



For Immediate Release

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Contact: Ashley Lacenski, Community Development Director

Phone: 608-782-5520

Email: Ashley.Lacenski@couleecap.org

Couleecap and City of Prairie du Chien Break Ground on New Workforce Housing Development

Couleecap and the City of Prairie du Chien broke ground on a new housing development to support the local workforce. The project, located on Brunson Street, will build four, three-bedroom, two-bathroom homes to be sold to families earning up to 80% of the County Median Income. Each home will have a full basement and a garage.

“This project has been a team effort from the beginning,” says Ashley Lacenski, Couleecap Community Development Director. “We have received tremendous support from the City of Prairie du Chien, local businesses and foundations, and the State of Wisconsin. The lack of affordable housing impacts everyone, and this community has come together to address the issue.”

The Brunson Court housing development is supported by a grant from the WI Department of Administration, as well as a land grant and 0% interest construction loan from the City of Prairie du Chien.

“When the City of Prairie du Chien attended the last presentation on the housing study for this area, we understood that workforce housing was a necessity for Prairie du Chien,” says City Administrator Chad Abram. “The City then extended the olive branch to our neighbor, Couleecap, for discussions and immediately we began to plan this great development for the City of Prairie du Chien,” added Mayor Dave Hemmer. “I don’t recall the last time the City was able to help assist the development of four homes all at the same time, this is all do to collaboration,” said City Administrator Chad Abram.

Even with these funds, the project still had a funding gap due to higher-than-usual construction prices. Couleecap needed to raise at least \$100,000 to make the project move forward.

“That’s when we reached out to local partners who really stepped up in a big way,” says Lacenski.

The George Family Foundation, People’s State Bank, Alliant Energy Foundation, Truvant, and Prairie Motor Sports provided funding towards the project.



The George Family Foundation has given \$50,000 to the project with the statement, “The George Family Foundation is excited to be a supporter of the ‘Brunson Court Twin Home Project’. Since 1996 it has been our intention and purpose to help sustain and improve the Prairie du Chien community. We deeply understand the need for workforce housing and are thankful for the opportunity to be of financial assistance.”

People’s State Bank has pledged \$20,000 to the development. “Peoples State Bank believes the success of affordable housing initiatives relies on partnerships with businesses and organizations that have a strong commitment to building our community. Peoples State Bank is committed to the communities we serve through both financial support and volunteerism, and are confident our donation will be put to great use,” said Sheri Bowar, Residential Relationship Manager, Vice President. “We are proud to assist in providing affordable housing and making our community a better place to live and work.”

Alliant Energy Foundation awarded Couleecap with a \$15,000 grant for the project. “The Alliant Energy Foundation is honored to help build the future in Crawford County,” said Julie Bauer, Executive Director, Alliant Energy Foundation. “We understand affordable workforce housing is a necessity and without an ample supply of it, the entire community suffers. We see the power in what Couleecap and the City of Prairie du Chien have already accomplished, and the potential for what lies ahead.”

Truvariant is contributing \$10,000 towards the project. Tina Stoeffler, Vice President of Operations said, “Being a part of the Prairie du Chien community for nearly 30 years, Truvariant values our partnership with the city and various other charitable organizations like Couleecap that have been instrumental in helping us be successful and expand globally under our new ownership. Truvariant’s support and partnership with Couleecap of this affordable housing initiative is an ideal investment in the community to help families gain a foundation of securing residency in our community to help support continued growth in our local businesses and community.”

Prairie Motor Sports donated \$5,000 to the project. Rod Hall, owner, said, “Prairie Motor Sports is proud to support the development of Prairie du Chien. Affordable housing is an imperative component in the growth of our community.”

Affordable workforce housing is necessary to ensure a thriving, equitable community for all. In a report by the Southwest Planning Commission completed before the pandemic, 56% of Crawford County’s resident workers needed at least two times their occupation’s median income to afford a median-priced home in the county. Affordability has not improved since the pandemic.

Couleecap has hired a local contractor to complete the project by the spring of 2023. Each home will be sold at market rate to qualified buyers earning up to 80% of the County Median Income. Couleecap will provide down payment and closing cost assistance to ensure the mortgage and property taxes are affordable for new homebuyers. Couleecap’s HUD-certified housing counselors will provide pre- and post-purchase financial counseling to ensure homebuyers are supported during the homebuying process and after closing.

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About Couleecap

Couleecap, Inc. is a private non-profit 501c3 charitable organization. Couleecap helps people in need with housing food, transportation, and more. Created in 1966, we are a community action program that fights poverty and promotes self-sufficiency in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe, and Vernon counties. Couleecap is a member of the Community Action Network, originally created in 1964. Learn more at couleecap.org.