LMC LEAGUE of MINNESOTA CITIES

Senate State and Local Government Committee Cancels Hearing on Zoning Bills

March 31, 2025

The hearing scheduled for March 25 was canceled, but zoning and land use reform bills still remain under consideration in both chambers.

On March 25, the Senate State and Local Government Committee was scheduled to consider several zoning and land use reform bills:

- SF 2229 — Minnesota Starter Home Act
- SF 2140 — More Homes Right Places Act
- SF 2286 — Transforming Main Street Act
- SF 1268 — People Over Parking Act

In preparation, the League met with committee members, issued an action alert to cities whose Senators serve on the committee, and facilitated outreach from city officials. The League also prepared both written and in-person testimony to express concerns about the bills. However, the hearing was canceled that morning.

What's next for the bills

Despite the cancelation, these bills remain active in both the House and the Senate. They could be rescheduled for a hearing or included as amendments to other legislation at any time. The League continues to engage with bill authors in both chambers to address concerns.

The proposals have all advanced to their next committee stops in the House Elections Finance and Government Operations Committee and the Senate State and Local Government Committee.

Your next step

While the Senate canceled its hearing on these bills during the week of March 24, the House Elections Finance and Government Operations Committee is still likely to hear the legislation before the first and second committee deadline, which is on April 4. Cities should continue to contact their House and Senate legislators to share concerns about these bills.

What’s in the bills and how they would affect cities

The following is a summary of the bills at the time of this writing.

Minnesota Starter Home Act

HF 1987 (Rep. Spencer Igo, R-Wabana Township) / SF 2229 (Sen. Lindsey Port, DFL-Burnsville)

The bills were heard by the House Housing Finance and Policy Committee and the Senate Housing and Homelessness Prevention Committee on March 11.

The bills would require cities to:

- Permit at least two units on any single-family zoned lot and allow accessory dwelling units on lots with single-family homes.
- Limit minimum lot sizes to one-eighth acre for duplexes and single-family homes.
- Prohibit minimum lot sizes for townhomes larger than 1,500 square feet.
- Allow at least 80% lot coverage and restrict floor area ratio and setbacks.
- Prohibits minimum parking requirements for any development.
- Require an administrative review approval process for residential developments with no more than one public meeting (not hearing).
- Ensure development complies with city infrastructure, health, safety, and general welfare standards.

During the House hearing, Rep. Andrew Myers (R-Tonka Bay) and Rep. Wayne Johnson (R-Cottage Grove) proposed amendments to scale back parts of HF 1987. Their amendments aimed to:

- Exempt cities with populations under 10,000.
- Remove the required administrative approval process.
- Extend compliance deadlines for small cities.
- Eliminate prescriptive mandates on lot sizes and setbacks.

However, the committee did not adopt any of the amendments.

More Homes, Right Places Act

HF 2140 (Rep. Larry Kraft, DFL-St. Louis Park) / SF 2231 (Sen. Liz Boldon, DFL-Rochester)

The bills were heard by the House Housing Finance and Policy Committee hearing and the Senate Housing and Homelessness Prevention Committee on March 12.

A “delete everything” amendment, which replaces the original bill language with new language, was adopted by the committee, changing several components of the bill. Key components of the bill include:

- **Urban municipalities** (cities of the second, third, and fourth class within 1 mile of a city with more than 150,000 residents) must:
  - Upzone 75% of residential areas to allow townhomes, duplexes, triplexes by right, or any combination of development to permit an average density of one unit per 1,500 square feet.
- **Nonurban municipalities** (cities over 10,000 residents that don’t qualify as urban municipalities or first-class cities) must:
  - Upzone 50% of residential areas to allow townhomes, duplexes, triplexes by right, or any combination of development to permit an average density of one unit per 4,000 square feet.
- **First-, second-, and third-class cities** must create “commercial corridor districts” along municipal state-aid streets, allowing higher density development per acre.
- The bill would also:
  - Limit setbacks, floor area ratio, lot coverage, and minimum square footage rules in mixed-use housing zones.
  - Prohibit minimum unit sizes, construction material requirements, and local design standards beyond state building codes.
  - Eliminate minimum parking requirements for all developments.
  - Limit usage of planned unit developments and conditional use permits.
  - Require an administrative approval process with no more than one public meeting (not a hearing).

Transforming Main Street Act

HF 2018 (Rep. Liish Kozlowski, DFL-Duluth) / SF 2286 (Sen. Doron Clark, DFL-Minneapolis)

The proposals were heard by the Senate Housing and Homelessness Prevention Committee on March 11, and in the House Housing Finance and Policy Committee on March 12.

The proposals would:

- Require all cities to permit multifamily and mixed-use development in any commercial zoning district, except for heavy industrial zones.
- Allow cities to require that developments authorized in the bill include commercial use on the ground floor but only if the development is replacing existing commercial or industrial structures.

- Limit city review of projects under 300 units, prohibiting consideration of traffic, noise, or nuisance concerns.
- Require first-class cities, St. Cloud, and all metro-area cities to allow multifamily buildings up to 75 feet tall in commercial districts.
- Prohibit cities from requiring egress, durability, or energy efficiency standards, and limits any setback and lot coverage requirements beyond those required for commercial buildings.
- Eliminate parking minimums for all new developments.
- Require developments to comply with city requirements regarding adequacy of existing public infrastructure and other health, safety, and general welfare standards.
- Require cities to award density bonuses for affordable housing.
- Mandate an administrative review process with no more than one public meeting (not hearing).

Preemption of municipal design standards

HF 2013 (Rep. Jim Nash, R-Waconia)

This proposal was heard by the House Housing Finance and Policy Committee on March 11.

Note: A delete everything amendment limiting the scope of the bill was offered by Rep. Nash and adopted during the committee hearing.

The bill would:

- Prohibit all cities from imposing construction material or method requirements on residential developments with four or fewer units. This includes restrictions on architectural elements, building egress, durability, energy efficiency, and light access — unless required by the State Building Code
- Exempt historic districts from the requirement and allows cities to require an egress point on the street-facing side of the structure.
- Ban interim ordinances related to aesthetic mandates

Prohibition on minimum parking requirements for development

SF 1268 (Sen. Omar Fateh, DFL-Minneapolis)

The proposal was heard by the Senate Housing and Homelessness Prevention Committee on March 13.

The bill would:

- Prohibit all cities from requiring minimum parking spaces for any new development including commercial, industrial, and residential.

- Allow cities to specify disabled parking requirements.

Read more news articles.

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