



City of West St. Paul, Minnesota
Housing Plan
2019

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Executive Summary

West St. Paul can be characterized as an older, first-ring suburb, and a working class community with modestly priced housing options for both renters and owners alike. West St. Paul has been considered a “developed community” since 2005 (Dakota County), this means there is very little vacant land available for new construction. With over 9,000 residential properties within the five square miles of West St. Paul, City Officials, Staff, and residents all must be conscious of these items when considering reinvestment and redevelopment as the community continues to grow. The Metropolitan Council’s growth numbers for West St. Paul project an expected population increase to over 23,000 residents by the year 2040.

This plan outlines several successful initiatives presently being utilized by the City and its residents. As a supplement to the existing programs offered through West St. Paul and Dakota County, this Housing Plan is to be used as a strategic, planning, and educational document with recommendations, goals, and available funding sources to be used to inform and guide both current and future decisions. Throughout this document, there are assessments of the physical and monetary characteristics of the West St. Paul housing stock, along with demographic information of the community; these features and demonstrated trends set a tone and establish a landscape of what some of the more critical areas of housing are, along with the presently thriving areas.

Identified throughout multiple areas of the plan are goals and recommendations supplemented by funding and partnership opportunities to work toward achieving those goals. The plan identifies several different goal areas, such as: housing growth, the future of affordable housing, Quality Housing Program initiatives to help preserve the existing housing stock such as rental licensing and code enforcement, redevelopment and re-investment with the community, life-cycle housing, and establishing a welcoming community for both new and existing residents.

West St. Paul’s housing community is largely considered to be naturally affordable, partially due to the aging housing stock, with more than half of the housing units being built prior to 1970. While the housing structures are presently in good condition and are relatively affordable, still a large percentage of homeowners are cost-burdened by their existing housing situation by paying more than 30 percent of their income, this limits the funding available for reinvestment or rehabilitation. Despite these distressing financial numbers, the residents of West St. Paul have established a clear interest and intent in reinvesting and renovating their homes, with more than 5,000 residential alteration permits issued between 2010 and 2018. As these trends continue, this plan is intended to be a source of information, a tool to help educate, and a guiding resource to City Officials, Staff, and residents alike.

Introduction

Housing is a strong contributor not only to the overall regional plans for West St. Paul, but also to the quality of life of the residents. In the Comprehensive Plan, housing is highlighted to play an important part in the community plan to identify areas for reinvestment and how to best guide the future growth of the City. In order to predict and plan for the future, it is important to understand the historical and current trends and changes in housing and household composition.

The following plan outlines and identifies programs currently offered by Federal, State, County, and local initiatives as well as to opportunities to be utilized by city staff, elected officials and boards, and residents of West St. Paul.

This plan seeks to:

- Address key housing issues throughout the city,
- Explore and recommend actions and/or alternatives for residential reinvestment, and
- Identify goals and objectives to establish a clear vision of quality that is suitable and affordable to all ages and generations.

The efforts of creating this plan serve to initiate and provide housing strategies, best practices, and recommendations that will further advance local initiatives and catalyze conversations and partnerships to better identify and unify City Council's role and city staff responsibilities.

Goals

The following goals have been established through many different housing efforts; including Comprehensive Plans, Quality Housing Program, and the 2014-2015 Housing Survey.

- To develop and maintain quality housing in residential neighborhoods to meet the needs of current and future residents;
- To promote and preserve a community of excellence through ethical, responsive, efficient, and innovative provision of services;
- To provide safe and adequate housing for all people, regardless of age, income, or ethnic background;
- To provide a variety of housing alternatives for the residents of West St. Paul;
- Work to preserve naturally-occurring affordable housing within all affordability ranges while still maintaining the overall safety and livability of the City's housing stock;
- To support attractive, stable neighborhoods through strong code enforcement, rental licensing program, rehabilitation incentives, and public services and facilities;
- To redevelop the housing supply to meet diverse needs while maintaining the integrity and quality character of existing neighborhoods;
- To support housing maintenance assistance programs, particularly for lower-income households.

History

West St. Paul's housing stock was first addressed in the Comprehensive Plan that was prepared in 1963, this plan envisioned small, local commercial development along Robert Street surrounded by multifamily housing as a buffer between the different density uses of commercial and single family residential. The southwest portion of the city was planned to be large lots for single-family homes to account for environmental concerns such as the preservation of water resources and green space. During the years following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, extensive commercialization of Robert Street took place, which then led to a decreased interest in multifamily development along the corridor. This stirred the development of walk up rental apartments in other areas and relatively little, large lot development in the southwest portion of the City during the 1960's and early 1970's.

After further study and examination, the City recognized that 39 percent of the City's housing stock consisted of multifamily housing, causing concern due to the large concentration of apartment development in two areas of the City. The City therefore down-zoned some high-density residential areas, and took interest in residential rehabilitation efforts to help maintain a more stable population and overall density throughout the city.

The goal of this housing action plan is to complement the decisions made in the past to better execute and reinforce the City's and the Economic Development Authority's current and future efforts, and to educate residents about funding opportunities and resources available for residential reinvestment. The goal of West St. Paul is to promote and preserve a community of excellence by ethical, efficient, and innovative provision of services. During the past 10 years, West St. Paul has undergone many efforts to preserve and expand the quality and diversity of the existing housing stock.

Community Character

Demographics

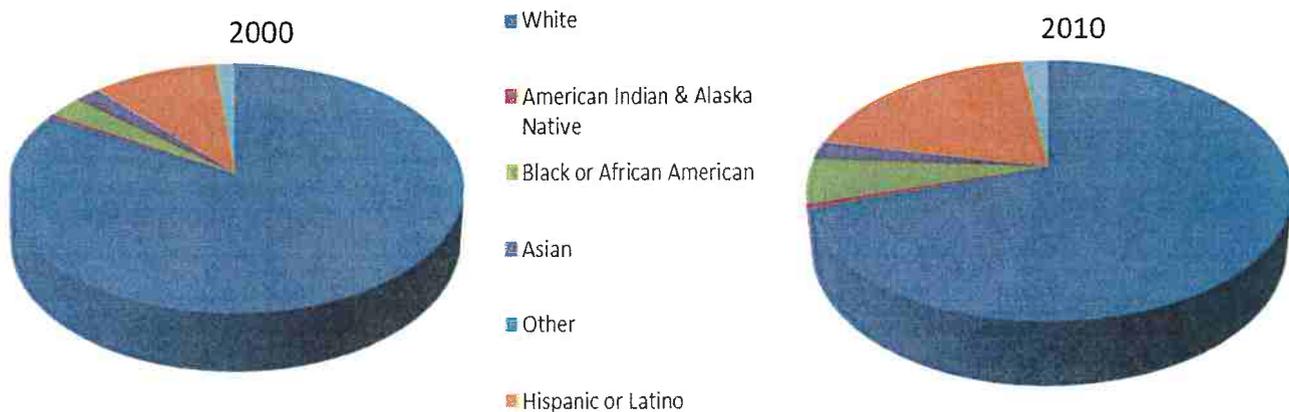
Race and Ethnicity

Growth traditionally brings diversity; West St. Paul is becoming more diverse; as can be seen most evidently in the increase in the Hispanic or Latino community and the decrease in the White community (see Figure 1-1). The percent of white residents was 93.28 in 1990, and dropped to 69.9 percent in 2010 (a decrease of 23.38%). The big increases were from Black or African American alone and Hispanic or Latino, 0.63 to 5.62 percent (an increase of 4.99%) and 4.56 to 19.46 percent (an increase of 14.90%), respectively.

As the City’s demographics continue to change and transition, the City will need to work to accommodate a wider variety of different lifestyles, age groups, and housing types; including mixed-use, workforce units, higher-end amenities, and transitional housing, while still maintaining the essential character of existing neighborhoods.

Figure 1-1 - Population Race and Ethnicity 2000, 2010

Source: 2010, 2014 Met Council



Educational Background

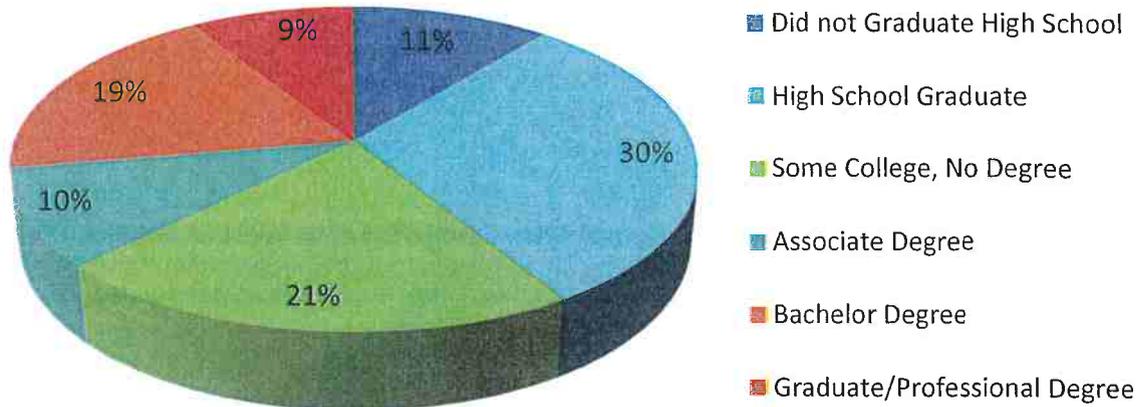
According to the 2010-2016 American Community Survey, in 2016 one quarter of the population in West St. Paul had graduated high school. Approximately one third of the population either had attended some college, but did not earn a degree or graduated college with an Associate’s Degree; while just under one third of the population has earned either a Bachelor or Graduate/Professional Degree. These numbers can be seen below in figure 1-2.

Between 2000 and 2010 there was a large push to attend college, as there was a need for more highly educated professionals at that time. This trend is reflected in the table below, especially when

compared to the educational status of residents in 1990. In 1990, less than 20 percent of the population earned either a Bachelor or Graduate/Professional Degree

Figure 1-2 - Highest Education Level

Source: 2010-2016 Decennial Census & American Community Survey

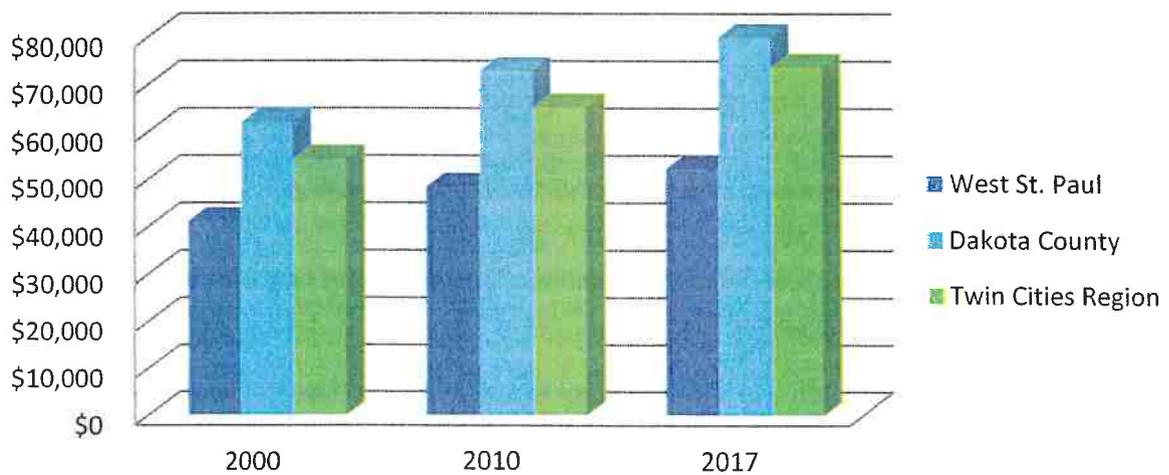


Community Wealth

Overall, West St. Paul’s annual wages have slightly increased since 2010, where the median income was \$48,400. The current median income is \$52,100, which is still significantly less than the median household income for Dakota County \$80,000. West St. Paul has the lowest median household income out all of the cities in Dakota County, and is lower than the median for the Twin Cities metro region.

Figure 1-3 - Median Household Income 2000-2017

Source: 2018 Metropolitan Council Community Profile

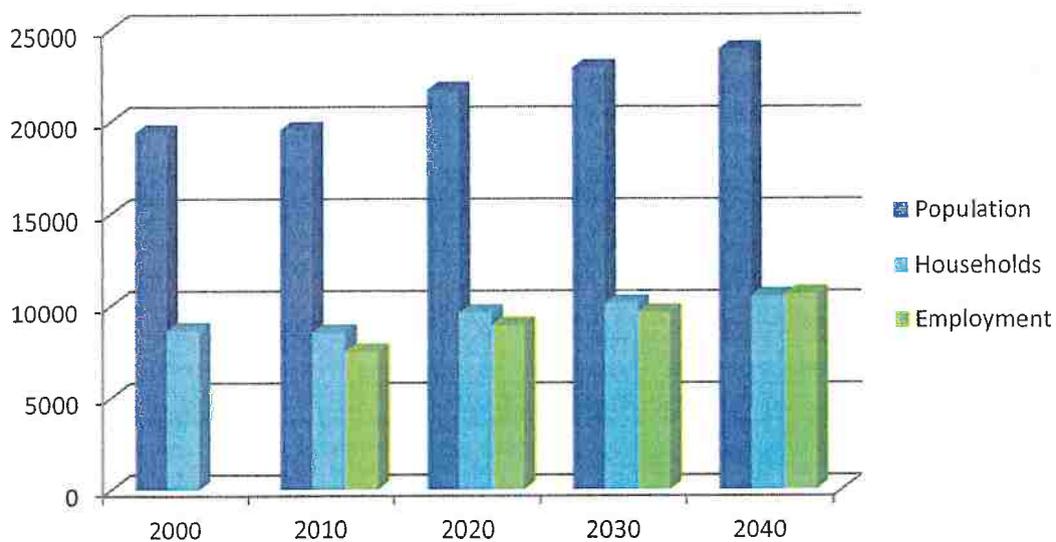


Community Growth

West St. Paul is expected to grow to 23,100 residents by 2040 (these numbers can be seen below in Figure 1-4), with the number of households and opportunities for employment remaining relatively stable. This offers the opportunity for new residents that choose to live in West St. Paul, but may potentially work in another community. In order to do this, an attractive housing stock is a vital necessity. With the current stock continuing to age, West St. Paul is being presented with a choice. The choice to either continue with the current housing stock as it is, or choose to re-invest and redevelop its assets.

Figure 1-4 - Forecasts of Population, Households, Employment of West St. Paul, 2000-2040

Source: Metropolitan Council, Twin City Forecast to 2040



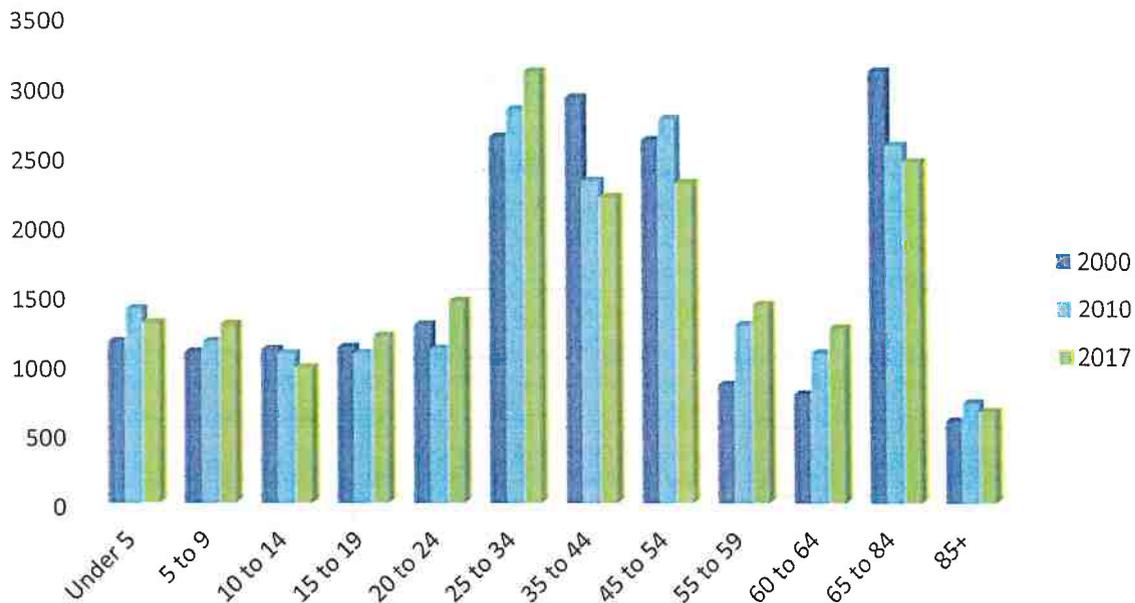
Aging Demographic

The median age of West St. Paul residents between 2000 and 2010 had only slightly changed, increasing from 39.3 in 2000 to 39.7 in 2010. However, conversely, the composition of age cohorts has changed significantly. Large increases are in the 55 to 64 ages as well as 85 and older years, while a decrease appears among ages from 10 to 24 (see Figure 1-5). It is anticipated that West St. Paul will continue to increase in senior residents in the future. Therefore, **the City needs to plan how the community can accommodate senior housing.**

According to the 2013 Dakota County Housing Needs Assessment, Dakota County, as a whole, is expected to see major shifts in housing preferences by 2030 as a larger portion of the population moves into their senior years (65+). Seniors seeking a variety of housing options ranging from condominiums to assisted living will account for a larger share of demand for new multifamily housing.

Figure 1-5 - West St. Paul Resident Ages 2000, 2010, and 2017

Source: US Census 2000, 2010, 2017



Population Growth

Following World War II, the construction of the modern highway network surrounding Minneapolis and Saint Paul revolutionized transportation accessibility. With the heavy incentives for the use of the automobile, the new highway system allowed growth in areas much further from the city core than ever before, and therefore opened up a supply of new land available for development. Historically, the region has urbanized footprint expanded as far as new transportation accessibility allowed. In more recent decades— from 1980 to 2010—the majority of the region’s new household growth occurred in Suburban or Suburban Edge communities.

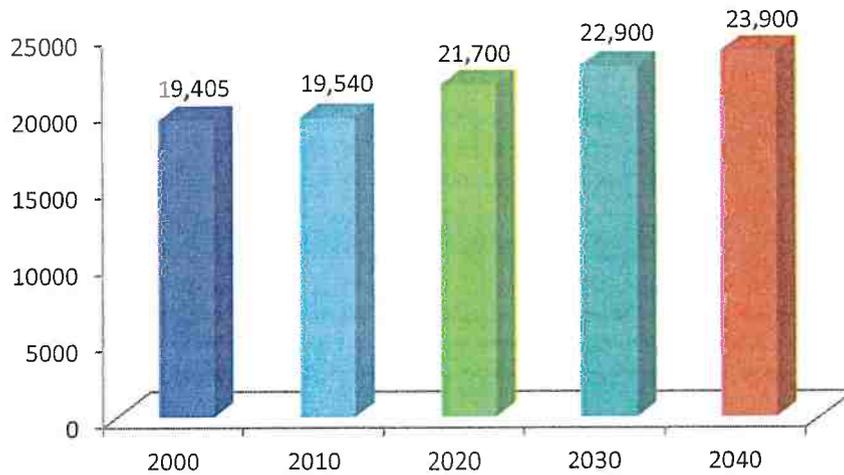
West St. Paul’s central location and close proximity to the Minneapolis/St. Paul urban core continues to offer multiple incentives to new and existing residents. This includes benefits such as close proximity to the urban core’s retail and other services, employment opportunities, more established roadways as well as multiple forms of transportation.

As West St Paul is defined as a Developed Community, population has remained relatively stable with slow growth since the 1970s. West St Paul will grow its population steadily by 2040, and is expected to gain 4,360 in population and 1,971 new households from 2010 to 2040 (see Figure 1-6). Population is expected to grow to 23,100 by the year 2040, according to the 2014 Metropolitan Council Population Forecasts; this averages to a population increase of just over 1,123 people and a one percent total increase over the next 20 years. Population growth is slow due the majority of West St. Paul being already built out, meaning there are little to no more buildable lots or areas.

As can be seen in figure 1-5 above, the largest portion of the population is between the ages of 25 and 54, with the median age being roughly 37. As this population ages, older adults are likely to want smaller, maintenance-free housing options that offers access to services and amenities near areas they know best—primarily, the developed core or downtown of the city. Areas immediately surrounding Robert Street have historically served as an area or destination of interest.

Figure 1-6 - West St. Paul Population Growth 2000-2040

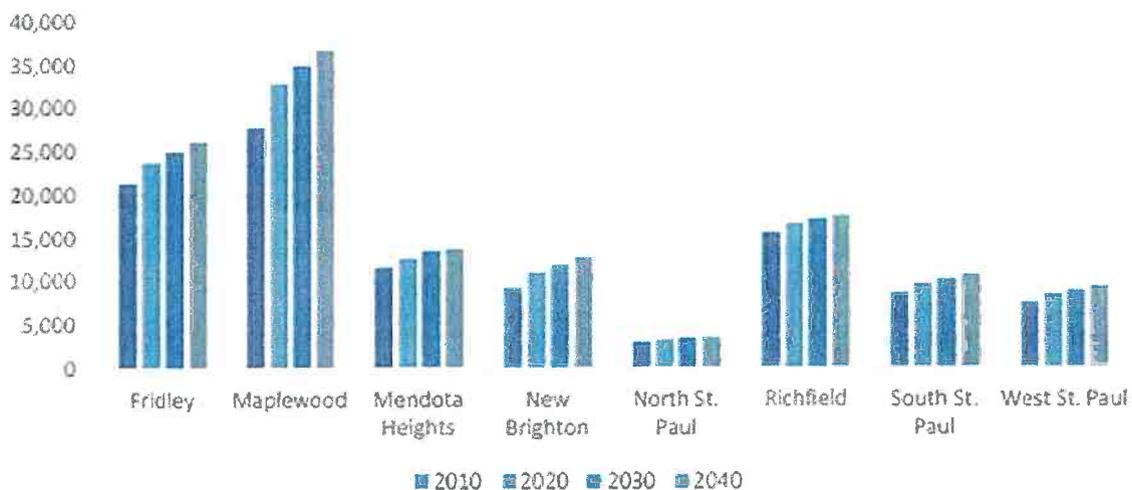
Source: 2014 Metropolitan Council



Local Economy

According to ESRI’s 2018 business analyst, West St. Paul is home to 756 businesses and 10,580 employees, offering a diverse business mix. The main business industries in West St. Paul are retail trade (16.8%), other services, excluding public administration (14.2%), and health care and social assistance (9.4%), respectively. These three industries alone account for 40 percent of the businesses in West St. Paul. The percentage of employment in these industries is slightly higher than the Minnesota state average.

Projected Job Growth for West St. Paul and comparison cities



Future job growth is expected to occur in health care support (18 percent increase), personal care and service (14 percent increase), healthcare practitioners and technical occupations (12 percent increase) according to Met Council's projected job growth, will allow for an opportunity for West St. Paul to capture some additional living wage positions within the community. Figure #, demonstrates the annual wages in West St. Paul compared to Dakota County and the Twin Cities Metro Region.

Through 2040 West St. Paul is expected to lag behind most comparable first ring suburbs in terms of job growth. Other communities such as Fridley and Maplewood will see significant job growth, see the graph above.

Housing Profile

Housing Characteristics

West St. Paul is defined as an older, first-ring, working-class community with modest-priced owner occupied and rental housing options. Dakota County defined three submarkets in 2005: developed communities, growth communities, and rural areas. Developed communities are defined as an area with limited new housing and little land available for development. West St. Paul is placed into the category of developed communities, along with Mendota Heights, Eagan, Sunfish Lake, South St. Paul, Inver Grove Heights, and Burnsville.

West St. Paul has 9,174 total housing units spanning across just over 3,000 acres (5 sq. mi.) according to the 2015 Metropolitan Council Community Profile. The residential land use, including multi-family residential, makes up 1,894 acres out of the total 3,202 acres, which accounts for approximately 60 percent of the total land in West St. Paul. Fifty-one percent of the housing stock is considered to be single family detached and contains no manufactured homes or other forms of housing such as mobile homes and RVs.



Larger Single Family Homes. Many of the city's larger homes, such as the home shown here, are located on the larger lots located in the southwest part of the city.



Smaller Single Family Homes. This home is more typical of the majority of single-family homes that are older and built in the 1950's or earlier.



Apartments Buildings. Apartment complexes such as this one are common throughout the city and are generally built in an older walk-up style.

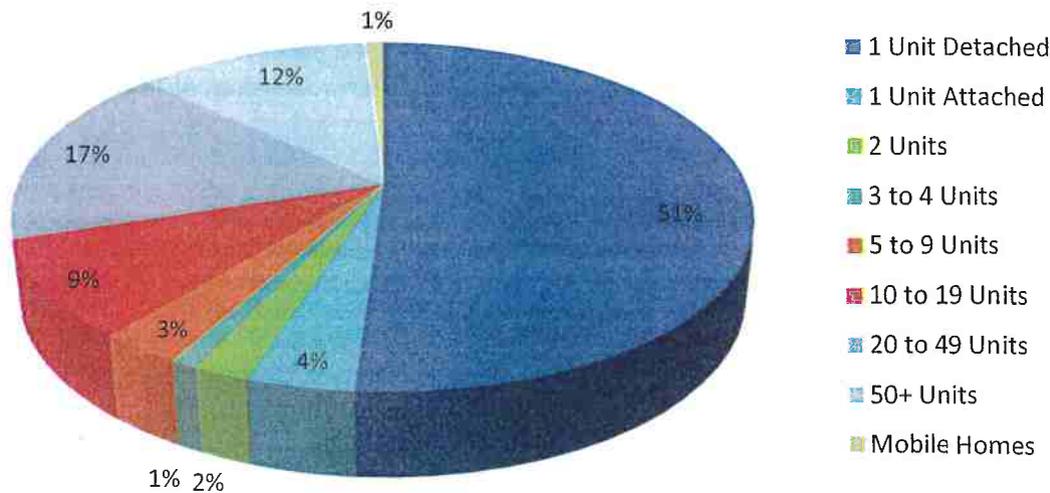


Senior Living. West St. Paul is host to several senior-oriented housing complexes that offer a spectrum of specialized programming or care.

The type of housing units in the City has remained fairly unchanged over the past 25 years. Single family, or one unit detached, housing has been the most prevalent; teetering between 51 and 52 percent of the total housing stock from 1990 to 2015. Multi-family housing (5 or more units) continues to be the second most common type of housing in West St. Paul, ranging anywhere from 38 to 40 percent of the total housing stock. West St. Paul was previously ranked the highest in renter percentage among larger cities in the Dakota County (Market Research Partners, Inc., December 2002). Other types of housing units that are present, but are not as prevalent, include townhomes, condominiums, and duplexes.

Figure 2-1 - Housing Units per Structure Type

Source: ACS Survey 2010-2014, 5-year Estimates



In order to attract and retain residents, it is important to provide a diverse housing stock that is both attractive and functional for all age ranges. Figure 2-1 above shows that the majority of the housing stock in West St. Paul is single-family detached homes; when combined with one unit attached single-family homes comprise 55 percent of the existing housing stock.

In order to retain a diverse housing stock and to better prepare for the projected population growth and aging residents, West St. Paul will likely see an increase in multi-family housing and retrofitting of housing due to the city already being over 90 percent developed. Generally, the construction of multi-family units increases as the amount of buildable land decreases due to their ability to be more sustainable through cost efficiency, maximum space utilization, and proximity to infrastructure and transit.

In 2018 alone, the City of West St. Paul approved 172 new multi-family units. Through the 2040 Comprehensive Plan update, West St. Paul was able to diversify its redevelopment options by incorporating more areas of mixed use throughout the city, primarily along Robert St.

Age of Housing Stock

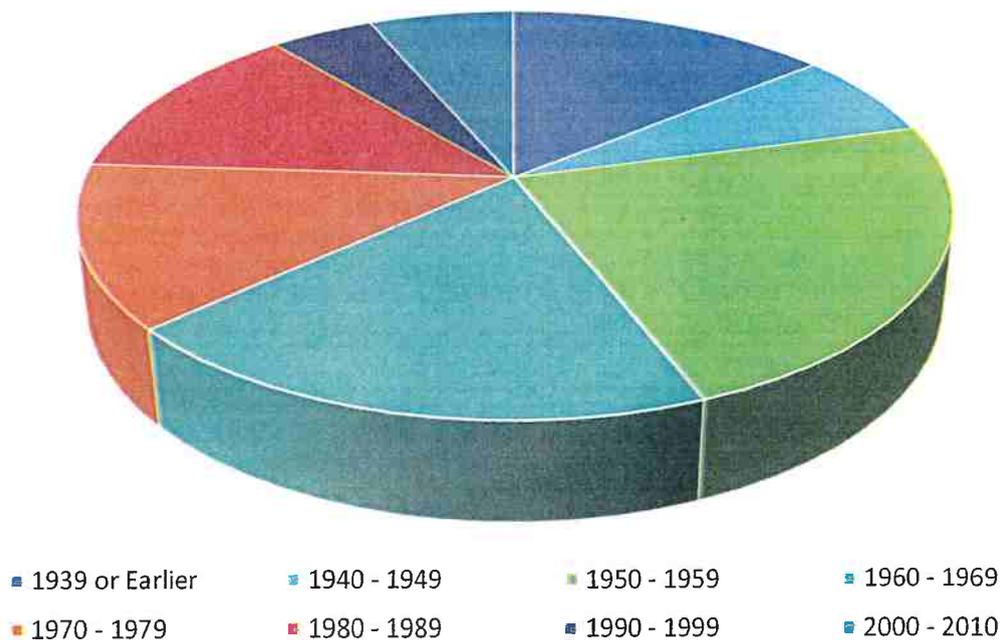
The majority of owner occupied houses were either built in the periods of 1939 or earlier and 1950 – 1959. Housing structures in West St. Paul tend to be in good shape for a housing stock where more than half the units were built prior to 1970.

Presumably, based on the number of renovation permits issued by the Building Department (over 500 annually since 2014), these houses have been renovated or improved upon to either attract new residents or to retrofit the property for the needs of the existing residents.

While the homes during the 1960 – 1979 time period remain very functional. It can also be noted that the time period where the least amount of housing was built was during the years of 1990 – 2010, even though there was an economic housing boom during the early 2000's, it is not reflected in this data. This could be due, again, to the lack of open space suitable for housing, as is commonly seen with many first ring suburbs.

Figure 2-2 - Age of Housing Stock in West St. Paul

Source: US Census Bureau, 2013/2014 American Community Survey



Apartment Complexes with 100+ Units

As of 2018, West St. Paul was home to over 40 apartment complexes with ten or more units; this adds up to over 3,000 multi-family units. With the total number of residential units calculating to be 9,174 (according to the Metropolitan Council Housing Stock Estimates) these apartment complexes make up nearly one-third of the overall housing stock in West St. Paul. As the existing infrastructure continues

to age, City Staff and elected officials will be forced to take a more active role in the overall maintenance and restoration of these properties and their surrounding infrastructures.

Table 2-3 below lists all of the apartment complexes in West St. Paul that have over 100 units. Many of which were built in the late 1960s to the early 1970's.

Table 2-3 - Apartment Complexes with 100+ Units

Apartment Complex	Address	Year Built	Number of Units
Westview Park Apartments	285 Westview Dr.	1997	298
Holiday Acres Apartments	1762 Oakdale Ave.	1995	188
Somerset Green & Sandlewood Place	1550 - 1552 Charlton St.	1994	168
Eagle Pointe	2044 Oakdale Ave.	1972	217
Charlton Park	430 Mendota Rd.	1972	170
The Oaks of West St. Paul	171 – 191 Thompson Ave. East	1966	132
The Oaks of Heatherwood	85 Thompson Ave. West	1970	108
Country Club Manor	1945 – 1955 Oakdale Ave.	1970	105
Oakdale Terrace	1926 Oakdale Ave.	1968	170
Covington Court Apartments	364 Marie Ave.	1965	159

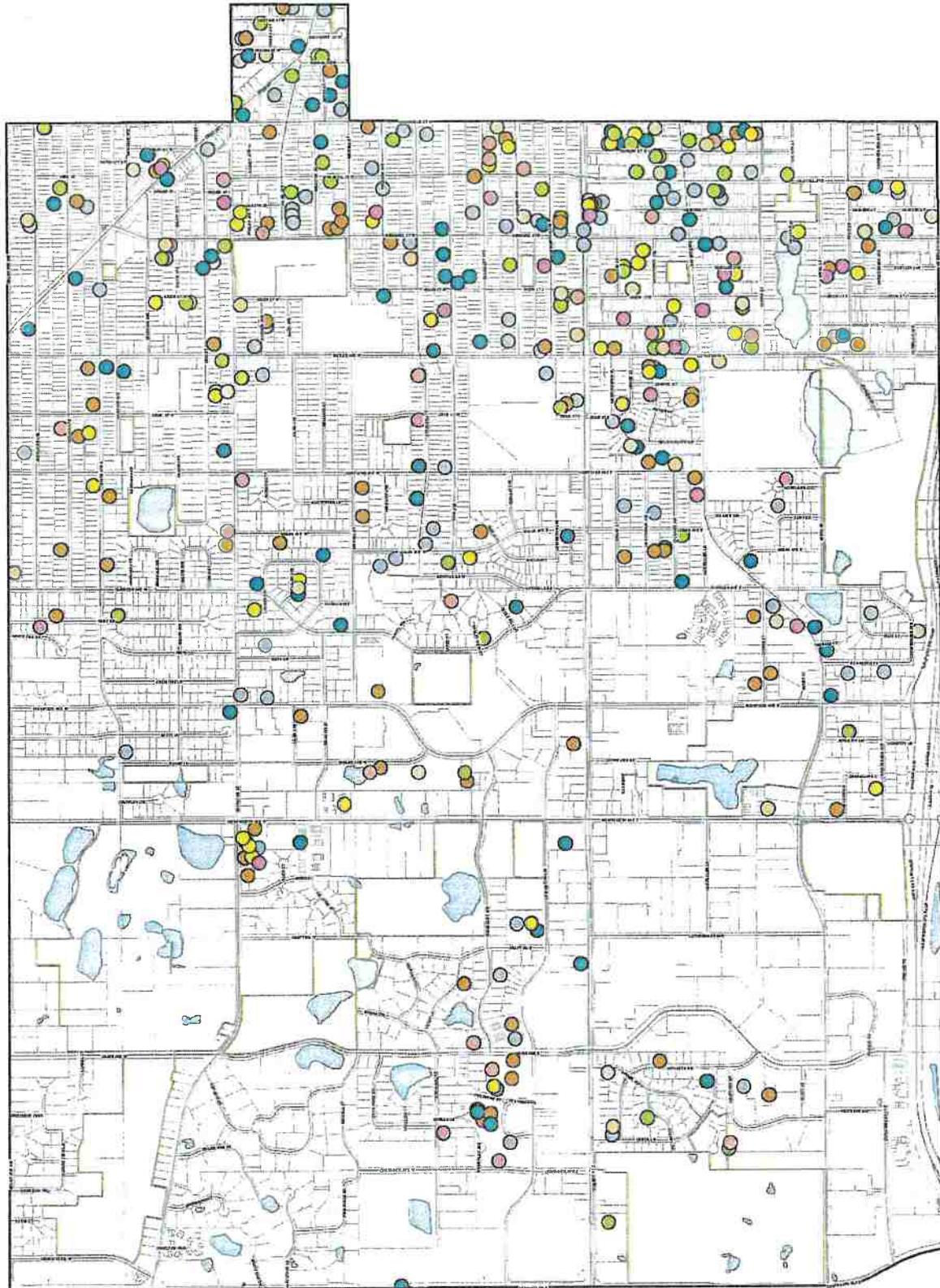
In 2013, 26% of renters in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Statistical Area said they were either completely dissatisfied or only partially satisfied with the building and ground maintenance for the property they were renting.*

Foreclosure Trends

Foreclosures and pendencies were high in 2010 due to the crash of the housing market; West St. Paul experienced 127 pendency notices and 85 foreclosures. Overall numbers for both have come down, in 2018 West St. Paul experienced 60 pendencies and 14 foreclosures.

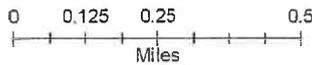
In the eight-year time frame of 2010 to 2018, 637 homes received a notice of pendency. Of those 637 homes, 396 went into foreclosure (over 62 percent). With such a high number of homes entering into foreclosure, it is important to educate residents on their resources and options during times of financial difficulty.

Foreclosed Properties, 2010 - 2018



Legend

- Foreclosures 2018
- Foreclosures 2017
- Foreclosures 2016
- Foreclosures 2015
- Foreclosures 2014
- Foreclosures 2013
- Foreclosures 2012
- Foreclosures 2011
- Foreclosures 2010



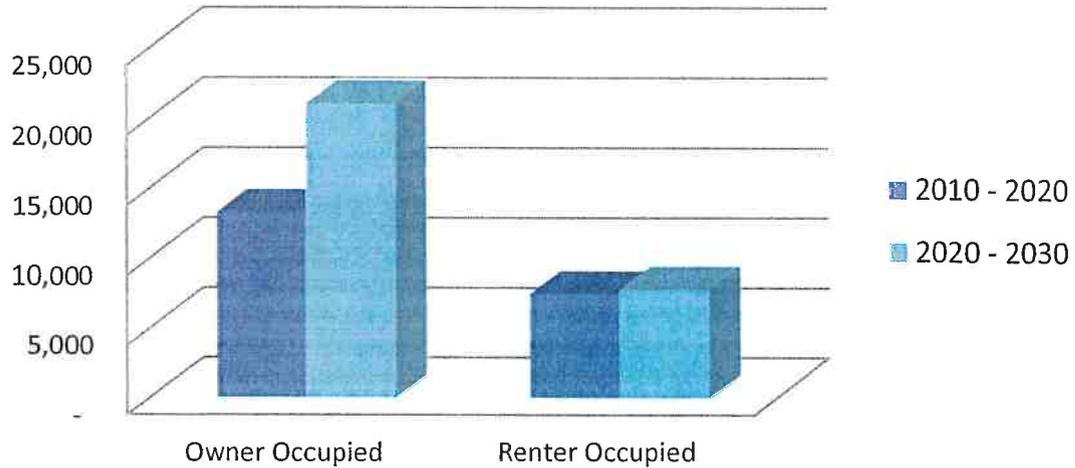
Prepared for the
West St. Paul Community
Development Department
by the Dakota County Office of GIS.

Housing Demand

According to the Dakota County Housing Needs Assessment of 2013, county wide demand is projected for an estimated 34,456 owned housing units and 15,069 rental units between 2010 and 2030. Approximately 68 percent of the demand is projected to be for owner occupied housing and 32 percent for rental housing.

Figure 2-4 - Housing Units in Dakota County

Source: Dakota Co. Housing Needs Assessment



Housing Demand - Public Input

During the public engagement portion of the composition of West St. Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan, several comments and themes were voiced through public comment.

A summation of the comments is as follows –

- An overwhelming majority of residents rate the quality of life in their neighborhood as “Very Good” or “Excellent”,
- Preserving the affordability of housing in this community is important to residents,
- A large percentage of respondents have concerns about their ability to remain in West St. Paul as long as they desire,
 - Specific concerns include a lack of appropriately sized and affordable housing for aging residents, homes that are not currently configured properly, and insufficient assisted living or nursing facilities to meet their needs,
- A significant rate of respondents feel that there are housing-related obstacles that would prevent their kids or grandkids from staying in West St. Paul,
 - These obstacles include a lack of starter homes, apartments, and rentals available in the city, as well as the cost and desirability of the existing housing,

- Maintenance and upkeep of existing homes, especially older properties, has been identified as a significant challenge for the community, and
- While there are concerns about the quantity and condition of aging multifamily buildings in the city, there is also an openness to new attached and multifamily housing development, especially those of a more modern style.

Public Input - Missing Housing

During the annual open house in May of 2017, the public was asked what type of housing does West St. Paul most in need. The responses were primarily centered around single family/starter homes (see table 2-5). Similarly, another survey of necessary housing was conducted during a community engagement meeting in March of 2018 (see table 2-6). More details on the votes can be seen below.

Needed Housing Type	Percent
Large Single Family Homes	6
Market Rate Apartments	9
Multi-Story Condos/Townhomes	19
Senior Housing	13
Single Story Condos	19
Small Single Family/Starter Homes	25
Something Else	9

Needed Housing Type	Percent
Affordable Rentals	18.2
Market Rate Rentals	4.2
Senior Rentals	3.6
Single Level Townhomes	15.8
Condos	3.6
Single Family Homes	43
None	11.5

Housing Demand - Developer Perspectives

Rental housing at all income levels is needed to provide for the increased rental demand, according to Maxfield’s 2013 Housing Needs Assessment for Dakota County. However, new market rate rental housing is needed to increase movement in the overall market and encourage those most able to afford to move up to do so. Developers are expressing difficulty in finding sites in the more developed communities and are concerned that the rent levels needed to support new market rate housing may be difficult to achieve while still remaining affordable for the tenants.

In 2016, some developers indicated that the minimum rent levels needed to support development costs and profit for new construction range from about \$1.50 to \$1.55 per square foot. This equates to monthly rents of \$1,088 to \$1,124 for a one-bedroom unit at an average unit size of 725 square feet.

Other developers have stated that their threshold is higher, at about \$1.80 per square foot, meaning that rents could be approximately \$1,305 for a one-bedroom unit using the same size unit as mentioned before.

One recent example of this in West St. Paul, is the RoofTop 252 apartments, approved for development in late 2016. The one-bedroom apartments at this market rate complex are between 650 and 715 square feet and cost between \$1,180 and \$1,290 per month. The most affordable apartment at this complex are the studio units with 410 square feet for \$995 per month (shown on the right).

One Bedroom / Studio

LORE | \$995-\$1005 | 410 ft²

0- available



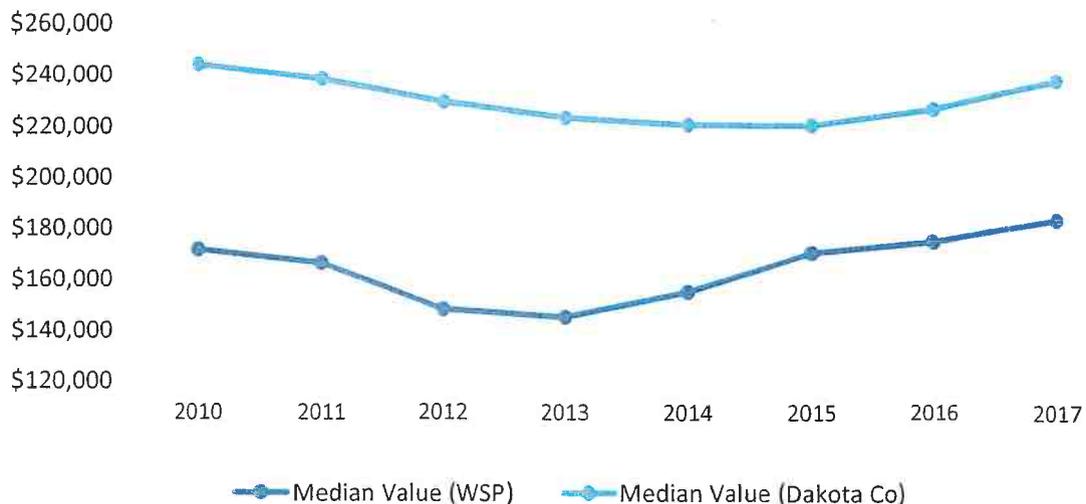
Recently, developers have been decreasing average unit sizes in order to reach the per square foot threshold that they need for financial feasibility and smaller unit sizes have been accepted by prospective renters who have been more focused on the amenities package.

Cost of Housing

The median housing value for West St. Paul in 2017 was \$183,300. When compared to \$171,400 in 2010, West St. Paul’s median housing value has experienced a seven percent increase. Housing values are projected to continue to rise as the construction of new housing decreases, demand and cost increases.

Figure 2-7 - Median Housing Values 2010-2017

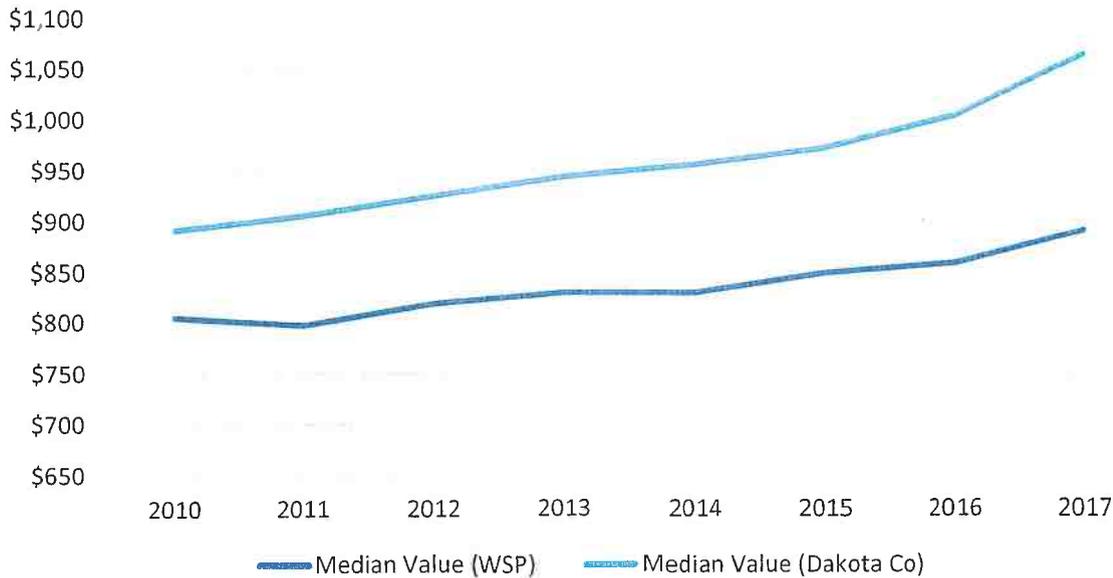
Source: American Community Survey



Similarly, rental prices have increased over the past seven years. Median rent paid in West St. Paul during 2010 was \$805, experiencing nearly an 11 percent increase to \$890 in 2017, according to the 2010/2014 American Community Survey (ACS).

Figure 2-8 - Median Rent Paid 2010-2017

Source: American Community Survey



West St. Paul’s housing costs are relatively low in comparison to the rest of Dakota County. While Dakota County’s median housing value experienced a two percent decrease, the overall yearly median consistently remains above the West St. Paul median.

The lack of developable land is not only clearly seen on an aerial image of the city, but also visible is the demand for housing in general. In 2014, the vacancy rate for owner occupied housing units was less than one percent. In addition, the current relatively low mortgage interest rates (hovering around 4.0 to 4.5 percent) gives potential home buyers extra incentive to purchase; mortgage rates are at the lowest levels since the 1970’s.

Affordable Housing

One in four households in West St. Paul experiences housing cost burden, meaning that housing costs more than 30 percent of the family or individual’s income. This number can consistently be seen in many cities throughout the metro, specifically inner-ring suburbs. According to Met Council’s Existing Housing Assessment from 2016, the largest portion of the population (approximately 11 percent, or 2,200 people) is the income range of at or below 30 percent AMI.

With the exception of its neighboring community, South St. Paul, West St. Paul provides a much higher percentage of affordable housing options in comparison to other Twin Cities first ring suburbs (see

below). A reason for this can be contributed to the community's older rental housing stock. West St. Paul's rental housing landscape looks much the same as it has for decades, because the vast majority of the rental housing stock was constructed in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s.

City	Existing Affordable Units			Total Affordable Units
	at <30% AMI	at 31-50% AMI	at 51-80% AMI	
West St. Paul	7%	38%	44%	89%
South St. Paul	7%	46%	43%	96%
Inver Grove Heights	9%	20%	41%	69%
Richfield	5%	20%	65%	91%
Maplewood	8%	25%	48%	81%
<i>Twin Cities Region</i>	<i>6%</i>	<i>22%</i>	<i>40%</i>	<i>68%</i>

Source: Met Council Existing Housing Assessment 2017

While not all rental housing in West St. Paul can be considered affordable, a significant fraction is affordable. Many rental properties in the city are affordable by virtue of being “naturally-occurring affordable housing.” Typically, naturally occurring affordable housing comprises older attached and multifamily housing. Naturally occurring affordable housing may have deferred maintenance needs or be of an older or more obsolete style.

According to a Dakota County Housing Study of 2013, demand is now outpacing supply in some housing categories, more notably apartment rentals. Rental vacancies have hit new lows in some communities; tightening vacancies and increasing rents have resulted in low and moderate-income households experiencing much greater challenges to secure affordable housing.

Group Residential Housing (GRH)

West St. Paul's affordability is attractive not only for homeowners, but also to individuals that provide group residential housing.

According to Minnesota State Statute 256I.03 Subdivision 3 (2016), Group Residential Housing means a group living situation that provides, at a minimum, room and board to unrelated persons who meet the eligibility requirements of section 256I.04 to receive payment for a group residence rate.

Recently, there has been a structural change to the established Group Residential Housing system. Previously operated and monitored by the State, GRH was recently re-assigned to the counties hosting the individuals in need of such a unique housing situation, which was then handed down to the local counties/cities to manage. During this extensive change in controlling parties, counties/cities are still in transition to establish the best methods to manage GRH within each unique situation as well as

continuing to work to establish management practices and appropriate funding items, as all of these items were previously managed by the state.

Future of Affordable Housing

The Metropolitan Council has calculated that 37,900 new affordable housing for-sale or rental units will be needed in the MSP metropolitan area between 2021 and 2030, according to the 2040 Housing Plan.

- These 37,900 units will be appropriated among all the cities in the metro area, based on the amount of existing affordable housing, the wages paid by employers in the area, and the level of public transportation available. It was determined that West St. Paul should provide 120 additional affordable housing units in the period from 2021 to 2030.
 - Source: Metropolitan Council's Local Planning Handbook – Allocation of Affordable Housing Need, 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Housing Inventory

Due to West St. Paul's projected steady population growth and limited developable land, it has been suggested that **the City take initiative in improving and preserving the existing housing stock in addition to considering redevelopment opportunities in the future, potentially publish a remodeling booklet or handbook to encourage property re-investments and to educate residents on how to fix and update homes.**

In order to effectively maintain and improve the current housing stock and appeal to future tenants and homeowners, West St. Paul has launched a multi-year plan to invest both single and multi-family housing. The first step of the plan was to investigate the current housing conditions for single and multi-family housing.

The findings of the study provided not only in-depth and resourceful information of the current housing conditions in West St. Paul, but also policies and programs to improve the City in various ways. The findings allow the City to identify target areas of home improvement. They could also be used to find funding to improve target areas through various mediums including housing rehab grants, loan programs, and other applicable local, state, and federal assistance. Overall, the study provided ample background for any future research and/or implementation for the improvement of West St. Paul's housing stock.

The study was conducted between mid-July 2014 and late-October 2014. As this is the first of such studies, the methodology was modeled from the latest housing survey of the City of Burnsville in Minnesota, which was completed in July 2013. The single-family homes in the study were dwelling units maintained by homeowners or tenants, including single-family housing and duplex or triplex properties with one to three units. Multifamily homes are licensed apartment buildings with more than three units, mixed-use commercial/residential apartments, and owner-occupied or rental condominium and townhome buildings.

The houses in West St. Paul are generally in good shape. Twelve criteria were developed to observe the exterior conditions of homes, including landscaping, driveway, etc. The scoring was based on a 1 to 5 scale, from excellent to deteriorated (one being excellent and five being deteriorated), which was adopted from *A Guide to Neighborhood Housing Assessment* (Crump, 2010).

The overall score of single-family housing was 2.36 out of 5. Similarly, the overall score of multi-family housing was 2.32 out of 5. Ward I from both single- and multi-family housing was the lower quality of housing condition and Ward III from both was the higher quality of housing conditions in the City.

From the assessment of the physical and cost characteristics of the housing stock in West St. Paul, combined with the demographic analysis of the community, there are some features and trends of the housing landscape that are especially notable and will shape the actions West St. Paul will take to address housing in the coming decades.

Table 3-1 - Average Score of Housing in West St. Paul

Scoring – 1 = excellent and 5 = deteriorated

Ward	Avg. Score of Single-family Home (SD)*	Avg. Score of Multi-family Home (SD)*
I	2.52 (.31)	2.38 (.38)
II	2.42 (.33)	2.38 (.31)
III	2.19 (.32)	2.18 (.23)
Total	2.36	2.32

*SD – Standard Deviation

Table 3-2 - Overall Average of Multi-family Housing

Scoring – 1 = excellent and 5 = deteriorated

Criteria	Avg. Score (Ranking)	Ward I	Ward II	Ward III
Roof	2.29	2.38	2.56	2.13
Windows/Doors	2.16	2.16	2.18	2.14
Paint	2.30	2.36	2.39	2.16
Trim	2.28	2.33	2.38	2.15
Siding or Stucco	2.47	2.56	2.54	2.34
Landscaping and/or Yard	2.31	2.37	2.36	2.21
Driveway	2.61	2.68	2.57	2.60
Sidewalks and Steps	2.05	2.23	2.24	1.69
Chimney	2.32	2.25	1.86	2.42
Foundation	2.33	2.75	2.13	2.33
Garage	2.46	2.58	2.50	2.39
Porch or Deck	2.22	2.15	2.32	2.16
Total	2.31	2.38	2.38	2.18

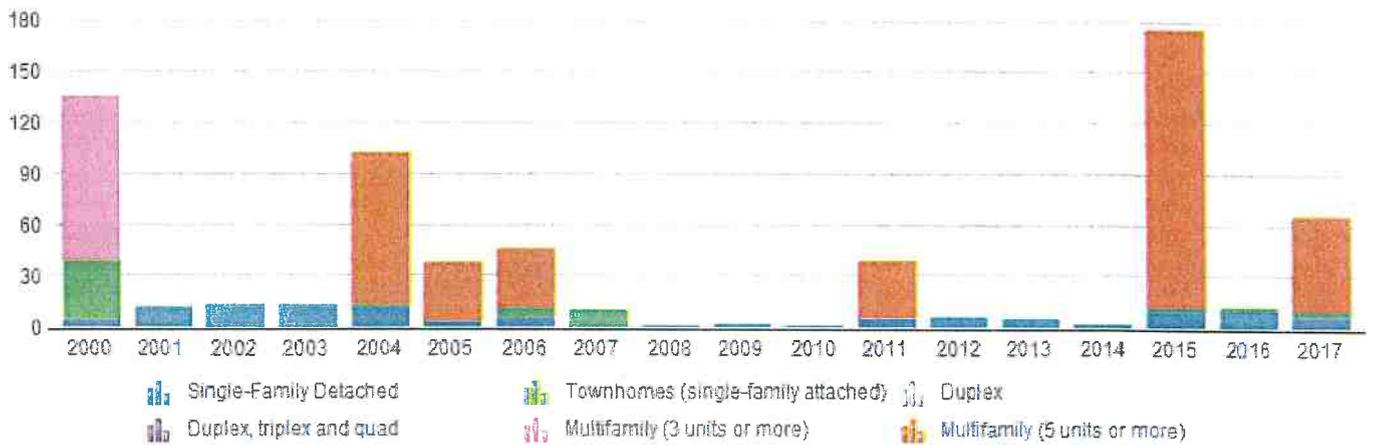
Housing Maintenance, Rehabilitation, and Redevelopment

New Construction

As can be noted below with Figure 4-1, the amount of new construction for single-family residential buildings has remained low, averaging 1-2 units per year. This can be attributed to the lack of empty lots as well as only a small population increase, growing from 19,540 people in 2010 to 20,222 people in 2015. In addition, due to the smaller lot sizes in the Northern portion of the city there is little interest in splitting or subdividing lots. However, as population slowly increases there is an increased demand for housing. This has encouraged developers to examine alternative ways to create housing such as redeveloping failed commercial sites.

Figure 4-1 – New Housing Permits 2000 – 2017

Source: Met Council Community Profile 2018

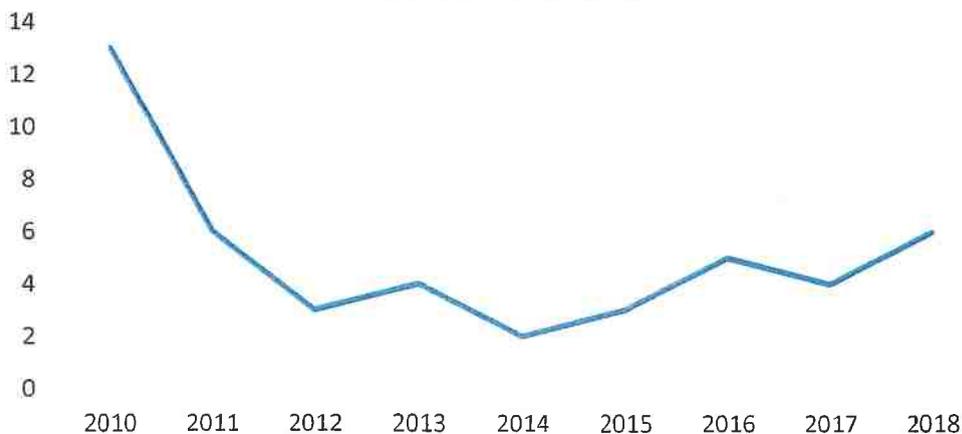


Demolition

It can be noted in figure 4-2, that demolition of residential buildings initially had relatively high amounts of activity, but quickly dropped down. Recent trends show those numbers rising again as demand continues to outpace supply. Overall, West St. Paul does not see much new development within its borders, which shifts the focus to redevelopment and rehabilitation efforts.

Figure 4-2 – Demolition Permits 2010 - 2018

Source: WSP Building Dept.



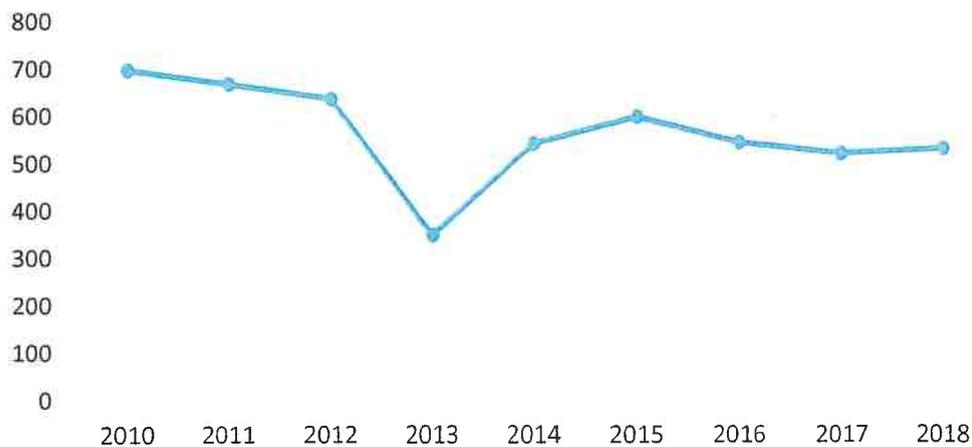
Rehabilitation

Housing structures in West St. Paul tend to be in good shape for a housing stock where more than half the units were built prior to 1970. In order to effectively maintain and improve the current housing stock and appeal to future tenants and homeowners West St. Paul has launched a multi-year plan to invest in both single and multi-family housing and better target rehab grants, loan programs and other local, state, and federal funding sources where they are most needed in the community.

There is a strong desire to rehabilitate and redevelop the current housing stock in West St. Paul, as can be seen in figure 4-3. This figure establishes the number of permits pulled for residential rehabilitation and alteration. Residential in this case includes only buildings that are four units or less. The words rehabilitation and alteration are used to cover a wide variety of activities, primarily an improvement or alteration to the primary structure of a residential lot. For example, a building permit in this category could entail an entire interior remodel or simply a window replacement.

Figure 4-3 - Residential Alteration Permits 2010-2018

Source: West St. Paul Building Department



A total of 5,088 alteration permits were issued between 2010 and 2018, with an average project valuation of \$8,143. If each individual permit is assumed associated with one individual property, this equates to an average of just over 600 houses or nearly seven percent of the housing stock per year making alterations for eight consecutive years.

In just eight years, nearly 56 percent of the housing stock in West St. Paul was altered in some way, shape, or form. This is an encouraging trend and clearly states that homeowners are interested in re-investing in their properties, which in turn allows them to live in their homes longer.

Quality Housing and Redevelopment

The City of West St. Paul addresses property maintenance, rehabilitation, and redevelopment issues through the following programs:

- Quality Housing Program
- Code Enforcement
- Rental Licensing
- Property Recognition Programs
- Home Improvement Loans and Property Fix-Up
- Housing Replacement Program

Quality Housing Program

The Quality Housing Program was established in the fall of 2000, when the City Council and Economic Development Authority (EDA) adopted the Implementation Plan for Quality Housing. The plan outlined strategies to create and sustain quality housing in West St. Paul. These strategies were implemented to establish a housing stock that is aesthetically more attractive, has increased valuation, is healthier for residents, and improves the security and social fabric of the community at large. Efforts of this program are described in further detail in the following segments.

Code Enforcement

Property maintenance has always been a priority for West St. Paul; this became more tangible when the City adopted its first code enforcement ordinance in 1988. Several improvements have been made since then, including a 24 hour code complaint line and anonymous methods of contacting City Staff.

In the early 2000's the City of West St. Paul conducted two separate sessions of full-scale inspections of every property in the city. Inspections included both interior and exterior reviews of all properties. Dividing different areas of the city into zones, inspectors were able to cover the entire city in five years. Between 2000 and 2005, over 3,700 properties were not compliant with the established City ordinances. Each property was sent a compliance letter notifying the resident of the issue.

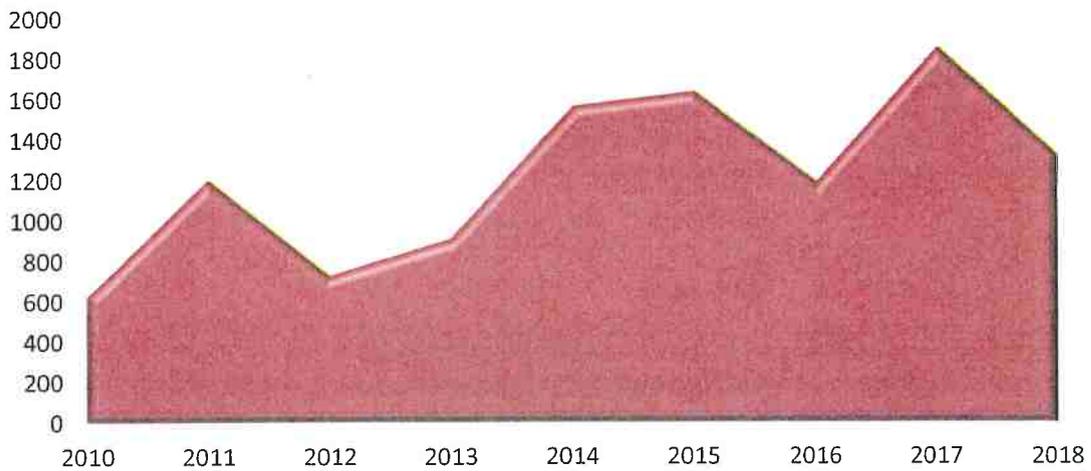
Each year the City of West St. Paul has up to two full time employees to address property and resident complaints as well as to enforce zoning code compliance. The City previously had one full time permanent employee and during the spring and summer season, would employ one part time temporary employee.

In order to better serve the public and better utilize staff time, the singular position of Code Enforcement Officer and the singular position of Rental Housing Inspector were combined to have two inspectors, each inspector doing a mix of both code enforcement and rental housing inspections.

If trends continue, as seen below in Figure 5-1, and the number of code issues continue to increase or even remain consistent, **it is recommended that the City consider hiring additional staff to manage the high number of code violations and maintain a quick response time to complaints.**

Table 5-1 - Number of Code Violations 2010-2018

Source: WSP Community Development Dept.

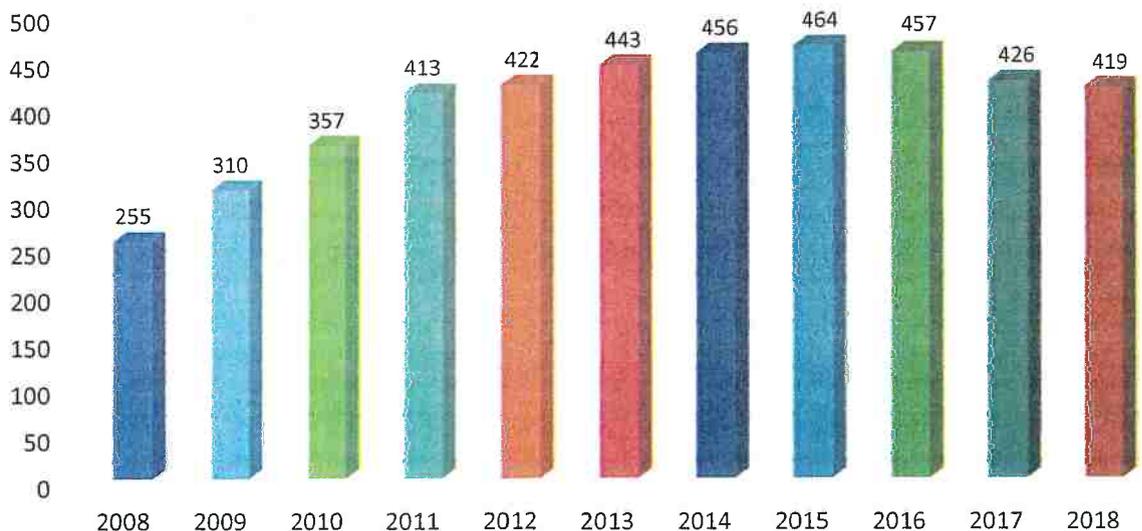


Rental Housing

On November 27, 2006 the City Council approved an ordinance regulating all rental housing units within the city. The purpose of the ordinance was to “protect the public health, safety, and welfare of citizens” of the city who occupy rental units. By adopting rental dwelling inspection and maintenance program standards to help correct substandard conditions and maintain a standard for existing and newly constructed rental dwellings in the city.

Figure 5-2 – Rental Licenses 2008 – 2018

Source: WSP Community Development Dept.



All rental licenses are renewed on an annual basis and reviewed by both City Staff and the City Council. Properties up for renewal must be current on all payments and compliant with all city code regulations; if and when a property becomes an issue the community development department closely examines the property with all other departments within the city. This includes police, fire, code enforcement, building, and inspections.

Due to the high demand for rentals in West St. Paul, City Council elected to limit the number of licensed rental properties per block, the maximum density of rentals allowed per block is ten percent. This means that if there are ten houses on a block, only one of them is allowed to be a rental property. By limiting the number of rentals within the city, it helps to better distribute the rental properties, maintain the diverse housing stock, and appeal to a variety of incomes.

The City of West St. Paul closely monitors its rental housing stock and requires annual renewals and inspections for all of its rental properties in addition to requiring that all property owners or managers complete Phase One: Property Management Training through the Minnesota Crime Prevention Association and Minnesota Crime Free Housing. This program closely aligns with West St. Paul's goals to ensure a diverse housing stock in which all properties meet maintenance standards by using licensed housing evaluators who have certified expertise in performing residential inspections.

The City maintains a map and list of multi-family developments which indicates the name of the project or development, site location, contact information, and the number of buildings and units. **By continuing to closely monitor rental properties, owners, and tenants through consistent enforcement and management education** West St. Paul is able to shape the growth trends of a large portion of the housing stock within the city.

Property Recognition Programs

Each year residents of West St. Paul nominate properties they believe are well maintained or have been significantly improved. Any person can nominate a candidate's property for the program. The amount of money spent on improvements is not a deciding factor for these awards. Rather, the use of the property and the compatibility with the neighborhood will be considered.

All nominations are reviewed by City Staff and City Council and winners are selected in each ward.



Photo: 2015 Outstanding Property Awards – 916 Allen

Home Improvement Loans and Property Fix-Up Program

Dakota County's Home Improvement program helps to assist low to moderate-income homeowners make repairs and improvements to their home. Funds are commonly used for projects such as roof replacement, plumbing or electrical repairs, and insulation.

Applicants must own their home and have well-established property equity, good credit history, and fall within the income requirements.

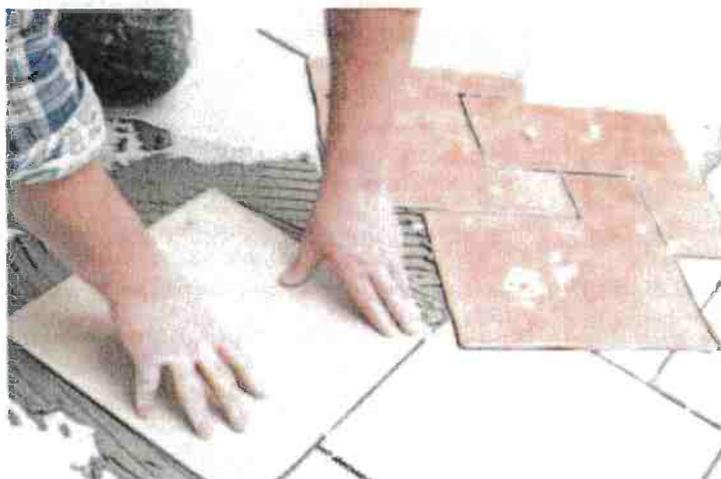


Photo: Dakota County CDA Home Improvement Brochure

Housing Replacement Program

The Housing Replacement Program was adopted by the Economic Development Authority (EDA) in April of 2000. It is designed to address homes that are beyond the scope of rehabilitation.

The city's Economic Development Authority (EDA) assists Property Owners of homes that are beyond repair or not economically feasible to rehabilitate. Often times, homes in poor condition cannot be sold on the private market. Generally, these homes are considered blighted or structurally deficient

The program sponsors the replacement of deteriorating lower value housing on scattered sites throughout the City with larger, higher value single-family housing. Replacement is achieved through voluntary acquisition from a willing seller or from a homeowner requesting demolition assistance in order to make his or her own housing replacement plans financially possible.

Under the Housing Replacement Program, an owner may approach the EDA and request them to make an offer to purchase the property for fair market value. If the Property Owner extends and accepts an offer, the EDA would purchase the property, demolish the structure, and resell the lot for redevelopment of a new single family home.



Photo: 236 Annapolis St E Demolition

The property on 236 Annapolis Street East was demolished, and Hometown, Inc., a custom builder, constructed a new four bedroom home with a 2 stall car garage.

Other properties include 812 Dodd Road, 443 Bernard St E and 812 Dodd Road.



236 Annapolis Street East Reconstruction

- Four Bedroom
- Two and ½ Bathrooms
- Two Car Garage

The EDA also assists homeowners who desire to retain their lot and rebuild a new home by providing financial assistance for the demolition costs, thus saving the homeowner \$8,000 - \$10,000. There are no income limits to participate in this program.

Properties the EDA has purchased since 2001

978 Allen Ave	892 Bidwell St	202 Kathleen Dr.
848 Allen Ave	273 Butler Ave E	1012 Livingston Ave
180 Annapolis St E	277 Butler Ave E	188 Mainzer St
236 Annapolis St E	373 Butler Ave E	951 Oakdale Ave
320 Annapolis St E	928 Charlton St	1198 Ottawa Ave
270 Annapolis St E	804 Dodd Rd	810 Dodd Rd
966 Bellows St	158 Haskell St	1003 Stryker Ave
305 Bernard St E	160 Hurley St E	360 Thompson Ave E
443 Bernard St E	288 Hurley St E	184 Thompson Ave W

Partnerships and Local Initiatives

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Each year the City of West St. Paul applies for the following housing assistance programs:

Year	Money Awarded
2010	\$90,500
2011	\$90,200
2012	\$75,000
2013	\$82,804
2014	\$81,906
2015	\$81,906
2016	\$81,906
2017	\$110,808
2018	\$99,694

Each year, the City applies for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding through the Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA). Historically, the City has applied for CDBG funding for redevelopment and rehabilitation loans administered by the CDA. The City receives approximately \$90,000 a year in CDBG funding.

CDBG funding provides a maximum of \$25,000 for deferred repayment, 0% interest rate loans to income eligible homeowners. Each year, five to eight low and moderate-income WSP homeowners make necessary home improvements from the annual CDBG allocation to housing rehabilitation. Eligible repairs include code-mandated repairs due to deferred maintenance, upgrading mechanical or other systems to current standards, and permanent general improvements to increase property values.

The program provides home improvement assistance to underserved populations in WSP. However, the City benefits overall through increased property values and preservation of existing housing stock. Over the last several years, the City has maintained one of the highest numbers of closed loans in the County since the program's creation.

Dakota County Partnership

The Dakota County CDA First Time Home Buyer Program provides financial resources for West St. Paul residents purchasing a home. Eligible properties include existing single-family homes, townhomes, condominiums, new construction, and duplexes.

Additionally, some first time homebuyers can also qualify for the Down-payment and Closing Cost Assistance program. Loans up to \$10,000 are available depending on household income. The CDA assists up to 20 households per year for this program.

Partnered Programs offered to residents of West St. Paul,
by Dakota County CDA and West St. Paul in 2015

Housing Assistance Program	Number of Residents Served
Housing Choice Voucher (Elderly)	293
Affordable Apartments	101
Housing Choice Voucher (Families)	84
Scattered Site Housing	11
Bridges	10
Continuum of Care	5
Family Unification Program	3
Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing	1
<i>Total Number of Residents Served</i>	<u>508</u>

Source: Dakota County CDA and West St. Paul Community Development Department

Program Descriptions

Housing Choice Voucher Program

- http://www.dakotacda.org/rentalassistance_program.htm#housingchoice
- The Housing Choice Voucher program, also known as Section 8, utilizes the existing private rental market to provide housing for low income families, elderly, handicapped, and disabled persons.

Continuum of Care

- http://www.dakotacda.org/rentalassistance_program.htm#shelter
- Continuum of Care provides rent assistance, in connection with supportive services, to homeless persons with disabilities. The supportive services provided by Community Services fulfill a dollar-for-dollar match requirement for the HUD grant. The CDA assists 23 households through this program.

Bridges

- http://www.dakotacda.org/rentalassistance_program.htm#bridges
- Bridges serves persons with chronic and persistent mental illness. The CDA administers the housing subsidy portion of this program, which is grant funded by the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency. The Dakota County Social Services Department coordinates the support services for the clients. Participants contribute 30 percent of their income toward rent and the grant subsidizes the remaining portion. This program provides a temporary “bridge” that connects the gaps between homelessness, treatment centers, institutional facilities, and permanent affordable housing.

Family Unification Program

- http://www.dakotacda.org/rentalassistance_program.htm#FUP
- The Family Unification Program (FUP) is designed to increase the housing resources of child welfare families to prevent the separation of children from their parents because of inadequate housing, to ease the transition to adulthood for youth aging out of foster care, and to facilitate and expedite access to housing and supportive services through agency collaboration. The Dakota County CDA has 100 FUP vouchers that will allow families to reunite with children who are otherwise unable to leave foster care because of the inability to afford decent housing.

Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing

- http://www.dakotacda.org/rentalassistance_program.htm#shelter
- HUD-VASH (Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing) is a unique partnership between the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that provides long term case management, supportive services, and permanent housing support for chronically homeless Veterans.

Dakota County Scattered Site Homes and Affordable Apartment Complexes

Dakota County has several housing programs available to low and moderate income individuals and families alike. The Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA) owns and manages 243 properties in Dakota County. Fourteen properties, totaling 192 units, are within the city of West St. Paul. Single family homes, duplexes, townhomes, and four-plexes are offered as a part of the Individual and Family Scattered Site program. West St. Paul currently only has single family homes as a part of this program; however the Dakota County CDA also manages affordable apartments within West St. Paul.

In order to qualify for the Individual and Family Scattered Site program through Dakota County CDA, the family or individual must fall within a certain income category in addition to acceptable rental history, credit, and pass a criminal background check. Lower incomes within each category take higher priority within the system, while the highest income is the maximum qualifying income. Overall, the goal is to have families pay no more than 30 percent of their adjusted monthly income toward rent.

CDA Properties in West St. Paul

Address	Property Type	Number of Units
1675 Livingston Ave	Apartment	80
900 Robert St	Apartment	59
140 Haskell St E	Apartment	42
Various	Single Family	11
<i>Total Number of Units</i>		<i>192</i>

Tax Forfeiture Development Program (TFDP)

The Dakota County CDA has a Tax Forfeiture Development Program to acquire tax-forfeited parcels from the State of Minnesota. The program's primary objective is to acquire and develop or redevelop tax forfeited property for an authorized use, namely the removal of blight and/or the development of low and moderate income housing.

On February 11, 2014, CDA Staff presented to the Board the opportunity to acquire a home located at 144 Stanley Street East in West St. Paul (Parcel ID – 42-58700-00-05). The owners had defaulted on their repayment agreement and the property was vacant. The City of West St. Paul had acknowledged several previous City Code violations on the property including junk, overgrown grass and weeds, and inoperable vehicles on the property.

On May 5, 2015, the CDA awarded a substantial rehabilitation contract for 144 Stanley Street East to Changing Images Design for \$112,901.02 and began construction in June of 2015.

Dakota County regularly rehabilitates blighted properties throughout the county; 144 Stanley Street was one example that can be seen in West St. Paul.

144 Stanley Street Rehab



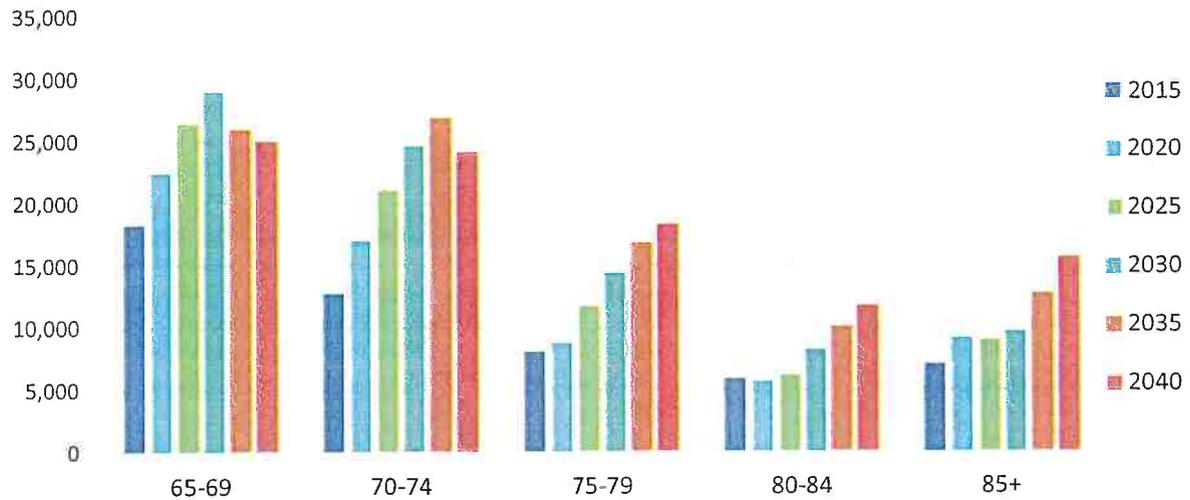
Housing Development

Senior Housing

Dakota County is expecting to see a 79 percent increase in the population age group of 65+ by 2040. This equates to over 42,000 additional residents that are 65+. This age group comprised 13 percent of the total population in Dakota County in 2015; by 2040, ages 65+ will comprise 19 percent of the total population in Dakota County. Details on the population increase is detailed below in figure 6-1.

Figure 6-1 - Dakota County Population Projections

Source: MN Demographic Center



In the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, the City identified the lack of senior housing as a growing concern. Since that time, less of an emphasis has been placed on building apartments and greater focus has been placed on townhomes, condominiums, and age accommodating living facilities type of uses. This effort to provide the community with greater living choices has promoted life-cycle housing goals as well as the revitalization of blighted and underutilized properties. As the general population continues to grow in age, there will be more demand for senior housing along with other alternative residential uses.

New Senior Housing Developments in West St. Paul



2012 – Walker Methodist Westwood Ridge Assisted Living

Added a new 70 unit assisted living complex. Including 24 memory care units, 36 24-hour transitional care units, and 10 care suite units.



**2016 – Sanctuary
Assisted Living Project**

A new 4-story, 164-unit Affordable Senior Assisted Living Facility.



2018 – DARTS

Development of a new 4-story, 172-unit independent senior living facility.

Multi-Family Housing

According to the Dakota County Housing Study of 2013, demand is now outpacing supply in some housing categories, more notably apartment rentals. Rental vacancies have hit new lows in some communities; tightening vacancies and increasing rents have resulted in low and moderate-income households experiencing much greater challenges to secure affordable housing.

Through the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update as well as the Renaissance Plan, West St. Paul has identified Robert Street as a potential area for mixed use and multi-family housing redevelopment. The mixed use would allow for a revitalization of the Robert Street corridor and multifamily housing would create shoppers for the already existing retail located along the corridor.

Mixed Use Housing

The primary corridor of West St. Paul, Robert Street, once served as a high demand commercial strip. Over the past 30 years, regional retail dollars have expanded to provide more opportunities to the customer. In an effort to continue to attract a strong customer base, Robert Street must offer more than just retail. Therefore, the Robert Street corridor is now in transition after its reconstruction in

2017. During the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update, the City identified specific areas of Robert Street that would be appropriate for moderate to high density residential, which **could** be part of a mixed-use development or zoning district. The high number of large underutilized parcels along the corridor offer a prime location for reinvestment and redevelopment.

A “Gateway North District” was implemented in the zoning ordinance in 2007 to address mixed-use development along the northern portion of the Robert Street Corridor. Reduced setbacks were established to encourage redevelopment and the formation of design standards.

Single Family – New Construction

As can be seen in the table below, between 2010 and 2018, 44 new single-family homes were constructed between 2010 and 2018; the average valuation of the homes built during this time equates out to roughly \$341,768, this is nearly double the median housing value in West St. Paul in 2017. This demonstrates the fact that not only is affordable housing in demand, but above the median is needed as well.

Year	Number of New Homes	Total Valuation
2010	1	\$145,000
2011	5	\$733,900
2012	5	\$2,181,500
2013	4	\$1,018,782
2014	3	\$885,000
2015	9	\$3,157,231
2016	7	\$3,536,906
2017	6	\$1,837,194
2018	4	\$1,542,269
Total	44	\$15,037,782

Detached single-family homes have consistently made up more than 50 percent of the housing stock in West St. Paul, even dating back to 1990. With the history of this trend, it can be expected that detached single-family homes will remain the majority of the housing options for quite some time in the future to come.

The City of West St. Paul has been considered “fully developed” since 1998; however, new construction or re-development still occurs throughout the city. Many residents have stated that they have lived in West St. Paul for a long time, and would like to continue to live in West St. Paul; however, the current housing options that they want or need are not available.

Needs and Goals

From the assessment of the physical and cost characteristics of the housing stock in West St. Paul, combined with the demographic analysis of the community, there are some features and trends of the housing landscape that are especially notable and will shape the actions West St. Paul will take to address housing in the coming decades.

The following section summarizes the community's most critical housing needs as they relate to affordability and future demands on the city's housing supply. Each section contains a housing trend observation, a supplemental narrative and a subsequent "housing need goal" that arises out of this observation.

The most critical housing needs/goals in West St. Paul are as follows:

- The housing stock in West St. Paul is aging, and residents will have increasing maintenance and upkeep requirements in the coming decades.
 - West St. Paul contains mostly smaller-lot single-family homes developed in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s that are beginning to age and may not be as attractive or suitable for modern households as they once were. Developing strategies to maintain and support West St. Paul's existing housing stock, particularly for those households with lower incomes and fewer resources, will remain a significant challenge in the decades to come, and will be important to continue to attract newcomers to the city.
 - *Housing need goal: Support housing maintenance assistance programs, particularly for lower-income households.*
- The City supports actions that make it possible for West St. Paul residents to age in place.
 - New senior housing units developed in the past 15 years have increased the number of housing options available to aging residents in West St. Paul. However, residents identified lack of available options for residents of all ages, particularly aging or elderly residents, as a significant challenge facing the community. Many lifelong residents want to remain in the community that they are familiar with or have grown up in. The City may consider exploring allowances for more diverse housing styles while supporting opportunities for senior and supported housing development to meet the demonstrated need in the community.
 - *Housing need goal: Meet increased demand for senior housing and opportunities for residents to age in place.*
- More than one in four West St. Paul households are cost-burdened, and nearly 40 percent of these households are at or below 50% AMI.
 - A disproportionate share of these cost-burdened households are lower-income households. As market challenges to the production of affordable housing persist, West St. Paul must prioritize support for affordable housing development by using the tools

- available at the City's discretion and strengthening partnerships with other agencies to promote affordable housing production (more on this in the "Planning for Affordable Housing" section below). Furthermore, the city should prioritize affordability at or below the 50% AMI affordability band, which requires intentional application of affordable housing policies, partnerships, and resources.
- *Housing need goal: Reduce overall community housing cost burden, particularly by supporting those projects that provide affordability for households in the <50% AMI categories.*
 - West St. Paul, along with many urban communities, is at risk of losing its naturally occurring affordable housing to redevelopment.
 - West St. Paul has a certain amount of housing that is considered affordable by way of "naturally occurring" means. Typically, naturally occurring affordable housing comprises older attached and multifamily housing that may have deferred maintenance needs or is of an older or obsolete style. Naturally occurring affordable housing is an important source of housing affordability in many Twin Cities urban communities but requires a careful, balanced approach. All residents have a right to live in safe and well-maintained housing, but maintenance and other upgrades (including redevelopment) can contribute to the loss of housing affordability in a community.
 - *Housing need goal: Preserve naturally occurring affordable housing within all affordability bands while improving the safety and livability of the city's housing stock.*
 - The existing housing stock of West St. Paul must be maintained or improved, thus improving the quality of existing neighborhoods while maintaining its affordability.
 - There are proactive steps that West St. Paul can take to recognize the important role that naturally occurring affordable housing plays in the community while also recognizing the imperative to maintain a safe and viable housing stock. Naturally occurring affordable housing typically supports households between 30-80% AMI.
 - *Housing need goal: Preserve naturally occurring affordable housing within all affordability bands while improving the safety and livability of the city's housing stock.*
 - Strategic development of housing can offer access to services and amenities to provide populations without a personal vehicle a method of transportation.
 - West St. Paul's proximity to a major urban center and the presence of major roadway arteries like Robert Street present opportunities for transit-oriented development, which can support populations who cannot or prefer not to own a personal vehicle. Prioritizing transit-oriented development projects will support seniors and low-income households who traditionally have a higher demand for transit services.

- Housing need goal: Explore opportunities to increase transit-oriented development in strategic areas connected to major transit routes.

- Monitoring and updating City ordinances can help to produce flexibility and diversity in housing opportunities.
 - Zoning codes provide dimensional and locational standards that dictate the built form of housing. A city that actively monitors and updates its zoning code may find opportunities to lessen regulatory barriers to producing the types of housing that meet the demands of residents or prospective residents, as well as the conditions of the market.
 - Housing need goal: Update ordinances as necessary to maintain optimal housing functionality and livability and to address new technologies, market trends, and resident needs.

Recommendations

Housing Growth

- Encourage the development of housing that offers access to services and amenities to provide populations without a personal vehicle a method of transportation,
- Investigate rehabilitation funding options for aging apartment complexes, and
- Rental housing at all income levels is needed to provide for the increased rental demand.

Affordable Housing

- Continue to work with the Dakota County Community Development Agency to support new and existing programs available to West St. Paul residents,
- Consider housing alternatives to best accommodate all life stages and all incomes, and
- Work with lenders and social service agencies to provide financial literacy and other programs to encourage homeownership within West St. Paul.

Redevelopment and Reinvestment

- Encourage community reinvestment and housing rehabilitation and retrofitting to accommodate both new and existing residents,
- Regularly update the Housing Inventory to track and reassess the conditions of the housing stock followed by targeted programs for areas where problems are identified,
- Initiate the improvement and preservation of the existing housing stock in addition to considering redevelopment opportunities in the future,
- Encourage green building practices, energy efficiency, and sustainability throughout the City of West St. Paul
- Encourage diversity and a variety of housing options within neighborhoods to avoid high concentrations of low and modest income housing in any portion of the city.
- Identify multi-family properties in need of updating and will work with the owners of the property to improve site and building conditions,
- Partner with agencies and community groups to institute quality of life improvements within distressed housing sites and encourage reinvestment in older properties to maintain character, functionality, and value, and
- Create and publish a remodeling booklet or handbook to encourage property re-investments.

Code Enforcement

- Consider hiring additional code enforcement staff to help management of increased complaint volume,
- Continue to monitor property maintenance to inform owners of compliance issues and methods to correct any forms of non-compliance, and

- Update ordinances as necessary to maintain optimal housing functionality and livability and to address new technologies, market trends, and resident needs.

Rental Licensing

- Closely monitor rental properties, owners, and tenants through consistent enforcement of license requirements and training requirements,
- Establish reoccurring Rental Management education programs,
- Continue to hold monthly meetings with owners and managers of the existing rental facilities, and
- Encourage open communication between City Staff and rental owners and tenants.

Life Cycle Housing

- Educate all residents of the First Time Home Owner funding opportunities,
- Continue to examine additional redevelopment and rehabilitation programs to increase funding levels and improve upon existing programs, and
- Continue to plan for an aging population by encouraging development that is accessible to all ages.

Welcoming Community

- Create outreach and educational materials for new homeowners and residents of West St. Paul,
- Explore the feasibility of hosting an annual housing fair to educate potential homebuyers and to show case properties that are currently for sale, and
- Promote the organization of neighborhood groups to organize residents, identify and address potential issues, and advocate for neighborhood preservation and enhancement.

Housing Programs and Assistance

The City of West St. Paul works in conjunction with Dakota County to administer the following housing programs:

- **Rental Housing and Licensing**
 - <http://wsbmn.gov/286/Rental-Licensing>
 - Interested candidates can apply for a rental license either in person or via email. All applications are subject to the 10 percent rental density per block maximum. A typical rental application procedure includes a background check, a thorough property inspection, and review of the application by the City Council. For more information on this program, please see the link above.

- **Darts – Outdoor Chore Service**
 - <http://www.darts1.org/services/household-services/outdoor-chores>
 - Darts Outdoor Chore Service caters to older homeowners who are unable to keep up with common property maintenance, such as mowing the grass or raking leaves. These chore services are offered on a sliding scale fee system that is based on the homeowner's income.
 - More recently, Darts has begun taking on indoor projects as well. With grant money from the Department of Human Services, Darts has been able to install simple items in homes such as grab-bars and comfort-height toilets for older adults.

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**
 - http://www.dakotacda.org/cities_and_townships.htm#comm
 - The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is a federal program that provides multiple municipal funding opportunities. CDBG funding for Dakota County is managed by the Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA), who then distributes the funding to surrounding communities to better assist and develop residential housing environments, expand economic opportunities for low-income individuals, and to revitalize blighted conditions throughout the community.

- **Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)**
 - http://www.dakotacda.org/cities_and_townships.htm#home
 - The HOME program is a federal program that allocates the authority to local jurisdictions' to best determine how to distribute funds to provide affordable housing for individuals who are at or below 80 percent of the median income. Types of projects that are eligible for this form of funding include, but are not limited to new construction, rehabilitation, and rent assistance.

- **Home Improvement Loans**
 - <http://www.dakotacda.org/homeowners.htm#HomeImp2>
 - The Home Improvement Loans program provides zero percent interest funding to low and moderate-income individuals to make repairs and improvements to their home. Qualifying alterations for this program include, but are not limited to roof or window replacement, electrical or plumbing repairs, and special needs improvements such as ramps or bathroom modifications. For more information on this program, please see the link above.

- **First Time Home Buyer Program**
 - <http://www.dakotacda.org/homebuyers.htm#FTHB>
 - Can include Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance
 - Dakota County CDA partners with local mortgage lender to offer new homeowners, or individuals who have not owned a home in the past three years, up to \$10,000 in funding along with fixed low interest mortgage financing. This program also offers homebuyer education such as workshops and online courses.

- **Home Stretch Home Buyer Education Program**
 - <http://www.dakotacda.org/homebuyers.htm#HSEP2>
 - The Dakota County CDA offers monthly classes that are taught by professionals in the home-buying field, such as mortgage lenders, realtors, and home inspectors. Each class is designed to cover everything you need to know about buying your first home, covering topics such as budgeting, and credit issues, shopping for a home, and the purchasing and closing process.

- **Mortgage Foreclosure Counseling Program**
 - <http://www.dakotacda.org/homeowners.htm#MFPP2>
 - Residents of Dakota County committed to solving their financial problems can receive free counseling on foreclosure with referrals to additional resources, and sometimes, financial assistance. The Dakota County CDA employs homeownership specialists to evaluate the situation and suggest an action plan including an in-depth examination of the homeowner's finances to develop and implement a budget.

- **Pre-Purchase Counseling**
 - <http://www.dakotacda.org/homebuyers.htm#PPCP2>
 - This program is available to all interested parties, whether you are buying a home now or in the future. Pre-purchase counseling offers one-on-one consultations aimed to aid homebuyers in the process of purchasing a home, covering topics such as credit repair, household budgeting, and identifying different types of mortgage loans.

- **Senior Housing Program**
 - http://www.dakotacda.org/seniorhousing_program.htm
 - The Senior Housing Program is designed for adults age 55+, offering quality units in Apple Valley, Burnsville, Eagan, Farmington, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Mendota Heights, Rosemount, South St. Paul, and West St. Paul. Properties located in West St. Paul include The Dakota offering 59 units and Haskell Court offering 42 units.

- **Housing Improvement Area (HIA)**
 - <http://www.dakotacda.org/homeowners.htm#HIA>
 - The Housing Improvement Area (HIA) is a program available to cities within Dakota County that need housing improvements in a specific area. All improvements are done at the cost of properties within the designated area of improvement. Improvements must be done in a common area, accessible to all residents in the area of improvement. Approval includes a minimum of 55 percent of the homeowners in the area to sign a petition in favor of the project, a public hearing, and a veto period.

- **Energy Assistance Program**
 - <http://www.dakotacda.org/homeowners.htm#EAWP2>
 - <https://www.capagency.org/housing-services/energy-assistance/>
 - The Energy Assistance Program is administered by the Scott, Carver, and Dakota County Community Action Partnership (CAP) agency. This program is designed to help eligible homeowners maintain safe and affordable home energy; this can include bill payment assistance, home energy crisis intervention, and energy advocacy.

- **Redevelopment Program**
 - http://www.dakotacda.org/cities_and_townships.htm#redev
 - The Dakota County CDA's Redevelopment Program provides staff expertise to cities for redevelopment activities such as the acquisition of affordable housing sites to the redevelopment of commercial sites on behalf of cities.

Funding Opportunities

All local governments rely on a variety of revenue sources in order to operate a budget as it can provide priceless assistance in the redevelopment process. West St. Paul relies on specific revenue sources in order to help facilitate development and redevelopment projects in the city.

The following is a list of potential funding programs and relevant information for West St. Paul residents and staff.

Federal

- **Home Affordable Modification Program (HAMP)**
 - <https://www.treasury.gov/initiatives/financial-stability/TARP-Programs/housing/mha/Pages/hamp.aspx>
 - HAMP works by encouraging participating mortgage servicers to modify mortgages so struggling homeowners can have lower monthly payments and avoid foreclosure. It has specific eligibility requirements for homeowners and includes strict guidelines for servicers. The program includes incentives for homeowners, servicers, and investors to encourage successful mortgage modifications.

- **Home Affordable Refinance Program (HARP)**
 - <https://www.fhfa.gov/Homeownersbuyer/MortgageAssistance/Pages/HARP.aspx>
 - HARP allows homeowners who have seen a drop in their home value and are underwater refinance into better mortgage terms.

- **Home Affordable Foreclosure Alternatives Program (HAFA)**
 - http://www.freddiemac.com/singlefamily/service/docs/hafa_bulletin_fact_sheet.pdf
 - The Home Affordable Foreclosure Alternatives (HAFA) initiative offers eligible borrowers who did not qualify for or complete a permanent modification under the Home Affordable Modification program (HAMP) or another home retention option to avoid foreclosure.

- **Federal Housing Administration Rehabilitation Loans**
 - <https://www.fha.com/refinance>
 - Many buyers decide to purchase a home that is significantly older, and not in the best condition. The FHA 203(k) Rehabilitation Loan enables borrowers to finance the purchase or refinance of a home, along with its renovation or "rehabilitation" of the property.

- **Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly**
 - https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/mfh/progdesc/eld202
 - The Section 202 program helps expand the supply of affordable housing with supportive services for the elderly. It provides very low-income elderly with options that allow them

to live independently, but in an environment that provides support activities such as cleaning, cooking, transportation, etc.

- **Housing Choice Voucher Program**

- http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/housing_choice_voucher_program_section_8
- The housing choice voucher program is the federal government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Since housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual, participants are able to find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses, and apartments.

- **Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant**

- https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/cn
- The Choice Neighborhoods program helps communities transform neighborhoods by revitalizing severely distressed public and/or assisted housing and catalyzing critical improvements in the neighborhood, including vacant property, housing, businesses, services, and schools.

State

- **Don't Borrow Trouble Minnesota Campaign**

- http://www.fhfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Dont_Borrow_Trouble_Report.pdf
- Don't Borrow Trouble Minnesota (DBT) is a public education and community outreach campaign that seeks to prevent predatory lending in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Launched in March 2003, the campaign combines education and counseling to help individuals and families become and remain successful long-term homeowners.

- **Start Up - MHFA First Time Home Buyers**

- <http://www.mnhousing.gov/sites/lenders/mortgage>
- Start Up is a statewide mortgage program for eligible first time homebuyers. Available through participating lenders, Start Up offers affordable interest rates, a three percent down payment option, and closing cost assistance loans.

- **MHFA Fix Up and Community Fix Up Loan**

- <http://www.mnhousing.gov/wcs/Satellite?c=Page&cid=1360797573568&pagename=External%2FPage%2FEXTStandardLayout>
- Fix Up is a statewide home improvement loan program for eligible homeowners, available through participating lenders. The Community Fix Up Loan Program is an add-on program

for eligible Fix Up lending partners and provides affordable, fixed interest rate loans with lower rates for energy and accessibility loans.

- MHFA Rehabilitation Loan
 - <http://www.mnhousing.gov/sites/lenders/rehab>
 - The Rehabilitation Loan Program (RLP) provides deferred loan financing to eligible low-income homeowners statewide who are unable to secure home improvement financing in the private sector. Funds may be used for basic home improvements that directly affect the home's safety, habitability, or energy efficiency.

- DEED Redevelopment Grant Program
 - <https://mn.gov/deed/government/financial-assistance/cleanuo/redevelopmentgrantprogram.iso>
 - The Redevelopment Grant Program helps communities with the costs of redeveloping blighted industrial, residential, or commercial sites and putting land back into productive use.

- Impact Fund
 - <http://www.mnhousing.gov/wcs/Satellite?c=Page&cid=1358906164357&pagename=External%2FPAGE%2FEXTStandardLayout>
 - The Community Homeownership Impact Fund (Impact Fund) provides funding for developers and administrators of single family, owner-occupied affordable housing activity throughout the state. Funding is accessed through a competitive Single Family Request for Proposals (RFP) process.

County

- Community Development Block Grant
 - <https://www.dakotacda.org/community-development/community-development-block-grant-program/>
 - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding helps to further rehabilitation opportunities and projects for low- and moderate- income persons and to eliminate blight conditions.

- Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)
 - <https://www.dakotacda.org/doing-business-with-the-cda/housing-finance-resources/>
 - The Home Investment Partnership (HOME) Program is a flexible federal grant program that allows participating jurisdictions to decide how funds will be used to provide affordable housing for people at or below 80 percent of median income.

- Home Improvement Loans
 - <http://www.dakotacda.org/homeowners.htm#HomeImp2>
 - The Home Improvement Loan Program assists low- and moderate-income homeowners with making repairs and improvements to their homes, like roof replacement, furnace replacement, electrical and plumbing repairs, and insulation.

- First Time Home Buyer Program
 - <http://www.dakotacda.org/homebuyers.htm#FTHB>
 - Homebuyers purchasing their first home in Dakota County can access fixed, low-interest mortgage financing along with a Mortgage Credit Certificate and up to \$8,500 in down payment and closing cost assistance through our First Time Homebuyer Program. Since 1983, this program has helped over 5,000 Dakota County residents purchase their first home.

- Home Stretch Home Buyer Education Program
 - <http://www.dakotacda.org/homebuyers.htm#HSEP2>
 - The CDA's Home Stretch Homebuyer Education Program, Framework Online Homebuyer Education Program, and Pre-Purchase counseling are ways that potential homebuyers can educate themselves on the unknowns of homeownership. Homebuyer education will give buyers the tools and resources needed to become a successful homeowner.

- Mortgage Foreclosure Counseling Program
 - <http://www.dakotacda.org/homeowners.htm#MFPP2>
 - The CDA's Mortgage Foreclosure Program is a free advisory program for homeowners who are nearing foreclosure. A homeownership advisor can provide information and review options to help people stay in their home.

- Senior Housing Program
 - http://www.dakotacda.org/seniorhousing_program.htm
 - The Senior Housing Program is designed for adults age 62+. The development offers residents a sense of community while they enjoy their golden years. All senior buildings are beautifully decorated, offer one- and two-bedroom apartments and are equipped with amenities such as a community room with a kitchen, libraries, laundry facilities, emergency call systems, and underground heated parking.

- Energy and Weatherization Assistance Program
 - <https://www.dakotacda.org/housing-resources/homeownership/weatherization-energy-efficiency/>
 - Weatherization services will permanently reduce energy bills by helping to make your home more energy efficient. The program provides income qualified homeowners in

Carver, Dakota, and Scott Counties with grants to assist with making their home more energy efficient.

- Redevelopment Program
 - <https://www.dakotacda.org/community-development/redevelopment-program/>
 - The CDA's Redevelopment Program provides staff expertise to assist cities with their redevelopment goals. The CDA has worked with cities on a wide variety of projects ranging from the acquisition of affordable housing sites to the redevelopment of commercial sites.

Met Council

- Livable Communities Grants
 - <http://www.metrocouncil.org/Communities/Services/Livable-Communities-Grants.aspx>
 - The Livable Communities Act (LCA) funds community investment that revitalizes economies, creates affordable housing, and links different land uses and transportation. LCA's voluntary, incentive-based approach leverages partnerships and shared resources to help communities achieve their regional and local goals.

Local Initiative

- Darts – Outdoor Chore Service and Home Repairs
 - <https://dartsconnects.org/home-services/>
 - As we get older, sometimes tasks like shoveling snow, raking fall leaves or mowing the lawn can become unmanageable. With a little assistance, you can continue to be safe, live comfortably, and take pride in your home.

Private

- Habitat For Humanity - A Brush with Kindness
 - <http://www.tchabitat.org/abwk>
 - The A Brush with Kindness program focuses on exterior painting, and health and safety repairs. This home repair program utilizes a combination of volunteers and contractors to help homeowners affordably maintain their homes.
- Metro Paint-A-Thon
 - <https://www.metroaintathon.org/homeowner-eligibility>
 - Metro Paint-A-Thon helps low-income senior citizens, disabled adults, and veterans continue to live independently in their own homes. A volunteer team is matched to complete the exterior of homes and garages, thereby keeping it safe, secure, and beautiful and an asset to the neighborhood. All of this is done at no cost to the homeowner.

- Hearts and Hammers – Exterior Painting Program
 - <http://heartsandhammers.org/about/>
 - Hearts & Hammers – Twin Cities, Inc. is a private non-profit organization that provides exterior painting and home improvement assistance for senior and physically disabled homeowners. Assistance is provided at no cost, the work is done by volunteers, and the materials are donated.

- Rebuilding Together – Home Repair Program
 - <http://rebuildingtogether-twincities.org/apply/home-repair-program/>
 - Rebuilding Together strives to create healthier, livable homes by providing volunteer-delivered repairs including weatherizing, cleaning, installing flooring, patching and painting, siding, landscaping, and almost anything that restores the homeowners' independence, safety and security.

- Rebuilding Together – Safe at Home Program
 - <http://rebuildingtogether-twincities.org/apply/safe-at-home-program/>
 - The Safe at Home Program provides volunteer-delivered safety, fall prevention and entrance access modifications for older adults or those living with a disability so that they can continue to live in safety and independence in their own homes.

- Rebuilding Together – Accessibility Modification Program
 - <http://rebuildingtogether-twincities.org/apply/safe-at-home-program/>
 - The Accessibility Modifications Program provides larger, contractor-delivered environmental home modifications such as doorway widening and kitchen or bathroom renovations to enable aging-in-place and single-level living.

- Rebuilding Together – Critical Repair Program
 - <http://rebuildingtogether-twincities.org/apply/home-repair-program/>
 - The Critical Repair Program provides timely, contractor-delivered repair or replacement of essential systems such as HVAC, electrical, plumbing, outer envelope, and roofs that are critical to healthy, livable homes.