



# Shelter Expansion Frequently Asked Questions

Midland's Open Door is currently seeking a Conditional Use Permit for the property at 1610 W. Carpenter Street with the intention of moving the current women and children's shelter from its location in Homer Township to the Carpenter Street property. It is our hope that you will welcome us, and the women and children we serve, to the neighborhood.

**1. Who will Midland's Open Door serve at 1610 W. Carpenter Street?**

Midland's Open Door will serve homeless single women and homeless women with children in this home. The women and children served are from Midland County with services also provided to those in our neighboring counties of Isabella, Clare and Gladwin if space and circumstances permit. Midland's Open Door always reserves the last bed in each of our shelters for Midland County residents.

**2. Where is the current women and children's shelter located?**

The current women and children's shelter is located at 1678 E. Chippewa River Road in Homer Township. Midland's Open Door has provided safe shelter for Midland County women and children at this location since 2004.

**3. Why are you moving?**

The current home in Homer Township is insufficient for the needs of Midland County women and children. Relocating these services to 1610 W. Carpenter provides a facility in better condition with the capacity to serve more women and children in need.

Since initiating the tracking of shelter calls and service numbers in 2015, the women and children's shelter is consistently unable to meet the need of homeless women and families in Midland County. Despite adding a new program in 2017 to move female-headed families out of shelter and into independent housing via MOD's Family Support Program, the Open Door continues to only meet 60% of needs for homeless women and children in Midland County.

In this new facility, Midland's Open Door will nearly double our capacity for women and children in crisis, expanding from 18 beds to 32 beds, with emergency capacity for 36 individuals.

Current Homer Township Location	New Carpenter Street Location
18 beds, emergency capacity for 22	32 beds, emergency capacity for 36
Safe transportation via County Connection	Safe transportation via Dial-a-Ride, bicycles and on foot
Family capacity: Mom with four children	Family capacity: Mom with six children

Most of the women who stay at Open Door's shelter do not have personal vehicles and therefore rely on County Connection for transportation. This can create an added financial burden for those already struggling. Moving services to a facility within the city limits will improve walkability and remove significant transportation barriers to employment and other resources and services frequented by those in shelter.

**4. Is the need for additional bed space for women and children a temporary need in our community?**

According to the 2018 Midland County Housing Analysis, the lowest incomes in Midland County are in households headed by single mothers and elderly women who live alone. At least half of each of those groups will struggle to find affordable rental housing in Midland County. In the case of single mothers, their problem is compounded by the need for more space than they can afford.

Given the data tracked by Midland's Open Door for the past eight years, and the 2018 Midland County Housing Analysis, we do not believe that this is a temporary need. The aim of Midland's Open Door is to ensure adequate space to meet care for Midland County neighbors who find themselves in need of temporary emergency shelter.

**5. How long will they be allowed to stay at the shelter?**

"Through to a solution" is our motto. Midland's Open Door employs case managers and support staff to work alongside each guest, assisting them with a goal plan and the resources needed to meet those goals. As long as a guest is making progress toward their goals, they will be welcome to continue their shelter stay as they work toward a long-term solution.

The women and children who live at Open Door's women and children's shelter stay, on average, 38 days in shelter.

**6. Will they be supervised 24/7? What about security?**

Midland's Open Door provides 24/7 supervision by trained personnel. In addition, a security system will be installed, including external cameras and alarms on all exterior doors. Exterior doors are locked and alarmed between 10:00 PM and 5:30 AM.

**7. What about extra traffic?**

Most guests do not have personal vehicles therefore traffic activity at this location will be limited. Shift changes for shelter personnel occur three times within the 24-hour period, every eight hours.

**8. What about public safety?**

Midland's Open Door has operated in this neighborhood for nearly 36 years without any major incidents. The men, women and children served by the Open Door are actively working to turn their lives around and Open Door provides around-the-clock supervision to ensure the safety of our guests and our neighbors. We value being a good neighbor and expect the same from our guests.