



July 22, 2018

Heather Worthington
Director of Long Range Planning
City of Minneapolis
Community Planning and Economic Development
105 Fifth Avenue South #200
Minneapolis, MN 55401

RE: Fulton Neighborhood Association input to the Minneapolis 2040 Draft Comprehensive Plan

Dear Director Worthington:

The Fulton Neighborhood Association (FNA) represents the Fulton Neighborhood in the southwest corner of Minneapolis, bounded by Penn Ave S, France Ave S, W 47th St. and W. 54th St. The FNA Board strongly opposes the 2040 Draft Plan as the policies and actions described in the plan will not meet its overarching goals and objectives. We need a plan that clearly integrates with transportation plans, affordable housing policy, and works collaboratively with each unique neighborhood.

Equity is the underlying theme throughout the 2040 Plan and one which we applaud and support in our neighborhood. We all agree the ideal city will strengthen and grow both the middle class and those struggling at the bottom by providing great schools, access to affordable and accessible housing, living-wage jobs, amenities of all kinds and a sustainable and diverse economy to support these goals. A city will also offer a path to homeownership for residents as homes typically increase in value, build equity and provide a nest egg for the future. Costs are predictable and more stable in owning than renting, ideally based on a fixed-rate mortgage. Rentals, on the other hand, offer equity to owners and not renters, further stripping wealth.

The draft 2040 Plan does not promote its stated goals of either homeownership or stabilization of our rental communities. To increase density, the 2040 Plan is structured to allow for more housing units, not more homeownership, and the proposed new multi-unit housing would be built with little to no regulation as to size or scope. The plan promotes rentals by allowing for and encouraging a dramatic increase in apartment buildings along not only transit corridors, but throughout the city on all blocks - changing single family neighborhoods into multi-unit neighborhoods, without making any of these units affordable nor taking into account the housing stock that would either be displaced or remain.

For most people buying a home is the single largest purchase of their lives. They don't have the means to build or buy an apartment building or a multi-unit dwelling. It appears only developers and the

wealthy can invest in the infrastructure laid out by the 2040 Plan and smaller, more affordable single-family homes will be lost. Instead of building equity in the city, the plan will do the opposite.

Affordable housing is critical to keeping Minneapolis great. But simply increasing housing and density doesn't make it affordable. How does wholesale zoning changes make housing affordable? There are no details in the plan that actually address either affordable housing or equity.

Likewise, the 2040 Draft Plan takes a broad-brush approach to zoning when every neighborhood is different and has different needs. The 2040 Plan needs to allow for local planning in updated zoning changes. For example, in the 50th & France area in the Fulton Neighborhood, there are 7 zones (C1, C2, OR1, OR2, R1A, R2B, R4) all within a 6-block area. This makes it very confusing for businesses and homeowners alike. Some businesses simply move across France Avenue into Edina to avoid the confusion. We would like changes to be made but they can't be wholesale. What is right for Fulton is not necessarily right for any other area in the city with our unique needs.

Another goal of the 2040 Plan is a focus on walking, biking, and mass transit. Again, another laudable goal, but the plan falls short by ignoring that cars will continue to be a major player in transit for many years to come. Mass transit works well when businesses are centralized but falls short when they develop or move out of the central core of the city due to high prices. Many people cannot get to their jobs in a reasonable time with walking, biking, or mass transit. Therefore, cars need to be addressed and failing to do is a serious problem with the draft plan.

Likewise, the 2040 Plan disregards parking for new multi-unit buildings almost entirely, relying on street parking and the hope that renters will all be using mass transit exclusively. The maps and drawings in the 2040 Plan are practically free of cars; hardly a realistic portrayal of our city streets in the winter. Multi-unit housing needs to have at least one off-street parking spot adjacent to the property. For example, a four-plex needs four parking spots. If it is central in a block, it could have two on street parking spaces, but also needs two off-street parking spaces.

It is reasonable to conclude that hard fought current rules designed to keep house sizes reasonable in size and within the flavor of the neighborhood, like the floor-to-area (FAR) and height restrictions, will be lost under this plan in developers' efforts to maximize square footage on lots that are not large enough. Green space and drainage for run-off will be lost as well in an effort to overbuild on interior city lots.

The 2040 Plan will ultimately set the foundation for future zoning changes and, although we agree that we cannot rely on current zoning rules to keep pace with changes we want to occur in our city, we strongly oppose the draft plan as proposed. We urge the City Council to make significant changes before submitting a final plan for approval.

Sincerely,

Fulton Neighborhood Association Board of Directors

CC: Mayor Jacob Frey

David Frank, Director, Department of Community Planning and Economic Development

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Ward 2 Council Member Cam Gordon
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