



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth - Communications Office

411 West First Street, Duluth, Minnesota 55802
218-730-5230 | www.duluthmn.gov | Emily Larson, Mayor

For more information contact Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer 218-730-5309

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SUBJECT: Mayor Larson Activates Housing Task Force

BY: Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer

Mayor Larson Activates Housing Task Force

[Duluth, MN] Mayor Emily Larson is proud to announce the individuals appointed to serve on the Mayor's Affordable Housing Task Force. Announced in the 2019 State of the City address, the task force will work to develop a long-term, dedicated funding mechanism to address Duluth's affordable housing crisis.

Twelve leaders from the health care, business, development, and social service sectors were selected to participate in the task force. Those selected include:

- Laura Thorsvik, Essentia
- Deb Otto, Bremer Bank
- Stephanie Cummings, Wells Fargo
- Michael Boeselager, St. Luke's
- Dan Markham, Kraus Anderson
- Lynn Nephew, Housing and Redevelopment Authority of Duluth Board
- Lee Stuart, CHUM
- Joel Sipress, City Councilor
- Sarah Wisdorf, Lake Superior Area Association of Realtors
- Laura Birnbaum, St. Louis County, Public Health and Human Services
- Jeremy Hogle, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota
- Don Ness, Ordean Foundation

The task force will be make recommendations within the city's capacity to act and embrace innovation. The group will examine issues, including housing availability, affordability, quality, and investments. The group will also review national best practices and policies to guide their work.

"We know that we have a need for more affordable housing units in the community," said Mayor Emily Larson. "This group will steer the City in a direction that has a funding compass attached to it so that we can solve this problem."

The group will have their first meeting in September and is tasked with having a report ready in early 2020 to share with the public.

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