

Housing Profile

This section describes availability, adequacy and affordability of the housing inventory in Grant City in comparison to Worth County and the State of Missouri. The assessment of housing inventory in Grant City is based on the secondary as well as the primary (windshield survey) data collection.

Supply, or *Availability*, is shown in the number of units, structural type, occupancy, vacancy rates, size and number of bedrooms. *Adequacy* is generally described by quality characteristics, units rehabbed and weatherized, market-rate versus government-assisted housing and wheelchair-accessible rental units. *Affordability* is evaluated via affordability standards and cost burden limits.

Housing Supply/Availability

Table 3.1 Occupancy and Tenure in 2000

	Grant City		Worth County		Missouri	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	499	100	1,245	100	2,442,017	100
Total occupied:	409	82	1,009	81	2,194,594	90
Owner occupied	291	58	773	62	1,542,149	63
Renter occupied	118	24	236	19	652,445	27
Total vacant:	90	18	236	19	247,423	10
Occasional use	10	2	49	4	66,053	3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing

Table 3.1 shows the number of owner-occupied versus renter-occupied units for Grant City in comparison to Worth County and Missouri according to the 2000 Census. Of the 499 housing units in Grant City, 82 percent were occupied with 58 percent of owner- and 24 percent of renter-occupied units. This translates into 71 percent homeownership rate. For comparison, homeownership rate in 2000 was 70 percent statewide and 75 percent nationally for rural communities.



From the windshield survey, example of an occupied house in Grant City: 1107 S. High (also determined to be in good overall condition).

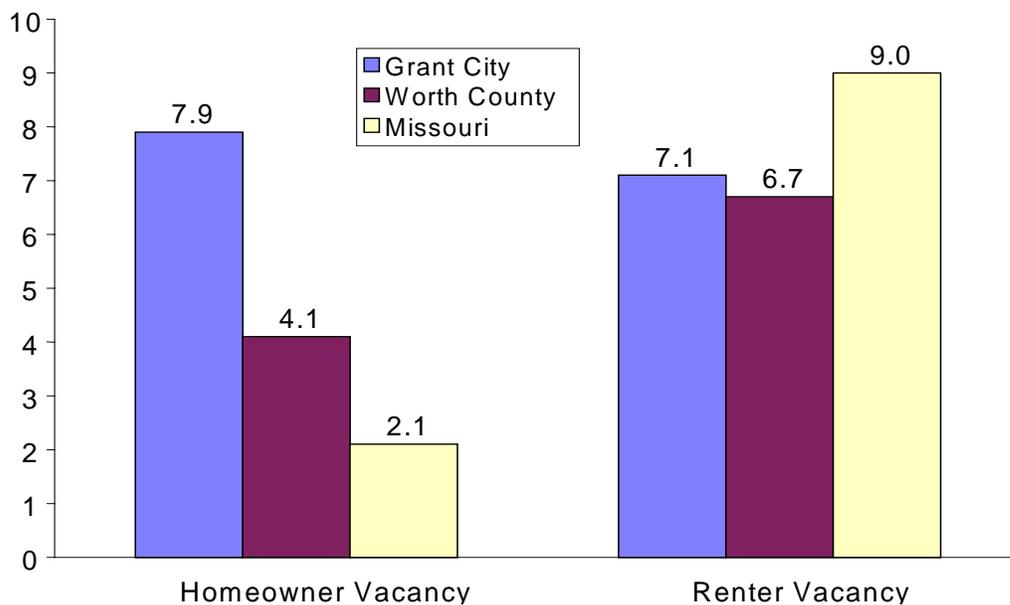


From the windshield survey, example of a vacant house: 403 Pleasant (also determined to be beyond repair/requiring demolishing).

The number of vacant units in Grant City increased by 29 units from 1990 to 2000, while the *total* number of housing units decreased by 4. This corresponded to a decrease of 11 households in Grant City during the same period. Similar to the county, Grant City reported vacant units totaling 18 percent of the housing stock in 2000. Of the 90 vacant units, 9 were for rent, 25 for sale, 11 rented or sold but not occupied, and 10 for seasonal use. The remaining 35 units (about 30 percent of the vacant units) were not actively for sale or rent and were reported as "other vacant." These units could be uninhabitable due to physical conditions or legal constraints (trusts, estates) and warrant further investigation.

Eighty-one percent of the housing units in Worth County were occupied, with a homeownership rate of 77 percent being larger than the state average (70 percent). The county reported a net loss of 24 housing units from 1990 to 2000 demonstrating decline outside the Grant City limits with decreases in both owner- and renter-occupied households (as mentioned above, Grant City lost 4 housing units in the same time period). The number of vacant units in the county increased by 4 for the same time period. This corresponded to a decrease of 28 households over the last decade, indicating that housing replacement (production less destruction) occurred at about the same pace as the creation of new households (or, in this case, loss of households) in the area.

Figure 3.1 Vacancy Rates in 2000



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing

Figure 3.1 shows the vacancy rates in Grant City and Worth County as compared to the State in 2000. The homeowner vacancy rate in Grant City increased from 1.8 to 7.9 in the period from 1990 to 2000, indicating a widening of the market. The homeowner vacancy rate in Worth County increased from 1.7 to 4.1 in the same time period. The homeowner vacancy rate in Grant City was higher in comparison to the county and the State at the time of the 2000 Census. In contrast, the rental vacancy rate in Grant City was lower than that of the State, perhaps, due to a tightening of the market through the 1990s. HUD states that the minimum acceptable vacancy rate for owner-occupied housing is 1.5 percent. For rental housing, HUD considers a market with fewer than 5 percent vacant units to be too tight.

Both homeownership and rental vacancy rates in Grant City appear adequate to provide consumer choice in the housing market. However, overall vacancy rates can mask a community's real housing availability situation. In reality, some of the units can be too expensive, too large or small, substandard, obsolete for today's lifestyles, wheelchair inaccessible, located at unacceptable junctions (too far from jobs or schools), or managed by people who discriminate against certain prospective tenants. In the case of Grant City and the county, a number of the units are not actively for sale or rent. The effective vacancy rates, consisting of the units from which tenants can choose, usually aren't known or published.

Table 3.2 Change in Residency from 1995 to 2000

	Grant City		Worth County		Missouri	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Persons Age +5	891	100	2,254	100	5,226,022	100
Same house in 1995	513	58	1,446	64	2,803,368	54
Different house in 1995	378	42	808	36	2,422,654	46
Same county	249	28	458	20	1,229,176	24
Different county	129	14	350	16	1,126,115	22
Same state	96	11	236	10	652,746	12
Different state	33	4	114	5	473,369	9
Lived Abroad	0	0	0	0	65,782	1

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing

Table 3.2 shows residence for persons five years of age and over as reported in the 2000 Census. Grant City reported that 58 percent of the population lived in the same house for at least five years prior to the 2000 Census. Another 28 percent had moved within Worth County. Fourteen percent moved to Grant City from another county as compared to 16 percent in the county and 22 percent in the State. This indicates that the rate at which people moved into Grant City in the late 1990s was somewhat weaker than averages for the county or State. Efforts to provide land for housing development and promote Grant City as an attractive location to live could give Grant City a competitive advantage.

Table 3.3 Housing Units in Structure, 2000

	Grant City		Worth County		Missouri	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Housing Units	502	100	1,245	100	2,442,017	100
1 Unit, detached	382	76	1,016	82	1,679,585	69
1 Unit, attached*	12	2	16	1	67,120	3
2-4	41	8	59	5	219,679	9
5 to 9	6	1	8	1	92,267	4
10+	20	4	20	2	233,034	10
Mobile home	41	8	120	10	199,826	8

* Attached houses (rowhouses, townhouses, and duplexes)

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing

Table 3.3 shows the number of housing units available for each type of structure according to the 2000 Census. Grant City and the county reported a somewhat larger percentage of low-density housing in comparison to the State (86 and 88 vs. 81 percent, respectively), including single-family homes, townhouses and structures with two to four units. The county reported a slightly larger percentage of mobile homes in comparison to the city and State. According to the Advisory Panel, mobile homes in the city are zoned in a sense that they have to be of certain style, certain square footage, and their owners have to receive an approval from their immediate neighbors. With the large number of low-income households in Grant City, mobile housing could provide an affordable housing option.



From the windshield survey, example of a mobile home: 809 S. Pleasant (also determined to require major repairs).

According to the City Clerk, there were 2-3 new single-family housing units constructed in Grant City since the last Census. No newly constructed multifamily units, duplexes or manufactured houses were reported.

Anticipated Housing Construction: The city reported that there are no housing units in the construction pipeline; that is, no housing has been approved for construction or is in the planning stages.

Table 3.4 Tenure by Bedroom Count in Grant City, 2000

	Owner occupied		Renter occupied		Vacant		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Units	289	100	122	100	91	100	502	100
No bedroom	0	0	0	0	4	4	4	1
1 bedroom	12	4	40	33	8	9	60	12
2 bedrooms	90	31	57	47	42	46	189	38
3 bedrooms	130	45	17	14	19	21	166	33
4 bedrooms	42	15	6	5	12	13	60	12
5+ bedrooms	15	5	2	2	6	7	23	5

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing

Table 3.4 shows bedroom count by tenure for Grant City as reported in the 2000 Census. Seventy-one percent of the total housing stock in Grant City consisted of two or three bedrooms. Forty five percent of the owner-occupied units had three bedrooms, with about one-third of the stock consisting of two-bedroom units. In contrast, rental units were comprised mainly of one- and two-bedroom units. In analyzing vacant units by bedroom size, we note that units with two bedrooms comprised 46 percent, and with three-bedrooms - 21 percent of vacant units.

Table 3.5 2000 Grant City Housing Market

Housing Market within Community - Availability from 1 (low) to 5 (high)	
Duplexes for rent:	1
Medium to Large Apartments (2+ bedrooms)	4
Low priced single-family homes (under \$40,000)	5
Medium priced single-family homes (\$40,000 - \$90,000)	2
High priced single-family homes (over \$90,000)	3

Source: <http://www.nwmorcog.org/profiles/gc/housing.htm>

Table 3.5 describes the ranking of Housing Market Availability within Grant City. Low priced single-family homes (under \$40,000) have the highest availability, and duplexes for rent – the lowest.

Housing Adequacy

There are no state-wide building codes in Missouri, and building codes are actually prohibited by law in 93 out of 114 Missouri counties. Even though Missouri cities are allowed to adopt building codes, sometimes large, new developments are intentionally built just outside the city limits. The owners later petition the city for annexation, which complicates other issues, such as fire protection, because the newly annexed structures might not meet city fire codes.³² HUD's Housing Quality Standards (HQS) describes the requirements for safe, sanitary, and affordable housing; city codes may require additional features.

Table 3.6 Year Structure Built as Reported in 2000

	Grant City		Worth County		Missouri	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Housing Units	502	100	1,245	100	2,442,017	100
1990 to 2000	16	3	80	6	415,684	17
1980 to 1989	14	3	56	4	347,622	14
1970 to 1979	108	22	188	15	443,860	18
1960 to 1969	50	10	97	8	357,273	15
1950 to 1959	46	9	115	9	300,518	12
1940 to 1949	61	12	128	10	181,907	7
1939 or earlier	207	41	581	47	395,153	16

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing

Table 3.6 shows the age of the housing units in Grant City at the time of the 2000 Census as compared to the county and State. The age of structures can help identify the housing units likely to have asbestos or lead paint problems or those homes needing rehabilitation. Fifty-three percent of the housing units in Grant City were over 50 years old (i.e., built prior to 1950) at the time of the 2000 Census, as compared to 57 percent for the county and 23 percent for the State. According to the Panel, some houses in Grant City were built through FHA loans about 30 years ago. The large percentage of older homes in Grant City and the county in comparison to the State is a strong indicator of the need for housing rehabilitation programs in the area.

³² ABS Consulting, <http://www.absconsulting.com/news/may15.html>

Based on the Census 2000, the number of units in Grant City built from 1940 to 1980 averaged from 5 to 11 units per year, not taking into account units that have since been destroyed. Production levels in the city in 1990-1994 averaged 3 units per year and there were no new units built between 1995 and 2000, indicating that current levels are much lower than in previous decades.

Table 3.7 Housing Quality Characteristics in 2000

	Grant City		Worth County		Missouri	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Housing Units	502	100	1,245	100	2,442,017	100
Lacking plumbing facilities	13	3	59	5	32,432	1
Lacking kitchen facilities	21	4	67	5	39,097	2
Crowded Units	3	1	12	1	53,263	2

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing

Table 3.7 shows housing quality characteristics for Grant City in comparison to Worth County and the State as reported in the 2000 Census. Many U.S. households face substandard living conditions and overcrowding,³³ living in housing units that lack hot water, electricity, toilets, bathtubs or showers, and with the number of occupants exceeding the number of rooms in the unit. The percentage of substandard units in Grant City is somewhat lower than in Worth County but higher than that of the State. However, these units represent a small portion of the total housing stock and require no focused attention. Overcrowding also does not seem to represent a problem in Grant City.

The windshield survey conducted in Grant City in 2002 as part of this study surveyed 380 housing structures in Grant City.³⁴ According to the survey results, 144 housing structures in Grant City were in good overall condition.



Example of an occupied house in good overall condition: 104 Lover’s Lane.

³³ According to the U.S. Census definition, a housing unit that lacks complete kitchen or bathroom is considered Substandard Housing. Similarly, a housing unit is considered overcrowded if it has more than one person per room.

³⁴ At least a dozen houses on the northwest side of town were not surveyed. Senior citizens’ apartments just west of the school were also excluded from the survey. For a description of the windshield survey, see “Interactive Mapping Interface/Access to Windshield Survey Results” section.

Housing Units in Need of Repair

The windshield survey identified houses that are in need of repair. According to the survey, 61 units in the city require major repair. These are deteriorating units that nonetheless would be economically feasible to repair:

Parcel ID #	Physical Address	Parcel ID #	Physical Address
07070833021504	504 S. Front	07070833010802	500 S Lyon
07070833022004	5 W . 7th St.	07070833020502	409 S Pleasant
07070833021506	507 S. Main	07070828035208	409 W Fourth St
07070833024007	106 South High	07070828035212	307 W 4th
07070833024001	804 South High	07070828035213	305 W . 4th
07070833022901	811 S. Pleasant	07070828035502	304 W 4th
07070833022901	809 S. Pleasant	07070828041304	207 E 4th
07070833023007	703 S Front	07070828034206	209 W . 3rd
07070833023001	701 S Front	07070828040704	203 E 3rd
07070833022201	607 S. Front	07070828034304	202 Pleasant
07070833023204	1 E 8th	07070828034303	204 Pleasant
07070833023304	706 S High	07070828034001	201 W 2nd
07070833022906	802 S. Briggs	07070828040804	609 E. 3rd
07070833022703	708 Francis	07070828040304	203 E First
07070833022601	703 Frances	07070828040402	104 E. First
07070833022704	707 Goodskill	07070828040106	4 McKinley
07070833022802	412 8th	07070828033501	2 N High
07070833022801	400 W 7th	07070828031104	201 N Main
07070833020804	605 W 5th	07070828032401	7 N Main
	709 Briggs	07070828033301	1 N Main
07070833022102	106 6th	07070828033402	7 E First
07070833022201	202 W 6th	07070828033703	106 S Main
07070833021202	308 W 5th	07070828032402	8 N Front
07070833020601	301 W . 5th	07070828031201	209 N Front St.
07070833021405	506 S Pleasant	07070828030703	302 Front
07070833021205	509 S West	07070828030507	307 Pleasant
07070833021701	500 High	07070828031905	201 Elm
07070833021604	508 Main	07070828033003	1 Wisconsin
07070833010302	501 E. 5th	07070828032802	101 Boundary
07070833010202	408 Meade	07070828032703	308 E. Elm
07070833011001	408 E 5th		

The units in need of major repair are scattered around the city – there is not a particular section of the city that has heavy concentration of these houses. However, the NE corner of the city seems to have no houses in need of major repair.



Example of a house in need of major repair: 508 Main Street.

Several programs are available that could help in rehabilitation efforts but require a successful grant application. For example, USDA Rural Development provides low-interest loans or grants through the Section 504 Rural Housing Repair and Rehabilitation Program to very low-income homeowners who are unable to obtain affordable credit elsewhere. Funds can be used for repairs or improvements to remove health and safety hazards, or to complete repairs to make the dwelling accessible for household members with disabilities. Better promotion regarding the availability of this and other programs could serve to increase their usage in the area.

USDA Rural Development also offers the Section 533 Housing Preservation Grant to units of local government and nonprofit organizations for the repair or rehabilitation of low- and very low-income owner-occupied housing or rental property occupied by lower-income households. The grants are competitive and are made available in areas where there is a concentration of need. A combination of these programs would provide for a stronger grant application and increase the impact of the local rehabilitation program.

Besides applying for various grants to enhance rehabilitation efforts in Grant City (for example, through USDA Rural Development offices or through the CDBG grants administered by the DED), the city could sponsor a Group Workcamp. This 25-year-old program based in Loveland, Colorado, organizes week-long summer service projects for Christian youth groups across the country. Working in crews of five (four teens and an adult supervisor), participants paint houses, build ramps, replace roofing and install skirting on mobile homes. A full camp of 400 teens and approximately 75 chaperones can rehab up to 75 homes in a one-week camp session. 200 volunteers represent about 8,000 hours of volunteer labor—worth at least \$50,000—to the community. The Camp works in partnership with Cook Inlet Housing Authority that promotes independence through housing.³⁵

Youth Build programs, specializing in the rehabilitation and production of affordable housing while enhancing community leadership skills exist throughout the U.S. The program allows people between the ages 16 and 24 to learn construction skills while earning their GEDs.³⁶

Housing Units in Need of Demolishing

Over time, some housing units are destroyed, either unintentionally by fire, wind and other forces of nature, or via authorized demolishing and are thus removed from the local housing inventory.

The city reported that officially there were no units that had been demolished in the past two years. According to the Mayor's Office, currently there are 13 building in the City that are identified as needed to be torn down. In the next five years, the Mayor's Office plans to have up to 25 buildings torn down, with the area of focus being the Square – central downtown. The City tried to get a CDBG Neighborhood Development grant to improve their housing stock as well as demolish a few dilapidated units but failed to obtain it. The CDBG grant application was submitted on April 24, 2002 and the amount requested was \$125,000, with \$11,500 match. However, on August 25, 2003, Grant City received \$80,000 grant from the Missouri office of the USDA Rural Development for roads' repair.

The windshield survey identified 7 housing units in the city beyond repair, and thus requiring demolishing.

³⁵ For more information, see <http://www.cookinlethousing.org/537.cfm> and <http://www.groupworkcamps.com/2004/sites.asp>

³⁶ For more information on the program, see <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/chp/op/YSDP/YouthBuild.asp> and <http://www.gazela.org/youthbuild.htm>

These are:

Parcel ID #	Physical Address
07070833022101	601 S Front
07070833022206	304 W. 6th
07070833021201	302 W 5th St
07070828035602	403 S Pleasant
07070833020501	405 S Pleasant
07070828035205	310 W. 3rd
07070828033102	6 Wisconsin

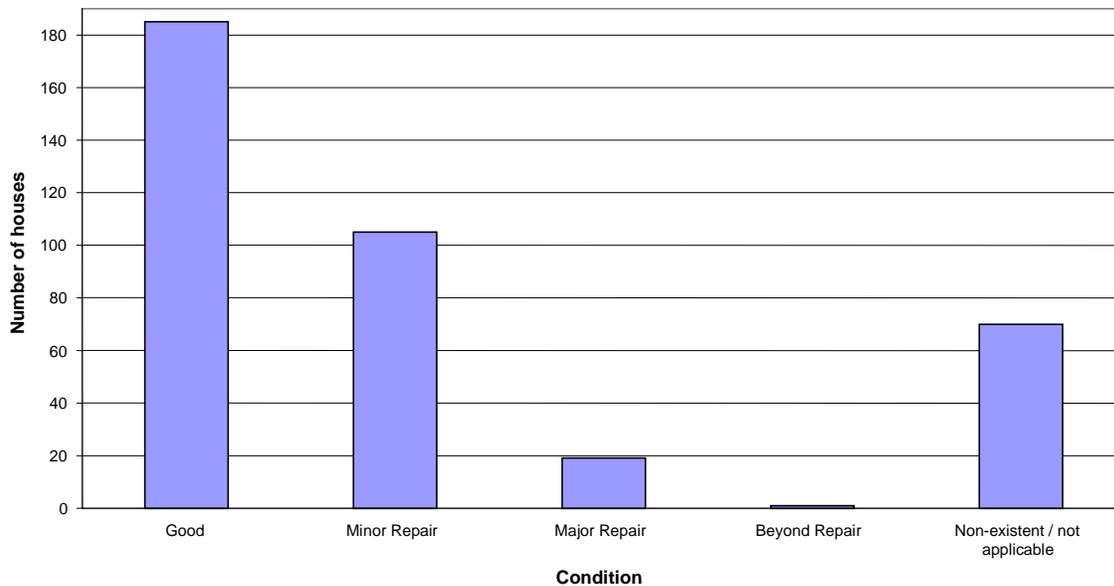
These units are located west or southwest of the city's downtown area (except for one house that is located 3 blocks NE of downtown).³⁷ Interestingly, all the houses requiring demolition are 2 to 4 blocks from the town square. This indicates that Grant City needs to be more aggressive in their code enforcement efforts in eliminating blighting influences from the neighborhoods.



Example of a house in need of demolishing: 304 W. 6th Street.

The following charts are based on the information collected via the windshield survey.

**Figure 3.2 Parking Area Conditions, 2002
Grant City**



³⁷ Six houses in need of demolishing are located south of highway 46 and one – north of highway 46.

The survey was conducted for 380 housing units in the city. Complete information on the survey results was provided in the Supplement (in the paper format) and in the password-protected part of the project website to the members of the Advisory Panel only. Figure 3.2 demonstrates parking area conditions for Grant City housing stock. About half of the surveyed housing units had good parking, with 28 percent of the parking areas needing minor repairs. Only one parking area was beyond repair.

**Figure 3.3 Overall Housing Conditions, 2002
Grant City**

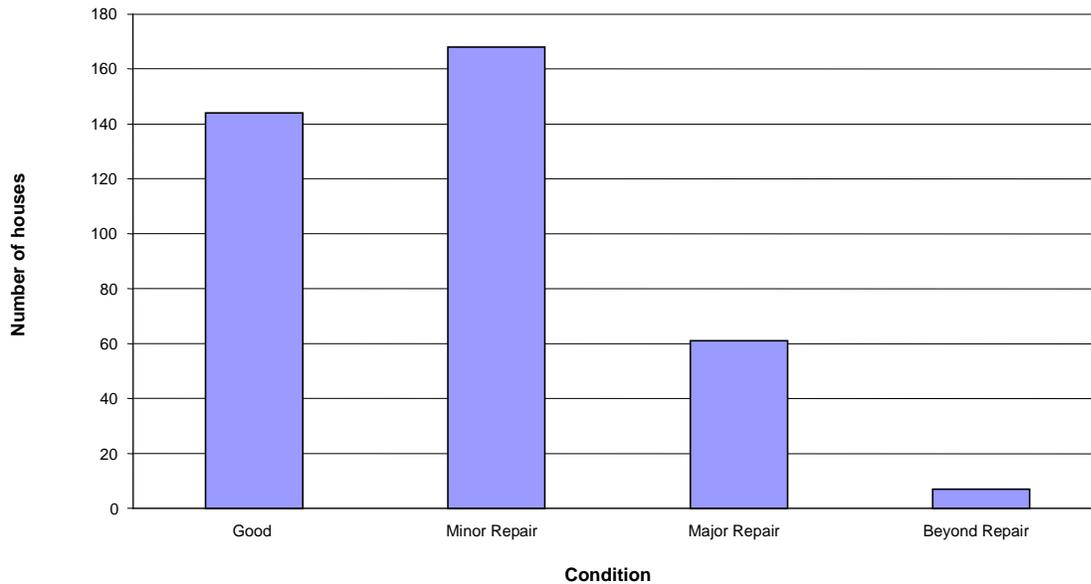


Figure 3.3 depicts overall housing conditions in Grant City. Overall condition of a housing unit is judged based on the cumulative assessment of its roof cover; gutters and downspouts; decks, porches and balconies; exterior paint; windows and doors; chimney; exterior walls; parking area; foundation; entry and steps; and condition of outbuildings.³⁸ Thirty eight percent of housing units in the city were in good condition³⁹, 44 percent were in need of minor repairs, and 16 percent – in need of major repairs. Only 7 out of 380 total units (or 2 percent of the surveyed housing stock in the City) were beyond repair.



House in good overall condition: 109 High.

³⁸ For a definition of all variables from the windshield survey, see Appendix B.

³⁹ Good condition implies that the structure and the yard are carefully maintained. The structure exhibits no surface wear, and no repairs are necessary.

**Figure 3.4 Conditions of Outbuildings, 2002
Grant City**

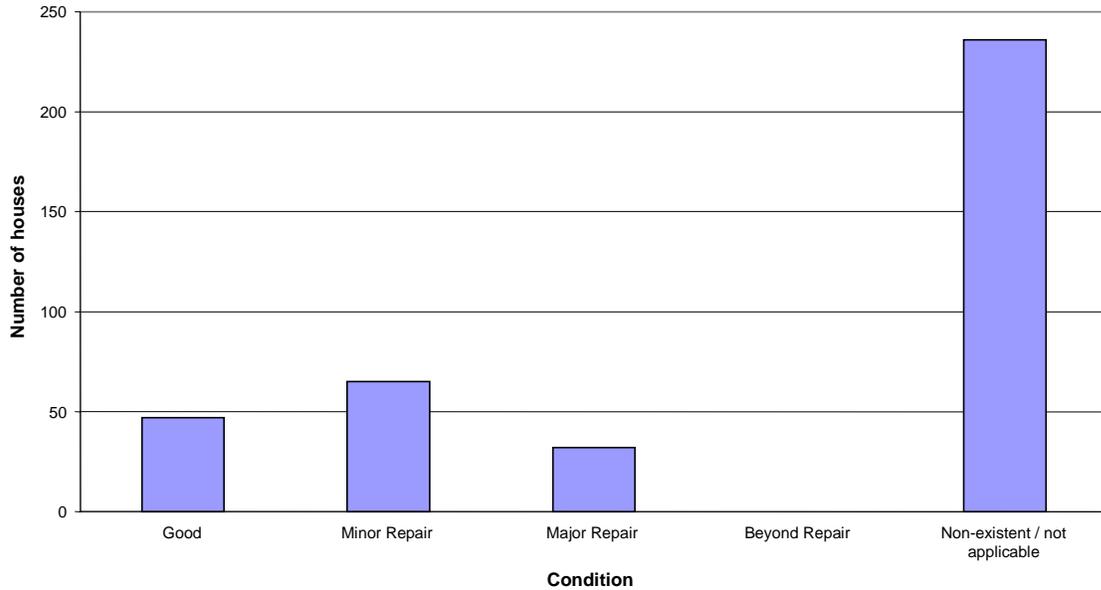


Figure 3.4 shows conditions of outbuildings in Grant City. The majority of housing units in Grant City did not have outbuildings. Those that did were for the most part in good condition or needed minor repair. However, 22 percent of all outbuildings in the city needed major repairs. There were no outbuildings beyond repair.

**Figure 3.5 Property Fencing, 2002
Grant City**

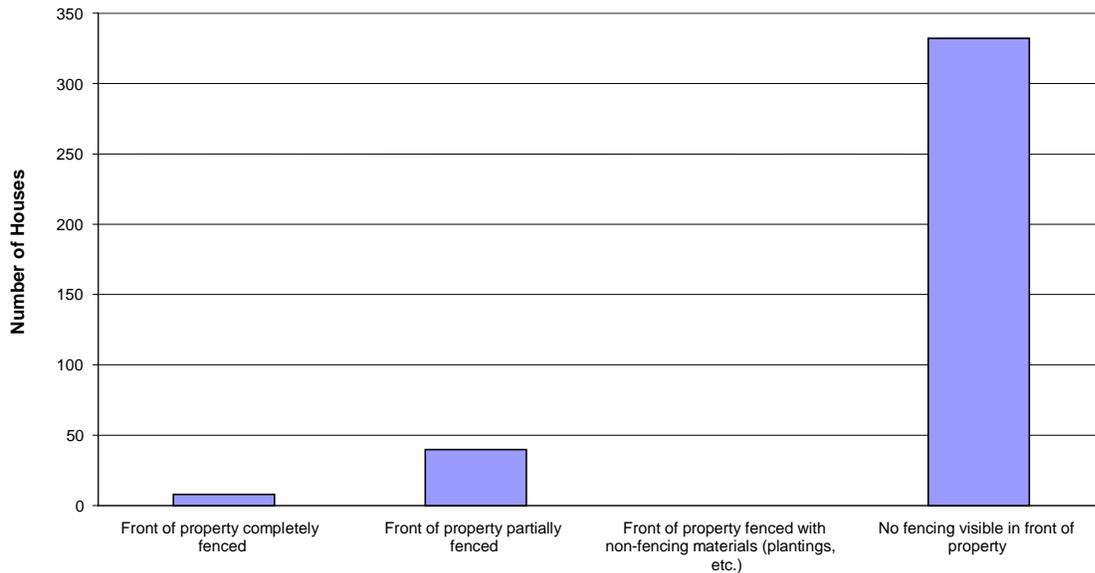


Figure 3.5 analyzes fencing of Grant City housing units. The majority of the city housing units (87 percent) did not have fencing. Only 8 units (or 2 percent of the surveyed housing stock) were completely fenced off in the front. No units were observed that were fenced with non-fencing materials (plantings, etc.).



Front of property completely fenced: 205 High.

Figure 3.6 General Street Lighting, Grant

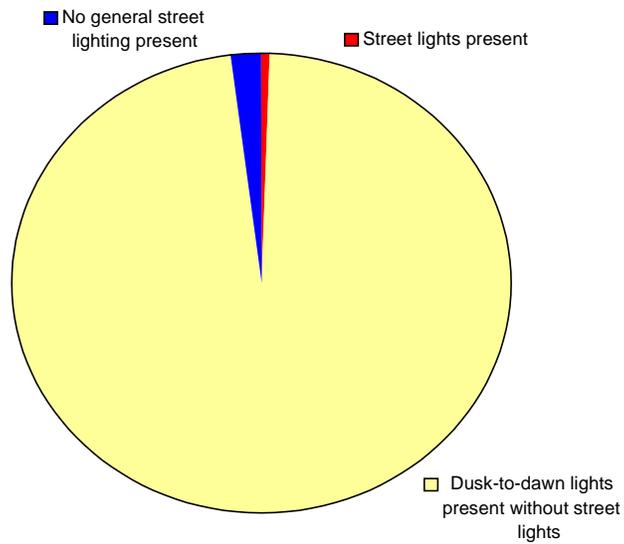
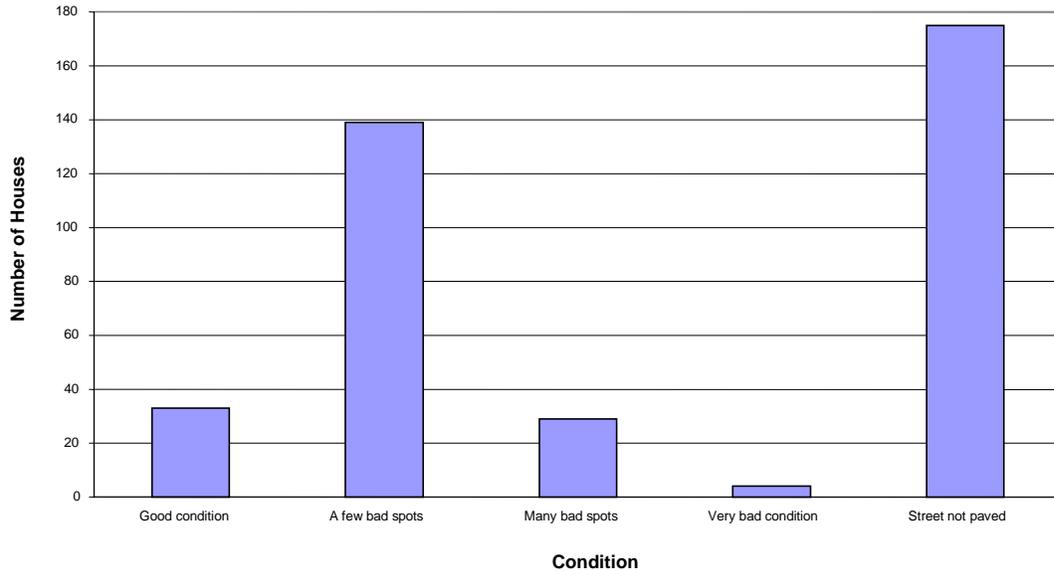


Figure 3.6 analyzes the lighting condition in the city. The majority of street lighting in the city were dusk-to-dawn lights (98 percent of all lighting). Street lights were present at only 2 housing units, whereas 7 housing units had no street lights present.

**Figure 3.7 Street Conditions, 2002
Grant City**



Next, the condition of the streets on which the houses were located was analyzed. As illustrated by Figure 3.7, 9 percent of houses were on the streets that were in good conditions, approximately 37 percent had streets with a few bad spots, 9 percent were located on the streets that had either many bad spots or were in very bad condition, and 46 percent of houses were located on the streets that were not paved.

**Figure 3.8 Property Cleanliness, 2002
Grant City**

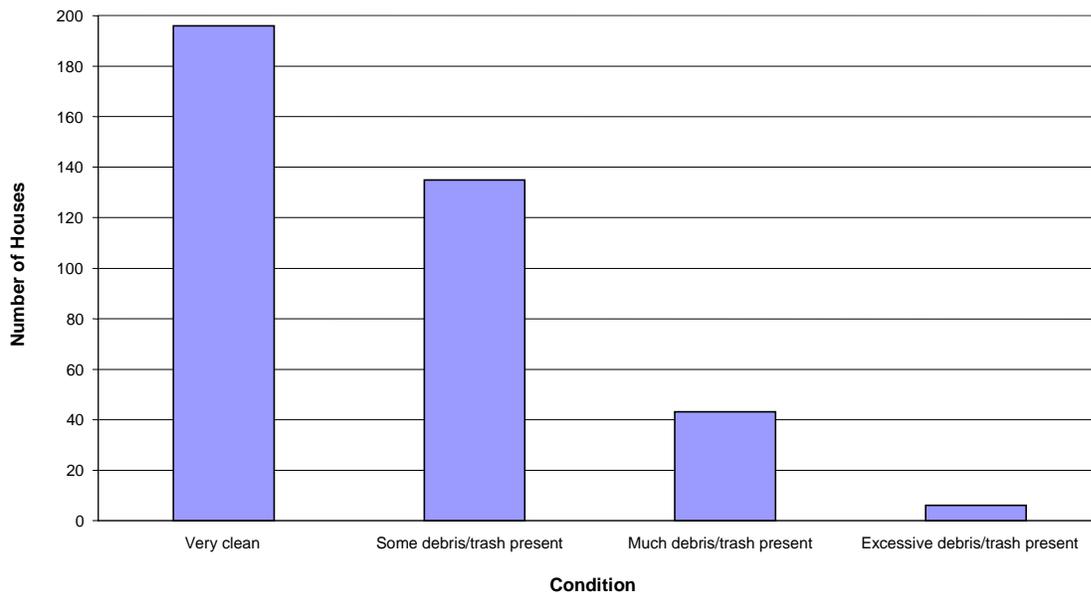


Figure 3.8 analyzes the cleanliness of housing stock in Grant City. Over 50 percent of housing units in the City appeared very clean. Approximately 36 percent of surveyed housing units had some debris/trash present at the time of the survey, and 13 percent of all units had either much or excessive trash present.



Excessive trash present: 202 W. 6th (overall, the house requires major repairs and painting, with its windows and doors determined to be beyond repair. The house did not seem to be occupied at the time of the survey).

Fridge on the porch: 507 S. Main (overall, the house requires major repairs).

**Figure 3.9 Square Footage of Structures, 2002
Grant City**

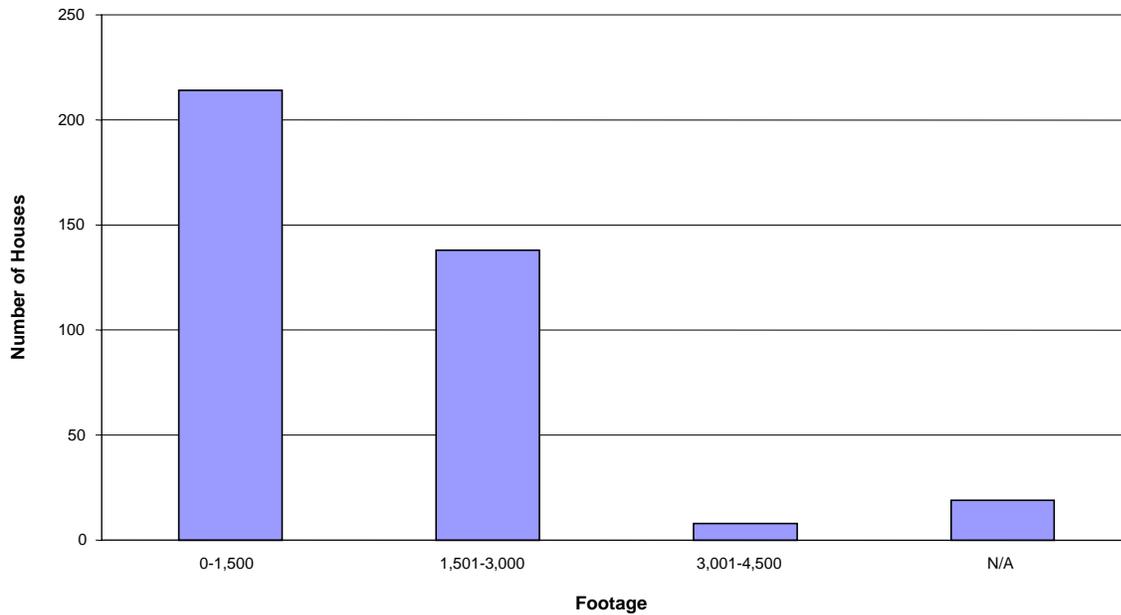


Figure 3.9 shows the square footage of housing units in the City. Approximately 56 percent of all housing units in the City had a livable area that did not exceed 1,500 ft², 36 percent of units had a livable area between 1,500 and 3,000 ft² and the remaining 2 percent of houses had a square footage in excess of 3,000 ft². The data on the square footage of housing units along with other detailed secondary data on each housing unit (assessed value, year the structure was built, number of rooms, bedrooms and stories, presence of basements and other buildings) were obtained from the local Assessor's office.

**Figure 3.10 Distance to School, 2002
Grant City**

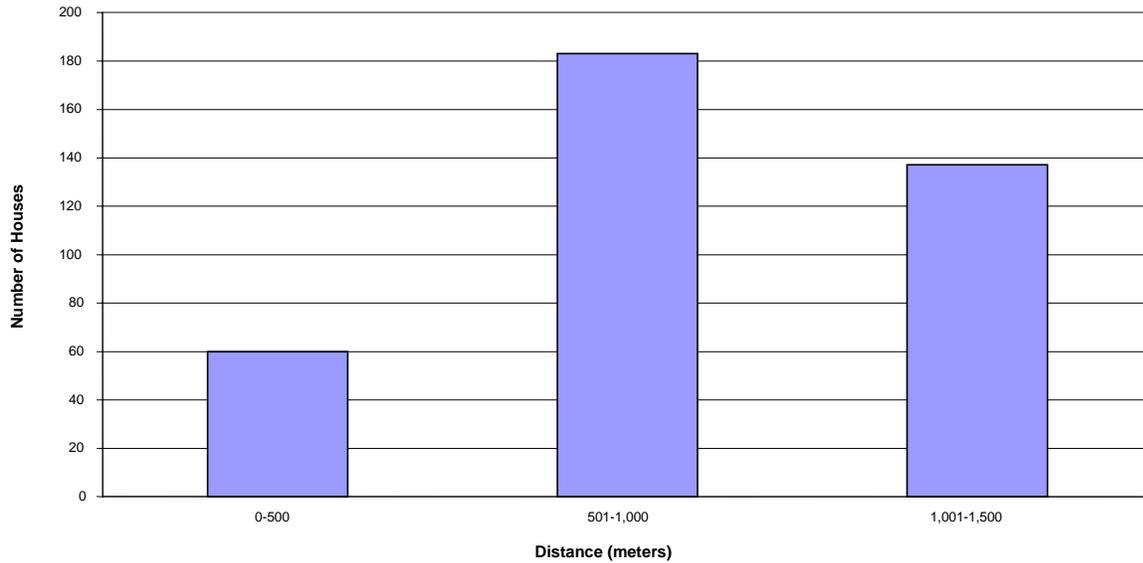


Figure 3.10 demonstrates proximity of Grant City housing units to school. There is only one school in Grant City, Worth County R-III school district. Approximately 16 percent of surveyed housing units were located within 500 meters from school, 48 percent were located between 500 meters and 1 km from school, and 36 percent were located farther than 1 km from the school.

**Figure 3.11 Distance to Park, 2002
Grant City**

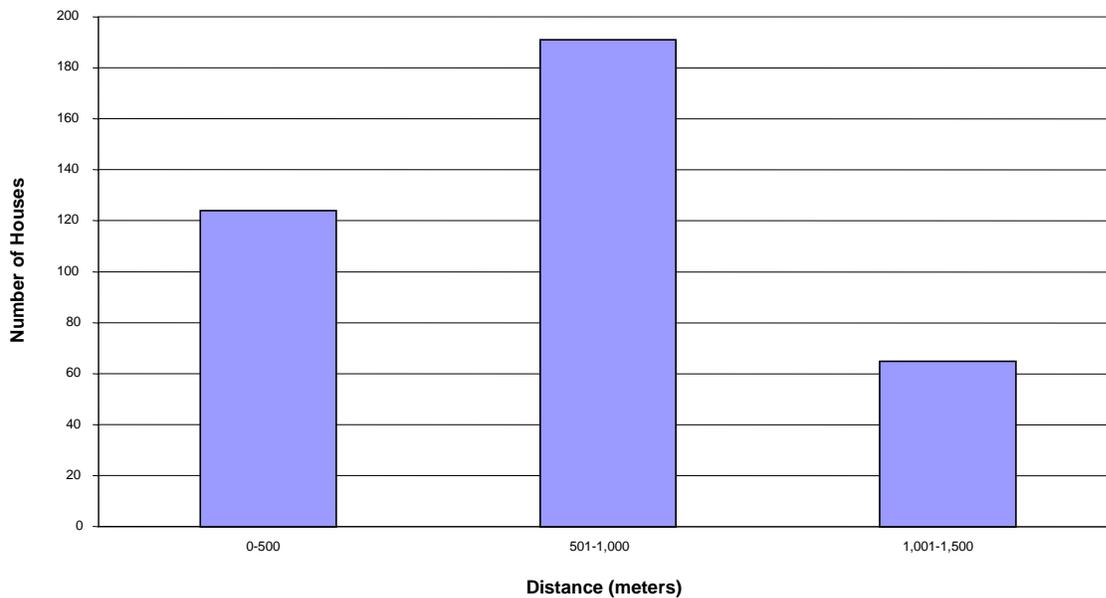


Figure 3.11 shows the distance from housing units to park. There are two parks in Grant City. About 33 percent of surveyed housing units in the city were located within 500 meters from the park, 50 percent were within 500 to 1,000 meters from the park, and the remaining 17 percent were located within 1 to 1.5 km from the park. There is no hospital in Grant City. All houses in the city are about 17 miles away from the nearest hospital. Distances to the school, parks and hospital were calculated by CARES via ArcView.

Examples of houses demonstrating other housing conditions and neighborhood characteristics evaluated via the windshield survey:



A house with porch beyond repair: 201 W. 2nd
(overall housing condition requires major repair).



House numbers present but difficult to see from the street: 201 W. 3rd (overall, house requires minor repairs).



A house with roof beyond repair: 203 3rd
(overall housing condition requires major repair).



A house with gutters and entry steps beyond repair; also requires painting: 209 Front Street
(overall, the house requires major repairs).



Some graffiti visible from property: 301 W. 5th (overall housing condition: requires major repairs). The street on which the house is located is described as “very dirty”.



Windows and doors beyond repair: 302 W. 5th St (the house also has roof, exterior walls, foundation and overall house condition beyond repair). Property has excessive trash and overgrown grass. Does not appear to be occupied.



House with old furniture on the porch: 405 S. Pleasant. (overall condition of the house, as well as its roof, porch, windows and doors is beyond repair. Condition of sidewalk is very bad. Property has overgrown trees, excessive trash and unmaintained yard. Does not appear to be occupied.)



House with chimney beyond repair: 505 S. Main.



Unmaintained yard and overgrown trees: 6 Wisconsin. (the house also has overall condition, as well as roof, exterior paint, windows & doors, exterior walls, and entry & steps beyond repair).

Interactive Mapping Interface/Access to Windshield Survey Results

The windshield survey conducted in Grant City for 380 housing units gives detailed assessment of current housing availability and adequacy in the community.

The Housing Profiles Protocols: Partnering to Develop Tools to Foster Community Revitalization and Citizen Empowerment's website serves as the main medium for the project partners and community citizen's advisory groups connected with this project to interact with each other and to make information about the project accessible to all.

Although this website serves many purposes and presents information in many forms, the key component of the site is the Interactive Mapping interface (see <http://www.cares.missouri.edu/hpp-odf/imsdata.htm>).

Users will enter the Grant City Interactive Mapping interface by clicking on the Grant City icon. From there, the user will see aerial photography, digital orthophoto quarter-quadrangles (DOQQs) of the Grant City area. This high altitude photography dates from 1995 to 2000. Overlaying the DOQQs are Incorporated Areas, County Boundaries, Roads and Highways, Schools, Parks and Houses.