



3898 Maizeland Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Phone: 719-528-6133
Fax: 719-528-6848

Surveying • Planning

www.ldc-inc.com

Revised January 29, 2019

EL PASO COUNTY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT
2880 International Circle
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Attn: **Gabe Sevigny**

Re: **FREEDOM SPRINGS Minor Site Development Plan – Letter of Intent; APN 54074-07-047**

Dear Gabe:

LAND DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS, INC. (LDC) is representing **THE VECINO GROUP**, authorized representative for this development of the above referenced property in this application for a Minor Site Development Plan submittal.

The subject area is a “vacant land” portion of the East Half of the West Half of the Southeast Quarter of Section 7, Township 14 South, Range 65 West of the 6th P.M., in El Paso County, Colorado. It is adjacent to Western Drive (improved public right-of-way), just East of Hathaway Drive, at its intersection with Great Western Drive (improved private right-of-way). The specific property-of-interest is that 3.87-acre parcel known as Lot 2, WESTERN HILLS SUBDIVISION FILING NO. 2 (Plat Book G-5, Page 94, El Paso County, Colorado records). This lot is zoned R-4 and is planned for a Low-Income Housing for Veterans Apartment Complex.

Public utilities exist in this vicinity for appropriately-permitted utility service connections: CHEROKEE WATER AND SANITATION DISTRICT (water, wastewater); COLORADO SPRINGS UTILITIES (gas, electric). Fire protection is to be provided by the CIMARRON HILLS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT.

There are no planned waivers or variances requested for this development at the “initial review” stage of this project. See attached Request for Alternative Landscape Design Letter (interior landscaping trees by Jon Walsh, Landscape Architect), Application Narrative and Support Letters.

Owner: FREEDOM SPRINGS, LLC
Chris Ball . . . Phone: (417) 720-1577, Ext. 2603 . . . Email: chris@vecinogroup.com
305 W. Commercial Street
Springfield, MO 65803

Authorized Representative: THE VECINO GROUP
Casey Greer . . . Phone: (417) 720-1577 . . . Email: casey@vecinogroup.com
444 S. Campbell Avenue
Springfield, MO 65806

Thank you for your consideration,

LDC, Inc. by David V. Hostetler
dhostetler@ldc-inc.com

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David V. Hostetler', is written over the typed name and email address.

File: 18005 FREEDOM SPRINGS LOI 01-29-19



JON WALSH, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

October 3, 2018

Reviewing Planner
El Paso County Planning Department
2880 International Circle
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

RE: Request for Alternative Landscape Design. Development plan: Freedom Springs

Dear Reviewing Planner,

The developer of this site proposes multi-family development along Western Drive. The 3.87 acre lot zoned R-4 is presently vacant ground with multi-family developments to the north and west. Because only a portion of the site is proposed to be developed at this time the developer of this property requests an alternative landscape design for the landscape requirement listed in the Landscape and Water Conservation Manual.

Request #1

Section: Interior Landscaping Trees

Requirement: One tree per 500 s.f. of required 15% interior landscape.

Proposal: Provide the required interior trees for the proposed developed portion of the site.

Justification: Much of the eastern half of the property is not proposed to be developed at this time. The proposed internal trees provided meet or exceed the required quantities for the developed portion of the site.

Thank you for your consideration of these items. Please call if you have any questions relating to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jon C. Walsh'.

Jon C. Walsh, RLA
Landscape Architect

1. Executive Summary:

Colorado Springs has 161 veterans who are homeless every night; in addition, 288 families are homeless every night. Freedom Springs will change that. By offering affordable housing and onsite supportive services to develop and maintain stability, Freedom Springs will provide a uniquely supportive community environment for formerly homeless veterans and veteran families. Collaboration between The Vecino Group, Pikes Peak United Way, Volunteers of America, and Ross Management will make Freedom Springs a success. The Vecino Group will act as the owner/developer; Pikes Peak United Way as the land owner; Volunteers of America as the lead service provider and Ross Management Group as the property manager. Freedom Springs will provide 50 units of permanent supportive housing with amenities geared toward stability and fostering a sense of community and interaction for veterans and veteran families, ultimately decreasing veteran homelessness by 24% and family homelessness by 10% in Colorado Springs.

Freedom Springs is a proposed new-construction, multifamily permanent supportive housing development that will consist of 50 units (6 efficiency, 38 one-bedroom, and 6 two-bedroom); 100% of which will have project based rental assistance. Twenty-five project-based vouchers have been awarded from Colorado Springs Public Housing Authority. In addition to the commitment of vouchers, Freedom Springs has a funding commitment of \$500,000.00 from the El Paso County Housing Trust Fund and a commitment of tax abatement from the El Paso County Public Housing Authority. Freedom Springs has applied to Colorado Department of Housing for an additional 25 project based vouchers and will apply for matching home funds after allocation of tax credits.

The development will consist of one three-story elevator-serviced building containing 50 permanent supportive housing units and associated amenity space. The proposed security/community/amenity space will consist of an on-site property manager's office/lobby, on-site service provider offices, wellness room, food pantry/lending library, community room with full kitchen, exercise room/gym, computer room, maintenance office and storage, conference room, classroom, rotating/open office space for visiting service providers, outdoor sport court, vegetable gardens, tot lot, security cameras, controlled access entries, and parking.

Freedom Springs is ideally located in Cimarron Hills, an unincorporated area within El Paso County, just outside of Colorado Springs and north of Peterson Air Force Base and in census tract 50.00 with a poverty rate estimate of 14.27% on the 2014 ACS 5-year estimate. The suburban site provides an opportunity for fostering community interaction, prospective educational and economic advancement, as well as safety and security. A transit line to the north services the site; in addition, Freedom Springs will have on-demand transportation provided by a part-time driver and donation of a van to the project.

Freedom Springs will follow the Enterprise Green Communities requirements. Its intended methods will total 59 intended points, 24 points above the 35-point minimum requirement. In addition to the mandatory criterion, the development will highlight access to open space, efficient irrigation, advanced water conservation, be 5% more efficient than EGC baseline, construction waste management, recycling storage, advanced ventilation, recreation space, and renewable energy from photovoltaic (PV) panels.

Each unit at Freedom Springs will have forced heating and air conditioning, blinds, Energy Star washer/dryer, Energy Star dishwasher, Energy Star refrigerator, range, disposal, and microwave. Luxury vinyl tile flooring and solid surface countertops will be used for durability and style.

The foundations will be a mix grade beam and spread concrete footings, slab on grade first floor, floor slab, and three-story wood frame construction. Elevator serviced, with amenity and service provider space throughout the 1st and 2nd floors. Energy Star windows, doors and insulation will all meet or exceed Enterprise Green Communities standards.

Freedom Springs has a broad range of financial sources for funding, many of which are already approved. Freedom Springs will utilize 9% low income housing tax credit financing, a “soft” loan from the El Paso County Housing Trust Fund, CDOH has indicated support of a matching loan, Colorado Springs Housing Authority has approved 25 project based vouchers and the El Paso County Housing Authority has agreed to enter the ownership entity as a special limited partner to facilitate a property tax abatement for the development. The development will be able to remain debt free, allowing net cash flows to be reinvested in services and programs for residents, with equity/deferred developer fee being contributed by The Vecino Bond Group.

This is a third attempt to fund Freedom Springs. In 2015, the application lacked supportive housing vouchers. In 2016, the community was 100% one-bedrooms for single veterans, after a more in-depth data dive and several meetings with state and local stakeholders, the partners of Freedom Springs revamped the application to include families with a veteran preference. In addition, the ownership structure was changed to reflect Vecino Bond Group, LLC as the sole owner.

2. Identify which guiding principles in Section 2 of the Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) the project meets and why it meets them:

- *Projects serving Homeless Persons as defined in Section 5.B5:*

Section 42 of the Code defines “homeless” as an eligible individual or family who (a) lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and (b) has a primary nighttime residence that is: (i) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing); (ii) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or (iii) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. The term “Homeless Individual” does not include any individual imprisoned or otherwise detained under an act of the Congress or a state law.

Freedom Springs will receive 100% of its referrals from service agencies/coordinated entry in Colorado Springs. The following agencies have indicated the demand for these units:

- Veteran’s Administration (10 referrals at lease up and 4 monthly referrals)
- Homeward Pike’s Peak (6 referrals at lease up and 2 monthly referrals)
- Rocky Mountain Human Services (20 referrals at lease up and 5 monthly referrals)
- Aspen Pointe (5 referrals at lease up and 1 monthly referral)
- Springs Rescue Mission (40 referrals at lease up and 20 monthly referrals)
- Salvation Army (15 referrals at lease up and 27 monthly referrals)

Each person/family referred through the coordinated entry system in Colorado Springs will meet the definition of homelessness as defined above.

3. Identify which, if any, of the guiding principles in Section 2 of the QAP the project meets and how it meets them:

- *To support rental housing projects serving the lowest income tenants for the longest period of time:* Freedom Springs will be housing persons that are considered “literally” homeless and without resources. We anticipate that most residents will be considered extremely low-income at 30% of area median income or below.
- *To distribute housing credits to assist a diversity of populations in need of affordable housing, including families, senior citizens, homeless persons and persons in need of supportive housing:* Freedom Springs will be serving the homeless population with 100% of its units. In addition, to providing units to persons that are homeless, Freedom Springs will offer full-time, on-site services. The persons living at Freedom Springs will be identified through the coordinated entry system as needing supportive housing and qualifying for the most vulnerable housing, needing the most services.

4. Describe how the project meets the criteria for approval in Section 2 of the QAP:

a. Market conditions:

The most recent published Point-in-Time Count for Colorado Springs/El Paso County is 2015. The count reports that a total of 288 persons in households with at least one adult and one child were homeless, with 201 living in transitional housing, 84 in emergency shelter and 3 unsheltered. The count reports that 161 veterans were homeless, with 54 being unsheltered and 107 being sheltered. Freedom Springs will decrease veteran homelessness by 24% and family homelessness by 10% in Colorado Springs.

The project will not negatively impact the vacancies of other rent restricted developments in the area due to the lack of affordable housing, waiting lists and high occupancy rates at existing properties in the market area.

In addition to the most recent published Point-in-Time Count (PITC), the market study identified the following PITC numbers:

“Of the 1,415 homeless persons in the PMA in 2017, 958 (67.7%) were considered sheltered and had housing in emergency shelters or transitional housing, while 457 (32.3%) were unsheltered individuals residing in the street. There were 258 homeless veterans and family members in 2017.”

Further, according to the market study, there are 212 PSH units in the market area that are either existing or in the pipeline, while there are 881 income- and size-qualified homeless persons in the PMA for the subject’s units. The number of qualified special needs homeless renters far exceeds the number of existing and proposed PSH units in the PMA. The proposed project should reach 97% stabilized occupancy within two months, without concessions.

b. Readiness-to-proceed:

Pikes Peak United Way currently owns the land. A Phase I has been completed and no further investigation is recommended. The site is properly zoned and will only require administrative review. Further community

outreach and entitlement process will resume in August 2017.

c. Overall financial feasibility and viability:

Freedom Springs is financially feasible if awarded 9% Low-Income Housing Tax Credits as requested. The project is not requesting a basis boost. The gap funds from Colorado Division of Housing will be requested post LIHTC allocation; a letter of intent was submitted along with the Project Based Voucher (PBV) application. The "hard" funds identified, including construction financing terms and tax credit investor pay-in rates, are all based on discussions with the developer's existing relationships with these firms and considered very achievable, given the forecasted conditions for the next 12 months in the financial markets. Pro forma estimates of rental income, vacancy rates, operating expenses, debt coverage ratios and reserve deposits all fall within the developer's typical underwriting targets and within CHFA's underwriting standards as well. Finally, the project is not feasible as a PAB/4% LIHTC project. The amount of soft funds required to fill the gap under a "4% scenario" would be unachievable.

d. Experience and track record of the development and management team:

Freedom Springs will be developed and owned by Vecino Bond Group, LLC. Pike's Peak United Way is leasing the land to the Freedom Springs project at a nominal rate. Ross Management Group (RMG) will manage the property and Volunteers of America will be the lead service provider.

Vecino is a private, for-profit company devoted to Housing for the Greater Good. Vecino has over 100 developments in five states, has 39 dedicated staff and offices located in California, Missouri, Utah, New York and Kansas. A project portfolio can be found attached. **Pike's Peak United Way** was founded in 1922 and is dedicated to advancing the common good by not only providing a safety net for basic services, but also preventing tomorrow's problems by addressing issues today. **Ross Management Group (RMG)** is a Denver based company with 25 years of experience in property management. With a portfolio comprised of many LIHTC properties, RMG specializes in lease up and compliance. RMG is in good standing with CHFA. **Volunteers of America Colorado Branch** is a national, nonprofit, faith-based organization dedicated to helping those in need rebuild their lives and reach their full potential.

e. Cost reasonableness:

Vecino Design Build has significant experience in the design and construction of affordable housing and has obtained a 3rd party estimate of construction costs that are in line with internal estimates to construct the project. Overall, the cost to construct this project is in line with projects of comparable size, quality, and demographic served especially considering Davis-Bacon wage requirements and supportive service escrows.

f. Proximity to existing tax credit developments:

According to the market study, there are three existing LIHTC developments, one VASH/Inc. Restricted, and one existing PSH development in the PMA. All have occupancy rates of 95-100%. There is one existing unit offline, being rehabbed and 62 PSH units under construction in the PMA. The inclusion of the subject's 50 units to the PMA's PSH rental inventory, in addition to the 63 similar dwellings that are under construction or offline, will not have a detrimental impact on the occupancy rates of existing PSH units, since the subject will fill its units with homeless persons from a multitude of referral partners.

g. Site Suitability:

Many factors contribute to the suitability of the site, appropriate zoning, proximity to community

services and neighborhood amenities, walking distance to transit stop, suitability in construction and providing a safe and secure site. Freedom Springs is partially made possible through the donation of land to Pikes Peak United Way, with PPUW leasing the land to the project. The site is in an established neighborhood and the area has been attracting limited development. A 160,000-square foot shopping center is under construction 2.1 miles northeast, while FedEx recently completed a 223,000-square foot distribution center, 1.1 miles southwest of the subject.

5. (a). The first year DCR is above 1.30 in agreement with PSH underwriting and having available net cash flow to offset the high cost of services provided to residents of Freedom Springs.

6. **Address any issues raised by the market analyst in the market study submitted with your application:**

“The subject’s location is slightly inferior to both surveyed properties with PSH and VASH units because these properties are closer to shopping and employment centers, public transportation and off-site homeless resources than the subject.”

The collaborative partners and key stakeholders view this location as a benefit to the project, due to the ability to provide enhanced services and security at this site. Volunteers of America (VOA) has extensive experience managing, coordinating and providing services to homeless households and will be able to fill the units with existing clients and referrals from numerous in-kind service providers and the coordinated entry system. Freedom Springs will partner with a wide array of on- and off-site supportive services to ensure that each resident is receiving the necessary services. In addition, Freedom Springs will have on-demand transportation for residents through a donated vehicle.

7. **Address any issues raised in the environmental report(s) submitted with your application and describe how these issues will be or have been mitigated:**

The Phase I did not report any recognized environmental conditions.

8. **Identify if there are any unusual features that are driving costs upward as well as if there are any opportunities to realize cost containment:**

Davis-Bacon wage requirements are a significant cost to the project. Cost containment has been keenly in focus, PPUW has agreed to lease the land at a nominal annual rate, and Vecino Bond Group, having an integrated, design, engineering and construction team allows the developer to review and streamline design documents as they are being produced.

9. **In your own words describe the outreach that you have conducted within the proposed community and demonstrate local support for the project (including financial support):**

The Freedom Springs’ team has coordinated local community support for the last two years to garnish support. The initial support spun from a local business owner providing the land on which Freedom Springs will be developed. El Paso County has provided support by partnership percentage and tax abatement. In addition, El Paso County has provided \$500,000.00 to the project (awarded in April 2017). The local non-profit landowner is the lead agency for the Continuum of Care, providing

education to the local community. Volunteers of America is not currently located in Colorado Springs; however, they have been involved with the Continuum of Care since the partnership began with Freedom Springs. The Workforce Center, Homeward Bound Pike's Peak, and Aspen Pointe have all provided in-kind MOU's to provide on and off-site services at Freedom Springs. Workforce Center, Veteran's Administration and Community Care, have all provided letters of support. Freedom Springs is a local community effort to address and help alleviate homelessness.

10. N/A

Additional attachments:

- a. El Paso County Letter of Support
- b. Colorado Springs/El Paso County Continuum of Care Letter of Support
- c. Workforce Center Letter of Support
- d. Veteran's Administration Letter of Support
- e. Community Care Letter of Support
- f. Air Force (Craig Schlattmann) Letter of Support

EL PASO COUNTY

COLORADO

COMMISSIONERS
DARRYL GLENN (PRESIDENT)
MARK WALLER (PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE)

STAN VANDERWERF
LONGINOS GONZALEZ JR.
PEGGY LITTLETON

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL SERVICES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
DEANNE McCANN, DIVISION MANAGER

May 15, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the El Paso County Economic Development Division, I would like to express our support for the development of Freedom Springs by the Vecino Group which will address the dire need for permanent supportive housing in El Paso County. We are a proud supporter of Freedom Springs' commitment to serve homeless veterans in our community.

Permanent supportive housing is as an important goal for the region. El Paso County has, in collaboration with various community organizations, conducted an Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) in order to affirmatively further fair housing in the region. This AFH plan includes a goal to assist in the development of additional publicly-supported affordable housing units in areas of opportunity. The Freedom Springs development is consistent with this goal as well as the goal to help those who are experiencing homelessness to move into permanent or permanent supportive housing, with specific focus on serving veterans, youth, and families with children as outlined in the El Paso County Community Development Block Grant Program's Consolidated Plan. Furthermore, the mission of Freedom Springs is aligned with the objectives to promote a variety of housing options/opportunities, to advocate and support the Continuum of Care efforts, and work with housing partners to decrease homelessness, all as outlined in the El Paso County Strategic Plan.

The El Paso County Housing Authority agreed recently to partner with Vecino Group to further support the Freedom Springs project. The Authority's participation will take the form of a \$500,000 loan as well as the creation of Freedom Springs GP, LLC, including the Authority as a partner offering property tax abatement.

Finally, we, as the Pikes Peak Enterprise Zone Administrator, will propose Freedom Springs as a contribution project which will confer state income tax credits to any donors of the project. We are confident the project will be received favorably by the Colorado Economic Development Commission if Freedom Springs is successful in its applications to Colorado Division of Housing and Colorado Housing and Finance Authority.

Please feel free to contact me if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,



DeAnne McCann
Economic Development Manager

200 S. CASCADE AVENUE, SUITE 150
OFFICE: (719) 520-6481
WWW.ELPASOCO.COM



COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80903
FAX: (719) 520-6486

Pikes Peak Continuum of Care

April 29, 2017

Colorado Housing and Finance Authority
1981 Blake St.
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Members of the Review Committee:

On behalf of the Pikes Peak Continuum of Care (PPCoC), I am submitting this letter of support for the application by Pikes Peak United Way, Vecino Group and Volunteers of America to create the Freedom Springs project. We applaud this effort to create additional permanent supportive housing units in our community.

The latest data on housing and shelter resources demonstrates our community's need for additional housing units for the homeless and extremely low income population is increasing steadily. The 2017 Point in Time Survey preliminary report identifies a little over 1,400 individuals who were unsheltered, in emergency shelter, or in a form of transitional housing. Of these, 216 were Veterans. The PPCoC uses a Coordinated Entry system based on a prioritized, by-name list for all individuals looking for housing. As of April, there were over 600 individuals on that list of which 216 were Veterans.

The need for permanent supportive housing is growing in our community. To date, approximately 354 of all individuals assessed using the VI-SPDAT tool for Coordinated Entry have a score that indicates PSH is the best resource. However, our community desperately lacks this model of housing. We hope the tax credit review committee looks favorably on our request and makes this award to address the great need in the Pikes Peak region and specifically in Colorado Springs.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Polk

Board Vice-Chair, Pikes Peak Continuum of Care



May 8, 2017

Colorado Division of Housing
Colorado Housing and Finance Authority
1981 Blake Street
Denver, CO 80202

To whom it may concern:

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center serves the citizens of El Paso and Teller counties to promote the economic and social vitality of the Pikes Peak region. Our services change the lives of job-seekers with proven training and employment opportunities, and our employer partners acknowledge the value we add to their bottom line. As a leader in collaborative partnerships and a member of the local Peak Military Care Network, we give priority to Veterans to enhance their job-readiness, particularly for Veterans in need of intensive services. Our Veteran Employment Representatives regularly provide peer-to-peer engagement to assist job seekers who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, find and retain employment through individualized Employment Assessments, Employment Plans, and Job Development.

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center is pleased to support the proposed Freedom Springs Veteran Housing Community with services to enhance housing stability for Veteran residents through our extensive training opportunities and employment services. As soon as Freedom Springs begins housing Veterans, the Pikes Peak Workforce Center will have a Disabled Veteran Outreach Specialist (DVOP) serve as a liaison to provide and coordinate employment related services to residents. Additionally, our Financial Coach for Veterans will provide one-on-one coaching sessions to support a resident's financial stability. These in-kind services will be provided free of charge to Freedom Springs and its residents.

As the premier employment development agency in our region, the Pikes Peak Workforce Center is eager to partner with Freedom Springs to make employability a reality for the Veterans residents of this vital housing program.

Sincerely,

Dennis Hisey
CEO/Interim Executive Director
Pikes Peak Workforce Center



**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
EASTERN COLORADO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
1055 Clermont Street
Denver, Colorado 80220
303-399-8020**

April 24, 2017

Ms. Alison George
Director, Division of Housing
Colorado Department of Local Affairs
1313 Sherman Street
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Ms. George:

Please accept this letter of support for the Freedom Springs Housing development from the Eastern Colorado Healthcare System. The VA is aware that Freedom Springs is intended to house formerly homeless veterans in Colorado Springs. The VA is committed to working with Freedom Springs, Pikes Peak United Way, and Volunteers of America to address homelessness among veterans in El Paso County.

Colorado Springs is one of the largest military communities in the United States. Colorado Springs has committed to ending Veteran homelessness through efforts involving the Mayor's Office, the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and local non-profit social services providers. Despite this, Colorado Springs suffers from a significant lack of affordable housing and currently has no project-based permanent supportive housing developments addressing the needs of Veterans who are seeking to end their homelessness.

Freedom Springs will change that, by offering affordable housing and on-site supportive services to develop and maintain stability. Freedom Springs, located at 850 Western Drive, will provide a uniquely supportive community environment for formerly homeless Veterans. A Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) development, Freedom Springs will include 50 one-bedroom apartments.

The Eastern Colorado Healthcare System looks forward to supporting this project and a successful collaboration. Thank you for your attention to this proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sallie A. Houser-Hanfelder", is written over a horizontal line.

For Sallie A. Houser-Hanfelder, FACHE
Director



May 5, 2017

Susan Niner
Colorado Division of Housing
1313 Sherman Street #18
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Ms. Niner,

Community Care of Central Colorado supports the work of Volunteers of America Colorado Branch (VOACO) in providing supportive services for residents at the proposed Freedom Springs permanent supportive housing project for Veterans experiencing homelessness in El Paso County. We understand that VOACO will be providing stabilization and case management services to 50 residents at Freedom Springs. The Colorado Springs Housing Authority has committed 25 housing vouchers for the project and VOACO will be applying for 25 DOH vouchers on May 12, 2017.

Community Care is a program of Community Health Partnership (CHP), a coalition of health care providers serving the Pikes Peak region. CHP is committed to working with other health care providers, as well as payers, patient representatives, policymakers, public health organizations and others to create an innovative and efficient health care delivery system. CHP serves the community's needs through its programs (Regional Care Collaborative Organization, Coordinated Access to Community Health, Behavioral & Mental Health Crisis Team, and Health Information Exchange). Community Care, RCCO Region 7, coordinates care for more than 168,000 Medicaid beneficiaries in our community. Our patients suffer significant health issues exacerbated by the effects of poverty. Many experience mental and behavioral health challenges. In addition, CHP's Coordinated Access to Community Health (CATCH) program has provided a coordinated system of care for our community's uninsured residents working closely with independent safety net medical clinics participating in the CATCH system.

We believe the Freedom Springs Permanent Supportive Housing Project is vital to reaching the community's goal of achieving a functional end to homelessness and improving the health of area Veterans.

Sincerely,

Aimee Cox
CEO Community Health Partnership

Craig Schlattmann, MSW, LSW; Colonel, USAF (Ret)

Colorado Department of Housing
Colorado Housing Finance Authority
Denver, CO

May 5, 2017

The purpose of this letter is to express my strongest support for Freedom Springs as a Permanent Supportive Housing solution for homeless Veterans in El Paso County.

As the Program Manager of southern Colorado's sole VA-funded Rapid ReHousing/Homeless Prevention program from 2013-2016, I had the honor of being on the ground floor in coordinating efforts to end Veteran homelessness within the Pikes Peak Continuum of Care (PPCoC). While serving as a PPCoC Board Member during that period, I spearheaded development of the goals and objectives used to define "functional zero Veteran homelessness" within our CoC. In order to coordinate efforts toward that goal, we established our Community Advisory Council on Veteran Homelessness (CACVH) in May, 2015. Since that time, the CACVH has met monthly to track progress toward fulfilling both the nine measurable criteria that define our local "functional zero" definition, and the corresponding federal Criteria and Benchmarks for Ending Veteran Homelessness announced by the USICH in October, 2015.

At the March, 2017 meeting of the CACVH, it was announced that eight of the nine criteria needed to achieve "functional zero" had, for the first time, been met, indicating that coordinated processes are now in place locally to rapidly identify homeless Veterans and connect them to housing and supportive services. However, the last remaining criteria yet to be achieved, rapid access to affordable housing, remains a highly illusive goal due to lack sufficient housing for homeless Veterans in El Paso County. It is this chronic shortfall in housing that makes the need for Freedom Springs so urgent.

In my current role as a social worker/mental health therapist working exclusively with local Veterans and their families, I am frequently called upon to address homelessness with my Veteran clients. As a therapist colleague of mine once quipped, "It is hard to get people to talk about their inner child when they don't know where they will sleep tonight." Access to housing and supportive services provided by Freedom Springs will address this critical need while simultaneously filling the one remaining resource gap in our community needed to achieve "functional zero" Veteran homelessness.

Please accept my most vigorous endorsement for Freedom Springs!

Most sincerely,



Craig Schlattmann, MSW, LSW; Colonel, USAF (Ret)
