



March 17, 2014

1717 N. Stoughton Road, Madison, WI 53704-2605 . 608-246-4730 . 608-246-4760 Fax

CDBG City Commission  
Room 225, Madison Municipal Building  
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, P.O. Box 2627  
Madison WI 53703

114 E. Main Street, Watertown, WI 53094-3747 . 920-262-9667 . 920-262-9559 Fax  
www.cacscw.org

Dear Commission Members,

Community Action Coalition for South Central WI, Inc. (CAC) has had a chance to review the Goals and Objectives for 2015-16. Thank you for your ongoing efforts in providing for those in our community who are low-income, especially with regards to improving the services to homeless and special populations.

CAC agrees with the priority to serve the homeless and those that are at risk of becoming homeless. The primary goal to focus on affordable housing by increasing the housing supply and providing assistance for stability is a necessity for the community. Each is equally important when providing individuals with information and access to resources. Because CDBG's priorities align with CAC mission, we are able to work as partners in providing quality services to those in need.

CAC receives funds through CDBG for the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) for its Rentable Program. The Rentable Program provides a centralized source for rapid re-housing and eviction prevention financial assistance for all member agencies of the Dane County Continuum of Care (CoC) for many years. The City also helps fund additional services so CAC staff is able to provide participants about information access to housing-related community resources with financial assistance, mediation, and housing and budget consultation. This combination of services has proven to be very successful in reducing the number of homeless individuals and families, prevent at-risk household from becoming homeless, and stable rent households. All of these services equip individuals with the information and/or skills necessary to obtain and maintain stable housing.

In addition, the City recently started funding the Coordinated Intake and Assessment pilot program as part of HUD's Continuum of Care efforts to provide more streamline services for those in need. People who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless often don't know where to start. Many participants do not know which program would match their needs and having difficulty in trying to figure out the homeless system in Dane County. If participants are referred to or call the Housing Crisis Hotline, they obtain information about the different services available in Dane County that match their need. They are informed of the status of those services with regard to openings and waiting lists, and if the service is available, the participant receives personalized referrals to the respective agency. If a household has been homeless for less than 6 months, they are eligible for the pilot program and will receive case management.

Please let us know if you have any questions about CAC programs. I can be reach at 608-246-4730 ext. 213 or by email at [kristinad@cacscw.org](mailto:kristinad@cacscw.org).

Sincerely,

Kristina Dux  
Manager of Family Development

Cc: Greta Hansen, Executive Director





COMMUNITY ACTION COALITION  
FOR SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN, INC.

1717 N. Stoughton Road, Madison, WI 53704-2605 . 608-246-4730 . 608-246-4760 Fax  
114 E. Main Street, Watertown, WI 53094-3747 . 920-262-9667 . 920-262-9559 Fax  
www.cacscw.org

**March 17, 2014**

**TO: Members of the CDBG Commission, City of Madison**

**FR: Community Action Coalition for South Central Wisconsin, Inc. (CAC)**

**RE: Community Gardens**

**While the topic of community gardens has risen to a community conversation level in terms of what is the best model to serve Madison and Dane County, there is widespread support for community gardens as part of a healthy food for all approach in community development.**

**While CAC's role in overseeing community gardens is likely to change, the need for advocacy, community development efforts and leadership training and support for people affected by poverty will remain a top priority for CAC. The same should hold true for the City of Madison. Community gardens are a valuable community asset, serving a multicultural and multi income community throughout the city.**

**CDBG has played an important role in the development of community gardens. CAC strongly encourages the commission to continue its support.**



**From:** [Jan Reek](#)  
**To:** [Cdbg](#)  
**Subject:** Public Hearing Comments for March 20, 2014  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 18, 2014 10:44:34 AM

---

Dear Commission Members:

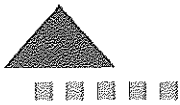
Project Home provides minor home repair services that support Goal One: Affordable Housing. By providing subsidized repairs for income eligible households, we ensure “decent, safe, sanitary and affordable housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income households.” These opportunities in turn “enhance household, neighborhood and community stability.”

Looking back at our work in 2013, we assisted 84 racially and ethnically diverse households with repairs. Three fourths had incomes equal to or less than 50% of the Dane County median income, so the program primarily serves households without excess funds to accomplish needed repairs. The customer pays for labor at a subsidized rate of \$10 per hour and purchases the materials. Female household heads, the elderly, and households with disabled individuals can afford our services. Providing such services may well prevent some very financially challenged households from losing their homes or needing to live in a home in disrepair.

Homeownership and taking care of one’s home is an area where homeowners should feel a sense of accomplishment. The subsidized repairs allow homeowners to take pride in ownership, feel a sense safety in their own homes, receive education on home maintenance, and keep family resources available for the many important decisions that families face on a daily basis.

Please continue to support this important service during the funding allocation process.

Jan Reek, Director of Programs  
Wyolanda Singleton, Intake Supervisor



**Movin' Out**

600 Williamson Street, L-1  
Madison, WI 53703-3588

608/251-4446  
608/819-0623 FAX

info@movin-out.org  
www.movin-out.org

*Housing ideas for people with disabilities.*

## **Comments regarding Community Development Program Goals and Objectives**

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the newly drafted goals and objectives that will guide Madison's community development activity in the next two years. Overall, Movin' Out endorses the priorities and strategies proposed. We are pleased with the clarity and organization of the new plan.

Movin' Out has one strong concern: In objective 1.2, Housing Assistance, the first condition proposes a significant change in practice that will have a negative impact on the quality and quantity of housing counseling made available to low-income, first-time home buyers with disabilities. This condition reduces the housing counseling resource available to home buyers with disabilities from the current maximum of \$6,000 to an amount capped at \$3,600 per household. This means that home buyers can only access 60% of the housing counseling that has been available to them in recent years.

The partnership between Madison and Movin' Out has yielded significant success. By preparing home buyers with disabilities with information, housing counseling and a plan tailored to a home buyer's specific circumstances, we have assisted 93 households to achieve sustainable home ownership in the last 10 years—and have assisted well over 100 Madison households since Movin' Out first partnered with Madison in the 1990s.

Movin' Out provides a highly individualized and intensive practice of housing counseling—an approach required for the home ownership success of people doubly vulnerable due to disability and poverty. Home ownership reduces vulnerability by mobilizing affordable, decent housing to enhance stability and reduce the discontinuity of displacement from rental arrangements or congregate facilities.

When city staff gave the rationale behind the proposed cut to housing counseling for home buyers with disabilities, they explained that they interpreted the housing counseling cost as an administrative fee and thus limited to the 10% limitation for HOME administration. HOME regulations do not interpret housing counseling as an administrative function, but does consider housing counseling as a qualified expenditure for home buyer assistance with no limitation such as those that apply to HOME administrative costs.

The change limits the access of home buyers with disabilities to needed housing counseling, but it does not have any cost-saving impact for the city. The maximum amount of \$36,000 per unit remains intact in the proposed goals and objectives.

Movin' Out asks the committee to amend the 2015-2016 goals and objectives to restore the current amount allowable for the purpose of providing information, housing counseling and a housing plan for people who will find greater stability and control in their lives as homeowners and who will pay their share of property taxes to keep Madison a community that values diversity and opportunity.

To: City of Madison Community Block Grant Commission

From: Brenda K. Konkel

Re: 2015-2016 Community Development Program Goals and Objectives

Date: March 20, 2014

---

I read the 22 page document and the two page explanatory memo outlining CDBG Goals and Objectives and I was struck that not once do these documents mention the critical issues we are currently facing in the City of Madison, or the strategies that we might employ to address them in a more meaningful manner. Frankly, I find this document very little different than when I first read it 20 years ago. It's tired and stale. With this consistent strategy, we have seen the issues in our community deteriorate instead of improve. Honestly, we are failing our community and not changing our strategies to address the emerging pressing needs. I would like to see a document that addresses the following:

#### AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING

- We have an 18.7% poverty rate. 9.2% of our families are below poverty. ([AI Fair Housing Report](#))
- Our rental population is high compared to other communities – 50%. And 56.7% of these renter have rental costs exceeding affordability. ([AI Fair Housing Report](#))
- In Dane county we have 23,829 extremely low-income renter households (24,850) and only 5,003 affordable rental units, which leaves a **gap of 18,826 affordable units**. For every 100 ELI household, there are only 21 affordable and available rental units. ([America's Rental Housing Crisis](#))
- We have a 2.05% rental vacancy rate. It is at historic lows and far below the national average of 8%. Impediments to Fair Housing Report recommends 5% vacancy rate. ([MG&E](#))
- For a person making the top of the ELI at \$24,850 to spend 30% of their income on rent the units need to be \$621/month or below. Current rental rates in projects funded by the CDBG process exceed this.
- For someone on W-2 to live in affordable housing with their children, with an income of \$673/month they can only pay \$202/month. I am aware of no programs the CDBG commission funds that would accommodate this level of need.
- Our Section 8 waiting lists have been closed since at least 2007. Some of our public housing waiting lists are now also closed. ([CDA Section 8](#), [CDA Public Housing](#) & [DCHA](#))

#### HOMELESSNESS

- In 2012, 3382 people stayed in shelter, but 1,654 were turned away. ([2012 Annual Homeless Report](#)) Many more do not seek shelter. On 1/29/14 during the semi-annual HUD point-in-time count there were 94 individuals that were found sleeping outside, not in the shelters.
- Even families and those with case management cannot always find housing within the 30 - 90 days that they stay in shelter due to the vacancy rate and the change in laws that removed many protections in landlord screening.

- If there are more than 30 single homeless women per night, they get turned away with little time to find a legal place to sleep for the night. This is not safe and women should not be forced into survival sex or risk injury because they have no place to sleep. ([Salvation Army](#))
- The Warming House only lets families stay there every 2 – 4 nights, where are families supposed to go on the other nights? ([Salvation Army](#))
- Homeless men don't have case management services provided at the shelter, unlike families and single women. I don't see any agency actively helping them find resources and housing. ([Porchlight](#))
- Child protective services has reported a caseload that shows and increase in homeless children being removed from their family. ([Dane County HHN Minutes Nov. 6, 2013](#))

#### JOB CREATION

- In order to afford housing in this community, many people need more than a full-time job. A housing wage for a 1 bedroom = \$14/hr, 2 bedroom = \$16 and 3 bedroom = \$22. ([NLIHC](#)) Many non-profits, including my own, do not pay starting wages at the minimum for a 1 bedroom apartment.

#### RACIAL EQUITY

- Eighty percent (80%) of people in shelter described themselves as non-white ([2012 Annual Homeless Report](#))
- It's seems like a major failure that this report does not at least recognize the racial disparities in our community revealed in the [Race to Equity Report](#).

Continuing with these same priorities and goals will not change any of the above, only perpetuate it. I'd ask the commission to be forward looking, consider the impact you could have on the community and rethink the goals and objectives by beginning with determining what you are trying to accomplish and how to get there. Specifically, I'd like you to make the following changes:

#### **GOAL ONE: AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

##### OBJECTIVE 1.1 HOUSING SUPPLY

###### Priorities and Strategies

1. Add affordable rental housing for those at 30% AMI or below to the list of types of projects to specifically increase the supply of affordable housing.
2. Explore policy solutions to the 3+ bedroom dilemma. Developers specifically violate fair housing laws when they build to exclude families but it has not been addressed with the planning department.

###### Rental Housing Development Conditions

3. When evaluating the proposals for rental housing development also consider ability to reach lower levels of affordability. Consider giving more than \$54,000 per unit for lower levels of affordability.
4. Why does the CDD have a policy of not assisting project that convert owner-occupied units to rental units? (#8)

## OBJECTIVE 1.2 HOUSING ASSISTANCE

### Priorities and Strategies

5. I am unclear if the numbering indicates a priority, but if it does, given our limited resources I would list expanding homeownership opportunities last, at this point with the issues we are facing, I don't think we can afford to have that be a high priority when we need over 18,000 affordable rental units in our community.

### Homeless and Special Needs Population Conditions

6. We need well trained, higher paid outreach workers that bring the skills necessary to do the job well, along with adequate support from the agencies to help them do their jobs.
7. Families and single women have many services (case managers) if they are in shelter, even while they are on the waiting list. Men have no case management services. This should be made a priority.

### Homeless and Special Needs Population Preferences

8. I completely understand the desire to have permanent solutions to homelessness, that is the only strategy to solve the long-term problem, however, we can't have people freezing to death in the meantime. There has to be a priority on cold weather services especially. The Salvation Army Warming Shelter (emergency overflow shelter) turns people away most nights. People can't get into housing in the 30 - 90 days allotted to them in shelter, then what? We need solutions for this that start with sufficient shelter space and end with making it legal to sleep somewhere, anywhere, if you are not in shelter.
9. Rapid Re-housing and Housing First models seem to be working well for families, we need to do the same for men. We also need to examine the eviction rate for these programs to make sure that they are truly Housing First models.

### Housing Resources Conditions

10. I would like to see a definition of what is expected from people doing "housing counseling". I believe that we can save housing for many people by them knowing what their rights are, but this is very often left out of the discussion by people doing "housing counseling". In a tight rental market, we need to use every tool we have.

## **GOAL TWO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

11. Consider sustaining non-profit jobs that already exist with wages worthy of what the people doing the work deserve. True, family-supporting jobs. When our non-profit workers often qualify for many of the programs we run, that is a problem.
12. Consider prioritizing creating jobs in non-profit agencies as a priority instead of entrepreneurs and start-ups.

## **GENERAL CRITERIA AND CROSS-CUTTING REQUIREMENTS**

13. While I see the words "affirmatively further fair housing" I am certain that we are not really striving in any meaningful way to reach this as a goal. I would like to see it be a priority listed in each place it is appropriate and that it be one of the key considerations in funding. Particularly

funding should be spent on the multiple recommendations in the Impediments to Fair Housing Report which includes “increase use of fair housing compliant procedures”.

14. I would like to see us take seriously the commitment not to displace people. There are several policies throughout the city that have displaced many residents over time – typically through the police department or demolitions. The city, as a whole, has done nothing to address these policies. I would like to see training or support provided for those departments that are aiding in the displacement of low-income tenants.

#### **ALLOCATION OF FUNDS AND APPLICATION PROCESS**

15. Honestly, looking at the chart it’s difficult to know how much will be allocated for rental housing and how much will be allocated to homeownership, but I think rental needs to be an extremely high priority.
16. I think that it is time we spend less on administration of the programs and more on the programs themselves. To me, the overhead looks high, but without a break down of what it is used for, it is hard to tell. 7 employees supported by \$100,000 a piece seems to be a generous amount of money, though I am sure I am missing something without more information. Whatever the allocation of funds towards administrative costs percentage is, that should also be allowed for funded non-profits, on top of what it takes to run their programs
17. How does the ESG funding process relate to these priorities? I see the agencies making decisions in their own self-interest instead of what is best for the community. I also see the commission deferring to those decisions. I would like to see more direction from this commission in that process. I understand that the Homeless Services Consortium has a board to make these decisions by HUD mandate, but I would like to see a member of this commission on that board so you as a group can stay informed of decisions being made outside of your process.