



**Common Wealth**  
Development



**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**COMMON WEALTH**  
**DEVELOPMENT**  
2024

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Common Wealth Family –

Reflecting on Common Wealth's journey through 2024, one word comes to mind: Tenacity. The sort of steadfast commitment and unwavering persistence that drives us to push forward despite challenges. Tenacity reminds me of my experience as a fourth grader at Mendota Elementary School, competing in the Gompers Cluster Math Meet with a group of equally determined kids. We called ourselves the Tenacious Kids. The name spoke to our preparation and our collective commitment to a shared goal, working through drills and problem-solving every single day until we felt ready to face the competition. It wasn't always easy, but the discipline, the commitment to accountability, and the strength of our shared purpose drove us to success.

As an organization, Common Wealth Development's dedication to supporting affordable housing, workforce development, business incubation, and youth empowerment demands not only passion but resilience. And the past year has been a testament to how deeply those values are embedded in our work.

In 2024, our Housing Operations team continued to demonstrate the sort of persistence required to ensure housing stability for low-income families and individuals. Despite rising utility costs, increasing insurance premiums, and the bureaucratic challenges of HUD compliance, our team pushed forward. Not only did we enhance our inventory systems, we also strengthened our capacity for maintenance and repairs, expanded our administrative support, and maintained our commitment to providing healthy, sustainable housing through energy efficiency initiatives.

Our Adult Workforce Development programs continued to build on the momentum of previous years. The WorkUp Academy, though in its infancy, has already demonstrated its potential to empower adults through training and mentorship. Through deliberate collaboration and creative approaches to funding, we have laid the groundwork for what we expect to be a transformative initiative for individuals seeking meaningful employment and financial independence.

Common Wealth's Youth Workforce Development programs have shown incredible resilience and dedication in preparing our youth for the realities of the workforce. This year, the Madison Youth Advisory Board exemplified the power of critical engagement, tackling the complex issue of immigration with a rigor and professionalism that should make us all proud. Their work is a testament to what can be achieved when we provide youth with the resources and platforms to lead from their own truth.

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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In the area of Business Incubation, our Madison Enterprise Center and Main Street Industries continue to serve as critical resources for emerging entrepreneurs. We have seen growth not only in the number of businesses we support, but also in the diversity of industries represented. From artistry and culinary ventures to floristry and specialized manufacturing, these small businesses contribute significantly to our community's economic landscape. The success of these incubators demonstrates how investing in local entrepreneurs strengthens our neighborhood economies.

Despite the obstacles presented by economic volatility and a divisive political climate, we have continued to push forward. We are not naive about the challenges we face—whether they come from an uncertain economy, the changing landscape of federal and local regulations, or the harsh realities of housing instability. But the mission remains clear: to strengthen our communities through truly affordable housing, workforce development, business incubation, and youth empowerment. And this work, in this moment, demands tenacity.

Looking ahead, we will continue to draw upon the lessons of the past year. We will double down on our efforts to expand our capacity, improve our systems, and provide the highest quality of service to the communities we serve. We will approach our work with the same relentless determination that defines who we are as an organization.

Thank you for standing with us, for believing in our work, and for sharing our vision of a stronger, more equitable community. We are ready to keep pushing forward, committed to the work, and committed to the people we serve.

Onward.



**Justice Castañeda**

Executive Director



# MISSION & VISION

Common Wealth Development is a private non-profit community development organization incorporated in 1979.

We build community infrastructure through safe, affordable, and healthy housing; local business incubation; and person-centered workforce development for youth and adults, rooted in a foundation of racial justice and health equity. We know that by providing safe and healthy housing, supporting economic stability, and promoting community engagement through outreach activities, we reduce health inequities and the likelihood of violence.

## CORE PROGRAM AREAS:

Support the retention and sustainability of affordable land in Madison and Dane County

Support developing businesses through affordable space and business incubation

Coach youth and adults in financial fluency, job readiness, and entrepreneurial leadership

Integrate comprehensive community health approaches to city-wide violence prevention efforts

Provide safe, stable housing opportunities for renters and aspiring homeowners





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# SPONSORS

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Our local sponsors and individual donors' financial support makes our work possible.

American Family Dreams Foundation

Keith Daniels

Baer Insurance Services, Inc.

Kirch Appliances

Banzo

Kramer Elkins and Watt

Bardston LLC

Lake Ridge Bank

Beam Suntory

Madison Homebrewers and Tasters Guild

City of Madison Community Development Division

Madison Metropolitan School District

Community Shares of Wisconsin

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Marquette Neighborhood Association

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Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

Frank Liquor Company

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Forward Madison

Roots & Wings Foundation

Galway Companies

Saint Dunstan's Church

Hawks Quindel, S.C.

Spiribam Fine Spirits

Ian's Pizza

Sustain Dane

It's Good For You

The Weary Traveler Freehouse

# PARTNERS

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Because of you, we are able to provide coordination of care and truly represent a model of community development rooted in partnership and collaboration.

Ace Hardware

American Family Insurance

Arbor Covenant Church

Arbor Hills Neighborhood Association

Children's Wisconsin

Chocolate Shoppe

City of Madison:

-Engineering Division

-Civil Attorney's Office

-Department of Civil Rights

-Community Development Division

-Department of

Planning Community & Economic Development

-Fleet Services

-Madison Police Department:

Community Outreach & Resource Education Unit

-Madison Public Libraries:

Central Branch

Meadowridge Branch

-Parks Division

-Warner Park Recreation Center

-Water Utility

Dane Buy Local

Dane County Joining Forces for Family

Dane County Clean Sweep

Developing Artists Murals and Alliances

Early Childhood Initiative (ECI)

Elevate Energy

Employment and Training Network

Good Shepard Lutheran Church - Madison Campus

Goodman Community Center

Holy Wisdom Monastery

Joining Forces for Families

Latinos Organizing for Understanding and Development (LOUD)

Madison Children's Museum

Madison Gas and Electric

Madison Metropolitan School District:

-Capital High School

-Capital High Parenting Program

-LaFollette High School

-Madison East High School

-Madison West High School

-Vel Phillips Memorial High School

Meadowood Community Center

Meadowood Health Partnership

Meadowood Neighborhood Association

Operation Fresh Start

Potter's Crackers

Public Health of Madison and Dane County

Violence Prevention Unit

Rise Up

RSVP of Dane County

Second Harvest

Southwest Madison Action Coalition

Summit Credit Union

SupraNet

Sustain Dane

The Road Home

Third Sector Housing Group

UW Writing Center

Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center

Youth Employment Network

YWCA

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Our work is made possible due to the consistent support and efforts of our all-volunteer Board of Directors!

**Vanessa Kuettel**

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Vice President

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Treasurer

**Beth Welch**

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**Jocelyn Acuna**

**Rudy Moore**

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# STAFF



## Administration

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Executive Director

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Finance Director

**Stephanie Bradley Wilson**  
Director of Operations

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Development

**Areli Estrada**  
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**Valerie Holt**  
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**Benny Ramirez Gomez**  
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Assistant

**Tino Corona**  
Administration & Finance  
Specialist

**Beatrice Hadidian**  
Willy Street Fair, Administrative  
Vendor Coordinator

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Management-  
Special Projects  
Manager

**Nick Lee**  
Interim Housing  
Operations  
Manager

**Emily Hill**  
Housing &  
Resident Relations  
Coordinator

**Karen Gilbert**  
Housing &  
Resident Relations  
Coordinator

**Evelyn Betts**  
Real Estate Development  
Coordinator

**Sarah Batarfi**  
Housing  
Administration  
Coordinator

**Sataro Sato**  
Maintenance  
Manager

**Devin O'Brien**  
Maintenance  
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**Mike Suter**  
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Coordinator

**Meghan McGinley**  
Community  
Development  
Specialist

**Summer Mitchell**  
Community  
Development  
Specialist

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### Adult Workforce Development

**Kari Alston**  
Adult Workforce Development  
Coordinator

**Rachel Stetenfield**  
Community  
Development  
Specialist

### Business Incubation

**Brendan Vandenburg-Carroll**  
Business Development  
Manager

### Youth Workforce Development

**Sam Heim**  
Youth Workforce  
Development  
Manager

**Htet Hlawn**  
Youth Workforce  
Development  
Manager

**Wanlee Lor**  
Youth Programs  
Operations  
Coordinator

**Maggie Douglas**  
Youth Programs  
Operations  
Coordinator

**Jaley Bruursema**  
Youth  
Employment  
Coordinator

**Akilah Wallace**  
Youth  
Employment  
Coordinator

**Pong Xiong**  
Youth  
Employment  
Coordinator

**Taylor Jones**  
Youth Employment  
Specialist

**Kalia Thao**  
Youth Employment  
Specialist

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Community  
Development  
Specialist

**Danny Sykes**  
Community  
Development  
Specialist

**Alli Nolte**  
Community  
Development  
Specialist

**Tommy Pack**  
Community  
Development Specialist

# HOUSING OPERATIONS

## **Overview**

Common Wealth's Housing Operations experienced major staffing changes over 2024 and celebrated the completion of a number of large-scale capital improvement projects. Despite the rising rents across the Madison housing market, Common Wealth has continued to provide truly affordable rent to our tenants, taking steps to ensure program stability while continuing to improve the quality of our services.

## **Milestones**

In 2024, Common Wealth welcomed three new members to our Housing Team: Sarah Batarfi (Housing Administration Coordinator), Emily Hill and Karen Gilbert (Housing and Resident Relations Coordinators).

## **Capital Improvements**

In 2024 Common Wealth completed several large-scale remodel projects, including significant upgrades to three properties in our Meadowood portfolio. Responding to resident requests, we installed new exterior lighting fixtures to improve sidewalk and parking lot visibility while enhancing the building's aesthetics and curb appeal. Residents actively participated in the process, selecting the final fixtures through surveys and consultations, ensuring the upgrades met their needs and expectations.

In 2024, Common Wealth piloted the remodel process at Yahara River View Apartments, replacing fully accessible, barrier-free shower surrounds as part of a multi-year plan. After extensive research, consultations with ADA specialists, and internal reviews, our Housing team installed a Kohler LuxStone surround. This durable, high-quality product enhances resident safety, simplifies maintenance and improves the living experience for residents with accessibility needs. Over the next 12 months, we will continue to evaluate the remodel to ensure it continues to meet our objectives and guides future upgrades.

## **Improvements (Cont.)**

In 2024, Common Wealth also took a significant step toward decarbonization and electrification with a pilot project at our 4-plex at 2009 Leland Drive. With guidance from Elevate Energy and Sustain Dane, we upgraded the building with new electrical panels, heat pumps, and solar panels. This marks our first residential property to transition from gas-fueled to electric heating and cooling, with gas furnaces retained as back-ups. The heat pumps now handle the primary workload, while solar panels reduce electricity costs through renewable energy. Residents were thrilled to enjoy air conditioning in their apartments for the first time –a vital improvement given the wildfire smoke of 2023 and increasing intensity of summer heat. Providing cooling and ventilation is an essential part of our commitment to healthy housing



Rebuilding of the third floor balcony

# HOUSING OPERATIONS

## Resident Satisfaction

Each year, Common Wealth surveys residents to gather feedback on our performance, quality of living, and areas of improvement. In 2024, more than two-thirds of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Housing Operations was performing well across 16 categories. Notably, 75% residents said they would recommend Common Wealth's apartments to friends and family--the highest endorsement we could hope for.

"Everyone is pretty great at Common Wealth," noted one resident. "Common Wealth has been the most professional and realistic management company I've dealt with :)".

Affordability and safety remain top priorities for our residents, with affordability named as the most appreciated aspect of our apartments. One resident shared, "It's my 13-year-old's first bedroom he's ever had!". Residents also highlighted the professionalism of our staff as a close second. Equally gratifying, when asked the most common response to what residents disliked about their apartment was simply, "Nothing."

## New Programs and Initiatives

In 2024, Common Wealth achieved a major milestone with the completion of a comprehensive maintenance inventory system, a project in progress since 2020. Led by Maintenance Coordinator Devin O'Brien and Maintenance Manager Sataro Sato the final phase included creating a master inventory list, standardizing products and supplies, mapping storage locations, developing policies for upkeep, labeling and quantifying inventory items, and digitizing the entire system in our AppFolio property management software. Devin's organizational skills and technological expertise, combined with Sataro's institutional knowledge, made this achievement possible. The new system streamlines ordering and tracking, significantly reducing the time the maintenance team spends retrieving and purchasing parts.

## Rental Collection Policy Updates

In 2024, Common Wealth updated our rental collection policies to adapt to the post-pandemic landscape. With pandemic-era financial support dwindling, we adjusted procedures to address the new reality while maintaining our commitment to housing stability. While the policies still emphasize working with residents to resolve arrears, leniency for multi-month delinquencies has been scaled back as community resources decline. The updated procedures also streamlined administrative steps, reducing the workload for staff managing rents and ledgers. To ensure the policy remains effective as intended, the team will conduct evaluations at 3, 6, and 12-months for potential adjustments.

## Ongoing Decarbonization Efforts

In partnership with Elevate Energy and Sustain Dane, Common Wealth Development advanced its decarbonization efforts with comprehensive energy audits across our residential portfolio in 2024. These audits assessed building envelopes, insulation, windows, and mechanical systems, to identify opportunities for reducing emissions. Using this data, we developed a priority list of properties for retrofits and upgrades. Following the successful pilot project at 2009 Leland Dr., we plan to expand the decarbonization efforts to additional properties in 2025.



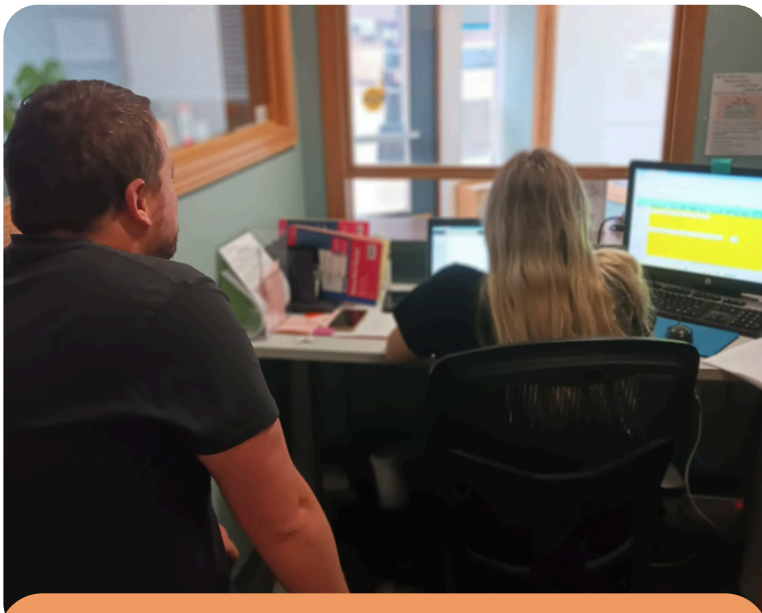
Heat pumps at 2009 Leland Dr.



# HOUSING OPERATIONS

## Sustainable Lawn Care Practices

Encouraged by the City of Madison's No Mow May initiative, Common Wealth took steps to support native pollinators by allowing spring wildflowers to grow. However, limited communication and cultural preferences for manicured lawns led to misunderstandings about the initiative. These challenges spurred a reevaluation of our lawn care practices, resulting in the adoption of a 4-inch cutting height to preserve low-growing flowering plants, enhance water retention and support pollinator habitats. Additionally, we partnered with Green Mowers of Madison, an all-electric landscaping service, significantly reducing our carbon footprint. This transition further aligns with our commitment to environmental sustainability and reducing greenhouse gas emission from grounds-keeping.



Housing Operations Staff

## Challenges and Areas for Growth

In 2024, the phase-out of pandemic-era rental assistance left some households with large unpaid balances and limited resources to address them. Common Wealth staff worked diligently to secure funding and negotiate payment plans, recovering approximately half of outstanding rents. However, many households could not access rental assistance or meet repayment agreements, resulting in an increase in evictions filed, bad debt and overall vacancy loss. Filing evictions, always a last resort measure to access remaining rental assistance programs, strained administrative resources, and required outsourcing to attorneys, adding increased costs to the organization.

Evictions became a significant challenge in 2024 due to changes in how rental assistance programs were administered. One of the primary rental assistance programs in Dane County required households to be in eviction court to access funds. This shift forced us to file a record number of evictions as a last resort to help residents access resources and stabilize their housing. Unfortunately, not all households qualified for assistance, secured full payment of their balances or met the terms of their stipulated agreements. The administrative burden of managing, eviction filings, court follow-ups, and related tasks stretched internal resources and required outsourcing to attorneys, incurring additional unbudgeted costs. These challenges highlighted the unintended consequences of tying rental assistance to eviction proceedings, ultimately increasing housing instability for many residents.





# HOUSING OPERATIONS

## Growth (Cont.)

Evictions and unit turnovers led to a surge in bad debt and created bottlenecks in maintenance and marketing. Staff tasked with eviction-related paperwork had less capacity to market vacant units, while maintenance teams faced delays in completing repairs. These factors increased vacancy losses, underscoring the need for improved procedures and better administrative support to maintain housing stability and fiscal health.

Pest control remained a significant challenge in 2024. Inconsistencies with vendors and difficulties ensuring resident compliance with treatment protocols created ongoing obstacles. To address these issues, Common Wealth partnered with a new pest control and implemented stricter monitoring and response procedures to improve effectiveness across properties.

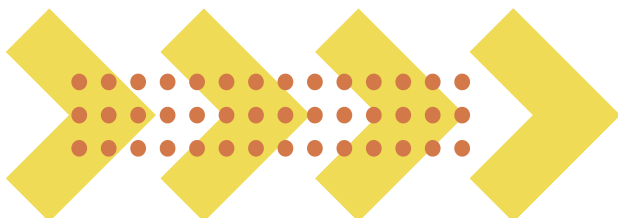
A summer apartment fire displaced one household, rendering a unit uninhabitable. Thankfully, no one was injured in the fire, and the professionalism of Madison's first responders ensured the situation was managed effectively. Restoring the apartment has been a lengthy process involving inspections, fire and smoke remediation and ongoing renovations.

The window replacement project at the historic Willard Knight Residence faced delays due to permitting challenges and contractor attrition. Approval from the City of Madison Historic Preservation Committee required extensive reviews, consuming much of 2023 and 2024. With a new contractor and windows now in production, the project is set for completion in spring 2025.

Professional development, on-boarding training, retention, and attracting qualified candidates continue to frustrate staffing in Housing Operations. While substantial pay adjustments were made to account for inflation and rising wages post-pandemic, Housing Operations has not been able to efficiently attract skilled candidates to fill staff vacancies. Rarely have candidates been in queue at priority deadline for application, and it has taken months at times before fielding a viable candidate. Attempts have been made to loosen job requirements; however, this has proven ineffective. Furthermore, feedback from new hires has pointed to insufficient onboarding, training, and professional development for them to feel confident in their roles. Current onboarding training helped with identifying values behind the work but has not been helpful in learning how to do the work. This has been exacerbated by hiring staff unskilled or under-skilled in the work being performed.



Measuring windows for energy efficiency upgrades to improve heat retention while preserving the iconic front office window



# HOUSING OPERATIONS

## **Looking Forward — 2025**

In 2025 Common Wealth anticipates significant staffing changes in our housing team. A new Director of Housing Operations is expected to be hired in Quarter 1, followed by a Director of Real Estate Development later in the year. With recent administrative hires, office coverage at Yahara River View Apartments and The Alliance will expand to two days per week. New compliance regulations under the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act will take effect in 2025 aiming to streamline administrative processes across federal programs. While Common Wealth has developed an implementation strategy with training and resources in place, management will need to stay vigilant as further adjustments emerge.

Yahara River View Apartments is scheduled for two major upgrades: A full roof replacement and building-wide Wi-Fi installation in partnership with SupraNet. The roof project requires rebuilding window structures on upper-flow units due to prior design flaws, as well as assessing rooftop mechanicals and solar panels for replacement. Meanwhile, the Wi-Fi initiative builds on the success of a pilot in the Meadowood portfolio, ensuring residents have reliable internet access as part of their lease.

Common Wealth is also exploring environmentally sustainable landscaping by replacing traditional lawns with native vegetative mats. These low-maintenance, drought-resistant plantings require monthly rather than weekly upkeep, enhance curb appeal, and provide essential wildlife habitat. Observations show that residents use porches, playgrounds, and courtyards more than open lawns, making this transition a practical and sustainable investment despite the initial cost.

The biggest challenge ahead remains keeping housing truly affordable for low-income households while maintaining high-quality, safe housing. Rising insurance costs, utilities, staffing expenses, and wages continue to strain budgets. Raising revenue—typically through rent increases—creates ethical concerns, as 82% of Common Wealth residents earn below 50% of the area median income, 31% earn under \$20,000 annually, and nearly half are single-parent households with children. Balancing financial sustainability with housing accessibility remains an ongoing challenge that will require strategic solutions and community support in 2025.



ELLA Community Development Specialists  
with Interim Housing Manager, Nick Lee

# HOUSING OPERATIONS

## Common Wealth Housing by the Numbers — Data and Statistics

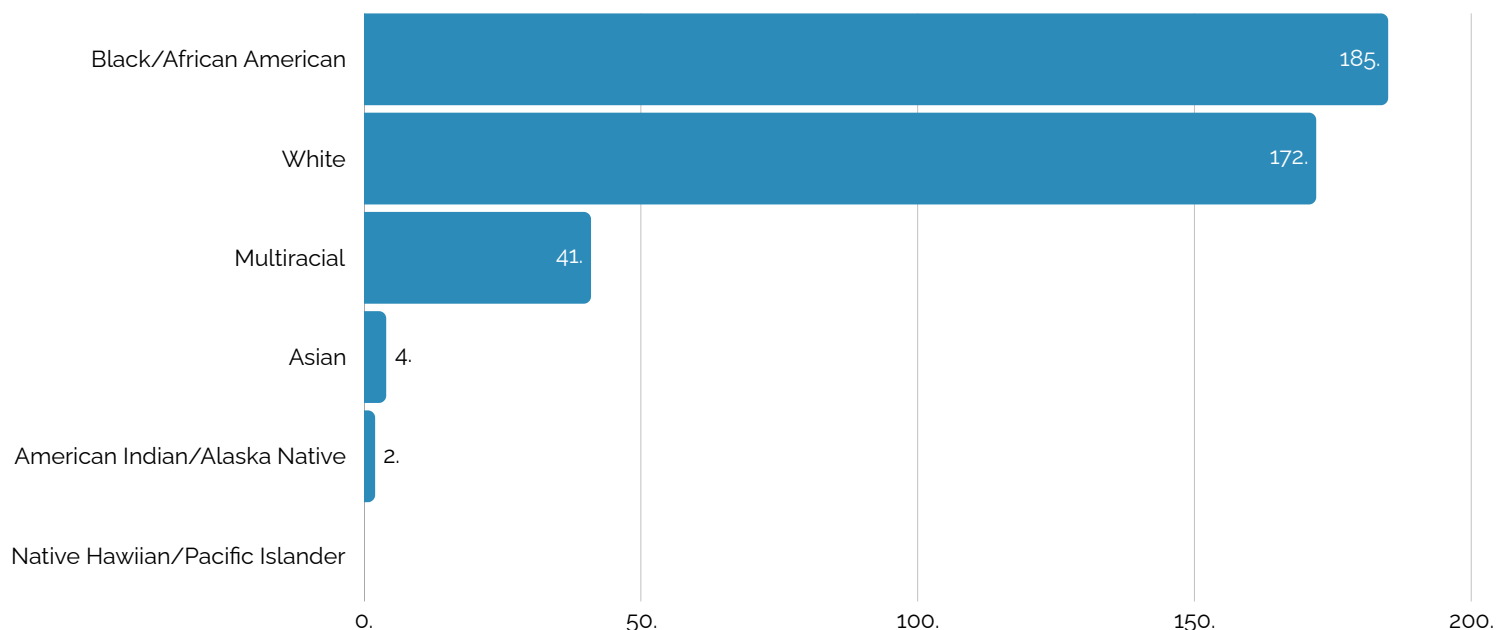
### Portfolio

Common Wealth maintained our housing portfolio size in 2024.

Portfolio	Properties	Apartments	Studios	1-Bed	2-Bed	3-Bed	Retail
YRVA	1	60	4	19	25	12	0
Marquette	17	54	2	21	22	9	3
Meadowood	10	62	1	5	41	18	3
Total	28	176	7	45	85	39	6

### Demographics and Outcomes

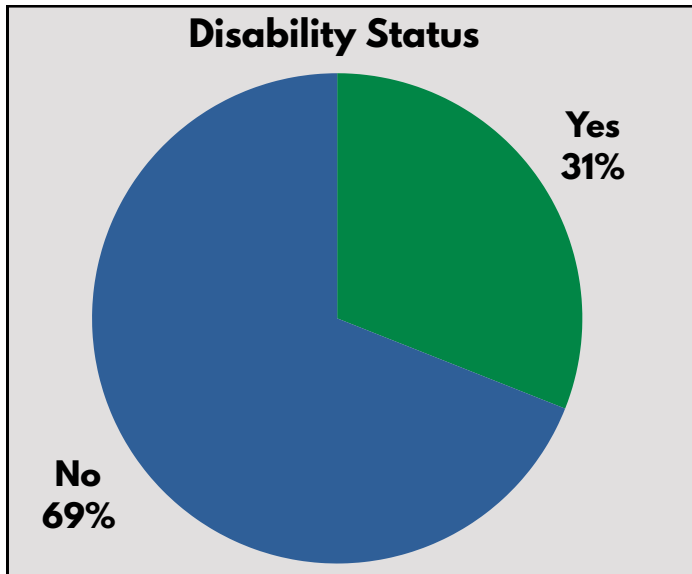
Common Wealth provided housing to 406 individual residents in 188 households. Demographic breakdown for residents is described below.



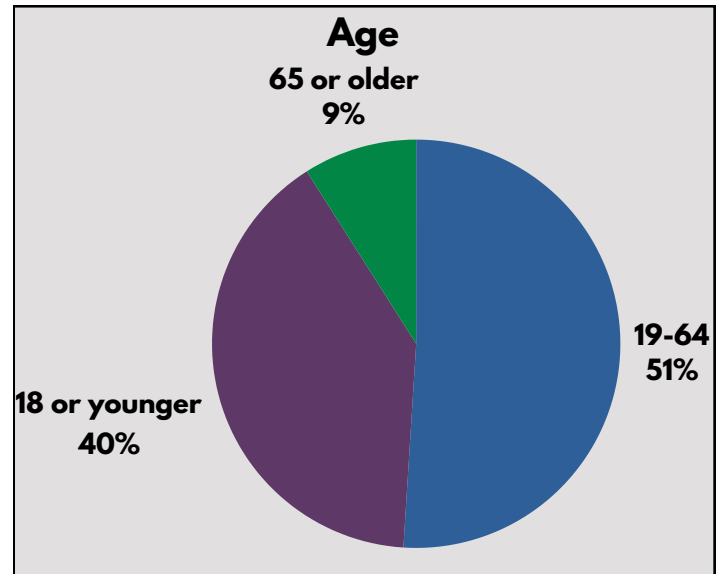
Of our 373 residents, 185 identify as black or African American, 172 identify as white or Caucasian, 41 identify as multiracial, 4 identify as Asian, and 2 as American Indian/Alaskan Native.

# HOUSING OPERATIONS

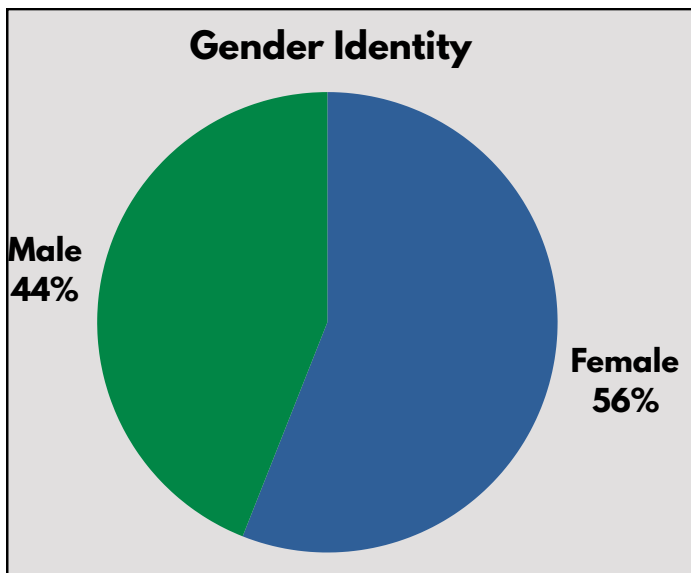
## Common Wealth Housing by the Numbers — Data and Statistics



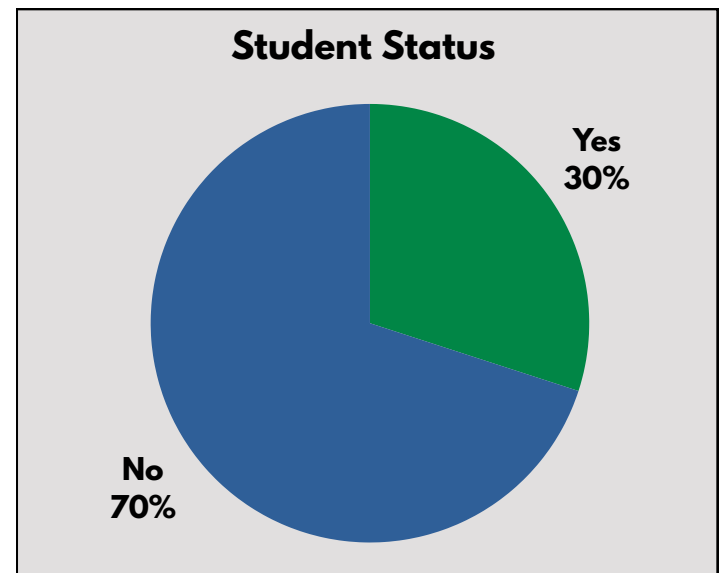
121 of 404 residents identify with a disability while 283 do not. Representation in percentages of residents who identify with a disability is shown in the chart above.



The largest age group of residents is 19–64-year-olds with 209 residents followed by 160 residents who are 18 and under. 35 residents are 65 and older. The chart above demonstrates percentages.



Regarding gender, 226 residents identify as female, 176 identify as male, 2 identify as non-binary, and 2 did not respond. Above is a representation of gender among residents in our portfolio.

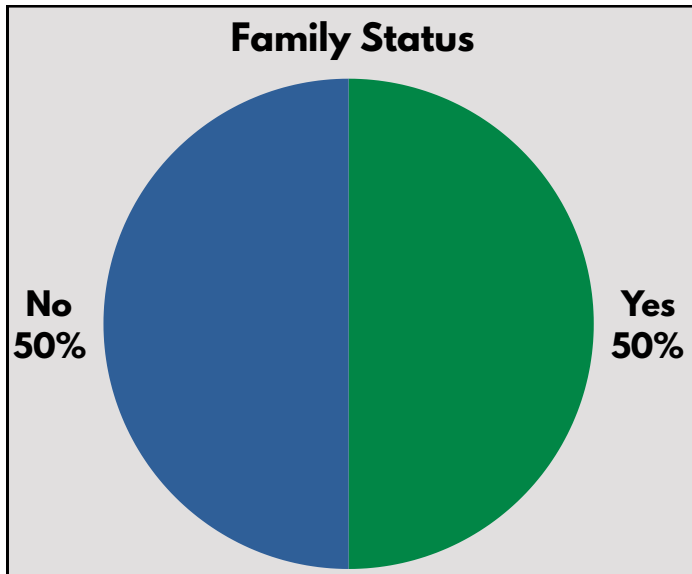


The majority of residents are not full-time students. 286 are not currently enrolled with a full-time student status with 118 currently enrolled as full-time students. The chart above shows the percentages.

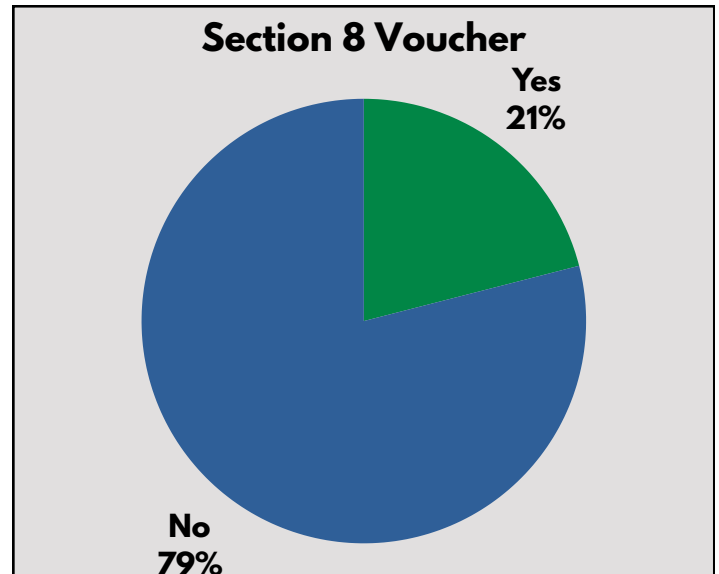


# HOUSING OPERATIONS

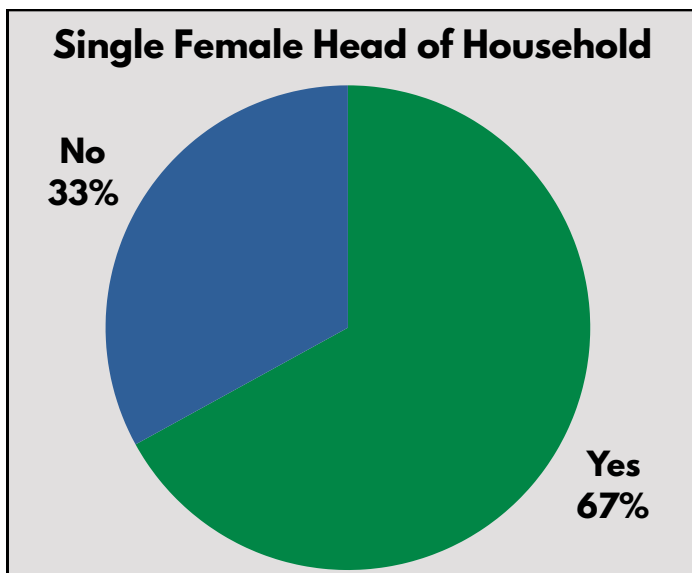
## Common Wealth Housing by the Numbers — Data and Statistics



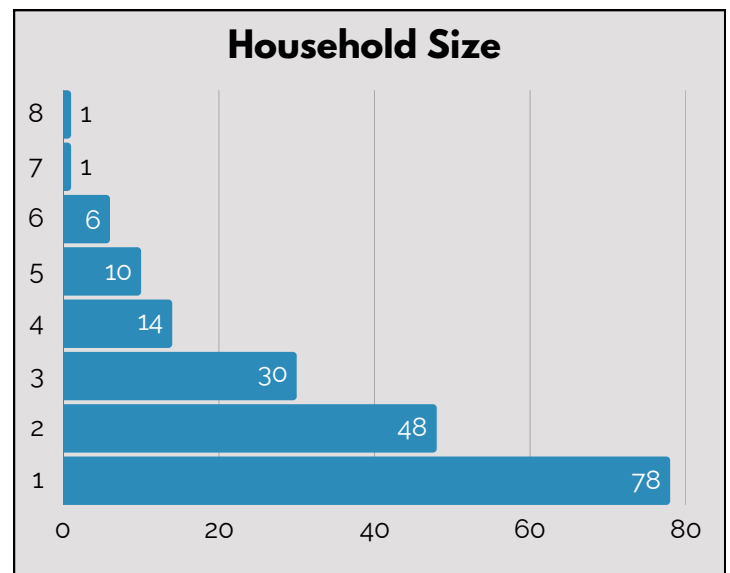
Given the affordability challenges of raising a family, there is a large proportion of families in our housing. Of 188 households, 94 are families with 94 not being families. The above chart represents the percentage of households with families.



39 of our households are enrolled in the Section 8 rental assistance program. The remaining 144 households are not or did not respond.



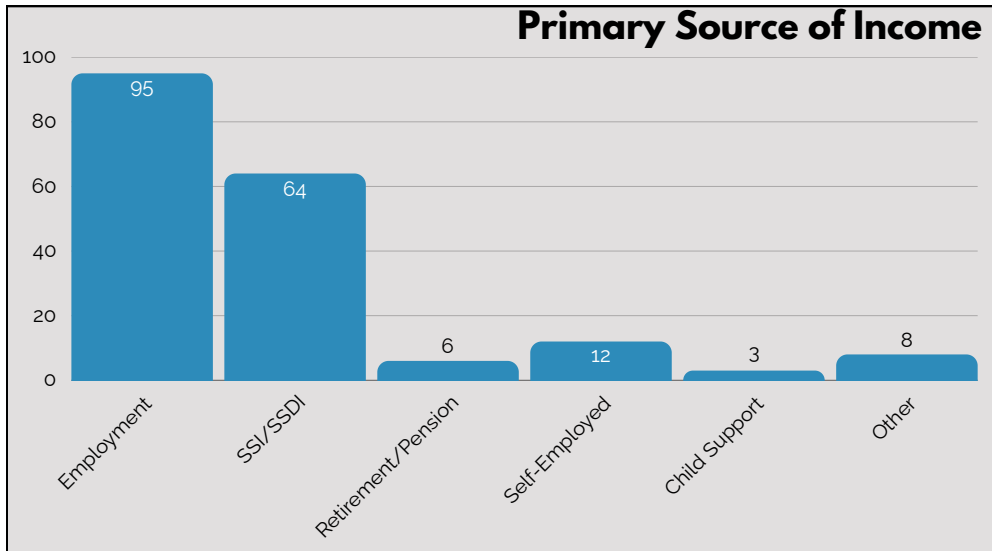
The majority of households are headed by females. 126 households have female heads of household while 62 do not. The chart above shows percentages.



The chart above details the household sizes within our housing program. The largest proportion of residents are single person households, and our largest household has 8 individuals. Household size is limited by occupancy standards with our largest units being 3 bedrooms.

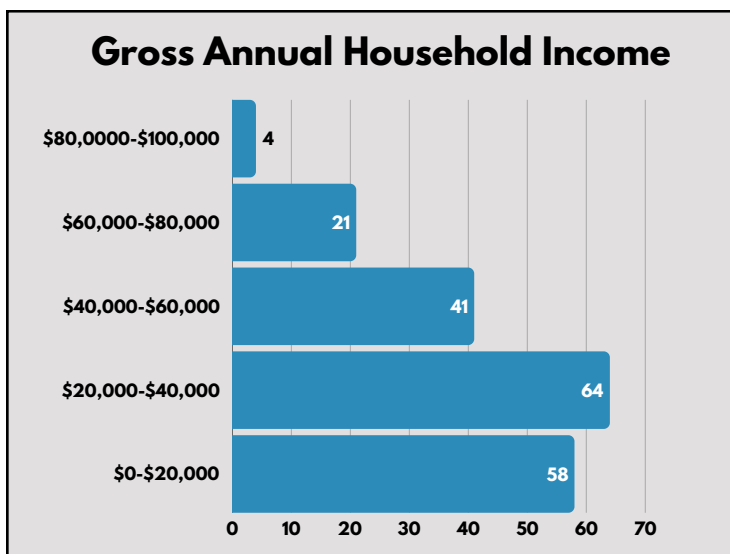
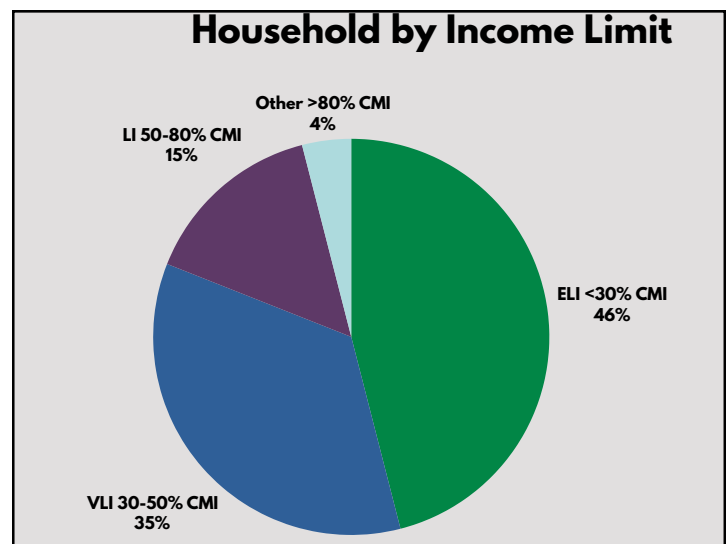
# HOUSING OPERATIONS

## Common Wealth Housing by the Numbers — Data and Statistics



The vast majority of households have employment as their primary source of income. The second most common source of primary income is SSI/SSDI. The chart shows the percentage of households by primary source of income.

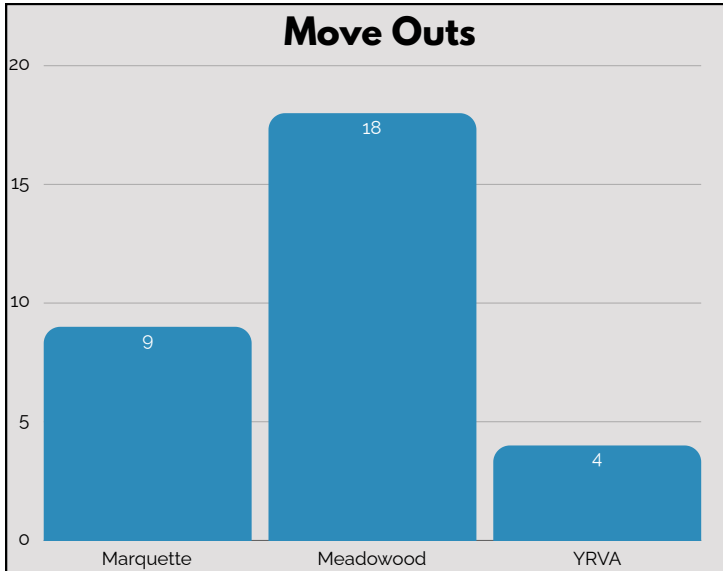
This chart shows where households fall in relation to county median income (CMI). Extremely low income (ELI) is defined as earnings below 30% CMI. 86 households are ELI. Very low income is defined as between 30%-50% CMI. 66 households are VLI. Low income (LI) is defined as between 50%-80% CMI. 29 households are LI. There are 7 households who earn over 80% CMI represented as "Other" in the chart.



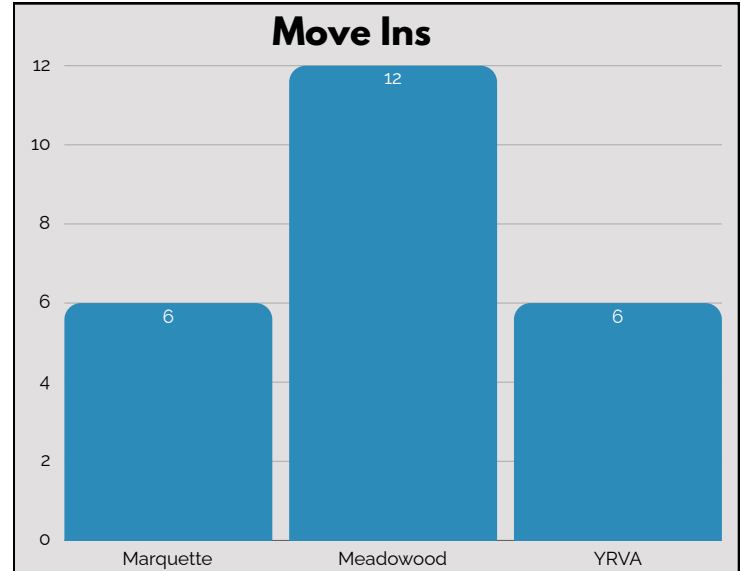
In terms of gross annual income, 64 households earn between \$20,000-\$40,000, 58 households earn less than \$20,000, 41 households earn between \$40,000-\$60,000, 21 households earn \$60,000-\$80,000, and 4 households earn over \$80,000.

# HOUSING OPERATIONS

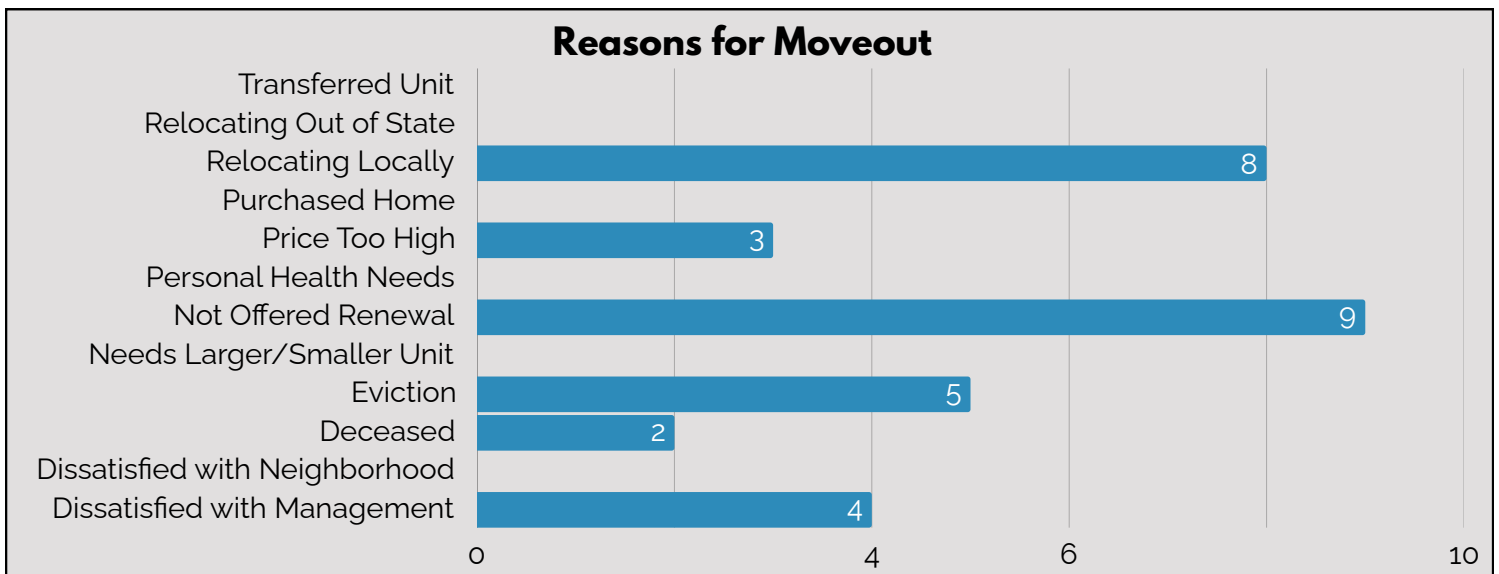
## Common Wealth Housing by the Numbers — Data and Statistics



Common Wealth experienced 31 move outs over the course of 2024, double the total move outs in 2023. The Meadowood portfolio had the greatest number of move outs at 18, followed by Marquette portfolio at 9, and finally YRVA at 4. The chart above shows move outs by property group in percentages.



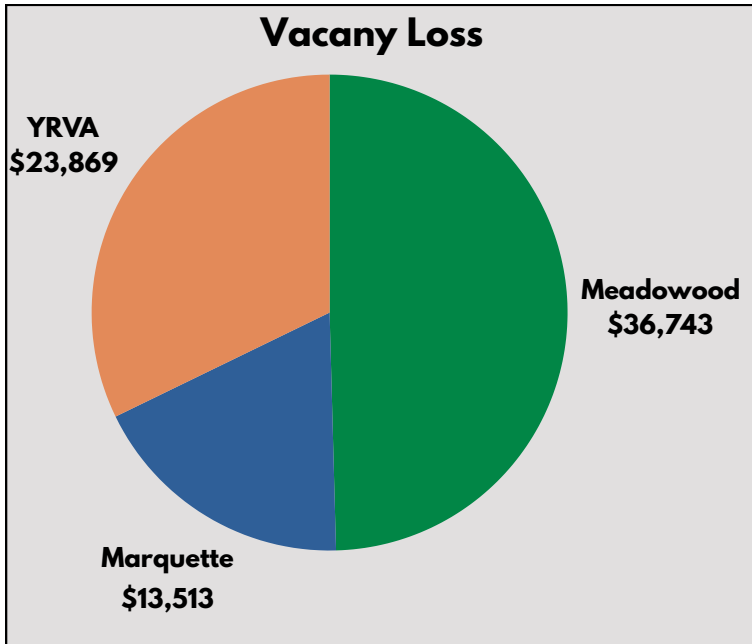
We had 24 new households join the Common Wealth community in 2024. Meadowood had 12, Marquette had 6, and YRVA had 6 households move in. The chart above shows move ins.



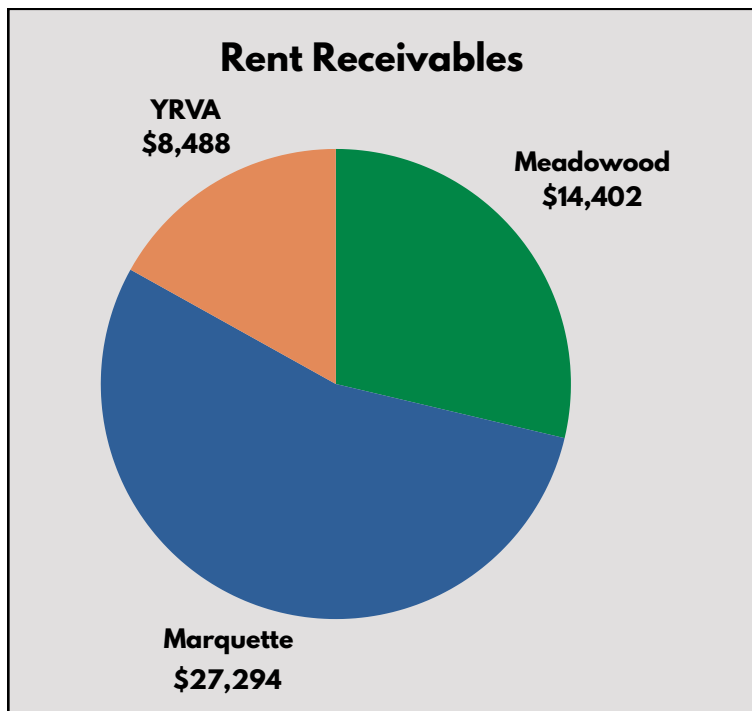
A breakdown of the reasons for moveouts in 2024.

# HOUSING OPERATIONS

## Common Wealth Housing by the Numbers — Data and Statistics



Total vacancy loss increased substantially from \$28,011 in 2023 to \$74,125 in 2024.



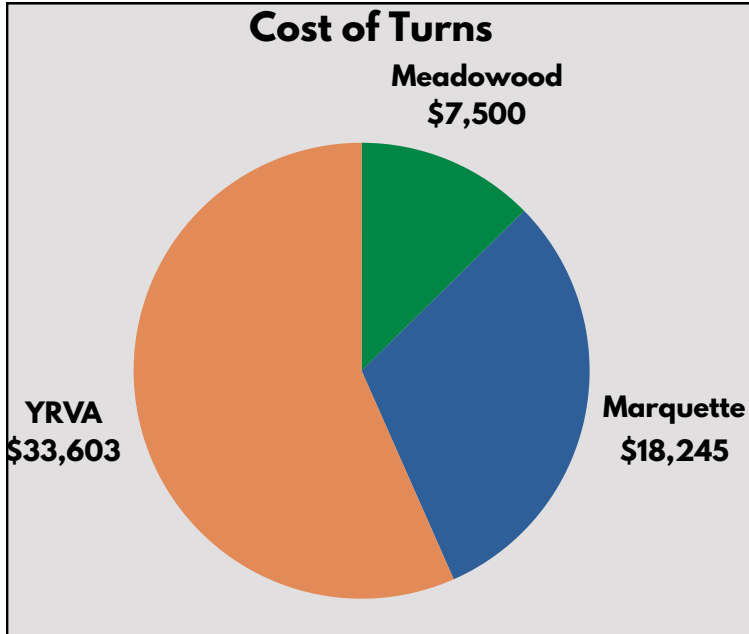
2024 ended with a 33.7% decrease from \$75,714 in 2023 to \$50,184 in 2024.



# HOUSING OPERATIONS

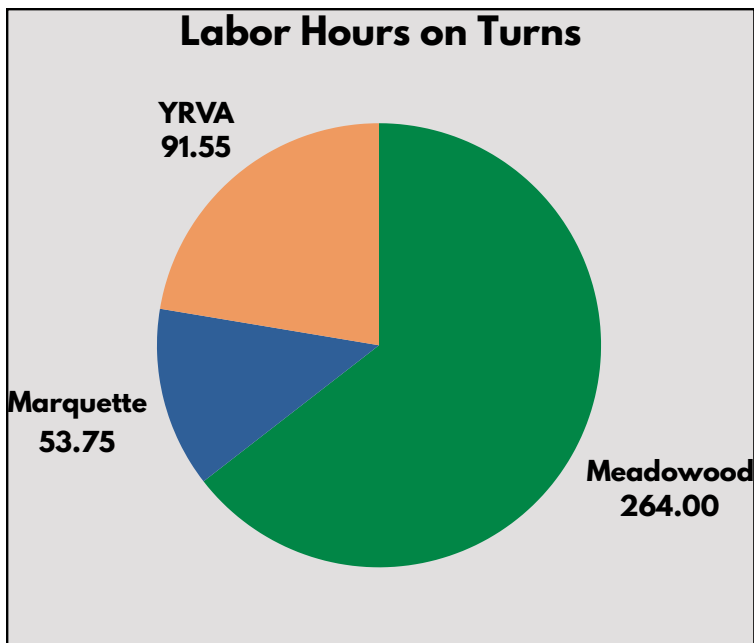
## Common Wealth Housing by the Numbers — Data and Statistics

### Cost of Turns



Total costs of turns increased substantially from \$59,348 in 2023 to \$88,857 in 2024.

### Labor Hours on Turns



Labor hours spent on turns almost doubled between 2023 and 2024 with 490 labor hours spent doing turns. The hours invested in Meadowood turns alone is equal to the total hours spent for the entire portfolio in 2023.



# YOUTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## Overview

Common Wealth Development has been supporting youth in Madison for over 30 years through our Youth Workforce Development (YWD) programs. In 2024, we celebrated several accomplishments and as we look ahead at the work to come, we are well-poised to continue building upon all that 2024 has brought. Youth are fundamental in revitalizing the community and investing in their development is a key pillar of Common Wealth's violence prevention work. Our breadth of workforce development programming utilizes structured training, mentorship and experiential learning opportunities to empower youth as they grow and to support their competitiveness in the labor market. Our programs offer the opportunity to build the foundation from which they will launch their long-term plans and future development beyond high school. Common Wealth's programs support youth with developing critical awareness, system analyzation, and creative problem-solving skills, all of which will aid them on their trajectories to becoming the future leaders of Madison.

In 2024, Common Wealth continued to hone and refine our spectrum of programs as violence prevention strategies and build upon our community partnerships. Our dedicated YWD team was instrumental in delivering diligent support and facilitating rigorous training programs that offer youth the opportunity to advance their professional expertise and gain confidence. As a result of these efforts, over 600 young people were served through our programmatic offerings, both via our direct community-based programs and the collaborative partnership efforts Common Wealth supports. As we reflect on all our achievements in 2024, we eagerly look forward to all the work, growth, and development ahead in 2025.

## Milestones

### **Youth Business Mentoring Program (YBMP)**

In 2024, Common Wealth's Youth Workforce Development team led ten sessions of the Youth-Business Mentoring Program (YBMP). The sessions were held across Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) high schools and two summer sessions hosted at community-based public library locations were offered. YBMP, a foundational workforce development program, prepares Madison and Dane County youth through a two-week pre-employment training session. Throughout the program, youth develop skills to help them retain employment and build the financial habits necessary to reach their immediate and long-term goals.

Youth in YBMP have the opportunity to hone their interpersonal communication skills, practice interviewing, develop their resume, network, learn about customer service skills, and establish a core base of knowledge around their financial literacy skills and habits. Graduates of the program receive a \$100 stipend for successfully completing their training as well as priority access to recruitment information for the spectrum of programs available at Common Wealth. As youth move into the job placement portion of the program, their mentor supports with their enrollment into the MMSD Experiential Learning program, where they earn elective school credits for the hours worked at the job secured through Common Wealth.



Graduates of YBMP from Vel Phillips Memorial High School



# YOUTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## YBMP (Cont.)

YBMP had significant impacts in 2024, with 97% of youth enrolled in the program successfully completing the training portion with Common Wealth staff aiding them in securing jobs at varied employment opportunities including: Madison Children's Museum, UW Health, Chocolate Shoppe, Madison School and Community Recreation, Simpson Street Free Press, and many others. We focus particularly on assisting youth facing barriers to employment, such as those navigating the juvenile justice system or coming from lower-income households. The diversity of the youth who participated in YBMP in 2024 was notable, with 90% identifying as students of color, 43% residing in Neighborhood Resource Team (NRT) areas, and 84% qualifying for free or reduced lunch. This brief snapshot of the youth who participated in YBMP reflects not only our dedication to supporting youth from a variety of backgrounds but also our inclusive approach as we work with them in their professional journey.



ELLA Intern Tommy Pack supporting WFYIP students

## Wanda Fullmore Youth Internship Program (WFYIP)

The Wanda Fullmore Youth Internship Program stands as a pillar of Common Wealth's commitment in the development and growth of youth in Madison. Through internship placements as experiential learning and the completion of a capstone development project, interns access an 8-week paid opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge. Guest speakers from throughout the community are brought in to share expertise in the professional development series, giving interns access to information including public speaking, foundational financial habit building, resumes, long-term career planning, and networking. In 2024, the cohort was comprised of 32 students from across Madison, with 78% identifying as BIPOC, 75% coming from low-income households, and 55% from NRT areas. Throughout the summer, youth gained invaluable exposure and experience by working with various City of Madison Departments including Parks Division, Public Health, Madison Police Department, Traffic Engineering, Madison Public Library, City Attorney's Office, Department of Civil Rights, and more. This opportunity offered the students a firsthand perspective on public service and civic engagement while developing their employability skills through on-the-job training with guided mentorship.

Common Wealth staff built upon the successes of 2023, continuing the emphasis on building a sense of community amongst the interns in the 2024 program. Additional team building days included the annual trip to Brittingham Boats, a day at Goodman Pool, and other activities to build upon the cohort's bond, support with collaboration and strengthening the group dynamic.



# YOUTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

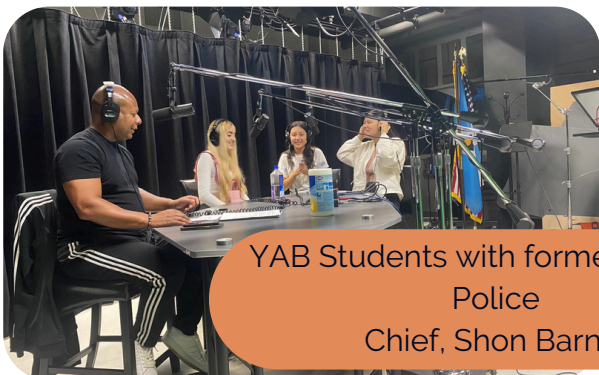
## WFYIP (Cont.)

The 2024 WFYIP Urban Design Capstone Project, supported by Common Wealth staff and UW Madison technical assistants, provides interns with a hands-on experiential learning component to work on collaboratively throughout the summer. Capstone curriculum is built to engage the interns, challenge them to think dynamically, and expand their understanding of community development. Interns offered their voice and unique perspectives to real-world projects, culminating in a presentation detailing their recommendations. Interns delivered their development proposals for 4502 Milwaukee Street and 2002 Zeier Road, detailing how each site can best be designed to serve their respective communities and youth in Madison.

## Youth Advisory Board (YAB)

Common Wealth Development's Youth Advisory Board (YAB), established in partnership with Madison Police Department (MPD) in 2021, has been host to dynamic and crucial conversations between Madison youth and MPD. Students engage with contextual resources, historical perspectives, and lead constructive dialogue addressing systemic issues that disproportionately affect BIPOC communities.

YAB members are encouraged to develop their critical writing and analytical skills, engaging with research and theoretical content to enhance their academic capabilities. This strong academic foundation provides Board members with the skills necessary to confidently contribute to the dialogue and make well-informed recommendations.



YAB Students with former Madison Police Chief, Shon Barnes

## YAB

As this program has grown over the last several years, cohorts of Board members have leveraged their theoretical understanding to analyze real-world challenges such as community safety and neighborhood stability. Bi-monthly meetings have focused on exploring the complexities of these issues, understanding the historical contexts at play, and how those factors have implications on their communities. In early 2024, the Board focused their discussions on an exploration of the concept and practices related to control of communities and found this required connecting with community leaders and representatives beyond any single system.

With the conclusion of the 2023-2024 school year in May, five YAB members graduated from the program, moving onto their post-secondary plans. Students continuing on the Board worked together to identify their policy topic of focus for the upcoming school year, landing on immigration policy and connecting with a myriad of professionals about their work. Continuing to meld the theoretical and contextual learning with direct dialogue provides a platform for youth to voice their concerns, articulate insights, and post recommendations and solutions to the challenges they and their peers face.

In addition to the six continuing board members, five new youth joined the board in August 2024, rounding out eleven active board members heading into the 2024-2025 school year. Building upon the bi-monthly discussions, Board members also had the opportunity to complete supplemental writing exercises, continuing their skill development and work processing the discussion topics outside of the group sessions. YAB has continued to be an active and passionate group of youth leaders from across Madison who will continue building upon the growth and achievements 2024 as we look ahead to 2025.



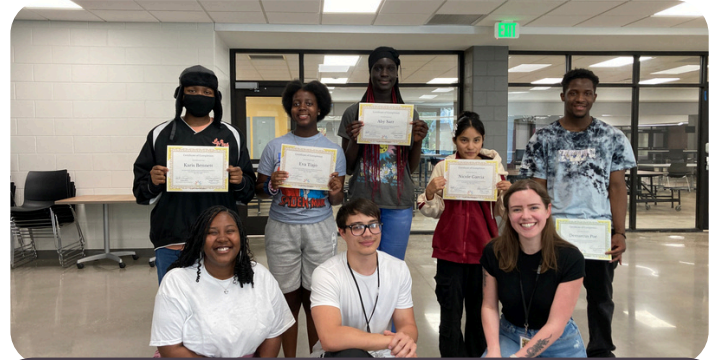
# YOUTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## Workshops

Workshops at Common Wealth are designed with the diverse and unique learning needs of youth in mind, crafted to support each specific group. Financial empowerment curriculum is the center of each workshop series, ensuring that youth have access to the foundational elements of building healthy habits early on. Our workshops range from focused, concise sessions to expansive workshop series, depending on the approach best suited to the group. The workshop sessions meet youth where they are, regardless of their starting skill point, and ensure a thorough understanding and confidence of the financial lessons.

In 2024, we piloted a workshop with Neighborhood Intervention Program, a new connection by delivering a series focused on pre-employment skills and financial health. Emphasizing interpersonal professional communication, Common Wealth staff worked with the group to develop the skills and confidence to prepare them for their first work experience, in addition to the foundational financial literacy skills to set them up for success.

Looking ahead, 2025 has a number of new collaborations planned alongside our standing partners who we're eager to work with again. Common Wealth staff are working with Capital High Parenting Program to design and schedule a spring workshop, focusing primarily on financial fluency with the considerations key to youth navigating parenthood. Additionally, a workshop with Savanna Oaks Middle School will commence in March 2025, connecting with eighth graders to talk about their rights at work, foundational financial literacy skills, and being prepared for their first work experience.



East high students celebrating completion of YBMP

## Madison Metropolitan School District – Experiential Learning Program Partnership

Common Wealth's Youth Workforce Development staff facilitate MMSD's Experiential Learning Program, through which students can earn elective school credits by working a part-time job or volunteering. CWD staff coordinate and communicate with school support staff, counselors, students, and guardians to ensure they're on track and all requirements are met to earn credit. Staff facilitate weekly in-person office hours at each of the four primary Madison high school campuses, and support students through the enrollment process, in completing assignments, and ultimately earning credit for their work.

Our staff work diligently year-round to support students during the spring, fall and summer semesters to ensure their work experience and related academic reflections are supporting their growth. This year, through the combined efforts of staff and students, almost 500 students benefitted from the Work Based Learning participation and credits earned with Common Wealth Development.



# YOUTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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## **Looking Ahead — 2025**

Reflecting on 2024, Common Wealth is eagerly looking forward to leveraging all of the growth and accomplishments of the last year. Our Youth Workforce Development programs are poised to continue expanding, further enhancing the reach and impact for Madison youth. We are resolutely committed to offering the youth of Madison and Dane County with thoughtful and innovative programming that meets them both where they are and while establishing a foundation from which they can build.

In 2025, we will continue expanding upon the depth of our programs, thinking specifically about the long-term impacts and strategic planning for each initiative. It's imperative that we think beyond the coming year to include how our programs will grow and evolve to best support youth in the coming five years, specifically reaching those from underrepresented and underserved communities.

We are looking forward to strengthening our partnerships and building out our collaborative efforts vital to creating a comprehensive program that is prepared to support youth and their ongoing development. Our team is dedicated to refining our strategies in violence prevention, racial justice, and health equity as the core values and pillars of our work. As we look ahead to 2025 and all the opportunities and challenges it will bring, we do so with steadfast commitment to the communities we serve. We are honored to continue being a part of the journey of Madison's youth towards their goals and look ahead towards the coming year with renewed energy and optimism.

## 635 YOUTH SERVED IN 2024



WFYIP Participants getting ready to embark on a biking journey



# ADULT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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## **Overview**

Common Wealth's Adult Workforce Development program section approached 2024 ambitiously and saw significant accomplishments throughout the year! We continued to support the ongoing needs of the community while carrying forward long-term projects and overall section development efforts that have been in progress. Standardizing section practices, bringing in support staff to evaluate the programs, and more accurately defining the long-term mission and goals of the section were all met with vigor and enthusiasm in 2024 and will provide a thoughtful foundation from which to build!

Common Wealth's Adult Workforce Development section continued to be led in 2024 by Kari Alston, in her first full-year as the program manager. Kari diligently worked to develop the administrative supports that allowed her to push the program area further and make significant programmatic strides. Kari worked to draft a manual that outlines the tempo of the section and related programs, initiated new partner conversations, and thoughtfully analyzed the service gaps that are present in existing programs with suggestions for how to mitigate and offer solutions. Connecting with other organizations and individuals from across Madison, Kari has built a network of supportive services that will offer adult workforce participants robust care.



Adult Workforce Development Manager Kari Alston with a community partner.

Building upon projects that began in and were carried over from prior years, Common Wealth staff established goals and priorities for 2024 with the intent of creating more effective and streamlined procedures programmatically and administratively. This included developing effective operating procedures, training and onboarding protocols, and increased documentation of programmatic practices. The development of accessible training tools, workflow definitions, and updated program materials provided staff with a foundation from which to build and make considerable progress towards overarching programmatic outcomes. In March 2024, the pilot session of the WorkUp! Academy program was launched, providing professional skill development, technology training, and cohort-based community learning to the participants. The pilot program provided invaluable feedback that then informed the second session that launched in the fall of 2024, with a total of 5 community members graduating in the program's first year.

Adult Workforce Development was also supported by a familiar face in 2024, the return of Rachel Stetenfeld who had previously worked on the original design and curriculum development for the WorkUp! Academy program proposal in 2021. Rachel rejoined the Adult Workforce team for the summer of 2024 to evaluate the pilot session and redesign and redevelop the materials for the second session based on firsthand participant feedback. Rachel leveraged the program evaluation responses and staff recommendations to craft revised materials based on thoughtful input and experience so that WorkUp! Academy will best meet the needs of the community and utilize lessons learned.



# ADULT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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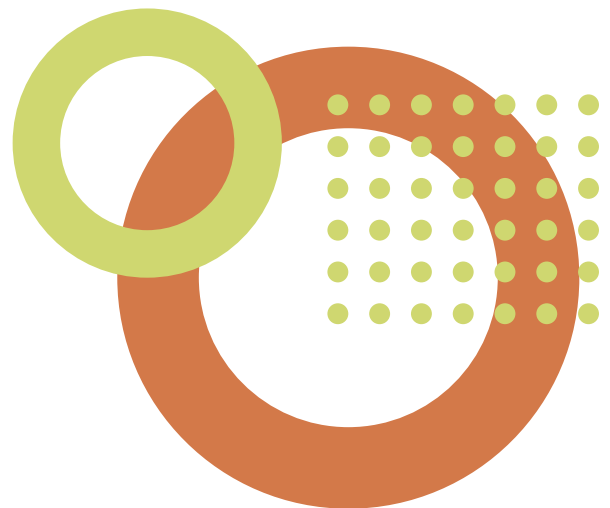
## **Milestones**

Common Wealth's Adult Workforce Development section consistently supported over almost two years by the Adult Workforce Development Manager, Kari Alston, identified that the administrative processes that outline her work needed further development and documentation to be most effective. As Kari worked through her first full year, she built a robust section administration resource portfolio that offers training expectations, workflow and program procedures, programmatic operations, and contract language. Learning from her own experience transitioning into the role and as Common Wealth looks ahead at the future of the section, onboarding new staff was a priority area of emphasis to build out these supportive administrative materials. Aligning staff on the section's programmatic mission, vision, and goals at the front-end of their onboarding creates more cohesive staff joins with shared understanding of the foundational underpinnings that guide their work.

A challenge the Adult Workforce section continues to navigate as we push our work forward is staff bandwidth. Supported primarily by Kari Alston, the time constraints that come with limited staffing mean that considerations for growth, scale, and new ideas need to be reviewed and assessed with that in mind. The quality of the services provided to participants is the most important priority, and opportunities to build from that foundation often mean leveraging relationships, partnerships, and concerted networking to build new connections. The Adult Workforce section works collaboratively with a number of organizations and individuals that provide individualized support to participants who are often navigating multifaceted and complex situations. With the support of the aforementioned approved administrative processes and streamlining Kari's processes, she was able to successfully initiate and build new connections in 2024.

This included more support for mental health resources at the weekly Job Shop program, preliminary conversations with bilingual supportive services, connecting with other passionate individuals across Madison who hope to volunteer, and initiating conversations with larger potential partners that would support with developing more robust curriculum and long-term program planning.

Additionally in 2024, ongoing program assessment and development efforts led to the recommendation that staff and participants would be better supported by alternative software tools to track outcomes and progress. Building upon the work already done to establish administrative procedures and workflows, staff established priorities, needs, and goals that could be provided in a new tool and explore existing resources from other sections at Common Wealth. Ultimately, Common Wealth staff were able to work collaboratively and establish a new system for tracking the participants served across contracts and program areas and as they progress through the program steps. This new system was finalized at the end of 2024 and staff are looking forward to utilizing it heading into the new year.



# ADULT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## Program Highlights

### **WorkUp! Academy**

WorkUp! Academy is a new employment training program aimed at specifically supporting adult participants with skill development to better equip them to rejoin the workforce and retain an opportunity. The program focuses primarily on communication skill development, use of technology, and completion of the program qualifies participants for connection to a transitional employment opportunity. The program provides community members with cohort-style learning, leaning on their peers as they're developing their skills, and offers practical activities and lessons to build participants' confidence as they look ahead to future opportunities. Academy participants complete mock interviews, practice utilizing technology in the workplace, develop goals, and do this all with the guided support of Common Wealth staff. Learning from the pilot sessions in 2024, Common Wealth will be starting 2025 with the additional support of Chromebooks, purchased for use in training WorkUp! Academy participants to develop their technology skills, reliably access emails, develop their resumes, and apply for jobs.



WorkUp! Academy Graduates

### **Experiential Learning and Leadership Academy (ELLA)**

Common Wealth's Experiential Learning and Leadership Academy (ELLA) provided the opportunity to integrate support staff into the Adult Workforce section and push the program development efforts further. ELLA offers a strategic platform for young adults at various post-secondary stages to work structured internships with rigorous professional seminars. The program positions young adults at the helm of community development and policy innovations and caters to a dynamic cohort ranging from recent high school graduates to graduate students aiming to supplement academic theory with practical community development work. Through ELLA, Rachel Stetenfeld was able to rejoin the Adult Workforce section over the summer term to lend her experience and talents in evaluating the WorkUp! pilot session. Rachel had previously worked in the Adult Workforce section and supported the original development of the WorkUp! Academy program proposal in 2021. Her familiarity with the program was a significant asset to the section and ongoing development of the program. Rachel gathered the evaluation data from participants in the pilot session, assessed staff feedback, and took those cumulative recommendations to draft revised materials based on the lessons learned. The tempo, frequency, and duration of sessions was adjusted to better accommodate participant work schedules. Activity formats, lesson methodologies, and guided program materials for participants to reference were all changes made. Utilized in the second session in the fall of 2024, staff and participants reflected a significant improvement in the flow of the program and in the content itself. Ongoing tracking of participant feedback, key takeaways, and staff input will all be utilized to continually inform how the program grows. Building upon the successful pilot year, two sessions are proposed for 2025.

# ADULT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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## **Southwest Transitional Employment Program (STEP) & FoodShare Employment and Training (FSET)**

Initially piloted in 2014 through a grant from the City of Madison's Emerging Opportunities Program, we are continuing to offer and improve our unique Southwest Transitional Employment Program (STEP) in partnership with FoodShare Employment and Training (FSET). This collaborative program was created specifically for those who are struggling to find a job because they are inhibited by systemic barriers, such as previous justice involvement or logistical barriers such as a gap in job history or a lack of employment references. STEP seeks to mitigate these barriers by providing a short-term aid employment opportunity, where individuals can earn a living wage while working a temporary position to gather work history, build connections, and gain a work reference based on demonstrated performance. Through our partnership with FSET, we offer connections to quality services and training such as license recovery,

record expungement, GED education, web design, manufacturing and construction training, and workshops for computer basics that are set to put participants on the track for success.

In 2025, Common Wealth aims to develop this further by building out the WorkUp! Academy to serve as pre-requisite training before being placed in a STEP placement. STEP already requires participants to meet similar criteria now covered by WorkUp! modules and providing deliberate training prior to the placement ensures staff can make an accurate and effective referral to a work opportunity. Common Wealth staff aim to build out the network of supportive placements that are available to STEP participants that are Second Chance employers, open and willing to provide supportive training, and accessible via public transportation. Ideally, the positions will also present opportunities for long-term growth, promotion, or advancement as well.

Building out the STEP program, its connections to other programs, and its long-term outcomes and impacts has been a goal carried over from prior years following the pandemic. Common Wealth will leverage the progress made via the WorkUp! Academy pilot, improved administrative procedures, and updated software to support with participant progress and tracking to make significant strides in 2025. As Common Wealth Development continues to navigate the ongoing changes and needs within the community served via our Adult Workforce Development programs, our emphasis will remain on holistic person-centered development, ensuring each individual who comes through our doors is viewed not only as a job seeker, but as a whole person with unique aspirations and needs. We recognize the power of community in this journey and remain committed to deepening our collaborative ties and 2025 will be a pivotal year in our ongoing work within sustainable workforce development and community building.



# ADULT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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## Job Shop

Job Shop is a weekly drop-in program that provides community members with a flexible and consistent space to access supportive services in one place. Emblematic of Adult Workforce Development's overall approach to community development, the program leverages trusting partnerships to provide wraparound services. Hosted at the Meadowood Community Center from 9:00am – 12:00pm, staff from Common Wealth, Joining Forces for Families, RISE Wisconsin, and UW Writing Lab attend weekly to build bridges across the organizations providing services and break down barriers for the community. In 2024, CleanSlate Rehabilitation services joined regularly to offer supportive services, and other new partnerships are being developed to continue to think dynamically about the care being offered to the community coming to Job Shop. Attendance at Job Shop has continued to rise with demand growing for the unique environment offered. Common Wealth staff alongside partner organizations will continue to explore new opportunities to enhance this work.

## Looking Ahead — 2025

Looking ahead to 2025 and building upon all that was accomplished in 2024, Common Wealth is poised to maintain the support provided to the community and continue developing our programs to be responsive to the community and all that's ahead. In line with our mission and goals, Common Wealth will leverage the supports of the community, our network of partners, and provide robust support that is driven by the needs of those we serve.

## The Alliance - Building Safety

In 2024, Common Wealth staff and neighborhood partners working out of the southwest office, the Alliance, identified building security and operations as a priority. CWD staff met with security vendors to assess options that both provided those working in the building with a sense of security and that didn't impact the welcoming environment. Staff working out of the Alliance are often facilitating community-based supportive services, meaning in-office hours vary across the collaborative organizations. Ultimately, a monitoring system was selected that allows staff to welcome members of the public remotely, but also ensures that the doors are not unlocked at all times. This system was installed in 2024, and has been a supportive resource for those working from the Alliance. The general operations and building workflow amongst the organizations staffing the Alliance have provided a supportive and collaborative workspace that supports the unique and individualized work being done in the neighborhood. To push this conversation further in 2025, Common Wealth aims to increase general programmatic branding and public-facing outreach to increase awareness of the work being done and resources available by adding Common Wealth Development and partner organization signage at the Alliance.



# ADULT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## **2025 - (Cont.)**

Common Wealth made significant progress on the Adult Workforce program development goals in 2024, including the pilot of WorkUp! Academy and connecting workforce opportunities across the Economic Development work team. WorkUp! Academy was initially drafted several years ago, as staff had identified the significant need for tailored and comprehensive training opportunities for Adult Workforce participants before they started a job placement in STEP. Finalizing the WorkUp! Academy curriculum, goals, and projected outcomes in quarter four of 2023 into quarter one of 2024, two inaugural sessions of WorkUp! Academy were facilitated in 2024, offering participants tangible skill development and supportive learning environments in small-group settings. Looking ahead to 2025, WorkUp! Academy has been more adequately formalized as a prerequisite to STEP placements and programmatically structured to be most effective to meet individuals where they are. Common Wealth is poised to complete a successful second year of this program and staff are looking forward to connecting with community members who will be best supported by this opportunity.

To compliment the program development work, Common Wealth's Adult Workforce program section is starting 2025 with a more robust and thoughtful database to support the work of staff. In 2024, a review of existing technology yielded gaps in measuring outcomes, tracking participant progress, and effective support of individual goals. Starting in January of 2025, staff will utilize a new database designed specifically for the Adult Workforce section of programs to generate reports, measure program impacts, and track participants as they move through their goals.



The Meadowood Neighborhood Center

# BUSINESS INCUBATION

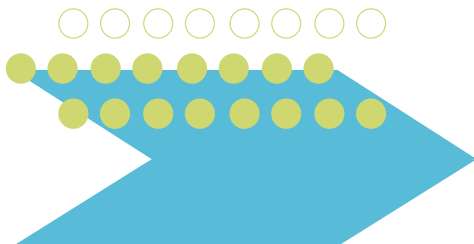
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## **Overview**

A walk down the hallway of either the Madison Enterprise Center or Main Street Industries buildings will yield a dynamic and unique snapshot of the varied businesses operating from the Common Wealth incubation spaces. Entrepreneurs work on spice mixes, artistry, floral arrangements, within a tattoo collective, in a distillery, a brewery, and many other enterprises to comprise an eclectic and bustling community on Madison's isthmus. These businesses operate as a core component of Common Wealth's mission to support business incubation in pursuit of equitable economic development in Madison. Our first and second-stage incubators, Madison Enterprise Center and Main Street Industries respectively, offer affordable commercial space for diverse small businesses, prioritizing those that are owned by women and BIPOC entrepreneurs.

## **Madison Enterprise Center (MEC)**

The Madison Enterprise Center (MEC), located at 100 S. Baldwin Street, is Common Wealth Development's first-stage incubator. First-stage incubation can serve smaller businesses that have been operating for three to four years and are ready for their first physical space. Opened in 1987 in partnership with Madison Gas and Electric, MEC has provided affordable commercial space for start-up and expanding businesses in Madison. Potential businesses must have a business plan that outlines their job creation goals over the initial years of occupancy. Once a business is a tenant at MEC, Common Wealth staff work with them to build towards their "graduation" after three – five years of tenancy.



## **MEC**

We had five business leave MEC in 2024: Yips Snacks, Lily Forest Designs, BWZ Architects, TacoCat Creations, and The Baked Lab. Lily Forest Designs moved to a storefront nearby on Willy St. and both TacoCat Creations and The Baked Lab "graduated" from MEC and moved to Main Street Industries.

Common Wealth was able to continue supporting two additional MEC tenants by providing the opportunity for them to expand their footprint within building. Both Atmospheric Floral and Mermaid Kitchen grew in 2024, expanding to larger suites or into additional spaces that provide increased opportunity for expanded business operations. In addition to these expansions, we welcomed seven new businesses to the MEC community in 2024: Shade Tree Naturals, Stephanie Barenz Studio, Heirloom Bakery, Love U Candle, Mizztique Boudoir, Versal Goods, and Steph Hagens Art. We are thrilled to have these new businesses at MEC and look forward to the growth ahead.

## **Madison Enterprise Center Tenants**

Flavor Temptations  
Shade Tree Naturals Mermaid Kitchen  
Aurora Creative  
MicroMyco Growers  
bernie & zuzu  
Heirloom Bakery  
Atmospheric Floral  
Tori's Trinkets  
Not Your Angel Artistry  
Steph Hagens Art  
Colleen Manner Design  
Versal Goods  
A Space Studio  
T.L. Luke Art  
Love U Candle  
Modern Talisman

# BUSINESS INCUBATION

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## Main Street Industries (MSI)

Main Street Industries (MSI), located at 931 East Main Street, has been Common Wealth's second-stage incubator since 1997. Originally built in 1913 as a Greyhound Bus terminal, the building now serves small businesses who are ready for a long-term place to call home. Businesses must have a comprehensive business plan that includes job creation in the near future. Comprised of long-term tenants who have highly customized suites, businesses often stay until they outgrow their space or are ready for a space to own.

Due to the long-term tenancies at MSI, Common Wealth welcomes new enterprises into this building less frequently than at MEC. In January, The Quince & Apple Company moved out of MSI after successfully growing from MEC into a long-term tenancy at MSI before being sold to new ownership in 2023. In 2024, Bunky's, TacoCat Creations, and The Baked Lab all joined the MSI community, and the building was at full occupancy for the entire year. As mentioned earlier, TacoCat Creations and The Baked Lab both graduated from spaces at MEC into large suites at MSI. The Deliciouser also expanded their footprint in the building, taking on an additional suite for production space and creating more outdoor seating for their events.

## MSI

Common Wealth made several improvements to the Main Street Industries building in 2024, continuing the long-term capital improvement project plan from prior years. The hallways and all common areas were refreshed with a new coat of paint, brightening the spaces that tenants and customers frequent. In addition to the new hallway color, local artist and current MSI tenant, Phil Salamone from Atwood Atelier, painted the Common Wealth Development logo in the entryway to the building.

In November, Main Street Industries hosted the Art at the Depot event on Small Business Saturday. Current tenants alongside other local artists set up tables, opened their suites, and welcomed the public into the building throughout the day. The market-style event provided businesses with the opportunity to connect with customers directly and to visit the building, which is not typically open to the public. After such positive reception and attendance, the event is planned to happen again in 2025!

## Main Street Industries Tenants

Giant Jones Brewing  
Old Sugar Distillery  
CraftOptics  
MetalPeople  
Bali & Soul  
Wildwood Productions  
Level 5 Donuts  
Origin Breads  
The Baked Lab  
TacoCat Creations  
Bunky's  
Steam Instruments  
Pat's Gym  
Atwood Atelier  
Community Shares of WI  
The Deliciouser  
Red Clover Tattoo Collective





# BUSINESS INCUBATION

## Common Wealth Gallery (Madison Enterprise Center – 3rd Floor)

The Common Wealth Gallery is a community space located on Madison's near east side at 100 S. Baldwin Street. The 2,000 square foot gallery can accommodate solo and group art shows and has continued to be a wonderful resource for artists to display and sell their work. In 2024, we continued to see growth in the support local artist displays, featuring about fifteen shows throughout the year.

The spring Gallery Night was co-hosted with Latinos Organizing for Understanding and Development (LOUD), an event that brought together several artists to paint and create in the gallery in the weeks leading up to the show. The fall event was a paint-and-pour themed event for the community to attend and participate in while learning more about Common Wealth's work and mission. To conclude the Gallery Night events, the fall was again, co-hosted with LOUD for the Dia de los Muertos event for the third year, and included a special celebration for the retirement of Oscar Mireles, the Executive Director for the Omega School.



Celebrating Dia de Los Muertos



Day of the Dead altar, traditional Mexican and Latin American practice of honoring and remembering deceased loved ones

# THANK YOU!

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Thank you, Stephanie Bradley Wilson. Your dedication to Common Wealth Development over the past 9 years has been profound. You will be missed. Wishing you the best in your retirement.

