

Developmental Outlines

*Principles for designing affordable housing
in the Denver Metropolitan Area*

In light of homelessness statistics in the Denver Metropolitan Area, this design and development proposal outlines a new developmental strategy in order to create and maintain new affordable housing.

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Section 1: Introduction

Current Housing issues

Unfortunately, in previous years, Denver's homeless housing programs have been relatively decentralized and ultimately lacking. According to information from the *Denver Voice*, from 2015 to 2018, while the sheltered homeless population has been steadily decreasing, the unsheltered population has been increasing. The *Denver Post* also reports that over the past 5 years, 2016 – 2020, Denver's homeless population has increased by 15%. According to a study of homelessness in American metropolitan areas, the Bay Area Council Economic Council in 2017 determined that Denver had similar proportions of permanently housed homeless individuals as New York City and San Diego who have been suffering with their own homelessness issues. Many programs that already exist to help homeless individuals and families get into permanent housing simply do not have the resources or reach needed to help everyone that needs it.

Basic Goals

My proposal is to utilize the rampant gentrification and development that has hit the Denver metro area in recent years to create new, affordable, and sustainable homes for those that are homeless. This could be through brand new construction or through the refit of old unused hotels, apartments, or office blocks as well.

Assisting Those In Need

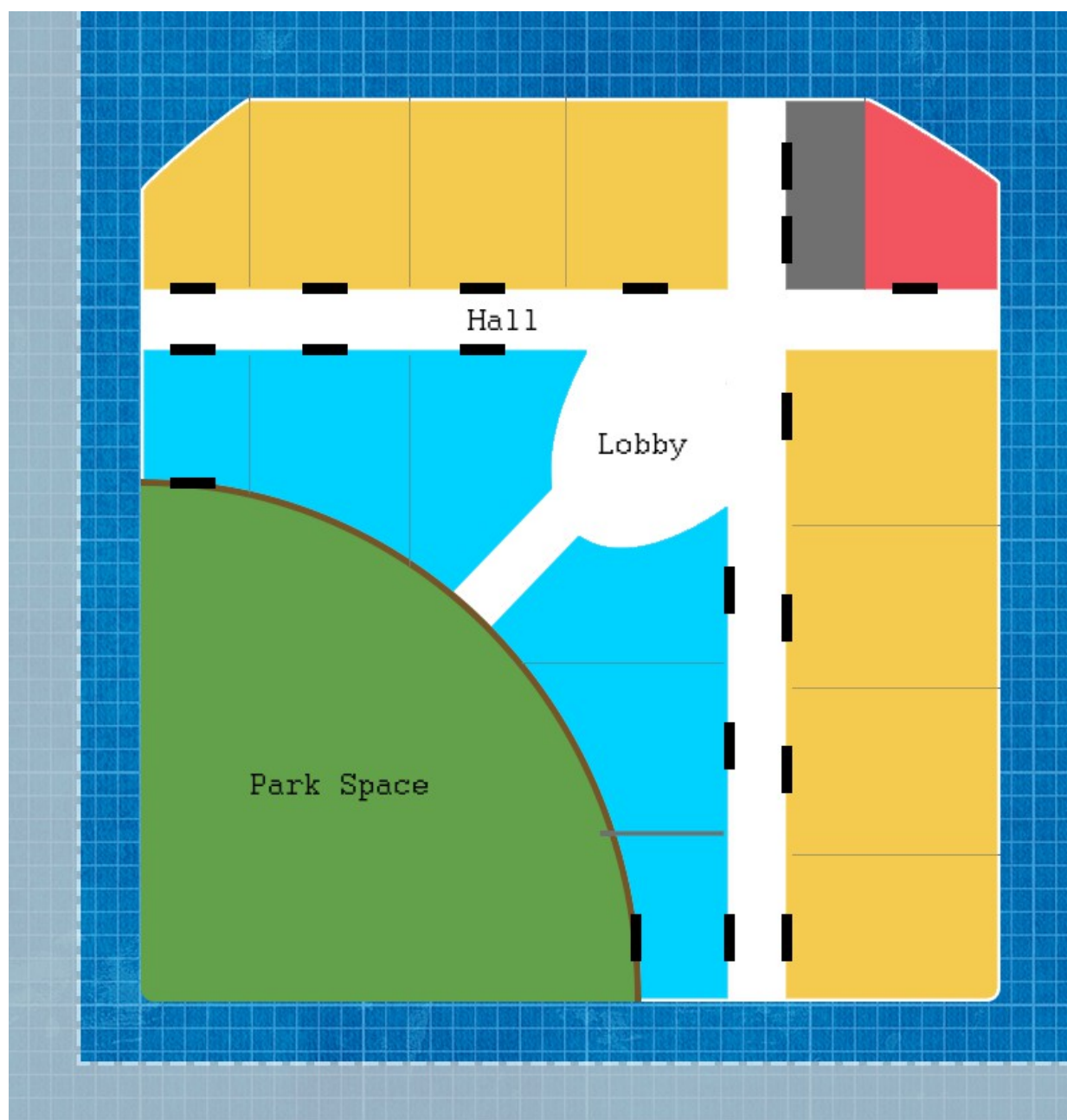
I plan to accomplish a sustainable affordable housing program for homeless individuals by designing a kind of multi-class community-based housing complex that would fit well visually and structurally to the kinds of heavily gentrified developments already happening in Denver. It is my belief that providing developers with an alternative to gentrification tactics that tend to be an alternative banking system, that instead provides community space and future economic development, could be hugely beneficial for the city, the people, and the developers in the long run.

Section 2: Design and Planning

Design Precedence

The core design of these new multi-class apartments is centered around community spaces and places where people of all socioeconomic status can feel comfortable interacting with their neighbors. In consideration of this, I propose 3 main foci of design: A large, central courtyard area, for gathering, meeting, and socializing, surrounded by storefront space for shops and services; Lobby areas throughout the building based around being gathering spaces; Relatively open-designed units to encourage the intermingling of residents.

Layout



Key:

Yellow - Rooms • Blue - Store/business space • Red - Building Office • Grey - Elevators

Centered on the idea of maintaining a healthy sense of community, this apartment design would allow for organic mingling of individuals as they go about their days. Hallway intersections would be expanded into small communal areas, and lobbies would have plenty of natural light and areas to sit, study, work, or mingle.



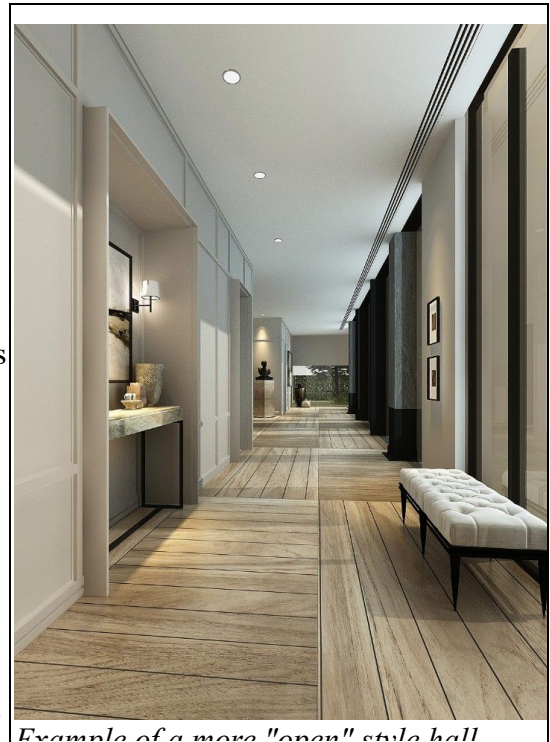
Contemporary Denver-Style Apartment; Aside from a concave shape for the courtyard space, my proposed complex would have a similar style in order to fit in well

Public Space

The large central courtyard area would be designed with community first. Spaces for casual gathering and for children to play would be integral to the courtyard area, such as small playgrounds and/or markings in the courtyard to help facilitate children's games like hopscotch, 4-square, or similar games. More open courtyards could even have things like hoops for basketball or soccer goals. Along with these, there would be open walkways to allow easy movement between parts of the building and outside of the complex. Storefronts would be available for lease on the courtyard. However some would be reserved for services, like family planning, childcare, bank branches, and even general medical practitioners, that may be required by the residents, while others would be open to traditional businesses. Not only does this plan take into consideration the needs of those living in the complex, but also mimics the spirit of Denver development in places such as the 16th Street Mall, providing open-air gathering spaces and cultural areas where members of the community can congregate.

Private Space

Finally, the most obscure and perhaps radical idea of the three: making more open-style housing for the units. In this I am trying to bring the feeling of a neighborhood street indoors, like how people can see and mingle with each other while walking down their street. Giving hallways less of a claustrophobic “endless hall of doors” feeling, bringing in more natural light through mirrored skylights such as solar tubes, and providing small porch-like areas in front of home units to help encourage this style of community. Widening the hallways as well would be integral to this open feeling, as well as higher ceilings. The idea would be to have enough space to make a hallway feel more like a sidewalk than a closed in hallway.



Section 3: Third-Party Involvement

Government of Denver

A project of this scale can easily grow too large for a city to handle, and as such, the City of Denver would need to take certain measures to prevent too much red tape. The City of Denver already contains 130 advisory boards and commissions. Rolling these projects into existing boards or local commissions would help cut down on any extra bureaucracy the city already needs to handle, as well as allowing localized commissions more oversight on the construction and development of given complexes. For example, the Cherry Creek North Design Advisory Board, which oversee new development in the Cherry Creek North Area. Their oversight would assist in designing a complex that could blend in to the local Cherry Creek feeling, as well as having a close-to-the ground perspective about the wants and needs of the Cherry Creek community. Local commissions and boards would have a better idea of what certain neighborhoods of Denver have a need for and could tailor each of the complexes to these needs, providing more or less incentives to developers, and even changing certain parts of the plans such as the amount of space reserved for shops and services should the need arise.

Real-estate Developers

There are already several proven incentives for affordable real estate development that have already been implemented in places such as San Mateo County and the city of Boston. These include options such as Density bonuses, expedited permissions for construction, fee waivers or reductions, and special zoning permissions. Many inclusionary or affordable housing incentives that already exist allow developers to build denser and more profitable housing if they include a certain percentage of affordable housing units. As it applies to this project, I believe the allowance of a certain amount of extra units to increase density would be a reasonable incentive to give. However, an extra incentive of special developmental zones adjacent to the proposed complexes would be a powerful incentive as well. This secondary incentive would encourage developers to not only construct the projected complexes, but to also develop the economies in the surrounding neighborhoods. One way this is accomplished simply by having a more dense complex of all kinds of people. This allows for more kinds of businesses to be attracted to the areas around these complexes. Far from just being a better

version of urbanization, increasing population density, it's easier to know where the people who require assistance are and the city of Denver can more effectively roll out assistance programs in and around these complexes without having to plan as much as they do already based on statistics of local residents.

Humanitarian organizations

A key part of the ultimate success of this proposal is the partnership of local humanitarian organizations, such as Denver Homeless Out Loud, Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, and Denver Rescue Mission. As part of the public space on the ground floor of the buildings would be office spaces specifically for organizations that provide services such as family planning, counseling, childcare, etc. so that they can be as close as possible to the people who need their services.

Citations

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[King, this works pretty well. Your basic content and organization works well. I think you could add even more examples for clarification and support throughout (see my comments on the side), but your overall points and organization work. You should design the first page more like the

example you sent with a tile and a forecasting sentence of what your plan is about. You also could include some visuals throughout to show an example layout of your courtyard and indoor idea. This is a good start though! 12.5/15]