

Recommendations Rise From Local Housing Study

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Five Northwest suburban towns are in “excellent position” to develop new housing options, but must work to stop the spread of foreclosure, a study reports.

The “Homes for a Changing Region” report, a 10-month effort by three regional planning agencies and the Northwest Suburban Housing Collaborative, identifies short- and long-term housing needs for residents of all ages in Arlington Hts., Buffalo Grove, Mt. Prospect, Palatine and Rolling Meadows.

General recommendations outline steps the towns can take to better handle the effects of foreclosure, improve rental oversight, assist senior homeowners, maintain current housing, look for ways to lower utility and maintenance costs and offer landlord education.

Projections show populations of the five towns rising in the next 30 years, which is one reason the collaborative formed: to take a closer look at what’s available, and what could be required to accommodate the living needs of more people.

Some specific recommendations include:

Arlington Hts.

Population: 75,000

Projected (GO TO 2040): 86,059

New housing requirement: 4,400 dwellings

Tackle foreclosures, particularly in condo buildings: The report recommends improved tracking and monitoring of foreclosure locations in the village. Arlington Hts. could serve as a “base” for regional efforts to slow the spread of foreclosure, and speed up the foreclosure process. It is suggested the village utilize foreclosure data to reach out to various condo associations to hear concerns and issues, while working to better identify “troubled” properties.

Downtown: Opportunities for redevelopment remain around the Arlington Hts. train station. The report recommends the village continue to pursue housing possibilities, including a mix of new rental and owner-occupied multi-family housing.

Algonquin Road corridor: Work with Mt. Prospect, Rolling Meadows on transportation improvements, redevelopment opportunities based off transit emphasizing pedestrian, bike connections, shared social services.

Buffalo Grove

Population: 42,000

Projected (GO TO 2040): 50,363

New housing requirement: 3,100 dwellings

Create town centers: Explore creating mixed-use “downtown”, “neighborhood center” or “main street” areas throughout the village, including along Lake Cook Road, the Buffalo Grove Metra station and Prairie View Metra station. The Metra stations may be better suited for younger populations along with workforce housing, while senior housing options may exist along Lake Cook, according to the housing report.

Buffalo Grove Metra station: In the short-term, improve connections between residential, train and industrial/commercial areas along Deerfield Parkway. Long-term: pursue mixed-use development possibilities, multi-family housing and retail options.

Mt. Prospect

Population: 55,000

Projected (GO TO 2040): 63,354

New housing requirement: 3,600 dwellings

Maintain housing supply: Room to grow is hard to come by in Mt. Prospect, with the village only able to accommodate 33% of projected housing needs by 2040, according to the study.

Maintenance, especially of the village’s several aging multi-family properties, is “paramount” to ensure affordable housing remains in Mt. Prospect, the report states.

Develop south Mt. Prospect: The village should explore continued annexations near the United Airlines office complex on Algonquin Road, with a long-term eye on workforce housing, jobs, retail and community service improvements.

Make more room for seniors: The proposed 92-unit Horizon senior living facility would provide a boost in number of affordable senior rental buildings. Focus should also be on infrastructure improvements around existing senior developments.

Palatine

Population: 68,557

Projected (GO TO 2040): 78,145

New housing requirement: 4,700

Maintain housing supply: If the village chooses not to grow, demand to live in Palatine will remain strong and push up housing prices, according to the study. That will impact the village’s ability to maintain a balanced housing stock affordable to a number of income levels. Multi-family dwellings

currently provide 87% of the rental stock. The quality of that housing must be maintained.

Development of downtown: Efforts must continue toward a mixed-use neighborhood providing a mix of higher density housing types for all income groups in close proximity to transit.

Improvements at the Rand-Hicks-Dundee triangle: The area contains many elements of a great neighborhood including open space, a mix of single- and multi-family housing, retail choices, schools, and proximity to regional roads. Design of the area, however, prevents it from melding into one. Options include multi-family housing along Hicks and portions of Dundee as well as infrastructure improvements such as a sidewalk/crosswalk network and bike paths.

Rolling Meadows

Population: 24,099

Projected (GO TO 2040): 27,524

New housing requirement: 1,500

Foreclosures: The city must focus on foreclosures, especially in condominium units. It needs to use data to find “troubled” properties and work to develop intervention strategies for them.

Redevelop the area along Kirchoff Road: Rolling Meadows should continue earlier plans for additional multi-family housing in the area including some senior housing.

Exploring opportunities in southern Rolling Meadows along Algonquin Road: The area is a mix of office, retail, and apartments and could be a great neighborhood, but it needs pedestrian and bicycle connections.

Population projections were taken from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning’s (CMAP) seven-county regional “Go To 2040” Comprehensive Plan. Other agencies to work on the housing report, along with CMAP and the Northwest Collaborative, were the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and the Metropolitan Planning Council. How and when the recommendations are implemented is up to the individual communities.