



March 6, 2024

Senator Founq Hawj, Chair
Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee

Senator Hawj,

I am writing in support of SF 4183, legislation updating comprehensive plan guidelines to recognize the environmental and public health imperatives associated with increasing housing density.

In Minneapolis, the city's nation-leading 2040 comprehensive plan has allowed the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA) to recently expand its deeply affordable family housing portfolio. The Family Housing Expansion Project, enabled by the changes enacted in the 2040 plan, delivered 26 two- and 58 three-bedroom units in fourplexes and sixplexes to 16 sites across Minneapolis, mostly in locations that previously had empty lots or single-family homes. Sixteen of the units are disability accessible, with another 17 being high-priority homeless units with services funded through Hennepin County's Coordinated Entry program.

With more than 700 deeply affordable family homes scattered across Minneapolis, this is the most sought-after type of housing the agency offers, with a waitlist that has recently been as many as 7,500 people. Of the nearly 3,100 residents currently living in CHR homes, 88 percent are Black/African American, 54 percent are children, 86 percent of households are female-led, and nearly two-thirds of the households have five or more family members living there—families with young children.

These homes are also a proven tool to provide families with a solid foundation for upward mobility. Of the current heads of household, 19 percent were employed when entering their new home. On average, these residents earned \$20,722 a year in income. Today, 70 percent of these residents are employed, earning an average of \$37,321 a year, with more than 60 percent of these residents' earned income increasing while in these homes. Better yet, since 2020, 16 percent of all families leaving these homes went on to purchase their own homes.

In 2024, MPHA had been planning to expand this portfolio once again by adding eight new deeply affordable family units across three sites where single-family homes are offline because of major capital needs on each home. However, because of the legal uncertainties surrounding the 2040 plan, the agency cannot move forward with these plans at this time. This means MPHA cannot invest nearly \$1.5 million to add new units of its most sought-after housing. I urge lawmakers to support this legislation and empower MPHA to build this much-needed housing this year and in the years ahead.

Respectfully Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Abdi Warsame".

Abdi Warsame
Executive Director/CEO
Minneapolis Public Housing Authority