



Board of Directors
Interfaith Sanctuary
1620 W. River Street
Boise, ID 83702

Dear Members of the Board,

It is with great respect and appreciation for all your continued work at Interfaith Sanctuary that we submit this letter to support the expansion of Interfaith's work at the new State Street location.

The Boise/Ada County Homeless Coalition is an organization of members from across the community (and Treasure Valley). Our membership represents service providers for those at risk of housing insecurity, those who find themselves unhoused, members from the community at large, and members from sectors such as health care, education, refugee resettlement, the faith community, builders and property managers. Our mission is education (of ourselves and others) about the policies, practices, and systems that feed this cycle of instability, as well as the inaccurate and harmful narratives built around homelessness in the U.S. We engage in ongoing advocacy for best practices, policies, and resources to address the barriers and to protect the most vulnerable in our communities.

Today Interfaith Sanctuary represents one of the most essential safety nets for the disenfranchised in Boise (and the wider area it is sometimes called to serve). It is the ONLY low barrier shelter in our community that accepts families, single adults, and those who are struggling with physical, mental, and substance health issues. What we see proven across the country (and for years now) is that it is imperative for humans to be stably housed in order to find the internal and external resources to begin rebuilding their lives. Interfaith provides this. With safe housing and its growing number of programs, it encourages its guests to engage, connect with others, and regain their sense of identity and control over their lives. Watching this organization continue to expand services and impact with so few resources and almost no space has been like watching a garden bloom. The idea of expanded and dedicated spaces for its work and guests is JUST what is needed.

We know this has been a long journey, and hope that you see and hear not only the voices of those who might contact and encourage you, but all of those within the community who have been showing up along the way...with hundreds of letters and hours of support in public forums. There is an "army" behind you, people who understand the necessity and quality of the work being done....people who are grateful for a means to protect and promote those who need a hand.

Although I appreciate the emphasis that data provides, I will skip them, confident that you understand the trends we are faced with—the rising costs and dearth of housing, the stagnant wages (the number of employed homeless the shelter supports), and the unhoused family, elderly, and medically vulnerable numbers that continue to increase as our economy leaves more behind—more who have suffered one trauma too many—more for whom there are no other places to turn.

The work of Interfaith Sanctuary is essential to any current and future plan for our City and to the support those in emergency life situations. The work of building and opening this new shelter with such promise of stabilizing our community is crucial. YOUR work has been crucial. Indeed, you will leave a legacy. Thank you for making this happen as soon as possible.

With gratitude,

denise caruzzi

Denise Caruzzi
Boise/Ada County Homeless Coalition
m: 208-340-7449
dcaruzzi@gmail.com

"There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about."