



STAFF REPORT

MEMO DATE: March 19, 2021
MTG. DATE: MARCH 23, 2021

TO: Village of Cottage Grove Ad Hoc Housing Task Force

CC: Village of Cottage Grove Board of Trustees
 Matt Giese – Village Administrator
 Lisa Kalata – Village Clerk

FROM: [Erin Ruth, AICP – Village Planning Director](#)

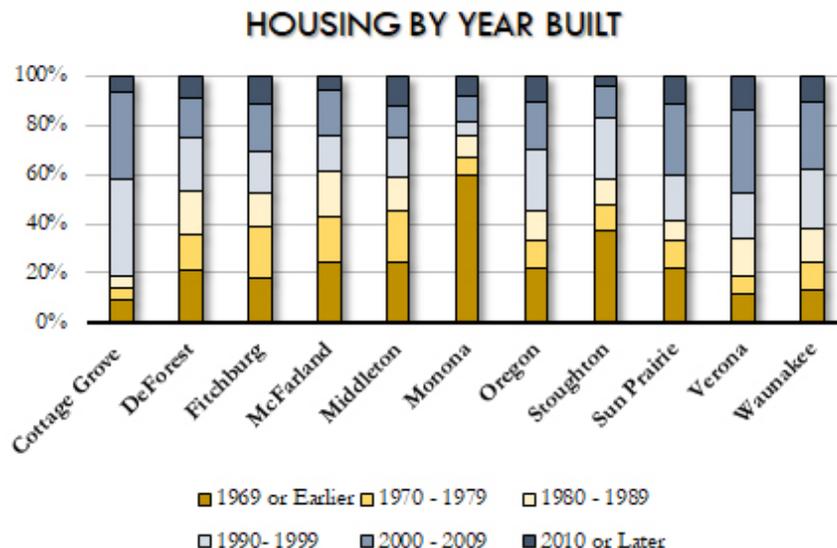
RE: Physical Housing Data

BACKGROUND

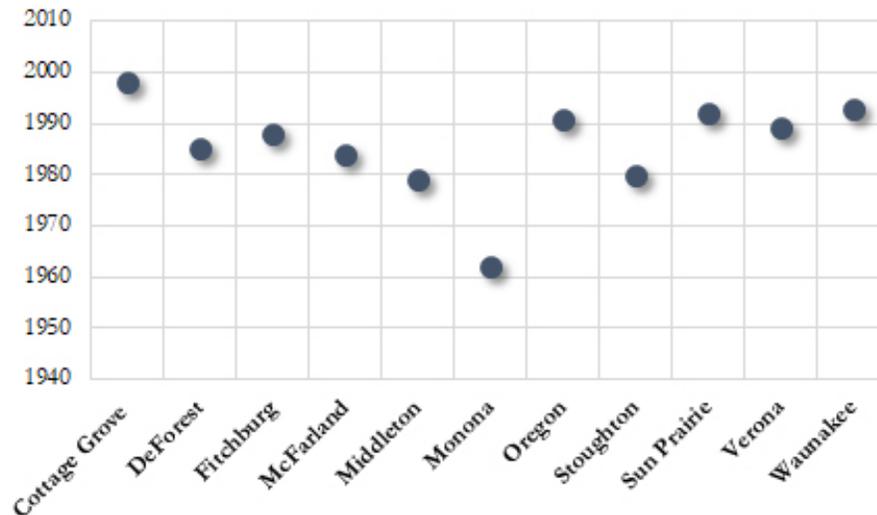
At several upcoming meetings the Housing Task Force will review various sets of data related to housing both in the Village and the region.

OVERVIEW

A selected set of data, each with a summary, follows below. Data comes from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 5-Year American Community Survey from 2019. Because it is a representative survey there is a margin of error for all data.



MEDIAN YEAR BUILT



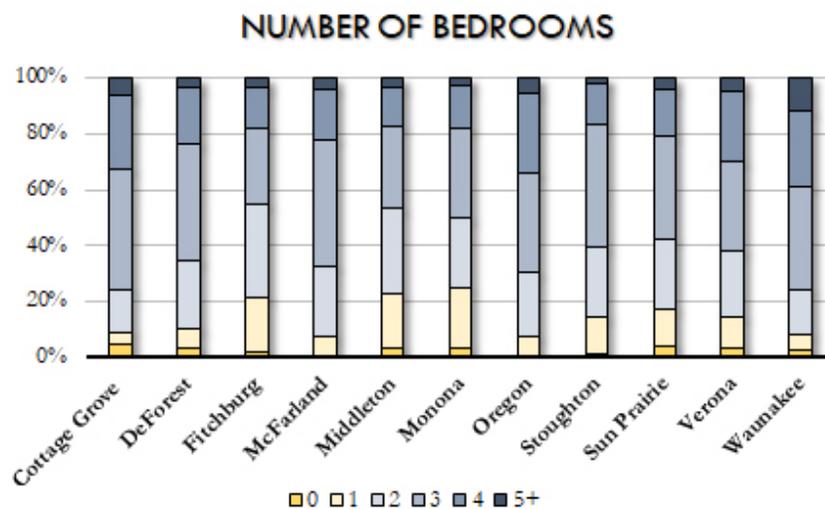
Cottage Grove has the newest housing stock among the comparable communities both in terms of the percentage of homes built in recent decades and the median year built.

Just over 80% of housing units in the Village were built in 1990 or later. Only two other communities built more than 60% of their units in that span: Verona (66%) and Waunakee (62%). By comparison, just 24% of Monona's housing units have been built since 1990.

The median year built (meaning half of the community's units were built before that date and half after) for units in Cottage Grove is 1998. Only three other communities had a median date in the 1990s: Waunakee (1993), Sun Prairie (1992), and Oregon (1991).

Potential policy implications:

- *In addition to the relative lack of variety in home values in Cottage Grove, the fact that so much of the housing stock was built over a short time span suggests less variety in the Village's housing. Continue to encourage variety in new housing types.*
- *Older units can be an option for affordability, but the relative lack of such units in the Village makes them less of an option here. Consider programs that protect viability of the older units that do exist in the Village, such as those in the vicinity of Firemen's Park.*

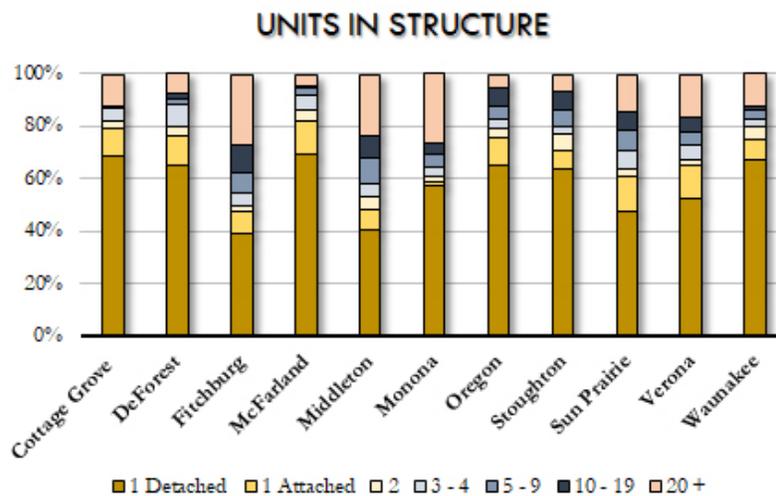


Cottage Grove is among the communities with the lowest percentage of housing units that are studios, 1-bedroom, or 2-bedroom with both Cottage Grove and Waunakee having about 24% of units in those categories. Oregon has the next lowest percentage at 30.7%. Given that Cottage Grove and Waunakee have two of the three lowest percentages of rental units, these figures are not surprising.

Cottage Grove has the highest percentage of units that are 3 or 4-bedroom (69.6%). DeForest (62.6%), McFarland (63.7%), Oregon (63.9%), and Waunakee (64%) are the communities with the most similar percentages.

Potential policy implications:

- *This is another category that suggests less variety of units in Cottage Grove compared to comparable communities. Continue to encourage variety in new housing types.*
- *Smaller units tend to be the most affordable. More small units would provide more affordable options.*
- *Smaller units are also best suited for small one or two person households. Recent graduates, single adults, couples without children, empty nesters and the elderly are among the household types that may make use of smaller units and it may be a challenge to find such units in the Village. The national trends is toward a greater variety of household types, including these smaller households.*



Cottage Grove has the second highest percentage of units located in 1 unit detached, 1 unit attached, or two-unit buildings (82.1%) with only McFarland higher (86.4%).

It may not be obvious which category a building falls into just by looking at it. For example, a duplex with a ground to roof dividing wall, separate heating units and utility meters, and no units above or below each other would be considered 1-unit attached. An otherwise identical duplex with shared meters would be counted as a 2-unit building. Quadplexes, townhouses, rowhouses, etc. divided similarly as the example above would also be considered 1-unit attached.

Potential policy implications:

- *This is another category that suggests less variety of housing types in Cottage Grove compared to comparable communities. Continue to encourage variety in new housing types.*
- *A detached single-family home is the least attainable housing type for many households. The relatively high percentage of units in that type of building makes the Village unaffordable for many households.*
- *A detached single-family home also carries the highest maintenance cost and property taxes both of which further affect affordability.*
- *A detached single-family home also carries the highest maintenance burden (yard care, snow removal, general upkeep) of the building types. Some household types such as the elderly or disabled are not able to perform such maintenance and may no longer find this home type suitable to their needs.*
- *Single-family detached housing uses land less efficiently requiring more reliance on automobiles and is less efficient to heat and cool with corresponding environmental effects. Consider ways to encourage environmentally sensitive design in single-family homes.*