



Memorandum

TO: Kevin J. Jackson, Village Manager 
FROM: Kira Tchang, Assistant Village Manager/HR Director 
FOR: Village President and Board of Trustees
DATE: November 6, 2023

SUBJECT: Update Regarding Asylum Seeking Migrants in Oak Park (New Arrivals)

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Board with an update regarding staff's response to the asylum-seeking migrants currently located at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, including preliminary financial analysis, and the current and anticipated operational impact of the Village's emergency response efforts.

Background

Over 100 asylum-seeking migrants are currently in temporary shelter at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and have been sheltering there since the early hours of November 1, 2023 when they were transported from tents located outside the Chicago Police Department's 15th District (the 15th District) station. Village staff have been providing emergency support which began with the arrival of the migrants in Oak Park. This support has focused primarily on public health services, public safety services, interpreter services, and general coordination and support of the temporary church shelter site.

The Village activated its emergency operations center (EOC) on November 1, 2023 and the Village Board subsequently adopted a resolution declaring an emergency on November 2, 2023, granting the Village Manager emergency purchasing and contracting authority through December 4, 2023. It is understood that all purchasing and contracting authority must be within the \$150,000 of general funds allocated for this purpose by the Board of Trustees on October 30, 2023, and the \$150,000 in funding that the Village was initially awarded through the Supporting Municipalities for Asylum Seeker Services (SMASS) grant. Staff have been notified via the Illinois Department of Human Services that the Village will receive an additional \$250,000 in SMASS grant funding.

As of November 3, 2023, staff continue to provide services and coordination at the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church site which currently shelters approximately 120 individuals. Though staff have become aware of other community volunteer efforts which have led to three additional reported temporary shelters in the Village, staff had limited information regarding these sites and the Village is not currently involved in coordination or service provision at these or any other unknown volunteer-led sites.

Temporary Housing Plan for Shelter

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church has agreed to provide temporary shelter through Saturday, November 11, 2023 and staff have been working to identify alternate temporary housing solutions for those individuals currently sheltering at the Church that are safe, available and cost effective. Through existing partnerships, staff have identified two potential short-term solutions: the West Cook YMCA, and the Carleton Hotel.

The West Cook YMCA has agreed to make one floor (40 rooms) available to women, children and families beginning later this week. Rooms are designed to be single room occupancy; however, these rooms can accommodate up to three individuals and meet the Village's standards for occupancy. The cost of 40 rooms, which can be used to house up to 50 individuals in total, is \$8,000 per month. Staff is working to identify other costs for furniture, materials and additional services (i.e., maintenance/janitorial) that would be required to house a large number of people in the space. Additional rooms may be available on a rolling basis for single males at a rate of \$250 per month.

The Carleton Hotel has 13 rooms available later this week (with additional rooms becoming available later this month) which can accommodate up to five individuals per room and meet the Village's standard for occupancy. The cost of each room is a discounted rate of \$80 per night and these rooms are available for up to 28 days. Stays at the Carleton Hotel cannot exceed 30 days due to tenants' rights which could allow persons to overstay without any funding in place.

Based on this availability the Village can house all women, children and family units currently residing in the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church basement.

The West Cook YMCA and the Carleton make up the majority of available, temporary, short-term housing that exists within the Oak Park community. The use of these rooms will exhaust most of the existing housing options, leaving extremely limited options for any future or additional asylum-seeking migrants. Up to nine individuals can shelter in the Oak Park Police station lobby. Staff are currently seeking to locate additional arrangements for temporary outdoor or indoor shelters and this would necessitate a wide range of additional resources.

It is important to note that staff have been informed that asylum-seeking migrants who are relocated to Oak Park from Chicago lose their opportunity to gain housing through the existing City of Chicago shelter and welfare plan. This plan is designed to provide both temporary shelter and more permanent, stable housing and includes a formal care plan for wraparound services. There are asylum seekers who have indicated to staff that they would like to return to Chicago, however staff is working to gain clarity regarding the status of these individuals should they return to the 15th District Police Station or another Chicago location.

Expenses Accrued to Date

For the period of time from November 1, 2023 through November 6, 2023 staff have accrued the following costs:

Food	\$3,705.38
Medical	\$282.31
Miscellaneous	\$34.56
Transportation	\$30.00
Security	\$20,412.00

Language Access	\$15,840.00
Total	\$40,304.25

Additional expenses listed here do not include in kind contributions related to staff salaries or overtime, not does it include utility expenses associated with the temporary shelter location.

Estimated Costs Moving Forward

These costs are provided for the purpose of illustrating anticipated expenses for housing 120 individuals for a one-month period. This timeframe was identified based on logistical realities and the existing emergency declaration which expires December 6, 2023. Staff are working with providers to develop and finalize preliminary discussions which may impact final actual costs.

Housing (Carleton Hotel - 13 Rooms)	\$29,120.00
Housing (Carleton Hotel, additional as needed up to 9)	\$20,160.00
Housing (YMCA - 4 th Floor)	\$8,000.00
Housing (YMCA - 20 additional SROs)	\$5,000.00
Housing Supplies (YMCA - cots, bedding, towels)	\$22,000.00
Housing (YMCA Staffing)	Forthcoming
Housing (YMCA Housekeeping)	Forthcoming
Housing (YMCA Programming)	To be determined
Food (YMCA - 120 people - 1 meal/day)	\$45,000.00
Wraparound Services (Housing Forward)	\$60,000.00
Language Access (2 interpreters x 12 hrs/day)	\$118,800.00
Security	\$60,000.00
Health Dept. Services (Medication)	\$1,500.00
Transportation	Forthcoming
Total	\$369,580+

Wraparound services included in Housing Forward’s proposal include staffing for assessment, intake, service coordination from 9-5 pm, volunteer management, behavioral health support, a \$3,000 transportation budget, laundry service, and program administration. Housing Forward is only able to respond to this emergent issue by reallocating existing staff from responding to the current unhoused within the community and shifting resources to the asylum-seeking migrant response.

This estimate does not include the costs associated with St. Catherine/St. Lucy’s current showering program which are estimated to be \$1,200/month based on the past 2 billing cycles.

Community Volunteer Plan for Shelter

It is estimated that approximately 60 individuals are currently sheltering at a church in Oak Park. The efforts have been solely volunteer-led at this location. Staff have been made aware that the church can no longer provide shelter beginning on Tuesday, November 7th. Other faith-based communities have been identified who may be able to temporarily shelter some of these individuals. Three churches have indicated they may be able to accommodate up to 62 individuals collectively, however these churches would be seeking varying levels of service and coordination from the Village should the asylum-seeking migrants be relocated. This would result in additional expenses and the reallocation of personnel. Staff are following up on specific needs from the available churches.

It is estimated that approximately 20 individuals are currently sheltering at Calvary Memorial Church. The efforts have been solely volunteer-led at this location. The church has committed to providing shelter for 30-60 days, however there are limited resources and the church is seeking a location for individuals to shower.

Emergency Response – Operational Impacts

The Emergency Operation Center was activated on November 1, 2023. Senior Staff have been dedicating significant time and resources to the emergency response and hold critical roles in the EOC structure.

The Village's Health Director, Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, and Emergency Preparedness Coordinator have been staffing the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church shelter location around the clock since November 1, 2023. Additionally, staff from the Health Department have been providing health services during regular business hours and the police department has provided security details the nights of November 1st through 3rd. Calls for Fire Department/EMS and Police Department services have occurred at the Good Shepherd location. The emergency response has disrupted regular day-to-day operations as individuals have been responding. In particular the Village Manager's Office and Health Department have been primarily diverted to focus on the asylum-seeking migrant arrival. Large-scale projects including collective bargaining, alternative calls for response model, and the racial equity assessment have been delayed. Additional projects may be impacted as the response evolves.