

October 25, 2024

Amy Oeth  
Project Manager, Growing MKE  
Department of City Development  
City of Milwaukee

Re: Growing MKE Feedback

Dear Ms. Oeth,

We represent the Milwaukee County Commission on Aging (the Commission) and we are writing to share our support for the Growing MKE initiative developed by the City of Milwaukee's Department of City Development and encourage passage of the ordinance that formalizes this plan. The Commission represents more than 186,000 older adults throughout Milwaukee County, of which more than 94,000 live in the City of Milwaukee.

Part of our charge is to advance the idea that older adults deserve to choose where they want to live, who they want to live with, and to participate fully in their communities. The goals of the Growing MKE align with this mission to help older adults age in place with dignity. The plan's first recommendation, to update the zoning code to allow more types of neighborhood-scale housing in more neighborhoods, supports older adults to remain living in the community.

In particular, the addition of increased housing stock in the form of townhomes, accessory dwelling units, cottage courts, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes permit older adults to live in supportive arrangements, with family members, and in safer arrangements that support their daily living activities.

The addition of more, and varied, housing stock also improves housing affordability, which is increasingly important for older adults with limited income. As costs continue to rise for necessary services in all areas, including healthcare, transportation, and food, promoting housing affordability is a priority.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the Growing MKE initiative. We urge the City of Milwaukee Common Council to support this plan by adopting the formal ordinance. We also respectfully request that this letter of support be appended to File No. 240402 for future reference.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Janice Wilberg, Ph.D.  
Chair, Commission on Aging

Brian Peters  
Legislative Officer, Commission on Aging