



**Webster Groves
Senior Housing Development Project
Q & A
Updated: 10/3/23**

1. Who is behind the development of this proposed affordable senior housing project?

Two mission-driven organizations, Peace United Church of Christ (Peace UCC), and the Housing Authority of St. Louis County, are partnering to develop this site location for affordable housing for seniors.

2. Why is Peace UCC taking on this project?

Peace UCC believes in embodying the words and teachings of faith through actions that help create a more inclusive, just, compassionate, and sustainable world. Peace UCC's mission of caring for the well-being of all includes its community, Webster Groves. Right now, many senior citizens on fixed incomes in Webster Groves are at risk of being pushed out of our community due to increased property taxes and other financial pressures. Seniors in Webster who have been friends and neighbors throughout the past deserve the opportunity to remain in our community.

3. What are the details surrounding this project? Number of housing units? Target audience? Proposed density of project?

The project will have 52 units and will be similar in size to the neighboring Elle building, but on a much larger piece of land. This means density will be significantly less than other developments on Lockwood while preserving the green space along Lockwood and Plant Avenues.

There will be a mix of one and two bedroom units available to residents at different income levels. There will also be six market rate units.

4. Who will be able to apply to live in these units?

We are designating these units to be age 62 and older. In a 62+ community, the only residents that can be under 62 are live-in aides or caretakers. In a 55+ community, there are exceptions for younger people, which is why this will be designated as 62+.



5. How will Peace UCC fund the development of this housing project? Will my tax dollars go to support the project?

No local tax dollars will be used in the development of this project. Peace UCC and the Housing Authority are applying for state and federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits to fund the development.

6. Who is the developer on the project?

Peace UCC and the Housing Authority of St. Louis County are co-developers of the project.

7. What is the City of Webster Groves' position on the project?

While Mayor Laura Arnold supports the project, representatives of the development team are actively discussing the project with other city officials.

8. What is the timeline associated with the senior housing development?

The partnership applied for tax credits in September and will find out in December if the project is funded. From there, due diligence takes about nine months to a year. The project would likely be under construction in late 2024 or early 2025 and be completed within approximately 12-18 months.

9. Once the property is developed and seniors move in, what will be Peace UCC's role with the project going forward?

This is an ongoing investment that Peace UCC is making. Upon completion of this development, Peace UCC will serve as an active, committed partner in the management of the development to ensure its success.

10. Will affordable senior housing negatively impact property values in Webster Groves?

There is overwhelming evidence that senior housing will not negatively impact property value. Shelterforce, an independent publication that serves community development practitioners, looked at [62 studies](#) on the effects of affordable housing on property values. In 29 studies, affordable housing raised property values; in 27, the effects were neutral; 5 had mixed effects; and one had negative effects:

"This perennial fear of neighbors has been the subject of repeated academic study by a wide range of research teams under a wide range of conditions, and



the consensus is overwhelmingly that well-designed, well-maintained affordable housing does not lower property values — and in some cases it might raise them!” -The Answer, Shelterforce

The developers understand also and appreciate the value of the trees and green space on the property. They will work to preserve as much of the greenspace as possible to maintain the aesthetics of the Webster Groves neighborhood.

11. Will my taxes go up due to the development of the senior affordable housing project?

Property tax values are calculated by looking at recent sales of comparable properties. Since this development is multifamily, senior affordable housing, it should have no direct impact on tax assessments for Webster residents.

12. Will the affordable senior housing project add to increased traffic and congestion within Webster Groves?

Traffic related to this development should have minimal impact on congestion in the area. Many seniors in affordable developments rely on transportation services and/or use their automobiles.

13. We already have senior housing in Webster Groves, why do we need more?

Seniors on a limited income cannot afford to remain in Webster without making difficult sacrifices for other essentials like food or healthcare. One in five households in Webster are age 65 and above, representing about 1,700 households. Right now, there are less than a couple hundred affordable units for seniors in and around Webster Groves.

14. Is this public housing or privately owned?

This is not public housing. This development will be privately owned by a partnership between Peace UCC and the Housing Authority of St. Louis County.

15. If privately owned, who is the owner of the housing development project?

Peace UCC and the Housing Authority of St. Louis County will own the development.

16. Since the housing development is owned by a church, will the church pay taxes?



Yes, the church as part of the private partnership entity that owns the housing is responsible for paying taxes.

17. What are the developers doing to protect the tree canopy and green space that already exists on the property?

The developers understand and appreciate the value of the trees and green space on the property and will work to preserve as much of that as possible.

18. What are the benefits of the senior housing development to the community of Webster Groves? Financial, economic, and otherwise?

The city will receive its prorated share of property taxes generated from the new development. Additional benefits to the local economy:

- The development team will be comprised of St. Louis area companies that employ hundreds of area residents and pay state and local taxes.
- According to the economic impact estimates provided by the National Association of Homebuilders, the construction of a 48-unit senior housing project has significant benefits for the local community. In terms of direct and indirect impacts, each unit provides an average benefit of \$123,964, resulting in a total project benefit of \$6,446,107 through local income, wages, jobs, and more. These impacts will be realized at the completion of the project.
- A study conducted by the Center for Outcomes Research and Education (CORE) found that affordable housing reduced overall healthcare cost expenditures for Medicaid recipients and an 18% decrease in ER visits. This translates to a decrease of \$84 per month for each senior household in an affordable development. This should result in an annual savings of over \$44-\$48k annually for taxpayers.

19. Did Peace UCC look at any other options for the real estate property location other than senior housing?

Yes. When Peace UCC originally decided to sell its land in favor of funding its mission, the plan was to simply sell the real estate on the private market. In the process of receiving and considering initial offers, we learned of the exciting option to use the church property to improve the quality of living for seniors.

There are many people with fixed incomes who are being pushed out of the neighborhood because of rising property taxes. Peace UCC wants to make sure there is a place for elders in the community too.



20. Will there be any community meetings to discuss the details of this project while providing the community with an opportunity to respond/engage?

Peace UCC and the Housing Authority are actively conducting community outreach by holding public meetings, attending regularly scheduled community group meetings, and talking with small groups of Webster Groves residents in their homes. We welcome your feedback about this project and invite you to take the survey on this website.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/webster-groves-affordable-housing>

21. How much money can I make and still be eligible to live in the new senior housing?

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development sets income limits on an annual basis. Based on this year's limits, we estimate that one person can make up to \$42,200 annually and two people can make up to \$48,230 annually and still be eligible to live in one of the affordable units. These limits are for income, not assets, but would include any net income from assets each year.

There will also be six market rate units in the development that will not have any income restrictions for residents.

22. How will Peace and the Housing Authority ensure that seniors already living in Webster Groves will be able to live in the new apartments?

While we cannot exclude anyone from applying for residency, we are committed to keeping the Webster Groves community informed and up-to-date on how and when to apply for residency.