

Partners for Affordable Housing: Shelters and services

By KIRSTEN BECKER Guest Columnist

Jan 18, 2021



Becker

For over 35 years, Partners for Housing (PFH) has been addressing the needs of individuals in the region who have found themselves in housing crises. The mission “to guide individuals and families on a path toward housing stability” serves to inform all services and programs it provides.

Best known for its two emergency shelters, the Theresa House and the Welcome Inn in Mankato, in October 2019, the organization added a third shelter in St. Peter. Union Street Place (USP), formerly the St. Peter Motel, was made possible by the generous donation from a group of St. Peter residents who wanted to help make a difference.

Emergency Shelters

In the shelters, single females and small families with children are sheltered for a period of up to 90 days. Guests are matched with experienced case managers who help set goals, link guests with community resources, and address barriers to accessing and maintaining stable and affordable housing.

Supportive Housing

While emergency shelter is critical to the ultimate recovery from homelessness, PFH recognizes that, for many of their guests, 30, 60 or 90 days is not nearly long enough to ensure long term housing stability. Poverty, limited education and/or work skills, mental or physical limitations, family instability, low vacancy rates and high rental costs all act as barriers to the ability of a household to retain their housing.

Understanding those concerns, PFH also offers three supportive housing programs — transitional housing, rapid rehousing and long-term housing — where at-risk individuals, couples and families can access affordable housing coupled with a safety net of consistent staff support for a period of up to two years.

Permanent Housing

Finally, PFH also offers affordable, permanent housing to low-income households. In addition to two single-family houses, 29 apartments located throughout Mankato are home to individuals and families who might otherwise be unable to find affordable housing. As long as rent is paid and tenant guidelines are followed, these families can be assured of a safe environment in which to live and raise their families with no end date.

Holiday Bundles

In mid-December and in collaboration with area businesses and community members, P4H collected over 100 “holiday bundles”, consisting of baskets, bins or decorative bags filled with new household items, games or toys and gift cards for

each of the households it serves. The bundles were received gratefully by guests and clients during the week prior to Christmas.

Future Plans

PFH is involved with several advocacy groups, including Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless, and has the eventual goal of adding more shelter space when the opportunity presents itself.

To learn more about PFH, visit partnersforhousing.org.

Kirsten Becker is the communications manager for Partners for Affordable Housing, which works on housing issues in the area, including Nicollet, Le Sueur and Blue Earth counties.

Becky Asleson