

**Men's Shelter Operator
Request for Qualifications (RFQ# 11053-2022)**

PART 1: AGENCY INFORMATION

Applicant Organization:	Porchlight, Inc.
Contact Person Name and Title:	Karla Thennes, Executive Director
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Federal Tax ID or EIN:	39-1579521
SAM/UEI Number:	608303822
Legal Status:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Liability Company <input type="checkbox"/> General Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Sole Proprietor <input type="checkbox"/> Unincorporated Association <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Tax Exempt Status:	501 (c)(3) since 1987

PART 2: AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL

This application is submitted by the undersigned with the full knowledge and consent of the governing body of this organization and is, to the undersigned's best knowledge, accurate in all details. The undersigned also certifies having reviewed the terms and conditions stated in the RFP.

<i>Karla Thennes</i>	7/14/2022
Signature	Date

Name of Partner Agencies
Catalyst for Change
Nurse Disrupted, Inc.
MACH OneHealth
Kabba Recovery Services
WisCARES
VA Homeless Outreach

PART 3: AGENCY QUALIFICATION

1. Agency Experience and Capacity (50 points)

- 1) Describe relevant experience your agency and partners have serving this population. In particular describe experiences related to operating an overnight shelter, managing day-time services and providing, managing or coordinating housing-focused support services. Indicate the span of time this experience covers and the approximate number of persons or households served.

Porchlight is uniquely qualified to operate the permanent purpose-built shelter. Porchlight is the original and only operator of men's emergency overnight shelter in Dane County. The Drop-In Shelter was established in the fall of 1984, and Porchlight has put its time, effort, and funding into the project every year since. We have grown to meet many other needs in the community over the past four decades, but remain dedicated to providing shelter as a core tenet of our organizational mission.

Porchlight has made many changes to shelter operation over the years, but none as great as those catalyzed and facilitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, Porchlight has demonstrated adaptability, creativity, and determination. We continued to provide shelter every night without fail, even through outbreaks, location changes, and a traumatic shooting incident. With the benefit of improved facilities and appropriate funding, we were able to completely reimagine our staffing pattern, improve many of our basic services, and update our policies and procedures to include approaches that lowered barriers for shelter guests. The sweeping changes made in the last two years are just the beginning. The way we provide shelter is rapidly evolving, and Porchlight is ready to meet the moment. In 2021, the Drop-In Shelter served 1,020 unduplicated guests with 35,335 nights of shelter. Attendance in 2022 has increased significantly, with 789 unduplicated guests served with 26,664 nights of shelter through June, compared to 667 guests and 17,296 nights of shelter through June of 2021.

Porchlight also has experience managing daytime services. Porchlight operated the Hospitality House for 20+ years before making way for The Beacon. Porchlight's Safe Haven program has provided daytime services for individuals with mental illness since the 1990s. Services include meals, showers, laundry, transportation, mail, and phone access. Safe Haven also provides housing-focused case management and crisis stabilization services funded through Medicaid. In 2021, Safe Haven served 482 unduplicated guests. They have already served 392 unduplicated guests through June of 2022.

Porchlight provides housing-focused services to Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness at the Veterans Transitional Housing Program (VTHP), which has been successfully connecting Veterans with permanent housing since 2009. In their last full operating year, VTHP served 53 Veterans, with 75% exiting to permanent destinations. Those success rates have increased in the current operating year, with 41 Veterans served, and 84% exiting to permanent destinations so far.

Porchlight also provides supportive services to households in 184 Porchlight-owned and operated permanent housing units, as well as 20 units in the community. Services focus on eliminating barriers and maintaining housing. Case management is voluntary, and offered throughout tenancy. Level and frequency of services vary based on the needs and desires of the household. In 2021, Porchlight permanent housing and permanent supportive housing programs served 286 households with 93% of households maintaining housing or exiting to a permanent destination.

Even with longstanding programs, Porchlight is committed to growth and improvement, as evidenced by significant programmatic changes in recent years. We see our collective years of experience as one of our

biggest strengths, and the pandemic highlighted our ability to implement many new strategies and protocols while maintaining consistent, reliable services for our participants.

Catalyst for Change will partner with Porchlight to provide housing-focused case management services at the permanent purpose-built shelter. Catalyst for Change is a nonprofit organization based in Dane County that has been serving people experiencing homelessness since 2019. They began performing street outreach and mediation in 2020 and added Comprehensive Community Services in 2021. Founders John Adams and Michael Moody have been working in homeless services for nearly 10 years. John Adams worked as a substance abuse counselor at Hope Haven and then worked at Bethel Lutheran Church's Homeless Ministry. Michael Moody joined John at Bethel and together they provided services to individuals experiencing homelessness, reduced police calls, and improved community understanding and support of Bethel's Homeless Ministry. John and Michael were then asked to be founding staff members of The Beacon Day Resource Center. John was quickly promoted to Director, and Michael became the Community and Partner Relations Specialist. During their time at The Beacon, John and Michael also provided staff support at the Porchlight Drop-In Shelter in the early months of the pandemic, where they developed a strong working relationship with shelter management, and helped envision a shelter with lower barriers to access.

After working at The Beacon for several years, John and Michael decided to found their own organization to address gaps that they observed while working in homeless services. Due to continued successful outcomes, Catalyst for Change has been awarded several grant contracts through the City of Madison and Dane County. Catalyst for Change provides daily outreach and Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) for people with mental illness or substance use disorders. They currently provide Service Facilitation or case management services to 29 clients and supportive services to 24 additional clients. They prioritize providing CCS to clients experiencing homelessness in Dane County. They also provide street outreach services to individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Dane County. In 2021, they provided outreach to 435 individuals experiencing homelessness.

- 2) Provide relevant performance outcomes for work your agency has done in this area, including outcomes for safe and appropriate diversion, successful exits and housing retention.

Porchlight has not yet conducted diversion in shelter. Because enrollments are now conducted one-on-one with staff, there is potential to work a diversion element into initial enrollments, if there was funding to support both financial incentives and additional staff time.

Historically, the Porchlight men's shelter has struggled with data collection for exit destinations specifically. Emergency overnight shelters are notoriously poor at collecting exit data, as the majority of guests do not initiate contact with the program after they have exited. We assume that a substantial number of guests leave shelter for housing, but because night-by-night shelter is not the type of program from which one would formally discharge, shelter staff is typically unable to gather exit information, including destination.

With the help of new features in Clarity and the implementation of scan cards, we have vastly improved our data entry in the past year, including timely exits in HMIS. Our new protocol for exiting guests from shelter is to run a monthly report of enrollees who have not accessed shelter in the previous 30 days. That report is reviewed by case management staff, who ensure that known destinations are recorded before the remainder of listed guests are exited to an unknown destination. In the past, because we were not exiting guests in a timely fashion, we hypothesized

that it would be possible to reach out to all guests who were being exited to see if staff could ascertain their exit destination. Now that we have been exiting guests on a monthly basis for the past 10 months, we have found that the average number of guests to be exited each month is 86. That is too large a volume of guests for staff to contact individually while still providing case management services to guests who are currently accessing shelter. It therefore remains true that a large percentage of exits are to an unknown destination. The majority of guests discontinue accessing shelter without reporting back to staff.

That said, while the percentage of our guests exiting to known permanent destinations is very small, it is still the highest percentage of the previous five years, and is trending higher. While we no longer think it is likely that we will be able to ascertain the exit destinations of a majority of shelter guests who do not access case management, we have seen that staff is more likely to know the exit destination of a guest who is working with our shelter case managers. This was demonstrated by the increase in case management during the pandemic. In 2020, 83% of shelter exits were to unknown destination, with 3.6% of exits to permanent housing. In 2021, 77% of shelter exits were to unknown destination, with 5.4% of exits to permanent housing. So far in 2022, 63% of shelter exits have been to unknown destination, with 7.6% of exits to permanent housing. This supports Porchlight's intention to increase housing-focused case management services in the purpose-built shelter, and to expand those services to cover regular business hours, in order to provide more continuity for both staff and guests.

In 2021, Catalyst for Change served 435 unique individuals experiencing homelessness through their street outreach program. Of those 435 individuals, they enrolled 119 individuals as program participants. Of their program participants, they assisted 72 individuals, including couples and individuals with children, in exiting homelessness to permanent housing. Of the 72 individuals that they assisted in obtaining permanent housing, five individuals returned to homelessness after being housed. They were able to assist three of the five individuals who lost their housing in obtaining new housing. The other two individuals who lost housing were connected with the Dairy Drive Tiny Home project and the City of Madison hotel program. The remaining 70 individuals they assisted in obtaining housing remain housed due to ongoing wrap-around services they provide through outreach and CCS.

Not only does Catalyst measure program participants who exit homelessness to permanent housing, but they also measure many other points of service. In 2021 on night outreach alone, Catalyst had 435 program participants, and recorded their interactions in HMIS. They provided case management, housing, employment, legal assistance, and connection to substance abuse treatment. They recorded 455 service transactions, such as providing sleeping bags, tents, food, water, bus fare, dog food, gas cards, and more. Catalyst provided 211 rides or Lyfts to shelter, emergency respite, medical appointments, and housing and employment appointments. They referred 60 people to the Medical Respite COVID-19 hotels and the Vulnerable Population Hotel program. So far in 2022, Catalyst for Change has assisted 34 individuals experiencing homelessness to obtain permanent, safe housing.

- 3) Briefly describe the experience and qualifications of the key staff who will be involved in planning for and performing the required tasks, and indicate whether they are currently employed or to be hired.

Porchlight staff is distinctly qualified to plan for and operate our community's first purpose-built shelter. Porchlight has been the leading voice for many years in advocating for a purpose-built shelter, and dedicating the resources necessary to properly serve single male-identified individuals in Dane County.

Karla Thennes (Executive Director) has been with Porchlight for over 31 years. She has an MSSW from the University of Wisconsin, with a concentration in mental health. She shares her experience and extensive knowledge with the community as a Board Member for Goodwill and Downtown Madison, Inc. She is also on the United Way Affordable Housing Committee and a member of Downtown Rotary. In her early career, Karla provided direct service at both overnight and day shelter. This work informed her later position as Director of Services, during which she developed several housing and supportive service programs. In that role, she was also involved with grant writing, fundraising, staff hiring and supervision, execution and outcome reporting. In the past 20 years, Porchlight has conducted three large capital campaigns, raising \$10 million to build 92 units of affordable housing for homeless and low-income individuals. Karla was integral to the development of the housing and supportive service programs attached to each housing campus. Karla leads by example. She worked on-site every day during the pandemic, including conducting health assessments at the Men's Drop-In Shelter. Her philosophy is that she will not ask her staff to do anything she is not willing to do herself. Even in her position as Executive Director, Karla has remained connected to the shelter. She helped build the list of 70 volunteer groups that prepared and served meals at the men's shelter before the pandemic. She coordinated with the lead volunteer of each group, and developed and maintained an extensive schedule of dinner and breakfast meals served 365 days per year. Karla's dedication has kept the men's emergency shelter at the core of Porchlight's mission.

Kim Sutter (Director of Services) has been committed to transforming men's shelter since taking over supervision of the program in 2017. Her philosophy is that change cannot happen if you do not or cannot acknowledge that there is improvement to be made. She has worked for the past five years to improve Porchlight's reputation amongst funders and other providers by being honest about where Porchlight could improve, and asking for the resources and support necessary to facilitate that change. Kim believes in the power of strong policies and procedures, but also considering potential unintended consequences. If something is not working, she has no problem scrapping that idea and trying something new. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she was dedicated to ensuring that Porchlight was using this unexpected upheaval in homeless services to make major, lasting changes to the way our men's shelter operates. She is a staunch advocate for the purpose-built shelter, and is prepared to lead the shelter through the next major phase of change. Kim has an MSW from the University of Wisconsin, and has worked for Porchlight for 14 years. Prior to supervising men's shelter, Kim managed the Safe Haven transitional shelter program for individuals with mental illness. She has many years' experience providing direct service to individuals accessing our homeless services system. In her role as Director of Services, Kim oversees operation of the Safe Haven day shelter, the Veterans Transitional Housing Program (VTHP), Porchlight Housing Case Management, and the current Men's Drop-In Shelter. She also sits on several HSC committees and work groups.

Porchlight will be hiring an Assistant Director of Services in fall 2022. This position will work alongside the Director of Services, participating in program administration and oversight. They will focus on developing and implementing strategies to effectively evaluate and improve program outcomes, including at shelter.

Fares Fares (Interim Shelter Manager) has been working at the Porchlight Men's Drop-In Shelter for two years, and sits on the Porchlight DEI Committee. Prior to shelter, Fares worked in nonprofits and the hospitality sector. His background in customer service has translated to his work at shelter and his service to individuals experiencing homelessness. Fares has a Masters in Human Rights, which informs his approach to conflict resolution and his commitment to preserving the dignity and rights of shelter guests. He is passionate about creating partnerships with other community organizations to better serve guests, and to bring opportunities and activities to shelter. His experience living outside of the US has given Fares an appreciation and respect for cultural diversity, as well as the tools to adapt to any situation. He speaks four languages and is skilled at communicating with guests who otherwise may struggle to interact with

staff or other guests. Fares also has lived experience with homelessness, mental illness, and substance use, and is uniquely suited to relate to and advocate for shelter guests who are dealing with these issues themselves.

Wendy Siewert (Case Management Supervisor) has been working with Porchlight for 14 years, and sits on the Porchlight DEI Committee. They are also the agency HMIS Administrator and participate in the HSC Education & Advocacy Committee. Prior to their work with Porchlight, Wendy worked at Hebron House, as Outreach Coordinator for the Red Cross, and on the Disaster Action Team in Milwaukee. They also have extensive experience in customer service, and have worked as an advocate for disability rights and voting rights. During their time with Porchlight, Wendy has worked with and/or administered several different programs, including Hospitality House, Safe Haven, Outreach, DIGS, Youth RRH, Sun Prairie programs, and Drop-In Shelter. They currently supervise case managers serving Porchlight housing residents and Drop-In Shelter guests. Wendy has a Bachelor of Social Work degree, and has undergone extensive training in housing first and harm reduction approaches. As an assault survivor, Wendy is also a passionate advocate for trauma-informed care. Their work with individuals experiencing homelessness is also informed by their own mental health and substance use recovery, and their lived experience of homelessness.

Daniel Barnes (Director of Finance) has a Bachelor of Science in Accountancy, and has been working for Porchlight for 15 years. He started his career in public accounting, performing certified public audits and corporate tax returns for regulated telecommunication utilities in the State of Wisconsin. Daniel has also been the accountant for two other local nonprofits, maintaining their financial records for five years. During his time with Porchlight, Daniel has been responsible for oversight of all financial operations. This has included processing payroll and all invoices internally, and tracking expenditures across multiple funding sources, programs, and 27 housing properties. Under his leadership, Porchlight has been very successful at layering funding sources to support program stability. Porchlight holds grants and contracts from various federal, state, county, and city departments, each with their own process for budget, eligibility, reporting, and billing. Daniel ensures that Porchlight remains a good steward of all grant funds and contributions, both restricted and unrestricted, and maintains his reputation amongst staff for supporting successful service provision while ensuring consistency and compliance.

Drew Niedercorn (Director of Kitchen Operations) has been operating the Porchlight Products program and overseeing the VTHP and Safe Haven kitchens for the past year. Prior to his work with Porchlight, Drew had a diverse and successful career managing foodservice operations, spanning a variety of genres and service styles. This included a downtown Milwaukee conference center hotel with multiple outlets, a high-volume corporate international restaurant chain, and many independently owned venues. Drew has opened a brand new hospital and multiple restaurants, managed foodservice operations for a memory care facility, has overseen a restaurant and school meal program in a Waukesha-area nonprofit organization, and has supervised a Meals on Wheels production kitchen. He has been teaching food safety and sanitation at the technical college level since 2008, and has worked as a culinary educator in both a public high school and at a technical college. Drew has also administered a culinary education program using the ProStart Program curriculum for an inner-city Milwaukee Christian-based nonprofit organization. Managing at these levels for over 25 years has taught Drew to learn who his clients are, meet people where they are at, and serve with passion. These lessons keep his focus on learning, teaching, growing, and being a responsible steward of the resources available to him.

John Adams and Michael Moody will be the key Catalyst for Change staff involved in planning for the new shelter. John Adams and Michael Moody are both currently employed by Catalyst for Change and founded the organization.

John Adams, Substance Abuse Counselor, Co-Founder, President, outreach worker, and CCS provider for CFC, developed a passion for helping others in the late 90s while volunteering at Allied Dunn Marsh Community Center and Vera Court Community Center. However, John's dedication to his community dates

back further than volunteerism. John is a product of similar communities in Chicago, IL, and Madison, WI, where he has seen the devastation of drugs, addiction, poverty, and homelessness. These early encounters exposed John to his true calling of helping impoverished communities. John knew that to become a voice for his community, he would need to expand his knowledge of social services through formal education. He is a graduate of Madison Area Technical College with a degree in Liberal Arts, and he has a bachelor's degree in Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) from UW-Stout. John has worked as an overnight staff and substance abuse counselor at Hope Haven inpatient treatment facility, a Catholic Charities program. Later, John transitioned from Hope Haven to Bethel Lutheran Church's Homeless Ministry. When he arrived, he quickly noticed and analyzed deficiencies within the program. John strategically formulated a plan to reduce police calls, community complaints, and behavioral issues. John developed behavioral expectations and suspension policies. Within three months, he significantly reduced police calls, drug and alcohol use on the property, and created a neighborhood and community outreach program. John was the Program Director of The Beacon Day Resource Center from 2018 to 2021. He ran the day-to-day operations, and created and implemented policies. John uses his life experiences to help him relate, understand, and advocate for people often misunderstood and struggling with life challenges.

Michael Moody, MSW, Co-Founder, CEO, outreach worker, and CCS provider, began working in homeless services at Bethel Lutheran Church's Homeless Ministry in 2016 to create rational and sustainable policies and programs alongside John Adams. Then in 2017, Michael transitioned to working as a Guest Services Specialist at The Beacon Day Resource Center and provided direct services to people experiencing homelessness. In 2019, Michael completed his Master's in Social Work, focusing on policy and administration from the University of Wisconsin. He is an advocate for marginalized people and devoted to elevating their voices to help them be heard. From 2018 to 2021, Michael served as The Beacon's Community and Partner Relations specialist. At Bethel, Michael and John realized the importance of talking with neighbors and working with the community. The need to work with the community grew at The Beacon by addressing issues with neighbors and local businesses, educating them on what The Beacon was doing and the problems around people who are homeless or "socially displaced." Working with this population has taught him that it is crucial to talk with different people and ask and listen to difficult questions. Through such discussions, he has learned about his own inherent biases and how to transcend them.

- 4) Describe how your agency is part of the larger system of services and/or resources most relevant to people experiencing homelessness.

Porchlight is integral to the homeless services landscape in Madison, especially in the areas of shelter and housing. The Drop-In Shelter has been the central emergency shelter for male-identified adults in Madison since 1984. Since the original need for emergency shelter was established, the program expanded in size and scope over the years to accommodate a growing number of shelter guests. Though the Drop-In Shelter was long envisioned as a warm place to meet basic needs, Porchlight leadership and shelter staff have worked hard in the past five years to align more closely with community values and expectations, including supportive housing-focused services and lower barriers to entry. Since the COVID pandemic, a large influx of funding for emergency services has made it possible for Porchlight to transform the Drop-In Shelter program into one that provides better, lower-barrier services in congregate facilities that are significantly more appropriate for shelter.

Porchlight has long collaborated with other agencies in our Continuum of Care (CoC), and these collaborations have only strengthened during the pandemic. Shelter staff has solicited and accepted

feedback from other shelter providers, and has developed relationships with street outreach teams in order to facilitate warm handoffs for folks who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Safe Haven staff have also worked closely with street outreach teams to support day shelter guests who are sleeping outside, and provide referral and on-site Crisis Stabilization services for guests with mental illness at The Beacon. The Veterans Transitional Housing Program (VTHP) is a grant and per diem partnership with the VA, and VTHP staff participate in case conferencing, Built for Zero, and other efforts to end Veteran homelessness in Dane County.

We are also committed to participation in our CoC Coordinated Entry system. Porchlight is a subrecipient of the Coordinated Entry HUD grant through the Institute for Community Alliances. The Drop-In Shelter has a full-time Coordinated Entry Worker who conducts assessments and referrals to the housing priority list at both the Drop-In Shelter and The Beacon. On the housing side of Coordinated Entry, several years ago Porchlight dedicated nearly 100 housing units to the Coordinated Entry list in order to fill a gap in permanent housing with ongoing support services for individuals with moderate vulnerability and service needs. Porchlight now has two permanent supportive housing (PSH) programs and a permanent housing (PH) program totaling 134 units that select tenants from Coordinated Entry.

Porchlight is very involved in the Homeless Services Consortium (HSC). Several staff members from both the Drop-In Shelter and Safe Haven participate in the Shelter Providers Committee. Porchlight staff also sit on the Core, Nominating & Governance, Point-In-Time, Education & Advocacy, and Lived Experience Committees, and participate in various work groups, including outreach case conferencing, Written Standards, housing first providers group, and forms group. Porchlight staff currently attends HSC Membership meetings, and have previously served as the Chair and Vice Chair of the Membership and served on the Board of Directors.

- 5) The success of this facility will require collaboration and partnerships with other service providers. Identify three organizational partners and describe how you will collaborate with them to best serve shelter guests. Indicate the specific roles they will play.

1. Nurse Disrupted, Inc. will continue to partner with Porchlight to facilitate on-demand telehealth services to shelter guests throughout operational hours each night. Guests in need of medical consultation are set up at a private kiosk and connected by tablet to a nurse. The nurse can provide self-care instructions, recommend the guest follow up with a primary care provider, or advise emergency care. These telehealth services prevent unnecessary ambulance calls and emergency room visits, and increase health care access to guests who may otherwise not seek assistance for medical concerns. In the next year, Nurse Disrupted hopes to broaden services to include on-demand tele-mental health care for shelter guests experiencing mental health crises or otherwise in need of mental health care.

2. MACH OneHealth, in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin MEDiC program, will continue to partner with Porchlight to provide on-site medical care for shelter guests on a weekly basis. MACH will also continue to take referrals from shelter staff for guests who have been recently discharged from hospitals or clinics and would benefit from follow-up care. In the next year, MACH hopes to expand their nursing team in order to serve guests at shelter twice per week. In addition to medical care, MACH's social work and outreach teams will collaborate with Porchlight to facilitate warm handoffs for individuals experiencing

unsheltered homelessness who may consider using shelter, and to outreach to shelter guests who are suspended from services or otherwise vacillate between sheltered and unsheltered locations.

3. Kabba Recovery Services will partner with Porchlight to provide on-site groups for shelter guests with substance use issues who are interested in recovery. Groups will be provided at least weekly, and up to 2-3 times per week if guests show interest in more frequent groups. Kabba will provide on-call crisis intervention services for guests experiencing crisis who are not responding to de-escalation efforts by shelter support staff. This service is intended to reduce police calls related to non-violent crises. Shelter staff may also refer guests to Kabba for on-site individual counseling. Additionally, Kabba will provide training for shelter staff on crisis intervention, substance use, and harm reduction.

- 6) Describe your agency's commitment to the principles of low-barrier access, cultural competence, trauma-informed care, harm reduction, and racial equity. Give specific examples of how these principles are integrated into the services your agency currently provides and how they will be incorporated into the shelter operations.

In the past several years, Porchlight has made many programmatic changes in an effort to align with best practices and community goals, including discontinuing programs that were underperforming, and revamping programs that were using outdated or ineffective approaches. For example, Porchlight Housing eliminated nearly all screening criteria in order to lower barriers to access and to align with a Housing First approach. With their transformation to day shelter, Safe Haven adopted a harm reduction model and significantly reduced service suspensions.

Porchlight has made many significant changes to shelter operations in the past two years with the goal of lowering barriers to access, including increasing operation hours, providing transportation, eliminating the 90-day limit, accepting guests under the influence of substances, and reducing the length of suspensions. Staff has also implemented scan cards, which make the nightly intake procedure faster and less burdensome on guests. Shelter staff has developed relationships with outreach teams so that if an unsheltered individual agrees to try shelter, a warm handoff may be facilitated, even outside intake hours.

Because shelter serves individuals from many different cultures and belief systems, staff are trained to meet guests where they are at. Shelter staff is also diverse in culture and beliefs, and the more expansive staffing pattern allows staff to tap out or tap in if a guest would benefit from a different type of communication style, a different language, or speaking to a person with whom they share a certain characteristic or experience. Staff is also taught that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to serving people experiencing homelessness, and if you are unable to successfully communicate or serve a guest, you should try a different approach.

Porchlight has made some trauma-informed changes to procedures while at the First Street site. Initial enrollments are now completed individually with case management staff in a private area, which allows for more opportunity for the new guest to review policies, ask questions, and share personal information privately. Scan cards also allow returning guests to check in without saying their name aloud or physically signing in. Staff has used the large space at shelter to accommodate guests who feel safer sleeping in a different pod than another guest, or nearer to staff. While the opportunities for creating a warm, inviting, and empowering space are limited in a converted garage, Porchlight looks forward to more opportunities to create a welcoming environment supported by additional trauma-informed practices in the future.

During the pandemic, shelter staff discovered that with an appropriate staffing level, it is possible to serve individuals under the influence of alcohol and drugs in shelter, and have successfully served hundreds of intoxicated guests over the past two years. Staff has learned to assess whether a guest is in need of detox or medical care, and when and how to administer Narcan. Many guests are able to access shelter while intoxicated without any problems. Those with behavioral issues receive additional staff attention and may be separated from the larger group in an effort to keep them inside.

While Porchlight is still in its beginning stages of developing and implementing a diversity, equity, and inclusion plan for the agency as a whole and subsequently for shelter, we are finalizing an organizational strategic plan with a DEI focus (see Section 3).

- 7) The Operator(s) is expected to leverage additional resources to augment funding available through the City and County. Please discuss your agency's ability to fill that role, including its fundraising and grant writing capacity. Indicate any fundraising your agency currently undertakes, including its scale and any staffing resources currently in place to perform that function. What is the level of annual funding you expect your agency to be able to contribute toward operations?

Porchlight has extensive experience in both fundraising and grant writing, and intends on increasing its capacity for resource development in the coming years. The Porchlight Board of Directors has already approved the hiring of a Resource Development Director to take the lead on major fundraising efforts, as well as grant application and administration. Currently, several leadership- and management-level staff are involved in grant writing, including recurring grants from public sources and private grants from individuals, groups, and foundations. Grants may range in size from \$250 to \$1,000,000+.

Porchlight holds several annual fundraising events, most notably the Chef's Tasting and the Annual Recognition Dinner. These events are attended by hundreds of Porchlight supporters, and raise funds through sponsorships, auctions, and donations. Businesses and community members also hold many individual events that benefit Porchlight each year, including recurring events like The Rusty Putter golf outing held by Steve Brown Apartments and First American Title, and an annual barbeque held by J.H. Findorff & Sons. In addition to annual fundraising efforts, Porchlight has undergone three large capital campaigns, raising over \$10 million to build 92 units of affordable housing.

Porchlight's current annual budget is nearly \$8 million. Each year, Porchlight balances the budget by raising over \$1 million in contributions to augment grants and program income. Our annual donor contributions have steadily risen over the years from \$95,000 in 1990 to an average of \$1.6 million each year from 2016 – 2020. The success of these efforts is due in large part to Porchlight's reputation as a good steward of donor funds, and our continued dedication to serving households experiencing homelessness in our community, even during this unprecedented pandemic.

Porchlight has a large and dedicated group of volunteers and donors who feel specifically connected to the shelter and its guests. In 2021, Porchlight received over \$30,000 in donor funds allocated to the men's emergency shelter. We also receive in-kind donations worth hundreds of dollars each month, including travel-size hygiene items, clothing, and first aid supplies used by shelter guests. Over 35+ years of operation, Porchlight had built a list of 70 volunteer groups who purchased, prepared, and served meals at shelter every day of the year until the pandemic. Porchlight, the County, and the City all found out during the pandemic how incredibly valuable that service had been. While the majority of those groups are no

longer able to serve in that capacity, 15 groups have expressed interest in participating in meal preparation and service in the future. We envision these volunteer groups supplementing an on-site meal program at the permanent shelter.

8) Describe your agency's process approach to monitor and improve service quality and outcomes.

Last year, Porchlight dedicated significant staff time to developing new data collection and monitoring procedures for the shelter, including implementing scan cards and shifting to the attendance module in Clarity (HMIS). This change has noticeably increased convenience for guests, and significantly reduced errors and improved overall data quality. Additionally, we are using new monthly reports to track individuals who have not accessed shelter in the previous 30 days, to ensure timely program exits. Use of the HMIS attendance module has also provided more accurate and timely census numbers, which help inform staffing changes, and have demonstrated that previous seasonal patterns in attendance are indeed influenced by the elimination of the 90-day shelter limit during the pandemic.

The Drop-in Shelter conducts biannual guest surveys that include a section for narrative participant feedback. We collect and report the responses, and are able to make some changes right away (e.g. bringing in a microwave for guests, hanging mirrors in the bathroom, etc.). Other feedback we take under advisement and consider whether we can implement longer-term when there is a permanent site (e.g. bed reservations, laundry access, etc.). We often make changes based on verbal feedback from guests during their stay, and in response to formal complaints or grievances. We also keep feedback in mind when considering changes in services or procedures. One frequent request that we have been unable to accommodate in our first two temporary shelter spaces, but that we have worked into the plan for the temporary site at Zeier Rd is storage. We will have lockers for guests to temporarily store personal belongings that they would like secure while they are accessing shelter.

Porchlight is in the midst of finalizing its next strategic plan, which includes a focus on engaging and incorporating participant feedback in future decision-making processes. This had also been a recommendation of Porchlight's DEI Committee. In response, the Drop-In Shelter is the first Porchlight program to develop a Guest Council. The Council will meet every two weeks and provide recommendations to shelter staff on improvements to shelter services, policies, and procedures. The Guest Council has met once already to participate in a focus group regarding permanent shelter services and amenities.

Porchlight has also worked to foster a culture where all employees have the opportunity to influence program practices, services, procedures, and policies. Monthly shelter staff meetings always involve a time to make observations or suggestions on how to better serve guests.

Catalyst for Change is committed to providing the highest quality of service to their clients and every individual they encounter. A common theme expressed by individuals experiencing homelessness is that they are frequently not treated well by people, because they are stigmatized and face bias due to their homeless status. Catalyst values treating every individual with respect and compassion. They regularly provide their clients with opportunities to offer input regarding their satisfaction with programs and services. They quickly identify areas in their programs and services that need improvement, and make necessary changes. They welcome feedback and constructive criticism and are always learning and growing through their work and through regular weekly supervision with a Licensed Professional Counselor and

Certified Substance Abuse Counselor. They offer participant feedback surveys every six months for their clients to complete with suggestions and comments. They consider and attempt to implement all feedback received. As a team, Catalyst is incredibly flexible and adaptive. They meet as a team weekly to discuss how things are going and any ways they can improve their services.

Catalyst for Change as an organization is meticulous about collecting and sharing data. They aim to set the industry standard for good, accurate data collection and sharing throughout homeless services. They are a data-driven organization, and always strive to increase their services provided month-over-month and year-over-year. They believe in collecting data to systematically measure their tangible results and then share what is working for them and why. They enter all service transactions, including tents, sleeping bags, food, water, connections to rental assistance, entry and exits into their program, and entry and exits into housing, nightly. Catalyst tracks all encounters on the micro-level to use data collected to impact macro-level systems. They enter new clients into HMIS and share data with all homeless services agencies. They understand how valuable HMIS can be when utilized consistently, and have been able to facilitate many connections with various service providers and their clients. When they enter service transactions timely and regularly, social service providers can reach out to them if they see Catalyst has connected with their clients recently. In addition, Catalyst can provide regular reports through HMIS whenever needed.

2. Organizational Fiscal Planning and Management (20 points)

- 1) Complete the table below regarding your agency’s 2022 revenue and expenditure projections.

AGENCY REVENUE		AGENCY EXPENSES	
Source	2022 Budget	Category	2022 Projected Expenditure
City of Madison	215,000	Personnel	3,083,000
Dane County	814,000	Operating	1,982,000
State of Wisconsin	2,155,000	Space	2,386,000
HUD	430,500	Special Cost: Assistance to individuals	74,000
Other Government	422,000	Special Cost: Subcontracts	46,000
United Way of Dane County	179,000	Special Cost: Other	165,000
Other Foundations	63,000	Capital Expenditures	16,000
Fundraising	1,842,700	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	7,752,000
User Fee	1,821,000		
Other	46,800		
TOTAL REVENUE	7,989,000		
			2022 Projected
		Surplus or (Deficit)	237,000

- 2) Is your agency subject to annual financial certified audits (Yes/No)? Yes.

If your agency is subject to annual financial certified audit, were there any findings or concerns identified in the most recent audit? If yes, please explain.

The most recent certified audit is attached (2020). Porchlight did not have any findings in the most recent certified financial audit, and has never had a finding for any audited year.

*Please note that agencies must submit certified audit results or financial statements as a part of the application packet.

*Agencies that do not have annual audits completed must submit the most recent annual financial statements showing how the existing agency funds were expended along with a letter signed by the president of the board of directors stating that they approved the financial statement as prepared.

3. Commitment to Promoting Racial Equity (10 points)

- 1) Describe your agency's commitment to equity and inclusion. What specific strategies or practices are followed to ensure that these principles are integrated into your organization, and its work? What values does your organization center around with respect to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color community members experiencing homelessness and how does your organization operationalize those values?

Porchlight has always had a diverse workforce in terms of race, ethnicity, age, gender identity, LGBTQ+ identity, and disability status. We are aware, however, that having a diverse staff does not mean that policies regarding employment and services to guests and residents are automatically equitable. In the past, Porchlight has not intentionally centered equity and inclusion, or viewed policies and procedures with an equity lens. We identified this as an opportunity for growth, and have been making steps in the past two years to change our organizational orientation around diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In 2020, Porchlight hired its first ever human resources (HR) staff. Since then, the Director of Human Resources has been working on examining and improving recruitment, hiring, retention, and training practices. All staff now receive training regarding harassment and discrimination, bystander intervention, and unconscious bias during their onboarding process. HR is now looking into additional opportunities for trainings from other community providers that center on promoting equitable and inclusive practices within our programs.

After hosting a facilitated diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) workshop for case managers in 2021, the Director of HR created the agency DEI Committee. The DEI Committee has included 10 staff members representing different parts of the agency, and has already presented to the Porchlight Board of Directors. The committee will eventually be self-run, and will have the ability to create change to policies and practices at both program and agency levels.

Porchlight is committed to effectively serving individuals experiencing homelessness in our community, including those who identify as BIPOC. Staff is trained to treat everyone with dignity and respect, and to directly address issues between guests that include derogatory language regarding race or ethnicity. We strive to ensure that we are making the same high level of service available to all guests, and that consequences for policy violations are consistent based on the violation and do not disproportionately affect BIPOC guests. We believe that building an equitable culture in shelter is necessary to deliver on our mission.

- 2) List steps your agency has taken, or plans to take, to establish or continue practices that advance racial equity inclusion. Describe the strategies and activities that will be used to make this program culturally relevant and promote racial equity.

Porchlight is in the process of finalizing its 2022 – 2025 organizational strategic plan. Porchlight hired a consultant from The People Company to lead a planning process with a focus on equity and inclusion. In addition to our mission, vision, and values, we developed foundational themes around equity and inclusion that will guide us in our future discussions and work as we implement our strategic plan. Those themes are:

- We care for people in ways that create access and opportunity – where a richness of ideas, experiences, and perspectives are valued, and result in the best service for all.
- We respect individual differences, build trust, limit bias and favoritism, and strive for the best overall outcomes for our guests, team members, and community.

As we become fully engaged in our new strategic plan, our goal is to cultivate an organizational culture that ensures that diversity, equity, and inclusion is at the foundation of everything we do – from our staff and work environment to how we serve our guests and engage our community. There are many strategies specific to equity and inclusion outlined in our strategic plan, including:

- Create a consistent onboarding process for new employees and volunteers that connects our mission, vision, values, and diversity, equity, and inclusion to each person’s role and responsibilities at Porchlight, and clarifies what their new role is, along with the related expectations.
- Evaluate our hiring process to clarify processes and procedures, improve diverse representation while ensuring sufficient staffing, and eliminate adverse bias.
- Create a recruiting strategy that includes hiring from within our guest base, and having employees that represent the demographic makeup of our guest population.
- Develop a succession plan and leadership advancement plan that includes recommendations for developing internal leadership potential, especially for people of diverse backgrounds.
- Involve guests in decision-making beyond surveys, including developing panel advisory committees.
- Create DEI learning opportunities for all staff. Sponsor opportunities for all staff to build competence in DEI concepts, including discussion groups, guest speakers, book discussions, etc.
- Develop and confirm DEI behavior standards that include specific examples of behaviors and actions that illustrate success.
- Equip supervisors and staff and hold them accountable through performance management for DEI behavior standards.
- Ensure DEI Committee representation from all program locations.

- Review salary and compensation to ensure they are competitive and equitable across all roles and diversity identities – include external market analysis.
- Increase diversity of Board members and evaluate the process for Board member recruitment.

We have already begun some of this work at the Porchlight Drop-In Shelter. Shelter staff is already diverse in terms of race, gender, age, LGBTQ+ identity, education level, and life experience. Staff includes individuals in mental health recovery, substance use recovery, and with histories of incarceration. Over half of current staff members have lived experience of homelessness. Three shelter staff members currently sit on the Porchlight DEI Committee. We have also already launched the Shelter Guest Council, which will inform future policy changes. As we move forward with our strategic plan, we will continue to invest in DEI training and education to encourage learning and foster open and honest communication within shelter and the organization as a whole.

3) Complete the tables below regarding the agency board of directors and staff composition.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

GENDER	Current #	% of Board
Identify as Female	5	26.3%
Identify as Male	14	73.7%
Identify as Other	0	0%
Data Unknown	0	0%
Total	19	100%

AGENCY STAFF

Current #	% of Staff
43	40.2%
64	59.8%
0	0%
0	0%
107	100%

RACE	Current #	% of Board
White/Caucasian	14	73.7%
Black/African American	4	21.0%
Asian	0	0%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0%
Native Hawaiian Other Pacific Islander	0	0%
Multi-Racial	0	0%
Other	1	5.3%
Data Unknown	0	0%
Total	19	100%

Current #	% of Staff
56	52.3%
23	21.5%
0	0%
1	0.9%
0	0%
0	0%
5	4.7%
22	20.6%
107	100%

Ethnicity	Current #	% of Board
Hispanic or Latino	1	5%
Not Hispanic or Latino	18	95%
Data Unknown	0	0%
Total	19	100%

Current #	% of Staff
4	3.7%
103	96.3%
0	0%
107	100%

4. Project Specific Policies and Strategies (20 points)

- 1) Describe your vision for the proposed shelter. What basic elements are needed to ensure a successful overnight shelter? What supportive services do you think are necessary to move guests toward stable housing? If possible, indicate how you would prioritize services within the two groupings.

DROP-IN SHELTER

The basic, essential elements of overnight shelter are intake/enrollment, beds and linens, restrooms and showers, food service, sanitation, and operational staff.

Intake/Enrollment

Porchlight envisions an intake and enrollment process that is similar to what is being done now. Guests complete their initial enrollment one-on-one with staff, review all shelter services and guidelines, and have the option of creating a Clarity ID card for faster access next time they come. They also complete a needs assessment, and would ideally be connected to case management to work toward meeting those needs. Though we hope COVID screening is obsolete in the coming years, we would anticipate continuing with security screenings. We would look for ways to speed up that process so guests are not waiting for an inordinate amount of time. We would also expect an indoor queueing area to be large enough to accommodate at least 100 guests at a time. Porchlight would consider experimenting with bed reservations in one or more of the dormitory spaces to see if that reduces conflict and/or reduces the number of guests who arrive immediately when shelter opens in order to secure their favorite spot.

Beds & Linens

Porchlight envisions single, non-bunked beds with 3-sided partitions, spaced at least six feet apart. We would continue to contract with a linen vendor for sheets and blankets.

Restrooms & Showers

A shelter with a capacity of 250 would need to have at least 10 bathroom stalls and 10 shower stalls. The shower stalls should lock the way bathroom stalls do, rather than have curtains that can be opened intentionally or unintentionally by other guests. There should also be multiple accessible bathrooms with showers in them for guests with mobility issues, and at least two all-gender bathrooms for staff.

Food Service

Porchlight is interested in creating more opportunities for guests in shelter that will aid in their transition to permanent housing. One way of doing that is to operate a fully functional self-contained Kitchen Program at the new shelter that can serve healthy, nourishing meals. This Shelter Kitchen Program would be modeled after Safe Haven, the smaller-scale day shelter that Porchlight currently owns and operates. The program would be an extension of our Porchlight Products training program, where qualified clients will have the opportunity to be employed and trained to work in the kitchen. A highly skilled full-time Kitchen Manager will be in charge of all kitchen operations and the training of client workers with the end goal in mind of imparting marketable kitchen and work readiness skills that can be put to use in the work force. There will be additional focus put on educational opportunities that can help clients and workers alike learn about healthy nutrition, food safety, food budgeting, and meal planning.

Porchlight will rely on a variety of resources to operate the Shelter Kitchen Program. Similar to Safe Haven, we will continue to utilize our community agency partnerships with Second Harvest, Community Action Coalition, the River Food Pantry, and the University of Wisconsin as a source for a hefty portion of our food supplies. We will also be organizing external volunteer groups again who wish to provide meals at the shelter as they did pre-pandemic. Kitchen personnel will stock and maintain a limited pantry that can aid in providing food access. We will also leverage existing relationships with our current vendors to attain pricing that is appropriate and cost efficient in order to procure what is not supplied elsewhere.

The expectation is that the kitchen itself would be commercial grade with plentiful dry storage, walk-in refrigeration and freezer space, high output commercial stoves and ovens, mobile electric steam tables for service, appropriate exhaust hood venting, HVAC and fire suppression to accommodate the equipment and the square footage of the space. Also necessary will be a three-compartment sink, commercial dish machine, and commercial garbage disposal.

Sanitation

Minimally, an overnight shelter would require full-time custodial staff to ensure the shelter facility is cleaned on a daily basis. Porchlight sees this as another potential opportunity to hire and train shelter guests who may be interested in custodial work. In that case, there would be a manager of the custodial program who is ultimately responsible for facility sanitation, and would also hire and train client staff with the goal of moving on to employment in the community.

Operational Staff

Minimum essential staff for overnight shelter would include a manager, intake staff, security, and at least two shelter assistants per shift.

Accommodations and amenities that should be included in a purpose-built shelter include laundry, storage, enclosed smoking area, multiple dormitories, offices and meeting rooms, separate rooms for isolation and special needs, transportation, and trained support staff.

Laundry

The shelter should include self-service laundry machines with detergent provided. Ideally, this would be located outside a dormitory space and accessible at all hours.

Storage

As mentioned in Question 4 (3) below, Porchlight recommends that each bed have small, personal storage space for guests to store valuables and some belongings while they sleep. Additionally guests would benefit from medium-term storage in a common area.

Smoking Area

Porchlight strongly recommends an enclosed, outdoor space for smoking or taking a break that can be accessed all night without supervision.

Dormitories

Many guests struggle to sleep in rooms with 100+ strangers, and lack of sleep increases the likelihood of conflict. Porchlight recommends multiple dormitory spaces, potentially with different "lights out" times. Guests could select the dormitory that best meets their needs, or avoid guests with whom they do not get along. There could be a dorm with no pets, a dorm with reserved beds, a dorm for late arrivals, etc.

Offices & Meeting Rooms

A purpose-built shelter would have several offices and larger meeting rooms to accommodate both shelter staff and community partners. There should be smaller meeting spaces that fit 2-4 people, and larger spaces that fit 20-30, in order to accommodate groups and activities.

Isolation & Special Needs Rooms

Porchlight recommends at least one isolation room to shelter guests with communicable diseases. This was an issue in shelter before COVID, and will continue to be an issue in the future. As part of a strategy to reduce out-of-shelter suspensions, Porchlight also recommends two smaller dorm rooms to accommodate individuals with challenging behaviors (see Question 4 (6) below).

Support Staff

In addition to operational staff, purpose-built shelter should include support staff to engage more heavily with guests. This would include staff to monitor and provide mediation for guests in isolation and special needs rooms, additional service staff to conduct initial enrollments and assessments, support staff for guests experiencing crisis or needing assistance, and additional supervision staff.

Ideally, a new shelter would also include transportation, medical respite beds, accommodations for guests with pets, and an accessible pay-to-stay dormitory for guests with income who have off-hours sleeping schedules.

Transportation

Because the permanent shelter will be located outside of downtown, Porchlight recommends continuing to provide some sort of regular transportation assistance to guests. If the shelter does not provide 24-hour services, then there should continue to be shuttle transportation to and from The Beacon day center on a daily basis. If 24-hour services are provided on-site, then the shelter should minimally provide bus passes for guests without income who need to attend appointments or have other business downtown.

Medical Respite Beds

Many guests are discharged from hospital settings directly to shelter, including those who are recovering from medical procedures, have acute and/or chronic medical conditions, or are otherwise unable to care for themselves (see Question 4 (5) below). Porchlight recommends medical respite beds for guests who need a clean, safe place to recover from a procedure, or require assistance from an in-home aide.

Guests with Pets

A well-appointed shelter would also accommodate guests with pets, including crates, food, and miscellaneous supplies (see Question 4 (8) below).

Pay-to-Stay

A pay-to-stay dormitory that is accessible 24 hours per day would benefit guests who work second or third shift and need to sleep during the day. Porchlight envisions a model similar to Higher Ground's program, where guests pay a small fee on a weekly basis and the money is saved in an account to be paid to a housing provider within one year of the guest exiting shelter. If housing is not secured within one year of exit, the money is remitted to the program.

HOUSING-FOCUSED SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

In order to move the needle on housing outcomes, Porchlight believes the permanent shelter should offer 24-hour shelter services and a 4-5 person housing-focused case management team. Porchlight anticipates that within the next two years, there may be an agency that is interested in partnering to provide day shelter services. However, if no such agency comes forward, Porchlight is committed to providing those day services. The day shelter would welcome community partners to provide services for guests on-site, and would ideally include a computer lab for guests to access during business hours.

Catalyst for Change will partner with Porchlight to provide housing-focused case management for guests. Catalyst for Change envisions that the proposed shelter will provide daily, on-site case management services to shelter guests. Catalyst will work with Porchlight to provide individualized, wrap-around case management. They believe in utilizing a person-in-environment approach to meet all people where they are at, and assess individuals for their current needs and goals. To ensure a successful shelter, Catalyst for Change will offer housing-focused case management to all shelter guests, and will continually attempt to engage guests who may initially be uninterested in case management services. They will also enroll

interested individuals in Comprehensive Community Services so they can have long-term services in place after they leave the shelter.

Both Porchlight and Catalyst for Change staff will make direct referrals to community resources for guests who may need additional assistance for medical, mental health, or substance use issues, including but not limited to partner agencies who provide services on-site (see Question 1 (5) above).

- 2) Describe your plan for initial and on-going staff training. Discuss how your organization attends to the overall well-being of staff.

All Porchlight employees complete mandatory training courses on diversity, inclusion, unconscious bias, and bystander intervention as part of their onboarding process. Shelter staff have also had several trainings specific to emergency shelter, including blood-borne pathogens and biohazard clean-up, proper use of PPE, COVID precautions and screening, Narcan administration, active shooter training, accessing the Crisis line, and de-escalation in a shelter setting. In addition, the shelter manager, assistant manager, Coordinated Entry worker, intake staff, and case managers all complete new user and annual trainings on HMIS, and are certified Clarity users.

In the future, Porchlight will be working with community partners to provide a more robust series of training opportunities for shelter staff, including several focus areas suggested by staff in feedback sessions with management. Staff has expressed a desire for training in mental health and crisis response, substance use disorders, and first aid. We also plan to introduce more regular training in trauma-informed care, harm reduction, housing first, and LGBTQ+ issues and equal access.

Porchlight is keenly aware that providing direct service to individuals experiencing homelessness can lead to secondary traumatization and burnout. While many employees are driven to do this kind of work, it is still difficult and draining. Promoting employee engagement, satisfaction, and wellness is an ongoing effort, and a focus of Porchlight's current strategic plan. In addition to increasing training and development resources, Porchlight plans to more intentionally connect employees and their roles to the organization's mission, and to build stronger teams within and among different programs. Although we do strive to eliminate silos within the agency, we must work harder to form meaningful connections through all levels of staff.

Another important aspect of employee morale is appreciation. Because social services work can be thankless, employees need to know that their work is recognized and appreciated. Porchlight holds annual employee appreciation events, which have included bowling, karaoke, local sports events, and family gatherings. During COVID when large gatherings have been less popular, we have held barbecues before or after shelter staff meetings. Each year we open up orders for Porchlight t-shirts and sweatshirts, which have historically been very popular, and ensure each staff member gets one free t-shirt annually in addition to any other subsidized apparel. We also try to highlight staff's work by sharing success stories on social and in print media.

Porchlight has a strong benefits package for full-time employees that includes health, dental, vision, life, and long-term disability insurance, as well as a 403(b) retirement plan. Employees who work 20 hours per week or more have sick leave, paid holidays, and generous vacation time. All employees are eligible for the

Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which includes access to Licensed Professional Counselors and Work/Life Specialists.

- 3) Describe how your agency will engage with unsheltered persons who typically do not use shelter services. What specific adjustments will you suggest, to service design, staffing, outreach, and engagement approaches that will reduce or remove barriers to their access?

As an integral part of future support services in shelter, Catalyst for Change will continue to provide a bridge between our community's unsheltered population and shelter. Catalyst currently provides daily street outreach and mediation services to individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Dane County. While providing outreach, Catalyst for Change frequently connects individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness with the Porchlight Drop-In Shelter. Catalyst for Change will continue to provide outreach services, and while providing outreach, will work to connect unsheltered individuals to the new shelter. Their outreach worker will be able to connect unsheltered individuals directly to on-site shelter case managers. Catalyst's outreach team may also provide follow-up to shelter guests as needed.

Catalyst for Change staff engage people experiencing homelessness by being a consistent presence on outreach every evening, every week. Some people experiencing homelessness distrust social workers and social services. Therefore, they do not pressure people to talk to them or to engage in services. They begin by introducing themselves and letting people know what they do and the services they provide. They let them know that they assist people with getting connected to shelter, housing, substance use treatment, case management, health insurance, photo identifications, and more. Catalyst's goal is to build trusting relationships so that they can then connect guests with shelter and case management when they are ready. Even if individuals have had negative experiences with homeless services in the past, they assure them that staff will be there to support, guide, and advocate for them so that negative encounters do not happen again.

Porchlight staff will also increase engagement with other outreach teams (e.g. MACH OneHealth, Urban Triage) to ensure they are acquainted with shelter services and guidelines, in order to encourage their clients to try using shelter, and to facilitate warm handoffs between their teams and Porchlight staff. If outreach teams feel it may be effective, Porchlight will periodically send shelter staff out to engage directly with unsheltered individuals in order to answer questions about shelter and to build trust. Shelter staff already meet biweekly with staff at The Beacon to talk about how to better serve mutual guests, and to facilitate transitions for day shelter guests who are sleeping outside but may be interested in accessing shelter. Shelter staff also meets monthly with Catalyst for Change staff to collaborate regarding guests who are vacillating between shelter and unsheltered locations, or who are on suspension from shelter and may benefit from outreach intervention.

There are additional shelter design elements that would benefit all guests, and may encourage unsheltered individuals to consider using shelter. One is increased privacy in the sleeping quarters. Porchlight would recommend equipping all beds with barriers on three sides so that guests do not have to see or be seen by the other guests surrounding them when they are trying to sleep. Another is charging capabilities at each bed, for phones and other electronics. We would also recommend secure, individual storage. It would be difficult to administer, but an ideal situation would include short-term small personal storage connected to each bed, and larger medium-term storage available in a common area.



4) Describe your strategies to improve housing outcomes for shelter guests.

The most immediate change that Porchlight believes will positively impact housing outcomes is to reimagine shelter case management services. Current case management is limited by shelter waking hours, which are outside of regular business hours, and at a time that few shelter guests are interested in engaging in supportive services. Based on current utilization patterns, we think that two case managers per evening maximizes the number of guests served within night shelter waking hours, and even if we added another, there would not be a proportional increase in utilization of case management services. Instead, we envision a case management team that may begin initial engagement during evening hours, but would do the majority of work with guests during daytime business hours. This case management team would consist of Catalyst for Change staff. Porchlight has done case management in-house for the past several years, but thinks that to move the needle in permanent shelter, collaborating with an agency whose primary focus is outreach and case management will improve housing outcomes and allow Porchlight to focus on operational excellence.

Catalyst for Change has been a housing-focused organization since their founding. They have focused on building connections with social service providers, local property managers, landlords, and owners to house individuals experiencing homelessness and improve housing outcomes for their clients. They complete VI-SPDAT assessments and make sure individuals are referred to Coordinated Entry. They also make sure all required HUD documentation is completed and submitted so individuals will move more quickly up the housing list. Because there are infrequent openings in Permanent Supportive Housing through Coordinated Entry, they have created their own version of “permanent supportive housing” where they work closely with clients and property managers to make sure their clients are successful in their housing. Their goal is not only to get clients housed, but also to improve their overall quality of life and assist them in individual skill development so they can achieve success, however that looks for them.

Another important factor is data collection. Improving data does not improve housing outcomes per se, but it improves our knowledge of what those outcomes are. Because there are currently so many exits to unknown destinations, the general assumption is that all of those are negative exits. Porchlight is already improving our data collection practices, and having a larger case management team that is able to follow and serve a much larger group of guests will inevitably result in fewer exits to unknown destinations. Also, a 24-hour service model would significantly increase continuity of service, which would likely reduce transiency among guests.

In addition to supportive service changes and data collection improvements, Porchlight has been exploring options for prioritization amongst our own affordable housing stock for guests accessing shelter. Porchlight currently has five properties that are not already prioritizing individuals experiencing homelessness, including our Brooks St building, which has our most affordable SRO units. The five properties include units of various sizes, with rents ranging from \$265-\$800/month. This variety would allow us to house individuals on a fixed income, in addition to guests with higher incomes who are otherwise unable to compete in Dane County’s rental market. Provided we are able to follow through with this idea, we would accomplish this by structuring a preference in our tenant selection criteria for these properties. While this will not single-handedly house the 1,200 guests who access shelter each year, it is another strategy that we hope will make a positive impact on housing outcomes for guests.



5) Substance use and mental health issues often pose barriers for people accessing shelter or housing. What practices and policies, including harm reduction practices, will your agency implement to accommodate the needs of shelter guests with medical, mental health and substance use challenges?

For the past two years, Porchlight has been successfully serving guests who present at shelter under the influence of alcohol and drugs. Many guests do not exhibit behavioral issues while intoxicated and are able to access shelter resources without issue. Staff is better able to address behavioral issues that do arise when there is an appropriate level of staffing to allow for one or two staff to respond to an incident while other staff are still available to oversee general operations and serve other guests. Porchlight intends to continue serving individuals under the influence in permanent shelter, and continue to have Narcan and safe needle disposal boxes on site. We will also work with community partners to provide on-site support to guests with substance use challenges, and will continue to host AA/NA groups in shelter for guests who are interested in 12-step recovery programs.

Porchlight is interested in reducing and potentially even eliminating service suspensions for alcohol- or drug-related incidents, while still prohibiting substances in shelter. At the next temporary site, we will be experimenting with pre-intake personal storage to determine if we can reduce substances in shelter with an environmental solution. We hypothesize that if guests have the option to lock up drugs or alcohol before they enter shelter, it may reduce the number of guests who attempt to bring substances inside. We are interested in other potential environmental and policy solutions that promote a substance-free environment in shelter while preserving dignity and keeping guests inside.

The shelter currently serves many guests with mental health issues, and shelter staff do their best to make accommodations as necessary, intervene in crises, and de-escalate conflicts between guests that may be exacerbated by mental health symptoms. Staff already makes an effort to avoid suspensions when incidents are clearly mental health-related, provided that no one is seriously harmed. Porchlight will be introducing mental health training for all shelter staff so they feel better equipped to serve guests with mental health issues who may present in any number of ways. We hope to provide tele-mental health appointments for guests in the future, using our current telehealth setup. We will also have a larger case management team that can focus on the needs of individuals with mental health issues, and connect them to care as needed, including connection to Comprehensive Community Services, as appropriate.

In addition to services, there are building design features that could benefit guests who struggle in large group settings. One would be to have several separate spaces instead of one large dormitory. Because some guests may disturb others when they have trouble sleeping, Porchlight would recommend a lit room with tables, chairs, a TV, books, and games for guests to access when they are not able to sleep or need time away from the larger group. As we saw at Higher Ground, we recommend an outdoor, enclosed smoking space with picnic tables that could be accessed without supervision at any time of night. Many conflicts could be resolved if guests had an opportunity to step outside for a smoke or just to get some fresh air.

In order to effectively serve individuals with medical issues, the shelter should include medical respite rooms where in-home care attendants can assist individuals who are unable to care for themselves. When the Vulnerable Population Hotel program ends, we anticipate that several guests with higher needs will return to shelter and require more assistance than shelter staff is able to provide. Historically, hospitals have discharged individuals directly to shelter, even when they are unable to perform their

activities of daily living (ADLs). While we know that a better long-term solution is necessary, we need to find a safer way to serve folks who require a higher level of care but must access shelter in the interim.

- 6) Describe strategies you would adopt to limit the number and length of suspensions. Describe how your agency would integrate restorative justice concepts (resolving conflict through non-punitive measures to repair harm) in your policies and procedures.

Last year, Porchlight shelter management analyzed January – July 2021 shelter incident data in order to inform changes to suspension policies, including reducing length of suspensions overall and implementing a warning system before issuing suspensions for bringing alcohol and drugs into shelter. We also analyzed January – June 2022 shelter incident data to determine whether there were any discernible patterns, and whether previous changes had made a difference in overall suspension trends. We found that the proportion of suspensions to bed nights was down very slightly (0.53% in 2021 v. 0.50% in 2022), and longer-length suspensions of 4+ months were also down slightly (14% of suspensions in 2021 v. 11% of suspensions in 2022).

One of the things we were most interested in seeing was whether implementing a warning system for bringing in alcohol and drugs would reduce the number of overall suspensions for solely substance possession. We did find that there were a large number of guests who were warned the first time they brought in drugs or alcohol, and did not bring it in again, therefore avoiding a suspension. However, we were surprised by the number of guests who still brought in substances even after being warned, and the number who brought in substances multiple times and received graduated suspensions. Overall, drugs and alcohol in shelter represented 40% of suspensions in 2022 (down only slightly from 47% in 2021). That tells us that suspensions are not an effective deterrent when it comes to bringing substances into shelter. For this reason, Porchlight would eliminate suspensions solely for bringing in substances.

We found that 9% of suspensions were issued for guests smoking inside, which is a historically high number of smoking incidents. This is something that we believe could be reduced or potentially eliminated by having an enclosed, outdoor smoking area that can be accessed without supervision throughout the night. We also think there is a potential environmental solution for theft, which represented 5% of suspensions in 2022. If guests had personal secure storage attached to their beds, there may be less opportunity for their belongings to be subject to theft from other guests.

Most other suspensions were a result of interpersonal conflicts of varying degrees among guests or between guests and staff. Some conflicts could be better resolved if shelter staff have a stronger skill set in de-escalation and trauma-informed care. However, many conflicts do escalate to a point where a guest must be removed from general shelter in order to ensure the safety of the remaining guests. In those cases, when police presence is not necessary, Porchlight envisions two smaller rooms outside the main dormitories. These rooms would be used to separate guests in conflict with each other while still keeping them inside. The guests could continue to access these rooms for an assigned period of time, like an in-shelter suspension. However, if they are interested in coming back to the main shelter earlier, they can work with staff to repair the harm, or establish a service plan with case management. That could look like meeting with the other guest to apologize, returning or repairing property, helping out around the shelter, participating in groups, developing a housing plan, seeking treatment, etc. Porchlight would train staff in

mediation, and collaborate with a community partner to learn more about restorative justice practices and how they could be incorporated in shelter. This would not eliminate suspensions outside of shelter, but could significantly reduce the number of suspensions that result in guests losing access to shelter entirely.

- 7) Individuals that identify as a couple have barriers accessing shelter in Dane County. How would your agency plan to accommodate them? What are some important considerations that would need to be addressed?

There is certainly a gap in shelter services for couples in Dane County. Same-sex couples and couples in which one or both individuals identify as nonbinary currently have the option of seeking shelter together at either the single women's shelter or the single men's shelter. However, they may still experience stigma associated with their LGBTQ+ status, and feel uncomfortable in shelter. Opposite-sex couples must either split up and access shelter individually, or elect to remain together in an unsheltered location.

The purpose-built shelter could have a dormitory specifically for couples, with a dedicated staff person to enroll couples and oversee the space. It would also require support services to work with couples to identify housing options. The number of support staff needed would depend on the number of beds in this space. The couples' dormitory would still have single beds, and as with the rest of the shelter, there would still be rules prohibiting sexual acts, both individual and between couples.

Aside from requiring a separate space with additional staffing, there would be several other considerations and potential complications for a facility with a shelter for couples. First, while the overall goal may be to reduce the number of opposite-sex couples choosing to remain unsheltered rather than seek shelter separately in single-sex shelters, a couples' shelter could not limit access to opposite-sex couples. Same-sex couples or couples in which one or both individuals identify as nonbinary may also elect to access couples' shelter, because it may feel more comfortable or welcoming to couples than single-sex shelters. Secondly, and perhaps more significantly, while the overall goal may be to reduce the number of unsheltered couples, there is a significant number of couples who currently do split up in order to access shelter. If there are a limited number of beds in the couples' shelter, they could be accessed by couples who are already accessing shelter separately, but would prefer to access shelter as a couple. You could prioritize couples who are unsheltered, but that may have the unintended consequence of incentivizing couples to sleep outside in order to become eligible for couples' shelter.

A decision to move forward with couples' shelter within this new purpose-built shelter would need to be coupled (pardon the pun) with an understanding of the size and scope of the population, acceptance of the increase in ongoing operational cost, and strong policies and procedures that account for and mitigate the potential unintended consequences of attempting to eliminate this gap in our community in this manner.

- 8) The Operator may be asked to accommodate pets beyond service animals and emotional support animals. What is your agency's position on supporting pets? What considerations would need to be addressed?

Porchlight is open to supporting guests with pets in shelter, provided there is space and appropriate accommodations to do so. We are aware that there are a number of individuals sleeping in unsheltered locations because their pets do not qualify as service or assistance animals and they do not wish to separate from their pets.

There would be several considerations to address. Shelter would need many crates of various sizes, and something to cover each crate. Pets would sleep in crates next to where their owner is sleeping. Crates for cats would need to be large enough to accommodate litter boxes. Shelter would need to have supplies on site, including pet food, water bowls, leashes and harnesses, cat litter and scoops, and bags to clean up after dogs.

There would need to be more than one dormitory so that shelter guests with allergies or concerns about animals could sleep apart from pets. Guests with animals would need to be spaced out so that their pets are less likely to be agitated by each other. There should be a closed-off outdoor area designated as a pet space so that guests can take their animals outside as needed throughout the night.

WisCARES has agreed to partner with Porchlight to help provide supplies and to reserve appointment slots specifically for shelter referrals, to ensure pets are updated on their vaccinations, and have necessary preventative medications. They are also considering providing on-site consultations at shelter if possible. If the shelter moves forward with a plan to support pets, WisCARES staff has agreed to provide ideas and feedback regarding facility and outdoor design to effectively accommodate various animals while minimizing potential negative impacts on other guests.

Men's Shelter Operator Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Review Team Supplemental Questions – Porchlight

PARTNERSHIP

- *"Catalyst for Change will partner with Porchlight to provide housing focused case management services at the shelter." Would Catalyst for Change be a subcontractor for Porchlight? Does it mean that Porchlight would not hire case managers within Porchlight? Would Catalyst for Change be able to leverage CCS and other Medicaid resources for shelter operation?*

Catalyst for Change would indeed be a sub-contractor under this grant. The exact staffing pattern will be influenced by service model and budget, but we anticipate that Porchlight would not hire case managers in addition to Catalyst staff. We envision an operations team and a services team that work closely together.

We know from other community projects that relying too heavily on a plan to leverage CCS and Medicaid dollars is not an effective plan to provide service access to all program participants. The cost of service staff could only be directly offset by shelter guests who have Medicaid, are eligible and interested in CCS, and select Catalyst for Change as their service facilitation agency or an array provider. We will not limit housing-focused service access to guests on Medicaid, nor put forth a budget that accounts for any significant amount of Medicaid resources. That said, it is our vision that shelter guests who are eligible and interested in CCS be connected to those services with the help of shelter staff, and that if they do receive Medicaid-funded services from shelter staff, we recoup the cost of those services in our shelter budget.

- *"Nurse Disrupted hopes to broaden services to include on-demand tele-mental health care for shelter guests experiencing mental health crises or otherwise in need of mental health care." What would it look like? Do you have a cost estimate?*

This service does not yet exist, but Nurse Disrupted is currently in talks with Anesis Therapy Center and Journey Mental Health as potential therapy partners. Logistically, access to the service would look the same as current telehealth. Shelter guests would walk up to a kiosk in a private room and touch the display, which would prompt connection to a therapist via video. Sessions would be about 30 minutes long, and focus on brief interventions for guests currently experiencing mental health challenges.

Depending on available budget for this service, it could be provided a couple of different ways. Porchlight could contract for set hours at Medicaid rates. For example, a therapist could be made available for 4 hours two days per week at \$113/hour (monthly cost of ~\$3,616). Any guest could access the service during these set hours. Another option could be that guests with insurance could access the service, and the therapy partner could bill Medicaid. This would limit access, but lower costs.

- *"Kabba Recovery Services...will do weekly groups and provide on-call crisis intervention services". For on-call crisis intervention services, would it be telehealth or in-person? How would it be different from Nurse Disrupted telehealth? How quickly can on-call crisis staff respond?*

On-call crisis intervention from Kabba would be over the phone or in-person, depending on the severity of the situation. In most cases, we anticipate that shelter staff will be able to de-escalate a guest in crisis. We would still use available resources like 988 or Journey's crisis line, and access tele-mental health if it were available. Our intention would be to utilize on-call crisis intervention through Kabba only in extreme cases when a crisis situation cannot be de-escalated by on-site staff or a guest needs additional help to remain safe, and the next step would be to call the police. Our hope would be that on-call crisis staff would either help the guest remain safely in shelter or help provide a warm handoff to emergency personnel if the guest does end up needing to be transported to the hospital for their safety. Kabba estimates that their on-call staff could be available by phone within 15 minutes, and on-site within 30-45 minutes. The goal of this service is to prevent police calls whenever possible, and to mitigate trauma associated with police contact if it is deemed necessary.

Men's Shelter Operator Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Review Team Supplemental Questions – Porchlight

- *The proposal includes several key partnerships. How would you ensure that the services are not duplicated and offered in a cohesive manner?*

Some of these partnerships already exist in shelter, and we manage them by scheduling set days for each group where possible. This ensures that guests know when to expect certain services to be available (MACH/MEDiC clinic on Mondays, vaccine clinics on Wednesdays, AA/NA on Thursdays, etc.). This also allows shelter staff to refer guests to specific services that may benefit them, and have a higher chance for follow through. We prevent duplication by vetting new services ahead of time, and ensuring that we are filling current gaps in access or availability. For example, a guest may require a medical consult. If MACH/MEDiC are on-site and have openings, the guest would be directed their way. If their docket is full or the issue needs to be addressed outside of their hours, the guest would be referred to a telehealth nurse who is available on demand. In general though, the sheer number of guests accessing shelter limits any provider's ability to meet all need, thereby limiting opportunity for duplication of services. In permanent shelter, Porchlight would continue to create schedules with community partners and ensure that there is adequate time and space for them to serve guests effectively.

- *Which agency do you expect to partner with for day shelter services? If day and night shelters are operated by different providers, how do you envision services will be coordinated in a cohesive manner?*

Porchlight approached Catholic Charities as a potential partner for day shelter services, as we already work closely with Beacon staff. They were initially interested, but were unable to commit within the timeline of the RFQ. They did leave the door open for future conversations if/when they became clearer on the future of The Beacon. There were outstanding questions about how the current day resource center would operate if the new purpose-built shelter also included day services, and what future City and County funding would look like. We think there are some conversations that need to happen in the community and amongst funders about the ideal picture of day services when this new shelter is operational. When there is a clearer picture, Porchlight may be able to broach this topic again with other providers.

If Porchlight were able to partner to provide day shelter services, that partner would be a sub-contractor. Porchlight would be the lead agency, and would make final decisions as necessary regarding policies and procedures, as well as coordinate facility issues. Both providers would use HMIS to track attendance and services. Porchlight already has a good working relationship with other shelter providers, and has worked over the years, and even more during COVID, to make policies and procedures more consistent across shelters. We are confident that we would develop a strong and amicable relationship with another agency if we collaborated to provide shelter. If we are unable to partner with another agency to provide day shelter services, Porchlight is still committed to providing day services in-house.

- *How is the relationship between security and the guests?*

Porchlight introduced security personnel and screening after the shooting in shelter in March of 2021, at the request of both staff and guests. Mid-year guest surveys a few months later indicated that most guests felt safer with security present. The primary complaints in the following year were about the approach of a specific guard, and screening speed. After multiple attempts at individual coaching, Porchlight spoke with the security company about softening their approach, and the company simultaneously came under new management. For the past several months, the two security guards assigned to shelter have forged a strong, respectful relationship with both guests and staff. They have extensive training in de-escalation, and understand that our goal is to resolve conflicts and keep guests inside. The new guards would much rather connect with the individual than act as an authority figure. Shelter staff believes that the large majority of guests now see the role of security as ensuring safety for everyone. Porchlight also hopes to increase the speed of security screening at Zeier Rd by offering pre-intake storage for guests, so that they may securely store belongings and therefore reduce the number of items to be screened.

Men's Shelter Operator Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Review Team Supplemental Questions – Porchlight

FUNDRAISING

- *Porchlight intends on increasing its capacity for resource development in the coming years. What are the plans for increasing capacity?*

Porchlight will be hiring one (1) 20-40 hour/week Resource Development Director in 2024. Porchlight does not currently have a staff person solely dedicated to fundraising and grant writing. The Board of Directors has already approved this new position, which will provide resource development and acquisition for all Porchlight programs in addition to the new men's purpose-built shelter.

STAFF TRAINING & WELL-BEING

- *What is the staff turnover rate at the men's shelter?*

Porchlight is currently seeing about a 33% annual turnover in shelter staff. The position that has most frequently turned over since the 2020 change in staffing pattern is the part-time Health Assessment Coordinator position that conducts COVID screenings for guests entering shelter and refers as appropriate to the Isolation/Quarantine Center. This position is held primarily by former health assessment volunteers who have full-time jobs or attend school full time, and either leave the area or no longer wish to hold multiple jobs. We also have difficulty retaining third shift staff. Other positions tend to be a bit more stable.

CONNECTING WITH UNSHELTERED POPULATION

- *"Porchlight will periodically send shelter staff out to engage directly with unsheltered individuals in order to answer questions about shelter and to build trust." What staff position would be best suited to perform this duty? What is the envisioned frequency?*

We think management and intake staff would be the positions best suited to engage with folks, as they are some of the first staff members guests would encounter when they enter shelter. Guests may feel more comfortable if they recognize staff when they first come in. We have not tried this before, so whether we continue this strategy and with what frequency would be determined by the success of the outreach efforts. If we saw unsheltered individuals trying shelter, and the response from street outreach workers was positive, we could potentially send someone out on a biweekly or monthly basis to connect with folks.

- *How would you address the specific concerns identified by the unsheltered population regarding why they are not accessing the shelter?*

There is limited up-to-date information about why individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness are not accessing shelter. However, results from a 2019 survey of unsheltered households listed the following reasons in order of frequency: feeling unsafe, used up 90 nights, too many rules/rules are too strict, issues with staff, barred from services, too crowded or loud, and nowhere to store my stuff. Several of these concerns have been addressed since that survey, including the addition of security, elimination of the 90-night limit, significant change in staffing pattern and personnel, and allowing folks in under the influence of substances. Since making those changes, Porchlight created a brochure to be distributed by street outreach providers that highlighted changes in policies, listed what shelter guests can expect, and included pictures of the new space at First St.

In the original RFQ response, Porchlight proposed several other strategies and amenities that would address concerns previously mentioned by the unsheltered population, including storage (Q4-3), an enclosed and accessible smoking area (Q4-1, Q4-5), and multiple dormitories with increased privacy (Q4-1, Q4-3). The response also mentions reducing or eliminating service suspensions for substance-related incidents (Q4-5) and adopting a restorative justice model that responds to conflicts in shelter while striving to keep guests inside (Q4-6). A congregate shelter cannot cease to have rules, but our goal would be to make those guidelines clear and sensible, and to ensure guests do not feel they are arbitrary, or being inconsistently enforced.

Men's Shelter Operator Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Review Team Supplemental Questions – Porchlight

HOUSING

- *The City and County envision this shelter to be housing-focused shelter with improved housing outcomes. What are some tangible ways that you can connect people to housing?*

This permanent-built shelter will be amazing for our community, but ultimately will not change the housing landscape in Madison. Our shelter guests will still face significant barriers to housing, and affordable housing stock will continue to be far too small to meet the need. We have seen during COVID that even with vouchers and rapid rehousing funding, individuals experiencing homelessness struggle to find housing in Madison. Where we hope to make an impact is in creating more on-site opportunities to eliminate barriers to housing, securing funding for entry costs for guests who could otherwise obtain housing, and working with Catalyst for Change staff to develop, expand, and improve relationships with community landlords who might consider referrals from shelter staff. Porchlight is also looking into targeting some of our own housing stock (Q4-4).

- *If housing-focused case management is provided by Catalyst for Change, what would be the other Porchlight staff members' roles in advancing the housing goal?*

Other successful housing-focused shelters set a tone from the first time a guest enters, that shelter is temporary, and they must be on a path to housing. We hope to develop a program that is housing-focused from day one, and engages guests from the moment they enroll. Porchlight operational staff will build relationships with shelter guests, encouraging them to participate in on-site activities, connecting them to community resources when possible, and providing warm handoffs to case management staff. Shelter staff will reinforce that shelter is just a waypoint, and support guests in actively working toward their housing goals. Porchlight is also thinking about possible ways to support guests after they have transitioned to housing, so that they do not return to homelessness due to lack of support or community in housing.

SUSPENSIONS

- *What is the typical suspension length for the types of suspensions mentioned in the application – bringing in alcohol and drugs, smoking incidents, interpersonal conflicts?*

Currently, suspensions for bringing alcohol or drugs into shelter are graduated (warning, 7 days, 14 days, 30 days, 45 days, 60 days). Smoking incidents are 30 days, due to multiple past fires caused by lit cigarettes in shelter. Interpersonal conflicts vary based on the severity of the incident. If the situation can be de-escalated and no one is hurt, there is often no suspension. Conflicts that involve more significant verbal aggression can range from 3-7 days. More serious verbal and physical aggression that may include overt threats are typically 2-3 weeks. A physical altercation with another guest can range from 1-3 months depending on severity and whether one or more guests was injured. A one-sided assault of another guest or staff ranges from 6 months to a permanent loss of services, based on whether the other person was or could have been seriously injured. In the last suspension analysis, serious interpersonal conflicts resulting in suspensions of 6 months or more represented 10% of total suspensions.

- *Do you think you would need medical staff (doctor, nurse) on site if you are operating a wet shelter?*

It is not Porchlight's intention to operate a "wet" shelter, which means allowing and facilitating on-site substance use. Safe/Supervised Consumption Sites (SCS) are an important tool in overdose prevention, but they include close medical supervision. That would require dedicated medical staff throughout shelter operation hours, which would be prohibitively expensive, and would also require a dedicated space inside shelter for supervised use.

Instead, Porchlight intends to operate a "damp" shelter, which accepts guests under the influence of substances, but does not allow on-site use. Understanding that on-site use still occasionally occurs, shelter staff would be trained in Narcan administration to combat overdoses in shelter. This is the model Porchlight has been operating for the past 2+ years, and has done so successfully.

Men's Shelter Operator Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Review Team Supplemental Questions – Porchlight

COUPLES

- *Do you have an estimated number of couples or households with adult children of different genders currently splitting up and using the men's shelter and women's shelter?*

We do not currently ask for or track this information, so there is no way to accurately gauge the scope at this time. Anecdotally, Porchlight and Beacon staff could think of 5-7 different-gender couples who are splitting up to access shelter. There are also at least 4-5 couples who are currently identifying or presenting as same-sex couples and accessing the same shelter together.

- *There are other community shelter examples where they did not explicitly prohibit it and allow participants to work things out to allow each other intimate time. Would you be willing to consider such a model?*

Porchlight would not categorically rule it out. We are open to hearing about other models that have been successful, and how different policies could work in this permanent shelter. We would, however, have questions about logistics and philosophy. For example:

- Would intimate contact be allowed in congregate spaces? If so, how could we ensure other guests are not negatively impacted?
 - If there are non-congregate spaces for intimate contact, how would it be determined how long and by whom those spaces may be accessed?
 - As with family shelter, would couples shelter accept any self-identified couple? If so, should the shelter be concerned about coercion or trafficking of any kind?
 - How should shelter staff handle reports of non-consensual intimate contact or sexual assault?
 - Should the shelter be concerned about sex work inside shelter? If so, how might sex work be prevented and/or handled when it is reported?
- *What resources can you offer for reproductive health?*

Our current telehealth system provides care advice by registered nurses for over 700 care concerns, including many reproductive health topics (e.g. sexual assault, contraception, STI exposure/questions, etc.). We also currently stock condoms with help from partners at Vivent Health, and would continue to do so. Additionally, Public Health recently announced that they will be expanding their Sexual and Reproductive Health Clinic. We have fostered a very strong partnership with Public Health in the past two years, and anticipate that expansion of their services will result in increased access for our guests. Public Health has been excellent at providing us with educational resources and supplies, coming on-site to serve guests directly, and streamlining referral processes wherever possible.

OTHER

- *How do you plan to make a shelter more welcoming?*

There are several environmental design considerations that would make the facility itself more welcoming and less institutional. On the program side, shelter guests have given lots of suggestions that we would like to implement, including: on-site activities and classes, more opportunities for work, stronger Wi-Fi and places to charge electronics, a cafeteria, better A/C, lockers, vending machines, games, computer room, and focus groups.

- *Do you plan to have any healthcare members on staff?*

We doubt that the future operational budget of the shelter will support the cost of one or more health care members on staff, which would be significant. Porchlight is continuing and expanding current partnerships with other organizations that provide health care in order to facilitate connection to those resources for shelter guests. That said, we would certainly be open to having health care members on staff if the operational budget supported it.