



Department of Planning, Development, and Assessment  
400 LA CROSSE ST, LA CROSSE, WI 54601 | P: (608) 789-7512

## ARPA Bridge Housing Staff Memo

---

### Request for Proposals (RFP) Summary

The City of La Crosse launched an RFP to create specialized housing capacity with \$1.1m of ARPA funding. Nine applications were received and almost \$4m was requested in ARPA funds. Proposals were scored by the Economic and Community Development Commissioners and the Pathways Home Action Team. This staff memo includes updated funding recommendations based on the remaining ARPA funds available.

### Pathways Home Team Recommendation

The Pathways Home team scored proposals with representation from City Police, Fire & Planning Departments and La Crosse County Human Services. The team met to discuss submissions and recommended the following use of the ARPA funds:

| Organization | Funding Recommendation |
|--------------|------------------------|
| Karuna, Inc  | \$300,000              |
| Couleecap    | \$801,869.25           |

### Economic and Community Development Commission (ECDC) Recommendation

The ECDC recommended that \$300,000 to Karuna, and the remainder of the funds split evenly between Couleecap and The Salvation Army, adding contractual safeguards with Couleecap to ensure supportive wrap around services. The recommendation passed with a vote of 4-2.

| Organization   | Funding Recommendation |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Karuna, Inc    | \$300,000              |
| Couleecap      | \$400,934.62           |
| Salvation Army | \$400,934.62           |

## **Summary of Recommended Proposals**

**Karuna, Inc**, a co-housing program in La Crosse since 2023, proposes an increase in housing capacity by 40-50 beds. The total project cost is approx. \$1.4m and \$300k in ARPA funds were requested. \$100k of the funds will be used to support the continued implementation of the pilot program. \$200k of the funds will be used in acquisition of a building to begin expansion of the program. The remaining \$1.4m in funds will be raised through state funds, federal funds, and private donations.

The three primary components of Karuna's plan are:

- Co-living style apartments with rent assistance; and
- 24-hour intensive, peer based supportive services onsite plus care coordination with other community service providers; and
- Community connection, integration, and engagement through planned recreational activities and required community service.

**Couleecap**, working in La Crosse since 1966, proposes to expand the Thriving Families program and add 16 units of housing. The total project cost is \$1.5m and \$1m in ARPA funds were requested. The \$1m in funds would be used toward housing acquisition (600k), TBRA vouchers (\$360k) and program operations (\$40k). The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (FSPA) has committed to funding the \$575k gap through a letter of support included with the application.

Key components of Couleecap's Plan are:

- Acquisition of properties to be used as bridge housing for people experiencing homelessness;
- Zero barrier housing entry with supportive case management throughout the program;
- City Rental Voucher program;
- Property acquisition dollars and city rental voucher program matched by private and state sources.

**Salvation Army** has been serving La Crosse since 1896 and proposes to expand the shelter to provide more beds to serve both individuals and families. The renovation and reconfiguration of the shelter will improve both the quantity and quality of the emergency services provided. The project would add 44 individual beds with the flexibility to increase to 64 additional beds. The overall project cost is \$18m and \$1.2m in ARPA funds have been requested. The \$17.6m in funding will be fundraised through private donations. The requested funds will be used for the renovation and reconfiguration of the La Crosse Corps Community Center and Emergency Shelter.