

Craig, Sondra

From: City of La Crosse Notices - No Reply
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2026 8:38 AM
To: Craig, Sondra; Elsen, Nikki; Janssen, Barb; Kahlow, Chris; Sleznikow, Larry; Trost, Jennifer; Mindel, Mackenzie; Dickinson, Tamra; Goggin, Erin; Steele, Annette; Washington-Spivey, Shaundel; Weston, Lisa; Newberry, Aron; Bedford, Crystal; Padesky, Gary; Stine, Olivia; Northwood, Rosanne
Subject: City Council Contact Form: Support for City Administrator position from the Housing Advocacy Committee

Submitted on: 2/10/2026

Name: Natalie Heneghan

Email Address: natalie@habitatlacrosse.org

Is this related to a legislative agenda item: Yes

Agenda item number: 26-0071

Subject: Support for City Administrator position from the Housing Advocacy Committee

Dear members of the Common Council,

The Housing Advocacy Committee is a group of dedicated individuals concerned about affordable housing. This committee is led by Habitat for Humanity of the Greater La Crosse Region and includes 31 representatives from 23 key employers and nonprofit organizations. Together, we work to bring attention to the challenges our community faces regarding affordable housing, and we advocate for legislative and policy changes.

Considering this mission, we are writing to express strong support for the creation of a City Administrator position in the City of La Crosse. This role is essential to building a more responsive, coordinated, and professional city government—one that can better support initiatives like ours and address the urgent housing needs of our community.

The 2024 La Crosse Housing Study highlights the need for increased housing development to meet the needs of our community. The study notes:

- A desire among residents for an increase in all housing types including single-family homes, duplexes, and multi-family rental units.
- While La Crosse County has seen steady population growth, the City of La Crosse has stagnated. This can at least partially be attributed to the cost and availability of housing in the City of La Crosse compared to neighboring communities.
- High costs for both rentals and owner-occupied units can be mitigated through an increase in supply of every housing type.

A City Administrator will support housing development by providing cohesive leadership to the many city departments that developers interact with when building new housing in La Crosse. Department heads have expressed a need for greater collaboration between departments and a desire for greater continuity and consistency between departments.

A City Administrator would support housing development in several ways:

- Coordinate interdepartmental efforts to streamline housing-related programs, zoning, and development approvals.
- Ensure continuity and follow-through on long-term housing strategies, even as elected leadership changes.

- Support grant writing and funding acquisition, helping the city secure resources for affordable housing projects.
- Provide data-driven analysis and policy recommendations to the Common Council and Mayor, enabling more informed decisions on housing affordability, tenant protections, and land use.
- Facilitate partnerships with nonprofits, developers, and employers to expand housing access and affordability.

As a group of housing developers and advocates, we have experienced delays, miscommunication, and inefficiencies when working with local government on housing projects. We urge Council to consider the positive impact that coordinated administration will have on meeting our city's urgent housing needs.

Communities with City Administrators have been shown to adopt a data-driven approach to decision making, tracking progress on goals laid out in strategic plans, and making adjustments to operations based on the data. This expertise is crucial for achieving the goal of adding 203-232 new units annually through 2030, as noted in the La Crosse Housing Study.

We urge you to support the creation of a City Administrator position, a crucial step toward stronger leadership, smarter governance, and a more equitable future for all residents.

Thank you for considering our position.

Sincerely,

Natalie Heneghan

Committee Chair

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