

Sowing Seeds of Hope - Neighborhood



The Glens of Dacono Gateway Stone

In 2017, St. Vrain Habitat began its Neighborhood Revitalization (NR) program partnering with the Glens neighborhood of Dacono. The approach provides a path for Habitat affiliates to serve more families and improve life for the whole community beyond building homes. The Glens was selected as 1 of 10 neighborhoods in 2018 to partner with Habitat for Humanity International in a 5-year Learning Cohort to implement and test the Quality of Life Framework; a guiding tool developed by Habitat International, to partner with residents and bring lasting change to marginalized neighborhoods across the country.

The Glens is home to 1/3 of the City of Dacono's residents and consists primarily of manufactured homes built in the 1970's.

High homeownership rates and a strong sense of pride are characteristic of the neighborhood. While the homeownership rate of 67% in the Glens is higher than that of the state, the median income is 40% lower than that of Dacono and the State of Colorado. There was a history of disinvestment in the neighborhood, new developments surrounding the Glens, and there were barriers to amenities and services.

The neighborhood also has a higher percentage of low-income, elderly, and Hispanic households than surrounding areas. The 2020 Census indicates 20% of the adult population is over 55 and 55% of the households are Hispanic. These percentages are significantly higher than the rest of Dacono (16% Over 55; 39% Hispanic).

What Changed Over 5 Years in the Glens?

To evaluate the effect of the NR program, Habitat partnered with ORS Impact to conduct resident surveys and focus groups. Residents shared what the changes mean to them and what they have enabled them to do. Surveys of 161 residents in 2019 and 267 residents in 2023 along with physical observation of 100 properties were completed.

These surveys examined how residents perceive their quality of life is improving in the neighborhood.

There is strong evidence that improvements have positively affected residents' lives in meaningful ways.

— ORS Impact



**Together we can build our community
Juntos podemos construir nuestra comunidad**

The creation of the "Pride of the Glens" coalition provided foundational outcomes for community and collective action in the neighborhood. The coalition is a multicultural, bilingual, resident-led coalition of "neighbors helping neighbors." Through the Coalition, Spanish-speaking and English-speaking residents from a range of backgrounds and age groups find opportunities to lead and participate. While they come to the table with different motivations and backgrounds, in the end, they coalesce around a shared vision:

"proud to live in a quiet friendly neighborhood where all of our dreams can come true"

In the past five years, leaders have developed annual goals and completed projects impacting the community through events, beautification, and neighborhood connections action teams.

Residents are the fuel behind the Coalition— they hold the key to long-term sustainability.

— ORS Impact

Inviting diverse voices to find common ground and take action isn't a new idea, nor is it simple. Habitat for Humanity's very roots at Koinonia Farm in Americus, Georgia challenged convention in the 1940's with an integrated and intentional community. A guiding principle of inclusion to hear all diverse voices, center previously marginalized communities and serve the entire community equitably has driven how the coalition comes together.

Providing meals and childcare at meetings, and bridging digital divides helps to hold space for everyone to contribute. The coalition focuses on

Revitalization in the Glens of Dacono



listening and leaning toward strengths, rather than problems. This invites community members to build on what's good, sharing their gifts in new ways in the neighborhood. Community activities have had lasting impacts. May and October Dumpster Days and improvements at the Shopping Center beautified what was in disrepair and neglected.

Residents in The Glens are happy with their neighborhood and think it has become a better place to live over time.

— ORS Impact

Creating shared space at the new Community Center, El Centro, meets a longtime need for a place to gather and learn. A Gateway Stone for the neighborhood and a mural celebrating Dacono's history enhanced the sense of the community. Advocating for an accessible crosswalk at the state highway seemed out of reach, and then it was achieved! Residents have become respected leaders of their community, teaching and inviting others to join and bringing ideas into action. The Coalition plans to continue to grow independent of Habitat, as a sustainable organization to lift up not only the Glens neighborhood, but Dacono and the surrounding areas.





Coalition Leaders join members at El Centro for Zumba

In addition to the efforts of the coalition, Habitat has built 14 new homes in the Glens and completed 32 Home Repairs. Critical Home Repairs improve safety, accessibility, economic stability, and social connections for vulnerable and older adults. Homeowners contribute 10% of the cost and social/sweat equity towards the project. The average cost of a repair of \$15,000 often includes roof replacement, accessible bathroom modification, installing ramps or new windows. Residents are grateful to feel safe in their home. Restoration and prevention of future water damage increases the home's durability, saves on utilities, and allows them to access insurance. Repairs also have a positive influence on surrounding properties and have inspired others to make improvements.

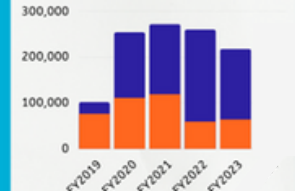
Sense of Community

Creating the space and time to connect and listen for dreams, hopes and concerns builds relationships and community. Survey results indicate that around half of neighborhood residents have engaged in at least one community meeting or event.





Category	Color
Clem Dufour Park Landscaping & Park Benches 2018	Grey
Dacono Mural & Gateway Stone 2020, 2022	Orange
Parking Lot Rehab 2021-2022	Yellow
Ongoing Equitable and Diverse Coalition Meetings, Block Parties, All Resident Meetings 2018-2023	Purple
Community Center / El Centro 2023	Blue



Fiscal Year	Home Repair \$	Coalition \$
FY2019	~50,000	~50,000
FY2020	~100,000	~100,000
FY2021	~100,000	~100,000
FY2022	~100,000	~100,000
FY2023	~100,000	~100,000

Investments in the Glens over the past five years total \$1,314,495 from funding partners for Home Repairs and the Pride of the Glens Coalition

Learning

Cultures of Learning allow for conflict, innovation and adaptation. Reflecting on principles and purpose guide the work:

- Foster Partnerships
- Build Power
- Accountable to Community
- Learn, Improve, Innovate
- Focus on Systems

* Findings of ORS Impact Evaluation and Program Information available at stvrainhabitat.org

St. Vrain Habitat's Neighborhood Revitalization efforts have leveraged local, federal and foundation grants investing a total of \$1,314,495 in the Glens neighborhood and Dacono, not including new home builds. Funding partners include the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, General Motors, H&R Block, Wells Fargo, Republic Services, The Weld Trust, United Way of Weld County, The Weld Community Foundation, United Power, and the City of Dacono. The Federal Home Loan Bank of Topeka and USDA Rural Development fund the Critical Home Repairs program.



SCAN ME

A comprehensive evaluation of the impact and learnings of the cohort communities will be published by ORS Impact in 2024.