

2023 UPDATE HOUSING

BLUE RIBBONS Collaborative spirit · Civic engagement · Influx of financial assistance

RED FLAGS Shortage of safe, affordable housing · Aging housing stock · Housing instability



PHOTO COURTESY OF HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

A new five bedroom home is being constructed by Habitat for Humanity on North Boonville in Springfield.

High construction costs challenge housing progress

Safe, decent, and affordable housing provides a stable foundation for families, neighborhoods, and entire communities to thrive. Over the last two years, Springfield has generally maintained Blue Ribbons and made progress on addressing Red Flags related to housing.

BLUE RIBBONS

Springfield's **collaborative spirit** and **strong civic engagement** remain Blue Ribbons:

- Continued expansion of services for people facing housing instability provided at Community Partnership of the Ozarks' O'Reilly Center for Hope.
- Relaunching of landlord training and engagement initiatives that had been on hold due to COVID. CPO's Housing Collaborative hosts two annual events

to educate landlords and case managers on housing resources; the first of these events served 85 case managers.

- Release of Forward SGF, the City of Springfield's comprehensive plan, which will guide the physical growth of Springfield for the next 20 years. The plan includes a focus on neighborhood revitalization and the development of missing "middle" housing — affordable housing for middle-income families.

We are still seeing positive outcomes from the **influx of federal financial assistance** responding to COVID but also seeing negative outcomes as some assistance ends:

- The City of Springfield has allocated \$11.3 million in various funding streams made available through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to address system-level housing and

RECENT SUCCESS STORY

Mary, a longtime Springfield resident who lives with cerebral palsy and other health conditions, has lived many of our Blue Ribbons and Red Flags firsthand. Sixteen years ago, she and her 5-year-old daughter, Kelsey, lost their housing.

They used The Kitchen Inc.'s Missouri Hotel and were living there when Kelsey started kindergarten. The school connected Kelsey with a lunch buddy who turned into a lifelong supporter.

After about a year, Mary received federal rental assistance administered by the Missouri Department of Mental Health, which enabled the family to move into their own home, where they were stably housed for more than a decade. This stability helped Mary become an engaged member of her Springfield neighborhood and the larger community as she advocated for accessible design at the local and state level with the support of empower: abilities.

Stories like Mary's reveal how housing support can lead to more citizen participation for improving neighborhoods. But as the family's independence grew, making ends meet became more difficult.

As Mary and Kelsey's family grew over the years, they continued to face some challenges because rental assistance and food-stamp support dropped off as their household income increased.

They also struggled to cover child care and utility costs, which have doubled since the family moved into their current housing a year ago. Mary's limited Social Security income isn't enough for her to afford housing on her own. The family was able to maintain their housing throughout COVID because of federal stimulus funds and the renter's rebate, a Missouri property tax credit for qualifying households.

Kelsey owns a car and is raising her own child. Despite working full time, Kelsey still relies on support from friends, family and the community to meet daily living needs.

homeless service needs. As of the date of publication, the following selections have been made:

- o \$1,753,430, to selected for-profit and nonprofit developers proposing to develop a total of 47 affordable housing units.
- o \$1,962,273, for the development a 12-unit non-congregate emergency shelter, providing 24 additional non-congregate shelter beds to the local Continuum of Care system.
- o \$3 million for a purpose-driven day center.
- o \$650,000 for a respite house and other services.

Financial support available to individuals in the form of rental-assistance programs, stimulus payments and higher child tax credits have ended.

RED FLAGS

Progress has been made on addressing the Red Flags of **affordable housing shortage, aging housing stock** and **general housing instability**:

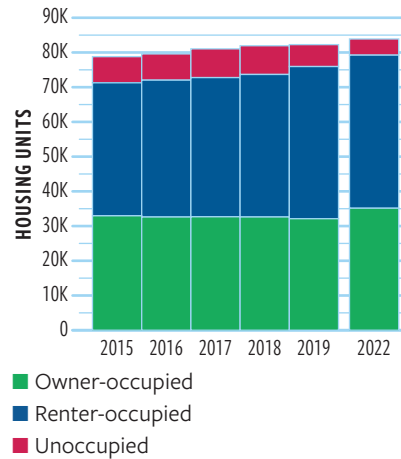
- In late 2023, Springfield plans to complete a comprehensive housing study to quantify housing needs. Affordable housing is being developed through nonprofits such as Eden Village and Habitat for Humanity. An additional project that will have 50 units dedicated for seniors 55+ is supported by state and federal tax credits awarded through Missouri Housing Development Commission’s Low Income Housing Tax Credit program.
- Restore SGF, a city redevelopment program, is starting to formalize support for rebuilding and refurbishing historic neighborhoods and homes.

However, other issues continue to be critical Red Flags:

- High construction costs limit the amount of affordable housing being developed. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development generally defines “affordable housing” as housing on which the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of gross income for housing costs, including utilities. Across the state, there is a shortage of 114,609 rental homes for extremely low-income renters. In Springfield, fewer than one in three people have access to affordable housing.
- Existing affordable housing previously funded by Missouri Housing Development Commission is expiring.
- Rental rates exceed what some federal assistance programs can pay, and high purchase costs and rising interest rates restrict buying power for individuals who are purchasing homes.

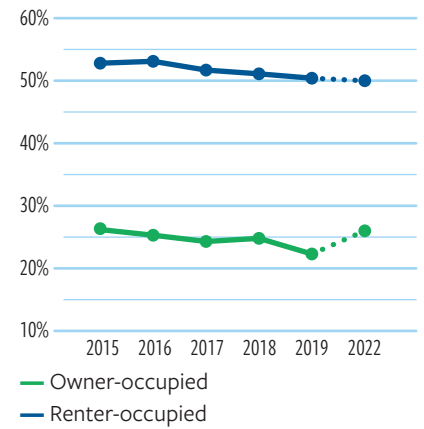
KEY METRICS

Estimated Housing Occupancy in Springfield



SOURCE: 2022 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Cost-burdened Households in Springfield



SOURCE: 2022 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

ABOUT THE 2023 UPDATE

This interim update reviews current data for the Blue Ribbons and Red Flags from the 2021 report. The 20th anniversary report, to be released in 2024, will develop an updated list of Blue Ribbons and Red Flags.

- Springfield lacks a comprehensive rental inspection program to ensure housing is safe, decent, and sanitary. In its 2022 regional health assessment, the Ozarks Health Commission found that 28% of Springfield residents live in substandard housing and 21% of all housing in Springfield is in fair to worse condition.
- Local programs that support home repairs have decreased. These programs offer key support in maintaining some of the 56% of housing units in Springfield built before 1980.

The Housing 2023 Update was produced by Amanda Stadler of the Missouri Department of Mental Health with input from Bob Jones, Shelby Butler and Nancy Williams.