

# **Population and Housing Patterns in Six North Shore Communities**

**WILMETTE**

**KENILWORTH**

**WINNETKA**

**NORTHFIELD**

**GLENCOE**

**HIGHLAND PARK**

Prepared for the North Shore  
Interfaith Conference on Suburban Housing Patterns

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October 15, 1972

## SUMMARY

1. The six communities examined in this study represent probably the most affluent concentration of its size in the Chicago area. In terms of income, 3 of the communities are in the top 6 out of 187 suburban municipalities, and all 6 are in the top 14. Single family homes are valued at about twice the overall Chicago area rate. More than half the residents have a college education; and they average four more years of schooling than the typical Chicago area resident.
2. This affluence is almost totally white. Only 1.4 per cent of the area's residents are black -- while the Chicago area rate is almost 18 per cent and the suburban Cook County rate, 3.8 per cent. Except for Glencoe (5.1 per cent) and Highland Park (1.8 per cent), none of the 6 has more than a one per cent black population -- probably mostly composed of live-in help rather than independent households.
3. Despite their affluence, the six suburbs contain a measureable number of poor persons. Even by the most stringent standards (represented by an annual income of \$3700 for a family of four), there are at least 500 households in poverty in the area. The incidence is spread

rather uniformly among the six suburbs. One third of the households in poverty are fatherless families, and about one fourth are elderly persons. The poor are predominantly white -- even in Glencoe, 70 per cent of the poor are white and, in Highland Park, 86 per cent.

4. Of the 8,500 teachers, school staff workers, municipal employees, and retail clerks who work in the area and provide it with essential services, some 1,000 represent families whose incomes are below \$8,000 per year. A much larger group - about 3000 families - fall between \$8,000 and \$12,000 per year. All of these 4000 families are priced out of the housing market of the communities which depend on them for services. These are not, for the most part, poor families, but their moderate incomes price them out of a market in which 80 per cent of the single family homes are priced at above \$35,000 and four room apartments start at \$160.

## INTRODUCTION

At the request of the Planning Committee for the North Shore Interfaith Conference on Suburban Housing Patterns, and with the support of the Community Renewal Society, the Institute of Urban Life undertook an examination of the population and housing setting of six select North Shore suburbs.

The six represent probably the greatest concentration of affluence in the Chicago metropolitan area. With their income rank among the 187 suburban communities for which median family income data are available, they are:

Kenilworth	1st
Glencoe	3rd
Winnetka	4th
Northfield	11th
Wilmette	13th
Highland Park	14th

Predominantly an area of large single-family homes, home ownership costs about twice as much in these communities as in the metropolitan area as a whole.

### Basic Population Facts

The six communities comprised, in April of 1970, a population of 97,060 housed in some 28,671 dwelling units—about 4½ per cent of the suburban Cook County population. Approximately one third of the area population lives in Highland Park, another third in Wilmette, with Winnetka, Glencoe, Northfield, and Kenilworth in that size-order accounting for the rest of the population. These and the data in the following paragraphs are presented, by individual community, in Table I.

Almost 38 per cent of the area population consists of children under 18, and slightly over eight per cent, of persons 65 years and older. These distributions do not differ significantly from those for the suburbs as a whole, nor do they differ very much from one of the six suburbs to another. Kenilworth has the highest proportion of aged and the lowest proportion of children; and Northfield the lowest proportion of aged and the highest proportion of children.

However, there are sharp differences among communities, and between this area and other suburbs and the Chicago area generally, in terms of the presence of black persons of whatever economic status, and in terms of the presence of poor people. For the six communities as a whole, about 1.4 per cent of the population is black, compared to 3.8 per cent for suburban Cook County and 17.6 per cent for the entire

Chicago area. By individual community, however, there is a wide difference. Glencoe, with a small but long established black community, has a higher proportion of black persons (5.1 per cent) than the Cook County suburbs as a whole -- though still considerably less than for the Chicago metropolitan area. No one of the other communities has a proportion greater than the suburban average; and, in fact, the percentages in Northfield and Wilmette (three-tenths of one per cent) are barely measureable. All indications are that most of this population outside of Glencoe is made up of live-in domestic workers rather than independent households.

While the incidence of poverty -- as measured by the 1970 U. S. Census -- does not show such sharp divergence among the individual communities, the overall percentage (2.2 per cent) is less than half of the average for the entire of suburban Cook County, and less than one-fourth that for the entire Chicago area. This particular poverty measure is a complicated one, and will be discussed at greater length later in the report. It should be noted here, however, that Kenilworth's 4.8 per cent -- the highest of the six communities -- may well be attributed to the variation surrounding sampling error for the very small population of Kenilworth. In other words, because the income and poverty data are based on a sample of the 1970 households, rather than on the full count -- the results for relatively small communities are subject to a considerable amount of technical error.

Socio-Economic Indicators

Median family income for the six communities ranges from \$34,573 in Kenilworth to \$20,749 in Highland Park. Since the median is a statistic that divides a distribution exactly in half, this means that in Kenilworth, half of the families earn more than \$34,573 per year; and in Highland Park, half earn more than \$20,749. As will be discussed in detail later on, the half below the median is still quite affluent; no more than about 10 per cent of Kenilworth's families, and no more than about 30 per cent of Highland Park's, earn less than \$10,000 per year.

This income data, as well as the related indices discussed in these paragraphs, are presented on Table II.

In most of the six communities, the median value of single family homes is above \$50,000, compared to a Chicago-area-wide median of \$24,300. Data not shown in Table II indicated that only about 20 per cent of the homes in the six-community area are valued at less than \$35,000--most of these in Wilmette and Highland Park. The average family in the area owns two automobiles, and about 65 per cent of the houses are equipped with air conditioning, and compared to about 44 per cent for the Chicago metropolitan area.

Not surprisingly, the median number of years of school completed for most of the six communities is well above college.

For the first time in Census history, the 1970 Census of Population and Housing includes an index of poverty. Because there are some serious limitations to the validity of the index, it is necessary to discuss the technical highlights of the Census procedure before examining the data.

The index used to define poverty in the 1970 census is based upon two concepts. The first is the estimated cost of an emergency plan food diet prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, under which not more than about 40 per cent of average-skill American households can achieve minimum nutrition. The second concept is an assumption that the total needs of a low-income family can be measured by multiplying the cost of this diet by a factor of 3.0 -- on the evidence that low-income families typically spend one-third of their income on food. Armed with the data from these assumptions, the U. S. Social Security Administration prepared a complex table of "threshold" for individuals and families of various sizes. A truncated version of these thresholds is presented on Table III. Thus, the threshold for a four person family, non-farm residence, with a male head, was \$3,745 in 1969. A family in this category with less than \$3,745 in income is designated as "in poverty."

This index has already been the subject of an abundant critical literature. The food allowance of roughly 82 cents per person per day is generally below standards adopted by urban welfare agencies. The assumption that about \$1.60 per person per day is adequate to provide rent, utilities, clothing, transportation, and a bare minimum of recreation is open to serious question -- especially in high-rent areas.

In defense of the Census measure, it should be noted that it was never intended to set a standard for the definition of poverty, but only to provide a reasonable yardstick for the comparison of the incidence of poverty between one place and another, or between socio-economic groups of the population. If this purpose is kept in mind, the application of the Census data to the subject communities will make some sense.

Table IV reports the incidence of poverty in each of the six communities, by four categories: families, unrelated individuals, persons, and households. A word about these categories is also in order. "Families" are persons related by blood, living in a single housing unit. Where two or more families live together, the two families are counted as one for census purposes, and their size and income combined. "Unrelated individuals" are persons living alone, or persons unrelated to each other living in housing units together, or persons living with families but unrelated to those families. The "persons" count adds to the unrelated individuals the number of persons in each family that is below the poverty

level. "Household" is a concept that includes families, unrelated individuals living alone, and the "head of household" of a household of unrelated individuals living together. Each category thus measures the incidence of poverty in a somewhat different way.

Before examining the Table IV presentation, it should also be noted that the census definition of "income" includes wages or salary, dividends, interest, social security, pensions, annuities, regular receipts from trusts, welfare payments, etc. It does not include receipts from the sale of property, withdrawals from savings, or income "in kind" -- such as room and board.

The Census data displayed on Table IV indicate that in 1969 (the "income year" for the 1970 census) the incidence of poverty among the six communities was substantially below that of the Chicago area across all four categories of family-household composition. Only Kenilworth is above the metropolitan area average, and then only in the "unrelated individuals" category. As we mentioned earlier, this may well be attributable to the normal sampling error for communities of relatively small size.

Nevertheless, an incidence upwards of three per cent of all households in poverty by the very rigid standards of the Census poverty threshold is still a surprising finding for the north shore communities. There are four reasons why the reported census data may be producing a somewhat "false reading"

for the subject communities:

1. Where domestic workers "live in," and receive living quarters and/or food "in kind," the "in kind" value is not counted in income. Thus, these workers would be enumerated as "living in poverty" if their salary (above room and board) does not exceed the poverty threshold. An examination of contract rent for the six communities shows that the 1960 census reported some 682 rental units as involving "no cash rent." If this were a very rough approximation of the "live-in" phenomenon, it would reduce the number of households in poverty from 1020 to 392.

2. Some few upper-income families may well have been living, during 1969, on the sale of assets or on withdrawals from savings.

3. The measurement of poverty among "unrelated individuals" does not allow for the fact that where a group of unrelated persons share an apartment, they share the rent. Each unrelated individual is evaluated against the poverty threshold on the basis of the formula described above, which allows two-thirds of income for rent, transportation, clothing, and other needs. Where rent is shared, other income is released for other needs. It may be fairly asked, however, whether this distortion is a real one: one could define a person as in poverty if he could not afford to live alone.

4. Where there are concentrations of college students not living at home or in college dormitories, the census may overestimate the extent of poverty because it treats such

students as unrelated individuals, and measures their income as an index of their poverty status, although it does not treat funds received from parents as "income." This phenomenon is probably not a major problem in the six study communities.

We may assume, then, that there is some genuine poverty in the six communities -- roughly about three per cent by the census measure. This measure can be discounted somewhat because the census techniques provide a "false reading" for the peculiar makeup of the particular communities; but the discount should be mitigated by the fact that the initial census definition of what constitutes poverty is quite low.

Some insights into the makeup of the poverty families and persons can be gained from data available for the four communities above 10,000 population: Glencoe, Highland Park, Wilmette, and Winnetka. These are presented on Table V. Among persons enumerated by the Census as being in poverty, 27 per cent are children in Glencoe; 30 per cent, in Highland Park; 25 per cent, in Wilmette; and 9 per cent, in Winnetka. Among families enumerated in poverty, 42 per cent are headed by women in Glencoe, ranging downward to 24 per cent in Wilmette. Data are available by race for only two communities: Glencoe and Highland Park. There, 30 per cent of the persons in poverty in Highland Park are black, and 27 per cent, in Glencoe. Thus, in these two communities, which contain most of the black population for the six community study area, the

preponderance of enumerated poor are white.

### Housing Needs of Local Employees

Another approach to evaluating the housing setting of an area is to match employment against available housing. In the case of the six study communities, local industry plays only a relatively small role and is, in any case, difficult to measure. We have concentrated here on three categories of employment -- education, municipal government, and retail trade. All three are necessary services to any community and, especially with regard to the first two, there is a strong argument that opportunities for housing should be close to the communities served.

Table VI reports the general findings of our estimates. We estimate approximately 2287 persons employed by public elementary and secondary schools in the study area (about 1609 teachers and 768 supporting staff); approximately 611 persons employed by municipal governments; and approximately 5636 retail employees.

Although the basic employment counts are estimates, they are very good approximations, based upon official statistics and upon the 1967 censuses of Government and Business. The detail of the estimating procedure is described in the footnotes to Table VI.

Estimating the income levels of these categories of employment is a more difficult matter. Since the Census of population and housing measures income of persons at the

place where they reside, not at the place where they work, the income and poverty statistics for the six communities provide no real clue about the income distribution of workers in the study communities. We have applied available state-wide or national rates of wage-earning for the four categories of employment listed on Table VI, adjusted to eliminate secondary wage-earners and adjusted where appropriate for locally-higher wage rates. These approximation should be regarded as highly generalized, and the separation between "low" and "moderate" income as but a crude approximation.

Nevertheless, the magnitude of the numbers is fairly impressive. The aggregate of school, municipal, and retail employment in the six communities probably generates about 1000 family heads whose incomes are below \$8,000 per year--the income range which generally describes candidates for "moderate income" housing as defined by Federal housing programs.

Using the \$8,000 income level as a measure of need in many ways understates the lack of fit between employment and housing opportunity in the six communities. It is quite likely that very few of the nearly 3,000 public servants in these communities can afford to live within them--even though their incomes are above the "moderate income" level. For the cost of housing in the six communities is very high, indeed.

### The Housing Supply

In the absence of detailed-cross tabulations of single-family value and of gross rent, by number of rooms, it is difficult to make a very precise comparison between need and cost of housing. These cross-tabulations from the 1970 census are contained in its electronic tape output--not yet completely available, but will not be contained in any of the printed materials from the 1970 census for communities in the present study.

The distribution of owner and renter units by increments of value or rent -- regardless of size, is available, however; and is reproduced here as Table VII. Only 14 per cent of the owner occupied single family homes in the area are valued at less than \$30,000 -- a total of about 3000 homes; and only about 20 per cent of the apartment units rent for less than \$150 a month--a total of about 1071 apartments. Certainly, some of the homes, and a large number of the apartments, are quite small. Table VIII reports the distribution of single family and apartments, by the number of rooms, for the four communities whose population is greater than 10,000. About 2500 of the single family units are five rooms or less, and presuming that for the most part value flows with room size, this would account for most of the single family homes below \$30,000. About 2200 of the apartments are four rooms or less, again presumably accounting for most of the apartments that

rent for less than \$150 per month.

Various researchers would match this generalized description of the housing stock against the need estimates generated in the earlier parts of this study and come up with somewhat different conclusions: all of them, however, would center around the finding that the available supply of housing stock in the six communities is somewhat less than the needs of resident poor persons, and considerably less than the housing demand generated by school, municipal, and retail employees.

TABLE 1. Basic Population Facts: Six Select Communities

	Total Population	Total Housing U.	Under 18	Over 64	Black	In Poverty <sup>1</sup>
Glencoe	10,542	3,065	36.7	8.4	5.1	2.6
Highland Park	32,263	9,391	38.1	7.0	1.8	3.3
Kenilworth	2,980	898	34.6	10.1	0.9	4.8
Northfield	5,010	1,492	38.1	6.1	0.3	3.1
Wilmette	32,134	9,583	37.4	9.6	0.3	3.3
Winnetka	14,131	4,242	37.4	9.9	0.8	2.1
All Study Area <sup>2</sup>	97,060	28,671	37.8	8.4	1.4	2.2
Chicago Area <sup>3</sup>	6,978,947	2,294,848	34.5	8.8	17.6	9.3
Suburban Cook Co. <sup>4</sup>	2,125,412	646,120	35.8	7.5	3.8	4.7

1. For definition, see text discussion
2. Sum of all six communities
3. Chicago SMSA
4. Cook county, less city of Chicago

TABLE II Select Socio-economic Indicators

	Family Income <sup>1</sup>	Rank <sup>2</sup>	Value of Homes <sup>3</sup>	Autos <sup>4</sup> per H.H.	House H. with air cond.	Median Education <sup>5</sup>
Glencoe	\$29,565	3	\$50,000+	1.71	75.5%	16.4
Highland Park	\$20,749	14	\$46,100+	1.57	68.4%	15.4
Kenilworth	\$34,573	1	\$50,000+	1.74	67.0%	16.2
Northfield	\$21,268	11	\$48,400+	1.72	70.3%	14.6
Wilmette	\$21,809	13	\$46,500	1.55	71.4%	16.2
Winnetka	\$28,782	4	\$50,000	1.58	59.1%	16.6
Chicago Area <sup>6</sup>	\$11,931	-	\$24,300	1.06	43.7%	12.2

1. Median family income
2. of 187 suburban communities of 2,500+ population in Chicago SMSA
3. Median value, specified owner occupied
4. Computed by Institute of Urban Life from census data. This is an approximation, since a value of "3.0" was assigned to the open interval "3 or more" in the original data tables.
5. Median school years completed, all persons 25 years or older.
6. Chicago SMSA

All data from U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1970.

Table III

Census-Defined Poverty Thresholds, Nonfarm  
Residence, 1969 Income

	Total	Male Head	Female Head
All unrelated Individuals	1,840	1,923	1,792
Under 65 years	1,893	1,974	1,826
65 years and over	1,757	1,773	1,751
All families	3,410	3,451	3,082
2 persons	2,383	2,394	2,320
Head under 65	2,458	2,473	2,373
Head 65 yrs and over	2,215	2,217	2,202
3 persons	2,924	2,937	2,830
4 persons	3,743	3,745	3,725
5 persons	4,415	4,418	4,377
6 persons	4,958	4,962	4,917
7 or more persons	6,101	6,116	5,952

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1970, General Social  
and Economic Characteristics: Illinois (PC (1)-  
c 15), App. - 30.

## Census Measure of Poverty in Select Communities

## A. Per Cent

	Percent in Poverty of...			
	Families	Unrelated Individuals	Persons	Households
Glencoe	1.9	18.2	2.6	3.0
Highland Pk.	2.1	22.0	3.3	3.9
Kenilworth	2.9	32.6	4.8	N.A.
Northfield	3.7	16.3	3.1	N.A.
Wilmette	2.3	24.7	3.3	3.8
Winnetka	1.4	19.4	2.1	4.0
Chicago Area	6.8	27.9	9.3	10.5

## B. Number

	Number in Poverty...			
	Families	Unrelated Individuals	Persons	Households
Glencoe	50	108	275	89
Highland Pk.	168	413	1041	340
Kenilworth	23	45	143	
Northfield	49	34	156	
Wilmette	189	445	1054	328
Winnetka	48	191	302	160
All Six	527	1236	2971	1020

All data from U.S. Census of Population, 1970, General Social and Economic Characteristics: Illinois (PC (1) C 15).

Table V. Select traits of persons and families  
in poverty: Census measure

	Glencoe	Highland Park	Wilmette	Winnetka
Persons in poverty who are:				
children under 18	27%	30%	25%	9%
Black	30%	14%		
Over 65	16%	22%	30%	42%
Families in poverty which have female heads	42%	33%	24%	40%

Source: Same as Table IV

Table VI

Estimate of low and moderate income families  
employed in selected support activities

Type employment	TOTAL <sup>1</sup>	Estimated Families at income level: 2	
		LOW	MIDDLE
School teachers	1609	...	...
School supporting staff	678	...	270
Municipal Employees	611	...	275
Retail Employees	5636	116	353
	8534	116	898

1. Number of teachers from Directory of Illinois Schools, 1970-71, State Department of Public Instruction, State of Illinois. Supporting staff estimated by applying to the teacher count the ratio of supporting staff to teachers as reported in the 1967 Census of Governments, Vol. V, Table 35, for the larger school districts in the study area. Municipal employment from U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1967, Census of Governments, Vol VII, Table 34. Expressed as full-time equivalents. Municipal employees for Kenilworth and Northfield were not reported in the census, and were estimated here at the ratio of population to municipal employment data from the other four municipalities. Retail employment data from 1967 Census of Business: Retail Trade (Illinois: BC-67-RA15), Table 3, expressed as number of employees on first quarter, 1967 payroll.

2. For school system: distribution of salaries for teachers and supporting staff, statewide, from Census of Governments, 1967, Volume VII, Table II, applied to yield number of teachers and supporting staff earning under \$5,000 and \$5,000--\$8,000 respectively. No teachers fell into the first group, and few into the second group; the latter were assumed here to be secondary wage earners. Few supporting staff fell into the lower category, but again we assumed

here they are probably secondary wage-earners. No adjustment was made to the state distribution table to compensate for local wage differentials for supporting staff, although the mean for the six communities was less (slightly) than that for the state. For municipal employees, the identical state table was applied, corrected for a locally higher wage scale. The assumption here is that most municipal employees are not secondary wage-earners. For the retail trades, national rates of employment were used to estimate the proportion of full time year-round male retail salesmen to the total of all retail workers. This group is assumed to be primary wage earners. National data on income of this category applied to yield percentages earning less than \$5,000 and \$5,000-\$8,000. These sets of data from U.S., Bureau of Census, Current Population Reports: Consumer Income: Income in 1970 of Families and Persons in the United States (Series P-60, # 80, Oct. 4, 1971).

Table VII      Housing supply, by value and Contract  
Rent - Six Communities

A. Value of owner-occupied single family units

Value	Frequency		Cumulative	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 15,000	145	0.6	145	0.6
15,000-19,999	342	1.6	487	2.2
20,000-24,999	943	4.3	1430	6.5
25,000-34,999	3095	14.1	4525	20.6
35,000 and Over	17,472	79.4	21,997	100.0

B. Contract rent of renter-occupied units

	Frequency		Cumulative	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under \$80	221	4.5	221	4.5
80-99	207	4.2	428	8.7
100-149	1071	21.8	1499	30.5
150 or more	2728	55.6	4227	86.1
No cash rent	682	13.9	4909	100.0

Source: U.S. Census of Housing, 1960

Table VIII      Housing supply, by number of rooms  
- Four communities<sup>1</sup>

Owner Occupied

	Frequency		Cumulative	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
less than 5 rooms	698	3.3	698	3.3
5 rooms	1855	8.9	2553	12.2
6 rooms or more	18,429	87.8	20982	100.0

Renter Occupied

	Frequency		Cumulative	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1 room	176	3.8	176	3.8
2 room	280	6.0	456	9.8
3 room	743	16.0	1199	25.8
4 room	1018	21.9	2217	47.7
5 room	1045	22.5	3262	70.2
6 + rooms	1376	29.7	4638	99.9

Source: U.S. Census of Housing, 1960

1. Glencoe, Highland Park, Wilmette, Winnetka. Data for Northfield and Kenilworth not published.