



# New Microsite to Shelter People at Peace Presbyterian Church

## What is a microsite?

A microsite is a location that provides transitional shelter in the form of Conestoga huts to a small group of individuals experiencing homelessness. Up to six Conestoga huts are allowed via City Code 4.816. The site is managed by a nonprofit social service provider who is responsible for maintaining the site, providing supervision and oversight, and supporting the residents. It is similar to other transitional shelter models in Eugene whose goal is to provide safe, stable, temporary places for people experiencing homelessness to be, keep their belongings, and receive connections to services.

## Where is the new microsite?

The new microsite will be in the parking lot behind Peace Presbyterian Church, 3060 River Road. The site will include 6 Conestoga huts.



## Why was this site chosen?

Peace Presbyterian has hosted a Conestoga on this site for the past year. The City makes its best effort to find workable sites for this program that minimize impacts to neighbors and sensitive areas. The land must be suitable for the type of use (flat and relatively dry) and allow access for vehicles to service the site. Central locations near access to public transportation and services are important.

The Peace Presbyterian site is one of 8 new City-supported transitional shelter sites being opened in city limits in response to the need for non-congregate shelter during the COVID-19 pandemic. The new sites are located across the city.

## Who will operate and manage the site?

SquareOne Villages (SOV), the local nonprofit organization that operates Opportunity Village Eugene with 29 units, will operate the new microsite at Peace Presbyterian as well as a second site on property they own on Roosevelt Blvd. SOV also built Emerald Village Eugene, an affordable housing community of 22 tiny homes and has an agreement to purchase the vacant lot next to Peace Presbyterian to build a similar project there. Learn more at [www.squareonevillages.org](http://www.squareonevillages.org).



## Who will be staying at the microsite?

Individuals 18 or over who are experiencing homelessness are eligible to apply for a space. Applicants are screened to determine if they are a good fit. Once at the site, SOV will work to connect residents with support and resources to help them move toward a more permanent housing solution.

## How are the sites kept healthy and safe?

Residents sign agreements to abide by rules of the site, and the nonprofit operator provides ongoing supervision and oversight. There is zero tolerance for violent or threatening behavior, or alcohol or drug use onsite. Residents will use the church restrooms and will have access to an indoor food prep area. Overnight visitors are not allowed. Residents are expected to keep the site tidy, refrain from disruptive behavior and be good neighbors. Site management also includes weekly meetings of residents to discuss any concerns and ideas for site improvement.

### **Why are microsites being established?**

The number of people who are unsheltered in our community exceeds the number of shelter beds and low-income housing units currently available—a situation which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 outbreak as capacity at current shelters has decreased due to social distancing requirements. Identifying additional locations where people can safely and legally stay with basic infrastructure, hygiene stations, oversight and support has been a model that has proven to be very successful in Eugene. Programs under this model have demonstrated the transformation that people can experience when having a safe and secure place to be, stay dry, get their basic needs met, and receive support to increase their overall stability. Opportunity Village, opened in 2013, has been a highly successful model of transitional shelter that has been replicated in a number of communities across the country.

Establishing new rest stops (for up to 20 units) and microsites (for 6 units) increases our community's non-congregate shelter capacity which keeps more of our unhoused community safe in the midst of our ongoing COVID-19 environment and with the onset of winter. These programs also reduce the number of people illegally camping in unsafe and unsanctioned spaces.

### **How long will the site be at Peace Presbyterian Church?**

The site will operate for at least a year. Should the microsite be unable to meet its goals of adequately supporting people, complying with rules of the program, and being good neighbors, the City or SOV may close the site before then. After 12 months of operation, the City will evaluate whether the site should continue.

### **What are the next steps?**

Site preparation is underway. The site is expected to be operating by January, providing unhoused individuals with shelter during the cold weather season.

### **Who do I contact if I have a concern or question?**

If you have general questions or concerns about this program, please contact Regan Watjus in the City Manager's Office at [RWatjus@eugene-or.gov](mailto:RWatjus@eugene-or.gov) or 541-682-8442. If you have specific operational concerns or questions related to the site or the program once it is operating, you may choose to contact SOV directly during their business hours at (541) 525-0501.

Learn more about the City's efforts to address homelessness at [www.eugene-or.gov/homelessness](http://www.eugene-or.gov/homelessness).

