

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: CONSENT TO SALE OF PROPERTY AND REINVESTMENT OF \$80,000 FOR THE FUTURE PURCHASE OF AN EMERGENCY SHELTER PROPERTY ON BEHALF OF THE ASSAULT CARE CENTER EXTENDING SHELTER AND SUPPORT (ACCESS)

BACKGROUND:

Back in 1984, the City utilized \$80,000 of Community Development Block (CDBG) funds to purchase and rehabilitate a property on Duff Avenue to be used as an emergency shelter on behalf of the Assault Care Center Extending Shelter and Support (ACCESS). **The granting of the funds included a restrictive covenant whereby the property could not be sold without approval of the City and the \$80,000 initial investment would need to be repaid to the City.**

In March 2004, the City Council approved a request from ACCESS to sell its property on Duff Avenue and reinvest the \$80,000 in the purchase of a larger facility on Lynn Avenue with the same restrictive covenant mentioned above.

ACCESS is now seeking permission to sell the Lynn Avenue property in compliance with the restrictive covenant which will result in the repayment of the \$80,000 to the City. Additionally, ACCESS is requesting that the City Council commit to reinvestment of \$80,000 into a new property. This request was referred to the staff at the January 12, 2016 Council meeting.

The ACCESS Board concluded as part of its FY 2016-17 strategic planning (see Attachment A) that the future needs of ACCESS require a change in its service model. ACCESS desires to transition from a single shelter location to operation of a “scattered sites” model. Under this model, its emergency housing needs would be met in several separate locations. These locations would not include its staff or administrative offices.

The Planning & Housing staff recently met with the ACCESS Director and a board member to discuss the scattered sites model and how it relates to our Zoning Ordinance. The shelter use is classified as a Social Services Provider. The Zoning Ordinance only allows facilities for Social Services Providers to occur in Residential High Density (RH), Residential Medium Density (RM), Floating Suburban Residential Medium Density (FSRM) areas, or the South Lincoln Mixed Use District.

The first step in its new model is to sell the current facility. ACCESS has accepted an offer for the purchase of their property located on Lynn Avenue in the amount of \$1.12 million. ACCESS would like to close on the sale of the property within the next week, but will maintain possession of the property until August 2016. ACCESS would look for new sites between February and August. ACCESS has indicated as a first priority that it would like to acquire two to three residential properties (two duplexes and a single-family dwelling) within the City limits of Ames.

At the time that the City Council approved ACCESS to sell the property on Duff, ACCESS had already identified and had an accepted a purchase offer for the property on Lynn, and therefore, it was able to retain the \$80,000 as part of the sale proceeds to use toward the

down payment on the Lynn property.

At this time ACCESS has not identified any property which it would like to purchase. Therefore, the \$80,000 will have to be repaid to the City at the closing on the property on Lynn. Once ACCESS has identified a property that meets the zoning requirements for use by a Social Services Provider, a check can be issued to the ACCESS to use toward the purchase of the new property, which will include a restrictive use covenant agreement to be recorded against the property similar to the two previous covenants for the Duff and Lynn properties.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can authorize the following:
 - a) Grant permission to ACCESS to sell its current property on Lynn Avenue and repay the City \$80,000 upon completion of the sale.
 - b). Direct staff to pay ACCESS \$80,000 once ACCESS has an accepted purchase offer for a property that meets the zoning requirements for the City of Ames, along with a new restrictive covenant with similar language from the previous two restrictive covenants (requirements for the City's consent to sell and repayment to the City).
2. The City Council can authorize ACCESS to sell its current property on Lynn Avenue and require ACCESS to repay (as part of the closing transaction) the \$80,000 back to the City and release the restrictive covenant lien without a future commitment to provide \$80,000 for the purchase of a new site.
3. The City Council can deny authorizing ACCESS to sell its property on Lynn Avenue.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

It has been the practice of the City to support this type of reinvestment of grant funds to non-profit organizations that provide a valuable service for the citizens in our community. The difference in this case is that a new property has not yet been identified by ACCESS and, therefore, the \$80,000 from the sale of the Lynn property must initially be repaid to the City at the time of closing. The City will place the sale funds in a restricted account until such time ACCESS is ready to close on an eligible property and a new restricted covenant has been created similar to the previous two covenants.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1 as specified above.

ATTACHMENT A



ACCESS Housing Plan 2016-2017

Brief Summary

Presented to members of the ASSET Administrative Team (Jean Kresse, Deb Schildroth, Brian Phillips, and Karla Webb), as well as Vanessa Baker-Latimer from the City of Ames on November 4, 2015

ACCESS strives to offer the best comprehensive housing plan for all victims we serve, in all of our counties. In considering our plan to offer housing services, ACCESS is committed to the following principles:

Trauma Informed Care & Survivor Empowerment:

Victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, trafficking or other crimes should be served in a way that ensures dignity. Whenever possible, ACCESS staff and programs will allow victims to determine their own needs, and to be responsible for their own well-being.

Housing First:

Like safety, housing is a basic need. ACCESS advocates work to ensure that all victims we serve are safely housed. When a victim can be safely and stably housed, we know that we can alleviate their trauma, allowing the victim to attend to all needs in a responsible manner, and be a more healthy and adaptive person overall.

Best Practices & Quality Assessment:

ACCESS housing efforts shall be guided by best practices and quality assessment. We strive to ensure that we are meeting victims' needs in the best way possible, which includes an assessment of the victim, but also an assessment of practices that have proven beneficial to victims in other areas. Through this assessment, ACCESS advocates will make every effort to match the victim to the most appropriate housing solution.

Smart Maintenance & Growth:

Although housing is a key component of services to victims, ACCESS needs to constantly evaluate all of the victims we serve and all of the services we offer, to ensure that we are following our mission and keeping our core services strong. Resource allocation shall be balanced, to allow all victims the opportunity for safety and healing.

In order to follow these principles and to ensure that ACCESS is able to meet victim's needs appropriately, the following activities are detailed to serve as a guide in understanding and developing ACCESS's housing program.

Shelter Diversion (SD)

ACCESS Domestic Abuse Program advocates (non-shelter staff), are charged with working with unstably housed victims, in an effort to divert victims away from shelter. This is done through various efforts, including but not limited to:

Emergency crisis response to assist the victim in getting to a safe location, either through safety planning, transportation assistance, or through connecting the victims to protections which will allow for them to return to their own residence safely.

Hotel stays may be used (often 24-48 hours) to allow the victim time and safety in order to make a short term plan more viable.

Currently, one Domestic Abuse Program Advocate is able to specialize in housing advocacy, and ACCESS is working to increase the capacity of all the advocates to work on diversion in several ways. One way this has been instituted is through training on the use of the VI-SPDAT assessment tool. As diversion and housing system advocacy becomes more ingrained in the landscape of domestic abuse advocacy, ACCESS will need to continue to invest in advocacy and/or training of advocacy to work within housing systems.

Emergency Shelter (ES)

Continue to offer emergency shelter as needed. Maintain the capacity to offer 3000 or more bed nights per year, a majority of which are intended for Story County residents. Offer a combination of supervised and non-supervised sheltering options

- Scattered site sheltering: Two or more locations. One staffed/supervised location and one or more unsupervised locations.
- Hotel/motel use when appropriate

Emergency shelter is considered last resort. Individuals should have been offered many other alternatives and shall have been assessed thoroughly. If safety or housing cannot be attained in another manner, this option is offered. Goal of ES is stay of 20 days or less, with permanent housing achieved directly following that stay.

Rapid Rehousing (RR)

Rapid-rehousing is funding to allow a victim to quickly attain housing, through payment of first month's rent, deposit, and other related costs. This funding can also be used for subsequent month's rent when appropriate to help ensure that this housing option is a successful placement for a victim beyond the very initial stages.

ACCESS has been able to offer Rapid Rehousing through the use of HUD/ESG funds. We began in calendar year 2013. We have made significant strides in teaching ourselves the best practices around administering these funds.

In order to continue to develop rapid rehousing as an effective option, ACCESS will look to continue to increase the amount available from ESG. Also, either through ESG or other funds, ACCESS will need to invest in community based housing advocacy to achieve the following results:

- Landlord engagement/ housing identification
- Housing case management geared toward long-term housing and economic stability.

Transitional Housing (TH)

In the next month, ACCESS will begin to utilize transitional housing in Story, Boone and Marshall Counties. This will consist of leased apartments, two 2-bedroom and two 1-bedroom in Story County, one 2-bedroom and one 1-bedroom unit in Boone County, and one 1-bedroom and one 2-bedroom unit in Marshall County. These apartments are reserved for victims with the highest barriers. These victims will be able to reside in the units for six (6) to twenty-four (24) months. The program will employ a case manager, responsible for addressing the long-term stability of the resident. This program will be able to offer a range over 2000-4000 bed nights in all of the counties it serves, with a majority of those nights being administered within Story County.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

ACCESS is not offering PSH at this time. In the short term, ACCESS's TH program will likely serve as the substitute for PSH.

ACCESS could pursue funding to offer this service when we are ready/able. PSH is essential for many homeless persons, many who have been victimized, to eliminate the overall instability in that person's life. If a victim can be permanently housed, and has support through an agency like ACCESS, studies show that the victim or person will be more likely to stabilize in other areas of her/his life. In that case, the person takes less of a toll on other resources, such as community emergency services (which would include ACCESS Emergency Shelter).