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To: Representative Igo, Co-Chair, Housing Finance and Policy
Representative Howard, Co-Chair, Housing Finance and Policy
Senator Port, Chair, Senate Housing and Homelessness Prevention
Senator Lucero, Ranking Minority Member, Housing and Homelessness Prevention

From: Jennifer Lemaile Ho, Commissioner, Minnesota Housing 

Subject: Report on Olmstead Plan Activities

Pursuant to Minnesota Laws 2025, Chapter 32, Article 3, Section 15, Minnesota Housing is required to report on the State's Olmstead Plan activities related to affordable and accessible housing for persons with disabilities.

Background

Minnesota's Olmstead Plan is intended to ensure that Minnesotans with disabilities can live full, integrated lives in their chosen communities. Named after the landmark 1999 Supreme Court decision *Olmstead v. L.C.*, the plan establishes goals for Minnesota state agencies covering topics including individual choice, person-centered planning, housing, education, employment and transportation. The [first plan](#) was created as an outcome of litigation against the State of Minnesota and was finalized in 2015. That version of the plan was overseen by a federal court through 2020.

The [Olmstead Subcabinet](#) is made up of 12 state agencies and entities, plus the Metropolitan Council. Subcabinet members work together to make sure the state follows the Minnesota Olmstead Plan. The Olmstead Implementation Office (OIO), which is housed within Minnesota Housing, facilitates engagement between people with disabilities and state agency leaders. Minnesota Housing is a member agency of the Subcabinet and Commissioner Jennifer Ho serves as its chair.

Housing Goal in the Existing Olmstead Plan

The current Olmstead Plan includes one goal related to housing, which set targets for participation in certain programs in which individuals with disabilities receive financial support for their housing and sign a lease for a unit that they choose. The most recent report showed that 2,352 people were able to move to rental housing of their choice over a 3-year period. This

is a shared goal with the Department of Human Services.

Year	Goal	Actual	Status
2021	569	1,095	Met
2022	598	419	Not Met
2023	635	838	Met
Totals:	1,802	2,352	

Housing Goal 1: *More people with Disabilities will live in integrated rental housing of their choice and receive financial support to pay their rent. The table shows the number of people with disabilities renting integrated housing of their choice and receiving financial support, compared to the goal for each year.*

Olmstead Plan Update

The Olmstead Subcabinet decided in 2023 that the plan needed a comprehensive update. The new goals will be part of a 5-year plan that will be in effect from 2027 -2032.

Creating New Goals in Community

OIO and the Subcabinet designed a process that would include more community voices who would co-create the new plan alongside the subcabinet agencies. This includes paid consultants with lived experience of disability (people with disabilities or their family members) who are embedded in agency teams and known as Inclusion Consultants (IC).

ICs incorporated their experience and the results of community conversations to create a [Focus Area Report](#) of recommended topics. Housing was identified as a top area of concern, most directly implicated in the report in Focus Area One: Freedom, Belonging, and Self-Determination, and Focus Area Five: Accessible Homes, Communities, and Infrastructure.

Other community engagement and advice for the plan update have come from:

- Dendros Community Conversations: Dendros Group was contracted to hire and support the Inclusion Consultants, as well as conduct community engagement.
- [Disability Inclusion and Choice Survey](#)
- [Small Community Conversations](#): OIO worked with a consulting firm, ACET, to host more than 20 community conversations. These conversations focused on ideas of choice, integration, and inclusion. ACET worked with community partners for the conversations.
- [OIO Quality of Life Survey](#)
- Policy Consultants’ Best Practices Report

Minnesota Housing's Participation in Goal Creation

As one of the Subcabinet agencies, Minnesota Housing has participated in the drafting of new goals. The agency's team includes three members of the Servant Leadership Team, staff representatives from three agency divisions, a team lead, and two Inclusion Consultants (IC).

The team began meeting in June of 2025, meeting approximately three times per month. Its work included establishing guidelines and values for functioning as a team and framing the work, reviewing research and information gathered from community conversations, identifying areas for improvement in service delivery and creating strategies, and creating measurable goals in four topic areas. The ICs lifted streamlined delivery of services and homeownership opportunities for people with disabilities among their top priorities.

Throughout the process, team leads from all subcabinet agencies participated in regular information sharing and technical assistance meetings and identified potential areas for interagency collaboration.

Minnesota Housing's goal drafting process has also taken into consideration the findings from other community engagement and state policy development work. These include the Task Force on the Long-term Sustainability of Affordable Housing, the Simplifying Supportive Housing Work Group, the Age-Friendly Blueprint, and Healthy MN Partnership.

Beyond Incremental Goals to Transformative Change

The community has expressed the real need for transformative, systems-level change to meet the needs of people with disabilities. The updated plan will include a section of transformative goals and strategies that do not fit within a 5-year scope. OIO is also exploring the creation of an initiative to address major barriers and long-term structural issues that lie outside of individual agency authority and lay groundwork for future changes.

Estimated Timeline

- **February 19:** Olmstead Leadership Forum meeting to discuss draft Olmstead Plan
- **March 13 (tentative):** Olmstead Subcabinet meeting to discuss draft Olmstead Plan.
- **March-May 9, 2026:** Public comment period. Dendros hosts community meetings for feedback/comment on the draft Olmstead Plan, plus language-inclusive offerings and other feedback opportunities.
- **May-July 2026:** Subcabinet agency teams reconvene to consider public feedback/comments and make goal revisions. Additional Leadership Forum and Subcabinet meetings may also take place.
- **Fall 2026:** Olmstead Implementation Office compiles any changes to Olmstead Plan. Leadership Forum/Subcabinet reviews and votes on final Olmstead Plan.

Proposed Minnesota Housing Olmstead Goals

Recognizing that affordable and accessible housing is central to the aims of the Olmstead Plan, the Agency is developing potential goals, with supporting strategies, to increase the supply of affordable and accessible housing and support increased homeownership for people with disabilities. This work builds upon existing incentives and requirements in the Agency's Qualified Allocation Plan, which guides most rental housing development funding, as well as its Multifamily Rental Housing Design and Construction Standards. Together, these documents encourage or require funded projects to incorporate Universal Design and visitability features to create more units set aside for people with disabilities, including permanent supportive housing.

The overarching goal is that people with disabilities live in the communities and setting of their choice without barriers and Agency is exploring goals and strategies to:

- (1) expand accessible, affordable housing options for people with disabilities by funding universal design rental units and permanent supportive housing with deeply affordable rents and services.
- (2) increase access to financing for home accessibility improvements, strengthening homeownership pathways, and improving outreach to households that include people with disabilities.
- (3) Collaborate with other state agencies on strategies to help more people move from segregated settings into integrated community housing.

Conclusion

This work reflects the Agency's commitment to advancing the promise of Olmstead v. L.C. toward meaningful, lasting systems change. By expanding the supply of affordable and accessible housing, strengthening pathways to homeownership, improving program design, and deepening interagency collaboration, the Agency seeks to ensure that people with disabilities can live with dignity, autonomy, and inclusion in communities of their choice. Continued partnership with community members, state agencies, and stakeholders—grounded in lived experience and informed by public feedback—will be a key part to refining these goals and strategies and translating them into measurable progress from 2027 to 2032 and beyond.