



# **Senior Housing & Retirement Village Development Landscape in Detroit**

**June 2025**

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**Housing & Revitalization Department  
Policy Development  
& Implementation Division**



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## Introduction

Since 2010, the share of Detroit's population that is 65 years and older has steadily increased. While most Detroiters in this age group are homeowners, the proportion of Detroit residents ages 65 and older who rent has slightly increased since 2010. As Detroiters age, it is critical that the city maintains a diverse housing supply that allows senior households to age in place in the city they have called home for decades.

In 2024, the Detroit City Council requested that the Housing & Revitalization Department conduct an analysis of the landscape of housing for an aging population, with a specific focus on "Retirement Village" models. This analysis was conducted to provide City Council, the Housing & Revitalization Department, other City departments and public agencies, community organizations, and other interested stakeholders with important context, background, data, and analysis pertaining to senior housing development in Detroit. This analysis includes:

- A summary of population statistics and housing needs for senior households in Detroit and the greater region
- An overview of research on existing surveys of seniors regarding resource gaps and housing preferences
- A summary of Detroit's current inventory and construction pipeline of senior housing options
- Definitions of senior housing types used in the housing industry
- An overview of the "Retirement Village Model" and an assessment of development feasibility in Detroit
- A brief survey of innovative and emerging practices in senior housing development

This analysis is intended to serve as a primer for policy makers and other stakeholders to gain a foundational understanding of the senior housing landscape and potential areas of focus for the preservation and development of affordable senior housing.

## Senior Demographic & Housing Profile in Detroit

### ***Population and Tenure***

Detroit is home to 94,023 residents ages 65 and older, which represents ~15% of the city's population.<sup>1</sup> Seniors ages 60 and older make up 21% of Detroit's population. There are 66,113 housing units in which the head of household is age 65+. Nearly 68% of these housing units are owned (44,800) with the remaining 32% rented (21,313 units).

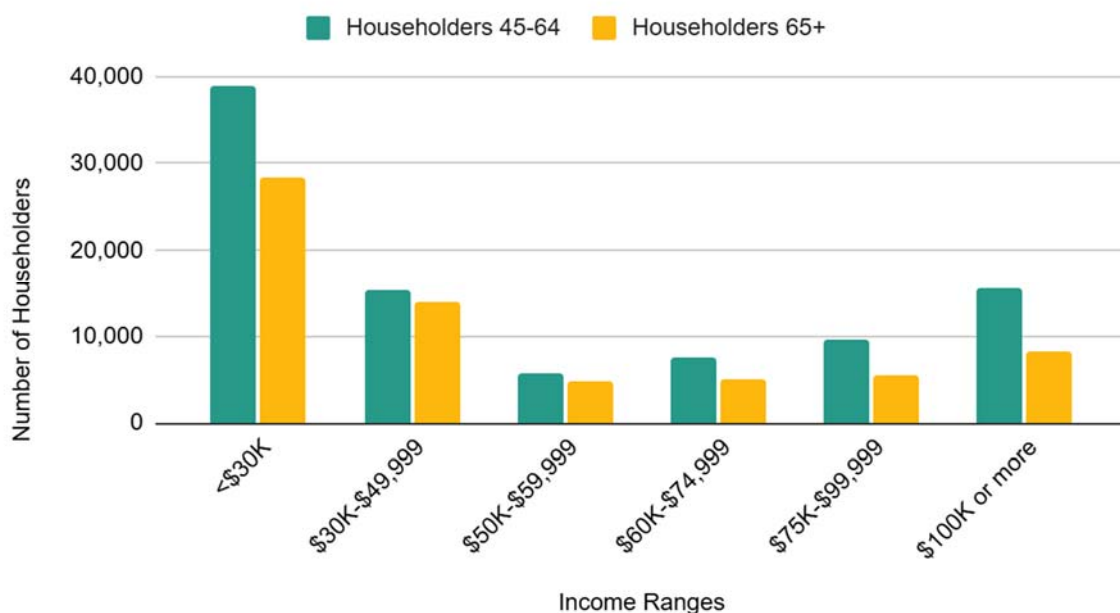
<b>Tenure By Age of Householder in Detroit</b>						
Year	Owner Occupied Units with Householders 65+	Total Owner Occupied Units	Share of Owner Occupied Total	Renter Occupied Units with Householders 65+	Total Renter Occupied Units	Share of Renter Occupied Total
2010	42,369	147,688	<b>29%</b>	15,123	123,362	<b>12%</b>
2020	45,254	128,739	<b>35%</b>	20,372	141,707	<b>14%</b>
2023	44,800	125,927	<b>36%</b>	21,313	127,280	<b>17%</b>
Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates						

### Household Composition and Demographics

Older residents in Detroit are living in a variety of living situations, some alone and others in intergenerational households.

Of 107,658 households with residents living alone, about 34% of those are 65 years or older.<sup>2</sup> Of the 253,207 total households estimated to live in Detroit, approximately one third include one or more household members who are 65 or older. There are 17,840 grandparents living with their own grandchildren under the age of 18, and about 38% of those grandparents are responsible for their grandchildren.<sup>3</sup>

### Incomes of Older Residents in Detroit



Approximately 64% of householders ages 65 years and older make \$49,999 or less.<sup>4</sup> Comparatively, about 58% of householders ages 45 to 64 and 58% of householders ages 25 to 44 make \$49,999 or less.

## Senior Housing Preferences & Barriers to Choice

Nationally, recent American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) surveys show that a majority of adults 50 years and older want to stay in their home and community for as long as possible.<sup>5</sup> However, roughly half of adults do not fully trust that their community will be able to meet their needs as they age, impacting their ability to age in place. Many seniors 50 years and older cite financial difficulties -- such as the cost of rent or a mortgage and the need to lower housing costs and have a home that costs less to maintain -- to be a driving factor behind future decisions to move out of their current homes.<sup>6</sup> While most adults would consider downsizing to a smaller residence if their needs changed, the desire to remain in single-family homes remains strong. Although residents 50 years and older place higher priority on community features like access to affordable and high-quality health care services and clean water, national AARP surveys indicate that the importance of opportunities for social connection and entertainment have increased among all adults since 2021.

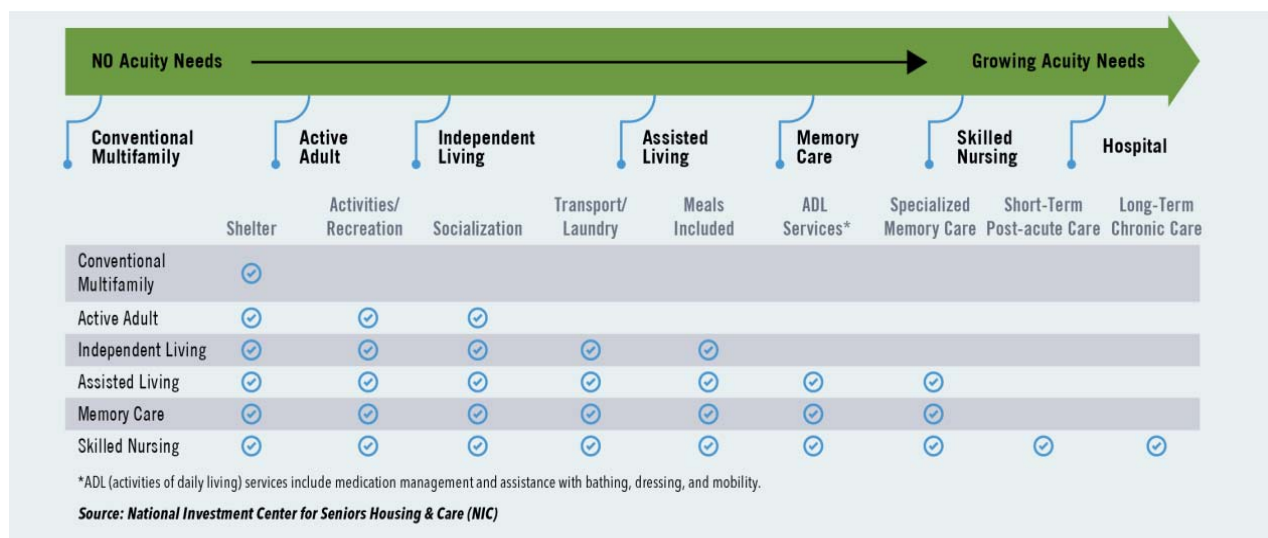
Along with economic and housing affordability constraints, the accessibility of older adults' current homes also is a factor in determining the ability for seniors to age in place as they develop disabling conditions. A 2022 University of Michigan national survey of adults ages 50-80 illustrated that while seniors find it important to remain in their homes as long as possible, about 1 in 5 adults said they did not have the necessary home features to help them age in place.<sup>7</sup> Nearly half of responding adults said they had given little or no consideration to the home modifications they might need in the future. Because many older adults live on fixed incomes, the ability for them to afford home modifications to safely age in place can be uncertain, especially for lower-income seniors.

Local assessments in the Detroit area align with national studies indicating the need for older residents' communities to provide a full spectrum of resources and services.<sup>8</sup> Almost one in five seniors said that maintaining their current residence and paying for utilities was difficult, according to a community assessment conducted by Wayne State University and the Detroit Area Agency on Aging. Stakeholders also expressed the importance of community services for older residents, including health and wellness programs, services that help seniors access health and supportive services, home care and housekeeping services, and supportive services for people providing care.

## Senior Housing Classifications

In the senior housing market, practitioners categorize senior housing options into a few commonly used classifications based on the level of services provided to senior residents. These categories include:

- *Conventional Multifamily*: Standard multifamily buildings that can cater to senior residents or have minimum age requirements for residency.
- *Active Adult*: Living arrangements that include social and recreation activities for seniors.
- *Independent Living*: Living arrangements where residents require little or no assistance. These communities can also vary greatly in terms of amenities and atmosphere for clients. Congregate living facilities can have meal plans, housekeeping, and laundry services.
- *Assisted Living/Memory Care*: Living arrangements where residents require assistance with some or many activities of daily living but can still live without 24-hour medical care.
- *Skilled Nursing Facilities*: Living arrangements where residents need significant, daily medical care.
- *Continuing Care Retirement Communities*: Facilities that combine two or more of the above, such as independent, assisted, and nursing units. This model is designed so that seniors do not have to move as the level of care they need changes.



In the East North Central region of the United States -- which includes the top 21 metropolitan statistical areas in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin -- the region's independent living and assisted living occupancy have seen increases since 2021/2022. The occupancy rate for both of these types of housing hovered around 86% as of Q2 2024.<sup>9</sup> As of mid-2024, there were 1,790 independent living and 1,800 assisted living units under construction in the region.



# Current Senior Housing Landscape in Detroit

## Existing Senior Housing in Detroit

There are approximately 74 affordable housing properties in Detroit that specifically serve elderly residents, representing roughly 9,047 units of affordable housing. Of these affordable units, nearly 6,000 of these units are affordable to households from 20-50% area median income (AMI). These properties range from larger multifamily apartment buildings to smaller 2-story garden apartments. A table of these properties can be found below in Figure 3. While each of the properties below have units designated for seniors, some are also open to other populations like families and residents with disabilities.

Figure 3: Existing Affordable Senior Housing Portfolio in Detroit

Project Name	Year Built	Project Address	Affordable Units	Council District	Type
8330 On The River	1976	8330 E Jefferson Ave	280	5	High Rise
Across The Park Apartments	1979	2700 S Annabelle St	201	6	High Rise
Bellemere Apartment Homes	1956	14824 Greenfield Rd	88	1	Low Rise
Bicentennial Tower	1976	4 E Alexandrine St	299	6	High Rise
Bowin Place	1998	15400 W 7 Mile Rd	193	2	High Rise
Calumet Townhouses	1979	4387 3rd St	104	6	Low Rise
Cambridge Towers	1981	19101 Evergreen Rd	250	1	High Rise
Cameron Court	2009	8600 Cameron St	48	5	Low Rise
City Modern	2019	124 Alfred St	54	6	Low Rise
Clement Kern Gardens	1985	1661 Bagley St	87	6	Low Rise
Conner Creek Elderly Apts	2005	4661 E Outer Dr	48	3	Low Rise
Delray Senior Housing	2004	275 W Grand Blvd	72	6	Low Rise
Delta Manor Apartments	1988	2150 E Vernor Hwy	99	5	Mid Rise
Devin Apartments	1923	2740 Chicago Blvd	42	5	Low Rise
Dickerson Manor	2011	722 Emerson St	66	4	Low Rise
Pablo Davis	1999	9200 W Vernor Hwy	80	6	Low Rise
Eden Manor	1995	18040 Coyle St	64	2	Low Rise
Ellis Manor	1994	19200 Shiawassee Dr	88	1	Low Rise
Evangelical Manor	1992	6720 W Outer Dr	64	2	Low Rise
Faith Manor	1990	15321 Archdale St	56	7	Low Rise
Forest Park Place	1974	1331 E Canfield St	97	5	Mid Rise
Freedom Place	1981	1101 W Warren Ave	352	6	Mid Rise
Gardenview Estates III C	2013	8401 Woodmont	84	7	Low Rise
Gardenview Estates III D	2013	8401 Woodmont	82	7	Low Rise & Rowhouse
Gateshead Crossing	1976	4950 Gateshead St	45	4	Low Rise

Greenhouse Apartments	1981	17300 Southfield Svc Dr	208	2	Mid Rise
Village of Harmony Manor	2005	15050 Birwood St	43	2	Low Rise
Hartford Village	2017	17500 Meyers Rd	17	2	Cottages and apartments
Himelhoch Apartments	1901	1545 Woodward Ave	36	6	Mid Rise
Jefferson Meadows	1990	13101 Freud St	83	4	Low Rise
Jennings Senior Living	2014	7815 E Jefferson Ave	46	5	Low Rise
Kamper Stevens	1962	1410 Washington Blvd	163	6	High Rise
Lexington Village	1980	1310 Pallister St	350	5	High Rise
McGivney-Bethune Apts.	1984	16850 Wyoming St	79	2	Low Rise
McAuley Commons	1993	11500 Shoemaker St	58	4	Low Rise
Medical Center Village	1978	4701 Chrysler	190	5	Mid Rise
Meyers Elderly Housing	1998	18000 Meyers Rd	74	2	Low Rise
Morton Manor	1983	20000 Dequindre St	150	3	Mid Rise
Oak Village Square Apts.	1998	4241 Burlingame St	74	7	Low Rise
Orchestra Place	1927	100 Parsons St	82	6	Mid Rise
Orchestra Towers	1974	3501 Woodward Ave	248	6	High Rise
Parkview Place	1973	1401 Chene St	197	5	High Rise
Parkview Tower & Square	1979	1601 Bradby Dr	350	5	High Rise & Townhome
Phillip Sims	1991	800 Dickerson St	121	4	High Rise
Pilgrim Meadows	2001	3843 Puritan St	30	2	Low Rise
Plymouth Square Village Apts	1981	20201 Plymouth Rd	280	7	High Rise
Restoration Towers	1980	16651 Lahser Rd	147	1	Mid Rise
Rev. Dr. Jim Holley Apts	2023	9001 Woodward Ave	60	5	Low Rise
Rio Vista	2001	1250 18th St	64	6	Low Rise
River Park Vill. Senior Apts	1922	415 Burns Dr	108	5	High Rise
River Towers	1976	7800 E Jefferson Ave	469	5	High Rise
Riverbend Towers	1974	4386 Conner St	95	4	Mid Rise
Thome Rivertown	2016	3103 Wight St	50	5	Low Rise
Robert Holmes Teamster Hsg	1986	5100 Brush St	99	5	Mid Rise
Sheridan Place I	1982	7501 E Jefferson	203	5	High Rise
Sheridan Place II	1981	7601 E Jefferson Ave	200	5	High Rise
Springwells Village	2000	2702 Carson St	24	6	Townhomes
The Village of St. Martha's	2009	15875 Joy Rd	45	7	Low Rise
Theresa Maxis Apartments	1991	16800 Wyoming St	79	2	Low Rise
University Meadows	1992	4500 Trumbull St	53	6	Low Rise
Van Dyke Center	1980	8100 Gratiot Ave	200	5	Mid Rise & Townhome
Village Center I	1983	901 Pallister St	200	5	High Rise
Village Center II	Unknown	823 Delaware St	54	5	Unknown
Village Of Bethany Manor	1997	8737 14th St	51	5	Low Rise

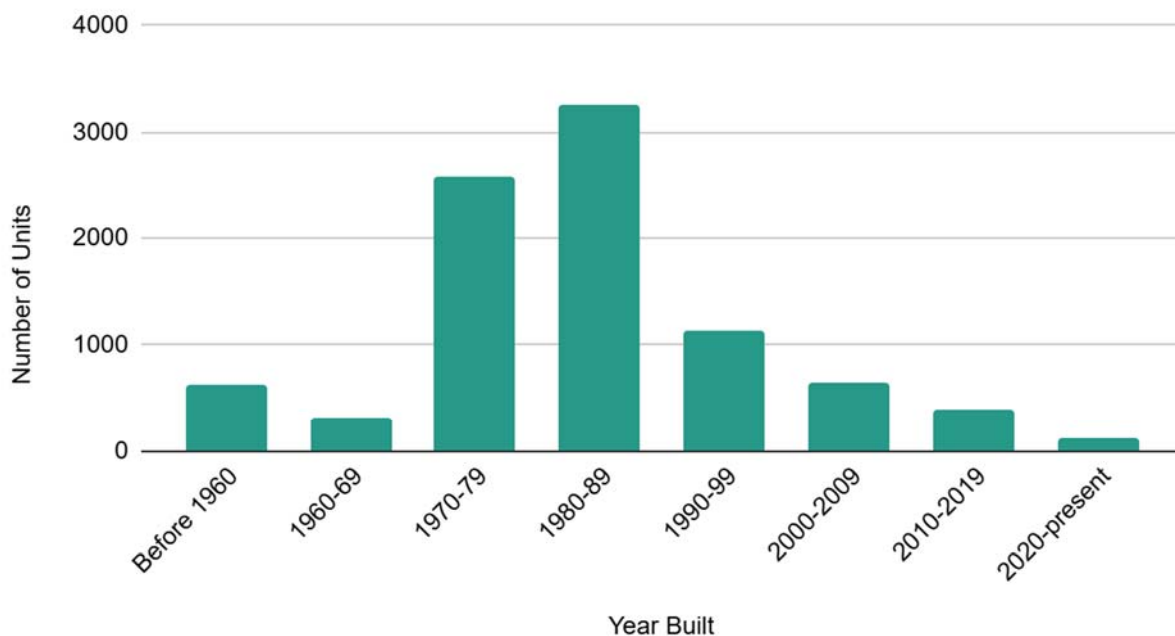


Village Of Brush Park Manor	2001	2900 Brush St	112	5	Low Rise
Village of Oakman Manor	2007	14034 Woodrow Wilson St	54	2	Low Rise
Village Of Woodbridge Mnr.	2002	1300 MLK Jr Blvd	100	6	Low Rise
Warren Plaza Apartments	1980	430 E Warren Ave	197	5	Mid Rise
Warren West Apartments	1969	4100 W Warren Ave	143	6	Mid Rise
Washington Boulevard	1923	234 State St	114	6	High Rise
Williams Pavilion	1985	99 E Forest Ave	149	6	High Rise
Wellington Square I	1926	59 Seward St	49	5	Mid Rise
Wellington Square II	1926	59 Seward St	45	5	Mid Rise
Woodbridge Estates Ph. IX	2020	1200 MLK Jr Blvd	61	6	Low Rise

*\*Note on Definitions and Analysis for Figure 3: High rise apartments contain 11 floors or more. Mid rise buildings are 7-10 floors. Low rise are less than 7 floors.*

The majority of the existing affordable senior housing portfolio in Detroit older housing stock. The majority of existing units were constructed in the 1970s and 1980s. Excluding a handful of historical buildings in Detroit, the average age of existing affordable senior housing in Detroit is estimated at about 34 years old.

Number of Units vs. Year Built



Resident surveys conducted by Senior Housing Preservation Detroit (SHP-D), a coalition formed to advocate for the housing needs of seniors, illustrate the importance of improving

the quality of existing senior housing in the city. In 2022, coalition member United Community Housing Coalition canvassed 392 units of subsidized housing across eight existing affordable housing properties in Midtown and Downtown Detroit. They completed 225 interviews, and 88% of respondents were seniors.

Through this effort, over 62% indicated they were not satisfied with the condition of their building.<sup>10</sup> Respondents highlighted accessibility, repairs/maintenance, safety and security, and pests as primary challenges. Resident accounts also showcase the importance of integrating services, community resources, and social connection opportunities with housing to meet Detroiters' holistic needs. The majority (67%) of respondents earned \$1,110 or less per month, and 88% of seniors reported two or more health conditions. Nearly 80% of respondents did not have access to a vehicle, nearly 40% reported difficulty in paying for fresh food/fruits and vegetables, and 43% of residents reported feeling lonely or isolated often or sometimes.

### ***Senior Housing in the Development Pipeline***

The Housing & Revitalization Department continues to make investments into the construction of new affordable senior housing. There are currently six senior properties in the development pipeline:



- **Development Name:** Dr. Violet T. Lewis Village
- **Location:** On the site of the former Lewis College of Business at 17370 Meyers Rd.
- **Unit Profile:** 105 total units, with rents ranging from 30-80% AMI; building includes project-based vouchers for extremely low-income households
- **Project Details:** Includes the renovation of two historic structures on the Lewis College of Business site and construction of a new, four-story building
- **City Funding:** \$500,000 in HOME funding and \$1,250,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funds



- **Development Name:** Greystone Senior Living Apartments
- **Location:** 440 Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard
- **Unit Profile:** 49 units; 1- and 2-bedroom units ranging from 30-60% AMI
- **Project Details:** Affordable housing project is spearheaded by Cass Community Neighborhood Development Corporation
- **City Funding:** \$1,626,988 in HOME funding, as of Feb. 2025



- **Development Name:** Trinity Village Apartments
- **Location:** 21101 W. McNichols in Old Redford
- **Unit Profile:** 53 units, ranging from 30-80% AMI
- **Project Details:** Co-developed by community-based organization Detroit Blight Busters
- **City Funding:** \$1,534,639, as of Feb. 2025



- **Development Name:** Archdale Senior Living
- **Location:** 7225-7262 Archdale in Warrendale Cody Rouge
- **Unit Profile:** 53 units, ranging from 30-60% AMI
- **Project Details:** The proposed building is designed for independent, senior residents to include housing and community space for resident activities
- **City Funding:** Not yet finalized



- **Development Name:** Gesu Senior Housing
- **Location:** 17198 Oak Dr. in University District
- **Unit Profile:** 36 units, ranging from 30-80% AMI
- **Project Details:** MHT Housing and Gesu Parish Detroit are spearheading the project, which will consist of a two-story building connected to an adaptive reuse of the existing former rectory building
- **City Funding:** Not yet finalized

# Financing for Senior Housing Development

## Senior Housing Financing

Senior housing is financed by both public and private investment. Calculating the cost incurred by residents to live in senior housing options is shaped by several factors, including:

- If the resident lives in housing subsidized by public funding
- If the resident lives in housing not established for the express purpose of providing medical or supportive assistance
- If the resident relies on healthcare services for daily living

Typically, subsidized affordable housing units for seniors in the United States are funded through the following federal resources:<sup>11</sup>

- **Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC):** LIHTC is the largest source of affordable housing subsidy in the nation. These tax credits are made available at the federal level and allocated to states to award to projects. Once awarded, developers can sell these credits to investors and use the proceeds of the sale of credits to finance affordable housing development. The LIHTC program can only be used for affordable rental housing.
- **HOME Rental Assistance:** A federal block grant to jurisdictions to provide affordable housing to low- and moderate-income families. The City of Detroit uses this allocation to create affordable housing and often distributes these funds to developers who have secured LIHTC credits to ensure HOME funds are used for projects that are financially feasible.
- **HUD Project-Based Rental Assistance:** Federal programming that provides rental assistance to owners of multifamily housing to make units affordable to low-income households. Tenants pay 30% of their income on housing costs, and the governmental resources fill in the gaps. Buildings can possess project-based rental assistance that are open to income-qualified households, including seniors.
- **Section 202 Supportive Housing For the Elderly Program:** This federal program provides capital advances to finance the construction, rehabilitation or acquisition of structures that will serve as supportive housing for very low-income elderly persons, as well as provides rent subsidies for the projects to help make them affordable to residents. This program is run through the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development based on Congressional appropriations.<sup>12</sup>

- **Housing Choice Vouchers:** Colloquially referred to as Section 8 tenant vouchers, these vouchers are awarded to individual households, who can take the voucher to private housing units on the market to receive reduced rent.

For seniors who need living options with integrated health services, the extent of financial assistance they can receive is more nuanced and dependent on the state in which they live and their health insurance. Medicaid pays nursing home costs on a long-term basis -- including room and board -- for residents who need that level of care and meet eligibility requirements, but eligibility criteria varies by state.<sup>13</sup> Medicare covers skilled nursing home care, and these stays are intended to be temporary.

Assisted living facilities are geared to older adults who need less medical care than what is provided in a nursing home but may need help with tasks related to daily living, such as dressing and bathing. Generally, most portions of Medicare do not cover the costs of assisted living. Medicaid does not cover room and board associated with assisted living, but states offer waiver programs that help cover some assisted living services.<sup>14</sup>

In Michigan, programs exist to encourage aging in place and provide financial assistance to seniors to meet their housing and healthcare needs. These programs include:

- **PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly):** Allows older adults to continue living at home while receiving services like acute care services and hospital services. These services are primarily offered through an adult day health center and can include in-home and referral services based on client needs.<sup>15</sup>
- **MI Choice Waiver Program:** Michigan's waiver program allows older eligible adults to receive Medicaid-covered services like those provided by nursing homes while staying in their own home or another residential setting.<sup>16</sup>
- **Affordable Assisted Living:** Affordable Assisted Living projects can receive points under the Michigan State Housing Development Authority's tax credit application, which funds affordable housing in the state of Michigan.<sup>17</sup> These projects combine senior apartment housing with health-related services for low- and moderate-income residents.

Due to the growth of the state's aging population, expanding the supply of affordable and accessible rental units for seniors, promoting the ability of older adults to age in a place of their choice, and increasing the number of affordable facilities that offer a continuum of care within one building or complex are goals under Michigan's recently released statewide housing plan.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Financial Barriers to Senior Housing Development***

More broadly, residential developments, including senior properties, are now more expensive to build in part due to the increasing costs of construction and materials. The table below shows the extent of construction material cost increases from February 2020 through September 2024 as pandemic-related supply chain constraints drastically affected prices. The price of steel jumped as high as 240% by December 2021 and remained 146%



above the February 2020 price as of late 2024. Lumber followed a similar price trend, increasing to a high of 215% above February 2020 prices in May of 2021, having since come down to 118% above the February 2020 price. Concrete did not experience a drastic jump in price but has steadily increased over the past four years and was at a recent high of 140% above February 2020 prices as of September 2024.

<b>Material</b>	<b>Post Pandemic High</b>	<b>Sept. 2024 Pricing (Relative to Feb. 2020)</b>
Steel	+240% Dec. 2021	+146%
Lumber	+215% May 2021	+118%
Concrete	+140% Sept. 2024	+140%

Along with these national factors, local housing stakeholders and developers say there are several other challenges to creating housing in Detroit, including:

- The development timeline for housing projects, particularly the permitting process, is long due to multiple reviewers. Consolidating approvals or allowing administrative approval for projects that meet specific thresholds could shorten timeline and thus reduce the opportunity for project costs to increase due to delays. Administrative inefficiencies have a disproportionate impact on smaller, lower-capacity developers, according to these stakeholders.
- Some developers report a lack of clarity in the City's development process
- Some developers feel that public approval processes add additional costly requirements
- A skilled labor shortage and increases in labor costs negatively impact projects
- Lack of public funding for pre-development activities hinders development

## Retirement Village Concept

For the purpose of this report, the definition of a retirement village is a community for senior residents that consists of multiple buildings or structures arranged to form a neighborhood on a large parcel or contiguous parcels. One recent example of this type of development in Detroit is Hartford Village, a gated senior living community located at 17500 Meyers Road in Northwest Detroit. Developed by Hartford Memorial Baptist Church and Presbyterian Villages of Michigan (PVM), Hartford Village provides cottages and apartment homes to seniors ages 62 and older. While an independent living community, Hartford Village helps connect residents to wellness services and health care resources offered through PVM's continuum of care communities, such as memory support and skilled nursing.

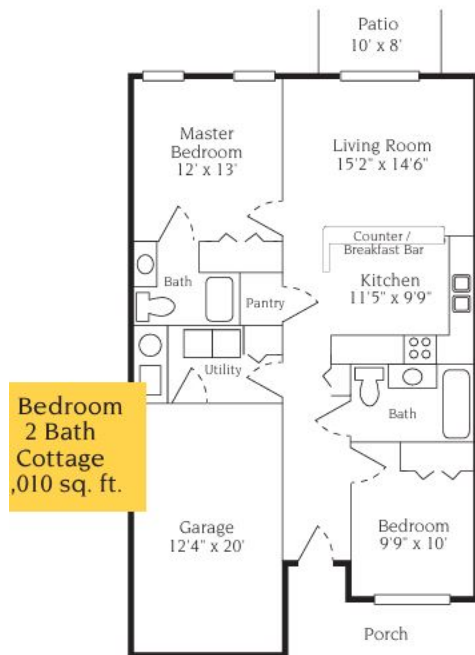




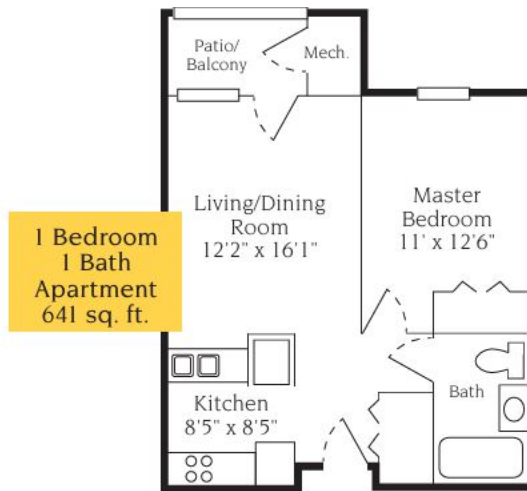
Hartford Village includes 39 ranch-style homes and 45 apartments. The mixed income property provides both market-rate and income-restricted units. Cottages have two bedrooms and two bathrooms, and apartments come in studios, 1 bedroom/1 bath units, and 2 bedroom/1.5 bath units. In 2025, the costs to occupy these units were the following:<sup>19</sup>

	Monthly Rates	Income Qualified Monthly Rates
One bedroom apartment	\$1,300	Starting at \$900
Two bedroom apartment	\$1,649	\$1,291
Cottages	\$1,892	\$1,859
Studios	\$840	

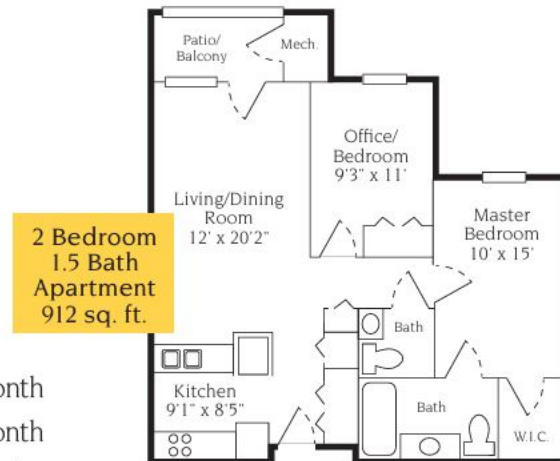
Site plans and floor plans of the development are as follows:



**Bedroom  
2 Bath  
Cottage  
1,010 sq. ft.**



**1 Bedroom  
1 Bath  
Apartment  
641 sq. ft.**



**2 Bedroom  
1.5 Bath  
Apartment  
912 sq. ft.**

**Optional fees:**

Carport	\$30 per month
Premium Satellite TV/Internet	\$65 per month



Officially opened in 2017, Hartford Village cost roughly \$17 million to develop. The property consists of one studio apartment, 27 one-bedroom apartments, 18 two-bedroom apartments, and 39 two-bedroom cottages.

Based on this composition and current rates to build various unit types, the cost to build this kind of development today is estimated to be between \$24 million and \$25.6 million (see calculation table below). This aligns closely with an alternative calculation based on the increase in the cost of inputs into multifamily residential construction from 2017 to 2025, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Using that calculation, the estimated costs of building Hartford Village now is roughly \$24,837,000.

Unit Type	Number of Units in Hartford Village	Per Unit Low Estimate	Per Unit High Estimate	Total Unit Cost Low Estimate	Total Unit Cost High Estimate
Studio	1	\$246,000	\$257,000	\$246,000	\$257,000
1 Bedroom	27	\$290,000	\$292,000	\$7,830,000	\$7,884,000
2 Bedroom	18	\$327,000	\$333,000	\$5,886,000	\$5,994,000
Cottage (1,010 sq ft per cottage)	39	\$255/sq ft	\$290/sq ft	\$10,044,450	\$11,423,100
<b>Total Estimated Development Cost (2025):</b>				<b>\$24,006,450</b>	<b>\$25,558,100</b>

### ***Retirement Village Feasibility Analysis and Senior Housing Land Use***

Larger retirement or senior communities typically require large development parcels, sprawling over several acres. The more “scattered site” in nature – meaning the more stand-alone structures in a senior property – the more acreage it requires.

In 2018, assisted living facilities ranged from 4 to 418 licensed beds,<sup>20</sup> and the average bed capacity was roughly 38 licensed beds.<sup>21</sup> Recent estimates show there are 4,133 assisted living communities in Michigan, representing about 57,852 total beds.<sup>22</sup> National surveys of projects indicated the average site area of a surveyed senior housing project in 2022 was nearly 7 acres.<sup>23</sup>

The local example of a retirement village model, Hartford Village, is built on a roughly 6.3-acre site.

## 17500 MEYERS ☆



A primary challenge with the retirement village development model in the urban context is the availability of suitable sites or the land assembly required to create a suitable site. Looking at the current inventory of public land, there are 33 instances of contiguous land of at least 5 acres, 29 owned by the City of Detroit and 4 owned by the Detroit Land Bank Authority. Of these 33 sites, 9 are located in one of the City's Targeted Multifamily development areas, indicating that they have market conditions that may be more suitable for multifamily development. There are a total of 25 sites that are 3+ acres, publicly owned, and in a Targeted Multifamily development area.

### **3+ acre sites that are DLBA and City owned parcels**

	DLBA Lot Assembly	In Targeted Multifamily Area	City Owned Lot Assembly	In Targeted Multifamily Area
3-3.99 acres	8	3	26	8
4-4.99 acres	2	1	12	4
5+	4	3	29	6

At this scale, the sites available in Detroit are well below those sought by the senior/retirement housing development industry. The table below shows the scale of other Michigan-based retirement villages:

Name and location of facility	Acres
Beaumont Commons in Farmington Hills	33+
Blossom Ridge (aka Flourish Collection) in Oakland County	44
Vicinia Gardens in Fenton	16
Woodhaven Senior Community in Flint Township	40

## Innovations in Senior Living

Beyond the traditional senior housing typologies, alternative housing arrangements have been deployed in cities throughout the country that increase community connectedness for older residents. A survey of these practices is below:

- Village-to-Village Network
  - Originated in Boston, the Village Movement has created villages across the country, which are community-based organizations formed through a group of neighbors.<sup>24</sup> Villages are membership-driven and self-governing, are typically run by volunteers, and may have some paid staff. Villages build a sense of community for members, coordinate access to services like transportation and health programming, and form partnerships with community agencies to benefit the village's members.
- Co-housing communities and cooperatives
  - In co-housing communities, members share common amenities, have smaller individual homes, and help manage and maintain the property.<sup>25</sup> Co-housing communities can be for seniors or intergenerational.
  - One local co-housing example is Sunward Co-housing in Ann Arbor, where a mix of families, single-person households, and retirees live in 40 private homes clustered on five acres.<sup>26</sup> The community is officially a condo association and residents participate in community decision-making.
  - In senior cooperatives, residents have a say in how it operates.<sup>27</sup> CSI Support and Development operates five co-op properties in Detroit.<sup>28</sup>
- Homesharing
  - In homesharing models, two or more unrelated people share a house or apartment.<sup>29</sup> There are several benefits to homesharing: the home seeker finds affordable housing, the home provider gets extra income to cover living expenses, the home provider can get extra assistance to maintain the home, and the homesharing model decreases social isolation for older adults.
  - One homesharing program is Sunshine Home Share Colorado, where home seekers complete about five hours a week of service on average for their home providers. The more service the home seeker conducts, the cheaper the rent will be in the living situation.<sup>30</sup> Typical home sharing services

conducted by the home seeker includes driving, yardwork, meal preparation, and minimal home maintenance and housekeeping. Sunshine provides staffing capacity to complete background checks, credit checks, and social work intakes on all program participants. Staff also help facilitate homeshare agreements, conduct quarterly check-ins, and provide assistance if conflicts arise between participants.

- University-based retirement communities (UBRC)
  - University-based retirement communities provide seniors housing options that are on a college campus or in walking distance of a campus.<sup>31</sup> Seniors benefit from a wide range of activities like sporting events and performance arts. Retirees can enroll in college classes, and these communities often provide seniors access to health care options.
- Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC)
  - A NORC refers to neighborhoods or buildings where a large segment of the population are older adults. Within the NORC Supportive Service Programs model, core program components include case management, social work services, health care management and prevention programs, education and recreation activities, and volunteer opportunities.<sup>32</sup> This model unites service providers and other agencies to provide support to the senior community, programs are located in NORC sites or in close proximity to the community, and a lead agency is responsible for service coordination.
- Place-based and intergenerational models based in Chicago:
  - Chicago has co-located public housing sites and libraries, with one of these sites being a senior housing property.<sup>33</sup>
  - Based in Chicago, H.O.M.E. (Housing Opportunities & Maintenance For the Elderly) offers an Intergenerational Housing Model. Seniors have access to social services and engagement opportunities, and families and young adults live alongside the seniors.<sup>34</sup> Resident assistants who are younger people spend time with residents and cook meals in exchange for room and board and compensation.

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<sup>1</sup><https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2023.S0101?q=%20age%20detroit>

<sup>2</sup> <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2023.DP02?q=DP02+detroit>

<sup>3</sup> <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2023.DP02?q=DP02+detroit>

<sup>4</sup> <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2023.B19037?q=detroit%20income%20age>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/research/topics/livable-communities/housing/2024-home-community-preferences-report.doi.10.26419-2fres.00831.001.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/research/topics/livable-communities/housing/2024-home-community-preferences-report.doi.10.26419-2fres.00831.001.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> [https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/172128/0268\\_NPHA-Aging-in-Place-report-FINAL.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y](https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/172128/0268_NPHA-Aging-in-Place-report-FINAL.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y)

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- <sup>8</sup> <https://www.docdroid.com/OQMykxr/1a-community-need-assessment-complete-report-revised-cover-7-23-2020-afternoon-fh-1-pdf>
- <sup>9</sup> Q2 2024, Plante Moran Market Snapshot
- <sup>10</sup> Senior Housing Preservation Detroit report
- <sup>11</sup> <https://preservationdatabase.org/documentation/program-descriptions/>
- <sup>12</sup> [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/housing/mfh/progdesc/eld202](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/mfh/progdesc/eld202)
- <sup>13</sup> <https://www.medicaidplanningassistance.org/medicaid-and-nursing-homes/>
- <sup>14</sup> <https://www.ncoa.org/article/does-medicare-pay-for-assisted-living/>
- <sup>15</sup> <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/assistance-programs/healthcare/seniors/program-of-all-inclusive-care-for-the-elderly-pace>
- <sup>16</sup> <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/assistance-programs/medicaid/portalhome/beneficiaries/programs/progbens/mi-choice-waiver-program>
- <sup>17</sup> [https://www.michigan.gov/mshda/-/media/Project/Websites/mshda/developers/lihtc/assets/liqap/mshda\\_li\\_qap\\_2024\\_2025\\_score\\_sum\\_final.pdf.pdf?rev=a5a5b4c43bef48c69758eacd85cf0471&hash=5996263AC6A7DC6E31DBB1D1649F4E0A](https://www.michigan.gov/mshda/-/media/Project/Websites/mshda/developers/lihtc/assets/liqap/mshda_li_qap_2024_2025_score_sum_final.pdf.pdf?rev=a5a5b4c43bef48c69758eacd85cf0471&hash=5996263AC6A7DC6E31DBB1D1649F4E0A)
- <sup>18</sup> <https://www.michigan.gov/mshda/developers/statewide-housing-plan>
- <sup>19</sup> <https://www.pvm.org/locations/hartford-village/>
- <sup>20</sup> <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11544>
- <sup>21</sup> <https://www.ahcancal.org/Assisted-Living/Facts-and-Figures/Pages/default.aspx>
- <sup>22</sup> <https://www.ahcancal.org/Assisted-Living/Facts-and-Figures/Documents/State%20Facts/Michigan-AL.pdf>
- <sup>23</sup> <https://www.cbre.com/insights/reports/2022-seniors-housing-development-costs>
- <sup>24</sup> [https://www.vtvnetwork.org/content.aspx?page\\_id=22&club\\_id=691012&module\\_id=248578](https://www.vtvnetwork.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=691012&module_id=248578)
- <sup>25</sup> <https://www.cohousing.org/senior-cohousing/#tab1>
- <sup>26</sup> <https://www.sunward.org/>
- <sup>27</sup> <https://www.seniorliving.org/cooperative-housing/>
- <sup>28</sup> <https://csi.coop/en/locations/MI>
- <sup>29</sup> <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/casestudies/study-09282016-1.html>
- <sup>30</sup> <https://www.sunshinehomeshare.org/>
- <sup>31</sup> <https://www.theseniorlist.com/retirement/best/university/>
- <sup>32</sup> <https://www.norcs.org/norc-paradigm>
- <sup>33</sup> <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/pdredge/pdr-edge-inpractice-090919.html> and <https://mappedchicago.org/projects/northtown-library-and-apartments#:~:text=This%20project%20in%20West%20Ridge,and%20encourage%20life%20long%20learning>
- <sup>34</sup> <https://homeseniors.org/intergenerational-housing>