

A photograph of a two-story yellow house with a dark brown roof and a dormer window. The house has a covered front porch with a white pickup truck parked in the driveway. An American flag is flying on a pole in front of the house. The foreground is a brick-paved street. The sky is blue with some clouds, and there are bare trees in the background.

Dodge City & Ford County CHAT Report

Community Housing Assessment Team

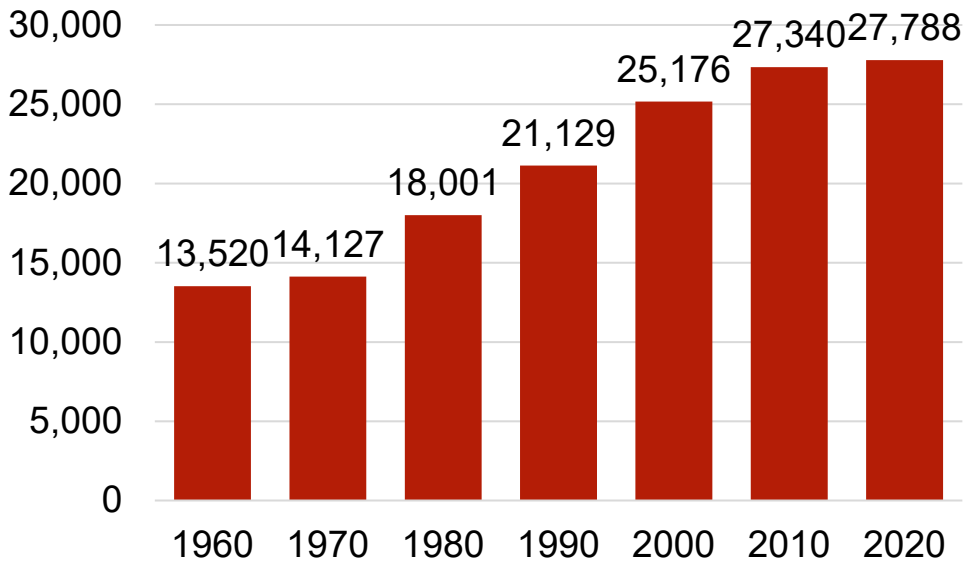
Amy Haase, AICP

June, 2022

Dodge City



Population Change in Dodge City 1960-2020

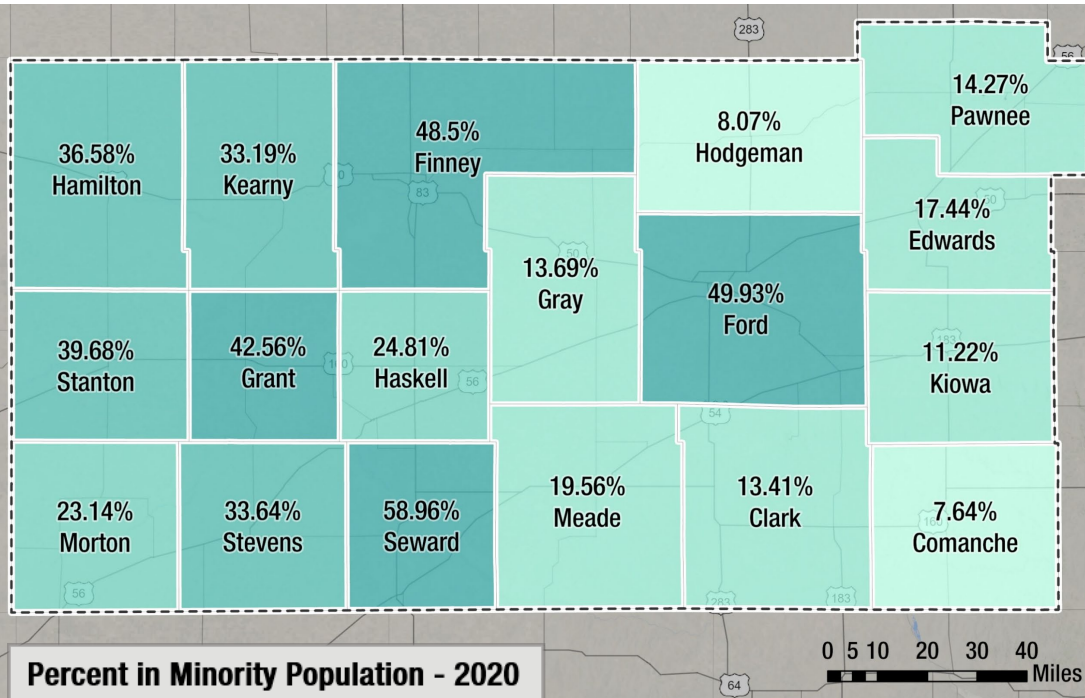


Over the past 50 years, Dodge City has grown steadily, though slightly slower than predicted in the last two CHATs. The 2020 Census estimated population of 27,788 suggests continued growth. This supports the demand employers are indicating that they have for new employees.

2020 Population: 27,788
 2015 CHAT Estimate: 28,045
 2012 CHAT Estimate: 28,509
 2008 CHAT Estimate: 31,104

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	Change 1960-2020
Dodge City, Kansas	13,520	14,127	18,001	21,129	25,176	27,340	27,788	14,268
Ford County	20,938	22,587	24,315	27,463	32,458	33,848	34,287	13,349
Dodge City, Kansas as a % of Ford County	64.6%	62.5%	74.0%	76.9%	77.6%	80.8%	81.0%	

Dodge City Population Estimates



Source: Kansas Statewide Housing Study; RDG Planning & Design, 2020

- Minorities and those living in poverty are more likely to be undercounted.
- Ford, Finney, Grant, and Seward Counties all have over 50% of their population at-risk for being undercounted.
- If only 1/10 of Dodge City's at-risk population was undercounted, it would add nearly 1,400 resident to the city's population count.

Population Change by Age Cohort

Dodge City: 2010-2019

Age Group	2010		2020		2010-2020 Difference
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
0-15	7,378	26.99%	7,335	26.98%	-43
15-19	2,317	8.47%	2,192	8.06%	-125
20-24	2,207	8.07%	2,018	7.42%	-189
25-34	4,229	15.47%	4,004	14.73%	-225
35-44	3,413	12.48%	3,392	12.48%	-21
45-54	3,140	11.49%	3,074	11.31%	-66
55-64	2,227	8.15%	2,813	10.35%	586
65-74	1,182	4.32%	1,290	4.75%	108
75-84	814	2.98%	729	2.68%	-85
85+	433	1.58%	339	1.25%	-94
Total	27,340	100.00%	27,555	100.00%	-154

Source: U.S. Census



Increase
Decline

Increases and decreases naturally occur as different generations move through the cohorts. Some generations, like the Baby Boomers and Millennials, are just larger than the ones before and after them.

Predicted Total Population Change Dodge City: 2020

	2020 Predicted	2020 Actual	Difference	% Variance
Total Population	28,884	27,888	-1,096	-4.6%

Source: U.S. Census; RDG Planning & Design

- The Census will not be releasing 2020 Decennial age/sex data until 2023
- Based on 2010 Census data the city should have grown at a greater rate
- The difference is less than the estimated undercount for the city, but the difference could also be related to a lower than predicted birth rate

Housing Occupancy Change

Dodge City: 2010-2020

	2010		2020		Change 2010-2020
	Number	% of Occupied Units	Number	% of Occupied Units	
Owner-Occupied	5,320	60.6%	5,101	59.2%	-219
Renter-Occupied	3,457	39.4%	3,514	40.8%	57
Total Vacant	601		584 (869*)		-17
Vacancy Rate	6.4%		6.3%		
Total Units	9,378		9,199 (9,869*)		-179

Source: U.S. Census

*2020 Census count, the remaining numbers are the 2020 5-year American Community Survey estimate from the Census Bureau.

The 2020 Census count had the city gaining units overall but that a much greater number of those units were vacant. Based on recent rental and for sale activity, and concerns about the undercount, it is unlikely that Dodge City has a large number of vacant units. The above numbers use the American Community Survey estimates which indicate a smaller vacancy rate but likely undercount the total number of units.

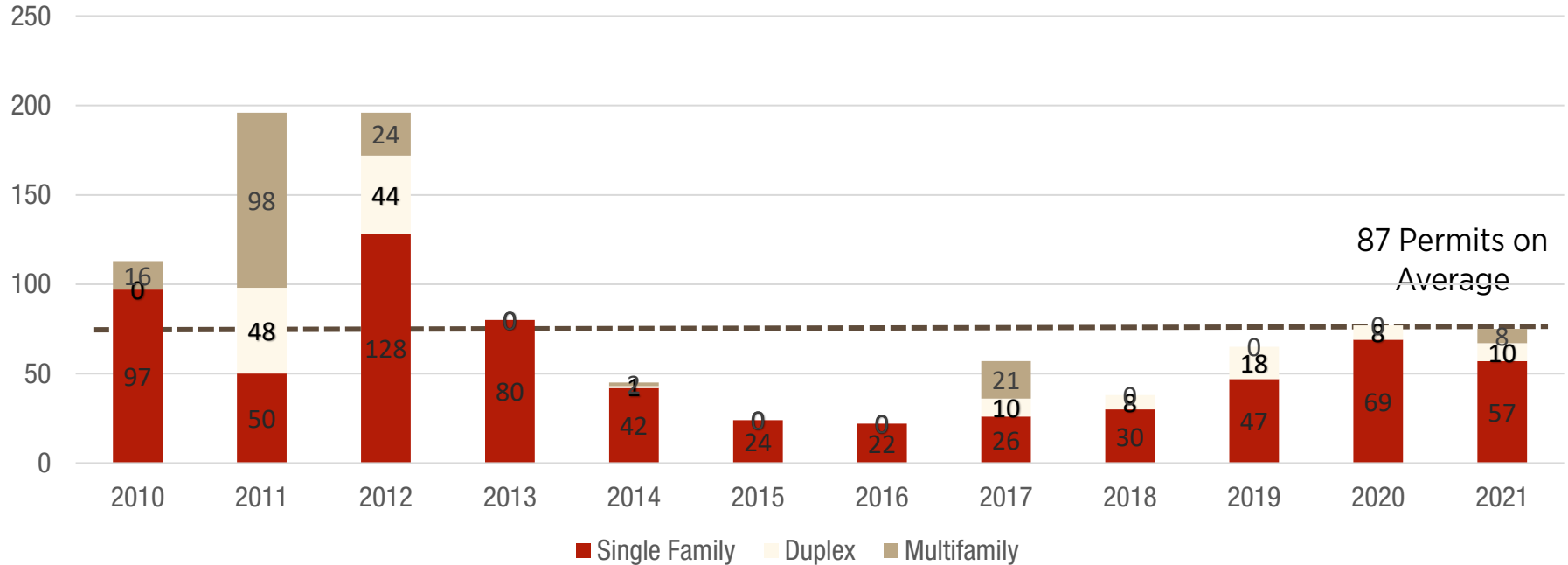
Housing Occupancy Change

Dodge City

- In June 2020 Zillow listed 33 for sale units and the 2020 ACS estimated 46 units
 - Both numbers are well below an adequate supply of for sale housing which for a city with over 9,000 housing units should be well over 100 units
- The 2020 ACS estimated that the Homeowner vacancy rate was less than 1%
- While the rental vacancy rate estimate was at 5% it has likely dropped since as households unable to find ownership options are remaining in rental units longer and new households to the community have to rent due to lack for ownership options.

Building Permits Dodge City: 2009-2021

Construction Activity



Source: City of Dodge City

Since 2010, **almost all homes** were built using incentives including RHID and NRP. Dodge City experienced steady new construction through 2013. At that time, construction slowed to less than half the pace as before. Since 2015 only 7% of new units are multi-family rental units. Overall, the number of owner-occupied units decreased, while renter-occupied units increased, suggesting some new rentals units are being generated through the **conversion of single family-owner-occupied homes to rentals.**

Building Permits

Dodge City: Since 2012

Construction 2010-2021: 87 units annually

**Production Demand since 2008: 160-190
annually**

Based on the 2008 and 2012 Housing Study, production has fallen short of actual demand by approximately 70-100 units annually. As a result, many are not moving to higher quality and higher value homes or forming their own households. It has also limited the city's overall growth.

Age of Housing

Dodge City: 2020

Dodge City has an older housing stock

- 50% of structures are more than 50 years old
- Less than 10% of structures have been built in the last 20 years

Structures – Year Built		
	Units	%
Built 2014 or later	122	1%
Built 2010 to 2013	168	2%
Built 2000 to 2009	440	5%
Built 1990 to 1999	889	10%
Built 1980 to 1989	867	9%
Built 1970 to 1979	2,125	23%
Built 1960 to 1969	1,062	12%
Built 1950 to 1959	1,611	18%
Built 1940 to 1949	760	8%
Built 1939 or earlier	1,155	13%
Total	9,477	

Comparative Income, Value, and Rent: Dodge City 20 Estimates

Source: U.S. Census

	Median Household Income	Median House Value	Value/Income Ratio	% of Owners Paying > 30%	Median Contract Rent	% of Renters Paying > 30%
Dodge City	\$52,654	\$106,200	2.02	17%	\$618	29%
Emporia	\$43,481	\$98,200	2.26	15%	\$531	47%
Garden City	\$56,274	\$156,900	2.79	13%	\$618	34%
Hays	\$52,135	\$182,100	3.49	19%	\$624	46%
Hutchinson	\$48,889	\$101,300	2.07	15%	\$571	46%
Junction City	\$52,159	\$138,300	2.65	24%	\$692	38%
Liberal	\$48,434	\$111,700	2.31	20%	\$639	35%
Pittsburg	\$34,353	\$86,800	2.53	19%	\$552	57%

- An affordable, self-sustaining housing market with adequate value or revenues to support market rate new construction typically has a V/I value between 2.5 and 3.0
- Ratios below 2.0 are significantly undervalued relative to income & ratios above 3.0 exhibit significant affordability issues
- Dodge City has stronger incomes and older housing resulting in lower ratios and less cost burdened households.

Housing Affordability Ranges

Dodge City: 2019

Income Range	# HHs in Each Range	Affordable Range for Owner Units	# of Owner Units	Affordable Range for Renter Units	# of Renter Units	Total Affordable Units	Balance
\$0-24,999	1,734	>\$60,000	1,094	\$0-499	979	2,073	339
\$25-49,999	2,729	\$60,000-124,999	2,033	\$500-999	2,671	4,704	1,975
\$50-74,999	1,990	\$125,000-199,999	1,305	\$1,000-1,499	103	1,408	-582
\$75-99,999	1,082	\$200,000-249,999	282	\$1,500-1,999	-	282	-800
\$100-149,999	798	\$250,000-399,999	389	\$2,000-2,999	-	389	-409
\$150,000+	653	\$400,000+	130	\$3000+	-	130	-523

Source: U.S. Census *This table should be read left to right across rows*

- Dodge City has a surplus of housing for households making between \$25,000 and \$49,999
- The lack of housing for households making more than \$50,000 means many residents earning higher wages compete for more affordable units, limiting the number of available units for prospective new employees

Comparative Population Models

Dodge City

	2020	2025	2030	2035
2000-2020 Growth Rate (0.50% Annual Growth)	27,788	28,482	29,194	29,923
2010-2020 Construction Activity (1.23% Annual Growth)	27,788	29,536	31,393	33,367
Natural Population Change*	27,555	28,817	29,467	30,096

* Based on 2019 cohort survival and birth rates

Source: RDG Planning & Design

- Dodge City has a young population that should sustain natural growth
- Based on construction activity and supported by a likely undercount in 2020 the city's annually growth rate may have been closer to 1.23% over the past ten years
- **There are currently at least 600 job openings and another 800 will be available by 2030 once Hilmar and the associated dairies open**
 - These alone could generate 450 to 700 new households, units that are currently not available in the market
- Growing at only a 0.5% annually would not reflect the reality of the building activity that has occurred in the last two decades nor the workforce needs

Projecting Housing Needs Dodge City

- Use population scenarios, recent construction activity and assumptions about people per household to generate ten years of overall housing demand.
- Consider the distribution of household income in a community.
- Match income ranges with affordability price points, based on housing costs equal to 30% of adjusted gross income.
- Define price breakouts for new housing demand, based on the assumption that new construction should ideally be affordable to the existing household income distribution.
- Note: These estimates are not meant to indicate an exact demand for housing, but rather provide guidance as to what kinds of housing is needed to reach certain targets.



Development Targets

Dodge City: 2017-2030

	2020	2025	2030	Total
Population at End of Period	27,788	29,536	31,393	
HH Population at End of Period	27,182	28,892	30,709	
Average PPH	3.00	3.00	3.00	
HH Demand at End of Period	9,061	9,631	10,236	
Projected Vacancy Rate	8.8%	8.2%	7.7%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	9,936	10,491	11,091	
Replacement Need		24	30	54
Cumulative Need During Period		455	629	1,084
Average Annual Need		114	126	120

Source: RDG Planning & Design

Housing demand calculation is based on:

- No change in the number of people per household
- Average annual replacement of 6 units per year
- Slightly declining vacancy rate

- Based on historic construction trends and the workforce needs in the community, Dodge City will need to produce nearly 1,100 units in the next decade
- The replacement need is slightly lower on the assumption that most of the worst housing has been removed and a focus on housing rehabilitation will be important

Development Targets

Dodge City: 2020-2030

	2020-2024	2025-2030	Total
Total Need	455	629	1,084
Total Owner Occupied	227	315	542
Affordable Low: <125,000	86	118	204
Affordable Moderate: 125-200,000	62	86	149
Moderate Market: 200-250,000	34	47	81
Market: \$250-350,000	25	35	60
High Market: Over \$350,000	20	28	49
Total Renter Occupied	227	315	542
Low: < \$500	52	72	125
Affordable: \$500-1,000	82	114	196
Market: \$1,000-1,500	60	83	143
High Market: \$1,500+	33	45	78

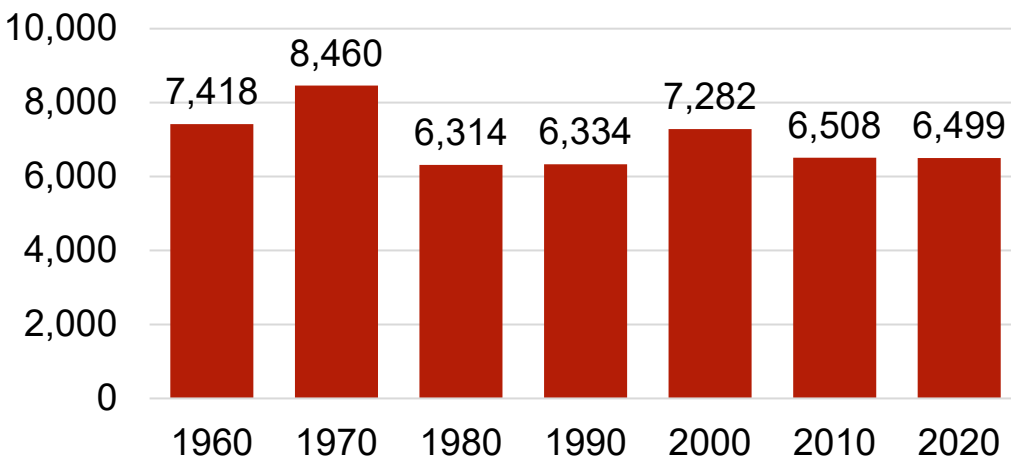
Source: RDG Planning & Design

- This analysis assumes a split of 50% owner-occupied and 50% rental units
- New construction will cost more than \$200,000 or \$900 a month in rent, causing demand for lower-cost units to be met by existing housing.



Ford County

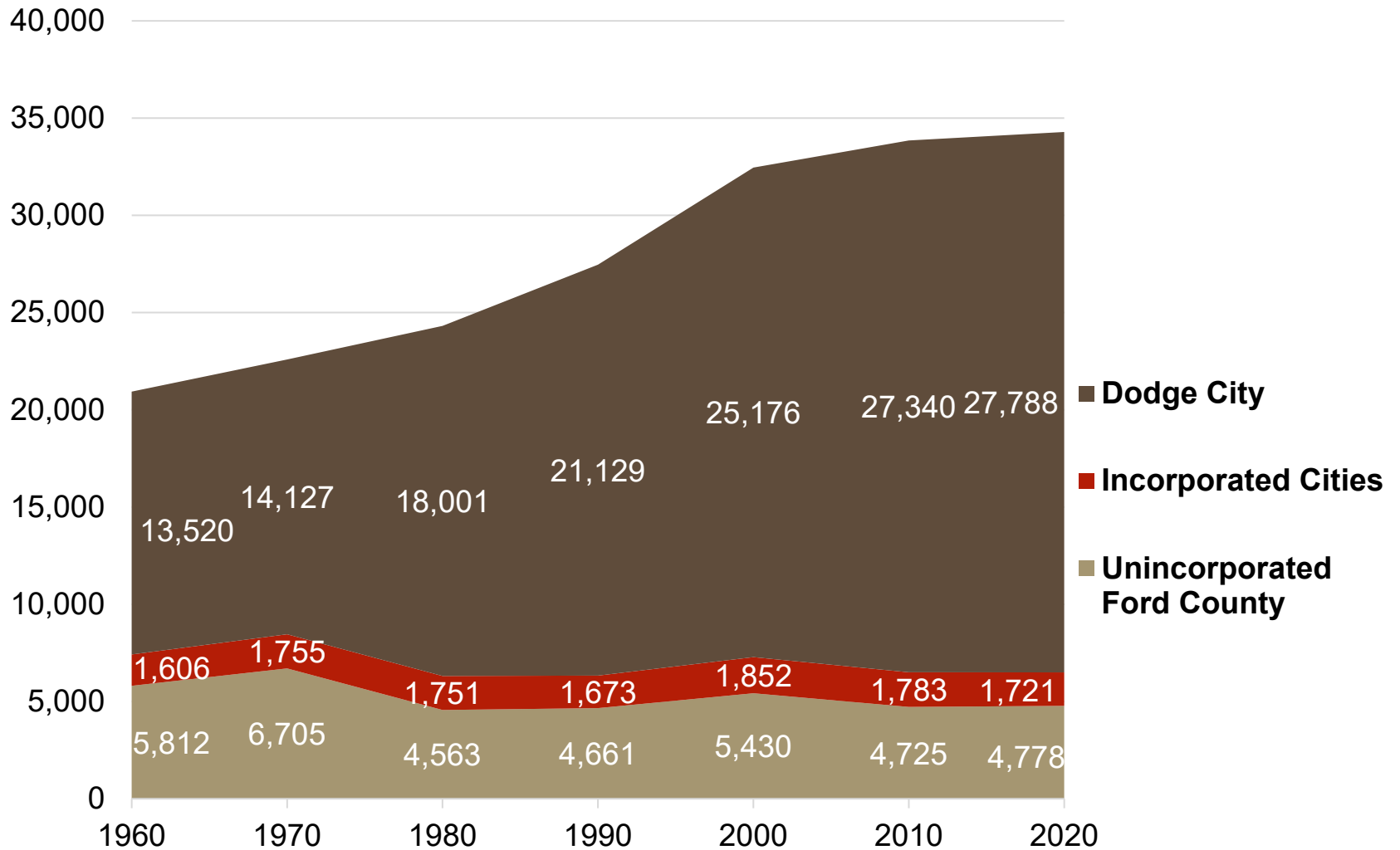
Population Change in Ford County 1960-2020



Over the past 60 years, Ford County's population, exclusive of Dodge City, has fluctuated. The 2020 count indicated a population loss for Bucklin and Ford. There are concerns throughout the country regarding undercounts in 2020. Minorities and those in poverty are most likely to be under counted. Over 50% of Ford County's population was at-risk for being undercounted.

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	Change
Bucklin	752	771	786	710	725	794	727	-25
Ford	252	246	272	247	314	216	203	-49
Spearville	602	738	693	716	813	773	791	189
Unincorporated Ford County	1,606	1,755	1,751	1,673	1,852	1,783	1,721	115
Ford County Total	7,418	8,460	6,314	6,334	7,282	6,508	6,499	-919

Population Change in Ford County 1960-2020





Source: U.S. Census

Population Change by Age Cohort

Ford County: 2010-2020

Age Group	2010		2020		2010-2020 Difference
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
0-15	8,852	26.2%	8,556	25.4%	-296
15-19	2,798	8.3%	2,646	7.8%	-152
20-24	2,484	7.3%	2,317	6.9%	-167
25-34	4,926	14.6%	4,643	13.8%	-283
35-44	4,205	12.4%	4,133	12.3%	-72
45-54	4,175	12.3%	3,964	11.8%	-211
55-64	3,031	9.0%	3,797	11.3%	766
65-74	1,640	4.8%	2,055	6.1%	415
75-84	1,154	3.4%	1,034	3.1%	-120
85+	583	1.7%	573	1.7%	10
Total	33,848	100.0%	33,718	100.0%	-130

Source: U.S. Census

 Increase
 Decline

Increases and decreases naturally occur as different generations move through the cohorts. Some generations, like the Baby Boomers and Millennials, are just larger than the ones before and after them.

Predicted Population Change

Ford County: 2000-2019

	2020 Predicted	2020 Actual	Difference
Total Population	6,436	6,499	63

Source: U.S. Census; RDG Planning & Design

- The Census will not be releasing 2020 Decennial age/sex data until 2023
- Based on 2010 Census data the county's population would have remained steady
- The difference is slightly above predicted but generally reflects predicted population

Housing Occupancy Change

Ford County: 2010-2019

	2010		2020		Change 2010-2019
	Number	% of Occupied Units	Number	% of Occupied Units*	
Owner-Occupied	1,858	77.2%	1,745	74.0%	-83
Renter-Occupied	540	22.8%	613	26.0%	73
Total Vacant	259		305		46
Vacancy Rate	9.86%		11.45%		
Total Units	2,627		2,663		36

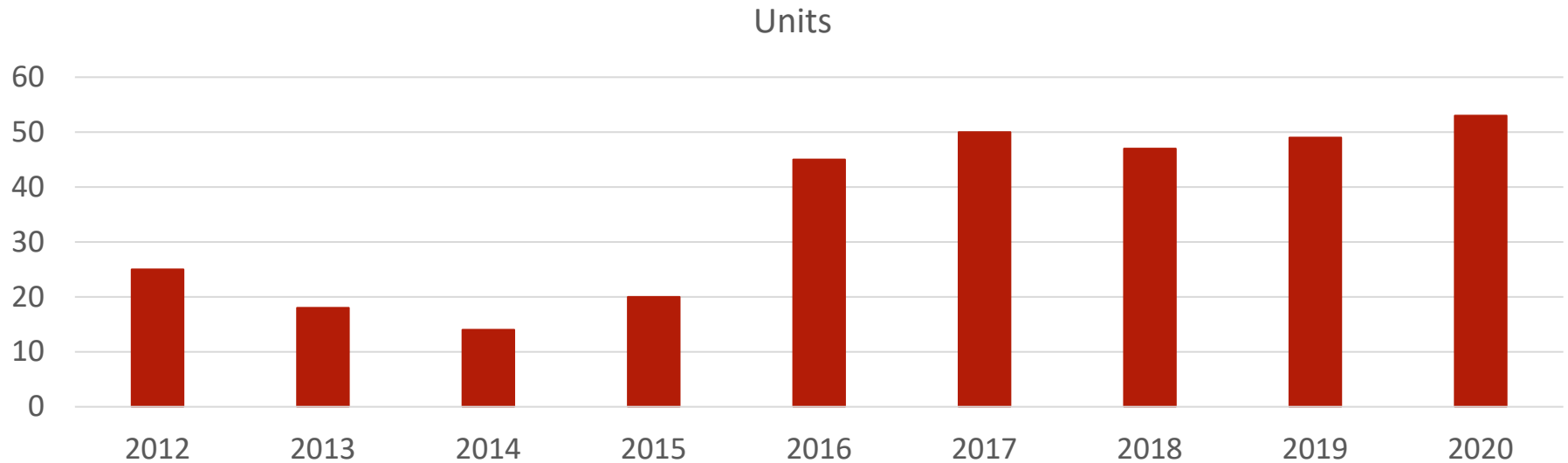
**2019 ACS estimate; Source: U.S. Census*

Vacancy rates for Ford County are significantly higher than in Dodge City. Some of this is a result of a smaller sample size but also a good percentage of units that are not available for rent. Like the city it has also seen an increase in the number of rental units, again likely a result of small, single-family homes being converted to renter occupancy in the rural communities.

Building Permits

Ford County (excluding Dodge City): 2012-2015

Construction Activity



Source: Ford County

In the last several years building activity in the county has increased, more than doubling what had been produced in previous years. This is likely filling the need for higher price point units.

Comparative Income, Value, and Rent: Ford County 2019 Estimates

	Median Household Income	Median House Value	Value/Income Ratio	Median Contract Rent
Bucklin	\$58,750	\$84,600	1.44	\$425
Dodge City	\$50,338	\$109,100	2.17	\$607
Ford	\$41,250	\$44,000	1.07	\$557
Spearville	\$68,906	\$118,900	1.73	\$633
Ford County	\$51,711	\$112,500	2.18	\$604

Source: U.S. Census

- An affordable, self-sustaining housing market with adequate value or revenues to support market rate new construction typically has a V/I value between 2.5 and 3.0
- Ratios below 2.0 are significantly undervalued relative to income
- Ratios above 3.0 exhibit significant affordability issues
- It is likely that much of the housing inflation and wage increases that have occurred in the last 18 months are not yet appearing in these estimates

Housing Affordability Ranges

Total of Ford County: 2019

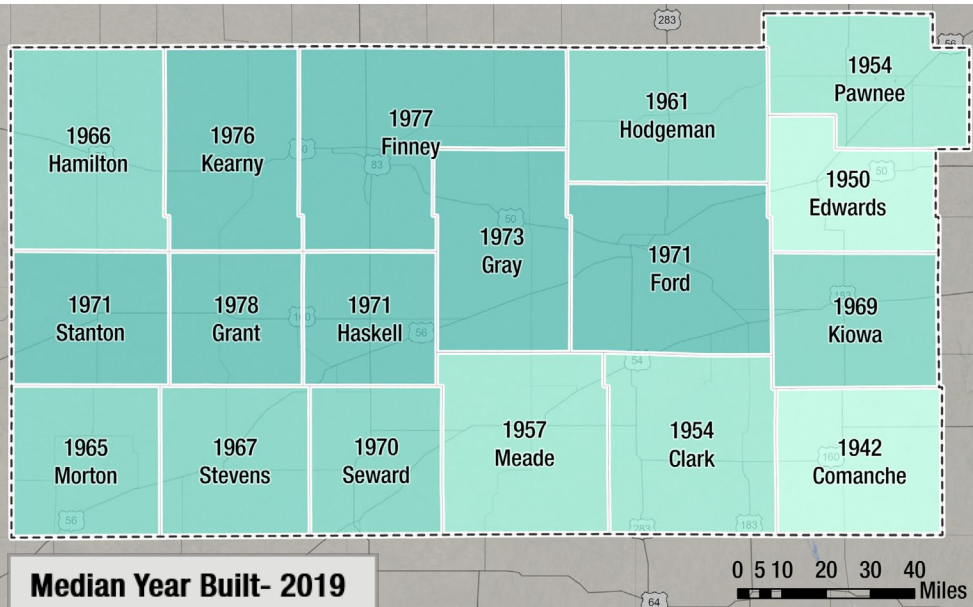
Income Range	# HHs in Each Range	Affordable Range for Owner Units	# of Owner Units	Affordable Range for Renter Units	# of Renter Units	Total Affordable Units	Balance
\$0-25,000	2,077	>\$60,000	1,436	\$0-499	1,185	2,621	544
\$25,000-49,999	3,402	\$60,000-124,999	2,544	\$500-999	3,056	5,600	2,198
\$50,000-74,999	2,435	\$125,000-199,999	1,630	\$1,000-1,499	126	1,756	-679
\$75-99,999	1,402	\$200,000-249,999	484	\$1,500-1,999	0	484	-918
\$100-150,000	1,148	\$250,000-399,999	683	\$2,000-2,999	0	683	-465
\$150,000+	880	\$400,000+	201	\$3000+	0	201	-679

This table should be read left to right across rows

Source: U.S. Census; RDG Planning & Design

- Ford County communities have a large supply of older housing, keeping values lower
- Higher income groups show a consistent deficit, meaning that many households compete for more affordable units, limiting the number of available units for prospective new employees

Age of Housing Ford County



Median Year Built- 2019

- 1950 or Earlier
- 1951 - 1960
- 1961 - 1970
- 1971 - 1980
- 1980 or After

Source: Kansas Statewide Housing Study; RDG Planning & Design, 2020

Year Built	Percentage
Built 2014 or later	1%
Built 2010 to 2013	3%
Built 2000 to 2009	4%
Built 1990 to 1999	11%
Built 1980 to 1989	10%
Built 1970 to 1979	22%
Built 1960 to 1969	12%
Built 1950 to 1959	14%
Built 1940 to 1949	8%
Built 1939 or earlier	15%

Source: U.S. Census

Comparative Population Models Ford County

	2020	2025	2030	2035
0.25% Annual Growth Rate	6,499	6,581	6,663	6,747
0.50% Annual Growth Rate	6,499	6,663	6,831	7,004
1.0% Annual Growth Rate	6,499	6,831	7,179	7,545

* Based on 2019 cohort survival and birth rates

Source: RDG Planning & Design

- While Ford County, outside of Dodge City, has declined over the past twenty years the rural communities have potential to fill housing gaps that exist for the County's workforce
- New growth should be directed toward the communities where infrastructure and services can be provided more efficiently
- If the county grew at 0.5% annually the population grow to over 6,800 by 2030

Projecting Housing Needs Ford County

- Use population scenarios, recent construction activity and assumptions about people per household to generate ten years of overall housing demand.
- Consider the distribution of household income in a community.
- Match income ranges with affordability price points, based on housing costs equal to 30% of adjusted gross income.
- Define price breakouts for new housing demand, based on the assumption that new construction should ideally be affordable to the existing household income distribution.
- Note: These estimates are not meant to indicate an exact demand for housing, but rather provide guidance as to what kinds of housing is needed to reach certain targets.



Development Targets

Ford County: 2017-2030

	2020	2025	2030	Total
Population at End of Period	6,499	6,663	6,831	
HH Population at End of Period	6,387	6,548	6,714	
Average PPH	2.95	2.95	2.95	
HH Demand at End of Period	2,165	2,220	2,276	
Projected Vacancy Rate	9.4%	9.0%	8.5%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	2,389	2,438	2,486	
Replacement Need		12	15	27
Cumulative Need During Period		49	63	112
Average Annual Need		12	13	12

Source: RDG Planning & Design

Housing demand calculation is based on:

- No change in the number of people per household
- Average annual replacement of about 5 unit per year
- A steady vacancy; however, this may decline with a higher rate of lost units or units that are currently not occupied leaving the market.

- Ford County's population growth is expected to occur primarily within Dodge City but the county's smaller communities have potential to grow.
- Current projections suggest 112 new homes would be expected to be built through 2030, this would be below recent construction activity but reflect the ability to provide services to rural units.

Development Targets

Ford County: 2020-2030

	2020-2024	2025-2030	Total
Total Need	49	63	112
Total Owner Occupied	30	38	67
Affordable Low: <125,000	11	14	25
Affordable Moderate: 125-200,000	8	10	18
Moderate Market: 200-250,000	4	6	10
Market: \$250-350,000	4	5	8
High Market: Over \$350,000	3	4	6
Total Renter Occupied	20	25	45
Low: < \$500	4	6	10
Affordable: \$500-1,000	7	9	16
Market: \$1,000-1,500	5	7	12
High Market: \$1,500+	3	4	7

Source: RDG Planning & Design

- This analysis assumes a split of 60% owner-occupied and 40% rental units, meeting the demand for quality rental units.
- Most new construction will probably cost more than \$200,000 or \$900 a month in rent, causing demand for lower-cost units to be met by existing housing.

Development in Bucklin, Ford, & Spearville 2017-2030

- All of the communities of Ford County can capture regional job growth if existing housing quality remains high and lots are available for new construction.
- On an annual basis Ford should be striving to build about 1 unit annually or building attached homes that can allow older residents to downsize and remain in Ford.
- Bucklin and Spearville should be building about 5 units per year to support a 1% annual growth rate.
 - These units should include new opportunities for rentals and smaller/lower maintenance units that serve retirees and seniors.

Conclusions

- Dodge City and Ford County have a historically low number of units that are for sale causing households to stay in rentals longer and creating historically low vacancy rates for rental units
- With over a 1,000 jobs open or coming open in the next few years there is not an adequate supply of vacant units to meet these demands
- The market has not responded to this demand as construction activity has remained below 100 units annually, well short of what is needed to meet growing employment base and changing household preferences
- Partnerships, incentives, and subsidies will be needed to address the city and county's housing shortage or local business will not be able to grow and attract new employees

Overall Assessment



Housing Resources

- Success since 2008
- Continued Employment Demand
- Sustained Housing Demand
- Strong Small Communities
- Organizational Resources



Housing Resources

Success Since 2008

The 2008 and 2012 reports focused on the need for additional housing and improved housing quality. Since then the city has become a state-wide model for implementing the Rural Housing Incentive District (RHID) and the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP). Additionally, the city has implemented housing codes and worked toward improved housing conditions. These programs have been essential in bringing more housing to the market. Furthermore, the city has seen a large number of new income based rental housing.



- **Success since 2008**
- Continued Employment Demand
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Housing Resources

Continued Employment Demand

While the energy boom has likely leveled-off in the region the demand for employees remains high. The need to fill positions has resulted in even broader recruiting efforts and has only further diversified Dodge City's population. This has brought both new opportunities and challenges. Filling positions, especially in the skilled and professional ranks continues to be a challenge and meeting these individuals housing expectations will be important in recruitment.



- Success since 2008
- **Continued Employment Demand**
- Sustained Housing Demand
- Strong Small Communities
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Housing Resources

Sustained Housing Demand

Demand for both rental and owner-occupied housing remains strong. While growth has not been as great as was projected in 2008 and significant progress in housing development has been made, demand continues to exceed construction activity. The need for greater quality and variety in rental housing is a big part of this demand.



- Success since 2008
- Continued Employment Demand
- **Sustained Housing Demand**
- Strong Small Communities
- Organizational Resources

Housing Resources

Strong Smaller Communities

After no growth or slower growth during the 2000s, Ford County's smaller communities have experienced more growth and building activity in the last five years. Spearville and Bucklin have both made efforts to improve community quality and attract new residents.



- Success since 2008
- Continued Employment Demand
- Sustained Housing Demand
- **Strong Small Communities**
- Organizational Resources

Housing Resources

Organizational Resources

Over the past 10 years the city has expanded and built on its organizational resources. The Development Corporation, School District, and Community College all provide important resources to the city. The efforts they have made in regards to housing, jobs, and skill development are essential to the county's continued growth. In the coming years, their leadership in expanding partnerships and bringing more stakeholders to the "housing" table will be important.



- Success since 2008
- Continued Employment Demand
- Sustained Housing Demand
- Strong Small Communities
- **Organizational Resources**

Challenges



Housing Issues & Challenges

- Shortage of “For Sale” Units
- Housing Quality
- Market Rate Rentals
- Rental Rate to Quality
- Demand for Scarce Price Point
- Downtown Demonstration Project



Housing Issues & Challenges

Shortage of “For Sale Units”

In 2018 this report noted a shortage of “for sale” housing and since 2020 the number of “for sale” homes has only decreased. This has created a near crisis situation for many communities. An inventory shortage causes a stagnant housing market where households looking to move in the market are choosing to stay in their home for longer periods. Secondly, a shortage makes moving to Ford County difficult for new employees and families. There are many reasons for the stagnant market but one of the most important is a lack of variety. Existing owners are no longer looking to “move-up” but are often looking for products that better accommodate their current stage of life.



- **Shortage of “For Sale” Units**
- Housing Quality
- Market Rate Rentals
- Rental Rate to Quality
- Demand for Scarce Price Point
- Downtown Demonstration Project

Housing Issues & Challenges

Housing Quality

While strides have been made toward improving housing quality, the issues related to housing quality affect both the owner and rental market. Lower quality homes depress home values and make it more difficult to do infill development. A lack of new market rate rental housing leaves lower quality units on the market and price points that do not match the age or quality of the unit.



- Shortage of “For Sale” Units
- **Housing Quality**
- Market Rate Rentals
- Rental Rate to Quality
- Demand for Scarce Price Point
- Downtown Demonstration Project

Housing Issues & Challenges

Market Rate Rentals

Over the past ten years a number of new rentals have been constructed but most of those have been income based. The lack of new market rate construction means that the market for those making just over the income limits is very tight. At the same time new construction that can meet those price points is very challenging. The lack of new construction also means that some of the lowest quality housing units remain on the market at rates that do not reflect their quality. New construction will have to be at higher price points but should also free up lower price point units.



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Housing Issues & Challenges

Rental Rate to Quality

Before and during the energy boom rental housing was extremely tight and rates increased in reflection of this demand. Rates have not come back down, especially for some of the lowest quality units. The rental market does not appear to be as tight as it was in 2012 and 2008 with some landlords reporting vacancies and longer periods to fill units. However, it does not appear that this has yet to force lower quality units to adjust rental rates or to make improvements to reflect quality. Some of this may be due to the continued influx of new residents who have different housing expectations.



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Housing Issues & Challenges

Demand for Scarce Price Point

The greatest demand for housing in Dodge City appears to be homes priced below \$180,000. Homes at this price point are the most difficult to construct due to land values, construction costs, and smaller profit margins for the private sector. Addressing this issue will require the continued construction of higher value units that encourage “filtering” in the market, greater housing variety that provides lower maintenance options, housing rehab, and assistance in construction of housing priced below \$200,000.



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Housing Issues & Challenges

Downtown Demonstration Project

The previous housing studies identified the downtown as a great opportunity for the city and county. Housing is an important part of a districts revitalization but can often be the hardest component. The unfamiliarity of downtown housing development and the higher rental rates needed to support building rehabs can make the financing challenging and create uncertainty. This makes the development of the first project very important. This project needs to demonstrate the market for this type of housing unit.



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Housing Strategy



Strategic Objectives

Ford County and Dodge City's employment opportunities, proven record of housing production, and community investments position it for continued growth. The **County is both benefited by and challenged by the regions job availability**. Most of Kansas has a labor shortage and often employers are competing for the same workers.

However, Dodge City's efforts to add housing and amenities should make the city more competitive. A number of forces limit the region's ability to provide affordable housing for people who are logically attracted to the community. If we **can't provide available and affordable housing, we will be unable to attract the new residents** who want to live in and contribute to the region.

Strategic Objectives

A housing program for Ford County and Dodge City should:

- **Continue the aggressive development programs and incentives** that have supported new housing construction.
- **Increase the number of market rate rental units** that will free up housing for those making too much to qualify for income based housing.
- Open up the “for sale” market through greater **housing variety** that meets the needs of young workers and empty nesters.
- Use strategic rehabilitation and housing conservation to meet the need for housing priced below \$180,000 and **strengthen home values in the city’s oldest neighborhoods and smaller communities.**

1. Filling the Gap

The implementation of RHIDs and NRP have been essential to beginning to address the shortage of housing in the Dodge City market. But it hasn't been enough. There are still gaps in rental housing and not enough production to create movement in the market.

Many of the following strategies will require additional support beyond what has been used in the last 10 years. These may include:

- Lending Consortium
- Local Housing Trust Fund
- Employer Assisted Housing

1. Filling the Gap

The 2008 CHAT recommended a Lending Consortium, pooling resources to provide interim financing for important regional housing projects. A Housing Trust Fund can function in similar ways. Both provide greater flexibility due to use of local funds, and is a key advantage.

Employers can be a major partner in these types of efforts. The role of employers can vary from providing funding into the Lend Consortium/Housing Trust Fund to constructing housing for workers. Housing in the recruitment and retention of employees is a major issue for employers and their involvement is becoming necessary in many communities.

1. Filling the Gap

Schuyler Workforce Rental Guarantees

In Schuyler, NE employers provided rent guarantees. The employers, including the School District and Cargill, have put no money into the projects but only the guarantee that if the units could not be rented they would cover the rents for up to 5 years. To date all units, renting at over \$1,000, have remained full and no employer has been called on their note.



2. Housing Diversity

Increasing Mobility through housing diversity.

The low supply of “for sale” units is a significant challenge for new employees to the area and for current residents looking to move within the community. Low mobility rates among the existing households is the key issue for available units.

Traditionally, as households earned more they would look to purchase larger homes. This trend is changing, with more homeowners staying in housing longer, as they are more interested in high quality and lower maintenance housing rather than more square footage. Instead they are looking for **products that fit their lifestyles**. For empty-nesters, this may be lower maintenance units that will allow them to easily transition into their retirement years. For young professionals it may be more about the neighborhood and atmosphere, being close to amenities like restaurants and entertainment.

2. Housing Diversity

Examples of Housing Diversity:

- **Townhomes and Duplexes**
- **Multi-family**
- **Empty-Nester oriented housing**
- **Downtown housing**
- **Small lot single-family**

Using RHID and NRP to provide sites will be one piece of the puzzle but additional assistance may be needed to provide gap financing.

3. Market Rate Rentals

Rental housing in Dodge City has several story lines.

- The rising cost of housing and the concern that many of the city's moderate income earners cannot afford rental housing.
- Little to no new rental housing has been constructed because of the perception that rental rates over \$800 a month, which would be necessary to support new construction cannot be supported.
- The perception that rental housing in rural or smaller markets should be less.
- A small number of rental units priced over \$800 leaving higher income earners competing with lower wage earners for the best quality units.

3. Market Rate Rentals

To overcome these story lines:

- A **demonstration project** will need to be completed that shows some higher rental rates can be supported
- **Gap financing** will need to be provided **to support lower price point rental** housing.

Gap financing for these types of market rate rentals will have to come from local support. This will include:

- RHID/NRP
- Lending Consortium/Local Housing Trust Fund
- Local employers

4. Housing Conservation

Dodge City has made strides on infill and housing rehabilitation but has found that it is difficult and nearly impossible for the private market to successfully rehab or do infill projects.

Lower home values in some of the most distressed neighborhoods discourage private market projects that may not even see a project appraise at cost.

A targeted approach should continue that identifies strategy areas that will elevate the overall values of a neighborhood or few blocks. Programs should include:

- Purchase-Rehab-Resale
- Lot Assembly
- Expanded demolition program
- Greater code enforcement

4. Housing Conservation

Purchase-Rehab-Resale programs. Program maintains the city's existing housing stock while providing affordable owner-occupied housing. Usually done through a non-profit development corporation using HOME funds but the Lending Consortium or other sources may be used.

NeighborWorks Northeast Nebraska has completed over 140 homes for the city of Columbus, NE using this program.



4. Housing Conservation

- **Lot Assembly**
 - May need to occur with assistance from the city
- **Expanded demolition program**
 - Dedicated funding source should be identified by the city for the removal of three to five housing units annually
- **Greater code enforcement**
 - The city should consider implementation of a program that triggers a basic life safety inspection upon the change of utility billing

All of these initiatives should be targeted and aimed at increasing values necessary to support private market investment.

4. Housing Conservation

Mobile Home Buyout Program: Faribault, Minnesota:

The Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) in Faribault has used its Mobile Home Buyout Program to acquire and remove substandard housing from its existing mobile parks.

Through this voluntary program, owners of uninhabited, dilapidated or substandard mobile homes may apply to participate in the buyout program. If the unit is determined to be substandard, uninhabited, or dilapidated, the HRA will buy the mobile for a flat rate of \$2,000, not including property tax or lot rent. Upon acquisition, the home is then properly demolished, removed, and the lot repurposed.

<https://www.ci.faribault.mn.us/427/Mobile-Home-Buyout-Program>

This program does not address the housing needs for those individuals currently living in substandard units but does offer a way to remove some of the manufactured homes in the worst condition.

4. Downtown

As noted in the 2012 Housing Study, Downtown has significant potential and resources to encourage downtown housing. Programs such as NRP, TIF, and the newer RHID Upper Story program (SB 90) are in place to support downtown housing.

However, a project has yet to be completed because of the complicated nature of these projects and the concern over higher rental rates. A demonstration project will need to be completed to show the market can be success. Gap financing may be necessary to support an initial project.





Dodge City & Ford County CHAT Report

Community Housing Assessment Team

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