

Re: Growmke/Housing Element, et al..
5 Points Senior Committee Opposition

To the CPC :

It is with staunch opposition to the GrowMKE, Housing Element, and any and all current and future derivatives of these plans I write. In addition, to opposing reasons already on record including those of 5 Points representatives, I write to oppose the GrowMKE, Housing Element plan, and other measures that are taken out into subsequent separate plans presented June 2, 2025 at 1:or in the past. I am writing to speak out against the unchecked implementation of **Grow MKE** and the **Housing Element**, which—if left unaltered—will displace the very residents who have built and sustained Milwaukee's Black neighborhoods for generations.

- **Grow MKE:** A redevelopment initiative aimed at expanding housing options and economic opportunities, but which risks accelerating displacement due to rising property values.
- **Housing Element:** A planning framework guiding housing growth that may encourage development favoring market-rate housing, often neglecting protections for existing vulnerable residents.
- First, as my parents, relatives, and community members , in addition to myself, who are seniors in the area and members of the AARP, we question the legitimacy of the AARP co-signing this plan. Neither the individuals who are senior members of 5 Points nor me were contacted by the AARP to render our position on this plan. Therefore, the AARP does not have full authorization to co-sign this plan as some of the very city residents within the designated zip codes and are greatly affected who are members were never contacted on their thoughts or intent to support and it contradicts the AARP's mission for seniors regarding housing.

Negative Effects of Gentrification on Vulnerable Populations

However, the current plans risk severe harm:

- **Displacement and Health Risks:** Rising taxes and rent increases threaten to uproot seniors who own their homes outright. Forced moves disrupt care routines and increase stress, particularly for those with Alzheimer's and dementia.
- **Psychological Harm:** Displacement leads to loneliness, depression, and loss of essential social support.

- **Financial Hardship:** Fixed incomes cannot keep pace with rising housing costs, risking loss of generational wealth built over decades.

By protecting and investing in the city's long-term residents—including seniors, veterans, persons with disabilities, second-generation homeowners, and returning citizens—Milwaukee stands to gain:

- A **stronger, more stable economy** fueled by local spending and reliable tax revenue.
- **Environmental sustainability** through reduced sprawl and more efficient housing use.
- Enhanced **community connectedness and cultural richness** that improve quality of life.
- A **safer, healthier, and more equitable city** for all residents.

We deserve strong protections. Policies must include:

- **Property tax relief and freezes for seniors and fixed-income homeowners.**
- **Rights of first refusal** allowing residents and community groups to purchase homes before they are sold on the open market.
- **Resident-led stabilization measures** to give communities control over local development.
- Investment in **accessible housing, health services, and support for returning citizens.**
A **stronger, more stable economy** fueled by local spending and reliable tax revenue.
- **Environmental sustainability** through reduced sprawl and more efficient housing use.
- Enhanced **community connectedness and cultural richness** that improve quality of life.
- A **safer, healthier, and more equitable city** for all residents.

As a lifetime member of the NAACP, a powerful organization, that has consistently worked toward housing, equity, equality, and inclusion based upon righting the wrongs and injustices in housing and other legal matters, this goes against the very principles that are woven into the very fabric of society. My membership and that of other legends in the city do not accept this plan. Within its elements are the very injustices against which we have fought with a new and enlightened vision of housing and generational wealth. This plan inherently aims to demolish the very matters of education, housing, equity in policy, justice, economics, and environment.

Groups like the **NAACP** fight for racial equity and anti-displacement in Black communities. The **AARP** champions aging-in-place and affordable housing for seniors. The **National Caucus and Center on Black Aging** and the **National Disability Rights Network** advocate for the unique needs of Black seniors and persons with disabilities. Groups like the **NAACP** and **AARP** advocate for these protections nationally. These groups stress that **local residents' voices must be prioritized** in policy-making to which they must give full voice and **validity to Milwaukee's residents** at the local level.

As someone who in addition to parents and foreparents who have experienced various forms of disinvestments, segregation, and policies that cause harm, plans that operate under the umbrella of addressing an immediate concern must include an analysis of implementation several years down the line as long-term gentrification, loss of identity, loss of wealth, educational institutions, community and nationwide wholeness which are the very ingredients of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are at risk for loss without amenable compensation. They must also avoid repetition of the same psychological and economical trauma that raids the city of positive sustainability and growth.

I **oppose the implementation** of Grow MKE, the Housing Element, and similar plans **as currently designed**, due to their failure to adequately protect seniors, veterans, persons with disabilities, second-generation homeowners, and marginalized communities from displacement.

Many of these residents are **seniors, second-generation homeowners, veterans, persons with disabilities, and citizens returning to society**. They've paid off their homes, live on fixed incomes, and some are battling conditions like **Alzheimer's** and other age-related illnesses. For them, stability is not a luxury—it's survival. **Culturally**, these residents preserve the history, identity, and soul of our neighborhoods.

Keeping these residents in their homes benefits Milwaukee's economy, environment, social fabric, and overall stability. I urge the Commission to:

- Center residents in decision-making,
- Implement protections like tax relief, rights of first refusal, and resident-led measures,
- And ensure the health and wellbeing of our most vulnerable neighbors.

Any housing or redevelopment policy must be grounded in **accurate population data, meaningful resident participation, and enforceable protections** to ensure our community's health, dignity, and heritage are preserved.

I further dissent on any and all implementation of parts of the plans (either GrowMke, Housing Element, and other housing plans) submitted as separate policies and plans.

I oppose these plans as they currently stand. We must revitalize Milwaukee **with**, not at the expense of, those who made this city strong and with community appointed representatives.

Additionally, as a representative of the Senior Committee for 5 Points , I carry the weight of them regarding the opposition to this plan's implementation as it stands.

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