Minnetonka Mills Twin Homes development breaks ground

Construction of 10 affordable housing units on the Mills Church campus is expected to be complete in 2028

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(SUN PHOTO BY NATALIE TRIMBLE)

From left: Bridgewater Bank Managing Director Patrick Craig, Metropolitan Council Member Tyronne Carter (District 3), Former Minnetonka Mayor Brad Wiersum, Hennepin County Commissioner Heather Edelson, Minnetonka Mayor Rebecca Schack, Mills Church Pastor David Landt, Homes Within Reach Executive Director Brenda Lano-Wolke, Twin Cities Habitat President Chris Coleman, and Minnesota Housing Commissioner Jennifer Ho shovel dirt into the air at the June 10 ceremonial groundbreaking of the Mills Twin Homes project.

On June 10, city officials, community members and nonprofit partners congregated on the Mills Church campus in Minnetonka for a ceremonial groundbreaking of the Mills Twin Homes project.

The event, hosted by Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, marked the public launch of the long-awaited development on a 2.56-acre site in the Minnetonka Mills neighborhood.

Construction is underway on the corner of Baker Road and Inverness Lane to transform an underutilized parking lot on the church's campus into 10 new affordable housing units for low- and moderate-income first-time homebuyers through the construction of five two-unit twin-home buildings.

"The Minnetonka Mills Twin Homes project significantly expands attainable homeownership options in Minnetonka," Twin Cities Habitat President Chris Coleman said. "After robust community engagement, we are excited to celebrate this milestone and look ahead to welcoming 10 families to their new homes."

Twin Cities Habitat is partnering with Homes Within Reach on the project, which involves the preservation of communal amenities currently located on the site, including an apple orchard and playground. A community garden and dumpsters will be relocated on the church's campus and an abandoned garage will be demolished and replaced. The apple orchard and most of the tree covers would be unchanged.

Habitat is also seeking partners to improve the existing playground for future use, which will in turn benefit church congregants, residents and neighborhood.

Minnetonka Mayor Rebecca Schack was present at the June 10 event as a guest speaker, alongside Former Minnetonka Mayor Brad Wiersum, who shared in celebration of the development's positive impact to the surrounding area.

"We [were] so glad when we were able to come to a plan that the city could participate, support and bring all of our partners in to provide housing for 10 families, which is incredible," Schack said. "Family housing and particularly home-owner occupied is so valuable because it allows a place for people to send their kids to school, to develop ties to the community, to work within our community, and we need that in order to stay current and to stay successful in Minnetonka."

"I really want to congratulate the 10 families who will own the new homes in this area. This is an exciting time for them and an exciting time for our community," Wiersum said. "The new owners of the homes here will make significant contributions to our community."

Other guest speakers at the groundbreaking event included Mills Church Pastor David Landt, Hennepin County Commissioner Heather Edelson, Metropolitan Council Member Tyronne Carter (District 3), Minnesota Housing Commissioner Jennifer Ho, Bridgewater Bank Managing Director Patrick Craig and Homes Within Reach Executive Director Brenda Lano-Wolke.

Funding for the project was a team effort, provided by Congressionally Directed Spending; Minnesota Housing; State Housing Tax Credit contributors, including Bridgewater Bank, Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County, the City of Minnetonka, and individual donors; and a partial land donation from Mills Church.

"It's a wonderful thing to transfer from an idea to actual construction, but the best change is from construction to homes being actually occupied," Coleman said. "There was so much community support from the beginning for this project."

Construction of the 10 affordable housing units is expected to be complete in 2028.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Minnetonka Mills Twin Homes project dates back to Feb. 8, 2020, when the idea to create affordable housing on the Mills Church campus was first proposed.

Mills Church and Habitat for Humanity didn't present a concept plan to the city until 2022, due partly to public feedback and discussion, as well as restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In their concept plan, they proposed using the church's underutilized parking lot and open space to construct two, six-unit townhomes and two single-family homes.

On Dec. 6, 2022, several concepts for the site were presented at a neighborhood open house and public feedback was requested. In 2024, a new plan was presented to the Minnetonka Planning Commission, which lowered the proposed building count to 10 twin homes.

On April 25, 2024, the church and Twin Cities Habitat revised the project plans and presented them to the Planning Commission, who expressed concerns about its lack of alignment to the city's comprehensive plan.

At the May 6, 2024 Minnetonka City Council meeting, the council adopted resolutions and ordinances for the project and approved funding for Habitat for Humanity through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

In February 2025, the council approved the development's final plat. Later in August, the council then received a site development permit application that authorized site grading, tree removal, utility installation and construction of stormwater management facilities. The site development permit was issued in October 2025.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity is a registered 501©(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1985, as part of the global Habitat for Humanity network. Twin Cities Habitat creates, preserves, and promotes affordable homeownership across the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area through the united efforts of supporters, volunteers and community partners. The nonprofit has helped make homeownership possible for 2,100 families in the Twin Cities.

For more information, visit tchabitat.org.

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