Patti J. McAtee

April 8, 2025

Mr. Christopher Gibbons
Planning Manager, Community Development Department
City of Council Bluffs
209 Pearl Street
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503

RE: CASE #PR-24-001
Applicant/Property Owner: Heidi Mazel, 12618 Polo Place, Broomfield, CO 80020
Representative: Gabrielle (Gabby) Dowdy, 1003 High Street, Council Bluffs, IA 51503

Dear Mr. Gibbons,

As a lifelong resident of Council Bluffs, I would like to share my support for The Upper Room and the work Gabby Dowdy is doing in our community. I am writing in support of the request to allow a 'boarding, lodging, rooming house' at 1003 High Street.

I currently serve on the Council Bluffs Airport Authority board of directors, and have volunteered and served on several boards and advisory committees of non-profit organizations over the past 30 years. More recently, I have focused my career on promoting regional economic development in both Iowa and Nebraska.

Last year I met Gabby at Crossroads Church and learned about The Upper Room and the mission of this non-profit organization. I personally know how passionate Gabby is about making a positive impact on our community through this supportive housing initiative and the services they offer to help women transform their lives.

While I agree that Council Bluffs needs to continue to monitor future development plans for multi-family residential use, I disagree that this would set a bad precedent for future projects in the City. Gabby understands and recognizes that there are local regulations that she must be compliant with and has gone through the appropriate channels to get this multi-family housing project up and running to the best of her ability. This has included multiple meetings, phone calls and emails with city officials, community leaders, and other non-profit organizations.

As I have learned through the years city governments must be 'firm, but fair' with their development plans, but I also believe there is room for compromise with both parties. I am praying that the City of Council Bluffs makes a 'firm, but fair' decision when it comes to moving forward with the development plan for The Upper Room so that they may be able to help more women and their families in our community.

During my first conversation with Gabby she stated, "I praise God everyday that we live in this special city," and I could not agree with her more. We do live in a special city and I am reminded daily of the special people that work behind-the-scenes to make Council Bluffs a better place to live, work and play. Thank you for your time and consideration. I will continue to keep the faith and pray that the City of Council Bluffs approves this request.

Blessings,

Patti J. McAtee

22465 Three Bridge Road . Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503
402.968.8308 . pmcatee2@gmail.com

Patti J. McAtee

April 8, 2025

Mr. Christopher Gibbons
Planning Manager, Community Development Department
City of Council Bluffs
209 Pearl Street
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503

RE: CASE #PR-24-001
Applicant/Property Owner: Heidi Mazel, 12618 Polo Place, Broomfield, CO 80020
Representative: Gabrielle (Gabby) Dowdy, 1003 High Street, Council Bluffs, IA 51503

Dear Mr. Gibbons,

As a lifelong resident of Council Bluffs, I would like to share my support for The Upper Room and the work Gabby Dowdy is doing in our community. I am writing in support of the request to allow a 'boarding, lodging, rooming house' at 1003 High Street.

I currently serve on the Council Bluffs Airport Authority board of directors, and have volunteered and served on several boards and advisory committees of non-profit organizations over the past 30 years. More recently, I have focused my career on promoting regional economic development in both Iowa and Nebraska.

Last year I met Gabby at Crossroads Church and learned about The Upper Room and the mission of this non-profit organization. I personally know how passionate Gabby is about making a positive impact on our community through this supportive housing initiative and the services they offer to help women transform their lives.

While I agree that Council Bluffs needs to continue to monitor future development plans for multi-family residential use, I disagree that this would set a bad precedent for future projects in the City. Gabby understands and recognizes that there are local regulations that she must be compliant with and has gone through the appropriate channels to get this multi-family housing project up and running to the best of her ability. This has included multiple meetings, phone calls and emails with city officials, community leaders, and other non-profit organizations.

As I have learned through the years city governments must be 'firm, but fair' with their development plans, but I also believe there is room for compromise with both parties. I am praying that the City of Council Bluffs makes a 'firm, but fair' decision when it comes to moving forward with the development plan for The Upper Room so that they may be able to help more women and their families in our community.

During my first conversation with Gabby she stated, "I praise God everyday that we live in this special city," and I could not agree with her more. We do live in a special city and I am reminded daily of the special people that work behind-the-scenes to make Council Bluffs a better place to live, work and play. Thank you for your time and consideration. I will continue to keep the faith and pray that the City of Council Bluffs approves this request.

Blessings,

Patti J. McAtee

22465 Three Bridge Road . Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503
402.968.8308 . pmcatee2@gmail.com

Town Council Meeting

Apr 7, 2025

Re: The Upper Room

1003 High Street

Council Bluffs, IA 51503

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of The Upper Room and Gabby Dowdy to express my unwavering support for their mission to establish a stabilization home at 1003 High Street, Council Bluffs, IA 51503. With over a decade of experience working alongside individuals emerging from crises involving addiction, trauma, and mental illness, I have witnessed firsthand the profound need for such homes across the United States. It is imperative to increase the availability of these residential stabilization homes to integrate these individuals into our communities, rather than marginalizing them due to unfounded fears.

Some may have concerns about the potential impact on neighborhood safety and crime rates. However, research indicates supportive housing programs significantly reduce emergency service utilization and interactions with the criminal justice system. For instance, Denver's Supportive Housing Social Impact Bond (SIB) initiative demonstrated a 40% reduction in arrests and a 34% decrease in police contacts among participants of stabilization homes over three years.

The women, who will be housed in The Upper Room stabilization home, will be held accountable for transforming their lives. Within these supportive environments, residents often achieve significant personal milestones: obtaining their GEDs, securing gainful employment, and accessing opportunities previously beyond their reach. Many experience genuine love and care for the first time, fostering healing and personal growth. These homes are sanctuaries where brokenness is mended, dreams are realized, and lives are profoundly transformed.

It should be recognized that one can never fully know the backgrounds of those who move into our neighborhoods. In this instance, neighbors are informed about the home's

purpose: to aid those who have experienced trauma and hardship. Our response should be one of support and inclusion, not exclusion based on personal discomfort or fear.

Studies have shown that supportive housing programs have high success rates in maintaining housing stability. For example, 86% of participants in Denver remained in stable housing one year after moving in, with rates of 81% after two years and 77% after three years. By welcoming a stabilization home into your neighborhood, you will be fostering an environment of support and unity, which can strengthen the fabric of your community.

Furthermore, supportive housing is a cost-effective solution for addressing chronic homelessness and associated challenges. In New York City, the average daily cost to house an individual in a homeless shelter is approximately $124, while the price rises to $201 per day for a family. In contrast, supportive housing reduces these expenses and alleviates the financial burden on emergency services and the criminal justice system. For instance, the cost of incarcerating an individual at Rikers Island is approximately $1,525 per day, highlighting the economic advantage of providing supportive housing alternatives.

In conclusion, establishing The Upper Room's stabilization home represents a compassionate and pragmatic approach to addressing the needs of women striving to overcome adversity. By supporting this ministry, you aid these individuals on their recovery journey and enrich our community through increased cohesion, safety, and shared humanity. I urge you to approve the opening of this home and join us in embracing a future where our neighborhoods stand as a beacon of hope and support for those in need.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jessi K. Burge

Founder, Executive Director

7173 S. Havana Street, Suite 600-305

Centennial, CO 80112

Sources:

Denver Supportive Housing Social Impact Bond Initiative (SIB):

- Urban Institute: https://www.urban.org/policy-centers/metropolitan-housing-and-communities-policy-center/projects/denver-supportive-housing-social-impact-bond-initiative

New York City Supportive Housing & Cost Analysis:

- Columbia University Housing Lab: https://www.arch.columbia.edu/research/labs/15-housing-lab/question6
- The Fortune Society: https://fortunesociety.org/media_center/opinion-supportive-housing-can-help-break-the-cycle-between-homelessness-and-incarceration

Taletha Pettis
Case Consultant
Timlin & Rye P.C.
899 Logan st. Ste 203
Denver CO 80203

April 4, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:
My name is Taletha Pettis, and I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Shannon's Hope in Colorado. I have worked in the field of child protection for over 25 years, and in that time, I have been blessed to collaborate with Shannon's Hope on numerous occasions. I can attest that I have had many clients who would not have achieved success without the support and safety provided by this program.

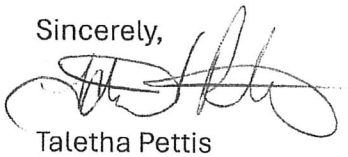
Shannon's Hope is instrumental in assisting women, who have typically experienced some type of trauma, in either keeping their children in their care or being reunified with their children. I have seen firsthand the positive impact they have on the lives of vulnerable families. I have had the pleasure of visiting this facility on many occasions, and I have never witnessed any concerns regarding interactions with the neighbors. The home is consistently kept clean and in a manner that is community friendly, reflecting the program's commitment to being a valuable and respectful member of the neighborhood.

What truly sets Shannon's Hope apart is their unique and effective approach. This facility excels at meeting people where they are, without resorting to shaming or blaming tactics. They understand and respect that we are all unique individuals with different needs and challenges. The opportunities offered through this community-based program remove some of the stigma often associated with asking for help. It fosters a supportive environment where individuals can grow and learn at their own pace, with the guidance of compassionate and skilled professionals.

In my professional experience, programs like Shannon's Hope are crucial to the well-being of our community. They provide essential services that empower families to overcome adversity and create brighter futures for themselves and their children.

I wholeheartedly support Shannon's Hope and believe their work is invaluable to the families and the community they serve. I urge you to consider their positive impact and lend your support to their mission.

Sincerely,



Taletha Pettis
303-345-7335

Respectfully to the members of Council Bluffs City Council, Council Bluffs Iowa

Re: Upper Room (and Shannon's Hope)

Even the best of our communities has challenges in helping its most vulnerable, which is too often homeless mothers and children and exploited individual women. Shannon's Hope has been successful for decades in offering an in-depth supportive program not only for individuals in need but also for tackling this critical local Community need. The success of coordinating volunteers and resources (including churches and service organizations) to help relieve this growing community concern is reflected in the accolades of many other community representatives.

Some of the benefits and extraordinary support of this program to qualified individuals and to our Community include:

1. Safety. Established protocols protect participants and the Community through a safe and loving environment from commencement through final completion and graduation from individualized programs.
2. Motivation and qualification of participants includes their willingness to pass initial protocol requirements and their commitment to an individualized program proven to be successful over the decades.
3. Opportunity for community volunteers, professionals, and public services for comprehensive and cooperative support as needed.
4. Assimilation of individuals into the local Community as active and productive citizens and family members
5. Growth of local Community members by an opportunity to participate in collaborative purpose-driven support

The Community also enjoys some relief from financial, organizational, and departmental pressures by private funding and volunteer efforts. The local neighborhood enjoys the more orderly flow of productive relationships. Program participants find strength and purpose in becoming vibrant members of our local Community.

The Upper Room and Shannon's Hope provide a proven Win-Win for all parties and have my full support and appreciation.

Rick Lunnon

720-363-6287

Arvada, Colorado

Personal Recommendation

I have known Gabby for more than four years now prior to the time that she came from Refined to work with us at Shannon's Hope. In her role as Programs Director, she plans for and facilitates educational training which provides a base for our client's future employment and life-skills necessities. She has proven to exceed all my expectations of leadership, reliability, and integrity. Her selfless devotion to our clients at Shannon's Hope has been mixed with powerful organizational and leadership skills that have benefited all. She is one of the best decision makers I have been around and shows wisdom in handling conflict. I am thrilled to see her step out in a foundational role with our new home in Council Bluffs. Over the last four years she has been invested with, not only the care of many individuals, but also the balance of being responsible to a larger group of under resourced, homeless women. Her honesty stands out as a powerful fundamental trait that allows for consistent care of individuals as well as a binding force for the staff and board members of Shannon's Hope. She has the mettle of an experience combat veteran as well as the deep sensitivity to share tears with women in need. I highly recommend her as a model citizen, a trustworthy, mentor, as an example of integrity that will benefit the council Bluffs community and her neighborhood in particular. I'm certain her beneficial impact to the community will be felt beyond the individuals rescued from the streets where less homelessness will be evidenced. Each person she rescues from homelessness is one more for whom Council Bluffs doesn't have to provide. As president of the having served as president of the Shannon's Hope board of directors for the last four years, and as a personal friend, I heartily recommend, without reservation, Gabby Dowdy as founder and director of the Upper Room.

Sincerely

Gary Tucker

President, Shannon's Hope Board of Directors

KEEPING IT CIMPLE | SHANNON WOODS

8910 Ralston Road, STE 102 | Arvada, CO 80002 | keepingcimple@gmail.com | 720-270-4899

April 7, 2025

Dear members of Iowa City Hall,

I'm Shannon Woods, Grants /Special Project Manager and small business owner, I would like to offer my endorsement of expanding the Ministry / Mission of Shannon's Hope in Colorado through the opening of the Upper Room in Iowa. The Upper Room will be able to offer your community resources and support specifically Women and Children in need of the options, resources, education and hope.

Shannon's Hope Ministry has more than forty (40) years of experience and has made a difference to innumerable women and their unborn/ born children. I am personally very proud to be in the community and witness "families" /women become success stories through the ministry. In fact, the first true success story is the founder of Shannon's Hope Ministry starting the ministry from her own personal tragedy and now the ministry has become a safe place for countless women and children; over the last four decades.

I believe I can provide significant assistance to this project by ensuring communication and transparency at the Upper Room. In addition, I will be offering my support finding grants and private donations for the Upper Room to become a safe place for women and children in need in your community.

In conclusion, I would like to endorse expanding Shannon's Hope Ministry in Colorado and the Upper Room of Iowa which will benefit the surrounding community of Iowa by offering key resources, options and education to Women in need. Ultimately the program will make a difference for your community through reducing domestic violence, mental health resources (including substance abuse), homelessness and unemployment.

Sincerely,



Shannon Woods
keepingcimple@gmail.com
720-270-4899