

PEOPLE'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING VISION

A vision for the Madison area to expand low income housing opportunities, ensure dignity and a path to stable housing for the homeless, provide greater accountability for violations of local housing laws and increase local government resources to support housing programs.

Pursue Innovative Permanent and Transitional Low-Income Housing Options: Pursue development and prevent further demolition of single room occupancy housing (SROs); expand affordable housing options through housing cooperatives, co-housing and community land trusts and ensure the new zoning code encourages this type of housing; explore a tenant interim lease program (a program from NYC) in which tenants move into buildings purchased by the city with the opportunity for tenant management and eventual ownership as a low income housing cooperative.

Expand the Warming House: The city and county should work together to study how warming house services could be expanded so families are not turned away from shelter. More immediately, the city should appropriate \$10,000 for the Salvation Army to use to secure alternate shelter for families using the Warming House who have sick children, as a public health measure.

Improve Homeless Services: Develop and enforce shelter standards needed to ensure the humane treatment, safety, security, health and sanitation of shelter residents and to recognize the dignity inherent in each shelter resident. Shelter services should be trauma-informed and recovery-oriented. A shelter monitoring committee should oversee these standards and a third-party grievance process should be available to those seeking or receiving services from shelter. Additional funding is needed for shelter residents who are sick and/or just released from the hospital to secure alternative shelter. Study the need for family, men's and women's shelter space.

Expand Quality Case Management Services for Homeless and Formerly Homeless Individuals and Families: More resources must be devoted to expand case management services by hiring case managers who are well-trained, culturally competent, possess solid case advocacy skills, have vast knowledge of available resources (including public benefits), and experience working with low-income people and people of color. Case management should be expanded in existing programs and added to programs which do not currently offer case management, including the men's shelter. Case managers should carry a reasonable case load (Child Welfare League of America standard is no more than 17 families at a point in time).

City Grant Writer: Hire a city grant writer to seek federal and foundation funding for not only homelessness and housing issues, but staff support and training for funded agencies. Prioritize sensitivity training for people providing direct services as well as administrative training and support.

Property Tax Fairness - LLCs: Investigate taxes lost through sales of LLCs which result in the true value of the property not being accurately reflected.

Greater Enforcement of MGO Chapter 32 "Landlord and Tenant": The City Attorney's office should hire a full time person to field tenant complaints of lease violations. Violations would be limited to those violations that do not need outside investigation, but can be determined by

documents provided by the complainant. The City Attorney's office should be given the authority to either ticket or file long form complaints based on the violations and investigate patterns of abuses if immediate resolution is not reached through discussions with the landlords. Based on the number of complaints, the city should study the feasibility of a housing court. A meaningful landlord registration ordinance should be passed, which would require landlords to provide the city with ownership and contact information and allow the city to collect information about rents, apartment features and other data.

Expand Language Access and Bilingual Information and Services to LEP Populations: Hire more bilingual staff (Spanish and Hmong) in city departments including Housing Operations, Building Inspection, Municipal Court, etc. An ordinance should be passed which requires the use of leases, termination notices, non-renewal notices and court documents in Spanish and Hmong when that language is the primary language of the tenant.

Housing Operations Ombudsman: An ombudsman position should be added to CDA of the City of Madison Housing Operations Unit and the Dane County Housing Authority to help resolve disputes between the housing authorities and those who participate in their subsidized housing programs.

Security Deposit Loan Program: The Security Deposit Loan Program, a program developed in Iowa City, would be a jointly established program between a local housing organization and a local Bank to provide no-interest loans for rental security deposits. The loan program is based on a revolving fund of money, allowing additional loans to be made as payments are received. The program would contribute to a households' self-sufficiency through the establishment of a credit file or to repair bad credit. Grants would be sought to cover loans not paid back.

Protect Tenants from Irrelevant, Unreliable and Dated Credit History: Housing providers should be prohibited from denying an application for residential tenancy based solely on: (a) the filing of an eviction action which resulted in a dismissal; (b) credit history which is unrelated to a housing obligation; or (c) credit history related to a housing obligation which is more than two (2) years old.

Protect the Use of Service Animals: We support specifically expanding local equal opportunity ordinances to prohibit discrimination in housing and public accommodations against persons who have animals which a qualified professional has recommended as providing a beneficial service or support.

Support the Vision by Signing the Petition!

Please take a second to sign on at <http://bit.ly/pplshsng> and spread the word to your contacts to do the same.

Join us on Facebook at **Petition to Support the People's Affordable Housing Vision.**

Email peopleshousingvision@gmail.com to express your support and let us know if and how you'd like to get involved.