



11 Housing

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

In 2015, the City of Wood Dale participated in the *Homes for a Changing Region* study led by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). This project culminated in a housing policy plan that grouped together Addison, Bensenville, Villa Park, and Wood Dale—the Northeast DuPage County Cluster—and looked at each community’s population projections and existing housing supply to determine future housing and community development needs. Wood Dale has already completed one of the main recommendation from the *Homes* report, which suggested that the City update its comprehensive plan, as the most recent document prior to this one was adopted in 1997.

This section revisits other key recommendations from *Homes* and includes new recommendations that are consistent with this Comprehensive Plan.

■ Infill Redevelopment

Homes recommended that the City focus on development near the Wood Dale Metra station, and in particular the report mentioned the need for senior housing. In addition, the plan noted the need for new housing developments to be built in a way that they can adapt to changing demographics over the long-term, and can accommodate not only seniors in the short-term but also younger households in the next generation. These points are consistent with the findings of the comprehensive plan. Further, since the time that *Homes* was published in 2015, there has been construction of a new senior living facility, Randall Residence of Wood Dale, located on Irving Park Road at Catalpa Avenue. This facility has 147 units, which addresses demand for senior housing.



Recently completed senior living facility on Irving Park Road, the Randall Residence of Wood Dale

■ Aging in Place

In addition to attracting development that can meet increasing demand for senior living, the *Homes* plan recognized that many people want the option to remain in their homes as they age. In fact, a national study found that the vast majority—nearly 90%—of people over the age of 65 want to live in their homes for as long as possible.⁴ To help accommodate older adults, the plan recommends the City develop materials on “aging in place” that can be distributed to residents and provide information on ways to adapt homes to improve accessibility and facilitate senior living.

A handyman program also was identified as a way to help senior citizens or lower income families maintain and stay in their homes. A range of funding and operational models for these programs can be found throughout the metropolitan area. A well-established example is operated by the North West Housing Partnership on behalf of the Northwest Suburban Housing Collaborative. Such a program can focus on life safety or building code needs, which would facilitate inspection when properties are sold. Funds made available to home owners for these programs are typically either a grant, loan, or forgivable loan. Income targeted programs might be eligible for CDBG funding, which could be explored with DuPage County.

⁴ National Conference of State Legislatures and the AARP Public Policy Institute. (2011). *Aging in Place: A State Survey of Livability Policies and Practices*. <https://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/ppi/liv-com/ib190.pdf>

Other programs to support those aging in place and the community at large would be for Wood Dale to consider offering local workshops that teach residents how to do their own home renovation, maintenance, and repair. Along those lines, the DuPage affiliate of Habitat for Humanity offers its home repair program, which covers elements like painting, yard and roof repair, ramp installation, weatherization, and critical home repair.

“As a new resident, it would be wonderful to have a welcome packet or page on the City website that could list all the businesses by category, name, and address. Since our town is spread out, it would help to know what is available.”

-Resident Input ”



Single-story homes allow some seniors the opportunity to remain in their homes as they age

Crime-Free Rental Ordinance

Many of Wood Dale's neighboring communities—Addison, Bensenville, and Villa Park—have crime-free housing programs to monitor multifamily units. The City currently has a Rental Property Registration program in place, but may want consider adopting its own crime-free rental ordinance. This would require all property owners to attach a crime-free lease addendum to every rental agreement. In order to promote safe rental housing while also maintaining the welcoming and open environment that exists in Wood Dale today, the crime-free ordinance would:⁵

- Offer protections and methods of redress for tenants and property owners
- Ensure that the victims of crime are allowed the option to remain on a lease
- Define that in the event of arrest for an act of domestic violence, only the perpetrator can be evicted
- Require annual landlord training seminars

Noise and Sound Proofing

A common concern heard from the community in both the HOMES and comprehensive plans relates to the train and plane noise that impacts quality of life. The Wood Dale O'Hare Noise Group Committee already manages communication with the City and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as a member of the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC), an inter-governmental agency dedicated to reducing aircraft noise in the communities around the airport. Wood Dale City Council has also communicated with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to attempt to control the train horn that resident hear as Metra and other trains pass through the city.

The City and its residents are dedicated to this issue and are taking the steps necessary through public processes to help mitigate sound issues in the community. In addition, Wood Dale could consider strategies that might encourage private sector developers to include soundproofing in new construction. For instance, the City could waive permit fees, grant density bonuses, or expedite approval processes for developers who commit to soundproof buildings.



⁵ Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. (2015). *Homes for a Changing Region*. http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/10818/FY15-0129%20DUPAGE%20HOMES_final_lowres.pdf/b8e779a4-b564-4a44-b851-c98b19a976b4