

Higher Ground

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Meeting Notes 05/25/16

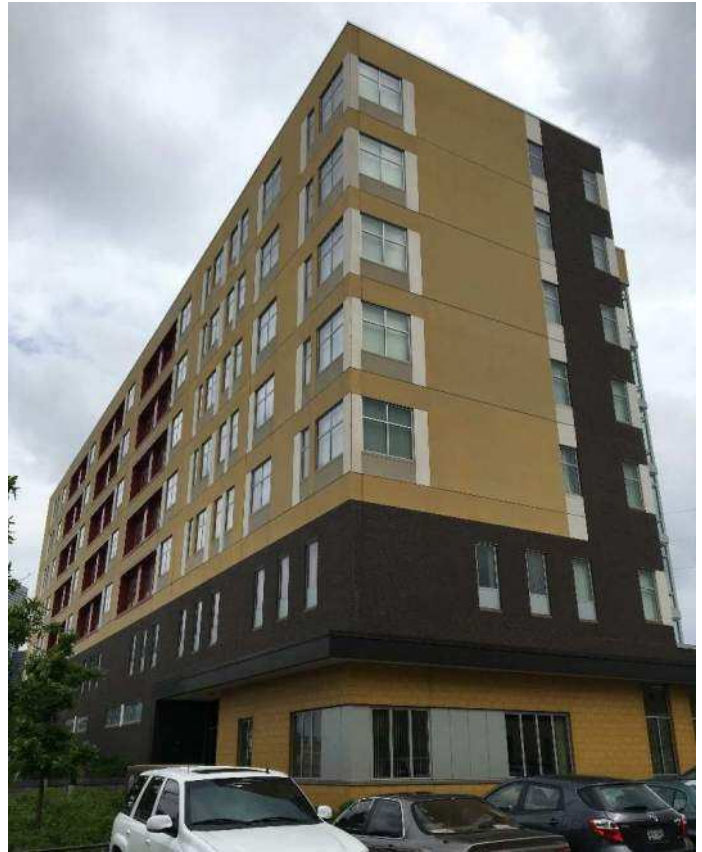
- I. Located in downtown Minneapolis the building is an “Everything in one spot” which offers a variety of resources and levels of shelter in one location. Natural progression of housing types as you go up in floors. Shelter only serves single men.
 - a. An additional shelter, Higher Ground St. Paul, is based on this model and is under construction across from their existing Dorothy Day drop-in Center facility.
 - i. St. Paul’s Higher Ground will have 193 SRO units, and accommodate 280 in its shelter
 - ii. The new shelter will accommodate both men and women, but in separate areas of the building
- II. First Floor Shelter – **120 beds** with capacity for additional 51 mats on floors
 - a. Exterior queuing area under canopy at front entrance. Bike storage in courtyard. Separate entry location for access to housing floors of the complex.
 - b. Once you enter the facility, you cannot exit for the evening.
 - c. Centralized staff desk provides visual access to shelter, entry and to the lobby for the housing levels.
 - d. Plenty of natural daylight fills the open sleeping spaces.
 - e. Third party medical facility located off the entry across from the main staff desk prior to entry into the shelter.
 - f. Meals are prepared by Catholic Charities and transported to the kitchen where they are served to the guests.
 - g. Bunk beds- Guests store belongings on a shelf of custom-made bunk beds. Each bunk bed has a power pole for outlets top and bottom. Solid panel between lower bunks for privacy.
 - h. Bedding is changed each day and stored in shelving behind overhead doors just off the dining area.

- i. Minimal services, with no lounge; Higher Ground does not want to encourage guests to stay for long periods of time – goal of progression to upper levels. There is currently no limit on length of stay per guest.
 - j. Higher Ground notes that bunk rooms should be open spaces, in order to maintain clearer sightlines for staff
 - k. Open floor area in bunkroom used for intoxicated guests that will sleep on mats on the floor.
 - l. Dining area contains tables, which can be folded up and moved out of the way to provide additional space for sleeping mats to handle the increase in guests.
 - m. Interior smoking rooms
- III. Pay to Stay Option – Second Floor Intent is to provide a few more luxury than what the shelter provides as encouragement.
- a. \$7 per day, or \$42 for the week if paid in advance
 - b. Includes a “pay out” program in which guests are encouraged to seek more permanent forms of housing.
 - i. The money they paid in can be “paid back” up to \$500 for a security deposit or first & last month’s rent
 - c. Contains 80 beds, each with their own locker. Open room concept for observation but provides half walls for bunks to anchor against.
 - d. All guests in this shelter component must be sober
 - e. Guests keep their bed and bedding for the duration of their stay. Spaces become more personalized
 - f. Access to their own lounge, open all night
 - g. Access to the computer lab
 - h. Separate showers and bath
- IV. Offices – Administrative offices, also located on the 2nd floor
- V. There are 5 staff members total overnight monitoring both the 1st and 2nd floors
- VI. Single Room Occupancy units –3rd-6th levels – similar to traditional dorm, where guests have their own room but share common restrooms, showers, and kitchen
- a. These levels and above have an entry separate from the 1st and 2nd levels, but observed from the central staff desk
 - b. Each level has its own lounge

- VII. Efficiency Units (Studios) – Highest level of service, located on the top floor, level 7
 - a. Guests each have their own studio apartment, including kitchen and bath
 - b. Higher level of privacy and separation
 - c. This level also has its own lounge
- VIII. Smoking room located inside the building and ventilated
- IX. Higher Ground has a Good Neighbor policy, which all guests agree to and sign
- X. Guests and residents are issued cards upon entry to the facility. Cards are used for tracking purposes and are scanned upon each entry for monitoring and security.
- XI. As a guest moves up to a new level of service, as from shelter to Pay to Stay, they feel they gain respect from peers, and it gives them a sense of pride or accomplishment
- XII. Security – All guests are wanded upon entry, there is security presence at check-in and security conducts overnight patrols
 - a. Staff area, including intake and monitoring, is located centrally, with views to the shelter entry, shelter bunk room and separate entry for SRO and efficiency units
- XIII. Funding – Catholic charities make up 75% of their revenue



Entrance courtyard with lockers and bike parking



Exterior Image of building



Canopy at entrance to shelter on right



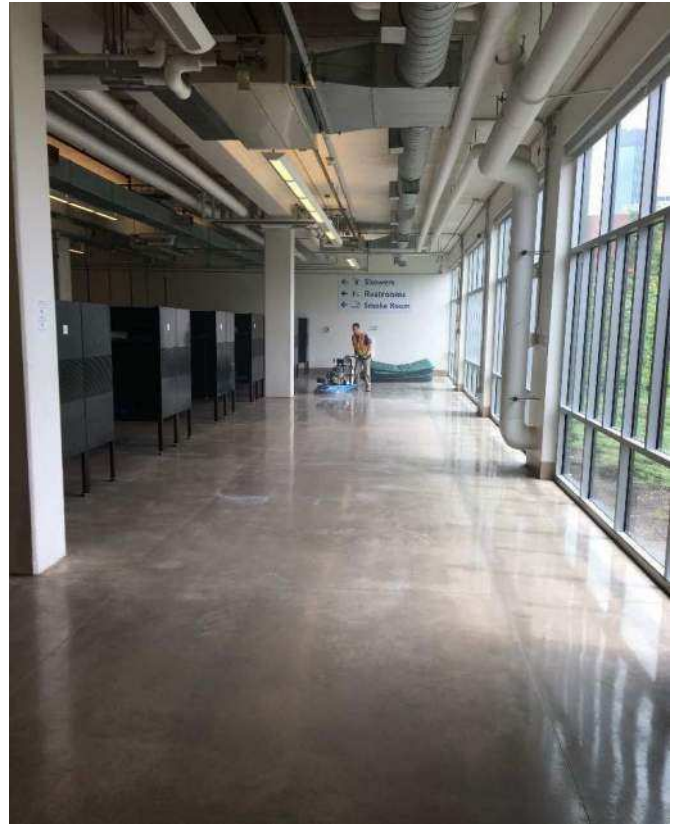
Queuing area to shelter



Separate entrance to housing floors above



Staff desk at shelter entry



Floor space for shelter minus sleeping mats



Custom bunk beds in shelter



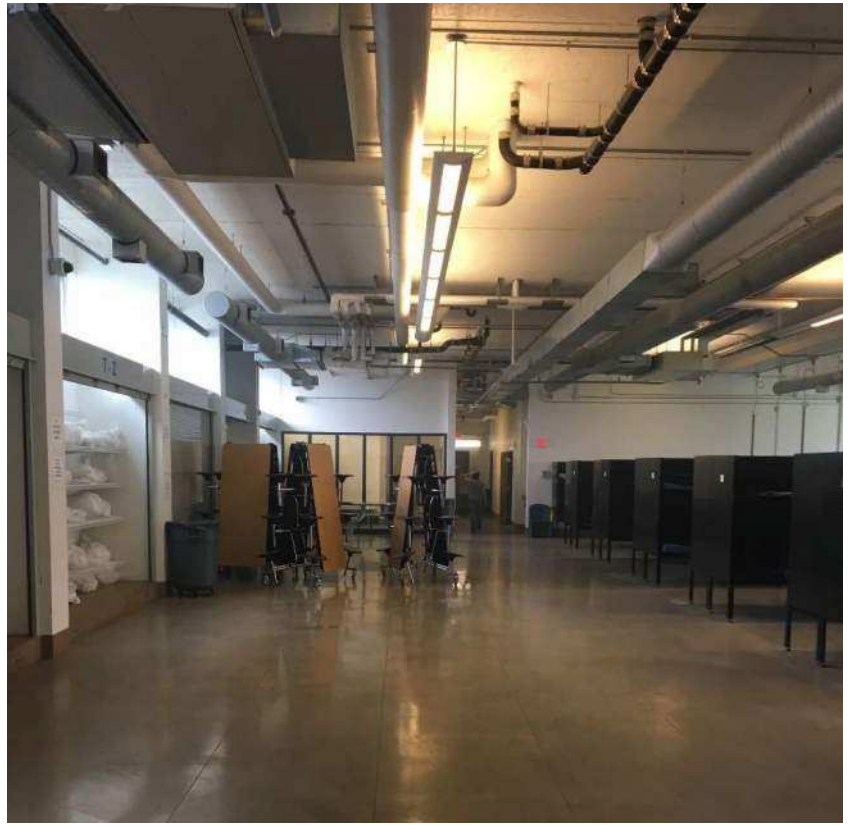
Counter for meal program



Staff desk access to shelter upon entry



Bathroom stalls



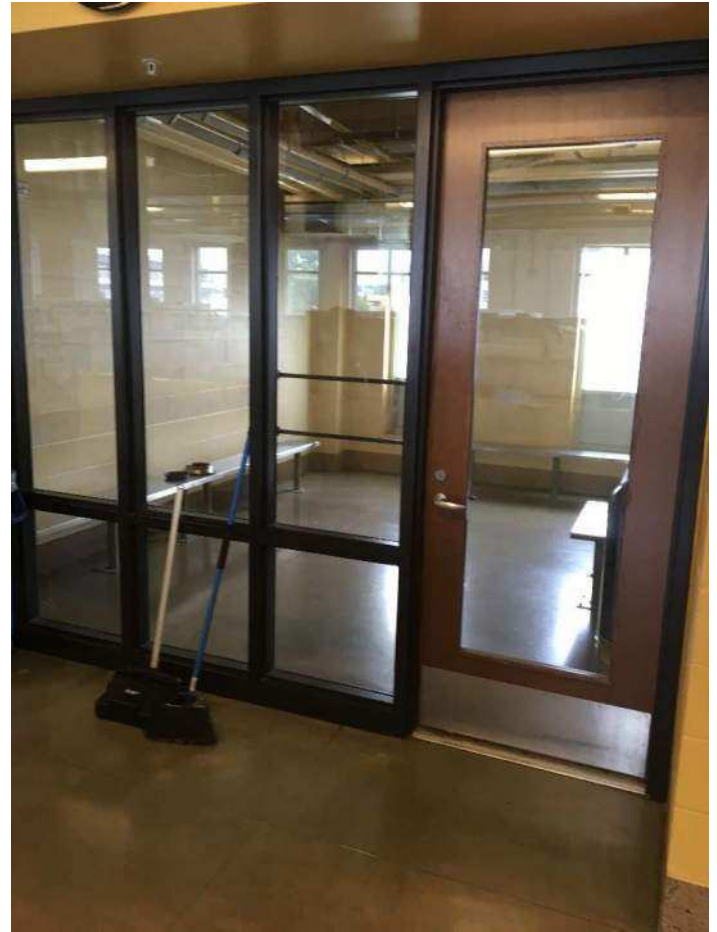
Dining area with movable tables for additional sleeping area



Open area with bunks and private locker space for Pay to Stay program
Higher Ground Shelter - Minneapolis



Lounge spaces on SRO levels



Interior smoking rooms



Lounge space for Pay to Stay guests

Rockford Rescue Mission

Rockford, Illinois

Meeting Notes 07/08/16

- I. BASIC OPERATION:
 - a. Summary: Single location serves Men's Shelter, Women and Women with children Shelter, along with Men's Recovery and Women's Recovery Centers, and Education and Daycare Center, all with distinct entrances
 - b. Crisis Shelter Goals and Criteria: Once accepted to the shelter, guests may stay up to 7 days, during which time they must connect with a case manager to outline their goals and work constructively on their situation.
 - i. If they continue to meet regularly with case workers, the period of stay is not limited, but, if they do not meet with case workers, they may no longer stay at the shelter
 - ii. Goal is upward mobility, not just shelter. Guests must prove they are ready and willing to make progress
 - c. Guest Population:
 - i. Many guests and residents are brought to the shelter by police, with the women's shelter getting 1 police drop-off per day
 - ii. Furlough Guests: required by a judge to go through the recovery program instead of jail time; to serve as a furlough facility, the mission must follow certain sanctions and requirements
 - iii. Up to 30% of guests have strong mental health issues. If individuals are a harm to themselves or others, they are referred to a nearby medical facility that has temporary facilities that can better provide for those individuals
 - d. Staff: Rockford Rescue Mission has 45-50 staff at the facility at any given time during the weekday, including administrative staff, with a total of 50 staff
 - i. 15 Staff total are specific to running the various programs & dining services
 - e. In the course of their recent addition/remodel, completed in May, they have found that there is a strong connection between the building layout and what services/character of care they can offer
- II. FUNDING:
 - a. Relationship between Funding and Building Program: Rockford Rescue Mission has found that by providing certain facilities, like a daycare or classrooms or resource rooms, additional "wrap-around" funding can be accessed, and in turn, more services can be provided to the homeless population
 - b. Through providing data on its guests through the Continuum of Care, Rockford can access additional funding.
 - i. Rockford collects information from every guest on who they are, how long they've been homeless, and attempts to get to the root of the factors that led to their situation, from financial management, abuse, etc.

- ii. The Continuum of Care, also allows the shelter to refer guests to other agencies or community services that can help, if the Rockford Shelter can't meet all of an individual's needs
- iii. This teamwork between agencies can also limit the cost of providing city/community resources where other agencies may be more suited
- c. Funding options are limited as a faith based organization, but community organizations will be eligible for state and federal funding, granted they adhere to anti-discriminatory, ADA, and other regulations

III. SHELTER COMPONENTS:

- a. Administrative Offices
 - i. Located on the 2nd floor
 - ii. Offices for program managers, grant writers, etc.
- b. Education Center
 - i. Computers and classrooms available to guests, residents and community members to develop computer skills, GED completion, and obtain basic vocational training or resume development
 - ii. Classrooms offer opportunity to provide drug education classes, relationship rebuilding classes, and spiritual life classes among others
 - iii. Library holding donated books and other materials
 - iv. Vocational training and interview practice/meeting room
 - v. Nutrition Classes
 - vi. Counseling volunteer office
- c. Medical Clinic: All care donated
 - i. Waiting area
 - ii. Dentist (1 suite)
 - iii. Chiropractor (1 suite)
 - iv. Doctors & Nurses + Nurse trainee program (2 medical suites)
 - v. Instruction in using urgent care facilities instead of the ER to obtain medical care not offered at the clinic – reduce costs to city/community
 - vi. If sign up is not filled by guests and residents, clinic is opened up to community
- d. Dining/Kitchen
 - i. Full commercial kitchen serving breakfast lunch and dinner, by center staff, with some resident responsibilities
 - ii. Two mealtimes, one for Crisis Center guests and community members, and one for Recovery Center residents, both genders eating together
 - iii. Full capacity used on major holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas. (400-450 people)
 - iv. Average of 180 guests on a day to day basis, with 400+ meals served per day
 - v. All people coming to dine are checked in at the end of a long interior hallway, out of the elements. This information is shared with the Continuum of Care database
 - vi. Once inside, guests staying at the Crisis Center can check in to intake from the dining hall, eliminating an exterior queue for the Crisis Center

- e. Crisis Center: made up of separate Men's and Women's areas, each with their own entry and located in separate parts of the building
 - i. General Guest Restrictions:
 - 1. Those convicted of arson or sexual misconduct are not permitted
 - 2. Those seeking shelter while under the influence of illegal substances are referred to the detox facility at the nearby hospital
 - 3. Those orderly guests under the influence of alcohol are permitted shelter, but are accommodated in the respective day resource room with mats on the floor, directly monitored by staff.
 - 4. Those rowdy or disruptive inebriated individuals are turned away
 - ii. Men's and Women's Crisis Center needs are mostly the same. Majority of difference is in capacity and the women with children bunk area
 - iii. Separate Intake for each gender Crisis Center:
 - 1. Intake room/staff office has direct visibility into day resource room/lobby, restroom area, and bunk room, and contains the staff restroom and guest belongings storage room
 - 2. Intake Activities/Tasks
 - a. Towels are distributed and belongings placed in bins at pass through window facing restrooms; all guests are given scrubs and shower shoes to wear while clothing is in hotbox
 - b. All guest belongings, including cell phones, are placed in a bin with their designated bunk number and stored in a room within the intake area to prevent theft, spread of bedbugs, etc. and guests are checked for prohibited substances
 - i. Removal of belongings and cell phones seems to cut down on guests queuing for specific beds
 - ii. Guests are allowed to bring one item with them into the bunk room, excluding cell phones, to reduce re-traumatizing guests, while ensuring safety and the security of their belongings
 - c. All guests are required to shower, and submit their belongings to the hotbox
 - iv. Bunkroom: Each bunk is assigned a morning chore, including making the bed, and another cleaning task, associating responsibility for staying in the shelter
 - 1. Guests staying multiple days retain the same bunk throughout
 - v. Restrooms:
 - 1. Toilet stalls are divided by solid walls with a curtain at the front to prevent guests from cordoning themselves off or locking another guest in.
 - a. These curtains do suffer abuse, but they are cheap to replace
 - 2. Gang shower located at the end, divided into 3 shower "areas", no curtains
 - vi. One small infirmary room, aka Safe Room, with either adjacent or attached full bath is located in each Crisis Center

- vii. Day Resource Rooms: Containing TV, Games, etc. available throughout the day, which eliminates outdoor queuing. Surrounded by easily accessible and approachable case manager offices and other staff rooms
 - 1. This arrangement has proven to provide a more relational interaction between staff and guests
- viii. Case Manager Offices located on each side of Day Resource Room
 - 1. Case Managers available to assist guests with counseling, housing, social services, etc.
 - 2. This arrangement allows staff and program managers to listen in on the interactions or problems that develop so they can better support those in need
 - 3. Locating all staff offices together, as in the new women's crisis wing, creates perceived barriers to resources for guests, as it can be intimidating
- ix. Women's Shelter (Completed in May): Specific Concerns/Elements
 - 1. Houses both women and women with children, 60 guest capacity
 - 2. Women with children have their own area within the bunk room, designated by blue bunks
 - 3. Often children make up 40% of the guest population in the Women's crisis center, but they must be 11 or younger
 - 4. Safety is key, especially for the Women's Crisis and Recovery Centers
 - a. All doors leading to and from have coded keypads
 - b. 85% of homeless women have suffered domestic or sexual abuse, and in many cases the perpetrators attempt to reconnect with their victims
 - 5. Quiet sitting room available off the day resource room, which will contain lockers for items that need to be accessed throughout the day, like purses, etc.
 - 6. Salon Room in the process of completion
 - 7. Staff breakroom with kitchenette and commercial refrigerator provided
 - 8. Hotbox room heated up to 150 degrees for 2 hrs each day, all guests are required to have their belongings treated
- x. Men's Shelter: Specific Concerns/Elements
 - 1. **80 beds**
 - 2. Duplicate/B Side - space available for additional bunk room, showers and day resource room. Currently unused
- xi. Resource Center, with its own exterior entry
 - 1. Contains Day care room w/future day care provider to organize activities for the children
 - a. Attached study room and children's bathroom
 - 2. Classroom set up for video classes and life skills classes
 - 3. Resource Rooms for meetings discussing housing options, medical needs, education, and connecting individuals to local services
 - 4. Bike Storage Room

5. Mechanical Room

f. Recovery Center

i. Men's Recovery Center: Houses 50 Total Residents

1. Residents are housed in interior rooms of different sizes reflecting the stage of the program they're completing, from individual rooms with their own bathroom, 2-man room, 4-man room, and 6 man rooms
2. Recreation room with TV, Game tables, soft seating
3. Shared bath/showers
4. Resident Advocate Offices
5. Laundry
6. Fitness room
7. Waiting room for families

ii. Men's Transition Center, Same as Women's Transition Center

1. Individual rooms along the exterior wall for residents who have completed the recovery program, and are working or completing their education.
2. 15% of their income goes toward their housing cost, 85% is saved; Rockford staff work with residents and local banks to set up savings accounts
3. Transition Residents may stay up to one year after completing their program
4. Understanding that addiction recovery is a 3+ year process and that even after the transition stay, they will still need resources to aid in furthering their recovery

iii. Women's Recovery Center: Houses 48 Residents

1. Family rooms along one side of square layout, with large skylight and attached bath but no shower
2. Transition rooms opposite the family rooms, each with their own shower and bath
3. 2-occupant resident rooms with adjacent jack and jill bath, shared with another 2-occupant room
 - a. Women residents go through the same program as the men, but always share room with one other, instead of 6-man, 4-man, 2-man process on men's side
4. Intake: Staff office serving both as reception and for one-on-one meetings
 - a. Supply room adjacent for donated items like shampoo, toiletries and other needs
5. Large Classroom
6. Children's Playroom
7. Art Room, crafts and sewing
8. Fitness Room
9. Central but isolated Day room with attached restrooms

- a. Complaint by program managers that this area, along with classroom, playroom, art, and fitness rooms was too disconnected from staff and residents, and lost the relational feel the previous Women's center had

10. Small kitchen for resident's use

11. Laundry

12. Drug testing room – Drug tests are performed at random intervals or for suspected use

13. Staff lunch room

14. Resident Advocate offices

- iv. Recovery Center has an extremely high 40% completion rate. Residents may always re-enter the program in the case of relapse

IV. CAFÉ

- a. Opened in 2008 to provide vocational training to recovery residents
- b. A good number of residents working at the café are hired at local businesses because they are already trained
- c. Rockford Rescue Mission is looking at increasing vocational training options by working with local businesses to provide 6 month internships, and provide work experience residents can put on their resume

V. TRANSGENDER

- i. National statistics show population ratio is approximately 1 female transgender guest to 9 male transgender guests
- ii. With over 85% of female guests having experienced sexual abuse, accommodating transgender guests in the same space can trigger fear & conflict
 - 1. In some cases, transgender guests are given hotel vouchers
- iii. Each Crisis center, men's and women's, has a small infirmary room (also called a safe room) with two beds, which are sometimes/could be used to shelter transgender guests
 - 1. The men's infirmary has an attached full bath, and the women's has a full bath just across the hall
- iv. Guests come from all backgrounds and there is no way to predict how guests may react to a transgender individual.
 - 1. Significant monitoring is needed to ensure the safety of all guests
- v. Whether the program/shelter receives government funding has an impact on what accommodations can or must be made for the transgender population
- vi. Transgender guests are often in need of significant time with case workers
- vii. It is noted that the Rockford Shelter has had only a few transgender guests, one of which was provided shelter, but did not show for social service appointment that was arranged within the typical 7 day period, and shelter was subsequently withheld
- viii. Their experience has been that accommodating a transgender guest in the transition process is difficult for the individual and their physical and mental safety, as well as staff and other guests

- ix. Each transgender guest is taken on a case by case basis to determine the accommodations that would best ensure everyone's safety and needs

VI. ADDITIONAL REFERENCES:

- a. Mel Trotter Mission, Grand Rapids Michigan; has addressed many of the things Rockford is in the process of doing
 - i. Has a very successful collaboration with the community
 - ii. Contains 8 beds reserved for the publicly inebriated
 - iii. Graded program serves varying levels of need, from those between jobs to those suffering from mental health issues
 - iv. Guests are issued key cards that provide them access to different areas of the shelter that serve their level of need or progress
 - v. Fresh Start or Restart shelter in addition to Crisis shelter lets guests know that there is a way out of homelessness



Main entrance to building reception and staff offices



Entrance to Women's crisis center on left and Women's recovery wing on right



Entrance to Men's crisis center and exterior smoking area behind fences



Staff desk at Men's crisis entry



Guests secure storage area at staff desk



Men's crisis center bunk area with observation from staff



Men's crisis center bunk area



Men's shower area



Men's common area with Case managers offices



View of community kitchen



Main dining hall



Entrance into dining hall for community



Teaching classroom



Computer resource center for all guest



Daycare facility



Dentist services



Workout facility



Women's crisis center entry and staff reception with common area in foreground



Women's crisis staff area with view into bunk area



Women's crisis lounge with safe room beyond



Staff view to women's showers and bathrooms



Pest control storage at women's crisis center



Staff view to women's crisis entry



Men's recovery program sleeping unit – 6 person



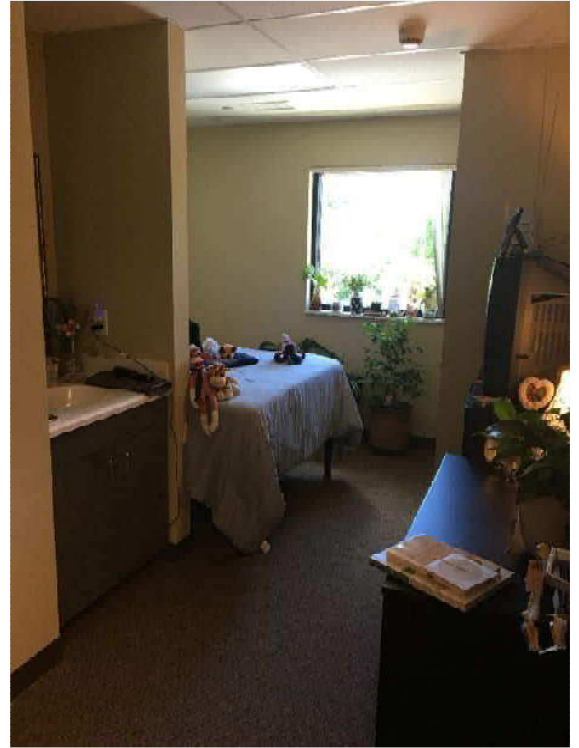
Women's recovery sleeping unit – 2 person



Women's recovery room with children



Women's recovery wing common lounge



Women's recovery sleeping unit – 1 person



Women's recovery wing craft room



Women's recovery wing entry corridor with reception