

March 23, 2007

Dear Friends of Minnesota Green Communities,

During the past year, concerns about global warming, peak oil, and the promises of green building and design have been in the news daily. Across the state, advocates and community leaders, including Governor Tim Pawlenty, increasingly demand greater attention to renewable energy, environmental protection, and sustainable development.

As a result, more and more of our elected officials recognize the significant health, environmental, and economic benefits of green building and sustainable land use. A major shift in consciousness among our elected leaders is now moving the sustainable development policy agenda forward.

These are encouraging signs.

Greater Minnesota Housing Fund, together with our partners the Family Housing Fund and Enterprise, believe that by supporting sustainable development and green affordable housing we can provide a needed local response to a global challenge. While our focus is on meeting the needs of low-income families and communities, we see direct connections between our work in green affordable housing and similar work within the environmental community and the green design fields.

It is truly time to think in new ways. We feel it is critical that more developers, contractors, architects, planners, property managers, and other professionals throughout Minnesota adopt the use of proven green design and green building methods to meet the housing needs of the community at large, especially our lowest income households. The Minnesota Green Communities initiative is one of the state's premier resources for providing practical tools to these pioneers. The market is ready and waiting.

**On May 16 and 17, 2007, we are pleased to co-convene the second annual Minnesota Green Communities Green by Design Conference at The Depot in downtown Minneapolis.** I encourage you to register for this exciting two-day event. It offers a rich assortment of workshops on urban and rural design, green building, and provocative presentations on global warming, peak oil production, and our increasingly unstable energy future.

It is also my privilege to announce that **Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.** will be the keynote speaker for this event. I am personally inspired by Mr. Kennedy's commitment to the protection of public health and defense of the environment, and confident his message will resonate with all Minnesotans as we explore the positive economic, health, and environmental outcomes of green community design.

The Green by Design Conference will present the most accessible formulas for accelerating the rate of change toward sustainable development, healthier communities, and environmental stewardship in our cities and towns. By adopting the best green building practices we will ensure that our children live healthier lives, enjoy a cleaner environment, and have the ability to reach their full potential because our communities are designed better.

**Please register for Green by Design today** and join us in supporting efforts to improve our homes, our communities, and our planet.



Warren Hanson  
President, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund

More information available online: [www.greencommunitiesonline.org/minnesota/default.asp](http://www.greencommunitiesonline.org/minnesota/default.asp)