



May 5, 2026

Dear Alderwoman Marina Dimitrijevic and Members of the Finance and Personnel Committee,

I am writing to express VIA Community Development Corporation's strong support for the Bridge Project in Milwaukee as you consider the allocation of remaining ARPA funds.

At VIA, we work alongside neighbors and partners every day in the Layton Park, Silver City, Burnham Park and Clarke Square neighborhoods to advance equitable development, housing stability, and economic mobility. We see firsthand the pressures families are navigating—rising costs, housing insecurity, and limited access to flexible resources that meet their real, day-to-day needs. The Bridge Project is a powerful response to these challenges.

By providing direct, unconditional cash support to mothers, the program centers trust, dignity, and choice; values that are essential if we are serious about advancing equity. Its impact is both immediate and long-term: improving housing stability, reducing food insecurity, and creating the conditions for families to pursue education, employment, and overall wellbeing. This is not just relief, it is a smart, preventative investment in Milwaukee's future.

Importantly, many of the families served through The Bridge Project live in the very neighborhoods where VIA is deeply engaged. We have seen how targeted investments like this can stabilize households and contribute to stronger, more resilient communities. Expanding this program at a time when demand continues to grow would be a meaningful step toward ensuring that Milwaukee families have the support they need to thrive.

I respectfully urge you to support the allocation of ARPA funds to the Bridge Project in Milwaukee. This is a proven, community-centered approach that aligns with our shared goals of strengthening families and building a more equitable city.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,

JoAnna Bautch

Executive Director

VIA Community Development Corporation

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