



Additional responses to questions from West Hills Neighbors regarding the Pilot Tiny Home Village Project

1. Permitting/Construction

- How will the proposed Pilot Tiny Home Village be permitted by the City of Spokane? Do these shelters meet current building codes?

The City of Spokane has determined that the Tiny Home Village is a Community Service which is a permitted use in the Residential Multi-Family Zone. The City Building Department has determined that the Tiny Homes, Restrooms, and Community Buildings are considered temporary structures under the Building Code.

- You've stated you plan to have the tiny homes in operation by the end of September (two months from now). How will you have the infrastructure and resources in place by this tight deadline? Please share your timeline.

The end of September is optimistic and more likely the end of October or early November is more realistic. For a full timeline of activities please see the PowerPoint presentation handed out at the July 31st Community Meeting.

2. Supportive Services

- What level of essential support and wraparound services will be provided to residents?

Within our current temporary housing system, service providers either provide wraparound services (like housing navigation, mental health and substance use treatment) themselves within the site, or partner with additional service providers who come to the site for services. This coordinated network of service providers that facilitates linkages, and support is a key component for resident success.

The plan is not for this to be a low-barrier, emergency shelter. We envision this village as bridge housing for people in our current shelters who are moving along their path to permanent housing.

- Is there a dedicated budget for these services? If so, what is the total amount?

The City of Spokane is working on a dedicated budget from various buckets of money that will be identified for the duration of the operation of the Tiny Home Village.

3. Neighborhood Relations

- What is the current relationship between Ascenda and Waters Meet, given their proximity?

Waters Meet owns the property and Ascenda is a tenant on a month-to-month lease. Waters Meet has met with and will continue to meet with Ascenda on the Tiny Home Village to get input, listen to concerns and potentially partner where there are opportunities.

- How will this existing dynamic influence the project?

Waters Meet is fully aware of the mission of Ascenda and we believe that the Tiny Home Village will be designed and operated in way that mitigates impacts on their operations. As the Tiny Home Village is a temporary use, future conversations about the use of all the property owned by Waters Meet are expected.

4. Collaboration

- Will Ascenda and Waters Meet collaborate on this project? If so, in what capacity?

We are not sure yet, but we welcome collaborative partnerships whenever possible. For example, it is possible that clients could start at the Tiny Home Village and transition into Ascenda. The hope will be to create opportunities for collaboration between Ascenda, Waters Meet, and the contracted service provider for the village.

5. Stakeholder Involvement

- What stakeholders have been engaged to date in the planning of this project?

This project is just over a month into planning. We have met with the City of Spokane, Washington State Department of Commerce, service providers, adjacent property owners, West Hills Neighborhood Council leadership, and Ascenda.

6. Illegal Camping Mitigation

- What strategies will be implemented to prevent additional illegal camping in the area?

Waters Meet will not allow any camping on our property. We plan to meet with the railroad who owns two parcels directly west to discuss not allowing camping on their property. We will also coordinate with City of Spokane and identify any camping on public lands or rights-of-way. Additionally, we will work with the City's new outreach services then that comes online (they are currently inviting providers to apply to provide outreach in partnership with law enforcement across the entire City).

7. Neighborhood Impact

- What specific steps will be taken to address potential increases in:
 - Illegal camping (*see answer above*)
 - Abandoned vehicles:

Any abandoned vehicles on Waters Meet property will be towed and any on adjoining rights-of-way will be reported to the City of Spokane.

- Trash and debris accumulation in the West Hills neighborhood?

We don't expect to see any trash and debris accumulation, but as the land-owner we will ask that the service provider work with Tiny Home Village residents to participate in a neighborhood clean-up program. This has been a component of some of the specialized shelters in the City that we would like to see replicated here.

8. Resident Expectations

- What rules and expectations will residents be required to follow?

The hired service provider will set the rules and expectations for guests. There are current best practices that are used in temporary housing solutions in our city that promote safety and wellbeing for the staff, residents, and the surrounding neighborhood.

Waters Meet will hold the service provider responsible for ensuring these rules and expectations are being met consistently.

- Will guests be allowed?

The hired service provider will set the rules for guest visits within the village. There are current best practices that will be incorporated to govern guest policies. No guests will be allowed to stay overnight, only residents.

- Around parking?

We are considering parking needs for service providers and some residents. We don't expect that most will have cars, but they might, and we will accommodate parking on Waters Meet property. Through the Good Neighbor Agreement that is created, the neighborhood will be able to work on addressing parking on surrounding streets related to this project to minimize impacts.

- Around behaviors?

The service provider will set the tone for behavior. Again, best practices within temporary housing solutions such as bridge housing will focus on creating a community

of safety and well-being for those staying there and those will be incorporated by the service provider.

9. Site & Security Plan

- What is the security plan for the site?

We are considering security in both the design and operations.

- Will 24-hour security be provided?

It is unlikely that there will be 24-hour security. However, we expect service provider staff will always be on-site. Most service providers have 24-hour staffing structures and safety plans for handling concerns at nights and on weekends and holidays.

- Will there be a fence around the site? If so, what kind?

We plan to fence the entire Tiny Home Village. The type of fence has not been decided. We are looking for feedback from the neighborhood as well as other stakeholders.

- Will the site be gated?

Yes, there will be a gated entrance with controlled entry/exit points.

- How will sewage, trash, showers, meals be addressed?

The restrooms will have full sewer hookups, trash will be placed in a dumpster, showers are available in the restroom spaces, and meals will most likely be delivered and consumed in the community rooms. Individual units will not have kitchen appliances.

10. Resident Selection

- What screening process will be used to determine eligibility for residency?

This will be determined by the service provider chosen to run this Pilot Tiny Home Village. The intent is that this Village will be considered bridge housing, a model of temporary housing that we do not currently have here in Spokane at scale. We expect residents will be referred from a shelter or another service provider after being previously in a shelter and assessed.

The goal will be to create a place for people to move on from shelters in their journey toward permanent housing thereby opening low-barrier shelter beds in our city's emergency shelter system.

11. Operator Selection

- How will the organization responsible for operating the pallet shelter village be selected?

Either Waters Meet or the City of Spokane will release a Request for Proposals or Qualifications as early as late August for service providers to respond. Either of those organizations will make a final decision of which service provider to hire.

With the City of Spokane, the CHHS Board (Community, Health and Human Services) is the body that reviews and scores all proposals. They usually meet the 2nd Wednesday of every month in the Council Briefing Room.

12. Liability

- In the event of harm (e.g., vandalism, theft, fire) to residents or structures in the surrounding neighborhood caused by or related to the project, who will be held legally and financially responsible?

Waters Meet and the hired service provider cannot be held liable for anything happening off our property. The Good Neighbor Agreement and the work of the service provider should limit impacts.

13. Accountability and Enforcement

- What enforcement mechanisms will be used when residents break the rules?

The service provider will set the rules and how they are applied utilizing best practices. This occurs in our current network of shelters with regularity. Residents that cannot follow those rules may eventually be asked to leave or referred to a more appropriate facility which is consistent with practice throughout our continuum of housing services.

- How will ongoing accountability be ensured?

The service provider will provide accountability. We would also like to set up recurring meetings with neighborhood members, service providers, and Ascenda to discuss and resolve any issues or impacts.

One of our partners who is providing 15 of the Tiny Homes structures, the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI), has had success in their villages with developing community advisory boards. These boards allow regular opportunities for neighbors, providers, and system administrators to discuss concerns and develop solutions.

14. Use of Resources

- Given Spokane's limited resources and the complexity of its homelessness crisis:
 - Is this the most effective and strategic use of funding?

The funding source for the structures in the Tiny Home Village is American Rescue Plan Act dollars administered by the Washington State Commerce Department through the Encampment Resolution Project. These funds were unspent from the Spokane Encampment Resolution Project and Commerce approved using them to purchase the structures for the Village instead of giving them back to the State. This kept these funds local and will support 30 more units in Spokane to shelter our houseless community. We had a limited window to determine how best to use these funds and based on feedback decided this option best met our local needs and budgets. The goal is to have it be a demonstration site of what can work while providing space for 30 more individuals to be safely sheltered. In other communities, Tiny Home Villages are more expensive than shelter beds but less expensive than permanent supportive housing. Additionally, we know both from data in Spokane and in other communities that participants are more likely to be permanently housed when they engage in transitional or bridge housing versus just emergency shelter.

- What are the projected infrastructure costs (e.g., community room, bathrooms, showers)?

We have spent over \$700,000 on the structures, air conditioning and heaters for the Village. There will be additional infrastructure costs to bring water, sewer and power to the site as well as other costs like fencing and landscaping which is still to be determined.

- How does this investment compare to expanding capacity at existing organizations with similar facilities?

Although final costs have not been determined, it is likely that the cost per unit for this Tiny Home Village will be somewhere in the ballpark of \$50,000 per unit when you consider the total price of the project (structures, infrastructure, and other improvements) though the site improvements that do occur will be able to remain in place if we determine relocating the Tiny Home structures to another location is necessary. Waters Meet is not charging anything for the use of the land.

There are so many variables to compare to expanding existing facilities as they are each unique, even if they can expand. Tiny Home Villages typically have higher per unit costs compared to motel shelters or congregate shelters when you include the cost of land. In this case, there are no land costs.

15. Sustainability

- What is the long-term plan if operational funding is reduced or lost?

The Tiny Home Village will close if operational funding is lost. The structures would then be repurposed which could include alternative options for funding the ongoing operations of the village or use of the structures elsewhere in the City.

- How will the infrastructure be maintained or repurposed?

The tiny homes and accessory structures can be moved to another site if needed. It is expected that there will be minimal maintenance required for the structures but that will be incorporated into the operations costs. Additionally, there are avenues such as mitigation funds that may be accessible in the event they are needed.

16. Qualifications and Research

- What expertise is in place to ensure this project's success?

The primary expertise will be with the service provider and the entity overseeing that contract (either City of Spokane or Waters Meet). Both the City of Spokane and Waters Meet staff have experience with Tiny Home Villages and oversight of operations of multiple homeless system response projects where we have collectively built knowledge on best practices and lessons learned.

- What research or proven models were used to inform the project design?

There are numerous tiny home villages throughout the west coast. These have been studied. We looked closely at the work of the Low-Income Housing Institute in the Seattle area as well as villages that are successfully operating in cities such as Walla Walla, Missoula, and Vancouver. Here are 3 other successful villages:

- **Community First! Village in Austin, Texas:** Known for its holistic approach, offering not just housing but also a wide range of on-site services and opportunities for residents to work and rebuild their lives.
- **Quixote Village in Olympia, Washington:** Employs a resident-driven governance model, empowering residents to actively participate in managing their community.
- **Tiny Tranquility Park in Waldport, Oregon:** A successful example of a tiny home village that focuses on shared spaces and community gathering areas.

And, a few research articles on this topic we have reviewed:

[Tiny Homes Research 1](#), [Urban Institute How To Build a Tiny Home Village](#), [Tiny Home Village Research 2](#)

17. Future Preparation

- What additional planning, partnerships, or resources are being pursued to ensure long-term sustainability?

We expect the partnership between Waters Meet, West Hills Neighborhood, City of Spokane, chosen service provider, Ascenda, and the Washington State Commerce Department will ensure sustainability.

18. Duplication of Services

- Has coordination occurred between Waters Meet and Catholic Charities?

We have shared our plans with Catholic Charities and we are aware they are considering tiny homes but haven't to our knowledge identified a funding source.

- How does the duplication of infrastructure and services in such close proximity make strategic sense?

There is more need for shelter, transitional, and permanent housing in Spokane than this Tiny Home Village can meet. This Tiny Home Village is one small piece of the system in Spokane to respond to the needs of our houseless community. It is also a pilot project that will produce important insights into the viability of this bridge housing model in Spokane.

19. Curfew

- Will there be a curfew for residents? If so, what are the proposed hours?

The service provider will determine the need for a curfew and the associated hours. Not all shelters utilize curfews with their guests due to various reasons, but they do create guidelines for participants to ensure safety and wellbeing of residents, staff, and neighbors.

20. Evaluation and Outcomes

- What is the timeline and framework for evaluating the project's success?

The service provider, Waters Meet, and the City of Spokane will be developing a framework to evaluate this pilot project. One of the goals will be to ensure participants are making progress towards permanent housing.

- If the project is successful, how will ongoing funding be secured?

The City of Spokane will identify funding to operate the Tiny Home Village.

- If it fails to meet its goals, who will be responsible for restructuring or terminating the initiative?

Although not expected, if the project does not meet its goals, the contract with the service provider will not be renewed and dedicated funds and infrastructure will be reallocated and repurposed.

21. Future Development

- Are there any current plans or intentions to expand this site with additional pallet homes or shelter types?

No. We do not believe there is additional space on the property to accommodate additional units.

22. Insurance and Bonding

- Is Waters Meet insured and bonded? If so, who provides the coverage, and what are the policy details?

The service provider will be required to be insured, and name Waters Meet and the City of Spokane as additional insured.

23. Fire Safety: Outdoor Cooking/Burning

- Will there be rules regulating outdoor grilling or open burning? If so, what are they?

We do not believe at this point that outside grilling or open burning will be allowed for safety reasons.

24. Fire Protection Measures

- What fire prevention and emergency response measures will be implemented on-site?

Emergency preparedness is being considered in the design of the village in coordination with the City of Spokane Fire Department. The service provider will also have fire and emergency procedures. We are also working with the railroad to address their parcels and the potential fire hazards there to coordinate for fire prevention.

25. Accountability

- In the event of project failure or negative outcomes, who are the responsible organizations and individuals?

Waters Meet and the City of Spokane.

- What mechanisms will be in place for transparency and accountability?

Waters Meet and the City of Spokane are committed to being open and transparent about the process through information dissemination, community meetings, stakeholder design meetings, and recurring meetings with the neighborhood once the service provider is chosen. Like all city-funded housing projects, providers will be required to track how many people they serve, what services residents utilize, and what the outcomes are for those individuals.