

Executive Summary

Purpose of Study

In the Fall of 2000, State Representative Larry McKeon, at the urging of local community groups and residents, commissioned Loyola University Chicago's Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) to provide an analysis of relevant data regarding housing and land use in the Uptown community.

A Local Advisory Council (LAC) was created to review, evaluate, and advise the project staff as they collected and analyzed data sets. For the past two years, researchers at CURL have worked with Organization of the NorthEast (ONE), Representative McKeon, and the LAC to collect and analyze data from a variety of sources.

The goal of this report is to provide to all stakeholders and parties engaged in the Uptown community a comprehensive and accurate profile of Uptown and the changes that have been occurring within the community over the past decade, based on data collected from a wide range of reliable sources. The community, thus informed, will be better able to address the issues and concerns of all its residents.

Key Findings

General Population Characteristics

- Stable overall population with some variation among census tracts.
- Decrease in the number of children and senior citizens.
- While Uptown is still recognized as one of the most diverse communities in the City, it did experience a loss of minority racial and ethnic group residents while the white, non-Hispanic population increased. These trends contrast citywide trends, which saw a rise in Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander residents and loss of Caucasians.
- The median income of Uptown residents increased during the 1990s, but it remains below the city median. At the same time, the distribution of different income groups in Uptown approaches the city averages.
- The poverty rate in Uptown declined, as did that of the city. However, Uptown's poverty rate remained higher than the City as a whole. Poverty rates in Uptown declined in all age categories except residents over 65 years old, diverging from the citywide trend.
- The overall education level in Uptown increased, paralleling the trend citywide. Uptown residents, on the average, have attained higher levels of education than the City as a whole.

Land Use and Land Value

- Uptown experienced declines in the number of mixed-use buildings, rental buildings, and vacant lots, while experiencing an increase in the number of condominium buildings. These trends follow those of the city, but all at faster rates.
- Assessed land value in Uptown rose along with other areas on the north side near Lake Michigan and the Loop, which have the highest land values in the city.

Housing Overview

- Uptown has a high density of housing units.
- As with many other densely populated community areas in Chicago, Uptown has a relatively high proportion of renters (or, conversely, a low level of owner-occupied housing). However, the proportion of owner-occupied housing is increasing.
- There was a large decrease in the number of vacant rental and owner-occupied units in Uptown.
- Owner-occupants in Uptown are spending more of their income on housing, while fewer renters are spending over 30% of their income on rent. These match citywide economic trends and a shift in the direction of greater homeownership rates.
- There were losses in the total number of rental units—losses at a rate higher than the citywide rate.
- Uptown has a dual rental market – smaller apartments (no- and one-bedrooms) in Uptown are less expensive than the city average, whereas larger apartments (two or more bedrooms) rent for more than the city average.
- The values and sales prices of owner-occupied units increased.
- There are different value trends in the various sub-markets of Uptown's homeownership housing market: single-family detached; condominiums, townhouses; and different sized apartment buildings.
- The total number of units in Uptown (after eliminating duplicates) subsidized by the five agencies (HUD, DOH, CHA, IHDA and CHAC) equals 5,896 units or 18.2% of the community's total housing stock.
- The total number of buildings in Uptown that have a building-based subsidy is 100, or 3% of the community's building inventory.