

https://www.mankatofreepress.com/news/local_news/affordable-housing-groups-launch-funding-push/article_63f4ab1c-46da-11ea-918e-fb45d59cf501.html

Affordable housing groups launch funding push

By Brian Arola barola@mankatofreepress.com

Feb 4, 2020



People tour the facilities at the new Union Street Place homeless shelter in St. Peter.

File photo



ST. PETER — Housing advocates will gather in St. Peter today to kick off a campaign calling for more affordable housing funding.

The Homes for All statewide coalition is requesting \$500 million in bonding funding during the upcoming legislative session for affordable housing projects. The nonprofit is joining with Partners for Affordable Housing on the 6 p.m. event at the St. Peter Food Shelf.

The groups will highlight local affordable or emergency housing projects and how Homes for All hopes to secure more funding for similar initiatives.

Partners' Union Street Place emergency shelter is a good example of what projects the bonding dollars could support, said Matt Traynor, Homes for All's engagement co-chair.

"We just feel like it's a good example of what we're proposing," he said. "Part of the legislative request within the bonding request is that emergency shelters are a one-time eligible use of the bonds."

Most of Partners' clients are between 20 and 40 years old, while 45% are 17 or younger.

Union Street Place opened in 2019 after Partners converted a donated motel into shelter space. Even with the donation, raising funding for operations was a challenge, said Executive Director Jen Theneman.

"It's really hard for us to find the money to do all of those things," she said.

Homes for All holds three legislative agenda kickoffs each year to highlight its priorities heading into the session. The first this year was held recently in Moorhead, and St. Peter will be the second before the final one in the Twin Cities metro.

Gov. Tim Walz's administration proposed \$276 million in funding for affordable housing projects in January. While applauding Walz's pledge as more generous than previous administrations, Traynor said Homes for All is pushing for \$500 million to cover even more projects.

Follow Brian Arola [@BrianArola](https://twitter.com/BrianArola)

If You Go

What: Homes for All 2020 legislative kickoff

When: 6-7:30 p.m. today