

February 3, 2026

Governor Tim Walz
Office of Governor Tim Walz
130 State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Governor Walz,

On behalf of the West St. Paul City Council, I write to request state action to protect residents and stabilize communities impacted by recent immigration enforcement activity in our region. We thank you for all of your efforts to this point to assist the immigrant community and the entire State of Minnesota through this time of heightened community anxiety and disruption.

We are hearing from residents and small business owners who are experiencing real disruption and economic harm. When families are afraid to leave their homes, the ripple effects are predictable: missed work, lost wages, reduced access to essential services, reduced customer traffic for local businesses, and heightened housing instability. This combination harms residents, employers, schools, and neighborhood safety, and it creates avoidable downstream public costs.

West St. Paul has a large and strong immigrant community that includes a large Hispanic population as well as a large number of immigrant-owned businesses. We are taking steps within our authority to help, and we have incredible networks of volunteers stepping up to assist. We are providing grant support to food security organizations and networks serving affected households, as well as evaluating local small business loan and grant options. However, our local resources and the resources of our volunteer networks are limited and cannot meet the scale of need. State-level tools and funding are necessary to prevent displacement and stabilize local economies.

The West St. Paul City Council urges the State of Minnesota to take the following actions:

- 1. Temporary eviction protections tied to current conditions**
Establish temporary, targeted eviction protections during periods of heightened immigration enforcement activity that are materially disrupting residents' ability to work and access essential services. Any state action should be clear, time-limited, and accompanied by practical guidance for renters, homeowners, landlords, and lenders.
- 2. Emergency housing stability funding for direct rent and mortgage assistance**
Appropriate additional emergency funds to provide direct rental and mortgage payment assistance for households experiencing disruption that materially limits their ability to safely work, travel, or access services. Assistance should be designed to prevent

displacement and homelessness and should be delivered through existing state systems and trusted nonprofit partners to move quickly.

3. **Emergency stabilization support for impacted small businesses**

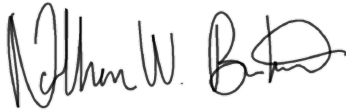
Create or expand rapid-response stabilization tools for small businesses experiencing sudden revenue loss tied to reduced customer traffic and workforce disruptions. Support should prioritize the smallest and most vulnerable businesses and may include short-term grants, flexible zero or low-interest loans, and technical assistance delivered through existing state, regional, and nonprofit business support networks.

To be clear, West St. Paul is not requesting additional funds to be awarded to the City for our operations. Our request is that the state deploys resources directly to households, housing stability administrators, and impacted small businesses through existing state and community-based delivery mechanisms.

Minnesota has successfully used temporary eviction protections and emergency assistance tools in prior emergencies. A targeted, time-limited response now will prevent displacement, reduce downstream costs, and help communities stabilize and recover.

Thank you for your leadership and partnership. We would welcome the opportunity to share what we are seeing locally and discuss practical design considerations so state actions are clear, workable, and effective.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathan W. Burkett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Nathan W. Burkett
City Manager
City of West St. Paul, MN

Cc: Senator Sandy Pappas
Senator Matt Klein
Representative Mary Frances Clardy
Representative Maria Isa Perez-Vega