

**The Salvation Army
Emergency Cold Weather Shelter**

PROJECT STATEMENT

Contact

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Project Location

505 S. Weber Street, Colorado Springs, CO

Description

The Salvation Army Emergency Warming Shelter provides a safe emergency shelter environment for up to 150 unsheltered persons during cold weather months. The shelter operated at 505 S. Weber between October 19, 2015 and April 17, 2016 under a one-year conditional use permit subject to review by the Downtown Review Board. The Salvation Army is seeking a conditional use permit to operate an emergency cold weather shelter for a third year with the following conditions:

- Permission to operate daily from January 3rd, 2018 to April 30, 2018 whenever temperatures fall below 38 degrees Fahrenheit. Though final operating dates are to be determined, this timeframe provides more flexibility to respond to unpredictable weather without violating zoning code. DRB approved November 1 to April 15 with the previous CUP.
- Operating hours from 6pm to 9am with the option to operate longer hours on days of extreme cold (generally 20 degrees or less). Regular operating hours have yet to be determined, but an extended timeframe allows more flexibility to respond to changing weather conditions and other needs that might arise. DRB approved flexibility to modify hours with the previous CUP.
- Maximum occupancy of 170. This is the Fire Code limit. During the previous emergency cold weather operations, on dates of extremely cold temperatures, the facility did reach Fire Code capacity. Average occupancy during the coldest months was about 145 people per night. DRB approved an occupancy of 150 with the previous CUP. Request is to increase to Fire Code capacity of 170.

The Emergency Cold Weather Shelter is a behavior-based, low barrier shelter. Entrance is not conditioned on sobriety or background checks. Good behavior is expected. Disruptive, violent or otherwise inappropriate behavior is not tolerated. Guests are required to provide ID or they are entered into HMIS and print out an ID if they do not have one. No smoking, weapons, drugs or

alcohol are permitted in the shelter. Men and women are segregated. The shelter offers the following services:

- Dinner meal beginning at 5:30pm
- Bedding for the night
- Restroom facilities
- Morning breakfast (continental style)
- Referrals to other services
- Opportunity for case management and access to regular sheltering program
- Overnight storage for large items
- Accommodations for pets as feasible

Project Need

There is significant unmet need for emergency shelter in Colorado Springs in general and a specific need for additional emergency shelter beds during cold weather months when low and extremely low temperatures put unsheltered residents at significant risk of hypothermia, frostbite and even death. At the Point in Time Count (PIT) of the homeless conducted by the Pikes Peak United Way in January 2017, 457 respondents identified as unsheltered. At that time, only 69 emergency beds were available and those beds were limited to high barrier shelter such as RJ Montgomery(50) and specific subpopulations such as respite(7), youth(4), Veterans(1), and families(6). This leaves a gap of at least 388 emergency shelter beds.

Most people on the street are there not because they choose to be, but because policy barriers (such as maintaining maintain sobriety) and an insufficient number of shelter beds leave them with no other options. By increasing the number of emergency shelter beds and admitting people to shelters based on behavior, we better ensure that people living on the street have opportunity to be sheltered, connected with services and ultimately, housed. This is better for people experiencing homelessness and better for the neighborhoods where people experiencing homelessness are often forced to take refuge outdoors.

The Salvation Army operated an emergency cold weather shelter at the site from October 19, 2015 to April 17, 2016 with few incidents. Neighborhood concerns included trash, staging of bulky items in front of the site (shopping carts and belongings), people hanging around the site all day and lines forming early. There were many requests to use the restroom at the convenience store at Cimarron and Nevada. The Salvation Army has met with City staff to discuss strategies for mitigating issues that concern the residents and businesses. The Salvation Army and the City are also hosted a neighborhood meeting on December 5, 2017 to get input from area residents and businesses. The discussions between The Salvation Army as well as the input from the neighborhood meeting culminated in the creation of a “Shelter Management Agreement” that mitigates many of the concerns of the neighborhood.