



HOUSING

“THERE’S NO PLACE LIKE HOME” – DOROTHY FROM KANSAS



WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- ❖ Information about the need for housing in the community
- ❖ Policies that seek to protect the quality of Colwich neighborhoods
- ❖ Policies that provide the framework for increasing housing supply and diversity while protecting existing neighborhoods
- ❖ Discussion of the economic goals, objectives and policies

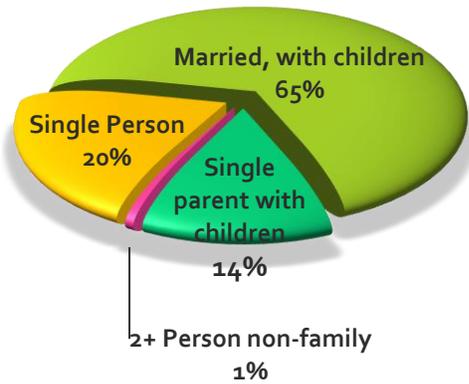
INTRODUCTION

Residential living is the most prominent use of land resources in Colwich. Centrally located between Wichita and Hutchinson with respect to their being the major employment and economic centers in the region, a large and growing number of residents choose to avail themselves of the hometown atmosphere and quality of life which characterizes Colwich.

Through its adopted plans and policies, the city pursues opportunities to preserve neighborhood quality, expand the overall housing supply, maintain and increase affordable housing, meet the housing requirements of individuals with special needs, prevent discrimination in housing, and promote walkable sustainable neighborhoods.

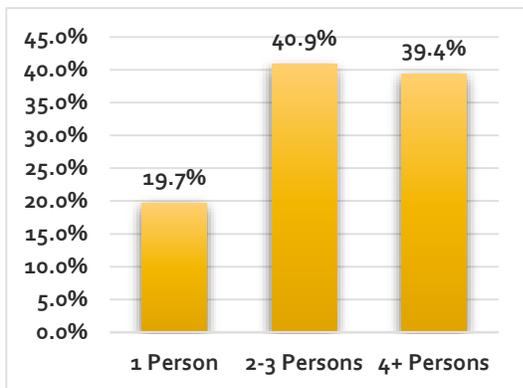
Housing works in conjunction with land use, transportation, economic development, and other community objectives addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. For instance, increasing the supply of housing available to the city's diverse workforce supports economic development.

Household Type Distribution in Colwich 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey

Colwich Household Size



Dwelling Unit Demand



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey

TODAY'S CONDITIONS & TOMORROW'S PROJECTIONS

HOUSING TODAY

Colwich's household composition is diverse and so are the types of housing Colwich residents desire. 80% of Colwich's households included children, with an average household size of 2.4 persons and 65% of the households were married with children.

Unlike the regional and national trends, Colwich's 65 and older population is 8%, with half of those being seniors over the age of 75. The median age is 30 making Colwich a community in which young families migrate to for the safety, family friendly, small town atmosphere not found in the urban growth areas of Sedgwick County.

Colwich's households earn 62% more than the median household in Sedgwick County with the average dollar spent on housing in the city exceeding the average dollar spent countywide.

HOUSING TOMORROW

The city must explore creative and innovative methods to increase housing opportunities while protecting existing neighborhoods and environments. The planning commission opened the C-2 Central Business district to allow for vacant buildings to be transformed into residential properties showing their progressive thinking for the revitalization of the downtown corridor.

NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY

Colwich is characterized by high quality, vital neighborhoods that vary widely in age, character, and the value and size of housing. The neighborhoods are predominantly well maintained and have a strong sense of pride. Maintaining and enhancing the quality of all neighborhoods is an important part of Colwich's livability.



While the goal of creating and maintaining a progressively better living environment for the community, an important aspect of the continuing planning program must be to develop a viable strategy for maintenance of existing neighborhoods, and establishment of quality standards for new residential developments.

Some level of change in existing neighborhoods is natural and an indication of a healthy, stable neighborhood. Typical neighborhood investments include new additions on existing houses, re-roofing and re-siding, new or improved landscaping and improvements for pedestrians such as sidewalks and paths.

The city promotes neighborhood quality by facilitating healthy change while protecting residents from new development that is out of character with the neighborhood. The city also promotes neighborhood quality by restricting activities or uses that are incompatible with a residential area. The city employs development regulations and other city codes to limit the bulk and scale of buildings to control noise and nuisances, to minimize the impact of non-residential uses, and to restrict other activities that negatively affect neighborhood quality.

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

The future development strategies support innovative methods to achieve housing goals while maintaining flexibility to fulfill different priorities in different neighborhoods. As more modern development concepts are put into place, it is probable that overall neighborhood development will trend away from the traditional lot and block design pattern and will be more adaptable to modern technologies.

An important program for the future is to monitor new developments and recommend appropriate changes to local codes.

This section describes some of the innovative housing types in Colwich and the context in which they work well.



- **Mixed use housing.** Colwich encourages creative and innovative uses for commercial and residential housing supply. Mixing housing and commercial uses can enhance the vitality of commercial areas by encouraging foot traffic to support neighborhood shops and provide “eyes on the street.” Over time, portions of the downtown area in the Central Business District could become a distinct mixed used neighborhood.



- **“Mother-in-law apartment”.** New housing opportunities may also be provided in well-established neighborhoods. A single family property may be designed to include an independent residence within the existing home known as a “mother-in-law apartment” or an “accessory dwelling unit.” Accessory dwelling units are subject to strict guidelines to protect the character of the single family residential neighborhood. Accessory dwelling units may provide affordable housing opportunities and help those with limited income keep their homes.
- **Needs specific design.** Housing opportunities are created when housing design and accommodations are made to address the ordinary changes that people experience over their lives due to aging and life circumstances. Colwich encourages housing options, programs, and services that support independence and choices for those who want to remain in their home or neighborhoods regardless of age or ability.
- **Reduce regulatory barriers.** The city works to identify and eliminate unreasonable regulatory barriers that negatively impact the diversity and affordability of the city’s housing supply.

Barriers may be removed based on analysis of the regulation's contribution to the public safety, providing necessary infrastructure, community services and amenities, environmental protection, and long-term maintenance costs.

- **Planned Unit Development.** The Planned Unit Development process allows for variations in site design and density from the requirements of the land use portion of the comprehensive plan in exchange for public review and design review to ensure compatibility with the setting. Clustering may be encouraged to protect critical areas.

SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING



Residents with special needs may require housing accommodations and assistance. In general, special needs populations include people who require assistance in their day-to-day living due to disability, health, age, or other circumstances. Family living situations, institutional settings, social service programs and assisted living housing all serve a portion of the need.

Housing for people with special needs should be sited to protect residential neighborhoods from adverse impacts, avoid concentration of such housing, and provide stable family living situations for people with special needs that are compatible with other residential uses in neighborhoods.

GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

GOAL

To maintain the vitality and stability of single family, multifamily and mixed use neighborhoods and promote a variety of housing opportunities to meet the needs of all members of the community.

OBJECTIVES



OBJ-1. Maximize the opportunity for each family or individual to rent or purchase safe, sanitary and decent housing within their economic means.

OBJ-2. Assure equal opportunity in choice of housing for all people regardless of race, religion, age or sex.

OBJ-3. Provide every living unit with city water and sewer services

OBJ-4. Investigate participating grant funding sources as a means to finance housing improvement programs.

OBJ-5. Enforce basic housing codes.

OBJ-6. Adopt and maintain effective zoning and subdivision regulations.

POLICIES

H-1. Residential expansion shall demonstrate performance with the future land use plan.

H-2. Residential expansion shall represent logical extensions and additions of existing neighborhoods.



- H-3. Neighborhood growth patterns shall provide for continuation of existing municipal street and sidewalk systems.
- H-4. Residential additions shall provide for drainage patterns consistent with the characteristics of the existing terrain at the site, and on adjacent properties.
- H-5. New neighborhood areas shall be served by a full range of utilities including water, sewer, electricity, cable, internet and natural gas.
- H-6. Future neighborhood expansions in areas of flood hazards will not be permitted except upon proof of compliance with local, state and federal floodplain management regulations.
- H-7. Future residential neighborhood expansion shall be evaluated for need for recreational opportunities as part of the plat approval process.
- H-8. All residential expansion shall demonstrate compliance with the zoning and subdivision regulations of the city.

IMPLEMENTATION

The primary responsibility for maintenance of this vital cooperation is one of the primary responsibilities of the planning commission acting in its official role as technical advisor to the governing body. Where this process has been successful, there will be effective management of continuing urban expansion which will beneficially impact the quality of the available housing opportunities for all citizens, present as well as future.