

RESPONSES TO ALDERMAN DURKEE

Alderman Durkee,

This is to address your recent question regarding the cost of “ripples” created by affordable housing.

The behaviors you mentioned are commonly associated with residents of Public Housing, not Affordable Housing. The RHDC Avon Street project is an **Affordable Housing** project meant to fill a healthy housing gap experienced by approximately 5,000 hard-working Rockford households.

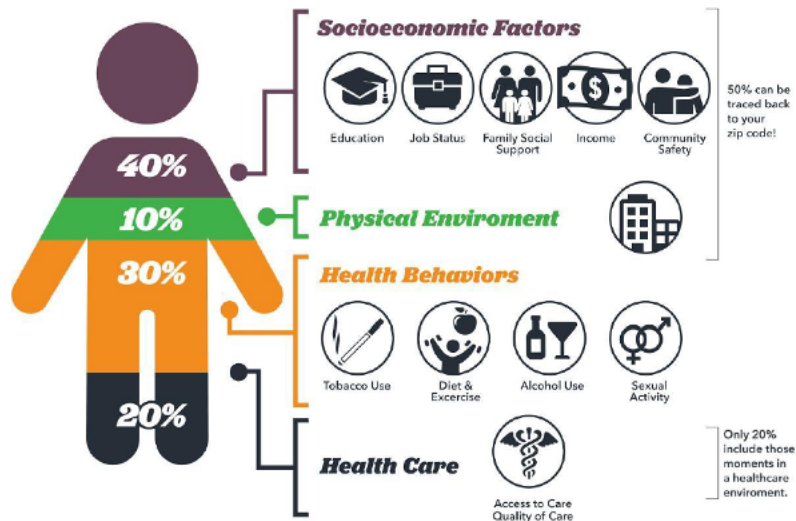
(The behaviors you site have driven the Department of Housing and Urban Development itself to change its model and favor public-private partnerships like those at The Grove or Jane Adams developments.)

While public housing can be considered “affordable” to people with little to no income, the definition of **Affordable Housing** is that people will spend no more than 30% of their income on housing-related costs – rent or mortgage and utilities. Such residents are most often hard-working, low-wage-earning members of society. Due to the circumstances into which they are born, they are too often driven to make unfortunate choices that affect their health outcomes and chances for improved life outcomes.

The graphic below shows how a given zip code's socioeconomic factors and physical environment can drive 50% of an individual's or family's health outcomes.

Societal Drivers of Health (SDoH)

Where we live, learn, work, and play has a great impact on health and health outcomes. We must address upstream inequities through **place-based, cross-sectoral collaboration**



The **Social Determinants of Health** (SDOH) impact residents' health, well-being, and quality of life

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- Safe housing, transportation, and neighborhoods
- Racism, discrimination, and violence
- Education, job opportunities, and income
- Access to nutritious foods and physical activity opportunities
- Polluted air and water
- Language and literacy skills

Overall, the Social Determinants of Health contributes to deep health inequities.

We must ask ourselves; what is the cost of not providing safe, Affordable Housing opportunities, especially when Winnebago County is losing ground to the Social Determinants of Health?

In 2023 Winnebago County is now 90th in health outcomes out of 102 Illinois counties (up from 88th in 2022). It is now 97th in health factors (up from 95th in 2022).

Residents negatively affected by the Social Determinants of Health literally lose years of life. As taxpayers, we foot the bill for significant health costs that could be prevented with thoughtful upstream interventions – such as Affordable Housing opportunities.

The Avon Street project has built-in mechanisms to ensure connections to quality health care and resources that can reverse the persistently unhealthy conditions many residents have had to live with on our City's West side.

Robust resident participation shaped the Avon Street project during our research and due diligence phases and our volunteer Board is committed to addressing the need for healthy affordable housing for hardworking, lower-wage-earning Rockfordians.

Please let us know if you would like to explore the project in greater detail with any of our members. We would be glad to talk with you.

Thank you!

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The Rockford Housing Development Corporation (RHDC) is a 501c3 organization with a mission to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals in the Rockford area. The RHDC is led by a Board of Directors composed of five Rockford residents with a strong desire to address the underlying conditions of poverty and improve the conditions of Rockford neighborhoods.