



Office of the Mayor

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Mayor Announces Housing Forward: An Agenda to Address the Housing Needs of All in a Growing City

Today the Mayor unveiled Housing Forward, a package of initiatives that collectively represent the City's housing agenda. It includes a series of efforts to increase housing choice, create affordable housing, combat displacement and segregation, ensure seniors and others can stay in their homes, and the City's efforts to end homelessness. The package highlights recent achievements, efforts underway, and work yet to come, and it demonstrates what is fundamentally necessary to achieve our housing goals: multiple efforts on every aspect of our housing challenges.

The challenge we face in Madison is daunting. We are working to address historic and persistent inequities in housing while also facing growth pressures - and the displacement and affordability challenges that come with them. If recent trends continue, Madison could be home to 70,000 new residents and 40,000 new households by 2040.

"Madison is an attractive city for people to move to, and we need it remain inviting and accessible to our long-term residents as growth occurs," said Mayor Rhodes-Conway. "We need to push as hard as we can on affordable housing while dramatically increasing the amount of housing being built and helping people stay in the neighborhoods they have always called home."

This means using every lever at the City's disposal. Under the Housing Forward plan, the City will:

- Catalyze the development of new affordable housing through City funding sources, and by buying land and making it available for affordable housing
- Invest in homeownership opportunities for people of color with non-profit partners
- Ensure a variety of housing types and price points in neighborhoods to help Madisonians remain in their neighborhoods, even as their housing needs change
- Amend zoning and permit processes to make it easier for the private sector to build more housing to help supply keep up with demand and ease the pressure on housing prices. We need 10,000 new homes every five years to keep up with projected demand
- Help prevent evictions and expand loan programs that help seniors and others stay in their homes

- Develop full-service purpose-built shelter facilities for women and children and single men that help move people into stable housing
- And more

“I strongly support the Housing Forward agenda. These actions have been called for through a number of City planning efforts and they are desperately needed,” said Lindsay Lemmer, District 3 Alder and member of the Housing Strategy Committee. “Madison cannot be a thriving city when its residents are increasingly worried about their housing costs or housing options.”

While the City is using every tool available to increase the amount of housing and the amount of affordable housing in Madison, we still face limits to the tools we can utilize. State law prohibits the City from pursuing rent control, rental inspections, or from requiring affordable units in new development (often referred to as inclusionary zoning). With these known limitations, Housing Forward also includes plans to look further into new and emerging approaches that may help improve housing affordability and housing access in Madison.

“The Housing Forward agenda shows that the City is moving forward on all fronts,” said Patrick Heck, District 2 Alder and member of the Housing Strategy Committee. “Madison needs more affordable housing, and it also just simply needs more housing. The City is working on both those fronts while also trying to help people stay in their homes and neighborhoods, increase homeownership for people of color, and support people experiencing homelessness.”

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