

612 Flats to provide emergency housing for Codington County residents

Watertown, SD – The Codington County Welfare Office today announced with community leaders the purchase of the 612 Flats in Watertown for the purpose of providing emergency housing for Codington County residents.

“A new non-profit called Watertown Cares has been established to oversee the non-congregate emergency housing, which will provide 8 individual units to the community,” said Watertown Cares President Dawn Sikkink. “The property will be purchased from Crestone Builders through grant funds from the South Dakota Housing Development Authority.”

“Having a safe place to stay is the foundation of being able to move forward in life. Not having housing means living in crisis and living in crisis means being reactive instead of making choices for a healthy future. Emergency housing is the first step in the continuum of safe housing,” said Watertown Mayor Ried Holien.

“The Codington County Welfare office has assisted 44 homeless individuals or families in the last six months. Currently, people end up in housing with too many people or staying in places that aren’t meant to be lived in such as cars, sheds, or garages. Watertown Cares will not only provide temporary, non-congregate housing, but on-going support as individuals transition to a stable living condition,” said Codington County Commissioner Brenda Hanten.

This project is one of four priority areas identified during the Codington County Social Services strategic planning process. The four areas have established five working groups for: Housing, Mental Health, Community Transformation and Child Care, and Centralized Service & Community Education. The housing working group identified non-congregate emergency housing as the priority.

“Having recently been remodeled, the 612 Flats is the ideal property for emergency housing because of its separate living spaces, it’s in excellent condition, and it has a centralized location. We are thankful to Eric and his partners at Crestone Builders for meeting the needs of those who need it most,” said Codington County Welfare Director Sara Foust.

“Crestone Builders is proud to be a part of the process that help ensure that people have a safe place to stabilize their lives and take the steps to be a contributing member of our community. There are many challenges these residents face, housing can be one less worry,” said Eric Skott of Crestone Companies.

Financial closing on the property is expected to be completed in February 2023, with opening to residents anticipated by April 1, 2023.

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About the Codington County Strategic Plan:

In 2021 Codington County Social Services underwent a strategic planning process, which resulted in the creation of the Codington County Social Services Advisory Council. The council exists to collaborate across agencies, families, and individuals to identify and improve social services that meet the needs of Codington County residents. Five committees were formed to address housing, childcare, mental health, community transformation, and centralized services and education. The advisory council intends on keeping the community updated on the progress of the implementation of the strategic plan.