

Great Falls City Commission
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Neighborhood Council #7 includes the majority of the vulnerable populations because almost all of the services organizations, including Great Falls Rescue Mission, Cameron House, Toby's House, etc., are located within the Neighborhood Council #7 boundaries. In addition, there is a continuing discussion due to the homeless/vulnerable population which is gathering daily in the downtown area, specifically on 6th Street and 2nd Avenue North. Therefore, Neighborhood Council 7 has an extremely vested interest in any proposed shelter.

It is very apparent that Great Falls needs an additional low-barrier shelter. Studies in communities across America have shown that housing is essential, before other supportive services can be of use. The NeighborWorks Great Falls Baatz project is for sustainable housing, with supportive services provided. However, the 24 units being renovated at the Baatz building are too few and too far in the future. Great Falls needs additional temporary beds as quickly as possible.

As the current shelters, Great Falls Rescue Mission, YWCA, etc., are filled to capacity, we need a local non-profit to step up and present a plan for an emergency shelter. We believe the churches involved in the encampment on the corner of 6th Street and 2nd Avenue North, First Methodist, First English Lutheran, First Baptist, and Episcopal Incarnation, would be willing to work together to create and administer an emergency shelter if funds were available. The City needs to help create an emergency shelter; a coalition of non-profits would run it.

Until emergency shelter options are available, there will continue to be encampments in the downtown neighborhoods. Please consider the use of one-time COVID funds to include emergency shelter options.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sandra Rice, Neighborhood Council #7 Secretary

Neighborhood Council #7, approved at Neighborhood Council #7 February 14, 2022, meeting

From: [Lisa C. Kunz](#)
To: [Greg Doyon](#); [Charles Anderson](#); [Krista Artis](#); [Craig Raymond](#); [Bob Kelly](#); [Eric Hinebauch](#); [Joe McKenney](#); [Rick Tryon](#); [Susan Wolff](#)
Subject: FW: HOME ARP hearingShyla Patera written comments
Date: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 8:09:42 AM

Public Comment, re: Agenda Item 14

-----Original Message-----

From: Lisa C. Kunz
Sent: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 8:09 AM
To: 'Shyla Patera' <shycpat@icloud.com>
Subject: RE: HOME ARP hearingShyla Patera written comments

Good Morning Shyla - Thank you for your comments for Commission consideration of agenda item 14 this evening.

Best regards,

Lisa Kunz
City Clerk/Records Manager
Civic Center Room 204
406.455.8451

-----Original Message-----

From: Shyla Patera <shycpat@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 12:12 AM
To: Lisa C. Kunz <lkunz@greatfallsmt.net>; commission <commission@greatfallsmt.net>
Subject: HOME ARP hearingShyla Patera written comments

My name is Shyla Patera. I am an Independent Living Specialist who represents North Central Independent Living Services, Inc. in Black Eagle, Montana. As an advocate who has assisted consumers and citizens of Great Falls with disabilities during the Covid 19 pandemic, I hope that my comments on The City HOMEARP plan will provide needed discussion topics for current and future opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

NCILS would hope that consideration is given to issues and projects regarding food insecurity and healthy eating for low income and all residents of Great Falls. NCILS hopes that our community will address broadband and assistive technology needs of all of our students including those with disabilities.

NCILS is hopeful that the City of Great Falls helps north central Montanans with disabilities who are at risk for homelessness after hospital discharge by hiring a housing navigator and working with said housing navigator to ensure that all newly constructed and rehabilitation housing is affordable, accessible, and universally designed housing stock. Given Montana's housing crisis, Great Falls Housing Authority and other housing agencies should be utilizing all types of federal vouchers, homeowner assistance, and all housing and home ownership assistance opportunities available to us as a City through ARP. The City of Great Falls and community partners should encourage those residents who may need to access and utilize emergency rental assistance programs and the homeowner assistance fund by designing a promotional campaign in support of these programs. NCILS hopes that ARPA funding can and will be allocated for home modifications such as ramps, grab bars and minor sidewalk repairs. The City should recommend that the nonprofits who are tasked with helping citizens access emergency rental assistance programs hire more interviewers to evaluate applications and community needs in regards to emergency rental assistance. We also, as a City, may need to consider a policy ordinance which would assist potential renters so they would not have to pay multiple application fees if multiple buildings, properties, and apartments that are owned by the same property management

companies are applied for by citizens and residents .

In transportation and infrastructure,

NCILS would also like to see funding allocations and sustainable infrastructure built for emergency transportation needs. As a city, Great Falls must incorporate

ADA accessibility into our business, community ,economic,social planning and development.

NCILS hopes that employers as well as the city of Great Falls and surrounding areas include people with disabilities and f on und competitive integrated employment opportunities for hiring that include people with disabilities .

Projects and applications should be outlining affordable ,community connections, connectivity , ADA accessibility , visitable, and universal design .Thank you for your time and consideration of my comments.

Shyla Patera Independent Living Specialist North Central Independent Living Services,Inc.

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Sent from my iPhone