

Woodstock Illinois

Age-Friendly Livable Community

ACTION PLAN

prepared for
Woodstock City Council
April 2021

Housing | Facilities | Services | Activities
Community-based ideas for today and tomorrow

by
NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR GOVERNMENTAL STUDIES
and WOODSTOCK AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

**Center for
Governmental Studies**

Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development



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This report was prepared by Mim Evans, Andy Blanke and Norman Walzer under a contract with the City of Woodstock.

Views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the NIU Board of Trustees.

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Table of Contents

Woodstock Illinois Age-Friendly Livable Community Action Plan: Executive Summary	1
Section 1: Introduction: Woodstock Plans for an Age-Friendly Future	3
Section 2. Why an Age-Friendly Livable Community Action Plan-And Why Now?.....	5
Section 3: How Age-Friendly is Woodstock Now: Where are We and Where Could We Go?.....	17
Section 4: The Plan: Actions for an Age-Friendly Woodstock.....	23
Section 5: Implementation: How Do We Get There From Here?	34
Appendix A: Interviews, Focus Groups, Assistance & Inspiration.....	40
Appendix B: Woodstock Commuter Flows, 2017	41
Appendix C: Consumer Spending Types by Age.....	42
Appendix D: Impact Methodology	43
Appendix E: Impact by Major Business Sector.....	44
Appendix F: How Age Friendly is Woodstock Now?	45

Woodstock Illinois Age-Friendly Livable Community Action Plan: Executive Summary

The City of Woodstock has a vision for an age-friendly future:

Age-friendly Woodstock, Illinois is widely recognized as a warm, welcoming vibrant community offering lifelong opportunity and enrichment for youth and adults of all ages, abilities and lifestyles.

This vision is in response to a big change already underway—in less than ten years, nearly half of Woodstock adults will be over age 55. As the City allocates resources, it will need strategies that ensure Woodstock's changing population is well served. If successful, Woodstock will be a sought after location to live, visit and invest.

The Woodstock Age-Friendly Livable Community Action Plan (AFP) will guide the City in its role as an AARP designated Age-Friendly Community. Work began two years ago with a City Council resolution and plan preparation began with funding from a Community Foundation for McHenry County Transformational Grant. A steering committee of residents, service providers, business people and others completed the AFP in April 2021.

Why is the AFP important?

- By 2034, for the first time ever, the U.S. will have more older adults than children.
- Residents age 65-74 are projected to increase by 39% and those age 75+ to increase by 50% from 2019 to 2029.
- Research shows that what is good for older people is good for all people.
- Residents age 55+ contribute \$164.7M annually to the county economy, supporting 1,605 jobs.

How age-friendly is Woodstock now?

Woodstock is currently about as age-friendly as many other communities, but with strong assets on which to grow, Woodstock can become an exemplary Age-Friendly Community. When surveyed, residents responded that they mostly like living in Woodstock. When asked, the following were the most frequently mentioned reasons to remain a resident or consider leaving:



Resident responses show that older adults often want the same things as younger people: affordable homes that fit their lifestyle and are close to where they want to go; fun things to do; quality healthcare; transportation options including walking and public transit; and to be engaged in the community.

Older adults often choose to live near their children and grandchildren. Therefore, Woodstock needs to be attractive to younger families, too, and younger families must be aware that Woodstock is age-friendly if they are to encourage older generations to remain or become residents.

The Plan

The AFP's goals are divided into four focus areas. The goals are summarized below:



Housing: Four goals addressing the variety of individual housing units, residential site design, the relationship between residential areas and complementary uses, varied price points, and home maintenance.

Top priority goal: Woodstock offers creative and alternative forms of housing that meet residents' needs at different points in their lives. This goal addresses the needs of current older residents while also addressing the potential of new housing to attract new residents.



Facilities: Five goals addressing gathering places, businesses that meet wants and needs of older adults, walkability, and year-round indoor and outdoor gathering spaces.

Top priority goal: Seniors enjoy a designated venue to connect with friends, activities and services. This goal responds to a desire expressed by older Woodstock residents and the likelihood of a site and partner to assist in making it happen.



Services: Five goals addressing convenient, high quality healthcare, transportation choices, improved communication and internet options, and strong caregiver support.

Top priority goal: Woodstock residents can access a broad range of health services. This goal is a top priority because of the growing number of older people and their increasing demand for healthcare. It also addresses the importance of quality healthcare in decisions about where to live in retirement.



Activities: Five goals addressing events and gatherings for all ages, lifelong learning and the pursuit of special interests, growth of Woodstock as a center for the arts, and opportunities to engage with the community.

Top priority goal: Woodstock offers a wide range of events and creative/gathering opportunities appealing to all segments of the population and visitors. This goal promotes intergenerational contact, a strong sense of community and Woodstock as a place to visit. It has implications for recruiting residents and visitors and the economic vitality of the Square.

The AFP also includes strategies and suggests projects that will move Woodstock towards reaching its age-friendly vision.

How do we get there from here?

Following submission of the AFP to AARP, the City can organize to implement the plan. Key components are listed at right.

As the plan is implemented, marketing age-friendly Woodstock to potential visitors, residents and investors is a logical next step in enhancing Woodstock's image as a desirable place to live, visit and invest.

The full plan follows or can be found on the City's website at <https://www.woodstockil.gov/>.

Key Components:

- City leadership
- Interdepartmental communication
- Council liaison
- Diverse advisory council
- Collaboration with other organizations
- Outreach to residents and stakeholders

Section 1: Introduction: Woodstock Plans for an Age-Friendly Future

Changing demographic trends and projections for the next decade and beyond present opportunities and challenges for communities like Woodstock, IL. Several important issues are in play. First, the baby boom population has reached retirement age and now represents a large and rapidly growing segment of the older population. Second, longer life spans and better health mean more active years in retirement. Third, the economy is changing from a manufacturing base to an information economy involving more white-collar and service positions. There is every indication these trends will continue and will affect the types and locations of cities that are likely to prosper in the future.

Advances in communications technology and greater acceptance of its use in the workplace accelerated already growing opportunities to work remotely part- or full-time. A high quality of life and affordable living environment within reasonable proximity to work plus a walkable setting with cultural and entertainment facilities are growing in importance as both young adults and mature populations select a residence. These requirements enable places such as Woodstock in suburban locations to highlight a high quality of life, less commuting time to work, and access to more recreation facilities in attracting residents of all ages.

Since older and younger residents want many of the same things in a community, the Age-Friendly Livable Community Action Plan will improve quality of life for all residents.



Making this case effectively, however, requires these places to address the needs of populations in multiple age groups. The charm and sense of place created by Woodstock's historic square, nearby rural countryside, a lively arts community and other amenities make Woodstock especially well-suited to attract diverse new residents and retain current residents as they approach retirement age.

Forming a steering committee to guide plan preparation and provide input was the first step in the planning process. Committee members generously shared their time and expertise through many meetings and review of interim documents and the final report. Members of the Woodstock Age-Friendly Action Plan Steering Committee include:

- Dick Ahrens: *Realtor, former City Council and Economic Development Commission member*
- John Buckley: *Executive Director, Independence Health & Therapy*
- Andrew Celentano: *Chair, Woodstock Transportation Commission*
- Krista Coltrin: *Economic Development Coordinator, Treasurer, Visit McHenry County CVB*
- Melissa Cooney: *Estate Attorney, ZRFM*

- Stu Gaines: *CFO, Satori Pathway Healthcare Consultants*
- Martha Hansen: *Asst. Director, Woodstock Public Library*
- Arlene Lynes: *Chamber Ambassador, Business Leader*
- Hans Mach: *McHenry County Community Development Administrator*
- Wendy Piersall: *City Council member, artist and business owner*
- Andrew Stuckey: *McHenry County Senior Community Development Specialist*
- Terry Willcockson: *City Staff Liaison and Project Manager*
- Dr. Paula Yensen: *McHenry County Board and McHenry County Sr. Services Grant Commission Chair*
- Aileen Zei: *McHenry County Community Development Specialist*

Many additional people helped develop the AFP. A list is included in the [Appendix A](#).

Four major sections follow this introduction to the report:

- *Section 2* discusses why being age-friendly is important for Woodstock by examining demographic changes and the economic impact of older residents.
- *Section 3* addresses how age-friendly Woodstock is now, establishing a starting point for the planned age-friendly effort. Because the City has long pursued a high quality of life for residents and Woodstock has many assets that make it uniquely attractive, the community has a degree of age-friendliness already.
- *Section 4* presents the plan itself, including a vision statement, goals, strategies and projects.
- *Section 5* suggests how the City could organize to implement the plan, including a suggested organization structure, the relationship between this plan and other plans, and measuring progress towards achieving goals. The appendices provide additional detail on the information presented in this report.

Conclusion

The City of Woodstock was designated an AARP Age-Friendly Community in 2019 and subsequently received a McHenry County Transformational Grant to prepare an Age-Friendly Livable Community Action Plan (AFP). This report presents Woodstock's plan. Because the needs and desires of older residents are often similar to those in younger age groups, implementing the plan will benefit the community as a whole, making Woodstock an even more desirable place to live, visit or invest.

Section 2. Why an Age-Friendly Livable Community Action Plan-And Why Now?

Two trends already well underway create an opportunity for Woodstock to thrive as a place to live, visit and invest in coming years. *First, the older population is growing more rapidly than any other age group. Second, growth in older populations will have a significant impact on spending in the future.* Many in the Post World-War II generation are financially secure and are, on average, healthier than previous generations. Some are working longer and are in a position to make serious contributions, financial and time, to their communities. They live independently, travel more, and are more engaged in local civic and social events.

A third significant factor is that the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated wider use of technology creating more opportunities for choice of residence and lifestyles. Woodstock has opportunities to attract more remote workers by making sure services and options available match the preferences of this audience.

Key to these efforts will be that Woodstock is attractive and friendly to many age groups. Especially important is to attract working age populations who will retire and continue to live in Woodstock. This section of the report examines current and anticipated future Woodstock residents and their economic impact on the community.

Growth in Population by Age

According to the *American Community Survey*, slightly more than half (54.6%) of Woodstock residents are 45 years of age or older and 23.4% are 55 years and older. Retaining these residents is important and attracting others in similar categories will help Woodstock grow and prosper. However, it will be important that they can find suitable living accommodations to age in place.

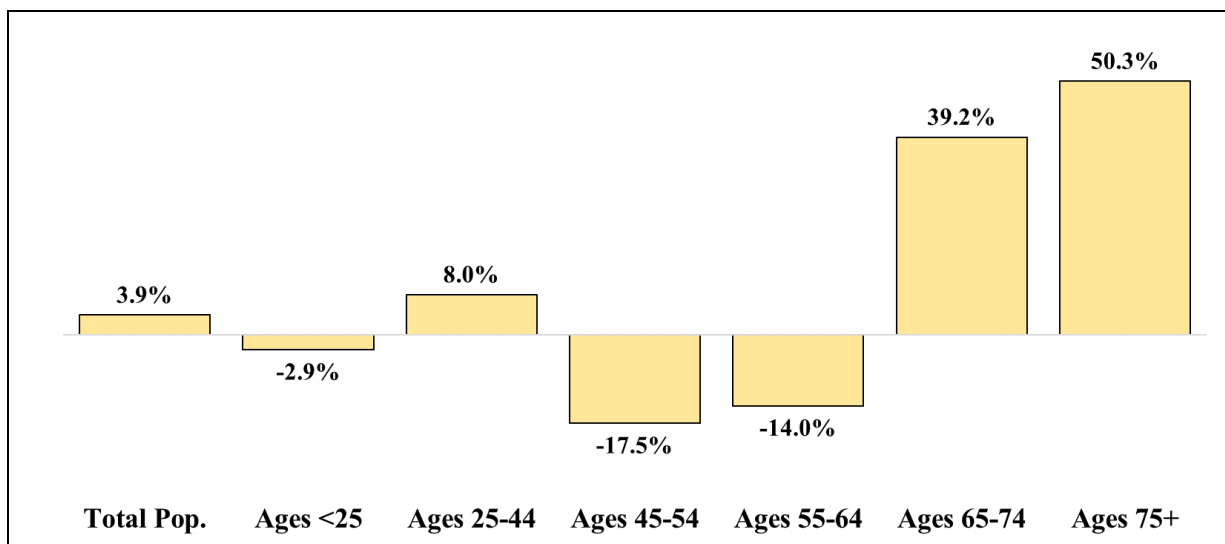
At the same time, it is also important to replenish the populations with those starting employment and/or families. For instance, 36% of the Woodstock residents are in the 25-44 age category. Retaining these residents and attracting others in the same age category, will help Woodstock expand and prosper. These groups will require suitable housing, entertainment options, and social networks, some of which are already in Woodstock.



Population projections for the next decade for Zip Code 60098 including Woodstock indicate relatively little overall growth but the most rapid increases will be 39.2% for those 65-74 years and 50.3% for those older than 75 years (Figure 1). Relatively small growth (8.0%) is projected for the 25-44 year age cohort but it is more than offset by the projected declines in the population aged 45-64. Small overall population growth plus expected expansions in the

older population groups means that the Woodstock economy will change in housing needs, shopping patterns, and health services.

Figure 1. Projected Population by Age, 60098 ZIP Code, 2019-2029*



Source: Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. 2019.

The population projections are pre-pandemic, but the current economic slowdown is more likely to change the degree of the population trends, rather than direction. These expected trends offer opportunities to strengthen the local economy along lines currently being pursued, including well-appointed reasonably priced housing units suited for various age groups.

Minority Populations

Residents of Color are more prevalent in Woodstock than in McHenry County (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019, Table DP05). For instance, Hispanics/Latinos represent an estimated 21.4% compared with 13.1% countywide and have been a stable portion of the population during the past decade. Blacks (non-Hispanic), at 2.2%, are more prevalent than the 1.4% in McHenry County and increased from 1.8% in 2010. Asian non-Hispanics (2.3%) are closer to the county average (2.8%) but more than the 1.9% at the beginning of the decade.

It is important to recognize the needs of Woodstock's minority populations, which includes over one-fourth of residents.

It is important to recognize the needs of these resident groups in planning since they represent 25.9% of Woodstock's estimated population compared with only 17.3% in McHenry County. These figures are only estimates, however, and may change with release of 2020 Census data.

Income and Education Characteristics

Education and income are often related, ultimately influencing housing choices and spending patterns. Therefore, understanding these characteristics is important in planning for resident needs. Education completion levels are below the county average with 12.2% of the Woodstock population *not* having completed high school, compared to 6.9% of McHenry County (2015-2019 ACS, Table S1501). At the higher education end of the scale, 30.3% of Woodstock residents earned a Bachelor's Degree or higher compared to 34.4% of McHenry County. The lower incomes in Woodstock are consistent with lower educational attainment. For example, 17.4% of residents have incomes below \$25,000 which is comparable with the Chicago metro area overall (ACS Table S1901). Nearly two-fifths (39.4%) of Woodstock residents live in households with less than \$50,000 annual income with a median household income in Woodstock of \$61,478 compared with \$86,799 countywide.

Older residents in Woodstock (65 years and older), have a lower median income (\$49,129) than McHenry County residents of similar age (\$55,217) but Woodstock retains relatively higher income residents in retirement years (Figure 2). The *ratio* of household income in Woodstock to the McHenry County is 75.5% for the 45-64 year age cohort but 89.0% for those 65 years and older, even though Woodstock has proportionally more single person households. This comparison bodes well for the ability of Woodstock to retain financially secure populations as they age and retire. At the same time, upper income households (\$100,000 and over) are clearly underrepresented in Woodstock, with only 27.5% in this category compared with 41.7% in McHenry County.

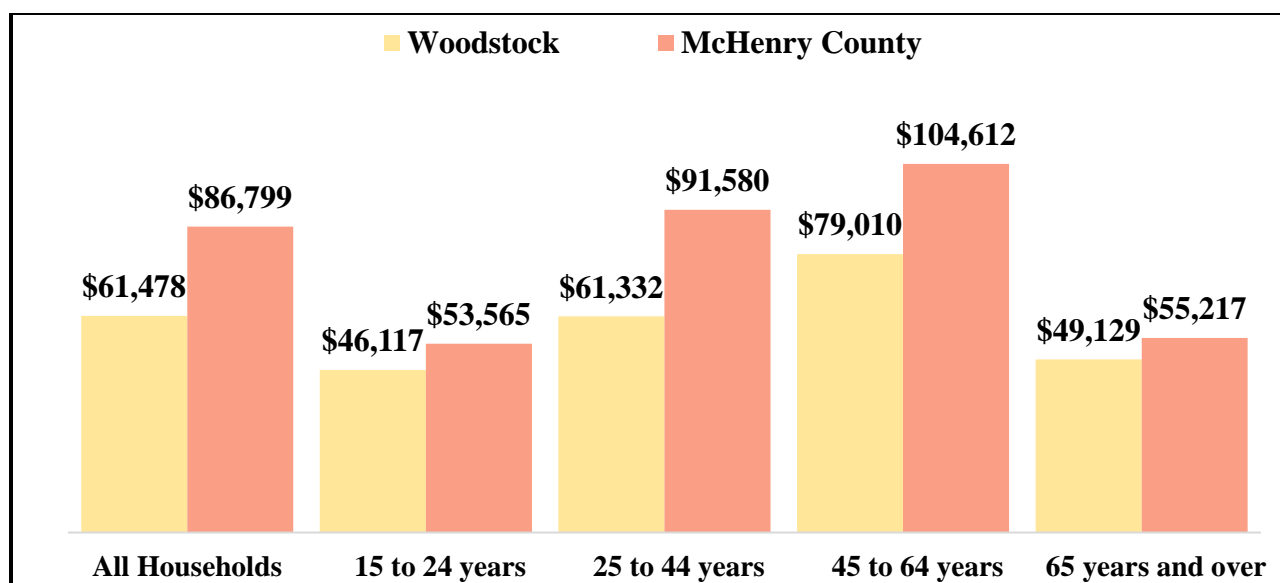
Income characteristics determine both types of housing available and the ability of Woodstock to build a solid economic base from local spending. Remaining attractive to tourists and maintaining a strong multigenerational cultural/entertainment base will attract spending from residents throughout the region. Thus, surrounding communities offer prime opportunities to attract both tourists and potential residents to



Woodstock. Many residents of nearby communities are already familiar with the attractions in Woodstock so continued marketing to these groups is a sound approach and could be enhanced in future efforts along with informing current residents about local opportunities.

Income influences housing choices and spending. Woodstock has a smaller proportion of upper income households than McHenry County. These nearby upper income households represent economic opportunity for Woodstock.

Figure 2. Median Household Income by Age



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2014-2018.

Employment Characteristics

Employment patterns in Woodstock approximate those of the county although with a slightly smaller proportion (67.6%) of residents in the labor force than in McHenry County (70.3%). The younger population in Woodstock and lower labor force participation rate may partly reflect more full-time students.¹

Inbound and outbound commuters are prevalent in Woodstock and other employment centers with transportation options. In fact, of the 9,699 Woodstock jobs and 12,080 working Woodstock residents, only 2,040 both live and work in Woodstock. See [Appendix B](#) for additional detail. Making Woodstock more age-friendly could increase its role as a regional employment center, attracting people commuting into Woodstock as residents and people currently living and working elsewhere may choose to become residents working remotely and occasionally commuting elsewhere.

Woodstock has strong potential to attract new residents among remote workers or people currently commuting to jobs in the community.

¹ The labor force is defined by the Department of Labor as those in the population of age 16 or higher who are either employed, or unemployed and actively seeking work. It does not include full-time students who do not have or seek jobs, nor does it include those who have abandoned their job searches out of discouragement.

Spending Patterns by Age



Knowing amounts typically spent on goods and services by different age groups helps assess the potential for age-friendly strategies. This is especially relevant for maturing populations who become less mobile over the years and more likely to spend locally. While detailed spending estimates by age group are not readily available for Woodstock, comparable information is collected for the 12-state Midwest region by the

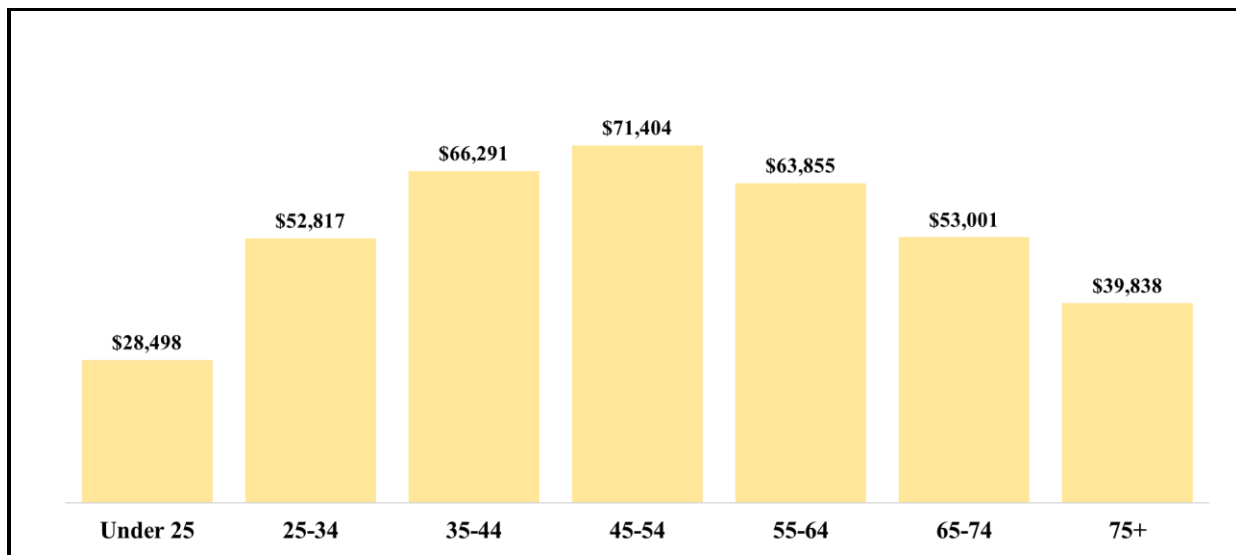
Consumer Expenditure Survey (CES).² Spending patterns in the CES were adjusted by the ratio that household incomes in Woodstock represent of the multi-state Midwest region. These estimates provide reasonable approximations for expenditures both by amounts and by types of purchases used to estimate the impact of attracting additional residents in specific age categories.

Previous discussions identified lower incomes expected as residents reach retirement age. Although household incomes in Woodstock are generally less than in McHenry County, the income gap is lower when comparing income specific to households in traditional retirement age.

Active retirees (65-74) and pre-retirees (55-64) collectively make up nearly one-quarter of all consumer expenditures. Spending levels (\$53,001) by active retirees (65-74 years) in the Midwest (CES) are slightly above those (\$52,817) of young adults starting careers (25-34 years). (Figure 3) Residents nearing retirement age may reduce their work commitments to part-time or pursue other opportunities that gradually reduce their incomes and spending. Older residents spend less (\$39,838) overall but more on healthcare. Not all expenditures by insurance agencies or Medicare are considered in local spending which can understate the local impact.

² The Midwest is defined by the Census Bureau as the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio. Census regions are the smallest sub-national geography available in the CES dataset.

Figure 3. Midwest Consumer Expenditures by Age, July 2017-June 2018.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2017-2018.

Although hard to measure directly, residents approaching and in retirement have schedules that are more flexible, and therefore, may spend more time away from their home communities on extended vacations, visiting family and so on. Some also have a second home in another location and so spend less time in the Woodstock area. This means that while these residents spend significant amounts, they may not spend as much locally. As they reach older age groups, time away from home often decreases and local spending increases.

A second important element in spending involves understanding types of purchases made by various age groups especially those in target populations. Several key factors are worth noting.

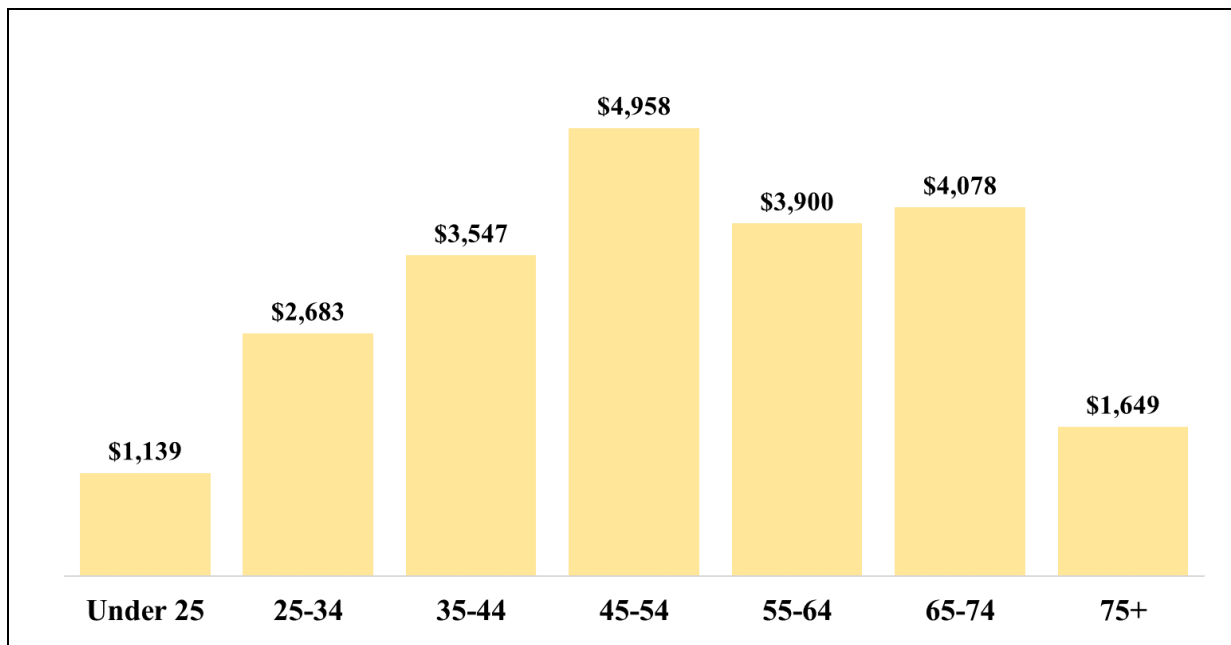
- Expenditures for healthcare continue to increase with age and are highest in later years even if the local impact is understated because of insurance coverage not included.
- Spending for public services such as water distribution is stable or even increases with age, which is positive because it supports infrastructure and fixed costs.
- Older residents are often more willing and available to support local organizations and activities, especially those of special interest such as hobbies, cultural events, or public service groups. The expenditures do not include volunteer hours invested in local activities.
- As populations age, they make fewer large expenditures, e.g., automobiles, which lower local sales tax receipts, especially in Woodstock where auto and boat sales are important components of sales tax revenues.
- Restaurants represented a relatively small share of the sales tax base at 10.5% of the total. This is not to downplay restaurants and similar businesses in a population recruitment

strategy. In fact, adding high quality and relatively unique restaurants could be a regional draw as well as stimulate interest by people considering Woodstock as a retirement location. Restaurants and drinking establishments are social gathering places that attract tourists as well as residents and can be a destination if they are relatively unique high-end establishments.

- Expenditures for entertainment are especially worth considering (Figure 4) because surveys show they are important in choosing where to live. While types of entertainment activities differ, spending for these services remain relatively high among older age groups. Populations in the 65-74 years age cohort spent \$4,078 annually on entertainment, slightly more than the \$3,900 spent by those 55-64 years. These expenditures are well above the \$3,547 spent by mid-career residents (ages 35-44 years). However, older residents may spend more on entertainment outside of Woodstock as they travel or pursue other interests.

[Appendix C](#) includes additional detail on spending patterns by age group.

Figure 4. Entertainment Spending by Age, Midwest, 2017-2018



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2017-2018.

Several questions arise in considering population-based recruitment approaches. First, does Woodstock offer the types and selection of merchandise or activities that match the interests of future residents? Second, can these offerings be marketed effectively to residents in surrounding areas to boost the economic base? The importance of expenditures for entertainment draws attention to the types of unique facilities and events available locally to retain populations

especially during the winter months. Expanding high quality short-term lodging accommodations could help retain tourist spending.

Woodstock has regional advantages in hosting cultural events and other attractions that help retain populations during times when they otherwise might be out of state. A comparison of sales by month reveals wide swings suggesting that residents possibly shop elsewhere, or reduce spending, especially during the first quarter. Studying these trends in more detail, by type of activity, could help to find ways for Woodstock to smooth out fluctuations in sales. This will be even more important as consumers purchase more online. Identifying desired purchases not currently in Woodstock could help design efforts to stabilize the sales patterns.



Equally important to recognize is that recruiting a stable population is a longer-term strategy spanning several years. Demographic trends make clear that older populations will increase in the next two decades. Some of these groups are financially secure and in good health so will continue to contribute to society and the economy in new and innovative ways. *Communities that are attractive with part-time employment arrangements, suitable housing, high-speed internet, and shopping facilities along with recreational opportunities are well positioned to accommodate this growth. Many past and planned activities in Woodstock recognize these opportunities.*

The next section estimates the potential impacts on local businesses from increases in the number of residents in three age groups. The analyses are based on estimated spending patterns and potential population changes. They can be adjusted to show the effects of alternative population recruitment strategies. The estimates were generated using IMPLAN, a nationally recognized economic modeling program. Additional information on the methodology is in [Appendix D](#).

Local Impact of Population Changes

A population growth strategy involving residents in mid-career to retirement and post-retirees will attract people from multiple age groups that prefer locations with diverse services and opportunities. For discussions in this report, three age categories and titles are used but these working categories and titles can change in the project implementation phase. The overall aim is to identify mid-career to retirement age groups. Each group is described below.

- Mature Career Residents (55-64 years old): Well-established in their careers and starting to consider other options.
- Retirees (65-74 years old): Many are already retired or are strongly considering retirement. This Retiree group may include many who will continue to work in their current jobs or professions or embark on a new phase of their life that involves working in a different profession so may be interested in continued education or lifelong learning opportunities available locally.
- Post-Retirement Residents (75 years or older): Some may need different housing or living accommodations. They may be interested in health-related or supportive activities so are designing a new phase in their life with other opportunities and interests.

The local impacts of changes in population are presented separately for current residents and expected new residents using conservative, status quo, and optimistic scenarios. The estimates illustrate expected impacts on McHenry County and then are scaled down to Woodstock. The impacts are short-term and do not forecast long-term changes, but as populations move into Woodstock, the effects are likely to continue.

Local effects from spending by current residents are presented next, followed by estimates for potential incoming residents under the various scenarios identified.

Spending by Current Residents

Spending by the approximately 4,000 current Woodstock households in the three subject age categories directly supports 1,132 jobs in McHenry County, and those purchases represent \$164.7 million in output in the county. The direct impact comes mainly from populations between 55 and 64 years of age, currently the largest number of households in the three age groups, and the age group that spends most annually, based on previous discussions. For every \$100 spent by a household in this age group in Woodstock, another \$50 is generated in the McHenry County economy. Spending by current older residents supports 1,605 jobs (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Effects of Spending by Current Woodstock Residents Age 55 and Older on McHenry County Economy

	Employment	Labor Income (\$M)	Value Added (\$M)	Output (\$M)
Total Effects	1,605 jobs	\$52.0	\$85.7	\$164.7

Source: IMPLAN, 2017.

The three industries most affected by this spending are retail trade, finance and insurance, and real estate, with retail trade receiving most of the direct purchases. The finance and insurance sector includes health insurance, one of the largest spending categories by older residents. The healthcare sector is not affected as heavily as finance & insurance because health expenditures by older residents are often for insurance premiums rather than direct payments to healthcare

providers. Thus, this impact may not include all 3rd-party payments to medical or health agencies. Even so, spending by these households still contributes a total of \$6.6 million in output for health and social service providers in McHenry County.

These households contributed a total of \$51.8 million to the retail trade sector in McHenry County. In addition to groceries, general merchandise, and apparel, this sector also includes pharmacies, electronics, crafts and hobbies, and sporting or recreational equipment. Many entertainment purchases are classified as retail trade and a more detailed classification is not currently available. Their spending also supports an estimated \$17.4 million in real estate, both owned and rented dwellings, and \$8.7 million in output of the construction industry in McHenry County. The construction sector includes new residences and commercial properties as well as renovations and repairs to make residences amenable to all ages. The highest impacted industries are shown in Figure 6. A lengthier table is in [Appendix E](#).

Figure 6. Impacts by Major Business Sector (\$millions)

Industry	Total Output Impact	Examples of Types of Purchases
Total	\$164.7	
Retail trade	\$51.8	Groceries, hobbies
Finance & insurance	\$22.1	Vehicle insurance
Real estate & rental	\$17.4	Owned/rented dwellings
Other services	\$9.4	Vehicle repair
Accommodation & food services	\$8.9	Restaurants
Construction	\$8.7	Home repair/renovation
Administrative & waste services	\$6.8	Building services
Utilities	\$6.5	Electricity
Government & non NAICs	\$6.2	Property tax
Information	\$5.5	Phone & internet

Source: IMPLAN, 2017.

The proportion of spending retained in Woodstock depends on availability of goods and services locally, as well as the availability of transportation for residents within the immediate area to patronize Woodstock establishment. These broader impacts are difficult to estimate in the analyses without more complete data on where residents purchase. As noted previously, this information could be obtained in a more detailed household survey.

Strong ties to the health care sector by mature residents are a significant contribution to the local economy and these expenditures increase with age. The Kaiser Family Foundation reported that

in 2016 (latest available), the population over age 55 represented 29% of the population but 56% of total health spending nationally (<https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/chart-collection/health-expenditures-vary-across-population/>). After suitable adjustments for the somewhat smaller share of the population over age 55 in Woodstock (27.3%), this age group represents an estimated 51.5% of health expenditures, including third-party payments from public and private insurance.



Spending by Future Residents

The discussion turns next to the impacts of recruiting future residents to Woodstock in the targeted age groups. Assuming continued spending patterns, the industries most affected by population maturing trends are the same as those affected by current residents of similar age. The total impacts on output for additional residents are less than for all current residents because the anticipated population shifts are incremental, and they include decreases in the 55-64 age group who traditionally have spent more. Total annual spending would range from \$58.8 million to \$80.1 million, depending on how Woodstock performs relative to the forecast. Since much or most of this spending involves goods and services subject to local sales taxes, there could be substantial revenues for local governments depending on how much of the spending occurs in Woodstock.

Status Quo Scenario

If the trends in population aging in Woodstock follow expected projections for the next 10 years, spending by *incoming* residents in targeted population age groups will directly support an additional 413 jobs and \$45 million in output by 2029 (Table 14) in the short run. The total impacts that result from the multiplicative effects could be 607 jobs and \$69 million in output in McHenry County. Over time, these jobs are likely to continue or even increase depending on local development actions. The amounts retained in Woodstock will depend on businesses available and local development strategies.

Optimistic Scenario

If Woodstock surpasses the population projections, an additional 703 jobs and \$80.1 million in output could be generated in McHenry County. Meeting the expectations of the optimistic scenario will depend at least partly on success with various age-friendly livable initiatives.

Conservative Scenario

If population trends in Woodstock are less than projections, spending could support an additional 512 jobs and \$58.8 million in McHenry County by 2029. The underlying assumption for the conservative scenario is that the pandemic would have long-term impacts on the ability to attract and retain older residents in Woodstock, but a modicum of spending would remain as current residents age in place. There could be a somewhat higher loss of employment as the population matures into cohorts that spend less.

All three scenarios are presented in Figure 7. Under even the most conservative scenario, the effects of additional older adult residents are substantial.

Figure 7. Potential Effects of Spending by Additional Woodstock Residents Age 55 and Older on McHenry County

Future Scenario	Employment	Labor Income (\$M)	Value Added (\$M)	Output (\$M)
Status Quo	607 jobs	\$21.4	\$37.1	\$69.9
Optimistic	703 jobs	\$24.7	\$42.7	\$80.1
Conservative	512 jobs	\$18.1	\$31.4	\$58.8

Source: IMPLAN, 2017.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Woodstock has assets, opportunities, and amenities to support an Age-Friendly recruitment strategy. Likewise, the local impact of a successful approach could be substantial. RealWoodstock and other organizations have many recruitment and marketing efforts underway and could target specific age groups identified in the AFP.

Section 3: How Age-Friendly is Woodstock Now: Where are We and Where Could We Go?

When embarking on a new endeavor such as becoming an exemplary age-friendly community, it helps to know current conditions. Learning how age-friendly Woodstock currently is identifies strong points on which to build and where to consider applying additional effort and resources. Woodstock's present age-friendly status was examined in five ways:

1. Scores on AARP's Livability Index
2. Comparison with other communities in the Chicago metropolitan area
3. Information from nationwide preference surveys
4. A survey of Woodstock residents
5. Focus groups and individual interviews with people representing different perspectives on age-friendliness

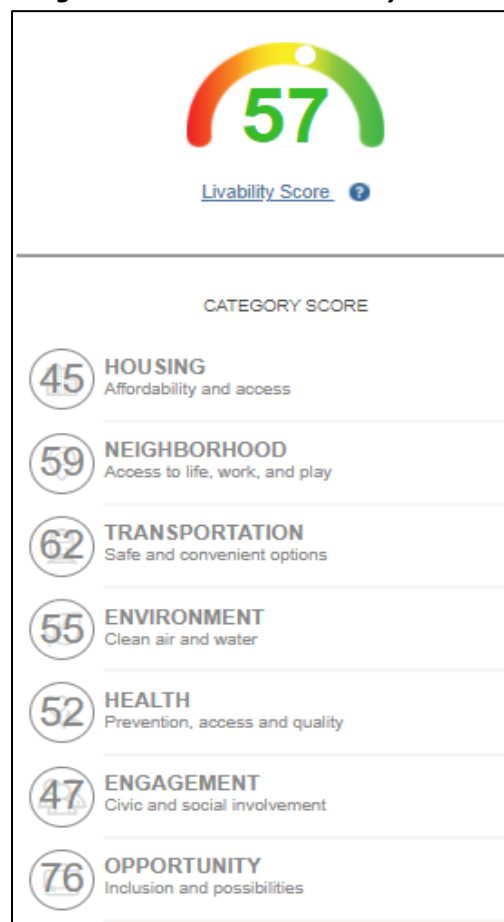
A discussion of the findings resulting from this research follows.

1. The Livability Index

AARP uses an index of seven community characteristics to evaluate age-friendliness. The Index rates Individual communities for each characteristic on a scale of 0 to 100, with higher scores more desirable. Figure 8 shows Woodstock's scores.

Woodstock's total score of 57 puts it in the middle range of all communities across the country. Woodstock has special strengths in the Opportunity category. This category includes the degree of income inequality, educational attainment, jobs per worker, and age diversity. While no characteristic is extremely low, Housing is the lowest score based on housing costs and the availability of accessible housing designated for older residents. Woodstock's total score is slightly above the cities of Crystal Lake (54) and McHenry (53).

Figure 8: Woodstock Livability Score



2. Comparison with Chicago Metro Area Communities

Woodstock was compared to other communities in the Chicago metropolitan area to determine its relative age-friendliness. See [Appendix F](#). Based on this evaluation, the following items are categorized as assets, challenges, or neutral (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Woodstock Current Conditions: Assets and Challenges Compared to Other Area Communities

Category	Asset	Challenge	Neutral
Transportation	Metra	Local public transit	
	Downtown walkability	Transportation costs	
		Trail mileage	
Housing	Rental supply	Low ownership rate	Relative cost
	Subsidized housing supply	Older units need updating	
	Small units sizes	Small unit sizes	
Communication	Internet access	Language barrier	
	Traditional news outlets		
Environment	Library	Trail system	Public open space
	Low crime rate	Grocery store locations	
	Mixed use neighborhoods	Road safety	
	Compact neighborhoods		
	Low housing vacancy		
Health	Access to specialists	Quality of care	
Participation	Arts involvement		
	Community opportunities		
	Income equality		
	Age diversity		

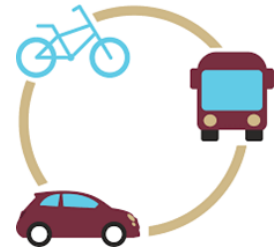
Woodstock scores in the mid-range of communities across the country and similarly to those nearby. With more assets than challenges, Woodstock appears well positioned to promote an age-friendly identity.

3. National Preference Surveys

Both the National Association of Realtors and AARP survey adults nationwide regarding lifestyle preferences and concerns. Findings regarding transportation and housing are particularly relevant for age-friendly communities. Quotes from each survey are shown in italics.

The National Association of Realtors Transportation Findings

- *Six-in-ten residents would spend at least a little more for a house in a walkable community. Millennials (born 1981-1996) are more likely than other generations to be willing to spend more, followed by Gen Xers (born 1965-1980). Those in the Silent/Greatest Generations (prior to 1945), notably, are more likely to spend more for a walkable community than Boomers (1946-1964). Those with kids at home, especially Millennials with kids in school, are much more willing than others to invest more in a home in a walkable community.*
- *When the only trade-off for the walkable community is a smaller yard, just over half of all residents prefer that option, with those in the Silent/Greatest Generation the age group most interested (61% prefer).*
- *Maintaining roads, bridges, and highways remains residents' overwhelming priority for the government. While road maintenance is most important to all generations, Millennials and Gen Xers are more interested in expanding transportation alternatives and building walkable communities, and they are somewhat less focused on roads than older generations.*
- *Most residents like walking (80%) and driving (73%), while nearly half say they like riding a bike, and just over a third (38%) say they like taking public transit. Age is a key consideration in these comparisons. Young generations are more likely to like biking and taking public transit, while older generations are more likely to say they like driving.*



Source: National Association of Realtors Community and Transportation Preferences Survey, September 2017.

In addition, AARP found that adults age 50 and older and 65 and older report greater frequencies of driving while adults age 18-49 report greater frequencies of almost all other forms of transportation (AARP Preference Survey 2018).

These findings indicate that walkability may be less important than basic road maintenance and that planning for the continued use of cars by residents even at quite advanced ages may be the highest priority.

AARP Housing Findings

- *Between 50 and 60% of adults age 18-49 say they want to remain in their communities and homes as they age, while nearly 80% of adults age 50 and older indicate this same desire.*
- *Approximately one-third of adults age 18-49 report they will stay in their current home and never move while nearly half of adults age 50 and older say they will never move.*
- *Over 60% of all adults own their homes, and approximately one in three reported that major modifications to their home are needed to accommodate aging needs.*
- *The presence of accessory dwelling units is low, but seven in ten would consider building one for a loved one who needs care.*
- *Half of adults already share or would be willing to share a home as they age, with a major consideration being if they needed help with daily activities.*



Smaller homes, more rentals, and relatively low costs will create a solid housing base for older adults.

These preferences show the importance of housing in deciding where to live. They also indicate policy topics to consider. Changes in current regulations may be needed if the City wishes to encourage creative and alternative forms of housing. City policy has been for development to pay for itself.

Development costs in Woodstock are relatively high making it difficult for projects to generate adequate financial return to investors and developers. This situation has slowed the construction of affordable housing for older adults. The City's second TIF district creates new opportunities to build housing for older adults. In sum, the combination of smaller homes, more rental units, and relatively low costs make the older adult housing opportunities in Woodstock stronger than those in many other communities. This is a solid base for the City from which to encourage housing that fills the gaps.

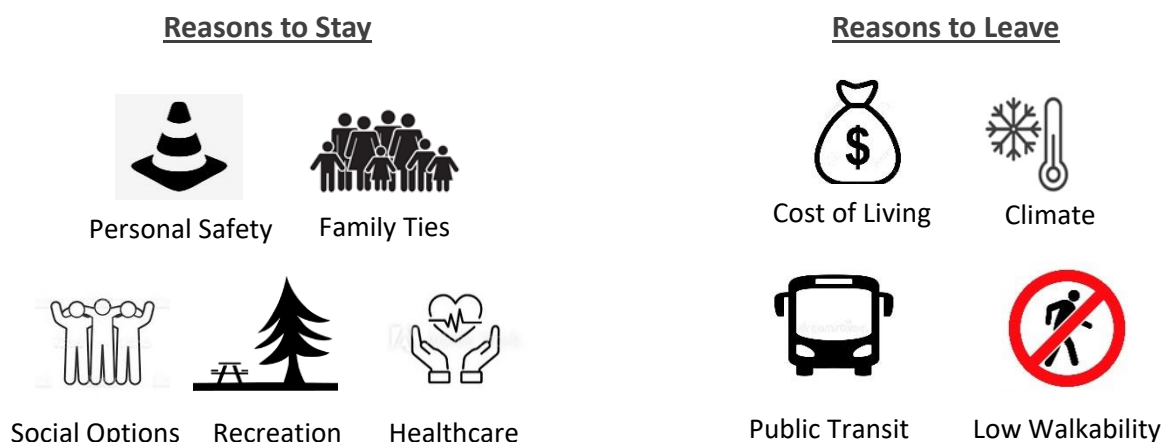
4. Resident Survey

All Woodstock residents were invited to participate in a resident survey. A total of 251 responses were received. The responses are not a representative sample, but are useful for ideas on resident thoughts. The respondents included residents age 18 years and older and varied in income, housing, and other life circumstances. Responses often did not vary significantly by age of respondent, reflecting the common desires of all residents. Response highlights follow.



Most respondents are positive about living in Woodstock and do not plan to leave, regardless of age. The most frequently mentioned reasons to remain or leave are shown in Figure 10. Respondents felt strongly about more positive aspects of the community than shortcomings.

Figure 10. Reasons to Stay or Leave Woodstock



Additional survey findings include:

- Among those age 55+, the top reason to leave their present *home* is to downsize (32.7%) followed by desiring a home that better meets the needs of an older person (20.5%).
- Approximately 1/3 are interested in an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) or in-law suite. This interest came from older residents who might live in one of these units and from younger residents who might host an older family member in their home or on their property.
- Just over half are unsure if the services they need or anticipate needing are available.
- Approximately half are dissatisfied with public transit or have no opinion.
- There is general satisfaction with public services with some exceptions.
- There is interest in leisure and social activities as well as living near to downtown.
- Interest in age-friendly modifications to housing and on-call assistance is high.
- Respondents are actively engaged in local civic, professional, and recreational activities.

Residents respond positively when asked about living in Woodstock and are generally satisfied with public services.

5. Focus Group and Interview Findings

Focus groups and interviews were held with local residents, business people, service providers, and City staff. Highlights of the discussions follow.

- Housing is needed at both ends of the income spectrum. Interest in congregate settings has declined due to COVID-19 and may not recover for some time or at all.
- Older adults most often become or remain Woodstock residents because their children or grandchildren live



there. Therefore, Woodstock needs to be attractive to younger families. Adult children need to know what is available for their parents if they are to encourage them to relocate to Woodstock.

- Retirees desire housing that supports their more flexible lifestyle. These types of housing are not readily available now. They are attractive to younger households as well.
- Innovative housing, including for snowbirds and ADUs, has potential.
- The Square and its historic charm, sense of place, culture, events, and retail is a critical asset with a positive outlook for growth.
- Retirees and tourists look for the same thing: unique, high quality places to shop, dine, sleep and explore. Investing in older tourists can lead to attracting retirees as residents. Having more high-end and unique stores on the Square and having them open on weekends and some evenings will add to the drawing power of the downtown shopping area.
- Additional high-end, short-term accommodations could attract visitors and tourists to spend more time in Woodstock. Becoming more familiar with local attractions and assets could cause them to move to Woodstock or at perhaps have Woodstock as a second home.
- Looking to the future, digital and geographic marketing will strengthen ties between Route 47 and the Square and other attractions such as the apple orchards. Similarly, recent marketing directed to current residents will help bolster activity and links with the community as well as lure in-migrants.
- Upgrade Broadband access to better serve residents interested in remote working. Likewise, introduce more competition among Broadband suppliers including a community owned cooperative arrangement such as Internet Freedom.



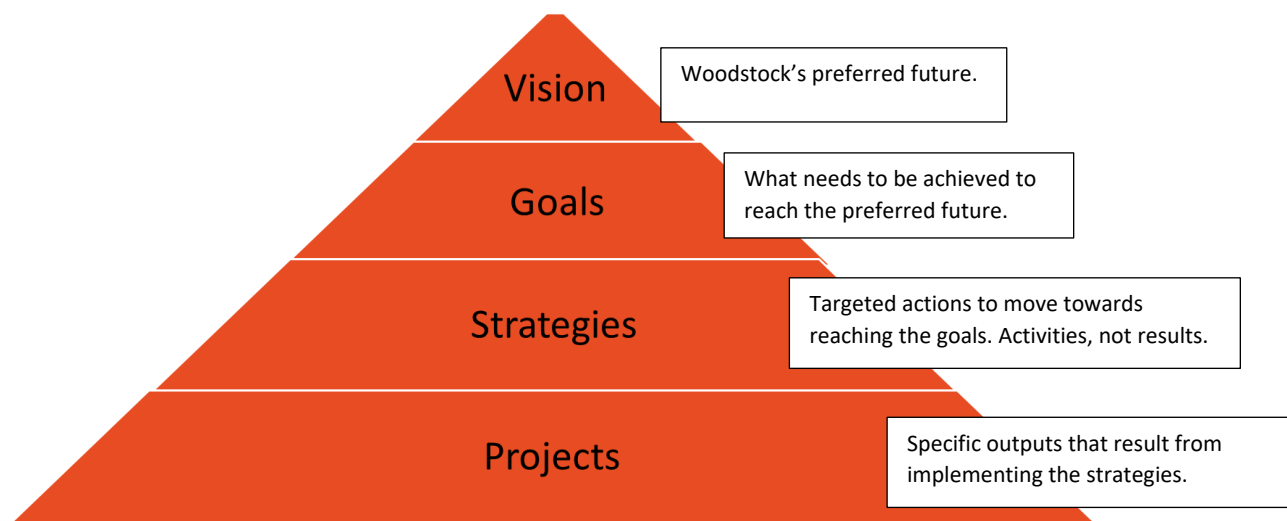
Conclusion: A Solid Base on which to Build

While residents responding to the survey and/or participating in focus groups are mostly satisfied with services and quality of life in Woodstock, *more diversified housing, better Internet access, and high-end convenient shopping* were raised as ways to increase the potential to attract and retain residents. These are elements of the AFP. Some of the suggestions are short-term while others will take several years to develop and implement. Goals and strategies in the plan are presented next.

Section 4: The Plan: Actions for an Age-Friendly Woodstock

The Steering Committee met in four working sessions designed to move from analyzing background data and public input to producing an action and implementation plan. The committee developed the Age-Friendly Livable Community Action Plan (AFP) by first adopting a vision for an age-friendly Woodstock. The group discussed what they hoped for a future Woodstock in this aspirational exercise. After agreeing on the vision, attention turned to achieving it. This discussion generated the specific goals included in the plan. Goals in themselves do not move the community forward so strategies were developed to reach the goals. Strategies are activities to be undertaken, but they are not ends in themselves. To reach the desired ends, specific projects are suggested that would result from implementing the strategies. The illustration below shows the relationship between these components of the plan (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Woodstock AFP Components



A discussion of each component follows.

Vision

The Steering Committee developed the following vision for an Age-Friendly Woodstock:

Age-Friendly Woodstock Illinois is widely recognized as a warm, welcoming, vibrant community offering lifelong opportunity and enrichment for youth and adults of all ages, abilities and lifestyles.

Of special note is that this vision addresses residents of all ages, rather than focusing solely on older adults, reflecting the understanding that an age-friendly community benefits all ages. As previously discussed, the desires of older residents and younger residents overlap more than they differ.

Goals and Strategies

Multiple models were considered in developing goals that would move the community towards achieving its vision. The World Health Organization developed a set of eight domains, later adopted by AARP. These are:

1. Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Social Participation
5. Respect and Social Inclusion
6. Civic Participation and Employment
7. Communication and Information
8. Community Support and Health Services

These eight domains helped in developing a model tailored to Woodstock's current assets, challenges and desires. While all eight domains are included, Woodstock's plan is organized around four focus areas:



Housing



Facilities



Services



Activities

Each goal in the plan fits within one of these focus areas. *The goals are summarized below:*



Housing: Four goals addressing the variety of individual housing units, residential site design, the relationship between residential areas and complimentary uses, varied price points, and home maintenance.



Facilities: Five goals addressing gathering places, businesses that meet wants and needs, walkability, and year-round indoor and outdoor spaces.



Services: Five goals addressing convenient, high quality healthcare, transportation choices, great communication and internet options, and strong caregiver support.



Activities: Five goals addressing events and gatherings for all ages, lifelong learning and the pursuit of special interests, growth of Woodstock as a center for the arts, and opportunities to engage with the community.

The steering committee recognizes that limited resources mean not everything in the plan can happen at once. In order to guide the City's efforts, the members prioritized the goals within each focus area by asking the following questions:

- How achievable is this goal?
- How much impact would achieving this goal have on the community?
- How interested is the community in this goal?

The **highest priority goal** for each focus area is as follows:



Housing: Woodstock offers creative and alternative forms of housing that meet residents' needs at different points in their lives. This goal addresses the needs of current aging residents while also addressing the potential of new housing to attract new residents.



Facilities: Seniors enjoy a designated venue to connect with friends, activities and services. This goal responds to a desire expressed by Woodstock residents and the potential availability of a site and partner to assist in making it happen.




Services: Woodstock residents can access a broad range of health services. This goal is a top priority because of the growing number of older people and their increasing demand for healthcare. It also addresses the importance of quality healthcare in the decisions about where to live in retirement.




Activities: Woodstock offers a wide range of events and creative/gathering opportunities appealing to all segments of the population and visitors. This goal promotes intergenerational contact, a strong sense of community and the strengthening of Woodstock as a place to visit. It has implications for recruiting residents and visitors and the economic vitality of the Square.

Strategies are presented to move the community towards achieving each goal. These strategies include ongoing efforts by the City and other organizations, examples from other communities, and ideas generated by Steering Committee members and participants in the resident survey, focus groups and interviews. Figure 12 lists the goals in priority order and related strategies.

Figure 12. Woodstock Age-friendly Community Action Plan-Goals and Strategies

 Housing Goals (in priority order)	Strategies
1. Woodstock offers creative and alternative forms of housing that meet residents' needs at different points in their lives.	A. Make developing creative and alternative housing easier for developers and residents interested in new options.
	B. Support housing with Universal Design or Life Long Housing attributes.
	C. Encourage housing development that enables recycling of existing homes.
2. Residential areas have easy access to shopping, services, and social/ entertainment options.	A. Prioritize walkability and bikeability in infrastructure planning.
	B. Encourage mixed-use development that includes housing, shopping, services, and recreation.
	C. Include age-friendly principles in comprehensive plan updates.

3. Site design encourages healthy, active lifestyles for all ages.	A. Create shared gathering spaces within residential areas.
4. Aging residents can obtain home maintenance and retrofit homes for their needs easily and affordably.	A. Publicize and share information and referral on home maintenance and remodeling services.
 Facilities Goals (in priority order)	Strategies
1. Seniors enjoy a designated venue to connect with friends, activities and services.	A. Develop a drop-in older adult gathering center.
2. Woodstock attracts businesses providing dining, shopping and job opportunities, minimizing residents' need to leave the community for these purposes and increasing the attraction of visitors.	A. Promote diverse businesses on the Square that offer dining, bakeries, pharmacies, clothing stores, restaurants, etc.
	B. Encourage development of lodging within walking distance of the Metra station and the Square.
	C. Work with Chamber of Commerce to support businesses that appeal to older adults and serve them well.
3. Woodstock is a year-round clean, safe, attractive and walkable city for residents and visitors.	A. Improve and repair sidewalks, streets, walking/bike paths.
	B. Promote use of bike and walking paths by people of all ages.
	C. Increase the number (mileage) of safe walking and biking paths.
4. Residents of all ages are welcomed and served well at public buildings and private businesses.	A. Help building and business owners make their establishments accessible and comfortable to all shoppers.
5. Woodstock offers outstanding outdoor and indoor recreational and cultural spaces enjoyable by all ages year-round.	A. Investigate potential locations for an indoor facility accommodating large groups.
	B. Create public outdoor areas with seating, public art and performance space.
 Services Goals (in priority order)	Strategies
1. Woodstock residents can access a broad range of health services.	A. Strengthen ties with area mental/health service providers.
2. Woodstock residents' have strong options to meet their transportation needs.	A. Work with public and private transit groups to improve door-to-door and on-demand transit options for all residents.
	B. Integrate transportation and recreation opportunities to improve resident ability to participate.
	C. Increase funding for transportation improvements.

3. Woodstock residents can easily obtain information on services and opportunities.	A. Establish and promote an easily accessible, in-person and remote Information and referral hub for services and activities.
	B. Work with Senior Care Volunteer Network to better publicize and coordinate volunteer participation as well as requests for local assistance.
4. All areas of Woodstock have high quality internet service.	A. Identify unserved areas and explore solutions to implement broadband fiber.
5. A strong caregiver network supports Woodstock residents caring for older family members.	A. Identify caregiver needs and services currently available to meet them.
 Activities Goals (in priority order)	Strategies
1. Woodstock offers a wide range of events and creative/gathering opportunities appealing to all segments of the population and visitors.	A. Work with volunteers to continue and increase year-round activities appealing to a variety of residents and visitors.
	B. Develop more winter programs to make the cold weather months more enjoyable and less isolating for residents.
	C. Market Woodstock as a travel destination for older adults.
2. There are many opportunities for lifelong learning and the pursuit of special interests.	A. Encourage affinity groups.
	B. Expand educational programs with older adults as mentors and as students.
3. Woodstock is a regional center for the arts.	A. Encourage multigenerational artists and hobbyists to locate in Woodstock.
	B. Develop an arts hub/makerspace.
	C. Provide artists with opportunities for peer group socialization, display and sale of their work.
4. Woodstock offers meaningful ways for its residents to remain engaged in the community throughout their lifetime.	A. Grow programs in Woodstock schools that bring seniors into contact with students as mentors, tutors, and classroom guests.
	B. Encourage businesses to provide part-time employment opportunities suitable for older residents.
	C. Promote participation in Opera House, Library and recreation programs as audience, participants and volunteers.
5. Increase awareness of career development needs and opportunities in aging policy development and services.	A. Collaborate with area higher education institutions.

Projects

Strategies are activities, not results. Projects are the results of implementing the strategies. The illustration below shows the continuum from vision to projects using a gathering place for older adults as an example.

Figure 13. Progression

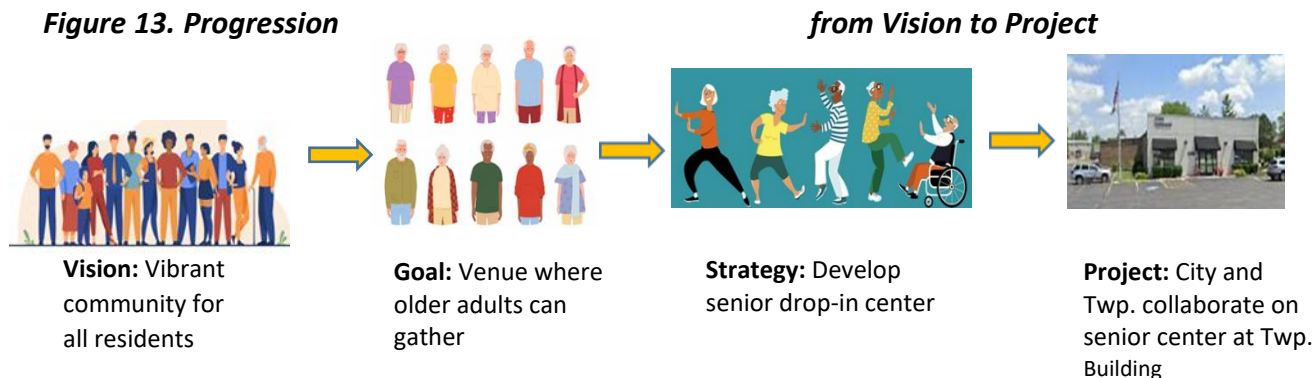





Figure 14 adds a project column to the previous table of goals and strategies. The Steering Committee recognizes that not all projects will be completed and that others may be added to the list. In some cases, suggested projects are already underway or planned by a City department or other organization. In other cases, significant upfront planning is necessary to determine project feasibility. By suggesting these projects, the steering committee is grounding the plan in real efforts that can be undertaken. The hope is that some of these projects, or others developed later, will provide direction and starting points for plan implementation. Identifying projects that can be completed quickly because they are already underway, inexpensive, or have strong community champions can lead to early successes, generating enthusiasm and momentum for completing additional projects. Projects that result in tangible, visible improvements are also helpful early projects.


Projects that can be completed quickly and have visible results can generate support for the AFP.

Figure 14. Woodstock Age-Friendly Community Action Plan-Goals, Strategies and Projects

 Housing (Goals in priority order)	Strategies	Project Ideas
1. Woodstock offers creative and alternative forms of housing that meet residents' needs at different points in their lives.	A. Make developing creative and alternative housing easier for developers and residents interested in new options.	1. Hold a public forum on creative housing options. 2. Review building and zoning codes and modify as necessary to support housing options such as ADUs, co-ops and group living arrangements.
	B. Support housing with Universal Design or Lifelong housing attributes.	1. Develop more continuum of care options, e.g., Village or Co-Housing. 2. Form a Co-op with hospital or medical group. 3. Incentivize Universal Design Features
	C. Encourage housing development that enables recycling of existing homes.	1. Conduct a housing needs assessment to identify gaps in supply by type and price.
2. Residential areas have easy access to shopping, services, and social/recreation options.	A. Prioritize walkability and bike-ability in infrastructure planning.	1. Connect adjoining parcels with walking paths, sidewalks, especially subdivisions.
	B. Encourage mixed-use development that includes shopping, services and recreation.	1. Plan each parcel to complement and support neighboring properties.
	C. Include age-friendly principles in comprehensive plan updates.	2. Include the small grocery/convenience store concept in more projects. 3. Consider zoning changes to allow close proximity of complementary residential and nonresidential uses.
3. Site design encourages healthy, active lifestyles for all ages.	A. Create shared gathering spaces within residential areas.	1. Provide space for community flower and produce gardens. 2. Build mini-parks in existing neighborhoods.
4. Aging residents can obtain home maintenance and retrofit homes for their needs easily and affordably.	A. Publicize and share information and referral on home maintenance and remodeling services.	1. Create a referral service for building trades. 2. Conduct free or low cost home safety assessments. 3. Consider tax relief for retrofitting homes.

	Facilities (Goals in priority order)	Strategies	Project Ideas
1. Seniors enjoy a designated venue to connect with friends, activities and services.		A. Develop a drop-in older adult gathering center.	1. Work with Dorr Twp. and City Recreation Department to use the township building. 2. Identify a Plan B site if above location is not workable.
	2. Woodstock attracts businesses providing dining, shopping and job opportunities, minimizing residents’ need to leave the community for these purposes and increasing attraction of visitors.	A. Promote diverse businesses on the Square that offer dining, bakeries, pharmacies, clothing stores, and restaurants, etc.	1. Recruit “of place” businesses such as a Square Art Supply. 2. Identify business gaps and target recruitment to fill them. 3. Expand business retention efforts. 4. Assist owner succession and transition.
		B. Encourage development of lodging within walking distance of the Metra station and the Square.	1. Research lodging options offered in comparable communities.
C. Work with Chamber of Commerce to support businesses that appeal to seniors and serve them well.		1. Initiate a signage program. 2. Develop new promotions for senior- friendly businesses. 3. Establish a retail certification program for age-friendly businesses.	
3. Woodstock is a year-round clean, safe, attractive and walkable city for residents and visitors.		A. Improve and repair sidewalks, streets, walking/bike paths.	1. Conduct regular informal inspections by public works, police, fire, delivery services to alert City of issues. 2. Conduct walk audits using AARP materials. 3. Provide strong, sustainable funding.
	B. Promote use of bike and walking paths by people of all ages.		
	C. Increase the number (mileage) of safe walking and biking paths.	1. Create a map of current paths and plans for expansion. 2. Enlist major companies to create connective paths. 3. Publish maps and route suggestions to places of interest.	

4. Residents of all ages are welcomed and served well at public buildings and private businesses.	A. Help building and business owners make their establishments accessible and comfortable to all shoppers.	1. Use TIF funding to upgrade access at and to buildings and facilities. 2. Consider use of Revolving Loan Fund to cover accessibility improvements.
5. Woodstock offers outstanding outdoor and indoor recreational and cultural spaces enjoyable by all ages year-round.	A. Investigate potential locations for an indoor facility accommodating large groups.	
	B. Create public outdoor areas with seating, public art and performance space.	
 Services Goals (in priority order)	Strategies	Project Ideas
1. Woodstock residents can access a broad range of health services.	A. Strengthen ties with area mental/health service providers.	1. Work with NWM and Mercy to develop Senior Concierge position 2. Build relationships with medical and other senior service providers to promote availability and access.
2. Woodstock residents' have strong options to meet their transportation needs.	A. Work with public and private transit groups to improve door-to-door and on-demand transit options.	
	B. Integrate transportation and recreation opportunities to improve resident ability to participate.	1. Create an integrated plan for transportation and recreation.
	C. Increase funding for transportation improvements.	1. Add required developer contributions toward transportation.
3. Woodstock residents can easily obtain information on services and opportunities.	A. Establish and promote an easily accessible, in-person and remote Information and referral hub for services and activities.	1. Investigate better utilization of existing information and referral systems in the county. 2. Enlist clubs (Rotary, Moose, churches, etc.) to provide links and information on their websites. 3. Create 1-stop shop information hub via City website. 4. Create and place informational brochures in all public buildings and private businesses.
	B. Work with Senior Care Volunteer Network to better publicize and coordinate volunteer participation as well	1. Use local events to showcase services.

	as requests for local assistance.	
4. All areas can access high-quality internet service.	A. Identify unserved areas and explore solutions to implement broadband fiber.	1. Expand Fiber Consortium offers to businesses.
5. A strong caregiver network supports Woodstock residents caring for older family members.	A. Identify caregiver needs and services currently available to meet them.	
 Activities Goals (in priority order)	Strategies	Project Ideas
1. Woodstock offers a range of events and gatherings appealing to residents and visitors of all ages.	A. Work with volunteers to continue and increase year-round activities appealing to a variety of residents and visitors.	1. Develop ethnic celebrations. 2. Support religious ceremonies and speakers to encourage understanding. 3. Encourage ethnic food trucks.
	B. Develop more winter programs to make the cold months more enjoyable and less isolating.	
	c. Market Woodstock as a travel destination for older adults.	
2. There are many opportunities for lifelong learning and the pursuit of special interests.	A. Encourage affinity groups.	1. Provide opportunities for seniors to participate in the arts. 2. Develop an annual senior talent show at the Opera House and senior art show at the Library. 3. Offer monthly evening meet-up space at Stage Left Café for senior socializing and performances.
	B. Expand educational programs with older adults as mentors and as students.	1. Consider satellite libraries located in residential areas home to many people who have difficulty accessing the main library. 2. Have seniors instruct others on life skills such as cooking, finances, sewing. 3. Increase history offerings.
3. Woodstock is a regional center for the arts	A. Encourage multigenerational artists and hobbyists to locate in Woodstock.	1. Promote the City as an artist friendly place to live or work. 2. Develop residences that incorporate art/hobby spaces while meeting older resident needs.

	B. Develop an arts hub/makerspace.	1. Gather additional information on desired activities and related needs.
	C. Provide artists with opportunities for peer group socialization, display and sale of their work.	1. Hold events on the Square with or in addition to farmers market 2. Host judged art events. 3. Consider events at the McHenry County Fair or at the fairgrounds during the year.
4. Woodstock offers meaningful ways for its residents to remain engaged in the community throughout their lifetime.	A. Grow programs in Woodstock schools that bring seniors into contact with students as mentors, tutors, and classroom guests.	1. Seniors read to young students. 2. Seniors teach conversational level languages. 3. Teach children games played by seniors in their youth. 4. Seniors share historical interests. 5. Reach out to retired experts such as computer programmers, engineers, accountants, lawyers, machinists, mechanics, building trades, etc., to share knowledge with students.
	B. Encourage businesses to provide part-time employment opportunities suitable for older residents.	1. Include in a retail certification program
	C. Promote participation in Opera House, Library and recreation programs as audience, participants, and volunteers.	
5. Increase awareness of career development needs and opportunities in aging policy development and services.	A. Collaborate area higher education institutions.	1. Work with Aurora University to develop courses.

Conclusion: A Strong Plan to Guide the City

The steering committee considered available data, community input, potential resources, and input from experts in developing the AFP. The plan's goals, strategies and projects can guide the City's age-friendly initiative. The next section of the report discusses implementation strategies.

Section 5: Implementation: How Do We Get There From Here?

Woodstock has many resources available to implement the plan. This section of the report suggests an organizational structure for implementation, the role of other agencies and organizations in this effort, the relationship between the Age-Friendly Community Action Plan and other plans and projects, project timing, and how the City might measure progress.

Organizing for Implementation

The City of Woodstock will continue leadership of this effort. City staff is already working on some of the suggested projects and staff has the expertise to pursue others. It is important that all departments communicate often and well in order for the plan to be implemented efficiently. Additionally, a liaison to the council should be created.



Much of the work to become age-friendly involves coordinating current efforts rather than starting anew. Therefore, coordination will be key to operating cost-effectively and in a timely manner. A means of coordinating efforts, perhaps with a staff person assigned to that task, should be considered. An advisory council including City staff, a council liaison, representatives from key partner organizations, and current steering committee members can oversee the effort.

It is suggested the work be organized around the four focus areas of housing, facilities, services, and activities. Each focus area team could include select members of the advisory council, city staff, and members of other interested groups.



Partnerships and collaborative arrangements should be sought with other jurisdictions and organizations that have overlapping interests with the City's age-friendly efforts. McHenry County and Dorr Township provide services to older Woodstock residents and manage significant programs. They also have resources that the City does not. Non-profit organizations serving older adults are numerous. Other agencies and organizations serving a broader age range can help both in expanding their services to older populations and in connecting older and younger residents. Organizations that connect with people outside of the Woodstock area including visitors, investors, or future residents also can play important roles. The many current boards and commissions also should be considered as partners.

Outreach to the public and other interested organizations will be necessary to generate support and develop partnerships. An open house for the public, including business owners, to present the overall plan, answer questions, and an opportunity to sign up for volunteer opportunities could help build community engagement and buy-in. In addition, news releases should be

prepared for multiple outlets. An information and strategy session with related organizations is suggested. This event would inform potential collaborators about the plan and address questions and concerns. Time allocated for developing teams and sharing ideas will get the implementation process going and generate support.

Key Components:

- City leadership
- Interdepartmental communication
- Council liaison
- Diverse advisory council
- Collaboration with other organizations
- Outreach to residents and stakeholders.

Funding

Implementing a multi-project plan will be complex, requiring diverse funding sources. While the City can allocate some funds and staff time to the effort, grants, project specific fundraising, sponsorships, and cost sharing with other organizations should all be pursued. City staff is adept at securing grant funding. Fundraising is often most effective when directed to tangible projects with long lasting on the ground impacts. Examples include bricks and mortar projects such as buildings, parks, trails and other open space, street furniture, and landscaping. Sponsors also find these projects attractive and may be further motivated through naming opportunities. Benefactors or sponsors also can be pursued for activities such as events and programming, again with acknowledgement of financial support. Cost sharing with other jurisdictions or organizations is appropriate wherever there is an overlap of interests or responsibilities. Similarly, cost sharing with private sector stakeholders, such as property owners or adjacent businesses who may benefit, can be pursued.

Current Plans

Ongoing City plans connect with the AFP at many points. Each of the following plans should be reviewed for overlap with the AFP or where updates to the plans might consider age-friendly connections.

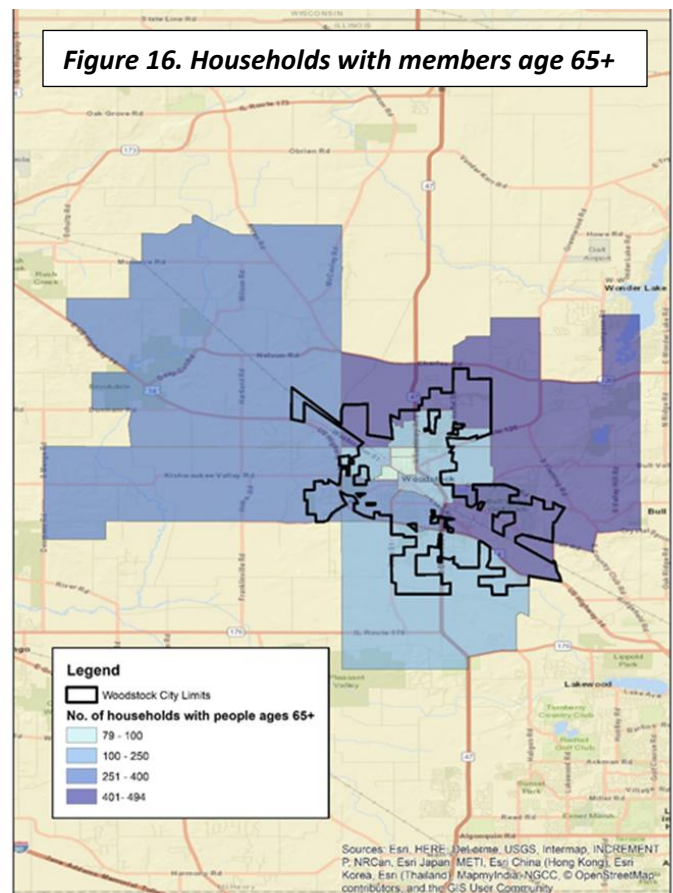
- Downtown plan
- Comprehensive Plan
- Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)
- CDBG/Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA)
- Sidewalk Plan
- Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) Bike/Walk Path
- Old Courthouse Renovation Plan

The connection to the AFP for some of these plans is clear.

- The AFP calls for additional walking paths. These paths are identified in the ITEP Bike/Walk Plan.
- The AFP calls for encouraging creative forms of housing and considering convenience commercial uses in residential areas. The UDO is a tool for implementing these kinds of decisions.
- The Old Courthouse Renovation Plan includes public spaces for meetings, events, and other activities. It is a potential venue for the kinds of activities suggested in the AFP.
- The CDBG/NRSA plan addresses underserved areas of the community. The initial focus is on Woodstock's east side, an area where many older residents live.
- The AFP identifies downtown Woodstock as a unique asset that attracts visitors and residents. It is relatively walkable, connected to public transit and offers a variety of activities for all ages. The Downtown Plan is designed to enhance and strengthen this important asset.
- Figure 16 shows the relative number of older residents in each area of the community.



This map illustrates how land use patterns in one part of the community may have great or little impact on the older population. City policies might consider the existing and changing locations of older households as it makes land use decisions in updating the comprehensive plan.



Timing

The scope of the AFP is intended to be addressed over a number of years. Identifying projects that can be completed early in the process can generate additional support for the plan among local stakeholders and establish a track record helpful in securing funding for later projects. Possibilities for year one projects include those already being planned or carried out, those for which there is likely to be early support, and those for which there are collaborative partners ready to contribute resources.

Metrics

Measuring progress should occur from two perspectives: completing specific tasks (*outputs*), and achieving goals (*outcomes*). As projects are undertaken, steps to completion will be spelled out and the anticipated end product described. This end product might include a new or expanded facility, services provided to a target number of people, publicizing the availability of services, or something else. The point is that these projects all can have quantifiable outputs, whether it is something built, people reached, dollars raised, or another measure.

Completing projects and generating outputs is an interim measure of success. While this progress should be celebrated, it does not necessarily indicate progress has been made toward reaching goals (the desired *outcomes*). Developing a new service or facility that reaches a target number of people is a measurable output. A different measure is needed in order to determine if reaching that number of people brought the City closer to its goal (bettering their lives in some way). For example, providing several miles of new walking trails in target neighborhoods can be a measured output, but whether or not people are happier with their neighborhoods as a result is an outcome. Measuring outcomes is more difficult than measuring outputs, and often communities do not focus on the outcomes, which may not be visible for several years. Continued resident surveys, statistics on resident health, participation in community activities, fewer residents relocating out of town or more new residents arriving, and repeat visitors are examples of how outcomes could be measured.

Next Steps

The AFP must be submitted to AARP for Woodstock to retain its official Age-Friendly designation. Following submission and at the direction of Council, the City can organize to implement the plan. Several members of the Steering Committee are interested in becoming members of the advisory council. City staff can be assigned to participate, a liaison to council appointed, and other members invited.

Public outreach and connections to other agencies and organizations can begin soon. The marketing of Woodstock as an Age-Friendly Community to potential visitors, residents and investors is a logical next step in enhancing Woodstock's image as a desirable place to live, visit and invest.



Conclusion: Woodstock has the Resources to Move Ahead

Woodstock's Age-Friendly Livable Community Action Plan builds on City leadership, existing plans and efforts underway within the greater Woodstock community. The AFP recommends deliberate steps to take when organizing for implementation. Effective communication among all those involved, including the public, will be key to achieving Woodstock's vision of an age-friendly community that supports all of its residents.



APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interviews, Focus Groups, Assistance & Inspiration

(*Action Plan Steering Committee member)

Area Aging Services:

***Dr. Paula Yensen**-McHenry County Board, Senior Services Grant Commission Chair
***Hans Mach**-McHenry County Planning & Development
***Andrew Stuckey**-McHenry County Planning
***Aileen Zei**-McHenry County Planning
Sue Brokaw-Dorr Township Supervisor
Chief Michael Hill-Woodstock Fire/Rescue
Captain Matt Hedges-Woodstock Fire/Rescue
***John Buckley**-Independence Health & Therapy
***Melissa Cooney**-ZRFM Attorneys
Holly Peters-Hearthstone Communities
Kim Ulbrich-McHenry County Housing Authority
Micki Miller-Senior Services Associates
Sharon Smith-Harvard Senior Center
Carlyn Housh-One Home Health Agency
Marla Fronczak-AgeGuide Area Agency on Aging
Leslie Edstrom-AgeGuide Area Agency on Aging
***Stu Gaines**-Satori Pathway Healthcare Consultants
Bernie Marinelli-Satori Pathway Healthcare Consultants
Mayor Catherine Adduci-Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Age-Friendly Community Collaborative Chair
Kyle Smith-Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Age-Friendly Community Collaborative
Marc Blessing-A Tribe Called Aging

Community Connections:

Danielle Gulli- Woodstock Area Chamber of Commerce, Real Woodstock
***Arlene Lynes**-Read Between the Lynes
Olga Ortiz-Berry Global, Hispanic Connections
Cheryl Wormley-The Woodstock Independent
Laura Cullotta-Woodstock Rotary
Neeley Erickson-Illinois Realtors
Marcy Piekos-Leadership Greater McHenry County

Community Attraction/Retention:

Christian Cantwell-Woodstock Rotary
Craig Hallenstein-Broker and Author
Wayne Read-Dougherty Enterprises
Catherine Peterson-Aurora University Dean
Diana Frisbie-Aurora University
Dr. David Stumpf-Northwestern University Professor Emeritus

Community Housing:

***Dick Ahrens**-Keefe Realty
Arturo Flores-Success Realty, Hispanic Connections
Kim Keefe-Keefe Realty
Peter Kloczek-Berkshire Hathaway Starck Realty

City of Woodstock:

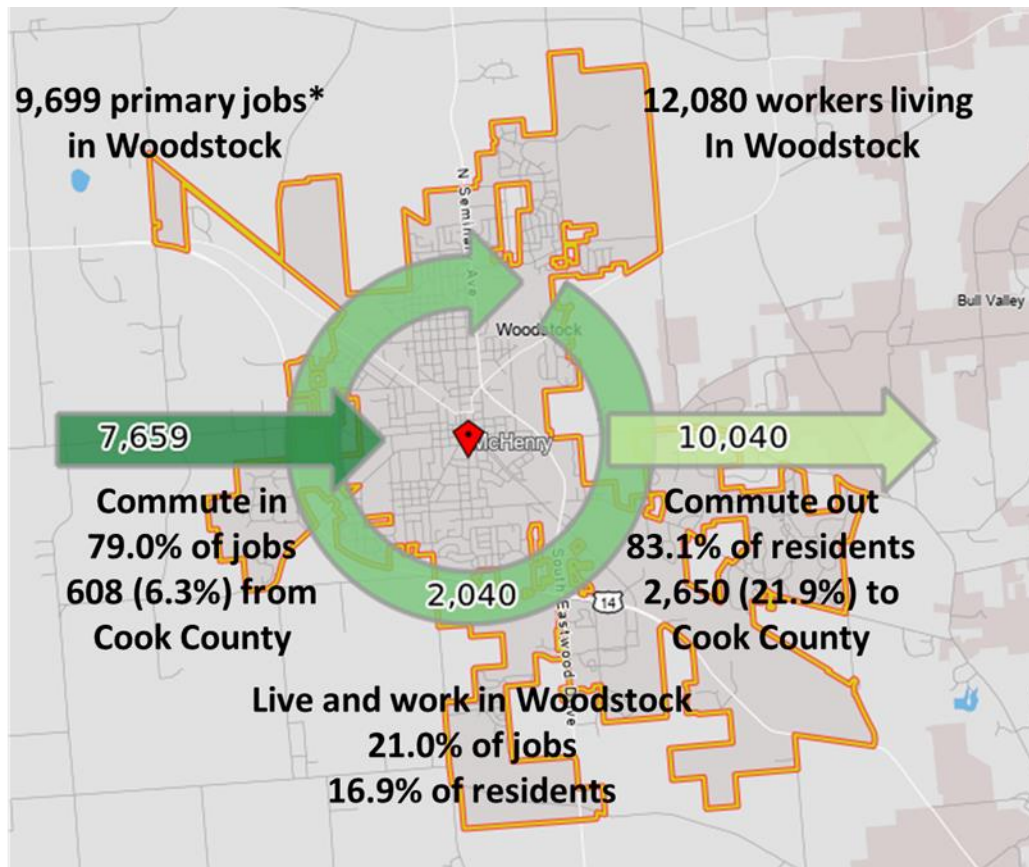
***Wendy Piersall**-Woodstock City Council Liaison
***Terry Willcockson**-Staff Liaison & Project Mgr.
Roscoe Stelford-City Manager
Paul Christensen-Asst. City Manager
Chief John Lieb-Police
Dan McElmeel-IT
Garrett Anderson-Economic Development
***Krista Coltrin**-Economic Development
Joe Napolitano-Building & Zoning
Darrell Moore-Building & Zoning
Christina Betz-Public Works
Chris Lynk-Public Works
Daniel Campbell-Woodstock Opera House
Dave Zinnen-Recreation Department
Becky Vidales-Recreation Department
Deb Schober-Human Resources
Jane Howie-City Manager's Office
Betsy Cosgray-City Manager's Office
Monica Amraen-City Manager's Office
Nick Weber-Woodstock Public Library
***Martha Hansen**-Woodstock Public Library
***Andrew Celentano**-Transportation Commission

Community Foundation for McHenry County:

Deb Thielen, Marcey Sink, Lyndsey Thompson

And all those who generously participated in our community-wide Age-Friendly Woodstock survey!

Appendix B: Woodstock Commuter Flows, 2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap, 2018.

*Primary jobs are defined as those representing the largest share of earnings for workers. Primary jobs are used to avoid double-counting commuters that hold multiple jobs.

Appendix C: Consumer Spending Types by Age*

Item	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Age Trend
Total	\$52,817	\$66,291	\$71,404	\$63,855	\$53,001	\$39,838	
Food away from home*	\$3,063	\$3,913	\$4,161	\$3,229	\$2,678	\$1,819	
Owned dwelling costs (e.g. mortgages, prop. tax)	\$4,995	\$7,236	\$7,904	\$7,932	\$6,039	\$4,609	
Rented dwellings	\$4,742	\$3,464	\$2,522	\$1,346	\$1,528	\$3,255	
Telephone services (cellular or landline)	\$1,174	\$1,624	\$1,707	\$1,490	\$1,170	\$816	
Water and other public services	\$430	\$611	\$606	\$628	\$548	\$462	
Household furnishings and equipment	\$1,959	\$2,496	\$2,602	\$2,292	\$1,855	\$1,091	
Apparel and related services*	\$1,947	\$2,334	\$2,443	\$1,640	\$1,379	\$774	
Vehicle purchases (net outlay)	\$4,058	\$5,163	\$4,614	\$4,176	\$2,689	\$1,510	
Gasoline, other fuels, and motor oil*	\$2,040	\$2,465	\$2,435	\$2,191	\$1,620	\$940	
Public and other transportation*	\$714	\$763	\$726	\$809	\$674	\$319	
Healthcare (incl. insurance & medicine)	\$3,363	\$4,571	\$5,163	\$6,369	\$7,020	\$6,625	
Entertainment	\$2,683	\$3,547	\$4,958	\$3,900	\$4,078	\$1,649	
Fees and admissions*	\$599	\$1,078	\$919	\$681	\$659	\$316	
Audio and visual equipment and services	\$821	\$1,160	\$1,151	\$1,080	\$1,031	\$899	
Pets, toys, hobbies, and playground equipment	\$791	\$930	\$1,726	\$1,056	\$740	\$356	
Other entertainment supplies/equipment/services	\$472	\$380	\$1,163	\$1,083	\$1,648	\$77	
Personal care products and services	\$621	\$971	\$999	\$785	\$671	\$502	
Education	\$921	\$924	\$2,449	\$1,371	\$319	\$115	
Cash contributions	\$771	\$1,324	\$2,060	\$2,738	\$2,471	\$2,231	
Personal insurance and pension contributions	\$6,871	\$8,608	\$10,301	\$8,329	\$4,235	\$1,207	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2017-2018.

*Asterisks indicate spending categories likely to have been disrupted by the pandemic. Spending by residents under age 25 is omitted for simplicity and relatively low amounts spent.

Appendix D: Impact Methodology

The impacts of spending by population age groups are described at three levels: *direct effects*, *indirect and induced effects*, and *total effects* on employment, labor income, value added, and output. *Direct effects* are specific to economic activities, such as total spending by older residents in Woodstock, expected to occur within McHenry County.

Indirect and induced effects estimate the broader economic development that occurs because of the direct effects. *Direct effects* in Woodstock ripple across McHenry County as businesses serving older residents purchase inputs from other companies in the county and as employees at those companies spend their wages. An example of an *indirect* or *induced* effect is an increase in retail sales because employees of businesses serving older residents spend their wages in McHenry County. These effects can continue for several iterations through Woodstock and surrounding communities. Thus, the estimated impacts far exceed those only in Woodstock, which is why the IMPLAN analyses are usually conducted on a county basis.

The *direct* and *indirect/induced effects* sum to the *total effect*. The spending multiplier is the total effect divided by the direct effect and it is a measure of the number of jobs created in McHenry County because of activities in Woodstock. Again, these impacts are expected in the relatively short-run and are not intended to be long-term growth projections. Other factors will change which may affect the short-term effects. However, they provide useful planning information that helps local policymakers select development strategies.

The economic impact results presented have several limitations summarized briefly below. This economic model presents a cautious interpolation from secondary data at a regional or national level, including some room for uncertainty in areas such as lasting effects of the pandemic, potential changes in future spending patterns, and the complex nature of healthcare spending.

Limitation	Comments	Our Adjustment
Lingering effects of pandemic	Safety concerns and distancing requirements could result in less spending for several years.	Economic model is run over a long time horizon, assuming an eventual return to business as usual. <i>Impacts are not meant to show effects of a downturn or early stages of recovery.</i>
% of Year Spent in Woodstock	Baby Boom generation spends avg. 10 vacation days on travel/year. Retirees have more time.	Decreased spending by 1/12th, conservatively allotting up to a month outside of Woodstock.
Elasticity of Spending	Incomes in Woodstock lower than in national spending survey. This could change some pending patterns.	More research would be needed to derive new spending patterns. Decreased spending based on ratio of income in Woodstock to income in national survey.
Future Spending Patterns	Spending patterns will likely change in the future with new goods and services.	Cannot predict new technology trends. Can only apply current spending patterns to future population levels.
Health Care Costs	Spending survey does not include third-party payments, which represent most of the revenue for hospitals.	Health care expenditures from national spending survey are not used in our IMPLAN model. We model that sector separately. Downscaled Total Patient Revenue at Northwestern Medicine Woodstock Hospital, based on national patterns in health care costs by age and the population by age in Woodstock.

Appendix E: Impact by Major Business Sector (\$millions)

Industry	Total Output Impact	Example Purchase
Total	\$164.7	
Retail trade	\$51.5	Groceries, hobbies
Finance & insurance	\$22.1	Vehicle insurance
Real estate & rental	\$16.8	Owned/rented dwellings
Other services	\$9.4	Vehicle repair
Accommodation & food services	\$8.9	Restaurants
Construction	\$8.6	Home repair/renovation
Administrative & waste services	\$6.8	Building services
Utilities	\$6.5	Electricity
Government & non NAICs	\$6.2	Property tax
Information	\$5.5	Phone & internet
Professional- scientific & tech services	\$4.5	
Health & social services	\$3.7	
Educational Services	\$3.2	
Arts- entertainment & recreation	\$3.2	
Transportation & Warehousing	\$3.1	
Wholesale Trade	\$2.6	
Management of companies	\$1.1	
Manufacturing	\$0.9	
Mining	\$0.1	
Ag, Forestry, Fish & Hunting	<\$0.1	

Source: IMPLAN, 2017.

Appendix F: How Age Friendly is Woodstock Now?

Woodstock's current level of age friendliness was compared with national statistics and nearby communities on each of the eight factors listed below.

1. Transportation
 - Metra, Pace, and MCRide provide public transit with varying degrees of access and convenience (CMAP).
 - Based on a national survey, older people prefer their own cars and prioritize well-maintained roads (National Association of Realtors Preference Survey, 2017).
 - Transportation costs are 22-24% of household expenditures, higher than the goal of 15% (CMAP).
 - Woodstock's walk score of 30 is relatively low (walkscore.com).
2. Communication and Information
 - Internet coverage is good and growing in importance (GeoISP).
 - Paper options are available for those who prefer it or do not have internet access (NIU CGS interviews).
3. Housing
 - There is limited housing designed for older residents (NIU CGS interviews).
 - National surveys show interest in new kinds of targeted housing with currently limited availability in Woodstock (AARP Preference Survey 2018).
 - Ensuring that older residents' existing homes are suitable for their later years is a concern (AARP Preference Survey, Woodstock Resident Survey).
 - Woodstock has more rentals, more multifamily units, and smaller homes than typical of McHenry County (CMAP).
 - Approximately 35% of households spend more than the HUD goal of 30% of income on housing, but in general, costs are similar to elsewhere in the county (CMAP).
4. Environment
 - Woodstock's open space is in the mid-range for communities of similar size and exceeds nationally recognized standards. The trail system is somewhat short based on nationwide data (National Recreation and Parks Association).
 - Most residents have reasonable access to grocery stores (USDA).
 - The crime rate is low. Road safety is somewhat compromised based on traffic fatalities (AARP).
 - National surveys show Interest in walkability is highest among youngest adults and declines with age (National Association of Realtors Preference Survey 2017).
 - Synergy of land uses is key to maximizing quality of life for all residents.
5. Health and Human Services
 - Recent changes in local hospital services may be cause for concern (NIU CGS interviews).
 - Patient satisfaction scores in the bottom third of all communities (AARP Livability Index).
 - 82% of older people rate convenient and well-maintained facilities as critical (AARP Preference Survey 2018).
6. Participation and Inclusion
 - The arts sector is strong and vibrant (AARP Livability Index).
 - Voter participation is high (AARP Livability Index).
 - The Woodstock population is more diverse than the county (American Community Survey).

