

Dear Mayor Kabat -

This email is a request to the City of La Crosse, Board of Public Works to review and approve the ramp and curb renovations at 111 Ninth Street North - Christ Episcopal Church.

Our church community needs to make major renovations to our church office building on Ninth St., adjoining the church itself. The La Crosse Historic Preservation committee saw our recommended exterior updates and approved the plan to retain our historic architecture while providing better access. They also commended us for sustaining and preserving a building which is a large part of La Crosse history. This structure, built in 1961, needs many upgrades to better accommodate the needs of members and visitors with mobility limitations.

The 9th street entrance is the primary entrance to the office building and church because it does not have stairs and leads directly into the foyer with our elevator to reach 3 different building levels. Our building hosts church services 6 days a week. We also host other non-profit organizations who routinely use our sanctuary for concerts (UWL, Coulee Region Gospel Choir, Annual Advent Hymn sing). We collaborate with Coulee Council on Addictions (NA, AA, Al-Anon), the Salvation Army and Dubna Friendship Club by providing meeting room and special event space. Most events we host draw 100-500 people many using wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches or other adaptive equipment.

The current curb height at our drop off zone is a major barrier to entry. Many guests do not have the physical strength, balance or dexterity to raise their foot up that high to get onto the sidewalk. The buckled sidewalk also poses a safety hazard for those trying to negotiate entry. Our architect recommends creating a curb-less widened access area in our current loading zone which would allow a vehicle to drive up in the loading zone, unload a guest with a walker/wheelchair directly onto the sidewalk which would lead to a ramp where they could more easily gain entry. We also agreed to level out and replace the buckled concrete on the 9th street side with new sidewalk.

A drawing and renderings of the project are attached.

Please contact me with any questions about our project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Tim Donahue
Junior Warden, Christ Episcopal Church
608/769-8232