

From: [Bonnie Roe](#)
To: [All Alders](#); [Tishler, Bill](#)
Subject: #3 Recognizing June as Homeownership Month
Date: Monday, June 17, 2024 1:34:29 PM

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Dear Alders,

As you celebrate National Homeownership Month, I would encourage you to take this opportunity to reflect on ways you can help more Madisonians own homes. Some things that come to mind:

1. Stop pushing through zoning changes that incentivize local and non-local investors to turn single-family homes into maximum-profit rental properties. As your resolution mentions, "homeownership is a pathway for wealth-building."
2. Pursue changes at the federal and local level to make it easier for condo developers to obtain financing. As we fulfill our need to increase urban density, dense condo developments need to be a bigger part of the plan.
3. Work to incentivize ways for seniors to age in place in Madison. Currently there are very few places for seniors to go when they're ready to downsize. The shortage of condos makes them very expensive to own. For example, a 2-bedroom condo at Sequoya Commons is right around \$1 million to purchase. But no home-owning senior I know is willing to sell their home and then throw all that equity, built over years, into over-priced rental units with no return on investment. If there are no attractive and affordable ownership options for seniors, they will rightly stay in the homes where they raised their families. If there were attractive options, many would likely downsize, thus freeing up space for younger people to raise their families in residential, single-family homes. Most families with children want to live in a home, not an apartment building, as reflected in recent studies that show they are willing to move out to areas where they can afford to buy a home.
4. Stop spending so much money. The property taxes are killing current homeowners and renters in this city. The combination of out-of-control spending and the high rate of borrowing is driving up property taxes. Borrowing is driving up the levy, and the growing structural deficit is relying on a referendum passing so that the City can tax properties above the state-imposed limit. Even the nice loans offered through CDA may need to be curtailed while our spending and revenues are so out of balance. There are other loan programs out there and the city just does not have the money to spend, even on good things. If the city is really benefiting so much off of these loans, then the ones taking them out could likely find a better deal elsewhere. We have a \$22 million structural deficit, growing rapidly over the years. As the extremely low rate of ownership vacancy shows, there are people willing to buy in Madison. There is no need for city incentives. If one can't afford a down payment at this time, they probably also cannot afford all the increasing taxes and fees.

Once again, if you want to honor homeowners, make more opportunities available so that more people can own homes. Development in Madison over the last several years has been almost exclusively rental units. Our rental to ownership ratio is way off. Please see the attached screenshots showing our Rental Vacancy Rate and Ownership Vacancy Rate. I hope you will read the whole report here:

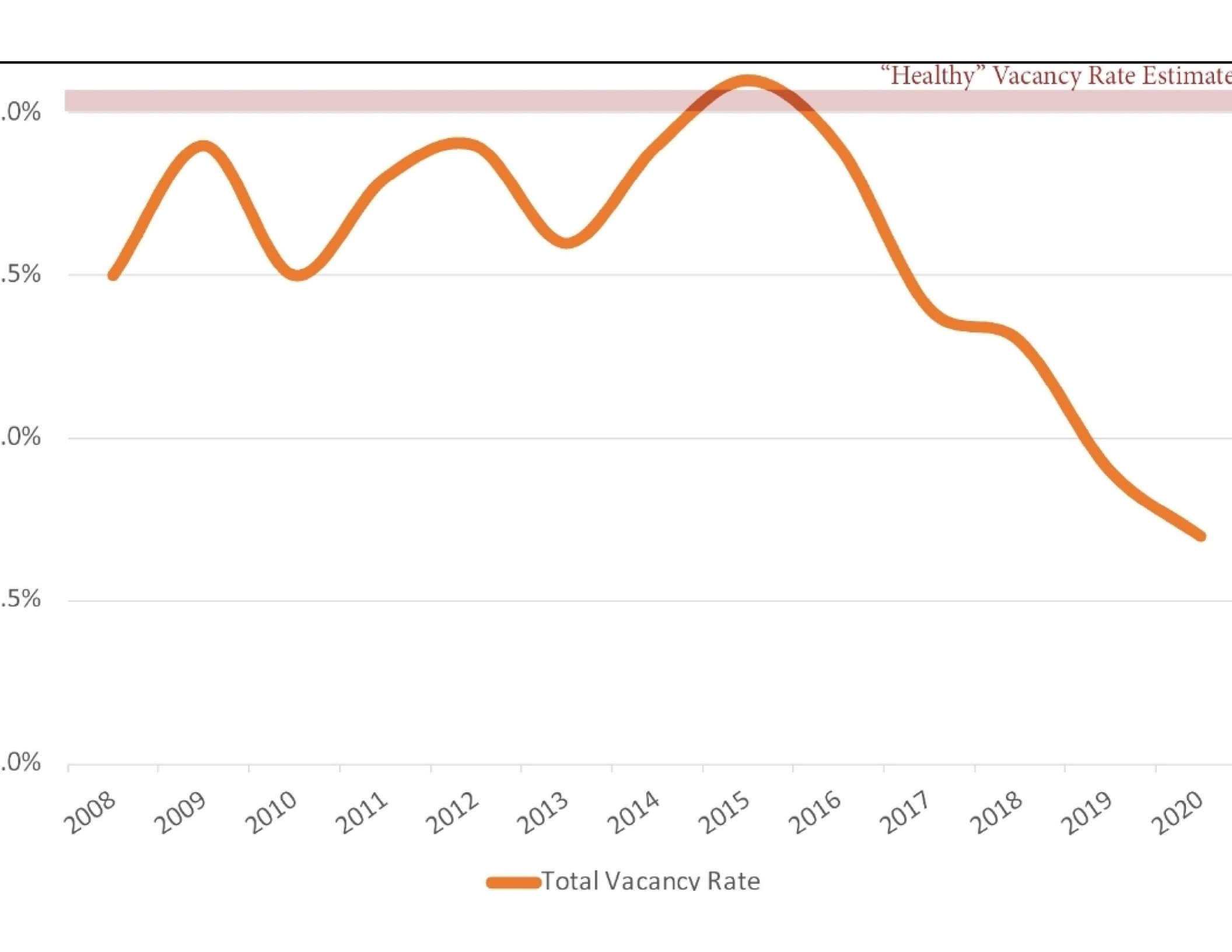
https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/community-development/documents/2022%20Housing%20Snapshot%20Report%20-%208_4_22.pdf

And please stop making decisions that only make it more and more expensive to live here. Good people are being priced out of Madison, even people who have lived in their homes in Madison all of their adult lives and paid taxes to make this City the wonderful place it is. It is a sad thing when people on fixed incomes in homes paid off years ago have to move out of Madison because they can't afford the property taxes to stay there. If the current trend continues, Madison will soon become a City for the wealthy and the publicly subsidized, with no middle ground. That is not the Madison I envision for our future. Allow people, especially those from historically marginalized populations, to benefit from the opportunity many of us have to build generational wealth by planning for and

providing more ownership options.

Thank you for your consideration,

Bonnie
District 11



housing cost burdened .

Housing cost burden indicates a shifting of household finances, leaving less available for other necessities such as childcare, food, and healthcare.

In Madison, nearly half of renter households and almost one-fifth of owner households are cost burdened to some degree, with nearly a quarter of renters spending more than half of their income on rent.

