

Housing Narrative: Village of McFarland

Most expensive development fees in Dane County

#16 out of 16
in Development Fee Cost

The Village of McFarland has some of the most expensive development fees in Dane County, ranking 16th overall out of 16 municipalities that were examined in MABA's fee study. McFarland's current impact fees are nearly double the average of other local communities.

Permit starts have also not kept pace with demand. MTD data shows housing starts peaked near 90 in 2018–2019 before plummeting in 2020 and struggling to recover, with recent years averaging far fewer permits. This data highlights how McFarland's fee structure may be discouraging new housing supply despite clear population growth and demand.

McFarland

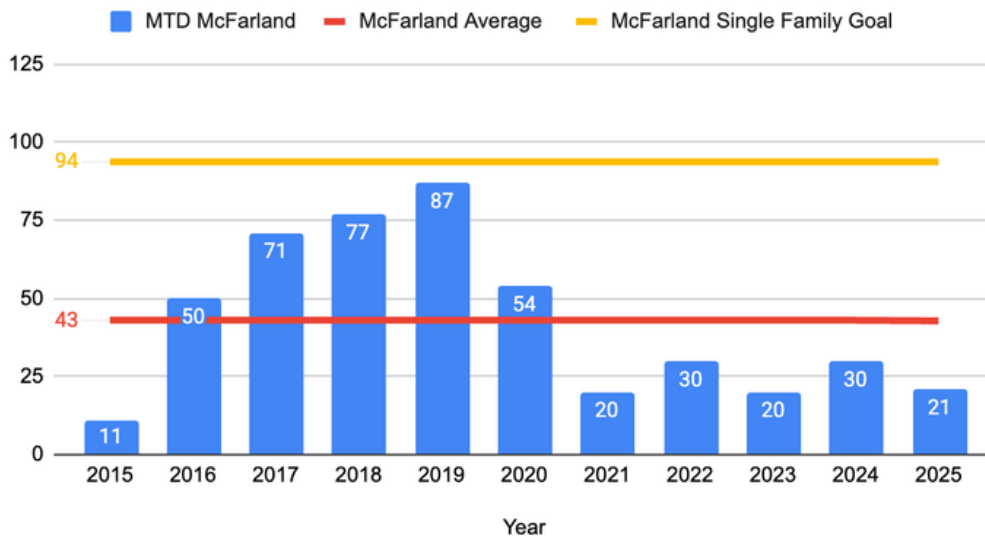


Table 1: Annual Single-Family Permit Starts and Regional Housing Strategy Targets

**Income Needed
to Afford New Home
\$172,601**

National Association of Home Builders

**McFarland
Local Mill Rate
0.005775728**

Dane County Treasury Department

**McFarland Mill Rate
Rank
6 of 15**

Dane County Treasury Department

**McFarland Parcel
Numbers
3844**

Dane County Treasury Department

Municipal Fee Rank



Overall

16 of 16



Impact

16 of 16



Planning

8 of 16



Building

12 of 16



Engineer

13 of 16

* Fee Rankings (1-16 with 16 being highest cost and, 1 being lowest)

**Annual New Single Family
Housing Units Needed: 94**

**Annual Unit Starts (Avg.):
43**

**Housing Progress Report
Goal Not Met:**

Missing 73

Housing Units In 2025

Housing Narrative: Village of McFarland

Possible Solution

To address these challenges, McFarland should explore reducing or restructuring impact fees, which currently creates one of the largest barriers to new developments. Any consideration of increasing impact fees would be counterproductive to housing growth. Building and engineering costs should also be revised to bring them more in line with neighboring communities.

Approval of additional lots and growth in permits would provide a more robust and long-term economic impact that additionally increasing fees.

Educational Resources

- **Housing Supply Accelerator** - <https://www.nahb.org/-/media/NAHB/advocacy/docs/state-and-local/housing-accelerator-playbook.pdf>
 - The Housing Supply Accelerator (HSA) Playbook is for local elected officials and community planners working to boost diverse, attainable, and equitable housing supply in communities nationwide.
- **Creating Housing for All Brochure** - <https://www.nahb.org/-/media/NAHB/advocacy/docs/top-priorities/housing-affordability/nahb-attainable-housing-brochure-2019.pdf?rev=ad31433c972b451d80254c1cb8ca334d>
 - Quick overview of solutions for housing
- **Land Development Checklist** - <https://www.nahb.org/-/media/NAHB/advocacy/docs/industry-issues/land-use-101/orientation/land-development-checklist>
 - This checklist outlines the typical process developers should go through. This resource will help both developers and public officials better understand the many steps in the land development process, the timeline, likely costs, and required due diligence associated with residential development.
- **Development Process Efficiency: Cutting Through the Red Tape** - <https://www.nahb.org/-/media/NAHB/advocacy/docs/top-priorities/housing-affordability/development-process-efficiency.pdf>
 - This report focuses on the land development review and approval process, an arcane-sounding component of housing development, but one that impacts the cost of new housing at all price levels.
- **NAHB Impact Fee Primer** - <https://www.nahb.org/-/media/7AC7AA3E405D43C7A5C7D40B3760EB61.ashx>
 - Resource that breaks down what impact fees are, how they are typically calculated, the pros and cons to impact fees, and lists possible alternatives
- **NAHB Priced Out Portal** - <https://www.nahb.org/news-and-economics/housing-economics/housings-economic-impact/households-priced-out-by-higher-house-prices-and-interest-rates>
 - Increases in home prices, mortgage rates, and property taxes have a direct impact on housing affordability. These factors lead to many Americans being priced out of the housing market. NAHB's "priced-out" methodology calculates how many households would be affected by these changes.
- **DANE COUNTY REGIONAL HOUSING PRIORITIES, STRATEGIES AND ACTION ITEMS, 2024 - 2028** - <https://rhs.danecounty.gov/documents/pdf/DCRHS-SAPReport-FNL-web-STRATEGIC-ACTION-PLAN.pdf>
 - Regional Housing Strategy with 17 strategies on how to address housing crisis in Dane County
- **A Road Map to Solving Dane County's Housing Crisis: Strategic Action Plan 2024-2028** - <https://rhs.danecounty.gov/documents/pdf/FactSheets/RHS-FactSheet-v3FINAL.pdf>
 - RHS Quick Fact sheet expanding on housing crisis
- **RHS BEST PRACTICES RESIDENTIAL ZONING CODE** - <https://rhs.danecounty.gov/documents/pdf/Best-Practices-Residential-Zoning---11.5.25.pdf>
 - The Best Practices Residential Zoning Guide is a resource for Dane County communities to evaluate and identify regulatory barriers that limit housing supply and diversity, as well as regulations that increase the cost of housing.

Housing Narrative: Village of McFarland

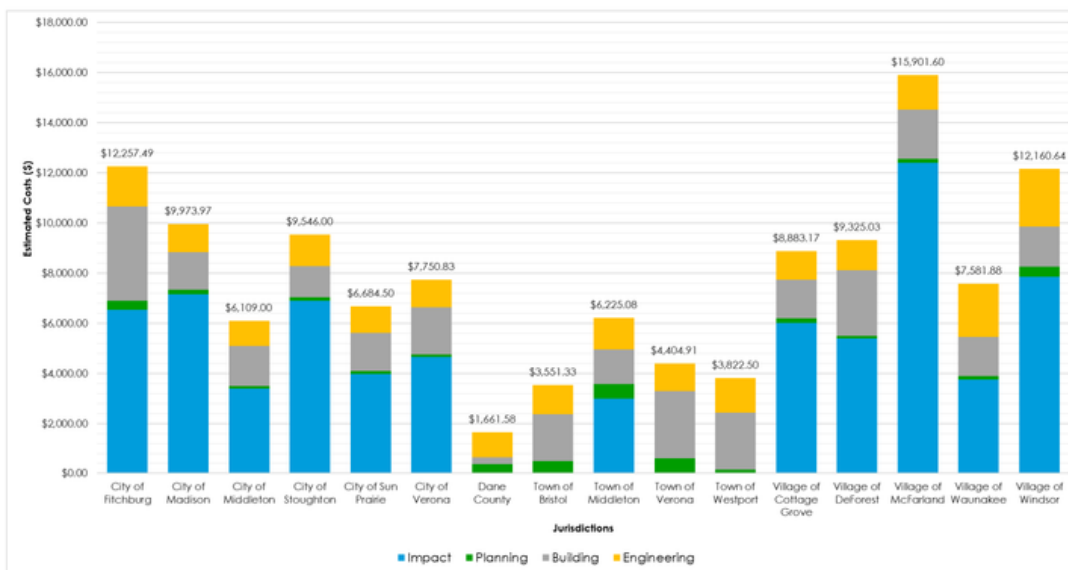


Table 2: Estimated Single-Family Development Fees

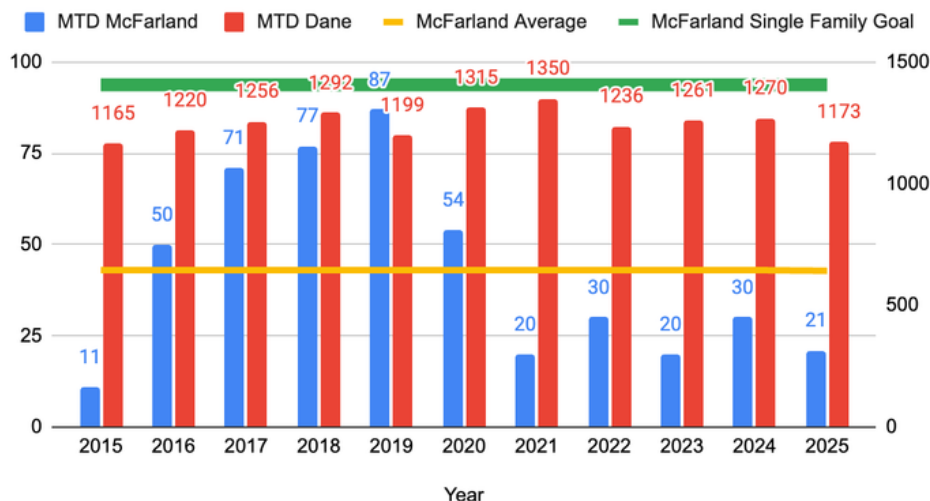


Table 3: Single-Family Permit Trends Compared to Dane County and Regional Housing Goals

Dane County Average
Home Price
\$556,556

MTD Marketing Services of Wisconsin

McFarland Mill Rate
0.01643913

Dane County Treasury Department

Estimated annual
property taxes
\$9,149.03

McFarland New Average
Home Price
\$477,238

MTD Marketing Services of Wisconsin

McFarland Mill Rate
0.01643913

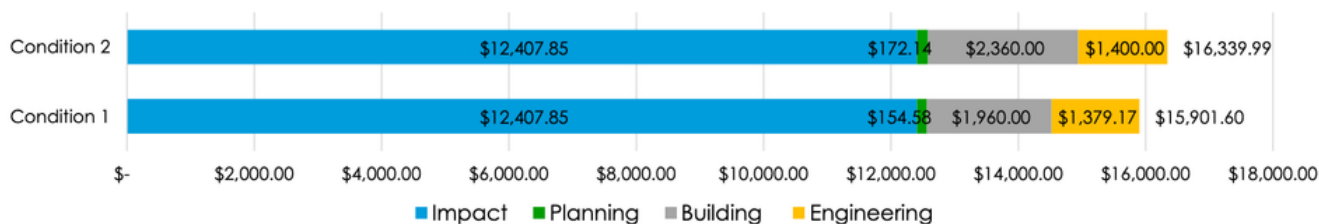
Dane County Treasury Department

Estimated annual
property taxes
\$7,846

Housing Narrative: Village of McFarland

2.14 Village of McFarland

Village of McFarland Per-Home Fee Amounts



Village of McFarland Housing Affordability Analysis	Below Average Median Income (AMI)		Average Median Income (AMI)	Above Average Median Income (AMI)		
	Workforce Housing Range					
	Owner-Occupied Housing Units					
Owner-Occupied Affordability	60% AMI	80%AMI	100%AMI	120% AMI	150%AMI	180% AMI
Village of McFarland Median Income*	\$56,286	\$75,048	\$93,810	\$112,572	\$140,715	\$168,858
Median Single-Family Home Value**	\$491,000	\$491,000	\$491,000	\$491,000	\$491,000	\$491,000
Affordable Mortgage (2.5 x income)	\$140,715	\$187,620	\$234,525	\$281,430	\$351,788	\$422,145
Affordability Gap - Owner Occupied	-\$350,285	-\$303,380	-\$256,475	-\$209,570	-\$139,213	-\$68,855
	Renter-Occupied Housing Units					
Renter-Occupied Affordability	60% AMI	80%AMI	100%AMI	120% AMI	150%AMI	180% AMI
Village of McFarland Median Income*	\$56,286	\$75,048	\$93,810	\$112,572	\$140,715	\$168,858
Median Annual Rent*** (\$1,447 x 12)	\$17,364	\$17,364	\$17,364	\$17,364	\$17,364	\$17,364
Affordable Rent (30% of income)	\$16,886	\$22,514	\$28,143	\$33,772	\$42,215	\$50,657
Affordability Gap - Renter Occupied	-\$478	\$5,150	\$10,779	\$16,408	\$24,851	\$33,293

Sources: American Community Survey 2023 5-yr estimates, and Vierbicher.

* Median Income per 2023 ACS 5-yr estimates - [\\$1903 Median Income in Past 12 Months \(in 2023 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars\)](#)

** 2024 Median SF Sale Price Sold, per MLS as proxy for Median Single-Family Home Value. Sample Size: 113 single-family homes sold and 140 listed. Data collected by Vierbicher staff April 7, 2025.

*** Median Annual Rent from 2023 ACS 5-yr estimates - [DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics](#)

Median Sale Price vs. Total Estimated Fee Costs Per Home

	City of						Dane County*	Town of				Village of				
	Fitchburg	Madison	Middleton	Stoughton	Sun Prairie	Verona		Bristol	Middleton	Verona	Westport	Cottage Grove	DeForest	McFarland	Waunakee	Windsor
2024 Median Sale Price Sold	\$474,900.00	\$449,900.00	\$569,250.00	\$402,000.00	\$445,000.00	\$561,924.00	\$475,000.00	\$585,000.00	\$825,000.00	\$649,000.00	\$685,000.00	\$485,000.00	\$469,900.00	\$491,000.00	\$610,000.00	\$550,000.00
Total Fee Costs per 2,500 sq. ft. home (Condition 1 - 40 lots)	\$12,257.49	\$10,367.30	\$6,109.00	\$9,546.00	\$6,684.50	\$7,750.83	\$1,661.58	\$3,551.33	\$6,225.08	\$4,404.91	\$3,822.50	\$8,883.17	\$9,325.03	\$15,901.60	\$7,581.88	\$12,160.64
Fee Costs as percentage of 2024 Median Sale Price	2.58%	2.30%	1.07%	2.37%	1.50%	1.38%	0.35%	0.61%	0.75%	0.68%	0.56%	1.83%	1.98%	3.24%	1.24%	2.21%
Lowest value																
Highest value																
*Dane County contains numerous Towns and Townships whose fees may vary and therefore have not been included. This lowers the reported Fee Costs for Dane County.																



Housing Narrative: Village of McFarland

VILLAGE OF MCFARLAND

SOURCE	FEE TYPES investigated	Village of McFarland Fees	Condition 1 (60 SF homes; 2500 sq ft)		Condition 2 (35 SF homes; 3500 sq ft)	
	Impact Fees	Duration/Per Unit	Cost per home	Cost for development	Cost per home	Cost for development
https://mcfarland.municipalcodeonline.com/book?type=ordinances#name=APPENDIX_A_FEES	Parkland (fee in lieu of land dedication)	\$ 4,781.52	\$ 4,781.52	\$ 286,891.20	\$ 4,781.52	\$ 167,353.20
	Park Improvement Fee (Single-Family)	\$ 3,141.33	\$ 3,141.33	\$ 188,479.80	\$ 3,141.33	\$ 109,946.55
	Public Safety Center Impact Fee	\$ 2,285.00	\$ 2,285.00	\$ 137,100.00	\$ 2,285.00	\$ 79,975.00
	Public Library Impact Fee	\$ 710.00	\$ 710.00	\$ 42,600.00	\$ 710.00	\$ 24,850.00
	Public Water Impact Fee for wells (assume 0.75" meter size)	\$ 1,117.00	\$ 1,117.00	\$ 67,020.00	\$ 1,117.00	\$ 39,095.00
	Public Water Impact Fee for water tower (assume 0.75" meter size)	\$ 373.00	\$ 373.00	\$ 22,380.00	\$ 373.00	\$ 13,055.00
	Planning Fees					
https://mcfarland.municipalcodeonline.com/book?type=ordinances#name=APPENDIX_A_FEES	Conditional Use Permit (CUP)	\$425.00 + actual costs	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	Certified Survey Maps (CSM)	300.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	Preliminary Plat	\$500.00 + \$50.00/parcel + actual costs	\$ 58.33	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 64.29	\$ 2,250.00
	Final Plat	\$500.00 + \$50.00/parcel + actual costs	\$ 58.33	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 64.29	\$ 2,250.00
	Zoning Change or Amendment	\$475.00 + actual costs	\$ 7.92	\$ 475.00	\$ 13.57	\$ 475.00
	Variance	\$ 450.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	Recording Fees (Register of Deeds)	\$ 30.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 1,050.00
	Subdivider to pay all legal/consulting fees incurred?	Yes	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	Building Permit Fees					
https://mcfarland.municipalcodeonline.com/book?type=ordinances#name=APPENDIX_A_FEES	New Construction UDC Seal	\$ 35.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 1,225.00
	Building Permit (New Building Residential)	Min. \$125.00, \$0.15/sq. ft	\$ 375.00	\$ 22,500.00	\$ 525.00	\$ 18,375.00
	Electrical	Min. 75.00, + 0.05/sq. ft	\$ 200.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 8,750.00
	Plumbing	Min. 75.00, + 0.05/sq. ft	\$ 200.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 8,750.00
	HVAC permit fee	Min. 75.00, + 0.05/sq. ft	\$ 200.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 8,750.00
	Certified Municipal Plan Review: HVAC	Min. \$100.00 + \$150.00 if <2,500 sq. ft; + \$200.00 if >2,501-5,000 sq. ft.	\$ 250.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 10,500.00
	Certified Municipal Plan Review: building plan	Min. \$100.00 + \$250.00 if 2,500 sq. ft; + \$300.00 if >2,501 sq. ft.	\$ 350.00	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 14,000.00
	Driveway Permit	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 1,750.00
	New Construction Water Use Fee	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 1,750.00
	Early Start Permit	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 7,000.00
	Occupancy Permit	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 1,750.00
	Engineering Fees					
https://www.mcfarland.wi.us/DocumentCenter/View/147/Erosion-Control-Application-PDF	Staking	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 35,000.00
	Erosion Control (up to 20,000 sq. ft)	\$ 350.00	\$ 350.00	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 350.00	\$ 12,250.00
	Stormwater Management (Sites >5 acres in Area)	\$750.00 + \$1,000.00 deposit + actual cost	\$ 29.17	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 1,750.00

Special Impact Fees:

V. McFarland

- Public Safety Center Fee (\$2,285.00)
- Public Library Impact Fee (\$710.00)
- Pub. Water Impact fee for wells (0.75" meter) \$1,117.00
- Pub. Water Impact fee for water tower (0.75" meter) \$373.00

Housing Narrative:

Village of McFarland

56-176 Credit Toward Park-Land Impact Fee

Parkland dedicated and accepted by the Village shall act as a credit toward any required Park-land impact fee, pursuant to Section 8-464, in an amount determined by the Community Development Director, consistent with the needs assessment and the amount of the park-land impact fee.

56-173 Land Dedication

- 1. Required land dedication.** The subdivider shall dedicate usable land to provide park, playground, recreational and open space to meet the needs to be created by the Subdivision, land division, or development project in accordance with the standards set forth in this Article, subject to approval by the Village Board. Whenever a proposed park, playground, or other public land, other than streets or drainageways, is designated in the Village Comprehensive Plan and Outdoor Recreation & Open Space Plan is included, all or in part, in a tract of land to be subdivided, these proposed public lands shall be dedicated to the public by the subdivider. The parkland dedication shall meet the service standard of 2,106 square feet per single family dwelling unit, 1,463 square feet per multi family dwelling unit, including apartments and duplexes, and 804 square feet per group quarters dwelling unit, determined by the number and types of dwelling units in the proposed development and the most current needs assessment. The dedication shall be made part of the Plat or Certified Survey Map.
- 2. Park-land impact fee in lieu of parkland dedication.** The Plan Commission may determine in any proposed Subdivision or other land division that, based on an evaluation of the proposed dedication against the Village's Comprehensive Plan and Outdoor Recreation & Open Space Plan, and any other policies adopted by the Village Board, the subdivider shall pay the park-land impact fee in lieu of dedicating parklands. If the Plan Commission determines that a proposed dedication meets some but not all the usable land criteria, the Plan Commission may recommend, and the Village Board may approve, acceptance of that land with partial credit to the land dedication requirement.

56-175 Development Of Park Area

- When parklands are dedicated, the subdivider is required to:
 - Properly grade and contour for proper drainage;
 - Provide surface contour suitable for anticipated use of area;
 - Cover areas to be seeded with a minimum of four inches of quality topsoil, seed as specified by the Director of Public Works, fertilized with 16-6-6 at a rate of seven pounds per 1,000 square feet, and mulched. The topsoil furnished for the park site shall consist of the natural loam, sandy loam, silt loam, silty clay loam or clay loam humus-bearing soils adapted to the sustenance of plant life, and such topsoil shall be neither excessively acid nor excessively alkaline; and
 - Install or provide for installation of water and sanitary sewer lines to the property line of all dedicated land.
- The Village Board may require certification of compliance by the Village Engineer. The cost of such report shall be paid by the subdivider.
- Grading and seeding of parklands is to be completed as soon as ten percent of the planned lots in the Subdivision are sold, as determined by the Village Board.
- If the subdivider fails to satisfy the requirements of this Section, the Village Board may contract said completion and bill such costs to the subdivider, following a public hearing and written notice to the subdivider of noncompliance. Failure to pay such costs may result in the immediate withholding of all building permits until such costs are paid.

The following shall be exempt from any park impact fee:

- Additions that do not increase the number of dwelling units;
- Tear-downs and replacement of dwelling units with the same number of dwelling units, for which the park impact fee has already been paid.
- Developments for which the park impact fee has already been paid, and in the case of the park-land impact fee, a sufficient land dedication has been made by the developer acceptable to the Village.
- Those developments determined by the Village Board to warrant a waiver or partial waiver of a park impact fee for the purpose of developing affordable housing.