



OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL

HOUSING & FAMILY SERVICES

RESOURCE CENTER



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN **CASE STATEMENT**



The following WDEOC leadership and staff serve on multiple committees: Anna Cardarella, Marie Gernes, Katie Hulbert, Dale Karls, Deanise Woychek.

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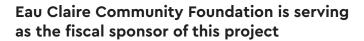
Becky Seelen Phil Swiler

*ex-officio

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Helping Every Person Thrive

For nearly 60 years Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council (WDEOC) has lived by the motto, "help for today, hope for tomorrow."

WDEOC has been working to alleviate poverty and create a brighter future for the people living in Buffalo, Eau Claire, Jackson, and Trempealeau counties. Over the years WDEOC has developed dozens of diverse programs to promote economic independence and self-reliance delivered at the local level.

Because the nature of WDEOC's work is at the individual level, sometimes the impact is hard to see. Yet, collectively, the impact is far-reaching and elevates every aspect of the communities where we all live, work, and play. Let me share some examples of the work we do every day:



Anna Cardarella, WDEOC CEO

- Educating and empowering low-income children (prenatal five years) and families to reach their highest potential through Western Dairyland Head Start and Early Head Start programs.
- Addressing homelessness and housing insecurity by providing prevention, rapid rehousing, short-term, and long-term housing to keep youth and adults from living on the street.
- Warming the homes of senior and low-income citizens by providing assistance for heating and electric costs, weatherizing homes to reduce energy consumption, and replacing or repairing heating systems, leaky fixtures, and more.
- Providing low-income families with food, clothing, transportation, and access to education and training to prepare them for meaningful work, and so much more.

We want to see every person thrive; yet we know this is not always possible. One of Eau Claire's greatest challenges is in housing – whether it is the chronically unhoused, those unable to secure permanent housing, or those perilously close to becoming homeless. That is why WDEOC seeks to place coordinated housing services and a Day Resource Center for the unhoused into one easily accessible location. Key partners will join WDEOC in delivering wraparound services to increase the number of people who have a permanent place to call home. WDEOC professionals will be onsite to help navigate housing resources and supportive services to get them on a path to stable housing and ensure they remain in stable housing.

I am excited about this amazing collaboration, but to fully understand its importance to the Eau Claire community, it helps to know and appreciate all WDEOC and its programs do to support the people in the area. I hope you will take the time to learn more about WDEOC Housing and Family Services, the Day Resource Center for the Unhoused, and why it is for the greater benefit of the Eau Claire community.

Letter from the Board Chair

On behalf of WDEOC's Board of Directors, I am pleased to share an exciting opportunity to transform the way we serve our community. Through this capital campaign, we have the chance to bring WDEOC's Housing and Family Services programs and a Day Resource Center for our unhoused neighbors under one roof. This initiative is a bold and necessary step as we work to meet the growing need for stable housing and critical support services.

WDEOC purchased the property at 610 Gibson Street, which, once remodeled, will serve as a beacon of hope—a place where those experiencing homelessness or at risk of losing their housing can access WDEOC's Housing and Family Services programs. Those who are currently unhoused can access the support of a Day Resource Center, which will be managed by the highly regarded team at Hope Gospel Mission.

This DRC will do more than provide immediate relief from the outdoors; it will foster empowerment, connection, and opportunity. We invite you to be part of this transformational effort. Your support will help us open

doors—both literally and figuratively—for our most vulnerable neighbors. Together, we can build a future where everyone has a place to call home.

Richard SchaumbergChair, WDEOC Board of Directors



Richard Schaumberg Chair WDEOC Board of Directors

Capital Campaign Proceeds Breakdown

\$3,577,000	Building Cost
\$1,000,000	DRC operating budget for two-and-a-half years
\$1,000,000	Remodeling costs
\$95,000	Fixtures, Furniture, Equipment
\$428,000	Professional Services
\$300,000	Financing
\$6,400,000	Total Campaign Costs*

^{*}The campaign total has been adjusted to reflect increased remodeling costs.

Executive Summary – Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council

Overview

WDEOC is ready to embark on a new chapter with its Housing and Family Services programming. This project will include expanded office space for its existing Housing and Family Services, which will elevate collaborative opportunities and delivery of services. The facility will also have the addition of a long-needed Day Resource Center (DRC).

Need

In 2018, the City of Eau Claire engaged the services of Erin Healy Consulting to explore establishing a collaborative to end homelessness in Eau Claire. The study demonstrated that, in addition to affordable housing, day services along with access to housing services were a critical need for the City's unhoused population.

Professionals working in the field of homelessness in Eau Claire put the number of unhoused people somewhere between 500 and 700. There are very real downstream consequences when a community does not address the challenges presented when someone is unhoused. People struggling with mental health or addiction issues need somewhere to go—for help, for shelter, for hope.

Solution

WDEOC's new DRC will combine a day shelter that will operate seven days a week and offer amenities like showers and laundry facilities along with a resource center that will offer trained counselors and a menu of services focused on mental health and addiction recovery.

Hope Gospel Mission (HGM), a local nonprofit with a strong reputation for its counseling and recovery programs for the unhoused, will manage the DRC. Chris Hedlund, program director, and his team of counselors bring their vision and experience to this proposal; however, while their personal faith drives their mission, this is a secular outreach collaboration with other area service providers.

WDEOC will own and manage the new Housing and Family Services programming and DRC site. After an extensive search, the agency purchased an existing building that, after remodeling, will meet the space needs for all the services. Community Haven House in downtown Eau Claire has filled the need for a day shelter on a provisional basis. Now, WDEOC, an organization with the management skills of a large secular nonprofit, is teaming up with Hope Gospel Mission (HGM), a faith-based nonprofit, along with support from the City of Eau Claire. Hope Gospel Mission assumed operations of Community Haven House on April 1, 2025, and is expanding the project through the Day Resource Center. In recognition of the dedicated volunteer leadership at Community Haven House, the new DRC will proudly retain the same name moving forward.

Organizations advocating for this project include a mix of government agencies, local agencies, and community groups. Many of them will be provided space in the DRC to collaborate and offer on-site services.

Cost

The goal of the capital campaign is to raise \$6.4M. This includes two-and-a-half years of operating expenses for the DRC. After that, HGM will assume the costs of running the Center. HGM is a fiscally strong 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a track record of success since its establishment in 1998, and it will fundraise the necessary long-term support for the Day Resource Center.

Request

WDEOC is seeking contributions as multi-year pledges which can be paid over five years.

Status

The City of Eau Claire is supporting the project with a gift of \$500,000. Including this commitment, WDEOC has already received more than \$2 million in pledge commitments toward the project as of July 1, 2025.

Schedule

- January 2025: Pre-capital campaign planning began
- June Aug 2025: Building is purchased and remodeling begins
- June Oct 2025: Capital campaign Silent Phase
- Nov 2025 Aug 2026: Capital campaign
 Public Phase
- January 2026: Day Resource Center opens

Meet WDEOC

CEO Anna Cardarella is inspired by this opportunity and sees it as the future for all their housing services. "WDEOC has developed dozens of diverse programs to promote economic independence and self-reliance delivered at the local level," she stated. "This proposal will improve WDEOC's ability to serve the region's people. For nearly 60 years, WDEOC has lived by the motto, "help for today, hope for tomorrow," and this project is all about hope."

WDEOC seeks to place coordinated housing services and a DRC in one easily accessible location. Key partners will join WDEOC in delivering wraparound services to increase the number of people with a permanent place to call home. WDEOC professionals will be onsite to help navigate housing resources and supportive services to get them on a path to stable housing and ensure they remain in stable housing.

As the largest nonprofit organization operating in western Wisconsin, WDEOC is a familiar presence many people mistake for a government agency. It has an operating

budget of over \$18M and provides direct services to low-income residents. In addition to multiple forms of housing assistance, WDEOC operates Head Start centers and provides low-income families with food, clothing, transportation, and access to education and training to prepare them for meaningful work.

Mission Statement

Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council's mission is to alleviate poverty-related conditions and provide opportunities that enable people to advance economically and socially.

Community Vision Statement

All people in western Wisconsin are embraced by and empowered to participate in a thriving, safe, and healthy community.

Agency Vision Statement

WDEOC is an innovative, action-oriented team that supports people of all backgrounds in moving from situational or generational poverty and isolation to self-sufficiency.



A Day In The Life

The following vignette offers a firsthand glimpse into how the Day Resource Center will support individuals experiencing homelessness and housing instability. It illustrates the positive impact of having access to essential services, community connection, and personalized support—all under one roof. This example shows how dignity, safety, and opportunity can be part of someone's everyday experience when resources are accessible and centralized.

I arrive at the Day Resource Center around 9 a.m. when they open. After signing in, which means I agree to follow the Code of Conduct and Good Neighbor Policy, my belongings are checked in by staff. They are placed in a secure area, so I know they are safe. There is always a staff member or volunteer to help me access my property whenever I need to.

I spend most of my day at the Day Resource Center because I have access to the services that I need. I feel safe here. It gives me a sense of community and I feel valued, welcomed, and supported. It is close to the Community Table where I eat. While I am here, I am able to rest, watch TV, access computers, do artwork, utilize my musical talent, use the phone to make important calls and visit with my friends. I am also able to take a shower, do laundry, get something to drink, and have a healthy snack, which I really appreciate.

My case manager at the Day Resource Center has connected me with many resources. I meet with them weekly to report my progress and go over my needs. They made sure I signed up for health insurance, foodshare, and housing. They helped me with my resume and applying for jobs. We have gained trust and respect for each other. It has been really helpful that most of the services that I need are all in one place instead of me having to go to multiple different locations.

Thanks to the Day Resource Center and their commitment to helping me, I have been able to get and stay sober. I am now employed and saving up money to get my own place. I am working on rebuilding a relationship with my family and those that I hurt. I encourage anyone who needs some extra support or is experiencing homelessness to go to the Day Resource Center.

-Kim



WDEOC is the largest 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization operating in western Wisconsin. With primary offices in Independence and Eau Claire, the programs form a network of services that help alleviate poverty-related conditions in 19 Wisconsin counties, focusing on the four core counties of Eau Claire, Buffalo, Trempealeau, and Jackson.

Established as a Community Action Agency (CAA) on June 6, 1966, under the Economic Opportunity Act, WDEOC programs help disadvantaged individuals strive for and ultimately achieve a higher quality of life by providing an array of supportive services.

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. WDEOC cares about the entire community and is dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other. WDEOC has been affiliated with Community Action Partnership (CAP), a nationwide network of Community Action Agencies, since 1990.

The impact of WDEOC across western Wisconsin is extensive; yet its services often go unnoticed. Much of the work is delivered in the community and in direct service to the individual. While grateful for the support,

many of those receiving services choose to keep their personal situations private. In fact, your neighbor may have been a client who has benefited from a WDEOC program. Their programs and partnerships include Child Care Partnership, Business Development, a Women's Business Center, the Fresh Start Program for young adults, the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program, Head Start, Weatherization and Energy assistance, and programs to address housing and homelessness.

WDEOC already manages a suite of programs which includes homelessness support and prevention to home ownership. Its Family Shelters program provides seven homeless shelters for families with children. The agency also provides housing and case management services to chronically homeless individuals and families in the City of Eau Claire through its Housing First program.

WDEOC's Housing Assistance Program for Youth provides comprehensive case management services to young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 who are homeless or housing insecure in Buffalo, Eau Claire, Chippewa, Trempealeau, and Jackson counties. Based on a needs assessment, they develop individualized plans to help young adults obtain permanent housing and utilize personal strengths to achieve self-sustainability.

Since November of 2016, hundreds of homeless families and individuals have moved from homeless shelters into permanent housing thanks to WDEOC's Rapid Rehousing Program. Their Rapid Rehousing case managers develop relationships with area landlords and help clients on the Coordinated Entry prioritization list move into apartments of their own.

WDEOC's more than \$18.6M budget consists of various funding sources. When a need is identified, WDEOC obtains funding from federal, state and local entities through a competitive grant process. Its largest funding source is the Office of Head Start, which provided \$8.46M in 2024. All funding from this source is restricted to the agency's Head Start programs.

Given its client base, the agency receives little to no payment for services and thus relies almost exclusively on grant funding. The agency receives charitable contributions from a limited number of private individuals, businesses, and foundations, operates a thrift shop, and engages many volunteers to deliver its programming. Due to increased demand for services, especially in housing, along with increased costs, the agency can no longer be so dependent on government funding and will need to increase philanthropic giving in its operations.

The agency is governed by a Board of Directors composed of 1/3 income-eligible constituents, 1/3 County Board Supervisors, and 1/3 private citizens. As such, WDEOC offers more than 20 unique programs that provide short and long-term opportunities for low-income families and individuals.



Katie Hulbert, Director of Housing & Family Services



Current Eau Claire WDEOC location

WDEOC has delivered on its mission for almost 60 years. During that time, its services, location, clients served, and staff have grown exponentially. The agency serves its clients in their homes, in the community, and in one of its many physical locations throughout western Wisconsin.

While the home office is in Independence, many WDEOC staff work at 418 Wisconsin Street in downtown Eau Claire. Included at this location are staff in Energy Assistance, Fresh Start, Child Care Partnership, and a growing Housing & Family Services department. Overall, WDEOC's staff has grown by 33% since 2015, and the Housing & Family Services staff

has increased from two to 25. The number of clients served at the Eau Claire office has more than doubled, yet the space available has not changed.

Not only is the current facility not meeting the needs of a growing staff, program, and client base, the building itself presents challenges.

Accessibility

One of greatest concerns is around accessibility, starting with available parking. Client parking is on the street with the closest handicapped parking a (half) block from the entrance. This may seem minor; however, the ability to find close, convenient parking can

significantly ease anxiety when a client is in an already stressful situation. Upon arriving at the entrance, a person with mobility issues will find the entrance does not have an automatic door, making it inaccessible. The doors are heavy and difficult to manage. With no elevators, meeting rooms on the lower level are off limits to someone unable to navigate stairs. There are no handicap accessible restrooms.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Many program staff share offices. Some are even tripled up in an office. Even the CEO shares an office. The most significant challenge when staff are doubled or tripled up is the ability to serve clients in a dignified and confidential manner. Finding a meeting room that can accommodate a large family is a challenge, with some meetings occurring in open spaces. Due to the lack of privacy, it is not unusual for staff other than the one assisting the client to hear or see a client crying while sharing their story, which can cause them pain or embarrass-

ment. Clients deserve the respect of being in a comfortable, private space while discussing their situation with the WDEOC staff member.

Safety, Compliance, and Maintenance

Not only are restrooms not accessible, they are also not available to the public. This can be a barrier for someone who has brought small children with them or who has frequent or urgent needs due to a health condition. The number of restrooms available does not meet the standard for the number available per number of staff. This puts excess pressure on aging plumbing, which has backed up in the past. Part of the WDEOC's five-year plan is to sell the facility and relocate the remaining staff, who do not need to be located near the downtown, to a different facility or office building. Remodeling the facility is not an option as it would require extensive asbestos abatement making it cost prohibitive.



"We're working with people who are extremely vulnerable, and we need a space that will provide them with the privacy and dignity they deserve. Many of our clients are not comfortable in this building, and that makes our jobs extremely difficult."

Katie Hulbert, WDEOC Director of Housing & Family Services



Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. and Related Entities

Consolidated Statement of Activities Year Ended December 31, 2024

Revenue	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Grant and contract revenue	\$17,458,458	\$211,294	\$17,669,752
Commodities received	\$783,306	\$0	\$783,306
Program contributions	\$1,359,367	\$204,664	\$1,564,031
Sale of Fresh Start/NSP Homes	\$190,000	\$0	\$190,000
Service fees/donations	\$318,389	\$0	\$318,389
Investment income, net	\$84,609	\$0	\$84,609
In-kind contributions	\$856,648	\$0	\$856,648
Net assets released from restrictions	\$123,229	-\$123,229	\$0
Total Revenue	\$21,174,006	\$292,729	\$21,466,735

Program Expenses	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Child education programs	\$8,530,047	\$0	\$8,530,047
Housing/weatherization programs	\$5,308,219	\$0	\$5,308,219
Food programs	\$1,891,715	\$0	\$1,891,715
Economic development programs	\$1,188,673	\$0	\$1,188,673
Youth programs	\$665,281	\$0	\$665,281
Job training programs	\$204,302	\$0	\$204,302
Homeless/shelter programs	\$342,952	\$0	\$342,952
Community services programs	\$818,066	\$0	\$818,066
Transportation programs	\$128,890	\$0	\$128,890
Senior services programs	\$279,936	\$0	\$279,936
Discretionary activities	\$450,070	\$0	\$450,070
Total program expenses	\$19,808,151	\$0	\$19,808,151

Support Services	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Management and general	\$678,001	\$0	\$678,001
Fund-raising	\$40,712	\$0	\$40,712
Total support services	\$718,713	\$0	\$718,713
Total expenses	\$20,526,864	\$0	\$20,526,864
Change in net assets	\$647,142	\$292,729	\$939,871
Net assets - Beginning of the year	\$3,466,602	\$2,599,491	\$6,066,093
Net assets – End of the year	\$4,113,744	\$2,892,220	\$7,005,964



"WDEOC has developed dozens of diverse programs to promote economic independence and self-reliance. This project will improve WDEOC's ability to serve the region's people. For nearly 60 years, WDEOC has lived by the motto, 'help for today, hope for tomorrow,' and this project is all about hope."

Anna Cardarella







WDEOC Fresh Start program participants

WDEOC Programs & Services

Homeless Services

Family Services

Homeless Assistance Program for Youth

Permanent Supportive Housing

Rapid Rehousing

WERA Housing Stability

HUD Housing Counseling

Children & Families

Head Start & Early Head Start Child Care Partnership

Birthday Bags

Food Security

Child and Adult Care Food Program – CACFP

The Emergency Food Assistance Program – TEFAP

Eagle's Nest Food Pantry

Home Energy Plus

WHEAP Energy Assistance

Weatherization

Energy Crisis Assistance

Furnace Repair & Replacement

Water Conservation

Home Ownership

Down payment Assistance

First-Time Homebuyers

HUD Housing Counseling

Thrift Store

Training & Education

Fresh Start

Skills Enhancement

Nursing Skills

Women's Business Center

Entrepreneur Technical Assistance

Child Care Training

Transportation

Work-n-Wheels

Paratransit Certification

Transit Ambassadors

Volunteer

RSVP Senior Volunteer Program

Volunteer with WDEOC



"It's been great working with everyone at Western Dairyland. They're on top of things, and when they tell you something, they follow through. They helped us in ways we never thought possible."

Introduction to the Day Resource Center Project

The Need for Increased Services for the Unhoused

This article by Julian Emerson was published in the *Leader-Telegram* as part of a series on the unhoused.

"They appeared one by one, like ghosts emerging from the darkness, the frosty white puffs of breath emanating from their mouths is a testament to the subzero air around them.

Others joined this small crowd, one by one outside Sojourner House, a downtown Eau Claire homeless shelter at 618 S. Barstow Street. At 6:50 p.m. they huddled in a group of about 20, shielding each other from the biting wind, eagerly hoping for one of the coveted spots inside the shelter. The cigarettes many smoked lit the dark like tiny orange stars.

Two hours earlier, when the temperature was slightly warmer, a group of Christmas carolers sang holiday music in a park across the street from the shelter amid sparkling lights that adorned the park's trees.

This group in front of the shelter seemed a world apart from that joyous scene. Their faces depicted the rough lives they've lived, each line and groove and scar and missing tooth a road map of difficulties past.

Their eyes revealed the hardships they had endured. Most stared resolutely ahead, worn out from another day of wandering the cold streets.

For some, their eyes once shined with hope, their lives seemingly on the right path before a medical malady or ruined relationship or lost job dragged them from the right side of the tracks to the wrong, derailing their hopes and dreams. Others have never known a semblance of normalcy, their childhoods a dysfunctional mess, their adult minds addled by mental illness, alcohol, or drug addiction. Call them Eau Claire's invisible souls. They are homeless."

In 2018, the City of Eau Claire engaged the services of Erin Healy Consulting to explore establishing a collaborative to end homelessness in Eau Claire. The study demonstrated that day services were a critical need for the city's unhoused population.

The pandemic years of 2020 to 2022 exacerbated these needs. Community agencies working with the homeless, notably Community Haven House, WDEOC, and Hope Gospel Mission, explored the concept of a Day Resource Center. Together, they created the first proposal for such a facility in Eau Claire.

In the heart of Eau Claire, hundreds of individuals struggle without the security of a home. Determining exactly how many is extremely challenging, and numbers can vary greatly. However, if you take the children that the Eau Claire School District counts as homeless, add their parents, and then add all the people in the three main overnight shelters on any given night, you are already in the hundreds without taking into account people sleeping in their cars or unsheltered outdoors. Professionals working in the field of homelessness in Eau Claire put the number somewhere between 500 and 700. Broader data show approximately 3,000 people experience homelessness throughout western Wisconsin, with about 49% being children. Recent reports also indicate that over 27,000 people experience homelessness throughout the year in Wisconsin. An estimated 6,057 individuals were homeless on a single night in Wisconsin, of which 3,065 were homeless families with children. It is also estimated that 28% of all persons experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin are under the age of 18.1

These numbers, stark as they are, fail to capture the depth of the crisis. Each statistic represents a person—someone's parent, child, or friend—dealing with complex

¹ https://www.hopegospelmission.org/eau-claire-homelessness/

challenges that extend far beyond the visible issue of homelessness. Despite the city's economic growth and initiatives aimed at helping the unhoused, the number of people without homes continues to rise, painting a troubling picture of need and resilience.

At the same time, although difficult to admit, it is discomforting at best and dangerous at worst when someone struggling with mental health or addiction issues has nowhere to go.

Families with children may no longer want to access the resources of a city park. Customers may not want to enter a business if someone is obstructing the doorway. Library patrons may not receive services as staff are distracted by attending to non-user needs. These are the very real, downstream consequences when a community does not address the challenges presented when someone is unhoused.

The vision of WDEOC, Hope Gospel Mission, the City of Eau Claire, concerned citizens, and business owners, is that a Day Resource Center (DRC) will bring dignity and hope to the lives of individuals sometimes treated as though their very humanity is in doubt. It will provide wraparound services and resources to guide them on a path toward wellness, stable housing, employment, and financial independence.



"The struggle is real and exhausting." This is the answer from an anonymous guest at Community Haven House when asked to share what it feels like to be without a home. Another replied, "Leads to depression and temptations to do wrong."

The Solution

WDEOC is seeking funding for the purchase and remodeling of a building to house a permanent location for WDEOC Housing & Family Services with a DRC located in the downtown Eau Claire area. According to Katie Hulbert, WDEOC Housing and Family Services Director, "The center will provide a comprehensive, accessible and team approach to working with people who are experiencing homelessness or are at-risk of homelessness." It will provide a single point of access to a multitude of amenities, including a congregate meeting space to shelter from the elements. bathrooms, showers, laundry facilities, shortterm storage for personal belongings, and social activities.

It also will be home to WDEOC's housing programs including Housing First, Rapid Rehousing, HUD Housing Counseling, Homelessness Prevention, Homeless Assistance Program for Youth, Family Shelters, and Housing Stability, along with around 25 staff who can assist individuals seeking and receiving support in transitioning to stable, permanent housing. The facility will also offer flex space for various agencies to offer onsite services at no charge. Space will be available to homeless agencies, medical services, mental health providers, food providers, etc.

Having a place for individuals to spend the day while engaging them in activities and ensuring they are aware of opportunities available to move them toward more stable housing will help alleviate pressure on businesses, public buildings, and outdoor spaces. At the same time, co-locating services will maximize resources that are directed at not only helping those who are without housing. it also will help those who are in imminent situations that may push them out of their current home. We have learned that when a community provides a safe, accessible, and nonjudgmental environment where people can access services, they are more likely to achieve the steps they need to improve their life circumstances.



WDEOC will own and manage the building and will contract with HGM to operate the DRC.

HGM has a successful, proven program model for operating a DRC. HGM's program team leadership consists of a counseling team, a chaplaincy team, a house staff team, and kitchen team. The DRC would be added as the fifth team and would collaborate and coordinate with the other teams for support. In the unlikely event HGM pulls out, WDEOC is committed to continued operation of the DRC and will work to secure another service provider. HGM intends to adopt the Community Haven House name for the DRC to honor the work of the leadership, volunteers and staff of the temporary Community Haven House currently located on Washington Street in downtown Eau Claire.

Leadership

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the issues affecting the homeless population became more evident and pronounced. Several community organizations, including WDEOC, HGM, Community Haven House, Eau Claire County Health and Human Services, the City of Eau Claire and more, were involved in determining a solution to help people live more stable and productive lives.

Through leadership from its Board of Directors, WDEOC decided to take the lead in bringing the project to fruition with the assistance of HGM's critical programmatic experience and the solid backing from the City of Eau Claire.

The key players include WDEOC staff and housing experts under the leadership of Anna Cardarella, who has been at the organization for 21 years, 13 of it as its CEO. Cardarella holds an MBA from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, where she also earned her Bachelor of Business Administration in Economics.

Chris Hedlund is the Program Director at HGM. Hedlund has been with HGM since 2005. He has a variety of professional and practical counseling experiences and more than 20 years of providing programmatic planning and services to nonprofits. He is a Certified Trauma Professional by the International Association of Trauma Professionals and has been trained in the Genesis Process, an evidence-based addiction recovery curriculum. Hedlund has authored More Than a Homeless Shelter, a book about assembling a holistic opportunity to provide services to those in need that exceeds simply providing housing. He has also consulted with several other rescue missions as they develop holistic programs of their own.

Who Will Benefit

Not everyone is homeless for the same reason or needs the same help, even though the persistent lack of affordable housing underlies this national crisis. As many as 40 - 60 percent of people experiencing homelessness have a job but cannot afford stable housing because wages have not kept up with rising rents. In 1970, the United States had a surplus of 300,000 affordable homes. Today only 37 affordable homes are available for every 100 extremely low-income renters. As a result, 70 percent of the lowest-wage households spend more than half their income on rent, placing them at high risk of homelessness when unexpected expenses (such as car repairs and medical bills) arise.

Who Are The Homeless?

The unhoused are divided into four categories by the US Dept of Housing and Urban Development

- Those literally without a housing option (people living in their car or tent and the chronically homeless are included here).
- Those who are at imminent risk of homelessness.
- Those fleeing domestic violence.
- Youth whose lives are in a state of flux and expected to remain so for the foreseeable future.

Veterans are among the homeless as are many people of color and members of the LGBTQI+ community. African Americans represent 13 percent of the general population but account for 37 percent of people experiencing homelessness and more than 50 percent of homeless families with children.² Many of these individuals will find support from WDEOC's other housing programs located within the building.



"Everyone has a story to tell that people should be open to hear. In our [homeless] community, we are willing to give the shirts off our backs to help each other."

Gabe, CHH Guest

What the DRC Offers

The physical space for the DRC will incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) options to create a safe space for all users. This will accommodate the inclusion of flexible meeting spaces for other service providers such as physical and mental health services, job training, and educational opportunities. Other potential uses include veterans' services, parole and probation services, and more.

The DRC will have a low barrier to entry to provide access to most. A "low barrier" means an individual will have limited expectations for entry and use of services. While they may be asked to identify themselves, there are no background checks. While sobriety is not an expectation, they must be able to take care of themselves. The intent is to meet the individual where they are to help move them forward. Because the DRC will open to people who have a previous criminal record, it will not be a space for families. Eau Claire currently has several services for families. During the school year, children attend school during their day, and their parents could then go to the DRC. During the summer months, the Boys and Girls



"When we come together and provide all these services to a family, we can really make a difference. Collaboration is key to our success."

Jeanne Semb

WDEOC Housing and Family Services Program Manager, 2024 Annual Report

² https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/ what-causes-homelessness/inequality/

"Support for a Day Resource Center is strong. From the homeless community to the agencies dedicated to supporting them, from local businesses and residents to elected officials in the region, there is a consensus regarding the urgency of this initiative."

Emily Berge, curent City Council President

Club, Summer School, Head Start, and other opportunities exist for children.

The DRC will have access to staff trained to enroll clients, who so choose, into the Coordinated Entry System (CE). A CE is a centralized process to coordinate program participant intake, assessment, and provision of referrals. The CE will provide a layer of safety, streamline some service delivery, and be one of the tools to assist with program outcome assessment.

The center will be a central hub for many resources to provide mental health support, shine a light on substance abuse programs, and help adults living with mental illness by providing the safety and security they need as they work toward a brighter tomorrow.

The City of Eau Claire is home to multiple service providers, the only emergency night shelter in the northwestern part of Wisconsin, and many medical services not available in surrounding communities. This results in many individuals experiencing homelessness migrating to Eau Claire. This creates challenges for the community and puts pressure on our service providers. Creating a DRC will help alleviate the challenges and pressure that agencies experience.

Catholic Charities operates Sojourner House, the city's emergency night shelter, and is currently evaluating the feasibility of keeping it open year-round. If operations must be limited to the colder months, the demand for alternative shelter options will increase significantly.



Terry Weld, former City Council President



I believe we are a great city. A city that lends a hand to those in need. A city that recognizes a challenge and meets it. A city that witnesses success and celebrates it. A city that senses hardship or struggles and stands up, reaches out, volunteers, and gives what it can to help change and better the lives of others. A city that cares.

With this project we have the timely opportunity to support our city's strategic values and make a real difference in the lives of many. This project is an opportunity to design and build a more efficient and productive facility that will strengthen our community and provide the resources to aid those that wish to better themselves. Through continued education, job training, gainful employment, physical and mental healthcare, reconnecting families and securing a home, our unhoused residents can learn to feel whole again.

The first step is coming together; the second step is giving. Giving your heart, your time, and your money to build, fund and staff a community resource center that will help pave a new path for our unhoused residents, our neighborhoods, businesses, and community.

Terry Weld, former City
Council President

Community Haven House (CHH) has served as Eau Claire's day shelter for several years. However, it's important to understand that a day shelter is not the same as a Day Resource Center (DRC). A day shelter typically does not offer services from multiple agencies that support people experiencing homelessness, nor does it provide the comprehensive assistance needed to move toward stable housing.

Recently, Hope Gospel Mission, with financial support from the City of Eau Claire, assumed management of CHH as planning continues for the proposed WDEOC and DRC. Without continued progress on this initiative, CHH will close at the end of 2025 when funding expires and the building lease ends. This would leave those who rely on CHH with nowhere to go during the day.

Without a reliable and consistent shelter and resource center, people experiencing homelessness will be forced to seek refuge in public places such as businesses, the library, and parks—placing additional strain on these spaces and on the community.

The new Day Resource Center would not only preserve the support CHH currently provides but also expand on it—offering more robust services to help individuals work toward wellness, stability, and permanent housing.

Semi-Annual Point-In-Time Homeless Count: Eau Claire

2019-2024

	Households w/ Children	Households w/o Children
January 2020	3	9
June 2020	0	7
January 2021	0	7
June 2021	0	36
January 2022	0	26
June 2022	4	32
January 2023	0	30
June 2023	9	44
January 2024	10	42
June 2024	33	71



A Short History

2020

Eau Claire, like cities across the country, has always had people living on its streets. Likewise, it has always had organizations and volunteers willing to provide shelter, supportive services, and social context to support those experiencing housing insecurity. When the pandemic hit in 2020, individuals, already struggling for shelter, found that their once reliable places to retreat in inclement weather were no longer available. Recognizing and responding to the acute struggle of these individuals, a collaboration of people, nonprofits, and churches worked to ensure the health and safety of Eau Claire's unhoused during this unprecedented time.

Positive Avenues, operated by Lutheran Social Services, joined with The Sojourner House, operated by Catholic Charities, to create a 24-hour shelter at Hobbs Ice Arena. Not long after, they moved into the former Hansen's Market on West Clairemont Avenue.

2021-2022

The warmer spring and summer months provided an opportunity to look for an alternative space. A community task force was formed to help identify a solution and in December 2021, an emergency warming center – now called Community Haven House – opened in a former church building adjacent to and owned by Christ Church Cathedral. Originally only open on weekends, Community Haven House quickly expanded its operating hours to seven days a week working with Catholic Charities as its fiscal sponsor.

2023

In May, 2023 the City Council of Eau Claire approved \$500,000 of ARPA funding to create the site for a permanent day shelter for the city's unhoused population. City of Eau Claire leaders approached WDEOC with the idea that a new building for WDEOC, which has outgrown its current space, could also include

a DRC. Once it was understood that restrictions on federal funding prohibited the WDEOC from housing Head Start (children) and the homeless adult population in the same building, they began to plan for a DRC that would be in a stand-alone building that would also be home to all of WDEOC's housing programs.

During this time, many different voices including those of unhoused individuals—were actively sought out and listened to in order to gather feedback on what the DRC would need to effectively serve the unhoused community. Their input was included in a variety of ways: they participated in listening sessions and educational forums, served on the Community Haven House advisory committee (which includes individuals with lived experience), and provided feedback through Q&A sessions at the library and via questionnaires. Additionally, members of the unhoused community serve on the Campaign Planning Committees for the DRC. There were numerous opportunities for people with lived experience to be meaningfully involved in the process.

In November 2023, the building that houses Community Haven House was sold, and once again the organization and the people served were upended and moved to its current location in a former pawn shop at 412 Washington Street in downtown Eau Claire. The site is a temporary solution, and the lease and funding are running out.

2024

Determined to find a solution that would address not only the acute needs of those seeking shelter, WDEOC, HGM, and the City of Eau Claire partnered to conduct a campaign readiness study in spring 2024 that would determine if there was widespread community support for a day services center, which would provide shelter when overnight facilities are closed, provide laundry, shower and restroom facilities, food and social programming. At the same time, WDEOC program staff would be in proximity to deliver its extensive array of supportive services focused on housing stability.

The Campaign Readiness Study

WDEOC contracted with Crescendo
Fundraising Professionals, LLC (Crescendo)
to conduct a Campaign Readiness Study
designed to determine the ability and
willingness of businesses, individuals, and
foundations to support a capital campaign
to create a facility for its housing and family
services that would also create a resource
center to serve Eau Claire, Wisconsin's
unhoused population during the day.

The study was generally positive that funds could be raised to purchase and remodel an existing building. The study did not support new construction.

Favorable Factors

- Raising \$850,000 prior to the campaign was a sign of credibility and justification for confidence in the project.
- The key partnership between WDEOC and HGM gave confidence to donors.
- The financial support of the local municipality and area businesses provided a significant and needed financial investment and a powerful statement of credibility.

Challenging Factors

- At the time of the study, finding a location and building new or purchasing an existing building was still in discussion. Study respondents did not support building new. They were unable to respond to a specific location which may have generated energy and excitement for the project beyond what was learned.
- Philanthropic and business community leaders do not know the mission of WDEOC or fully understand its size, scope, and capacity.
- At the time of the study, final details needed to be confirmed between the HGM and WDEOC to manage the center.

 Previous proposed locations within the main corridor of the North and South Barstow Business Districts were not supported. To alleviate concerns associated with a location in the heart of the business district, WDEOC researched multiple locations and settled on one that is still in the business district but not directly within the main, downtown business corridor.





"Every person is precious and important and deserves the opportunity to access resources to help them get well. We need to connect people experiencing homelessness to the resources they need to move toward wellness."

Sandi Polzin
Executive Director, Hope
Gospel Mission



A New Home for WDEOC and DRC

After a lengthy search and researching more than 50 properties, WDEOC has a signed purchase agreement for the property located at 610 Gibson Street. The location is well-suited to serve as home to WDEOC's Housing and Family Services programs and the DRC:

- It is within easy walking distance of needed services and organizations such as the Community Table dining site, Sojourner House, and L.E. Philips Memorial Library.
- It is on the fringe of the downtown Barstow retail corridor. WDEOC leadership presented the site to the

downtown North Barstow District business owners, who reacted favorably to the site.

- It will be on a revised city bus route.
- The building is in excellent condition.
- Total square footage will accommodate WDEOC's housing programs and the DRC.
- The current floor plan lends itself well to the needs of WDEOC and the DRC and requires minimal demolition.
- Excellent parking.







Supportive Organizations and Partnerships

HGM has established relationships with many significant partners in the area. These relationships will be maintained and leveraged to provide the best services available to those experiencing homelessness. A vital relationship has been established between HGM and the current Community Haven House Advisory Committee and the CHHI board. The intent is to invite members of the committee and CHHI Board to serve in an advisory capacity to assist in the launch and operations of the new DRC. Their experience, diversity, and investment will provide beneficial insight into the needs that should be met and find solutions to challenges that will be encountered. Additionally, those with lived experience will be invited to add their voice to this advisory board.

Further, it is anticipated that strong relationships with mental health providers, primary care physicians, free clinic services, dental care, eye care, housing resource partners, veterans' service providers, food pantries, clothing donations partners, employment services, 12-step groups, and other similar partners will be fostered and maintained to help move someone out of homelessness and into wellness, employment, housing, and stability.

This project has formed both formal and informal relationships with a mix of municipal and governmental agencies, elected officials, local nonprofits, and community groups. The list of supporters continues to grow and currently includes:

66

[In reference to Community Haven House] "This place is awesome. I love it here. I feel safe here."

Whitney, CHH Guest

City & County

- Eau Claire Police Department
- Eau Claire Fire Department
- Eau Claire City Council
- Eau Claire County
- · City of Altoona
- Dunn County
- L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library

Health

- Mayo Clinic Health System
- Marshfield Medical Center Eau Claire
- Chippewa Valley Free Clinic
- The Wellness Shack
- Apple Pregnancy Care Center
- Essential Health Clinic

Homeless Shelters & Housing Services

- Beacon House (Family Promise of the Chippewa Valley)
- Bolton Refuge House
- Community Haven House
- Eau Claire Tenant-Landlord Resource Center
- Hope Gospel Mission
- · Knight Transitional Housing
- Salvation Army
- Sojourner House (Catholic Charities)

Community Organizations

- Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce
- Eau Claire Community Foundation
- Workforce Resource, Inc.
- YMCA of the Chippewa Valley

Program Summary - How It Will Work (prepared by Chris Hedlund, Hope Gospel Mission)

This campaign will address the three barriers to improving the conditions for those in the Eau Claire area experiencing chronic homelessness, acute homelessness, or on the verge of homelessness while simultaneously improving the climate for business and recreation.

The barriers:

- There is no permanent space for people experiencing homelessness to gather that does not place a disproportionate burden on public spaces in the downtown and other areas of Eau Claire.
- 2. There is no permanent space for the unhoused to find protection from the elements seven days a week, 12 months a year.
- 3. There is no coordinated, collaborative, case-managed, efficient access to the resources this community needs to achieve wellness, employment, and housing security.

The opportunity exists to address all three of these needs in one project.

WDEOC and the DRC (a day resource center managed by the highly effective HGM) will provide a low-barrier day shelter coupled with supportive services that operate as a onestop shop for people in need. This permanent location will exist in the downtown Eau Claire area for accessibility and convenience to the population most in need.



Riki works 30 hours per week at a fast-food restaurant, and with her hourly wage, it is challenging to make ends meet. After being homeless and living in a small motorhome for a brief time, the family moved into a WDEOC Homeless Shelter near downtown Eau Claire.

Riki said the stable environment helped her family live a relatively normal life. "The kids are happier, and I'm able to relax a little bit and figure things out," she said.

She is paying off some old debt, and before the end of the year, she plans to move into subsidized housing operated by the City of Eau Claire. The family receives shelter and case management services from WDEOC.

The basic structure of the project will have WDEOC owning and managing the building. WDEOC program staff delivering housing service programs will have offices in the building. Management of the DRC will be through the oversight of HGM's program team leadership. The program team consists of a counseling team, chaplaincy team, house staff team, and kitchen team. The DRC will be added to this department as the fifth team and would collaborate and coordinate with the others for support. The intended name of Community Haven House within the DRC is intended to honor the work of the volunteer leadership of the temporary Community Haven House currently located on Washington Street in downtown Eau Claire.

Working with WDEOC, HGM regards this project as an opportunity to increase its outreach and fulfill its mission and vision to be a leader in providing help and hope in the communities it serves and to see lives rescued, rebuilt, and renewed. As such, HGM will make its day shelter services inclusive and lowbarrier, valuing equity, diversity, and inclusion of all people in need of services without discrimination. All faith-based programming in this project would be offered but not required.

Chris Hedlund, HGM Program Director





Value Proposition

A DRC will provide a solution that impacts several concerns for people in the Eau Claire area. By providing a safe space for people to gather and find protection from the weather, people experiencing homelessness will not have to gather in other public areas. The downtown businesses have voiced concern over the loitering that happens downtown. Likewise, the people experiencing homelessness do not want to be loitering and would prefer a place where they are welcomed. This new space would meet that need and help clients with practical and tangible services such as laundry and shower services, food, social and recreational opportunities, and the opportunity to work with service providers to improve their current situation. HGM's philosophy is to help people move forward toward their wellness. This project would work to do this in an organized and efficient way.

Financially, it is much cheaper per person, per day, to provide these supportive services in this environment when compared to inpatient behavioral health services, police interactions, jail, or hospitalization. Proactively reducing the need for these other services brings a tangible financial impact to the overall community and lessens the burden on available resources.

Who Is the Typical Client?

The project is designed to be a one-stop shop for a variety of housing support services, not just those experiencing homelessness. The typical client of the DRC is often someone currently experiencing homelessness. Because the DRC is a low-barrier environment, access is limited to adults aged 18 and over. Adults and families with children with housing needs will be able to access the array of housing and family services offered by WDEOC and partner agencies in the adjoining but separate offices.

Many clients do not have transportation, and some may have mental health needs that interfere with their ability to navigate throughout the community to different resources. Adding to the array of services provided by WDEOC and HGM, other agencies involved with this population will be offered free, flexible space to meet with clients. Agencies might include dental care, probation and parole services, and job training. They will be personally introduced to another person in the same building, thus increasing the likelihood that they will follow through and follow up with getting the services they need. Many clients will be repeat clients for some time while they work their next steps toward wellness, employment, and stable housing. On-site services will improve communication between staff and clients, especially for those who do not have a cell phone.

Building Designed to Serve

The space within the building dedicated to day shelter will include large, open areas where separate spaces could be created so people served can spread out but not be secluded and can be easily observed for safety. Additionally, flexible office spaces would be available for visiting agencies to use on a scheduled basis



to meet with clients and provide services onsite. Access to technology will be provided as needed to accommodate the guest agencies.

The following list includes examples of items for consideration:

- 1. Several shared office spaces for external agencies will be needed.
- 2. A large day room space, open and visible for security purposes.
- 3. Unisex, single-use spaces for bathrooms and showers.
- 4. Sufficient storage space for necessary resources and stock of supplies.
- 5. Areas designed for meetings, classes, social, and recreational opportunities where clients can find separation and assemble in smaller groups.
- 6. A space for computers that clients can use that allows for moderate privacy without concealment.
- 7. A space for storing and serving food.
- 8. A space to welcome new guests and create a bottleneck funnel for incoming security checks.
- A fenced-in outdoor patio area will be available for clients to enjoy, which will be connected to the DRC.
- 10. All spaces with windows for visibility and accountability. Offices should at least have large windows in the doors.
- 11. Camera systems record both audio and video in all common spaces and entry/exits.

- 12. Building materials, furniture, flooring, and other surfaces that are easy to clean and sanitize. Any areas with carpeting should have replaceable carpet squares and rugs instead of rolled carpeting.
- 13. Sound abatement considerations.

Services

WDEOC will collaborate with HGM to assist anyone requiring housing support or daytime shelter at the DRC. Anticipated services include the following:

- Providing an indoor, climate-controlled, safe space during daytime hours, seven days a week for people experiencing homelessness.
- Providing food. In addition to healthy snacks, clients will access lunch at the Community Table. HGM will hand out lunch prepared at its central kitchen on days Community Table is not serving lunch. Meals will not be prepared on-site.
- 3. Providing showers, washing machines, dryers.
- 4. Providing access to hygiene items and connection to resources for clothing and food in collaboration with existing food pantries and clothing distributors.
- 5. Providing flexible meeting space for agencies to be on-site to help the clients connect with potential resources, including the possibility of on-site 12-step meetings.

- 6. Providing staff to meet with each client regularly and help them with basic case management and help them access the resources available to them.
- 7. Providing optional enrichment activities throughout the day for clients to participate in to help them grow and learn, having more options than a TV to watch.
- Providing clients desiring religious opportunities with a connection with those services. Religious programming will not be mandatory or provided onsite.
- 9. Providing an address for receiving mail.
- 10. Providing secured, short-term storage where people can temporarily store important documents or items.
- 11. Providing access to tenant/landlord resources.

Every client will meet with a case manager to determine which services they may need or want. Once identified, the case manager will assist them in connecting with these services; ideally, many will be available on-site in the flexible meeting spaces. Each client will have the opportunity to assist in creating their own care plan and in choosing which services they want to pursue. The goal is to move each person toward wellness, stable housing, financial independence, and employment while meeting their mental and physical health needs. We will provide a positive, encouraging, and healthy environment where those who are not quite ready to make changes may be motivated to pursue wellness for themselves.

Operating Hours

The Day Resource Center intends to operate seven days a week, Monday through Sunday from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM. The hour gap between Sojourner House hours of operation provides for the transition time for clients to move from Sojourner to the DRC and allows HGM staff the time to prepare for the day.

Security

Safety will not be compromised. The space will be designed to allow separation among client groups in a manner that dangerous areas that are secluded or out of sight are avoided. This recognizes that crowding can cause security and morale issues among clients. Sufficient staff and volunteers will be present when the center is open to ensure safe operations are established.

The established culture of this facility will be one of respect and hospitality while being trauma-sensitive and acknowledging the needs of anyone experiencing mental illness. A minimum code of conduct or standard of behavior will be established and enforced to keep the environment physically, mentally, and emotionally safe. Each person will know what the expectations are and will have the autonomy to help us create this safe environment or choose to find assistance from alternative resources. Absolute sobriety will not be mandated; however, all clients on-site must be able to care for themselves and maintain a code of conduct to receive services.

Staffing Summary

The DRC will be staffed by a manager who provides oversight and case management and two rotating supervisors who will support the day-to-day operations while also providing case management. A team of regular volunteers will be used to supplement staffing to ensure safety as well as support the needs of the clients in the DRC. The staff's primary responsibility will be keeping the center safe and healthy. Their secondary responsibility will be to create the culture of an intentional, healthy, healing community. In addition to these responsibilities, illustrative examples of job description tasks are listed on the next page. All staff and volunteers must be over 18.

Summary of Manager DRC Responsibilities

- Oversee volunteers and Day Resource Center operations.
- Provide training for staff and volunteers, including competency evaluations.
- Work with reporting staff to provide training, support, and leadership to ensure daily operations are consistent with policies, procedures, and culture.
- Create, implement, oversee, and audit operational processes and procedures to achieve expected outcomes for clients.
- Meet with each reporting staff member regularly on their shift to provide support and training.
- Ensure the culture is enmeshed within each position and present in each client's experience.
- Maintain thorough documentation and communication as necessary.
- Enforce a code of conduct inside the DRC in a manner that is not punitive but draws people toward wellness and completed with quick intervention to maintain a healthy environment.
- Maintain a calm and peaceful center.
- Maintain secure entry, conduct property searches, and other screening as necessary to keep the DRC safe.
- Address any issues during the shift while maintaining calmness and professionalism.
- Complete various chores as needed.
- Maintain all forms, postings, and manuals used in the DRC and given to clients.
- Manage clients' cases to assist them in meeting expected outcomes. Based on the caseload, delegate case management as necessary to supervisors.
- Submit maintenance and technical requests and care for other details such as ordering supplies for their buildings.
- Lead monthly staff meetings and monthly client meetings.

*This list is illustrative, and not all-inclusive.





"From my perspective it is a 'moral imperative' to create a resource center where people can escape the unforgiving streets. These streets claim lives, can render people permanently disabled mentally and physically, funnel people through the legal system and create barriers to employment, education, civic participation and overall happiness."

Dr. Susan M. Wolfgram

Chair Community Haven House Advisory Committee, Co-Chair JONAH Affordable Housing Task Force & Co-Director Eau Claire Tenant-Landlord Resource Center



Compassion

by Miller Williams

Have compassion for everyone you meet, even if they don't want it.

What seems conceit, bad manners, or cynicism is always a sign of things no ears have heard, no eyes have seen.

You do not know what wars are going on down there where the spirit meets the bone.

From The Ways We Touch: Poems. Copyright 1997 by Miller Williams. Used with permission of the University of Illinois Press.

This heart is one of six that comprise "Love" a collaborative work of art created by guests of Community Haven House in collaboration with Dan Ingersoll, retired art teacher and CHH volunteer

Capital Campaign Details

Recognizing the crisis of Eau Claire's unhoused community members and those perilously close to joining the ranks of the unhoused requires sound strategic decisions and planning. The WDEOC Board of Directors has approved a capital campaign to co-locate its housing and family services programming and staff. The goal is to raise \$6.4M. The campaign will begin the silent solicitation stage in the summer and will launch on Thursday, November 13th at an event at Florian Gardens

from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The free event is open to the public. The pledges will be secured in early 2026. WDEOC will finance the five-year time period while the pledges are being remitted by donors.

In addition to running a capital campaign, WDEOC leadership intends to institute a dedicated fundraising program to generate unrestricted gifts to contribute to the operating costs of its programs. This includes a comprehensive development program that provides for giving from individuals, private

foundations, grants, and special events. It will also work to expand its volunteer base and broaden its role within the region.

A Community Effort

This collaborative project will positively impact the community. The Eau Claire Community Foundation (ECCF) will serve as its fiscal sponsor and manage all gifts and pledges, which will allow WDEOC and HGM to focus on delivering programs and serving clients. With its expertise, ECCF is uniquely qualified to help donors support this important project through a variety of giving options.

Ways to Give

Now is the time to bring the organization up to its total capacity, recognizing the great need for affordable housing and support for the unsheltered in our area. Campaign leaders hope you will join this effort to address housing insecurity and combat homelessness through this campaign. We hope you will consider making a personally meaningful gift, either outright or through a pledge, as this project directly impacts the community we love.

Pledge Commitments

Payments on pledges can be fulfilled by cash, checks, commodities, or appreciated property. Donors are advised to consult with their financial advisor if making gifts not by cash or check. Many large corporations offer employee-matching gift programs. The Board of Directors encourages potential donors to check if such a program exists. This is an excellent way to increase both the size and the impact of gifts to the Capital Campaign.

A Pledged Gift

You can fulfill your pledge over three or five years, using the payment method that best suits your financial plan. ECCF will send biannual payment reminders, and provide charitable receipts including the proper IRS language for the type of gift received. Spreading your payments over three to five years enables you to contribute at your highest capacity.

An Outright Gift

An outright cash gift is the simplest and most common way of giving. Outright gifts include appreciated securities, bonds, or personal assets; qualified charitable distributions (QCD) from your IRA; real property assigned ownership; or beneficiary status in paid life insurance with cash value (in any single form or combination). Many of these types of gifts hold specific capital gains tax advantages and deductibility for you.

Donor Recognition Plan

All gifts and pledges will be publicly acknowledged during the campaign unless the donor requests anonymity. Donors may choose to keep their gift confidential or grant permission for their name to be shared to inspire others or support a challenge grant announcement. Additionally, gifts may be made in honor, memory, or recognition of individuals, events, or achievements. Donors may also choose to have their name—or that of someone they designate—displayed on a donor recognition wall.

When you are asked to give, please give generously!

Connect with us:

Anna Cardarella anna.cardarella@wdeoc.org www.westerndairyland.org 715-836-7511



Donor Recognition Naming Rights

All contributions of \$1,000 or more to the WDEOC and Day Resource Center Campaign will be permanently recognized in a prominent location on the property. Gifts of \$500 or more will be publicly acknowledged during the course of the campaign without identification of amounts. All gifts and pledges are confidential. A donor may choose to remain anonymous. Donors may choose to make their gifts in honor or in memory, in recognition of specific events or accomplishments, or may choose to have their names or others engraved on the plaques as listed below.

The following Giving Societies have been established to recognize levels of gifts and pledges to the Day Resource Center Campaign. Donors will have the opportunity to identify how they wish their names to be listed prior to installation.

Features To Be Named	Gift Amount
Building	\$2.5M
WDEOC Large Conference Room (Accessible to outside organizations)	\$750,000
WDEOC Reception & Waiting Area	\$500,000
DRC Welcome Center & Primary Program Room	\$500,000
WDEOC Food Pantry (Secured)	\$250,000
Medical Exam Room	\$250,000
DRC Patio and Outdoor Space (Secured)	\$250,000
WDEOC Fresh Start Program Room	\$150,000
DRC Second Program Room	\$150,000
WDEOC Small Conference Room	\$100,000
WDEOC Kitchen & Breakroom	\$100,000
WDEOC HAPY Program Room (Homeless Assistance Program for Youth)	\$100,000
DRC Flexible Meeting/Office (4 available)	\$50,000
WDEOC Offices (14 available)	\$25,000
DRC Program Room	\$25,000
DRC Personal Care Room (Secured)	\$25,000
DRC Laundry Room	\$25,000

Giving Societies	Gift Amount
Beacon	\$1,000,000
Society	and above
Pathway	\$999,999-
Society	\$500,000
Horizon	\$499,999-
Society	\$100,000
Visionaries	\$99,999-
Society	\$50,000
Opportunity	\$49,999-
Society	\$25,000
Renewal	\$24,999-
Society	\$10,000
Allies	\$9,999-
Society	\$5,000
Advocates	\$4,999-
Society	\$1,000
Neighbors Society	Up to \$999

Appendix - A

You can find WDEOC programs and services in the following locations:

Main Office

23122 Whitehall Road Independence, WI 54747

Eau Claire Office

418 Wisconsin Street Eau Claire, WI 54703

Head Start Program Locations

Eau Claire County

Altoona Early Learning Center 1312 North Hillcrest Parkway Altoona, WI 54720

Eau Claire Head Start Center 3103 Oak Knoll Drive Eau Claire, WI 54701

Eau Claire Truax Head Start/ Early Head Start 623 Truax Blvd Eau Claire, WI 54703

Buffalo County

Naples Head Start Center S283 County Road BB & HH Mondovi, WI 54755

Trempealeau County

Independence Head Start Center/Early Head Start 35480 Sixth Street Independence, WI 54747

Blair Early Learning Center Blair-Taylor Elementary School N31024 Elland Road Blair, WI 54616

Arcadia Early Learning Center Arcadia Elementary School 358 E River Street Arcadia, WI 54612 Galesville-Ettrick-Trempealeau Head Start Center Kindernook – GET School District 20873 College Ave Galesville, WI 54630

Jackson County

Black River Falls Head Start Center 905 Alder Street Black River Falls, WI 54615

Pepin County

Family Resource Center 309 3rd Avenue West Durand, WI 54736

Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council Programs

Children & Families

Head Start & Early Head Start

www.wdHeadStart.org

Nearly 500 children and their families are enrolled in Western Dairyland Head Start. The program educates and empowers low-income families with children (prenatal to five years old) to reach their highest potential. Head Start Early Learning Centers are in

- Altoona
- Eau Claire West

- Eau Claire South
- Independence
- Arcadia
- Blair
- Galesville (serving the Galesville-Ettrick-Trempealeau school district)
- Black River Falls
- Naples

Child Care Partnership

www.ChildCarePartnership.org

Our mission is to partner with and support parents and caregivers by creating a greater understanding of their important role and the positive impact they have on the lives of children.

- Parents We work with parents and/ or caregivers to find childcare, evaluate childcare options, and provide resources including payment assistance.
- Providers We provide one-on-one support for individuals interested in starting a childcare business, support to regulated childcare programs, continuing education opportunities, the CACFP for family childcare programs, and more.
- Community We are the local experts and hold vital childcare data for communities to best support children, families, and local economies.
- Family Resources We work with parents and caregivers in Buffalo and Pepin Counties to build on their strengths, foster confidence, and deepen connections with their children during fun, hands-on activities.

Birthday Bags

Each month, dozens of bright bags are filled with cake mix, frosting, candles, colorful plates and napkins, and a few small toys. The bags are delivered to children staying in WDEOC homeless shelters, families enrolled in Head Start, and other families who are struggling to make ends meet. Our goal is to provide every child, regardless of their economic situation, with a happy birthday.

Food Security

Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) – A federally funded program providing financial reimbursement for licensed/certified childcare providers who serve nutritious meals and snacks to the children in their care.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) – WDEOC works with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to provide supplemental food and supplies to food pantries in Eau Claire, Buffalo, Trempealeau, and Jackson counties.

Eagle's Nest Food Pantry – A food pantry serving students in the Independence School District, located within the combined Elementary/Middle/High School building.

Homeless Services

Family Shelters – Each shelter is a fullyfurnished residence for one family with children. Families stay for 30 to 45 days and receive case management services.

- Four shelters in Eau Claire
- One shelter in Black River Falls
- One shelter in Blair
- One shelter to reopen next year in Mondovi
- HUD Rental Counseling

Homeless Assistance Program for Youth
- 15 young adults ages 18–24 receiving
comprehensive case management services and
education.

Permanent Supportive Housing (commonly referred to as Housing First) – WDEOC rents 33 apartments and provides case management services for chronically homeless clients in Eau Claire and Altoona.

Rapid Rehousing – Rapidly connects families and individuals experiencing homelessness to permanent housing through a tailored package of assistance that may include the use of time-limited financial assistance and targeted supportive services.

WERA Housing Stability – 170 clients receiving case management services to prevent eviction and find permanent housing.

Home Energy Plus

WHEAP Energy Assistance – Operating with state and federal funds, the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) provides

financial assistance to thousands of households each year, easing the burden of high energy bills and keeping families warm in winter.

Weatherization – Households receiving WHEAP Energy Assistance may also qualify for Weatherization services. Common weatherization services include installing attic and sidewall insulation, sealing major air leaks, repairing, or replacing furnaces, plus other energy-conserving activities.

Energy Crisis Assistance – Financial assistance available during a crisis; if a household is without heat, is nearly out of fuel, or is unable to purchase more fuel.

Emergency Furnace Repair & Replacement – Funding is available to pay for repairs or replacement of a furnace/boiler/heating system.

Water Conservation Program – Provides services to income-eligible homeowners and some renters to repair or replace water heaters, leaky fixtures, toilets, and pipes.

Home Ownership

First-Time Homebuyer Loans – No-interest loans for low-income first-time homebuyers.

Down Payment Assistance – Financial assistance for income-eligible homebuyers in western Wisconsin.

HUD Home Ownership Counseling

Training & Education

Fresh Start – Provides education, employment skills, and career direction for young adults by involving them in the construction of a new house. When completed, the house is sold to an income-eligible family in the community. The goal is for each young adult to be fully employed or enrolled in post-secondary education when they leave the program.

Skills Enhancement – Offers financial assistance to low-income individuals who are working while pursuing post-secondary education.

Nursing Skills - Offers financial assistance to income-eligible individuals interested in pursuing high-demand nursing degrees.

Business Development

www.SuccessfulBusiness.org and www. WomensBusinessConference.com

Provides individualized and group business training, with special efforts made to assist economically and socially disadvantaged women.

Entrepreneur Technical Assistance – We work with start-ups and existing businesses to offer assistance and training. Our focus is on economically and socially disadvantaged individuals.

Child Care Training classes, conferences, and assistance for aspiring and existing childcare providers.

Transportation

Work-n-Wheels – Provides auto loans (purchase or repair) to low-income workers.

Paratransit - Under contract with Eau Claire Transit, WDEOC is the paratransit certifier for the city and county of Eau Claire in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The program helps people unable to use the fixed route bus system due to cognitive and/or physical disabilities.

Transit Ambassadors – A free program teaching residents how to use the City of Eau Claire bus system. One-on-one personal assistance is available.

Thrift Store

WDEOC operates Cents & Sensibility, a non-profit thrift store located in Independence. New merchandise donated by community members arrives at the store every week, and 100 percent of sales helps WDEOC in assisting less-fortunate families residing in Buffalo, Eau Claire, Jackson, and Trempealeau counties.

Volunteer

The Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) connects individuals aged 55 or older with meaningful volunteer opportunities in their communities. Volunteers are matched with volunteer opportunities that best reflect their interests, available time, and preferences.



March 21, 2024

To whom it may concern,

I am pleased to write a letter in support of the Day Resource Center (DRC) project in the City of Eau Claire, WI.

Over the last few years, the need for a DRC has become significantly greater with the increase in unhoused residents in our community. The proposed solution has the potential to make an impact in Eau Claire and bring existing services into one location to be more efficient and effective in helping address individual and community needs.

Services based in one location that provide a positive impact on the social determinants of health could significantly improve the overall well-being in our community. Research shows the impact on one's health when they do not have consistent access to basic needs. Providing critical services to a population whose needs are great could help reduce hospital emergency room visits, inpatient stays, EMS calls, detoxification programs, police calls, incarceration, and mental health crises, all of which result in high public costs and poor health outcomes.

I support the Day Resource Center project and believe that it has the potential to make a lasting impact on the homeless community we serve.

Sincerely,

Brook Berg
Director, Community Engagement
Mayo Clinic Health System, Northwest Wisconsin



Matt Rokus, Chief of Police 721 Oxford Avenue, Suite 1400 Eau Claire, WI 54703

The Eau Claire Police Department supports the concept of a Day Resource Center (DRC) to better serve the City of Eau Claire's homeless population. Our community has a gap in offering daytime shelter and supportive resources.

A DRC for people experiencing homelessness would reduce the current amount of behavior disorder, specifically in Eau Claire's downtown area. Criminal behavior and disorder associated with homelessness in our downtown have drastically increased over the past five years. A DRC would improve the quality of life in our downtown area, offer supportive resources to those in need, and improve our department's ability to deliver police services.

A facility dedicated to our homeless population which offers treatment services, community resources, mentorship, mental health services, overall support, encompassed with structured guidelines, would be a positive addition to the City of Eau Claire. This change would allow a referral and option for police officers who often encounter people who have few alternatives.

A DRC will provide people experiencing homelessness a supportive environment during daytime hours and decrease the amount of officer time spent addressing problematic behavior. Currently, members of our police department spend a disproportionate amount of time addressing behavior disorder in a small section of our city. A DRC will have a positive impact on our homeless population and increase our officer's availability to provide services to the entire community.

The Eau Claire Police Department supports a Day Resource Center. It will have a positive impact for both our homeless population and our entire community.

Respectfully,

Matt Rokus
Chief of Police

Eau Claire Police Department



Eau Claire Fire Department

216 S. Dewey Street, Eau Claire, WI 54701 Phone: 715.839.5012 * Fax: 715.839.1696 * Email: ecfire@eauclairewi.gov



Matthew J. Jaggar Fire Chief 715.839.5012 March 22, 2024

Subject: Day Resource Center

Jon M. Schultz Deputy Chief 715.839.5024 The Eau Claire Fire Department supports the concept of providing a Day Resource Center as a means to help members of the community experiencing homelessness.

Robert S. Haller Deputy Chief 715.839.2911 The Eau Claire Fire Department has seen an increase in the use of services related to people experiencing homelessness. This has created more calls for service for environmental exposures, mental health issues, drug overdoses, illegal fires, and traumatic injuries from violent interactions.

Tony M. Biasi Deputy Chief 715.839.5015 A Day Resource Center may help reduce the use of emergency services by providing a safe and controlled environment where people in need can get help in a safe and centralized location. Additionally, a center that provides mental health services, drug misuse treatment, and basic health care could reduce the need for EMS services or transport in an already strained local health system.

Administration 715.839.5012

Unhoused individuals also need food, shelter, and a climate-controlled environment to survive. A Day Resource Center may reduce the need for fire and EMS services through the reduction of illegal warming fires in public spaces or vacant structures. This may reduce the potential of uncontrolled fires and environmental exposure related calls requiring medical attention.

Inspections / Investigations 715.839.4825 A well-structured and supported Day Resource Center would likely provide the resources necessary to help the unhoused population and community. Therefore, the Eau Claire Fire Department supports a Day Resource Center.

Respectfully,

Matter Joga

Matthew Jaggar Fire Chief



Finance Department Phone: (715) 839-6044 Fax: (715) 839-4940

March 21, 2024

RE: Day Resource Center

To Whom May Concern:

The City of Eau Claire has allocated \$500,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funding for acquisition of a Day Resource Center. In addition, the City of Eau Claire has accepted a donation from Mayo Clinic in the amount of \$100,000 to be used in conjunction of the project and will continue to assist in gathering matching funds for any grant awards.

Thank you,

Kitzie Winters Finance Director City of Eau Claire

ge Winten -



I am writing to express my support for the establishment of the Day Resource Center (DRC) project in Eau Claire, WI. I have served on the Eau Claire City Council since 2018 and I have seen the need for homeless services explode, especially after Covid.

The support for a Day Resource Center is strong, as echoed by the support from various stakeholders. From the homeless community to the numerous agencies dedicated to supporting them, from local businesses and residents in our Central Business District to elected officials and government personnel in the region, there is a consensus regarding the urgency of this initiative.

Centralizing essential services within the DRC would streamline efforts to address pressing community needs with increased efficiency and effectiveness. By consolidating resources under one roof, the DRC will be a place to serve those in need of vital services such as shelter during the day, employment assistance, housing support, basic mental health care, hygiene amenities, peer counseling, food and clothing provisions, and financial literacy guidance.

Furthermore, by mitigating the strain on emergency services, reducing hospital visits, minimizing instances of incarceration, and averting mental health crises, the DRC has the potential to alleviate public costs significantly while simultaneously improving health outcomes for our community.

I wholeheartedly endorse the Day Resource Center project and believe that it has the potential to make a lasting impact in the homeless community we serve. Thank you for your consideration.

Emily Berge
City Council President
City of Eau Claire



1303 LYNN AVENUE ALTOONA, WI 54720

Ph: 715-839-6092 Fax: 715-839-1800 www.ci.altoona.wi.us

March 21, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the City of Altoona, WI in support of the Day Resource Center (DRC) project in the City of Eau Claire, WI. We support the City's efforts as they move forward in raising money and applying for grants to make this a reality.

The need for a DRC is significant and there is widespread support in the homeless community we serve, from homeless support agencies, among business and residents in our Central Business District, elected officials and government staff in the region, and many community members throughout the area.

The proposed solution has the potential to make a real impact in Eau Claire and bring existing services into one location to be more efficient and effective in helping address community needs.

Services based in one location that aim to provide a warm, safe place to stay during the day, employment resources, housing assistance, basic mental health services and referrals, basic hygiene and first aid supplies, peer mentoring, food and clothing access and financial literacy are needed in our community.

A DRC could potentially reduce hospital emergency room visits, inpatient stays, EMS calls, detoxification programs, police calls, incarceration, and mental health crises, all of which result in high public costs and poor health outcomes in the Chippewa Valley.

I wholeheartedly endorse the Day Resource Center project and believe that it has the potential to make a lasting impact on the homeless community and region we serve. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Roy Atkinson

Assistant City Administrator



March 25, 2024

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter in support of the Day Resource Center (DRC) project in the City of Eau Claire, WI.

The need for a DRC is significant and there is widespread support in the homeless community we serve, from homeless support agencies, among business and residents in our Central Business District, elected officials and government staff in the region, and many community members throughout the area.

The proposed solution has the potential to make a real impact in Eau Claire and bring existing services into one location to be more efficient and effective in helping address community needs.

Services based in one location that aim to provide a warm, safe place to stay during the day, employment resources, housing assistance, basic mental health services and referrals, basic hygiene and first aid supplies, peer mentoring, food and clothing access and financial literacy are needed in our community.

A DRC could potentially reduce hospital emergency room visits, inpatient stays, EMS calls, detoxification programs, police calls, incarceration, and mental health crises, all of which result in high public costs and poor health outcomes.

I wholeheartedly endorse the Day Resource Center project and believe that it has the potential to make a lasting impact in the homeless community we serve. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, I may be reached at 715-839-5106 or by e-mail at kathryn.schauf@eauclairecounty.gov.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Schauf County Administrator Eau Claire County

COUNTY OF DUNN



March 25, 2024

Department of Administration

Kristin Korpela Dunn County Manager 3001 US Highway 12 East, Suite 225 Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751 Phone (715) 232-2429 Fax (715) 232-1324 admin@co.dunn.wi.us

LETTER OF SUPPORT

This letter is in support of the Day Resource Center (DRC) project in the City of Eau Claire, WI. Although currently the Dunn County Manager, I spent nearly 20 years in administration with the Dunn County Department of Human Services. I can personally attest to the need for wrap-around resources for unhoused persons. Up until recently, Dunn County totally relied on the Chippewa Valley, and especially Eau Claire, for assistance with people experiencing homelessness. We had no formal resources or sheltering facilities. We now have a 20 bed overnight shelter that is constantly full with a waiting list.

The need for a DRC is significant and there is widespread support in the homeless community we serve, from homeless support agencies, among business and residents in our Central Business District, elected officials and government staff in the region, and many community members throughout the area. The proposed solution has the potential to make a real impact in Eau Claire and bring existing services into one location to be more efficient and effective in helping address community needs.

Services based in one location that aim to provide a warm, safe place to stay during the day, employment resources, housing assistance, basic mental health services and referrals, basic hygiene and first aid supplies, peer mentoring, food and clothing access and financial literacy are needed in our community.

A DRC could potentially reduce hospital emergency room visits, inpatient stays, EMS calls, detoxification programs, police calls, incarceration, and mental health crises, all of which result in high public costs and poor health outcomes. The Chippewa Valley just lost a hospital/medical system provider tightening access to such valuable resources.

I wholeheartedly endorse the Day Resource Center project and believe that it has the potential to make a lasting impact in the homeless community we serve. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristin Korpela, Dunn County Manager

Crescendo Fundraising Professionals, LLC

Ellen Hongerholt, Founder/President
Jillian Harris, Consultant
Brittany Bral, Consultant
Mikayla Larsen, Graphic Design
Nancy M. Brown, Consultant
Peggy Derrick, Consultant
Kevin Hennessy, Editor

