

2016 Report of Saint Francis Center to the 130th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Colorado—October 12-14, 2017

The mission of Saint Francis Center is to reveal God's love for humanity by providing a safe place for people who are homeless in Metro Denver to meet their basic needs for day-to-day survival while offering them assistance to transition out of homelessness.

Executive Summary

St. Francis Center is responding to the cries of our brothers and sisters who are in desperate need. As the statistics in this annual report convey, while we are facing an uphill battle in terms of the sheer number of people we serve, we are able to tailor our programming to respond to the needs of those who rely on us. St. Francis Center plays a crucial role in guiding people as they find their way out of homelessness. We know that of the more than 10,000 different individuals we serve at the Day Center each year, more than 80% need our services for less than 34 days. And for those who need a bit more time, we will continue to provide services with dignity and respect. We also know that employment and housing is the way out of homelessness, and I could not be more proud that in 2016, we helped find jobs for 499 people, and helped another 335 find and maintain housing. The necessity of the services St. Francis Center offers has never been so clear, nor has the impact of our services. With Diocesan support, we can continue helping people put their lives back together.

Goal 1: To provide emergency services to adults who are homeless.

Projected Outcomes:

- Our day shelter will serve more than 750 different men and women a day, with close to 10,000 different people accessing shelter throughout the year.
- The St. Francis Center outreach team will have 14,500 encounters with homeless men and women, and connected many with shelter and emergency services.

Actual Outcomes:

- We provided shelter to 10,103 different guests, serving a daily average of 753 different people.
- Our outreach team had 12,488 encounters with homeless individuals in downtown Denver, helping hundreds access shelter, healthcare and emergency services.

Goal 2: To provide stabilizing services that help men and women end their homelessness.

Projected Outcomes:

- More than 1,200 men and women will receive employment services.
- The health clinic will provide high quality healthcare services to more than 1,100 different guests.
- More than 1,500 different men and women will receive help accessing resources such as birth certificates, bus tickets, transportation, and information/referrals through our Social Services staff.
- More than 90,000 units of clothing would be distributed.

Actual Outcomes:

- Employment Services served close to 818 different individuals and helped place people in 499 full-time jobs.
- The health clinic served 601 different guests, who visited the clinic over 1,343 times.
- Social Services staff served over 2,400 different individuals and provided over 6,380 different services.
- Guests visited the clothing room over 17,900 times, resulting in over 90,000 units of clothing being distributed.

Goal 3: To support men and women after they transition out of homelessness, helping them to continue to remain housed and meet goals for self-sufficiency.

Projected Outcomes:

- St. Francis Center will help 325 different people find or retain housing.
- Case managers will provide intensive support to residents in 69 units of housing.
- 90% of those receiving case management support will remain housed.

Actual Outcomes:

- St. Francis Center helped 335 different individuals find or retain housing.
- Case Managers provided intensive support to residents in 69 units of housing.
- 92% of those who received case management support across all SFC housing programs stayed either in supportive housing or moved on to other permanent housing arrangements.

A. Community Impact:

The shelter continues to help hundreds of people every day with emergency services and with support to transition out of homelessness. Grant funds helped allow us to keep a full schedule of hours and program services available to meet what continues to be a growing need in the Denver Metro area. Funds also helped us continue to be a key collaborative partner with the Women’s Homelessness Initiative to provide access and transportation to overnight shelter for women at area churches.

Unanticipated Results:

Our total Outreach Team encounters were down some as a result of some significant turnover over the last year on the Outreach Team, and also due to recent metro-wide changes in the housing referrals process which require more intensive engagement with individuals who are interested in pursuing housing from life directly on the streets. Also, due to staffing issues on the part of our partner Stout Street Health Clinic, our clinic hours have gone from seven days a week to five days a week, which has led to a lower number of people actually served versus what we projected.

Collaborations:

St. Francis Center continues to maximize resources by seeking partnerships with outside groups and having those groups provide services on-site. On-site partnerships include:

On-Site Partner	Service
Colorado Coalition for the Homeless (CCH)	Stout Street Clinic services operate at SFC. CCH also provides a benefits acquisition team at SFC

On-Site Partner	Service
Mental Health America of Colorado	Provides on-site mental health counseling resources at St. Francis Center
Veterans Administration	Provides on-site services for veterans at SFC
Catholic Worker Soup Kitchen	Provides a meal twice a week for guests
Denver Department of Human Services	Provides on-site benefits acquisition services to guests

In addition, we work with many community partners beyond the shelter walls. The Downtown Denver Partnership provides funding for street outreach, and Denver County’s workforce center system provides access to job listings. We partner with the Women’s Homelessness Initiative to provide transportation to and from local churches for overnight overflow shelter for women. We coordinate services with all area shelters through formal meetings and ongoing contacts. SC also provides leadership to the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative and Denver’s Road Home to coordinate with other agencies and reduce the number of people who are homeless in Denver.

B. Lessons Learned

The number of individuals we serve has remained fairly steady compared to previous years. Anecdotally, the stagnation of wages and the ever increasing cost of housing has created a very challenging landscape for poverty-stricken individuals. With the opening of the Denver Rescue Mission Lawrence Street Shelter, we have seen the number of individuals served on average each day drop by about 6%, but our total number served for the year has remained consistent or even grown relative to previous years.

We continue to see a high incidence of mental illness and substance abuse in our population, and we have begun working with the Denver Foundation on an expansion of our Mental Health/Wellness office to help lower barriers for those suffering from mental illness to access care resources. Our desire remains to provide one-on-one case management for every guest who comes into our facility, but given the heavy volume, this is not realistic. However, we have recently opened an Information Desk at our day shelter in an effort to provide as much individual care and assistance as possible to assist our guests with basic needs in regards to community supports, transportation assistance, and other information.

For the first time since St. Francis Center opened 33 years ago, our day shelter facility was open on the Fourth of July and Thanksgiving. This was in response to community partners who, due to the high number of individuals in need of assistance year-round, requested that we keep our services available to guests on these days. The need was apparent, as 611 individuals visited our shelter on July 4th, and 707 visited on Thanksgiving.

C. Future Plans

Future plans include being a major partner in the construction and operation of St. Francis Apartments at Cathedral Square, a new permanent supportive housing project which will open November 2017. We also are looking to expand the reach of our Employment Services program to facilitate more opportunities for our shelter guests, in addition to the high number of clients we serve in connection with the Department of Corrections. SFC is also in the final negotiations to assimilate assets and some programs from the closure of Denver Urban Matters. SFC will continue the Urban Education program, absorb DenUM employment services into existing SFC employment services, and in the long term build permanent supportive housing for previously homeless people on the site of DenUM’s building. SFC is also providing supplemental storage

for our guests through a City of Denver pilot program located at our Employment Services office.

St. Francis Center provides leadership and is actively involved in two community coalitions, Metro Denver Homeless Initiative and Denver Commission to End Homelessness, and shares information about its outcomes and lessons learned in these public forums. We publish an annual report to communicate our outcomes to our supporters. We publish a periodic newsletter and use social media channels to inform donors and the community of advocacy issues and advance the work of our mission.

We will continue collaboration as identified above and remain open to future partnerships, with specific attention directed towards underserved populations including women, individuals with mental illness, and individuals with mental and physical disabilities.