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Private dollars help move people experiencing homelessness into stable housing

Anchorage, AK – A clear path forward to increase housing and services for those experiencing homelessness in Anchorage has convinced private funders to contribute millions, matching the Municipality of Anchorage's commitment.

In all, the Anchorage Assembly has appropriated $6 million and private funders have committed $7 million for a total of $13 million to move people from shelter to housing. This public-private partnership will systematically address how best to serve specific populations and minimize neighborhood impacts.

Funders in addition to the Municipality are: Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Calista Corp., Chugach Alaska Corp., Doyon Ltd., Premera Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alaska, Providence Alaska, Rasmuson Foundation and Weidner Apartment Homes.

"The Municipality of Anchorage stands behind these public-private partnerships that will help our city's most vulnerable get the resources they need to be healthy and successful," said Mayor Dave Bronson. "I look forward to working together with our community to make sure no one is without shelter or care."

The Bronson administration, the Anchorage Assembly, the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness and funders, represented by Rasmuson Foundation, took part in a facilitated process to come to agreement. The result is a plan to move more than 700 people out of the Sullivan Arena and local hotels — temporary mass care that was necessary during the pandemic but is intended to end on June 30.

"Along with our many partners, we are having success connecting our neighbors experiencing homelessness to housing that meets their individual needs," said Meg Zaletel, interim executive director of the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness. "We need all hands on deck to continue this momentum! Community partnership and collaboration is key to making homelessness in Anchorage rare, brief and one-time."

Alaska philanthropies and corporations are backing the unified plan with commitments totaling $7 million to ensure stable housing and shelter with services leading to housing for those experiencing homelessness. The Assembly has designated $6 million.

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
ANCHORAGE COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS
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“We are at a transformational moment for addressing homelessness in our community,” said Anchorage Assembly Member Felix Rivera. “This work builds on the Anchored Home Plan to end homelessness in Anchorage and is the culmination of years of hard work from many community partners. I thank the mayor, the Assembly and our community partners for your commitment to this audacious goal.”

The public-private partnership agreed on an approach with smaller, geographically distributed facilities tailored to specific needs. The group is pleased to announce four fast-track projects that together will house 500 or more individuals:

- **Complex care.** Located at 303 W. Fireweed Lane in what was the Sockeye Inn, the facility includes 61 rooms including some doubles and will serve those with ongoing or unmet medical needs. It will open in June with Catholic Social Services as the operator. The sale closed March 30.

- **Navigation center and shelter for single adults.** A shelter at Tudor and Elmore roads is intended to house up to 200 single adults with surge capacity for 130 more. The navigation center will quickly connect individuals to services and stable housing.

- **Workforce and permanent supportive housing.** A facility at Fifth Avenue and Cordova Street will provide stable housing in 130 rooms. Some individuals will double up. A purchase agreement is pending.

- **Residential treatment center** for those with substance misuse disorders. A facility to be run by the Salvation Army is under renovation at 660 E. 48th Ave. The center will house up to 68 individuals.

Those projects will serve four of the five specific populations identified by the workgroup and ensure the comprehensive approach sought by funders. A project being developed separately will address the fifth area of need, specialized populations that include couples, women, LGBTQ+ individuals and the elderly.

“Nonprofit organizations already are providing excellent care in Anchorage to those most in need, but more services and more types of support are needed. Our philanthropic partners have wanted to do more, but they needed to see consensus among key players,” said Diane Kaplan, Rasmuson Foundation president and CEO. “Productive negotiations by the workgroup have paid off, and we hope hundreds of Alaskans will live better lives as a result.”

Download: Photos of 303 W. Fireweed Lane (Photo credit: Matt Waliszek)
Download: Map, homeless-to-housed flow chart, other visual aids

About the facilitation group

The Municipality of Anchorage's goal is to systematically bring compassionate care to our residents experiencing homelessness. The strategy involves housing, transitional housing, supportive housing, treatment and navigation centers among other initiatives. It calls for a 'no wrong door' approach with services tailored to individual needs.

The mission of the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness is to provide dynamic leadership in making homelessness rare, brief and one time. As the lead for the Anchorage Continuum of Care, ACEH seeks to promote communitywide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; provide funding for efforts to quickly rehouse individuals and families experiencing homelessness while minimizing trauma and dislocation; promote access to services needed by individuals and families experiencing homelessness; and optimize self-sufficiency.

Rasmuson Foundation aims to promote a better life for all Alaskans. Main funding areas are solutions to homelessness, health care, the arts, organizational and community development and human services including projects to address domestic violence, child abuse and services for seniors and people with disabilities. The Foundation was created in 1955 by Jenny Rasmuson to honor her late husband E.A. Rasmuson.