



House by the Side of the Road

2023 Annual Report

Message from the House Manager

2023 Board members

Debra Dill
President

Kevin Graber
Vice-President

Lynn Cohan
Secretary

Ken Westerman
Treasurer

Mark Hopper

Scott King

Venus DePena

We are so grateful for everyone who helped us continue our mission by supporting us this year. Thanks to your generous support we were able to help 4,922 households, 1,168 more than last year.

In October, due to an overwhelming increase in clients, and insufficient volunteers to serve them effectively, we returned to the terms of our original mission, "to serve the people of Washtenaw County" only. We opened our doors in 1970 as a partnership between county churches and the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners.

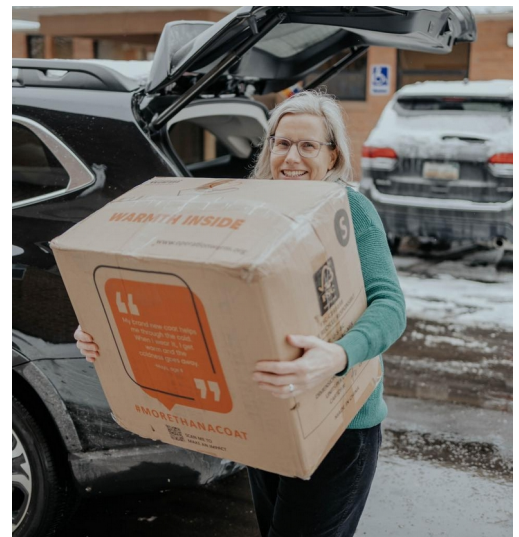
In January we received a \$75,000 grant from Washtenaw County, a wonderful gift, and acknowledgement of our value to county residents. The grant helped us meet the annual increase in expenses and change the lighting in our home at 2051 S State Street from fluorescents and incandescent to light emitting diodes. Rent is our largest expense, but we are grateful to our landlord, State Street Enterprises, LLC, who charges us significantly less than the predominant commercial rate. Utilities are our second largest expense. We appreciate Bluecolt Lighting who helped provide more light at a significant reduction in cost.

We could not have accomplished so much in 2023 without the many donations of clothing, household items, and money from so many in our community. Thank you!

Best wishes,
Gemaya Griffin

Our mission

House by the Side of the Road's purpose is to provide FREE clothing and small household items to children and adults in need.



Meet Our Volunteer Pat Holt

Interviewed by volunteer Kelly Mayhew

Visitors to the House by the Side of the Road often have children in their households. To shop for their children, these clients visit the second floor of the House, where they find clothing, toys, and a variety of supplies. The rooms are inviting, neatly arranged and painted a warm beige. There are windows in the doors so you can see into and out of the rooms, should someone run off. Much of the organization of this area came from the efforts of one of our volunteers.

Pat first got involved with the House in 2013 trying to donate a pile of old clothing. She'd visited the House once previously as a single mother, with children, and remembered it years later. While calling to confirm whether the House could use what she had – they could – the topic of volunteering came up. Would she be interested in seeing more of the work done at the House? She would.

Pat was freshly retired, looking to fill her time, and was asked if she could take over the Children's Department. "I kinda threw myself into this place," she says. The House was then in a building on Phoenix Drive, and Pat gets lost in thought as she recalls the many changes over the years.

The location on Phoenix Drive was too expensive, and the House moved to a warehouse in Ypsilanti. Pat recalled some difficulties at that location: because it was a warehouse, zoning wouldn't allow people to shop. Instead of clients coming in and choosing what to take, they had to send requests, which were filled by volunteers and picked up by clients later. While Ypsilanti did relent – allowing only one person to shop at a time – the House set its sights on a better location, moving to 2051 South State Street.

On State Street the House started leasing only the downstairs. When we were able to expand into the second floor in the summer of 2021, Pat saw her chance. She worked hard to prepare the space for what would eventually become the Children's Department, coming in early, working weekends, and enlisting her husband to help. The rods hanging across the walls were her idea. When asked about it, she says "I like to be crafty." Her hobbies outside the House – cake decoration and painting furniture – reflect this.

My daughters asked me: 'with all the time you spend there, why not get a job?' I don't want some job!" She laughs good-naturedly about it, recounting a time where she helped a young man get toiletries. He was going to check out, carrying a travel-sized toothbrush. Pat thought to herself: "I could do a lot better than that," and went to get him a proper toothbrush, toothpaste, the whole nine yards. "I got back, and he looked at what I had, looked at me, and asked "Can I give you a hug?" That's what it's all about. It's experiences like that that have kept Pat coming back for more than a decade. The House and its clients are in her heart!



Client Stories

The House by the Side of the Road serves a variety of people with different backgrounds, experiences, and reasons for visiting. We spoke to a few clients to find out how they made their way to us:



- “Louise” originally came to the US in search of a better life. Previously living in Missouri, she had trouble finding work, and moved in with her aunt in Michigan. Her aunt, already a client, then brought her to the House in search of items to start off her new life.
- “Bill” was a new client who came in search of work clothes. He’d heard about us from a friend whose son was helped after exiting prison.
- “Justin” was referred to us by Catholic Services as a part of their Offender Success program. Many returning citizens have little, and he was directed to the House in order to make up for the loss. Justin was excited: despite having walked over a mile in the rain to reach us, he was smiling broadly. When he was ready to leave, checkout assisted in bagging his items up so they would be easier to transport.
- “Ann” had heard about us while at the Delonis Center, but didn’t visit until she’d found new housing. She arrived for the first time with her friend, and both were glad to have the service available. Ann was especially thrilled that we had dog toys: she lit up when talking about her dog and the messes his fur would leave on the couch!

Who We Are

At the House by the Side of the Road, we are happy to serve the needs of our clients. Volunteers and volunteer Board members bring special skills and dedication to the mission of the House by the Side of the Road. Our clients pay nothing and are not required to provide a referral. We are proud to report that we are uniquely a 100% volunteer run organization. That means we have NO paid staff but rely on the generosity of many individuals.

Our Impact

In 2023 we served:

4,922 households

410 households/month (average)

1,515 new clients

Our clients came from:

50% Ypsilanti

32% Ann Arbor

18% Other (3% other cities in

Washtenaw County, 15%

beyond Washtenaw County)

Our Clients

Some clients are homeless, just re-entering society from prison, dealing with mental health issues, recent immigrants, or migrant workers. People come in after family breakup, job loss, fire, or prolonged illness.

How You Can Help

Give Funds

Consider helping to support the House.

- Become a sustaining donor by donating any amount per month
- Honor someone (birthday, anniversary, return of good health, graduation, wedding...)

Give today! Go to:

www.housebythesideoftheroad.org

Volunteer

Our volunteers are the heart of what we do. We need people to receive, sort, tag, and hang up clothes, sort and display household items, and check clients in and out. Call us at 734-769-4085 or email us at housebyroad@gmail.com.

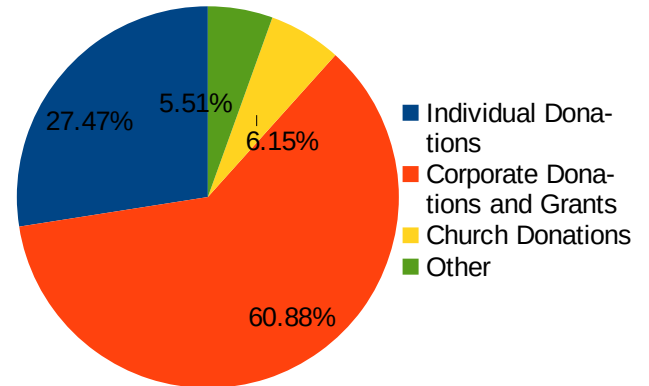
Donate Clothes and Household items

Our current needs are:

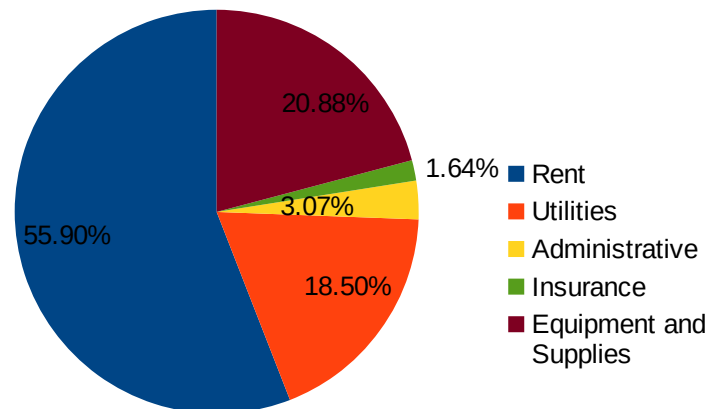
- Pots and pans
- Sheets and blankets
- Towels
- Small appliances
- Backpacks/suitcases
- Tennis shoes
- Pajamas
- Men's jeans

Financials

| Revenue | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Individual Donations | \$41,079 |
| Corporate Donations and Grants | \$91,036 |
| Church Donations | \$9,191 |
| Other | \$8,234 |
| | \$149,541 |



| Expenses | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Rent | \$48,696 |
| Utilities | \$16,117 |
| Administrative | \$2,678 |
| Insurance | \$1,427 |
| Equipment and Supplies | \$18,192 |
| | \$87,111 |



Contact

2051 South State Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

734-769-4085

housebyroad@gmail.com

www.HousebytheSideoftheRoad.org

<https://www.facebook.com/housebysideoftheroadAnnArbor/>

Hours

Open for clients:

Monday - Friday, 10:00am - 2:00pm

Open for donations:

Monday - Wednesday, 9:00am – 1:30pm

Thursday & Friday, 10:00am – 1:30pm