

## **Executive Summary**

This capstone forms the beginning of a master land use plan for 123 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, a Light-Industrial (L-I) property in Greeley, Colorado. The client, High Plains Housing Development Corporation (HPHDC), initiated this report to explore the feasibility of an adaptive reuse project. The project goal is to provide low-income affordable and permanent supportive housing units in response to a deficient affordable housing stock in Greeley. The central questions of this capstone are: *Can the existing structures of the 123 Property be preserved and adapted? If so, are the property and structures suitable for housing units, specifically low-income affordable and permanent supportive housing units? Is there a need for this type of housing in Greeley? Do Greeley's existing plans support the development of adaptive reuse and affordable housing? Could this property be rezoned from Light Industrial (L-I) to High Residential (H-R)? What could this site look like if the project moves forward?*

This capstone covers the need for additional low-income affordable housing units in Greeley and also discusses the efficacy and feasibility of permanent supportive housing. This capstone also examines the costs and benefits associated with adaptive reuse as well as the value and potential hurdles historic preservation offers. Additionally, this project cites existing Greeley city plans which recognize that affordable housing as well as the adaptive reuse of historic structures as important goals. Lastly, this capstone analyzes important case studies to illustrate not only what is possible but also what is advantageous in terms of the adaptive reuse of industrial buildings.

The original brick buildings which stand on the site today once housed a Kuner Canning facility, which was just one of many warehouses Empson-Kuner built all over Colorado. The property was later bought by Hoshiko Farms to be used as a produce storage facility, and then

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donated by the Hoshiko family to HPHDC in 2020. As the original brick buildings on this site were constructed in 1908, structural and environmental assessments were needed before moving forward with an adaptive reuse concept. Terracon, an engineering and scientific consultant group, performed multiple assessments over the course of this capstone project and found that although renovations are necessary, the existing brick buildings are structurally sound. Additionally, Terracon performed environmental assessments in order to determine the soil and vapor quality within the site. No soil contaminants were found and it was determined that only limited interior vapor mitigation is necessary. Moving forward, the existing brick buildings will need to be repointed, the interiors will need to be refurbished, and general renovations for housing will need to be conducted. Terracon's cost estimates for repointing and refurbishing reach just over \$3 million. Additional funding for this project may be achieved through Low-Income Tax Credits, HOME funds, Community Development Block Grants, and State Housing Trust Funds. Federal and state historic tax credits may also contribute to the costs of renovations for this project.

HPHDC is a nonprofit corporation and a Community Housing Development Organization that seeks to prevent community deterioration in low income areas and to assist low-to-moderate income individuals and families through affordable housing development strategies. In pursuing the other funding sources for this project, HPHDC needs to establish the need for low-income affordable housing in Greeley. Greeley's housing market is increasingly inaccessible to the population, which is generally struggling with the cost of housing. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, "Colorado ranked 9th out of the 10 top states" for populations experiencing homelessness with an estimated 10,857 homeless people (Housing First, 2020). The population in Weld County may be particularly vulnerable to this trend, as the housing stock in the area has struggled to recover following the 2008 housing crisis. Weld County was recently identified as the fourth most unaffordable housing market in the nation (Household Stability, 2021), and according to

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the US Census, Greeley has a deficit of 3,866 affordable housing units (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Poverty status within the study area of this project is relatively high, while home ownership and educational attainment are relatively low. Rent as a percent of income is high in this area, and the number of renters (as opposed to owners) is also high. The descriptive statistics employed in this report begin to illustrate the needs of Greeley's population, and point to potential solutions.

Given the findings, this report endorses the adaptive reuse of 123 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue as low-income affordable and permanent supportive housing. The brick buildings should be historically preserved as they offer a community founded on the agriculture business cultural heritage and a communal connection to the past. At the same time, this property has the potential to serve the needs of this community's future. Renovating the existing buildings should cost less than building housing units from scratch, especially considering the non-financial costs of removing an important artifact and demolishing the embodied resources and culture found within the brick. This report also endorses the development of low-income affordable and permanent supportive housing units given the statistical findings regarding the population of Greeley as well as the cost and benefit analysis of permanent supportive housing. Greeley's existing city plans also call for additional affordable housing units (and adaptive reuse of historic structures), which sets a precedent for rezoning this property and working to provide funding for this project and for projects like it.

In order to create an equitable society founded on holistic, sustainable principles, projects like HPHDC's "Hoshiko Village" should be held up as an example of change. To build towards this idealistic future, society needs to address those populations who are struggling to survive. Utilizing existing structures is not only a sustainable way to move forward, but also an equitable way to integrate those with lower income into the heart of a community. The heart of a community pumps resources into the population and catalyzes care for the rest of the body.