

WAUWATOSA SENIOR COMMISSION



WAUWATOSA
SENIOR COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 2025



PURPOSE AND DUTIES

Summary of Wauwatosa Senior Commission Chapter 2.28.020 of the City Municipal Code

- Represent and advocate for senior citizens.
- Bring focus to issues affecting the quality of life of seniors
- Serve as a connecting point between senior, the city, social agencies, neighborhood associations and other groups
- Continually monitor the needs of seniors and develop strategic recommendations to address identified issues
- Help establish Wauwatosa as a community recognized for welcoming and supporting intergenerational neighborhoods

2025 Members

Patricia Bruce - Resident
Kathy Causier - Chair, Resident
Dianne Dagelen - Resident
Kristen Hecht - Resident (resigned November 2025)
Robert Heller (Resident)
Laura Laurishke - Police Department Liaison
David Lewis - Alderperson Liaison
Dain Maddox - Resident
Michael Meier - Resident
Carol O'Brien - Resident
Carmen Pangilinan - Health Department Liaison
Elise Riepenhoff - Vice-Chair, Resident
Jeanne Sidner - Resident (resigned December 2025)
Kosta Zervas, Wauwatosa Senior Centers Director, Recreation Department Liaison

2025 Budget Report

City of Wauwatosa



2025 YEAR-TO-DATE BUDGET REPORT

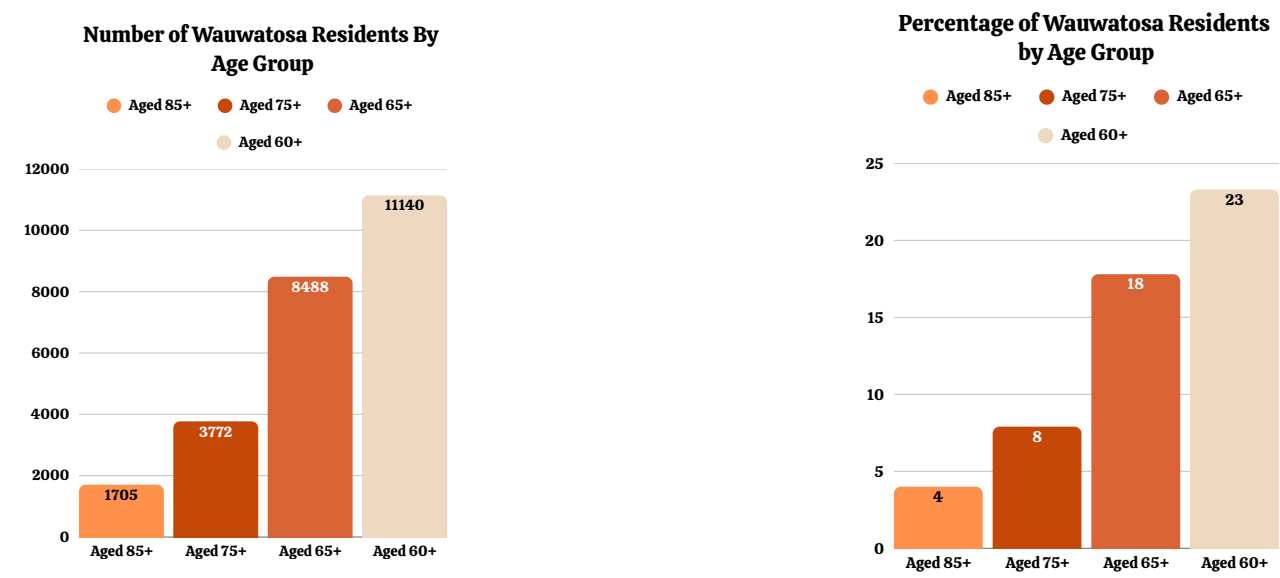
FOR 2025 13								
ACCOUNTS FOR:	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANSFRS/ADJUSTMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	ENCUMBRANCES	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USE/COL	
10115000 GF SENIOR COMMISSION								
10115000 4812 DONATIONS/CONTRIB	-300	0	-300	-235.00	.00	-65.00	78.3%*	
10115000 6004 PRINTING AND DUPL	0	0	0	5,000.00	.00	-5,000.00	100.0%*	
10115000 6099 OTHER EXPENSES	5,000	7,000	12,000	6,013.74	.00	5,986.26	50.1%	
TOTAL GF SENIOR COMMISSION	4,700	7,000	11,700	10,778.74	.00	921.26	92.1%	
TOTAL REVENUES	-300	0	-300	-235.00	.00	-65.00		
TOTAL EXPENSES	5,000	7,000	12,000	11,013.74	.00	986.26		

FOR 2025 13								
	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANSFRS/ADJUSTMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	ENCUMBRANCES	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USE/COL	
GRAND TOTAL	4,700	7,000	11,700	10,778.74	.00	921.26	92.1%	

** END OF REPORT - Generated by Carmen Pangilinan **

DEMOGRAPHICS

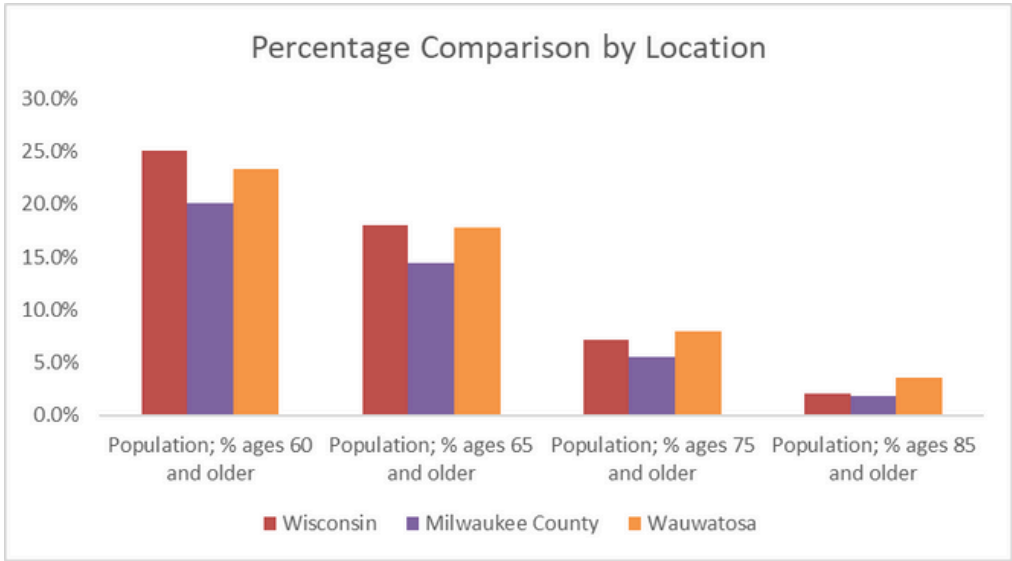
23% of Wauwatosa residents are aged 60 or over. Population projections indicate the older adult population will continue to grow well into 2040.



Wauwatosa is a desirable place to age in place. The percentage of older adult Wauwatosa residents is higher in every age category than that of Milwaukee County.

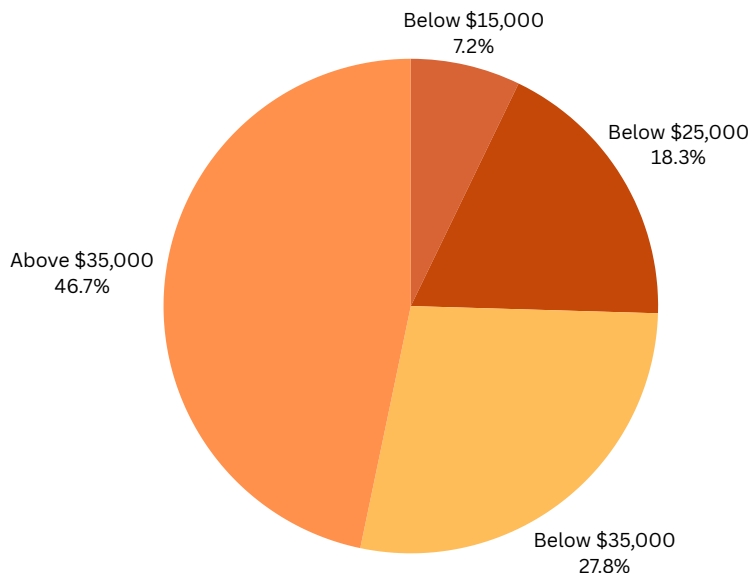
The percentage of residents aged 85+ is twice as high in Wauwatosa than Milwaukee County overall.

This is significant in that as we age we are more likely to be in need of supportive services to help us remain living independently in our homes.



DEMOGRAPHICS

INCOME



In 2023, the most recent year with data available, over half of Wauwatosa households headed by residents aged 65+ have an income at or below \$35,000.

LIVING ALONE



ALMOST 40% OF WAUWATOSA RESIDENTS 65+ LIVE ALONE

- Living alone and being older are risk factors for loneliness and isolation. Social isolation, loneliness, and lack of social connection pose serious public health risks that affect a significant portion of the adult and youth population,
- People who experience social isolation and loneliness are at increased risk to develop cardiovascular disease, depression and dementia, and are at a higher risk for falls.

KEY ISSUE: HOUSING

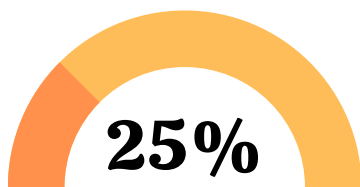
Challenges and Initiatives



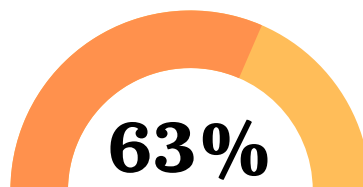
Challenge: Affordability

COST BURDEN DATA FOR HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD 65+

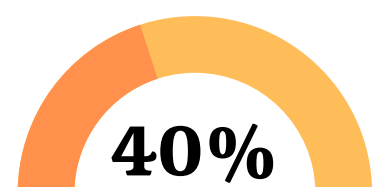
A household is cost-burdened when it spends more than 30% of its income on rent and utilities.



Homeowners



Renters



All Head of
Household 65+

Median Household Income all Residents	Median Household Income Head of Household 65+	Median Home Value	Average Property Tax Bill	Median Gross Rent
\$93,859	\$57,464	\$307,600	\$5,930	\$1,116

Initiatives:

- Continued to strongly advocate for affordable and accessible housing for all. In addition to affordable units, focus on advocacy for - outreach to landlords to encourage voucher programs (Section 8), promotion of more missing middle housing, and equitable shared revenue funding from the state to municipalities.
- Members Dianne Dagelen and Pat Bruce led the way to forming a partnership with Dr. Demond Means and Ted Martin from the School District to start the Senior Tax Exchange Program (STEP) - an intergenerational program pairing older adults and elementary students in school libraries to read to one another, while getting paid up to \$750 a year to help offset increases in property taxes.

KEY ISSUE: HOUSING

Challenges and Initiatives

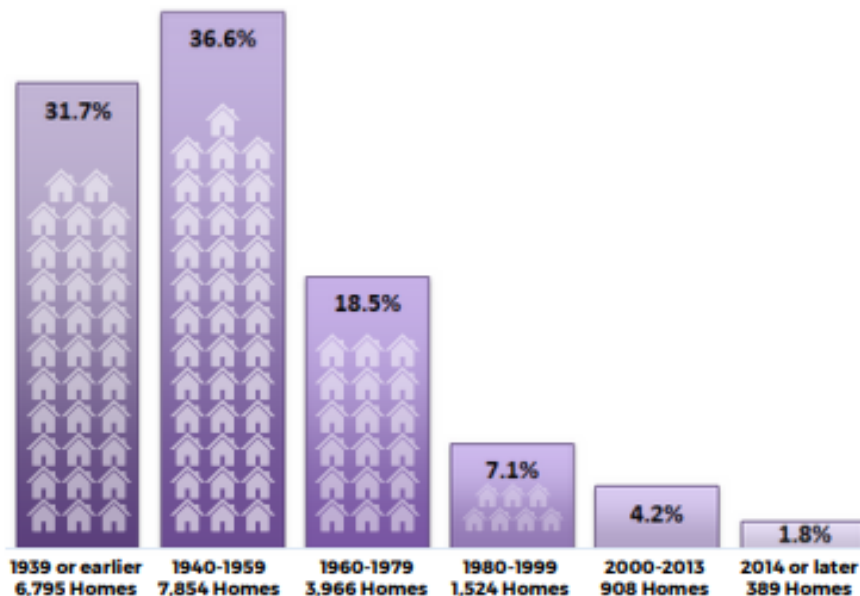


Challenge: Availability and Accessibility

Much of the older housing stock lack accessibility features which may be needed in order to continue living independently as we age.

Most homes are older, with 31.7% built before 1940 and only 6% since 2000.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimate



Initiatives:

- Continued promotion of the Wauwatosa Home Loan Repair Program
- In partnership with the Joint Housing Coalition, provided input for the City's Comprehensive Plan and proposed zoning updates.
- Continue ongoing contact and coordination with the City and Development staff on a variety of housing issues.

HOUSING GOALS



Goals:

- Address funding gap to make below market housing financially feasible for developers.
- Increase housing options to include more "Missing Middle" housing.
- Continue to publicize the availability of the Home Loan Repair Program.
- Support the efforts to bolster the volunteer base to help provide services such as snow shoveling and yardwork assistance.
- Address many of the questions and common misconceptions around changes in zoning.

Key Partners:

Wauwatosa Health Department
Wauwatosa Age-Friendly Steering
Committee
Wauwatosa Joint Housing Coalition
Wauwatosa Development Department

Asks:

- Work together to advance and support efforts to expand housing options in Wauwatosa which will result in more affordable housing.
- Build on Wauwatosa's history of providing mixed housing options throughout the community.
- Support efforts to provide volunteer assistance for yardwork and snow removal assistance for older adult residents.

KEY ISSUE: HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Challenges and Initiatives



- **Falls**

- **Challenge:** Falls present major challenges to healthy aging. Falls are the number one cause of non-natural death in the City of Wauwatosa and typically involve older adults. According to the CDC, Wisconsin has the highest fall death rate among older adults in the United States.
- **Initiatives:** The Commission has consistently supported the funding of Healthy Aging Grants at the state level which would provide additional support and resources for falls prevention. The most recent letter of support was sent in September 2025. Locally the Commission supports the evidence-based falls prevention workshop, Stepping On by helping to market the program to residents.

- **Social Isolation and Loneliness**

- **Challenge:** data shows that older adults and people with disabilities are at a higher risk for social isolation and loneliness. 40% of Wauwatosa's older adults live alone, which is an additional risk factor.
- **Initiatives:** The Commission was an active partner in promoting social connection activities offered through the Health and Recreation Departments. Activities include:
 - Senior Planet and Tosa Tech Time technology assistance programs
 - Senior Tax Exchange Program (STEP) - intergenerational program pairing older adults and elementary students in school libraries to read to one another.

- **Communication and Lack of Available Resources**

- **Challenge:** Digital communication is the predominant mode of communication offered by the City and many service providers, which is not the preferred mode of communication for some older adults.
- **Initiatives:** Commission funding to support the creation and dissemination of a Wauwatosa Older Adult Resource Guide available online and in paper format.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS GOALS



Goals:

- Continue to prioritize falls prevention efforts.
- Continue to promote the intergenerational STEP program offered through the Wauwatosa School District.
- Support the continued development of efforts to provide technology training to older adults while simultaneously increasing the ways in which we communicate with all residents.
- Increase community knowledge of available resources through the sharing of the Wauwatosa Older Adult Resource Guide and support of the Tosa Connects neighborhood connection program.
- Advance strategies and education to reduce ageism.

Key Partners:

Age-Friendly Tosa Steering Committee
Wauwatosa Health Department
Wauwatosa Joint Housing Coalition
Wauwatosa Recreation Department

Asks:

- Work with community partners to support the Tosa Connects initiative which has the goals of fostering connection between neighbors in order to provide residents with information about and access to local resources and opportunities.
- Support efforts to change the way we talk about aging - we are all aging!

KEY FOCUS AREAS: ADVOCACY AND COLLABORATION

Two of the Senior Commission’s main responsibilities are advocacy and collaborating with other groups to make life better for older adults in Wauwatosa. The Senior Commission has approved a policy priority list to help focus and guide our advocacy work.

The Wauwatosa Senior Commission Supports Legislation, administrative actions, and agency policies that:

- Create better access to voting and removes barriers to voting.
- Allow for the construction of safer streets, bike lanes, and improved pedestrian crossings.
- Allow for increased access to and availability of affordable, below market housing.
- Support increased access to programs, services, and funding for home repair services and costs associated with owning or renting a home in order to age in place.
- Enhance caregiver support services.
- Support intergenerational opportunities.
- Support healthy aging such as grants to address falls prevention, chronic disease self-management, and caregiver support.
- Support access to programs for Energy assistance
- Support access to programs for affordable and nutritious food

Key Partners:

Age-Friendly Tosa Steering Committee
Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network
Wauwatosa Joint Housing Coalition
Wauwatosa School District
Wauwatosa Library
Wauwatosa Department of Public Works

Wauwatosa Community Health Improvement Plan
Action Teams
Wauwatosa Common Council
Wauwatosa Commission for Persons with Disabilities
Wauwatosa Equity and Inclusion Commission
Wauwatosa Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee
Wauwatosa Sustainability Committee

Asks:

- Support efforts to provide more written information for those who are not connected digitally.
- Expand efforts to bolster the volunteer base to help provide services to older adults.

2025: HOW WE USED OUR FUNDS

- Creation and printing of Older Adult Resource Guide
- Grocery store gift cards for senior center dining site members
- Two community cooking classes
- Sponsorship of local volunteer recruitment efforts for Eras Senior Network
- Sponsorship of WAAN Aging Advocacy Day at the capitol
- Support for Housing Week Activities: Food and beverages, incentive gift cards
- Support for Social Connection focused community input session - Food and beverage, signage, office supplies, gift cards for incentives
- Gift cards for 2026 Senior Health and Wellness Fair

Puzzle Palooza
Team Puzzle Contest
Little Red Store, 7720 Harwood Ave
Wednesday, October 8
5-7pm

Join our team puzzle challenge to uncover fun facts and helpful housing resources in Wauwatosa! Refreshments will be provided and prizes awarded.

Wauwatosa Housing Week 2025
In Wauwatosa, we believe that housing means more than just a shelter over your head. It's the only foundation of a healthy community. Learning more about the connection between health and housing.

RSVP Required:
Contact Public Health Strategist, Carmen Panglinan at 414-479-8947 or cpanglinan@wauwatosa.net



MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING WALKING TOUR

ABOUT THE TOUR

- Learn more about missing middle housing and how it may provide a solution to the city's housing needs.
- The walking tour will take approximately 75 minutes. Please wear comfortable foot wear, bring water, and dress appropriately for the weather.
- Following the tour we will gather at Collective on 6th for a tour recap and beverage courtesy of AARP Wisconsin.

Home to Health

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11
10:00AM**

MEETING SPOT - OUTSIDE COLLECTIVE ON 6TH AND WELLS



Heart Healthy Cooking Class

Join us for a hands-on, heart-healthy cooking class focused on delicious, plant-based meals that nourish your body and support cardiovascular health.

Participants will learn practical cooking techniques, how to read labels and choose heart-healthy ingredients, and easy swaps to reduce sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars.

FREE

Chef Amberlea Childs

Thursday, February 12th

5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Wauwatosa West High School Room #159

Spots are limited and sign up is required. Call 414-831-5542 to sign up.




WAN Advocacy Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Day
Wisconsin Aging | Advocacy | Network

Thank You, Sponsors

AARP Wisconsin

Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) • Milwaukee County Aging Services
Wauwatosa Senior Commission • Wisconsin Association of Benefit Specialists (WABS)

Aging and Disability Professionals Association of Wisconsin (ADPAW) • Area Agency on Aging of Dane County • TMG

UAW Milwaukee Metropolitan Retiree Council • Wisconsin Association of Nutrition Directors (WAND)
Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) • WaPACT • Wisconsin Senior Corps Association (WSCA)

Acumen Fiscal Agent • Alzheimer's Association SE Wisconsin Chapter • Village Caregiving • Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers (WASC)
Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance (WIFACSA) • Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA) • Wisconsin Senior Advocates

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