

Housing Town Hall: The 4 Lenses

“In 2040, Milwaukie is a flourishing city that is entirely equitable, delightfully livable, and completely sustainable. It is a safe and welcoming community whose residents enjoy secure and meaningful work, a comprehensive educational system, and affordable housing.” – Milwaukie All Aboard

Equity

The City of Milwaukie defines equitable housing as *“diverse, quality, physically accessible, affordable housing choices with access to opportunities, services, and amenities”*. Using equity as a lens helps address ingrained power dynamics that occur between dominant and non-dominant identities (e.g. race, age, class, physical ability, etc.). This issue of an imbalance of power can lead to policy decisions that disproportionately impact vulnerable populations. Using an equity lens can help us uplift vulnerable communities in the process of shaping housing policy in Milwaukie.

- Approximately 57% of people of color in Milwaukie are renters while approximately 38% of Whites are renters. Sixty-two percent of Milwaukie’s Hispanic or Latino residents rent their homes.¹

Affordability

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development defines affordable housing as *“any housing that costs an owner or renter no more than 30 percent of gross household income, including utilities”*.

Households that pay more than 30 percent of their rents often struggle with having funds for food, health care, transportation, childcare among other necessities that determine people’s quality of life.² Utilizing affordability as a lens helps ensure an improved and sustained quality of life.

- 32% of homeowners and 51% of renters are spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing-related costs
- 27% of all Milwaukie households are spending more than 50% of their incomes on housing

Sustainability

How we choose to manage the forecasted population growth and housing needs in the built environment plays an instrumental role in if/how we will reduce our building, transportation, and materials-related emissions to meet our climate action goals set forth in Milwaukie’s Community Climate Action Plan.

Using sustainability as a lens allows us to consider tradeoffs that will guide the development of housing policies that help us become a carbon neutral city by 2050.³

Livability

According to AARP, *“livability is about realizing values that are central to healthy communities: independence, choice, and security.”*⁴ When thinking about livability as a lens, housing affordability and access, proximity to amenities and needs, access to multimodal transportation options and a clean environment, encouraging innovation while honoring the small town feel of Milwaukie’s existing neighborhoods, and the promotion of public health are all aspects that can be considered as we refine housing policies for the Comprehensive Plan.

¹ U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2013-2017

² Milwaukie Housing Affordability Strategy (MHAS): 2018-2023 Action Plan. (2017). City of Milwaukie.

³ Milwaukie Community Climate Action Plan. (2017). City of Milwaukie.

⁴ AARP Livability Index. (2018). AARP. Retrieved from livabilityindex.aarp.org/livability-defined

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Tradeoffs		Related Lens(es)
Preserving the visual character of existing neighborhoods	Promoting opportunities for people with a broader range of needs, incomes, and backgrounds	Equity, Livability
Reducing the cost to purchase housing	Promoting sustainable building and design features	Equity, Affordability, Sustainability
Preserving the visual character of existing neighborhoods	Increasing affordability through innovative building materials (modular housing)	Livability, Affordability
Protect and preserve tree canopy	Allow a wider range of housing types	Equity, Affordability, Sustainability
Providing “private open space” e.g., larger yards	Expanding the types of housing allowed in more traditional single-family neighborhoods	Affordability, Livability
Preserving the visual character of existing neighborhoods	Increasing opportunities for more inclusive, flexible and efficient housing design	Equity, Livability
Providing parking for housing units	Increasing housing development at a lower cost	Equity, Affordability, Livability