



BRINGING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER TO END HOMELESSNESS

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\$1 Million Howard R. Levine Foundation Gift Enables Groundbreaking for Shelter

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (May 7, 2020) —Men's Shelter of Charlotte/Urban Ministry Center broke ground on a new emergency homeless shelter this week after receiving a \$1 million gift from the Howard R. Levine Foundation. In recognition of the significance of the gift, the new shelter will be named in Mr. Levine's honor. The \$4.4 million project is needed to replace the current shelter located at 3410 Statesville Avenue, and the Levine gift has provided the leverage needed to begin the project.

The newly constructed shelter will replace the existing aging and inadequate facility on the same property. The old warehouse converted for an emergency winter shelter in 2005, was designed to meet only the most basic needs – a place for men to stay warm, dry and clean. The current shelter operates in an open dormitory style layout and has recently had to reduce capacity from 180 beds to 132 in order to achieve social distancing.

The new shelter will be designed not just to meet the basic needs of its guests, but also to help men emerge from homelessness with office space for on-site case management for housing and employment services. The new facility will also add a cooking kitchen, guest laundry services, and a group room for classes and a mobile computer lab.

Howard Levine said he is enthusiastic about these new opportunities to serve men experiencing homelessness. "Many of those served by the shelter are working in jobs making \$8 or \$9 hour, and there simply are not affordable places for them to live in our community. I am excited to invest in providing both stability and opportunity for people to take the next steps forward in their lives."

The new shelter will mimic the recently renovated N. Tryon facility, with most beds in sleeping pods, creating a more private and distanced environment. While the new shelter's capacity will be an increase from the current 132 bed count, the bed numbers are still being finalized in light of COVID-19 and the need for social distancing. "This pandemic has shown the importance of home and the ability to have a space where you can live safely and comfortably. Our intention with this upgraded shelter is to help men find safety, stability and tools to quickly move home," said Liz Clasen-Kelly, CEO of Men's Shelter of Charlotte/Urban Ministry Center.

Other major funders for the project include Honeywell (\$500,000 announced earlier this year), Springsteen Family Foundation, and The Lucille P. & Edward C. Giles Foundation. North Carolina Housing Finance Agency is supporting the project with a \$500,000 loan and Charlotte City Council recently approved a \$800,000 grant



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from the City's Housing Trust Fund. Construction is estimated to take nine months, with the expectation of guests being able to move in at the end of next winter. Fortunately, guests will not have to be relocated during construction, as the new shelter will be built behind the existing shelter.

Mecklenburg County reports over 3,000 people experiencing homelessness.

Men's Shelter of Charlotte/Urban Ministry Center is a comprehensive homeless service provider, offering everything from street outreach and basic services, to shelter and housing. Services and programs reach over 1,200 individuals every day across six campuses in Charlotte, including two year-round emergency shelters for men. Its N. Tryon Street shelter was renovated and reopened in 2018. More information about the organization can be found at mensshelterofcharlotte.org or urbanministrycenter.org.

CEO Liz Clasen-Kelly will be available to answer questions from 1:00pm-2:00pm at 3410 Statesville Avenue.

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