

Letter: City made 'strides' in reducing vet homelessness

Wade Troxell 5:01 p.m. MST November 8, 2015



Buy Photo

(Photo: Coloradoan library)

CONNECT | TWEET | 15 LINKEDIN | 1 COMMENT | EMAIL | MORE

In July, I joined 850 municipal and state leaders in the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness, an initiative to make veteran homelessness across the country rare, short-lived and non-recurring. Every day, communities are making headlines for housing all known veterans, and Fort Collins has made significant strides in reducing homelessness among our veterans as well.

Right now, 71 veterans are using Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing vouchers in Fort Collins to rent apartments they otherwise could not afford. This includes 18 veterans who moved into Redtail Ponds in the past year. The Fort Collins Housing Authority also recently obtained another 10 vouchers to serve even more veterans. Housing Authority staff has worked diligently with the Department of Housing and Urban Development to raise voucher payment standards for to ensure veteran voucher-holders are not priced out.

Volunteers of America Supportive Services for Veteran Families has also served 100 very low-income veterans and their families with rental assistance to help these individuals move back into permanent housing or to keep the housing they may be at risk of losing. All veterans are connected to a specialist who can help secure benefits, access employment services or find healthcare providers.

While this work has set us on a strong path forward toward helping every veteran find and retain stable housing, there is still more to be done. Even those veterans with vouchers are still having trouble finding apartments.

As mayor, I am asking those community members who have rental properties to consider renting to a veteran with a voucher. Each individual has the aid of a case manager ensuring veterans are supported as they move out of homelessness and into housing. Property owners and managers who are interested in joining me in this effort and renting a home to a veteran can contact the staff at Volunteers of America at 970-472-9630 to learn more.

It is through collaborative efforts like this, bringing together service providers, housing providers, community members and landlords that Fort Collins can join the ranks of other successful communities to affirm that we have made veteran homelessness rare, short-lived and non-recurring.

Wade Troxell is the mayor of Fort Collins.