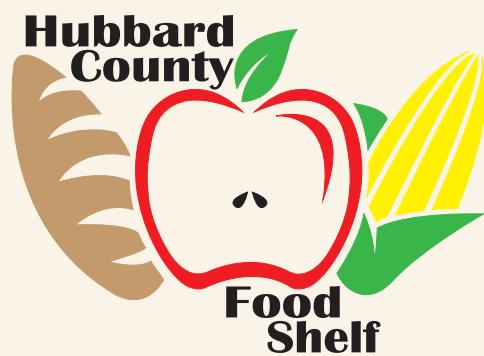




Nourish for Today.

Build for Tomorrow.



The mission of the Hubbard County Food Shelf is to provide food for our clients in order to solve short-term emergency needs.

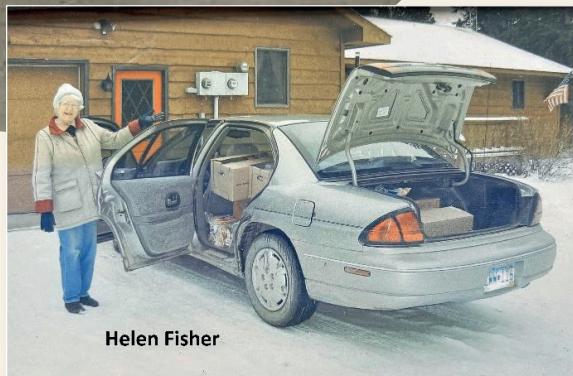
hubbardcountyfoodshelf.org



Hubbard County Food Shelf

A HISTORY

Volunteers, the lifeblood of the operation, show up day after day to stock shelves, sort produce, manage logistics, and greet every client with warmth and understanding. Their efforts are the backbone of the food shelf's quiet but persistent success.



Helen Fisher



**Current Food Shelf Building
308 Pleasant Avenue South**

In the Beginning...

- Started with 2 Volunteers
- Distributed Donated Dry Goods
- Added Venison Shot by Local Hunters and Butchered by Local Meat Market
- Began Purchasing Food with Donated Funds
- Later Local Grocery Stores Began Donating Dairy, Produce, Meat & Bakery

In the heart of Park Rapids, Minnesota, a small act of compassion in 1983 sparked what would become a decades-long movement to fight hunger with dignity. The Hubbard County Food Shelf began with no budget, no full-time staff, and no permanent home—just a couple of local volunteers determined to ensure that no neighbor went hungry. From humble beginnings with storage in the trunk of a car and volunteer garage space, it grew into one of the region's most impactful nonprofit organizations, quietly nourishing thousands of lives with food, care, and respect.

The original founders included a group of 12 community leaders affiliated with several of the local churches. By 1985, the food shelf had gained official nonprofit status allowing it to expand partnerships, accept donations, and grow with the increasing needs of the community. Still entirely volunteer-run, it operated out of an old house, purchased in early 1991, which was repaired and expanded by volunteers. It was powered by donated goods, compassionate hands, and an unwavering mission to serve.

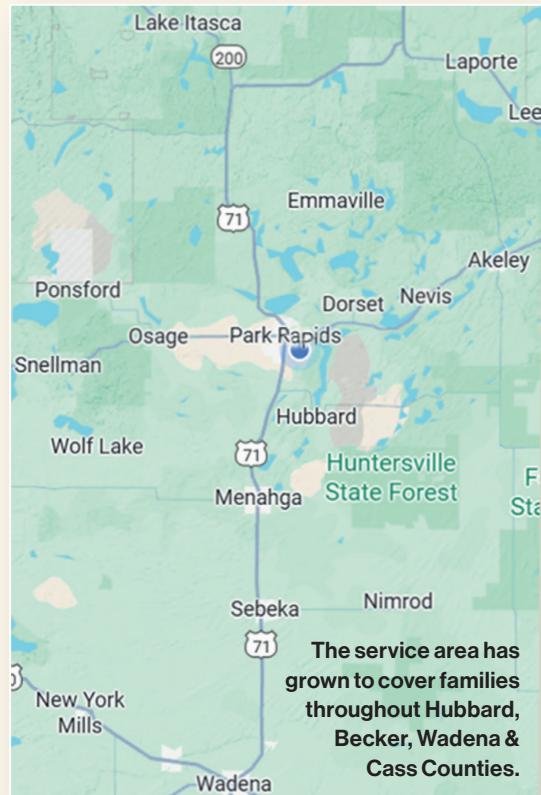
Over the years, the food shelf evolved in response to growing demand. In 2011, a 4200 square foot plumbing warehouse was purchased and adapted into the current facility. What started as a small emergency food assistance service quickly became an essential community resource—offering stability for families between jobs, groceries for seniors living on fixed incomes, and hope for parents facing tough choices.



OF CARING

In 2017, the food shelf's mission was captured in a beautiful mural painted on its exterior by a local high school student and long-time volunteer. The image—vivid produce in outstretched hands—became a powerful symbol of what the food shelf stood for: generosity, nourishment, and human connection.

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck in 2020, the food shelf's ability to adapt was put to the test. With safety at the forefront, it transitioned to one client at a time, some curbside pickup and, when requested, home delivery. With extra food available, we shared our surplus with neighboring food shelves in Ponsford, Akeley, Nevis, Osage, and Menahga. Volunteers restructured workflows overnight, ensuring continuity of service for families who suddenly found themselves in crisis. What might have halted operations in many places only deepened the resolve to serve this community.



The Chili Challenge has raised \$110K since 2011!



Demand surged during 2021 and 2022. In one year alone, the food shelf served over **4,200** households—reaching more than **12,000** individuals. Food distribution topped **378,000** pounds, a record number. Families with young children, working adults juggling multiple jobs, and seniors struggling with rising grocery costs made up the growing client base. The increase in use wasn't just about temporary hardship—it reflected systemic challenges facing rural Minnesota communities.

While our various annual fundraising efforts have allowed us to cover operating expenses, they don't provide the resources to build a facility to meet the demands now and in the future.

By the Numbers

Today, the food shelf stands not just as a provider of food, but as a symbol of what a community can achieve when it cares deeply and acts boldly. Volunteers, who have given countless hours over the years, exemplify the spirit behind every meal delivered, every shelf stocked, and every hand held.

490+

AVERAGE NUMBER OF
DONORS EACH YEAR

\$0

DOLLAR AMOUNT PAID TO STAFF
(100% Volunteer Run)

100+

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

10,000+

NUMBER OF
VOLUNTEER HOURS

410,000+

POUNDS OF FOOD DONATED
BY OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY
AND PARTNERS IN 2024



Total Pounds of Food Distributed

Year	Pounds
2020	360,202
2021	330,253
2022	378,530
2023	452,700
2024	537,315



Breakdown of Demographics Served in 2024

Ages	% Served
0-17	32%
18-64	52%
65+	16%



of Household Visits Annually

Year	Visits
2020	3,766
2021	3,082
2022	4,195
2023	5,121
2024	5,228

270
Tons of Food
Distributed in 2024



Equal to the weight of
38 School Buses



Hubbard County
has a poverty rate of
11.8% which is higher
than poverty rate of
9.3% for the state
of Minnesota.



Hours & Days of Operation:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday
10:00 AM to 3:30 PM

We Partner With...

- Commodities Supplemental Food Program for Seniors
- Akeley Food Shelf
- Pine Point Community on White Earth Reservation
- Nutrition Services Inc. (NSI) Senior Meals
- Local Grocery Stores
- North Country Food Bank
- MAHUBE-OTWA
- Hubbard County Social Service
- Park Rapids Pastoral Association

Providing for The Future

As the organization looks to the future, it's clear that the current facility—at 4,200 square feet—can no longer meet the demands of a changing, growing community.

In the spring of 2025, the board took a bold step forward by hiring an architect to design a new 7,800-square-foot client-choice food shelf. The new facility will enhance our ability to effectively and safely serve our clients in the years ahead.

Client Benefits

- Separation of client waiting area from client intake area (for privacy)
- Improved client flow and efficiency (lower wait times)
- Improved function for client choice (based on dietary needs)
- Adequate onsite parking with space to address traffic flow (for safety)

Volunteer Benefits

- Improved function minimizes manual lifting
- No ramps or steps to impede safe warehouse activity
- Separate traffic areas to minimize potential for mishaps

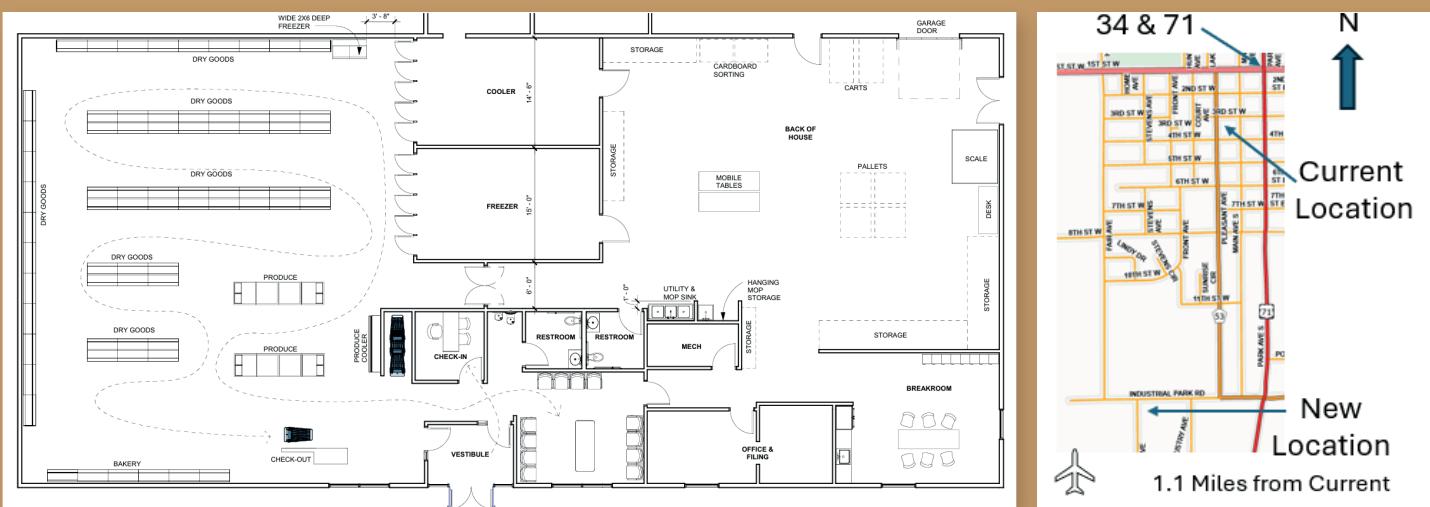
Operational Benefits

- Increased storage capacity, especially for items that are only available for a limited time
- Increased space for processing incoming food, especially perishables
- Space for volunteer training and communications



The Vision Includes

- A walk-in freezer and cooler
- Commercial loading zones
- Dedicated sorting areas
- Supermarket-style shelves
- Additional warehouse space to allow for purchasing items at bulk pricing
- Client choice shopping
- Improved energy efficiency to reduce operating costs
- Potential space for community garden plots



7,800 Square Foot **Client-Choice Food Shelf**

It's not just a building – it's a commitment to address food insecurity with even greater compassion, dignity, and efficiency.

It represents the culmination of over 42 years of work and the promise of a future where no one in our service area goes hungry.



As we prepare to build a new home for this life-sustaining mission, we invite new partners to join us. Whether through donations, services, or a shared vision, your support can help complete the next chapter in this extraordinary story.

Because this isn't just a food shelf—it's a legacy of kindness. And the best is yet to come. 

Contact Us



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