



The Bridge: The Facts

Creating a space for civility, community and hope

Mission statement: Within a safe and respectful environment, The Bridge provides a seasonal shelter for adults as well as opportunities for transitional housing for those seeking greater independence.

History

- The Bridge was established in 2006 to address the problems of homelessness and hypothermia in the city of Cortez.
- During its sheltering season (October to April), The Bridge houses an average of 35 guests per night. Guests receive meals, including breakfast and dinner.
- COVID-19 impact during 2020-2021: Due to social distancing and health mandates, The Bridge has been housing an average of 10 to 20 guests per night.
- In its early years, The Bridge was staffed only by volunteers. Today, it operates with a staff of 13 and continues to depend on its many volunteers.
- Originally housed at the old Justice Building, The Bridge opened a new facility in 2019. It is located at the corners of Park and Empire.
- The Bridge is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with a nine-member board.

Services

- **Sheltering:** The Bridge provides seasonal shelter for people experiencing homelessness during a seven-month season (October to April). More than providing emergency housing, The Bridge offers support services such as meals, free laundry, hygiene facilities (showers and bathrooms), and referrals to services such as work opportunities, case management and health care.
- **Transitional housing:** The Bridge offers low-cost apartments for those already working towards independent living. The apartments are rented to people for six months at a time to enable people to stabilize their lives and gain greater independence.

Guests who utilize The Bridge

- Male: 82%; Female: 18%
- Ages: Adults 18 and older
- Working poor: While each year, the population of guests utilizing The Bridge changes, the number of guests working full- or part-time has increased.

The Bridge facility:

- On the first floor, The Bridge provides sheltering for 26 people, a sobering space for up to 15 people and office space. The second floor can house up to 25 formerly homeless people in 1 - 2 bedroom apartments. The transitional apartments generate income to offset costs of the sheltering operations.
- When it opened in 2019, The Bridge facility was the first of its kind in Colorado to include sheltering, transitional apartments and day labor opportunities under one roof.



The community as “Bridge Builders”

The Bridge opened its new \$2.8 million facility with financial support of more than \$185,000 from local foundations, businesses and community members. It also received grants from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs and support from foundations outside of the region. The Bridge continues to receive strong financial, volunteer and community-wide support.

More information, contact:

Visit: thebridgeshelter.org

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