

# Dane County: To release \$1 million in funding to support communities' efforts to accelerate housing development

Posted on Tuesday, Feb 24, 2026

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*Partnership Between Dane County Human Services, Planning and Development Departments Addresses Regional Housing Strategy Priority*

MADISON, WI – Today, Dane County Executive Melissa Agard announced \$1 million in grant funds will be released to accelerate housing development and help address the county's housing crisis. Interested municipalities can use the funds to update their zoning codes, permitting processes, and internal procedures.

“Regulatory barriers can drive up housing costs and restrict the supply of homes and the range of housing options available.” County Executive Agard went on to say, “Through the CDBG PRO Housing grant program, our participating municipalities will have a chance to review their local zoning, permitting, and internal procedures—and make important reforms to remove barriers and support more housing.”

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (CDBG PRO Housing) Grant funds will be administered by Dane County Department of Human Services' Housing Access and Affordability. The funds are intended to be informed by the [Best Practices Model Zoning Code Guide](#), released by the Dane County Planning and Development Department.

Every municipality in Dane County is eligible to apply for the CDBG PRO

*Housing Addressing Zoning, Permitting & Building Code Barriers to Affordable Housing* grants from Dane County.

Municipalities that wish to learn more about the funds can attend an upcoming virtual workshop on March 11<sup>th</sup>, and open office hours March 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Municipal staff should contact [cdbg@danecounty.gov](mailto:cdbg@danecounty.gov) for information on how to attend the sessions. The first round of applications for funds is expected to be released in late March.

Dane County aims to provide more support to communities to increase affordable and workforce housing stock and address key goals in the [Dane County Regional Housing Strategy](#), a roadmap to address the county's generational housing crisis.

Affordable housing is defined as housing that is affordable for households that make 80% of the area median income (AMI). In Dane County, that's \$72,720 for a single person or \$103,840 for a household of four people. Typically housing that's meant to be affordable for neighbors who work in construction, nurses, retail, teachers, or law enforcement. It also includes housing for seniors.

The partnership between Dane County Planning and Development and Dane County Human Services is the latest in Dane County's historic investments to address the current local housing crisis. Both departments play unique roles in advancing key strategies to increase awareness and availability of affordable housing in Dane County.

The Dane County Department of Planning and Development is the County's lead agency charged with developing and coordinating implementation of the RHS, and supporting municipalities in their efforts to reach their housing goals under the plan.

In addition to the release of the Best Practices Model Zoning Code, since the RHS was launched in 2024, Planning and Development conducts regular [Regional Housing Network](#) (RHN) webinars, [an Annual RHS Meeting](#) open to the public, produced [housing Fact Sheets](#), and tracked the progress of communities contributing to the goals of the RHS in the first Annual RHS Metrics Report. The Planning Division also provides housing planning and technical assistance to interested Dane County cities and villages.

The Dane County Department of Human Services' Housing Access and Affordability Division (HAA) is the County's lead agency charged with managing federal and local

funding, and with developing and implementing the critical programs that help Dane County support the development of affordable housing units and programs that help Dane County meet its own RHS goals, and help residents in Dane County move into and maintain housing.

Notably, HAA administers the [Dane County Affordable Housing Development Fund \(AHDF\)](#). Since 2015, the AHDF has invested over \$75 million in capital funds to support the creation of 3,200 units of affordable housing and over 3,400 of housing units total in Dane County. Earlier this year, HAA released Dane County's first-ever round of funding focused on preserving existing units of affordable housing, supporting 70 units of affordable housing in Waunakee, Fitchburg, Stoughton, and Madison.

HAA also funds and implements programs to spur homeownership as well, a top priority of the Regional Housing Strategy, launching unique partnerships with Habitat for Humanity and the Madison Area Community Land Trust in 2025 to help those organizations purchase land for future affordable home development.

Through HUD's Community Development Block Grant and Home Investment Partnerships (CDBG/HOME) programs, HAA provides funding to nonprofits and developers to help with down payment assistance for homes, advance the creation and preservation of affordable housing units. The program has invested nearly \$6,000,000 while creating 98 multi-family units across Dane County. Additionally, HAA has provided over \$15,000,000 in 0% interest, deferred loans to homebuyers to make homeownership affordable and to homeowners in need of repairs.

To learn more the Dane County Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) visit [www.rhs.danecounty.gov](http://www.rhs.danecounty.gov).

To learn more about the Dane County Human Services' Housing Access and Affordability, visit [here](#).