



February 12, 2018

To: Fort Collins Mayor Troxell and City Council

From: Holly LeMasurier, Homeward 2020 Director

Re: *Homeless Gear Housing First Initiative*, Quarter 2 Report; October – December 2017

Council is provided quarterly reports produced from the Homeless Gear Housing First Initiative (HFI) project (a partnership project with Homeward 2020). HFI obtains and shares data and learning experiences with city leadership, service providers, stakeholders and the community-at-large, as the project explores housing and support solutions for persons experiencing chronic homelessness in Fort Collins.

### Q2 Data highlights

- 364 people are experiencing chronic homelessness in Fort Collins (homeless more than six months).
- 22 new people entered chronic homelessness this quarter.
- 20 HFI participants were housed this quarter.
- HFI participants continue to reflect 100% housing retention through this quarter.
- The majority of HFI's fifty-four active clients have been homeless more than three years, and six current clients have been homeless over ten years.
- While contact with all persons and confirmation of ages is still underway, the project has identified 19 seniors experiencing chronic homelessness, and 13 youth (age 18-25), so senior and youth-oriented services can be specifically targeted to individuals.

### Findings

- **Deeper data collection and data sharing** across service providers and sectors is crucial to success. Several groups and projects are working on improvements.
- **Community-wide involvement and strategic collaboration** is key to providing proactive, consistent and coordinated care for our community members experiencing chronic homelessness. Effective housing, health care and support options for vulnerable people should be easily accessed in a strong, vibrant community.
- **Housing retention specialists and intensive case management** are essential for vulnerable individuals exiting homelessness. There is a significant gap in housing retention and case management support in the community. Several programs are, however, now piloting provision of this service.
- **Access to existing subsidized housing units is extremely limited, and rate of creating of new units is not meeting the community need.** Many persons experiencing chronic homelessness become eligible for housing vouchers (providing payment to subsidize their housing) but can't find an open unit. Collaboration with private landlords to access market housing is demonstrating success and developing as a viable, nimble option in Fort Collins.
- **Funding for both housing access and specialized support services** is a priority. HFI and Homeward 2020 continue work to quantify and monetize specific needs based on data collection and identified gaps and assets. Homeward 2020 is concurrently researching funding models and best practices from different communities that have seen success.

### Looking Ahead

HFI data development and reporting deliverables also include the creation of an online 'dashboard' and tracking of our numbers and housing progress over time. The project is finalizing data definitions and data collection, as well as the data portrayal and infographics for online publishing soon. This Q2 report shares further insight into data points and narratives that will be featured. Council's next quarter update will include information on the website and 'dashboard' project.