

Welcoming, Empowering,  
Safe Habitation Initiative with  
Neighborhood Engagement



WeShine

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## WESHINE BUSINESS PLAN CALENDAR YEAR 2022

### WeShine Prototype Pod Design



**Portland's housing crisis remains unsolved; the number of people experiencing houselessness has grown exponentially.** Lacking current data, best estimates are that there are at least 5000 unsheltered people living on Portland streets. WeShine is taking concrete steps to create new solutions for our most vulnerable citizens. We plan to build 2 micro-villages in 2022 to provide transitional shelter and services to our vulnerable neighbors. **WILL YOU JOIN US?**



## Executive Summary of WeShine Business Plan for Calendar Year 2022

**WeShine** will build and operate small-scale transitional shelter sites with basic hygiene, sanitation, social service connections, and other support on private donated or leased land. to provide to adults while they await access to permanent affordable housing. We will prioritize serving vulnerable underserved subsets of the unhoused populations such as BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, persons fleeing interpersonal violence, those with chronic health conditions or disabilities, and transition-age youth or students. In 2022, we plan to develop and operate 2 neighborhood-based micro-villages each with 6-15 guests. Our longer-term vision is to develop and operate a coordinated network of temporary neighborhood-based micro-villages distributed across the Portland area. **To date, we have leased our first site and are in process of building our sleeping pods. We have also identified a second site and are in discussion with our partners about the lease.**

The **WeShine** micro-village model offers a cost-effective strategy to engage both private and public stakeholders in providing humane, safe, empowering, and welcoming transitional shelter while decreasing the negative effects of unmanaged encampments. Within our temporary villages, we will provide the support necessary to help individuals prepare to re-enter the larger housed community as well as basic hygiene, sanitation and kitchen facilities. The **WeShine** micro-village network will support an ethos that promotes dignity, respect, and community inclusion as we strive for neighborhood betterment and a supportive larger community for all.

Five elements make **WeShine** unique:

- Focus on embedding small scale villages in the heart of residential neighborhoods and business districts;
- Use of an economically sustainable and replicable model for infrastructure, site design and operational elements;
- Partnerships with private property owners including faith communities, non-profits;
- Plan to provide layers of support from paid staff, neighborhood and faith-based community volunteers, and through partnerships with culturally specific or specialty community service providers; and
- Vision of a coordinated and centrally administered network of **WeShine** micro-villages throughout the metropolitan area.

All **WeShine** micro-villages will include:



- Paid WeShine staff, including a live-in Village Life Coordinators, Navigation Specialists, and Peer Support Specialists working onsite at each village each week as well as an on-call maintenance and back-up staff person;
- Physical structures that promote safety, privacy, hygiene and community
  - lockable sleeping pods for each individual or couples
  - a hygiene building with shower and toilets
  - garbage and recycling station
  - A community service pod for our service partners
  - community building(s) with kitchenette and space for dining and meeting
  - plantings and artwork to promote sense of community
  - a perimeter fence and gate for security and privacy

The total cost to build each **WeShine** 10 unit micro-village will be approximately \$350,000. or \$35,000 per unit. Operational costs for the same size village will be similar at approximately \$372,000 per year per micro-village. While plans to raise approximately 15-20% of the capital costs for each village, we are seeking a Joint Office of Homeless Services contract to support the remaining development costs for multiple micro-villages as well as the majority of ongoing operating costs. WeShine will charge modest indirect fees for its services to both build and operate the micro-villages.

While **WeShine** is a relatively new organization, it is led by an executive director with 45 years of experience in social work, much of it focused on special needs housing development and management, and a diverse Board of Directors who collectively have 320+ years of relevant professional experience in nursing, addiction treatment, peer support, diversity, equity and inclusion, land use planning, transportation, information technology, construction law, civil engineering, and non-profit management. Over half of our leadership is represented by persons of color, LBGTQ individuals, and those with lived experience of houselessness.



## Background and Need for **WeShine** Transitional Micro-villages:

Unsheltered camping is ubiquitous on public lands in many Portland neighborhoods -- in parks, beneath underpasses, in bike lanes, on sidewalks and parking strips, and on the ground near freeway entrances and exits. The impact of these sites on the neighborhoods they inhabit include human waste, an increase in vandalism and petty crime, trash, discarded needles, vermin, and damaging fires. Although the public has supported significant increases in funding at every level of government to build permanent affordable housing, progress in building and opening these buildings has been disappointingly slow. It takes from 3-5 years for most affordable housing projects to come to fruition. <sup>1</sup> The slow pace of permanent housing development has inspired **WeShine's** grass roots effort to attack the crisis of unsheltered living on the streets in a meaningful way. Village style transitional shelters have proven to be an effective and cost-effective response to serving the unhoused in Seattle as well as in other cities across the country. <sup>2</sup>

Our model differs from the Safe Rest Villages proposed by the City and other villages funded by the Joint Office of Unsheltered Services because we are:

- a grassroots effort to tackle lack of shelter, led by a group of experienced and committed professionals
- Small scale and nimble in our operations
- Undergirded by neighborhood and faith community support
- supported by private sector resources including a diverse group of volunteers, private property owners, and donors and
- replicable and economically sustainable.

Local surveys of the current unsheltered population have shown that campers would prefer to stay in a motel or a small village-style community over the traditional style of congregate shelter where there is a lack of privacy and security, the facilities are closed during the day, and there are few accommodations for couples or individuals with pets. When, prior to a

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<sup>1</sup> Local government has been reluctant to invest in transitional shelters. Only as recently as March 2021 has a tiny percentage of government funding been designated to provide transitional shelter programs.

<sup>2</sup> From Seattle.gov blog: *The tiny house village program is one the most effective sheltering models, **proven to safely shelter people and connect individuals to permanent housing**. These programs offer onsite case management services, including connections to behavioral health supports, and to permanent housing that help end a person's experience with homelessness. Onsite amenities also typically include access to Wi-Fi internet, hygiene services, and communal kitchens. Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, the tiny house village program overall saw a 34% exit rate to permanent housing-one of the highest performing shelter to housing programs the City funds.*



sweep, campers are offered congregate shelter only a small percentage will usually accept the offer. Many of these will leave the congregate shelter before they are able to make progress towards moving to permanent affordable housing. Further, when individuals are accepted into permanent affordable housing directly from the street or a congregate shelter, a significant percentage stumble as tenants and risk ending up back on the streets. An interim step is needed for individuals to re-learn how to live in a small self-governed community and to address their underlying trauma and health issues. Management of chronic illnesses is particularly difficult on the street where the struggle for survival is paramount.

### **Target Population:**

We utilized data from the JOHS 2019 one point in time survey as a baseline for the number of persons living unsheltered in the Portland area. EcoNorthwest and others project the population has grown significantly since 2019. Currently, it is estimated that there are as many as 5,000 adults living unsheltered in Portland. Our micro-villages will partially address the pressing need for transitional shelter by building and operating, throughout the Portland metropolitan area, a coordinated network of temporary micro-villages with support services. Other alternate shelter providers are also mobilizing throughout Portland. By distributing various types of alternate shelter—including **WeShine** micro-villages-- throughout many Portland neighborhoods, we can shelter at least 1,000 vulnerable neighbors in the next two to three years and improve the quality of life for all in communities throughout Portland. **WeShine** will prioritize serving Black, Indigenous, People of Color, LGBTQIA+, young adults, and individuals fleeing violence or with chronic health conditions or disabilities.

### **Mission and primary objectives:**

**WeShine** will provide transitional shelter to vulnerable adults in micro-villages with basic hygiene, sanitation, service connections, and support while guests await access to permanent affordable housing. To accomplish this mission, **WeShine** will develop and operate a coordinated network of these micro shelter-villages in neighborhoods across the Portland area, on leased or donated private or public land.

All **WeShine** micro-villages will include:

- Paid staff including a live-in *Village Life Coordinator*, *Navigation Specialists*, *Peer Support Specialists* working onsite at each village each week and a *Maintenance and Back Up Specialist*.



- A robust and diverse group of volunteers involved in both building and sustaining each village.
- Community Service partnerships to augment and supplement WeShine services. Examples include place-making, community building, matched savings program, case management, and harm reduction services.
- Physical structures that promote safety, privacy, hygiene, and community
  - lockable sleeping pods for individuals, or larger pods for couples or those who use wheelchairs
  - a shower and toilets
  - laundry machines if feasible
  - garbage and recycling station
  - a community service pod
  - a community building with shared kitchenette and space for dining and meeting
  - a perimeter fence and gate for security and privacy

**WeShine** will hire, supervise, and support the on-site staff and maintenance/backup person and will prioritize hiring individuals who are representative of the population we are serving and who have lived experience of poverty, oppression, behavioral health issues, and /or of being unhoused.

Our micro-villages will range in size from 6 to 12 units. The small size of our shelter communities will maximize our guests' sense of safety and empowerment, allow for a high degree of cultural specificity and personalized services, and will attract substantial neighborhood support. The services, support and sense of community our guests gain while staying in a **WeShine** micro-village will help them prepare to become successful tenants as they transition to permanent affordable housing.

Requiring a site size of only 5,000 to 10,000 square feet, our micro-villages can be accommodated on any parking lot or other undeveloped parcel zoned for commercial, multi-family residential, or employment use or that is on faith-community-owned property.

**WeShine** may also utilize sites slated for future development--while those development projects await their funding, design review, and/or permits, the property can be leveraged as a temporary micro-village.

Our primary objectives for the calendar year 2022, are to:

- Build at least 2 micro-villages;



- Obtain funding for capital and operations from foundations, businesses, individual donors, and other fund-raising activities, as well as through local government contracts for alternative shelter;
- Hire staff with lived experience of houselessness to reside in each village and support the guests in self-governance of the villages, to connect guests to services and benefits that will help them transition to permanent affordable housing, and who will walk side by side with guests who are ready to address their addiction and/or mental health issues;
- Foster a solid and positive sense of community in each village as well as mutual engagement between villagers and nearby community members; and
- Support a robust corps of volunteers to build the villages as well as provide ongoing supplemental and practical assistance to villagers.

### **WeShine Service Delivery Model:**

**WeShine** micro-villages will be embedded in the heart of residential neighborhoods, near both public transportation arteries and commercial and retail services. In addition to **WeShine** staff, neighborhood and faith-based community volunteers will provide practical assistance such as communal meals, rides to medical appointments and help filling out paperwork or making phone calls. Village guests will also be encouraged to contribute to neighborhood improvement projects. Community Service partners will visit the sites regularly to provide culturally specific and/or specialty services.

Micro-village guests will be required to sign each village's Good Guest Agreement. At a minimum, the agreements will stipulate that they must treat all persons with respect and courtesy; and that violence, criminal activity, and open use of drugs or alcohol will not be tolerated. Guests will be held accountable for their behavior, as well as that of their visitors, and may be trespassed from the property for violations of the Guest Agreement or other community rules developed by the Village Council. Guests will pay a sliding scale monthly user fee and will be expected to contribute at least eight hours a week of "sweat equity" to support and maintain the village community. Each micro-village will have a Village Council and guests will be supported to address issues and concerns as they arise and to make their own decisions regarding the day-to-day operations of their village.

All village structures will be portable and easily dis-assembled and reassembled at a new leased site as a lease terminates and we need to move. Guests will be able to stay in the micro-village for up to 2 years; however, we expect that 30-40% of guests will transition to permanent affordable housing each year.



**WeShine**-designed sleeping pods are insulated structures with a lockable front door, two windows, and room enough for one or two beds and some personal storage. Each sleeping pod has a covered front porch or patio that can hold a small chair and table. **WeShine** will also provide electrical heat, light, and an electrical outlet to each sleeping pod. The number of sleeping pods in each micro-village may vary depending on the size of the lots and the number of couples or individuals with accessibility needs that we serve at each site. Standard sleeping pods provide 64 SF of interior space. Larger pods provide 80 SF of interior space.

**WeShine's** transitional micro-village model addresses the expressed needs and aspirations of currently unsheltered folks for privacy, safety, security, basic hygiene, and sanitation as well as the opportunity to build community, govern themselves, develop job skills, improve their self-sufficiency, and find safe welcoming alternate shelter.

#### **Readiness to Proceed:**

- ✚ We have signed the lease for a ten unit micro-village site at the Parkrose Community United Church of Christ (PCUCC), 12505 NE Halsey and are building the sleeping pods in loaned warehouse space.
- ✚ We have obtained and activated comprehensive insurance coverage for our guests, volunteers, staff, and community partners.
- ✚ We have identified maker of pre-engineered sheds that can be modified to serve as hygiene, kitchenette, and meeting/livingroom facilities.
- ✚ We have worked with City staff to obtain preliminary approval for our site development plan and have gotten bids on electrical work. We are seeking plumbing bids.
- ✚ We have written numerous grants and been accepted as an alternate shelter provider with the Joint Office of Homeless Services. We are working with the Joint Office on our contract.
- ✚ We have raised approximately \$50,000 in individual donations and grants to date and are submitting other grant requests.
- ✚ We have contracted with Partners38 for ongoing accounting and bookkeeping services and with Social Purpose Works for initial HR consultation as we prepare to open our first micro-village.

The next step is to work with contractors to prepare our site for building, build the fence, add interior walls and flooring, add insulation, add electrical and plumbing to the community structures, , start accepting and screening guest referrals, and hire the staff. We have identified our second site and are in discussion with our partners about the lease terms. We have been awarded a grant to fund part of the capital expense of the 2<sup>nd</sup> micro-village. We



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are having productive discussions with several other property owners regarding potential sites for future micro-villages.

We plan to initiate building the 2<sup>nd</sup> micro-village within 90 days after we open the first village.

### **WeShine's special qualifications:**

The Board and Executive Director of **WeShine** are residents of seven different neighborhoods. We are working collaboratively to ameliorate the acute problem of unsheltered houselessness throughout Portland and the metro area. Five of nine board members and executive staff are representative of the vulnerable populations we intend to serve in our villages: Black, People of Color, LGBTQIA+, and individuals with lived experience of houselessness and/or addiction. Although the **WeShine** organization is a young tax-exempt non-profit, the leaders of the organization have extensive track records of success as innovators in their fields, including urban planning, housing development, social services, behavioral and physical health, diversity, equity, and inclusion, information technology, and grantsmanship. The Executive Director, Janet McManus, has more than 45 years' experience as a social worker with expertise in aging and long-term care, crisis intervention, special needs housing development, and program and project management with low income and marginalized populations. We have engaged experienced human resources and accounting professionals who will work with us to ensure that we are ready to maintain our organizational excellence as we make the leap to a multi-million-dollar budget with sub-contracting, reporting and data management requirements, and employer responsibilities.

**WeShine** has pledged to organize its activities, recruit Board members and advisors, hire and support staff, and operate our micro-villages in a manner that reflects our commitment to inclusion, respect, and fair representation for all Portlanders.

### **Collaboration and Networking Efforts:**

**WeShine** is working collaboratively with a number of other alternative shelter providers (Catholic Charities of Oregon, Cultivate Initiatives, Catholic Charities of Oregon, Oregon Trail of Hope, Straightway Services, Helping Hands, Bridges to Change, Do Good Multnomah, The City Repair Project, Beacon PDX, and more) to share information, compare resources, and to seek opportunities for partnership. We have also reached out to organizations such as the Mental Health and Addiction Association of Oregon, Assertive Community Treatment providers, Portland Community College, Outside In, Gather:Make:Shelter and community development organizations seeking ways to partner in the development of transitional micro-villages. We are engaged in conversations with

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several faith-based or non-profit communities that are considering using church property for transitional or permanent affordable housing. **WeShine** has also sought to learn from the experiences of existing village communities in the Portland area and has both visited other programs and villages and talked extensively with Right to Dream Too, C3PO, Hazelnut Grove, JOIN, Street Roots, Greater Good Northwest, Neighborhood House, Kenton Women's Village, Hygiene4All, Rahabs' Sister, and Shelter Now, as well as with individuals with lived experience of homelessness.

**WeShine** micro-villages are a very cost-effective strategy to engage both private and public stakeholders in providing decent, safe, and welcoming transitional shelter while reducing the negative effects of unmanaged encampments throughout our community. **WeShine** micro-village communities will all be connected by an ethos that demonstrates dignity, respect, and mutual engagement as we strive for neighborhood betterment and decent housing for all.

## Sources of Other Funding for **WeShine**

In 2021, we raised approximately \$40,000 in individual donations to support **WeShine**. In 2022, we have raised an additional \$20,000 so far. The remainder of our administrative costs will be raised through grants, donations, and fund-raising events. A budget summary for **WeShine** development, administrative, and operating budgets will be provided in a separate document.



### Meet the **WeShine** Executive Staff and Board of Directors

**WeShine** is represented by a diverse board and staff with more than 280 years of experience in the fields of nursing, social work, law, information technology, digital communication, land use and city planning, special needs housing development and management, organizational management, education, Peer Support services, addiction treatment, grant-writing, and non-profit board service. Sixty-six percent of our board and staff have lived experience as persons who are Black or People of Color, lesbians, in recovery from addiction, or with lived experience of houselessness.



**Executive Director:** Janet (Jan) McManus, LMSW. Jan is an experienced social worker and social services innovator with more than 45 years' experience in special needs housing development and management, crisis intervention and adult protective services, program development and management, long term care, service coordination, and organizational administration and financing. Jan lives in the Laurelhurst neighborhood and is one of the founders of **WeShine**.

### **Board of Directors:**

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**Chair:** Chris Tanner is a retired nurse with decades of experience in teaching, community development and coalition building, grant writing, project management and community health. She has served on several boards of non-profits, and board member and Chair of the Sullivan's Gulch Neighborhood Association. She is a founding member of *WeShine*.



**Vice Chair:** Randolph Carter is an educational consultant who specializes in diversity, equity and inclusion for schools and colleges, has a long history of non-profit board service, and lives in the Sullivan's Gulch neighborhood.

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**Secretary:** JoAnn Herrigel is a retired urban and social services planner and administrator and neighborhood activist who lives in the Laurelhurst neighborhood. She is a founding member of **WeShine**.



**Board Member:** Jennifer Coon is a Peer Support Specialist, who works full-time at Blanchet House and lives in the Buckman neighborhood.

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**Treasurer:** Andrew Kualaau is an RN and addiction specialist who is working on his PhD in nursing and has frontline experience working at Central City Concern's Hooper Detox facility and with Portland Street Medicine. Andrew lives in West Beaverton.



**Board Member:** Dave Weaver, a founding member of **WeShine**, is a web designer, digital resource specialist and neighborhood activist who lives in the Kerns neighborhood.



**Board Member:** DJ Heffernan is a retired land use planning consultant and neighborhood activist who lives in the Sullivan's Gulch neighborhood and is a founding member of *WeShine*.