcomes Report
- Increase School-Based Family Case Management
- Deploy Shelter Diversion and Homeless Prevention Strategies
- Funding and Operating Strategies for 40 New Family TH Units
- **Commitment to Build/Purchase 40 TH Units**

PREVENT AND END HOMELESSNESS FOR  
FAMILIES, YOUTH, AND CHILDREN IN 2020

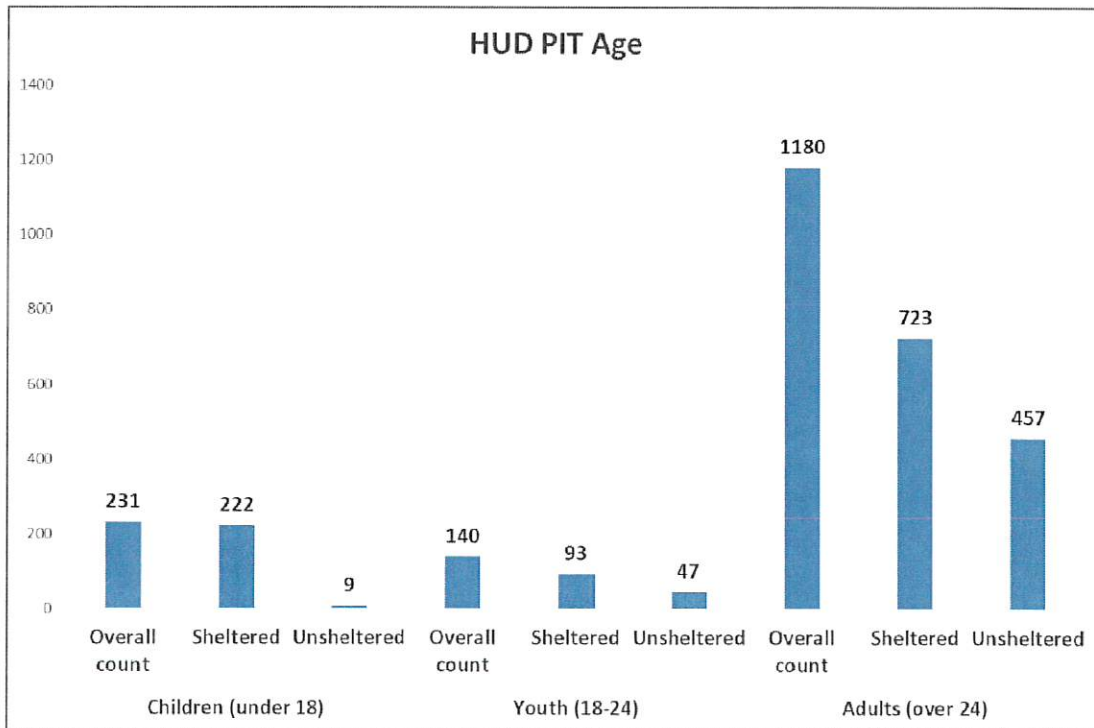
*Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent  
and End Homelessness*

### APPENDIX 3

## 2018 Point-in-Time Data – Child and Student Homelessness

Extracted from Endhomelessness.org: the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires a point-in-time (PIT) count of sheltered and unsheltered people identifying as homeless. Our community conducts a full count of both populations annually, during the last week of January. The count provides demographic and other data insights which help the community track progress toward the goal of ending homelessness. The PIT count is not without limitations. There may be variation in count methodology or outreach from one year to the next and the PIT, by very definition, measures a “point in time” or snapshot of shelter status on a single night. Additionally, families and youth are often afraid or unwilling to participate in PIT counts due to concerns about system involvement and visibility.

	Total Students	Total Families
Academy D 20	91	64
Calhan D R J1	-	-
Cheyenne Mtn D12	12	8
Colorado Springs D11	472	Not Reported
Edison 54JT	1	1
Ellicott D22	-	-
Falcon D49	78	51
FFC D8	212	153
Hanover D28	-	-
Harrison D 2	146	92
Lewis Palmer D38	19	18
Manitou D14	52	36
Miami-Yoder 60JT	0	0
Peyton 23JT	-	-
Widefield D3	34	26
<b>Total # Students</b>	<b>1117</b>	<b>449</b>



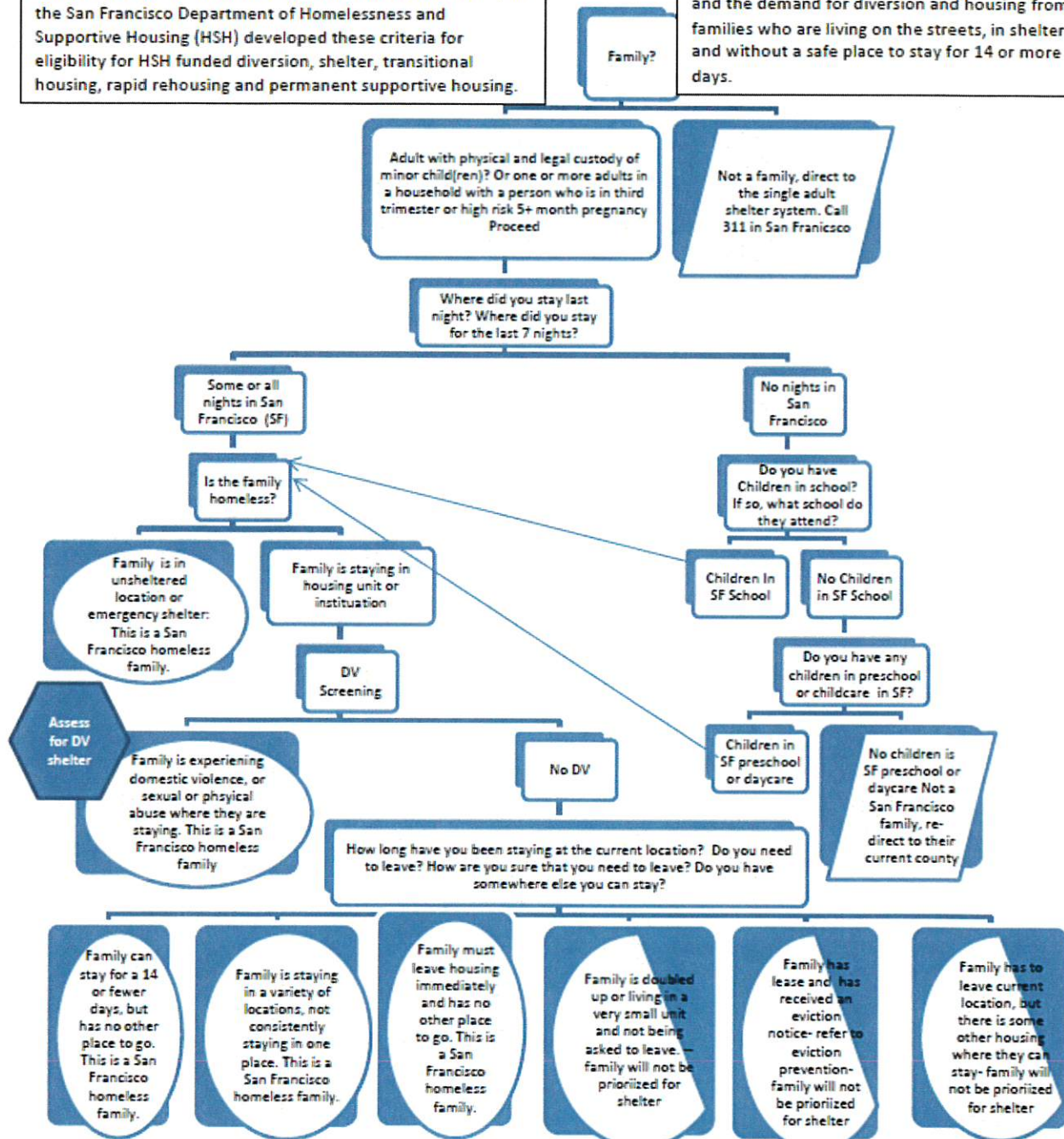


APPENDIX 4

Family Triage Process – San Francisco Model  
San Francisco Homeless Family Triage Process

There are several definitions of homelessness used for families in San Francisco. There are not enough resources in San Francisco to offer shelter, and other resources to all families that meet one or more definition of homelessness, so the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) developed these criteria for eligibility for HSH funded diversion, shelter, transitional housing, rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing.

In consultation with the San Francisco community, HSH will consider serving homeless families who are not prioritized according to these criteria in the future based on the availability of resources, and the demand for diversion and housing from families who are living on the streets, in shelter and without a safe place to stay for 14 or more days.



April 14, 2017

Families in transitional housing and these living situations are eligible for services and rapid rehousing. Families will be prioritized and served with housing assistance based on housing assistance availability and the demand

## APPENDIX 5

### Citations and Resource Links

#### Causes and Solutions for Family Homelessness

<https://www.bassukcenter.org/services-matter/>

<https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/what-causes-homelessness/inequality/>

<https://homestretchva.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/White-Paper-Homestretch-October-2018-A-Better-Way.pdf>

[https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/92566/ending\\_family\\_homelessness\\_through\\_pfs\\_1.pdf](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/92566/ending_family_homelessness_through_pfs_1.pdf)

[https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/family-criteria-benchmarks-july-2017-revision.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/family-criteria-benchmarks-july-2017-revision.pdf)

[https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/USICH\\_OpeningDoors\\_Amendment2015\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/USICH_OpeningDoors_Amendment2015_FINAL.pdf)

<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/Family-Options-Study-Full-Report.pdf>

#### Effects of Homelessness on Children

[http://www.fhfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Homelessness\\_Effects\\_Children.pdf](http://www.fhfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Homelessness_Effects_Children.pdf)

<https://www.nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2018-supplemental-anticipatory-guidance.pdf>

#### Transitional Housing Programs

<http://solutionsforchange.org/transitional-housing-is-essential-in-solving-family-homelessness/>

<https://www.legalclinic.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Set-up-to-fail-2nd-edition.pdf>

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Recovery-Housing-Policy-Brief.pdf>

#### Citations/End Notes:

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<sup>i</sup> Bassuk, Ellen (November 2014) retrieved from: <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Americas-Youngest-Outcasts-Child-Homelessness-Nov2014.pdf>, (11/9/2018)

<sup>ii</sup> Family Promise, retrieved from: <https://familypromise.org/homelessness-fact-sheet/>, (10/31/2018)

<sup>iii</sup> United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (September 2018) retrieved from [https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/Homeslessness in America Families with Children.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Homeslessness_in_America_Families_with_Children.pdf), page 5, (11/12/2018)

<sup>iv</sup> Hamilton Family Center (February 2016) retrieved from: ( <https://hamiltonfamilies.org/wp-content/themes/HamiltonFamilyCenter/images/HamiltonPublicSchoolWhitePaper-Electronic-Copy.pdf>, (11/12/2018)

<sup>v</sup> Bassuk, Ellen et al (2015) retrieved from: <http://www.bassukcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Services-Matter.pdf>, (11/12/2018)

<sup>vi</sup> Community Health Partnership (August 2018) retrieved from: [https://www.ppchp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/2018\\_PIT\\_HIC\\_CommunityReport\\_FNL.pdf](https://www.ppchp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/2018_PIT_HIC_CommunityReport_FNL.pdf), page 11, (10/31/2018)

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**From:** [Shawna Kemppainen](#)  
**To:** [Duarte, Catherine](#)  
**Cc:** [Shawna Kemppainen](#)  
**Subject:** Comment Action Plan 2019  
**Date:** Friday, February 01, 2019 9:01:16 PM

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Comment on 2019 Community Action Plan:

Urban Peak Colorado Springs applauds the proposed 2019 Annual Action Plan from the Community Development Division, and in particular the focus of funding for homeless prevention. Funding from the City of Colorado Springs via CDBG and ESG grants are leveraged with private philanthropic dollars by many nonprofits. The expenditures for facilities, rental assistance, inclusive overnight shelter, affordable housing, and street outreach are needed now and will continue to be needed in our growing community.

Because Urban Peak Colorado Springs is a member of the Way Home America dashboard, monitoring youth homelessness challenges and safe exits on a monthly basis, we would like to share this information from December 2018:

- 111 youth in homelessness ages 18 to 24 were on the By Name List having taken the housing survey in hopes of finding a home – 98 were continuing in homelessness from the previous month; 4 were returning to homelessness; and 9 were newly homeless
- 12 youth exited homelessness – 9 of them to a known safe place.
- While one-third to one-half of youth who take the housing survey qualify for Permanent Supportive Housing, only 5% to 10% ever receive that type of resource
- 48% (51 youth) were sleeping outdoors or in other places not meant for human habitation
- 42% (45 youth) were sleeping in shelters
- 8% (9 youth) were couch surfing

We urge the City of Colorado Springs to set a goal of building into the general fund budget a 1-to-1 match for HUD funding utilized via the Community Development Division's federal funding.

***Shawna Rae Kemppainen***

*(all pronouns used)*

Executive Director

Urban Peak Colorado Springs

719-630-3223 extension 2811

719-201-5926 Cell

E-mail [Shawna@urbanpeak.org](mailto:Shawna@urbanpeak.org)

[www.urbanpeak.org](http://www.urbanpeak.org) / 423 East Cucharas St., Colorado Springs, CO 80903



From: [Toombs - DOLA, Kristin](#)  
To: [Duarte, Catherine](#)  
Subject: Re: Reminder: Seeking input: 30-day comment period on draft 2019 Action Plan  
Date: Friday, February 01, 2019 11:46:39 AM

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Thank you for sharing, Catherine. I have shared this with several other colleagues here at the Colorado Division of Housing. It is helpful to see the vision for Co. Springs and appreciate all of the work that has gone into creating this.

Kristin

---

Kristin Toombs  
Director  
Office of Homeless Initiatives



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1313 Sherman Street, Room 320, Denver, CO 80203  
[kristin.toombs@state.co.us](mailto:kristin.toombs@state.co.us) | [www.colorado.gov/DOLA](http://www.colorado.gov/DOLA)

*Under the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA), all messages sent by or to me on this state-owned e-mail account may be subject to public disclosure.*

On Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 11:38 AM Duarte, Catherine <[Catherine.Duarte@coloradosprings.gov](mailto:Catherine.Duarte@coloradosprings.gov)> wrote:

Good morning, all!

**Just a reminder that today is the last day to submit any written comments or questions about our [draft 2019 Action Plan](#).** Thank you to those folks who made it to the Jan. 16 public meeting. For those of you who couldn't make it and are interested in the topics covered, I've attached a PDF of the slides presented at that meeting. Please feel free to send any questions about those.

We have also continued the new-ish tradition of putting the draft action plan highlights into a 2-page infograph, which is also attached here. This is handy in case you'd like to submit a comment by midnight tonight, but don't want to read the whole report!

**From:** [Posey, Steve](#)  
**To:** [Duarte, Catherine](#)  
**Subject:** 2019 AP Comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 15, 2019 4:49:01 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.gif](#)

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Summary of a call about the 2019 AP:

Zane Penley, Harvey Group Property Management, called to discuss priority needs in the Executive Summary. Mr. Penley asked for clarification of the phrase 'preservation and development of affordable housing.' Examples of preservation that were given include maintaining rental subsidies at properties with expiring tax credits and administration of the owner-occupied rehab program. Examples of development include gap financing for new multi-family construction.

**Steve Posey**

Community Development  
HUD Program Manager  
719-385-6880  
[steve.posey@coloradosprings.gov](mailto:steve.posey@coloradosprings.gov)

**From:** [Janice Taylor](#)  
**To:** [Duarte, Catherine](#)  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 02, 2019 5:33:57 PM

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Following is my input to the comment period on draft 2019 Action Plan:

<https://coloradosprings.gov/community-development/page/community-development-action-plan?mlid=33701>

This plan or program is another example of politicians and the administrative state going through a public “process” in order to give the appearance of partnering with citizens. It is nothing more than steamrolling our good citizens. Taxpayer money paid in is followed by money out, making those involved in its disbursement feel good, nothing more. The government, in this case HUD, is returning the citizens’ own money with tricks and regulations attached. It is a sham.

Janice Taylor  
Colorado Springs