



April 29, 2025

Senator Jim Carlson
95 University Avenue W.
Room 3221
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Senator Carlson,

On behalf of the City of Eagan, I am writing to express our strong opposition to the delete-all amendment being introduced to Senate File 2229, known as “The Skinny Housing Amendment.” While we share the goal of ensuring affordable and accessible housing opportunities across Minnesota, the new delete-all amendment would virtually eliminate meaningful citizen engagement, undermine sound community planning practice(s), impose a one-size fits all model to communities and project sites that would have unintended and negative impacts on residents and cities alike. In addition, the current amendment was NOT developed in consultation or collaboration with local government representatives. By contrast, adoption would undermine ongoing conversations to find practical and reasonable legislative approaches to housing affordability and accessibility.

Senator Carlson, as you know, Eagan has long been celebrated regionally and statewide as a successful city and a strong community. This is in large part because of our collective commitment to sound infrastructure & land use planning principles AND the community trust and support we foster through authentic and consequential engagement with our residents on the most significant development decisions our community faces. The delete-all amendment before you, if enacted, would effectively undermine Eagan’s continued success and eliminate the rights of residents to consequentially engage their locally elected representatives in order to participate in the development decisions that impact their neighborhoods and our community. It would be unfortunate and undemocratic in equal measure.

Several sections of the delete-all amendment are especially concerning:

Minimum Parking Requirements (Section 4)

The bill would prohibit cities from requiring more than one parking space per residential unit,

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regardless of a community's access to public transit or walkability. In Eagan, 78% of workers use private vehicles to commute to work. Parking is a practical necessity for suburban residents. **This mandate will almost certainly lead to under-parked developments, strain on public infrastructure, unsafe winter street conditions, and frustration for residents and visitors.** On roadways which were not designed for parking on both sides, minimum parking requirements will result in both infrastructure costs and significant safety impacts to pedestrians and drivers alike. The City of Eagan frequently works with developers to provide parking flexibility as each specific site warrants (i.e., location near transit, senior housing, affordable housing). Local knowledge and flexible processes are important to design projects that work for each site.

Restrictions on Commonly-Owned Property within Homeowners' Associations (HOAs) (Section 5)

This bill prevents cities from conditioning development approval on any feature or common property necessitating a HOA. **This language deprives cities of the ability to require private maintenance of private infrastructure such as private streets, stormwater ponds, common areas, and fencing.** These costs would ultimately fall on city taxpayers and lead to disagreements between cities and developers about the ownership and maintenance of such features.

Common area infrastructure must have a mechanism to ensure that private systems are maintained, and that property does not become tax-forfeited and a public burden. Lack of appropriate maintenance of private infrastructure can negatively impact the public system.

Prohibition on Site-Sensitive Multifamily Design (Section 6)

The language prohibits reasonable design considerations for all residential development. The application of this language to all types of residential development is particularly problematic for large multifamily buildings where cities impose reasonable requirements to ensure compatibility in scale and form and create baselines so affordable housing and market rate housing do not have obvious differences based on the income of those who live there. **Prohibiting all aesthetic design standards for multifamily buildings allows the development of monolithic, Soviet-style blocks that stratify low-income residents into buildings that appear to be of lesser quality.**

Prohibition on Public Hearings (Section 7)

This provision would eliminate the role of the City Council and Planning Commission for all residential development in all cities by mandating an overcomplicated and restrictive administrative review process. Public hearings, which provide necessary due process protection for property owners, neighbors, and the community, would be limited to two "community meetings" without substantive authority. **Meaningful civic engagement at the local level builds trust in government and connection to communities.**

Prohibition on Collection of Fees to Mitigate Public Impact of Private Development (Section 7)

Also in Section 7, prohibiting cities from requiring exactions, dedications, or fees threatens the ability to fund vital community needs by disallowing park dedication fees, green space requirements, water and sewer fees, easements for roads, trails, utilities, and other development-

related infrastructure. **Without the ability to collect fees to mitigate public costs of private development, these costs will be borne by taxpayers rather than private developers.**

The legislation, again, imposes a one-size-fits-all approach that virtually eliminates community engaged decision making—zoning and land use—and impacts the ability of cities to plan and respond to unique site & local conditions. It also takes away the ability for our city to welcome engagement through robust community input.

In summary, the delete-all amendment to SF 2229 would significantly diminish the ability of local governments to ensure thoughtful, sustainable, and community-supported residential development.

To be clear, our opposition to the delete-all amendment to SF 2229 is not an indication that we and/or other local governments and organizations are not working towards common and reasonable ground. In fact, quite the opposite. The League of Minnesota Cities has been working closely with Senator Gustafson over the past several weeks on alternative language (SF3418). Numerous cities, including Eagan, have been involved in the effort to move closer to a place where cities and the legislature can agree on a responsible and practicable approach to affordable housing and production across the state. While not fully there yet, we have, thus far, made significant progress on accessory dwelling units, aesthetic design standards and administrative approvals processes that preserve consequential citizen engagement for larger development proposals with significant community impacts. Unfortunately, if SF2229 were to move forward, it would significantly undercut these good-faith efforts to continue a positive and productive conversation.

As such, we respectfully urge you to actively oppose, and if the time comes, to vote “NO” on the delete-all amendment to SF 2229. Please, protect the ability of cities like Eagan to continue making smart, community-centered planning decisions and for our shared constituents to be involved in these community conversations.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and continued leadership on behalf of our region and the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Maguire". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Maguire
Mayor