



City of White Bear Lake

4701 Highway 61 N.
White Bear Lake, Minnesota 55110
651-429-8526 | www.whitebearlake.org

April 30, 2025

Dear State and Local Government Committee Members:

RE: Opposition to SF 2229

The City of White Bear Lake respectfully asks you to **oppose HF 2229**. We ask you to oppose this bill due to its rigid approach, prescriptive mandates, and lack of flexibility. Overall, this bill will undermine decades of work by local governments to engage their residents and businesses to thoughtfully plan for the land use and housing needs of their individual communities. After reviewing the language in the bill, our specific concerns include:

1. **Residential Design Standards Limits.** The language prohibits a myriad of reasonable design standards for all residential developments including large multi-family or mixed-use buildings that cities utilize to ensure compatibility with the existing environment, including building orientation, transparency requirements for pedestrian and transit-oriented design, and other architectural elements. As a fully developed and historic community, design standards are an essential tool to ensure new development fits into the established neighborhoods throughout White Bear Lake.
2. **Parking Restrictions.** Limiting minimum parking requirements to no more than one space per unit, regardless of access to public transit or walkability, will result in under-parked developments that will increase congestion in existing neighborhoods and create challenges for city public works. This is especially concerning for White Bear Lake, which lost nearly all of its transit service after the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. **Administrative Approval Requirement.** By requiring that all residential development be approved administratively, the language:
 - Eliminates public hearings that normally occur in the development process before the Planning Commission or City Council. These public hearing meetings are essential to provide an opportunity for the community to learn about a development proposal and provide comments directly to their city officials.
 - Appears to prohibit cities from requiring exactions, dedications, or fees, which could eliminate city authority to assess park dedication fees, considerations for greenspace, water and sewer fees, and potentially other development-related fees.
4. **Homeowner Associations Controls.** By prohibiting cities from requiring certain services, features, or common areas be managed by a HOA, the amendment could allow



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developers to shift responsibility for privately intended infrastructure to the city—making it public and funded by taxpayers.

In summary, we ask you to **oppose S.F. 2229** due to its rigid approach, prescriptive mandates, and lack of flexibility. We look forward to working with the legislature and other local governments on an alternate approach that is practical, flexible in nature, involves public input, and includes local decision-making so policies can fit each community's unique needs.

Respectfully,

Lindy Crawford
City Manager

Jason Lindahl
Community Development Director

cc: White Bear Lake Mayor and City Council