



LAKE SHORE CAP, INC.

HELPING PEOPLE. CHANGING LIVES.

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To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is to demonstrate Lakeshore CAP's full support of the proposed Warming Shelter by First Presbyterian Church.

One of the concerns I have heard when the topic of opening shelters comes up is 'if we build it, they will come.' Lakeshore CAP and some of our partner shelters are part of a State wide database. The information entered into this database provides us with true statistics on homelessness migration, and I can report to you that if you build it, they will come applies to a baseball field in Iowa, not a warming shelter in Manitowoc.

Between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022 the database had information on 175 persons experiencing homelessness in Manitowoc County. Of these, 159 remained in county, 8 left the county and 8 came into the county. Essentially, we had a 0% increase in the number of persons in our county seeking homelessness services from outside the county.

In Sheboygan County, during this same time frame, where there is a warming shelter in operation during the cold months; 199 persons were entered into the database. 170 remained in the county, 13 left the county and 16 came into the county. That is a .02% increase in the number of non-county residents seeking homelessness services in the county which is statistically insignificant.

Homelessness is on the rise across the country, which means it's on the rise for Manitowoc County residents. We are not immune. The July Point-In-Time count found 8 individuals without shelter in the county. Historically we identify zero to 3 people during this count.

The true reason that homelessness happens is because there is a lack of housing. With the shortage in rental housing and the increased pricing of rental housing, making it unaffordable to those living in it, the issue of homelessness continues to grow.

Lakeshore CAP is serving people living in their cars and on the streets within our service area who are living with chronic illnesses such as diabetes and cancer. No one should have to live in their car, and in particular no someone who is struggling with complex medical issues.

A warming shelter will allow for those in need of a warm, safe place to sleep at night to get the rest and nourishment they need. It will also allow them to connect to supports needed to help them obtain permanent housing of their own.

In a recent conversation with the Director of the Sheboygan Warming Shelter, he shared the story of a gentleman who used the warming shelter for a couple of months. He was a quiet man who after a few months stopped in one evening to say he would not be back. He had been working the entire time he was staying at the shelter and had saved up enough money that he was able to rent his own place. These are the stories that shelters produce, and Lakeshore CAP supports the opportunity for more stories like this to happen with the help of a warming shelter in our community.

Sincerely,

Colleen Homb
Executive Director