

NAIOP

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

DC|MD CHAPTER

HOUSING PROJECT PILOT PROGRAM

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE
DOWNTOWN DAY SERVICES CENTER**

**JULY & AUGUST
2024 REPORT**



ABOUT

HOUSING PROJECT PILOT PROGRAM

The project aims to transition 3 to 4 individuals sleeping on the streets into a form of housing (a safe form of shelter). The following summaries outline the success of the pilot program launched with funding by NAIOP DC|MD.

Steps to Identify homeless Individuals:

- 1** Street Outreach teams between the Downtown Day Services Center (DDSC) and the H3 Project assessed several locations in the downtown area for individuals who have been on the streets for 6 months or more. These individuals do not meet the city housing requirements or have been on the waiting list for over a year.
- 2** Once individuals are identified, conversations with the individual are executed by H3 to explain the funding opportunity. Upon acceptance of the opportunity, H3 begins the actions to transition the individual from the streets to the form of shelter.

As you will read in the following narratives, this project grant has hugely impacted four (4) homeless individuals, restoring their hope and dignity.

ABOUT

THE DOWNTOWN DAY SERVICES CENTER

In February 2019, with funding support from the DC Department of Human Service (DHS), the Downtown Day Services Center (DDSC) proudly opened its doors. Since then, the DDSC has served more than 60,000 individuals experiencing homelessness and, on average, nearly 250 guests per day. The DDSC provides a safe space for people to access basic necessities, including showers, laundry facilities, computers, and more.

The Downtown Day Services Center provides direct homeless street outreach through life-sustaining tools and housing resources critical to individuals experiencing homelessness. It also provides direct access to a series of service providers, including housing, employment, and medical care. The DDSC continues to serve as a national model for effective urban day centers and is proud to solidify external partnerships to ensure equal opportunities for the unhoused.



MEET CARLOS

AGE 32

OVERVIEW

When h3 Project staff first encountered Carlos, he was sleeping outside the Creative Center for Nonviolence (CCNV) at 425 2nd Street. He reported that he had been in that same spot for the past four months, using a makeshift bed of blankets. The harsh realities of living on the streets in Washington, D.C., had taken a significant toll on him, and while he maintained a semblance of spirit, the weight of his circumstances was evident.

LANGUAGE BARRIER

Carlos only speaks Spanish, which can make it somewhat difficult for him to access the various resources available in a city filled with potential opportunities. This language barrier created a significant obstacle in his attempts to seek assistance. The announcement that CCNV would close by the end of July further compounded his anxiety, intensifying his need to find a way out of his precarious living situation.

SUPPORT FROM H3 PROJECT

Recognizing the challenges Carlos faced, an h3 Project staff member fluent in Spanish was assigned as his case manager. The outreach specialist worked to connect him with a job opportunity at the Red Roof Inn in Castle Hill, Delaware. Although the prospect of employment offered a potential way forward, it was accompanied by the harsh reality of starting over in an unfamiliar environment.

ACTION TAKEN

After confirming the details with the inn, h3 Project staff acted to facilitate Carlos's transition. They purchased an Amtrak ticket, providing him with transportation to his new job. They also supplied him with work clothes and sturdy boots to prepare him for the role.

Additionally, they packed food for the journey, understanding that he needed sustenance during this challenging time. Given that Carlos would not receive his first paycheck for 30 days, h3 also covered his initial month's rent and provided him with \$200 for food and other necessities, aiming to ease some of his immediate financial stress.

CURRENT STATUS

Now, 42 days into his new job, Carlos reports back with a bright smile and enthusiasm in his voice. He enjoys the work, the rhythm of maintenance tasks that keep him active and engaged. More importantly, he has made new friends among his colleagues, a community that provides the camaraderie he so desperately craved. The isolation that once enveloped him has begun to dissipate, replaced by the warmth of connection and the promise of a brighter future.

CONCLUSION

Carlos's journey illustrates the complex reality of moving from homelessness to stability. While he has taken important steps toward building a new life, the process is still fraught with challenges. The support he received from h3 Project has been crucial, but the road ahead will require ongoing effort and resilience as he continues to navigate his new circumstances.

GRANT COVERED

- AMTRAK Train Ticket
- Food For Journey
- Clothing: 2 Pairs of Pants, 2 Shirts, 4 Boxer Briefs, 5 Pairs of Socks, Belt, Work Boots
- First Months' Rent
- \$200 for Food and Other Necessities

MEET DAVID

AGE 22

BACKGROUND

Three months ago, David arrived in Washington, D.C., while traveling from Tennessee to Baltimore. During his bus journey, he met someone who advised him that D.C. might be a better place for him to stay sober. At just 22 years old, David shared with h3 that he began using meth at the age of 12. He decided to leave Tennessee primarily because most of his family and friends were still involved in drug use. After achieving two years of sobriety, he was determined to maintain this lifestyle.

CHALLENGES FACED

Upon arriving in D.C., David encountered difficulties within the shelter system. Due to his Southern accent and how he presented himself, he found it challenging to fit in, resulting in him primarily sleeping outside. This precarious living situation heightened his vulnerability and made it imperative to find stable housing.

SUPPORT & HOUSING

During our discussions, David expressed excitement about the possibility of moving into extended sober living housing, which aligned with his goals for recovery. Through a contact that h3 has maintained for several years, we were able to secure a room rental for him in Northeast D.C. David currently shares this room with another individual. Although he has only been there for six weeks, the stability of housing has been a significant positive change in his life. As part of the house rules, he is required to follow the Alcoholics Anonymous network, including having a sponsor as well as attending weekly meetings. He is also subject to random drug tests and must participate in the weekly house meeting on Monday nights.

EMPLOYMENT

In addition to securing housing, h3 helped David find employment.

He is now working 40 hours a week at Taco Bell, which will enable him to cover his rent after the initial adjustment period. We assisted him with his résumé and provided interview preparation, which he stated played a crucial role in securing the job.

INITIAL SUPPORT PROVIDED

When David moved into his new housing situation, h3 facilitated his transition by providing essential support. This included arranging an Uber to his new residence, supplying a MetroCard for transportation, and providing clothing and household items such as a fan for his bedroom, sheets, pillows, toilet paper, laundry detergent, and hangers, among other items.

CURRENT STATUS

David is extremely satisfied with both his housing and employment situation. He expresses optimism about his future and is committed to maintaining his sobriety. The stable housing and employment combination has given him hope and direction as he continues his journey toward a healthier lifestyle.

CONCLUSION

David's case highlights the importance of providing comprehensive support to individuals seeking to rebuild their lives after overcoming addiction. With the right resources and assistance, David is making significant strides toward a stable and fulfilling future in Washington, D.C. h3 will continue to monitor David's situation while also providing emotional support and guidance as his roadmap to success is best determined.

GRANT COVERED

- Uber to Extended Sober Living Option
- Metro Card with Pre-Load of \$20
- Clothing: 2 Pairs of Pants, 2 Shirts, 4 Boxer Briefs, 5 Pairs of Socks, Belt, Athletic Shoes
- Gift: Bedroom Fan, Sheet Set, Cleaning Supplies, Toilet Paper, Laundry Detergent, Hangers, etc.
- 6 Weeks Rent (Rent Cost is Weekly)

MEET CHRIS

AGE 53

BACKGROUND

When the h3 Project staff first encountered Chris, he had been homeless for six years, primarily sleeping outside. He expressed that while he occasionally sought shelter, his medical vulnerabilities made those environments difficult for him to navigate. Chris is 53 years old and suffers from diabetes, which requires him to undergo dialysis three times a week, as well as congestive heart failure and asthma.

MEDICAL CHALLENGES

Due to his medical condition, Chris was offered a dialysis machine for home use. However, without stable housing, this option was unfeasible. Instead, he relies on medical clinics for his dialysis treatments whenever possible. Over the past year, Chris has spent as much time in the hospital as he has living outside, indicating the severity of his health issues. During our conversations, he expressed feelings of hopelessness, stating that he sometimes questions whether he wants to continue living.

SUPPORT & INTERVENTIONS

Recognizing the urgency of Chris's situation, h3 Project worked to connect him with mental health resources and facilitated meetings with a doctor who partners with our organization. These steps were crucial in addressing his immediate health concerns and providing him with the support he needed.

HOUSING SOLUTION

In our efforts to assist Chris further, we found him a room to rent through Craigslist. He is currently renting this room for \$500 a month.

Although he has to share a bathroom and common areas with three other people, Chris has expressed his happiness with the arrangement and is grateful for the assistance provided by h3 in securing stable housing.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT PROVIDED

Along with securing housing, the h3 Project provided Chris with a MetroCard for transportation and some clothing, which are essential for his daily needs and mobility in the city.

CURRENT STATUS

Chris is adjusting to his new living situation and has expressed appreciation for the stability it brings. Although challenges remain due to his ongoing health issues, having a place to call home has positively impacted his outlook. The support from h3 has been instrumental in helping him navigate both his medical and housing challenges.

CONCLUSION

Chris's case underscores the critical need for comprehensive support for individuals facing homelessness, particularly those with significant medical vulnerabilities. Through the interventions of the h3 Project, Chris is beginning to experience a sense of stability that has been absent from his life for years. Continued follow-up and support will be essential as he works toward improving his overall well-being.

GRANT COVERED

- Uber to Room Rental
- Metro Card with Pre-Load of \$20
- Clothing: 2 Pairs of Pants, 2 Shirts, 4 Boxer Briefs, 5 Pairs of Socks, Belt, Casual Shoes
- 2.5 Months Rent

MEET THOMAS

AGE 61

BACKGROUND

Thomas has been in Washington, D.C., for approximately five months. Unfortunately, this duration means he is not yet eligible for any housing voucher opportunities, as individuals must be documented in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for at least one year to qualify for housing assistance in the city.

CHALLENGES FACED

Thomas faces additional difficulties due to his three-legged dog, Chancellor. This unique circumstance has made it particularly challenging for him to find suitable shelters or day centers that accommodate pets. While Thomas is committed to maintaining sobriety, he grapples with mental health challenges that lead him to use prescription pills as a coping mechanism to numb his trauma.

HOUSING OPTIONS

When discussing extended sober living options like Oxford House, Thomas expressed enthusiasm for the possibility. However, he has been refused entry to three different Oxford Houses and one independent sober living facility due to Chancellor. In one instance, the refusal was attributed to another resident's dog allergy; in other cases, the facilities either did not accept pets or had no space.

Chancellor is a documented service animal, which should mean that Thomas cannot be refused entry... however, in our experience, that has not happened. Currently, Thomas and Chancellor continue to live outside, facing the daily challenges of homelessness without a stable environment.

ONGOING EFFORTS

The h3 Project remains committed to finding a suitable placement accommodating both Thomas and Chancellor.

We continue to explore various options and resources in hopes of securing a safe and supportive living situation for them.

HEALTH CONCERNS

Recently, Chancellor developed a large tumor on his leg, approximately the size of a baseball. Thomas is understandably distressed about his dog's health, expressing deep fear over the possibility of losing Chancellor. He conveyed that he did not know how to continue living without his companion. We are working to connect Thomas with a veterinarian who can examine Chancellor's leg pro bono, as addressing this health concern is critical for both Thomas's and Chancellor's well-being.

CURRENT STATUS

Both Thomas and Chancellor remain outside, facing ongoing challenges related to housing, health, and mental well-being. The situation is precarious, and the urgency of finding a safe living arrangement is paramount.

CONCLUSION

Thomas's case highlights the complex interplay between homelessness, mental health, and the bond between individuals and their service animals. The h3 Project is dedicated to advocating for Thomas and Chancellor, working diligently to secure a suitable living arrangement that respects their needs and provides the stability they both deserve. Continued support and resources will be essential as we navigate this challenging situation.

GRANT COVERED

- 3 Ubers to different Oxford Houses in DC & VA
- Dog Toy & Water Bowl
- Clothing: 3 T-shirts, 2 Shorts, 3 Boxer Briefs, 3 Socks



THANK YOU TO OUR PILOT PROGRAM SPONSORS

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It is our daily commitment to create healthy, balanced communities for all DowntownDC residents – those who are housed and unhoused. Thank you in advance for your interest in helping the BID work to ensure that individuals experiencing homelessness reach the goal of housing.

Debra Kilpatrick Byrd
Director of Homeless Services

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