

**Impact 100 Metro Detroit Grant Summary**  
**Grant Finalist: WAVE Project (Welcoming All Valuing Everyone)**  
**Project: Expansion of Shower Services for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness**

**Background:** WAVE Project serves individuals experiencing homelessness and other underserved people in Metro Detroit. More than 8,500 people in Michigan experience homelessness on any given day. Due to limited transportation, accessibility, and other barriers, members of the homeless community often go long periods of time without a shower. After extensive research, meetings with community leaders, and conversations with existing organizations, a unique mission emerged for WAVE Project: sharing love by providing mobile showers to those in need.

**Unmet Need:** Over 8,500 people experience homelessness in Michigan on any given day. In Metro Detroit, fewer than 20 walk-in showers are made available daily to those in need. According to a study published by researchers who surveyed individuals experiencing homelessness in Detroit on topics related to hygiene, participants reported having difficulties accessing publicly available shower facilities. The top three most commonly reported barriers were too few public showering facilities, concern about items being stolen, and too long of wait times (Buechler et al 2020). Providing a mobile shower facility to individuals experiencing homelessness that is accessible to all, regardless of physical ability, is unique to the community because there are no similar services available in Metro Detroit. Being known as 'The Motor City', Detroit residents utilize cars instead of a subway system or other public transportation. Those without vehicles face difficulties getting places as a result. WAVE Project addresses this barrier by being mobile. Our mobile shower services and Essentials Van move throughout the week and are made available at locations of other organizations who also serve people experiencing homelessness. By providing services full-time, we would be able to serve more individuals in need than ever before.

**Project Summary:** Just one of WAVE Project's mobile shower trailers can provide 30+ showers in a day, doubling the number of walk-in showers currently available in Metro Detroit. Our current mobile shower trailer was manufactured in 2019 and does not feature an ADA-compliant shower stall due to limited funding. As a result, many of our elderly and disabled guests are not able to easily or safely utilize our shower services. While we are committed to serving all who need our services, this presents a liability concern for our organization.

This grant would allow us to manufacture an ADA-compliant (Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design) shower trailer to provide safe and accessible showers to guests with physical limitations. It would also enable us to increase our capacity and provide services full-time.

**Outcome:** Our first primary objective is to expand from providing mobile shower services and Essentials Van services from a part-time schedule to a full-time schedule. To achieve this, a full-time shower services manager will be hired within one month of receiving the grant. Our second primary objective is to increase service accessibility to the elderly, people with disabilities, and others with physical limitations by utilizing an ADA-compliant mobile shower trailer. The shower trailer will be completed and ready to use within 12 months of receiving the Impact100 grant.

**Sustainability:** If we are awarded the Impact100 Metro Detroit grant, the majority of the funds will be used to purchase an ADA-compliant trailer, which will enable us to serve a wider population right away. Once purchased, the cost of maintaining the shower trailer is low, and can be sustained by our multiple revenue streams, including sponsorships, donations, and grants. Expanding the number of days, we offer services and hiring a full-time shower services manager is contingent on receiving additional funds, which we believe we will be able to acquire as we continue to gain a presence in the community.

