



ADAMS COUNTY

COLORADO
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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**STUDY SESSION AGENDA
TUESDAY
February 7, 2017**

ALL TIMES LISTED ON THIS AGENDA ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

10:00 A.M.	ATTENDEE(S):	Jeanne Shreve
	ITEM:	Legislative Working Group
10:30 A.M.	ATTENDEE(S):	Raymond Gonzales
	ITEM:	Homeless Assessment Study
11:30 A.M.	ATTENDEE(S):	Ben Dahlman
	ITEM:	2016 FY External Audit Work Plan
12:30 P.M.	ATTENDEE(S):	Ben Dahlman
	ITEM:	2017 Internal Audit Plan
1:30 P.M.	ATTENDEE(S):	Raymond Gonzales
	ITEM:	Land Disposal Recommendations
2:00 P.M.	ATTENDEE(S):	Barry Gore / Tricia Allen
	ITEM:	ACED Annual Work Plan Review
2:30 P.M.	ATTENDEE(S):	Todd Leopold
	ITEM:	Administrative Item Review / Commissioner Communications
3:00 P.M.	ATTENDEE(S):	Heidi Miller
	ITEM:	Executive Session Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(a) for the Purpose of Discussion Potential Sale of Real Property
3:30 P.M.	ATTENDEE(S):	Heidi Miller
	ITEM:	Executive Session Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b) and (e) for the Purpose of Receiving Legal Advice and Advising Negotiators Regarding Northglenn Case
4:00 P.M.	ATTENDEE(S):	Heidi Miller
	ITEM:	Executive Session Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(e) for the Purpose of Advising Negotiators Regarding ACC Structure

(AND SUCH OTHER MATTERS OF PUBLIC BUSINESS WHICH MAY ARISE)

AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE



STUDY SESSION AGENDA ITEM

DATE: 2/07/17
SUBJECT: Legislative Working Group (LWG) – General Assembly Legislative Review
FROM: Jeanne Shreve, Intergovernmental Relations Office
AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: Intergovernmental Relations Office, County Manager's Office
ATTENDEES: Jeanne Shreve, LWG
PURPOSE OF ITEM: Brief BoCC on previous week's General Assembly legislation of relevance to the County, and obtain County stances on said legislation
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Review, discussion, and obtain County stances on legislation

BACKGROUND:

The First Regular Session of the Seventy-first Colorado General Assembly convened on January 11, 2017. These Study Sessions will review, with the BoCC, the pertinent legislation introduced the previous week in order for the BoCC to take official County positions on each piece of relevant legislation.

AGENCIES, DEPARTMENTS OR OTHER OFFICES INVOLVED:

Intergovernmental Relations Office, Legislative Working Group, County Manager's Office

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:

FISCAL IMPACT:

Please check if there is no fiscal impact . If there is fiscal impact, please fully complete the section below.

Fund:

Cost Center:

	Object Account	Subledger	Amount
Current Budgeted Revenue:			
Additional Revenue not included in Current Budget:			
Total Revenues:			

	Object Account	Subledger	Amount
Current Budgeted Operating Expenditure:			
Add'l Operating Expenditure not included in Current Budget:			
Current Budgeted Capital Expenditure:			
Add'l Capital Expenditure not included in Current Budget:			
Total Expenditures:			

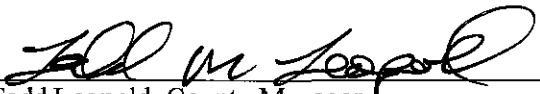
New FTEs requested: YES NO

Future Amendment Needed: YES NO


Additional Note:

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:

APPROVAL OF FISCAL IMPACT:



Todd Leopold, County Manager



Nancy Durr
Budget / Finance



Raymond H. Gonzales, Deputy County Manager

Bryan Ostler, Interim Deputy County Manager



STUDY SESSION AGENDA ITEM

DATE: February 7, 2017
SUBJECT: Homelessness Study
FROM: Raymond H. Gonzales, Deputy County Manager
AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: County Manager's Office
ATTENDEES: Don Burnes, The Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness Courtney Brown, The Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness Chris Kline, Human Services Herb Covey, Human Services Nathan Mosley, Parks & Open Space Norman Wright, Community & Economic Development Joelle Greenland, Community & Economic Development Joshua Kennedy, Sheriff Office
PURPOSE OF ITEM: To report the findings of the study completed by The Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness, University of Denver
STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

BACKGROUND:

During the summer of 2016 Adams County engaged the professional services of The Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness to examine the growth of the homeless population around the Clear Creek and South Platte River corridor of Adams County.

The report includes three primary tasks:

- 1) Conduct and analysis of services currently available to address the needs of the individuals living in encampments in Adams County.
- 2) Develop a set of recommendations to meet the needs of individuals living in encampments while simultaneously addressing concerns of public health and safety over both the short and long term. The plan would involve collaboration with key stakeholder groups—individuals experiencing homelessness in encampments, county leadership, county agencies, homeless service providers, and city officials from municipalities surrounding the encampments.
- 3) Look broadly at the County's strategies for addressing homelessness more generally and help inform short- and long-term strategies in the County to

address all aspects of homelessness, not just those individuals in the encampments.

AGENCIES, DEPARTMENTS OR OTHER OFFICES INVOLVED:

County Manager's Office
Human Services Department
Parks and Open Space Department
Community and Economic Development Department
Sheriff Office
The Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness, University of Denver

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:

Final Report
Power Point

FISCAL IMPACT:

Please check if there is no fiscal impact . If there is fiscal impact, please fully complete the section below.

Fund:

Cost Center:

	Object Account	Subledger	Amount
Current Budgeted Revenue:			
Additional Revenue not included in Current Budget:			
Total Revenues:			

	Object Account	Subledger	Amount
Current Budgeted Operating Expenditure:			
Add'l Operating Expenditure not included in Current Budget:			
Current Budgeted Capital Expenditure:			
Add'l Capital Expenditure not included in Current Budget:			
Total Expenditures:			

New FTEs requested: YES NO

Future Amendment Needed: YES NO

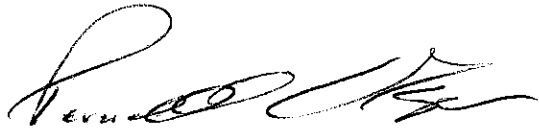
Additional Note:

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:


APPROVAL OF FISCAL IMPACT:



Todd Leopold, County Manager



Budget / Finance



Raymond H. Gonzales, Deputy County Manager

Bryan Ostler, Interim Deputy County Manager



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GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness

December 30, 2016

MEMORANDUM

To: Ray Gonzales, Gabe Rodriguez

From: Donald Burnes, Courtney Brown

Re: Final Report from The Burnes Center

It is with pleasure that we send you the final report of our findings and recommendations regarding homelessness in Adams County, *An Assessment of Adams County's Efforts to Address Homelessness*. As you will see, the report includes a Table of Contents, Acknowledgements, an Executive Summary, the full report including citations where appropriate, and Appendices. We have also tried to incorporate your suggestions about the draft report into this final document as much as possible.

Many of the service providers that were interviewed have expressed an interest in reading the report. Please let us know if and when it would be appropriate to share the report with service providers in Adams County.

As we say in the Conclusion of the report, although a few of the recommendations can be accomplished with the expenditure of very little money, most of our suggestions will require political will, real commitment, and substantial financial investment. However, we also know that creating housing and appropriate wrap-around services is cheaper than letting individuals continue to live on the streets and in shelters. Therefore, we feel it is in the best interests of Adams County to move forward aggressively to address our recommendations.

We are optimistic about future efforts to overcome homelessness in Adams County. Throughout our work, we have encountered dedicated people who are deeply committed to solving this problem. We have been impressed by their insights, the quality of the ideas that have been suggested, and by the passion and compassion that they have demonstrated. There is clearly a base of interest and commitment here upon which to build. That is very encouraging.

As we indicate in the report, there is much work to be done. We recognize that it will be a challenge to marshal the necessary will and resources to address the problem as fully as we would all like. Please know that we stand ready to provide any assistance to you and your colleagues as the County moves forward.

Thank you again for the opportunity to work with the two of you and all the others with whom we have had contact.

Our very best,

Don and Courtney



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December | 2016

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness

An Assessment of Adams County's Efforts to Address Homelessness

Report prepared by: Donald Burnes and Courtney Brown of the
Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness

Consultants: Tracey O'Brien, Frederick Richmond, Molly Jacobson

Interns: Betsy Bevis, Michelle Crandell, Ann Franek, Sarah Park

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness would like to thank the Adams County Government for its willingness to collaborate and for its assistance in completing this assessment of efforts to address homelessness. We would like to recognize the hard work of many Adams County government officials in realizing this project and extend a special thank you to Ray Gonzales, Gabe Rodriguez, Chris Kline, Herb Covey, other County department heads, the Office of the Adams County Sheriff, Deputy Joshua Kennedy and the entire Community Resource Team. We thank Don May, Peter LiFari and Dave Riggs at the Adams County Housing Authority. We would also like to thank the service providers in Adams County and the individuals experiencing homelessness for their time and participation, which made this assessment possible. At the Burnes Center, we believe that assessment and evaluation are essential in order to impact policies and practices that can transform the lives of those experiencing homelessness.

Thank you for this opportunity,
The Burnes Center Staff

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The number of people experiencing homelessness in Adams County, especially those in camps along the Clear Creek and the South Platte River, has grown over the past several years, prompting Adams County to re-examine its approach to addressing this issue. As a result of increasing public concern, the office of the County Manager and members of the Board of County Commissioners reached out to the Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness (BC) to assist in this re-examination.

In response to the County's request, BC proposed to undertake three primary tasks:

- Conduct an analysis of services currently available to address the needs of individuals living in encampments in Adams County.
- Develop a set of recommendations to meet the needs of individuals living in encampments while simultaneously addressing concerns of public health and safety over both the short and long term. The plan would involve collaboration with key stakeholder groups—individuals experiencing homelessness in encampments, county leadership, county agencies, homeless service providers, and city officials from municipalities surrounding the encampments.
- Look broadly at the County's strategies for addressing homelessness more generally and help inform short- and long-term strategies in the County to address all aspects of homelessness, not just those individuals in the encampments.

METHODOLOGY

In developing its approach to these three tasks, BC staff identified a basic research question and several sub questions to guide its assessment and recommendations. The basic research question is: ***What can the County do to improve its services to those experiencing homelessness?***

The sub questions are:

- A) Who are the campers and what do they need in terms of services?
- B) What services are available in the County for those experiencing homelessness, including the campers?
- C) What are the gaps in services in the County for the overall population of those experiencing homelessness?
- D) What recommendations do the campers have for improving services?
- E) What recommendations do county officials and service providers have for improving services?

In its assessment, the Center utilized a systems mapping approach that includes the identification of needs, available services, gaps in services and solutions for the creation of a truly integrated system of services in a geographical area. We also used a partnership approach to research that involves various organizational representatives and community members including those who are currently experiencing homelessness as collaborative and active participants in the process. We gathered data from residents in the camps, from service providers in the County, from County officials, and from other interested parties as a basis for our recommendations.

FINDINGS

Our data collection and analysis identified five important findings:

- A. There is inadequate shelter space in the County for families and for individuals.
- B. Like most other jurisdictions across the country, there is insufficient housing to address the needs of the County's individuals who are experiencing homelessness.
- C. There are services that individuals identified as being needed, especially showers, employment assistance, help getting identification, storage, housing assistance and shelter.
- D. There is a lack of a clear countywide plan to address homelessness.
- E. There is a need for improved collaboration among the various departments that have responsibility for dealing with homelessness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of these findings, the recommendations have been grouped by time frame.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION OVER ONE TO THREE YEARS

The following seven recommendations, will take some time, probably 1-3 years. However, given the immediacy of the winter months, we encourage the County to move quickly to start considering them as soon as possible.

Recommendation #1: The County should convene a group to develop a 10 Year Plan to address homelessness.

Recommendation #2: The County should develop a plan to evaluate its efforts to address homelessness.

Recommendation #3: The County should approach future efforts to address homelessness as a seamless system of services rather than as a series of individual services and agencies.

Recommendation #4: The County should hire a homelessness services coordinator.

Recommendation #5: The County should improve and expand its communication and coordination between county government offices and its network of housing providers including the Adams County Housing Authority.

Recommendation #6: The County should provide dedicated alternative safe, secure, dignified, habitable space for persons not willing to go to shelters.

Recommendation #7: The County should provide some assistance to the Sheriff and Deputy Sheriffs that patrol the encampments.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION OVER THREE TO FIVE YEARS

The following four recommendations are listed in the 3-5 year time frame because complete enactment of them will take at least that long. However, we strongly encourage decision makers to begin to think through enactment strategies long before the third year.

Recommendation #8: The County should provide more available shelter space for families and for single adults.

Recommendation #9: The County should explore creating service jobs for those in the encampments and for others experiencing homelessness similar to the Denver Day Works program.

Recommendation #10: The County should pay much more attention to homelessness prevention.

Recommendation #11: The County should develop strategies to locate services where the people are, rather than providing services in a central location.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION OVER FIVE OR MORE YEARS

It will likely take five to ten years to adequately address the affordable housing crisis, at a minimum. However, we think Adams County should start addressing the issues of affordable and attainable housing earlier than five years from now.

Recommendation #12: The County should create more affordable/attainable housing for its poorest residents.

Recommendation #13: The County should form partnerships with surrounding county governments, city governments and service providers to develop a true regional approach to address homelessness.

CONCLUSION

Although a few of the recommendations can be accomplished with the expenditure of very little money, most of our suggestions will require political will, real commitment, and substantial financial investment. If our nation's failure to end homelessness over the last 35 years has taught us anything, it's that solving this problem doesn't come on the cheap. However, we also know from a variety of studies that creating housing and appropriate wrap-around services is cheaper than letting individuals continue to live on the streets and in shelters.¹ Therefore, it is in the best interests of Adams County to move forward aggressively to address these recommendations.

¹ Culhane (2008) *The Cost of Homelessness: A Perspective from the United States*
Perlman & Parvensky (2006) *Denver Housing First Collaborative Cost Benefit Analysis and Program Outcomes Report*. Denver: Colorado Coalition for the Homeless.
Tsemberis (2010) *Housing First: ending homelessness, promoting recovery and reducing costs*
Zaretsky, Flatau & Brady (2008) *What is the (net) cost to government of homelessness programs?*

ASSESSMENT REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Adams County, like cities, suburbs, and rural areas across the country, has been challenged by the question of how best to respond to its population of people experiencing homelessness. Although there has been a county response to homelessness over the past number of years, in the past several months, the Sheriff and other county departments have received increasing numbers of reports from concerned citizens regarding newly developed homeless encampments along the Clear Creek and South Platte River trail systems near the intersection of highways 270 and 76. These new encampments have raised concerns related to public health and safety.

As a result of the increase in citizen concern, the office of the County manager and members of the Board of County Commissioners reached out to the Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness (BC) to provide advice on how best address these issues. In addition, the County requested that the BC provide recommendations about the overall approach to homelessness in the County.

In response to the County's request, BC focused on three primary tasks:

- Conduct an analysis of services currently available to address the needs of individuals living in encampments in Adams County. This included identifying service needs, barriers, and gaps in service, as well as the capacity of service providers.
- Develop a set of recommendations to meet the needs of individuals living in encampments while simultaneously addressing concerns of public health and safety over both the short and long term. The plan would involve collaboration with key stakeholder groups—individuals experiencing homelessness in encampments, county leadership, county agencies, homeless service providers, and city officials from municipalities surrounding the encampments.
- Look broadly at the County's strategies for addressing homelessness more generally and help inform short and long term strategies in the County to address all aspects of homelessness, not just those individuals in the encampments.

In developing its approach to these three tasks, BC staff identified a basic research question and several sub questions to guide its assessment and recommendations. The basic question is: ***What can the County do to improve its services to those experiencing homelessness?***

The sub questions are:

- A) Who are the campers and what do they need in terms of services?
- B) What services are available in the County for those experiencing homelessness, including the campers?
- C) What are the gaps in services in the County for the overall population of those experiencing homelessness?
- D) What recommendations do the campers have for improving services?
- E) What recommendations do county officials and service providers have for improving services?

METHODOLOGY

Study Approach—Systems Mapping

BC designed the assessment instruments utilizing a systems mapping approach. Systems mapping includes the identification of needs, available services, gaps in services, and solutions for the creation of a truly integrated system of services in a specific geographical area. We used a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach to conduct this research, that is, a partnership approach to research that involves various organizational representatives and community members including those who are currently experiencing homelessness as collaborative and active participants in the process.

Interviews

The Burnes Center worked with Adams County officials to develop two interview protocols—one for individuals experiencing homelessness and residing in encampments and another for Adams County homeless service providers.

The interview protocol for individuals experiencing homelessness included questions about:

- Personal and demographic information
- Length of time the individual had been camping
- Why they were camping
- Which services they used and where those services were located

In marked contrast to most other studies of this kind, we also asked about the types of services the individual needed to be able to access in Adams County. This question provided the participants with an opportunity to identify not only what services they need but suggestions they might have for improving the County's approach to addressing homelessness.

BC staff interviewed homeless service providers about:

- Types of services offered at their organizations
- Restrictions or requirements for services (e.g., sobriety, background check, populations served, etc.)
- Current capacity and demand for homeless services
- Which organizations and county departments they collaborate with to address homelessness
- Homeless issues that they believe are most pressing in Adams County and their suggestions for addressing these issues

In addition, BC developed a set of interview questions for Adams County officials from the various departments, asking:

- How each department interacts with individuals experiencing homelessness
- How County departments interact among themselves regarding homelessness
- How County departments interact with service providers
- What if any departmental resources are available to address homelessness
- Opinions regarding the major issues in the County related to homelessness, including suggestions for improving the County's response to these issues

Data Collection

BC traveled to homeless encampments on the Clear Creek trail on October 28, 2016 with the Adams County Sheriff's Department. BC staff and interns clearly communicated to participants that the interview was voluntary and that none of the information collected would identify a specific individual. Participants received ten dollars as compensation for completing a 30-45 minute interview. BC conducted 24 structured interviews with individuals in the encampments; however, one interview was eliminated from the analysis because the participant's mental health prohibited the interviewers from collecting accurate information. This respondent made it clear that he was not likely to access services or stay in a shelter.

From September 1 to November 18, 2016, BC completed 12 structured interviews with representatives from all of the major service providers in Adams County that offer shelter and housing assistance. We also interviewed representatives from the Adams County Housing Authority. BC completed a number of interviews with additional organizational representatives from local government, law enforcement and non-profits that offer services relevant to homelessness (e.g., employment assistance, referral information, case management, mental health, drug treatment, etc.). Three representatives of Adams County service providers either cancelled their interview appointments and could not reschedule or were unavailable for interviews within the assessment period. These organizations included Servicios de la Raza, Salud Family Health Centers and A Rising Hope.

Additionally, BC conducted seven interviews with Adams County officials from the following departments/offices: County Manager, Sheriff, Parks and Open Spaces, Community and Economic Development, Human Services and Long Range Strategic Planning. A complete list of the County departments and service provider organizations interviewed is included in Appendix A.

Secondary Data Collection

BC gathered data on Adams County demographics, poverty and homelessness as well as information related to the availability and capacity of housing and sheltering services within the County. The researchers collected these data from:

- Online sources including the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) Point-in-Time (PIT) surveys, the Colorado Department of Education data on homelessness among school children, and demographic data from the census..
- Regular meetings of service providers in Adams County including the Coalition for the Homeless meetings, Poverty Reduction Workgroup meetings and through email exchanges with Adams County employees and service providers. These data supplement and provide context for the interview findings.

Analysis

SPSS, a standard statistical software package, was used to analyze quantitative data (e.g., frequencies, cross tabs, means, etc.). Qualitative interview data were coded by major themes and then summarized. The instruments—the interview protocol for individuals in the homeless encampments, the interview protocol for homeless services providers and city officials, and the list of questions asked of county officials—are included in Appendix B.

Limitations of the Data

All individuals found in homeless encampments on October 28, 2016, were invited to participate. Since these findings reflect those individuals that voluntarily agreed to participate, it was not a random sample. Therefore, while our sample appeared to be representative of the population, results cannot be generalized to the entire encampment population.

Homeless families are an important demographic that are not represented in this assessment, as BC staff did not encounter any families with children in the encampments. As discussed below, families comprise a large percentage of those experiencing

homelessness in Adams County. BC was only able to infer some of the needs of homeless families from interviews with service providers and background data.

Finally, fewer interviews with service providers were collected than anticipated because of scheduling conflicts and cancellations. However, we interviewed the major providers of shelter and housing assistance in the County. Additional interviews would help add depth to the assessment and increase the validity of the results.

BACKGROUND

Demographics, Poverty and Risk of Homelessness in Adams County²

According to the latest census data, Adams County has a population of 491,337 of which 27.5% are under the age of eighteen and 9.8% are sixty-five or older. The Office of Long Range Strategic Planning states that Adams County has the highest number of children per capita in the state, with approximately 30,000 children under the age of five. In 2014 there were an estimated 155,047 households. Approximately 30% of the population speaks a language other than English in the home. An estimated 81% of the population has a high school diploma and only 21% have a Bachelor's degree, representing an opportunity for increasing income potential through education.

According to census data, the median household income in 2014 was \$57,421³ per year, and an estimated 13% of the population was experiencing poverty. The Office of Long Range Strategic Planning states that 125,000 people in Adams County have less than \$500 in their checking and savings accounts combined at any time, thus representing individuals who are at risk of experiencing homelessness in the event of a financial stressor. Another set of data illustrative of the number of households possibly living on the edge of homelessness includes those receiving governmental assistance. The Adams County Department of Human Services has provided information regarding their caseload in Table 1.

² Demographic and Census data in these paragraphs comes from Census.gov unless otherwise noted.

³The National Low Income Housing Coalition 2016 *Out of Reach* report states that the AMI for Adams County in 2016 was \$80,100.

Table 1. Adams County Human Services Caseload⁴

Benefit Type	2014	2015	2016
Average No. of SNAP Households Served Monthly	22,531	21,726	21,244
Average No. of TANF Households Served Monthly	1,294	1,455	1,454
Average No. of Adult Financial Households Served Monthly	2,756	2,702	2,556
Average No. of Health First Colorado (Medicaid) Households Served Monthly	55,119	64,243	73,188
Average Monthly Benefits Issued for the Same Households			
SNAP	\$7.4 million	\$6.89 million	\$6.5 million
TANF	\$512,759	\$578,126	\$583,041
Adult Financial	\$958,856	\$1.0 million	\$919,390
Medicaid	<i>No data</i>	<i>No data</i>	<i>No data</i>

**No data available for SSI households*

Housing Costs⁵

There are an estimated 167,043 housing units in the County, and renters make up approximately 35% of the population. The National Low Income Housing Coalition’s (NLIHC) report provides additional information on the housing wage in Adams County, i.e. the hourly wage needed to afford a two-bedroom unit without exceeding 30% of the household income. In Adams County the estimated cost of a two-bedroom unit at Fair Market Rent (FMR) is \$1,227 per month making the housing wage in Adams County \$23.60, which is slightly higher than the state average of \$21.12. This represents 2.8 minimum wage jobs at forty hours per week and a yearly salary of \$49,080. NLIHC states that in 2016 there were approximately 54,976 renter households and the average renter wage was \$14.97. The rent affordable at this wage is approximately \$778 per month; it would take 1.6 jobs at this average renter wage to pay the fair market rent.

Data on Homelessness

Table 2 highlights some demographic characteristics of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Adams County according to the Metro Denver’s Homeless Initiative (MDHI) Point-in-Time (PIT) surveys. Several data points are conspicuous in the

⁴ Data provided by the Adams County Department of Human Services.

⁵ These data come from the NLIHC 2016 *Out of Reach* report http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/OOR_2016.pdf

annual counts of homeless subpopulations below. First, overall numbers for 2016 are down substantially from all the previous years. However, from what various individuals reported, we believe this represents a serious undercount, created by an incomplete execution of the PIT in January of this year, rather than by a substantial reduction in actual numbers. Related to this is the number of persons who are chronically homeless. (Persons are considered chronically homeless if they have a disability and have been either homeless constantly for over a year or have had four bouts of homelessness in the past three years.) Although the actual numbers of such individuals is down in 2016 (probably due to the undercount), the percentage of chronically homeless individuals compared to the total population of those experiencing homelessness is actually higher than in previous years.

Second, prior to 2014, MDHI counted persons who were doubled-up as homelessness. In the 2014 PIT, MDHI separated out this population. In part, this accounts for the tremendous drop in total homeless from 2013 to 2014. This alteration to the definition of homelessness where doubled-up was no longer considered homelessness could also account for some of the change in percentages related to gender, as it is possible that females are more likely to be doubled-up than males. As well, this change in methodology likely influences the rise in unsheltered individuals as a percentage of the total population. Additionally, family composition among those experiencing homelessness has changed between 2014 and 2015, which may be accounted for by the locations where the survey was administered.

Table 2. Subpopulations of Homeless in Adams County – PIT Counts⁶

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total Homeless	1531	864	1,264	532	572	200
Male/Female	40%/60%	37%/63%	37%/62%	57%/43%	51%/49%	52%/48%
Chronically Homeless	7	14	32	36	31	13
Unsheltered	1.1%	3.7%	6%	11%	18%	30%
Family status						
Single Adults	12.3%	12.6%	15%	16%	56%	NA
Unaccompanied Youth	--	--	--	--	5%	7%
Persons in Families with children	85%	85%	80%	81%	32%	69%
Persons in Families without children	3%	3%	5%	4%	7%	31%

The PIT survey collects data on the reasons why individuals and families are experiencing homelessness and where they last had a permanent residence. Table 3 includes the top five reasons given for why individuals and families were experiencing homelessness in Adams County over the last three years. For the last three years the top three reasons given for homelessness in Adams County included losing a job or unemployment, housing costs that are too high, and family/relationship breakup.

Table 3. PIT Reasons for Homelessness in Adams County⁷

2014	2015	2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40.9% Lost job or could not find employment • 27.4% Family or relationship break-up • 20.9% Housing costs were too high • 15.3% Bad credit • 14.4% Mental Illness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26.4% Unable to pay rent • 25.4% Lost job or could not find employment • 20% Family or relationship break-up • 14.1% Asked to leave • 12% Bad credit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26% Lost job or could not find employment • 24% Unable to pay rent • 22.9% Family or relationship break-up • 22.9% Asked to leave • 15.6% Alcohol/Substance use

⁶ Metro Denver Homeless Initiative <http://mdhi.org/point-in-time-reports/>

⁷ *Ibid*

Over the last two years mobility among those experiencing homelessness surveyed during the PIT has shown that the majority of individuals spending the night in Adams County had a permanent place to stay in Adams County (61% in 2016 and 53% in 2015) or in Denver (17% in 2016 and 22% in 2015). The percentage of those from out of state or country fell to 9% in 2016 from 14% in 2015. Although the majority of individuals experiencing homelessness in Adams County had their last residence in Adams County, the PIT shows that more individuals migrate to Denver once homeless. In 2015, 375 homeless individuals in the Metro Denver Area ~~that~~ said their last permanent residence was in Adams County—190 were surveyed in Denver, 146 in Adams County. In 2016 there were 230 people metro wide that last resided in Adams County—127 were in Denver compared to 55 in Adams County. The greater concentration of services for homelessness located in Denver is likely the reason for this migration.

The Adams County Department of Human Services recently examined poverty and mobility in the County. While this examination was larger in scope than just looking at homelessness, census data indicate that there is a higher percentage of impoverished people moving into Adams than the state average (9.2% vs. 7.5%). Both Arapahoe and Weld Counties have higher percentages of people below the 100% poverty level moving into their counties than Adams (10.6% and 9.5% respectively).⁸

The PIT survey is only one source of data and has a number of limitations.⁹ Additional data are needed to supplement the PIT in order to gain a more accurate picture of homelessness. The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) collects data on school-aged children experiencing homelessness throughout the school year. While the PIT survey uses HUD guidelines to define homelessness, the Department of Education operates under a different definition of homelessness, one that includes families that are

⁸ Personal Communication with Herb Covey.

⁹ The PIT survey only provides a snapshot of homelessness during a single night in January and the limitations of the PIT survey are widely recognized. Some of these limitations include: 1) it only counts those identified as homeless at that time and who are also willing to participate; 2) it only captures those who meet the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition of homelessness which does not include people living in motels paid out of their own pocket, couch surfers and those living double/tripled up.

doubled/tripled up and living in motels. Table 4 includes information on homelessness in Adams County from the CDE. These numbers only include the school-age children in homeless families, not the adults or the younger children/any children that are not enrolled in school. These numbers suggest that many more individuals are experiencing homelessness than is shown in the PIT, especially if one estimates the unaccounted for family members. These increased numbers are likely the result of the more inclusive definition of homelessness used by the CDE and the collection of data throughout the school year.

Table 4. Colorado Department of Education Homeless Data by School Year¹⁰

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Shelters, Transitional Housing, Awaiting Foster Care Placement	133	199	208	166	210
Doubled-up Due to Economic Hardship	2837	3963	3470	3511	3778
Unsheltered	101	58	45	58	91
Hotel or Motel	79	176	148	139	206
Totals	3150	4396	3871	3874	4285

Sheltering in Adams County

There are five major service providers in Adams County that provide shelter—Access Housing, Almost Home, Cold Weather Care, Comitis Crisis Center, and Growing Home. There are 62 shelter beds year round for families with children: Access Housing (18), Almost Home (30) and Growing Home (14). Currently Access Housing is unable to use two of its eight buildings, reducing their available beds to 10 and the total number of shelter beds for families to 54. Approximately, 25% or one-fourth of Access Housing’s families is homeless because of domestic violence. There is one domestic violence shelter in Adams County, A Rising Hope, which has approximately 6 beds for survivors of domestic violence.

¹⁰ Colorado Department of Education https://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/homeless_data

There are only two service providers in Adams County that serve single individuals experiencing homelessness. Comitis Crisis Center is located just inside Adams County in Aurora and serves both individuals and families year round with 139 beds. Additionally, Cold Weather Care consists of a network of Churches in Adams County that offer 20 shelter beds to individuals during the coldest six months of the year.

All of the shelters have limits on the length of time an individual or family can stay in their shelters, ranging from 30-90 days. The number of available shelter beds is only a fraction of what people need, according to the data from the PIT and Colorado Department of Education.

Housing Assistance in Adams County¹¹

The Adams County Housing Authority (ACHA) manages the vast majority of housing vouchers (currently 1,498) in Adams County (housing vouchers allow individuals and families to pay only a portion of their monthly rent bill). Almost 300 additional vouchers in Adams County are not managed by ACHA (e.g., 75 in Commerce City and 220 in Brighton). ACHA receives approximately 15-20 contacts per week from households in Denver needing to use their vouchers in Adams County. The average household size for the voucher program is three, with an average annual income of \$13,000. Well over half (69%) of the vouchers in Adams County are held by non-disabled elderly adults without children. According to federal guidelines, at least 75% of individuals in the housing voucher programs must be at or below 30% area median income (AMI) and an additional percentage up to 25%, can be at or below 50% AMI.

Individuals and families are chosen to receive housing vouchers through a lottery system in Adams County. The last time the lottery opened in 2014, the Housing Authority received approximately 4,000 applications in two days for an estimated 500 available vouchers—a demand that is eight times greater than the supply. The Housing Authority expects an even higher volume of applicants in 2017 due to the launch of the new online application system.

¹¹ Data provided by the Adams County Housing Authority.

Out of the 500 individuals that were randomly selected through the lottery at the last opening, approximately 450 qualified for the program and 300 were successful in finding housing. There is currently a 98% occupancy rate in the county that has caused many property owners to opt out of housing voucher programs because they can collect higher rents at market rates. In the recent past, 60-70% of housing vouchers issued in Adams County were returned because the recipient could not find a unit where they could use the voucher. The competitiveness of the rental market also affects the number of vouchers that are issued. As the Fair Market Rent increases, ACHA must spend more money per voucher, reducing the overall number of available vouchers.

ACHA also manages 10 properties with an estimated 1,500 units of housing. There is not significant overlap among the voucher programs and ACHA properties (approximately 200 vouchers). There are two properties in development that will include 60 additional units. Table 5 shows the residents by AMI in all 10 ACHA properties.

Table 5. ACHA Property Residents by Area Median Income (AMI)¹²

Percent of AMI	Percent of Residents	Number of Individuals
Less than 30%	39%	1387
31-50%	37%	1328
51-60%	15%	532
Above 60%	9%	334
Totals	100%	3581

The breakdown of household size among all housing voucher programs and properties managed by ACHA is 29% one-bedroom, 40% two-bedroom, 23% three-bedroom and seven% four-bedroom. The data suggest that there are far fewer affordable housing resources in Adams County for larger families.

Encampments

Throughout the Denver metro area, an insufficient number of shelter beds, restrictive regulations in existing shelters, and the general condition of many shelters have forced

¹² Ibid

some persons experiencing homelessness to remain outdoors, usually in some kind of primitive encampments. These individuals have created such campsites for decades, but these encampments have multiplied in recent years due to an increasing number of persons experiencing homelessness and various local statutes that have placed significant restrictions on what persons can do in the out-of-doors.

Within the past year, due to an increasing public outcry from the business community and the public, some local jurisdictions have stepped up enforcement of the various local ordinances, leading to a series of “street sweeps” that have forced people in campsites to “move along” and to abandon most of their belongings. Despite protests from local advocates, Denver and Boulder seem to have adopted a whack-a-mole approach to eliminating these campsites, and police clashes with encampment denizens and advocates have become commonplace.

While Adams County has not yet engaged in “street sweeps”, local citizen complaints have forced County sheriffs and local police to closely monitor a growing number of encampments. As the interview findings show, it is likely that this growth is fueled in part by persons seeking to escape from the extensive police attention in Denver and Boulder who are setting up camp in Adams and Jefferson Counties.

The state of homelessness in Adams County reflects the lack of housing resources across the entire country. If one includes all the households that are either at significant risk of becoming homeless or actually experiencing homelessness, we have a deficit of 7.5 million housing units. Every state, on average, would have to create 150,000 units, over night, to eliminate this deficit. For every 100 extremely poor and homeless households in the US, there are just 17 affordable and attainable housing units available. Further, for the bottom 20% of people who either rent or own their own homes, they spend 87% of their annual income on housing, leaving them with just about \$1,000 per year for everything else—food, clothing, health care, child care, transportation, etc., **one thousand dollars for the entire year.**

Another way to look at the housing crisis nationally is to consider the housing wage. Across the country, the housing wage is \$20.30. The wage in Colorado is \$21.12. In Denver, the needed wage is almost \$24, and in the City of Boulder, the housing wage is more than \$50 per hour. In Denver, a person would have to work almost three full-time jobs at minimum wage to afford a modest two-bedroom unit. In Boulder, an individual would have to work about six full-time jobs at minimum wage to afford an average two-bedroom house.¹³

In addition, the federal government provides approximately \$250 billion in housing subsidies of which 80% goes to homeowners who itemize their tax deductions and claim a mortgage interest deduction and deductions for state, local, and sales taxes, and 20% goes to low income renters.

Although many recognize that homelessness is in large part an economic issue, the result of the lack of available, affordable housing, it is not uncommon for municipalities to enact statutes that criminalize homelessness rather than addressing the root cause of the problem. These statutes include camping bans, bans on various aspects of panhandling, sit and lie ordinances, to name just a few. Denver, for example, has instituted a series of street sweeps over the last several months, much to the satisfaction of some residents and business owners and to the dismay of others.

Given this background look at homelessness in Adams and the country, it is clear that residents in Adams experiencing homelessness or extreme poverty face the same kinds of obstacles in obtaining housing that their counterparts face nationwide.

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

This section of the report includes the quantitative and qualitative assessment findings from the interviews. The findings are separated into sections corresponding to the research questions identified in the Introduction.

¹³ Out of Reach 2016, National Low Income Housing Coalition.

Research Question: What can the County do to improve its services to those experiencing homelessness?

A) Who are the campers and what do they need in terms of services?

D) What recommendations do the campers have for improving services?

BC interviewed 24 individuals experiencing homelessness along the Clear Creek trail in Adams County on October 28, 2016. The following sections provide:

- A basic description of the demographic and personal characteristics of the individuals contacted in the encampments
- Information regarding the individual experiences of homelessness
- Reasons for camping in Adams County
- Details regarding the services these individuals currently access and where these services are located
- What services these persons need in Adams County

As described in the section on data collection, only 23 interviews were included in the analysis.

Demographic and Personal Characteristics

Of the individuals interviewed, 16 are male and seven are female. Five stated they are veterans. Since criminal history can often create barriers to accessing services and housing, BC staff asked about felony convictions and if the individual was prevented from obtaining housing or other services because of his or her criminal history. Fourteen interviewees stated that they had been convicted of a felony, and nine of the 14, stated that their criminal record was a barrier to housing or other services. For example, one respondent stated that he was camping because he was unable to rent an apartment because he did not pass the property owner's criminal background check despite having good credit. Another respondent said there is no housing available for felons.

Homelessness and Reasons for Camping in Adams County

The total length of time homeless among those interviewed in the encampments ranged from 17 days to 10 years, with the average length of homelessness equaling 571 days or

approximately 1 year and 7 months. Two persons stated that they had been without a permanent place to stay for less than 1 month, eight persons between one and three months, four persons for more than three months but less than one year, and nine persons had been experiencing homelessness for more than one year. Nineteen respondents said that they sleep in a camp most of the time, two sleep on the street most of the time and two stay with friends or family most of the time. Twelve respondents answered that their last permanent residence had been in Adams County, five in Denver and six from outside the state. The proportion of people coming from out of state is higher than what the PIT survey suggested. This could mean that there are actually higher numbers of individuals from out of state or that people coming from outside the state are more likely to camp than those from the metro area.

Interviewed participants indicated that they have been camping in Adams County anywhere from one day to 10 years. Of the 23 respondents, 14 persons have been camping in the Clear Creek and Platte River trail area for less than one month, four persons from one to three months, two persons from over three months to one year and three persons for more than a year. Eleven respondents stay alone while camping in Adams County, six said they stay with a partner or spouse, and six with friends. Additionally, five persons have a companion animal that stays with them.

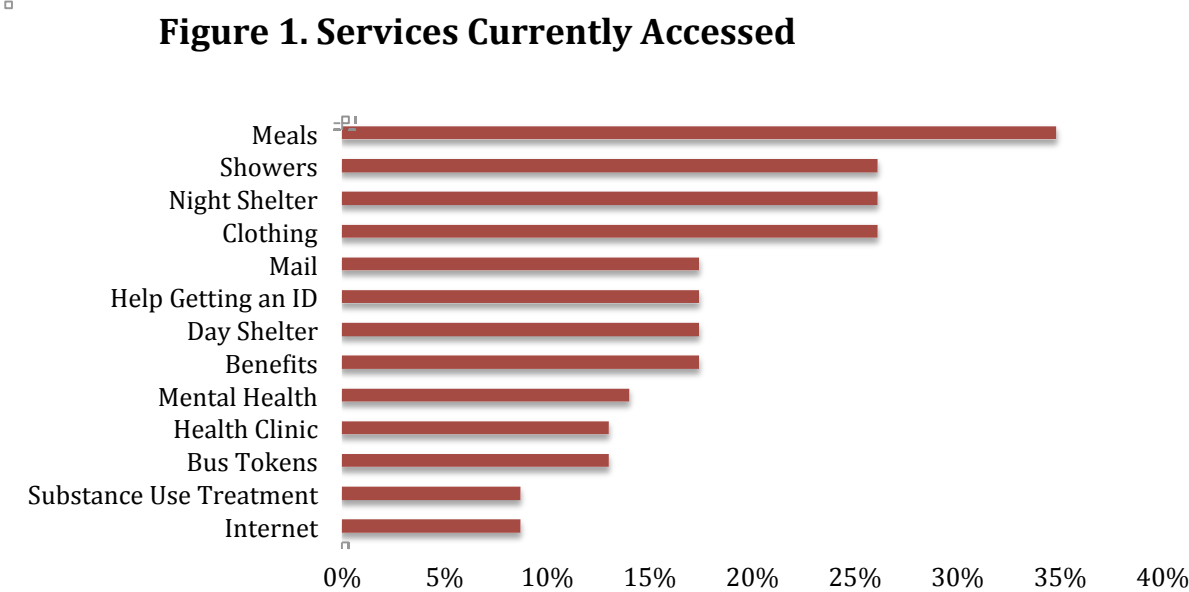
BC staff also asked individuals why they are camping in Adams County. The theme that emerged most frequently among the reasons given for camping was that camps are safer and allow for more privacy than shelters. Individuals stated that shelters are “too crowded” and full of “unstable people.” Respondents described that they had their belongings stolen while staying at a shelter because there was not enough storage. Two individuals stated that they have mental health issues (PTSD and bipolar) and do not feel safe around lots of people.

A second theme among the reasons given for camping in Adams County was that the respondent had friends or family staying in the area—both housed and camping. A few respondents said that prior to camping they were staying with friends in the area, and

others said they have friends camping here. One respondent indicated the desire to stay close to children who live in Adams County. Finally, respondents said there is less police harassment for individuals experiencing homelessness along the bike trails in Adams County than in Denver.

Services

BC staff asked the interviewees about the services they currently access as well as services they need in Adams County near the encampments. Figure 1 shows the most frequently identified services that the respondents are currently accessing.

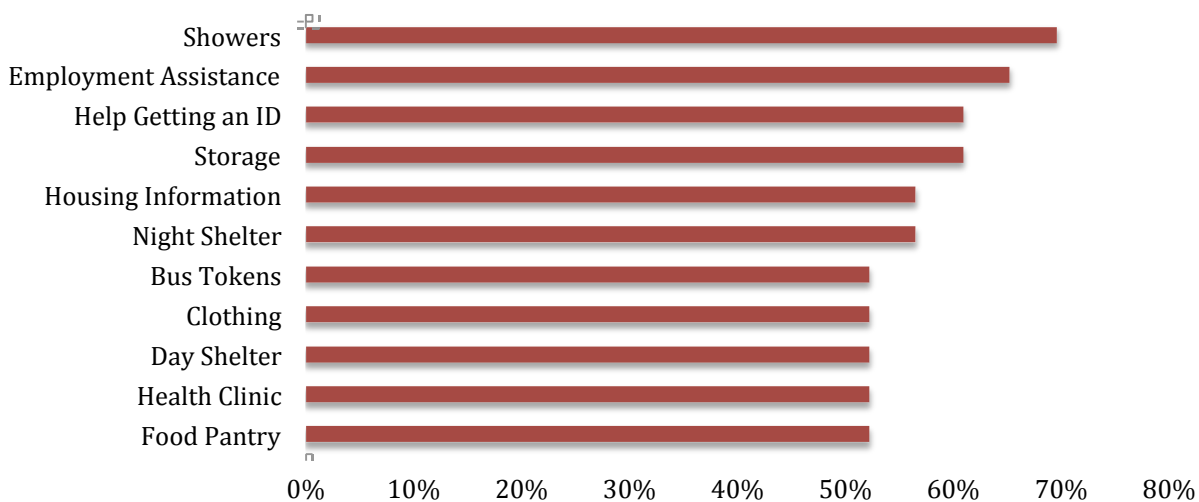


Eight respondents get meals from service providers and community organizations, and six access night shelter, clothing services and showers. The interview findings show that most of these services are accessed in Denver. Thirteen of 23 respondents stated that they access services in Denver. The organizations where respondents receive services most often are the Denver Rescue Mission, the St. Francis Center, and Samaritan House. Only three individuals stated that they receive services in Adams County, from the Department of Human Services and the Adams County Food Bank. Additionally, three

individuals stated that they receive services at the JeffCo Action Center in Jefferson County.

Interview respondents also provided information about what services they need in Adams County. Figure 2 contains all services that over half of respondents stated as needed in Adams County. In addition, almost half, 11 or 48% of respondents stated Adams County needs more housing vouchers, meals, mail, professional skills training and substance use treatment, and 10 persons stated the need for transitional housing and mental health services. Other important comments related to services included the need for a local resource center, mobile resources, bathrooms and water.

Figure 2. Services Needed in Adams County



These findings highlight several important issues. First, needed services are in very short supply in the County. Over half of the respondents needed to go to Denver to get many of these basic services. Second, transportation becomes a critical issue. Few if any of the respondents have direct access to a car, so they must rely on either friends who do have cars, on public transportation that is limited in Adams, or on bicycles which are few and far between. Getting to and from Denver becomes even more difficult in light of these limitations on transportation.

In the Denver Metro Area, service providers use the Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) to assess the chronicity and medical vulnerability of individuals experiencing homelessness in order to identify those most appropriate for different housing programs available across the metro area. BC staff asked interview participants to identify any disabling conditions for which they would like to receive services. The responses to this question provide some insight into the medical vulnerability of the individuals interviewed. Approximately 65% or 15 individuals interviewed stated that they had one or more disabling conditions that needed services while eight did not have a disabling condition. Five respondents had one disabling condition, three had two, and two had three or more disabling conditions. Table 6 shows the frequency of each disabling condition among respondents.

Table 6. Frequency of Disabling Conditions

Mental Health	52.2%
Chronic Health	26.1%
Physical Disability	21.7%
Substance Use	13.0%
Developmental Disability	4.3%
AIDS/HIV	4.3%

BC staff also specifically asked about shelter. The majority of respondents, 18 or 78% stated that they would stay in a shelter if one was available in the area, while five said they would not stay in a shelter. However, most of the respondents said they would only use a shelter under specific conditions (e.g., during winter, if the shelter allows couples, if the shelter allows companion animals, and if the shelter has services for PTSD). Additionally, while many said they would access a shelter under such conditions, they also stated that they would prefer a place to camp legally and free, a “camping community.”

Research Question: What can the County do to improve its services to those experiencing homelessness?

B) What services are available in the County for those experiencing homelessness?

C) What are the gaps in services in the County for the overall population of those experiencing homelessness?

E) What recommendations do county officials and service providers have for improving services?

From September 1 to November 18, BC staff interviewed 12 different groups from Adams County service providers, local governments and other community organizations that provide services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The groups interviewed included representatives from seven homeless service providers, two local governments and three other organizations—the Adams County Housing Authority, Adams 12 School District Family Liaisons, and Anythink Libraries.

Current Services and Collaborations

In order to better understand the system of services, BC staff asked these organizations questions related to the types of direct services provided to individuals experiencing homelessness, requirements and restrictions for service provision, populations served, capacity for services, and the types of work collaborations in and outside of the County. These 12 representative organizations provide a wide variety of services for those experiencing homelessness—shelter, health care, mental health, substance use treatment, education, employment, utilities assistance, identification assistance, clothing, showers, bus tokens, etc. Of a list of 35 different services, childcare and legal services were the only services not provided by this group of organizations. Since there are many services offered among only a fraction of the providers in the County, it is possible that individuals experiencing homelessness in the encampments who still want or need additional services, may not know they are available, have transportation issues, or the services are not available in Adams County.

The interview findings show that the availability and accessibility of day and night shelter for all populations experiencing homelessness represents a major gap in services in Adams County:

- It was already noted that the number of available beds is far below the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness according to the PIT and Colorado Department of Education data.
- Providers of shelter in Adams County are unable to accommodate many sub-populations. There is no shelter in Adams County that can accept unaccompanied youth or accommodate individuals that would like to stay together with their friends. One shelter, Growing Home, can take in companion animals. Comitis is the only shelter that can house individuals with severe mental health issues or substance use issues.
- All of the shelters have at least one requirement for services that creates barriers for individuals seeking shelter. These requirements include sobriety, drug tests, possessing personal identification, receiving benefits in Adams County, employment or seeking employment and the absence of certain types of criminal convictions.
- All five shelters stated that they regularly have to turn individuals and families away. Four of the five said that they do not have the capacity to serve everyone, but only two could estimate how many people they are unable to serve. Comitis estimates that they turn away 400 people per month and Almost Home estimates 10 families per day. Cold Weather Care states that approximately 30% of individuals seeking shelter who pass the initial intake screen are denied a place to stay because the organization cannot accommodate companion animals and certain physical disabilities.

BC staff asked about the types of working collaborations among organizations. All 12 organizations worked with a variety of service providers, city officials, and county departments. Nine, or 75%, worked with organizations or agencies in other counties. When asked who their organizations worked with to address issues of homelessness, 92% said they work with local law enforcement, 75% said Adams County Department of

Human Services and Almost Home, 67% said Growing Home, and 58% said Cold Weather Care and the Adams County Housing Authority.

Recommendations from Service Providers

During the interviews, BC staff also asked these organizational representatives what they believe to be the most important issues related to homelessness in Adams County and what suggestions they have to improve the County's response to homelessness. Data from the interviews identified the following themes regarding major issues related to homelessness:

- Denial among public officials, local governments and the general public that homelessness exists in the County including denial about the number of individuals and families at significant risk of experiencing homelessness.
- Lack of a collective effort to address homelessness.
- Lack of employment and low wages.
- High cost of housing and lack of affordable housing.
- Insufficient resources for families experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.
- Providing more support for law enforcement.

In order to solve these issues, the interviewees stated the need for better connection and communication among service providers, community groups, local governments and the County. They said that city and county government officials need more knowledge of and involvement with the issue of homelessness and that the County should create a revenue stream to address homelessness. Additionally, they indicated a need for more funding to make housing more affordable and keep people in their housing (services for homeless prevention such as emergency rental assistance, more low-income housing developments, more rental assistance vouchers, etc.). Finally, the interview respondents highlighted the desperate need for more shelter for both families and individuals.

Recommendations from County officials

BC conducted seven interviews with Adams County officials from various departments—County Manager, Sheriff, Parks and Open Spaces, Community and Economic Development, Human Services, and Long Range Strategic Planning. BC staff asked questions regarding the office or department’s interaction with individuals experiencing homelessness, the available resources to address homelessness, how the different county departments collaborate to address homelessness, ideas as to why people are camping in Adams County, and the major issues of homelessness facing the County as well as suggestions for addressing the stated issues.

The Adams County Department of Human Services and the Sheriff’s Department were the only two agencies that stated they have regular contact with individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Other departments mainly interact and provide resources to local homeless service providers. The Sheriff’s Community Resource Team is the only County entity that said they have regular and continued interaction with persons in the encampments. This team serves as the main outreach to the encampments despite a lack of resources for addressing many of the underlying social and systemic causes of homelessness—unemployment, underemployment and low wages, high housing costs, mental health, substance use, etc.

The respondents did not indicate an intentional collective approach within county government to address homelessness. They stated that different departments collaborated on various project related to homelessness as the need arose. For example, the Sheriff’s Department collaborated with the Department of Human Services to conduct the PIT survey and worked with Parks and Open Spaces to assess the health and safety impacts of some of the abandoned campsites. However, there is not a lead department or office to direct and coordinate homeless programming.

Many of the County officials echoed what the service providers and local government representatives had to say in terms of the major local issues related to homelessness—denial of the issue, lack of affordable housing, the lack of a strategic and regional

approach, and a lack of public will to allocate resources for homelessness. The Sheriff's department raised a number of important public health and safety concerns specifically related to the encampments—drug use, used syringes near public trails, large amounts of debris, human waste, exposed power lines, fires, extreme mental health issues and interpersonal violence. The immediate need for health and safety in the encampments combined with the diverse needs of other populations experiencing homelessness throughout the County call for a multi-level approach that addresses the specific needs of individuals through the creation of “safe spaces” and increasing access to services while at the same time addressing the larger systemic issues of homelessness.

Adams County Officials were very open to a number of creative solutions for homelessness including the possible creation of authorized encampments, transforming county building space into shelter space and creating opportunities to develop mobile services. Finally, most Adams County officials identified the importance of asking individuals who are experiencing homelessness for their articulation of needed services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear from the Adams County statistics and comments from county officials, service providers, and residents in the campsites that services available in the County are inadequate. There are many more family members and single adults experiencing homelessness than there are available shelter beds. Also, there are more family members and school-aged children who are at significant risk of homelessness than available housing and shelter by several orders of magnitude. This is a growing problem exacerbated by rapidly increasing housing costs and likely cutbacks in federal funding for social service programs. Planning should begin now. In addition, we are heading into the winter months, and the 20 beds available through the Cold Weather Care project are clearly inadequate to provide comfort for the numbers of persons in the river encampments.

Furthermore, the Denver metro area is at a real crisis point in its approach to those persons living on the streets and in encampments. Denver's code enforcement has

created a schism in the overall effort to address homelessness between those experiencing homelessness and their advocates, and the business community and political leadership. It is very possible that Adams County, if it follows a constructive thoughtful approach to addressing the needs of its most at risk population, can provide real leadership to the metro-wide area and beyond.

Since we understand that it will be impossible for the County to enact all the following recommendations immediately and that some of them will be more costly than others, at the urging of the County, we have grouped the recommendations into groups based on the amount of time we suggest it takes for their enactment.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION OVER ONE TO THREE YEARS

These recommendations involve a change in organizational attitudes and culture and involve increasing collaboration among departments and agencies. While we recognize that changes in organizational culture will take time, we encourage responsible parties to begin to design strategies to bring about such change as soon as possible.

Recommendation #1: The County should convene a group to develop a 10 year Plan to address homelessness.

Several years ago, the County created a Blue Ribbon Commission to develop a 10 year plan to address homelessness. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, the work of the Commission faltered, and the Commission itself came to a close.

However, in spite of the dissolution of the earlier effort, the basic concept of a county-wide commission/coalition remains a good one, especially if the mission of a new effort were expanded to include addressing extreme poverty in the County. Under the appropriate, committed leadership of one or more of the County's leaders, a comparable effort would be an important force in mobilizing services throughout the County and in developing a streamlined, integrated, and seamless system for the provision of these services. Such an effort, especially if it includes the faith community, would also produce a substantial increase in the sense of community throughout the County, by breaking down existing service silos and by engaging a larger portion of the entire community in

the effort. In addition, by creating this seamless system of services, Adams County could create an effective model for counties throughout the Denver metro area and could provide critical leadership in developing a region-wide comprehensive system of services (See Recommendation #13).

There are several requirements necessary for the creation of this effort. First, to avoid negative associations from the failure of the first effort, the coalition needs a new name. We recommend the following: Adams County Homelessness Initiative to End Vulnerability through Empowerment (ACHIEVE). Second, ACHIEVE needs to be chaired by one or more County leaders who have the time and the commitment to really push the agenda of the organization. Such leaders could be elected officials, department heads, business leaders, leaders in the faith community, or other well known and respected community individuals. Third, there needs to be real commitment from the relevant departments and the major service providers in the County to work actively to accomplish the goals of ACHIEVE. Fourth, there needs to be agreement about data and data sharing in order to make the transition from one service sector to another as seamless and painless as possible. Fifth, the leadership must be strategic in identifying the actual membership of the organization. All the relevant sectors must be represented, including individuals who are currently or have experienced homelessness. Finally, there needs to be a staffing component to carry out the work of ACHIEVE and to provide the glue for such an effort. Additionally, developing a formal 10 year plan in a public manner provides an opportunity to educate the public and develop support.

Recommendation #2: With or Without ACHIEVE, the County should develop a plan to evaluate its efforts to address homelessness.

Regardless of whether or not the County decides to implement some type of 10 year planning coalition, the County should create some mechanism for evaluating its efforts to address homelessness. A recent analysis of 10 year plans across the country indicated that, in almost every case, there were no plans to evaluate the effectiveness of these planning efforts.¹⁴ This is certainly true of the Denver's Road Home effort. Yes, there are

¹⁴ *Ending Homelessness: Why We Haven't, How We Can, Chapter 15*

reams of data about outputs, i.e. numbers of units of service provided—e.g., housing units created, outreach contacts, etc.—but there has been little cumulative assessment of the overall impact of these services on the lives of those experiencing homelessness.

Adams County is now at a point where it could provide real leadership in developing real outcome data about its efforts to address homelessness. It's not enough to identify numbers of families that move into housing; it is important to ascertain how long people remain in their units. It's not enough to determine the number of people who get jobs; it is critical to assess whether individuals stay in jobs and get wage increases over time. It's not enough to document the number of outreach contacts; we need to follow up on those contacts to find out what happened. We also need to examine whether our services lead to improved quality of life over time.

We recognize that this type of longitudinal program evaluation is difficult to accomplish and is potentially quite costly. We also understand the inevitable tension between adding additional services versus evaluating existing services, given finite added resources. However, we are strong believers in identifying truly successful programs for replication rather than continuing to invest in programs of questionable value.

Recommendation #3: The County should approach future efforts to address homelessness as a seamless system of services rather than as a series of individual services and agencies.

One of the current buzzwords in the social service arena is collective impact. All too often, departments and agencies attempt to advance their own agendas, thus leading to very isolated impact. It is important that the relevant county officials view their approach to homelessness as a collaborative and coordinated system. Such thinking provides the opportunity for some agencies to focus on some particular services rather than trying to provide them all, but it requires that agencies coordinate and collaborate extensively. The homelessness coordinator for the county should be in charge of developing this systems approach to the issue. (See Recommendation #4 below.)

This collaboration should include the efforts of individual jurisdictions. It seems inefficient and potentially duplicative for the County to be developing services while individual local jurisdictions are simultaneously trying to create their own ways of addressing the problem. City efforts should be identified and incorporated into the larger system of services available throughout the County.

We also recognize that technology will be required to assist in this cultural change. Various types of software are available to assist in organizational planning, client assessment and evaluation, and overall program evaluation. Appropriate department managers need to consider the inclusion of appropriate software to assist in the cultural change.

Recommendation #4: The County should hire a homelessness services coordinator.

After talking with county officials and with service providers, we conclude that there is a lack of clarity about the county's overall plan to address homelessness and a lack of coordination among county agencies and several of the local jurisdictions.

This has led to a fragmentation of services, to the detriment of our most vulnerable citizens. We recognize the existence of various political jurisdictions and the resulting mixture of governmental responsibilities for various services. However, if persons experiencing homelessness and extreme poverty in Adams County are to receive the kind of assistance that they need and deserve, we feel that coordination should be increased and that there be real clarity about the County's approach to ending homelessness.

Therefore, we encourage the county to hire a staff person, located in the Department of Human Services, to oversee and manage the entire county effort to deal with the troubling issue of homelessness. Therefore, this person should have both management and planning skills and experience.

We realize it will be necessary to find the funds to pay for this person's salary, however, we consider this recommendation to be one of the most important. If the County is to move forward aggressively to attack homelessness, engaging this person should be very high on the list of priorities.

Recommendation #5: The County should improve and expand its communication and coordination between county government offices and its network of housing providers including the Adams County Housing Authority.

During the course of our investigation, we have been struck by the separation of county government offices from the Adams County Housing Authority and other housing providers. To our way of thinking, it is very important that housing providers collaborate closely with other service providers, including county department offices in order to address the variety of issues confronting those experiencing homelessness. We urge the Director of the Housing Authority and the relevant heads of county offices to develop a strategy for much closer collaboration and coordination in order to marshal appropriate forces to address homelessness. This recommendation extends to County coordination and collaboration with other housing providers, such as the Brighton Housing Authority, various Community Housing Development Organizations, and DelWest. The creation of a seamless system of services for those experiencing homelessness demands much greater collaboration and cooperation. The County homelessness coordinator can play a major role in developing this increased collaboration.

In the case of the following two recommendations, complete enactment will take some time. However, given their importance and the onset of the winter months, we encourage the County to move quickly to start the process as soon as possible.

Recommendation #6: The County should provide dedicated alternative safe, secure, dignified, habitable space for persons not willing to go to shelters.

There are some individuals for whom crowded, congregate shelters are simply not the answer. Couples that are not allowed to stay together, individuals not allowed to keep their companion animals with them, persons with serious mental illness, active drinkers and/or drug users, and others who find shelters unsafe and unhealthy are all reluctant to go to shelters. These individuals deserve a safe, secure, and dignified place to be.

There are various types of places that can be created. These include: tent cities, yurtsvilles, and tiny home villages. We have visited one very successful tent city in

Portland, OR, Right to Dream Too (RtDT), and we came away very impressed by what the residents there have created. RtDT is a self-governing community of people with 40 places for overnight single males, 16 spaces in a separate tent for single females, a separate tent for families, another tent for persons with companion animals, places for 20 individual tents, an office tent, a small kitchen tent, electricity, port-a-potties, some running water, and an impressive set of community rules regarding responsibilities and behaviors. It is a community situated on a downtown parking lot next to an office building, and it has been specifically authorized by the Mayor.

Other examples of successful tent cities exist, as do tiny home villages. Lyons and Salida are both in the process of creating tiny home villages on land that has been given to tiny homebuilders by local public agencies, and there are other examples across the country. We find it incredible that local communities are prepared to create very commodious campsites for weekend campers that offer individual campsites; bathroom facilities with flush toilets, running water at sinks, and showers; garbage disposal bins and dumpsters; and even small stores in some cases; but they are not willing to provide even the simplest kinds of accommodations for our most at-risk populations. This is a wonderful opportunity for Adams County to again be a real local pioneer.

It should be noted that these alternatives have differing levels of permanence. Tent cities and yurtsvilles, though comfortable and independent, are not necessarily intended as an alternative to permanent supportive housing; they really are intended as a better transitional alternative than the streets and, in some cases, than overcrowded shelters. Tiny home villages, in comparison, can well become more permanent housing.

Also, we recommend that, as the County explores the creation of such alternatives, consideration be given to siting small “villages,” “cities,” and the like spread out over a wide area. By doing so, it will be possible to avoid the inevitable community NIMBY backlash. Most of this reaction centers on situations in which large numbers of people are gathered together in a single area. By spreading folks out, we can mitigate against community negative reaction.

Recommendation #7: The County should provide some assistance to the Sheriff and Deputy Sheriffs that patrol the encampments.

Our experience in interviewing persons in the encampments, reinforced by our conversations in the office of the county sheriff, suggests that these law enforcement officials are being placed in a very difficult position when they patrol the encampments. (Members of the Sheriff's Office Community Resource Team accompanied us as we traveled to various encampments for interviews.) First and foremost, these officers are law enforcement officials, but they are often being asked to provide what might well be called social work and case management assistance. With relatively little training, they are being called on to address issues of poverty and homelessness with which they have had little experience, and they articulate real frustration at having to serve in this dual capacity. The development of resource guides containing information on local homeless services is one example of where support is needed. The Sheriff's Community Resource Team is the only group that has regular and consistent contact with individuals in the encampments. They have developed a resource guide that they hand out to people they encounter on the trails. Since this group is the only major form of outreach, their resource guide materials should be continually updated and supplemented by social service professionals. We recommend several ways of addressing this basic problem

A) One alternative is to employ a social worker that would accompany the officers as they make their rounds of the encampments. This individual could focus his/her attention on the service needs of individuals, while leaving the law enforcement issues to the Deputy Sheriffs. This person could also be responsible for providing up-to-date lists of services, including those available in Adams. If the funds were available, the county might hire this person as a full-time staff member. If funding was an issue, perhaps the County could share the expense and the person's time with Westminster, Northglenn, Brighton, and/or Thornton. Denver has initiated a co-responder program to address mental health issues by diverting individuals to more appropriate resources outside the criminal justice system. The program employs six clinicians (LCSWs and LPCs) that are law enforcement staff. From April to November of 2016, the co-responder teams have had over 800

contacts that have resulted in only 21 arrests. Overall, 47% of the Denver co-responder teams' contacts are with individuals experiencing homelessness, and that figure is 100% if you include only the contacts in District 3 (downtown Denver).¹⁵ Jefferson County has a similar program that pairs social service workers with law enforcement.

B) A second not mutually exclusive alternative would be to substantially enhance the training that all Sheriff's Department officers receive prior to their deployment in the field. In discussing this possibility with the Sheriff and several deputies, we sensed some real enthusiasm about collaborating with the Sheriff's Department to create a series of training modules regarding various aspects of addressing homelessness for law enforcement officers. These modules could then be offered to police officers in local Adams jurisdictions as well as to Sheriff's deputies and police in neighboring counties and jurisdictions.

C) The County should also explore creating collaborative relationships with various service providers and mobile services. Perhaps staff from one or another service agency could accompany law enforcement officials when these officers make their rounds.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION OVER THREE TO FIVE YEARS

The next four recommendations are listed in the 3-5 year time frame because complete enactment of them will take at least that long. However, we strongly encourage decision makers to begin to think through enactment strategies long before the third year.

Recommendation #8: The County should provide more available shelter space for families and for single adults.

A) Existing shelter space in the County is clearly inadequate. There needs to be additional night-time shelter space for single adults. Although the Cold Weather Care program deserves great commendation for its important contribution to housing adults, the 20 CWC beds are insufficient to meet the demand. Furthermore, the Comitis shelter beds are consistently filled to capacity, and they are geographically removed from most of the adults that need shelter. In the face of this deficit of beds, the vast majority of the campers

¹⁵ Personal communication with Chris Richardson 11/16/2016.

we interviewed expressed an interest in being in a shelter in the winter, depending on certain conditions. It is important to note that the campers identified several conditions to improve shelters such as: shelter space for couples to stay together, companion animals to stay with their owners, and better privacy.

B) Night-time shelter space for families with children is also totally inadequate. Existing service providers indicated to us the need to turn away families because of insufficient space. School liaisons also reported that some families have to live in Denver shelters because of insufficient space in Adams, even though their school-aged children continue to attend Adams County schools, thus creating impossible logistical conditions for childhood learning and school attendance. The County should provide more overnight accommodations for families.

C) In addition to overnight accommodations, several service providers and encampment residents indicated the need for day-time shelter with services. An excellent example of such a facility is the St. Francis Center in Denver, where there is a large space for individuals and a variety of services immediately available, including storage, showers, access to phones, employment assistance, a clothing closet, access to housing assistance, and assistance with behavioral health issues. Several campers identified one or another of these services as highly desirable. The newly created day shelter can also be viewed as a resource center, much like the St. Francis Center is viewed. We have not tried to identify where this shelter/resource center would be located; we leave that to the decision makers. However, we strongly encourage consideration of its creation.

D) There is virtually no 24 hour shelter in the entire metro Denver area. All of the shelter space is either for day-time use or for overnight stays, thus resulting in the always frustrating need to move from one type of shelter to a line-up to get into the other kind of shelter, with no guarantees about getting in. Adams County could provide real leadership by creating a 24 hour shelter in the metro area. Even if the County did so on a small, pilot basis, such an effort would provide a pioneering example of what could be done. A 24-hour shelter is not intended as a permanent residence. In order to avoid it becoming one,

various guidelines about length of stay and consumer efforts to find more permanent housing would have to be developed.

E) The Honen Building is due to be vacated soon, if it hasn't been already. As we toured the building, we felt that it was a potentially viable spot for a new shelter in the County, maybe even a 24 hour shelter. In talking with Human Services Director Chris Kline, we felt that with minor modifications, the building could serve as a shelter for both single adults and families, and its outdoor space and kitchen would be strong assets for the individuals housed there.

F) In considering shelter space, one often is confronted by neighborhood opposition to siting. It is quite understandable that neighborhood residents resist the creation of a large congregate shelter in their midst. Residents in some neighborhoods also feel that they are bearing the brunt of shelter locations because most of the shelters and other services are located in their neighborhoods. In order to address these concerns, we are strong advocates of the creation of a series of smaller shelters located in various parts of the County. Such a strategy can overcome many of the fears of neighborhood residents and eliminate the creation of large, overcrowded mega-shelters.

G) One of the overarching impressions that we gained from our various interviews was that the shelter system in Adams provides relatively little space for important sub-populations among those experiencing homelessness. We have already mentioned families; there are not enough shelter beds for families. Time and time again, service providers and school liaisons bemoaned the inadequacy of shelter and housing space for families with children. The same is true for single adults. The largest shelter facility in the County is Comitis, and its space is not only regularly filled by local Aurora residents, but it is geographically removed from many of the County's persons experiencing homelessness. In addition, there is virtually no shelter space for families without children, for individuals with companion animals, or for persons with serious addiction and/or mental illness issues, except for Comitis. There is absolutely no shelter space for unaccompanied youth. The County should pay careful attention to the shelter needs of

various subpopulations of those experiencing homelessness. Addressing those needs should be a high priority.

H) Finally, we recommend developing a countywide procedure for emergency shelter during severe weather so that individuals and families can receive shelter quickly with no or very few restrictions. Emergency shelter is especially important during winter months when the temperature falls below 40 degrees. Currently Adams County does not have what most service providers would identify as “emergency shelter” that can be easily accessed by anyone experiencing homelessness during severe weather. In Denver, there are a number of organizations that serve as staging sites for specific populations (e.g., men, women, families, unaccompanied youth, transgender individuals, etc.). When these shelters reach capacity, the Department of Human Services has procedures for providing motel vouchers.¹⁶

Recommendation #9: The County should explore creating service jobs for those in the encampments and for others experiencing homelessness.

For many persons experiencing homelessness, employment opportunities are seriously lacking. This certainly is true for those individuals we interviewed in the encampments. Over half of the individuals in the encampments said they need employment assistance. Additionally, unemployment has been cited as one of the top three reasons why individuals experience homelessness in Adams County for the last three years. Denver recently created a new program, Denver Day Works administered by Bayaud Enterprises, to employ persons experiencing homelessness on a day labor basis to engage in various tasks with the expectation that particularly good workers might get hired on a more permanent basis. This could be a very appropriate model for Adams County. What if the department of Parks and Recreation hired some of the individuals in the encampments to clean up various campsites along the trails and bike paths? This could provide some financial support for individuals, would create a much cleaner space, and might well appease path users and neighborhood residents.

¹⁶ A description of Denver’s Severe Weather procedures can be found here <https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/denver-human-services/community/denvers-road-home/helping-the-homeless--snowstorms.html>

The County should also explore other ways of creating employment opportunities for those experiencing homelessness. We understand the inherent difficulties in accomplishing this and recognize that this is a long-term project, but we feel strongly that the county should address this in some fashion.

Recommendation #10: The County should pay much more attention to homelessness prevention.

One of the truly puzzling characteristics of the national approach to addressing homelessness which, in turn, is reflected at the state and local levels is the apparent reluctance to consider homelessness prevention as an important part of the system's arsenal of programmatic approaches. We focus most of our attention on trying to get people out of homelessness rather than trying to prevent them from becoming homeless in the first place. This reluctance helps to explain why overall numbers of persons experiencing homelessness have not declined appreciably in the last 35 years across the nation. There seems to be a virtually endless supply of persons who become homeless, replacing those we manage to extract from homelessness. We must develop better ways to address this.

Our national lack of attention to prevention of homelessness is symptomatic of our national approach to many issues. Consider the state of the nation's roads and bridges. In short, if an expenditure can be kicked down the road, it will be. This is certainly true of our entire health care system, treatment rather than prevention, but that is slowly changing.

We recognize that various County departments provide some emergency assistance with rent and with other cost items. TANF and SNAP assist in other ways, as does Medicaid. However, as we indicate above, some 125,000 individuals do not have \$500 in available cash in case of health care emergencies or expensive car repairs. These individuals are at extreme risk of becoming homeless; they are the proverbial "one check away." The County needs to develop strategies to provide deeper assistance to these individuals and families so that they do not fall into homelessness.

Once again, we recognize that this whole area is one that could be placed in a longer time frame. To really develop an appropriate strategy to address prevention might well take 5-10 years or longer. However, we list it here so that decision makers can begin to plan strategies to accomplish this in the first three years. We want this to remain on someone's radar.

Recommendation #11: The County should develop strategies to take services to where the people are, rather than forcing them to come to a central location.

One of the things we heard from encampment residents and from school liaisons was the difficulty that many people experiencing homelessness have with transportation. This is particularly true in places like Adams County where public bus transportation is limited and where light rail service is virtually non-existent. All of this makes it very difficult for those without their own cars to get to appointments and to avail themselves of shelter and other services.

The entire service paradigm seems to be: we provide service at our location, so if you want the service, you come to us. This, frankly, flies in the face of everything we know about transportation difficulties. Services are being provided at the convenience of the service provider, not at the convenience of the service consumer. It seems logical to turn this paradigm around, that is, providing services where the consumers are, not necessarily where the provider is located.

What would this look like? For example, what if the county developed a mobile food pantry that traveled around to various locations in the county where persons experiencing homelessness congregated? Another possibility would be for the county to outfit an old bus or school bus as a series of small offices focused on housing, employment, and health care and/or social workers/community resource navigators. Another van could offer clothing and blankets. If one starts to think in this new way, all kinds of possibilities develop.

Short of reconstructing the service paradigm, people experiencing homelessness will need much greater help with transportation. This could come in the form of vans that go to various locations to pick up people and transport them to service agencies and/or providing bus tokens or financial assistance for taxis and/or bicycles. Regardless of what the County decides to do about transportation, officials should be creative and innovative in addressing this critical issue.

Another approach for taking services to people experiencing homelessness would be to identify locations where these individuals gather and take service providers to these locations. For example, libraries often become de facto day shelters for those experiencing homelessness. In Denver, the downtown library branch has hired two social workers to address mental health crises and help individuals navigate services. The same is true in Austin, Texas, and Salt Lake City. Some of the service providers we interviewed stated that a number of library branches in the County encounter significant numbers of persons experiencing homelessness. The County could provide a floating social worker that provides a regular schedule of services in libraries, parks and/or recreational centers across Adams County.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION OVER FIVE OR MORE YEARS

It will likely take five to ten years to adequately address the affordable housing crisis, at a minimum. However, we think Adams County should start addressing the issues of affordable and attainable housing earlier than five years from now.

Recommendation #12: The County should create more affordable/attainable housing for its poorest residents.

The housing squeeze that has hit Denver is clearly in evidence in Adams County. As we indicated earlier, the cost of housing is skyrocketing, just as it is in neighboring counties, while average annual income is failing to keep pace across the metro area, including in Adams. There is clearly a need for a significant expansion of more affordable housing in the county. We are aware that the Adams County Housing Authority is planning to build some additional housing, but officials there admit that its planned facilities are not

keeping up with demand. In addition, data from ACHA indicate that although there are insufficient Housing Choice vouchers to meet the need, over half of the vouchers that are distributed are returned because people are unable to find housing units and landlords willing to rent to them. This situation needs to change. Additional housing units should be developed, landlords should be persuaded to rent to voucher-holders, and incentives should be created to entice the building industry to develop more low-income housing.

We recognize that this can only be a long-term goal. The ultimate solution to homelessness is for everyone experiencing homelessness to live in suitable housing, usually permanent supportive housing. Creating enough of this will always be a long-term goal, but we should continue thinking about that now. One example could be that the County creates a dedicated funding source for housing those experiencing homelessness and/or affordable housing, along the lines of what Denver recently did.

Recommendation #13: The County should form partnerships with surrounding county governments, city governments and service providers to develop a true regional approach to address homelessness.

Collaboration across geographic and political boundaries is important because of the mobility of populations experiencing homelessness as well as the potential for integrated systems of services to better and more efficiently serve those experiencing homelessness. Adams County should develop a plan to establish partnerships with surrounding counties and municipalities as well as to work with homeless service providers in the region. Just as there are service silos within counties, each county also tends to be a service silo. The information we collected from the campers suggests that individuals experiencing homelessness do not pay attention to geographical boundaries; they necessarily move from Denver and Jefferson County to Adams and back to meet their needs. This strongly suggests a much more regional approach to addressing homelessness.

We recognize that there are initial efforts to move in this direction. Coordinated access and entry, along with appropriate data sharing represent a good first step. However, a truly regional approach requires much more. Adams officials should work closely with

their counterparts in other counties to develop a more coordinated approach across county lines.

CONCLUSION

There is growing research and evaluation evidence that providing housing and services is less expensive in both the short and the long term than continuing to incur the costs of law enforcement and the criminal justice system along with the costs of the health care system as these systems deal with people living on the streets and in unauthorized encampments. Recent studies underscore the veracity of that finding in communities across the country, including one such study here in Denver.¹⁷ That compilation did not even include the 2016 study, “Too High a Price,” that documented the expenditure of \$750,000 by the City of Denver in 2014 to enforce local anti-camping codes and that was before the City engaged in its most recent spate of street sweeps. Furthermore, the study authors estimated that six Colorado cities spent over \$5,000,000 over five years for the same kinds of enforcement.¹⁸ Although we did not obtain an estimate of the cost of the Adams County Sheriff’s outreach and enforcement, it is clearly substantial.

We recognize that enactment of all our recommendations will be costly. It is for this reason that we have spread them out in stages over time. However, it is important that policy makers in the County understand that, over the long haul, it will be less costly to do the right thing than it will be to continue to leave our most at risk brothers and sisters without the housing and services they need and deserve.

It is clear from our investigation that there is room for improvement in how Adams County addresses homelessness. In our various interviews and conversations, numerous people described gaps in services that needed to be addressed across the County. In our

¹⁷ Culhane (2008) *The Cost of Homelessness: A Perspective from the United States*

Perlman & Parvensky (2006) Denver Housing First Collaborative Cost Benefit Analysis and Program Outcomes Report. Denver: Colorado Coalition for the Homeless.

Tsemberis (2010) *Housing First: ending homelessness, promoting recovery and reducing costs*

Zaretsky, Flatau & Brady (2008) *What is the (net) cost to government of homelessness programs?*

¹⁸ “Too High A Price,” Sturm College of Law, University of Denver

recommendations, we have tried to incorporate suggestions for how decision makers could take forward steps to fill these gaps.

We are optimistic about overcoming homelessness in Adams County. In all of our work, we have encountered dedicated people who are deeply committed to solving this problem. We have been impressed by the insights that our respondents have had, by the quality of the ideas that have been suggested, and by the passion and compassion that people have demonstrated. There is clearly a base of interest and commitment here upon which to build. That is very encouraging. It is also significant that County leaders reached out to outsiders to help them develop a coordinated strategy for moving forward. We certainly appreciate the opportunity to work on this issue with these leaders. We wish all of the interested parties the very best of luck as you move forward.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Complete List of Interviewees

Adams County Offices

- County Manager
- Community and Economic Development
- Human Services
- Long Range Strategic Planning
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Sheriff

Adams County Service Providers and Other Partners

1. 3CE The Center for Career & Community Enrichment
2. Access Housing
3. Adams 12 Family Liaisons
4. Adams County Housing Authority
5. Almost Home
6. Anythink Libraries
7. Cold Weather Care
8. Commerce City Government
9. Community Reach
10. Growing Home
11. Mile High Behavioral Healthcare Comitis Crisis Center
12. Westminster Government

Appendix B: Assessment Instruments

Encampment Interview Protocol

Individuals Experiencing Homelessness:

Adams County Government wants to learn more about the needs and experiences of people experiencing homelessness in Adams County. We are working with a research group called the Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness from the University of Denver's Graduate School of Social Work. They are helping us gather information that will improve services and service delivery in the County.

We are asking that you please answer the following interview questions. The interview is completely anonymous and entirely voluntary. If you do not want to participate or answer any question(s), it will not affect any services you receive in Adams County or any of your interactions with Adams County Government. The Burnes Center will combine all of the responses and will not report any identifiable individual information. Thank you so much for your help and time.

1. How long have you been without a permanent place to stay?

_____ days _____ months _____ years

2. How long have you been camping here?

_____ days _____ months _____ years

3. Who do you stay with here?

_____ Alone _____ with Friends

_____ with Spouse/Partner _____ with Children

_____ with Spouse/Partner and Children

_____ with Companion Animal

4. Where were you staying before you came here?

_____ Adams County _____ Metro Denver Area

_____ Denver City/County _____ Colorado

_____ Out of State

5. What services, if any, have you used in the past year and where were they located?

Organization name/location:

<p>Shelter</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Day Shelter</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Night Shelter</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Help with night shelter access</p>	<p>Other Services</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bus tokens</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Meals</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Food Pantry</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Clothing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Showers</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Storage</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mail</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Phones</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Internet</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Long Distance Calls</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Help Getting ID (including birth certificates)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Help applying for public benefits, food stamps etc.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Childcare</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Childcare assistance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Utilities assistance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Veterans services</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Legal service</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> DV Services</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list):</p>
<p>Housing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Housing Referrals</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Transitional Housing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Supportive Housing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Housing Vouchers</p>	
<p>Health Care</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Health Clinic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Referrals</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ER</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Glasses</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Help with Obtaining Medications</p>	
<p>Behavioral Health</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Services</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Service Referrals</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Drug/Alcohol Treatment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Drug/Alcohol Treatment Referrals</p>	
<p>Education/Employment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Employment Assistance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> GED Assistance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Education Assistance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Professional Skills Training</p>	

6. What services would be most beneficial to you/What do you need?

Shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Day Shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Night Shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Help with night shelter access	Other Services <input type="checkbox"/> Bus tokens <input type="checkbox"/> Meals <input type="checkbox"/> Food Pantry <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing <input type="checkbox"/> Showers <input type="checkbox"/> Storage <input type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Phones <input type="checkbox"/> Internet <input type="checkbox"/> Long Distance Calls <input type="checkbox"/> Help Getting ID including birth certificates <input type="checkbox"/> Help applying for public benefits, food stamps etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans services <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list):
Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Information <input type="checkbox"/> Transitional Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Supportive Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Vouchers	
Health Care <input type="checkbox"/> Health Clinic <input type="checkbox"/> Glasses <input type="checkbox"/> Help with Obtaining Medications	
Behavioral Health <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Services <input type="checkbox"/> Drug/Alcohol Treatment	
Education/Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> GED Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Education Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Skills Training	

Notes:

7. What would a shelter have to be like to make it somewhere you'd want to go?

8. If a shelter was provided in this area, would you use it?

_____ Yes

_____ No

_____ Yes, if it met certain conditions. Notes:

9. Why are you camping?/Why specifically here?

The following questions are asked only because we want to know how best to serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Adams County. Knowing about some of your experiences and challenges allows us to develop programs and services that meet your needs. This survey is voluntary and you are not under any obligation to answer any of the following questions.

10) Where do you sleep at night most of the time? (Please check one location):

<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel or motel	<input type="checkbox"/> On the street, in a car, encampment, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter	<input type="checkbox"/> With friends or family
<input type="checkbox"/> In your own house, apartment or room (including transitional housing or permanent supportive housing)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

11) Are you a veteran? ____ Yes ____ No

12) Have you been convicted of a felony? ____ Yes ____ No

13) What is your age? # ____

14) Do you identify as: ____ Male ____ Female ____ Gender variant/Transgender/Gender non-binary

15) Please check all of the following that you think create difficulties related to your ability to live independently:

<input type="checkbox"/> Physical disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Developmental disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Chronic health condition	<input type="checkbox"/> AIDS/HIV	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health problem	<input type="checkbox"/> Drug or alcohol problem	<input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Record
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THANK YOU!

Service Provider Interview Protocol

Service Providers/City Organizations:

Adams County Government wants to learn more about the needs and experiences of people experiencing homelessness in Adams County. We are working with a research group called the Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness from the University of Denver's Graduate School of Social Work. They are helping us gather information that will improve services and service delivery in the County.

We are asking that you please answer the following interview questions. The interview is completely anonymous and entirely voluntary. If you do not want to participate or answer any question(s), it will not affect any of your relationships or interactions with Adams County Government. The Burnes Center will combine all of the responses and will not report any identifiable individual information. Thank you so much for your help and time.

1. What organization/agency do you work for and what is your role?

_____ Homeless Service Provider _____

Role _____

_____ City Employee _____

Role _____

_____ Local Government _____

Role _____

_____ Other _____

Role _____

2. To what extent do you/your organization work directly with people experiencing homelessness?

_____ Provide direct services

_____ Provide referrals only

_____ Other

3. What services do you provide to individuals or families experiencing homelessness? Check all that apply.

Shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Day Shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Night Shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Help with night shelter access	Other Services <input type="checkbox"/> Bus tokens <input type="checkbox"/> Meals <input type="checkbox"/> Food Pantry <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing <input type="checkbox"/> Showers <input type="checkbox"/> Storage <input type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Phones <input type="checkbox"/> Internet <input type="checkbox"/> Long Distance Calls <input type="checkbox"/> Help Getting ID (including birth certificates) <input type="checkbox"/> Help applying for public benefits, food stamps etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans services <input type="checkbox"/> Legal service <input type="checkbox"/> DV Services <input type="checkbox"/> Referrals of any kind <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list):
Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Transitional Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Supportive Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Vouchers	
Health Care <input type="checkbox"/> Health Clinic <input type="checkbox"/> ER <input type="checkbox"/> Glasses <input type="checkbox"/> Help with Obtaining Medications	
Behavioral Health <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Services <input type="checkbox"/> Drug/Alcohol Treatment	
Education/Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> GED Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Education Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Skills Training	

4. This section asks about requirements/limitations the organization has for the population it serves (limitations such as age, drug-use, etc.)

4 a. Does your organization have ...? Check all that Apply:

_____ Required Sobriety

_____ Required Drug Tests

_____ Must have Identification

Circle all that apply: Valid State ID / Jail ID / Any Photo ID /

Other: _____

- _____ Must have an address
- _____ Must have an address in Adams County
- _____ Must receive benefits in Adams County
- _____ Limitations on income: _____
- _____ Must be employed or actively seeking employment
- _____ Limitations regarding a Criminal Record
 - ___ No Criminal Record ___ No Felonies
 - ___ No Sex Offenses ___ No Domestic Violence
 - ___ Other: _____
- _____ Limitations on what an individual can bring to/store in your space? Notes:
- _____ Other Requirements or Limitations:

4 b. Can you accommodate? (Check all that apply)

- _____ Single Adult Men
- _____ Single Adult Women
- _____ Families with children
 - Circle all that apply: Single Men / Single Women / Couples
- _____ Heterosexual couples
- _____ Homosexual couples
- _____ Individuals who wish to stay with group of friends
- _____ Unaccompanied youth
- _____ Transgender by gender (not sex)
- _____ Companion animals

_____ Individuals with a physical disability
_____ Individuals with severe mental health issues
_____ Individuals with drug and/or alcohol dependency
_____ Other _____

notes:

4 c. What ages do you serve?

___ 0-18 ___ 19-25 ___ 25-55 ___ 55-65 ___ 65-older

notes:

5. How many people do you serve on a daily/monthly/yearly basis?

_____ # per Day _____ # per Week _____ # per Month

6. Do you turn people away for services? _____ Yes _____ No

Why do you generally have to turn someone away?

About how many?

_____ # per Day _____ # per Week _____ # per Month

7. What other organizations do you collaborate with to provide services?

7 a. Emergency Shelter/Homeless Service Providers in Adams County (check all that apply)

_____ Almost Home _____ Cold Weather Care
_____ Comitis _____ Growing Home
_____ Other: _____

7 b. Other Types of Service Providers in Adams County

List Organization Name(s): _____

7 c. City and County Organizations/Agencies

_____ Local government name: _____
_____ Local Police
_____ Local Library Branch: _____
_____ Local Parks
_____ Adams County Human Services
_____ Adams County Housing Authority
_____ Other Adams County Department: _____

7 d. To what extent do you collaborate with city and county officials?

7 e. Organizations in Another County? ____ Yes _____ No

If Yes Please List Organizations: _____

8. What issues do you see in Adams County regarding homelessness?

9. What suggestions/solutions do you have to address these issues?

THANK YOU!

Questions for Adams County Officials

1. What department are you with and what is your title?
2. Do you or your department have contact with people experiencing homelessness? If yes, describe.
3. Do you or your department provide any resources for people experiencing homelessness? If yes, what resources?
4. Do you or your department have any contact/provide resources for homeless service providers?
5. To what extent do you work with other county departments to address the issues of homelessness?
6. Why do you think individuals would be camping rather than seeking other forms of services/shelter?
7. What are the biggest issues that you see in terms of homelessness in the county?
8. What solutions do you suggest in regards to these issues?



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Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness

An Assessment of Adams County's Efforts to Address Homelessness

Presentation by staff of the Burnes Center on Poverty & Homelessness:
Dr. Donald Burnes, Chair of the Board of Advisors
Courtney Brown, Associate Director

Background

- According to 2014 census data: 13% of the population of Adams County experiences poverty
- 125,000 people in Adams County are at risk of experiencing homelessness in the event of a financial stressor
- PIT Count: 200 people experiencing homelessness in Adams County
- Due to a lack of available services, those that become homeless in Adams County generally migrate to Denver
 - A. In 2016, 127 people in Denver claimed to have last held residence in Adams County but migrated to Denver after losing their places of residence



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Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness

Research Question

What can the County do to improve its services to those experiencing homelessness?



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Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness

Methodology

Data Collection through interviews with: government officials (7), service providers (12), and those living in the encampments along Clear Creek trail (24).

Data compiled and quantified through SPSS.



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Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness

Findings

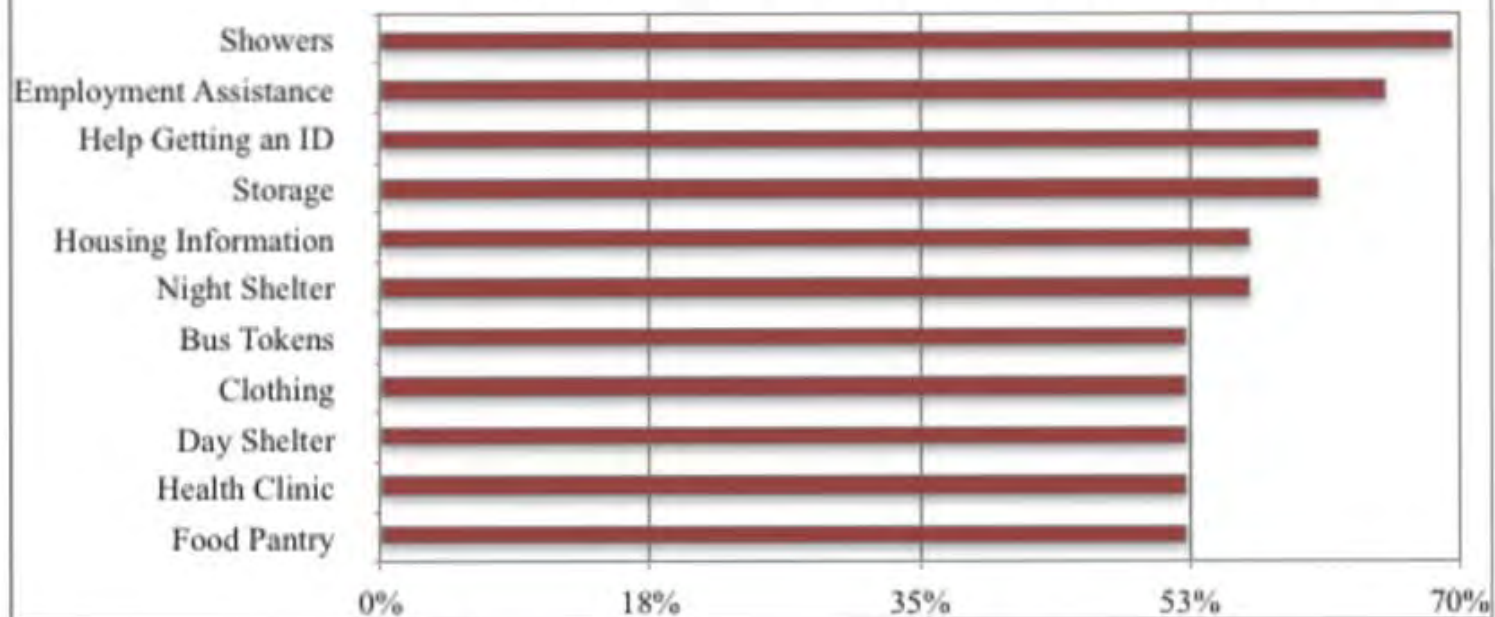
- There is inadequate shelter space in the County for families and for individuals.
- There is insufficient housing to address the needs of the County's individuals who are experiencing homelessness.
- There are services that individuals identified as being needed, especially showers, employment assistance, help getting identification, storage, housing assistance, and shelter.
- There is a lack of a clear countywide plan to address homelessness.
- There is a need for improved collaboration among the various departments that have responsibility for dealing with homelessness.



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Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness

Figure 2. Services Needed in Adams County



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Recommendations for Consideration: *1 to 3 years*



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Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness

- Recommendation #1: The county should convene a group to develop a 10 Year Plan to address homelessness.
- Recommendation #2: The county should develop a plan to evaluate its efforts to address homelessness.
- Recommendation #3: The county should approach future efforts to address homelessness as a seamless system of services rather than as a series of individual services and agencies.
- Recommendation #4: The county should hire a homelessness services coordinator.
- Recommendation #5: The county should improve and expand its communication and coordination between county government offices and its network of housing providers including the Adams County Housing Authority.
- Recommendation #6: The county should provide dedicated alternative safe, secure, dignified, habitable space for persons not willing to go to shelters.
- Recommendation #7: The county should provide some assistance to the Sheriff and Deputy Sheriffs that patrol the encampments.



Recommendations for
Consideration: 3 to 5 years



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Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness

- Recommendation #8: The county should provide more available shelter space for families and for single adults.
- Recommendation #9: The county should explore creating service jobs for those in the encampments and for others experiencing homelessness similar to the Denver Day Works program.
- Recommendation #10: The county should pay much more attention to homelessness prevention.
- Recommendation #11: The county should develop strategies to locate services where the people are, rather than providing services in a central location.



Recommendations for
Consideration: *5 or more years*



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Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness

- Recommendation #12: The County should create more affordable/attainable housing for its poorest residents.
- Recommendation #13: The County should form partnerships with surrounding county governments and service providers to develop a true regional approach to address homelessness.



We want to help you move forward. We think this report is a start. The Burnes Center would be honored to work with you as you develop your strategies to address homelessness.



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Questions?



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Burnes Center on Poverty and Homelessness



STUDY SESSION AGENDA ITEM

DATE:	February 7, 2017
SUBJECT:	External Audit Work Plan and Update for the 2016 Fiscal Year
FROM:	Benjamin Dahlman
AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:	Finance Department
ATTENDEES:	Benjamin Dahlman
PURPOSE OF ITEM:	Discuss External Audit Work Plan for 2016 and Introduce CliftonLarsonAllen's new Principal Assigned to the Engagement
STAFF RECOMMENDATION:	Proceed with 2016 External Audit Work Plan

BACKGROUND:

Local Governments including Adams County are required by C.R.S. 29-1-603 to have an annual audit performed on the financial statements. The County's financings also require annual audits as continuing disclosure.

The County's annual audit includes two primary components in the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The Financial Section includes the County's Financial Statements. The Compliance Section includes the Single Audit which was conducted in conformity with the provision of the Single Audit Act of 1987, the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996, and Title 2 U.S. Code of Regulation Part 200. The County's audit firm gives opinions related to these items.

CliftonLarsonAllen LLC has been selected as the County's External Auditor. The contract was approved in Public Hearing on December 6, 2016. New this year, CliftonLarsonAllen LLC will have a new Principal on the engagement and he will be introduced to the Board.

As mentioned in the Public Hearing, CliftonLarsonAllen LLC will engage the Board and discuss the audit process. Specific topics to be covered are as follows:

1. Introductions
2. Scope of the Audit: discussion about what an audit is and why it is performed
3. Auditors' Responsibilities under US Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS)
4. The Auditors' and Board of County Commissioners' Roles in the Audit

5. Risk Assessment and Fraud: discussion on what this is and auditors' responsibilities
6. Discussion on required communications and deliverables between the auditors and Board
7. Findings: overview of what a finding is, types of findings, and how they are communicated
8. Audit Committee: overview of what an audit committee is and reasons why an organization may want to establish one

AGENCIES, DEPARTMENTS OR OTHER OFFICES INVOLVED:

Finance Department

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:

Presentation covering item 1-8 above

FISCAL IMPACT:

Please check if there is no fiscal impact . If there is fiscal impact, please fully complete the section below.

Fund: 1

Cost Center: 9252

	Object Account	Subledger	Amount
Current Budgeted Revenue:			
Additional Revenue not included in Current Budget:			
Total Revenues:			<hr/>

	Object Account	Subledger	Amount
Current Budgeted Operating Expenditure:			\$121,000
Add'l Operating Expenditure not included in Current Budget:			
Current Budgeted Capital Expenditure:			
Add'l Capital Expenditure not included in Current Budget:			
Total Expenditures:			<hr/>

New FTEs requested: YES NO

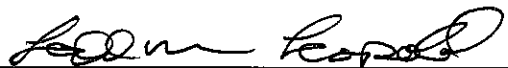
Future Amendment Needed: YES NO

Additional Note:

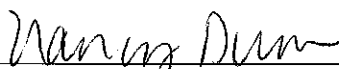
This is a multiple year contract which is a traditional timeframe for such work. The cost represented above is for this year only.

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:

APPROVAL OF FISCAL IMPACT:



Todd Leopold, County Manager



Nancy Dunn
Budget / Finance

Raymond H. Gonzales, Deputy County Manager



Bryan Ostler, Interim Deputy County Manager



Adams County, Colorado

Comprehensive Annual Finance Report (CAFR)
Audit and Single Audit

Fiscal Year 2016

Audit Entrance Meeting with the Board of
County Commissioners

February 7, 2017

Investment advisory services are offered through CliftonLarsonAllen Wealth Advisors, LLC,
an SEC-registered investment advisor. | ©2016 CliftonLarsonAllen LLP



Fiscal Year 2016 Audit Entrance Meeting Agenda

- Introductions
- Scope of Audit
- Responsibilities under GAAS
- The BOCC's Role in the Audit
- Risk Assessment
- Required Communications and Deliverables
- Discussion on Findings
- Overview of an Audit Committee
- Questions



Scope of the Audit: Why is an audit performed?

- Colorado's Local Government Audit Law requires every local government (cities, counties, special districts, school districts, authorities, political subdivisions, and others) in the state to undergo an annual financial audit conducted by an independent CPA firm.
- The State Auditor is required to examine all audit reports to determine compliance with accounting standards.



Scope of the Audit: what is an audit?

- An examination of the financial report of an organization by someone independent of the organization.
- To determine: accounting records are accurate and complete, prepared in accordance with GAAP, and the financial statements are free of material misstatement.
- Required to report to Governance (Board) on control deficiencies, significant deficiencies and/or material weaknesses in internal controls when identified during the audit.



Scope of the Audit

- Financial Statement Audit – Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)
- Single Audit
 - Preliminary major program determination – 6 programs:
 - ◇ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Child Care & Development Block Grant Cluster (CCDF), Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LEAP), Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)
 - ◇ Head Start, Federal Transit (FTC)
 - ◇ Potential for additional programs to be identified based on final SEFA
 - Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (SEFA)
- Findings and Recommendations

Responsibilities under US Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS)

- Auditors are responsible for:
 - Expressing opinions on whether financial statements are in conformity with U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles
 - Expressing opinions only over information identified in our report. Other information reviewed, but not subjected to testing
 - Performing audit in accordance with required auditing standards
 - Communication of significant matters related to audit



Responsibilities Under GAAS (continued)

- An Audit in Accordance with GAAS
 - Does not relieve management of responsibilities.
 - Includes consideration of internal control as a basis for audit procedures, but not to opine on effectiveness of internal controls.



The BOCC's Role in the Audit

The COSO Framework



Risk Assessment

Prior Year Knowledge/Team
Brainstorming Session

Interviews with
Management, Operating
Personnel, Internal Audit,
BOCC

**Risk
Assessment**

Regulatory Reports

Inherent Risk/Other



Risk Assessment and Significant Accounts/Transactions

- Perform risk assessment to determine material accounts/transactions.
- Include those accounts that are quantitatively and/or qualitatively material. Matter of auditor judgment.
- Will obtain an understanding of risks (risk of error, fraud, and/or noncompliance) and control environment for each.
- Nature of the account/transaction and risks identified will dictate if test of operating effectiveness is performed.



Required Communications to BOCC and management

- Preliminary Communications to Governance:
 - Responsibilities under US Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS) and the Uniform Guidance
 - Planned scope and timing of the audit
- Communications to Governance – Conclusion:
 - Significant findings or issues from the audit
- Management Letter at Conclusion:
 - Deficiencies in internal control other than significant deficiencies and material weaknesses



Required Deliverables

- Deliverables included in CAFR:
 - Independent Auditors' Report – **opinions on the financial statements**
 - Independent Auditors' Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with Government Auditing Standards (GAS/Yellow Book report) – **report on internal controls over financial reporting**
 - Independent Auditors' Report on Compliance For Each Major Federal Program, Report on Internal Control Over Compliance, and Report on the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards Required By The Uniform Guidance – **opinion on federal programs and findings severity**
 - **Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs** – includes financial statement findings and federal award findings (material weaknesses and significant deficiencies)



Findings – What are they?

- An audit finding is defined as an area of **potential control weakness, policy violation, or non-compliance with the terms and conditions** of the award or other issue identified during the audit.
- A finding is reported as either a **significant deficiency or material weakness over internal control and/or compliance**.



Types of Audit Findings: Significant Deficiency vs Material Weakness

- **Significant Deficiency:** is a deficiency, or a **combination of deficiencies, in internal control over financial reporting or major programs**, that is **less severe than a material weakness** yet important enough to merit attention by those responsible for oversight of the entity.
- **Material Weakness:** is a deficiency, or a **combination of deficiencies, in internal control over financial reporting or major programs**, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a **material misstatement** of the financial statements or material non-compliance with a program requirement **will not be prevented or detected** on a timely basis.



How are findings communicated?

- Significant deficiencies (SDs) and material weaknesses (MWs) are required to be reported in the “Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs” – in the CAFR package (compliance section)
- Deficiencies in internal control that are not SDs or MWs are reported in the management letter that is given to the BOCC and management



What is an audit committee?

- A subgroup of those charged with governance
- Common responsibilities of an audit committee:
 - Oversees external and internal audit functions – meets with auditors and discusses the audit plan and reviews results
 - Oversees the financial reporting process – through review and monitoring of reports prepared by management
 - Oversees the government's internal controls
 - Helps set the tone for the government regarding whistleblower policies and antifraud measures



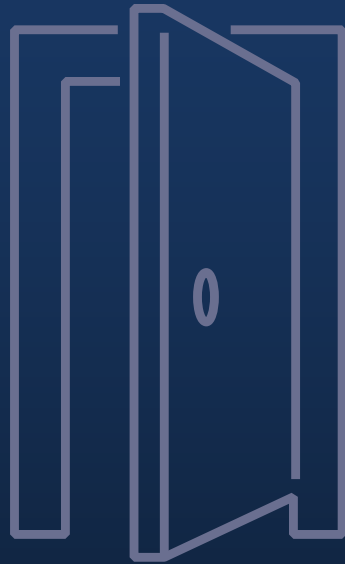
Why establish an audit committee?

- The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) encourages governments to establish them as a best practice and have the following characteristics (<http://www.gfoa.org/audit-committees>):
 - Formally establish the audit committee
 - Members should be independent from management
 - Members should have understanding of governmental financial reporting and experience with internal controls
 - Should establish an appropriate tone at the top
 - Should understand their role on the committee and responsibility as members



Questions?





Paul Niedermuller, CPA
Principal, State and Local Government
303-439-6053
Paul.Niedermuller@CLAconnect.com

Allison Slife, CPA
Manager, State and Local Government
303-439-6018
Allison.Sliffe@CLAconnect.com

CLAconnect.com



STUDY SESSION AGENDA ITEM

DATE:	February 7, 2017
SUBJECT:	Internal Audit 2017 Risk Assessment and Work Plan
FROM:	Benjamin Dahlman
AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:	County Manager's Office
ATTENDEES:	Eide Bailly Representatives: Kim Higgins, Paul Kane, Brent Millspaugh, Carrie Enders Adams County Representative: Benjamin Dahlman
PURPOSE OF ITEM:	2017 Internal Audit Risk Assessment and Workplan Presentation
STAFF RECOMMENDATION:	Review 2017 Internal Audit Risk Assessment and Audit Work Plan and Direct Internal Auditor to Implement Plan

BACKGROUND:

On October 26, 2011, the Adams County Board of County Commissioner established an internal audit function for Adams County Government for the purpose of enhancing public accountability and adhering to best practices in government.

The Internal Audit Charter was updated on January 6th, 2015 and Eide Bailly, LLP has been the County's Internal Auditor since February 3, 2015.

The Internal Audit Charter requires that the Internal Auditor provide; among other tasks, the following:

- Participate in the development of a flexible annual audit plan in partnership with County Management using an appropriate risk-based methodology and submit that plan to the Board of County Commissioners for review and approval.
- Implement the annual audit plan as approved, including; as appropriate, special tasks or projects requested by County Management and the Board of County Commissioners.

The Internal Auditors will finalize the 2016 year and present the strategy for the 2017 Risk Assessment and Audit Work Plan.

AGENCIES, DEPARTMENTS OR OTHER OFFICES INVOLVED:

Finance Department
County Manager's Office

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:

2017 Preliminary Risk Assessment
2017 Audit Work Plan

FISCAL IMPACT:

Please check if there is no fiscal impact . If there is fiscal impact, please fully complete the section below.

Fund: 1

Cost Center: 9252

	Object Account	Subledger	Amount
Current Budgeted Revenue:			
Additional Revenue not included in Current Budget:			
Total Revenues:			<hr/>

	Object Account	Subledger	Amount
Current Budgeted Operating Expenditure:			\$100,000
Add'l Operating Expenditure not included in Current Budget:			
Current Budgeted Capital Expenditure:			
Add'l Capital Expenditure not included in Current Budget:			
Total Expenditures:			<hr/> <hr/> \$100,000

New FTEs requested: YES NO

Future Amendment Needed: YES NO

Additional Note:

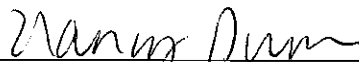
The budget for the Internal Audit function is \$100,000 annually.

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:

APPROVAL OF FISCAL IMPACT:



Todd Leopold, County Manager



Budget / Finance

Raymond H. Gonzales, Deputy County Manager



Bryan Ostler, Interim Deputy County Manager



2016 Executive Summary

Adams County, Colorado

February 7, 2017

Adams County, Colorado
2016 Executive Summary
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Procedures Performed 3
Proposed Audit Plan 5

Executive Summary

Internal Audit departments operate using guidance provided by the International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF) published by the Institute of Internal Auditors. Standards of the IPPF address planning and indicate that risk-based plans should determine the priorities of the internal audit activity, consistent with the organization's goals. The internal audit activity's plan of engagements must be based on a documented risk assessment, undertaken at least annually. The input of senior management and the board must be considered in this process.

With the issuance of RFP 2014.403, Proposal for Internal Auditor Services, our proposal dated October 21, 2014 and the Purchase of Service Agreement signed February 3, 2015, Adams County changed its internal auditor services agreement and vendor to Eide Bailly, LLP. We were hired as part of the Adams County team to provide consulting/special projects as well as risk assessments/internal audits for top management with final reporting and approvals by the Board of County Commissioners.

We met with the board of county commissioners (BOCC) on December 13, 2016 to deliver our 2016 internal audit and special/consulting reports which included a payroll analysis for the Finance Department, a follow-up report for the Treasurer's office and a report on cash handling within the Sheriff's office. This report outlines those procedures as well as any other reports issued prior to 2016 (*Figure 4: Page 6*). We also included the proposed audit plan for 2017, which may include follow up projects from our risk assessment updates (*Figure 3: page 5*). Certain department directors and elected officials provided input as part of the current and updated risk assessment process to ensure key risks were captured for each function within the County. Department directors and elected officials will be included in the interview process/risk assessments updates as the audit plans are refined and approved during 2017.

The risk assessment process is not an exact science but should occur on an annual basis. The majority of risks are self-reported by the director/elected official and staff of the respective function. While every risk and its associated ranking are thoroughly discussed with the risk's owner, no audit procedures are performed to validate the rankings (thorough audit procedures will be developed and performed as part of the individual audits proposed as a result of this report). The audit team applies professional judgment and experience to determine the final risk rankings.

It is very important to note that risks are written as if they are occurring. Readers should not assume the noted risk actually exists or that the function is deficient in any way. The purpose of the risk assessment is to develop an audit plan, not to report problems with current operations. In contrast, the purpose of an internal audit is to evaluate and conclude on the adequacy and effectiveness of operations and internal controls through interviews, review of documentation, testing, and other detailed procedures. A countywide risk assessment does not validate data or go into the same level of detail as an internal audit and should not be viewed as such.

Individuals Contacted

Department directors and elected/appointed officials were contacted for input into the updated risk assessment process during 2015 and 2016. *Figure 1: Departmental Contacts* lists each function contacted, along with the function's respective leader. Internal Audit contacted each of these individuals as part of the updated risk assessment process. Additionally, the majority of functions included key members of their staff when providing input and feedback.

Figure 1: Department Director/Elected Official Contact

Assessor's Office – Patsy Melonakis
Clerk & Recorder – Stan Martin
Commissioner's Office – Todd Leopold
Deputy County Manager – Internal Services- Bryan Ostler
Coroner's Office – Monica Broncucia-Jordan
Sheriff's Office – Michael McIntosh
Finance Director– Benjamin Dahlman
Treasurer's Office – Brigitte Grimm

Objective

A risk assessment is performed as part of any internal audit function, the objective of which is to determine the risks to the organization and develop an appropriate risk-based audit plan.

Scope

The scope of our risk assessment update included all departments and elected offices within Adams County.

Procedures Performed

We performed the following procedures to complete our risk assessment:

1. Presentation of methodology to directors/elected officials interviewed- For the internal audit function in 2016, our risk assessment methodology and procedures were presented to the department directors and elected/appointed officials that we met with to promote consistency within the process across all operating entities. For the 2017 and subsequent risk assessments, we will present our methodology to any newly interviewed and/or elected officials or newly hired department directors.
2. Solicitation of risks- Each interviewed director/official was asked to review the goals/responsibilities of their function and risks to accomplishing these goals/responsibilities. For each risk, respondents were instructed to rank the magnitude of impact and likelihood of occurrence.

Magnitude of impact assesses the severity of the risk, assuming it were to occur, using rankings of high, medium, and low.

Likelihood of occurrence assesses the chance the risk will come to fruition, regardless of the severity of the risk, using rankings of probable, potential, and remote.

3. Evaluation of risks- Internal Audit reviewed all completed risk assessments in conjunction with the function's goals/responsibilities, information available on the function's internet/intranet sites, and Internal Audit's experience with government operations. Additional risks or changes to risk rankings were proposed when deemed appropriate.
4. Departmental/Elected Office interviews- Internal Audit held individualized risk assessment sessions with each elected official and department director, listed below (*Figure 1, above*). Internal Audit also meet with top management and several elected officials to obtain their input regarding updates to the 2016 risk assessment. The purpose of these meetings and contacts was to clarify responses submitted in the self-assessment, review and revise risk rankings as necessary, and discuss additional risks proposed by Internal Audit.

5. Validation of risks- To ensure risks and associated rankings were appropriately captured, top management was provided copies of the final risks/rankings and given the opportunity to propose additional changes.
6. Consolidation of risks- Upon completion of the risk validation process, risks from each function were consolidated into a master risk assessment covering the entire county. We assigned risk rankings numerical weights as presented in *Figure 2: Risk Rankings*:

Figure 2: Risk Rankings

Magnitude Rankings		Likelihood Rankings	
High	3	Probable	3
Medium	2	Potential	2
Low	1	Remote	1

Financial magnitude was multiplied by the likelihood ranking to arrive at an overall raw risk score.

As discussed in the preceding scope section, some county officials and departments requested an expanded risk assessment scope to evaluate aspects of their operations with legal/regulatory, operational, and reputational risks. When all four categories of risk were considered, we multiplied the mathematical average of rankings in all four of the magnitude categories by the likelihood ranking to arrive at an overall raw risk score.

In addition to individualized risk rankings, we used budgeted expenditures as another factor in the risk assessment process. Risks associated with departments/elected official offices with larger budgets were given additional weight. Departmental budgets were summarized and given a “percent rank” in relation to other departments. This percent rank was added to the overall raw risk score as a “budgetary factor” to produce a final risk score.

Since Internal Audits were conducted at some Adams County departments/elected official offices during the years 2012 through 2016, we developed a “prior audit” factor which when applied, reduced the final risk score for the audited departments.

As the Internal Audit function continues to mature, overall risk scores in future years will likely include additional factors influencing risk such as the number of agreed upon management actions not completed. Such additional factors will help ensure that all functions receive adequate audit coverage, regardless of initial risk rankings.

7. Development of audit plan- We translated the final risk scores into relative rankings and sorted the scores in descending order. It is important to note that individual risk factors do not necessarily translate one for one into proposed audits. In some cases, the noted risk may be an inherent risk for which the County has no control over. In these cases, the County should be aware that the risk exists despite the fact that the risk cannot be addressed in an audit. In other cases, individual risks may not warrant a discrete internal audit and rather, are combined with other risks to produce a more comprehensive audit of the function. Further detail on the proposed audit plan is included in the “Proposed Audit Plan” section below.

8. Presentation of draft risk assessment and audit plan- This report, in draft format, was presented to top management for review and comment prior to formal adoption of the annual audit plan by the Board of County Commissioners in public hearing. While all comments were considered, Internal Audit, as an independent function reporting directly to the Board of County Commissioners, made the final decisions on risks, rankings, and proposed audits presented to the Board.
9. Approval of annual audit plan- As a final step in the risk assessment and audit planning process, the audits outlined in this report are presented to the Board of County Commissioners for final approval.

Proposed Audit Plan

Internal audit was set up with an annual budget affording approximately 800 annual audit hours. We have structured our internal audit plan to fit within close proximity to this budget. The internal audit budget also includes audit hours to administer the audit function, update the risk assessment annually, and conduct follow up audits to determine if agreed upon management actions have been satisfactorily completed.

Based on the results of our 2016 risk assessments and pending 2017 risk assessment updates, we propose the 2017 internal audit plan presented in *Figure 3: Proposed Internal Audit Plan*. Our proposed audit plan was based on the risk assessment results and our knowledge of county government operations. This plan may be modified as necessary during the year to address immediate concerns or changing conditions. Specific timing of each audit engagement will be determined upon approval of the audit plan and coordination with auditees.

Figure 3: Proposed 2017 Internal Audit Plan

2017 Internal Audit Proposed Schedule	Dates	Hours
2017 Risk Assessment – Continue to meet with department directors and elected officials to update the risks/rankings identified in the 2016 risk assessment to refine the 2017 audit plan.	On-going	100
2017 – Assessor’s Office – Review of operations and compliance with laws and regulations, specifically the process to assess mobile home parks and resulting Board of Equalization hearings and appeals process that have been denied the Office. Upon discussions with the Assessor, we expect to schedule the internal audit in May-September, 2017.	TBS	100
2017 – Clerk & Recorder-Review of operations, internal controls, segregation of duties and off-site cash collection sites. We expect to schedule the internal audit in February 2017	2/13	250
2017 – Coroner – Internal controls surrounding inventory collection, safeguarding, reporting and releases to appropriate persons. We expect to schedule the internal audit in August 2017	TBS	100
2017 – Community and Economic Development-Review of grants and internal controls surrounding the compliance of those grants (policies, allocations and sub-recipient monitoring) handled by grant managers in this department.	TBS	150
Administration- Time required to manage the internal audit function, and perform follow up audits, not otherwise associated with specific audits.	Ongoing	150
Total budgeted hours- 2017		850

Figure 4: 2015-2016 Internal Audit Procedures and Special/Consulting Projects Performed to Date

2016 Internal Audit and Special Projects	Status
2016 Risk Assessment – Interviews with department directors/elected officials to update risk assessment to evaluate risks to the County and develop the 2016 internal audit plan.	Complete
2016 – Finance-Payroll analysis/strategy to determine best practices, efficiencies and effectiveness in changing payment cycles and processes and potential vulnerabilities with current planned timing.	Complete
2016 – County Treasurer’s Office- Follow up review of adequacy of internal controls over financial operations, including receipt and disbursement of funds and roll out of new treasury management system.	Complete
2016 – Sheriff – Operational audits of the office, internal controls, segregation of duties, search and seizure funds, commissary funds based upon risks the Sheriff would like addressed.	Complete

2015 Internal Audit and Special Projects	Status
2015 Risk Assessment – Interviews with department directors/elected officials to update risk assessment to evaluate risks to the County and develop the 2015/2016 internal audit plan.	Complete
2015 Marijuana Lot Drawing – We assisted with the conduction of the Marijuana Lot Drawing held on January 27, 2015 for selection of applications for marijuana establishments as outlined in the Adams County Board of County Commissioner Resolution 2014-358 Approving Marijuana Regulation Amendments in Unincorporated Adams County	Complete
2015 Stormwater Utility Fees – We reviewed the internal controls surrounding the billing process and tested the billing process and calculations before bills were mailed to constituents of unincorporated Adams County related to the 2015 Stormwater Utility Fee billed in accordance with the Adams County Resolution Establishing Rates, Fees and Addressing Credit and Appeal Policies and Additional Details	Complete



STUDY SESSION AGENDA ITEM

DATE: February 7, 2017
SUBJECT: 4th QTR 2016 Update and 2017 Plan of Work
FROM: Barry Gore and Tricia Allen (ACED staff)
AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: ACED
ATTENDEES: Kristin Sullivan
Status Update – Annual Plan of Work
STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

BACKGROUND:

Per the Professional Services Agreement, ACED is required to meet with the Board of County Commissioners to discuss its Annual Work Plan and providing quarterly status updates on achieving the scope of services identified in the Professional Services Agreement.

AGENCIES, DEPARTMENTS OR OTHER OFFICES INVOLVED:

Economic Development

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:

See attachment

FISCAL IMPACT:

Please check if there is no fiscal impact . If there is fiscal impact, please fully complete the section below.

Fund:
Cost Center:

	Object Account	Subledger	Amount
Current Budgeted Revenue:			
Additional Revenue not included in Current Budget:			
Total Revenues:			

	Object Account	Subledger	Amount
Current Budgeted Operating Expenditure:			\$131,516
Add'l Operating Expenditure not included in Current Budget:			
Current Budgeted Capital Expenditure:			
Add'l Capital Expenditure not included in Current Budget:			
Total Expenditures:			

New FTEs requested: YES X NO

Future Amendment Needed: YES X NO

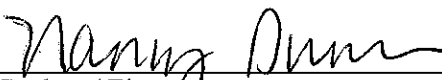
Additional Note:

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:

APPROVAL OF FISCAL IMPACT:



 Todd Leopold, County Manager



 Budget / Finance



 Raymond H. Gonzales, Deputy County Manager

 Bryan Ostler, Interim Deputy County Manager



2016 Plan of Work

February 7, 2017

Business Retention and Expansion

BRE Visits 4th Qtr 2016

	4 th QTR 2016	3 rd QTR 2016	2 nd QTR 2016	1 st QTR 2016	YTD Totals
Visits	21 Visits	33 Visits	25 Visits	16 Visits	95 Visits (GOAL: 100)
Jobs	418	1,355	1,040	251	2,646
Capital Investment	\$6M	\$5M	\$4M	\$15M	\$30M

Business Retention and Expansion

Business Retention & Expansion 4th Qtr 2016

Companies Visited

AllComm Data Supply

American West Construction

Cornerstone Mechanical

Denver Machine Shop

Direct Edge Denver

Dynamic Metal Fabrication

E.J. Painting & Fiberglass

Front Range Precast

Integrity Building Solutions

Metro Pavers, Inc.

Mile High Graphic

Mile High Tank Services, LLC

Next Strategic Technologies

Norm's Printing & Typesetting

Paul's Canvas

Power Surveying Company

Precise Cast

Quality Bicycle Products

Red Arrow

Redd Iron Inc.

RMT Trucking



Business Retention and Expansion

Business Retention & Expansion
4th Qtr 2016

Challenges Raised and Being Addressed by
ACED

- Finding skilled workforce
- Finding affordable commercial real estate



Business Retention and Expansion

Company Closures/Job Losses 4th QTR 2016

	4 th QTR 2016		
Company	Jobs	Closed, Relocated or Downsized?	Reason
Rocky Mountain Supply	8	Closed	Unknown

Primary Employment Attraction

Prospects, New Businesses and Incentives 4th QTR 2016

	4 th QTR 2016	3 rd QTR 2016	2 nd QTR 2016	1 st QTR 2016	YTD Totals
# of New Prospects	22	31	32	36	121 (GOAL: 75)
Company Announcements	Buehler Moving	McLane Foodservice	Lennox Industries	Medline Supply	--
	RockSol	New Deal Deicing	gloProfessionals	River North Brewery	--
	Atara	GoRight	Project Star (Confidential)	Amazon	--
	BSI	Offen Petroleum	Beverage Distributors	Laser Galicia America	
CAPEX	\$46,775,000	\$42,700,000	\$22,000,000	\$64,000,000	\$175,475,000
# of New Jobs Announced	311	469	1,164	728	2,203
2016 Tax rebate amount	\$292,055 in eligible tax rebates for 2016	\$292,055 in eligible tax rebates for 2016	\$292,055 in eligible tax rebates for 2016	\$292,055 in eligible tax rebates for 2016	\$292,055 in eligible tax rebates for 2016

Primary Employment Attraction

Commercial Real Estate Activity 4th QTR 2016

4th QTR 2016	Vacancy Rate		Rental Rates	
	Adams	Metro Denver	Adams	Metro Denver
Office	18.9%	13.4%	\$19.19	\$24.37
Class A	12.3%	11.4%	\$25.00	\$30.14
Class B	16.5%	15.8%	\$16.41	\$21.69
Class C	34.6%	11.5%	\$20.19	\$19.99
Industrial	5.5%	5.0%	\$6.04	\$6.37
Retail	5.8%	5.7%	\$15.50	\$15.91

Developments Under Construction in 2016

Property	Total SF Under Construction	Available
Majestic Commercecenter	800,000 SF	4th QTR 2017
Rangeview Industrial Center	125,000 SF	3 rd QTR 2017
Park 12 Hundred Tech Center	374,000 SF	1 st QTR 2018



Marketing and Outreach

Marketing and Outreach - 4th Qtr 2016

	4 th QTR	3 rd QTR	2 nd QTR 2016	1 st QTR 2016	YTD Totals
Presentations/ Marketing Campaigns	5	5	6	6	22 (GOAL: 12)
Website					
	Content, Content, Content!	Creating 'City Profiles'	Creating a page to market the AC WBC	Adding new Events software	
	Creating pages for Marketing Areas		Content, Content, Content!	New Blog feature	
Outreach Efforts					
	AC Planning Partners Conference	North Area Sales Professionals	Denver Metro Assn of Realtors	Full page article to be published in June issue of CREJ	
	AC Workforce Development Board	I-70 Chamber of Commerce	SMPS (Construction and Engineering firms)	DMCAR Presentation	
	Mile High Community Loan Fund	Aurora Chamber of Commerce	Westminster Rotary	MNCC Bus Tour	
	CO Urban Workforce Alliance	Metro Mfg Partners	REAP	Innovative Real Estate Group	
	NAWB Director's Conference	Colorado Brownfields Conference	Innovative Real Estate Group (Brighton and Commerce City Offices)	Urban Land Institute	
			Commercial Real Estate Marketing	CREJ Land and Development Conference	

Business Issue Survey

Next Steps

- September 13, 2016 - Results presented to the ACED Executive Committee
- October 7, 2016 - Results presented to the ACED membership (October Investor Forum)
- December 13, 2016 - ACED presented recommendations to the ACED Executive Committee. Additional information and data was requested by the EC.

2017 Major Project

Adams County Site Selection Conference
July 31 - August 2, 2017

5 Site Consultants (specializing in Aerospace/Aviation, Advanced Manufacturing, Energy, and Health and Wellness) will get an up-close look at our economy, our infrastructure, our industries, and the quality of our workers. They'll be briefed, queried, networked, and will speak to Adams County leaders on our assets, deficits, and will make recommendations on gaining/maintaining a competitive advantage.



QUESTIONS?



**Thank you for your support
of ACED!**

