1 2021 RES-271

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## AWARDING A CONTRACT FOR ARP HOUSING NAVIGATION DCDHS – HAA DIVISION

This project is funded with the County's allocation of local aid authorized in the 2021 American Rescue Plan. Therefore, this resolution follows the format outlined in 2021 RES-013.

## **Justification**

<u>Authorizing Law:</u> In March of 2021, the federal government authorized the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan (ARP) stimulus bill authorizing additional funding to respond to and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic across multiple areas of need.

Dane County was allocated over \$106 million in ARP local aid. A portion of those funds have been committed to various efforts to prevent and end homelessness and limit spread of COVID-19 through efforts to provide social distancing in the congregate shelter system. Over \$8.2 million in ARP funding was approved for the Hotels to Housing rehousing initiative for use in 2022 in the 2022 Dane County Budget, including \$535,000 for expanded housing navigation services.

Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Preventing exposure to and spread of COVID-19 among households experiencing homelessness has been a pillar of Dane County's pandemic response. Beginning in March of 2020, Dane County funded non-congregate hotel shelter operations and assisted with other congregate shelter expansions to quickly create critical social distancing in the community's homeless shelter system, partnering with numerous hotels to provide rooms, and with the City of Madison, Public Health Madison-Dane County, and frontline agencies to administer the program.

Pandemic response efforts also included an expansion of housing navigation services to assist non-congregate hotel shelter guests, congregate shelter guests, and those living unsheltered with assistance finding permanent housing and clearing barriers to obtaining housing, such as rental or utility arrears.

As the amount of housing resources has increased due to targeted federal and local funds, so has the need for assistance in navigating housing options for households experiencing homelessness with a less than perfect housing history.

Following the results of a request for proposals (RFP) process, the Dane County Department of Human Services – Housing Access and Affordability Division (HAA) seeks to contract with Catholic Charities, Inc., Diocese of Madison to provide housing navigation services. The contract term will be from January 1, 2022 to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2022.

Housing navigation services will consist of assisting individuals in need of housing, including but not limited to help with housing search; identification of an individual's housing barriers; guidance and advocacy to overcome those barriers; information and referral to community resources to address concerns related to housing (employment and training, mainstream benefits, etc.), and assistance in filling out housing applications.

Housing navigation services will be targeted to individuals sheltering in hotels paid for by Dane County; individuals and families who are not currently in housing, experiencing homelessness

as defined by HUD (living in shelter or on the streets), and/or not currently enrolled in another case management or outreach program where they would be obtaining housing navigation services; and individuals and families who are housing insecure or do not otherwise meet the HUD definition of homelessness (individuals who are staying with another person or self-paying for extended lodging in hotels.) Services provided to households who do not meet the HUD definition of homelessness may be broader and more "self-service" in nature depending on program capacity.

Catholic Charities, Inc., Diocese of Madison has been the contracted provider for Housing Navigation Services in 2020 and 2021. In 2020, Housing Navigation provided services to 1112 people, enrolled 520 households in individualized services, and exited 109 households to permanent housing. In the first 3 quarters of 2021, Housing Navigation has provided services to 1339 people, enrolled 700 households in individualized services, and exited 149 households to permanent housing.

<u>Duplication of Funding/Existing Partnerships and Programs:</u> The funding is not duplicative. Catholic Charities is the current operator of County general purpose revenue (GPR) funded housing navigation services. Additional housing resources are necessary to meet the local need.

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**Expected Outcomes and Data Collection:** Data collected will minimally include total number of individuals enrolled in/assisted with services, including racial, age demographics, and veteran status; number of households served; number of households exited to permanent housing; number of clients referred to other supports, and a breakdown of those referrals by topics, including but not limited to employment and training, mental health/AODA, economic assistance benefits, additional housing assistance, health care, and/or legal assistance; number of individuals served with rental assistance; and average amount of rental assistance distributed per households served.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the following contract be awarded (with a term of January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2023) and that the County Executive and County Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to sign the agreements on behalf of Dane County, and that the Controller is authorized to make payments:

84 Vendor

Contract Amount

Catholic Charities Inc., Dioceses of Madison

\$535,000

Total Expenditure: \$535,000

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County Board requests quarterly reports be shared with 88 the members of the County Board, and that the Health and Human Needs Committee review 89 the reports on a quarterly basis and discuss how the information presented addresses 90 anticipated program outcomes.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that unspent funds from 2022 be carried forward for expenditure in 2023.