



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Meeting Agenda - Final

Common Council

Thursday, August 8, 2024

5:00 PM

Council Chambers
City Hall, First Floor

special meeting

This meeting is open for in-person attendance and will also be available through video conferencing. The meeting can be viewed only (no participation) by visiting the Legislative Information Center Meetings calendar (<https://cityoflacrosse.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>) - find the scheduled meeting and click on the "In Progress" video link to the far right in the meeting list.

Members of the public who would like to provide written comments on any agenda may do so by emailing cityclerk@cityoflacrosse.org, using the green drop box outside of City Hall, or mailing to City Clerk, 400 La Crosse Street, La Crosse WI 54601.

Mayor Mitch Reynolds, Presiding

Roll Call

Tamra Dickinson, Erin Goggin, Barb Janssen, Larry Sleznikow, Christine Kahlow, Mac Kiel, Mackenzie Mindel, Chris Woodard, Rebecca Schwarz, Jennifer Trost, Douglas Happel, Mark Neumann

Agenda Item:

[24-1068](#)

July 8 Report regarding options for interim overnight shelter.

Adjournment

Notice is further given that members of other governmental bodies may be present at the above scheduled meeting to gather information about a subject over which they have decision-making responsibility.

NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

Requests from persons with a disability who need assistance to participate in this meeting should call the City Clerk's office at (608) 789-7510 or send an email to ADAcityclerk@cityoflacrosse.org, with as much advance notice as possible.



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Text File

File Number: 24-1068

Agenda Date: 8/8/2024

Version: 1

Status: Agenda Ready

In Control: Common Council

File Type: Report

Agenda Number:



City of La Crosse

July 8, 2024

To Members of the Common Council of the City of La Crosse,

This document has been prepared in response to resolution #24-0817 passed by the Common Council on June 17, 2024, directing all necessary staff to provide multiple options for interim overnight shelter in writing within three weeks of the adoption of the Resolution.

This conceptual document is meant to fulfill the requirements of the resolution. According to the Pathways to Housing list, which is a by-name list of people experiencing homelessness in the City of La Crosse, there are approximately 230 individuals living in the La Crosse community without permanent and secure housing. There are approximately 70 individuals staying in local fully occupied shelters (Salvation Army and New Horizons). Therefore, it has been determined that an option or combination of options for the remaining 160 individuals would be needed to provide adequate shelter or secure living option. The options provided in this document seek to address the needs of the aforementioned 160 individuals in a viable manner; something that is likely to be achievable. If, for example, property owner is not willing to allow a parcel to be used for this purpose or require approvals that seem highly unlikely or unattainable that option is not included for the purposes of this document.

Work was conducted within the limited timeline allocated by #24-0817 to comprehensively assess space and location options that have been considered repeatedly in the past few years. All potential options were considered and evaluated within a viability matrix that included discussions of access of emergency service personnel, available infrastructure to address hygienic needs, cost of needed improvements, and whether a parcel was likely to be readily available for use, among other considerations.

Based on lessons learned from past experiences providing a space or shelter, considering the number of individuals for which an appropriate space would need to be provided, and through evaluation of current space availability, a mixture of indoor and outdoor spaces is likely

necessary to effectively provide services for the current population of individuals experiencing homelessness. Among the considerations of this determination is the sheer number of individuals needing services, the likelihood many individuals would be unwilling to stay at an indoors facility because, among other reasons, the lack of pet access, and other considerations that can be numerous and unique to individuals. Location decisions also need to consider access for those with disabilities, availability of electrical infrastructure to accommodate storage of medication for certain individuals as well as whether locations would need to zoning changes to allow the intended use.

Among the most significant considerations for any location is the level of staffing necessary to ensure health, safety, and environmental stability. Based on significant past experiences, it was determined that adequate staffing should be prioritized for both indoor and outdoor locations. Appropriate training and qualifications are critical of any staff who are to work with individuals identified by this council resolution. Potential staff additions include, but are not limited to, maintenance, security, and supportive care workers. Volunteers can be included to assist in staffing needs but would need proper coordination and should not be considered as additional personnel in lieu of appropriate professional staff due to liability and safety considerations.

Possible locations both within the City of La Crosse and nearby municipalities.

After a vetting process of parcels identifiable as potential sites, the most currently viable have been identified. In addition to sites evaluated within La Crosse city limits, conversations to identify potential sites outside of the city occurred with representatives from the Village of Holmen, City of Onalaska, Village of West Salem, Village of Bangor, Town of Onalaska, City of La Crescent, La Crosse County, Sparta, City of Tomah, Town of Shelby, Town of Medary, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Administration and the School District of La Crosse. A message was left with the Town of Campbell, but staff were unable to connect with a representative there. No immediate or unique options were provided although representatives from some municipalities seemed open to further discussion, pending governing body approval and provision of additional information for use of open space.

Regardless of the location, additional staff would be required to operate any facility properly and safely. Additionally, any Park property would need approval from the City of La Crosse Board of Park Commissioners.

Potential sites

Indoor

1. Catholic Charities Warming Center at 413 3rd Street South. Capacity for approximately 40 people.
2. Fire station #10 (former fire station #2) at 626 Monitor Street. 2 toilets, 1 shower, kitchen. Capacity for approximately 30 people.
3. Northside Policing Center at 713 St. James St. Capacity for approximately 20 people. 1 shower, 2 kitchenettes, separate men's and women's bathrooms.
4. 621 3rd St N. Capacity for approximately 30 people. 1 toilet. No shower.
5. Norwood Inn and Suites – 148 hotel rooms, 101 Sky Harbour Drive, located in the Town of Campbell. There may be additional unknown costs associated with needed repairs.

Outdoor

1. Wittenberg Park. 2945 Wittenberg Place. This property was declared surplus on May 9, 2019, and therefore may not need approval from the Board of Park Commissioners. 8.6-acre parcel with bathroom facilities.
2. 300 St. Cloud St. 0.93 acre. No on-premises amenities.



- Green space by City Hall parking lot between 6th and 7th Street. This property is on the list of properties where camping is prohibited. No on-premises overnight or weekend amenities.



- County parking lot at 230 7th St N, tax parcel 17-20167-60, Lot F. Recommendation of using this as a safe parking place for those living in their vehicles. This lot would be accessible from 7:00pm – 7:00am. There are similar initiatives in Duluth, MN (<https://steppingonupduluth.org/safe-bay>) and Brown County/Green Bay, WI (<https://bchhcwi.org/safe-park/>). This proposal has not been discussed with the County and would be subject to approval of the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors.
- Sherwood Park at 3300 Nottingham Place. No on-premises amenities.
- Erickson Park at 2423 21st Place S. 9.14 acres. Shower and bathroom facilities at nearby Erickson Pool.
- City-owned property at 5248 33rd St S. 1.17 acres.



Projected expenditures related to staff, equipment, security, rental fees, insurance, cleaning costs and any other associated expenses.

Providing dedicated spaces for individuals experiencing homelessness, whether indoors or outdoors, involves various cost factors. These factors can be divided into known and unknown costs, impacting the overall budget required to sustain such initiatives. Costs are estimated based on past experiences, expenses, and rough estimates but not through a formal Request for Proposal process.

Known costs

1. Operational Costs

- Catholic Charities of the Diocese of La Crosse Inc. La Crosse Warming Center: Operates from November to April with a monthly expense of approximately \$50,000. If operational outside these months, the cost remains the same.

- The Salvation Army Services: Annual costs range between \$125,000 and \$150,000 for 20 hours of work per week for six employees. This does not include additional expenses like furnishings, utilities, facilities repair, and janitorial supplies. Their facility is currently at full capacity.

2. Staffing Costs

- City Staff for Outdoor Locations: Estimated at \$400 per week for each staff member, with a minimum of two staff members for 20 hours per week per person. This would result in an annual cost of \$41,600. City Staff would be responsible for daytime cleaning and maintenance of the site and not for security or to provide other services.

3. Security Services

- Estimate of security services ranges from \$1500 - \$2000 per day. This results in an annual cost of \$547,500 - \$730,000. This estimate is from previous costs associated with emergency shelter.

4. Potential Additional Location Amenities

- Portable Toilets: \$80 each per week, serviced 2-3 times per week, or \$105 for ADA accessible units which results in an annual cost of \$9,620 (for two toilets with one of them an ADA unit).

- Dumpsters: \$500 each per month, emptied three times a week which results in an annual cost of \$6,000.

- ADA 4 Station Portable Shower / Restroom Combo Trailer: \$105,760 to purchase (cost from 2021).

5. Infrastructure Costs

- Electricity Infrastructure for Outdoor Spaces: Estimated at \$10,000 if it does not already exist.
- Repairs for bathroom and shower facilities at Erickson Pool: Estimated at \$20,000.

6. Additional Items to Be Considered

- Storage of personal items during the day.
- Supplies such as chairs and cots.

Unknown Costs

Hidden and Unknown Costs of Establishing Homeless Shelters and Encampments

1. Location-Based Variability

Utility Rates: The cost of utilities such as electricity, water, and heating can vary significantly based on the location of the shelter.

Labor Costs: The availability and cost of skilled labor for maintenance, security, and support services can fluctuate. Ensuring that staff members are adequately trained to deal with the specific needs of homeless individuals, including mental health support and substance abuse counseling, can further increase labor costs.

2. Unidentified Needs and Emergencies

Unexpected Repairs and Maintenance: Facilities may require sudden repairs or upgrades due to wear and tear or unforeseen damages. For example, during extreme weather conditions,

shelters may need additional repairs to roofs or heating systems. The unpredictability of such emergencies may necessitate the allocation of contingency funds.

Increased Demand: Sudden spikes in homelessness can occur which could stress facilities and available resources.

Health Emergencies: Outbreaks of illnesses within shelters can lead to additional healthcare costs and the need for isolation facilities. Managing these health emergencies requires not only medical supplies and healthcare staff but also infrastructure adjustments to create quarantine areas, all of which contribute to unforeseen expenses.

3. Regulatory and Compliance Costs

Local Regulations: Meeting local building codes, health and safety standards, and obtaining necessary permits can incur costs. Compliance with Wisconsin's health and safety regulations for shelters might require additional investments in facility upgrades and regular inspections to ensure ongoing compliance.

Legal Fees: Potential legal challenges or opposition from local residents can lead to protracted legal battles, further increasing costs and delaying project timelines.

4. Community Impact and Interaction

Security Measures: Ensuring the safety of both the shelter residents and the surrounding community can necessitate hiring security personnel and installing surveillance systems.

Community Outreach Programs: Engaging the local community through outreach programs to reduce stigma and build support for the shelters can require significant funding. La Crosse has invested in community meetings, educational campaigns, and collaborative efforts with local organizations to foster a supportive environment for its homeless population. These initiatives help to create a more inclusive community but also require continuous investment.

5. Long-Term Sustainability

Fundraising: Continuous efforts to secure funding through grants, donations, and government assistance are necessary to maintain operations. La Crosse has relied on both state and federal grants—including ARPA dollars, as well as local fundraising campaigns, to support programs related to addressing homelessness. Sustained fundraising efforts are critical to ensure the long-term viability of shelters and to cover unexpected costs.

Partnerships: Developing and maintaining partnerships with local businesses, non-profits, healthcare providers, and educational institutions can be resource-intensive but crucial for sustainability. Partnerships with organizations like the La Crosse Community Foundation and local healthcare providers have been vital in providing comprehensive support to the homeless population. These partnerships require coordination, communication, and sometimes shared funding.

Volunteer Management: Recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers require dedicated resources. La Crosse's shelters depend heavily on volunteers, necessitating ongoing training programs, volunteer coordination efforts, and recognition events to maintain a motivated and effective volunteer workforce. This will also be true for any effort undertaken through city government. The reliance on volunteers adds an element of unpredictability, as volunteer availability can fluctuate.

Estimate of Known Operations Costs (per annum) for potential indoor/outdoor sites:

Indoor:

1. Catholic Charities Warming Center at 413 3rd Street South. Capacity for approximately 40 people. Approximately \$300,000.
2. Fire station #10 (former fire station #2) at 626 Monitor Street. 2 toilets, 1 shower, kitchen. Capacity for approximately 30 people. Approximately \$190,000 - \$250,000.
3. Northside Policing Center at 713 St. James St. Capacity for approximately 20 people. Approximately \$190,000 - \$250,000.
4. 621 3rd St N. Capacity for approximately 30 people. Approximately \$190,000 - \$250,000.
5. Norwood Inn and Suites – 148 hotel rooms, 101 Sky Harbour Drive, located in the Town of Campbell. Approximately \$2,190,000 - \$2,550,000 (includes purchase of \$2,000,000, not an annual operations cost).

Outdoor:

1. Wittenberg Park. 2945 Wittenberg Place. Approximately \$609,100 - \$800,000
2. 300 St. Cloud St. 0.93 acre. Approximately \$609,100 - \$800,000
3. Green space by City Hall parking lot between 6th and 7th Street. Approximately \$609,100 - \$800,000
4. County parking lot at 230 7th St N, tax parcel 17-20167-60, Lot F. Unknown administrative costs.

5. Sherwood Park at 3300 Nottingham Place. Approximately \$609,100 - \$800,000
6. Erickson Park at 2423 21st Place S. 9.14 acres. Approximately \$609,100 - \$800,000
7. City-owned property at 5248 33rd St S. 1.17 acres. Approximately \$609,100 - \$800,000

Estimated start date and duration of program.

Factors for the estimated start date of a program would depend on choosing a location and funding, hiring of staff and signing contracts with service providers. Any such program would need to continue until sufficient, sustainable surge shelter and/or housing is identified through the Pathways Housing list. In some capacity, estimates would need to be considered until the end of 2028. The temporary surge shelter timeline as identified in Pathways Home is April 2025.

Program details and rules, including, among other things, hours of operation, check-in procedures, code of conduct.

Since this request is for overnight interim shelter, the hours of 7:00pm – 7:00am are generally assumed.

1. Salvation Army

Currently operates as the primary shelter in La Crosse at one location. Emergency shelter program rules can be modified for new locations that address the following related to rules of conduct at current Salvation Army shelter: Length of stay, visitors, language/aggression, weapons, theft, curfew, tobacco, drugs/alcohol, medications, dress code, sign in/out, pets, et al.

2. Catholic Charities Warming Center

Benevolent organization that is open as an overnight rest spot from November – April. Opening the center year-round would require additional funding. Catholic Charities has their own set of policies and procedures that are generally known by individuals who are unsheltered and use the facility.

3. Outdoor space. Operational hours and protocol may depend on outcome of resolution #24-0876 and requirement to move every 12 hours when camping outdoors. Otherwise, basic rules of conduct will be observed at all times and intended focus is to provide an area to sleep overnight rather than create a long-term outdoor living environment.

Proposals on how to deal with secondary effects of homeless persons once transitioned to interim shelter. For example, when homeless persons leave their location and garbage, abandoned property, and hazardous or infectious materials are left behind.

From past experiences of encampment clean up at Cameron Park, Houska Park, Isle la Plume and River Point District, contractors and staff clean sites with heavy machinery and hand-pick to clear out small items such as plastic detritus and needles. Once interim shelter is established, the same process would need to be achieved at any current encampments. Staff would request assistance from refuse companies as well as add help to assist in cleanup.

Estimated cost of clean-up is between \$10,000 - \$30,000 per site. This estimate is from previous costs associated clean-up efforts and depends greatly on size, location, and number of individuals in an established encampment.

Elsen, Nikki

From: Marsha Kurth <marshakurth@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2024 11:18 AM
To: Elsen, Nikki
Subject: Please submit for review at August 8 Open Public Meeting

You don't often get email from marshakurth@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

*** **CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

Introduction

Homelessness is a significant issue in La Crosse, as it is in many cities across the nation. The common question posed is: "Where should the homeless go?" Our belief is simple and compassionate: they should be able to go about their day like any other citizen. To achieve this, they need essential services such as a place to store their belongings, showers, laundry, meals, and a place to sleep. This proposal outlines how the City of La Crosse might utilize an intake facility and process to assign temporary home bases, meeting these needs and supporting our homeless population in leading dignified lives.

Objectives

1. **Provide Secure Storage:** To offer safe storage solutions for personal belongings.
2. **Hygiene Facilities:** To ensure access to showers and laundry services.
3. **Food Security:** To provide regular, nutritious meals.
4. **Shelter:** To create safe sleeping spaces.
5. **Support Services:** To offer additional support such as job training, counseling, and healthcare.
6. **Temporary Homebase Assignment:** To ensure every individual has a stable, consistent base.

Proposed Solution: Centralized Intake Facility/Process Where Each Participant Has An Assigned Temporary Home Base

Centralized Intake Facility/Process

Location: A centrally located space in La Crosse, ideally an office in an underutilized municipal building or repurposed vacant property that is or could be open a few hours a day 7 days a week.

Implementation:

- Establish the intake facility and process as the first point of contact for homeless individuals.
- Complete a brief initial assessment to understand individual needs and circumstances.
- Assign each person a temporary homebase within designated properties in La Crosse.
- Ensure each homebase includes secure storage, hygiene facilities, food services, and sleeping quarters.

Key Services Provided by each Homebase Facility

1. Secure Storage

Implementation:

- Provide lockers or storage bins in a locked room at each assigned homebase.
- Develop and implement a process to ensure access to secured storage.
- Ensure proper security measures are in place (ie camera in the store area).

Rationale: Secure storage allows homeless individuals to keep their belongings safe, reducing the burden of carrying everything with them and preventing theft or loss. Ensuring access provides flexibility and peace of mind.

2. Hygiene Facilities

Implementation:

- Ensure each homebase has access to showers and laundry machines.
- Provide toiletries and laundry supplies.
- Maintain cleanliness and hygiene standards.

Rationale: Access to showers and laundry facilities helps individuals maintain personal hygiene, boosting their self-esteem and health, and enabling them to present themselves well for job opportunities.

3. Food Security

Implementation:

- Partner with local food banks and charities to supply food.
- Organize regular meal schedules (breakfast, lunch, dinner) at each homebase.
- Ensure a variety of nutritious options are available.

Rationale: Consistent access to nutritious meals can alleviate the stress of food insecurity and contribute to better overall health.

4. Shelter

Implementation:

- Convert properties already identified by the City into homebase shelters with individual sleeping spaces assigned via the intake facility.
- Provide bedding and personal space for each individual.
- Ensure the homebase shelters are safe, clean, and well-supervised.
- Require residents to vacate the homebase shelters between 7 AM and 7 PM daily.

Rationale: Providing a secure place to sleep is fundamental to addressing homelessness, giving individuals a safe space to rest and recuperate. A designated home base ensures stability and a sense of

belonging. Vacating the shelters during the day encourages individuals to engage in community activities, access services, and seek employment.

5. **Support Services through the Pathways Home Project**

Implementation:

- Offer job training programs and employment assistance.
- Provide mental health and addiction counseling.
- Ensure access to healthcare services.
- Facilitate social services to help individuals transition out of homelessness into permanent housing.

Rationale: Comprehensive support services are crucial for addressing the root causes of homelessness and assisting individuals in becoming self-sufficient.

Phase 2 May include Community Appointed Advocacy Program

Implementation:

- Assign each individual a trained community advocate.
- Advocates will assist in navigating social services, healthcare, job training, and housing programs.
- Ensure ongoing support to address any barriers to self-sufficiency.

Rationale: Community advocates will provide personalized support, helping individuals understand and access the systems in place to aid their transition out of homelessness. This tailored assistance increases the likelihood of successful outcomes.

Conclusion

Addressing homelessness requires a holistic approach that provides not just shelter but a supportive environment where individuals can regain their dignity and independence. By establishing a centralized intake facility and process, La Crosse can efficiently assign temporary home bases that meet the fundamental needs of the homeless population. This approach not only benefits those directly affected by homelessness but also fosters a more inclusive and compassionate community.

Call to Action

We urge the City of La Crosse to consider this proposal and take the necessary steps to implement these solutions. By doing so, we can ensure that our homeless population is treated with the respect and dignity they deserve and that they have the opportunity to go about their day with the same sense of purpose and normalcy as any other resident.

Respectfully Submitted by La Crosse Community Member and Red Cross Trained Shelter Volunteer
Marsha Kurth

Elsen, Nikki

From: Linda Pake <linda.pake609@icloud.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2024 11:59 AM
To: ZZ City Clerk External
Subject: Homeless

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from linda.pake609@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

*** CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

My understanding is the seminary sits almost empty. I understand that the dialysis and office and the diocese library are there. But wasn't this a place with lots of bedrooms and bathrooms, shower facilities for the young men studying to be priests Couldn't the churches in La Crosse chip in and help financially cover some of the costs.
Sent from my iPhone

Craig, Sondra

From: Jenna Ferries <jenna.ferries@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2024 2:51 PM
To: Happel, Douglas
Cc: Elsen, Nikki; Craig, Sondra
Subject: Proposed Overnight Encampment Site at Erickson Park

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jenna.ferries@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Dear Mr. Happel,

May I please submit to you a concern I have with an issue that will be on the upcoming Common Council agenda?

I was shocked to read about the proposal set to go before the La Crosse Common Council on August 8 meant to address overnight shelter needs of the unhoused, in which Erickson Park is named as one of the proposed outdoor sites. While I agree that solutions are necessary, I feel strongly that placement of such an encampment would be highly inappropriate directly adjacent to an elementary school.

It is unfair to generalize about all unhoused individuals contributing to unsafe conditions within such encampments, but among my concerns are issues outlined in the proposal itself including: "ensuring the safety of both the shelter residents and surrounding community can necessitate hiring security personnel," "when homeless persons leave their location and garbage, abandoned property, and hazardous or infectious materials are left behind," "from past experiences of encampment clean up at Cameron Park, Houska Park, Isle la Plume and River Point District, contractors and staff clean sites with heavy machinery and hand-pick to clear out small items such as plastic detritus and needles" and other references being "based on significant past experiences."

I don't know if the Council-person's proposal was based on the possibility of Spence being closed as a school, but obviously that referendum has not yet passed, and if it does, the timeline of a new school being constructed does not coincide with the City's need for an immediate solution for housing needs to be addressed. While I do appreciate that this proposal better addresses what the Salvation Army had previously highlighted as concerns beyond simply placing people in consolidated areas for shelter, such as access to social services, emergency services, security, mental health resources and drug/alcohol counseling, please ensure that your selection of future sites are made without adversely affecting the youngest and most vulnerable in our community!

Thank you,
Jenna Ferries
CC: City Clerk; Deputy City Clerk

Craig, Sondra

From: Linda Hartung <lhartung54601@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 4, 2024 12:26 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Homeless

Some people who received this message don't often get email from lhartung54601@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

I just read what the City and Council is proposing considering the homeless population and I am not only appalled but shocked that City parks are being considered again. There is NO CAMPING in city parks and this should not be changed. On the list is Erickson Park which is right next to an elementary school. What is wrong with all of you? How can that even be considered. I have read comments concerning this and I know that I am not the only one thinking this. The homeless population have chosen a way of life where they don't have any responsibilities and everything is given to them. My husband and I have worked our entire lives to get what we have and I am sick of paying higher taxes so that everything can be given to a group that doesn't seem to want to help themselves. If you are going to open up camping in city parks, then everyone should be able to go to Riverside, set up their campers and tents, have fires, etc. for the weekend without any repercussions. You don't have to call me a mean person or think that I have no feelings because I feel this way. This group of people are nothing more than squatters. They have put up at Houska, the trails by Myrick and in motels. They have done NOTHING but trash them and we as taxpayers have to pay for the cleanup. Stop giving them everything they need! Hell, we are senior citizen and would like a few things given to us but being brought up the way we were, we know that we either have to save up or work for what we want. This hairbrained idea needs never to be allowed to happen. Taxpayers do not want city parks given to them and have them destroyed and then we clean up after them again. As for Erickson Park, complete insane idea. The kids that go to that school DO NOT have to see that type of living. Please get your heads on straight!! I am NOT alone in this thinking.

Linda Hartung
lhartung54601@yahoo.com

Craig, Sondra

From: Robin Lundgren <tweets769@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 2, 2024 8:18 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Homeless Camping in Parks

Some people who received this message don't often get email from tweets769@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

I am writing to all of you to ask that you do not allow homeless camping in our beautiful city parks. These people are pushing the good citizens out of those parks. They are creating a tremendous amount of waste. Both refuse and human. They are contaminating the area with drugs and discarded needles. I live near the Lacrosse welcome sign. So far I have had to pick up discarded needles. All our vehicles have been broken into multiple times. The same with our garage. We have had to purchase security cameras and those don't stop them. I was accosted while walking my dogs early one morning by a person who was clearly homeless and on a large amount of some kind of drugs. Thank God I had my dogs with me as they scared him off. I now can't walk my dogs when it is hot because I can't go out before it gets too warm. All these things have started and continue to become more frequent since the homeless have been camping by the sign. I fear allowing them in the parks will just create a haven for lawlessness. The taxpayers of this city deserve to be able to use the parks we pay for. Not be driven out by dangerous conditions and lawlessness. Please vote no on this resolution. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Robin Lundgren

Craig, Sondra

From: Poellinger, Bethany S <BSPoelli@gundersenhealth.org>
Sent: Friday, August 2, 2024 4:21 PM
To: ZZ City Clerk External; Neumann, Mark; Happel, Douglas; Trost, Jennifer; Schwarz, Rebecca; Woodard, Chris; Mindel, Mackenzie; Kiel, Mac; Kahlow, Chris; Sleznikow, Larry; Janssen, Barb; Goggin, Erin; Dickinson, Tamra
Subject: August 8 Special Meeting

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Greetings,

I have recently learned that the council is looking at various properties for homeless camping approval throughout the city and voting on this next Thursday.

I wanted to share my opposition to two of the properties being considered for camping; Sherwood Park at 3300 Nottingham Place and 5248 33rd Street South - neither location has any amenities such as a basic toilet or bathroom. Also both of these locations are not near any services such as Catholic Charities or the Salvation Army. One is literally on a major highway which could be dangerous for crossing/traffic and both locations are within a block of railroad tracks.

Thank you. Bethany Poellinger

From: Bree <clemmersons@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 2, 2024 5:49 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Concerns for Meeting on 8/8/2024

Some people who received this message don't often get email from clemmersons@gmail.com. Learn why this is important <<https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>>

*** CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

Concerns Regarding the Proposed Relocation of Unhoused Individuals to the South Side

Dear Members of the City Council,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed relocation of unhoused individuals to the South Side. As a resident near the proposed sites and a frequent user of Sherwood Park, I am deeply concerned about how this plan could impact both the accessibility of local amenities and the broader well-being of our community.

1. Impact on Local Amenities: The relocation plan could significantly restrict access to essential community spaces such as Sherwood Park. This park is not only a crucial recreational area for local residents but also a safe, accessible place I rely on for outdoor activities. Losing easy access to this park would be particularly distressing for someone like me, who has been in the neighborhood only a month and values the ability to walk to nearby amenities without the need to cross a highway.
2. Perception of Exclusion: Relocating our unhoused neighbors to the outskirts of the city might inadvertently communicate that they are being pushed out of the community, fostering a sense of exclusion rather than inclusion. While the intention may not be to "out of sight, out of mind," for residents like myself living in the South Side, these issues remain very "in my sight, and in my mind". The biggest question on my mind being why the focus isn't on providing actual assistance and stable solutions for these individuals, rather than repeatedly moving them from one location to another without addressing the underlying issues?
4. Need for Reevaluation: The increasing number of unhoused individuals in our community signals the ineffectiveness of current strategies, highlighting an urgent need for new approaches that focus on long-term solutions rather than temporary fixes. This growing issue calls for a comprehensive review and implementation of sustainable support systems, including mental health services and medical care. The fact that the unhoused population continues to expand rather than decline raises serious concerns about our community's commitment to addressing and resolving the root causes of homelessness.
5. Successful Models: Numerous cities have shown that initiatives such as "tiny homes" can provide safe, dignified, and permanent housing solutions that effectively support the reintegration of unhoused individuals into society. Importantly, these initiatives do not necessarily require funding from taxpayers; there are many innovative funding models that can be explored. The persistence of the housing crisis indicates that as a community, we may not be exploring enough diverse solutions, often defaulting to temporary relocations or constructing high-cost, low-capacity housing developments. This approach is not only inefficient but fails to address the scale of the problem. It's crucial to consider more cost-effective, large-scale solutions that can accommodate more individuals and truly alleviate the burden of homelessness.

I urge the City Council to consider these points and to adopt innovative and compassionate strategies that tackle the root causes of homelessness. Reflecting on the origins of this crisis, researching solutions implemented by other communities, and scrutinizing the effectiveness of current spending are crucial steps. For instance, the funds allocated for a minimally used bike lane downtown could have been directed towards more impactful projects. By investing in comprehensive support systems and permanent housing solutions, we can uplift every member of our community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I am hopeful for a strategy that reflects our shared values of empathy and community support.

Sincerely,

Sabrina Clemmerson

Craig, Sondra

From: DN Casper <dncasper@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 10:14 AM
To: ZZ Council Members; mlarson@lacrossecounty.org
Subject: City Council Vote Regarding Homeless Considerations

Some people who received this message don't often get email from dncasper@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Dear La Crosse City Council Members; Ms. Margaret Larson, Supervisor, District 14

We are writing this to you as Residents of the Town of Campbell.

While we have no elected representation on the La Crosse City Council in the matter of the homeless population, our attention is drawn to the fact that the Norwood Inn & Suites, in the Town of Campbell, is mentioned as a possible lodging location for the homeless. This proposal to us matters greatly.

This is difficult for us to absorb on many fronts:

The building is in poor condition and should be struck down; it has been a gathering spot for unseemly activity

We, as a community, could not support the many who need services if the homeless reside there

One of the biggest drawbacks would be the annual cost, over 2 million

Most importantly, we in Campbell, do not have 24/7/365 police protection for ourselves, much less an additional at-risk population

We challenge you, as elected officials, to act area wide, not just in the best interest of the City of La Crosse, to think "outside the box"!

Why not build a cinder-block type building, in Houska Park for the homeless population? A dormitory type facility, very austere, to shelter them from the elements yet the building could be repurposed and sold by the City if changes occur? Such a building could be built for the 2 million plus, the money spent on one year's lodging yet be a building investment for the City? This location would afford proximity to the hospitals and police department and to services needed. The individuals could be in a collective area, and not scattered. Many are languishing in the heat of summer, it is easily seen.

You are not only making decisions for the City of La Crosse but for the residents of our area as a whole and there is an obligation to look to the best welfare for all of us.

Thank you,
Doug and Nancy Casper
815 Plainview Rd.,
La Crosse, WI 54603
608.790.2322

Craig, Sondra

From: Steele, Annette
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 2:41 PM
To: Elsen, Nikki; Craig, Sondra
Subject: FW: Homeless encampments

Annette Steele

Executive Assistant to the Mayor
Mayor's Office
City of La Crosse
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

steelea@cityoflacrosse.org
Office: 608.789.7500

FOR NEWS AND UPDATES SIGN UP FOR E-NOTIFICATIONS [HERE](#)

From: Ruth Adams <wradams2@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 2:18 PM
To: Steele, Annette <steelea@cityoflacrosse.org>
Subject: Homeless encampments

You don't often get email from wradams2@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

I strongly object to allowing the homeless to set up camp in areas on the far south side of La Crosse, i.e. Johnson Park on 33rd st. This will make our neighborhood extremely unsafe. I walk along the Pammel Creek walking trail on a daily basis and will certainly no longer feel safe doing this if the homeless move in. There are children that play on the playground equipment in Johnson Park, so they would no longer be safe. Also regarding property values which would go down and deteriorate our neighborhoods with the homeless living in the area. I feel nothing would be safe from vandalism, drugs and general filth that the homeless create. Maybe the City of La Crosse should stop providing so many services for these people with our tax dollar. Our property taxes go up, we lose services, i.e., reduced hours at Isle La Plume and the loss of large item pickup. Maybe it is time the taxpaying population of La Crosse are thought of first and not how to help the homeless.

Please vote DOWN on allowing the homeless to move into the 33rd st area of south La Crosse.

From a concerned taxpaying senior citizen living in this area.

Ruth Adams
4517 Juniper St
La Crosse, WI 54601

From: Babs Heintz <babs57heintz@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 6:45 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Unsheltered Population

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from babs57heintz@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

*** CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

I received the information on the options currently being discussed for the unsheltered .Out of all the current options listed, it seems like Houska Park, was the most workable in the past (except for the contamination as a result when they left), with the hotel being used for the colder months.When Houska Park was used, they were mostly together, making it easier for resources to see them for assistance.They also were not in a populated neighborhood.I am surprised this would even be considered near a neighborhood, such as Erickson Park or pool area.That neighborhood is anxiously awaiting the pool to be opened, and imagine just moving into a neighborhood and not only is the school going to be closed, the pool closed, and then the possibility of an encampment in the neighborhood.I use this as an example, but feel anywhere in a neighborhood is inappropriate for many reasons.I realize this is an issue nationwide and hope LaCrosse can find some solutions.Barb Heintz Sent from my iPhone

Craig, Sondra

From: Barbara J Smith <bjsdas@charter.net>
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 6:05 PM
To: Reynolds, Mitch; Neumann, Mark; ZZ City Clerk External
Subject: Aug 8, Common Council Meeting

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from bjsdas@charter.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

*** CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS DO NOT BELONG IN CITY NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS.

Homeless encampments should not be put in residential neighborhood parks period!

The failed experiment at Houska Park should show all that this was a very BAD idea and that park wasn't even in a residential area. There are many well documented reasons how and why it failed. Just the cleanup alone with its \$100,000 cost and many safety risks from discarded drug paraphernalia are a huge concern.

Putting it in a residential area would be only be inviting more potential problems, such as assaults, thefts and break ins. About 80% of the people in my Cliffside neighborhood are elderly and many of them are vulnerable as well. They may live alone, have health issues, physical impairments and limited ability to get help quickly. Many of us leave our homes for months at a time, especially in the winter. How would we be able to feel confident that our home would be safe?

Considering putting an encampment in Johnson Park on 33rd St is nonsense. The park is part of the Pammel Creek Walkway and there are numerous homes that back up to the path within 10 feet of their back doors. An easy target for an intruder to break into quickly and mostly unobstructed and most of these residents are elderly. We urge you all to walk it and see it for yourself. Johnson Park is a small neighborhood park catering mostly to young families using the play equipment. There is little area for tents and NO permanent hygiene facilities. There's one porta potty there but today we observed some guys from a lawn crew who got out of their truck to use the potty. Evidently one had to go really bad cuz we got to watch him walk into the bushes to relieve himself. He wasn't far enough into the bushes to hide and we dread to think that this would become an everyday occurrence. "Campers" would literally only be 10-50 feet away from homes, perhaps closer.

Violence at the Houska Encampment was a regular occurrence and we would no longer feel safe daily walking our dog on the path that's accessed in the park.

We pay over \$4,000 in property taxes to live in our forever home that we saved for over 50 years. We don't wish to leave La Crosse but we would certainly consider other options if there are homeless encampments in city parks.

Parks are not meant to be drug dens. There are resources for those who wish to change and many of these homeless people are not willing to use them to change. It's not safe for those of us who live our lives next to them.

Dwaine and Barbara Smith
3614 Parkwood Place

Sent from my iPad

From: nancyjohnson@centurytel.net
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 8:02 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: City Council Vote Regarding Unsheltered Population

*** **CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

As residents of the Town of Campbell, we are writing this email to you in opposition to housing the unsheltered in the Town of Campbell at the Norwood Inn.

I've worked in downtown La Crosse for 42 years and I have seen firsthand the destruction and chaos that the homeless have caused. I have watched the City workers clean up broken windows, paint stairwells that have had a fire started in them, and clean up massive amounts of garbage. I don't think I have to go on. You all know what housing the homeless entails.

We think you also have a duty to the tax-paying citizens. Theft and property damage are only a couple more problems that would need to be dealt with. Our police force on French Island, Town of Campbell, is not 24/7/365 for ourselves, much less an additional at-risk population. At times it has been dangerous downtown on the streets and in the parking ramps. We don't want that in our neighborhood. Safety is a major concern as we watch people walking their dogs and children riding their bikes and playing in our neighborhoods.

Housing the homeless at the Norwood Inn is not in the best interest of the residents of the Town of Campbell. The Norwood Inn itself raises many concerns as a location to use for shelter of the homeless. As I understand it, the Norwood Inn is probably similar to American's Best Value Inn, which we all know was torn down due to deficiencies.

Greg and Nancy Johnson

Craig, Sondra

From: Josh Miner <jwminer@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 7:27 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Homeless "solutions"

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jwminer@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Please just build more housing and stop playing whack-a-mole! We have a homelessness problem because we don't have anywhere near enough housing. And we don't need more "affordable" or "low income" housing — we probably have enough already. The problem is that it is all occupied.

Building much much much more market-rate housing — apartments, condos, multiplexes, and single family units — will cause people to move out of where they currently live, freeing up that unit for someone else to move into.

You'll know that we've build enough units when property values start to decrease, and homeowners like me start complaining. When that happens, ignore it, because you'll have accomplished the task at hand.

Thanks!

Josh Miner
2225 State St, La Crosse, WI 54601

Craig, Sondra

From: Michael Stolpa <stolpa.michael@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 8:24 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Homeless in La Crosse

Some people who received this message don't often get email from stolpa.michael@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Dear Council Members,

I recently read that the City of La Crosse has a plan to send their homeless to the town of Campbell. At first I thought it was a poor joke. Texas is the laughing stock to many as they try to ship their problems to other communities. At least they ship them to cities that have some services. Campbell has a small handful of police officers and no medical facility. Even the fire department is manned by volunteers.

The island is already dealing with poisoned water, thanks to the La Crosse Airport. Now you want to send your homeless? Can't you at least fix one problem before sending more? Heck, they can't even drink the water here.

You will be sending the homeless through neighborhoods containing hundreds of homes and families and forcing them to travel for miles for services. Can you please stop dumping your problems on your neighbors? Sorry if this is a problem for boat owners and dog walkers but their convenience should not be more important than our homes. Even the empty Kmart building would be closer to services.

Please be responsible neighbors.

*Michael Stolpa
1713 Lakeshore Drive
La Crosse, WI 54603*

Craig, Sondra

From: Nanette Harter <nandjharter@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 8:04 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: sheltering the homeless

Some people who received this message don't often get email from nandjharter@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Dear Council members,

I have lived in La Crosse my entire life (57 years). I have always loved this city. I am an outdoor person who does a lot of biking, hiking, kayaking, and enjoying outdoor festivals. Over the past few years, I have felt more and more uncomfortable and unsafe in areas I would normally feel safe, due to the homeless encampments.

I have worked directly with those with mental illness and addiction for over 20 years. I am very passionate about getting them the best help we can. What I do not believe in, is the way the city enables this population, by allowing them to continue to destroy our property with leaving their garbage all over the city. In order to help those who are using drugs and alcohol, as well as those with mental illness, we need to ensure we don't do too much for them, having them rely on handouts, rather than working on improving themselves and getting the help they need.

It would make sense to me, for the city to put up a large pull shed, tent, some type of structure, in the parking lot between the Salvation Army and the County Adm Center (as this parking lot is no longer needed). With that, you could ban all city and county camping (other than in campgrounds), give the homeless the option of staying in the shelter over night, then have social workers available to work on getting them the help they need. You could offer port- a -pots for bathrooms and cots to sleep on, in one big room. Social workers should be on staff 24/7 to ensure it does not become one big room to do more drugs and to help support them in the recovery process. This is what happens when you allow them in parks and in hotels.

The more the city enables the homeless, the more people who come to the city and join them, thus the population of homeless, mainly drug users, inhabit our city.

I can't imagine what a tourist thinks when they come to bike or kayak our area. I would personally not return if this is what I encountered. I have roots here, so for now I am staying, but it is so frustrating to have to worry about where I bike, walk, and/or kayak.

Please do not allow them in our parks or hotels.

Sincerely yours,
Nanette

Craig, Sondra

From: Patti Stellmaker <pattistellmaker09@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 10:20 AM
To: ZZ City Clerk External
Subject: Johnson Park Potential Homeless Encampments

Some people who received this message don't often get email from pattistellmaker09@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Dear Mayor Reynolds,

I am sending this email due to the possibility of the homeless encamping in Johnson Park. My husband and I are seniors living a couple of blocks from the park on Parkwood Pl. right off of 33rd street.

Our neighborhood is 80% seniors. We bought in this area 10 years ago for the beauty and the peaceful area it is. This is our retirement home. The impact on the resale of our home would be devastating. We worked hard to be able to purchase a home in this area of Lacrosse. There also is a safety issue with bringing in the homeless to our senior citizen neighborhood. The impact on health with drug use debris is frightening. Many people use the walking trail and enjoy the park.

We object to placing a homeless tent encampment in our residential neighborhood.

Thank you ,
Al and Patti Stellmaker
3613 Parkwood Pl.
Lacrosse
608-780-5243

Craig, Sondra

From: Paul M <ptmedinger@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:16 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Encampment near Erickson

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from ptmedinger@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

*** CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

Dear Honorable Council members,

I have been hearing about a proposal for a possible encampment for our homeless population near the Erickson Pool area. If this proposal is true, I think this is one of the most foolish proposals I have ever heard in this great city of ours.

I represented this area for 10 years on the city council. I have four young kids that all walk to school. This is a good neighborhood. It is filled with lots of children and parks, and children are seen playing and riding their bikes all over. While La Crosse can often get a bad reputation in the surrounding area, this area of the city is beautiful, and filled with families and children and it is a place we choose to stay, and we love it here. There is also an elementary school right next to Erickson Pool, not to mention a Middle School and High School within walking distance.

While I empathize with those who may need to utilize such a place, this is NOT the place. This is the complete opposite of where the city should be looking. The fact that this area would even be considered is astonishing.

Please do not let this happen.

Sincerely,

Paul Medinger
608-769-9895

Sent from my iPhone

Craig, Sondra

From: Hayli Russell <haylirussell@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:34 PM
To: ZZ City Clerk External
Subject: Interim Housing Shelter

Some people who received this message don't often get email from haylirussell@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Hello,

I live about a block from Sherwood park. I can't believe that a park in a residential neighborhood with (or without) children is even being considered. I have small children and bring them to this park. I go on walks around my neighborhood with my kids. Given the amount of theft around the camps and the amount of cleanup Houska park required with trash and needles everywhere, I would not feel comfortable with my children outside at my own house.

Seeing that many concerns are already in the proposal: "ensuring the safety of residents and surrounding community can necessitate hiring security personnel", "when homeless persons leave their location and garbage, abandoned property, and hazardous or infectious materials are left behind", "from past clean ups, heavy machinery is needed for cleaning the sites and hand-picking small items such as plastic detritus and needles", how can a park in a residential neighborhood even be a thought?

You are going to push people out of the city of La Crosse. If this park was chosen, I would be moving, because the safety of my children is not something I'm willing to compromise.

I hope this is taken into consideration.

Hayli Russell

Craig, Sondra

From: Corrine Holtz <tcjj23511@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 2:49 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Fwd: Concern for the Homeless Encampment Options

Some people who received this message don't often get email from tcjj23511@gmail.com. Learn why this is important <<https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>>

*** CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

August 6, 2024

Mark Neumann, Council Member

Mitch Reynolds, Mayor

Members of the Common Council

Re: Homeless Encampment Options

Dear Council,

I am writing to express the many feelings I have regarding the Homeless Encampment research and discussion that will be in front of the common council on Thursday, August 8. I am concerned that most of the locations in the proposal are in or near residential areas that are heavily populated with young families or senior citizens and that the resolution does nothing to address the actual problem.

The location on 33rd Street is near my home. This is a neighborhood that is made up of mostly senior citizens and a large number of young families. Additionally, is this what we want as a first impression to visitors as they enter our city?

Erickson Park is located next to an elementary school. Exposing young elementary children to the homeless population should not be an option. The additional suggestion to use the Erickson Pool bathroom and shower facilities is also not giving any consideration to the many families of La Crosse. Erickson Pool has been considered the "flagship" swimming pool for a number of years. I regularly visited Erickson Pool with my two boys for swimming lessons, log-rolling and to swim during their younger years. They worked there during the last four summers as lifeguards, swim instructors and pool attendants. The pool was closed this summer for maintenance that has yet to be started as of the writing of this letter. Is the lack of supposed work to be done poor planning on the part of the city or a strategic move to use the location for the homeless? As stated in the report, past experience has shown any facilities used by the homeless will be destroyed and require massive cleanup and/or rebuilding of structures. Destroying a community swimming pool that should be available to the tax paying and contributing families of La Crosse should not be a consideration.

Our community must stop enabling the homeless population and take steps to resolve the problem. Past attempts to assist the homeless population to find jobs and housing to become persons who contribute to our community have not been followed through on. There are plenty of services that have been offered to “the 230 individuals living in the La Crosse community without permanent and secure housing”. The majority of the homeless population chooses not to take action to better their situation. Consequences of that choice should result in notice that services will not be provided past a set period of 30-60 days. Continuing to provide services with no demand for accountability or action from the person accepting those services has clearly exasperated the homeless situation and become an invitation for others to come to La Crosse to take advantage of the situation. Those services are not free to anyone who has a job and pays taxes in this city. It makes me sad that La Crosse has become a community that cares more about the homeless and throwing our tax dollars away while watching people destroy our community and its facilities than looking out for our actual tax paying citizens that are contributing to make this a better place.

Sincerely,

Corrine Holtz

Concerned, Working and Tax-Paying Parent, Wife, and Community Member

Craig, Sondra

From: Morris210 P <tpotaracke518@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 7:18 PM
To: JANSSEN@cityoflacrosse.org; Dickinson, Tamra; Goggin, Erin; ZZ Council Members; Reynolds, Mitch
Cc: Morris210 P
Subject: La Crosse, Wisconsin Unsheltered Population Thoughts/Input

*** **CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

Dear Dedicated Public Servants, council members, mayor, department heads and teams,

We have not found the solution that fits . . . yet.

The solution is NOT a park. The solution is not a hotel or any other nonpublic asset for accommodation. Yes, I believe it needs to be a public or nonprofit facility, but I am not certain a perfect place exists. What do the experts think? What do the persons versed in these types of populations advise?

We all have needs, as Maslow said there are certain needs as human beings: food, water, shelter. However, how many parks, trails, or additional facilities are we going to allow to be trashed.

Many of the unsheltered are addicts and cannot function or reason appropriately. Therefore make bad choices that affect all of us in the community. We even have infiltration of this population south to the southern edges of the city.

Many lack even a basic level of self-respect as evidenced by their inability to clean up themselves and their 'camping' area, find work, follow through with agencies dedicated to assist: Salvation Army, churches, Catholic Charities, food van, HIV clinic van, etc.

How do we, how can we help this needy population? I do not know, but we need to. We must for the future of our great city and our children, families, populations, and beyond.

Do we have a building we can place them into which can be hosed down, sanitized, cleaned periodically, yet which can facilitate oversight, hygiene, auditing of health, needs, security, additions, etc. Different level of need on different floors/areas.

I do believe part of the solution should be the nonprofit organizations whose mission is to help and house the poor, etc. as they are exempt from paying taxes for this mission but I am not sure they are equipped to facilitate this population and their vast and varied needs.

It breaks my heart to see what goes on each and every day from the building I work in which is directly proximal to the marsh unsheltered population: needles, cars/bikes/vans/parts/trash clogging up sidewalk, streets, parking lots; intimidation and unsecure routes to our parking lots/vehicles/outdoor spaces; filth, garbage, profanity, seedy behaviors in plain view of all populations; requisite warnings to visitors to our beautiful city to be aware of these populations as they could be offensive and violent; threatening, and unseemly; blood and other body fluids on our business thoroughfares, garbage, drug paraphernalia, etc. on these same areas has prompted increased lighting and security cameras. Observations of dump trucks, skid steers, and other equipment; our police and fire personnel, auditing entities, HIV agency, food agencies, etc.

It saddens me to see the city I have called my home for over 55 years treated with such disrespect and lacking in value to these human beings; it distresses me to see the children and pets under duress because of the choices, or not, of their legal guardian(s).

I believe this population needs to be housed in a building, with 24/7 monitors; a facility capable of periodic disinfection and cleaning; and these people if they are to be housed there need to comply; if not then they need to leave our city.

How? Where? who?

Not parks or trails as we tried that;

not a hotel as we tried that.

do the unsheltered have a collective voice/representative person/group? where do they think they should be housed? how do they think they should be treated? What responsibility are they willing to accept and live up to in order to receive services and shelter?

Compromise.

Logical Consequences.

Positive/negative reinforcement.

Thank you for all of your time and work, effort and frustration. I am at a loss for the 'right thing to do'. There has to be a way... I know we cannot continue the way it is or our city will be destroyed.

Tammy Potaracke

Lifelong La Crosse Resident

La Crosse Logan

Viterbo College

Craig, Sondra

From: Jeremiah Shaver <jeremiah.d.shaver@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 11:21 PM
To: ZZ City Clerk External
Subject: French Island - Norwood Inn - Homeless

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jeremiah.d.shaver@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Hello,

I won't be able to attend the meeting on Thursday in regards to the sheltering of homeless at the Norwood Inn on French Island, but as an Island native who still works on FI, I must voice my opinion in full opposition to this taking place.

The City of La Crosse has already failed at least twice in this manner having used similar tactics. The northside hotel/motel that was first used to house the homeless ended up a complete disaster. Drugs, Prostitution, Theft, amongst other things all rose to the top of the problem list as result of this decision. End Result: Catastrophic Failure!

The 2nd utter failure was the Houska Park Fiasco. The aforementioned problems just moved to a new location. The cleanup of Houska when they were finally vacated was disgusting, not to mention the soil contamination. End Result: Catastrophic Failure!

What does the city think will change this 3rd time around? The answer is - it won't. The Norwood Inn will become a haven for drugs, prostitution, crime, amongst terrorizing the surrounding family neighborhoods, making the entire area unsafe! This is with a police station right across the street. We've seen it happen already at the same hotel during the I-90 project and beyond.

I think it's fitting that when you drive into La Crosse on 35 and see the "Welcome to La Crosse Native Americans playing La Crosse statue", that the homeless tents are right there along with it. Ironic honestly. The Mayor and city caused a lot of this problem, and now all you're doing is shifting the problem around to different parts of the community and that is not a viable solution.

Even IF, something like this hotel housing option were to take place, there should be requirements to stay. Community work. Applying for jobs. Drug tests. Don't adhere to any one of them and they're out. This is how you help the homeless, not by just shifting them around from place to place for them to destroy. Help build them into constructive citizens again. Until the Mayor gets truly serious about the issue, this is not the answer. This is not helping them. It will have the same result as before....Catastrophic Failure!

Thank you for your time,

Jeremiah Shaver

Craig, Sondra

From: Mary Fran Rybarik <franny363@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 7:17 PM
To: ZZ Council Members; Reynolds, Mitch
Cc: Fran Rybarik
Subject: J&A and Council Meetings on August 8

Some people who received this message don't often get email from franny363@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

*** **CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

August 6, 2024

Dear City Council Members and Mayor Reynolds,

I beg you to please take action to ban camping in the marshlands in the City of La Crosse at your meetings on Thursday August 8, 2024.

You have heard from your citizens about the damage to the Marsh, which protects our city from flooding and is home to many flora and fauna. You have heard from tourists, visitors and organizations who utilize the marsh trails, about the abhorrent situation they find along Vietnam Veterans' and Asfoor trails. And the squalor continues to worsen. How many letters have you received from people who have witnessed needles, drug deals, and people shooting up along the trail?

On August 10, Friends of the Marsh are asking for volunteers to sit by the River Architect building on the Veterans trail all day and count people using the trail. On September 14, thousands of families, many of whom travel from all over the country to participate, are planned to walk that trail in support of breast cancer research. What about their needs and safety? Continuing to allow the illegal behaviors happening along a public recreation trail, and catering to this entitlement, is beyond my understanding.

There is no easy solution, we all can agree to that. But you do have options - including the requested recommendations for various short term options from City staff of July 8, which finally showed up in the agenda packet for the J&A meeting July 30.

If you are unable to come up with a short term solution from the options created by the city staff on August 8, please at least make encampments in the marshlands illegal, enforceable and immediate. Postponing it any longer is unconscionable.

Thank you

Mary Fran Rybarik
La Crosse resident and taxpayer

Craig, Sondra

From: ragamuffins@charter.net
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 8:36 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Cc: Chair@townofcampbellwi.gov; Supervisor2@townofcampbellwi.gov
Subject: Agenda Item 24-1068

Importance: High

Some people who received this message don't often get email from ragamuffins@charter.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

*** **CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

Dear La Crosse Council Members,

I am unable to attend the City Council Meeting on Thursday, August 8th, due to a previously scheduled commitment. Therefore, please enter my comments into the record.

According to the online agenda packet, under "Potential Sites – Indoor" for housing the homeless, *Norwood Inn & Suites* is listed as a potential site. As a taxpayer, a homeowner with children, and resident of French Island, this raises multiple, serious concerns.

According to a letter written on March 9, 2022 to the City of La Crosse Council Members by Major Alan Hellstrom, Corps Officer of the Salvation Army, when the homeless were housed at the *Econo Lodge*, many alarming concerns were brought to the Council's attention. Mentioned specifically in the letter was, "**rampant drug use, violence, sex trafficking, drug trafficking and other disturbing events.**" This is shocking! Why would the outcome of moving this population into the *Norwood Inn & Suites*, at the taxpayer's expense, have any different results?

Has the City of La Crosse and/or the Council Members taken into consideration that there is an elementary school **less than one mile** from the *Norwood Inn & Suites*? This presents a safety hazard to young children on numerous levels. Have the parents and staff of *Summit Environmental School* been notified that this is an option the City of La Crosse is considering?

Has the City of La Crosse and/or the Council Members taken into consideration that there are multiple neighborhoods with young children **directly across the street** from the *Norwood Inn & Suites*? There is also a footbridge next to the *Norwood Inn & Suites* that leads to multiple other neighborhoods with young children. Again, presenting a safety hazard to children on numerous levels. Have the homeowners and families in these neighborhoods been notified that this is an option the City of La Crosse is considering?

French Island is a small community and has an excellent police force that works tirelessly to keep this community safe. Has the City of La Crosse and/or the Council Members taken into consideration how this will strain the Town of Campbell Police resources?

Has the City of La Crosse and/or the Council Members taken into consideration that community resources (social services, healthcare, full-service grocery stores, etc...) are not within walking distance of the *Norwood Inn & Suites* (for those who do not have cars) and would require travel on and off French Island? How are people being transported to needed resources and how is it being paid for?

Relocating a homeless population into neighborhoods filled with young families less than a mile of an elementary school will impact crime rates, property values and the community's safety. How are the taxpayers and homeowners on French Island being represented, notified and involved in the decision-making process?

It is important to note that the majority of taxpayers *funding* housing the homeless, have lived in this La Crosse community for years, decades, and generations (my family goes back seven generations in this area). Longstanding taxpaying residents have not only invested monetarily in this city, but have grown families here, built businesses here, given back more than they take and care deeply about the La Crosse community. The homeless population is an undisputed problem not unique to the city of La Crosse. Many homeless are transients, moving from city to city, taking resources where they are available. Taking from cities they have no vested interest in. Taking from residents that care and have invested in their community. This attracts even more transients into the area seeking resources and the more that is given, all the more is taken. Sheltering people in hotels has proven to be extremely costly (in terms of money, safety and crime) and ***fails to treat the underlying cause*** of homelessness.

The reputation of La Crosse is becoming tarnished by a population that has no long term vested interest in this community. I understand this is a complicated issue, and as a longtime resident of La Crosse, I am extremely concerned about the options the City of La Crosse is considering and the impacts it will have on the taxpaying residents that do love this community and want to see it thrive. I would appreciate hearing a response back on the questions raised in my letter, as well as addressing them during this Thursday's meeting.

Thank you,

Krista Engholdt

From: Danielle Deml <ddeml9607@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 7:29 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Homelessness and Camping in La Crosse

Some people who received this message don't often get email from ddeml9607@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Dear Council Members,

My name is Danielle, and I reside on 19th Street South in District 7. I am reaching out to express my concerns about the future of homeless encampments and the potential designation of parks as locations for these camps.

I previously contacted my council member, Mac, but have yet to receive a response, so I am now addressing this issue via email in hopes that my concerns will be heard.

While I understand and appreciate the importance of addressing homelessness, I am deeply troubled by the proposal to include parks, such as Erickson Park near Spence Elementary, as potential sites for encampments. The recent expense incurred for cleaning up Houska Park raises concerns about the financial implications of relocating encampments back to such areas. Additionally, the marsh area, which has become less accessible due to safety concerns, will likely require substantial funds to restore.

As a mother, I find it disheartening that our community's parks—vital recreational spaces for our children—are being considered for such use. The closure of Erickson Pool this year has already significantly impacted children who rely on this facility during the summer. The prospect of losing additional parks to this issue exacerbates my concerns.

It appears that the current approach may only serve to shift the problem rather than address it effectively, leading to increased cleanup costs and diminished safety and enjoyment of public spaces. This situation contributes to a growing sense of instability and dissatisfaction among residents. It is disheartening to see a decline in the quality of life for tax-paying citizens and their families, while our taxes continue to rise and the focus seems to shift toward bike lanes and accommodations for the homeless.

I urge you to consider the concerns of your constituents and reconsider the current plans. It is crucial to find a balanced approach that addresses homelessness while preserving the quality and safety of our public spaces.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Danielle

Craig, Sondra

From: Kate Zirzow <kajani02@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 10:33 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Overnight Shelter Norwood Inn

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from kajani02@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

*** CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

Dear council members,

I am writing this email to you all today to express my frustration with the proposed overnight shelter location of Norwood Inn & Suites, located in the Town of Campbell. As a former French Island resident, I still frequent the Island as many of my family members still live there. When I heard about your proposal regarding purchasing the hotel for a shelter, I was blown away. Why would anyone think this is a good idea?? Have any of you been inside that hotel? It is a complete disrepair. Bulldozing that hotel is the only smart idea. Not only mentioning the price tag of 2 million for the purchase, it will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to get that bed bug infested hotel into some type of condition where you can bring people in. What are they going to drink? Not the water! The pool area has a ceiling fan hanging by wires, mattress and boards are set up against broken windows and not to mention the drug use, prostitution and police/ems calls. Do any of you remember what happened with the Econo Lodge? What did it cost to fix that up after the homeless were done trashing it?

Currently the Police Dept on French Island is not a 27/7/365 dept. That means that the County Sheriff's Dept will need to pick up the slack. Have you looked into their staffing numbers during the overnight shift? It's not many officers. They will not be able to handle the call volume. In addition, the Fire Dept on French Island is staffed only by volunteers.

I have been looking into purchase my first home back on French Island as that is where I grew up, my family is located, I love the community and the parks where my husband and I can take our dog to exercise. If this agenda passes, I will be looking elsewhere. One of the parks we frequently use is Sky Harbor ball park. . . just a short distance from the hotel. I can guarantee you this will be a new meeting spot for the homeless population during the day when they are required to leave at 7:00am. What do you think these people are going to do during those day time hours? They are going to wonder the neighborhoods and create crime. Theft, break-in's, leaving needles on our streets. It has been proven over and over again that the services offered by the City of La Crosse is not wanted by them!! Why do you keep enabling??? Why do you keep shifting the problem from one area to another instead of putting your money where your mouth is and actually FIX THE DAMN PROBLEM!!!! Build a dormitory style building and have requirements that need to be followed and met in order for occupancy (drug testing, job applications, mental health services etc) Didn't the City of La Crosse hire someone to deal with the current homeless problem? Mayor Reynolds has caused this problem and now he doesn't want to face his consequences of his actions. Bringing them to the Island will not stand!

Not only will this idea of purchasing Norwood increase crime, drugs, traffic on the Island, I'm sure we will lose the only store we have. Quillin's has seen an uptick in theft from the current homeless guests that stay at the hotel now. They've had to cut hours back trying to save a buck so they can keep the doors open. The next closest convenience store is over a mile away. You will be taking our neighborhood, parks and the community we all know it. Home values will decrease as people move off the island to get away from this problem you all are trying to create. . . and I can tell you they won't be moving to the City of La Crosse.

I urge you to vote NO on this matter.

Thank you,

Kate Zirzow

From: Beth Marie Hall <hallbethmarie@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 12:44 PM
To: ZZ City Clerk External
Subject: Common Council 8/8/24 Item 24-1068

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from hallbethmarie@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

*** CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

Dear Madams and Sirs;

I wish to submit a written comment to the Common Council pertaining to agenda item 24-1068 for the scheduled August 8th, 2024 Common Council Meeting. I wish to state my opinion that the proposed possible outdoor overnight shelter for the unhoused at Erickson park is poorly thought out and inappropriate.

Erickson park/pool is directly next door to Spence Elementary School where there is no delineation between where the park ends and where the southern playgrounds begin. Even if fencing were constructed, the encampment would butt up against the boundary of where pre-kindergarten through 2nd grade play during recess. While many unhoused individuals do not pose a risk to other individuals, one can't ignore that mental illness (often untreated) and addiction play a part with a portion of the unhoused population. Placing an outdoor encampment near the elementary school would expose students to these issues.

Elementary schools also need to operate with a higher level of security due to the realities of our time. The level of security would need to be even more so at an outdoor encampment at Erickson than at other locations in order to make sure the school boundaries were kept secure and safe. While the possibility exists that Spence may close and a newer elementary school built, the referendum vote has yet to occur. If it passes, construction of a new school would take time. The proposed timeline of the encampment being open from April 2025 into 2028 would coincide with the potential new school's construction timeline while Spence remains open.

Additionally, Erickson park and the ball diamonds are utilized all summer long by youth and adult leagues. Often, parents allow their kids to walk cross Erickson park to play at the Spence playgrounds while ball games take place. The community will no longer be able to utilize Erickson park in the same way either by no longer being able to play at the popular ball diamonds or be able to allow their children to play at the park or playgrounds outside of school hours.

Furthermore, Erickson pool is a popular swimming location in the neighborhood and is continually packed when not closed for repairs. Placing an outdoor encampment at Erickson with access to pool restrooms and showers would either put undue pressure on pool staff and patrons or effectively close a popular city pool that the neighborhood loves.

Lastly, an outdoor encampment for the unhoused is in general a poor idea because it is only a viable housing solution for maybe 6 months of the year. The population of the encampment would have to be moved during the colder months. A year round, indoor facility would be a more viable solution for the people the common council is attempting to help. I would urge the council to pursue an indoor location - possibly a large building that has sat unused for a long duration of time, such as the old Kmart site.

I wholeheartedly urge the Common Council to remove Erickson Park from the list of potential outdoor encampments for the unhoused for the reasons mentioned above. To continue consideration of it as a possible site demonstrates to the families of Spence Elementary and the surrounding neighborhood that the city doesn't prioritize our children when determining their agenda.

Thank you,

Beth Marie Hall
Call/Text (608) 738-2311

From: Karla <Karla@MarkJewellers.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 12:04 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Homeless

*** **CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

To all,

I am writing to say quite feeding the bears. What I mean is quite giving and giving of taxpayer money to the unsheltered population. The city has been doing this for 3 years now and it has not improved, rather it's made it worse. The influx of peoples from all over the country now know they should come to LaCrosse, because this city just keeps giving and giving.

I found out today that the city of Lacrosse cut the budget for Lights Over North LaCrosse, approx \$11,000 but the city has plenty of funds to give to homeless? Shame on the city for taking away a great community event! To give to people who trash the community.

There should be no camping anywhere in the city of LaCrosse except an actual campground. The proposed areas for camping seem ridiculous to invite this group of people into any neighborhood is asking for more attrition of the upstanding taxpayers of the city! How would any of these proposed sites be any different the Houska disaster or the EconoLodge disaster.

The hotel on French island is not the answer. They will just destroy it like the Econolodge and then the city will own a 2-million-dollar piece of crap property. That is unsellable. There is no easy access to services from the Island. None of this makes any sense.

Now I know there are a few homeless that are truly in need and those folks will work to get a hand up. Those that do not want help and just want handouts cannot be helped by any handouts.

"Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."

Where is the accountability.

The homeless should be accountable for their actions. How about volunteering anywhere to earn what is given out freely. If they truly want help, this would be helpful and accountable

As a business owner, property owner, former foster parent, an active community member I am sure I will get ridiculed for my statements here, but the amount of funds the city is proposing to be spend on people who are not even from this community is out of hand.

K. Doolittle

Sent from my U.S.Cellular© Smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Craig, Sondra

From: Susan Applebury <susan.applebury@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 11:57 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Please Do Not move the homeless to the Norwood Inn

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from susan.applebury@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

*** CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

Dear City Council Members,

My husband and I have recently learned of a proposal by the City of La Crosse to purchase the Norwood Inn on French Island to house the homeless. This would be a complete disaster! The Town of Campbell is not equipped nor has the resources required to handle an influx of homeless individuals.

It would require increased police presence and patrols, there are no medical care or other services available at all, not to mention the horrendous mess that would be left behind for the Town to clean up.

My husband and I have some experience with cleaning up after the homeless. They invaded a house we had purchased for my daughter on the Northside of La Crosse.

The neighbors called the police as we were unaware of the situation. The police in turn called us. A group had broken in through a window and trashed the property. There were needles, drug paraphernalia, feces, urine, garbage, broken glass, etc. The smell was horrible. And all of this damage occurred within about a week.

I also have great concern for my grandchildren's safety as they live just a few blocks from the Norwood. They along with some of their friends have been in fear of walking by the homeless when walking home from school.

I don't know the solution to the homeless problem, but I do know that housing them in the Norwood is NOT the answer.

Thank you for your consideration and service.

Sincerely,
Susan Applebury

Sent from my iPhone

From: Alexis Hagedorn <alexis.c.hagedorn@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 1:52 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Homeless Housing Options

Some people who received this message don't often get email from alexis.c.hagedorn@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

To whom it may concern,

I stumbled across the City of La Crosse Common Council agenda for 8/8/2024 and saw that a discussion about housing the homeless population is going to be discussed. I have clear and strong objections to the Norwood Hotel location being used to house the homeless in the future. Bringing the homeless population to French Island is going to be catastrophic for all businesses and households.

My parents live by Olivet Church, as well as many of my family and friends in the same general area. I grew up in that location. I never once felt unsafe, scared or uneasy. I am now a new mother and my sister also has a baby. We love bringing them over to their grandparent's house because of the safety and friendly demeanor of their neighborhood. There are always kids running around and families having fun. We strongly considered purchasing our first home near my old neighborhood.

The homeless population is the complete opposite of safe, friendly and neighborly. If you drive downtown La Crosse, you can clearly see (and hear) this population: heaps of garbage, personal belongings scattered everywhere, physical and verbal altercations, bothering law-abiding citizens for money as they are going into a business, the list goes on and on.

Mental illness and drug and alcohol abuse are common problems within that community; most do not want the help and are a burden on our healthcare system when they frequent area emergency rooms with "ailments" that they don't want to be treated for and rude behaviors. I understand that some accept the help, but most do not. My knowledge is from family and friends working in these local emergency rooms, as well as my personal observations when my family is needing to be seen.

I can assure you that bringing this population to French Island, a beautiful and comfortable place to live, will bring nothing but problems. I have summarized a few below:

1. Town of Campbell will need to hire more police officers to patrol that area, or have neighboring agencies assist, taking away resources in other communities. Crime rates will increase (look at America's Best Value Inn and the EconoLodge) and illegal activities will be taking place.
2. Neighboring businesses (Quillins, Celebrations on the River, Olivet Church, etc.) will likely experience issues of their own, such as stealing, littering and loitering. I know for a fact that a bride and groom will not want to see homeless people passed out in the parking lot or trying to ruin their special day. I wouldn't blame them for wanting to change venue locations, which is taking money away from a local business.
3. The clean-up in itself is a money pit. Look at Houska and Cameron Parks. How many times has our taxpayer money gone to clean up these locations, for them to be destroyed not even a week later? How many times are

the parks going to be closed to accommodate these people that don't do anything to contribute to our city? We always looked forward to the Farmer's Market on Friday evenings, but we haven't frequented this event due to concerns over the safety of our child in this well-known homeless park. Let's take this money being wasted and help our veterans instead, people that risked their lives for our country; they deserve the time and resources that the City is currently throwing away.

I will conclude this email by again stating bringing the homeless population to French Island is the wrong choice, for many reasons other than the ones I have listed here. For the safety and well-being of the citizens, I am asking to please consider the young families with their kids playing in the front yard. Please consider the elderly couple not afraid to take a walk in the evening. Please consider the out of town visitors imagining themselves purchasing a home in a quiet, family-friendly neighborhood. And please consider the first time grandparents, such as my parents, taking their young grandchildren to play at a clean park, full of other children having a fun afternoon.

Thank you for your time,
Alexis Hagedorn

Craig, Sondra

From: Troy Richter <troyrichter4816@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 1:30 PM
To: ZZ Council Members; Neumann, Mark
Subject: Interim Overnight Shelter

Some people who received this message don't often get email from troyrichter4816@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Mr. Neumann and Council Members,

I have recently learned about the possibility of an overnight shelter being considered at the end of my block (5248 33rd Street South). I am writing to express my deep concern regarding this proposal. Yes, there is a homeless issue in La Crosse. Yes, the city needs to partner with agencies to provide services. Yes, this is compassionate to care for others. Still, I question the thought process of putting this shelter in a neighborhood. Surely you can understand the concern for safety and the fear of decrease of property value. How is this site even considered an option? Besides being in a neighborhood with young families and retirees, there are no amenities to support an overnight shelter. The location on the far south end of the city is far away from any services.

I strongly oppose this proposal and ask that you consider a place close to services, with amenities, and **NOT** in a neighborhood.

Houska Park was a location close to downtown services and was not in a neighborhood. That location should be at the top of the list.

Troy Richter
4816 33rd Street South

Craig, Sondra

From: Jara Richter <jaraleelynn@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 3:10 PM
To: ZZ Council Members; Neumann, Mark
Subject: Re: Tent Encampment proposal, Southside La Crosse

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jaraleelynn@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Dear Mark Neumann, I apologize for the incorrect spelling of your last name. Auto correct sometimes does a good job, but in this case they didn't spell your name correctly and I didn't catch it.

On Wed, Aug 7, 2024 at 2:59 PM Jara Richter <jaraleelynn@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Mark Newman and La Crosse City Council members,

I am writing about the proposed tent encampment on the corner of 33rd St. in Mormon Coulee Road for our homeless population.

I have a strong affinity and support for our homeless community in La Crosse. I have worked at UWL for 24 years prior to my early retirement, as the Assistant Director of University Centers overseeing the COVE — Center for Organizations Vision and Engagement. Much of my work centered around volunteer opportunities and connecting students and faculty/staff with needs in the community. I represented UWL in the initial partnership with the United Way, Western Technical College, and Viterbo University to create Ugetconnected for our campus and the greater community.

Closest to my heart, was food and housing insecurity among our students and within our community. I oversaw the UWL food pantry, and was the co-coordinator of a tri-campus and community project that focused on educating and creating awareness among our community regarding our homeless population within La Crosse. The name of that event was Facing Homelessness in La Crosse. Western Technical College students interviewed participants who volunteered to tell their story, UWL Students took those interviews and turned them into written stories which Viterbo Students acted out on stage at the Weber Center March 20 and 21, 2017. I've attached pictures of the program.

I tell you this because I want you to understand that I have sincere compassion for this vulnerable population. I believe it will not be in the best interest of the homeless population nor the neighborhood on the corner of Mormon Coulee Road and 33rd St., South to move ahead with this plan.

This population will not be in a safe space at this location. It is located right next to a very busy highway where pedestrians, including myself, have found ourselves in dangerous situations trying to cross on foot. One person was tragically killed not that long ago here. In addition, there is no running water, no bathrooms, no electricity and no services to assist these residents.

The neighborhood surrounding this area is full of families with kids, elderly and retired communities. This encampment poses many concerns for noise, safety, and lower property values.

I understand that there is no easy solution to this situation. I am passionate about this vulnerable population finding a more suitable and safer place to call their temporary home. I am willing to meet with anyone to assist

in problem-solving this delicate and important issue. Please reach out to me, or let me know who I should reach out to in order to assist in a positive resolution for those involved.

I feel very strongly about this issue, and since I am retired and in improved health after several years of being off the radar recovering, I am hopeful I can assist in finding collaborative solutions.

Thank you for your time,

Respectfully,
Jaralee Richter
4816 33rd St S



Western
Technical College
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT



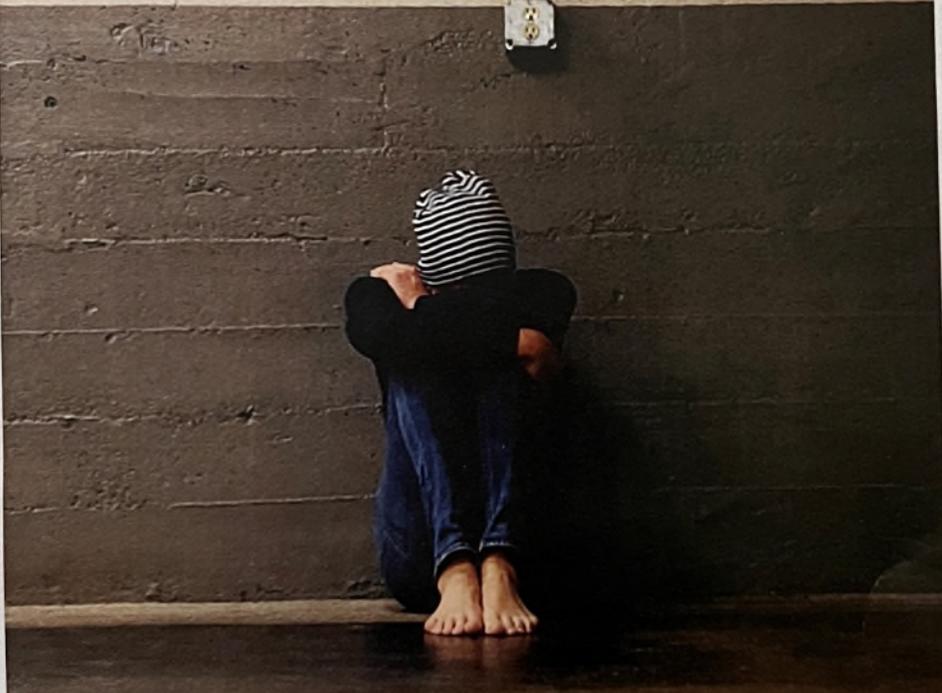
Couleecap
your local community action program

UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
LA CROSSE

UnitedHealthcare
Community Plan

present

FACING HOMELESSNESS IN LA CROSSE



A collaborative community project

MARCH 20 & 21, 7:00 PM
WEBER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Special thanks to:
Aaron Rasch for his pre-production music
Lily A. Janezich for the composition and
performance of the "Homeless" poem

Facing Homelessness in La Crosse

Cast and Production Devisers

- Jessica Askey
- Ioannis Atlasis
- Gemma Cooper
- Jessica Derks
- Alicia Diaz-Valls
- Jackson Lamb
- Rachel Munoz
- Justin Niebow
- Dorothy Oberfoell
- Calvin O'Connell
- Zoe Oskarsson
- Maxwell Rosa
- Maija Salo
- Isabella Weiss

Production Team

Show Direction and Production David Gardiner
..... Jeffrey Stolz
Technical Assistant Jared Miller

*Please turn off all cell phones
and electronic devices.*

*Taking pictures or using recording
equipment is prohibited.*

About the Facing Homelessness in La Crosse Project

The Facing Homelessness in La Crosse project is a year-long, tri-campus service-learning project designed to encourage mutual vulnerability, understanding, empathy and trust. It exists to connect project members and community members human to human. Neighbors who have or are currently experiencing homelessness were invited through community agencies to participate in this venture. Stories were then carefully and respectfully collected by Western Technical College students, published into stories by University of Wisconsin-La Crosse students, and brought to life on stage by Viterbo University students.

The goals of the project are to:

- Empower individuals to tell their story and/or find their voice. Document the stories and bring them to life on stage.
- Connect our community human to human and neighbor to neighbor with respect, dignity, and empathy.
- Involve students from three campuses to increase their connection to the community, and engage them in critical thinking.
- Encourage community action to assist in ending homelessness in La Crosse.

Stories of each of the nine community members whose experiences inspired this production can be found online at <https://endhomelessnesslacrosse.org/facing-homelessness>.

Western Technical College Partners

*Ann Lichliter, Human Services
Associate Faculty*

STUDENTS

Katelyn Camling
Alyssa Cooper
Amber Ducklow
Tabitha Figueroa
Emily Grenier
Vanessa Hegge
Krista LaFleur
Rochelle Lemke
Laura Osborne
Morgan Pederson
Marcellese Powell
Krystal Reed
Dora Schieffer
Robert Schroeder
Krystal Springer
Elizabeth Stanish
Danielle Van Nuland
Autumn Welch

University of Wisconsin -La Crosse Partners

*Laurie Cooper Stoll,
Faculty*

STUDENTS

Hailey Anick
Erin Baldwin
Taylor Balistreri
Lindsey Barlow
Abby Bishop
Kylee Britton
Ashley Clark
Olivia Dorscheid
Mallory Hemmersbach
Ethan Ingalls
Kaytee Johns
Taylor Klokow
Patricia LaDue
Lizzy Megard
Kaitlin Meye
Ellie Miller
Matthew Mitch
Sam Mozey
Lucy Putnam
Eric Rahman
Brianna Reeder
Jenna Sandstrom
Carissa Schlafen
Sam Steingraber
Callie Timm
Madison Wescott
Peter Xiong
Roosevelt Yang

August 8, 2024

Re: Homeless Encampments - Counsel Meeting August 8, 2024

Mayor Mitch Reynolds:

It has come to my attention that the council will be discussing potential Homeless Encampments at your meeting on August 8th. This is a difficult problem for La Crosse and for most cities and towns in the US. One Park up for discussion is Johnson Park on 33rd Street which is across the street from the development I live in. I was the 3rd person to purchase a home in Juniper Estates in 5/83. The curbs were up but the streets not yet paved. It has been a wonderful home and neighborhood.

The City started working on greening up the area. First of all, the Pammel Creek path was developed running from Boma Road, past Wedgewood Valley, State Road Elementary School, Trane, Hillview NH, the baseball fields, next apartments and condos and then single homes. The Hillview golf course was turned into a housing development. Nice benches were added along Pammel Creek. My neighbor worked with the City to put up a gazebo for people to rest and enjoy the area and eventually a water fountain for refreshment. She developed a floral garden of perennials around the Gazebo and then another garden further south near the playground which has a basketball court and playground equipment for children. Now how does this jive with making it a homeless camp area??

The path is very busy with walkers, joggers, elderly walking with canes, bikes of different types, family outings and pet lovers with their dogs and family members giving their loved one a wheelchair ride. When the weather is good and the sun is out it is a lovely place to be. Does that sound like a homeless encampment environment??

About 10 years or so ago, my neighbor was working on weeding one of the flower gardens close to the underpass. She suddenly noticed someone was behind her. She looked up and there was a homeless man with a knife! She slowly backed away. Fortunately a jogger noticed the problem and came over and asked if she would like help. He took her home and police were called. After that her husband always went with her to garden. Apparently a group of homeless people were living under the overpass. Often they were seen

wandering in backyards and police were called. Eventually it stopped. The police probably moved them.

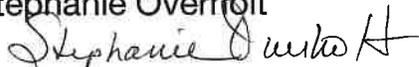
I, as you might suspect, I do not feel our area should be made into a homeless encampment. It will devalue our property and make it difficult to maintain safety and cleanliness. We all pay our taxes and our expectations are that the city maintain our area. This is a neighborhood of families.

I am wondering if you put Johnson Park on the list because it is quite south of the City - in fact on the way out of town? Where would the showers and toilets be that they will need? Food, etc. It is a concern for them and their potential neighbors.

Thanks for your time. I hope to be at the council meeting on Thursday.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Overholt

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephanie Overholt". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the printed name.

Craig, Sondra

From: Mike Cavers <mwcavers@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 5:43 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Norwood

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from mwcavers@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

*** CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

Council members,

I strongly object to the consideration the purchase of Norwood Inn as housing for the homeless.

First, it sounds like the Norwood needs repairs even before homeless can move in.

Second, I don't know of any building the homeless have used that have not been thoroughly trashed.

Third, I believe a concentration of homeless people make any residential area a less safe neighborhood to live in.

Please remove Norwood Inn purchase from any consideration for homeless housing, now and in the future.

Michael Cavers

Craig, Sondra

From: ffgreg32@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 5:51 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Homeless encampment on 33rd St.

*** **CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

The location they are considering on the 5200 block of 33rd street is located across the street from nice condos and Stoneledge apartments, and a half block from my apartment complex. Also, it is right on Mormon Coulee road where 45 thousand cars pass each day. It is the only southern gateway into our city. What will that look like, having a homeless encampment, with porta-potties, and dumpsters as they come into the city? Will my packages be stolen from my door step, will there be law enforcement there at all hours? The La Crosse Police averaged over 100 calls per month at the Econolodge on the Northside. I also can't help but think that the owner of Fiesta Mexicana and several other businesses in that area, couldn't be pleased with the prospect of this proposed camp. What could they have been thinking to consider a disruption of this clean quiet neighborhood? Please reject this poor suggestion, vote NO! Thank you for your consideration. Greg Olsen 5130 So. 33rd St.

Craig, Sondra

From: Joe Sweazey <Sweazey.J@outlook.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 7:11 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Norwood Inn Homeless

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sweazey.j@outlook.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Hello, I am a resident of the Town of Campbell. I am writing to voice my opinion about Norwood Inn on French Island becoming a place for the homeless. I do NOT think this is a good idea and I oppose the idea. Look at the money the City of LaCrosse had to spend on garbage removal, picking up needles etc etc when the homeless were removed from Houska Park. The Norwood Inn has more than its fair share of police calls and they do not have the manpower to take on more. Quillins, right next door to Norwood Inn has to close an hour early because of the riff raff that hangs out there (extended stay residents) who don't have a place to go. We do NOT want this in our neighborhood. Please consider something else.

We pay our mortgages and taxes to live here.

Thank you.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Diana Lambries <lambriesx4@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 8:00 PM
To: supervisor2@townofcampbellwi.gov; chair@townofcampbellwi.gov; ZZ Council Members
Subject: Homeless Housing Solutions

Some people who received this message don't often get email from lambriesx4@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Good evening,

I write to you as a resident of French Island over 20 years, as a taxpayer, as a mother, and a woman who is concerned about the potential purchase of the Norwood Inn & Suites and acquisition of this property for housing the homeless in the La Crosse area.

Research has indicated that homeless encampments can reduce property values up to 12.7% according to the National Association of Realtors. While I understand that this may not meet the exact definition of a homeless encampment, it seems that the same potential negative impacts will likely be present. In addition, there are many negative impacts that are cited as being shared between homeless shelters and homeless encampments.

The negative elements homeless encampments share with homeless shelters include:

- Higher crime rates
- Increased police calls into the neighborhood
- Damage to residential property by homeless shelter residents
- Significantly increased drug use in the neighborhood
- Increased public intoxication or inebriation
- Increased assaults on and threats to property owners or renters in the neighborhood

Questions I would currently pose for consideration:

- 1) With the current registered guests at Norwood Inn, what is the reported drug use and police intervention already being needed?
- 2) How would the City of La Crosse propose to fund the additional police presence that will most likely be needed, as the Town of Campbell would likely not be able to sustain or support any additional increases necessary to protect the full Town of Campbell?
- 3) What other options within the city limits of La Crosse are being explored?
- 4) What impact would the ownership of this property have on any potential conversations regarding Annexation of the Town of Campbell by the City of La Crosse?
- 5) How will the City of La Crosse propose to ensure the safety of the staff of Quillin's and other businesses and the business property near Norwood Inn?
- 6) What objective data do you have that would indicate that the outcome of this purchase would be any different than the outcome at EconoLodge previously?
- 7) What considerations are you giving to the decreased property values both now and future, when potentially there would no longer be a homeless shelter onsite?
- 8) What additional resources will be needed for sanitation to the grounds of Norwood Inn and who will be responsible for those expenses?
- 9) Sex trafficking has already been indicated as a common occurrence in areas of high homelessness in the La Crosse area - Houska Park and Econo Lodge for example. What will be done to decrease the risk of our children

that may be in that area, coming over the footbridge, to access Quillin's or go into La Crosse? I already do not let my children go to Quillin's alone due to having been approached by individuals that were under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol - in the store and in the parking lot. Those same individuals walked right over to Norwood Inn as their place of residence.

10) What would the City of La Crosse and Town of Campbell cite as benefits to this acquisition versus drawbacks?

11) What resources would be made available to those housed at Norwood Inn to support an avenue of independence and self sufficiency? What happens if those housed are not interested or willing to utilize resources as their individual goal is not independence and self sufficiency?

12) This building was recently under scrutiny for being potentially uninhabitable and deemed to nearly be condemned. What has changed since that determination was made? If not updates have been made, who is funding any necessary remodeling. Taxpayers? One time funding? Isn't that similar as to why Econo Lodge was not purchased?

13) Concerns have already been raised by The Salvation Army about using the Econo Lodge previously. [La Crosse Salvation Army receives 'disturbing' reports about EconoLodge homeless shelter, leaders say in letter | La Crosse | news8000.com](#) How would this be any different, especially now that this location is outside of the La Crosse City Limits?

Providing a roof over someone's head is not the same as a solution to homelessness. I do not support the purchase of Norwood Inn by the City of La Crosse as a solution for homeless members of our community. This seems to be a shift of burden from the City of La Crosse to the Town of Campbell. This seems to be a purchase plan with an underlying agenda that will not be brought forth with transparency until it is too late.

This photo was outside of Houska Park after clean up had been initiated. I do not want to see Norwood Inn and French Island turn into another Houska Park.



Garbage piled outside La Crosse's Houska Park on Mar. 15, 2023 (PHOTO: Brad Williams)

Sincerely yours,
Diana Lambries

Craig, Sondra

From: Mary Jo Werner <mjwerner14@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 9:19 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Norwood Hotel proposal

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from mjwerner14@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

*** CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

Good evening,

My name is Mary Jo Werner and I am a resident of the town of Campbell. I am writing as a person who is not a resident of the city of La Crosse, but who is concerned about the city of La Crosse's proposal to utilize the property known as Norwood Hotel for the purpose of housing unsheltered individuals. Please see below for my concerns:

1. The Norwood Hotel is designed for short term stays for individuals. Guests stay at the hotel while traveling to another destination or for visiting or working in the area for a short period of time, a few days at most. The hotel rooms are not designed for long term stays. The rooms are not designed for cooking, dining or other activities that would be needed during a long term stay.
2. The location of the hotel is not conducive to accommodate unsheltered individuals. Medical facilities such as clinics and dental buildings are a significant distance away. The hotel is not near places where unsheltered individuals can socialize. It is isolated from other places to accommodate a transition from homeless to full time housing. The building is a long distance from city or county run agencies.
3. The location of the hotel is very close to an exit to an interstate. This exit is not well lit and there is much foliage where possible intruders could lurk to engage in foul play. Some unsheltered individuals are vulnerable children and adults. It would be easy for someone to kidnap or do other harm to these vulnerable people and readily exit the area via the interstate.
4. Removing unsheltered individuals from the city of La Crosse to a physical location outside the city runs counter to providing solutions for the unsheltered individuals. The city of La Crosse has hired individuals to focus on these individuals and their status. By spreading groups of unsheltered individuals to different municipalities, it allows for confusion and inconsistency in monitoring these individuals.
5. Coordination and community concept between the city of La Crosse and the town of Campbell. Currently the town of Campbell is staffed for its current population for both the police and fire departments. An influx of several unsheltered individuals whose backgrounds (single person, family, mental health concern) are unknown, is set up for failure. Developing a formal plan that is coordinated and agreed upon by all parties involved, helps ensure success.

At this time, my suggestion would be to postpone or table this idea of using Norwood Hotel for unsheltered individuals.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPhone

Craig, Sondra

From: Pat Germanson <patzone84@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 10:04 PM
To: ZZ City Clerk External
Subject: Homeless French Island

Some people who received this message don't often get email from patzone84@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

8/7/2024 French Island is a family Community of hardworking individuals, parent who help their kids get an education and exceed. French Island is not a place for homeless people who leave needles lay outside, create filth & distruction where every they go. The more handouts we give the more we attract homeless.

A police report was filed a couple days ago. A homeless man was by Family restaurant Northside La Crosse. He was visual to a woman and her children eating a meal. He pulled down his pants and urinated, then pulled his pants down and deficated. He pulled his pants down again using a towel to wipe himself front to back.

I worked for La Crosse City Housing Authority. In the 80's I helped Hmong refugies who could not get along with City & Mountain people. I dealt with gang members in the Hmong and black culture. Chicago blacks brought the troubles with them. No matter how we helped people they didn't help themselves. I helped a scary mental ill obese client who scared my boss, found out he was not homeless, and asked me for money.

I helped a homeless sister get into La Crosse City housing. She refused to take any help once she was housed. We could not help her keep her place clean, fulfill requirements, Doctor appointments. She fought with resident's, drank & created havoc, finally was convicted. No matter what I did she would unravel life into distruction.

I met a man from Texas who worked in construction. Summers were hot so he would relocated to La crosse Salvation army claiming homeless, live there for 3 months, find a job, then go back to Texas. He used this system for 3 years and did not care.

I helped Evergreen apartments get rid of dangerous tenants who brought gang members. I helped with mental ill county clients who were fighting and assaulting other residents.

I have talked to many landlords who told me they helped homeless only to have their places trashed, including sever a l hotels in La Crosse & Onalaska.

We cannot have the Family farm anymore where in the 70's homeless or mental ill had to work for their room & board.

Pat Germanson (respect my privacy)

From: Shauntel Burzynski <shauntel.m.burzynski@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 10:30 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Functional Zero - Concerns about Homeless Camping Options

Some people who received this message don't often get email from shauntel.m.burzynski@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Hello Dear Council Members,

I am new to this beautiful city of La Crosse. During my short time here, however, I've noticed a number of homeless people camping around my apartment complex. Instead of other sustainable, safe housing options. This is beyond upsetting, and voting to ban camping city-wide now will worsen the issue.

Pathways Home is, for the most part, a great plan! Understanding the multi-faceted and contentious subject of homelessness is an essential step in the right direction. However, ending encampments across the city cannot occur before other housing services are consistently made available. The Plan does not adequately share a timeline surrounding all of the Action Pathways, and so I humbly implore you to consider the impact of banning homeless camping without having proper alternatives already in place.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter,
Shauntel Burzynski

Craig, Sondra

From: Brad Friske <bsfriske@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2024 2:24 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: agenda item 24-1068.

Some people who received this message don't often get email from bsfriske@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

*** **CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

Dear La Crosse City Council Members,

I am writing this to you as a resident of the Town of Campbell concerning agenda item 24-1068.

I am concerned about several aspects of your interest in moving the homeless population of La Crosse City to the Town of Campbell, specifically the Norwood Inn.

First as I am sure you are aware, there is no bus service to the Island on the weekends and the last buses to and from the Island are between 6am and 6pm with no service on weekends. Housing homeless with no other transportation is stranding them on the island.

Your plan seems to indicate that the homeless only occupy the building during certain times, where are they to go the other 12 hours they will not be in the hotel, especially on weekends when there is no transportation off the island?

This hotel is not near any social services, everything is off the island. Will social services be provided at the hotel location since transportation will be an issue?

The town of Campbell does not have enough police to handle the population of the Town AND the homeless population of the Norwood Inn should that be the plan. Will the City of La Crosse supply dedicated additional police services to the hotel?

The hotel has mold issues from a burst pipe of several years ago that have not been completely remediated (if at all). A look at reviews on most any travel website will show this hotel to be riddled with issues including mold, smells and security issues. Many of the reviews are titled Do Not Stay Here, or something similar. Mold remediation would be necessary and the cost is hefty. The City of La Crosse could possibly find itself the target of a lawsuit should one or more of the residences become ill due to the unhealthy situation. Additionally, we already have a contaminated water supply. This hotel was condemned before and I understand it's in the process of being condemned again.

Treating the Homeless issue as a collective problem is never going to fix the issue. The homeless are individuals with different situations that should be addressed on an individual level.

The homeless population seems to increase with each new shortsighted plan from the City of La Crosse. This looks like just another one. The old KMart building is not even on the list of options, yet it would be much better located for transportation, food, and other needs of the homeless.

Dumping people in a rundown hotel in another community seems like an out of sight, kick the can down the road response.

Brad Friske
Town of Campbell

Craig, Sondra

From: suzanne weibel <suzanneweibel@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2024 8:04 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Homeless in the marsh

Some people who received this message don't often get email from suzanneweibel@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Please, please, please make this issue a top concern. The marsh is a treasure and not meant for all of the trash and human condition that is happening now.

A friend reached out to say she had visited Lacrosse recently and walked through the marsh and spoke with alarm about the garbage and the people "squatting" in this once beautiful place to visit. This visitor spoke of not feeling safe and the visual and physical destruction of the marsh. I was unnerved and embarrassed.

I was avoiding my walks through the marsh because of all I had heard about what was happening. Because of this recent visitor's communication, I finally took that walk and all I had been hearing was true. I couldn't believe what I saw.

I hope any taxpayer support for the marsh and it's beautification is temporarily not being collected from the taxpayers, because as I see it, the taxpayers are not able to use marsh as intended at this time.

Thank you for making this complex problem of homeless in the marsh a top priority.

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

Craig, Sondra

From: David Konrath <davidkonrath@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2024 8:32 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Cc: Cindy Riplinger-Konrath
Subject: Fw: Norwood Inn

Some people who received this message don't often get email from davidkonrath@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

*** **CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

Good Morning

As a resident of the Town of Campbell for the past 25 years, I am opposed to your consideration of moving the homeless population to the Norwood Inn on French Island.

The last time a hotel [Econo Lodge] was used to house the homeless, there was nothing but trouble and the place was ruined in the process.

We are a small community with limited police resources and are not prepared to handle the problems this will bring on for us.

I am not sure why you all think our community should be responsible for taking over the City's problem other than attempting to wash you hands of it.

This has been going on for several years now, and your band aid approach isn't working. I believe you have people assigned and are paid to handle the homeless and they need to step up and do their job.

You need to secure a location within the city limits, and not pass the buck to us.

Sincerely

Dave and Cindy Konrath
2617 Jerald St
French Island

Dear Mayor Reynolds & Committee,

I live near Clayton Johnson Park on 33rd Street. It is discouraging to know this park is being considered a site for allowed camping. The park is a small area for family/friend gatherings, often for picnics, basketball games, walking trail use, and socializing. These activities would be eliminated should campsites be allowed. In fact, all our lovely city parks attract folks for gatherings and activities. They were never intended to provide housing. Please explore other options for camping and allow our parks to be used as they were intended and continue to enhance La Crosse's beauty.



Pauline Conwell
3616 Parkwood Place



© Julia Lily

From: Robert Cooper <rjccoooper@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2024 10:40 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Resolution 24-1068

Some people who received this message don't often get email from rjccoooper@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

Members of LaCrosse Common Council,

I write to you today in response to Resolution 24-1068. I have had the occasion to experience the unsheltered population in LaCrosse from several different vantage points. I have been in the encampments and other shelters on multiple occasions during my employment and have had numerous conversations with them. My wife has been the victim of verbal and emotional abuse at the hands of unsheltered individuals while shopping in local stores, and I have a cousin that is a member of the unsheltered community and has been for most of his adult life, probably for 30 years or more. He is, through his own admission, responsible for the circumstances that led him to this situation, He is not an addict or alcoholic and does not live in the encampments out of concern for his own wellbeing but he does survive without causing issues for others. I have great sympathy and concern for the unsheltered population in LaCrosse. I have that sympathy because of the complete and total lack of any vision of this Council. The items that you are proposing are all worthless. These proposed solutions are just a way for you to make it look like you are doing something to help when you are just using the unsheltered community as Pawns moving them from place to place, actually putting them at risk providing them with inhuman living conditions. The largest issue that most of these individuals face is mental disease or illness. I believe that the severe drug problem in the unsheltered community is because of an opportunity for the dealers to prey on these individuals . What is needed is a real treatment facility for them to live where they can receive the care and medications that they need. Teach them the basics of living on their own and has rules and regulations for them to follow and with proper help maybe some can return to society as productive members. Until that happens most of these individuals are going to continue the path that they are on, never be employable and without any hope of improvement. Understandable that this all-costs money. I honestly do not feel that the citizens of LaCrosse would object to spending a considerable amount of money to provide a facility for these individuals if it was done right and for our citizens. Also understand that this is our money that you are playing with and not yours. The 2024 city budget is something like \$72,000,000. With a population of 52,000 that is about \$1,385 per resident. Your proposal just for security for the 260 individuals is about \$2,885 per person. Along with other cost associated with this issue I would not hesitate to say that this will end up costing closer to \$5000 or more per individual. In reality this is probably not even a City of LaCrosse issue. Most of the unsheltered population are not from LaCrosse. It is the responsibility of City government to provide its citizens with clean water, sewage and trash disposal, maintain city facilities such as parks. Address zoning and building regulations and promote the city's economic development along with providing law enforcement, public transportation and fire protection. Going through the list of departments, the city does not even have a department that is responsible for this situation. It should be left to the County, State or Federal agencies to

provide relief. I have used the words most and majority often. I understand that not all of the unsheltered are in the same situation and that there are exceptions to everything.

In summary, I feel that this proposal should be voted down. The citizens of LaCrosse have been held hostage by a very small portion of people that are for the most part here for the benefits. They have no sense of respect for other people, or laws or much of anything else. Until the Council is ready to seriously address the real issues in this situation you should “cut bait” and stop all services and turn this over to the agencies that are equipped to do so. If there is nothing here for them, they will move on. PLEASE GIVE US OUR CITY BACK.

Bob Cooper

435 24th Street North

LaCrosse

Craig, Sondra

From: Andrea Mekkelson <andreamekkelson@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2024 11:11 AM
To: ZZ City Clerk External
Subject: Encampment proposals for the unsheltered

Some people who received this message don't often get email from andreamekkelson@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***** CAUTION:** This email originated from an external sender. **DO NOT** click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *******

To Whom It May Concern,

My husband and I live at 5141 33rd St S. We are opposed to the vacant lot across from us on 33rd St becoming an encampment. The plight of the unsheltered is very difficult and complex, we know. However, history has shown that every attempt to provide a place for camping has led to destruction, filth, drug abuse and lack of safety. Houska Park - ruined. Cameron Park - ruined and the downtown merchants were losing business. River Point - folks living at RiverPlace were feeling threatened and now, the Riverwalk Trail is not safe to use due to the encampment there.

Please take the 33rd St lot off the list. How about the old KMart building?

Respectfully,

Andrea Mekkelson

Bruce Hanson