

Housing For Seniors

Housing needs and preferences change with age. Housing characteristics such as accessibility, size, and costs may become incompatible with the needs of the residents as they age or retire. Unfortunately, there are often limited options for seniors who want to transition to new, more appropriately sized housing in the same community. These constraints often lead to aging residents to leave the community to find appropriate housing elsewhere or stay in housing that does not meet their needs. Providing housing options for seniors within their own community, often referred to as “aging in place” benefits both seniors and the community at large.



“Aging in place” for seniors provides a host of benefits including familiarity with local services and existing networks of support and social interaction. When an aging household can move into more suitable housing, it opens more appropriately sized housing opportunities for new residents and young families.

In Ulster County, approximately 20% of the population is aged 65 or older.ⁱ In the coming years, the number of people aged 65+ is expected to grow while the total population of the county is expected to decline. As a result, approximately 26% of Ulster County’s population is projected to be aged 65 or older by the year 2030.ⁱⁱ As the senior population continues to grow both in total number and as a percentage of total population, it will be important to provide housing options that meet the needs of this demographic.

THERE ARE SEVERAL STRATEGIES FOR CREATING MORE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SENIORS:

- Age-Restricted Housing Developments: Age-restricted housing developments can be built that are specifically designed for an older population.
- Affordable housing units: Affordable housing units, even those not specifically designed for seniors, can be a viable option for aging residents. Many older residents are on limited fixed-incomes meaning they are likely to qualify for income-restricted affordable housing.
- Accessory dwelling units (ADUs): ADUS are typically relatively small, reducing the burden of upkeep. They can also provide a way for aging residents to maintain independence while remaining close by to family or other caregivers.
- Design Standards: while there are many successful examples of housing designed and built specifically for seniors, there is a growing movement to implement universal design standards more broadly to ensure that new housing can be accessible and adaptable for everyone regardless of age.

ⁱ U.S. Census Bureau – 2020 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

ⁱⁱ [Cornell Program on Applied Demographics – County Projections Explorer](#)