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From: Aron Newberry <newberry54601@gmail.com>
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To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: REACH Center Zoning Approval Support

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Washburn & PPH need REACH

Dear Council Members,

I encourage the City Council to consider the facts, data, and evidence regarding the community's needs for increased access to affordable healthcare when deciding on the rezoning petition for the REACH Center. Washburn and Powell-Poage-Hamilton neighborhood residents face significant health and economic challenges, with the 2020 Census showing that the area has some of the worst outcomes in La Crosse County. The average household income in Washburn is \$32,000, compared to \$53,000 city-wide. Furthermore, 38% of Washburn residents live below the poverty line, significantly higher than the 21% city-wide rate. The United Way's ALICE data estimates that 50% of city residents are either in poverty or one financial hardship away from it.

Supporting the rezoning of the REACH Center addresses the pressing health and economic needs of our most vulnerable residents. The center provides essential health and social services that are a lifeline for the community. Rezoning will allow for the expansion of these services, particularly much-needed dental care. The REACH Center is also a key contributor to the City and County's "Pathways Home" plan to address the growing homelessness issue in La Crosse.

Additionally, the opposition's arguments primarily revolve around proposed safety concerns, a rigid application of zoning designations, and favoring neighbors' wishes over the property owner's rights. However, the facts, data, and evidence do not support these arguments. Let's review the facts, apply principles of fairness, and consider the necessity of this resource to make an informed decision. Let's prioritize Washburn's, and all of La Crosse's, well-being and support this necessary, low-risk, high-benefit change.

Sincerely,
Aron Newberry

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