

Craig, Sondra

From: Elsen, Nikki
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 6:32 PM
To: Craig, Sondra
Subject: FW: Habitat statement on Affordable housing for Thursday King Street apartment complex proposal

From: Pam Hartwell <pam@habitatlacrosse.org>
Sent: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 6:18 PM
To: ZZ Council Members <ZZCouncilMembers@cityoflacrosse.org>
Subject: Habitat statement on Affordable housing for Thursday King Street apartment complex proposal

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Mr. Mayor and Council members,

On behalf of Habitat for Humanity La Crosse Area we recommend support of this housing unit or opportunity to delay for further discussion.

The myriad benefits of affordable housing in the City of La Crosse are:

1. Affordable housing located near public mass transit can help low-income residents save money, access better jobs, and reach critical community services.
2. Affordable housing contributes to significant economic impacts, including increases in local purchasing power, job creation and new tax revenues. People who spend less of their income on housing can spend more at local businesses.
3. Affordable housing helps prevent evictions that are costly for land owners and devastating to the credit and ability to rent again for the evicted.
4. A person's housing is a huge social determinant of their health. Among other factors like income and education, housing is a component that drastically influences a person's physical and mental well-being. Poverty severely limits people's options, which is why poverty is linked to a vast range of health problems, both acute and chronic in nature.
5. Building New Affordable Housing creates jobs in construction fields and supports city tax base. According to a study from the National Association of Home Building, 100 affordable rental homes generates \$11.7 million in local income, \$2.2 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and 161 local jobs in the first year alone."
6. Another long-term economic benefit of affordable housing is the chance to decrease childhood poverty. Providing children with a better and more equitable path forward is one of these long-term ways to build economic growth and healthier societies. Equipping kids with tools for social mobility isn't just a moral argument – it's also proven to create economic growth for communities. According to Mark Rank, a Professor of Social Welfare at Washington University, "It is estimated that for every dollar spent on reducing childhood poverty, the country would save at least \$7 with respect to the economic costs of poverty."

We have surveyed members of protected classes living in the La Crosse area, looked at the City of la Crosse Impediments to Fair Housing report, reviewed ALICE reports, as well as many other

reports, surveys, and statistics AND they have ALL identified the challenge of a lack of affordable housing available, the inability of basic wages to cover housing costs in the area, and existing housing being in poor condition as top tier issues for our area. We simply need more housing to meet the demands of students and working people.

Specific to this until is the fact that it will provide new, safe, affordable housing for at least 16 people in our community. At \$700/ month for rent, a person making \$30,000/ year or \$14.5/ hour could afford these units. That means a single income household making between 50-60% of county median income could afford these units putting it well within the category of low income affordable housing by Habitat standards and HUD. We also appreciate that it is one block off Cass and West Avenues positioning it close to public transportation and on the edge of the core neighborhood. We are aware from working with students and young professionals that finding housing close to campus but still within a neighborhood is desirable.

We will be coming forward with more ways that the City can help address these challenges, but for right now there is a proposal to create more affordable housing in our community and we at Habitat for Humanity La Crosse Area support allowing this new affordable development to go forward.

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With HOME being more important than ever, Habitat La Crosse currently has 6 homes under construction for families in need, with more on the way – but are facing a \$150,000 funding gap due to COVID-19. Go to our [website](#) for more information on how we are building forward, and [click here](#) to help us close the gap.