

September 5, 2018

During a meeting on September 5, 2018 between homeless individuals, government officials and local area homeless and housing agencies, the following needs and potential solutions were discussed:

Some of the short term deeds which were identified

- Basic needs such as:
 - Convenient location
 - Shelter
 - Shade
 - Food
 - Water
 - Blankets
 - Toilet facilities
 - Showers
 - Laundry facilities
 - Medical
 - Reconnect to services

Longer term needs

- Additional short-term housing
- Permanent affordable housing
- Mental health and substance abuse services
- Veterans services

Agencies who are working together to assist the homeless include:

- Kalamazoo Gospel Mission
- Ministry with Community
- Open Door / Next Door Shelters
- Kalamazoo County Community Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services
- Housing Resources Inc.
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation
- United Way of Battle Creek & Kalamazoo
- ISAAC
- 211 / Gryphon Place
- Kalamazoo Community Foundation
- City of Kalamazoo
- Kalamazoo County

Based on the conversation with homeless individuals and the needs people shared with us, the service providers have the following short term solution while we continue to work on longer term housing issues.

Proposed Short Term Solution (30 days)

1. The Kalamazoo Gospel Mission will allow those who are homeless to sleep indoors at the Gospel Mission
2. The Kalamazoo Gospel Mission will allow outdoor camping on its vacant lot which is located near Edwards Street starting September 5, 2018 through October 5, 2018
 - a. The fence will be removed
 - b. A shade tent, tables and port-a-johns will be provided outside
3. Individuals may use the Gospel Mission's services:
 - a. Indoor beds
 - b. Meals (meal hours have been extended for breakfast, lunch & dinner)
 - c. Showers will be opened to those not using the shelter
 - d. Access to other service agencies who come to the Gospel Mission
4. Ministry with Community (located across the street) will provide homeless services
 - a. showers
 - b. restrooms
 - c. meals (breakfast & lunch)
 - d. laundry facilities
 - e. lockers
 - f. telephones
 - g. permanent mailing address
 - h. social work staff and access to other service agencies
5. Service agencies will seek shelter for the families who are sleeping outdoors
6. Service agencies will seek medical care for those who need it
7. A housing provider and service group will be formed and work with homeless individuals to create short-term and long-term solutions
8. Service providers would like to meet weekly with representatives from the homeless to review conditions and issues