



Social Development Commission
Pathways from poverty to success

July 28, 2021

Alderman Michael Murphy
Chairman, Finance and Personnel Committee
Common Council, City of Milwaukee

Dear Committee Chairman Murphy,

Community Relations-Social Development Commission is in support of Mayor's Stronger Summer Plan, part of the first allocation of American Rescue Plan funding. The Stronger Summer Plan provides over \$93 million in much needed funding for a range of critical programs as a first phase of investment, and these resources will help Milwaukee continue a strong recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the City of Milwaukee's designated Community Action Agency, SDC is committed to support projects that benefit communities and economic development for the families who live here. The Mayor's Recovery & Resilience Plan centers racial equity and inclusion in each recommended investment, taking intentional first steps to address the unequal impact of COVID-19 on Milwaukee residents. It also provides significant resources to several key areas:

- Affordable and sustainable housing development, operations, and support programs. For example, the Take Root Milwaukee program works closely with the Department of City Development to connect people to services and resources that help them "Buy, Fix or Keep" their home. We fully support the allocation for HUD-approved homeownership counseling programs – these agencies are critical partners in our efforts to sustain and increase homeownership rates in the city. Both the Compliance Loan and Climate, Energy, & Equity Upgrade programs address the need for critical resources that help maintain and improve the city's older housing stock.
- Milwaukee Rental Housing Resource Center (RHRC), a new collaborative initiative to serve as a virtual clearinghouse for tenants and landlords to connect with resources such as legal and mediation services and financial assistance.
- Small business support including Business Restart 3.0 and the Ethnic & Diverse Business Coalition (EDBC), both of which will provide direct investment to programs that will help Milwaukee businesses sustain operations and access technical assistance resources.
- Employment and job training programs that will connect city residents in high poverty and/or groups that are experiencing higher rates of unemployment to paid training, apprenticeships, workforce transition, and certification opportunities.

We strongly support using ARPA funds for initiatives that increase housing stability, invest in neighborhoods, support our small business community, and enhance economic opportunity for Milwaukee residents – leading toward a more resilient and healthier city. Your support of the Stronger Summer plan will help Milwaukee emerge from this pandemic stronger and more equitable.

Respectfully,

George P. Hinton, BA, MHA, PhD
CEO