

To: Mayor and City Council Members

From: Nate Burkett, City Manager

Cc:

Date: November 22, 2022

Subject: Dakota County/Guild Crisis Center Issue Brief

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- **Overarching policy** – The Council has expressed support for greater mental health services in the community and a desire/willingness to be a part of the solution. This project improves a broken system by creating a place for people to go when they need more help than regular out-patient counseling, but are not in significant enough crisis to require hospitalization.
- **Transparency**
  - County/Guild – The County has held 4 total public meetings on 10/18 and 11/10. Two meetings were held each day one during the day and one in the evening. People could attend virtually or in person. Another meeting/open house is set for 12/1.
  - City process – The City Council held a work session on this topic on 9/26/2022. All of the statutorily required notices were sent out to properties within 350 feet. The planning commission held a properly noticed public hearing. The Council will hear the proposal on 12/12 – we intend to list that as a public hearing on the agenda so that people have another chance to be heard.
- **Public safety**
  - Client Type – This facility will be serving people that are deemed not to be a risk to themselves or others. It is a voluntary placement – as compared to other facilities in the city that are typically placements by court order.
  - Police Perspective – Chief Sturgeon has worked closely with Guild and the County and is comfortable with the business model at this location and that it will not cause a public safety risk. The services will be provided differently than they are at the three group homes that Guild currently operates in SSP. In addition, the building will be built for this purpose, as opposed to a home that is being used as a group home – so there will be better security and layouts to keep everyone safe. There will be calls to the facility, but as with everything the PD will handle it.
  - Police Calls – Comparing calls to other group homes and trying to estimate what the impact this facility will have is like comparing apples to oranges. The facilities (which are repurposed single family homes, or duplexes or apartments) currently in operation in West St. Paul house people who are court ordered to treatment. Yes, some of these facilities have higher call volumes – but they are not the same as this proposed facility.
  - Similar facility in Savage – The City Administrator and Police Chief of Savage have both stated that there are no concerns with the Savage facility. The Savage facility provides

the same in-patient treatment that this facility will, but does not have the drop in services. There are occasional calls to the Savage location, but nothing as severe or frequent as to cause concern to the City or adjacent residents.

- Current WSP Site - Guild currently provides walk in services at 1740 Livingston in West St. Paul which is .6 miles away from the proposed site. Neighbors to the Livingston Guild site have not reported problems to the City – problems are not expected due to drop-in services at the Northern Service Center site.
- **Lawsuit against Guild** – Community members have brought forward a lawsuit between a former employee and Guild. The former employee alleged that Guild did not protect them from a client who was harassing and threatening her. That suit was settled out of court. The Council is not allowed to consider that suit in their deliberations and should not ask about it. If Guild brings it up that opens the door, but it is highly unlikely that they will.
- **Statutory requirement to allow** – The City is REQUIRED by statute to allow this type of use somewhere in the City. Staff worked with the County and Guild to determine this was the best site due to its proximity to retail, and to the future BRT line. This was also the least intrusive location we could find based on a list of 6 that the County provided earlier this year.
- **Potential CUP Conditions** - Minn. Stat. 462.357 Subd. 8. Allows for the city to put reasonable conditions on a facility of this type. With the provision that “no conditions shall be imposed on the facility which are more restrictive than those imposed on other conditional uses or special uses of residential property in the same zones, unless the additional conditions are necessary to protect the health and safety of the residents of the residential facility”. A couple of ideas for consideration are:
  - Require that all people being discharged from the facility have an arranged private transportation mode back to their home community.
  - Require Guild to provide the City with their admission requirements/policy, require them to abide by it.
  - Require Guild to install and monitor security cameras across the entire exterior of the site.