



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

## Community Development Division

215 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Ste. 300

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 2627

Madison, Wisconsin 53701-2627

Phone: (608) 266-6520

Fax: (608) 261-9626

[www.cityofmadison.com](http://www.cityofmadison.com)

Child Care  
Community Resources  
Community Development Block Grant  
Madison Senior Center

# Memo

To: Madison Common Council

From: Jim O'Keefe

Date: January 14, 2019

Re: Resolution 53955 – Funding for Security Services at Tree Lane Apartments

---

On Monday, January 14, the Finance Committee will consider Resolution #53955, a request to amend the 2019 Operating Budget to provide up to \$165,000 to Tree Lane Apartments, LLC for the purpose of increasing security staffing at 7933 Tree Lane. A second resolution, to address the need for additional support services, will be introduced in coming weeks.

The property at Tree Lane is the second of two City-inspired permanent supportive housing developments in Madison – part of the City's efforts to address homelessness here. It houses 45 once chronically homeless families. The City selected Heartland Housing to undertake the project in 2015. Its development was aided by City and County loans and federal low-income housing tax credits. The property opened in June 2018. The YWCA of Madison currently provides on-site support services to the residents but intends to leave in March. The City contributes \$50,000 of the \$165,000 annual budget for support services.

The period following the property's opening has brought a rise in criminal activity and other unwanted behaviors to the area. Tree Lane Apartment families and residents of the surrounding neighborhood have expressed safety concerns and called for actions to address the situation. That led the Mayor to convene a response team, led by Deputy Mayor Gloria Reyes, to work with the district alder to assess the situation and recommend appropriate actions. The team includes representation from DPCED, MPD, YWCA, Heartland and MPI (the firm Heartland uses to provide security at the building).

The team has discussed and problem-solved issues that include property management practices, security protocols and coordination with law enforcement, and Heartland has implemented many of the recommendations. A primary source of disturbances at the property, and an area of ongoing concern, is access to the building by visitors and guests of residents. The building was designed with many security measures, including the use of one main entrance, electronic access controls and security cameras throughout the property, and a front desk where residents are required to register their visitors. However, some residents and visitors have disregarded the building's guest policies and security protocols. This has resulted in some guests gaining access to the building without being properly registered, and in some cases, in violation of the banned guest list for prior offenses. Such access is possible, in large part, because there is insufficient staffing to prevent it. The response

team believes this is a critical weakness.

Heartland contracts with MPI, a private security firm, to provide unarmed security at the property, monitoring the building's entrances, common areas, parking lot and grounds. The building budget can support \$145,000 annually for that service, which is not enough to provide coverage at all times. In recent weeks, however, Heartland committed an additional \$81,000 in organizational resources (outside of the building budget) to increase funding available for security services to \$226,000 annually. This increase ensures that one security officer, in addition to Heartland staff, will be on-site at the property 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This increased level of security has been in place since January 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. Response team members also believe it would be helpful, during the current period of the property settling, to add a second security position during times when disruptive behavior is more likely to occur – specifically, during evening hours and on weekends. This resolution proposes providing the property up to \$165,000, through the remainder of 2019, to cover the cost of a second security position between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. on weekdays, and all day on the weekends. It will improve safety by helping to deter unwanted visitors and disruptive behavior in and around the building.

This request to fund additional security seeks temporary funding, intended to continue only until it and other steps already taken allow the property to settle, and residents and the community to feel safer. In the coming weeks, we will be putting forward a second request. It will ask for resources needed to strengthen and sustain support services for residents that are essential to ensuring the long-term success of the families that this partnership seeks to serve. We believe those efforts will be much more effective if they can occur in an environment in which safety and security are not overriding concerns of resident families.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I, and others involved with the response team's efforts, will be available to answer questions you might have.