



# Non-Congregate Emergency Shelter

DISCUSSION WITH HOUSING, SAFETY & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

MAY 5, 2025

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## Non-Congregate Emergency Shelter

### Council Priority Alignment

- ▶ Great Neighborhoods and Safe Communities

### Purpose

- ▶ Provide update on potential opportunity to establish the city's first **non-congregate emergency shelter (NCES)** as a tool to address quality-of-life issues associated with the unhoused population
- ▶ Preview the NCES concept and intended public-private partnership, in advance of a possible future discussion with City Council (and subsequent request for Council action)

### Key Takeaways

- ▶ The local unhoused population faces and creates challenges that warrant a public-private sector response
- ▶ While there is no simple/single solution to address the unhoused population, local stakeholders view the NCES as an essential part of an integrated gameplan

# Non-Congregate Emergency Shelter: Why?

## Data

- ▶ According to the June 2024 Point-in-Time count data, there were **384 people experiencing unsheltered homelessness** in Mecklenburg County (a 33% increase from the prior year)
- ▶ According to a 2024 survey (of approximately 180 unsheltered residents) administered by UNC-Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, having “**more privacy**” was cited as the primary factor that would make the survey participants **more likely to use shelter services**

## Stakeholder Feedback

- ▶ Residents (mainly Uptown) cite persistent quality-of-life challenges associated with the unhoused
- ▶ Uptown employers have identified challenges associated with unhoused as a top priority
- ▶ Local stakeholders identified the NCES idea as the best starting point to address unhoused challenges

## Simplified Ecosystem Snapshot



# Non-Congregate Emergency Shelter: What?

## Defining Attributes of the NCES

- ▶ Non-congregate design (approximately 50 residential rooms)
- ▶ 24-hour shelter (i.e., guests not required to vacate each morning)
- ▶ Low-barrier entrance requirements
- ▶ Serve adults (including multi-member adult households without minor children)
- ▶ On-site medical care, mental health services, and substance use treatment
- ▶ Located in Mecklenburg County, but not in Uptown
- ▶ Transportation options embedded in the model
- ▶ Some shelter capacity earmarked for direct referrals from City/County street outreach partners

## Desired Model for Public-Private Partnership

- ▶ City-County collaboration to fund the acquisition and conversion/renovation of an existing building
- ▶ Private sector to fund first three years of operating costs for the shelter
- ▶ Qualified, experienced service provider to be selected (through a national search) to operate the shelter, and be responsible for advancing a sustainable financial model starting in year 4

# Non-Congregate Emergency Shelter: How?

## **Summary of Current Activities**

- ▶ Mecklenburg County has identified a site that appears suitable for the NCES concept
- ▶ United Way, in collaboration with County, City and certain local service providers, issued a Request For Interest (last week) to initiate the search for a qualified operating partner
- ▶ Private sector engagement is ongoing, with preliminary indications of support for the concept

## **Desired Timeline**

- ▶ End of 2025: finalize public-private sector funding coalition, secure site control, and select operating partner
- ▶ Summer 2026: open the NCES

## **Next Steps for City Council**

- ▶ The following three variables must advance – favorably – before this potential investment opportunity would be ready for a Council Action Review (and subsequent request for Council action): 1) Request For Interest, 2) site identification, and 3) funding coalition