

**Eastside Men's Shelter and Supportive Housing  
Community Meeting  
September 29, 2016  
Meeting Summary**

On September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Neighborhood Outreach hosted the first Community meeting regarding the Eastside Men's Shelter in Eastgate with approximately 100 people in attendance. There was a panel presentation by the City, Congregations for the Homeless and Imagine Housing. The presentation was followed by a time for public comment and Q&A. The questions ranged in topics from Homelessness on the Eastside, Shelter and Day Center Operations, Siting Process, Coordination with Eastgate Plan, Outreach, and Crime and Safety. A complete list of the questions received is included below.

The public comments included both residents opposed to the siting of the Men's Shelter in Eastgate at this location, as well as, residents appreciative of the leadership of the City to serve the homeless men on the Eastside.

Nearby residents raised a number of concerns:

There were general questions about the siting process and the outreach. What other locations were considered in Bellevue? Why not keep it where it currently exists? Are there any other options being explored? Residents asked for more transparency in the site selection process. They also asked for more outreach to be done with Bellevue College and the commuters at Eastgate P&R.

Nearby residents of Sunset Ridge, Madrona Park, Seasons at Harmony and Harmony condominiums expressed concern that they "were forgotten" in the siting process. Residents spoke about the pace of growth happening in Eastgate, including traffic concerns, Eastgate P&R operating beyond its capacity, Amazon beginning shuttling services, PSE's Energize Eastside project and Bellevue College's addition of dormitories on campus. There was a sentiment that Eastgate is experiencing too much growth, too fast.

Residents also highlighted safety concerns. This area of Eastgate is a heavily wooded neighborhood with wetlands that also provides safe places for people to walk. There were concerns about ensuring neighborhood safety when the men's shelter serves men who may be addicted to drugs or alcohol, potential sex offenders, or struggle with mental illness. Will the shelter include a needle exchange program? What about the neighboring areas around the shelter, will these areas see an increase in crime, loitering, litter, or unpermitted encampments? Additionally, residents identified concerns about the proximity to Bellevue College, including young students in the "Running Start" program, as well as the proximity to the Eastgate P&R with commuters using the facility at all hours. Will the police increase their presence in the community? How will the City guarantee neighborhood safety?

There were also residents who expressed a desire to not have the men's shelter located in Eastgate - but also offered their support and partnership to "make it work" for the community if it ultimately was decided to locate the shelter in Eastgate.

Other residents spoke about their experience with Congregations for the Homeless and personally spoke to the safety they felt while volunteering and the competence CFH has in serving homeless men. Many encouraged those in attendance to visit the current shelters, talk to the residents and learn more about

homelessness through firsthand experience. Residents commented on the necessity of the men's shelter serving a critical need on the Eastside and expressed their gratitude for the City's role in addressing homelessness in our community.

The next step in outreach will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Meeting for the Men's Shelter on October 27<sup>th</sup> at the Champions Centre, 7-9pm. In this meeting, Neighborhood Outreach will report back what has been heard in sum total of the outreach to date, as well as, work with the community to identify some possible approaches to address the primary concerns, as well as, any outstanding issues that remain unresolved.

**The Panel responded to questions and comments raised by the community, including:**

***Homelessness***

- What are the various types of shelters?
- Can homeless people sleep in Robinswood Park?
- Will this help get men out of the trees and from under the bridges?
- Will 100 beds be enough to serve all the homeless men on the Eastside? Are there other shelters for Eastside men?
- Why do they must live in Eastside? I would move north/south, wherever, when I cannot afford. That's how people end up living in different places.
- There are those in the homeless community who don't want help. I know of one man who has refused help multiple times and just wants to be left alone. Who do you handle situations like this?
- What percent of men are from Bellevue verses other cities? Seattle?
- What is the City experience with homeless? Years, Clean-ups, what can really happen?
- What is the August Wilson House?

***Siting Process***

- Evans Plaza near Chic-fil-a is a more appropriate site
- Downtown should be a much better place to start something like this. It is where more services area.
- What other locations were considered in Bellevue?
- What other locations have been reviewed before identifying/selecting this site?
- Why not use the winter shelter?
- Why is this site a good site for Bellevue? Location to the transit center/Park and Ride?
- What are the rationale of choosing this place (vs. Redmond or Kirkland location) – particularly for men-only shelter as opposed to women and family shelter.
- Do you think having a single men facility is wise to put next to a college? With young men and women attending?
- Why not place them in a less crowded area? This place is right next to Park & Ride where there are many commuters who want to feel safe, day and night, while they travel by foot. The place is right next to Bellevue College – the biggest college in the Eastside – where there are many young students walking outside. The place is next to many young family residents. So why not in a less populated place (for sex offenders, addicts, etc...)
- Who makes the final decision on if this site is chosen?
- What other sites are being considered if this one next to Bellevue College isn't chosen?
- What commitments is the City, City Council, police going to give this community?

- Can we place a temporary shelter in this location to see if it's a good fit with commuters, college students, P&R and neighborhood?

### ***Eastgate Land Use Plan***

- Why was it not considered in the Eastgate CAC?
- How has this site selection process been coordinated with the redevelopment planned in Eastgate? The area may be low density commercial today, but I seem to recall this area being targeted for a mix of high density residential and commercial use. Are these uses compatible? Will this hamper the revitalization effort?
- Eastgate is not really a gateway is it?
- I'm fine with having the facility here. My concern is that many areas of the City, County and Sound transit have great plans for this area around I-90/Eastgate. Who is coordinating these various plans? Including ST3, TOD, Mens Shelter/Supportive Housing, Mountain to Sound Trail, and rezoning of associated business areas).
- Eastgate P&R is already at capacity. What is the plan to expand accommodating the increase in need?

### ***Budget***

- Who is paying for the cost of the building? Taxpayers or private funds
- Sound Transit bought the former shelter site. What has their contribution to the shelter been?

### ***Shelter Operations***

- Do you know where these men are from? I.e. Bellevue, Redmond, Eastside, Seattle, Washington – or new arrivals to the area.
- What percent of residents of the Eastgate shelter do you estimate will come from Bellevue verses other cities? Will Seattle's homeless be housed in Eastgate?
- What kind of men will be using the shelter?
- What are the barriers or requirements for someone to be admitted to the shelter?
- What are the rules? If they break the rules, what happens?
- Best level of graduation – even compared to UGM and Salvation Army?
- What about the people who don't follow the rules?
- Are mentally ill clients required to get treatment?
- Are drug addicts required to get addiction recovery services?
- If they are drunk or on drugs, will they be denied entry? If so, where will they go and will they be left to wander?
- Are they going to be drug testing and keeping an eye on the alcohol?
- Can men be "using" in the shelter?
- Will this be considered for second King County city for "Safe Use"?
- Once in for the evening, can they leave it during the night?
- What happens when an individual is turned away for any reason? Refusal to show ID, failed background check? What is the protocol now when this happens?
- Are any of the "residents" pan handlers?
- Will men be hanging around – like Union Gospel Mission or Westlake?
- How much bus usage do you expect from the shelter population?
- Is there a limit to how long someone can stay without taking steps to end his homelessness?
- Does this new shelter combine the EWS of the permanent shelter? Or the EWS of the Day Center?
- What services will be available for women and children as part of this investment?

- Curious why there are separate women/men/family shelters. Why not all together? Is this related to safety?
- How will a permanent shelter benefit homeless men?
- How will it benefit the community to have the permanent co-located shelter and day center?

### ***Day Center***

- Is the Day-Center on premises? Will it be drop-in? What will it be like?
- Since the Day Center is closed and the new facility is years away from opening, what is the interim plan?

### ***Supportive Housing***

- Will this Imagine Housing Project be solely for transition housing for user for the Men's Shelter?
- Will there be both shelter and permanent housing? How many permanent residents?
- Is the housing supposed to be transitional? Is there a limit on how long someone can stay?
- Could you build the building over the parking?
- Could the Park and Ride supplement lost parking if you build the building over the parking lot?
- Is this going to be a permanent residence type facility?

### ***Crime and Safety***

- What security concerns should the neighborhood be concerned about based on history?
- What do Bellevue Police think of this plan and location? Would like to hear directly from them and would like to hear the pros and cons from their perspective.
- Has Bellevue been in contact with others that know the real issues that come from the homeless, things like murder, rape, robbery, theft?
- Have you seen increases in crime or litter where the shelters are?
- How will police help when more homeless are attracted to the area?
- The areas around the Seattle Union Gospel Mission is NOT what we want. How can we be assured that this won't happen?
- Who is going to be policing?
- Clients will not be permitted to loiter in the neighborhood. How does this process work? What is the neighborhood? Who monitors loitering? What happens when a client is loitering?
- How will you handles illegal encampments? With this heavily wooded neighborhood, will you be searching all of our wooded areas daily?
- The Park & Ride is already stinky and experiences car break-ins. How will the police keep the community safe?
- How do you plan to keep crime down or from not happening at all?
- How can you guarantee that the residents will not accost people living near by or walk past the shelter?
- There are > 200 units (single families) right next to this site, not to mention the Bellevue College Dormitory with forieng students. How can they be protected?
- If the project moves forward, could there be a community police substation in Eastgate like the one at Crossroads?

### ***Outreach***

- What have the surrounding businesses said about their proposed new neighbors?
- What is Bellevue College's reaction?
- Have the P&R community been informed of this proposal? They are a significant stakeholder community with 1600 stalls.

- Who on the stage shares as much concern as some in your audience? Who represents people who are opposed?

### **Next Steps**

This public input provided additional questions and input that will continue to shape the understanding of the impacts of the Eastgate site location, as well as, inform the site design and mitigation efforts that would be recommended to address community concerns and safeguard the health and safety of the entire community.

The City will provide an updated FAQ sheet with written responses to the most frequently asked questions.

The second Community Meeting will occur on October 27<sup>th</sup>, Champion Center, from 7-9pm.

**Written Comments Received**

What you are doing is great for the homeless. Thank you!

As a member of the Eastgate Corridor Study (2010-2012) CAC, I am very disappointed that the plan for TOD rezoning at the site for this project will instead be a men’s shelter and day center for 100 men. I have no problem with the shelter concept; I just think the location should be anywhere else – possible the King County property down the hill. Next to the transit center, next to Bellevue College, Next to the apartments on 142<sup>nd</sup> Pl Se – it’s just the wrong place for the Men’s Winter Shelter. It’s the RIGHT place for TOD, including affordable housing. Whether we get ST3 by 2041 or not, the transit center serves a lot of commuters: to Seattle, on Microsoft shuttle buses, on Google shuttle buses. After the Spring District builds out, Eastgate will be the next business commuter location. REI will have its headquarters there in a few years.

The potential for this site is so great that I think it is short-sighted to short circuit the Comprehensive Plan for the Eastgate Corridor with a low-density, part-time shelter that is a permanent feature of the Corridor.

Please try and find an alternative location – possibly at King County’s other property on Eastgate Way. If not there, possibly in the LI area of Richards Valley. Both still have easy access to transit for the men, as well as, access to the commercial areas of Factoria where employment is possible.

I support this project. I am interested to learn more about how a full community effort can be developed to alleviate fears and/or build confidence in the system.

Thank you for helping the people experiencing homelessness.

I can see the possibility of having permanent homeless housing in Eastgate, but I think it’s irresponsible to put a day center in this heavily wooded area.

I am in favor of this project. It is so necessary and will be a great help to all of us on the Eastside in addressing homelessness

I am an Asian female who lives at the nearest residential townhome to the proposed homeless shelter. I take daily walks with my dog around Bellevue College, P&R (including the path between BC & Health Center) and surrounding area. Can the police and shelter organization guarantee my safety? None of the “accountability” or “responsiveness” answers are comforting. All it takes is one person to fall victim to change all the residents life for the worse.

The hillside location is better than the parking lot location because it will be less expensive to build, will help eliminate forest areas where crime can occur, and will be quitter for the residents.

The neighborhoods/communities concern about safety needs to be build into the development/shelter’s construction and operation budgets. Everyone wante to help those who experience homelessness.

Everyone wants safe neighborhoods. There is a disconnect when a facility is built that may create future safety issues but there is no correlated funding to address those safety issues – only empty promises of outreach, advisory councils, etc. Tie funding for the two issues together.

What about buying the parking lot along Eastgate Way and building public health parking up rather than digging?

Some form of housing is a critical need.

It is imperative that every project be coordinated with King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties.

It is great to help homeless by providing them houses. However, it is a great concern to me that there will be sex offenders and men with mental issues around my neighborhood. I love to live in this neighborhood since it is very safe and quiet. I often go out for a walk after dark without any fear. I'm not sure how the City will do to prevent any crime. There's no detailed plan. I'd like to hear more firm and detailed plan regarding the safety.

Congregations for the Homeless has a long and exceptionally food record of managing shelters and day centers. The Issaquah Human Services Commission has examined grant applications for shelters across the Eastside, and based on the good record and statistics for Congregations for the Homeless shelters, we have been very happy to support them. This new location will greatly benefit the homeless in Issaquah who have found other locations difficult to access.

I strongly support this program. It is critical to address the growing homeless population.

I'm excited! Great project and site. How can I help?

The project is needed with well qualified partners. We really need to study more closely the vulnerability of the neighborhood. (Condos, foreign students, Hyatt House, other businesses west and north of there). Must post information at P&R for commuters, NOT the organizations.

As a resident of Lake Hills, as an Architect, and as a parent, I am passionate about the opportunity for housing for everyone. Housing and basic shelter is a major concern and issue in the Bellevue area. The men's shelter is essential to help people recover from homelessness. I'm just not sure that the location selected adjacent to Bellevue College is the best location. Bellevue College does provide an opportunity for education for all!

Great job!! And excited there is so much help here in Bellevue for the homeless!

The need is clear. A permanent fully professional facility will provide the most help possible. I look forward to volunteering my help.

I have a comment about this project which I will make in a more considered way later. Spent tonight listening.

Temple de Hirsch Sinai, the largest synagogue in Washington State, is eager to partner with CFH in providing support and services for the Eastside Men's Shelter and Supportive Housing project. This partnership is good for our community and our neighbors within

.....  
I have spent 26+ years dealing with the greater Seattle Area homeless problem. If you would like to go on a tour or see what is going to happen here, please look me up. I can help find a location that will work for all of Bellevue.

.....  
Why was it not discussed in the Citizen's Advisory Committee on eastgate I-90 plan? Why did we hear nothing about this until the Eastgate Land Use Amendment was passed by the Planning Commission? Why was the deliberation not done publically?

.....  
It certainly appears that this project is moving rapidly ahead before any input from those of us who live in the neighborhood have been consulted. This is disappointing and very concerning.  
.....

Need to do a better job for community outreach and ensure the broadest stakeholder engagement. Support this location and potential of partnership with Bellevue College, access to transit and services if the concerns are mitigated. Concerned that the plan for this needs to include engaging with transportation and human services – need to address traffic congestion and construction impacts and overlap with S Bellevue Park & Ride closure from 2018-2021 and future growth.