

September 26, 2018

John Arlandson - 651-335-4099

To – St. Paul City Council Members

I am John Arlandson, a member of Christ Lutheran Church on Capitol Hill. I am also a member of the St. Paul Caucus of ISAIAH – Affordable Housing Task Group.

**Our Mission is to understand and facilitate opportunities for all people in the City of St. Paul to have an affordable, stable home.**

We know that without a stable, livable home it is very hard to thrive in our City. We also know that the need for affordable housing in St. Paul far exceeds the availability. It is due to stagnant wages and increased rents.

Those suffering most are people of color, lower income families and the elderly. The St. Paul Fair Housing Group presented its report April 18, 2018 which identified needs and made policy and budget recommendations.

**One of the options that we are championing is that of ADU's (Accessory Dwelling Units) - the issue that is before the City Council today. As a people of faith, members of ISAIAH, and as concerned neighbors, we express our strong support for the ADU ordinance and urge you to pass the ordinance.**

The American Planning Association's research and knowledge center states: *"Internal, and detached ADUs all have the potential to increase housing affordability (both for home owners and tenants), create a wider range of housing options within the community, enable seniors to stay near family as they age, and facilitate better use of existing fabric in established neighborhoods.* Consequently, many cities and counties attached have signaled support for ADUs in their plans."

It also states: *"The research to date does not support fears about lower property values or parking shortages. Conversely, there are some indications that ADUs do increase the supply of affordable housing and do make significant economic contributions to their host communities through construction activity and property taxes."*

According a Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) report in 2008, ADUs benefit communities in many ways:

- They allow families to stay together by allowing an elderly or disabled member to live near their family caregivers while also maintaining some privacy.
- They are more affordable to build than regular real estate.
- Because they are built on land that the family/owner already has, their construction does not incur the extra cost of land.
- They increase the supply of a community's housing.
- They are many times more affordable to rent for low-income persons, elderly, disabled, or young students on fixed incomes, and empty nesters.
- They are flexible and can be designed to blend in to surrounding architecture, or can be built/designed inside an existing home.
- Because they can be connected to the utilities of the primary dwelling, there is no need to develop new infrastructure.
- They allow more efficient use of housing stock, and provide an alternative to creating major zoning changes that significantly change neighborhoods

St. Paul has a history of ADU's. As I drive down Summit Avenue I see the carriage houses that once housed people and horses. Many have now become units that are occupied by owners and renters. St. Paul currently permits ADUs in the area one-half mile from University Avenue between Emerald Street and Lexington Parkway, which is located in St. Anthony Park, Union Park, and Hamline Midway Planning Districts.

There are more than a hundred homeless families in Ramsey County. Many of the children in these families attend St Paul Public Schools. In addition, due to shortages in Emergency shelters, about 75 of these homeless families are waiting to get into shelter, and are living in their cars, the streets, on public transit, or sleeping on the floors of relatives/friends.

ADUs are a small but meaningful step toward sustainable housing.

My faith calls me to work to create a city where all residents can work, live, and thrive. I therefore strongly support the ADU ordinance because it will take us one step closer to that goal.

Thank you for voting in favor of ADU's.