

Housing Assessment Tool (HAT)

PART 1: HOUSING ASSESSMENT TOOL (HAT) OVERVIEW

Purpose

The purpose of conducting a "housing assessment" is to help local communities identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and priorities before allocating resources to implement strategies or tasks that will address those priorities. This assessment should be able to be completed locally. Depending upon local capacity, some communities might decide to hire a facilitator to assist, but locals should drive the process, not the facilitator. It is anticipated that communities conducting a housing assessment will use what is learned to determine goals to resolve housing issues. The community should keep in mind that this assessment is an evolving process that is subject to change depending on community issues and perspectives. Timeliness, while important, should not be the primary factor for the community in doing the assessment.

Definitions

"Strengths" refer to an area or aspect of a community that is advantageous. "Weaknesses" refer to an area or aspect of a community that may or may not need improvement based on community perspectives and/or limited resources. "Opportunities" refer to a favorable combination of circumstances that possibly will lead to an improvement after a specific action is taken. "Priorities" refer to what areas or issues a community is seeking to address first, given community preferences and/or limited local resources. "Strategy/Task" refers to the action steps taken to address a community priority to take advantage of an opportunity.

PART 2: STAKEHOLDERS / ORGANIZATIONS

A. Select Stakeholders: Please check the boxes of the individuals/groups that participated in partnerships to manage the assessment process. Check all that participated and identify a lead organization or person. Every effort should be made to make the housing assessment process as participatory as possible.

Public Agencies

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City: <u>Wilson- Susan Kriley- LEAD ORGANIZATION</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> County: _____ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School District: <u>USD 112- Wilson Schools</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Housing Authority: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural District: _____ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional Planning Commission: <u>North Central Regional Planning Commission</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Area Agency on Aging: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Job Services Office: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> County Extension: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Public or Private Organizations

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Main Street Board: _____ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Economic Development: <u>Wilson Economic Development Corporation</u> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIDE Program: <u>Wilson PRIDE</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Dev. Corp.: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Downtown Merchants Assoc: _____ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chamber of Commerce: <u>Wilson Chamber of Commerce</u> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bank: <u>Wilson State Bank</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Utility Company: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Club: _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business: <u>Wilson Communications, Eschbaugh Advertising</u> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business: <u>Golden Living Center</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Other Stakeholders

- Local Authorities: _____
- Minorities: _____
- Workers: Individuals - 7
- Senior Citizens: Individuals - 7
- Youth: _____
- Unemployed Persons: Individuals - 7
- Disabled Persons: Individuals - 7
- Other: Individuals - 7
- Other: _____

- B. Select a regional area** - You are encouraged to take a regional approach. Identify what your region looks like? Provide a small narrative to describe how your region will look. How does the region affect the housing needs of your community?

City or Cities: Wilson - The City of Wilson has a population of 781 and approximately 400 homes. Of those 400 homes, 15% are empty or vacant. Conditions of the empty or vacant homes are deteriorating. With funding from the Kansas Department of Commerce Housing Grant, there will be a decrease in dilapidated and deteriorating homes and will encourage other property owners to fix their properties up as well. Wilson is located along I-70 half way between Hays and Salina (45 miles either direction) and 35 miles from Great Bend. Wilson Lake (the clearest lake in Kansas) is seven miles north of the city limits. Ellsworth (population 3,120) and Russell (population 4,506) both are within 20 miles of Wilson and have major employers. Many people have stated that they prefer to live in a small town and commute the short drive to work. Without adequate housing, Wilson is at a disadvantage.

County: _____

Region: _____

- C. Businesses/Employers** - List "at least" the top five businesses/employers in the region and identify each one's typical employee. Do they live in your region? Do they have adequate housing? If no, what are the needs of the employees? Are they planning any expansion or reduction in work force? How will future action affect housing needs or conditions? Is housing an issue when hiring? What are the issues? What can they contribute to solve the housing needs for their current or future employees?

Top five business/employers- Eschbaugh Advertising, Wilson School (USD 112), Wilson Communications, Wilson State Bank, and Golden Living Center. There are approximately 30% of their employees with small children/ families that do not live in Wilson because there are not and was not available housing rentals.

There is not adequate housing. Three out of the five major employers surveyed have stated there are new / potential employees that can not live in Wilson because there are not houses available. Those employees are forced to live in neighboring towns and drive miles to work in Wilson. Housing is needed for families. We are in need of rentals to allow the employees a chance to see if the area and the business meet their families needs and goals. Once the employees determine that they are compatible, they want to purchase a home. Available housing to purchase is also not adequate.

40% of the major employers surveyed have stated they plan to expand. With these planned expansions, Wilson will be even further behind in being able to meet the housing needs which could jeopardize their businesses. Three out of the five major employers also state that housing is an issue when hiring, potential employees have to weigh the amount of pay versus gas it will take to travel to and from home to work.

The Wilson mayor and city council are taking an active approach with the award of the Kansas Department of Commerce Housing Rehabilitation and Demolition Grant in the Spring of 2012 for a target area of Wilson. We want to expand beyond this target area with a future application to cover more of our entire community.

PART 3: DEMOGRAPHICS

Please fill in the boxes with the data requested. As an alternative, 2000 and 2010 census data may be attached.

| POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS | 2000 | 2010 | Percentage Change | Data Source |
|--|----------|----------|-------------------|--|
| Total Population | 799 | 781 | -2.3% | 2010 KS Stat. Abstract (KSA) p. 465 |
| Number of under age 18 (students) | 180 | 160 | -11.1% | 2000 & 2010 Census P12/P13 |
| Number of under age 18 - 25 (non-students) | 223 | 210 | -5.8% | 2000 & 2010 Census P12/P13 |
| Number of age 26 - 65 | 350 | 377 | 7.7% | 2000 & 2010 Census P12/P13 |
| Number of age 66 and older | 226 | 194 | -14.2% | 2000 & 2010 Census P12/P13 |
| Median Household Income | \$34,821 | \$44,250 | 27.0% | 2000 Census DP-3; 2010 ACS 5-year Estimates DP-3 |
| Per Capita Income | \$16,622 | \$21,109 | 26.9% | 2000 Census DP-3; 2010 ACS 5-year Estimates DP-3 |
| LMI Percentage | 36.2% | 36.2% | 0% | 2000 Census (Updated) From CDBG General App. Guidelines & HUD FY12 data (http://www.hud.gov/offices/cod.systems/census/ks/index.cfm). Newer data was not available at application time. |
| Unemployment Rate | 1.0% | 0.7% | -30% | 2000 Census DP-3; 2010 ACS 5-year Estimates DP-3 |
| Average Household Size | 2.26 | 2.24 | -0.8% | 2000 & 2010 Census DP-1 |
| Number of Homeless Persons | 0 | 0 | 0% | 2000 Census QT-P12 & 2010 Census Table P43 |

Note: Most data can be found in the Kansas Statistical Abstract. "Percentage change" can be found by subtracting 2000 data (for example: 25,000) from 2010 data (for example: 20,000), then dividing that number (5,000) by the 2000 data (25,000) to get the percentage change from 2000 to 2010 (20%).

| HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS | 2000 | 2010 | Percentage Change | Data Source |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------|-------------------|--|
| Median Housing Value - Owner | \$36,800 | \$55,300 | 50.3% | 2000 Census DP-4; 2010 ACS 5-year Estimates DP-4 |
| Median Gross Rent - Renter | \$294 | \$484 | 64.6% | 2000 Census DP-4; 2010 ACS 5-year Estimates DP-4 |
| Number of Occupied Housing Units | 333 | 331 | -0.6% | 2000 & 2010 Census DP-1 |
| Number of Owner-Occupied Units | 272 | 263 | -3.3% | 2000 & 2010 Census DP-1 |
| Number of Renter-Occupied Units | 61 | 68 | 11.5% | 2000 & 2010 Census DP-1 |
| Number of Vacant Housing Units | 73 | 74 | 1.4% | 2000 & 2010 Census DP-1 |
| Number of Vacant Owner Units | 16 | 7 | -56.3% | 2000 and 2010 Census QT-H1 |
| Number of Vacant Rental Units | 17 | 13 | -23.5% | 2000 and 2010 Census QT-H1 |

| | | | | |
|---|----|----|--------|---|
| Number of Deteriorated Housing Units | 48 | 52 | 0 | City of Wilson -Windshield Survey |
| Number of Deteriorated Owner Units | 35 | 40 | 8.9% | City of Wilson -Windshield Survey |
| Number of Deteriorated Renter Units | 8 | 7 | -14.3% | City of Wilson -Windshield Survey |
| Number of Dilapidated Housing Units | 0 | 0 | 0 | City of Wilson -Windshield Survey- please note that our dilapidated houses (16 in 2000 and 16 in 2010) are vacant |
| Number of Dilapidated Owner Units | 0 | 0 | 0 | City of Wilson -Windshield Survey |
| Number of Dilapidated Rental Units | 0 | 0 | 0 | City of Wilson -Windshield Survey |
| Number of Single Family Building Permits Issued During Past Calendar Year | 6 | 4 | -50% | City of Wilson Building Permits |
| Number of Single Family Building Permits Issued During Past Calendar Year | 6 | 4 | -50% | City of Wilson Building Permits |
| Number of Residential Units Demolished During Past Calendar Year | 0 | 0 | 0 | City of Wilson Data |

Note: Data for number of deteriorated or dilapidated housing units can be developed by having the community conduct a windshield survey. A housing unit is "deteriorated" if there are at least two major structural problems, but the unit can still be repaired for a reasonable amount of money. A housing unit is "dilapidated" if there are three or more major structural problems, but the unit cannot be repaired for a reasonable amount and is, therefore, proposed for demolition.

PART 4: PAST ACTIONS AND CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE

- A. Identify any housing activity that has taken place in the last five years (include any grants/programs or pending applications). Explain what parties initiated the change. What has it done to improve or worsen the housing issues in your community?

In early 2012, the City of Wilson received a Kansas Department of Commerce Rehabilitation and Demolition Grant for \$400,000. This will help with approximately 1/3 of our town. We need financial help with the remaining 2/3 of our town. The grant will demolish approximately eight structures which will free up lots for people to build on along with helping to keep our community safe from dilapidated structures. The grant will rehabilitate approximately 14 households that need assistance to bring their home up to standards. This will help ensure those homes stay livable and don't become dilapidated structures that need demolition. The Wilson mayor and city council are applying for the 2013 Kansas Department of Commerce Housing Rehabilitation and Demolition Grant to cover the remaining area. The City of Wilson has had numerous requests for grant assistance outside of the approved target area from the 2012 Kansas Department of Commerce Housing Rehabilitation and Demolition Grant. As an initiative to property owners (and renters), the Wilson City Council approved an aggressive Neighborhood Revitalization Plan effective January 1, 2012. The Neighborhood Revitalization Plan rebates a property owner for City of Wilson taxes (USD 112 has also approved the same plan) paid on the increase in appraised value from improvements made to their property. The improvement has to increase the appraised value by at least \$500 and requires a minimum investment of \$2000 to qualify. (Rebates are received for 10 years - additions, remodeling 100% rebate for 10 years and new construction 100% rebate for first five years then 50% rebate for additional five years.) This aggressive plan has proven effective in other cities to help with deteriorated properties.

- B. What would you describe as your needs? How did you arrive at this conclusion?

Surveys taken from city government officials and general public show that the quality housing units are inadequate and small family homes that are in good shape and efficient are the needs. Results indicated there is a housing shortage in

terms of quality, quantity, variety and price-range. There is a lack of availability: for elderly people wanting to downsize or move out of their large house into a rental, for younger people and families looking for quality and affordable starter homes or rentals, for people wanting to move to Wilson and hoping to find either a decent starter home or rental that offers quality and affordability, and for middle to higher income people hoping to find middle to higher end modern housing. The greatest unmet demand is for rental housing of any kind, especially affordable rental housing. A landlord and city government official stated that she received four to five calls a day for housing requests. Most people will not buy a house until they live in the community for awhile. With not a lot of availability rentals, they are many times forced to move to a different town then end up buying a house in that town. The City has taken a pro-active approach in that we have sent letters to the owners of the empty houses to encourage them to rent them out or sell them. With little to no response on the letters sent, the City is trying a different angle in that with a rehabilitation and demolition grant, that might entice the owners to make a change. Current homes occupied show the need for rehabilitation to bring them up to standards to keep them liveable.

- C. Describe the infrastructure system (water, streets, sewer, storm drainage, natural gas distribution and electrical distribution) as it relates to housing needs.

All necessary utilities are available for housing. Water lines were replaced in 90% of Wilson in 1990. The remaining 10% of the water lines within Wilson, and the transmission lines to the water wells were replaced in 2008. The City of Wilson abandoned the Imhoff Sewer System and installed a sewer lagoon system in 2006. Streets are chipped and sealed every four years. Storm drainage is proven adequate. Electrical distribution is through Rolling Hills Electric and natural gas distribution is through Midwest Energy.

- D. Describe the visual appearance of the target area, indicating the age/condition of residential, commercial and industrial buildings, the accumulation of debris/junk, presence of noxious weeds, etc.

The city government is working on reducing debris/junk and noxious weeds through the Board of Health and the Public Compliance Officer. The downtown area is old and aging due to empty buildings not being kept up. Some are in process of being fixed up. Visually, most of Wilson's commercial properties that house active businesses look fine, though some look neglected and run-down. Many of the commercial buildings that have been commercially inactive for any period of time, are obviously deteriorating. Some are in poor condition with leaky roofs, limestone walls that need tuck pointing, etc. About half of Wilson's former commercial buildings in its downtown are in need of substantial repair. Some of these are seriously blighted and repairs will be very costly. The Wilson Czech Opera House was destroyed in a fire in Nov of 2009. The City of Wilson assisted the Opera House Corporation with clean up through a Kansas Department of Commerce Urgent Need Grant. Elevators are dilapidated and appear to be hazardous. Residential areas are for the most part in good shape but have dilapidated homes mixed in that need demolished or rehabilitated. Nearly 15% of Wilson's houses are setting empty and not offered for sale or rent. Many of these houses are in a deteriorated condition. Some occupied houses are also in poor condition, but most appear to be in satisfactory to good condition.

- E. What are the community's homelessness prevention efforts? What homelessness assistance does the community provide or need?

Wilson has an active food bank and thrift store to assist people. There is also assistance available through local churches and organizations for people who may need help with utility bills, some healthcare expenses, and even rent. These are efforts that help to prevent homelessness.

- F. What are the environmental issues that could affect housing decisions? For example: flood zone, railroad tracks and major roadways.

As many small cities are, the City of Wilson is faced with monitoring underground contamination that is believed to be caused by careless disposal of cleaning solvents in the past in certain parts of town. The contamination does not affect the city's supply of water and only covers a small area within the contaminated plume. Wilson is fortunate in that there is only one small area (approximately 50 ft by 50 ft with no housing units) of Wilson that is in a FEMA recognized flood zone.

Railroad tracks run through the center of Wilson. Highway 40 runs through the center of Wilson - parallel with the railroad tracks and I-70 is two miles north of the city limits. No housing decisions will be affected by these items.

G. Other factors not addressed above that are important factors for your community.

It is the consensus that affordable and quality housing is a major need in Wilson. Wilson wants to increase our population (which helps with revenues) but without available housing, it is not possible. The demand is there but not the supply. With funding assistance, it will help ensure community contributions as well so we can come together as a local community to solve the housing issues.