

SAVE THE SOLDIERS HOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Every hero deserves a home

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MILWAUKEE SOLDIERS HOME?

The Milwaukee VA Soldiers Home Historic District (Soldiers Home), a 90-plus acre district that rests on the grounds of the Clement J. Zablocki Medical Center overlooking Miller Park, is one of Milwaukee's most important historic assets.

The Soldiers Home was built in 1867 as a place of healing for veterans returning from the Civil War. This was made possible by a group of women from throughout Milwaukee who raised \$110,000, a staggering amount of money in the 1860s, to make this vision into a reality. As one of his last acts before his assassination, President Abraham Lincoln signed legislation to create a national system of homes for disabled veterans. Milwaukee's is one of the three original Soldiers Homes; it is the most intact. It is also one of only 43 National Historic Landmarks in Wisconsin and contains some of the oldest and most historic buildings in the entire VA system. Since then, thousands of Wisconsin veterans made the Milwaukee Soldiers Home their home. We can honor these men and women and support those who have so nobly served our country in this century by restoring these iconic buildings to relieve the plight of homeless veterans.

For people who have served our country so proudly, spending their nights on the streets of Milwaukee, in shelters waiting for permanent housing, or doubled up with family or friends is unthinkable. This project will provide 101 units of housing and services for homeless veterans and those who are at risk of becoming homeless.

The project affords an opportunity for a groundbreaking public-private partnership to help address veteran homelessness and preserve some of Milwaukee's most historic buildings.

Saving the Soldiers Home is a truly remarkable and historic undertaking in Milwaukee.

WHAT IS THE TOTAL COST?

The project will cost approximately \$40 million.

HOW IS THE PROJECT BEING FUNDED?

The project is made possible through an Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) agreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Through an EUL, the District's vacant buildings will be leased out long term to third-parties, in this case, The Alexander Company and the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee. The project will be financed through Low Income

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Housing Tax Credits, Federal and State Historic Tax Credits, grants, fundraising and other soft financing options.

HOW MUCH DO YOU NEED TO RAISE PRIVATELY IN A CAPITAL CAMPAIGN?

A capital campaign, led by a coalition of organizations and volunteers, to raise \$3,000,000 in private support from foundations, corporations, organizations and individuals will leverage \$37,000,000 in additional funding that will come to the Milwaukee community for this project.

WHICH VOLUNTEERS WILL LEAD THE CAMPAIGN?

Mick Hatch, Patty Keating-Kahn and Carl Mueller will co-chair the campaign. A Leadership Team has been formed that includes representatives from many veterans' organizations throughout Milwaukee and Wisconsin, and other community leaders.

An Honorary Committee of community leaders who endorse the project has also been created. A complete list of volunteers is available upon request.

WHO ARE THE PARTNERS IN THIS PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP?

- The **Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee** (HACM) and **The Alexander Company** are leading a team that will renovate, operate and maintain these significant buildings to provide permanent supportive housing for veterans and their families that are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- The **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs** (VA) is involved in all aspects of the project.
- The **Milwaukee Preservation Alliance** has been working consistently since 2011 to save

the vacant buildings at the Milwaukee Soldiers Home and will continue their efforts through campaign leadership.

- The **Center for Veterans Issues** is the Supportive Resident Service Provider.
- **Uihlein Wilson Architects** is the Architect for Old Main (Building 2) and the duplexes (Buildings 14, 18, 19 and 62).
- **Quorum Architects** are the architect for the Headquarters Building (Building 1).
- **JP Cullen** is the general contractor.
- The **Greater Milwaukee Foundation** is providing oversight and administrative services for pledges and gifts related to the project.
- **Mueller Communications** will provide public relations, social media and marketing consultation and assistance.
- **Foley and Lardner LLC** is providing legal representation.
- **The Sweeney Group** is serving as capital campaign consultants.

WHAT ARE THE PLANS FOR EACH BUILDING?

We will return six of the District's buildings to the service of veterans. The buildings will be rehabilitated into a total of 101 supportive housing units for veterans and their families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

- **Old Main (Building 2):** The most iconic building at the Soldiers Home was a domiciliary for patient living and care. Under our plan, it would again become a home for veterans as it is renovated into 72 one-bedroom and 8 two-bedroom apartment units. The building will also house amenities including large community spaces, resource centers, a fitness area, and offices for building management, home healthcare and counseling. We expect renovations to Building 2 will be complete by March 2020.

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- Administration Building (Building 1): The “Headquarters” Building will be converted into single room occupancy units, which will provide housing for 14 homeless or at-risk veterans. Adjacent areas will be renovated into a common kitchen, dining, community and living rooms. The historic post office on the first floor will be reused as supportive program offices. Community and activity areas for supportive services will be housed on the building’s ground level. We expect Building 1 to be complete by April 2020.
- Several duplexes on the grounds will also be restored and refurnished for use as veteran housing, including the former Catholic Chaplain’s Quarters (Building 14), and three private duplex homes that formerly housed Soldiers Home staff and their families (Buildings 18, 19, 62). Each will be refurnished with two-story three-bedroom units on each side. We expect these buildings to be complete by April 2020.

WHO WILL COVER THE ONGOING OPERATIONAL COSTS? WILL VETERANS BE CHARGED RENT?

We have secured Project-based HUD Veterans Affairs Support Housing (HUD-VASH) Vouchers for 75 units and are applying for an additional 26. We are also working to secure Section 8 Vouchers. These vouchers will ensure that monthly rents are no more than 30% of each tenant’s monthly adjusted gross income. By participating in either HUD-VASH or Section 8, the rental income will cover the cost of operating expenses.

WILL THERE BE HOUSING UNITS SPECIFICALLY FOR WOMEN?

Yes, 11 units of housing are designated for women veterans and will be located in a separate and secure area of the building.

WHAT WILL “SUPPORTIVE SERVICES” FOR VETERANS INCLUDE?

The Center for Veterans Issues will offer onsite supportive services to resident veterans in one-on-one and group settings, including:

- Case management
- Educational training and employment assistance
- Benefits assistance
- Temporary financial assistance
- Peer-to-peer counseling
- Recreational activities
- Independent living skills training, including: cleaning, meal planning and preparation, laundry and personal finance
- Transportation assistance
- Wellness programs
- Sobriety maintenance
- Nutritional support
- Outpatient clinical referrals
- Referrals to partner organizations

WHY ARE THE APARTMENTS “VETERAN PREFERENCE” INSTEAD OF “VETERAN ONLY”?

Under an Enhanced Use Lease, we are not able to have “veteran only” housing. But, we believe that given the need in our community, all units will be filled by veterans. While estimates are more likely to capture the chronically homeless veteran population, and may undercount those who are transitionally homeless or at-risk of homelessness, those in need of permanent housing number in the thousands. Veterans who are doubled up with family or friends, but who would otherwise be without shelter, are generally not included in homeless samples. We are confident the 101 units provided as a result of rehabilitating the Milwaukee Soldiers Home will service our veterans.