

## **Introduction**

The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) is committed to meeting Minnesotans' needs for decent, safe, sustainable, marketable, and affordable housing. Since building codes and local regulations/ordinances primarily focus on health and safety and/or protecting property values, they cannot be relied on to meet all of our expectations. Therefore, in an effort to better meet our customer needs and communicate our expectations, we developed the following design standards for rental housing:

1. MHFA Multifamily Design Standards for General Occupancy Rental Housing;
2. MHFA Multifamily Design Standards for Supportive Rental Housing;
3. Tax Credit Design Standards;
4. MHFA Accessibility Standards; and
5. Visitability Requirements (Note: Visitability Requirements were imposed by the 2001 Minnesota Legislature on certain new construction)
6. Minnesota Housing Multifamily Sustainable Housing Design Standards

The above referenced design standards replace all previous MHFA design standards and are applicable to housing receiving MHFA financing for new construction, rehabilitation, and/or adaptive reuse of an existing building.

While developing design standards for rental housing we sought input from our Funding Partners, MHFA Technical Advisory Group (made up of Developers, Housing Managers, Architects, Contractors, and Attorneys) and members of MHFA Senior Staff. In addition, housing design standards required of other state housing finance agencies conducting business similar to us were reviewed and compared. We determined these design standards fall within the mainstream of design standards required by other agencies.

Design standards are not intended to restrict innovation. We welcome new ideas and look forward to implementing any new idea that will provide long-lasting benefits to our customers.

If you need assistance in interpreting the intent of any design standard, feel free to contact the MHFA Multifamily Division and request to speak to a MHFA Staff Architect.