

R A D I A S

H E A L T H

Welcome to a full circle of care.

September 5, 2017

To Whom it May Concern,

We are writing this letter in support of the Listening House remaining a part of our Dayton's Bluff Community. We feel strongly that the Listening House will continue to fill a gap that has existed in this community for quite some time. We believe that Listening House will continue to be responsive neighbors who will address any concerns regarding their guests, and will continue to provide a safe place for community members to direct people who may be in need.

The RADIAS Health ACCESS team, funded with federal grant dollars, provides outreach and case management to homeless individuals who struggle with mental health and chemical dependency issues in Ramsey County. The team has been operational since 1986. It is our mission to engage and build relationships with people experiencing homelessness, and connect these people to things like housing, treatment, and mental health services. The team formerly used office space within the Dorothy Day building, but relocated to the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood three years ago. The move allowed team members to be more active in engaging in community outreach activities. The team does not use this space to meet with persons served; instead the space is used as a 'base' for conducting outreach activities.

Due to outreach activities that are part of the ACCESS Team's mission, team members have been aware of homelessness in the Dayton's Bluff area for quite some time. In addition to camps in Mounds Park, team members are aware of people experiencing homelessness behind the Union Gospel Mission, in Swede Hollow, in the nearby nature sanctuary, and people living in cars within the Dayton's Bluff community. There are also a great number of people "doubled up" or "couch hopping" in this area. Some individuals receive shelter in nearby locations that require them to leave during daytime hours.

There are many people experiencing homelessness in this area who do not travel to adjacent neighborhoods to receive services such as food and healthcare. In 2015, a group of homeless services providers engaged in a targeted outreach effort in the Dayton's Bluff/Metro State Library. During this effort, providers encountered countless people who were homeless and not connected to resources.

The Listening House has been an excellent collaborative partner to homeless services advocates for many years. Outreach staff have been able to engage with many persons experiencing homelessness at the Listening House over the years - persons who have not been able to engage with service providers in any other locations. Engagement with both persons served and with staff at the Listening House has led to trusting relationships between people experiencing homelessness and service providers. This has led to permanent housing for formerly homeless individuals - and a reduction of use in other services that are costly to taxpayers.

Since the move into the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood, members of the ACCESS team have continued to work closely with Listening House staff persons and with the individuals they serve. Service providers have regularly scheduled outreach services at the Listening House. In turn, Listening House staff contact team members when there is concern or a need for additional engagement and support to persons served.

We are very hopeful that Listening House will continue to provide a needed service for persons experiencing homelessness in this community.

Sincerely,

RADIAS Health ACCESS Outreach Team

Jodi Harder

Bret Byfield

Brianna Drugg

Grant Altmann

Zach Wolfgram

