

Article updated: 6/7/2013 9:53 AM

Elgin, others look to chart housing needs

Elgin, northern neighbors can provide input starting next week

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Sen. Dick Durbin toured neighborhoods in Elgin two years ago and talked to residents such as Jim Kelly who were dealing with foreclosures. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning is working with Elgin, Carpentersville, East Dundee and West Dundee to identify future housing trends in the area and determine how to meet those needs. In Elgin, for example, many people have bought foreclosed homes and turned them into apartments, Elgin Mayor Dave Kaptain said.

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By Lenore T. Adkins

Starting next week, the public will get to have its say on the types of housing they think would best suit Elgin, Carpentersville, East Dundee and West Dundee.

The [Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning](#) is working with the communities to develop a "Homes for a Changing Region" plan, which aims to help city and village officials develop long-term housing plans. It will be one common report, but each municipality will have its own separate plan within the document.

A D V E R T

The communities, working together as the Fox Valley Homes Cluster, joined forces to secure a planning grant for assistance from the agency last year. That assistance is valued at about \$80,000. The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and the Metropolitan Planning Council are also involved in the process.

"It'll help us as a region because we face a lot of the same housing questions, concerns, challenges (and) desires for expansion," said Cathleen Tymoszenko,

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West Dundee's director of community development. "And coming together and working together is a benefit, because housing doesn't really recognize borders."

The workshops, from 7 to 9 p.m., will be:

- Monday at East Dundee Village Hall, 120 Barrington Ave.

- Tuesday at the Carpentersville public works building, 1075 Tamarac Drive.
- June 18 in West Dundee at the police station on 100 Carrington Drive.
- June 19 at the Centre of Elgin, 100 Symphony Way.

The agency is still in the planning and information gathering process. At the workshops, residents can learn about the different types of housing in their communities, where growth is expected to occur and how housing trends across the nation, region and in their communities will determine supply and demand for the next 30 years. They will also be invited to give their input, which CMAP will work into the eventual plan.

From there, CMAP leaders will solicit input from elected officials.

Using data and everyone's feedback, CMAP will put together a draft report that each municipality would likely see by the fall, said Jonathan Burch, an associate planner with CMAP.

"Each of the municipalities chooses how best to fit the final report into their planning processes," Burch said. "We want the municipalities to really own the report. We don't want it to be sitting on a shelf."

Elgin is already working on a new comprehensive plan and will use the eventual CMAP report as a document to help with its own plan, Mayor Dave Kaptain said.

"One of the major things in our community I know we're going to see is a need for senior housing," Kaptain said. "The waiting list for affordable senior housing in Elgin is about three years (for rentals)."

In East Dundee, the village is ready to hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony for two developments — one that offers discounted housing for seniors and another that offers the same for war veterans. Village President Lael Miller would like to see more rentals downtown.

Carpentersville has always been a working town, Village President Ed Ritter said, and to that end, he wants to see starter homes for younger families, returning veterans, newlyweds and others with more modest means, as opposed to additional low-income housing.

The village is also compiling a workforce study to help position the village to better identify jobs that complement its residents.

"To go along with that kind of housing, we have to make sure we find midlevel jobs for people," Ritter said.