



GOAL 01

Preserve and Rehabilitate Existing Housing Stock

The Johnson County Housing Study prioritizes the need to maintain existing attainable housing throughout the County. Houses in good condition now are not guaranteed to be in good condition in the future. Many areas of Johnson County are older and have increased needs for regular property maintenance. This is a heavy expense for some households. These are areas to conserve and ensure homeowners have the funds to upkeep the homes.

RECOMMENDATIONS OVERVIEW:

 1.A	<p>Encourage housing revitalization by reviewing codes and ordinances and by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Evaluating existing housing preservation, property maintenance, health and safety codes, and rehabilitation programs for effectiveness regularly, set new goals, and reallocate funding if needed.  ■ Create or modify a redevelopment code and/or variance process to encourage residential reinvestment while still ensuring building safety. 
1.B	<p>Assist with maintenance and repair costs to ensure safe housing. </p>
1.C	<p>Promote “Opportunity to Purchase” policies, which require owners to notify tenants of intent to sell and provide them (or an approved third party) an opportunity to purchase.</p>

 Top recommendation as recommended by Housing Task Force

 Community for All Ages, see page 19



RECOMMENDATION 1.A

Encourage housing revitalization by reviewing codes and ordinances and by:

- Evaluating existing housing preservation, property maintenance, health and safety codes, and rehabilitation programs for effectiveness regularly, set new goals, and reallocate funding if needed.
- Create or modify a redevelopment code and/or variance process to encourage residential reinvestment while still ensuring building safety.



CONTEXT:

Evaluating existing programs is key to maintaining effective programs. When evaluating existing programs, cities should set performance metrics to measure success, ensure sufficient allocation of funds to programs, and evaluate elimination of ineffective funds or policies to reduce inefficiencies in time and resources. Evaluating programs regularly can often be pushed aside for lack of priority and simply evaluating programs without identified performance metrics does not have the impact of implementing new innovative policies and actions.

Rehabilitating existing properties can trigger compliance with current building codes for the entire residential structure. Requiring everything to be brought the current building code, especially for large multi-family properties can be costly. By creating a redevelopment code to encourage residential reinvestment, communities can still ensure building safety while reducing the cost burden on the property owner. Reducing the cost burden on the property owner or developer will result in more affordable housing options within the existing housing stock.



BARRIERS ADDRESSED:

Knowledge of programs and resources, quality of existing housing stock, rehabilitation costs, restrictions and regulations



COMMUNITY TYPE:

Countywide



IMPLEMENTATION LEAD:

Mid-America Regional Council convenes County and municipalities



IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME:

1 - 3 years



PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- Number of municipalities that review codes and ordinances
- Total dollars invested in housing renovation



CASE STUDIES:

There are many programs used in Johnson County cities today that can help rehabilitate existing housing. The Housing Study provides guidance on the evaluation process along with the programs that are currently available in Johnson County (pages 299 and 308 – 309). [View Housing Related Programs in Johnson County of the Johnson County Housing Study here.](#)

A case study by the National Association of Home Builders compares the differences between conventional building codes and rehab codes looking at a single-family house in Chester Township, New Jersey. [Read the study here.](#)

RECOMMENDATION 1.B

Assist with maintenance and repair costs to ensure safe housing.



CONTEXT:

The goal of these programs is to allow homeowners who might not otherwise be able to afford necessary repairs to maintain a safe and healthy living environment. Owners can use these funds to bring a property up to code, tend to electricity or plumbing issues, repair the roof and floor, or make upgrades that enhance the home's energy efficiency or accessibility. Assistance with maintenance costs can help prevent the displacement of low-income households who otherwise may struggle to keep their home in livable condition. Aside from improving living conditions and safety, maintaining homes also increases community appearance and property values. Programs addressing these issues tend to aid in drastic scenarios or when buildings are in serious need rather than addressing needs along the way to upkeep and maintain housing.



BARRIERS ADDRESSED:

Knowledge of programs and resources, quality of existing housing stock, rehabilitation costs



COMMUNITY TYPE:

Countywide



IMPLEMENTATION LEAD:

County, municipalities



IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME:

3 - 5 years



PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- Investment in housing rehabilitation
- Number of housing units rehabilitated



CASE STUDIES:

Kansas City offers various home repair programs available to low- and moderate-income households. [Learn more about the programs offered here.](#)

Johnson County already has two existing programs:

- Johnson County Minor Home Repair Program
- HOME Program

Some Johnson County Municipalities have existing programs:

- Lenexa – Exterior Grant Reimbursement Program
- Merriam – Exterior Home Improvement Grant
- Mission – Mission Possible (minor home repair)
- Olathe – Deferred Loan Program
- Olathe – Emergency Repair Program
- Prairie Village – Exterior Grant Program
- Roeland Park – Neighbors Helping Neighbors Program

RECOMMENDATION 1.C

Promote “Opportunity to Purchase” policies, which require owners to notify tenants of intent to sell and provide them (or an approved third party) an opportunity to purchase



CONTEXT:

The Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) provides tenants of single-family housing units or qualified non-profits the opportunity to purchase a home before it goes on the market.

The Community Opportunity to Purchase Act (COPA) offer tenants and qualified non-profits the first right to purchase multi-family buildings. For example, this program has a proven track record in Washington DC of preventing displacement, preserving affordable housing, and advancing racial equity by creating cooperative ownership opportunities. This can be enforced through a rental property license.

While getting legislation to pass could be difficult, municipalities can pass policies which increase the feasibility of the recommendation. This would address the trend of out-of-state investors buying up homes for rental properties. Clear distinction between multi-family buildings and single-family homes would need to be addressed in the policies, and another ramification is that classifications of buildings are taxed differently.



BARRIERS ADDRESSED:

Competitive investment buyers, cost of housing, limited supply of first-time homebuyer options



COMMUNITY TYPE:

All



IMPLEMENTATION LEAD:

Municipalities



IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME:

3 - 5 years



PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

■ Number of housing units purchased by previous renters



CASE STUDIES:

COPA was created to prevent tenant displacement and promote the creation and preservation of affordable rental housing. [Check out how it's working in San Francisco.](#)

Washington D.C. was the first community to enact TOPA. Between 2002 and 2013, thousands of low-income residents have been able to remain in almost 1,400 units preserved under the program. [Learn how the program has helped retain affordable housing here.](#) [You can also find details on Washington D.C.'s program here.](#)