

**From:** [Jeff Stanek](#)  
**To:** [City County Homeless Issues Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Written Comment  
**Date:** Monday, May 3, 2021 3:24:52 PM

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Dear members of the City-County Homeless Issues Committee,

I am a resident of Madison, and of Alder Benford's district (6). I am writing to urge you to oppose the imminent eviction of residents at Reindahl Park.

When I hear the argument that evicting people from the Reindahl Park campsite is actually just an incentive for current residents to make use of various preexisting services, I'm not sure how to make positive sense of that. Yes, services exist, but they aren't made better or more accessible, in any way, by this eviction, nor are they in any case able to do for housing and community what the campsite is doing. If city/nonprofit services were adequate to these needs, there would be no campsite at Reindahl Park to begin with (or, before that, McPike Park). This line of argument that would characterize the eviction as an incentive to use already-existing services, when those services are not meeting basic needs that are instead being met at this time by the Reindahl campsite, is disingenuous on its face. I urge you to push back against this rhetoric and name the real reasons for the eviction notice: aesthetics.

I'm a frequent user of Madison's public parks, and the city's relentless campaign against homeless campsites does not enhance my enjoyment of the parks whatsoever; it saddens and shames me, and I know this sentiment is widespread. The few complainers should not be pandered to over the general goodwill of the community, and certainly not over the basic needs (housing, community) of the Reindahl residents.

Sincerely,  
Jeff Stanek  
515 Maple Ave  
Madison 53704

**From:** [Bridget Rogers](#)  
**To:** [City County Homeless Issues Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Doubled Up Resource Specialist  
**Date:** Monday, May 3, 2021 2:23:40 PM  
**Attachments:** [Doubled Up Resource Specialist.docx](#)

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Please find attached a written statement to be shared with members of the City-County Homeless Issues Committee as part of the Listening Session today.

Thank you,  
Bridget Rogers  
3325 Basil Dr.  
Madison, WI 53704

Dear City-County Homeless Issue Committee Members:

My name is Bridget Rogers and I urge you to support the creation of a Doubled Up Resource Specialist position to help address the unmet needs of our doubled up homeless population. I am writing this letter as a private citizen. Although I speak from my voice as a private citizen, as a community social work and a member of the Doubled Up Workgroup, I see the doubled up population on a regular basis and witness how their needs are not being met or prioritized in our current system.

Families and individuals that are doubled up, meaning they are staying with others often in overcrowded and very tenuous situations, are rarely able to access any services through our current system. They are often overlooked, not seen as vulnerable enough, and not prioritized to receive necessary help. Living in doubled up situations, often from house to house, can be frightening and unsafe for children as well as adults. This must change. In MMSD alone, roughly 80% of homeless students qualify under this category of doubled up/self-paying in hotels (based upon pre-Covid data). That means 80% of homeless school age children in Madison are not receiving the supports they need to gain the housing stability that we know is imperative to be engaged scholars. Given that BIPOC persons are significantly overrepresented in our communities' homeless population, this is also an equity issue to bring enhanced resources to the doubled up portion of our homeless.

*"Families can just go to shelter if they are in such need. These families must be ok staying where they are at if they don't go to shelter. They are better off staying with someone than going to shelter."* These are some of the common misconceptions related to doubled up homelessness. These represent false narratives that minimize the struggles of doubled up families and allow us as a community to continue to overlook this extremely vulnerable population. There are many reasons that a family may not have an option except to be doubled up including lack of transportation to the shelter, special needs of family members, limited English proficiency (and lack of linguistically appropriate supports in shelter), mental health barriers, among a multitude of other reasons. Especially for families residing outside of Madison, the transportation barrier is huge. The truth is that even if more families were able to get to shelter, we don't have the capacity to serve them. We must look at alternate strategies to support our doubled up homeless families without requiring them to enter our shelter, and funding a Double Up Resource Specialist is one of those strategies.

The goal of the Doubled Up Resource Specialist is to coordinate and organize resources in such a way to serve the doubled up population while promoting community awareness about this complex and important issue. The Specialist would be instrumental in examining policies and procedures adversely impacting the doubled up population, gather and examine data, and gather ideas from other communities how to effectively serve this group, and seek out new funding sources. The Doubled Up Workgroup, a workgroup of the Homeless Services Consortium with representatives from a variety of community agencies, private citizens and those with lived experience, has been meeting for over a year to raise awareness around this topic and identify next steps. The recommendations of the group for the critical next step is the development of this Doubled Up Specialist position and we respectfully ask you to consider including it in your funding recommendations. I would encourage you to reach out to the Doubled Up Workgroup if you have additional questions related to this important topic at [doubledupworkgroup@gmail.com](mailto:doubledupworkgroup@gmail.com).

Respectfully,

Bridget Rogers  
3325 Basil Dr.  
Madison, WI 53704  
(608) 217-3196

**From:** [Catherine Reiersen](#)  
**To:** [City County Homeless Issues Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment, Item 65121  
**Date:** Monday, May 3, 2021 1:31:45 PM

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Good afternoon,

My name is Catherine Reiersen and I am representing myself as a longtime resident of Dane County. I also bring experience as School Social Worker and McKinney Vento Coordinator in the Sun Prairie Area School District.

In my district, 70% of our families are doubled up and many do not have access to the shelter system or housing services. "Doubled up" means the family is sharing the housing of others because they cannot afford housing on their own. While the family has a "roof" over their heads, these living arrangements are precarious and can change weekly. These families are often at the mercy of their "hosts," who risk their own housing for allowing long-term guests. With no services or case management, families who are doubled up are often left behind and invisible.

I emphatically endorse the creation of a City/County position who specializes in supporting the doubled-up homeless population. This person could coordinate and advocate for resources and funding to serve doubled-up families. They could also lead a County-wide data collection effort of our TOTAL homeless population, including doubled-up families who are not included in our current numbers. I believe that an accurate data picture of homelessness would show large numbers of doubled up households in urban AND rural areas.

Thank you,  
Catherine

**From:** [Patricia O'Day](#)  
**To:** [City County Homeless Issues Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Permanent Men's Homeless Shelter  
**Date:** Monday, May 3, 2021 11:19:03 AM

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CCHIC:

I believe the current location, and building on First St, should evolve into the permanent men's homeless shelter. Instead of purchasing a building and waiting up to two years for renovations, those millions of dollars could be used to expand programs, and resources for the homeless community right now! Isn't that more of a priority than the Public Market? The First St building is larger than the Zeier Rd building, and has the room to provide an all purpose shelter. It has the proximity to needed resources such as The Beacon. I have seen and read only positive comments about the current shelter, and the City already owns the building! Use of budgeted funds could really go a long way to make this facility a success. As a taxpayer, this is how I would like to see our money be spent.

Realistically, there will always be a Homeless population in the downtown area that would not want to take the bus out to EastTowne. Without the shelter on First St, these men will have nowhere to sleep but downtown parks and church basements. A step backward.

I applaud Alder Abbas and his initiative to offer a Plan B, with the possibility of the nearby Hooper building as an option. It was said this location "checks all the boxes". If it works out, this would be the best alternative to First St. I'm also wondering if the Hooper Building could possibly be considered as a new home for the Public Market?

Thank you for your consideration.  
Respectfully, Patricia O'Day

**From:** [Evelyn Gildrie-Voyles](#)  
**To:** [City County Homeless Issues Committee](#)  
**Subject:** statement for the May 3rd listening session  
**Date:** Monday, May 3, 2021 7:35:12 AM

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Dear Council on Homelessness members

I am registered to speak tonight but in case I have to leave before being able to give my comment, here is a written version.

Thank you for your consideration

My name is Evelyn Gildrie-Voyles. I am a resident of Madison and I am here to speak against the planned forced removal on May 9<sup>th</sup> of the people living at Reindahl Park. The Center for Disease Control recommends that encampments of unhoused people not be broken up during the Coronavirus Pandemic. Breaking up encampments scatters people throughout the city and makes it difficult to provide services and health care. In response to the CDC recommendations Mayor Conway-Rhodes and the city created Temporary Permissible Encampments to allow unhoused people to camp in public parks if distancing and sanitation was maintained. Keeping Reindahl as a Temporary Permissible Encampment makes financial and moral sense. The people residing at Reindahl take distancing seriously and have created their own means of hand washing and sanitation since the city was slow to provide wash stations and trash collections. I have been visiting the encampment at Reindahl since April to help with filling wash stations and trash pickup. There is currently a network of volunteers and service providers that are serving the population at Reindahl. Breaking up the camp will break this network of support and make it difficult for outreach providers and volunteers to find and help these individuals.

If the Reindahl park encampment is broken up on May 9<sup>th</sup>, this will be the second time since February that a Temporary Permissible encampment has been broken up by the city. Most of the people at Reindahl were already removed from McPike Park. Such removals are against CDC guidelines. We are still in a Pandemic and the guidelines are still in place. Madison needs to stop treating unhoused people like a cosmetic nuisance to be shoved farther out of sight and start treating them like human beings who are doing their best to cope with a host of set backs.

I ask that Reindahl Park remain a temporary permissible encampment until we are no longer in a national health crisis and there is a period of recovery so that people are able to find better living arrangements and job opportunities. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Evy Gildrie-Voyles  
202 Farley Avenue  
Madison, WI  
608-772-9729