

# VANTAGEPOINT

TRUSTWORTHY ALERTS AFFECTING YOU, YOUR HOME, AND NEIGHBORHOOD

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY ALERT:

### Omnibus Zoning Bill Overrides City Authority, Radically Increasing Density by Dictating Statewide Affordable Housing Standards

Although there's no question that Minnesota needs more affordable housing solutions, the "Missing Middle Housing" bill (SF 1370/HF 1667) currently steamrolling through the Senate merits more scrutiny and public discussion—in MasterWerks' opinion, a lot more!

If passed, this omnibus zoning bill (combining four bills previously introduced in the state legislature) would supersede all city zoning and land use authority throughout Minnesota, including all comprehensive plans. Instead, all housing development would be controlled by state law. Municipalities could only impose local standards related to public health, safety, or general welfare.

Here's a quick, condensed overview of SF 1370/HF 1667:

All single-family lots in residential zones would be up-zoned, giving owners the right to tear down and rebuild at least two and—depending on location—up to six residential units on the lot, with additional units permitted if all-electric and/or energy-efficient. Simultaneously, cities could not require more than one off-street parking spot for the lot's combined residences, potentially pushing multiple vehicles onto the street. Minimum lot sizes would be reduced to 4,000 square feet, and municipalities would be unable to establish required minimum square footage, floor area ratios, design standards, aesthetic requirements, or homeowner's associations. Quite literally, such changes would significantly alter the intrinsic character or fabric of our current neighborhoods and communities.

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As for mixed-use, multifamily, or commercial zones, residential developments could match the height of any existing building within a quarter mile, and developments designated as affordable could exceed that height. Emergency homeless shelters would be permitted anywhere in these zones.

MasterWerks also shares the concerns of many city leaders throughout Minnesota that the bill fails to consider the impacts of densification on community infrastructure. Turning commercial districts into multifamily residential zones makes it tough for communities to recruit businesses, thus reducing tax revenue. Since the bill sets no limits on how many residential units must be added to each community and contains no funding, homeowners would be left to foot the costs of substantial infrastructure upgrades, including roads, water mains, sewer lines, stormwater management systems, as well as schools, emergency, and other essential services. There are also no provisions to protect community greenspace and character.

If you have thoughts about SF 1370/HF 1667—whether pro or con—we encourage you to contact your state representatives right away, before it's too late.

To learn about the bill in greater detail, see the links contained in this article on our website:

[WWW.MASTERWERKSLLC.COM/PROPOSED-ZONING-BILL](http://WWW.MASTERWERKSLLC.COM/PROPOSED-ZONING-BILL)



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## WHY VANTAGE POINT

*It's easy to overlook—and increasingly difficult to spot—seemingly minor news with major consequences. Often related to governance changes, proposals fly under the radar because they appear boring, wonky, or hyper-local. If they rise to the level of public discussion, they're camouflaged with positive sound bites, masking unstated effects on people's comfort, convenience, or pocketbooks. Meanwhile, unsuspecting homeowners assume their representatives or others in opposition will handle the issue or that the legislation or regulation will never pass, without fully realizing the vast power of legislative and bureaucratic maneuvering that often pushes changes through without a direct, up-or-down vote. The new law or ordinance gets approved, and they're left to wonder, "How the heck did THAT happen?"*

*To shine a light on obscure dynamics, MasterWerks constantly reviews and filters information that may affect our clients. The goal of "Vantage Point" alerts is to raise awareness of pending issues and advance opportunities for you to make your voice heard when it counts. We believe everyone needs to think about new ideas and proposals—not only their immediate objectives and benefits but their longer-term consequences, both intended and unintended—and the net effects of those changes for ourselves and our communities.*

*You'll also find Vantage Point alerts archived on our website:*

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*We never just add on,  
We multiply value*