



## CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS

Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness  
July 20, 2023, 6:00 pm  
Third Floor Music Hall, City Hall

1. Welcome
2. Public Comment
3. Aneisha Samuels: Location Discussion
4. Vote on Recommended Location
5. Stephen Towne: Agency Discussion
6. Vote on Recommended Agency
7. Andrea Love-Smith: Construction Discussion
8. Vote on Recommended Construction
9. Adjourn

Kindsay Connor did NU1 complete Matrix

Address	Location 3290 Rt 9 / TOP HILL Comments	Location 260 MARCE AVE Comments	Location GATEWAY HOTEL Comments	Location NORTH of EAST AVE. Comments
Variables	0-5	0-5	0-5	0-5
Access to Bus Route				
Proximity to Social Services	40		18	39
Infrastructure (Water, sewer)	50		42	40
Cost for ownership/rental	27		32	36
Timeline	19		18	17
Zoning Compliance	40		49	7
Conversion cost	50		6	8
Lot size	40		43	11
Walkability (Sidewalks/crosswalks)	27		23	36
Environmental Concerns	27		36	38
Neighborhood Character	9		19	20
Proximity to shopping	27		36	27
Feasibility for SRO (Single Residence occupancy)	21		27	30
Operational Cost Yearly	50		50	27
Future spatial Economic Impacts	-		-	-
Total Score	20		36	26
	448		434	362

Please rate each variable 0-5: 0=very low, 3= average, 5= very high

Address	Location Comments	0-5	Location Comments	0-5	Location Comments	0-5
RT 29 / LAKE AVE	RT 29 / LAKE AVE	9	153 South BRDWAY	42		0-5
Variables						
Access to Bus Route						
Proximity to Social Services		19		40		
Infrastructure (Water, sewer)		29		38		
Cost for ownership/rental		45		17		
Timeline		5		6		
Zoning Compliance		17		50		
Conversion cost		8		14		
Lot size		40		40		
Walkability (Sidewalks/crosswalks)		18		50		
Environmental Concerns		9		48		
Neighborhood Character		40		49		
Proximity to shopping		6		50		
Feasibility for SRO (Single Residence occupancy)		22		30		
Operational Cost Yearly		1		1		
Future spatial Economic Impacts		30		39		
Total Score		217		518		

Please rate each variable 0-5: 0=very low, 3= average, 5= very high

**PURPOSE** The intent of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to obtain applications from qualified nonprofit organizations to run a permanent low demand homeless shelter. The purpose of this funding is to provide a safe and secure environment for homeless individuals who may not be able to access traditional shelters due to various reasons such as mental health issues, substance abuse, or other barriers.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Homelessness is a growing problem in our society, and it is essential to provide support and resources to those who are most vulnerable. Low demand homeless shelters are designed to provide a safe and secure environment for individuals who may not be able to access traditional shelters due to various reasons. These shelters offer a low barrier to entry, meaning that individuals can access them without having to meet strict requirements or conditions. The Task Force determined the need for a permanent low-demand shelter to be constructed to meet the needs of these unhoused and vulnerable individuals. In the interim, a temporary low demand shelter operated by Rise was implemented to give adequate time to find a location and agency to operate a permanent low-demand housing solution. This RFP is intended to select the agency that will assume responsibility for operating the low demand emergency shelter with respect, sensitivity, and professionalism to the challenges and responses that are correlated with being unhoused or in crisis and also help to foster trust and engagement with services to promote stability and well-being.

The responding agency will provide fair and non-discriminatory services, including:

- Operate a safe, sanitary, supportive shelter 24/7/365 to help people in crisis access housing. The shelter must comply with City of Saratoga Springs and New York State codes and regulatory expectations.
- Operate without expectations for sobriety, treatment compliance, or other compliance expectations beyond those needed for maintaining safety and sanitary conditions. The eligibility criteria should focus on accepting people in need and meeting them where they are, not screening them out.
- Staff will provide case management and support services to address needs and help people stabilize and identify and work toward next steps.

## 1. AGENCY OVERVIEW (10 points)

### Agency Experience-

- Describe:
  - the organization, including its mission, history, and experience working with homeless individuals.
  - your organization's experience providing housing, shelter, 24/7 services.
  - your organization's history in managing grants or contracts and providing required documentation of fiscal and programmatic reports.
  - Any history of working with municipalities or county/state entities.

Target Population- Include a description of the target population and how the low demand homeless shelter will meet their needs.

### Staffing-

- Describe:
  - the Key staff who will oversee the shelter and provide direct services.
  - staff qualifications and required training.
  - If volunteers will assist with the program, include the qualification, job duties, screening, and training plan for volunteers.
  - Who is responsible for:
    - program oversight including fiscal and regulatory oversight.
    - supervision of staff
    - recruitment and support of volunteers.

## 2. SHELTER PROGRAM DESIGN (50 points)

### Values statement-

- Describe:
  - the overall philosophy that will be used to effectively engage, support, and provide a safe, clean, welcoming home for people who are unhoused.
  - how you will assess comprehensive needs, focus on most immediate needs and,
  - if applicable, tailor services to specific needs.
- Describe the policies and practices that you will implement that support a low barrier approach.
- Describe the training sources you will use to ensure your staff are using a low barrier approach, understanding trauma, developing de-escalation techniques and provide strengths-based , individualized supportive services.
- How do you use a harm reduction approach to addressing issues of substance use or mental health?

### Housing First practices-

- Describe:
  - how the proposed program design and general policies/procedures will work to remove barriers while still maintaining the safety, security, and wellbeing of the shelter guests and staff.
  - how advocacy services will support a Housing First orientation while also working to help people toward increased stability.

- barriers that might limit eligibility and what steps would be taken to remove those barriers or assist the individual if their housing crisis could not be resolved by admission into the low demand shelter.

Trauma-informed practices- Describe how trauma-informed practices will be used in the provision of housing, case management, and support services.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion-

- Describe:
  - the training and operational practices to ensure that services are provided without bias, and with cultural humility and sensitivity.
  - any expected accommodation to address individual needs.
  - how you assist guests who may have limited English proficiency, speech, vision or hearing challenges, immigration concerns, or other obstacles to inclusion. Describe plans for recognizing, upholding, and addressing the diversity of guests, volunteers and staff.

Staffing Plan-

- What is the staff/guest ratio?
- Describe:
  - the staffing plan.
  - staffing schedule.
  - the responsibilities of each employee during their scheduled shift (note the responsibilities may vary depending on the hours they work- describe these differences)
  - the background check policies for staff/volunteer including criminal, CPS (if applicable) and DMV (if applicable).
- What is the plan for recruiting, training, and documenting the work of staff/volunteers?

Volunteer Plan- Will volunteers be utilized. Describe what roles volunteers would provide regarding all aspects of shelter operations.

Support Services-

- Describe:
  - the specific services that will be offered to shelter guests. These may include case management, health care, social support, employment, transportation, recovery, etc.
  - how the services will address the specialized needs of the guest population.
  - if there are specific expectations/timeframes for certain services/performance outcomes/shelter stay and the reasons for these timeframes.
  - services provided by the agency as well as any services that will be provided on site by community partners.

Integration with existing services-

- Describe any plans to integrate the low demand shelter with other existing services, including housing services, recovery or mental health services, community -based services, etc.

Meals- Describe the plan for meal provision on site.

- Safety-
  - Individual- Describe how your policies/procedures will address safety considerations for the individual, for the shelter guests, and for the immediate neighborhood.
  - Facility Describe the plan for facility management oversight, including fire safety, code compliance, cleanliness, repairs, etc.
- Community- describe your plans to interface with the community to:

- provide opportunities for shelter guests.
- to understand and respond to any concerns from the immediate neighborhood as well as the community at large.
- collaborate with other community service organizations for the benefit of the program and guests.

### 3. PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES (15 points)

- How will this low demand shelter provide benefit to:
  - 1) people who are unhoused and have experienced difficulty engaging with existing supports, and
  - 2) To the overall community.
- What are your goals for the shelter?
- How will you measure success programmatically? Be specific and address areas of program utilization, overall effectiveness etc.
- How will you measure success for shelter guests?

### 4. FISCAL AND REPORTING (10 points)

- Describe the fiscal viability and health of the applicant agency, including the history of successfully accessing and managing public grant funding.
- In the past three years, has the applicant agency been audited or reviewed by a government agency? If so, what was the result? Describe any negative findings and how they were resolved.
- How does your organization track income and expenses. Describe your fiscal/accounting experience, practices, and reporting. How do you track volunteer hours, donations, or provision of in-kind services.
- Provide your organization's current annual budget.
- Indicate if audited financial statements have been prepared for the applicant agency within the past twelve months and if the audit resulted in an unqualified or "clean" opinion. If the audit resulted in a qualified opinion, please describe.
- Did the most recent audited financial statements of the applicant agency indicate that current assets were equal to or exceeded current liabilities (a positive working capital position)?
- Describe the role of your board of directors with regard to fiscal and program oversight.

### 5. BUDGET (15 points) **Note it is practically impossible to craft a budget without knowing some key factors we have not yet decided on, e.g. facility layout (is it one building or more .. all on one floor, separate wings for men and women? How many guests do we expect to house? etc). So, we might want to give some projected info with these projections upon which to base budgets so there are standard assumptions the agencies can use in developing the budget. Clearly if these metrics change the chosen organization would be able to amend the budget, e.g. if we projected 40 guests and the actual size of the facility allowed for 55)**

- Provide a comprehensive budget for the staffing, program costs, maintenance and operations of the shelter.
- Describe any existing funding your agency has to support the proposed project.

Whatever instructions we want to include... Proposals must be submitted by [insert date] to [insert email address]. Proposals will be reviewed by our organization, and the selected nonprofit organization will be notified by [insert date]. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact [insert contact information].

Also our committee might want to make recommendations about the skillsets that would be beneficial to the review team. I would assume proposals are going to be reviewed by a team convened by the mayor, probably utilizing City employees.

Some skillsets I think might be beneficial are:

- Experience reviewing grant proposals, particularly those in the human services realm. When I submit an rfp for a new auditor or IT company the criteria and expectations are very different from a human services grant application. So, having someone who is familiar with what to look for in this type of narrative is helpful.
- Someone famnilar with Housing First and shelter service provision (this could be the same person as above)
- Fiscal expertise
- What else?



## Scoring considerations (for reviewers only):

**1. Agency overview 10 points**- Assess organizational experience working with the population, providing shelter, leadership experience, and interface with other community organizations and the community at large. Consider past performance outcomes.

### **2. Shelter Program Design (50 points):**

Assess low demand, Housing First and Harm Reduction understanding and competence (background information from the National Alliance to End Homelessness bulleted below to better understand the low-demand model):

#### FOUNDATIONAL TENETS OF HOUSING FIRST

- Homelessness is a housing problem
- Everyone is ready for housing now
- People should be returned to or stabilized in permanent housing as quickly as possible and connected to resources necessary to stay there
- Issues that contributed to a household's homelessness can best be addressed once they are housed

#### HOUSING FIRST IN SHELTER PRACTICE

- Few to no programmatic pre-requisites to permanent housing entry
- Low-barrier admission policies
- A focus on helping individuals and families access and sustain permanent rental housing as quickly as possible
- Supportive services are voluntary

#### LOW-BARRIER DOES NOT MEAN

- Not having rules or expectations of shelter participants
- Allowing people to act in ways that are unsafe to themselves or others
- Letting anything happen or letting everyone in

#### SIMPLE, SAFE, BEHAVIOR-BASED RULES

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Use the shelter space in a respectful manner.
- Be a good neighbor.
- No weapons are allowed in the shelter, and nothing may be used as a weapon inside the shelter.
- Substance use is not allowed on the premises

### **3. Performance Outcomes (15 points) :**

Align emergency shelter's goals with the community's goals to end homelessness by providing low-barrier, safe, and housing-focused shelter so people are not unhoused.

**4. Fiscal and reporting (10 points)**

Evaluate organization's experience with managing grants, any performance concerns on past grants, and bookkeeping/fiscal processes and accountability.

**5. Budget (15 points)**

Assess the project's projected costs for staffing and maintenance and operations, realistic projections for overall costs, and leveraged funds or other financial support the applicant brings to the project (including in-kind contributions)