

August 9, 2021

City of La Crosse Common Council
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Re: Letter of Support for Hatchery LLC

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to share my perspective as a community member who is very proud of what I have seen evolve in the downtown area in the almost 25 years I've lived and worked here. When I moved here, the downtown area was a ghost town compared to the thriving and lively modernized version we are fortunate to have today. This is thanks to many people - like you and our Hatchery LLC friends - who continue to see potential and beauty in our unique city between the river and the bluffs but who also realize that ignoring our treasures is a detriment to the entire community in the long-term. I have lived and worked in several countries and in several states, and I am an extensive traveler – the most thriving places I have experienced are those that are respected, beautified, and inviting to all.

I'm also very interested as an active contributor to the downtown area. Not only do I work downtown and spend as much time as possible there, my kids attend La Crosse Polytechnic School. A key to the school's mission is to engage with and serve the downtown community and businesses/organizations. I also serve as president of CRALC, the governing board of Polytechnic and CRVA, and it is very important to me that we never lose interest and focus on continuing to grow and take care of our surroundings and the future opportunities for our kids.

I was happy to read all the supporting points in the recent Tribune article, especially the public letter of support from The Riverside International Friendship Gardens stating they don't see hesitations but are excited to collaborate and help design the beer garden and highlight another sister city and country. That means a lot to me, being a global citizen. Their perspective holds a lot of weight for me because they understand the location and Riverside Park intimately. The number of opportunities and events for the community and visitors to come together in Riverside Park throughout the year is a positive sign of our thriving downtown area and everything you have done to help us get here.

To be transparent, I worked with Tiffany Smith of Hatchery LLC for several years when I was a professor at Viterbo University, and we have remained friends since I left Viterbo in 2014. I am very aware of all of the passion and work she has invested into making this area an even better place for all stakeholders. She is a visionary who takes risks that many would not be willing to do, and that benefits us all. For example, she rescued a property in my neighborhood and has turned that eyesore into a beautiful place that is a thriving Airbnb, giving many people the opportunity to experience the La Crosse area. We have had absolutely no issues with the many visitors. For me, personally, I'm grateful that she has improved my neighborhood and made it

more lively. In another example, I seriously considered establishing a business in one of her properties because of how Tiffany approaches development – it's always about what will help make La Crosse a better place for everyone while preserving the beauty of its history.

In the 25 years I've lived here, I have never had interest in stepping inside the Hatchery building, although I have awed at its history and charm. I was thrilled to learn of Hatchery LLC's proposed plans and their passion for doing something great for the community. I'm sure to be one of their first customers in that space – imagine the professional meetings and celebrations possible, which currently are limited to very few venues in such an attractive location! I ask you to join me in your support of this.

Anita Wood
La Crosse, WI 54601