



## The Tiny Home Village: Family Connection and Stability

The YMCA of Seven Council Fires has asked the YMCA Alumni National Service Project to build a Tiny Home Village to meet a critical need on the Cheyenne River Reservation".

### Community needs will be met by the Tiny Homes Village

There is a desperate shortage of housing on the reservation leading to unhealthy situations for children and families. There is a 3-5 year wait for subsidized housing and it is very typical for homes to be occupied by 10-15 people from related families.

### Selecting the residents of the tiny homes

The YMCA's Board of Directors decided to give priority to Native American single mothers. Selection will be handled through an application process that aligns with the best practices promoted by the YMCA Housing Network of which the YMCA of the Seven Council Fires is a member.

### A high occupancy rate is assured

The Y does not anticipate having a problem maintaining full occupancy of the tiny homes because the need is so great. A waiting list of families ready to move in will likely start as soon as a home becomes vacant.

### Management of the housing program

The Y currently has a staff member responsible for programs and services related to Family Connection and Stability. This person will work with residents of the tiny homes to connect them with resources and help them create their path toward permanent housing.

### Maintenance and care of the homes

Residents will receive an orientation that explains their responsibility for upkeep of the home and trains them in those tasks. Staff will conduct monthly "walk-throughs" of the homes to make sure they are being kept up, and Y maintenance staff will handle all repairs. The rent paid by residents will fund this work.

## Twigs: Bringing YMCA programming to rural communities

### Community needs will be met by adding twigs throughout the reservation

The Twigs (small Y branches) will provide youth living in remote parts of the reservation greater access to developmental programming by enabling the Y to expand its existing programming in these communities. The shelter provided by the Twigs will allow the Y to extend programming later into the fall and start earlier in the spring. They will also support a much greater variety of programs.

### Families will participate in the programs offered?

Families will be empowered to shape the nature of the programs offered for their children. The Y will present a menu of program options and ask families to tell them which programs they most want to see offered. While most of the programming is for kids, there are also occasional family events offered such as holiday meals or Family Fun Nights where we offer an array of activities with community partners such as, Behavioral Health, Indian Health Services, and other organizations.

Programming will include activities such as STEM projects, cooking classes, gardening, sports, arts projects, depending on the interests expressed by families in that particular community. When determining where to place the Twigs, the Board of Directors considers factors such as proximity to the Y, services currently available, population size, and connection to the Y among other things. The first three communities to get Twigs will be Cherry Creek, Bear Creek, and Green Grass.

### Staffing the Twigs and operating hours

The Y staff currently running programs in reservation communities will staff the Twigs which will operate 3 hours/day after-school and in the summer months.

### Sustainability of the tiny homes and twigs

The YMCA expects continued growth of its annual campaign which has started trending upward again since the pandemic. The Y has also secured a 3-year \$150,000 grant to fund programming. To strengthen the Y's fundraising capacity long-term a fundraising consultant has been retained to help develop a comprehensive campaign that addresses our capital, annual and endowment needs. The endowment portion of the campaign will be earmarked to fund staffing.



## Future support from YMCA Alumni

The Y is currently taking steps to acquire vacant land adjacent to the tiny home village for the future placement of additional homes. We also hope to eventually place Twigs in 10 additional communities

around the reservation. YMCA Alumni will be asked to consider continuing this partnership beyond the current commitment to help fulfill this vision.