

To Dane County Board:

I am writing to ask you to please pass the Round 3 Grants for small businesses in Dane County. My company SRO Artists Inc of Middleton has lost considerable earnings (over \$600,000) due to the pandemic. The music/performing arts sector is among the hardest hit businesses in the country. I have furloughed my staff seven and am surviving on three part time employees (including myself) at a monthly loss. I am in need of grant assistance. I applied for the round 2 and was not selected. In anticipation of the 3rd round of grants, I understand this is delayed at the level of the county board. Please, please please pass this third round of grants to help all small businesses in Dane County re-hire employees and resume our businesses. Thank you.

Jeff Laramie | President
SRO Artists, Inc. | est. 1980
6629 University Ave, #206 | Middleton, WI 53562
Call - 608.664.8160 Ext: 302

Good afternoon,

I am a Dane County resident of 10 years and currently live in Sun Prairie. I work with students experiencing homelessness and have seen firsthand some of the challenges that families face. In Dane County, the demand for housing has far exceeded the actual inventory of housing. Families who have a past eviction, criminal history, poor credit or cannot afford 3x the rent upfront are basically counted out of the apartment search. Even when a family has an apartment, rent has continued to skyrocket in our area. This has a detrimental effect on Black families who are more likely to face these barriers.

Most families who cannot access housing are forced to double up with relatives or friends. 70% of Sun Prairie's homeless students are sharing the housing of others, which leads to crowded, unsafe, and illegal conditions. These families are essentially stuck; they're not homeless enough to access homeless services, but yet cannot find a place to rent.

These families may reach the shelter system or they may bounce between different households for years. The schools provide some services to families who are doubled up, but there is no help with security deposits, subsidized rent, or housing case management. In rural areas, there are very little services within walking distance and less affordable housing, which adds even more burden to families.

I would like to see a more robust service system that does not just rely on HUD dollars, but that addresses homelessness as a community issue. Just as we spend local money on education, public transit, and infrastructure, we should do the same for homelessness. HUD funds are often for strict use and cannot be used flexibly to support our doubled-up families. In the end, they often go to the shelter system. While the shelters serve a vital role in ending homelessness, they are often a last resort for families, when they've exhausted all other resources and burned many bridges. If families were able to easily access wraparound support from schools, churches, or community-based locations, we might actually make a long-lasting impact on housing and homelessness. The data shows that our current system is clearly not working.

Thank you,
Catherine Reiersen

Recommendations to Dane County Health and Human Needs Committee from Movin' Out, Inc. Regarding the Dane County Affordable Housing Fund

Movin' Out, Inc. has several recommended changes to the Dane County Affordable Housing Fund that we believe would improve its overall impact in addressing the housing needs the County has identified. These recommendations are listed below:

1. The County should increase its efforts to better coordination with the City of Madison and other local units of government as it plans and allocates its resources to maximize the collective impact of the funding and programs associated addressing affordable housing needs. This coordination could result in allowing the County to assist more projects by having a better understanding of what other potential local funding sources are planning to award to the projects. Additionally, the overall goals and scoring points for projects may be better aligned by such coordination.
2. Based on feedback from investors, lenders and property management companies who invest and manage affordable housing Dane County should budget and allocate a portion of the Affordable Housing Fund to establish a loan loss reserve fund that will increase the access to rental housing by working in tandem with its goal of "providing generous tenant screening criteria". Further, designing such a fund would be best accomplished by including meaningful input from stakeholders impacted by the effort of providing generous tenant screening criteria. Stakeholders could include tenants in need of housing and their advocates; professional property managers of affordable housing; representatives from other local units of government (who may also contribute to such a fund) and County staff. Such a fund could provide a financial backstop to multifamily operators to cover the economic risks associated with leasing to tenants who may not pass current tenant screening criteria now used by property managers to select tenants.
3. The County should expand the makeup of the Dane County Affordable Review Team to include private sector real estate professionals such as lenders, experienced developers and others who do not have conflict of interest issues. When selecting additional Review Team members attention should be paid to ensuring meaningfully diversity is represented. This will increase the ability of the County to better evaluate and underwrite the proposed projects and support the County staff.
4. The County should eliminate the points currently awarded to projects located in the City of Madison that are more than ½ mile from an existing affordable housing project and instead adopt alternative metrics. The fact that there is another LIHTC project within ½ mile does not necessarily mean that the location of the proposed project will result in over concentration of lower income tenants.
5. The County should expand the types of projects it will award funding to beyond LIHTC financed projects and should consider helping to establish a public/private fund to finance new residential infrastructure (new subdivisions for example) with the goal of creating new workforce housing options for both home ownership and rental housing. These newly developed neighborhoods could be targeted to meet the needs of households with a range of income

levels and housing needs that are currently not able to be addressed by the private sector or the existing affordable housing financing programs.

6. The County should increase the amount of funding awarded for adding more green building features beyond solar such as electric car charging stations, increased thermal insulation and others.

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