

- Build pathways for youth engagement

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

Supercharged, Simplified Housing

Housing is the top regional issue to emerge from Moving Forward Together, and one of the most complex to solve.

THE CHALLENGE

- Housing is often the largest investment in people's lives; unstable housing makes it hard to thrive.
- Costs have outpaced wages, and development is hampered by materials costs, limited developer resources, land availability, zoning and regulatory limits, and neighborhood opposition.
- In some areas, debates over vacation rentals and second homes add to the tension.
- Local governments, HRAs, developers, and funders are stepping up, but demand keeps outpacing affordable supply.
- There is limited coordination on a regional level, and there are numerous potential benefits for a broader push that goes deep on this one major issue affecting Northeast Minnesota.
- Process participants [had many ideas on ways to move housing forward](#) across the region.

OUR ROLE

As a leading priority, Northspan and Northland Foundation are planning a **Day of Action** on regional housing efforts in early 2027, with up to 6 **follow-up working group meetings**.

TAKE ACTION

REGIONAL

- Attend Minnesota Housing's [Northeast Minnesota Housing Forum](#) and/or the [City of Duluth's Housing Summit](#) (fall 2026)
- Interested in the 2027 Day of Action, or already working in this space? Contact Karl Schuettler, kschuettler@northspan.org.

LOCAL

- Reform zoning for greater flexibility (e.g., fewer parking requirements, accessory dwelling units)
- Encourage development on infill properties
- Expand rehabilitation and renovation programs and funds
- No-cost local housing development planning consulting available to rural sites; [learn more](#)

See the full report and project updates at <https://www.northspan.org/thriving-rural-communities/>