

TO: Planning Commission planadmin@milwaukee.gov
TO: Staff Assistant clee@milwaukee.gov

Thursday 5/29/2025

TO: Mayor Johnson mayor@milwaukee.gov
TO: Alderman Alex Brower alex.brower@milwaukee.gov

RE: (240402 – Public Hearing Comprehensive Planning
Milwaukee Mayor’s “Housing Element” of City of Milwaukee Comprehensive Plan

RE: Formerly known as: Growing MKE

In 1969 as newlyweds, my husband and I purchased a home in the City of Milwaukee. We found a multitude of homes on the market, for long periods of time and for great reductions in the selling prices. Residents were fleeing the City, the lack of zoning was permitting homes to be broken up into rooming houses, larger homes were adding fire escapes in order to rent out to multiple people and/or several families and absentee landlords were abundant. As a result we purchased a home for almost 50% of the listing that was on the market for over 1 year.

As other young people bought in, there was a neighborhood effort to change the zoning to single family, grandfathering in duplexes and apartment buildings. The neighborhood became stable again, and the quality of life increased. This neighborhood to this day, contributes a enormously to the tax base of the City.

This “new Housing Element” runs the risk of once again, causing residents to flee to the suburbs in order to avoid absentee landlords, breaking up homes into rooming houses, increasing an already dense neighborhood to greater density, reducing the value of the homes, & again reducing the tax base.

ADUs: The “new” Housing Element Plan consists of proposed amendments to permit Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in single-family districts without adequate neighborhood input and should not be approved as currently written.

ADUs: Will permit internal structures that contradict previous commitments to safeguard single family neighborhoods. This could result in diminishing green space and increased density in already dense neighborhoods. There is no provision for resident involvement.

ADUs: Such dwellings damage many dense stable neighborhoods, areas with minority populations, areas without adequate parking and quality of life for residents.

Transparency: I support the City’s attempt to accelerate transparency & public participation in all districts of the City.

Surveys: I support surveys distributed to all City residents, to allow input to the Plan since it would directly affect all homeowners. Each Alderman should hold meetings for constituents to understand the Plan, and have an opportunity to provide comments. A blanket proposal City wide should never exist. Each alderman's district has it's own distinct living space and such requests should be honored to provide a quality of life for all residents. This information should be gathered before any Plan is implemented.

Many neighborhoods are unaware of the scope of the changes that have been proposed. As written, neighborhoods are not prepared for the negative impact this may have on their living spaces. Density will increase, the quality of their neighborhoods will decrease.

With the Plan as proposed, if the neighborhoods suffer a decline, keep in mind the tax base will also decrease. Is the City ready for this? If the neighborhoods decrease in 'quality of living' these residents will seek other places to live – the suburbs?

□

I'm requesting that postcard surveys be sent to all property owners in the single-family districts throughout the city to ask if they support a doubling of the density in their neighborhood to accommodate ADU's, and/or changing single family zoning districts, allowing single family homes to be broken into duplexes, and/or multiple family dwellings, which would require multiple exits such as fire escapes. And for Alderperons of all districts hold community meetings to inform their constituents of this pending Plan.

□

Sincerely,

□

NAME: Sandra McSweeney
ADDRESS 3450 N. Lake Drive, Milwaukee, WI 53211
MOBILE: 414-788-5939
EMAIL: samcsweeney30@yahoo.com