

Gateway Domestic Violence Services

Expansion Project Concept Document

January 23, 2023

The Aurora/Arapahoe Battered Women's Shelter dba Gateway Domestic Violence Services (Gateway) was founded in 1979 as an emergency shelter to serve adults and their dependents fleeing domestic violence (DV). For over 44 years, Gateway has been the only agency providing emergency shelter and supportive services to victims of domestic violence in the City of Aurora including Arapahoe and Adams Counties. Gateway also provides services to clients from around the state when there is capacity. Our mission remains the same: to prevent and eliminate intimate partner violence through counseling, residential care, legal advocacy, and empowering people for social change. Since Gateway was founded, the organization has served over 400,000 victims of intimate partner violence.

Gateway provides shelter for those fleeing Domestic Violence (DV). Understanding that they are leaving their homes to ensure they can be free from abuse and violence is one of the priority areas of HUD (Housing and Urban Development) funding. Many individuals experience PTSD because of the continued abuse and violence they experienced in their previous relationship and in their previous home. Substance misuse can be a way of coping for some victims of DV. Our target populations include single individuals including women, men and the LGBTQIA population. We also serve families including adults and their dependents, ages birth through their teen years. The majority are people of color and live at or below the federal poverty level.

In 1979, the City of Aurora donated the Emergency Shelter still being used today. In 1985, a second facility was purchased with support from the City of Aurora's CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) and support from the Johnson Foundation. This facility was added to provide additional services for victims including individual and group counseling for those experiencing DV, and space for Administration. In 1994, a third location was added to provide shelter in the West side of Arapahoe County. This was funded by a CDBG from Arapahoe County. This facility now serves as the 90-day extended stay shelter.

The Emergency Shelter has 6 bedrooms and 23 beds. The extended stay shelter has 5 bedrooms and 14 beds. Due to COVID restrictions that are still ongoing, only half of the beds are typically utilized at one time. Although there has been maintenance on the buildings, there have not been many changes to the homes throughout the 30 plus years, nor have they been expanded during this time. In 2022, Gateway turned down a CDBG from the City of Aurora because accepting that grant would have required staying in the same space for 10 more years. The work that would have been accomplished through this grant was only a band-aid solution to the issues in the current space.

Aurora, Arapahoe, and Adams Counties in Colorado have seen significant population growth during the 44 years that Gateway has been serving this area. The City of Aurora saw a 17% increase in population over the last decade, while Arapahoe County saw an increase of 14%, and Adams County 18% over the same period. Yet, the size and capacity of Gateway Shelters have not changed to accommodate this growth. The result of this is that we are turning away over 700 people who need our services in just one quarter of 2022. Since the beginning of COVID in 2020, there has been limited shelter and housing options available, and this has a major impact on Gateway's ability to assist clients with finding stable housing when transitioning out of shelter. Since Gateway rarely asks people to leave without a place for them to move to safely, the length of time residents remain in shelter has been expanded. This also impacts on our ability to meet the needs of those in imminent danger.

Gateway staff and Board have determined that it is important to explore new alternatives for meeting the needs of more victims of domestic violence. It has become apparent that there is a need to have a larger Emergency Shelter that is developed with social distancing in mind (non-congregate shelter) and a variety of room sizes to allow space for individuals and for families. This new location would be a safe place to land for those fleeing DV to stay for 60 days so that they can prepare for the next steps toward a life without violence. This location will be staffed 24 hours a day with Advocates who provide a full range of emotional support services as well as Housing First case management.

There is also an extreme need for transitional housing with progressive engagement of clients toward securing permanent housing. This space will ideally include private rooms to meet both individual and family needs, on-site case management and housing services. This space will be staffed during regular business hours with intensive case management, group meetings and specific trainings being provided as needed during off hours. Partnerships with work development agencies, education programs, credit unions for budgeting, Arapahoe County Department of Human Services, etc. will be offered.

What will this space look like?

Gateway is exploring a potential location in the City of Aurora that is in Arapahoe County. This location allows for two separate buildings as described below. The design of these spaces will be done very thoughtfully with a focus on being welcoming and trauma informed. Shop Works Architecture is committed to this project, and they focus on supportive housing and trauma informed design.

One of the buildings will be an Emergency Shelter with an estimated 12 - 16 bedrooms in a non-congregate shelter. Some of the rooms will be sized for one bunk bed to house an individual or a small family and the balance will be sized for multiple bunk beds to meet the needs of families. A portion of these rooms will be developed to include spaces for pets who bring comfort as they all escape violence. This space will also have a Children's Play Area, Office areas for staffing, a shared kitchen and dining, laundry, and shared community space for

gathering. There will also be shared private or community bathrooms as part of the design. Part of the long-term vision is to create a space for children that in future years would become a childcare center for those in the Emergency Shelter and those participating in other Gateway programs. The confidentiality of this space is crucial for keeping children and adults safe.

The second building located nearby would include 15 - 18 transitional private rooms with space for families and individuals. This would also include space for case management and housing staff members, meeting space for partner organizations to be engaged will include at least one large meeting space where training can be provided for those in shelter and those in supportive housing. On-site laundry room will also be necessary. Additionally, administrative offices and trauma informed space for counselors to meet individually and in groups with those fleeing DV. This space will also have storage for donated goods that can be easily accessible for those who are moving into their own space. The location of this space would be shared only as needed

Outdoor space would include covered dog runs, a playground and space for children to run. Outdoor space for adults and families to move around would be helpful.

At this point in the planning process, we anticipate that services will be provided primarily by Gateway staff members. It is anticipated that this new space will require the hiring of additional staff. Once the building is developed, Gateway will be strategic in opening the spaces when staffing is in place to meet the need. We anticipate it may be a tiered approach initially. Gateway will be applying for the Transformational Homelessness Response Grant Program in June of 2023 to support the initial costs of programming.

Victims of Domestic Violence can and do move forward when they find the support and safety, they need create a new world for themselves as Survivors. Unfortunately, during the first three quarters in 2022, the crisis line received calls from over 1500 victims who we had to turn away because of our limited capacity. Now is the time to take advantage of some of the newly available resources that are intended to better align homeless and housing response systems and create additional, trauma informed spaces for people to find refuge, safety and begin their journey towards healing.

Potential Funding Sources/Budget

Gateway will be applying for funding in February/March of 2023 through the new Transformational Affordable Housing, Homeownership, and Workforce Housing Grant Program which was released by Colorado Department of Local Affairs through the Division of Housing (DOH).

For projects funded by HB22-1304, a minimum of 25 percent of project or program budget/cost must be sourced from applicant or other third party (financial institution, non-profit, philanthropic foundation, etc.).

Gateway is asking Arapahoe County to consider the current award of \$1.5 million to be used as match. Also there has been an initial conversation with Jessica Prosser from the City of Aurora

to consider supporting this project also. Gateway is also reaching out to Adams County since we serve that area of Aurora, as well and will also be exploring Foundations which may consider investing in these crucial activities.

Potential Capital Campaign Project Budget

Costs associated with purchasing, design, construction and finishing of the project are estimated to be 20 million. This number is based on estimates from the architectural firm and their current experience with a similar project.

Anticipated Revenue (still need to apply for a lot of this):

Grant from Colorado DOH	16,000,000
Arapahoe County Commissioners	1,500,000
City of Aurora	1,000,000
Selling current properties	1,000,000
Adams County, Foundations, etc	500,000

Team Currently engaged in this Project (as of 1/20/23)

Beaux Simone Consulting is a development partner with the involvement of Katie Symons and Zoe LeBeau. They have already been instrumental in bringing other partners to the table. Anawim Housing will also be engaged in the development of this project and will take the lead in securing the property and creating and managing the budget. Jessica Ostermick is our realtor who is with CBRE.

As mentioned before, Chad Holtzinger with Shop Works Architecture has committed his team to this project. His team includes Laura Rossbert, COO, who is beginning meetings to gather information from staff and clients concerning trauma informed design. Chad has invited Ware Malcomb to engage in the survey of the properties as a starting point and Deneuve Construction has also agreed to be part of this project.

Next Steps and Timeline

1. Architect, Developers and Executive Director (ED) to meet with the Planning staff of the City of Aurora to address concerns of keeping location and planning confidential. This meeting will also help identify any major issues to be addressed in advance. January 2023
2. Realtor and Developer will negotiate Purchase Option Agreement with the Seller. January/February 2023
3. Surveys and other requirements necessary for the grant will be completed. February 2023
4. Gateway will submit LOI for consideration to DOH. February 10, 2023

5. Meeting with staff from DOH in February 2023
6. Submit proposal 2/28/2023.
7. Apply for CDBG funding from the City of Aurora in May of 2023.
8. Break ground in 2024.
9. Project completed in late 2025 or early 2026.