



Department of Planning and Community & Economic Development

Community Development Division

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Child Care
Community Resources
Community Development Block Grant
Madison Senior Center

Memo

To: Members, Madison Common Council

From: Jim O'Keefe, Community Development Division Director

Date: 10/6/2022

Re: Legistar File #73500- Extending provision of on-site services at Dairy Drive Campground

Legistar File #73500, was introduced on September 6 and is scheduled for action by the Common Council on October 11th. The measure seeks Council approval to extend the urban campground arrangement at Dairy Drive through December 31, 2023. The capacity of the campground (up to 30 units) and the provision of on-site property management and supportive services, through Madison Street Medicine (formerly known as Madison Area Care for the Homeless – MACH OneHealth) – and Kabba Recovery Services, would continue unchanged.

The Dairy Drive campground emerged in 2021 as part of a new City strategy to provide safe and legal alternatives for persons experiencing homelessness who are unable, or unwilling, to utilize congregate shelter facilities. On August 31, 2021, the Council adopted RES-21-00621 (Legistar File No. 67137), authorizing City staff to develop a campground on City-owned property at 3202 Dairy Drive, subject to State licensure regulations under Wisconsin State Administrative Rule ATCP 79. The Dairy Drive facility is the City's only State-licensed campground. It opened in November 2021.

The site is authorized to support up to 30 single-occupancy shelter cabins, each connected to electric power, and climate controlled. The cabins do not have plumbing, however, bathroom and shower accommodations are available on site. The City used a competitive Request for Proposals process to select Madison Street Medicine, in partnership with Kabba Recovery Services, to provide property management and on-site supportive services. The service contract supports 8 FTE positions – including a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Substance Abuse Counselor, Housing-Focused Social Worker, General Support Staff, a Maintenance/Property Manager, Camper Support, and Project Coordinator.

Staff from the City's Community Development Division and Madison Police Department, along with Alder Jael Currie, have worked closely with Madison Street Medicine and Kabba to ensure that campground users receive support services and that there are adequate safety measures in place at the site. The agencies have also held monthly meetings with area businesses and other stakeholders to share information and address concerns.

The campground's purpose is to provide a safe and legal shelter alternative to unhoused persons while they work to secure stable housing. It is probably too early to draw firm conclusions about the Dairy Drive experience but there are some promising early signs. The operation has had success in connecting clients to housing. Since its opening, the campground has served 50 individuals. Through September, 20 of them have exited the campground to housing. Much of that success can be attributed to the availability to campers of on-site services which are generally of higher intensity than those available to most unhoused persons in the community. But not all campground users have engaged in those services so while notable, the

campground's successes have not been universal. About a half dozen people have been asked to leave the facility, most for violating the terms of a community living agreement with which campers are asked to abide. A few campers have left on their own accord, without apparent housing plans, and three others passed away before securing housing.

Another measure of success has been a decline in the number of incidents of reported conflict within the campground. Behavioral policies governing the site and its users, timely staff interventions and improving collaboration between on-site staff and law enforcement are seen as key factors leading to fewer incidents and less need for emergency services and welfare checks. And since many of the campground users were formerly unsheltered and scattered in locations throughout the City, this experience represents not just a decline in calls for service at the campground but one that positively impacts the City's overall emergency response system. Yet it is important to understand that the campground population is a dynamic one. As people leave, new arrivals take their place and, sometimes, bring new challenges with them. That turnover can make more difficult the task of building, and sustaining, a cohesive community.

When the Council authorized creation of the Dairy Drive campground, it did not specify how long the facility would operate. Federal funds made available to the City as part of Congress's response to the COVID pandemic have paid for most of the capital and operating costs associated with the campground. The City entered into a one-year contract with Madison Street Medicine (and Kabba Recovery Services) for property management and on-site supportive services. That contract expires on October 31st. The continuation of those services is projected to cost about \$880,000 on an annualized basis. The 14-month period, from November 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023, covered by Legistar File #73500, is estimated to require a total of \$1.13 million. CDD staff has identified City-administered federal funding sources to cover that total, a portion of which is available now and the balance to be addressed in the 2023 Operating Budget.

CDD seeks Council approval to continue the operation of the Dairy Drive sheltered campground through 2023, and authorization to allocate available federal funds needed for property management and on-site supportive services, and will continue to monitor the project's performance outcomes.