

Why is Affordable Housing an Issue in Northfield?

Housing prices continue to rise

- The average sales price for a home in Northfield was \$804,321 as of June 30, 2005, an increase of 94.63% since 1994. (*Chicago*, October 2005)
- Median rent rose from \$898 in 1990 to \$1,158 in 2000, a 29% increase. To afford this monthly rent, a household would need to earn at least \$22.27 per hour, or \$46,320 per year. A person earning minimum wage (\$6.50) would have to work 137 hours a week in order to afford this rent.

Housing market is tight and favors small households

- The number of owner-occupied units rose 24% (378 units) and the number of rental units fell 13% (23) since 1990.
- The rental vacancy rate is 5.4%, 12% tighter than in 1990 when it was 6.1%. The homeowner vacancy rate is 1.4%, 55% looser than a decade ago when it was 0.9%.
- Northfield's population grew 16% since 1990 to 5,389 while the number of households grew 20% to 2,155. Although the total number of units increased 21%, the number of housing units with zero or one bedroom grew 56% since 1990.

Seniors are vulnerable

- In 2000, 37% of Northfield's households included seniors over the age of 65, an 8% increase since 1990.
- 25.8% (290) of the area's senior households aged 65 and older live alone. 81.7% are women.
- 10 seniors aged 65 and older live in poverty. Of these, 9 live alone.
- 125 homeowners aged 65 and older spend more than 35% of their income on housing.
- 13 renters aged 65 and older spend more than 35% of their income on housing.

Low-income families with children are at-risk

- The number of households with individuals under 18 grew by 20%, from 571 in 1990 to 684 in 2000.
- 24 children (2% of the area's children under 18) live in poverty.
- 14% of single female-headed households in Northfield live in poverty.

Housing costs burden low-income residents

- A total of 85 Northfield residents live in poverty. This represents 2% of the area's total population.
- 26% (451) of Northfield's households earn less than \$50,000 per year.
- 22% (380) of homeowners spend more than 35% of their income on shelter.
- 32.5% (50) of renters spend more than 35% of their income on shelter.

Employment

- The number of unemployment insurance covered jobs in Northfield has increased from 3,842 in 1984 to 6,838 in 2004, or 77%. (Illinois Department of Employment Security)

Diversity is low

- Asians comprise 5.6% (300) of the population. This is an increase of 50.8% since 1990 when 4.3% (199) of the population was Asian.
- Latinos comprise 1.7% (90) of the population marking an increase of 400% since 1990 when 0.4% (18) residents were Latinos.
- African-Americans comprise 0.5% (28) of the population, an increase of 154% since 1990 when 0.2% (11) residents were African-Americans.

Affordable housing options are lacking

- 2 families with the Housing Choice/Section 8 Voucher rented in Northfield as of March 2005. This was a 40% decrease from February 1998 when 5 families with the voucher resided within the community. (Cook County Housing Authority)
- The Illinois Housing Development Authority deemed 4.50% (99 units) of the total housing stock to be affordable as of the 2000 Census. (www.ihda.org/admin/Upload/Files/8e3d4770-6932-4503-a3ad-665a0c32edcb.pdf)
- There are no deliberately affordable housing developments in Northfield.
- Northfield submitted an affordable housing plan to IHDA and is implementing it by loosening some zoning restrictions. (http://www.northfieldil.org/Zoning_Ord.htm)