



## **Comprehensive Plan Update: Housing and Neighborhoods Subcommittee**

### Summary:

The Housing Subcommittee addresses the neighborhood characteristics of Winona, housing goals and policies to achieve them, and housing choice.

### Examples of discussion topics/focus areas:

- Review characteristics of existing housing stock and recent reports (2016 Housing Study)
- Zoning impacts on housing development in Winona
- Economic drivers and need for housing in Winona
- Projections for growth to 2045
- Housing types and choices (Missing Middle, traditional neighborhood development, form-based approach, neighborhoods as more than a collection of houses)
- Housing development impacts on sustainability, economic development, and access to recreation/outdoor space
- Fiscal impacts of housing development and resiliency
- Housing and Neighborhoods Ideas and Issues from Comprehensive Plan Phase 1 Public Engagement (see next page)

### Overall Committee Product:

**In accordance with Winona's 2045 vision, city values, and Comprehensive Plan Overarching Themes; housing goals, objectives, and policies/actions identified by the subcommittee are recommended for incorporation into the Comprehensive Plan.**

### Committee Timeline:

- March - August 2022
- Two meetings per month – 1-1.5 hours long

# Housing and neighborhoods

Responses about housing focused on increasing the amount and variety of housing, with an emphasis on affordability for families and working-age folks. There were 209 comments about housing across all responses to questions about issues and ideas for Winona's future.

## Connections to values

Housing choice and quality matter to Winona's shared values of livability and economy, and comprehensive plan themes of equity and sustainability.

## Issues and ideas

1. Housing choice. Respondents expressed a need for more housing that meets a variety of needs.
  - Winona needs to concentrate on affordable housing - difficult to find land that can be developed reasonably, especially with the bluffs and the river. Twin homes and quad homes would be advantageous. We hear that housing is expensive here. Sometimes this is a drawback to winona - tough to find a place to live.
  - Winona NEEDS more homes for families especially for those who have walked a bad past and are trying to get back on their feet! It's hard for those like myself and my husband that have a bad past and a record to find a decent place to live. To many homes for college students and not enough for families in need!
  - 8000 people commute into winona, 11,000 commute out. There seems to be college housing, but what about family housing? Family rentals, starter homes, more housing inventory options - many single family homes have been converted into rentals for college students
  - Housing. Housing is affordable here in my opinion, but finding a home to purchase was challenging and I would have preferred being able to buy a new-build which was unavailable.
2. Housing quality. Respondents noted that housing quality varies in Winona, and much of the housing that is available is not desirable. The age of Winona's housing stock is of note as well - 40% of housing units in Winona were built in 1939 or earlier.
  - Housing-not enough quality homes for everyone. The ones on market are very run down
  - Improve property maintenance codes and compliance inspections.
  - I do think that the housing situation is the one that comes up the most. Rentals are mostly for college kids and they can be gross and are not always taken care of, but the new apartments are too expensive for a single person.
  - Housing being addressed with so many neighborhoods with houses in need of repair and yards a mess
  - housing - very old housing, built before 1900, tree roots cause problems in sewer pipes, leaders have to have a program to rebuild very old houses
  - there are rentals on the edges of the neighborhood - we should encourage landlords to worry about their exterior appearance. and I know it's not just landlords, sometimes it's a homeowner, but I hate driving through town and you can pick out the rental units just by

how they look from the outside. some way to incentivize that. that's a sore thumb- a lot of the main roads in town are filled with rental units, and people visiting never get to see other areas of town. (first impression) what we can do to incentivize that - make winona pretty, homes have so many cool architectural features and it would be kind of cool to see that.

3. Historic neighborhoods in the heart of Winona.

- Love to see more single family ownership of homes. Many young families or individuals would like to live in affordable housing in the heart of Winona so they can walk, but they can't find housing so they live outside Winona. Housing is either expensive but not nice, or really expensive and nice, but not affordable.
- more education (about historic preservation) - not only business owners and people in historic preservation districts, but also education on their responsibility as a property owner in a historic district. more education on behalf of the people who are responsible for making these decisions. When votes would go to the city council, the whole mission of the HPC would have to be described. Council should be more aware of what historic preservation commission does.
- maybe a historic homeowners group would be helpful - or a historic building group for commercial building owners. Getting support, learning rules and opportunities. Windom park neighborhood has an informal (group like that). build support from fans, and excitement too.
- WSU selling off three of the old st teresa's buildings - want to see reuse of those. hope demolition by neglect doesn't happen, and someone finds use for them.
- up in the twin cities, the neighborhoods around the lake area, people tear down a small home and build a bigger home. When people knock down homes, it's important for them to be rebuilt in the style of the neighborhood. It's important for us to have high standards in our community - all neighborhoods have really cute charm and character and that might apply - have high standards for that type of rebuild or remodel, so it's not just fast/inexpensive. When we're reinvesting in the core of the city, how can we best facilitate that without detriment to neighborhoods.

4. Housing affordability. Respondents noted that both apartment and home prices create barriers for growth.

- Improved housing that is affordable for manufacturing operators
- Twin homes, 4-6 unit homes that people can get into. La crosse, onalaska, and holmen do that. It seems to work. 200-300,000 range.
- new homes being built are too expensive
- There are lots of nice new rental options, but not everybody wants to rent, and homeownership is still really important to people. Lack of affordable startup housing limits our growth
- to do that (edu-industry partnership), we need more affordable housing for young professionals and young families. We have this kind of gap here. there's never a middle that really gets on the market. How do we create that 125-150 nice neighborhoods for up and coming professionals.

5. Housing equity. Respondents expressed concern that Winona's housing is segregated by income level, and a desire to see mixed neighborhoods across the city.

- Housing seems segregated. I don't know this issue through and through, or how to fix it, but I suspect there's a need for more affordable housing all over town instead of in specific areas.
- Safe and secure permanent housing for low income residents. Public housing is not safe and secure for long term.
- housing access: MN Supreme Court decision only allow certain number of renter on one block: systemic, racist, classist policy on the books that needs to be removed
- concentrations of poverty creates more poverty behaviors. i think winona's neighborhoods could relax their covenants and we'd see better outcomes. mixed income reduces property crime and helps people feel like they are in a vibrant place and not stuck there
- new condos, apartments, should have a certain percentage set aside for working-class affordable or section-8 affordable and required to do that. reduce segregation, and make the community more diverse.
- winona needs to accept density in some of its developments. be amenable to mixed income housing, so poverty is not concentrated resulting in neighborhood issues. be amenable to apartments.