

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: April 19, 2024

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Shakita LaGrant McClain, Director, Department of Health and Human Services

Subject: A report from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), providing an informational report regarding programs in the 2024 budget administered by Housing Services

File Type: Informational Report

REQUEST

This informational report provides an overview of the programs in the 2024 DHHS Adopted Budget for Housing Services.

BACKGROUND

In the 2024 budget for Housing Services, there were no substantial changes relating to expenditures of Milwaukee County tax levy from the previous year except for additional affordable housing funds and the new senior home repair program. However, major initiatives continued into 2024 that were funded by grant funds. Housing Services continued the County's focus on providing affordable housing, the rehabilitation of Milwaukee County foreclosures and an expansion of housing navigation for homeless outreach.

Affordable Housing Initiatives

A large focus of Housing Services has been the development of affordable housing, particularly in the suburban areas of the County. Milwaukee County allocated \$15 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds towards this effort. To date, all funds have been committed to projects approved by the County Board. This allocation has led to the proposed development of over 300 units of affordable rental housing. In the May cycle of the County Board, a project will be recommended for substitution for the remaining funds. If approved, that will mark the sixth distinct municipality that will be receiving funds.

Since these funds have been expended, the County Board authorized \$4 million in additional affordable housing funds in the 2024 Adopted Budget. Through a budget amendment, \$2 million was authorized to support the Concordia 27 development on the

Near West Side in Milwaukee. That development is currently under construction and the development agreement between the developer and Housing Services is being completed. The remaining \$2 million will be spent on an additional development. Housing Services will seek County Board approval for the use of these funds later in 2024.

Housing Services has also focused on the development of affordable housing for homeownership. Milwaukee County was awarded \$7.5 million towards the development of single-family homes in the neighborhood surrounding the Marcia P. Coggs Human Services Center as well as an investment into King Park in partnership with the Milwaukee County Parks Department. Two developers, Habitat for Humanity and the Emem Group, were chosen through a Request for Proposals (RFP) to construct up to 120 homes. Construction of the first homes began in 2023 with the full project being completed in 2026.

Senior Home Repair

The Milwaukee County Board authorized \$1 million to Housing Services to create Milwaukee County's first Senior Home Repair Program dedicated to City of Milwaukee residents. Housing Services had operated a long-standing Home Repair program using HUD funds from the HOME and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Programs. Due to program rules, these funds had to be used outside of the City of Milwaukee as the City received their own federal funds. In early 2024, Housing Services conducted on-site trainings for seniors on the new program at two of the County Senior Centers. The main source of referrals is through the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). As of this report, Housing Services has received enough applications to use all the funding and the Loan Committee within Housing Services are currently making recommendations on projects to be funded.

Rehabilitation of Milwaukee County Foreclosures

Housing Services was previously awarded \$3 million in Milwaukee County ARPA funds for the rehabilitation of Milwaukee County Tax foreclosures. The goal of this award was to rehabilitate the homes and sell them to first time homebuyers at an affordable price. If homes are occupied, Housing Services will offer households assistance with alternative affordable housing to ensure that families do not become homeless as a result of a foreclosure action. Since the award, Housing Services has 10 homes under contract representing most suburban communities. In March, Housing Services received a report from the County Treasurer on additional inventory. Staff will be creating scopes of work for these additional houses and are targeting at least 15 total homes to be in the program in 2024.

Expansion of Homeless Outreach Services

Housing Services also received \$700,000 to expand housing opportunities and services for homeless individuals. Housing Services contracted with Community Advocates to

administer \$500,000 in fiscal funds in early 2024. Housing Services staff are utilizing these funds for housing start-up costs for individuals to move into permanent housing. These costs include start up kits, security deposits, furniture, and other move in costs. Housing Services was also awarded \$200,000 to expand case management services to ensure that individuals are successful in housing and do not return to homelessness. Early in 2024, Housing Services contracted with Sirona Recovery Services to provide this service. Housing Services plans on an additional agency contract in the summer of 2024.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

James Mathy, Housing Administrator

PREPARED BY:

James Mathy, Housing Administrator, Department of Health and Human Services

APPROVED BY:

Shakita LaGrant-McClain

Shakita LaGrant-McClain, Director, Department of Health and Human Services

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

Cc: County Executive David Crowley
Chair, Committee on Community, Environment and Economic Development
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Director, County Clerk's Office
Steve Cady, Research Director, Comptroller's Office
Daniel Park, Research and Policy Analyst, Comptroller's Office
Lottie Maxwell-Mitchell, Sr Budget and Management Analyst, Strategy, Budget & Performance