

TRANSITIONAL SHELTER for the UNHOUSED: ADDRESSING SIGNIFICANT CONCERNS

➤ Concerns that those currently without housing are:

Dangerous criminals:

Residents are carefully screened to admit only sober, law-abiding residents. Residents sign agreements with the rest stop providers that they will abide by the rules and program expectations. On-site managers provide supervision. Best practices for water, handling and preparing food, cooking and cleaning, heating, waste management and illness prevention are followed. There is zero tolerance for violent behavior or alcohol or drug use onsite. Children must be supervised and are prohibited from staying overnight. Portable restrooms and trash collection are provided. Residents are expected to keep the site tidy, refrain from disruptive behavior and be good neighbors. The sites are also fenced to control access and promote safety. *Outreach Handbook: Eugene's Rest Stop & Car Camping Programs*, p. 37.

Research in Eugene has concluded:

- No considerable increase in reported criminal activity due to rest stops.
- 84% of neighboring residents and businesses were supportive of rest stops.

"Providing for the Unhoused: A Review of Transitional Housing Strategies in Eugene. 2015." Outreach Handbook: Eugene's Rest Stop & Car Camping Programs, p. 38.

Drug/alcohol-addicted:

Homelessness and addiction go hand in hand. The end result of homelessness is often substance abuse, and substance abuse often contributes to homelessness. The National Coalition for the Homeless has found that 38% of homeless people are alcohol dependent, and 26% are dependent on other harmful chemicals. [Addiction Center](#).

Mentally ill:

While 30% of homeless people overall suffer mental illness, the rate is significantly higher in female populations. 50% to 60% of homeless women suffer mental and emotional disturbances, often pre-dating their homelessness. [Addiction Center](#).

Lazy, good-for-nothings who don't want to work:

Today, most households become homeless because they simply do not make enough money to pay for housing. Low-income households are typically unemployed or underemployed due to a number of factors, such as a challenging labor market; limited education; a gap in work history; a criminal record; unreliable transportation or unstable housing; poor health or a disability. Those who are homeless face significant obstacles to finding and maintaining employment. Finding a home is a critical first step.

Some rest stop residents are employed; others receive assistance in finding employment and contributing more fully to our community. Job training and placement programs, such as those funded by the federal government, also provide the tools some people need to secure stable, long-term employment. Improving access to supportive services, such as childcare subsidies and transportation assistance, would also go a long way in helping people stay employed, achieve housing stability and remain housed. [Homelessness in America](#).

A Survey of Eugene's Rest Stop Residents reveals:

- 86% indicated that they had an increased ability to provide for themselves.
 - 71% felt that staying at the rest stop is helping them transition to permanent housing.
- "Providing for the Unhoused," Outreach Handbook: Eugene's Rest Stop & Car Camping Programs*, p. 38.

➤ **Concerns that if our community provides additional transitional housing:**

Other government services will lose needed funding:

Transitional housing can reduce public health care costs. Health and homelessness are inextricably linked. Health problems can cause a person's homelessness as well as be exacerbated by the experience. Housing is key to address the health needs of people experiencing homelessness and to reduce public healthcare expenses.

Property values will decline:

"I would say to my fellow Eugenians who might be nervous about one of these sites moving into their neighborhood, you have nothing to fear. The existing sites have demonstrated their good citizenship. I believe these residents are people who are serious about trying to improve their situation. As such, they deserve a little help from the rest of us, because in these times it's too easy to fall into their situation."
Jim Stauffer, Eugene. *Outreach Handbook: Eugene's Rest Stop & Car Camping Programs*, p. 38.

More people without housing will flock to this area:

Other communities have ended homelessness. Our community can provide another successful model.

Why provide additional transitional housing for those without shelter?

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." – *Matthew 25:40*

"But the stranger that dwells with you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself." – *Leviticus 19:34*

"Whoever alleviates [the situation of] one in dire straits who cannot repay his debt, Allah will alleviate his lot in both this world and in the Hereafter." – Muhammad

