



Chairs & Cares Model Accessible House

General Statement

Objective:

The objective of Chairs & Cares is to build and facilitate operation of a state-of-art showcase model accessible home where people with disabilities and inabilities, contractors, professionals, students and the community can gain first hand knowledge of various assistive technology alternatives and house modifications that will assist aging and disabled individuals to live independently in their community.

The entire facility and surrounding landscape displays and demonstrates, in an actual home setting, numerous and varied state of the art accessible house modifications and related furniture, fixtures, appliances, equipment and technologies that can be used to build or remodel a house to make independent living possible for people who might otherwise have to move to an institution..

What:

Two story, 4,600 sq ft house - three bedrooms, five bathrooms (two public), kitchen, resource library, equipment room, combination meeting room/classroom, vision equipment room, hearing equipment room, storm shelter room, garage, and reception office. An elevator and a stair lift will also be included. The house will be operated by a national disabilities resource organization member, Midstate Independent Living Consultants.

There are 8 Independent living centers in Wisconsin. One of them, Options for Independent Living in Green Bay (<http://optionsil.com/>) has been operating a house just like this since 1997. They serve over 800 individuals and organizations per year, plus hosting numerous additional political and social group meetings related to disabilities.

Where:

The house is located on campus at the Northcentral Technical College on the northwest side of Wausau. It will service the Central Wisconsin area including, but not limited to, the counties of Marathon, Portage, Wood, Lincoln, Taylor, Clark, Vilas, Iron, Langlade, Menominee, Shawano, Waupaca, Oneida, Price, Ashland, Forest, Sawyer, Rusk, etc.

How:

Local builders built the model home. NTC Architectural Design Professor, Roger Plamann, created first draft architectural designs and plans. Keller Builders was the general contractor. Foundations and the general community population as well as donated time and materials from local businesses and trade unions have funded the home. We broke ground on August 29, 2006 and completed construction in early August 2007.

Beneficiaries:

Local disabled and elderly people with inabilities, disabled veterans, their families, doctors, medical rehab specialists, insurance rehab specialists, builders and contractors, attorneys, and NTC students (medical program, residential design, architecture, electrical, mechanical).



Benefits:

According to Options for Independent Living, “One out of six Americans (approximately 55 million) will experience what is deemed to be a significant disability during their life. With our aging population, by 2012 more Americans will be over age 65 than under, the need for accessible living accommodations will only grow.” “Persons with disabilities are the greatest growing minority in the U.S. today.” A Kiplinger report about retirement indicates that in 2003 the national average cost for a nursing home was \$57,700 per year. In 2003 Wisconsin was close to the national average at \$56,400 per year. A September 2004 Met Life report indicates the annual average cost rose to over \$60,000 in Wisconsin. Per AARP the national average annual cost for nursing home care rose to \$68,800 in 2006.

Enabling one person to avoid going to a nursing home for one year would provide a huge cost savings for individuals and their families. Multiply by many individuals and many years and the potential economic impact is huge.

Census Data from year 2000:

- Wisconsin population = 5,401,906
 - Population over age five with disabilities = 790,917 (14.7%)
 - Population age 65 or older = 707,650 (13.1%)
 - State population age 65 or older plus those with disabilities = 242,237 (36.5%)
- Marathon County Population = 126,031
 - Population over age five with disabilities = 17,190 (13.6%)
 - Population age 65 or older = 16,384 (13.0%)
 - Population age 65 or older plus those with disabilities = 33,574 (26.7%)
 - Marathon and surrounding county population age 65 or older plus those with disabilities = 136,929 (29.2%)

Cost:

Turnkey estimate = \$1,200,000 total value. Offset by estimated \$400,000 - \$600,000 donated labor, building materials, equipment, furniture, fixtures, and appliances (based on OptionsIL building cost).

Perpetuation:

Estimated annual operating cost = \$10,000 - \$15,000. Rent from MILC will partially offset the cost. Estimated average annual donations of \$10,000 - \$20,000 will offset the balance of the operating costs and help build an endowment fund. An endowment account will be established to fund shortages in emergency maintenance, repair, and necessary updating to remain “state-of-art” with respect to accessibility. When established, account will be targeted at a minimum of \$200,000.

Participating Organizations:

- Northcentral Technical College: Providing location, architectural expertise, general assistance, board of directors and advisory board participation
- Midstate Independent Living Consultants: Will operate the house, expertise about accessible construction, furniture, fixtures, appliances, and equipment.
- Aging & Disability Resource Center: Collaborating with MILC, expertise and resources related to old age and disabilities

Internet Website: See → <http://www.choicesil.com>

Solutions for people with challenges in mobility, vision and hearing