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Subject: Update on Ramada

Good morning,

We've just shared the below update with our media partners and wanted to be sure you had this information as well. Please feel free to share with others and let me know if you have any questions.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: December 3, 2021
City of Asheville | Communication & Public Engagement Department
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MEDIA ADVISORY: City of Asheville will not move forward with emergency shelter at Ramada

The original plan

The City of Asheville had originally planned to create a [high-access emergency shelter](#) at the Ramada property. This was in response to a critical and urgent need in our community to provide shelter for people with complex issues who are otherwise underserved. The City had started sheltering unhoused people in hotels as a practical and compassionate measure during the pandemic. This response successfully helped slow the spread of COVID-19 among our homeless community and had the immense added benefit of connecting people with needed services and permanent housing.

What's happening now

The City will no longer pursue creating an emergency shelter at this location. As originally planned, the City, its partners and the community were unable to come to consensus around this project.

The City of Asheville remains committed to working with its partners and this community to create an emergency high-access shelter. Staff received feedback from the community and our partners that a more extensive planning process is needed to develop a new emergency shelter, so the City will begin a new planning process in partnership with both the community and other funders.

The City is committed to positive outcomes for the 80 people currently sheltered there and will continue that operation through March, using that time to work on housing solutions for each participant.

A new use for the property

Working with a new partner, the City is exploring the idea of permanent supportive housing at the Ramada property instead of the high-access emergency shelter. If negotiations are successful, the City Council would vote on this matter at their December 14 meeting.

What is permanent supportive housing?

[Permanent supportive housing](#) means affordable housing combined with the types of services that help people stay in housing, such as connections with health care, substance use treatment, and employment. This is key to help people who are coming out of homelessness transition into housing in a safe and sustainable way.

Why the change

The idea to explore creating permanent supportive housing at the Ramada instead comes because City staff received feedback that a longer planning process was needed to make sure that a high-access emergency shelter project could succeed. Asheville has a documented need for additional permanent supportive housing. Again, the City remains committed to working with its partners and this community to create an emergency high-access shelter in another location to be determined in future.

A commitment going forward

The City of Asheville believes that having a well-functioning homeless services system is crucial to end homelessness. This includes interventions like preventing homelessness, providing temporary shelter, and transitioning people into permanent housing. While the original plan for the Ramada to become an emergency shelter will not move forward, the City of Asheville remains committed to working with its partners and this community to create an emergency high-access shelter.