



The “Aston” Good Neighbor Protocol

Background and Purpose

The District of Columbia, as part of its efforts to create non-congregate bridge housing options, purchased the Aston to provide a dignified environment for District residents who are best served in non-shelter facilities. The Aston Non-Congregate Bridge Housing (NCBH) facility, located in Ward 2 at 1129 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, will serve:

- Adults matched to a permanent housing resource through the District’s Continuum of Care.
- Adults who cannot be served in low-barrier shelters, or who would be better served in a non-congregate setting, such as those living in encampments.
- Couples and adult families.

The Aston will be used for non-congregate bridge housing. It will not be used for low-barrier shelter.

The purpose of this Good Neighbor Protocol (GNP) is to outline the shared goals and responsibilities of the contracted service provider, Friendship Place (FP) (which was selected by the Continuum of Care (CoC) lead); The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness (TCP); the Department of Human Services (DHS); the Department of General Services (DGS); and neighbors (including both residents and businesses) in the surrounding area; in establishing and maintaining positive and productive relationships.

This Good Neighbor Protocol was created by the Aston Community Advisory Team (CAT), and may be amended as described in Section I (“Good Neighbor Protocol Governance”).

Shared Goals

The parties to this GNP agree that our community is stronger when we support each other. The parties acknowledge the following goals of the GNP:

- To facilitate transparent, accurate and timely communication in all matters pertaining to the Aston’s impact on the community.
- To serve as a framework that allows the parties to work collaboratively to address concerns and solve problems.
- To maintain a peaceful, safe, and clean neighborhood.

Partners to this Protocol

The Department of Human Services (DHS), through contracts with nonprofit service providers, is the District government entity responsible for providing emergency housing for families and individuals experiencing a housing crisis. DHS is responsible for oversight of all its contracted providers related to the Aston Bridge Housing Program.

The Department of General Services (DGS) is the real estate arm of the District government responsible for managing the facilities at the Aston and providing building system management services for the Aston throughout its operation as a city facility, either directly or through a contracted vendor.

The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness (TCP) is the continuum of care entity for the District, which, through its providers, is responsible for overseeing operations and management of the Aston. In addition, TCP will coordinate day-to-day maintenance services.

Friendship Place (FP) is the non-profit on-site provider and operator of the Aston under a contract with TCP. FP is responsible for day-to-day management of the site, including the delivery of services. FP is also responsible for the enforcement of program rules, and for communicating with neighbors when questions or issues arise.

The Aston Community Advisory Team (CAT) is composed of (A) members of city agencies, (B) representatives of the Ward 2 councilmember, (C) representatives of community organizations, and (D) representatives of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A (ANC 2A). The CAT is responsible for facilitating communication between the public and the District throughout the duration of the Aston's operations, unless the Mayor and Ward 2 councilmember direct its termination.

Participant means an individual staying at the Aston who has agreed to abide by the program's rules and expectations.

Neighbor means a resident, nonresident property owner, business owner, or business employee in the neighborhoods surrounding the Aston.

Stakeholders means all the above.

Terms of the Protocol

The terms of the GNP below address responsibilities and commitments regarding (A) participant capacity, (B) maintenance of the property, (C) participant conduct and behavior, (D) safety and security, (E) communication and mutual respect between all stakeholders, (F) program development, updates, and reporting, (G) change of use, (H) GNP governance, and (I) glossary.

A. Capacity

DHS will limit the initial access to the Aston to 50 participants. Two months after operations begin, DHS will assess the facility's operations and, in consultation with the CAT, provide the community (during a properly noticed ANC 2A meeting) a report on the operations and outcomes of the program at that time.

If, after two months of operations, the Aston's opening has been successfully implemented, there are no verified and unresolved safety or operational concerns, and there is support from the CAT, DHS will aim to augment the operation by up to another 50 residents, with a maximum capacity of 100 participants at any given time throughout the operation of the facility.

Criteria to consider in assessing the program's successful implementation and capacity for increasing the number of participants (not to exceed 100 participants) will include:

- Effective case management, including access to mental health and other services to existing participants.
- Participant compliance with program rules.
- Prompt and appropriate response to any health, safety, or other concerns raised by participants and neighbors (as set forth in Section E, "Communication").
- Compliance with the terms of the GNP.
- Hiring capacity and funding availability to increase the number of case managers in accordance with provider contractual requirements.
- Hiring capacity and funding availability to provide the appropriate number of staff on site, as follows:
 - Seven days per week, the Aston will be staffed by a combination of case managers, resident monitors, administrative, security, and support staff;
 - During the overnight and weekend hours, the Aston will be staffed by program and security supervisors and security staff.
- Hiring capacity and funding availability to increase security on additional building floors as they become utilized.

The CAT will be informed about negative outcomes or feedback related to any of the above criteria, and DHS, TCP, and Friendship Place will make reasonable efforts to resolve those concerns prior to increasing the Aston's capacity.

B. Maintenance of the Property

Clean, well-kept neighborhoods attract residents and businesses. Just as neighbors are expected to keep their property well-maintained, presentable, and within the

design standards of the community, so shall the District keep the Aston presentable and in good condition.

To maintain the property at 1129 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, DGS commits to the following:

- Maintaining building management systems to allow continuous operation of the Aston.
- Making any necessary structural repairs to the building as quickly as possible, to prevent health or safety impacts on participants and on-site staff. In the short term, the city has committed to repairing the roof using funding allocated for this purpose in DHS's Fiscal Year 2025 budget.
- Remediating public health and public safety-related property issues.
- Developing and implementing a trash and recycling plan for the site that covers frequency of pick-up, timing, type of truck, etc., so that there will be no trash buildup up at the Aston.
- Developing and implementing an integrated pest management strategy for the site, the execution of which will be monitored on a monthly basis.
- Performing daytime testing of the emergency generator for noise control.

DHS/TCP/Friendship Place commits to the following:

- The property and sidewalks, tree boxes, and curbs adjacent to the property will be kept free of litter and other debris.
- Any necessary nonstructural repairs to the building will be made as quickly as possible.

C. Participant Conduct and Behavior

Mutually respectful behavior is essential to the quality of life in a community. Neighbors and participants will strive to live together peacefully and respectfully. Similarly, the District shall promote good conduct and respectful behavior, and will ensure compliance with District laws and regulations.

To promote mutually beneficial behavior, Friendship Place will:

- Give prompt and effective notice of its program rules to program participants, in accordance with the Homeless Services Reform Act of 2005, D.C. Official Code § 4-752.32, by giving every new participant a written copy of the program rules, reading and explaining the rules to the participant, and obtaining the participant's signature acknowledging their receipt of the program rules and indicating their awareness, understanding, and acceptance of the program rules.

- Enforce program rules that encourage respect inside the Aston and in the surrounding neighborhood, and quickly address rule violations.
- Enforce leash laws and ensure animal waste in front of the building is disposed of appropriately when participants have service or support animals.

In addition, the program rules will:

- Require participants to work toward their housing goals in accordance with the individualized housing plan they develop with their case manager.
- Provide hours and days for visitation.
- Prohibit threatening language and behavior on the property.
- Prohibit alcohol and illegal drug use on the property.
- Prohibit weapon possession on the property.

TCP and DHS will:

- Review Unusual Incident Reports filed by any of the contracted service providers, including security and case management providers, to determine if any contractual changes or remedial actions are required, and keep the CAT apprised of general progress.
- Offer substance use disorder treatment to participants and strictly enforce a policy that prohibits alcohol and illegal drug use on site.

D. Safety and Security

All neighbors and participants deserve to feel safe and secure in their homes and businesses. Neighbors, participants, FP, TCP, DHS, and DGS will work together to create a safe and secure community.

All stakeholders will:

- In the case of safety emergencies, call 911.
- In non-emergency situations, stakeholders will follow communication protocols set out in Section E (“Communications”) below.

TCP/Friendship Place will:

- Require participants to abide by program rules approved by the DHS.
- Conduct background checks and clearances for employees and onsite personnel as required by contract and District law, to ensure safe and supportive services for participants.
- Provide de-escalation training to staff and security personnel.

- Contract security to be on-site 24/7/365, with security stationed on each floor.
- Require security to monitor the immediate area outside the building, subject to the relevant limitations under District law.
- Equip the Aston with a magnetometer to screen entry for participants and visitors.
- Ensure that the magnetometer is in working condition, and coordinate with DGS for prompt repairs as needed.
- Complete and file an Unusual Incident Report, as required by DHS. (For example, any time MPD or FEMS is called to the site.)

DGS will:

- Ensure sufficient lighting on the grounds of the property.

E. Communication and Mutual Respect

Communication between neighbors is extremely important in any community. In the spirit of mutual respect, the following sets forth expectations for each stakeholders' role in facilitating effective and respectful communication.

DHS will:

- Receive and coordinate opportunities for community feedback, through the CAT and ANC 2A meetings, on concerns related to the development of the non-congregate bridge housing services at the Aston.
- Respond to and strive to address concerns related to participants' and neighbors' quality of life during any building repurposing and/or construction, and during the Aston's operations.
- Prior to beginning service, share with the CAT, ANC 2A, ANC 2B, and the Ward 2 Councilmember a document indicating each agency and/or partner responsible for each service provided to participants (e.g., DHS, TCP, FP, DGS, etc.).
- In the event of a change in service provider or agency responsibility, share an updated document with the CAT, ANC 2A, ANC 2B, and the Ward 2 Councilmember within 10 business days.
- Prior to beginning service, DHS will provide a website on an easily accessible webpage, which will include:
 - Updates and other information relevant to the Aston Bridge Housing Program.
 - The Aston's service provider and program manager and contact information.
 - Information on how neighbors can submit feedback and/or non-emergency health, safety, and other concerns to the service provider, and the provider response protocol set out below.

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- DHS will share this information in writing with the CAT, ANC 2A, ANC 2B, and the Ward 2 Councilmember.

Neighbors will:

- In non-emergency situations, notify the Aston or contact Friendship Place via phone at XXX-XXX-XXXX or by email at XX@XXXX.com by the contact information and methods provided on the Aston Bridge Housing webpage.

Friendship Place will:

- Communicate transparently, accurately, and in a timely manner, with participants, neighbors, ANC 2A, ANC 2B, the CAT, DHS, and DGS.
- Provide a clear point of contact for participants and neighbors, with contact information easily accessible both online and in the Aston building.
- Respond as follows to any email/written concerns submitted to Friendship Place or TCP about the Aston facility or operations:
 - Respond to the submitter within one business day to acknowledge receipt of the submission.
 - Respond to the submitter within three business days to address (a) whether the concern falls within the responsibility and scope of Friendship Place or a different entity, (b) whether the concern requires further action, and (c) if the concern requires further action, Friendship Place will provide a plan and timetable for remedying the concern, while maintaining appropriate participant confidentiality.
- Provide notification to neighbors when programming will have an impact on the surrounding neighborhood (for instance, if there is a block party that involves street closures).
 - Notification shall be via written notice to the ANC 2A Chairperson, the ANC 2B Chairperson, the ANC 2A06 Commissioner, the CAT Co-Chairpersons, and the Ward 2 Councilmember's office, at least one week prior to the scheduled programming.
- Share with neighbors opportunities to volunteer.

Friendship Place and DHS will:

- Host an open house event before the Aston begins operations to allow neighbors to visit the facility and learn more about the services offered to participants.

CAT members will:

- Encourage neighbors to attend Aston events.
- Actively welcome participants to the neighborhood.
- Encourage neighbors to treat participants as they would any other resident or patron of the area.
- Encourage neighbors to understand participants' need for privacy and confidentiality.
- Provide feedback on concerns related to neighborhood quality of life.
- Coordinate opportunities for community engagement, including feedback and input, on all issues and concerns related to the function of the Aston, and share information with FP and DHS.
- Support the success of the non-congregate bridge housing and related services delivered at the Aston.

F. Program Development, Updates and Reporting

- Work closely with the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) to consider which populations can be prioritized and what service models offer the greatest efficacy to ensure the goals of the plan and the needs of our population are met.
- Directly apply lessons learned from PEP-V, as well as its work with the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH), which publishes the District's Strategic Plans, specifically Homeward DC (2015-2020) and Homeward DC 2.0 (2021-2025).
- Provide annual written updates to ANC 2A, ANC 2B, the office of the Ward 2 Councilmember, and the CAT on facility function, using an agreed upon template, and provide in-person updates to ANC 2A and the CAT when requested.
- Report quarterly to the ANC 2A, ANC 2B, the office of the Ward 2 Councilmember, and the CAT on the impact of the property on the surrounding neighborhood, using the following data metrics:
 - Quarterly facilities data:
 - Pest control code violations.
 - Trash pickup and special trash notices.
 - Any new and/or resolved facilities concerns.
 - Status of construction and/or major repairs.
 - Quarterly program data:
 - Average number of monthly participants.
 - Number of neighborhood concerns and resolutions (including noise complaints).
 - Staffing summary (including average daily case management ratios).
 - Number of program-related 311 calls.
 - Number of program-related non-medical 911 calls.

- Quarterly program outcomes data:
 - Average participant length of stay.
 - Number of participant exits to housing, such as permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, Project Reconnect, and other permanent housing destinations.
 - Number of other participant exits.

G. Change of Use

The District has committed to the community that the Aston will not be used as low-barrier shelter, and to maintain the Aston's use for bridge housing for the foreseeable future. The District also agrees to present to ANC 2A and the CAT prior to any changes in use, including for other housing purposes by DHS, and including but not limited to the following:

- Use for any form of supportive housing that is significantly different in nature than the current Aston program, with regard to expected length of participant stay, and/or facility rules and expectations.
- Use for any form of housing that would invoke tenant's rights.
- Use for emergency housing, such as migrant housing or hypothermia shelter.
- Use as a shelter for participants under 18 years old.
- Use as a medical facility for unsheltered participants.
- Use as an inpatient drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility.
- Use as a criminal rehabilitation facility.

H. Good Neighbor Protocol Governance

Meeting procedures and membership:

- The CAT shall conduct all votes in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order.
- The CAT will be co-chaired by the ANC 2A Chairperson (or their designee) and a representative from Mayor Bowser's administration.
- The member composition of the CAT shall be as follows:
 - ANC 2A (4 participants): The ANC 2A Chairperson (or their designee), the ANC 2A06 Commissioner, and 2 community members appointed by the ANC.
 - Civic and Neighborhood Association (2 participants): The president of each of the two local associations or 2 community members appointed by the Associations.
 - Ward 2 Councilmember (3 participants): The Ward 2 Councilmember (or their designee) and two community representatives selected by the Ward 2 Councilmember.
 - Homeless Services Stakeholders (3 participants): 1 representative of the homeless services provider charged with operating the Aston, 1

representative of a homeless services provider who serves the neighborhood surrounding the Aston under the District’s outreach provider contract, and 1 homeless services consumer selected by the above homeless services provider.

- DC Executive Government Representatives (3 participants): 1 representative appointed by the Mayor, 1 representative appointed by DHS, and the DGS project manager.

CAT meetings:

CAT meetings take place on the second Monday of every month at 5:00 p.m., except when rescheduled to avoid conflict with holidays, or by a vote of the CAT. Additional meetings may be added by a vote of the CAT.

These public meetings shall take place online via Microsoft Teams, except as otherwise noted. The link will be provided and updated as needed on the Aston Bridge Housing website.

Amendments to the GNP:

- The GNP shall be reviewed by the CAT on an annual basis, in consultation with stakeholders.
- Amendments to the GNP may be offered by CAT members at any properly-noticed CAT meeting, in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order.

Agency Points of Contact:

DHS POC(s): TBD

DGS POC(s): TBD

Friendship Place POC(s): TBD

I. Glossary

(1) Congregate shelter. A type of shelter that provides space for multiple people to sleep in a common area, with limited or no privacy.

(2) Continuum of Care. The comprehensive system of services for individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

(3) Low barrier shelter. An overnight housing accommodation for adults who are homeless for the purpose of providing shelter to individuals without imposition of identification, time limits, or other program requirements. Low-barrier shelters are typically congregate shelters.

(4) Non-congregate program. A temporary housing program that provides private or semi-private units or rooms for individuals or families.

(5) Participant. A person receiving services as part of the Aston Bridge Housing program.

(6) Permanent supportive housing. A program that provides rental assistance and supportive services for an unrestricted period of time, to assist individuals and families who are experiencing chronic homelessness (or who are at risk of experiencing chronic homelessness) to obtain and maintain permanent housing and to live as independently as possible.

(7) Project Reconnect. A program that is individually tailored to support persons experiencing homelessness who desire to connect with friends and family as a way to return to more stable housing.

(8) Rapid Re-Housing. A program that provides housing relocation and stabilization services and time-limited rental assistance to help a homeless individual or family move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in permanent housing such that recipients may remain in the housing when assistance ends.