



MAYOR CAVALIER JOHNSON
CITY OF MILWAUKEE

October 25, 2024

Dear Common Council Members,

I have chosen not to sign Common Council file # 240863, a substitute resolution relating to the reallocation and expenditure of up to \$847,900 of American Rescue Plan Act funds. The file, as passed by the Council, neglects to consider other reasonable options for funding the designated efforts. At the same time, it is an affront to a highly respected housing not-for-profit agency which had, in good faith, entered into a contract with my administration.

To be clear, I raise no objection to either the Bridge Project nor the Concordia 27 development. They are worthwhile efforts. My disagreement with the majority of Council members stems from the source of funding for these endeavors and the message this file sends to agencies about the reliability of city partnerships.

In the case of the Bridge Project, a program that provides up to \$750 per month of unconditional cash grants to pregnant individuals who live in four specific zip codes. I believe a program such as this belongs in the philanthropic world and there remain unexplored private sector funding alternatives. And, significantly, in future years, city taxpayer support for these unconditional cash transfers is simply not sustainable.

Concordia 27, a multi-use development, is largely complete. The funds designated in this file would support the affordable housing component of this project. What this file does not consider is the alternative funding mechanism under Wis. Stat. 66.1105(6)(g) which could sufficiently provide for Concordia 27's needs.

By rescinding the contract with Habitat for Humanity for the development of affordable, zero-energy-ready homes on vacant lots in low-income and disadvantaged communities, the Council action has terminated, unnecessarily, a valuable project funded with American Rescue Plan Act money. The action treats Habitat for Humanity disrespectfully. And, at the same time, the Council action sends a message to all partner agencies, throughout Milwaukee, that city government is an unreliable partner.

For these reasons, I cannot attach my signature to this Council file.

Sincerely,

Mayor Cavalier Johnson