

# 2018 Annual Report

## Milwaukee City/County Commission on Supportive Housing

The Milwaukee City/County Commission on Supportive Housing was formed in 2007 through actions of both the Milwaukee Common Council and the Milwaukee County Board. The Commission held its inaugural meeting in January 2008.

The enabling legislation established the following mission for the Commission:

*...serve as a community infrastructure with the institutional commitment and the financial resources necessary for providing safe, affordable and accessible housing options with supportive services for persons with mental illness or other special needs. The commission shall establish goals and benchmarks for the effort to address housing needs for persons with mental illness and other special needs in the community, and monitor progress and hold the community accountable for meeting these goals.*

Under the leadership of Chair Jim Tarantino (Capri Communities), the commission met once in 2018. Others who served on the Commission during 2018 are Suzanne Breier (private citizen), vice chair; Paula John (Erica P. John Fund); David Brown (Community Advocates); Tony Perez (Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee); Steve Mahan (City of Milwaukee Community Development Grants Administration); Matt Melendes (Heartland Housing); Jim Marks (United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties), and Ald. Khalif Rainey (Milwaukee Common Council).

The Commission receives staff support from the Milwaukee Dept. of City Development and the Milwaukee County Housing Division.

### Key supportive housing accomplishments in 2018

#### St. Anthony's Apartments

The redevelopment of the former St. Anthony's Hospital as 60 permanent supportive housing units for individuals at risk of homelessness was completed in late 2018. The project, at 1004 N. 10<sup>th</sup> St., was developed by Heartland Housing in collaboration with Capuchin Community Services (CCS).





The apartment building adjoins St. Benedict's Church, which has long been the site of the St. Ben's Community Meal Program operated by CCS. The development also creates indoor waiting space for the hundreds of individuals who are served daily by the meal program, along with showers, laundry machines, a health clinic operated by Ascension Health, classrooms and homeless outreach services provided by CCS. A Milwaukee County Day Reporting Center for non-violent offenders will also be located at the building, and on-site supportive services will be provided by Justice Point, Inc.

Both Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee provided financial support to the development. Also providing financial assistance to the project are the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority, Zilber Family Foundation, Federal Home Loan Bank and Capuchin Community Services.

Hundreds of individual donors also supported the project. These included Tony Busalacchi (pictured above), a Milwaukee artist who was born at St. Anthony's Hospital. Busalacchi held a sale of his art and gave the proceeds to the project, generating more than \$20,000 to help furnish apartments at the building.

### **Victory Manor**

The newly-constructed Victory Manor, within the Westlawn Gardens public housing development at 68<sup>th</sup> and Silver Spring, opened in December. Victory Manor is designed as an integrated supportive housing development with 15 of its 60 units targeted for residents with disabilities who will receive services through a partnership with the Center for Veterans Issues Ltd. On-site supportive services include case management, counseling (alcohol and other drug abuse, life skills and mental health), education, training and employment assistance, benefits assistance, temporary financial assistance, peer-to-peer counseling, referrals, and on-site recreational activities to compliment the services available at the Silver Spring Neighborhood Center.



### **Clarke Square Apartments**

Tax credit financing awarded in 2018 will facilitate the development of Clarke Square Apartments, a 40-unit, two-building complex at 2331 W. Vieau Pl. and 2330 W. Mineral St. Half of the units in the project will provide supportive services, including 10 designated for youth at risk of homelessness as they turn 18 and age out of foster care.



Development partners are Cardinal Capital and Journey House, a non-profit agency that, for 50 years, has assisted families on Milwaukee's near south side to move out of poverty by offering adult education, youth development, workforce readiness, and family engagement. Construction is anticipated to be completed in spring 2020.

### **Soldier's Home Apartments**

Work is expected to begin in March 2019 to transform several historic Milwaukee Soldier's Home buildings into permanent supportive housing for veterans and their families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

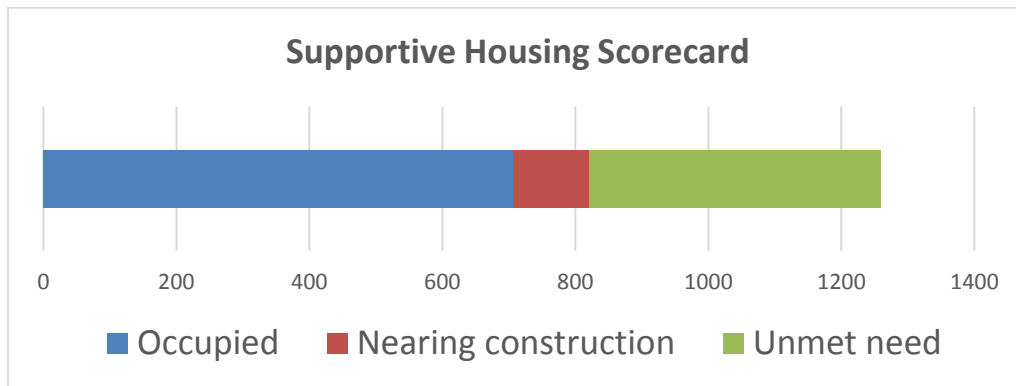


The buildings are located on the grounds of the Zablocki Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and were built originally to treat disabled Civil War veterans. Old Main Hall (pictured at left), constructed in 1869 but vacant since 1989, will be converted to 80 one- and two-bedroom apartments, opening in 2020. A future phase of the project will create 14 single-room-occupancy units and restore duplexes on the property. The Alexander Co. is developing the project. Management and supportive services will be provided by the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee.

Construction of the project, originally expected to begin in 2018, was delayed as the developer launched a successful \$3 million fund-raising campaign to support the project.

## Supportive housing scorecard for 2018

Milwaukee County's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness, published in 2010, estimated that Milwaukee County needs 1,260 units of permanent supportive housing. The chart below tracks progress in developing new supportive housing units. Counting the 821 units that were either occupied or nearing construction by the end of 2018, our community is more than 60 percent of the way to that goal.



## Partnership to End Chronic Homelessness

The Partnership to End Chronic Homelessness, announced by County Executive Chris Abele and Mayor Tom Barrett in June 2015, provides significant resources to address the needs of individuals whose circumstances meet the federal definition of chronic homelessness. These individuals generally have a disability and have lived continuously for a significant period of time in a shelter or a place not meant for human habitation, such as an outdoor encampment or a vacant building.

The Partnership, which pools resources from Milwaukee City and County government and the City and County public housing authorities, follows the "housing first" model. This concept posits that the lack of a permanent place to live is the single most important problem that must be solved for homeless individuals.

Over time, Milwaukee County will identify a number of small apartments that can provide housing for up to 300 chronically homeless individuals identified by a County outreach team and the Milwaukee Police Dept. Rent support for these individuals is supplied by rent vouchers issued by the City and County housing authorities, along with City HOME funds. Housed individuals are offered case management services provided by non-profit agencies including the Salvation Army, Guest House, Hope House, Community Advocates and Pathfinders for Youth.

By the end of 2018, several hundred chronically homeless individuals had been housed and voluntarily accepted case management services. 99% of the individuals who have been housed to date are still in their apartments. The use of County employees who serve as housing navigators has contributed to the high retention rate. The navigators serve as intermediaries to assist both housing first tenants and landlords to resolve problems.

Milwaukee County has established an endowment to raise private funds to continue to support the housing first model. The Greater Milwaukee Foundation serves as the fiscal agent for the endowment; funds may be used for rent assistance, case management, and employment help.

For more information, consult the initiative's web site: [www.housingfirstmilwaukee.com](http://www.housingfirstmilwaukee.com).