



Waukesha Water Utility

SERVING WAUKESHA SINCE 1886

115 DELAFIELD STREET
WAUKESHA, WI 53188-3615

Telephone: (262) 521-5272 • Fax: (262) 521-5265 • E-mail: contactus@waukesha-water.com

TO: Ronald D. Leonhardt - City Clerk

FM: Dan Duchniak, General Manager *DD*

Waukesha Water Utility

RE: Waukesha planning documents

DT: December 15, 2011

The Milwaukee Common Council passed Resolution 110438, directing various reports to be prepared prior to the authorization of negotiations on the potential sale of water by the Milwaukee Water Works to the Waukesha Water Utility.

The resolution requests Waukesha to report on its comprehensive (Smart Growth) plan, its housing plan and its transportation plan. In compliance with that request, I have attached the following documents:

- A summary of Waukesha's Comprehensive Plan;
- A summary of Waukesha's Housing Plan;
- A copy of Waukesha's Comprehensive Plan, including the Housing Plan;
- A summary of Waukesha's Transportation Plan;
- A copy of Waukesha's Transportation Plan;
- A summary of recent news stories on initiatives by Waukesha organizations to address the needs of Waukesha citizens.

We hope this information is helpful to the Milwaukee Common Council. We hope the Council will authorize the start of negotiations in the very near future.

Thank you.

*For
Dan Leonhardt
you the Transit
Plan as soon as
he receives it.
Thank you,
Dan*



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City of Waukesha Housing Plan Summary

This document is submitted to the Milwaukee Common Council as required by City of Milwaukee Ordinance #110438. The purpose of this submission is to provide a snapshot of the ongoing efforts by the City of Waukesha to accommodate and promote housing for citizens of all races, physical abilities and ethnic backgrounds in our community.

Like many communities in southeast Wisconsin, the City of Waukesha has enjoyed moderate population growth over the past 20 years. Since 1990, the population of the City of Waukesha has increased an average of 12% with each census. As our population has grown, our citizenry has become a bit older (23% increase in the median age) and much more diverse. **Minorities have accounted for over 60% of our growth during the last two census periods.** While still small, the **number of African Americans in Waukesha doubled in each decade.** More noticeably, our Latino population, which has brought a wonderful cultural mix to our city, has grown to 12% of the total population of Waukesha. If compared to the most recent City of Milwaukee district maps, **the City of Waukesha is home to more Latinos than all but five of Milwaukee's aldermanic districts.** In addition to growth in African American and Latino residents, Waukesha has seen an across the board increase in each of the other two non-white categories: American Indian and Asian/Pacific Islander. As a matter of fact, **the Asian population has quadrupled over the past 20 years** and if again compared to Milwaukee's own aldermanic districts, Waukesha would house the 5th most Asians on a percentage basis.

As a result of the demographic changes in our community, the City of Waukesha has adopted certain housing policies that will allow us to best serve all of the residents of our community. These changes are meant to build upon our already strong mix of traditional, transit-oriented neighborhoods and determine the highest and best use for our land. A number of initiatives that have been adopted by the city's Comprehensive Plan build upon our strong rental housing base. These initiatives have been added to the progress that the city has already made with regard to affordable housing, as well as housing for the disabled and homeless.

Presently, 41% of the housing units in the City of Waukesha are contained in rental units. This is almost identical to the ratio of owner-occupied v. rental units in the City of Milwaukee according to the Department of City Development (66% owner-occupied according to <http://city.milwaukee.gov/ImageLibrary/Groups/cityDCD/planning/plans/Citywide/plan/Housing.pdf>). Included in these numbers are several projects that accommodate lower income and fixed income population. **These include 481 units of Community Based Residential Facility (CBRF) housing, 425 units in nursing homes, 805 units of HUD assisted multi-family housing, 414 units of WHEDA Low Income Tax Credit (LIHTC) housing and 266 units of public housing**

run by the Waukesha Housing Authority. In addition, there are 161 other housing units that are available to low-income families and the elderly for a total of 2,552 units of affordable housing. A detailed list of all of the previously mentioned housing addresses is attached for your review.

As an example of recent affordable housing activity in Waukesha, one need look no further than Dunbar Oaks, a planned subdivision being developed by the City of Waukesha to offer new affordable home ownership opportunities in the central city. The subdivision is just a block from Bethesda Park and the Fox River, close to downtown shopping, the Waukesha Public Library, Central Middle School, Carroll University and the City's largest employers. It is also served by mass transit. Dunbar Oaks has both income requirements and design requirements that must be met. Four lots must have owners that earn less than 50% of the county's median income. Another four lots must have owners that earn between 51% and 80% of the county's median income and 6 lots can have owners that earn up to 120% of the county's median income. Buyers will receive the lots for \$1 in order to encourage owners of more modest income. In addition, a second mortgage is available through the city that equates to a forgivable, no interest loan. If an owner remains in the home for 15 years, the loan disappears and they own the land outright.

The design standards for the project are in place for two reasons. The first is to help integrate the new houses into the older, well established neighborhood. The standards set forth certain requirements to help the houses visually fit into the neighborhood. Second, the standards were designed to reduce the cost of ownership. The high grade materials and energy efficiency requirements will result in lower ownership costs.

The City of Waukesha is also available to help buyers with down payment assistance through its partners at Waukesha County and WHEDA.

Attached, please also find a sampling of news articles that demonstrate the broad range of activities in which the Waukesha community is engaged to provide assistance to our citizens who may be in need of additional support.

In addition to Waukesha's past commitments to affordable housing for families, the elderly, the homeless and persons with disabilities, the city has adopted a number of initiatives in our Comprehensive Plan that build on our past success. Among the general housing initiatives that were identified as critical to the future of the City of Waukesha are:

1. The need to develop a variety of housing choices so that residents of all incomes may be accommodated. Sufficient housing choices are important as the population ages and new jobs are created. A specific emphasis should be placed on affordable and workforce housing so as to accommodate employers in the area. In order to accomplish this, the City of Waukesha will ensure that a broad range of housing styles, types and price ranges are provided. This menu of housing types, sizes and styles will provide opportunities to minimize geographic imbalances between job and residence locations.

2. The preservation of, and addition to, our vibrant core city of traditional neighborhoods and our beautiful historic downtown. The City of Waukesha is fortunate to have quality traditional housing stock and a well-preserved historic downtown. Policies should be put in place to strengthen these areas. Adding housing variety to appeal to a variety of incomes is important to ensure economic viability, as housing options are important for the City and County's workforce.
3. Building upon the city's distinct advantage within the county because of our superior ratio of rental units in comparison to other surrounding municipalities. While the county as a whole has only 20% of units available as rentals, the City of Waukesha housing stock contains 40% of its units as rentals. This allows Waukesha to better attract working class families to the heart of the city.

The recommendations below were adopted by the Waukesha Common Council specifically to address the need to provide affordable housing options for citizens of the city:

1. The leaders of the City of Waukesha recognize that households should not have to pay more than 30 percent of their adjusted gross income in order to secure decent, safe, and sanitary housing. In addition to the contract rent payment or the payment of the principal, this includes interest, taxes, the necessary insurance, utility, and other attendant costs.
2. The City of Waukesha will continue using Tax Incremental Financing for the redevelopment of properties to meet affordable housing needs.
3. The City of Waukesha will consider and explore the creation of incentives for the development of affordable housing units. Options to consider include density bonuses and waiver of fees. The City will work with other municipalities and the County to study the feasibility of an affordable housing trust fund to assist in meeting the projected employment housing needs.
4. The City will encourage mixed income housing development where feasible to avoid concentrating affordable units in a limited number of areas.
5. The City will encourage the adoption and use of "flexible zoning district" regulations such as Traditional Neighborhood Development, Transit-Oriented Development, and Planned Unit Development regulations. Many of these already exist in the City of Waukesha and should be used as positive examples for future development.
6. The City will develop or encourage the development of rent-to-own programs through public-private partnerships and entrepreneurship to give low-to moderate-income families a chance at homeownership.
7. The City will study the potential to integrate other types of specialty housing, where applicable, such as "cooperative housing" (sometimes called "coop-housing" or "co-habiting housing"), "cohousing" and university or campus-related housing for seniors, which may also socially support and help seniors and/or persons with disabilities be self-sufficient.

8. The City will continue to support the inclusion of accessory units and “live-work-units” (sometimes called “flex units”), where suitable, to help provide affordable housing as well as affordable office or work space for entrepreneurs (i.e., small businesses and home-based businesses).

CBRF: 2010 (WI Dept. of Health Services)

	<u>Address</u>	<u>Capacity</u>
Avalon Square Inc.	222 Park Pl	27
CCLS Garfield	1306 Garfield Ave	8
CCLS Oakdale Drive	1606 Oakdale Dr	8
CCLS Victoria Drive	1425 Victoria Dr	8
CCLS Welsh Court	2704 2706 Welsh Ct	8
Century House	1130 Northview Rd	12
Creative Living Environments - Clarion	21325 Clarion Ln	8
HIL Canaan	443 Freeman St	8
HIL Fleetfoot	1316/1318 Fleetfoot Dr	8
HIL Greenmeadow	204 Greenmeadow Dr	5
HIL Greenway	1329 Greenway Terrace	5
HIL Jordan House	2165 Laura Ln	8
HIL Orchard Knoll	1500 Northview Rd	5
Linden Court Waukesha	2330 W. Michigan Ave	24
Lindenheights	427 N. University Dr	68
LSS Genesis Halfway House	1002 Motor Ave	10
LSS House of Hope	325 Sentinel Dr	14
Marion House	401 S. Prairie St	8
Merrill Hills Manor	3217 Fiddlers Creek Dr	97
Oak Hill Terrace V LLC	1805 Kensington Dr	128
Samson House	611 N. Grand Ave	8
Summit House	910 Summit Ave	6
Total		481

AFH: 2010 (WI Dept. of Health Services)

	<u>Address</u>	<u>Capacity</u>
Booth House	903 Summit Ave	4
CCLS Wesley Drive	S37 W25065 Wesley Dr	4
Crestwood Group Home	301 Crestwood Dr	4
Green Valley	1128 Green Valley Dr	4
HIL Sylvan House	1600 Sylvan Ct	4
Lander II	2820 Lander Ln	4
Lander Lane	2809 Lander Ln	4

LSS Lowell House	914 Lowell Dr	3
Manhattan	2031 Manhattan Dr	4
Michigan	1505 Michigan Ave	4
Oakdale 2	1737 Oakdale Dr	3
Oakwood House West	637 Madison St	4
Prairie Moor	148 N. Moreland Blvd	4
Riverview	419 Riverview Ave	3
St. Coletta of WI Blackhawk Men	1502 Blackhawk Trail	4
St. Coletta of WI Blackhawk Women	1500 Blackhawk Trail	3
St. Coletta of WI Cavalier Drive	1109 Cavalier Dr	4
St. Coletta of WI Chippewa	1216 Chippewa Dr	4
St. Coletta of WI Greenway Terrace	1339 Greenway Terrace	4
St. Coletta of WI Mohawk	1236 Chippewa Dr	4
Total		76

RCAC: 2010 (WI Dept. of Health Services)

	<u>Address</u>	<u>Capacity</u>
Avalon Square	222 Park Pl	50
Oak Hill Terrace RCAC	1805 Kensington Dr	35
		85

Nursing Homes: 2010 (WI Dept. of Health Services)

	<u>Address</u>	<u>Capacity</u>
Lindengrove Waukesha	425 N. University Dr	135
Virginia Health and Rehabilitation Center	1451 Cleveland Ave	105
Waukesha Springs Health and Rehabilitation Center	1810 Kensington Dr	185
		425

Public Housing: 2011 (Waukesha HA)

	<u>Address</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Type</u>
Scattered Sites - Family	Scattered	152	Family
Saratoga Heights - Elderly	600 Arcadian Dr	114	Elderly
Total		266	

HUD-Assisted Multi-Family: 2008 (HUD)

	<u>Address</u>	<u>Assisted Units</u>	<u>Total Units</u>	<u>Type</u>
Monterey and Hillcrest - Family	1804 S Grand Ave	60	299	Family
Sunset Apartments	1512 Big Bend Rd	72	72	Family
Westwood Heights	1705 Elder St	40	40	Family
Willow Park	1017 Delafield St	146	146	Family
East Terrace Apartments	801 N. East Ave	130	130	Elderly
La Casa Village I	1431 Big Bend Rd	46	47	Elderly
La Casa Village II	1441 Big Bend Rd	19	20	Elderly
Senior House	825 Pleasant St	33	33	Elderly
Sunset Heights	1926 Madera St	17	18	Elderly
Total		563	805	

LIHTC In-Service: 2011 (WHEDA)

	<u>Address</u>	<u>Low-Income Units</u>	<u>Total Units</u>	<u>Type</u>
Highlands South Apartments	1505 Big Bend Rd	54	104	Family
Pine Pointe Apartments	138 S Grand Ave	28	80	Family
Summit Woods	2501 Summit Ave	21	62	Family
Berkshire at Sunset	S30 W24890 Sunset Dr	78	78	Elderly
The Silvernail	2451 Silvernail Rd	82	90	Elderly
Total		263	414	



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City of Waukesha Comprehensive Plan

Executive Summary

The City of Waukesha has completed the attached comprehensive plan pursuant to s. 66.101, Wis. Stats. This plan was adopted by the City of Waukesha Common Council on November 3, 2009.

The leaders of the City of Waukesha believe that a comprehensive plan is necessary in order to logically plan for the city's growth while also building upon our city's strongest assets. These include a vibrant core city comprised of traditional neighborhoods and anchored by a beautiful historic downtown, a population that is increasing in diversity and unique natural surroundings that are highlighted by the scenic Fox River.

This executive summary provides a snapshot of the matters that are most important to the people of Waukesha. City leaders believe that by following these guidelines Waukesha will become a healthier, more prosperous and more sustainable community. Many of the findings and recommendations adopted are consistent with those that the City of Milwaukee has adopted through their process.

The following are key findings and recommendations in several categories.

HOUSING

(Please also refer to the attached Housing Plan Summary)

The following housing issues were identified as critical to the future of the City of Waukesha:

1. The need to develop a variety of housing choices so that residents of all incomes may be accommodated. Sufficient housing choices are important as the population ages and new jobs are created. A specific emphasis should be placed on affordable and workforce housing so as to accommodate employers in the area. In order to accomplish this, the City of Waukesha will ensure that a broad range of housing styles, types and price ranges are provided. This menu of housing types, sizes and styles will provide opportunities to minimize geographic imbalances between job and residence locations.
2. Preservation and adding to our vibrant core city of traditional neighborhoods and a beautiful historic downtown. The City of Waukesha is fortunate to have quality traditional housing stock and a well-preserved historic downtown. Policies should be put in place to strengthen these areas. Adding housing variety to appeal to a variety of

3. incomes is important to ensure economic viability, as housing options are important for the City and County's workforce.
4. Building upon the city's distinct advantage within the county because of our superior ratio of rental units in comparison to other surrounding municipalities. While the county as a whole has only 20% of units available as rentals, the City of Waukesha housing stock contains 40% of its units as rentals. This allows Waukesha to better attract working class families to the heart of the city.

Housing Affordability and Housing Costs

The recommendations below were adopted by the Waukesha Common Council in recognition of the need to provide affordable housing options for citizens of the city:

1. The leaders of the City of Waukesha recognize that households should not have to pay more than 30 percent of their adjusted gross income in order to secure decent, safe, and sanitary housing. In addition to the contract rent payment or the payment of the principal, this includes interest, taxes, the necessary insurance, utility, and other attendant costs.
2. The City of Waukesha will continue using Tax Incremental Financing for the redevelopment of properties to meet affordable housing needs.
3. The City of Waukesha will consider and explore the creation of incentives for the development of affordable housing units. Options to consider include density bonuses and waiver of fees.
4. The City will work with other municipalities and the County to study the feasibility of an affordable housing trust fund to assist in meeting the projected employment housing needs.
5. The City will encourage mixed income housing development where feasible to avoid concentrating affordable units in a limited number of areas.
6. The City will encourage the adoption and use of "flexible zoning district" regulations such as Traditional Neighborhood Development, Transit-Oriented Development, and Planned Unit Development regulations. Many of these already exist in the City of Waukesha and should be used as positive examples for future development.
7. The City will develop or encourage the development of rent-to-own programs through public-private partnerships and entrepreneurship to give low- to moderate-income families a chance at homeownership.
8. The City will study the potential to integrate other types of specialty housing, where applicable, such as "cooperative housing" (sometimes called "coop-housing" or "co-habiting housing"), "cohousing" and university or campus-related housing for seniors, which may also socially support and help seniors and/or persons with disabilities be self-sufficient.
9. The City will continue to support the inclusion of accessory units and "live-work-units" (sometimes called "flex units"), where suitable, to help provide affordable housing as well as affordable office or work space for entrepreneurs (i.e., small businesses and home-based businesses).

TRANSPORTATION

(Please also refer to the attached Transportation Plan)

In addition to owning and operating the Waukesha Metro Transit System, the Waukesha Common Council has adopted the 2035 Regional Transportation System Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin. This is a multi-modal plan dealing with public transit, bicycle and pedestrian accessibility, travel demand management, transportation systems management, and arterial streets and highways. The process for the development of the recommended multi-modal program began with consideration and development of the travel demand management, transportation systems management, bicycle and pedestrian, and public transit elements of the plan. Arterial street and highway improvement and expansion was then considered only to address the residual high traffic volumes and attendant traffic congestion, which may not be expected to be alleviated by travel demand management, transportation systems management, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and public transit.

The following additional recommendations have been adopted in the Comprehensive Plan based upon inventory data, a public opinion survey, and transportation development objectives, principles, and standards:

- The City of Waukesha will work with other municipalities to refine the proposed system of off- street bicycle paths and surface arterial streets and highway system accommodation of bicycles contained in the 2035 Regional Transportation System Plan. In addition, the City will integrate bikeway accommodations into planning for upgrades and modifications to the county trunk highway system consistent with the refined county transportation plan and facilitate communication with local municipalities and bordering counties to address bikeway linkages and connectivity.
- The City of Waukesha will work in partnership with Waukesha and Jefferson Counties to expand the Lake Country Recreation Trail from Delafield to Watertown with the City providing a curb lane on-road bikeway connection to the Lake Country Trailhead near Country Springs Hotel.

The County and municipalities will evaluate dedicated funding sources for county-wide shared taxi service to meet the needs of a growing elderly population in all 37 municipalities.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

The Comprehensive Plan presents a discussion of the major community facilities and utilities within the county, including telecommunications infrastructure, public and private utilities, school districts, libraries, cemeteries, healthcare facilities, childcare facilities, and public safety.

The following adopted recommendations are:

1. The City will work with the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) as part of the regional water supply planning process to identify groundwater aquifers that can sustain planned development.
2. The City will consider modifying its Park and Open Space Planning process to identify lands that may need to be preserved for municipal groundwater supplies, specifically meeting the use isolation distances required for high capacity wells.
3. Since watershed boundaries rarely follow municipal boundaries, the City of Waukesha should work to develop storm water system plans based on watershed areas.

AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Comprehensive Plan presents an inventory and analysis of the agricultural, natural and cultural resource base of the City of Waukesha.

In order to preserve our cultural resources and natural assets into the future, the Common Council has adopted the following recommendations:

1. Follow the recommendations of the Regional Water Supply Plan objectives and standards used to prepare the plan.
2. Amend land use categories to direct development away from areas with seasonally high groundwater and discourage development of below-grade structures on soils with groundwater limitations less than 3 feet from the surface.
3. Amend applicable zoning codes, land division and storm water management ordinances to more stringent site design and storm water management requirements necessary to address thermal and other runoff impacts.
4. Seek historical register status for the lists of historical sites that are eligible for historic designation but have not been designated and the list of potentially eligible sites that need additional evaluation for inclusion as eligible sites.
5. To protect and encourage the preservation of primary and secondary environmental corridors and isolated natural areas, discourage residential development in environmentally sensitive areas.

LAND USE

The recommended land use plan map in the comprehensive plan provides a design for the attainment of the urban and open space preservation objectives contained in the comprehensive plan. The implementation recommendations pertaining to the urban development areas, environmentally sensitive areas and other land use plan implementation measures are summarized in the attached document. Recommendations include:

1. The County and municipalities will examine regulatory codes to identify the extent to which they permit or exclude relatively lower cost housing, and make appropriate

changes to facilitate the provision of such housing. This review should primarily focus on the structure types permitted development densities; minimum lot area requirements; and minimum dwelling unit floor area requirements. The City will also research, study, promote, and provide education about the use of energy efficient homes and green housing development design concepts.

2. Within the context of community-level plans, detailed neighborhood development plans will be prepared for each residential neighborhood or special district where significant growth is expected. While such plans may also vary in format and level of detail, they should generally do the following:
 - a. Further classify residential areas as to structure type and density, with the mix of housing structure types and lot sizes resulting in an overall density for the neighborhood consistent with that recommended in the community-level and county plan.
 - b. Identify environmentally significant areas to be preserved consistent with the community-level plan and county and regional plans.
 - c. Indicate areas to be reserved for storm water management and utility easements.

The neighborhood planning process will make full use of the many design concepts that can enhance the living environment and increase efficiency in the provision of urban services and facilities and in travel patterns. Also promote design concepts that mimic the traditional neighborhoods of the City of Waukesha. These concepts include mixed-use development, traditional neighborhood development, transit-oriented development and residential cluster development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In order to promote economic development opportunities and enhance the viability of existing industrial, office and retail centers, it is important to pursue those opportunities in a way that benefits the entire region. In addition, these opportunities should be pursued keeping in mind that the people who will be employed in these businesses have an opportunity to live in the City of Waukesha. Last, all economic development opportunities must take into account their effect of the special natural environment our community enjoys. The following standards shall be included to guide the placement of new industrial, retail and office uses:

1. Suggested design criteria:
 - Access to available adequate water supply, sanitary sewer service, storm water drainage facilities, and power supply.
 - Site design emphasizing integrated nodes or centers, rather than linear strips.
 - Site design appropriately integrating the site with adjacent land uses.
 - Service by a transit service. (This standard applies to industrial, retail, and office uses located within, or in proximity to, medium- and high-density areas).
2. Promote the use of the comprehensive plan as a guide and tool in advising residents, businesses, and developers regarding planning and zoning actions and decisions.

3. Officials in the County should coordinate access to state and federal resources to assist in funding City transportation and infrastructure improvements.

Tax Increment Financing

Tax Incremental Financing is a powerful tool that municipalities may utilize in order to set development priorities for their community. The Waukesha Common Council has adopted a plan that would set the following priorities:

1. Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) should conserve and renew urban areas and enhance their viability.
2. Tax Incremental Financing should be used for brownfield and other redevelopment projects.
3. To encourage a viable urban center, the City should continue the use of Tax Incremental Financing in redevelopment projects.

Collaboration and Cooperation

Any successful economic development plan for Waukesha is dependent on the overall health of the region. In order to accomplish our mutual goals of job creation, higher family incomes and increased business opportunities, the City of Waukesha is committed to the following cooperative economic development efforts:

1. In response to existing and projected skilled workforce needs, the City of Waukesha, in cooperation with appropriate business and community organizations, should work with the University of Wisconsin and other higher education systems to provide greater access to bachelor and master degree programs to City residents
2. Collaborate with the Milwaukee 7, the Waukesha County Economic Development Corporation, Waukesha County Technical College and UW-Extension to conduct a labor market analysis for the City of Waukesha, Waukesha County and the Region that assesses the existing and anticipated supply and demand for labor as well as employer and employee training needs.
3. To add to the livability of the City and enhance an employer's ability to attract a workforce, continue to update the City Park and Open Space Plan to ensure sufficient recreational opportunities for the resident population.



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City of Waukesha Public Transportation

Plan Summary

Public Transit

The City of Waukesha is the major supplier of local public transit service in the Waukesha area. The taxpayers of the city have made public transit a priority by becoming owners and operators of the Waukesha Metro Transit System since August 1981. The system is owned by the City of Waukesha, and operated by a private contract management firm under the direct supervision of the Transit Director, a City of Waukesha employee. While the policy making body of the transit system is the Waukesha Transit Commission, the ultimate responsibility for review and approval of certain important matters, including the annual program budget, lies within the Waukesha Common Council.

The transit system also operates the Waukesha Metrolift Program to provide paratransit service for the travel needs of disabled citizens who are unable to use the fixed-route bus service provided by the Waukesha Metro Transit System. This curb-to-curb service is operated during the same hours as the fixed-route service and is available throughout the entire transit system service area. In addition to the metrolift program, Waukesha's fixed route service is accessible so that it may be utilized by disabled citizens throughout the service area.

In addition to operating 10 local routes in the City of Waukesha, **the transit system operates a number of routes that provide public transportation links between persons living in the City of Milwaukee and job opportunities in the City of Waukesha and Waukesha County.** Those routes include:

- **A subsidy paid by Waukesha County to Milwaukee County Transit** for the extension of Milwaukee County bus route 10 linking downtown Milwaukee with Brookfield Square.
- **Bus route 1** in Waukesha that connects Brookfield Square with downtown Waukesha with transfers between the Waukesha Metro Transit System and the Milwaukee County Transit System at Brookfield Square.
- **Bus route 901** in Waukesha that connects Downtown Waukesha with Marquette University, Downtown Milwaukee and UW-Milwaukee.
- **Bus route 904/905** that connects Oconomowoc, Delafield, Hartland and Pewaukee with Marquette University and Downtown Milwaukee.

- **Bus route 906** that connects Mukwonago, Big Bend and New Berlin with Downtown Milwaukee.
- **A subsidy paid to Milwaukee County Transit** to provide route 79 service from Menomonee Falls to Marquette University and Downtown Milwaukee.

In order to help create a seamless transit system for the benefit of the user and employers throughout the region, the **transfer fees between the Waukesha Metro Transit System and the Milwaukee County Transit System were eliminated in 2009**. The City of Waukesha also maintains a Downtown Transit Center in Waukesha where all Waukesha Metro routes and Route 901 meet for convenient, no-waiting transfers.

The Waukesha Metro Transit System is consistently reviewing operations to improve transportation throughout the entire system.

Transportation Planning

In addition to owning and operating the Waukesha Metro Transit System the Waukesha Common Council has adopted the 2035 Regional Transportation System Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin. This is a multi-modal plan dealing with public transit, bicycle and pedestrian accessibility, travel demand management, transportation systems management, and arterial streets and highways. The process for the development of the recommended multi-modal program began with consideration and development of the travel demand management, transportation systems management, bicycle and pedestrian, and public transit elements of the plan. **Arterial street and highway improvement and expansion was then considered only to address the residual high traffic volumes and attendant traffic congestion, which may not be expected to be alleviated by travel demand management, transportation systems management, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and public transit.**

The following additional recommendations have been adopted in the Comprehensive Plan based upon inventory data, a public opinion survey, and transportation development objectives, principles, and standards:

- The City of Waukesha will work with other municipalities to refine the proposed system of off street bicycle paths and surface arterial streets and highway system accommodation of bicycles contained in the 2035 Regional Transportation System Plan. In addition, **the City will integrate bikeway accommodations into planning for upgrades and modifications to the county trunk highway system** consistent with the refined county transportation plan and facilitate communication with local municipalities and bordering counties to address bikeway linkages and connectivity.
- The City of Waukesha will work in partnership with Waukesha and Jefferson Counties to **expand the Lake Country Recreation Trail from Delafield to Watertown with the City providing a curb lane on-road bikeway connection to the Lake Country Trailhead near Country Springs Hotel.**

- The County and municipalities will evaluate dedicated funding sources for county wide **shared taxi service to meet the needs of a growing elderly population** in all 37 municipalities.



Community Action

Examples of Support for Waukesha's Diverse Population

Waukesha's population is becoming increasingly diverse in terms of race, income and age. The community has responded in many ways to help meet the increasing needs for support. The following articles provide a small sample of the broad range of services local residents and organizations provide.

For example, better access to health care is a critical need for many. A groundbreaking was recently held for a health clinic next to the Waukesha Transit Center, a project the City has been working on with Sixteenth Street Community Center of Milwaukee, ProHealth Care and the Waukesha Memorial Hospital Foundation.

The new Waukesha Community Health Center will, as Sixteenth Street has said, "meet the growing needs of those who face financial, cultural and linguistic barriers in accessing care." Sixteenth Street also said, "The identified needs and patient population served by this site mirrors that of the constituents we currently service in Milwaukee County. Over the last decade, the number of persons living in poverty in Waukesha County has risen from 2.7% to 6.3%, the number of persons with Medicaid coverage has nearly tripled and the number of residents who could benefit from bilingual services has increased 42%."

Pregnancy Support Connection and Healthy Families to merge; New organization will be Safe Babies, Healthy Families, Waukesha Freeman

By Sarah Pryor Freeman Staff

Date: Dec 13, 2011

WAUKESHA – Two long-serving Waukesha non-profits are merging to create one organization that will help women in crisis from the moment they realize they're pregnant until their children are 5 years old.

Pregnancy Support Connection and Healthy Families will officially merge on Jan. 1, but training is already under way to make sure staff is able to serve the prenatal to childhood needs of any woman who walks through its doors, said Shirley Wehmeier, former executive director of Healthy Families.

"This will give us a chance to work with mothers for the long-term," said Wehmeier, now the assistant executive director of Safe Babies, Healthy Families. "We've worked as partners for so many years that it was a logical step, and we've talked about it for several years."

District Attorney Brad Schimel, former board president of Pregnancy Support Connection, said the merger will allow clients to keep the same caseworker from prenatal care until the child is 5 years old, rather than being referred to a new agency after the baby is born, which often results in losing clients who don't take the time to follow up on referrals.

"We'll now have a seamless exchange that will eliminate duplication, create efficiencies and expand our capacity so that we can serve more people," Schimel said. "There's more need now than we're able to meet."

Safe Babies, Healthy Families will collaborate with organizations like the Waukesha Housing Authority to provide support and education on housing, nutrition for mothers and babies, positive domestic relationships, childcare and more.

"These women are getting education that frankly I wish everyone leaving the hospital with a newborn infant was getting," Schimel said. "The job isn't over when the baby is born – there's still work to be done."

Schimel said more than 90 percent of the women served by Pregnancy Support Connection have a history of abuse, domestic violence or neglect in their own lives, and it's difficult to break the cycle without someone intervening, which is a goal of Safe Babies, Healthy Families.

"When we change little things early on, it means big changes later, and hopefully it will decrease the amount of work our office sees down the road," Schimel said.

Wehmeier said she, Executive Director Nancy Major and the rest of their staff are excited to get the ball rolling on the new organization.

"We've turned it over in about six months," Wehmeier said. "It's quite an undertaking but it will be wonderful when it's done."

Homelessness hits families as shelters feel squeezed, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

By Annysa Johnson of the Journal Sentinel
Dec. 12, 2011

Robyn Greif lay beneath the covers in an Oak Creek motel, the sounds of her small children around her, thinking for the first time in days: "We don't have to rush somewhere. We can feed our kids. We can shower today."

The family of seven had driven from South Carolina in search of work for Greif's husband, Sean, but had run out of money. They had spent three nights sleeping in their minivan because the area shelters were full.

The Salvation Army paid to house them at the motel, at least through last weekend, and their prospects for permanent housing look good.

But the Greifs represent a troubling trend in this time of economic turmoil: the growing number of homeless families - at a time when shelters are filled beyond capacity and state and federal dollars earmarked to run them are being cut.

"The situation, especially for families, is very tight in the shelter system," said Joe Volk, executive director of Community Advocates, which runs Milwaukee's largest shelter for families and abused women at 3025 W. Mitchell St.

"Like every family shelter, we put cots in the hallway, all kinds of things to make more room. But at some point, you have to say the inn is full."

Milwaukee has about 1,000 emergency shelter beds - about 300 of those targeted for families, according to the Shelter Task Force, a coalition of agencies that serve the homeless. Those beds - along with overflow spots in "warming rooms" around the area - have begun to fill up in recent weeks as temperatures drop.

"We had 14 last night. But I expect, if it stays this cold, we're going to be up to 20 very shortly," the Rev. Karen Hagen of Tippecanoe Presbyterian Church on the south side said during a recent cold spell. Tippecanoe began opening its doors to the homeless last year with all-night "prayer vigils," which allow them to provide the service without the red tape involved in running a formal shelter.

Tippecanoe, like most of the area's shelters and warming rooms, serves primarily adults. But families now represent a larger share of the nation's homeless population than ever before, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. A HUD report released in the summer said the number of homeless people in families rose by 20% from 2007 to 2010. Bob Waite, of the health and social service hotline Impact 2-1-1, said calls for housing assistance are up 18% this year. Housing calls made up 13.3% of all calls to 2-1-1 through November, compared with 11.7% last year, Waite said.

Because of the shortage of emergency shelter beds, families - especially larger ones such as the Greifs - must be split up between facilities, said Ken Schmidt, executive director of Hope House and head of the task force. Some will opt to sleep in cars rather than separate their families.

"We try not to have people sleeping on the floors, but if it gets that tight, we might have to go to that model," Schmidt said. "But we don't want people sleeping in cars. That's the worst-case scenario."

Family struggles

The Greifs, with five children between the ages of 1 and 6, are not unusual in the circumstances that brought them to the shelter doors. Sean Greif, 35, said he worked as an auto mechanic in Rock Hill, S.C., but his paychecks dwindled as the company struggled. A friend of Robyn's in West Allis encouraged them to come north, so they loaded their children and belongings in their van.

When housing with the friend fell through, they spent two nights in a hotel before their money ran out. And they began eating at free meal programs and sleeping in the van at truck stops overnight.

Sean Greif has had two interviews. But even if he lands a job, it could be weeks before they scrape together enough money for a place to live.

"Hopefully, things will come together. That would mean the world for us," he said, before carting the family's belongings in plastic bags from the van into their hotel rooms Friday night.

An increase in beds for families seems unlikely, given the financial squeeze most shelters are experiencing with the cuts in state and federal funding, according to Schmidt.

"We had cuts of 10% to 12% in our community development block grants. And there's another 12% cut next year, so things are only going to get worse in 2012," he said.

Waiting list in Waukesha

A lack of funding forced two shelters operated by Hebron House of Hospitality in Waukesha to close earlier this year. Both have reopened after the community responded with \$60,000 in donations and pledges.

Even with the two shelters up and running again, Hebron House is at capacity in its three shelters and has a waiting list of 16 families and 12 women hoping to find a spot at Sienna House, said Hebron House of Hospitality Executive Director Bernie Juno.

"People think homelessness is only in central cities and large urban areas. But the suburbs have real problems as well," Juno said. "We think of Waukesha as a wealthy community, but there are people here who come for the jobs, but can't afford housing where they work."

The Greifs, too, have benefited from an outpouring of generosity after word of their plight spread.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society provided clothes and food. Well-wishers left gifts of money and coats - one card signed "Welcome new neighbor. Hope this helps." A trucking company called about a possible job for Sean.

"It's been amazing," Robyn Greif said in the warmth of her hotel room. "Every time someone shows up at the door - with snacks for the kids, or groceries - it hits me. It's just amazing."

<http://www.jsonline.com/news/milwaukee/families-changing-face-of-homelessness-d23d2hl-135486998.html>

Waukesha Service Club donates \$500,000 to Community Health Center
Center to provide care for low-income, uninsured or under-insured people, Waukesha
Freeman

Sarah Pryor, Freeman Staff

Date: Dec 10, 2011

WAUKESHA – The Waukesha Service Club is taking the season of giving to a whole new level with a \$500,000 donation to the new Waukesha Community Health Center, which will provide care for low-income, uninsured or under-insured people.

"Our mission statement reads in part 'to help the sick and needy in Waukesha County'," said Waukesha Service Club President Marlene Zick. "It was a unanimous decision by our members to help fund the health center – they said this is what we're all about."

Established in 1930, the club consists of 114 women from all over Waukesha County.

"All members have hands-on involvement in the organization, so they aren't just attending meetings on a monthly basis," Zick said.

The organization runs a thrift store and the gift shop at Waukesha Memorial Hospital.

"Where the proceeds from those shops are distributed is our decision," Zick said. "Everyone is involved."

The clinic, run by the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center, will have 10 medical provider teams and is expected to provide care for nearly 10,000 Waukesha County residents.

The Waukesha Memorial Hospital Foundation and ProHealth Care have pledged to fund purchase of the site and initial costs.

Ed Olson, Chief External Affairs Officer for ProHealth Care said the center was needed because there's an "increased urgency because of the growing number of people who are on Medicaid or who are uninsured or underinsured because of the economy. As a result, inappropriate use of hospital emergency departments is on the rise and the health care safety net cannot meet the current and growing demand for service. That will change when the Waukesha Community Health Center opens this summer."

**Updated: Officials Break Ground on Waukesha Community Health Center;
New health clinic designed to meet the uninsured and the underinsured people in Waukesha
County, Waukesha Patch**

By Sarah Millard
December 8, 2011

The sun was shining bright through the windows as health care and government officials gathered Thursday morning to break ground on the new Waukesha Community Health Center near downtown Waukesha.

Mayor Jeff Scrima welcomed the new clinic to the city, thanking those involved with bringing the project forward.

"ProHealth Care has been a wonderful neighbor to us here in the City of Waukesha," Scrima said. "They have served our citizens to their best, with professionalism, with dignity and with ongoing pursuit of innovation, always asking the question how can they serve better."

Waukesha County Dan Vrakas praised ProHealth Care's work and welcomed the 16th Street Community Health Center to Waukesha.

"The true measure of any community is the compassion that it and they show for those less fortunate," Vrakas said. "This beautiful facility, as we get underway with construction today, is going to do just that."

From a news release from ProHealth Care:

The WCHC will be the third health center operated by Sixteenth Street. Services will be phased in over two to three years. When fully operational, the health center will have 10 medical provider teams and is expected to provide care for nearly 10,000 Waukesha residents. As a community health center, services will be available to all regardless of insurance status including low-income, uninsured and underinsured individuals. The scope of services will complement the health services already available in the area.

The project will involve renovating two existing buildings and tying them together with new construction. The health center is expected to be complete in summer of 2012.

The health center site is centrally located in downtown Waukesha. It is adjacent to the city bus terminal, providing easy access for those using public transit. The site also is adjacent to the Waukesha Family Practice Center, a clinic where medical residents now provide care for many underserved people. Care will be coordinated between the Family Practice Center, the WCHC and many other community organizations and physicians.

The need for a community health clinic was identified several years ago when areas of downtown Waukesha were designated by the state as medically underserved. The number of Waukesha residents covered by Medicaid has grown significantly, rising more than 116 percent since 2003. Local safety net providers have strained to meet the demand for services.

ProHealth officials also announced significant progress toward meeting their fund-raising goal for the new health center. The Waukesha Memorial Hospital Foundation has pledged \$2.3 million to cover the purchase of the site and other initial expenses. So far, individual donors, foundations and corporations have committed more than \$2 million to the project.

Sixteenth Street Community Health Center has also received a \$2.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to pay for construction of the center.

<http://waukesha.patch.com/articles/officials-break-ground-on-waukesha-community-health-center>

Waukesha community clinic breaks ground Thursday, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

By Laurel Walker of the Journal Sentinel
Dec. 7, 2011

Waukesha - The new Waukesha Community Health Center, rising out of a partnership between the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center in Milwaukee and its federal grant and the Waukesha-based ProHealth Care and its Waukesha Memorial Hospital Foundation, will break ground on new quarters Thursday.

Medical services there are scheduled to start sometime next summer.

The clinic will be located next to the Waukesha Transit Center, in the former North Street Market at Barstow and North Sts. that has remained largely vacant since it was partially built in 2005.

The hospital foundation is contributing \$2.3 million for site acquisition and initial operations. A \$2.6 million federal grant made available to the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center through the Affordable Care Act is paying for completion of the unfinished interior and to join two separate buildings into a 15,000-square foot facility with 30 exam rooms.

Initially 12 people - three medical providers, nursing staff and workers to assist with insurance enrollment and to coordinate referrals - will staff the clinic. Eventually, the staff will grow to 40, including up to a dozen medical providers, spokeswoman Ellyn McKenzie said.

While the clinic will serve those with insurance of any type, it will also serve patients without insurance who will be billed on a sliding scale based on income and family size, based on clinic policy. A nominal fee will be assessed for all services, officials said.

The 30-year-old St. Joseph's Medical and Dental Clinic located a few blocks away on East Ave. in downtown Waukesha and which offers free services to the community's neediest people will still be in demand, said Jennifer Evans, executive director.

"There's more than enough business for both agencies," she said.

Both clinics will be an important part of the safety net caring for low-income individuals and they will work together, officials from both said.

The Waukesha Community Health Center will develop partnerships and referral arrangements with medical providers, government agencies and nonprofit agencies like St. Joseph's free clinic to form a continuum of care, McKenzie said.

While ProHealth and the Waukesha Memorial Hospital Foundation are helping to launch the clinic with financial assistance, the community health center will be operated by the Sixteenth Street agency.

Evans said the new health center is a welcome addition to serve a growing need.

"Soaring unemployment rates have added to the number of Waukesha County residents who have lost their employer-sponsored insurance and find it necessary to enroll in government plans such as BadgerCare and Medicaid," she said. "As a federally qualified health center, the new clinic will be well situated to provide basic medical services to this population."

But about 25% of those who seek medical or dental help from St. Joseph's - including the homeless - have no income and no government-supported insurance, she said. Another 27% of households, averaging two people, have annual income of less than \$12,000.

"These are people who can't even afford the co-pays under BadgerCare," she said.

The staff at the Waukesha Community Health Center will be paid by the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center. More than 100 service providers at St. Joseph's are volunteers who donate their time. In 2010, according to the St. Joseph free clinic's annual report, the clinic helped about 1,200 people in the community with health care services valued at \$860,000.

Most of the clients said if it weren't for the free clinic, they'd go without care or go to a hospital emergency room.

Correction: Because of an editing error, an earlier version of this article improperly attributed a quote from Jennifer Evans, executive director of the St. Joseph's Medical and Dental Clinic, located a few blocks away in downtown Waukesha. Evans was describing the new health center as a welcome addition to serve a growing need in the area.

"Soaring unemployment rates have added to the number of Waukesha County residents who have lost their employer-sponsored insurance and find it necessary to enroll in government plans such as BadgerCare and Medicaid," Evans said. "As a federally qualified health center, the new clinic will be well situated to provide basic medical services to this population."

<http://www.jsonline.com/news/waukesha/waukesha-community-clinic-breaks-ground-thursday-9s3bson-135206293.html>

Waukesha Overflow Homeless Shelter To Open With County Support; Enough funding is available to keep emergency shelter open this winter, Waukesha Patch

By Jon Voils
December 6, 2011



A Waukesha overflow shelter designed to house 35 single men will remain open until next April 30 thanks to a commitment of up to \$25,000 made by Waukesha County Executive Dan Vrakas on Monday.

The announcement was made during a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the re-opening of Siena House, a shelter for single women and their families operated by Hebron House of Hospitality in Waukesha. Siena House was closed since July due to a funding shortfall.

"Donations and commitments of over \$50,000 to date will permit the overflow shelter to operate from Dec. 15 through April 30," said Development Director Cathy Malkani of Hebron House. "The county's participation is vital in keeping the shelter open through the winter."

"Homelessness in Waukesha County is a big problem, and I was challenged by our faith-based communities to match the \$25,000 they had already raised," Vrakas said. "It's a good example of a private and public partnership."

"The money will come from pre-budgeted Department of Health & Human Services dollars for AODA (Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services) and mental health treatment in residential facilities, because addiction issues are involved in about 75 percent of these homeless cases.

"I made the commitment on behalf of the county, because we recognize the need. We see an opportunity to offer support to these families and individuals, whether it's developing job skills or providing alcohol and drug counseling. There are many reasons a person may be homeless."

The county is working with Hebron House, other non-profit organizations, churches, schools, local colleges and businesses to find a solution to Waukesha County's homelessness, according to Vrakas.

"If someone finds himself or herself homeless, we want it to be a one-time experience," he said.

Waukesha shelters to reopen;

Donations approaching \$60,000 have been made, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

LAUREL WALKER, lwalker@journalsentinel.com Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Staff

Published: November 30, 2011

Waukesha - Two Waukesha shelters for the homeless that closed because of a lack of operating funds will reopen in the next two weeks after contributions poured in from the community. Bernie Juno, executive director of Hebron House of Hospitality Inc., said although the agency hasn't raised the entire amount it had aimed for before opening the doors, pledges and cash approaching \$60,000 have come in so far. Siena House, a shelter on Summit Ave. for up to 28 single women and members of families, has been closed since mid-July. It will open Monday with a ribbon-cutting celebration.

An overnight shelter for homeless men during the winter months, located in a former school building at Northview Road and Grandview Blvd., will open Dec. 15, Juno said. Plans are to operate it until the end of April, but "obviously if we don't get the rest of the money, we'll end up closing it early." Juno had said in October that \$70,000 was needed for the men's shelter to reopen in mid-November, but she said with a month's delay, it will now need about \$42,000 to break even.

Nearly \$30,000 has been raised or pledged for the men's shelter, she said. About \$30,000 has also been raised for Siena House, and together with expected 2012 donations, that shelter should be able to operate all next year, said Cathy Malkani, development director.

The emergency winter shelter can handle up to 35 men a night. It operated for two years in the basement of St. Matthias Episcopal Church downtown but moved to the vacant school building last year, where it went in the red by about \$20,000.

Downtown church pastors, in particular, were helpful in promoting the holiday fundraising effort for the shelters, Juno said. They're also helping Hebron House in its effort to raise money for buying the former Northview School, which more recently served as the private West Suburban Christian Academy.

Hebron House hopes to give the overflow men's shelter a permanent home and co-locate a variety of nonprofit agencies there that serve the same homeless population.

"Through a very challenging year, the community has really responded so well," Juno said. "It makes us all very happy because we're going to be able to reopen the shelters." In another piece of good news for Hebron House, word has come that a \$1.4 million federal housing assistance grant has been approved for the agency's plans to build eight apartments for low-income individuals with disabilities.

A construction grant, or capital advance, totaling \$1,298, 200 will fund two four-unit buildings on a double lot on Summit Ave. near Horeb Park. The agency already owns the lot, but Waukesha County, which backed the project, was forced to repay the \$300,000 acquisition cost to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development because the project wasn't completed on time.

Juno said she has not yet received the agreement letter from HUD and doesn't yet know if those funds can be used in part to repay the county. The grant includes another \$90,600 for rent subsidies over three years, according to the HUD announcement.

The property is already zoned for apartments but the city's Plan Commission will have architectural review of the design. Case management services will be provided to the tenants with special needs. Juno said she hopes construction can start in the spring.

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Serving in the season of giving, *WaukeshaNow*

Area organizations need volunteers, donations

By CHRISTOPHER KUHAGEN

Nov. 15, 2011

Editor's note: This is the first in a two-part series of organizations that serve the needs of the homeless and hungry.

One week from today many people will wake up in warm beds to the smell of turkey cooking in their kitchens. Families will gather around the table to a full Thanksgiving dinner. Most will not know where to start.

And when morning comes, mobs of people will wait outside of department stores to get their hands on everything they saw in the ads.

Some, however, won't have these experiences. The only line they'll be standing in is at the meal site.

It's the reality thousands of individuals and families from Waukesha face. In fact, while there are some wealthy areas in the county - noted by the 4.9 percent living below the poverty level compared to the state average of 11.1 percent in the 2010 U.S. Census - the City of Waukesha's poverty level is at 8.8 percent.

"There's homelessness all over," said Ralph Zick, the executive director at Hope Center, a nonprofit center in Waukesha, whose main goal is to prevent homelessness. "We just don't see it on the surface. It doesn't stand out to people, but that doesn't mean it's not there.

"I don't know what the actual count is, because it's ever-changing. As soon as we help them out and people get on their feet, there's someone else who shows up."

Maj. Carol Lemirand, who is the Corps Officer at the Waukesha County Salvation Army, said the amount of people coming into the center is growing.

"If the job market doesn't get better, it will stay that way," Lemirand said. "A number of organizations are trying to work with folks to prevent them from being homeless. But the amount of vulnerable people is an amazing number."

However, since many of these centers are nonprofits most are experiencing financial troubles putting their fate in jeopardy.

"The nonprofits are doing just a great job, but everyone is struck with financial issues where we just don't have enough," Zick said. "We're having to stretch our resources any way we can.

"But the money might not be there and they may or may not be available next year, which is scary."

Following is what the Food Pantry of Waukesha County and Hope Center are doing to help those in need:

Food Pantry of Waukesha County

The Food Pantry of Waukesha County, a nonprofit organization, has undergone numerous changes since it was established in 1978. But its goal is the same: to increase awareness of hunger in the community, promote collaborative action to provide food to those in need and to essentially eliminate hunger.

The pantry, 1301 Sentry Drive, serves an average of 6,136 people per month - 42 percent of whom are children. It gives away more than 75 boxes of cereal six days per week and more than 300 cans each of fruits, vegetables, soup and canned protein. They also dispense items such as shampoo, soap, toothpaste and diapers.

The food pantry also helps families determine their needs to become more self-sufficient and links clients with local agencies for budgeting assistance. They also help families with food preparation, medical issues and job placement.

Food can be picked up by one member of the household once every two weeks, but in order to keep the shelves full, the community must help. Monetary or food donations are needed as are volunteers. Its website offers 30 ways in which one can give. Donation hours are from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday and from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday.

Hope Center

Hope Center also serves as a food giveaway as it holds a free meal program in addition to offering free clothing, books and furniture.

Its Day Center also provides a social gathering for the homeless. It is open from 8:30 to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and Zick said "through a generous grant" the Day Center will now be open on weekends until April.

With the cold months coming, Zick said providing people with a place to stay during the day is imperative.

"Anything we can do to help people," Zick said. "That's our No. 1 focus. We don't judge. We just provide service and it's a welcoming thing to do."

Without its 875 volunteers, though, it would not be able to stay open. And since Hope Center, located at 502 N. East Ave., runs on donations and grants, it also needs fundraisers to stay afloat.

It holds its largest fundraiser of the year Thursday - the annual Thanksgiving Dinner and Auction at the Country Springs Hotel in Pewaukee. The proceeds will benefit Hope Center's meal and clothing program. Last year, the event raised \$75,000 and this year they are looking for another big gain.

It needs this money because of the large amount of people who come into the center. Zick said it has served more than 25,000 meals this year and more than 4,000 visitors come into the center each month.

Zick expects that number to stay consistent, which means it is always in need of volunteers and donations.

"It's steady all year," Zick said. "There are huge numbers for clothing. But we expect it to go up 10 to 15 percent for our Day Center (in winter).

"If someone comes in here, they'll get help or assistance in some way. No one goes away without anything. We welcome anyone here and have a lot of people coming in day after day."

Zick said it's a rewarding experience to see people who are struggling find hope at Hope Center.

"It's not depressing when you see happiness," Zick said. "It's a wonderful feeling. We're very happy to help but wish we could do more."

How to help

Waukesha Food Pantry: 1301 Sentry Drive

Food donation hours are accepted from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday and 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday. Visit waukeshafoodpantry.org for more ways to help and volunteer.

Hope Center: 502 N. East Ave.

Donations can be made online at www.hopecenterwi.org. To volunteer call (262) 549-8726.

<http://www.waukeshanow.com/news/133920543.html>

Waukesha Board Hires Additional Staff at Whittier School, *Waukesha Patch*

By Amy Gilgenbach
November 13, 2011

The Waukesha School Board approved hiring four additional full-time staff members at Whittier Elementary School during its board meeting last week.

One of the positions was new for the school – a supervisor for “positive behavioral interventions and supports” (PBIS), needed because a number of children at the school are experiencing some type of crisis and acting out, including hitting teachers.

“We are experiencing many, many students who are in crisis – emotional crisis, physical crisis – who are really impacting the learning in a number of different grades over there,” Gray told the school board when asked about the position.

Consequently, the educational focus at Whittier is suffering, despite the school having one of the best principals, he said.

Whittier takes in a large amount of students from low-income areas and this year, there seems to be an increase in the number of students who are acting out, according to Gray,

Sixty-one percent of children at Whittier qualify for the free and reduced lunch program, an indicator of poverty, according to Wisconsin Department of Instruction data. Last year, 53 percent of students qualified for the program at the school.

The new position will provide extra support for the children, who are not necessarily identified as special education, and their families, according to Jennifer Wimmer, Director of Special Education for the school district.

The situation at Whittier has also attracted the attention of the district's Safety Committee, which discussed worker's comp accident reports in which teachers and aides reported being injured by students, the majority of whom had special needs.

According to the committee report by school board member Karin Rajnicek, the committee discussed whether they were providing enough support for the teachers and aides.

The salary of the new PBIS position will be 70 percent of \$57,576 because it's a one-year hire and part of the year has already passed.

The three other positions would be 70 percent of about \$159,000 and include two kindergarten teachers and second grade teacher to lower class sizes.

Funding for the positions may come from grants and other special funding, in addition to other district funds, so the overall impact to the district is lessened, according to Gray.

Even with the new hires, overall staffing for elementary staff is still lower than previous years, Gray said.

In other staffing-related business, the school board also approved hiring a full-time physical education teacher at Horning Middle School and a part-time Title 1 math teacher at White Rock Elementary; and accepted the resignation of Lisa Sigler, Director of High School Instruction effective Dec. 16.

<http://waukesha.patch.com/articles/school-board-approves-more-staff-to-help-struggling-school>

Local Service Organizations Receive Cuts in Waukesha, Waukesha Patch

Homeless shelters, the Women's Center and others notified by county that they will have less grant money for 2011.

By Amy Gilgenbach
October 7, 2011

Local area non-profits and community service organizations are reeling from a one-two punch that may jeopardize services for some of the most citizens needy of Waukesha County.

Thanks to reductions and budget delays at the federal level, the organizations will receive less money this year than they expected from the Community Development and Block Grant (CDBG) program, money they may have already spent. Additionally, they will not know how much money they can expect to receive for next year until January, making budgeting difficult.

According to Waukesha County Department of Parks and Land Use Director Dale Shaver, under whose department the CDBG was recently moved, grant allocations were typically made prior to receiving preliminary grant awards from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. In 2010, the CDBG followed that process and received official grant awards that were 16 percent less than anticipated, causing a shortfall in funding for the grants.

The county anticipated receiving \$1.6 million but received \$1,306,879, an unanticipated shortfall of \$293,121. The majority of the gap was managed by reallocating or eliminating funds without impacting the organizations that receive grants from the CDBG program, according to Shaver.

Only \$56,150 of the shortfall was taken from 2011 allocations to the organizations. Each grant received a 20 percent reduction in their expected grant allocation, except for organizations that had already spent their money or were guaranteed an allocation, according to Shaver.

"We made adjustments basically on the county's back without impacting any organizations," Shaver said. "That was our goal, to minimize that impact as much as we could."

To prevent this situation from occurring again, Shaver has asked the CDGB to not make grant allocation plans until after hearing from the federal government.

"Rather than putting them in this predicament – some organizations have expended those funds – the county is making adjustment to its process," Shaver said. "It's difficult for them but it's better than finding out late in the year."

Increased Need But Not Increased Funding

For homeless shelters and other such organizations, the change could not have come at a worse time, with increased demand due of the economic downturn and winter approaching. For the Hebron House of Hospitality, it means a "huge deficit" and a need for additional funding.

"Demand is up due to the recession and the unemployment rate," said Executive Director Bernie Juno. "We're experiencing an increase in requests from families and single mothers."

Even with recent renovations to their facility, which increased how many people they could serve, going from 24 to 40 people, the demand still is outstripping availability. As a result of the grant reductions, the organization's overflow shelter will not be opening unless they receive a specific donation to fund it, according to Juno.

The Hebron House of Hospitality emergency shelter received a reduction of \$14,800, with their new allocation being \$59,200. Jeremy House, also operated by Hebron House, received a reduction of \$1,700 with an adjusted allocation of \$6,800.

"It definitely not only hurt us but it also hurts other agencies that provide services for the homeless," Juno said.

At Hope Center, Executive Director Ralph Zick, while pragmatic about the decrease in funding, noted that it would impact their organization, especially since donations haven't been as strong due to the downturn in the economy and demand for their services exponentially increasing.

"It hampers our ability to provide the services we need to provide and planned on providing for the people who need it most," he said. "But it's not the end of the world."

He noted that Hope Center has its biggest fundraiser of the year coming soon, a Thanksgiving dinner and auction, and maybe the organization will be able to make up the amount then.

"Funds are going to be an issue for every non-profit," Zick said. "We're going to have to cut-back."

How to cut back when the need for services is increasing is the conundrum.

According to Zick, two and a half years ago, the Clothing Shop was serving 500 to 700 people a month. Now they get 4,000 to 5,000 visitors a month.

Project Move, a program which provides donated furniture and household items, such as bedding and kitchen items, to individuals and families, was expected to serve 200 to 300 people this year but so far this year has served 1,500, he said.

"We're growing so fast," Zick said. "When funds get cut, it just destroys us."

Hope Center's grant allocation decreased from \$14,000 to \$11,200 for its day shelter and from \$4,000 to \$3,200 for its delivery truck.

Timing of Reductions Inopportune

At The Women's Center, although the decrease in funding is a concern, the timing is a problem, too. The timing of the unexpected reductions for 2011, late in the year, has made it difficult for the organizations that receive the grants.

"Those funds were included in our 2011 budget," said Deb Delvaux, director of finance for the shelter.

The organization is able to minimize impact of the cuts due to "strong" financial management and a diverse source of funding, according to Diane Ripple, the center's director of programs and services. They will also look to make up the revenue from other sources and reduce costs where possible.

"We will do everything we can to not reduce services. As we look ahead to ongoing cuts, we might be in a more difficult position," Delvaux said.

Reductions in grants for sexual abuse services, the crisis line and the Sister House, an emergency shelter for victims of domestic violence, totaled \$9,050 for the Women's Center, with their adjusted allocation being \$36,200.

Other grants impacted were for the emergency shelter at Salvation Army, with a planned allocation of \$10,500 decreasing to \$8,400; veteran services offered by Dryhooch of America, \$12,500 to \$10,000; medication services offered by the Lakes Area Free Clinic, \$6,000 to \$4,800; birth to age 3 services offered by Lutheran Social Services, \$13,000 to \$10,400. In addition to other programs, City of Waukesha programs for adaptive recreation, community policing and a senior coordinator were also cut from \$31,000 to \$24,800.

Other Cuts Expected for 2012

For what to expect of CDBG funding in 2012, county officials have heard everything from the program being eliminated to having a 10 percent cut. Shaver said that in his budget, he anticipates at 10 percent cut for next year, on top of the 16 percent cut they received this year, cuts that will once again trickle down to the non-profit and other grant-receiving organizations.

<http://waukesha.patch.com/articles/local-service-organizations-receive-cuts-in-waukesha>

Habitat home gives families fresh start; **Homeowners, volunteers working hard on project, *WaukeshaNow***

By CHRISTOPHER KUHAGEN
Sept. 20, 2011

One family lives in an old, broken-down trailer home, cramped in a space uncomfortable for seven people. Roof damage is the norm as are cold winters. There's no air conditioning during hot summers, no basement to protect oneself during a tornado or a major storm and privacy is rare.

The other family isn't in a much better situation. Mold fills the attic of their Waukesha duplex. Electrical problems are a regular occurrence. In winter, no insulation makes for a chilly stay and touching the walls almost makes one's hands freeze.

While there are plenty of families in the world who are in the same boat or who are homeless, these are far from ideal living situations. Yet, these are the situations that two financially-stricken families from the area have found themselves in.

Soon that will change.

No more will there be restless nights about whether or not the air they breathe in is safe.

No more will they need to wear winter jackets in their homes just to stay somewhat warm. And no more will they have to worry about getting wet inside when it rains.

Habitat for Humanity of Waukesha County is changing this. And the families - the Messplays and the Lormans - couldn't be more thankful that their fortunes are changing right before their eyes.

"This really has been a dream come true and I didn't imagine everything would be so wonderful," said Amanda Messplay, who has rented that rundown Waukesha duplex for the last five years with her husband, BC, and their five children.

Taking shape

James Lorman, who along with his wife Katie Rutkowski and their five children reside in that old trailer, added: "This pretty much means the world right now."

It means so much to them because they know that over the next three to four months they will be residing in an actual home with their families for the first time together.

"I can't wait to own it," Messplay said. "It's been a dream of mine to own a home and now we're going to have it."

The process is already well underway.

Construction began toward the end of May and throughout the hot summer volunteers for Habitat for Humanity have been on site in the Dunbar Oaks project in downtown Waukesha on Bethesda Court at the location of the old YWCA to make sure everything stayed on schedule.

The foundation was laid. The base of the house and the exterior were assembled. The roof began to look the part. It's been like putting together a puzzle. And all parties have been involved in putting this puzzle together. Both families are obligated to put in 500 sweat equity hours during the process.

Beat the deadline

"Habitat's mission is to help people," said Mary Jo Gdovin, who serves as the family selection chair for the Waukesha County chapter. "But we're not a handout organization. We made it clear that we expected them to be 100 percent involved in the project. This very much is a gift to them and they understand how fortunate they are."

"I could never have imagined this," Messplay said. "When I was at the house [earlier this summer] and the walls were being put up, I got overwhelmed. I started to cry. I could barely contain it. I was like, 'Oh my gosh this is our house.' Seeing it is just unbelievable. Everything is so nice. It's so exciting for all of us."

But for Messplay and her family, this almost didn't happen. Messplay said she mailed the application to the wrong address and by the time she received it back in the mail, the family only had one day before the application deadline. But with the help of the Habitat program, they sent it in and got it approved with one day to spare.

"If I had waited another day we could have got passed by," Messplay said. "I'm especially grateful."

A scary day

Messplay and her husband were both raised in nice homes with parents who provided for them. However, times have changed for the two.

"Sometimes things don't work out the way you plan," Messplay said.

Messplay works as a mortgage servicer for U.S. Bank in Brookfield, but her husband was let go from his job as a floor installer two years ago. BC picked up some hours at a local bar, but it's only part time. As a result, the financial difficulties have loomed large for the couple while trying to raise five young children: Ethan, 10, Ava, 8, Charlie, 5, Ella, 5, and Mason, 3.

"We tried to move, but with our family size it was impossible to buy a home on our own," Messplay said.

The same can be said about Lorman and his family. While their situations are different from the Messplays, the fears of staying safe and healthy in a not-so-comfortable environment have been similar.

Lorman and his family have lived in Eagle for the last nine years. He was on his way home from work when a tornado ripped through the city last summer, destroying 25 homes and damaging hundreds more with winds that reached 125 to 130 miles per hour. "That was scary," Lorman said. "It missed where we live by a mile and a half."

While a storm like that can take out the biggest of homes, the new home will provide a new comfort level for Lorman and his wife along with their children: Jena, 11, Joey 10, Emily, 7, Michael, 4, and Oliver, 1.

Good neighbors

The families, who will live side-by-side, have met numerous times and Messplay couldn't be more happy about who her neighbors will be. Coupled with the fact that both families have the same amount of children around the same age makes them relate even more.

"Families who have more kids understand people who also have more kids," Messplay said. "When we've done hours on the house together, I've met them and I've fallen in love with them. They're such down-to-earth people, so I couldn't have hand-picked better neighbors. They are the cherry on top in this whole process."

Gdovin is happy Habitat for Humanity can have a part in these families' lives.

"At Habitat, we are just ecstatic to meet the needs of families," Gdovin said. "There's a lot of low-grade housing out there and we want to provide good quality homes to hard working families.

"And these two families are very appreciative of the opportunities coming their way. This is going to change the lives of 10 children and four adults. It's an amazing process, and I feel blessed to be apart of it."

Habitat supports the families by giving them a blessing and a "wall-raising ceremony," which they did on Sunday for the Messplays.

At the time of the initial groundbreaking in May - which is when Lorman's family had the ceremony in their honor - the Messplays weren't selected yet by Habitat for Humanity. But with the house now taking shape and with members of Habitat for Humanity on hand, the ceremony was emotional for Amanda. It also made the whole process real for her.

"I feel like we're now part of this Habitat family," said Messplay, whose family is scheduled to move in early next year. "I didn't understand what that meant until the ceremony. It made me open up my eyes."

Lorman, too, gets emotional when talking about the house because, although there's still at least a few more months before he and his family can move in, the reality of it is setting in.

"It's real exciting," Lorman said. "It's kind of surreal. Looking at a big house, we're just like, 'Wow.' "

Home sweet home

Where: 317 and 319 Bethesda Court, Dunbar Oaks project

Who: Lorman family (Eagle) and the Messplay family (Waukesha)

How it happened: Habitat received a \$68,750 grant in December 2010 from Thrivent Financial for Lutheran

A good start: \$175,000 has been raised but they are still looking for more

To help: Call (262) 309-6025 or visit www.hfhwaukesha.org

Fast Fact: This is the 18th and 19th families helped by Waukesha's chapter since 1989

<http://www.waukeshanow.com/news/130226773.html>



2 projects give hope to needy in Waukesha, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

Laurel Walker | In My Opinion
Sept. 16, 2011

With the state of housing so distressful these days - home values dropping, foreclosures continuing, homelessness unceasing - hope glimmers in two Waukesha projects for the more vulnerable among us that will be celebrated this weekend.

One is a Habitat for Humanity duplex near downtown that will eventually house two families among the struggling class of working poor. Each family has five children who can't wait to play in the nearby park or make use of the library a couple blocks away.

Amanda and BC Messplay have asked their priest to bless their Habitat duplex Sunday as part of a "wall-raising" ceremony. The James Lorman and Katie Rutkowski family who share the other half of the duplex and were picked for ownership earlier had a groundbreaking ceremony with the Habitat community at their side a few months ago.

These are the lucky ones.

Mary Jo Gdovin, a Habitat board member who leads the homeowner selection committee, said the two families survived extensive screening and with one spouse working full time in each, still fall below the federal poverty limit.

"As little as they have, they're grateful for it," she said. One family lives in a donated old trailer with a mold problem in Eagle. The other lives in a poorly maintained rented duplex in Waukesha.

The couples will be responsible for home payments and maintenance, and they're already putting sweat equity into the abodes.

Amanda Messplay, a mortgage servicer whose husband was laid off as a floor installer but who tends bar part time to help with finances, said, "I'm really good with caulking, nailing and picking up rocks."

Working side-by-side with community volunteers is "incredible," she said. "I appreciate these people so much. They're not getting anything out of it. We're getting a house out of it. But they're just good people who want to help other people."

Other good persons can volunteer to help build, too. The agency's website - www.hfhwaukesha.org - allows volunteers to sign up for specific jobs and even in teams.

The duplex is in the 11-lot Dunbar Oaks subdivision on the defunct YWCA property. It came together through cooperation of the city and county with federal neighborhood stabilization funds that make the lots available for \$1.

The other project, celebrated with a groundbreaking Friday, is a pair of group homes being built in two west-side Waukesha subdivisions for St. Coletta of Wisconsin, a Jefferson-based residential and vocational service for those with developmental disabilities.

The two eight-bedroom houses will be home to 16 developmentally disabled adults who need supportive living arrangements as they strive for independence. Two of their families donated the cost of the homes and lots.

Some neighbors objected during the city approval process, but Ted Behncke, St. Coletta's vice president of operations, said their concerns are typical but unfounded.

"There's a commonly held perception that you're talking about pedophiles or criminals," he said. "These people have never done anything. They live very quiet lives and work hard."

Most of the 16 residents now live in rented group homes that the Waukesha Housing Authority can soon devote to others who need a helping hand with housing.

The line is long.

Call Laurel Walker at (262) 650-3183 or email lwalker@journalsentinel.com

<http://www.jsonline.com/news/waukesha/130000908.html>

Pregnancy Support Connection to Celebrate 25th Anniversary at May 5 Gala, *WaukeshaNow*

By Rick Moon
March 25, 2010 |

Waukesha, Wis. – The aura will be glamorous and the atmosphere festive, but the focus will be on nurturing healthy babies and young mothers May 5 at a 25th Anniversary Gala to benefit Pregnancy Support Connection Inc.

The red-carpet event will celebrate and support Pregnancy Support Connection's longstanding outreach to young women facing crisis pregnancies. Featuring a "Retro Hollywood" theme with star-studded trappings, the gala opens at 5:30 p.m. at the Country Springs Hotel, 2810 Golf Road.

Pregnancy Support Connection – formerly known as UP Connection – is the only organization in Waukesha County providing comprehensive services, intervention and counseling to help

women deliver healthy babies and become stable, self-sufficient parents. The organization's motto, "4 Safe Babies," reflects its goal of helping mothers and babies develop strong, nurturing relationships and chart a successful path in life.

"Our mission has evolved beyond dealing with the immediate situations faced by these women and young children, to addressing the root causes that are tied to crisis pregnancies," said Nancy Major, Executive Director of Pregnancy Support Connection. "We are working to stop the cycle of abuse and poverty that so many of these women come from, and focus on creating healthy living environments that ensure a positive future for them and their children."

Pregnancy Support Connection provided services to more than 1,000 people in 2009. More than 85 percent of the young, pregnant women it served were victims of childhood sexual or physical abuse or neglect. Ninety-five percent were identified as living in extreme poverty.

The May 5 event is Pregnancy Support Connection's biggest annual fund-raiser. The gala will be highlighted by professional dancers, big band music and celebrity impersonators. Attendees can bid on a wide variety of silent auction items, plus enjoy a gourmet dinner and fine wines.

More information about the event is available by calling (262) 524-4120 or visiting www.pregnancy-support.org.

"This event will recognize how Pregnancy Support Connection has helped so many young women and their children over the past quarter century," said Brad Schimel, Waukesha County District Attorney and President of the PSC Board of Directors. "We want everybody to enjoy themselves, knowing that their support is directly helping many young women get through a vulnerable, often frightening time and create a better life for themselves and their babies."

<http://www.waukeshanow.com/userstoriessubmitted/communityevents/89117077.html>

Waukesha County seeks U.S. funds for shared homeownership, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

By Darryl Enriquez, Journal Sentinel, Inc
March 24, 2009

Waukesha - Borrowing the concept of shared ownership from the United Kingdom, Waukesha County officials are hoping to spur affordable housing and move foreclosed homes off the market in a single stroke.

Waukesha County and City of Waukesha officials are asking for more than \$800,000 in federal housing money to quickly purchase, rehabilitate and sell distressed properties, all at appraised value.

Buyers would have ownership interest equal to the amount of financing for which they are able to qualify, with a nonprofit agency holding the remaining ownership share.

Federal funding is being pursued through a joint city/county application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Neighborhood Stabilization Program. Applications are reviewed and administered by the state.

The nationwide rise in home foreclosures led to the availability of federal dollars to salvage housing markets.

In Waukesha County, 631 properties were scheduled for sheriff's sales last year, up 73% from 364 in 2007, Sheriff's Department records say. Waukesha led the list with 150 properties on the auction block, followed by Menomonee Falls with 57, Brookfield with 55, and Muskego and New Berlin each with 42.

The stabilization program allows local governments to acquire, redevelop and sell foreclosed properties that might otherwise become abandoned and cause blight. The purpose is to prevent the decline of neighborhoods and home values.

Although the program is directed at acquiring single-family foreclosures, it could return a building divided into multiple living units back to a single residence.

Glen Lewinski, Waukesha County community development coordinator, said the effort will require marketing to a public that's not accustomed to the notion of shared ownership.

How it works

The minimum amount of ownership allowed usually is 50%. In the United Kingdom, resident owners pay fees to the nonprofit partners for the portion of the home they do not own. The fees should sufficiently cover costs incurred by nonprofits and build reserves for unexpected expenses.

The resident owner pays all maintenance expenses and property taxes. Residents can buy additional ownership shares as their finances improve.

If approved, the local program would start with four homes, locating one potential buyer below 50% of the area median income, two between 50% and 80% and one at 80% to 120%, with the focus on properties in the city of Waukesha. If the program grows, officials hope it will spur private financing to purchase additional foreclosed homes.

If the shared ownership strategy isn't accepted by the home-buying public, the money could be used for more conventional financing strategies, such as a lease-to-purchase model, Lewinski said.

<http://www.jsonline.com/news/waukesha/41793947.html>.

New dental clinic aims to give area children a little more to smile about, *WaukeshaNow*

By JILL RICK
April 10, 2008

About 10 years ago, public health and parish nurses in Waukesha County began to notice a disquieting trend among the children they encountered. More and more kids were showing signs of severe dental disease, and to make things worse, it was difficult to find dentists willing to treat the children, many of who came from low-income families.

The apparent need for better dental care in children was soon reinforced by two Wisconsin-based studies. Over 2001-02, a survey of the dental health of Wisconsin third-graders showed that 30 percent had untreated dental decay. In 2003, a survey of preschool-aged children enrolled in Head Start programs found that 24 percent of the children surveyed showed signs of untreated dental issues.

In April 2005, a coalition of community groups, social service agencies and health experts came together to study the need for increased access to dental care in Waukesha County, a process that started with a community oral health assessment and ended with the ambitious goal of creating a dental clinic to serve the needs of low-income and uninsured children and adults in Waukesha County.

Scheduled to open in early May in the Barstow Building in downtown Waukesha, the Waukesha County Community Dental Clinic will be the first clinic dedicated to serving low-income and uninsured patients in the county.

The clinic's executive director, Renee Ramirez, has lived and volunteered in Waukesha County for 22 years, but even she was surprised to learn that one of the largest unmet needs of county residents was access to dental care.

"I thought I knew about what's going on in Waukesha County," Ramirez said. "I knew that there was poverty, but I didn't realize that dental needs were such a problem."

With a primary goal of increasing access to dental care and elevating the oral healthcare of the low-income population, the clinic's services will include eliminating pain and acute oral disease for adults and children, providing diagnostic and preventive services for children and offering limited, basic restorative services for children.

Clinic services won't be free, but patients without insurance and who fall below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines will be charged based on a sliding fee scale, with no patient paying more than \$25 per visit. The clinic will employ a full-time dentist, hygienist and dental

assistants, and will also utilize the services of other volunteer dentists as well as dental hygiene students from Waukesha County Technical College.

The clinic's organizers have spent the past few years raising money to fund the project, and recently met their goal of raising \$1.6 million to pay for the clinic's equipment, renovation and operating expenses. While the coalition received a few large grants, including a \$350,000 donation from Delta Dental, much of the money raised has come from individual donors.

"I'm energized by the scope of the community involvement," Ramirez said.

Clinic organizers hope to serve about 2,500 patients during this first year of operation, Ramirez said. The county's Hispanic population will be a particular focus of the clinic, which expects to draw patients through referrals by social service agencies such as La Casa de Esperanza and by local medical clinics.

While the clinic will be a first for Waukesha County, clinics dedicated to serving the low-income population are not rare, with several clinics in Milwaukee County, one in Jefferson County and one in Appleton serving three counties, Ramirez said.

"It's not just a Waukesha County problem. It's a state problem, and a national crisis," she said.

For more information about the Waukesha County Community Dental Clinic, call (262) 928-7407 or visit the clinic's web site at www.wccdentalclinic.org.

<http://www.waukeshanow.com/news/39062237.html>