



WESTMINSTER

## Economic Development Department

Homelessness-Property/Business Owners' Rights and Best Practices

June 24, 2021

# Agenda

## Welcome

*Shelby Wood, Business Resource Management Analyst, [swood@cityofwestminster.us](mailto:swood@cityofwestminster.us), 303.658.2168*

## Parks, Recreation & Libraries

*Kate Skarbek, Senior Management Analyst*

## Community Development

*Aric Otzelberger, Operations & Community Preservation Manager*

## Police Department

*Mike Wazny, Police Officer*

## Q&A



WESTMINSTER

## Parks, Recreation & Libraries

Kate Skarbek

# Homelessness: Scope, Causes & Action

How many people are experiencing homelessness?

What caused them to become homeless?

What is the City doing about homelessness?

# Federal Definition of Homelessness:

An individual or family who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

4 Categories:

1) People who are living in a place not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelter, in transitional housing, or are exiting an institution where they temporarily resided.

2) People who are losing their primary nighttime residence, which include a motel or hotel or a doubled-up situation, within 14 days and lack resources or support to remain housed.

3) Families with children or unaccompanied youth who are unstably housed and likely to continue in that state.

4) People who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, have no other residence, and lack the resources or support to obtain other permanent housing.

# How Many People Are Homeless in Westminster?

120

- Literally homeless: living outdoors, in vehicles, etc.

2,100

- Potentially being evicted

1,000

- Pre-K through Grade 12 Students Unstably Housed

?

- Fleeing domestic violence & or about to

# 2016 Survey in Both Counties – Contributing Factors:

## Financial

- 15.6% Unable to pay rent, mortgage and/or utilities
- 14.5% Lost job/Couldn't work
- 3.7% Public benefit problem

## Relationships

- 8.3% Asked to leave
- 7.5% Relationship problems
- 7.3% Abuse or violence in home

## Health

- 8.5% Substance use
- 5.4% Family member or personal illness
- 4.6% Mental illness

# Housing Costs Compared to Income

## Adams County

The hourly wage needed for a household to afford an apartment in:

- ▶ 2- bedroom: \$30.12 or \$62,640
- ▶ 1- bedroom: \$24.23 or \$50,400
  
- ▶ State of Colorado  
minimum wage \$12.32  
average renter's wage \$19.49

## Jefferson County

For income levels in Jefferson County to be compatible with housing costs, relative to the national average, the median annual household income in Jefferson County would need to increase 31%, from \$85,890 to \$112,421.



# What City Initiatives Prevent or Address Homelessness?

## Prevention

- Building & Preserving Affordable Housing
- Rental Assistance
- Colorado Legal Services

## Literal Homelessness

- Work with 100+ Partners
- Navigator
- Hotel Stays
- Wellness Court

# Contact Information:

- Kate Skarbek
- Senior Management Analyst
- [kskarbek@cityofwestminster.us](mailto:kskarbek@cityofwestminster.us)
- 303-658-2022
  
- To contact the Homeless Navigator for services:
- [navigator@cityofwestminster.us](mailto:navigator@cityofwestminster.us)
- 720-431-2456



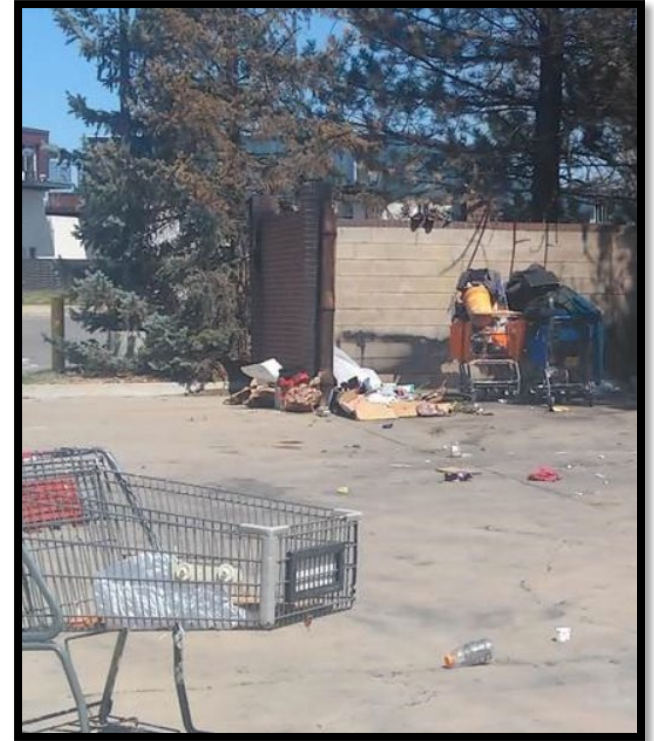
WESTMINSTER

## Community Development

Aric Otzelberger

# Protecting Your Private Property

- Avoid confrontation and maintain a safe distance.
- Do not offer food or money, as it may encourage more panhandling. If you are inclined to help, it is better to contribute to local charities, missions, food banks or social service organizations.
- Do not permit anyone to camp or loiter on your property.
- Do not allow anyone to store shopping carts, bedding or other personal belongings on your property.
- Where allowable, restrict access to sidewalk overhangs, alcoves, or other areas protected from inclement weather that may be attractive for camping or loitering.



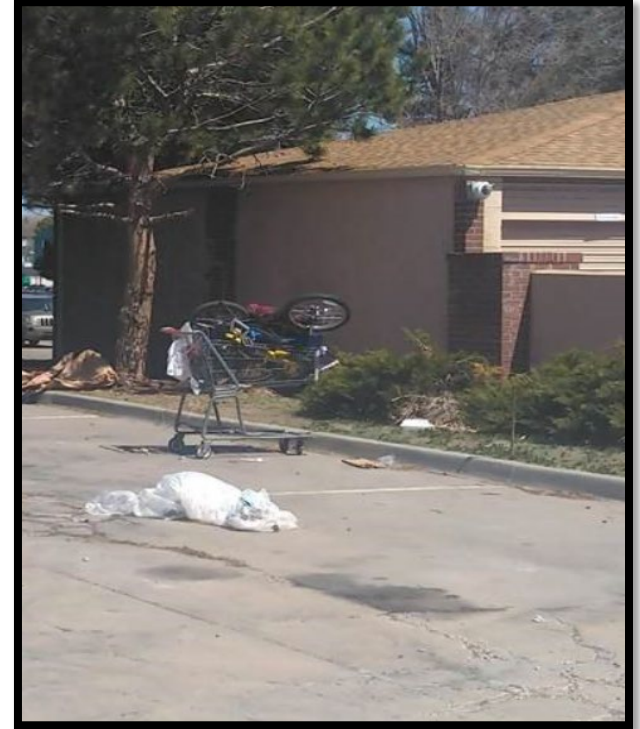
# Protecting Your Private Property

- Lock or remove handles from water spigots.
- Keep all trash in dumpsters within dumpster enclosures. Keep the dumpsters and enclosures locked when not being filled or emptied.
- Secure outside storage sheds or containers.
- Lock or turn off exterior power outlets.
- Lock gates after hours.
- Install motion-activated exterior lighting after hours.



# Protecting Your Private Property

- Properly trim landscaping to eliminate hiding places and provide site visibility.
- Keep property free of trash, litter, junk, etc.
- Use graffiti-resistant paint or anti-graffiti coatings on the sides of the building and any other design features that could be vandalized.
- Enhance landscaping on the property to keep vandals away from areas that might be vandalized.
- Design amenities to discourage misuse. For example, shape benches and other seating to be comfortable for sitting but not for sleeping.





# Protecting Your Private Property

- Install security cameras to cover public areas.
- Establish, post, and enforce rules of conduct for public use of private property. Include nighttime curfews and prohibitions of loitering, illegal lodging, drinking alcoholic beverages and drug activities.
- Private property/business owners with concerns about persons experiencing homelessness on their property should contact the Westminster Police Department, non-emergency Dispatch at phone 303-658-4360.
- If an individual other than the business/property owner has a concern about persons experiencing homelessness or a camp on private property, they should contact Code Enforcement at 303-658-4432 or [codeenfo@cityofwestminster.us](mailto:codeenfo@cityofwestminster.us).



## Contact Information:

- Aric Otzelberger
- Operations and Community Preservation Manager
- [aotzelbe@cityofwestminster.us](mailto:aotzelbe@cityofwestminster.us)
- 303-658-2122





WESTMINSTER

Police Department

Mike Wazny

# Law Enforcement and People Experiencing Homelessness

- Being homeless is not a crime
- Police will respond on criminal activities: fighting in public, open container, public urination, etc.
- The response can look different depending on the officer responding and crime alleged to be occurring
- To arrest or not to arrest and what that means; jails may or may not accept

# Law Enforcement and People Experiencing Homelessness

- What to do if you are having problems with people experiencing homelessness on your property.
- Non-Emergency Phone Number  
303-658-4360
- Emergency Phone Number  
911
- What happens when you call the Non-Emergency number or the Emergency number.
- Response times to calls for service
- Private property trespassing – letter authorizing PD to enforce violations when necessary and will be on file with dispatch and must be from owner / designee

# Example of Trespass Authorization

Letterhead if possible

**Date** (Today's date):

**Property location address** (location having issues):

Description of what is happening. Permission for Officers of the Westminster Police Department to enforce trespassing violations (specify if this is for inside only of property, inside and outside, or only outside). Permission to enforce trespass is given indefinitely or until I call the Westminster Police Department to have letter removed from above listed address (Westminster Dispatch Center 303-658-4360). List anything else of importance.

**Property owner information:**

First and last name of owner with date of birth (**mandatory date of birth. We need this if a ticket is issued. The PD cannot have a victim name only with no date of birth**)

Address (can be address of home or business)

Phone number (if multiple list in order of preference). We will call when trespasses are issued. This is to inform you since you are listed on the ticket as the victim).

Attach site map if you have one (most property managers will have this). This should clearly show what property is yours, maybe highlight if not clearly marked.

## Contact Information:

- Mike Wazny
- Police Officer
- [mwazny@cityofwestminster.us](mailto:mwazny@cityofwestminster.us)
- 303-658-4026

# Questions – Open discussion