

Ravin Inn proposal:

As the Director of the Homeless Impact Division, I will always encourage opportunities to create low-income housing for people experiencing homelessness.

We are in dire need of housing that targets people who experience homelessness, have barriers to housing and have an income that is within 0-60% AMI (Area Median Income). Motels could provide an opportunity to create Single Resident Occupancy (SRO) Units.

The following aspects have to be considered when creating housing opportunities for people with severe barriers to housing (such barriers include a lack of income, legal background issues, evictions, severe and persistent mental health, physical disabilities, and health issues):

- Housing units in a single-site Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) setting for the most vulnerable people who have been experiencing long-term homelessness MUST include a strong model of support services including health, mental health, substance use, disabilities, and other services, as well as ongoing case management.
- Support services funding should be identified alongside the housing development proposal. The assumption that provider agencies will step up and bring the services without additional funds is not working. Service providers will request a funding source they can tap into, especially as high intensity services are needed to assist people.
- To serve the most vulnerable population, we must consider a low-barrier approach following the Housing First model, which is a best-practice focused on individualize support services approach and community-building to meet each person's needs and help them remain in housing long-term.
- A single-site location should specialize in either housing for individuals or housing for families and not mix the two populations. Having said that, Nashville lacks housing opportunities for individuals that meet the chronic definition of homelessness (as defined by the federal department of Housing and Urban Development) AND Nashville lacks the needed support services to address the underlying issues.
- Designated housing units should be filled through our community's coordinated entry process that identifies the most vulnerable people eligible for such housing.

In summary, the Homeless Impact Division of Metro Social Services supports the development of permanent housing opportunities for the most vulnerable individuals who experience chronic homelessness in our community. To make such an approach work, we have to include an intensive service model in the planning and funding process of such housing units.

Judith Tackett
Director
Metro Homeless Impact Division