

The Senior Housing Crisis in Dane County

Olivia Parry, Sr. Planner, Dane County Planning and Development Dept.
Darrin Wasniewski, Outreach Director, AARP Wisconsin
Danny Afable, Development Manager, JT Klein

Taking the Next Step Together.



Regional Housing Network Meeting, September 18, 2025

FACT SHEET

Senior Housing 101

Does Dane County Need Senior Housing?



Yes! Dane County is experiencing a severe housing shortage, impacting the County's growing senior population's ability to find and maintain housing.

Demand for senior housing throughout Dane County exceeds the current supply. As of 2020, there were approximately 147,000 Dane County residents age 55 or older, and the population continues to grow quickly. However, there are only about 8,200 senior housing units in the county. The Regional Housing Strategy calls for the production of more senior housing units to better meet growing demand, particularly affordable, multi-family senior housing.

Overall Demand for Senior Housing

The current demand for senior housing outstrips the County's available supply.

Of the County's approximately 6,000 specialized age-restricted rental units, 2,100 are independent living units, 2,900 are assisted living units, and 1,000 are nursing/memory care units.



Dane County's 55+ age cohort is growing at a faster rate than the County's overall population, and faster than Wisconsin's 55+ population as a whole. Demand is expected to increase as Dane County's senior population continues to grow.

Current demand...

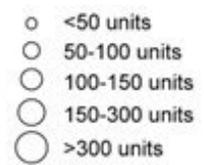
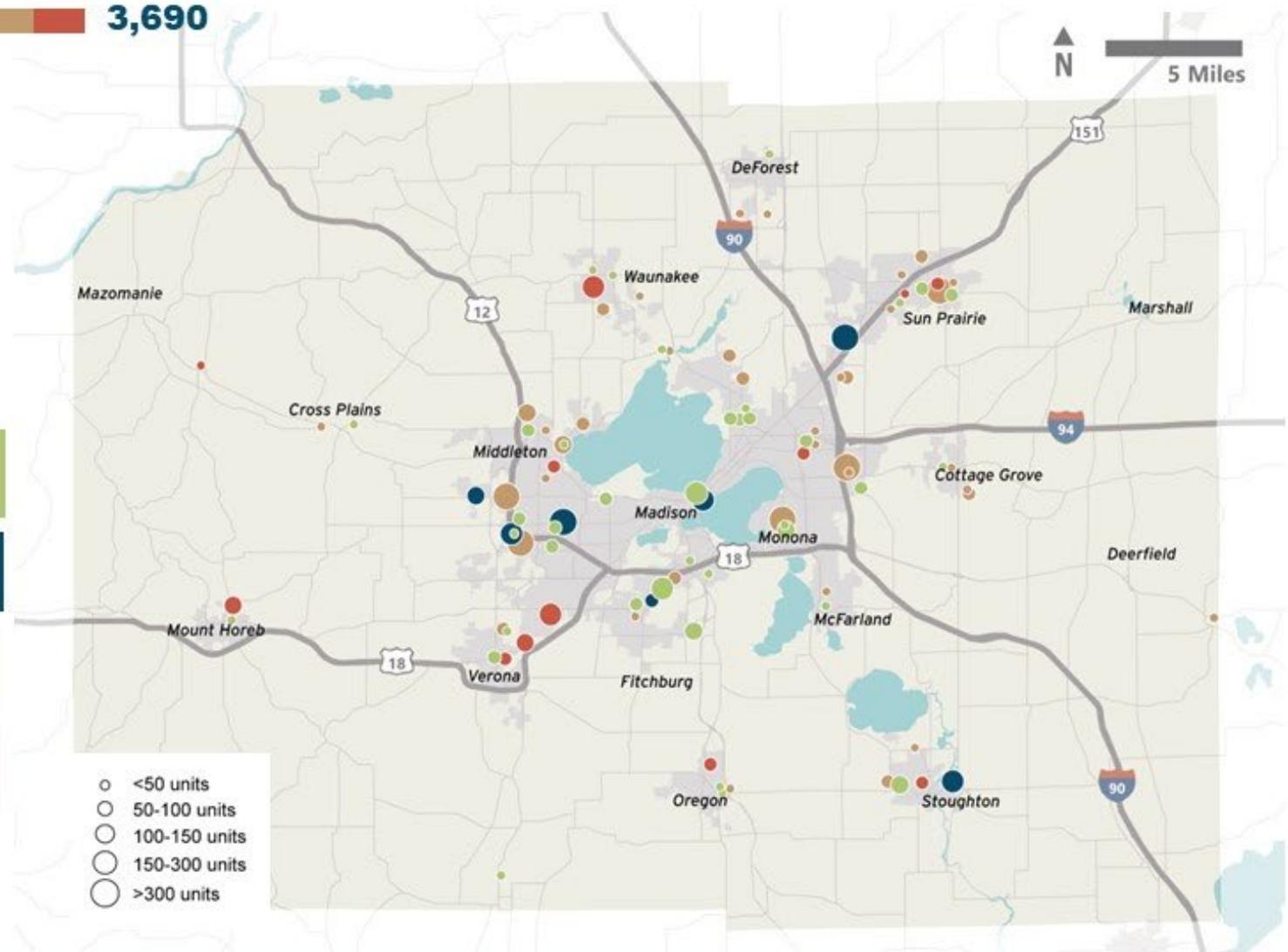
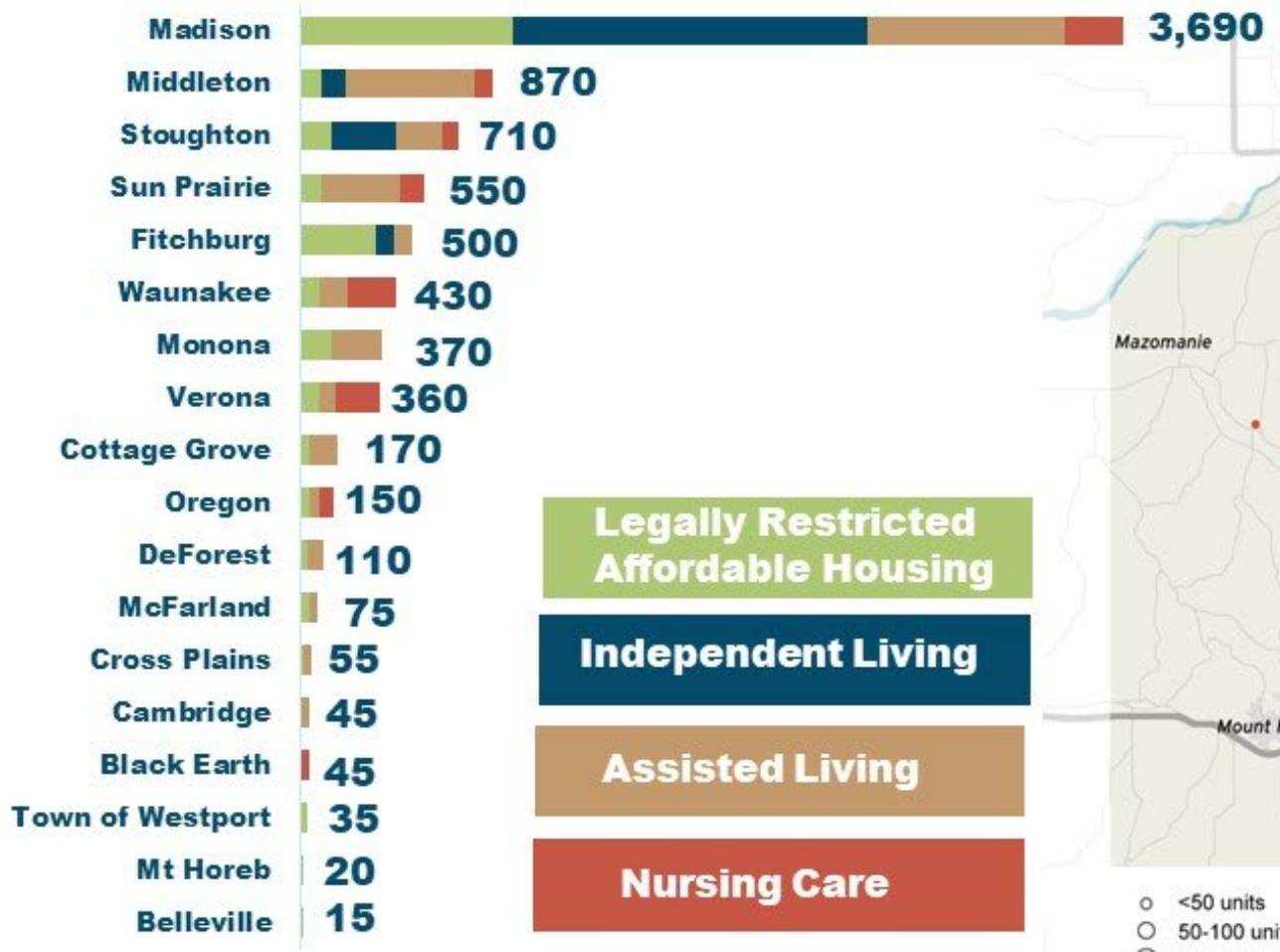
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SENIOR HOUSING INVENTORY BY MUNICIPALITY

ONE QUARTER OF THE 8,200 TOTAL SENIOR UNITS IN DANE COUNTY ARE AFFORDABLE



Source: NICMAP, CoStar, Dane County, WHEDA, HUD, SB Friedman

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SENIOR POPULATION GROWTH 2020-2040

1.5 x

The overall growth rate for people age 65 and older is expected to be 1.5 times higher than the overall population

Affordable senior housing (rental or for sale), is essential to market mobility because it ensures senior households have options for downsizing from single family homes



DANE COUNTY CHANGE BY AGE COHORT

EVERY AGE COHORT IS GROWING IN DANE COUNTY

Change in
DANE COUNTY
 and **WISCONSIN**
 population by age cohort
 from 2010 - 2020:

	≤ 14	15 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 54	55 - 74	75+
23.1% vs .5%	+3.6%	+15.1%	+8.0%	+1.5%	+30.8%	+21.9%
52.7% vs 35.5%	-4.7%	-1.7%	+2.2%	-9.6%	+26.1%	+9.4%

Dane County's population is increasing across all age cohorts, especially ages 55 and older.



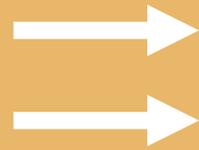
Source: US Census Bureau, SB Friedman



Demand for Senior Housing Units 2020-2040

From 2020-2040, Dane County needs to produce **8,200 senior housing units to meet the varying needs of the county's senior population.**

RHS identifies the need for **6,000 of these units to be affordable senior housing**, accessible to households at 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI) or less.



Dane County needs to produce **300 units of affordable senior housing per year 2020-2040**

"Maintenance is hard... All the things that you used to be able to do yourself start adding up and are extremely expensive."

- Senior Community Focus Group Participant



Economic and Social Benefits of Senior Housing



Market Mobility and New Housing Stock

Adding affordable senior housing units creates market mobility, and allows senior residents to downsize into units appropriate for their household size, income, and physical ability. With lower housing costs, less or no maintenance, seniors can age more safely within their households.

“New” Single-Family Units

When seniors sell their homes, this opens up single-family units in high demand for younger residents or growing families in the community to move into.

Aging in Place is Better for Your Health

Adequate senior housing allows seniors to age in place and stay in their community, maintain connections with family and friends, social networks, and keep the same health providers. Moving to a new community at an advanced age can often lead to isolation and poorer health outcomes.



Strategies to Support Affordable Senior Housing in Your Community

- Identify the number of affordable senior housing units your community needs in the housing chapter of your comprehensive plan. Providing unit demand will indicate your intent and support to developers.
- Identify the location for senior housing in your comprehensive plan (near transit corridors, services, and amenities), in your land use maps, helping to further clarify your vision for senior housing.
- Update your TIF ordinance to include affordable senior housing as a priority.



Strategies to Support Affordable Senior Housing in Your Community

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Oak Ridge at University Park- Madison



Heritage Middleton Senior Apartments- Middleton

Strategies to Support Senior Housing Development

- Educate residents about the demand for senior housing in your community
- Identify the number of affordable senior housing units your community needs in the housing chapter of your comprehensive plan. Providing market demand will indicate your intent and support to developers.
- Identify the location for senior housing in your comprehensive plan (near transit corridors, services, and amenities), helping to clarify your vision for senior housing.
- Update your TIF ordinance to include affordable senior housing as a priority.
- Issue a Request for Proposals for affordable senior housing identified in your comprehensive plan.
 - Fee waivers
 - Streamlined permitting to bring forward units faster
 - Identify gap financing or other costs for senior housing in your TIF Extension Fund program
 - Allow senior housing developers to exceed your multi-family cap, if you have one.
 - Update definition of family in your ordinance to allow for unrelated residents (seniors) to live together so they can save on expenses and get help with maintenance.
- **Market Rate Senior Housing**- adding market rate senior housing stock can include the construction of in-law units, or Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) on single-unit properties, and adding more diverse housing types such as townhomes, condominiums, and small-format zero-entry homes that are 1,000 square feet or less. Another future fact sheet will be added to address various types of housing for seniors.



Want to Learn More?

Email your questions to regionahousing@danecounty.gov or visit [rhs.danecounty.gov](https://www.danecounty.gov), to sign up for the monthly RHS housing newsletter.



To expedite delivery and help reduce costs of affordable senior units consider:

Fee waivers

Streamlined permitting, 3rd party approvals

TIF Extension Fund program

Identify gap financing or other expenses related for affordable senior housing development as eligible criteria

Allow senior housing developers to exceed your multi-family cap, if you have one

Update definition of family in your ordinance to allow for unrelated residents (seniors) to live together so they can save on expenses and get help with maintenance

Consider land banking and issue a Request for Proposals for affordable senior housing identified in your comprehensive plan





Regional Housing Network
Developing Affordable Senior Housing
September 18th, 2025

JTKLEIN, INC.
DEVELOPMENT • CONSTRUCTION • MANAGEMENT

Developer Background: JT Klein Company

- ▶ Founded in 2014, JT Klein Company is a local development company headquartered out of Madison, WI. All members of the development team grew up in Dane County (Madison, Sun Prairie, & Stoughton)
- ▶ JTK specializes in new construction market rate, affordable senior, and workforce housing
- ▶ JTK has completed 10 WHEDA tax credit affordable housing projects in Dane County
 - ▶ Over 1,000 units throughout the County
 - ▶ 164 units of affordable senior housing
 - ▶ Received 2025 9% competitive tax credit award for an 80 additional senior units
- ▶ All JTK developments are professionally managed by a local property management company, Oakbrook Corporation (Madison, WI)

Difference in Finishes & Amenities?

All JT Klein affordable developments contain the same high-level finishes and amenities found in a market rate project. Full size in unit washer/dryer

- Stainless steel appliances
- Granite countertops
- Luxury vinyl plank flooring
- Onsite amenities
 - Community room
 - Workout Facility
 - Onsite Management & Maintenance
 - Controlled access and cameras
 - Storage lockers
 - Library
 - Puzzle table & pool table



Difference in Finishes & Amenities?



Difference in Finishes & Amenities?



WHEDA - Affordable Housing Tax Credits

- ▶ Main source of financing for affordable housing projects
- ▶ WHEDA awards developers tax credits, which provide equity
- ▶ 30 year commitment to affordable rents
- ▶ Rents based on Area Median Income (AMIs)
- ▶ Competitive Scoring Process



Where to Building Affordable Senior Housing?

WHEDA Needs & Tenant Needs

- Census Tracts
 - Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs) / Difficult to Develop Areas (DDAs)
- Proximity to Neighborhood Amenities
 - Grocery Stores & Pharmacies
 - Senior Centers
 - Parks & Bike Paths
 - Restaurants & Retail
 - Salons
- Regular Bus Stop within 0.5 Miles
- Close Proximity to Family & Friends
 - Many seniors grew up in these communities

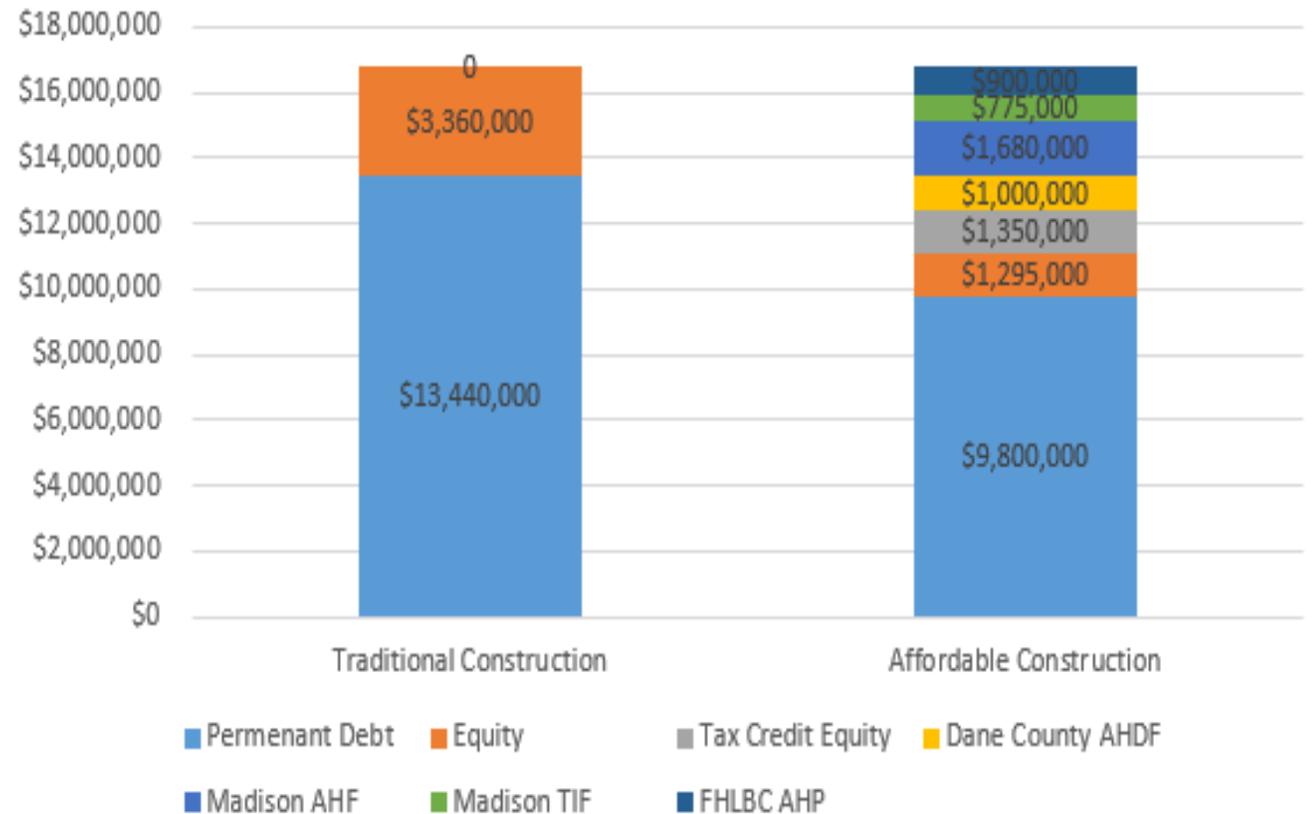
Affordable Housing Challenges - Timing

- Affordable projects can take 2+ years from site acquisition to ground breaking
 - Significant upfront cost
 - Challenge to find land sellers willing to wait
 - Construction pricing
- WHEDA & Grant applications are only once a year
 - Permissive zoning & committed funds
- Elongated Closing Process
 - Permanent lender
 - Tax credit investor
 - Grant / soft fund investors
- WHEDA scoring is always changing
 - projects that score well one year can score poorly the next year

Affordable Housing Challenges: Financing

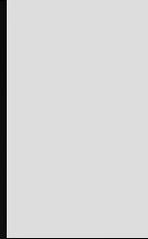
- Fixed Rents = Limited Debt
- Need for Soft Funds
- No Guarantee of Receiving Successful Soft Funds
- Volatile Construction Pricing & Rising Interest Rates Create Further Gaps
- Need 80%+ of Funds Committed to Apply

Sources: 68 Unit New Construction- 16.8mm



What Can Communities do to Help?

- Flexible Zoning & Detailed Comprehensive Plans
 - Revisiting Neighborhood Plans & Future Land Use Maps to Ensure Affordable Housing in Appropriate Locations
- Educated Staff & Commissioners
 - Confidence that elected officials understand the need
 - Invite developers to speak / share market trends
- Waiving Fees for Affordable Units (Impact fees, park fees, etc.)
- TIF Financing & Affordable Housing Funds
- Land Banking & RFPs Incentivizing Affordable Housing



Questions/Contact Information

JT Klein Company, Inc.

Danny Afable

dafable@jtklein.com

Office: (608)661-2345

