

CHAPTER OUTLINE

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I. CHAPTER FOCUS

Over the past twenty-five years the total number of households has been increasing at a faster rate than the total population. From 1970 to 1980, the U. S. population increased 11.4% and total households increased 26.7%; from 1980 to 1990, the U.S population increased 9.8% while total households increased 14.4% . This rapid increase in households is a result of smaller family size and increases in one parent households, persons living alone, and households of unrelated persons. Although the traditional husband/wife household with children is still the predominant type, the number of such households actually declined.

These national trends are reflected in Kane County where housing units continue to rise at a proportionately higher rate than population:

1970-1980 housing unit increase - 12.6%
1970-1980 population increase - 10.9%

1980-1990 housing unit increase - 28.4%
1980-1990 population increase - 14%

The average household size in Kane County in 1970 was 3.26 persons, in 1980 it was 2.92 persons and in 1990, 2.9 persons. The 2010 projected average household size is only 2.55 persons (Source: *Kane County Data Book*, Nov., 1993)

The focus of this Chapter is to present data that help define projected patterns of residential development and to provide guidance in meeting future housing needs. St. Charles can expect to see the trend toward smaller household size continue to shape housing demand into the year 2000. At the same time, the demand in St. Charles for large, higher-priced homes on large lots is likely to continue.

As a City, St. Charles does not control the housing market. However, through the development review process the City can influence the type and amounts of new housing. The City can also help protect the value of existing housing through the application and enforcement of development regulations, zoning and building codes.

II. FINDINGS**A. Housing Stock and Mix**

Housing trends in St. Charles directly reflect demographic trends. Population growth trends are toward a primarily younger, upwardly mobile, high income population. Table 8-1 reviews the housing characteristics and indicators for St. Charles, Kane County, and the State of Illinois.

Table 8-1 shows that the proportions of owner and rental housing in St. Charles are about equal to Kane County; the proportion of owner-occupied housing is a little higher than the State's. St. Charles has several rooming houses with shared baths, which accounts for the number of units lacking some plumbing. The percentage of households below poverty level is lower in St. Charles than the County or State. Median household income levels are higher in St. Charles than the County or the State.

The housing stock of St. Charles is in extremely good condition and has no prominent physical deficiencies. This is due to several factors:

1. At the end of 1994, 71% (6,832) of the total residential units (9,591) have been built since 1960. These include 4,457 single family units and 2,375 multi-family units.
2. Market conditions have driven up land values, generating quality residential infill and remodeling throughout the City.

A windshield survey was conducted to identify any substandard homes or residential areas; none of which were found. This survey did identify residential areas in older sections of the City which could benefit from upgrading. It is important to note that these areas are mostly in good condition, with only scattered housing units in need of maintenance. The public infrastructure is in good condition and the neighborhoods are sound. The City can most effectively address the condition of these housing units by support of private assistance efforts such as the Neighborhood Improvement Association, as well as ongoing building and property maintenance code enforcement.

**TABLE 8-1
HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS AND INDICATORS***

	<u>ST. CHARLES</u>		<u>KANE COUNTY</u>	<u>STATEWIDE</u>
	Absolute Number	Percentage	Comparable Percentage/No.	Comparable Percentage/No.
Households:				
Total	8,505	100.0	100.0	100.0
Owner	5,682	66.8	66.8	59.9
Renter	2,451	28.8	29.3	33.4
Unoccupied	372	4.4	3.9	6.7
Persons in owner-occupied housing	17,164	76.9	69.5	64.2
Persons in renter-occupied housing	5,159	23.1	30.5	35.8
No. of persons per household	2.74	----	2.90	2.65
Householder or spouse 65+				
Total	1,353	16.6	17.7	21.9
Owner-occupied	905	15.9	19.6	25.2
Renter-occupied	448	18.3	13.4	16.0
Units lacking some or all plumbing for exclusive use:				
Total:	22	0.26	1.1	1.64
1.01+ Persons Per Room:				
Total	88	1.1	3.47	3.92
Owner	26	0.1	2.32	2.56
Renter	62	2.5	5.83	6.19
Median value, owner-occupied units	\$137,100		\$101,700	\$80,100
Excessive housing costs/ \$20,000 Income Limit:				
Owners paying 30% or more	474	11.5	10.4	9.5
Renters paying 30% or more	501	24.8	29.0	33.2
Total Households Below Poverty Level**	243.00	2.86	5.90	11.30
Total Median Household Income	\$46,637		\$40,080	\$32,252

*Information sources: sample estimates from 1990 Census Summary Tape Files 1 and 3; census data extracted and printed by NIPC; and 1994 Illinois Statistical Abstract. ** 1989 poverty threshold for family of four = \$12,674

Historically, St. Charles grew as a community of single family detached homes. In 1960 there were 2,811 dwelling units in St. Charles. The relatively few apartments were typically the result of single family home conversions into 2 and 3 units. Since 1960, the ratio between single family and multi-family dwelling units has changed. Multi-family units currently make up approximately 28% of the total housing units in St. Charles.

**TABLE 8-2
CITY OF ST. CHARLES HOUSING UNITS**

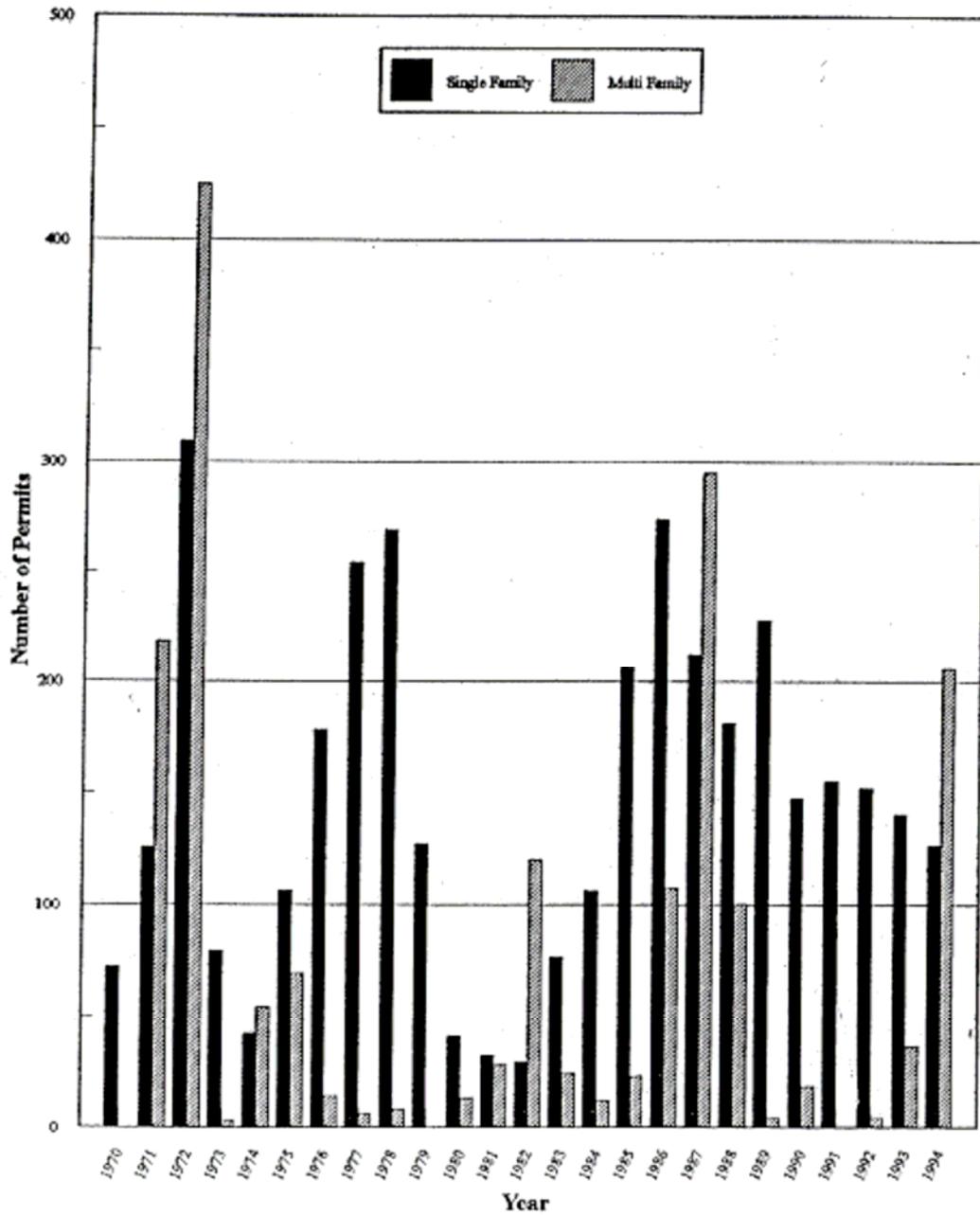
YEAR	TOTAL UNITS	UNIT INCREASE	PERCENT INCREASE	YEARLY AVERAGE	PERSONS PER DU*
1950	2,049				3.37
1960	2,811	762	37%	76	3.29
1970	4,192	1,381	49%	138	3.14
1980	6,550	2,358	56%	236	2.84
1990	8,772	2,222	34%	222	2.60
2000**	11,238	2,556	30%	256	2.56
2010**	13,734	2,406	21%	241	2.53

*DU = Dwelling Unit

**Projections based on NIPC 2010 projections (includes 2,400 units in DuPage Co.)

The increase in multi-family units reflects demographic and economic changes in society. Since 1960, more young people and senior citizens are living alone. These age groups, along with childless couples, single persons and single parents are creating greater demands for multiplex units in the market place. A multiplex unit is any residential unit other than the traditional single family house and lot, e.g. . cluster housing, condominiums, apartments, or townhouses. Developable land in the City is becoming more scarce and the market demand for multiplex units will increase. Multiplex units help meet the need for diverse housing types. When designed and located properly, multiplex units can blend in with single family homes and help create interesting and attractive neighborhoods.

FIGURE 8-3
DWELLING UNITS AUTHORIZED BY BUILDING PERMITS
1970 - 1994



The most prominent housing type in St. Charles will continue to be the traditional single family home. There are two other areas of housing that will demand more attention in the future. The first is residential conversions, such as a single family home converted to a two-unit. The architectural integrity of the structure itself must remain intact and in keeping with the character of the neighborhood. These conversions will place additional burdens on existing parks, schools and other community facilities.

The second area is housing in the downtown area. This would primarily involve upper story residential conversions of existing commercial buildings. Some of the R-3 and R-4 parcels adjoining the downtown area may also present opportunities for conversions or redevelopment to multi-family housing. Housing such as the Hotel Baker and Carroll Towers bring people and activity to the downtown while at the same time providing housing for senior citizens that is convenient to stores and services. Residential development within and adjacent to the downtown area is desirable and will help in maintaining the downtown as the socially active and economically viable center of the community.

B. Residential Distribution

The housing units in St. Charles are fairly evenly distributed throughout the community. The distribution of units can generally be divided into four quadrants divided by the river and the railroad.

The southern quadrants contain the bulk of older homes whereas the northern quadrants contain much of the community's newer residential development. The most notable exception to this is the Cambridge area in the southeast quadrant. The northeast quadrant has experienced the most residential growth in the last five years largely due to the Royal Fox, Charlemagne and Woods of Fox Glen developments and the continuing build out of Fox Chase PUD. The northern quadrants and the West Gateway area hold the biggest potential for future residential development.

Starting in the 1970's with the Fox Chase development, the trend in single-family residential development has been toward larger lots. This trend reflects three basic factors: (1) economic conditions; (2) the City's quest for manageable population growth; and (3) market demands for larger homes and garages and increased privacy. As a result, the local building industry has shifted its orientation toward the upper end of the market.

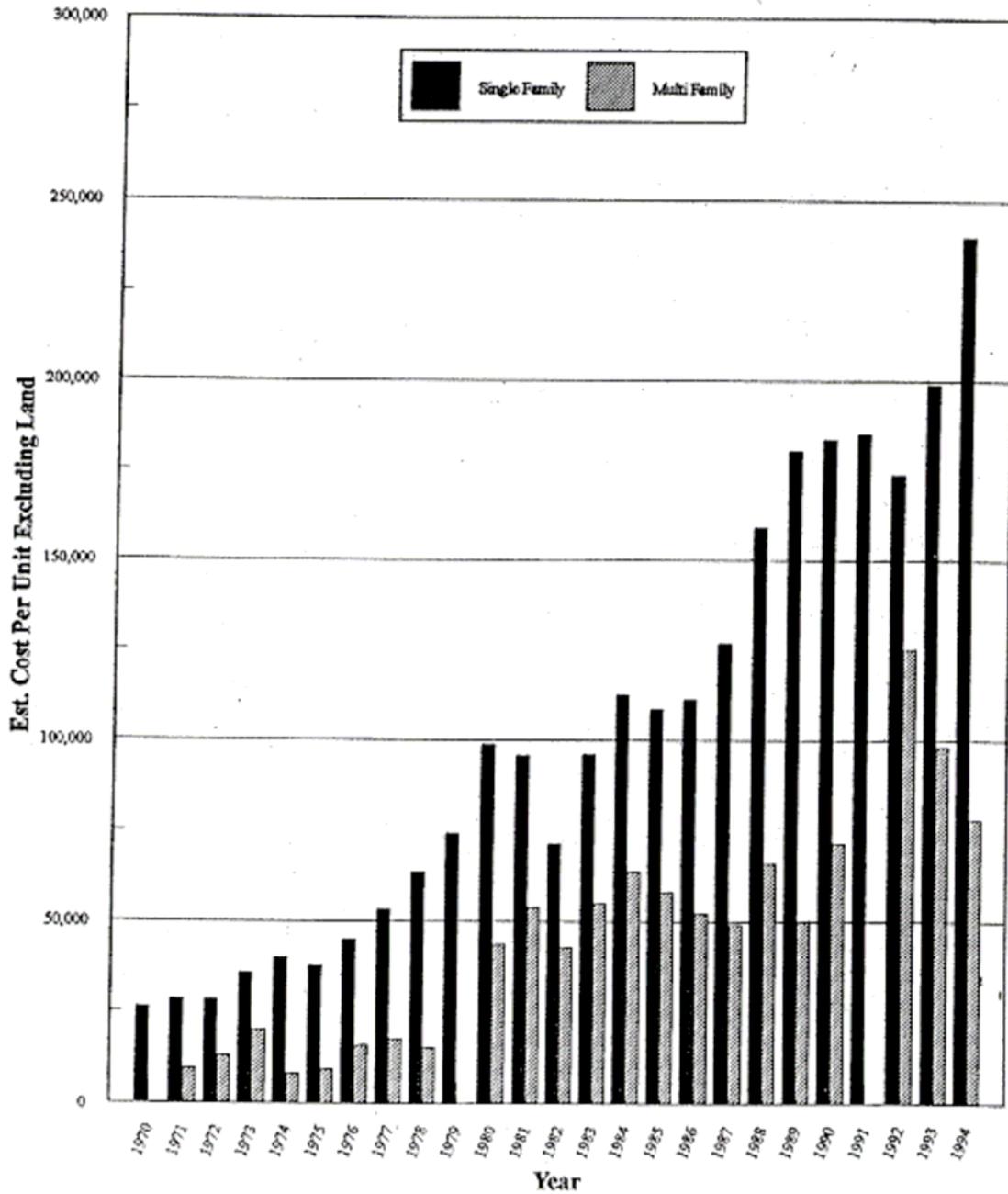
C. Housing Market

The average sale price of a detached home sold in St. Charles between Jan-Sept, 1994, was \$224,524 (See Table 8-4). The average new single family home constructed in 1994 cost \$239,908, not including a minimum lot cost of \$35,000 (See Figure 8-5). As these trends continue, fewer people at the younger and older ends of the housing market will be able to afford new homes. The annual income required to support a conventional mortgage for the average priced newly constructed home in St. Charles is in excess of \$78,000 per year (See Table 8-6).

TABLE 8-4

Detached Homes Sold in City of St. Charles, Jan.-Sept., 1994	
<u>Sale Price</u>	<u>Number</u>
< \$99,999	25
\$100,000 - \$149,999	118
\$150,000 - \$199,999	107
\$200,000 - \$299,999	169
\$300,000 - \$399,999	71
\$400,000 - \$499,999	15
\$500,000 +	13
Average closing price = \$224,524 (\$206,815 during same period in 1993)	
Median closing price = \$204,250 (\$180,000 during same period in 1993)	
Attached* Homes Sold in City of St. Charles, Jan. – Sept., 1994	
<u>Sale Price</u>	<u>Number</u>
< \$99,999	4
\$100,000 - \$149,999	20
\$150,000 - \$199,999	22
\$200,000 +	9
Average closing price = \$157,691 (\$166,050 during same period in 1993)	
Median closing price = \$159,900 (\$152,500 during same period in 1993)	
*Includes duplexes, townhouses and condominiums	

FIGURE 8-5
AVERAGE COST OF NEW HOUSING UNIT
1970-1994



**TABLE 8-6
WHAT IT COSTS TO BUY A HOME IN ST. CHARLES**

Purchase Price	\$100,000	\$125,000	\$150,000	\$200,000
Down Payment	20,000	25,000	30,000	40,000
Mortgage	80,000	100,000	120,000	160,000
If Mortgage Rate is 10%:				
Monthly principal, interest	705.98	882.48	1,058.97	1,411.96
Monthly property taxes	184.80	231.00	277.21	369.61
Total Monthly Payment:	15.25	17.58	21.17	30.42
Annual Income Required to Support Mortgage*	\$38,830	\$48,474	\$58,172	\$77,657
If Mortgage Rate is 12%:				
Total Monthly Payment	\$1025.94	\$1280.94	\$1537.21	\$2051.80
Annual Income Required to Support Mortgage*	\$43,969	\$54,897	\$65,880	\$87,934

Assumptions: 20% down payment, 29-year fixed rate mortgage, average St. Charles tax rates.

There are few starter homes available in St. Charles. During the period of Jan-Sept, 1994, only 25 homes sold for under \$100,000. It is extremely difficult for a starting fireman, teacher, mail carrier, etc. to buy a home in St. Charles. The objective of providing attainable housing is to provide home ownership opportunities for average-income (\$30,000 - \$50,000) households. Although rental housing is necessary to provide a diverse range of housing opportunities, home ownership creates neighborhood stability and increases levels of community involvement. Approximately three-fourths of the City's population live in homes they own.

One way to maintain a housing balance is to encourage the development of smaller homes. A smaller house is more likely to be attainable. There is a market for smaller houses, not only because they can cost less but also for the ease of upkeep and energy efficiency. An attainable, smaller house does not have to be a "no frills box". Smaller homes can fit into the character of the community. In fact, the attractive, hometown character of many of the older City neighborhoods is due to a mix of small, medium and large-size homes. Well designed small houses can be a community asset, providing housing for first time buyers as well as housing for long-term residents who no longer desire the work and cost of maintaining a larger home. Smaller houses makes sense for several other reasons including:

- Families are smaller;
- There are more single people and childless couples;
- Many people no longer have the time or money to maintain large houses and large lots;
- There are more single-parent families in the market place;
- The number of elderly people in the population is on the rise, seeking compact, well designed houses that are easy to maintain and energy efficient.

There are a number of ways to encourage more balanced and attainable housing opportunities. Some of these methods may be more effective than others for St. Charles. Further study is needed to determine whether they will demonstrate a community benefit:

- a. Compact lot - requires skillful design so the lot remains in proportion to the housing; allows for more flexibility in subdivision layout.
- b. Zero lot line - takes advantage of areas with limited space, shifting the house to the edge of the lot on one side; puts all the side yard space where it can make a difference.
- c. Cluster housing - concentrates houses on the most buildable portion of a project site. Land area saved allows for increased open space and protection of sensitive areas. Utilities and streets can be laid out more efficiently and economically.
- d. New technology and new applications - methods and materials change very quickly in today's market, many of which yield energy and cost savings.

D. Neighborhood Cohesiveness

Neighborhood recognition plays an important part in any community. A sense of place develops social cohesiveness, as people take pride in their neighborhood and in their city. Neighborhood cohesiveness is currently strong in St. Charles and is promoted through homeowners associations, helping hands programs, and crime watch groups.

A neighborhood's physical setting is vital to creating a sense of place. That physical setting includes well defined boundaries and prominent landmarks such as schools or parks. Arterial streets can often define the perimeter of a neighborhood. Other facets of a cohesive neighborhood include:

- a. Strong linkages among the residential areas within the neighborhood, and with parks, schools, etc.
- b. Specific landscaping for a given neighborhood; i.e., a certain type of parkway tree, street light or street signage. Neighborhood themes may be appropriate.
- c. Protection from intrusions of inappropriate land uses.

- d. The relationship between dwelling units, creating a sense of scale and continuity without being monotonous.

Neighborhood recognition and cohesiveness does not mean that neighborhoods should be isolated from one another. An interconnecting street system between neighborhoods is important for public health and safety reasons, provided that such interconnections are planned so that streets are properly designed and sized to avoid overburdening neighborhood streets. Street, pedestrian/bicycle path and/or open space greenway connections also enable social interaction which promotes strong community identity and contributes to the hometown image of the City.

E. Housing Uniformity

A well designed subdivision is a delicate balance between architectural harmony and individuality. Residential areas where everything looks the same, or areas that are chaotic, do not contribute positively to the community. For a community to have depth and character a variety of housing types, styles and sizes are needed; however, there should also be consistency within this variety. The following should guide the planning and design of any type of residential development ranging from large lots with large homes to factory-built units, to multiplex units:

1. Provide consistency in an area by developing consistent neighborhood amenities such as specific parkway trees, street lights, signage etc.
2. Provide diversity and variety within housing styles in a subtle manner with the use of form, color, and materials. For example:
 - a. Variety of form: Use of one and two story houses within the same area; varied roofscape.
 - b. Variety of color: Use of various colors of materials compatible with each other.
 - c. Variety of texture: Use of various materials such as siding and roof materials.
 - d. Limit the number of any given model in a new subdivision.
3. Provide an authenticity and discipline in the style chosen. Avoid artificial imitations of a style. The simplification of details and materials can result in economic as well as visual benefits.
4. Create natural separations by careful land planning of streets and clusters, utilizing natural land features and park areas. Even on the flattest and most uninteresting parcels, creative use of cul-de-sacs and loop streets coupled with open space can achieve the separations essential to the creation of residential identity.

5. Whenever practical, use street furniture such as signs, lighting, benches, landscaping etc. This will compliment and encourage the theme of an area.

F. Energy Efficient Housing

Energy conservation is good planning. Although energy efficiency does not have the sense of urgency it did during the 1973 oil embargo, this issue can resurface. The City should be prepared to deal with another, and possibly longer lasting, energy crisis by: 1) pursuing more energy efficient housing and 2) considering new methods and technologies for energy efficiency, including active solar systems, design changes, and alternative building materials.

The City needs to be receptive to new, more energy-efficient building materials and practices. This is coupled with reviewing zoning and building regulations and codes. This review should be particularly concerned with passive solar development in terms of lot layout, house siting and landscaping, and active solar systems in terms of solar collectors and solar access.



Marie
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III. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Protect and enhance the housing stock and mix of St. Charles.

1. Continue the enforcement of the City's Property Maintenance Code.
2. Maintain a ratio of single-family to multi-family units of 72% to 28%.
3. Strengthen zoning and subdivision regulations to: (a) encourage quality multiplex development, (b) deal with residential conversions, (c) encourage residential development in downtown and, (d) properly regulate factory or pre-built housing.
4. Establish performance standards for the conversion of residential structures to more intense residential uses which are sensitive to the architectural integrity of the structure, as well as the character of the neighborhood.

B. Insure a balanced community by providing for a variety of housing types and sizes.

1. Cooperate with organizations and agencies that are studying the issue of attainable housing and consider recommendations that might meet this need in St. Charles.
2. The City needs to be receptive to non-traditional development such as zero lot line and cluster housing, thus encouraging a more balanced and attainable housing market.
3. Develop standards for new types of quality housing units which are adapted to meet the needs of smaller households and the elderly.
4. Provide for transitions between different housing types by providing open space and landscape buffers or requiring compatible lot sizes and housing style immediately adjacent to existing neighborhoods.

C. Promote high quality residential environments in well defined neighborhoods.

1. Protect residential areas from the intrusion of inappropriate land uses.
2. While maintaining individual neighborhood identity, provide for the interconnection of neighborhoods through street, pedestrian/bicycle path and/or open space/greenway connections.
3. Work with neighborhoods in establishing neighborhood themes and physically promoting such themes.

D. Promote the physical harmony of neighborhoods.

1. Expand the development review process to include areas of architectural style, unit variety and other items related to neighborhood uniformity.
2. Provide diversity and variety within housing styles in a subtle manner with the use of form, color and materials.

E. Be prepared to deal with an energy crisis.

1. Be receptive to new building materials and practices given proper reviews.
2. Review building and zoning regulations in terms of passive and active solar systems.
3. As part of the development process, review pedestrian and automobile flow patterns and unit distribution.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

The essence of this Chapter is to maintain a balance of housing types in the community. The changing demographics indicate a need to stimulate the development of attainable and moderately sized housing units to serve the needs of smaller and older households. The City can encourage developers to incorporate such units into their developments. The promotion of more residential development in the downtown area can also serve to meet the needs as well as other planning objectives of the downtown community.

Keeping the City housing and development regulations up to date is important; the City must also be willing to consider new alternative technologies to provide more attainable and energy efficient housing. The City has to be prepared to deal with current and future housing trends while maintaining a stable housing stock. To accomplish this, the City should prepare and adopt an affordable housing action plan based upon the Northeastern Illinois Housing Endorsement Criteria. The City needs to better utilize the PUD process, stimulating more creative housing and site design to attain more attractive and cost-effective development.

SUPPLEMENT**NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS HOUSING ENDORSEMENT CRITERIA**

Homeownership studies show that housing in high job growth areas like DuPage, Lake and North Suburban Cook counties and in revitalizing neighborhoods in Chicago is beyond the reach of the average working family and lower income folks. Census Data also confirms the findings of the Metropolitan Planning Council's 1999 Regional Rental Market Analysis that rental housing is not an adequate backup plan for households who cannot afford homeownership. Where housing is affordable, jobs and other opportunities are scarce – contributing to the traffic congestion, economic disparity and racial segregation taxing our region. Compared to other metropolitan hubs, the Chicago area is failing in its ability to meet the housing demands with adequate supply. Focus groups and key informant interviews with critical stakeholders identify community resistance and poor communication as primary obstacles preventing local decision-makers from accepting proposals and policies which forward regional housing objectives.

For our region to remain competitive, we must expand the supply of housing options to meeting growing demands. By securing broad-based support for these Housing Endorsement Criteria, municipal leaders, neighbors, employers and community-based organizations can together more effectively attract, identify, and support proposals for quality developments. To promote housing and mixed-use developments that meet community needs while addressing broader regional sensible growth goals, new housing should meet most of the principles and criteria below:

General Principles**Promote Economic Development and Sustainability**

Housing, when appropriately located, encourages the expansion of existing and the location of new businesses and industries within the region. The mismatch between where the jobs are and where the workers can afford to live has significant costs. Increasingly, employers recognize that local housing for all levels of their workforce promotes stability and productivity for the workers as well as the individual company.

Encourage an Array of Quality Housing Options throughout the Region

Developments with units at price points accessible to a wide range of income levels are needed to provide the local workforce and residents with a housing supply that is critically needed and currently lacking. By the year 2020, Northeastern Illinois is expected to increase 25% in population, or 1.5 million people, and the housing market must be expanded at all price points to accommodate this dramatic growth.

Support Innovative Community Development and Design

Quality residential and mixed-use developments maintain, enhance, or create livable streets, neighborhoods, and public spaces oriented to the pedestrian. A variety of housing types provides a healthy mix of residents from different age groups, racial and cultural backgrounds, income levels, and household types. New developments foster a sense of community, while promoting people's choice of housing, privacy, and convenient access to nearby amenities.

Provide for Mixed Uses within a Neighborhood

In order to enhance community livability and decrease auto-dependency, a mix of land uses within a neighborhood combine residential with retail, restaurants, schools, and other amenities in close proximity. The location of schools, entertainment districts, parks, businesses, institutions, and recreational facilities will be consciously integrated with new and existing residential developments to encourage ease of pedestrian access.

Minimize Cost of Municipal Services

Clustering housing near existing infrastructure minimizes the per capita costs of municipal services by allowing more efficiency and economies of scale.

Promote the Use of Public Transit

Housing, together with commercial space and public amenities, should be planned for, and built first, within walking distance of existing or planned transit service in order to strengthen transit ridership and decrease traffic congestion.

Support Sensible Growth

There are ample opportunities within existing service areas of our older cities and suburbs to provide for a portion of projected housing needs over the next 20 years. Infill development and redevelopment within existing municipal areas and conservation developments are of tremendous value. Adhering to development policies which encourage compact, mixed-use development will promote an array of housing types and expand individual choice. This will advance other regional and community needs, such as protection of open space and the growth of local tax base.

Specific CriteriaLocation

Infill development and redevelopment within existing cities and towns, as well as new conservation developments, will receive preference. In order to maximize compatibility with public transit and minimize auto use, housing within one mile of major transit service, a job hub or town center, provides a future market for transit. The project may be within two miles of a rail transit station if provisions are made to provide ongoing shuttle service to future residents. Major transit service is defined as a bus or rail stop with peak period wait times for no more than 30 minutes. Major transit service includes funded, but not yet built, fixed rail stations.

Land Use

New developments that aim to cluster housing in an efficient manner, in context with the surrounding community, to preserve natural resources and open space will be give priority attention. Higher densities and mixed uses are particularly appropriate near Metra and CTA stations to reduce the growth of traffic congestion on local and regional roads.

Design

New developments that stress quality design and construction to help ensure its long-term contribution to the improvement of the neighborhood will be given preference. The proposed buildings will fit their setting, complementing and enhancing the existing neighborhood, and promoting a sense of community, pedestrian friendly design and the other principles of good village design. Proposals will address transit use and access and, where appropriate, the potential for mixed use.

Management

The management and maintenance of developments are as critical as the initial design and construction to meeting the goals of enhancing communities. Therefore, the capacity of the development team to successfully address long-term needs, as evidenced by its track record in selling, leasing, and managing development properties, and its history with neighborhood and/or tenant relations will also be considered.

Source: Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, Northeastern Illinois Housing Endorsement Criteria, November 2001.