SUB 1 TO 2021 RES-156 AS AMENDED BY HHN ON 9/2/21 PURSUING TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT HOUSING SOLUTIONS FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AND AUTHORIZING FUNDING

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5 Dane County has prioritized safe sheltering and eviction prevention throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. 6 The County committed funds from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES") Act 7 to eviction prevention and has partnered with Tenant Resource Center and Urban Triage to administer 8 Emergency Rent Assistance program funds allocated to the County through federal COVID relief 9 legislation. The County funded Occupy Madison to support the creation of 28 tinier houses for people 10 who had been living outside in 2020 to prevent them from having to live outside during the cold winter 11 months. The County has also funded expanded housing navigation and launched a rapid rehousing 12 program to provide more stable housing options to people experiencing homelessness. The County has 13 funded a hotel sheltering program for families due to the capacity limitations at the family shelter and for 14 individuals who are especially vulnerable to serious illness if infected by COVID-19 ("vulnerable 15 population") and not sufficiently protected in congregate shelter facilities. At its peak, the hotel sheltering 16 program provided safe shelter to approximately 300 households.

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18 Vulnerable Population Hotel Sheltering

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20 As local public health emergency orders were lifted in June, 2021, it became more difficult for Dane 21 County to secure long term room availability with local hotels who were partnering in the vulnerable 22 population hotel (VPH) sheltering program. In mid-July, the VPH stopped taking new referrals due to the 23 program ending in August, 2021. Currently, there are 139 people in the hotels designated as VPH and 60 24 people are on the waitlist. The last two VPH contracts end on August 25 and August 30, 2021. Neither of 25 the VP hotels are interested in extending the contracts. Housing navigation, hotel sheltering case 26 management partners, and supportive housing providers are working to find permanent housing for the 27 people that remain in the county-funded hotel sheltering and are placing some people. The County is also 28 working to secure new hotel partners. The shelter available to single women operated by The Salvation 29 Army is at capacity. Many people sheltered in VPH were previously living outside in encampments at 30 McPike Park and Reindahl Park.

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The County has not yet spent \$2.4M in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds it allocated for hotel sheltering in 2021, but will use these funds for quarantine shelter and new VPH contracts if secured. The County also has allocated funds in the amount of \$2,659,760 for the Hotels to Housing program in 2021 and \$1,624,252 is unspent. While 90 persons in the Hotel to Housing program have executed leases and more will lease up in the coming months, estimates show there will be unused funding that can be reprogrammed to support additional services and housing options for individuals and couples experiencing homelessness.

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40 Ongoing Need for Supportive Services and Housing for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

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The Dane County Homeless Services Consortium, our Continuum of Care for U.S. Department of
 Housing and Urban Development (HUD) homelessness assistance grants maintains a coordinated entry

44 lists (aka "by-name" lists) for housing for all the families and individuals who have been identified through

45 our coordinated entry system as experiencing "literal homelessness" (also known as "category 1").

46 Persons are placed on this list according to a common assessment tool and the length of time they have

47 experienced homelessness. In order to be assessed and placed on the coordinated entry "by-name" list

48 for housing, the person must have been sleeping in a shelter or another place not meant for human

49 habitation (like an encampment) for at least 7 days in a row prior to their assessment. Persons are

experiencing chronic homelessness, according to HUD, if they have a verifiable disabling condition and
 have experienced homelessness for a total of at least 12 months in the last three years.

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As of August 11, 2021, there are 508 individuals on the coordinated entry list in Dane County who are
currently experiencing homeleessness and almost half of those persons, 238 people, are experiencing
chronic homelessness. Racial disparities are significant. Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC)
make up the majority of the people on the coordinated entry list and 221 people (43%) identify as Black.
142 people are seniors (55 and over), 29 are veterans, and 43 are youth (18-24 yrs old) on the list. The
average length of time of individuals on the list waiting for a housing placement is 470 days.

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Thousands in Dane County at Risk of Eviction Due to Rent Owed

As of July 5, 2021, 8,573 renters (9.2% of 93,189 total renters) in Dane County are at risk of eviction due
to owing back rent.¹ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), on August 3, 2021, issued a
new Order which applies in counties with a substantial or high rate of community transmission. This
Order is in effect for 60 days and protects renters from being evicted due to non-payment of rent through
October 3, 2021 so long as Dane County remains at a substantial or high rate of community transmission.
When the Order is no longer applicable, a significant increase in eviction filings is expected. More
evictions will also add pressure on our sheltering and homeless services system.

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70 Growing Number of People Living in Encampments and Cars

71 72 Some of the people who had been in the hotels and who are on the coordinated entry list were previously 73 living in encampments, including but not limited to McPike Park and Reindahl Park in the City of Madison. 74 For much of the pandemic, the City of Madison followed CDC guidance to leave encampments in place. 75 The City of Madison also authorized temporary permitted encampments in a few locations. One of those 76 temporary permanent encampments (TPE) was at Reindahl Park. While the authorization for the TPE 77 expired, the City of Madison, through direction by the Common Council, is allowing the encampment to 78 remain in place while the City pursues alternatives to the Reindahl site. Outreach staff have estimated 79 that as of early August, 2021, they have connected with approximately 125 people who are currently 80 living outside in encampments. The actual number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness 81 and living outside or in cars is expected to be higher.

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State licensed campgrounds operated by the Dane County Parks Department are one of very few lawful
alternatives for people experiencing homelessness who lack access to permanent housing. Dane County
Ordinances, at sec. 53.07, regulate the campgrounds. Requirements in the ordinances which place limits
on reservations, require online reservations, and require payment for reservation fees are particularly
burdensome to people who are using the campground as their primary residence because they have no
other housing available.

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In July, 2012, in response to a request from the Dane County Board, Madison-area Urban Ministry (now
 known as Just Dane), issued a report to the Dane County Board on alternative sites for Occupy Madison.
 Occupy Madison had been operating an encampment in an abandoned car lot on East Washington Ave.
 The Report provided immediate, intermediate, and long term "responses and strategies to address needs

94 and gaps in services". One of the immediate responses and strategies was related to car-camping. The

95 report recommended the following to the County Board over 9 years ago:

¹ https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/28/opinion/covid-eviction-moratorium.html

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97	Establish car camping sites or parking spots for those living in their cars;
98	1. Identify spots on county owned property, businesses and faith communities parking lots;
99	2. Follow other successful car camping models from around the United States. Examples
100	include Santa Barbara, CA, Eugene, OR, Portland, OR, Los Angeles, CA;
101	3. Create a registration process for those who would like to camp in the available car
102	camping spots;
103	4. Develop a community outreach program to engage neighbors and address concerns
104	regarding car camping in the neighborhood.
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106	The Delta Variant and High Rate of Community Transmission in Dane County

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In early August, the CDC determined that Dane County, like much of the country, was at a high rate of community transmission. On August 17, 2021, PHMDC issued an emergency order, effective August 19, 2021, which requires that everyone age 2 and older wear a face covering or mask when in any enclosed building where other people, except for members of the person's own household or living unit, could be present. The high rate of community transmission in Dane County and throughout much of Wisconsin due to the Delta Variant necessitates alternatives to congregate shelter for persons who are particularly

- 114 vulnerable to serious illness from COVID-19.
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Opportunities for Collaboration with City of Madison on Temporary and Permanent Housing Solutions

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119 The challenges around unsheltered homelessness in Dane County are not new but, like in communities 120 around the country, they have been made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the issues the 121 community is struggling with is a growing reluctance to use group shelter settings, in part, for fear of 122 exposure to COVID. As a result, more and more people experiencing homelessness are choosing to live 123 outdoors, in conditions that are both unsafe and unsustainable. The City of Madison has allocated \$2M in 124 ARPA funds for strategies to provide support outside of the shelter system. Funds provided in this 125 proposal are intended for use to support one or more strategies for people currently living outdoors. 126 Money could be used for such things as purchasing property for use as an encampment; installing basic 127 services like running water, bathrooms or electricity; establishing "tiny homes" or similar structures for use 128 by campers: and paying for on-site staff to support and monitor an encampment site. Additional funds are 129 needed to support the purchase, and operation of the tiny house village community and additional sites to 130 support safe and healthy living arrangements for people experiencing homelessness, particularly 131 unsheltered homelessness. Additional options are also needed for people who are car-camping as that is 132 not included in potential encampment sites. 133 134 The City has also allocated \$2.5M in ARPA funds for the purchase of a hotel to convert to housing, with 135 some units designated as permanent supportive housing for people who have been experiencing chronic

homelessness. Through the ARPA, Dane County has received a \$2.25M allocation of funds targeted to
 the expansion of housing. Dane County's allocation was determined using the HUD's formula used to

allocate annual HOME Investment Partnerships Program funds. While federal guidance for the use of

139 these funds is forthcoming, national webinars regarding best practices for the use of these funds have

140 encouraged the purchase and conversion of hotels for supportive housing for persons who have

141 experienced homelessness.

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143 Precedent for Making Exceptions and Waiving Fees to Mitigate COVID-19 Hardship

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145 Throughout the pandemic, Dane County has offered support for property owners and businesses to 146 mitigate COVID-related burdens. In 2020, the County adopted 2020 Res 20 allowing municipalities to 147 delay property tax payments and waive penalties and fees on their property taxes. In 2021, the County 148 adopted 2020 Res. 442 which allowed Public Health Madison Dane County to provide a 30% rebate for 149 license fees for businesses. The rebate saves business owners with the most common license \$165. 150 151 NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, Dane County shall continue to pursue hotel partnerships to 152 provide safe shelter with previously allocated funds to persons designated in the "vulnerable population" 153 and to avoid returning vulnerable individuals to congregate shelter, unsheltered homelessness, or other 154 unsafe living arrangements. Any funds not spent in 2021 shall be carried over into 2022. 155 156 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Dane County allocates \$7M in American Rescue Plan Act funds, to 157 support additional strategies to serve people experiencing homelessness, particularly those experiencing 158 unsheltered homelessness and living in encampments, with expanded services and housing options as 159 follows: 160 \$250,000 to expand outreach services to people experiencing unsheltered -161 homelessness; 162 \$1.5M for land acquisition, planning, development and operation of one or more -163 permanent tiny house village(s); 164 \$5.25M for purchase and renovation of one or more hotels or multi-unit buildings to -165 provide supportive, low-barrier housing for people on the coordinated entry by-name list. 166 Any funds not spent in 2021 shall be carried over into 2022. -167 168 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, provided it is a permitted expenditure under forthcoming federal guidance, 169 Dane County designates its additional \$2.25M allocation under the federal HOME funds formula to 170 contribute to the purchase of a hotel to convert to supportive housing for individuals or couples who have 171 experienced homelessness and are on the coordinated entry "by-name" list. If allowable under 172 forthcoming federal guidance, funds may be used to support the acquisition of a hotel in partnership with 173 the City of Madison, with any funds not spent in 2021 carried over into 2022. Dane County should also 174 consider authorizing additional ARPA funds or funding in the 2022 Capital Budget for a hotel purchase 175 outside the City of Madison. 176 177 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Departments of Human Services, Land and Water Resources, 178 Planning and Development, and Department of Administration shall convene a staff team, with Public 179 Health Madison Dane County serving as a consulting organization, to prepare a report on implementation 180 of lawful camping and car-camping options in Dane County as first recommended to the County Board in 181 July, 2012. The report shall be presented to the City-County Homelessness Issues Committee no later 182 than 60 days after the adoption of this resolution. 183 184 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Dane County shall temporarily waive the requirements of ss. 53.07(1),(2), 185 (3), and (5), Dane Co. Ords., for people experiencing homelessness, following a referral from outreach 186 workers, and camping in Dane County campgrounds through March 31, 2022. 187 188 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Dane County will continue to pursue reimbursement, to the greatest extent 189 possible, from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for expenditures on non-congregate 190 hotel sheltering, particularly for the sheltering of people particularly vulnerable to serious illness from 191 COVID-19 infection and those in guarantine. 192

- 193 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Dane County, in its 2022 Capital Budget affordable housing
- 194 development commitment, will prioritize partnerships with nonprofits committed to providing transitional
- 195 and permanent housing to people who are currently experiencing homelessness, with a strong preference
- 196 for set asides for persons and families experiencing chronic homelessness.
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- 200 References

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- 202 Chapter 53 dane co ords https://www.countyofdane.com/documents/pdf/ordinances/ord053.pdf
- 203 April presentation
- 204 https://dane.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=9343655&GUID=A1A06C85-5781-41DC-8022-
- 205 24583519C314
- 206 Res 11 RRH
- 207 https://dane.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4922335&GUID=FD4C440B-6C7C-4810-88E4-
- 208 586E0E616970
- 209 City investment chart for housing and homelessness 2021 ARPA and 2022
- 210 https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=9500443&GUID=1F47D089-A775-466B-AF13-
- 211 E22B407E21E1
- 212 CDC encampment guidelines
- 213 https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/homeless-shelters/unsheltered-
- 214 homelessness.html
- 215 NAEH and FEMA
- 216 https://endhomelessness.org/fema-response-and-homelessness-during-covid-19/
- 217 NLIHC letter re FEMA reimbursement
- 218 https://nlihc.org/resource/nlihc-led-disaster-housing-recovery-coalition-calls-fema-release-guidance-
- 219 extend-full?utm_source=NLIHC+All+Subscribers&utm_campaign=5082676db4-DHRC-Update-7-8-
- 220 2021&utm medium=email&utm term=0 e090383b5e-5082676db4-291673033&ct=t(DHRC-Update-7-8-<u>20</u>21) 221
- 222 FEMA non-congregate sheltering
- 223 https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/FEMA-Non-Congregate-Sheltering-During-the-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf
- 224 Dane Co Out of Reach NLIHC
- 225 Out of Reach 2021: Wisconsin
- 226 https://rethinkinghomelessness.org/
- 227 HUD ESG COVID19 grantee guidance
- 228 https://www.hud.gov/program offices/comm planning/homeless esg covid-19

On September 2, 2021, the Health and Human Needs Committee amended the sub to remove the last sentence on line 154 to line 166.