



**Planning & Development Division**  
*Planning & Economic Development Department*  
 Room 160  
 411 West First Street  
 Duluth, Minnesota 55802

218-730-5580  
 planning@duluthmn.gov

|                             |  |                                 |                                  |                |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>File Number</b>          | PLIUP-2503-0016                                      | <b>Contact</b>                  | Jason Mozol, jmozol@duluthmn.gov |                |
| <b>Type</b>                 | Interim Use Permit for Temporary Outdoor Living Site | <b>Planning Commission Date</b> |                                  | April 8, 2025  |
| <b>Deadline for Action</b>  | <b>Application Date</b>                              | March 7, 2025                   | <b>60 Days</b>                   | May 6, 2025    |
|                             | <b>Date Extension Letter Mailed</b>                  | March 20, 2025                  | <b>120 Days</b>                  | July 4, 2025   |
| <b>Location of Subject</b>  |  | 1533 W Arrowhead Rd             |                                  |                |
| <b>Applicant</b>            | Vineyard Christian Fellowship, Duluth                | <b>Contact</b>                  | Melissa Hassebrock               |                |
| <b>Agent</b>                | CHUM   |                                 | Joel Kilgour                     |                |
| <b>Legal Description</b>    |  | PIN 010-3500-00095              |                                  |                |
| <b>Site Visit Date</b>      |  | March 22, 2025                  | <b>Sign Notice Date</b>          | March 25, 2025 |
| <b>Neighbor Letter Date</b> |  | March 20, 2025                  | <b>Number of Letters Sent</b>    | 39             |

#### Proposal

This one-year Interim Use Permit would allow for 2025 operation of Safe Bay, an overnight parking lot, at the Vineyard Church. This parking lot would operate seasonally. This program previously operated at the Damiano Center in 2023 and 2024.

#### Recommendation

Staff recommends approval, subject to conditions.

|                | <b>Current Zoning</b> | <b>Existing Land Use</b> | <b>Future Land Use Map Designation</b>   |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Subject</b> | R-2                   | Church                   | Urban Residential/ Low Density Nbhd      |
| <b>North</b>   | R-1                   | Residential              | Low Density Neighborhood                 |
| <b>South</b>   | R-1                   | Residential              | Traditional Neighborhood                 |
| <b>East</b>    | R-2                   | Open Space               | Neighborhood Mixed Use/ Low Density Nbhd |
| <b>West</b>    | R-2                   | Residential              | Urban Residential/ Low Density Nbhd      |

#### Summary of Code Requirements

50-20.1.I: Use-specific standards for Interim Outdoor Living Site

50-37.10: Authorizes the city to issue an interim use permit that authorizes a special use to exist until a specified date.

**Comprehensive Plan Governing Principle and/or Policies and Current History (if applicable):**

Governing Principle #13 – Develop a healthy community. Safe Bay allows a place for people without housing to sleep safely in their cars, with access to bathrooms and other services.

Governing Principle #14 – Integrate fairness in to the fabric of the community. Safe Bay provides people living in cars a designated, legal place to stay with access to basic amenities.

**Future Land Use –**

Urban Residential: A transitional use between more intensive commercial uses and purely residential neighborhoods.

Low Density Neighborhood: Single-family housing with urban services. Non-residential uses are mainly uses such as schools and churches.

**Site history:** CHUM has been providing services to people in need for over 50 years. Safe Bay is a piece of their programming that works to address homelessness. Safe Bay opened in 2023 under a temporary use permit at the Damiano Center, providing safe and secure overnight parking and sleeping places for people living in cars.

**Review and Discussion Items**

Staff finds that:

- 1) The Vineyard Church will provide an overnight parking lot. This is only for people sleeping in vehicles (not tents or other sleeping facilities). It will operate seasonally during the warmer months, May through October, and only at night (6:00 pm – 9:00 am). Vehicles will park in the existing, paved rear lot. Other parking lots in the front of the property will provide parking for other uses.
- 2) Safe Bay provides bathroom facilities, garbage and recycling dumpsters, and a sharps container, all meeting the requirements of UDC Section 50-20.1.I.
- 3) The maximum occupancy for this site is 50 people.
- 4) All minors present on the site will be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- 5) Staff from CHUM and overnight hosts provide oversight at all hours the facility is open. The staff and hosts document vehicles and guests, ensure quiet hours starting at 10:00 pm, and monitor all activities on site.
- 6) In case of an emergency, such as an extreme weather event, the Vineyard Church facility is available for shelter.
- 7) The property will be screened by temporary fencing along the rear of the property. Trees and vegetation provide additional buffering between the proposed project site and the neighboring residential structures. A fence permit is required prior to installation of any fencing.
- 8) No additional exterior lighting will be provided.
- 9) A time limit on this Interim Use Permit is required because this is an interim living site. The time period for this use shall be one year from the date of approval.
- 10) Plans have been reviewed by the Fire Marshall without any comments.
- 11) Fourteen public comments have been received and are attached.
- 12) No other agency or City comments have been received.

**Staff Recommendation**

Based on the above findings, staff recommends that Planning Commission approve the interim use permit, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The project be limited to, constructed, and maintained according to the information submitted with the application and all criteria in UDC Section 50-20.1.I.
- 2) This Interim Use Permit has a duration of one year and shall expire one year from the date of approval; however, the site will only be open from May - October.
- 3) Before operation commences, the applicant will ensure that the operator's name, telephone number, and e-mail address are posted on the site and easily visible to the public, and will provide a photo of this signage on the site to the Land Use Supervisor.
- 4) Any alterations to the approved plans that do not alter major elements of the plan may be approved by the Land Use Supervisor without further Planning Commission; however, no such administrative approval shall constitute a variance from the provisions of UDC Chapter 50.





**PLIUP-2503-0016**

Interim Use Permit  
1533 W Arrowhead Rd



The City of Duluth has tried to ensure that the information contained in this map or electronic document is accurate. The City of Duluth makes no warranty or guarantee concerning the accuracy or reliability. This drawing/data is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. The drawing/data is a compilation of records, information and data located in various City, County and State offices and other sources affecting the area shown and is to be used for reference purposes only. The City of Duluth shall not be liable for errors contained within this data provided or for any damages in connection with the use of this information contained within.

Aerial Imagery Captured 2019

Prepared by: City of Duluth Planning & Economic Development, March 6, 2025; Source: City of Duluth.





GRAPHIC SCALE

1" = 40' feet

Now or Formerly:  
Wall Structure  
Tax lot: 010-3500-00217Now or Formerly:  
Curtain Wall  
Tax lot: 010-3500-00212Now or Formerly:  
Office Building  
Tax lot: 010-3500-00210Now or Formerly:  
Police Station  
Tax lot: 010-3500-00211Now or Formerly:  
Wardens' Quarters  
Tax lot: 010-3500-00200

|                           |                                 |                       |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Light Pole                | Sanitary Sewer                  | Gas Valve             |
| Water Valve               | Wall Mount Gas Meter            | Storm Inlet (Square)  |
| Fire Hydrant              | Property Line                   | Storm Inlet (Round)   |
| Slamless Fire Hydrant     | Telephone Pedestal              | Indicative Building   |
| Stand Pipe                | Low Area                        | Height at This Spot   |
| Wall Mount Electric Motor | PVC Pipe                        | Overhead Line         |
| Electric Transformer      | Site Access                     | Hand Hole             |
| Building Foot Print       | Utility Pole w/ Transformer     | Fence Line            |
| Concrete Surface          | Guy Wire                        | N. North              |
| Gravel Surface            | Set 1/2 inch by 14 inch iron    | S. South              |
| Rip Rap Rocks             | Pipe with Plastic Cap Inscribed | E. East               |
|                           | with License No. 43808          | W. West               |
|                           | Found Monumentation             | (Plat)                |
|                           | Fire Hydrant & Water Valve      | (Meas.) Measured      |
|                           | Pipe Outlet                     | R/W Right-of-way      |
|                           | Flared End                      | Mail Box              |
|                           |                                 | Indicates Handicapped |
|                           |                                 | Parking               |

NORTON'S

Now or Formerly:  
Police Station  
Tax lot: 010-3500-00200Lot 5  
1006.58  
500'22.43' E

Lot 6

DULUTH

Lot 7

Lot 8

Lot 9

Lot 10

OUTLOTS

Now or Formerly:  
Andrew Hall  
Tax lot: 010-3500-00253Now or Formerly:  
Wardens' Quarters  
Tax lot: 010-3500-00200Now or Formerly:  
Wardens' Quarters  
Tax lot: 010-3500-00200Now or Formerly:  
Wardens' Quarters  
Tax lot: 010-3500-00200Wood Frame  
One Story Garage  
875 sq. ft.Wood Frame  
One Story Shed  
132 sq. ft.Main entrance and  
directional sign 1

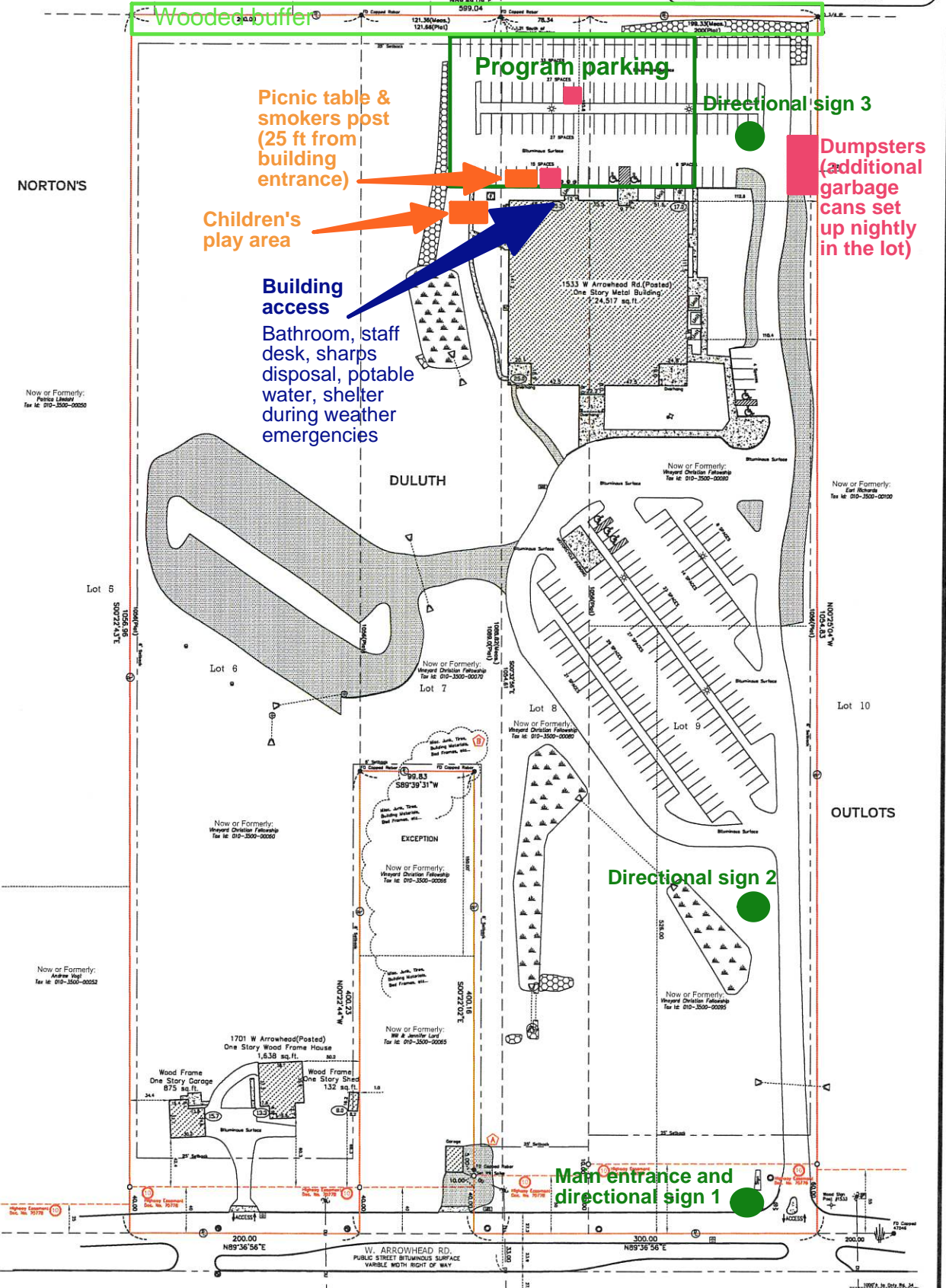
Directional sign 2

Directional sign 3

Dumpsters  
(additional  
garbage  
cans set  
up nightly  
in the lot)Picnic table &  
smokers post  
(25 ft from  
building  
entrance)Children's  
play areaBuilding  
access  
Bathroom, staff  
desk, sharps  
disposal, potable  
water, shelter  
during weather  
emergencies

Program parking

Wooded buffer





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**FW: Safe Bay**

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**Sent:** Tuesday, April 1, 2025 12:56 PM

**To:** planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>;

**Subject:** Safe Bay

Hello, my name is Ashley and I am a support staff with Stepping On Up Duluth (CHUM). Safe Bay is such a wonderful option for the people who are living out of their vehicles as they work to save up for their needs and housing. Our Safe Bay clients are very respectful and quiet as they are out here working in the community by day, just like you and me. We must offer these folks a safe place to catch up on their rest so they too can face the day. As a support staff, we maintain the peace every shift, and pass the peace off to the next shift. We clean up after the program and make sure we leave it looking better then when we found it. This program is so vital to the people who use it.

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Outlook

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**FW: Concerns - Overnight Parking at Vineyard Church W Arrowhead Road**

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**Date:** March 27, 2025 at 9:16:32 PM CDT

**To:** [council@duluthmn.gov](mailto:council@duluthmn.gov), [mmayou@duluthmn.gov](mailto:mmayou@duluthmn.gov)

**Subject: Concerns - Overnight Parking at Vineyard Church W Arrowhead Road**

Greetings,

I am unsure who to exactly contact on this matter:

I wanted to state some serious concerns I have as a Duluth resident in the Kenwood neighborhood over the proposed "Safe" overnight parking at the Vineyard Church on West Arrowhead Road.

This neighborhood is a mixture of young families and college students who reside in rental housing. This neighborhood is currently a safe area for college students to live who come from far away. Parents of college students pay over \$20,000 per year to send their students to UMD or CSS and live in the Kenwood area.

This proposed "safe" overnight parking at the Vineyard Church will invite individuals who do not reside in the Kenwood area to come and park their vehicles to sleep in overnight. As a resident, these are not the types of individuals we want to incorporate into our area. These are not the types of people we want around our young adults in our community. What kinds of messages will this send to families of students away at colleges that right down the street we have a homeless population residing in a parking lot?

Our Duluth community is a fragile balance of displaying the best values, while also not destroying the current safety of the residents. I speak for many young adults in the Kenwood area: this "safe" overnight parking is not what we want! This is not the type of reputation and appearance the city of Duluth can afford. We need to put our

best on display in front of prospective families and students to the area who come from afar to receive an education at our nearby colleges. Duluth cannot afford to lose out on this economic significance from college families by placing homeless families in a nearby parking lot. This is a matter of safety for our students and families in the area. We choose to live on the hill in Kenwood for a reason. For the feeling of safety. We choose not to live downtown for a reason. We do not want to be welcoming this community into our area.

Please let our voices be heard.

Please respond at your earliest convenience. Feel free to call me to discuss.

[REDACTED]

Sincerely,  
Rose Carpenter, a Kenwood resident

Sent from my iPhone



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**FW: Safe Bay at Vineyard Church**

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To: planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>  
Cc: Mike Mayou <mmayou@DuluthMN.gov>; joel@steppingonupduluth.org  
Subject: Safe Bay at Vineyard Church

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I am writing in support of Chum's application for Safe Bay to be located at Vineyard Church.

My experience as a past board member for Chum, a volunteer at the Warming Center, and an ongoing supporter of Chum has shown me how absolutely vital Chum's programs are to the health and well-being and movement toward stability of people in our community who are experiencing homelessness. I appreciate the congregation of Vineyard Church and many of its neighbors for their support of this initiative. Their welcome of people who need a safe place to park is commendable. The need is real!

Please approve this application.

Sincerely,  
Holly Church  
5326 Otsego St.  
Duluth, MN





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**FW: In support of Safe Bay**

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**Sent:** Monday, March 31, 2025 4:44 PM

**To:** planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>

**Cc:** Mike Mayou <mmayou@DuluthMN.gov>;

**Subject:** In support of Safe Bay

Dear Duluth Planning Commissioners,

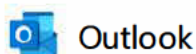
I am writing to express my full support to operate Safe Bay at the Vineyard Church. It is commendable and appreciated that the Vineyard Church has stepped up to help our community address the housing crisis. Safe Bay is a proven success story that has operated successfully for 2 years. Safe Bay connects people to resources, increases public health and safety, and saves lives.

I have a friend who stayed with me for several months in 2016. He had spent time sleeping outside. His phone was taken when he fell asleep at the bus station. We can do better. Our community needs Safe Bay, as well as more emergency shelter, and more permanent affordable housing with supportive services.

Thank you,

Debbie Freedman

3528 E 4<sup>th</sup> St, Duluth, 55804



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**FW: Support for Safe Bay at Vinyard**

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**To:** planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>  
**Cc:** Mike Mayou <mmayou@DuluthMN.gov>  
**Subject:** Support for Safe Bay at Vinyard

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Dear Planning Commission -

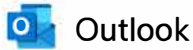
The need for safe alternatives for our unhoused population is critical. CHUM's Safe Bay project is one significant component of support for Duluth individuals and families without permanent shelter. I fully support CHUM's application to operate the Safe Bay program at the Vineyard Church this year, and urge you to as well. This program has been operating at Damiano safely for two years, and now is not the time to remove it from our community's resources for this population.

As a librarian for almost 30 years at Duluth public Library, I saw the great need for shelter of our homeless neighbors as, during the latter part of my tenure, the Library became a safe daytime shelter for many who had nowhere else to go. I know that that need didn't end at nightfall, and that the need has only grown since I retired in 2019. Decency and humanity call on us to continue to respond to their need.

Once again, I urge you on April 8 to approve the interim permit for CHUM and Vineyard to proceed with this program. Thank you for your attention to my thoughts.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Grossman  
5326 Otsego St.  
Duluth 55904  
[REDACTED]



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**FW: Support for Safe Bay**

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**Sent:** Tuesday, April 1, 2025 2:35 PM

**To:** planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>

**Cc:** Mike Mayou <mmayou@DuluthMN.gov>;

**Subject:** Support for Safe Bay

Dear City of Duluth Planning Commission,

My name is Emma Haugen and I volunteered in the mornings at Safe Bay last summer. I am writing this to let you know that I fully support Chum's application for an interim use permit to operate Safe Bay at the Vineyard Church. In my time volunteering there, I met a lot of cool people. Most of the people who stayed there had jobs, families who they kept in touch with (some families that even stayed there together), and all were just trying to get to a better place in life.

The mornings were slow, often filled with light conversations, and talk about resources and next-steps for those close to getting housing (I remember how enthusiastic Joel Kilgour was during the Safe Bay orientation, telling me that Safe Bay has a much higher rate of getting people housing!) Before volunteering at Safe Bay, I was wary of what I might encounter there and I had several people who were wary for me, yet I'm pleased to say that I always felt safe (which as a young 23-year-old girl, you don't always), it was clean, and people were polite and respectful. There is always Chum staff members present, and they're consistently looking for new ways to improve the flow of the morning, safety of the guests, or anything else (for example, when I started volunteering, there was no fence. Chum devised a way to make a lightweight, easy for all to handle, fence that could be constructed each night and torn down each morning, giving the guests at Safe Bay more of a feeling of security, while also not permanently changing the landscaping of Damiano). This is why it's so wonderful that Safe Bay hopes to move to the Vineyard Church, as there will be more green space, more seclusion from the nightlife that downtown brings, and overall more feeling of safety for the guests who will be staying there.

I've been told that being at the Vineyard will also allow them to expand hours, which I know will help benefit those that work, as last summer some guests would work until late in the evening or even early morning, and still be required to get up and moving right away in the morning. This would allow them to get the sleep and rest they need. Churches have a long history of helping people who otherwise have nowhere else to go, certainly not anywhere as safe as Safe Bay would be for those living in their cars. I'm so happy that the Vineyard has volunteered their space to support this amazing program.

Thank you,  
Emma Haugen





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**FW: Interim use permit for Safe Bay**

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**Sent:** Tuesday, April 1, 2025 11:26 AM

**To:** planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>

**Cc:** Mike Mayou <mmayou@DuluthMN.gov>;

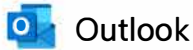
**Subject:** Interim use permit for Safe Bay

I write in favor of the City of Duluth Planning Commission to issue an interim use permit for the operation of Safe Bay at the site of the Vineyard Church.

I have been a volunteer at Safe Bay for two seasons and am looking forward to doing so again this year. I have enjoyed meeting the people who are living out of their cars due to an inability to find affordable housing. Many of these people have jobs and appreciate having a safe place where they can spend the night. Based on my experience I think the concerns expressed by some people about having Safe Bay in their neighborhood are unnecessary.

I hope you will vote in favor of issuing the interim use permit. I simply think it is the right thing to do. Thank you for your consideration.

Larry Johnson  
1611 Minneapolis Ave.  
Duluth, MN 55803



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**FW: Safe Bay in Kenwood**

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**Sent:** Tuesday, April 1, 2025 2:05 PM

**To:** Mike Mayou <mmayou@DuluthMN.gov>; planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>

**Subject:** Safe Bay in Kenwood

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Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

I live down the hill from the Kenwood shopping center, and I shop there two or three times a week. I am also a member of St. Andrew's by the Lake Episcopal Church, which has supported the Safe Bay program in Duluth since it started.

I am writing to unequivocally support Chum's application for a permit to operate Safe Bay at the Vineyard Church this summer (2025).

The Vineyard church is generously offering the use of some of their space to help people in need. Safe Bay is a supervised program which Chum has run very successfully for two years at the Damiano Center. There are staff working whenever Safe Bay is open, so there is always someone available to provide help or solve problems.

I don't know if you can imagine living out of your car. I talked to someone who had to live out of her car, and she described how much it helped her to have a safe place to sleep, and to use the toilet or take a shower. It is amazingly frightening to have no place to go, and to know that if you fall asleep, someone could come along and pound on your window and tell you to move, or even attack you.

The goal of Safe Bay is to provide a safe space for people who have no place to go. If the city is willing to approve the required permit, then those people will have a chance to sleep safely, and go through the day knowing they have a safe space to go back to. This allows them to focus their energy on the next steps to solving their problems, instead of worrying about where they will spend the night.

I urge you to approve the permit for Safe Bay.

Elizabeth Maeshima  
1202 E 7th St.  
Duluth, MN 55805



Outlook

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**Safe Bay Proposal**

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**To** Mike Mayou <mmayou@DuluthMN.gov>; Arik Forsman <aforsman@DuluthMN.gov>; Jason Mozol <jmozol@DuluthMN.gov>; Wendy Durrwachter <wdurrwachter@DuluthMN.gov>; Tara Swenson <tswenson@DuluthMN.gov>

 1 attachment (73 KB)

CoC Plan on Unsheltered Homelessness-MN-509 Special NOFO .docx;

Councilor Mayou and fellow Council persons,

We are writing to you with concerns about the Safe Bay site, proposed for the Vineyard Church parking lot.

We have lived on Linzie Rd for 31 years. We chose this neighborhood for the quiet and natural location. It has been a wonderful neighborhood to raise our kids and feel fortunate to call our neighbors friends.

We are aware that the search for a site began 3 years ago. And no "neighborhood" or church stepped up to the challenge. Why not?

Because of the concerns for safety, and I would assume an impact on property values? Certainly a topic of conversation we are currently having with our neighbors. Also liabilities? Who is responsible for possible damage to our property?

The lack of communication is an issue. To only notify those living within 350 feet of the parking lot, feels disrespectful to those who will possibly be impacted. Many were not able to attend the meeting at the church, because of the lack of notice. For that reason it feels as if they are being deliberately sneaky.

We do understand that there is an unhoused population problem in our city. But moving them into neighborhoods does not feel like a solution. What neighborhood would be welcoming to an increase of 10 to 60 people suddenly moving in next door?

We need answers, about noise, garbage, pet control, boundaries. What about behavior? We were told that there will be no screening and no one will be turned away. That sounds irresponsible. We have heard about issues around the Damiano Center, coming from the experiences of that neighborhood. We have had very few situations of concern in our little community, and work to keep it comfortable and safe.

We understand that the homeless issue is difficult for Duluth, but hiding them in a neighborhood is not a solution.

We are hoping that you will see that this is not a good location for Safe Bay.

Thank you for your time.

Michael and Kimberly Maki



**P. CoC Plan for Serving Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness with Severe Service Needs: Duluth/St. Louis County (MN-509)**

Page 1 of 15

**Introduction:**

Duluth/St. Louis County (MN-509) CoC's (SLC CoC) plan to target unsheltered homelessness is a community plan called Stepping On Up (SOU). This plan was developed throughout 2021 with input and feedback from people experiencing homelessness, housing providers, business owners, landlords, local governments, CoC governance, culturally specific providers, funders, and faith communities. SOU is a collaboration of eight partner organizations; CHUM (host agency); American Indian Community Housing Organization (AICHO), the Human Development Center, and The Salvation Army. SOU is a three-phase, five-year plan to reduce unsheltered homelessness by expanding capacity for street outreach (SO), case management, Coordinated Entry, and HMIS capacity to work with unsheltered households trying to secure permanent housing. SOU will continue to foster additional relationships with housing developers and management companies such as Center City Housing Corporation to pair new and open rental units with people moving out of unsheltered homelessness. Simultaneously, SOU will develop and construct at least 100 shelter-next units and 200 culturally specific, harm reduction, service rich permanent supportive housing units. More than 600 people accessed Warming Centers in SLC CoC in winter 2021-2022 and emergency shelters operated at or over capacity. This represents a several year trend of rapidly increasing homelessness in SLC CoC, especially unsheltered homelessness. This proposal represents the SLC CoC vision for targeting SO and support services resources needed to successfully reach and support more than 550 unsheltered individuals.

**Stepping On Up Plan Overview**

**Phase 1:** Authorized Outdoor Living Zones & Street Outreach (SO) Expansion **Goals:** Provide basic emergency shelter from the elements through the summer and fall months when Warming Centers are closed; Reduce harm caused by substance abuse; Decrease violence and calls for emergency services **Action plan:** Develop 2-4 capacity controlled (10 persons each max) scattered sites where people are allowed to set up a tent or sleep in a car. Several of these sites are already identified and established; the authorized living zones will officially launch in Spring 2023. The Safe Bay site for people living in their vehicles will also open Spring 2023 and provide safe parking, hygiene facilities, and support staff. Authorized outdoor living zones do not prevent or end homelessness. It should be viewed as a temporary, emergency, harm-reduction response within a broader strategy toward permanent housing. In addition to authorized living zones, there is an urgent need to add SO staff to engage and assist unsheltered people in accessing services and permanent housing.

**Phase 2:** Shelter Next Response - Indoor Villages or Tiny Home Park **Goals:** Provide increased privacy and safety for residents. Provide shelter and protection from heat and cold. Provide people with a step up from shelter which helps build skills and support towards permanent housing. Create space for couples and other people who cannot or will not use traditional, congregate shelter. **Action Plan:** Develop at least 100, secure, step-up housing units that can be built quickly and for a fraction of the cost of permanent housing. SLC CoC is considering several models including an indoor village or tiny home park with communal hygiene facilities. This option offers people an alternative to outdoor camping and will allow us to phase out authorized living zones. All models include service provisions to assist people in stepping up into permanent housing and recovery. Discussion with government agencies and potential funders are underway to launch this phase. A site has not yet been identified, but this phase will launch in 2023-2024.

**Phase 3:** Transforming Response: Towards Long-Term Housing **Goals:** Move people out of shelter and the streets into permanent supportive housing. Add additional units that give preference to people who have experienced chronic unsheltered homelessness. **Action Plan:** Invest in development of at least 200 units of supportive housing for people who are experiencing chronic or long-term homelessness by 2026. This will require creative and cost-effective designs and long-term funding for supportive services. Two immediate, promising solutions that SLC CoC is targeting in phase 3 include the New Model of Housing Supports and the conversion of hotels/motels to permanent housing. The New Model was developed through community discussions with multiple Duluth providers, people experiencing homelessness, and

**P. CoC Plan for Serving Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness with Severe Service Needs: Duluth/St. Louis County (MN-509)**

Page 2 of 15

fundings and is ready to move forward with a pilot project. One Roof Community Housing and The Salvation Army will develop and manage the Plover Place Project pilot which will open June 2023. This is intended to be a model that could be adopted by other organizations and affordably built. It consists of two 12-unit dormitory-style apartments (24 units total) including kitchenettes, toilet, shower, and sink. Plover Place is under development and will utilize State of Minnesota Long-Term Homeless (LTH) Housing Support funds for rental assistance and a blend of CoC Supportive Service funds and Medicare reimbursement services for Housing Stabilization Services to support residents. Center City Housing Corporation is also in the process of developing 60 units of permanent supportive housing for single adults. This building, Wadena West, will have on-site supportive services and target those who have experienced homelessness the longest and who have mental health conditions and/or co-occurring chemical dependency issues. This building will be key to moving unsheltered individuals into permanent supportive housing. Subsidies for these units are covered with a mix of Section 8 and LTH Housing Support funds. Additionally, SLC CoC will continue to target the purchase and conversion of hotels/motels to Permanent Housing. One such example is the St Francis Apartments (formerly the Downtown Duluth Inn) which is 32 units of CoC-funded rent subsidy units and 11 units of LTH Housing Support beds that opened in 2021 in Duluth, MN.

**P-1c. Landlord Recruitment**

1,2. Advocacy and person-centered housing plans are key strategies in SLC CoC. For example, The Human Development Center Homeless Team provides landlord advocacy for those who may have higher barriers to accessing housing such as low income, criminal record, low credit score, and/or past evictions. HDC outreach workers will match a client's background, safety needs, and cultural preferences with the rental criteria of landlords who may be more flexible and compassionate. This approach is used across the CoC to ensure those experiencing homelessness are connected to housing. In the past few years, SLC CoC has implemented several strategies to increase landlord partnership with people who have experienced homelessness. A key strategy has been securing cash incentives and damage funds for landlords. One key example of this has been partnerships with Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) & Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV). This project, called Home for Veterans, allowed MDVA to pay a cash stipend to any landlord who signed a lease with a veteran experiencing homelessness. The project also provided funds for any potential damages or missed rent. This approach was also utilized in the 5-year Landlord Incentive pilot project funded by Minnesota Housing to target reducing recidivism and securing permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness with a criminal record. This pilot recently ended and served 35 households in SLC CoC with criminal backgrounds. Duluth Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA) has also started using this approach by establishing a fund for potential damages or missed rent for any landlord working with programs such as Section 8, Housing Choice Vouchers, etc. These programs have been developed and administered to help recruit landlords into our CoC & PHA supportive and permanent housing programs. Relationship building with landlords is an ongoing strategy in our CoC that is always being improved and expanded. SLC CoC housing providers regularly attend landlord association meetings and regular landlord listening sessions in SLC CoC. Additionally, MDVA & MACV were able to conduct outreach to new landlords via the City of Duluth rental licensing office. This allowed a letter about working with veterans experiencing homelessness to be mailed out to all landlords holding a rental license in the City of Duluth. More rural areas of our CoC do not require a rental license, and as a result, this approach was focused on in the metro area of our CoC. This approach identified new landlords that had not previously worked with veterans experiencing homelessness in SLC CoC. Another key strategy has been expanding rental assistance opportunities such as adding VASH vouchers, expansion of the Long-Term Homeless Housing Support Program, and the Emergency Housing Voucher program through Duluth HRA. Lutheran Social Services (LSS) also utilizes a relationship-building approach with landlords to secure permanent housing for youth experiencing homelessness. LSS includes letters to landlords with housing applications that introduce the youth and offer a guarantee for the security deposit and first/last month's rent. The Stepping

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On Up (SOU) plan has built in funding to support paying deposits and potential damages or missed rent to landlords participating in SOU. All housing providers involved in SOU will attend Landlord Association meetings to build relationships and introduce service-rich supports offered to all participants engaged in SOU. The SOU street outreach team will network with private landlords to build long lasting relationships and provide incentives for landlords such as landlord tenant mediation and financial support when available. These landlord relationships will allow our clients to then use their housing subsidy to obtain housing among this network of landlords. SLC CoC's Affordable Housing Coalition 150 Campaign, a target outreach and relationship building campaign, launches in November 2022 with the goal of securing 150 new units of housing owned by independent landlords and management companies to pair with vouchers/scattered-site rental assistance. SLC CoC also utilizes a homelessness prevention approach when working with landlords. Significant state and local funding resources are used for past due rent and utilities. Case managers, landlord mediation and legal services are used to prevent evictions. Legal Aid Services of NE MN and The Tenant Landlord Connection (TLC) are essential partners in securing mutual recissions and sustaining landlord relations. The final strategy SLC CoC utilizes is tenant education & support. This happens through ready to rent classes offered by PHAs & the Tenant Landlord Connection. Ongoing support is offered to all people experiencing homelessness who secure housing to increase stability and reduce returns to homelessness. SLC CoC continues to expand services to support people after finding permanent housing and is rapidly expanding via the Medicaid service, Housing Stabilization Services. 3) SLC CoC uses multiple data sources to track landlord recruitment efforts. For example, voucher utilization via main PHAs, Duluth & Virginia HRA, are tracked. SLC CoC regularly receives data from PHAs on unused vouchers and discusses strategies for increasing utilization. PHAs also track how many households are awarded vouchers but cannot secure housing in a reasonable timeframe and share this information with the CoC. For CoC-funded programs, SLC CoC reviews unspent funds reports at least quarterly and works directly with projects to increase landlord engagement and program utilization. SLC CoC also reviews bed utilization data at least annually and works with projects to increase bed utilization and/or reallocate this funding to more effective projects/project types. For example, SLC CoC converted the CHUM Shelter Plus Care project to site-based rental assistance in order to open the 44-unit St. Francis Permanent Supportive Housing Apartments in 2021. SLC CoC also implemented a case conferencing model for households on the Coordinated Entry priority list which helps to track and support the highest need families and veterans to move into housing more quickly. This approach helped SLC CoC reach functional zero for veteran's homelessness in 2021 and is helping to reduce the length of time homeless for Rapid Rehousing-eligible HUD Homeless families. Due to COVID-19, the State of Minnesota held a lengthy eviction moratorium. During this time, many landlords did not receive rent. Although they were able to access emergency assistance once the moratorium lifted, many chose to sell their property and/or no longer work with supportive housing programs. SLC CoC has seen a loss in rental units overall in the CoC and currently has a unit deficit compared to the need; Therefore, housing expansion is a key strategy for SLC CoC moving forward.

**P-3. Current Strategy to Identify, Shelter, and House Individuals and Families Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness**

**P-3.a Current Street Outreach Strategy**

1. St. Louis County (SLC) is a large and geographically diverse county. Due to this fact, street outreach (SO) is coordinated accordingly and occurs between partner agencies in both south SLC/City of Duluth and north SLC. In south SLC, SO is closely coordinated through the Stepping On Up (SOU) plan. In addition, SO coordinates with community partners that also intersect and engage with people who are unsheltered. These teams include our mobile crisis response team, operated by SOU partner, HDC, and our Co-responder team which includes Duluth Police, two embedded social workers and an RN. These teams and our SO staff are part of the Community Intervention Group (CIG). Unsheltered people will sign a release of information after building trust with SO staff that allows multiple service providers to



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support people collaboratively and work together to meet goals. CIG meets monthly to discuss any people who may need wrap-around support or are at risk and often includes people who are unsheltered. It is the goal to meet people where they are at and ensure they don't fall through the cracks. As part of CIG, SO staff also assist with community courts to work on connecting people with treatment and housing programs with the goal of permanent supportive housing. In north SLC, SO staff meet daily to review calls and decide how to use resources/time, assess the urgency of the situation, and work through risk mitigation strategies while trying to support people to access permanent supportive or permanent housing as rapidly as possible. 2. SO in the City of Duluth happens daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., sometimes extending. In north SLC, SO happens on a more part-time basis but is available any time. SLC CoC also maintains a 24/7 homeless hotline which allows SO to be available when needed if a person is identified as being potentially unsheltered through a tip to the hotline. SOU will expand SO hours and capacity and add new SO staff on weekends. The SO staff respectfully engage and develop rapport with individuals experiencing homelessness by coordinating outreach at a variety of locations throughout the CoC. These locations include the streets, homeless encampments, drop-in centers, community kitchens, libraries, needle exchange programs, detox, skyways, outside living zones and other places where individuals experiencing homeless congregate. 3. The outreach workers help households exit homelessness and unsheltered homelessness by connecting them to housing assistance and other services. This is done by completion of Coordinated Entry (CE) assessments, completing applications for mainstream housing including Housing Choice Vouchers and public housing and completion of applications for mainstream benefits. Furthermore, outreach workers assist clients with accessing emergency shelter, expediting Diagnostic Assessments, and connecting to other community programs including services for victims of domestic violence. These services can often be crucial to supporting people with permanently exiting homelessness by providing mental health services, harm reduction services and/or treatment, medical care, and/or safety planning. SO staff can support people with accessing cash benefits from county resources including Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) and direct assistance grant funds to help pay for application fees, moving assistance, storage fees, essential furnishings, back rent owed, first month's rent and damage deposits. Through these means, SO staff work with partner agencies to connect households to financial supports as needed including assisting with funding upon securing housing. The CE system also conducts regular case conferencing focused on specific populations represented on the CE Priority List. There are now bi-weekly reviews of all veterans and HUD homeless families on the priority list in order to provide intensive support to quickly identify appropriate housing. This approach was a key element in the SLC CoC declaration on effectively ending veteran's homelessness in 2021. SLC CoC plans to expand this approach specifically to unsheltered individuals in partnership with SO staff in 2023. 4. Methods of engagement center on relationship building, developing trust, and utilizing trauma-informed and harm reduction approaches. SLC SO staff often engage with people who are the least likely to request assistance by engaging in a trauma conscious and culturally responsive way to gain trust over time. Resources that can serve as tools of engagement would also be provided such as water, bus passes, laundry tokens, tents, tarps, winter gear, hygiene kits and by later helping clients access other services and benefits. Youth SO staff engage youth, build rapport, and refer them to drop-in centers, shelters, or other age-appropriate services. Youth SO happens in close partnerships with schools across SLC CoC. SO staff specifically identify youth who are at-risk or victims of exploitation and human trafficking. SO and related resources are advertised on webpages, billboards, brochures, at shelters, youth organizations, schools, libraries, medical clinics, corrections, veteran and DV services sites. Additionally, SLC CoC's SOU plan includes expansion of SO, targeting unsheltered people in our CoC. This plan will include specialized SO for youth, families living in vehicles, and chronically homeless unsheltered individuals. SO staff co-create person centered housing plans that prioritize housing choice and cultural preferences/needs. Outreach workers will assist clients in connecting with and accessing culturally specific materials and programing that meet their identified needs. To support increase and development of

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cultural responsiveness, awareness and trauma responsive approaches to engagement, organizations have developed ongoing trainings for SO staff that address privilege, white privilege, and cross-racial competency/humility. Organizations stand with individuals who are experiencing discrimination and strive to dismantle structural racism. Partnerships are developed and nurtured with the social services/housing on neighboring Tribal lands, NAACP, Islamic Center, and cross-cultural alliance groups such as Voices for Ethnic and Multiracial Awareness (VEMA). Additionally, all CoC-funded organizations are required to have anti-discrimination statements and racial equity and culturally responsive care policies and procedures in place. These policies are evaluated bi-annually and play a key role in CoC project scoring during the annual CoC NOFO. SLC CoC has close partnerships with Fond du Lac Tribal Nation and Bois Forte Tribal Nation and integrates tribal partners into all CoC decision-making processes. SLC CoC will work with all projects funded to integrate culturally relevant care practices and build relationships with Tribal Nations. 5. The outreach teams will connect with individuals experiencing homelessness by assisting with the CE assessment, assistance with application completion and obtaining disability verifications. Cash assistance will be available to pay for application fees which is often a barrier to securing housing. Outreach workers have developed relationships with landlords and housing providers and will continue to engage and build relationships. These relationships help with combatting housing denials and provide access to housing. Outreach workers also connect households to a variety of services through direct partnerships to support people in recovery to obtain housing while receiving support with physical, mental, cultural, spiritual, and chemical health; truly taking a holistic and housing first approach. 6. SLC organizations providing SO, shelter and permanent supportive housing prioritize hiring staff who have lived experience of homelessness. The majority of CoC providers have hired staff with lived experience of homelessness and continue to increase the percentage of staff with lived experience, recognizing the power of peer support and the expertise of a person with lived experience walking side by side with a person who is in transition.

**P-3.b. Current Strategy to Provide Immediate Access to Low-Barrier Shelter and Temporary Housing for Individuals and Families Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness**

1. SLC CoC's strategy to provide immediate access to low-barrier shelter and temporary housing for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness has numerous components that vary across our geographically diverse CoC. In the City of Duluth, CHUM is our largest low-barrier shelter that includes a 24/7 drop-in area coupled with sleeping areas. It is a rare occurrence that someone is not able to stay at CHUM. During the colder months (October 15 – April 15) people who are unsheltered can also access the permanent warming center (WC) in Duluth with access to showers and medical and behavioral health services on site. There are also 6 family shelter units embedded within family permanent supportive housing in Duluth. In north SLC there is low-barrier emergency shelter (12 units). When this shelter is full, our CoC utilizes hotel rooms for shelter expansion beyond designated shelter space. This is especially important for the winter season. Our strategy includes doubling the number of these units and expanding DV shelter and family shelter units in rural areas (north SLC) by use of Housing Supports and ARPA funds. As mentioned earlier, the Stepping On Up plan includes increasing emergency shelter and temporary housing in creative ways to meet people where they are at from outdoor authorized living zones to indoor villages. American Indian Community Housing Organization is currently expanding culturally specific shelter units for singles and families. 2. The diversity of our low-barrier shelter options has proven successful in meeting people where they are by providing sleeping areas, individual hotel rooms and spaces where people can be awake/drop in 24/7. Our strategy also includes embedding services and supports on site across shelter settings in our CoC. Services and supports include health care (e.g. general care and assessment, wound, burn, and foot care); public health (vaccination and testing); harm reduction services; substance use Comprehensive Assessments which are required to make referrals to inpatient and outpatient treatment; mental health care including diagnostic assessments, intake screenings and referrals. The Duluth Family Medical Clinic staffs the Hope Clinic which is located inside the CHUM shelter, our CoC's largest congregate, low-barrier shelter. Our strategy also significantly

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increases street outreach (SO) and navigation services that connect people to shelter, temporary housing, and permanent supportive housing. This will expand SO and case management to help more people make transformative steps toward stability and accessing emergency shelter, transitional housing, and non-congregate shelter. 3. Over time, we have learned that dignified shelter with individual units when possible (e.g.; hotel rooms) work. Not only do they provide more comfort but also more privacy. We have also learned the importance of literally meeting people where they are while providing services and supports. Because of this, we have worked to coordinate with social service partners and health care providers to come onsite to various shelter sites on a regular basis. This provides the opportunity for providers to build rapport and trust with guests staying there who may then eventually decide to engage in services, supports, and care. We have seen this through our family temporary shelter sites and WC sites as shared earlier. Additionally, we have done extensive research, including site visits of other temporary and emergency shelters across our state, and have learned about the benefits of indoor shelter sites from people who have lived in them. This coupled with what we have heard from people living outside and in their vehicles, is what has informed phases of our SOU strategy that we are currently working to implement. Because of the extreme shortage of shelter beds and subsidized housing, authorized outdoor living zones (AOLZs) are the quickest option to provide a place for people who are ready to begin working on stability. We have been able to pass the necessary city planning and zoning ordinances to allow for AOLZs and are in the process of acquiring land for the launch in Spring of 2023 after the WC closes. AOLZs will have provisions for private tent or hut dwellings, garbage disposal, sharps disposal, and basic hygiene facilities. We will seek residents who are attuned to living peacefully in a small tent community and ready to work on their stability. SO workers and support staff will support people moving into AOLZs, enforce safety and sanitation, help reduce harm from substance use, decrease incidents of violence and predatory behavior, and reduce unnecessary use of emergency services. We will engage medical, mental health, substance use, and housing providers to do in-reach at AOLZ sites, and SO workers and support staff will connect people to needed services and help people follow through with their commitments. Many of these providers are already experienced in providing services and supports in our shelters and overnight WCs. Our goal is that people living at the AOLZs will be good neighbors and we will establish a community covenant to be signed by residents that outlines guidelines for safety, sanitation, peacemaking, and a harm reduction approach to substance use. We will establish non-intrusive peer and community led safety and clean patrols (with resident input) to help enforce basic guidelines for sanitation, peacekeeping, and community building. During the winter, we will encourage people to use our WCs. Phase II develops 100 temperature-controlled, secure, step-up indoor shelter units that can be built quickly for a fraction of the cost of permanent housing that offers privacy and safety for guests, a continued in-reach and service-rich environment, and accommodations for individuals who cannot or will not use traditional, congregate shelters. This will allow us to eventually phase out the AOLZs. However, step-up indoor shelter units are not intended to be a permanent solution to homelessness but will offer people private space, safety and needed support so residents can work on their goals for stability and be successful in permanent housing.

**P-3.c Current Strategy to Provide Immediate Access to Low Barrier Permanent Housing for Individuals and Families Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness**

1. Utilizing the Housing First Approach is key to SLC CoC strategy to provide low/no barrier permanent housing options to those who have experienced unsheltered homelessness. All CoC-funded programs adhere to Housing First and harm reduction protocols and avoid terminating tenancy whenever possible. When tenancy must be terminated, other housing options are considered before exiting a household to homelessness. Review of the projects requires that Housing First is a practice and not just a policy. Housing programs do not require a client to pass background checks that prohibit specified criminal convictions (except for registered sex offenders in certain programs). CoC-funded projects do not require clients to be sober to access housing. Projects do not deny housing based on family composition, marital

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status, or sexual orientation. Housing projects work expeditiously with the admission process, helping to secure all required documentation. SLC CoC providers assist in compiling documentation needed for housing during street outreach (SO) and Coordinated Entry (CE) assessments which expedites the process to access housing. CoC funded projects work with the clients where they are at through a harm reduction approach. The housing programs work toward engaging clients and connection to services as the client chooses. SLC CoC provides training to projects and providers to ensure they are up to date on housing first and harm reduction practices and culturally responsive care and services. SLC CoC conducts an annual housing first assessment of all CoC funded projects and all applicants for CoC funds. This assessment includes detailed questions about non-discrimination, criminal background barriers, LGBTQIA2S+ safety, domestic violence policies, and late rent policies. Each project is also required to submit a copy of their lease and any relevant organizational policies annually. This information is reviewed, scored, and feedback is provided annually. Projects that score low consistently on housing first assessments are in danger of reallocation through annual CoC project ranking processes. 2) The SLC CoC CE is also a key strategy to move households from unsheltered homelessness to permanent housing. All projects funded by SLC CoC are required to use CE for all housing placements. SLC CoC monitors CE referrals to ensure that CoC-funded projects are working with those with the highest barriers to housing and the highest priority needs first. The CE system also conducts regular case conferencing focused on specific populations represented on the CE Priority List. This has led to bi-weekly reviews of all veterans and HUD homeless families on the priority list to provide intensive support and to quickly identify appropriate housing for these individuals and families. This approach was a key element in the SLC CoC declaration on effectively ending veteran's homelessness in 2021. SLC CoC plans to expand this approach specifically to unsheltered individuals in partnership with SO staff in 2023. Another key strategy for SLC CoC for connecting individuals to permanent housing includes prioritizing new development and unit expansion. A key example of this has been CoC Coordination with landlords and business owners to rapidly expand the State of MN funded Long Term Homeless (LTH) Housing Support program. This program has more than doubled in recent years and allowed our CoC to expand available permanent housing options. There are currently 253 LTH units in SLC CoC and 49 additional units in development. SLC CoC is deeply engaged in the Low-Income Tax Credit Process which helps support the development of housing designated for people experiencing homelessness. The CoC is engaged in discussions with policy makers and developers to increase affordable housing development by advocating for American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding to be used for affordable housing. Another key step SLC CoC took in 2020 was to convert an underutilized scattered site CoC PSH program to a site-based program for 32 chronically homeless adults. SLC CoC recently developed the Stepping Up 5-year Plan for funding creative shelter and permanent supportive housing expansion across the CoC which includes 200 units of permanent housing. One such PH project is Salvation Army's (TSA) Plover Place. Plover Place will provide 24 units of efficiency housing in two buildings of 12 units each including kitchenettes, full bathrooms, and living/sleeping areas. TSA will provide building management staff, three full-time Case Managers, and 24-hour front desk staffing. TSA provides services using a Housing First approach. Consistent with Housing First, TSA's goal is to minimize barriers to housing and not impose pre-conditions such as sobriety, clean criminal background, etc. The project is targeted to individuals with high barriers and is intended to serve households who have been on the CE priority list for longer than two years. TSA will prioritize those who are unsheltered and on the priority list. SLC CoC has additionally supported and partnered to secure funding for new PH projects such Wadena West, Decker Dwelling, and Brewery Creek that are dedicated to serving people experiencing homelessness. Wadena West Apartments will be new construction. It is a new permanent supportive housing project adding 60 one-bedroom apartments into the Duluth market. Applicants for this project will come from the CE list, emergency shelters and/or unsheltered homeless individuals. Five units will be dedicated to individuals who meet the HUD chronic homeless definition. The project will house high-barrier, single adults. Tenants must have a serious mental health diagnosis and may also have dual occurring disorders, difficult



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rental and criminal histories, years living unhoused, etc. There is an extreme shortage of affordable rental housing in SLC CoC. 50% of Duluth renters are cost burdened and the vacancy rate for affordable housing is below 3%. Single homeless adults represent the largest number of people in the CE system. This project will have affordable rents for tenants with both Housing Supports and Section 8 certificates allowing all residents to only pay 30% of their income towards rent. All tenants will have access to a 24-hour front desk and on-site supportive services. Additionally, the CoC has a strong partnership with PHAs and helped launch the Emergency Housing Voucher program and supported affordable housing development processes for PHAs in the CoC. SLC CoC focused on increasing supportive services in the last year by adding new SO staff, Navigators, and Housing Stabilization Case Managers across the CoC. The CoC also established a permanent warming center (WC) location which allowed for wrap-around services for unsheltered households. SLC CoC has strong coordination with rapid rehousing programs to move households quickly from homelessness to permanent housing. Additionally, all households in the CoC have access to Ready to Rent and First Time Homebuyer classes to gain life skills related to housing retention.

3. In recent years, SLC CoC has seen a rapid increase in homelessness, especially unsheltered homelessness. In 2015, SLC CoC counted 490 total people in the PIT count with 94 unsheltered peoples. SLC CoC counted 555 total people in the 2022 PIT count, with 234 unsheltered. The 2022 count was low as it was conducted during a high surge of the COVID-19 delta variant. The 2020 PIT count (no unsheltered count in 2021) showed 612 total people, with 284 unsheltered people. When comparing 2015 to 2020, this shows a total increase of 25% in homelessness and a more than 200% increase of unsheltered homelessness in 5 years. Much of the unsheltered homelessness is concentrated in the one urban area in SLC CoC which is in Duluth, Minnesota. This plan thus targets Duluth, Minnesota as a starting point for addressing unsheltered homelessness in our CoC, with plans to expand successful interventions into the rural geography of our CoC. In the Duluth area, there were 1,362 people on the Coordinate Entry (CE) Priority List as of August 2022. 734 of those on the CE list are single adults, with 284 of those on the Priority List for 2+ years. This means that an average of 39% of single adults wait 2+ years for housing in SLC CoC. This has led SLC CoC to primarily target single adults in our CoC funding priorities and plan to target unsheltered homelessness. The Duluth area CE Priority List also has 19 couples, 239 families, and 117 youth currently waiting on housing opportunities. 135 of these households have been on the priority list for 2+ years. This means that an average of 36% of youth, couples, and families wait 2+ years for housing in SLC CoC. A secondary strategy will target youth and families as these numbers increased in recent years. Youth and families will also be targeted with additional homelessness prevention funds in 2023. While these numbers do not factor in housing options outside of CE, the current housing system needs rapid intervention to house folks more quickly and successfully. In the rural areas of our CoC, the population is much smaller with only 135 households on the CE priority list and wait times for housing are currently much shorter. Additionally, when reviewing CoC System Performance Measures for FY2021, SLC CoC saw 1,087 people experience homelessness for the first time and only 262 of those individuals accessed emergency shelter or transitional housing. Although not all those experiencing homelessness need to access shelter, this number still shows a large unmet need in SLC CoC. FY2021 SPMs also showed a high success rate of SLC CoC's current SO interventions; 61% of those who accessed SO and exited went to permanent housing. Currently, SLC CoC has two full-time SO staff covering the Duluth area and a few Case Managers with part-time SO duties covering the rural geography of SLC CoC. With over 600 unique individuals accessing WCs in Duluth in winter 2021-2022 and shelters at capacity, we estimate the need to be 550 individuals that are currently unsheltered in SLC CoC. In 2021, SLC CoC SO programs served more than 300 unique individuals. Although our current SO is effective, SLC CoC needs to expand SO and support services capacity to help move households through unsheltered homelessness more quickly and with more support and care. SLC CoC emergency shelters and transitional housing projects are currently operating at 85% capacity due to COVID-19 capacity changes but have historically operated at 100% capacity or higher. The largest emergency shelter in our CoC is CHUM and in recent years they have opened their small

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drop-in center for shelter overflow/additional WC space and consistently filled every bed. All permanent housing project types (PSH, OPH, RRH) in SLC CoC operate at 95-100% year-round which demonstrates a lack of available units to meet the current needs. SLC CoC is also proposing a service-rich plan to target unsheltered homelessness as 85% of households currently in the CE Priority List have severe services needs including disabilities, chemical dependency, mental health diagnoses, criminal backgrounds, evictions history, safety needs, etc. Finally, SLC CoC has seen an increase length of time homeless for those in emergency shelter & transitional housing in the CoC. For FY2015, the average length of time homeless was 62 days and for FY2021 the average was 101 days. 4. With emergency shelters operating at or over capacity year-round and long waitlists for permanent housing, SLC CoC has invested in the opening of WCs across the CoC. With dangerously cold winters, this strategy has been used as a harm reduction model until we are able to expand housing and shelter across the CoC. WCs across SLC CoC are a relatively new intervention to address unsheltered homelessness. In 2021, The Duluth WC secured a permanent, seasonal location and stabilized funding to keep doors open for years to come. Additionally, SLC CoC has been able to utilize hotel vouchers across the rural geography of our CoC to meet the needs for emergency WC stays. With over 600 unique individuals accessing WCs in the CoC in winter 2021-2022, the need is overwhelming and SLC CoC has rapidly responded to secure funding and locations. SLC CoC has learned many lessons from the past few years of operating WCs. People experiencing homelessness and accessing WCs have shared with housing providers that they do not feel comfortable in emergency shelter and prefer camping whenever possible. It has been clearly articulated that services need to be on-site and not referral based. We need to offer services where unsheltered people naturally gather. This has led to the addition of behavioral health providers, physical health providers, and vaccination clinics being added to the Duluth WC location. It is also clear that sobriety cannot be required in any of our current projects if we hope to see successful outcomes for folks entering our housing continuum. We have learned that many unsheltered individuals were not accessing the CE system and/or not updating their assessments when life situations changed. Finally, we learned that we need to plan our projects around diverse family structures including couples, chosen family, and extended family. Through HMIS data showing utilization of emergency shelters and WC locations and direct feedback from people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, SLC CoC has formed a plan to target additional low/no barrier options for people experiencing homelessness. This includes safe parking options (Safe Bay) for those living in their cars and authorized and monitored encampments (authorized living zones). Much of the growth is in unsheltered homelessness and has been exacerbated by increasing cases of substance abuse, mental illness, and a lack of housing and shelter options. Thus, SLC CoC invested in The Stepping On Up (SOU) plan, a far-reaching response to address the needs of unsheltered individuals. SOU is a collaborative effort between eight Duluth-based organizations, each with extensive experience serving people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. The goal of SOU is to transform the homeless response system in Duluth through a five-year, three-phase plan that provides innovative SO and case management, expanded access to support services, shelter development of 100 private units, and the creation of 200 affordable and supportive housing units accessible to people leaving shelter who are ready to enter permanent housing. The expansion of SO, shelter, and permanent supportive housing units across the CoC will be paired with a service-rich plan that incorporates behavioral health, physical health, cultural-specific healing, trauma-centered healing, and development of key skills such as employment skills or Ready to Rent Classes. SLC CoC has also secured a SO bus that is now owned by the Loaves & Fishes Community. This bus is being converted to a mobile SO unit that can hold supplies, be host to mobile healthcare interventions, and provide a low-barrier, warm, and safe space for SO interventions.

**P-4. Updating the CoC's Strategy to Identify, Shelter, and House Individuals Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness with Data and Performance**

1, 2. The CoC Planning & Evaluation Committee meets monthly to review project-level annual performance reports, CoC-wide systems performance measures, HMIS data, PIT data, and racial disparities data. This committee is key to understanding unmet needs, who is accessing street outreach

(SO) and emergency shelter in SLC CoC, and how to expand services as needed. For example, the number of households experiencing homelessness guides funding decisions and the need for increased shelter beds & outreach expansion. The Coordinated Entry (CE) System works closely with emergency shelters and SO staff to locate people who come up on the Priority List for housing openings. When a household is referred to a housing program, the SO and shelter workers are more likely to be able to contact the household and will assist in follow through with housing. SO and shelter workers regularly conduct CE assessments in the field while doing outreach as well as at warming centers (WC) and emergency shelters. This approach will be expanded with additional funding for SO staff. SO data is currently entered into HMIS but we need quality improvements and enhanced HMIS technologies to support in-the-field HMIS data entry. SLC CoC is proposing HMIS expansion to target data collection, quality, and evaluation improvements for unsheltered people. The HMIS lead agency, Institute of Community Alliances (ICA), will maximize existing HMIS capacity for data collection and pursue performance solutions for SLC CoC SO projects by enhancing HMIS tools that exist and/or developing new tools to help the CoC meet data goals. This may include features like geospatial mapping, mobile-friendly applications, and on-screen data quality checks that would make the data entry and referral experience easier. This would make it possible for SO to access HMIS in the field and conduct live updates and CE assessments. Additionally, all Special NOFO project applicants have included HMIS budget line items, including CHUM's proposed FTE for managing data specifically for unsheltered individuals. This will greatly increase data collection and quality for those experiencing unsheltered homelessness in SLC CoC. SLC CoC shelter and outreach staff work closely with law enforcement, hospitals, jails, treatment centers, area schools, faith communities, and area businesses to identify people experiencing homelessness and connect them with resources. SLC CoC will continue to expand data-driven approaches for SO. SLC CoC will form new partnerships that bring services to where unsheltered people are living and naturally gathering including behavioral and physical health providers visiting the Safe Bay car camping site, WCs, and the authorized living zone encampments. The increased number of outreach workers is essential to connect those experiencing unsheltered homeless to safety at the WCs and emergency shelters. Data evaluation in SLC CoC has led to targeting shelter expansions across the CoC, including current CoC-wide domestic violence beds and future development of additional shelter units via the Stepping On Up plan. 3. The CoC Planning & Evaluation Committee meets monthly to review project level annual performance reports, CoC-wide systems performance measures, HMIS data, PIT/HIC data, and racial disparities data. This committee is key to understanding the current bed utilization and housing outcomes in all permanent housing settings as well as the unmet need for permanent housing. Case Managers and CE leads meet weekly across the CoC to communicate needs of people experiencing homelessness and rapidly connect households to permanent housing when units open. SLC CoC also has implemented a case conferencing model for households on the CE priority list which helps to track and support the highest need families and veterans to move into housing more quickly. This approach helped SLC CoC reach functional zero for veteran's homelessness in 2021 and is helping to reduce the length of time homeless for rapid rehousing eligible HUD Homeless families. SLC CoC will be extending this case conferencing model to those experiencing unsheltered homelessness in 2023. Finally, SLC CoC is using data-driven approaches to target permanent housing development across the CoC. Most recently this includes Plover Place, Garfield Square, Decker Dwellings, & Wadena West for single adults and the upcoming youth development, Brewery Creek.

**P-5. Identify and Prioritize Households Experiencing or with Histories of Unsheltered Homelessness.**

1. Our CoC has a comprehensive approach to identify and connect with individuals and families experiencing, or with histories of, unsheltered homelessness through street outreach (SO), and tenancy sustaining, behavioral health and physical health supports and services through partnerships outlined below. SLC CoC's Stepping On Up (SOU) strategic plan targets unsheltered homelessness by: outreach to unsheltered people with opportunities to develop relationships that will lead to

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engagement with stabilization and transformation over time; developing safe, private, dignified spaces for unsheltered people who, for health and safety reasons, avoid our current low-barrier shelters (and consequentially turn to living on the streets which is characterized by instability, trauma, and vulnerability); and supporting people who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness and/or people with severe service needs with a step-by-step process to transition from a crisis-driven, survival mode to living with hope, purpose, and meaning. As outlined below, resources are provided along the way from SO housing navigation and tenancy-sustaining services, including but not limited to, assistance with accessing insurance and other cash and food benefits, employment resources, physical healthcare, harm reduction and addiction resources, mental healthcare, medication, peer recovery and support, and dental care. 2. SLC CoC prioritizes providing people with current and histories of long-term homelessness (LTH) with housing and programming. For example, our CoC's largest and most rapidly expanding program is LTH permanent supportive housing which a household must have experienced long-term homelessness to be eligible. This program has grown by 62% in the past year, reducing the number of people facing unsheltered homelessness. Half of program referrals come from our coordinated entry (CE) process and the other half come directly from treatment centers and/or incarceration facilities that would otherwise release or discharge people directly into homelessness. The CoC is currently reviewing policies and procedures with HUD technical assistance to strengthen our efforts in reducing unsheltered homelessness through CE. We are constantly analyzing what is and is not working with access points, coordination, referrals, and other CE procedures. The CE process has increased case consultation which provides a broader knowledge base of resources for households experiencing homelessness. Case consultation and CoC prioritization of chronically homeless households has proven to put unsheltered homeless individuals/families first. Additionally, by increasing the number and capacity of SO staff, we will be able to assist more households in securing required documentation for housing. Housing programs within our CoC follow Housing First principles, reducing eligibility criteria. Pairing these, along with other housing programs in the CoC, households can move from homeless to housed, reducing unsheltered homelessness across our CoC. 3. The outreach and support services that are initiated in Phase I of SOU will help move people who are unsheltered through a pipeline of support so that they develop capacity to move on to permanent supportive housing (Phase III) as they develop the stability and resources to do so. One avenue of support SO provides is to connect people who are unsheltered to temporary shelter such as CHUM and the warming center. Our CoC strives to continually bring impactful resources, supports and services to meet people where they are in their housing and recovery journey. Resources and partners that come regularly to temporary shelters include: St. Louis County Public Health and professionals who volunteer their time from the Lake Superior Community Health Center; Duluth Family Medicine Clinic; Essentia Health; St. Luke's Hospital; University of Minnesota's Medical and Pharmaceutical Programs; St. Louis County Substance Use Recovery Team; ACCRA psychiatry and adult mental health rehabilitative services (ARMHS); Harm Reduction Sisters and St. Louis County Adult Mental Health Case Managers. Services range from providing testing and vaccines to medical and behavioral healthcare. Additionally, Loaves and Fishes obtained a bus that will be utilized by volunteer medical professionals to visit areas where unsheltered people with severe service needs are located, as well as AOLZ sites. Outreach workers will have clients sign releases of information as services are added so that they can act as liaisons between the services and person served. Outreach staff will assist clients in verifying when appointments are, what needs to be turned in (e.g.; documentation and verifications), and the client's evaluation of the service. Outreach workers will continue to build relationships with local nonprofits and human service agencies which is, and will continue to be, key to linking clients to services and benefits. More specifically, our partner, The Human Development Center (HDC), is a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic whose services are offered directly to anyone served through SO and the SOU program. They offer expedited referrals for diagnostic assessments when a client is homeless and care coordination with other medical and mental health providers. The outreach workers assist with setting up mental health services, reminding clients of

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scheduled appointments and providing transportation to those appointments. HDC also provides an array of services clients can access such as addiction counseling and medication assisted treatment, therapy, ARHMS, Peer Support, psychiatry, and children services. Workers assist clients in obtaining health insurance through partnerships with local MnSure Navigators to ensure continuity of care. 4. Each phase of SOU provides ongoing services including healthcare, life skills and job training, domestic violence support, treatment for substance misuse, and mental health services to individuals as they move from unsheltered homelessness to stability. HDC's homeless team has three Housing Navigators who help homeless individuals find a path to housing. Navigators create individual housing plans based on clients' backgrounds, cultural needs, and preferences. Navigators, often with SO staff, work on setting up apartment showings or housing interviews and attending the appointment with applicants. Navigators support clients in obtaining and maintaining housing (if at risk) by advocating for and with clients when working with landlords. Additionally, navigators assist clients in collecting verifications that are needed for housing and coordinating homeless referrals. After a client has been housed, appropriate support services will be put in place to follow up. Navigators can continue to coordinate with landlords, property managers and support service providers as needed or requested. As noted earlier, Phase III of SOU will develop at least 200 units of new permanent supportive housing (PSH) for people who have experienced unsheltered, chronic, or long-term homelessness. These additional supportive housing units are critical to our pipeline of support to help people resolve unsheltered homelessness and address concerns that previously affected their stability and well-being. SOU envisions several permanent supportive housing facilities (with service-rich environments) that are clustered around specific situations such as sobriety, re-entry, youth, etc. Culturally specific programming and activities provide opportunities for vocational development. Embedded services within PSH will build life skills and housing stability. Increasing PSH is a clear need and priority in our CoC that we have been actively working on. St Louis County coordinates a housing support program specifically for unsheltered households who have experienced long term homelessness (LTH) which means that people have faced homelessness for one year or four times in the past three years. LTH is a specific type of PSH and the program has grown by 62% in the past year alone. Two specific PSH housing projects connected to SOU is Plover Place and Wadena West. Plover Place will have 24 units of LTH housing with staff on site. Once moved in, residents will be supported through case management to maintain their housing. Project Case Managers will work with residents to apply for mainstream benefits and community services such as mental health services, substance abuse treatment, employment services, legal aid, basic needs assistance, and appropriate medical insurance. Those in need of care while their medical coverage is pending will be referred to community providers who offer free or sliding fee services. Once covered, Case Managers will help residents find primary providers of health and dental care and specialists as needed. Project staff will regularly assess residents' needs for other social services. If/when residents exit the project, staff will work with them to find alternative, suitable, affordable permanent housing in the community. Case Managers will assist residents in applying for housing and gathering the resources needed to move, such as financial assistance with security deposits, household goods, and assistance with moving costs. Project staff will complete exit plans with residents before they leave to ensure they have connections to long-term supports and community service providers. Wadena West will provide 60 units of PSH and a range of services including case management to help them navigate these services. Additional behavioral health supports (both mental and chemical health related) will be available on site through HDC.

**P-6. Involving Individuals with Lived Experience of Homelessness in Decision Making– Meaningful Outreach**

1,2. SLC CoC launched the Racial Equity & Accountability Project (REAP), a 9-person leadership team that is made up of LGBTQIA2S+, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) individuals who have all experienced homelessness. REAP conducts listening sessions and on-going 1:1 conversations with people currently experiencing homelessness on needed systems changes and funding priorities. SLC CoC created REAP in response to voices of people with lived experience of homelessness requesting



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decision making pathways in the CoC. REAP participated in the CoC NOFO project review, scoring, and ranking for the first time in FY2022. All opportunities to participate in decision-making process in SLC CoC are shared on social media, via street outreach workers, shelter workers, the CoC website, public meetings, email notifications, and sometimes via partnerships with local news stations. Additionally, SLC CoC helps to host community summits annually that engage a diverse set of stakeholders in setting goals around ending homelessness across the CoC. These summits have an emphasis on the voices of those who have experienced homelessness as key decision-makers and have occurred for nearly 10 years in SLC CoC. SLC CoC governance board has a required seat for someone with lived experience of homelessness and prioritizes people with lived experience for all board openings. Additionally, all CoC committees, advisory committees, and working groups include people who have experienced homelessness. When identifying community needs and community solutions, individuals with lived experience of homelessness are always engaged in key planning and decision making related to housing and shelter. People who have experienced homelessness (especially unsheltered homelessness) are key leaders on the SLC CoC Stepping On Up (SOU) Committee which chairs the CoC plan to target unsheltered homelessness. SOU leaders regularly consult with individuals experiencing homelessness to ensure that their needs and perspectives are represented; this is a commitment that is built into every step of the process. The SOU Committee also hosted community listening sessions to design strategies to target unsheltered homelessness around the current needs and barriers communicated by those who are experiencing homelessness in SLC CoC. For example, when the Warming Center (WC) closed for the season in spring of 2022, SOU organizers held a meeting to consult with WC guests about SOU. The primary objective was to gather feedback around the planned project, with an initial focus on authorized living zones/encampments. Over 100 people with lived experiences of homelessness participated in these sessions and offered suggestions and recommendations about what would be useful and necessary given their experiences. This included suggestions about amenities, services offered, location, and security/regulations. As SLC CoC began designing Safe Bay, listening sessions and 1:1 conversations with people currently living in their vehicles were hosted to help create the site design. SLC CoC has formed the SOU plan and this Special NOFO application in direct response to the needs voiced by people currently experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the CoC. Additionally, each of the organizations engaged in SOU have people with lived experiences of homelessness on staff and SOU is committed to promoting employment and hiring people who have experienced homelessness. Phases I and II of SOU will be increasingly resident-led and guided by residents' collectively determined set of agreements and rules. 3. SLC CoC requires that all CoC-funded projects engage people who experience homelessness in project planning and feedback in the annual NOFO competition. Many CoC-funded organizations have a long history of engaging people experiencing homelessness in making decisions on program and building design and implementation. For example, The Salvation Army (TSA) of Duluth gathers feedback from program participants who are homeless through our case management process, in which participants are asked what services are working and what could be added or changed to better meet their needs. TSA's Plover Place proposal was developed through community input including that of people who have experienced homelessness. Prior to the development of Decker Dwellings, potential tenants were surveyed and invited to multiple community meetings to provide feedback input. In addition, Center City Housing Corporation hosts monthly tenant meetings to encourage community, pass on program information and get feedback from people. These meetings have resulted in significant changes to projects in development and existing programming. These suggestions and improvements include tenant access to computers, laundry facilities and supplies on site, increased unit sizes over time, brighter and airier units, 24-hour front desk staff, and culturally responsive programming. CHUM, as the lead agency of the SOU plan, has ensured that people who have experienced homelessness have been key to designing various aspects of programming including community education, volunteer recruitment, training, resident support, site design and construction, fundraising, and Good Neighbor Outreach.

Additionally, CHUM employs many people who experienced homelessness and involves them any time they are interested in project design and policy decisions. Human Development Center takes great care and value in collecting feedback from both clients and community partners alike. Twice a year, HDC collects client input through its Client Satisfaction Survey and PATH survey. The surveys collect both agency-wide and program-specific data and feedback which is then used to identify gaps in services and inform service providers on how to better serve clients. At Lutheran Social Services (LSS), youth feedback has created the vision and plan to build an additional youth emergency shelter, with specific LGBTQIA2S+ safe and centered units. LSS youth also participate in leadership councils. Additionally, SLC CoC is in the process of forming a Youth Action Board and many housing providers in the CoC already have internal youth leadership structures.

**P-7. Supporting Underserved Communities and Supporting Equitable Community Development**

1. In SLC CoC, unsheltered people, Indigenous people, and youth (especially LGBTQIA2S+ youth) have been historically underserved and will be the focus of the 5-year Stepping On Up (SOU) Plan to target unsheltered homelessness. SLC CoC's current strategy to identify those who have been historically underserved or unserved by the housing response is to expand street outreach (SO) capacity and Coordinated Entry (CE) capacity. This falls into the SOU plan which would add 9 SO staff and culturally specific outreach services. Additionally, youth specific, LGBTQIA2S+ centered outreach expansion will help SLC CoC better identify youth experiencing homelessness or housing instability. Outreach workers will conduct CE assessments to help reduce barriers to permanent housing. Expansion of the CE system (including but not limited to drop-in/walk-in appointments at scattered sites and additional staffing) will support outreach workers in identifying and connecting new individuals, couples, and families to housing resources. SLC CoC will continue to utilize the 2-1-1 hotline and domestic violence hotline as avenues for identification of those experiencing homelessness. School homeless liaisons will continue to partner with the CoC to identify students/youth experiencing homelessness. SLC CoC will target relationship building with school homeless liaisons to provide resources and supports for youth and families. SLC CoC will also continue to strengthen existing relationships with jails, prisons, hospitals, and treatment centers to support those exiting facilities who do not have housing secured to identify those experiencing homelessness and help prevent homelessness whenever possible. An additional strategy for identification of individuals and populations previously unserved or underserved in our CoC will be low/no barrier, harm-reduction options for services and support. This will include the Authorized Living Zones (small, authorized, and structured encampments) and Safe Bay (safe, staffed parking area) both launching in Spring 2023. Additionally, SLC CoC will continue to have low barrier warming center (WC) options across the CoC. This will help connect SLC CoC housing providers to those living in cars and those who do not often enter traditional emergency shelter. SLC CoC will continue to center the voices of people with lived experience of homelessness through our Racial Equity & Accountability Project Leadership Team, SOU, housing agency employees, Tribal Nations, and listening sessions as key informants in identifying underserved and unserved populations. Voices of people with lived experience of homelessness have been central to our CoC funding decisions and resource planning and have already helped to identify key gaps for those who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness. This will continue to be one of our most valuable strategies for reaching those who we have previously not been reached as a CoC. Finally, SLC CoC will continue to build on and strengthen our partnership with Bois Forte and Fond Du Lac Tribal Nations to best identify tribal members in need of housing and supportive services.

2. In SLC CoC, the homeless population has a disproportionate number of BIPOC people represented. According to the 2020 census, Indigenous people make up about 2% of the entire population of SLC CoC. Black people make up an additional 2% of the total population and mixed-race people make about 5% of the total population. Other people of color make up less than 2% of the total population. In the 2022 PIT count, Indigenous people made up 26% of the total sheltered/unsheltered population counted. Black people made up 11% of the total population counted, and mixed-race people made up 10% of the total population counted. The majority of those counted as unsheltered in the 2022 PIT count identified

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as Indigenous. SLC CoC will target this disparity through culturally specific SO and strengthening partnerships with Tribal Nations and culturally specific providers. Additionally, SLC CoC will continue to evaluate all funded projects on their racial equity and culturally responsive care programming and offer training and recommend improvements as needed. SLC CoC also sees a large population of LGBTQIA2S+ people experiencing homelessness and will target this issue through expansion of youth outreach and shelter, annual LGBTQIA2S+ competence training for staff, and site visits for compliance with the HUD Equal Access Rule. 3. SLC CoC plans to provide comprehensive SO expansion as the key strategy to provide housing interventions to previously underserved populations. SLC CoC is also targeting shelter expansion, including a pending expansion of the culturally specific domestic violence shelter, Dabinoo'Igan, run by the American Indian Community Housing Organization. Additionally, SLC CoC is adding 2 youth specific SO staff and supporting the expansion of youth emergency shelter beds in partnership with Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota (LSS). LGBTQIA2S+ youth are at the core of LSS's planning for expansion and targeting of new services. LSS hopes to expand outreach to the rural geography of SLC CoC in the future, knowing that many LGBTQIA2S+ youth in rural areas have little support and this can be a major contributor to housing instability for youth. An additional strategy for providing outreach and services to individuals and populations previously unserved or underserved in SLC CoC will be low/no barrier harm reduction options for services and support. This will include the Authorized Living Zones (small, authorized, and structured encampments) and Safe Bay (safe, staffed parking area) both launching in Spring 2023. Additionally, SLC CoC will continue to have low barrier WC options across the CoC geography. This will help SLC CoC housing providers bring services and housing options to those living in cars and those who do not often enter traditional emergency shelter. These settings will be service-rich environments with behavioral health and physical healthcare options on site. SLC CoC will continue to build on and strengthen our partnership with Bois Forte and Fond Du Lac Tribal Nations to best serve tribal members in need of housing and supportive services. SLC CoC will continue to support the development of permanent housing options across the CoC, such as Plover Place & Wadena West. The New Mode, which is being utilized in a pilot project at Plover Place, is designed to support smaller buildings and settings that would allow for culturally specific services and settings. For example, one building could be 12 units for LGBTQIA2S+ youth while another could be specifically for Indigenous people with histories of unsheltered homelessness. SLC CoC is supporting the expansion of this model of housing to meet the unique and diverse needs of those experiencing homelessness in the CoC who have not previously had their needs met by existing services. Finally, SLC CoC requires all CoC-funded programs to have racial equity and culturally responsive care policies and programs and conducts regular analysis of these projects to make existing services more accessible and appropriate for previously unserved populations.

This correspondence is in regards to CHUM and the Vineyard Church proposal to have Safe Bay located on Vineyard property from May 1, 2025 through October 31, 2025. CHUM, The Vineyard Church and Stay Bay has “good concept, without a good plan”, and their permitting approval should be denied until they present a plan that answers the neighborhood concerns.

I am a homeowner on Linzie Road, which borders the Vineyard property. On Wednesday morning I was contacted by a neighbor informing me of a “neighborhood information meeting” being held that night in which the leaders of the church and CHUM were going to have a listening and question and answer session. Being contacted by my neighbor brought up one glaring question. Why were only a select few notified, why not all of us. I informally asked my neighbors if they were notified and I found a disturbing trend. Those that supported Democratic campaign signs in their yard during the 2024 election cycle were contacted. One could infer that CHUM and the Vineyard were handpicking their audience for their meeting in the hopes there would be no dissent. This fact alone should delay the approval of “PLIUP-2503-0016 Interim Use for Outdoor Living Site at 1533 W Arrowhead Rd for CHUM” CHUM and Vineyard should in good faith notify all property owners, in accordance with state rules” and host a second “neighborhood information meeting” prior to the Duluth Planning Commission review of their application.

The first 30 minutes of the meeting was to present that Duluth has a homeless population and the various reasons for the cause. Then CHUM spent a total of about 5-10 minutes explaining what their plan was. After listening to their plan I quickly realized they have a “good concept, without a good plan”. For example, on their application they are stating CHUM and Vineyard is stating they have a wooden buffer between the proposed area and private property owners. This is not the case, they are encroaching on private property owners and including their land. At best this is a mistake, at worse if this permit is approved a possible violation of Minnesota Statute 117.102 and all sub statutes, *PREEMPTION; PUBLIC USE OR PURPOSE*, also known as eminent domain. This is violation because The City of Duluth would be granting non-property owners the conditional use of another’s private property without their consent, or permission. Again, CHUM and the Vineyard not being fully truthful about their intentions, similar to the limited notifications of the “neighborhood information meeting”.

Many in attendance at the “neighborhood information meeting” brought up what is the plan to keep the homeless on Vineyard property and they did not have a plan or answer other than we will give them a map. They had no plans to clearly identify Vineyard property lines, or to create any sort of barriers to protect boarding property owners’ property. The only plan that was presented was by the local police who stated “call 911 if your property has a trespasser”. Two issues with this response, is this really the best use of 911, and two the priority would be low and by the time an officer would respond the situation would probably have been resolved.

When the leader of CHUM was asked who do neighbors call when there are issues, he provided their daytime office number. This is an issue because their office will be closed when Safe Bay would be in operation. CHUM and Vinyard has zero plans in place for the community to contact them during Stay Bay hours of operations, leaving our only recourse to address immediate issues to utilize 911. Again, is this a well thought out plan?

Safety for the CHUM volunteers and those utilizing this resource was presented. This neighborhood has at least 2-3 bear sows with cubs (as seen on video door bells and trail cameras), and one tends to get a bit aggressive. Additionally, camera at 1605 Linzie Rd, recorded a cougar/mountain lion on August 23, 2023. When presented with these facts the presenters again had no answer or plans on who to maintain the safety of their staff or residents of Stay Bay. They sarcastically mentioned that they had a single bear last year. In this neighborhood we can not put our trashcans out on the street until the morning of trash pickup because of the bears. The vineyard pastor even stated they have to put 50 pound weights on their trash bins to keep the bears out, and when you look on Safe Bay permit application the trash collection site is directly alongside the proposed parking. With the proximity of trash, people and wildlife we are only asking for an incident to occur. It was obvious that CHUM and Vinyard has no plan for limiting wildlife encounters, their plan is to hope and pray it does not occur.

As I stated earlier “good concept, without a good plan”. They have no plans on protecting private property rights, they have no plans in place to protect their members and residents. They have no plans to protect wildlife. They have been deceitful in notifying the public of their intentions. Safe Bay on their website states it is drug-free but CHUM and Vinyard would not explain how they enforce this policy. My guess is they have no policy. This is concerning because, “The majority (76%) of people experiencing homelessness have significant health issues (Figure 6). While these numbers are staggeringly high across Minnesota, rates are even higher in greater Minnesota (84%) than in the Twin Cities metro (72%). This includes higher rates of the most common mental health concerns—anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder—and substance use disorder.” (Wilder Research, 2024, pg 7, [https://www.wilder.org/sites/default/files/2023Homeless\\_TwinCities-GreaterMN\\_Brief1\\_6-24.pdf](https://www.wilder.org/sites/default/files/2023Homeless_TwinCities-GreaterMN_Brief1_6-24.pdf)). It makes me ask why would the city move this illegal activity from a high crime rate area near the Damiano Center to a neighborhood that has little to no crime (based on Duluth Police online crime map). Could it be because the Chamber of Commerce and City leaders want this population away from the tourism industry that brings in over \$780 million in annual direct economic impact ( <https://duluthchamber.com/resources/visitors/> )? Monica Haynes, director of UMD’s Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) surveyed visitors during Sidewalk Days festival in July 2024, and it is no surprise she reported two of the top three concerns was



drug use and homelessness. What a perfect way to address visitors concerns by moving the problem to a location not seen by tourists.

What about alternate locations? There is Eastridge Community Church and St Johns Free Lutheran Church on Arrowhead that has no residential neighbors? Or even the Shepard of the Hills Lutheran Church on Maple Grove that has a back parking lot and commercial property as a boundary? It seems CHUM has teamed up with Vineyard one because their food distribution site is there and two Vineyard is attempting to reimage itself to the community after the church's youth pastor pled guilty in November to sexually assaulting girls, and the molester's parents were forced to resign from the church ( <https://www.duluthnewstribune.com/news/local/duluth-youth-pastor-pleads-guilty-to-sex-assaults-victims-sue> ). Currently, there are nine civil lawsuits against Vineyard. All of this seems more to be for presenting the Vineyard in a positive light, rather than the poor neighbors that they are.

Lastly, writing to the Planning Commission was probably a waste of my time. Safe Bay is already advertising their site has moved, the Duluth Police and Fire Department are supportive, and the City Council member Mike Mayou who represents this neighborhood was at the meeting and did not have the will to speak. All of these facts makes one to infer it is a forgone conclusion that the City of Duluth has already approved this project, and the April 8, 2025 meeting is only a formality. I only hope no one is seriously injured this summer, and myself and other neighbors will be calling 911 every time Safe Bay does not follow the conditions of their permit. Then next year I will have actual data on negative impacts the city caused to this safe and quite neighborhood.

Darrin Phillips  
Linzie Rd,  
Duluth, MN



Duluth Police  
Crime Map

Filter by Neighborhood(s)

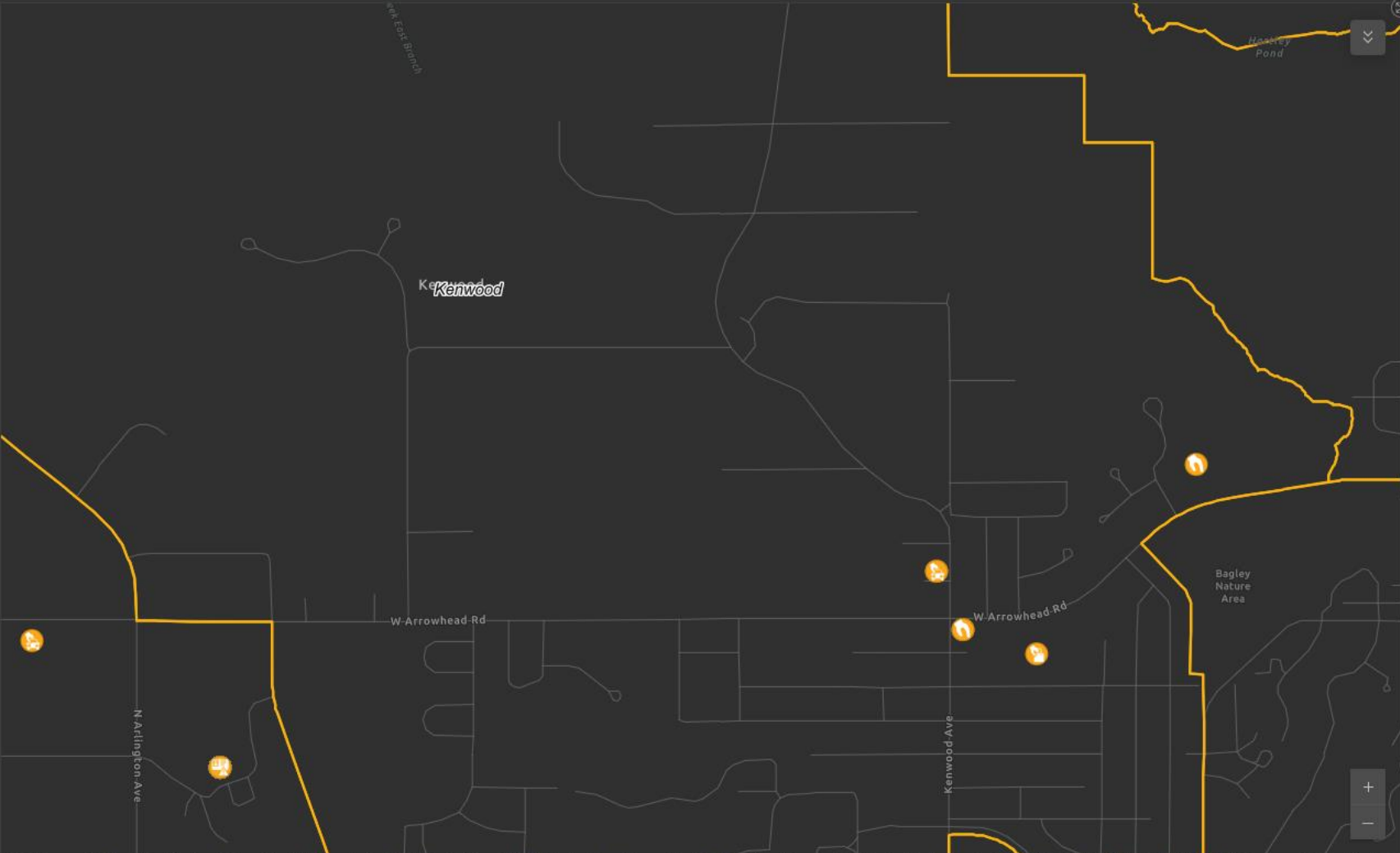
Select Neighborhood(s)

Filter by Crime Type(s)

Aggravated Assault, All Other Off... 42

Filter by Date(s)

2025



Esri Community Maps Contributors, University of Minnesota Duluth, St. Louis County (MN), Fond du Lac Reservation, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Cens... Powered by Esri

Mapped Crimes

1.3k

(Does not include sensitive crimes)



02025-25042479  
Larceny from Motor Vehicle  
100 BLK N 18th Ave E  
3/25/2025, 3:39 PM



02025-25042290  
Shoplifting  
5600 BLK Roosevelt St  
3/25/2025, 10:14 AM



02025-25042190  
Drug Offenses  
300 BLK N 6th Ave E  
3/25/2025, 2:24 AM



02025-25042147  
All Other Offenses (Except Traffic or Warrants)  
700 BLK W 1st St  
3/25/2025, 12:03 AM



02025-25042147  
Simple Assault  
700 BLK W 1st St  
3/25/2025, 12:03 AM



02025-25041991  
Shoplifting  
1200 RI K F Superior St

\*This list only displays the 200 most recent crime incidents per the filters applied, if any.

**Filtering Crime Map:**  
Above you may filter the crime incident data by one or more of the following criteria: neighborhoods(s), crime type(s), and date(s). To filter, click on the criteria you would like to adjust to view a dropdown menu of options; choose as many filters as to what applies to your search.



# Duluth Police

## Crime Map

### Filter by Neighborhood(s)

Select Neighborhood(s)

### Filter by Crime Type(s)

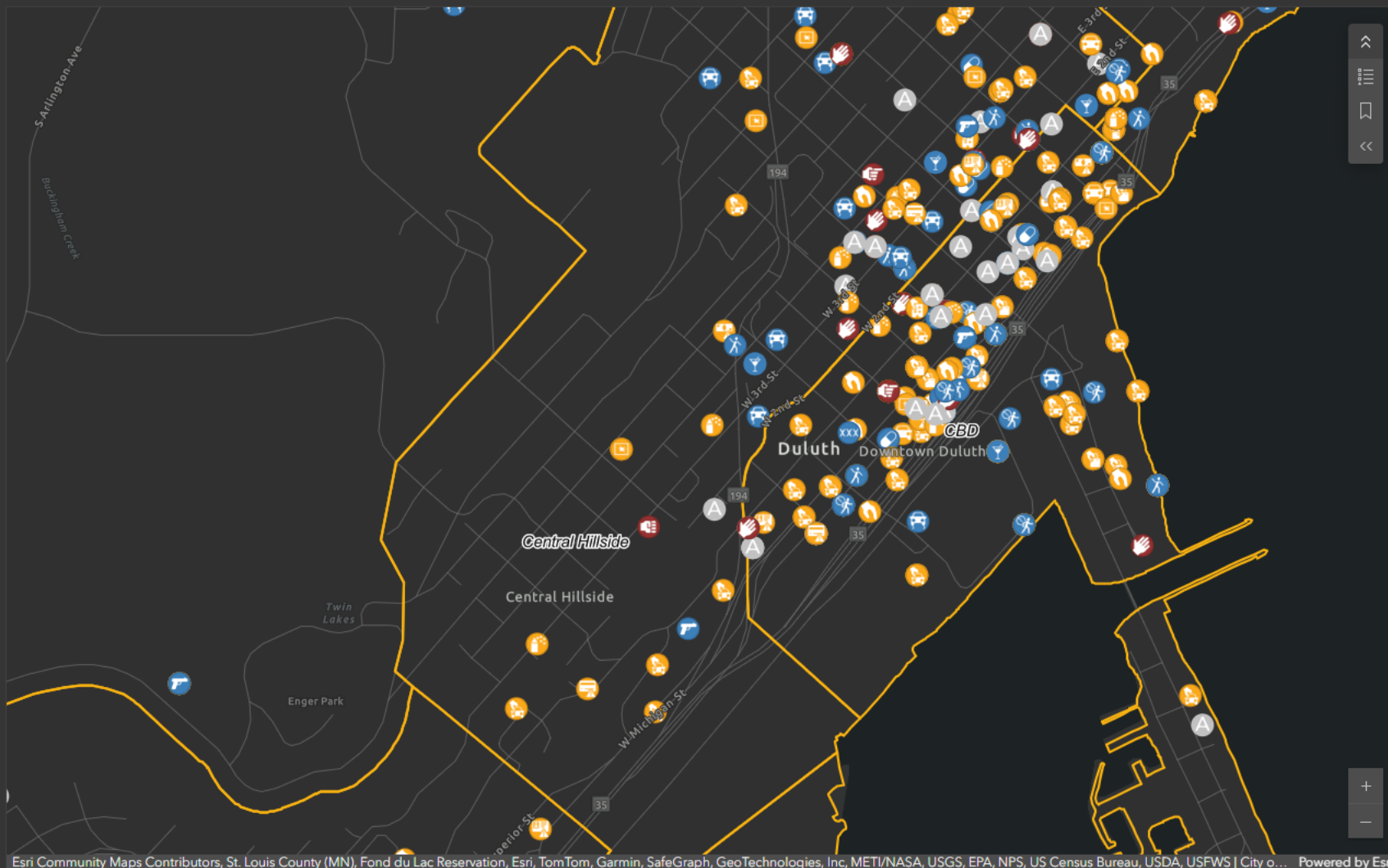
Aggravated Assault, All Other Off... 42

### Filter by Date(s)

2025

#### Filtering Crime Map:

Above you may filter the crime incident data by one or more of the following criteria: neighborhood(s), crime type(s), and date(s). To filter, click on the criteria you would like to adjust to view a dropdown menu of options; choose as many filters as to what applies to your search.



## Mapped Crimes

# 1.3k

(Does not include sensitive crimes)

- 02025-25042479  
Larceny from Motor Vehicle  
100 BLK N 18th Ave E  
3/25/2025, 3:39 PM
- 02025-25042290  
Shoplifting  
5600 BLK Roosevelt St  
3/25/2025, 10:14 AM
- 02025-25042190  
Drug Offenses  
300 BLK N 6th Ave E  
3/25/2025, 2:24 AM
- 02025-25042147  
All Other Offenses (Except Traffic or Warrants)  
700 BLK W 1st St  
3/25/2025, 12:03 AM
- 02025-25042147  
Simple Assault  
700 BLK W 1st St  
3/25/2025, 12:03 AM
- 02025-25041991  
Shoplifting  
1200 RI K F Superior St

\*This list only displays the 200 most recent crime incidents per the filters applied, if any.

[Crime Map](#)[Sensitive Crimes Chart](#)[About](#)[Mapped Crimes](#)[Sensitive Crimes](#)

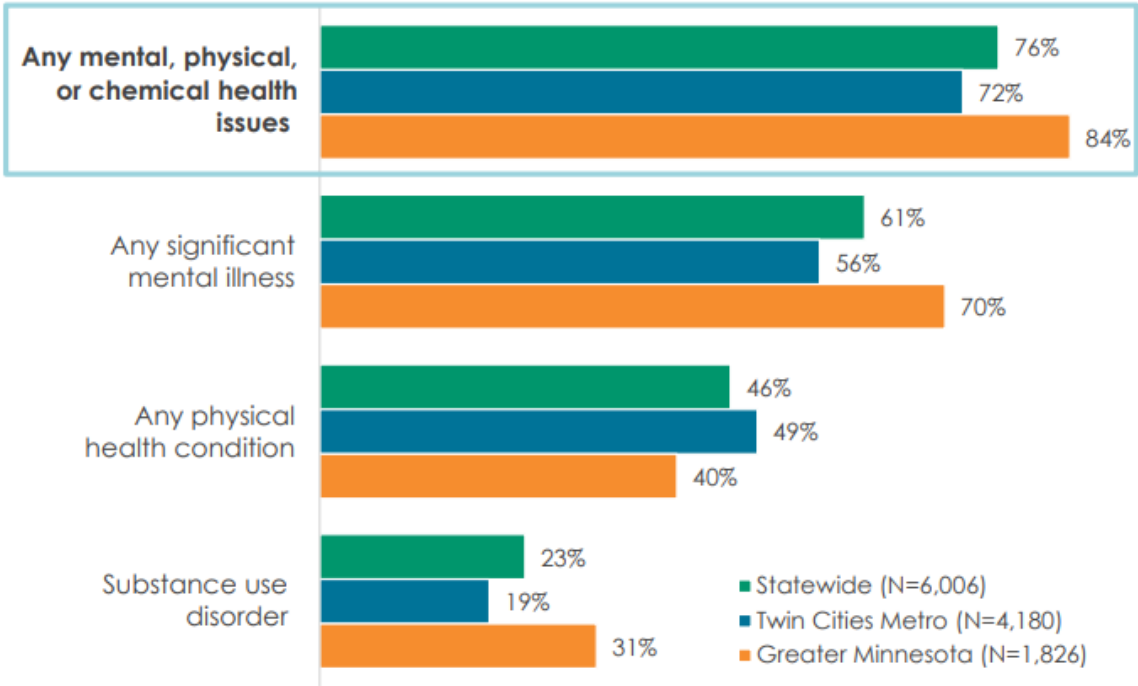
[https://www.wilder.org/sites/default/files/2023Homeless\\_TwinCities-GreaterMN\\_Brief1\\_6-24.pdf](https://www.wilder.org/sites/default/files/2023Homeless_TwinCities-GreaterMN_Brief1_6-24.pdf)

Wilder Research *Homelessness in the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota* t  
mnhomeless.org

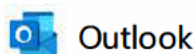
## Significant health issues are more prevalent among people in greater Minnesota.

Like traumatic experiences, health has huge impacts on a person’s ability to find and maintain housing. The majority (76%) of people experiencing homelessness have significant health issues (Figure 6). While these numbers are staggeringly high across Minnesota, rates are even higher in greater Minnesota (84%) than in the Twin Cities metro (72%). This includes higher rates of the most common mental health concerns—anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder—and substance use disorder.

### 6. Health conditions among Minnesota adults experiencing homelessness



Source. 2023 Minnesota Homeless Study interviews  
Note. Chart includes those who report a significant mental illness or substance use disorder in the past 2 years or a chronic physical health condition in the past 12 months.



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**FW: support for Safe Bay**

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**Sent:** Monday, March 31, 2025 5:53 PM

**To:** planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>;

**Cc:** Mike Mayou <mmayou@DuluthMN.gov>; Terese Tomanek <tomanek@DuluthMN.gov>; Azrin Awal <aawal@DuluthMN.gov>; Arik Forsman <aforsman@DuluthMN.gov>; Lynn Marie Nephew <lnephew@DuluthMN.gov>

**Subject:** support for Safe Bay

Members of the Planning Commission-

I'm writing to share my support of the new Safe Bay site at The Vineyard Church. In our work with survivors of domestic violence, we witness firsthand that safe places for those who are unhoused can have an overwhelming positive impact on the trajectory of one's life. Intimate partner violence is a significant contributing factor to homelessness, and many survivors are forced to leave their homes to escape abusive situations. In fact, fleeing/attempting to flee domestic violence is a federally defined category of "homelessness". As one of only two shelters in our community designed specifically to support domestic violence survivors, we are often at capacity and the alternative options for safe places to stay are limited. Further, while we maintain the strictest of confidentiality expectations, it can be the case that abusive partners have learned our shelter location rendering our space unsafe for this small population of victims. A more discreet, unsuspected location- such as Safe Bay- may better suit the safety needs of certain individuals. Living in a congregate, communal facility can also be overwhelming to individuals who aren't used to residing with others even for a short time. The independence and autonomy of staying at an alternate location, even if it's in their own vehicle, can be a better option for survivors with these concerns.

As experts of their own lives, we believe in supporting survivors' choice in identifying what "safety" means to them. We are grateful for the collaborative partnerships we have with our sibling organizations and programs like CHUM and Stepping On Up that provide dignity for those who are most in need of support.

Warmly,

**Brittany Robb**

*pronouns: she/her/hers*

Executive Director

Safe Haven Shelter & Resource Center

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]





Outlook

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**To:** planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>  
**Cc:** planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>;  
**Subject:** In support of CHUM's application for an interim use permit for Safe Bay at Vineyard Church

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Dear Members of the Duluth Planning Commission,

I would like to express my support and appreciation for the Vineyard Church's willingness to host the CHUM/Stepping Up Duluth Safe Bay program and to encourage your commission to approve CHUM's application for an interim use permit to operate the Safe Bay program at that location. I understand that the Safe Bay program has already been in operation for the past two years and trust that it will be able to continue to do so at this new location. The congregation I serve, Temple Israel, is a member of CHUM and a longtime supporter of programs such as this one. I also personally support the Safe Bay program. It is an extremely beneficial step in serving the needs of our unhoused population as a necessary interim step as our community continues to deal with the long-term challenges of homelessness.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this important manner.

Sincerely,  
Rabbi David Steinberg

Rabbi David Steinberg  
Temple Israel  
1602 E. 2nd Street  
Duluth, MN 55812

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

*"We short-circuit religion when we treat it as an affair between the individual and God. To function normally, the religious current connecting the individual with God must pass through the life of a people."*

- Outlook

**FW: Permit PLIUP-2503-0013**

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 26, 2025 5:43 PM

**To:** planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>

**Subject:** Permit PLIUP-2503-0013

It sounds like CHUM and the church are trying to do a good thing.

I just found out about the meeting today, and it's almost over.

In years past I've lived fairly close to homeless shelters (Minneapolis & Phoenix), camps (Minneapolis), and have seen how rough they can be on neighborhoods and surrounding wild areas if not carefully managed.

I currently live less than 1/2 mile from the Church.

My understanding is that permits are for 1 year. I don't know what renewal looks like, but I would ask that

1. A very low limit on overnight out-door lives be placed at the start, perhaps increasing to something that's still comparatively low during the first year. Quality of life in camps decreases radically at a couple different thresholds. Let's stay below all of them for the first year.
2. Regular patrols of the surrounding woodland, both on church premises and the surrounding properties, should be done for sharps and trash.
  - 2a. Anyone staying there should be registered, and required to sign a document that entering/exiting the property will be done only via arrowhead, or returning will not be allowed.
  - 2b. If the grade of people staying there includes those actively using, There should always be some presence there.
3. Establishing a practice of alternating years for licenses at locations like this would be a very good thing for the city. We want to spread the "burden" we want to avoid creating specific areas of chronic inflammation (homeless people are people! But there is a cost to the surrounding neighborhood, alternating years would give the areas a chance to recover and be better hosts in the years the outdoor living places are present)

Helping is good, is \*necessary\*. I'd love for it to be done in a way that allows every participant and witness to \*feel\* good about it.

Sincerely,

Donovan Walker