



DOUGLAS COUNTY HOMELESS INITIATIVE

THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2025

MINUTES

Thursday, March 13, 2025	9:00 AM	BOCC Hearing Room, Conference Rooms A & B
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In - Person Attendees: Commissioner Abe Laydon, Adrian Mabry, Allison Cutting, Artie Lehl, Caroline Frizell, Catherine Millis, Dan Marlow, Darren Weekly, Donte Young, Ellie Reynolds, Erin White, Greg Matthews, Jamie Fisher, Jason Gray, Jay Carpenter, Jeff Garcia, Jennifer Eby, Kevin Torrens, Kirsten Swanson, Kyle Villamor, Laura Hefta, Luke Ward, Melody D'Haillecourt, Mike Hill, Mike Polhemus, Nick Adamson, Nick Hausman, Paolo Diaz, Rand Clark, Ruby Richards, Sandy Holcomb, Sasha Easton, Scott Nelson, Steven Dodrill, Tiffany Marsitto

Online Participants: 18 (list is available upon request)

- 1. Welcome & Introductions:** Commissioner Laydon
- 2. Legal Update:**
Jeff Garcia, Douglas County Attorney: Two issues the County is hoping to address are overnight camping in vehicles and issues contacting and collaborating with local businesses with out of state owners to address overnight parking, encampments, and panhandling issues. The County is exploring possible solutions which include an ordinance for heightened public nuisance, a criminal reporting requirement with a possible fine issued, and posting of Handouts Don't Help signs.

3. Douglas County Housing Partnership:

Artie Lehl, Deputy Director: Douglas County Housing Partnership (DCHP) is the Public Housing Authority for Douglas County, City of Lone Tree, City of Castle Pines, Town of Parker, and Town of Castle Rock. Housing instability affects all communities due to the high demand of affordable housing, depleted housing supply and production of supply due to increased cost of development, and loss of affordability. DCHP is at the end of the housing continuum and provides permanent housing for those caught in the cycle of cost burden, instability, eviction, foreclosure, and homelessness. Colorado is ranked number eight as least affordable according to the 2024 Out of Reach report. This means that a household requires an income of \$37.47 per hour to afford a two-bedroom apartment. Based on the average rent in Douglas County, households need to make \$42.33 per hour to afford a two-bedroom apartment. The largest need for affordable housing in the County is for the 0-30% income category. These are usually individuals who are strictly on social security or disability income. Middle income properties are the next highest need. The average home price in Douglas County is \$800,000. This means that households would have to make \$150,000 a year for a four-person household to make this an affordable housing option.

DCHP has been working on reducing the cost of housing for ten years to help bridge the growing gap. DCHP administers 91 State Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) and currently has 91 people on the waitlist. There are 2,912 income aligned units in Douglas County with 2,279 at 60%AMI, 160 at 50%AMI, 70 at 40% and 163 at 30%AMI.

Homeless Diversion and Housing Navigation services provided by DCHP include foreclosure mitigation counseling and reverse mortgage counseling services and is made possible by the Transformational Homeless Response Grant (THRG) provided by the Colorado State Department of Local Affairs. Proposition 123 funding is a multi-jurisdictional collaboration to develop affordable units across the County. There are currently 334 units under construction and have a final goal of 1300 units to be completed across all the jurisdictions of Douglas County by 2026.

4. GOALS Update:

Paolo Diaz, CEO, Family Tree: Paolo Diaz served in Adams County on their poverty and homelessness initiatives for 6 years then worked in the non-profit sector for 12 years after that. The Generational Opportunities to Achieve Long-term Success (GOALS) program takes a two generational approach to put the whole family on a path to economic security. It is a 4–12month transitional housing program with wraparound supportive services. From July 1, 2024 – February 28, 2025, 100% of families exited to safe and stable housing, 76% of female single heads of households, 83% of families have maintained or increased their income, 6,369 nights of shelter were provided, and the average family size of GOALS is three people per household. There are currently three Douglas County families participating in the new GOALS program, 2 of the 3 families are single female heads of households, all families have school – aged children enrolled in school, all families have maintained or increased their income, and 762 nights of shelter have been provided.

5. Executive Committee Member Updates:

Laura Hefta, Lone Tree Councilperson: Parker is reviewing their camping ban to discuss possible updates needed. There has been a noticeable reduction in panhandling in Parker.

Jay Carpenter, Lone Tree Mayor Pro Tem and Douglas County Community Foundation Board Member: The Valentine's day fundraiser raised \$600 and the current Handouts Don't Help fund balance is a little over \$2,000.00.

Sasha Easton, A/D Works!: ACC Sturm hiring event happening on 4/3/2025 from 1:00-4:00p.m.

Jason Johnson, Executive Director, MDHI: Introduced himself and is looking forward to engaging and collaborating with the DCHI.

6. HEART Update:

Tiffany Marsitto, Community Services Supervisor: February HEART activity summary includes 24 new clients enrolled in the HEART program, 162 total referrals, 34 clients exited the program, and 14 business engagements. HEART activities that were completed for the month included a presentation for Douglas County Economic Development Corporation. In February 2025, there were 24 new enrollments to the HEART program, in December of 2024, there were 19 and in January of 2024, there were 31. In February of 2025, there were 46 households that received one or more services in the HEART program. HEART completed a total of 162 calls for service for the month of February 2025. The services provided by location included Highlands Ranch 32%, Castle Rock 19%, Parker 24%, Lone Tree 12%, Castle Pines 8%, Englewood 4%, and Larkspur 1%. Exit outcomes for the 34 clients were 9% exited to permanent housing, 23% exited to temporary housing, 21% exited to shelter, 15% were no contact, and 32% wanted to remain homeless out of County.

February success story comes from HEART Navigator Katie Millis who received a call on the HEART hotline from a concerned citizen about a person who appeared to be homeless and hitchhiking along Interstate 25 in Castle Rock. Katie, along with Douglas County Sheriff's Deputy, Nick Hassman, helped move the individual to a safer location to discuss available assistance. The individual wished to return to New Mexico, where they had family support, but had become stranded after attending a court hearing. Katie was able to secure a hotel voucher for the night along with a bus ticket to New Mexico for the following day. The individual safely arrived in New Mexico and has since reconnected with family.

7. Public Comment: No Comment**8. Closing Comments: Commissioner Laydon**

The Next Regular Meeting Will be Held on Thursday, April 10, 2025 @ 9:00 a.m.