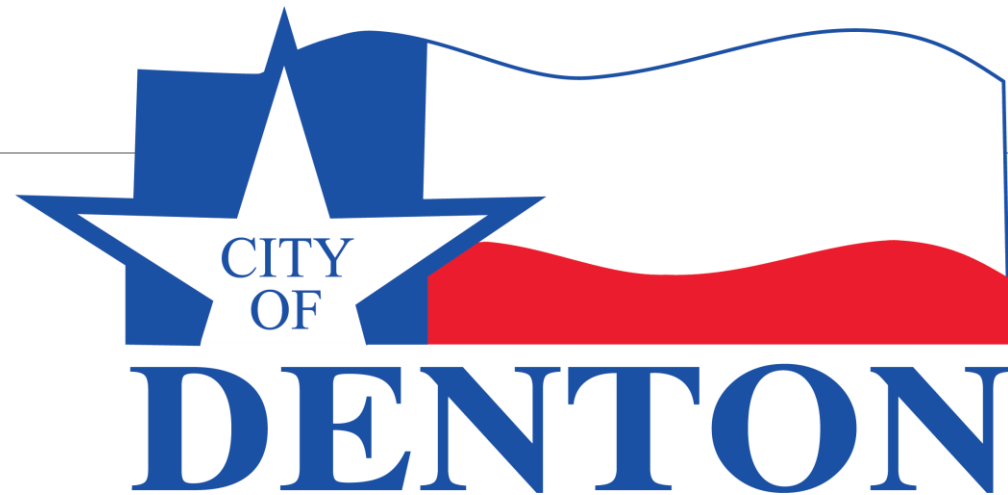


# Homelessness Initiative Update 2

April 15, 2025

Jesse Kent, Director of Community Services



# Presentation Goals & Strategic Alignment

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Homelessness is a complex issue with many underlying factors. Today's presentation will provide an update and seek Council feedback on the City of Denton's funded homelessness initiatives (encampments and the community shelter) covered by the Auditor's report and our focus on assisting individuals out of homelessness.

This presentation will not cover the City's inclement weather policy or legislative priorities; these topics will be in a future work session.





This initiative supports the City's Key Focus Area: Foster Economic Opportunity and Affordability.

# Background

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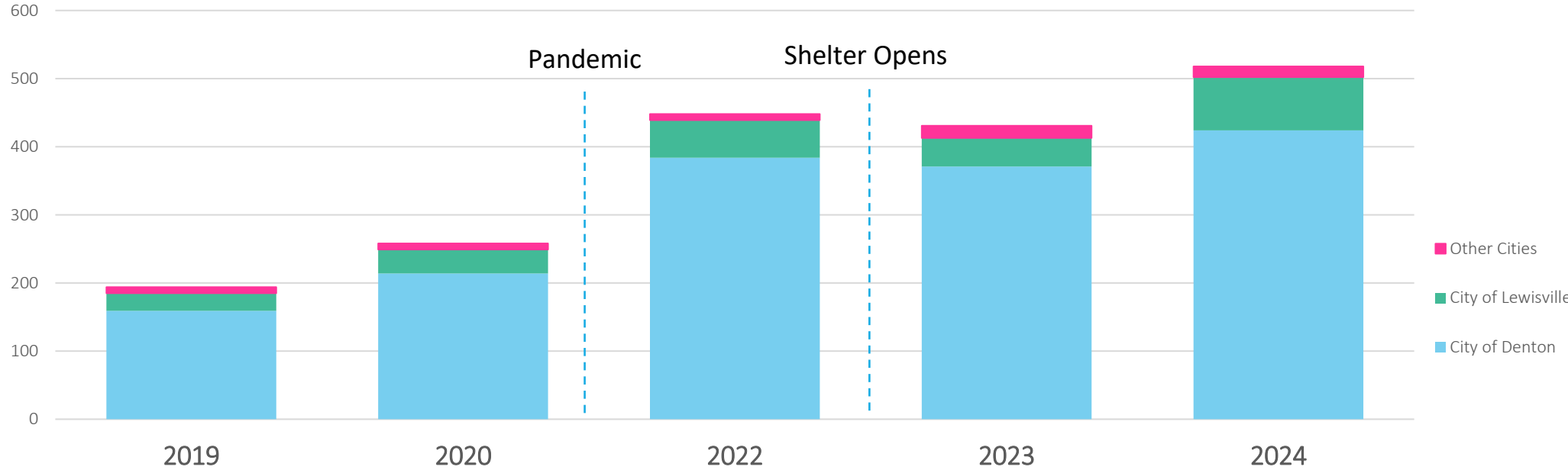
- Continuing the discussion from November last year on Community Shelter founding and operations; opportunities for improvement, including:
  - Safety and security concerns
  - Space and process enhancements
  - Service delivery optimization
  - Opportunities for partnership

# Denton County's Collective Approach to Homeless Services & Initiatives

SERVICE COMPONENT	PROVIDERS	PURPOSE	SERVICES
 <b>Prevention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Salvation Army;</li> <li>Our Daily Bread;</li> <li>Giving Grace</li> </ul>	Keep families housed; prevent evictions	Assistance with rent, and/or utilities; case management
 <b>Outreach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Giving Grace</li> <li>Denton PD Outreach Team</li> </ul>	Connect people to shelter, housing, and other services	Obtain IDs; referrals to; shelter/housing; mental health/substance use services
 <b>Emergency Shelter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our Daily Bread</li> <li>Salvation Army</li> </ul>	Provide shelter; address basic needs, connect to housing	Shelter; meals, basic hygiene; case management
 <b>Housing Stability</b> 1: Short-Term 2: Medium-Term 3: Long-Term	1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Denton County Friends of the Family;</li> <li>Our Daily Bread</li> </ul>	Transitional stay while locating permanent housing	90-120 day stays; case management
	2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christian Community Action</li> <li>Giving Grace;</li> <li>Our Daily Bread</li> </ul>	Rapidly rehouse and reconnect to permanent housing	3 to 24 months of rental assistance
	3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Denton County MHMR;</li> <li>Denton Housing Authority;</li> <li>Giving Grace</li> </ul>	Ongoing assistance for vulnerable populations	Rental subsidy for low-income and people with disabilities

# Homeless Data

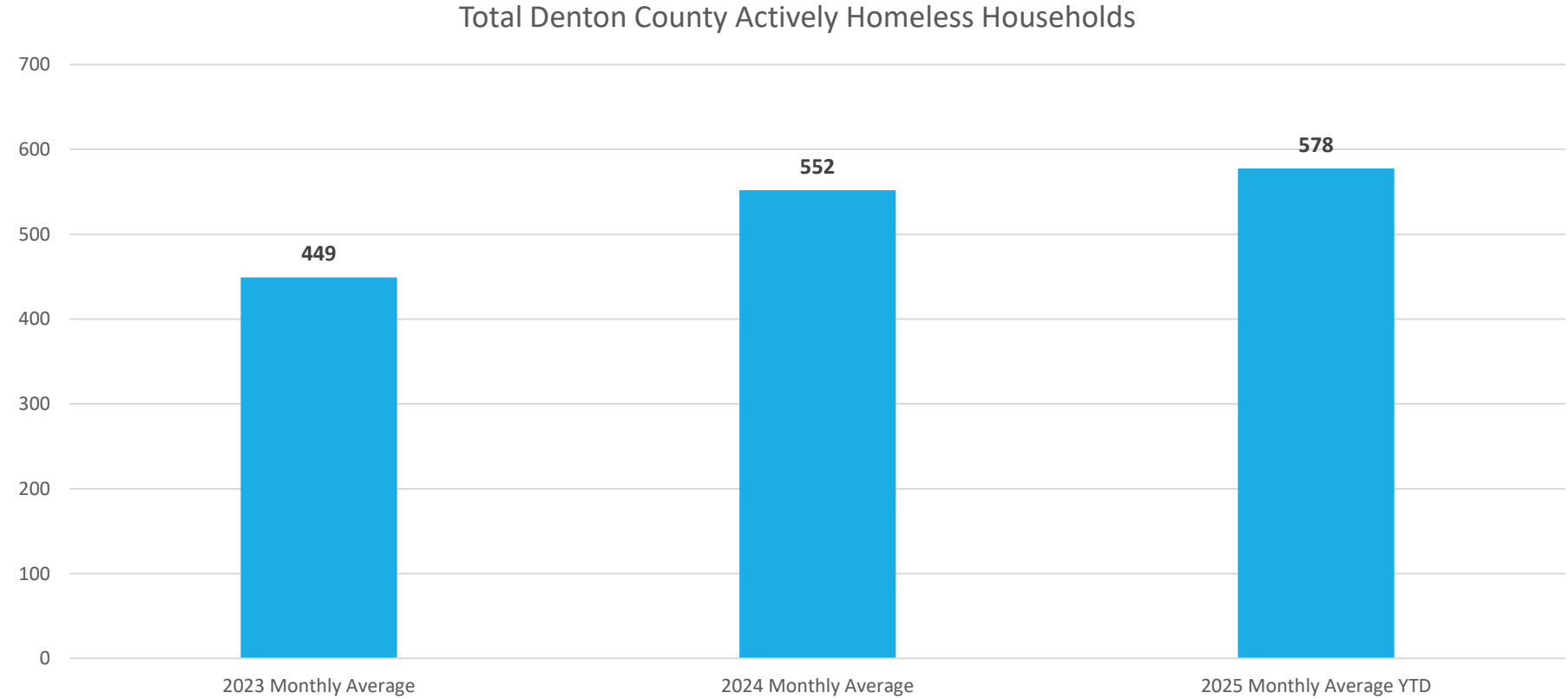
Point in Time (PIT) Count  
Denton County  
Adults Experiencing Homelessness



	2019	2020	2022	2023	2024
City of Denton	159	214	384	371	424
City of Lewisville	26	35	55	42	78
Other Cities	9	9	9	18	16
Total	194	258	448	431	518
City of Denton change in %	-	35%	79%	-3%	14%

2021: PIT Count at the National and State Level for 2021 was optional due to Covid 19 resulting in a partial/incomplete PIT Count, data not included

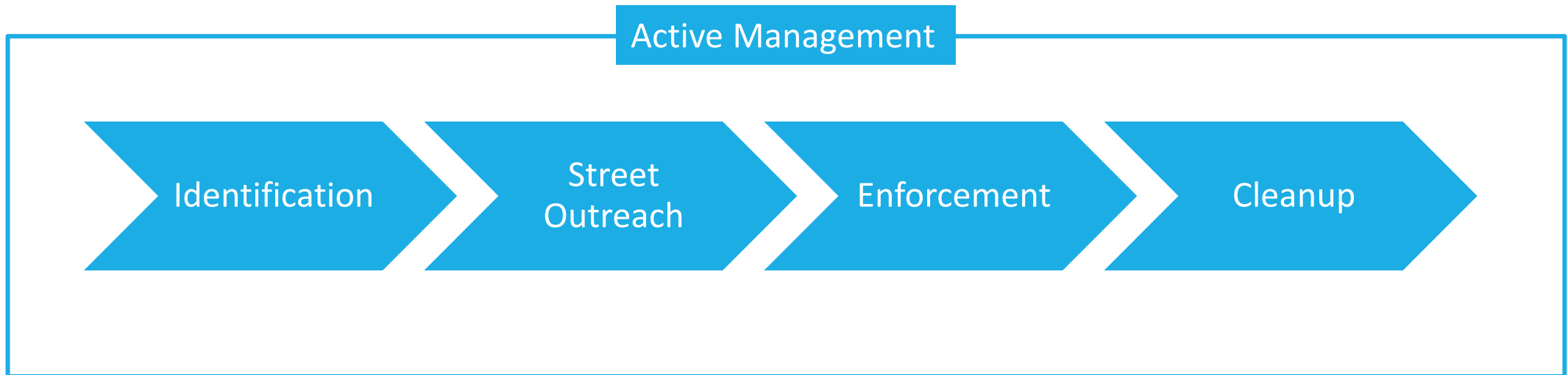
# Homeless Data



# Encampments

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**Addressing encampments requires the coordination of four different steps with many stakeholders**





# What is an encampment

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# Groups involved in addressing encampments

## Identification

- Residents
- Council members
- City staff
- Businesses

## Street Outreach

- Non-profit agencies, specifically Giving Grace (\$125,000)
- Police Outreach Team
- Unaffiliated groups and concerned individuals

## Enforcement

- Police Outreach Team

## Cleanup

- City staff, including Parks and Code Enforcement
- Private contractors
- Property owners

Community Services

# Recommendation: Enhance coordination

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## **Opportunities for greater coordination exists**

- As of January, Community Services maintains responsibility for ensuring all encampments are appropriately managed, from identification to cleanup
- Develop a process to connect the unaffiliated groups doing this work with the coordinated collective effort

# Recommendation: Redistribute outreach resources

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## **Move the civilian components of the PD Outreach Team to Community Services**

- Align staffing with best practices for mental health response and reduce the strain on public safety resources
- Maintain the ability to respond to individuals experiencing mental health crisis

# City Property Process

## Proposed process

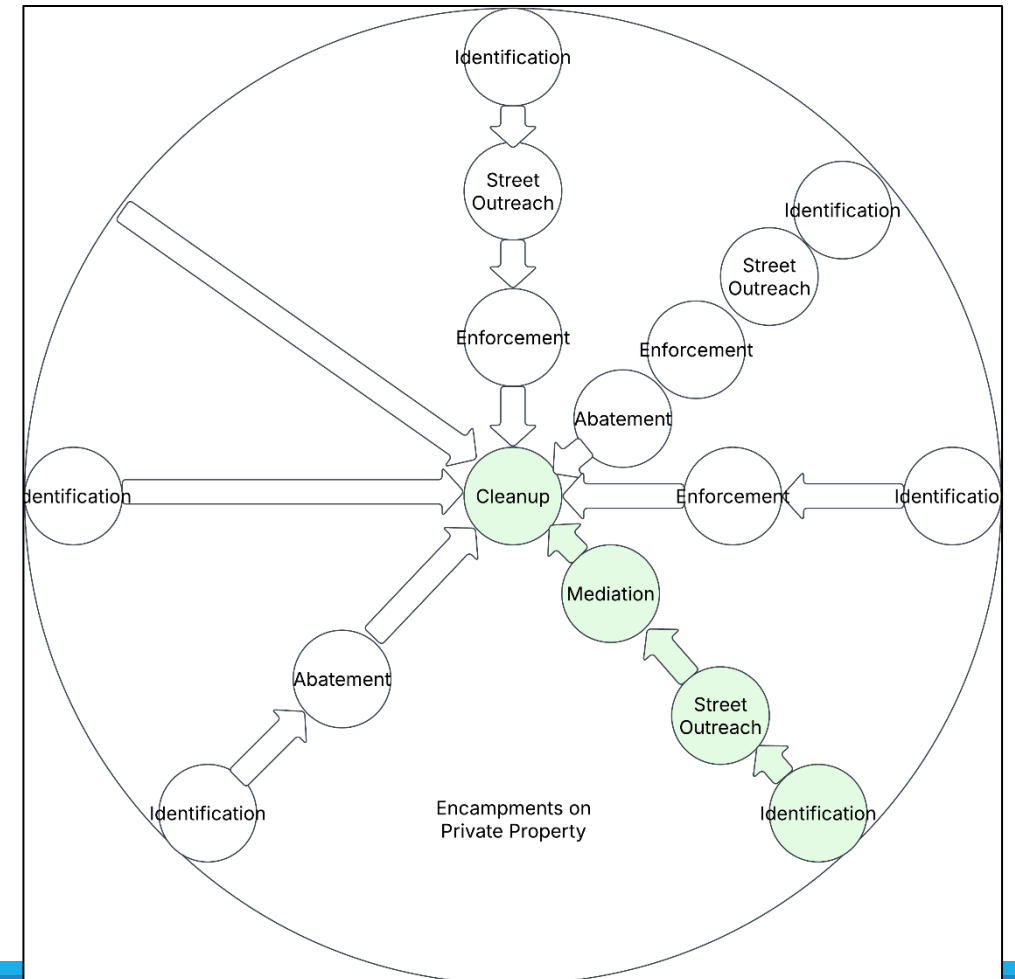
- Community Services is responsible for scheduling and managing cleanup of encampments
- Cleanup goal is completed within one week of identification

Day 0	Day 0-3	Date of Notice - Day Prior to Cleanup	Cleanup
<div>Encampment Identified</div> <div>Encampment Logged and Outreach Notified</div>	<div>Encampment Noticed for Cleanup</div> <div>Cleanup Quoted and Scheduled</div> <div>Street Outreach Conducted</div>	<div>Street Outreach Conducted</div>	<div>Street Outreach Conducted</div> <div>Trespass Remaining Individuals</div> <div>Conduct Cleanup</div>

# Private Property Process

**Increase support for the myriad potential processes**

- Develop best practices and technical assistance to help property owners navigate dealing with encampments
- Explore opportunities to provide cleanup support to property owners





# In summary

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**City should adopt a more collaborative, proactive approach to addressing encampments in the City through:**

- Continuing to develop coordination tools for encampment and street outreach tracking
- Streamlining the encampment cleanup process on public property
- Providing additional technical support to property owners in addressing encampments
- Explore programming to provide support to address the impact of homelessness on property owners

# Community Shelter

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- In 2020, the City Council approved the purchase of the property at 909 Loop 288 to renovate the **34,000 square foot building**, for a co-located day center and overnight shelter to provide services to people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.
- In 2021, The City executed a Management Services and Operating Agreement (MSOA) with Our Daily Bread. This agreement is for five years from Certificate of Occupancy Issuance (Nov. 2022)
- In Dec. 2022, the shelter opened.



# Community Shelter Services

- **Shelter (Emergency and Transitional)**
  - Day Shelter (8a-8p)
  - Overnight Shelter (4p-8a)
- **Community Kitchen: Meals served three times a day**
  - Breakfast (8a-9a)
  - Lunch (11:30a-1p)
  - Dinner (5:30p-7p)
- **Housing, Income and Employment (Such as Ready For Work)**
- **Wellness and Support Services**



# What the Shelter is and is not

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## **The Shelter is:**

- An overnight emergency shelter for individuals looking to progress out of homelessness
- A day shelter and central location for supportive services, such as meals, clothing, workforce development
- An inclement weather shelter

## **The Shelter is NOT and was never designed to be:**

- A rehabilitation facility
- A medical aftercare facility
- A mental health facility
- A long-term housing solution

# Recommendation: Reset capacity to available case management resources

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## **Tie overnight shelter capacity to case management capacity**

- Limit the Community Shelter long-term (greater than one week) resident capacity to the number of guests they can effectively case manage, in line with best practices (i.e. No more than 17 guests per dedicated case manager)\*
- Currently this limit would be 119 clients receiving overnight services across emergency shelter and the transitional wing, based on seven active case managers; reduced from the current capacity of 192
- Allow for other partner agencies actively managing clients to house guests at the community shelter, provided they have an appropriate housing plan
- Develop a wait list to access shelter services

\*This will not impact service level increases tied to the City's Inclement Weather Policy



# Recommendation: Length of Stay Policy

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**Length of stay should be based on accountability for progressing out of homelessness**

- Individuals are accountable for progressing on their housing plan to remain at the shelter and should remain focused on their individual goals
- In 2024, 99 guests were dropped off from outside of Denton by various organizations; individuals who are sent to the shelter from outside our community should receive up to three days of shelter and provided the resources to return to their care network or community
- From May through December 2024, Our Daily Bread asked first-time guests “what is your last known city or zip code.” Of the 498 responses, only 120 responded with the City of Denton (24%).

# Recommendation: Raise barriers

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**Remove low-barrier language; continued stay is conditional upon personal conduct**

- Staying at the shelter means progressing on individual housing plans
- Individuals who create an unsafe environment for staff or clients be removed

## Recommendation: Provide care at the shelter

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**Emergency situations will continue to exist, resources should be brought in to treat issues where they are**

- Partnerships should be established to bring medical care into the facility to reduce the burden on emergency services and local hospitals
- City mental health clinicians should spend time officing at the shelter
- Continue to seek grant opportunities, such as the Bloomberg Mayor's Challenge
- United Way of Denton County Interns

# In summary

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**Shelter operations should continue to be improved, practices should be reassessed, and the contract should be amended to include:**

- Limiting overnight stay capacity to case management resourcing
- Implementing a Length of Stay Policy and guidelines to ensure that the shelter is focused on housing individuals
- Raising barrier levels

# COUNCIL DISCUSSION

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